



# Gwinnett Heritage

Fall 2025

A Quarterly Publication

Vol. 54 No.1



Lilburn: Charming by Nature. Growing by Choice.

&



Hooper-Renwick Themed Library  
Ribbon Cutting



The Old Lawrenceville Jail:  
When Myth and Memory Collide

# In This Issue

## A Word from the President



I always encourage people to pay close attention to the lessons of the past. Studying history is essential—because to truly understand where you're going, you must first understand where you've been.

Unfortunately, many people view history as boring or irrelevant to their daily lives. They've often been taught that it's just a list of dates, battles, and famous names. But nothing could be further from the truth.

History is, at its heart, the telling of a story. To understand that story, you need to know the characters and their motivations. You must grasp the setting, the symbolism, the conflicts, the plot, and the themes.

Gwinnett has a story—many stories, in fact—and all of them intertwine to create a vibrantly connected community. Some of these stories are well known. Others have been forgotten or even suppressed. Still more are waiting to be discovered and shared.

The Gwinnett Historical Society (GHS) is dedicated to preserving and telling these stories. Since 1966, when 13 individuals recognized the need to protect important historical sites—like the Elisha Winn House—as the county began to grow rapidly, the organization has been doing this important work.

The mission of the Gwinnett Historical Society inspires us to look more closely at our local history—to better understand and appreciate the rich heritage right in our own backyard.

To our active members, thank you for your continued support and participation. If you have an interest in history but haven't yet taken the step toward membership, I encourage you to join us. You'll make a meaningful difference, learn something new, and have a great time along the way.

As an organization, we take pride in Gwinnett's many stories, and we look forward to adding your voice to our thriving community.

Enjoy exploring this issue of *Gwinnett Heritage*.  
Jason West, GHS President

## This issue of Gwinnett Heritage

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Don't miss an issue of *Gwinnett Heritage*. Notify the GHS office of change of email address and other contact information.

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### Cover photos

**Top:** Lilburn's Historic Downtown  
(Source of photo: Jackie Tyson.)

**Left:** The Hooper-Renwick Themed Library Ribbon Cutting  
(Source of photo: Gwinnett County.)

**Right:** The Historic Lawrenceville Jail  
(Source of photo: Jason West.)

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*The 1826 Wynne Russell House in Lilburn  
(Source of photo: Emil Powella.)*

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*The Elisha Winn Fair is a festive event taking  
place in October (Source of photo: GHS.)*

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*Mount Carmel UMC in Norcross  
Celebrates Its Centennial/Bicentennial  
Anniversary.(Source of photo: Mount  
Carmel UMC.)*

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# About Us

## Our Purpose

Gwinnett Historical Society collects and preserves the history and genealogy of Gwinnett County, Georgia and the records of the early settlers of the county, including the churches, schools, organizations and other institutions.

## 2025–2026 Officers

President: Jason West

Assistant Treasurer: Betty Warbington

Vice President: Beverly Paff

Recording Secretary: Diane McCormic

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Corresponding Secretary: Sandy Lee

## Join Gwinnett Historical Society

\$25 for Individual    \$35 for Family  
\$10 for Student    \$25 for Institution  
\$500 Lifetime Membership  
Membership renewal is due by  
January 1 of each year.

Membership includes subscription to *Gwinnett Heritage* and password for the members' area of website. To view *Gwinnett Heritage* online, login to the members' area in [www.gwinnetths.org](http://www.gwinnetths.org).

## Connect with us

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## Lilburn: Charming by Nature. Growing by Choice.

*by Rebecca Baumann, City of Lilburn Communications Director, with Hugh Wilkerson, Lilburn's unofficial City Historian*

*Lilburn's charming historic Main Street. (Source of photo: Jackie Tyson.)*

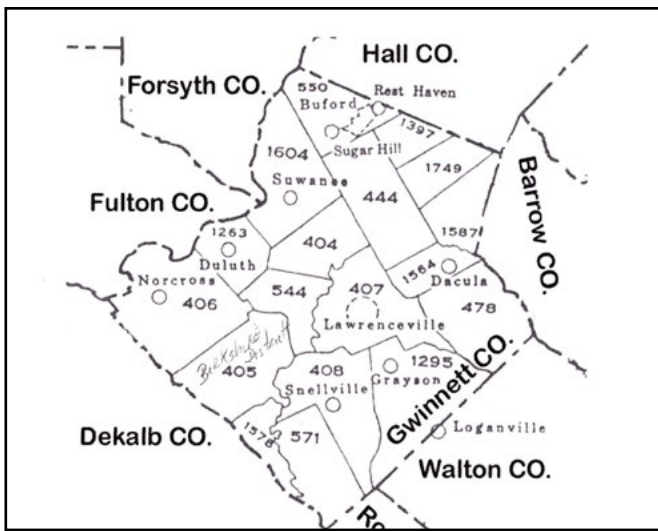
Lilburn's story begins in the early 1800s, when the area was still a hunting ground of the Muscogee (Creek) Native Americans. Prior to Gwinnett County's creation in 1818, the Muscogee (Creek), as well as the Cherokee, had been compelled by treaty to cede much of their lands to Georgia or to the federal government.

The State organized a series of land lotteries to distribute the territory to settlers. Gwinnett County was created from land ceded from the Muscogee (Creek) and the Cherokee, combined with a portion of Jackson County.

The future site of Lilburn fell in Militia District 405, known as the Berkshire District. In the 1820 Georgia Land Lottery, the land was surveyed into 250-acre lots and drawn by eligible citizens. The parcel encompassing present-day Lilburn was identified as Land Lot 135 in the 6th Land District of Gwinnett.

While he was not the original lottery winner of that lot, pioneer William McDaniel had acquired title by 1823 and journeyed by ox cart to settle the area. McDaniel and a small group of fellow settlers established homesteads on the frontier, laying the groundwork for a new community.

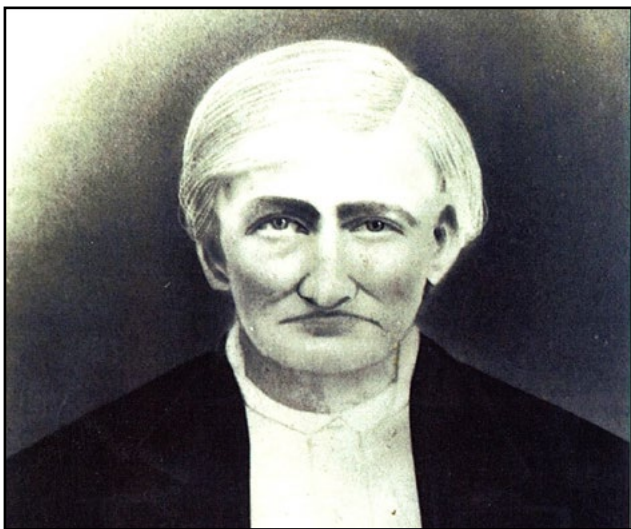
The William McDaniel cabin is no longer in Gwinnett County, but it still survives as part of the Historic Westville Village now located in the Columbus, Georgia area. According to local Lilburn accounts, the cabin was first moved to Jonesboro in the 1930s. Colonel John Wood West was engaged in an effort to collect and preserve historic buildings at his home property there. When West died in 1961, his collection was moved to land outside Lumpkin, Georgia; the William McDaniel cabin was among the six buildings that were relocated. There, Historic Westville, named in Colonel West's honor, was established as a living history village that



Map showing Gwinnett County militia districts.  
(Source of image: City of Lilburn/Georgia  
USGenWeb Archives.)

opened to the public in 1970. In 2013, Historic Westville reached agreement with the City of Columbus, Georgia to move the entire village to a site in the Columbus area.<sup>1</sup>

The first settlers camped beside a local stream, and in those early days they simply called it "Camp Creek," a name that has endured for over 200 years. In that same year, William McDaniel helped organize the area's first church, the Camp Creek Primitive Baptist Church, named after the creek. The congregation built its first permanent building in 1825. This humble frontier congregation was the



William McDaniel, early settler of Lilburn. (Source of  
photo: City of Lilburn.)

center of community life and remains active today. The church building stands at Arcado Road and Camp Creek Road.

In 1840, a group of members led by McDaniel broke away from Camp Creek Primitive Baptist Church and founded a new church called Liberty Baptist, known today as First Baptist Church of Lilburn. The original Liberty Baptist was organized in McDaniel's log home in February 1840 and was born from the pioneers' desire for a different style of worship. The new congregation built its first meeting house the same year as it was organized.



Original log cabin of William McDaniel. (Source of photo:  
City of Lilburn.)

Around 1834, Thomas Carroll, a major landowner in the area, instructed his enslaved workers to construct a small wooden church where the enslaved community could worship. That little church, formed by Black congregants in the 1830s, became Salem Missionary Baptist Church, an institution that still thrives in Lilburn today at its current location at Poplar Street and Killian Hill Road. Members of the church are rightfully proud of its history and have established Heritage Hall, a museum dedicated to telling the story of the church and its members over time.

- 1 Robert M. Craig. "Westville", [Lumpkin, Georgia], SAH Archipidia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012—, <http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/GA-01-259-0018>.



One of the early buildings that housed Camp Creek Primitive Baptist Church. (Source of photo: City of Lilburn.)



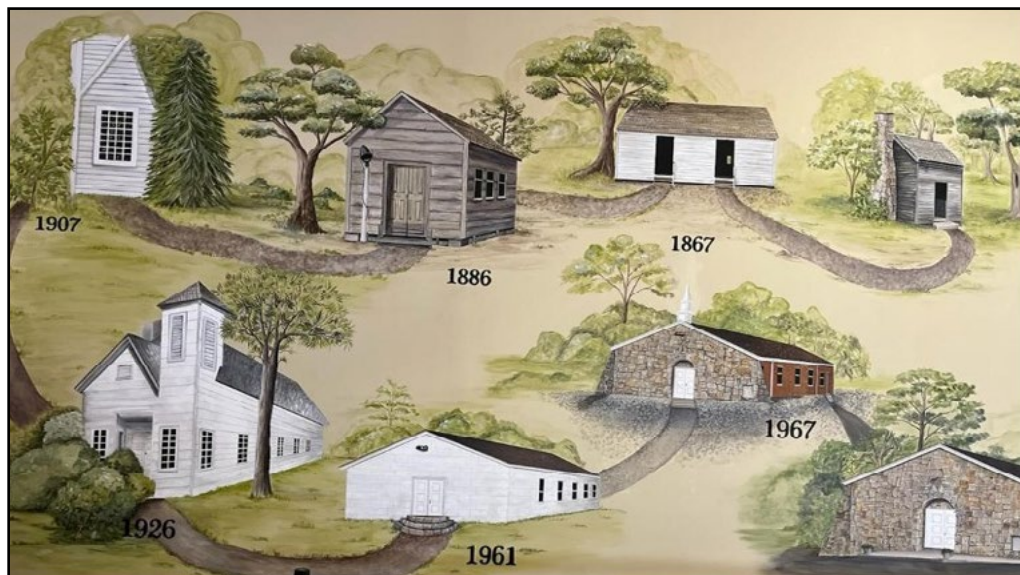
Early Liberty Baptist Church building. (Source of photo: City of Lilburn.)

These early churches were not only places of faith but also the social foundation of the young settlement, reflecting the bonds among the settlers. It is particularly noteworthy that Salem Missionary Baptist Church, established as one of the earliest places of worship for enslaved people in the community, is also one of the oldest churches in Gwinnett County.

By the late 19th century, the quiet farming community was transformed by the arrival of the railroad. However, before trains, a stagecoach route from Lawrenceville to Fayetteville ran through the area on the path of today's Lawrenceville Highway.

A stop called Choice's Store served early travelers, as well as the community. Dating back to the early 1800s, it stood at the crossroads of today's Rockbridge Road, Harmony Grove Road and U.S. Highway 29. It was operated first by John Choice and served as a trading center, post office and voting precinct for the growing community of McDaniel (later Lilburn).

For over a century it remained a fixture before the rise of the Georgia, Carolina and Northern Railway shifted the town's center toward the tracks. A historical marker now stands in place of the store building as a reminder of a time past.



Representation of buildings utilized by Salem Missionary Baptist Church over the course of its existence. (Source of image: Salem Missionary Baptist Church.)

