

Zion Chapel of Ease Cemetery

Oldest Existing Landmark on Hilton Head Island



Have you visited this beautiful, but quiet, site on Hilton Head Island?

The Zion Chapel of Ease, at the corner of Mathews Drive and William Hilton Parkway and across from Carra-bba's Restaurant, has been a part of the Island's history since 1788 and was the center of antebellum life on the island. The Heritage Library, owner of the site, has vowed to bring this period of our history alive on this site.

St. Luke's Parish, including Hilton Head Island, was formed from St. Helena's Parish by an act of the colonial assembly in 1767. A new church to service the Parish was not built until c.1787, and it was located between Coosawhatchie and Scriven's Ferry on Eutaw Road. During that time, the parishioners on the island continued to attend St. Helena's in Beaufort



1825 map of mid-island area

when they were in town. In 1788, Captain John Stoney and Mr. Isaac Fripp built the Zion Chapel of Ease on Hilton Head for the Island residents, and services were alternated between the two churches. The building was of wood on a brick foundation, 40' x 30'. There were several temporary rectors at first, but the first permanent rector was Philip Mathews, whose family became prominent landowners on the island.

The Barksdale, Baynard, Chaplin, Davant, Fripp, Kirk, Pope, Stoney, Webb families worshipped here.

An 1825 map of the area shows that the church and the militia muster house were located here, and a masonic lodge just down the road, so this site was the center of island activity at that time. The two creeks, the Folly to the south and the Broad to the north allowed access by boat, and the main roads led to the site.

In 1846, William Eddings Baynard, whose plantation ruins are still visible in Sea Pines Plantation, built his family mausoleum on the church property. Baynard died in 1849 and was buried there, and we believe that there were 7 burials altogether, some of them children. This is now the oldest existing building on the island.

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The Heritage Observer
 is published by Heritage Library
 852 William Hilton Parkway
 Suite 2A
 Hilton Head Island SC 29928
 843-686-6560
www.heritagelib.org

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Savannah College of Art and Design and the Baynard Mausoleum

In May of 2013, Dr. Thomas Taylor of the Historic Preservation Department at SCAD brought his students to Hilton Head to perform a condition study of the Baynard mausoleum. The students' report cited moisture as the biggest problem, causing deterioration of the stone, and, secondly, damage caused by insects and plant growth inside the structure. The class recommended some interim stopgap measures that could be done to slow the accumulation of moisture and the Heritage Library has completed those recommendations. A tarp has been stretched across the roof to prevent rainwater from coming through the sinking and separated roof panels, the door has been ventilated to allow air circulation within the building, and the tree canopy has been thinned of deadwood to allow more sunlight on the structure.

Dr. Taylor came back with his new Historic Preservation graduate students this spring to again measure the moisture in the stone and to take additional measurements that weren't taken in 2013. We are happy to report that the interim measures the Library has taken have reduced the moisture content in the stone from the original moisture reading of over 100 to 20-30 at this time. Also, the inside plants have died and are ready to be cut and removed.

The students spent some time clearing part of the floor to expose the



*Above: SCAD students taking measurements at the mausoleum.
 Below: The Library had wooden posts installed to reinforce the roof.*



tiles that are still there. While the tiles appeared to be white, when cleaned they were found to be red sandstone just like the outside of the building. The students also found evidence of a door anchor on each side of the doorway and an indentation in the middle of the threshold that would support the claim that two swinging marble doors were in the front entrance.

On their next visit, hopefully in the spring of 2016, they will be experimenting with some solutions for cleaning the outside of the building to restore it to its former glory.

Wish List

Hopefully you have saved Hilton Head Monthly magazines and would be willing to donate them to the Library. We are looking for issues from 1976 through 2013.

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After the Civil War, the Reverend James Stoney returned to the Island in 1868 and reported that the church had been abandoned, dismantled and had entirely disappeared. All that was left of the muster house was the foundation, which became the foundation for the Goodwill Baptist Church, later renamed the Oak Grove Baptist Church.

This 1950 Drill Hole map (right) by the United States Bureau of Mines still shows the Oak Grove Church in the location of the old muster house.

