

# Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

P.O. Box 623, Carolina Beach, North Carolina 28428

## *Newsletter*

Volume 14 No. 1

January, 2007

Darlene Bright, editor

### **January Meeting**

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday, January 15, 2007, 7:30 PM, at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall.

Candace McGreevy, Executive Director of the Lower Cape Fear Historic Society at the Latimer House, will speak about the Society's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and their efforts to continue to help preserve our history and heritage.

Members and the general public are invited to attend.

### **Last Month**

Once again, approximately 40 members and guests shared in the food and fun at our annual Christmas Party December 19<sup>th</sup>. After a wide variety of staple and exotic dishes and desserts, the party was entertained by the very talented Deborah Hockenbury and John Golden. Carols and special music, along with trivia games and prizes were enjoyed by all.

### **Message From Your President**

**By Judy Rhudy Thompson**

Hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We are truly blessed with the wonderful summerlike weather. Enjoy!

I hope everyone remembers the Re-Enactment event at Fort Fisher, Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, and I appreciate the help from our volunteers who prepare the delicious sausage dogs for the event.

Let's begin thinking about Kure Beach's big 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration coming up in the Spring. Let's do all we can to make this a huge success.

We are getting excited with the work being done to upgrade the Civil War Colonel Lamb Report to include the Union perspective by General Curtis. We expect that this publication will be completed by May.

Keep an ear out for a magnificent postcard pictorial of Carolina and Kure Beaches by Elaine Hinson. The book will illustrate our local history since early development, through picture postcards and her vast research and knowledge of the area. This very unique work should be published and available by late May, 2007.

I look forward to a fruitful year as we continue work to preserve our important history. Let's all be a part.

### **North Carolina's Role in the Mexican War, 1846-1848**

**Extracted from North Carolina in the Mexican War, 1846-1848**

**By William S. Hoffmann**

**State Department of Archives and History 1959**

As thousands of Americans poured into the Texas territory seeking "to get ahead," or looking for a new beginning, conflict with Mexico was inevitable. The first clash came in October 1835, with General Sam Houston overcoming Mexican forces at San Antonio in December. Expecting retaliation from dictator Santa

Anna's larger force, Houston retreated across Texas to the Brazos River and was relieved of command for not remaining. Lieutenant Colonel William B. Travis, James Bowie, David Crockett, and 174 men remained at the Alamo, met and fought Santa Anna's 6,000 troops until the last American was killed. At San Jacinto, April 21, 1836, Sam Houston gathered a force of old settlers and defeated Santa Anna practically ending the revolution.

"Although Texas enjoyed independence, it was anxious to become one of the states of the Union." The balance of slavery, as states entered the Union, prevented Texas from becoming a state until the Democrats nominated James K. Polk, a native of North Carolina, for the presidency and adopted a platform strongly favoring annexation of Texas. Polk was elected and Congress subsequently passed a resolution offering Texas annexation as a State or the alternative of entering into a new treaty leading to statehood. The first proposal was accepted and Texas was admitted to the Union December 29, 1845.

Problems with Mexico continued as the U. S. government offered a large sum of money to purchase the territory. Mexico needed the money but pride prevented acceptance. As a stalemate followed, American troops were sent to occupy the disputed area between Texas and Mexico. One of the officers of the American force was the twenty-eight-year-old North Carolinian, Braxton Bragg, fresh out of West Point. Threats and sneak attacks soon escalated into open conflict.

North Carolina responded to a call for troops, but a series of "snafus" prevented any real action until, on February 15, 1847, a regiment of 936 North Carolina troops left Fort Johnston, below Wilmington, for Mexico. "North Carolina was more or less typical of the whole nation in its response to the call for regiments. Patriotism at the beginning of the war led to many enlistments but as time passed and nothing happened, volunteering dropped off. The dilatory tactics of the War Department deprived the army of many soldiers. North Carolina could easily have furnished three regiments if they had been accepted immediately and sent into action, but the policy of asking for only one regiment and then delaying sending that one into combat lost many men to the army. Thus the State furnished neither the largest nor the smallest number of troops in the war."

North Carolina troops arriving in Mexico found conditions there deplorable and repulsive and morale soon reached the pits as they were assigned menial tasks with no opportunity to fight. Colonel Robert T. Paine, a strict disciplinarian, didn't help matters as his extreme punishments for menial offences caused his troops to hate him and Lieutenant Colonel Fagg who carried out Paine's orders.

