

# THE COASTLAND TIMES

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## INTERIOR DEPT' LENDING AID TO GETTING FERRY.

### National Park Service Joins State in Effort to Obtain Landing Craft for Oregon Inlet

If the State Highway Commission is successful in getting a boat suitable to handle Oregon Inlet ferry traffic this year, it will be due largely to the National Park Service which was responsible this week in getting the Secretary of the Interior to request of the Navy Department, one of its idle land craft now in storage, so that it may be converted into a ferry-boat.

The only possibility of getting such a craft appeared to be upon request of a Federal Department. The state had exhausted its efforts to find a boat to relieve the acute situation at Oregon Inlet. This week A. C. Stratton of the National Park Service requested that the Director, Conrad Wirth, appeal to Secretary McKay of the Interior Department to make the request. Mr. McKay came to the rescue, and aided the Highway Department, Senator Willis Smith intervened also in behalf of the project.

If the suitable boat is located among Navy surplus craft, it will require several months for conversion. With its three motors, it can cross Oregon Inlet in ten minutes, carrying 22 cars.

## SAUNDERS MOVING UP WITH AVIATION MAG.



The son of a famous newspaper editor, W. O. Saunders of Elizabeth City, now living in Washington, D. C., and in the aviation magazine publishing business, is rising all the time.

Keith Saunders, formerly legislative editor is now **American Aviation's** news analyst. This title means simply that, in Keith's capacity as managing editor of the **American Aviation Daily**, he receives all the raw material which comes into the office daily in the form of news releases, newspaper clippings, wire reports, and government agency reports. His judgment of news values is often reflected in the magazine through the close relationship of the two publications.

Keith's background of more than 20 years of newspaper and magazine writing and editing, including eight years of aviation writing, makes him unusually well qualified for his present post.

Educated at Elizabeth City (N.C.) High School and at the University of North Carolina, he went to work on his father's newspaper, **The Independent**, in 1930, and subsequently worked for the **Raleigh Times** as Capitol Hill reporter, the **Oxford N.C. Public Ledger** as editor, and the **Norfolk Virginian Pilot** as general assignments reporter. He realized his initial goal of working on a metropolitan daily when he joined the staff of the **Baltimore Evening Sun** in January 1945.

Assigned to cover industry and transportation, Keith soon became a frequent visitor at the Glenn L. Martin and Bendix Radio Division plants, and the wartime Baltimore base of British Overseas Airways Corporation.

Before long, he was writing aviation news almost exclusively, covering aviation events around the U.S.A.

When Editor and Publisher Wayne W. Parrish offered him a job in December, 1946, Keith accepted immediately. He explained his decision later as follows: "American Aviation Publications then seemed to me to be the top outfit in aviation publishing. I figured that aviation was slated to grow into big business and that this company would grow with the industry."

Keith has acquired a well-rounded knowledge of aviation in the more than six years he's been with us, having served as assistant managing editor of the magazine, airports editor, and legislative editor before becoming managing editor of the **Daily**.

Though his entry into aviation writing dates back only to 1945, Saunders had an interest in the industry long before that. His father interviewed Orville Wright for **Collier's** magazine in 1926, and in 1927 the elder Saunders became the founder and first president of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association, dedicated to honoring the Wright Brothers and furthering aviation. Kitty Hawk was in the same Congressional district as Elizabeth City, and Keith's father enlisted the support of the Congressional Representative from the district in persuading the government to build a fitting memorial to the Wrights atop Kill Devil Hill.

Keith is a good friend today of three men actively associated with the Wrights' 1903 flight: Alpheus Drinkwater, Coast Guard telegrapher who sent the message of the first flights to the outside world; Harry Moore, **Virginian-Pilot** reporter whose story about the flight was believed by few readers at the time; and Capt. Bill Tate, in whose home the Wrights boarded during their experiments at Kitty Hawk.

