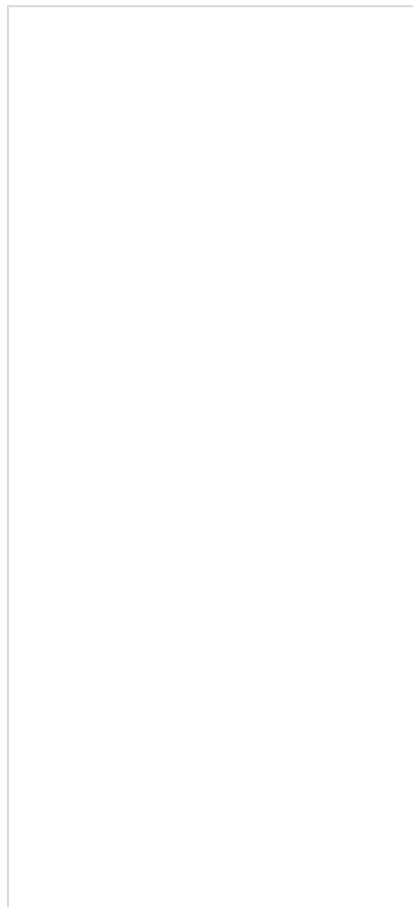


Georgia Salzburger Society
2980 Ebenezer Road
Georgia Highway 275
Rincon, GA 31326



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The Georgia Salzburger Society

Vol. 35 No. 2

Spring 2025

Mark your calendars! Plan now to attend the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Georgia Salzburger Society. Here is a glimpse of the events planned for Heritage Day weekend. ~ Erika Bragg



Georgia Salzburger Society Centennial Celebration Weekend



Friday: August 29, 2025

- 5:30 PM – Meet and Greet
- 6:00 PM– Centennial Banquet at New Ebenezer Retreat Center

Saturday: August 30, 2025

- 9:30 AM – Sightseeing in Savannah with Elite Trolley
- 3:00 PM– Treutlen Research Workshop



Sunday: August 31, 2025

- 11:00 AM– Morning Worship Service at Jerusalem
- Lunch in Social Hall after church service
- 1:00 PM – International online presentation with **Dr. Jürgen Gröschl** focusing on the publication of additional Boltzius journals
- 3:00 PM– Afternoon concert: **The Journeymen**
- Reception to follow

Monday: September 1, 2025

- 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM– Heritage Day Festival
- 10:00 AM – Hinely Poster Contest Title:
Milestones in Georgia Salzburger Society History (1925 – 2025)
- 11:00 AM – Speaker: **Friederike Lippold**, International Communication and Event Coordinator of the Francke Foundations in Halle, Germany





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:
Tom Grovenstein
ASST LOEST RESEARCH LIBRARIAN:
Dylan Mulligan
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 2026

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To March 2027

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Anne Miller Dylan Mulligan
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Edited by Robert Peavy
Published by Anne Miller

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



President's Message

The attention of the Society has now turned to preparing for the Heritage Day Celebration on Labor Day, as well as plans for the Centennial Celebration of the Society scheduled for that same weekend. The Society has contracted to acquire and place a large granite stone to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Society founded in 1925. The plan is to have the stone placed near the museum with a bronze plaque in commemoration of the founding.

The Board requests that anyone who desires to make a contribution toward the purchase of the stone and plaque (approximately \$8,500) to contact Jennifer in the Society's office. The Society intends to recognize contributors to this fund at the Centennial celebration.

On another note, the Board has also voted to approve partial funding of a new joint publication by the Society and the Francke Foundation in Germany. This proposal has been agreed to by the Board of the Salzburger Society as well as the Francke Foundation through Prof. Dr. Thomas Müller-Bahlke. The publication will include letters from Pastors Herman Heinrich Lemke, Christian Rabenhorst, and Christoph Frederick Triebner. There are a total of one hundred previously unpublished letters and a travel diary to be included.

As a Society, we have previously focused on the first and last of the pastors supplied from Halle and the Francke Foundation. This new publication will shift focus to the pastors in the interim period which includes The American Revolution. In particular, the disputes between Pastors Rabenhorst and Triebner which took place during The American Revolution, (Continued on page 5)

2025 Landing Day Celebration

This year's Landing Day celebration was held on Saturday, March 8th. We were blessed with beautiful weather all day and many visitors to enjoy it with us. The traditional meal of good rice soup was prepared by our lovely Salzburger ladies and served in the social hall prior to the worship service, which was held in the historic Jerusalem Lutheran Church.



During the worship service, Pastor Rick Johnson used the same scripture from the Book of Psalms (50 and 116) that was read at the first thanksgiving celebration in March of 1735. Dr. Brent Tharp, Director of the Georgia Southern University Museum, delivered an excellent and informative presentation on the indigenous peoples, entitled "*Centuries of Tradition and Adaptation.*" He brought with him several maps, including one original piece that is centuries old.

