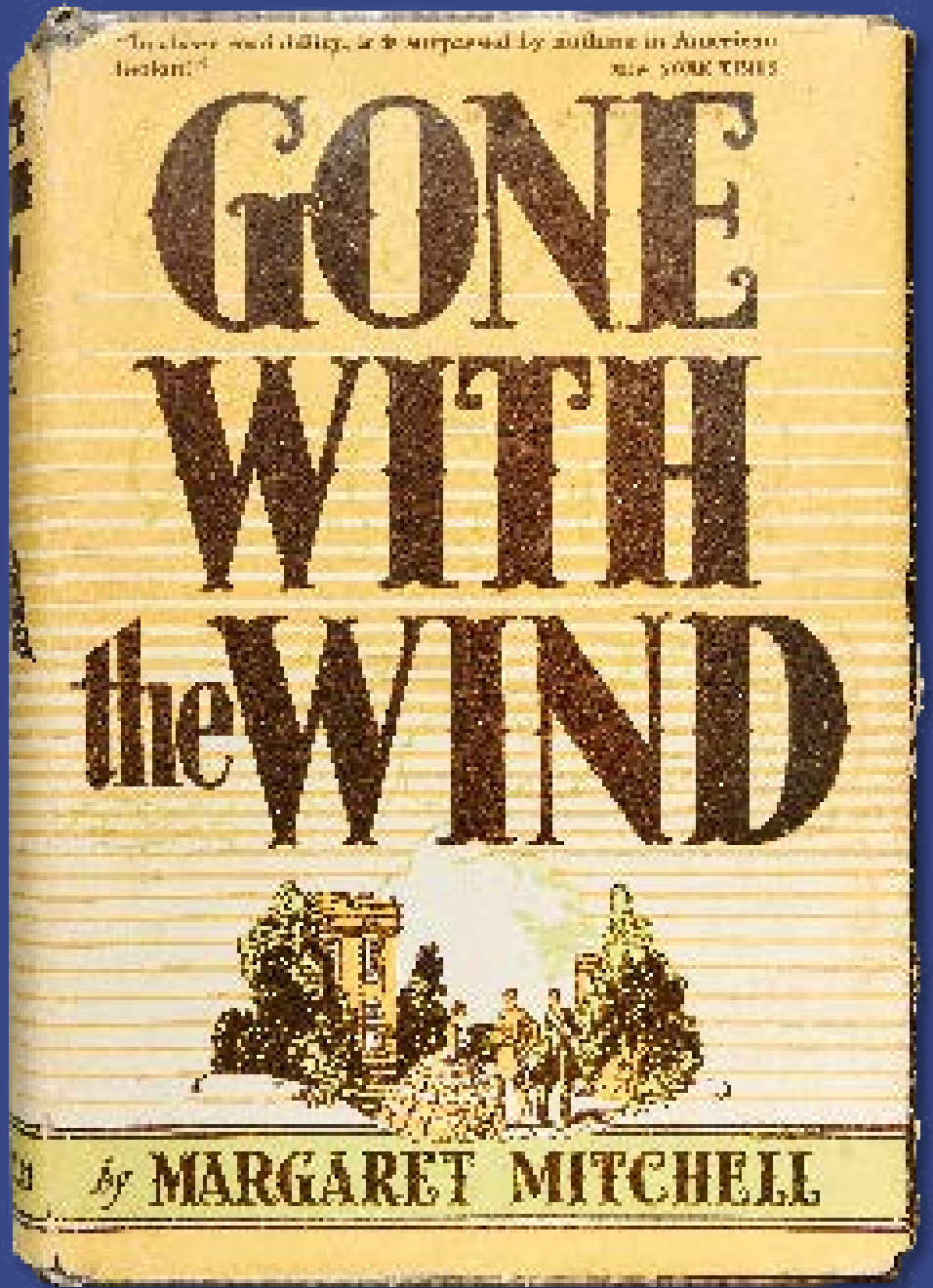


# HISTORY MATTERS

Summer 2024



# 01

## On Background

Message from the Chair & CEO

# 02-09

## Exhibitions & Collections

Telling Stories: Gone With the Wind and American Memory

Margaret Mitchell House: A Lesson in Historic Preservation

More Than Brave: The Life of Henry Aaron

# 10-11

## Programs

Celebrating 50 Years of Hip Hop

# 12-13

## Goizueta Gardens

Head, Heart, Hands, and History

### Cover Artifact

*Gone With the Wind* was published in 1936 and became an instant sensation. The 32nd printing, pictured on the cover, was part of a print run of 50,000 copies in January 1937, bringing the total number printed to 1,140,000 within the first year. It became even more popular following the award of the Pulitzer Prize to Margaret Mitchell in spring 1937 and the film adaptation in 1939. Read more about Atlanta History Center's newest exhibition *Telling Stories: Gone With the Wind and American Memory* in this issue of *History Matters*.

# 14-27

## Support

Swan House Ball 2023

An Evening in the Red Room

Swan House Ball 2024

Donor Recognition

Financials

# 28

## Back Cover

Researching Your Family

History at Atlanta History

Center's Kenan Research

Center

### ON BACKGROUND



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR & CEO

William B. Peard

*Board Chair*

Sheffield Hale

*President & CEO*

## Dear Friends and Supporters of Atlanta History Center:

We are excited to welcome you back to Atlanta History Center's Midtown campus beginning July 10, 2024. After many hours of effort, we're installing a new exhibition, and it's a thrilling day when we get to share that work with all of you—and reopen a campus in the meantime. *Telling Stories: Gone With the Wind and American Memory* explores the origins of the world's most famous historical fiction about the Civil War and Reconstruction, including Margaret Mitchell's life and influences and the complex history behind the story. We hope you'll make plans to see it soon.

This exhibition builds on the work that Atlanta History Center has been doing to explore how and why Americans remember the Civil War and the impact of history on our everyday lives. Starting with the Cyclorama restoration, where we examined how cultural influences can tinge one's perception of history, continuing with *Monument: The Untold Story of Stone Mountain*, where we showed how the memory of the Civil War interacted with policies throughout the 20th century, *Telling Stories* explores how Margaret Mitchell—and Atlanta—are central in our continuing efforts to understand the Civil War and its aftermath. It's the kind of understanding that is made possible as we gain time and perspective away from the event itself.

Rest assured that after reopening Midtown, we will not be standing still. There are many more exciting updates to exhibitions and experiences around Atlanta History Center coming your way over the next several years—we look forward to sharing more with you in future issues of *History Matters*.

