



NEWSLETTER

BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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MAY MEETING TO BE HELD AT BEMC IN SUPPLY, NC MAY 12, 2008 7:30 P. M.

The next meeting of the Brunswick County Historical Society will be held on May 12th at the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation Building, 795 Ocean Highway West, Supply, NC. The meeting begins at 7:30 P. M. **We always meet the 2nd Monday in February, May, August and November.**

The speaker will be Richard Lawrence, head of the NC State Underwater Archaeology Branch in the Division of Archives and History, NC Department of Cultural Resources. He has held this position for nearly 20 years.

Involved in a variety of projects statewide, he has investigated hundreds of underwater archaeological sites, including prehistoric canoes, colonial sailing vessels, numerous Civil War shipwrecks and coastal river steamboats.

He was among the first divers to explore the USS Monitor in 1979, in cooperation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. He has been involved with all phases of management and research of the QAR project since its discovery in 1996.

He received the Bachelor of Arts degree in archaeology from the University of Colorado and has written numerous articles on underwater archaeology in North Carolina.

DUES!!! DUES!!! DUES!!! It's time to pay dues for the year 2008. A dues increase was approved at the February meeting. Annual dues are \$15 and a Life Membership is \$150. Send your check to the address at the top of the page. Just a few have not paid. **LOOK FOR A RED CIRCLE BESIDE YOUR NAME ON THE MAILING ENVELOPE—IF IT IS THERE YOU NEED TO SEND YOUR DUES IMMEDIATELY. NO DUES—NO AUGUST NEWSLETTER!!!!!!!**

The Treasurer reports a bank balance of \$2,266.73. This bank balance is as of April 30, 2008. Total membership stands at 75. This includes 25 Life Members. Newsletters are sent to 5 libraries, 1 historical society and 1 state historic site. For \$150 one can become a life member and never have to worry about dues again. Today, this is truly a bargain. Talk with your friends and invite them to the next meeting. Don't assume they know about the society. We are receiving good publicity about the meeting since notices are placed in area newspapers.

CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL DAY

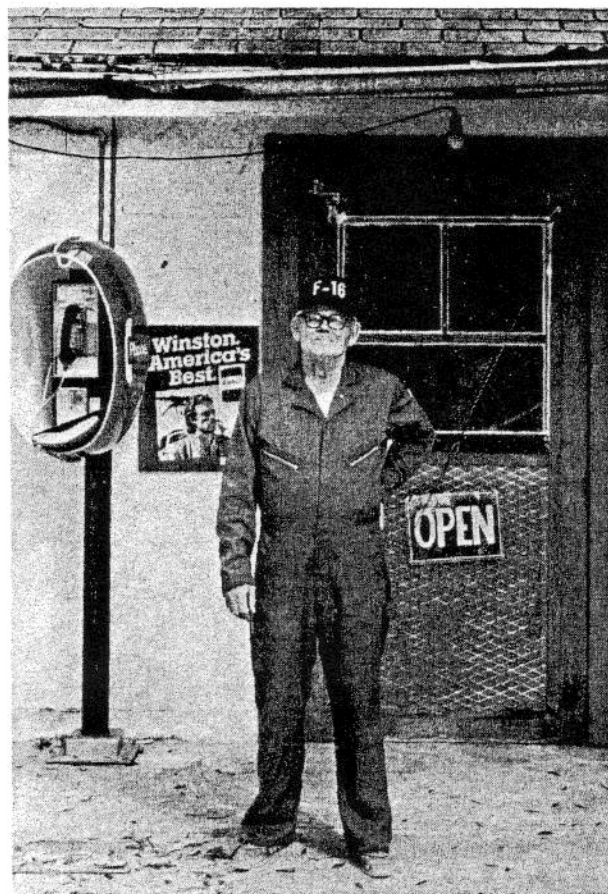
Confederate Memorial Day Services will be held May 11, 2008 at 3:00 P.M. in Oakdale Cemetery at the Confederate Mound.

There will be a Living History event at the Bellamy Mansion on May 24, 2008 at 10:00 A.M.

Both events will be held in Wilmington, NC.

