

# FORT MACON RAMPARTS

Volume XI Issue 3  
Fall 2004

Award winning  
publication of the  
Friends of Fort Macon

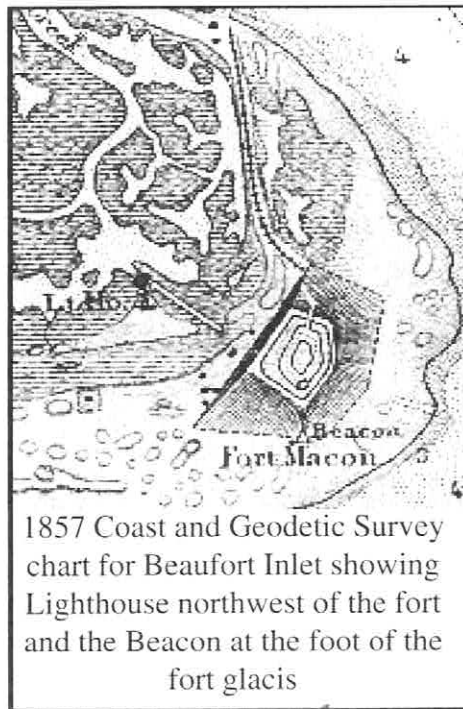
## THE BOGUE BANKS LIGHTHOUSE

by Paul Branch, Fort Ranger/Historian

During the last few issues of the Ramparts a section entitled "Outside the Walls of Fort Macon" has been included. This section describes various exterior buildings and structures that once existed as part of the "Fort Macon Military Reservation." This article is a continuation of that series and describes the Bogue Banks Lighthouse, which once stood outside the walls of Fort Macon from 1855 to 1862.

Lighthouses seem to hold a special place in the hearts of many people. These noble structures have a romance all their own, standing tall and steadfast against wind and sea spray, shining a beacon of light through the darkness to guide the mariner to safety. Today, the various modern navigational aids and global positioning devices make the thought of the seafarer standing at the wheel of his ship intently searching through the gloom for the friendly guiding flash of a lighthouse seem quaint and dated. Although their usefulness has indeed faded with time, lighthouses are among the most familiar of coastal icons. They are an integral part of coastal history, especially for North Carolina.

Although many people today are familiar with the lighthouses that dot the coast of North Carolina, few are aware that one of them once stood outside the walls of Fort Macon at the eastern end of Bogue Banks. Its



existence was only a brief seven years. Its end was untimely—a casualty of war. Nevertheless, the story of the Bogue Banks Lighthouse remains an interesting part of the history of coastal North Carolina.

Continued on page 4

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

by Jody Merritt

The summer of 2004 started off in a great way. We had the largest attendance for the month of June (212,488) that we have had since I have been here, and we all know that is a long time. The main contributing factor to the increase in attendance may have been the great weather. There were only three days in June where we had some rain. During the summer months we had a total of 569,672 visitors in the park. Again, the tour guides with the Friends did an outstanding job. This summer we had 26,133 people on the tours and over 600 people for our nature programs. For the first time this summer we had an aquarium at the bathhouse where we displayed some of the different types of fish and crabs that you might find in the park. It was a great hit, and I am sure we will do it again next year.

We continue hearing compliments on the fort restoration. I cannot thank the Friends of Fort Macon enough for all of the work that they did in helping secure funds for the work on the fort. I look forward to working on the Officer's Quarters with the Friends this coming year. The process of meeting all of the state

Continued on page 2

See: **DOOZARDOO** on page 7

## THE WORLD IS BEING REINTRODUCED TO THE FAUNA AND FLORA OF FORT MACON

by Randy Newman, Ranger

In February 1869, Dr Elliott Coues, a young Army Surgeon reported for duty at Fort Macon. He quickly introduced the world to the fauna and flora of Fort Macon and the local vicinity in the 1870's with his many articles on the fort's natural history. Dr. Henry Yarrow replaced Dr. Coues in 1870 and collaborated with him to complete a detailed listing of birds, mammals, reptiles, fish, and crustaceans of Fort Macon. Dr. Coues' and Dr. Yarrow's articles in the *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia* documented their findings of the great diversity of life around the fort. "It was intended," they said, "that they give a full account of the zoology of the locality, as studied by the writers during their successive residence at Fort Macon."

