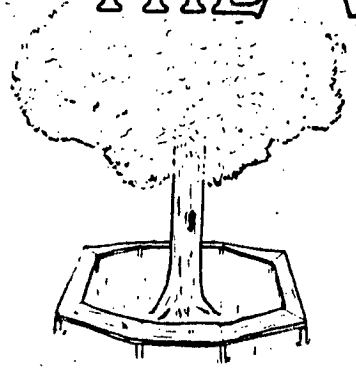


Carson

# THE WHITTLERS BENCH



SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

JANUARY 1988

**JANUARY MEETING:** Our Society will hold its first meeting of 1988 on Thursday, January 28, at the Public Library on West Moore Street. The meeting, a business one, will begin at 7:30 P.M. and will include the installation of our 1988 Officers. Please remember that it is time to pay our dues for 1988. Please plan to attend.

**NEW OFFICERS:** The following officers will serve the Society for 1988:

- |                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| PRESIDENT      | Paul Sweeney           |
| VICE PRESIDENT | Frances Allen          |
| SECRETARY      | Jan Quinn              |
| TREASURER      | Pauline Swain          |
| ARCHIVIST      | Susie Carson           |
| LIBRARIAN      |                        |
| EDITOR         | Mary Gore, J. W. Smith |
| DIRECTORS      | Jean Prevost - 1988    |
|                | Eleanor Smith - 1989   |
|                | Jack Fairley - 1990    |

**CEMETERY ENDOWMENT FUND:** Opened the account at the Southport Security Savings and Loan Association in April 1987. Interest at the rate of 5.5% to January 1988 was \$15.10.

In January we purchased a \$500.00 Certificate of Deposit at interest of 7.8%. Balance now in the savings account is \$156.51, need \$344 to purchase a second Certificate of Deposit.

**URGENT! URGENT!:** In the clean-up after the last dinner meeting, my serving spoon got traded with someone else's serving spoon. I hope we can make the exchange for our regular spoons at the next meeting. I hope that they are missing their "slotted stainless steel serving spoon" as much as I miss my "scoop type, unslotted stainless steel serving spoon". ABBIE BITNEY - 457-9466

**THE HISTORY OF BRUNSWICK COUNTY:** A few copies of the book "THE HISTORY OF BRUNSWICK COUNTY" are available for sale. Get yours while supplies last. Contact Mary S. Gore or Susie Carson for your copy. The price of the book is \$10.00 if personally picked up, or \$11.00 if mailed.

**DUES NOTICE:** 1988 dues are now due. At the end of this page you will find a form for sending in your dues. Dues should be mailed to the Society at its permanent address as shown above.

## MEMBERSHIP DUES

NAME:

MAILING ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE NO.:

- |             |                       |                               |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| CATEGORIES: | Individual, \$10.00   | Business, \$15.00             |
|             | Husband-Wife, \$15.00 | Sustaining \$25.00 (annually) |
|             | Student \$2.00        | Life \$100.00                 |

## TREES, BRANCHES, AND TWIGS

Please write these people direct if you have information to share. Remember to enclose a stamped, addressed envelope if you want a reply. Send any queries you want published in "The Whittlers Bench" to Southport Historical Society, marked Attn: Genealogy Committee. Right now we have plenty of space, but your query must have North Carolina Connections.

The Genealogy Committee is planning some exciting projects. Come to our next meeting to learn about them!

\* \* \* \* \*

I am trying to determine the father of CORNELIUS WINGATE, my 4-g-grandfather, who resided in Robeson and Cumberland Counties. He appeared as a juror in Brunswick County in 1782. He died in Fayetteville, NC. He married SUSANNAH JERNIGAN, daughter of JESSE JERNIGAN of Wayne County, NC and also Robeson County, NC. CORNELIUS' daughter, ATHALIA, married ROBERT WELLS BROWN of Smithville and their daughter JESSIE WINGATE BROWN, married Dr. LORENZO FRINK. If anyone can offer any information that will help me determine which WINGATE was his father, I shall be grateful. Mrs. Virginia S. Oliver, 12100 Bushey Drive, Wheaton, Maryland 20902.

I am looking for information about the PRICE family. My greatgrandfather was DAVID WILSON PRICE and we know his father died when he was young and that he was born in 1828 in Brunswick County, NC. In the Old Southport Cemetary is a grave for JAMES PRICE and his wife ELIZA. There are other PRICES buried there, but the dates for JAMES are a good match for a connection with my DAVID WILSON, and DAVID named his first daughter ELIZA. Mrs. Iris V. Jeter, 221 Cambridge Circle, Danville, Virginia 24541.

