

Coastal Living editor  
Joan Greene

## COASTAL LIVING

## Fort Macon repairs, visitor center plans outlined

By Joan D. Greene  
Staff writer

Everyone was anxious to learn about plans for the new visitors center at Fort Macon when Kathryn Cloud called the Nov. 1 meeting of Friends of Fort Macon to order at Mrs. Willis's Restaurant, Morehead City.

Jody Merritt, Fort Macon park superintendent, said the Fort staff had received a community leadership award from the county Mayors' Committee for Persons with Disabilities, for efforts to make the environs accessible to those with disabilities.

He said Fort Macon State Park is a "destination area" for those with disabilities, that beach accessibility is "the best on the Eastern Seaboard." He said that such designs are overlooked in many park and similar sites, but "I think we have an obligation in the new center to build the accessibility!"

He introduced Gary Parton and Grimsley Hobbs, architect, who

have studied the Fort Macon site and who discussed plans with the Friends. The plans include restoration and repairs as well as a new visitors center.

**Architects' report**

Mr. Parton and Mr. Hobbs researched the fort's history and conferred at length with Mr. Merritt and his staff to ensure that the center accommodates all aspects of the program while allowing space for expansion.

Mr. Parton said that thanks were due to the military who in the past two years volunteered equipment and services to "sweep" the top of the fort to remove any live ammunition from the ground. He said live ammunition was found and removed.

The next project will be test excavations over casemates. Some areas have not been touched since the fort was built, and they need to be excavated to check the masonry and sheets of lead. Secondly, exca-

vation tests will also check where repairs were done in the 1970s, but which have now at least partially failed, allowing further damage from seepage. The tests will tell exactly what was done then, and what needs to be done to correct any problems.

The next series of tests will include tests on the masonry. These will confirm the strength of the masonry and will determine what, if anything, needs to be done to the brick and mortar. This series of

tests will include permeability tests of a moat area. Over the years, the water table has risen, so that in mud of the moat, the water level is at gund level. The goal is to find a way to lower the water table in the moat, which in turn will help eliminate leakage in the fort.

The two series of tests should be completed by the first of 1996.

Examining development of the visitor center, Mr. Parton said there were three distinct areas of

planning. First, the architects worked with the fort staff to develop a master list of programs and to determine the space which each part of the program would require in the visitors' center building. Next, a detailed analysis of the fort site was made, of ways the area could be used. They found the old railway line which ran from the beach across from Radio Island to the fort, which apparently transported building materials and later, munitions to the fort. The architects

urge the replication of that line, with exhibits showing its use during the fort's construction and use.

They also suggest that a coastal interpretive trail be built around the fort perimeter, with stations to explain native vegetation, shells and other aspects of coastal life which might be found around the fort.

The master plan for the fort includes a tentative plan for the visitors' center and other tentatively

(Please see *Fort Macon*, 2B)

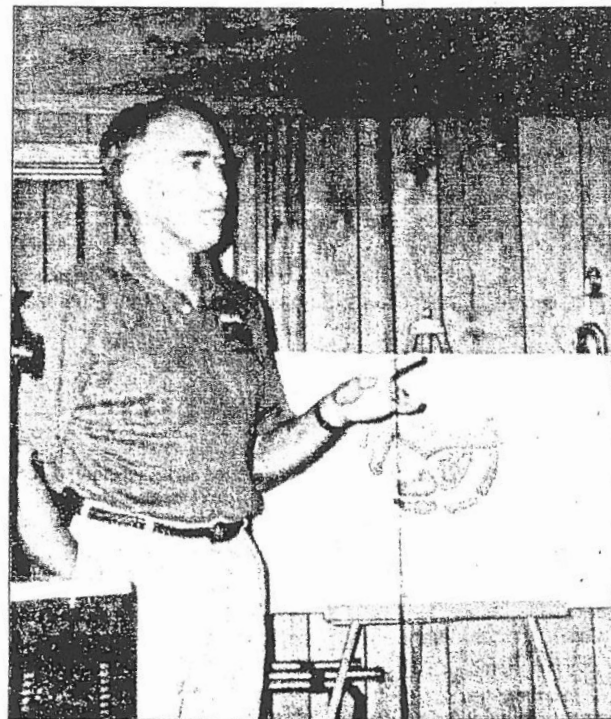
Bible history group  
seeks course pledges

A \$35,000 fund-raising campaign has begun for a Bible as History course at East Carteret and West Carteret high schools. The 10-month campaign will decide if a non-devotional course will be held with the 1996-97 school year.

