



The Heritage Observer

News from The Heritage Library

Bringing the Past to Life

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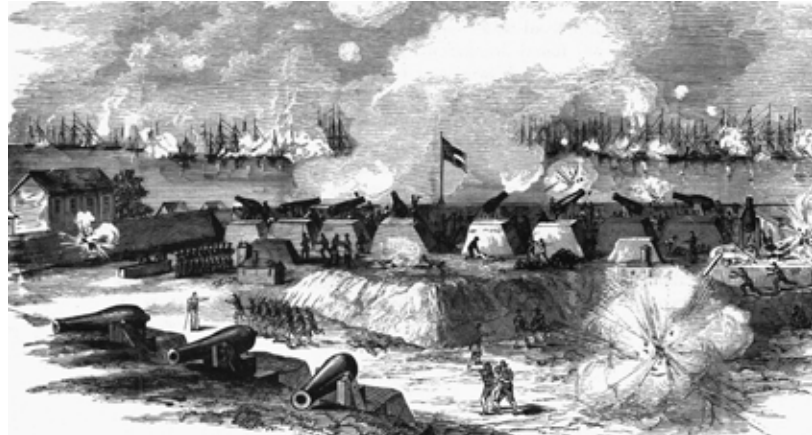
The People on Hilton Head During the Civil War

The Heritage Library is proud to announce on Wednesday, October 22, at 4:00 PM at Town Hall in Council Chambers the completion of its most ambitious project to date: "The People on Hilton Head Island During the Civil War." The public is invited.

Mayor Drew Laughlin will open the proceedings. Lou Benfante will speak about the research which was involved and will then introduce several native islanders who will relate stories about their ancestors that came to light with the assistance of the research. Refreshments will be served and the researchers will be available to answer questions.

"The People on Hilton Head Island During the Civil War" is the result of tireless efforts on the part of the Heritage Library's dedicated staff of volunteers. This project encompasses years of Island history, including an index of individuals who were treated at the Army Hospital on Hilton Head during the Civil War; an index of the soldiers who died on Hilton Head, were buried in the Government Cemetery, and later exhumed and moved to the National Cemetery in Beaufort or to their hometown; an index of U.S. Colored Troops of the 21st Regiment; and an index of the residents of Mitchelville, a Freedmen's Town on Hilton Head Island from 1862-1868.

Main sources for the research were U.S. Army pension applications, burial orders, Roll of Honor listings, and records from the General Hospital at the Union Army base on Hilton Head. The hospital, located next to Fort Walker (renamed Fort



Left:
*The battle of
Port Royal
Sound*

Below:
*Family with
soldier*

Welles by the Union), was a 400-square-foot-building with 500 beds that has yielded countless interesting stories during this research.

The Library has the letters of Charley Kline, a private in Company D of the 115th New York regiment. Charley was from Amsterdam, NY, and was stationed on Hilton Head at Fort Mitchel and at Fort Welles. His letters discuss a lot of sickness in the camps and he mentions Andrew Clark, a private in his company and Corporal Reuben Wright, also from his regiment, who both died of typhoid fever in June of 1863. Andrew Clark was originally buried on Hilton Head, but both his and Reuben Wright's remains are now found at the National Cemetery in Beaufort.

Also of interest is the story of Captain William Bailey, Jr. He was the Confederate Captain of Company G, 5th Florida Infantry. He had been captured at Gettysburg, was one of the Immortal 600, and was being held as a prisoner of war on Hilton



Head when he died of cirrhosis of the liver on March 5, 1865. He was originally buried on Hilton Head and his remains were later moved to the Bellamy Cemetery in Jefferson County, Florida.

These are only two of the many stories which the Library's volunteer researchers have found. The data which the Library volunteers have compiled will soon be available to the public on the Library's website.

The dedicated volunteers who were involved in this project are identified in the "Librarian's Corner" on Page 8.

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Letter from the President

Following up on the excellent collaboration with other Island organizations that made the 350/30 Celebration such a success last year, we have continued to work with other organizations in 2014.

We have worked with Coastal Discovery Museum to present our Speaker Series on the Modern Development of Hilton Head Island and we continue to work together on our Fort Mitchel tours.

