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# The Powder Magazine

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## **Representative Ted Davis, Jr. to Receive Special Recognition**

## Friends Announce Annual Meeting & Descendants Reunion to Coincide with 152<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Program

Friends of Fort Fisher invite all members, Fort Fisher descendants and the interested general public to attend the Friends Annual Meeting and Descendants Program on Saturday, January 14, 2017 at the Carolina Beach Courtyard Marriott. The Annual Meeting and Descendants Reunion will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will also include presentations by Dr. Chris Fonvielle highlighting topics of special interest to all descendants of those who saw service at Fort Fisher and the lower Cape Fear.

Local genealogists will be present to help attendees with researching their Civil War ancestors. The Friends will also confer special recognition for State Representative Ted Davis, Jr. for his leadership in securing legislative support and funding to plan for a new Fort Fisher Museum and Visitor Center. Additionally, silent auction items will be displayed and up for

bid to help raise funds for badly needed improvement projects at Fort Fisher. The Descendants



**State Rep. Ted Davis, Jr.**

Reunion and Friends Annual Meeting will conclude by 11:30 a.m. so all can visit Fort Fisher to enjoy a full day of activities and speakers commemorating the 152<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Fort Fisher. There will be no charge for Friends members at-

tending the annual meeting and descendants reunion but non members will be asked to pay \$5.00 to help offset refreshment costs.

A block of ocean front rooms is available at the low anniversary rate of \$67.30 if reserved before Dec. 16, 2016. The special rate will no longer apply after that date but will be available at the regular rack rate on a space available basis. To take advantage of the special rate contact the Courtyard Marriott at Carolina Beach by calling 910-458-2030 or 1-800-321-2211 and using the code **FOFS** or go on-line to [www.friendsoffortfisher.com](http://www.friendsoffortfisher.com) website to use the link to connect directly with the Marriott reservation page for the Fort Fisher Anniversary Program. Please make your reservations before Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> to receive the limited discount special room rate.



**Ft. Fisher descendants gather for 2015 reunion. Among them are descendants of two U.S. Medal of Honor recipients and the Confederate Medal of Honor recipient.**

## From the site manager, Jim Steele...

Dear Friends:

Hurricane Matthew has come and gone, and Fort Fisher made it through the storm with only minor damage caused primarily from water intrusion into the Visitor Center the week leading up to the storm. We had expected the worst, given the terrible impact the hurricane and flooding had on so much of North Carolina and elsewhere, but we were very fortunate. Tree limbs came down and street signs were blown away, but otherwise Fort Fisher is in good shape. After the tree litter and other debris is cleared away no one would ever know Fort Fisher endured such a powerful storm. And that is great news, because even though the summer tourism season is over, staff here is no less busy working to make Fort Fisher better than ever.

Site staff and the Friends of Fort Fisher are engaged in a number of programs and projects. The 32-pounder "Rifled & Banded" cannon in Shepherd's Battery will be completely refurbished this fall; the gun is a crowd favorite when demonstrated. The "BOOM" can be heard all the way to Wilmington! We are working on a new exhibit for the visitor center and on more interpretive waysides to better tell the Fort Fisher story. A new roof on the visitor center is near completion as I write this and is a welcome improvement. Our work to eradicate the invasive Yaupon shrubbery on the earthworks is progressing nicely. Much of the Yaupon has been killed with a good herbicide (thank you Friends board member Mike McCarley!) and we plan another controlled burn this winter. And of course we will continue to present top-notch educational programming. The 152<sup>nd</sup> anniversary program and the Friends Annual Meeting and Descendants Reunion will be on Saturday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, (see story page 3), so plan to be here for excellent living history.

In closing, I remind you that if you like what we do here at Fort Fisher and wish to support it, please join the Friends of Fort Fisher. If you are already a member, encourage your friends and family to join too. The Friends are key to making site programming and improvements happen. We cannot do what we do without help from the Friends and we welcome your participation.

