



COASTAL GEORGIA
**HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

2024 Annual Report



The mission of the Society is to connect people to Coastal Georgia's dynamic history through the stories we share and the collections we preserve.

Winter Program Agenda

January 26, 2025



Welcome and Call to Order

Executive Director's Message

Board of Directors Update

Rodriguez Service Award

George C. Cunningham Award

Speaker Introduction

***In the Hurricane's Eye:
Winning the American Revolution***

Adjourn

Keith Calhoun

Sherri Jones

Keith Calhoun

Keith Calhoun

Mimi Rogers

Mimi Rogers

Nathaniel Philbrick

Keith Calhoun

Featured Speaker: Nathaniel Philbrick

In the Hurricane's Eye: Winning the American Revolution



Award-winning author Nathaniel Philbrick will present a program based on his book ***In the Hurricane's Eye: The Genius of George Washington and the Victory at Yorktown***, with a focus on Nathanael Greene, a major-general in the Continental Army with significant ties to Coastal Georgia. Washington named Greene the commander of the Continental Army in the southern theater, where Greene's campaign against Cornwallis contributed to the successful outcome of the war. Philbrick will weave together the crucial events of the Revolution's final years and bring to life the fascinating personalities who fought on land and sea for the ultimate prize of American independence.

An avid sailor and resident of Nantucket Island, Philbrick has written several *New York Times* bestsellers, including *Mayflower*, *Bunker Hill: A City, A Siege, A Revolution*, and *In the Heart of the Sea*, which won the National Book Award for Nonfiction. *In the Heart of the Sea* was also the basis of the 2015 film of the same title, as well as the 2010 PBS American Experience film "Into the Deep." His other titles include *Sea of Glory*, which won the Theodore and Franklin D. Roosevelt Naval History Prize and the Albion-Monroe Award from the National Maritime Historical Society, and his latest work, *Travels with George: In Search of Washington and His Legacy*. Philbrick's writing has been featured in *Vanity Fair*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and the *Wall Street Journal*, among other publications, and he has appeared on numerous television programs.

2024 Leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

Mary Schellhorn, President
Duane Harris, Immediate Past President
Keith Calhoun, Vice President
Jeffrey Molitor, Treasurer
Cheryl Hargrove, Secretary
Sherri Jones, Executive Director
Mimi Rogers, Curator

Jack Crews
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Johnny Evans
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John Hunter
Steven Kerr
Susan Lawhorne
Susan Myers
Brenda Nease
Janis Rehlaender

HONORARY TRUSTEES

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Albert Fendig

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Sherri Jones, Executive Director
Mimi Rogers, Curator
Allison Dupuis, Director of Public Programming
Sheila VanderWood, Director of Development
Leigh Ann Stroud, Public Relations Director
Eric Oberg, Director of Retail Operations
Jessica Aldridge, Events Coordinator
Trish Scott, Office Manager
Susan Bacon, Special Projects

Senior Historian, Buddy Sullivan
Consulting Archaeologist, Lindsey Cochran, Ph.D.

MUSEUM STAFF

Robert Aronson
Sarah Ash
Nancy Chastain
Linda Culver
Jim Henderson
Chip Lewis
Sally McLean
Gail Rivard
Kelly Rodgers
Duane Shearer
Chris Simmons
Theresa Spangler
Laura Trippe

President's Report

A little over five years ago, as a new member of the Society's Board of Directors, I took part in the discussions that resulted in our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. As I wrap up my term as President, I am pleased to report that the Society has stayed true to the Strategic Plan's vision, implementing many new initiatives to help realize our mission **to connect people to Coastal Georgia's dynamic history through the stories we share and the collections we preserve.**

It would be difficult to enumerate all the new, or expanded, endeavors that have taken place during the past five years, but a few examples deserve highlighting. The unique aspects of our collection of Coastal Georgia documents, photographs, and artifacts are now digitized and available online to researchers, scholars, and the public. Partnerships and collaborations with other organizations have broadened our reach to audiences well beyond the Society's St. Simons Island headquarters and have expanded our knowledge of local history. For example, we just completed the fourth year of the Brunswick lecture series and actively participated in the centennial celebrations of the Harrington School and the F.J. Torras Causeway.

The Society's Archaeology Lab provides services to local organizations such as the St. Simons Land Trust, Fort Frederica, and the Cassina Garden Club and is completing important work with the owners of the 19th century Adam Strain Building in Darien. Connections with our local schools and the College of Coastal Georgia provide educators with materials, speakers, and training to enrich their teaching about our shared heritage. To ensure the ongoing protection of the St. Simons Lighthouse (which celebrated its 150th anniversary with a dazzling light show in 2022) and the East Beach Coast Guard Station /Home Front Museum, 260 friends and members generously contributed more than \$1.25 million to create a Preservation Fund.

