



# STONE MOUNTAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Greetings!

Fall has arrived along with a host of important things to talk about. In the last newsletter we profiled the history of the City Cemetery, and we thank readers for the positive responses. We are delighted to report that the City has signed a contract for maintenance, and we look forward to seeing its improvement.

We hosted our annual BBQ which was well attended earning the Society \$1,618.78. If our application is successful, that money will be used as matching funds for a Georgia Trust Callahan Incentive Grant to repair our ADA access. The walkway and ramp were destroyed last year when the large oak out front came down. Thanks to all the sponsors and volunteers that made it a success. Wayne and Beth Snead and the Hambys, both Anne and Rusty bring the essential foods to the table while Susan Devine, Chakira Johnson, Duane

## IN THIS ISSUE: Upcoming Autumn Events and Restoration Plans



**AUTUMN ARRIVES SEPTEMBER 22!**

### THE BOARD MEMBERS

Mary Beth Reed  
President  
and Newsletter Editor

Theresa Hamby, Secretary

Pauline T. Myers, Treasurer  
Chakira Johnson, Membership Coordinator  
Susan Devine, Groundskeeper  
Beth Snead, Events Coordinator

Wayne Snead, at large  
Rusty Hamby, at large  
Kathryn Wright, Board Member Emeritus!  
Melanie Florence, House Manager



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September 22, 2022

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Studdard, Pauline Myers, Melanie Florence, and Theresa Hamby help fill out the bill of fare and wait tables. Sounds like Anne Hamby was the major domo in the kitchen, making everything click. New South provided the beer, wine, and other refreshments. It was truly a festive occasion and we enjoyed meeting new faces and seeing old ones. **Thanks for your support.**



**The Stone Mountain Memorial Association  
is Rededicating the  
Washington W. King/College Avenue Bridge  
at Stone Mountain Park,  
at 2pm on September 16, 2022.**

The covered bridge has just been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The public is invited to celebrate this important event celebrating the accomplishment of a master African American bridge builder (see press announcement below for details).





**Stone Mountain Memorial Association Rededication of Washington W. King/College Avenue Bridge @ Stone Mountain Park, September 16, 2022**

**Who:** The board of the Stone Mountain Memorial Association, and DeKalb County CEO Michael Thurmond, will rename and rededicate the Stone Mountain covered bridge, behind the south face of Stone Mountain Park, connecting Indian Island to the park, as the **Washington W. King/College Avenue Bridge**, in recognition of both the bridge builder and the bridge itself being placed on the **National Register of Historic Places** in 2022.

**What:** Brief rededication ceremony on Indian Island within Stone Mountain Park, at the bottom of Covered Bridge Lane in Stone Mountain Park. The bridge and the adjoining nature trail which encircles Indian Island (.8 miles) will also be renamed the **King Trail**.

**When:** 2 p.m. on Friday, September 16, 2022

**Where:** Indian Island Landing

**Why:** Following the appointment of the Reverend Abraham Mosley as the first African-American to chair the SMMA board, the board has adopted a number of additions and initiatives within Stone Mountain Park to broaden its appeal. Working with the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Community Affairs, the Stone Mountain Covered Bridge was renamed and with the appropriate research and citations submitted, renamed the **Washington W. King/College Avenue Bridge**, for addition to the National Register of Historic Places. The renamed bridge and trail will also be the first additions at Stone Mountain Park recognizing a prominent African-American Georgian.

**Background:** After two floods of the Oconee River in Athens damaged the College Avenue bridge, it was replaced and circa 1965, and then sold to the Stone Mountain Memorial Association for \$1.00. The bridge was cut into sections, relocated to the park, and then installed, connecting the 18-acre, man-made Indian Island, with the more natural southern side of the park.

Later research determined that the bridge was among many engineered, designed and constructed in 1891, by then prominent African-American bridge builder, **Washington W. King**, part of the second generation of a family of engineers and bridge builders. Attending the rededication will be two great-grand nieces of Washington W. King, **Rebecca King Rosenberg** and her husband Seth, of Pittsburgh, PA and sister **Kathleen King Hawrylak** and her husband Mark of Sante Fe, New Mexico.



## Save the Date

Please pencil in Friday December 2  
for the **Society Christmas Party** on your calendar.

## Fall Talk Series in Collaboration with Sue Kellogg Library Join Us!

All presentations are free and open to the public. They will be held  
at the Library located at 952 Leon St., Stone Mountain, behind the  
depot. Refreshments served.

Any questions please contact  
**Sara Sellers, Branch Manager, 770-413-2020**  
or **Mary Beth Reed, SMHS, 678-983-1071.**







### **Shermantown History** **September 26, 7-8pm**

Ms. Edna Lovett, Ellenwood resident and parishioner of Bethsaida Baptist Church, will share with us her research on Bethsaida Baptist Church and Shermantown, Stone Mountain's historic African American community. Ms. Lovett is a local historian who has authored and compiled two histories of the community.



### **Coffins and Caskets: A Peek at Stylistic and Symbolic Change in the American Funeral** **October 24, 7-8pm**

Coffins and caskets tell a story. As American attitudes towards death evolved over time, so have coffin and caskets. Dr. Hugh B. Matternes, Head of the Cemetery Studies Group, New South Associates, will show changes in style and decoration using archaeological and historic photographic examples to illustrate how American burial cases were made, decorated, and used in the past to address the needs of the mourning community.



