

# THE WHITTLES BENCH

## Southport Historical Society

Volume XXVII, Number 3

May, 2003

### May Meeting

#### **MAKE A NOTE...** **Change in time!**

May 22nd  
**6:00 pm**  
at the  
Southport  
Community  
Building

### SHS Officers & Directors

President  
Peter Wyckoff 457-5599

Vice-President  
Pat Kirkman 457-0579

Secretary  
Karen Knighton 457-8018

Treasurer  
Wolf Furstenau 278-4050

Historian/Archivist  
Marilyn Lessen 457-0004

Directors  
Shirley Wilson 278-7430  
Musette Steck 253-3855  
Bob Lucas 457-6723



### PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPH

**WE LIVE AND LEARN** In the interests of making the membership meetings more meaningful, there have been some changes put in place. The first of them start right here in the Whittler's Bench, where you'll notice that the Secretary's Report and Treasurer's Report have been inserted in the newsletter. If you would like more details of either, you may contact Karen or Wolf directly.

The other changes will come at the meeting. Everyone likes the fellowship, so we're urging everyone to arrive at 6:00, rather than 6:30. This will have the double advantage of allowing more fellowship time and giving the folks doing set up to get all of the fantastic dishes you bring out on the groaning tables. Dinner will be at 6:30 sharp; plates will be at the start of the table – utensils and napkins will be at the end. Desserts and beverages will be on separate tables. These changes are done with the idea of expediting serving so that everyone can enjoy eating before the meeting starts and the speaker introduced.

**SPEAKING OF SPEAKERS** Our May speaker will be Beverly Tetterton who will be introducing us to the wonderful world of genealogy. The introductory overview will be followed up on Friday morning at the Community Building as Beverly conducts a genealogy workshop for those who wish to dig deeper into their roots and twigs.

**I TRY TO REMEMBER MY MANNERS, BUT SOMETIMES . . .** I forget those special words "Thank you". Thank you to all of the officers and board members for all of their faithful hard work; thank you to all of those folk who set up and clean up at each of the meetings; thank you to all of the volunteers from SHS who pitched in to help make the Murchison House Designer Showcase such a success, thank you Randy for allowing the Board to use the Southport Visitors Center each month for our meetings, and thank you to the volunteers at the Old Jail.

**SPEAKING OF THE OLD JAIL** The Board has voted to hire an architect to assist us with the finer points of compliance with the maze of regulations that are beginning to confront us. This seems to be a good time to "ask permission rather than beg forgiveness". We still anticipate that the restoration will be complete by July 2004, the Centennial of the building.

I hope to see all of you at the meeting on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

*Peter Wyckoff*



### NEW ADDRESS

Jon and Cinda Lewis have sold their beautiful old home in Southport and moved with mixed emotions to 2618 Monticello Drive, Winston-Salem, 27106, phone 336 722 1203. They would love to keep in touch with their Southport friends, and plan to visit here as often as possible.



## LOOKING BACK - THE HISTORY PAGE

Susan Carson, Editor

I am pleased to present an article on the history of naval stores by Bill Dunn who, as many of you know, is a charter member of the Southport Historical Society and a resident of Boiling Springs Lakes. Bill did an in-depth study of this topic which was so important to this region in the past and has graciously agreed to share his research with us.

### Naval Stores Bill Dunn

The production of naval stores was an important southeastern United States commercial venture from early colonial times to shortly after the Civil War. Although the industry continued for many years after this, its importance was drastically reduced with the gradual decline of wooden sailing ships which started in the Civil War period. Production of naval stores in Brunswick County continued until the 1930s.

The products of naval stores are resin (crude turpentine in the trade), turpentine, rosin, pine tar and pitch. The term "naval stores" originated from the use of these products by the British Navy in colonial times and the U.S. Navy in the construction of their wooden sailing ships and commercial sailing ships.

*Resin*, or crude turpentine (the sap from pine trees) is the raw material from which naval stores are produced. *Turpentine*, also known in the trade as "spirits" or "oil" or turpentine, was used in making paints, varnishes and preservatives in wooden ship building; for illuminating (when mixed with alcohol); in the manufacture of rubber goods; in medicines; and as a solvent. *Rosin* was used as a sealant in wooden ship building; in making lye soap and washing preparations; celluloid; roofing materials and other items. *Pine tar* was used as a preservative for sailing ship ropes and for caulking when mixed with jute fiber on wooden ships. *Pitch* (pine tar boiled to remove most of the water content) was used as a preservative and caulking in the construction of wooden ships.

Although all species of pine could be used, only two species were used to collect the raw materials to make naval stores: longleaf pine, which was then the most common species in southeastern United States; and slash pine, whose natural range was limited to Florida, South Carolina and coastal Georgia.

Two methods were employed in Brunswick County to extract the materials for naval stores: turpentine distilleries (called "stills" in the trade) and pine tar kilns (called "tarkle pits" in the trade).

