



Bumblebee Buzz April 2024

Preserving the Past, Enjoying the Present, Building the Future.

A Note From The President:

Spring has sprung. Clocks have changed. Summer is rapidly approaching. The island will soon be buzzing with sun, surf, and fun-seeking families.

The Historical Society of Topsail Island offers many family-friendly activities during the summer:

The Aquarium Program, presented by the NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher Outreach and sponsored by The Town of Topsail Beach, will begin June 26th. The sessions are held on Wednesdays from 1-2 PM at the Assembly Building.

Turtle Talks, presented by the Topsail Turtle Project through the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center, begin the first week of June. The sessions are held on Monday mornings at 9 am outside the Assembly Building.

Bingo, one of our most anticipated programs, will begin June 13. It is held on Thursday evenings in the Historic Assembly Building.

As you can see, it will be a busy and fun-filled summer for our organization. We would love to have you join us at any, or all, of our activities. Please go to our website topsailhistoricalsociety.org to get the latest information on events. If you have some free time and want to volunteer with us, please go to the [Get Involved tab](#) on our website. We can use you on our team!

Have a wonderful Spring. May your family enjoy good health and much happiness.

Regards,

Cindy Scaparrotti

Missiles and More Museum Opens New Ocean City Beach Exhibit



The Historical Society of Topsail Island is pleased to open a new exhibit in the Missiles and More Museum entitled *Ocean City Beach*. The exhibit that spotlights our local African American heritage will open on Saturday, April 20. Meet your Ocean City neighbors at an Open House from 3 -5 p.m.

Ocean City Beach was established in 1949 and became the first community in the state where African Americans could purchase oceanfront property. The close-knit community, which became a part of North Topsail Beach in 1990 continues to grow. Despite the passing of time, Ocean City Beach remains a community united in values and tradition.

HSTI Welcomes New Education Committee Chairperson

Karen Gavigan recently retired to the Topsail area with her husband, Frank, after working at the University of South Carolina (USC). She was a Professor and Interim Director in the School of Information Science. Prior to working at USC, Karen worked as an academic, school, and public librarian. Karen and her family have been longtime Topsail residents since 1950 when her grandparents owned one of the original Topsail homes. She is the proud mother of two sons and recently welcomed a new daughter-in-law to the family.



Pictured l-r are the scholarship recipients:

Lillian Padgett, McKenzie Tomlinson, Lillian Swan, and Gabriella Colón

Photo credit Stephanie Key, Assistant, Pender County Tourism.

For almost thirty years, the Historical Society of Topsail Island (HSTI) has awarded scholarships to area high school graduating seniors. This year HSTI awarded four scholarships at the annual scholarship luncheon on April 11th. The scholarships ranged in value from three to six thousand dollars.

The following 2024 scholarship recipients are students from schools in Onslow and Pender County.

- Gabriella Colón is a student at Early Pender High School. Her essay was entitled, *Rosenwald Schools in Pender County*.
- Lillian Padgett from Topsail High School wrote her winning essay about an astronaut, *Christina Hammock Koch*, who grew up in Jacksonville, N.C.
- Lillian Swan, also from Topsail High School is a scholarship recipient for her essay, *A New Road to Peace* about the Moores Creek Battlefield.
- McKenzie Tomlinson, from Dixon High School, received a scholarship for her essay about *The History of the Rosenwald Schools of Pender County*.

“The Historical Society of Topsail Island is proud to provide scholarships to local high school students each year to support their educational journeys,” said Karen Gavigan, Chairman of the HSTI Education Committee. “Our scholarship recipients are selected based on academic achievement, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. The HSTI is pleased to honor this year’s four outstanding students.”

The students made presentations about their essays at the awards luncheon. Attending the luncheon in addition to HSTI members, the scholarship recipients, and their family members were Topsail High School (THS) counselors Celina McGee and Sheila Sheats, THS Scholarship Coordinator, Jonathan Buchanan; Dixon High School (DHS) counselor Yulissa Balsamo, DHS Principal Curtis Ehmann, Pender Early College (PEC) counselor Abby Robbins, and Shannon Grable, PEC Career Development Coordinator.





Luncheon and Lecture News

May 9 Historic Halifax & the Halifax Resolves

Frank McMahon, Assistant Site Manager at Halifax State Historic Site will be our speaker. The Halifax Resolves was a name later given to the resolution adopted by the North Carolina Provincial Congress on April 12, 1776. The adoption of the resolution was the first official action in the American Colonies calling for independence from Great Britain during the American Revolution.