Sincerely,  
Jim Steele



Brunswick Civil War Round Table board president Mike Powell, far left, presents a \$4,350 check to the Friends of Fort Fisher board treasurer Harry Parham. Shown at right are BCWRT vice president Jim Johnson and Friends of Fort Fisher CEO Paul Laird. The donation was made in memory of BCRT Co-founder Tom O'Donnell and given as sole sponsor to a new permanent exhibit honoring Col. William Lamb at Fort Fisher State Historic Site.



# *152nd Anniversary of the Battle of Fort Fisher*

*.... Desperate bravery and brilliant valor ...*



On Saturday, January 14, 2017, Fort Fisher will host its annual living history program marking the 152<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Second Battle of Fort Fisher. This year's theme, "*Desperate bravery and brilliant valor*," will focus on the stories of the men who displayed bravery and valor during the afternoon of January 15, 1865.

Throughout the day, reenactors will bring the fort to life. Harry Taylor, a local photographer, will be using his 1860s wet-plate photography studio to take photographs for visitors. Infantry units will be available to talk with visitors about camp life, garrison duty, conduct the manual of arms and firing demonstrations. Artillery units will conduct drills and firing demonstrations consisting of the Historic Site's Rifled and Banded 32-pound cannon and the Site's bronze 12-pound Napoleon cannon.

In the Spencer Theater, two local historians and authors, Rod Gragg and Richard Triebe, will be presenting stories of the bravery and valor displayed by men at Fort Fisher. Both authors will be on-site during the day to meet the public and sign copies of their books. Period music will be provided by NC favorites the Huckleberry Brothers Band throughout the day.

The Junior Reserves programming will feature a "School of the Soldier" and a "Secret Codes and Encryption Devices" program. The "School" will be outside and will educate visitors about the life of the Civil War soldier. Inside the museum, "Secret Codes" will help visitors learn about making sure the message gets through your enemy's lines. The program runs from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, is free, and open to the public. All Fort Fisher programming is made possible with the support of New Hanover County, the Town of Carolina Beach, the Town of Kure Beach, and the Friends of Fort Fisher and its sustaining members.





## Fort Fisher Police Chief featured in public service announcement for crosswalk safety

As part of the statewide "Watch For Me NC" crosswalk safety program, Fort Fisher Company Police Chief Stan Register recently partnered with UNCW and the NC Department of Transportation to participate in one of two public service announcements being shown on UNCW cable channels, numerous websites, and at Mayfaire movie theaters.

Produced and edited by UNCW's Department of University Relations, the 30-second PSAs were filmed at locations all around New Hanover County. In the videos, top law enforcement officials emphasize pedestrian and bicycle safety and remind drivers that slowing and stopping at pedestrian crosswalks is not just a good idea, it's the law.

The segments featuring Chief Register were videotaped at the pedestrian crosswalk located just outside Fort Fisher's north parking lot gate.

Each year more than 2,400 pedestrians and 960 bicyclists are hit by cars on North Carolina streets. According to organizers, the object of the Watch for Me NC campaign is to reduce the number of pedestrians and

safety and educational messages directed toward drivers,

pedestrians and bicyclists, and 2) enforcement efforts by area police to crack down on some of the violations of traffic safety laws. Local programs are typically led by municipal, county, or regional government staff with the involvement of many others, including pedestrian and bicycle advocates, city planners, law enforcement agencies, engineers, public health professionals, elected officials, school administrators and others. The "Watch for Me NC" program, which started with a pilot program in Wake, Durham, and Orange counties in 2012, each year invites communities across the state to become partner communities. As part of that effort, partner communities receive additional support and training from NCDOT. To see the video featuring Chief Register, please visit <https://vimeo.com/177716046>.



Broadcast media specialists Bradley Pearce, left, and Krista McKinney, both of the UNCW University Relations department, direct Fort Fisher Company Chief Stan Register, center, in the crosswalk safety public service announcement filmed at Fort Fisher State Historic Site in Kure Beach.

bicyclists hit and injured in crashes with vehicles.

The "Watch for Me NC" program involves two key elements: 1)

As part of that effort, partner communities receive additional support and training from NCDOT. To see the video featuring Chief Register, please visit <https://vimeo.com/177716046>.



