

A Century of History

**Savannah City Hall Centennial
1906-2006**

**City of Savannah
Research Library & Municipal Archives**

A Century of History

Savannah City Hall Centennial, 1906-2006

**City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives
Savannah, Georgia**

January 2006



On the cover:
Postcard of City Hall, looking north on Bull Street from Johnson Square, circa 1922.
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A Century of History, Savannah City Hall Centennial, 1906-2006.
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City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives
January 2006

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The flag of the City of Savannah was designed by Cornelia Sams Maclean (later Mrs. Willis Wilder) and adopted by City Council on January 18, 1905 as the City's official banner. The design includes a field of white bordered by blue and red, with the City's Coat of Arms in the center surrounded by thirteen stars representing the thirteen original colonies. As used in the flag, white denotes purity, red represents courage, zeal and fervency, and blue signifies loyalty, devotion, justice and truth.

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Introduction

Constructed between 1903 and 1906, Savannah's City Hall stands as a monument to the progressive spirit of the City of Savannah during the early 1900s when the municipal government strived to achieve "A Greater Savannah." The City desired a larger home to reflect the community's prosperity and to give the growing government adequate facilities with "a building for a century to come." Local architect Hyman Wallace Witcover designed a monumental Italian Renaissance Revival building in granite and limestone for the City and the Savannah Contracting Company executed the design. On January 2, 1906, Savannah's City Hall was thrown open to the citizens of Savannah for inspection. One writer from the *Municipal Journal*, of New York, declared he had "never seen a city building better adapted to the uses for which it was intended." City Council held their first meeting in the new Council Chamber on January 3, 1906. In the century since then, City Hall has served the local government and the community faithfully, and stands as a symbol of the City's progress and history.¹

The following timeline traces Savannah's City Hall through its first century of history, beginning in 1906 and ending in December 2005. This timeline was prepared to document City Hall's history in preparation for its 2006 centennial anniversary, as well as to serve as a research tool for future users. All information of pertinence found in the research process was included. However, there may be additional events that were not clearly documented and have slipped through the cracks of history. Therefore, this should not be considered "everything" that ever happened in or to City Hall.

Each entry of the timeline has been prepared so that it could stand alone as an individual article with unique sources and supporting images. Each entry is composed of five elements to facilitate future use: type of entry; date; narrative; supporting visual materials; and sources.

The **type of entry** indicates the subject matter of the entry based on seven categories. "**Archives**" entries pertain to actions and events related to the storage, preservation, use and disposal of municipal records. "**Artifacts**" entries provide information on artifacts currently stored or displayed in the building, or those that were once in the building. "**Events**" is a broad category that covers any important or interesting event that took place in, or in the immediate vicinity of, City Hall and could include visitors, social functions, awards, exhibits, demonstrations and protests, anniversary celebrations, or movies which featured the building. "**Images**" of the building appear when an

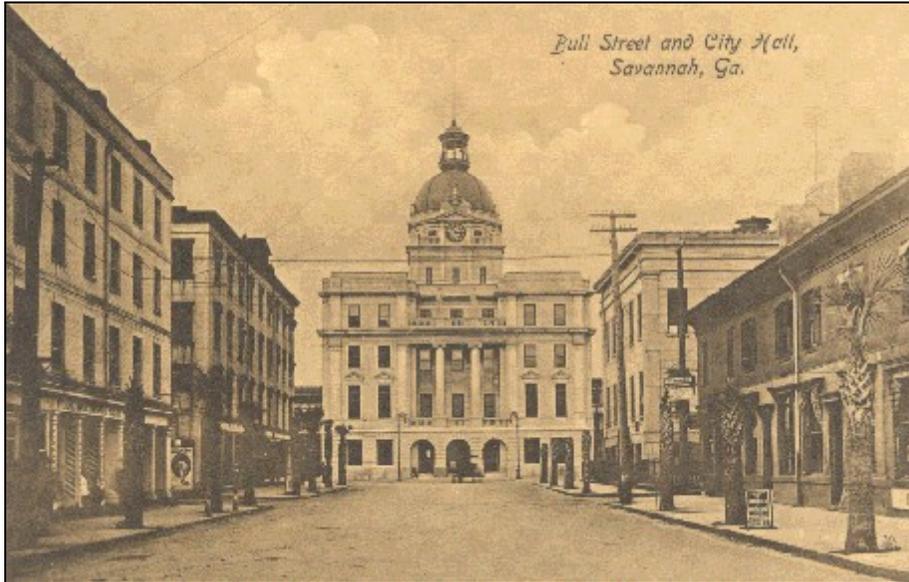
¹ For more information on the construction of Savannah's City Hall see *The Birth of City Hall, 1903-1906, Savannah City Hall Centennial, 1906-2006* (Savannah, Georgia: City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, 2006).

interesting or particularly good image of the building was found, but no additional information supports a detailed narrative. “**Municipal**” entries pertain to changes and growth of the municipal government of the City that have some bearing on the use of City Hall, for instance departments moving in or out of the building, new City programs for employees, or items related to a City Hall employee. “**Politics**” refers to events or changes in Savannah’s political climate or Savannah’s City Council that led to an important event occurring in City Hall, for instance the first female mayor and first African American mayor. “**Structure**” entries have the most direct bearing on the physical and aesthetic changes that occurred in City Hall over the past 100 years, including renovations, repairs, changes to original details, handicapped accessibility, and master plans.

The **date** includes the year, month and day of the entry to the greatest degree possible. Some entries span several months, or even years. Research for some entries did not provide specific dates only general time frames (year or month), these entries were placed at the beginning of the year or the month they relate to before those with specific dates. The **narrative** is the meat of the entry, including a description of the event and all pertinent dates, persons and departments involved. Entries include **supporting visual materials** (if available and/or known). Each narrative is followed by citations for the **supporting sources** in a smaller font size.

A comprehensive bibliography of this document has not been prepared, since each entry is fully cited within the body of the document. A listing of general sources, not specifically cited within the entries, has been supplied at the end of this volume.

A Century of History *1906 ~ 1909*



Postcard of City Hall and Bull Street, n.d.
V. & J. Duncan Antique Maps and Prints, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Structure/Final Payments ***1906***

During 1906, the first full year City Hall was open for business, the final payments on the building and its furnishings were made totaling \$63,484. In completing his 1906 annual report, Mayor Herman Myers reflected on the success of the new building:

Of the new City Hall it is not necessary to make more than a passing reference. We can justly regard it as one of the monuments of this administration. Visitors from all parts of the country have, during the past twelve months, praised it. Not only has it given the municipal government a home worthy of a city of Savannah's importance, but the building of the hall out of the city's regular funds has been an excellent advertisement for the city's financial condition and has indicated to the world Savannah's spirit of determination to advance at least in keeping with the progress of its sister cities, if not to excel them in many ways.

Report of the Hon. Herman Myers, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia, for the Year Ending December 31st, 1906. Savannah: Braid & Hutton, 1906. p22-23, 28.

***Events/First Flag at Half Staff & First Closing of Offices
1906 June 17***

On June 17, 1906, the flag over City Hall was lowered to half staff noting the death of former Savannah mayor Rufus Ezekiel Lester (1837-1906). This is the first documented instance of City Hall observing a death through the lowering of the flag and the closing of City Hall offices for a funeral, as specified in a special resolution of the Committee of the Whole adopted by City Council on June 19, 1906. At the time of his death, Lester (mayor of the City of Savannah, January 22, 1883-January, 21 1889) was residing in Washington, D. C. and serving as Representative of the 1st Georgia District. He sustained fatal injuries on the evening of Friday, June 15th, after falling through a skylight in the roof of his apartment building. Lester suffered multiple breaks, fractures, a dislocated shoulder, and shock before passing away around 6:00 pm on Saturday, June 16, 1906. Members of the Lester family and a delegation of Congress accompanied Lester's remains back to Savannah, arriving via train on June 19, 1906. The former mayor's body was taken to St. John's Episcopal Church where it laid in state, under the watch of an honor guard of the Confederate Veterans Association, until the funeral in the afternoon. The current Mayor, Aldermen, and City officials attended the funeral in a body, meeting first at City Hall and then marching together to the church.

"Caused Deep Sorrow in Savannah." *Savannah Morning News* (17 June 1906) 1:1.

"Funeral of Col. Rufus E. Lester." *Savannah Morning News* (18 June 1906) 8:3.

Larner, R. M. "After Brave Fight Colonel Lester Dies." *Savannah Morning News* (17 June 1906) 1:1.

"Resolution of the Committee of the Whole" (19 June 1906). *Report of the Hon. Herman Myers, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia, for the Year Ending December 31st, 1906*. Savannah: Braid & Hutton, 1906. p382-383.

"Special Council Meeting To-Day." *Savannah Morning News* (19 June 1906) 12:5.

"Veterans Will Guard Remains." *Savannah Morning News* (19 June 1906) 12:1.

***Structure/Landscaping
1907***

During 1907, the Park and Tree Commission placed two bay trees in the portico above the main entrance on Bay Street, "and they add a touch of life to the building."

Report of the Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1907. Savannah: 1907. p227.

***Structure/Vault Ventilation
1907-1908***

On January 29, 1908, City Council appropriated \$350 to the Committee on City Lots and Opening Streets for installing ventilation in the permanent record vault in City Hall's basement. In 1907, the Engineering Department had examined the vaults and prepared a plan to improve the ventilation. During 1908, City Engineer J. W. Howard prepared specifications for the system and supervised its installation with City Hall Custodian Ferguson. The final cost was only \$273, well below the original appropriation. In his annual report for 1908, Engineer Howard reported that the ventilation system had "proven satisfactory."

"Much Routine Business Before Council." *Savannah Morning News* (30 January 1908) 8:4.

Official Proceedings of City Council (29 January 1908) 371. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Report of the Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1907. Savannah: 1907. p201-202, 213.

Second Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1908. Savannah: 1908. p149, 179.

***Structure/Fire Alarm System
1907-1909***

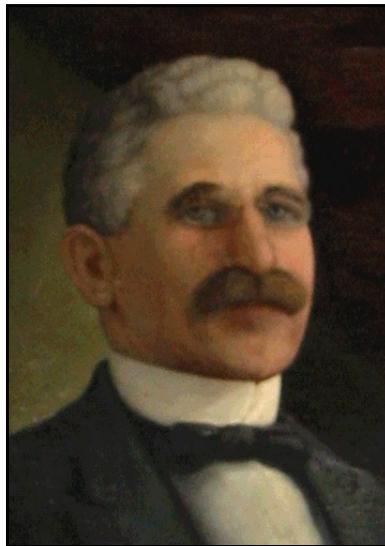
During 1907, work on the under-ground fire alarm system, superintended by W. D. Claiborne, was completed with the cable terminating in City Hall. At the end of the year, Superintendent Claiborne reported, "So far the under-ground System has given perfect satisfaction." In 1909, a new charging station for the system was installed in City Hall in a fireproof room, including a 12-circuit automatic switchboard and three double battery racks.

Report of the Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1907. Savannah: 1907. p125.

Third Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1909. Savannah: 1909. p106, 139.

***Artifacts/Myers Portrait
1907 March 12-13***

Sometime between 6:30 in the evening of March 12, 1907 and 9 o'clock in the morning of March 13, 1907, an unidentified person slashed the portrait of former mayor Herman Myers hanging in the Council Chamber. The oil portrait, painted by Ambrose DeBarra MacNeil in 1905, and presented by Myers to the City at the first City Council meeting held in the new City Hall, depicts an almost life-size image of Myers standing next to a table. The painting was disfigured by two slashes across the face in an x-pattern by a knife or some sharp instrument. Within thirty minutes of the discovery of the defacement by Messenger of Council Charles Gradot, Mayor George Tiedeman placed the investigation in the hands of Detectives Murphy and Umbach.



Mayor Herman Myers, oil portrait painted by Ambrose DeBarra MacNeil, 1905. Savannah City Hall, Council Chamber
Photographed by L. Spracher, 2005 for City of Savannah Research Library & Municipal Archives.
Used with permission.

Throughout the day, a steady flow of spectators visited the Council Chamber to view the damage. Neyle Colquitt, secretary to the mayor, temporarily repaired the portrait by pasting paper to the backside to hold the edges of the canvas together. "Before the flaps of canvas were pasted back in place...the appearance of the slashed face was ghastly."

A special meeting of Council was called for that very afternoon at 1 o'clock during which Council resolved to offer a reward of \$500 for the arrest of the guilty party and to restore or replace the painting at the

expense of the City. Alderman J. D. Epps and Mr. Charles P. Rossignol upped the reward with an additional \$50 each. Alderman Frank C. Battey spoke out about the vandalism:

I think it is the most outrageous piece of vandalism which has come to my attention since the visit of Sherman's army. Words fail me in expressing my contempt and horror at the act of the miserable miscreant who committed this crime. I cannot imagine any punishment too severe for him.

Mayor George W. Tiedeman told the local newspaper that Battey's remarks reflected the feelings of Council and wrote Mr. Myers expressing his regret over the incident. Myers responded with gratification for the steps taken by Council.



Savannah Newspaper Headlines, March 13, 1907.

"Picture of Former Mayor Herman Myers Mutilated as it Hung in Council Chamber."

Savannah Evening Press (13 Mar 1907).

Used with permission.

Unfortunately, the culprit was never apprehended and the slashing of Herman Myers portrait remains a mystery. The damage was immediately repaired by Mr. G. N. Thonnesen for about \$50, paid for by the City, and the portrait was re-hung in the Council Chamber by the end of April 1907.

"G. N. Thonnesen will Restore Myers Picture." *Savannah Morning News* (17 Mar 1907) 24:3.

"Keys to Chamber are Collected." *Savannah Morning News* (15 Mar 1907) 12.

"Mutilation of Ex-Mayor's Picture." *Savannah Morning News* (14 Mar 1907) 12:3.

"Picture of Former Mayor Herman Myers Mutilated as it Hung in Council Chamber." *Savannah Evening Press* (13 Mar 1907).

Structure/City Hall Custodian 1907 July 31

On July 31, 1907, City Council placed authority over the Custodian of City Hall, and all purchases connected with the position, in the hands of the Committee on City Lots and Opening Streets, then under the chairmanship of Alderman John H. H. Entelman, "there being many matters connected with the care of the hall which would come within the province of a committee of Council." The Mayor's powers to appoint and dismiss the Custodian of City Hall, provided for under the resolution adopted in December 1905 when the building was first occupied, were retained.

Official Proceedings of City Council (31 Jul 1907) 318. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Report of the Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1907. Savannah: 1907. p21, 448.

Structure/Elevator Repairs
1907 October 9

On October 9, 1907, City Council authorized an expenditure of \$143.60 for a complete set of cables for the City Hall elevator.

Official Proceedings of City Council (9 Oct 1907) 336. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Roof Repaired
1908-1912

Within weeks of first opening, the City Hall roof began experiencing problems with heavy rains and backed-up gutters. The roof became a recurring issue in the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the building. In 1908, under the supervision of City Engineer J. W. Howard, the roof over the City Engineer's office was repaired in an effort to prevent routine leaks which had damaged the ceilings, walls and equipment. In 1910, City Council budgeted \$750 for repairs to the roof for the following year. During 1912, Engineer Howard surveyed the roof, estimated the square footage, and prepared specifications for a new copper roof.

Fifth Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31st 1911. Savannah: 1911. p176, 194, 206.

Report of the Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1907. Savannah: 1907. p218.

Second Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1908. Savannah: 1908. p149.

Third [Fourth] Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1910. Savannah: 1910. p4.

Municipal/New Departments
1908

On February 12, 1908, City Council adopted an ordinance creating the new position of City Bacteriologist, under the Board of Sanitary Commissioners and the Health Officer, as "an aid to the control of Public Health and for the study of problems in sanitary science." The Board was authorized to conduct a competitive examination and hire a bacteriologist. The ordinance also stipulated that the bacteriologist would have and keep an office in City Hall and Council approved a special expenditure of \$6,000 for a lab. On April 15, 1908, the examination was held simultaneously in Savannah in the City Hall, New York City, Chicago, Washington D. C., and New Orleans. Dr. V. H. Bassett, former Resident Pathologist and Assistant Superintendent of the Milwaukee County Hospital, who tested in Chicago, was selected and began work by establishing the new lab on the third floor of City Hall in a suite of rooms adjacent to the Health Officer. The Bacteriologist's offices included a preparation room, photographic dark room and laboratory room and were set up for bacteriological, chemical and pathological examinations and experiments.

