

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST

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Friends of Fort Fisher and Friends of Elmira Prison Camp form partnership

Friends of Fort Fisher, Inc. and Friends of Elmira Civil War Prison Camp is very pleased to announce the formation of a partnering relationship.

The non-profit organizations Friends of Fort Fisher, Inc. at Fort Fisher State Historic Site in Kure Beach, North Carolina and the Friends of Elmira Civil War Prison Camp, Elmira, New York have a mutual interest in commemorating the soldiers and the history of the Civil War at Fort Fisher and at Elmira.

The goals are not only to educate but also to preserve historical sites, buildings, and artifacts for posterity, education and interpretation. Fort Fisher is the most visited State Historic Site in North Carolina with annual attendance that exceeded 800,000 last year. It is also on the National Register of Historic Sites and was North

Carolina's first federally designated National Historic Landmark.

This mutual interest between the two organizations is strengthened due to the 1,121 Confederate captives from Fort Fisher

ing the cold winter of January, 1865. The journey from Fort Fisher was a fatal journey for 518 Fort Fisher soldiers who would die in the Elmira Prisoner of War Camp within five months. These men were primarily from North Carolina and South Carolina. They suffered from the harsh winter in New York and the lack of proper sanitation, rations and clothing in the Elmira Prison.

Fort Fisher soldiers made up 26% of the 2,970 deaths in Elmira Prison. Now they lie buried far from home in the Confederate Section of the Woodlawn National Cemetery in Elmira, New York.

Join us in remembering and honoring those who served their nation and state during the Civil War and particularly those soldiers who died in far off prison camps and never returned to their home states. You can honor them with your membership

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who were sent to Elmira Prison after the fall of Fort Fisher on January 15, 1865. Fort Fisher was called the "Gibraltar of the South" and guarded the seaport city of Wilmington, NC and the shipping lifeline of the Confederacy.

This was a tragic time in the history of the United States and a tragedy for the 1,121 Confederate captives who arrived in Elmira dur-

From the site manager, Jim Steele...



Dear Friends:

Springtime is here again, and here at Fort Fisher the school field trip season has arrived. As I write this, our visitor center and tour trail are overwhelmed with elementary school students studying exhibits, following a guided tour and enjoying historic weapon demonstrations. Every year we host approximately 20,000 children of all ages from all over North Carolina. They have a great time and learn in ways that just cannot be done in a classroom, and the experience gives them a real appreciation of Fort Fisher's history and our shared heritage. Your contributions and membership in the Friends of Fort Fisher is crucial to ensuring these children receive a quality experience that gets better and better every year, and I thank you for your continuing support.

In other exciting news, it seems our neighbors with the Underwater Archaeology Branch have found the blockade runner *Agnes E. Fry* in 20 feet of water, not far from Fort Caswell (see story below). This is a truly wonderful discovery! The *Fry* is the first Civil War-era shipwreck to be located in the Cape Fear region in decades, and I expect that the excitement will stimulate tourism and perhaps lead to increased funding for historic preservation work. This is exactly what happened fifty years ago with the discovery of the *Modern Greece*. Coinciding with the Civil War Centennial, enthusiasm for the *Modern Greece* and its archaeological treasures helped pave the way for the establishment of Fort Fisher State Historic Site.

In closing, I encourage you to come out for our annual Park Day on Saturday, April 2 (see story opposite page). We have many projects to accomplish from raking leaves to painting cannons, and we need your help. Please contact us ASAP if you can participate; we want to ensure we have enough food and souvenir t-shirts! We look forward to seeing you here, and thanks again for all that you do to make Fort Fisher the greatest historic site in North Carolina.

Sincerely,
Jim Steele, Manager

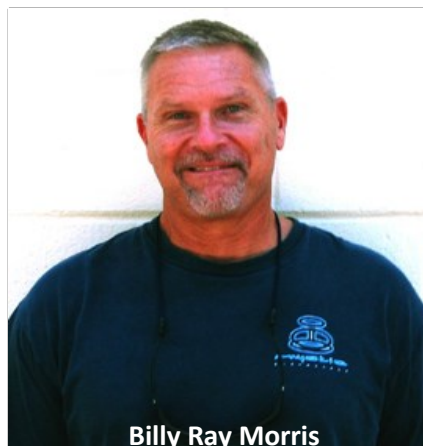
Discovery of blockade runner by NC Underwater Archaeology Branch to be focus of Discovery Channel's Daily Planet report

Another pearl in the form of a large iron-hulled Civil War era steamer was recently discovered in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of N.C., near Oak Island. Researchers and archaeologists from the Underwater Archaeology Branch (UAB) of the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology and the Institute of International Maritime Research made the discovery during sonar operations.

