



Historic Port of Washington Project



UPCOMING EVENTS

Virtual Lecture 2

August 4–7pm

History of the US Coast Guard In Washington

HPOW Mission

A part of the HPOW mission is to promote to all ages 8-80 our rich maritime heritage. Our displays and exhibits can be seen now at three downtown locations:

- NC Estuarium
- Harbor District Market

HPOW Needs You!

Become a Volunteer,
Become a Friend. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.



Treasurer's Report

April 27, 2020 Balance Sheet

Assets	\$7682.00
Bank Account balance	\$5397.03
Artifacts donated to date	1200
Volunteer Hours	
donated to date	776
Friends of HPOW	
2020 Dues Paid	320

From HPOW's New Chair...

Billie Mallison

This spring your Historic Port of Washington Project (HPOW Inc.) is looking forward to continued growth in exhibits and programs that celebrate Washington's history and our Inner Banks region of North Carolina. Check out our updated history booth at the Washington Harbor District Market. A new key chart easily IDs and locates buildings, vessels, and sites of historic note on an enlarged mural depiction of the old Washington waterfront. Our "earliest traders" are celebrated in an extensive display of Indian artifacts found in Beaufort County, on loan by collector Danny Leggett.



Detail of updated Harbor District Market display

Ray Midgett has graciously agreed to remain at the helm as President of HPOW. Joan Cottle shines with marketing expertise as our new VP, Gail Baird's organizational skills as our new Secretary are transforming the group, and David Connor, as Treasurer, armed with Quick Books, continues to meticulously protect our funds. Some other examples of our talent pool: Barbara Van Vliet, local artist, has stepped forward to share her wizardry with graphics. Gill Jones, local historian, has organized and contributed to our Newsletter. Our active Board of Directors, both seasoned and new to the group, provide the wind beneath our wings, and I am honored to succeed Ken Carpenter as Chair. continuing with our current and new projects.

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The 1950's Beach Mission Washington Teens Will Never Forget

One Saturday in either 1957 or 58 six young men aged 16-18 were up at dawn scheduled to arrive at Warren Field, to return by nightfall.

Bill Dunn of Glebe Creek, Bath N.C. recalled recently three boys at a time were flown aboard local pilot Ed Earnhardt's CAP squadron L-19 "bird dog." The Cessna type aircraft landed that morning on the hard beach at Cape Lookout at low tide.

The other three boys rode from Washington to rendezvous with the plane in a 1 ½ ton truck filled with hundreds of empty potato bushel baskets. The truck was driven to the closest dead end paved road (not far from Snug Harbor Old Seaman's Home) at a spot where the plane could shuttle multiple loads of shell-filled baskets to the waiting truck. The boys gathered conch and whelk shells all day, taking turns flying to the beach and only breaking for sandwiches and bottled drinks. All of the shells sold the next week for 20-25 cents each and many today can be found lining back yard gardens of historic homes on Second Street.

In the late 1950's Washington NC CAP squadron was an auxiliary of the US Air Force and supported search and rescue mission for downed planes flying out of Camp LeJeune-Jacksonville, Cherry Point Marine Air Station – Havelock, Stallings Field- Kinston and Seymour Johnson Air Force- Goldsboro. The youth attended ground school training with the support of four licensed pilots.



Cessna L-19 Washington Civil Air Patrol's Conch Mission to Cape Lookout



HPOW new artifact collection includes a 100 year old old fireman's helmet from the City of Washington and even a brass nozzle from the 1920s.

Pamlico's Past HPOW Led Class

You probably "don't know Jack," as in "Who the heck was Jack's Creek named for?" Did you know that there was a "wild west" shoot out on Main Street? "back in the day?" Who were the Beaufort County men who joined the Union Army during the Civil War? If you would like to get the answers to these questions as well as learn some more interesting stories and facts about the history of Washington and Beaufort County, register for "Pamlico's Past," a BCCC class led by HPOW Project's own Ray Midgett & Blount Rumley.

For more info about the next dates go to:
<https://www.beaufortccc.edu/continuingeducation/general-information/registration>



One of several Pamlico workboat models commissioned by HPOW to showcase local maritime shipbuilding heritage. This is a model of a 45' Sharpie Ketch.

Past Pamlico Pandemics

(Excerpted from a virtual lecture presented by Ray Midgett on our Facebook site on April 10, and currently available online at <https://youtu.be/c84i1x21f60>)

Today, because Covid 19 is a novel virus, we are forced to deal with a pandemic in the only way our ancestors could in the 19th and early 20th Century. By isolation, separation (social distancing), and wearing face masks. Let's take a look back at the 1800s and the year 1918 to learn about how eastern North Carolina dealt with wide-spread infections.

