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THERE WAS A HOLE, said District Court Judge Ray Walton, but there was no evidence Carolina Cape Fear Corporation had anything to do with it. Charges that the owners of Bald Head

Island had dredged a hole to land heavy equipment on the island were dismissed. Here, a piece of equipment works on the beach with famous Old Bald Head Lighthouse in the background.

Island Dredge Case Thrown Out Of Court

Charges of illegal dredging by the developers of Bald Head Island were dismissed Tuesday afternoon because the state failed to show who was responsible for the 30 by 60-foot hole below the high water mark.

"There is evidence there was a hole," Judge Ray Walton said after hearing the state's case in District Court here, "but there is nothing in the evidence that Carolina Cape Fear Corporation had anything to do with it."

The alleged dredging was discovered February 12 by Walter Johnson, assistant supervisor of the Division of

Commercial and Sports Fisheries who lives at Long Beach. He was accompanied that day by Frank Yelverton, a biologist aboard the research vessel Dan Moore which was moored at Southport because of inclement weather.

Johnson said he first suspected that equipment was being unloaded on the island by Carolina Cape Fear Corporation earlier that morning when a loaded barge passed the Fisheries office headed for the island. He later crossed the Cape Fear River to the island, where Yelverton made photographs

of the alleged dredging and Johnson talked with Roger Shepard, who identified himself to the fisheries officer as the man in charge.

Johnson testified that Shepard said he represented Carolina Cape Fear Corporation and was there to see that the contractor performed the job properly. The officer asked to see a dredging permit, but Shepard replied that he did not have one.

The workers were then instructed to stop all work below the high-water mark. Johnson said Shepard asked for permission to secure the

barge, but that the request was denied.

Shepard reportedly said, "You have pictures of what's happening here."

Johnson described the controversial hole as being about 30 feet wide and extending about 60 feet from shore. The depth was estimated by Johnson to be 18 to 24 inches. Johnson said he returned to the island the next day and there was no trace that dredging had occurred.

E.L. McLamb was charged with the violation of the dredge and fill law because equipment with his insignia was found on the island near the barge landing. Judge Walton determined there was insufficient evidence against him, also.

Under cross-examination, Johnson said he had worked in Brunswick County for seven and one-half years but this was the first time he had a photographer accompany him. The officer noted, however, that he has asked

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New Schools Must Be Orderly -- Judge Walton

Judge Ray Walton told a group of students in a February 10 disturbance at Bolivia High School that he wasn't interested in punishing anybody.

"I'm interested in not having it happen again," he said in District Court Monday afternoon. "That's not the way to run a school."

The inter-racial free-for-all occurred shortly after the morning school bell when a white student was pushed into a black student, who pushed back. "I have no question in my mind that it was like the two girls said," Judge Walton noted.

The ensuing fray resulted in warrants against five persons; Judge Walton found two not guilty and postponed judgment in the other three cases until April 17, adding that punishment would not be levied unless more trouble was reported in the meantime.

The defense attorney said he believed all parties charged in the case were involved in the fight, but that his clients felt that school authorities should have handled the situation. Neither the principal nor the assistant principal was in court Monday.

Judge Walton noted that society is changing, "and if there is anything we need it is education." Under circumstances that existed at Bolivia school that day, he added, it is impossible.

"My job is not an easy one," he continued. "Someone is going to feel that I am prejudiced, or that I am

leaning over backwards to help someone. I don't want any repercussions; we have had a good school."

Walton said he wanted to serve on the local school board but learned that he could not because of his

position as judge. "But Mr. (Franklin) Randolph and I agree that there are two things that are needed in the new school: order and cleanliness. These are necessary for a good system. Parents know that and so do you students."

New Political Prospects As Candidates Withdraw

Two significant changes have occurred in the list of Democratic candidates in Brunswick County for the May 6 primary.

George Frink, who had filed as a candidate for the nomination for register of deeds, decided last week to withdraw from that race. His filing fee was returned and his name will not appear on the ballot.

In Northwest Township, Dural Guyton has withdrawn as a candidate for member of the board of county commissioners, leaving Lonnie C. McKoy, Jr., unopposed for the Democratic nomination from that township. Since no Democratic candidate filed from Waccamaw Township, this gives McKoy a place on the ticket as a candidate for county commissioner. He will be the first black nominee for his office in the history of

Brunswick County. As matters now stand, Representative Thomas Harrelson will be opposed in the general election by E.J. Prevatte, Southport attorney. They must campaign in Pender County as well as in Brunswick because the 11th House District is comprised

of these two counties. All five members of the Board of County Commissioners are Republicans and all five have filed for reelection. They are W.A. Kopp, Jr., John H. Bray, J.T. Clemmons, Robert Simmons and Vardell Hughes. Northwest Township is not

represented on the present board.

