

Genealogical Research

By Erica Duvic

In the past, family history research meant long hours spent at archival repositories scrolling through microfilm and sending self-addressed stamped envelopes to distant records offices in the hopes of finding your ancestors. Indexes were published in books, genealogical society newsletters were your connection to fellow researchers, and travel was often required to access various records. The 21st century genealogist still uses many of these skills and resources, but the internet has transformed the way research is conducted and records are shared. The internet has also enabled genealogical novices to

easily discover their ancestors online without visiting a library. Online databases, e-mail, social media, and websites have changed the way we approach family history research and have offered us easier methods for locating those elusive ancestors. Television shows like *Who Do You Think You Are?* and *Faces of America* have also popularized a hobby formerly reserved for retirees, and demonstrated its relevance in modern culture. Whether your ancestors are from DeKalb County, Georgia or DeKalb, Illinois you can use technology to broaden your research capabilities and help others with their research.

One of the most popular family history websites is Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com), which consists of subscription databases of indexed and digitized records from across the globe. Online indexes of records are not new in genealogy, but the digital copies of original records that are constantly being added to Ancestry.com and websites like it can

Voter's Oath for East Lake District of DeKalb County, Ga.

OATH OF VOTER, See Act, Sec. 2

"I do swear, or affirm, that I am a citizen of the United States; that I am twenty-one years of age, or will be on the _____ of this calendar year; that I have resided in this State for one year, and in this County for six months immediately preceding the date of this oath, or will have so resided on the _____ of this calendar year; that I have paid all taxes which, since the adoption of the Constitution of 1877, have been required of me, except taxes for this year, that I possess the qualification of an elector required by the Constitutional Amendment adopted in 1901, and that I am not disfranchised from voting by reason of any offense committed against the laws of this State. I further swear, or affirm, that I reside in the _____ district, City of _____, or in the _____ ward in the city of _____ at No. 2771 on Thomson St. S. E. Street. My age is 48. My occupation Teacher."

Amendment to Constitution, Act 1908, pages 28 and 29, par. 4, Secs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

All persons who have honorably served in the land or naval forces of the United States, in the Revolutionary War, or in the War of 1812, or in the War with Mexico, or any War with the Indians, or in the War Between the States, or in the War with Spain, or who honorably served in the land or naval forces of the Confederate States, or of the State of Georgia, in the War Between the States, or

All persons lawfully descended from those embraced in the classes enumerated in the sub-division next above, or

All persons who are of good character and understand the duties and obligations of citizenship under a Republican form of Government, or

All persons who can correctly read in the English language any paragraph of the Constitution of the United States, or of this State, and correctly write the same in the English language when read to them by any one of the registrars, and all persons who, although disabled by physical disability, are unable to comply with the above requirements, but who can understand and give a reasonable interpretation of any paragraph of the Constitution of the United States, or of this State, that may be read to them by any one of the registrars, or

Any person who is the owner in good faith in his own right of at least forty acres of land situated in this State upon which he resides, or is the owner in good faith in his own right of property situated in this State and assessed for taxation at the value of \$500.00.

NAME	Date of Birth	Age	Color	District	Soldier	Descendant of Soldier	Good Character and Knowledge of Duties of Citizenship	Educational	PROPERTY 40 acres land or Equivalent	OCCUPATION
<u>Mrs. Ethel Pharr</u>	<u>11-6-1895</u>									
<u>5-1</u>		<u>44</u>								
<u>H. H. Pharr</u>										

Signed here Ethel Pharr

Tax Collector

The Atlanta Regional Director's Office Voting Records, 1936-1940 are a valuable tool because they often list names, street addresses, ages and occupations for voters.

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Stone Mountain: The Granite Sentinel

By John Mullins

Emerging author George Coletti did not test the writing waters gingerly - but jumped in with both feet, producing a huge 736 page historical novel of a hard working farmer, his family, friends and neighbors living, toiling and surviving during the tumultuous years of the Civil War.

In many ways this could be called a history text, albeit covering a limited territory and time frame. Mr. Coletti has researched his subject thoroughly and documented his facts with 637 footnote citations. But, by hanging these facts, figures, places and people around the story of a fictitious family, he brings continuity, order and a sense of pace that the facts alone do not provide.

Buck Jernigan, his wife Betty Gail and twins Norman and Polly live literally in

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Decatur's Oakhurst:

By David S. Rotenstein

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In 1890 a group of Atlanta entrepreneurs bought more than a thousand acres in DeKalb County and carved out subdivisions with now-familiar names: Kirkwood and East End. Poplar Springs was one of the subdivisions created by the Atlanta Suburban Land Company. Unlike its sister developments however, Poplar Springs disappeared from local maps and memories.