Sincerely,

Bill Sheffield

# TELLING STORIES



Gone With the Wind & American Memory

**ABOVE** Margaret Mitchell is pictured with her famous novel shortly before the movie premiere.



**ABOVE** A huge crowd of eager movie-goers gathered in front of Loew's Grand Theater for the *Gone With the Wind* premiere. *Kenneth Rogers Photographs, VIS 82.121.12, Kenan Research Center at Atlanta History Center.*

“In a weak moment, I have written a book” Margaret Mitchell confessed via letter to historian and artist Wilbur Kurtz. It was November 1935, and a few months earlier, Mitchell met Macmillan Publishing editor Harold Latham and reluctantly handed over a manuscript so voluminous that he purchased an entirely new suitcase to haul it back to New York. Little did he or Mitchell know, the resulting novel would win a Pulitzer Prize and be adapted into one of the highest grossing film adaptations of all time.

*Telling Stories: Gone With the Wind and American Memory* examines the making and meaning of this influential tale. The exhibition explores Margaret Mitchell's life, her experiences in Atlanta, and her research process, situating this historical fiction in its contemporary context. It showcases the cultural phenomena resulting from the movie's popularity and the many ways—both shallow and profound—that American culture shifted as a result. Finally, it traces the history behind the story, showing how *Gone With the Wind* reflected and advanced common historical myths about the Civil War and Reconstruction.

For all of *Gone With the Wind*'s historical roots in the 1860s, it is a novel of the 1930s. It encapsulates Margaret Mitchell's feminist outlook on the new century through her plucky and daring heroine

Scarlett O'Hara. The book also reflects the long Confederate-tinged shadow of the Civil War that Mitchell learned from her grandparents, while raising questions about the war's outcome, Reconstruction, and eventual Jim Crow segregation which governed Mitchell's world.

Around 4 miles away from Mitchell's apartment, preeminent scholar W.E.B. Du Bois penned his groundbreaking *Black Reconstruction in America* while Mitchell was busy at work editing *Gone With the Wind*. Published in 1935 at Atlanta University, one of the premier Black higher educational institutions, *Black Reconstruction* reflects an entirely different history. Du Bois shows how Black Southerners used newly-won political power following the Civil War, such as in establishing public schools and other needed facilities including hospitals and insane asylums. It is a stark contrast to Reconstruction as presented in Mitchell's tale, which describes a time of terror and fear for her white characters explicitly due to Black political influence. Perhaps no two books better exhibit the contradictions in American life and scholarship—each written by Atlantans reflecting the research and communities surrounding their respective spheres.

No one was as shocked as Margaret Mitchell when her book became a runaway bestseller the following year. Her star rose as famed Hollywood producer David O. Selznick transformed the 1,037-page novel into a 4-hour epic stretching the limits of cinematography.

Understanding *Gone With the Wind* is essential to understanding Atlanta's trajectory in the 19th and 20th centuries. It became part of the city's unofficial marketing plan to the world, and points of contention and conversation inspired by both book and movie encapsulate many of the tough cultural questions that have defined American life. Both praised and criticized from its moment of publication, *Gone With the Wind* drew in stark relief the continued struggle to make sense of the country's deadliest conflict. Margaret Mitchell wrote one of the most consequential books of American fiction in a tiny basement apartment in Midtown, Atlanta. Nearly nine decades later, its impact is still being examined.

*Telling Stories: Gone With the Wind and American Memory* opens on July 10, 2024. Tickets available at [atlantahistorycenter.com](http://atlantahistorycenter.com).



**ABOVE** This view of Margaret Mitchell House from Crescent Avenue shows individual apartment balconies. The building was turned into an apartment building shortly before Margaret Mitchell and John Marsh lived in Apartment No. 1., visible at the bottom left side of the building in this image.

# MARGARET MITCHELL HOUSE: A LESSON IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION



**ABOVE** Before its restoration, Margaret Mitchell House had fallen into extreme disrepair. Here it is pictured in the 1980s.

**BY JACKSON MCQUIGG**  
Vice President of Properties

**AND CLAIRE HALEY**  
Vice President of Special Projects

The journey to save Margaret Mitchell House from the wrecking ball is a very Atlanta story. Energetic community leader and former journalist Mary Rose Taylor ultimately led the effort to completion, including seeing the house through two restorations after two fires.

The timeline for the preservation of the Margaret Mitchell House was a lengthy one. Initial moves towards the preservation of the house date back to the early 1980s. The unlikely story involves a pioneering federal judge who desegregated the University of Georgia Law School, grassroots neighborhood activists, and one of the most prominent Mayors in Atlanta's history. All would find themselves at the center of a pivotal court case that would help determine the future of historic preservation in Atlanta.

When Margaret Mitchell and John Marsh lived in Apartment No. 1 of what is today known as the Margaret Mitchell House from 1925–1932, the building was called Crescent Apartments. The building was constructed as a single-family residence in 1898–1899 before being converted into apartments from 1919–1920. Looking around Apartment No. 1 today, it's tough to imagine that the humble one-bedroom apartment served as Mitchell's home office as she penned (or, in this case, as she typed on her Remington typewriter) the majority of one of the most influential novels of all time, *Gone With the Wind*. In 1932, Mitchell and Marsh moved on to a different apartment building. The subsequent years weren't kind to Crescent Apartments. After a long period of decline, the blighted apartment building's last tenant, photographer Boyd Lewis, moved out in 1977. An eyesore, the building sat unoccupied for another decade, but not unnoticed.

In the early 1980s, John Taylor (no relation to Mary Rose Taylor) moved to the Midtown neighborhood of Atlanta. He soon noticed a curious thing: on a regular basis, tour buses were stopping for photo ops in front of a run-down old house. Later, when taking a walk around the neighborhood, he bumped into Deborah James, who told him about the building's unlikely former inhabitant. James had recently relocated to Midtown from Columbus, Ohio. She was fascinated with the notable absence of tributes to one of Atlanta's most prominent authors, Margaret Mitchell. Despite the popularity of *Gone With the Wind*, there was no location that honored or explored the author's life and legacy.



**ABOVE** Liquor brand Jack Daniels signed on to the early campaign to save Margaret Mitchell House from demolition and restore the property.

