



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

**On the Cover:** A dragonfly takes a moment's respite on the branch of a magnolia tree on the grounds of the Thomasville History Center.



Here we are in the thick of the summer, and my mind is already headed towards the fall and all the wonderful events we have planned...but you can read about those on social media and further on in this edition of The Hourglass. What I'd like to talk about now is growth. Growth in a few forms: future-wise, staffing-wise, and building-wise. As for the future, well, you never know but then again, maybe we do. We just wrapped up our last strategic planning meeting, and we'll be reporting back about all the exciting details before the fall. And then we have growth in our staff: we have a new employee who has joined our team, Leighann Wilson. She is the Site Manager at the Lapham-Patterson House, and she comes to us with an extensive background and an amazing ability to get things done! She will have lots to tackle and she's already been a huge help in getting the House open, inviting, and in good shape.

We're also growing "structurally." We recently made some headway with our newest addition to the Smith Homestead in the backyard. Our newest building is on its foundation, has a roof, and is getting a porch as I type. Please stop by and peek the next time you're here. All of these types of growth are what help us meet our mission and be able to bring you exciting, fun and functional events and programs, and we really love doing just that.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne McCudden". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anne McCudden

Executive Director

[anne@thomascountyhistory.org](mailto:anne@thomascountyhistory.org)



## The Rev. C.I. LaRoche: Faith & Flourishing in Thomasville

St. Thomas Episcopal Church and the Thomasville History Center proudly announce a shared lecture on Tuesday, September 17 in the church sanctuary. Presented by Rev. Wallace Marsh, the talk will center on the work and vision of Rev. C. I. LaRoche who led the St. Thomas congregation at the height of Thomasville's Resort Era. Described in contemporary newspapers as having "endeared himself to all classes of people by his genial ways and blameless walk..." Rev. LaRoche's career in Thomasville came to an end in 1897 when he accepted a position in Maryland.



Join us at 7pm to explore the historic church sanctuary, marvel at the original Tiffany stained glass windows, and enjoy fellowship with members of the congregation and History Center friends before the program begins at 7:30pm. Light refreshments will follow the lecture. Admission to this event is free and open to all. Attendees are kindly asked to RSVP in advance at [brushfire.com/thomasvillehistorycenter](http://brushfire.com/thomasvillehistorycenter).

# Crate to Plate: Olives to Lemons

## 5th Edition of Crate to Plate Coming October 3



In the four years since its inception, Crate to Plate has grown from a reactionary pivot to a new path - one that still centers on a celebration of the History Center's work but meets our friends and neighbors where they are. Now, attendees can choose to take their crate home, to a shared gathering off site, or stay at the History Center and enjoy food, fun, and fellowship in upscale picnic style on our grounds. The best of all worlds.

This October 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will embark on our 5<sup>th</sup> Crate to Plate adventure. This year guests will enjoy the flavors of the south of France at Olives to Lemons! A Provençal picnic experience that celebrates local businesses, supports the Thomasville History Center, and takes inspiration from the flavors, aromas, and scenery of the Mediterranean region. Sponsorship opportunities are available online at [thomasvillehistory.org](http://thomasvillehistory.org) and each level includes at least one complimentary crate.



We hope that you'll allow the whispers of the food and culture of the region to transport you as you celebrate the history, people, and stories of Southwest Georgia!

Join us for the Thomasville History Center's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Crate to Plate. Support the Thomasville History Center and local businesses one crate at a time.

*Pledge your support today at:*

[brushfire.com/thomasvillehistorycenter](http://brushfire.com/thomasvillehistorycenter)

Help us to make Crate to Plate even more successful as we transition to an improved online reservation experience.

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Name as it should appear:

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

- |             |           |
|-------------|-----------|
| ___ \$3,000 | ___ \$750 |
| ___ \$1,500 | ___ \$500 |
| ___ \$1,000 | ___ \$250 |

- |                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Will you provide a logo?      | Yes ___ No ___ |
| Decline Benefits? (no crates) | Yes ___ No ___ |
| Would you like an invoice?    | Yes ___ No ___ |

Brushfire is an online event management platform that offers the History Center better tracking and attendee management. By using just your email address on Brushfire, you to pledge your sponsor support, RSVP for your crates, purchase additional crates, gift crates to friends or family, and make changes to your reservation at any time!

