



# NEWSLETTER

BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PO BOX 874, SHALLOTTE, NC 28459

VOLUME LVIII

May 2017

NUMBER 2

Organized June 21, 1956

## 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.

## Society Officers For the 2016 & 2017 Term

President: Richard Hollembeak  
Vice-President: Sally Robinson  
Secretary: Roberta Brady  
Treasurer: Bob Armour  
Directors: James Robinson  
Jim Marlowe  
Dave Lewis

Newsletter Editor: Dave Lewis

**BCHS Website**  
www.bchs1764.org  
Webmaster: Jimmy Green

## MAY MEETING TO BE HELD AT BEMC IN SUPPLY, NC May 08, 2017 7:30 P.M.

The next meeting of the *Brunswick County Historical Society* will be held on Monday, May 8th 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 February 2017 issue of the *NEWSLETTER* began the 58th Volume. Volume I, Number 1 was printed September 1961. A complete set of the Newsletter from September 1961 to November 2016 can be found in the Wilson Library at UNC-Chapel Hill, NC and at the New Hanover County Public Library North Carolina Room in Wilmington, NC. There were no publications of Volume 17, #3 & 4 (1977) and Volume 18, #1 (1978).

## Program

Mr. Richard Powell from Southport will be our guest speaker for the evening. Richard holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree from MIT and is a noted historian researching the lives and events which took place before, during and after the founding period of America. His program topic will be "Miracle in Philadelphia. The Making of the Constitution."

## Dues

**DUES** are now payable unless you are a **Life Member**. The annual dues are \$15.00 for an active member or \$150.00 to become a Life Member. Checks may be mailed to the **BCHS** in care of Bob Armour or bring check or cash to the February meeting. Use the membership application found on page 7 for contact changes. Make checks payable to the **Brunswick County Historical Society**.

## William Harris Styron

William Styron was born November 5, 1878 in Dare County, North Carolina and died October 05, 1913 in Dare County while patrolling the beach as a member of the Creeds Hill Life Saving Station.

William married Josie N. Ottaway September 10, 1908 in Brunswick County. She was born May 08, 1887 in Brunswick County and died November 04, 1955 in Brunswick County. Josie was the daughter of William Ottaway and Sarah Doshier. Their two children, William and Elsie, were born here in Brunswick County.

### Serious Electrical Storm Off Hatteras

*Editors Note: Reprinted as written including graphic description of accident.*

Norfolk, Va., October 25, 1913. The most serious electrical storm ever recorded on the Hatteras coast prevailed there for two hours beginning at midnight, William Styron, a surfman, while patrolling the beach, was struck by lightning and instantly killed. The bolt struck Styron in the head and came out of his boots, literally tearing the body to pieces. The body was subsequently found and was today prepared for burial.

From the Hatteras life saving station today it was declared that never in the history of man at that point was there such severe thunder and lightning as prevailed between midnight and 2 o'clock this morning. Between midnight and 9 o'clock today there had fallen at Hatteras more than three and a half inches of rain-a literal cloudburst. But for the sparsely settled county much havoc and loss of human life would have resulted from the storm. The lightning struck in many places. Trees were torn to pieces and the ground in many was torn up.

The storm was felt at points along the entire North Carolina coast. The rains for 24 hours have been severe in all parts of eastern North Carolina, with washouts reported in some places. The rain of the past hours has brought the total precipitation at Wilmington, N.C., up to nearly ten inches during the month of October. Lumberton, Nags Head, New Bern, Washington, Elizabeth City and other

points throughout eastern North Carolina report heavy rain.

## Village Point

*Source: Article by EUGENE FALLON, The State Port Pilot, October 4, 1961. As written. Submitted by Holly Long, Village Point Preservation.*

*"Along the cool, sequestered paths of life they were content to lead the even tenor of their way" - Thomas Gray*

It isn't far from Shallotte and from that humming artery known as US Highway 17, but it might as well be a million miles. Shallotte Point is an old gate, a gateway to the mainland, via an inlet of the sea and the Shallotte River.

And if the gate is rusted, it is a nice rust; perfumed with rose and grape arbors, a quiet place, dreaming in the sun.

My first stop was at the farmhouse on the very edge of the village. This in itself was noteworthy, for farms go wanting along salt water. The sea offers an easy living, and the sea is right at hand.

