

Time and Tide

55 years ago

A story on the front page of the *Pilot* for October 20, 1943, reported the first frost of the year in Brunswick County. Landscape consultant Robert S. Sturtevant reported that Orton Gardens were in good condition, this despite a severe labor shortage.

Sixty white-faced Hereford cows had been purchased as a base for a livestock operation at Oaks Plantation; post office patrons were reporting mix-ups in the mail between Shallotte and Charlotte, due no doubt to the similarity in spelling; and there was a lot of news in the paper that week about ration books.

45 years ago

It was October 21, 1953, and Miss Marie Rourk had reigned as the homecoming queen at Shallotte on the preceding Friday. To make her evening a happy one, the Shallotte gridders had swamped the visiting Beaufort team, 39-0. Elsewhere on the grid scene, Southport had been downed by Elizabethtown, 20-13, and the newly formed Bolivia team had an open date.

Sgt. A. T. McKeithan, U. S. Army, stationed in Hanover, Germany, had written of a visit to Southport's England counterpart; charter boats were reporting catches in excess of 700 bluefish; and a headline read, "Lions to Meet."

35 years ago

Bob Scott spoke to the annual meeting of the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation in Whiteville 35 years ago this fall and told his listeners, "I haven't decided yet (about running for governor)." He was referring to the race 34 years ago. Miss Priscilla Hewett had been crowned homecoming queen at Shallotte High School. Her picture was on the front page of the *Pilot*.

Halloween carnivals were being advertised for all the schools; Siamese twins that had been born to a Shallotte couple had died in Winston-Salem; and "Waterfront" was about Hurricane Ginny, a tropical storm that couldn't make up her mind which way to blow.

25 years ago

On the front page of the *Pilot* for October 17, 1973, there was a beautiful picture of the old lighthouse on Bald Head Island. A series of pictures at the bottom of the same page showed a pretty young girl opening and eating her first oyster of the season.

A seven-year highway plan for Brunswick County included completing work on Highway 211 between Midway and Supply (done), and improvements to Highway 17 (also done). Capt. Billy Potter was shown with a fisherman who had caught a 72 1/2-pound wahoo while fishing with him aboard the *Idle On II*. (The fish was also in the picture, front and center). We had just returned from a visit to the Grand Ol' Opry and we had a feature about it.

20 years ago

Severe beach erosion at Long Beach had created an emergency which led to moving the waterfront home of Dr. and Mrs. Sam Sue to higher ground on the third row. We had a picture of that situation on the front page of the *Pilot* for October 18, 1978. Marty Folding had been sworn in as chief of police for Southport.

Dedication ceremonies for the new Leland Middle School had been held on the previous Sunday; funds continued to pour in on the "Jaws of Life" project; and the advertising section was filled with political ads pointing voters to the general election in November.

15 years ago

A "Red Tide" scare had turned out to be a false alarm, much to the relief of fishermen and beach residents of Brunswick County. That had been a front-page story in the *Pilot* for October 19, 1983. In "Waterfront" we had speculated on what a catastrophe it would have been had this occurred one week earlier, during the U. S. Open King Mackerel Tournament. Brunswick County commissioners had approved the levy of an additional half-cent sales tax, proceeds from which would be used by Brunswick County and municipal governments.

Jo Jo White, former South Brunswick football star, had been named player of the week in NAII District 26 for his performance at Livingstone College during the previous Saturday's game; CP&L had earned high praise from a NRC official who previously had severely criticized the Brunswick plant; and the Southport Board of Aldermen had rejected a proposal to name a Historic Properties Commission.

10 years ago

Immediate past national president of AARP John T. Denning had presented the charter for the Southport chapter to Gail Halley, president of the local organization, at a banquet meeting in Southport. We had photo coverage of this prestigious event. We also had a photograph of groundbreaking ceremonies at the North Carolina Baptist Assembly where work was to begin on a \$1.6-million conference center. Distinguished Baptist State Convention officials were present and participated in the event.

Saltwater fishermen from Gov. Jim Martin down to the most humble surfcasters were up in arms against the federal fisheries action to close the king mackerel season within ten days; a moratorium had been declared on future burials in the Old Smithville Burying Ground and Smith Cemetery in Southport pending a survey to determine available spaces; and waterfront watchers had been thrilled to see twice-daily trips through the Southport harbor by the cruise ship *Galileo* (later the *Meridian*) as she completed a week of one-day trips out of Wilmington.

5 years ago

It was October 20, 1993, and Bald Head Island fire chief Greg Turner was calling for sprinklers in all new construction, in the wake of the Swansquarter condominium fire which had destroyed ten buildings on September 30. At Long Beach, consideration was being given to construction of a new fire station, for which \$225,000 had been budgeted. And county commissioners were asking for a public forum to learn more of Martin-Marietta plans for limestone mining.

The county zoning ordinance which had taken a year for preparation was to become effective November 1; Long Beach Road was getting a center-turn lane; and Caswell Beach officials were trying to determine how best to protect the public from surfside stumps.

