



# Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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## Newsletter

Volume 21, No. 11

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Darlene Bright, editor

History Center Hours: Tues, Fri, Sat 10-4

Rebecca Taylor, production

**NORTH CAROLINA**  
★ In the ★  
**GREAT WAR**



### November Meeting Monday, November 17, 2014 7:30 PM

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold its monthly meeting on **Monday, November 17, 7:30 pm at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall. LeRae Umfleet**, Chief of Collection Management for the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, will return to share her newest program.

It has been argued that World War I created the modern world by undermining European aristocracy, shifting national borders, industrializing warfare and expanding the public realm of women. The war also changed North Carolinians. North Carolina emerged from this first global conflict less rural, more worldly and better equipped to serve the nation through industry, military installations and shipbuilding enterprises at our ports.

Although the United States did not formally enter the war until 1917, the first Tar Heels left North Carolina to join the French Foreign Legion 100 years ago in August 1914. However, once the United States declared war against Germany in April 1917, North Carolinians supported the war effort and rallied behind President Woodrow Wilson when he said that America was fighting for democracy in what would be called “a war to end all wars.”



LeRae will be discussing the lives and experiences of North Carolinians on the home front and the battlefield during the Great War. She is particularly interested in sharing the stories of men and women who went to Europe early in the war and sacrificed their lives and safety for what they believed to be right and honorable, well before the US joined the war effort.

### President's Letter - November, 2014



This card gives us a glimpse of downtown Carolina Beach in the early 1940s at the corner of Lake Park Boulevard and Harper Avenue. The building on the right is the Carolina Beach Drugstore showing its distinctive battlement parapet; some of the druggists who operated it over the years were Luther Bunch, Wilbur Adams, Neil and Nancy Adams Musselwhite and former mayor Neil Pharr. You can see a sign near the street which confirms that the drug store also housed a bus station during WWII and beyond. Laney Real Estate now occupies the former drug store. Carolina Beach's post office, at that time, was located in the tan building across the street called Brewer's Inn. Bank of

America and its parking lot are now in that spot. The three and a half story building just left of the drug store (on the card) was Risley's Cottages and Rooms. It was on the corner of Harper Avenue and Canal Drive and had a grocery store on the bottom level. It sat across the street from the Royal Palm Hotel on the southwest corner of Harper and Canal. The Royal Palm was remodeled and reopened as the Hotel Astor in 1983. The Astor burned in 2005; its site remains a vacant lot used by the amusement rides in the summer season.



## Oral History

### “Ethyl-Dow at Kure Beach” by Howard Hewett



I can add some additional history because the Ethyl Dow Chemical Co. had a direct impact on my family. My Dad went to work for Ethyl Dow in 1933 as a laborer helping clear the land for the Kure Beach Plant.

As construction progressed, he continued to work at the plant site. When the plant started operations, he became a plant operator, then shift foreman, plant foreman and later Supervisor. After the war when the demand lessened for ethylene dibromide, the plant was mothballed but it was kept in semi-running condition. Dad maintained his role as supervisor of the remaining crew.

When the decision was made to demolish the plant, Dad & his crew were responsible for clearing all the equipment. Then most mechanical equipment was sold to potential buyers.

In 1953, our family moved to Freeport, Texas for a 1 year project at the Ethyl Dow plant there. Dad was somewhat an expert in the packing of the blowing out towers which had a special lath packing made of cypress. The project included purchasing the cypress, manufacturing the lath packing and installing it in the towers.

We returned to Federal Point in 1954 just in time for hurricane Hazel. By 1956, the plant was cleared and all equipment sold. Dad turned the key to the Office building over to a demolition contractor.



If you viewed the [YouTube video – History of the Ethyl Dow Plant](#) (Island Ecology for Educators-Final Project), produced by Johnny Reinhold in 2012 and recently posted on Facebook by Lem Woods, some of the concrete & brick rubble material from the plant demolition was later used at Fort Fisher to combat beach erosion. The article is a fairly accurate history of the Kure Beach plant.



In 1956, the Hewett family moved back to Freeport, Texas where Dad continued to work for Ethyl Dow until the shutting down of the Texas Operation plant in early 1970's. Again, Dad was given the responsibility for clearing the Freeport plant, selling the equipment and turning the plant over to a demolition contractor.

