



THE WHITTLERS BENCH

Southport Historical Society

501 North Atlantic Avenue
Southport, North Carolina 28461

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Vol. XVII No. 6 September 1993

On Friday, October 1, 1993 we will host a social and presentation on the history of Fort Johnston.

The program will begin at 7:30 PM in the Community Building, or former WW II USO on the Garrison Grounds with a short talk about Fortifications and the Fort's involvement in all the country's wars. The speaker will be Dr. Wilson Angley, Researcher, Division of Archives and History, N. C. Department of Cultural Resources.

Dr. Angley has recently completed a technical report titled, "^{History} A HISTORY OF FORT JOHNSTON ON THE LOWER CAPE FEAR". Copies of the report are available for review in the Southport Maritime Museum. The Southport Historical Society plans to assist in the publishing of the history of Fort Johnston next year. We are in the process of preparing graphics, editing, indexing, obtaining photographs and preparing the manuscript. Any ideas, pictures or assistance would be very welcome. After the presentation, there will be a question and answer period. We hope all everyone wants to know about the oldest, continuous military establishment in North Carolina will be explained.

Following the lecture there will be refreshments and an opportunity to meet the author. This program is open to the public and we encourage every member to bring friends and neighbors. Society members are asked to bring some of their favorite cookies so we can have a cookie extravaganza.

NOMINATIONS

Please contact your president, 457-4712, with proposed candidates for the 1994 officers and Directors of your society. Should you not want a call requesting that you serve on the Executive Board, I suggest you volunteer to serve on the nominating committee.

SOUTHPORT DISPLAY - SOUTHPORT-BRUNSWICK COUNTY LIBRARY SEPTEMBER 1993

Be sure to visit the library in Southport this September. The Historical Society will be displaying pictures of the Southports around the world and across the United States.

The similarities are astounding. At first glance, you will be sure that some of the pictures were taken in our town.

We have identified a dozen Southports in four countries and six states. We are positive that some of the information will be most interesting to your family, friends and visitors.

OPPORTUNITY

The moores Creek Battleground Association, Inc. would like a special representative from the Southport Historical Society at their Patriotic Program on Sunday 27, 1994 at 2:30 PM.

We would like a volunteer on a recommendation of someone to be our official representative and Honorary Vice President at the Battleground Association. We would also like to see a large support group. Mark it on next years calendar and plan to attend. The guest speaker will be Dr. Bobby G. Moss, Noted Historian.

"Looking Back" - The History Page

Susan Carson, Editor

SEPTEMBER 1993



SOME BIG PLANS IN THE MAKING! You will recall that our Founders Day gathering during the Bicentennial Year was such a success that we promised those attending that we would do it again in 1994. Well, 1994 is almost upon us, so I asked the Executive Board for permission to start the planning for that Big Occasion. Permission was granted and I have asked the following Society members to serve with me on the committee: Cheryl Daniel, Paul Sweeney, Mary Shannon and Bill Reaves. ALL OF YOU resident members will be asked to help in some way - just remember that!

MERCHANT MARINE MEMORIAL: Here again, I've been doing a lot of talking and now it is time for some action. I think we have enough information to make tentative plans at least. And again I asked the Executive Board for permission to get going on this. I have asked the following to serve with me: Mary Shannon, Edgar Keal, Chris Suiter, and Francey Wertz. You can bet that you will be hearing much from this committee - and soon.

DO YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EARLY: Give a friend or relative a membership in Southport Historical Society! Think how easy that would be. Or honor him or her with a gift to our Cemetery Endowment Fund. We'll send a pretty card telling the recipient of your gift. And there is a list of publications and notecards that you may choose from - see the Historical Society brochure. No wrapping service available, though!

Membership Committee
Publications Committee

We express our thanks to Jeff Brooks of Raleigh for the following article. Jeff comes from an old Southport family (Galloway - well, also Adams) and he and his wife are members of the Society.

SHRIMP: 10¢ PER LB. WITH HEADS ON, 15¢ WITH HEADS OFF

I had walked up from the Old Yacht Basin to Grandmother Maggie Adams' home on Brown Street, through the back door and laid the brown paper bag with a dozen or so large shrimp (heads on) upon the kitchen table. I rinsed my hands at the cold water tap on the back porch and walked to the front porch to tell Grandma that David (her son, Cap'n David Adams of the Patricia) had sent along some nice shrimp for supper from our day's catch at Long Beach. Grandma asked, "Where did you put them?". When I replied, "On the table" she said "Oh, my! Run put them in the icebox or the cat will get them". By the time I got back to the kitchen table, that black and white Tomcat had gotten into the sack, cleaned and eaten all the shrimp, leaving hulls, tails and heads strewn about on the table.

For a "city-raised" kid, Old Southport was a great place with many things to do, especially going fishing and shrimping. Cap'n David had driven me over to Wilmington to get my "Social Security Numbers" since I was under age sixteen and only a few workers like "child actors" and "fishermen" could get a Social Security number in those days.

