

Sunset Taxpayers Still Oppose Bridge, Mad Inlet Parking Lot

BY SUSAN USHER

Sunset Beach Taxpayers Association members reaffirmed opposition to a high-rise bridge to the island Saturday during their fall meeting at the fire station.

While rain fell in a steady drizzle outside, members inside the bay worked their way through the intricacies of parliamentary procedure. In a series of unanimous votes, they took stances:

- opposing the U.S. Postal Service plan to have Sunset Beach, Ocean Isle Beach and Calabash residents assume Shalotte mailing addresses as well as using the Shalotte zip code;

- opposing the proposed retoning of a portion of Sea Trail Golf Links from residential to business and supporting a comprehensive "master plan" for the town's development;

- favoring underground electrical lines;
- reiterating opposition to a proposed Mad Inlet parking lot, recommending the town accept the west end property only for pedestrian access, not for parking.

According to council member Minnie Hunt, rewording of the deed conveying the property from Mr. and Mrs. Ed Gore to the town is on the agenda for discussion at the council's Oct. 6 meeting.

After a lengthy discussion on wording of a motion, the 80 to 85 members present unanimously authorized their executive committee to explore all available routes of opposition to a high-rise bridge, including the possibility of legal action. The vote followed one woman's urging to "leave no stone unturned to stop that bridge."

"We don't need a high rise bridge pouring more people onto this tiny little island turning it into a Coney Island," she said.

With one motion withdrawn and a substitute motion reworded, one audience member called for a vote. "Let's go with this. I'm getting motion sickness."

Arguing that the group needed to "hit them over the head" to get the attention from state transportation authorities, member Warren "Bud" Knapp had pressed for authority to seek a "cease and desist" order, but was told that type of legal action could be taken only by the full group. At the Thanksgiving weekend meeting on Nov. 29, the committee could recommend legal action. SHTA sent a petition of 1,500 signatures to Gov. Jim Martin and several DOT officials earlier this year open.

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Sinking Of Derrick Ship Ends Long Wait For Reef

BY TERRY POPE

After two years of waiting, members of the Long Bay Artificial Reef Association watched Saturday morning as its first reef sank beneath five- to seven-foot waves and came to rest on the ocean floor off of Oak Island.

It took just two minutes for the 104-foot-long derrick to touch bottom after more than 80 sticks of dynamite were detonated in the vessel's hull. The sinking had been postponed for more than two weeks due to poor weather conditions.

"It's been a long time," said State Rep. E. David Redwine Saturday as he watched the derrick sink from less than 100 yards away while aboard "The Other Woman." Redwine helped sponsor bills through the N.C. House of Representatives to help fund the association's reef project. Other donations were made by Brunswick County Commissioners and the City of Southport.

The McGlammy Reef is the first in a series of offshore structures expected to enhance both recreational and commercial fishing along the Brunswick County coast.

Although weather conditions were not ideal Saturday with rain and rough seas, Hurt Len of Sea Tow Services Inc. of Wrightsville Beach, the

company contracted to do the sinking, decided the winds were right to haul the former U.S. Army Corps of Engineers service derrick offshore. It had been docked at the Southport Municipal Pier since Saturday afternoon.

A falling tide helped guide the derrick through the mouth of the Cape Fear River; however, at several times members of the Long Bay Association thought the sinking would be postponed again.

A tugboat owned by O.E. Durant Co. of Wilmington that was carrying the barge out to sea at one point switched positions and decided to pull instead of push the derrick to the reef site. Association members received word that the vessel had turned around and was heading back to Southport.

Another delay occurred when the boat carrying dynamite for Sea Tow Services developed engine trouble enroute to the reef site 3.5 miles offshore. The boat had to be towed to the site and the dynamite transferred to another boat.

"We've waited this long, I guess we can wait a little while longer," said Dale McDowell, president of the association.

The reef will be named the Tommy McGlammy Memorial Reef in

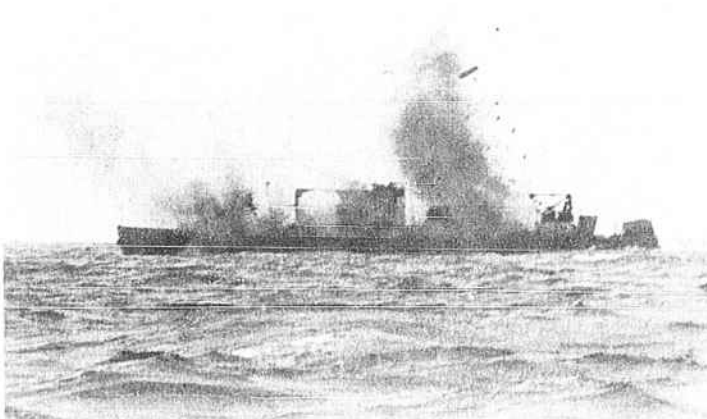
honor of a popular sport fisherman from the Midway Road area near Southport. McGlammy was killed in a work-related accident in 1923.

