



# The Heritage Observer

News from  
The Heritage Library

*Bringing the Past to Life*

Vol. 9, No. 3

July 2017



## Heritage Library Goes On The Road This Summer!

— TOURS & PROGRAMS ALL OVER THE ISLAND —



A PERFECT TOUR FOR PHOTO & HISTORY FANS!

### TAKE A HISTORIC TOUR - BY BIKE!

The waterfront corridor of Squire Pope Road is rich in unique history. Learn about Hilton Head Island's history of Native Americans, The Civil War, Reconstruction, Fishing and Farming and the Gullah Community during this 1 & 1/2 hour bike tour.

WEDNESDAYS AT 10AM

\$15/ADULT • \$10/CHILD • AGES 10+ ONLY

Safe, casual and fun, this tour requires helmets. Bring your own bike. Bug spray and water suggested. Leaving from The Sailing and Rowing Center at Squire Pope Community Park - 137 Squire Pope Rd.

Book online at [heritagelib.org](http://heritagelib.org)



### ZION LIVING HISTORY TOURS

- Corner of Hwy. 278 & Mathews Drive -  
Meet historical characters who lived on the island during the Antebellum period and see inside the oldest existing structure on Hilton Head Island. Tour where Revolutionary War soldiers are buried.

EVERY FRIDAY AT 10AM

\$12 PER ADULT • \$7 PER CHILD

Book online at [heritagelib.org](http://heritagelib.org)



### HISTORIC FT. MITCHEL IN HILTON HEAD PLANTATION

Join The Heritage Library for a tour of the Civil War battery on Skull Creek built to protect Port Royal Sound and the Seabrook Coaling Station.

EVERY THURSDAY AT 10AM

\$12 PER ADULT • \$7 PER CHILD

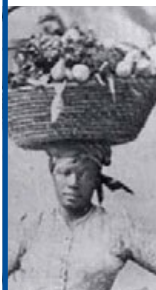
### - DINNER TOURS -

MONDAY EVENINGS AT 6PM

Join General Ormsby Mitchel for a three-course meal at the Old Fort Pub in Hilton Head Plantation and enjoy a talk on the battle of Port Royal and Hilton Head Island during the Civil War. After the dinner and talk, General Mitchel will lead a guided walking tour of Fort Mitchel.

JULY 10, 17, 24, 31 • \$40 PER ADULT • \$20 PER CHILD

Call Old Fort Pub at 843.681.2386 for reservations.



### HISTORIC SITES ON HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Join us for a 1 and 1/2-hour talk about the history of Hilton Head Island and the historic sites on the island accompanied by a map that you can then use for your own self-guided tour of the sites by car or by bicycle.

MONDAYS AT 11AM AT COLIGNY THEATRE

JULY 10, 17, 24, 31 • AUGUST 7 & 14

\$10 PER PERSON, NO RESERVATIONS NECESSARY!



1 North Forest Beach Drive

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852 William Hilton Parkway, Suite 2A  
 Hilton Head Island SC 29928  
 843-686-6560  
 1501 Bay Street  
 Beaufort SC 29902  
 843-379-1550  
 www.heritagelib.org

**Editor:**

**Elizabeth R. Hanson**  
 erhanson@hargray.com

# Sharing the Heritage

There are so many fine Beaufort County historical organizations, but this is one you may not have heard of: The Beaufort County Historical Resources Consortium. The Consortium was founded by Grace Cordial in 2003. Grace is the head of the Beaufort District Collection at the Beaufort County Library in Beaufort.



By Iva Roberts  
 Welton

The Consortium is a group of non-profit institutions whose membership includes a wide spectrum: libraries, museums, historical preservation societies, historical sites and other heritage organizations across Beaufort County. The membership collaborates, using their resources to heighten public and civic awareness of the history of our County.

Members provide public access to documents, research materials, artifacts, maps, structures and exhibits. Many present programs related to Beaufort County history. They seek to preserve and promote their historical and cultural collections that reveal Beaufort County's critical role in the region, state and nation.

The Consortium meets three times a year and dates for meetings are set at the January meeting. I always look forward to sharing news from our Heritage Library and hearing news from the other members.