The table was set for the beginnings of a preservation effort. James would go on to establish The Margaret Mitchell Museum, a non-profit dedicated to finding a way to commemorate Mitchell's life and work. John Taylor and his then partner, Weston Sprigg, also became interested in the rundown building and founded The Margaret Mitchell House, Inc. (also called Mitchell House, Inc.), an organization specifically focused on restoring and preserving the house itself.

To others still, the Midtown block was prime real estate. In 1985, developer Trammell Crow, prior to its current ownership, purchased the parcel of land that included Margaret Mitchell House. The house was in rough shape following a 1984 fire that damaged much of the upper two floors of the building, though the apartment where Mitchell and Marsh lived was relatively untouched. After considering options, the company applied for a permit to tear down the house in August 1987. At that time, the City of Atlanta's historic preservation ordinance simply stated that demolition permits for historic structures identified in an Atlanta Urban Design Commission citywide historic structures survey had to go before the Mayor for approval or denial. Therefore, for months, speculation brewed about whether or not then-Mayor Andrew Young would sign the permit. The prospects looked grim for Margaret Mitchell House; in one newspaper article, the Mayor acknowledged that what was being proposed for preservation had most recently been "a flophouse."

## EXHIBITIONS & COLLECTIONS

Mitchell House, Inc. worked hard to demonstrate the value of the building to Atlanta and to dissuade Mayor Young from signing the demolition permit. They commissioned a study to show that the house could be operated as an economically viable museum, raised money and enlisted pledges for in-kind support for the restoration, and even managed to get the famous actress Olivia de Havilland, who played the demure and iconic Melanie Wilkes in the movie adaptation of the famous work, to personally send a telegram to Mayor Young asking him to deny the permit.

After extensive consideration, Mayor Young denied the demolition permit in January 1988. The development company sued in Federal court the same day. It was a consequential case, and tested a broader constitutional question about Atlanta's preservation ordinance: can the denial of a demolition permit for a structure on a portion of a larger parcel constitute a legal taking by local government, thus violating the fifth amendment?

The case was assigned to Horace T. Ward, United States District Judge. As a student, Ward desegregated the University of Georgia Law School and served as the first African American District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

Ward ultimately ruled in favor of saving Margaret Mitchell House on the merits of established historic preservation precedent. His decision in the Atlanta case largely reflected a cornerstone of historic preservation law established by a U.S. Supreme Court decision. In 1978, the Supreme Court decided in *Penn Central Transportation Co. v. City of New York*, which concerned the proposed demolition of New York's Grand Central Station by the railroad which owned it, that certain "undue burdens" created by historic designations could be considered a taking, but that declining land value alone does not constitute a taking.

In Atlanta, this meant that Mayor Andrew Young's refusal to sign the permit could stand. Justice Ward further found that "historic conservation is but one aspect of the much larger problem [...] of enhancing—or perhaps developing for the first time—the quality of life for people." Finding in favor of the City, Ward concluded that "plaintiff's motion for summary judgement is DENIED [...] This matter is hereby DISMISSED."

Soon, the City would adopt new historic preservation laws, correcting some issues with the previous ordinance and establishing processes for evaluating building demolition. Today, buildings cannot be demolished simply by the stroke of a Mayor's pen.

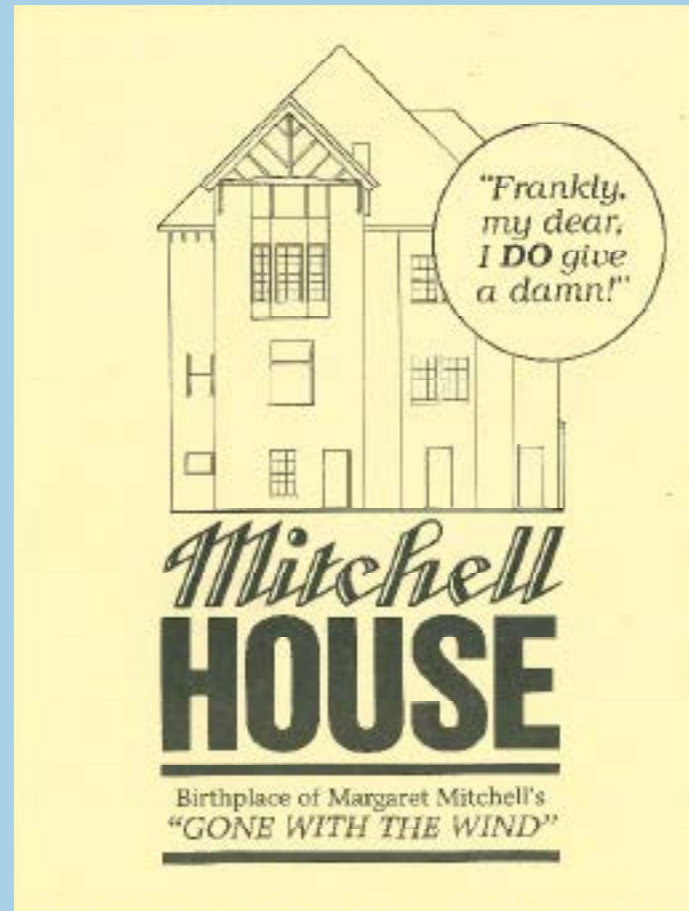
Deborah James' organization The Margaret Mitchell Museum, Inc. and Mitchell House, Inc. merged in 1990, but not before James married the last tenant of the house, Boyd Lewis. The new organization was then known as The Margaret Mitchell House, Inc. In 1990, Mary Rose Taylor, who had worked for years behind the scenes to preserve the house, was named Chairwoman of The Margaret Mitchell House, Inc., which was a game changer.

She would see the project through to ultimate success, even through two intensive restoration efforts complicated by unsolved arson fires in 1994 and 1996. Shortly after the 1994 fire, Mary Rose Taylor persuaded Fuji Bank, which held a mortgage on Margaret Mitchell House, to forgive the mortgage as a step towards preserving the house. She then approached automaker Daimler-Benz and secured funds for The Margaret Mitchell House, Inc. to acquire the block

which included both the house and the 1920s historic retail space, Commercial Row.

Mary Rose Taylor's tenacity and skill resulted in the establishment of Margaret Mitchell House as a functional museum. The museum provided information about Margaret Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind* in book and film, a visitor's center, and literary programming. In 2004, she merged the organization with Atlanta History Center, which continues to own and operate the property.

Today, safe from demolition and designated a City of Atlanta Landmark Building Site, Margaret Mitchell House moves onto its next phase—continuing to provide a place for exploring one of Atlanta's most consequential and influential works of literature.



