



The Heritage Observer

News from
The Heritage Library

Bringing the Past to Life

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April 2020

Bringing Life Back to a Place of Death Archaeological Work at Zion Chapel of Ease Cemetery

Nestled at the corner of Mathews Drive and William Hilton Parkway is the Zion Cemetery with the Baynard Mausoleum, one of the most important historic sites on Hilton Head Island. With graves dating before the Civil War, the cemetery includes headstones for many of the most prominent families living on the Island during the 1700-1800s, including William Baynard who erected the mausoleum in 1846, the oldest standing structure on Hilton Head Island today. While the cemetery and mausoleum are of undeniable historic importance, they fell into disrepair after the Civil War with the grounds becoming overgrown and the mausoleum doors stolen, inviting people to use it as a place to drink, smoke, take shelter, and otherwise disrespect the dead.

For the last several years, the Heritage Library has labored to restore the cemetery and mausoleum making them important historical landmarks. Archaeology has been a major aspect of rehabilitating the site, in part because many of the graves have lost their headstones over the years and some of the structures that once stood on the property, such as the chapel, are no longer visible.



Archaeologists are increasingly relying on innovative technologies to answer questions about the past. Using satellite imagery, isotopic studies, and three-dimensional scanning and printing, the modern archaeologist does quite a bit more than dig in the dirt. In fact, some technologies are



By **Matthew C. Sanger**
*National Museum of
the American Indian*

making it unnecessary to dig at all. At the leading edge of technological innovations is a family of instruments, including Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), which provides an opportunity to “see” underground without moving an ounce of dirt.

Every summer since 2016, along with students from Binghamton University, I have conducted fieldwork at Zion Cemetery using these new instruments. This fieldwork has resulted in a better understanding of the cemetery, including pinpointing the presence of several dozen unmarked graves. Surrounded by an iron fence and holding numerous large gravestones, the Kirk family plot is currently one of the most visible aspects in the cemetery; my research suggests it was once one of two such plots.



The most dramatic revelation was locating a family plot and a fallen headstone, both of which had been buried during decades of neglect. Conducting surveys using cutting-edge technological instruments in the open field in front of the Davant plot, I found a pattern in the data showing a rectangular anomaly buried under the soil. This anomaly measured about the same size and shape as the Davant plot and was oriented in the same direction. In addition to this rectangular feature, our instruments found another anomalous reading in its corner, something that looked like it could be a fallen headstone. Working with members of the local community and the Heritage Library, our excavations revealed that the anomaly was indeed a headstone. Thankfully the inscription on the stone was still readable and showed

we had found Thomas Webb who died in 1816, born in 1769. Webb’s family owned the Marshland Plantation on the Island and he was married to Lydia Davant, daughter of James and Lydia Davant who are also buried in the cemetery.

Our excavations also showed that the fence line surrounding the Davant family plot was constructed of tabby, a type of concrete made using oyster shells in the 1700-1800s, and had been repaired over time using brick. Buried within one part of the tabby was a piece of historic pottery, known as transfer-ware, that was made in Europe and popular in the Americas during the late 1700s and early 1800s. Together with the headstone, the piece of transfer-ware shows that this family plot was established by the early 1800s and based on our surveys, holds at least six other graves.

The discovery of this family plot and associated headstone, along with at least two dozen additional unmarked graves, not only increases our understanding of this important landmark but will also help in decisions associated with further development of the site. As the cemetery and mausoleum continue to garner greater attention by residents and tourists, the site will require improvements, such as paths, more parking, and new fences which are included in Phase II of the plans for developing the proposed Zion Chapel of Ease History Park. Knowing where graves are located will help ensure that future improvements will not disturb these past island residents and that the site will continue to both educate and inspire the public for many years to come.



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From the Executive Director



By Barbara Catenaci
Executive Director

Spring has arrived on Hilton Head Island and our Library was a very busy place and then came COVID-19. Before having to close the Library, our volunteers completed a number of research projects and posted articles to our website. Their work is worth your time to explore. Philip Cromer researched and wrote the article *THE TALBIRDS - Builders, Planters, and Patriots*. The achievements of the Talbird family are recorded in the history of Beaufort County and found in several 18th and 19th century structures extant today. For the most part, they are recognized for their contributions as brick makers and builders but they were also successful planters, patriots, and politicians. Unique among family names, Talbird is a corruption of the name Talbot having been misspelled on some legal papers and later adopted by the family. Although the name, Talbird, has disappeared as a last name in the Beaufort area, there are a number of descendants living here today. You can find the article at

<https://heritagelib.org/talbird-plantation>.

