



TABBY TATTLER

Dataaw Historic Foundation Newsletter

Spring 2011

From the President . . . JACK BROWN



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Spring 2011 issue of DHF's semi-annual newsletter. This *Tattler* will bring you up to date

on the results of several efforts since our last issue and the projects we have in the works for the rest of this year. It includes a report on our dynamic membership as of mid April.

Although we are only a few months into 2011, I am very excited about a number of recent things that have been happening in the DHF — and have a sense that this year could turn out to be the most successful in our 16-year history. I would like to touch on a few exciting areas covered in this issue:

■ **Strong Membership Results** — DHF is off to a terrific start in 2011. We have 335 members as of early April, well ahead of last year's pace and within reach of our milestone goal of 380. DHF continues to be the Island's largest organization.

■ **Excellent Attendance at DHF events** — we have had wonderful turnouts at recent DHF events. The March Oyster Roast was a sellout (226 people), we broke a record on the raffle; and all net proceeds on the event will go toward future preservation programs. (See page 2 for pictures of the Oyster Roast.)

■ **National Recognition for Historic Site** — on March 4, 2011, as a result of a combined initiative by DHF, the DIOA Board and Island Management, the "Sams Plantation Complex Tabby Ruins" was officially placed on the prestigious list of historic properties for the National Register of Historic Places. (For more information, see the article on page 5.)

■ **Major DHF Award** — DHF was recently awarded a "Historic Preservation Award" for its efforts over the past few years by the Historic Beaufort Foundation. DHF had previously been awarded the Lifetime Achievement award by HBF in 2006. Both awards may be viewed at the history display in the Clubhouse. (See article on page 4 for more information.)

■ **Impressive New Volunteer Efforts** — DHF started a new volunteer program in late 2010 to encourage its members to become volunteers on special DHF projects, events and programs. The response has been impressive, and several new volunteers are now assisting the Board with various DHF activities.

I am delighted to let you know that two of these new volunteers are co-editors for this newsletter. Ann Craigmile (who retired from the Board a year ago) has volunteered to help organize the newsletter and write several articles; Ken Hirsch has agreed to bring his writing talents to the issue. They have joined with the layout and design expertise of Cindy Schafer, DHF Director, to create this special *Tattler*.

Also, of note, this issue contains an article by John Huntley on a new DHF preservation project. (See the article on page 3.) The article, entitled *Dairy/Cold Room & Blade House*

Preservation, covers our plans for preservation work at this historic structure — and the creation of extensive records of the structure to help guide future preservation efforts. The project will begin in late April.

In closing, I would like to thank all of our current DHF members for their invaluable support and financial help. And to those of you who have yet to become members this year, I encourage you to join DHF in the exciting adventure of preserving the unique history of our wonderful community.

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Save the Date!
Friday, October 14, 2011
DHF Fall Fish Fry

DHF Annual Oyster Roast, Another Success!

The Dataw Historic Foundation annual Oyster Roast on March 7, 2011 at the Cannery was a huge success. It was the 12th straight year that the Oyster Roast was a sellout event. There were 226 attendees, including several members of the Sams family. They dined on oysters, chicken and gumbo with all the fixings, furnished by Reeves Catering, while listening to Jim Bachety’s “light jazz.” Those who had left room for dessert found a cornucopia of homemade treats laid out in the Cannery. From comments received, a great time was had by one and all. A side note: more red wine than white wine was consumed this year, probably a result of the cooler weather.

The raffle was the best ever. DHF sold a record \$3,790 in raffle tickets, many at the Roast, surpassing the \$3,675 sold last year. The raffle featured an array of donated prizes, some of which were unique items. The prize winners were:

1. Emily’s Restaurant & Tapas Bar Gift Certificate for \$150 (donated by Tommy Winburn) – Lee & Bob Martin
2. Grace & Glory Gift Certificate (donated by Grace & Glory) for \$250 – Sue & Larry Weidner
3. Sams Cemetery Painting by Mac Rogers (donated by Mac Rogers) – Jeanne & Aubrey Cochran
4. Audubon Print (donated by Terry & Beth Lurtz, framing by John Baumeister) – Ardith Holzmacher
5. Egret Carving by Jerry Hubbard (donated by the Hubbards & the Browns) – Dudley McKenney
6. Tabby Planters by Rick Wightman (donated by the Wightmans) – Lynn & Tim Maher

Paula Campbell and Marcia Rohrbaugh, Oyster Roast Co-Chairs give special thanks to our donors, and to all those who volunteered to make this event such a rousing success. Key volunteers included: Desserts: Joan Berra and Robin Colgan; Raffle: Cissy Nichols; Promotional Materials: Cindy Schafer.