Members are:

- Archaeological Society of SC/Hilton Head Chapter
- Beaufort County Historical Society
- Beaufort District Collection, Beaufort County Library
- City of Beaufort Planning Department, City Historic Preservationist
- Coastal Discovery Museum
- Daufuskie Island Historical Foundation
- Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Collection
- Heritage Library History and Ancestry Research Center
- Historic Beaufort Foundation
- Parris Island Museum
- Parrish Church of St. Helena Archives
- Penn Center
- Port Royal Historical Foundation
- Port Royal Maritime Center
- The Santa Elena Foundation

## Live closer to Beaufort?

Why not research your ancestry  
 at our Beaufort branch?

**BEAUFORT BRANCH**

1501 Bay Street  
 Tue & Wed  
 10am - 3pm  
 843-379-1550

# A Genealogy Success Story

My husband and I recently did DNA testing through Ancestry's service. When the results were completed, I noticed a "first cousin match" in the results, on my husband's side. Thinking it was probably one of the "known cousins" and being busy, I did not contact the person immediately. Shortly after, I received a message through Ancestry from the person, and found she was NOT one of the cousins I knew about.



By Carol Clemens

Here is part of her message:

*"I was actually adopted. I found my birth mother's family several years ago and all I know about my father's side is that he was a policeman with the Downey Police Department. I'm trying to figure out his name due to the fact that by the time I found my birth mother she was deceased, and*

*my siblings, through her, do not remember his name. They have asked the older family members but no one can remember his name. Maybe this story rings a bell for someone in your family. I hope I'm not opening a can of worms that is, or was, a secret for your family. If you have any information, please let me know. I don't need to meet anyone, I just want to get some family medical history and have names for my children's family trees."*

The clue was the fact that her father was a Downey, CA, police officer. My husband's Uncle Walt was a police officer in California and later an Alaskan State trooper. I had documentation of his residence in Downey for the correct time span. Piecing together my research, her limited knowledge, and DNA, we have no doubt that she is indeed the daughter of Uncle Walt.

I have added her info to the family tree and shared it with her. From knowing nothing other than the occupation of her father and his residence,

she now has family history going back to 1801 in Norway. She has the colorful story of her Grandfather "jumping ship" in New York harbor in 1923 and his purchase of "immigration papers" for \$50 that he believed made him a US citizen. She now knows about her half-brothers and sisters and has photos of many of her Norwegian ancestors.

Best of all, she will be meeting many family members this summer. My husband's mother recently passed away and we are holding a Celebration of Life Service in her hometown in up-state New York. Our "new" cousin and one of her daughters will be making the trip from the West Coast to join us in celebrating the life of the aunt she never knew.

I am delighted that I could play a part in this wonderful success story. It would not have been possible without both careful, documented research and the benefits of science through DNA testing.

## Reclaim the Records: Fighting to Return Public Records to the Public

Reclaim the Records is a not-for-profit organization started in 2015. Consisting of genealogists, historians, researchers, and others, its goal is to use state Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) laws to force governments to turn over copies of important genealogical records that are not currently online or readily available to the public. Once obtained, Reclaim the Records digitizes the data and puts it online for anyone to freely access.

It has gone to court when government agencies failed to comply with FOIA requests in a timely manner, winning several groundbreaking law-

suits in New York State. Currently, Reclaim the Records has focused on New York, New Jersey, and Missouri records, but is expanding to other states.

In two short years, the organization has already had great success. Its most recent accomplishment was the release of the New York State Death Index. Although the Index is available in the New York State Archives in Albany, access is controlled, the hours are limited, and the process is antiquated. Now you can research the Death Index online from home.

Reclaim the Records uploads data to the following free website:

<https://archive.org/>. It is currently uploading the NYS Death Index and hopes to have the entire Index covering 1880-1956 posted by the end of August.

It has a website with a form for suggesting records for the Organization to try to obtain, a newsletter sign-up, and a list of information already obtained and data in progress. Go to: <https://www.ReclaimTheRecords.org/> for information on what is available.

According to Reclaim the Records, "The bottom line is this: we want public records to be returned to the public. The law is on our side and we're not afraid to use it."