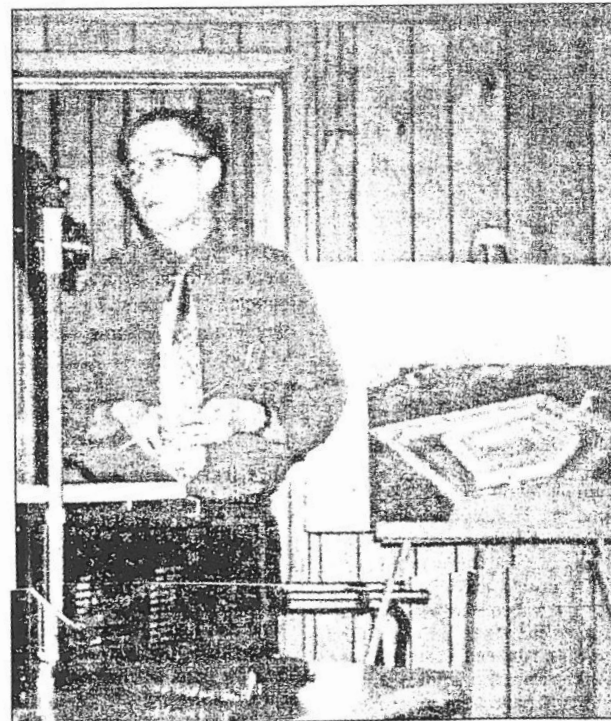
The Carteret County Board of Education approved a curriculum for the course which will be taught

than \$9,000 in cash and pledges. The goal is to raise \$35,000 by January 1996, which is what Mr. Naegelen estimates it will cost for one full-time teacher's salary and benefits, plus start-up supplies and materials for both schools.

Mr. Naegelen said the curriculum's objectives include equipping the student with an understanding of the contribution of the Bible to



Dr. Phil McNally of Raleigh, director of the North Carolina State Parks Department, explains funding to the Friends of Fort Macon.



Architect Gary Parton describes to the Friends of Fort Macon the studies done to determine the best location for the best exterior.

(Continued from Pg. 1B)

planned construction or arrangements for grounds. The architects recommend a low, rustic-looking structure which can be seen from the parking lots only through the screen of trees. One entrance to the center will be the path now leading to the outdoor restrooms. Rest-

rooms will be incorporated into the building but built so they can be left open for fishermen and tourists when the center is closed.

The goal is to preserve as much of the vegetation as possible. Traffic will be directed to the visitors center from three areas, with all traffic to the fort leaving from a

wide, covered porch at the visitors' center. Additional parking will be added. Parking areas will include bus parking and a bus turn-around, staff parking, visitors' parking and service parking.

The building is proposed to contain about 19,000 square feet with a large exhibit room, a conference

room seating 150, a bookstore and gift shop, a conference library seating 40 or 50 and several wide, covered porches.

"The fort will continue to be the dominant feature," said Mr. Parton and Mr. Hobbs. They foresee a building with brick exterior, arched entrances and small, rounded win-

dows with shutters. A low sloped roof will be used for most of the structure, to diminish the height of the building so that it won't be dominant in the setting. A low, sloped wind-resistant roof is planned. There may be a higher ceiling, with more glass, over the lobby area. "There won't be a wide expanse of lawn and glass," Mr. Hobbs said, explaining that the building would be only glimpsed from the approach, with paths leading through the trees and bushes to the entrances.