In addition, more than 15 members pitched in to provide food service and bartending, and many more donated desserts. Thanks also to Christi Henry and the Landscape Maintenance staff, including Hank DeMichele and Al Orage. The area around the Cannery looked great.

Another feature of the evening was DHF President Jack Brown’s acceptance of a \$900 donation by the Propane Buyers Group. The gift will go towards funding of on-going preservation efforts.



In the background, the Oyster tables are full. There was plenty of food for oyster-lovers and those who preferred other fare. In addition to the oysters, there was chicken and sausage gumbo and marinated chicken, along with a host of salads and side dishes, cornbread and wonderful desserts. No one went home hungry!



(Above) Cissy Nichols and Jack Brown announce the raffle winners as (Below) hopeful participants look on!



Have you seen it yet? Dataw Island’s History Display opened in the Welcome Center lobby in September 2009. If you have not been there, or you want to learn more about the rich history of the place you call home, please come and visit. The Welcome Center is open during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 9 AM—5 PM. The exhibit features interpretive panels spanning Dataw’s history from prehistoric times, the colonial period, the Sams family ownership and Civil War years, to the new era of Alcoa development. Artifacts in the Welcome Center date back to 10,000 BC. It is well worth your time, and it is a great place to take any visitors you have. Also, on display is the scale model of the Sams family plantation home done by our own Jerry Hubbard.

Dairy/Cold Room & Blade House Preservation

... JOHN D. HUNTLEY, Chairman, Ruins Preservation Committee



This structure on the B. B. Sams Plantation site was built and used by B. B. Sams and his family from the early to mid 1800s. It is unique in design, particularly with its gabled tabby roof still intact. It is reported to be the only tabby roof still intact in the United States.

The Dairy/Cold Room was built as cold storage for dairy products and other perishables. Large pieces of ice, insulated in sawdust, were shipped from the north to keep the interior space cold enough to preserve these products. Adjacent to it is the Blade House, a multi-function structure which got its name from corn stalks (blades) used as fodder for cattle and horses.

DHF efforts have continued apace in inspecting/examining this and the other B. B. Sams Plantation site ruins. Most recently, after the hard winter of 2011, Colin Brooker, conservation and preservation expert, conducted an examination of the B. B. Sams Plantation site and reported his findings to DHF. Tabby by its very nature is porous and is particularly subject to damage and deterioration from freezing weather such as we had this winter. He noted loose tabby and deterioration over the doorway to the Dairy/Cold Room with approximately 12 inches of tabby lost above the door where the lintel had been. If this deterioration were to continue, it would result in the collapse of the last remaining tabby roof in the United States. Other weaknesses and deficiencies were also noted, but this is the part of the structure that needs immediate repair. This recommendation proposed that records be made (digital photographs) and measured drawings be prepared relative to the building's current condition. This is necessary in order to provide a full record and a basis for future efforts.

The DHF Executive Committee and Board approved funding for Brooker Architectural Design Consultants to do the work as proposed. The more recent cement patching will be removed and a pressure treated timber lintel will be installed over the opening to the roof portion. In addition, a pressure treated timber door frame and jambs will be installed. The loose tabby over the lintel will be replaced and repairs made to the eroded west exterior face of the building. This work is expected to begin in April and be completed within a reasonable time.



A close-up of the deteriorating door.



Colin Brooker and John Huntley inspecting the dairy door.

TABBY TATTLER

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Dataw prominently mentioned in *Bluffton Today* newspaper article (February 15, 2011)

Drs. Barry and Barre Wright, who live on Callawassie Island, wrote the interesting article, *"Tabby Passes the Test of Time"* to share with local readers some of the treasured tabby structures found in Beaufort County. Among the many tabby structures referenced, Dataw received noteworthy mention:

One of the most complete remains of a plantation is the B. B. Sams one on Dataw Island. William Sams chose Dataw for his indigo fields and built a tabby house there around 1786. From 1800 to 1850, his son B. B. Sams occupied the original Palladian villa design house and expanded it to accommodate his 15 children. The ruins of the Sams' mansion, kitchen chimney, farm outbuildings including a dairy with the only known surviving tabby roof, chapel and the cemetery wall enclosure demonstrate the versatility of tabby.

