

HUGUENOT SOCIETY of SOUTH CAROLINA
huguenotsociety.org | (843) 723-3235

THE HUGUENOT HERALD

Volume 29, Number 1 Spring 2019



Henri IV

Upcoming Events:

Huguenot Society of SC
134th Anniversary Meeting
Founders Hall at
Charles Towne Landing
Thursday, April 4, 2019

Annual French Service
French Protestant
(Huguenot) Church of
Charleston
Sunday, April 7, 2019,
10:30 a.m.

134TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING HUGUENOT SOCIETY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

The One Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Anniversary Meeting of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina will be held at Founders Hall at Charles Towne Landing on Thursday, April 4, beginning at 4:30 pm. The address is 1500 Old Towne Road, Charleston, South Carolina. Please enter at the main gate for Charles Towne Landing and follow the signs to Founders Hall. There is plenty of parking available. The reception will be held from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm. At 5:30 pm, the business meeting will begin, followed by the program.

The Strang Lecture is given annually at the Anniversary Meeting in memory of our late member John Perry "Jack" Strang of New York. We are pleased to announce that this year's Strang Lecture will be given by Phyllis G. Jestice, Ph.D., Professor & Chair of the Department of History at the College of Charleston. Dr. Jestice's research specialty is medieval European history with an emphasis in tenth and eleventh-century German history, and she teaches on a wide range of medieval and early modern topics. Dr. Jestice received a Ph.D. and M.A. in History and Humanities from Stanford University, and a B.A. in European History from the University of Puget Sound.

Her lecture, "The War of the Three Henries: How the Huguenots Won Religious Freedom," will focus on how the military and diplomatic skills of the Huguenots prepared the way for Henri IV to issue the Edict of Nantes after he came to the throne in 1589.

Please RSVP for acceptances only by March 25th to (843)723-3235 or office@huguenotsociety.org. There is a \$20 guest fee for non-members. We look forward to seeing both members and guests at the Anniversary Meeting!



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FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Fellow Huguenots,

Until recently, I typically explained the Huguenot experience within the context of the persecution suffered at the hands of Louis XIV and the hardships they endured immigrating to countries where they sought religious freedom. While that message is critical to understanding what drove Huguenots to safer, more tolerant lands, what fortifies our interest is the impact they made once they arrived at their destinations.

We often describe the Huguenots' impact within the limited framework of the first or second generations after immigration, by which point they had largely assimilated. When we widen our lens and incorporate the ingenuity, creativity, leadership and craftsmanship of their descendants - to include the entire generational scope of Huguenot ancestry - we see a much clearer picture. This picture underscores that our Huguenot ancestry, writ large, has changed the world for the better and blessed the countries that harbored our ancestors. It is a testament to tolerance and the benefits that accrue to those that embrace it.

While there is not room to include a lengthy list of Huguenot descendants in this newsletter, I highly recommend going online and looking up "famous Huguenot descendants." The lists that you will find show the depth of their impacts on the arts, literature, entertainment, entrepreneurship, industry, medicine, military, politics, religion and sciences. Some names are familiar, some less so, but all represent their breadth of aspirational accomplishment, given the proper environment.

I hope you also enjoy our Chaplain Tom Guerry's sermon from our Fall Service entitled "We've a Story to Tell" and published herein. Thank you for helping us tell our story to the world.

Sincerely,

John E. Huguley, Jr.
President

SOUTH CAROLINA CONNECTIONS TOUR 2019
The Huguenots in Colonial America: New Paltz, New York
Sponsored by the South Carolina Historical Society
September 9-13, 2019



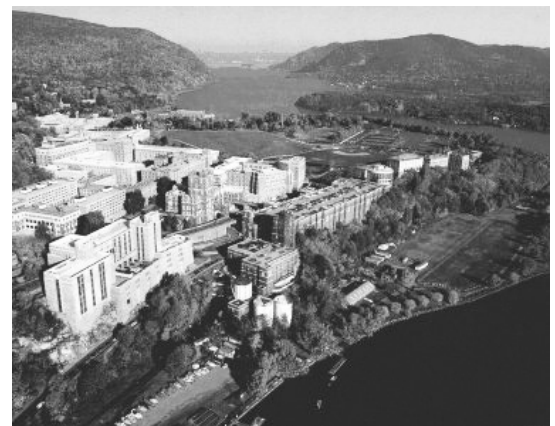
Members of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina are invited to join the South Carolina Historical Society's South Carolina Connections Tour to New Paltz, New York. Join us as we explore a prominent Huguenot settlement located in the scenic and historic Hudson River Valley. New Paltz was founded by a group of French Protestants in 1677 and survives as a "vibrant, cultural and richly historic place." The stone houses constructed by these settlers and their descendants still stand in the historic district along Huguenot Street. Our headquarters for the tour will be the Mohonk Mountain House (www.mohonk.com), a National Historic Landmark resort. Nestled

between New Paltz and the Hudson River, this Victorian castle boasts its own unique history with opportunities to enjoy golf, trail hiking, gardens, and museum spaces.

