

THE WHITTLERS BENCH

Southport Historical Society

501 North Atlantic Avenue
Southport, North Carolina 28461

Vol. XVIII No. 1 January 1994

ANNUAL MEETING

The Southport Historical Society Annual Meeting will be held beginning at 6:30 pm Thursday, January 27, 1994 in the Trinity United Methodist Church on the corner of East Nash Street and Atlantic Avenue.

The meeting will be a covered dish supper. We are asking everyone to bring their favorite dish. Please invite friends and neighbors to join us.

PROGRAM: "Southport Architecture". The speaker will be Mr. Ed. Turburg, Architectural Historian and Restoration Expert.

ELECTIONS

The Nominating Committee submitted the following slate of candidates:

PRESIDENT	Eleanor Smith
VICE PRESIDENT	Cheryl Daniel
SECRETARY	Susie Carson
TREASURER	Francey Wertz, Incumbent
ARCHIVIST	Noni Rogers
DIRECTOR (2 yr. term)	Ray Bitney
DIRECTOR (1 yr. term)	Paul Sweeney
DIRECTOR (3 yr. term)	Chris Suiter (elected 1993)

1994 DUES ARE DUE

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

\$10 INDIVIDUAL
\$15 HUSBAND/WIFE
\$25 SUSTAINING
\$150/200 LIFE
\$ _____ DONATION

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

OVER

PATRIOTIC PROGRAM

On Sunday February 27, 1994 at 2:30 PM we have been invited to attend the 218th Anniversary Celebration of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge, Moores Creek National Battlefield, Currie, North Carolina. Our representatives and honorary vice presidents of the Moores Creek Battleground Association will be Judy Thompson and Chris Suiter. They have a great program planned. Dr. Bobby G. Moss, noted historian and author will be the guest speaker. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

1994

The incoming Executive Board will be challenged by the following:

1. Moving the Historic Log Home. A great request has been submitted to the N.C. Division of Archives and History.
2. Installing a marker to honor Merchant Mariners killed off our coast in WWII and buried in the Northwood Cemetery.
3. Conducting Founders Day 1994.
4. Initiating a Living History Video Program.
5. Preparing a booklet describing the Bicentennial Quilt and installing a permanent sign in city hall to identify the squares.
6. Publishing with assistance from the NC Division of Archives and History The History of Fort Johnston. Pictures are still needed to support the book.
7. Considering what to do about our headquarters in the Old Brunswick County Jail when the lease expires on August 9th.
8. Assisting the City and Southport 2000 in developing an Old Smithville Burial Ground brochure and in preservation of the cemetery.
9. Reprinting the Cap'n Charlie book.
10. Conducting informative and fun meetings and programs.

APPRECIATION

Thanks to the Officers, Directors, and Society members for making the past year a success.

Don

"Looking Back" — The History Page

Susan Carson, Editor

JANUARY 14, 1994



I hope all you local readers of "Looking Back" will show up at the Annual Meeting of the Society on January 27th. (See front page announcement). Our covered dish dinners are always good. Be sure to watch for some "historic" dishes such as Mary Shannon's "Hoppin' John", Susie Carson's "Duffy Cakes", and best of all, Mary Gore's "Potta Collards" - or as we sometimes say in these parts, "A mess o' collards". Also, I'm expecting someone to bring in some "Brown Dogs", a real special treat. In fact, there's just no telling the Old Southport dishes you might find at the dinner, so come join us.

At the meeting you'll also hear an up-to-date report of the exciting news from the Merchant Seamen Memorial Committee (sinking of SS John D. Gill on Marh 12, 1942, in case you don't remember or had not heard).

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NOW for our regular feature: This article comes to us from Bill Reaves who is always on the lookout for interesting items for Whittlers Bench. This one comes from The Wilmington Messenger, Wilmington, N. C., March 26, 1897:

A STRANGER'S FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF SOUTHPORT - SOME SUGGESTIONS TO THE CITY FATHERS-
THE MANY NATURAL ADVANTAGES OF THIS PLEASANT TOWN.

Robert Burns, the famous Scottish poet, gave expression to the idea that we could improve our condition by seeing how we were regarded by others. Perhaps it is a wholesome thing now and then, to take a look at ourselves through another's spectacles and on this idea I propose to give some of my impressions of Southport. If these lines should appear to criticise (sic) it will be with the kindest intentions.