Today, the site is a lovely, old cemetery watching over the ancestors of the Davant, Kirk, Webb, Stoney, Barksdale, Baldwin, Irvine, and Baynard families. The four Revolution-



1950 Drill Hole map from the U.S. Bureau of Mines, showing the Oak Grove Baptist Church.

ary soldiers memorialized there are Charles and James Davant, Isaac Baldwin, and John Stoney. Charles Davant and John Stoney are buried elsewhere, but James and Isaac are here.

With the restoration of the mausoleum, new fencing, electricity, benches and a speakers' platform, the library will be able to tell the story of this era in our history to our children and our visitors. The library welcomes donations to help bring our dream to a reality. Please send a check to the Heritage Library, 852 William Hilton Parkway, Suite 2A,

Hilton Head Island, SC 29928 and designate it for the Zion Historic Site.

Look for more to come on this historic landmark.



Save the Date

“LOWCOUNTRY READS FOR THE HOLIDAYS”

Heritage Library Book Fair

Saturday, November 14, 2015

11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Join Pat Conroy, the Story River Books authors, and over 30 other Lowcountry authors to kick off the holiday season with great reads and great gifts.

Heritage Library Recognized



Lou Benfante and Linda Piekut show off the certificate the Heritage Library received recently for being recognized as a Facility in the National Park Service Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

Heritage Library Legacy Society

Planned gifts provide financial flexibility and tax benefits for you and allow you to provide ongoing support to the Heritage Library. Gifts through your will can reduce your estate taxes and ensure the future of the Library's mission. Gifts outside your will, such as naming the Heritage Library Foundation as a beneficiary on appreciated securities, retirement plans, or insurance policies will avoid probate. Simply call Linda Piekut, 843-686-6560, and let her know that the Heritage Library Foundation is part of your estate planning.

Your gift will contribute to the Library's mission to document and promote the history of Hilton Head Island and to continue to be a premier ancestry library.

Charter Members:

The Robert and Cora Peebles Charitable Foundation
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Memorial Donations

In memory of

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In memory of John Arnold:

Dr. and Mrs. Barrett Riordan

Sharing the Heritage

Living in an area of South Carolina, rich with history and residents who care deeply about our heritage, we take a look today at the **Historic Beaufort Foundation**. Beaufort, founded in 1711, is just an hour from Hilton Head Island and is nationally recognized as a preservation success story.

The Historic Beaufort Foundation is a non-profit organization, chartered in 1965. Members are the vital force supporting the Foundation's preservation mission: the preservation, protection and presentation of sites and artifacts of historic, architectural and cultural interest for future generations.

Your first stop when touring this city must be 801 Bay Street, the John Mark Verdier federal-style house, owned and maintained by the Historic Beaufort Foundation. It is the only planter's house in Beaufort open to the public and is a great introduction to the history of the "Queen City of the Sea Islands." This prominent Federal-style mansion was built c.1804 by John Verdier (1759-1827), a successful merchant and planter. The house served as Union headquarters during the occupation of Beaufort (1861-1865). The enthusiastic docents tell the history of Beaufort using the house and its exhibits as references. Exhibits go beyond the time of the Verdier family to Beaufort's Civil War history with extraordinary photos by Samuel Cooley of the Beaufort Volunteer Auxiliary and Bay Street — and — go on to Robert Smalls and Beaufort's Reconstruction history. You will be intrigued by an outstanding scale model diorama of Bay Street as it was in 1863, executed by noted lecturer and model maker, Dennis Cannady. Other outstanding scale models include The Wabash, the SS Planter and the Robert Smalls house.



By Iva Roberts Welton

The Verdier House, with its exquisite architecture, is open from 10:30 am – 4 pm, Monday through Saturday. Tours are on the half hour. Admission is \$10 for adults, free to HBF members. Call 843-379-6335 to inquire about guided tours. A lovely gift shop includes books, prints and posters.

