

Salt Lake City Ancestry Trip

Registration Deadline is May 22

Last year The Heritage Library sponsored a trip to the world-renowned Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. The trip was very successful — participants were able to solve genealogical brick walls and everyone had a good time. So, the Library is doing it again.

This trip will be one week, August 30-September 5, leaving from Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport on Delta Airlines and staying at the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel.

The Family History Library is the “mecca” of genealogical research. Its noteworthy records include deeds, wills, military, tax and vital records from around the world. Trip members will have access to numerous computer databases, millions of rolls of microfilm and thousands of microfiche plus genealogical books and outstanding maps. At the Joseph Smith building, located close to the Family History Library, one is able to receive one-on-one assistance within a specific research area. Individual assistance is also available at the Family History Library.

There will be a Sunday evening “meet and greet” pizza party and a group dinner on Thursday evening. The trip package includes five full days of research at the Family History Library but trip members may elect to do other things some of the time. Salt Lake City offers interesting sightseeing.

Prices start at \$1290 and include airfare, hotel, research at the Family History Library, planned events and transportation from airport to hotel. There is a discount if you sign up before May 1. Call the Library for price information, 843-686-6560.



*Top, left: Last year's group dinner in Salt Lake City.
Top, right: Sightseeing the architecture around town.
Below: Salt Lake City's Family History Library.*



Don't Forget to Register by May 22

Officers:

Executive Director: Linda T. Piekut
President: Lou Benfante
Vice President: Ezra Callahan
Secretary: Allison Diercks
Treasurer: Peter Cooper

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FROM THE BOARD:

New Board Members

At the Heritage Library's Annual Meeting on February 19, there were five positions on the Board of Directors up for a vote. Harry Eschenbach, Linda Piekut and Lou Benfante were elected to another three year term. We are happy to welcome Allison Diercks and Sarah O'Leary Takacs, who were elected to their first terms on the Board. Here are brief bios of our two new Board members:



Sarah Takacs



Allison Diercks

Allison Diercks — A native of Indiana, Ali moved to the Lowcountry in 2012. She earned two degrees from Indiana University (B.A. '08, J.D. '11) and remains a die-hard Hoosiers fan. While in law school, Ali worked as a summer clerk for the Honorable Steven David, now a justice of the Indiana Supreme Court. She also worked in Washington, DC, in the office of Senator Evan Bayh and at Mil Mujeres, a nonprofit dedicated to providing legal assistance to domestic violence victims. Ali was admitted to the South Carolina Bar in 2013. In addition to law, her professional background includes higher education and student life. Ali lives on Hilton Head Island and practices with the law firm Berry and Carr.

Sarah O'Leary Takacs — Sarah is a broker at Keller Williams Realty. She was born in Pittsburgh, PA, and is a

graduate of the University of Pittsburgh where she studied Classics. Sarah moved to Hilton Head Island in 1981 via Stone Harbor, NJ, and has been active in the community and real estate for the past 33 years. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Hilton Head Area Association of Realtors. Previously, Sarah served as a Commissioner for the South Carolina Real Estate Commission and now serves on their Investigative Review Committee. She is active in the DAR's local William Hilton Chapter and is working on her genealogy. Sarah lives on Hilton Head Island with her son, Zac, who is a student at USC.

The Board met after the Annual Meeting and elected the following slate of officers:

President — Lou Benfante
 Vice President — Ezra Callahan
 Treasurer — Peter Cooper
 Secretary — Allison Diercks

Tuesday Morning History Programs

Tuesdays 10:30 am • \$5 per person

Reservations Required: Call 843-686-6560

April 14: The Role of Women in the History and Development of Hilton Head Island

April 21: The Gullah People and Culture

April 28: Historical Sites on Hilton Head Island

May 5: The Story of Santa Elena

May 12: Early Explorers of the South Carolina Lowcountry

May 19: The Role of Women in the History and Development of Hilton Head Island

May 26: Historic Sites on Hilton Head Island

June 2: The Gullah People and Culture

June 9: The Story of Mitchelville

June 16: The Role of Women in the History and Development of Hilton Head Island

June 23: Historic Sites on Hilton Head Island

Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

Heritage Library's annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon was held on March 18. Lou Benfante, President, opened the meeting. Here are excerpts from his talk.