While talking with a newly arrived Englishman, many years ago, I asked what impressed him most strongly on his reaching this country. His reply was: "The price of matches." They were selling for 5 cents per box then. In vain we try to steer a straight course down the street, from one corner to another, where we hope to find a friendly lamp post. The post was sometimes in evidence but not a ray of light other than the stars, save here and there a stray beam which escapes through a window shutter to somebody's parlor or sitting room.

It may be that the inhabitants of Southport, being the descendants of a long line of pilots, do not feel the need of street lamps. It is said that a skillful pilot develops a sixth sense, in the power of knowing where his vessel is and how she ought to go even in the darkest night, as if by instinct.

But how is the stranger to know that in order to reach the post office from Harper's store he should steer southwest, half-west, until Bald Head light bears on his port bow, then put his helm hard a starboard, otherwise he will surely run afoul of Pyke's office.

If his course should be in the direction of the wharf, along the regular channel of Moore Street, with the wind fresh from the southwest, he is expected to luff up sharply while the lights of the combination are just abaft (?) his starboard quarter or he will capsize somewhere in the neighborhood of the courthouse.

As a matter of fact, unless the stranger gets his bearings all right and heaves his lead very often, the guileless wayfarer with a limited knowledge of the stars will run afoul of about everything within reach, before he reaches the haven of his intentions.

It seems remarkable that a town of the size and importance of Southport should have no street lamps. We do not expect electric lights or even gas, but kerosene is cheap and good. The city fathers should wake up and illuminate. It would not only impress strangers more favorably but would be a comfort to homefolks, while its cost would be a mere bagatelle. That the community is remarkably quiet and law abiding is proven by the fact that one man constitutes the chief and only policeman required. Local option prevails here and those who are bibulously inclined are required to steer to the northwest, a mile or so, to slake their thirst.

Unlike any seaport town on the South Atlantic, Southport is on high ground, well drained, dry and well-shaded. The streets are broad, level and well-shaded by beautiful live oaks. These stand just where nature put them, as often in the centre as on one side of the streets. Between and among them the vehicles pass and in so doing make a serpentine track on its otherwise green surface. These live oaks are green all year round and furnish a grateful shade in summer, while the high location of the town, facing the ocean, makes it delightfully breezy and pleasant. To one who wants a place to enjoy his dolce far niente there is here every requisite. These qualities, with the added attraction of the water, in the way of sailing, bathing and fishing, make Southport an ideal place for a summer resort, if it had a railroad.

In the matter of railroads they have high hopes but the present condition of the projected railroad is not very flattering. Still it must come and it will come. Places of less size and commercial importance have secured roads and Southport will do so too, if they keep on hammering at it.

With the road built the town would keep full of health and pleasure seekers all the year round, for winter sports may be had, in the way of hunting the wild ducks, turkeys and deer in the immediate vicinity. At present it takes more time and trouble to come here from Asheville, Charlotte or Raleigh than to reach New York from those places.

The magnificent harbor makes it a splendid place of refuge for all coastwise vessels bound north and south and a fine coaling station. These things are bound to come but they will come very slowly, unless our people "get a move on them" and help push the improvements along. We must not do too much waiting for something to turn up but do some of the turning ourselves.

Southport has many natural advantages and should grow into a large and important seaport, with a good foreign trade. That such will be the result I am fully convinced. It is said that one may have the finest and most perfect invention or machine known and still the world will not run after it. The owner must advertise and push it to make it a success. IT is the same way with a town; we must all unite to shove it along the road of progress or we will not get there. One potent factor in this way is a good home paper. Its power to do good in the line of progress is inestimable. IT builds up trade and keeps us in touch with the rest of the world. Trying to do business without

HISTORY PAGE CONTINUED, 3

advertising is said to be like winking at your girl in the dark, you know it but she don't. (Remember, folks, I am quoting this!)

