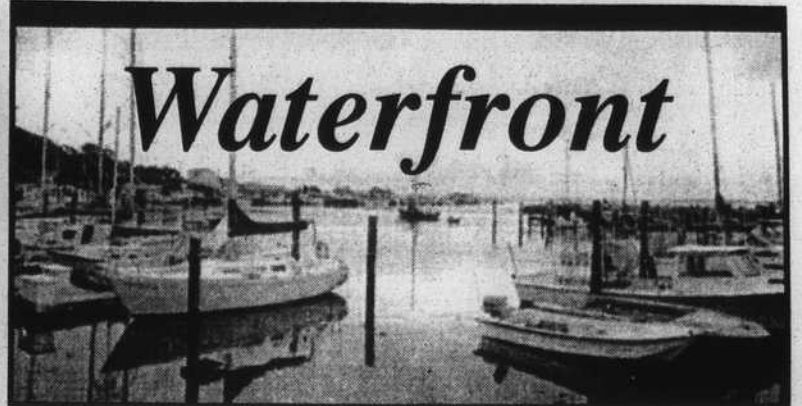




THE WAY IT WAS

On the fifth anniversary of the memorable March Storm we thought we'd recall other weather trouble of the past, and found this photo taken in the aftermath of an October, 1899, blow -- and high tide. The

tug is the *Blanche*, no longer with us, the building on the right is the long-gone pavilion, but the four houses still stand on high ground at the foot of Atlantic Avenue.



Waterfront

We've mentioned it in "Time and Tide" and there's a smattering about it in "Not Exactly News" this week, but we thought a bit more on the fifth anniversary of the 1993 March Storm -- the No-Name Hurricane, some regard it -- might be in order.

First, to recall the local particulars, it was Saturday, March 3, when the sou'wester snuck up on us all, blowing so hard that endeavor after endeavor had to be canceled with nobody exactly understanding what was happening. Afterwards some complained that the weather people hadn't given warning, but in fact they had, and the problem was that folks didn't understand that a huge storm can blow up in the spring just as one can in the fall.

Because there was no "official" alert like the familiar hurricane watches and warnings, people were out in weather they never should have braved, and marine interests were particularly hurt by poor preparation. The miracle of the storm was singular -- no one was seriously hurt, much less killed, in a time when limb and life were in very great jeopardy.

How high did the tide get? We settled that then with the help of Michael Goodwin, who reported that the tide crested at the edge of the bulkhead of the Bald Head Marina, where it had washed into the parking lot on the extraordinary tide on January 1, 1987.

How hard did the wind blow? Boyce Spencer logged a gust at 110 miles per hour in the pilot's office on Bay Street.

We all recall that Capt. Wayne Ludlum and two pilot apprentices had boarded the tanker *Amelina* at the bar that morning to take her to Wilmington, and Spencer kept feeding information on wind speed to Ludlum as he rounded into the harbor and started up the river, unable to do anything else.

Ludlum did ask Spencer to forego any further wind speed reports, as they were superfluous, and later he observed that if he'd known it was going to blow that hard he would never have left the dock.

Bob Black, who we usually find here wrestling reef balls over the side in the the Long Bay Artificial Reef enhancement program, is tussling now with a matter of far more gravity, and asks our help.

As member of the Southeast Regional Advisory Committee of the Marine Fisheries Commission, Black along with his fellows is seeking help with recommendations on the use of commercial fishing gear for recreational purposes. Specifically, how should recreational fishermen use crab pots, gill nets and shrimp trawls.

The committee is to make recommendations to the commission on April 14, for devising of rules to be implemented in 1999, and Black hopes to get some information which will breathe the breath of real life into those recommendations. "It's not a matter of whether there's going to be restriction put on commercial gear in recreational use," said Black, "the only question is what it'll be."

Give Bob a call and talk with him about it if you're a recreational harvester. His telephone number is 278-4137, and he's ready to listen.

Southport aldermen Annexation use permits, top agenda

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

With a legislative study commission hearing on proposed deregulation of the electric industry conflicting with a regular monthly meeting of city government Thursday, Southport aldermen met just long enough to recess their March meeting.

Aldermen will reconvene to do business at 7:30 p.m. this Thursday, March 19, at City Hall.

Here's a rundown of business the mayor and board of aldermen of the City of Southport will entertain:

■ Harbor Oaks Development Corporation will ask for a conditional use permit to place a temporary sales office in Harbor Oaks subdivision. The developer wishes to place a mobile office and will landscape around it. The planning board has recommended approval of the request with the condition the trailer remain on-site for no more than one year. A public hearing on the matter will precede board action.

■ City attorney Mike Isenberg will report on his meeting with city staff and the owner of a River Drive tract he wishes to develop as a six-lot subdivision to be known as River View. Last month Ron Thompson, owner of 106 River Drive, said the planning board's denial of his subdivision proposal was racially motivated. He is the only African-American owner of property on River Drive, he said.

■ A review of final plats for Section 2 of Harbor Oaks subdivision and Section 1 of Sandy Hills subdivision will be made. Harbor Oaks lies between Moore and Leonard streets with an entrance opposite Ferry Road on Moore Street. Sandy Hills subdivision lies adjacent to the rear property lines of homes on Jabbertown Road. Its entrance is on Leonard Street, about 1,750 feet from its Jabbertown Road intersection.

■ City clerk Jim Brown will inform the board officially that Bald Head Island Ltd.'s petition for annexation of a 70-acre parcel on the Cape Fear River northeast of city limits is sufficient and the parcel meets state requirements for annexation. Aldermen are expected to set a public hearing on the proposed annexation of the property, which now serves as a landing area for the Bald Head Island ferry, on April 2.

■ Aldermen will discuss adoption of a resolution in support of Electricities' effort to ensure its stranded debt will be paid by all electricity users in the state when the electric industry is deregulated. Southport shares in the debt of the agency which bought ownership

interest in nuclear power-generating plants in the 1970s and 1980s, thereby reducing electric costs for all users, the city and Electricities argue.

■ A request for out-of-town sewer service will be entertained. John and Beverly McCloskey want the city to extend sewer service to the 12 commercial units they plan to build on 3.5 acres on N. C. 211 next to their Party Time store. Estimated flow will be 1,800 gallons per day, based on the number of employees they expect to work in the 12 offices and stores in the planned complex.

■ A request for satellite annexation of nearly 41 acres on N. C. 87 north of city limits will be entertained. The parcel is not contiguous to city limits. Petitioners E. J. and Amaretta Prevatte, Bette C. Robb and Philip King Jr. wish to subdivide and develop the property and want city services.

■ Brunswick Concert and Theatrical Society will ask the city for a monetary donation to improve the Centennial Center. The Centennial Center is the old gymnasium on the Brunswick Community College Lord Street campus which is leased to the non-profit group for 35 years. The group says it needs to upgrade the facility, which has been better used since the city's Community Building burned. The facility has a working stage and seating for 300 persons.

■ Three appointments will be made to the city planning board.

YAUPON BEACH PIER

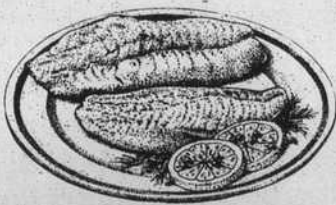
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