



The FIRST 2025 Friends of the NC Maritime Museum at Southport Newsletter is HERE.

Inside you will find a message from the Friends of the Museum Board Chair, Tom Hale

Friends ONLY upcoming events, a CONTEST, and finally a report from a special

December 2024 Event.

Read ON.....

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Snow falls on Ft. Johnston

A Belated Happy New Year, shipmates! I hope that you all enjoyed a blessed and safe Holiday season! 2025 – wow; I don't know how you feel but I find it hard to believe that we've started a new year.

I also hope that you've kept warm in the month of January which has been abnormally cold (but then again, so has much of the country!) With all the cold weather in January, I wonder what Punxsutawney Phil will predict?!?!?

The Mullet Wrapper is undergoing some changes thus the tardiness in it getting out to you. The major change is that the Friends will be preparing and publishing the Mullet Wrapper vice the Crew (John, Shannon, or Toni). The Publicity and Volunteer Recruitment Committee (chaired by Tammy Newton) has volunteered to take the lead in conjunction with Cathy

Dudley. Please bear with us as we implement some changes. As always, your thoughts and ideas are very much appreciated!

It was wonderful that so many of you made it out to our get-together (our Volunteer Appreciation evening!) in early December! In light of some folks not being able to make it, I wanted to share the comments that Wayne Berry shared that evening with the volunteers and guests.

First and foremost – thank you for everything you’ve done for the Museum over this year and the past few years. The Board and the Crew are continually impressed – but not surprised – that your volunteer service has never wavered throughout 2024. In many ways, we saw it increase. .

While we do appreciate all of our volunteers, there are a few people who deserve special recognition. During our busy summer months, we had over 17,000 visitors to our museum. Eight volunteers put in extra time and each logged over 30 hours just during the summer. Please join me in recognizing Helene Remer, Angie Hilburger, Claire McNaught, and Betsy Saja, Linda (LA) Ament, Tony Boccio, Carolyn Korb and Kevin Fitzgerald.

We’d also like to thank Sam Lytle, Tina Clarke and Claire McNaught for their work cooking and serving Thanksgiving dinner to the men and women of USCG Station Oak Island.

The Board of Directors has the privilege each year to recognize the efforts of an individual for exemplary service to the North Carolina Maritime Museum at Southport; this individual is recognized for demonstrating exceptional efforts through sharing personal time, treasure, talent, and/or advocacy over a number of years in keeping with the spirit of Mary Strickland’s vision, and having contributed significantly to the growth and success of the Museum. This year, the Board has selected a most worthy individual to receive the Mary Strickland Award – Linda Pukenas. Please read the full citation below.

Thank you for your continued interest in preserving and sharing our maritime history, especially at **our** Museum! If, at any time, you have any questions, issues, or ideas, please do not hesitate to discuss them with me.

I am certain that 2025 will be an exciting year at **our** Museum! Happy New Year and Fair Winds,

Tom

FRIENDS EVENTS



**EXCITING MEMBER-ONLY
EVENTS PLANNED**



Stargazing! March 29, 2025 at historic Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson. The event is facilitated by the Cape Fear Astronomy club. They will provide telescopes to look at the night sky. Members will need to bring chairs and flashlights. This is a family friendly event that will include Friends of Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson Look for the invitation to register in the March newsletter.

This event is a benefit for active Members of the Friends only. Not a member? [Join today!](#)

SPRING BENEFIT SLATED FOR APRIL 11th

Mark your calendar for April 11, 2025. The Annual Benefit to support the Maritime Museum and bring Friends of the Museum together for an evening of fellowship, dancing, and fun. A Friends of the Museum family will be hosting the Museum Benefit tropical party at their home on the Cape Fear.

We'd like to invite you to come and enjoy the beautiful atmosphere at the coolest party venue on the river. Ticket invitations are open to members first, and the event promises to be an evening in paradise to remember, with Caribbean steel drum musician and theme cocktails and heavy hors d'oeuvres.

Look for additional information in the March Newsletter!



Volunteering at the Maritime Museum is a great way to give back to your community. It's a win-win situation: you help the museum and you get to enjoy the benefits of volunteering. It's a great way to meet new people, learn new skills, and make a difference in your community.

Being a volunteer is proven to reduce stress, combat depression, keep you mentally stimulated, and provide a sense of purpose. While it's true that the more you volunteer, the more benefits you'll experience, volunteering doesn't have to involve a long-term commitment or take a huge amount of time out of your busy day. Our volunteers commit to a few hours each week, bringing their talents and time.

As the public face of the museum, they are responsible for welcoming visitors and ensuring a positive experience - from the little ones to the curious ones.

For More Information visit our [website](#) or call us at 910-477-5154:

GIFT SHOP
Store-Wide Winter Sale!