Today people around the world are again being introduced to the fauna and flora of Fort Macon. The Fort Macon State Park staff has been hard at work for the past two years on inventorying and photographing the fauna and flora of the park. The photos and information are then placed on the internet under the North Carolina Division of Parks & Recreation, Natural Resources Inventory Data (NRID).

Since August 2003, Fort Macon State Park has received nearly 2000 logins. The search engine, Google, has recently indexed the Division's NRID site. With this recent index, the park staff expects thousands of new hits to the

NRID site. Web users will have access to all of North Carolina State Parks. The database is a work in progress with park staff constantly updating the database with additional species and photos. If you were planning to visit a state park and wanted a checklist for birds, reptiles, plants, etc., this site will provide you the most up to date information.

One could also just sit back at home and look at photos of fauna and flora from Fort Macon or any other state park by clicking on photos from a park. If one is not currently listed you can click on the scientific name on left and that will take you to an internet site with pictures of chosen subject. This should be very beneficial to someone who is attempting to ID something they observed while visiting the park or in the general area.

This site has already proved to be a valuable resource to students and teachers. The web page address is <http://207.4.179.38/checklist/find.php> Choose a park from the scroll down bar, choose a group (arachnid, amphibian, bird, echinoderm, insects, fish, fungus, mollusk, etc.).



Ranger Randy with removed  
Alligatorweed

*The staff at Fort Macon would like to thank Bo Sullivan of Beaufort, NC for his hours of assistance in helping in identification of moth specimens. Without his assistance*

*it would have been impossible for park staff to properly ID them. If you have expertise in fauna or flora and would like to assist the staff in the identification of specimens, please contact the park at 726-3775.*

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"Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example."

Mark Twain

(Super's Message - Continued from page 1)

requirements on this project may take longer than we thought, but it will be worth the effort and wait. When we constructed the overlook shelter in the fort area, we knew that it would be a great addition to the park. What we did not realize was the impact that it would have on weddings in our area. So far this year we

have had 39 weddings held in the park. One of the most requested areas is the overlook shelter at the fort. I cannot think of a more beautiful location for two people to begin their journey in life together.

I hope everyone has a great fall and winter. Again, I want to thank the Friends for all of their work at the park.

## "THE FORT IS BEAUTIFUL!"

by Nancy Donnan, editor

Over and over during the past year, rangers and volunteers have heard this comment from visitors. Much of the credit goes to an amazingly small Maintenance staff.

Maintenance Supervisor Barry Smith is currently assisted by Larry Stover and Frank Page. The latter is a seasonal worker who will stay on as long as there are state funds. Missing from the staff is Tom Coombs, who is now on disability leave. Two additional seasonal workers helped through the warm months only. In short, a small number to handle an enormous job.

Consider grass cutting alone. From April through October, the wide-spread park grounds are cut on average four times each month. "We have every kind of grass and weed known to grow in this area, including sandspur and cactus," explains Barry. "Our job is to make it look like astroturf." And they've succeeded. The mowing goes on down in the moat, along the ramparts, on the edge of the road, in the bathhouse area, anywhere where grass needs cutting on the 400 acres of the state park.

While mowing makes a lot of noise and is visible to the public, it is only a part of the overall Maintenance load. There's a long list of things to be attended to, most of them preventive care. There's up-

keep of the two attractive sun shelters, one on the Inlet and the other on the ocean, both popular for weddings as well as for regular visitors, including the handicapped. Other responsibilities include: plumbing and electrical repairs, maintenance of three residencies for park staff, also the park office, and for the Barracks where seasonal workers live. Ten vehicles and trailers must be constantly cleaned, greased and serviced; add to that 5 septic tanks, 2 large parking lots, 5 generators,

out of dumpsters. Barry recalls contriving an escape ladder for 17 of them after one storm.

Behind the park office There's a large storage area, the warehouse, the shop where repairs and carpentry and painting are going on. You'd be amazed at the neatness, with everything having its own designated space, whether hanging in neat rows from the walls or stored on shelves and in drawers built by the staff themselves. Carpentry is an important part of the upkeep of the casemate exhibits.

Barry and his staff cite the support of park superintendent Jody Merritt, stating that he knows the importance of preventive maintenance and good equipment. Safety for the visiting public is vested in the Maintenance Department as well as the condition of the buildings and grounds.

