



Photos contributed

Attendees at the Derby Day event May 6 at Caswell Beach gather to watch a tabletop race.



A group of ladies admiring the National Centennial Flag also assisted with the blind pool, 50/50, the silent auction and other events at this year's Derby Day fundraiser. From left are Helen Radcliffe, Betsy Hamer, Jayne Rankin, Norma Eckard, Connie Hendrix and Dianna Suttle.

Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range present successful Derby Day fundraiser

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The success continues for the Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range as 65 people attended the Derby Day fundraiser in Caswell Beach on May 6. The 1918 Fort Caswell Rifle Range is approaching 100 years and the commemoration started back on April 6, 2017, the date the U.S. entered World War I.

Derby Day activities included tabletop horse races with the names of battles, leaders of military, soldiers, movies, songs and video games relating to World War I and a silent auction to raise additional funds. A Military Moment was given before each race by Carl Mauney, a World War I reenactor from Pennsylvania.

The Brunswick Town Daughters of the American Revolution chapter and Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range

conducted a commemoration at the site of the rifle range May 8. From now on, they will recognize important dates of famous battles and military leaders that arrived in France where the U.S. supported the allies against Germany, assisting them in preserving democracy.

The historic preservation project started back in 2011 when the homeowners of Caswell Dunes decided that something needed to be done to the structure that was in danger of collapsing. From then on, there was no turning back as the nonprofit moved forward with plans to save a Brunswick County piece of history, the only one known to exist. Almost anyone would be overwhelmed if they heard the cost needed to save the rifle range, as quoted by engineers.

The interior and exterior of the Caswell Dunes clubhouse was decked out with patriotic red, white and blue

balloons and blue tablecloths with American flags. The flags of France, Britain and the U.S. waved in the wind on the deck where guests gathered. Also featured was the National Centennial Flag that will be used in future commemoration events during the next year and a half.

There is also an urgent plea for the public to search for a family member that served in The Great War. Send a picture and any information about your family member, the branch of service, rank and above all stories about them. They are needed on the Wall of Honor on the website, caswellriflerange.com. Email the information to fcaswellriflerange@gmail.com.

Anyone wanting to become a part of the planning for next year's Derby Day fundraiser should email the group. To make a donation, go to the website and click on donation.