While the community had been steadily growing, the real catalyst for growth came with the Georgia, Carolina and Northern Railway, which began building a rail line through Gwinnett in the late 1880s. After a number of corporate reorganizations, the line became part of the Seaboard Air Line Railway, and by 1892, the first trains were chugging through what had been farmland. As was common in that era, the railroad company helped establish a town along the tracks.



*Choice's Store in its later years before it was torn down in 1930.*

*(Source of photo: City of Lilburn/ Courtesy of Mildred Carroll Martin.)*

Initially the locality was known as "McDaniel" after the early settler, but by 1895, maps were already labeling it "Lilburn, Georgia." The town's name was a tribute to Lilburn Trigg Myers, who was later identified as a general superintendent of the Seaboard Air Line Railroad. Myers was the son of a major railroad investor, and a visiting relative in 1998 helped confirm that the town had indeed been named after him. While Myers never lived in Lilburn, his connection to the railroad left a lasting mark on the community's identity.

With the railroad in place, Lilburn blossomed into a classic Georgia railroad town. The downtown was built parallel to the tracks. Railroad Avenue became the town's main thoroughfare, and the

streets were laid out in a simple grid; they were originally named First, Second and Third Streets. Today Second Street is known as Main Street, and Third Street is now Lula Street.

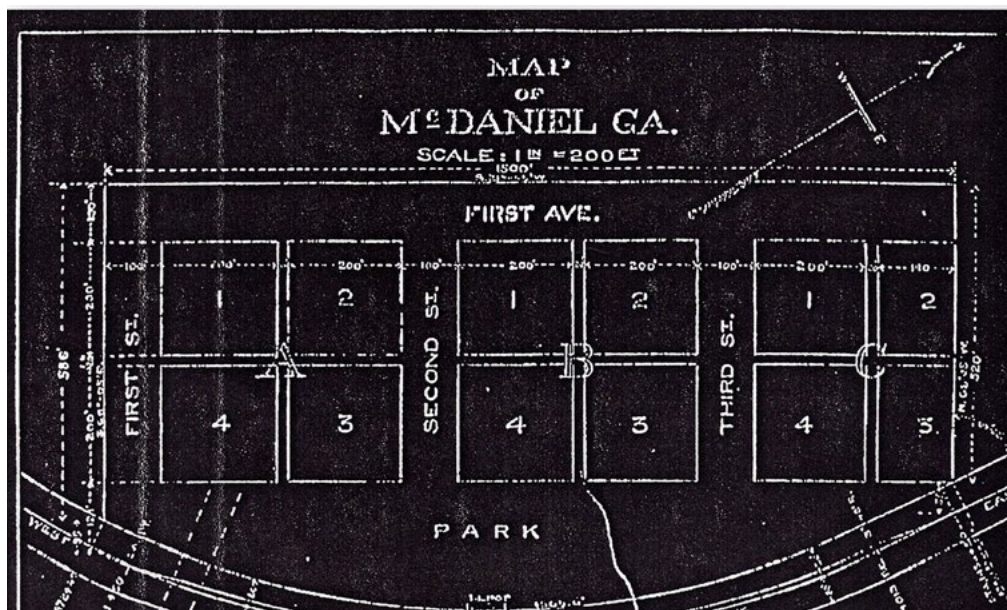
A depot was built near the present Lilburn City Park, and businesses sprang up to serve railroad workers and local farmers. By the 1910s, Lilburn boasted amenities like a general store called Alford's, a post office, a bank and other shops clustered along Main Street. Businesses like Todd's Brickyard employed local men to manufacture the goods they offered for sale.

The prosperity prompted the Georgia Legislature to officially incorporate the Town of Lilburn on July 27, 1910. The new town's limits extended about three-eighths of a mile from the courthouse of the old Berkshire District. Interestingly, the town government was slow to organize. The community was so small and tight knit that residents initially felt formal municipal government was unnecessary. For a couple of decades, Lilburn thrived informally as a railroad stop, known for its convenient rail transport and the hospitality of its locals.

Lilburn's boom times between about 1895 and 1920 were followed by a series of hardships that tested the community's resolve. The most

dramatic blow came in the early hours of November 15, 1920 when a fire ignited and raged through downtown before dawn. It was reported that the fire started at the Lilburn Supply Company. The blaze destroyed almost the entire business district; only the structure that is now occupied by Antiques in Old Town survived.

The efforts of volunteers saved the surrounding residences from destruction. What has been referred to as the "bucket brigade" was simply neighbors frantically passing water to douse the flames. This



*Map of community of McDaniel after the coming of the railroad. (Source of image: City of Lilburn.)*

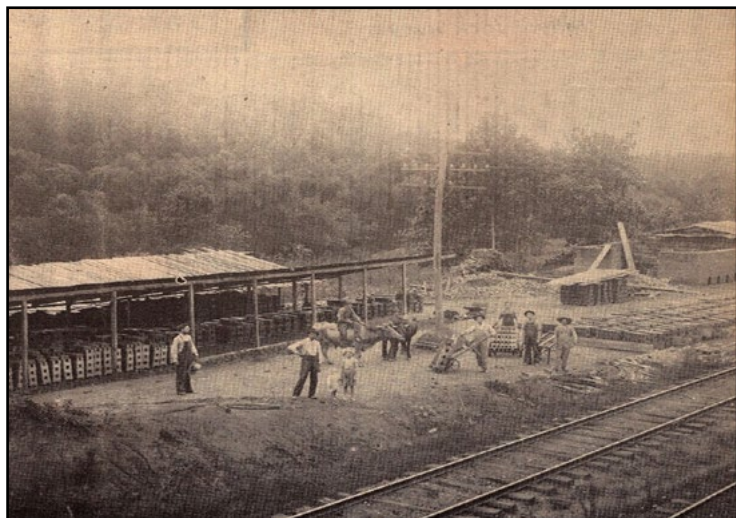


*City of Lilburn's namesake, Lilburn Trigg Myers. (Source of photo: City of Lilburn.)*

devastating fire was a turning point, plunging the little rail town into economic hardship.

The fire was only the first of multiple crises. In the 1920s, agriculture in the South was decimated by the boll weevil infestation, which destroyed cotton crops. This crop was Lilburn's economic base at the time. Farmers who had depended on cotton saw their livelihoods vanish. The situation worsened with the onset of the Great Depression after 1929, as the nationwide economic collapse dried up capital and commerce.

With its downtown in ruins and local agriculture failing, Lilburn entered the 1930s in steep decline. The rise of the automobile also changed settlement patterns. New roads like Lawrenceville Highway drew businesses and travelers away from the old rail-oriented town center. In 1942 the railroad itself realigned its tracks for efficiency and demolished the



*Todd's Brickyard in 1910. (Source of photo: City of Lilburn.)*

Lilburn depot, underscoring the town's loss of prominence on the rail line.

By the late 1930s, Lilburn had effectively become a sleepy crossroads. The town's original 1910 charter was eventually dissolved in 1939, as the inactive municipal government was deemed unnecessary. Lilburn's early 20th-century heyday had given way to several decades of quiet persistence. The community endured, but its former vibrancy had faded.

Lilburn's fortunes began to turn again in the mid-20th century. With the growth of Metro Atlanta after World War II, Gwinnett County's population surged, and previously rural areas needed infrastructure. By the 1950s, even the modest community of Lilburn found that services like reliable water supply were needed for the growing populace. Responding to these needs, residents moved to re-establish their city government. On March 7, 1955, a new charter was approved to incorporate Lilburn as a city once more. This time, the municipal government was organized and functional, ready to guide the town's development.

As a newly incorporated city in the late 1950s, Lilburn slowly began to grow as part of Atlanta's northeastern suburbs. For a time, the city government operated from a rented space along Lawrenceville Highway until 1976 when Lilburn constructed its first city hall building in modern times. This brick city hall building, located adjacent to what is now Lilburn City Park, symbolized the town's mid-century stability and civic pride.

Lilburn remained a small but tight-knit community through the 1970s and 1980s, even as suburban development spread through Gwinnett County. A larger city hall was built on the same site in the mid-1990s to accommodate growing administrative needs. During these decades, Lilburn developed a reputation as a quiet, family-friendly suburb with a distinctive charm. The city's identity, rooted in its frontier and railroad past, persisted quietly, awaiting a new chapter of revitalization.

By the 2000s, Lilburn's leaders and citizens were determined to breathe new life into the historic heart of their city. A clear vision took shape to transform Old Town Lilburn, the original downtown area, into a vibrant center of the community once again. This revival was driven by strategic partnerships and careful, long-term investment of resources.

A key catalyst was funding from Gwinnett County's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) program. Starting in 2001, Lilburn began receiving a share of county SPLOST funds for capital improvements, ultimately garnering over \$40 million across five voter-approved SPLOST referendums. These funds, combined with grants and city budget commitments, allowed Lilburn to embark on major projects. One early success was the realignment and streetscape improvement of Main Street that runs through the heart of Old Town using 2009 SPLOST dollars.

Another pivotal strategy was forming partnerships to build new civic facilities that would anchor downtown. In 2011, the City of Lilburn and Gwinnett County entered an intergovernmental agreement to jointly construct a modern city hall and public library in Old Town. This partnership pooled resources to create a landmark municipal complex, which opened in October 2016 as a focal point for the community.



*Municipal Complex containing the Lilburn City Hall and the Lilburn Branch of the Gwinnett County Public Library System. (Source of photo: City of Lilburn/ Courtesy of Emil Powella.)*



*Children enjoying the splash pad in Lilburn City Park on a hot summer day. (Source of photo: City of Lilburn/ Courtesy of Emil Powella.)*

Shortly after, a new police headquarters and municipal court building was funded by the 2017 SPLOST and opened in 2020, improving city services and freeing up space downtown. Infrastructure enhancements also included extensions of the Camp Creek Greenway, a popular multi-use trail along the creek that was funded over multiple SPLOST cycles. Throughout the 2010s, Lilburn invested in its parks and public spaces, which included the addition of pedestrian bridges on the greenway, a new outdoor pavilion and playground, and even a splash pad water feature for families in Lilburn City Park.

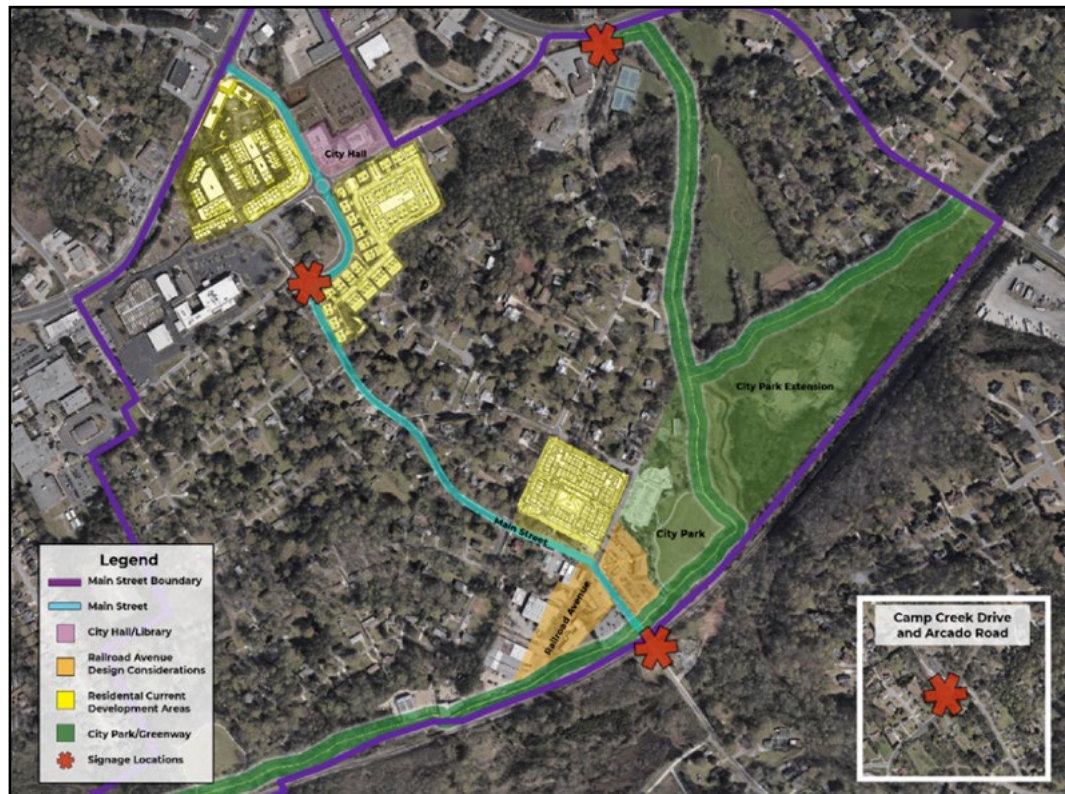
These public investments soon attracted private development interest in Old Town. The city established a tax allocation district and



*Lilburn City Park serves as a community gathering place for public events and family fun. (Source of photo: City of Lilburn/Courtesy of Emil Powella.)*

Map showing Lilburn's current growth and planning efforts. (Source of image: City of Lilburn.)

other incentives to spur revitalization of underused downtown parcels. As a result, new high-end townhomes and single-family homes have been built within walking distance of Main Street. A senior living community opened across from the new Lilburn City Hall. Old buildings were refurbished, and new businesses opened their doors, blending tradition with fresh energy.



