

SHIPPING NEWS FROM PORT BATH

1 June 1749

Sloop Chester under Amos Cole, entered Kingston, Jamaica. She was of 30 tons burden with a crew of 6. Built in New England in 1748. Registered at Boston on 13 November 1748. Owner was Amos Cole and Co. Cargo—100 barrels of pitch and tar, 15 barrels of turpentine, 6,000 staves, 6,000 headings, 6,000 shingles, and 10 barrels of mackerel. From North Carolina. Bonded at Bath on 23 March 1749.

The Act of 1673

This act stated that all goods not bonded in England must have a duty and bond placed on them when the ship reached the colonies. The colonial governor collected the bond and duty and thus started a tradition that continued through the Revolution. Before going to sea, a ship was required to pay a bond guaranteeing that if certain enumerated goods were loaded at any port they would be brought to England or an English port and nowhere else. A ship-owner or captain who did not go to an English port would be prosecuted. The Crown thus hoped to channel all trade through English ports and receive income from duties and taxes.

From www.marinersmuseum.org



The Bath Packett

Newsletter of the Historic Bath Commission

2011 Historic Bath Highlights

January 2012

Landscape Interpretation Enhances Bonner House

In the summer of 2009 Bill Pruitt, chairman of the Historic Bath Commission, assigned Blanche Monroe, HBC member and master gardener, to head up a beautification project for the site. The rest, as they say, is history.

Bath's history does not just include facts about houses and families who lived in Bath. A properly interpreted landscape helps provide a sense of place and a certain time period. The effect of such interpretation can be subtle, but it is easy to see how things look different in a historic landscape as compared to a modern one. So far, most of the work accomplished through the Commission's beautification project has been focused in the yard and garden of the 1830 Bonner House. No bushes now hug the home's foundation and we look forward to the growth of historic varieties of fruit trees, grape vines and roses.

Today, the crown jewel of the Bonner landscape features a beautiful wooden arbor, beckoning visitors into the Bonner's back garden, designed in Colonial Revival style. The

arbor emulates the design of one which still stands at the home of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia. It was scaled to our needed proportions and built by Mr. Chuck Burgin of Washington, NC.



Historic Bath Site staff is grateful to the many volunteers from the Bath area who have given freely of their time to help shape this landscape into one which we are proud to share with our visitors. The work is not complete, so please stroll the grounds, enjoy the view and imagine yourself a Bonner.

-Leigh Swain

Hurricane Irene Changes the Landscape

While eastern North Carolina is not oblivious to the threat of hurricanes between June 1st and November 30th, this year's storm was quite unique. After watching weather models for several days and realizing that Irene would visit us in some form, site staff began preparations to insure the safety of structures and artifacts. Closing the shutters on the Palmer-Marsh House helped prevent damage to the windows along with water damage that could come from broken glass or blowing rain. Since there are no shutters on the Bonner House, plywood was placed over the windows there. In both houses, artifacts on outside walls or near windows were removed to safer loca-



tions, in the Palmer-Marsh kitchen furniture was placed on bricks to give some elevation from the tile-covered floor.

The loss to the site and to the surrounding area was the number of trees that fell from Hurricane Irene's wrath. With

hurricane force winds for nearly 24 straight hours, trees were uprooted, homesites and roadways littered with debris. Oak trees seemed to fare the

worst with upturned root systems being much taller than most grown men. But miraculously, structural damage seemed to be minimal compared to what could have been.

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Information about events at the Historic Bath State Historic Site are sent to the Washington Daily News, The Beaufort-Hyde News, and the Tri-County webpage. Flyers are posted at the Bath Community Library and the Bath Post Office message board. You can also call the Visitor Center at 252-923-3971 or visit our website www.bath.nchistoricsites.org for more details.

Events for 2012

Mark your calendars now for these upcoming events offered at Historic Bath

Lectures:

March 10: 10 a.m. "A Layman's Guide to Beaufort County Architecture" Beth King, a preservation specialist with the NC State Historic Preservation Office's eastern branch, will present a PowerPoint presentation teaching how to date a building by examining styles, features and house plans. She will focus primarily on buildings found in rural Beaufort County.

