

Exploring Beaufort's Past

History

Originally inhabited by the Coree Indians, then French Huguenots, Beaufort was eventually settled by the British in 1709. In 1713, Robert Turner, who held the original land grant for 200 acres, laid out the town and named the streets just as they are today. The town was named in honor of Turner's friend Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort, and was incorporated in 1722.



By the late 18th century, Beaufort was becoming an active seaport. Inhabited by sailors, pirates, privateers, fisherman, soldiers, and planters, it was a diverse community with the common thread of the sea.

While Beaufort's active sea trade allowed it to be connected

with seaports thousands of miles away, its geography kept it isolated from the interior of the state. This isolation has helped the town retain its historic appearance. Still standing today are the homes of Beaufort's early sea captains, shippers and merchants. Beaufort boasts over 100 homes that are over a century old and several private residences that are over 200 years old.

Architecture

Beaufort's early architecture is characterized by its simplicity and charm. Boat-building tools and skills were used as sea captains copied the double-porch styles of the West Indies and Bahamas seen on their seafaring voyages.

The Bahamian influence is reflected in the rooflines of the

oldest houses in Beaufort. Providing nature's own air-conditioning, the gabled ends form a steep pitch at the ridge of the roof which breaks to cover the traditional full-length porches.

Though Beaufort's houses range from traditional cottages to elaborate Queen Anne and Greek Revival styles, porches are a dominant feature in almost all of them.

The quirky picket fences built with an up and down pattern are distinctive to Beaufort. These picket fences are used extensively, and may have a connection to an



early law stating that pigs must be kept in the yard. Pigs found outside the fence could be slaughtered by the finder, though half

must be given to the church wardens to feed the hungry.

Beaufort

Beaufort, the third oldest town in North Carolina, is the perfect place for a leisurely walk with its tree-lined streets and quaint historic buildings. Use the map provided on the inside to locate this house as well as guide you through the six-block historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

As you wander, imagine a time when the streets were canopied by elm trees given to the town by Queen Anne of England in recognition of the two Beaufort streets named in her honor.

Beaufort has historically been a seaport village, much as it is today. Walk along Front Street and you will see sailing vessels still using the safe harbor. Look across the inlet to Carrot Island and bird Shoal to catch a glimpse of the wild horses that make it their home.

Make the Beaufort Historic Site at 130 Turner Street your first stop for information on all there is to see and do in the quaint seaport village of Beaufort. We offer lively guided tours of authentically restored homes and buildings, the mysterious Old Burying Ground, and Beaufort's charming historic district aboard a vintage English double-decker bus. You'll love discovering our coastal heritage!

Narrated Bus Tours

Buildings Tour

Old Burying Ground Tours

Old Beaufort Museum Shop

Mattie King Davis Art Gallery

Beaufort Historical Association

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Walk through



History

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

*Beaufort,
North Carolina*

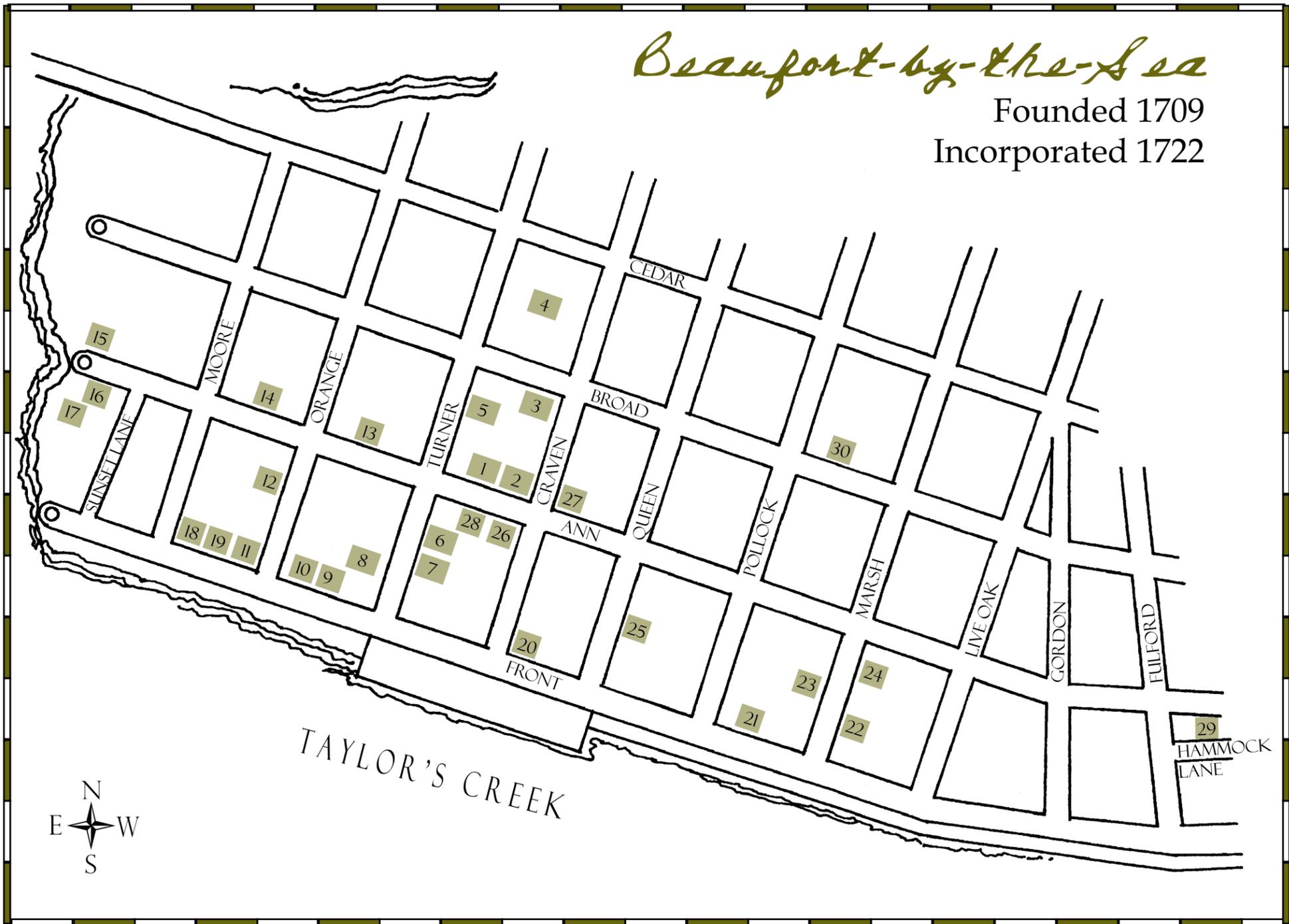
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The Beaufort Historical Association