Your tour begins after you arrive at the Mohonk Mountain House on Monday, September 9, where we will dine together on Monday evening in one of Mohonk's historic dining rooms. The tentative agenda includes:

- On Tuesday, we will travel by bus to New Paltz, where interpreters from Historic Huguenot Street will provide a guided tour, lunch, and lecture. Dinner will be at the Mohonk, followed by time to enjoy the resort amenities in the evening.
- On Wednesday morning, tour the scenic Mohonk Mountain House properties. In the afternoon, we will visit the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum (also the site of Roosevelt's home).
- On Thursday, we will visit the United States Military Academy at West Point, located on the Hudson River. We will return to Mohonk for our last dinner together.
- Friday's checkout time is 1:00 pm, so consider taking in the Mohonk Greenhouse and Garden Tours before you head home.

The cost of the trip is \$5,000 per couple which includes bus transportation, tours, admissions, rooms, and meals. The price does not include transportation to and from New York, alcohol, room service charges or gratuities. For more information or to register for the trip, please contact Ginny Zemp at the SC Historical Society at virginia.zemp@schsonline.org or (843) 723-3225, extension 119.



WE'VE A STORY TO TELL

Chaplain Guerry's Sermon from the Fall Service

Isaiah 51:1-6 *Hebrews 11:1-3, 6, 8-10*

For several weeks during each spring and each fall, the Huguenot Church in Charleston is opened on weekdays to the many tourists and visitors who pass this way. Those who step through these doors are greeted by a knowledgeable and welcoming team of volunteers who are eager to share the Huguenot story. Granted, some of those visitors - mainly those unfamiliar with the term Huguenot - approach rather guardedly and cautiously until our guides put them at ease, assuring them that most Huguenots don't bite and that these days we rarely take prisoners. In fact, our visitors might learn that we are an amiable sort of people. And though in the broad range of Christian churches our numbers are comparatively small, we make up for it in an eagerness to tell our story to anyone who will listen.

And we do have an inspiring story to share. It is a story worth the telling and Huguenots are a people who love to tell it. It is a faith story, one that is rooted and grounded in the confidence that the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ has called us into being, and has traveled with us on our long and arduous journey. In a graphic passage the New Testament writer of Hebrews calls forth bitter and painful memories when he writes of the faithful who "suffered mocking and flogging, chains and imprisonment or were killed by the sword, who were destitute, persecuted, and tormented." Such memories as those are reflective of Huguenot experiences in 17th century France.

When Henry IV issued the Edict of Nantes in 1598, French Protestants were granted a measure of religious freedom. This was an occasion for celebration among those who had suffered long under the yoke of an oppression that demanded religious conformity. Yet the freedom it afforded was not absolute. Throughout the years and decades that followed, persecutions persisted in many quarters. And then, on October 22, 1685 with the Revocation of the Edict under Louis XIV, the persecutions became official.

This, then, is the Huguenot story. Or at least a part of it. But why dwell on that? When have the people of God ever been free from oppression? Are such things not best forgotten? Obviously, the biblical writers didn't think so. For as he gathered the Israelites in the plains of Moab, Moses recounted the painful details of their story: "The Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us." Neither did Joshua smooth over the rough parts when he retold the story at Shechem, told it to a people who had heard it over and over and over again. For while oppression is only a part of the story, it's a part that must be told. But to leave it there would be a recipe for regret and despair. And Moses would have none of it, "Yes, we were afflicted, yes, we were oppressed...but we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors! And the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression."

Anyone at all familiar with the Huguenot story knows well that it does not end on a low note. The road our ancestors traveled was a road that rises. It led through the high country of faith and courage and endurance. And they followed that path armed with the sure conviction that they were being led by an almighty hand. Lest we forget, those of our generation who

proudly wear the name Huguenot know that as a part of our story, a part that we are called upon to remember: *Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug.*

So, the story does not end on a low note. In fact, the story has not ended at all but is still unfolding around us and among us and within us.