Annual events now draw huge crowds. For example, Lilburn's Sparkle in the Park Fourth of July celebration and the longtime Lilburn Daze festival each attract tens of thousands of attendees. Other events like the Lilburchaun Parade, Food Truck Tuesdays and holiday festivities fill the Old Town with neighbors and visitors enjoying the renewed community spirit.

Today, Old Town Lilburn is flourishing as a lively, walkable neighborhood that still honors its past. Residents and visitors can stroll from the park to local eateries, shops and the library, all within a few blocks. The small-town character, where people know each other by first name, remains intact, even as new development adds modern amenities.



Hugh Wilkerson, Lilburn's unofficial historian. (Source of photo: City of Lilburn.)

In 2014, city leaders embraced a forward-looking vision of "a vibrant city where businesses prosper, where safety is a lifestyle, and where friends share life together in a community that will span the generations." This vision reflects the enduring charm and resilience of Lilburn. From its beginnings in the lottery of 1820, through setbacks like fire and economic collapse, Lilburn has continually reinvented itself while preserving a strong sense of community. The "sleepy town" has truly awakened, proving that with focused effort, strong partnerships and pride in its heritage, Lilburn's best days can still lie ahead.

Special thanks to Hugh Wilkerson, longtime resident and unofficial Lilburn historian, for his invaluable contributions to this article. \*



## The Hooper–Renwick School Preservation Project: Gwinnett County’s First Themed Library

By Enuma Chigbo

*A day of celebration at the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library ribbon cutting in June with school alumni and community members. (Source of Photo: Gwinnett County)*

I have never been one to preserve notebooks from school, especially Arithmetic notebooks. Being my least favorite subject, it's hardly surprising why. However, all that changed on June 16, 2025.

June 16 will be a day forever etched in the memory of many. About 1,000 guests at the very least converged at 56 Neal Boulevard in Lawrenceville to witness the historic ribbon cutting of the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library. This landmark event was slated for 2 p.m., but somehow even at that time, the approximately 200-car parking lot had a major overflow. The Hooper-Renwick Themed Library is built through the renovation of the original Hooper-Renwick School. Hooper-Renwick was the only school in the Gwinnett County Public School system

where a Black student could receive a high school diploma during segregation.

The Hooper-Renwick preservation project is largely a result of one woman's passion and determination, Rubye Neal. Neal graduated from Hooper-Renwick High School in 1956, and went back to work there as a lunchroom manager. According to Neal, the high school closed in 1968, and its students were integrated into other public schools in their vicinity:

After its closure, it was still part of the Gwinnett County Public Schools system, but more of a historical structure. The few students who attended at that time were students with special needs. One day, sometime in 2014 I think, the principal said



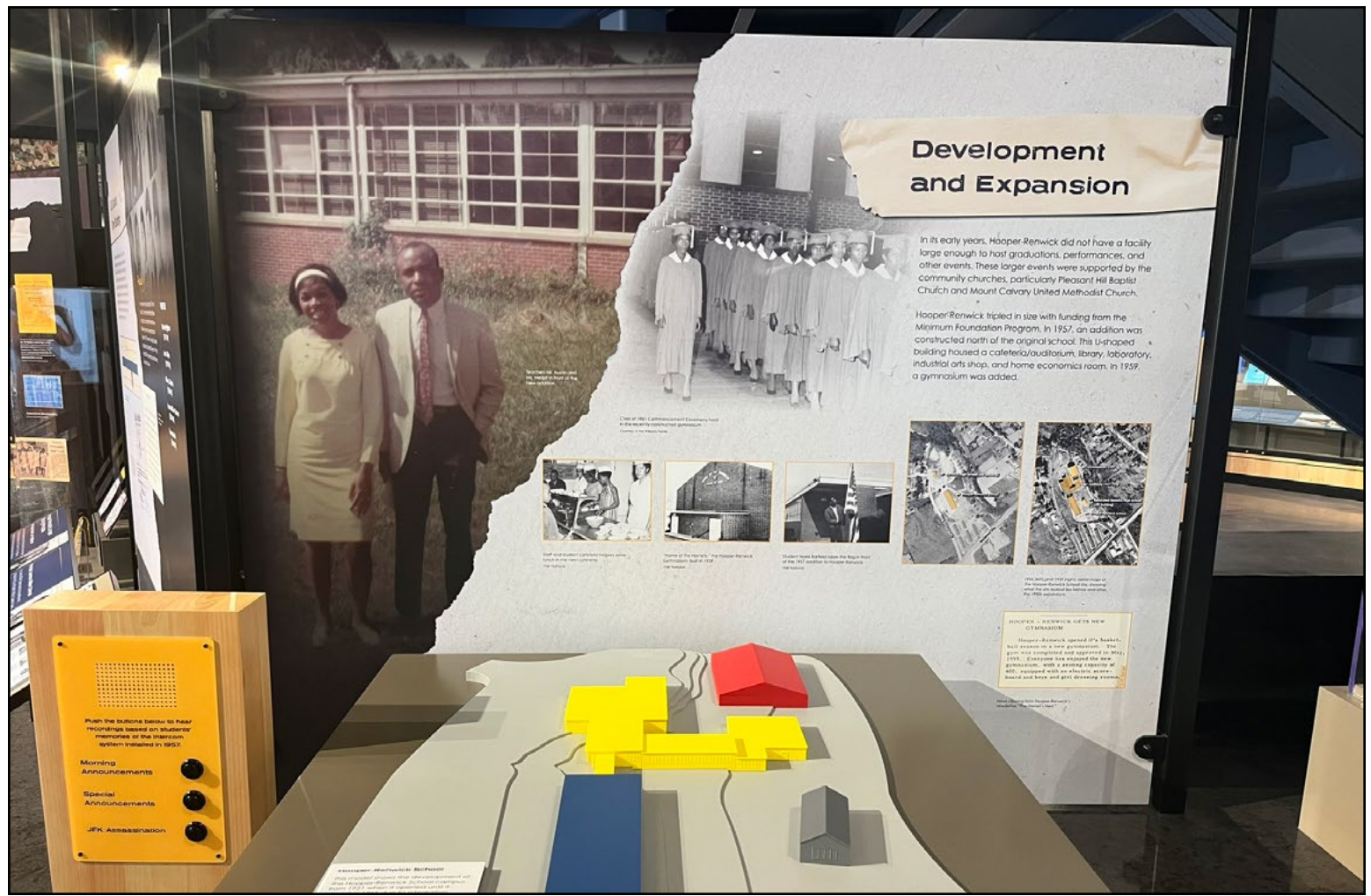
*Visitors to the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library in Lawrenceville are treated to an immersive exhibit on the history of the school and education in Gwinnett County and Georgia during segregation. (Source of Photo: Jackie Tyson)*

something about the property being sold to the city of Lawrenceville. To the best of my understanding, the deal was almost closed. However, I went up to the City of Lawrenceville and demanded to see Judy Jordan Johnson, who was mayor at that time. I left a message with her secretary and Johnson called me shortly after.

Neal said she recommended that a space in the new structure be carved out in memory of the school she held dearly, and Jordan said she would keep that in mind. "I also recommended that a farewell party be held in that building, Jordan obliged and it was indeed a great party." The original building was a 12-room structure, which had a long hallway and in this space, Neal adorned the walls of the hallway with literature and pictures that depict the history of the school.

In recognition of her tireless efforts, Neal's name was announced at the ribbon cutting event, and she was given a standing ovation. David Still, Mayor of Lawrenceville, was present at the event and gave up his seat when she walked in. Mayor Still shared the following:

The Hooper-Renwick Themed Library is more than just a renovation of a historic building. It is a powerful reminder of where we've been and a bold investment in where we're going. This space honors the legacy of the Hooper-Renwick School and the generations of students, teachers, and families who built a strong and resilient community in the face of adversity. Now it becomes a place where new generations will gather to learn, connect, and dream. I believe this library will have a lasting impact not just on Lawrenceville and Gwinnett, but the entire



Visitors to the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library in Lawrenceville are treated to an immersive exhibit on the history of the school and education in Gwinnett County and Georgia during segregation. (Source of Photo: Jackie Tyson)

state and more, as a symbol of unity, pride, and progress. It is a place where students will grow, where stories will be preserved, and where the legacy of the Hooper-Renwick Hornets continues.

Some other stakeholders at the occasion included: Deborah Tuff of the Gwinnett County Communications Department; Nicole Love Hendrickson, Chairwoman, Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners; Jasper Watkins III, District 3 Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners; J.T. Wu, Chair Gwinnett County Public Library Board of Trustees; Charles Pace, Executive Director, Gwinnett County Public Library; Chuck Warbington, City Manager, City of Lawrenceville; Constance Brown, Chair, Hooper-Renwick Legacy Preservation Committee; and Joeann Malone of the Salvage Baptist Church.

"We cannot overlook the important role that the church played," said Joeann Malone who did the opening prayer. Malone attended Hooper-Renwick beginning in the sixth grade, and was one of the last graduating classes. In her prayer, she touched on how the project was built on a foundation of knowledge, wisdom and history.

The Hooper-Renwick Themed Library sits proudly on 3.76 acres of land. It boasts of programming for children, teens and adults, a 125-person multipurpose meeting room, three learning labs, 24 computer stations, two study rooms, Black studies rooms, outdoor rooftop space and much more.

Gwinnett County Historian, Amelia Porter Lewis reflected on the library opening:



The old piano that once stood in the Hooper-Renwick School is on display as part of the library exhibit (Source of Photo: Enuma Chigbo)

The preservation of the Hooper-Renwick School building and the establishment of the themed library has exceeded all expectations. This library is an amazing accomplishment by the Hooper-Renwick Legacy Committee, the City of Lawrenceville, and Gwinnett County. Preserving Gwinnett's segregated Black school demonstrates the community's commitment to inclusive preservation. This library will be greatly enjoyed by the community and visitors for decades to come.

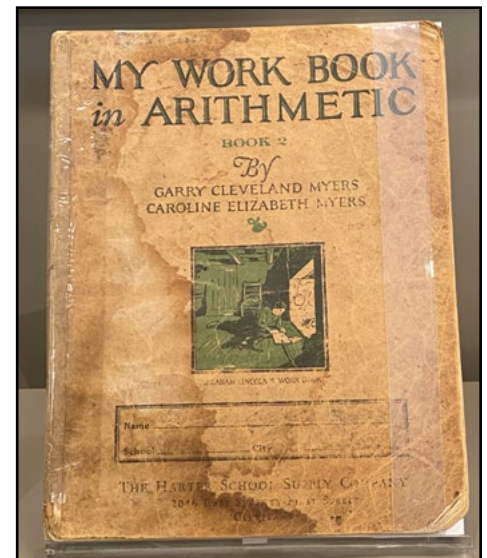
The Hooper Renwick School is said to have a very complex history.

Neal's aunt, the late Miley Mae Hemphill, was a respected educator, serving as a principal and curriculum director for Gwinnett County and Jackson County school systems, as well as Winder City Schools. In her 238-page thesis titled, *A study of the Negro Public Schools in Gwinnett County, Georgia 1937-1956*, Hemphill discusses the history of limited education for Black people, which dated back to the early 19th century in the following quote:

No kind of school was provided for Negroes before the civil war because of a colonial law that said no slave should be allowed to read, write, or practice any skilled trade.

In 1826, Gwinnett County's representatives put through an act to establish a system of free schools in the county, but no effort was made for Negro public education until 1871. This was when the first Negro public school was started in an old frame building. It was located in Lawrenceville on Honey Suckle Street in the "Rock Knob" community. In 1943, the school was moved to its present location where an erected structure with the name "Uncle Mack" was placed. Marshall C. Renwick spearheaded a movement in 1951, and soon after a 12-room brick structure was built and given the name Hooper-Renwick High school.

