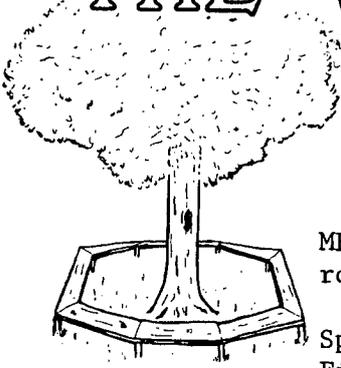


Susie

# THE WHITTLERS BENCH



SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

501 N. Atlantic Ave. • SOUTHPORT, NORTH CAROLINA 28461

January 12, 1990

**MEETING:** Historical meeting will be held at the Public Library Board room on West Moore Street on Thursday, January 25, 1990 at 7:30 PM.

Speaker for the meeting will be Mr. Gehrig Spencer, Director of Fort Fisher. Mr. Gehrig's talk will include information concerning the past history of The Fort and future plans.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:** Being your President for two years has been a special opportunity. In addition to being educational, getting to know you has truly enriched my life.

The Society has grown from 33 members to 108. The Heritage Garden was planted at the Jail and a new office and library were built there. Halloween Night at the jail and the 4th of July Antique Show have become worthy customs of the city. Financially we have progressed from red to black. Best of all is the enthusiastic interest and spirit of the Historical Society.

Credit for our growth in membership and activities is due to the work of our Board of Directors and Committee Chairmen and the the interest of each of you. Thank you. PAUL W. SWEENEY

**EDUCATIONAL TRIP:** There is not a Garden Page in this issue because our Garden Editor, Flora Greensleeves, is on a short trip to London. While there she is visiting and studying 19th Century gardens for information to include in the garden book which she will be writing later and which we hope will be published by the Southport Historical Society.

**MEMBERSHIP DUES:** Dues are now due for 1990. Below is a due's form. If more convenient, you may mail your dues in to the Society at the above address. PLEASE GET YOURS IN IMMEDIATELY.

1990 MEMBERSHIP DUES

NAME /NAMES \_\_\_\_\_

- \$ 10.00 Individual
- \$ 15.00 Husband/Wife
- \$ 25.00 Sustaining
- \$100.00 Life (one person)
- \$150.00 Life (couple)

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

GOOD NEWS TO REPORT: A few months ago the Historical Society purchased an ad in The Genealogical Helper requesting information about descendants of our first Town Commissioners: Joshua Potts, Charles Gause, William Espy Lord, Robert Howe, Jr., and Benjamin Smith. Benjamin Smith died childless, but we are looking for collateral kin descendants. As a result of the ad, we know some of the descendants of the first four and collateral kin of Smith. In fact, one of our own members (Pauline Smith Swain) falls into this latter category. Of course, we are looking for others, also.

The reason for our special interest is that when Southport's Bicentennial Year is celebrated in 1992, the descendants/kin of those first five Town Commissioners will be issued special invitations to the festivities. We will also be recognizing descendants of many of the town's early settlers - as many as we can get addresses for. We have an impressive list so far, but we need help in discovering others. Do you know any? If you do, please get in touch with us right away. Some of the early "Movers and Shakers" of the new Town of Smithville (in addition to the Commissioners) were: Robert Potter, Henry Long, John Huske, Jonathan Swain, Joseph Swain, Thomas Drew, Benjamin Blaney, Stephen Copes, John Conyers, Emmanuel Garcia, John Brown, Richard Willson, Daniels, Price, Sellers, Platt, and on and on we could go. Let us hear from you out there real soon.

ALSO - why don't you send in some suggestions of what you would like to have included in the year of celebration.

-----

ANOTHER CLASS IN SOUTHPORT HISTORY: The History Page Editor will teach another class in Southport History at Brunswick Community College, Southport Campus on Lord Street, beginning in early March. The exact date has not yet been set. This will probably be a 13-week course (one class per week). The class involves lectures, guest speakers, field trips, and a tour of the town. There will also be opportunities for extra reading and study and research, if desired. If you are interested, please call Susan Carson at 457-6940 and get your name on the list. Sometimes the classes get a bit overcrowded and other arrangements have to be made. Your call will assure you a place in the class. For those over 65, there is no charge; for those under 65, there is a small charge. If interested, please call before Feb. 28.

