



Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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

Newsletter

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Darlene Bright, editor

October Meeting

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, October 15, at 7:30 pm, at the Federal Point History Center**, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall. Members and the general public are cordially invited. Refreshments will be served following the meeting.

Historian, Ann Hewlett Hutteman, and Linda Newton, representing the Newton Cemetery Committee, will give an overview of the activities which have taken place at the Cemetery since the Agreement in 1998 between MOTSU and the Historic Society to maintain the Cemetery.

Ann and Linda will give a brief history of the Cemetery and its significance as a National Register site.

Annual clean-up at the Newton Cemetery will be held November 3rd, beginning at 9:00 am (Rain date is November 10th) The Newton Cemetery is located off Dow Road, Carolina Beach. Volunteers are needed and you may sign up at the meeting.

At our October meeting, we will also be presenting two historic plaques. One to Elaine and Skip Henson, who currently own the **Lancaster Cottage, 815 Carolina Beach Ave., N., Carolina Beach**, and one to Pat and Richard Lyerly, **208 South 4th Street, Carolina Beach**.

Last Month

Dr. Chris Fonvielle, Professor of History at UNC-W, presented an overview of his new book, "Historic Wilmington and the Lower Cape Fear," to approximately 70 members and guests at the September 17th meeting.

Chris spoke on many of the historic highlights and firsts in lower Cape Fear history, with fantastic projected photographic imagery from his collection. Many of these appear in his new book.

Chris has been and continues to be a great supporter and asset to the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society since its beginning. We are grateful for his contributions.

Barbecue Benefit

We will be holding a Down East style Barbecue on Saturday, October 20, from 11 am to 4 pm at the History Center building next to the Carolina Beach Town Hall on North Lake Park Boulevard.

Large plates of delicious pork barbecue, beans, slaw and hushpuppies are only \$5.00. Drinks and fresh, homemade desserts can be purchased separately. Come early and bring your neighbors as you support the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society.

Volunteers are needed to help serve on Saturday, and also, prepare and donate homemade desserts. Call 458-0502 or 458-8684, leave message.

Incidents in the Blockade Running Career of Signal Officer D. S. Stevenson
Taken from a Souvenir Booklet of The Hebe Skirmish Centennial and the Fort Fisher Visitor Center-
Museum Groundbreaking Program, August 24, 1963

The following account written for the Archives of the Ladies Memorial Association by Mary F. Sanders is a vivid description of the excitement of the blockade running business.

“In the soft mild days of October, 1864, while we still lingered at our cottage by the sea, on Confederate Point, I witnessed the most interesting scene of my life.

“It was during dark nights that the blockade runners always made their trips, and the bar was shelled whenever one was expected.

“The *Little Hattie*, a blockade runner, on which my nephew, Daniel S. Stevenson, was signal officer, was expected, and the bar was vigorously shelled each night to keep the blockading fleet at a safe distance.

“Captain Leppy, a dashing young South Carolinian, Captain of the *Little Hattie*, had ordered the fires banked, just at the dawning of the day, as they approached Cape Lookout, intending to wait until the next night, when he would run down the coast and come in through New Inlet at Fort Fisher, but before the order could be carried into effect, he saw by the movements of the Yankee fleet stationed off Cape Lookout, that they had been discovered. Immediately he rescinded the command and turning to Lieut. Clancy, the Mate, and Dan, said ‘They see us and I am afraid we shall be captured, but we will give them a lively race for it;’ then turning to one of the men, said, ‘Tell the engineer to crowd on the steam, have the fireman to feed the furnace with Nassau bacon, and we will make this run in broad daylight.’ ‘Clancy’, said the Captain, ‘run up the Fox and Chicken,’ (the private flag of the *Little Hattie*). ‘Throw out the Stars and Bars, fling to the breeze every inch of bunting we have on board and, if we must die, we will die game.’

