



NEWSLETTER

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

VOL XXXV NO III

AUGUST 1995

From the President

Happy vacation days to you. Hope you have enjoyed each of them--the cool days, the hot days and all of the much needed rain days.

We have a very interesting program for our meeting Monday August 14th @ 7:30 p.m. at the Southport Maritime Museum on Howe Street in downtown Southport (next to Attorneys Prevatte, Prevatte, and Campbell). Mrs. Susie Carson will be our speaker. Look for announcements from N.C. Maritime Museum, Beaufort, N.C. in this issue.

The November 13th, 1995 meeting will be at Brunswick Community College Library @ 7:30 p.m. Mr. Henry Mintz will be the speaker. If he is unable to be with us, Mr. Frank Galloway will take his place.

Mark your calendar for the meetings. Articles for the "Newsletter" are welcome. Looking to see you, August 14th @ 7:30 p.m. Lottie Ludlum, President

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The Society recently was given 88 photographs of school buildings in Brunswick County. They were taken from 1949-1953. Sixteen different schools are included such as Royal Oak, Chapel Road, Cedar Grove, and Navassa. They will be on display at our August meeting.

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The Newsletter editor is requesting our members to write a short biographical sketch about themselves. They may wish to write a personal account of an event in their life, a genealogical article about their family, or a recollection about their involvement in WWII, Korean, or Vietnam War. Send them to the editor using the address in the letterhead.

Gwen Causey, Editor

Museum Hours:

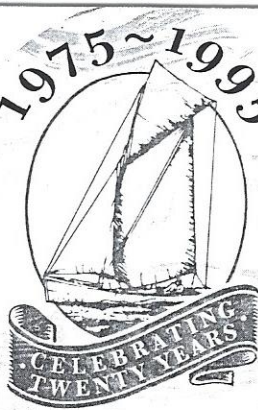
Weekdays: 9AM - 5PM

Saturdays: 10AM - 5PM

Sundays: 1PM - 5PM

Address:

315 Front Street, Beaufort, NC 28516

Phone: 919-728-7317**Director:** Rodney D. Barfield**Editor:** Jeannie W. Kraus**Design & Production:** NCMM Design Dept.**Illustrations:** Dover Publications, Inc.; Background: Marbled paper with fish pattern.

Museum Calendars are mailed four times a year. It is museum policy not to register participants for field trips until after the calendars are in the mail.

AUGUST**3 Thursday****Seaweed Marble Painting**

Float paint over a seaweed extract to decorate paper and a T-shirt. Activity for adults and children ages 8 and up with an adult. 10 AM-12 NOON. Reservations-\$10 fee includes shirt.

7 Monday**Catch a Fish, Print a Fish**

Catch a fish to print on a T-shirt. Activity for children ages 5-12 with an adult. 1:30-3 PM. Reservations-\$5 fee.

8 Tuesday**Bird Shoal Trip**

Explore the Rachel Carson Component, NC National Estuarine Research Reserve. Boat transportation provided to the island near Beaufort. 10 AM-1 PM. Reservations-\$8 fee.

**Cape Lookout Lecture**

Slides of wildlife, habitats, and field trip opportunities on Cape Lookout National Seashore presented by the Cape Lookout Studies Program. 2 PM.

9 Wednesday**Salt Marsh Trip**

Field trip for families to explore a coastal wetland habitat. 11:30 AM-1 PM. Reservations-\$5 fee.

10 Thursday**Shackleford Beach Trip**

Excursion to the beach on Shackleford Banks, a wilderness island of Cape Lookout National Seashore, highlights dune ecology, shells, and birds. Boat transportation provided. Leave 9:30 AM, return 2:30 PM. Reservations-\$15 fee.

11 Friday**Bird Shoal Trip for Kids**

Coastal exploring field trip to the Rachel Carson Component, NC National Estuarine Research Reserve. For children ages 10 and up. Boat transportation provided to the island near Beaufort. 1-5 PM. Reservations-\$8 fee.

