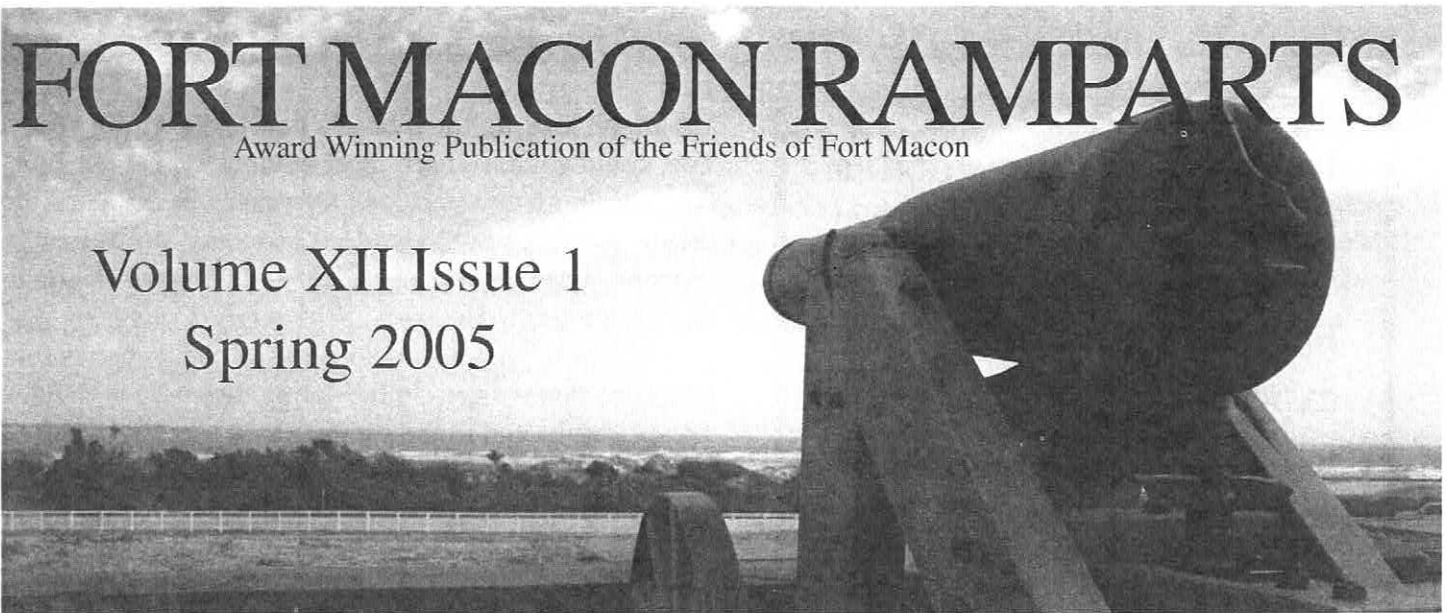


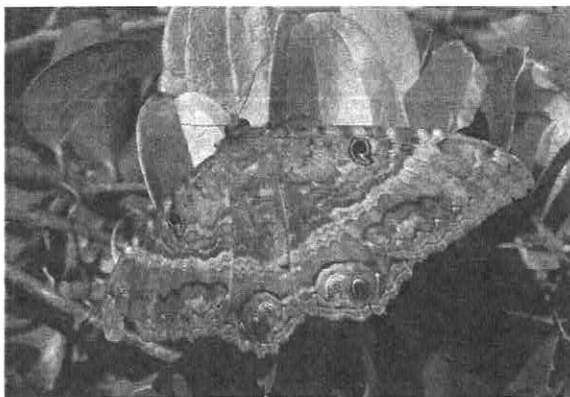
FORT MACON RAMPARTS

Award Winning Publication of the Friends of Fort Macon

Volume XII Issue 1
Spring 2005

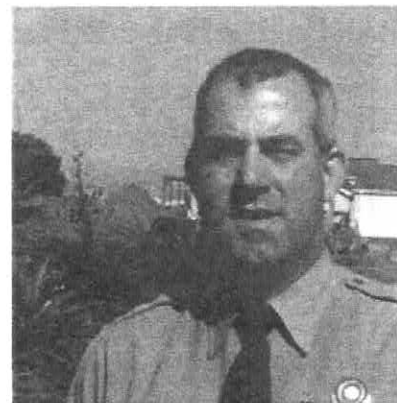


Ranger Randy Newman finds specie of moth never seen in NC, THE BLACK WITCH



On December 16, 2004, park staff observed a Black Witch Moth (*Ascalapha odorata*) at Fort Macon State Park. This is the first recorded sighting for North Carolina and only the eleventh known sighting recorded east of the Mississippi excluding Florida. The Black Witch Moth is usually associated with the New World tropics and flies year round in Rio Grande Valley (southern most part of Texas) and south Florida. The moth is a member of the family, Noctuidae and

is the largest moth in North America. It has a wingspan of 5 to 7 inches, and is often mistaken for a bat which it somewhat resembles at night. Known in Mexico by the Indians since Aztec times as mariposa de la muerte (butterfly of death). When there is sickness in a house and this moths enters, the sick person dies. A variation of this theme heard in the Rio Grand Valley is that death only occurs if the moth flies in and visits all four corners of one's house. In Hawaii, Black Witch mythology, though associated with death, has a happier note in that if a loved one has just died, the moth is an embodiment of the person's soul returning to say goodbye. In some parts of Mexico, people joke that if one flies over someone's head, the person will lose his hair. Still another myth: seeing one means that someone has put a curse on you! Information for this article came from website, The Black Witch Moth: Its Natural & Cultural History. This website can be found at the following address > <http://www.texasento.net/witch.htm><