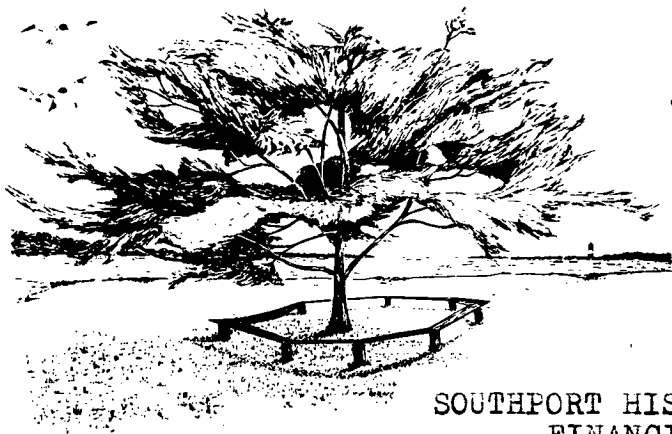
A united effort on the part of our citizens here, in promoting the material prosperity of the town would certainly have good results. But ~~of~~ **this** more anon."

(signed) Thomas C. Harris

Well, I'm glad he liked our trees and breeze, at least! Can you imagine a newspaper of today printing a wordy letter such as this?

This editor of the History Page is beginning to run out of things to print. I'd sure like to hear from some of you readers as to what you want to read about. Also, how about some more stories from you old timers about growing up in Southport?

For our next issue I would like very much to have some comments from those of you who may have been living in Southport ~~back~~ ^{back} in March 1942 when the SS JOHN D. GILL was sunk off Southport by a German U-boat and the survivors and bodies brought here. Please let me hear from you soon.



THE WHITTLERS BENCH

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SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

December 1, 1992 through December 31, 1993

RECEIPTS:

Dues	\$1457.00
Book Sales	2084.50
Card Sales	28.50
Quilt Card Sales	0.50
Plaque	100.00
Genealogy Certificates	130.00
Cemetery Fund Donations	40.59
"John D. Gill" Fund Donations	460.87
Bank Interest	189.24
Prepaid Postage	17.00
Miscellaneous Donations	59.62
Miscellaneous	65.70

TOTAL RECEIPTS \$4633.52

DISBURSEMENTS:

Program	\$ 73.50
Newsletter printing and postage	335.04
Association dues and publications	72.00
Plaque	50.00
Printing	
Society Brochure	443.08
Fort Johnston Book	249.88
Miscellaneous book expense	35.00
Old Jail maintenance	177.20
Quilt Display Case	465.19
Fort Johnston speaker - video tape	58.30
Transfer to Cemetery Fund	110.59
Purchase <u>Captain Charlie</u> books	280.00
Log Building expense	20.00
Travel expense	46.00
Miscellaneous postage	40.40
Miscellaneous expense and supplies	132.13

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS \$2588.31

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FINANCIAL SUMMARY
December 1, 1992 through December 31, 1993

Beginning Balance:		
Check Account	\$ 214.62	
Savings Account	5790.10	
Petty Cash	21.27	
Total		\$6025.99
Deposits to Check Account	\$2471.78	
Deposits to Savings Account	2161.74	
Total Deposits		\$4633.52
Disbursed from Check Account	\$2585.35	
Disbursed from Petty Cash	2.96	
Total Disbursed		\$2588.31
Ending Balance:		
Check Account	\$ 101.05	
Savings Account	7951.84	
Petty Cash	18.31	
Total		<u>\$8071.20</u>

* * * * *

CEMETERY ENDOWMENT FUND
As of December 31, 1993

Certificate of Deposit (maturity 11-21-95)	
Value (including interest of \$1064.13)	\$3194.13
Savings Account	
Balance (including interest of \$121.25)	\$982.43

