

Nerve Gas, Bald Head Top News Of Past Year

Henry Pike Held For Grand Jury

A Brunswick County Coroner's Jury in session Tuesday night in Southport ordered Henry Pike, Shallotte white man, to be held under \$2,500 bond for grand jury investigation of the fatal shooting last Monday night of Gilbert Simmons. The victim was a white resident of Ash.

Coroner Lowell Bennett set the bond at \$2,500.

According to the coroner, Simmons died instantly from two bullet wounds from a .38-calibre pistol. One slug struck him in the chest, the other in the lower abdomen, and death was instantaneous.

The shooting occurred in the Henry Pike home, and the latter claimed that he shot Simmons in self defense.

At the inquest in Southport Monday night the defendant was represented by S. Bunn Frink and Henry Foy. The Simmons family have engaged the services of M.H. Anderson as private prosecutor.

During the hearing testimony was heard from Skyle Hewett and James Robinson, members of the Shallotte Rescue Squad; Hoyle Varnum, assistant Chief of

Police; Frankie Babson, Ash resident; and Michael Powell, of Powell's Funeral Service. The defense offered no testimony.

Members of the coroner's jury were Shep Smith, Aaron Inman, Coleman Moore, Fred Watts, George Sloan and William Tripp.

Light Contest Winners Named

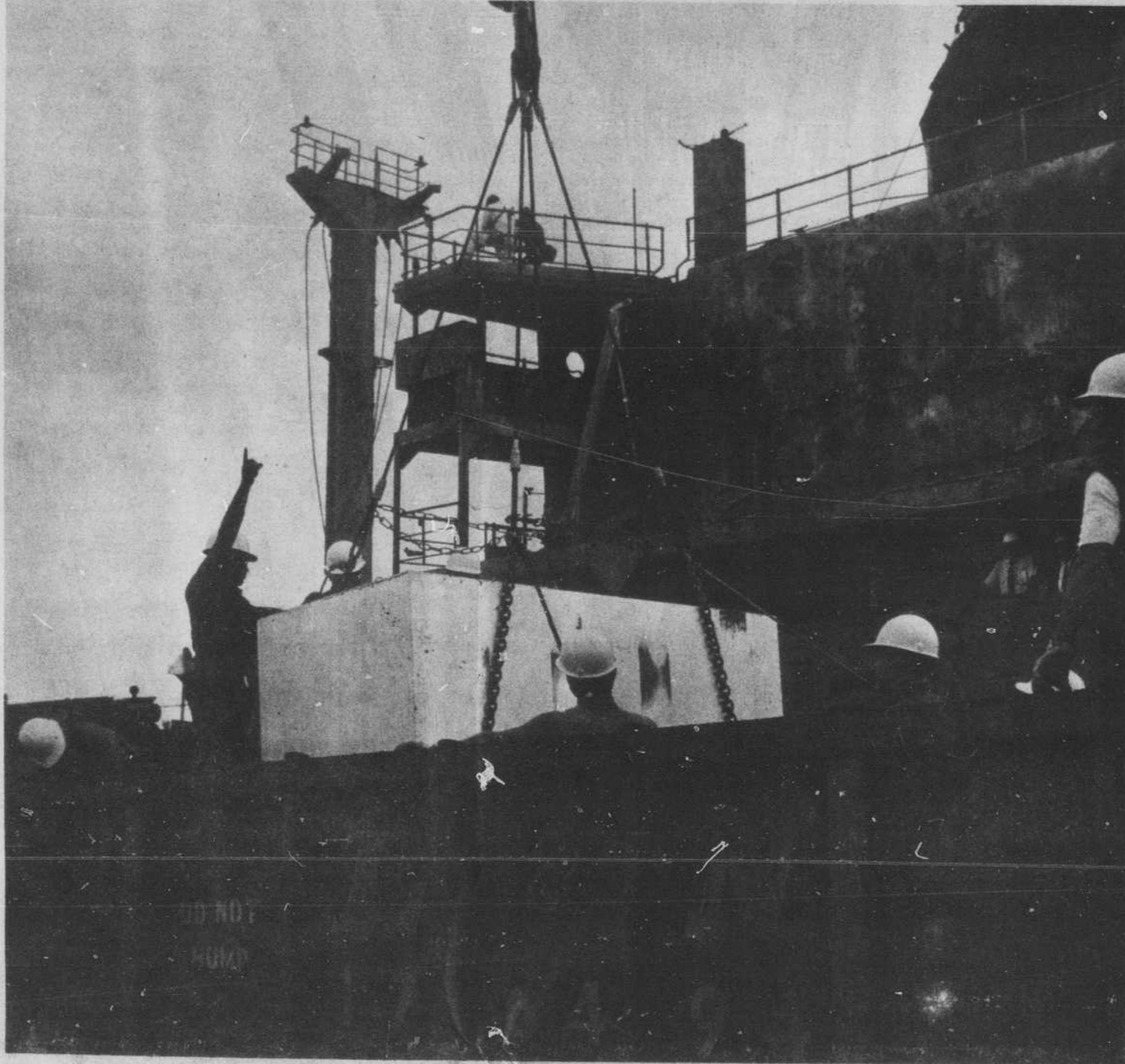
The Annual Christmas Lighting Contest sponsored by the Southport Garden Club developed stiff competition in every category this year as judges came up with the following list of winners:

