



THE WHITTLERS BENCH

Southport Historical Society

501 North Atlantic Avenue
Southport, North Carolina 28461

VOLUME XIX, NUMBER 1

JANUARY 1995

ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, January 26, 1995, at the Southport Maritime Museum. Refreshments will be served. As part of our annual business transactions, the enclosed financial report will be presented, as will revised bylaws. Peter Wyckoff has been nominated to replace Paul Sweeney on the Board of Directors, since Paul has completed his tour (and wants a rest!), and will be presented for election. The program will be on the ever-fascinating story of the 1878 "Christmas Ship," the City of Houston, which sank in a hurricane off Cape Fear. Wayne and Mary Strickland, who, I suspect, know more about this ship than its crew did, will give the presentation--lots of slides and artifacts!

IN MEMORIAM

The Historical Society wishes to express deepest sympathy to the family and friends of member Jack Fairley, who recently passed away. Jack's most recent service to the Society was his responsibility for Historical House Plaques.

JOSHUA POTTS MEMORIAL

On January 12, 1995, the Executive Board voted to advise the City of Southport that the Society's recommendation is to rename Waterfront Park the Joshua Potts Memorial Park to honor our town's founder.

1995 DUES ARE DUE

NAME _____

\$10

INDIVIDUAL

ADDRESS _____

\$15

HUSBAND/WIFE

\$25

SUSTAINING

\$150/200 LIFE

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

\$ _____

DONATION

MAIL TO: Southport Historical Society
501 North Atlantic Avenue
Southport, NC 28461

JOHN D. GILL NOTE

Gary Potts, member of our Society and one of the GILL survivors who attended the March 1994 ceremony, sent the Society a Christmas greeting with the following note:

"Just a note to everyone in the Society and everyone in Southport. Too bad we had to wait 52 years to renew the love and friendship that binds me to you. I think we should have done this years earlier when I did not look like the Old Man of the Sea! I wish to thank all of you for the tapes you have sent me. I certainly appreciate it. I am very proud of the fact that I regard myself as an honorary citizen of Southport. I fly the flag you gave me and my neighbors all ask what the idea is. I proudly tell them of all you folks. Not everyone has the opportunity to be associated with two cities. I feel so proud and humble to be considered a member of the City of Southport. With love, Gary

MOORE'S CREEK BATTLEGROUND ASSOCIATION

This year member Judy W. Thompson will again represent the Society as an Honorary Vice President at the 219th Anniversary Celebration of the Battle of Moore's Creek on February 25-26, 1995. The special Patriotic Program for the public will be held on Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at the National Battlefield.

PUBLICATION

The new edition of Cap'n Charlie and the Lights of the Lower Cape Fear will be available at the annual meeting. We held the price at \$10.00 (but this one is a paperback).

MEETING DATES FOR 1995

January 26
March 23 (Dinner)
May 25
September 28
November 16

Please put these dates on your calendar---times and places will be announced in the State Port Pilot and the Whittlers Bench, as will "dinner dates."

"Looking Back" - The History Page

Susan Carson, Editor

JANUARY 17, 1995



NOTE: In response to the plea of the "Looking Back" editor, Member Jeff Brooks of Raleigh, has sent in the following item. Thanks, Jeff.

TALL TALES FROM THE WHITTLED BENCH

Twice daily, weather permitting, there is a meeting of the SPLC* at The Bench or the nearby swings. At one of these meetings, Jeff told about the time he and Inez stopped in the small college town of Princeton, New Jersey for a coffee break at mid-morning while passing through on their way to New York.

As we entered, I saw a small gentleman sitting in a rear corner of the coffee shop. He had several pieces of yellow legal paper on the table in addition to his coffee and crullers. It was apparent that he was busily making some notes and geometric symbols on the paper. We took a table opposite him and I noticed that he looked vaguely familiar with his shock of graying hair, mustache and button-down cardigan sweater.

As we awaited our order, I glanced at him several times as he made notes and calculations and occasionally sipped his coffee. Once he glanced up at me and noted that I was looking in his direction. He smiled and we exchanged a greeting by nodding heads. His eyes twinkled as he looked over his spectacles.

Our coffee and doughnuts arrived and he became engrossed in his work. After thirty minutes or so, Inez and I got up to pay our tab. As we arose the old gentleman looked up, smiled and nodded again. As he did, I spoke and said to him, "You look very intense with your work. May I ask just what it is that engages your attention so much?" His eyes twinkled even more brightly as he politely replied: "Gedankin, Gedunkin"! and acknowledged our departure.

As I paid our ticket at the front register, Inez asked, "Did you know that old man?" "Didn't you recognize Dr. Einstein?", I replied. "I thought he looked familiar", she said. And we continued our travels during which time I told Inez that the most favorite expression of SPLC* is that "The first liar has not a chance"!

*SPLC - Southport Liar's Club. (Note from Susie: Jeff, I sure hope I got Dr. Einstein's reply correct - the copy was not real clear at that point!)

