



LET'S RAMBLE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 IS THE DATE

9:00 IS THE TIME

**WEST CAMDEN AND CHARLTON COUNTY
THE DESTINATION**

Details: Meet no later than 9:00 at Friendship Baptist Church on Highway 40, just west of Kingsland. Lunch will be Dutch Treat at Okfenokee Restaurant in Folkston.

Visit Coleraine - Old Mills Place and Cemetery - Sardis Church - Traders Hill

Who's Invited? You, your guests and any other interested visitors.

WHAT WILL YOU SEE AT COLERAINE?

The Hebard House, the Granite Marker commemorating the signing of the Coleraine Treaty and the St. Marys River.

James Seagrove, one of the St. Marys founders, and James Armstrong owned an Indian trading post at Coleraine on the very edge of Indian territory. A small settlement built up around this. A perfect spot for a meeting with the Indians.

In May 1796 began a meeting to last one month ending on June 29 with the Indians pledging to abide by the earlier New York Treaty and to help in running the line between Spanish Florida and the United States. They also agreed to help keep the peace with the settlers. They did not cede any land.

Indian Commissioner Benjamin Hawkins was among those in the American contingent, along with soldiers and other political figures. The Creek Indians were represented by twenty kings, seventy-five chiefs and three hundred forty warriors.

Alexander McQueen's 1932 HISTORY OF CHARLTON COUNTY says, (After the signing) "Coleraine struggled along for years as a small trading post, but the Indians gradually deserted it for Fort Alert (Traders Hill) several miles up the St. Marys River.

"The old landing, and beautiful grounds surrounding, with large moss-draped oaks dotting the old deserted village streets is still a spot of beauty."

In 1912, the granite marker was erected on the site by the Lyman Hall Chapter of the DAR.

This marker stands in the front yard of the Hebard, now Varn, house. D.L. Hebard, who at one time owned much of the Okfenokee and logged most of the cypress trees there, built the house.

McQueen described the house, "It is without doubt, the finest and most expensive home to be found in this section of south-east Georgia. It is constructed entirely of wood, mostly cypress lumber."



THE HEBARD/VARN HOUSE AT COLERAINE

WHAT WILL YOU SEE AT THE MILLS PLACE?

A family cemetery, the site of Mills chapel - and a typical old farmhouse that once belonged to the Mills family.

Mr. McQueen says of the Mills family, "Members of the Mills family have been leaders in the affairs of Charlton County for several generations, and the high esteem in which the older members of this pioneer family were held has been a decided asset to the members of the present generation."

The Mills Cemetery is located near the chapel site and on private land. Family names, besides Mills, include Mizell, Credille, Lee, Cox, Kennison, Baker, Cannon, and Russell.

WHAT WILL YOU SEE AT SARDIS?

Sardis Primitive Baptist Church, beautiful in its simplicity, is located west of Folkston. It was organized before 1821, according to CHARLTON COUNTY HISTORICAL NOTES. Three buildings have stood in the same general area. The original one was replaced in 1840. The one still standing was built much later.

The pulpit now in use is over a hundred and forty years old. It has a bullet hole believed to have come from the gun of a soldier during Indian uprisings. The militia was sent out to protect the settlers, and believed the Indians were hiding in the church.

Membership in the Sardis Church has declined in the past years, but members still meet the fourth Saturday and Sunday in each month.

Sardis Cemetery adjoins the church and is one of the largest and oldest in Charlton County, perhaps dating to 1840. Some of the family names found are Conner, Chancey, Rigdon, Sikes, Altman, Crews, Johnson, Gibson, Chesser, Roddenberry, Mizell, and Petty.

WHAT WILL YOU SEE AT TRADERS HILL?

The site of Charlton County's original county seat. A cemetery for the townfolk from the town long gone. A turpentine still site. The St. Marys River.

According to McQueen's history, Traders Hill (Fort Alert) was probably established as early as 1755. This settlement near the headwaters of the St. Marys River was a village of "considerable importance" in the early days of Georgia's history. The fort, garrisoned by U.S. troops, protected the nearby settlers from the Indians, who were known to attack unprotected farms.

Traders Hill remained a pioneer trading post with a few stores and barrooms until 1854, when Charlton County was created and this became the county seat. The town then became a "center of commerce" for southeast Georgia and north Florida.

Trade between the storekeepers and farmers was the chief industry; shot and powder, staples from the stores, were swapped for furs, hides, wool, cotton, and other products from farm or woods.

It remained a thriving village until the railroad came through the county farther to the east, and Folkston became the seat of government.

Mr. McQueen wrote in 1932: "In the old cemetery lies sleeping many prominent members of the old pioneer families, and every year their descendants came from the 'four corners' to visit and care for the graves of their ancestors.

"The old courthouse and jail have long since been destroyed; the old stores and barrooms have passed away in decay; the residences and boarding houses have long been torn down and removed, but skirting the old site on the south, the magnificent St. Marys River placidly flows toward the Atlantic Ocean, and through the giant, moss-draped oaks the south wind still speaks of fierce combats, noble adventure and sweet romances of an almost forgotten past."

