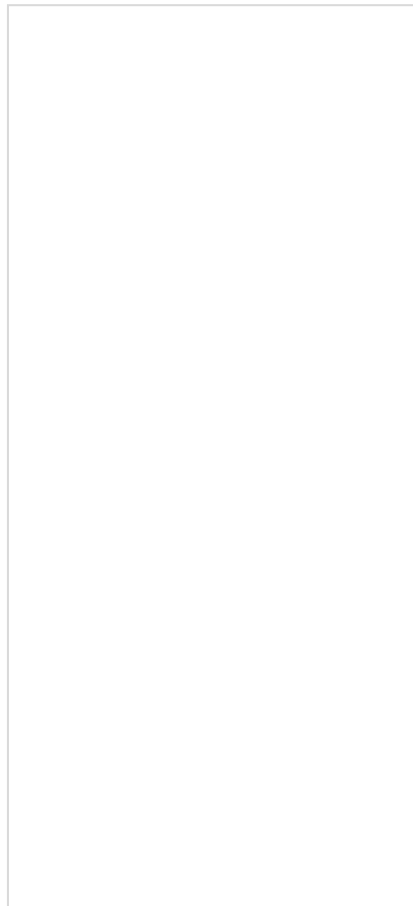


Georgia Salzburger Society
2980 Ebenezer Road
Georgia Highway 275
Rincon, GA 31326



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Landing Day Celebration – March 8, 2025

Please plan to attend the annual Landing Day celebration on **Saturday, March 8, 2025.**

The day begins at **10 a.m.** All GSS buildings and Jerusalem Lutheran Church will be open. Take a tour, stroll the grounds, visit with cousins, and meet new ones!



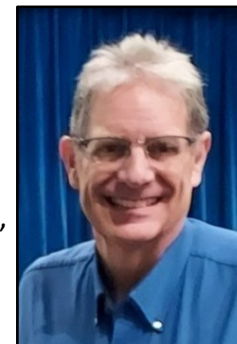
From **11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**, a traditional lunch of good rice soup will be served in the church social hall. Lunch costs **\$10** and includes soup, dessert, and a drink. All proceeds from lunch sales will benefit the **GSS general operating fund.**

At **1 p.m.**, GSS buildings will close, and the **Memorial and Thanksgiving Service** will begin in the church sanctuary. This tradition dates back to **March 1735—290 years ago!**

During the service, there will be a moment of silence, followed by the reading of names of recently deceased GSS members, with the bells of Jerusalem tolling in their honor.

The **annual business meeting** will immediately follow the church service.

Our **special speaker** will be **Dr. Brent W. Tharp**, Director of the Georgia Southern University Museum and adjunct assistant professor in the Department of History. His presentation, "**Centuries of Tradition and Adaptation,**" will explore how Native Americans in southeastern Georgia developed enduring traditions and adapted to significant changes in environment, health, technology, and culture. Dr. Tharp will highlight much of this history as reflected in the collections and exhibits of the Georgia Southern Museum.



Following the presentation, the **new slate of officers and directors** will be elected and installed.

At **3 p.m.**, a **reception** will be held in the **GSS Parsonage** to honor the guest speaker and recognize both incoming and outgoing Board members. Cake and punch will be served. ~ Erika Bragg



Founded in 1925

Georgia Salzburger Society

An Affiliate Chapter of the Georgia Historical Society

ADDRESS for
Georgia Salzburger Society
2980 Ebenezer Road
Georgia Highway 275
Rincon, GA 31326

OFFICE HOURS
Tuesday and Friday
9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.
Phone: 912-754-7001
Email: gaslzbrgr@aol.com
Website: <http://govisiteebenezer.com>

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Noble Boykin
VICE PRESIDENT: Erika Bragg
SECRETARY: Gaye Royal
TREASURER: Jerry Groover
CURATOR: Patsy Zeigler
ASST CURATOR: Robert Peavy
LOEST RESEARCH LIBRARIAN:
Dylan Mulligan
ASST LOEST RESEARCH LIBRARIAN:
Tom Grovenstein
REGISTRAR: Debra Herrin
ASST REGISTRAR: Sandra Wingate
PARLIAMENTARIAN: Charlie Arnsdorff
CHAPLAIN: Pastor Richard Johnson
PAST PRES: Claudia Christiansen
ADMIN ASST: Jennifer Nash

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

To March 2025
Allen Kieffer Anne Miller
Marty Edwards Tom Grovenstein
Virginia Spano

To March 2026
Linda Brannen Dot Cauley
Judy O'Neal Jean Thomas
Dan Wilson, III

To March 2027
Ronnie Allen Rebecca Heidt
Diane Holder Sandra Wingate
Joshua Zeigler

Edited by
Published by Anne Miller

Newsletter
Published Quarterly
Send news and inquiries to the
GSS Office.