Knowledge, creativity, and hard work contribute to the success of the Society's many programs, services, and collaborations. And,

as we articulated in the Strategic Plan, in all we do, we also aspire to "maintain unparalleled standards of excellence in personnel, preservation, presentation, and resource management."

The Society's committed Board of Directors provides wise counsel, advocacy, and critical support in many ways. We are most appreciative for the service of Lucy Glasebrook, Duane Harris, and Brenda Nease, who completed their Board terms in December. We look forward to working with our newly elected directors Greer Brown, Chris Ernst, Dr. Johnny Evans, and John Jaje. In 2025, the Society's Board will be led by Keith Calhoun, President; Steve Kerr, Vice President; Jeff Molitor, Treasurer; and Janis Rehlaender, Secretary.

It has been a privilege to be President of the Coastal Georgia Historical Society. I have been enriched by this experience and am grateful for my fellow Board members, our many volunteers, members, and Keepers of the Light. At the top of my gratitude list, however, is the wonderful staff that is so expertly, thoughtfully, and energetically led by Executive Director Sherri Jones, with the dedicated support of the Society's esteemed curator, Mimi Rogers. Because of their shared vision, creativity, expertise, and perseverance, the Society has continued its trajectory as the region's premier, multi-faceted **educational and cultural organization.**

Although Mimi Rogers is retiring in January, her legacy of education, preservation, and the pursuit of excellence will continue far into the Society's future.

As we complete our 2020-25 Strategic Plan, there is no question that the Society is well- positioned to embark upon another five-year adventure to connect even more people with the dynamic history of Coastal Georgia.

Sincerely,

Mary A. Schellhorn



CORRELL FAMILY FOUNDATION ATRIUM

WORLD WAR II HOME FRONT MUSEUM — COASTAL GEORGIA AT WAR —

Fifth Graders from Golden Isles Elementary School Visit the Home Front Museum

Executive Director's Report

"Preserving the Past, Shaping the Future: 2030 Vision"

The development of a **new strategic plan** was a milestone in 2024. We are truly grateful to our members, visitors, community leaders, partners, and other stakeholders who participated in surveys and focus groups to inform our discussions. Over the past decade, the Historical Society has seen incredible growth in its facilities, programs, engagement from our members and the community, financial well-being, and its reputation as an institution committed to excellence. This foundation has allowed us to be bold when considering our role and responsibilities to the Coastal region over the next five years. We look forward to distributing the full plan "Preserving the Past, Shaping the Future: 2030 Vision" in the Spring. In the meantime, I am excited to share a few highlights.

During strategic planning, one of the most inspiring discussions was a focus group with leaders across the community including business and tourism professionals, directors of cultural organizations, and educators. They saw us as a trusted partner, and history as a powerful tool for building a stronger community. We have taken this to heart and are eager to focus more energetically on our role as partner, collaborator, and community resource. Our discussions included how to strengthen heritage tourism because of its potential to improve economic development and the sustainability of local cultural organizations. We also discovered opportunities to share facilities on the mainland to expand our ability to present new exhibits. Moving forward, we are excited by the prospect of meaningful collaborations like the 100th anniversary celebrations of Harrington School and the F. J. Torras Causeway during 2024. **In all that we do, we are committed to working with others to deepen appreciation of our shared history.**

We continue to be amazed by the Georgia Coast's centuries-long history and global significance. Capitalizing on our strengths, the Society is ready to expand our vision, capacity, and geographical reach to become **the center for the study of Coastal history** that this region deserves.

This will include amassing a renowned collection of cultural and archaeological artifacts that are representative of the diverse eras and peoples that inhabited this area. It will include promoting research and scholarship and a range of quality educational offerings that appeal to all ages. We also envision sponsoring a regional conference about history, archaeology, and preservation to generate more discussion and collaboration, as well as greater awareness of this area's remarkable history among wider audiences.

The work of our Archaeology Lab will now become even more valuable. Since its inception in 2012, the lab has broadened our scope beyond the current museum and curatorial focus to study diverse eras and communities integral to our history. The new strategic plan further emphasizes the study of coastal archaeology as an essential component of understanding our past. We will provide expert assistance to organizations and agencies for research, monitoring, and reporting to ensure the region's rich history is not lost. Our decade-long partnership with the St. Simons Land Trust at Cannon's Point Preserve is a worthy example. The preserve is a multi-era repository of historical evidence, and the Native American and African American artifacts already excavated there have afforded unique perspectives into the lives of these Coastal peoples. The history unearthed through future excavations at sites throughout the region will offer untold opportunities to recognize these important inhabitants and share their stories.