Help Wanted

Donations & Volunteers needed for a Yard Sale. The proceeds from this sale will benefit the Scholarship Fund. Anyone interested, please call Tammy 842-6981.



STAFF PHOTO BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN
JIM CARTER opened his variety store on Sunset Harbor Road in 1971. It's been a gathering place for residents ever since.

Read more about Jim Carter's store in the article about Sunset Harbor in this issue of the NEWSLETTER.

Society Officers 2007-2009

President: Glenn Kye
Vice- President: James Green
Secretary: Annette Phelps
Treasurer: Gwen Causey
Directors: Sheldon Pigott, Tammy Sellers, Dave Lewis
Newsletter Editor: Gwen Causey

MISSION STATEMENT: To collect, preserve, study, evaluate and publicize the history of Brunswick County, NC. To devote meetings to presentation of materials about Brunswick County and the Lower Cape Fear through lectures, slides, and discussion. To publish a newsletter which contains news of the Society's activities, research papers and articles that pertain to genealogy.

2. A WOMAN NAMED AME

While straightening out my Potter lineage I lose an American patriot and gain a British loyalist.

* * * * *

At this point my story moves from New England to Brunswick County, North Carolina. Also, I leave the Russ line for a short while in order to describe my Potter ancestry, which for a time was a perplexing matter. The confusion, how it was cleared, and the truth of the matter follow.

When Cousin Florence (Barkman) joined the NSDAR she did so by virtue of claimed descent from one Private Samuel Potter¹, who fought in the North Carolina Militia for a few months in 1777 before being "killed by British outlaws." The soldier's wife is listed as Anne -----.

The story, apparently produced by Cousin Florence's genealogist, continues: "Anne" married a widower named William Goodman, and she outlived him, also. Goodman's will is on file in the North Carolina Archives; even more important, "Anne" made a subsequent will wherein she listed all her children by her first marriage: Mary, Robert, Amelia, Lydia and Samuel. Amelia Potter was Cousin Florence's great grandmother and my great great great grandmother.

When I submitted an application to the NSDAR on the same Samuel Potter², I received a nice letter³ informing me that North Carolina court records showed that Amelia Potter was the daughter of a Robert Potter, and the NSDAR no longer took applications based on Samuel Potter. However, my lineage included a different veteran of the Revolution, Sempronius Russ, husband of Amelia Potter, and I might join by virtue of descent from him.

I spent several hours at the Clayton Library in a fruitless search for further information on Samuel Potter, North Carolina patriot. Finally, in October, 1989, my husband and I visited the North Carolina Archives, and a couple of hours reading the record of the Court of Common Pleas for Brunswick County⁴, not only verified the DAR's statement, but also provided me with a new branch for my family tree:

Amelia Potter was indeed the daughter of Robert Potter; her mother was Ame Willets. Ame Willets and Robert Potter probably were married in the first half of the 1760's. They had 5 children, with the same names as erroneously credited to Samuel Potter and his wife, Anne -----. Robert Potter died in 1782 or early 1783 without making a will. His estate was in probate in Brunswick County for the next 10 years.

The widow, Ame Potter married widower William Goodman, Sr., who had six children by a previous marriage. She and Goodman had one child, a daughter named Sarah. Goodman died in 1793, naming Ame, Sarah, and Samuel Potter, Ame's youngest son, as his principal heirs. He also left "all the money I have by me and that is due to me.....to my wife for the purpose of buying her a negrese to work for her." Apparently she did that, for the 1800 census shows

A WOMAN NAMED AME

Ame as head of household, living with her teenage daughter, Sarah, a negro man and a negro woman. Ame died in the last half of the year 1800; her will, probated in 1801, leaves the two blacks to Sarah, with the rest of her estate to be divided between Sarah and Ame's five children by her first marriage. She must have been active right up to the end, for she bequeathed her best riding habit to daughter Lydia Cain. Records show a marriage bond posted for Sarah Goodman and Peter Gause; presumably they were married and lived happily afterward.

