



The Heritage Observer

News from The Heritage Library

Bringing the Past to Life

Vol. 6, No. 1

JANUARY 2014



At the Chamber Ball: From left: Lou Benfante; Heather Rath; Leslie Richardson (holding the plaque), Linda Piekut and Bill Miles, CEO of the Chamber. Photo by Bluffton-Hilton Head Chamber of Commerce

Heritage Library Honored by “Organization of the Year” Award

Initiated by the Heritage Library and carried to fruition by the organizational skills of Leslie Richardson of the Richardson Group and our executive director, Linda Piekut, and the participation of the Town of Hilton Head Island and most of the island’s organi-

zations, the 350/30 Celebration was a rousing success with an estimated attendance of 5,000 people.

The week-long celebration marked the once-in-a-lifetime coincidence of local anniversaries: the 350th anniversary of the sighting of the island by Capt. William Hilton, and the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the Town of Hilton Head Island. It was chronicled in the *Island Packet*, with extensive coverage of the varied activities, and by *Hilton Head Monthly* and Monte Jett from L&L Broadcasting. The Heritage Library and the 350/30 Celebration were honored on January 11 by the Hilton Head-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, receiving the Organization of the Year Award at the chamber’s annual ball.

MORE BALL PHOTOS ON PAGE 8

Save This Date

February 19, 2014

Annual Meeting, 10 a.m at the Library

- Plan to attend
- New features
- Watch your email for details.



Bob Masteller at the Jazz Corner. (Martin Lesch on the piano)

Photo from the Jazz Corner

Bob Masteller: “My Life and Times with Charles Fraser” Jan. 28, at Coligny Theatre

A brand-new speaker series, “Hilton Head in the Modern Era,” will begin January 28 at the Coligny Theatre, sponsored by the Heritage Library and the Coastal Discovery Museum. Preceded by a wine reception at 5:30, Bob Masteller will speak at 6:00, followed by dinner at the Jazz Corner for those who wish to participate.

See Speaker Series on Page 2

Speaker Series (Cont'd from Page 1)

Bob Masteller was one of those many talented individuals brought to Hilton Head by Charles Fraser, in his case as vice president for human resources. Like so many of Fraser's discoveries, Masteller became an integral part of the community. He not only opened the now-famous Jazz Corner and initiated jazz classes for young people, he was also active in the establishment of the Town of Hilton Head Island. He recently received the Alice Glenn Doughtie Good Citizenship Award.

The price for the talk is \$25/person, \$40/couple. Call 686-6560 for reservations. Dinner at the Jazz Corner will depend on availability and at Restaurant Week prices. Call 842-8620 for information.

Future Speakers

March 11

J. N. (JR) Richardson: "Coming of Age on Hilton Head Island." JR was one of those people recruited by Charles Fraser. He was called JR then to distinguish him from the other Jameses on the Fraser staff, and the nickname stuck. Your chance to hear what it was like.

May 20

Thomas C. Barnwell: "The Fishing Co-op and the BASF Conflict." The Fishing Coop on Hilton Head Island was so successful that it was given a large write-up in *Ebony* magazine. The BASF conflict was an epic struggle against a chemical company who wanted to put a plant in what was virtually Hilton Head's backyard. Island watermen were heroes in fighting off the intrusion. You'll want to hear the full story.

September 23

Rebekah Dobrasko: "Low Country Schools 1920 - 1970." Before the bridge (and even afterward) schools on the island were necessarily small and limited.

November 18

Robert Onorato: "Developing 2000 Acres in the Middle of Paradise." His vision for Palmetto Dunes and Shelter Cove.

