



## March 2024 Newsletter



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> House & Garden Party**  
**The Wilen's**  
**Sunday, May 19, 2024**  
**Rain Date: Sunday, June 16, 2024**  
**4 to 7 p.m.**

Come join Buckhead Heritage for the third House & Garden Party. Located off Woodward Way, the property is an oasis all to itself. A beautiful house, pool area, and English garden make this space stunning. Wander the paths that surround the breathtaking property. The original part of the house was built in 1926 and was the home and studio of well-known Georgia artist Comer Jennings who created stunning

portraits of Jimmy Carter, Robert Woodruff, and numerous Buckhead families and their children.



**Peachtree Heights East  
Movers, Shakers, and Heartbreakers Walking Tour  
Sunday, March 17, 2024, 2 p.m.**

**Buckhead Heritage presents this tour in  
partnership with Atlanta Preservation Center as part of  
2024 Phoenix Flies**

Caleb Brown and Richard Waterhouse offer a fascinating tour of this hidden neighborhood near Peachtree Road and Lindbergh. With approximately 330 homes, Peachtree Heights East includes early 20th century American two-story four-square, Craftsman Bungalow, Cape Cod, Tudor Revival, and Ranch to 21st century home styles. We will see examples of several of these on the tour. The mile-and-a-half route is hilly and will last about an hour-and-a-half. We will meet at the Duckpond's historical marker and stay on the road during the tour.

To register, please contact Executive Director Richard Waterhouse at [waterhouse@buckheadheritage.com](mailto:waterhouse@buckheadheritage.com) or (404) 467-9447.



## **Speaker Series: Carolyn and Bill Curry**

**Thursday, March 21, 2024, 7 p.m., Free**

**Cathedral of Saint Philip Gould Room**

Dr. Carolyn Curry Ph.D. is an author, historian, and teacher. In 2014 she published *Suffer and Grow Strong: The Life of Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas 1834-1907* which won Georgia Author of the Year Award and was selected as One of the Books All Georgians Should Read by the Center for the Book. In 2019 she published her first novel, *Sudden Death*, which is a murder mystery set in the world of football. Whether writing about the past or present, her primary interest is the well-being of women. She will discuss *Sudden Death* during the program.

In 2002, Carolyn also founded a non-profit foundation, Women Alone Together®, which she has directed for twenty years. Through seminars, book programs, and special events, the goal is to help women who are alone because of death of spouse, divorce from spouse, alone by choice, or alone because of separation, disease or estrangement, however, all women are invited.

Bill Curry has spent his entire adult life as a leader and communicator. His NFL career included two Super Bowl titles and a stint as the President of the NFL Players Association. Bill served as head football coach for Georgia Tech ('80-'86), the University of Alabama ('87-'89), and the University of Kentucky ('90-'96). In 1989, Bill was recognized as the nation's top coach with the Bobby Dodd National Coach of the Year Award.

In June 2008, Bill was selected to be the inaugural head coach of Georgia State University's new football program. Bill's book – *Ten Men You Meet in the Huddle* – was released in August 2008 by ESPN books and was praised by author Pat Conroy as “the best book about the NFL” that he ever read. An updated tenth anniversary edition was

just released in December 2018. Bill will talk about his book during the program.

**Register**

## **Speaker Series: Thomas D. Hills**

**Thursday, April 18, 2024, 7 p.m., Free**

**Cathedral of Saint Philip Gould Room**

Our April Speaker will be Thomas D. Hills, a participant in State of Georgia governance and close observer of politics.

He witnessed the transition in early 2000's from Democratic control of Governor's office and both houses of the state legislature for 130 years until Sonny Perdue was elected Governor in 2002 and the political layout of Georgia changed "literally " overnight. He set out to inculcate "bureaucracy with a business brain" into state government. Who were the "players" in that transition, what was "changed" and what was sustained? Many of the decisions made in the Perdue administration laid the foundation for some of the political changes and differences in the priorities of state government over the next several years and up to the current days.

Mr. Hills is a Native Atlantan. He was born at Piedmont Hospital and has been a resident of Buckhead for all of his adult life. He was Former Atlanta City President of Wachovia Bank – worked with that bank and predecessor (First Atlanta) 36 years. He was CFO State of Georgia 2003-2010 and State of Georgia Treasurer 2010 -2011. He is active on many community boards. He has a BA and MA in History and J.D. from Emory Law School. He is author of *Red State Rising – Triumph of the Republican Party in Georgia* published in 2009.

**Register**



## **Speaker Series: *Bobby Jones Then & Now:* *The Evolution of Atlanta Memorial Park***

**Thursday, May 16, 7 p.m., Free**

**Cathedral of Saint Philip Child Hall**

Marty Elgison, the President and Founder of the Bobby Jones Golf Course Foundation, Catherine Spillman, the Executive Director of the Atlanta Memorial Park Conservancy, and Pete Pellegrini, the Senior Project Manager with the PATH Foundation, will discuss how the legacy of one of the most influential figures in golf, a historic flood and the Beltline converged to transform Buckhead's oldest park.

For generations of residents, Atlanta Memorial Park was known for its ramshackle public golf course and the Bitsy Grant Tennis Center. While Chastain Park and Piedmont Park became Crown Jewels in the city's park system, it was overlooked and neglected.