President's Message

Everyone, including all our staff and volunteers, has been very busy at the Society this winter. We are now, of course, preparing for the Landing Day Celebration in March. Our program for Landing Day will focus on Native Americans in this area and their relationship to the Salzburgers at Ebenezer. At least one Euchee descendant from Oklahoma has reached out, and she is planning to attend our Landing Day Celebration at her own expense. She is one of the Euchee tribe members who participated in the Heritage Day Celebration approximately ten years ago, when a number of their tribe from Oklahoma visited Ebenezer.

She has also reached out to others in the Euchee community to organize another group trip, this time involving older members who have expressed their desire to see their tribal homeland in Southeast Georgia.

We are also beginning to organize plans for the Centennial Celebration of the Society, tentatively scheduled to take place on Heritage Day weekend. We are planning a dinner and the erection of a monument to mark the occasion. Hopefully, the monument will be completed in time for the dedication ceremony. Of course, this will depend on the availability of the stone and the work schedule at the stone quarry.

At this time, all is well at the Society. We have received funds from the insurance carrier for most, if not all, of the damage to the Society's property caused by Hurricane Helene. (Continued on page 10)

Proposed Nominations for Upcoming Election

As presented at the February 8th board meeting by chair Dan Wilson, III and approved by the board. Each nominee has agreed to serve in the respective position.

NOMINATIONS 2025 GSS OFFICERS

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary
Museum Curator
Assistant Curator
Loest Research Librarian
Assistant Librarian
Registrar
Assistant Registrar
Parliamentarian
Chaplain
Past President

Noble Boykin
Erika Bragg
Jerry Groover
Gaye Royal
Patsy Zeigler
Robert Peavy
Tom Grovenstein
Dylan Mulligan
Debra Herrin
Sandra Wingate
Charlie Arnsdorff
Rick Johnson
Claudia Christiansen

DIRECTORS TO MARCH 2028

Julie Hynes
Allen Kieffer
Anne Miller
Dylan Mulligan
Virginia Spano

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Linda Brannen
Dot Cauley
Judy O'Neal
Jean Thomas
Dan Wilson, Chair

Atlanta Chapter Happenings

- The Atlanta Chapter held its winter Members Meeting on Sunday, February 23rd, at Peachtree Lutheran Church in Atlanta at 3 p.m. The program was *The Salzburgers and the Yuchi*, which explored the special relationship between the new settlers and the indigenous people. Our guest speaker was **Tracie Revis**, Director of Advocacy with the Ocmulgee Mounds National Park and Preserve Initiative (ONPPI). Tracie, who is of Yuchi descent, is an attorney and was the first female Chief of Staff of the Muscogee Tribe. She relocated from Oklahoma to Macon, Georgia, in 2022 to work on making the Ocmulgee Mounds a U.S. National Park. The program was followed by the traditional German dinner provided by the renowned Chef Roger and his team.
- Mark your calendar for the upcoming September 28st member meeting, where author, researcher, and professor emeritus of religion at Augsburg University, Dr. Russell Kleckley, will be the guest speaker.
- **Don Hanberry Memorial Fund** — Planning continues for the proposed renovation of the outdoor amphitheater at Jerusalem Lutheran Church. For more information on how you can honor Don's legacy as a Salzburger, please contact Dr. Candace Rausch at (404) 316-2895. ~ Dan Wilson





GSS Memberships Approved

February 8, 2025

Debra Stafford Herrin, GSS Registrar

Life Membership

Pamela Hickman Dunford
David Lawton Feuger
Noel Bradley Mingledorff
Thomas Tolle Mingledorff
Savannah June Roche
Dan Hall Willoughby, Jr.
Freya Elizabeth Deeds

Immigrant Ancestor

Hans Schmidt
Hans Georg Gnann
Jorg Mengersdorff
Jorg Mengersdorff
Hans Georg Gnann
Hans Georg Gnann
Hans Georg Gnann

Regular Membership

Melissa Griner Healy
Melanie Elizabeth Spikes

Immigrant Ancestor

Johann Caspar Greiner
Peter Gruber

Another Chapter in Salzburger History

A lot can happen in one hundred years. The Georgia Salzburger Society held its first organizational meeting on September 2, 1925, that is 191 years after the first group of Salzburgers settled in Georgia.

During those years, much has been accomplished, and many have contributed to the plans set forth by the founding Salzburger members. Now, it is time to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Georgia Salzburger Society and honor those founding organizers, the first elected GSS board members, and the 180 charter members — two of whom joined as Life Members.