The vessel is believed to be the remains of the *Agnes E. Fry*, one of many blockade runners used to penetrate the wall of Union naval vessels blocking the port of Wilmington during the Civil War. The goal of the Union blockade was to keep supplies from reaching the Confederacy through one of its most important ports and to prevent the export of cotton and other marketable items by the Southerners. The wreck is located 27 miles downstream from Wilmington near Fort Caswell at the

mouth of the Cape Fear River, and is the first Civil War-era vessel discovered in the area in decades.

"A new runner is a really big



Billy Ray Morris

deal," said Billy Ray Morris, Deputy State Archaeologist-Underwater and Director of the Underwater Archaeology Branch. "The state of preservation on this wreck is among the best we've ever had."

Researchers will continue work-

ing to positively identify the vessel as the *Agnes E. Fry*, which was known to have gone down in the area. These operations are part of a major project funded by the National Park Service through the American Battlefield Protection Program.

Historical, cartographic and archaeological resources have been examined for the past two years to better understand the maritime components of the Fort Fisher campaign. Fortifications protected both entrances to the Cape Fear River from the Atlantic and were critical in keeping open a life-line to the Confederacy until Fort Fisher fell in January 1865.

In addition to making national and international news, the UAB's findings are expected to be the subject of a news segment developed for the Discovery Channel's *Daily Planet*, which features daily news, discussion, and commentary on the scientific aspects of current events and discoveries. The UAB offices are located at Fort Fisher State Historic Site in Kure Beach, NC.

WE 
VOLUNTEERS



Join us for Park Day 2016 on Saturday, April 2

As part of Park Day 2016, volunteers are needed Saturday, April 2, 2016 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon to help beautify and preserve Fort Fisher, the largest earthen fortification in the Confederacy, which once protected the port of Wilmington and the vital blockade running trade on the Cape Fear River.

Park Day, now in its 20th year, is an annual hands-on preservation event created by the Civil War Trust to assist with the maintenance of America's Civil War Sites. Volunteers of all ages, of all ability levels, are welcome and—and encouraged—to participate.

Many activities are appropriate for groups such as scout troops, service clubs, and church youth groups. At noon,

all registered volunteers will be treated to lunch provided by the Friends of Fort Fisher, the non-profit group which supports the site, along with its sustaining members.

All volunteers are asked to register in advance by calling John Moseley at (910) 458-5538 x201 or by emailing him at john.moseley@ncdcr.gov.

"Park Day is a great opportunity for our friends and neighbors to make a difference in their community by helping to maintain and preserve our valuable cultural history and one of the most scenic and historically significant places in the nation," Assistant Site Manager John Moseley said.

Pack-It-In Pack-It-Out



Please carry out all trash

Saca la basura por favor

Help us ensure that the Fort Fisher visitor experience is safe, healthy, and enjoyable for all

Now that we are rapidly approaching the spring and summer tourism season, Fort Fisher State Historic Site encourages visitors to implement and support our “Pack it In, Pack it Out” environmental policy, adopted in an effort to keep the site clean and safe for visitors of all ages to enjoy. Simply put, the policy states that if you brought it with you, please plan to take it with you when you leave and dispose of it properly.

Efforts are underway to acquire additional signage to remind visitors of how this mutually-cooperative approach is essential in providing a safe and meaningful experience for the more than 800,000 visitors the site accommodates annually. Amazingly, this annual feat is accomplished with a professional maintenance team comprised of only

two full time individuals. Among other things, this duo is responsible for maintaining some 264 acres of property, the visitor's center, the maintenance facility, and all the equipment needed to operate and maintain the site.

Additionally, in an effort to ensure ample parking space for museum visitors and easy access for emergency vehicles, Fort Fisher recently erected “Towing Enforced” signs on the property. The gated parking lot on the north side of the museum is reserved for museum parking only, not beach access. These parking lot gates are locked at 5 pm each day, after which point owners run the risk of having their vehicles towed by commercial towing company Tow to Tow.