-----

HISTORY TID BITS

JOSHUA POTTS: A man who was determined to establish a town near "The Fort" (Fort Johnston), and succeeded:

- ' Born in 1751 (probably in Halifax County, N. C.)
- Died in 1825 at age 74 in Halifax Co., N. C. at the home of his son-in-law Mr. Alston
- Married three times - several children
- Served in the American Revolution as a supplier of goods for the troops
- Served in the N. C. House of Commons in 1787
- Brought about the founding of the Town of Smithville in 1792.
- Served as the Town's first Clerk.
- Purchased several lots in the new town
- Served on the N. C. Pilotage Commission
- Was a lawyer, broker, agent, merchant, surveyor, and engineer, with his office in Wilmington prior to 1792.



# Genealogy



The Genealogy Committee continues to issue the Century Certificates and Pioneer Family Certificates.

Any person whose family has lived in Brunswick County for at least 100 years or more is eligible for a Century Family Certificate. This is a good way to honor your family, or the family of a friend who may not know about our project. The Certificates are Gold Leaf suitable for framing, and show the name of the descendant as well as the ancestor. You are requested to prove that your family lived in Brunswick County by 1890, but that is not difficult with a copy of the U. S. Census for 1880 Brunswick County in our country library on Moore Street. Look up your family in this census, make a note of the page number, and line number where they are listed and complete an application for the certificate. Tax lists and land records are other ways to prove the family residence in Brunswick County. Look at some of these old records on your family, you will find them interesting. The cost is \$10.00 with the profit going into the Historical Society Cemetery Endowment Fund.

The Pioneer Certificate is a little more complicated. You must prove your family's residence in North Carolina prior to Statehood, 1787. You must furnish the information that proves your connection to the family. Contact any member of the genealogy committee for an application or for more information.

\*\* \*\* \*

Brunswick Community College, Learning Resource Center, is making a collection of photo copies of the family histories that are recorded in Brunswick County Family Bibles. Two copies of each of the pages of writing will be made with a photo copy machine on Acid Free Paper. Our Society has already donated 500 sheets of Acid Free Paper for this project. One set of the copies will be presented to the owners of the Bible, for their own use and safekeeping. The other copy will be placed in a reference section of the library and made available to researchers seeking to trace their family roots. Persons with Old Family Bibles are asked to contact Abbie Bitney, 457-9466, or Susan Carson, 457-6329. Don't let the information in your Old Family Bible be lost!

## CEMETERY

We were all saddened with the vandalism of two one hundred year old grave markers in the Old Smithville Burying Grounds during the Halloween Season this year. It was doubly discouraging because we had our Old Jail Headquarters open as one of the stops on the Library Ghost Walk Tour for the children of the town. One way to help prevent such destruction is for us as a society is to talk about the heritage of our community that is found in our old cemeteries. Each Society Member must make sure that others are aware of the problems of preservation of such landmarks.

There is some good news about the Cemeteries. The City Cemetery Commission Members recommended to the City Aldermen, and they approved the recommendation. Sometime during January, Mr. Baker, of "Stones Unturned" will make a professional survey, and map of our old Cemeteries. We will have more on this project later. We must stay informed and alert as to what we can do.

ATTENTION -- Among the many things Hurricane Hugo Blew away was our party to host the Old New Hanover Genealogical Society Meeting last fall. Events are being rescheduled for Saturday, May 19th. MARK that date on your calendar, and MAKE plans now to attend. This will be a picnic meeting in Franklin Square Park, and a program with an emphasis on Brunswick County and its early residents.

SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
YEAR 1989

Balance January 1, 1989

\$ 1,383.65

RECEIPTS

1989 dues (including life memberships)	\$ 1,505.00
1990 dues	170.00
Publications	1,435.86
4th July Antique Show	2,334.91
Contributions	73.00
Tote bags	40.00
Note & post cards	52.00
Postage	<u>12.25</u>

