

Chronology of Coastal Georgia History

- 25,000 B.C. End of Wisconsin Ice Age; formation of Georgia Sea Islands.
- 2,000 - 3,000 B.C. Earliest known Indian habitation.
- 1560-65 French explorers visit coastal Georgia.
- 1566 First official Spanish visit to Georgia coast. Jesuits are first missionaries.
- 1572-73 Jesuits driven out. Franciscan missionaries arrive.
- 1597 Juanillo revolt. Many Franciscan missionaries slaughtered.
- 1600 New missionaries arrive.
- 1670s English settle in South Carolina.
- 1685 Mission of Santa Catalina destroyed, last Spanish mission in Georgia.
- 1685 1732 Era of pirates.
- 1733 British settle at Savannah. Founding of Colony of Georgia by General James Oglethorpe.
- 1736 Fort Frederica built. Wesleys begin preaching in Georgia.
- 1742 Battle of Bloody Marsh. Spanish defeated.
- 1763 Great Britain gains possession of Florida.
- 1776 1783 American Revolution.
- 1786 Nathaniel Green died at Mulberry Grove
- 1788 Glynn Academy founded.
- 1793 Cotton gin invented by Eli Whitney revolutionizes the cotton production industry.
- 1794 Timber cutting begins in this area for U.S. Navy ships.

1804 Aaron Burr stays on St. Simons after duel with Alexander Hamilton, whom he killed. A hurricane happens to hit St. Simons during his stay.

1807 - 1811 James Gould erects the first lighthouse on St. Simons Island.

1815 British invade coastal islands end of War of 1812.

1818 General Light Horse Harry Lee died at Catherine Green's home, Dungeness, on Cumberland Island.

1820 First Christ Church built.

1838 39 Fanny Kemble spends winter in coastal Georgia. From her visit she wrote Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation.

1858 Slave ship Wanderer lands cargo on Jekyll Island. It is the last ship to bring slaves directly to U.S. from Africa.

1861 - 65 Civil War residents evacuate Brunswick and the islands. Confederate Fort Brown constructed on the south end of St. Simons Island, near the Lighthouse.

1861 Evacuating Confederate troops blow up the St. Simons Lighthouse and Fort Brown is demolished. Federal troops sporadically occupy the area.

1867 - 72 Second lighthouse is built from a design by Charles Cluskey and engineer Orlando Poe.

1874 - 75 Sidney Lanier writes "Marshes of Glynn."

1880 - 1900 Brunswick and St. Simons become shipping and naval stores center.

1884 Present Christ Church is rebuilt by Anson Dodge, who becomes its rector.

1886 Jekyll Island is purchased by a group of millionaires who form the Jekyll Island Club.

1886 The Charleston Earthquake damages lighthouses along the southeast coast

1888 St. Simons Hotel is completed.

- 1890 Brick oil house built beside St. Simons lighthouse.
- 1896 Storm surge from a hurricane inundates Brunswick and the Islands.
- 1898 Area residents request Federal protection from feared Spanish vessels during the Spanish American War.
- 1915 Exterior staircase is constructed on the Keeper's Dwelling
- 1917 – 18 During World War I, Brunswick becomes a shipbuilding center with six shipyards in operation. A picric acid plant was built but never opened.
- 1924 Causeway between St. Simons and Brunswick opens.
- 1928 Sea Island celebrates the opening of the Cloister Hotel.
- 1934 Electricity replaces kerosene as source of light in lens.
- 1937 Brunswick Pulp and Paper Company are established.
- 1939 Lighthouse placed under jurisdiction of U.S. Coast Guard.
- 1941 - 45 World War II; U.S. Maritime Corporation builds 99 Liberty Victory ships. NAS Glynco, a blimp station, opens. McKinnon Airport on St. Simons also becomes a Naval Air Station.
- 1942 Two tankers are torpedoed offshore by German U boats. The U.S. Navy occupies the King and Prince Hotel to establish a Combat Information Center.
- 1947 The state of Georgia purchases Jekyll Island. The National Park Service opens Fort Frederica National Monument.
- 1953 Lighthouse fully automated with timer to turn light on and off. Last lighthouse keeper retires.
- 1964 Brunswick Junior College opens.
- 1965 The Coastal Georgia Historical Society is formed.
- 1971 Brunswick celebrates its bicentennial.

1974 Naval Air Station - Glynco is closed. The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center opens on the same site.

1975 Museum of Coastal History (later the St. Simons Lighthouse Museum) opens in restored lighthouse keeper's house.

1984 St. Simons Lighthouse is leased from the U.S. Coast Guard and becomes part of the museum complex.

2004 Lighthouse Tower ownership turned over to Coastal Georgia Historical Society through the National Lighthouse Preservation Act.

2006 The Society opens the Maritime Center at the Historic Coast Guard Stations to the public.