

Cutler Collection Digitization
Collections Spotlight



“Slides of March” Returns
Equinox Event at the Lapham-Patterson House

Our history begins here. Let us start you on the journey.

The Stories We Tell

We are pleased to say that our Interpretive Plan is almost complete! In museums, interpretation refers to the story we tell and how we tell it. After a great deal of internal discussion, we have developed our main theme which will be at the center of our future storytelling.

When a visitor tours the Davis Wing or one of the historic buildings, attends a lecture, or reads our publications, we want them to walk away with an understanding that Thomasville/Thomas County is *a part of place and a place apart*. This theme allows us to show how our history is similar to that of other southern communities, but that actions, influences, and reactions have resulted in stories that set it apart from its peers: stories that have resulted in Thomasville's modern and historic identity.



The process of writing and revising the Thomasville History Center's Interpretive Plan began more than 2 years ago. Curator Ephraim Rotter undertook the project to describe and analyze the organization's history, past and current programs and exhibits, and identify crucial moments, stories, individuals, and businesses who have shaped the history of the community. That led us to identify the sub-themes within our major theme.

Major Theme

A part of place, a place apart; Discover our community's experiences within the evolution of the South and modern America.

Sub-Themes

Adaptation Ecology
Preservation Identity
Opportunity

Chronology

Early Environment
(14,000 B.C. to 1825)
Antebellum
(1825-1861)
Civil War & Reconstruction
(1861-1875)
Resort Era
(1875-1906)
Industry, Modernity & the World Wars
(1906-1945)
Civil Rights & The Cold War
(1945-1989)
Post Modernism & Preservation
(1970-Present)

Over the coming months, we hope to invite our members, neighbors, and stakeholders to discuss our interpretive plan and provide comments.

SLIDES OF MARCH:

The Thomasville History Center is always learning. Whether it be about our collections, historic buildings, or the community at large. This year's lecture series will highlight subjects that have long been a part of the History Center's story that we have recently learned more about and continue to research.

The two-part series begins with *The Cutler Collection: What We Know Now*, which will include a discussion of the collection's archival materials and artifacts including the paintings by Ben Ali Haggin of Hazel Beamer Cutler which hang in the Flowers-Roberts House.

The second lecture, *Keeping Up With the Smiths*, will focus on the changes to the Smith Homestead's story over the last two years as researched by Programs Assistant, Meme Hand. We invite you to learn more about the stories we tell at the *Slides of March!*

Slides of March: The Stories We Tell

Tuesday, March 5 & Tuesday, March 19 at 7:30pm, Thomasville History Center, Free & Open to All

MARCH 5:

The Cutler Collection: What We Know Now

By: Ephraim Rotter

Curator

Learn about the extensive Cutler Collection, its archival materials, portraits, and more relating to the life and career of Hazel Beamer (Cutler) who danced on Broadway in the 1920s, her family, and friends: artists Ben Ali Haggin, Candace Wheeler, and Dora Wheeler Keith.

Ephraim Rotter has been Curator of the History Center since 2007. He serves on the Thomasville Historic Preservation Commission, and as the Vice President of the Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries.

MARCH 19:

Keeping Up With the Smiths

By: Meme Hand

Programs Assistant

Hear recent discoveries about the Smith family and their homestead in relation to previous understandings. Learn the influence of technology in facilitating research.

Meme is a first year student in Florida State University's Museum & Cultural Heritage Masters Program and works part time at the Thomasville History Center learning the ropes of museum work. She was recently awarded for her work on the Smith Family Homestead by the Georgia Association of Museums & Galleries.



Coming Soon

“THE SLIDES OF MARCH”: THE STORIES WE TELL

★ March 5: The Cutler Collection: What We Know Now

7:30pm, Ephraim Rotter

🏠 March 19: Keeping Up with the Smiths
7:30pm, Meme Hand

UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

☀️ March 1: Summer Camp Registration Opens

👩 March 8: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
Digital Series on Facebook & Instagram,
[@thomasvillehistory](https://www.instagram.com/thomasvillehistory)
Learn about some of the community's most remarkable women & their contributions.

✂️ March 9: Hand-Crafted: Free Drop-In Program
10am-Noon, Flowers-Roberts Basement
Bring your current project & enjoy company and conversation with other crafters!

🌸 March 20: Spring Equinox Celebration
3:30pm-5:30pm, Lapham-Patterson House,
Free admission

🌿 March 28: Roots & Branches: A Genealogy Workshop
2pm-4pm
Thomasville Genealogical Library
Free, Advanced registration required
thomasvillehistory.org
Learn how to research the branches of your family tree and how to use local resources.

🚶 April 12-14: Georgia Trust Spring Ramble
Volunteers Needed!
Info: thomasvillehistory.org/ramblevolunteer

🌹 April 25-27: Rose Show & Festival

Follow us for updates!
[@thomasvillehistory](https://www.instagram.com/thomasvillehistory)

Updates

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The History Center's membership approved the nominations of three new Board members at the 2019 Annual Meeting held on January 27. The new members, Charnie Beverly, Brandy Kirkham, and Lynn Williams officially began their three-year terms at the February 26 Board Meeting.

INSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS UPDATED

The 2018 Annual Report and 2017 990 are available for public view on the History Center's website under "Mission & Publications." You will also find back issues of *The Hourglass* and previous years' 990s and Annual Reports there as well.

JOYNER-CALLOWAY GARDEN SIGNS

In January, the History Center installed four new interpretive signs at the Joyner-Calloway House. The signs describe the appearance and function of a turn of the century yard and garden. These panels complement the existing raised garden beds and our future plans to improve the interpretation of the yard and house by telling a more complete story of how the house's occupants lived.. Visit the History Center to see the new signs on display.



Digital Library of Georgia Digitization Grant: The Cutler Collection



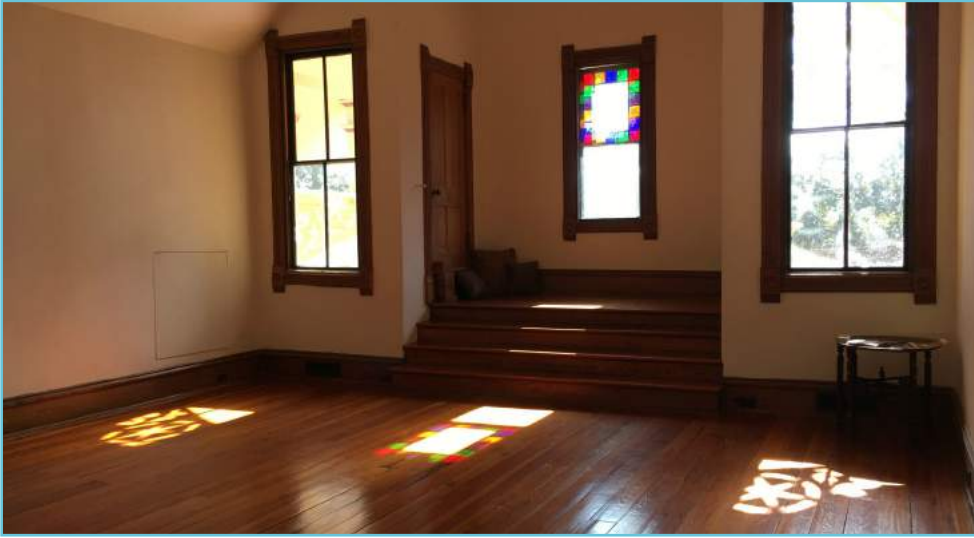
Cutler Collection: Hazel Beamer, c. 1930

The Thomasville History Center is one of six institutions receiving a service grant from the Digital Library of Georgia (DLG) intended to broaden partner participation. The DLG solicited proposals for historic digitization projects in a statewide call, and applicants submitted proposals for projects with a cost of up to \$7,500.00.

The Thomasville History Center has been awarded funds to digitize the correspondence and diaries of Hazel Beamer Cutler, a Broadway entertainer, and her family friend Candace Wheeler, founder of the American decorative arts movement, who was a winter vacation visitor to Thomasville.

Based at the University of Georgia Libraries, the Digital Library of Georgia, dlg.usg.edu, is a GALILEO initiative that collaborates with Georgia's libraries, archives, museums, and other institutions of education and culture to provide access to key resources on Georgia history, culture, and life. This work is accomplished through the ongoing development, maintenance and preservation of digital collections and online digital library resources. DLG also serves as Georgia's service hub for the Digital Public Library of America and as the home of the Georgia Newspaper Project, the state's historic newspaper microfilming project.

LPH Happenings



DIGGING DEEPER

Just as we continue to expand the stories at the History Center, we are also discovering new facets of the Lapham-Patterson House's story. Most recently, Curatorial Assistant Jenna Pope researched the House's builder and designer, Tudor Rommerdall. Follow the LPH's Facebook page, [@lapham-patterson](https://www.facebook.com/lapham-patterson) for future features.

Jens Peter Theodore "Tudor" Rommerdall was born October 15, 1849 in Aalborg, Denmark before immigrating to America around 1869. Rommerdall married Mathilda Linquist in that same period and they had two sons. He first settled in Chicago where his descendants believed that he worked on the Historic Chicago Water Tower. Rommerdall also lived in Kenosha, Wisconsin and the summer resort community of Spring Bluff, Illinois. There, he developed a relationship with Charles Lapham.

Rommerdall ventured south to Thomasville with Lapham, likely in 1884, when Lapham bought his lot at the corner of Webster Street and Dawson St. with Ephraim Hackett. He returned often and built the Lapham-Patterson House, and more than a half dozen other public and private structures. During construction of the water works in Thomasville on December 6, 1887, a fatal accident resulted in the deaths of Rommerdall and two others. Rommerdall fashioned himself a brick mason, architect, and builder and when he died, the newspaper designated him a "master builder in all the branches." At his death, he held contracts worth 50,000 dollars and his building plans continued in his absence.

