

Carteret County News-Times

A Merger Of

The Beaufort News (est. 1912) & The Twin City Times (est. 1936)

EDITORIAL PAGE

TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 1950

Lucky Numbers?

Awaiting the announcement of census figures had the suspense of mystery thrillers beat, especially for town officials, quasi-public officials and others whose interests lie directly with the number of people inhabiting a particular portion of this whirligig called Earth.

In general, people expected Carteret county's 1950 census figures to be a great deal higher than they were 10 years ago. Wild estimates of 10,000 for Morehead City, 5,000 for Beaufort have been proved just that wild.

Since the end of the war, knots of people concentrated all over the nation in wartime installations and factories have found their way back again to a more normal existence. Carteret county is no exception. We wonder, too, if all the hustle and bustle of the early and middle 1940s didn't make a few extra people seem like hundreds of extra people, simply because we couldn't take care of them, sell them all the coffee in the store, find them a place to live, or fill their tanks with gasoline.

One of the most difficult things for an average human being to do is estimate a number of people gathered together. Put over 75 persons in a room and ask several others how many are there and almost every answer will be far from the actual count. It takes experience to estimate the number of persons in crowds. And it's a shrewd individual who can guesstimate with reasonable accuracy the number of persons living in an area covering miles and miles.

Although Beaufort's 1950 census count is lower than 1940, it's immediate trade area has increased, for it's "suburbs" cover a large territory of concentrated population. Morehead City did slightly better than just squeaking over the 5,000 mark, yet a margin of 55 can hardly be considered substantial.

Carteret county's overall growth of 4,667 is heartening. The more people we have, the better labor market we can offer, an increased purchasing power makes the retail businessman feel good, while county and town officials pray that revenue gains increase proportionately to take care of all the demands that folks make of government these days.

The Whims of Man

One of our readers called to our attention this week that the referendum which set up a municipal recreation program for Morehead City was done so under a law which would be an ideal tool for dictators.

He pointed out that in a democracy, such as ours where we wave a flag and shed blood frequently for the right to vote, few of us stir our bones to go to the polls. Therefore, he reasoned, a power-thirsty character could maneuver the calling of a referendum whereby, he, for example, would be given unheard of authority and supremacy.

He would get that authority merely because the so-called voters would sit around on curbstones saying how awful it was that he was doing such a thing, but they wouldn't go to the polls and tell him not to.

Yes, we agree that our reader has a point. But let us go back to the 1930s when there was a referendum called on establishing a race track here. During those years the law in effect was the one which said that persons who registered for an election could merely stay away from the polls and thereby cast a "no" or "against" vote.

It was believed that the minority was in favor of the race track and "we-want-a-race-track" rooters were going around saying, "Isn't it awful, all a person has to do is stay away from the polls and that will be a vote against the track!"

So they, after sweating it out and winning, decided that the law should be revised. That sentiment was undoubtedly reflected in the 1947 legislature which changed the law to read that EVERYONE, yessers and no-ers, have to go to the polls in a referendum.

Now, Morehead City voters, 74 of them that is, have decided that the town should have a recreation program. And everybody else is mad because those who registered and stayed away from the polls were not counted as "against" votes.

To call this reaction inconsistent, as compared with the race track issue, is understatement.

The present law is the one which adheres more closely to the principles of democracy. Casting a vote is one of the cardinal rights of every citizen, and no law should say that in some instance it is fitting and proper that only "yes" votes be cast.

The law in effect prior to 1947 was a fine molder of negative opinion. Knowing how ambitious most folks are when it comes to going to the polls, we were not surprised to hear many declare, "I'm going to be in favor of it. That way I don't have to bother to vote."

The present law is the better one of the two. But one further revision merits consideration: unless a certain per centage of the town's voters go to the polls at least 30 per cent (the minimum can be determined by government experts)—the referendum should be declared invalid and the town governing body should automatically be given the right to make the decision.

Sou'easter

By Captain Henry

I was scanning again last night the election return table which was in the paper a week ago. Pat Dill, the new representative to the legislature must be much impressed with his popularity on Portsmouth. Ten votes were cast—all for Taylor.

Young Taylor took the outcome of the election in a reasonable manner. Some of his fellow candidates jumped up and down and screamed. As a matter of fact, the story is told that he was the only one who refused to go along with them when they were talking protest.

He shook hands with his victorious opponent on the Monday following the election and told him he felt sure Dill was capable of representing the county in a fair and favorable way.