Prettiest living tree: Mr. and Mrs. Lee Caster, Leonard St., First, and Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Russ, N.Howe St., second.

Prettiest Door: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Willing, Lord St., first; and Mr. and Mrs. Ray Walton, Bay St., second.

Prettiest over all: Mr. and Mrs. Ed Oliver, River Dr., first; and Mr. and Mrs. J.C. Bowman, River Dr., second.

Most original: Mr. and Mrs. Ormond Leggett, Rhatt St.



Nerve Gas Coffins Loaded At Sunny Point

The Top News-- Nature, Politics

Concern for man's environment played a major role in Brunswick County news during the past year.

Top stories of 1970 were the nerve gas shipment from Sunny Point and the continuing argument of whether to conserve or develop Bald Head Island. Ecologists involved themselves with both matters and public attention was focused here—especially by the deadly nerve gas.

Chemical warfare materials have been shipped from the Sunny Point terminal before, but previously the operation was hidden from public scrutiny. This time, national news media followed trainloads of the deadly gas from depots in Kentucky and Alabama en route to Sunny Point, where the concrete coffins were loaded aboard a Liberty ship for eventual disposal at sea.

The cylinders that contained the gas were encased in steel and concrete blocks but there was danger that these "coffins" would leak. According to Army officials, if they had their way the gas would have been detoxified, but the concrete enclosures made this process impractical. Thus, the sea-dump.

Sunny Point was chosen because longshoremen at the terminal were trained to handle dangerous cargoes. The stevedores, who all worked on Southport crews, appeared calm throughout the whole operation, telling national news reporters that more dangerous cargoes are loaded at the terminal every day.

More than one million tons of ammunition pass through Sunny Point each year.

After a short delay caused by threatening weather near the dump site off the Florida coast, the LaBaron Russell Briggs, an old hulk of a Liberty ship, was towed from the Southport harbor

to be scuttled at sea.

The second most important story in Brunswick County during 1970 was the controversy about Bald Head Island, a 12,000 acre sub-tropical piece of property at the mouth of the Cape Fear River. It is a sure bet to be one of the best stories next year, too.

The question hasn't been answered whether the island will be changed into a plush but practical resort by the would-be developer, or whether Gov. Bob Scott will be successful in his bid to acquire the property for the state.

The Bald Head affair started last year when the developer of Hilton Head Island, S.C., an-

nounced plans to buy the island near Southport. He backed down when Gov. Scott and other state officials indicated that dredging permits would not be issued, and therefore ferry slips and probably an airport could not be constructed.

This past summer a North Carolina developer bought the property from owner Frank Sherrill for a reported \$5.5 million and seems ready to challenge Gov. Scott and others to secure the dredging permits and proceed from there towards development. He has indicated that preliminary construction could begin this spring, about the same time Gov. Scott will be seeking support and money from

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First Ferry Moved To Old Location

It's off with the old and on with the new at the Southport-Fort Fisher Ferry this week.

On December 23 the first ferryboat placed in service on this run was taken back to Cedar Island where it will be operating between that slip and Ocracoke. She is the old Sea Level but henceforth will be known as the Louch Faircloth, having been renamed recently in honor of the Chairman of the State Highway Commission.

Here to take her place is a vessel from the old Bogue Sound run. She is the Sandy Graham, named in honor of a former Chairman of the State Highway Commission. She began her trips across the Cape Fear River on Wednesday of last week.

The original ferry arrived here in December, 1965, and began service between Southport and Fort Fisher on February 8, 1966. Formal dedication of this new service was held on March 8, 1966. When she tied up at the end of the day on December 22 she had completed 6,640 round trips across the Cape Fear River, a distance of 53,120 miles.

It is expected that a sister ship to the Sandy Graham will be added to the local operation before the peak season next summer.