GENEALOGY CORNER - MILLS FAMILY, PART II

The family of Joseph Mills, who died in 1810, was featured in the September issue of Guale News. Since the Society will be visiting the Mills cemetery where other members are buried, some information about them will be of interest. This comes from CHARLTON COUNTY HISTORIC NOTES and McQueen's HISTORY OF CHARLTON COUNTY.

The Joseph Mills, Jr. who settled the Mills Plantation in what is now Charlton County was born in 1795. He married Elizabeth McClellan, daughter of Samuel (or Andrew) McClellan, on December 28, 1826. Her marked grave in the Mills Cemetery says she was born in December 1810 and died January 18, 1888.

Shirley Thompson's WOODBINE TWINETH names the Joseph Mills, Jr. children: Joseph, Sarah Ann, Margaret Jane, Samuel McClellan, Catherine Augusta, Seaborn Foster, Mary Ann Elizabeth.

Catherine A. married John Kennison

Samuel M. Mills, (1876-1953) buried Pineview

Mary Elizabeth Mills married John Louis Rudolph and is buried in Mills Cemetery.

Seaborn Foster Mills was the seventh child of Joseph and Elizabeth Mills. He was born October 26, 1842 and died February 7, 1929. He married Elizabeth Wainwright in 1868. She was born April 27, 1846 and died September 22, 1922. They are both buried in the Mills Cemetery.

Their children were:

Sarah A. (Gussie) married J.B. Baker, both buried Mills Cemetery (Five children)

Seaborn F., Jr. married Josephine Golson (Two children) (1870-1948, buried Pineview, Folkston)

Frank D. (see below)

Lilly married C.Y. McMullen (One son)

Minnie married H.A. Renfroe (Five children)

Martha married J.N. Jones (Two children)

Edgar married Floy Wilson and continued to live at old homestead. (Four children)

Frank Decatur Mills, born April 8, 1876, died July 4, 1960, buried Pineview. He married on March 4, 1900 Mary Elizabeth (Mamie) Wright, daughter of Dr. J.C. Wright. They had thirteen children.

Francis Rudolph married Ivella Kight

Lillian Lucille married Carl Zart

Seaborn Foster married Eloise Gandy

Frank, Jr., married Helen Gowen

Sheldon Morris died while young

Harry Lee

Mamie Wright married Robert A. Aitken

James Gilbert married Liberty McIver

Margaret Odette married John W. Lee

Raymond Kenneth married Bernice Jones

Walter Morris married Alice Vickers

Mary Elizabeth

Harold Winston married Martha Ann Routzong

CHRISTMAS TOUR OF HOMES IN ST. MARYS

Saturday, December 12. For more information watch the local paper or call Orange Hall, 882-4000.

OFFICERS FOR 1999

Election of officers was held at the October meeting, and last year's went back in with an overwhelming majority!

President	John Christian
Vice President	Eloise Thompson
Rec. Secretary	Susan Lee
Corr. Secretary	Virginia Christian
Treasurer	Mildred Walko

Directors James Stacy, Charles Thompson, and Bebe Williams hold a three year term and will be up for reelection in 2000.

Committee heads will be selected at the planning session in January. If you would like to volunteer, please call Dr. Christian during Bryan-Lang Library hours 8-5 at 576-5841.

FROM OTHER AREAS

The Georgia Historical Society, of which Guale Historical Society is an affiliate member, is conducting its Annual Giving Campaign with a target goal of \$30,000 for 1998. In announcing this, the Society shared its successes this past year: Georgia Heritage Celebration for school children, 146 affiliate chapters, 57 consultation programs across the state; 50% increase in library visitors, 7 statewide workshops, 88 new collections with 512 new books, adding the Georgia Historical Markers program, capital improvements to Hodgson Hall.

With all these accomplishments, the Society is hoping to do even more with the help of interested history buffs. If you would like to make a contribution - send to Georgia Historical Society, 501 Whitaker St., Savannah, GA 31499. For information, call 912-651-2125.

The two remaining lectures in the fall series will be The Architecture of J. Neel Reid by William Mitchell on November 19, and Historical Cemeteries of the South by Dr. Todd Groce on December 10. Both will be held at Hodgson Hall at 7 p.m.

Savannah's Downtown Neighborhood Association announces the twenty-fourth annual Holiday Tour of Homes on Saturday and Sunday, December 12 and 13. For tickets and more information, call 912-233-0220.

Coastal Georgia Historical Society plans a trip to Penn Center on St. Helena Island, South Carolina for their Heritage Days. For information and reservations, call 912-638-4666.

NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS SINCE 10/98

Jim Burnham Family; Fred Mercier Family (New, '99); Mary Cassels, Jacksonville (New, '99)

If you would like to renew for 1999, send to Treasurer Mildred Walko, 800 Margaret St., St. Marys, GA 31558.

• Family \$15 • Individual \$8 • Student \$2

This is the last Guale News until February, so Happy Thanksgiving! Merry Christmas! and a Great New Year! See you at the February meeting!