17 Thursday**STRANGE SEAFOOD EXHIBITION**

Annual education program features exhibits, demonstrations, and tasting unusual seafoods. 5:30-7 PM. Tickets-\$15. (See write up)

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31 Thursday**Catch a Fish, Print a Fish**

Catch a fish to print on a T-shirt. Activity for children ages 5-12 with an adult. 9-10:30 AM. Reservations-\$5 fee.

30 Wednesday**Croatan Trip**

Excursion to the Croatan National Forest highlights carnivorous plants, wildflowers, and birds. Meet 9:15 AM in Morehead City, return 1 PM. Reservations-\$5 fee.

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

A special celebration is planned for Sunday, September 17, 1995, to recognize the twentieth anniversary of the North Carolina Maritime Museum. The program will include state and regional dignitaries, the United States Marine Corps Band, and a museum Open House. All members of the Friends of the Museum are cordially invited to attend.

REMINISCENCES OF WILMINGTON AND SMITHVILLE-SOUTHPORT

1848-1900

By: Dr. Walter Gilman Curtis

Chapter Two

Smithville was reached from Wilmington by the line of ocean steamers which were a continuation of the great line to the south. These were four steamers named "The Gladiator," the "C. Vanderbilt," the "Governor Dudley," and the "North Carolina"; the last of which was a spare ship to be used in case of accident to any of the others. They were commanded respectively by Captain Isaac B. Smith, Captain Sterrit, and Captain Bates; and were very popular, making their trips for many years to Charleston, South Carolina without accident. They started daily from Wilmington on the arrival of the northern train. Breakfast and dinner were served on board between Wilmington, and Smithville, and they were fine repasts as they had the markets of Charleston and Wilmington to rely upon, with all the luxuries they afforded. These steamships took passengers and freight for Smithville, and made their landing at a wharf near where the steamer Wilmington now has her landing. Returning from Charleston they stopped at the same wharf and breakfast was served between Smithville and Wilmington. I will here mention the name of a woman quite celebrated in the annals of Smithville; her name was Mrs. Mary Duffy, who kept an eating house on the water's edge; which was long patronized by the citizens of Smithville, especially by the pilots. For over twenty-five years Mrs. Duffy arose at about three o'clock in the morning and prepared breakfast for all passengers intending to go up in the steamer. A cup of coffee, or anything else wanted by the pilots, who wanted a morning meal before going to sea in search of vessels. There were several fine deck boats which were very fast, and able to go to sea in all weather; each of these pilot boats carried as many pilots as were necessary, and sometimes did not come into port again until they had put all their pilots aboard oncoming vessels. The bar at that time had about 12 feet of water upon it, consequently vessels coming into this port must be of that draft, and built to carry from 1000 to 2000 barrels of naval stores; they also brought from the northern markets whatever freight was offered, and this was nearly all the northern freight because the railroad was very uncertain. Mrs. Duffy was remarkable in her powers of seeing and hearing, and her business was, in addition to supplying meals to wake up passengers who wished to take the steamer to Wilmington as these steamers entered port before light in the morning. It was necessary that Mrs. Duffy go by the sense of hearing, and she could always hear these boats which were side wheelers, far enough out to sea to enable the passengers she had