A prince of a pauper

Lately I've become sort of a Tom Sawyer, playing on the beach, checking out what the fishermen catch

I remember the night I got myself adopted. It was just after Thanksgiving two years ago. I was sitting behind the newspaper office when the editor came out the door headed for supper. I reached out my paw -- yeah I did -- and he reached out and touched it, and then went on his way. It wasn't two minutes before the lady of the house -- my "new mom" -- came and grabbed me up and took me home and fed me, and said this is where I was going to live.

Dad said mom should slow down a bit, that this may already be somebody's kitten.

"I'll call Dr. Rabon and make an appointment to get his shots and have him neutered," mom insisted.

Uh ... whoa, mom. Maybe in a few weeks? "What are we going to name him?" she wanted to know.

Hel-lo, mama. Black and white cat who needs a collar ... maybe a *colored* one.

"Newsprint!" mom exclaimed. "Black and white and 'read' all over." (I think it was at that moment dad thought this could be a really cool thing.)

So let me tell you something about myself. I was a stray. I was born in downtown Southport, over behind the old Amuzu Theater.

My real dad's name is Dan; maybe you've seen him because he looks just like me. That was an okay neighborhood, but I wanted to see the world -- or at least the other side of Moore Street. The Pharmacy and Thai Pepper's out back, riverview out front. It seemed like a pretty good move.

It was not without its surprises though. Seems mom already had a cat, a sissy cat.

I'm a boy cat, and here I was expected to share space with a sissy cat. But, you know, it hasn't been that bad. I chase Chelsea -- I always catch her -- and we tumble and tussle. Mom yells; I stop. But I know Chelsea enjoys it too. She's a good girl deep down.

I'm a house cat a couple hours a day, but frankly, I'm an outside cat. I was born that way, and I don't think I'll ever change.

When I do stay indoors, usually I get restless about 4 a.m. -- if you know what I mean -- and want to eat and go outside. Usually I wake mom up by rattling the blinds, but if that doesn't work I scrape my claws across the carpet. If you know my mom, you know that works every time.



Newsprint

One night, though, we almost had a problem. Mom was out of town and dad, well, he sleeps through a lot. I went to the kitchen and brought a loaf of bread and sat it on the bed. Hummph. Nothing.

So I go to the back door and drag the mat up a flight of stairs and lay it on the floor next to the bed. Eat, go outside, I thought. How hard can this be?

Scrape the carpet. Dad doesn't move. Hummph.

"Boing, boing," that's the first thing I heard," dad told mom when she got home. "Newsprint was behind the bedroom door, pawing the door-stop. 'Boing, boing.'"

Let me tell you, the man's lucky I already knew how to use a litter box.

My best friend, though, is "Yellow Kitty." That's what everybody calls her -- yes, she's a her too -- and she's lived in the alley between Moore and Bay streets a long, long time. Mom and dad say I've been good for her, that she acts like a young cat again. She's still shy around adults, but she's not sissy at all.

Yellow Kitty is a backyard cat, though. Me,

I'm a front door cat.

I visit Waterfront Gifts sometimes and the owner lets me "sleep with the animals." Tourists think it's cute, me lying there with a pile of stuffed creatures. Mom thinks it's cute that I go to the Doshier "flea market." Get it? And maybe you saw that picture of me in the *Pilot* trying to help free that little squirrel locked inside a building downtown.

Hey, I'm a boy cat. Remember that.

I remember my first bird.

I can still hear mom and dad laughing at me as I climbed the back fence and marched proudly across the yard to show off my catch. Okay, so I found the bird. No matter that it was so stiff I almost tripped over it, because this is what boy cats are supposed to do. Mom says lately I've become sort of a Tom Sawyer, playing on the beach in front of the house, checking out what fishermen catch from the city pier.

I've had a good time these two years -- outdoors and indoors. I like marshmallows and popcorn, and peanut butter, though it sticks to the roof of my mouf; but I guess I owe Ms. Verilyn an apology for slipping into her kitchen and eating her hot dog. I've found a good friend in my "grandma" next door who -- she'll get mad if I tell you this -- loves me pretty much I think. I let her feed me, but I should tell you, this is the same lady who saw me in front of BB&T one day and carried me back across Howe Street in her arms for all the world to see. That, my friends, was embarrassing -- and not just for her!

But that's a boy thing, and you'll have to forgive me.

I guess if I had to tell you about my last two years I'd say I've enjoyed visiting with people downtown, that I've enjoyed the tourists at Waterfront Park -- and the seagulls and ice cream -- and that I've enjoyed sleeping on the couch at the office. Chelsea and Yellow Kitty, who hardly know each other, are my two best friends. I hate being kissed, but I love having my brow rubbed. I love my mom and dad.

But if I had a wish, and I do, it would be that people think of me as just a boy.

A good little paper boy.

Newsprint was accidentally killed last Wednesday and is buried behind The State Port Pilot office.

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