**TOP RIGHT** The house was subject to at least four fires, but the two in the 1990s were by far the most devastating. Here, the house is pictured burning in 1996, and the aftermath was almost total destruction.

**BOTTOM RIGHT** Mary Rose Taylor is pictured with Dr. Otis Smith, who received a scholarship funded by Margaret Mitchell to attend Morehouse College and study medicine and later served as Chair of the Margaret Mitchell House Board.

**ABOVE** A brochure created by one of the original non-profits founded to save Margaret Mitchell House.



# MORE THAN BRAVE: THE LIFE OF HENRY AARON



BY CLAIRE HALEY  
Vice President of Special Projects



**ABOVE** Private collectors from around the country loaned items for the exhibition, including these baseball cards.

On April 8, 1974, Major League baseball player Henry “Hank” Aaron made history when he hit his 715th home run. The milestone hit broke legendary baseball player Babe Ruth’s record, a major feat in and of itself, but even more extraordinary considering the circumstances he was up against at the time of the chase, including death threats and physical pain. *More Than Brave: The Life of Henry Aaron* explores not only the historic moment in baseball history, but the life and legacy of Atlanta’s most famous baseball player.

Aaron was born in Mobile, Alabama in 1934. He had limited opportunities for formal baseball training and made do with what he could, including hitting bottlecaps with a broomstick alongside his friends. Jackie Robinson and other Black baseball players made the dream of playing baseball professionally real to Aaron—he was 13 when Robinson started for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947 and broke the color line in Major League Baseball. At age 14, Aaron got to see Robinson speak in Mobile.

Aaron’s professional career began with a brief stint in the Negro Leagues before moving to the minor leagues. At the age of 20, the Boston Braves drafted Aaron, and he came to Atlanta when the team relocated in 1966. Initially, he was uncertain about coming to the South due to previous experiences in the minor leagues, but letters from Black community leaders helped reassure him. From the moment he stepped on the field, he was a standout. Even in 2024, he still holds multiple records, including runs batted in (RBIs) at 2,297 and total bases at 6,856.

The home run chase in 1973-1974 captured the attention of the entire nation as fans waited to see if Aaron would do what was thought to be impossible. Despite the anticipation, not everyone was supportive— Aaron received racist death threats and hate mail as he closed in on Ruth’s record. Aaron persisted and the crack of the bat the evening of April 8, 1974 marked one of the most significant moments in American sports. As legendary baseball broadcaster Vin Scully called it: “What a marvelous moment for baseball, what a marvelous moment for Atlanta and the state of Georgia, what a marvelous moment for the country and the world. A Black man is getting a standing ovation in the Deep South.”

When Aaron’s professional career as a player came to a close, he returned to the Atlanta Braves in a management position, where he continued to significantly impact team development. In 1990, Aaron made a strong case for pursuing Chipper Jones and other notable players, building up the famous 1990s Braves team that won the World Series in 1995. He even advised then-catcher Brian Snitker to go into coaching—the current World Series-winning coach of the Braves. Henry Aaron and his wife, Billye Aaron, were also deeply involved in the Atlanta community, founding the Chasing the Dream Foundation among other initiatives.

As the milestone anniversary of 715 neared, Atlanta History Center was approached by the Atlanta Braves. “Hank Aaron was an extraordinary athlete, but also an extraordinary Atlantan. When the Braves approached us with the idea of an exhibition, it was an immediate yes,” said President & CEO, Sheffield Hale. The exhibition contains a multitude of photographs, memorabilia, and personal items of Aaron’s, thanks to the contributions of the Aaron family, the Atlanta Braves, the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Emory University, Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, and personal collections from individuals throughout the United States.

On April 8, 2024, Billye Aaron joined Major League Baseball commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Atlanta Braves CEO Derek Schiller and other notable guests to cut the ribbon and officially open the exhibition.

*More Than Brave: The Life of Henry Aaron* is on view at Atlanta History Center until September 2025.

*This exhibition is sponsored by the Henry Louis Aaron Fund, The Rich’s Foundation, and the Atlanta Braves Foundation*



**ABOVE** Among other personal items, some of Henry Aaron’s Hall of Fame rings and awards are on display in the exhibition.

# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF HIP HOP



**ABOVE** Memorabilia from the hip hop time capsule.



**BY LUCY ABELL**  
Research & Writing Assistant

On December 7th, 2023, the Atlanta Mayor's office, in collaboration with its Hip Hop 50 task force, hosted a ceremony at Atlanta History Center for the dedication of a time capsule honoring fifty years of hip hop history in Atlanta. First played at a party in the Bronx on August 11, 1973, hip hop music took off and spread south where it quickly became popular in Atlanta. The city's hip-hop scene began developing in the 1980s, and started to flourish in the 1990s when record companies like Big Oomp Records and artists such as OutKast and Goodie Mob came on the scene. Now, Atlanta is one of the ten cities in the United States with the strongest and most enduring connections to the culture and genre of hip hop.