A little more than a year ago on Pentecost Sunday we had a first time visitor in worship. That in itself is not unusual, of course, but is true of many Sundays. Yet in this case we can't tell you who our visitor was because we didn't get his name. We learned later that he was identified only as the mystery worshipper, one of an international network of individuals who visit different churches and report on their experiences. Most of the churches visited are in England or elsewhere in Europe but why we were chosen for a visit remains a mystery. We were not alerted beforehand that we were under the spotlight that Sunday and it's just as well. We might have been tempted to "put on the dog" in an effort to impress our visitor. But, all things considered, it was better that he should see us as we are. Sometime after his visit he sent us a copy of his impressions. For the most part he was very generous in his comments, noting the beauty of the place and the warmth with which he was greeted. His overall assessment of his experience here was that the service made him feel glad that he is a Christian.

One other thing he said about us that some might find a little disconcerting is that the service has a whiff of a museum, an interesting way of putting it but one that has a certain ring of truth. Now a simple definition of a museum is 'a place where important things are preserved.' I know that because I looked it up. And I decided that we can live with that - as long as we are clear about what the important things are.

First and foremost, of course, is our identity as a people of faith. If we lose sight of that, we've lost our *raison d'être*.

- It was for faith that the Huguenots endured persecution
- It was for faith that they resisted tyranny
- It was for faith that they fled to other shores
- It was for faith as the hymn says, that "They climbed the steep ascent of heaven/
Through peril, toil and pain..."

All that we are as Huguenots grows out of the soil of our faith in Almighty God. So what our visitor detected as the whiff of a museum we might insist is the sweet aroma of faith. And that's why *we look to the rock from which we were hewn and to the quarry from which we were dug.* It reminds us of who we are and why we're here.

Yet, again, the story does not end there. For as people of faith we live within a certain tension - between the wisdom of the past and the challenge of the future. As we heard in our New Testament lesson, the writer of Hebrews extols the faithfulness of our spiritual ancestors, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. And what he says of them is that they not only looked to the past but that they looked forward to a future to which they were called and into which they were led by an almighty hand.

Several decades before the Revocation, as the Pilgrim Fathers and Mothers were making

preparations to leave Europe to come to these shores, they gathered in church to hear a final sermon by their pastor, John Robinson. The counsel they heard that morning included admonitions to courage and faithfulness and hope. At the same time he lamented an unwillingness to see beyond the limits of their own beliefs and the teachings of their respective leaders, whether Luther or Calvin or others. Yet he insisted that however God may choose to reveal His purpose, they must be ready to receive it. With that came also this reminder: "Remember that the Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from his word."

In other words, the story is still being written. And what was true of those 17th century pilgrims is just as true of 21st century Huguenots. Like them we have a past but we also have a future, looking to Jesus on whom our faith depends from beginning to end. We are not finished. We are works in progress, living out our faith according to the light that God himself gives us through such as he may choose. We are not finished.

Tolstoy's *War and Peace* is considered by many to be one of the greatest novels ever written. More than a thousand pages long it is impressive in its scope and ambition. It has been reported that a few days after completing the mammoth work the Russian author was heard to say, "Yes, but what have I done lately?"¹ That's a question that we, too, should be prepared to ask.

Our identity as Huguenots was forged in the past but we are not stuck there. We have an inspiring past but we have a challenging present and are called to a promising future. And as we continue to reflect on what it means to be a people of faith, it's a question that must be asked in every generation - what have we done lately?

AMEN

1. Quoted in Roger Angell's *This Old Man: All in Pieces*

THE SOCIETY OF ST. THOMAS & ST. DENIS



The Society of Saint Thomas and Saint Denis was formed to celebrate the Christian faith of those early French and British parishioners who made Carolina their home and to instill an interest in the traditions and culture of the colonists who settled within the parish of St. Thomas and St. Denis. The Society of St. Thomas & St. Denis also contributes to the preservation and upkeep of the historic St. Thomas and St. Denis Parish Church, Vestry House, Churchyard and grounds. Church services, usually followed by a social event, are held a few times a year. If you would like to be added to their mailing list to be notified of future events, please let us know.

**THE HUGUENOT SOCIETY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTIONS**

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ANNUAL FRENCH SERVICE FRENCH PROTESTANT (HUGUENOT) CHURCH SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 2019

The annual French service of the French Protestant (Huguenot) Church of Charleston will be held on Sunday, April 7 at 10:30 a.m. and a collation will follow.