The Democrats will have primary competition for this office in three townships. Only Ernest McGee from Town Creek and McKoy are without opposition as representatives from their

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Long Beach Erosion Problem On Waterway

The town of Long Beach, which has an erosion problem on the oceanside, is bothered by a similar problem along a stretch of the Intracoastal Waterway on the north side of the island.

In a letter to the district engineer of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, Tom Jarrett of the Corps' Coastal Engineering Studies Division said erosion is occurring at a rate between three and ten feet a year along a section popularly known as the yellow banks.

According to a group which recently met with Jarrett, most of the erosion can be attributed to the increased number of pleasure craft which ply the waterway on their seasonal trek north and south.

Jarrett stated, "One solution to the problem to be considered is the posting of 'no-wake' signs along the yellow banks section." He added that the cooperation of the N.C. Wildlife Department would be necessary in such an undertaking, along with the Corps and the Coast Guard.

The land being affected by the erosion lies within the U.S. Government right-of-way, Jarrett continued. "However," he told the group of interested citizens and beach residents, "should the erosion continue at its present rate, within 10 or 20

years, erosion will be affecting private property outside the right-of-way."

The group, which included Long Beach Town Manager Jack Hayward, Town Commissioner Kermit Holloway, National Development Corporation representative James Wolfe and Harold Crain, temporary chairman of the Waterway Property Owners Committee, asked whether the spoil material from the next maintenance dredging operation could be placed on the south side of the waterway where the erosion is occurring. The possibility exists, the group was informed.

The group expressed an opinion that it would be practical for the government to protect the banks with some type of structure; Jarrett said this might be possible, provided the

average annual cost of such a structure would be less than the average annual cost of dredging.

BRIDGE WORK

At the last meeting of the Long Beach commissioners, it was reported that a group visited State Highway Commission Chairman Lauch Faircloth, who said the Commission will go ahead with construction of the new Oak Island bridge west of the present temporary crossing. The public hearing will come later, the SHC chairman was reported to have said, but the hearing was not expected to alter any of the present bridge plans.

According to the minutes of the Long Beach meeting, "In all the letters from Mr. Faircloth to the Town of Long Beach he has stressed that no action would be taken until after a public hearing" concerning the bridge.

Candidate To Speak

GOP Dinner Friday Night

James A. Holshouser, candidate for the Republican nomination for governor, will wind up a busy day in southeastern North Carolina Friday with a speech at a GOP dinner at Long Beach.

Holshouser is scheduled to come to Brunswick County from Wilmington where his schedule calls for morning coffee with a group of supporters, a speech at the Heart of Wilmington motel and an afternoon press conference.

The Long Beach dinner, sponsored by the Brunswick County Young Republican Club, will be at Jones

Restaurant at 7 p.m. Miss Linda Packer is the dinner chairman.

Holshouser, a 37-year-old Boone attorney, claims the distinction of being a Republican who never has lost an election in North Carolina. His victories include four elections to the State House Representatives and three as Republican state chairman.

His many honors for civic, religious and governmental activity include his selection by President Nixon as a member of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission.

Campaign Diary

By MARGARET HARPER



One of the best meetings I have attended during the first few weeks of my campaign was in Whiteville last Wednesday night, right after the paper came out. The Columbus County YDC staged one of the best county rallies I have ever attended, and I enjoyed every minute of it. I was among friends and I knew it, and believe me that's a good feeling.