Poplar Springs was laid out in the heart of what became the Town of Oakhurst. Oakhurst enjoyed a brief life as an independent municipality. In 1915, the state revoked Oakhurst's 1910 charter and Decatur annexed the town. By the turn of the twenty-first century, Oakhurst had become a trendy Decatur neighborhood with a funky identity.

Incorporated in May 1890, the Atlanta Suburban Land Company's officers included President Aaron Haas, Vice-president J. S. Todd, Secretary J. L. Logan Jr., and Treasurer W. A. Haygood. The company was capitalized at \$270,000 and in a July 1890 article, the boosterish *Atlanta Constitution* noted that no more than \$15,000 of the new company's stock was held outside of Atlanta.

The day after the company's formation was announced in the *Constitution*, the newspaper reported that a deal had been struck between the company and the Metropolitan Street Railroad Company to extend its line from Atlanta to Decatur using "dummy engines": small locomotives. The *Constitution* reported that the new railroad would be built in a scenic corridor: "This avenue is to be a broad and beautiful one, laid off with a view to making it an elegant drive from Atlanta to Decatur." The paper added, "Atlanta will be greatly benefitted by the opening up of such an avenue as the land company proposes to open ... the dummy line along this avenue will do wonders in the way of development."

To make that development a reality, on July 24, 1890, the company bought 1,425 parcels in DeKalb County from its officers and board of directors. These parcels were among large tracts of land the individuals had been consolidating. Kirkwood and East End were the company's best-



Oakhurst's Castle features a turret and a courtyard enclosed with granite. Photo by the author.

A Subdivision & A Castle

known subdivisions. "This is the largest purchase of lands ever made near Atlanta," wrote the *Constitution* in July 1897.

Poplar Springs was a 92-acre subdivision the company carved from 175 acres included in the July 1890 purchase. To date, no maps have been identified that show Poplar Springs as a named place. The only known map showing all of Poplar Springs' limits is an undated plat prepared for the Atlanta Suburban Land Company by Hall Brothers, an Atlanta-based engineering firm.

Most of the lots were large, measuring 100 feet wide and from 350 to 400 feet deep. The Consolidated Electric Car Line (dummy line) is shown in what became Oakview Road. Park lands were reserved along Hill Street and Oakview. The only named roads in the plat were Fayetteville Road, Hill Street, Mead Road, and Third Avenue.

The company marketed the properties in its vast portfolio in the early 1890s as "large, handsome" lots available at low prices in a location convenient to Decatur and Atlanta. It does not appear that Poplar Springs was marketed separately until 1896, after the company had gone into receivership following the national depression of 1893.

By the spring of 1896, the company was aggressively marketing Poplar Springs — now as "Poplar Springs Park" — in the *Constitution*. Ads touting the properties hailed its proximity to Agnes Scott and its location along the streetcar line. One ad described Poplar Springs as "the prettiest place for an ideal home between Atlanta and Decatur." The advertisement continued, "The handsomest subdivision ever made near Atlanta."

Many of the company's lots had been sold as the economy recovered in the late 1890s. The company had targeted middle-class buyers at a time when families were moving to garden city suburbs throughout the nation. In Atlanta, Inman Park, Druid Hills, and Candler Park became some of the most recognizable suburbs while others, like Poplar Springs, became historical footnotes or were forgotten altogether.