Just remember that we can all be proud of the appearance of the fort and the rest of the park because a lot of hard work goes on be-

hind the scenes. "We want our park and fort to set a standard for other parks as well as for our own operation," says Barry Smith, "and yes, we wish we could do it without making any noise."

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"If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop digging."

Will Rogers

"A fanatic is one who can't change his mind and won't change the subject."

Winston Churchill



The Maintenance Crew: Fall 2004  
Larry Stover, Frank Page, Barry Smith

a long list of power and hand tools requiring attention and repairs.

Garbage must be dealt with, restrooms must be cleaned, filters must be replaced, locks must be lubricated, standing water must be drained, all of which brings up the chronic problems of mosquitoes and the age-old enemy, humidity. Hurricanes bring their own set of woes, including beach erosion, flooding, damage from wind and waves. A flooded moat brings in critters that are not normally seen. While snakes are rare, raccoons love the fort and must be coaxed



(Lighthouse - Continued from page 1)

During the first half of the 19th century, the U.S. Government attempted to protect the country's maritime commerce by installing lighthouses, beacons and lightships at numerous points along the coast to enable mariners to avoid navigational hazards. The treacherous coast of North Carolina, world-famous as the "Graveyard of the Atlantic," was one of the problem areas. Navigational aids were needed to mark great shoals extending far out to sea and tricky, shifting channels leading into ports and inlets.

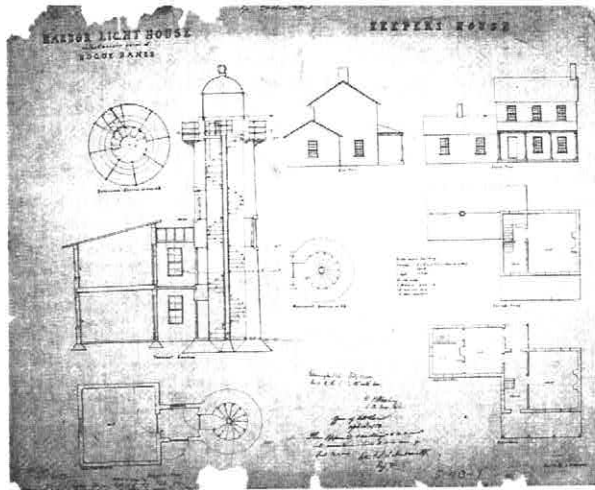
Cape Hatteras, Ocracoke Inlet, Cape Lookout and Cape Fear all received navigational aids in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. However, Beaufort Harbor was neglected. Beaufort became an official U.S. port of entry in 1803 and by the mid-19th century had eclipsed Ocracoke Inlet in importance as the state's second major seaport. Still, up to that time no formal navigational aids had been established to guide ships through the main channel of Beaufort Inlet. Instead, period nautical charts provided only depth sounds leading into the inlet. Later, Coast and Geodetic Survey charts for the early 1850s provided a complicated set of sailing directions to guide ships through the inlet. For instance, a ship approaching the entrance of the main ship channel was instructed to use Fort Macon, a large sand dune on the western end of Shackleford Point and a white spire visible in Beaufort as a set of ranging points to align in a certain order with compass bearings to pass through the channel. There is little wonder that a number of ships (the most famous of which was Blackbeard's pirate ship *Queen Anne's Revenge*) grounded and were lost over the years in trying to access Beaufort Harbor.

Finally, on August 31, 1852 Congress appropriated a sum of \$5000 to erect a small harbor lighthouse on the eastern point of Bogue Banks to assist vessels entering Beaufort Inlet. Construction did not start until almost two years later. The work was under the superintendence of Captain Daniel P. Woodbury of the Army Corps of Engineers, who was the engineer assigned to the coasts of North and South Carolina.

To build the Bogue Banks Lighthouse, Woodbury selected a site back from the shifting beach on a large spit of stable, dry land adjacent to the marsh about 200 yards northwest of Fort Macon. Construction began in the summer of 1854 and continued throughout the winter. Plans called for a brick lighthouse tower with a two-story building attached to be used for storage of supplies. The plans originally depicted the tower as being circular. When constructed, however, the tower was built in an octagon. Also included in the lighthouse plans was a small, two-story keeper's house, although it is unclear if this was ever built.

