

Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range plan Wall of Honor for World War I military

The nonprofit Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range Inc. is working on a project to honor men and women who served in the Great War and appealing to the public for support to send pictures of relatives, or Doughboys as they were called, who served in World War I.

For the last four years, the organization has worked toward stabilizing and preserving a 1918 rifle range on Caswell Beach listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It once was a non-contiguous part of Fort Caswell.

"If you have a family member that served in any branch of the military during World War I, men and women, from any state, we welcome your help," Norma Eckard, president of Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, said in a news release. "Send a copy of a photograph of your family member in uniform, their rank, unit/division, any stories about them and the war. List the state where they signed up and/or where they lived."

The friends are making a Wall of Honor to display military photographs during fundraisers and special occasions, especially the fourth annual Kentucky Derby set for Saturday, May 7, at the Caswell Dunes clubhouse. A commemorative event is in the planning for the rifle range Centennial year in 2018.

Within the month, engineers will begin evaluating the structure and recommending stabilization re-

pairs. In addition, an arborist will identify trees that are damaging the walls and proceed to remove them. After that, the engineers will prioritize the work for continuing the stabilization of the structure. Once the stabilization is complete, recommended permanent repairs can be made while maintaining the historical qualities of the original architecture.

Photographs may be mailed to Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, 5 Foxfire Trace, Caswell Beach, NC 28465. Questions and pictures may be sent to Norma and Ron Eckard at norma_lee@mindspring.com.



Photos contributed

Original 1918 rifle range structure on Caswell Beach



Board members and supporters of Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range are shown with photographs sent in by Brunswick County residents. Seated at left is Norman Sprinthall, holding a photo of his father, Sgt. Archie Sprinthall from Rhode Island, who served in the 26th Division; Lois Sprinthall, seated next to her husband, holds a picture of her uncle, Fred Thies, a member of the Army Medical Corps; back row from left is Bob Schraffran, holding a photo of 1st Lt. Donald Frazer Crane of New York, submitted by his son, Frazer Crane of Southport; Russ Barlowe is holding a photo of the Williams brothers, Henry D. and Albert, privates in the Army from Shallotte, grandfather and uncle of David Williams of Shallotte; and Norma Eckard holds a picture of Sgt. Alvin York of Tennessee, a World War I hero who received the Medal of Honor.