Saturday's sinking marked Brunswick County's first new reef since the mid-70s. The Wilmington District office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers donated the former service derrick to Brunswick County, which transferred ownership to the reef association.

The Long Bay Association was formed by the county's three saltwater fishing clubs to promote development of artificial reefs offshore. Permits have been obtained to refurbish two existing reefs, one off Oak Island and another off of Lookwood Folly Inlet, and to create six new ones.

As funds became available, several other drops of reef material are planned in the near future, including the old Holden Beach Bridge and a donated tanker barge hull as well as the county's share of about 200 box-cars donated to the state by Seaboard Railroad.

The McGlammy reef is resting under 39 feet of water approximately 4.2 miles southwest from the Oak Island Lighthouse. It is marked by a floating buoy.



STAFF PHOTO BY TERRY POPE

FOLLOWING THE EXPLOSION the hull sank in just two minutes to the ocean floor to form the Tommy McGlammy Memorial Reef. According to Long Bay Artificial Reef Association President Dale McDowell,

feed fish will begin congregating around the reef immediately, with larger fish to follow. "There will be some fish caught there this fall," he predicted. (More pictures on Page 2-A)

HURRICANE SHELTER RULES CHANGE

Two High-Rise Bridges Expected To Speed Evacuation Of Islands

BY SUSAN USHER

Two new high-rise bridges are expected to reduce the time needed to evacuate Ocean Isle and Holden beaches by as much as one-third in the event of a hurricane warning, according to Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan.

With the brunt of the Atlantic hurricane season approaching, Logan has been completing arrangements with local and state agencies on how to deal with a hurricane.

While the season runs from June 1 to Nov. 30, Logan said the months he really worries about are September and October, when the most hurricanes and the most severe hurricanes are likeliest to occur. On Tuesday afternoon, weather forecasters were tracking a tropical depression located about 825 miles east/northeast of the Leeward Islands. They said the depression, while weak and poorly organized, could reach tropical storm strength by Wednesday afternoon. If its winds reach 39 mph it will become a tropical storm and be named Danielle. It would be fourth named

storm of the 1986 season. Safe evacuation of the coast and provision of shelter to those families who need it are the county's top priorities, said Logan.

The bridges are expected to make a significant difference in evacuating Holden and Ocean Isle beaches, according to Logan.

"We will no longer have just one-way traffic," he said. "We should no longer have bottlenecks at the bridges."

Between Labor Day and Thanksgiving, Logan estimates a lead time of about eight hours would be required to safely evacuate residents of barrier islands and the immediate inland area along the Intracoastal Waterway. "We could probably do it in six hours, but I'd prefer to have eight hours."

That's taking into consideration an increase in permanent population of several thousand since the last major storm.

With a peak population in the area, however, the lead time required would increase to 12 to 18 hours because more time would be required for notification; unfamiliarity

of visitors with the area; and tourists' tendency to pack all they've brought with them for the return trip. "They aren't going to go to the shelters," he said. "They're going to go home."

Logan said that while all data from Hurricane Diana in 1984 has not been compiled, that public attitudes toward advance evacuation have changed. Five years ago, only 30 percent of those surveyed said they would be willing to evacuate. That number has since increased to 70 percent, he said.

"But if we keep getting storms that don't do much damage—like Gloria last year and Charley this year—that could change," continued Logan. "It would take a period of several years."

He suspects that is due primarily to a good working relationship established among county agencies, the municipal governments and others. When county commissioners meet and make the recommendation to evacuate, he said, the municipalities concur and then act quickly.

(See SHELTER, Page 2-A)

Clamming Resumed Saturday In Area Affected By Oil Spill

Five and a half months after an oil spill temporarily ended shellfishing in the Shalotte River, the last waters closed because of that spill reopened to clambers Saturday morning.

Affected, according to Rich Carpenter, southern district manager for the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, were the west bank of Shalotte River and the marsh across the Intracoastal Waterway where the leaking barge, the Edgar O. Sykes was deliberately run aground the night of March 17 after it struck an object and began leaking its cargo of heavy No. 6 fuel oil. It was en route from Savannah, Ga., to Morehead City when the incident occurred.