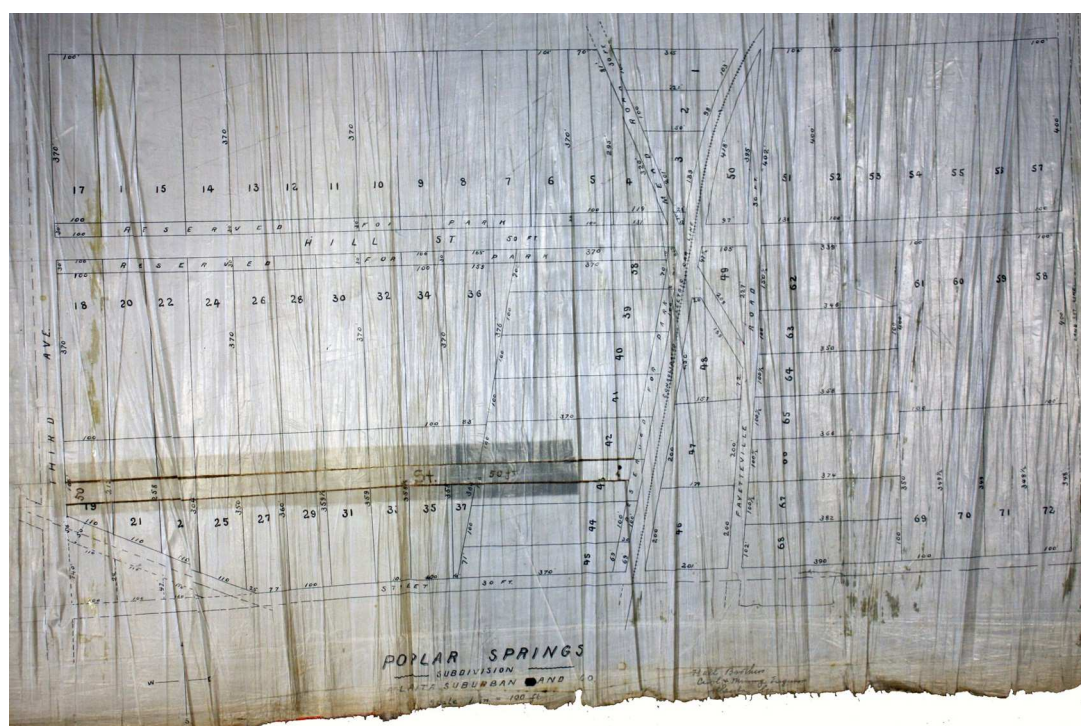
Most of the homes and commercial buildings in Poplar Springs were vernacular: common and ordinary. One house at 138 Fayetteville Road was different. Artist Frank Judson was born in Ontario, Canada, in 1870 and he came to Atlanta in 1906 or 1907 to work as a salesman for the Atlanta Art Glass Company, a manufacturer of architectural and decorative stained glass. Judson was one of four sons of

noted artist William Lees Judson (1842-1928). While his brothers stayed close to their father and settled in California where they founded Judson Studios, Frank Judson chose to work for established companies.

When Judson and his young family arrived in Atlanta, he bought three lots on Fayetteville Road in the fashionable Poplar Springs suburb. He purchased two of the lots at the corner of Underwood Road and Fayetteville from the Atlanta Suburban Land Company in November 1907; the third lot (located south of Underwood) he bought from Mattie Underwood one year later. Sometime in 1908 Judson built a home on the two lots he bought in 1907.

The Judson house captures architectural trends popular at the turn of the twentieth century: a foursquare plan, a late Victorian tower and tall narrow single-light double-hung windows. Its spacious courtyard, constructed of Stone Mountain granite, appears to have been completed after the house. Its parapet with battlements and sturdy walls that extend to the sidewalk are part of why the property is called the "Oakhurst Castle." Stained glass panels in the courtyard complement stained glass in the home's transom and sidelights and survive as tangible reminders of Judson's career and art. Another addition was the construction by the mid 1920s of a one-story carriage house or garage.

Judson's stay in Georgia was brief. By 1916 he had fled the state to avoid creditors and he died sometime before 1920. His iconic Fayetteville Road house became a local landmark and it entered local folklore. Its history captures the story of subdividers and speculators who created the landscape we recognize as suburban DeKalb County. ✦



This plat map for the Poplar Springs shows Fayetteville Road, Hill Street and other residential roads.

Genealogical

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save researchers a considerable amount of time and money. The decreased costs of scanning records and digital storage space have resulted in seven billion records being made available to those willing to pay the monthly fee. Fortunately, access to records is not limited to subscription websites as many libraries and archives provide access at their institutions, including the DeKalb History Center. There are also many websites that offer free access to records, the largest of which is FamilySearch (www.familysearch.org), run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Through the efforts of missionaries, volunteers, and partnerships with other organizations, they have made available many important record collections including the 1900 Federal Census and Freedmans Bank Records.

Many online database websites offer more than just indexes and digitized records. Sharing your family tree is easier than ever using Ancestry.com or Geni's (www.geni.com), free family tree services that link ancestors into one big family tree. However, the quality of the submitted trees is directly related to the effort put forth by the family historian; and the ease with which records can be accessed has resulted in an influx of poorly researched family trees. So while it is easy to connect your tree with another, you must proceed with caution and treat information provided by others as suggestion rather than fact.