A member of the Aviation Writers Association and the National Press Club, Keith serves as editor of **National Aeronautics**, monthly publication of the National Aeronautic Association. He See SAUNDERS, Page Four

## AYCOCK BROWN PISCATORIALLY IS PREDICTING

### Prophesies Big Early Mid-Spring Fishing News on the Dare County Coast

By **AYCOCK BROWN**  
Manteo—Since channel bass have already been reported in the surf and sound of lower Dare County this year, with several already caught in nets of commercial fishermen, prognosticators are making the piscatorial prediction that channel bass will show up at Oregon Inlet earlier this year than usual. Old timers who fish by the tides and swear by the full moon are saying that the first of this species to be taken with rod and reel will be sometime during the last half of March.

Thus, the mid-Atlantic coast's biggest fishing news each year would break earlier than usual. The first channel bass taken by a sportsfisherman trolling at Oregon Inlet in 1952 was landed on April 5. Two weeks earlier on March 23, two channel bass were brought to the beach by surf casters at the Point of Cape Hatteras and by early April the fish were plentiful southward to Hatteras Inlet. After April 5, the fishing was fair in the surf from Bodie Island to Oregon Inlet, but not as good as it had been during some previous spring seasons when anglers troled through literally acres of the big copper beauties ranging from 30 to 55 pounds.

Old time guides point out one fact that may bring the first catches earlier this season and that is the March moon which becomes full on the 30th. There is something about the tides of a full moon which does something to fish, especially channel bass. They are usually found in larger fish and larger numbers at such periods, and they usually take lures or cut bait more readily during the full moon period. That is what the old timers say.

Arrival of channel bass at Oregon Inlet each spring in recent years has become national news. Outdoor editors throughout the east from Chicago to New York and other metropolitan areas stand by for the news each year and usually give the story a big play when the first fish is taken and as long as they are being caught with rod and reel. Credit for making the Oregon Inlet and Cape Hatteras channel bass fishing nationwide news goes largely to the North Carolina State News Bureau.

Sportsfishermen coming to the Dare Coast this year will not only find more boats in the fleet and all-paved highways which make it possible to drive to points near the best sloughs of the surf, but also many additional and new places of accommodations.

Dare County Tourist Bureau in Manteo serves as a local clearing house and information source for sportsfishing inquiries, it was stated today by L. L. Swain, chairman of the organization.