When you pledge, you can complete your donation using a credit card or by selecting the "Invoice" option.

Check your official crate RSVP off your to-do list using the Attendee fields at the time you sponsor or at a later date by logging into your Brushfire account.

Once your transaction is submitted, you will receive a confirmation email. This contains a blue button link that will bring you right back to your order where you can make changes and updates at any point.

**We're here to help at any time!**

# Calendar Notes

Add these dates to your calendar!

**August 15:** Annual Volunteer Appreciation Party, 5pm-7pm

**August 17:** Untold Stories Tour, 2pm

**September 2:** Closed, Labor Day

**September 17:** St. Thomas Church Lecture, 7pm

**September 28:** Untold Stories Tour, 2pm

**October 3:** Crate to Plate: Olives to Lemons, Pickup and Dining on the grounds begins at 5pm.

**October 26:** Untold Stories Tour, 2pm

**October 26 & November 2:** Tiptoe Through the Tombstones: Murder & Mayhem at Laurel Hill Cemetery. Tours at 5pm. Advanced registration required.

**October 31:** Trick or Treat! 5pm-7pm (or as supplies last). Volunteers needed.

**November 5:** 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pilau Dinner

**November 23:** Untold Stories Tour, 2pm

**November 25:** Shop The Lobby for Small Business Saturday; check folks off your shopping list and support the History Center at the same time!

**December 14:** Untold Stories Tour, 2pm

## Shop Small at The Lobby

The Lobby at the Thomasville History Center offers a variety of goods that reflect the history, people, landscape, and stories of the Red Hills region as well as items made by local artisans. To become a consignment vendor, please contact Meme, [meme@thomascountyhistory.org](mailto:meme@thomascountyhistory.org). We'll be looking to stock The Lobby for fall before you know it!

## Between The By-Lines...

Ever wondered who was behind your favorite article in an edition of THE HOURGLASS or wanted to know who to reach out to in order to learn more? We're testing out a new feature in this edition by including by-lines on some content featured in THE HOURGLASS and our email addresses so we can continue the conversation!

Let us know what you think and if you'd like this format to continue!

## Add to Cart: Shop The Lobby from Facebook & Instagram

We're working on a new feature of our online experience that we think you'll love! Soon, you'll be able to purchase gifts, souvenirs, and books from The Lobby without having to leave Facebook or Instagram. You may have seen this feature from other vendors, and we're excited to introduce a new shopping avenue to our friends near and far.



Items purchased from social media will be available for shipping only, so if you're a local and want to pickup, please visit [thomasvillehistory.org](http://thomasvillehistory.org) and select Local Pickup at checkout to save time and extra fees!

## Page 11: Photo Grid Captions: (clockwise from left)

Thomas County teachers at the Teaching World War II & the Holocaust Professional Development workshop compete in a primary source game presented by museum educators from the Museum of History & Holocaust Education at Kennesaw State University; Members of the 2023-2024 Apprentice class pose after their Capstone Open House; Members of the Strategic Planning Committee meet; Meme and campers go on a tadpole search; A camper enjoys a living history activity involving a vintage telephone; Going through a donation of items belonging to Stern Tittle; The Lobby pop-up shop at the spring Hangout.

# The Artifact Collection of the Thomasville History Center: In Numbers

The Curatorial Department at the History Center recently concluded a nearly three-year inventory of our three-dimensional object collections. The vast majority are human-made artifacts of the twentieth century that represent the myriad aspects of life in Thomasville and the Red Hills. Each object was cleaned, tagged with a unique identification number, and those in storage encapsulated for protection from environmental damage. From the totality of the inventory, we have a far better idea of both what we need and what we already have to assist us in telling the stories of our place:

