

*Donations  
Appreciated*

# HISTORIC FORT GAINES



***WALKING OR CYCLING TOUR***

Welcome to Clay County and Fort Gaines, Georgia. You are about to tour an area rich in history and tradition. You'll see landmarks that recall the perils and the excitement of life in a frontier settlement over 200 years ago. You'll walk along paths that seem to echo the footsteps of centuries past. You'll learn about the lifestyles of an adventurous area, long since woven into the pages of history.

Of all the Frontier Forts created in Georgia during its embryonic history, Fort Gaines is the sole survivor as an incorporated municipality. It was the first American Settlement in the Tallasee Territory. Georgia refused the gift of this land for four years until after the end of the first Seminole War. They, then reluctantly, accepted it regretting that "God Almighty Himself had left it in such an unfinished condition". For those with a keen ear, listen carefully and you can hear the footsteps of history in this small town.

## **Begin Your Tour at Stop Number**

This tour covers about 1.5 miles and will take roughly 60 minutes to walk, less time to cycle. The tour is divided into three sections: Downtown, Neighborhood and the Bluff. For a shorter tour, take 1 or 2 sections of the tour for easy and quick travel. Numbered site marker signs are in front of each of the stops along the way. The numbers correspond to the numbers on the enclosed maps. The tour is also divided into 5 sections, and the distance of each section in yards is shown. Please keep any pets on a leash and leave the tour clean for others to enjoy.

The starting point of the tour is the Clay County Courthouse. Make your way to 210 South Washington Street, facing the Courthouse.

# Walking or Cycling Tour

## Downtown

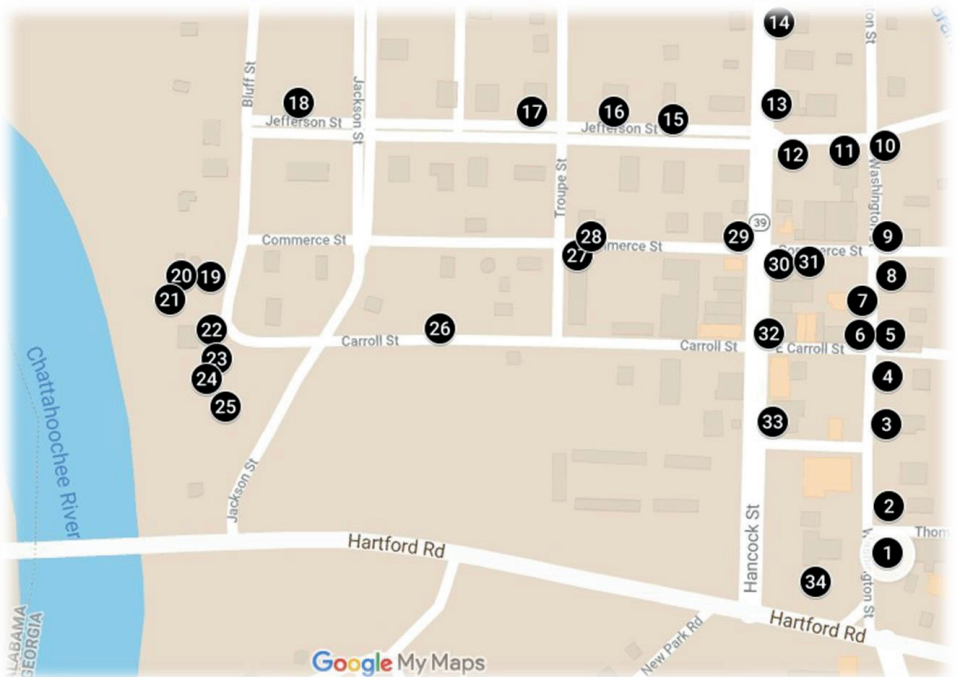
- 1 - Clay County Courthouse
- 2 - P/K/P House
- 3 - Sutlive House
- 4 - Grimsley House
- 5 - Globe House & Tavern
- 6 - Sutton's Corner Museum
- 7 - Hatchett's Drug Store
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## Neighborhood

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- 13 - Presbyterian Church
- 14 - Grist/Coleman House
- 15 - McRae House
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## Bluff

- 23 - Fort on the Bluff
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- 26 - Pioneer Cemetery
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- 28 - Foster House
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- 31 - Wayside Inn
- 32 - Main Street
- 33 - Clay County Library
- 34 - First Baptist Church



1

## Clay County Courthouse & Jail

210 Washington Street S, circa 1870

Fort Gaines was the first settlement in the territory of Tallasee. When it was annexed in 1818 by Georgia, Tallasee was divided into 3 counties. In 1854, Clay County was created. It was named for the famous statesman, Henry Clay, who died in 1852. Since Fort Gaines was such an old settlement at the time of construction, it lacked a city square in which to house the Courthouse, like those found in many southern towns.



Both the Courthouse and Jail were constructed around 1871, using bricks from the local Sutlive Brickyard. The Courthouse still retains many of the original features, including the original purpose. The Jail is currently used by the Clay County's Sheriff's Office and 911 Center. It no longer has the original jail cells and hanging room, where executions were performed. The jailer's family lived on the ground floor of the building, with his wife preparing the prisoner's daily meals. Those inmates got some delicious southern home cooking!

2

## Paullin/Killingsworth/Penuel House

208 Washington Street S, 1900

Designed by architect George F. Barber, one of the foremost mail-order catalog architects between 1890-1910, it was designed for JB Horne in St. Charles, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago and labeled "Suburban Chicago Home" in the Barber Catalog. This home was constructed around 1900.

