



COASTAL GEORGIA
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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.

Summer 2025

CHAUTAUQUA LECTURE SERIES



Sea Island Casino postcard, circa 1946.

“Just Passing Through: Famous Faces in the Golden Isles”

As nationwide awareness of the attractions, communities, and natural beauty of Georgia's coast increased in the early twentieth century, visitors flocked to the area—including some of the most well-known figures of their time. Some, like future president Dwight D. Eisenhower and flying ace Eddie Rickenbacker, came here for vacations. Others, like Zora Neale Hurston and B.B. King, visited Coastal Georgia for their careers. The expansion of tourism transformed the Golden Isles into both a destination and a crossroads. When these trailblazers visited, they brought the spotlight with them.

The 2025 Chautauqua Lecture Series will view our region through the eyes of these four fascinating Americans, exploring what their temporary stays can tell us not only about their lives and accomplishments but about the place we call home.

Continued on Page 2



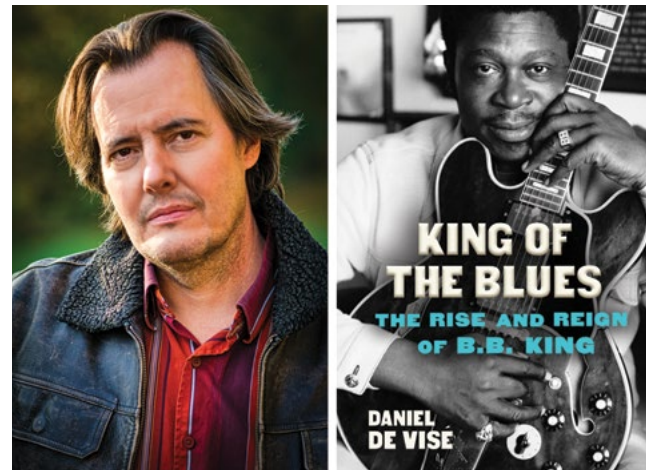
Dwight D. and Mamie Eisenhower on Sea Island, 1946. Courtesy of Sea Island.



Michel Paradis, Ph.D.

On **Thursday, September 4, 2025**, Michel Paradis, Ph.D., will deliver a lecture about Dwight D. Eisenhower. In 1946, Eisenhower and his wife Mamie famously vacationed on Sea Island, where an oak planted to honor their visit remains today. Dr. Paradis is a leading human rights lawyer, historian, and national security law scholar. He is most recently the author of the critically acclaimed ***The Light of Battle: Eisenhower, D-Day, and the Birth of the American Superpower***. He is also a partner at the international law firm Curtis Mallet-Prevost and a Lecturer at Columbia Law School. He was awarded his doctorate from Oxford University, where he was a Champion Scholar, and received his law degree from Fordham University in New York.

Daniel de Visé will present a program on B.B. King on **September 11**. In 1961, King visited and performed at the Dolphin Club Lounge on Jekyll Island. The Lounge was located near St. Andrews Beach, which was for a time the only public beach on Georgia's segregated coast accessible to African Americans. The venue was also part of the Chitlin Circuit, a series of venues throughout the South that served Black performers and Black audiences. Daniel de Visé's book ***King of the Blues: The Rise and Reign of B.B. King*** was a *Kirkus* Best Nonfiction Book of the Year and was longlisted for the PEN America Award for Biography. His journalistic work has appeared in the *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and the *Miami Herald*. In 2001, he won a shared Pulitzer Prize with his team at the *Herald*. De Visé received his bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University and his master's in journalism from Northwestern University.

