

## Admiral Visits Morehead City



News-Times Photos by McComb

Mayor George Dill, left, escorts Vadm. Roy A. Gano, commander of the Military Sea Transportation Service, up the steps of the Morehead City town hall yesterday morning. At the right is Brig. Gen. Frank Tharin, commanding general of Cherry Point Marine Corps Air station.



Delmas Willis, left, Joe Morris and Arthur Lewis, who were aboard the Bunny II when she pulled seven Potomac survivors from the water, were commended yesterday by admiral Gano.



Cdr. T. F. Bachele, USN, representing the US Bureau of Ships, talks with Cdr. George Philbrick, USCG, and Lt. John Riddell, USCG, at the Morehead City municipal building prior to the arrival of admiral Gano.

# Coast Guard Will Begin Official Inquiry on Potomac Disaster Today

A Coast Guard inquiry into the burning of the Navy tanker Potomac will get under way today at the Coast Guard Reserve building, Fort Macon.

Officers in charge will be Capt. Joseph Bresnan, chief of staff, Fifth Coast Guard district; Lt. Cdr. W. Goddu, officer in charge of the marine inspection office, Wilmington; and Lt. Cdr. Harry Gardner, chief of the investigating section, marine inspection, Norfolk.

The inquiry is expected to continue for several days.

Cdr. George Philbrick, USCG, commanding officer of the Chilula, who was in charge of fire-fighting operations, reported that all flames aboard the Potomac were extinguished at 4:30 p.m. Sunday.

The hull was cooled with water and then boats moved in to fight the remaining flames with foam.

When asked why it was decided to extinguish the remaining flames, commander Philbrick said the fire had burned out to the extent that it was felt safe to put the blaze out without setting up conditions conducive to explosion.

At 6:30 p.m. Sunday, the Coast Guard discontinued all its operations and let the salvagers take over. The salvagers, Merritt, Chapman and Scott, with Capt. C. L. Peterson in charge of operations, put portable generators aboard the hulk and started working immediately under lights. They will work around the clock.

Estimates on how long it will take to get the wreckage of the Potomac out of the harbor range anywhere from 7 to 60 days. If the hulk can be floated, removal time will be less than if it had to be taken out in sections.

Here to oversee salvage operations for the Navy is Cdr. T. F. Bachele, Bureau of Ships, Commander Bachele led the salvage tug Cable left a job in Galveston, Tex., Wednesday, stopped briefly at its home port at Key West, Fla., before coming into Morehead City.

The Coast Guard is maintaining a safety patrol in the harbor. Shipping operations are generally back to normal, according to Lt. John Riddell, commanding officer of Fort Macon Coast Guard group.

## Fire Halted Barge Loading For Several Days

● Esso-Humble Head Reports on Fire

● Flames Went Toward Oil Terminal, Port

Jim Hux, manager of Esso-Humble oil terminal, said Saturday that the burning Potomac in Morehead City harbor made it necessary for the terminal to send oil to Washington, N. C., by truck last week.

The flaming hulk and danger of gas vapors made it too risky to pump gas from the terminal tanks to barge. The Esso terminal is located on the same side of the harbor as the state port and lies northwest of the Aviation Fuel Terminals dock where the Potomac caught fire.

Mr. Hux said he was notified of Tuesday night's fire by Henry Scott, Crab Point, an Esso-Humble employee. Mr. Scott heard the first explosion at 6:55 p.m., ran out in his yard, saw the blaze, and called Mr. Hux.

"One of the terminals is on fire," Mr. Scott said. Mr. Hux rushed to his terminal. When he got there, he found Walter Friederichs, Charles McNeill, Clifton Lynch, and J. C. Steele, state port personnel.

"Everybody was calling the fire department," Mr. Hux relates. "I could see the tide was still rising and the wind was out of the southeast. There was a threat to the state docks and Esso, but the immediate danger was the possibility of an explosion which would disrupt the keel structure of the Potomac, spill out the gasoline, which would catch fire and be pushed by the tide into the docks."