Need parents of JAMES HEWETT, born about 1820. Resident of Brunswick County, NC by 1854. First wife, unknown, second wife, AMELIA JANE HEWETT. Children: WILLIAM OTTOWAY, A. E. "ALLEN", MARY ELIZABETH, and NANCY CAROLINE. Mrs. Susan Carson, 501 N. Atlantic Ave., Southport, NC 28461

I am working on my family genealogy for a book on my VERNON Ancestors. I saw in the "State Port Pilot" about the new column TREES, BRANCES, AND TWIGS. How can I obtain a copy of "The Whittlers Bench Newsletter"? Do I have to be a member of the Southport Historical Society? If so how may I join? Robert P. Carter, Route 1, Box 360, Bolivia, NC 28422

\* \* \* \* \*

EDITOR'S NOTE: You do not have to be a member, write us for more information. There are advantages for membership, and we welcome new members.

# The Garden

by Flora Greensleeves,  
Consultant

**CAMELLIA JAPONICA:** These plants have a long and distinguished history, having been cultivated in the great gardens of China and Japan for many centuries before they became known to the West. Camellias were named for Georg Kamel, a Jesuit priest and botanist who discovered the plant in China. Camellias were introduced into America by the French botanist Andre Michaux around 1740, about the same time they became known in England. Many of the varieties grown today were developed in the early 1800's.



A member of the tea family; the camellia is extremely hardy and long-lived. If left unpruned, it will eventually become a small tree. The broad, dark green leaves are attractive all year, unharmed by even freezing temperatures. Its unscented flowers may be single, semidouble or double, ranging from pure white to bright rose in solid and variegated shades. Buds or blossoms, appearing in mid-winter, may be nipped by sudden cold but the plant itself is rarely harmed. Southport's naturally acid soil is perfect for these elegant plants. They do need to be mulched and should be watered in periods of drought.

COMMON CAMELLIA

Camellias have long been one of the favorite garden plants, valued for their permanence and winter color. The flowers were once popular as corsages and are often floated in a bowl of water as a centerpiece. For many people camellia flowers have a great romantic appeal because of their association with the beautiful, doomed heroine of Dumas' novel La Dame aux Camélias. If not closely connected with Southport before, the camellia certainly became a local tradition after so many were planted in "The Grove" (Franklin Square Park) during WPA days of the Great Depression.



ROSE OF SHARON - Hibiscus syriacus

Hibiscus  
Althaea  
Hollyhock

The Rose of Sharon is a tall, tree-like shrub of the mallow family (malvaceae). It blooms from mid-summer to fall with large open flowers similar to those of the closely related tropical hibiscus species. Flower colors range from white to pink and purple. The plant can reach ten or twelve feet and when grown in an open, sunny location, develops a neat, oval shape.

## ALTHEA (ROSE OF SHARON)

A native of India and China, Hibiscus syriacus came into England through Syria in 1596 and was later brought to the colonies by English settlers. Records show that it was popular among early gardeners of America, including Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, both of whom grew the plant in the gardens of their Virginia estates. Being the only species of hibiscus that can survive outside the tropics, syriacus has maintained its popularity in southern gardens for more than two centuries. Several venerable examples survive beside some of the older homes in Southport. Some of the older citizens of the town always called them "Alphy" or "Althy" bushes.

Rose of Sharon is easy to grow and will quickly become a valuable permanent addition to the garden. It may be propagated by layering, hardwood cuttings, or seeds. Young plants may need a little winter protection, but once established they will grow and bloom for many years with no further attention.

**NOTE:** Mr. E. J. Prevatte, local attorney and avid gardener of many years experience, and a resident of the Historic District of Southport, has presented several Althaea plants to the Society to become a part of our collection for the Benjamin Smith Memorial Garden. We deeply appreciate his interest in this project.

All members and friends of the Historical Society are invited to seek out cuttings or seeds of old plants of Southport, a valuable part of our heritage, for our garden honoring the memory of one of our "Founding Fathers".

To Milton Domler of Boiling Spring Lakes, we owe a big and hearty "thanks" for his contribution of the following article on the tar kiln which was used in the naval stores industry of early Brunswick County as it supplied tar, pitch and turpentine to England. Dr. Lawrence Lee says: "As the principal source of tar and pitch, the contribution of the Lower Cape Fear to the self-sufficiency of the British Empire is clear." In later years, the industry was revived for a few short years. Mr. Domler located one of the tar kilns on his property in Boiling Spring Lakes and did the research necessary for the following article. He is glad to show the kiln to those who ask. Thanks again, "Dom".

