



NEWSLETTER

BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
5152 NEW BRITTON LP NW. ASH, NC 28420
brunswickcountyhistoricalsociety.org

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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 2019 & 2020 Term

President: James Green
Vice-President: Gwen Causey
Secretary:
Treasurer: Bob Armour
Directors: Jim Marlowe
Dave Lewis

Newsletter Editor: Dave Lewis
Webmaster: Charles Clemmons

brunswickcountyhistoricalsociety.org



NOVEMBER MEETING TO BE HELD AT BEMC IN SUPPLY, NC NOVEMBER 13, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.

The next meeting of the *Brunswick County Historical Society* will be held on Monday, November 13th, 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 2023 issue of the *NEWSLETTER* began the 62nd Volume. Volume I, Number 1 was printed September 1961. A complete set of the Newsletter from September 1961 to February 2023 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

Our speaker will be Mary Ellen Watts Poole. Her program will be "Southport History Through Commemorative Bricks."

Mary Ellen is a native of Southport and a life member of the Southport Historical Society. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of SHS as Membership Director and is know as their Commemorative Brick "Guru."

Dues

DUES are now past due 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**. Please address questions of your membership status thru our website. *You may now pay your dues through PayPal by using our website.*

BCHS Website

Visit our website and check out all the great features available including photos and videos of previous speakers at our meetings. Our newest feature is a genealogy collection uploaded by our members. To date several family tree files have been added including the Clemmons family, Floyd family, Lewis', Lancaster's, and the Hewett's of Brunswick County. There is also a link to the owners so that you may contact them, ask questions, and exchange information.

Many Brunswick County Historical Society members are interested in family genealogical research. This feature has been added to the BCCHS website and will facilitate that research by providing a forum for exchange of family tree files. BCCHS members may now provide their gen files for upload to the website. The intent is to provide a data base for family tree sharing.

Members may email their files (and applicable email contact information) to webmaster Charles Clemmons at cmclm43@gmail.com, and Charles will upload the files to the website. We will not be able to accept submissions from non-members. PDF or other image file formats (jpg, png, etc.) are preferred, but Word and other formats may be acceptable as well. If you have questions regarding the process, please contact Charles directly.

Once uploaded, members can access the files by going to the BCCHS website at <https://brunswickcountyhistoricalociety.org> and clicking on "Genealogy Files" in the navigation bar on the left side of the screen.

Charles has done a tremendous job designing and maintaining our new website. The BCCHS has welcomed several new members this past year and continues to grow and provide historical data for our county and the Cape Fear region.

Shallotte Old Sunnyside School

"Old Sunnyside" is a white schoolhouse built in 1915 on the grounds of what is now Shallotte Middle School.

Built at a cost of \$1500, it was originally home to all grade levels and later just the elementary school students.

Everyone who attended school in the town of Shallotte between 1915 and 1972 likely had a class

inside the building. In 1972, when it was time to build Shallotte Middle School, Sunnyside closed and would have been razed without the intervention of then-mayor, Beamon Hewett and the town aldermen.

Instead of being destroyed, the building was moved to a plot of land at the northeast intersection of Highway 130 West and Main Street. That's where the school remained, abandoned and run-down, for three decades.

In 1999, Shallotte's Centennial Commission decided to restore the old schoolhouse. The Shallotte Historical Preservation Society was formed, and a "Save Old Sunnyside" plan was put into action. Using funding from donations as well as the town of Shallotte, the building was moved back to the grounds of Shallotte Middle School in 2002, just a few hundred yards away from its original location. After nearly a decade of renovation work, the building is now opened to the public.

Up until 1915, Shallotte and the southwestern area of Brunswick County was sorely lacking in facilities in which to educate its children. In a school board meeting on Feb. 2, 1914, members discussed several propositions for schoolhouses in Smithville and Shallotte Townships. At a subsequent meeting on Sept. 7 of that year, a committee was appointed to select and locate a site in District # 1, Shallotte Township, for a new schoolhouse and was asked to report at the next meeting.

