



NEWSLETTER

BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOX 874, SHALLOTTE, N. C. 28459

Vol. XXI, No. 1

February, 1981

CURRENT CONCERNS

The Brunswick County Historical Society will meet Monday, February 9, at 7:30 p.m. in the West Brunswick County Library in Shallotte. The speaker will be Mr. John Duval, who will speak on "The Teaching of Social Studies in Brunswick County Schools".

Membership dues for 1981 should be paid early in the year so that the secretary can complete her mailing list.

A file of information on place names in the county is being collected. We do not keep and furnish genealogical information.

The Federation of North Carolina Historical Societies met in November and presented the first annual award to a member society for outstanding achievement.

The Duke University Medical History Program presented in December "Medicine in North Carolina; its History and Legacies".

Dr. Charles Joyner of Coastal Carolina College in Conway, South Carolina, is directing special studies of the Waccamaw River and its influence on the surrounding area. These studies will be of interest to both Brunswick and Columbus Counties.

The "Brunswick County Bibliography" prepared in 1963 should be updated. Could this be a project in 1981?

The North Carolina Methodist Historical Society will meet in March. Further information is available from your president.

Four historians and writers are researching the practice of building in the state from 1650 to the present. The project will produce a manuscript for a book of histories and biographies of architects and builders in this state. Information is being collected by Architects and Builders in North Carolina, P.O. Box 10494, Raleigh, North Carolina 27605.

The North Carolina Genealogical Society has recently published a book NORTH CAROLINA RESEARCH: GENEALOGY AND LOCAL HISTORY. This was prepared by a panel of experts giving research techniques for the using of official records and maps. The same society has in progress ANCESTOR INDEX for genealogists.

Some of our future programs may include display of historic relics and records. Members may start giving consideration to available items over 100 years old for use in displays. Other ideas for future programs and projects will be welcome for consideration by the program committee.

"Fickle Finger Of PROGRESS
Taps SMITHVILLIANS In 1888;
Changed Town's Name to Get A
Railroad It Did Not Get "

During a four-year period, 1888 -- 1892 some men of mighty mind's and means conceived a plan wherby the dormant Port of SMITHVILLE would become the terminal for a Great Trunk Line Railroad running from The Great Lakes at CHICAGO to SMITHVILLE.

About 1900 a corporation was organized under the Laws of NORTH CAROLINA, styled "The SOUTH ATLANTIC & NORTHWESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY," for the avowed purpose of promoting the establishment of railroad Trunk Line from SMITHVILLE to BRISTOL, Tennessee, there to continue to GALAX and on to CHICAGO for the purpose of bring in Coal for export at Smithville to England and European ports..

Among the men of prominence who visted SMITHVILLE were several nationally prominent individuals, such as STUYVESANT FISH and GEORGE PULLMAN, the latter a big factor in the PULLMAN CAR COMPANY. They contacted the prominent citizens of SMITHVILLE.

Two years after the organization of the SOUTH ATLANTIC AND NORTHWESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY. The SOUTHPORT CONSTRUCTION COMPANY was chartered under the laws of North Carolina, with an Authorized Capital of \$25,000 and with the following listed as Charter Stockholders:

W.H. PYKE
H.H. DAUGHERTY
WILLIAM WEEKS

At this time "Mister Mike" GUTHPIE suggested that the name of SMITHVILLE be changed to "SOUTHPORT," claiming such a name would indicate that it was the most southernmost Port in North Carolina. Then the old Town of Smithville surrendered its individuality of its name by adopting a name that had no connotation for the little marine villagers other than their desire that Southport, North Carolina, would become as important as The Port of SOUTHPORT, England.

But the projected railroad "Died A-Borning" shortly after Miss Laura Weeks, daughter of William Weeks, dug the first shovel of dirt, the project having been killed as a result of The Great Depression in ENGLAND, as it was reported that several English financiers were interested in The Trunk Line project.

While SOUTHPORT never did get a Trunk Line Railroad, the Town did become the terminal for a short line with a long name, The WILMINGTON, BRUNSWICK & SOUTHERN RAILROAD, which began operations on a thirty-mile railroad line on November, 1911, from SOUTHPORT to WILMINGTON, or at least to Wilmington via a junction at NAVASSA.