Randy Newman - Ranger

Don't forget - Ice Cream Social - April 24, 2005 - See Page 6

Superintendent's Comments

In the casemate stood a giant of a man. His shadow covered the Friends of Fort Macon with love, expertise, and "mucho" help. Bob Donnan is sorely missed. It is taking five people to "sort-of" do what he did. Be at peace, Bob. You gave our world an example of how we all should live.

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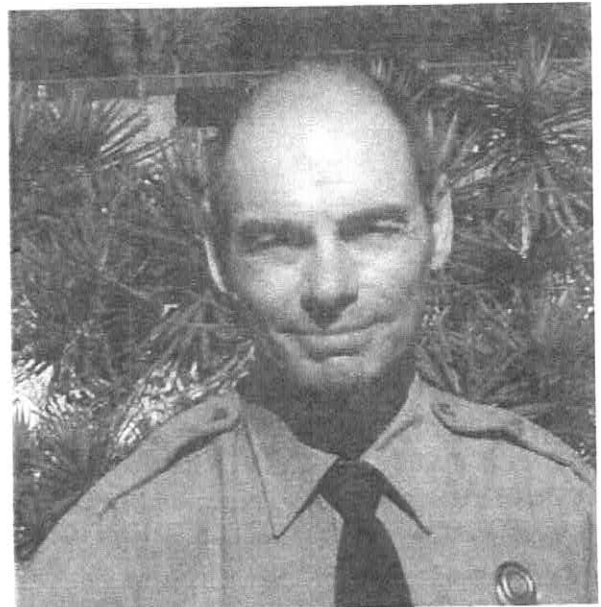
PARK SUPERINTENDENT- Jody Merritt
PRESIDENT EMERITUS ...Bennett Moss

We are all looking forward to a new and exciting year. This could not have been more evident than at the Tour Guide training that started in February. It was good to see the returning guides and the eagerness of the new trainees. I cannot emphasize enough on how important this program is to the park. Without the Friends of Fort Macon's help, we could not meet the demands for programs that we get. In the spring they help with the school groups and in the summer they take over most of the daily tours and free the Rangers up to deal with large number of visitors that we get.

In February the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began pumping sand on the Park's beaches. We desperately needed the sand, especially at the bathhouse area. I hope that in the future we can get sand placed on the beach when we need it, and not just every eight to ten years. Park visitors will enjoy the wider beaches this summer, and it not being so crowded for them.