The Miasma. 180 years ago, the existence of miasma was the accepted theory for the spread of disease. Infections, according to the theory, were not passed between individuals but by poisonous vapors or mist filled with particles from decomposed matter that were identifiable by their foul smell. These vapors were given the name "miasmata" or "miasma." The Italians had their own phrase for it, "mal' aria" or "bad air."

Malaria. NC physician Charles E. Johnson argued in an 1851 lecture on malaria "... that "marsh miasm ... cannot be the cause of the disease." By the latter part of the 19th Century, most physicians including Dr. Johnson prescribed what we now call the "germ" theory of infectious disease, microorganism being the culprits. We now know that malaria is caused by a single-celled microorganism called a plasmodium and not bad air.

Washington Establishes a Quarantine Ground

Being a trading port provided Washington the opportunity for ships from other regions to bring contagious disease to town as well as their cargo. To protect the town from disease, an ordinance was passed in 1853 establishing a "quarantine ground." "... Be it further known, That all vessels arriving at this port from any port... South of Wilmington, N. C..." between June 1 and November 1 "... are required to anchor at the Quarantine Ground..."

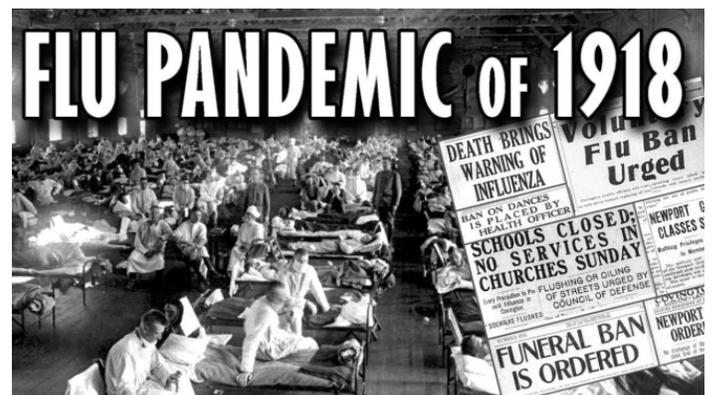
Yellow Fever. Yellow fever was another disease that plagued Washington. It is caused by a virus and is spread by the bite of an infected female mosquito. Newspapers state-wide reported yellow fever in Washington in October 1843. Other nearby towns prohibited citizens to travel to Washington. Washington experienced 43 deaths from Yellow fever from August 31 to October 4.

Smallpox. Smallpox is a serious infectious disease caused by the variola virus. People who are infected with smallpox develop a fever and a distinctive, progressive skin rash. In May 1899 local doctor William B. Rodman, Jr. said of an outbreak "One of our citizens developed the dread smallpox... What was the community to do? We had no hospital or place for treatment. Hastily a building known as the Pest House was constructed on the



sand ridge between the swamps on the south side of the river... There the doctors of the community rendered treatment."

Spanish Influenza. Before Covid 19, the 1918 influenza pandemic was the most severe in recent history. It was caused by the H1N1 influenza A virus. In North Carolina, 13,644 people died. Nationally, the disease killed around 700,000. As the influenza virus spread in eastern North Carolina, schools, churches, theaters, picture shows, and places of public gatherings were ordered closed. Social functions were postponed indefinitely and a local newspaper stated "women's clubs are not permitted to meet." On October 10, 1918, Washington, NC experienced its first reported death to the Spanish Flu. His name was Gus Dillon, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Dillon. Doctors estimated the number of cases in Beaufort County to be around 200 with a steady increase in the number of infections. By mid-October, events in Washington and the Federal Court were postponed until January. Dire reports were coming in about how the flu was affecting the rural parts of Beaufort County. 30 deaths were reported in a 3 to 4-day interval. The number increased to 50 plus deaths



by the end of October. As Covid 19 is changing our social norms today with handshaking, so it was in 1919. Much like Dr. Anthony Fauci's remarks concerning handshaking, W.O. Saunders, the publisher of the Elizabeth City Independent, wrote on Feb. 7, 1919 "Let's quit shaking hands. It is a filthy and abominable habit from the barbaric past... Having served its day and purposes it ought to be relegated to oblivion." We know that didn't happen.

