

FORT MACON RAMPARTS

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The date on your mailing label
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Fort Macon State Park and Hurricane Florence

Randy Newman



Fortunately for Fort Macon State Park, Hurricane Florence, which had been a Category 4 seven days earlier with estimated maximum sustained winds of 130 mph, began decreasing. North Carolina Coast and Fort Macon State Park began feeling the effects of the storm on September 12 (still a Category 2) with maximum sustained winds of 110 mph offshore, forward movement slowing down to 2-3 miles per hour. For the next three days Fort Macon experienced strong wind gusts, with the National Weather Service reporting the highest recorded wind gusts at Fort Macon at 105 mph. The storm finally came ashore near Wrightsville Beach on the morning of Sept 15, as a Category 1 with maximum sustained winds of 90 mph. The park received "torrential" rain for three days, with the

National Weather Service reporting Morehead City had received 23.75 inches.

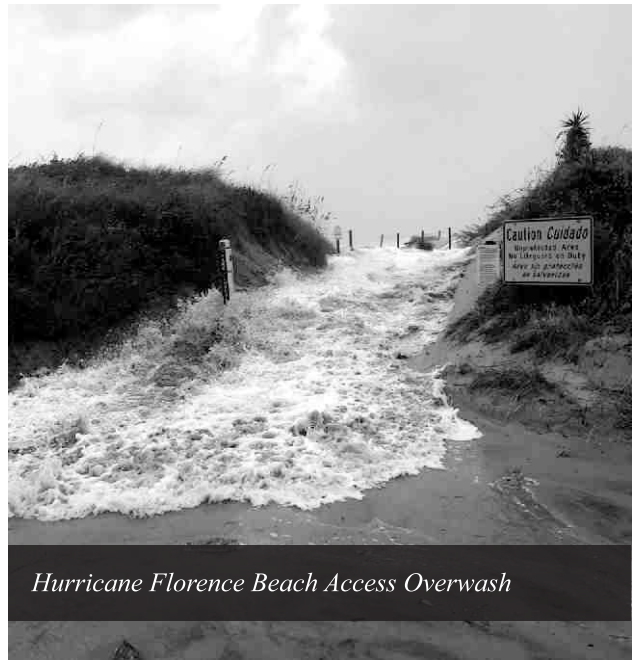
On September 11, Park staff finished storm preparations by putting hurricane shutters on all of the buildings, and securing items that might be tossed around in the strong winds. At this time the county issued a mandatory evacuation order, so the park closed to the public at 12:00 p.m.

On September 12, the park began feeling the first effects of the storm, with rain and wind gusts of 34 mph out of the Northeast.

On September 13, at high tide, around 10:30 AM the ocean waves were crashing through the Bathhouse eastern beach access and my residence yard flooded from high tidal water coming out of the marsh. My kids took advantage of the flood water to cast net the front yard for small fish which included mullet, sheepshead, sharptail goby and other common marsh minnows. This helped the kids pass the day, since they were housebound with no electricity. Throughout the evening the wind gusts got stronger with one reported gust of 105 miles per hour, and the wind direction never changed. Not realizing that storm had slowed to 2-3 miles per hour forward movement, I began thinking in the middle of the night, that we were probably going to take a direct hit from the eye wall. I also began to remember reading about former Fort Macon Superintendent Vance Smith leaving Fort Macon State Park after Hurricane Hazel (October 15, 1954) for William B Umstead State Park in Raleigh, NC, and stating “needless to say I have had my fill of a lifetime of beaches during a storm”, and wondering would this be the storm to break me after 30 years of experiencing storms at Fort Macon. I got up at midnight to check for flood water associated with high tide, and found my yard totally underwater. I got my son Garrett up to help begin moving vehicles from the yard, however when I went outside the tide had already switched and water was streaming out of my yard, back across the driveway into the marsh. Water had gotten to my bottom step of my front porch. But luckily, we had been spared what would have been a devastating loss of property if the flood water had continued. The National Weather Service had reported a 10-foot storm surge in the general area.