On Jan. 4, 1915, the board ordered the contract for the building of the schoolhouse in District # 1, Lockwood Folly Township (which embraces a part of Shallotte Township) be awarded to L. C. Tripp in the sum of \$1,500. Mr. Tripp was the head of a prominent Shallotte family and built several of the early buildings in the area. He agreed to take \$439 on said sum and as part payment on said contract, the said amount of \$439 subscribed by himself and other patrons of the school in said district, the same to be collected by himself. The forgoing history serves as a reminder of the meager beginnings of Sunnyside. The building was completed in 1915 and has gone on to serve countless numbers of children in the area.

Even after the Shallotte High School building was completed in 1927, Sunnyside was allowed to remain on the grounds and continued to be used for classrooms throughout the remaining life of the newer building. Shallotte High School was closed

in 1972 when three new high schools were built in the county. On its former site, Shallotte Middle School was built. At this juncture in history, Sunnyside was destined for the wrecking crew. Had it not been for the intervention of mayor Beamon Hewett, and the town aldermen, Sunnyside and all its fond memories would have been lost in the annals of time. In order to save the old building, it was moved to a location at the northeastern inter-



section of N.C. 130 West and Main Street.

Although efforts were made to complete the restoration of Sunnyside so that it could be used as a historic showplace and welcome center, the idea floundered and the old monument continued to sit. Then, at a meeting of Shallotte's Centennial Commission in early 1999, the idea was brought forth again. It was the consensus of the commission that the restoration should go forth. Subsequently, the Shallotte Historical Preservation Society was formed and in conjunction with the Town of Shallotte, a "Save Old Sunnyside" project was put in place. The immediate plans were to relocate Sunnyside to the left front grounds of the Shallotte Middle School near its original location.

Now that the building has been restored it is used to collect, store and display early artifacts and memorabilia from before the 20th century. The building is one of the main Shallotte tourist attractions and is open to the public and used for educational purposes.

An Account of the Cape Fear Country 1731

By Hugh Meredith

Editors Note: The following article, describing the new Welsh Tract in North Carolina, appeared in two consecutive issues of The Pennsylvania Gazette, published by Benjamin Franklin. Printed as written.

Thursday, April 29 to Thursday, May 6, 1731.

The new Settlement going forward at Cape Fear, having for these 3 or 4 Years past, been the Subject of much Discourse, especially among Country People; and great Numbers reporting thither continually, from this and the neighboring Provinces, merely to view the Place and learn the Nature of the Country, that they may be capable of judging whether it will probably be an advantageous Exchange it they should remove and settle there; and none having at their Return published their Observations for the Information of others; The following Account of CAPE FEAR, (extracted from the private Letters of a judicious and impartial Person, who lately resided there some Time, and who had not the least Interest that might induce him either to commend or discommend the Country beyond strict Truth,) it is thought will not be unacceptable to a great Part of our Readers.

CAPE FEAR is the Name Mariners give to a Spit of Sand which runs out to Sea on the East Side of the Mouth of Clarendon (commonly called Cape Fear) River, and vulgarly gives Name to a great Western Part of North Carolina, now called New Hanover Precinct. The Pitch or outward Point of the Cape is laid down to be in 33 d. and 30 m. N. Lat. And the Body of the Country lies to the northward of it, and runs westward on the Seashore about 80 miles, where it joins South Carolina; and eastward I know not how far, but I believe no great way. The Country in general is very low and level, especially back from the Rivers; the Swamps and Savanahs seem to be as low as the Rivers, and are in Fact very little higher. Most of the Country is well clothed with tall Pines, excepting the Swamps, Savanahs, and some small Strips by the Sides of Rivers. The only Town they as yet have is Brunswick, seated on the River Clarendon, about 18 or 20 Miles from the Mouth of it; having a commodious Place for Ships to lie safe in all Weathers, and is likely to be a Place of Trade, and the Seat of Government; tho' at present but a poor, hungry, unprovided Place, consistion of not above 10 or 12 scattering mean Houses hardly worth the Name of

A Village; but the Platform is good and convenient, and the Ground high, considering the Country. There are several Rivers that water this Division or District: The westernmost is a little River near South Carolina; then the Shelote River and Lockard's Folly; these three enter the Sea at about 10 Miles Distance from each other; and are, by reason of Sand Bars cross the Mouths of them, navigable but for Boats, Shallops, and the like small Craft. The next is Elizabeth River, which is but small and of no great Length, entering the great River Clarendon near the mouth.