Historic Port of Washington Timeline

The 1700's:

1769 The 70 ton brig *Acorn* is built in Washington

1770's Washington is one of few colonial Atlantic ports not blockaded by the British, Washington mercantile fleet supplies ships and provisions to Continental army and ports blockaded by the British. Forks of the Tar is renamed Town of Washington

1782 General Assembly incorporates Washington. 30 houses in 1783.

1785 Port of Bath Customs Service operations, customs collectors and naval officers move from town of Bath upstream to Washington, the new county seat

1787 a new Federal Courthouse is built on Market Street, the second oldest surviving in North Carolina

1776-1790 Port of Bath Customs Collectors and Port officials move upstream to Washington, Nathan Keias Port Collector builds house on Water Street next door to John Gray Blount Port of Bath District Commissioner. They are both buried with their wives at St. Peter's Episcopal Cemetery.

1790 Port Bath Customs and Impost District renamed Continental Port of Washington

1791 Revenue Cutter, *Diligence*, built in Washington

The 1800's:

1810 The *Young Eagle*, a 100 ton schooner built in Washington

1811 Two brigs the *George Washington* and the *Edwin* built in Washington

1812 War of 1812 *Hawk* built here

1815-1830 Shipbuilding declines

1830 Shipbuilding rebounds, Builders included Cap Hezekiah Farrow and his son Joseph Burton Shipp, William Tannehill and Hull Anderson.

1825 John Myer's shipyard & marine railway

1838 Corps of Engineers installed locks and dams, 3.5 feet channel up to Tarboro. Steamboats appear on the Tar.

1845 Washington recognized as a major shipbuilding center in the Southeast

1847 The first locally operated steamship the *Oregon* arrived in from ship yards in Baltimore

1849 John Meyers and Sons operated two stern paddlewheel steamships, *Amidas* and *Governor Morehead*, towing cargo flats and delivering mail service. Departs 6am arriving Greenville 12noon

1850 Washington ranked as Number one shipbuilding center of NC, 23 shipbuilders in Beaufort Co, large tonnage ships built: the *GR Dixon*, a 209 ton schooner, *Queen of the South*, a 305 ton schooner and *Pathfinder* a 428 ton schooner.

1855-56 A productive period, much port activity, many runaway slaves find their way to Washington to escape by water on Union ships, Castle Island sawmill

1862 Union forces occupy Washington, Confederate Navy ordered 3 gunboats from Washington shipbuilders

1865 -84 following the Civil War fire which burned half the town, only one shipyard Joseph Farrow remains

1885 shipbuilding rebounds due to Railroads system making Washington a regional hub and Washington harbor dredged 9 ft channel to Pamlico Sound

1890 Twenty seven known vessels (7 of them steamers) moored in Washington

1876-1891 annual revenue for the Port of Washington increases from \$500,000 to \$4, 800,000.

1880's to 1900 Port of Washington known for shipping and commerce and boatbuilding. Along the docks were lumber, grain and cotton mills, freight and passenger terminals, oyster canneries and fish houses.

The 1900's:

1900-1920 Zenith of Port of Washington maritime commerce. The

Atlantic Coastline railroad had a station on Gladden Street; flat bottom steamboats carried goods inland up the Tar as far as Rocky Mount. By **1918** there were 50 wharves. Many schooners traded to the Outer Banks north to Boston and south to the West Indies.

1950 Federal Port closed.

1960 Coast Guard Station Closed

From HPOW's New Chair...

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Blount Rumley is cataloging our artifacts collection. Our Board: We are graced with an active, knowledgeable, local history loving Board of Directors, and I am honored to succeed Ken Carpenter as Chair of this group, which consists of both seasoned and new Board members.

Importantly, please consider sharing your time, talent, artifacts, ideas, and financial support with us; we are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, all-volunteer org. So we need more volunteers for our activities including fund raising, living history projects, virtual presentations, and budding museum and artifacts collection. We have no funding by any government entity to date.

Our mission is to share our maritime commerce heritage with people of all ages from eastern North Carolina and beyond. Collectively we have a wealth of historic knowledge and artifacts that can significantly enrich the lives of everyone from 8 to 80. Become a FRIEND of HPOW! Please support us and help us grow: contact@hpow.org. Don't let history be lost. And please don't be shy!

Thank you, *Billie-Jean*

2020 HPOW Project Inc.

Officers:

President, Ray Midgett

Vice President, Joan Cottle

Secretary, Gail Baird

Treasurer, David Connor