To become a **top-notch regional research and education center**, we are making a significant investment in our professional staff commensurate with the Society's recent improvements to programs and facilities. Therefore, we are excited to report the addition of a new Staff Archaeologist, Aaron Ellrich, on January 6th. Aaron holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Florida, as well as an M.A. in museum studies. He will ensure that archaeology is fully integrated into the Society's activities and the capabilities of the lab expand to serve the coastal region. Having done fieldwork in several southern states, he looks forward to focusing on our area. He will evaluate the needs of the

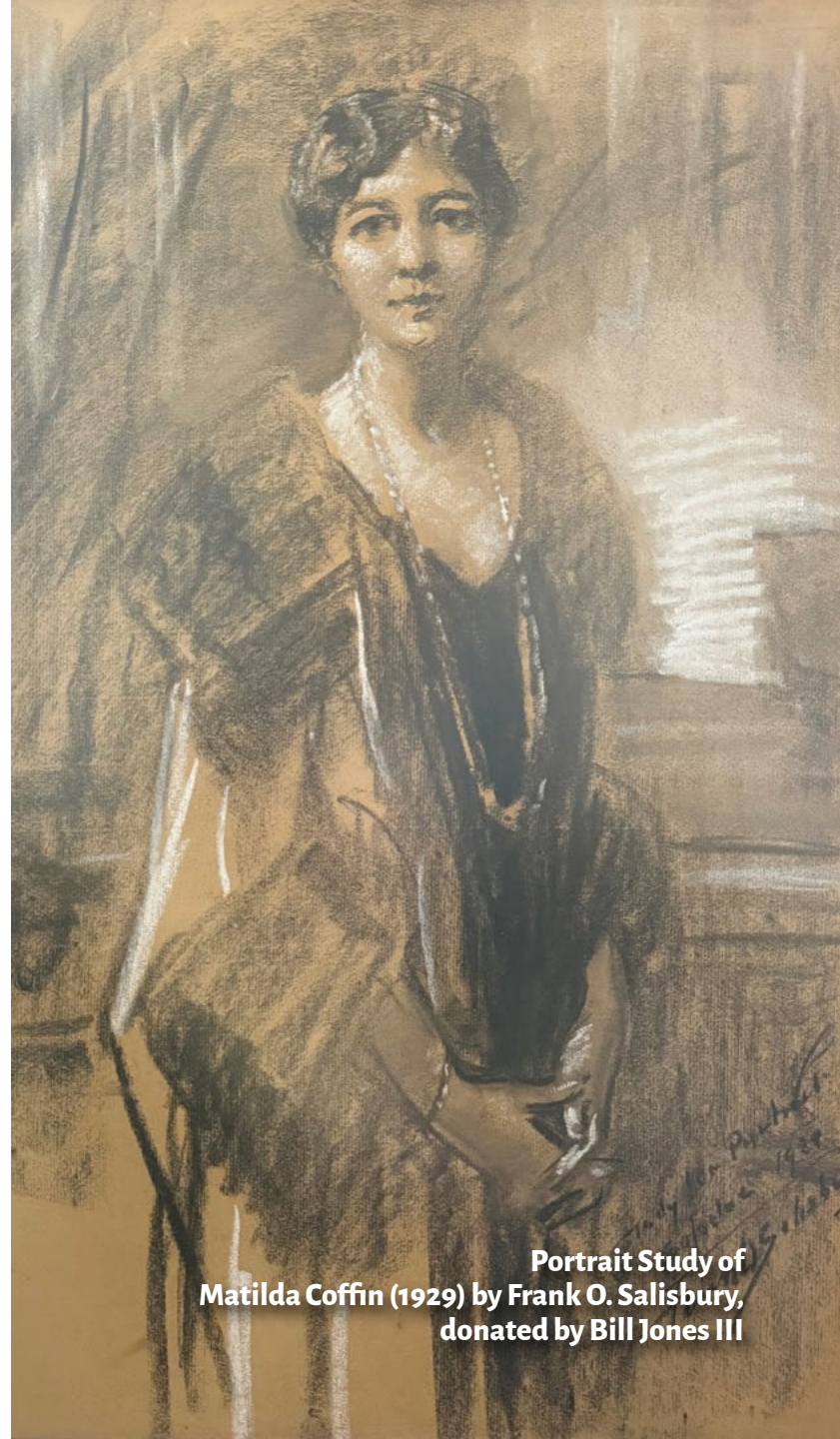
Georgia Coast and play an important role as an expert advisor as we face climate change and disasters like the burning of the Huston House in Darien during 2024.

This time last year I announced the impending retirement of Mimi Rogers, which will be official as of January 26th. For a year now we have searched for the right person to fill her shoes and to provide the talents and experience required by our ambitious new plan. I am happy to report that as of February 3rd, Whitney Nell Stewart will assume the role of Director of Collections & Education. Whitney is joining us from the University of Texas at Dallas where she was an associate professor of history. She has an M.A. and Ph.D. in history from Rice University and last year published her first book, *This is Our Home: Slavery and Struggle on Southern Plantations*, which won several awards. Aaron and Whitney are scholars and experts in their fields who see the enormous opportunity that the study of our regional history affords. The Society is thrilled to welcome Aaron and Whitney to our organization

These are exciting times as we transition and grow into a regional role. These new initiatives will require us to be more expansive in our outlook, better promoters of our history and those who preserve and share it, and more innovative in achieving sustainability for our services. In approving this ambitious plan, the members of the Board of Directors have pledged their active involvement in its successful implementation. We will need you, our most loyal supporters, to make this same commitment. It is a bold and dynamic path that we are choosing, one that will provide the cultural glue that our community is seeking. Martin Luther King, Jr. said "All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence." Please join us as we embark on this journey to break new ground and strive for excellence in preserving our past and serving others.