When you finish reading about the Talbirds, please take the time to look at the progress being made on the Reconstruction Era on Hilton Head Island project documenting the Island during the reconstruction. What our volunteers found will amaze you. The project is divided into four areas – Land Sales, Education, People and Occupations (Occupations is going through some review but will post soon) and all of it is interesting and worth the read. The names of the volunteers working on this project are given in The Annual Meeting article on Page 3.

Finally, we are proud of our new technology. We retired the old server after 15 years and now have a greater capacity for creating and storing projects, data and records. Patron computer stations have had software and hardware upgrades including larger monitors that help with records viewing and group work. Riedel Computers provided us with their expert advice and service and helped to make the change as seamless as possible. This project was made possible by generous donations from Women in Philanthropy, The Bargain Box and Joe Player. We are grateful for these gifts.

Heritage Happenings

In our effort to keep our members, patrons, volunteers and visitors safe the Library, in compliance with the orders issued by Governor McMaster, was closed and canceled scheduled events, programs and tours. Watch our website and Facebook page for updates. Please follow the advice of the experts and stay safe and

healthy. We look forward to opening our doors again and sharing the stories of our past. The Library thanks our healthcare workers and first responders – your work is appreciated and respected, especially during this health emergency. If you have any questions, please send an email to director@heritagelib.org.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Heritage Library Foundation

February 20, 2020

On February 20th, Board President Ezra Callahan opened the annual meeting, reporting that 2019 was a great year thanks to members, donors and volunteers. “We can’t do what we do without all of you.”



Bill Altstaetter and Ezra Callahan

Mr. Bill Davies, the speaker, is Vice Chairman of the South Carolina Sestercentennial Commission created by

the SC legislature to decide how South Carolina will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. The commission decided to leave it to the counties to determine how they want to celebrate. Davies also spoke about the Liberty Trail. He is the Senior Advisor of the Liberty Trail Organization in South Carolina. The trail will

cover the original thirteen colonies. South Carolina, part of the trail, will highlight and emphasize its role in the Revolutionary



Bill Davies

War. Beaufort County will be on the trail and plans include the Battle of Port Royal in the first phase of sites.

Following lunch, President Callahan announced the awards.



Reconstruction Era on Hilton Head Island | Special Volunteer Recognition

Before recognizing the volunteers present, Linda Piekut, Project Leader, gave an update on the Reconstruction Project. Three sections of the project, Land Sales, Education and People are completed and now online on our website. The fourth section, Occupations, is being finalized and will be up on the Library website soon. Linda presented each of the volunteers at the meeting with a certificate of recognition and each volunteer got a round of applause upon receiving the award. *Shown in photo: Claudia Kennedy, Cam Benson, Lois Briggs, Linda Piekut, Rick Bart and Steven Strandmark. Volunteers who were not present: Bob Blot, Nancy Burke, Murray Christopher, Marie Danforth, Barbara Friis, Karen Gobrecht, and Patricia Russo*



Nancy Burke

Nancy Burke | Heritage & History Hero

Nancy has left her mark on every part of the Library, volunteering for many projects. She researched and wrote a book about her husband’s family history. In 2005 she became Deputy Director of the Library and Assistant Head Librarian; in 2006 she became a member of the Board; and in 2012 Head Librarian. Nancy researched and compiled, with volunteers Patricia Burke and Susie Marquis, *They Served: Stories of the United States Colored Troops from Hilton Head Island, South Carolina*, published by the Library. Nancy was unable to be present at the meeting so Ezra will present her with the award at a future date.



Barry Riordan



Ive Welton and Bill Altstaetter

Barry Riordan & Iva Welton | Lifetime Achievement

The Library is proud to have Fort Mitchel and Zion Cemetery on the National Register of Historic Places. Working long hours doing research and responding to questions from the National Register required Barry’s and Iva’s meticulous attention to detail and strong organization skills to achieve this award.

Barry was in charge of the Ft. Mitchel application. He has been a volunteer at the Library since 2012. Barry’s first project was helping to prepare an ATAX proposal (Accommodations Tax Fund that the Town distributes to nonprofits each year.) He has continued to write the ATAX proposal each year. Barry has written several successful grant proposals. In 2016 he became a member of the Board and sits on the Advancement Committee.