# 75th Anniversary of Fort Fisher's World War II history highlighted at October program that shows fort used as anti-aircraft training base

Let's face it, when you think of Fort Fisher, you generally think of a Civil War earthwork fort that protected a critical supply line for the Confederacy. You also probably think

his time at Fort Fisher, Samuel MacIntyre of the 557th AA, Battery C said quite simply, "Sand, Sand, Sand." One member of the 558th AAA Battalion asserted, Fort Fisher was "a forlorn spit of sand and

scrub growth pinched between the Atlantic Ocean and the Cape Fear River, a quagmire of sand, sand, and more sand. It was strictly a no-nonsense place designed to put grit and fire in the bowels and brains of its trainees." In his history of the 558th AAA (AW), Bill Drobinch stated "If nothing else hardened the men, at least the mosquitoes did. In the

march toward victory. Guest speakers included Wilbur Jones, Founder World War II Wilmington, Camp Davis historian Cliff Tyndall, and Women's Airforce Services Pilots (WASP) researcher Krystal Lee. Also included during the weekend were historic weapons and equipment, WWII memorabilia, and an authentic military jeep. Tours of the fortification's remains were also conducted.

While it wasn't planned, we had the privilege of having a pair of WWII Fort Fisher veterans visit the site after hearing about the program. One of them, Corporal Don Coss (Ret), had his daughter drive him down to attend the program so he could see how the fort had changed since he was stationed at Fisher in 1942.

The program was designed to provide numerous educational and interactive opportunities for all age groups and interest levels. Among other things, it featured a 'Paint-the-Toy-Soldier' activity as well as an 'Anti-aircraft Gunner'



World War II veteran Corp. Don Coss (Ret), left, discusses his 1940s military experience at Fort Fisher with assistant site manager John Moseley

of the famous 1865 battle in which the fort fell into Union hands and the Confederate supply line was permanently severed, which led to the end of the war. While this is reasonably well-known, there is another lesser-known side to Fort Fisher, one that played a vital role during World War II. In October 1941, as an extension of Camp Davis, the fort was repurposed for anti-aircraft artillery training, with soldiers learning how to fire the M2 90mm gun, the M1 40mm Bofors gun, and the M45 quad .50 caliber machine gun system. At its height, Fort Fisher could handle three battalions on a six-day training rotation. Between the post's opening and its closing in 1944, about 43 AA Battalions trained at Fort Fisher.

What was life like for those soldiers sent to live at Fort Fisher? When asked what he remembered of

morning, the insects gathered in humming waves in the crowded latrines." It was a race to see who would win—the men shaving or the mosquitoes sucking them dry.

In mid October, Fort Fisher State Historic Site paid homage to those turbulent times of war with the program "Fort Fisher's World War II Experience" and focused on the 75th anniversary of the base being opened.

Displays were set up on the old Fort Fisher airstrip, reenactors discussed the life of the World War II soldier, life on the home front, Fort Fisher's anti-aircraft artillery training ground, the history of Camp Davis, and the roles women played in the



The authentic World War II jeep is always a crowd pleaser when we honor Fort Fisher's World War II experience.

activity. By using a Nerf-style dart machine gun, the gunner (visitor) learned to track moving targets and score hits on the 'boggeys'.

Continued on page 10

# Meet Fort Fisher's New! site assistant Jesse Hoskins

**1. Where are you originally from?** I was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, and called this city my home until the age of 10. A new job for my father led our family to Boone, North Carolina, just as I was entering middle school. Although I lived in Charlotte for quite some time, and still have family ties to the area, however; I will always consider myself to have grown up in the mountains of North Carolina.

**2. What brought you to the Cape Fear area?**

Originally, I was lured to the North Carolina coast by a promising internship opportunity at Carolina Beach State Park. A favorite professor of mine had assisted me with finding an internship through the Youth Advocacy Involvement Office (YAIO) and by the end of the spring semester of my Junior year I was becoming excited about the move. The final factor which influenced my move to the area was the fact that a good friend of mine had a house in the area and had offered to rent me an inexpensive room.