Educational resources are another important feature of family history websites, which provide guidance to assist you in reaching sound conclusions in your research. FamilySearch provides free research courses and videos to help get you started as well as a wiki covering a wide range of topics relating to genealogy (<http://wiki.familysearch.org>). A wiki is a collaborative website where

users are encouraged to create and edit articles that link together and build upon collective knowledge. The DeKalb History Center maintains the wiki article for DeKalb County, which includes a listing of where to find certain types of records and information on local repositories. Online seminars, known as webinars, are another way to learn more about family history topics and to pick up handy tips for online research. GeneaWebinars (www.geneawebinars.com) has a comprehensive listing of upcoming webinars as well as information on the free software needed to attend the sessions. Many amateur and professional genealogists also write their own blogs to document their discoveries and share tips and tricks with others. A quick Google search of your research interests can bring up several popular blogs, or you can browse by type or geography at GeneaBloggers (www.geneabloggers.com). Blogging is part of the much larger trend of social media which has become a popular way for family historians to keep in touch with one another as well as their families. Sharing information via social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook allows you to connect with other researchers as well as librarians and archivists who can answer your questions.

Despite these technological innovations, it is still necessary to visit libraries, archives, and courthouses to get the records you need.

Disabled Soldier Pensioners Heretofore Paid.					
STATE OF GEORGIA,					
County.					
The following contains a true list of the Disabled Soldier Pensioners now residing in said county, whose names are on the Disabled Soldier Pensioners' Roll of said county and are entitled to the Pension due by the State for 1917:					
No.	NAME	Annual Pension	POST-OFFICE	Date of Payment	RECEIVED PAYMENT
73	Lanier D. S.	80	Decatur	2/8/18	D. S. Lanier by Mrs. W. J. Simmons
74	Little Susan	80	Atlanta	2/8/18	Susan Little by R. E. Little
75	Mason Emily	80	St. Mountain	2/13/18	Mr. C. T. Wells
76	Mauldin Mary Frances	80	St. Mountain	2/13/18	Mrs. W. T. Ogle
77	Miller Amanda E.	80	Chamblee	2/15/18	Amanda E. Miller by Gus Hudgins
78	Mitchell N. C.	80	Decatur	2/8/18	N. C. Mitchell by D. W. Mitchell
79	Mize Mary C.	80	Lithonia		Mrs. Mary C. Mize
80	Moonaugh R. H.	80	Decatur	2/7/18	Mrs. R. H. Moonaugh
81	McLelland E. A.	80	St. Mountain	2/15/18	E. A. McLelland by Cussie McLelland
82	McGhee Elizabeth	80	Lithonia	3/4/18	Elizabeth McGhee by Jno. W. McGhee
83	Nash L. C.	80	St. Mountain	2/13/18	Mrs. L. C. Nash
84	New Ellen	80	Lithonia	2/11/18	Mrs. Ellen New by J. L. Argo

The screenshot shows the FamilySearch website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'FAMILYSEARCH', 'Learn', 'FamilySearch Centers', 'Indexing', and 'Blog'. Below this is a header for 'DeKalb County, Georgia' with a sub-header 'United States > Georgia > DeKalb County'. A 'Contents [hide]' sidebar on the left lists various topics like 'History', 'Boundary Changes', 'Record Loss', 'Places/Localities', 'Populated Places', 'Neighboring Counties', 'Resources', 'African Americans', 'Cemeteries', 'Church', 'Court', 'Land', 'Local Histories', 'Maps', 'Military', 'Newspapers', 'Probate', 'Societies and Libraries', 'Family History Centers', 'Taxation', 'Vital Records', 'Birth', 'Marriage', 'Death', 'Voting Records', 'Web Sites', and 'References'. The main content area features a map of Georgia with DeKalb County highlighted in red. Below the map is a 'Facts' section listing 'Founded' (9 December 1822), 'Parent County' (Henry County, Georgia), and 'County' (Gwinnett County, Georgia; Fayette County, Georgia; Newton County, Georgia). A 'Search Learning & How-To's' section is also visible, along with a 'New to the Research Wiki?' section and a 'Views' sidebar.

The DeKalb article on FamilySearch includes information on where to find records and can be updated by anyone.

The Confederate Veterans and Widows Pensions Collection include names, addresses and death dates.

Research (cont.)