Three generations have lived in this home: Dr. William Lewis Paullin Jr, Albert & Evelyn Killingsworth, and Ann & Ken Penuel. The wife of the second owner of the home, Mrs. Evelyn Killingsworth, was the local florist and provided flowers for all funerals and weddings in town for many years. The local superstition was said to be, "The marriage wouldn't last, and the deceased wouldn't go to Heaven without Mrs. Evelyn's flowers."



The current owners have restored and modernized this beautiful old home with updates and additions constructed in 2002-2003.

3

## Sutlive House

204 Washington Street S, circa 1820

This two-story white home was built by General John Sutlive around 1820. Originally from Tennessee, General Sutlive was called Chafee (White Rabbit) by his Native American friends. He operated a ferry across the Chattahoochee until the first bridge was built in 1841. He was one of the original military officers at Fort Gaines. Except for being expanded and having decorative elements added to the exterior, the home retains its original appearance. In the recent past, the home served as a popular Bed & Breakfast.



4

## Grimsley House

202 Washington Street S

Local legend tells that long ago two young men were courting the same young lady and, of course one of them had to lose. The loser made an unusual vow: instead of finding a new bride, he vowed he would wait to marry the couple's first daughter. Believe it or not, he did! After the old man's death, his widow came to Fort Gaines and ordered this house from the Sears & Roebuck catalog, which was delivered on the Central of Georgia Railroad and assembled by local builders.



5

## Globe House & Tavern

106 Washington Street, circa 1820

Locally known as The Globe House, this home was built by Colonel Samuel Gainer, one of the town's first lawyers and a board member of Fort Gaines Academy. The home gets its name after a repositioning of the Globe Marker. It was originally located across the street to mark The Globe Tavern. The tavern eventually burned, and the marker was



only recently relocated to its current spot across the street, in the Sutton's Museum window. In the early days of telephone service, this house was used as the town telephone exchange. It was well known by everyone in town that the quickest way to locate someone was to ask the telephone operator, Ms. Lonnie Gamble.

6

## Sutton's Corner Museum

115 Washington Street S, Museum conversion in 1993

Founded by David Campbell, this museum is now owned by Clay County, and it is operated by the Fort Gaines/Clay County Historical Society. It is located on the lot where the former Globe Tavern, a stagecoach stop, burned down. The ironwork on the exterior of the building was manufactured by Mesker Brothers Iron Works and was applied to the building around 1904, when it served as a Mercantile.



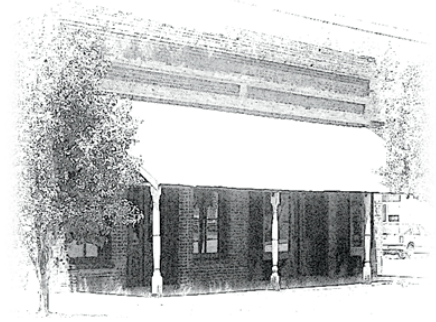
Enjoy viewing a gold mine of the past; the museum captures life in rural Georgia around 1850 and contains over 4000 unique objects dating from the early 1800's to the present, many of which are sole survivors of its kind. Visits to the Museum are by appointment only.

7

## Hatchett's Drug Store

109 Washington Street S, circa 1870's

Hatchett's Drugs, one of the first pharmacies in town, was opened in 1870 by Dr. James Marrion Hatchett, a civil war surgeon and pharmacist. When Dr. Hatchett died in 1894, his son, Samuel Pope Callaway Hatchett, carried on the operation of the Drug Store for the next 63 years. It is argued by the locals that Mr. Pope did not want to sell anything from the store, but instead most days he could be found sitting in a chair, propped up in the front of the building with a scowl on his face. When Mr. Pope died, his wife, Ms. Emogene locked the doors without moving a single item. Her heirs donated the contents of the store to the Lumpkin Historical Society in the 1970's. The building still retains its original façade, interior, and flooring.



Until recently, the building was used for meetings and social events.

8

## John Dill House

102 S. Washington Street, circa 1820

In the fall of 1817, a boat captained by Lieutenant Richard W. Scott containing ill and wounded soldiers along with their families, made a mad dash up the river to find refuge at Fort Gaines. At a location now known as Scott's Bluff, they were attacked by Native Americans and all members of the party were killed or scalped, except for 6 men and one woman, Elizabeth Stewart, a young widow, who remained a prisoner. During her capture, she noticed the Native Americans discarded collected paper money, but kept the coins. She quietly gathered up the paper bills, pinning them to her petticoat. (Continued)



(Continued)

After she was rescued by General Andrew Jackson's forces, she was safely returned to Fort Gaines, where she later married John Dill and used the discarded paper money she collected to build this house.

While it may be said the money to build this house came from Elizabeth, John was one of the most important people in the construction of the City of Fort Gaines. Not only was he a soldier, but he was a charter member of the Methodist Church, an incorporator of the Fort Gaines Steamboat Company, and he became the first postmaster in 1825. John Dill originally owned all the land comprising the city limits and sold lots to other settlers to build the town. He was a brilliant entrepreneur.

For most of its life, this grand house has been widely known as a hotel for its grandiose rooms and grand meals served on the long dining table.

The interior, like the exterior, is massive. The house has eight mantles on the first floor with intricate carvings and decorative tile with shapes of logs and flowers. The oak wainscoting in the house is delicately hand-carved with features including vines and oak leaves.

9

## Brown House

106 Washington Street N, circa 1827

Once known as the Old Tin Shop, this house was built by brothers Bob and JHP Brown. On the first floor was a Mercantile and the second floor housed a shop, where they made all types of cookware, with pieces

sold across the country. A large tin sign in the shape of a coffee pot hung out front as their trademark. The home was later used as a hotel, then as an annex to the Dill house.