Cliff Lynch called Jewell Smith, Morehead City, fireman on duty at Cherry Point, and Smith told him he had dispatched to Morehead four foam-equipped trucks and loads of 5-gallon cans of foam.

Mr. Hux went out to the high-way where he spoke to patrolman J. W. Sykes, who was keeping traffic off the bridge. The equipment from Cherry Point was already on Radio Island, so patrolman Sykes took Mr. Hux to the island.

There, two of the Cherry Point foam-dispensing trucks were assigned to go to the Esso-Humble terminal and the state docks, as well as a Vanceboro fire truck and a truckload of canned foam.

By this time, an hour had elapsed since the start of the fire. "We didn't get the explosion we expected, but the tide rose enough so that more fuel had gotten on the water. Flames came to within 100 feet of the east end of berth 3 (southernmost berth of the old dock at the state port). The end of our dock had flames against it, but it did not ignite. Two camels at berth 2 caught fire."

"Camels" are pontoons used as fenders to keep large ships away from the dock. One of the Car-

## Toll: One Dead, One Missing

The toll in the Potomac tanker fire remains at one dead and one missing.

Most of the crewmen have returned to their homes. Marine military police were on duty on the Morehead City bridge and at either end of the bridge Sunday to warn sightseers not to smoke on the bridge. The officers also kept traffic moving.

Thousands of cars poured into Morehead City, filled with people interested in viewing the remains of the \$7½ million tanker.

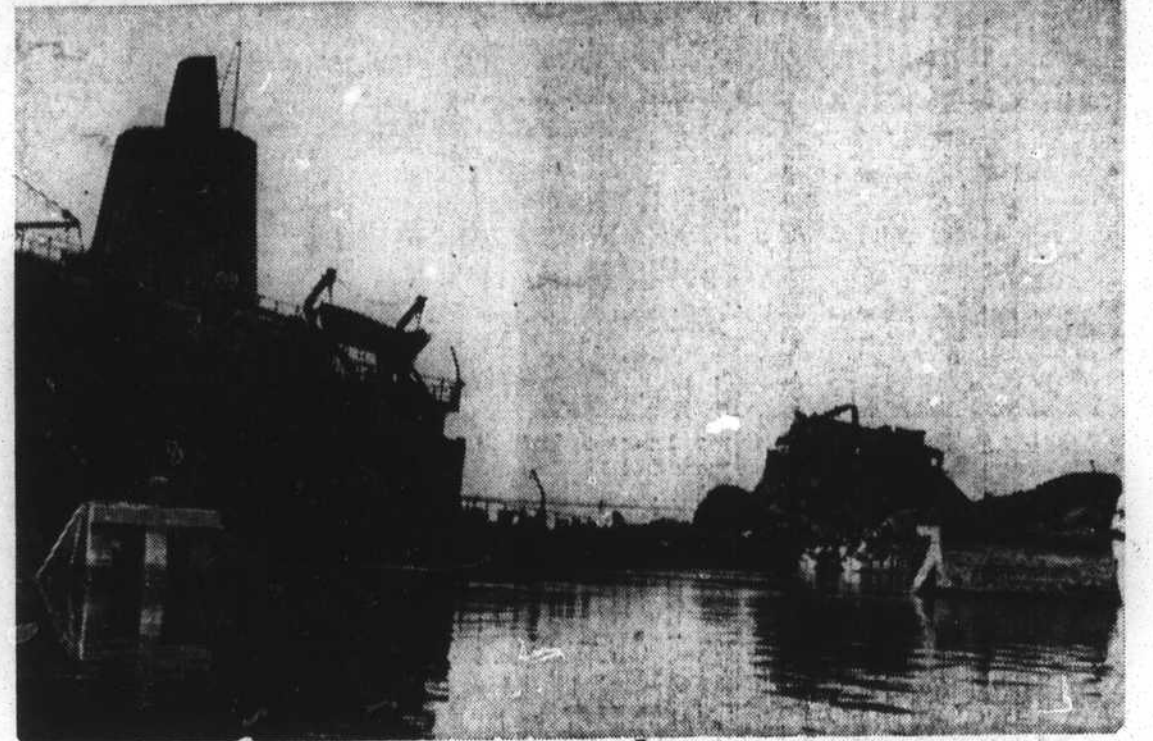
The "no smoking" warning was felt necessary because high tides were floating oil from the ship around the bridge. It was believed that a cigarette tossed or match tossed in the water could have started a new blaze. Traffic was stopped from crossing the bridge for a short period Saturday afternoon.

