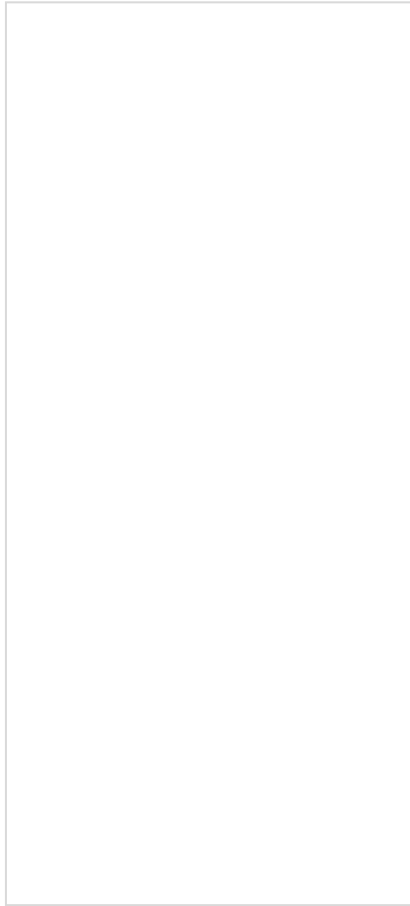


Georgia Salzburger Society
2980 Ebenezer Road
Georgia Highway 275
Rincon, GA 31326



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The Georgia Salzburger Society

Vol. 36 No. 2

SPRING 2026

HERITAGE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Our Salzburger ancestors established a place in the birth of American civilization here at Ebenezer. Heritage Day on September 7, 2026, is your opportunity to proudly honor the struggles and sacrifices they made to create this historic landmark. Please make every effort to attend as many Heritage Weekend activities as possible.

One highlight this year will be the recently refurbished Marktplatz. Did you know the Market Square has long been an important part of Salzburger heritage? Come take a tour through the Market area and enjoy the new landscaping, additional plants, and the



monument near the museum entrance.

Visitors may purchase produce, hand-crafted bread, sweet treats, and both useful and decorative craft items. There will also be demonstrations of daily life during the Revolutionary War era. Afterward, sit for a while at the little pop-up café and enjoy



your snacks along with a glass of special-recipe Salzburger lemonade, prepared right there in a huge wooden barrel. You may even be fortunate enough to hear accordion tunes drifting through the area.



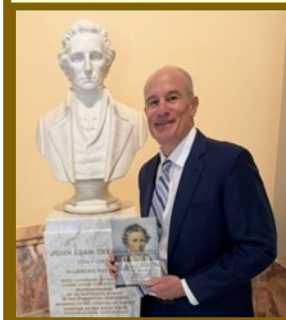
Come make cousin connections through photos, albums, and lively conversations while enjoying the benches donated over the years. There are places you will remember all your life. Though some are gone forever, Ebenezer still remains. Please do your part to help keep it that way.



~ Claudia Christiansen

2026 Heritage Day Speaker: W. Wright Mitchell

The speaker for Heritage Day will be W. Wright Mitchell. He is the President and CEO of the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation and the sixth great-grandson of John Adam Treutlen through his paternal line.



His new book, *Georgia's First Elected Governor: John Adam Treutlen and the American Revolution*, seeks to restore Treutlen to his rightful place in history and more fully tell the story of Georgia's uncertain evolution toward self-government.

More information about our speaker will appear in the summer newsletter.

W. Wright Mitchell



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

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

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To March 2029
Dot Cauley Tonya Donaldson
Judy O'Neal Jean Thomas
Dan Wilson, III

* Vacancies

Edited by Kristin Everson
Published by Anne Miller

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



President's Message

It is truly an honor to get to serve as GSS President. I am thankful for the opportunity to have served as Vice President for the past three years, and I appreciate Noble Boykin's friendship and trust during my tenure as his VP.

Work on the edition of the *Letters of Lemke, Rabenhorst, and Triebner* is progressing. Dr. Pabst has completed the transcriptions of the Lemke letters, and Dr. Kleckley has started translating them.

At the Board meeting on May 16, the GSS Board voted to enter into a reciprocal partnership with the History Department at Georgia Southern University. Dr. Robert Batchelor, the chair of the department, attended the board meeting and presented his vision for partnering with GSS. I consider this step an important one to take, and I am thankful for Dr. Batchelor's interest in assisting the GSS, and for the Board's support of this relationship.