HISTORY DEPARTMENT



Lou Benfante

2014 Projects To Build on 2013 Accomplishments

The History Department was very busy in 2013 and will be in 2014 too. We are continuing our Historic Sites lectures which are held every Tuesday at 10:30 AM at the Library. These talks draw interest from Island visitors and from the community. In 2013, in-house attendance at the Historic Sites talks totaled 195. Three off site presentations at Sun City, Spanish Wells Club and the Heritage Academy were attended by 189 guests. Iva Welton spoke on the "History of Rose Hill" and the "History of Belfair" at the Hilton Head Life-long Learning Institute, Dee Phillips presented the "Role of Women in the History of Hilton Head Island" at the Zonta and Palmetto Hall Clubs, Bill Alstaetter presented the "History of Spanish Wells" at the Spanish Wells Club, and Lou Benfante presented the "History of Mitchelville" at the Sunset Rotary Club and the "Battle of Fort Pulaski" at the Spanish Wells Club. These off site presentations attracted 262 attendees. On the 350/30 Celebration's History Day, October 1, we hosted 155 visitors at Fort Mitchel. Our Thursday morning Fort Mitchel tours, which are done in conjunction with the Coastal Discovery Museum, drew 86 patrons from March through November. In 2013 our lectures were attended by visitors from 31 different states and six foreign countries.

The History Department supported the 350/30 Celebration by writing six articles on the Island's historic sites for *Hilton Head Monthly* magazine and by preparing ten 90-second Historic Sites radio spots which were aired many times on local radios stations

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History Department (Cont'd from Page 2)

Our feedback from the Historic Sites lectures has shown that there is interest in a presentation on the History of the Island from 1950, when the lumbermen arrived. Dee Phillips is working on that presentation and we will probably alternate it with the Historic Sites lectures on Tuesday mornings at the Library. We will advertise these talks through the local hotels.

Two new volunteers, Mary Ann Cyr, who is a teacher at Hilton Head Prep, and Georgia West, who is a member of the historical society in her native Illinois have joined the History Department.

We will continue to support the People of Mitchelville Project specifically by helping to write a school curriculum and by assisting with research and oral histories. Our other projects this year include a presentation on the Plantations of Hilton Head, which Sondra Hardy is preparing; a book on the history of Fort Mitchel; and additional community education. Mary Ann Cyr and Lou Benfante are collaborating on an evening presentation for Hilton Head Prep students, parents and faculty. Lou is also teaching two classes for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute of USCB during the spring semester. Sondra Hardy will be presenting her "Role of Women in the History of Hilton Head Island" to the community and to our members. We have also provided historic articles for this year's first two issues of *snaphd*.

As always, we appreciate the assistance and continued support of all the officers and volunteers of the Heritage Library Foundation.

LOU BENFANTE

Editor's Note: *snaphd bills itself as an "organization that specializes in community-based advertising, public relations, networking and marketing initiatives. . . showcasing the life, entertainment and overall spirit of each community in which we operate."* Information at <http://snaphnews.com/>. Local website is snaphh.com

NATIVE ISLANDER ROOTS PROGRAM

Family Representatives Presented with Family History Plaques



Kim Harris of Ancestry.com

On October 14, 2013, the Heritage Library presented the Native Islander Roots program at Cherry Hill School. The program was the result of a collaboration with the Pan-African Studies Department at Clemson University to teach the students how to do the genealogy of some of our native island residents and assisting them with that phase of their studies. The library then took the results of the students' work and produced family history plaques to present to the residents. Kim Harrison, Senior Account Executive from Ancestry.com presented a talk on the resources available at Ancestry for researching African-American genealogy.



Among the family plaques presented at Cherry Hill School: upper left, Monica Magalas presents to Murray Christopher; upper right, Yanna Purnell presents to Dawn Ferguson; lower left, Chris McMaster presents to Vernie Singleton; lower right, Shakera Griffin presents to Johnnie Mitchell. Photos by Linda Piekut

Wish List

Members and supporters of the Heritage Library have been extraordinarily generous with their time, talent, and treasures. In this column we will list those items which are urgently needed in order to provide our patrons with improved services.

- **Wi-Fi.** This would be an enormous convenience to library users. We have the capability to offer it, however, we need a piece of software to secure our server. A donation of \$300 would cover it.

