Family History Docent Program

The Family History Docent program pairs volunteers with special training in our resources for genealogists with guests researching their own family stories. Many of our Docents have done thorough genealogy work on their own families, and several Docents have extensive library experience as well.

Docents receive three hours of training on the contents of our Reading Room computers and an inventory of our genealogical books, learn to identify Moravian memoirs within and without our computer system, and take a skill-set test of their knowledge at the end of training to make sure they know where to find things. Trainees agree to volunteer for three hours a week for three months, or a total of thirty hours in time anytime in that three-month period. Docents meet guests who have scheduled family research in advance. They also assist with other family history work at the Archives.

If you would like to work with one of our Docents during your visit here, please call ahead to schedule an appointment. If you’d like to apply to be a Docent, please contact our office. Training classes are limited, and sessions will be offered two to three times a year.

Remote Ordering of Memoirs and Genealogical Research

You may order a copy of any individual memoir remotely for a charge of $10. Additional copies or copies of memoirs for other individuals on the same order are $5 each. Memoirs must be in English, and requesters must agree to keep the facsimile image of the original for their own personal use and not publish or distribute it. Monies must be received before items are sent; and payment may be made by check, or by credit card at the Remote Ordering page in the Family History section of our website.

Any memoirs still in German must be translated for a fee first. Genealogical inquiries requiring less than ten minutes staff time to handle are free. But longer inquiries will require a fee before research can be done. For details, see our Services and Fees brochure or the corresponding section of our website.
**Our Memoir Collection**

At the unique heart of our family history studies is a collection of memoirs of over 14,000 individual members of the Moravian Church, from its beginnings in North Carolina until the present day. Several hundred additional memoirs since 2005 await scanning, while some 500 18th-century items await translation. A Moravian memoir, known as a Lebenslauf in German, is a spiritual resume of sorts: ideally, written, reviewed, and revised by a member throughout his or her life, then shared with the congregation upon their passing, and gathered in our Archives. Encouraged by the founder of the renewed Moravian Church, Count Zinzendorf, as a way to “make the invisible church visible,” memoirs are a blend of autobiography, obituary, and testimony that give a wonderful amount of personal detail on long-ago lives which may have otherwise been simply remembered by name, and birth and death dates. Not every memoir is detailed, but many early ones richly are.

**Reading Room Computer Resources**

Two reading room computers give searchable access to these resources:

**Graveyard Listings** —maps and records of Forsyth County burials

**Miss Adelaide’s Family Record Books** – genealogies done by Archivist Fries of Wachovia families based on church and county records

**Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society**—selected issues of this 19th century journal

**Marshall 1775 catalog**—listing of Wachovia community members by its first Administrator, F. W, Marshall

**Civil War Records**—service records of selected Moravians, including the 26th Regimental band

**World War II Service Records**—compiled by Archivist Douglas Rights

**Family History Books and Notes**—sampling of family digital records

**Moravian History Books and Notes**—searchable scans of several titles

**The Wachovia Moravian**—newsletter of the Southern Province from 1893 until 1970

Fries, et al., eds., *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina* (13 volumes); and Crews and Starbuck, *With Courage for the Future* (250th Anniversary History of the Moravian Church Southern Province) - seminal works on the Moravian experience in the region

**Maps and Plans**—scans of selected historical maps in the collection

**Deed Book**—sales of Wachovia church lands outside of Town lots, 1769-1869

**Early Salem and Winston City Directories**

**Old Salem National Register Historic District Descriptions**

**The Genealogy Bookshelves**

Among the 1600 titles in our Reading Room Library are 165 genealogical studies of regional families.