

DeKalb History Center

Historic DeKalb Courthouse
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Decatur GA 30030

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www.dekalbhistory.org



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HISTORY
CENTER

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Times of DeKalb

A Quarterly Journal

Spring
2023

Of the Land: A Glimpse at Georgia's Early Indigenous Peoples

By Rebecca Selem, Exhibits & Communications Coordinator

Human habitation in the area we now call Georgia is thought to have begun around 15,000 BCE. These groups, called the **Paleo Indians**, were nomadic bands of hunters who predominantly hunted Ice Age megafauna. As the climate in the southeastern part of North America began to warm, humans were able to thrive in the area of the Macon plateau, hunting deer and fish and gathering berries, nuts, and roots for sustenance. This group is known as the **Archaic Indians**, frequenting the area until about 1000 BCE. Due to their differing lifestyles, the artifacts and stone points they used varied from their predecessors.

The **Woodland Indian** period, beginning after 1000 BCE, brought in the trend of creating permanent settlements, no longer roaming the land

nomadically in search of food. This group figured out how to successfully sustain horticulture, securing more reliable food sources and allowing them to live in one location. They planted starchy seed plants, like grasses and sunflowers. Due to their immobility, they developed more permanent tools, buildings, and art, and began a trading system with other groups – some as far west as the Rocky Mountains and as far north as the Great Lakes.

The **Mississippian** Culture began around

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Guests mingling at the Annual Spring Fling.
Photo credit: Once Like A Spark Photography

Spring Fling

The Annual Meeting and Silent Auction fundraiser was held on Friday, March 24, 2023.

Our **Annual Spring Fling, A Historic Prom Night to Remember** featured a live auction, online silent auction, and some exciting giveaways and games. Attendees dressed up in their finest, multi-decade Prom attire. During the Annual Meeting, new directors and officers were elected:

Directors: Monique C. Brown, Stephanie Cherry-Farmer, Scott Candler, IV, Michael Lehman, D.E. Smith, David Stanhope, Lynn

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The mounds at Etowah Indian Mounds State Historic Site.

Of the Land continued

Continued from page 1

900 (BCE), and by 1200, different groups within the culture moved from the areas of central Georgia and thrived in different locations such as Etowah in north Georgia, Moundville in Alabama, and Spiro in Oklahoma. Those who lived on the Macon plateau moved a few miles south from the Ocmulgee Mound Complex and established the Lamar site around 1350. The **Lamar** Culture is an example of late Mississippian culture and is named after an early landowner in the area. This particular group of people are thought to be the direct ancestors of the Muscogee (Creek). The group that migrated up to Etowah are thought to be the ancestors of the Cherokee.

The Lamar people thrived until 1540, when Hernando de Soto led an expedition into the southeast bringing unfamiliar diseases like smallpox and using violence and terror in his quest for riches. Exposure to the Spaniards decimated the population and survivors of this catastrophe banded together to form the Ocheese Creeks and the Muscogee Creeks, names historically known to English settlers. It is estimated that as much as 90% of the country's Indigenous population died as a result of Europeans coming to America.

Pre-European Arrival

Muscogee (Creek)

The groups that made up the Creek Confederacy were the Muscogees, Yuchis, Alabama, Hitchiti, Shawnee, and others. As a whole, the group was identified most frequently as the Muscogee because they made up a vast majority of the confederation. Interestingly, those who made up the Muscogee (Creek) Nation spoke a number of different languages – such as Algonquian, Muskogean, or Siouan.

The Muscogee (Creek) territory once stretched from the Georgia coast into what is now central Alabama. Members of the Nation were nicknamed “Creek” by British settlers in the 1700s because they were always situated near a creek or river. As the nickname suggests, the Muscogee (Creek) towns were rooted in river valleys, or near flowing water of some kind.

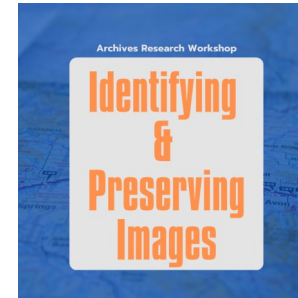
Towns were typically organized around a main public area with villages surrounding it. Sacred earthworks or mounds were the social centers of town with community gardens and fields of crops stretching past the town. The central plazas would often contain four partially enclosed wooden lean-tos or open cabins in each cardinal direction – used for the principal chief, a second subordinate chief, and a council of elders to meet. The head families would reside close to the center of town. Villages had flat, square grounds surrounded by arbors for ceremonial dancing purposes.