This River Clarendon is esteemed the best for navigation of any along that Shore, even from the Capes of Virginia, to 18 or 100 Miles westward of Charlestown in South Carolina, as having the deepest Channel and easiest to find; yet with some Reason I am inclin'd to believe, that there are in that Distance several as good if not better. However, 'tis certainly a noble River, the best and almost the only one of consequence in all North Carolina. It is about half a mile wide at Brunswick, and the Tide ebbs and flows between 3 and 4 Foot Neap Tides. Vessels of above 50 or 60 Tons English Make, cannot go above 6 or 8 miles above the Town; but small Craft may go 20 or 30; and much farther they might go, were it not for a multitude of Logs that have fallen into the Rivers, which are so heavy and solid that they lie at the bottom, and many of them show but little Appearance of Decay. This River divides it self about 10 miles above the Town: the main Branch, which is by much the largest and runs by far the longest Course, is called the Northwest; and the other Northeast, up which I was about 50 Miles by Land, (by Water it was near *) which took up two Days Walking; and Account of which will give you an Idea of the Country in General.

At our first setting out we had a sandy Pine Barren to walk in, which was covered pretty thick with large Pine Trees, and underneath small Myrtle Bushes full of Berries, and some other small Bushes to me unknown, growing in a white sand, with a black sandy mould underneath; which when cleared yields a tolerable Crop of Indian Corn and Beans, but of Potatoes of the Bermudas sort, Squashes Pompions and the like, a vast Increase, as will the worst dry Land they have; though I cannot think of any Land of this kind lasting. We were not gone above a mile before we came to some small

Savanahs, which are grassy Plains having few or no Trees on them and are either wet or dry according to the Season; they were now very wet by reason of the Rains and had fallen a few Days before. These Savanahs are good Pasturage for Cattle; Beneath the Grass there is a fine black Mould, (in Some but thin, in others a very good Thickness) on a blueish white Clay. In moderately wet Summers they might make tolerable good Rice-Ground, as is done with the like in South Carolina. They are so well clay'd at bottom, that what Rain falls on them is a long while draining off. In about 8 miles going, it was almost all Savanahs and one of them the Way we went, I think could be no less than 2 miles broad, and the Path I suppose was laid out the best way that could be without going very much about. The Water was mostly ankle deep on them.

When we had pass'd these, we entered into Pine Land, at first but barren, but it soon grew better, and as it mended the Pines grew thinner, so that in a mile there was scarce any to be seen, but in their stead good Oak and Hickery, and the Land had small Ascents and Descents, with fine Runs of Water in the Vallies, passing among Limestone Rocks, which in their Qualities are much like those of Pennsylvania, only in this they differ, that these seem for the most part to be Oyster and other Shells cemented together; this is visible on the outside, but more to be seen when the Stones are broken, for then the several Kinds of Shell may be easily distinguish'd: Of these they make their best Hand Milstones, and I believe may make good Water Milstones, when they have such Mills to try them with. The Land here was very good, and the second Best I saw in the Country; but it cannot be above 4000 or 5000 Acres, and is all settled. In this good Land we walk'd about 3 miles and cross'd the North East; after which the good land did not reach above 40 or 60 Perches. Then we entered Savanahs much such as those we had pass'd before, only the Water was not quite so deep, being seldom over our Shoes. Such was our Way for 7 or 8 miles, only here and there a narrow Strip of Pine Barren. Then we came to as good Land as ever I saw. When we came within This, the pines were totally lost, and we had as fine a Wood to walk in as could be wished, of all the Sorts that are in Pennsylvania (Chestnut excepted,) besides several other Sorts to me unknown. The Land was a fine black Mould, in some Places on a whitish Clay, others on a rusty

yellow, and some on a reddish or quite red Clay. The three last are counted the best; the other inclining to be the Savannah Kind. There is plenty of Limestone here, such as the former, and good Water. Here I saw the finest Crop of Indian Corn I ever have seen; the Stalks of which measured 18 Foot long; and they told us, that the year before that had 800 Bushels of Corn off 9 Acres of that Land, and expected then to have so much. This Piece of good Land may contain about 6 or 7000 Acres.

