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Georgia Historical Society Launches New Web Site

Savannah, GA – January 9, 2008. The Georgia Historical Society (GHS) is pleased to announce the launch of its comprehensively redesigned Web site and online public access catalog. A centerpiece component of GHS's Expanding Audiences for History technology initiative, the new Web site is content rich and boasts a powerful search engine, user-friendly navigation, and a wealth of historical resources never before available online. You are invited to explore and be engaged in Georgia's story through new online exhibits, a history education resource center for school teachers, an interactive historical marker tour, online articles and publications, calendar of events, advanced research tools, and much, much more! Visit GHS online today at www.georgiahistory.com!

Headquartered in Savannah, the Georgia Historical Society is the oldest cultural institution in the state and one of the oldest historical organizations in the nation. "For nearly 170 years the mission of the Georgia Historical Society has been to collect, preserve, and share Georgia history," said Todd Groce, GHS's President and CEO. "By offering online access to GHS's unique library and archives collection and wide-ranging educational resources, this Web site truly makes us a *global* resource by allowing us to share the state's rich history with people all over the world."

Designed and developed by SmackDab Studios, the new GHS site is powered by a robust content management system, enabling staff to manage large amounts of data for use by web visitors. Backed by a powerful, SQL-based database, the new site empowers visitors to browse or search events, exhibitions, and a variety of other types of content to find what they are looking for. Both staff and visitors can take advantage of the latest browser-based technologies (AJAX, Ruby on Rails, etc.) to make data entry and searching more efficient and relevant. The site features a database-driven calendar that provides quick access to all Society events as well hundreds of historical facts, arranged by day and with full library reference information. The calendar uses the latest technologies to make a tremendous amount of data available in a very simple interface. The historical marker index of the site gives visitors full access to statewide marker data, including full-text searching, marker photographs, and dynamic mapping of single markers as well as groups of markers. Markers can also be displayed based on a variety of advanced filtering techniques, including by geographic area, time period, dedication date, and subject matter.

One of the most critical features of the new site is that it allows for real time editing by GHS staff using an innovative WYSWYG back end editing tool. This new system is highly intuitive and requires very little user-training thereby enabling users without HTML or other web editing software experience to update and add content to the site as often as required. "We are really excited to be able to add, edit, and remove content to the site without staff having to become proficient in HTML. This new site allows us to do more than we have ever done before—and there is still much more to come," said GHS Executive Vice President and COO, Laura García-Culler. "This is truly a multi-phase venture; soon all of GHS's merchandise, services, multimedia, and publications will be available directly through the Web site. We will also add a component that provides our nearly 200 statewide Affiliate Chapter members to add content to a page of their own."

This project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in the Web site do not necessarily represent those of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.



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For more information please visit www.georgiahistory.com or call us at 912.651.2125.

The Georgia Historical Society, headquartered in Savannah, is the oldest cultural institution in the state and one of the oldest historical organizations in the nation. It is the first and only statewide historical society in Georgia. For nearly 170 years, GHS has collected, preserved, and shared Georgia history through a variety of educational outreach programs, publications, and research services. For more information visit: www.georgiahistory.com.

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