The Bogue Banks Lighthouse was given a fixed fourth order Fresnel lens. Fresnel lenses were masterpieces of precision optics invented by Frenchman Augustine Jean Fresnel (1788-1827). Imported from France, they consisted of concentric rings of dozens of glass prisms and lenses fitted into massive brass frames that magnified the light of a lantern into a powerful beam like a magnifying glass. They came in six sizes, or orders. The fourth order (medium sized) lens of the Bogue Banks Lighthouse stood fifty feet above the sea. The light was visible 12 ½ nautical miles out to sea.

While the Bogue Banks Lighthouse was being built, Congress appropriated an extra sum of \$1000 on August 3, 1854, for the construction of a separate beacon



Original engineer plan of the  
Bogue Banks Lighthouse

tower to supplement the lighthouse. The beacon served as a ranging light when lined up with the lighthouse to allow mariners to enter Beaufort Inlet at night. The beacon had a sixth order (small) Fresnel lens fixed on a heavy timber tower thirty feet above the water. Its light was visible 10.6 nautical miles out to sea. The beacon was located about fifty yards below the south angle of Fort Macon and about 1000 yards southeast of the lighthouse. To further assist mariners entering Beaufort Inlet, a series of buoys was established along the channel.

Captain Woodbury completed the lighthouse and beacon in the spring of 1855. The two lights were put into operation for the first time on May 20, 1855. With the two new lights and the channel buoys in place, mariners finally had adequate navigational assistance in entering Beaufort Inlet safely.

For the next several years the lights operated successfully, guiding mariners through Beaufort Harbor. The 1860 census lists Thomas Delemar as the Lighthouse Keeper. One year later, the War Between the States began in April, 1861.

On April 14, 1861, two days after the beginning of the war, Fort Macon was seized by local secessionist militia forces. These forces were soon relieved by state troops sent by Governor John W. Ellis. On April 17 Governor Ellis ordered Captain M. D. Craton, commanding the state troops at Fort Macon, to "take the most active measures for the defense of the post under your command, and hold it against all comers. Remove all buoys, extinguish all harbor and other lights, and take every precautionary measure to strengthen and guard the approaches to your position."

Accordingly, the lights in the Cape Lookout and Bogue Banks Lighthouses and the Bogue Banks beacon were all extinguished for wartime security. There was no reason to maintain the lights to aid Union warships patrolling offshore. By June, 1861, it was decided the very valuable Fresnel lenses should be removed from these lighthouses and the beacon in order to safeguard them from any war danger. Beaufort Collector of Customs, Josiah F. Bell, who was appointed Superintendent of Lights for the Beaufort District of the Confederate Lighthouse Bureau, had the lenses carefully taken down and placed in storage in a warehouse in Beaufort at a cost of \$5 per month. He also spent \$19.25 for the purchase of blankets in which to wrap the lenses.

For the remainder of the year the lighthouse lenses remained in storage. The empty Bogue Banks Lighthouse made a good vantage point from which to watch the movements of Union warships blockading the entrance to Beaufort Inlet.

Early in 1862, the expedition of Union Brigadier General Ambrose E. Burnside arrived in North Carolina coastal waters. During February, 1862, Burnside's forces were able to capture and secure much of the northeastern sound region of the North Carolina coast. In view of this powerful threat, it was probably at this time that the lighthouse lenses and apparatus were sent to Raleigh for

safekeeping. A short time later, Burnside's forces captured New Bern on March 14. Burnside then turned attention toward the capture of Fort Macon and Beaufort Harbor.

A portion of Burnside's forces commanded by Brigadier General John G. Parke advanced from New Bern to capture Fort Macon. Morehead City was occupied on March 23 while Beaufort was taken on March 26. A demand to surrender sent to Colonel Moses J. White, commanding the Confederate garrison of Fort Macon, was refused. Parke's Union forces prepared to besiege the fort.