From hence we set out the next Day, and in a Course of 16 or 18 miles most of our Way was Savannahs, not so wet as those the Day Before; and more Pine Barrens that look'd a little better than those we had before seen; and some Spots of good Land, the largest about 2 or 300 Acres; and some Rice Swamps. These Rice Swamps are flat, low Grounds, by the Sides of Rivers or Runs, generally well clothed with tall Timber and Canes underneath; some with Trees only, others all Cane; Some are by Rivers or Runs where the Tide comes, these are overflow'd every high Tide; others are above the Tide either far up the Rivers, or at the Heas of Runs, (such were those in our Way,) they are hardly ever quite dry, nor ever so wet as to hurt the Rice, unless it be a very wet Time indeed. In, clearing these Swamps, they first cut down the Cane, and all the small Underbrush, and gather it in Heaps; then fall the Saplins and great Trees; the Branches of the Trees they generally lop off and burn with the Saplins, but let their Bodies lie and rot, the Logs being little minded because Rice is chiefly managed with the Hoe. They are mose of them of a deep black Mould and are something Boggy. Towards night we got to the House of Mr. David Evans, late a Magistrate in New Castle County upon Delaware: The Land he lives on is pretty good and the highest I saw in the Country, but there is only a small Body of it.

The next Day about Noon, we embark'd in a Canoo to return to Brunswick, accompanied by Mr. Evans and two others having about 80 miles to row on the River Northeast, which is deep enough for a Sloop of 60 Tons all the Way, and would be navigable for such quite up to Mr. Evan's, were it not for the Multitude of Logs that lie in it, part of them fast in the Sand, with great Snags or Limbs, and sometimes either End or the Middle quite above, or but little beneath the Surface; and in some Places

we saw whole Heaps jambed together, almost from Side to Side and so firm that they are immovable, being sound, heavy, fast and deep in the Sand, otherwise this would be a fine River, the Tide in a dry Time flowing some miles above Mr. Evans's. It is very crooked and deep, and from 10 to 15 Perches in the general Breadth of it. It is rare to find firm Land on Both Sides, opposite; it being Swampy on one Side or the other, and often on both, and the Swamps very large, especially within 20 or 30 miles of its Entrance into Northwest. The water is of a dusky Complexion, and looks much like high-coloured Malt Small-Beer, which is the general Hue of all the Waters, especially Rivers, of both North and South Carolina.

The Remainder in our next.

To be continued. There were Welsh emigrants from Pennsylvania and Delaware, who settled in the Cape Fear region in the decade 1730-1740, and later. An indication of this settlement is a tract of land still called the Welsh Tract, this designation appearing in the New Hanover county record as early as 1737. It is likely that this was the settlement in which Hugh Meredith was interested. This tract of land is being described in detail by Hugh Meredith is transcribed as written and published in 1731.

Questions to Ask During Family Interview

Here are eight conversation starters to help you create and capture the fascinating details and memories that make up your family story. Ask a parent, have kids interview grandparents, or record your answers yourself for future generations. Use the 5 W's, who, what, where, when, and why.

- 1- What was your childhood home like?
- 2- Why did your parents give you your name?
- 3- What were your parents' occupations?
- 4- What is your earliest memory?
- 5- What makes you the happiest?
- 6- What has changed the most since you were a child?
- 7- What is the bravest thing you've ever done?
- 8- Who were the oldest members of your family that you knew personally?

A Tribute to the Armed Services Arranged by Lloyd Larson

Army

First to fight for the right, and to build the Nation's
might,
And the Army goes rolling along.
Proud of all we have done, fighting till the battle's
won,
And the Army goes rolling along.
Then it's hi! hi! hey! The Army's on its way.
Count off the cadence loud and strong; two, three,
four, hut, two, three!
For where'er we go, you will always know
That the Army goes rolling along.

Coast Guard

We're always ready for the call, we place our trust
in Thee!
Through howling gale and shot and shell to win the
victory!
Semper paratus is our guide, our pledge, our motto,
too!
We're always ready, do or die. Ay! Coast Guard,
we fight for you!

Navy

Anchors aweigh, my boys! Anchors aweigh
Farewell to college joys. We sail at break of day,
day, day, day!
Through our last night on shore, hail to the foam!
Until we meet once more, here's wishing you a
happy voyage home!

Air Force

Off we go into the wild blue yonder, climbing high
into the sun.
Here they come, zooming to meet our thunder;
At 'em, boys, give her the gun!
Down we dive, spouting our flame from under, off
with one terrible roar.
We live in fame or go down in flame, for nothing
can stop the U.S. Air Force!