Mrs. William Edgar Tripp [Miss Cora] sat and rocked on her porch. Behind her the fields lay fallow and neglected since the passing of her husband some years ago. The widow is 76.

Had Shallotte Point changed much since her earliest remembrance? The widow replied quickly: "Only in the last 15 or 20 years," she said, "since they paved the road to Shallotte. Before that it was a shell road, you know. Fast roads bring fast company. The young, wild ones come down occasionally on weekends and rear and buck in scandalous fashion. I suppose they come because there is no policeman here."

Across the hard surfaced road that has upset the widow looms a magnificently-spreading live oak. Mrs. Tripp said that legend had it George Washington address a handful of fisherfolk beneath that same tree. "General Washington was supposed to have mopped his brow," said Mrs. Tripp, "and spread his damp kerchief atop that tree. It has sure

grown since then!"

The widow's next words lent credence to the tale of Washington's visit: I was born in that old house you see in back of the oak," she said, "and my mother-in-law, dead these 40 years, she was born there too." It developed that the mother-in-law was in her eighties at the time of her death, placing the old house at least 120 years old. According to Mrs. Tripp, the building was ancient 120 years ago.

"It was built by a man named Niproneous Russ," she said, "Russ, who was a wealthy man with slaves, had the timbers, bricks, etc., shipped over from England, and erected here in 1716. It is lightwood from sills to top, and not a nail in it; pegged together with wooden pins. The old place has never seen paint."

The mother of the man Bessie Tripp married was born a Pickett [Pigott]. The Picketts acquired the property from Niproneous Russ, and in turn sold it to a Dr. John McNeil, only practicing physician that Mrs. Tripp recalls in her lifetime spent at Shallotte Point. William Edgar Tripp [Mr. Edgar] bought the place from Dr. McNeil. Today the uninhabited building, still staunch and solid, belongs to the widow.

Driving into the village proper, our next call was on Dought [Daught] Tripp, locally known as Capt. Tripp, and with good reason. Tripp has boats, many of them. Party boats for outside fishing, small boats for inside fishing, and he is not above renting them. In fact he makes his living in that fashion.

"I would say that 95 percent of Shallotte Pointers gain their living from the water," Tripp began. "And our big season is just beginning. From the middle of September to Christmas the inlet teems with fish. Sometimes about the first of each year a man wakes up one morning to find they are gone. Just like that!" Tripp snapped his fingers. "Then our village settles down to hibernate, so far as strangers are concerned, anyway. Of course work does not stop exactly. There is oystering and shrimping, which continues all winter, the oystering till April; the shrimping? Well, that's a year round deal."

Mackerel and blues are found outside. Spots by the millions inside the inlet. There's excellent trout fishing in season.

According to Tripp, Shallotte Point is the poor man's sporting mecca. "We cater to the working class," he says, "who only occasionally can afford to fish salt water. Most of our customers stay at the Point for 2 or 3 days. They hire a skiff, usually renting an outboard motor, and take the wife and kids out a few hundred feet and fish and fish and fish."

With what luck? Tripp smiled. "Pretty good on the average," he said. "I have 20 skiffs myself, which I rent out with or without motors. I've very often seen a party of say four people bring in more than one lard stand filled with spots, flounder and trout. You can pack some 60 pounds of fish to each lard stand".

Tripp disclosed an oddity at the Point. Most lard stands are manufactured at Wheeling, West Virginia, and an amazing number of them are sold at small Shallotte Point, as receptacle for fish, of course. Tripp revealed that he alone sells as many as 100 lard cans each week during the four month fishing season at the Point. Multiply this number some six or eight times (other Shallotte Point dealers) and you come up with a lot of lard cans.

In the conversation it was brought out rather conveniently that Shallotte Pointers are at odds with death. Tripp's father is hale and hearty at 93. The most recent Shallotte Point funeral was held for a 94-year-old man. Youngsters of 70-odd years carry on the business of making a living as though there had been but a few yesterdays. Might be the salubrious salt airs, the seafood diet. Something there is in Shallotte Point which rejects decay and death. Even the houses many endure for 250 years.

We went next to the Anchor Hotel. This is a long, white-painted rambling building overlooking the inlet. A salt-faded sign read: "Dine and Dance, Seafood and Steaks, Oyster Roasts."

But solitude prevailed. The dining room was closed. A curlew mewled from between a row of

upturned boats, freshly painted green. Just then a man drove up and introduced himself as Capt John W. Garner. He was, he said the proprietor of the Anchor Hotel.