We worked with the Mitchelville Preservation Project to present "Life Before Mitchelville" at the Westin on October 11th. There was a panel discussion featuring five renowned history professors who discussed living conditions for African Americans on Hilton Head Island from the Plantation era to the date of the battle of Port Royal on November 7, 1861.

As part of the Gullah Geechee Consortium of Beaufort County, we are helping to plan a weekend visit to the Lowcountry by Lonnie Bunch, Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. The Heritage Library will be hosting a meet and greet at the USCB Bluffton campus on Sunday evening, November 9th, in collaboration with the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry and the Mitchelville Preservation Project.

We are also providing a lecturer for three of USCB's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute's Fall semester classes: Mitchelville, the Battle of Fort Pulaski, and the Patriots and Planters lectures and a tour of the Zion Cemetery.

Please check our website for further information on these events.



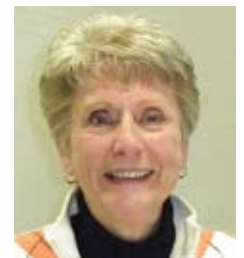
By Lou Benfante,
 President

Letter from the Executive Director

Twelve people took advantage of our ancestry research trip to Salt Lake City, seven of them Library volunteers, and we had a wonderful time. Our flights were on time, our hotel was comfortable (and right next door to the Family History Library), and we had time to take in some local entertainment and sight-seeing on our own. Read about all of our successes and failures in Sunni's article on page 4.

My own personal success was to find a living relative from Australia who was one of the elders working at the library. I went to a window to request a book and he looked at the information I was requesting and said, "I believe we are related." We discovered that he is my 6th cousin, and he had the information on the ancestor who "came over the pond" that I had been researching for fifteen years. While I had no luck finding my husband's Polish ancestors, I can still call the trip an unqualified success because I met Cousin Tony.

Many thanks to our Monday librarian, Sunni Winkler, who showed us how to prepare for the trip and who gave us a tour of the library to get us started.



By Linda Piekut,
 Executive Director



Linda Piekut and Cousin Tony

Sharing the Heritage

Beaufort County, once known as Beaufort District, abounds with exciting history. This is the first in an Observer series about some of the local organizations whose members enjoy researching, writing books, giving informative talks, and sharing our fascinating history. These organizations deserve our support. Our lives are richer with knowledge about this glorious area of South Carolina many of us have chosen to call "home." Below is information about one of them.



By Iva Roberts
Welton

The Beaufort County Historical Society

The oldest organization in Beaufort County, now celebrating its 75th year. A member-based organization dedicated to the study and preservation of history. As stated in their constitution, their purpose is to collect and disseminate accurate historical data with particular emphasis on Beaufort County, the proper marking and preserving of its historic sites, and the study of Beaufort County history in general.

The Society also supports the Beaufort District Collection Room, which contains a local history and archival collection at the Beaufort Public Library on Scott Street in Beaufort.

There are no offices. Meetings with noted guest speakers, authors and historians, are held quarterly at the Beaufort Yacht and Sailing Club. An optional lunch is served at 11:30 AM and the meeting begins at noon. All meetings are open to the public. President is Mary Lou Brewton, with a distinguished board and advisory board. A membership costs \$25.00 and can be mailed to: BCHS, PO Box 55, Beaufort, SC 29901.

On November 8, 2014 the BCHS will celebrate its 75th anniversary from 10 AM to 1:30 PM at the USCB Center for the Arts in Beaufort. The cost for members is \$25.00 and \$40.00 for non-members, which includes a box lunch and anniversary cake. Lecturers will include esteemed historians Dr. Larry Rowland, Dr. Stephen Wise, Michael Coker and Jim Spirek.

For tickets, please call the USCB Center for the Arts at 521-3145. For lecture information, contact Iva Welton at ivasouth@aol.com.

Zion Cemetery Restoration

If you look at the Baynard Mausoleum today, you will see a plastic tarp built over the roof and louvres cut into the door. The students of the Savannah College of Art and Design performed a condition study in the spring of 2013 and found that the biggest cause of the stone deterioration was moisture. The sinking roof panels allowed rainwater to flow into the structure and there was no ventilation to dry out the stone. Consequently, the stone is showing evidence of leaching, and plant material is growing inside the building.