## Librarian's Corner

# They Served: Stories of the USCT on Hilton Head

For more than two years Library volunteers abstracted and edited stories from the pension applications of the US Colored Troops who served in the Union army in the Civil War and who were from Hilton Head or settled here after the war. These stories are treasure troves of family genealogical data and interesting accounts of the difficulties of both war time service and the years following the Army's departure. They detail daily hardships, the prevalence of disease, the poverty of some veterans, and the successes of others.



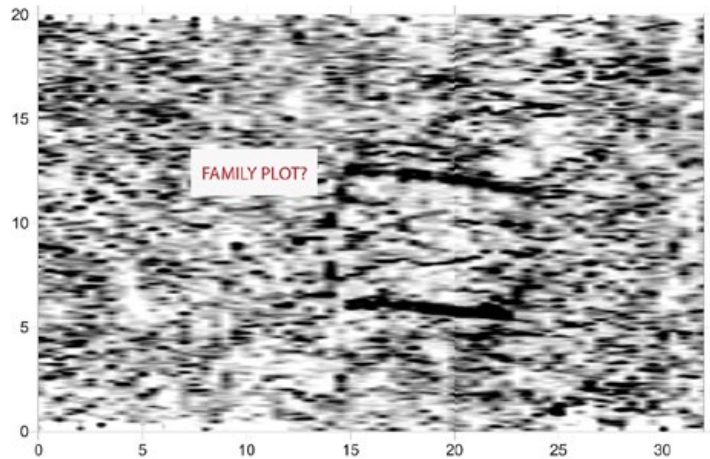
By Nancy Burke  
Head Librarian

From these applications we learn how names often changed as men enlisted. For instance, William Simmons borrowed a pass from Ira Sherman, a food vendor, in order to enter Fort Walker. In the process "he was immediately taken to the Provost and his name was recorded as Ira Sherman. He never saw or heard from the real Ira Sherman again but he was known as Ira Sherman throughout the war."

We learn of the deaths of some seven soldiers who drowned in a boat accident on the Stono River while serving near Charleston, and the fate of the soldier who was executed for mutiny. While many of the veterans suffered from severe poverty due to disabilities related to the war, Mary Brown, widow of Prince Brown, accumulated 79 acres of land and a building valued at \$230.

The stories cover the period from the slave era through the early 1900's and the pension applications are often primarily stories of the widows left behind. A number of native islanders still living on Hilton Head are descendants of these soldiers.

These stories are told in *They Served: Stories of the United States Colored Troops from Hilton Head Island, SC*, compiled by Nancy Burke, Patricia Burke and Susie Marquis. The book can be purchased at the Library and on Amazon.com.



An image of a possible family plot in the Zion Chapel of Ease Cemetery, discovered by Dr. Matt Sanger's team during a January study.

## Zion Update

We received a preliminary report from Dr. Matt Sanger, who, with his team, performed the ground-penetrating radar study of the cemetery in January. Their results were mixed, with the discovery of several unmarked graves, some intact gravestones under the surface, and a previously fenced family plot (see picture), but with no clear indication of the church's location.

The plot is outlined by "buried materials of high density" that are likely concrete or tabby footers that once supported a fence around a plot. The outline measures 6 by 8 meters, and is 3-5 cm below the surface. One of the gravestones is in the newly discovered family plot, and another in the Kirk plot.

Dr. Sanger and his students came to Hilton Head last summer to perform an archaeological dig at the Sea Pines Shell Ring. They will return this summer to continue that dig, and they have obtained the required permit to continue some light excavation at the cemetery to expose the family plot and the flat gravestones.

To prepare for that work, we are going to clear more of the brush between the cemetery and Darling Eye, where we believe the church was located. We will have a work party on Saturday, July 8 at 9:00am. So, bring your clippers, loppers, work gloves, chain saw, and tarps, and help us make history.



By Linda Piekut  
Executive Director

# ZION CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DONORS

The Heritage Library has launched this capital campaign to preserve the Baynard Mausoleum and create an outdoor learning center where programs for adults and children will be held. The following donors are helping to achieve these goals.

If you wish to make a contribution, send your check marked "Zion Fund" to Community Foundation of the Lowcountry, Post Office Box 23019, Hilton Head Island, SC 29925.



