



# Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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## *Newsletter*

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Darlene Bright, editor

### **January Meeting Monday January 19, 2008**

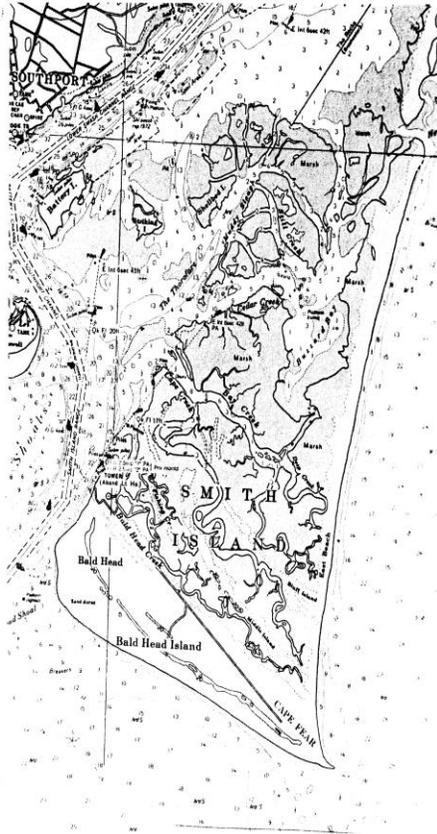
The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, January 19 at 7:30 pm at the Federal Point History Center**, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall.

Our January speaker will be Susan Grantier, the Historic Tour Director for the Old Baldy Foundation, the not-for-profit organization that maintains and runs the Smith Island Museum of History and Old Baldy Lighthouse, North Carolina's oldest standing light tower.

Cape Island, Cedar Island, Smith Island, Bald Head Island...these are just a few of the names for the nearly 13,000 acres of maritime forest, sand dunes and tidal marsh that stand at the mouth of the historic Cape Fear River.

Susan will help us explore Bald Head Island's rich maritime history, from lighthouses to lifesaving stations, Civil War forts to world class resort. The island's residents have ranged from Native Americans to soldiers of three wars; river pilots to ambitious entrepreneurs dreaming of development during the roaring 20s.

Susan graduated from UNC Wilmington in 2007 with a BA in History after moving here and falling in love with Wilmington and Southeastern North Carolina's history ten years ago.



Smith Island, Bald Head Island, and Bald Head. (From NOAA National Ocean Survey chart 11537.)

### **Calling for Volunteers -- Sausage-Dog Sale Fort Fisher Reenactment Weekend January 17, 2009**

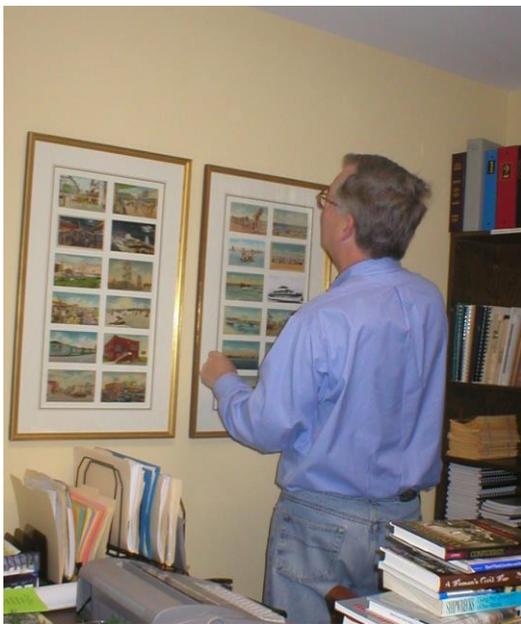
We will be selling sausage and hot dogs at the Fort Fisher Reenactment again this year. This annual event gives our members a chance to be right in the middle of the "battle" while raising money for our organization. We need people to begin setting up around 10:00 and in 2 hour shifts until late afternoon. If you can work a shift please leave a message on the History Center phone: 458-0502 or e-mail us at [FP\\_HPS@yahoo.com](mailto:FP_HPS@yahoo.com) so Rebecca can let Leslie & Darlene know who'll be helping and when.

## Holiday Potluck a Huge Success!



If you missed the December meeting you missed a lot. We had a great crowd that was bigger than many of us have seen at a Society social event. Every chair in the place was occupied. The food was scrumptious, the fellowship special and the entertainment beyond compare. John Golden led us in a sing-along of everyone's favorite carols, everything from "Rudolph" to "Silent Night." And, as has become tradition, Jay and Deborah Hockenbury played Santa with hilarity for all.

## Major Donation: Postcard Collection



Santa came for real in early December when Thomas Gray donated FORTY-SEVEN postcards to our growing collection. Framed beautifully in thematic groups and including a number Elaine Henson declared "rare," they add significantly in our ability to provide iconic images to our visitors and researchers.