(continued on next page)

Being a "land-lubber" from Washington, D. C., Cap 'n David took occasional delight in taunting me about getting seasick or a queasy stomach. One particular day when the Patricia was rolling and pitching considerably, I was standing waist deep in the hold culling the shrimp before icing them. Cap'n David said, "What you need, Jeff, is a piece of salt pork on a string". That did it! After a few minutes I recovered and never again got either seasick or airsick. Also, I never got over just how fast that old Tomcat could clean and eat a dozen large shrimp!

Many pleasant summers were spent in Southport. My wife, Inez, and I have always tried to be on hand for the 4th of July celebrations, only missing if I were out of the country with the military or building Geodesic Domes for the U. S. Information Agency or the Department of Commerce.

Several years ago the Patricia was lost off Long Beach during a bad weather spell. I was told by Cap'n Adams that his last paying fishing party of six had to abandon ship with their catch in plastic bags and swim for shore. Cap'n Adams is buried in the Old Smithville Burying Grounds and is survived by his wife, Deenie Mae, and his daughter, Patricia, who is now living in Alaska.

Then - there was the time that "Skippy", "Bohunkus" and several of us caught that 9-1/2 foot shark off the pier at the end of Howe Street - but that's another story.

See you at Whittlers' Bench soon.

Jeff Brooks

NOTE TO JEFF: Please send us the shark story. Also, why not a little "biography" of Cap'n David or one of your other ancestors. One of these days we want to publish a little book of Old Southport biographies.

The next article comes from Chris Suiter, who with his wife Debbie, has been doing interesting things in Alaska this past summer.

A SMALL STORY OF THE CIVIL WAR: "GOT BACK"

Despite Old Smithville's well-deserved reputation for hospitality, not all of it's visitors were graciously received. One such unwelcome visitor was Union Navy Lt. William B. Cushing, a famous Civil War daredevil, who visited the town several times. (He claimed to have "captured" it in 1865, after the Confederates had all departed, of course!) Cushing's first visit, in February 1864, is what concerns us here: a midnight raid in small boats sneaking past the forts. Cushing and his men were trying to catch Confederate General Hebert in his nightshirt, and they landed right in front of the General's hotel in the darkest part of the night. The only persons awake and about in Smithville were two black men at work in the salt works. (The Confederacy had such a great need for salt that this works, and all the others in the Cape Fear region, operated around the clock, their continuous fires to boil away the seawater serving as beacons to both blockade runner pilots and Yankee raiders!) Since surprise was of the essence, the hapless black men were seized as prisoners of the Union Navy so they could not raise an alarm. Luckily for him, the General was not at home; so, as a consolation prize perhaps, the two blacks and a

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Captain Kelly of the Confederate Engineers, who was in the hotel, were carried away in the boats back to Lt. Cushing's ship, the USS Monticello.

This is not Cushing's story, however; this story belongs to the amazing young man who the Wilmington Daily Journal of 23 June 1864 identified, in the style of the time, as a "colored boy named Sam, but generally called Dick, a servant of Mrs. Catherine Allen, of Brunswick County....(who) arrived here this week from Nassau on board the steamer Alice"(which was, of course, a blockade runner in 1864!) In the newspaper article entitled "Got Back", Sam gave an account of his trip. After being taken away in the boats, he was kept thirteen days on board the USS Monticello, together with Captain Kelly and the other black man, Josh Howard. They were taken to Fort Norfolk, Virginia (Rip Raps) for three weeks, and then sent to Camp Hamilton near Fortress Monroe, Virginia, until 29 April 1864 when Sam was turned loose and sent to Baltimore. From his capture in Smithville until his arrival in Baltimore was precisely two months. Sam was separated from Josh Howard in Norfolk and did not know what happened to him; Captain Kelly was sent to prison camp at Point Lookout, Maryland.

The following quote from the article relates the next steps in this saga! "Arrived at Baltimore, Sam, by a summary process known to persons he met with on his travels, transferred his allegiance to the British Crown and his birthplace to Turk's Island, found out that he had been captured on a British steamer, and sought the assistance of the British consul to have him returned to his saline home. The Consul at Baltimore sent him on to New York, and the Consul at New York sent him to Nassau on board the schooner Mary Harris, Captain Dennis. He staid (sic) in Baltimore only one day, and in New York less than a week. Got to Nassau on the 25th May, and found one or more persons from Wilmington or Smithville, who helped him. Major Hyliger, Confederate Agent at Nassau, gave permission to come here and he got a passage on the Alice. Yesterday morning he got a passport from the Provost Marshal and went over to Brunswick to report to his 'old Missus' "...One of the major incentives for Sam's efforts to return home was "that he found the Yankees would be sure to clap him in the army... If he had to take that chance, he would rather take it 'for his own folks', but upon the whole he would rather not take it at all...A person informed him that having claimed to be born on Turk's Island, he was a Turk and ought to have at least three wives. Sam don't seem to know about that."

With that observation, this determined and resourceful man disappears from the stage of history. What happened to Sam in later years? Are his descendants still in this area?
