

## Let's Hear It For Tourists

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obtain information and help.

One entire wall of the chamber office is covered with racks displaying colorful brochures on attractions in the eastern part of the state.

"We provide literature about other areas, like Carteret County's 'Crystal Coast,' and the Outer Banks of Dare County, because traveler's can't get it anywhere else as they enter the state from South Carolina," Sartelle said.

The office also dispenses "hundreds" of N.C. maps, she said, helps vacationers map out routes, and gives them ferry information and advice on overnight accommodations.

"Of course, we provide many services to local visitors, too, and our new office attracts many people to stop here," she added. The inviting

new two-story stucco building at the intersection of highways 17 and 130 was completed a year ago.

The chamber's chief role, however, is to be an advocate for the business community. It constantly educates this community on the value of tourism to each merchant and to the county.

"We tell them that tourism presently provides 1,300 jobs in Brunswick County," Sartelle explained, "and that dollars spent here by tourists change hands four times. This proves the local businesses patronize each other, and that's very healthy."

More extensive education is planned. This fall the chamber will co-sponsor with the Small Business Center at Brunswick Community College a series of seminars for small

businesses, including one on hospitality, or "how to treat your guests."

Sartelle noted that 98 percent of the county's business is in the category of small businesses.

The local chamber's prime project of the year is the N.C. Oyster Festival, a popular event it sponsors at Seaside, between Ocean Isle and Sunset Beach, featuring shrimp, flounder and hot dogs, as well as oysters, and plenty of entertainment, arts and crafts and "good clean family fun." This year's festival, scheduled for October 22-23, will be the eighth annual observance.

If simplicity and a non-commercial atmosphere have made Brunswick County a tourist attraction, is there any danger that these qualities will disappear or be eroded with develop-



STAFF PHOTO BY MARJORIE MCGUIRE

SUSANNE SARTELLE looks over the latest publication from South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce, a guidebook for tourists.



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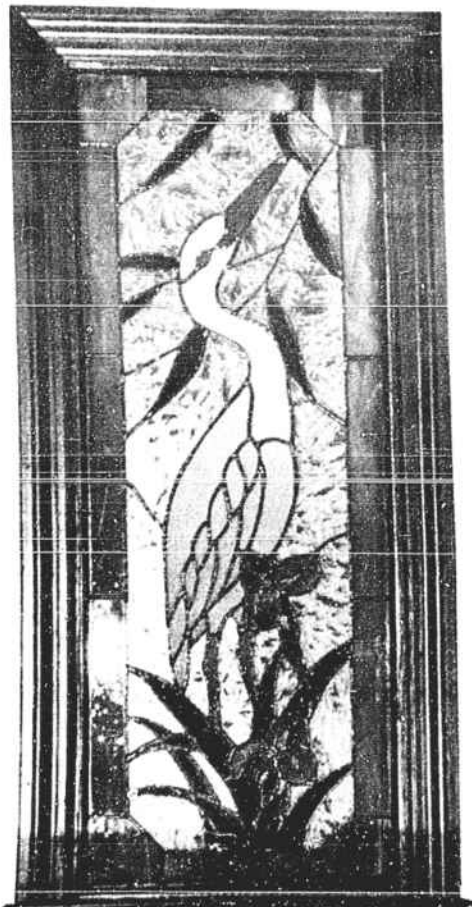
ment?

Sartelle said not. "For one thing, there's not much space left on the beaches for more commercial development," she pointed out. "There's only one high-rise in the South Brunswick Islands (Ocean Point at Ocean Isle Beach), and the

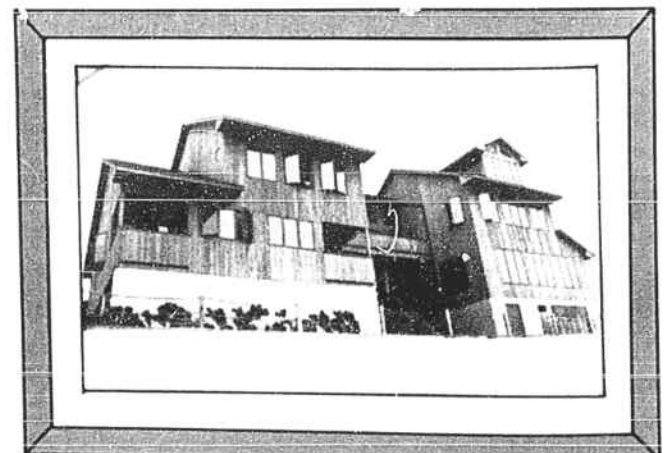
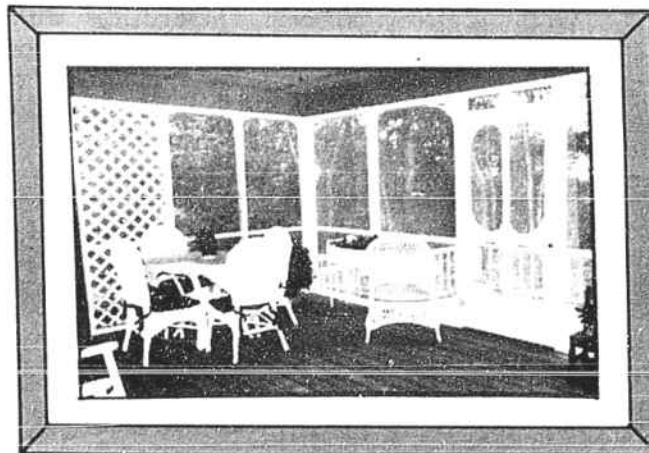
other beach communities have either zoning ordinances or height restrictions against them.

"Also, there are a lot of vision-oriented people here, who see some commercial things they want and a lot of things they don't want."

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