**3. Tell us about your formal education.** After graduating from Watauga High School in Boone, North Carolina, I decided to stay in the area and save some money by attending the local community college. During the next two years, I continued to work towards my Associates degree, and lived with my parents in our family home. After graduating from community college with an Associate of Arts degree, I transferred to Appala-

chian State University (still in my self-appointed hometown of Boone) where I decided to major in Recreation Management. I thoroughly enjoyed my degree pathway, and decided to choose a concentration in Parks and Recreation, which has continued to serve me well in regard to

Parks. The bulk of my related professional experience came from this new position of Assistant Park Ranger which I accepted joyfully at Fort Fisher State Recreation Area. After remaining in this seasonal position for nearly a year and a half cumulatively, I decided it was time to branch out and find something more permanent.

**5. Any hobbies/interests outside of work?**

My upbringing in a very recreationally blessed environment instilled a love for the outdoors, and while living in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, I frequently hiked the mountain trails and camped with friends. Although

I do adore spending time in the great outdoors, a substantial amount of my free time is also invested in watching television, listening to music, and spending time on social media. At times it feels like I have less access to enjoy the recreational pursuits which I enjoy, however; coastal life has allowed me to further my interests in pursuits such as saltwater fishing which were all but absent during my childhood.

**6. Do you have any experience or interest in historical weapons?**



Jesse Hoskins

my career choices.

**4. Tell us about your professional experience before coming to Fort Fisher.**

In my opinion, my professional experience began once I was initiated into the division of North Carolina state parks through my internship at Carolina Beach State Park. After completing my 10-week internship in Carolina Beach, I returned to Boone, N.C. for a final semester of school. After graduating with honors from Appalachian State University, I continued my search for a full time job, and once again found my calling on the N.C. coast. Once more, I was spurred to return to the coast due in part to the ability to continue living cheaply with my friend; and once more I found an open position with the North Carolina Division of State

Continued on page 7



# site assistant **Jesse Hoskins**

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While my experience with historic weaponry has been simply intellectual and never hands on, I have always been fascinated by military history and the tools which were evolved to be ever more effective on the battlefield. If one asked my mother or father, I would bet that they would have said that as a child I had a fairly healthy obsession with weaponry of all types, and although this was nothing more than a phase I still possess some lingering fascinations with the evolution of warfare.

**7. Who are a couple of your favorite authors?** J.R.R. Tolkien would definitely be high on the list as I absolutely love the Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings Trilogy. In addition to Tolkien I was also always enthralled with authors who wrote about the harshness of life in the wild like Jack London and Gary Paulsen.

**8. What, if anything, are you currently reading (besides this questionnaire)?** I have nearly finished Rod Gragg's historic account of the battle of Fort Fisher in his novel "Confederate Goliath," and am looking forward to starting the "Wilmington Campaign," by Chris E. Fonvielle.

**9. Have you noticed anything strange about Fort Fisher?** Aside from the staff, I have been amazed by the effects which the

Atlantic Ocean has had on the historic site. Having performed resource management projects in the area, I am fairly familiar with the functions and evolution of barrier islands, however; it is still astounding to see how much change takes place on the coast. Having viewed maps and photographs detailing the original fort's infrastructure, it is nothing short of amazing at how much the area has changed in the past 150 years.

**10. What do you think is understated/less widely known about Fort Fisher but needs to be shared?**

Although it is highly advertised here at the historic site, as a previously ignorant member of the public, I am amazed at how important the Cape Fear defensive network was to the Confederacy as a whole. In my readings thus far, I have heard the lower Cape Fear described as the "lifeline" of the Confederacy, and after further reading and research, it seems that this was indeed true. Another fact which was surprising to me was the sheer undertaking of the construction of Fort Fisher. The fact that both the Union and Confederate troops respected the fort as a marvel of wartime construction

really stood out to me... and the fact that earthworks from the fort's original land face remain until this day is nothing short of phenomenal.