On the morning of September 14, the park was still receiving wind gusts of 60 miles per hour and still raining. The winds finally began to decrease around 5pm. My residence had survived the storm with very minor damage. The park beaches had minor erosion, unlike the erosion from Hurricane Ophelia (September 14-15, 2005) which had taken place 13 years earlier to the day. Overall, the park appeared to have received very little damage; a few shingles off a couple of buildings, bathhouse sun shelter roof damaged, and lots of standing water with both parking lots flooded along with the fort's moat. With no electricity for several more days, and the moat pump unable to work, the moat water continued to rise. I kept a close eye on it because I had always heard during Hurricane Hazel the fort parade ground had flooded with 6 inches of water.

On September 16, my fears were a reality with the interior of the fort flooding with a couple of inches of water. Ranger Paul Branch, my kids and I began removing museum artifacts that we thought would be damaged from the flood water. All artifacts and exhibit props were saved with no real damage other than a needing a good cleaning. Our Raleigh office sent down a tractor with a connecting water pump which we used to begin lowering the water level in the moat, to help prevent further damage to the fort's



Hurricane Florence Beach Access Overwash



Hurricane Florence Fort Moat





museum rooms. After flood waters had receded the floors of the restored rooms began buckling and the odor of mold was present. The entire floors of the restored rooms will have to be replaced. Also, upon further investigation, the visitor center's rubber roof had torn during the storm allowing water under it. The entire roof of the visitor center will need to be replaced. This storm will be the costliest in Fort Macon State Park history, with an estimated damage of around 400,000 dollars. I still look at it as minor damage when I ride outside the park and see how many people have been displaced because of water damage inside their houses from the "torrential" rain. The roadsides have been covered in gypsum board, carpet, and personal belongings. Talking to one local resident, he stated "I expected the possibility of having to deal with flood waters, but not water pouring from my ceiling."

The bathhouse parking lot was reopened on Saturday, September 22. On Monday, September 24, the entire park was reopened to the public, except for the museum rooms in the fort.

Veteran's Day, 2018

Once again this year, the staff and living history volunteers of Fort Macon State Park held a Military Through the Ages observance for park visitors on November 10 in honor of Veteran's Day. Uniformed interpreters portrayed soldiers from the War of 1812 to World War II and explained the significance of each war to the history of Fort Macon. This year, a First World War soldier was added to the program. Although Fort Macon itself was not used in the First World War, there is a connection of the local area to that conflict. In 1906, the North Carolina National Guard established its annual training ground on the west side of Morehead City (area of present 35th and Arendell Streets), which it named Camp Glenn. For years thereafter, state National Guard soldiers trained here each year. In 1916, the National Guard was inducted into the US Army and subsequently went overseas to fight in the First World War. Thus, North Carolina Guardsmen received some of the training they used in the war at Camp Glenn.

This Veteran's Day, November 11, 2018, was of special significance because it marked an anniversary of one of the most important dates in human history. It was on that date one hundred years ago that an armistice was signed ending the First World War. The First World War, fought during the years 1914 to 1918 between the Allies and the Central Powers, was one of the two most brutal, costly wars ever to plague human history. Ironically, the armistice that ended this war took effect at 11 o'clock in the morning, on the 11th day of the 11th month, 1918, or 100 years ago.

The First World War was the first war to be fought on a global scale. It was known at the time as the Great War and was naïvely thought to be the "War to end all wars", because no one could imagine humanity ever suffering through anything like that again that would ever cause more death, destruction and suffering than what took place during those four grim years. The First World War saw the mobilization of the largest armed forces of any conflict up to that time, with a combined total of 65,038,810 soldiers serving from both sides. Of this total, 37,468,904 were killed or wounded during the war, or more than half of those who participated. Actual soldier deaths accounted for 8,528,831 of this total. The brutality of this war was intensified by the use of new weapons and methods of killing so that those serving in the armies and navies of the combatants could be found by Death not only on the land and the surface of the sea, but also from beneath the sea, from the sky and from the very air that they breathed. In addition to 8 1/2 million soldier deaths, an estimated 8-13 million civilians also died directly or indirectly because of this war. The war was also responsible for the collapse of three of the world's major monarchies, it made possible the birth and spread of world Communism, and unfortunately sowed the seeds for another, even more costly, brutal and horrific world conflict only 21 years later. Thus the impact the First World War had on human history was enormous and far-reaching.