10

## Fire Bell

Corner of Washington and Jefferson Streets, circa 1880's

This was the original bell used in the last decades of the 19th century and into the beginnings of the 20th century to alert citizens of fire. The bell was originally located at the intersection of Carroll and South Hancock Street. The bell was saved by Mr. James E Coleman after it was no longer needed by the city. On September 11, 2010, Remembrance Day, a ceremony hosted by the Fort Gaines/Clay County Historical Society to dedicate the Bell to Mr. James's father, George M. Coleman and to honor all the volunteer fireman who gave their time and effort for the protection of our citizens. George M. Coleman was a volunteer fire chief and was crippled in a fire.



The bell is not only important for its historical value, but for what it stands for today. We must never take their bravery or sacrifice for granted.

11

## Colonel Greene House

114 Jefferson Street E, circa 1876

This house was built by William James Greene, who served as a State Representative from 1886-1887. Chester Gavin, a descendent of Mr. Greene, also served as a representative from 1935-1946. Colonel Edward A. Greene, also a descendent, returned to Fort Gaines after retiring from the Marines, and lived in the house until his death in 1957.



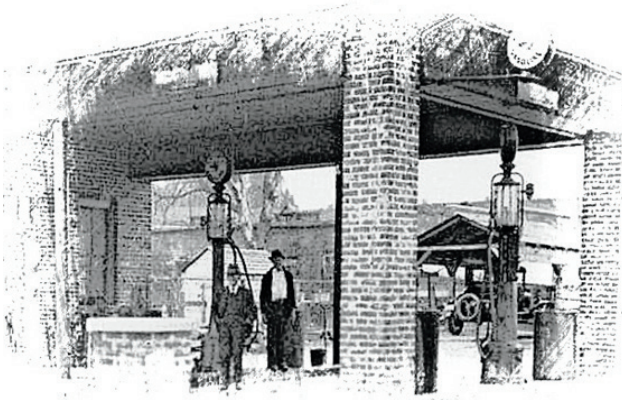
He would always dress in white and walk the streets with much fanfare, stopping children on the street, exchanging pleasantries, then giving them each a shiny new dime.

## Morris Park

Corner of Hancock and Jefferson Streets

Pictures indicate this property was originally a livery stable. It was common in those days for the livery to become a gas station. George Coleman was the first Standard Oil jobber in town at the turn of the 20th century and this was the site of his station. It is also where J.E. Coleman worked before, and after, his service in World War II. He recalls a unique story in his book, "Daddy Write That Down".

Mr. Mark Peterson was a local delivery man who owned a "Model A Ford" that he kept spic and span and parked in a garage adjacent to his home. Every Saturday he drove to town



to deliver his wares to the stores. Upon returning home, he would put his car in the garage, jack-up all four wheels, and put a chock

under each wheel before letting the air out of each tire. The next Saturday he would take out his hand pump to re-inflate each tire, remove the chocks, and come to town to get his windshield cleaned, oil and water checked, and 50 cents worth of gas, if needed. He evidently believed "relieving the pressure in his tires every night would make them last longer", and he might have been right!

The property was eventually acquired by the Morris family. The Park was a gift to the Downtown Development Authority from the estate of Marianne Morris late in 2015. The landscaping was done by the Fort Gaines Garden Club, including a town Christmas tree and an unusual "Sweet Tea" tree. It is a native from the Altamaha River area in South Georgia displaying big white flowers in Summer. It is a cousin to the heirloom Camellias so widely grown in southern gardens.

13

## Presbyterian Church

101 Hancock Street N, circa 1847; Fellowship Hall, circa 2008

The first Presbyterian Church was organized and ready for use in 1847 and was supplied by the Flint River Presbytery. Lines recorded in the Presbytery read, "Besides the liberal contribution of the churches, the Presbytery received



a liberal behest from Mr. Homer Alexander, residing near Fort Gaines, of rents, issues, and profits of a valuable plantation to be applied to the support of Domestic Missions of the Presbytery."

The Church in this location was built in 1905. The Fellowship Hall was an artful addition by local contractor, Anderson Construction Company of Fort Gaines, in 2008.

14

## Grist/Coleman House

103 Hancock Street N, circa 1880

Grist House was constructed in the late 1880's by Colonel Frederick Grist, who produced a strain of game chickens known as The Grandy Shawl Neck. Grist became famous as a game rooster breeder and arranged fights for his roosters all over the United States, even shipping some of his roosters overseas. Even today his strain of gamecocks is listed in game fowl magazines. More recently, this house was the home of James Edgar Coleman, the original author of this Walking Tour.



15

## McRae House

103 Jefferson Street W, circa 1840

This large two-story dwelling served as a barracks for the Confederate officers during the Civil War. It features a pecan and walnut wooden floor in the parlor, very unusual in its time. The floor was a housewarming gift from Mac Davis, a timber businessman in town known for driving everywhere in reverse because he was accustomed to backing out of logging trails.



After the Civil War, the house, its surrounding property, and the buildings on it were an excellent example of a self-sufficient way of life. The house was built very close to the street, giving ample room in the backyard to operate a small farm. There was a stable housing livestock, a chicken coop, and a smoke house for curing meats. There is still evidence of a large garden as the tilled rows can be felt beneath the ground as you walk across the property. All the buildings remained on the property until the 1980's. Annie McRae, who lived here with her family, was first cousin to Susie McAllister, who lived next door. The two ladies were lifelong friends and met at the garden fence daily for 50 years to exchange news. Both lived into great age, Annie until 90 and Susie to 102 years old. The Chinese Fringe tree in the front yard is a rarity in the area, magnificent in Spring with its masses of fragrant white blossoms.