Map of the province of Georgia showing trails and paths for trading and locations of indigenous groups. This image is a closeup of the Creek Nation's territory. Published in 1779. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

The government of the Nation consisted of a General Council composed of head men from each town (chiefs and subordinate chiefs) – they decided matters of war and peace for the entire Nation. However, many towns did not follow the direction of the General Council and kept to themselves. By the mid-1700s, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation contained about 60 towns. Women tended to the crops (corn, beans, squash, etc.), while men hunted, fished, and traded with neighboring tribes. They gathered berries, nuts, wild plants, and roots from surrounding forests for nutritional and medicinal use. ✦

Read the full article by visiting <https://dekalbhistory.org/dekalb-history-center-blog/> or by scanning the QR code:



June 6

Archives Research 101 – Identifying and Preserving Family Images

6:00—7:30 pm

In this workshop, become a detective to identify, investigate, and GeoTag (identifying a location) your old photographs. Attendees will also learn how to preserve, store, and organize family photos and documents. Ticket required. Virtual option coming soon.

For more information on these events and how to attend, please visit **dekalbhistory.org** or scan here:



In Memoriam

Mary Ann Hightower

Join * Renew * Give

We hope you enjoyed the spring 2023 issue of Times of DeKalb. Please consider making a financial contribution through joining, rejoining, or a one time donation. Your generous contribution to the DeKalb History Center will provide you with a year-long membership that includes our quarterly journal to keep you informed on all our activities. We hope that you will join our team by either renewing your membership or joining as a first-time supporter.



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____ Preservationist—\$500

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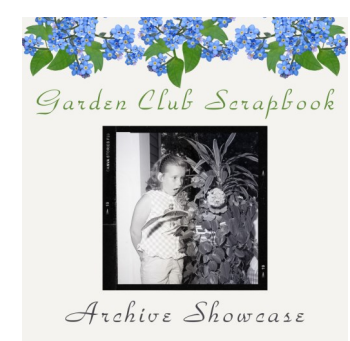
____ Student/Teacher/Senior—\$25

One time donation

Please mail this form with your contribution to: DeKalb History Center, 101 East Court Square, Decatur GA 30030

or call 404-373-1088 ext. 1003. Visit our website www.dekalbhistory.org to pay online.

Upcoming Events



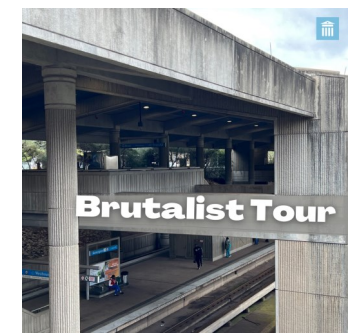
May 2
Archives Showcase: DeKalb County Garden Clubs

10 AM—4 PM
This “Archives Showcase” will feature scrapbooks that range from the 1930s to the 1990s, covering various parts of DeKalb County. The scrapbooks will be on display in the Archives Reading Room, so feel free to drop in anytime from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and take a look.
Archives Reading Room (1st floor of the Historic DeKalb Courthouse)



May 9
DeKalb Traveler: Olmstead Linear Park Alliance Walking Tour

1:00 –2:30 pm
This is a DHC Members exclusive tour. Walk through Olmstead’s Linear Park learning about plants, viewing wildlife, and enjoying the spring wildflowers. Distance about 1 mile. Ticket required.



May 10
Brutalist Architecture Pop Up Tour

6:30—8:00 pm
Love it or Hate it? Come on this tour to learn more about it and possibly fall in love with it! During this tour, we will learn what Brutalism is, what are the characteristics found in DeKalb County, and some examples in Decatur. Distance is less than a mile. Ticket required.
Tour begins at the DeKalb History Center.



Decatur Architecture Walking Tour
May 16 6:30—7:45 pm
May 23 6:30—7:45 pm (with Atlanta Preservation Center)
June 13 7:00—8:15 pm
July 11 7:00—8:15 pm (with Atlanta Preservation Center)

In this year’s brand new walking tour, come learn about the Architects and Architecture of Downtown Decatur. This tour will focus on commercial buildings spanning 1920 to 1970. Ticket required.
Virtual option coming soon.

Volunteer Appreciation

April is National Volunteer (Appreciation) Month. We love our volunteers here at the DHC! Whether they are helping during a special event, greeting visitors in the lobby, serving on the board, handling papers in the archives, giving a tour, or any other task we ask them to do, our volunteers make things work. When the DeKalb History Center formed in 1947, it was a purely volunteer endeavor.