As a volunteer of the Heritage Library I am proud and honored to welcome and thank our many volunteers. The quality and dedication of our volunteers have enabled us to do many wonderful things, some of which have received well deserved recognition: In 2013 our nonprofit, all-volunteer Library was the Hilton Head Island Organization of the Year; *USA Today* has named us as one of the ten great places in the world to conduct family history research; in 2014 the rollout of our Civil War databases at Town Hall had standing room only. None of these would have been possible without the tireless efforts and dedication of our head volunteer and Executive Director, Linda Piekut and the hard work of all of our volunteers. I know that, together, we can build on the successes we have already achieved to become a well-known source of genealogical assistance and a premier source



Left: Elizabeth Hanson learns she is being given the President's Award. Right: Volunteer of the Year Diana Luellen, with Lou Benfante and Linda Piekut.



of Hilton Head Island's history.

The President's award this year goes to a volunteer who previously served as President of the Women's Association of Hilton Head Island. In the past few years at the Library she has organized and indexed the Vertical Files and she has done a marvelous job of editing the *Observer* which is the Library's quarterly publication. The winner of the President's Award for 2014 is Elizabeth Hanson.

Linda Piekut presented the Volunteer of the Year award to Diana Luellen. Diana has worked hard to put together an excellent team of volunteers and is always on the lookout for new tidbits to share with them. She has been our Tuesday librarian for the past three years and has brought in many new members. She is an excellent researcher and has helped patrons complete their DAR applications. Diana is always willing to fill in when we are short-handed.

Heritage Library Legacy Society

The Heritage Library's new Planned Giving Program, Heritage Library Legacy Society, requests your support. Planned gifts provide financial flexibility and tax benefits for you and allow you to provide ongoing support to the Heritage Library.

Gifts through your will can reduce your estate taxes and ensure the future of the Library's mission. Gifts outside your will, such as naming the Heritage Library Foundation as a beneficiary on appreciated securities, retirement plans, or insurance policies will avoid probate.

The Heritage Library has been fortunate to receive both endowments and planned gifts throughout its history. It is thanks to the donations of individual donors and corporate sponsors and partners that the Heritage Library has remained a strong, vital nonprofit organization since 1997. Now we are able to recognize our benefactors formally through the Heritage Library Legacy Society.

We are happy to announce the first Founding Members of the Society: the Robert and Cora Peeples Charitable

Foundation, the Altstaetter Family Trust, Dori Dixon, and Peter Cooper. You, too, will become a Founding Member if, by June 30, you include the Heritage Library Foundation as part of your gift giving in your estate. Call Linda Piekut, 843-686-6560, and let her know that the Heritage Library Foundation is part of your estate planning. Your gift will contribute to the Library's mission to document and promote the history of Hilton Head Island and to continue to be a premier ancestry library.

An Adventure in Medieval History

I never would have thought I would be doing genealogy research at this point in my life. The need to find out my family history became apparent when my father died and I realized that my family knew very little about where they came from.

In the beginning I lacked information but as time went on, with each new discovery, I was able to piece together enough information to be able to continue. I



By Michelle Erbeck,
Member

have learned a lot along the way. I had to learn how to research land records and cartography. I had to learn to recognize some Latin, some German, and a form of old Medieval Script called "Kurrent" that was used in Catholic Church records. I had to learn a lot of history: the Crusades, the French Revolution and the 1848 German Revolution which led my ancestors to come to America.

The most fascinating part of this adventure was researching my family name and the history that went with it. I had to learn a lot of the regional history of Germany just to be able to understand how it applies to my own family line. German surnames took many different paths depending on what town was involved, what religion was involved and what history the town had at different times. I have learned that my family name comes from a little town in Germany called Niederselters where Seltzer Water originated. I found very distant cousins in Niederselters. I corresponded with the mayor, Dr. Norbert Zabel, of the town who has written about the town's history, *History of Niederselters*, and was a big help with my research. I discovered that he is a distant cousin



Niederselters, Germany (Photo courtesy of Dr. Norbert Zabel)

by intermarriages that took place in the 1700's. My family trail ends in Niederselters, back in the mid 1600's.

Along the way I have been in contact with other distant cousins, who have contributed information which would have taken me years to figure out on my own. I even have pictures of my great grandfather given to me by a cousin. We have compiled a family archive complete with my grandfather's military items and a Seltzer Water Jug that I was able to obtain from eBay, which once contained Seltzer Water from Niederselters. It is from the same time period that my last known descendants of my ancestors lived there. It is possible that they handled this very jug to fill it with Seltzer Water, which was the town's livelihood back then. To actually touch the jug that my ancestors may have used

is an exciting thing for me to be able to do.

