

**THE WHITTLES BENCH**

is a publication of the Southport Historical Society a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization P. O. Box 10014 Southport, NC 28461 E-mail: shs@ec.rr.com Website: southporthistoricalsociety.com Telephone contact: 910-457-0579 or 910-454-0437

**OFFICERS:**

President: Larry Maisel Vice President: Joe Loughlin Secretary: Charles Christianson Past Pres.: Pat Kirkman Treasurer: Phil Fravel Archivist: Larry Maisel

**DIRECTORS:**

Tom Izod Nancy Heihecker Trudy Young

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

The purpose of this society shall be to bring together persons interested in the history of Southport and surrounding areas. Understanding the history of our community is basic to our democratic way of life, gives us a better understanding of our state and nation, and promotes a better appreciation of our American heritage.

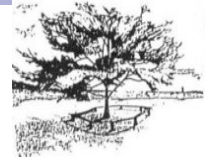
We further cooperate with the city of Southport to preserve the town's records and archives, and encourage the preservation of historic buildings, monuments and markers.

We endeavor to provide programs of historical interest at regular meetings, publish articles and books for the purpose of education and encourage community participation in the preservation of our heritage.

**Southport Historical Society**

was established January, 1976 and maintains the **Old Jail Museum** located at 318 E. Nash Street Southport, NC

# The Whittler's Bench



## *So What's Going on with the Garrison? . . .*



It has been 17 months now, since our society put a proposal for installing cannon at Fort Johnston and operating a museum and a learning center for young people before Southport Aldermen's Ft. Johnston Committee (a month less since it went to the full board) and no action has been taken on what we asked.

Your Historical Society Board continues to work toward what we want to do for the city and visitors at the Ft. Johnston site. We continue to have hopes that in the end, the city will find our plans in the citizens best interest. But it may be a while.

Larry Maisel

## *Membership Dinner Meeting . . . May 27th*

Mike Price presents:

“ Stories about my early Smithville family members”

Mike will present brief stories and photos from his soon to be published "**Our Journey: The Prices of Cape Fear and their Allied Families**" He will cover:

- an early pilot of Cape Fear when Southport was a tiny village
- 1756 Lockwood's Folly Baptist Meeting House and Old Bethel Church
- A Revolutionary War British Loyalist
- The first steamboat on the Cape Fear and its captain
- Six Cape Fear pilots and how they were inter-related
- The Civil War's affect on two families in Smithville
- a dramatic rescue at sea during an 1893 Cape Fear hurricane

The main character in each story is an ancestor of Mike's, and the stories are woven together to provide a wonderful glimpse into the amazing past of the historic little town of Southport.

Mike is Vice President in the Delaware-based Price Auto Group, which represents these auto brands: Pontiac, Buick, GMC Truck, Honda, Acura, Toyota

## *Our Speaker, Mike Price (all the way from New Castle, DE)*

and Scion. Mike was born in 1951 and has worked in the automobile retail business for 30 years. Mike lives in Smyrna, Delaware, with his wife, Sande. They have three children: Kris, Carrie and Drew and three grand children, Cora, Gracie and Lily.

During his formative years, Mike earned his BA degree from Delaware State University, Dover, DE in the field of History Ed; and his MA degree in Theology from Wesley Theological Seminary, adjacent to American University, in Washington, DC. Mike has studied Leadership and Administration in post-graduate doctorate courses.

Mike's mother, Katie Theresa Cox, and father, Warren Kimball Price, were born and raised in Brunswick County, North Carolina. Katie's childhood home was located in Southport; Kimball's was located on present-day Doshier Cutoff Road.

## *Historical Society Spring Classes at Ft. Johnston Garrison House at 7:00 PM\**

Our last class for the Spring will be **May 25** with Musette Steck - Effects of Reconstruction in both South and North (you can take just this class for \$10)

We have had very good reception for our classes. Here are those that have already been brought to life.

April 6 - Joe Loughlin on Blockade Runners and Charen Fink - life during the Civil War and Rose Greenhow.

April 13 - Pat Kirkman - Walking Tour of Southport History

April 20 - Larry Maisel - The Great Depression Hits Home

April 27 - Larry Maisel - World War II in Our Front Yard.

May 4- Bert Felton - pre-Colonial times, early explorers

May 11 - Bert Felton - The English arrive, NC is settled, through about the French & Indian War. (NOTE: Daytime class & will be at Brunswick Town)

May 17 - Musette Steck - Reconstruction Era Myths



Joe, Pat and Burt

*Cannons have a face thanks to Wanda Cornelius*

Wanda Cornelius, who is obviously an accomplished artist, has done a painting of what Ft. Johnston would look like with the cannons in place. The placement and angles may be somewhat different from what the real ones might have, but this is enough that we'll have something to show to the Aldermen at some point and have framed for our archives. We originally asked her for just a sketch, but she obviously went far beyond that, with great results. Thanks Wanda!