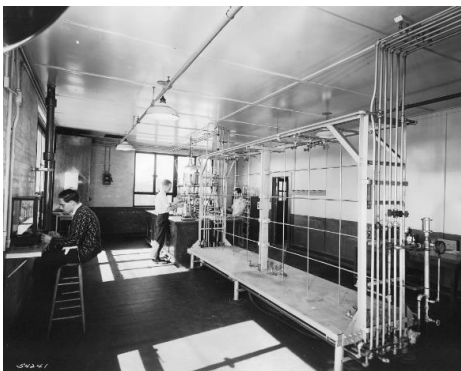




During Dad's 47 year Dow career he worked in two Ethyl Dow plants, 1400 miles apart and had the distinction of walk out the front door and turning the front door key to demolition contractors which ended the existence of the Ethyl Dow Chemical Co.

As to the Ethyl Dow plant at Kure Beach, Dad was able to save some of these photos. More excellent quality photos can be found at our FPHPS web site:

<http://federal-point-history.org/showcase/oral-history-howard-hewett-part-3/>



*Sources:*

Originally posted by Howard Hewett to: [Carolina Beach Locals](https://www.facebook.com/CarolinaBeachLocals/) on Facebook – Tuesday August 19, 2014. Howard's complete story of the Ethyl Dow plant, his excellent quality 80 year old photos of the plant – and additional resources about the plant are available on our website. <http://federal-point-history.org/showcase/oral-history-howard-hewett-part-3/>

## **As I Remember -- Hurricane Hazel -- Sixty Years Ago By Lane Holt**

Sixty years ago today Hazel destroyed everything our family owned-our home and our business on Carolina Beach. I still have vivid memories of the destruction. We rode out the hurricane in the Wilmington Hotel. I watched the glass window fronts in downtown burst and shatter from the pressure.

My parents and I were some of the first to be allowed back on the island. My Dad operated the Carolina Beach Fishing Pier and Restaurant. It was the first 1000 foot pier on the east coast, we were told. This brick building that housed the tackle shop and restaurant was constructed so as to survive storms. In fact, many locals wanted to spend the night in this building thinking it would certainly survive any storm. Fortunately, local law enforcement insisted we leave the island.

The road up the northern strip to our home and pier was closed so I started running up the beach. I could immediately see that very little of our pier was left, maybe 150 ft. at most. Some of the things I will never forget as I ran up the beach—the ocean was as calm as a lake. Only a slight ripple where the water met the sand. I will never forget the smell of propane gas from tanks ripped from houses that were now rubble. A couple homes next to our pier were actually now in the ocean.

I met a couple of elderly locals, the Griffins, walking toward me. They had chosen to stay in their home on the north end and you could see they made a mistake. They were in terrible shape. Soon I could see that our tackle shop and restaurant



was no more. It was flattened. No one would have survived in that building. The roof was almost one-half mile back toward the intracoastal waterway. It was an eerie sight.

Three feet of water in our home ruined everything in it. We spent many weeks with wonderful friends and neighbors until we were able to rebuild. Our meals came from the Salvation Army truck that came by twice everyday while we were cleaning up. I have not and will not ever pass a Salvation Army fundraiser without giving. I am sure I have paid them back many times over.

In loving memory of my parents, Dan and Margaret Holt.  
Lane Holt



### **Featured Business of the Month** **Island Tackle and Hardware By Tony (Lem) Phillips**

Island Tackle and Hardware, a TrueValue store, is also a valued Business Member of the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society. While the name gives away the fact that they are very interested in fishing, don't miss out on seeing everything they have to offer the community. A first class hardware store as well as a shop for gifts to fit anyone's imagination. And don't forget the gas for the BBQ. Pull up to the tank and fill up.

They are located at 801 N. Lake Park Blvd. Carolina Beach, NC 28428. Or visit them online at <http://islandtacklehardware.com/index.htm> . They have an online store but if you can't find what you're looking for, call them at 910-458-3049.

Island Tackle and Hardware, is a True Value Hardware Store and a "Full Service Fishing Paradise." Visit them soon and tell them that you too are members of FPHPS.