The business meeting, held after the presentation, concluded with the installation of the Board. We are deeply indebted to all our wonderful volunteers and members who faithfully give their time and talents to make our celebrations a success every year. ~ Erika Bragg

Ginely Salzburger Heritage Scholarship



Poster Contest – 2025

2025 TITLE: *Milestones in Georgia Salzburger Society History (1925 – 2025)*

Students from 2nd through 12th grades and college students who are current members of the Georgia Salzburger Society in good standing are eligible.

PURPOSE: To research the lasting societal contributions made by the Georgia Salzburger Society since its inception — for example, its structures, monuments, publications, events, and more.

Note: The registration form may be picked up at the GSS office or received by email by contacting the GSS office. The form will also be posted on the GSS Facebook page and GSS website. The forms must be received by noon, Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at the GSS office or by email.



GSS Memberships Approved

May 17, 2025

Debra Stafford Herrin, GSS Registrar

New Life Membership

John Whitlow Akerman, Jr
Angela Rochelle Beck
Nancy Gail Day
Richard Allen Ellison, Sr
Austin Aaron Grovenstein
Wade Wright Mitchell
Phyllis Christie White
Frances Thomas Wilbers

Immigrant Ancestor

Johann Adam Treutlen
Peter Gruber
Valentine Kessler
Phillip Nungazer
Johann Justus Grabenstein
Johann Adam Treutlen
Conrad Rahn
Johann Caspar Greiner

Up-Grade to Life

Debra Ann McDonough Carnahan
Eddie Wayne Deloach
Jason Michael Peery
James Cashwell Rahn

Conrad Rahn
Peter Gruber
Johannes Heinle
Conrad Rahn

Regular Membership

Ashley Neidlinger
Stephen Ralph Rigg

Johann Ulrich Neidlinger
Michael Burgholder

Young Salzburger Membership

Amelia Griffith

Johann Ulrich Neidlinger

Friends for Life

Elaine Lowery James

Friends

Peter Roberts

Lafayette Newton Ingram III 4-20-40 – 2-17-25
Mildred Seckinger Burgstiner 8-9-28 – 4-19-25
Bobbie Claire Arnsdorff Bookhoop 5-5-28 – 4-25-25
Rebecca Emmie Heidt 2-11-69 – 4-30-25

In Memoriam



10



FROM THE DESK OF THOMAS GROVENSTEIN

Loest Research Librarian

Greetings Cousins!

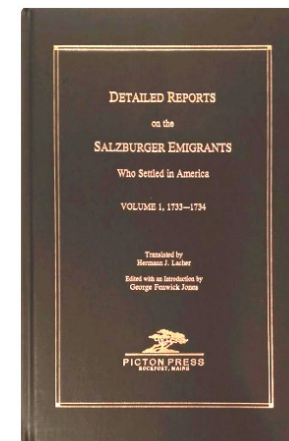
Spring is in the air, and visitors are showing up at Ebenezer and the Loest Research Library. While it is always of great interest and excitement to show visitors the steps needed to find that one elusive piece of information that completes a limb of the Family Tree, there are other areas that warrant additional study. To assist with this, we have perhaps the most important books in the library. They come from the first pastors who were a part of Ebenezer from 1734 onward.

One reason the writings and letters of these holy men were and are so important is that the daily life of the settlement of Ebenezer was chronicled in their pages. Births, marriages, baptisms, and deaths were not only a part of day to day life, they were an integral part of church life. While some of the writing is a bit difficult to get through, the rich contents and information are well worth the effort. There are six German pastors on whom the citizens of Ebenezer depended.

Three of the men, Lemke, Rabenhorst, and Triebner, have yet to have their writings published, but the other three have not only been published, but their writings are a cornerstone of the Loest Research Library (LRL).

The first, Johann Martin Boltzius (Bolzius), arrived with the first settlers in Ebenezer in early March of 1734. It was his leadership that brought them to a new world and saw them through the many trials of settling a raw land. The writings that Pastor Boltzius produced are available for your study at the LRL using the *Letters of Johann Martin Boltzius* and the *Detailed Reports*.

During this time, and as Boltzius carried on the duties of Senior Pastor, his understudy, Israel Christian Gronau, a young man of about 20, was given the title of Parish Junior and Catechist. His main job was to teach the children the "Three Rs" and to be their catechism teacher; he thus established Georgia's first Sunday School in 1734. Although Mr. Gronau died in 1745 at the relatively young age of 30, he also has writings contained in the *Detailed Reports*. (Continued on page 9)



Atlanta Chapter Happenings



Save the date: Autumn Member Meeting

Time: Sunday, Sept. 28, 2025 at 3:00 PM –5:00 PM

Location: Peachtree Road Lutheran Church

Guest Speaker: Dr. Russell Kleckley

"Pastor Boltzius, Meet Pastor Bergmann: An Imaginary

Conversation on the Very Real Lives and Times of Ebenezer's

First and Last German Pastors."