A SALUTE TO SPRING

Wednesday, March 20, 2019
3:30pm-5:30pm

Flowers are blooming, days are longer, and it's time for a celebration! All ages are invited to join us at the Lapham-Patterson House for a special weekday edition of *Make History* on Wednesday, March 20th for *A Salute to Spring*. March 20th is the vernal equinox, a day marking the start of spring and a day in which there are equal day and night hours. On this day each year, a unique phenomenon occurs on the third floor of the Lapham-Patterson House.

Science, history, and creativity collide for a unique celebration of spring's arrival. To view nature's trick of light and shadow, please visit the Lapham-Patterson House between 3:30pm and 5:30pm. The peak viewing hour for the "Equinox Effect" is 4-5pm.

We will explore the wonders of the equinox through a special experiment and attendees can create their own paper stained glass window like those found in the LPH. This event is presented at no charge and all are welcome.

Memberships

This list reflects Personal and Business members who have joined or renewed their memberships between NOVEMBER 24, 2018 AND FEBRUARY 18, 2019. Thank you for your support!

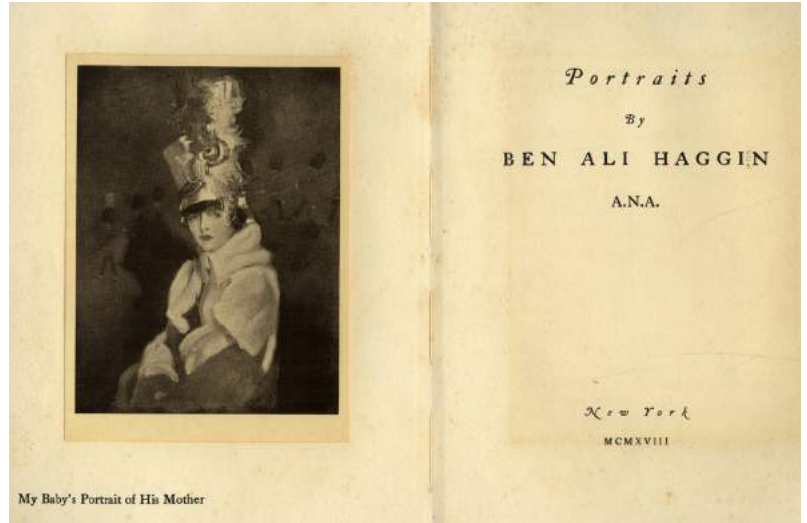
For questions or corrections, please contact Amelia, amelia@thomascountyhistory.org.

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Collections Spotlight

PORTRAITS BY BEN ALI HAGGIN

James Ben Ali Haggin, III (1882-1951) was a Broadway stage designer and portrait artist who painted all of the portraits of Thomasville native and Broadway actress Hazel Beamer (Cutler) on exhibit at the Thomasville History Center. Haggin, a Kentucky native, was born into one of the oldest and most powerful families in the Bluegrass State. His grandfather and namesake was known as the “Ranch King of the West” whose investments in cattle and railroads ranked him as the third-wealthiest man in America in the early 20th century. Their name comes in part from the first James Ben Ali Haggin’s maternal grandfather, Ibrahim Ben Ali, one of the first Turkish (Ottoman) nationals to settle in the United States.



Portraits by Ben Ali Haggin, 1918, 2006.005

Hazel Beamer met Ben Ali Haggin while she was dancing in the Ziegfeld Follies on Broadway, where he was the set designer. She quickly became friends with the artist and his family, including living with the Haggins for almost a year. During the course of their friendship in the early 1920s, Haggin painted at least 10 portraits of Hazel; he was a favorite amongst the celebrity crowd at the time, having painted Rudolph Valentino and dozens of other well-known stars.

Amongst the thousands of photographs and documents in the Cutler Collection is a small book titled Portraits by Ben Ali Haggin, published in 1918. As the title implies, it is a series of portraits painted by Haggin, including people well-known at the time like English actress Frances White, silent film actress Marie Doro, and Sir Frederick Smith, the Attorney General of Great Britain. Haggin passed away in 1951; his legacy and work lives on in archives and museums all over the world, including right here in Thomasville.

Memorials

Received January 1, 2019-February 28, 2019

Kate Watt Sedgwick

Given by Lillian & James Hughes

Wish List

We are in need of the following gently used or new items:

- Short Step Stool
- Window Air Conditioning Unit for LPH
- Lightweight Bowling Balls (less than 12lbs)
- Blender
- Coffee Maker for Lapham-Patterson House



Thomas County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1922
Thomasville, GA 31799-1922

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Thomasville National Bank



CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS:
Do you have a particular historical interest, skill, or handicraft you would like to share with our visitors? We invite you to get in touch and discuss volunteer opportunities with us. Call or email Anne, anne@thomascountyhistory.org to learn more!

KEEP IN CONTACT - SUBSCRIBE TO OUR EMAIL LIST!

Subscribe today on our website to receive bi-monthly updates.

We have experienced difficulty sending to Rose.net email addresses. If you have an alternate service provider (Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.) please use that address to subscribe at www.thomasvillehistory.org.



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@LaphamPatterson



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