Marines

From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli,
We will fight our country's battles in the air, on
land and sea.
First, we fight for right and freedom, and to keep

our honor clean.

We are proud to claim the title of United States
Marines.

America, the Beautiful

America! America! God shed His grace on thee!
O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved, and mercy
more than life!
America! America! May God thy gold refine,
'Til all success be nobleness, and ev'ry gain divine!
America! A-me-ri-ca!

BCHS Minutes from August 14, 2023

The Brunswick County Historical Society meeting
was called to order at 7:30 PM by the President,
James Green. There were 12 members and 2 visi-
tors in attendance.

The President led the Pledge of Allegiance to the
Flag of the United States of America.

There were no minutes for the May 13, 2023 meet-
ing. There was a bank balance of \$1,386.22.

The Treasurer's Report included a bank balance of
\$1,322.87. Income totaled \$30.00 for membership
renewals for Larry and Yvonne Brown and \$60.00
for new members: Doug and Sheryl Jones, Steve
Varnam and Joey Galloway. Expenses totaled
\$153.35 for speaker and printing and mailing of the
Newsletter. The report is attached to the minutes.

There was no unfinished business.

Under new business the President spoke about the
rising cost of printing and mailing the Newsletter.
A motion was made by David Holden to only mail
the Newsletter to those without email and a sur-
charge of \$10.00 for those members with emails
that want a hardcopy of the Newsletter mailed to
them. Motion seconded by Ann Bokelman. A
unanimous vote followed.

Carol Jutte made a motion to clean up the member-
ship list and to purge those who have not paid their
dues and move the libraries and historical sites
from postal mail to email. Motion seconded by
Glen Kye. A unanimous vote followed.

The program was given by Bob Surridge. He spoke on the Southport Scoundrels. These included Major General Robert Howe, Sr., Lanier Cravens, Benjamin Smith, James Read, E.M. Rosafy and Jesse C. Walker.

Motion to adjourn.

Members present: Jimmy Green Carol Jutte, Gwen Causey, David Holden, Judy Holden, Ann Bokelman, Bob Armour, Steve Varnam, Dave Lewis, Doug Jones, Glenn Kye, Rick Hollembeak.

Visitors: Carolyn Ferguson (she paid dues and became a member,) Larry Rittinger.

Gwen Causey, Acting Secretary

Letter from Leland

The Wilmington Messenger, Feb. 23, 1900

Mr. J. W. Gay, a subscriber at Leland, N.C., in remitting his dues to The Messenger, furnishes the following interesting facts concerning his community:

“Leland is only a small village, but it can boast of an eight-month school, and in another year we expect to make it nine months instead of eight. Miss Hyacinth Peterson is the teacher. She is an accomplished young lady, being a graduate in the English language and in music. In addition to her school she has quite an interesting music class and

is admired by all with whom she comes in contact, especially the little ones.

The Leland school closes about the 1st of June, when our annual Sunday school picnic takes place. A main feature of our 1900 picnic will be the Farmers’ Institute, something unknown in this community. We have some as fine trucking land around Leland as can be found anywhere, and it is to be hoped that the professor of agriculture, who advises us at our picnics, will be highly appreciated and beneficial to the community. Our facilities for shipping are all that we can ask; all the trains stop for either passengers, freight or express. Lettuce, beets, strawberries, beans, etc. are planted around here for the past few seasons, but have not been very successful; they need someone to stir them up and start them out with a new courage and make them say they will keep trying until they succeed.

“With many wishes for your future success, J. W. Gay.”

Transcribed as written

Area Events

December 10, 2023: Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site. Explore how the American colonists celebrated Christmas. You can enjoy 18th century refreshments in the Visitor Center, participate in traditional games, or try your hand at 18th century crafts. 1:00—5:30pm . Admission, adults \$5.00 and kids 12 and under free.

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

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail _____

New: _____ Renewal _____ Amount Enclosed _____

Receive *Newsletter* by email: Y N

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

Mail this form with your check to: 5152 New Britton LP Rd., Ash, NC 28420

Please submit any articles or information for future newsletters to Dave Lewis.

Email: davelewis@atmc.net

CALENDER OF EVENTS

BCHS Meetings: February 13, 2023
May 8, 2023
August 14, 2023
November 13, 2023



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