Rescue squad members of Morehead City and civil defense personnel directed traffic away from the bridge Saturday.

### NCEA Meeting

The Carteret unit, North Carolina Education Association, will meet at 7:30 tonight in the Beaufort school auditorium. Harry Williams, county civil defense director, will speak.

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Salvage crews are now aboard the once-glorious USNS Potomac. The tanker burned until 4:30 Sunday afternoon, a period of five days. Coast Guard craft are continuing safety patrol of the area.

## County Commissioner Proposes New Hospital Referendum; Deed Offered

### Police Seek Pogy Boatman Who Left Court

A Negro pogy boatman, charged with burglary, walked out of the Morehead City courtroom last Monday afternoon and officers are still looking for him.

Dave Anderson, 32, a member of the crew of the Aleutian Mail, waived hearing on four counts of breaking and entering, damaging property and possessing burglary tools. Judge Herbert Phillips set Anderson's bond for appearance in superior court at \$1,000.

Later in the afternoon when officers started looking for Anderson, he was nowhere to be found. They thought he was sitting in the courtroom.

The defendant was caught red-handed by Lt. Joe Smith of the Morehead City police force in Longley's Supply Co., highway 70 west, last Sunday night.

Lieutenant Smith said Anderson had climbed the fence around the place and broke in the back door. Perry Taylor, Morehead City, was riding by and saw a man go over the fence. He reported it to the police.

Lieutenant Smith also climbed the fence, went in the building and found Anderson. He said Anderson did not resist arrest—the officer had a .38 calibre pistol trained on him. (Lieutenant Smith also apprehended a burglar red-handed in Eastman's store about two years ago.)

For the Longley job, Anderson has been charged with breaking and entering and having in his possession burglary tools.

Under questioning, he admitted that he also damaged property in the 18th street Laundromat Friday, Sept. 22, broke a lock off the Weeks and Andrews Construction Co. warehouse, 1701 Fisher St., the same night and also on that night went in the Rollerhaven Rink by breaking in the back door.

He said he went into the Piggly-Wiggly store Tuesday night, Sept. 19. He gained entry by breaking a lock off a door at the rear. The only thing missing at Piggly-Wiggly was a quart of orange juice, according to Sgt. Bill Condie.

The sergeant said nothing of consequence was missing at the other places.

Lieutenant Smith said Anderson had with him at Longley's a crowbar and other tools. Anderson's hometown is Monroe, La. Police say he has no previous record here.

### Tide Table

Tides at the Beaufort Bar

HIGH	Tuesday, Oct. 3	LOW
3:22 a.m.	9:45 a.m.	
3:43 p.m.	10:21 p.m.	
Wednesday, Oct. 4		
4:21 a.m.	10:37 a.m.	
4:40 p.m.	11:08 p.m.	
Thursday, Oct. 5		
5:15 a.m.	11:25 a.m.	
5:30 p.m.	11:52 p.m.	
Friday, Oct. 6		
6:02 a.m.	12:10 a.m.	
6:15 p.m.		