Just to show the people how

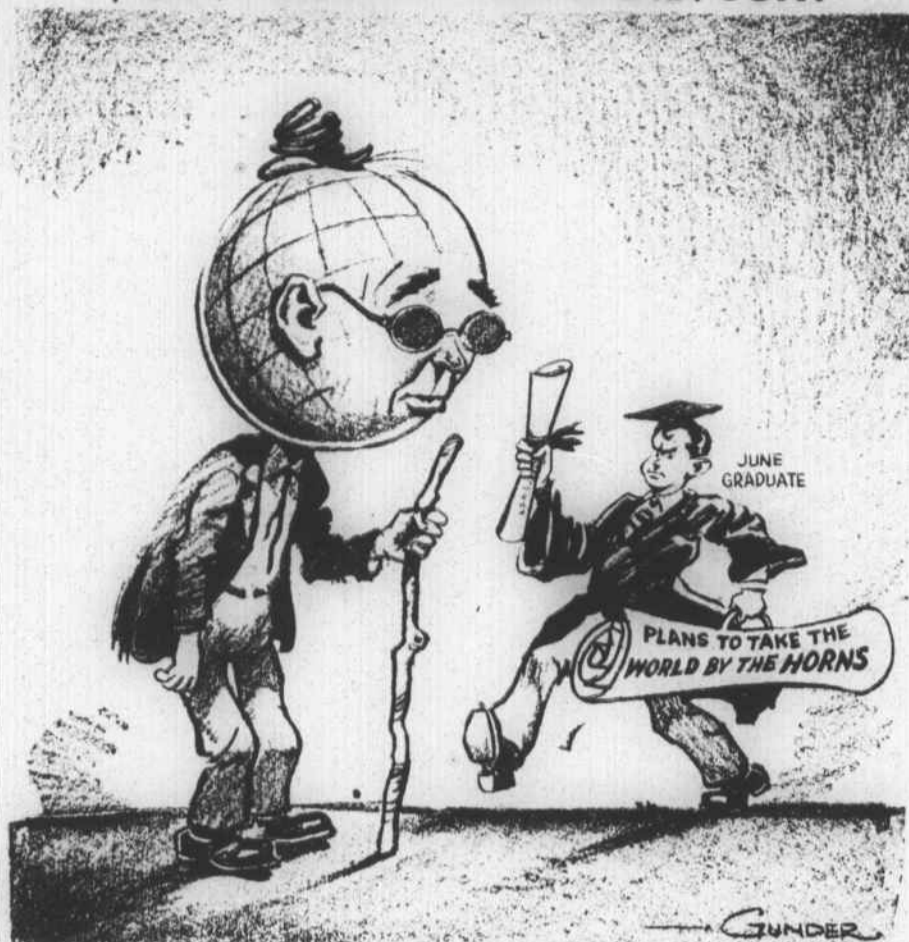
economy-minded he is, Willis Smith is asking the state to spend close to \$100,000 to help bind up his wounded pride. Smith is in his legal right (compared to this, \$23,000 is pin money, after all he needed that Madix dough to help him run for something). But I'm agin' the law that says a defeated primary candidate can request another election. If there were a strong Republican party in this state, there would be reason for having a run-off, for why have two Democrats running against one strong candidate of an opposition party in November???

This run-off business in this state is expensive, unnecessary, and without two grains of common sense.

The town board is finally wising up. The town has no money, yet they will let the expensive fire department equipment run all over

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"JUST TAKE ME BY THE HAND, SON!"



In The Good Old Days

THIRTY-THREE YEARS AGO

Town commissioners voted to ask property owners to deed to the town the land on which the seawall was being built, and also to assess the property owners 25 per cent of the cost of the wall.

The commissioners ordered the following changes in salaries: city clerk raised from \$25 to \$35, police chief from \$60 to \$70, night watchman from \$40 to \$45, and the mayor from \$75 to \$150.

The county squirting water on already burned down buildings. They say that if the majority of residents in the three-mile area surrounding Beaufort (to the north and east) don't pay an annual fee for fire protection, the fire department will not answer calls beyond the town limits. Whether they stick to that statement is another thing. If annual fees are not paid, I imagine that they will have to let a couple houses or buildings burn down before folks will decide whether they mean business.

It's a lot of downright foolishness for town residents to pay taxes to support the fire department so that the firemen can go out in the country and protect property of persons who never pay the town a cent of levy.

Gehrmann Holland, recently re-elected sheriff of our fair county, says he gets so many complaints he thrives on them. "My wife puts me on a diet at home and I grow fat on complaints at the office."

The socialist says that the only thing wrong with free enterprise is that there's too much enterprise and nothin' free.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Commencement of the public school in Beaufort this year was marked by the appearance of the senior class in caps and gowns for the first time.

The grand jury recommended book cases for the office of register of deeds and a storage house for the keeper of the jail.

A school of menhaden appeared in the harbor, making it easy for the men on the Wyona, which was lying at her wharf, to go out the necessary 100 yards in their purse boats and make a haul.