The Wrights noted that "history and tangible cultural heritage define a place and help us recognize how special our community is." They hope their article will encourage others to go out and look at these tabby structures and "stop for a moment to appreciate the beauty of our county's finest historic inheritances."



Old sketch of Sams Plantation house done by Eugenia Sams. Approximate date: mid 1800s

HBF Preservation Award

Every year the Historic Beaufort Foundation gives its Historic Preservation Honor Award to celebrate successful and exemplary historic preservation projects around Beaufort County. This March the DHF received a 2011 Preservation Award from the HBF, at its Annual Meeting, for its preservation and stewardship of the Sams Plantation Ruins. As part of the award presentation, the HBF noted that the DHF is also the winner of its lifetime achievement award in 2006 and cited our continued stewardship of the Sams Plantation Ruins, and our recent achievement of listing the Ruins on the National Register of Historic Places. HBF commended the DHF for continuing its efforts by growing membership, investing its funds, creating a historical exhibit restoring an 1825 Sams family crypt and creating a Heritage Walk.



(L-R) Joel Holden, DHF Chairman Jack Brown and John Colgan, accepting the HBF Preservation Honor Award on behalf of the DHF.

Dataw Heritage Walk

Become a part of Dataw History — put your name on the Heritage Walk!

The Dataw *Heritage Walk* is located near the Cannery and the Sams Plantation Ruins. On April 6, 2011, two years after the first bricks were sold, there were 196 bricks in place with three more on order. This is a significant milestone for this project. Phase III of the project is now underway and the DHF projects 25 more bricks to be added this year, thus bringing the Foundation closer to its long-term goal of creating a permanent location for all historic exhibits and archives.

A form to order a brick is inserted in this newsletter. Additional forms can be downloaded from the Dataw website. They are also available at the Cannery or can be picked up from Joel Holden, Terry Lurtz or Peter Pearks.

Fireside Chat

125 people attended DHF's Fireside Chat on November 18 in the Carolina Room. The featured speaker, Colin Brooker, a master architectural historian and the foremost authority on tabby construction, discussed the origins and history of tabby construction in the Low Country and Europe. Colin has worked closely with the conservation and preservation efforts on the tabby ruins on Dataw Island since the beginning of ALCOA's development and continues to work with the DHF in its ongoing preservation efforts.

Tribute to Cynthia Lanphear

DHF has lost a good friend, *Cynthia Lanphear*, who passed away on January 27, 2011.

While on Dataw, Cynthia was an active volunteer for the DHF. She was on the PR Committee for many years and was among the first to author articles pertaining to Dataw's history for the DIOA publication *Dataw Dialogue* under the title "The Past is Part of the Future."

In 2002, Cynthia did most of the research and wrote most of the copy for the DHF brochure, which has been widely distributed to residents and guests visiting Dataw.

A DHF contribution has been made to the Alzheimer's Association in Cynthia's memory.

Sams Family, Hilton Head History Buffs and Retired FBI Agents Visit Dataw

The Sams family celebrates at Dataw

Just prior to the Christmas holidays, DHF President Jack Brown hosted a special Sams' family visit to Dataw. The family saw the History Wall in the Welcome Center, toured the cemetery and enjoyed dinner at the Club.

Joining the Beaufort branch of the Sams' descendents were family patriarch Arthur Sams (97 years old) and his daughter Sara Parker Sams, who traveled here from Charlotte. Arthur, Jeanne, Ting and Reeve all share the same great, great grandfather, B. B. Sams. This was the first time Arthur and Sara had seen the Welcome Center display.

Hilton Head History Buffs

Earlier this year, Silvia Lalinde, the DIC Membership Director, received a request from a group of history buffs from Hilton Head to tour Dataw's historic sites.