The exhibit includes an original Arithmetic book once used by Hooper Renwick students (Source of Photo: Enuma Chigbo)



Today, this incredible landmark symbolic of the past, present and future, has a breathtaking presence that draws one into every detail. As I listened to speeches and made my way around, keenly observing the different items on display, the basketball net used for games back in the day, the organ, graduation ring, photographs of old students and the PTA, pews and hymnbooks from Mt. Calvary Methodist Church, I came to an abrupt stop... there it was, an old Arithmetic notebook, of inestimable value.

I stopped and looked at it for a few seconds, going down memory lane. In recent times, I would connect the dots as to how preserving even the most seemingly mundane items can transform into powerful storytelling and even wealth creation for generations to come, and indeed that made me wish I had saved mine...

## Voices from Hooper-Renwick

Compiled by Enuma Chigbo

### James Tinch – Hooper-Renwick 1963 Graduate



James Tinch (Source of Photo: Enuma Chigbo)

I started in the 9th grade, possibly in 1959. It was an exciting experience. We didn't have all the facilities, but we were comfortable enough. I enjoyed meeting different people and making friends. We had good teachers, who encouraged us, set moral standards and lived by example.

I was involved with track. That was all I had the time for. Hooper-Renwick also had a basketball team. We competed with other schools, and won a lot of track games, competing with other counties in the state.  
-James Tinch

### Gwendolyn Brown Taylor – Hooper-Renwick 1968 Graduate

Hooper-Renwick was wonderful. That was all we had and all we knew. The teachers did their very best under dire circumstances. We didn't have regular books. Our books were torn and tattered, with missing pages. This was what the teachers had to work with. We didn't have a football team but we had a basketball team. I joined the basketball team after the gym was built. We played other schools of the same race. Sometimes I wouldn't get home until 12-1 a.m. but was



Gwendolyn Brown Taylor  
(Source of Photo: Enuma Chigbo)

promptly back in school the following day. We won tournaments and trophies. Our basketball teacher was Mr. Jesse Lorraine

Walton. I believe he is still alive. We had talent shows and after school dances. The kids of today do not experience what we had back then. Teachers were loving but strict. Hooper-Renwick was good, learned a lot, maintained friendship over the years. All Black kids in Gwinnett County finished in Hooper-Renwick until 1968. The museum concept is a great idea. I hope that that when it's finished all the alumni will come out to celebrate. This is big for us.  
-Gwendolyn Brown Taylor

### Connie Brown – Hooper-Renwick 1960s Graduate

We learned reading, writing, English, math, social studies and learned other basic skills. During recess, we played catch. I still stay in



touch with some of the students who attended. Most impactful was my first grade teacher Mrs. Camp. She was stern, but a very good teacher and I respected

Connie Brown  
(Source of Photo: Enuma Chigbo)

her a lot. I am excited about the museum – more relieved that the building was not demolished. I am happy to see that all the artifacts will be on display. I am looking forward for it to open.

I remember when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. I watched his funeral service all day long on the black and white TV, which was rolled into our classroom.  
-Connie Brown

### **Harold Hutchins – Hooper-Renwick 1968 Graduate**

I attended Hooper-Renwick School from first to 10th grade. It was wonderful. We had such a great time. The teachers were good to me. We played outside a lot during recess. I recall one fine day during recess, I was on the merry-go-round, and my friends kept turning the wheel. They turned it so fast my legs were literally flying in the air! They went on and on amid my incessant cries being them to stop. My palms were all sweaty and at the end, I

let go and came down hard on the ground. I got hurt, but it wasn't too bad at the end of the day.



Harold Hutchins  
(Source of Photo:  
Enuma Chigbo)

I wasn't that much of a keen sportsman, but excelled in music and drama. We had a dance group that won competitions. There was this particular dance called the moon dance. The highlight of the moon dance was landing on the moon. We had play smoke coming flowing down the stage to depict a galaxy atmosphere. Ms. Lee our dance teacher taught us how to dance, and Mrs. Echols another teacher wrote the script. The audience was thrilled and we won first prize. In 1968, the school closed and we were reintegrated into regular schools. I completed my 11th and 12th grades at South Gwinnett High School in Snellville. The transition was fairly smooth as students before us paved the way. However, there were a few incidents. I recall fellow student jumping at me in the hallway as I moved from one class to the other. He called me names and pulled my hair. He continued to do so despite being called to the Principal's office.

However, 30 years later, I was dining in a restaurant, and there he was, with someone I presumed to be his wife. He came straight to me, apologized for the way he treated me in high school and asked for my forgiveness, which I promptly did.

-Harold Hutchins ✱



The exterior of the old Lawrenceville city jail off of Calaboose Alley. (Source of Photo: Jason West.)

## When Myth and Memory Collide: The Story of Ellick Austin

By Jason West, GHS President

Often, history and myth walk side by side.

The lines between fact and folklore can blur, especially when few sources exist and oral tradition has shaped the narrative over time. While the intent isn't always deceptive, these fictional blends of tall tales and truth can distort the record—and cause a real history headache.

A good local case in point is the much-recounted story of Ellick Austin. According to an 1883 article in the *Gwinnett Herald* written by Judge Richard D. Winn, Ellick was an enslaved man living in Gwinnett County in the 1840s. Winn recounts that one evening, Ellick's enslaver, Colonel James Austin, became "deeply intoxicated" and behaved inappropriately toward Ellick's wife. Ellick, understandably angered, responded with "sharp words," which enraged the drunken Colonel. A violent confrontation followed, and when the Colonel pursued Ellick with a sword,

Ellick fatally stabbed him in self-defense.

Rather than fleeing, Ellick turned himself in to the sheriff. He was arrested, tried by the Inferior Court, and found guilty of murder. Judge Winn wrote that he had the "unpleasant duty" of sentencing Ellick to hang. On November 10, 1848, Ellick Austin was executed "in the hollow below the jail."

Winn later reflected that this was "the most painful decision of my life." He believed that Ellick's status as an enslaved man led to the guilty verdict, and posed a haunting question: "If it had been a free man, would it not have been classified as justifiable homicide?"

Now, here's where the story takes a folkloric turn.

Local lore adds a number of unverified details. Supposedly, Ellick was held in the old Lawrenceville city jail on Calaboose Alley while

awaiting trial. Word has it he tried to dig or chip his way out using a metal slat. It's said that while waiting for his trial and execution, Ellick sang a song to his beloved—repeating the mournful line: “Oh, Betsy, will you meet me in heaven above?”

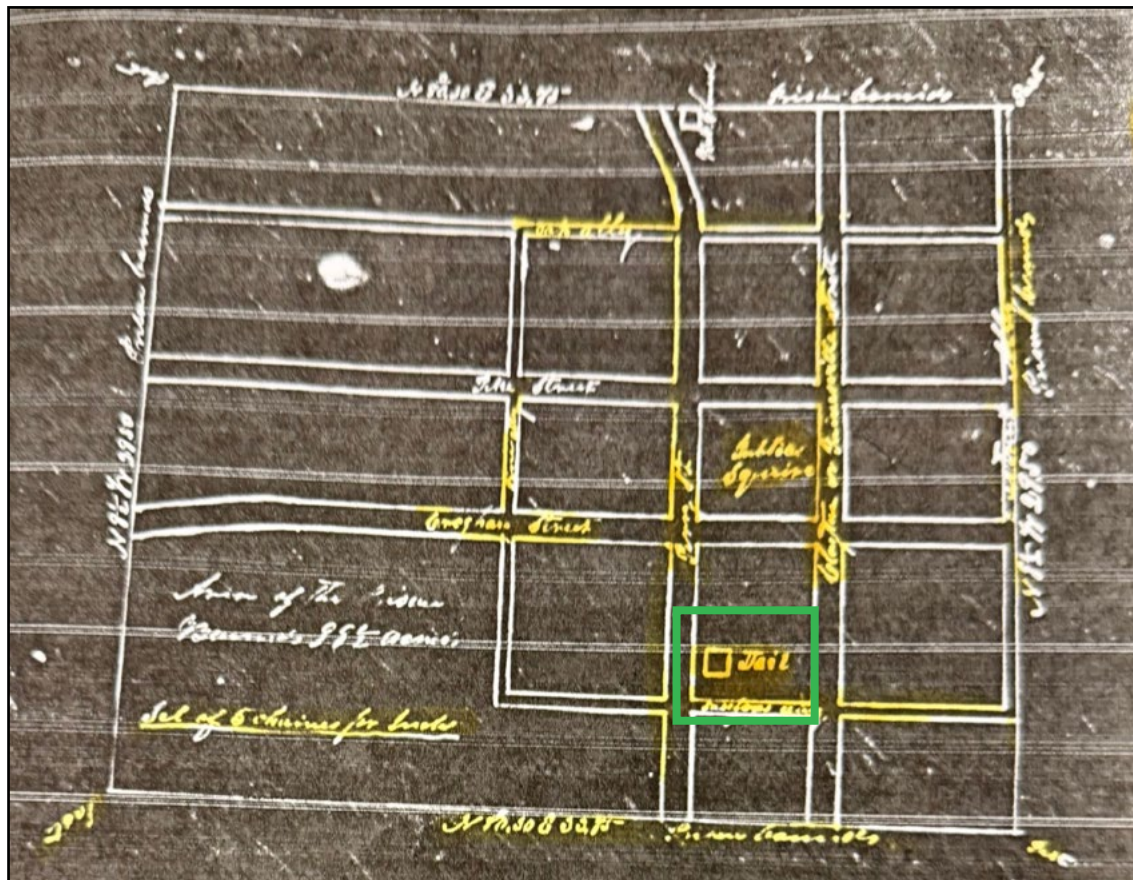
Today, that version of the story lives on in ghost tours, websites, and local legend. People are told that if you softly sing the lyrics inside the old jail, while standing before the chipped spot on the wall, you might hear a ghostly voice singing along.

I don't believe in ghosts, so you won't convince me Ellick's spirit is still

singing—but there are other, more tangible problems with this story.

First, there is no official record of a Lawrenceville city jail existing in 1848. The building commonly referenced in ghost stories was likely constructed around 1910, long after Ellick's death. According to David Still, the building's current owner and Mayor of Lawrenceville, the structure was built using reinforced concrete—a material not commonly used in the U.S. until the 1870s, and certainly not in local jail construction in the 1840s.

Second, even if a city jail had existed at the time, it wouldn't have been used for a county-level prisoner. As a man charged with murder, Ellick would have been held in the Gwinnett County Jail. According to *Flanigan's History of Gwinnett County, Georgia* (Vol. 1), the county's second permanent jail was built in 1832 and used until 1888. This facility, with its iron doors, massive locks, and square concrete blocks, stood near the county courthouse.



An 1855 map from the Inferior Court minutes detailing the location of the Gwinnett County Jail outlined in green. (Source: Georgia Inferior Court, Gwinnett County.)

A copy of a hand-drawn map dated June 15, 1855 and held in the Gwinnett Historical Society archives places that county jail at the intersection of Perry and Sassafras Streets (now Luckie Street)—about one block south of the current historic Lawrenceville city jail.

It's easy to see how the story shifted over time. The proximity of the two buildings, combined with the eerie look of the still-standing city jail, created fertile ground for blending a real tragedy with ghostly legend. The city jail's grim appearance invites imagination. It's an atmospheric backdrop for a somber tale—even if that tale takes considerable liberties with the truth.