Volunteers began collecting historic materials and meeting to discuss ways to share DeKalb County history. Volunteers kept the building from being demolished when the new courthouse was built in the late 1960s. Try to imagine Decatur *without* the Historic DeKalb Courthouse! When considering the timeline of our nonprofit organization, having paid staff is relatively new. Volunteers have kept the DHC going and thriving. Their work, their contributions, and their enthusiasm are greatly appreciated.



The DeKalb Historical Society Board, circa 1950s.

If you’re interested in volunteering, please follow the link and fill out the volunteer application. Return your completed application to Jennifer Blomqvist, blomqvist@dekalbhistory.org



Longtime volunteers at the Volunteer Luncheon, April 2023.



Volunteers at the Volunteer Luncheon, April 2023.

Executive Committee

President: Michael Lehman
President Elect: Jacqui Steele
Past President: Lyle Davis
Treasurer: Jack Regan
Secretary: Deborah Van Broekhoven
At Large: Scott Candler, IV
Caroline Freeman

Board of Directors

Valerie Biggerstaff
Monique C. Brown
Stephanie Cherry-Farmer
Tricia Wynegar Drake
Scott Drake
John Hewitt
D.E. Smith
David Stanhope
Lynn Watson-Powers
Demetrice Williams
Michael ZakeI
Ex-Officio: Tiffany Parks

Trustees

Mary K. Jarboe
Cathy Mullins
Claudia Stucke
Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr.
Betty Willis

Staff

Executive Director: Melissa Carlson
Archivist & Volunteer Coordinator: Jennifer Blomqvist
Rental & Preservation Coordinator: Mallory Donaldson
Programs & Membership Coordinator: Marissa Howard
Exhibits & Communications Coordinator: Rebecca Selem
Archives Assistant: Kathryn Turnbull
Building Manager: Sean Skeete

Spring Fling continued

Watson-Powers, Demetrice M. Williams, and ex-officio Tiffany Parks.

President: Michael Lehman, President-Elect: Jacqui Steele, Past President: Lyle Davis, Treasurer: Jack Regan, Secretary: Deborah Van Broekhoven

Thank you to the outgoing board members Angela Turk, Brian Mock, Doris Ramsey, and Trustee Lyn Menne, for your service to the organization.

Generous donations from over 100 local businesses, individuals, and restaurants paved the way to help us raise over \$11,000 for the DeKalb History Center. Thank you so much for your continued support!

Moreover, we could not have done it without all the delicious food from our preferred caterers. Guests enjoyed food from Avalon Catering, District Events and Catering, Fox Brothers Bar-B-Q, Gotta Have it Catering, LowCountry Catering, Party Execs, Phenomenal Food by Chef Holly, and Zest Atlanta.

A huge thank you also to Atlanta Pipe and Drape, Ballroom Blitz, Bloom Floral and Design, The Event Guys, Nice Entertainment, Niq Williams Events, Once Like A Spark Photography, Posh Blooming Creations, and Universal Joint/Moe’s & Joe’s for their decor and services during the event.

Thank you to our exceptional volunteers who kept everything running smoothly: Valerie Biggerstaff, Martin Blomqvist, Sioux Henley Campbell, Kate Cooley, Greg Donaldson, Mark Howard, M. Jackson, Mary K. Jarboe, Ivy Leader, Cathy Mullins, Tiffany Parks, Timothy Patton, and Sarah Philips. ✦



Photo credits: Once Like a Spark Photography

View the list of this year’s donors by scanning the QR code.



Black History Month Celebration Recap

This year’s Black History Month Celebration was about Black Church Music and the role it has played in Georgia’s social and political arenas.

Velma Maia Thomas and **Dr. Marva Carter** gave inspiring and informative presentations, and **Kenneth J. Lowe** preformed soul-stirring gospels throughout the program.

CEO Michael L. Thurmond provided the Welcome at the start of the program, and **Phenomenal Food by Chef Holly** catered the lunch served after the presentations.

A special thank you to **Tiffany Parks** for planning and creating such a spectacular event. ✦



CEO Michael L. Thurmond giving the Welcome Remarks.



CEO Michael L. Thurmond

Catherine Mullins

Deborah & Harold Van Broekhoven

American Baptist Historical Society | Compassionate Atlanta
Tricia Wynegar Drake & Walt Drake | Emory Decatur Hospital
Mike Lehman | The Marlay House
McCurdy & Candler, LLC | Pete & Charlotte Pfeiffer

Judge Tangela Barrie | Melissa Carlson & Timothy Patton
Caroline Freeman | Kelly Jordan | Sheriff Melody Maddox
NAACP, DeKalb County Branch | Ed Segraves
Claudia & Carl Stucke | Angela Turk | Holly Williams