On Landing Day, March 8, during the luncheon, the descendants of the first planning committee and the first elected GSS board members will be recognized. If you are a descendant of those founding members, please make plans to attend this special celebration honoring your ancestors and their accomplishments. If you can't be there on Landing Day, please consider sending your greetings.

Details of the times and schedules for the Landing Day activities are included in the newsletter.

Who was on the First Planning Committee?

Walter A. Gnann
Richard L. Gnann
Julian Shearouse
L. Fran Grovenstein
Herbert A. Reiser
George W. Fetzer

Who was elected to the First GSS Board?

Richard L. Gnann — President
Harvey Seckinger — Vice President
Julian H. Sherhouse — Secretary
William G. Gnann — Treasurer

Who was elected to the First Executive Committee?

C. Bowers Gnann
Blois Zeigler
George Rahn
John W. Reiser
Joshua A. Helmlly
Maude Arden
Gideon Seckinger
Susie Gnann
B. Cubbedge

In Memoriam

Jack Hightower Walker

Aug 4, 1940 - Nov 29, 2024

Leonora Blackburn Shumake Jones

June 17, 1929 — Dec 17, 2024

(Continued from page 2) Many thanks to those who contributed funds for the cleanup and restoration, as well as to those members who contributed substantial work and labor for the cleanup, tree removal, and repairs to the Fail House. Repairs to the syrup shed are ongoing and will take additional time. Special thanks to the Buildings and Grounds Committee, including Marty Edwards, Chair, and his assistant, Allen Kieffer, who personally completed much of the work in restoring the roof and porch on Fail House.

The Board and I look forward to seeing all of you on Landing Day in March.

~ Noble Boykin

A Centennial Celebration Banquet will be held to recognize the accomplishments of the Georgia Salzburger Society over the past 100 years since its founding in 1925. On this occasion, all past presidents or descendants of past presidents will be recognized and honored for their service and contributions to the success of the GSS.

Save the date! **August 29, 2025 @ The Retreat Center Banquet Hall**

You have much to cherish and be proud of. There are memories to share and history to celebrate. Please plan to be at Ebenezer this year to celebrate **1925–2025**.

Save the date! **March 8, 2025** ~ Claudia Christiansen

Museum News:

Visiting Ebenezer

Siblings Ron Seckinger of Arlington, VA and Dianne Seckinger Gable of Davidson, NC visited on January 17th. Each brought one daughter and two grandchildren who had traveled from as far as Baltimore and Boston.



Seckinger Family

L—R. Elizabeth Gnann Corey (Teena), Jim Corey (Elizabeth's son), Alice Stegman Corey (Jim's wife), Todd J. Corey (Alice & Jim's son)



Richard Gnann Family

GRADUATE SCAD STUDENTS DOCUMENTED THE FAIL HOUSE AND KITCHEN

Graduate SCAD student Zhichun Ye visited Ebenezer on January 31st. She contacted the GSS to request permission to document the Fail House and

kitchen's floor plan and layout as part of her Historic Preservation master's degree program requirement. Using a new 3D



program on her handheld computer, she accurately mapped and measured the main house and kitchen. She was accompanied by fellow master's program student, Carolyn Murphy. ~ Jennifer Nash



GSS Research Committee: Erika Bragg - Chair

Kraer and Rau Genealogy Corrections

On February 8, 2025, the GSS Board voted to make corrections to the genealogy recognized by the Society.

- The first change was made to the immigrant ancestor of the Kraer/Kroehr family. Peter Kraer had been named the ancestor of the line, even though he never left Salzburg. Peter was baptized on November 14, 1678, and died on January 24, 1748, in the county of Saalfelden. He married, for the third time, Barbara Rohrmoser on October 19, 1715. Pastor Boltzius reported that Barbara Rohrmoser Kraer "tearfully but willingly left her husband, with whom she had had happy days in Salzburg, and her children, one of whom was still nursing." Maria Kraer, the matriarch of the (Peter) Gruber line, left Salzburg as a 28-year-old single woman. She was accompanied by her stepmother, Barbara, and two of her younger sisters, Catharina and Gertraud.

The GSS Board voted to recognize Maria Kraer as the Georgia Salzburger immigrant ancestor in place of her father, Peter Kraer, who lived and died in the town of his birth.