- **A desktop printer.** Two printers have recently died; so far we have been able to replace only one.

- ***The Islander* magazine.** This magazine, published by the Hilton Head Chamber of Commerce from 1967 to 1992, is a wonderful resource for our focus this year on documenting the modern era on Hilton Head, but we are missing some copies. We will be grateful to our readers who can contribute copies to fill in the gaps. Listed below are the issues we need:

1967: January and November

1969: December

1970-1982: All issues during those years

1983: July

1987: November

1988: January, July, and August

1989: May, July, August, September, November, and December

1990: Missing all issues except May and November

1991: January, April, May, June, September and November

ON SALE HERE

Legendary Locals of Hilton Head

The book about Hilton Head Island persons, historical and present, is on sale at the Library for \$21.99.

Author Barbara Muller will also give a presentation about the book at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute on Pine Island February 12 at 1:00. For more information: Ron Roth, 208-8239.

BAYNARD MAUSOLEUM

Matching Funds Challenge



Carol & J. Ward Mathis.
(Mathis Photo)

Carol and J. Ward Mathis of E. Granby, Connecticut, have again challenged our members and friends to match their donation of \$2500 towards the repairs and renovations of the Baynard Mausoleum in the Zion Chapel of Ease Cemetery. Carol is a Baynard descendent, and this is the second matching fund donation that the couple has made.

The first Mathis challenge was matched by contributors. It paid for the condition assessment that was performed by students of the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) in the spring and summer of 2013. These matching funds will support some initial emergency measures that must be taken to reduce the moisture content of the mausoleum and pay for an additional study by SCAD students to determine the next steps in the renovation process.

LINDA PIEKUT

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The infamous 1870 “Brick Wall”

2:00 p.m. February 16 at the Library

Here's your chance to learn more about researching African-American family history. Toni Carrier, the Founding Director of Lowcountry Africana and the USF Africana Heritage Project, will describe how the use of Freedmen's Bureau records can help you find records from before the 1870 census, records that began in 1865. For the past five years, she and the Lowcountry Africana crew have been conducting research on behalf of Magnolia Plantation and Drayton Hall to rebuild the lineages of enslaved families in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

Toni holds a Master's degree in Applied Anthropology from the University of South Florida and has been researching in Lowcountry records for the past 12 years.

Members: Our Greatest Asset



Laurette Doscher-Benfante, Membership Chair.
Photo by Carol Clemens

Happy 2014! Our Membership has been very active the last quarter of 2013. Three former members rejoined: Sharon Lewis and Joan Nation of Hilton Head, and Charles Morse of Bluffton.

Our faithful members have come through for us again: Thirty-nine members have renewed their commitment to the Heritage Library during this period.

New Members

Hilton Head Island

Patricia Burke
Carolyn and Bruce Clark
Laura and David Dalton
Barbara and Thomas Demilio
Sheila Gallahue
Patricia and Robert Houlihan
Stephen Hyslop

Mary and Robert Michel
Suzann Olson
Erin Rota and Mary Ryan
Diane and David Sanders
Catherine and Rolf Santorius
Vivian Strauss
Bluffton
Aleslie and Thomas Balliet
Debbie DuBrucq
Peggy and Robert Harmon
Bonnie Wade Mucia
Judith Hart Pairan
Ceclilia Umhey
Kathleen and Jeffrey Watkins
Out of State
Gwin Hanahan, Seneca SC
Gretchen and Thomas Davant Johns,
Jacksonville FL
Frank Kicklighter, Fayetteville GA
Charles Nave, Roanoke VA

Renewals

Hilton Head Island
Marty and Paul Anthony
Joseph Black
Joan Bryan
Anita Byrd Calfee
Charles Calvert
Marriett and Gilbert Campbell
Sue and Jack Clark
Sally Clark
Guyla Dale
Velma Docherty
Edward Dowaschinski
Dodi and Harry Eschenbach
Debra Frieden