Editor's Note: We'll be running another item by Jeff real soon. And I'd be happy to hear from any of you out there who belong to the SPLC!

Now from Harold Watson comes another article on GROWING UP IN OLD SOUTHPORT. Please keep articles such as this coming to your editor. They are very popular - and anyone is welcome to contribute. Maybe you readers could go out and interview people who grew up in Southport and write up their stories for this column. Try it! And we have one more from Harold that will be run later.

"When my brother George got his appointment to sail on a ship out of Savannah, Ga., I got his job as soda jerk at our grandfather's drugstore (then Watson's Pharmacy, now the Pharmacy Restaurant). Ressie Whatley was senior and I was junior soda jerk. We had lots of fun meeting people and listening to their problems.

"When Bromo-Seltzer hit the market in the late 1920s, we had a dispenser at the soda fountain that measured out one dose, and after a big celebration, like the 4th of July, we sold more Bromos than we did cokes. One fellow wanted two cups - one with the dose of Bromo-Seltzer and the other with the carbonated water. He would pour it back and forth from one cup to the other until the foam quieted down, and then with one big gulp it was gone, and evidently so was his hangover. It was a going thing and I heard that a drugstore at Shallotte was selling more Bromos than any drugstore in North Carolina. About a year later I saw in the paper where the Federal agents found out there was something in the Bromo that wasn't supposed to be and that they had seized an entire warehouse full of Bromo somewhere in Georgia.

"Let's keep Southport's history moving. P. S. The fellow in this story said he'd rather have a drink of Jeris Hair Tonic than any bonded whiskey he'd ever drunk!"

I can't let this much space go to waste, so here's another little tidbit about our Smithville Heroine, Kate Stuart. This was found tucked into an old scrapbook. It was a newspaper clipping, but no source or date was shown.

"The Southern Railway has inaugurated a campaign to encourage the consumption of rice. A day is set apart on buffet cars for serving dainty and substantial dishes made of the great Southern cereal. People who do not know what rice batter cakes, waffles and muffins are surely are to be pitied. Rice is cooked and served in a great variety of ways, but we feel sorry for anybody whose opportunity in life has been so limited that they are in total ignorance of the superb Brunswick County dinner featured with steamed rice and stewed chicken and dumplings, with plenty of rich gravy. A real Brunswick County dinner consists also of a great variety of other things, and it reminds us to say that we have often wondered why Miss Kate Stuart, of the Stuart House at Southport, did not start a correspondence school to teach the uninitiated what a crackerjack dinner is."

Southport Historical Society

Southport, North Carolina 28461

SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

January 1, 1994 through December 31, 1994

RECEIPTS:

Dues	\$ 1300.00
Book Sales	5032.26
Card Sales	40.25
Quilt Card Sales	10.00
House Historic Plaques	500.00
Genealogy Certificates	30.00
Cemetery Fund Donations	45.00
John D. Gill Memorial Fund*	1325.35
John D. Gill Memorial Upkeep Fund	90.00
Bill Reaves Fund for Newsletter	502.00
Log Building Fund	15.00
Founder's Day - 1994	518.00
Bank Interest	203.44
Miscellaneous Donations	226.39
Miscellaneous Receipts	<u>121.30</u>
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 9958.99

DISBURSEMENTS:

Programs	\$ 147.11
Newsletter printing and postage	469.31
Association dues and publications	80.00
House Historic Plaques	121.20
Transfer to Abbie Bitney Cemetery Fund	295.00
Publications	
Reprint <u>Joshua's Dream</u> and <u>Cap'n Charlie</u>	6277.38
Purchase <u>Ft. Caswell</u> books	1300.00
Old Jail ten year lease	10.00
Old Jail Liability Insurance	200.00
John D. Gill Memorial ceremonies	
Monument	1460.15
Luncheon	257.60
Miscellaneous expenses and luncheon supplies	337.04
Founder's Day - 1994	651.44
Book Postage	59.88
Miscellaneous expenses and supplies **	<u>315.76</u>
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$11,981.87

*excluding 1993 donations
of \$460.87

**includes Log Building expense

---OVER---

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

January 1, 1994 through December 31, 1994

Beginning Balance:			
Check Account	\$	101.05	
Savings Account		7951.84	
Petty Cash		18.31	
	Total		\$ 8071.20
Deposits to Check Account	\$	2283.00	
Deposits to Savings Account		7570.99	
Deposits to Petty Cash		105.00	
	Total		\$ 9958.99
Disbursed from Check Account	\$10,565.10		
Disbursed from Savings Account	1300.00		
Disbursed from Petty Cash	116.77		
	Total		\$11,981.87
Ending Balance			
Check Account	\$	118.95	
Savings Account		5922.83	
Petty Cash		6.54	
	Total		\$ 6048.32

CEMETERY ENDOWMENT FUND
in honor of Abbie Bitney

as of December 31, 1994

Certificate of Deposit (maturity 11-21-95)	
Value (including interest of \$1333.58)	\$3463.58
Savings Account	
Balance (including interest of \$157.98)	\$1314.16