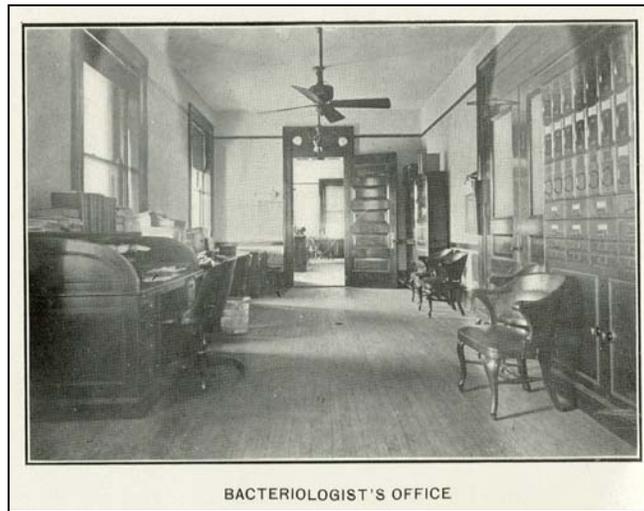
The equipment for bacteriological work is quite complete, including an autoclave, dry sterilizer, Arnold sterilizer, a large incubator, a small incubator, and the necessary glassware and supplies. The incubators are provided with Roux' metallic therm-regulators, and with Koch's safety burners, the connections under the incubator being metallic, thus avoiding danger from fire. The equipment for chemical analysis is less complete, but is sufficient for present needs, including a large Babcock centrifugal machine for the determination of fat in milk and cream.... A photographic outfit has already been secured and used in preparing records of inspections and in making records of unusual pathological conditions....



LABORATORY ROOM

Bacteriologist's City Hall Laboratory, 1908.
Second Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1908. Savannah: Savannah City Council, 1908.
 City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Miss Jane Van De Vrede, Dr. Bassett's former laboratory assistant at the Milwaukee County Hospital in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was hired as his assistant in Savannah and assisted in record keeping and managing the work load.



BACTERIOLOGIST'S OFFICE

Bacteriologist's Office, City Hall, 1908.
Second Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1908. Savannah: Savannah City Council, 1908.
 City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

In the first three months of operation, the lab conducted 405 tests, including those for diphtheria, typhoid fever, malaria, rabies, hookworm, and tests on water, milk, food and ice. The Bacteriologist distributed kits to local pharmacies for doctors to pick up and collect samples. They could then drop off the collected samples at the lab to be tested. The testing services were free of charge to the doctors.

Second Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1908. Savannah: Savannah City Council, 1908. p188-190, 216-218, 223, 227, 366-367, 446.

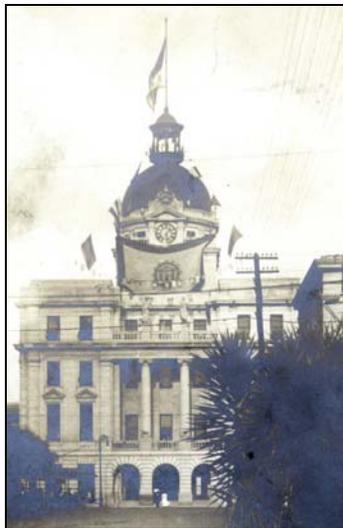
Events/Automobiles
1908 March 18-19



“Procession in front of City Hall,” c.18-19 March 1908.
MS 2168 Julian Quattlebaum Collection, Box 2, Photo Album, Picture #26965.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On March 18 and 19, 1908, Savannah witnessed the first of the “Great Savannah Races,” during which automobile drivers from around the world participated in a grand prix auto race for the Vanderbilt Cup on a new twenty-five mile race course laid out southwest of the city proper. Mayor George W. Tiedeman allowed most of the City employees to join thousands of spectators in cheering on the exciting events, though a skeletal staff remained at City Hall and kept all the departments officially open. “One of the more interesting sites on the streets of Savannah during the races was automobile processions.... They would form in the morning and drive to their positions.” One such procession was photographed in front of City Hall with members of the Racing Board and the Savannah Automobile Club posing.

Automobile races returned to Savannah on November 25-26, 1908 for the American Grand Prize Race sponsored by the Automobile Club of America.



Original City of Savannah flag draped across City Hall, photograph by Richard Stratton of Philadelphia, November 1908.
VM 1361PH Georgia Historical Society Photograph Collection, Box 4, Folder 2, Item 0597.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“City Employees [sic] will be Able to See Races.” *Savannah Morning News* (18 March 1908) 16:2.

Russell, Preston and Barbara Hines. *Savannah, A History of Her People Since 1733*. Savannah: Frederic C. Beil, 1992. p159.

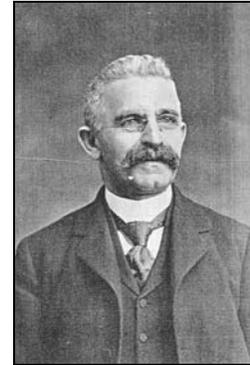
Wheeler, Frank T. *The Savannah Races*. Dover, NH: Arcadia Publishing, 1998. p23.

Municipal/New Departments 1909

In 1909, the Georgia Medical Society relocated all its books from the Georgia Historical Society's Hodgson Hall to City Hall in order to create more room for the Children's Department of the Public Library at Hodgson Hall. The medical books were placed in a room adjacent to the new Bacteriological Laboratory, creating a new medical library in City Hall.

Third Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1909. Savannah: 1909. p379.

Events/Myers Funeral 1909 March 25-26



Mayor Herman Myers, circa 1900.
Annual Report of Hon. Herman Myers, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Ga., for the Year Ending December 31, 1900... Savannah: Savannah City Council, 1901.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On March 25 and 26, 1909, the body of former mayor Herman Myers laid in state in City Hall beneath his own oil portrait hanging on the southern wall of the Council Chamber. Myers, Savannah's first Jewish mayor, passed away on March 24, 1909 after a lengthy illness. On the same day, City Council adopted a special resolution on his death calling for the flag to be lowered to half staff, City Hall to be draped in mourning, the City offices to be closed during the funeral, and Myers' body return to City Hall one final time.



"The funeral cortege with the remains of Hon. Herman Myers arriving at the City Hall" (25 Mar 1909).
JVM 005 Congregation Mickve Israel Visual Materials Collection, Oversized Box 5, Album 1 "In Memorium."
Savannah Jewish Archives, at the Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On March 25, 1909, Myers' casket was placed in the Council Chamber, surrounded by beautiful flowers, with police sentinels to guard as citizens and friends paid their respect in a steady stream until the doors were closed at 9 o'clock in the evening. "Thousands of persons from every walk in life and all ages went to the City Hall to get a last look at the man who in life did so much for Savannah." Visitors were again permitted on the 26th, until the remains of the popular mayor were removed from City Hall around 1 o'clock in the afternoon and escorted to Temple Mickve Israel for the funeral, followed by burial at Bonaventure Cemetery. The City of Savannah had a large floral arrangement depicting the official flag of the City sent to the funeral in Myers' honor.



"The remains of Hon. Herman Myers lying in state at the City Hall" (25 Mar 1909).
JVM 005 Congregation Mickve Israel Visual Materials Collection, Oversized Box 5, Album 1 "In Memorium."
Savannah Jewish Archives, at the Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

In his eulogy, Rabbi George Solomon used the City Hall building to highlight Myers' character and ensured that this beautiful building would forever be a memorial to the man who had worked so hard to have it built:

At the foot of our most beautiful thoroughfare, and in the very heart of our most important business center, the massive masonry of its granite walls typifying the solidity of his achievements, the enduring strength of his incorruptible integrity—the chaste elegance of its graceful symmetry and the seductive loneliness of its alluring approaches, symbolic of the genial sunniness which drew men irresistibly to him, stands our City Hall, monument at once of the winning fascination and lasting charm, not only of our city, but of Herman Myers as well.

On April 21, 1909, a special committee appointed to prepare a resolution concerning the late mayor submitted their report to Council reiterating Rabbi Solomon's views and including City Hall among Myers' greatest accomplishments in his work with the City:

The new City Hall, which has always been regarded as a very great success from a financial and architectural standpoint, was erected without additional taxation, and without injury to the departments of the city, or the retarding of the city's general progress.

"Herman Myers' Funeral To-Day." *Savannah Morning News* (26 March 1909) 12:1.

"Herman Myers Laid to Rest." *Savannah Morning News* (27 March 1909) 12:4.

"Herman Myers Passes Away." *Savannah Morning News* (25 March 1909) 12:2.

"Report of committee appointed to submit resolutions concerning the late Hon. Herman Myers" (21 April 1909). *Third Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1909*. Savannah: 1909. p570.

"Resolution on the death of Herman Myers" (24 March 1909). *Third Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1909*. Savannah: 1909. p560-561.

***Events/President Taft Visit
1909 November 4-6***

On the evening of November 4, 1909, President William Howard Taft arrived in Savannah, via the Central of Georgia Railroad, for a two-day visit at the tail end of his tour of the United States during the first year of his term. He stayed at the home of General W. W. Gordon on the corner of Oglethorpe Avenue and Bull Street. An elaborate banquet was given that night by the City of Savannah in honor of the President at the De Soto Hotel. Each guest received numerous souvenirs of the event, including a solid gold scarf pin with the seal of the City of Savannah, a small dinner plate hand-painted in gold with the President's monogram, and cigars with a picture of the President on the cigar band and individually wrapped in pouches with the name of each guest embossed on the outside.



"Banquet tendered Honorable William H. Taft President of the United States by the City of Savannah November 4th 1909" (program).

Myrick, Shelby, Sr. "Savannah's Dinner for President Taft." *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (3 March 1959) 8.

Vertical Files: Savannah History, 1900-1929.

Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

The following day, labeled "Taft Day" by the *Savannah Morning News*, numerous events were held throughout the city, including a concert by the Savannah City Band in Wright Square, acrobatic performances by the Six Flying Banwards in Forsyth Park Extension, flyovers of airships, inspection of torpedo boats off the Barnard Street dock, and a parade with President Taft driven through the city's streets, surely passing by City Hall which was decked out for the occasion with American flags and bunting. Taft left Savannah from Union Station on November 6, 1909 at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.



City Hall decorated for the visit of President Taft, November 1909.
VM 1374 Girard Photograph Collection, Box 1, Folder 15, Item 03.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



President Taft in automobile in front of the Gordon Home, November 1909.
Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“All Savannah Host to President Taft.” *Savannah Morning News* (6 November 1909) 12:1.

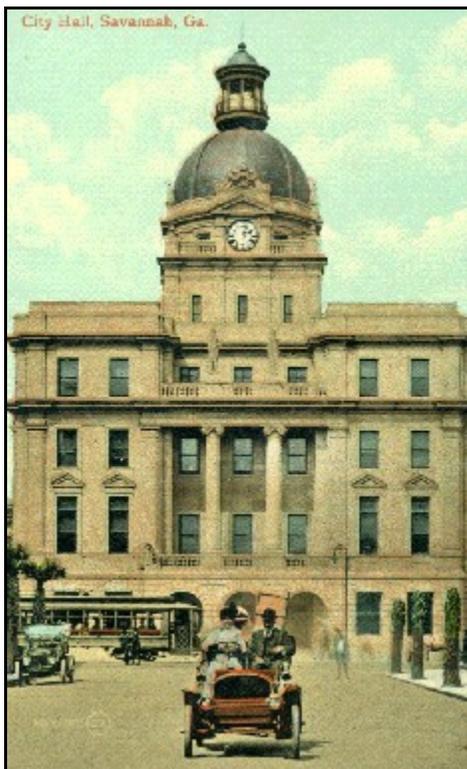
DeBolt, Margaret Wayt. *Savannah: A Historical Portrait* (3rd Edition). Gloucester Point, VA: Hallmark Publishing Company, 2001. p128.

“Fine Fireworks Seen in Park.” *Savannah Morning News* (5 November 1909) 16:6.

Myrick, Shelby, Sr. “Savannah’s Dinner for President Taft.” *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (8 March 1959) 8.

“Other Presidential Visits.” *Savannah Morning News* (12 November 1933) 6A:2.

A Century of History *1910 ~ 1919*



Postcard of City Hall and Bull Street, n.d.
1361PC Georgia Historical Society Postcard Collection, Box 7.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
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Events/Aldermen Funerals ***1910***

On the morning of January 3, 1910, Alderman Abram Vetsburg died suddenly of lung congestion at the Oglethorpe Sanitarium. Born in Bavaria in 1845, Vetsburg immigrated to the United States when he was only fifteen years old. After moving to Savannah, he became engaged in the mercantile business. In 1900, he was elected to the Board of County Commissioners. He was then elected to Savannah City Council and was sworn in on January 25, 1909. Less than one year later, Vetsburg met his untimely end while still in office. In his honor, City Council resolved to close City Hall offices during the funeral, lower the flag to half staff, and drape the City Hall building in mourning for thirty days. Vetsburg's funeral, attended by City Council in a body, was held at Temple Mickve Israel on January 4th, followed by interment at Laurel Grove Cemetery.

On December 18, 1910, Alderman Michael J. Kavanaugh, sworn in on the same day as Vetsburg, passed away. The same measures taken to honor Vetsburg were followed, including draping the City Hall and lowering the flag to half staff.

"Abraham Vetsburg Dies Suddenly." *Savannah Morning News* (4 January 1910) 12:6.

"Council Will Attend Funeral in Body." *Savannah Morning News* (4 January 1910) 12:6.

“Resolution on the Death of Alderman Abram Vetsburg” (3 January 1910). *Third [Fourth] Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1910*. Savannah: 1910. p511.

“Resolution on the Death of Alderman Michael J. Kavanaugh” (19 December 1910). *Third [Fourth] Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1910*. Savannah: 1910. p533.

Municipal/New Departments

1910 January 1

On January 1, 1910, the new headquarters for the Associated Charities officially opened in City Hall. During the next twelve months, its first year of operation, the Associated Charities furnished 323 meals to the homeless, visited 205 families with cases of sickness other than consumption, and worked with 55 cases of tuberculosis. The Police Department worked with the charity to refer those in need to the office in City Hall.

Third Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1909. Savannah: 1909. p16.

Third [Fourth] Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1910. Savannah: 1910. p373, 375-376, 381.

Events/Parade

1910 April 7

On April 7, 1910, the Greeks of Savannah celebrated the 80th anniversary of the nation of Greece’s independence from Turkish rule. The anniversary was marked throughout the day with religious and civic events, including a parade, addresses, banquet and dance. The previous day, George Peters came before Council representing the Greek community to request Council to review the parade before City Hall. Council accepted and the following day, the parade, including most of Savannah’s Greek population, passed in front of several members of Council on the steps of City Hall. For the occasion, from the rooftop of City Hall, the “Greek emblem was flying to the breeze from the flagpole directly beneath the flag of the United States.”

“Communication from sundry Greeks by George Peters” (6 April 1910). *Third [Fourth] Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1910*. Savannah: 1910. p544.

“Grecian Flag is Flung to Breeze.” *Savannah Morning News* (8 April 1910) 6:4.

Structure/City Hall Custodian

1912

In 1912, after six years, R. W. Ferguson was succeeded by J. Chris Werntz as Custodian of City Hall. Werntz would fill the position for several years to come, at least until 1917.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1915. Savannah: 1915.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1916. Savannah: 1916.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1917. Savannah: 1917.

Fifth Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31st 1911. Savannah: 1911.

Messages to City Council of Hon. Richard J. Davant Mayor...of the City of Savannah Georgia for the Year Ending December 31st 1913. Savannah: 1913.

Report of the Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1907. Savannah: 1907.

Report of the Hon. Herman Myers, Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia, for the Year Ending December 31st, 1906. Savannah: Braid & Hutton, 1906.

Second Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Richard J. Davant Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1914. Savannah: 1914.

