

SHORELINES – September 2004

Western EI

It's easy to overlook that the Town of Emerald Isle (EI) encompasses almost half of the 25-mile plus long island of Bogue Banks. As we continue our access and parking tour of Bogue Banks, we are going to divide EI in half to provide better resolution of the many facilities EI has to offer. This month, we're going to start with Western half of EI and immediately highlight the Town's newest facility; Station Drive Park.

Located at the intersection of Station Drive and Coast Guard Road, this new parking area with 16 spaces enables visitors and residents alike to reach the "Pointe", situated along the panoramic shoulder of Bogue Inlet. Once parked, access to the beach is available at the Channel Drive and Wyndtree boardwalks that also have additional handicapped parking spaces. The Station Street Park property was purchased by the Town of EI for \$30,000 that was offset with a grant issued by the N.C. Division of Coastal Management. An additional \$8,000 was furnished by EI for park infrastructure (grading, gravel, curbs, fencing, signs, etc.).

Whether you're a resident or renting a cottage for the week in EI, there's a good bet that a boardwalk/sandpath access leading to the beach is located at the end of your street. EI boasts the largest number of public access points in the State with almost 70, according to a new study initiated by the N.C. Shore and Beach Preservation Association and conducted by the N.C. Carolina Division of Coastal Management and N.C. Sea Grant.

In terms of parking, there are two "flagship" facilities in EI known as the Eastern and Western Regional Access, or affectionately referred to as "The Old EI Pier" and "The Islander", respectively. Each of these facilities can accommodate well over 225 automobiles and include picnic areas, outdoor showers, drink machines, and restrooms. The Western Regional Access (The Islander) is depicted in the maps included with this issue of *Shorelines* and is truly an unparalleled parking and access facility – there's even two well-manicured volleyball courts available for use.

And don't forget the 3rd Street Park, which as the name implies, is located just west of the intersection of 3rd Street and Ocean Drive at the eastern tip of EI. This area can accommodate 10 automobiles and includes a quaint handicap accessible overlook deck.

Next month we'll review Eastern EI and briefly discuss the "historic" section of town, Henry Fort, and other chronological tidbits.

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BEACH PARKING & ACCESS LOCATION MAP WESTERN EMERALD ISLE Bogue Banks, Carteret County