## 4,500 objects

- Oldest object is a piece of fossilized coral believed to be 250 million years old.
- Newest object is a “Camp Dawson” t-shirt from 2023.
- 11 animal-drawn wagons, 3 baby carriages, and 2 tricycles.
- 9 tuxedos, 6 top hats, and 1 tam-o-shanter.
- 130 dresses spanning from 1850-2021.
- 70 forks between 1832-1940.
- 19 matchbooks from twentieth century Thomas County hotels and restaurants.
- 4 locks of hair from between 1870-1890.
- 9 mixing bowls, 3 eggbeaters, and 1 toaster.
- 167 military uniforms from all branches of the Armed Forces (except Space Force) representing the Civil War through Vietnam and every rank from private to major general is represented.
- 75 bottles of medicine, 2 electrotherapy machines, and 1 bedpan from Archbold Memorial Hospital’s opening in 1925.
- 9 typewriters ranging from 1912 – 1976
- 13 plows, 3 sugar cane mills, and 1 hog emasculator
- 3 cornerstones from demolished buildings
- 300+ rank insignia pins, 3 Bronze Stars, 2 Silver Stars, 1 Purple Heart
- 70 chairs, 5 sofas, and 1 settee
- 8 steamer trunks ranging from 1885-1950
- 30 purses
- 13 hand fans
- 26 dolls ranging from 1838 – 1985
- 60 souvenir spoons
- 110 women’s hats and bonnets ranging from 1823-1970
- 40 flags and banners ranging from 1860-2020
- 96 oil paintings and portraits ranging from 1832-1990
- 1 pair of jeans



Ephraim Rotter  
Curator  
ephraim@thomascountyhistory.org

# Behind the Crown

What does the Thomasville History Center have to do with the Miss Thomasville scholarship competition? More than you might think...

The relationship between the History Center and the pageant goes back many years and on a winding path. Bear with me... It all started when I was a member of the team of directors for the Rose Queen pageant. Yes, I know, I'm still shocked by this bit of my personal and professional history. For a few years, I served on the managing board of the scholarship pageant and took on the task of "beefing up" the local history and culture questions.



Our relationship has continued beyond my tenure on the Board, and grown to include Meme, who is now a leader in the Junior Service League. It's becoming a History Center tradition! Together with pageant representatives, we've developed a detailed breakdown of relevant historical context that the contestants use to build their responses. Additional resource materials provided by the Jack Hadley Black History Museum and Pebble Hill Plantation add to the breadth of shared community knowledge and traditions.

At rehearsals, Meme and I coach contestants into "speaking in draft," and develop responses that reflect them as individuals. We remind them to not get bogged down in the facts and instead focus on the big ideas, emotions, and arguments that resonate for them. Start with the basics: who, what, when, where, why, and how, and build from there. Over the course of the week, the light bulbs go on, responses flow, and confidence grows.

Contestants stand out in our memories for a variety of reasons. In recent years, one contestant has held a special place in our hearts. We first met her as a contestant and soon after, she became a member of our first Apprentice class. For 2 years, Savannah Taylor, Miss Thomasville 2023, rolled into our bi-monthly meetings with news of her latest theatrical rehearsal, giggled with friends, and had thoughtful conversations about the role of museums in society.



Meme and I don't play favorites, but when Savannah returned to the Miss Thomasville competition in 2023 for a second time, we silently, then very loudly, cheered her on as she was crowned. Now, we've cheered her on as she competed for the title of Miss Georgia. We don't take credit for her success. That's all her. But we're grateful to have been a part of her journey. How far this journey takes her is still unknown, but wherever it leads, we hope you'll join us in cheering Savannah, and the rest of the Miss Thomasville contestants on following their big step into the spotlight.

Amelia Gallo  
Head of Community Engagement  
[amelia@thomascountyhistory.org](mailto:amelia@thomascountyhistory.org)

# One Click Away

The Thomasville History Center is proud to announce the completion of our new website. With the hard work of our partner, Summerhill Creative, we've designed a streamlined, user-focused experience. The process began over a year ago when History Center staff compiled a list of websites that had features we loved and those we did not. This helped us narrow down exactly what we were asking Summerhill Creative to design for us and functions that we felt would assist our members and visitors in finding the information they seek.

At the top of our list was a clean, streamlined menu that maps out the entire website at a glance. We also wanted a place beyond social media or The Hourglass where we could share more about what we do and our ongoing research projects; this resulted in the new Blog which will be cross-posted to our bi-weekly email newsletters. We hope the new design will help you find the answers to all your questions and inspire you to become even more engaged with the History Center!