Rhode Island Flag

Paul Branch

Fort Macon State Park now has an important new artifact for its collection: the original battle flag of the Union Fifth Rhode Island Battalion. Back in August, the park received word from Mr. William Gorges, owner Battlefield Antiques, Inc. of New Bern, that this original War Between the States flag was up for sale by its owner, for whom Mr. Gorges was acting as an agent. The flag had first come on the market long ago as part of the estate of Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Mathewson Potter, one of the officers of the battalion who had apparently taken the flag home at the end of the war. There is an interesting story concerning the flag and its connection to Fort Macon.

The Fifth Rhode Island Battalion was a five-company battalion that mustered into the Union Army on December 27, 1861 after the beginning of the war. It accompanied the expedition of Union General Ambrose E. Burnside to attack the coast of eastern North Carolina in early 1862, and participated in the battles of Roanoke Island (February 7-8, 1862) and New Bern (March 14, 1862). After the capture of New Bern, the battalion accompanied the forces of Brigadier General John G. Parke in his operations to capture Fort Macon and Beaufort Harbor during March and April, 1862. When Parke's forces reached Newport during the march down from New Bern, the battalion was detailed to rebuild the 180-foot railroad bridge there over the Newport River, which had been destroyed by the Confederates to slow the Union advance. After completing this task, the battalion participated in the siege of Fort Macon and received the surrender of the fort's Confederate garrison on the morning of April 26. It remained camped outside Fort Macon through part of the summer and in December was expanded into a ten-company regiment of heavy artillery. It spent the rest of the war on garrison duty in eastern North Carolina, as well as participating in various engagements.

The battalion flag in question is a 5 ½ by 5-foot navy blue-painted silk flag outlined in gold fringe and bearing a gold anchor (the state seal of Rhode Island) and the words "5th Battalion Infantry Rhode Island Militia." It was conserved circa 1987 and is currently sandwiched between two sheets of archival UV-rated plexiglass that has been stabilized with archival webbing mesh on the reverse side. It was the first flag carried by the battalion and would have been in battle at Roanoke Island and New Bern. It also would have been present throughout the siege of Fort Macon and, but for a twist of fate, might have been the flag carried when the battalion marched up to take possession of Fort Macon during the morning of the fort's surrender. It so happened,

however, that a new battalion flag had just been received from Rhode Island bearing the words "Roanoke" and "New Berne [sic]" to signify the battalion's participation in those battles. It was this new flag, rather than the old one, that was carried as the battalion marched up to receive the fort's surrender that morning. Thus, the siege of Fort Macon was probably the last time the old flag was actually used, assuming that the new flag replaced it. Of course, when the battalion was converted to a full regiment at the end of

the year, even the new flag would most likely have been replaced by a regimental standard.

Given the connection of the Fifth Rhode Island Battalion's old flag to early battles in North Carolina, and the siege of Fort Macon in particular, the staff of Fort Macon State Park was very interested in purchasing the flag when it came up for sale, despite the \$12,000 price tag. As a result, the Friends of Fort Macon and the Division of State Parks have jointly purchased the flag for the park. It is fitting that since the fort is the last place where it was officially used by the battalion, it will now be placed on display here at some point in the near future when the Fort Macon museum is rebuilt, following the flooding from Hurricane Florence.