County commissioner S. A. Chalk yesterday proposed a resolution calling for a new referendum on the county hospital, and R. R. Barbour, Morehead City, presented a deed for 20 acres of land for the hospital. The land is located in Mr. Barbour's development, Country Club Heights, between highway 70A and the Country club road.

The county commissioners, in session at the courthouse, deferred action on Mr. Chalk's proposal and Mr. Barbour's deed presentation.

Mr. Chalk proposed that the people vote again on the hospital issue Nov. 7, stating whether bonds should be issued for a hospital, whether the board should select a hospital site, or whether some other site should be chosen.

Mr. Barbour specified that the land he would give should be used only as a hospital site and construction should start within two years. A letter accompanying the deed also stated that he would sell additional land if the board wanted it.

He asked that the board give him an answer "within a reasonable time."

## Henry Hamilton Drowns While Setting Nets

The funeral service for Henry Hamilton, 49, Harkers Island, who drowned Saturday, will be held at 2 p.m. today in the Free Grace Pilgrim's Holiness church. The Rev. Billy Walker, pastor, will officiate. Burial will be in the Virgie Mae cemetery.

Mr. Hamilton drowned Saturday afternoon while setting nets across from Harkers Island on White shoal. He had put out three of his nets and apparently fell overboard as he was about to set the fourth, which was still in his boat.

Harkers Island boats started searching for the body Sunday, found it about mid-morning near the point where the nets had been set and turned it over to the Coast Guard.

The body was taken to the post-office dock in Beaufort where it was picked up by the Bell-Munden funeral home.

Lester Hamilton, a relative of the fisherman, found the boat about 5:15 p.m. Saturday and notified the Coast Guard.

The deceased fisherman made news Sept. 18 when he caught a 105-pound tarpon in his net.

Surviving are his wife, Rosa Bell; a son, Ralph; a daughter, Mrs. Roger Resor; one brother, Jesse; and four sisters, Mrs. Mamie Hamilton, Mrs. Georgie Lewis, Mrs. Gracie Willis and Mrs. Carrie Guthrie, all of Harkers Island, and three grandchildren.

### County Commissioners Hear Road Requests

The following residents presented road requests at the county board meeting yesterday:

Presenting the requests were W. D. Roberts, Bogue Sound, Robert Creech, Wildwood, and K. S. Swinson, Mansfield. A petition from residents in Jones Village, Beaufort, was also presented.

### Springle Barn Burns Saturday

L. D. Springle, Russells Creek, estimates the loss in his barn fire Saturday morning at \$9,000 to \$10,000. Mr. Springle said he has very little insurance.

Lost in the blaze was farm equipment, motors, scales, insecticide, and burlap bags. Mr. Springle managed to save his 1½-ton Ford truck which was half loaded with corn.

He discovered the fire at 8:05 a.m. He was returning from town and noticed smoke coming out of the barn. He had left for town three-quarters of an hour before and said he noticed nothing amiss.

The barn, 32 by 38 feet, was about 600 feet from the house. The Beaufort Rural Fire association truck and Beaufort town truck No. 5 answered the alarm, but Mr. Springle said there was very little they could do.

He has no idea as to how the fire started. The Beaufort truck returned about 5 p.m. to put out fire that had sprung up again.

Mr. Springle expressed appreciation to the firemen and neighbors who tried to help, "but there was nothing they could do," he remarked.

He said that he expects to rebuild some day but can't do so very soon.

### Outrage Laid To Vandalism

Vandalism is ascribed by George B. Stovall, local manager of Carolina Power & Light Co., for the hour-long power outage which affected the entire county late Saturday afternoon.

A two-foot piece of aluminum molding, probably thrown over the high fence surrounding the 110,000 volt substation on route 70A, Morehead City, shorted all six bushings of the regulator, a device which maintains proper voltage cycle as power demands increase and decrease.

Power went off at 4:50 p.m. Saturday and was restored gradually from 5:30 to 5:50 p.m.