Sincerely,

Sherri Jones



**Portrait Study of
Matilda Coffin (1929) by Frank O. Salisbury,
donated by Bill Jones III**

Financial Report

(Unaudited)

Operations

Revenues	\$ 1,783,589
Transfer from General Support Fund	\$ 52,000
Expenses (Excluding Depreciation of \$422,157)	\$ 1,740,150
Net Income from Operations	\$ 95,439

General Support Fund

Beginning of Year Balance	\$ 995,221
Transfer to Operating Account	\$ 52,000
End of Year Balance*	\$ 1,089,089

St. Simons Lighthouse Museum Preservation Fund

Beginning of Year Balance	\$ 985,833
Donations during 2024	\$ 85,200
End of Year Balance*	\$ 1,188,909

World War II Home Front Museum Preservation Fund

Beginning of Year Balance	\$ 981,561
Donations during 2024	\$ 85,200
End of Year Balance*	\$ 1,196,612

*Includes investment income and expenses for 2024.

Highlights of the Year

The Society's primary services to the community continue to be stewardship of the St. Simons Lighthouse Museum and World War II Home Front Museum; managing access to these important sites; preserving archival and archaeological collections; and providing educational programming and services to a variety of audiences, including school children and our members.

Museum Visitation	
General Admission	56,703
Group Tours	61
Participants	1,305
School Tours	50
Participants	1,919
Total	60,038

Educational Programming	
Attendees at lectures, special tours, and children's programs	4,250

Events	
Little Light Music	
Concert Series Attendees	5,000
Number of Event Rentals	54

Programs, Lectures, and Events

The Society strives to be a center for educational and cultural excellence in our community. We are continuing our efforts to serve wider communities and expand programming to Brunswick.

■ In preparation for the New Year, the Museums and Museum Stores were closed from January 8-12 for **maintenance and inventory**. During this time, the Keepers Dwelling was thoroughly cleaned, and the wood floors

were hand waxed. A number of interior and exterior spaces received a fresh coat of paint.

■ **The Society's Winter Program** was held on Sunday, January 14 at the St. Simons Presbyterian Church. Douglas Brinkley, Ph.D., presented "Silent Spring Revolution and Its Connection to Coastal Georgia." There were 358 members and guests registered. Patrick Kelley received the Cunningham Bowl for exemplary service as a volunteer, and Buddy Sullivan was given the Rodriguez Service Award for his long-term commitment to the Society as Senior Historian and presenter of our winter lecture series and other programs. After the lecture, a reception honoring Keepers of the Light was held at The Lodge at Sea Island.

■ Buddy Sullivan presented his annual four-week course, "**History of the Golden Isles—and Slightly Beyond,**" on January 16, 23, 30, and February 6. The course attracted 131 participants.

■ Society staff members participated in the annual **History Day at Oglethorpe Elementary School** on February 9. A program on the lighthouse keeper's critical job of monitoring the light and the Coast Guard's role in Coastal Georgia during World War II was presented to fifth graders.

■ In celebration of **Black History Month**, Bernard Powers, Ph.D., presented "African American History in the Lowcountry" at the St. Simons Presbyterian Church on February 22. A total of 170 people registered for the program. On February 23, he visited Glynn Academy and spoke to 93 students in AP U.S. and World History courses.

The **Journeys field trip** took place on March 5 with a visit to Hampton Plantation, Darien, and Butler Island Plantation. Guest speaker Terri Ward and Archaeology Lab manager Myrna Crook provided programs during the tour. There were 25 guests in attendance.



Lewis Glenn Greeting Local Families at the Lighthouse Museum Store

■ Free museum admission was offered to local children and their families on March 4. Thanks to the generosity of the **Jack and Anne Glenn Charitable Foundation**, 500 people visited while schools were closed for a teacher planning day.

■ Sherri Jones traveled to Providence, Rhode Island, March 4-6 to serve on the **American Alliance of Museums Peer Review Visiting Committee** for the accreditation of the Rhode Island Historical Society. The experience provided valuable background in preparation for our organization's reaccreditation in 2026.

■ **The Spring Program** was held on March 21 at the A.W. Jones Heritage Center. Leslie Dunlap, Ph.D., presented "*Daughters of Men: Vara Majette's Vision of Indigenous History*." The program was offered in person and virtually. There were 148 attendees registered.