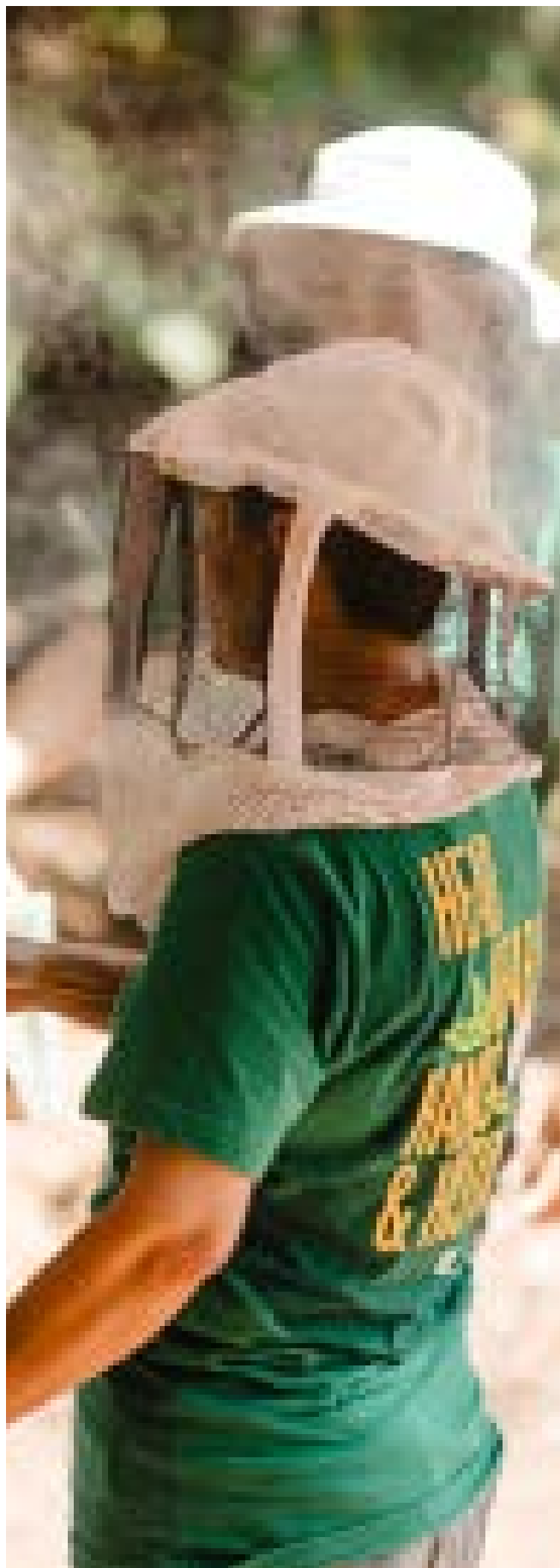
**THIS PAGE** Guests, including Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens, enjoyed an event celebrating the dedication of the time capsule.

**RIGHT** Dallas Austin enjoys the December 7th festivities dedicating the time capsule.

Mayor Dickens' Hip Hop 50 task force was focused on documenting and analyzing the last 50 years of hip hop in Atlanta, honoring the influence the city has had on the music and the music has had on the city. This involved the hosting of concerts, promotion of educational art initiatives, and celebration of the work of African American filmmakers, among other projects. One such project, which served as the culmination of the last year's celebration of hip hop's past and excitement for hip hop's future, was the creation of a time capsule. Put together in partnership with Atlanta History Center, which now hosts its intended contents, the time capsule holds mementos, memorabilia, and music donated by Atlanta's hip hop artists and their communities.

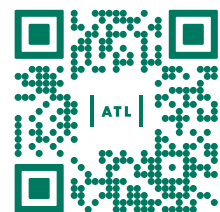
Among other fascinating objects, the time capsule holds signed records, magazines, and t-shirts, souvenirs from iconic concerts, and a keyboard used by songwriter Dallas Austin in the making of hit songs for iconic artists like Madonna and Boyz II Men, covered in notes to future viewers of the time capsule's contents. Presented to the broader community during the December 7th event at AHC, which celebrated both the time capsule and the yearlong work of the Hip Hop 50 task force, the capsule will be opened in 2048 in honor of hip hop's 75th birthday.





# HEAD HEART HANDS & HISTORY

BY COURTNEY MIXON  
Fulton County 4-H Agent



RIGHT Goizueta Gardens staff members demonstrate beekeeping.

Georgia 4-H began in Georgia as a corn club for boys in Newton County in 1904. The history of Georgia’s program is rich and deep, but the program and its work has evolved over the nearly 120 years of its existence. Atlanta History Center has a unique partnership with 4-H, which is the largest youth leadership program in the country. The Atlanta History Center program supports Fulton County Extension and 4-H in an urban area, bringing it back to Atlanta.

Georgia 4-H operates as an arm of the Public Service and Outreach unit of University of Georgia Extension service. Cooperative Extension has offices in every county across the state and provides services and knowledge in the areas of Agriculture & Natural Resources, Family & Consumer Science, and 4-H/Youth Development.

Through Atlanta History Center’s partnership with Fulton County Extension/4-H, youth gain access to free and low-cost programming in the areas of STEM and Agriculture, Healthy Living, and Community & Citizenship. Atlanta History Center’s mission, connecting people, history, culture, overlaps with Georgia 4-H in a variety of ways. 4-H looks to help youth become self-directing, contributing members of society and give them skills to create change and build confidence. Fulton County 4-H achieves this goal through community clubs, service, and youth development opportunities

BELOW Children created hands-on crafts during last year’s 4-H Day.



ABOVE 4-H Day included the opportunity to meet all kinds of animals.

Atlanta History Center is the ideal location for 4-H in Fulton County, thanks to the expanse of meticulously maintained gardens, the historic farm, and the institutional focus on civics education and a desire to help bridge divides between urban and rural Georgia. One of the large public programs is 4-H Day at Atlanta History Center each July. Youth from across the state (some traveled up to 4.5 hours!) are invited via their local 4-H club to attend this special event with activities that are only featured on this day. Selected activities activate each of the 4-H core values, including through highlighting artifacts including campaign buttons from the museum collections, hosting activities like button making for youth-led campaigns, and providing access to experiences like the exhibition, *Cyclorama: The Big Picture*, the documentary *Monument: The Untold Story of Stone Mountain*, visiting Smith Farm, and more. Youth are exposed to multiple perspectives and untold stories on historical subjects.

This event is open to the public and the activities are included with the price of admission. We hope to see you at this year’s program on July 18th!

Year round activities include the Atlanta History Center Community 4-H Club, which meets monthly on selected Sunday afternoons in McElreath Hall. Sessions are 1.5 hours long and the club is free to join. Youth grades K-12 participate in age-appropriate STEM, Agriculture, Citizenship, and Community Service Activities. Each meeting includes a community service activity, standards aligned lesson, and team/leadership building games led by the Community Club Officers. The 4-H club also highlights other activities offered throughout the month at a variety of locations, at Atlanta History Center, and virtually. Examples of supplemental activities include summer camp, leadership conferences, special interest clubs (Forestry, STEM), Judging Teams, Project Achievement, and more. Youth are encouraged to determine their “spark” of interest and explore it with the support of caring adults.

Enrolling in Fulton County 4-H at the Atlanta History Center is simple! Visit [extension.uga.edu/fulton](https://extension.uga.edu/fulton) and follow the page prompts, or email our county 4-H Agent, Courtney Mixon at [courtney.mixon@uga.edu](mailto:courtney.mixon@uga.edu) for a comprehensive welcome email. You can engage with Fulton County Extension on Instagram at [@uga\\_fulton\\_extension](https://www.instagram.com/uga_fulton_extension).