Digitizing records and indexing is a time consuming process for many smaller institutions, and it will be many years before these places can post their records online. Luckily, most repositories now have websites with lists of their collections and contact information for requesting records. The National Archives and Records Administration (www.archives.gov) even allows you to order copies of records via their website in a variety of formats. If you find yourself visiting an archive to look at records in person, consider bringing a smart phone, flash drive, or portable scanner. Genealogy companies now make applications (or 'apps') for smart phones that allow you to sync your family tree on your home computer and online so that you can access it wherever you go. Flash drives and portable scanners are the new alternative to the paper copies typically made when visiting an archive. At the DeKalb History Center, you can save money by allowing us to scan documents for \$0.10 per page and saving them to your flash drive. You should always ask staff persons about their institution's reproduction policy before scanning or photographing a document.

Whether you are just getting started with genealogy or have been building your family tree for decades, the DeKalb History Center can help you access the records you need. You can visit our website to view an updated list of our holdings (www.dekalbhistory.org) and keep in touch via Twitter (@DeKalbHistory) and Facebook. If you have any questions or are interested in donating your family history, contact our Archivist, Jill Sweetapple, at archives@dekalbhistory.org or 404-373-1088 extension 23.

TIPS: You can search an entire website using Google site search by typing in **site: <website> <search term>**. For example, searching for **site:dekalbhistory.org candler** will bring up all mentions of the Clanders on our website.

Even if you aren't subscribed to Ancestry.com, you can create a free account and search their records to see if it is worth the cost of a subscription. You can then visit the History Center to get full copies of the records. ✦

Lullwater Bridge

The Georgia Department of Transportation (Georgia DOT) is currently evaluating and assessing the structural soundness of the Lullwater Creek Bridge on Ponce de Leon Avenue. The bridge was constructed in 1922 and is located just east of Lullwater Road in the Druid Hills National Register District and the City of Atlanta Landmark District. The findings of a condition survey from October of 2010 suggest replacement of the bridge due to maintenance concerns, and the Georgia DOT will conduct load testing later this month to determine if the bridge is eligible for rehabilitation or if it must be replaced.

The Lullwater Creek Bridge is a common type of bridge construction called T-beam. It has decorative concrete arches underneath which form a beautiful arcade that is hidden from the view of travelers on Ponce de Leon Avenue. In fact, the entire bridge can easily go unnoticed when traveling across by car except for the concrete balustrades adjacent to the sidewalk on either side of the road. Over the years, because of its secluded nature, this hidden gem has become a destination for homeless people. It is also a popular place for graffiti.

Once the load testing is completed and the DOT determines if the bridge will be rehabilitated or replaced, they would like public input into the project. They are currently hosting a series of stakeholder meetings and will have a public information open house early in 2012. For more information visit the Georgia DOT website at www.dot.ga.gov or contact project manager Jeremy Busby at jbusby@dot.ga.gov. ✦



Views of the Lullwater Bridge showing the arches hidden from the street view. From David Rotenstein.

Granite Sentinel (cont.)

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the shadow of Stone Mountain. The story begins in April 1852 at the funeral of Andrew Johnson, owner of Stone Mountain and one of the founders of the town, or village really, of the same name. From there, the pre-war years introduce the people (historical and fictitious), places and events that will lead up to war and its aftermath. DeKalb County voted against secession and so did the Jernigans. These "union sympathizers" stayed in their homes and remained active in their churches and communities throughout the war. They tilled the land, volunteered in hospitals, and served in the military.

For most of the war, life in rural Georgia went on pretty much as usual. As in Georgia during the Vietnam conflict, loved ones and friends were conscripted and served in the military - most outside the state of Georgia. There were deaths, the wounded and the disabled, but the rhythm of life went on unchanged. There were shortages - medicines, paper, coffee, tea and other imported goods screened out by the blockade - but food was plentiful and the land was unravaged. That is - until "Uncle Billy" Sherman crossed over from Tennessee into Georgia in May 1864.

Thereafter the story becomes one of military communications with the civilian population reacting to the events resulting from them.

Life in Georgia changed. The Confederate forces under Johnson and later Hood were inadequate to defeat or drive out the 100,000 -man Union Army under Sherman. Fear of harm from the armies affected all civilians. Hoarding and hiding food and valuables became a way of life. The increasing number of dead, wounded, disabled and deserters, as well as the need to help family, friends and neighbors who suffered harm, placed a strain on morale and available resources.

The story portrays General Sherman in an even handed manner. Neither good nor bad, he was a commander with one goal - to end the war as quickly as possible. He did burn Atlanta, even designating which homes and businesses were to be put to the torch. But he did not harm Savannah, probably as there was no longer a need to do so. The war was essentially over.