## TALENT SHOW MARCH 7 BY PERFORMERS OVER 40

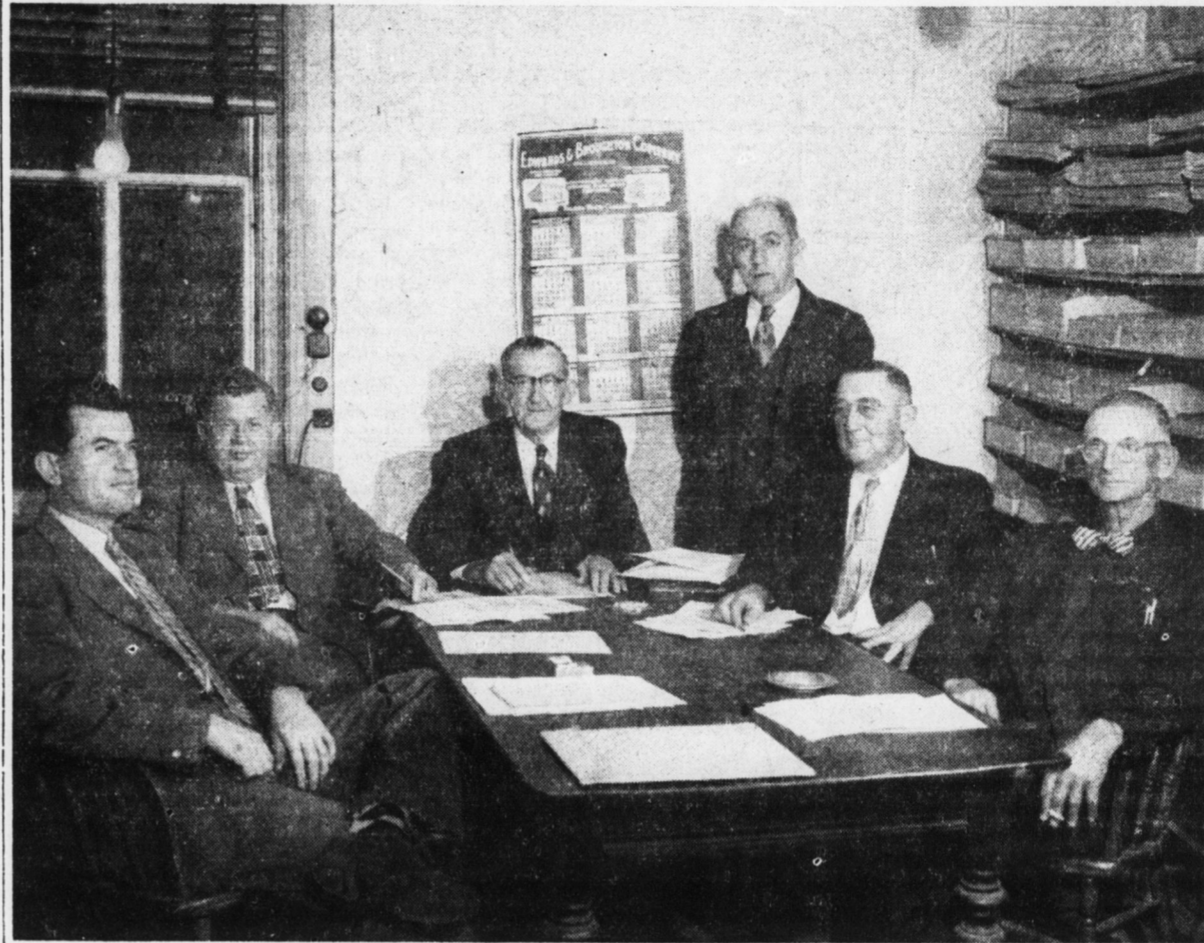
The popular adage "Life Begins At Forty" is to be proven by performers over 40 years of age on Saturday night, March 7, when a talent show featuring people who have reached that fair age will be put on in the Manteo school auditorium, sponsored by the Manteo Parent-Teacher Association. The show will begin at eight o'clock and a small admission will be charged.

Not only are all the performers over 40—two of them are 75 years of age. They will do the numbers they did 10, 20 and 30 years ago when they entertained. Mrs. Raymond Wescott, P-TA president, asks that anyone wishing to appear on the show, who has not already been contacted, get in touch with her. All available talent will be welcomed.

## CANCER CLINIC FRIDAY, MARCH 6

The Northeastern Cancer Clinic will be held Friday, March 6, 1953 in Elizabeth City at the health center with registration from 12:45-2:00. A free chest x-ray will be given anyone who wishes it along with the examination of the five areas of the body where cancer is most easily found and cured. There are no limitations as to sex, race, physical, or economic status at the center; however, there are age requirements. Women should be 35 or more; men should be 40 or over unless referred by your doctor, or unless you have one of the seven danger signals or symptoms. No appointment is necessary, but a priority may be secured by writing the Cancer Center, Elizabeth City, N. C., for one.

## DARE COUNTY'S BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



HERE'S the group who manages the business affairs of Dare County. Reading from left to right, they are Commissioners Lawrence L. Swain of Manteo, William Lloyd Scarborough of Buxton; Chairman Claude C. Duvall of Manns Harbor; standing Melvin R. Daniels, Clerk to the Board for the past 27 years; James W. Scarborough of Avon, and Willie H. Lewark of Kill Devil Hills. Photo by Aycock Brown.

## DICK JORDAN QUILTS TV FOR LOST COLONY WORK

Dick Jordan makes his last appearance of the season on WTAR-TV Norfolk, Friday at noon and he plans to devote much of this program to the Lost Colony and Dare Coast attractions. He has been featured on the Norfolk television station for the past several months and his piano playing and singing has made a hit with TV-spectators throughout Tidewater Virginia and northeastern North Carolina.