# SWAN HOUSE BALL 2023

In the spirit of the original Swan House owner, Emily Inman, the Swan House Ball is an Atlanta tradition steeped in elegance and community. Since 1986, some of Atlanta’s greatest business, social, and community leaders have come together each year for a night of fun, fashion, fellowship, and philanthropy. While the look, feel, and themes of the ball have dramatically changed over time, the mission remains the same—to raise funds to support the annual operations of Atlanta History Center and its educational programs while honoring those who have given not just to the History Center, but to the city of Atlanta.

The 37th Annual Swan House Ball took place on Friday, April 14th 2023. Honoring Jenny Pruitt, Executive Chairman and Founder of Atlanta Fine Homes Sotheby’s International Realty, the Ball was chaired by Juanita P. Baranco and Camille Brannon. Guests enjoyed an elegant evening celebrating the business and philanthropic legacy of Pruitt, who began her real estate career in Atlanta in 1968. In 2007, she founded Atlanta Fine Homes Sotheby’s International Realty. The company now has over 500 agents in the Atlanta area and generated over \$4.3 billion in sales in 2022. Amongst her numerous accolades, Jenny served on Atlanta History Center’s board of trustees from 2008-2014 and chaired the 2019 Swan House Ball.

Lead Sponsors of the 37th Annual Swan House Ball included:

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The Carol and Ramon Tomé Family Fund

- 1 Guests enjoy cocktails on the Swan House Lawn.
- 2 Event Chairs Camille Brannon and Juanita Baranco address guests at the Ball.
- 3 Guests enjoy dinner in the Grand Overlook.
- 4 Corporate Chair Carol Tomé, Chief Executive Officer, UPS.
- 5 Guests dance to Rupert’s Orchestra in the Allen Atrium.



# AN EVENING IN THE RED ROOM: A CELEBRATION OF THE DESIGN LEGACY OF RUBY ROSS WOOD



To celebrate the opening of Atlanta History Center’s temporary exhibition, *The Road to Good Taste: The Design Life of Ruby Ross Wood*, Atlanta History Center hosted an elegant reception at Swan House to introduce Atlanta’s design and architectural community to Wood’s trailblazing legacy. Guests were free to explore Swan House and its exhibitions while enjoying food from Alex Hitz and Soiree Catering under a beautiful tent decorated by Hitz on the Column Side lawn. Funds raised from An Evening in the Red Room helped support the institution’s operating expenses, including the vital work needed for the ongoing care and maintenance of Swan House.

- 1 Event sponsor T. Blake Segars and guests
- 2 Event sponsor Jackye Lanham and guests
- 3 Guests mingle under the tent at Swan House
- 4 Event Sponsors Mandy Culpepper and Stan Dixon.
- 5 Guests enjoy cocktails under the tent decorated by Alex Hitz.
- 6 Guests were free to explore the exhibition *The Road to Good Taste: The Design Life of Ruby Ross Wood* open through June 30, 2024.

Atlanta History Center is grateful to the generous sponsors of An Evening in the Red Room:

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1



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5

# SWAN HOUSE BALL 2024

The 38th Annual Swan House Ball was held on Saturday, April 20th, 2024. Honoring Patrice and Ernest Greer, the event was chaired by Jocelyn Hunter and Caryl Greenberg Smith. Guests enjoyed a beautiful evening to pay tribute to the Greers' philanthropic and entrepreneurial legacy. Patrice is a native Atlantan, president of Creative Concourse Concepts, and was the chair of the 2018 Swan House Ball. Ernest is president of Greenberg Traurig, LLP and served as chair of Atlanta History Center's Board of Trustees from 2017-2018. Together, Patrice and Ernest Greer embody a remarkable partnership, not only in their 35 years of marriage but also in their shared commitment to community engagement and professional excellence. Their contributions have significantly impacted Atlanta's social fabric, from health care and legal reform to education and the arts. Proud parents of two daughters, Kendall and Lauryn, and new grandparents, they continue to inspire through their leadership, vision, and philanthropy.

Lead Sponsors of the 38th Annual Swan House Ball included:

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A full list of sponsors and patrons will appear in the next issue of *History Matters*.

The Swan House Ball remains an integral part of community support for Atlanta History Center's operations. Altogether, the 2023 and 2024 Balls raised over \$2 million for critical operating support. Atlanta History Center is deeply grateful to all of our donors and patrons who ensured the success of both the 2023 and 2024 Swan House Balls. The 39th Annual Swan House Ball will be held on Saturday, April 26th, 2025. Further details will be announced in due course.

- 1 Carol and DePriest Waddy.
- 2 Left to right: Erica and Neil Tarabadkar with Emily and Michael Hertz.
- 3 2024 Swan House Ball Honorees Patrice and Ernest Greer address guests in the Grand Overlook Ballroom.
- 4 Left to right: Kendall Greer Smith, Lauryn Greer, and Justin Mott.
- 5 Left to right: AHC Board Chair Bill Peard and Carey Peard; Ken Smith and 2024 SHB Co-chair Caryl Smith; 2024 SHB Honorees Patrice and Ernest Greer; 2024 SHB Co-chair Jocelyn Hunter; Elizabeth Hale and AHC President & CEO Sheffield Hale

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*Gifts made between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023*

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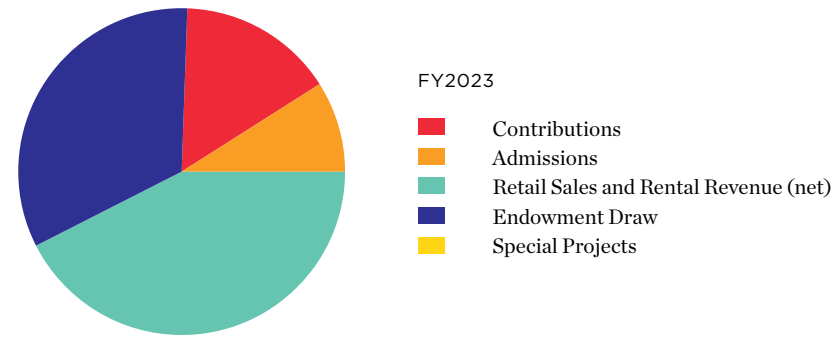
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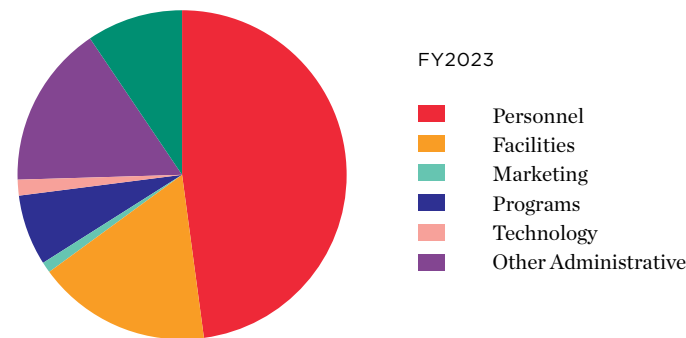