This site was the home of the Zion Chapel of Ease, the planters' church, and the planters' cemetery. There are four Revolutionary War soldiers memorialized here. A masonic lodge and the militia muster house are shown here on an 1825 map. The site was the center of activity on the Island in that era.

The Heritage Library has undertaken an ambitious project to restore the Baynard Mausoleum and create a learning center on the site focused on the antebellum period of the Island's history. Envision a mausoleum restored to its formal glory with its slate tile floors and veneered burial chambers with a coffin visible inside protected by clear shatterproof glass doors. Envision a perimeter fence around the whole site and a restored fence around the mausoleum. Picture the marsh visible behind the structure as it would have been in the early days. Picture wooden benches to the side of the mausoleum where school children and adults will be able to sit and learn about life as it was on the Island in the 18th Century.

In the near future we will complete a site survey, funding for which has been generously donated by a Davant family descendant, Dr. Thomas Johns and his wife, Gretchen. We thank the Johns for their donations to this project. Next we plan to do some tree remediation work and also make additions to our informational signage to tell the story of the mausoleum and the site.

The total project cost will be more than \$250,000, much of which we hope to fund through grant applications. The mausoleum cost alone will be \$175,000, but it should then be preserved to last another 169 years. Would you help us? Any contribution towards this work will be greatly appreciated, and will help us save the Baynard Mausoleum and develop the site into a beautiful place of historical significance.

Musings About the Heritage Library- Sponsored Trip To Salt Lake City

By *Sunni Bond Winkler*

As anyone involved in genealogy knows, Salt Lake City is the “mecca” of genealogical research. The Latter Day Saints (Mormons) have traveled all over the world, photocopying millions of records for genealogical research purposes. September 7-13 found 12 individuals in Salt Lake City, all attempting to solve genealogical issues, some long-standing — in other words, “brick walls.” Trip participants included Linda Piekut, Executive Director; Peter Cooper, Board member; Sunni Bond Winkler, Monday Librarian and Research Leader for the trip; Diana Luellen, Tuesday Librarian; Volunteers, Pat Burke, Janice Niver, Barry Reardon; Library Members, Janis Gatschet, Carol Jennings, Terry and Shelley Block, and Betty Reardon (Barry’s wife).

The trip started with a bang — fortunately not created by a group member. An overturned tractor trailer very effectively blocked three lanes on I-95 causing great delays. Luckily, group members made it to the departure gate in time despite a few anxious moments.

On arrival night, the group had a great pizza party at the hotel in the Heritage Room; appropriate, don’t you think? All were anticipating the next day at the Family History Library. Group members possessed mixed levels of genealogical research experience and all had different goals.

The next morning, Monday, Sunni gave the group a brief tour of the FHL and introduced them to the kiosk from which cards had to be purchased in order to print materials from microfilm and books. Several members immediately purchased cards and got right to work utilizing their prior homework to pull microfilm from rows of cabinets and books from shelves. As the day at FHL closed,



Family History Library, Salt Lake City



Pat Burke doing research at the Family History Library

many of the group were reeling from seeing millions of reels of microfilm in one place. Millions, yes millions.

Tuesday through Friday were unscheduled days when group members went separate ways, doing their own research.

Some of the group visited the Joseph Smith Building located a short walking distance from the Library, where you can receive one-on-one assistance within specific research areas. You can also have fun posing for a photo in front



*Standing outside the Family History Library (from left):
Sunni, Diana, Barry, Peter, Pat and Linda*



Dinner at the Lion House Pantry Restaurant



The Heritage Library's Salt Lake City group



Dinner at Market Street Grill

of a mural of the Statue of Liberty. They will send you a copy via email.

Thursday night was a planned group dinner at The Lion House Pantry Restaurant located in the lower level of The Lion House, originally the home of Joseph Smith. Various aspects of individual research were discussed and some participants gave Sunni their written thoughts — successes and disappointments.

What were some of the successes and disappointments cited? Many were disappointed that books were missing from

shelves; in some cases a book that was desperately needed for research. All seemed pleased with the individual assistance that was available at both the FHL and the Joseph Smith Building. While only a few had major successes, several did find clues to other research sources. Improved research capabilities ranked high, with several individuals able to find specific information that they had been unable to find previously. Sunni went with about ten research projects for others and had success with about six. Her biggest suc-

cess was finding the will of a Revolutionary War patriot and being able to connect him to the son that she already had proven to be in her lineage. Barry found a great uncle that he had previously been unaware of — as he said, “sometimes it is better to be lucky than good.” Pat found information on probable ancestors, two Revolutionary War patriots. The best stated disappointment was the one from Peter who said, “I discovered that I am not descended from English nobility, as my father had always claimed.”