So the next time you hear a compelling story from the past, take a moment to consider the facts. While some parts may be rooted in truth, others may be more myth than memory. And sometimes, those myths—however moving—can overshadow the importance of the real story, doing a disservice to the history we're trying to preserve.\*



*The historic Elisha Winn House property (Source of Photo: GHS.)*

## Elisha Winn House: The Birthplace of Gwinnett County

*By Betty Warbington*

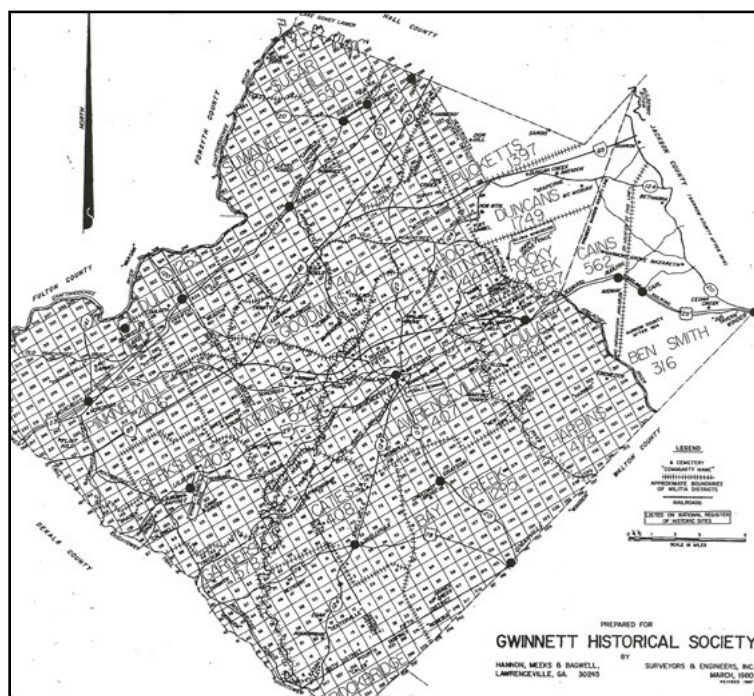
The Elisha Winn House and property are often labeled as the "Birthplace of Gwinnett County." The citizens of Gwinnett are fortunate that the Gwinnett Historical Society (GHS) recognized this significance in 1978 and purchased the deteriorating 1811 house and surrounding 3 acres. Subsequent efforts were made to hire Architect Lane Green to do the historical and architectural research and to have the property placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Due to the realization that GHS could not manage the enormous debt associated with these efforts, Gwinnett County Government was prevailed upon to take over that debt with GHS working to restore and preserve the house and buildings. Seventeen additional acres of the plantation were eventually added to the property as it became surrounded by development of new homes and a country club.

The story and significance of this historic site begins with the creation of Jackson County

in 1796 when lands were granted via the Headright System and continues with the creation of Gwinnett County in 1818 after the Creek and Cherokee Indian tribes ceded their land rights up to the Chattahoochee River. Until 1805, Georgia distributed its lands through the Headright system, under which land was available to individuals based on the number of heads in their household. Men were eligible for 200 acres in-their-own right, plus an additional 50 acres for each dependent, up to 1,000 acres total. The eastern and coastal counties of Georgia make up the headright area. There were problems with the Headright System which invited corruption and land fraud. Well-connected individuals could obtain grants to many more acres than that allowed by law. Thus, Georgia converted to the Land Lottery System where land lots were uniformly sized squares with the exception of those along irregularly shaped landforms, like a river. A few hundred land lots make up each Land District,

and multiple land districts make up an Original County. Under this more equitable method of granting land, eligible participants registered in their county of residence.

Almost every citizen of Georgia was eligible for at least one draw in the land lottery. Each authorizing law defined particular categories of participants, such as widows, orphans, or Revolutionary War veterans; no Blacks, even free persons of color, could participate. Names were sent to the state where lottery commissioners wrote them on tickets to be placed in a large drum. Each participant was randomly matched to a land lot. That person was given first right to obtain a grant to the land.<sup>1</sup>



Gwinnett County Land Lot Map (Source of Image: GHS.)

That portion of Jackson County west of the Appalachian River to Hog Mountain provided citizens for a working government until the new frontier could be surveyed and distributed via the Georgia 1820 Land Lottery. The militia officers and justices of the peace living in that portion of Jackson County held their offices in

the newly created Gwinnett County. The first five judges of the Inferior Court were commissioned on February 2, 1819. They were George Reid, Samuel Reid, John Cupp, William Towers, and Joseph Morgan. Elisha Winn was commissioned on July 21, 1820 to replace Samuel Reid. John Teadwell was Gwinnett's first representative and George Reid its first state senator. They attended the 44th session of the General Assembly in 1819.

All business of the government from planning and assigning citizens who would see to the laying out of roads to holding courts was done on the Elisha Winn property. It continued thus until the surveying of new lands was completed, the site for our County Seat of Lawrenceville was chosen from Land Lots 145, 146, or 147 in the Fifth Land District. Elisha Winn, land trader and Inferior Court Justice traveled to Milledgeville to purchase said property, and finally in 1821 the County Seat of Lawrenceville was created. Thus, the Elisha Winn House was truly our first courthouse and place of all government affairs for several years after the creation of Gwinnett County in 1818. Indeed, the Elisha Winn House is "The Birthplace of Gwinnett County." \*

*Source Material for my article is also recommended for those who want more facts/details on the history of Gwinnett and the methods of distributing land via Headright Grants and the Georgia Land Lottery:*

*Gone to Georgia: Jackson and Gwinnett Counties and their Neighbors in the Western Migration, by William C. Stewart First Printing 1965 by National Genealogical Society, Second printing 1979, Third Printing 1992, Fourth Printing 1999*

*History of Gwinnett County Georgia: 1818 – 1943 Volume 1 by J. C. Flanigan. Copyright: James C. Flanigan 1943*

*Historical Notes on Jackson County, Georgia, by Frary Elrod. Copyright 1967 by Frary Elrod, Jefferson, GA*

*The Elisha Winn House: Birthplace of Gwinnett County by Shannon E. Coffey, Published by the Gwinnett Historical Society, Copyright 2009 Gwinnett Historical Society*

<sup>1</sup> Georgia Land Lottery Research by Paul K. Graham, Copyright 2010 by the Georgia Genealogical Society

# Elisha Winn Fair

## October 4–5, 2025

### Elisha Winn Fair October 4-5, 2025

We are so excited to announce that the 2025 Elisha Winn Fair is happening October 4 and 5 at **908 Dacula Rd, Dacula, GA 30019** from **10 a.m. to 5 p.m.** daily. Admission is free and free parking is available across from the Winn House.

Fall is a great time to be outside and enjoy the cooler weather along with the tastes, sights and sounds of a great Fall festival! There will be lots of history to learn from touring the period-furnished Winn House built in 1812 on the property and all the activities happening on the Winn property. There will be great food; craft vendors; blacksmith demonstrations; antique tools on display in the lighted barn; a one-room schoolhouse; a railroad memorabilia display; War of 1812 reenactors from Fort Daniel Foundation shooting muskets; a period garden of vegetables and flowers with activities for children; a beautiful nature trail meandering through the woods; and multiple demonstrations of skills from days gone by like weaving, spinning, bobbin lace making and butter churning.



*The Skillet Lickers performing at the 2023 Elisha Winn Fair. (Source of photo: Diane McCormic.)*

On Saturday only, the **Atlanta History Dancers** will be presenting a high tea demonstration in Renaissance costume in the Winn House dining room from 11:30 am to 12:30 p.m. And from 1 to 2



*Participants at the 2023 Elisha Winn Fair. (Source of photo: Diane McCormic.)*

p.m., they will be dancing in the front yard of the Winn House demonstrating different period costumes and period music.

There will be **live music** on stage both days featuring the Skillet Lickers, a well-known local country music band as well as other talented artists playing and singing country music live on stage throughout both days of the fair.

If you are looking for a fun-filled weekend to learn all about local history, then you don't want to miss this once-a-year exciting event on October 4 and 5 at the Winn House!

If you would like additional information about the 2025 Elisha Winn Fair, please contact Betty Warbington at [bwarbing@bellsouth.net](mailto:bwarbing@bellsouth.net).\*

## 2024 GHS Annual Awards

At its December 9, 2024 general membership meeting, the Gwinnett Historical Society presented annual awards in a number of categories. Each of these awards was given for outstanding involvement or achievement as provided within the eligibility guidelines for the awards. The recipients of the awards were chosen by the Executive Council from the individuals and organizations who were nominated.

### The Distinguished Service Award

Recipients of this award must be selected from current members of the Gwinnett Historical Society who have been members in good standing for at least five years. The individual selected should have a lengthy record of supporting and advancing the work of the Society in multiple ways. In recognition of the importance of serving within the GHS office, a person who has volunteered there for a long period of time can qualify, as can a committee head who has directly advanced the mission of that committee and the Society.

For 2024, Peggie Johnson and Bobbie Tkacik



*Peggie Johnson's granddaughters, Jessica Oropeza and Alicia Baker, with President Nash and Vice President Bailey. (Source of photo: Michael Nash.)*



*Bobbie Tkacik receiving the Distinguished Service Award from Vice President Bailey and President Nash. (Source of photo: Michael Nash.)*

were both recognized with the Distinguished Service Award. These two GHS members have been instrumental in furthering the work of the Society through their faithful service.

In her time as Genealogy/First Families Program Chair, Peggie Johnson has provided outstanding service to the Society. She spends much time and energy in helping individuals to trace and document their family history in Gwinnett, which aligns with the Society's goal of preserving the history of Gwinnett and its families. Ms. Johnson, along with Vice President Gregory Bailey, recommended a Bronze level of First Families recognition that expands the program to individuals whose ancestors were in Gwinnett County by 1880. Additionally, Ms. Johnson is an extraordinary volunteer in the GHS Office and often works there three days a week. She personifies a good volunteer through her dependability, her positive approach to assisting others and her willingness to help with whatever needs to be done.

Unfortunately, Peggy was unable to attend the meeting due to illness, but her two granddaughters accepted the award on her behalf.

Bobbie Tkacik has served the Society in an outstanding manner, including providing a decade of leadership to the Society's cemetery preservation efforts as Cemetery Committee Chair. She has expended considerable energy toward the Society's goal of preserving the history of Gwinnett County and all its peoples through her efforts to identify, protect and maintain cemeteries across Gwinnett County. In her role as Cemetery Chair, Ms. Tkacik has not only organized and participated in cemetery cleanup projects, but she has also encouraged others to tackle such projects. She is a knowledgeable volunteer at the GHS Office who is adept at assisting visitors and responding to inquiries received by the office. Ms. Tkacik has also served as Office Manager and Corresponding Secretary previously, and she willingly assists with the Society's activities and meetings.

### **The Phyllis and Marvin Hughes Preservation Award**

This award is named in honor of Phyllis and Marvin Hughes who not only were very active in the Gwinnett Historical Society in earlier times, but also undertook and successfully completed the rescue, relocation and restoration of the historic Isaac Adair House. The survival of the house, originally located not far from the intersection of Hurricane Shoals Road and Pike Street in Lawrenceville, was threatened by development in the 1980s and demolition seemed almost certain. Then Phyllis and Marvin stepped in, methodically dismantled the house and lovingly reconstructed it on their property on Chandler Road outside the city.

The Hughes family lived in the house on the Chandler Road property for a number of years, but the house was once again in danger in 2008 since it sat in the path of the proposed extension of the Sugarloaf Parkway. Negotiations between Gwinnett County and Phyllis and Marvin resulted in the move of the house to its current location, adjacent to the Female Seminary Building in Lawrenceville; both buildings are now owned and maintained by Gwinnett County. The Isaac



*Rubye Neal accepting the Preservation Award from Vice President Bailey. (Source of photo: Michael Nash.)*

Adair House, which dates to about 1827, may be toured and is also available for rental as an event venue.

The recipient of the Phyllis and Marvin Hughes Preservation Award may be a group or an individual who has demonstrated significant effort to educate the citizens of Gwinnett County regarding the value of preserving our tangible heritage. This heritage includes both historic and prehistoric dwellings, sites and burial grounds. The award may also be given for the successful preservation and/or restoration of a dwelling, historic site or burial ground. The recipient must have demonstrated a genuine desire to preserve a portion of Gwinnett County's heritage and have incorporated sound preservation practices into the project.

The Gwinnett Historical Society presented this award to Rubye Neal in recognition of her unfaltering dedication to preserving and sharing the history of Gwinnett County, particularly that of Gwinnett's African American families, institutions and communities. Ms. Neal is recognized as an authority on such history and a reputable source of information that is difficult to find in written form. Her extensive knowledge, powerful memory and willingness to share information make her an invaluable resource in preserving Gwinnett's history. She has been

active in the efforts to preserve the Hooper-Renwick School and to continue its legacy in the new Hooper-Renwick public library. In addition, Ms. Neal serves as Historian for the United Ebony Society, as a member of Salem Missionary Baptist Church's Heritage Museum Committee and as a member of the Gwinnett Historical Society.