The reason for my "Potter problem" now became obvious: Cousin Florence's genealogist had been misled into mistaking the name "Ame" for "Ann" or "Anne". He was fooled by the phonetic spelling which was common in those days. Fortunately, I profited beyond simply correcting an old, mistaken belief, for William Goodman's will named the mother of Ame Potter--Mary Willets. We found a will for a Hope Willets who proved to be the husband of Mary Willets. Hope Willets also named all of his children in his will, and Ame was one of them.

Hope Willets died in 1766 or 1767. His will, which was probated in the latter year, names all his children: Mary, Ame, Lydia, Joseph, Samuel and Hope, Jr. Mary Willets lived on for several years; in 1783 she appears in court records as making gifts to her daughters, Mary Holland and Ame Potter. William Goodman's will mentions gifts by Mary to Ame as well as property that Ame herself brought into the marriage.

The Willets may have taken the British side during the struggle between king and colonies. At any rate, Hope and Buck Willets are mentioned as two of the dozen or so Brunswick County residents who had property appropriated by the colonial government. It is unlikely they would have taken such a stand unless the Willets family had traditionally been staunch supporters of the crown.

We did not find any mention of how the Willets and Potter families came to North Carolina, whether they emigrated from Britain directly or whether they moved south from more northerly American colonies. We did find records where in 1736 and 1745 a Robert Potter had taken up land on "the Rattlesnake branch of Old Town Creek", near Wilmington.

Both Robert and Samuel Potter, brothers of Amelia Potter, became prominent citizens of Smithville, which was then the name of the present town of Southport. Mentions of them in Smithville annals are found in the section on sources.

And what of Samuel Potter, "killed by British outlaws" and his wife, Anne -----? Not one word have we found concerning them. Reader, before we resume the Russ story, shed a tear for the unfortunate couple I once thought were my ancestors.

NOTES

1. NSDAR Application for National Membership Number 328,148, Florence Russ Barkman, September 25, 1940.
2. NSDAR Application for Membership, National Number 718,699,- Laura Henderson (Davis) Gum, July 12, 1988.
3. Letter, Martha R. Zimmerman, Registrar General, NSDAR, to Laura H. Gum, September 22, 1988.
4. Brunswick County, North Carolina, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Minutes, Volume 1, 1782-1790, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
5. Brunswick County, North Carolina, Marriage Bond Abstracts, 1804-1868, Microfilm, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
6. Loyalty and Dissent in the Lower Cape Fear, 1775-1783, Laurance Davidson Pless, Thesis, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, 1975.
7. Colony of North Carolina, Abstracts of Land Records, 1735-1764, Volume One, Margaret M. Hofmann.
8. Southport (Smithville), a Chronology, Volume 1 (1520-1887) by Bill Reeves, Broadfoot Publishing Company, Route 4, Box 508C, Wilmington, North Carolina, 28405, 1978.

Laura Henderson Davis Gum is the author of the book, *STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS*. The book describes the history and genealogy of her maternal ancestors. The four family names of closest relationship are Henderson, Hall, Reed and Russ. Her great great great grandfather, Sempronius Russ, married Amelia Potter.

STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS contains ten chapters—two of which are reproduced here for your reading.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I met Laura and her husband, Clarence, in 1989 when they were in Brunswick County, NC doing research. We spent many hours at the Rourk Library in Shallotte, NC sharing information and I was able to help her with cemetery locations and related historical information. On the same visit they met Virginia Russ Bellamy who was a most valuable resource for them.

3. A MAN NAMED SEMPRONIUS

My great great great grandfather, Sempronius Russ, moves from Connecticut to North Carolina to seek his fortune. He becomes a successful cotton planter and marries an eminently suitable young wife with whom he has a numerous family. At the height of his good fortune, however, tragedy strikes, and he is drowned in the Cape Fear River.

* * * * *

Where the name came from I have no idea. Almost certainly it would have been a source of ridicule and playground fights at school. And think when your mother stands in the door and yells so the whole neighborhood hears, "SEMPRO-O-O-NIU-U-U-S." In adult life it was the subject of numerous and creative spellings. Among his contemporaries it was often shortened to "Semp". In the 1810 census records he is listed as "Symp^o"; the census taker assumed people would recognize the superscript "o" as shorthand for "onius". The man himself spelled it "Simproneus"; we, however, will use the spelling shown in the chapter title, which is more acceptable to modern eyes.