Iva is responsible for the research and writing of the application for Zion Cemetery. She has been a member and volunteer at the Library for many, many years. Her first assignment was Director of Community Relations followed by work in many different areas. Iva writes *Sharing the Heritage* for the Observer. She is a member of the Board. Iva was unable to attend the annual meeting so Bill Altstaetter presented her with the award on March 10 at the South Carolina Yacht Club.

ZION CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DONORS

The Heritage Library has created this capital campaign to preserve the Baynard Mausoleum and create the Zion Chapel of Ease History Park. 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.

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David and Kim Furman

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Continued on page 5



Historic
Zion Chapel of Ease
History Park

Home of the Patriots and Planters



\$500 - \$999 BUILDERS

Paul and Martha Anthony
The Baer Family
Bethea Family Fund
Maggie and Larry Burke
Ezra and Audrey Callahan
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Dr. Sandy Termatto
Grace and William Tiernay
Gail and Andy Twisdale
Gail Wargo
Barbara Wiles
Womens Club of Sea Pines
Chuck Yahres



Fort Mitchel

The Library does not conduct weekly tours at Ft. Mitchel in the winter, but the Fort was a busy place this past winter. Boy Scout Troop 245 built benches and a platform at the Fort, leading to Joey Reindl becoming an Eagle Scout. They were helped by Espy Lumber who graciously and generously donated many of the needed materials. The Scouts mirrored the plans for the Fort with those for Zion Cemetery, calculated the needed materials, met with Espy Lumber to



secure the donation, transported materials and did the actual building. This project created a learning area at the Fort that we look forward to using for classes and tours with students, community groups and visitors.

In addition to the new learning area, we had some work done on walkways throughout the Fort. Mike Jukofsky and his MAJ crew helped us by repairing and replacing broken and cracked walkway sections. This project helps us to maintain a safe site and one that tourists and residents will want to visit. In the coming year, we hope to add safety striping to steps and to sand and paint handrails as we continue to keep the safety of our visitors a priority. ATAX funding helped with the needed repairs and we are grateful to Mike and his crew and the Town for their assistance.



The crew from Palmetto Coastal has been out doing spring landscape maintenance at the Fort with the help of the Boy Scouts, Joey Reindl, Mike Jukofsky, MAJ, the Town of Hilton Head Island and Palmetto Coastal.

We are looking forward to resuming tours on Tuesdays at 11am when Coronavirus restrictions are lifted.

Librarian's Corner

We have had a whirlwind of activity at the Library this past winter with an increase in genealogy researchers and an attendance increase in our genealogy classes. With the Library closed, I want to share some activities you can pursue at home, continuing your search for your ancestry roots. Keep in mind that it is always a good idea to go back to the beginning of each of your family trees to do some housekeeping. Looking at your timelines, places and descendants to be sure they all makes sense. I found it helpful to take one surname at a time, starting with the most recent person I have and going back as far as I can. Doing this you may be able to bust through some of the "brick walls" we all have and identify some new ancestors you haven't found before. Consider checking out some of these sites:

HERITAGE QUEST – This is a free site for members of the Heritage Library. If you are having difficulty in accessing this from the library website, consider emailing to: Membership@heritagelib.org, asking to reset your password.

From the Search bar, check out the Historical Maps. Pick a state from which you have American ancestors and select when they lived in a



Susan Dobbs
Head Librarian

particular county. It is possible that the records you seek can be found under another name for that time period. Under Wills & Probates, look for records by state. Several members have had success utilizing this tool. At the bottom of the Search Page are links to Additional Records. You can click on USA or foreign countries to explore the various databases that are found there. You may be surprised at what you find.

FAMILY SEARCH – If you don't already have one, you will need to create your own free log-in. Be sure to write down your user name and password, keep it simple.

Within Family Search, there are two main areas to consider exploring, Historical Records and Research Wiki. For Historical Records, enter a minimum amount of information on a name. You have a better chance of matches if you use a range of dates for the birth date, perhaps a three to five-year range. Census records and others are not exact when providing birth dates. When you click on the map for location, get to a state and a county if you can. You may be amazed to see all the databases that show up.

