

Barefoot's ties with Jackson date back to childhood. She grew up with Jackson, who she calls "Doll." She describes Jackson as "a brilliant woman" who never shies from a challenge. "There is no task that is more than she can handle willingly," Barefoot says. "She is extremely knowledgeable about local history and heritage, and since that is what I write about, she is always a great help to me."

Jackson's role as caretaker of local history is appropriate since her own roots are deeply entwined in it. Her mother was part of the Waycross Colony as a child. Her father fell in love with the island, too, and they moved to St. Simons Island when Diane was about 9 months old. At that time, there were approximately 1,500 people on the island. The family set up house about three blocks from the beach and then found jobs locally.

Jackson remembers her father and great-uncle helping to fight the fire at the second Casino in the 1950s. She remembers when the the Johnson rocks were installed in the 1960s. Jackson says it was "hard to get up to any mischief" because her dad owned the only gas station on the island and everyone knew her. Things are much different today with St. Simons' population between 15,000 and 20,000.

When she is not researching questions posed by library visitors, Jackson is transcribing her mother's letters and notes from the Waycross Colony days so that her own family's story can be included in the annals of local history.

Got Questions?

Research librarian Diane Jackson says some of the most valuable tools of her trade are The World Almanac and a good dictionary. For those researching their ancestry, the library has census records and, through GALLILEO, an online search service, access to some very good genealogy databases. In addition, the Special Collections room is home to a number of volumes of family histories that have been provided by local families from their own records.

There are books for visitors to write in genealogical queries and to insert known family information. The library cannot guarantee the accuracy of information in these books, but it can be another useful tool when building a family tree. The Brunswick-Glynn County Library also acts as the law library for Glynn County, so there are also court forms and instructions as well as other legal reference materials available that are very helpful when navigating the waters of the judicial system. ■

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