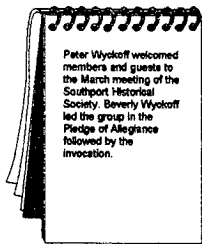
For turpentine stills the sap is collected by scarring the bark surface of the pine tree into the woody part of the tree trunk. Special, very sharp, knives called "hacks" with wooden handles, or long wood poles were used for this scarring, the knives leaving V-shaped scars for as much as 12-20 feet up the tree trunk. This scarring caused the tree to "bleed" pine sap (resin) which tended to flow down the center of the V cut to a collection pit called a "box" which was cut into the base of the tree about 12 inches above the ground. In later years small galvanized steel pans were nailed at the center of the V cut to collect the sap. A horse or mule-drawn sledge with barrels was pulled through the pine woods to collect the resin to take to the still.

At the still the resin was heated in special iron retorts with a firebox below. At a relatively low temperature the turpentine in the resin would vaporize and this vapor was passed through water-cooled condensers where the turpentine was collected as a liquid. What was left was rosin, a soft solid when it was cooled. Later copper retorts replaced those of iron, resulting in products of a higher quality.

Up until the 1930s, a turpentine still was operated in what is now Boiling Springs Lakes on Allen's Creek (now known as Boiling Springs Lake) just upstream from where N. C. 87 crosses the lake. There were also stills located in other parts of Brunswick County, especially at Supply and in the edge of the Green Swamp.

Note: The rest of the story, "Tarkle Pits", will appear in the next newsletter.

*Susie Carson*



## March Meeting Minutes

March 27, 2003 - Southport Historical Society  
Southport Community Building

Peter Wyckoff welcomed members and guests to the March meeting of the Southport Historical Society. Beverly Wyckoff led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the invocation.

Karen Knighton introduced the winner of the first Susan Sellers Carson scholarship, Katie Almirall from Oak Island. Katie, a South Brunswick senior, was selected on the basis of her history essay, which discussed the desegregation of Brunswick County schools.

Angie Vicarro, from Brunswick County Habitat for Humanity provided information on Habitat, its history and goals as well as information on the work it has done in this county. Volunteers and donations are needed to assure that homes are made available to those who need them. A new resale store has been opened in Ocean Isle and volunteers are needed there. Norm Carathanasis reported that the Gun Crew recently donated a firing to the Habitat Charity Auction that raised \$115.

The minutes from the November meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report – Wolf Furstenau provided a brief review of current activity and said that a full report is available on request. A new membership list was compiled and printed in March and copies were mailed with the March edition of the Whittler's Bench. Sales of the SHS books remain steady. Jon Lewis reported work on Susie Carson's new book, *Joshua's Legacy*, is complete and it is being edited.

Jail Report: Karen Knighton reported on progress at the old jail. A local architect will be hired to help oversee the process of obtaining the necessary permits for continuing work. Electrical permits, and issues of fire, safety, and accessibility must be resolved. Marvin Johnson and Irv Green continue to lead the volunteer efforts. Bert Felton was thanked for his assistance in finding a contact at Preservation NC..

Pat Kirkman announced the upcoming events scheduled for Heritage Days during Memorial Weekend. Events start with the next membership meeting, May 22 with Beverly Tetterton speaking on Genealogy 101. Friday, May 23, a Genealogy workshop will be held from 10-12 and it is free and open to the public. Saturday, May 24 is Heritage Day at the Community Building. Sunday May 25 will be a Heritage Tea, co-sponsored with the Southport Woman's Club and Monday May 26 will be a tribute to veterans.

Bob Lucas was nominated to replace Cinda Lewis as a director on the SHS board. Bob's election was unanimous.

The Old New Hanover Genealogical Society, which represents the five counties which originally formed New Hanover County (Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Pender, and New Hanover) presented an award to Susie Carson for her enduring efforts in history and genealogy.

Peter Wyckoff recognized outgoing board member Dick Hughes for his work. Dick completed his term in December. Certificates were mailed to Ann and Gary Brown in recognition of their work.

### Announcements:

\*Bob Lucas needs volunteers to assist with coverage for the Visitor's Center on Sunday afternoons.

\*Carolee Morris discussed the tour of the Murchison House sponsored by the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society.

\*Barbara Stockridge-Davidson announced the May 16 fundraiser for City Works.

Chris Suiter introduced Max Williams, the speaker for the evening who discussed the topic "Why did Johnny Reb fight?" Barbee Library on Oak Island will host Max Williams in a three part Civil War lecture series beginning April 15.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Knighton

## FROM THE LOWER CAPE FEAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Many, many thanks to the dozens of Southport Historical Society volunteers who helped staff the recent Designer Showcase House in Wilmington. Bob Lucas did a fantastic job of recruiting among the membership and the response was impressive. So much so that the Showcase committee designated a day to honor us, complete with a framed dedication in the foyer.



The Showcase, including special events and the gift shop, were all well received by the visiting public. Financial success seems assured as well, although that had not been a foregone conclusion. It was an extensive undertaking. To explain, for about two years the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society (LCFHS) has struggled with expenses and financial deficits. Along with all non-profit organizations and charities, we have experienced reduced income, while expenses continue unabated for maintaining the historic Latimer House. Thus much hope rested with this project and support from Southport meant a great deal.

