



# NEWSLETTER



BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BRUNSWICK TOWN, P.O. BOX 356, SOUTHPORT, N.C.



Vol. XV, No. 3

OCTOBER 1975

## THE NORTH CAROLINA FOURTH OF JULY FESTIVAL, INC. AT SOUTHPORT, N. C.



Each year Southport and the surrounding communities join together to celebrate America's Independence from British rule and to produce a three day festival which has been chartered by the Secretary of the State as THE NORTH CAROLINA FOURTH OF JULY FESTIVAL, INC. The earliest celebration dates back to 1795 and occurred at Fort Johnston, in present day Southport. The festival is governed by a Board of Directors who are citizens that have served as general chairman of past festivals.

Many civic clubs and organizations, societies and miscellaneous groups participate in some special way in helping to produce the festival. Citizens from all walks of life, religion, politics and occupations are banded together in this common cause and interest to present to their neighbors and visitors from throughout the state and many other states an old fashioned fourth of July.

The following is an excerpt from a speech given to Festival guests in 1974 by Southport Mayor Eugene B. Tomlinson, Jr.

"All through the years Southport has been intimately associated with the various defense elements that have been instrumental in keeping our nation free:

- Army at Sunny Point, Fort Caswell and Fort Johnston
- Navy at Fort Caswell
- Air Force at Fort Johnston
- Coast Guard at Oak Island

and on back to 1763 when, as our Lieutenant Governor recently reminded us — local citizens and the militia jointly perpetrated a dastardly act of rebellion against the crown some 10 years before our friends up in Massachusetts got around to putting their thoughts into action. . . .

Some few years later, in the 1790's, these same local citizens with the military present gathered to toast the independence won as a result of victory in the war they helped to start. Recorded history reveals that officers from Fort Johnston, and from the ships lying in the harbor gathered with the respectable inhabitants of the community to enjoy a sumptuous meal. Here we are almost 200 years later, with everything changed but nothing really different —

Officers from the Fort, from the ships, and the respectable citizens of the community.

My first visit to Southport, some few years ago, left an indelible impression on me:

- Oak trees right up to the edge of a single lane of pavement
- Stately old homes lining the waterfront
- Shrimpers and party boats in a rustic yacht basin
- The most picturesque view across a broad expanse of river to be found anywhere — no wonder early map makers referred to the lower reaches of the Cape Fear River as a new Jordan
- Most of all — a people who moved with such deliberate slowness that outsiders found it exasperating — yet they moved with a steadfastness of purpose such as is rarely found — a people who had a spirit of freedom about them, and they enjoyed living in a place of which they were proud!



All of this left an indelible impression on an impressionable teen-ager, who several years later — in a moment of nostalgic reflection — wrote a college theme entitled "Sunday in Southport". The paper came back marked A+, the only A I ever received on an English paper. The instructor, a young Navy Lieutenant who had no romanticism about him, added under the grade "what a tear jerker - you must really love the place".

Southport has changed much in the years since I wrote that paper, but again nothing important is really different: the river flows on — the way of life is still slow compared with much of the rest of the nation. Your presence here is indicative that we do love our freedom. We're not ashamed to admit to our belief in God and our country — and we fervently love this area in which we live.

Area expansion comes and brings new faces. Many become concerned about what will happen to the Southport we once knew. I assure you — from personal experience — *the new will flow into the old*, infusing perhaps some new energy, some new innovation — and we welcome these, they are needed. But even though everything may change outwardly, the basic characteristic that makes Southport "Southport" — an indomitable Spirit of Liberty based on love of God and country and concern for friend and neighbor — *will never be different!*

As long as this nation is peopled by folks like you and protected by a military establishment imbued with honor, integrity and purpose, our flag will continue to wave over the land of the free and the home of the brave."



Thousands of visitors attend the annual three day festival to enjoy the many and diversified events which include; street dance with live bands, beauty pageant, fireworks, black powder firearm demonstrations, free block long ice cream sundae, static displays, military units, ships, mechanized vehicles, aircraft warfare demonstrations and tactics, exhibits, mobile museums, wildlife conservation displays, historic places, recreation facilities, scenic, artistic and cultural displays, Heritage House, water ski show, boat shows, band concerts, Indian dancers, tennis tournament, choral groups, childrens field events; boat, motor and trailer given away each year, lovely ladies, reigning beauty queens from other festivals and towns throughout the Carolinas.

There are two art shows — competition awards and a sidewalk show, and a color slide program featuring area attractions.

The N. C. 4th of July Festival, Inc., is a member of the International Festival Association. A representative is sent to the IFA Convention to attend seminars, meetings and to swap ideas and discuss problem solutions with representatives of other festivals to improve and upgrade our festival.

Plan now to attend in 1976, The Bicentennial Year.

William G. Faulk, Jr.  
Historic Site Manager  
Brunswick Town

Pages pertaining to Brunswick County, N. C.

Government of N. C. - Legislative

Page 19

Brunswick County.

Senators

J. C. Baker

Commons

A. Moore, Samuel Frink

Page 23 - Brunswick County Justices of the Peace

John C. Baker

John Waddell

Arthur C. M. Grant

Lewis Galloway

John Brown

John Julius Gause

Henry H. Neale

Samuel Russell

Nathaniel Potter

Daniel Flemming

John Gripitt (Grissett)

Joseph H. Watters

John Swan

Benjamin R. Lacke(Locke)

Joseph J. Gore

Thomas Leonard

Robert Hawes

Jacob W. Leonard

Maurice Moore

James Flowers

Alfred Moore

Samuel Frink

Uriah Sullivan

Benjamin Smith

James B. Russ

Samuel Potter

John Neale

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Clerk of Superior Court

John Brown

Clerk of County Court

Alexius Forster

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Sheriff

Alfred Galloway

Solicitor

Francis N. Waddell

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Practicing Attorney

Francis N. Waddell

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County Surveyor

Benj'n Holden

Page 55

Resident Physicians

Sterling Everett

J. C. Clitheral

Page 61 - 62 - missing , showing academies

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Postoffices

Smithville

Postmaster

John Gibbs

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Baptist Churches

Cape Fear Association had 32 churches - Corresponding Secretary was C. M. McAllister, near Fayetteville.

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Methodist Churches - List of local Ministers

Brunswick Circuit

Edward Sullivan

Hezekiah Hewitt

John J. Gause

William Gause

Nicholas Prince

Joshua Newell

John Butler

Samuel Hankins

Edward Fitzgerald

Moses McKeithen

Josiah Lewis

Samuel Sarvis

Levi Dunn

Benjamin Lisle

Wilson Longley

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Deacons - Brunswick Circuit

Rev. Alexius M. Forster

Rev. Thomas Durant

Rev. Thomas King

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Elders - Brunswick Circuit

Rev. James L. Belin

Rev. J. W. Norton

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AUGUST MEETING

DATE: Monday August 11, 1975

TIME: 8 P. M.

PLACE: Brunswick Town Visitors Center

PROGRAM: Old Salem Restorations - Miss Paula Welshimer, Curator of Collections  
of Old Salem, Winston - Salem, N. C.