16

## McAllister House

105 Jefferson Street W, circa 1850

John C. Wells, an attorney and Clay County's Fourth Ordinary, built this house for his bride, Caroline Johnson. In 1897, RC McAllister bought the house for his own bride, Susie Helton. The kitchen of the home was the first Clay County Courthouse and Jail. During the Civil War it served as an overflow containment area for Union prisoners who were brought from the hospital in Andersonville, Georgia. They were placed under strict guard in front of the Courthouse. The building was then used as a schoolhouse until it was moved and attached to the present home. Picture shows house in early 1900's. The same family has owned the home since 1857.



17

## Mobley/Ross/Kinsell House

201 Jefferson Street W, circa 1900

This two-story brick home was built by Mr. Mobley in 1905. The home originally faced Troupe Street, which was a large, dusty, unpaved street. There was constant traffic down Commerce with travelers coming from the Chattahoochee River. The dust greatly interfered with Mr. Mobley's relaxation time on the porch, so the front porch was moved to face Jefferson Street. The second owner, CR Ross, owned the first hardware store in town.



The home has 11 rooms, including three bedrooms upstairs and two bedrooms downstairs. The house was remodeled in 1968.

18

## Fort Gaines Female College

Corner of Jefferson and Bluff Streets

What is currently the City Recreational Area was once known as The Fort Gaines Female College. In 1857, the Legislature authorized a lottery to complete this college, chartered in 1838 as Fort Gaines Female Institute. It was finished in 1859. Sereno Taylor was the first principal, followed by John W. Grant. The large college building was used for a "tax-in-kind" depot — for storage of one-tenth of all food and wool raised for the support of the Confederate Army. At the close of the war, Confederate soldiers distributed contents of this and two other local warehouses to families in this area before Federal troops arrived. Used for a time as barracks for Federal soldiers, it became again an important educational center. The school closed after an epidemic of typhoid fever.



## 19 Boy Scout Cabin

Bluff Street, circa 1930

Reverend Emmett E. Gardner of Fort Gaines Methodist Church formed the Boy Scout Troop in 1928. The Troop cut and scraped logs to build this Scout Cabin. Originally, the Cabin had two rooms. It served as the first community library. For all his efforts, Reverend Gardner was given a Silver Loving Cup by the community.

Today, the cabin is used for various civic events.



## 20 Toll House

Bluff Street, circa 1820

This two-story building is the former Toll House; in the 1820's, the only way to cross the Chattahoochee River was by ferry, and this building is where the passengers would pay the toll. This house was later used as a residence by John Dill.

Incidentally, in 1820, the land across the river was Native American territory. Today, it is part of Alabama.



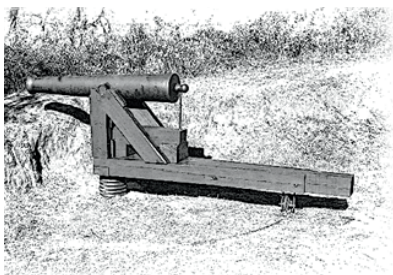
## 21 Confederate Cannon

Bluff Street, circa 1840

This cannon, used during the Civil War, remains in the same position atop the Bluff as it sat during the War.

There were two other cannons formerly located on the Bluff. Looking to the South, there is a large indentation

in the ground between large oak trees marking the previous location of the second cannon. The third cannon was located below the Bluff, closer to the river, and aimed downstream.



## 22 Cornelia Club House

201 Bluff Street S, circa 1927

The construction of the building was originally financed in part by a generous \$1000 donation from Cornelia Hatchett McAllister, a wealthy widow, for whom the building was named. Her portrait hangs over the fireplace mantle inside. This portrait was stolen, disappeared, and recovered in a dirty but undamaged condition by the sheriff many years later.



Cornelia was ahead of her time. She left Fort Gaines, became a real estate mogul in Miami during the early building boom of the city, and built a famous landmark, the McAllister Hotel, in 1917. The hotel was in its heyday during prohibition, and Al Capone was arrested there in 1930 while he was coming out of the lobby. The hotel was demolished in 1988.

Currently, The Women's Club House is the venue for many local weddings, parties, and meetings. It is also the anchor point for the long running local arts and crafts fair held in November, "Christmas at the Fort". The handsome pillars on the bluff side of the building were removed from Clay County High School when it was demolished in the early 1980s and carefully re-erected here.