His father was Azariah Russ, and his mother was Mary or Marcy Benjamin. Her ancestry is summarized below; a more complete description of my Benjamin lineage may be found in Sources: Notes on Early Ancestors.

John Benjamin 1580?-1645	married	Abigail Eddy 1601-1687
Joseph Benjamin 1633-1704	married	Sarah Clarke 1639-1716
John Benjamin 1682-1716	married	Phebe Larabee 1680- ?
Jabez Benjamin 1716-1763?	married	Rhoda Smith ? - ?
Mary Benjamin 1743-1824	married	Azariah Russ 1739-1824

John and Abigail Benjamin came to the Bay Colony (Boston/Cambridge) in 1632. Joseph was born in 1633, and thus was my first native-born ancestor. I am indebted to Mrs. Dorothy Russ Taylor for information on the Benjamin family.

Sempronius was born in 1767, in Ashford, Connecticut. In 1784 he served a few months in the Revolutionary Army, well after the battle of Yorktown had settled the main issue of the war. In 1788 he left Connecticut for North Carolina. We do not know what route he took; likely, he went to western Pennsylvania, and from there rode horseback down the Great Wagon Road which skirted the eastern side of the Appalachians. Both for company and for protection, he probably joined some wagon train, helping out with chores and hunting in return for having "his name put in the pot."

Other Russes had moved to the Carolinas a century earlier.³ Three of the brothers of Sempronius' great grandfather (Joseph Russ) had migrated to Berkeley County, South Carolina near present day Charleston in the 1690's. Early in the next century, sons of one of these three moved to Bladen County, North Carolina. After the Revolution North Carolina was a particularly attractive place for emigrants, not only because of its mild weather and varied natural resources, but also because it was safer as regards Indian troubles than areas west of the mountains. North Carolina proved so attractive that when the first census was taken in 1790 it was the third most populous state in the nation.

Sempronius acquired land in Brunswick County, North Carolina. Brunswick County is the most southeasterly county in the state; it is bounded on the east by the Atlantic, on the west by Bladen County, on the north by the Cape Fear River, and on the south by South Carolina (Horry County). (See Map 3.) It was created in 1764 by taking land from the existing counties of New Hanover and Bladen. The dominant feature of the land is the Cape Fear River, which enters the ocean near Southport, then the county seat of Brunswick County. Most present day readers will be more familiar with Wilmington, NC, which is across the river and slightly upriver from Southport.

In 1792 Sempronius married Amelia Potter, the daughter of Robert and Ame Potter whom we met in the last chapter. He was 25, his bride only 16. His marriage to Amelia was undoubtedly the most important move of his life. Not only was she a congenial mate and the mother of their ten children, but also her family connections were valuable to an up and coming young man. Important civic activities of Amelia's brothers, Samuel and Robert Potter, in Brunswick County are described in Sources. Sempronius and Amelia had ten children:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>Born</u>
Samuel Potter Russ	28 Sep 1796
William Russ	23 Jan 1799
Elizabeth Russ	16 Mar 1801
Reuben Russ	09 Aug 1802
John W. Russ	10 Mar 1805
Asa Russ	01 Jan 1807
Sempronius Russ, Jr.	17 Feb 1810
Lydia Russ	18 Oct 1811
Amelia Potter Russ	01 Mar 1814
Adeline Russ	16 Jun 1816

Reuben and William died in their youth, in 1804 and 1805, respectively. Elizabeth Russ married Thomas Randle in 1818; she died in 1834. The others lived to take part in the family migration to Mississippi in 1835 and 1836. We shall hear more of them in subsequent chapters.

Sempronius became a successful cotton planter. By 1800 he is listed as having 5 slaves. A decade later he had 26. In 1804 he purchased 3000 acres of land on the Shallotte River. Near his new plantation, lived several Gause families who were prominent in Brunswick County affairs. (William Gause Sr. was the wealthiest planter in Brunswick County; also, he was presiding judge of the Court of Common Pleas for many years. When George Washington passed through Brunswick County after his retirement from the presidency, he spent a

night at the Gause home. Sempronius would not have been invited to dinner; he was not yet a neighbor of the Gauses. However, he certainly would have turned out with everyone else in the county to cheer the former president.

