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Georgia Historical Society to Dedicate “Lord’s Acre” Historical Marker

Savannah, GA- April 10, 2013. The Georgia Historical Society (GHS), along with the Bluffton City Council, and Bluffton Baptist Church, will dedicate a new historical marker recognizing the Lord’s Acre movement in Bluffton, Georgia, on Sunday, April 14, 2013, at 11:00 a.m. at Bluffton Baptist Church (103 Broad Street, Bluffton).

In 1922 Rev. H.M. Melton of Bluffton Baptist Church challenged his congregation to set aside one acre of farmland and donate the proceeds from crops raised there to the cash-poor rural church. Seven farmers agreed. The “Lord’s acres” not only thrived but seemed impervious to the boll weevil that plagued the community in 1923.

Encouraged by a *Time Magazine* article in 1924, and later by the Lord’s Acre Plan of the Farmers’ Federation of North Carolina, the movement spread, becoming an international and interdenominational phenomenon that continues to provide funding for churches to the present day. The movement has grown beyond farmland to include projects of donated time and service, and to auctions and sales featuring homemade goods, arts, and crafts.

“This historical marker represents a piece of American history that was nearly lost; we are grateful that Bluffton’s place in the Lord’s Acre movement is finally being recognized,” said Freddie Odom, Mayor of Bluffton. “Now that this story is able to reach a wider audience, I hope that people are reminded that religious faith and agriculture are not only honored traditions in Georgia, but also vitally important in shaping and improving our lives today.”

The Lord’s Acre historical marker will be the first erected by GHS in Clay County since the Society took over administration of the Georgia Historical Marker Program fifteen years ago. Since that time, GHS and the independent review committee that evaluates the many applications for potential markers from around the state have worked to expand and diversify the stories told through historical markers.

“Historical markers are a great way to learn the many and varied stories of Georgia’s past,” said Christy Crisp, GHS Director of Programs. “They allow residents and visitors alike to experience those stories in a way that you can’t in a museum or by reading a textbook – by actually standing in the place where history happened. We are very pleased to be involved in the dedication of this new marker in Bluffton, Georgia.”

The Georgia Historical Society has administered Georgia’s statewide marker program since 1998, erecting nearly 200 historical markers across Georgia on a wide variety of subjects. Now, online mapping tools allow you to design statewide driving routes based on historical markers, while mobile apps give information about markers nearby. Visit www.georgiahistory.com for more ways to use Georgia’s historical markers and experience history where it happened.

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ABOUT GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Georgia Historical Society (GHS) is the premier independent statewide institution responsible for collecting, examining and teaching Georgia history. GHS houses the oldest and most distinguished collection of materials related exclusively to Georgia history in the nation. To learn more, go to

www.georgiahistory.com