Lectures are held in the Visitor Center and are free to the public.

2nd Saturdays:

June 9: The War of 1812. Patriotic lessons and activities held from 10a.m.-2p.m. At 1p.m. Ed Hodges will give a talk on this overlooked part of our history.

July 14: Living off the Land. Come visit a market day of country products. Take part in a watermelon seed spitin' contest and water bucket races. 10a.m.-2p.m.

August 11: The Written Word. Join area authors and poets as they read some of their favorite selections and talk about what inspires them to write. Book sales and signings will take place as well as a used book sale on the grounds by

the Friends of the Bath Library. 10a.m.-2p.m.

Movies:

February 16: "Ruby Bridges"

March 15: "Friendly Persuasion"

April 19: "Champions"

May 17: "Swing Time"

June 21: "Black Beauty"

July 19: "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory"

August 16: "The Railway Children"

September 20: "The Help"

October 18: "The Man from Snowy River"

November 15: "The Magic of Ordinary Days"

The movie is held in the Visitor Center at 7 p.m.

and is free to the public.

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The calm after the storm

Visitation Is More Than Out-Of-Towners

Many statistics are kept in an effort to accurately reflect what we do in the tourism business and how many people we interact with on a daily basis. To visit the site and see what we do can sometimes be misleading because visitors don't come at predictable times or in specified numbers; many days it can go from feast to famine in a short amount of time. Therefore it is more representative to release our data on a yearly basis.

In many ways, the success of an historic site is determined by the number of visitors at the end of the year. Our total visitation for 2011 was 16,509, a decrease from 2010 of about 800. Sadly, we have seen a decrease in many of the programs that we offer on a more local basis—movies and lectures. Both of these venues are free and include refreshments. Visitation does not mean that you have to be from out-of-town to be counted, we depend on our locals to take advantage of what we offer and bring their friends. **Come see us in 2012 and raise those numbers!**

Volunteers: A Gift Money Can't Buy

Volunteers are a vital part of the operations at Historic Bath and many aspects of our programming and the presentation of the site grounds would not be successful without them. In 2011 we were fortunate to log 676 volunteer hours, many of those in the Bonner House grounds project, assisting with school groups and decorating for Christmas Open House. To put the value of this into a financial perspective, at minimum wage this was a gift to us

of \$5,231.00. In reality, the value of these helping hands are so much more than a money figure. These workers interact with each other and the public to make the site look its very best and this shows through their willingness to give freely of their time and talents and the results of this work that our visitors enjoy.

We depend on and appreciate our seasoned volunteers but lucky for you, there is no age limit and we can never have

enough volunteers. If you have a few hours here and there and would like to try something new, I'm sure that we can find a place for you doing something that interests you. Give us a try; we look forward to hearing from you and giving you the opportunity to share Bath with others.

If you would like to join in the fun, give us a call at 252-923-3971 and we're sure to have a place just for you!

Is there a wedding in your future, maybe a family reunion? Various areas of the historic site can be rented for such events. A permit is required with applicable fees. Contact Bea Latham (923-3971) at the Visitor Center for more details!

Past Times 2011—Life As A Civil War Soldier

Children ages 5 to 10 experienced age-appropriate aspects of the Civil War in this year's Past Times program. In keeping with the statewide recognition of the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War, the children learned about the differences between living and working in the North and the South and the key players during the war for both sides. Music was an important aspect of camp life and Johnny Rebel (local resident Jimmy Edwards) introduced songs of the era during a boisterous sing-along. Since young boys were used in the war as drummers, the children made and decorated their own drum and marched around town visiting several

residents along the way. During mealtimes camp food was served including sausage, pork and beans, watermelon, grapes and hardtack (not a group favorite!). Linking the past with the present, campers packed a generous box of supplies and goodies for a local serviceman stationed in Afghanistan, adding to his package letters written and illustrated by each child thanking him for his dedication and best wishes for his safety.

Past Times is an excellent program finding fun ways to teach children about life in the past. Check out the program for 2012 and sign up your child today!!



For Children in 2012:

July 12th and 13th: Children ages 5-10 will play the role of both wealthy and working class children through simulated chores and activities. The program is limited to 20 children and pre-registration is requested. Lunch is provided. 10am to 2pm at the Visitor Center. \$15.00 per child for the 2-day program.

