



# Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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

## Newsletter

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Darlene Bright, editor

### January Meeting

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday, January 21, at 7:30 pm at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall. Member and the general public are cordially invited. Refreshments will be served following the meeting.

Author 'Fessa John Hook is a well-known broadcaster who became Billboard magazine's Program Director of the Year in 1983 for a ratings-winning Beach Music-Oldies radio station in Charlotte, NC. In the late 1980s, he developed the first full-time Beach Music radio station on 100,000 watt WRDX-FM in the center of the western Piedmont, NC. Today, he heads up the Endless Summer Network on the Internet and syndicates the Beach Music Top 40 Countdown and American Beach on two dozen radio stations in his 16th year as a syndicator.

Of course, he also pursues his Beach Music and Shag passions by dancing, researching, and writing. Fessa' Hook has been mapping the tributaries, backwaters, and main streams of Beach Music for nearly 30 years. It's been quite an adventure, digging up roots which often confounded the previously accepted folklore. What was supposed to be an 80-page monograph on Beach and Shag history has become a vocation.

The Beach Music Guide is the first Beach Music encyclopedia ever published, with 1000 pages of listings split between two volumes. "Shagging In the Carolinas" is a history of dance, romance, and the New South. Among it's many attributes, The Shag defied social conventions in its earliest days as carefree white teenagers were inspired by the possibilities inherent in improvisational black dance and music. Thereupon lies a multifaceted and fascinating history.

### Last Month: Annual Christmas Party

What a great time we had! The food was spectacular, especially the DESSERTS and the fellowship was warm. There were close to 50 people crowded into our little Center but everyone made the rounds and stopped to admire the carousel horse that our new members, the Miller's, brought. (It's the very one on the cover of Daniel's new book) A big thanks to Deborah and Jay Hockenbury for the wonderful entertainment. The Christmas trivia contest was a hoot, as were the prizes and their interpretation of O Henry's classic, THE GIFT OF THE MAJI, set the perfect tone for the upcoming season of giving. It just would't be Christmas without John Golden and his wonderful sing-along; we are so lucky to have such talented and giving members.

### Birth of the United States Constitution

By Leslie S. Bright

Referencing "American Political and Social History", By Harold Underwood Faulkner, 1937.

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Generally speaking, citizens in the various independent states thought their delegates were meeting to strengthen the old Articles of Confederation and not to essentially form a central federal government.

"The fathers of the American Constitution held their meetings behind closed doors and in secret. But for the scanty notes of a few members, particularly James Madison, posterity would be quite ignorant of what

happened. When the fragmentary information is pieced together, one fact stands out clearly. The delegates were practically unanimous in the belief that the central government should be strengthened by giving it power to lay and collect taxes, regulate commerce, control the issue of currency, assume the financial obligations of the confederation, and prevent the impairment of contracts. The delegates were also in general agreement as to the dangers of democracy and the necessity of preventing their development. The object of the delegates, said Madison, was ‘to secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a faction and at the same time preserve the spirit and form of popular government.’ ”

All of the delegates had been involved with government in one fashion or another. Many had helped to write their states constitution or had served as delegates to Congress under the Articles of Federation.

“Early in the convention the delegates threw over the idea of amending the Articles of Confederation and determined that a ‘national government ought to be established consisting of a supreme legislative, executive, and judiciary.’ The chief conflict in the convention now arose over the power in the new government of the large and small states, which, in the light of a century and a half of experience, seems a waste of time. Virginia proposed a lower house elected by the people and an upper elected by the lower house, the legislature to choose a single executive and the judiciary. The smaller states, led by Paterson of New Jersey, offered a counterproposal (the New Jersey plan) calling for a single legislature based upon states regardless of population with a plural executive elected by Congress and a judiciary appointed by the executive. A deadlock between the larger and smaller states was finally broken by a compromise establishing the system under which we are now governed.”

This constitution appeared to restore the same kind of authority the colonist had fought a war with Great Britain to abolish.