# Walking or Cycling Tour



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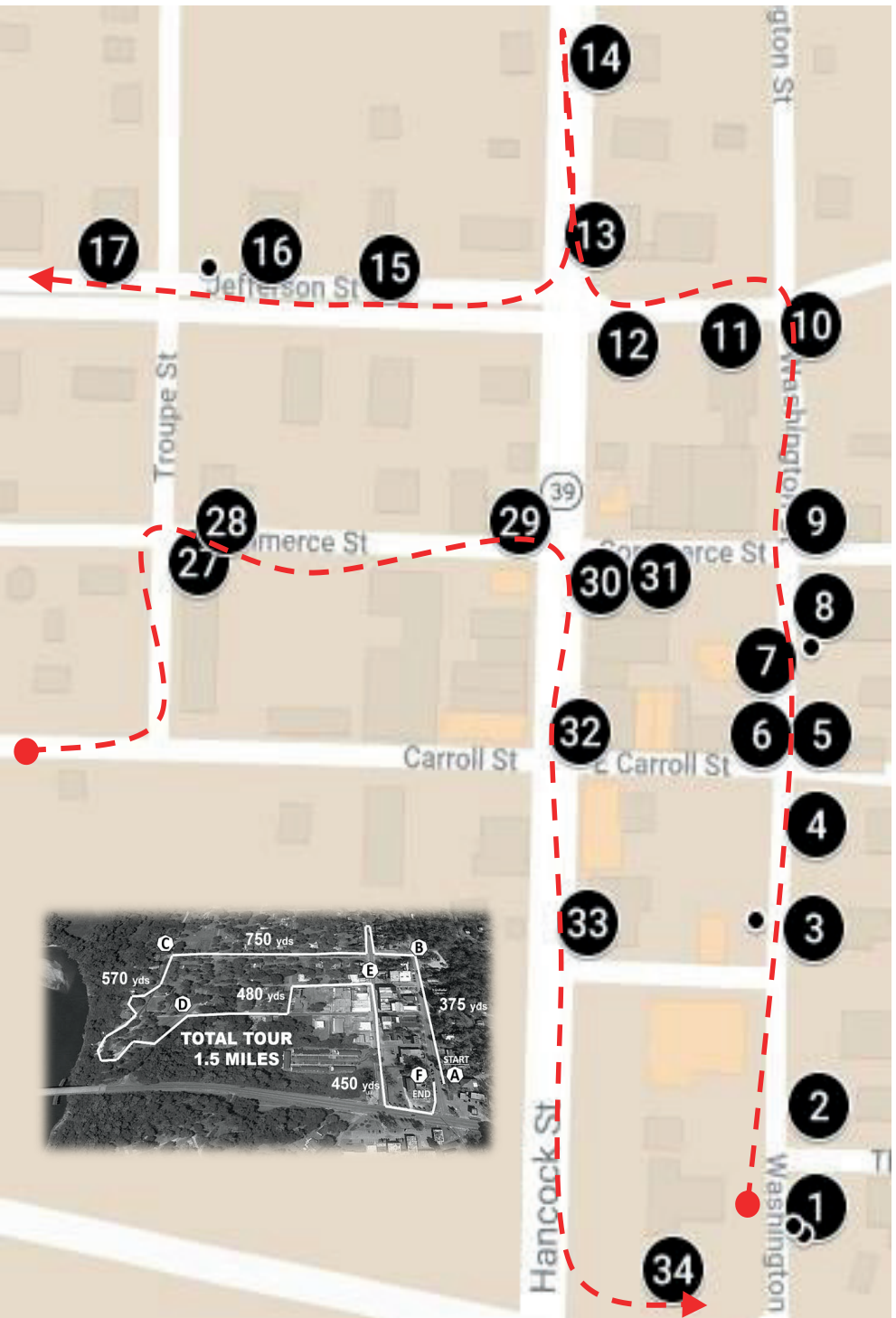
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## The Bluff

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## 23 Fort on the Bluff

Fort Gaines is one of the oldest continuously occupied towns in the South. This vicinity housed three different Forts over the last 200 years.

First, a frontier fort was constructed in 1814. Secondly, a fort was built as protection from Native American attacks in 1836. Finally, a fort was built in 1863 to prevent Union troops from getting up the river to Columbus, Georgia, which was a vital manufacturing center during the war known for their ship building, iron works and textiles.

During the Revolutionary War, an Indian village on the site of what is now Fort Gaines, lay deep inside the Creek Indian Nation. One Southern saying promises, "We'll be there, if the Good Lord is willing and the Creeks don't rise." Many people assume this referred to the water in the creeks overflowing their banks and preventing travel; however, the actual message referred to the Creek Indians. Benjamin Hawkins, the Indian Agent at that time, sent this message to General Andrew Jackson when he was ordered to report to Jackson. And that is the real story.

Fort Gaines became one of the most important river ports between Columbus and the Gulf of Mexico during the romantic era of steamboats.

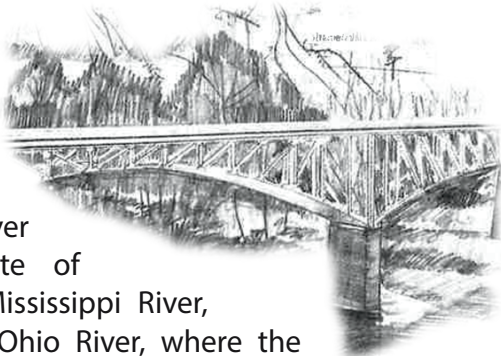


24

## Chattahoochee River Bluff

The River Bluff is approximately 130 feet above the Chattahoochee River. In more perilous times, it afforded a commanding view of river traffic and Native American movements.

One unique feature of this river is that the entire river belongs to the State of Georgia, unlike the Mississippi River, Rio Grande, and the Ohio River, where the dividing line runs in the center of the water. The Alabama line lies on the western riverbank.



25

## Frontier Village at the Bluff

The buildings grouped together on this site are authentic frontier structures, all once in use in Clay County. See the signs located at each building for further information.



26

## Pioneer Cemetery

Near the corner of Jackson and Commerce Streets

This is the final resting place for many of the earliest settlers of Fort Gaines. Among many unmarked graves is the grave of John Dill. He was buried in a fenced lot with his wife buried beside him. John Brown, the second president of Franklin College, known now as The University of Georgia, is resting in one of the unmarked graves. Much effort has been spent trying to identify his grave, but to no avail.



In 2008, ground penetrating radar was used to locate many of the unmarked graves. There are now 240 stainless steel markers on each previously unmarked grave.

27

## Methodist Church

Corner of Commerce and Troupe Streets, circa 1890

Under the leadership of Elder Samuel Johnson, the Church was organized in 1822 in the home of John Dill. The South Carolina conference assigned Reverend John J. Twigg to be its first pastor. In 1840, the first wooden building was erected by the Methodists, a year after the Church was incorporated under Georgia Law. The present church was built in 1894.