In 1810 a manufacturing census was taken for Brunswick County. The returns show that Sempronius ran a thriving integrated operation in cotton cloth, with minor production of hemp and flax. The following is the summary for the Russ plantation:

26 slaves
1 loom
150 units of cotton cloth
50 units of mixed cloth
4 units of flax and hemp
6 wheels for spinning

Mechanized forms of spinning and weaving, which were invented in England, were not yet available in the United States. In fact, it was British policy to forbid export of British machinery and knowhow, in an effort to hold a monopoly on power operations.

It is hard for us today to realize the work involved on a colonial plantation. Along with all the work of the cloth industry, it was necessary to raise food for all the people (nearly 40) on the plantation as well as for the farm animals. There would be new land to clear, and weeds and sprouts to be chopped from the cotton fields. Growing of rice, a mainstay of the workers' diet, would have been a major endeavor. The 1810 census lists a few water-powered mills for pounding (threshing) of rice. There were many more animal-powered mills listed: the swampy terrain of Brunswick County would provide very few locations suitable for development of water power. A likely side business would be production of naval stores (tar, pitch, turpentine) as a hedge against a poor cotton crop. (Before the war, Wilmington shipped more naval stores to England than any other port in the world.)

Sempronius would have spent a large part of his time moving and marketing his products. Transportation was a particular problem: wagon roads were nearly non-existent, and nearly all travel was by horseback, or if possible by water. With the latter, Brunswick County was well provided, but much of it was contained in swamps and sluggish streams. One gets an idea of the terrain by considering some of the names in the neighborhood of Shallotte: Devil's Elbow, Pinch Gut, Little Saucepan, Caw Caw Swamp, Lockwoods Folly Inlet, Frying Pan Shoals, etc.

Business and civic affairs would require Sempronius to be in Southport often and to make occasional trips to Wilmington. Since he might be away from home for several days at a time, he also had a house and lot in the city of Southport. While he was away from home the plantation would be run by an overseer under the watchful eyes of Amelia.

Sempronius' will, made in 1811, five years before his death, describes himself as "weak in body". Whether he suffered any disease or disability in his later years, we do not know.

For his time, Sempronius had an enlightened view of woman's place in society. Like Job, his daughters shared equally in the estate with his sons. The will further states, "I wish my wife, Amelia, to have an equal share of my property with my children, share and share alike." He goes on to specify that Amelia shall have the homestead "buildings, orchards, etc. during her lifetime." Finally, he names her, along with Joseph Hewitt, his longtime friend and legal adviser, to administer the estate.

Sempronius met a tragic end on October 9, 1816, when he drowned in the Cape Fear River. We do not know the exact details of the accident, but all sources agree that drowning was the cause of death. His widow, Amelia Russ, at the age of forty, was left with eight children, five of whom were less than ten years old. The youngest was a babe in arms.

He is buried in the Old Cemetery, in the town of Southport. His grave has been marked by the William Gause Chapter of the DAR. Part of the inscription on his headstone reads "He was an honest man, a good husband and a fond father." This is virtually an echo of what he himself wrote in his will, dated 1811: "I leave all my estate.....for the schooling of my children and support of my family and paying my debts." In my mind's eye, I have always pictured Sempronius as short of stature and slender of build, based on a picture I have of his eldest son. When my research showed me his rapid rise in worldly matters, I often thought of him as a little man with a big drive. Now that I know him better, that has changed; I think of him as a little man with a big heart.

NOTES

1. Russ Family, Dorothy Russ Taylor, published by the author, Alexandria, Virginia, 1978, revised in 1990.
2. The Benjamin Family in America, compiled by Gloria Wall Bicha and Helen Benjamin Brown. A reprint of pertinent parts of this compilation was provided by Dorothy Russ Taylor.
3. Russ Genealogy II, Herbert M. Russ, Genealogy Publishing Services, P. O. Box 8387, St. Petersburg, Florida.
4. Colonial North Carolina: A History, Hugh T. Lefler and William S. Powell, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1973, has been used as a general source on early North Carolina.
5. Numerous Russes and Gauses still live in Shallotte. We counted 29 listings of Gause and 34 of Russ in the 1989 city phone directory.