Beaufort-by-the-Sea

Founded 1709
Incorporated 1722



1. Old Burying Ground, 1709

Deeded to the town in 1731, this cemetery contains both Revolutionary and Civil War graves. The earliest graves here would have been marked with cedar slabs or shells due to the lack of indigenous stone. More information and a self-guided tour brochure is available in the Safritt Historical Center.

2. Ann Street Methodist Church, 1854

Hand-carved woodwork adorn the walls and ceiling, with stained glass windows from 1898.

3. Purvis Chapel, 1820

The oldest Beaufort church in continuous use, this building was originally constructed by the Methodist Episcopal Church and then given to the AME Zion Congregation.

4. Carteret County Courthouse, 1907

Note the statue of a Confederate soldier with his back symbolically to the north.

5. Odd Fellows Lodge, 1837

Built at night by the same brick masons working on Fort Macon during the day.

6. Leffers Cottage, 1778

Built by schoolmaster and court clerk Samuel Leffers, this coastal cottage is a good example of a "story and a jump" or a one-and-a-half story house.

7. Josiah Bell House, 1825

Josiah Fisher Bell, son of the home's namesake and resident himself, was a Confederate agent who, with others, blew up the lighthouses at Cape Lookout during the Civil War.

8. John Manson House, 1825

An excellent example of Bahamian architecture, this house stands on its original site. The interior walls and exterior doors of this authentically restored home boast historic decorative faux finishes.

9. Sabiston House, 1857

Now a bed & breakfast inn, this building is listed in the book *Haunted Inns of the Southeast*.

10. Bordon House, 1768

An important resident of the town, Mr. Bordon was a Quaker who could not swear oaths and therefore never held public office.

11. Easton House, 1771

This was the townhouse for Col. John Easton, who led the Beaufort militia against the British landing in April 1782. Later this house was used as a hospital and then prison during the Civil War.

12. Hattell House, 1827

Emeline Pigott, a Confederate spy, frequently visited relatives here and watched the Union shelling of Fort Macon from the top porch.

13. Leecraft House, 1857

This Greek Revival house served as the Union Provost Marshal's headquarters during the Civil War. Axe marks made by Union soldiers cutting wood are still visible on the floor.

14. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1857

Built by local shipbuilders, this church contains original pews, exposed scissor-beam roof construction, and stained glass windows.

15. Piner House, 1786

Once used as a school for girls from the Outer Banks.

16. Buckman House, 1845

An above-ground basement, unusual for this area, is in this house, still in the Buckman family.

17. John Hill House, 1839

Originally built on Portsmouth Island where it stood for 100 years, this home was moved to Beaufort New Town for another 100 years before being moved to its present location.

18. Sloo House, 1768

Federal home of a sea captain whose daughter died at sea. Her body was preserved in a keg of rum and buried in the Old Burying Ground.

19. Morse House, 1771

A live cannonball was recently found here.

20. Carteret Academy, 1854

An unusual three-story house with classrooms on the first floor and living space above.

21. Duncan House, 1900

Moved from the corner using mules, the invalid owner didn't realize what was taking place until he saw the scenery outside his window changing.

22. Gibbs House, 1772

Home of Captain Charles Biddle and his bride, Hannah Shepard, this house was built during the Revolutionary War.

23. Blake House, 1779

Said to have been sold for a cow and a calf, this steamboat gothic style house was previously owned by Congressman Charles Abernathy, legislator Nathaniel Russell, and author Irving Batchlor.

24. Rumley House, 1778

Originally, wooden pegs were used instead of nails in the construction of this house owned by John Rumley, a prominent civil servant and clerk of the the court.

25. Allen Davis House, 1774

Said to be General Burnside's headquarters during the Union occupation of Beaufort.

26. Langdon House, 1764

Built by Rich Barker, a house carpenter, this is a good example of early Beaufort architecture.

27. Joel Henry Davis House, 1837

Featuring Victorian gingerbread trim, this house was used as a dormitory for boys from rural parts of the county who attended school in town.

28. Dr. Josiah Davis House, 1854

Dr. Davis had an apothecary and medical office building next to the house which has now been moved to the Beaufort Historic Site for tours.

29. Hammock House, 1709

One of the most intriguing houses in Beaufort, it is believed to have been built on the site of an earlier house that was used as a tavern for a group of sea captains and later used as a tavern. Because the original house stood on a small hill, or "hummock," it was used as a navigation point on early maps. With over 30 documented owners in its over 200 years, the most famous or infamous house has many factual and fictional stories associated with it.

30. Rev. Jones House, 1840

Used as a hospital during the Civil War, this was also the first home in Beaufort to have a phone but Mrs. Jones was so afraid of it that she had it installed on a post in the yard.