Two students have nearly completed a survey of the historic section of Jerusalem church's cemetery, and they also attended the board meeting to present a large map of their work. They have also provided the GSS with photos of all the tombstones and a spreadsheet of all the known burials, which will be shared with the church as soon as the final edits have been made. Special thanks to Dr. Julie de Chantal and her amazing students for their work.

Please make plans to attend the special event, "Ebenezer at 250," on Saturday, June 13, at 10 a.m. The program will begin in the church and will include a brief lecture on the important role that Ebenezer played during the American Revolution. A presentation on the fighting in the Georgia backcountry will be given in the museum, and the artifacts recovered from Ebenezer will be on display in the parsonage. The event has been planned as a fundraiser for the Society and Jerusalem Lutheran Church, with an entry fee of \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. (Continued on page 8)



GSS MEMBERSHIPS APPROVED

May 16, 2026

Debra Stafford Herrin, GSS Registrar

Life Membership

Dehlia Louise Deimel
Geneva Gnann Deimel
Jiran Zachary Deimel
Lydia Frances Deimel
Natalie Sunsiya Deimel
Sarah Sutiny Deimel
Nolan Daniel Newkirk
Maria Chianello Newkirk
Joel Patrick Wright

Life Membership 80+

Ronald Gene Seckinger

Upgrade to Life Membership

James Milt Fletcher
A. Heyward Gnann
Robert V. Phillips
William C. Zipperer

Associate Life Member

Stephen Lloyd Skinner
Spouse of Margaret Collins Skinner (31 Jul 1954 – Oct 2024)

Regular Membership

Scarlett Judith Antoinette Sherrouse Benton
Suzanne Edith Clbough Dismukes
Lori Gayle Sherrouse Flemma
Glynda Hodges Grizzard
Kelly Elisa Smithy Hiatt
Rachel Hope Eve Sherrouse-Shandley

Immigrant Ancestor

Johann Georg Gnann
Johann Georg Gnann
Johann Georg Gnann
Johann Georg Gnann
Johann Georg Gnann
Johann Georg Gnann
Nicolaus Helmlé
Nicolaus Helmlé
Martin Dasher

Immigrant Ancestor

Matthias Seckinger

Immigrant Ancestor

Conrad Rahn
Jacob Gnann
Matthias Seckinger
Peter Zipperer

In Memoriam

Melvin Wendell Stafford
November 11, 1953 – February 19, 2026
Myra Waters Halfacre
October 21, 1950 – May 23, 2026

Atlanta Chapter Happenings

Date: **Sunday, September 27, 2026**

Time: **3:00–5:00 PM** (Followed by light refreshments)

Where: **Peachtree Road Lutheran Church**

3686 Peachtree Rd NE,
Atlanta, GA 30319



Guest Speaker: **Robert Scott Davis Jr.** is an award-winning historian and genealogist with more than 2,000 publications focused largely on Georgia history and research. He is widely recognized for his expertise on the American Revolution. Topic: **“The Salzburger in Colonial Georgia and the American Revolution”** As America celebrates its 250th anniversary in 2026, Mr. Davis’s presentation on the Salzburger during the Revolutionary War period will be especially timely, as well as entertaining and informative. ~ Dan Wilson



Fourth Annual Genealogy Resource Fair

Representatives of the Georgia Salzburger Society attended the fourth Annual Genealogy Resource Fair at the Statesboro Public Library. The event has persevered through a transfer of leadership and continues to be thoughtfully organized, although attendance was lower than in previous years. Ms. Kaitlyn Capper assembled a wide array of presenters, offering topics that appealed to every type of researcher.

Mrs. Laportia Mosley, of the Georgia Historical Society, delivered the keynote presentation, detailing GHS’s ongoing preservation efforts, as well as its program to provide unit-study support for Georgia educators.

Following the keynote presentation, attendees had the opportunity to choose from six additional sessions throughout the day, with topics including effective research strategies, free online genealogical resources, census interpretation, and caring for family records.

GSS board members Erika Bragg, Tonya Donaldson, and Sandra Wingate, along with volunteer Emily Bragg, were in attendance to interact with Resource Fair attendees, participate in workshops, the prize raffle, and the book sale, and foster future collaboration with the Statesboro-Bulloch County Library. ~ Emily Bragg



Emily and Erika Bragg 10

Ebenezer Is Getting Ready for Spring

Clean-up Day with Laurel Hill Group

Patsy and Gill Zeigler, Linda and Ronnie Allen, and the Laurel Hill Church youth group, along with their parents, gathered at Ebenezer for a yard clean-up day. The youth enjoyed playing Salzburger Bingo and sharing lunch together.