Primitive Or Pleasant, Sunset Harbor's 'A Good Place To Live'

**By: Marjorie Megivern
The Brunswick Beacon, June, 1988**

Bill Cox's brother bought a lot in Sunset Harbor in the early 70s and reported that it was a primitive place, complete with snakes.

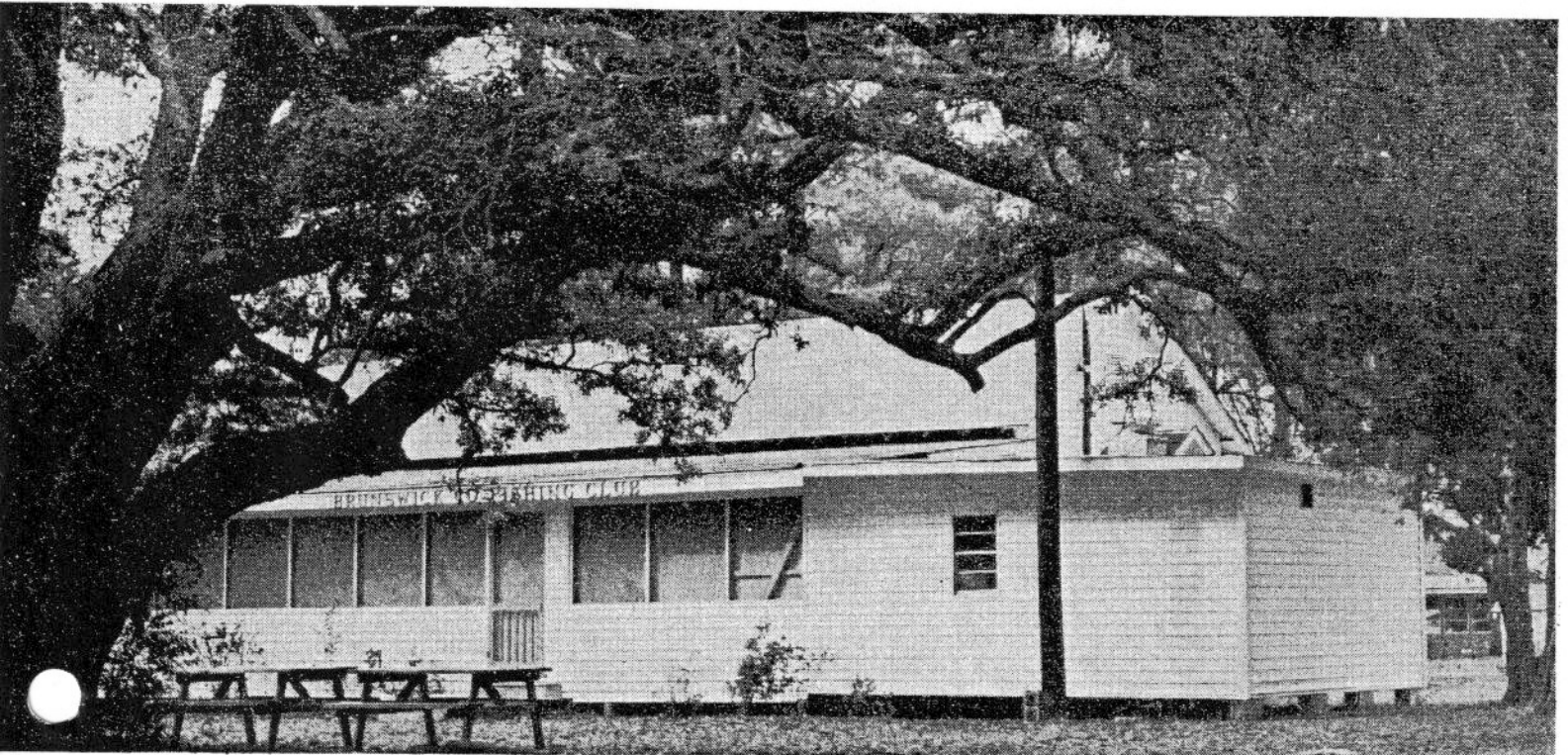
But when Cox retired from teaching and made his own move there in 1975, he found the quiet atmosphere and good gardening soil decidedly to his liking.