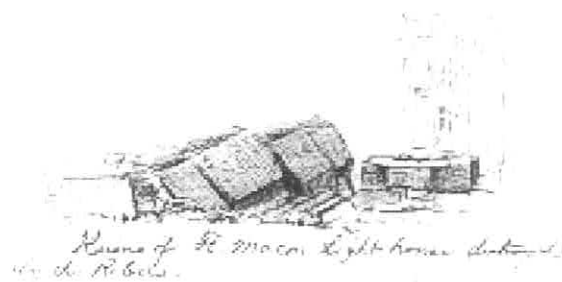
Knowing that some manner of attack was only a matter of time, Colonel White and his men made what preparations they could to defend the fort. One of the key considerations for defense, of course, was that the fort's can-

nons must have a clear field of fire in all directions. Tall structures outside the fort that in any way masked the guns, such as the Bogue Banks Lighthouse and beacon, had to go. On the evening of March 27, the fort garrison toppled the lighthouse over onto the ground. It broke apart into sections and lay in a crumpled heap in the sand. On the following morning the beacon was also pulled down.

General Parke's Union forces besieged Fort Macon on April 12

and subsequently bombarded it with siege guns on April 25. The fort surrendered the following day. For the remainder of the war, Union forces occupied the fort. During their occupation, at least two Union soldiers drew sketches of the ruins of the Bogue Banks Lighthouse lying on the ground. In the final days of the war, Union General William T. Sherman's army captured Raleigh, where the lenses for the Cape Lookout and Bogue Banks Lighthouses, and the Bogue Banks beacon were found still carefully bundled and stored. These were subsequently returned to U.S. Lighthouse Board. The Cape Lookout lens was reestablished in 1867.

At the end of the War Between the States, Beaufort Inlet once again was without adequate navigational aids. In 1867, estimates were submitted by the Lighthouse Board to Congress to reestablish the Bogue Banks Lighthouse and beacon. Congress declined to reestablish them,



Ruins of the Bogue Banks Lighthouse  
sketched by Corporal James W. Champney,  
45th Massachusetts Regiment, stationed at  
Fort Macon from December, 1862, to  
April, 1863.

however, and in 1869 they were dropped from the list of lights. For the remainder of the century only a line of unlighted buoys marked the channel passing over the bar into Beaufort Inlet. It was not until after the turn of the 20th century that three lighted beacons were erected to improve navigation into Beaufort Harbor.

Such was the brief existence of the Bogue Banks Lighthouse. Although the foundations of the lighthouse were mentioned as still being present in 1871, no artifacts or remains have ever been found of it. The site is now occupied by the United States Coast Guard base adjacent to Fort Macon. There is a good chance the remains may have been removed and used for fill to stop erosion on the north side of Bogue Point. However, there is little doubt the Fresnel lens from the lighthouse was reused by the Lighthouse Board in another lighthouse. It probably still exists today in one of the many lighthouses that still remain guarding the coast of the United States.

## Jean Bryere Kell

1909 - 2004



On October 4, we lost another of our Friends pioneers.

Jean Kell served as president of our organization during the uncertain period of 1989 - 1991, when the total Friends membership could fit into a small room. Looking back, Jean would smile and say that she and others were "holding the Friends together for Kathryn", referring to the 1992 - 1997 tenure of her good friend and colleague, Kathryn Cloud.

Both women died within four months of each other this year. Jean was a tireless researcher and author; Kathryn was a remarkable administrator. It is significant that in 2003, Jean received the Kathryn Cloud Award from the Beaufort Historic District Commission, and that the family suggested at Jean's death that memorial donations could be made to the Kathryn Cloud Garden Fund.

Jean was editor of *Carteret County During the American Revolution*, *Carteret County During the Civil War* and *Historic Beaufort, a Pictorial Profile*. She wrote a number of historic books for children, and her *Love, Goodwill and Affection* was made into a musical with the help of Laurence Stith.

The Friends have been fortunate to have these two friends, each with her own gifts, in our organization's past.

## BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

Our Bylaws state that the Friends officers and other Board members be nominated and elected by the current Board of Directors at the end of each year.

Our all-volunteer organization is losing many of its experienced leaders because of health issues, moving to new locations, other reasons. This crisis is not unusual in a retiree area like ours.

Our Bylaws state that nominations may be submitted by members other than those on the Board. A special Nominating Committee, chaired by Jean McElvein, is now soliciting nominations from the general membership.

Remember that the Friends have no central office or paid staff to "keep things going". Responsibilities of volunteer Board members are very real and sometimes urgent. It is realistic to have this group living within easy driving distance of Fort Macon.