## The Whitworth-Flanigan Award

The recipient of this award must have authored a book on Gwinnett history which was recently published. This award honors two men who served in the position of Gwinnett County Historian in the past: Robert B. Whitworth and J.C. Flanigan. Whitworth was named to the position of County Historian in 1930, the very first individual to serve in that role. While he died without publishing a history of the county, many of the records and manuscripts that he accumulated were passed on to Flanigan who used the materials as resources when he wrote his *Volume I and Volume II, History of Gwinnett County*.

As a side note, the Whitworth family settled in Gwinnett County in 1820, and four generations of the family served in various positions such as justice of the peace, deputy sheriff and tax collector. While serving the county, members of the Whitworth family accumulated many documents of historical significance such as inferior and superior court records and tax records from the 19th century. In 1998, descendants of Christine Lindsey Whitworth, widow of R.B. Whitworth, Jr., donated these papers to the Gwinnett Historical Society. The records reside in our archives and are known as the Whitworth Collection.

The Gwinnett Historical Society presented this award to Stewart Ewing in recognition of his book, *The Ewings of Gwinnett: Cowal - Stirling - Ulster - Maryland - Georgia*. The Whitworth-Flanigan Award is given for a book on Gwinnett history which was recently published. The Society recognized the significance of Mr. Ewing's contribution in sharing the results of his



Stewart Ewing, recipient of the 2024 Whitworth-Flanigan Award with Vice President Bailey and President Nash. (Source of photo: Michael Nash.)

genealogical research on the Ewing family in a way that stresses history and provides a broader context for his family's stories. Reading this book can enrich understanding of the experiences of other Gwinnett families as they journeyed to Gwinnett and settled here. Mr. Ewing's diligent seeking of the truth through extensive research and documentation is noteworthy and ensures that his writing is accurate and authentic. This book is a valuable addition to those that provide knowledge and understanding of the history of Gwinnett and its early settlers.

## The President's Award

The recipient of this award is chosen by the current president of the Gwinnett Historical Society and is intended to highlight an individual who has been of great help to him/her in achieving the goals of the Gwinnett Historical Society. GHS President Charlotte Nash selected Frances Johnson to receive the President's Award for 2024 in recognition of the many ways in which Frances assisted her during 2024. Frances is a seasoned leader for GHS with a wealth of knowledge about the organization and its history.

One of Frances's major contribution was her competency as Archives Chair, ensuring

that this area functions well. This is no surprise since she has been involved with Archives for decades, leading it for many years. However, just as valuable was the knowledgeable, steady presence that Ms. Johnson brings to the table based on her longstanding service to the Gwinnett Historical Society in an array of roles including: President, Trustee, Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary. Her calm counsel and thoughtful consideration of decisions about the Society's programs and business matters were tremendously helpful, and her enthusiasm for the Society's mission and activities provided inspiration. Ms. Johnson set the standard as role model and mentor by working for the Society's success in both large and small ways. For these reasons and more, Frances Johnson earned the President's Award for 2024.

Congratulations to all the recipients on their well-deserved GHS annual awards! ✨



*Frances Johnson, recipient of President's Award, with President Nash and Vice President Bailey. (Source of photo: Michael Nash.)*

Are you a FamilySearch.org user? Should you be? There is a high-impact new technology available on that platform that will dramatically

## Membership Renewal Reminder



**Reminder! Membership renewal for 2026 is due January 1, 2026.** Renewing on time will ensure that you do not miss an issue of the *Gwinnett Heritage* and that you will continue

to have uninterrupted access to the Members Only section of the Gwinnett Historical Society website. Additionally, you will continue to receive important communications sent to members, such as meeting notices.



And as a **special bonus** for current members who renew by January 1, 2026, your name will be entered in a drawing for your choice from a one-of-a-kind basket of goodies! So don't delay---renew your membership today.

You may now pay securely online by going to [www.gwinnetths.org](http://www.gwinnetths.org) and following these steps:

1. Click on **MEMBERSHIP**.
2. Click on **JOIN OR RENEW NOW**.
3. If you don't have a PayPal account, you can enter your credit card information.

You may also renew your membership by sending your check to:

Gwinnett Historical Society  
P.O. Box 261  
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

We appreciate your timely membership renewal!



## FOR RENOVATION

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The Gwinnett Historical Society offices will undergo a prolonged closure beginning after Labor Day as we refresh our space with new paint and carpet. While we understand this may cause some inconvenience, we're excited about the transformation! When the updates are complete in mid-November, our offices will have a fresh new look and be better equipped to serve the public.





## Mount Carmel UMC: Celebrating a Centennial & Bicentennial Heritage

by Lori Medlock Anderson

*Mount Carmel UMC, 1925 (Source of photo: Mount Carmel UMC.)*

Mt. Carmel United Methodist Church in Norcross, Georgia, formally began a year of celebration on August 24, 2025, for its centennial and bicentennial anniversaries with a dramatized retelling of the construction of the present sanctuary building. The sanctuary, built in 1925 largely by church members with donated or generously-discounted materials, is the third church building on this site.

Mt. Carmel's pastor, the Reverend Lori Osborn, reflected on the occasion, saying, "Sunday marked a wonderful beginning to our year-long celebration of Mt. Carmel's rich history. I look forward to this year's events and am blessed to be Mt. Carmel's pastor in this exciting season."

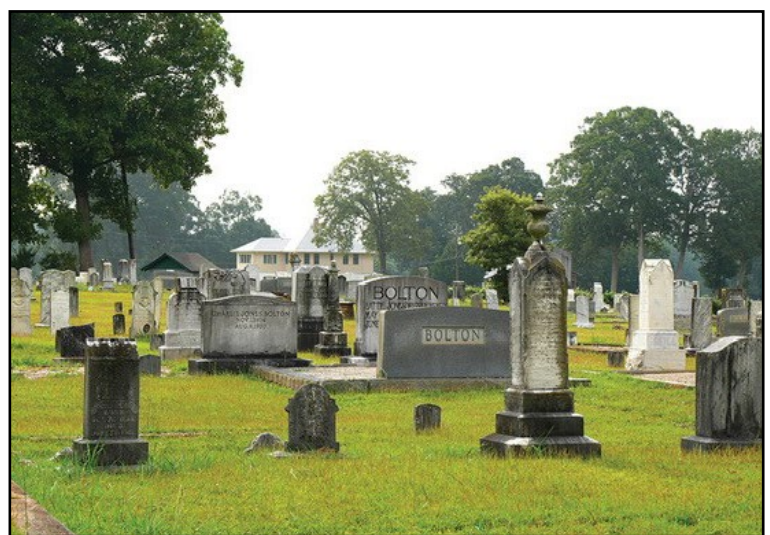
Sunday's events included the grand opening of a History Room dedicated to highlighting the church and the Pinckneyville community's

history, including a timeline showing significant events from the 1800s and 1900s, archival photos and documents, and artistic renderings of the church. A commemorative Christmas ornament created for the centennial/bicentennial year was unveiled and made available for purchase.

Mt. Carmel Methodist church was organized as early as 1826 in the west Gwinnett community of Pinckneyville along the old Peachtree Road. Five acres were donated to establish the church property by Daniel Pittman, a local landowner, and the little church on the frontier was part of the Gwinnett Circuit, the Methodist tradition that sent "Circuit Rider" preachers on horseback to proclaim the gospel to far-flung communities. The historic cemetery to the east of the church building contains graves of early church members and Pinckneyville residents. A popular church and community event is



*The History Room at Mount Carmel UMC (Source of photo: Mount Carmel UMC.)*



*Mount Carmel UMC Cemetery (Source of photo: Mount Carmel UMC.)*

the annual cemetery tour conducted by local historian Gene Ramsay.

The year of celebration will include participation in the upcoming Peachtree Corners Festival on **September 20-21**, guided tours of the historic church cemetery on **Sunday, October 26, 2025, and Sunday, March 29, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.**, and an original play, *A Night at the Hunnicutt Inn*, on **March 13 and 14, 2026**.

These events are open to the public, and all are welcome to attend. The commemorative Christmas ornament can be purchased for \$20 by contacting the church office at [mtcarmelumc@comcast.net](mailto:mtcarmelumc@comcast.net) or (770) 448-4498.

Mt. Carmel United Methodist Church is located at 5100 S. Old Peachtree Rd, Norcross, GA 30092.\*



*Mount Carmel Heiritage Sunday (Source of photo: Mount Carmel UMC.)*



*Commemorative Mount Carmel Ornament (Source of photo: Mount Carmel UMC.)*

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Place Lived <input type="text" value="Place Lived"/>	Birth Year <input type="text" value="Birth Year"/>



## Full-text Experiment Improves Access to Records on FamilySearch

By Chris Locke

improve your ability to perform genealogical research. Consider testing the technology yourself.

FamilySearch Labs has a set of experiments available to users. One of those experiments enables a full-text search on Familysearch holdings. Experimentation and improvement have been underway over the past couple of years.

FamilySearch recently migrated the full-text search technology set into its core operations. All users can now use this feature. The benefit to all of us is dramatically improved access to records that have not been previously indexed. The latest news from that organization is:

Using keywords, names, places, and dates, you can search over 1 billion genealogically significant records in a full-text search that might have been available only as images before. Although searching full transcripts is not exactly the same as searching indexed records, full-text

search allows users to find results from any part of the text in a record. This capability is helping thousands of people find relatives in documents they hadn't considered before and discover new evidence in previously unsearchable records.

FamilySearch Labs describes its full-text search experiment as follows:

FamilySearch has billions of historical records that have been digitized, but only a portion of these record images are currently searchable. This test of a full-text search for historical records uses artificial intelligence (AI) to transcribe images into text so they can be fully searched. This feature is meant to save hours previously spent manually reviewing thousands of images for an important piece of information—that can be found almost instantly with an automated search. Over 100 million records from the United States and Mexico are currently available in this experiment. We anticipate

adding more collections in the future.

FamilySearch also notes:

Full-text search allows users to find results from any part of the text in a record. This capability is helping thousands of people find relatives in documents they hadn't considered before and discover new evidence in previously unsearchable records.

Prior techniques relied on human-based indexing and manual document review.

The full-text search technology works with handwritten and typed documents. Therefore, by using this technology, your research efforts benefit from access to a much broader range of records. Also, more sophisticated query syntax is possible, which helps with precision search.

However, never forget that the automation is not perfect and will make interpretation mistakes. Consider that risk when formulating complex queries into the AI-generated indexes.

## How does full-text search work?

Google makes the following useful observations about full-text search technology. It explains the underlying process for that technology set:

*Full-text search involves two primary stages: indexing, which is akin to creating a map for a library, and searching, which pulls requested information from that map.*

### Indexing

*During the indexing stage, the system analyzes the text content of documents and stores the data in a structured format. This process typically involves:*

**Tokenization:** Breaking down text into individual words or units called tokens. This is like separating a sentence into individual words.

**Stemming:** Reducing words to their root form, such as "running" to "run". This ensures that variations of the same word are treated as a single term during search.

**Stop word removal:** Removing common words that are not particularly meaningful in search, such as "the", "a", and "is". This helps to reduce the index size and improve search speed.

**Building an index:** Creating a data structure that maps keywords to their locations within documents. This index acts as a roadmap, allowing the search engine to quickly locate relevant documents.

*The (automated) indexing process is crucial for the performance of a full-text search system. A well-structured index allows for fast and efficient retrieval of relevant documents even within massive datasets.*

Historically, indexing has been a human activity. Automation of that process means that indexing of significantly many more records is possible. For the latest details on how FamilySearch has implemented full text search technology on their platform, visit [here](#).✱

# Spotlight on Member: Jackie Tyson, New Newsletter Lead for GHS

By Charlotte Nash and Jason West

President Jason West announced not long ago that he had named Jackie Tyson as the Editor for the *Gwinnett Heritage*, the quarterly publication of the Gwinnett Historical Society. Jackie had reached out to inquire about how she might become active in the Society, and the vacant Editor position was clearly one of the immediate areas where a dedicated, capable volunteer was needed.

President West and former Interim Editor Charlotte Nash talked with Jackie to get to know her and her background while briefing her on what serving as Editor entailed. Both were very excited about the possibility of Jackie taking on the role of Editor, but she also needed to be sure that this was the right volunteer assignment for her.

Fortunately, after thorough consideration of the responsibilities of the Editor position and her capacity to take on this role, Jackie agreed to assume responsibility for the newsletter. President West described his excitement about Jackie's decision by saying:

History thrives when passionate experts share their gifts, and we are grateful to Jackie for doing just that. Through her volunteer work editing the *Gwinnett Heritage*, our award-winning newsletter, she has strengthened the mission of the Gwinnett Historical Society to preserve and share the stories of our community.