As a gentle reminder, we don't allow hammocks, camping, open fires, grills, overnight parking or illegal parking. Firearms and alcoholic beverages

of any kind are prohibited, as are glass containers and metal detectors.

Due to dangerous currents, undertows, and underwater hazards, swimming is not allowed. Similarly, visitors are prohibited from climbing on the rocks. Please remember to keep pets on a leash and clean up after them. Only service dogs are permitted in the museum. It's illegal to dig, excavate, disturb the ground, or collect any artifacts. Special events on the property, regardless of the size of the group, require a special event permit.

Fort Fisher State Historic Site is the most heavily-visited historic site in North Carolina. Please join us by doing your part in preserving and protecting this national treasure. If you have questions about site guidelines, please call 910-458-5538.

Fort Fisher to present Medal of Honor program Saturday, April 2, 2016 from 1-4 pm

On Saturday, April 2, 2016, Fort Fisher State Historic Site will continue its commemorative programming focusing on the Medal of Honor and its recipients.

At 2 pm, Interpreter John Moseley will be speaking about the history of the Medal of Honor. This award is the highest distinction that can be awarded by the President, in the name of the Congress, to members of the Armed Forces who have distinguished themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their lives above and beyond the call of duty. It was originally created to recognize the acts of bravery by Union enlisted Navy, Marine Corps, and Army personnel during the Civil War.

During the program, reenactors will be in the grove of trees behind

to fort demonstrating the manual of arms and conducting firing demonstrations.



Inside the museum, visitors will be able to learn about the 72 men awarded our Nation's highest award and view a few of the stories from many of those soldiers, sailors, and Marines.

The families of Privates Bruce Anderson and William Freeman have temporarily loaned their Medals of Honor and other materials to tell their stories at Fort Fisher. There will also be kids' activities to help youngsters understand the importance of awards for valor.

The Cape Fear region is no stranger to Medal of Honor recipients. In its history, 19 North Carolinians have been recognized for their actions with the Medal of Honor. New Hanover County's four recipients span the wars, both large and small, of the 20th century; one from actions in Mexico in 1914, two from World War 2, and one from the Vietnam War.

Free and open to the public, the Medal of Honor program runs from 1 pm to 4 pm., after the conclusion of Park Day. All programming is made possible by the Friends of Fort Fisher, Town of Carolina Beach, and New Hanover County.

Confederate Memorial Day Ceremony

Saturday, April 30, 2016
10 am at Battle Acre

Guest Speaker: Brig. Gen. (Ret.)
James 'Jim' Carper, NCNG

"Why our Confederate
heritage is so important"

Program sponsored by Fort Fisher
Chapter 2325, UDC



Brig. Gen. (Ret.) James
'Jim' Carper, NCNG

Fort Fisher State Historic Site

Pop quiz time: we ask 10 questions of teacher, driving instructor, & volunteer Steve Wood

Where are you originally from?

I am originally from Anderson, SC, but I grew up in Lincolnton, NC

How long have resided in NC?

Since 1972.

Tell us about your education and/or professional training. I attended Brevard College and Campbell University and I have a BA in Broadcasting and English, and I have teacher licensure in NC for Theatre Arts. I am also a DMV certified driving instructor.

When did you start volunteering at FF and what were you doing prior to that? I started volunteering in July 2015.

Tell us about your interest in history. For example, at what age do you remember becoming interested in history? In what era of history are you most interested? My family has vacationed at Fort Fisher for the past 20 years. I read Michael Shaara's "Killer Angels", and became interested in the Civil War. Having been to Fort Fisher every summer, I found out that my wife has a relative who fought at Shepherd's Battery, so I have had an avid interest in Fort Fisher, and North Carolina's involvement in the Civil War. I also took a walking tour of Wilmington back in the early 90s with my wife, and became interested in antebellum history. I read Dr. Fonvielle's "The Wilmington Campaign" and became hooked.

There's been a lot of discussion about building a new, expanded visitor center at FF. What components would you like to see in the visitor's center of the future? I believe that people appreciate history that they can experience and make an emotional connection with—that's why crowds love to see and hear cannon fire. I'd like to see interactive exhibits—maybe a mock bombproof, artifacts that people can hold and "touch history", and costumed interpreters present to give a feel of "being there". I also thought about an area for kids where they could dress up as antebellum characters and take photos. It's all about the emotional connection to the past.