LCFHS thankfully recognizes the following people for their gifts of time and support: : Howard and Janice Anderson, Barbara and Dick Brewer, Greg Bland, Audrey and Norm Carathanasis, Virginia Cannon, Earl and Judy Crotts, Peggy and Ray Campbell, Barbara and Ian Davidson, Bert Felton, Jane and Bob Felber, Cathy Fravel, Kate and Ennis Hardin, Judy and Richard Hughes, Randy Jones, Shirley Johnston, Dennis and Doris Johnston, Suzanne and John Knowles, Karen Knighton, Pat Kirkman, Richard Kirkman, Joan and Joe Lofink, Marilyn Lessin, Carol and Mark Levesque, Bob and Becky Lucas, Joan Madsen, Carolee and Ken Morris, Ginny and Bill Noble, Elmer and Mary Norwood, Walter and Majel Reinheimer, Carolyn Rhodes, Donna Silva, Ruth and Jim Smith, Susan Toth, Shirley Wilson, and Gibby Wilson.



## TREASURER'S REPORT

### INFLOWS

Income from Book Sales	\$823.95
Cannon Committee	100.00
Donations	10.00
Income from Dues	275.00
Bank Interest	49.67
Dividends	17.02
<b>TOTAL INFLOWS</b>	<b>\$1275.64</b>

### OUTFLOWS

Book Purchases	\$919.75
Meeting Supplies and Fees	150.00
Newsletter	336.50
Office Supplies	25.16
Old Jail	779.00
Postal Service	10.50
Printing	105.46
Quarterly Sales Tax Return	2.99
Sales Tax Paid	5.03
<b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>	<b>\$2344.39</b>

## BOOK REPORT



- On April 10th, 2003, 96 copies of *Fort Caswell in War and Peace* were purchased from the NC Baptist Assembly, publishers of Ethel Herring and Carolee Williams Book.
- The printers were given the go ahead on April 4 to reprint the book *Bald Head* by David Stick. The new print will include a photograph of Mr. Stick
- Final typesetting of the revised *Southport Secrets* is underway, following extensive reviews.
- Call for author(s): *The History of Brunswick County* ends around 1975. That is, Lawrence Lee's account of it. An update is now needed. It is a perfect project for a retired professor, or anyone who has kissed the Blarney Stone. The task can be divided into smaller parts, i.e., the history of St. James, etc. Interest? Contact Wolf Furstenau.

## VOLUNTEER(S) NEEDED!

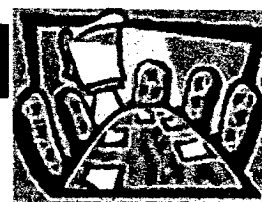
Jon Lewis provided a very much appreciated service to the SHS by keeping the Old Jail grounds mowed and trimmed. Now that he and Cinda have moved to their new home in Winston-Salem, we need someone (or ones) to take on the task of mowing, trimming, weeding and pruning. If you would like to take on all or a part of this task, please call Peter at 457 5599 (h) / 523 0266 (m) or Karen at 454 8018.



## GENEOLOGY WORKSHOP

Please join us in celebrating Southport Heritage Weekend with a Genealogy Workshop Friday, May 23, 2003 from 10:00 AM until noon at the Southport Community Building. Registration will begin at 9:30 AM. This free workshop is sponsored by the Southport Historical Society. Beverly Tetterton or Joe Sheppard will provide a genealogy presentation from 10:00 until 11:00 AM followed by a question and answer period. This is the opportunity to bring your genealogy questions and get started on your own family research. Please join us as we go "ancestor hunting". Refreshments will be provided.

## SHS BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



- Stephanie Van Noordt, architect, was hired to assist in meeting the building requirements at the Old Jail.
- A new format for the general meetings was adopted to assure that meetings are handled smoothly and efficiently.
- Southport Secrets is in the final review process and will be reprinted when the review is complete.
- The Cemetery Committee will be ask to develop a plan for maintaining The Burying Ground, including work to restore broken and damaged stones.
- A Heritage Tea will be held in conjunction with Heritage Days and will be co-sponsored with the Woman's Club.
- SHS's pledge to the Southport Community Building has been paid in full.
- Katie Alimrall won the first Susan Sellers Carson scholarship.
- Bids for the metal work at the Old Jail have been received and will be reviewed.



## S&H GREENPOINTS FOR SHS

Wolf Furstenau, SHS Treasurer, has obtained a Lowe's Foods rewards card in the Society's name. Individuals can donate their own Green Stamps (a few or many) to the Society's account by calling 1-800-435-5674 and giving the Hisotrical Society's account number (420220723650) to the Customer Care representative. We need a large coffee pot for Society functioning; the Lowe's catalogue lists a 60-cup coffee urn for 59,700 greenpoints. Please donate some of your points. This will enable the Society to fill other needs as they arise.