

1932 Fort Fisher Confederate Monument ^[1]

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Fort Fisher Confederate Monument
1932 Fort Fisher Confederate Monument
Kure Beach

^[2]

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<https://docsouth.unc.edu/commland/monument/297> ^[3]

Description: Located on Battle Acre at the Fort Fisher State Historic Site, this monument to Confederate soldiers is composed of a large bronzed clay eagle perched atop a tall granite column. The column, in Tuscan or simplified Doric style, stands approximately twenty-four feet high. The column rests on a large square base which itself sits on three shallow steps. The front face of the base contains a bronze plaque with the Battle of Fort Fisher depicted in bas-relief. A bronze plaque on the rear is inscribed with the dedication. One side is inscribed on the granite face with a commemoration of the Battle of Fort Fisher on December 24-25, 1864 and January 15, 1865. The other side is inscribed with a dedication to the Confederate soldiers who defended the fort. The eagle is depicted with its wings outstretched as it perches on a bronze sphere. The entire structure is mounted on a low rectangular brick platform with four shallow steps leading to the monument. This platform is not original to the installation of the monument.

A small stone marker dedicated to "OUR UNKNOWN CONFEDERATE SOLDIER" is located in the brick in front of the monument. An historic black and white photograph shows this plaque located in the grass at some point.

Images: [Monument with Confederate re-enactors](#) ^[4] | [Image of stone plaque in grass](#) ^[5] | [Battle Acre and monument, circa 1955](#) ^[6] | [Image of Battle Acre circa 1915-1930, with markers and flagpole](#) ^[7]

Inscription:

Front face, on bronze plaque: IN MEMORY OF THOSE MEN / OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES ARMY / WHO FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS / MANNED THE GUNS OF FORT FISHER / UNDER COMMAND OF / COLONEL [WILLIAM LAMB](#) ^[8] / MAJOR GENERAL W.H.C. WHITING / AND MAJOR [JAMES REILLY](#) ^[9].

Rear face, on bronze plaque: ERECTED BY / THE NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION / UNITED DAUGHTERS OF / THE CONFEDERACY / APRIL, 1932 / CECIL BRAWLEY LONG, PRESIDENT NEWTON / COMMITTEE / ANNIE ROGERS NEWELL, CHAIRMAN CHARLOTTE / AMANDA PARSLEY TAYLOR WILMINGTON / HANNAH ATTMORE LONG GRAHAM / MATTIE HADLEY WOODARD WILSON / ALICE DAVIS PECK WILMINGTON

Side, on granite: DURING THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES, / 1861-1865, FORT FISHER WAS THE DEFENCE / OF THE LAST OPEN PORT OF THE CONFEDERACY. / HERE A COMBINED NAVAL AND MILITARY / ASSAULT BY FEDERAL FORCES WAS REPULSED / ON DECEMBER 24 AND 25, 1864. / THE FORT WAS CAPTURED ON THE NIGHT / OF JANUARY 15, 1865, / AFTER THREE DAYS COMBINED BOMBARDMENT / BY MORE THAN 55 ENEMY WARSHIPS / AND ATTACKS BY 10,000 LAND FORCES. / THE GARRISON OF THE FORT, 1900 MEN, WAS /

COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF NORTH CAROLINIANS / WITH THE EXCEPTION OF 350 SOUTH CAROLINIANS. /

Side, on granite: IN MEMORY OF THOSE MEN / OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES ARMY / WHO FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS / MANNED THE GUNS OF FORT FISHER / UNDER COMMAND OF / COLONEL WILLIAM LAMB / MAJOR GENERAL W.H.C. WHITING / AND MAJOR JAMES REILLY

Platform, stone marker in brick: OUR UNKNOWN / CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

Dedication date: 6/2/1932

Creator: Charles C. Johnson, Architect

Materials & Techniques: Granite, bronze, clay, brick.

Sponsor: United Daughters of the Confederacy, North Carolina Division

Cost: \$The monument reportedly cost between \$9,000 and \$10,000.

Unveiling & Dedication: On the day of the dedication, the day before the anniversary of Jefferson Davis's birth, North Carolina Governor O. Max Gardner made the dedication speech. He spoke honoring the soldiers of the Confederacy and also praised the historic value of Fort Fisher as a strategic stronghold throughout the war. He commented that the difficult effort to hold the fort represented American strength. Mrs. Glenn Long, the president of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, also made a passionate speech on the importance of preserving Confederate heritage in the permanence of stone (SanCartier, p. 36). Many attended the dedication, including four veterans of the war, as well as many prominent members of the military and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. An invocation was delivered by the Reverend Thomas C. Darst.

An article in the *Wilmington Star* the following day also reported on a number of uninvited guests: a number of local cows joined the festivities, mooing loudly. Apparently several months earlier one of the cows, named Bossie, chewed the rope on the nearby flagpole marking Battle Acre and pulled down "Old Glory." According to the article, one attendee commented that the cow had succeeded in doing what "the whole Confederacy couldn't do - lower the American flag" (Butler, p. 212).

The unveiling had originally been planned for May 18; however, the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce apparently wanted to capitalize on attendance at the event to promote and coincide with the opening of the inland waterway and so donated \$250 to the dedication event in exchange for changing the date (Butler, p. 211).

Post dedication use: Annual Confederate Memorial Day observances and monument ceremonies.

[Image of monument ceremony, circa 1950s](#) ^[10] | [Image of men in Confederate uniform, circa 1961](#) ^[11]

Subject notes: The marker, built by Greensboro architect Charles C. Johnson, was raised by the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Construction of Fort Fisher began in 1861, and the fort remained in Confederate control until January 15, 1865 when Union forces captured the fort following an assault beginning on December 24-25, 1864. Fort Fisher was critical for supplying Confederate troops as far north as Richmond, with its connection to rail lines. In 1865 Wilmington was the only remaining supply route for the troops in Northern Virginia.

In 1935 remains thought to be those of a Confederate soldier were found in the area and moved to the base of the monument. This is presumably the origin of the stone commemorating the Unknown Soldier that sits at the base of the monument.

Location: The monument is located just off Battle Acre Road near Fort Fisher Boulevard South (U.S. 421). It is located on the right side of the road when traveling south. The front of the monument, with the eagle facing forward, faces roughly eastward toward the ocean. The Cape Fear river can be seen in the distance behind the monument.

Former Locations: The monument was relocated somewhat further inland in 1948 to protect it from encroaching erosion on the ocean side of the peninsula.

Landscape: The site is surrounded by grass.

City: Kure Beach

County: New Hanover

Subjects: Civil War

Latitude: 33.96939

Longitude: -77.91822

Subjects:

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Origin - location:

New Hanover County ^[15]

Kure Beach ^[16]

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