Jackie is a Gwinnett County and Metro Atlanta native and has been living in Lawrenceville with her husband Michael and their two children, Rose (12) and Miller (8), since 2019. Jackie is a historian/architectural historian with a Master's of Historic Preservation (MHP) from the University of Kentucky and a BA in Anthropology from

Georgia State University. Her career in historic preservation and public history has been primarily in the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) field, working for the local Georgia company, New

South Associates, since 2010. Jackie has served as President of New South Associates since 2024.



Jackie Tyson (Source of Photo: New South Associates.)

As a company, New South encourages its staff to volunteer their expertise in their communities. Following her role as board member and chair of the Georgia National Register of Historic Places Review Board, Jackie contacted GHS to see how she might be able to assist the organization. Ultimately, the newsletter seemed a perfect melding of Jackie's experience in editing and authoring reports and interpretive materials with her love of research and uncovering stories from our local past.

Jackie says,

It is my honor to assist the GHS with the *Gwinnett Heritage* newsletter. As a Gwinnettian at heart, I've been so impressed with the quality and content of the newsletter as developed and fostered by immediate Past President of GHS and Newsletter Chair, Charlotte Nash, along with her daughter Bethany Nash. I am dedicated to following in their footsteps and delivering quality newsletters to our community with compelling stories of our past. In my humble opinion, it is

the yet untold stories of local everyday folks that are the most meaningful and I'm excited to see what our future issues may uncover.

Please take the time to welcome Jackie to her new role, and be sure to say "yes" if she asks for your help with the newsletter! ✱

## September & November General Membership Meetings

**D**iscover Gwinnett's newest historic treasure. We are excited to spotlight the Hooper-Renwick School exhibit - an important tribute to the legacy of Gwinnett's Black community recognizing the only high school serving Gwinnett County Public Schools' Black students during segregation. Curator **Cammie Mansfield** will take us behind the scenes to share how the exhibit was planned, designed, and ultimately brought to life through a community collaboration. Her insights offer a deep appreciation for the care and creativity that went into honoring this vital chapter of local history. You'll also have a chance to explore the exhibit yourself and experience its powerful story firsthand.

**Monday,  
September 15,  
2025**

This meeting takes place at the **Hooper-Renwick Library** in Lawrenceville (56 Neal Blvd, Lawrenceville, GA. 30046).

Light refreshments and exploration begin at **6:15 p.m.**

Program begins at **6:45 p.m.**



*Cammie Mansfield (Source of Photo: Gwinnett County.)*

**J**oin us for a compelling presentation by **Dr. Marshall Shepherd**, a leading international weather-climate expert and the Georgia Athletic Association Distinguished Professor of Geography and Atmospheric Science at the University of Georgia. Dr. Shepherd will share perspectives on Georgia weather extremes and explore the historical significance of recent storms, such as Hurricanes Michael, Idalia, and Helene.



*Dr. Marshall Sheperd (Source of Photo: University of Georgia.)*

**Monday, November 17, 2025**

This meeting takes place at **Rhodes Jordan Park Community Recreation Center** (100 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville, GA. 30046).

Light refreshments begin at **6:30 p.m.**

Program begins at **7:00 p.m.**

# Recap of December 2024 General Membership Meeting

The Gwinnett Historical Society held its final 2024 general membership meeting, which also was the Society's annual meeting, on December 9 at the Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center. A good crowd was in attendance. In keeping with tradition, the social time for this meeting also was a holiday celebration that included a wide variety of tasty snacks and sweet treats provided by GHS members.

During the business meeting, President Nash reflected on the accomplishments of 2024 and expressed her appreciation to all those who helped ensure it was a very successful year for GHS. She also installed the officers and trustees for the 2025 – 2026 term, as listed below:

President – Jason West.

Vice President – Beverly Paff.

Recording Secretary – Diane McCormic.

Corresponding Secretary – Sandy Lee.

Treasurer – Richard Lux.

Assistant Treasurer – Betty Warbington.

Trustees – Kathryn Baskin, Brandon Hembree and Charlotte Nash.

After the installation ceremony, the focus of the meeting turned to two celebrations, the recognition of inductees into the First Families Program and the presentation of annual awards to outstanding GHS members.

Unfortunately, Peggie Johnson, First Families Committee Chair, was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. Bobbie Tkacik stepped in to preside over the induction ceremony for those being recognized with First Families status. The 2024 First Family honorees represent one of the largest groups ever inducted at the same time. Congratulations again to all those who compiled and submitted the required documentation to prove their ancestors were early residents of Gwinnett County.



Proud First Family Program inductees smile for the camera.  
(Source of photo: Michael Nash.)

The evening's celebrations continued with the presentation of annual awards. Recipients of these awards are listed below:

- Distinguished Service Award – Peggie Johnson and Bobbie Tkacik.
- Phyllis and Marvin Hughes Preservation Award – Rubye Neal.
- Whitworth-Flanigan Award – Stewart Ewing.
- President's Award – Frances Johnson.

Additional details about the awards that were presented are provided in a separate article in this edition of the *Gwinnett Heritage*. Congratulations and thanks to all the winners for their contributions to GHS.

With no other business to conduct, President Nash once again thanked those in attendance for a successful 2024 and adjourned the meeting. ✱

## Recap of January 2025 General Membership Meeting

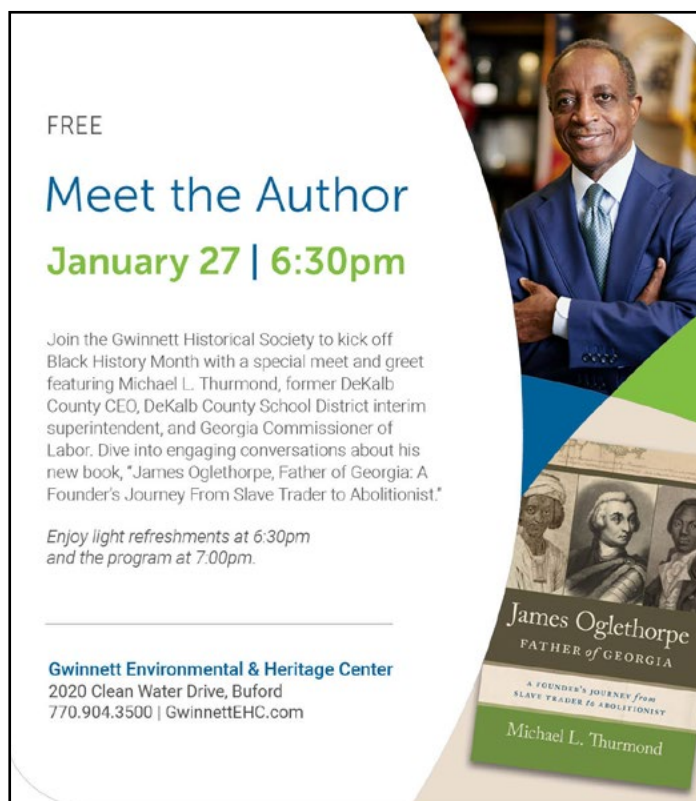
The first general membership meeting of 2025 was held on January 27 at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center. Based on the elevated level of interest in hearing our speaker for the evening, the meeting was moved to this location so that a larger number of attendees could be comfortably accommodated.

There was indeed an excellent turnout of both members and guests in attendance. After a chance to enjoy snacks and conversation, President Jason West handled a light business agenda and then moved quickly to the special program for the evening.

GHS was truly fortunate to welcome Michael L. Thurmond as its speaker for the January meeting. Mr. Thurmond is well-known across Georgia as a long-time public official who has served in multiple capacities at the State and local levels, but he is also an attorney, an author and a distinguished lecturer.

Mr. Thurmond, who completed his second term as CEO for DeKalb County government at the end of 2024, spoke on his latest book, *James Oglethorpe, Father of Georgia: A Founder's Journey from Slave Trader to Abolitionist*. In the book, Thurmond traces the path of Oglethorpe's life and his evolution from owning and profiting from enslaved labor to being an outspoken critic of slavery.

Thurmond probes the role that Oglethorpe's intellectual relationships with two formerly enslaved Black men, Ayuba Suleiman Diallo and Olaudah Equiano, played in strengthening and solidifying his opposition to slavery. These



FREE

### Meet the Author

January 27 | 6:30pm

Join the Gwinnett Historical Society to kick off Black History Month with a special meet and greet featuring Michael L. Thurmond, former DeKalb County CEO, DeKalb County School District interim superintendent, and Georgia Commissioner of Labor. Dive into engaging conversations about his new book, *James Oglethorpe, Father of Georgia: A Founder's Journey From Slave Trader to Abolitionist*.

Enjoy light refreshments at 6:30pm and the program at 7:00pm.

Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center  
2020 Clean Water Drive, Buford  
770.904.3500 | GwinnettEHC.com

James Oglethorpe  
FATHER of GEORGIA  
A FOUNDER'S JOURNEY FROM  
SLAVE TRADER to ABOLITIONIST  
Michael L. Thurmond

*Michael Thurmond was the featured speaker for the January 2025 general membership meeting. (Source of photo: GHS.)*

men were two of eighteenth-century England's most influential Black men and are little-known examples of interracial antislavery activism that helped form the formal abolitionist movement. Thurmond's engaging style of storytelling coupled with his fresh look at the life and times of Georgia's founder, James Oglethorpe, captivated all those who attended this meeting. The author was kind enough to autograph copies of the book for attendees as well. ✱

# Recap of March 2025 General Membership Meeting

The Gwinnett Historical Society held a regular general membership meeting on March 17, 2025 at the Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center. Attendees first enjoyed social time and refreshments, as well as the opportunity to browse a collection of artifacts from the late Lillian Webb's time as Gwinnett Commission Chair. This exhibit was provided in honor of Women's History Month in conjunction with the evening's program.

## Women Making History

**FREE | Monday, March 17 | 6:30pm – 8:30pm**

Celebrate Women's History Month with an exhibit honoring Gwinnett's first woman Commission Chair, Lillian Webb, and an inspiring conversation featuring two Gwinnett trailblazers! Chairwoman Nicole Love Hendrickson and former Chairman Charlotte Nash will share their remarkable journeys leading one of Georgia's most populous and diverse counties.

Join us for a preview of the exhibit with light refreshments at 6:30pm; the program will begin promptly at 7:00pm.



Nicole Love Hendrickson Charlotte Nash

**Rhodes Jordan Park**  
100 E Crogan Street, Lawrenceville  
For more information, visit [GwinnettHS.org](http://GwinnettHS.org).



GHS President Jason West (left), Nicole Love Hendrickson (center), and Charlotte Nash (right) (Source of photo: Michael Nash.)

Chairman Webb's family sharing memorabilia and artifacts from her time serving Gwinnett County.

After the business items were handled, President West opened the program by providing a brief background on Lillian Webb, who was the first female Gwinnett Commission Chair. He then introduced the two speakers for the evening, Nicole Love Hendrickson, current Chair of the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, and Charlotte Nash, who served as the previous Gwinnett Commission Chair and Gwinnett County Administrator.

President West posed a series of questions to the two women designed to help shed light on their experiences serving in these leadership roles and to prompt memories of Lillian Webb's time in office as well. Audience members also had the opportunity to ask questions Chairwoman Hendrickson and former Chairwoman Nash. ✱

*The March 2025 GHS general membership meeting featured speakers Nicole Love Hendrickson and Charlotte Nash (Source of photo: GHS.)*

Then, President West convened a brief business meeting by first introducing special guests, David and Rosalie Webb, son and daughter-in-law of Lillian Webb. He also expressed appreciation for

## Recap of May 2025 General Membership Meeting

The Gwinnett Historical Society held its regular general membership meeting on May 19, 2025 at the Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center. Attendees first enjoyed social time and refreshments.

Then, Vice-President Paff convened a brief business meeting for routine items. Once those were handled, she introduced the program for the evening.

Marie Bartlett, who is well-versed in historical fashion, was the guest speaker for the evening. She used her collection of expertly curated historical costumes to demonstrate the intricacies of 18th century fashion. The clothing that she modeled gave attendees a very real sense of the popular looks during the time of the American Revolution. Her husband was a good sport and modeled men's clothing of the same period.