Second Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1908. Savannah: 1908.

Sixth Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31st 1912. Savannah: 1912.

Third Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1909. Savannah: 1909.

Third [Fourth] Annual Report of Hon. Geo. W. Tiedeman Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia for the Year Ending December 31, 1910. Savannah: 1910.

Structure/City Hall Custodian 1913 January 27

On January 27, 1913, City Council passed an ordinance placing the Custodian of City Hall back under the direct supervision and control of the Mayor rather than the Committee on City Lots and Opening Streets. A month later, Custodian J. Chris Wertz presented a report on the building's furniture to Council at the March 5, 1913 meeting.

"An Ordinance to Regulate the Office of Custodian of the City Hall..." (27 January 1913). *Messages to City Council of Hon. Richard J. Davant Mayor...of the City of Savannah Georgia for the Year Ending December 31st 1913. Savannah: 1913, p549-550.*

Official Proceedings of City Council (5 Mar 1913) 27. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Inventory 1913 December

In December of 1913, auditors Marwick, Mitchell, Peat and Company appraised all City lands and buildings, including the City Hall property. The City Hall lot on Bay at Bull Street, measuring 120 feet by 90 feet, was valued at \$120,000, and the building was appraised at \$220,000. An inventory of all furniture and fixtures in City Hall included typewriters, filing cabinets, adding machines, and a water cooler. The Gamewell Fire Alarm System equipment located in City Hall was worth an estimated \$4,000.

Messages to City Council of Hon. Richard J. Davant Mayor...of the City of Savannah Georgia for the Year Ending December 31st 1913. Savannah: 1913. p116, 119, 121-122, 329.

Structure/Elevator 1914 November 11

On November 11, 1914, the Finance Committee of City Council authorized the Purchase Board to contract for the necessary repairs to put the City Hall elevator in the proper working condition.

Official Proceedings of City Council (11 Nov 1914) 306. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Short Session City Council." *Savannah Evening Press* (12 November 1914) 2:3.

Municipal/New Departments 1915

During the year 1915, the Playground Department established an office on the first floor of City Hall for Director Montague Gammon.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1915. Savannah: 1915.

Events/125th Anniversary of Municipal Government
1915 March 8

On March 8, 1915, Savannah celebrated the 125th anniversary of the inauguration of the first mayor and aldermen of the municipality. On March 1, 1790, as specified by the act of the General Assembly of December 23, 1789 incorporating Savannah, an election was held at the Market House for the City's first aldermen. Seven men were elected that day, including Joseph Clay, Jr., Joseph Habersham, Edward Lloyd, Matthew McAllister, Justus H. Sheuber, and Samuel Stirke. The following Monday, March 8, 1790, John Houston (1744-1796), former Governor of Georgia, was chosen by the elected aldermen from their own body as the first Mayor of Savannah. Houston took the oath of office in the council room of the Court House.

Gamble, Thomas, Jr. "Municipality 125 Years Old To-day." *Savannah Morning News* (8 March 1915). Gamble Collection, "Stories of Savannah," REF 975.8 G. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Davant Funeral
1915 October 9

On October 9, 1915, Mayor Richard J. Davant (1866-1915) died unexpectedly in a hotel in Millen, Georgia. Davant, only forty-nine years old, was currently serving his second term as Mayor of Savannah. Davant's remains were brought back to Savannah and laid in state in the Council Chamber for public viewing on October 11th and 12th. A "constant throng" of people came through to pay respects to the late mayor. The casket was surrounded by floral arrangements, many from the various City departments, and "the southern end of council chamber was a mass of flowers."



"Mayor Davant's Funeral Procession
 Leaving City Hall for Trinity Church."
Savannah Morning News (13 October 1915) 14:2.
 Used with permission.

The funeral was held at Trinity Church on October 12th and began at 3:30 in the afternoon with a funeral procession removing the body from City Hall and transporting it to the church on a horse drawn caisson draped with flags, followed by Davant's riderless horse led by a member of the Chatham Artillery. The procession, led by Chief M. L. Meldrim and a squad of mounted police, included members of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, the Knights of Pythias, and all the City departments on foot. The following day, the

Savannah Morning News ran a photograph of the funeral procession with the caption, "The streets are jammed with sorrowful people on either side, and the military organizations are seen formed in the back towards the City Hall."

Chairman of Council Wallace J. Pierpont was elected by members of Council to fill Davant's vacancy on October 18, 1915. On October 27, 1915, the committee appointed to prepare an appropriate memorial to the late mayor reported to Council and included his contribution to the construction of City Hall in the highlights of his achievements.

On the committee charged with the erection of the city hall he was of great value. He entered zealously into the planning of the handsome structure that is now one of the chief buildings of Savannah. Criticising [sic] intelligently, suggesting wisely, supervising comprehensively, his name upon the tablet in its main corridor attests valuable service rendered over the entire period of conception and execution of the plans that gave to the municipal government a home in keeping with the importance of the city.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1915. Savannah: 1915. p49-51.

"Fully 5,000 View Late Mayor's Body." *Savannah Morning News* (12 October 1915) 14:1.

"Mayor Davant Dies Suddenly in Hotel in Millen" *Savannah Morning News* (10 October 1915) 24:1.

"Mayor Davant's Funeral Procession Leaving City Hall for Trinity Church." *Savannah Morning News* (13 October 1915) 14:2-5.

"Name Pierpont for Mayoralty." *Savannah Morning News* (14 October 1915) 12:1.

"Thousands Pay the Last Tribute to Mayor Davant." *Savannah Evening Press* (12 October 1915) 10:2.

"Two Mayors Elected For Four-Year Terms." *Savannah Morning News* (24 February 1937) 14:3.

"Will Bury Mayor Davant To-Morrow." *Savannah Morning News* (11 October 1915) 12:1.

Events/Investigation of Fire Chief Engineer Monroe 1916 April 18

On April 18, 1916, at 8:30 in the evening, City Council met to hear charges of misconduct against John H. Monroe, Chief Engineer of the Fire Department. Alderman Joseph A. Logan, member of the Committee on Fire, brought the charges which were investigated by City Attorney R. J. Travis. W. W. Osborne represented Monroe in the hearing. An estimated two to three hundred spectators crowded the Council Chamber to hear the proceedings, during which Mayor Pierpont threatened to clear the room several times following applause or outbursts.

Three charges were brought against Monroe including: private use of public funds in the purchase of four automobile tires and rims on December 3, 1915 resulting in a bill of \$285.18 against the City; gross insubordination for referring to an order of the Mayor given on March 28, 1916 with, "I'll be damned if they (meaning the mayor and board of aldermen) can put anybody in my department I don't want"; and conduct to the prejudice of discipline and good order at the December 25, 1915 cotton fire on West Bay Street when he ordered Police Lieutenant B. S. Bryant away from his place of duty causing unnecessary friction between the two departments.

Mr. Monroe's defense was that he purchased the tires without going through the formality of getting the authority of the board of purchase because he considered it an emergency matter and that a delay might operate against the efficiency of the department. He brought out in his testimony, however, that he had conferred with Chairman W. A. Pigman of the fire department and that his action had the sanction of that official.

After over four hours of testimony and deliberation, City Council acquitted Monroe of the first charge, but found him guilty of the charges of insubordination and misconduct in a vote of eight to two, with Alderman Schroder abstaining on the grounds that the offenses committed did not justify the severe penalty. Monroe was immediately dismissed from his position and the office abolished in order to prevent Monroe from

being restored to the position through legal proceedings. Arthur J. Tosach, First Assistant Fire Chief, was temporarily placed in charge of the department.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1916. Savannah: 1916. p612-614.

"Council Ousts Chief Monroe." *Savannah Morning News* (19 April 1916) 14:5.

Events/Flag Day & Preparedness Parade 1916 June 14

On June 14, 1916, in observance of Flag Day, the community staged a Preparedness Parade up Bull Street, marching in front of a decorated City Hall.

An army of peace, yet an army of preparedness; a mighty protest of an aroused people against insecurity, over-confidence, the lulling of a nation into a fool's paradise of perpetual exemption from the shock of armed conflict. It was, as it has been elsewhere, the soul of the people uttering its demands in a panorama that made mere speech speechless by comparison....

The inspiration of the parade will long remain. Simple though the carrying of the flag was, it yesterday insured for it a closer and dearer relationship to every parader....



Preparedness Parade marches from City Hall, photograph by Foltz, June 14, 1916.
 "Some Striking Groups in the Preparedness Parade." *Savannah Morning News* (15 June 1916) 12:3.
 Gamble Collection, "Stories of Savannah," REF 975.8G.
 Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



Savannah Girl Scouts march in the Preparedness Parade, June 1916.
 Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Starting at 6 o'clock in the evening, over 7,000 marched from City Hall to Park Avenue led by Grand Marshal J. Pearce Wheless. Along the parade route, businesses and homes were adorned with flags as were the Savannah Electric Company's streetcars and ships in the harbor. Participants, all carrying American flags, included members of the Rotary Club, the 1st Sanitary Corps, the Benedictine Cadets, the Chevy Chase Girls, the Boy and Girl Scouts, about 3,000 school children, a men's division led by Mayor W. J. Pierpont and members of Council, and a women's division representing practically every women's organization in the city.

The old flag probably never looked more beautiful than when it came down Bull street like a flood. The murmuring voices of the multitude of spectators were almost hushed. As the parade passed[,] the sun for a few moments gleamed gently through the threatening clouds and smiled upon the banner of liberty. Its genial light touched the red and gave to it a deeper crimson hue, typifying the blood of the heroes who died for it; it touched the blue and it became a royal purple, the color of a kingly nation; it touched the white and made it snow-like in its purity, fair symbol of its purport. Nature's choice drapery of green was overshadowed. From overhead it seemed as though a myriad of stars had dropped from beyond the dark gray heavens and been caught by a marching host. The cool air seemed to play lovingly with the bunting, to touch the flag as though with fingers of endearment. The trees nodding before every passing breeze seemed to drop their graceful branches lower as though they would kiss the flag. And when the wind came in greater volume and swept along the street it proudly bore the flag without a furl that all might admire and love it more.

It was Flag Day in reality and Savannah to-day is the better for it and will be the better for it for many days to come.

Photographer Foltz snapped about fifty photographs of the parade from a dozen different points along the route of the different divisions and groups. The images appeared in the newspaper the following day and included one of City Hall. Foltz reported that he would sell sets of the photographs as "souvenirs of this unique public demonstration."

"Foltz Took Many Pictures of Parade." *Savannah Morning News* (15 June 1916) 5:5.

Gamble Collection, "Stories of Savannah," REF 975.8G. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Gamble, Thomas, Jr. "Emotions Stirred by Marching Throng." *Savannah Morning News* (15 June 1916) 12:2.

"Thousands Join in Stirring Protest Against Insecurity." *Savannah Morning News* (15 June 1916) 12:1.

Artifacts/S. S. Savannah Model ***1916 December 20***



City Hall Folder: *S. S. Savannah* model in the Council Chamber (27 October 1964).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On December 20, 1916, Captain A. F. Churchill, of the Churchill Line, received a model of the *S. S. Savannah*, the first steamship to cross the Atlantic Ocean. The eight foot hull (eleven feet from tibboom to taftrail) and rigging of the model had been constructed by the Central of Georgia Railway. I. G. Pitman, a stevedore of the Churchill Line, acquired the model from the Central and transported it to Nova Scotia where he worked with elderly sailing captains to correct the model's rigging. Captain Churchill had the model returned to Savannah in the hopes that it would be used in connection with a centennial celebration of the *S. S. Savannah* in 1919 and would then be acquired by the City and placed in a glass case for public display at the Georgia Historical Society. The model was considered very detailed and accurate with lifeboats, gangway, brass ship bells, two water tanks, two anchors, two brass cannons, and a carved wooden head of Captain Moses Rogers standing on the poop deck.*

**The model was on display in City Hall's Council Chamber for many years. Today it can be viewed by the public at the Savannah History Museum.*

"Model of Savannah is Exhibited Here." *Savannah Morning News* (21 December 1916) 14:5.

Events/Meldrim Funeral 1916 December 20

On the afternoon of December 20, 1916, Police Chief Marvin L. Meldrim (1872-1916) died at Park View Sanitarium following a ten day illness from an infection resulting from an appendicitis operation. Meldrim entered the Savannah Police Department at the age of twenty-three in 1896 and was elected Chief on January 28, 1913. "Probably no man, with the exception of the late Mayor Davant, holding a place in public life in Savannah was held in such high esteem by every one who knew him as was Chief Meldrim."

As an indication of his standing in the community and in the City, City Council passed a resolution on December 20, 1916, expressing their desire that the late chief's remains lay in state in City Hall on the day of the funeral, "in order that the public may have an opportunity to pay to the memory of Mr. Meldrim its last tribute of respect." Meldrim's remains laid in state in the Council Chamber on the morning on December 22nd in full dress uniform guarded by four patrolmen with an additional two mounted officers at the entrance to City Hall. Work in City Hall came to a standstill and people talked in hushed voices until after Meldrim's remains were removed. Hundreds "from all walks of the city's life, filed slowly and reverently past the body of the dead chief."

When the time for the funeral came Mayor Pierpont, with the aldermen and other city officials, lined the corridor leading to the Council room. The members of the police department, under the leadership of Lieut. B. S. Bryant, acting chief, were the last to view the body, marching past in single file. Then they were drawn up opposite the City Hall and when the casket, borne by the sergeants of the force, was taken to the street and the doors of the hearse closed upon it, the members of the department, four abreast, headed the long procession which went out Bull street to Oglethorpe [avenue]...

The funeral procession began at City Hall's steps and included members of the Police force and City Council. Eight police sergeants acted as pall bearers. Dewey, Chief Meldrim's favorite horse, followed the casket riderless with empty boots. As the procession left for Laurel Grove Cemetery, "Big Duke," the fire bell, tolled.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1916. Savannah: 1916. p615.

"Chief M. L. Meldrim Loses Brave Fight." *Savannah Morning News* (21 December 1916) 14:3.

"Chief Meldrim is Buried." *Savannah Evening Press* (22 December 1916) 16:2.

"Chief Meldrim is Laid to Rest." *Savannah Morning News* (23 December 1916) 8:6.

"Chief Meldrim to be Buried To-Day, City Mourns His Death, Body Will Lie in State at the City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (22 December 1916) 10:2.

Structure/Fire Alarm System

1917

During 1917, improvements made on the City's fire alarm system included the installation of additional boxes, cables, wires, and the rewiring of the main switch board at City Hall.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1917. Savannah: 1917. p151.

Structure/Tower Clock

1917 April 26

On April 26, 1917, T. P. Sandiford, City Electrician, was made keeper of the City Clocks, relieving the Wells Jewelry Company. According to Sandiford's 1917 annual report, "I shortly afterwards made a report to Fire Chief McFarland, calling attention to the unsafe condition of the weights in the City Hall Clock. This has since been remedied by workmen under direction of Chief Engineer Connant."

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Wallace J. Pierpont Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1917. Savannah: 1917. p154.

Events/Flag Resolution for World War I

1918 January 2

On January 2, 1918, City Council passed a resolution, presented by Alderman John W. Daniel, Sr., making it unlawful to fly any national flags other than that of the United States or one of its allies from City Hall's dome during the war (World War I):

Whereas, the time has come in the history of this country when every citizen, regardless as to whether he is a native-born son or of foreign birth, should deem is [sic] a sufficient honor to be known as an American, laying aside in spirit as well as in form all allegiance ti [sic] any foreign land, and acknowledging but one flag, the Stars and Stripes of the United States, therefore be it

Resolved, by the Mayor and aldermen of the city of Savannah, in Council assembled, That from and after this date no flag of any foreign land shall be displayed on the City Hall except the flag of such nation as may be at the time an ally of the United States in war, or the flag of such nation as may have a vessel of war visiting the port officially, or of such nation as may have at the time a high official of its government as the official guest of the city.

During the same Council meeting, Alderman Joseph A. Logan suggested the City maintain a "Roll of Honor" of all those Savannahians who had served in the armed services of the United States during the war. Council adopted a resolution to begin such a roll and to encourage relatives and friends of soldiers to cooperate by sending the necessary information to the Mayor's office for the compilation of an official document to be kept by the Clerk of Council.