■ **A Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon** was held on April 17 to thank all of our enthusiastic and hardworking volunteers, who contributed over 6,500 hours of service during 2023. Twenty-one volunteers were recognized for working over 100 hours, including five who contributed 200 hours or more.

■ The **St. Simons Lighthouse tower was inspected** to ensure visitor safety and identify any maintenance issues. On April 29, Jude Kostage, Principal of Atlantic Engineering Services in Jacksonville, completed an assessment of the tower, which the Society commissions every three years.

■ The Society's Preservation Campaign won the 2024 **Excellence in Stewardship Award** from the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation. The award "recognizes those who ensure the preservation of historic properties through long-term care and maintenance, stabilization, protection or continuous family ownership."

■ On May 9, Walter Hawthorne, Ph.D., presented "**Enslaved: Peoples of the Historical Slave Trade**" at the A.W. Jones Heritage Center. Dr.

Hawthorne is a professor of African and digital history at Michigan State University. He is also the director of Enslaved.org, an online database that is a repository of information about the lives of enslaved people. There were 162 registrations for the program.

On May 10, the Society hosted a second session in Brunswick. The program was held in partnership with the College of Coastal Georgia's Office of Diversity and Inclusion and took place at the Brunswick-Glynn County Library. Dr. Hawthorne spoke to an audience of genealogical researchers, leaders of Coastal Georgia organizations, and members of the community. He explained to attendees how the Enslaved.org project operates and how they can participate.

■ On May 17, Mike Bennett, Operations Director at Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum, performed a **detailed inspection of the French-made Fresnel lens mechanism** in the St. Simons Lighthouse. Mr. Bennett is a member of the lens restoration team at Ponce Inlet, one of only a few facilities in the country that undertake repair of historic lenses. He was assisted by Ralph Ainger, a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary team that faithfully maintains the light as a Federal Aid to Navigation.

■ **The Little Light Music Concert Series** was scheduled to open with the Tams on May 19, but the show was cancelled due to rain. The rescheduled show took place July 7. Local band Squirt Gun played on June 23 and the Pinebox Dwellers joined the lineup for the first time on July 21. The Sensational Sounds of Motown closed the series on September 1.

The series entertained 5,000 concertgoers and generated around \$31,000 for the Society. We are grateful to our generous sponsors: Ameris Bank; Brown-Rose Wealth Management at Morgan Stanley; Coastal Greenery; Elegant Island Living; Moore Stephens Tiller; Peach State Staging; SeaPak; and Taylor Odachowski Schmidt and Crossland LLC.

■ The Society partnered with the Torras Foundation to celebrate the **centennial of the F. J. Torras Causeway**. On May 20, Allison Dupuis presented a lecture on the history of the Torras Causeway at the College of Coastal Georgia. Entitled “Celebrating 100 Years of Connection: Imagining, Building, and Keeping the F. J. Torras Causeway,” the lecture examined the factors that led to the construction of the road, the personalities that made it possible, and its social and economic impact in the decades since its completion. Due to the popularity of the program, Dupuis offered lectures on June 26 and July 10 at the A.W. Jones Heritage Center. A total of 439 people attended the three programs. Dupuis also participated in the Causeway Celebration on Saturday, July 13.

■ In June, the Society welcomed Glynn County teachers to our museums for the third year in a row as part of their “**History Happens Here**” Workshop. K-12 teachers toured both sites with the Society’s Education Director. The teachers discussed ways to incorporate artifacts, interactives, and local stories into their lesson plans, followed by a lunch provided by the Society.

■ The Society’s 2024 **Chautauqua Lecture Series** explored changemaking elections that had a significant impact, both in Georgia and for the U.S. Presidency. The series was titled “Seasons of Change: Elections That Shaped Our National and State History.” The lectures were offered both in person and virtually at the St. Simons Presbyterian Church. There were 189 registrations. The series was generously sponsored by Gilbert, Harrell, Sumerford & Martin, P.C.; Lokey Asset Management of Raymond James; and SeaPak.

On **August 8, Scott Buchanan, Ph.D.**, delivered the first lecture “Georgia’s Gubernatorial Election of 1946: The Triumph of Rural Georgia.” Dr. Buchanan discussed the dispute over state leadership when Governor-elect Eugene Talmadge died before taking the oath of office and three politicians, including Talmadge’s son, Herman, claimed the office.

At the program on **August 15, Laurence Jurdem, Ph.D.**, presented “A Parting of the Ways: Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge and the Presidential Election of 1912.” Dr. Jurdem described Roosevelt’s controversial launching of a third-party bid in opposition to his own party’s candidate, William Taft, which threw the election to Woodrow Wilson.

The following Thursday, **August 22**, eminent Lincoln scholar **Harold Holzer** delivered “Electing and Re-electing Lincoln: The Immigrant Impact in 1860 and 1864.” The program was based on his new book, *Brought Forth on This Continent: Abraham Lincoln and American Immigration*, which describes the effect of the influx of foreign-born people on the political landscape of an increasingly divided nation.