through the years

Friends Of Fort Macon and Thirty Years of Projects

- 1988** | Received funds for a general information park brochure.
- 1988** | Funded a security system for the fort.
- 1990** | Secured Adopt-A-Park grants with Carteret Historical Society to create WWII Barracks exhibit—1990.
- 1991** | Put pressure on Raleigh Office of State Parks and met with Governor to establish a donation box in the fort. A donation box had been tried for several months in 1987 but the Raleigh Office said take it out “until a policy could be developed” to administer it. After three years of pressure from the Friends Raleigh relented and the box was allowed again with the Friends administering the funds collected by the box to be used for the park.
- 1991** | Funded research trip for park historian to the National Archives.
- 1993** | Purchased aluminum cannon wheels and parts to restore 6-pounder cannon.
- 1993-94** | Purchased three manikens for restored rooms.
- 1994** | Funded another security system for the fort.
- 1996** | Secured funding of replica Rifled 32-pounder.
- 1996** | Secured funding of replica Hot Shot Furnace. Metal hardware for the furnace was provide by Friend David Pleace. Pleace also installed the lead roof on the furnace.
- 1996** | Funded research trip for park historian to the National Archives.
- 1997** | Secured funding for two iron mortar gun carriages.
- 1997** | Began Volunteer Tour Guide program. This program is still in operation.
- 1997** | Funded research trip for park historian to the National Archives.
- 1998** | Secured funding for replica smoothbore 32-pounder through Friend Dean Proper.
- 1998** | Funded display case for original magazine doors and woodwork.
- 1998, 2000, 2004** | Purchased or secured donations of computer equipment, copy machines, and fireproof file cabinets for the park.
- 2000** | Secured funding for Restored Kitchen/Mess Room Exhibit. Friends David Pleace and Mickey Magee built the brick cooking range. Mr. Pleace provided the metal components.
- 2000** | Secured funding for Restored Commissary Storeroom Exhibit.
- 2000** | Funded fabrication of a replica magazine door.
- 2001** | Purchased or secured donation of original WWII firearms.
- 2001** | Secured funding of Restored Bake Oven.
- 2001** | Gave funds for Cindi Davia to travel to Prouts Neck, Maine, to meet an ancestor of Elliott Coues and obtain some of the original printing plates from the Key to North American Birds.
- 2002** | Secured donations and sponsors for wayside exhibits around the fort.
- 2002-03, 2015** | Purchased various original Civil War era firearms and artifacts for the museum.
- 2009** | Began volunteer program to man information desk of visitor center. Program is still ongoing.
- 2010** | Purchased wayside trail signs, exhibit stands and graphic panels for nature trail.
- 2012** | Purchased 30-pounder Parrott Rifle cannon.

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- 2013** | Contributed \$90,000 for construction of exhibit gazebo.
- 2014** | Contributed \$9,000 for East District event trailer.
- Ongoing** | Purchased gunpowder, primers and percussion caps for fort history events.
- 2014** | Purchased 32-pounder cannon.
- 2015-16** | Purchased rock and lumber for the park nature trail.
- 2016** | With Eastern National, purchased 8-inch columbiad, gun carriage and materials for platform.
- 2016** | With Eastern National, purchased Army pattern 30-pounder Parrott Rifle barrel, aluminum replica siege carriage for it, and a wheel and axle set to replace the rotten components of the park's existing wood siege carriage.
- 2016** | Helped organize and find sponsors for the first annual "Mosquito Run" event on our new nature trail. This is now an ongoing annual event.
- 2016** | Helped organize first annual "Howling Hayride". This is now an annual event.
- 2017** | Bought lumber and materials for 10-inch columbiad platform for the fort.
- 2017** | Contributed \$2500 to assist NC State Parks to host the Conference of Southeast State Parks Directors in North Carolina.
- 2017** | Partnered to purchase flatbed trailer for the park.
- 2018** | Contributed \$7001 to purchase the original flag of the Fifth Rhode Island Battalion.

Thank You

Friends of Fort Macon for all your support. Be proud of your hard work, and successes.
Please, share what the Friends do and let's make support and volunteerism contagious.

Your volunteer with cheer,
Cindi Davia, President, Friends of Fort Macon



New 2018 Friends Project

This Pictorial History is of Fort Macon's Wardens and Superintendents. We are still in search of nine pictures and will remain on the hunt.

This project was inspired by Doug Starr; the son of Fort Macon's first Superintendent W. Douglas Starr (pictured here).

Thank you! Starr Family for helping us tell the story. It was a pleasure to work on this project with you.

