

A Nags Head connection to Kill Devil Hill and The Wright Brothers Memorial

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Frank Stick was an ardent conservationist and he wanted to preserve both the natural beauty and the historical treasures of the Outer Banks. He became the driving force behind the creation of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, and had a hand in establishing the Wright Brothers National Memorial and Fort Raleigh National Historic Site.

Stick and his good friend and partner Allen R Hueth were originally from Asbury Park New Jersey. They first came to the Outer Banks on a hunting trip and fell in love with it. As residents of the booming Jersey Shore they envisioned a time when the little resort community of Nags Head could spread from Kitty Hawk to Hatteras. They soon began buying up Outer Banks real estate. Among their earliest purchases was an ocean-to-bay tract they bought from Willie Otis and Nellie Twiford of Nags Head.

Known as the Twiford tract it included Kill Devil Hill, the site of the first flights in a heavier than air machine by Wilbur and Orville Wright. Twiford had bought a 300 acre parcel from fellow Kill Devil Hills Lifesaving Service surfman Robert L Wescott in 1916.

According to Mickey Shortt, a Park Guide at the Wright Brothers Memorial, Wescott owned the land at the time the Wright brothers were using it for their glider trials at the turn of the century and paid Mr. Wescott a small fee to use the land. Other members of the lifesaving crew were witnesses to the first powered, controlled flight in 1903 and had been of great service to the Dayton brothers during their visits to the hill.

Almost immediately, Hueth and Stick sold the 772.26 acre Twiford tract to Charles Baker and Susan Sutton, also residents of the Jersey Shore, to raise cash for other real estate activities. A condition of the sale was that Baker and Sutton were required to donate Kill Devil Hill to the federal government if ongoing efforts to have a memorial erected were successful. The oceanfront part of this tract, which extended north for nearly a mile from the Kill Devil Hills Coast Guard Station, was first developed as Carolina Shores, then changed to Kitty Hawk Shores. The undeveloped back part is now the site of the Kill Devil Hills town hall, beach library, First Flight schools complex, and the Baum Bay subdivision.

Hueth and Stick went on to purchase another ocean-to-bay tract a mile or so north of Kill Devil Hill and began developing it early in 1927 under the name of Virginia Dare Shores. Associated with them in this venture was Captain Dan Hayman, a Kitty Hawk native, and the centerpiece of Virginia Dare Shores was a one hundred-foot wide avenue (as compared with the sixty foot-width of other streets in the development) named Hayman Boulevard. Virginia Dare Shores was laid out in blocks running 500 feet east to west and 200 feet north to south. Ocean Boulevard extended the length of the development, 250 feet back from the high water mark, and Bay Avenue paralleled the shoreline of Kitty Hawk Bay. In time a long dock was built as the south side end of Hayman Boulevard, with two large buildings over the water on the south side of the dock.

One of the buildings was used as an office, kitchen and dining room. The other, the pavilion, was designed for concerts and programs for excursions coming in by steamboat from Elizabeth City and tidewater Virginia, and for dances. There were two cement block cottages owned by the Virginia Dare Shores developers on the south side opposite the dock. In addition, one private summer cottage, also made of cement blocks using beach sand as the aggregate, was built adjacent to the proposed Ocean Boulevard. Known as the Weeks Cottage, it was the first summer cottage built north of the old Nags Head resort.'