So what are some of these non-paid jobs? The four officers (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer) have the duties of most officers. Among the responsibilities of committee chairmen on the Board are: administrative services, membership, programs for monthly luncheon meetings, publicity, Friends publications such as brochures, rack cards and the Ramparts.

As one Board member has put it, "The pay is atrocious, but the rewards of supporting Fort Macon are enormous."

Nominations for the Board may be submitted to Jean McElvein, chairman of the Nominating Committee, 252-247-6986.

*Paul Branch Sources: Annual Reports of the U.S. Lighthouse Board; National Archives; Record Group 365, Treasury Department Collection of Confederate Records, Records of the Lighthouse Bureau; National Archives, Record Group 24, Bureau of Naval Personnel, Deck Log of U.S.S. Gemsbok, March 27-28, 1862; David Stick, North Carolina Lighthouses (Raleigh, 1986); Kevin P. Duffus, The Lost Light, The Mystery of the Missing Cape Hatteras Fresnel Lens (Raleigh, 2003); Noble J. Tolbert (ed.), The Papers of John Willis Ellis (Raleigh, 1964); Copies of Engineer and Post Letters, Fort Macon State Park.*



# DOOZARDOO

Pronounced: Dues are due

Now that we have your undivided attention, look at your address on the Ramparts envelope.

If '04 appears beside your name, your 2005 dues (\$10) are due. A return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Put a renewal check inside and gladden the heart of our Treasurer. You'll make him very happy if you decide to add a contribution... or become a Life Member.

'L indicates that you're a Life Member. '05 means you've already paid for 2005. Please accept our thanks and pass the envelope along to someone else you'd like to enlist as a Friend, like your new neighbor.

The enclosed brochure, *Fort Macon, Where History Meets Nature*, has in it a brief history of the Fort. Keep it for yourself or pass it along.


If you have questions about your records, call 252-728-5495, or write to the Friends at P.O. Box 651, Beaufort, NC 28516.

## THANKS TO

- Golden Corral Restaurant for providing a new meeting place for our monthly meetings, 4060 Arendell Street, Morehead City, when our former location was unexpectedly closed.

- Jean McElvein, our retiring Program Chairman, who brought us such good programs for the past two years.

- Ranger Scott Crocker and the Friends volunteers on the Summer Concert Committee for a great musical series! Nobody felt more disappointed than these folks when the first and last concerts were cancelled because of bad weather forecasts. The remaining four concerts attracted an estimated 1500 enthusiastic concert goers. Kudos to Frank and Fran Rock for their record breaking recruitment of new members before and after each concert.

  
"Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment." Will Rogers

## CONGRATULATIONS

Two of our Board members recently received awards from the North Carolina Society of Historians: Bennett Moss, former editor of *Ramparts*, in the newsletter category (for third straight year); Dick Whipple, publications chairman, for the brochure *Fort Macon, Where History Meets Nature*.

Larry Richter, former Friends vice-president, all-round Friends volunteer (Ice Cream Social, Summer Concerts, etc) was one of 5 Carteret County recipients of the Governor's Award for Volunteerism in Wilmington on October 18. He was nominated by a Habitat for Humanity colleague, who considered Larry an asset to many other local organizations, just as we do!

The work of Grayden Paul (our president), Gwyn Towles (our secretary), Billy Scott and Pat Potter on the restoration of the John C. Manson House was reflected in the award recently given in St. Louis to the Beaufort Historical Association by the American Association of State and Local History.

Just in case you've misplaced the dues envelope

### Membership Form

Check One: ☐ New Member(s) ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift Membership

Fee Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Member's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Street or P.O.Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Donor, if gift \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership Categories and Fees

Individual/Family - \$10.00      Lifetime (Individual) - \$100.00

Business or Organization - \$25.00      Business Lifetime - \$500.00

**Friends of Fort Macon, P.O.Box 651, Beaufort, NC 28516-0651**

## Pats on the Back

It's always good to hear from our visitors. The Friends occasionally get hand written notes on membership forms. On July 31, we saw "Love the concerts!!", echoing the many such comments we heard in the sally port as the crowds headed home. On the same evening, another new member wrote, "P.S. Enjoy our Friday night doings". Then he added, "Fort Macon has sure improved since I first saw it in 1943. Had arrived in the area as a brand new USMC 2nd Lt. aviator at Atlantic Field."