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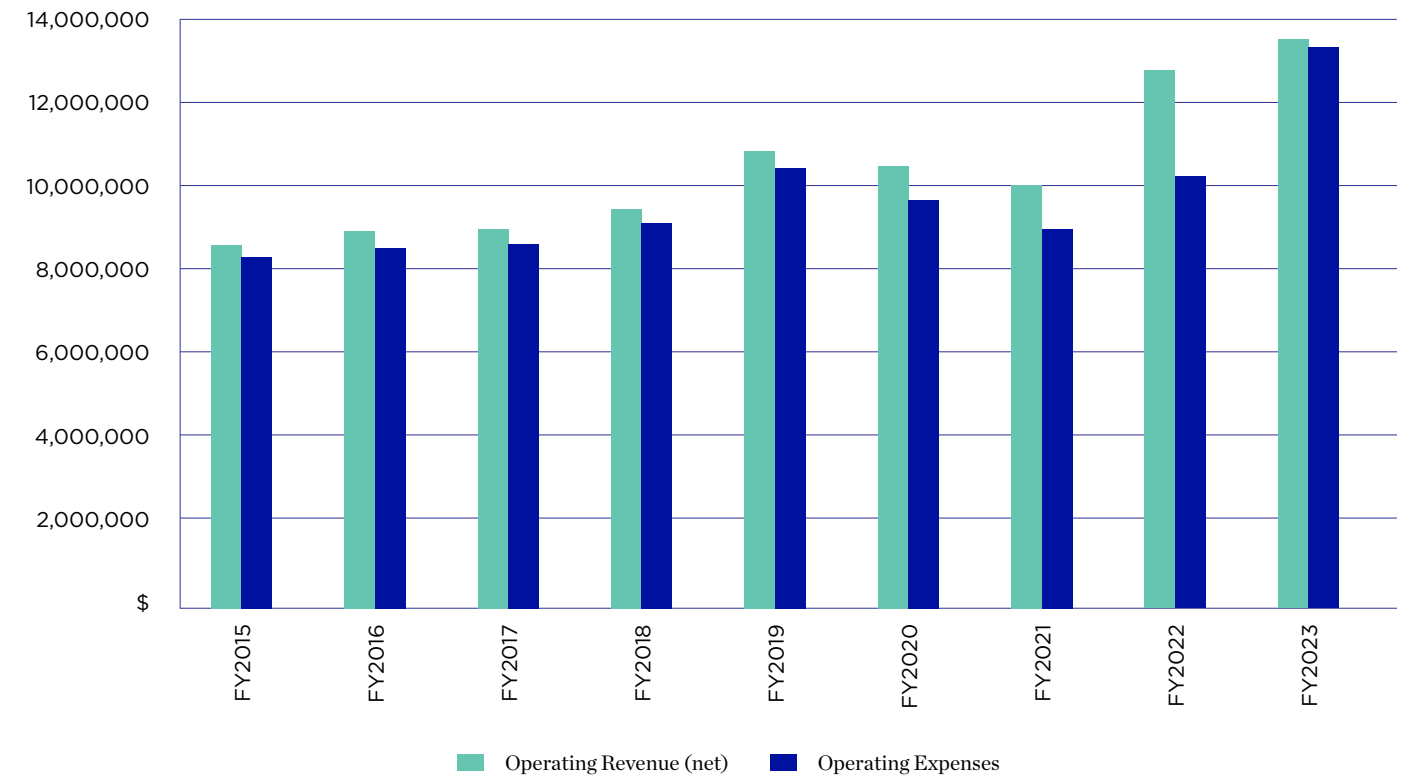
	FY2019		FY2020		FY2021		FY2022		FY2023	
Contributions	\$2,713,756	25%	\$3,404,134	32%	\$3,185,157	32%	\$2,363,889	19%	\$2,333,828	17%
Admissions	\$1,619,377	15%	\$1,178,167	11%	\$627,677	6%	\$875,673	6%	\$1,064,951	8%
Retail Sales and Rental Revenue (Net)	\$2,376,507	22%	\$1,863,426	18%	\$1,574,641	16%	\$4,335,859	34%	\$5,927,435	44%
Endowment Draw	\$4,105,301	38%	\$3,492,297	33%	\$3,902,500	39%	\$3,716,856	30%	\$4,020,683	30%
Special Projects	—	0%	\$661,300	6%	\$704,736	7%	\$1,323,544	10%	—	0%
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$10,814,940</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$10,599,323</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$9,994,711</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$12,660,822</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$13,346,898</b>	<b>100%</b>