Taken from: RAH!
RAH!
CAROLINA-
And Three Confluent Rivers Cape Fear
And
Cape Fear Cape

By

Harry Hayden

Amarette Pierce
West Brunswick Librarian
Shalotte, N.C.

Public Education in North Carolina

In 1829, Dr. Joseph Caldwell, in his address to the Internal Improvement Convention at Raleigh, declared that North Carolina was three centuries behind in public improvements and education, and attributed this condition largely to the widespread and fatal delusion that taxation for such purposes was considered contrary to a republican form of government. There can be no doubt that the dominant sentiment made it well-nigh impossible, during this period, to carry through legislation on any subject not connected with the bare preservation of life, liberty and property. This individualistic policy which paralyzed all efforts to establish schools and begin a comprehensive system of internal improvements seems to have been the outgrowth of sparse population and what Dr. Caldwell called the fatal delusion that taxation was contrary to a republican form of government. But whatever the cause of it the people of eastern North Carolina were unacquainted with those of the west. Unfortunate sectional jealousies were kept alive by lack of the means of communication between the sections, while commerce and trade languished and the masses of the people remained poor and ignorant, ready to oppose internal improvements and State aid to education as leading aristocracy and taking the position that plain farmers and mechanics needed no education.

"Old Field", a correspondent of the Raleigh Register during 1833, grimly observed that he thought "the people will have to learn to spell internal improvements before they can comprehend the meaning of that term." And he added that North Carolina was then a century behind other States in education and all other subjects of importance.

In his report on education to the legislature of 1838, Wm. W. Cherry said that "those who have mixed much with the people of our state know that there is an average half of every family in the State, who have recd no education and who are as yet unprovided with the means of Learning even to read and write!"

In 1802, Governor Williams called the attention of the legislature to the subject of education and said that education would enable the people to appreciate their civil and political rights. The next year Governor Turner said that education was the foe of tyranny. In his message of 1804, he said that prosperity and happiness depended on education, and mentioned the subject of taxation for schools. Even in colonial days, Governor Dobbs with the aid of a number of our leading men proposed to establish one free school in each county. But the measure failed, partly because the governor and the Assembly disagreed about other matters.

When the constitution of 1776 was framed, its 41st section - provided that schools for the convenient instruction of youth should be established and that one or more universities should encourage all useful learning.

Taken from-The Beginnings of Public Education in North Carolina
By: Charles L. Coon

Amarette Pierce
West Brunswick Library
Shellotte, N.C.

CURRENT CONCERNS

The next meeting of the Brunswick County Historical Society will be Monday, May 11, at 8 p.m. in the Fellowship Room of Concord United Methodist Church in Supply. The speaker will be Mr. C. B. Berry of Ocean Drive Beach, South Carolina.

The Brunswick County Historical Society is this year celebrating its twenty-five years of collecting, preserving, studying, evaluating and publicizing the history of Brunswick County. The members extend our invitation to all former members, to all who have been speakers on our programs, and to all who have written articles for our NEWSLETTER to attend our celebration at Brunswick Town Visitor Center Sunday, June 7, at 3 p.m.

Mrs. Gwendolyn Causey is directing a course in Brunswick County Local History at Brunswick Technical College in Supply.

The theme of North Carolina History Day, 1981, is "Work and Leisure in History". State contest winners for historical papers, projects, and performances will enter the National Contest at the University of Maryland June 11-13.

The Division of Archives and History is offering its own 1981 Historical Calendar for \$3.00 plus fifty cents postage. These may be ordered from Historical Publications Section, 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27611.

Colonial Living Day will be observed at Tryon Palace with craft demonstrations on May 30.

The General Conference of the Methodist Church designates one Sunday each year as Heritage Sunday. All local Methodist churches are encouraged to observe this day by celebrating their church histories and by looking to the future.

The North Carolina Baptist Historical Collection has completed cataloging the personal papers of the Reverend Elbert N. Johnson, a collection comprising 4,569 items, including photographs.

The Editor of NEWSLETTER urges our members to keep in mind the suggesting, collecting, and writing of articles to be published.

Membership dues for 1981 are payable to Mrs. Lottie Ludlum, Secretary, Post Office Box 874, Shallotte, North Carolina 28459.