This pleasant community, formerly known as Howells Point, skirts the Lockwood Folly River and has long been a center of fishing and retirement activities.

There is still a touch of wilderness there, but the past 15 years have brought considerable growth in population. "When we first came there were just 13 families living here year-round," Cox said, "but now several school buses come in to get the children."

He said the community was once "not the finest in the world," because of small lots and a lack of any restrictions on what could be put on them. "But it's upgraded in the last four years," he added.

Most residents live in mobile homes, many attractive doublewides, and a great many are retirees. Many of these are avid fishermen, a group that has achieved prominence since organizing the Brunswick County Fishing Club in 1971. In 1975 the club built its own clubhouse on the graceful curve of the river and has provided the community's chief social life.



STAFF PHOTO BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN

THIS WHITE FRAME CLUBHOUSE for the Brunswick Fishing Club, overlooking the Lockwood Folly River, was acquired by the organization in 1975 and refurbished by the members.

Representative of its membership is Jean Sweat, club secretary, who moved to Sunset Harbor when her late husband, Carlis Sweat retired from the U.S. Air Force. Both have been active fishing club members since its inception.

"This year for the first time we're opening our clubhouse every third Saturday, May through September, to serve dinners to anyone who wants to come," Sweat said.

The group's traditional fish fry is held in October, when prizes are awarded in the annual fishing contest.

In the 1985 edition of the club's annual publication, a historic piece discusses the origins of the fishing club.

"The subject was often kicked around on Saturday mornings at the club," the account read. "Perhaps (organization of the club) was the natural result of saltwater sports fishermen exchanging ideas about their sport; it might have been the upshot of a few who dreamed of a place where they might relax after a day of fishing; and there were those who visualized an exclusive Florida-style yacht club!"

Whatever the motivations, the fishing club has not only fulfilled some individual dreams, it has been an active proponent in the improvement of fishing.

In its first year, members loaded 1550 tires with cement for the club's first Fish Haven Reef, and since that time boilers, a barge, the Holden Beach bridge and a 45D vessel have been dropped on three reefs in the vicinity.

Club officials have fought consistently in the state legislature for artificial reef funding and for legislation extending U.S. jurisdiction to 200 miles off the coast to protect off-coast fisheries.

Dale McDowell, a club leader, is now president of the Long Bay Reef Association that comprises representatives of his club and the Oak Island fishing club.

Activists and retirees, fishing enthusiasts and gardeners, individualists and homebodies, are all part of this community and like living there for many different reasons.

The citizens have contributed to the community's growth and improvement. One unusual step was the establishment of a joint volunteer fire department with the black Zion Hill community. A small park adjoins the attractive fire building between the two communities.

Just one church, First Baptist, serves Sunset Harbor, and the only other communal activity is Community Watch, active only in the summer season.

Businesses are few and far between, but in one of the two area gas station/grocers, there is a sense of oldtime "general store" friendliness.

James Carter's little establishment was for many years the one source of gas and a limited supply of groceries. "Don't get so much business anymore, now that folks can go to the big supermarket in Southport," he said. "But we enjoy living here and talking to people who come in."

His place is still the only one that offers a relaxed, chatty atmosphere, where you can catch up on the local gossip.

Perhaps Mrs. Sweat's observation would be echoed by most Sunset Harbor residents: "I've lived in many places overseas, and in Fayetteville, and I wouldn't live anywhere else but here."

Biography of Edwin W. Taylor

Forester, Company, Southport, North Carolina

I was at a CCC Camp in Southport, N. C. as a forester. I worked at CCC Camp P-62 - Camp Sapona - from October 1934 to April 1936 as a forestry foreman. The camp was built on the outskirts of Southport, N.C.

There were two divisions at the camp. The Army that ran the camp under the supervision of reserve officers and in the case of P-62, the forestry section under the direction of the N.C. forestry Service, worked the men.