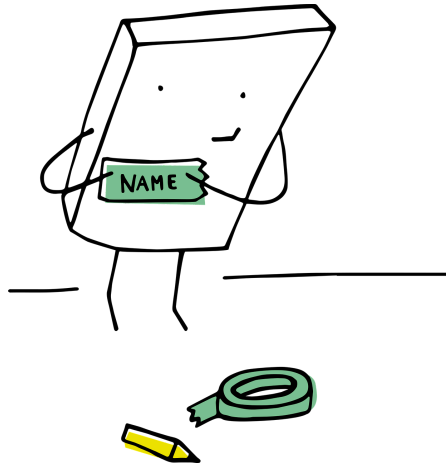
Looking for a good book for the chilly winter days? Or that little something special for someone special? Stop by the Friends Gift Shop in the Maritime Museum and take advantage of the Winter Sale! Everything in the store is 30% off. Jewelry is buy-one-get-one.

Volunteer Appreciation
Events!



On **December 6th** a wonderful crowd joined the Friends of the Museum Board in the Exhibit Hall. This annual event is an opportunity for the Board and leaders in the Southport Community to acknowledge our Museum Volunteers. Their selfless dedication and enthusiastic engagement with visitors to the Museum is phenomenal!

January 8, 2025 Our Museum volunteers were treated to a visit to the **Fort Fisher Historic Site and Museum**. The Museum recently opened in the Winter of 2024 following an extensive renovation and new building. Volunteers were provided a guided tour of the Museum and the Site! They enjoyed a lunch afterwards in Carolina Beach before returning home on the Southport Ferry.



Naming Contest for our Newsletter!

Currently named "Mullet Wrapper", the Board is interested in hearing from you! Send us your recommendations, suggestions, and ideas for a new name.

If you like the name and want it to stay - let us know. IF you have thoughts on a different name, please let us know. Enter your suggestion on our [website](#), or email us at southportfom@gmail.com



above l to r: Mary Strickland, Linda Pukenas, Wayne Berry, Rich Alt

2024 Mary Strickland Award Recipient Linda Pukenas

The Mary Strickland Award recognizes individuals for exemplary service to the North Carolina Maritime Museum (NCMM) at Southport, demonstrating exceptional efforts through sharing personal time, treasure, talent, and/or advocacy over a number of years in keeping with the spirit of Mary Strickland's vision and example, and having contributed significantly to the growth and success of the Museum.

Linda Pukenas is hereby recognized for her exemplary service to the NCMM. You are an exemplary example of a true "Friend of the Museum"! From the time you joined the Friends Board of Directors in 2017 until your departure in 2023, you have worked tirelessly to support our beloved Museum in numerous roles. While serving as our Board's Vice Chairman, you provided outstanding leadership in developing and shaping long-range plans for supporting the Museum's goals and growth. Your knowledge of the community and the inner workings of the Museum was crucial in guiding the Board in making committed choices. You helped the Board explore options and provided historical information, thus ensuring the mission of the Museum and the Board remained in sync. Additionally, you helped determine and develop our mission to ensure that our support was relevant, appropriate, and accepted by staff.

As a member of numerous organizations throughout our community, you served as our liaison and gained notoriety and support from local groups, such as Sisters of Southport and Historical Society. You never hesitated to contact our local press to enhance publicity and/or request assistance. You tirelessly lobbied town, county, and state officials for much needed financial support.

While serving as Fundraising Chair in 2022, you envisioned and planned an event that would become Southport's Social Event of the Year! Our first annual Jazz Night was a huge success because of your efforts. You recruited volunteers and financial support from the community, resulting in huge financial and membership growth for our Museum. Subsequent Jazz Night Events continue to be successful because of your vision, effort, and support.

Not only did you serve in leadership and planning roles, but you also worked as a cheerful volunteer. You welcomed visitors with a beautiful smile and warm hospitality, ensuring a return visit and possibly new member! You often stepped in to fill volunteer or staff vacancies so that the museum could remain in operation. You treated museum staff, members, and fellow friends of the board as family, providing us with financial and emotional support. Nowhere was this more evident and needed than during COVID.

Your selflessness, commitment, tenacity, and service to the Museum are most heartily commended, are in keeping with the spirit of Mary Strickland's vision and have significantly impacted the growth and success of the North Carolina Maritime Museum of Southport.

FUN FACT!

Though the name may have changed many times throughout the years, the actual "Cape of Fear" is the same today as it was in the 1500's. Our river name showed up on a map for the first time in 1733 as the "River of the Cape Fear." Over time, the name was shortened to the Cape Fear River.

Fort Johnston was built at the mouth of the river between 1745 and 1754 in Smithville to protect the upriver settlements and provide quarantine services for incoming seamen. A small community of river pilots, traders, and fishermen sprang up around the Fort and today we call it - Southport at the Mouth of the Cape Fear!

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