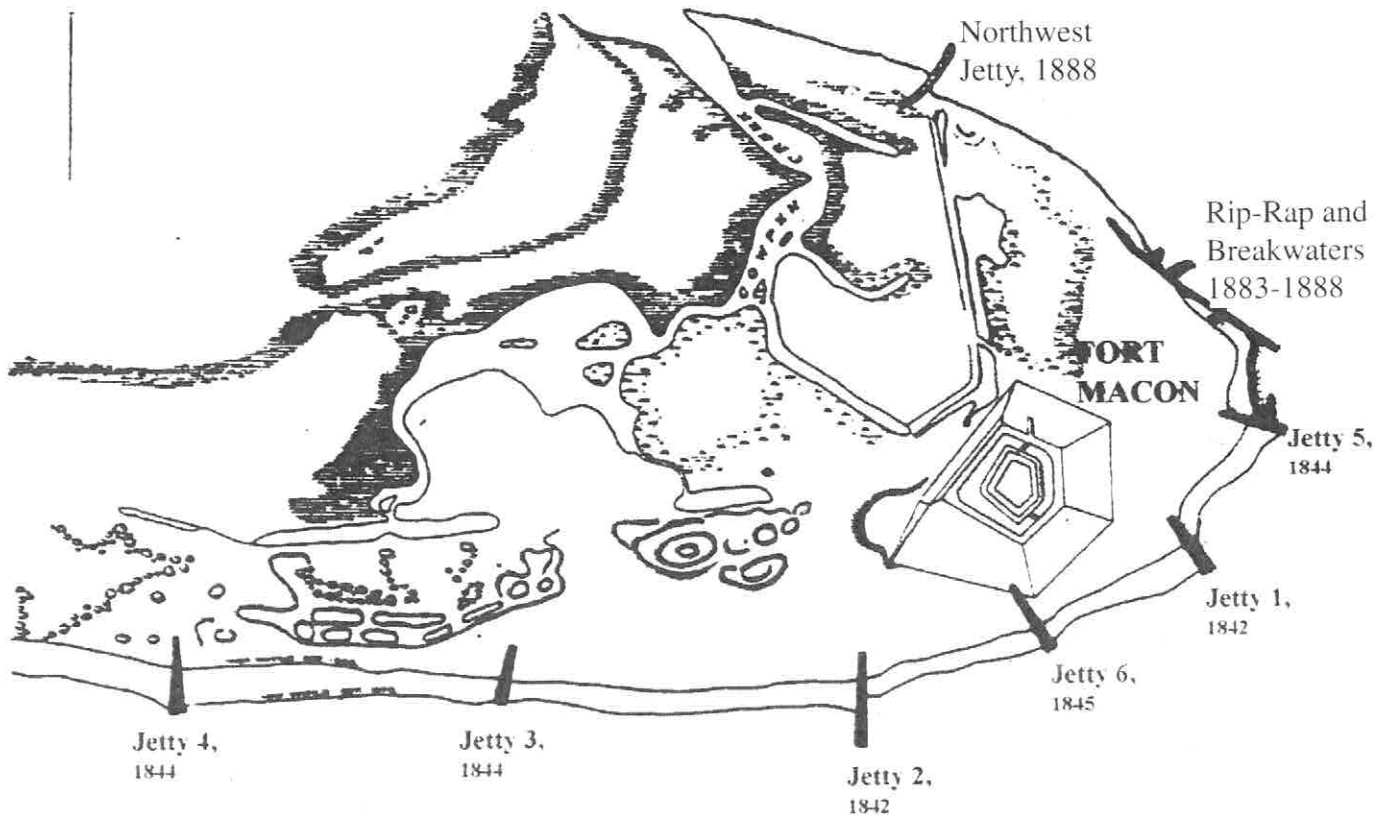
Thinking about the summer, we are beginning to interview people for our seasonal positions. So if you have a child, grandchild or are a kid at heart, get an application in to the park as soon as you can. We would like to have these positions filled by April. The openings that we have are for park attendants, refreshment stand, lifeguards and historian.

by Jody Merritt-Superintendent



EROSION CONTROL AT FORT MACON
PART ONE
BY PAUL BRANCH

In January, 2005, the Army Corps of Engineers began an erosion control project in which sand dredged from the ship channel through Beaufort Inlet is being pumped to rebuild, or "renourish", the Fort Macon State Park beach. The sand is desperately needed to repair the ravages of natural forces in recent years. Yet this project is but the latest part of a struggle that has gone on for almost two centuries. What follows is an overview of the efforts that have taken place to protect and preserve Fort Macon from the restless Atlantic.