On **September 5, Richard Brookhiser**, a National Humanities Medal winner, presented the final program in the series, “1800 – America’s First Two-Party System Goes to the Polls.” Brookhiser examined the dynamics and consequences when Thomas Jefferson and his own vice presidential running mate, Aaron Burr, tied for electoral college votes, and the House of Representatives elected Jefferson after 36 rounds of voting.

■ The **Brunswick Lecture Series** was held at the College of Coastal Georgia, October 8, 15, 22, and 29. There were 110 people registered for the series.

The first lecture on **October 8** featured the Society’s Senior Historian **Buddy Sullivan**. Sullivan covered the history of Brunswick from the colonial settlement of Georgia to the 20th century, concentrating on the city’s development as a commercial center and seaport.

Hector Montford, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History at the College of Coastal Georgia, presented “God Willing, I’m Going to Brazil: Paul Redfern and the 1927 Brunswick-to-Brazil Flight” on **October 15**.



Glynn County Teachers Participate in a “History Happens Here” Workshop



Fall Program Speaker Kate Clarke Lemay, Ph.D., at Frederica Academy

On **October 22**, local author and historian **Mason Stewart** presented “Temple Beth Tefilloh: A Historic Synagogue in the Middle of the Bible Belt.”

The series concluded with **Allison Dupuis** on **October 29** with a lecture about the Huston House near Darien, Georgia, which was destroyed by fire in July 2024, and its builder, T. L. Huston. In 1927, Colonel Tillinghast L'hommedieu Huston, a former co-owner of the New York Yankees, constructed a home on Butler Island, where he had converted the former rice plantation into a lettuce and dairy farm.

■ Allison Dupuis visited Burroughs-Molette Elementary School on November 8 for the school's annual **Veterans Day program**. Third, fourth, and fifth grade students learned about the history of the St. Simons Coast Guard Station and the importance of the Coast Guard during World War II.

■ On November 9, Myrna Crook, manager of the Society's Archaeology Lab, and Stephanie Knox, stewardship director of the St. Simons Land Trust, gave students from the Archaeological Methods and Theory class at Georgia Southern University a specialized tour of **Cannon's Point Preserve**. This is the third year that Dr. Matt Compton, anthropology professor and director of the GSU Laboratory of Archaeology, has brought this class to the Preserve.

■ The **Fall Program** was held on November 14 at the A.W. Jones Heritage Center. Kate Clarke Lemay, Ph.D., presented a lecture on her exhibit “Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence.” Displayed at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery in 2019, this exhibition celebrated the then-upcoming centennial anniversary of women's suffrage in the United States. The program was offered in person and virtually. There were 108 people registered.

The following day, Dr. Lemay presented programs on women's suffrage at Frederica Academy. Attendees included the entire eighth grade, the AP U.S. History class, a U.S. and World Affairs class, and

members of the Frederica Academy Women's History Club.

■ Staff members attended a **World War II Heritage Trail** planning meeting November 18 in Savannah. The meeting was facilitated by Angela Westerfield, Chief Marketing Officer with Visit Savannah. Participants discussed the Trail's mission, purpose, and future marketing goals.

■ The Museum Store's **Holiday Gift Open House** was held on November 23. An exclusive book talk featuring local author David Sweat and his book *Brunswick's Golden Era of Minor League Baseball* was held at 11 a.m. in the event hall during the Open House. A member preview event took place the day before.

■ On December 4, the Society hosted a **book talk and signing** at the A.W. Jones Heritage Center featuring Paul M. Pressly and his latest book, *A Southern Underground Railroad: Black Georgians and the Promise of Spanish Florida and Indian Country*. Pressly, the director emeritus of the Ossabaw Island Education Alliance, has previously written, edited or contributed to several books about the cultural and environmental history of Coastal Georgia. There were 107 guests registered for the talk.

■ During this year's hurricane season, the high winds of two storms caused loss of paint in several areas on the Lighthouse tower. On Friday, December 6, Jude Kostage of AES Structural Engineers in Jacksonville and Mike Keeling, a paint specialist from Coastal Construction Products in Jacksonville, did an **assessment of the masonry paint** and will prepare a report with findings and recommendations.

■ Starting December 17, the **gazebo underwent repairs**, including replacement of the wooden roof, thanks to the generosity of the Terry Thomas Foundation. The project will be completed in January when the structure receives a fresh coat of paint.

■ During 2024, the Historic Harrington School and St. Simons African American Heritage Coalition planned a diverse slate of programming in celebration of the **school's 100th anniversary**. Allison Dupuis assisted in these efforts by writing 26 of 52 weekly features on local African American history.

■ Throughout the year, the Society presented the **“History Highlights”** article each month in *Elegant Island Living* magazine. Produced by Allison Dupuis, these articles explored a variety of local history topics and featured photographs and artifacts from our collection.