collected to get up and dress, and go down to her establishment for a cup of coffee before going on the steamship wharf; as may be well imagined Mrs. Duffy was a very important character in Smithville, and she was duly appreciated by all the citizens of Smithville as a good and faithful woman; she lived to a great age and all through the war she continued the same occupation so far as the war would permit but her house was finally burned and her business was destroyed, and she retired to live with her daughter in the house in which is now the rectory of St. Phillips Episcopal Church, and ended there her long and useful life regretted by all but by none more than the children of Smithville to whom she supplied cakes which were so celebrated as to acquire the name of "Duffy Cakes." This steamship line was discontinued on the completion of the railroad, called the Wilmington & Manchester which carried all through passengers for southern ports or cities. As may be well imagined, this left Smithville aground upon the shoals, and what to do was a matter for serious consideration. How to get anywhere from Smithville was a difficulty not easily solved; there were few horses or vehicles of any kind in Smithville, but the river was there at any rate, and if you did not wish to go by land, and ride in a cart you could take a boat, of which there were plenty, and plenty of skillful boatmen to manage them; but neither of these modes of travel suited the public. Mr. Elijah Owen who kept an old-fashioned house of entertainment in Smithville had two horses but no buggy; besides one of these horses was an ancient quadruped whose business it was to attend to the transportation of all persons who died to their last resting place, and his services might be required at any moment, and in consideration of these services, he was granted the freedom of the town, and was pastured in the streets of Smithville, from which place he did not wish to go. The other horse was, during the intervals between courts, mostly engaged in transporting people in the country and ploughing fields belonging to "Uncle Elijah." So the people sat down, and waited, and waited for the arrival of the Rev. Mr. Pickett, and his wife who traveled the circuit in a "one horse shay," and being a man of varied resources of entertaining the people they were always glad to see him approach. The Rev. Mr. Pickett was a man who preached the gospel strictly on Sundays and during the rest of the days of the week, he sat and smoked his pipe in peace, and left his parishioners to enjoy life in their own way. At this time the people of the churches, and their preachers hadn't gone into politics, or any of the side issues which at the present day perplex the minds of the people, and draw their attention away from sacred things; so when the time came, when this reverend gentleman was expected, the citizens who had been sitting on logs or in boats gazing out upon the broad Atlantic for ships to heave in sight turned their backs upon the river, and the ocean, and gazed out in the direction of the country anxiously awaiting his approach that they might grasp

his friendly hand in their own, and bid him welcome. It may be well here to remark, that thought they were mostly engaged in maritime pursuits the did not forget there was a better country ahead of them to which sooner or later they must all travel, and they wanted to have the way pointed out to them so they would not be likely to get ashore or lost in any fog which might arise.

In the absence of steam communication it was found necessary to utilize the river as the best way for getting to Wilmington, so one or two enterprising men provided sailing packets on which they embarked and if the wind was fair they made good time to the city. If the wind was ahead however or a dead calm and they had to anchor it has come down to us by common report that they had a good time on board; plenty to eat, and something also to drink which seemed to keep up their spirits while they waited for somebody on board to stick jack knives in the main mast and whistle for the wind. These adventurous people always arrived in Wilmington sometime, which was sufficient. Captain Samuel Potter and Captain Samuel Price were captains in whom they could put implicit trust; and as they were not in a hurry, they did not complain.

But the necessity of a better mode of travel between Wilmington and Smithville soon led to the establishment of a steamboat passenger line by Mr. A. H. Van Boklen who was the largest distiller of turpentine in the city of Wilmington.

He put on the line the steamer "Spray," greatly to the satisfaction of Wilmington and Smithville but her schedule was only for summer trade, and at the close of the summer she was laid up and soon afterward she was burned. This steamer was under the command of Capt. John B. Price, a Cape Fear pilot of marked ability, and well fitted for the business. She brought down all the summer residents, of whom there were now a great many, and her decks were crowded with passengers and excursionists. It was about this time that the first tug boats were put into that service. One of these was the "Mariner" under command of Capt. John Davis, the other was the "Equator" under command of Jacob A. T. Price. These tug boats, however, did not wish to carry passengers and only did so as a favor, so that the means provided for travelers was very unsatisfactory. They assisted greatly in towing of vessels which was all that was wanted by the merchants of Wilmington. The time of their service on the Cape Fear River was very short as the war which shortly afterwards begun captured nearly everything which floated upon the sea. The summer residents of Smithville did not however depend upon these tug boats as they came to Smithville for fun and enjoyment and did not care much whether they went to Wilmington or not until the season was over. They were planters along the Cape Fear river, and retired merchants of Wilmington, and they formed the most delightful society in Smithville for they believed in Smithville as a most delightful place of residence, and were interested in everything that was done

and participated in all the amusements of the place. But we are now getting close upon a time when every amusement and every interest commercial or otherwise was to feel the dreadful shock of the impending war, and go out of existence, leaving Smithville as lonesome and bereft of all pleasure as its worst enemies could desire. In the next chapter of these reminiscences I will go back, and give some account of what happened in more peaceful times.