Historic Beaufort Foundation's Guide to Historic Beaufort, recently published, is a beautiful 180-page volume, an art and coffee table book as much as a guidebook. It is a great gift and would be a wonderful addition to your own library. The book portrays 170 of the 500 historic structures that represent three centuries of history and architecture in this National Landmark District. Color photographs by noted photographer, Paul Keyserling, and histories of each site are presented. Written and edited by Maxine Lutz, executive director of HBF, and Donald Kenney, the book expands on the architectural description by placing the sites in the context of Beaufort's history. The reader will be aware of how deep HBF's involvement has been in saving many buildings through financial investment, negotiating and hands-on preservation.

An annual event to look forward to is their Fall Festival of Houses and Gardens to be held October 23, 24, and 25. A popular monthly event will also return in the fall, a lecture with an optional dinner will resume in September.

The HBF office is located at 208 Scott's Street, just behind the Verdier House. Drop in or become a member today by calling 843-379-331. Be a part of their preservation movement. Learn more by enjoying their website at Historicbeaufort.org.

The Foundation is a local partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Special Speaker Series: Dr. Charles Calvert

The Heritage Library and Coastal Discovery Museum are proud to present Dr. Charles L. Calvert, Professor and Chair of the Department of Hospitality Management at the University of South Carolina Beaufort, as part of the 2015 Special Speaker Series: Hilton Head in the Modern Era.

Dr. Calvert will be speaking Tuesday, September 22 at the Coligny Theater.

Having played a key role as the Founding Program Director of the Hospitality Management Program at USCB, Dr. Calvert's academic interests now involve training the next generation of hospitality professionals for the growing tourism industry in the Lowcountry, including Hilton Head Island and neighboring Savannah, Ga.

"It has been our goal for over 25 years to have a hospitality, restaurant and tourism degree on Hilton Head," Cal-



USC Beaufort's Dr. Charles Calvert will be speaking September 22.

vert said. "The program is growing because it is a major that is demanded and very important to our local economy. USC Columbia and USC Beaufort programs are the only ones in the state of-

fering stand-alone hospitality management degrees. Other institutions in the state only have hospitality tracks in their business programs."

With the new campus, juniors and seniors will now be able to live and work on the Island as they finish up their last two years in the program, gaining greater practical experience. The new campus will provide more technology and improved infrastructure that is sorely needed. The current facilities are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, parking is inadequate and the air conditioning is spotty, according to Calvert.

Construction on the new campus should begin in 2017.

Join us on September 22 to hear Dr. Calvert's perspective on the enhancements the new campus on Office Park Road will provide for the students.

Librarian's Corner

Did you know that materials held by the Library are not limited to books, magazines and maps? There is a section, the Vertical Files, which houses a collection of newspaper clippings, manuscripts, brochures, pamphlets, periodical articles, maps, and other non-book materials which cannot be easily placed on shelves.



By Nancy Burke, Head Librarian

Elizabeth Hanson has spent countless hours of hard work organizing our Vertical Files. The files have been indexed and placed in labeled folders, making them easy for patrons to access. The materials in these files cover many subjects, including among others, foreign countries, U.S. history,

the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, African American topics, and materials pertaining to South Carolina, especially Hilton Head and Beaufort County. The files index is in a binder located on top of the filing cabinets and the files are listed in the card catalog. They contain a wealth of information and we hope that you will find the Vertical Files a useful source of information for your research.

2015 Special Speaker Series:
Hilton Head in the Modern Era

DR. CHARLES CALVERT

Personal Perspectives:
*Our Vision for Preparing
the Next Generation of
Hospitality Professionals
on Hilton Head Island*

Tuesday, Sept. 22

Coligny Theater, Coligny Plaza

5:30 pm Wine Reception • 6 pm Talk

\$30 single
\$45 couple

Dates and Speakers can be found at heritagelib.org.
For reservations, call the Heritage Library at
843-686-6560 or Coastal Discovery Museum at
843-689-6767, ext. 223.

Beaufort National Cemetery

Much has been written about Arlington National Cemetery, that huge repository of the remains of our military, soldiers, sailors, airmen, and others which exists just across the Potomac River from Washington, DC. If you visit Arlington Cemetery, you cannot help but be touched by its size, its beauty, and the meaning behind the stones themselves.