Collections

The following items were donated to the Society during 2024:

2024.001	Photograph (1) of U.S. Maritime Corporation shipyard employees and copy of that image, circa 1920; plans (2) for alterations to the Shelander Cottage, St. Simons Island, Georgia, circa 1936. Donor: Anne Shelander Floyd
2024.002	Wooden box containing broken christening bottle with netting, ribbon and small pennant, given to Mrs. I.M. Aiken as sponsor for the launch of Liberty ship <i>SS George G. Crawford</i> , Brunswick, Georgia, January 1, 1944. Donor: Harrison Aiken, Jr.
2024.003	Brochure: “The King & Prince Beach and Yacht Club,” circa 1940. Donor: W.W. Walker, Jr.
2024.004	Scrapbooks (2): Bicentennial Celebration of the Founding of Fort Frederica, 1736-1936 and Brunswick-Golden Isles scrapbook of tourism, 1971-1972. Record book of local weather reports (2), Jan.1943-Dec. 1953 and Jan. 1954-Dec. 1964. Donor: Golden Isles Convention & Visitors Bureau
2024.005	World War II armbands (2) for Aircraft Warning Service and Civilian Defense Drivers’ Corps; letter to Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Smith of Brunswick; and guest tags (3) to attend the launching of Liberty ships at the J.A. Jones Shipyard, 1943 and 1944. Donor: Family of Gloria S. Ramsaur

2024.006 World War II photographs (5) and negatives (2) of the Surrency sisters of Jesup, Georgia; newspaper articles, documents, and other media associated with history of the Liberty shipyard, J.A. Jones Construction Company, Brunswick, Georgia, and the Surrency sisters' work there.
Donor: Family of Lauree Surrency Hires

Additions to Existing Collections

1998.015 Meeting minutes, 1928; Yearbooks (2), 1939-1940 and 1942-1943; Flower Show program, 1933; *Better Homes and Gardens* National Award, 1935; framed landscape plan "Old Garden at Kelvin Grove" drawn by Wm. R. Marshall, 1936; copy of bookmark for cookbooks, 1947; plan for Gascoigne Bluff gardens, 1954; watercolor print of Hamilton Plantation House; 75th anniversary calendar, 2003; Garden Club notecards and sign.
Donor: Cassina Garden Club

2014.004 Presidential Letters Patent (2) signed by Woodrow Wilson, appointing Howard E. Coffin as Chairman of the Aircraft Board in 1917 and 1918; photographic reproduction of attendee list commemorating 1928 opening night of The Cloister; original portrait studies of Matilda and Howard Coffin signed by artist Frank O. Salisbury, 1929; Sea Island Game Preserve Records (12), 1929-1941; lidded, insulated pitcher inscribed "The Jekyll Island Club."
Donor: Alfred W. Jones III

2014.010 East Beach Association documents and photographs; photographs (2) of Brunswick scenes, circa 1940; andirons crafted from track of St. Simons railway.
Donors: Janis and Cesar Rodriguez

2015.006 Sea Island Summit 2004 scarf; handwritten journal, "Thoughts about Sea Island Summit" by Merry Tipton, June 2004; *Old Mill Days 1874-1908*, hardback edition.
Donor: Merry Tipton

Research Library

Book *The Civil War in Georgia: An Illustrated Travelers Guide* by Richard Lenz
Donor: Philip Wilheit

Book *When the Southern Lights Went Dark: The Lighthouse Establishment During the Civil War* by Mary Louise Clifford and J. Candace Clifford
Donor: Linda Olsen

Book *William Bartram on the Southeastern Indians*, edited by Gregory A. Waselkov and Kathryn E. Holland Braund
Donor: Mimi Rogers

Magazines *The National Geographic Magazine*, 1945 (12 issues)
Donor: Keith H. Griffin



Myrna Crook Meets with Georgia Southern University Archaeology Students at Cannon's Point

Archaeology Laboratory

As part of the Society's strategic planning for FY 2025-2030, board member Cheryl Hargrove prepared a comprehensive feasibility study and business plan for expanding the services of the lab to better meet the needs of Coastal Georgia. With board approval, an archaeologist was hired, Aaron Ellrich, Ph.D., starting in January 2025.

Throughout 2024, Myrna Crook, as a volunteer, managed the day-to-day operations of the lab according to professional standards. Lindsey Cochran, Ph.D., our consulting archaeologist, generously provided professional guidance throughout the year and assisted with strategic planning. Both volunteers and donors gave invaluable support to the lab. In total, 66 collections have been curated, comprising tens of thousands of artifacts.

Activities during the year included:

- Curating artifact collections according to best practices, monitoring environmental conditions in collections storage, and maintaining an updated database.

- Meeting remotely with Dr. Cochran and three East Tennessee State University (ETSU) students for a semester-long independent study focused on archaeology at Cannon's Point.