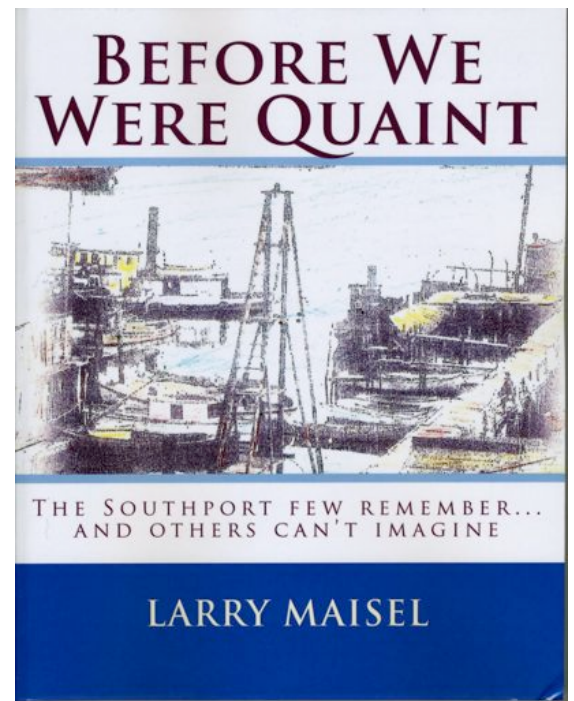
*Larry's Book is Ready at Last!*

**“Before We Were Quaint”**

The Southport Few Remember...  
And Others Can't Imagine

That's the title of the society's newest publication written by our current president, Larry Maisel. We are very pleased to announce that the book is now available for purchase and that we will host. . .

**A Book Signing Event  
Wednesday May 26th  
10 until Noon  
On The Garrison Lawn  
with Larry Maisel**



Come out and enjoy some lemonade, history conversation and the “salubrious breezes” on the waterfront. Members will receive will receive a 10% discount on the \$25 price of the new book. Hope to see you there - bring a friend!

We are very happy to note in the Whittler's Bench the news that Greg Bland, history teacher at South Brunswick High School, won an award from the North Carolina DAR for Outstanding Teacher of American History (along with a \$500 check!). Congratulations, Greg! The society is very proud of you.

Our society gives a scholarship each year to a graduating South Brunswick student who writes a winning essay based on local history. Our association with Greg's students has been very rewarding for us as well. We usually have the winner read his or her essay at one of our meetings. The scholarship was established in honor of Susie Carson who was always thrilled that young people were taking an interest in history.

This year we have a winner, Lauren Ehrhardt (\$2000) and a runner-up Lindsey Vereen (\$500). Thanks goes out to our members, Ali Travis, Earl Crotts and Tom Izod for judging the essays and to Karen Knighton for chairing our scholarship committee.

We continue to work with all our schools in the area by offering opportunities for local historical "characters" to present talks and demonstrations to our students. If this sounds of interest to you, contact Tom Izod at 253-6941 for more information.

*photo courtesy of The Star News*



Lois Marlowe, Greg Bland, Vicki Kay



## *News from the Old Jail . . .*

During the Southport Historical Society Christmas House Tour the Old Jail was open with four to six docents on hand at all times. There were 303 visitors that were counted visiting the building during the time period from 2:00 PM to 7:00 PM on the Tour day. The Old Jail was decorated on both the inside and the outside for the Christmas. The manikins that were erected in the Graffiti room and in the new Sheriff/Jailor room also had a festive style added.

Richard Slease has accepted the job as Old Jail building curator, and is working on new displays, and setting up a method so that the people who can not climb up the stairs can see photographs of the second floor.

A new entry deck has been developed to replace the old one, as the old one had sections underneath that were rotting away. The main entry door threshold had also rotted. The manikins now have faces that were painted on by Ann Thompson in February, so that they now have eyes to see and will be more realistic.

## *The Society takes History to the classroom*

On February 12th, Charen Fink enthralled the 8th grade students at South Brunswick Middle School for almost two hours with a presentation about the role of women in the Civil War and also the medical practices during that period. Dressed in period attire and armed with numerous historical artifacts Charen, with the help of her husband Dan, fielded many questions from the students who were clearly fascinated by her presentation. Paula Clemmons, the 8th grade teacher, was delighted with the presentation and plans to have more in the future. Bert Felton arrived at the Southport Elementary School on the morning of March 16th



dressed as a British sailor from the mid 1700s. Most of the students immediately asked him if he was a pirate! During two presentations to the 5th grade class at the school, Bert explained that he was not a pirate and then fascinated the students with stories about the life of a sailor on the ships in pre-Revolutionary times. There were so many questions that Sherry Woods, the 5th grade teacher, had to keep reminding the students to move on to their next class. Sherry Woods said she definitely wants more SHS history presentations . Joe Loughlin spoke to Southport Christian School's 3rd graders about what life was like in Smithville for his GG grandfather as a Civil War Blockade Runner.

## *A Bit of History by Larry Maisel*

Mike Price may now be living in Delaware, but he has very deep roots in Southport and Brunswick County. His ancestors -- who were among the earliest in these parts were whalers from "Up North" who liked the climate and the look of the area and stayed. Their first settlement was near Lockwood's Folly, but eventually they spread out, helping plant Baptist Churches along the way. Mike Price is a careful researcher and serious student of history. He is just completing a book which is built around his family tree, but also reveals a great deal about local history. For example, it has been unclear for a long time why the Yankee troops burned Bethel Baptist Church as they moved north up the river toward Wilmington. They had used the local Episcopal and Methodist churches as hospitals and living quarters, and while they damaged them pretty severely, they did not burn them. Then why Bethel? Mike has uncovered the answer. There was a Confederate artillery position in the church yard. It never fired a shot, but its presence was enough. You'll find the stories Mike price has uncovered to be fascinating. We'll see you at 6:30 on May 27th at the Southport Community Building. It's pot-luck, except for first-timers, so bring enough for yourself and some others.

## *Membership Application . . . Invite a Friend to Join*

### **SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 New \_\_\_\_\_ or Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with your check to: P. O. Box 10014, Southport, NC 28461

Annual Dues: Individual \$10 Couple \$15 Student \$2 Business/Organization \$15 Sustaining \$25  
 Life Memberships: Individual \$150 - Couple/Business \$200