My personal favorite is Research Wiki. You can search by country or use the map on the right. For example, for Germany, it will reveal maps showing the boundaries at different

periods of time which can help you find your ancestor. Once you get to the local level, there usually is a chart showing when that municipality started officially requiring vital records for births, marriages, deaths, etc. You can click on church records which lead to local parish records. Especially in Europe, a majority of the older records are there.

SITES TO EXPLORE

1. Find-a-grave
2. Google – GoogleTranslate, putting in an ancestor's name and/or place
3. Cyndi's List – has very specific databases for those hard to find specialties
4. National Archives (NARA) – old military records and homestead applications can be requested,
5. Library of Congress – has pictures and maps
6. Chronicling America – newspaper articles
7. Facebook – some of our members have found groups linking to people who have helped them find records

Hopefully this will keep you busy for a while. Check the Library's Website and Facebook Page for future activities and events. Stay well.

Sharing the Heritage

I am happy to share with you a new book that I consider one of the most important books written about this Island, *Gullah Days, Hilton Head Islanders Before the Bridge 1861-1956*.

The Gullah culture, though born of isolation and slavery, thrived on the US East Coast Sea Islands from pre-Civil War times until today, and nowhere more prominently than on Hilton Head Island. On our small barrier island, descendants of the first generations continue to preserve the Gullah culture, customs, arts, and cuisine. The three authors of this book are among those descendants. They chronicle the amazing story of their secluded community from the Civil War through the 1950's when real estate development connected Hilton Head Island to the mainland with a bridge. The three authors are residents of Hilton Head Island and I have had the pleasure of knowing them for many years.

Carolyn Grant made it a life-long goal to complete research for this book until no stone was unturned. She did that with her two colleagues, Emory Campbell and Tom Barnwell. Carolyn, a former staff writer for the *Island Packet* and the *Greenville News*, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Spelman College, a Master of Science degree in journalism from Northwestern University and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in public health from Walden University.

Grant is the Director of Communications for the Town of Hilton Head Island. She serves on the board of directors of numerous organizations. Grant grew up working with her



By Iva Roberts Welton
Board Member

family's restaurant business, Abe's Native Island Shrimp House, which was a favorite haunt of many islanders. She is a member of the 103-year-old Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church.

Emory Shaw Campbell, a fifth-generation native islander, was born on October 11, 1941. Campbell graduated as class valedictorian from Michael C. Riley High

School in 1960 and received a degree in biology in 1965 from Savannah State College. He went on to earn his MA from Tufts University in Boston.

Campbell served as Director of Community Service Education at the Beaufort Jasper Comprehensive Health Services for ten years before becoming Director of the historic Penn Center on St. Helena Island in 1980. Penn Center opened in 1862, founded by Laura M. Towne to educate freed slaves.

Campbell spearheaded efforts to create a family connection between the Gullah people and the people of Sierra Leone in West Africa. In 1988 he hosted Sierra Leone President, Joseph Momoh, at Penn Center. Campbell worked on a project to translate the New Testament of the Bible into Gullah.

Campbell is President of the Gullah Heritage Consulting firm based on Hilton Head Island. He manages the Gullah Heritage Trail Tours, gives lectures and offers courses related to Gullah culture. He lives on Hilton Head Island with his wife, Emma. They have two children.

Thomas Curtis Barnwell, Jr. was born in 1935 on Hilton Head Island. He is a fourth-

generation native islander who is considered one of the "Gullah Elders" on the Island. His parents were school teacher, Hannah White and Thomas Barnwell, a farmer who grew up here when the only transportation on or off the Island was by boat. Barnwell graduated from St. Helena High School in 1954 and enrolled in Claflin College in Orangeburg, SC until he joined the US Air Force. After military service, he travelled extensively studying sociology at Fisk University, community development classes at the University of West Indies, and group dynamics at the University of Maine.

Barnwell began his community service at Penn Community Services. He was Executive Director of Beaufort-Jasper-Hampton Comprehensive Health Services, Inc. and Regional Director of the National Consumer Cooperative Bank.

He testified before the US Committee on Hunger, Malnutrition, and Human Needs in 1969. Barwell is a land developer and a private business owner of rental properties. He is married to Susan Barnwell with whom he shares a successful wellness consultant business. They have three children.

Grounded in solid research, the book is written as an interesting narrative. It is full of first-person accounts, anecdotes, photos, and illustrations -- more information about the Gullah culture than you can ever imagine.

I began this article making a list of details that fascinated me in this book and quickly discovered there were far too many to include in a review. I invite you to discover them for yourself.