The forestry had a camp superintendent, usually a graduate civil engineer, and five or six forestry foremen. We had a camp engineer, blacksmith, and a mechanic to keep up the trucks. We built roads, truck trails, fire breaks, telephone lines and fought fires.

The Forestry Foreman's crew consisted of approximately 15 to 20 men, one truck and the following equipment: portable water pump (back pack type), fire hoe, fire flaps, axes, cross cut saws and shovels.

Each work crew pulled fire watch for one week then another crew took over (rotating system). When a call came in reporting a fire, the crew took off and upon arriving at the fire and if there was no State or County fire warden there the Forestry Foreman was on his own and started working on the fire. The location, size, type of woods, direction of wind, dry or wet would determine the action taken. The safety of the crew was always important.

The first work should be "killing the head" of the fire. If we stopped the "head" and the wind did not change direction, we had it made.

In the early 1930's fire control was just getting started. There was no equipment as we have today. Just a few telephones and no radios. Usually we had three or four large fires - 50 acres or more and a small fire - 25 acres or less.

We lived in army type barracks and had our meals in the officers' mess along with the army officers. We had a mess orderly and a barracks orderly.

There were very few problems with all involved at this camp. We had a great bunch of men at P-62 , for the most part.

----- Edwin W. Taylor

Camp Sapona brought needed work during Depression

Published: Wednesday, April 2, 2008 at 6:01 a.m.

Last Modified: Monday, March 31, 2008 at 1:25 p.m.

Like most people of my generation, I have lots of memories of growing up during the Great Depression, and I've talked about some of those here. We think about the hardships and fears of those dark days, but we also remember the way hard times brought people closer together in a spirit of sharing and helping.

New Deal programs of the 1930s not only provided desperately needed jobs throughout the country but also funded projects and services that were important to local economies. The Southport area was home to several of these programs.

The one that had perhaps the most lasting effect was Camp Sapona, a unit of the Civilian Conservation Corps, which was located about a half mile out on Leonard Street.

Camp Sapona was established in 1934 to assist in managing the area's vast timber resources. Under the direction of the N.C. Forestry Service, the work crews immediately began constructing access roads and fire breaks and erecting telephone lines and fire towers. Some of their biggest responsibilities were fire prevention and firefighting.

Recently my daughter found an article on the Internet by one Edwin W. Taylor who served as a forester at Camp Sapona. According to him, each fire crew consisted of 15 to 20 men equipped with one truck, a portable water pump and assorted hand tools.

Taylor recalls their action in responding to a fire: "The first work would be 'killing the head' of the fire. If we stopped the 'head' and the wind did not change direction, we had it made." He says that they typically had several large fires covering 50 or more acres. You can read Taylor's account at www.geocities.com/oralbio/taylorewbio.html.

Along with the foresters, there were other personnel who ran the camp itself, preparing the food and maintaining the living facilities. There were barracks, a mess hall, a woodworking shop, a library and areas for baseball, basketball and tennis. Their basketball team was said to be first-rate. The camp even had its own newsletter, appropriately called the *Sandspur*. I've been unable to locate any issues of this. If any of you still have copies, please let me know.

The cook at Camp Sapona was "Fat" Marr, a man who knew how to make lots of economical, hearty food for men who were doing hard physical labor. Some of you may remember him.

One of his specialties was candy made from mashed potatoes! This unusual recipe has been preserved in Lou Hardee's wonderful book, *Classic Southport Cooking*. It is a simple recipe that uses coconut and chocolate as a topping for a layer of sweetened mashed potatoes. It was thrifty to make and many people found it delicious.

Camp Sapona employed a number of local men including my father, LeDrew Sellers, while many other workers came from other parts of the country.

Some even married local women and stayed on to start their own businesses after the war. And so the community benefitted both from the immediate effects of the camp payroll and the long term contributions of the men who made their homes here. The camp lasted for three years, closing (as did many of the New Deal projects) as the country began to gear up for war.

I hope you've enjoyed remembering with me the story of Camp Sapona. There were also two sewing rooms and a book bindery that operated as part of the New Deal in this area. Do any of you know about these? I would love to hear from you about your own memories of the Depression or any information you might have on some of the New Deal activities in our area.