Johann Martin Boltzius and Johann Ernst Bergmann never met, but from their letters and journals, we discover much about their similarities and differences as persons and pastors, and also about their perspectives on Ebenezer. This presentation will draw from their written record to imagine a conversation they might have in heaven to introduce themselves to each other (and to us), and share their distinctive experiences and impressions on life in Ebenezer. Don't miss this unique opportunity to hear from one of the foremost experts on these important figures in the Salzburger story.

- Dr. Russell Kleckley, Doctor of Theology, 1990, University of Munich, is Professor of Religion Emeritus at Augsburg University in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He has edited, translated, and published many works that are important to Georgia Salzburger history.
- The Rev. Donald E. Hanberry Memorial Fund is still accepting donations to support future Georgia Salzburger Society projects to be chosen by the Hanberry family and GSS Board. "Please make donations payable to 'Atlanta Chapter – Georgia Salzburger Society' with a notation 'for the Don Hanberry Fund.'" Mail to: **Annette McEachin, 3035 Waterfront Circle, Marietta, GA 30062** ~ Dan Wilson



JOHN ADAM TREUTLEN WORKSHOP GSS Research Committee

John Adam Treutlen will be the focus of this year's research workshop to be held

during Heritage Day weekend.

The workshop is scheduled for:

- **Date:** Saturday, August 30, 2025 at 3 PM
 - **Place:** Georgia Salzburger Society parsonage.
 - **Topic:** The presentation will highlight the Treutlen family's history in Germany, Georgia, and South Carolina and will include the family's connection to Pennsylvania.
 - **Presenter:** Erika Bragg, GSS Research Committee Chair
- The workshop is free to attend.



Genealogy Resource Fair at GSI

Assistant Registrar Sandra Wingate represented the GSS at the third annual Genealogy Resource Fair on Saturday, March 22nd. The fair, which was held in the Russell Student Union at Georgia Southern, was co-hosted by Lillian Wingate and Autumn Johnson.

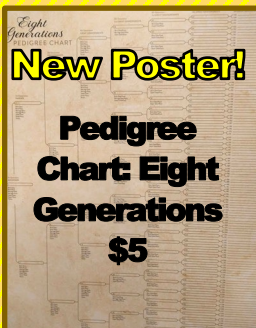
Sandra set up the GSS display and passed out brochures and flyers. She talked to attendees about the purpose and history of the Society and invited them to visit Ebenezer, especially on Heritage Day.



(Continued from page 3) Although Mr. Gronau died in 1745 at the relatively young age of 30, he also has writings contained in the *Detailed Reports*. The third published pastor, Johann Ernst Bergmann, arrived in Ebenezer around 1786, 21 years after Boltzius died. While Pastor Bergmann did not keep a journal like Pastor Boltzius, he wrote numerous letters, and many of those survived. The LRL is fortunate to have a relatively recent addition to its shelves in the collection *The Letters of Johann Ernst Bergmann*. These three men give you, the visitor to the LRL, an amazing opportunity to reach back into the sands of time and read the works of the men who led your ancestors from a land of Alpine mountains to a lowland swamp far removed from all they had known.

If you are reading this letter, you are part of a great community that made its mark on the shores of a new land. We hope to see you soon at Ebenezer! ~ Tom Grovenstein

WHAT'S NEW AT THE MUSEUM



100th COMMEMORATIVE COIN and MEDALLIONS

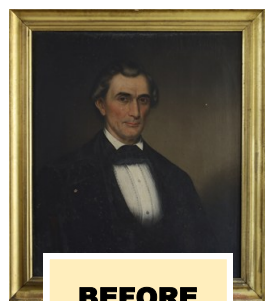
\$15 EACH



Nathaniel Nungazer Painting Restoration

The GSS was honored to be a 2024 Americana Corner Preserving America Grant recipient. The grant was used to restore the painting of Nathaniel Nungazer (1796–1870) to mitigate damage from mold growing on its surface. Art Conservationist Larry Shutts of Atlanta was contracted to complete the preservation of the portrait.