Food on the Table: VDV Garden Interpretation

It was not an easy job, but after rebuilding the raised beds and refurbishing the soil the Van Der Veer garden was very green in the 2nd half of 2011. The garden has always been an optimum educational area since it was constructed in memory of Dr. Herbert Paschal. This latest plan includes the use of more diverse crops that provide a look at the cultural make-up of the Bath area, focusing on the impact that the African-American population had on what was featured on the dinner table. Also growing in the garden was luffa, a plant in the gourd family used around the households for scrubbing and cleaning.

Also important in this project was for plant support systems, such as trellises, to be era-appropriate as well. Bamboo, thanks to Lynda Oden and Mr. and Mrs. Al Willson, was cut and formed into a system that allowed the luffa vines to climb over 7 ft tall. This allowed for the maximum growth of the luffa and

in mid-October, just before the first frost, over 200 luffa were harvested. These have been put up to dry and will be used in future programs at the site.

Presently, the garden has a very healthy crop of collards, cabbage, beets, rutabagas, turnips and mustard. Looking forward to the spring, the anticipated crops are cowhorn and burgundy okra, cayenne peppers, squash, purple calabash tomatoes, dragon finger millet, lettuce, cucumbers, beans and gourds.

Our thanks to the Historic Bath Commission which funded the wood needed to rebuild the beds and repair the fence and a grant from the Historic Bath Foundation which funded the purchase of seeds, plants, and peat moss.



Above: luffa planted in June begins to climb the bamboo trellis.

**Right: collards after the first frost
Far right: A turnip breaks ground in November**



50 Years of Touring...and Counting!

May 5, 2012 marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Palmer-Marsh and Bonner Houses to the public for touring. Under the direction of Edmund Harding, money was procured through many creative forms of fundraising to purchase the historic properties as well as restore and furnish them. Harding also engaged the manpower for the work, using the cultural resources from those that could travel and recognize quality antiques as well as the local residents that had practical sense of making do with little and the

pride to do their best.

Plans are underway to recognize this milestone with a celebration. While some details are not final at the time of this newsletter, discussion includes a program recognizing the key players 50 years ago and both past and present dignitaries. Discussion is underway with the Historic Bath Commission along with town clubs and departments to provide lunch for a nominal fee, and the Palmer-Marsh and Bonner Houses will be open to the public for free.

Mark your calendars now for this momentous event. Fifty years ago the town, community, county and state came together to accomplish this feat on behalf of Bath, Beaufort County and North Carolina. Let's all come and bring our family and friends to celebrate the wonderful gift left to us by these people of great foresight. Watch for more information to come or call the Visitor Center at 252-923-3971.

The Bonner House was built in 1830 by Joseph Bonner. It was first used as a summer home, becoming the main residence during the Civil War. The home remained in the Bonner family until 1942.

To maintain the historical flair of interpreting life in the home, most of the furniture and artifacts date to the 19th century.



What Is It? - Artifact Education

The object on the left is an artifact found in the Bonner House.

What is your best guess on how it was used?
(Find the answer on page 7)

From the Manager's Desk

Dear Readers,

It has been said that volunteers don't get paid – not because they are *worthless*, but because they are *priceless*. Let me tell you about our volunteers and you will surely agree! Do you realize that if not for these helpers, my site staff and I would be unable to provide an educational experience for the Beaufort County 4th graders on the scale that we do? That we would be unable to decorate for Christmas Open House in any comparable way to what the Bath Garden Club and others provide? And you must surely know that our 14 acres could not possibly get the same level of TLC as they have received from all those folks who bring their cheery attitudes onto the grounds for a beautification workday! My heartfelt “thank you” go out to our priceless volunteers. I hope that the article Bea wrote about our continued need for volunteers struck a chord with you; I encourage you to be a part of your community in this way.