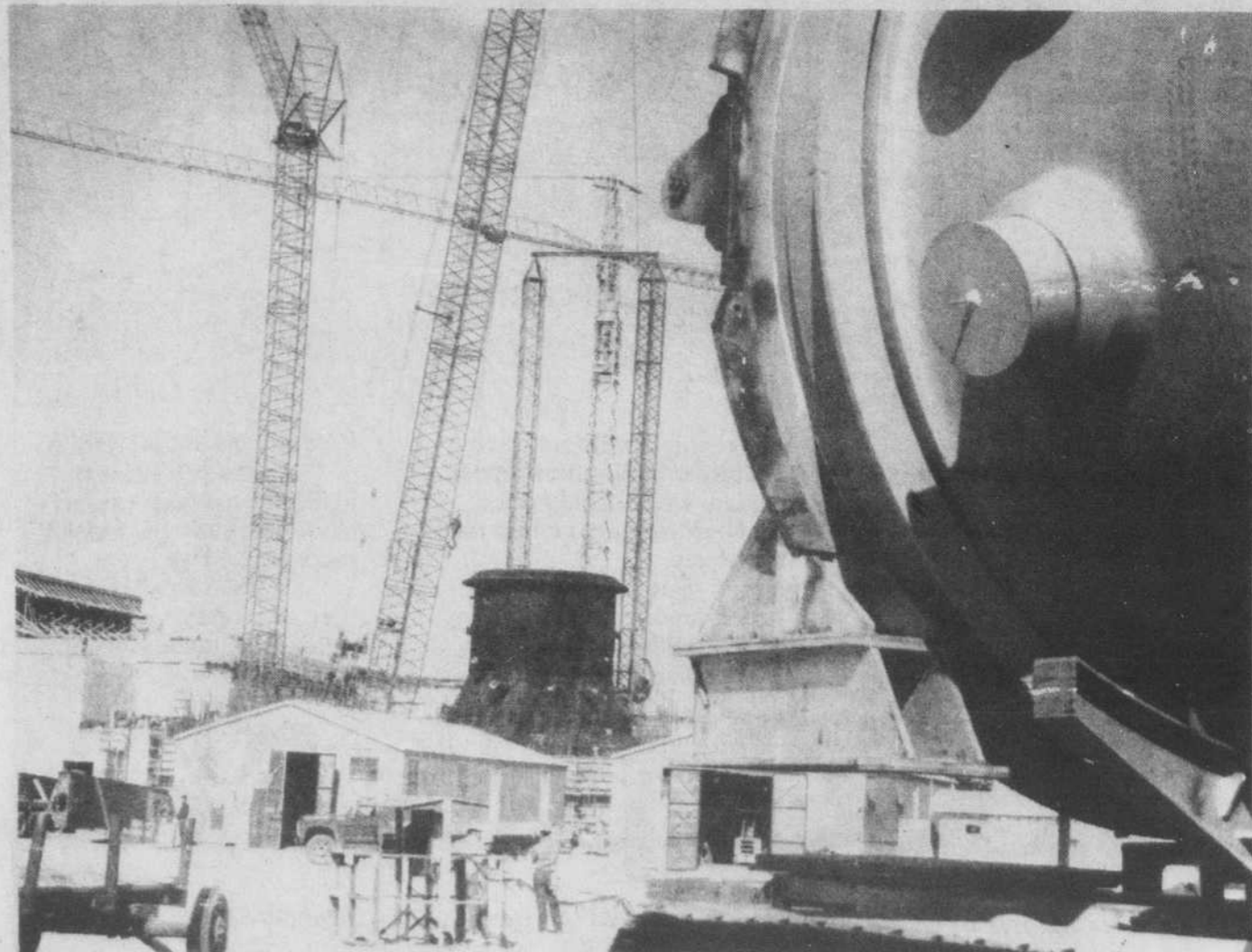
Jim and Carolyn High and Peggy Walton were on hand to introduce people to me and we used our Margaret Harper Booth as a base of operations. That had been designed by Jay Hefer and constructed and decorated by my other friends from The News Reporter. I was particularly proud to have my son, Ed, with me at this rally because it gave me an opportunity to meet some of his Columbus County friends.

My campaign buttons and other materials had not arrived, so they had printed some big cardboard "smile" signs which said "Margaret Harper for Lt. Gov." and some smaller ones on paper to be pinned on an oversized lapel buttons.

It was a good night.

When I walked into my front room that night I thought I must be in the wrong house because on the table was the most beautiful bouquet of flowers I have seen in years. I called Zona Ross and found out that they were from David Kincaide, a Southport boy who now lives in New Jersey. He had seen in The Pilot that I am a candidate for lieutenant

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REACTOR VESSELS for Carolina Power and Light Company's Brunswick Plant are to be installed soon. The 556-ton vessel (in the right

foreground) will be lifted by several heavy-duty cranes and lowered into the reactor housing (center).

Road Closes For Repairs

The State Highway Commission will close NC 133 (River Road) between US 17 at the Brunswick River and NC 87 at Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal to all through traffic so that needed repairs may be made to the Town Creek Bridge.

Through traffic on NC 133 will be routed on US 17 and NC 87 during this period, but local traffic will be maintained between Town Creek and the two termini mentioned.

The length of the detour is 23.2 miles.

The Highway Commission will begin work on March 6 (Monday) replacing damaged piles, replacing damaged pile caps, and leveling and adjusting the bridge floor. It is expected that this work can be accomplished by April 7 and the road opened to through traffic at that time.

Another Vote Won?

"She can't hear you, she's deaf," a woman said of a companion who was about to meet the candidate. Unperturbed, Mrs. Harper began to talk to the deaf woman on her fingers, a trick she learned years ago to communicate with the late Bill Keziah, former editor of this newspaper who was totally deaf.

Margaret Harper was in downtown Whiteville last week, shaking hands and asking support for her nomination for lieutenant governor.