The closing's main impact has been economic, not biological, according to Carpenter. He said a number of shellfishermen who normally harvest from the river have been out of work.

Shellfish in the river appear to have weathered the spill well.

"It didn't seem to have any effect on the shrimp," Carpenter said, referring to an early concern that the spill would harm young shrimp in the area at the time of the spill. "Actually, we were extremely lucky. The oil has all but disappeared from the oysters."

However, he said, the re-opening was mainly to allow clamming in the river after inquiries from enforce-

ment officers Glen Gibbs and Dale Hewitt.

"We called it to their attention that the river was looking good," said Hewitt.

Taste tests confirmed their visual examination. "Shellfish sanitation said there was no oily taste," said Carpenter. "That's what we had been most concerned about. If clams with an oily taste had reached the market, they could have ruined the market."

The affected waters reverted back to their status prior to spill except for two areas which will remain closed. These are waters within 100 feet of Hughes' Marina, which were closed by a May 21 proclamation, and several shellfish management areas in the river.

South Brunswick Says A Soggy Farewell To Summer

"Well, it rained, 40 days and 40 nights without stoppin'," goes the old spiritual, and most of southeastern North Carolina could have joined in that refrain over the Labor Day weekend.

With never a significant break in the showers and the overcast skies till Monday afternoon, the last holiday of the summer was a soggy mess for most tourists and residents of the South Brunswick islands area.

On the other hand, the cold, dismal drizzle drove many people to local grocery stores and other shops to give them an unexpected boost in business.

Realtors gave the weekend a mixed review. Lornie Lee Cooke at Ocean Isle Beach's Cooke Realty, said,

"There was much complaint about the weather, and people who didn't pay a deposit just cancelled. Our rentals were about half off the usual business."

She added that most people visiting the island went shopping and ate out more than usual.

Ann Martin at Sunset Beach Realty noted that they had no cancellations. "Everyone who reserved came," she said. "But there were not as many reservations as usual, because Labor Day is not one of our big weekends."

On Holden Beach, Alan Holden said of his realty firm's weekend experience, "We were a little disappointed in the overall weekend. But there were lots more lookers for buying property during the rain. We even

sold a few." He said there were a few "no-shows," but some of the merchants on the island were hurt even worse. "The waterside took a real beating," he said.

The effect of the weather showed up in fewer day visitors, Holden said. "Our parking lots had about 25 percent of last year's crowd," he said.

For law enforcement, it was an easy holiday. Jerry Gurganus, Ocean Isle Beach chief of police, said, "It was a real quiet weekend, and there were not as many day visitors, but there seemed to be as many in the cottages as usual. Most tourists were shopping."

Holden Beach police officer Ray Simpson echoed this report. "It was real quiet. There were lots of dis-

appointed tourists, but some of them said they enjoyed it and had a chance to relax," he said.

According to Pat O'Brien, assistant to Sunset Beach's town manager, "You wouldn't have known it was a holiday here." She said there were no traffic problems, no extra men needed to direct traffic, and she described Labor Day as "a quiet, soggy weekend."

But for some fortunate merchants, the weather proved to be a boon. Even the bumper-to-bumper traffic that developed Saturday brought customers to at least one shop along Hwy. 130.

Juan Yerton, owner of the Village, said, "Our store was filled to capacity, and one person said, 'We've been

sitting in that line-up so long, we thought we'd just pull in here for awhile.'"

Where were all those cars going? Many to Myrtle Beach, Waccamaw Pottery, or Wilmington to shop in an enclosed mall. But many also did their shopping in Brunswick County.

Some grocery stores were recipients of the business. Food Lion Assistant Manager Wayne Gallman said, "It was pretty good here Friday and Saturday. People got food and watched TV all weekend, I guess."

Don Safrif at Sunset Beach Grocery, however, said his business was "terrible." He added, "People came in wanting to know where they could go for entertainment in Myrtle Beach, so they could get out of their

cottages."

Bryan's in Shalotte benefited from the bad weather. Beth Willis, manager, said, "This weekend was tremendous, one of the best we've ever had, because people couldn't get on the beaches."

It was the same story at Shalotte's Maxway, where Fred Barriss, manager, described the holiday as "the best weekend of the season."

And Ursula Brown at Beach Mart on Holden Beach, noted, "It was pretty crowded in here all weekend."

But at Windstone Island Gifts in Ocean Isle Beach, manager Deborah Pope had a different story. "We had about the same business as if we'd had sunny weather," she said.

(See SOGGY, Page 2-A)