At the January Board meeting, board members unanimously accepted this generous donation and extended our most sincere appreciation to Thomas, a life-time member of the Society from Winston-Salem.

For now they've been hung on the back wall of the Library, the only large space we currently have to display them together in all their technicolor glory. The next time you're at the History Center, take some time to look in the Library. You'll be transported in time by these glorious bits of history.



## Did You Know?

## Excerpts from David Stick's *Bald Head: The History of Smith Island and Cape Fear*

- William S. Powell, distinguished historian and author of the definitive *North Carolina Gazetteer*, says that the name Bald Head is properly applied only to a small area of no more than a few hundred acres occupying the extreme southwest portion of the southernmost of the islands in the complex.
- The name CAPE FEAR first appeared on a map drawn by a member of Sir Walter Raleigh's 1585 colony en route to Roanoke Island, stating: "wee were in great danger of a Wracke on a breache called the Cape of Feare."
- The vast areas of Smith Island marshland and the tidal creeks winding among them provide a productive spawning ground for a variety of marine creatures, not the least of which are oysters, shrimp, clams, and crabs, as well as a number of finfish, including spot and mullet.
- Bald Head's best-known and most-publicized marine visitor is the giant loggerhead turtle, which sometimes weighs as much as half a ton. Awareness of the plight of the endangered loggerheads is especially acute on Bald Head, where a unique cooperative arrangement involving the developer, residents, the Nature Conservancy, and government agencies has resulted in an active "Turtle Watch" program.
- Landgrave Thomas Smith, a prominent merchant from Charlestown, secured a grant for the island on which Cape Fear was located on May 8, 1713 for the purpose of trading with the Indians.
- In September 1717 the notorious pirate Stede Bonnett was captured by Colonel Rhett in the waters of the Cape Fear River adjacent to Bald Head Island.
- During the *War of Jenkins' Ear* (cir. 1740's) a Spanish man-of-war appeared off Bald Head, harassing vessels entering Port Brunswick and commandeering others departing North Carolina with naval stores. As a result Fort Johnston was begun for the defense of the Cape Fear River.
- Benjamin Smith, the last of the heirs of Landgrave Thomas Smith to hold title to Smith Island and Bald Head, died in 1826 following a distinguished career in which he served as an aide de camp to General Washington as well as Governor of North Carolina, 1810-1811.
- In 1784 the North Carolina Assembly authorized a special duty of six pence per ton to be paid by all vessels entering the Cape Fear, the proceeds to be used for "erecting beacons and buoys at the mouth of the Cape Fear River." By 1789 there was enough money in the hands of the commissioners to begin construction of a lighthouse on Bald Head. Benjamin Smith, a member of the commission and owner of Bald Head, donated 10 acres, with the stipulation "that no person, shall be allowed to carry or keep on the said island, or any part thereof, any cattle, hogs, or stock of any kind." The lighthouse keeper was permitted to keep poultry, a cow, and a calf but anyone found hunting on the Island would be fined five pounds the first time and ten pounds for each succeeding offense.
- John J. Hedrick, an engineer from Wilmington and commander of the Confederate "Cape Fear Minute Men" was put in charge of the building of Fort Holmes on the west side of Bald Head. The primary mission of the 1,400 men of the 40<sup>th</sup> Regiment, North Carolina Troops under Hedrick's command was to prevent enemy landings anywhere on Smith Island; another was to go to the aid of any friendly vessel unfortunate enough to run aground on or near the island.
- An early plan, in the 1920's and 30's, for development of what the promoter called "Palmetto Island" resulted in clearing for proposed roads, and construction of a pier, a pavilion, and a partially completed hotel.
- Frank O. Sherrill of Charlotte purchased Bald Head Island in 1938 with plans for a major resort which would include a four lane "ocean highway" down the East Beach from Fort Fisher – to be paid for by the State of NC. In 1963 he consolidated his holdings by purchasing the federal property surrounding the two Lightstations and Lifesaving Station.
- In 1972 the Carolina Cape Fear Corporation purchased Bald Head from Frank Sherrill and announced development plans; however, politics, an economic recession, and a new public awareness of the value of undeveloped natural areas doomed their project to failure.
- Today 10,000 acres of marsh and estuary belong to the State of North Carolina. The Bald Head Island Conservancy and the North Carolina Nature Conservancy are involved in managing the undeveloped land.

**Support our Business Members!**

BB&T

Bame Ace Hardware

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 Gazette

B. Parker Protective & Lock

Pleasure Island Chamber

of Commerce

Dr. Vincent Smith, DDS

*Snow's Cut Monthly* Magazine

Taylor's Heating & Air, Inc.

Tucker Bros. Realty Company

Society Notes

● **Membership Information:** Debbie Price, Chairperson. We would like to welcome new member **Frances Walters** of Carolina Beach and **Troy and Nicole Slaughter** of Carolina Beach to our Society. Both subscriptions were “holiday gifts” so start thinking of who you might donate for next year.