Official Proceedings of City Council (2 Jan 1918) 402. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Only Old Glory to Fly O'er City Hall; Alien Flags are Barred; U-Boats Will Find No Place to Raise Teuton Banner." *Savannah Morning News* (3 January 1918) 10:2.

Events/Armistice Day

1918 November 11

On Monday, November 11, 1918, Savannah celebrated Armistice Day of World War I with a spontaneous celebration as news of Germany's surrender spread through the city starting at dawn. By 10 o'clock, a crowd, "in a delirium of joy," had gathered on the corner of Bull and Broughton streets and burned the Kaiser in effigy.

The official municipal celebration started at the same hour, when the fire department's engines and trucks, gaily decorated and loaded with waving, cheering adults and children, set out to tour the city. At 10:15 the whistles of industrial plants and all the ships in the harbor joined in for more than a half hour's "serenade."... Spontaneous talks by Recorder John E. Schwarz, Mayor Pierpont, and Dr. Wilder were greeted with wild cheers at different times during the day.... Banks and stores were closed all day, and courts as well as school classes were suspended.... That night, for the first time in months and with special permission from James M. Dixon, fuel administrator, the city was brilliantly illuminated....

From the dome of City Hall, the flag of the Fourth Liberty Loan Drive was flown below the United States flag. Mayor Wallace J. Pierpont designated November 14th as a legal holiday called "Victory Day" and preparations for a large parade began. However, a meeting at City Hall on the 12th resulted in the cancellation of the parade and holiday in light of the previous day's events and the probability that there would be some form of national celebration in the weeks following. "Yesterday's celebration sprang out of the heart and will of the people themselves...for all the world was making holiday together, and there was no one so poor or so humble or so high as not to share in it."

"City Holds Carnival When News of Peace is Reached." *Savannah Morning News* (12 November 1918) 10:1-2.

Elise Wortsman, "How Savannah Celebrated World War I Armistice Day," *Savannah Evening Press* (16 September 1944) 3:2.

"Formal Celebration Called for Thursday." *Savannah Morning News* (12 November 1918) 10:2.

Gamble Collection, "Fifty Years' Memories of Savannah" REF 975.8 GAM. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"Parade Plans are Abandoned." *Savannah Morning News* (13 November 1918) 10:3.

Events/U. S. S. Savannah Visit 1919 February 16-19

Between February 16th and 19th, 1919, the *U. S. S. Savannah* visited the city it was named for. The *U. S. S. Savannah* was a submarine tender seized from the Germans at the beginning of World War I. The 7,000-ton ship was built at Flensburg, Germany and was originally named *Saxonia*. In November 1917, it was commissioned the *U. S. S. Savannah* and had since gone 12,220 miles on the high seas as the "mother ship" or flagship of the 8th Division, 3rd Submarine Flotilla. On its visit to Savannah, the group was docked at the Atlantic Coast Line terminals and opened to the public for inspection.

On the February 16th, immediately after the arrival of the fleet, Captain Stapler, commanding officer of the division, and Lieutenant Commander Pierce called on Mayor Murray Stewart at City Hall. In return, the Mayor and Reception Committee were guests at a luncheon on the *U. S. S. Savannah*. On February 19th, around 10:30 in the morning, the submarine tender set sail from Savannah bound for Cuba's Guantanamo Bay. That day, Mayor Stewart wrote Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, thanking him for the division's visit to the city.

"Cordial Welcome for Submarines." *Savannah Morning News* (18 February 1919) 10:3.

Gamble, Thomas. "Thousands Visit Submarine Fleet." *Savannah Morning News* (17 February 1919) 10:2.

"Submarines Sail for Florida Ports on Way to Guantanamo." *Savannah Morning News* (20 February 1919) 12:6.

"Subs Leave To-Day for Cuban Waters." *Savannah Morning News* (19 February 1919) 12:1.

Artifacts/Ship Tablets 1919 April 21

On April 21, 1919, two bronze tablets were unveiled on the front of City Hall, on either side of the entrance, to commemorate the centenary of the *S. S. Savannah*, the first steamship to cross the Atlantic Ocean, and in honor of the *S. S. John Randolph*, the first iron-hulled vessel, launched in Savannah in 1834. The anniversary of the *S. S. Savannah's* sailing is actually May 22nd, celebrated as National Maritime Day,

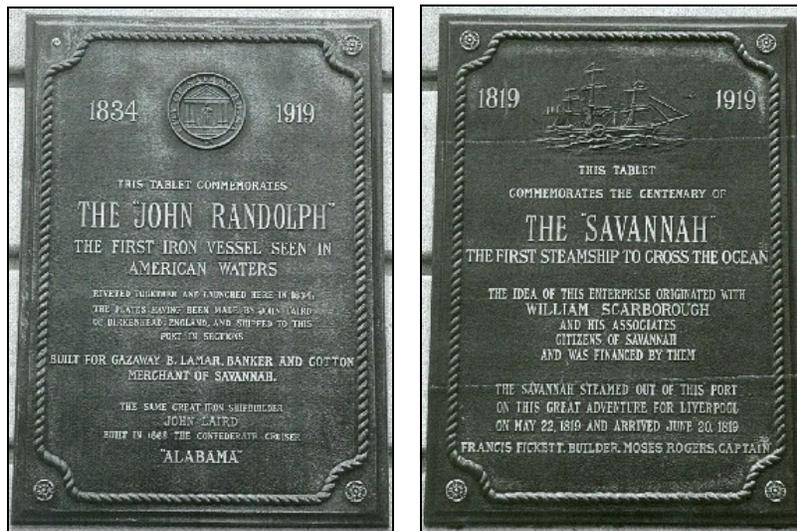
however, event planners felt the weather would be better for out of town guests if the unveiling was held in April. The day long celebration was followed by a week of events around the city reflecting a variety of historical subjects.

Invitations to the dedication ceremony, bearing the seal of the City of Savannah in gold, were sent to numerous dignitaries and those in attendance included Governor Dorsey, naval officers of the *Yamacraw*, Admiral Victor Blue, representing the United States Navy, Senator Hoke Smith, and Mayor E. E. Rogers, of New London, Connecticut, a descendant of Moses Rogers, captain of the *S. S. Savannah*.



“The City of Savannah requests the honor of your presence...”
 Gamble Collection, “Story of the Steamship Savannah...” RS GAM 975.8 GAM.
 Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
 Used with permission.

The day began with an address by A. R. Lawton in the Council Chamber “in which he reviewed the historic attitude of Savannah as a municipality towards transportation, and the courage and enterprise of her citizens of the past and present in undertaking the great projects which have culminated in placing her first among Southern ports.” The lecture gave visitors a chance to view several artifacts from the voyage of the *S. S. Savannah*, including the iron chair and table presented to Captain Moses Rogers by the Czar of Russia, the ship’s log, a silver pitcher, as well as a large scale model of the ship, owned by Captain A. F. Churchill, on display in the Council Chamber on the second floor of City Hall.



Savannah maritime history plaques, City Hall, Bay Street façade, installed 1919.
 Photographed by L. Spracher, 2005 for City of Savannah Research Library & Municipal Archives.
 Used with permission.

Following Lawton's address, the crowd moved to the front steps of City Hall where the Mayor's daughters, Mrs. F. I. Gibson and Miss Stewart, unveiled the tablets. "The unveiling ceremonies were very simple, Mrs. Gibson and Miss Stewart cutting the cords that held their covering in position. Moving pictures were taken of the scene after the tablets were unveiled, with the Mayor and Mrs. Stewart and their two daughters in the foreground, and with the Governor and his staff descending the steps of the City Hall."

In reality, the tablets were plaster models painted bronze, the permanent tablets not yet ready. However, their design was "greatly admired for their dignified proportions and their design and inscriptions." The tablet commemorating the *S. S. Savannah* included a bas-relief of the ship at the top, while that for the *S. S. John Randolph* exhibited the seal of the City of Savannah. The inscriptions for both were written by Mrs. Meldrim, a major organizer of the event.

The unveiling was followed by a harbor trip for invited guests on the *Yamacraw*, sent from the Charleston navy yard for the celebration. A luncheon was served on board the two hour trip. A banquet for nearly three hundred guests was held at the De Soto Hotel in the evening, followed by public addresses and music by the Fort Screven Band at the Municipal Auditorium at 8:30 in the evening.

Braynard, Frank O. *S. S. Savannah, the Elegant Steam Ship*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1988. p212.

"Centennial Tablets Will Be Unveiled at Ceremonies To-morrow at Noon at City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (20 April 1919) 14:2.

DeBolt, Margaret Wayt. *Savannah: A Historical Portrait* (3rd Edition). Gloucester Point, VA: Hallmark Publishing Company, 2001. p109.

Gamble Collection, "Story of the Steamship Savannah..." RS GAM 975.8 GAM. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"Savannah to Observe Notable Anniversary." *Savannah Morning News* (20 April 1919) 9:1.

"Unveil Tablets as Centennial Feature" *Savannah Morning News* (22 April 1919) 5:2.

Events/Southern Commercial Congress Sessions 1919 December 8-9

During the week of December 8, 1919, Savannah hosted the 11th Annual Session of the Southern Commercial Congress. The De Soto Hotel served as headquarters of the Congress, with several sessions held at City Hall. The Mayor and Alderman played active roles in the meeting as hosts and participants. Activities of the week included a harbor cruise, parade with General John J. Pershing, Commander in Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces, and a banquet at the De Soto with Pershing delivering the keynote address to about 450 guests.

On Monday, December 8th at 2:30 in the afternoon, City Hall was to accommodate the Governors' Conference Health Section, a joint program of the Southern Commercial Congress, the House of Southern Governors and the National Tuberculosis Association. However, several of the governors to participate did not arrive in Savannah in time and the session was pushed back to the following morning. Governor T. W. Bickett, of North Carolina, presided over the open meeting the following morning during which the group adopted resolutions regarding comprehensive health programs in front of an audience of about seventy-five. James Hardy Dillard, of Charlottesville, Virginia, president of Slater and Jeans Funds and member of the General Board of Education, spoke in the morning on mob rule and lynching laws. Governor A. H. Roberts, of Tennessee, discussed tuberculosis, and Governor Bickett followed on fertilizer. During the afternoon executive session, several prominent African American leaders, including Dr. R. R. Wright of Savannah, were heard from on the subject of race relations.

On December 9, 1919, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, City Hall hosted the executive session of the Association of Mayors. G. Glenn Toole, Mayor of Macon, presided over the meeting. The round table discussion was titled "Questions of Municipal Efficiency," and the keynote address was given by Clifford W. Wilson, Mayor of Bridgeport and Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut.

"Banquet Feature of Gen. Pershing's Visit." *Savannah Morning News* (7 December 1919) 27:1.

"City in Gay Dress for Big Congress." *Savannah Morning News* (6 December 1919) 12:4.

"Congress of Commerce to Convene Today." *Savannah Morning News* (8 December 1919) 10:1.

DeBolt, Margaret Wayt. *Savannah: A Historical Portrait* (3rd Edition). Gloucester Point, VA: Hallmark Publishing Company, 2001. p143.

“Full Program for Gen. Pershing’s Day.” *Savannah Morning News* (9 December 1919) 9:1.

“Governors Map Out Program for South-Wide Tuberculosis Fight.” *Savannah Morning News* (10 December 1919) 12:3-4.

“Governors to Confer on Health Problems.” *Savannah Morning News* (8 December 1919) 10:6.

“Health Section This Morning; Postponed Yesterday; Governors and Others Arrive Too Late for Conference.” *Savannah Morning News* (9 December 1919) 3:3.

“Notable Week Will Open with Pershing’s Arrival To-Morrow.” *Savannah Morning News* (7 December 1919) 32:1.

“Pershing Warmly Welcomed in Macon.” *Savannah Morning News* (10 December 1919) 9:2.

“Route of Pershing Parade Announced.” *Savannah Morning News* (4 December 1919) 12:5.

“To-Day’s Program of the Congress.” *Savannah Morning News* (9 December 1919) 14:3.

A Century of History
1920 ~ 1929



Savannah Girl Scouts celebrate "Smile Day" in front of City Hall, c.1923.
Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Images/Original Furniture
1921



Photograph by Girard. "Mayor Stewart at His City Hall Desk." (unknown newspaper and date).
Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics & Government, to 1929 [envelope marked 1921].
Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Politics/First Female Alderman
1923 January 18-22

On January 18, 1923, at the last City Council meeting of the outgoing administration of Mayor Murray M. Stewart, Sarah Berrien Casey Morgan was elected by Council to fill the unexpired term of Alderman (Dr.) George R. White who had resigned at the previous Council meeting. Following White's resignation, Alderman Saussy nominated Morgan, "whom he termed as one of Georgia's grandest women and one who has done so much for the city of Savannah and its people." A large crowd was present for the January 18th installation of Morgan, the first woman alderman in Savannah's history. When she was sworn in the women present applauded loudly. Morgan (who ran unsuccessfully for the aldermanic ticket with Mayor Stewart's board in the 1922 City primary, along with Lucy B. McIntire and Elise Heyward Howkins on the opposing side) only remained in office until the new aldermanic board was inaugurated at noon on Monday, January 22, 1923. While Morgan's election was historic, it would be years before another woman would sit on City Council, one actually elected by the people and in a position to make decisions rather than just as a four-day honorary member.

"Mrs. S. B. C. Morgan Passes in Death." *Savannah Morning News* (29 June 1931) 10:4.

"Old Council Acts to Handicap New Board." *Savannah Morning News* (19 January 1923) 12:1.

Rossiter, Frank. "City Beat." *Savannah Morning News* (19 May 1956) 16:5.

"Women Alderman to be Considered." *Savannah Evening Press* (19 November 1932). Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics & Government, n.d. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/World War I Soldiers Return
1923 February 7

On February 7, 1923, Savannah was the welcoming port for the nation's last returning troops from World War I, known as "America's Last Thousand." Actually numbering about 1,200 men of the 8th Infantry, they were transported from the Rhine in Germany on the *St. Mihiel*, many bringing home new families. When they reached the bar they were escorted into port by three vessels, including the United States Coast Guard Cutter *Yamacraw*. The *Yamacraw* carried an official reception committee including Mayor Paul Seabrook and visiting congressmen. The steamer *Hildegarde* carried children and a tug was full of newspapermen and photographers. An estimated 75,000 spectators lined the river and streets of Savannah to welcome home the soldiers. It was barely standing room between the Municipal Docks and East Broad Street by 1:30 in the afternoon.

The river front seemed alive with people. Like hives of swarming bees they hung in clusters from every available vantage point and the little balconies of the business offices along the bay seemed in danger of falling under their unaccustomed loads. As the transport neared the City Hall the Washington guns, presented to the Chatham Artillery by George Washington, lifted up their aged voices in salutation. With the third shot a mammoth smoke ring rose into the air, floating like a halo for a few seconds in space before it dissolved. Whistles and bells echoed from boat to boat and cheers reverberated from shore to shore.

Daylong festivities held in their honor included a parade, dance, and large barbeque held in the Forsyth Park Extension. The parade started at five o'clock in the afternoon at the head of Bay and Bull streets, in front of City Hall, and marched down Bull Street to the park. The marchers included returning 8th Infantry troops, as well as Spanish American War and Confederate veterans. The parade was led by a group of automobiles carrying Mayor Paul E. Seabrook, Governor Hardwick, Senator W. Harris, and the Army generals, accompanied by a squad of traffic policemen led by Lieutenant J. J. Clancy.



Returning World War I troops march down Bull Street, February 7, 1923.
V. & J. Duncan Antique Maps and Prints, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

There they were at last, in the familiar khaki, a great band of soldiers of the United States who have so honorably represented this country overseas, and there was something about the sight that brought tears to many eyes and quickened heartbeats to everyone who watched.

DeBolt, Margaret Wayt. *Savannah: A Historical Portrait* (3rd Edition). Gloucester Point, VA: Hallmark Publishing Company, 2001. p141-142.

"Great Throb of Welcome in Savannah's Reception to America's "Last Thousand"." *Savannah Morning News* (8 February 1923) 16:1.

