

MORE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Traffic Incident Mars 4th

To the editor:
On July 4th my family and I took my two nephews, ages four and six, to see the fireworks at Southport. The display was spectacular and we all enjoyed it very much.

But not the ride home. We knew there would be traffic problems with so many people trying to leave at once. We decided to make our way to Main Street and take the direct way out.

No sooner had we got on Main Street than a patrolman directed all the traffic in our lane down a side street. On taking the side street, we drove farther down and tried to get back on Main Street at another intersection.

We arrived at this intersection at 10:18. The county patrolman directing traffic was not letting any cars off the side streets. At 11:00, not having moved an inch, we turned off our motor to keep it from overheating. At 11:50, we and all the other cars on this road had been at this intersection over 1 1/2 hours. We asked the patrolman about this situation and he said he had orders not to let any cars from the side streets onto the main road.

When we tried to start our truck, our battery was dead. After pushing the truck to the side of the road, we asked the patrolman for help. One told us he was on break. The other said he couldn't help us. So we sat in the truck, in the rain, with two sleepy and tired little boys with no way home.

Eventually the traffic cleared and we hoped that finally the police might help us. But they all gathered at the open service station across the road from where we were. We again asked for help and were refused. This was 12:12 a.m.

As we watched the police and county patrol cars pull away, we wondered, what do we pay taxes

for? Everything about this situation was very wrong!

Had they not directed us down the side street, and then not let us out, none of this would have happened. But now, thanks to our "public servants," the sharpest memory of this 4th for two little boys won't be the fireworks, but of sitting in a hot truck, in the rain, on the roadside until 12:45 a.m.

We would like to thank the man who stopped and helped us. We didn't get his name. To the hundreds of other cars which went by and didn't stop, I hope that if you ever get stranded, you'll have somebody better than yourself or our police to depend on. Because if you don't you're in deep trouble.

Ethel M. Herring
Shallotte

Sunset's Salute Was Successful

To the editor:

I want to publicly thank all of those who participated in Sunset Beach's Salute to the Troops.

More than 300 residences and businesses displayed flags, bows or some patriotic decoration. Decorations varied from the elaborate to some handmade by children. One group participating was from New Hampshire.

A special thanks to the people of Sugar Sands who had planned their own celebration and then so kindly cooperated with us.

Most of all we give our appreciation and gratitude to all the men and women of our armed forces who through the years have sacrificed so much that we may live in this free and beautiful country.

Ginny Barber
Sunset Beach

State To Award Bid Friday To Widen Supply-Shallotte Stretch Of Highway 17

The N.C. Board of Transportation is expected to award the bid for four-laning U.S. 17 between Shallotte and Supply when it meets Friday in Raleigh and to approve a traffic signal for a busy intersection near Southport.

Seven companies are bidding on the project, with the apparent low bidder Dickerson Carolina Inc. of Castle Hayne. Its bid on the 5.3-mile project totals \$4.74 million.

The stretch of roadway involved in the project extends from S.R. 1136 (Redbug Road) at Shallotte north to the N.C. 211 intersection at Supply.

Work is expected to begin on or after Aug. 6, and is to be completed by June 1, 1993.

Widening of the segment would complete the four-laning of U.S. 17 from the New Hanover County line to Shallotte.

In a related move, the board is expected to amend right of way plans for the project.

Other local items on the board's agenda include a request for another \$110,000 for right of way and utility work associated with another U.S. 17 four-laning project.

The state had already allocated \$3.21 million for the preliminary work on U.S. 17 from the South Carolina state line to .86 miles west of N.C. 904 at Grissetown.

Traffic Light Proposed
The board is also expected to ap-

prove \$45,000 for safety improvements at the intersection of N.C. 133 and N.C. 87.

Plans are to install a fully-actuated traffic signal and to construct a right turn lane on the north approach of N.C. 87/N.C. 133 at its intersection with the Dasher Cutoff across from Smithville Township Park.

Also, the board is expected to approve Pine Street for state maintenance under the old subdivision road program.