28

## John Foster House

113 Commerce Street W, circa 1900

Across from the Methodist Church is the "L" shaped house built by John Foster. Because of its unique shape, it presents the same façade on both Commerce Street and Troupe Street. It is impossible



to get from one room to the other without walking through every interior room, unless walking around on the large outdoor porch.

29

## First National Bank & City Hall

103 Commerce Street W, circa 1900

First National Bank was organized by AW Holley and Dr. RT Crozier. WA McAllister served as President of the bank until it was liquidated in 1932 during The Great Depression.

The location of this building has served many functions over the last 115 years. In the early 1800's, this block was the location of one of several bars. It held a few tables and chairs and a large bar with a wooden rail underneath where you would rest your feet. Sawdust covered the floor to hedge against customers not accurate enough to spit into the spittoons. Lighting was the glow of kerosene lamps with whiskey barrels lining the walls. One night, after the libations had been freely flowing, a spirited fight broke out, knocking over a kerosene lamp. The fire station, with water and a hand pulled cart, was only a block away. However, history records that excited drunks don't make very efficient firemen. Soon, realizing the futility of their efforts, the group gathered across the street to watch the fire. Someone shouted, realizing the fire would eventually consume the whiskey barrels, causing a large explosion, but as the fire burned down to the barrels, it flickered out and died.



The next morning the fire marshal examined the scene. He found that Old Man Miller, the proprietor, had watered his whiskey so much that it wouldn't even burn. Miller was so humiliated; he had to leave town and find another place for business. This could have been the inspiration for the old adage "If you're being run out of town, the best thing to do is jump out in front of the crowd and act like you're leading them."

30

## Coleman Opera House

102 S. Hancock Street, circa 1880

This large building was constructed in 1880 as an entertainment hall. New York show troops would spend summers here in four local hotels. Here they would fine tune their plays to carry back to Broadway each fall. Many events, including dances, concerts, and cock fights were held here.



Later, it was converted into a movie theater and served the community in that capacity until 1936.

31

## Wayside Inn

106 E. Hancock Street, circa 1850

Behind the Opera House is the brick three story building known as The Wayside Inn. In 1863 city leaders declared this “realizing the necessity of a more efficient provision for the sick and wounded soldiers, who are daily being thrown into our midst, and knowing it to be our duty to contribute to their comfort as much as lies within our power, we resolve to establish a “Wayside Inn.”



The city fathers translated this patriotic language into deed, and it served as a Confederate hospital.

32

## Main Street

Hancock Street

Mobley Hardware was the longest running hardware store in Fort Gaines, with over 65 years of continuous operation. The painted facade was added later, after the initial construction.



KJ’s Grilling Company (107 E. Carroll Street) was formerly Union

Savings Bank, owned and operated by Grady Girmsley. The original brick bank vault is still intact inside the restaurant. The bank was liquidated during the Great Depression.

On the wall of Sutton’s Museum on Carroll St. is a large “Coke” advertisement. It’s now hard to believe that Coke, Georgia’s gift to the thirsty world, once sold for 5 Cents a bottle. The sign was recently preserved by the Fort Gaines Historical Society.



The Icehouse, located just South of the Post Office, was the selling point for large blocks of ice; the original freezer door is still there.

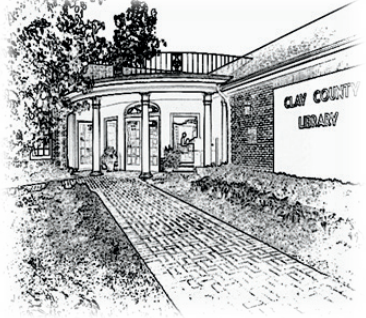
33

## Clay County Library

208 Hancock Street S

This library is a great source of pride within the local community. The facility encompasses 3,700 square feet, contains over 15,000 volumes and is recognized throughout the state for its excellent genealogy department.

In order to receive state grant assistance to begin construction \$40,000 cash had to be raised locally. The library board spearheaded a drive and the entire amount was collected without using a cent of taxpayer money.



34

## First Baptist Church

223 Washington Street S, circa 1890

The original Church building was erected in 1845 on the site of the present building, starting out with only fourteen members. Mrs. Mary Henderson, the widow of Major Henderson, a devout Baptist, gave the land upon which the original Church was built. The original building was replaced by the current structure in 1892. In 1928 additional Sunday School rooms were created by excavating a basement below the Church. Mr. LL Gwynn supervised the digging of the basement, where all was done by using only a scoop and a mule.



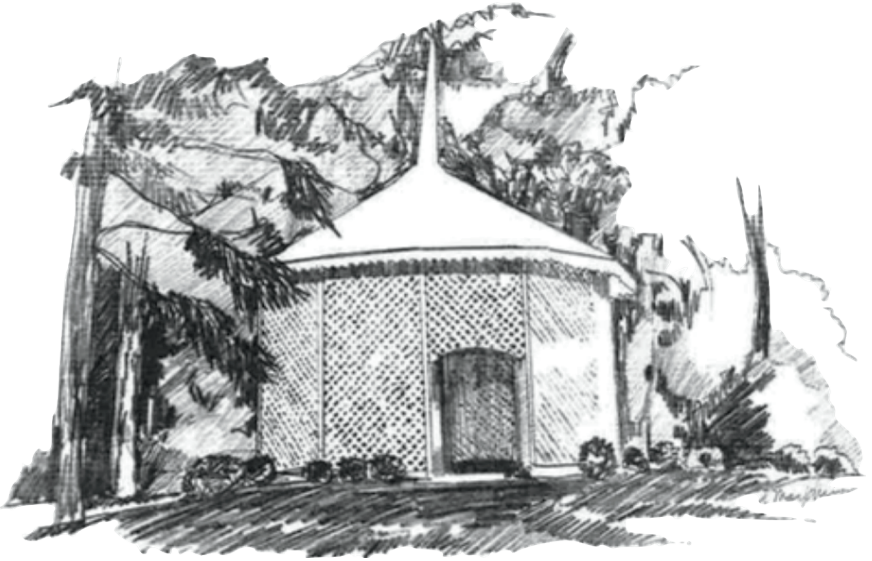
**END OF WALKING TOUR**  
**DISTANCE 1.5 MILES**