Dr. Coletti was raised in his grandparents' home in what is now The Stone Mountain Memorial Park. He attended Georgia Military College (GMC) figured prominently in this book) and has served on the Board of Directors of both the DeKalb History Center and the Stone Mountain Historical Society. We hope to see more works from Mr. Coletti. ✦

Upcoming Programs

Community Champions, Opening Reception, Tuesday, October 18, 5:30—7:00 pm

The DeKalb History Center, in cooperation with The Champion Newspaper, will host a new Temporary Exhibit highlighting 20 Years of Community Champions. As part of their 20-year anniversary, The Champion recognized newsmakers who have made positive contributions to DeKalb County during this time period. This exhibit details the important contributions from these Champions by highlighting their accomplishments and achievements and includes community leaders from all walks of life. The exhibit showcases personal items and memorabilia from many of the honorees.

Fall Storytelling on Saturdays at the Biffle Cabin, 10:00—11:30 a.m.

October 22—Spinning, November 12—Sidewinder Yo-Yo, December 10—Holiday Ornament

Join storyteller Fran Frantz as she presents storytelling and frontier crafts "with a twist." Mrs. Frantz is a local historian and enthusiastic storyteller who weaves fascinating tales of pioneer life with children's chores, entertainment, bartering and science. The programs are for children ages 6—12. Ages 4-5 may attend if accompanied by an adult. \$4 per session for members and \$7 for non-members. Reservations are suggested. Call 404-373-1088, extension 20 or email dhs@dekalbhistory.org.

Book Signing, Monday, November 7, 5:30—6:30 p.m.

Come meet local authors of two new books based on Stone Mountain. Paul Hudson and Lora Mirza will sign copies of their new book, *Atlanta's Stone Mountain: A Multicultural History*, along with George Coletti author of *Stone Mountain: The Granite Sentinel*. *Stone Mountain: The Granite Sentinel* is a historical novel that gives a fictional account of life in Stone Mountain during the 1850s and 1860s. Hudson and Mirza's *Atlanta's Stone Mountain: A Multicultural History*, includes history from the formation of Stone Mountain almost 300 million years ago to the contemporary park of today.

November Lunch and Learn, Tuesday, November 15, Noon

"DeKalb's Courtyards of Convenience: Jewish Communities Bound by String and Power Lines" with speaker David Rotenstein. David will explain the "courtyards" known as *eruv*s and their significance in DeKalb County.

Decatur Holiday Candlelight Tour of Homes, Friday, December 2 & Saturday, December 3, 5:30—9:30

The tour brings an eclectic mix of homes this year. Home renovations retained historic features of many of the homes, such as stained glass windows, oak floors and original bathroom fixtures, while updating kitchens and entertainment areas. The homes reflect the personalities of the owners, including whimsical metal sculptures, a retro-style kitchen and furniture from India. Participating homeowners have also shown a huge commitment to quality work - much of what you'll tour is a labor of love! The DHC is a grant recipient of the 2011 tour—check our website for additional information, which we will post as soon as it is available. ✦

October is Archives Month

Archives Month is a way to celebrate the value of Georgia's historical records, publicize the many ways historical records enrich our lives, and recognize those who maintain our communities' historical records. The theme for 2011 is History Worth Saving.

To celebrate Georgia Archives Month, we have created a small exhibit on photography from the DeKalb History Center collection. It is displayed in the lobby of the historic courthouse in the wooden cabinet given to the DHC in the 1980s by the Rehoboth Elementary School.

We have examples of all kinds of photographic processes from the last two centuries and many are included in this display. There are tintypes, which are

actually not printed on tin, but on sheets of thin iron. Sometimes tintypes were enclosed in a cardboard frame, which kept these bendable images safe. The exhibit contains cased photographs from our collection, housed in embossed leather cases with cloth linings and metal trim. We have also showcased different types of negatives and slides, including some large and medium format

negatives (1950s—1960s) from our extensive Guy Hayes Collection. We are in the process of digitizing these right now.

We are grateful to the Camera Doctor for loaning several interesting cameras for this exhibit. And special thanks to Dan Croskey and Beth Shorthouse for their assistance rehabilitating the cabinet. ✦



Tintypes from our wide ranging photograph collection.

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Collecting, Preserving and Sharing the History of DeKalb County

All funds received through memberships directly support the preservation of DeKalb County history and are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Your generous contribution to the DeKalb History Center will provide you with a year-long membership that includes our quarterly newsletter to keep you informed on all our activities. We hope that you will join our team by either renewing your membership or joining as a first-time supporter.

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