Speaker Series

We conclude our 2014 “Hilton Head in the Modern Era” series with two presentations you won’t want to miss. On November 18, Robert Onorato will speak on “Developing 2000 Acres in the Middle of Paradise” about the development of Palmetto Dunes and Shelter Cove. Robert first arrived on Hilton Head Island in 1970 as a successful developer from the West Coast who had supervised the development of 26 community projects on 72,000 acres in California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. He traveled to the Southeast at the request of Phipps Land Company of Atlanta, a lender to the new Palmetto Dunes Community, to make an appraisal of the property. Bob immediately saw the potential of this beautiful and sparsely populated Island, and was named President of Palmetto Dunes Resort, Inc., in 1972. He joined with Charles Fraser and Fred Hack Sr. to create a resort and residential lifestyle envied by the rest of the world. He worked for 44 years to create and improve upon the Sea Pines model. Bob has been an influential presence on Hilton Head Island for all of those 44 years.

On December 9th we have a special presentation by the women of Sea Pines. Since we have concentrated our talks this year on the men’s accomplishments in the early development years, we felt it was only fair to let the wives talk about living and raising children on the Island in those early years. Lois Masteller, Nelle Smith, Susan Woods, and Mary Coleman will present a panel discussion to tell their stories of those challenging years. A must-attend presentation.



Robert Onorato

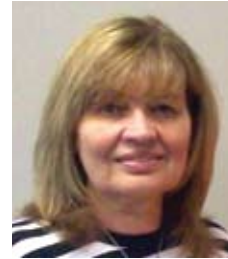
History Department

September 23 was the season’s start date for our Historic Sites series, which will continue on Tuesdays through November 25. They begin at 10:00 AM, are held at the Library, and a question and answer session follows when desired. The Fort Mitchel tours, in conjunction with the Coastal Discovery Museum, will continue on Thursday mornings through November.

Dee Phillips just presented a shortened version of “The Role of Women in the History of Hilton Head Island” at Wexford Plantation for the Indigo Run Women’s Association. Lou Benfante attended to furnish information about the Library. There were 89 women present.

We have a new brochure available for marketing which tells about the Library. The brochure gives a brief description of Fort Mitchel and Zion Chapel of Ease Cemetery, our two historic properties, and offers information about our historical lectures and genealogy classes. Information is included about the free one-hour genealogy sessions. There is a membership application in the brochure that can be torn out, completed, and mailed to the Library. There is a space where special Library events can be inserted. This new brochure is an excellent tool for many different purposes. Please take a look at it the next time you are at the Library. We hope that you will be as excited as we are about this new brochure.

Dee will be leading a WAHHI History Interest Group. She will make four presentations with emphasis on “Women and their Foot-



By Dee Phillips

prints on Hilton Head Island.” The dates in 2014 are October 9 and November 13; January 15th and February 27th in 2015. Each session will begin at 10:00 at the Library and will concentrate on a particular time period ranging from prehistoric times

to today.

The curriculum committee continues to work on the History of Mitchelville lesson plans for teachers to utilize. They plan to have these on our website by November 1, 2014. At that time they expect to continue working on lessons that will be used for Black History Month in February. Dorothy Scanlin, Anita Singleton-Prather, Lou Benfante, Judith Russell, Marion Payne, Joyce Wright, Ezra Callahan, and Dee Phillips are curriculum committee members.

Mary Ann Cyr continues her emphasis on Mitchelville in her Hilton Head Prep 6th grade Social Studies class. She is on the curriculum committee too and working with other members on the lesson plans.

Lou Benfante will teach three classes in the fall semester at USCB’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. In the past his classes have filled quickly and this fall is no exception.

Lou has joined the boards of the Gullah-Geechee Consortium and the Mitchelville Project.

Thank you to all at the Library who have assisted in our preparations and meetings this year. We could not begin another fall without the help of the officers and volunteers of the Heritage Library Foundation.