Who are a couple of your favorite authors and what have you read recently? I enjoyed Jeff Shaara's novels (he even exchanged emails with me about Virginia battlefields). I also enjoy Rod Gragg. I just finished reading "Covered with Glory". Currently, I am



Steve Wood

reading "Battle Cry of Freedom" by James MacPherson. For good fictional reads, I enjoy Clive Cussler and Douglas Preston..

Do you find that most of your Cumberland County students are familiar with Fort Fisher? What kind of feedback do you get from them? Not many were too familiar with the historic site. They traveled through the area with their parents. Most of them have been to the aquarium on field trips. I did run into one of my current students this summer in the visitor center. However, they DO KNOW about the site now. I talk of it often, and they ask a lot of questions. Most of them have seen "those big mounds" but didn't know what they were. They are very open to hearing about it because at my school (Cape Fear High School), we have US History teachers who are very thorough in their teaching of the Civil War, so the kids are familiar with the Anaconda Plan and the blockades. Another plus is to mention that Nicholas Sparks' movie "The Choice" was partially filmed there (ha, ha, ha).

If someone was willing to grant you one wish for something you could change about Fort Fisher, what would it be? I can't say I'd want to change anything right now. I like the idea of a bigger visitor center with more to show the public about what happened here, but the place is so beautiful. It's ethereally magic in a way.

What else would you like for people to know about Steve Wood? For example, do you give tours as a volunteer?

As a volunteer, I do whatever is needed so the general public can come to a better appreciation of the people who served on both sides at this place. Like Gettysburg and so many other places where brothers and friends met in battle, Fort Fisher is hallowed ground, and as a volunteer, I truly want to honor their memory by helping generations understand what they did here. I give tours, answer questions, look up ancestors, pick up trash, and do anything else. I really love it here. It's a good place.

Local woodworking company selected to build exhibit cases for Fort Fisher dioramas

Anchor Wood Products Chief Executive Lou Purin announced recently that the locally owned and operated woodworking company was selected by Friends of Fort Fisher, Inc. to provide custom built exhibit cases to house the historic site's collection of dioramas.

According to Friends of Fort Fisher executive director Paul Laird, Anchor Wood Products was awarded the contract after an extensive RFQ process to provide 5 display cases for Fort Fisher's dioramas. According to Laird, the dioramas are of exceptional craftsmanship and were originally made for the Blockade Runner Museum in the 1960's. When the museum

closed the entire collection was purchased by New Hanover County for the Cape Fear Museum on Market Street. A lack of exhibit space precluded the dioramas being available to the public and have remained in storage until acquired recently by Fort Fisher State Historic Site in Kure Beach.

The ability to work closely with the Friends of Fort Fisher and be on-site for quality control has made creating the exhibit cases go

smoothly from the start. Lou Purin emphasized, "We are able to utilize local suppliers and source all our materials from the Wilmington area. Along with our commitment to young local talent, we will provide Fort Fisher with savings in the cost of labor and shipping, without sacrificing quality craftsmanship." Laird echoed that sentiment saying "We always prefer to use local craftsmen and merchants because we're a part of the community and we raise funds locally for these projects so we like to keep the dollars local. We were impressed with the quality of Anchor Wood Products

work and professionalism. They have been extremely responsive to our exacting requirements for museum quality work."



Lou Purin with Anchor Wood Products shown here with an exhibit case in progress.



Caleb Gauvin with Anchor Wood Products applies paint to an exhibit case that will be used to house a diorama.

Anchor Wood Products pools its labor from local craftsmen. Many of the craftsmen are young men with life controlling issues who are either seeking a different direction in life or are trying to take their woodworking craft to the next level. The company actively seeks to uplift and mentor these young men. Lou Purin says of the company, "Our business is founded on Christian values, principles and work ethic. These qualities allow us to provide customers superior quality at a consistently fair price. They also allow us to have a purpose beyond just our business mission. We actively mentor and teach young craftsmen."

Anchor Wood Products is locally owned and operated, able to be on site to ensure quality control and source all material locally. Anchor Wood works with locally provided workforces and mentors talented craftsmen with life controlling issues.

Special thanks to Anchor Wood Products for providing the information used in this article. Photos by Paul Laird.