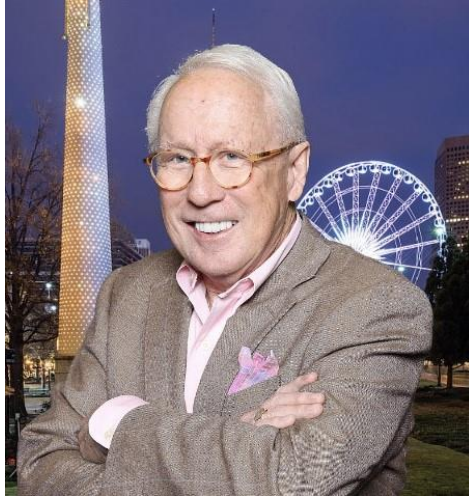
The once-in-a-generation flood in 2009 was one of the factors that led to the creation of the Atlanta Memorial Park Conservancy, which drafted the first Master Plan in the park's history. The PATH Foundation built the Northwest BeltLine Connector trail around the golf course, featuring bridges, a canopied boardwalk, and a spur trail to Tanyard Park and Ardmore Park. It has become one of the region's most popular pedestrian and biking paths. The Bobby Jones Golf Course Foundation launched the ambitious plan to build a revolutionary reversible golf course designed by Bob Cupp. Home to the Georgia Golf Hall of Fame and Boone's Restaurant, the renovated golf course, and state-of-the-art practice facilities are in high demand seven days a week.

The result is a resurgence of the 90-plus-year-old, 200-acre park. Hear the story of its past, its present, and its future.

**[Register](#)**

## Buckhead Heritage Board Approves New Board Members

Last month, the Board of Directors approved the following new board members: Howard Benson, James M. Ottley, and Mary Anne Walser, and Emeritus Board Member E. Fay Pearce, Jr. In this issue, we will spotlight our new board members and our Emeritus Board Member.



Howard Benson was one of the first investors/property owners instrumental in saving Buckhead's historic Cotton Exchange Building in 1984 when he located his national fundraising practice to the building. He has had a longstanding interest in Buckhead's viability since serving as a senior staff executive of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce from 1972 thru 1977 when he established his firm. He retired as CEO of National Community Development Services, Inc. in 2019 and now owns Foxglove Antiques & Galleries on Miami Circle founded in 2000 by his wife, Sheila, who passed away in 2023. He previously served as a Board member and Secretary of Buckhead Heritage from 2018 to 2020 and also as a member of the Program & Events Committee.



James M. Ottley is a mediator and real estate lending attorney with the firm of Stout Kaiser, LLC in Atlanta. James is a fourth generation Atlantan and a former board member and president of Buckhead Heritage and the Atlanta Kiwanis Club. James is a graduate of The Westminster Schools in Atlanta, Duke University and the University of Georgia School of Law. Mr. Ottley published two books on Atlanta history, entitled *Atlanta History for Cocktail Parties*, and *Atlanta History for Cocktail Parties II – Another Round*. James is an ardent history buff and on weekends and holidays he enjoys travelling to historical sites in Georgia (and beyond) and posting pictures and historical notes on his travels and findings.



A Realtor and licensed attorney, Mary Anne Walser has been a top producing Realtor in Atlanta for almost 20 years. Before dedicating her life to real estate, Mary Anne was a television news anchor for a decade and then an accomplished attorney. She still holds an active license to practice law in Georgia; although, she now sells real estate full time. She is married to James Haverty Smith, an architect and fifth-generation Atlanta native. She is dedicated to many charitable, artistic and civic causes and is a member of numerous professional organizations, including the Georgia Association for Women Lawyers, the Atlanta Bar Association and Commercial Real Estate Women.



E. Fay Pearce, Jr. has been a longtime supporter of Buckhead Heritage serving as Vice President and Programs and Events Committee Chair for many years. Under his leadership, the attendance for the programs has doubled in 1 year. He also successfully coordinated 3 Raffles and many fundraising events including several holiday parties. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Historic Oakland Foundation and is an Emeritus member of the Board of Directors of the Bobby Dodd Institute. He has been a long-time supporter of the Boy Scouts of America and currently serves on the Advisory Board of the Atlanta Area Council, BSA.



## Mary Lu Mitchell

We were saddened to hear about the death of Mary Lu Mitchell. She was a huge supporter of Buckhead Heritage and the mother of Wright Mitchell, founder of the organization. A couple of sentences from her obituary that seem to sum up her personality are: "Mary Lu was a loyal friend to many, always available to help others when called upon for information, advice and problem solving on a variety of issues, especially related to health. When thanked, her response was always, 'We learn from each other.'" To view her obituary, please [click here](#).





## Executive Director's Report

Buckhead Heritage continues to have success with their programs. In February, we had over 114 folks listen to Nina and Jacob Elsas talk about Jacob Elsas and the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill. If you are familiar with Oakland Cemetery and Cabbagetown, you know it sits right outside and Jacob Elsas is buried in the cemetery.

As you can see, we have programs planned for the next three months. If you have any suggestions of speakers for the summer and fall, please let me know.

One of the great programs in our city during the first three weeks in March is the Atlanta Preservation Center's Phoenix Flies. We have been part of the program for many years and we are pleased to be part of it this year by offering the Peachtree Heights East Walking Tour on Sunday, March 17 at 2:00 p.m. You can celebrate Saint Patrick's Day with us.

Take care,

Richard Waterhouse

## To Join or Renew Buckhead Heritage Membership

Go [Here](#) or contact Richard Waterhouse at the office, (404) 467-9447, or email [rwaterhouse@buckheadheritage.com](mailto:rwaterhouse@buckheadheritage.com).

### 2024 Board & Staff

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Christy Morris  
Elon Butts Osby  
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Mary Anne Walser

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