Explore today at [thomasvillehistory.org](http://thomasvillehistory.org)

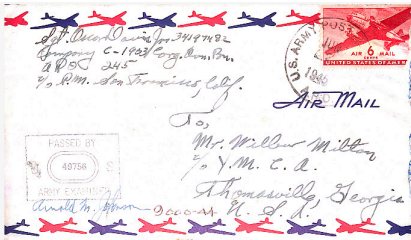
Amelia Gallo

Head of Community Engagement  
[amelia@thomascountyhistory.org](mailto:amelia@thomascountyhistory.org)

Videography & Website Design by Summerhill Creative;  
Photography by Whigham Images, Claire Timm, and the  
Thomasville History Center



## Letters From the Front



Letter from Sgt. 'Fat' O. Davis Jr. in the Pacific to Red Milton on June 7, 1945. 2001.038.098

I'm Rhonda Grim, and I've been volunteering at the Thomasville History Center since 2021. The bulk of that time I have been cataloging the files in the Answering the Call Collection (Donated by Dr. Douglas Haydel, 2001.38). This collection consists of correspondences between W.R. "Red" Milton and dozens of young Thomasville men who were stationed all over the world during World War II.

Some folders have contained dozens of letters that told a story of that person's time in the conflict. While reading those, I would find myself wanting to continue to read one after the other to see what happened to the young soldier or sailor. Others may have only had one or two letters that left me wondering why no others were written or why they may not have been kept. My biggest take away has been that many of these young men were simply trying to maintain a connection to home. They weren't necessarily interested in giving details of battles or recalling the trials they were facing being so far away from home. Most of them used these letters to talk about the "normal" things they weren't getting to experience - sports, friends, and their hometown.

I have also gained some insight into the enormity of the U.S. military during the war as I've read about soldier training stateside and the building of military installations to support these troops for the duration of the conflict.

Rhonda Grim  
Volunteer

# Striking the Balance

Picture it, the History Center in April... Meme's and my eyes are locked on the dashboard for Brushfire realizing that for the first time in our memories, Camp Dawson was completely sold out at 32 campers, and more were filling the waiting list by the day. It's a good problem to have. Great really. But...wow. Wrapping our heads around how to structure camp for 40 elementary school students, half of whom were going into Kindergarten and First Grade, was daunting to say the least. At the center of our concern/fear/imposter syndrome, was how to keep true to our education philosophy while offering enough guide rails that the sheer number of small humans in one place at one time wouldn't override "the plan." In keeping with our philosophy, the reality of 40 campers soon reminded us why we developed this philosophy in the first place.



Recognizing that younger campers and older campers had very different needs, we did our best to develop a parallel schedule that offered simplified content and experiences for the "littles" while engaging and challenging the minds and bodies of the "bigs." Without getting too deep into the psychology of it all, we wanted to protect the experience of each age group and not let the needs of one overshadow or define that of the other.

We're immensely grateful to our teen volunteers: Bella, Willa, Emmy, Alanis, Ava, and Madeline for their flexibility in adapting to the planless-plan and our adult helpers, Claire Timm and Stella Contente for helping us to course correct when needed and take a step back to look at the bigger picture of the experience we sought to create.



In the end, we're more confident that we can handle this quantity of campers again the future without sacrificing quality. It just might take us the full year until the next one to be ready for it! Over the course of the week, campers played stickball with the Tallahassee Museum, made watercolor and mixed media art with Cindy Inman, learned finger weaving, shelled peas, explored Gentian Creek Preserve, and visited Downtown Thomasville and Paradise Park before making an "exhibit" of their favorite camp experience.

Just two weeks after Camp Dawson, we were at it again with Archi-Camp, a new name for a repeat favorite. I'll turn it over to Meme to fill you in on that camp as it is her brainchild!

Amelia Gallo  
Head of Community Engagement  
[amelia@thomascountyhistory.org](mailto:amelia@thomascountyhistory.org)



# Piecing It Together

Thanks Amelia! Archi-Camp underwent an expansion to five days this year, giving us more time for trips and talks with experts in the field. We took the campers on tours of local neighborhoods from the Dawson Street Historic District with Janet Cable and Nancy Tinker of Landmarks to the Dewey City Historic District with Sarah Byrne of the Jack Hadley Black History Museum.

Urban planner Kenny Thompson and Landscape Architect Scott Chastain explained the thought and process that went into the redevelopment of the West Jackson Street or “Bottom” District. Jack Hadley and the staff of the museum led us through the history and future plans of the Imperial Hotel and Shotgun House while Eric Menninger of EAM Preservation and George Banks of Good Shepherd Episcopal showed us how the church and neighborhood evolved over time. Architect Bill Edwards gave the campers words of advice on their house plans.