# Nearby Points of Interest

## ● New Park Cemetery

New Park Road

The gazebo here sits atop an Indian Mound that dates back to 200 AD as yet another reminder of the antiquity of this area. The gazebo was designed by C.W. Morris and constructed in 1880. The Fort Gaines Home and Garden Club was responsible for having repairs made to the gazebo in 1970 and again in 2003.





# Mirror Images

## ● Marjorie Whidden House

403 E. Hartford Street, circa 1880

This home, shown on the left below was built in the late 1880's and showcases beautiful Victorian period architecture. Exterior features include large bay windows, an elegant front porch and high interior ceilings. The mirror opposite of this house is located at 318 South Washington Street and shown on the right.



## ● Adams House

318 Washington Street S, circa 1875

This home, shown on the right above, was built in 1875. It was the childhood home of Minnie Olin Adams who moved away but returned with her two children. She then repurchased the house and lived there until she passed away in 1958.

## Cemocheechee Creek

Highway 39, between Cox Lane and Crozier Lane5

According to legend, the Creek's name, in local Indian language, translates to "a blind horse staggering through the woods" and that adequately describes the crooked course of the creek. When the first Creek Indian War ended in 1814, General Andrew Jackson demanded property from the Creeks to compensate for the cost of fighting the war. Cemocheechee Creek, from here eastward to the Altamaha River, near present day Jesup, Georgia, was the northern boundary of the territory ceded by the Creeks. On the Northern side of this creek, where it flows into the Chattahoochee is a site of a pre-historic community consisting of a large village area and three adjacent platform mounds.



## Brown Chapel

315 Church Street

The African Methodist Episcopal Church has a unique history in that it is the first major religious denomination in the western world that was organized due to sociological, rather than theological differences. It was the first African- American denomination organized and incorporated in the United States, born in a protest against slavery and discrimination against black people. During the War and Reconstruction the AME Clergy moved into the states of the collapsing Confederacy to pull newly freed slaves into their denomination. Here in Fort Gaines during reconstruction, on May 9, 1867, Washington Brown, Calvin Mitchell, and Jackson Comb paid ten dollars to James B. Slayton for land to build and organize an AME Church and thus became the first stewards and trustees for Brown Chapel. The first Church structure burned but was rebuilt in 1912 by Reverend DW Moman and Professor Asbury Speight. The building still shows strong Gothic Revival elements including large gothic windows and a beautiful soaring natural wood tongue-and-groove ceiling. It remains a dramatic example of the history of civil rights in Fort Gaines and Clay County.



## US Army Corp of Engineers Office

427 Eufaula Road

This office serves Walter F. George Reservoir and Lock & Dam. It is responsible for the overall management of the recreation facilities, water surface, and lake shoreline.

Inside their office is a map of the lake showing nearby points of interest, along with information about the formation of the lake and wildlife found in this area. Also, on display are artifacts from the area and a mural depicting life from pre-historic times through Native American history up to the 20th century.

## Walter F. George Lock & Dam

GPS Location: 31.6310362, -85.0447050

Work began on this project in 1955, resulting in this Lock and Dam which stretches 2 1/2 miles from high ground in Henry County, Alabama, to the point of entry off Highway 39 in Georgia. The lock's inside dimensions are 82 by 450 feet, with a lift of 88 feet, making it the second highest lift east of the Mississippi.



The resulting lake, created by the impoundment is called both Lake Walter F. George and Lake Eufaula, extends 85 miles up the River, covering more than 45,000 acres with 640 miles of shoreline. The drainage area of the dam is an area about the size of the state of Massachusetts.

The powerplant here produces an average of 45,000,000 kilowatts of electricity each year. That's enough to serve about 56,000 homes.

## Phenomenon Walking Trail

GPS Location of Starting Point: 31.6302137, -85.0469162

A recent addition to Fort Gaines, this walking trail begins at the parking area south of the dam, then leads to East Bank Boat Landing, and further runs along Eufaula Road to end at Bagby State Park. A 3.8 mile walk on a paved path, this trail is perfect for nature lovers and families with lakeside, forest, and even lowland swamp views. Two bridges are on the trail.



## George T. Bagby State Park

330 Bagby Parkway

This complex was formally dedicated in May of 1989.

Georgia continues to provide a system of state parks and recreation centers second to none in the country.

The Lodge was named in honor of the late Walter F. George, who rose from tenant farm beginnings to serve his native Georgia with honor and distinction in the United States Senate from 1923 until 1956.



Following his Senate years, President Dwight Eisenhower appointed Mr. George his personal ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization citing his unique status as “Statesman of the World”.

The Lodge includes over 300 acres with a marina with lakeside gas docks, tackle shop, pontoon boat rental, public boat ramp, 60 guest rooms with 5 cabins, swimming pool and restaurant. The 3.8 mile Phenomenon hiking and biking trail terminates at the park.

## Meadow Links Golf Course

110 Meadow Links Drive

When Meadow Links first opened to play in 1998, Golf Digest ranked the course as “the nation’s sixth best new affordable public course.” Today, players who appreciate a links style layout will be challenged at Meadow Links.