License Plates Dates Given

The application cards necessary for obtaining 1971 license plates were placed in the mail on December 21 and 22. Department of Motor Vehicles officials expect this huge mailing, estimated at more than 3,500,000 cards, to be delivered by January 1.

The 1971 green and white plates will go on sale throughout the State on January 4. The 1970 plates expire December 31 and their use beyond that date is permissible only if they are duly-registered by the Department to the vehicle on which display is made.

Owners who have their vehicles properly registered by the Department have until February 16 to obtain new plates.

Surrounding area residents may obtain plates in Shallotte, next door to Russ Ford. Office hours will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday thru Friday, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. The local license agent, Mrs. Ray Hewett, points out that "to renew a plate you must have a renewal card," and she cautions against the misplacing of it when it is received. She also asks ap-

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Time And Tide

Register of Deeds R.I. Mintz was president of the Brunswick County Young Democrats Club back in 1935, and preparations were being made for the Jackson Dinner early in the new year. This news was in The Pilot for January 1, 1936. The menhaden boats were still at work, and a casualty during the preceding week was the loss of a purse seine when one of the boats of the Captain capsized.

Inmates at the Brunswick County Home were enjoying a new radio that had been installed during the Christmas season for their pleasure; Mr and Mrs. Fred Willing had purchased the J.D. Sutton home and had moved in; and December had earned a reputation for being a bad winter month. Judge R. Hunt Parker was to preside over the January term of Superior Court.

Five years later, and once more The Pilot came out on New Year's Day—1941. In contrast to the December of five years before, the month just past had set something of a record for warm weather, with the mercury going above 60-degrees on 18 days during the 31-day period. Orton Plantation had made Life Magazine with a spread on an old-fashioned Christmas party.

Judge R. Hunt Parker was coming here again to preside over the forthcoming January term of Superior Court; a picture of the late Aunt Mary Ann Galloway had appeared on the front page of The State magazine; and the Register of Deeds office had reported a rush for marriage licenses.

The time was December 26, 1945, the end of the year that saw the end
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Bald Head Lighthouse—Center Of Controversy

Moore Food Stamps Used In Brunswick

More than one-quarter million North Carolina people received aid through U.S. Department of Agriculture food programs in October, according to Russell H. James, Southeast regional director of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service.

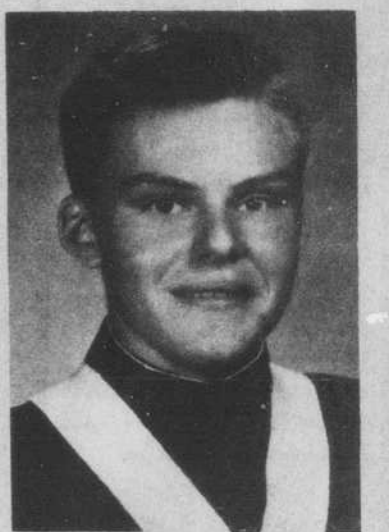
James reported that 271,560 people in the state were assisted by the food programs during the month—an increase of 64,874, or 31 per cent, over the same period last year, when 206,686 were given aid.

In Brunswick County, 1,720 persons received food stamps in October, compared to 903 a year earlier.

The overall state increase, he noted, was in the food stamp program, now in operation in 50 of North Carolina's 100 counties. During the month, 151,405 low-income people received over \$2.5 million in bonus food stamp coupons which can be exchanged for food at the local grocery stores. In October 1969, 71,320 participants in this program were given \$491,769 in bonus food coupons.

In the other 50 North Carolina counties, the needy people were assisted through the commodity distribution program which provides 20 USDA donated foods to supplement diets. There were 120,155 persons on this program—15,211 less than the 135,366 who participated in October 1969. The drop was attributed to the fact that several counties changed over to the stamp program during the year, FNS officials noted.

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture administers the family food distribution program while the State Department of Social Services is responsible for the food stamp program, both in cooperation with the U.S. Food and Nutrition Service.



CADET VEREEN

Promotion For Southport Boy

Cadet Johnie William Vereen has been designated the executive officer of "A" Company and of the Drill Team at Carolina Military Academy and has been promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant, according to an announcement from school President Harold D. Stanley.

Cadet Vereen, a member of the junior class at the preparatory school, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Vereen, Jr. of Yaupon Beach and is active in many other phases of campus life. He is an honor-roll student and serves as general manager of the campus radio station WCMA. At the annual Christmas ball held last Saturday evening, Cadet Vereen played the organ with the "Six Power Treatie", the student band which provided music for dancing.

This is Vereen's second year at Carolina Military Academy.