Speaking of community.....we are getting very excited that ours will get the opportunity to give a respectful nod to our predecessors when we celebrate their efforts to start a historic site 50 years ago this upcoming Saturday, May 5th. (It seems like a good sign that May 5, 1962 was also on a Saturday!) I expect each and every one of you to be a part of our celebration, so keep your eyes and ears open for more information about the day. A very exciting partnering of efforts will come from some of the Bath Elementary School teachers. As you can imagine, it would be extremely difficult to get school children to take part in a program on a Saturday in May. However, teachers and site staff will work together to develop a series of lesson plans for the children to study in early May. These children are our future community leaders, folks – we want them to have an appreciation of what was done in this community fifty years ago to ensure the old homes of Bath would still be here today for them. “Historic preservation” is not just a fancy term – it is the heart and soul of Bath. Let's never forget it.

Blessings in 2012, *Leigh C. Swain*

From the Historic Bath Commission Chairman— W. W. (Bill) Pruitt, Jr.

I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday Season, and are looking forward to 2012.

The beginning of a new year is exciting, and our Board of Directors is excited with the potential of another great year for our Commission. Challenges continue to confront us on our financial and operational fronts; however, as we have learned the last few years, from adversity comes creativity, and it is our personality to rise above these frustrating issues and implement the correct procedures to keep our Commission on the proper path. We must remain focused, flexible and frugal in the months ahead as we move together through these opportunities and continue our goals of historical achievement and service to our Community, State and Nation.

Our commission remains grateful to the Department of Cultural Resources, and especially to our Director, Mr. Keith Hardison, and department for their valuable assistance and knowledge. At a time when the Department has been drastically affected by continuous budget cuts, he and his staff remain cooperative and helpful well beyond normal requirement, and it is a pleasure to work with people like that. Please don't forget our excellent Board of Directors; Bobby, Claudia and Penny, who are not only challenged by the issues our Commission faces, but with the difficulty of working with someone like me, and we are indeed fortunate to have these people as leaders of our Commission.

Your Commission is moving forward because of the professional and caring work of our Site Staff and management. Leigh, Bea, Elizabeth, Robin and Wayne continue to provide first class programs and services to our visiting public. We are so fortunate to have each of them.

Finally, please let me end on this note. We will continue to be faced with operational challenges this year, but our Commission is dedicated to finding and providing the assistance necessary to keep our Site vibrant and effective; whether it be through volunteer, financial or instructive means; it is not only our obligation, it is our mission.

Thank you.
Bill Pruitt, Jr, Chairman

Tea Time—The Teapoy's Place in the Home

Even though the Revolutionary War emancipated the colonies from England, some practices remained in the day-to-day life of Americans for many generations. Drinking a cup of warm tea, often in the afternoon, was a time to relax or to visit with friends. Tea caddies were often found in the home to house the tea leaves, sometimes under lock and key. In the late 18th century, these caddies were placed on a pedestal and found a place of prominence in the home. It was given the name teapoy from the Hindu word tepai which meant 3-legged or 3-footed. Early versions of this piece were situated on a supporting column with a tripod style base but as we see in this example from the Bonner House, later styles in the 19th century still used the pedestal design but expanded into four feet. If the lid was

flat-topped the teapoy could also be used as a small tea table.

The piece on display in the Bonner House has five compartments—four with hinged lids and one with a knobbed lid. Having several compartments allowed you to store several flavors of tea or perhaps you would blend your own. The front compartment is open and allows a space for a waste bowl, a place to discard the wet tea leaves.

As with all the artifacts in the Bonner House, this piece was not used by the Bonners but acquired for the home because of its age.

Artifact Education

answer:

This piece of furniture found in the parlor is a teapoy, circa 1830. It is of the empire style and made of mahogany.

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Permit #14

Bath, NC 27808

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The Historic Bath State Historic Site staff gratefully acknowledges the support given us by the Historic Bath Commission. Much of what we do beyond giving tours would not be possible without their continued support. However, much of what they do is behind the scenes. Supplementing the salary of temporary employees, providing materials and snacks for special programs for all age groups, funding the Visitor Center gift shop, and funding the Christmas Open House just names a few of the ways that they help us be the best that we can be for ourselves and our visitors.

We hope you will take advantage of our programs in 2012 and we look forward to sharing our Bath with you!

****Postage for this newsletter was provided by the Historic Bath Foundation, Inc.****