On March 12, DHF President Jack Brown led eight people from the Hilton Head chapter of the Archeological Society of South Carolina on a tour of the Welcome Center, the Sams Plantation Complex and the upstairs clubhouse display. Each was given a copy of the DHF brochure along with a map of the Sams Plantation complex.

This knowledgeable group of historians expressed their gratitude in a nice note: "A super tour today. Everyone enjoyed it and appreciated the effort you all have made to preserve and display the wonderful history of the island."

Society of Former Agents of the FBI ... JOHN D. HUNTLEY

On Wednesday, March 9, 2011, over 30 members of The Society of Former Agents of the FBI, Hilton Head Chapter, held their luncheon meeting in the Dataw Island Club Tabby Room. This luncheon was culminated with a presentation by John Huntley on the history and preservation efforts by the DHF and the B. B. Sams Plantation ruins. John is the Society Chapter Chairman as well as the DHF Ruins Committee Chair. The "Historic Dataw Island" brochure was provided to the attendees, and the recently completed slide presentation on the history and preservation of the B. B. Sams Plantation was the program. Interest by the group was evidenced by insightful questions. One member, a Beaufort native, had come by boat to Dataw Island as a teenager, approximately 45 years ago. At the conclusion of the meeting, a self-guided walking tour of the plantation complex was made.

This proved to be a highlight of the luncheon meeting. The audience consisted of many first-time visitors to Dataw Island, who were favorably impressed by the ruins and the preservations efforts of the DHF. The success of this presentation was in large part due to the quality of the slide presentation prepared by Joel Holden, who also provided technical assistance for the presentation.



(L-R) Ting Sams Colquhoun, Sara Parker Sams, Charles Aimar, Jeanne Sams Aimar, Arthur Sams, Reeve Sams, Betty Sams. Front: Jack Brown. Reeve, Jeanne and Ting are brother and sisters. Photo by Jack's grandson, Ford.

National Register Listing

On March 4, 2011, the "Sams Plantation Complex Tabby Ruins" was officially placed on the National Register of Historic Places. This achievement capped a multi-year effort to gain this distinction. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of historic places deemed worthy of preservation maintained by the National Park Service as part of a program set up under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to support efforts to identify, evaluate and protect America's historic and archeological resources. The National Parks Service had accepted the Complex as eligible for listing on the National Register in October, 1988.

The National Register listing, an initiative in which the DIOA board and Island management combined their support with the DHF's efforts, will lend additional prestige to Dataw and provide another tool for Dataw's marketing efforts.

Dataw will now be entitled to display the unique and prestigious bronze plaque proclaiming the designation of the National Register of the historic nature of the Sams Plantation Complex Tabby Ruins. A dedication event for the unveiling of the plaque is expected to be planned for this fall.



Meet the REAL Caleb Westbrook!

We think we know about Caleb Westbrook, but do we? Yes, he was a trader for whom Westbrook's Island (now Dataw) was named. However, the *real* Caleb was not a Scotsman, nor a simple Indian trader, but an Englishman who was a bit of a rogue in chaotic times. He was actually a slaver who fostered Indian raids on neighboring villages and tribes for captives and ran afoul of the law of the early Carolina colony. Read all about "Dataw Island's Dark Beginnings" as researched and written by DHF's John Colgan in the May/June *Dateline*.

2011 Dataw Historic Foundation Members

Membership Categories

- Lifetime Members: Those whose lifetime contribution to the DHF is \$2,500 or more.
- Honorary Members: Limited to those with an ancestral connection to Dataw Island, This includes Sams family descendents and family descendents of other prior owners of Dataw Island.
- Friends of DHF: Those who have made a significant contribution to or have a special connection to DHF.

□ Benefactors (\$250) □ Patrons (\$100) □ Supporters (\$50) □ Members (\$30)

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 Al & Terry Wood
 David & Beverly Yoder

Not yet a member of DHF? Fill out the Membership Form inserted in this newsletter. 2011 membership forms are also available in the Cannery or through the dataw.org website. Completed forms go to Patty Gesell at 1722 Longfield.

Our history makes us unique among residential communities, and our efforts to preserve and display that history are fun, educational and important to our future.

