



SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Southport Historical Society will meet Thursday evening October 23rd at 7:00 p.m. at the Southport Baptist Church (basement). There will be a meeting and a covered dish dinner. Everyone please bring your favorite covered dish.

Our guest speaker for Thursdays meeting will be Mr. Carl Swain, a genealogist and lifetime member of the Southport Historical Society. Mr. Swain will be spending the week in the area doing research.

Mr. Swain has ancestors from Brunswick County. He will speak on his methods for genealogical research and some of the interesting experiences he has encountered. Areas he has knowledge in include computer search technology, National Archives records, and European sources.

SOCIETY HEARS PRESERVATIONIST

On September 9th Southport Historical Society held a special called meeting to confer with a representative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation about the future of preservation efforts in our community. John Meffert, assistant director of the Southern field office in Charleston, presented a slide program of projects in North Carolina that have been assisted by the National Trust. He then held an open discussion session to answer questions concerning the work of his division and particular problems now being faced in our community. About 20 members of the historical society and other interested persons attended the meeting.

Earlier in the day, Meffert toured Southport to make photographs and conduct an on-the-scene evaluation of sites that are of potential concern in historic preservation. He also met with city manager Col. Quentin Martin and members of the Lightship Commission to discuss ideas for the future and to explain the services the National Trust is prepared to offer.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a private, non-profit organization chartered by Congress to encourage public participation in the preservation of sites, buildings and objects significant in American history and culture. It offers educational programs, workshops, and consultation services to institutions and communities throughout the state. The National Trust publishes a monthly newsletter "Preservation News" and a bimonthly magazine "Historic Preservation", both of which are included in annual membership dues. The Preservation Press publishes many timely and useful books on architecture, archaeology, community planning, and a variety of other topics related to preservation. The National Trust is supported primarily through membership dues and private endowments.

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NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION (Con't)

For information about individual memberships in the National Trust, you may write to the national headquarters: The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20036. A list of current publications may also be obtained from this address.

Southport Historical Society is a member of the National Trust and our archives has complete sets of the above mentioned periodicals for the past four years. Our members may use this and other material in the collection by contacting Mrs. Susan Carson, archivist.

Following is a list of monographs presented to Southport Historical Society by Mr. Meffert on his recent visit. These have been placed in our archives and may be borrowed by our members. Please contact Mrs. Carson about the use of any of these booklets that are of interest to you:

The Preservation of Churches, Synagogues and Other Religious Structures

Private Funds for Historic Preservation

Revolving Funds for Neighborhood Preservation

Neighborhood Conservation

Rural Conservation

Preservation Education: Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade

Public Relations for Local Preservation Organizations:
Press Relations, Public Education and Special Events

Community Events and How to Organize Them

Preservation of Concert Halls, Opera Houses and Movie Palaces

OLD SOUTHPORT CEMETERY

The recent vandalism at the Old Southport Cemetery has been brought to the society's attention. We urge all members to take advantage of our beautiful fall weather to tour the cemetery, and offer suggestions on the preservation of this site.

SMITHVILLE - 100 YEARS AGO

(February 26, 1880) A small one-story frame house in Smithville, the property of Charles Hudgins of Wilmington, was destroyed by fire. The house was occupied by a black family, who were absent at the time.

(August-1880) - Capt. John W. Harper, master of the river steamer "Passport," was the first to refer to New Inlet dam as the "Rocks". He was also the first to take excursion passengers to that point.

GEORGE E HUBBARD

The Southport Historical Society is continuing its efforts to obtain oral histories from our residents. The following is an excerpt from an interview with Mr. George E. Hubbard. Mr. Hubbard was born in South Carolina on October 18, 1890.

"I moved to Southport in 1913. Ford Motor Company was looking for a place to start a new dealership. They chose Southport because it had more money than any town in two states. All the ships stopped at the foot of the street for coal and groceries. There were seven fish factories. Three were located where Sunny Point is now. We started the dealership where First Citizens Bank is now. I sold the first Ford to a man from Myrtle Beach and had to deliver it to him. When I got to Myrtle Beach there were two shacks and people pulling fishing nets. I had the dealership until they quit making Model T's. Ford Motor Company made us buy equipment that cost \$3,000.00 to repair Model T's and the next week we got a notice that they were not going to make Model T's anymore. After that I operated a service garage on Howe Street for 55 years and never missed one day of work."

"I joined the Southport Fire Department in 1914 when I sold them their first truck. It cost \$285.00 and took me a year to talk them into buying it. Harry Aldridge was an electrician and we made him chief. When he died the boys appointed me chief and I remained chief for 19 years. The city and county didn't give us any money. We had to raise funds for the trucks with fish fries and plays on the stage at the school. Bunn Frank introduced a bill in the Senate for the volunteer firemen to have a pension fund. Every fireman in the state had to pay \$1.00. I was the first man to draw a check from the fund."

"For six of the 19 years I was fire chief I was also an alderman and I did the same things the city manager does today."

"The town had a baseball team. The ball field was where the ice plant was located. The team built the field and we played on Saturdays. The scouts came here to watch us play. I sold Edmund Lewis, our pitcher, to the St. Louis Cardinals, but he got homesick and came back to Southport"

SPECIAL REPORT ON THE TOWN OF SOUTHPORT

The following are excerpts from South-Eastern Underwriters Association. Inspection. dated February 15 1916. This report was loaned to the society by Fire Chief Harold Aldridge.

FIRE RECORD - It is claimed that for a period of twenty-five years fire losses do not exceed \$20,000. In 1914 one fire destroyed 3 buildings with a total value listed at \$6,000. In 1915 a mercantile building valued at \$5,000 was destroyed. These seem to be the most serious fires in the history of the town.

CONFLAGRATION HAZARD- Although the larger values are on the whole well distributed and in many instances well detached unsafe flues the large amount of frame shingle roof construction and the fact that this section is subject to winds of high velocity introduce a marked conflagration hazard in the residential districts as well as in the mercantile area. The mercantile district is fairly well protected and most of the dwellings are located within 500 feet of hydrants.

TOPOGRAPHY: None of the streets are paved and the deep sandy soil prevalent throughout the town offers a serious impediment to the passage of fire apparatus.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM- None at present. Town officials expect to install a bell and proper signals at an early date. There is a telephone at pumping station at power plant, at chief's residence and at quite a number of the firemens homes.