Map showing jetty placements from 1842 to 1888
These jetties were the result of recommendation made by Robert E. Lee
during his inspection of the fort in 1840.

Since its construction, a constant battle between Fort Macon and the Atlantic Ocean has been waged. As with all permanent structures built on barrier islands, Fort Macon has been at times threatened by the natural forces that are constantly at work reshaping and changing Bogue Banks and Beaufort Inlet. By the very nature of its purpose, the fort had to be built of necessity in the most disadvantageous of locations: close to the shoreline on a barrier island adjacent to a major inlet. It has only been by very strenuous and expensive government efforts that the fort and its surrounding beach have been enabled to stay intact through the continual assault of Nature.

North Carolina's barrier islands are constantly in a state of change. They expand and recede over time. Likewise, the inlets through these islands open, close, and shift as the years go by. Beaufort Inlet, flanked by Shackleford

Banks on the east and Bogue Banks on the west, is no exception. Natural shore migration at Beaufort Inlet takes the form of alternately eroding and then building up the shoreline at Bogue and Shackleford Points as the inlet expands and contracts. This process takes place over an irregular number of years.

As an example of the extremes of the inlet's fluctuation, consider that during one period of inlet movement, erosion at Bogue Point swallowed up Fort Macon's predecessor fort, Fort Hampton, in 1825. One hundred years later, the process had reversed in the 1920s, creating a large expanse of land at Bogue Point that boosted the acreage of the newly-created Fort Macon State Park to an unprecedented 581 acres.

The fickle nature of the erosion process at Beaufort Inlet was of great concern to the Army Engineer Department when it began to build Fort Macon on Bogue Point, the eastern end of Bogue Banks. To prevent Fort Macon from having the same end as its ill-fated predecessor, Fort Hampton, it was necessary to take measures to preserve the fort site from the sea. To stabilize the shifting inlet and beach for the establishment of a permanent fort, the Engineer Department initiated a system of jetties along the shore of Bogue Point in 1831 while the fort was still under construction.

Jetties are structures of wood, stone or other materials built to extend from a beach into the water. They slow the water currents moving along the shore and allow sand to build up on the upstream side of the jetty, thus halting the effects of erosion.

These first 1831 jetties consisted of rows of wood pilings laid at right angles to the beach. They were filled with brush that was weighted down with brick bats and logs. They were successful in halting erosion of the fort site for some years. However, these structures were only temporary at best. By 1840 the wood had deteriorated and the bricks were scattered along the beach. The fort was in danger once more.

In December, 1840, Captain Robert E. Lee was sent by the Engineer Department to study the erosion problem at Fort Macon and determine a solution. In January, 1841, Lee sent his recommendation that two permanent stone jetties be constructed to halt the erosion. These would consist of stone piled upon a grillwork of palmetto logs set perpendicular to the shore. The Engineer Department approved the recommendation. In 1842, these two jetties were constructed on the beach near the fort by Lieutenant George Dutton. They proved to be successful. During 1844-45, four more stone jetties were constructed under Lieutenant Daniel P. Woodbury. These six structures held the beach in place for almost forty years.

Following the War Between the States, shore erosion shifted from the ocean beach to Beaufort Inlet. The inlet began to widen, causing considerable erosion at both Bogue and Shackleford Points. Between 1876 and 1881 the width of the inlet increased from 2250 yards to 2900 yards. Of the overall loss of 650 yards of beach between 1876 and 1881, 530 yards eroded from Shackleford Point and 120 yards from Bogue Point.

As a result, Congressional funding was appropriated for improvements to Beaufort Harbor by the Engineer Department. Engineers worked to stabilize both Bogue and Shackleford Points during the 1880s. On Bogue Point at Fort Macon, three new jetties were built on the inlet beach northeast of the fort during 1883-87. During 1883-85, a massive cast-in-place concrete breakwater was constructed on top of one of the old 1844 jetties eastward of the fort. During 1887 and 1889-90, stone revetments were built along the high water mark of the inlet beach northward from the concrete breakwater jetty. These improvements, along with similar work done across the inlet on Shackleford Point, served to stabilize Beaufort Inlet once more.