The course has been creatively woven into the gently rolling contours of the countryside, and architect Willard Byrd has designed a golf experience that rewards players with unique challenges and memorable views. The large greens offer subtle breaks. Lush green fairways are ribboned by long Bahia rough. Traps provide additional definition. Two large pecan trees and an old pear tree crown the hill behind the 10th green, where golfers can enjoy one of the finest views in the South.



These roadside markers with additional historical information are just a short drive from the Tour Stops. The signs are located just off the roadway. The GPS coordinates of each are listed for ease of access:

**Chattahoochee River Crossing** - across the River Bridge, into Alabama 31.6044935, -85.0592640

**Franklin First Beachhead** - across the River Bridge, into Alabama 31.6043816, -85600529

**Blue Star** - Corner of Highway 37 and Highway 39  
31.6033907, -85.0484276

**The Queen City** – Corner of Highway 37 and Highway 39  
31.6033907, -85.048476

**1814 Boundary** – across from the US Army Corp of Engineers Resource Mangers Office  
31.6338292, -85.0440247

**Oketeyeconne** – across from the US Army Corp of Engineers Resource Managers Office  
31.6338292, -85.0440247

**George T Bagby** – 330 Bagby Parkway  
31.6582812, -85.0595085

**The Lord's Acre** – 103 Broad Street, Bluffton  
31.5222497, -84.8676198

**Old Cotton Hill Seminary** – Shiloh Baptist Church  
31.7345736, -84.9758832

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James Edgar Coleman (1919-2016) returned to Fort Gaines after World War II where he commanded a Patrol Torpedo Boat Squadron in the Aleutians and the South Pacific. He then took over his father's business as a jobber for Standard Oil. The business expanded to gas stations and auto parts as time went on. Mr. Coleman loved Fort Gaines and was active in city and county government all his life. After retirement, he began authoring books about the history of this area as well as his own memoirs concerning growing up in Fort Gaines and his service in World War II.

## Sources

Many hours were spent doing the initial research as well as updating and revising the information for the latest revision. Thanks to the following publications and websites for their information:

Fort Gaines/Clay County Historical Society Newsletter 2010

Todd, P. N. "The History of Clay County", 1976

King, P.C. "Fort Gaines and Environs", 1976

Brown, Brian, "Vanishing South Georgia", website 2008-2018

Georgia Archives

South Florida Sun Sentinel, Jan. 6, 1988

Miami Herald, July 20, 2015

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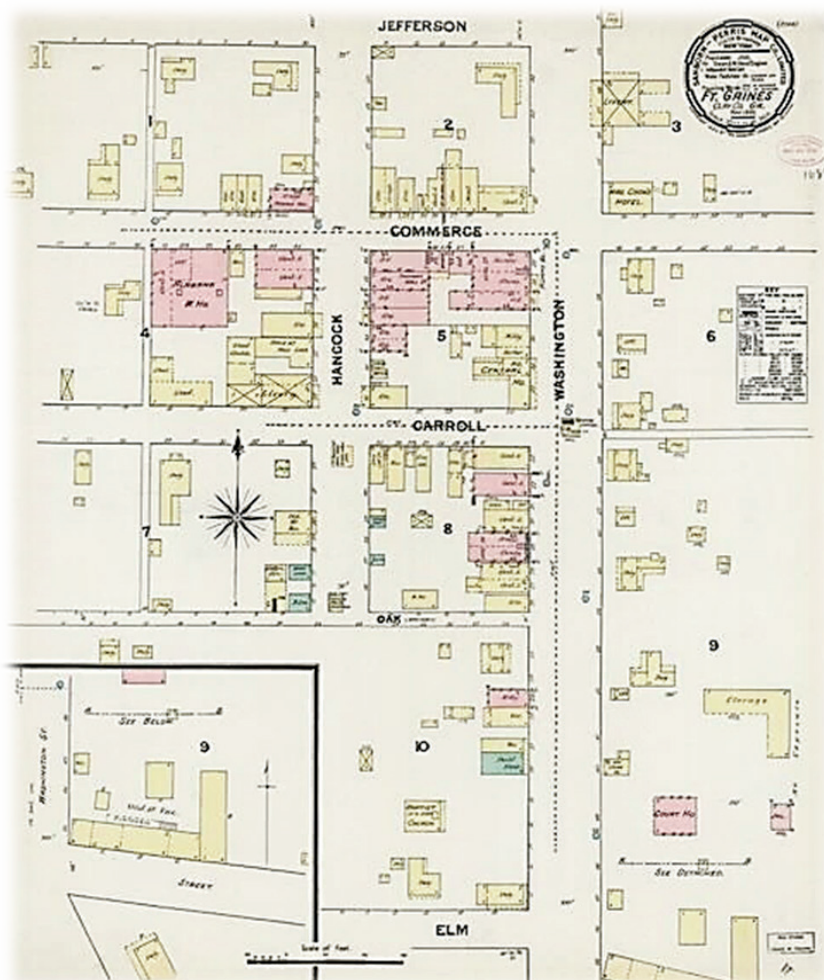
**The walking and cycle trail of Fort Gaines covers approximately 1.5 miles of our downtown area.**

**It is easy, level, and can take as long as you like to see. With a leisurely pace, you can walk the trail in about an hour.**

**If you stop, which we hope you will, talk to our local folks, read the historic marker signs, And enjoy the sights, it will take longer.**

**If you don't finish in one trip.....**

***Come back and see us again.***



MAP OF FORT GAINES – MARCH 1885

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 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FORT GAINES  
 FORT GAINES/CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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