**11. There's been a lot of discussion about charging admission to Fort Fisher or charging for parking. What are your thoughts about either of these ideas?** This was something which was also considered at the State Recreation Area while I worked there. My personal opinion in this matter is that the historic site (and the SRA) have been preserved and set aside for the enjoyment of the general public, and as such, the site should not be exclusive only to those who are fortunate enough to be able to pay to visit. Although this is my personal belief, I also understand that it costs money to keep these sites maintained and open to visitation and therefore understand why some advocate charging admission fees.

**12. People often wish there were more hours in the day. If there were, what kinds of things would you do with them?** Sleep.



*Welcome New Friends of Fort Fisher Members*

**Richard Bly**  
Fredericksburg, VA

**Kerry & Heather King**  
Winston-Salem, NC

**Mary Claire McNaught**  
Southport, NC

**Pete Perschbacher, PhD**  
Wilmington, NC

**Patty Rogers**  
Trips by Patty  
Wilmington, NC

**Cecil Ann Simmons**  
Leland, NC

**Col. Clifford Wilkins (Ret)**  
Carolina Beach, NC

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



## *Society of the Order of the Southern Cross* awards \$6k grant for cannon repair project

At the recent annual meeting of the "Society of the Order of the Southern Cross" in Fort Worth, Texas, the group's grant committee approved funding for Fort Fisher's Seacoast 32 pounder rifled and banded cannon repair at Shepherd's Battery. The SOSC grant was in the amount of \$6,000. The grant proposal was submitted by Friends of Fort Fisher CEO Paul Laird.

"Permit me to extend to you my congratulations on behalf of our entire organization, and to compliment you on the quality of your submission and the nature of your project," wrote SOSC Grants Committee Chairman James E. Alderman.

In accordance with grant stipulations, a report on the use of the funds will need to be submitted by July 1, 2017.

Founded in 1863 as an organization to provide for the relief of disabled soldiers and the widows and orphans of those who had died in service to the Confederacy, the

its history.

The original founders of the Order of the Southern Cross, Lt. General Leonidas Polk, Major General Patrick Cleburne and Reverend Charles Quintard had hoped that the organization they were creating, "The Order of the Comrades of the Southern Cross" would help relieve the soldier's anxieties as to the suffering of their families, enabling them to rededicate themselves once again to the great battles that lay ahead for the Army of Tennessee.

Today, the main purpose of the Order of the Southern Cross is to provide financial assistance to qualified groups through its Grants Program and to offer scholarships to college bound students through its Peter W. Orlebeke Memorial Scholarship Fund, thereby continuing to

honor the sacrifices of those old soldiers by helping to preserve Southern heritage and its history.



Fort Fisher's 32 pounder rifled and banded cannon at Shepherd's Battery will undergo extensive repairs in the coming weeks

Order of the Southern Cross serves as a philanthropic organization whose purpose is the preservation of Southern heritage and

# Fort Fisher

State Historic Site

# holiday

## OPEN HOUSE

## Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2016

## 10am-4pm

Sponsored by the Friends of Fort Fisher and Fort Fisher Chapter 2325 of the UDC



Free refreshments

Live entertainment

15% discount in gift shop



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](http://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](mailto:fisher@ncdcr.gov)

[www.nchistoricsites.org/fisher](http://www.nchistoricsites.org/fisher)



Visitors peruse the anti-aircraft artillery battalion command post featured at the WWII program

## Program focuses on Fort Fisher's World War II experience as an anti-aircraft artillery training base during 1940s

Continued from page 5

The program also featured an anti-aircraft artillery battalion command post, complete with a 1940s typewriter, which was a source of amazement to many members of the younger generation and a source of nostalgia for adults. The 1940s US Army switchboard, with working field telephones, offered an unexpected hands-on activity for kids and adults.

All Fort Fisher programming is made possible with the support of New Hanover County, the Town of Carolina Beach, the Town of Kure Beach, and the Friends of Fort Fisher and its sustaining members.

THE POWDER MAGAZINE

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Fort Fisher

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Web: [www.friendsoffortfisher.com](http://www.friendsoffortfisher.com)

E-mail: [info@friendsoffortfisher.com](mailto:info@friendsoffortfisher.com)