I learned that my paternal grandfather had a military career beginning in the US Cavalry in 1904. He was involved in the occupation of Cuba, assigned to some of the same units as Patton, who was a rising star and outranked my grandfather. I discovered that there is a family story involving my grandfather and Patton and a horse. The story: a horse kicked my grandfather and Patton shot the horse. We all know that Patton was a SOB but he loved horses as much as my grandfather did, and my aunt was very young when my grandfather told her the story. I suspect there is some truth to the story, just not the way it was recounted by my aunt, but it is fascinating to think about.

[cont'd on Page 5]

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I learned that my grandfather and Patton both served under General Pershing at Fort Bliss, Texas during WWI and the Pancho Villa campaign, ending with my grandfather participating in the Battle of Ciudad Juarez in 1919. I learned that my grandfather was promoted through the ranks to 1st Sergeant, one rank below the highest rank a non-commissioned officer can achieve, and he did it in the minimum time required to reach that rank. While he did not achieve the glory Patton did, his military service was exceptional and of the same caliber as Patton's.

Along the way I have learned important genealogical research lessons and would like to share some with those who may be researching German or European ancestry.

Probably the most important lesson I have learned is to follow the history not the name — the latter seems to always intersect with the history. If you don't learn about the history of the area, you cannot understand what you are seeing when you locate treasured records that document your lineage. The history research turned out to be as critical to my success as the research of the name.

For instance, with the names Hans, Johann and Joannes, we have all made the mistake of putting these names in our research records as they are written in the records researched, which makes them appear to be different names. The name used depends upon where the writer was from and the time period. All these names are one name, "John." We should all use "John" when we document our family lineage. To demonstrate this, you can do a simple search on familysearch.org. If you use John,



Niederselters, Germany (Photo courtesy of Dr. Norbert Zabel)

Johan, Johannes or Joannes you will get the same records.

I have learned that things may not be as they appear. The history of a given day defines not only what was recorded in church records but also how it was recorded and the form in which it was recorded.

I also learned that using the services of a qualified translator, from the region of the world you are researching who is knowledgeable about old records and the words used at different times, is critically important, both to recognize important clues and to validate your research. The biggest Catholic record break occurred when I had the records professionally translated by Manfred Bockling of Koblenz who is the Koblenz Archivist, published author, and a translator. He found the reference to Selters which I had not discovered previously. This information led me to find a match in the family search records of submitted lineages.

I know I will never be able to visit Germany but if any Heritage Library Members visit Germany, Niederselters is worth a stopover. You can even tell the Mayor I sent you.

My sources include materials provided by the Mayor of Niederselters, Dr. Norbert Zabel, and his book that I purchased, *History of Niederselters*; Catholic Church records from LDS microfilms and directly from the Church archives; my aunt, my aunt's cousin, Maureen Moriarity, who is related by my grandfather's sister's marriage; NYC Immigrant bank records on ancestry; my grandfather's military records; and the perspective of the historian, archivist and translator, Manfred Bockling, who is published and resides in Germany.

Who would have thought that today, ten years later, I would have a documented lineage going back as far as the 1660's. I owe part of my success to the Heritage Library for arousing my interest in my own family history.

Wish List

The Library's computers are in constant use by volunteers and patrons, and we need every one of them to meet the demand. Two of our computers no longer have enough memory to run our programs and must be replaced. Your tax-deductible donation of \$850 would replace both of them. If your finances don't allow you to buy two, please consider buying one for \$425 or donating towards the purchase. Thank you for your support.



So much debris, but look at the view!

A New View for Zion

What a difference some tree trimming and brush cutting can make. If you haven't visited the Zion Chapel of Ease Cemetery lately, stop in and look around. With the help of Accommodations Tax Funding from the Town of Hilton Head Island, and with a lot of hard labor from a team of dedicated Rotarians in the Rotary Rocs Program, you can actually see sunshine in the cemetery and a view of the marsh.

In late January, Jones Brothers Tree Surgeons removed some dead trees and trimmed the deadwood from the canopy to open up the site and make the site safer for our visitors. This allowed sun to reach the Baynard Mausoleum and help to remove some of the moisture which has been a severe problem, causing deterioration.

On Saturday, March 7, several members of our local Noon Hilton Head Rotary Club, including RMC Landscaping, cleared and hauled away three truckloads of brush from behind the Baynard Mausoleum and one other location, creating a view of the marsh. We are grateful to them for the work they and their wives accomplished; it made a tremendous difference.

Our long-range goal is to create a venue for youth and adult learning experiences where the story of Hilton Head Island can be told. Help us to turn this quiet, little known cemetery into a site of historical importance. Please donate online at www.heritagelib.org or send a check payable to the Heritage Library designated for the Zion Chapel of Ease Learning Center to support our goal.

Sharing the Heritage

This is the third in our series about the wealth of information available through our historical organizations to all who live in or visit Beaufort County, SC.