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THE HONOR ROLL OF THE LOWER CAPE FEAR RIVER PILOTS

By: Harry Hayden, July 1965

These Men Went Down To The Sea With Ships--Those Who Did Not Return Are
Marked With Stars

Adkins, Brooke

Adkins, Hawley

Adkins, Jack

Anderson, John William (Died, Lashed To the Wheel) (**)

Arnold, Joseph (Joe) (Hero on the "Timmons")

*Bensell, Joseph H. (Lost from "Sea Dory", Dec. 1872)

Bensell, Richard

Bowen, George

Brendel, R. L.

*Brinkman, Thomas W. (Lost from "Sprunt", 4/12/1877)

Burris, Alfred

Burris, Dun

Burris, Gray

Burris, Jake

Burris, James

Burris, Joseph

Burris, B. M. (Piloted U.S.S. Battleship "North Carolina" up Cape Fear river to
memorial berth.)

Bussels, Bonner

Bussels, Joseph (Rescued Grover Cleveland)

Corlette, Harry
Craig, James (Jim Bill or Sky Pilot) Blockade Runner
Craig, James Newton
Craig, Melvin T. (Mel)
Craig, Sterling

Daniels, Ed
Daniels, Joseph
Davis, Isaac, Junior
Davis, Isaac, Senior
*Dosher, Charles (Lost from "Sprunt" April, 1877)
Dosher, Julius
Dosher, Richard E.
Durant, J. W.

Fox, Joseph B. (Master, Steamer "Wilmington")

Gause, Ephrim (Father of late Charles E. Gause)
*Gillespie, Lawrence (Lost from "Sprunt" April, 1877)
Grissom, Billy
Grissom, Edgar
*Grissom, Thomas B. (Lost from "Sprunt" April, 1877)
*Guthrie, Archie (Lost off Hatteras Schooner "U. D. Long")

Keil, John

Loughlin, J. D. (Died aboard tanker, "Atlantic Trader"--President Wilmington-Cape Fear Pilots Association)

Mintz, Warren (Town Marshal at Southport)
Morse, Christopher C. ("Kit")
Morse, Thomas M. (Tom)

Newton, Benjamin
Newton, Calendar
Newton, John
Newton, Samuel
Newton, Walker

(These five Newtons were brothers;
Calendar died at an early age: 0)

Newton, Joe (Moved to Fernandina, Florida)
Newton, Julius (Doolie)

Pepper, Louis J. (Part Owner COMBINATION STORE)
*Pinner, Christopher (Lost from pilot boat "Sprunt")
Pinner, Joe
Potter, Julius (Father of Captain Leita D. Potter)
Potter, Leita D.

Sanders, William (Master of tug "Alexander Jones")
Savage, Thomas
Sellers, John
*Sellers, James R. (Lost from Sea Dory, Dec. 1872)
Sellers, Thomas (Tom)
Sellers, William (Bill)
St. George, Charles
St. George, Donald
St. George, H. T. (1964 Pilots Association Member)
*St. George, Robert (Lost in Sea Dory Tragedy off Bald Head)
St. George, Thomas (Tommy)
St. George, William (Pilots bought tug "Alexander Jones" under his leadership as
President of Wilmington-Cape Fear Pilots Association)
Smith, Cornelius
Smith, R. E. (1964 Pilots Association Member)
Styron, W. L. (1964 Pilots Association Member)
Swan, J. A. (1964 Pilots Association Member)

Thompson, John J.
Thompson, Joseph (Joe) Blockade Runner
Thompson, R. B. (1964 Pilots Association Member)
Thompson, Thomas Mann (Blockade Runner)
Trout, John D. (Lost in Sea Dory Tragedy)