“By the masses of the people, the Constitution was greeted with anything but enthusiasm. Some pointed out that the delegates had failed to follow instructions in not revising the Articles of Confederation and in submitting it to conventions rather than to the legislatures. Others opposed the sacrifice of state powers to the strengthening of the federal government. Others resented the fact that the Constitution seemed interested solely in safeguarding the rights of property and made no reference to the ‘rights of man,’ so prominent in the revolutionary philosophy of the period. Yet others complained that the federal government was essentially undemocratic. The lower house, to be sure, was popularly elected, but it was to be balanced against an indirectly elected senate, and both were to be balanced against a president, whose election the framers believed they had removed from popular control. Yet another agency had been established that might negate the work of both the legislative and the administrative branches, namely, a federal judiciary appointed (not elected) for life, the most conservative of all. The Constitution nowhere authorized the judiciary to declare the laws of Congress null and void, but there appears to be no doubt that many of the framers looked upon such a possibility with favor. It did say that ‘The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity arising under Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and treaties made,’ and there were, of course, the precedents of judicial review in the states, as in the case of *Trevett v. Weeden*. The whole was a system of checks and balances designed to keep the power out of the hands of the democratic and turbulent masses.

In defense of the Constitution much could be said and was said eloquently and effectively. The country was in real need of a strong central government that would give greater unity of action. The Constitution provided the instrument and did it by means of a series of nice compromises sufficiently soothing to command support from many groups. It was never intended to be democratic, but there was a possibility of amendment, difficult as that might be.

‘Governments are instituted among men,’ insisted Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence, to secure ‘certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.’ Madison, twelve years later, arguing for ratification in the tenth number of the *Federalist*, asserted that ‘the first object of government’ was the protection of ‘the diversity of the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate,’ and held that the ‘principal task of modern legislation’ was the regulation of conflicting economic interests. It was a far call from the high idealism of Jefferson to the stern realism of Madison, but not all had forgotten the political precepts of the revolutionary era. Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, to name but four of seven, had ratified the Constitution only on the virtual promise that it would be amended to

protect the ‘rights of man.’ As a consequence, the first session of the first Congress submitted twelve amendments to the states, ten of which, known as the Bill of Rights, were duly ratified. They guaranteed such fundamental rights as liberty of speech, press, and assembly, religious liberty, jury trial, and protection against unreasonable searches and seizures and against excessive bail and punishments, while the ninth and tenth amendments were blanket protection against usurpations by the federal government of the rights of citizens and states. With the adoption of these amendments, it seemed that human rights as well as property had been covered in the Constitution, but scarcely a decade passed before it was evident that phrases in a constitution, no matter how confidently they had been placed there, might acquire unexpected meaning as interpreted by the courts.”

The Constitution was adopted in most of the larger states only by the narrowest margin and by the cleverest political manipulation. It was not until the first Congress under the new Constitution brought economic pressure to bear by means of a tariff on foreign goods that North Carolina (Nov. 21, 1789) and Rhode Island (May 29, 1790) finally adopted the U. S. Constitution.

### **“Shagging In The Carolinas,” by ‘Fessa John Hook Review by Rebecca Taylor**

The very first question I was asked by a visitor to the History Center was “What is this Shag thing?” About all I knew was that it was a dance done to “beach music” that originated in the coastal Carolinas. So, as always, I googled it and immediately found the “Endless Summer Network.” Located on the internet at [www.beachshag.com](http://www.beachshag.com) this fantastic site not only provides details to the history and development of the dance but broadcasts the music that evolved alongside the dance via internet and satellite radio. (I’ve also got to admit that on really slow days at the History Center I play it as background music.) The web site is also a great central location to check on events and promotions built around this legendary dance today. Did you know there was an annual “Shagging on the Seas” cruise to the Caribbean?

The driving force behind the web site, and of the book SHAGGING IN THE CAROLINAS, is ‘Fessa John Hook, DJ and historian extraordinaire . Having spent much of his life in broadcasting and in chronicling Beach Music his accomplishments include developing the very first full time Beach Music radio station and being named BILLBOARD’s Program Director of the Year in 1983.

Did you know that the Shag predates both the Lindy Hop and the Jitterbug? That the “Southern Shag” was actually invented in North Carolina? Or that together with the Charleston and the Big Apple, Shag history, when it’s clearly laid out, depicts Southern culture in a way that’s never been documented before?

SHAGGING IN THE CAROLINAS, published in 2005 by Arcadia Press, is a picture essay that follows the development of the dance, and the music from the late 20’s (and Wilmington’s Feast of the Pirates) through the dance crazes of the 30’s and 40’s to the influence of the African-American rhythm ‘n blues. Ultimately, it is the story of how middle class white kids adopted the elements of improvisational black dance and music that would help change the culture of the South.