“The fires on the Yankee fleet had been banked before the *Little Hattie* was sighted, and as it took some time to clear out the furnace and raise the steam. The *Little Hattie* had some miles the start of her enemies, and well she responded to her extra steam. Young Stevenson said that to his anxious mind it seemed, at every pulsation of her great iron heart, her tough oaken sinews would quiver as if instinct with life, and she seemed to leap clear of the water, as if sharing the excitement of her crew. Eight blockading steamers joined in the chase, and kept up a murderous shower of shot and shell.

“This much my nephew told me; what follows, I witnessed.

“Just about 9 o’clock on that lovely October morning, when all nature smiled so kindly upon our war desolated land, a courier rode up to our front door and shouted, ‘There is a blockade runner coming this way, and she looks like the *Little Hattie*.’ The *Little Hattie* had two smoke stacks.

“I sprang to my feet, caught up the powerful field glasses belonging to my brother-in-law, Maj. James M. Stevenson, stepped out on the roof of the porch facing the ocean and looked, sure enough it was the *Little Hattie*, and to my horror, I saw a figure on the paddle box, whom I knew to be Dan, with flag in hand signaling to the Fort. The agonizing suspense of his mother could find vent only in prayer, and at a window toward the sea she knelt in supplication to the Throne of Mercy for her son and his companions in danger, while ever and anon, the shrilling screeching of the shot and shell would be answered by her.... groan.

“Onward dashed the frail little craft with eight United States steamers following close in her wake, pouring a relentless iron hail after her. When she came near the Fort, the thirteen ships stationed off the mouth of Cape Fear, joined in the fray, but He who marks the sparrow’s fall, covered her with His hand, and not one of the death-bearing messengers touched the little boat.

“The guns of the Fort were manned, shot and shell, grape and canister, both hot and cold, belched forth from the iron throats of Parrot, Columbiad, Whitworth and Mortar. This was done to prevent the fleet from forming on the bar and intercepting the *Little Hattie*’s entrance.

“For nearly an hour I stood on the roof watching the exciting race, and when the *Little Hattie* came near enough to discern features, I recognized Captain Leppy with his trumpet, Lt. Clancey with his spyglass and Dan, still standing on the paddle-box, with his flag, having served its purpose, for the time, resting idly in his hand; and, thus, at 10 o’clock that cloudless October morning was accomplished one of the only two successful trips of a blockade runner, made by day light.”

**Hospital Sketches, An Army Nurse's True Account of her Experiences
During the Civil War by Louisa May Alcott
Reviewed by Rebecca Taylor**

Everyone thinks they know Louisa May Alcott. After all, *LITTLE WOMEN* is the story of her own life, isn't it? Actually it isn't. In the novel Jo March waits at home for her father to come home from the war. But in real life Louisa, determined to actively support the Union cause, served as a nurse in a military hospital in Washington DC.

Though Louisa had written and published a few stories before the war, it was *HOSPITAL SKETCHES*, her first-hand account of her service that brought her writing widespread recognition.

Traveling alone from Boston to New York by train, then by coastal steamer to Philadelphia and on to Baltimore and Washington by train again, she savors the thrill of setting off on an adventure all her own.

However, she arrived at the hospital she nicknamed "Hurley-burly House."

"My duties had begun owing to a somewhat abrupt plunge in to superintendence of a ward containing forty beds, where I spent my shining hours washing faces, serving rations, giving medicine, and sitting in a very hard chair, with pneumonia on one side, diphtheria on the other, two typhoids opposite, and a dozen dilapidated patriots, hopping, lying and lounging about, all staring more or less at the new 'nuss,' who suffered untold agonies, but concealed them under as matronly an aspect as a spinster could assume."

After the Battle of Fredericksburg, this self-styled New England spinster quickly found the true side of the adventure she had eagerly sought.

"Presently, Miss Blank tore me from my refuge behind piles of one-sleeved shirts, odd socks, bandages and lint; put basin, sponge, towels, and a block of brown soap into my hands, with these appalling directions:

'Come, my dear, begin to wash as fast as you can. Tell them to take off socks, coats and shirts, scrub them well, put on clean shirts, and the attendants will finish them off, and lay them in bed.'"