P. R. C. "Moving Scenes Mark Triumphant Entry of Transport St. Mihiel." *Savannah Morning News* (8 February 1923) 12:1-2.

"Savannah's Heart in Welcome to Returning Troops." *Savannah Morning News* (7 February 1923) 14:1.

Structure/Inventory

1923 December 31

As of December 31, 1923, the appraised value of the City Hall lot, measuring 120 feet by 90 feet, was \$100,000, and the building itself was valued at \$200,000.

Annual Message to City Council of Hon. Paul E. Seabrook Mayor...of the City of Savannah, Georgia Year Ending December 31, 1923. Savannah: Savannah City Council, 1923. p72, 80.

Events/U.S. Navy Airship Visit
 1925 May 9

On May 9, 1925, around 3:45 in the afternoon, the U. S. Navy Airship *Los Angeles* flew over downtown Savannah on its way from Mayaguez, Puerto Rico to Lakehurst, New Jersey. The city had forewarning via a telegram sent from Brunswick as the dirigible passed over. That afternoon's *Savannah Evening Press* urged Savannahians to go out to greet the *Los Angeles*.



"Los Angeles Coming." *Savannah Evening Press* (9 May 1925) 18:4.

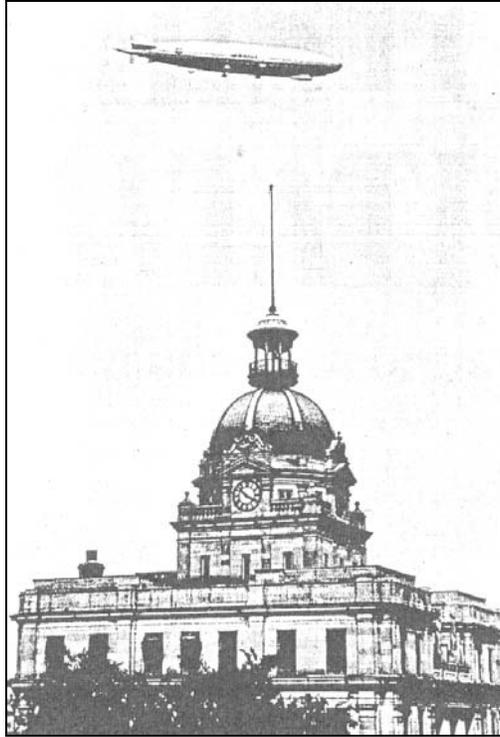
Many people were waiting on house tops, others crowded the upper windows of the higher buildings, and pedestrians on the surface of the earth assumed peculiar attitudes along the street, some of them with upcraned necks risking their lives by suddenly stopping before on-rushing traffic, to gaze with awe and wonder.

The airship spent about fifteen minutes touring the city. At the corner of West Broad and Park streets a packet of letters was dropped, landing in front of Knight's Drug Store, with a note asking the finder to post them. From there, the airship moved north over the business section. At the point the airship was over City Hall a photograph was taken.

To some people the Los Angeles seemed small but when she reached the downtown district she lowered her altitude slightly and assumed monstrous proportions. The Los Angeles is 656 feet or one-eighth a mile long. If her rear end was placed at Bay street her front end would extend beyond Broughton street.

If set on end beside the Independent Presbyterian Church she would be over three times as tall as the steeple. If the Cathedral of St. John were piled on top of the Independent Presbyterian Church and then St. John's Episcopal Church set on top of the two, the Los Angeles would still be taller.

Black and white photographs of the *Los Angeles* do not depict the character of the airship in as great detail as the local newspaper recounted. "The huge bag was painted silver color and shone resplendent in the bright afternoon sun like a pearly set in a sea of sapphire." The borders of the rudders were painted red, white and blue. Five gondolas swung from below. A small flag was attached to the tail. The account of the visit the following day used elaborate metaphors to describe the airship including "mammoth creature of the skies" and "like a great silver dragon she seemed to float lazily through the air."



U. S. Navy Airship *Los Angeles* flies over City Hall, May 9, 1925.
"City Hall and U. S. Navy Airship" (9 May 1925). Box 1121-033-4.
City of Savannah Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Around 3:58 p.m. the *Los Angeles*, after completing "her graceful tour of the realms of greater Savannah of the future," headed northeast over the Savannah River towards Charleston. Traveling at an average of 70 miles per hour, in between large cities, the airship was expected to arrive in Lakehurst the following morning.

A dispatch from the *Los Angeles*' commander to the Navy described the trip for the crew:

Flying steadily northward along the east coast, the Los Angeles crew is now eating dinner at Wilmington, N. C., after breakfast in Miami and luncheon at Jacksonville.

The History of Aviation in Savannah, Georgia. Savannah: The Savannah Airport Commission, 1998. p14.

"Los Angeles Coming." *Savannah Evening Press* (9 May 1925) 18:4.

"Los Angeles Flies over City." *Savannah Morning News* (10 May 1925) 16:5.

Artifacts/W. W. Gordon Bust 1927 May 11

On May 11, 1927, W. W. "Bill" Gordon and Arthur Gordon, brothers of Juliette Gordon Low, on behalf of the family of the late founder of the Girl Scouts of America, presented a bronze bust of William Washington Gordon (1796-1842) to City Council for display in City Hall. The bust was sculpted by Juliette Gordon Low, affectionately known as "Daisy" by friends and family, at the Central School of Arts & Crafts, in Southampton Row, London, England. The subject, her grandfather, was a native of Georgia, a lawyer, the first Georgian to graduate from the United States Military Academy at West Point, a Savannah alderman (1833-1834, 1836-1837, 1841), mayor of Savannah (1834-1836), and founding president of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Bronze bust of William Washington Gordon,
sculpted by Juliette Gordon Low. Savannah City Hall, Council Chamber.
Photographed by L. Spracher, 2005
for City of Savannah Research Library & Municipal Archives.
Used with permission.



William Washington Gordon, n.d.
Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The presentation of the bust to Council was accompanied by brief biographical sketches of W. W. Gordon and Juliette Gordon Low, and a certified letter from Daisy's instructor, Richard Garbe from the Central School of Arts & Crafts, verifying that it was her original work. On behalf of the City, Mayor Robert Hull accepted the bust and expressed the City's appreciation; "The likeness of the former mayor of Savannah, and the famous statesman, will be preserved and well kept."

The sculpture had arrived via steamer from England in Savannah on Saturday, January 15, 1927. Daisy saw it one last time before she died on January 17th. Before her death, she instructed her family to have the bust placed in City Hall.

"Bust of Mr. Gordon Presented to City." *Savannah Morning News* (12 May 1927) 20:4.

Official Proceedings of City Council (11 May 1927) 489. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Death of Mayor Hull ***1927 August 12***

On August 12, 1927, Mayor Robert Maxey Hull, age 64, died in office at 12:40 in the afternoon after suffering multiple stomach hemorrhages. City Hall immediately closed upon news of his death and at a meeting of City Council that afternoon, a special resolution in honor of the later mayor called for City Hall to remain closed until after the funeral (held the following afternoon at Independent Presbyterian Church). The resolution also provided that the building be draped in mourning with the flag at half staff for thirty days. A special committee of three, comprised of Aldermen John P. Stevens, Thomas M. Hoynes, and John L. Cabell, was appointed to prepare a memorial resolution on the Mayor's death. The body did not lie in state in the Council Chamber because the widow desired the remains of the late mayor to stay at their private residence until the funeral. On August 13th, City officials met at City Hall at 4:30 in the afternoon and attended the funeral in a body.

On August 31, 1927, City Council adopted the memorial resolution prepared by the committee outlining a brief biography of the late mayor and highlighting his accomplishments and character. As an alderman, Hull served on the Committee on Fire and "was responsible for what is to day [1927] one of the most modernized fire departments in the country. He, at that time, gave to Savannah the first motorized Fire Department,...he installed every advancement calculated to give efficiency that was possible."

As mayor (January 26, 1925-August 12, 1927), “His foresight was clearly demonstrated in the development of Bacon Park into a wonderful Golf Links. The desire to have an airport, which was uppermost in his mind at the time of death, is but a striking example that he was abreast of the time.”

He was ever cheerful and ready to help—no matter who the person was. To us who served him, his untimely death was a personal loss.

Alderman Thomas M. Hoynes was elected on August 31st to fill his unexpired term.

“City Council Hears of Death.” *Savannah Morning News* (13 August 1927) 14:2.

“Last Picture of Mayor Hull.” *Savannah Morning News* (14 August 1927) 12A:2-3.

Official Proceedings of City Council (12 August 1927) 52; (31 August 1927) 64-65. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

“Public Pays its Final Tribute.” *Savannah Morning News* (14 August 1927) 12B:2.

“Savannah’s Chief Executive is Dead After Brave Fight.” *Savannah Morning News* (13 August 1927) 14:1.

“Savannahians to Pay Last Tribute Today.” *Savannah Evening Press* (13 August 1927) 16:4.

Images/Inauguration

1929 January 21

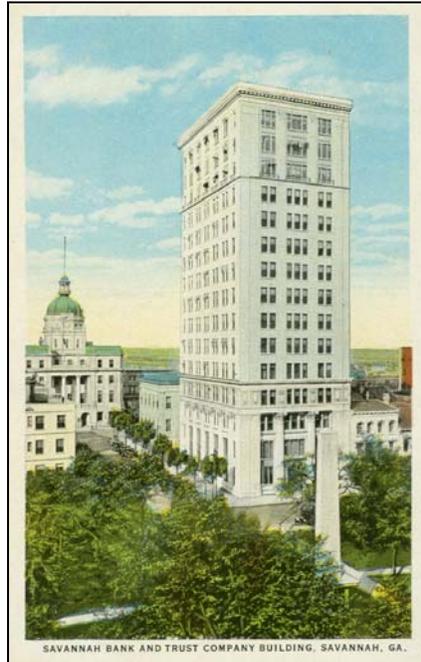
On January 21, 1929, following inaugural ceremonies, incoming Mayor Gordon Saussy was photographed on the front steps of City Hall with outgoing Mayor Thomas M. Hoynes, Mrs. Saussy, Mrs. Hoynes, and members of the Junior Chamber of Commerce.



Photograph by Rich. “First Picture of New Mayor After Inauguration.” *Savannah Evening Press* (21 January 1929).
Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics & Government, to 1929 [envelop marked 1929].
Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“First Picture of New Mayor After Inauguration.” *Savannah Evening Press* (21 January 1929). Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics & Government, to 1929 [envelop marked 1929]. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

A Century of History
1930 ~ 1939



Postcard of Johnson Square, Savannah Bank & Trust Company, and City Hall, n.d.
Private collection of Glenda E. A. Anderson.
Used with permission.

Artifacts/Oglethorpe Landing Tablet
1930 June 20

On June 20, 1930, a bronze tablet, affixed to a stone monument, was unveiled in the Strand just west of City Hall by the state and local chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution to commemorate the spot of General James Edward Oglethorpe's landing on Yamacraw Bluff as the most historical location in the state. The ceremony was held at 5 o'clock in the afternoon with Mayor Gordon Saussy accepting the monument on behalf of the City and pledging the City would "keep it, protect it, and preserve it as one of the most important markers in the city." The presentation was made by the state regent, Mrs. Bun Wylie of Atlanta, the address given by D. G. Bickers, and the benediction by Reverend J. W. Hitch. The text of the tablet reads:

*This is Yamacraw Bluff
where the Colony of Georgia
was Founded February 12, 1733
by General James Edward Oglethorpe
voted by the Georgia Daughters
of the American Revolution
the Most Historic Spot
in Georgia*

"Many Present at Tablet Unveiling." *Savannah Morning News* (21 June 1930) 16:3.

"Yamacraw Bluff Tablet Unveiling." *Savannah Morning News* (20 June 1930) 14:5.

Events/Flag Half Staff for Woman
1931 June 28

On June 28, 1931, Sarah Berrien Casey Morgan, the City's first and only female alderman up to that time (January 18-22, 1923), passed away in a local hospital after a long illness. Morgan's body was returned to her native Augusta for the funeral the following day. The local newspaper ran an obituary of Mrs. Morgan praising her work and contributions to the community:

Mrs. Morgan's place in Savannah will be difficult to fill. She was a woman recognized often in many leading endeavors here. She was a delightful hostess and a warm friend, was courageous in her opinion, and able as an executive, and her interest in young people never faltered.

On July 12, 1931, *The New York Times* noted that for the first time in Savannah's history, the flag on City Hall was flown at half staff in honor of a woman.

"Flag Lowered for Woman; Savannah City Hall Emblem at Half-Staff for Former Official." *The New York Times* (12 July 1931) E6:8.

"Mrs. S. B. C. Morgan Passes in Death." *Savannah Morning News* (29 June 1931) 10:4.

Events/Bomb Found in City Hall
1933 May 9

On May 9, 1933, around 12:50 in the afternoon, a pipe bomb was found on the second floor balcony of City Hall by Thomas V. Pruitt. The homemade bomb consisted of a three-inch piece of 3/8" pipe capped at both ends containing smokeless gunpowder wrapped inside newspapers, a grocery bag and then a shopping bag with eight sticks of dynamite. On the outside of one of the bags, written in red crayon, were the names "Tom Gamble, Emmett Wilson, Bob Downing" and something undecipherable. If the bomb had exploded "several lives might have been claimed" and "the bomb might have wrecked the upper part of the City Hall....such a blast would have shattered windows for blocks."

Pruitt, age 40, an unemployed husband and father, at first seemed the hero of the day finding the bomb, cutting the fuse and alerting City Hall employees. However, he quickly became the primary suspect. Traffic Officer Sam J. Williams, stationed outside City Hall, was summoned to the scene and took charge. Chief Detective John C. McCarthy soon arrived and began an investigation. Pruitt was taken into custody and held overnight. The *Savannah Morning News* quoted him saying, "It's a shame, but I'm willing to suffer to show the people of Savannah what kind of a man I am. I saved my own life, and the lives of the people in the City Hall. I honored myself."



"Mystery Bomb in City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (10 May 1933) 12:1.
Used with permission.

At the time the bomb was found, Pruitt was in City Hall to inquire about a job. Formerly a grocery clerk, he had been holding odd jobs for the previous year. Upon entering the City Hall building, he had asked Officer Williams if Director of Public Works Clements was in the building and was carrying no packages with him at the time. Once inside the building, he took the stairs rather than the elevator to the third floor. When he reached the second floor, he saw smoke coming from a package, tore it open and cut the fuse. Pruitt said he had his pocket knife out already trimming a hang nail.

At a May 14th hearing, Judge H. Mercer Jordon, of Police Court, heard testimony from four witnesses for the prosecution, including Chief Detective McCarthy, Detective E. A. Fitzgerald, W. H. Robertson, superintendent of the Park and Tree Commission, and T. A. Barfield, manager of a grocery store. Robertson testified he saw Pruitt fumbling with a package in the corner the bomb was found a few minutes before the discovery. Barfield identified (by handwriting on the outside of it) one of the paper bags the dynamite was wrapped in as coming from his store and as being the same one given to Pruitt the previous Saturday with groceries. Pruitt, through his attorney Limerick L. Odom, pleaded not guilty. However, no defense witnesses were put on the stand, even though several character witnesses had been summoned to the hearing.

Judge Jordon remanded Pruitt to the County jail in lieu of bond of \$10,000 pending action of the grand jury after hearing the testimony. At trial the grand jury was "asked to consider the evidence against Pruitt in support of the charges of attempting to destroy the City Hall, and possession of dynamite for commission of a crime." At trial, Pruitt was found not guilty of attempting to blow up the building.

"Highlights of Year in Savannah Reviewed." *Savannah Morning News* (30 December 1933) 12:4-5.

"Mystery Bomb in City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (10 May 1933) 12:1.

"Pruitt is Held for Grand Jury." *Savannah Morning News* (14 May 1933) 8:2.