Mr. Jordan recently took the \$5,000 a year job as manager of The Lost Colony. He is currently president of Manteo Rotary Club, and usually active in all civic matters. While his regular daily program is being discontinued due to his other duties he will likely appear on TV programs often during coming months in connection with promotional activities for Lost Colony and the Dare Coast area, it was stated.

## CAPE HATTERAS CITRUS TREES TO BLOSSOM SOON

Buxton.—Citrus fruit trees here are scheduled to start blossoming on or about March 15, it was stated today by Mrs. Maude White, postmaster at this community. The new blossoms will be coming at just about the time the last fruit are picked from the trees.

Orange, grapefruit and tangerines grow prolifically here in the front and back yards of local residents. There are also a few lemon and quince trees in the area.

Most of the small trees have been started within the past two years from the plants provided by N. C. Department of Conservation and Development. There are several old trees also, in the community, some 15 years of age. Largest grapefruit tree is one in the front yard of Mrs. White. This year she harvested about four bushels of fruit from the tree and there are still a few fruit on the tree at present.

Tourists now driving to the Outer Banks over the all-paved Nags Head - Hatteras highway are amazed to find citrus fruit growing in profusion here at the north of the citrus belt of Florida and southern states.

## DARE'S FIRST BEAUTY SHOW OF '53 SEASON

Dare County's first beauty show of the season will be held early in May under the sponsorship of the Manteo Lions Club. Contestants from every Dare community will participate and from the group "Miss Dare County of 1953" will be selected. She will represent this coastal county in the annual Albemarle Potato Festival at Elizabeth City during late May and probably enter other contests in the state.

## DARE TOURIST BUREAU TO MEET IN HATTERAS

Members of the board of directors, Dare County Tourist Bureau, will meet in Hatteras on Wednesday, March 16. L. L. Swain, chairman, advises. The meeting will be held in the new restaurant building at Atlantic View Hotel at 10 o'clock. This will be the regular spring meeting of the board of directors.

## GROUNDWORK FOR BIG VFW ENCAMPMENT IN DARE COUNTY IN JUNE

By **AYCOCK BROWN**

Nags Head.—What the promoters say will be one of the largest encampments ever held by the North Carolina Department, Veterans Foreign Wars, will be three days at Nags Head, June 4-7, it was stated here by Earl D. Knauff of Jacksonville who came to make arrangements for opening an executive director's office on May 1, several weeks in advance of the gathering which is expected to attract up to 5,000 persons to the area.

First day of the gathering in June will be devoted to activities of the VFW's "Military Order of the Cootie," which to this veteran's organization is similar to the American Legion's "40 and Eight" order.

The state's grand adjutant quartermaster of the Order of the Cootie is R. L. Rhodes, Jr., of Fayetteville. Already Rhodes is making arrangements for local accommodations as are other Posts in North Carolina from the coast to the mountains.

Executive Director Knauff stated that rooming headquarters and his office would be located in the Nags Head Hotel.

Varied entertainment is being planned for the VFW's during the four day encampment including dances, fishing contests, boating trips and visits to places of historic and recreational interest in the area. Business meeting during the convention will be held in auditoriums of Club Casino, the Dare Shrine Club and in the various hotels here on the Dare Beaches and in Manteo.

## "BARNEY" FISCHER, FORMER DARE RESIDENT, IS DEAD

Funeral services for Bernard Joseph Fischer, 60, who died Wednesday, Feb. 18th at the Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, Va., were conducted Thursday, Feb. 19th at 4 o'clock at the Twiford Funeral Home Chapel, Elizabeth City, by the Rev. Anthony Thibodeaux, pastor of the Church of Christ. Burial was in New Hollywood Cemetery.

Mr. Fischer was a native of Philadelphia, but had lived in Elizabeth City for a number of years. He was a veteran of World War I, having served in the U. S. Navy. Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Sarah Cartwright Fischer of Elizabeth City; and one sister, Mrs. Lou McGarrah of Camden, N. J. Mr. Fischer lived for a number of years at Salvo, Dare County.