[Click here for more info](#)

Our Luncheon and Lecture Series runs from September through May - Mark your calendars for the 2nd Thursday of each month!



The Missiles & More Museum is open!

April 3 thru May 24

Wednesday thru Friday 11 am – 3 pm

May 28 thru September

Monday thru Friday 10 am – 3 pm

Closed Memorial Day, Juneteenth, July 4th, Labor Day

NEW for 2024

**The M&MM will be open on the first Saturday of the month
June - September from 10 am--3 pm**

Volunteer Opportunities: Active Volunteers Build the Future!

How would you like to be involved?

~Luncheons~Education~Bingo!~Autumn with Topsail
~Fundraising~Engaging Speakers~Jingle Bell Ball~Museum Greeter
Do you have computer/online/virtual platform skills?
WE NEED YOU!!

I need more detailed information



Museum Director, Laurette Gordon & docents that volunteered >40 hours in 2023
l-r-Dale Eisman, Eric Johnson, Gary Chadwell,
Marianne McGillan, Patty & Joe Pfanzelter
Not pictured: Joe Bednar, Adam Kaline, Kevin Eitel



Wayne Peal and Sam Pendzick

Volunteers celebrated Leap Day at the annual HSTI Volunteer Recognition event held on February 29, 2024



2023-2024 HSTI Board members
l-r: Vicki Wiggins, Cindy Scaparrotti, Karen Gavigan, Kathy Hart, Steve Gordon, Cecile Broadhurst, Joe Pfanzelter, John Morris, Gwen Ward, Larry Combs, Ann and Bill Tumblin.

Ed Broadhurst received the 2023 HSTI Distinguished Service Award presented by Trustee Larry Combs.



Not pictured: Gaylene Branton, Tyler Reddinger, Steve Smith, Bobbie Morrison, Gaylene Branton & Jeff Wenzel



Create Unforgettable Memories

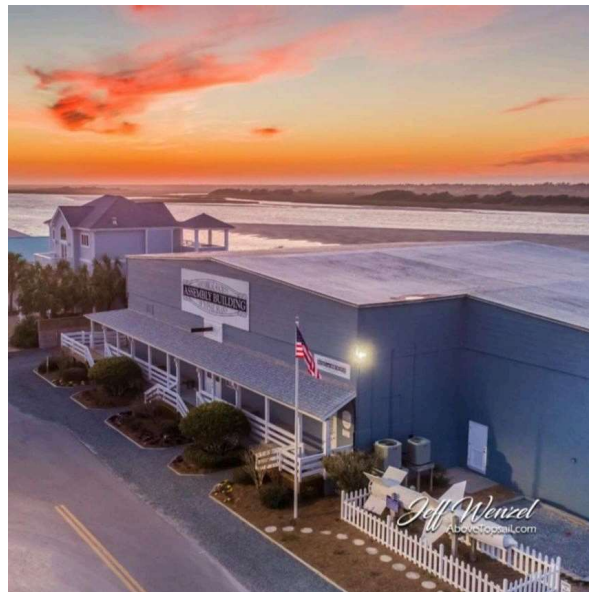
The unique and historic Assembly Building with its beautiful island setting, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is located on the Soundfront of Topsail Beach. Our location offers magnificent sunset views!

From an industrial vibe or a more Boho-style wedding, everything is possible at the Assembly Building with a capacity of up to 250 people provides a perfect setting for any occasion!

You will find your ideal setting for the most intimate celebration with your nearest and dearest to a grand affair with all your family and friends.

[Click on the button below for more information about renting the Assembly Building for your next event!](#)

[Visit Website](#)

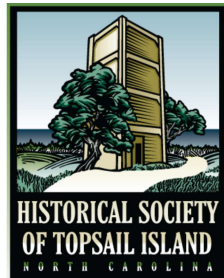




Historic Top Secret Walking Tour of Topsail Beach

This easy, free, one-mile walking tour will take you on a fun, historical adventure through the downtown area of the Town of Topsail Beach. This hike will accommodate strollers and folks with limited mobility.

[Learn More!](#)



Mission Statement

The Historical Society of Topsail Island is dedicated to the collection, preservation and promotion of the history of the Greater Topsail Island Area.



[Visit our website](#)

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