Construction will infringe as little as possible on the fort's programming and access to visitors.

#### Financing explained

Cost is estimated at \$4 to \$5 million. Dr. Phil McNally, Raleigh, director of the N.C. State Parks, said funding for the visitors' center would come from the State Parks Trust Fund, probably over two years. While he refused to be pinned down on a time frame, he said he would be surprised if it were not completed within the next five years. Actual construction will take about 16 to 18 months.

He said that the Fort Macon visitors' center was a one-of-a-kind project, different from all other vis-

itors centers. "It's clearly not a normal visitors' center," he said.

He said the first item of business must be stopping water damage. Then the center will be built, and after that, more restoration projects will be continued.

He explained where park funding is coming from, giving details of the National Heritage Trust Fund and the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.

He said the educational and visitors' center would "expand our season into the fringes," allowing large groups to visit the fort earlier in the spring and later in the fall.

#### Business session

In the business session, reports were given of progress on cannon construction and the hot shot furnace plans. More money is needed for both projects.

A report was also given on the membership campaign and mailings being prepared, including the annual report.

Jean McElvein said volunteers were needed for the 50-Plus House being built by those 50 and older for Habitat for Humanity, to drive nails, run errands, clean up or prepare meals. She suggested that anyone interested call Habitat at 728-5216.

## Quibbles

(Continued from Pg. 1B)

Each time you use your Big E card, a portion of the purchase price will go directly to El... I mean, to the Elvis Presley Memorial Foundation, the philanthropic branch of the Presley estate, which provides subsidies to the Little Debbie snack food comp... I mean donations to "adult, youth and children's charities Elvis so generously supported" in the public portion of his life.

To get your Elvis MasterCard, all you have to do is drive to Grace-land, where it can be used — no kidding — for a 10 percent discount on all the aforementioned scarves, velvet Elvises and other memorabilia.

You can also order the card by calling a toll free number, which the Quibbler happily passes on: 1-800-213-9577.

No, really. That's really the number. Honest, guys. You don't think the Quibbler would make something up, do you? Do you?



Participating in the District 12 meeting of the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs were, from the left, front row, Kim Pearce, state director of Juniors; Flo Scheible, district secretary; Frances Williams, Morehead City club pres-

ident; Jlene McPhaul, state president; and Alice Dye, district 12 president; back row, Mary Elizabeth Morris, Tibbie Roberts, Jerry Talton, Arlene Burns, Barbara Jacaruso, Mary Ethel McCabe and Roberta Tyler.

## Women's Clubs holds meeting

The fall meeting of District 12 of the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs was held in New Bern Oct. 19, hosted by the New Bern General and Junior clubs.

District 12 comprises clubs, both general and junior, from Beaufort, Jacksonville, Kinston, Morehead City, New Bern, Oriental and Vanceboro.

District President Alice Dye, of the Morehead City Woman's Club, called the meeting to order and a

Those attending from Morehead City in addition to the two officers listed above included Flo Scheible, district secretary, and members Roberta Tyler, Jerry Talton, Mary Elizabeth Morris, Georgia Wertman, Arlene Burns, Mary Ethel McCabe, Frances Williams and Barbara Jacaruso.

A welcome was extended by Mary Brown, president of the New Bern General Club, with the response given by Paula Kirby, president of the Jacksonville Juniors, inviting all to attend the 1996 meet-

were elected at this meeting. A luncheon of chicken salad, pasta salad, cheese wafers, cake and tea was served.

Of the many awards given to district clubs, four were earned by the Morehead City club: a silver bowl for beautification of surroundings, a silver bowl for best overall work by a general club, a silver bowl for best work in mental health and a silver bell for the best press book. Announcements were made and door prizes distributed before the meeting adjourned.

# Christie's

Large Selection of  
**NEW FALL  
FASHIONS**

# 30-40%

3888 Hwy 17 South • New Bern  
Mon-Sat: 10-6, Thursdays till 8 p.m.  
**919-636-5557**

Quality on  
sale at  
special low  
prices  
Everyday

# OFF