TEN YEARS AGO

Miss Bertha Gray Chadwick of Straits and James H. Davis of Beaufort were married on Saturday, June 3, and Miss Theresa Willis and Elmer Dewey Willis, jr., both of Wilsonton, were married Tuesday, June 11.

Mr. and Mrs. Halsey Paul welcomed a son, H. D., jr., on Friday, June 7.

FIVE YEARS AGO

The county board of commissioners opposed the establishment of a tuberculosis hospital at the Naval Submarine Base west of Morehead City.

Macon Snowden and Luther Hamilton, jr., were graduated from the United States Naval academy.

A Coast Guard crash boat exploded at the Port Terminal dock, injuring Charles Bennett and another crew member. The 11 other members of the crew, among them (G. W. Duncan, jr., and J. C. Gilbert) were uninjured.

Smile Awhile

It's a Desperate Situation

Just how distraught a housewife can get when her garbage isn't collected was proved the other day. Beaufort's City Clerk Bill Hartsell got a call from a Morehead City lady who wanted her garbage taken away at "22nd and Evans st."

Glass that will conduct electricity has been developed with the idea it can be used for a wide variety of heating purposes.

Earl C. Day
Cedar Island

Letter to the Editor

Loia, N. C.
June 8, 1950

To the Editor:

Answer to Mr. Davis' road inquiry—At the time that the committee from Cedar Island went before the county commissioners and asked that the road on Cedar Island be paved, Mr. Davis was present and if he remembers, we asked for the road to be paved from Lewis Creek on the east end of the island to the turntable at Pamlico Sound on the west end of the Island and the commissioners approved of our request. If any portion of this road was not on the county system at that time either the commissioners or Mr. Davis should have known it and informed us of the fact at that time so we could have requested that it be put on the county system.

When I took the petition to Mr. Davis after getting the property owners' signatures on it, he had a letter written to the Highway Commission asking that the road on Cedar Island be paved, from Capt. Joe Smith's to the turntable at Pamlico Sound, leaving off the portion of the road to Lewis Creek, and including the very portion of the road that he now claims is not on the county system. So we have only got what we asked for and what the county commissioners approved of, no more, and no less, without any "high-handed work" as Mr. Davis stated.

I wonder if Mr. Davis recalls his remarks at the beginning of the road program, that he hoped not one shovel of dirt would be moved for road improvement during the Scott administration. Now he is complaining about the roads on Cedar Island and Otway. I wonder if he would like to have the electorate of those precincts cast their vote for him in November. Awful bad he is using.

The only authority the county commissioners actually have is to have roads put on the system or taken off. Other than that they are advisory only, just as any other group.

We have a friend who has been very helpful and beneficial in the construction of the roads in our county and I am sure he would again lend a helping hand if called upon.

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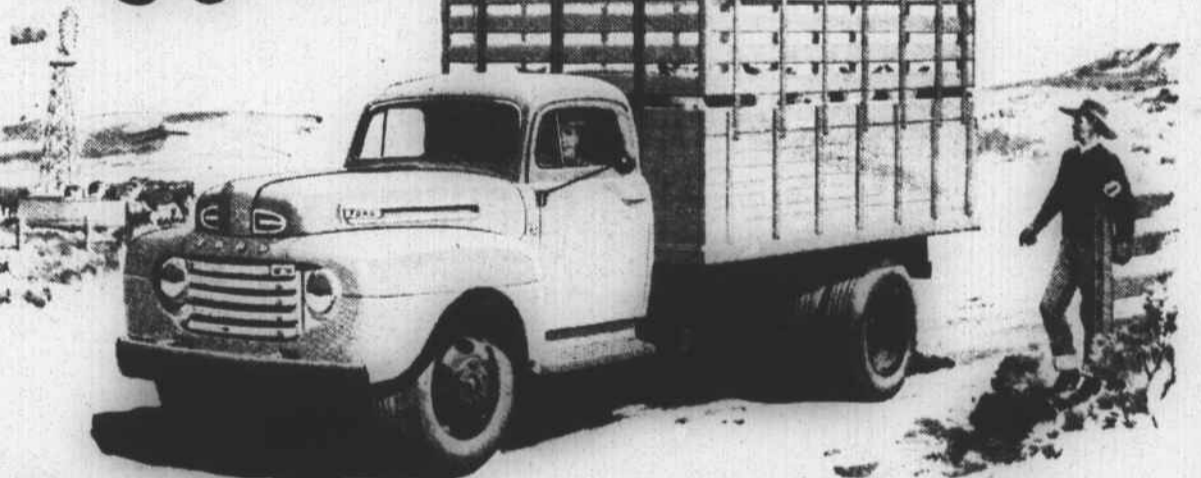
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