*Don't forget, we'd love to convert your Newsletter subscription to the electronic version if you are comfortable with the internet and e-mail. With postage at 42 cents, we save over \$5.00 a year on each “paperless” subscription.*

● **History Center News:** Darlene Bright, Director. Rebecca manned the History Center alone this month, but a very special thank you goes out to Sylvia Snook and Don Snook for helping with the Christmas decorations. And of course, Darlene and Leslie pitched in and made sure everything looked just right – and they un-decorated and packed up in storage for next year. In addition at our Wonderful Christmas Potluck, the month of December. Both Got-Holiday parties at the History Center

<b>The Federal Point History Center is now open: Tuesday: 12-4 Friday: 10-4 Saturday: 10-4</b>
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The Winterfair author fair Chris Fonvielle, Daniel Norris, Elaine Henson, Skipper Funderburg, Ann Hutterman, Beverly Tetterson, Jean Nance and Esther Myles who visited with the public and autographed their books. We made just over \$400 in gift shop sales which was a nice boost for the budget. Darlene and Rebecca are already thinking about what to do next year. We are really determined to pursue the “holiday crafts” idea with plenty of time to plan it.

### **Around About: Community Events**

**January 20, 2009:** Richard Triebe, local Civil War enthusiast, will be presenting a program on what happened to the Confederate soldiers from Fort Fisher after they were captured and taken north to prison. The program is at 7pm at the Southport Community Building , 233 East Bay Street.

**Oakdale Cemetary** has announced its Spring Events. Advance tickets are not required but encouraged. They are available at the Oakdale Cemetery office at 520 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street; Cash or Checks only; call the office at 910-762-5682 for additional information. For all events, participants should park outside the gate at the end of North 15<sup>th</sup> Street and meet at the entrance gate.

**Bird Watching Tour: Saturday, February 21, 8:00 AM** Go birding throughout Oakdale Cemetery with noted ornithologist, Dr James Parnell. A retired professor of biology at University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Dr. Parnell is the author of numerous books and articles on birds, among which is Birds of the Carolinas, which he co-authored. \$8.00 for non-members; FREE for members.

**Camellia Tour : Sunday, March 8, 2:00 PM** Ed Powers and Bill Wilcox, both members of Wilmington's Tidewater Camellia Club and certified judges of the American Camellia Society, will guide participants on a two hour tour of the camellias blooming in Oakdale. \$8.00 for non-members; FREE for members.

**Spring Floral Tour: Sunday, March 29, 2:00 – 4:00 PM** See what's blooming at Oakdale with horticulturist/superintendent Eric Kozen. \$8.00 per person; FREE for members.

**Oakdale Historical Tour: Saturday, April 18, 10 AM-Noon,** Architectural historian Janet K. Seapker gives a tour focusing on the history of Oakdale Cemetery and reveals the meaning of symbols used in Victorian funerary art. \$8.00 for non-members; FREE for members.

**The Lower Cape Fear Historical Society** is sponsoring a bus trip to **Old Salem on March 10 and 11, 2009.** In addition to visiting Old Salem we will have a guided tour of the Toy Museum by its founder Tom Gray. In addition we will visit Graylyn and Renolda House. Call the Latimer House

for details at 782-0492. We are now taking reservations; limited to 45 people. Price includes transportation and lodging at the Brookstone in Old Salem. Mr. Gray will have a wine and cheese for us in his home and will have us for lunch at Graylyn. All meals are included except for dinner Tuesday evening. The price is \$225.

**KURE BEACH'S ANNUAL STREET FESTIVAL APRIL 25, 2009 Begins 11:00AM @ "K" AVENUE**

**FABULOUS FOOD!** Chicken, seafood, sausage & gyro sandwiches, cotton candy, fudge, funnel cakes, lemonade, fries, hot dogs, blooming onions, beer, wine & soft drinks!!

**UNIQUE ARTS AND CRAFTS!** Jewelry, face painting, embroidered and crocheted items, lampworks, glass beads, hand-woven sweaters, blouses, candles, stained glass, painted windows, stepping stones & benches.

**LIVE MUSIC!!** 11:00am Sandy Bottom Beach Boys, 1:00pm Brunswick Big Band, 3:30pm Tony & Diane, 6:00pm Shamalama.

Don't miss this month's issue of SNOW'S CUT MONTHLY. January is their history issue and FPHPS is well represented with articles on the Federal Point Lighthouses, and the Royal Palms Hotel.

**Officers**

President – Don Snook  
Vice-President – Hazel Logue  
Secretary – Lois Taylor  
Treasurer - Jeannie Gordon

**Directors**

Pat Bolander	James Dugan	Ray Flowers
Elaine Henson	John Gordon	Cheri McNeill
Ron Griffin	Jay Hockenbury	Sylvia Snook

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