### **Tracking Down Metro Atlanta Railroad History with the Atlanta History Center** **November 7, 7-8pm**

Railroads and Atlanta's history are the subject of this presentation. Jackson McQuigg, Vice President of Properties, Atlanta History Center and a SMHS member, will focus on collections received from Norfolk Southern as well as others in the Atlanta History Center collection. Learn about the Georgia Railroad that served the village of Stone Mountain!



### **Guess What Stone Mountain Is Having for Dinner in 1925?**

Penny Halabi of Stone Mountain has donated a ledger from her family which included two generations of butchers, her grandfather, Ben Biffle, and her great grandfather, Thomas Andrew Furgerson. The ledger has Thomas Furgerson's name in the interior and the entries date from 1925-1926. The Furgerson-Biffle Family

lived on Main Street from 1930 onward. The census suggests that Thomas moved in with his daughter Mattie's family after the death of his wife, Ada. Thomas passed away in 1931 at the age of 61. His occupation was identified as an operator of a meat market likely operating from their Main Street address. Ben Biffle self-identified as a general farmer rather than a butcher but the ledger has a variety of types of penmanship suggesting that it was used by both men and perhaps others in the family business.



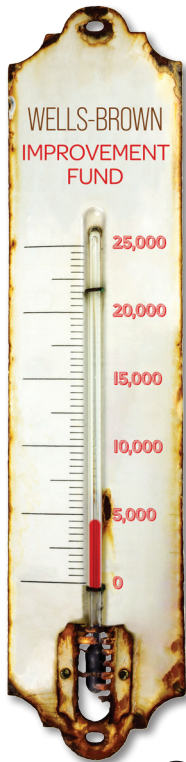
The ledger is missing pages and appears to be one of a series that has survived to tell us the story of what some village residents had on their table in 1925. Shade Williams, a quarryman, his wife Finnie and their six children, Fourth Street residents of Shermantown, were good customers, buying wieners, stew meat, steak, chops, ham, sausage, and liver. On Christmas eve, they purchased sausages and a pork roast for the holiday. Clifford Thompson, his wife and three children, lived on Third Street where Thompson worked as a blacksmith. They were also steady customers of the Furgerson-Biffle butcher shop. The Thompson Family ate the same cuts as the Williams Family but bought meat more regularly and had more beef roasts (Christmas dinner), pork shoulders, and hams. Other customers bought melons or watermelons and oysters suggesting there was farm produce and novelty items available.

The ledger is interesting in that the customer base seems to have been the south side of the city which makes sense given where the family lived. The address was 552 North Stone Mountain Lithonia Road. Unfortunately, the house was demolished in 1996. Using the 1920 census as a guide, it appears residents on lower Main Street and many Shermantown residents were customers. This ledger is a great information source on an area of town that has been little studied, so we are pleased to have this resource in our collection. **Thank you, Penny!**



148	1915	Shade Williams	
Aug	1	Bal Page 85	
"	1	Steak 25	
"	2	Steak 75	
"	4	Steak 45	
"	5	Meat 75	
"	6	Ummos 75	
"	8	By Cash	400
"	9	Bal	
"	10	Steak 40	
"	11	Ummos 10	
"	12	Steak 40	
"	14	Ummos 75	
"	17	Ummos 75	
"	18	M Ham 40	
"	21	Ummos 75	
"	22	By Cash	295
"	22	Sausage 30	
"	27	Steak 75	
"	27	Steak 60	
"	28	Meat Ham 15	
"	30	Steak 60	
"	31	M Ham 30	
"	31	Steak 45	
Sept	5	Steak	
"	5	By Cash	345
"	5	Steak Meat 50	
"	5	Ummos 75	
"	8	Ummos 75	
"	16	Steak Meat 50	
"	19	By Cash	220
"	19	Steak Beef 75	
"	19	Ummos 15	





## Celebrating 150 Years (plus one)!

The Wells Brown House turned 150 during the pandemic and it is time to celebrate. Like most 150-year-olds, the house needs some work to help it reach 200. In short, a new roof (20K), porch repair (5K+), shutter replacement and repair (?K), ADA access restoration (3K), plumbing and electrical upgrades are needed to ensure the house makes it into the next century. Historic houses also come with mature historic trees, and we have just learned that our beautiful water oak in the back yard is deceased and needs to be taken down (8K).

Over the past years we have worked with donations to the 1871 Club to help us maintain the Wells Brown House in addition to fundraising. In 2021, we collected \$1,807 of which \$1,500 was spent to remove the downed oak out front. This year we have garnered \$1,151 and that has funded plumbing and electrical work as well as fence repair for our historic fence. Thanks to all of you who have donated to make those repairs possible via the **1871 Club**. The scale of what is needed now, however, requires a large-scale fundraising campaign and we are kicking it off this



month. We are looking for grants and corporate sponsorships to help us meet our initial goal of 32K to replace the roof, restore our ADA access destroyed by the treefall last year, and take down the water oak. We are pleased to announce we have received a 5K donation to get us started! We will use the monies raised from the BBQ as matching funds for a grant from the Georgia Trust to get our ADA access restored. Please consider how you can help in our campaign to achieve these goals and help preserve one of our city's most significant historic buildings.