THE TAR KILN  
by Milton Domler

The tar kiln, known locally as "tar-kle", was built out in the deep woods where the location was most needed. In a much harvested forest, there were usually several tar-kles scattered here and there.

The tar-kle was formed by two men or two groups of men (depending on how large or how pressing the need in that area). Picking out a fairly bare spot, one group would start to shovel dirt from inside the circle to form a mound of dirt around them. The other group would shovel the ground outside the circle, tossing it onto this same mound. This would form a doughnut-shaped mound of earth with a pit in the center and a trough around the outer edge. There was one small area where the mound did not fully complete itself; this left a channel between the inside of the mound (pit) so that tars could flow to the outside to be harvested. Then a smaller pit was dug at the end of this channel for the tars to flow down into.

The main theory being that liquids will seek their own level, the large pit was filled with the trunks of felled trees with the butt-end downward in the tar-kle. Then a huge roaring fire was built in the trough outside the mound. In short order, the tree sap would flow into the bottom of the tar-kle, out through the open channel, and into the smaller pit, from where it was dipped out and poured into barrels to be hauled away.

The pit continued to be filled with tree trunks, and the fire was maintained until the pit could hold no more. When the sap was all extracted, the fire was allowed to burn down, the tar-kle was cleaned out, and the process started all over again.

During Colonial days, the colonists were struggling hard, not only to make a living for themselves, but also to develop their particular area into a complete and working nation.

Part of the industry that was being worked and was much needed was the processing of the tars and pitch derived from hundreds of thousands of rich, virgin timberlands throughout the country and especially the southern pine forests.

The pitch and tars were desperately needed for sailing vessels and other sealing needs throughout the world. They were, and still are, known as naval stores because their most pressing need in those days was for the ships of the fleet.

This was very hot and hard work; regardless of the need, the efforts that were put into the job did not seem to be worth the work of our forefathers, day and night, because they could not sell their raw material to whom they pleased. The colonists did not have the privilege to barter or sell to whom they pleased. They had to sell to the Crown (the British Government). In turn, the British would sell naval stores to Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, or any other country of their choosing. In return, the British would buy from these countries commodities that the colonists needed: plowshares, guns, tools, etc. After affixing high taxes to these goods, they would sell them to the colonists. This eventually proved to be one of the deciding factors that told the colonists that their hard labors were almost fruitless, and became a major reason for their wanting and deciding to become an independent nation.

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Editor's Note: Articles such as the above are solicited from you, the readers. Our "Whittlers Bench" will be more interesting if it has more contributors! Let's hear from you. If you need an "assignment", call Susie. She's got a lot of research that needs doing!

SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
YEAR 1987

Balance January 1, 1987 \$ 655.69

RECEIPTS

1986 dues	\$	10.00	
1987 dues		440.00	
1988 dues		255.00	
BOOK SALES:			
Cemetery		271.00	
Architecture		762.00	
Reeves - Chronology		300.00	
Fort Caswell		48.00	
Capt. Charlie		71.55	
Bald Head		56.00	
Book of Wilmington		36.00	
Stone rubbing		6.00	
Postage		12.69	
Endowment fund		10.00	
Donation		2.00	
City of Southport - reimburse jail work		<u>39.80</u>	
 TOTAL RECEIPTS	 \$	 <u>2,320.04</u>	 \$ 2,320.04

DISBURSEMENTS

City of Southport - insurance jail	\$	30.00	
United Carolina Bank - balance on loan		321.14	
Dues and subscriptions		85.00	
Postage - newsletter and correspondence		144.55	
Supplies - meetings and newsletter		38.99	
Printing - newsletter		7.00	
Transfer Endowment fund		220.00	
Transfer Savings - publications sale		1,346.00	
Seaway Printing Co. 2000 brochures		150.99	
Paint and painting jail floor		71.26	
Geneological Helper - advertising Cemetery Book		14.00	
Broadfoot Publishing Co. - 50% sale Chronology, Fort Caswell, Capt. Charlie, Bald Head & Book of Wilmington		263.28	
Society for Masonboro Island Inc. - donation		25.00	
The American Forestry Association - Plaque Plant a Living Legacy		<u>51.00</u>	
 TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	 \$	 <u>2,768.21</u>	 \$ <u>2,768.21</u>
 BALANCE DECEMBER 31, 1987			 \$ 207.52

Savings Account	\$	1,346.00	
Plus interest		<u>37.76</u>	
TOTAL		<u>\$ 1,383.76</u>	