I pointed to the boats wordlessly.

Garner rather sadly confessed himself no native. He hailed originally from Catham [Chatham] county, he said, and had been at the Point only 16 years or so. Garner proved he was an outsider by being in a hurry. Excusing himself, he suggested a certain lady as a splendid local historian.

The ladies name was Mrs. Leslie Chadwick. She lived in a story book white house in a lovely group of trees. Yellow finches and hummingbirds filled the branches over our heads as we walked on the porch.

Mrs. Chadwick, although a Brunswick native, had spent only 50 years in the Point of the Shallotte River Inlet. Her husband had been a fisherman.

"I love it here," said the lady. "How did it start? I really don't know. It was called Bowen's Point originally; this in honor of a pioneer family. Look through those trees; see that square-built house? That was the old Bowen house.

But I never saw them. They were dead and gone long before my birth. An old man named Dan Bloodgood stayed with them. Don't know whether he was a relative or not. Perhaps only a roomer. Anyway, he outlived them and continued to live on in the house. One windy night he died there, all alone. They said his ghost returned often, and was seen wringing it's hands and crying piteously..."

The lady fell silent, as if in commiseration of anyone having to leave such a peaceful domicile. Suddenly she spoke again of old sorrows.

"See that chinaberry tree on the corner of my property? Old-timers told that a schooner came into the inlet one day long ago, and dispatched a boat."

"In an old wooden tea chest some men carried the body of a small child which had died at sea. They buried the remains, shed a few tears and rowed

back to the ship."

The past unfolded under the soft voice of Mrs. Chadwick. It was past that, like today, offered men only uncertainty, trouble and travail. I looked about the pleasant landscape, suddenly hungry to drink my fill while I yet numbered amount the quick and the living. I recalled George Santayana's:

"O world I cannot hold three close enough!"

And it was time to go. Through the avenues of live oaks, I drove, past the Anchor Hotel, past Capt. Tripp's boat ramp, across the branch and the Washington Oak. Mrs. William Edgar Tripp waved from her porch.

Shallotte was the next port of call.

## Cemetery Cleanup

A small preservation group working with the land owners and Brunswick County officials has gained access to the historical Joseph Hewett, Sr. Cemetery located on Kinston St. in Holiday Haven near Holden Beach.

The initial cleaning has been completed, a sign installed and wreath laid within the tabby brick wall encompassing the three known graves. Plans for the permanent preservation of one of the oldest cemeteries in Brunswick County are being made.



Joseph Hewett, Sr. Cemetery

Photo taken March 2017



*daughter of Nicholas and Deborah Frink. They arrived in the Little River, South Carolina area before 1735 from Connecticut where their two children, Hannah and Jabesh, were born.*

## **Gause Family of Brunswick County**

The surname Gause is not very common according to the American census records. The origin of the Gause surname appears to be German or even from Old Prussia with its many various spellings. Moreover, the origin of the Gause families of North and South Carolina are unknown.

There is a record of a William Gause, Sr. who in 1734 purchased land in from Mr. John Bryan what was then the Bertie Precinct of North Carolina adjacent to the Virginia-North Carolina line. The same land was sold in 1735/36, and is surmised that William Gause, Sr. traveled south into Carven County, South Carolina before settling in the Little River area of South Carolina. Note: At that time all the area south of the Cape Fear was Craven County. The name Bryan appears several times in the Brunswick County Gause family lineage.

It is known that William Gause, Sr., the patriarch of the Gause families who were to become prominent in the history of Brunswick County, was present in the northeast coastal areas of South Carolina many years before the Revolutionary War. In 1737 he obtained grants from the crown for 400 acres of land in what was then Prince George's Parish and is now the Windy Hill Beach area of Horry County. An inlet from the Atlantic Ocean in the vicinity of the Gause property was known as Gause's Swash and is now known as White Point Swash. William subsequently became an innkeeper.