Karen Gobrecht
Claudia Kennedy and Harold Hadley
Elizabeth Hanson
Norman Harberger
Kenneth Hillary
Diana and David Luellen
Frances Robertson
Sansing and Terry McPherson
Pauline and Howard Miller
Richard Oriage
Linda Piekut
Bart Ruby
Rosemary Staples
Bonnie and David Sudduth
Barbara Thode
David Thomas
Theresa and Harvey Varnet
Carol and George Williams
Cynthia Wood
Out of State
Gordon Lewis, Wilmington DE
Lewis Little, Jr, Savannah GA
Bluffton
Barbara Anderson
Saundra Brooks
Janet and William Garrity
Jane and Kenneth Michel
Luellen and Douglas Robertson
You, our members, are our most valuable asset. It is because of your support that our **350/30 Celebration** won the “Organization of the Year” award at the Chamber of Commerce Ball. Thank you.

LAURETTE M. DOSCHER-BENFANTE

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Heritage Library in USA Today

For the newspaper’s “10 Great Places” series, *USA Today* turned to Jennifer Utley, head of research at ancestry.com for places to research family histories. The resultant list of 10 “great places” included the Heritage Library in the company of such luminaries as Ellis Island, National Archives, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, the New England Genealogical History Society, and the Newberry Library. The paper quotes Utley as saying, “The center [Heritage Library] focuses on local history and culture, including African-American research materials that

date from before the Civil War. The library contains resources such as plantation and smugglers’ records. It’s really a different picture of America.”

The news quickly lit up the email boxes of every volunteer and elicited a chorus of congratulations. Comments like “There’s no stopping us now” and “Great work” and “We’re in the company of some distinguished organizations” and “We have a great director who knows how to put us on the map” flooded our mailboxes.

We have some records of antebellum plantations on the island but I am not aware of any from smugglers.

BARBARA MULLER

ANNUAL MEETING

Candidates for our Board

The Heritage Library Foundation is extremely fortunate to have two excellent candidates for board membership. Their election would help fill out the board, bringing total membership to eleven.



Peter Cooper, most recently headmaster at Hilton Head Preparatory School, has a rich background in education. He has been headmaster or director of schools in: Houston, Texas; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Tokyo, Japan; Bogota, Columbia; Paris, France; and Dallas, Texas. He has degrees from Princeton and Harvard.

Cooper told us: “I first visited Hilton Head Island in the summer of 1970 to visit my aunt, uncle, and grandmother who had moved here two years earlier from Long Island. I fell in love with the island at that time and I retain my appreciation for the unique blend of nature and development which has taken place since then. I have read a fair amount about the island’s history and I have followed the work of the Heritage Library Foundation, including participating in the 350/30 Celebration. I hope that I can make positive contributions to the Foundation in the coming years.”



James “Jim” Robinson, an architect, has lived on Hilton Head Island for 29 years, and is responsible for many outstanding and award-winning buildings. His current practice, JYR Architect PC, includes a number of single-family residences and commu-

nity planning. He was one of the founders of KRA, Inc., in 1987, which was responsible for local projects including the original Beth Yam Synagogue, Barnes & Noble, Island Crossing, and many others. He is active in numerous community associations, including Sons of the American Revolution, and received the Alice Glenn Doughtie Citizenship Award in 2004. He said “Having been a member for a number of years, I look forward to being part of the Heritage Library Foundation Board. The Heritage Library is a wonderful asset to our community.”

Ways to Help Your Library

You can increase your contribution to the Heritage Library by a hefty 20% by putting it through the Heritage Classic Foundation. There are two programs in which the Heritage Classic will increase your Heritage Library contribution by 20%. *In each case be sure to name the Heritage Library Foundation as your charity of choice.*



Birdies For Charity – This has long been a fun way to tie into the RBC Heritage PGA Tour Golf Tournament Presented by Boeing. You agree to pledge a fixed amount (pennies, perhaps) for *each* birdie made during the tournament. Last year there were 1,321 birdies. Or you may simply

pledge a flat amount. Forms are available at the Library or you may contribute on-line at <http://www.heritageclassicfoundation.com/birdies-for-charity/>.