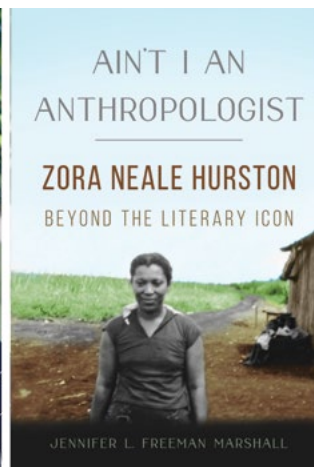


Daniel de Visé

The program on **September 18** will feature Jennifer L. Freeman Marshall, Ph.D., who will focus on Zora Neale Hurston. Hurston visited St. Simons Island in 1935 alongside researchers from the Library of Congress and New York University. Together, the group conducted interviews with residents of the island's African American neighborhoods and recorded their traditional music.



Jennifer L. Freeman Marshall, Ph.D.

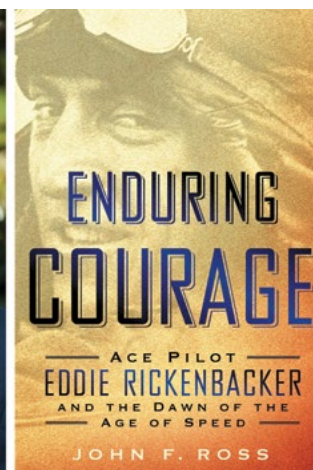


Dr. Marshall's book ***Ain't I an Anthropologist: Zora Neale Hurston Beyond the Literary Icon*** expands on this element of Hurston's career by examining the cultural meanings of Hurston's iconic popularity in literary studies and redefining her contributions to the discipline of anthropology. An Atlanta native and graduate of Spelman College, Dr. Marshall received her M.A. in anthropology from Georgia State University and her Ph.D. in women's studies from Emory University. She is an associate professor in the Department of English and the School of Interdisciplinary Studies at Purdue University.

The series will conclude on **September 25** with a lecture by John F. Ross on Eddie Rickenbacker, a frequent and noted visitor to Sea Island. An early automobile racer, Rickenbacker trained as a pilot in France and became the United States' most decorated flying ace of World War I, a Medal of Honor recipient, and the head of Eastern Air Lines. Ross's book ***Enduring Courage: Ace Pilot Eddie Rickenbacker and the Dawn of the Age of Speed*** illuminates Rickenbacker's connections to the dawn of car racing, aerial warfare, and the roles of race car drivers and flying aces—and Rickenbacker himself—as American legends. Ross is the former editor of the magazine *American Heritage of Invention and Technology* and the recipient of the 2011 Fort Ticonderoga Award for Contributions to American History.



John F. Ross



The programs in this year's Chautauqua series will take place on Thursday evenings, September 4, 11, 18, and 25, at 6 p.m. at St. Simons Presbyterian Church. Each will be recorded and will be available for viewing after the program. The cost for the series is \$50 for members and \$95 for non-members, with individual program tickets available for \$30 each. To register, please visit coastalgeorgiahistory.org.

Thank you to our generous 2025 Chautauqua series sponsors:



Programming Survey Results

Staff conducted a virtual survey of members in February to assess CGHS programming. We are grateful for the nearly 150 members who responded with helpful feedback that will guide changes to our public programs, including moving the Chautauqua Lecture Series to September. We are buoyed by the overwhelmingly positive response, which highlighted the quality of speakers and choice of topics, and are excited to continue providing valued programs for our members, community, and wider public.

Strategic Plan Member Program

We appreciate the membership's input into our recently adopted Strategic Plan and are ready to share more about it during a brief program this summer. Please join our new staff members Dr. Whitney Nell Stewart and Dr. Aaron Ellrich alongside CGHS Historian Allison Dupuis as we preview the future direction of the Society. Choose from two dates—**Thursday, July 31 or Thursday, August 21**—and meet us at 5pm in the A.W. Jones Heritage Center Event Hall. The program is free of charge, but registration is required by visiting coastalgeorgiahistory.org.