History Department

The Island is showing signs of spring with budding plants, Azaleas blooming, and pollen falling. Another sign we are experiencing, although not as welcome, is the Coronavirus. We have cancelled all of our events until restrictions are lifted.

The History Department has finished most of its activities. We held two teas at South Carolina Yacht Club in Windmill Harbour that were full; "Four Wonder Women" and an Authors'



By Dee Phillips
History Dept. Co-Chair

Book Talk. The teas were fun and the sandwiches were fantastic.

Battles and Brews was held with a talk about the history of beer and a battle to digest. The event was new and well-received. A March event, Wine and War, has been postponed. Check our website for the rescheduled date. A talk was given at the Cypress and another is planned. Our classes at USCB finished on March 11th and all had great attendance.

Living history characters plan to be available to showcase Heritage Library. Pairs of characters with speakers or several characters and their histories are available for meetings or events. If you are interested, please contact the Library, 843-686-6560. Leave your information and I will call you to answer questions or arrange for our living history characters to participate in your event.

We continue to plan new events and add new history volunteers interested in sharing their expertise. Please continue to support Heritage Library and stay healthy and safe.

Heritage Library Membership

Welcome to 33 New and 37 Renewal Members who have joined our Heritage Library Family.

NEW MEMBERS

South Carolina

Beaufort

Michael Monahan

Bluffton

Nancy Crom
Donald Cullen
Ella and Milton Davis
Janet Luczak
Elaine Ouelltte
Shelley and Gary Reynolds
Dawn Reynolds
Franklin Roach

Hilton Head Island

Susan and Ivan Bennett
Marcia Falke
Graci and Phil Finkle
Charles Gowin
Marilyn Hayes
Chris and John Heatherman
Donald Hejna
Eileen and Marin Kane
Janice McKelvey
Eric Reid
Gordon Weller

Okatie

Roger Anderson

Out of State

James Regis Brennan III, Iron River MI
Barbara Fitzgerald, Scottsdale AZ
Suzanne Kline, Nashville TN
Karen and Tom Rush, Charlotte NC
Danielle Smith-Elliott, West Bloomfield MI
Sandy and Tom Thorp, Shawnee KS
Mark Whalen, Edwardsburg MI

RENEWAL MEMBERS

South Carolina

Beaufort

Mary and Peter Somerville

Bluffton

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Alfred Beam
Kathleen Branigan and Richard Egan
Nancy and Joseph Burke
Alan Chaput
Susan and Ed Dobbs
Roxanne and Larry Garrison
Alan Johnson
Lois and Louis Lunardini
Julie and Richard Orr
Kathy and Gary Reynolds
Anne Tupper

Hilton Head Island

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Marriett and Gilbert Campbell
Sandra and Fred Caswell
Heather and Robert Cherichella
Louise Miller Cohen
Marie Danforth and Stephen Appell
Laurette Doscher
Jerry Gibbs
Suellen and Gary Goodear
MacBeth Graziano
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By Laurette
Doscher-Benfante
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Emma Simon, Savannah GA
Kathy and Jim Smith, Punxsutaney PA
Sharon and Donald Spellman, Andersonville TN
Donna and Gregory Wannemacher, Lima OH

Hilton Head Churches

Central Oak Grove Baptist Church

Established 1885

While the written records of when Central Oak Grove Baptist Church was organized do not exist there can be some reasonable assumptions based on recorded Deeds and other information.

Based on Deed records, a parcel of land to the north of Zion Cemetery was conveyed to Good Will Baptist Church by Adam Green, et al in March, 1887. This was a portion of the lands conveyed to Green and others at a tax sale in 1875.

The church's Trustees on the 1887 deed were: James Brown, Minus Graham, Charles Garvin, George Greaves, J. B. Grant, Caesar Permelia and R. F. Greaves.

At some point the congregation at Good Will changed their name to Oak Grove Baptist Church.

In August, 1956, the Board of Deacons sold the property to Honey Horn Plantation for \$1.00 and acquired the former Chaplin School across Matthews Drive



By Richard Chalk
Volunteer

which had been purchased by Honey Horn Plantation from Bluffton School District No. 2 in April of that year. The congregation has continued to worship at that location.

The membership of the church currently numbers about 200.

The Reverend Louis Johnson is the pastor and has been serving the congregation for about 20 years.