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HISTORIC AFRICAN-AMERICAN HOSPITAL RECEIVES NEW HISTORICAL MARKER

Americus, GA, January 7, 2009 -- The Georgia Historical Society (GHS) along with the City Federation of Colored Women Club will unveil a new historical marker to recognize Americus Colored Hospital. The dedication will be held at 133 J. R. Campbell Street, near the intersection with Jackson Street in Americus on **January 24, 2009, at 3:00 p.m.**

This is the second historical marker erected by the Georgia Historical Society in Sumter County. The marker recognizes not only an historic African-American Institution, but also the commitment of the people involved in the hospital's development and the management of the facility during its financial struggles. The hospital was unique among other hospitals in that it was opened to all licensed Physicians in the State of Georgia, both black and white, providing a wealth of opportunity for black professionals who were denied employment at other medical institutions. The marker text reads as follows:

Americus Colored Hospital

One of the earliest hospitals in southwest Georgia devoted to the care of African Americans, the Americus Colored Hospital opened in 1923. The majority of the funds needed to build the hospital were provided by Dr. W.S. Prather. Practice in the hospital was open to doctors of all races and so provided opportunities for black doctors, nurses, and pharmacists who were unable to practice in many hospitals throughout the South. The hospital suffered financial difficulties throughout its history, but remained in use by the African-American community until Sumter Regional Hospital was constructed under the Hill-Burton Act in 1953.

Erected by the Georgia Historical Society and the City Federation of Colored Women Club

Historical markers, which recognize people, places and events, tell the story of Georgia's past in a format that is accessible to residents and visitors alike and are an effective tool for economic development, encouraging local tourism and general state-wide interest. GHS has administered Georgia's historical marker program since 1998, erecting over 150 markers statewide.

The Georgia Historical Society, headquartered in Savannah, is a preeminent educational and research institution and the first and only statewide historical society in Georgia. It is the oldest cultural organization in the state and one of the oldest historical societies in the nation. For nearly 175 years, GHS has collected, preserved, and shared Georgia and American history through a variety of educational outreach programs, publications, and research services.