Volunteer Luncheon

Nearly forty CGHS volunteers gathered on Wednesday, April 16 for the Volunteer Luncheon. This annual event allows us to show our gratitude for the vital work that volunteers provide as museum docents, archival and archaeology volunteers, and school tour docents. At this year's luncheon, catered by Halyard's, staff presented a short program highlighting volunteer program stats and presented gifts to those who served 100+ and 200+ hours. The volunteers also challenged each other in a game of CGHS trivia, with the winners taking home Little Light Music tickets. We are so grateful to all the volunteers who make CGHS special!



Several volunteers contributed over 100 hours of service in 2024 (*indicates over 200 hours). Pictured, back row: Nancy Chastain, Pam Balsley*, Sandra Sanders, Marti Jeffers, Gretchen Negles. Pictured, front row: Walter Oglesby, Sallie Sasser, Mark Lawrence, Miriam Lancaster, Nancy Jenkins, Maggie Glennon, Becky Bridges, Les Breen, Chris Bone, Larry Bacon, Richard Altman. Not pictured: Adeane Bregman, Myrna Crook*, Sally Gilfillan, Patrick Kelley*, Janis Rodriguez*.

Become a School Tour Docent

Do you love Coastal Georgia history and sharing stories with young audiences? Join the CGHS Volunteer Program as a School Tour Docent! Help educate and entertain students at the Lighthouse and WWII Home Front Museums. For more information, contact Whitney at wstewart@coastalgeorgiahistory.org.



Teachers Tour CGHS Museums

More than two dozen Glynn County teachers toured the WWII Home Front Museum and Lighthouse Museum on Saturday, May 3 as part of the History Happens Here workshop. This exciting professional development opportunity brings teachers to historic sites across our region, fostering connections between teachers and historical organizations like CGHS.

Little Light Music Concert Series

Join us this summer for our beloved annual music series! Concerts begin at 7 p.m. on the oceanfront lawn beneath the Lighthouse. Bring your family, friends, a picnic supper, and lawn chairs, and enjoy the music. Tickets are \$20 for adults; children under 12 and Keepers of the Light are admitted free of charge. A \$60 season pass is available. Purchase tickets in advance at the Lighthouse Museum Store or at coastalgeorgiahistory.org. For news and weather updates, please visit the Society's website or Facebook page.

JUNE 15
Squirt Gun

JULY 27
Pine Box Dwellers

AUGUST 31
Sounds of Motown

The Society is grateful for the support of our 2025 concert sponsors:



Gazebo Restoration

Since March 2023, CGHS has been restoring the historic gazebo using generous grant funds provided by the Terry Thomas Foundation. The gazebo originally functioned as an ornamental cover at the summer cottage built by shipping magnate F.D.M. Strachan on St. Simons Sound around 1910. It was redesigned as a gazebo in 1976. To save it from destruction during residential development of the area in the late 1980s, the gazebo was donated to CGHS and moved to the Lighthouse grounds, where it has become a cherished part of our campus. Time has since taken its toll, however, necessitating a full restoration of the gazebo, which the Terry Thomas Foundation generously provided to ensure the continued use of this open-air structure. After repairing rotten wood, replacing the cypress roof, hand painting the entire structure, and landscaping the area, the gazebo is now ready to welcome students, visitors, and the community.



Pictured left to right: Susan Goodhue, Dewey Benefield, Sherri Jones, Mimi Rogers.

Historic Preservation

The Lighthouse and Keeper's Dwelling are rejuvenated after the completion of exterior maintenance projects in March. Razorback LLC prepared and painted the Lighthouse observation deck and handrail, as well as the lantern room deck and exterior handrail, in addition to washing, repairing, and painting the exterior masonry. Coastal Coverage Painting & Design Inc. painted the Keeper's Dwelling porch and benches, windows, shutters, soffits, and corbels. This type of work is made possible through the Preservation Fund, which ensures that our historic structures are protected for future generations. To donate to preservation, visit coastalgeorgiahistory.org.



CGHS IS
Making History

During the spring, more than two dozen school tours brought hundreds of local students to the Lighthouse Museum and Home Front Museum to learn about Coastal Georgia history. Researchers utilized our collections for publications and history graduate courses.