## \$20,000+ Patriots

The Church Mouse Boutique Thrift Shop  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Smith

## \$5,000 - \$9,999 Founders

Dr. George Mosse Chapter NSSAR  
National Park Service / South Carolina Department of Archives and History  
Pam and David Schofield  
VanLandingham Rotary Club  
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Webb

## \$10,000 - \$19,999 Preservationists

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## \$1,000-\$4,999 Historians

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Womens Club of Sea Pines  
Chuck Yahres

## Bike Tours are Back

We have a dedicated group of Bike Tour volunteers ready to guide you to the historic sites on Squire Pope Road. We gather at the Squire Pope Community Park Sailing and Rowing Center, and travel from there to the Amelia White Cemetery and the Green's Shell Ring. From there we travel to the Cotton Hope plantation ruins to hear about Captain John Stoney and his many holdings on Hilton Head Island. Back to stop at Benny Hudson's Seafood Store to walk the dock and hear about the Hudson family business from Tonya Hudson herself.

Bring your bike and join us on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 on Squire Pope Road. The cost is \$15 per adult and \$10 per child, 10 and over. No children under 10, please. Helmets are required.

Be sure to register in advance, online at [heritagelib.org](http://heritagelib.org).



## What a Wonderful Gift

The American Revolution Round Table-SC has given Heritage Library \$500 with which to buy costumes for our Zion guides. This is a gift that Zion Cemetery visitors will enjoy for years. Many thanks from all of us at Heritage.

John W. Basch, President, responded to our "thank you" with, *You are very welcome. ARRT-SC is very happy to support Heritage Library. As an organization, ARRT-SC promotes our American heritage as it relates to the Revolutionary War so our chapter feels that helping to preserve our heritage is very important.*

## Donations

### IN MEMORY OF:

*Larry Burke* - from:

Sunni Bond

Marie Danforth and Stephen Appell

Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Facchiano

Fitzgerald & Forrest Charitable Fund

Dr. & Mrs. William Kingsbury

SCYC Mah Jong Ladies

### IN HONOR OF:

*Leslie Richardson* - from:

Emily Geiger Chapter NSDAR

*Lou Benfante* - from:

HHP Women's Club

## Heritage Happenings

### Reservations Required

Online: [heritagelib.org](http://heritagelib.org)

### Classes and Lectures resume in September

#### ANCESTRY CLASSES

Wednesdays at the Library,  
1:30-3:30

\$10 members, \$15 non-members

**Sept. 20 & 27** - Starting Family Research, two-session class;  
\$25 members, \$35 non-members

**Oct. 4** - Get With the Program, Family Tree Maker

#### HISTORY LECTURES

Mondays at Coligny Theater, 11am  
1 North Forest Beach Drive  
\$10 per person, no reservation required

**July 10, 17, 24, 31; August 7, 14**

1 1/2-hour talks on Hilton Head Island History and Historic Sites. Includes a free map to take home

Tuesdays at the Library, 10:30am  
\$10 per person

**Sept. 19** - Hilton Head Island in the Civil War

**Sept. 26** - The Story of Santa Elena

**Oct. 2** - Pirates of the Lowcountry

Thursdays at the Library, 7:00pm  
\$10 per person

**Sept. 21** - Military Events on Hilton Head Island

**Sept. 28** - Pirates of the Lowcountry

**Oct. 5** - The Story of Mitchelville

**Oct. 19** - The Gullah People and Their Culture

# Heritage Volunteer

## Richard Bart

Our volunteer for this issue, Richard (Rick) Bart, joined our Library's Volunteer Staff when he learned that the Heritage Library offered assistance to people researching their family histories. He knew this was exactly what he always wanted to do when planning his retirement activities. Rick comments, "I am having so much fun with my work at Heritage that I should be paying for the privilege of being a volunteer."

Rick started researching his family's genealogy after attending a family reunion in 1989, when Family Tree Maker was still in the old DOS days. He expanded his genealogical interest while living in Taunton, Massachusetts when he collaborated with the Old Colony History Museum and the Catholic Cemetery Office, documenting people buried in the five Catholic Cemeteries in Taunton. In 1998 he wrote and published, *The Pease Family of Great Baddow, England*, a book about his brother-in-law's family.

Growing up in Tonawanda, New York, Rick enlisted in the US Air Force after graduating from high school. Following his discharge after a four-year stint in the military, he worked as an appliance repairman for a supermarket chain before joining Raytheon as an engineer. While employed at Raytheon, he attended Northeastern University in Boston, earning a degree in Electronic Engineering. His career then took him to Kopin Corporation, where he worked until retiring in 2013.