At the end of the week, the campers took what they absorbed from our talks to create their own buildings and neighborhood which includes two beach houses, two businesses, and two town homes (though one home was clearly in the process of demolition by neglect). Theirs is a neighborhood that has evolved from a quaint small town to a developing beach town. View the display throughout the summer

at the Lapham-Patterson House.

Meme Greitzer

Assistant Curator of Collections & Programs

[meme@thomascountyhistory.org](mailto:meme@thomascountyhistory.org)

## Untold Stories

In the development of each exhibit, there are stories that, however compelling, fall to the cutting room floor or get condensed. Join our curatorial team of Ephraim and Meme for new behind the scenes and beyond the exhibits tours of the History Center. Fans of our excursions are sure to enjoy this new experience!

Tours will last around an hour and include discussion of the process of exhibit design, research, and production. We'll also include a look into the collections with featured artifacts that complement the tour's storytelling.



Advanced registration is required. To register, visit the Experiences page at [thomasvillehistory.org](http://thomasvillehistory.org).

# Under the Sea

Have you ever wanted to own beach front property? Well, if you own land in Thomas County or the surrounding area, congratulations! You are the proud owner of beach front property! Or at least you would be if you had that property some 250 million years ago...

That was roughly the last time our area was underwater. Right around the transition from the Pliocene Epoch, a time 5.3 to 2.6 million years ago in which the climate was warmer and more tropical, to the Pleistocene Epoch, a time 2.58 million to 11,000 years ago also known as the “Ice Age,” our area was mostly submerged up to the Hazelhurst Terrace, an area that ran roughly from Cairo up to Sylvania, Georgia along the modern coastline.



SOLENASTREA HYADES  
Fossilized coral  
250 million years BP  
Donated by Marty Willett

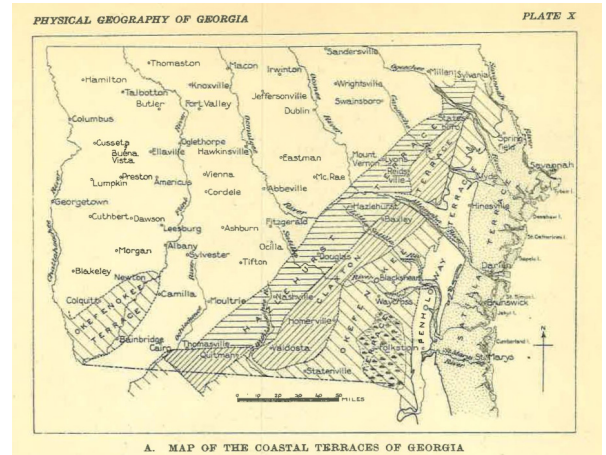


Slowly, the water began to recede as global temperatures dropped and water cooled into glaciers far north of our region. As this process went on, the receding water revealed islands, one of them located on what is now 319 along the state border. There’s a fun fact you can throw out the next time you pass the border on the way to Tallahassee!

After a few more thousand or so years, the coastline receded to an area called the Okefenokee Terrace, revealing the land that would one day be known as Thomas County. It also revealed many of the rivers, lakes, and land formations of this area we’re familiar with today: the Ochlocknee River, Lake Iamonia, Lake Lafayette, the basin of the Okefenokee Swamp, and the Cody Scarp, a terrace that is often used to mark the Southern boundary of the Red Hills Region.

Here at the History Center, we have a memento from Thomas County’s underwater days. It measures to be roughly the length of a loaf of bread but tips the scales at a whopping eighteen pounds. This heaping hunk was found in Metcalfe, and if it isn’t impressive enough in its own right, it won first place in the fossil category at the 1991 Georgia State Fair. This sample of fossilized coral is called SOLENASTREA HYADES or “Knobby Star Coral” for us laypeople. It dates to around the early Pleistocene Epoch, the last time this area was submerged under water.

Contact me if you would like to learn more or view this specimen!



“X-A. Map of the Coastal Terraces of Georgia,”  
LaForge, Laurence, Wythe Cooke, Arthur Keith,  
and Marius R. Campbell, PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF  
GEORGIA, 1925. Stein Printing Company, Atlanta.

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See photo captions on page 4



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