We acquired several new pieces of Coastal Georgia history, including a first edition copy of Fanny Kemble's ***Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838-1839*** (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1863). Kemble is discussed in the Keeper's Dwelling first-floor exhibit, and her book is one of the most well-known publications from 19th-century Coastal Georgia. This acquisition was especially exciting as it includes an inscription of who first purchased it, where, and when.



Photo courtesy of Tavel Cowan and Bike Walk Golden Isles.



Researcher Chris Bailey at work in the CGHS Research Library.

CGHS staff have also been making history over the past several months in our community and beyond. At Glynn County Schools' 2025 STEAMfest and Literacy Fair, Allison and volunteer Tom Luckstone introduced Glynn County students and parents to the World War II Home Front Museum through the museum's knot table, code blocks, and interactive demonstrations of Morse code and flag semaphore. Allison also gave several presentations, including at Community Church St. Simons, Mosaic Jekyll Island Museum, and Bike Walk Golden Isles. Aaron has been busy with artifact conservation work for the Florida Museum, which he presented at the Florida Anthropological Society conference. He's also met with landowners to discuss cultural resources on their property, including potential archaeology work. Whitney led a roundtable on Public Humanities in the South at the Southeastern American Studies Association conference. She also met virtually with architecture students at the University of Texas at Austin to discuss historic preservation.

Membership Highlights

Welcome New Members!

Keepers of the Light

Catherine Ammons – Sustainer
Elizabeth Kelley – Sustainer
Gene & Sheila Scanlon – Sustainer

General

Glenn Cook – Individual
Marybeth Dohmann – Individual
Bill Egeland – Individual
Shannon Gilreath – Family

Terry Goodbread – Individual
Sharon Graper – Family
David Henderson – Family
Ron & Connie Kersh – Family
Shirley & David Lane – Family
Samantha Lebas – Family
Swan McKnight – Family
Sara Nelson – Family
Kellie Sharpe – Individual
Pattie Tennille – Individual
Sherie Welch – Family

Thank you to those who have generously upgraded their membership or increased their level of annual giving.

Keepers of the Light

Jane Beadles & John Dunham – Luminary
Beth Downey – Sustainer
John Rodman – Patron

General

Christopher Bone – Assistant Keeper

*We appreciate you, our loyal members, for your continued support.
When you renew, please consider a greater investment in the Society.*



BRUNSWICK LECTURE SERIES *Save the Date*

The 2025 Brunswick Lecture Series will be held on October 7, 14, 21, and 28, at the College of Coastal Georgia's Stembler Theatre, located within the Campus Center. Each lecture will begin at 4 p.m. This year's series features an exciting assortment of local speakers on topics that span Brunswick's history from its foundation to the twentieth century.

Calendar of Events

Little Light Music

7-9 p.m.
Lighthouse grounds
\$20 per person
Free: Children under 12 and Keepers of the Light

June 15 – Squirt Gun
July 27 – Pine Box Dwellers
August 31 – Sounds of Motown

Strategic Plan Member Programs

5 p.m.
A.W. Jones Heritage Center
July 31 or August 21
Free of Charge

Chautauqua Lecture Series

6 p.m.
St. Simons Presbyterian Church
\$50 members; \$95 non-members
Individual program tickets available for \$30 each

September 4

"Dwight D. Eisenhower—
Visitor to Sea Island"
Michel Paradis, Ph.D.

September 11

"B.B. King—
Visitor to Jekyll Island"
Daniel de Visé

September 18

"Zora Neale Hurston—
Visitor to St. Simons Island"
Jennifer L. Freeman Marshall, Ph.D.

September 25

"Eddie Rickenbacker—
Visitor to Sea Island"
John F. Ross



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Jessica Aldridge

Consulting Historian
Buddy Sullivan

Consulting Archaeologist
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