Many thanks to the youth, parents, and members of the Georgia Salzburger Society who helped make the day a success. It was a wonderful day of working together, and the grounds look beautiful. ~ Patsy Zeigler

It’s Time to Trim the Azalea Bushes

Special thanks to this wonderful group of volunteers for spending the day trimming and cleaning up the azalea bushes in front of the museum.

Gill Zeigler and Ronnie Allen cut the

azaleas. Linda Allen, Julie Hynes, Patsy Zeigler, Sherry Dalton, and Jeanie Thomas



worked together raking up the cuttings, and Gill hauled them off. He came later and finished cutting the large azalea by the museum walkway.

My, it looks different now! ~ Patsy Zeigler



Swabian Roots

Edited and published by Vincent C. Exley, Marietta, Georgia

No. 3

January 3, 2026

The 1741 Swabians

The first substantial group of Swabians to settle in Ebenezer arrived in 1741. They came as part of the Fourth Salzburger Transport, a travel group of sixty-three members. However, at least **twenty-two** of these were **Swabians**. How did this happen? Nearly ten years after the 1731 Great Protestant Expulsion from Salzburg, there were still some exiles living in the vicinity of Ulm and Augsburg who had not emigrated to East Prussia or Georgia. From these Salzbergers the 1741 transport was organized. But some of these Salzbergers who joined this new travel group had married Swabians. Additionally, several Swabian couples joined the transport, as well as eight Swabian single men and women. Because there were so many Swabians in this band of travelers it could have been named the Salzburger-Swabian Transport of 1741!

The Canstatt Enumeration

When the 1741 travelers—heading for Ebenezer in Georgia—reached the town of Canstatt on the Neckar River, a detailed enumeration was made. This list is a fantastic composite of information about the emigrants: their names, occupations, ages, places of birth, places of last residence, and the names of their children. In my years of research, never have I seen an original source with so much detailed information about members of a transport as in this Canstatt tabulation.

Johann Scheraus

A Swabian couple in the Canstatt list is named Scheraus, Anglicized in Georgia as Shearouse. Today it is a well-known enduring “Salzburger” name. But actually, it appears to be the oldest continuing Swabian name in Effingham County. The Scheraus data in the Canstatt list: “Johann Scheraus, age 35, born in Bermaringen [Bermaringen], Ulm Territory, a weaver.” His wife: “Maria Helena Gott, age 44, born in Ulm.” Their son: “Johannes, age 6.”

A visit in Bermaringen: Barbara Scott of Clio, GA (red coat)—a descendant of Johann Scheraus—Flarleen Young of Springfield, GA (back left), Francis Hutto of Mt. Pleasant, SC (right), during a 2013 research trip in Germany. Couple in middle hosted us at St. Martin’s Lutheran Church. (Photo from Barbara Scott.)



(Continued on page 5)

Salzburger Heritage Sunday at the Lutheran Church of the Ascension



Georgia Salzburger Society members were invited to attend the Sunday celebration of Salzburger heritage with the congregation at the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Savannah. The Georgia Salzburger Society was well represented by Claudia Christiansen; Linda and Ronnie Allen; Erika Bragg and her daughter, Emily; and Jeannie Thomas and her husband, Dale.

The highlight of the day was a first-person presentation of Martin Boltzius of Ebenezer, portrayed by Pastor Patrick Finley. Following the presentation, he answered questions from the congregation and directed several questions to Claudia and Erika, who provided additional details in response to inquiries.

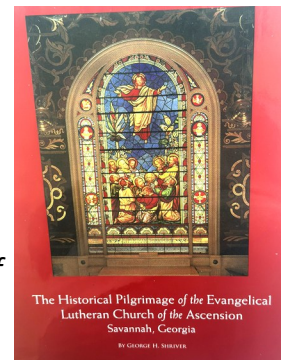
Our ancestors would have appreciated the simple reminders to honor and respect our Salzburger heritage. The service, held in the beautifully restored sanctuary, was well attended. The organ music was beautiful, and the choir music was wonderful.

One thing we especially noted during our visit was how graciously we were welcomed by the members of the Lutheran Church of the Ascension. Everyone was very friendly and encouraged us to return for another visit and attend future speaker presentations.