- The second change was made to the immigrant ancestor of the Rau family. Caspar Rau had been named the ancestor of the line, even though he died years before his family left Langenau. Caspar Rau was baptized on March 20, 1688, and died on July 31, 1747. He married Anna Remshardt on May 2, 1721. Anna Rau came to Georgia with the Third Swabian Transport in 1752. She arrived with five of her adult children: Elisabetha, Maria, Georg, Barbara, and Anna Catharina. Also on the transport were Sebastian and Ursula Fetzer and their two daughters. Ursula Rau Fetzer was the half-sister of the Rau children and the stepdaughter of the widow Rau. Anna Rau was granted 100 acres of land on November 29, 1752, in Halifax, along with others from the Third Swabian Transport. She was referred to as "the widow Rau" by the pastor. On April 9, 1759, "the old sick widow from Langenau, Anna Rau," called for the pastor to visit her. On April 11, "the sixty-year-old widow, Anna Rau, died yesterday morning, accompanied by the prayers of her children."

The GSS Board voted to recognize Anna Remshardt Rau as the Georgia Salzburger immigrant ancestor in place of her husband, Caspar Rau, who had died and been buried five years before Anna came to Georgia.

Touring Ebenezer

A day at Ebenezer can be full of surprises!

Some good like unexpected visitors...some not so good like a leak where there was none before! One can find a quiet relaxing atmosphere on most days... and we are blessed to have this place to visit as often as possible. Much is being done to maintain and preserve this historic site, so thank your volunteers when you see them and huge thanks to the donors who are sending in funds for the materials and supplies.

Make yourself a note to include Ebenezer on your list of where to be in 2025! It is the time and place to celebrate your Georgia Salzburger Society! Founded by a small group of Salzburger ancestors, the GSS will achieve one hundred years on September 2, 2025. Come celebrate at our annual meetings or any time you can travel over to visit Ebenezer. Details of planned events are included in the newsletter and more news will be sent out by email and Facebook.

Celebrating a Birthday

Have you ever gone someplace special to celebrate your birthday? Ebenezer can be that special place! Pictured here are friends celebrating a recent birthday at Ebenezer. They said it was a great place to be for a birthday because one can come here to relax, see interesting things and learn about history!

~ Claudia Christiansen



FROM THE DESK OF THOMAS GROVENSTEIN

Loest Assistant Research Librarian



Greetings Cousins!

The Loest Research Library, the Georgia Salzburger Society, and you! As I hope you are aware, we have a Landing Day celebration coming up on March 8, and you are not only cordially invited—you are greatly needed to make Landing Day complete.

As always, the Loest Research Library (LRL) has much to offer visitors, and I would like to take some time to speak to the parents of teenagers. I am well aware of the lack of interest many teens exhibit when it comes to seeking out and learning about their genealogical past. The big question many teens (and others as well!) have is: *“Why should I care? After all, all of my ancestors are dead.”* That is a valid question, and I would like to offer a few answers to help spark an interest in those “dead ancestors.”

First, learning about your family’s history helps you understand your own identity, connect with your family, and appreciate your heritage. By looking into the past, you can strengthen relationships with relatives close to you and share common stories. Learning about the struggles your ancestors faced can provide valuable life lessons about resilience, hard work, and perseverance.

Another important aspect of genealogy involves family health and personal growth. Knowing the medical history of past generations can offer insight into the current health and well-being of today’s family. DNA studies, along with written and oral histories, provide an amazing amount of health data. Exploring your ancestry also fosters curiosity, research skills, historical awareness, and even a passion for travel.

Finally, teens can build a “storybook” of the histories handed down by parents, grandparents, and other extended family members. Family reunions become more than just gatherings with food—they become opportunities to preserve family stories. Teens can gain a greater appreciation of their past, embrace the family dynamics of the present, and enter the future with a deeper sense of belonging and purpose.

Now, it’s time to bring your youngster to the LRL to begin the lifelong adventure of family history. We are here to help and guide all visitors in the right direction. This is a small but powerful library, and there is only one topic in this library... *you!*

Jerusalem Lutheran Church

will hold a bake sale during Landing Day, with all proceeds going toward refurbishing the amphitheater.



BAKE SALE

GSS at the Georgia Day Expo

On February 12th, Georgia Day, the Georgia Salzburger Society participated in the Georgia Day Expo, hosted by the Georgia Historical Society. It was a wonderful experience sharing Salzburger heritage with all the second graders!



Bonnie Futrell, Patsy and Gill Zeigler, and Claudia Christiansen



Look What Happened at Ebenezer on Super Museum Sunday!

Quilts were displayed in the buildings on the grounds.



AND THE WORK GOES ON AT GSS

Much work has been done recently at the GSS! Marty Edwards, Allen Kieffer, and Gill Zeigler installed a split-rail fence behind the museum to safeguard the newly repaired septic system.