## DIAMOND BACK TERRAPIN ARE CAUGHT ON COAST

Ocracoke.—During warm days here recently a number of hibernating diamond back terrapins have been caught, according to Wilbur Gaskill. Unusually mild weather is believed to have caused the terrapins, once considered a rare delicacy, to come out of hibernation so early. Gaskill caught 75 diamondbacks in one day and Ferd Williams, another islander, has caught about 100 recently. Once terrapins brought high prices but the demand is not great today and the price for them is much lower than in the old days.

## AIR-TIGHT TITLES SELDOM SEEN IN HATTERAS LANDS

### The Older Generations Left All Legal Questions to Posterity to Untangle

Buxton on Cape Hatteras, Feb. 26.—Six months diligent search through the fragmentary records of land ownership along the 75-mile strip that is to become the Cape Hatteras National Seashore has barely turned up a land title that will pass the grim scrutiny of the Lands Division of the Department of Justice, who have to nod before money can pass and another six months will likely elapse before the log-jam breaks.

There is an easier way to do it but A. C. Stratton, who directs the land-acquisition for the Seashore project is adamantly committed to the hard way because he believes it is the fair way and in the long run the owners of the land will get their money with none or little of it obligated to pay court costs and the fees of the lawyers they would have to hire.

Six months after the purchase money was placed in the U. S. Treasury and the Treasury of North Carolina by the administrators of the estate of the late Andrew W. Mellon and the Governor and the Council of State of North Carolina, not a penny of it has been paid out for land. Nor for much else though the relatively negligible cost of the title-searching and the negotiation with owners has been charged up to the fund. Up to now it amounts to little more than one per cent of the \$1,236,000.

Literal fact is that nearly every title yet examined in the area has some sort of a cloud over it, and this is no fault of the owners of the land, Mr. Stratton believes and they ought not to be penalized for something they had nothing to do with. Even the Worth property on the north side of Oregon Inlet has a total of 14 flaws in title that would have arched the brows of the lawyers in the Lands Division who have a rigid book to go by and they go by it.

Record-searching discloses that in the neighborhood of Cape Hatteras one land holder has sold the same small tract of land to five different buyers in the course of 25 years—and that without having a clear title to it himself. Additionally he leased the mineral rights to seven competing oil companies during the oil boom in 1945 and, currently, he is cheerfully willing to sell the same land to the Seashore project.

But in any case Mr. Stratton is not going to take the easier way with that tract of land until he has exhausted every possibility of establishing title to it without going to court. He proceeds on the thesis that, after all, the apparent owner may have a just claim to the land and until he discovers otherwise he will continue to search and negotiate.

Nearby is another tract that was held in one family for 200 years and distributed from generation to generation by the simple process of the owner calling his heirs to his bedside as he lay dying and apportioned the land among them. No will, no deed. That went on for generations and as of this week Mr. Stratton has discovered a total of 528 lawful heirs.

And to complicate the matter further, about 30 years ago one of the heirs sold the land to some people in Philadelphia, and they have since died, leaving about 50 claimants to a tract with a heavily clouded title. About the only deeds to land on the Outer Banks that pass muster are of comparatively recent date and involve lands purchased from or granted by the State. Up to now the Seashore has not only been unable to buy, but even to accept lands as a gift. The title has to be clear.

Up to now the only absolute deed discovered is that by which Mary Gaskins, widow, transferred for \$100 a tract of four acres on Cape Hatteras to be used as the site of a lighthouse. The deed is now in the National Archives in Washington but a photostat of it is here and a part of the record of the Alexander Hamilton Lighthouse. That deed was registered by the government in the Currituck Courthouse.

Not only have the Outer Banks been isolated but they have from time to time been in doubt about what county they were in. Earlier deeds are recorded in Currituck, later ones in Hyde and recent ones in Dare county. The island has stayed put but county lines have changed, often as not without the residents of the island knowing it. Their feeling has been "we've got the land—what do we need with a deed?" See TITLES, Page Four