We also enjoyed the delightful lunch catered by Carey Hilliard’s. Several people came to meet us and shared that they are Salzburger descendants who hope to visit Ebenezer again soon. Others expressed a new interest in researching their ancestry at the Loest Library. We were also pleased to meet some of the visiting musicians who came as part of the Bach Ascending concert held later that afternoon.

The LCA church historian presented us with a beautiful hardback book, *The Historical Pilgrimage of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension* by George H. Shriver, which will be placed in the GSS Museum.

~ Claudia Christiansen



FROM THE DESK OF THOMAS GROVENSTEIN

Loest Research Librarian

Greetings Cousins!

First, I want to wish a very big happy birthday to America! For 250 years, America has stood as a great beacon for democracies around the world. The Founding Fathers provided the world with a document that has truly stood the test of time. However, another remarkable event took place even further back in history. In 1734, 42 years before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, a small group of men, women, and children arrived on the shores of Georgia and made the arduous trek inland to a place we now know as Ebenezer.



These 73 hardy souls left Dover, England, on January 8, 1734, aboard the ship *Purysburg*, bound for the New World and religious freedom. After 104 days, the Salzburger finally arrived off the shores of Charles Towne, South Carolina. It wasn't until March 12 that the group was welcomed to Savannah by General James Oglethorpe. Cannons fired to welcome these travelers, and a meal of "good rice soup" was served. After a site was selected inland on March 17, the name "Ebenezer" (Stone of Help) was chosen, and between March 21 and April 7, the group of Lutheran settlers arrived at their new home on the banks of Ebenezer Creek, just upstream from the Savannah River.

We celebrate this time because each of us who are descendants of these remarkable settlers owes so much to their bravery, hardiness, inventiveness, and, above all, their faith in God. Here at the Loest Research Library, we strive to provide all who visit us in 2026 with the tools to discover their own history and the names of the ancestors who made it possible for them to be who they are today.



On this semiquincentennial birthday of America, let us remember this small group of Lutherans who left the shores of the Old World to begin a new life in the New World. We hope you have an amazing birthday, America!

(Continued from page 2) Heritage Day is on the horizon and will be here before we know it. This year's special speaker is Wright Mitchell, the President of the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the weekend-long celebration, which will begin on Saturday, September 5 and will culminate with the full-day festival on Labor Day, Monday, September 7. Volunteers are always welcome, especially during Heritage Weekend. If you can help, please call or email the GSS office. ~ Erika Bragg

(Continued from page 4)

Swabian Roots

January 3, 2026

My Mailbox

Uta-Maria and I received your newsletter titled "Swabian Roots" and found it interesting . . . Historically, how the various Austrian/Germanic groups arrived in Georgia, the communities they formed, and why we lump them together is an interesting one . . . It is true, the Swabians were not true Salzburger and the Swabian identity has been mostly forgotten in local Georgia history despite their involvement in the "Salzburger community" as builders, farmers, teachers, weavers, and vestrymen . . .

My GS family history is Caspar Heck and his unknown wife Anna (Heck was Swabian) . . . John Michael Lastinger and his wife Barbara Ann Huber (Lastinger was from Langenthalheim in Franconia) . . . Only one potential ancestor, Ursula Schweighoffer (married to John Martin Paulitsch) was an actual Salzburger.

Dr. Barry Troughton,
Raleigh, NC



Museum Spotlight

Curator: Patsy Zeigler



The "Marktplatz" for Heritage Day

The Museum Committee is planning enhancements to the Marktplatz for Heritage Day, so please visit and see the new additions and changes planned for the 2026 celebration.

We always appreciate donations of baked goods such as bread, cookies, brownies, candy, and other treats to sell. We also welcome vegetables, pickles, jellies, and other homemade items.



COME AND SEE!

Visitors to the Museum

Guests, Marcia and Bob Rahn, from Delaware.



Thank you, Bill Repasy for making the museum sign!



Landing Day 2026



**Pastor Rick Johnson
and Dan Wilson**



**Music by Leigh
Martin**



**Program in the
Church**



**Installation of Officers
and Board Members**



Lunch Ladies



Lunch in the Social Hall



Norman Turner at Old Ebenezer



**Noble Boykin, Margarete
Froelicher, Norman Turner,
Ann Purcell**



Touring Old Ebenezer Cemetery