The backflash from the regulator short caused a brush fire around the substation which temporarily hampered damage repair.

The immediate known cost of damage to equipment is better than \$2,000, Mr. Stovall reported.

### CD Personnel Assist During Tuesday Emerge

Civil Defense personnel were on hand to assist with traffic control and radio communications Tuesday night when the Potomac burned.

Harry Williams, county CD director, said Cliff Tilghman, Beaufort; George King and Lester Turnage, Morehead City, helped direct traffic.

Mr. Williams activated the CD radio network at 10 p.m. Tuesday. The CD radio office is in the old jail, Beaufort. He expressed his appreciation to the Mount Olive Rescue squad, Jim Hatcher, CD director, Mount Olive, and other rescue squads who sent men and equipment here.

# Admiral Thanks People for Their Aid

Vice Adm. Roy A. Gano, USN, commander of the Military Sea Transportation Service, visited Morehead City yesterday morning to thank everyone who helped in bringing the Potomac blaze under control.

He especially commended Capt. Arthur Lewis of the partyboat Bunny II, who rescued seven of the survivors.

The admiral, who was accompanied by a retinue of Navy and Marine officers, also said he wanted to see any of the Potomac crewmen who were still in the area. He and his party, after stopping at the town hall, viewed the port and the remains of the Potomac.

At the town hall, he was introduced by mayor George Dill to Cdr. George Philbrick, USCG, who was in charge of fire-fighting operations; Cdr. T. F. Bachele, Navy Bureau of Ships; Lt. John Riddell, USCG, commanding officer of Fort Macon group.

and D. J. Hall, town civil defense director Ray Hall, county civil defense director Harry Williams; Captain Lewis and two of the men with captain Lewis aboard the Bunny, Joe Morris and Delmas Willis.

Admiral Gano said to the skipper of the Bunny: "You've saved a lot of lives, sacrificing your own to help others." He warmly commended Mr. Morris and Mr. Willis. A fourth man aboard the Bunny, Joe Huber, was not present.

Navy officers accompanying the admiral were Capt. R. L. Smith, a former resident of Swansboro; Lt. Cdr. Lou Olivari, Cdr. O. C. Fodde, Capt. Harry Cross, Capt. W. S. Lawler, MD; Lt. Pete Baumgartner, and Lt. Cdr. J. L. Blondin. Captain Cross is public information officer for the Military Sea Transportation Service, bureau which operated the Potomac. Accompanying him was Lamar Holt, editor of The Sea Lift, official MSTS magazine.

the Convair, on which the admiral and his party flew from Washington, D. C., to Cherry Point yesterday.

Marine officers with the admiral were Brig. Gen. Frank Tharin, commanding general of Cherry Point Marine Corps Air station; Maj. R. E. Britt, base provost marshal; and Capt. Ed Schultze.

CWO John Donnelly, head of Cherry Point crash crew, who was at the scene of the fire, and Mike Jowdy, air base fire chief, were also present.

A spokesman for the Navy said that Cherry Point air base, New River and Seymour Johnson, bases supplied with gasoline from Aviation Fuel Terminals, will be supplied from Norfolk and Charleston until tankers can come in again at Morehead City.

He said that gasoline will be sent out from Aviation Fuel Terminals on Radio Island as long as there is gas in the tanks. There are now only three Navy

tankers, like the Potomac, afloat. The Maumee, a sister ship, first came into Morehead City harbor in March 1960.

Admiral Gano returned to Washington from Cherry Point yesterday afternoon.

## sorry

Sorry we couldn't fill the demand for Friday's papers covering the explosion and burning of the tanker Potomac in Morehead City harbor. Extra copies were printed, but even these were insufficient.

Another lesson learned: no matter how much is said on radio, tv and in other papers, people still want to read it in THE NEWS-TIMES. We consider this a compliment and will do our best in the future to foresee the demand when "big news" breaks.—The Editor.