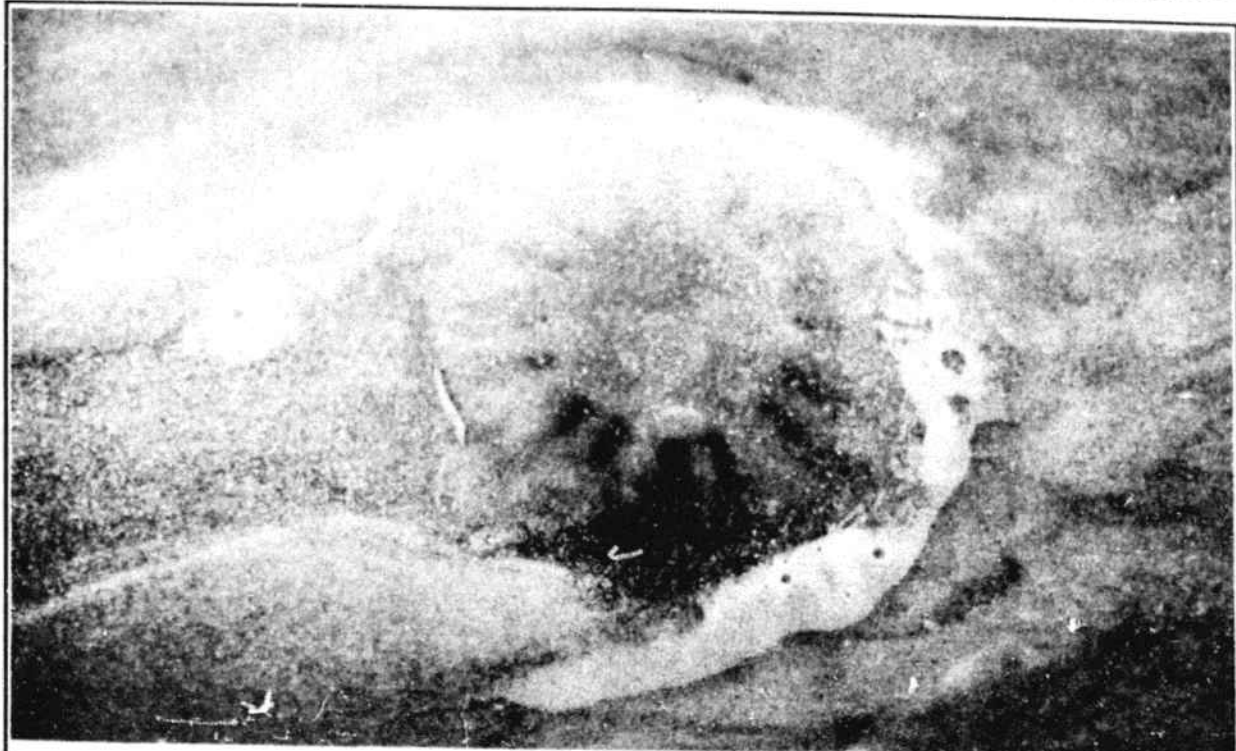


PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

JELLYFISH were thought to be marine plants for hundreds of years.

Examine the Jellyfish Carefully

BY BILL FAVER

Several times during each year we find jellyfish washed up on the beach strand. These globs of clear jelly-like substance hardly seem to resemble an animal. In fact, from Aristotle some 2,000 years ago up until the early 19th century, scientists considered these creatures to be marine plants. Their combination of plant and animal characteristics made classification difficult until Louis Agassiz described a system of nerves and named the animal.

In a pamphlet by Dr. Frank Schwartz of the UNC Marine Sciences Institute, we are told of nine species of jellyfish found in North Carolina. This group of animals belongs to the Cnidarians and are radially symmetrical with the parts arranged from the center like spokes in a wheel. Also included in this group of animals are the Portuguese Man-of-War, the moon jellies, and the summer jellyfish. Jellyfish vary in size from 1/8 inch in diameter to more than eight feet across. One of the largest, the Giant Arctic Jellyfish, has some 800 tentacles trailing as much as 200 feet behind it.

More than 95 percent of the jellyfish is water. The body consists of water combined with organic substances and minerals to form a very strong jelly. Jellyfish have no head, no centralized nervous system, and no definite respiratory, circulatory, or waste elimination systems. The only opening is the mouth and four large transparent lobes covered with tiny hairs, which maintain a steady current of water bringing nutrients into the body. From the central cavity or stomach, fine branching canals radiate to a circular canal around the rim where food and oxygen-carrying seawater circulates. The animal swims by means of a contracting muscle near its outer rim. As the jellyfish relaxes, water fills the cavity of the bell. It contracts quickly, forcing water out and propelling itself in the opposite direction.

Jellyfish have two forms in their life cycles—a polyp and a medusa. As medusa, jellyfish may be male or female and reproduce sexually, releasing eggs and sperm into the water. After fertilization takes place a flat, platter-shaped larva called a planula develops. These attach themselves to the bottom of the sea and change into a polyp, which may bud additional polyps. Eventually some polyps release free-swimming medusa.

The tentacles trailed by jellyfish are covered by tiny stinging cells. The microscopic, egg-shaped capsules each have a trigger-like bristle projecting from the surface. Inside a long tube is coiled and is released when the trigger is disturbed. The tube suddenly flies out and become imbedded in whatever caused the disturbance, injecting a minute amount of poison. Nematocysts can even be discharged from tentacles that have dried out over a long period of time.

It is this stinging which we most associate with jellyfish. In only a few species can these cells penetrate human skin. Treatment for stings has ranged from rubbing with wet sand to bicarbonate of soda, engine oil, pickle juice, rubbing alcohol, and ammonia. I am told it is best not to rub it with anything, but to apply meat tenderizer, which neutralizes the poison and counteracts the pain of the wound.

Jellyfish use tentacles to capture prey which can be small crustacea or even large fish. Some eat other jellyfish. Some fish feed on various parts of the jellyfish and hide in their tentacles. Some crabs dig holes in the domes of some species. Sea turtles nibble around the ends of the jellyfish and are the major animal feeding on them. In some countries, jellyfish are eaten by humans as a paste or dried flour.

Next time you encounter this strange creature on the beach, take a stick or a shell and examine it carefully. You'll be amazed at the variety the jellyfish adds to life along the shore.

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