Using photos and newspaper clippings from a variety of sources including the WILMINGTON MORNING STAR, the CHARLOTTE OBSERVER and even AMERICAN DANCE magazine, the book carefully constructs the history of Shag. Did you know that the Shag had been published in a choreographers script as early as 1936? FPHPS members will also be interested in the pictures of the Lumina and the White Lake Pavilion in their beach music heydays. There’s even a picture of the Seabreeze pavilion stretching out over the sound that I don’t remember seeing before. (Photo credits for that one go to our own Daniel Norris.)

There’s a great shot of a very young Chicken Hicks on the boardwalk at Carolina Beach – does anyone remember the Tijuana Inn ? Other sections chronicle the influence of the college students of the 50’s and 60’s on the dance, and the dance upon them . And as one would expect from this lifelong broadcaster the contributions of black AND white disk jockeys who played the music on stations from Raleigh to Charlotte to Columbia are preserved. Author Hook ends with a great look at the later days (80’s and 90’s) of both the Shag and Beach Music. My only question left: Can somebody explain the “dirty Shag” to me?

## 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. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of **Jerry Ludwig** and **Bob Doetsch**, who passed away recently. We all will surely miss them.

It can now be revealed: Our new "gift" members are **Paul Zickell** of Carolina Beach and **Marie and Edwin Rothbaler** of Marcellus NY. "Welcome to the Society" from all of us! In addition we welcome **James and Barbara Miller** of Carolina Beach and **Kenneth Stanley** of Wilmington. They both joined at the Christmas Potluck. ***Our current count is 220 personal members, and 23 business members!***

● **Newsletters:** If you wish to **receive** your FPHS 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.

● **History Center News** In November, our volunteers at the History Center included; **Jeannie Gordon, Sylvia Snook and Elaine Henson**. They helped a total of 43 visitors to the Center. Gift shop sales are up, as well, and we're selling lots of Daneil Norris's second book CAROLINA BEACH, NC: FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS REMEMBERED (\$29.95) as well as Elaine Henson's POSTCARD HISTORY OF CAROLINA BEACH (\$19.95). We've got plenty of the new

MY FRIEND THE ENEMY published by the Society, which sells for just \$10.00 and is a fascinating look at the Battle of Fort Fisher. We're still plugging away with the Bill Reaves project. We still need typists who know simple word processing to input the date from the card files. We have also begun to index the full run of FPHS Newsletters so that we will be able to access the historical material easily. Believe it or not we've got 13 years of Newsletters to index. We're using a simple program called BOOK COLLECTOR which is fairly simple once you work through a few entries. I'd love to teach a few people how to do it if anyone would like to help me on this project.

Beginning in February, the History Center will be open an additional four (4) hours from 12 noon – 4 pm on Tuesdays.

● **Letter to the Editor:** MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL! I miss you all and was licking my chops last Monday night while you were enjoying each other's delicious creations! All is going pretty well here – Dad is at home with Mother and I, Mother stopped driving because of her numb feet (neuropathy), so I'm chief cook and bottle washer and chauffer and nurse and appointment scheduler and everything else you can think of! Kure is doing well also. She has a great fenced back yard and we are overlooking a nice wide canal, so we get ducks, sandhill cranes, ibis', squirrels and various birds, and even a huge iguana! Thanksgiving Day we had 15 family members over for dinner and when Dad turned 85, we had another 12 members over to celebrate! So, this seems to be the place where we need to be. Just wanted to let everyone know that I'm thinking of you all and wish you all a joyous and healthy New Year! I'm planning a trip up in February and might be able to come to the meeting. My new address is 2825 S. E. Rawlings Road, Port St. Lucie, Fl. 34952. I love reading the newsletter, so please continue to send it to me! Thanks so much and love to you all. JUDY RHUDY THOMPSON.

● **SAVE THE DATE AND PARTICIPATE!** Mark your calendars for the **13<sup>th</sup> Annual “Be A Tourist in Your Own Hometown” for New Hanover County residents on Sunday, March 2, 2008.** It is on this day that participating area attractions open their doors to New Hanover County residents free of charge and residents become “tourists in their own hometown.” Our History Center will be participating in this popular event and volunteers will be needed to help. There will be a sign-up sheet at our next meeting, or you may call the Center – 458-0502, leave a message.

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