Some years later, William Gause, Sr. purchased from Nathan Frink a plantation at Star Bluff on the Waccamaw River, as well as his livestock, tools, and household furnishings. There is nothing to indicate that William ever lived there, however, some of his descendants settled in the nearby area of Red Bluff, as well as further inland where a Gause settlement and an old Gause family cemetery may be found today. The Frink and Gause families were apparently close and later inter-married over sever-

al generations

In 1740 a deed to one Ann Bryan, "a spinster", from William Gause, Innkeeper of "Long Bay of the Parish of Prince George", conveys to her several Negro slaves, furniture, bedding, and livestock. The deed was recorded in Craven County, North Carolina, January 4, 1744. . It speaks of her heirs, Needham Bryan, John Bryan, and William Bryan and identifies her as Ann Bryan of Craven County, North Carolina. Ann Bryan's relationship to William Gause Sr. and to the previously mentioned John Bryan of Bertie Precinct is unknown; but it is curious that the first names of the three children that she had at that time were the same as the first names of three of William Gause's children, i.e., Needham, John and William. Also curious is the fact that a later child fathered by William Gause Sr. and an unknown mother, was given the first name of "Bryan". The name of William Gause's wife does not appear in any records so far available. It is entirely possible that Ann Bryan was the wife of William Gause, Sr. and the children were either fathered or adopted by William. Adding to the mystery is a bill of sale, dated March 14, 1745 fourteen months after the deed to Ann Bryan was recorded stating that he sold this same property to Henry Warner for 700 pounds. When Henry Warner returned it to her sons in 1746, she was Ann Gause with the same three sons plus Charles. This document is recorded on page 116, book 75A, of "SC Wills, Inventories and Miscellaneous Documents, from 1746".

In 1751 William Gause, Sr. purchased land in Brunswick County and established the Gause plantation. He built a two-story manor house atop a high hill overlooking a channel separated from the Atlantic Ocean by a few hundred feet of marshland and what today is Ocean Isle Beach. The size of the plantation was several thousand acres. The manor house was located on Gause Landing Road (a few hundred yards from today's Ocean Isle bridge). The Gause Manor house was described as "a great and solid two-story affair built entirely of heart lumber".

The plantation prospered and became known as Gause Manor. Soon there were five Gause sons: William Jr., John, Needham, Charles, and Benja-

jamin. Charles moved to Smithville in the spring of 1790. Four of the Gause children, William Jr., John, Needham and Charles fought in the Revolutionary War in which William lost a leg.

President George Washington visited the Gause Manor on one of his horseback southern tours. In his diary Washington wrote, "Breakfasted at Wm. Gause's, a little out of the direct road 14 miles from the last stop. After then, we crossed the boundary line between North and South Carolina about half after 12 o'clock which is 10 miles from the Gause Manor." The entry was dated, "Wednesday, April 27, 1791".

Bishop Francis Asbury, circuit-riding Methodist preacher who rode his way to fame up and down the Coastal Carolinas for 50 years, often stayed at the Gause Manor. In his diary he wrote that he had preached at William Gause's manor house in 1801. The Bishop goes on to say "At this great house, most pleasantly situated on the Brunswick Coast at Gause Town, where I had looked forward to again greeting my once dear friend, William, death had stolen a march on me." Several years later the indefatigable Bishop came back to Gause Manor where he writes "I lodged at John Gause's. Our host is a local minister, and, I trust, a dear child of God." What happened to Gause's Manor? The popular explanation is that fire destroyed the structure. There is no credible date for the fire.

*Source: The Gause Plantation at Ocean Isle Beach, by Fred R. David and Vern J. Bender. Various internet genealogy and history web sites.*

### Memorial Day

Memorial Day will be celebrated across the United States on Monday, May 29th. Regardless of where it originated, it is an important holiday that remembers those that died for our country and serves to remind people of the costly price of war. There will be many formal ceremonies taking place in observance, most which will be held in the local communities near us. Be sure to check your papers and television stations for their listings.

A couple of traditional national events will be the *Laying of the wreath at Arlington Cemetery*. The President of the United States will lay a wreath at Arlington Cemetery and usually be accompanied by a speech, and *Remembrance and Moments of Silence*. A resolution was passed in December 2000 which asks that at 3 p.m. local time all Americans "To voluntarily and informally observe in their own way a Moment of Remembrance and Respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or listening to "Taps."

### Enjoy your weekend and thank a Veteran

#### ***Membership Application ... Invite a Friend to Join Brunswick County Historical Society***

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

New: \_\_\_\_\_ or Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Receive *Newsletter* by email:  Y  N

Annual Dues: Individual \$15 Life Membership \$150

Mail this form with your check to: P.O. Box 874, Shallotte, NC 28459