MEMBERSHIP OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1993

Aldridge, Victoria L.
Allen, Ada W. (Lenoir, N.C.)
Bennett, David W. (Calabash)
Blake, Gertrude
Briggs, James F.
Butters, M/M Kenneth (Margate, Fl)
Allen, M/M Edward (Long Beach)
Barnes, M/M Leonard (Savannah, Ga.)
Bitney, Dr. Ray H.
Blocker, Lucy S. (Bowie, Md)
Brooks, M/M Jeff (Raleigh)
Callahan, M/M Daniel
Carson, Susan S.
Causey, Gwendolyn (Supply)
Cornwell, Sherry (Mt. Pleasant, S.C.)
Davis, M/M Stanley (Baton Rouge)
Carter, M/M Robert (Charlotte)
Cochran, Cassie S.
Corbett, Dr. Richard (Wilmington)
Daniel, M/M Roy C.
Doshier, M/M Fred. G. (Alpharetta, Ga)
Doshier, M/M Wilbur (Cincinnati)
Dunn, M/M William S. (BSL)
Etheridge, David (Key West)
Fairley, M/M Jack P.
Fortney, Dr./M Sidney (Concord)
Grable, M/M Jerry (Long Beach)
Gause, George (McAllen, TX)
Dowling, Cindy
Ellington, M/M Charles
Enright, Peggy A. (York, S.C.)
Ezzell, Mary M.
Forstner, Dr. J. R.
Furstenau, Wolfgang (Long Beach)
Gavin, Lillian W.
Gooding, M/M Ronald (Long Beach)
Gore, M/M H. Orie
Grainger, M/M W. G. (Wilmington)
Gray, Thomas W. (Long Beach)
Griffin, Elizabeth W.
Hardee, Lewis, Jr. (New York)
Hardee, M/M Lewis, Sr.
Harper, M/M James M.
Henderson, M/M W. B. (Wilmington)
Hewett, M/M Coy (Long Beach)
Hewett, Mrs. Joyce
Hobbs, Maie C. (Wilmington)
Holden, M/M Norman
Holtz, Doreen (Chino, CA)
Hon, Roberta
Huntley, M/M Art
Johnson, M/M Donald K.
Kalmanson, Mrs. Arnold (Hebron, MD)
Kaufman, M/M Henry
Keal, M/M Edgar (Wilmington)
Keith, Mayzel (Wilmington)
Kotowski, Minnie F. (Wyndotte, MI)
Laos, M/M Ronald (Fredericksburg, VA)
LaBare, Dennis (Randalltown, MD)
Lawrence, M/M Deane F.
Leavitt, M/M Robert (Springfield, VA)
Lessin, M/M Donald
Liese, Susan
Loughlin, M/M Joseph S.
Lynch, Jane (San Diego, CA)
Marley, M/M Walter
Marlowe, Mary Catherine (Wilmington)
McDonald, Nancy L. (Durham)
McGowan, M/M W.L. (Bradon, Fl)
McNeil, Sarah A.
Michaux, Donna (Long Beach)
Milliken, M/M Horace
Morgan, Deborah T. (Salisbury, N.C.)
Munson, Dorothy P. (Dayton, OH)
Myers, M/M Burton
Netreba, Laurie (Emeryville, CA)
Norment, Mary L. (Charlotte)
Oliver, M/M Edward L.
Oliver, M/M John H. (Long Beach)
Oliver, Virginia S. (Wheaton, MD)
Parry, Cynthia
Paty, M/M Charles (Charlotte & Long Beach)
Phillips, Dr/M William
Pierson, M/M Samuel (Laurens, S.C.)
Pollitt, Roy C. (Disputanta, VA)
Propst, M/M James F.
Quinn, M/M Robert
Rabon, Dr/M James
Reaves, Bill (Wilmington)
Rehder, Laverne G.
Reinheimer, M/M (Long Beach)
Rider, Maureen
Rogers, Elnora
Rogers, Ludelfia
Rosse, Dr/M Mark (Rockville, Md)
Schmidt, M/M H.A.
Shannon, M/M (Wilmington)
Shannon, Wm. J. (El Segundo, CA)
Smith, M/M Carroll W. (Greenville, S.C.)
Smith, James W.
Smith, Eleanor P.
Spencer, M/M Harold
Spencer, Vicki
Strickland, M/M B. Wayne
Suiter, M/M Christorpher
Swain, Carl E. (Claxton, GA)
Swain, M/M John J.
Sweeney, M/M Paul W.

MEMBERSHIP LIST, CONTINUED

Thompson, Mary J. (Lewes, DE)
Thompson, Judy W. (Wilmington)
Tucker, M/M Don M.
Walsh, M/M (Charlotte)
Ward, Teresa (Long Beach)
Watson, M/M Harold B. (Long Beach)
Watson, M/M D. I. (Long Beach)
Wertz, Francey C.
Wesson, Mrs. Joanne
Wilson, Grace A.
Wilson, M/M Benjamin A., Jr.
Wyckoff, M/M Peter L.
Young, M/M Albert B. (Leland)
Zimmerman, Dolores (Rock Hill, N. Y.)