Champions Fore Charity – This is a new, prestigious category which will make you a Patron of the golf tournament and entitle you to certain Patron benefits. The minimum contribution is \$1,000; maximum \$8,000, designating the Heritage Library as the charity of your choice. The Heritage Classic Foundation will enhance your donation by 20%. If you are interested, call Linda Piekut at 843-686-6560. More information at <http://www.heritageclassicfoundation.com/champions-fore-charity/>.

**Kroger Will Help**

Have you visited the new Kroger’s yet? You can help support the Heritage Library while shopping there.

Go to the website www.krogercommunityrewards.com register, and link your Kroger rewards card to the Heritage Library Foundation.

LIBRARIAN'S CORNER

Winter Classes Underway



Old stand-bys and exciting new classes are on the winter 2014 class schedule. "Starting Family Research" and "Using Family Tree Maker" open the term on January 22, 29 and February 5. These are classes designed for new genealogists and those wishing to refresh or update their skills.

New workshops for the term begin with Carole Rossi's presentation on researching Italian ancestors. Carole is a member of the Library and has spent years of research and vacation time finding those elusive people. Bruce Arnold, an experienced genealogist from Pennsylvania and Library member as well, will offer a lecture on finding Scottish ancestors. These two talks will provide invaluable suggestions and sources for those with family from Italy or Scotland.

Carol Clemens will share her expertise on using your data to publish a book using Family Tree Maker. This is a great opportunity to learn how to present your research to your family members.

FamilySearch.org, the LDS website, has revised its site and added literally millions of new vital records. Shelley Block, who has worked with the LDS Library for years, will give a presentation on using this very important free internet site to its fullest.

The response to Jan Alpert's census class last year was very positive and so we are repeating it in March for those who missed it. Jan is a past president of the National Genealogical Society and chair of the upcoming NGS 2014 Conference in Richmond.

For a full listing of dates, times and fees, please see the Library's website at www.heritagelib.org.

NANCY BURKE

RESEARCH AIDS

Georgia Archives: A Treasure Trove of Historical Information

The University System of Georgia has increased accessibility to the riches stored in the Georgia Archives, once threatened with closure, by providing funding for additional staff. Here you can mine such historical and genealogical data as:

- Revolutionary War records along with records for selected Georgia veterans from the Revolutionary War through WW I
- Civil War records
- Colonial records
- Court records
- Records of recent government history
- General Assembly records
- Private manuscript collections
- Railroad records
- Records relating to Native Americans
- Maps and photographs

Located at 5800 Jonesboro Road in Morrow, GA, the facility is open 8:30 -5:00 Wednesday through Saturday.

A research card will allow access to the Original Documents Reading Room as well as the other research areas in the Archives. Be sure to check restrictions on what you can take into the research areas.

Personal flash drives may be used to store images of documents from Archives computers and microfilm readers. Hand-held cameras with no flash may be used in the Reference Room. There is no wireless service, but researchers may bring in a laptop, power cord, and mouse. No personal information or software may be downloaded onto Archives computers.

Visit www.georgiaarchives.com and take a look at their Virtual Vault, or plan a trip to take advantage of such easily accessible material. While the Archives may be "safe" for now, increased visitation and usage is absolutely essential to help keep the Archives open. Otherwise, those additional staffers as well as the added days available to the public may disappear.

SUNNI BOND WINKLER

Editor's Note: *This is a condensation of an article by Sunni Bond Winkler. The full article, listing restrictions, etc., is available from Sunni.*



Super Elegance

From the Chamber of Commerce Ball with “Great Gatsby” as the theme: Above, from left: Lou Benfante, Natalie Hefter, Linda Piekut, Mayor Drew Laughlin, Jane Laughlin, Leslie Richardson and Heather Rath. Right, Ezra “Cal” Callahan and Iva Roberts Welton.



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