Heritage Library Membership

This Quarter 20 New and 37 Renewal Members have joined our Heritage Library Family.



By *Laurette
Doscher-Benfante*
Membership Chair

New Members

Hilton Head Island

John Appelbe
Kathleen and Richard Bart
Jay Fairvalley
Jonathan Johns
Rose McGee
Janet Turley

Beaufort

Ursula Mercier

Bluffton

Michelle and Richard Eberhart
Patricia A. Gradman
John Lynch
Margaret Mary and Thomas Martin
Dedra and Thomas Roberts
Marsha and Philbert Williams

Okatie

Judy Fox

Out of State

Charles Boggues, Hartsdale NY
Kenneth Butler, Hempstead NY
Laverne Gantt, Rochdale Village NY
Carol Jennings, Zionville NC
Elizabeth Lipp, Dayton OH
Donna and Gregory Wannemacher, Lima OH

Renewal Members

Hilton Head Island

Christine and Terry Baehr
Marianne and Maynard Baker, Jr.
Jill and William Bender
Isobel Bitner
Patricia Burke
Mary Ann Compher
Guyla Hurst Daley
Priscilla Dement
Mary and Richard Goodrich
Elizabeth Hanson

Marilyn Hayes
Jane Hill
Catherine and Daniel Hofmann
Suzanne Huey
Diana and David Luellen
Marian and Porter Morgan
Deborah Pepe
Carol Pfeifle
Elisabeth and Barrett Riordan
Carolyn and James Robinson
Mary Ryan and Erin Rota

Diane and David Sanders
Ronni Silett and Booker Ingram
Verne Singleton
Karen and Melvin Slotnick
George Stubbs
Theresa and Harvey Varnet
Donna Waller

Beaufort

Ursula Mercier

Bluffton

Shelly and Terry Block
Deborah DuBrucq
Janis Gatschet
Joe Grant
Jane and Ken Michel
Joanne Miller
Margaret Pickett
Cassie and Michael Sanders

The People of Mitchelville



By *Ezra "Cal"
Callahan*
Chairman of the
Mitchelville Project

The Clemson students will return to Hilton Head Island the first week of November to participate in refresher courses in genealogy and oral history. Then they will start a new project; researching the history of the Mitchelville churches.

First African Baptist Church was the first church started in Mitchelville in 1862 — 152 years ago. Queen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church was started under an oak tree in 1865 and will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2015. St. James Baptist Church, the third church in the town of Mitchelville, is still located in Mitchelville in the section known as Cherry Hill.

The Clemson students will return in the spring of 2015 to continue with this program.

At present we are contacting additional colleges and universities with the plan to expand our People of Mitchelville project.

Download Our
Free App!



heritagelibrary.appsm.com

Librarian's Corner

The rollout of four significant databases on the Library's website this month was made possible by the dedicated work of a number of Library volunteers who have given countless hours to researching and indexing. Research on the Civil War pension applications of soldiers of the 21st Regiment, US Colored Troops, began eight years ago by John Griffin and Barbara Vernasco with a grant from the Heritage Golf Classic and has continued with the work of Glenda Blakeney, Bob Blot, Nancy Burke, Diana Luellen, and Jane Michel. John Griffin and Barbara Vernasco also conducted research to discover those who died on Hilton Head during the Civil War and were listed in the Army Hospital burial orders and the Roll of Honor. Their work has been continued by Paul and Marty Anthony and Isobel Bitner, whose efforts



By **Nancy Burke,**
Head Librarian

have provided additional information on these names. Paul and Marty have also discovered the names of many additional casualties not in the extant burial orders or the hospital records. Those names will be released in a subsequent database.

Collaboration with the Mitchelville Preservation Project led to a search for the names of the original Mitchelville residents. Research funded by the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry and the Bargain Box uncovered the identities of nearly seven hundred inhabitants of Mitchelville. That work was undertaken by Nancy Burke, Carol Ells, Pre Moore, Linda Piekut, and Patti Smith. Many of those names were found in the Army Hospital records, which were transcribed by Pre Moore.

The Library's sincere thanks go to these volunteers who have provided such substantial additions to our knowledge of the Civil War era on Hilton Head Island. These databases would not have been possible without their efforts.

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