A conflict resulted in Paine's firing into the midst of jeering troops, killing one man and seriously injuring another.

The Paine mutiny, perhaps undeservedly, gave the North Carolina regiment a bad name. It should be remembered that, although they did not enter combat, one-fourth of the volunteers were war casualties; 172 died of disease and sixty-two were discharged for disability; of these, nearly three-fourths died before reaching home. Only nineteen were listed as deserters, one of the smallest percentages of any regiment, regular or volunteer, in the Mexican War. These men were as much victims of the war as were those who died in combat.

All of North Carolina's citizen soldiers in the Mexican War were not in the State regiment. Several hundred Tar Heels in other units experienced the fiercest fighting.

As the State regiment left for the battlefield, two more companies were forming in North Carolina. President Polk had requested two companies from the State to become a part of the Twelfth Infantry of the regular army. Louis D. Wilson, whom the Democrats had favored as commanding officer of the State regiment, was appointed colonel of the Twelfth by the president. Lieutenant H. B. Sears recruited a company from Wilmington, Washington, and Fayetteville and Lieutenant Edward Cantwell recruited another from Wake and Lincoln counties. William Clark of Raleigh, appointed captain of one of the companies, later won recognition and promotion to major. The Twelfth Infantry left for Mexico to join commanding General Winfield Scott.

Through two years of fierce combat, 1846-1848, the U. S. prevailed and peace with Mexico was achieved once again. The State regiment, the Mecklenburg Dragoons, the Twelfth Infantry and particularly individuals like Braxton Bragg, who gained fame and became a national hero with his military brilliance gave North Carolina a place of honor in the Mexican War.

## Society Notes

### Support our Business Members!

A & G Barbeque and Chicken  
Austin & Son Garage, Inc.  
BB&T  
Bank of America  
Britt's Donut Shop  
Coastal K-9 Bakery, Inc.  
Friends of Brunswick Town  
Fort Fisher Restoration Committee  
Got-Em-On-Live Bait Club  
Hanover Iron Works, Inc.  
Historical Society of Topsail Island  
Laney Real Estate Company  
Dr. Vincent Smith, DDS  
Taylor's Heating & Air, Inc.  
Tucker Bros. Realty Company

● **Membership Information: Renewal Notices** are being sent on the anniversary of your joining the Society. We appreciate your prompt payment, saving the Society the expense of additional postage to send out a reminder. As dues invoices are mailed, we will be requesting an update of your personal information (address, phone, email address, etc). When you receive your next invoice, please take the time to verify your data and return the information form with your check.

● **Newsletters** are now available via email. If you wish to **receive** your FPHPS newsletter electronically, please send an email request to [fphps@yahoo.com](mailto:fphps@yahoo.com). To ensure that your message is not overlooked, please put the word "NEWSLETTER" in the subject line. **Thanks, Jeannie Gordon, Membership and Treasurer.**

● **Fall of Fort Fisher – 142nd Anniversary Event!** Saturday, January 13, 2007, between the hours of 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, 35 re-enactors and many presenters will focus on the Navy between the Colonial period and World War II. A large tent will be set up in the rear of the Fort Fisher Museum adjacent to the earthworks. Tours of the Fort will be conducted at 10:00 am, 1:30 pm, and 3:00 pm, and live firing of the cannons will

take place. Delicious sausage dogs will be available, prepared by the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society. If you wish to volunteer to help, please call Leslie Bright, 458-8684

● **History Center News!** Beginning this month, the History Center is now open on Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, or other times by appointment. Thanks so much to our volunteers: Jeannie Gordon, Leslie & Darlene Bright, and Jo Wainright.

If you have some time that you can spare on any Friday or Saturday, please call 458-0502 – leave a message. We desperately need you.

● We still have the **2007 Attractions Dining and Value Guide** for sale, along with new Ocean Plaza T-shirts, Society sweatshirts, tote bags, and a good selection of books. Stop in on Fridays and/or Saturdays, or at the next meeting, and check out our Gift Shop.

*We always welcome contributions and letters. We look forward to hearing from you!*

### Officers

President – Judy Thompson  
Vice-President - John Gordon  
Secretary – Ann Hertzler  
Treasurer - Jeannie Gordon

### Directors

|              |                |                |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Mike Blasko  | James Dugan    | Ray Flowers    |
| Donna Godkey | John Gordon    | Richard Graham |
| Ron Griffin  | Jay Hockenbury | Sylvia Snook   |

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