Kathleen (Kathy) Fraga and Rick



married in 1970. They have three grown children: in Marion, Massachusetts; Pasadena, California; and Washington, DC. Kathy's career was with preschool organizations and her retirement activities include volunteering at Hilton Head Hospital.

In 2013, Kathy and Rick visited friends who had retired to Hilton Head, fell in love with the Island and bought the third house they were shown; moving here in January 2014.

Rick joined the Library's volunteer staff in June 2015, helping walk-ins find their family histories. Then Linda suggested that he research life on the Island from the quiet times up to the bridge. Inspired by Mary Ann Evans', (pen name George Eliot) quote, "Our dead are never dead to us until we have forgotten them," he embarked on his project to create *Hilton Head Island People*, a Hilton Island family

tree in Ancestry.

Everyone in the Hilton Head Ancestry Tree has a tie to Hilton Head. The tree includes the original plantation owners, Civil War soldiers and sailors, Freedmen and their teachers, Island developers, business owners, and everyday people — from the 1600s to the present day. At the time this article was written there were 8,020 people in the tree; a tree growing every day Rick works. Currently he is wrapping up the reconstruction era on the Island, researching the teachers sent to school the freedmen. He has no set plan for his next additions, he bounces around in history.

When Rick enters a person in the tree, he has the vitals (birth/death dates, birth/death places) and family members. He includes as many ancestors and descendants as he can find through research including members who are currently living whose information is kept private and cannot be accessed by Family Tree viewers. He includes biographical information and pictures in the gallery section for each person. This information is also available in "Hilton Head Island People and Places" in the Library's shared/docs. Biographical information is available for approximately 1/10th of the people in *Hilton Head Island People*.

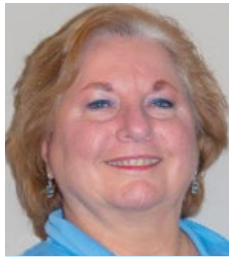
Rick says, "I get the greatest thrill finding the individual stories and the family connections. Names, dates and places are nice to know, but the stories bring the deceased back to life."

**Did  
You  
Know?**



Do you know that every time you shop at Kroger you can automatically donate money to the Heritage Library? All you have to do is swipe your Kroger Plus Card when you make a purchase. To get your card, go to [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com) and follow the simple instructions. A reminder — if you already have a card, it has to be renewed annually.

# Heritage Library Membership



**By Laurette  
Doscher-Benfante**  
*Membership Chair*

Welcome to 13 New and  
62 Renewal Members  
who have joined our  
Heritage Library family.

## NEW MEMBERS

### South Carolina

#### Bluffton

Helen and Thomas Delaney  
Carol and Phil Jones  
Claire and Howard Larson  
David Moon  
Craig Pelley

#### Hilton Head Island

Heather and Robert Cherichella  
Steven Dreamer  
Lesley Green  
Alice Page  
Sharon and Ricardo Pecora  
Lauren Piper, Quincy Martel  
Carolyn Schmidt

#### Okatie

Paul Dauphin

## RENEWAL MEMBERS

### South Carolina

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Ben Russell

#### Beaufort

Dorothy Hood  
Joe Player

#### Bluffton

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Janice and Richard McCollough  
Charles Michael  
Joanne Miller  
Janice Niver  
Linda Percy  
Barbara Redmond  
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Ingrid Valentin  
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Barbara Hamberg

#### Columbia

Barbara and Dalton Parker

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Beverly and Thomas Conner  
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Karen and Pasquale Diccianni  
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Charolette Willis

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#### Okatie

James Jordan

Rose Russo Aten

#### Port Royal

Philip Alling

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Roma Holmes, Buchanan MI

Joan and John Kelly, Rockville MD

Melanie Marks, Fairfield CT

Mary and William Porter, Jasper GA

Donna & Gregory Wannemacher, Lima OH



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Council of Hilton Head  
[www.hiltonheadartsdaily.org](http://www.hiltonheadartsdaily.org)

*Enriching Our Lives with Art, Culture, and History*

**October is  
National Arts and  
Humanities month**