Events/Bicentennial of Georgia***1933 April 27-29**

April 27-29, 1933, Savannah celebrated the Bicentennial of Georgia with an historical pageant depicting events of historical significance from the first one hundred years of Georgia history at Municipal Stadium (now Grayson Stadium), the dedication of the Moravian tablet in Oglethorpe Square on Abercorn Street, a Motor Boat Regatta at Thunderbolt, and Spirituals by the Mulberry Grove Singers at 35th Street Junior High School. The three-day celebration was closed with the President Monroe's Ball at the old De Soto Hotel on Bull and Liberty streets on April 29th at 9 o'clock in the evening.

**This event did not take place in City Hall.*

"200th Anniversary Commission." *Savannah Morning News* (23 April 1933) 12.

Events/Maritime Day***1933 May**

In May of 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a Joint Resolution of Congress establishing May 22nd as National Maritime Day in honor of the sailing date of the *S. S. Savannah* (May 22, 1819).

**This event did not take place in City Hall.*

Braynard, Frank O. *S. S. Savannah, the Elegant Steam Ship*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1988. p212.

Events/Slum Clearance Conference**1933 October 16**

On October 16, 1933, in a meeting at City Hall, Mayor Thomas Gamble proposed the clearing of the Yamacraw neighborhood (considered a slum) and its replacement with small rental homes or apartments. Gamble emphasized that not only would the slum clearance create a better physical environment, but could provide relief for local unemployment and funds could probably be attained through Public Works Administration loans. The plan was presented by Morton Levy, of Levy & Clark, architects, to most of the large Yamacraw property owners. One such owner, R. L. Cooper, commented that, "In the past Yamacraw has been a gold mine for property owners, but whole blocks of the section are not fit even for the cur dogs and alley cats that roam its streets." Cooper mentioned he had already torn down blocks of his own houses deemed not fit to live in.

The group also talked about the Frogtown neighborhood, considered as bad or worse than Yamacraw, but focused on Yamacraw as the first step since it was more visible to visitors entering the city. Following the meeting, Mayor Gamble left for Atlanta to learn more about the clearance of the slums in the Techwood and Atlanta University neighborhoods. The following months included many meetings and discussions on the project among City officials, property owners, and businessmen.

"Highlights of Year in Savannah Reviewed." *Savannah Morning News* (30 December 1933) 12:4-5.

"Slum Plan Meets with Enthusiasm." *Savannah Morning News* (17 October 1933) 12:1.

**Events/Bicentennial of Georgia-President Franklin D. Roosevelt Visit*
1933 November 18**



President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mayor Thomas Gamble, Jr., and Mrs. Sarah D. Roosevelt en route to Municipal Stadium, November 18, 1933.
Gamble Collection, "Visit of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt..." RG GAM 975.8G.
Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On November 18, 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt arrived in Savannah, via special train at Union Station, to deliver a special address for Savannah's 200th birthday at Municipal Stadium. President Roosevelt and his mother, Mrs. Sarah Delano Roosevelt, traveled by automobile along a parade route, escorted by National Guardsmen and Marines, through the business district and the intersection of Bull and Broughton streets. Mayor Thomas Gamble and Governor Talmadge accompanied them. An estimated 35,000 to 40,000 heard the President's speech at the stadium, while additional citizens enjoyed it in the Park Extension over radio amplifiers. After the program, the President and his mother returned to the train and left Savannah.



"Mayor Gamble Delivering the City's Address of Welcome."
November 18, 1933.



"President Roosevelt Waves a Greeting to the Audience."
November 18, 1933.

Gamble Collection, "Visit of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt..." RG GAM 975.8G.
Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

**This event did not take place in City Hall.*

Bischoff, Bill. "Throng Tensely Views Roosevelt." *Savannah Morning News* (19 November 1933) 12B:6.

Gamble Collection, "Visit of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt..." RG GAM 975.8G. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"Highlights of Year in Savannah Reviewed." *Savannah Morning News* (30 December 1933) 12:4.

"President's Day, Georgia Bi-Centennial Celebration 1733-1933, Municipal Stadium, Nov. 18th, 1933" (program). Vertical Files: Savannah History, 1930-1939. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"President Waves His Hat in Response to Greetings of Populace." *Savannah Morning News* (19 November 1933) 5A:4.

Structure/Museum Proposed

1935 April

At an April 1935 meeting of the Savannah Historical Research Association, the idea of establishing a museum dedicated to Savannah's maritime, commercial and industrial history, with exhibits representing the work of figures such as Dr. Charles Herty, Josiah Tattnall and Eli Whitney, was broached by Marmaduke Floyd. Floyd proposed that a suitable location for the museum would be City Hall's basement level. The Association appointed a committee, composed of Raiford J. Wood, Lowry Axley, and Marmaduke Floyd, to foster local interest in the proposed museum and approach City Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Cotton Exchange, the Georgia Historical Society, the Maritime Association, and other local organizations to work with the Historical Research Association to plan and maintain the museum.*

**A museum in City Hall's basement never became a reality.*

"Savannah Museum is New Proposal." *Savannah Morning News* (25 April 1935) 12:1.

Artifacts/Jury Rudder

1935 June 4

On June 4, 1935, Captain J. J. Clancy, of the Police Department, turned over a scale model of an 1850 sailing ship jury rudder to Mayor Thomas Gamble, which had been stored at Police Headquarters for some time, to be hung in the Council Chamber. A jury rudder is a rudder that is temporarily used in an emergency when something happens to the ordinary rudder. This model rudder was described in the local newspaper as constructed of ropes of equal lengths, laid side by side, and held in place by a frame work of boards. The jury rudder was enclosed in a glass case bearing the following inscription:

Model jury rudder, originated, constructed and successfully used by Capt. Job G. Lawton, of Massachusetts, in conducting the Ship Warren into the port of New York after a passage of 109 days from Glasgow in the winter of 1850 and 51, by him presented to the City of Savannah, Ga., 1858.

"Old Jury Rudder for City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (5 June 1935) 12:5.

Structure/Electrical Panel Rediscovered

1935 August

In August of 1935, the City rediscovered one of the original features of City Hall's electrical plan that had long been unused, if it had ever been utilized. Architect Hyman W. Witcover included a twelve-circuit panel board in the wiring of the sixth floor of City Hall to allow flood lights or ornamental lighting to be rigged on the roof and dome for special occasions. During the thirty years that the building had been occupied, the panel had been forgotten until the local newspaper ran a bit in their column titled "Thirty Years Ago," drawing from old news clips. Captain William Robertson, superintendent of the Park and Tree Commission, read the item which mentioned the electrical panel and wrote to Mayor Thomas Gamble inquiring if he was aware of it. Mayor Gamble passed it on to City Electrician E. H. Todd who examined the architect's original plans and located the panel.

Officials at the City Hall are giving H. W. Witcover, architect of the building erected thirty years ago, credit for being a most far sighted planner.

If the city ever becomes "flush" the connections may be made, allowing the City Hall to blaze with light on special occasions.

"Here's a Chance, if City is Flush, to Show a Bit." *Savannah Morning News* (23 August 1935) 14:2.

Events/Marriages
1936 August 12

On August 12, 1936, the second Charleston couple of the year married at City Hall.

"Passing Year was Filled with Local Events of Great Interest." *Savannah Morning News* (28 December 1936) 10:3-4.

Municipal/City Hall Hours
1937 January

In January 1937, incoming Mayor Robert M. Hitch announced his new office hours, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day. Prior to Mayor Hitch, former mayors Thomas Gamble and Richard Davant had almost made the mayoralty a full-time job, but Hitch, a practicing lawyer, preferred to return the mayoralty back to a part-time position as it had been previously.

"New Mayor's Hours at the City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (25 January 1937) 12:2.

Municipal/City Hall Police Officer
1937 January

During January 1937, there was much discussion in the local newspaper regarding who would replace Officer William Hall as City Hall policeman (there seems to have been a transition over the years from a City Hall Custodian with powers to arrest to a regular police officer assigned to the building). Officer Hall was up for promotion and the City Hall assignment was "coveted not because of any increase in pay but the hours are much better. Hours are the same as for the City Hall employees. Half day on Saturday and a free day on Sunday are among the job's good points."

"Who'll Be City Hall Policeman." *Savannah Morning News* (21 January 1937) 14:5.

Events/Charlotte Mayor Visit
1937 February 23

On February 23, 1937, Mayor Ben E. Douglas, of Charlotte, North Carolina, visited Mayor Robert M. Hitch at City Hall on his way to Florida for a vacation. Mayor Douglas was particularly interested in discussing the improvements being made at the Municipal Airport regarding field management and concession privileges, and City Engineer A. S. Goebel took him out to the airport to show him the work then underway.

"Charlotte Mayor Visits Savannah." *Savannah Morning News* (24 February 1937) 14:2.

Events/Henry Ford Visit
1938 February 9

On February 9, 1938, Henry Ford visited Mayor Robert M. Hitch at City Hall around 3:20 in the afternoon. Arriving with J. F. Gregory, superintendent of his Bryan County estate, few recognized the Detroit automobile manufacturer as he pulled up in his car for his first visit to City Hall. Ford and Hitch chatted informally for about thirty minutes during which the Mayor invited Ford to visit Savannah again and meet with some of the community's business leaders. Ford agreed to the idea stating, "After all we are neighbors."

"Henry Ford Pays Visit to Mayor." *Savannah Morning News* (10 February 1938) 14:1.

"Savannah's 1938 Chronology Has Been of Teeming Interest." *Savannah Morning News* (12 December 1938) 12:3-4.

***Events/U. S. S. Savannah Visit
1938 April 25-30***

Between April 25 and April 30, 1938, the *U. S. S. Savannah*, a 10,000 ton light cruiser, launched in May 1938 from Camden, New Jersey, visited Savannah. On the evening of April 25th, after docking at the Coast Line's wharves, Captain R. C. Giffen, commander of the ship, paid a visit to Mayor Robert M. Hitch. While docked in Savannah, about 47,000 people were welcomed aboard the *U. S. S. Savannah* for a tour. The cruiser carried fifteen six-inch rifles, eight five-inch 38 caliber dual purpose guns, anti-aircraft weapons, and four SC-1 Seahawk scout planes.



U. S. S. Savannah in Savannah harbor, April 25, 1938.
V. & J. Duncan Antique Maps & Prints, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

A seven-piece silver tea service, purchased with \$1,800 raised by local school children, was presented to the cruiser in a ceremony held in Forsyth Park Extension on April 27th. The service was based on the design of Paul De Lameire, an 18th century artisan, and had already been displayed in the jewelry store of Maier & Berkele on Bull Street for all to see. Accepting on behalf of the cruiser, Captain Giffen promised the service would “be tangible evidence of the bond between the cruiser and Savannah.”



U. S. S. Savannah in Savannah harbor, photograph by James H. Cobb, Jr., April 25, 1938.
Box 1121-033-1. City of Savannah Research Library and Municipal Archives, City Hall, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Before departing Savannah, Captain Giffen, made a farewell visit to Mayor Hitch at City Hall on April 29th and for some time the cruiser's battle colors hung in the Council Chamber. As the *U. S. S. Savannah* prepared to leave for a naval base in Cuba the following day, the newspaper reported, “A number of

Savannahians are expected to be down on the docks this morning to witness the departure of the *Savannah*. Turning of the 608-foot ship just above City Hall should be a very interesting operation.”



U. S. S. Savannah sailors marching down Bull Street, April 25, 1938.
V. & J. Duncan Antique Maps & Prints, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The cruiser visited Savannah for the last time in October of 1945.

“Cruiser Gets Warm Welcome on First Visit to Savannah.” *Savannah Morning News* (26 April 1938) 14:1-5.

“Cruiser Leaving for Cuba Today.” *Savannah Morning News* (30 April 1938) 14:1.

“Present Silver to U. S. Cruiser.” *Savannah Morning News* (28 April 1938) 14.

Swann, Amy A. “Savannah Ships’ Silver Service Comes Home.” *Savannah Morning News* (24 May 1994) 1C.

Images/Inauguration ***1939 January 23***

On January 23, 1939, the 114th Administration of City Council, under Mayor Thomas Gamble, Jr., was inaugurated in the Council Chamber.



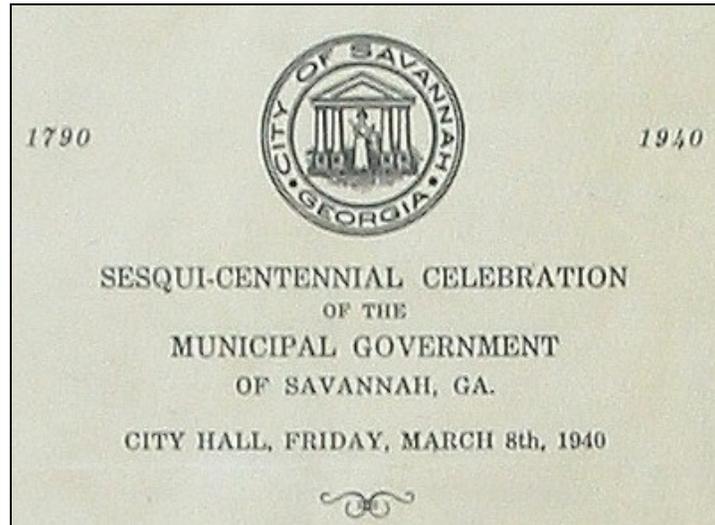
“City Fathers at January Inauguration.” *Savannah Evening Press*.
Gamble Collection, “Fifty Years’ Memories of Savannah,” 975.8 Gamble.
Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Structure/Tower Clock***1939 April 27***

On April 27, 1939, at a regular City Council meeting, the Committee of the Whole adopted a resolution allowing the City Treasurer to pay the Howard Clock Sales & Service Corporation, of New York City, \$616.25 to fulfill the City's contract with them, dated February 15, 1939. The Howard company had recently completed repairs to the City Hall tower clock.

Official Proceedings of City Council (27 Apr 1939) 495. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

A Century of History
1940 ~ 1949



Sesqui-Centennial Celebration (program), March 8, 1940.
Gamble Collection, "Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Municipal Government of Savannah, Georgia."
Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Events/150th Anniversary of Government
1940 March 8

On March 8, 1940, the City of Savannah celebrated the 150th anniversary, or sesquicentennial, of the first inauguration of the Mayor and Alderman of the City of Savannah with a simple program at City Hall organized by the City government, the Georgia Historical Society, the Savannah Historical Research Society, and the Savannah Public Library. The celebration, presided over by former mayor Robert M. Hitch, began at 4 o'clock in the afternoon with music by the Savannah Police Band. Guests included Charleston Mayor Henry W. Lockwood and collateral descendants of John Houston, the first mayor of Savannah. Though Houston had no children of his own, his brother, Sir George Houston, had numerous descendants, many still living in the Savannah area.



150th Anniversary Program, Council Chamber, City Hall, March 8, 1940.
 Gamble Collection, "Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Municipal Government of Savannah, Georgia."
 Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



150th Anniversary Program, Council Chamber, City Hall, March 8, 1940.
 Gamble Collection, "Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Municipal Government of Savannah, Georgia."
 Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

J. Randolph Anderson, president of the Georgia Historical Society, presented a lecture entitled "John Houstoun, First Mayor of Savannah, and Those Associated with Him in the Organization of the Municipal Government." Alex A. Lawrence, a Savannah attorney, spoke on "The Origin and Development of the Savannah Municipal Government." Former mayor Robert M. Hitch read warm greetings from Savannah's sister cities:

[Richmond Mayor J. Fulmer Bright said,] *Savannah is an outstanding example of a city well governed; a growing, flourishing, home loving municipality; destined for a great future through its magnificent harbor facilities...*

[From Baltimore Mayor Howard W. Jackson,] *A great seaport and industrial center, Savannah has contributed largely to the material welfare of the South and to the nation. The charming hospitality of its citizens is known to all who have been fortunate enough to visit your city...*

[Jacksonville Mayor George C. Blume wrote,] *Savannah, with its rich background of history and tradition, its many natural assets, its hospitable and friendly people, and its modern progressive spirit, is truly typical of both the old and the new South; and, as a part of the new South, Savannah has before it a glorious future marked by continued progress and prosperity...*

[And from Georgia Governor E. D. Rivers,] *I predict for Georgia's oldest city, under the leadership of her present and future municipal officers, continued advancement and even greater prosperity than she has enjoyed in the past.*



150th Anniversary Program, Council Chamber, City Hall, March 8, 1940.
Gamble Collection, "Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Municipal Government of Savannah, Georgia."
Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Following the presentation in the Council Chamber, the group adjourned to the first floor lobby for the unveiling of a bronze plaque by Miss Anne Waring and Mr. Frank A. Chisholm, descendants of John Houston. The one hundred pound tablet, cast by Price & Mapes, Inc., of New York City, was put into position on the morning on March 5th. The marker serves as a permanent record of four events in Savannah's history: the December 23, 1789 charter for the City of Savannah signed by Governor Edward Telfair; the March 1, 1790 election of the aldermen by the voters of Savannah; the March 8, 1790 election and installment of John Houston as Savannah's first mayor; and the December 2, 1844 election of the mayor directly by the people for the first time under a change in the municipal charter. In addition, the plaque lists all the mayors of Savannah from 1790 through 1940.