On February 10, 1863 President Abraham Lincoln designated six sites in the country as National Cemeteries since it was apparent that Arlington could not provide burial sites for all those who died fighting for our Country.

So, Beaufort County has its own "Arlington," the National Cemetery in Beaufort, SC, where the remains of over 20,000 individuals repose. Some are the spouses and/or children of military personnel, but most of the stones are for the military beginning with the Civil War, the War of Northern Aggression, the War Between the States, or that "late great unpleasantness" as one pundit called it. The early stones, Civil War stones, do not tell the same stories that the later stones do but they are meaningful nonetheless; a reminder of that period in our nation's history when brother often fought brother.

As you stand in this cemetery, if you could shut out all the noise of the street traffic, and listen carefully, perhaps you might hear stories rising into the ether told by some of the deceased. There is a certain peace and calmness that exists, a canopy of quiet resolution as visitors reflect on the many who gave their lives so that we are a free nation today.

It is a moving experience for the ladies from the Emily Geiger Chapter, NSDAR, who spend two days a month in this unique "marble orchard." The Genealogical Records Committee of this Chapter is currently inventorying this great and meaningful place. There are several Heritage Library volunteers who



Last December Pre Moore and Sunni Winkler attended the Wreaths Across America ceremony at Beaufort National Cemetery. This organization is dedicated to having a wreath with a red bow on every grave in every National Cemetery during the Christmas season. The author is standing on the right behind the color guard.

are involved in this project: Pre Moore, Chairman of the Genealogical Records Committee; Sunni Winkler who creates the final database that is submitted to NSDAR; and Veda Keeling who is a recorder at the cemetery. All three are Monday volunteers at the Library.

A week seems not to exist without an obituary in *The Island Packet* or *The Beaufort Gazette* for a veteran or spouse being buried in the Beaufort National Cemetery. The Genealogical Records Committee has calculated that there will probably be 22,000 burials in the cemetery when its inventory is completed. However, if a cemetery is an active one that continues to create final resting places then an inventory is never

completed, not even an up-to-date one.

Yes, there are existing inventories for Beaufort National Cemetery but these databases cannot be transferred to NSDAR records. One of NSDAR's requirements is that a member who is reporting the "residents" of any cemetery must lay eyes upon the individual stones and personally record what is inscribed thereon. NSDAR will accept photos of cemetery stones as documentation for applications. Photos for many cemeteries including Beaufort can be found at findagrave.com. However, memorial pages there do not have to carry any documentation, anyone can enter a memorial page for anyone without

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A marble orchard

[cont'd]

documented data. Individuals who do create such memorial pages often know that a picture is priceless but there are many memorials without photos on findagrave and some even cite a burial at the wrong cemetery. Not all of Beaufort National Cemetery stones recorded on findagrave carry photos on their memorial pages and the total number of Beaufort stones recorded there is far below the current number of over 20,000 stones currently in the cemetery.

There are 66 numbered sections at Beaufort National Cemetery plus about eight lettered sections. The majority of stones are one of two kinds; marble or a porous material, probably limestone, which deteriorates faster.

A Civil War stone is usually a simple cube, dirty gray in color due to age and composition with very little information. The stones simply cite the name of the individual, sometimes a rank, sometimes the state of origin. Usually no dates although there are some stones that are more descriptive. The information is “raised” as opposed to “incised” as are current-day stones. However, there are a few stones from that era that are totally different. Later stones are taller, not as thick and are numbered sequentially within a section. The number is on the backside of the stone. If there is a spouse or child buried there as well, their information is also on the back.

The military headstones of veterans after the Civil War are, for the most part, gleaming white marble. However, the stones in the lettered sections seem to have a more copper or orange tone to them, indicating the marble was taken from a different quarry. The incised information is black which sometimes fades away but not for many years. Most carry the military information: rank, branch, and any medals received. Surprisingly, a sentiment such as “I Did It My Way” or “Wonderful Wife” or similar remark is often included. One stone states “I Told You I Was Sick.” (what a story that must be). Sometimes there is more than one sentiment. Did the surviving family members



A Civil War stone (left) and a post-Civil War stone

have difficulty agreeing on one comment about their dear one? All of these inscriptions are great sources of genealogical information. Even a Civil War stone may offer some modicum of information but many do not.