Daufuskie Island

Daufuskie Island, an intriguing (residential) "Sea Island" which can easily be seen from Hilton Head is about 2.75 miles offshore with an Island surface of just eight square miles — accessible only by ferry or boat. In *An Island Named Daufuskie*, by Billie Burn, she states "Daufuskie is a Creek Indian word, which means 'sharp feather'."

The Daufuskie Island Historical Foundation was founded in 2001 — dedicated to collecting historical and cultural artifacts and history about the Island including Beaufort County census records from 1790-1850; initiating oral history projects; identifying, renovating, and restoring historic buildings on the Island; identifying and preserving extant slave dwellings; and placing historical markers at significant locations. The Janie Hamilton School Gullah Learning Center is also located in the Museum Complex. The Hamilton School is the setting for author Pat Conroy's, *The Water is Wide*. In 2014 the Historical Foundation was awarded the prestigious "South Carolina Historic Preservation Stewardship Award."

The Mount Carmel Baptist Church #2 was facing demolition. The Foundation was able to purchase the dilapidated building and restore it as the Billie Burn Museum. A timeline now graces the full length of a wall, conveying the history of the Island from 7,000 BC to the incorporation of the Foundation. A wide array of must-see Lowcountry gift items are available for purchase in the museum retail shops, including Lowcountry products, books by local authors, and Daufuskie Island map reproductions. Visitors may visit the Museum Complex, Tuesday through Saturday from 12:30-3:30 pm and by appointment.

Tour the exciting Rob Kennedy Historic Trail, at your own pace, by renting a golf-cart. Maps are available for these self-guided tours of the twenty most historical sites, including Haig Point tabby ruins, the Haig Point lighthouse, the old Haig Point Cemetery and the Strachan Mansion, while enjoying the bountiful beauty of the Island.

For more information about The Daufuskie Island Historical Foundation, please contact Executive Director, Nancy Ludtke, at nlfuskie@aol.com or 843-384-6363. Visit their website, www.daufuskieislandhistoricalfoundation.org. They welcome visitors, new members, and volunteers.

Watch for news of a special History Day Celebration in September 2015.

Questions? Contact Iva at ivasouth@aol.com.



*By Iva Roberts
Welton*

Want a Happy Family? Share Your History

In his book, *The Secrets of Happy Families*, author Bruce Feiler offers tips for having a happy family. Mr. Feiler suggests that families: create a family mission statement; share your family history; hold weekly family meetings; “fight right” by talking things over, coming up with three possible ways to solve the conflict and taking a family vote; have a family meal together, any time of the day is OK; and just try to incorporate some of these simple ideas into your family’s lifestyle.



By Carol Clemens

The most interesting tip for genealogists is this one; share your family history.

Feiler states, “Researchers at Emory (University) did a study which showed that the kids who knew more about their family history had a greater belief that they could control their world and a higher degree of self-confidence. It was the number one predictor of a child’s emotional well-being.”

Feiler adds that he does not mean to tell kids simply that their family is great, but rather to share how fam-

ily members worked hard to overcome challenges and hard times. Recounting real life stories from the family’s history provides children with positive role models and gives them confidence that they, too, can overcome problems.

So... do your research and don’t forget to tell your children and grandchildren about the hard working, problem solving, family members who set an example for others to follow. It just might have a positive effect on their emotional well-being.

You can read more at: <http://the-week.com/articles/444395/6-things-happiest-families-all-have-common>.

2015 Special Speaker Series: Hilton Head in the Modern Era



LAVON STEVENS

Personal Perspectives:

Gullah culture and my music and life in the Lowcountry

May 19 • Coligny Theater, Coligny Plaza

5:30 pm Wine Reception • 6 pm Talk

\$30 single • \$45 couple



Dates and Speakers Can Be Found at heritagelib.org.
For Reservations, Call the Heritage Library at 843-686-6560
or Coastal Discovery Museum at 843-689-6767, ext. 223.

Librarian’s Corner

Users of HeritageQuest.com, whether working in the Library or using Premier Remote Access, will welcome the changes in this important site. Redesigned by Ancestry.com, the site now has a familiar user-friendly interface as well as greatly enhanced content.



By Nancy Burke,
Head Librarian

Among the additions to content is a complete set of 1790 to 1940 censuses with images and every-name indexes. Mortality and Non-Populations Schedules are now available as well. The book collection has been expanded and now includes city directories with indexing. The set of Revolutionary War Pensions and Bounty Land records has been completed. Freedman’s Bank Records remain with indexing and fresh full-page register views. PERSI provides a valuable source of periodical articles. Researchers will find articles on locating material and valuable interactive census maps showing the changes in counties over the years.