Seeing the many layers of clothing that women routinely donned on a daily basis reinforced how much has changed in the last 200 years! ✱



*Marie Bartlett, demonstrating an example of women's 18th-century dresses (Source of photo: GHS.)*

## Recap of July 2025 General Membership Meeting

On July 21, the Gwinnett Historical Society held its regular general membership meeting at the Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center. After attendees had a chance to socialize and enjoy refreshment, President West convened the business meeting.

The action items were all routine in nature but Betty Warbington, Winn House Chair, also updated members on the status of preparations for the annual Elisha Winn Fair. (Reminder: The 2025 Elisha Winn Fair will be Saturday, October 4 and Sunday, October 5. Volunteers are needed both beforehand to prepare for the Fair and during the time it is underway.)

Once the business session was completed, President West opened his presentation on Gwinnett County's namesake, Button Gwinnett. President West is a bit of an expert on Button Gwinnett since he has portrayed Gwinnett for years in connection with his work with Gwinnett County. For hundreds of local school kids and other residents, Jason West's appearance in period costume has brought Button Gwinnett to life.

Button Gwinnett's unusual name was only one of the things that set him apart. His signature is one of the most valuable among all the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, with the last one to change hands in a public sale fetching \$722,500 in 2010. Of course, the rarity of surviving signatures of our county's namesake is due to his death in a duel less than a year after signing the Declaration of Independence.



*GHS President Jason West brings Button Gwinnett to life in period costume (Source of photo: Jason West.)*

Button Gwinnett had ambitions and was bold enough to take risky actions in pursuit of those ambitions. Unfortunately, any chance of achieving his goals was cut short by his untimely death. However, the decision by the Georgia Legislature to name a newly created county in 1818 for Button Gwinnett ensured that his surname would be known across the USA and around the world. \*



# Committees

## Chairs

African American History: Bernice Bailey &  
Greg Bailey

Archives: Frances H. Johnson

Cemeteries: Bobbie Wilson Tkacik

First Families: Peggie Johnson

Communications: TBA

Genealogy: Peggie Johnson

Historian: Amelia Porter Lewis

IT/Website: Chris Locke

Library: Richard Lux

Membership: Chris Locke

Newsletter: Jackie Tyson

Preservation: Diane McCormic

Publications: TBA

Resource Development/Fundraising: Charlotte Nash

Winn Property: Betty Warbington

## Reports from Chairs

### First Families

The deadline for the 2025 First Families application is **October 1, 2025**. We will be excited to welcome First Family inductees on Monday, December 15, 2025 at Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center.

#### **First Families of Gwinnett Induction Ceremony**

Monday, December 15

6:30- 9:00 p.m.

Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center, 100 E  
Crogan St, Lawrenceville, GA



*Past First Families of Gwinnett Inductees (Source of photo: GHS.)*

## STRICKLAND HOUSE (Ca.1874)

The Strickland House, 3061 Albion Farm Road, Duluth, became the staged murder scene for ABC's television series, *Will Trent*. The detective series follows its namesake while he solves fictional cases as a Georgia Bureau of Investigations agent. The home makes its debut during the Season 3, Episode 13, "One of Us Now," feature which aired April 8.

The earliest known homeowners were Isaac Newton Strickland (son of Isaac Strickland and Elizabeth Gilbert) and Sarah Catherine Strickland (née Rogers) granddaughter of ferryman, John Rogers and his half-Cherokee wife, Sarah (nee. Cordery). Originally, the home was a two-story, Plantation Plain-style home. The property was then owned by W. C. Dowis and became an actual murder site in 1922 when his son, Sheriff Deputy John Victor Dowis, was murdered due to his killing the Simpson brothers (see Gene Ramsay's article in *The Heritage*, Fall 2017). The home was last known to be managed by the Willam Ellis Burton Trust.



*Strickland House. The staged scene for the TV series has a pickup with a bullet hole in rear window. A mock-up of an Atlanta CSI vehicle is displayed at the scene. (Source of Photo: Diane McCormic.)*



*The Mason Mill ruins are located on Do Little Creek, beyond Lake Mist Ln, Centerville. (Source of Photo: Donna Sammender.)*



*The Maguire Water Tower is said to have been built by enslaved persons and is located on the old Maguire-Mason homeplace, 4303 Anderson-Livsey Ln, Centerville. (Source of Photo: Diane McCormic.)*

## PROFILES IN PRESERVATION

Donna Sammänder joined our Society last August 2024 and actively volunteers on the Preservation Committee. She lives in the Centerville area and is currently researching the area's history. She has fortunately uncovered some interesting facts and somewhat forgotten historical landmarks in the area like the Mason Mill ruins and water tower. Her main goal is to publish a book about the history of Centerville.

## GOING, GOING, GONE



*Dismantling the cabin revealed hand hewn, dovetail log construction once its exterior siding was removed. (Source of Photo George Hearn, S.A.S.)*

The Lockridge family home and its several outbuildings was an interesting, historical feature in Suwanee. Located at 3088 Wildwood Road, it was unfortunately razed to make way for another subdivision this past February. Daniel "Guy" Lockridge (1810-1872), son of James (1775-1845), initially built a cabin on this property circa 1833 (per his great-great-great grandson, Daniel Bennett). Amon Lockridge (1830-1920), son of Daniel, built a home here after returning from the Civil War (per Phyllis Davis). The Lockridge family lived here until the 1960s.

Meanwhile, Eugene B. Baynes, real estate Investor, started acquiring hundreds of acres of land in the area in 1948. His heirs would later sell property for projects such as Peachtree Ridge High School and Peachtree Ridge Park. Eugene



*Last Days of the Lockridge Homeplace. Street view of the Lockridge Homeplace, February 2025. (Source of Photo: Diane McCormic.)*



*The Lockridge Homeplace seen in its better days. (Source of Photo: Daniel Bennett, GHS.)*

Baynes bought the Lockridge Homestead in the 1960s. He added electricity and rented it. The homestead was described by Daniel Bennett as having "two living buildings and a cook house." In January 2025, Eugene's son and heir, Myron B. Baynes, sold the Lockridge homestead property for probable inclusion in the Bartlett Ridge residential development across the road. The property was already zoned residential.

In February 2025, Southern Architectural Salvage (S.A.S.) was given just 3 days to recover materials. The antebellum cabin was the only structure that was saved. Tim Finch, of Finch Finishes, only had 20 minutes to do an

assessment. According to George Hearn, S.A.S., the cabin was structurally sound but costs could run anywhere between \$100,000 to \$200,000 to relocate and restore the structure. The City of Suwanee was offered the cabin but did not have money programmed in the budget for the project this year. Incidentally, Suwanee Mayor Jimmy Burnette is related to the Lockridge's.

**Preservation Chair Note:** More photos on S.A.S.'s dismantling of the cabin, with views of the exterior and interior, can be viewed at their [Facebook page](#).

Street views through the years can be seen on Google Maps.

## QUERIES

July 2025, Frank Molock, PhD, wrote:

Dear Gwinnett Historical Society,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Frank Molock, and I am conducting research on the history of ferries in the Gwinnett County area, specifically Pittman Ferry. I am particularly interested in learning more about the location, operation, and significance of Pittman Ferry, which historically crossed the Chattahoochee River near the towns of Duluth and Norcross. I would appreciate it if you could provide any information or resources related to the following:

- Exact location of the ferry crossing and its proximity to modern-day roads.
- Historical records or documents related to the operation of Pittman Ferry.
- Any maps or images that might detail the ferry's route or infrastructure.
- Any personal or community accounts of the ferry's use in the 19th century.

If you have access to specific archives, records, or publications that may aid in this research, I would be grateful for any direction or assistance you can provide.

Thank you very much for your time and help. I

look forward to your response.

Warm regards,  
Frank Molock PhD

Diane McCormic, Preservation Committee Chair replied:

Hello,  
We apologize but we are unable to conduct in depth research. The problem with the ferries is that the names changed with new ownership. So, one ferry may be known by several names depending on the time frame.

I recommend the National Park Service reference: [https://npshistory.com/publications/chat/hrs\\_1980.pdf](https://npshistory.com/publications/chat/hrs_1980.pdf)

I could only find some snippets about Pittman's Ferry. It appears that Daniel N. Pittman (1793-1871) was appointed by the State Legislature in 1834 to establish a ferry on his land. His daughter, Abi Pittman Elder, describes the land she was born on as being on the Peachtree Road, a few miles above Norcross, near Pinckneyville. Source: <https://lisalandcooper.com/thoughts-regarding-peachtree-street-named/>

Find historical maps here: <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/>

Hope this helps,  
Diane McCormic  
Preservation Committee Chair



### Resource Development/Fundraising Committee

Planning for a major fundraising campaign for 2026 is underway, thanks to the efforts of a group of GHS members, including Rachel Bronnum, Melinda Locke, Beverly Paff, Amelia Porter, Bobbie Tkacik, Betty Warbington and Jason West. The coming year provides an excellent opportunity to plan events that not only honor the 250th anniversary of the founding of our nation but also can generate funds that are needed to allow GHS to continue and expand its work.

The Planning Committee held a brainstorming session earlier this year, with an extensive list of potential ideas in hand at the end of the session. The group is currently vetting these ideas and adding details to some of the more promising ones.

Stand by for more information to be shared in the next few months. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me at [charlottenash@bellsouth.net](mailto:charlottenash@bellsouth.net) or 770-868-6508 with any ideas you may have regarding potential fundraising efforts.

Also, be thinking about what treasures you can donate for an auction that is likely to be part of an event sponsored by GHS in 2026. These items can be tangible goods like jewelry, books, art or antiques, but we also are interested in offering experiences, especially unique ones, like a boat trip on Lake Lanier with an individual who can share the lake's history or assistance with planning a family reunion in Gwinnett that brings family members back to the place their ancestors lived in earlier times.



The success of any fundraising effort depends upon all of us, and we are counting on each of you as we make plans for 2026.

# Sympathy



## **Susan Robinson Frazier**

January 27, 1959- June 16, 2025

Susan Robinson Frazier, age 66, passed away peacefully on June 16th, 2025 in Gainesville, GA surrounded by family. Born in Duluth, GA on January 27th, 1959, Susan lived a life marked by compassion, strength, and an unwavering love for her family.

A lifelong Northeast Georgia resident, Susan was instrumental in her family and community. She obtained an Associates of Applied Science from Gainesville College and worked in various jobs from office management to computer programming. Susan was an avid cook, seamstress, Civil War reenactor, strong handywoman, fisherman, photographer, genealogist, a budding gardener, author, and the best granny.

Susan was preceded in death by her parents, Benjamin Robinson and Johnnie Cohen, and her brother Ben Robinson. She is survived by her sons Jeremy Frazier (Spouse Wendy), Sergeant First Class Army Reserve Jeffery Frazier, and Jennifer Webb (Spouse Clint) as well as grandchildren Hope Miller (Spouse Jonathan), Michael Frazier (Spouse Charity), Jacob Webb, Maddie Frazier, Jeffery Frazier Jr, Nathan Frazier, Liam Frazier, and Annie Frazier and great-grandchildren Paisley Ramey, Gracie Miller, and Weston Miller. Also survived by her sister Freida Knick, brother Terry Robinson, sister Judy Guyette, and sister Mamie Arnold. She was especially close to her Uncle Lamar and Aunt Martha Jo Hansard, who was like a second mother to her, and many other aunts, uncles and cousins.

Visitation will be held at Flanigan Funeral Home at 4400 S Lee Street in Buford, GA at 3 P.M. on June 18th, 2025 followed by a memorial service officiated by Morris Hansard at 4 P.M.

Published by Legacy.com by Flanigan Home & Crematory on June 17, 2025

*(Source of obituary and photo: Flanigan Funeral Home.)*

# Calendar of Events

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Unless announced otherwise, all General Membership Meetings  
and the Annual Meeting held at  
Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center  
100 East Crogan St., Lawrenceville

## *September*

September 15, 2025 • 6:30 p.m.  
General Membership Meeting

## *October*

October 4 & 5, 2025  
46th Elisha Winn Fair  
908 Dacula Rd., Dacula

October 18, 2025  
17th Annual Frontier Faire  
Fort Daniel Archaeological Site  
2505 Braselton Hwy./GA 124,  
Buford

## *November*

November 11, 2025 • 3:00 p.m.  
Georgia Veterans Museum  
20th Anniversary Celebration  
185 Crogan St., Lawrenceville

November 17, 2025 • 6:30 p.m.  
General Membership Meeting

## *December*

December 15, 2025 • 6:30 p.m.  
Annual Meeting  
& Christmas Party



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## Thank you to our sponsors

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