



501 Whitaker Street ■ Savannah, GA 31401 ■ Tel 912-651-2125 ■ Fax 912-651-2831 ■ www.georgiahistory.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Laura García-Culler, Executive Vice President
912.651.2125, ext. 36 or lgculler@georgiahistory.com

Georgia Days Kickoff Highlights the Many Creative Sides of Johnny Mercer

Savannah, GA - January 21, 2009. The Georgia Historical Society will launch its 2009 Georgia Days festivities with a musical presentation at the Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church, 429 Abercorn Street, Savannah, on February 3, 2009, at 6:00 p.m. followed by a reception in Calhoun Square.

In this family-friendly event, professional entertainer Jim Wann explores the life and contributions of Savannah's own Johnny Mercer by providing biographical information interspersed with musical selections from Mercer's extensive body of work, as well as personal reminiscences of Johnny collected from local Savannahians. A post-event reception will include a rare viewing of several of Mercer's original watercolors.

Featured performer Jim Wann has worked for over thirty years as a professional composer/lyricist and musician, composing the well-loved Broadway musical *Pump Boys and Dinettes* among many others. The music of Johnny Mercer has always been a favorite of Wann's, and his album *Pardon My Southern Accent* contains many of the singer and songwriter's hits. A graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill, Mr. Wann and his wife, Patricia, spend part of each year on Tybee Island.

The reception to follow the musical presentation will take place on Calhoun Square, and will serve as the official Kickoff to the 2009 Georgia Days. Champagne and sweets will be served, and attendees are invited to view paintings by the musician. Mercer's watercolors, some of which were inspired by the landscape of Savannah, provided the musician with another outlet for his expansive creativity. The landscape paintings feature scenes from Mercer's life and travels. Also featured at the reception will be local students' artwork inspired by Mercer's music.

This program is part of GHS's Georgia Days, a month-long commemoration of Georgia's rich history, and GHS's signature educational event of the year. The presentation is free and open to the public. For more information about Georgia Days 2009 events, visit www.georgiahistory.com and follow the Georgia Days links.

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.

###