*Walker, Robert S. (Lost in Mary K. Sprunt Tragedy)
Weeks, Harry (Late pilot boat engineer for years)
Weeks, Julius (Hero on "Uriah P. Timmons")
Willing, F. L. (1964 Member of Wilmington-Cape Fear Pilots Association)
Wescott, John (Jack)

**--One of the most romantic incidents of The Blockade involved Captain John William Anderson, of Smithville (now Southport). His ship, a Blockade Runner, was approaching the entrance to New Inlet on a dark-of-the-moon night, but he, Captain Anderson was in the throes of the deadly Yellow Fever. Too weak to stand at the wheel to guide his craft through the narrows, crewmen held him at the wheel while he was dying, but he gave the right orders in guiding his vessel through the Upper Mouth of The River and brought his ship to rest on the bosom of the Cape Fear, dying shortly thereafter. (Quoted in part from Doctor Sprunt's "Chronicles of the Cape Fear River"; and a paragraph by Gene Marlowe in the Star-News.)

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INSCRIPTION ON MARKER HONORING LOST PILOTS
OLD SOUTHPORT (SMITHVILLE) CEMETERY

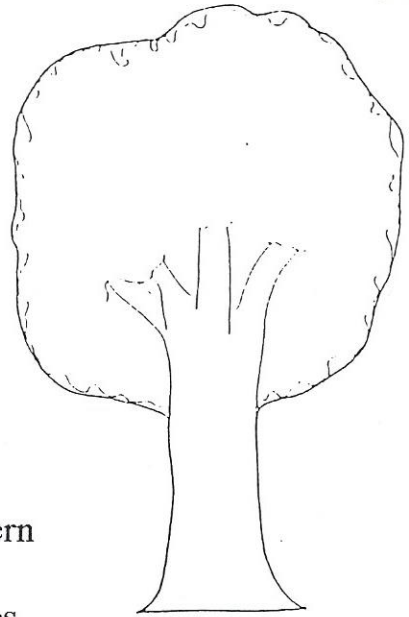
<p>This Monument Is Erected By Many Citizens Who Regret the untimely death of those Pilots who in the faithful discharge of their Duty were suddenly called to meet their God</p>	<p>Thomas B. Grissom age 39 Robert S. Walker 32 C.C. Piner 25 Charles Doshier 26 Laurence Gillespie 23</p>
<p>Pilots and Crew of the MARY L. SPRUNT were lost April 13, 1877</p>	
<p>The winds and the sea sing their Requiem, and shall, forever more.</p>	<p>Joseph Bensell age 46 Thomas W. Brinkman 32 John D. Trout 24 James R. Sellers 21 Robert St. George 22</p>

Cape Fear Pilots, were drowned,
 Dec. 11, 1872

Under the Genealogy Tree

by: Gwen Causey

For the beginning genealogist, a good place to begin is the library at Brunswick Community College at Supply, NC. There you will find on microfilm all NC census records for 1790-1910. Purchased recently were 23 rolls of the 1920 census for the counties of Southeastern and coastal NC. The library has a good collection of books that pertain to Brunswick and surrounding counties. Many of these are printed censuses, family histories, and court records. The Southport Leader (1890-1906), an early Southport newspaper, is on microfilm and available for your use. Summer library hours are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.



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The Brunswick County Commissioners recently voted to reprint the book, The History of Brunswick County North Carolina by Lawrence Lee. Copies will be available at a cost of \$15.⁰⁰. More information will be included in our next News-Letter.

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Index to Old Wars Pension Files, 1815-1926. The "Old Wars" pension application files are for service based on death or disability incurred during service in the US Army, Navy, and Marine Corps between the end of the Revolutionary War and the first year of the Civil War in 1861. The claims are for service in the Mexican War, the Indian Wars, the early part of the Civil War, and a few are for service in the War of 1812.

For more information on this book and others, write: The National Historical Publishing Company, PO Box 539, Waynesboro, TN 38485.