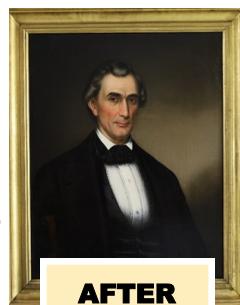
According to Mr. Shutts: All frame repairs have been completed, greatly improving the overall appearance. As much mold as possible was carefully removed. The mold had formed a hard crust that was difficult to reduce without risking damage to the unvarnished painting. Over decades, it had caused significant deterioration by directly consuming the paint. Despite the damage, the piece cleaned up remarkably well—about 80% improved. The coat's details now stand out, the face is clear, and the shirt appears bright.



BEFORE

Nathaniel Nungazer was the grandson of Georgia Salzburger community immigrants, Johann Heinrich (Henry) Nungazer and Maria Appolonia Kieffer, who came to Georgia with their parents in 1737 with the Second Palatine Transport.

Please visit the GSS Parsonage to see the beautiful restoration work. ~ Erika Bragg



AFTER



Teutonic Council Report

The Teutonic Council has redefined its meetings and welcomed several new members this year. Plans are being discussed for a new format to celebrate German American Day in October. The details are still a work in progress.

A new feature of the Teutonic Council has also evolved—a social event open to anyone interested in German culture or heritage. While the location may vary, the gathering is scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month at 6:00 PM at the Wexford Pub in Savannah. You need not be a member of the Teutonic Council or any of the three German heritage societies to attend. ~ Claudia Christiansen

Effingham Alive Fest at Ebenezer



The Effingham Alive festival was held at New Ebenezer on April 5th as a day for family fun, history, and community. The GSS Museum, the Loest Library, and the Visit Ebenezer Committee participated with tours, an Easter market, and a scavenger hunt. Visitors had fun finding the many treasures around Ebenezer's buildings, grounds, and church. ~ Claudia Christiansen



(Continued from page 2) as one pastor was a Loyalist and the other was a supporter of the American cause, will no doubt be of interest to the Society and history scholars in general.

Of the one hundred documents, seventy are in the Francke Foundation's archive, and thirty documents are kept in the Berlin State Library. We have also obtained permission to include in that edition the previously-unknown letter from Ebenezer Community leaders to Pastor Mühlberg which is held by the German Society of Pennsylvania.

The project is scheduled to commence in early 2026 with the publication slated to be completed within four years.

The projected cost for this publication project is substantial, \$68,952, but it is to be spread over four years. The Francke Foundation has agreed to produce the publication and handle all distribution. It is also anticipated that Professor Dr. Russell Kleckley will be in charge of the translation from old German to modern English.

As one can determine, this is a substantial project but thankfully, the most of same can be spread over four years, as referenced. The Board believes that a number of individuals will be interested in assisting with the raising of these funds. It should be noted that the family of the late Pastor and past president of the Society, Donald Hanberry, has agreed to make a substantial contribution in his memory toward this project which hopefully will cover the first year's costs.

We are also formulating a committee, much like a church stewardship committee, to attempt to raise funds for this worthwhile historical project. Of course, publication of the early letters and documents associated with the Salzburgers at Ebenezer is one of the primary purposes of the Society as set forth in our Constitution and founding documents. With this project, the Society will have published all the correspondence between the pastors of Ebenezer and the benefactors in Halle.

Hope to see you all on Labor Day for updates. ~ Noble Boykin

Noble Boykin, President of GSS, greeted Cynthia Tiger, a leader of the Euchee/Yuchi Tribe of NE Oklahoma, during her most recent visit to Ebenezer, her ancestors' homeland.



Touring Ebenezer Families Reconnecting with Their Salzburger Past

The Mingledorff descendants visit GSS for tour.



Bob Abdou, known as "Mr. Puppet," and wife, Pastor Julie, from Hilton Head

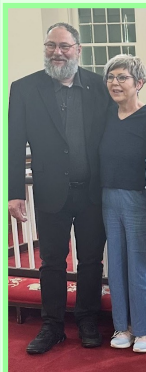


We are always happy to see guests visiting our "Hidden Treasure!" They're members of Skidaway Methodist Church.



Christian Priesmeier, the Reiser and Shealy Families

Members of the GSS were honored to welcome Christian Priesmeier, a 15th generation descendant of Martin Luther, and his wife to Ebenezer. They visited to learn more about the Georgia Salzburgers and to share Christian's message about Martin Luther.



GSS members also welcomed several members of the Reiser family, who gathered at the church to greet their friend, Christian Priesmeier—including 98-year-old Mr. Otho Shealy, widower of Mary Reiser Shealy. Christian and his wife enjoyed a covered dish meal with the Reiser family and GSS members, followed by tours of the GSS Museum and the Martin Luther Exhibition at the Ebenezer Retreat Center. Christian appreciated the opportunity to share the story of how he discovered his family connection to Martin Luther and to speak about his involvement with a Martin Luther lineage society.



A group from the Lutheran Church of Ascension visited the church and the museum.

