

## Homecoming 1996

*"There's hardly a day goes by that I don't miss that place ...  
It's the peace and quiet that's there, and it's home."*

*Miss Marian Gray Babb  
"One of the last to leave -- 25 Years Ago"*



Portsmouth Methodist Church

*Sponsored by the  
Friends of Portsmouth Island  
April 13, 1996*



Homecoming Service  
Portsmouth Methodist Church

*Jesus, Savior, pilot me - Over life's tempestuous sea;  
Unknown waves before me roll, Hiding rocks and treach'rous shoal;  
Chart and compass come from Thee -- Jesus, Savior, pilot me!*

Music Prelude  
Ringing of the Bell

Welcome Frances Eubanks, President  
Friends of Portsmouth Island

Invocation Rev. Pearl G. West, Retired  
NC Conference - United Methodist Church

\* Congregational Hymn "Lord, I'm Coming Home"

\* A Litany of Thanksgiving Jessie Lee Babb Dominique  
Portsmouth resident by birth

Leader: O God Our Father, we thank you for the privilege of  
coming home, again, to Portsmouth Island.

People: We have come together to remember, to share fellowship,  
and to celebrate our ties with this special island

Leader: You are the Creator of all that is beautiful and holy.

People: You know the thoughts of our hearts and the memories  
that come alive as we meet together in this sacred and  
historic place.

Leader: Thank you for the beauty and the spirit of this quiet  
place where, in days past, a thriving community once  
lived.

People: Thank you for all who have lived here -- who have  
experienced the basic, honest, and good life in harmony  
with wind and sea.

Leader: Our Father, make us aware and appreciative of the rich  
history of our North Carolina coastlands.

People: Rekindle within us gratitude and joy, as we are reminded  
of the heritage which is ours. Strengthen our efforts to  
protect and perpetuate this heritage for our children and  
grandchildren, and generations who will learn to love and  
respect this heritage.

Together: Amen.

History of Portsmouth Island Dot Salter Willis  
Portsmouth resident by birth

\* Congregational Hymn "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning"

Recognition of Portsmouth Families and Guests

Special Music "Marian's Song" Connie Mason

Special Music "Joyful Noise"- Atlantic United Methodist Church

Homecoming Message Rev. Robert Carpenter  
Cedar Island United Methodist Church

\* Congregational Hymn "God Be With You"

\* Benediction and Blessing Rev. Pearl G. West

Dinner - On - The - Grounds

Notes, Reminders and Announcements ...

The flowers on the altar today are given to the Glory of God by  
Chester Lynn of Ocracoke.

Please be sure to sign the Guest Register in the sanctuary to  
record your presence on this important day in the history of Portsmouth  
Island.

At 1:30 this afternoon, the Friends of Portsmouth Island will  
meet in the sanctuary. All are invited to attend and everyone is  
encouraged to join this group in keeping the history of Portsmouth  
Island alive. Membership is open to anyone who shares an interest in  
preserving the rich heritage of this island community.

Our thanks ...

To the many individuals who have joined us today, prepared the food  
and transportation, planned the details, participated in the service, and  
especially to those who will help make sure the island is safe and clean when  
we leave today.

To the organizations who have offered their support, the Carteret  
County Historical Society, the Ocracoke Preservation Society, the Core  
Sound Waterfowl Museum, Cape Lookout National Seashore, and for their  
efforts to keep this heritage we share in safekeeping for future generations.



## Welcome Home Again ...

... To Portsmouth Island. Welcome to this beautiful seaport village that time has forgotten, but not her people. This community, with its landmarks -- the church, the post office, the school -- stand to remind us all of those who came before, of the legacy they built together, and of the heritage and traditions we continue today.

You are welcome to this most sacred place to share memories, rekindle friendships, strengthen the bonds that bring us all back here again and again. Portsmouth was, is, and always will be, a haven from a stormy world. Portsmouth is a place where we can all come to rest and remember.

Today is a celebration. A time and place where we can celebrate our love and dedication to this place in North Carolina's history and renew our commitment to making sure Portsmouth is never forgotten.

For those who know Portsmouth as "home," this day is for you especially. You are the main thread in this tapestry of Portsmouth history. Thank you for allowing those who seek to know more of this beautiful place to share these memories with you. Thank you for allowing us to join you on this most important day.

## "Portsmouth Island People"

From *Portsmouth Island: Short Stories and History*  
Ben B. Salter and Dot Salter Willis

The people that were natives of Portsmouth Island were honest, decent, hard-working people. The men were seafaring men either being in the life-saving station there or fishermen. Some of the men were hunting guides in the winter. When I speak of fishermen, I mean they fished, oystered and clammed for a living. They worked hard but always managed to make a fairly good living for themselves and their families. They owned their own homes and boats. When they came from fishing they would always gather around and mend their nets. On days it was too bad to go fishing they would sit in their fish house for hours and mend the nets. I would enjoy these days as a young boy, helping and listening to the men tell tales of things that happened on Portsmouth long before I was born.

In winter it was time to hunt and oyster ... In the summer they fished and clammed, some would catch crabs. The women stayed at home, took care of the children and kept their homes spotless clean. They took pride in keeping everything, even their yards, as clean as could be. They kept their children clean and neat, there might be a patch or two on their pants or dresses but they were always clean. Their mothers taught the girls to read, write and sew. They also taught the boys reading and writing and to keep their rooms neat. Of course they sent their children to school when they were old enough to go, but most of them could say their ABC's and print their names before they went to school. The school would only be six months a year if it was not a stormy year. If it was stormy the teachers were afraid to go to the little school house. I remember one year we had school only two months. A storm came in October and scared the teacher so bad she left the Island and did not return.

The women would all sew for themselves, husbands and children. They all wore homemade clothes most of the time. In later years some would order their clothes for parties or to wear to church. They made the trimming to go on their dresses, tatting, lace and ruffles. Sometimes you could go by a house and see the ladies setting around all working with their fingers making tatting or fancy work to go on the baby dresses or little girl dresses. They would sometime gather in one living room, five or six ladies - sometimes more, to sew and visit at the same time. They made their own quilts and blankets, also their pillows and feather beds. The pillows and feather beds were made from the feathers of the fowl that the men killed in winter. They sewed thick cloth called "bed ticking" to make the pillows and feather beds. Every family had these to sleep on. They were real warm in the winter ...

The children would all be there playing together. The small ones would play where their mamas could watch them, the ones big enough would help their mothers. The ladies would always take time to teach their children how to keep house and do the necessary things that had to be done ... They would read the Bible to them and teach them how to live and love each other and God ...

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