HeritageQuest is a much more valuable resource with these changes and well worth the added cost of Premier Membership. More changes are coming and will be automatically available as they are made. Be sure to check this site regularly for new content.

Heritage Library Membership

24 New and 50 Renewal Members have joined our Heritage Library Family since the first of the year.

New Members

Hilton Head Island

Martha Girardi
Sheila and Jack Greenshields
Mary Jo and Terry Herron
Michael Jordan
Norma and Harry Miller
Joe Player
Lillian Regan
George Ann and Peter Salerno
Lisa Schaefer
Bonnie Shaw
Judith and Randall Tardy
Suzanne and Richard Thomas
Paula and James Wood

Bluffton

Patricia and Robert Bowditch
Ray Gilligan
Charles Michael
Dianne Rile
Deb Stremel

Renewal Members

Bluffton

Anita Bagley
Glenda Blakeney
Pre and Gary Moore
Bonnie Mucia
Lynda and Robert Rankin
Patti Smith
Ingrid Valentin

Hilton Head Island

Jan Alpert
Lynne and Richard Armfield
Joseph Black
Constance Blain
Barbara Born
Elizabeth Bundy
Fred Caswell
Peter Cooper
Suzanne and Patrick Crippen
Velma Docherty
Laurette Doscher and Lou Benfante
Michelle Erbeck
Debra Frieden
Linda and Robert Holmes
Charles Hunt, Jr.
Leveda and Bailey Keeling
Norman Levy
Anne Marie Meyerink
Kenlyn and Dennis Miller
Angela and Howard Mistical
Joan and William Nicol



By Laurette
Doscher-Benfante,
Membership Chair

Out of State

Susan and Ben Frank, Bethel CT
Rosemary and Sal Tripodi, Denver CO
Jean Morse, Lake Forest IL
Nancy and Wayne Brennehan,
North Muskegon MI
Kathy and Jim Smith,
Punxsutawney PA
Elizabeth Baxter, Raynham MA

Beth O'Keefe
Suzann Olson
Judith Pairan
Linda Piekut
Joanne and Richard Revie
Bart Ruby
Linda Russell
William Standen
Madeleine Thiessen
Sherry and George Westerfield
Margaret and Robert Zabawa

Okatie

Rose Russo-Aten

Out of State

Bruce Arnold, West Chester PA
Rickard and Rick Culbreth,
Savannah GA
Lynda DeLuryea, Newton CT
Mary Hess, Glen Ellyn IL
Roma Holmes, Buchanan MI
Lewis Little Jr, Savannah GA
Mary Kay and Robert Michel,
Reynoldsburg OH
Constance and Robert Prescott,
Camp Hill PA
Emma Simon, Savannah GA
Georgia and Henry West, Lake
Forest IL

Deep into the Heart of Germany

Presented by Suzanne and Patrick Crippen

Wednesday, May 6, 1:30-3:30 pm

Suzanne will speak of her journey from a superficial genealogist to a passionate researcher into her German heritage. Patrick will tell of his encouragement and support of his wife's great adventure. They will talk about research sources, resolving discrepancies, their trips to Germany and will share their stumbles and triumphs.

\$10 Library members; \$15 non-members

Reservations required: Call 843-686-6560

History Department

March has been just as busy as February and we anticipate another busy month in April and an exciting schedule for 2015.

The start time for the Tuesday lectures has been changed to 10:30 a.m., which gives visitors more time to look around the Library. Alternating topics has been successful. Many of the visitors who come for a lecture one week are coming back the 2nd and 3rd weeks to hear new talks. So far, we have spoken to 650 people in 2015 compared to a total of 750 for all of 2014.



By Dee Phillips

Attendance at Ft. Mitchel's opening in March was larger than expected and the rain even stayed away. Harry Eschenbach and Tom Martin have found time to help us at Ft. Mitchel. Sondra Shaw-Hardy and Georgia West have completed a new presentation on the early explorers of the Low-country which we will be offering soon. We have two new volunteers, Ray Gilligan and Paula Wood, who are ready to help. We welcome them to the History Department.

The Curriculum Committee continues to work on research for new lesson plans to put online. Members hope to present them to the State Social Studies Meeting in April or May in Columbia, SC. The committee hopes that their work has strengthened awareness of Hilton Head Island's Mitchellville History.

Lou Benfante will participate in the spring session of Osher Lifelong Learning Classes, and Lou and I will be doing two courses for Lifelong Learning of Hilton Head in the fall.