Unveiling of anniversary marker, City Hall, March 8, 1940.
 Gamble Collection, "Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Municipal Government of Savannah, Georgia."
 Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Gamble Collection, "Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Municipal Government of Savannah, Georgia." Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"Milestone of City is Passed." *Savannah Morning News* (9 March 1940) 14:1.

"Savannah Marks 150th Year Since Its Chartering as City." *Atlanta Constitution* (9 March 1940). Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1940-1949. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia

"Savannah's Ten Biggest Events in 1940 are Led by Hurricane." *Savannah Morning News* (15 December 1940) 24:3-4.

"Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Municipal Government of Savannah, Ga., City Hall, Friday, March 8th, 1940" (program). Gamble Collection, "Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Municipal Government of Savannah, Georgia." Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"Tablet Placed in Municipal Hall." *Savannah Evening Press* (5 March 1940) 14:5.

Events/Cadastral Survey

1940 May 9

On May 9, 1940, Major H. U. Wallace, District Works Progress Administration Engineer, presented Mayor Thomas Gamble with the completed Cadastral Survey of Savannah, the result of a three-year, \$65,000 W. P. A. project. The survey consisted of 251 maps showing all lots and buildings in the city limits. While the survey was intended chiefly for the use of the tax assessors, Major Wallace pointed out at the time that it would be useful to the City in planning sewerage and street work, and telephone, electric, and gas lines, while private citizens could also use them in determining property lines and dissolving deed disputes.

The Savannah Cadastral Survey has found a secondary use today as an historical research tool in the growing historic preservation field as property owners and developers restore and rehabilitate buildings and lots in the historic district. A copy of the Savannah Cadastral Survey is on file at the Chatham County Courthouse for public access.

"Cadastral Survey Completed by WPA." *Savannah Morning News* (10 May 1940) 20:4.

Events/Hurricane

1940 August 11

On the afternoon of Sunday, August 11, 1940, a hurricane hit Savannah causing wind and rain damage to buildings along Bay Street, around \$1 million worth of damage to the local area, and three local deaths.

Winds reached sixty-eight miles per hour in downtown Savannah and up to eighty miles per hour at Tybee Island.

The entire length of Bay street was cluttered with trees, branches, and debris from buildings lining the thoroughfare. Flanking the City Hall on both sides, giant trees straddled the street, as everywhere signs ripped partially loose from their moorings swung dangerously above the sidewalk.

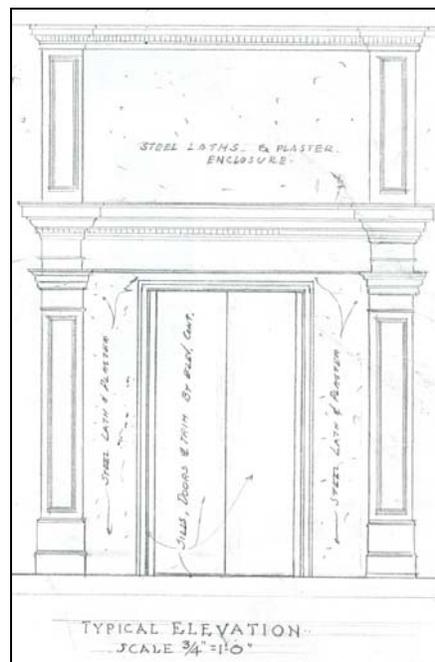
The Rourke Iron Works bell tower on East Bay Street, where the old City Exchange bell had hung since the City Exchange's demolition in 1904, collapsed during the storm. The bell was salvaged and put in storage.

"Hurricane Rips Through Savannah." *Savannah Morning News* (12 August 1940) 10:1-2.

"Savannah's Ten Biggest Events in 1940 are Led by Hurricane." *Savannah Morning News* (15 December 1940) 24:3-4.

Structure/Elevator Replaced 1941 January-February

During the first two months of 1941, the City planned for a new elevator for City Hall. The City Engineer prepared drawings and specifications for the work, including the enclosing of the original metal grillwork or screens (that allowed one to see the original elevator car) with steel lath and plaster. In February, the Otis Elevator Company, of Atlanta, Georgia, contracted with the City to supply a new passenger elevator with a platform 6'6" wide by 4'6" deep to serve all six floors. The elevator had the capacity to hold 2,000 pounds in addition to its own weight and travel at a speed of 200 feet per minute.



City Engineer's plans for City Hall elevator shaft, drawn January 18, 1941.

Drawing 24.3, City Engineer's Retrospective Plans and Drawings.

City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

"City of Savannah GA. City Hall. Elevator Shaft." (18 January 1941). Drawing 24.3, City Engineer's Retrospective Plans and Drawings. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Coming of Yards Tops Local News." *Savannah Morning News* (8 December 1941) 12:6.

Contract #1248 (21 February 1941), City Council Meeting Papers. City of Savannah, Georgia Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/WWII Salvage Drive***1942 August 27***

On August 27, 1942, seven cannon and ten machine guns captured from the Germans during World War I were formally turned over to Martin T. Price, chairman of the Savannah-Chatham County Salvage Committee, in the presence of Mayor Thomas Gamble in front of City Hall. The guns were a gift from Post No. 36, American Legion, and had stood at various locations around the city as souvenirs of World War I.

The artillery pieces, loaded onto two Works Progress Administration trucks, arrived at City Hall accompanied by another load of auto pieces, an unrelated donation for the Salvage Committee. S. W. M. Haile, past commander of Post No. 36, demonstrated how the machine guns were operated for the curious citizens who had gathered around. The salvaged items were slated for the steel mills, manufacture into ammunition, and a “return trip to Germany.”



German World War I guns and cannon turned over at City Hall, August 27, 1942.

Savannah Evening Press photograph developed by Photocraft.

“Collection Old German Guns Given in Salvage Campaign.” *Savannah Evening Press* (28 August 1942).
Vertical File: Savannah History, 1940-1949. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“Cannon and Guns Make Last Journey.” *Savannah Evening Press* (27 August 1942) 18:6.

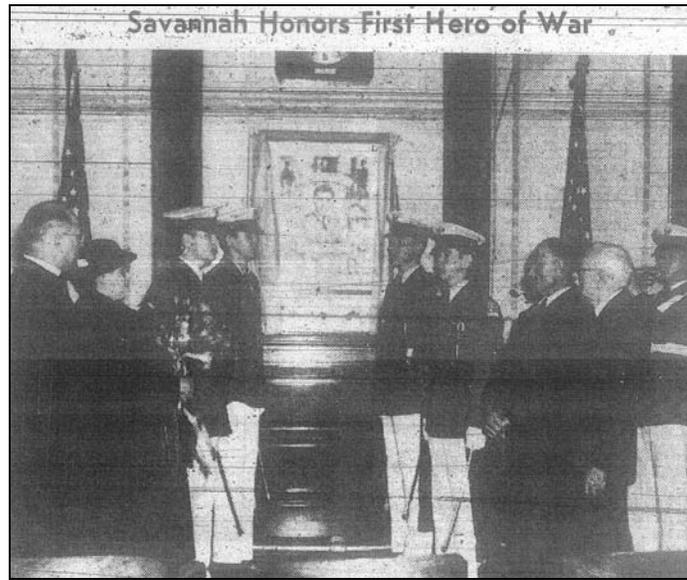
“Collection Old German Guns Given in Salvage Campaign.” *Savannah Evening Press* (28 August 1942) 18:2.

Artifacts/Gannam Portrait***1942 December 7***

On December 7, 1942, the first anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, a reception and memorial service were held in the reception room of Mayor Thomas Gamble’s office at 1 o’clock in the afternoon in honor of those Savannah men who gave their lives for their country. At this reception, a portrait of Staff Sergeant George K. Gannam, Savannah’s first casualty of World War II, was unveiled. The portrait was hung in the mayor’s reception room, beneath the clock original to the room, as a lasting tribute to all Savannahians who lost their lives for the cause of freedom in the war.

Staff Sergeant Gannam, a first generation American and graduate of Benedictine Military School, was killed in action on December 7, 1941 at Pearl Harbor. Following his death, Honolulu papers singled him out as “a model of patience and courage in the face of danger.” During the presentation of the portrait to the City, Father Gregory Eichenlaub, principal of Benedictine, stated, “George Gannam was a hero not

because he did great things in the eyes of the world, but because he did the ordinary things of life extraordinarily well.”



Sergeant George Gannam's portrait unveiled in the mayor's office, December 7, 1942.
"Sergt. Gannam's Memory Honored." *Savannah Morning News* (8 December 1942) 14:2-4.
Used with permission.

The ceremony opened with Robert F. Downing, city marshal, presenting a bouquet of red roses to Gannam's mother. City Attorney Spence M. Grayson delivered the eulogy. Two Benedictine cadets unveiled the portrait, one of Gannam in his uniform as staff sergeant of the school surrounded by scenes from his military life among the Benedictine cadets. Cadet Sergeant J. Goodwin, Jr. played "Taps," and Reverend John S. Wilder, of Calvary Baptist Temple, delivered the benediction.

Mayor Thomas Gamble accepted the portrait on behalf of the City:

In accepting it for the city, I can assure all that it will be cherished as a precious memorial dedicated to all American boys who fell in line of duty in this war. As people enter this room and their attention is drawn to the portrait of Sergeant Gannam, their thoughts will revert to others who, like him, gave up their lives that freedom might live.

Curtis, Margaret. "Savannah to Remember Pearl Harbor at Memorial Service." *Savannah Morning News* (7 December 1942) 16:2.

"1942 Proves Banner Year for Production of First Line News." *Savannah Morning News* (2 January 1943) 12:2-3.

"Sergt. Gannam's Memory Honored." *Savannah Morning News* (8 December 1942) 14:2-4.

Municipal/City Hall-Gamble Building Complex ***1943 May***

In May of 1943, the City purchased Kelly's Block, the commercial building adjacent to City Hall on the east, as a City Hall Annex to accommodate the departments overflowing in the main building. In less than forty years, the City had outgrown City Hall.

Spracher, Luciana. "The Thomas Gamble Building" (January 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Windows**1945 May 16**

On May 16, 1945, City Council authorized the Board of Purchase to advertise for bids for repairs to City Hall's windows including painting the window sills and sashes with two coats of green paint and re-glazing the windows where necessary.

Official Proceedings of City Council (16 May 1945) 428. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Death of Mayor Gamble**1945 July 13**

On July 13, 1945, Mayor Thomas Gamble, Jr. died in office after suffering a heart attack while on vacation at the Alexian Brothers Rest Resort in Signal Mountain, Tennessee. Gamble's remains were brought back to Savannah and his funeral was held on July 15th at the First Christian Church, followed by burial at Laurel Grove Cemetery. Upon learning of his death, City Hall was closed and draped in black mourning crepe, and the flag was lowered to half staff. At the next regular meeting of City Council, a memorial resolution was passed honoring Gamble's years of service to the community. Alderman Peter R. Nugent was elected on July 25th to fill Gamble's vacancy.

In September 1945, the City Hall Annex was renamed "The Thomas Gamble Building" in. The following year, a photographic portrait of Gamble was presented to the City by his family and hung in the Council Chamber in City Hall.

Biography File: Thomas Gamble. Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

"Cunningham Lauds Gamble; Portrait Placed in Chamber." *Savannah Morning News* (28 November 1946) 14:5.

"Mayor Gamble Dies Suddenly." *Savannah Morning News* (14 July 1945) 10:1-3.

"Mayor Gamble's Funeral Today." *Savannah Morning News* (15 July 1945) 24.

"Murphy Completes Drawing of Gamble." *Savannah Morning News* (1 April 1946) 10:5.

Official Proceedings of City Council (25 July 1945) 458; (5 September 1945) 479; (19 September 1945) 493. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Spracher, Luciana. "The Thomas Gamble Building" (January 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"War, Peace Kept City Busy in 1945." *Savannah Morning News* (26 December 1945) 12:1.

Structure/Tower Clock Electrified**1945 September-December**

In September of 1945, the Board of Purchase advertised for bids for the electrification of and repairs to the City Hall tower clock. The clock, almost forty years old, was in poor condition and many tower clocks in the area were being converted to electricity at this time.

Rufus Jackson, of Springfield, Ohio, converted the clock to electrical operation in September. The end of World War II had made the necessary materials for electrification available, and around the same time he electrified the tower clocks of the Chatham County Courthouse, the Independent Presbyterian Church, and the No. 6 Fire Station at Barnard and 38th streets. According to Jackson:

Weight-driven clocks have definite hazards—the weights, themselves. They have been known to break loose and crash through the ceilings of rooms below their shafts.... Old weight-driven clocks were greatly troubled by pigeons. Electric clocks, being much stronger, have an immunity to them.

By January 1946, the work had been completed and the old iron weights and balances sold as scrap metal. Previous to its electrification, Ira N. Smith had to climb into the dome once a week to wind the mechanism.

After electrification, his work was reduced to oiling only once every three months and inspecting the works for any problems.

Kelly, Patrick. "City Hall Clock Has New Face." *Savannah Morning News* (3 June 1962). Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (5 September 1945) 477-478. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Time on His Hands." *Savannah Morning News* (28 January 1946) 10:4.

***Municipal/Female Acting Clerk of Council
1946 January 8***

On January 8, 1946, for the first time in the history of the City of Savannah, a woman served as the acting Clerk of Council at a City Council meeting. Following the death of P. J. McNamara, Assistant Clerk of Council Katherine Redmond was the first woman to be in sole charge of the Clerk's office. Irene Grogan, formerly the Assistant Clerk of Council and Secretary to the Mayor, resigned two days after McNamara's death leaving Redmond with the duties of the Clerk's office. "Thoroughly familiar with the office and its work, Mrs. Redmond handles her duties efficiently and with dispatch."

"Woman Serves as Clerk of Council." *Savannah Evening Press* (8 January 1946). Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1940-1949. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

***Images/Inauguration
1947 January 27***

On January 27, 1947, Mayor John G. Kennedy was inaugurated at City Hall in the Council Chamber.



1947 inauguration overflowing the Council Chamber into the rotunda, photograph by Carroll Burke, Southern Photo Service, January 27, 1947.

"As New Administration Takes Over." *Savannah Morning News* (28 January 1947).

Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1940-1949.

Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

***Artifacts/Pulaski Flag
1947 August***

In mid-August 1947, Clerk of Council Arthur Greenfield found an old flag in the Clerk's vault in City Hall. R. P. Daily, a local historian interested in the find, looked the flag up in *History of the American Flag* and

found that it was a replica of the Pulaski Banner embroidered for Count Casimir Pulaski by the Moravian Sisters of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1778. Pulaski carried the original banner with him in the Siege of Savannah. After he was wounded, it was saved by his first lieutenant and then retrieved by Captain Bentalou. The banner was eventually deposited in Peale's Museum. In 1844, Edmund Peale donated it to the Maryland Historical Society where it was still preserved in 1947. The original banner is made of crimson silk with yellow embroidery and green letters, and measured about twenty inches square. The banner bears the inscriptions "U. S.," and in Latin "Union Makes Valor Stronger" and "No Other Governs."

"Daily Reveals 'Lost' Flag is Copy of Pulaski Banner." *Savannah Morning News* (23 August 1947) 10:4-5.