Notes from the Board

Treasurer Doug Campbell reports that DHF finished 2010 in a strong financial position, and with the excellent membership drive and Oyster Roast results, it is off to a good start in 2011. Doug prepares detailed monthly operating budget statements for the General Fund, along with the Special Funds (Archeological, Storm Recovery and Heritage Walk) and goes over them at each Board meetings. Four times a year he prepares the balance sheet for Board review.

Membership Co-Chairs Patty Gesell and Lynn Maher report 335 DHF members as of April 15. This figure is up from the same time last year. 380 is the 2011 membership goal.

Vice President Joel Holden is in the process of revising the Dataw History DVD he created for the 25th Anniversary celebration. The new version will also include the history of Dataw since Alcoa bought it, the beginning of preservation efforts, and special parties and celebrations that have been held. The DVD will be available for sale. Joel also reported that creation of the new DHF website is nearly complete. He and the Heritage Walk committee are working on the next phase of this successful project.

Vice President Marilyn Peck is coordinating plans for the DHF to take part in the Camp Dataw program scheduled for this July. Tentative plans include a "History Hunt" in the plantation complex. Marilyn is working on events for the rest of the year including the next annual Fireside Chat in November and a possible special fall event at the plantation complex. She is also beginning a new project which involves researching the original Beaufort summer homes of the Sams family. Marilyn and Cindy Schafer are considering an update of the current DHF brochure.

Grounds Committee Co-Chairs Terry Lurtz and Peter Pearks report that new signs will be created at various ruins' sites. It was also noted that maintenance work has been done on the Sams cemetery oak tree. The DHF shares this maintenance cost with the DIOA.

Ruins Preservation Committee Chair John Huntley reported that Colin Brooker, prominent historic ruins conservator and preservationist who has been overseeing the care and restoration of the Dataw historic structures, has completed recommendations for stabilizing the Dairy/Cold Room & Blade House. (*You can read about this in the preservation article submitted by John on page 3 of this newsletter.*) Colin is also compiling a report on the archeology and preservation history of Dataw from 1983—2010. The volume includes pictures of excavations of artifacts and ruins stabilization projects.

Fund-raising Co-Chairs, Paula Campbell and Marcia Rohrbaugh, presented the final report on the successful

Oyster Roast and already have begun planning for the Fall Fish Fry scheduled for Friday, October 14, 2010. **Be sure to mark your calendars.**

Historic Committee Chair Jane Griffith continues to oversee care of history exhibits in the Clubhouse and Welcome Center and is adding important new Dataw records to the DHF archives. She also is researching a Sams' letter journal from the Civil War.

DHF has had an impressive response to the new volunteer program started in late 2010. Volunteers are always appreciated by the DHF. Whether you bake a dessert or help set up or serve at one of the special events, deliver **Tabby Tattlers** or flyers, assist in recording or archiving historic records, guide a tour through the ruins, provide research in an area of interest, your help is vital to the success of the Foundation.

**DHF 2011
Officers, Board Committee Chairmen
and Directors**

Officers
 President: Jack Brown
 Vice President: Marilyn Peck
 Vice President: Joel Holden
 Treasurer: Doug Campbell
 Recording Secretary: Barbara Titus
 Corresponding Secretary: Cece Megrue

Board Committees Chairmen
 Fund-raising Co-Chair: Paula Campbell
 Fund-raising Co-Chair: Marcia Rohrbaugh
 Grounds Co-Chair: Peter Pearks
 Grounds Co-Chair: Terry Lurtz
 Historic Chair: Jane Griffith
 Long-Range Planning Chair: Joel Holden
 Membership Co-Chair: Patty Gesell
 Membership Co-Chair: Lynn Maher
 Public Relations Co-Chair: Marilyn Peck
 Public Relations Co-Chair: Cindy Schafer
 Ruins Preservation Chair: J.D. Huntley

Directors At-Large
 Long-Range Planning, Historic: Anne Williams
 Long-Range Planning, PR: John Colgan
 Long-Range Planning, PR¹: Elizabeth Blair

Other
 Technical Consultant: Larry Rowland
 DIOA Representative: Pat Bell

¹ Special Leave of Absence

Need a holiday or hostess gift? Check out the DHF notecards. The cover of each card is Bonnie McDonald's photo "Misty Ruins." There are 10 notecards in each pack. The cost is just \$10. Available at the alcove desk in the Community Center or at the Golf Pro Shop.