### FY2023 Operating Expenses with 5 Year Data

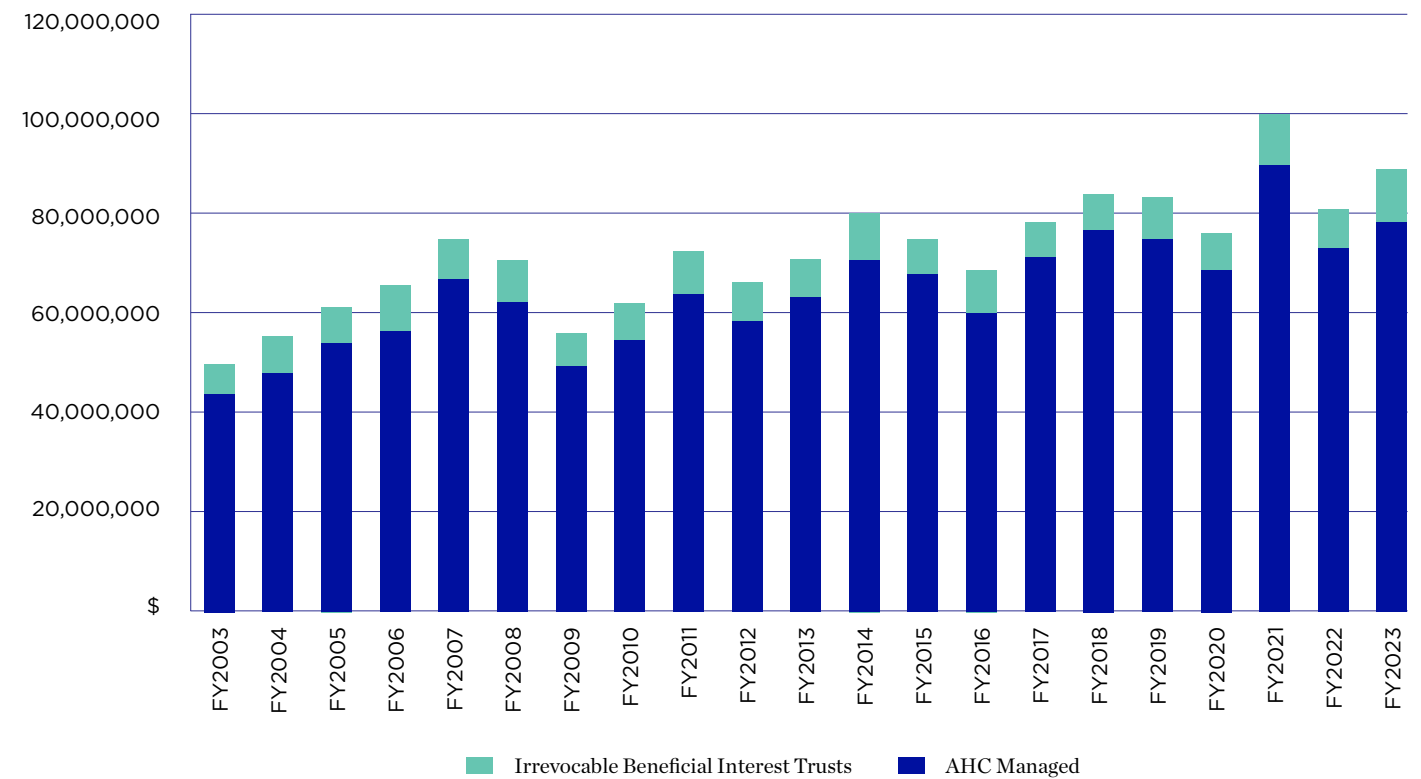


	FY2019		FY2020		FY2021		FY2022		FY2023	
Personnel	\$5,767,946	55%	\$5,401,651	56%	\$5,085,471	57%	\$5,274,557	52%	\$6,447,585	48%
Facilities	\$2,135,719	20%	\$2,248,096	23%	\$2,105,716	24%	\$2,366,177	23%	\$2,633,621	20%
Marketing	\$185,038	2%	\$64,475	1%	\$42,143	0%	\$207,439	2%	\$110,438	1%
Programs	\$261,280	2%	\$290,558	3%	\$154,312	2%	\$324,554	3%	\$342,653	3%
Technology	\$518,404	5%	\$574,363	6%	\$612,820	7%	\$783,036	8%	\$755,962	6%
Other Administrative	\$1,184,109	11%	\$1,085,714	11%	\$943,600	11%	\$1,210,903	12%	\$1,717,682	13%
Special Projects	\$418,950	4%	—	0%	—	0%	—	0%	\$1,324,090	10%
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$10,471,445</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$9,664,858</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$8,944,062</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$10,166,667</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$13,332,032</b>	<b>100%</b>


### Atlanta History Center Operating Revenue & Expenses



### Atlanta History Center Endowment



# RESEARCHING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY AT KENAN RESEARCH CENTER



Traditionally considered the domain of gray-haired researchers sitting in dusty libraries, family history research has moved into the mainstream, appealing to people of all ages, and is as accessible as the mobile device you hold in your hand every day.

**SO HOW DO I BEGIN RESEARCHING MY FAMILY HISTORY?**

The best place to start is with you! Write down what you know (or think you know) about yourself, your siblings, your parents, and your grandparents. Look through your papers, photographs, and other records at home for information to add. Ask family members what information they might be able to share.

**HOW CAN THE KENAN RESEARCH CENTER HELP ME?**

Once you've gathered all the information you can from home and family, you can begin to search our collections from any computer with internet access through our website follow the links for "Learning and Research" and "Search our Collections."

Our new federated search feature allows you to search all our databases with a single click. You can search by the county or state in which your family lived (i.e., "New York genealogy" or "DeKalb County genealogy") or you can search by your surname. If you are searching for photographs, you may wish to search for the name of the neighborhood in which you grew up. In the dropdown to the left of the search bar, you can select a specific type of item, such as an artifact or periodical, but it's probably best to search "Everything" first and then filter the results you will get. You can filter search results by Item Type, Format, Resource, Digital Format, Subject, and Date.

Atlanta History Center offers quarterly programs on a variety of genealogy topics, including beginning genealogy, using military records in genealogy research, preserving family photographs, and conducting oral histories of your family members.

If you need more assistance, Kenan Research Center is open by appointment only Tuesday–Saturday from 10:00am to 5:00pm. Please email [Reference@AtlantaHistoryCenter.com](mailto:Reference@AtlantaHistoryCenter.com) or call 404.814.4040 to request an appointment.

**CAN YOU HELP ME RESEARCH MY BLACK ANCESTORS?**

There's no question that researching your Black ancestors can be challenging, particularly if your ancestors were enslaved. Our quarterly genealogy programs offer guidance on a variety of topics, including researching your Black family history. One of our most popular genealogy program speakers, Emma Davis Hamilton, past president of the Metro Atlanta Chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS), produced a pre-recorded program on using the Freedmen's Bureau records during the early days of the pandemic in 2020. The recording is available on Atlanta History Center's YouTube channel.

**RESEARCHING MY FAMILY IS DIFFICULT. IS IT WORTH IT?**

Robyn Fivush and Marshall Duke of Emory University conducted decades of scientific research that confirm what those of us who love family history have always known: children who know the stories of their parents and ancestors are more successful in navigating the challenges of life than those who do not. According to the study, children who know their family's story have "better self-esteem, higher levels of social competence, higher quality friendships, and less anxiety and stress. They also had fewer behavioral problems, as reported by parents."

Fivush concludes, "[Children] need to know that they come from a long line of people who are strong, who are resilient, who are brave... The definition of who they are is not just something independent and autonomous, spun from nowhere. It's embedded in a long, intergenerational family story."

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