- Assisting with the planning of the Society's "Journeys" field trip to Hampton Point and Butler Island, working with speaker Terri Ward, and providing information about archaeology at both sites.

- Meeting with Dr. Cochran's ETSU students to discuss archaeology on the Georgia coast before a Cumberland Island field school in May/June.

- Monitoring a ground disturbance project at Cannon's Point Preserve, which generated a new collection of artifacts stored at the lab as part of our Memorandum of Understanding with the St. Simons Land Trust.

- Presenting a program on the use of oyster shells through the centuries at the meeting of the International Conference on Shellfish Restoration at Cannon's Point Preserve.

- Monitoring an installation project involving ground disturbance at the 19th century Adam Strain Building in Darien, Georgia. This added

thousands of artifacts to the current collection the lab is curating from the site. Assisted by volunteers Wyck DeLong and Janis Rodriguez, Myrna Crook organized and installed temporary exhibits of artifacts from this collection for the opening of the building as Tabby House Brewery.

- Receiving and processing six new collections of artifacts. This included three additions to the comparative collection, donated by James Baker IV, Jim Bruce, and Maria Haynes.

- Providing programming, research assistance, and information to community partners, including Cassina Garden Club, Fort Frederica, St. Simons Land Trust, and The Nature Conservancy.

- Assisting Cannon's Point Preserve staff with artifacts for Oglethorpe Point Elementary School History Day; participating in two Fort Frederica archaeology events; and organizing and presenting family activities at St. Simons Land Trust's Family Day at Guale Preserve.

- Assisting scholars with research and articles on archaeology; identifying artifacts found in Coastal Georgia; making site visits to properties at the request of owners to provide information on archaeology; and providing tours of the lab to visiting archaeologists, local non-profits, and other interested groups and individuals.

Volunteers

Since the Society's founding, volunteers have worked diligently to bring our mission to life for visitors and members. Our success is due to the dedication, commitment, love of history, and support demonstrated by these faithful stewards. We extend our appreciation to these individuals who continue to devote their time and talent to the work of the Society serving as museum docents, tour guides, archives registrars and researchers, event volunteers, administrative volunteers, archaeology volunteers, and members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Lighthouse crew.

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In 2023, the Society and its supporters established a dedicated Preservation Fund which will ensure that resources are permanently available to complete essential work on the historic buildings. Our heartfelt thanks to the donors listed below who supported this important effort in 2024.

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We are fortunate to have a strong and loyal group of members. Our Keepers of the Light have provided leadership and support since 2008, which sustained the organization during challenging times and allowed us to complete bold initiatives. Totaling over 200, Keepers contribute 20% of our operating budget each year.

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Vaibhavi Patel
Bobbie Patrick
Helen Peppiatt
Ann Pequigney
Tara Perry
Chris Phelps-Thiry
Gloria Phillips
Nan Phillips

Daren Pietsch
Dotty Plage
Carole Ploeger
Dave Pointon
Diane Pollack
Lou Pollie
Keith Post
Judy Powell
Cathy Powers
Bethany Raulerson
Marie Richardson
Vicki Rickicki
Bob Rightnour
Joy Riley
Yvonne Rios
Gail Rivard
Laura Robb
Cheryl Robinson
Ginny Rosner
Freda Roulhac
Richard Ruka
Sallie Sasser
Katherine Scalingi
Ginnie Schroder
Joanne Scott
Patti Scott
Julie Sellers
Ashley Shanks
Betty Lou Shaw
Peggy Sheffield
Pokey Sheffield
Linda Shonesy
Alan Sigler
Vickie Simmons
Beth Simpson
Dr. Scott Slechta
Bill Smith
Beth Smith
Ellen Smith
Dianne Smoot
June Sortwell
Mike Souther

Individuals, continued

Barbara Sprouse
Melanie Staab
Kay Stahl
Mason Stewart
Judy Stipp
Debra Stockton
Davene Strawser
Keith Strigaro
Tess Stuermer
Elizabeth Sudduth
Carl Svendsen III
Phil Tardif
Gigi Taylor
Sally Tillapaugh
Evelyn Ting
Laura Trippe
Michael Truckey
Ruth Trudeau
Becky Tufts
Jackie Turbidy
Kristel Tyre
Matthew Payne, University of
Georgia Main Library
Deborah Vagasi
Virginia Von Allmen
Nancy Wainwright
Christine Walden
James Walker
Frank Walsh III
Jeanne Warwick
Kim Watson
Kristina Watson
Elizabeth Weems
Kevin Weiss
Wanda Wetherington
Kathie Whalen
Susan Williamson
Faith Willis
Barbara Wilsher
Brian Womble
Bootie Wood

Ann Wright
Jackie Yates
Gloria Zocchi

**Deceased*

*Lists include members as of
December 31, 2024.*



Mike Bennett, of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum, Inspects our Fresnel Lens with Ralph Ainger





COASTAL GEORGIA
**HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

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