Welcome New Friends of Fort Fisher Members

David Bridgers
Wilmington, NC

Richard F. Bryan
Wilmington, NC

Layton Dowless
Whiteville, NC

Robert Gilbert
Orange, VA

David M. Hampton
Lewisville, NC



Lorna Hewett
Bladenboro, NC

Barry Isenhour
Midlothian, VA

James Johnson
Shallotte, NC

Peggy Luedtke
Carolina Beach, NC

John Lystash
Roanoke, VA

William H. Payne
Saugerties, NY

Julie & Stephen Ryan
Carolina Beach, NC

John Virgint
Troy, Ohio

Thank you for supporting NC's most visited battlefield & National Historic Lndmark

Charlotte NC resident wins Friends' rifle raffle

The Friends of Fort Fisher congratulate Rufus Taylor of Charlotte, NC, winner of the Friends' rifle raffle held this past January during the 151st Anniversary observance of the Battle of Fort Fisher. Out of hundreds of entries, Taylor, shown at right in his Charlotte home, won a working replica of a reproduction 1853 Enfield Musket.

Historically, the Enfield 1853 rifle-musket was used by both the North and the South in the American Civil War, and was the second most widely used infantry weapon in the war, surpassed only by the Springfield Model 1861 Rifled Musket. It has been estimated that over 900,000 Enfields were imported to America and saw service in every major engagement from 1862 to the final battles of 1865. This weapon was as close to a standard infantry weapon as the Confederacy ever got and was also used in large numbers by the Union. Congratulations, Mr. Taylor!



Rufus Taylor

Look for us on...



Join the Friends of Fort Fisher

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Palisade Society	\$40
Mounds Society	\$100
Blockade Runner Society	\$250
Gibraltar of the South Society	\$500
Col. Charles F. Fisher Society	\$1000

BENEFITS

Palisade Society – basic level of annual support includes attractive decal and member card, listing in *The Powder Magazine* quarterly newsletter, 10% discount on all purchases from our Fort Fisher Museum Shop and invitations to member only events

Mounds Society - level of annual support includes all of the above benefits plus one complimentary honorarium or memorial in one issue of *The Powder Magazine* newsletter

Blockade Runner Society - level of annual support includes all of the above benefits plus a 6" x 9" engraved brick paver on Fort Fisher's Walk of Honor

Gibraltar of the South Society - level of annual support which includes all of the above benefits except a larger 9" x 9" engraved brick paver, and a specially selected book annually from the Museum Shop

Col. Charles F. Fisher Society - level of annual support which includes all of the benefits of the Gibraltar level except the engraved brick paver is a permanent beautiful blue/gray 12" x 12" stone and may include an engraved emblem or logo

Other ways to contribute:

Memorial and Honor Gifts, Artifact Donations, In-Kind Gifts, Volunteers, Named Gift Opportunities, Bequests – Contact the Friends Executive Director for information

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Name _____
 Address _____

 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone _____
 Email _____

☐ New

☐ Renewal

All society memberships are based on a calendar year (Jan-Dec). Contributions are tax deductible, less the fair market value of goods and services received.

If you choose to waive your membership benefits, your contribution is fully tax-deductible.

☐ I wish to waive my society membership benefits

☐ I will be an Annual Society Member

Membership Categories

Palisade Society	\$40	_____
Mounds Society	\$100	_____
Blockade Runner Society	\$250	_____
Gibraltar of the South Society	\$500	_____
Col. Charles F. Fisher Society	\$1000	_____

Payment

☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card

Make checks payable to **Friends of Fort Fisher**

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

Mail to: Friends of Fort Fisher
 1610 Fort Fisher Blvd., Kure Beach, N.C. 28449

Name on Card _____

Account _____

Expiration Date _____ 3-digit security _____

Payments or donations may be made securely on our website www.friendsoffortfisher.com

Fort Fisher State Historic Site

1610 Fort Fisher Blvd. South

Kure Beach, NC 28449

Phone: (910) 458-5538

E-mail: fisher@ncdcr.gov

www.nchistoricsites.org/fisher



Friends of Fort Fisher and Friends of Elmira Prison Camp form unique partnership

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and financial support in either the Friends of Fort Fisher, Inc. (www.friendsoffortfisher.com) and Friends of Elmira Civil War Prison Camp (www.elmiraprisoncamp.com). For information contact: Paul Laird, Friends of Fort Fisher, plaird@friendsoffortfisher.com, Tel. (910) 612-7067 or Tom Fagart, Friends of Elmira Civil War Prison Camp, tafagart@gmail.com, Tel. (704) 262-0119

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Fort Fisher

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