During 1906, while the Army Corps of Engineers worked on a project to dredge the channel through Beaufort Inlet to a 20-foot depth, an unusual event took place. In December, 1906, part of the inlet beach area north of Fort Macon adjacent to Cowpen Creek suddenly began to crumble and sink into the water. The dock and breakwater for the newly-established U.S. Lifesaving Service Station, which was located near the mouth of

Cowpen Creek, likewise just collapsed into the water. The station house itself was left hanging partly over the edge of the crumbling cliff when the phenomenon suddenly stopped.

It turned out the ebb tide of the inlet, probably outflowing with greater velocity as a result of the dredging, had created a scouring action along the bottom of the north side of Bogue Point. The scouring action undermined a portion of the beach until it simply collapsed into the depths. The Lifesaving Station was later moved further inland to its present location, but new corrective measures had to be taken to stabilize Bogue Point.

During 1907-08, the engineers removed one of the jetties built in the 1880s on the north side of the point that was now useless. Its materials were then used to construct four other small jetties along the north side of the point. These managed to prevent further damage to the beach.

On the ocean beach in front of the fort, meanwhile, quite the opposite was happening. After 1908, the ocean beach began to build up at an amazing rate. This buildup was particularly heavy during the 1920s, to the delight of state officials now administering Fort Macon as a state park. It reached its peak in 1930, when the extreme end of Bogue Point became a hook-like sand spit extending about 2800 feet southeast from the walls of the fort. In the center of this hook was a lagoon-like tidal basin.



Photo taken in 1961 showing the sand build-up at that time



Paul Branch Jr. continues his discussion of erosion control at Fort Macon in the next issue of the Ramparts. This discussion will be from 1940 until the present day. Paul is the Fort Macon Historian. He has published two books on the fort and numerous articles

RECONSTRUCTED OFFICER'S QUARTERS PROGRAM STATUS

by Grayden Paul, Jr.

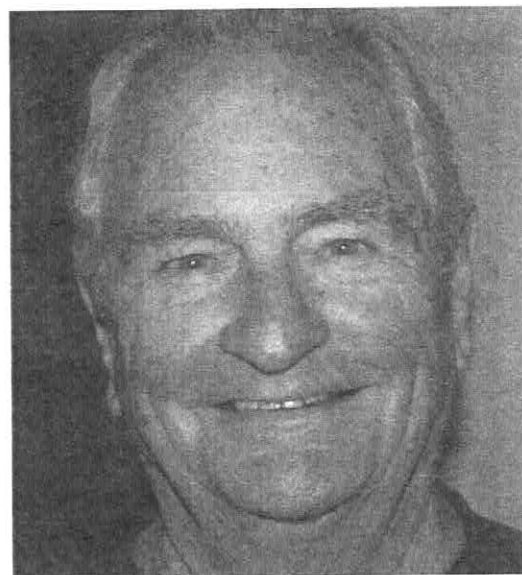
Although it seems like a long time, we are making progress on getting State Construction and Park Service approval to proceed with the reconstructed Officer's Quarters building at Fort Macon. It is amazing how many state agencies we have to go through to obtain final approval.

One interesting aspect of the process is that we, the Friends of Fort Macon, will lease the section of land for the building site from the state at a nominal fee. Upon completion of the building, we will transfer the land and the building back to the state, namely Fort Macon State Park. This process is known as a "gift in kind" in that the Friends are giving a building, constructed by the Friends on state property, to the state. Fort Macon State Park will then be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the officer's Quarters Building as an element of the Park.

John Wood, of the Department of Cultural Resources, and I have had reviews with our architect, Paul Stephens just recently. Paul feels that unless some unforeseen problem arises, we should have all the approvals by early April. We should then be in a position to launch a capital development campaign to raise the necessary funding for construction of the building. We have already prepared a "Case Statement" for use in fund raising, although some updating will be required because of the stretch out in the program approval.



Proposed Officer's Quarters



Grayden Paul Jr. - President

DON'T FORGET THE ICE CREAM SOCIAL

APRIL 24, 2005

LARRY AND MARY RICHTER HAVE PUT TOGETHER
ANOTHER TASTE TREAT DELIGHT.

COME ENJOY HOMEMADE,
MOUTH-WATERING BROWNIES WITH GOBS OF ICE CREAM
ENTERTAINMENT BY CONNIE MASON