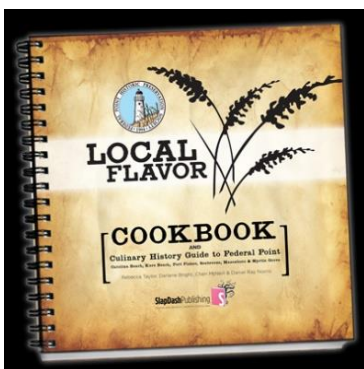


**Society Notes**  
**Darlene Bright, History Center Director**

- ❖ **DONATIONS!** Thanks to **Judy and Byron Moore** for purchasing the rack to hold all the folding chairs at the History Center. It will make set-up and clean-up SO much easier! And thanks to **Norm Melton** for donating a seashell sculpture made by his mother **Marie**. It is a great example of the kind of beach souvenir that was popular on the boardwalk in its heyday.
- ❖ **WWT Cruise:** Thanks to **Beverly Tetterton and Doug Springer** for their wonderful narration of the historic and natural history of the Wilmington waterfront, Eagles Island, and Navassa. I ALWAYS learn something new when I take one of Wilmington Water Tours excursions.
- ❖ Thanks to everybody who helped at our refreshment stand at the “Friends of Fort Fisher” Concert on November 1. Darlene and Demetria spent a good deal of time figuring out what to sell and purchasing it all. The work crew that afternoon/evening included **Demetria and Phil Sapienza, Andre Blouin and Nancy Gadzuk, and Tony Phillips and his friend Melanie**. They loaded up coolers, and cases of drinks, drove it to Brunswick County, set it all up to sell, and then hauled the leftovers back to the History Center, unloaded it, and inventoried what didn’t sell.
- ❖ The History Center recorded 84 visitors in October. We had 35 in attendance at the October meeting. The gift shop took \$144.88. The cookbooks are selling at a steady pace. The History Center was also used by Got-‘em-on Live Bait Fishing Club and the UDC-Fort Fisher Chapter, and the Committee for the Carolina Beach Walk of Fame. **PLEASE NOTE: We have a couple of long sleeve T-shirts and some FPHPS sweatshirts on sale. T-Shirts - \$5.00. Sweatshirts - \$12.00. Great for yard work or other grungy projects.**
- ❖ Please welcome new members **Robert and Liz Greenwald** of Wilmington.
- ❖ Thanks to **Sylvia Snook, Juanita Winner, Pat Bolander and Ron Griffin** for keeping the History Center open while **Rebecca** was away.
- ❖ Thanks AGAIN to **Andre’ Blouin** for all the time he’s put into our growing website. Please take time to look through our website’s Front Page menu at: [www.federal-point-history.org](http://www.federal-point-history.org) **Tony Phillips** is keeping things growing on our Facebook page. If you are on Facebook please take time to “like” us and share our posts.
- ❖ **And don’t forget!** If you take a trip with **Wilmington Water Tours** please tell them you are a member of FPHPS! If you do we get a portion of your ticket price. Call us 458-0502, or them 338-3134. [www.wilmingtonwatertours.net](http://www.wilmingtonwatertours.net)

**GET YOUR RAFFLE TICKETS NOW!**

We have had two wonderful prints of Carolina Beach scenes donated by **Ronald Williams** via. **Norm Melton**. Tickets are \$1.00 apiece, 12 for \$10.00, or 25 for \$20.00. We’ll hold the drawing at the Christmas Party. You don’t have to be present to win.



**Christmas is coming! Have your bought your cookbooks yet? Just \$21.95!**





**Officers**

President – Elaine Henson  
Vice-President – Tony Phillips  
Secretary – Juanita Winner  
Treasurer – Demetria Sapienza

**Directors**

John Gordon	Jean Stewart	John Moseley
Andre Blouin	Leslie Bright	Byron Moore
Skippy Winner	Jim Dugan	Barry Nelder

**Federal Point Historic Preservation Society****P. O. Box 623****Carolina Beach, NC 28428**

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***Please Support Our Business Members!***

**Atlantic Towers****Ned Barnes, Attorney****Big Daddy's****Britt's Donut Shop****Carolina Marine Terminal****Charles Henson Painting****Coastal K-9 Bakery, Inc.****First Bank****Frank's Pizza****Got-Em-On-Live Bait Club****Hanover Iron Works****Historical Society of Topsail Island*****Island Gazette*****Island Tackle and Hardware****Kure Beach Fishing Pier****Bob McKoy- Network Real Estate****Olde Salty's****Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce****Pleasure Island Foundation for a Sustainable  
Community****Primrose Cottage****SlapDash Publishing****Tucker Bros. Realty Company****Wilmington Water Tours****Winner Marine Construction****Winner RV Park**