Among her hardest duties was sitting beside men who were close to death.

"As I went in, John stretched out both hands:

'I knew you'd come! I guess I'm moving on, ma'am.'

He was; and so rapidly that, even while he spoke, over his face I saw the grey veil falling that no human hand can lift. I sat down by him, wiped the drops from his forehead, stirred the air about him with the slow wave of a fan, and waited to help him die."

There were days off, and Louisa, like Jo, was an inveterate walker. Can you imagine a wartime Washington security like this?

"Another of my few rambles took me to the Senate Chamber hoping to hear and see if this large machine was run any better than some small ones I know of. I was too late, and found the Speaker's chair occupied by a colored gentleman of ten; while two others were on their legs, having a hot debate on the cornball question, as they gathered the waste paper strewn about the floor into bags; and several white members played leap-frog over the desks, a much wholesomer relaxation than some of the older Senators indulge in, I fancy."

As happened to so many doctors and nurses who served before the days of antibiotics and modern methods of sterilization, Louisa contracted typhoid and was treated with Calomel, a common medication of the time that included mercury. Though she eventually recovered enough to resume some normal activities, she was never really well again, the mercury having settled in her muscles. She had to depend on a writing career to support her family.

Society Notes

Support our Business Members!

BB&T
Bank of America
Britt's Donut Shop
Coastal K-9 Bakery, Inc.
Fort Fisher Restoration Committee
Frank's Pizza
Friends of Brunswick Town
Got-Em-On-Live Bait Club
Hanover Iron Works, Inc.
Historical Society of Topsail Island
Island Florals by Roxanne
Island Gazette
Island True Value Tackle and Hardware
Laney Real Estate Company
B. Parker Protective & Lock
Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce
Pleasure Island Fresh Market
Dr. Vincent Smith, DDS
Snow's Cut Monthly Magazine
Taylor's Heating & Air, Inc.
Tucker Bros. Realty Company
Zorba's Steak & Seafood

● **Membership Information:** Debbie Price, Chairperson. WOW! This month Debbie has signed up five new Business Members: **Island True Value Tackle and Hardware, Frank's Pizza, Zorba's Steak & Seafood, Pleasure Island Fresh Market, and Island Florals by Roxanne!** And as a result of our Membership Picnic we added the following new personal members: **Connie Creech Burns, Lonnie and Linda Lashley, Carol and Mac Montgomery, Herb and Jackie Wiebe, Timothy Marvin and Annie Hope-Marvin.** Our current count is 208 personal members, and 23 business members. Thanks so much to the following who donated door prizes: Pleasure Island Fresh Market; Harris Teeter-Monkey Junction; Linda's Fashions; Island Tackle and Hardware; Bradley and Company Jewelry; Carolina Beach Furniture; Zorba's Gyros; Frank's Pizza; Island Florals by Roxanne; Island Gazette; and, Elaine Henson.

● **Newsletters:** If you wish to **receive** your FPHS newsletter electronically, please send an email request to **fphps@yahoo.com**. To ensure that your message is not overlooked, please put the word "**NEWSLETTER**" in the subject line.

● **History Center News!** In September, our volunteers at the History Center included; **Pat Bolander, Jeannie Gordon, Lois Taylor, and Sylvia Snook,** They helped a total of 49 visitors. THANKS so much! Don't forget to visit our gift shop. We have received a new shipment of Ocean Plaza and FPHS T-

shirts for the gift shop. Also, we still have a few **Attractions Coupon Books**, which make nice Christmas gifts!

Officers

President – Vacant
Vice-President – Cheri McNeill
Secretary – Lois Taylor
Treasurer - Jeannie Gordon

Pat Bolander
Elaine Henson
Ron Griffin

Directors

James Dugan
John Gordon
Jay Hockenbury

Ray Flowers
Richard Graham
Sylvia Snook

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