TOTAL RECEIPTS

5,623.02

DISBURSEMENTS

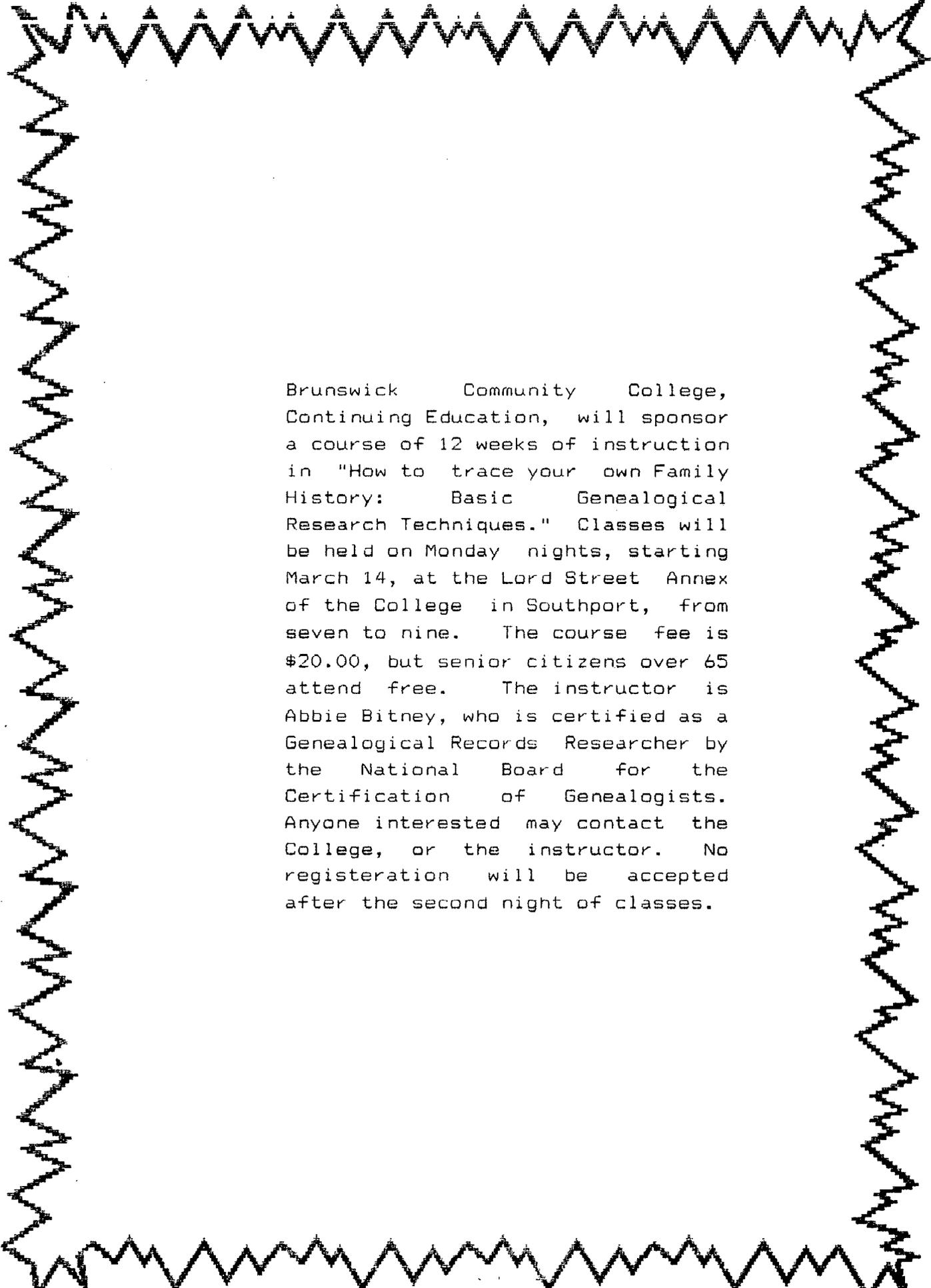
Postage	194.00
Dues and subscriptions	115.00
Supplies	549.12
Jail expense	378.57
Flowers	49.88
Federation of NC Historical Societies (This account paid in full)	500.00
Contributions	132.00
Advertising publications	28.00
Publications (paid in full)	1,527.81
Post cards(for resale)	157.50
4th July Antique Show	<u>504.65</u>

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS

4,136.53

BALANCE DECEMBER 31, 1989

\$ 2,870.14



Brunswick Community College, Continuing Education, will sponsor a course of 12 weeks of instruction in "How to trace your own Family History: Basic Genealogical Research Techniques." Classes will be held on Monday nights, starting March 14, at the Lord Street Annex of the College in Southport, from seven to nine. The course fee is \$20.00, but senior citizens over 65 attend free. The instructor is Abbie Bitney, who is certified as a Genealogical Records Researcher by the National Board for the Certification of Genealogists. Anyone interested may contact the College, or the instructor. No registration will be accepted after the second night of classes.