There is a small section nestled between Sections 57 and 58 which is labeled as a “Memorial Section.” The plaque on the river stone at the front of this section states that the stones are in memory of individuals whose remains have not been recovered or identified. Perhaps the remains were lost at sea, donated to science, or cremated with ashes being scattered or buried elsewhere. Therefore the stones are considered “cenotaphs.” One can tell that there could be no burials here as there is not sufficient room between rows for a full-sized casket. A few stones carry the name of the wife and children of the deceased on the back and several have dates of birth and death. There are 79 stones here including three Civil War stones, one Confederate and two Union. There is space for one more at the end of a row in the middle of the section.

There are stones labeled simply “Unknown U.S. Soldier” or in some cases just the number of the stone, no name, no indication of any identification whatsoever. One section contains nothing but these



There are 79 stones in this section

stones—406 of them.

If you don’t already know it, you may be surprised to learn that burials can be “stacked” in a military cemetery. The first burial is placed deep enough so that either one or two individuals can be placed on top of the original remains. One such site at Beaufort has a veteran and his two wives. He must have felt at the time of the death of his first wife who died fairly young that he would marry again, so he made appropriate arrangements for a “triple decker.”

There are “regular” headstones scattered throughout the cemetery. Not so many that you lose any of the military atmosphere, but they are there. I have an acquaintance whose wife is buried at Beaufort National, her grave marked by a “regular” double stone such as you can see in any non-military cemetery. My friend’s information is there — his date of birth, the military medals he received (Purple Heart, Combat Infantry Medal), his rank and branch of service. The only thing missing is his date of death. He is now 97 years of age.

I cannot begin to put into words the feelings that go through me as I record information from yet another veteran’s stone; my gratitude for the veteran’s service regardless of which war, my appreciation of a long-suffering military wife, my frustration that a young life was gone before he or she even had the chance to really live in this world. This is especially true of those lost in the Persian Gulf, Desert Storm, or Afghanistan conflicts. But I also get those feelings when I see the stones of those lost in World War I and II, Korea, and Vietnam, most of which occurred during my lifetime. Having visited American military cemeteries in Europe where I experienced the same kind of emotion, I know it has something to do with my own sense of patriotism and duty to my country. Perhaps this is why I spend so much time working in the beautiful yet poignant Beaufort National Cemetery.

Suzanne Bond Winkler

History Department

Our Tuesday History lectures have wound down and will resume in September but Lou and Dee will be working with timeshares on the Island, continuing the Historic Sites presentations.

Lou Benfante, Tom Martin, Harry Eschenbach, and Ray Gilligan are continuing to work with Coastal Discovery throughout the summer, making presentations at Ft. Mitchel on Thursdays at 10 am. We are planning a Fort Mitchel/Old Fort Pub Dinner night for July and will share the details on our website when they are completed.



By Dee Phillips

The new presentation on the Early Explorers of the Lowcountry by Sondra Shaw-Hardy and Georgia West was presented in late May and will be scheduled again in the fall. Kathy Smith will also be back in the fall with a new Cemetery Presentation and Dee and

Lou will be presenting courses with Lifelong Learning in Hilton Head. Judith Russell, Maryann Cyr, and Dee Phillips are completing nine new lesson plans on Mitchelville and the Gullah Culture which will be posted to the website for teachers in time for the fall school schedule. Paula Wood has

been conducting research to help with many of the presentations.

Bill Alstaetter was the featured speaker at Palmetto Hall on June 17th. His presentation covered the 1700-1800 time-period on the Island. The History Department is thrilled to have Bill back conducting presentations.

Dee will be doing two of our history presentations at TidePointe in September.

As you can see, the History Department will be busy this summer continuing to schedule new presentations, new lesson plans, and new opportunities for our community and members.

Heritage Library Membership

Welcome to 17 New and 45 Renewal Members who have joined our Heritage Library Family.

New Members

Bluffton

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Beaufort

Dorothy Hood

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Carol and Robert Clemens

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