Cindi Davia
President, Friends of Fort Macon

Membership Renewal Dues 2018/2019

Follow these instructions to renew your membership!

The address label on the newsletter references your Membership Type:

I = Individual (\$15) F= Family (\$15) C = Contributor (\$30) D= Donor (\$50) S=Sponsor (\$75)
Individual Lifetime (\$200) or Business Lifetime (\$500)

Then the amount of your last membership dues is listed.

The last item is the date of your most recent dues payment. If this date is prior to 2018, this will be your last Rampart until you update your membership. Unless you are a Lifetime Member, this is an annual membership.

To renew your membership, you can tear off the portion of the RAMPART with your address label on it. Circle the Membership Type that you are choosing. Add your email address to the right of the Membership Type section. Then mail this along with your check to the address on the RAMPART. You may also renew memberships and make donations on our updated website.

We would like to add your email address to our information as this will help reduce mailing costs and enable us to notify you of events in a more efficient and timely manner. We promise that we will NOT share this information with anyone and will only use it to notify you of Fort Macon/Friends of Fort Macon events.

Thank you, Sheila Leppert

A black and white photograph of a New Year's Eve celebration. In the foreground, two cannons are firing, with bright sparks and smoke. In the background, several large fireworks are exploding in the night sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Join us
NEW YEAR'S EVE

Starting at 6 pm we will have live music from the FAB Band, and at 7 pm the Cannons will fire to correspond with 12:00 UTC.
Bring your picnic basket and chair.

Happy New Year!
From your Friends at the Fort

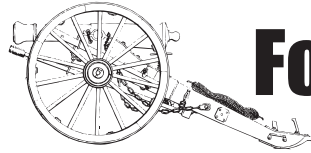


Come to Our MONTHLY LUNCH MEETINGS

Since Golden Corral is still closed and isn't expected to reopen until March, we will meet at Tsunami Grill in Morehead City on January 9th, February 6th, and March 6th at 11:30 am.

You may be missing a great opportunity if you haven't attended the **first Wednesday (of the month) lunch meetings!** Not only is there a short update on the "State of Fort Macon" by Superintendent Randy, there's always a fascinating talk by an expert that you may not want to miss for our Dutch treat luncheon. If you have attended some or all of these very interesting talks, you know how informative and amusing the speakers are.

Please call the Fort (252) 726-3775, check our website and Facebook to stay up to date on changes. We look forward to seeing you.



WINTER 2018

Friends of **Fort Macon**

Friends of Fort Macon
2303 East Fort Macon Rd
Atlantic Beach, NC 28512

OUR BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Atlantic Veneer
Beaufort, NC

**Munden Funeral Home
and Crematory**
Morehead City, NC

Coastal Press & Signs
Morehead City, NC

Al Williams Properties
Atlantic Beach, NC

Stampers Jewelers
Beaufort, NC

David P Robertson, DDS
Morehead City, NC

Chalk and Gibbs
Morehead City, NC

**Charlotte Metrolina
Civil War Roundtable**
Charlotte, NC

Casper Marine Service
Swansboro, NC

Randall Parker
Morehead City, NC

Amos Mosquitos
Atlantic Beach, NC

Brad Piner, CPA
Beaufort, NC

Carteret County
Carteret County, NC

Historical Society
Carteret County, NC

Clinton Toms III,
Durham, NC

New Bern Historical Society
New Bern, NC

New Life Photos | JJ Davidson, Inc
Greenville, NC

North State Haberdashery
Mint Hill, NC

Outer Banks History Center
Manteo, NC

Outer Banks Lighthouse Society
Morehead City, NC

1st NC Volunteers

Realty World First Coast Realty
Atlantic Beach, NC

Special Thanks

RANDALL PARKER
*Sponsor of our
Summer Concerts*

AMOS MOSQUITOS
*Sponsor of our
Mosquito Run 5K-10K*

REALTY WORLD FIRST COAST REALTY
*Sponsor of our
Cannon Gunpowder*

What's Happening?

Stay tuned to the Friends of Fort Macon
website: friendsoffortmacon.org and our Facebook page for updates and what's new.