***Events/Hurricane
Structure/Windows
1947 October 15***

On the night of October 15, 1947, Savannah and the Coastal Empire region were hit by a hurricane. The center of the storm made land fall about twenty miles south of downtown Savannah. Winds reached peak gusts of 95 miles per hour in the downtown area and 100 miles per hour on Tybee Island. A few large windows at City Hall were broken.

Landall, Joe. "Heavy Damage Left in Hurricane's Wake." *Savannah Morning News* (16 October 1947).

***Politics/Mayor's Powers
1947 October 17***

On the afternoon of October 17, 1947, City Council stripped the office of Mayor of many of its powers through an ordinance "re-defining the powers of the chief executive and placing many of those powers in the hands of the aldermanic committees." The ordinance was passed on its third reading in a vote of eight to three. It had already passed on its first reading on September 19, 1947 by a vote of 8 to 2, and on its second reading on October 3rd, by a vote of 8 to 3. Mayor John G. Kennedy, fighting Council's efforts to strip his office, had vetoed the ordinance on October 8th, and law required a two-thirds vote to override his veto, which the October 17th vote achieved. After this ordinance became law on October 17th, Clerk of Council Arthur Greenfield read a message from Mayor Kennedy questioning the legality of the ordinance and stating his belief that the restructuring of the municipal government should be voted on by the people at the proper time.

Passage of a second ordinance restoring full powers to the Mayor's office was made the first order of business on January 24, 1949, when the incoming City Council held its first meeting under Mayor Olin F. Fulmer. This ordinance, which passed unanimously, repealed the power-stripping measures approved by the previous councilmen on October 17, 1947 and provided Mayor Fulmer the same powers Savannah's chief executives held prior to that date.

"Mayor's Powers Fully Restored." *Savannah Morning News* (25 January 1949) 16:1.

Rossiter, Frank. "Aldermen Vote to Override Veto." *Savannah Morning News* (18 October 1947) 10:1.

***Events/First Outdoor Inauguration
1949 January 24***

On January 24, 1949, Mayor Olin F. Fulmer, Savannah's 57th Mayor, was inaugurated in the first outdoor inauguration in front of City Hall on a specially built platform. The front of the building was decorated in bunting and flowers. The second floor balcony was filled with floral baskets and a floral horseshoe, "the equal of any given to Derby winners."



Olin F. Fulmer inaugurated as Savannah Mayor, January 24, 1949.
Savannah Morning News Photo by Lee Banks.

"First Outdoor Inauguration of Mayor and Alderman is Colorful Event." *Savannah Morning News* (25 January 1949) 16:2.
Used with permission.

In a great outdoor ceremony, matching in beauty and color the inaugurations of governors and Presidents, the 65-year-old retired insurance executive took the oath of office from Superior Court Judge David S. Atkinson, who described him as "our old friend and new mayor."

An estimated 5,000 people were able to participate in the ceremonies, many watching from office windows and balconies. The Savannah High School and Benedictine bands began playing music at 11 o'clock in the morning, and by noon "virtually every seat and every vantage point a block around were taken."

The council chamber, scene of so many momentous inaugurations in the past, was quiet and deserted....

"New Mayor in Inaugurated at Great Outdoor Ceremony." *Savannah Morning News* (25 January 1949) 16:2-3.

Municipal/First Female Clerk ***1949 January 24***

On January 24 1949, Mrs. Louis J. Roos (Nola McEvoy Roos) became the first woman appointed Clerk of Council, as well as the first female to hold a top-level position with the City of Savannah.

A good way to describe Mrs. Louis J. Roos, clerk of city council, is that she is a "pace-setter" for the women of Savannah and has been for some time. As far as can be determined she not only is the first woman ever to hold the position of clerk of council, but is the first woman to head any major department of the city government of Savannah.

Mrs. Roos was very active in local women and business organizations, including the Savannah Business and Professional Women's Club, the Board of Education, and the Savannah Girl Scouts Association. She was the first president of the Woman's Council of the Chamber of Commerce in 1932. She organized the Chatham County Democratic Women's Club and served as the first president in 1934. She was named the General Chairman of the American Red Cross Call in 1935 and was the first woman to serve in that position in Savannah up to that time. In 1940, she became the only woman district supervisor of the Bureau of the Census in Georgia. Ross was a graduate of Savannah High School and Richards Business College. In 1927, she became secretary-treasurer of the R. & E. Pecan Company, her husband's business, a job she held until her appointment as Clerk of Council.

Official Proceedings of City Council (24 January 1949) 215. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Parr, Billy. "Clerk of Council is First Woman to Hold Top City Job." *Savannah Morning News* (6 February 1949) 22:5.

Artifacts/City Flag
1949 April 6

On April 6, 1949, Mrs. Willis Wilder, designer of the official flag of the City of Savannah, presented a new flag to Mayor Olin F. Fulmer to be hung in the Council Chamber. On January 10th, Mrs. Wilder (Cornelia Sams Maclean Wilder) noticed that the flag on City Hall looked "like a rag aloft...dirty with holes in it." Later in 1962, she described its appearance in 1949 as, "perfectly ghastly looking, but after all, it was 44 years old." She mentioned its condition and by March City Council placed an order with Kennickell Printing Company for new flags, the first time flags were ordered since the original ones were made in early 1905. Marion Kennickell found one of the original outdoor flags stored in a warehouse from which she copied the design. The new flags were delivered on April 5th and Mrs. Wilder made the presentation at City Hall the following day at 10:30 in the morning.

"Savannah Gets a Flag." *Savannah Morning News* (7 April 1949) 7:5.

Sieg, Gerald Chan. "A Brilliant, Unfamiliar Flag." *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (1962).

Politics/Open Meetings
1949 April 22

On April 22, 1949, City Council voted to conduct future Council business in open meetings instead of in the traditional Committee-of-the-Whole sessions, allowing reporters to sit in on the entire proceedings of the Mayor and Aldermen. Alderman Leo F. Griffin led the movement to rid Council of "star chamber" sessions and conduct business in the open to the greatest extent possible. Alderman Harry B. Grimshaw was the only alderman to vote against the move. Aldermen Alex A. Thomas was quoted saying, "We live in a democracy, I am told. Nothing that city council does should be secret. All of our business transactions are the business of the public."

"Aldermen Vote for Open Meets." *Savannah Morning News* (23 April 1949) 12:3.

May, Hoke Smith. "News Events During Past Year Reviewed as Jan. 1 Approaches." *Savannah Morning News* (26 December 1949) 12:4.

Politics/ City Council
1949 September 23

On September 23, 1949, during a heated City Council meeting regarding the appointment of Police Chief Sanford Butler, Aldermen Melvin Roberson and Leo Griffin, according to the *Savannah Morning News*, verbally attacked Mayor Olin F. Fulmer with "vitriolic blasts" calling him the "Dictator from the Yellow Building" (presumably the "Yellow Building" referred to City Hall).

With the retirement of Police Chief Ward effective October 1, 1949, Mayor Fulmer announced his desire to elevate Supervisor of Purchases Sanford P. Butler to the position as soon as possible and asked for the approval of Council. Alderman Roberson read a six-page prepared statement in opposition to the nomination of Mr. Butler, accused Fulmer of misleading the Police Committee, and tendered his resignation as a member of the committee, effective immediately, which was accepted by the Mayor. Alderman Griffin also spoke in opposition to Sanford Butler stating, "I have respect for the Mayor but no respect in his integrity and word."

Alderman Dan J. Sheehan spoke in the Mayor's defense saying, "The people of the city of Savannah have confidence in you." The issue was brought to vote and carried six to three appointing Butler Police Chief. Aldermen Roberson, Griffin and Steele opposed the appointment of Butler. Steele's argument against the issue was that he had not had time to study the matter, not that he had anything against Butler or the recommendation of the Mayor. The final vote suggested the majority of Council approved of the Mayor's actions.

“Alderman Have Lively Session.” *Savannah Morning News* (24 September 1949) 12:1.

“Fulmer Sees Ghost Writer in Attack.” *Savannah Evening Press* (24 September 1949) 14:1.

May, Hoke Smith. “News Events During Past Year Reviewed as Jan. 1 Approaches.” *Savannah Morning News* (26 September 1949) 12:4.

Official Proceedings of City Council (23 September 1949) 374-375. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

“Roberson, Griffin Blast Mayor as Council Names Butler Chief.” *Savannah Morning News* (24 September 1949) 12:3-4.

A Century of History *1950 ~ 1959*



City Hall, February 12, 1952.
City Hall Folder: "City Hall Gets Waterproofed" (12 February 1952).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Structure/Unknown Repairs ***1950 December 15***

At the December 15, 1950 City Council meeting, the Mayor and Aldermen resolved to authorize and direct the "Fiscal Officers of the City of Savannah...to pay for the necessary repairs to the City Hall, same not to exceed the sum of \$1,000." The Council minutes did not detail what repairs were required on the building.

"Council Proposes Extended Curfew." *Savannah Morning News* (16 December 1950) 14:5.

Official Proceedings of City Council (15 December 1950) 140. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Artifacts/Maritime Marker ***1952 November 11***

On November 11, 1952, an historical marker commemorating the sailing of the *S. S. Savannah* and the *S. S. John Randolph* was unveiled in front of a crowd of about 5,000 people at the dedication of the new \$6 million Georgia State Port facilities by Miss Bette Ann Wildes, of Noank, Connecticut, the great-great-

grandniece of Captain Moses Rogers, the captain of the *S. S. Savannah*. The marker was one of six new markers erected that month under the supervision of the Savannah-Chatham County Historic Sites and Monuments Commission. Though the marker was unveiled at the docks' dedication, it was set up in the Strand adjacent to City Hall on the east where it can be seen today.*

**This marker is scheduled to be relocated in 2006 to River Street adjacent to the S. S. Savannah maritime fountain.*

"Busy Shipping Scene Provides Backdrop for Port Dedication." *Savannah Morning News* (12 November 1952) 22:2-3.

"New State Docks are Dedicated." *Savannah Morning News* (12 November 1952) 22:1.

"Ready for Unveiling." *Savannah Morning News* (8 November 1952) 8:5-6.

Structure/Exterior Lighting ***1952 December 12***

On the evening of December 12, 1952, the City turned on a new lighting system for the City Hall dome. City Electrician Lester Gruver, assisted by Frank Hickman, manager of the Savannah office of the Westinghouse Electric Supply Company, and William Matthews, lighting engineer of the Savannah Electric and Power Company, had been working towards the illumination of the dome for several months. Gruver procured the "glow lights" by trading unused materials with the other companies with the approval of Mayor Olin Fulmer and the Electrical Committee of City Council. The lights were placed at the four corners of the copper dome's base and tested the previous Wednesday.

The lighted dome of city hall will be visible for many miles and will be particularly noticed by all persons entering the city from South Carolina.

"It will be a beacon of welcome to visitors coming into the city at night," said Mr. Gruver, "and it will give the people of Savannah a chance to note another beautiful thing about their city hall building."

"City Hall's Dome Illumination System to be Lighted Tonight." *Savannah Morning News* (12 December 1952) 40:5.

Events/Korean POW ***1953 September 4***

On September 4, 1953, Corporal Leroy J. Sykes, age 23, was welcomed by City officials at City Hall as Savannah's first Korean prisoner-of-war to return home. Corporal Sykes, who served with Battery A, 503rd Field Artillery Battalion, Second Division, spent nearly three years (32 months and 10 days) in Camp No. 5, a Communist prison camp in North Korea, where about 1,700 U. N. prisoners died (1,600 of them Americans).

After joining the United States Army in 1948, Sykes was stationed in Germany. He was transferred to Korea where he was wounded by shrapnel and taken prisoner by the Communists along with another Savannah soldier, Private James Williams (also released).

He was in the infamous Kunuri death march, and fashioned an earring in the form of a cross from an old toothpaste tube which he wore in memory to his buddies who perished in that ordeal.

Sykes did not like to discuss his experience and repeatedly said he was glad to be home. A native of Savannah and alumnus Cuyler School, he couldn't remember having ever been inside City Hall prior to this occasion.



Corporal Leroy Sykes welcomed in Mayor's Office, City Hall, September 4, 1953.
Photograph by Frank Freeman.

"First Liberated Savannah POW Welcomed On Arrival Home." *Savannah Morning News* (5 September 1953) 16:5.
Used with permission.

"First Liberated Savannah POW Welcomed On Arrival Home." *Savannah Morning News* (5 September 1953) 16:5.

Municipal/Council-Manager Form of Government Adopted 1954 February 1

After years of financial mismanagement, the municipal government of Savannah received a wake-up call and reorganization under a new charter (passed by the Georgia State Legislature in December 1953) which provided for a council-manager form of government composed of a City Council and a City Manager. On February 1, 1954, the City of Savannah began operating under this new system. While the Mayor would continue to be recognized as the official head of the City's government, the new position of City Manager would serve as the government's chief executive officer with jurisdiction over all the City's departments. The City Manager would be responsible to the Mayor and Aldermen for the proper administration of the government and charged with carrying out their plans. While that person would be in the position to make recommendations for new programs to Council, Council's approval would still be necessary before any new programs could be implemented.

On February 19, 1954, City Council approved a resolution to hire Francis "Frank" Atherton Jacocks as the City of Savannah's first City Manager on a month-to-month basis at an annual salary of \$15,000, effective March 1, 1954. Jacocks was chosen from a pool of one hundred applicants. On March 1st, City Manager Frank Jacocks began work at City Hall, and a new phase in the history of Savannah's city government.



City Manager Frank A. Jacocks, n.d.
"City Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Council-Manager System."
Report to Council (Public Information Office, 27 February 2004).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“City Manager Selected; To Take Office March 1.” *Savannah Morning News* (14 January 1954) 28:1.

“New City Manager Arrives.” *Savannah Morning News* (1 March 1954) 20:1.

Pitner, Richard O. “Top Ten Local News Stories of '54 Chosen.” *Savannah Morning News* (27 December 1954) 16:5-6.

Spracher, Luciana. “A Brief History of the Establishment of Savannah’s Council-Manager Form of Government” (February 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/50th Anniversary of Cornerstone Laying 1954 August 11

On August 11, 1954, Savannah celebrated the 50th anniversary of the laying of City Hall’s cornerstone with a ceremony in the Council Chamber on the second floor of the building on Bay and Bull streets. City Council was represented by Mayor Olin F. Fulmer, Chairman of Council Peter Roe Nugent, and Alderman Dan J. Sheehan. Reverend J. Nathaniel Reid, assistant rector of St. John’s Episcopal Church, gave the invocation and benediction.

Thomas H. Gignilliat, the principal speaker for the occasion, described the room as “one of the handsomest municipal meeting chambers in the country.”

Savannah is a far wealthier city today than it was when this City Hall was built, but I think every member of the finance committee will agree with me when I say that if we had to have a new City Hall today we couldn’t afford anything like this. Just look about you—you are not likely to see finer paneling anywhere.... The official furniture you see is the original mahogany furniture. When the number of our aldermen drops from 12 to six, as it will after the first of the year, I hope this semi-circle is not disturbed.

The half-century anniversary which we observe today, in terms of world change is the longest half-century in recorded history. When we go back to the date of the laying of the cornerstone of this building we go back to a date far remote from the present date in every yardstick of historical measure except the calendar.

Mayor Fulmer introduced three City employees who worked in the building when it was first opened, including Charles Garfunkel, then Superintendent of Police, J. Robert Creamer, former Clerk of Council, and Captain William H. Robertson, a clerk with the Park and Tree Commission then and Superintendent of the department fifty years later. Creamer described City Hall’s “wine room and coal bin,” and “called the administration of 1904 the ‘leaders of progress in this city’.” Shelby Myrick, Jr. represented his father, Shelby Myrick, Sr., who was Recorder when the building opened and had sent a message from Europe for the anniversary:

We see in this structure...the dignity and respect for government. We can also turn our minds back 50 years and consider the citizens and officials of Savannah of that date, who were cognizant of the needs for public improvements as well as the need that government officials look to the future. In this building Savannah is symbolized by its past accomplishments and advances, but the same spirit that caused the city officials to look forward to the future, and to erect this splendid building, must continue to exist in the coming years...

“City Hall Cornerstone is Big Rock—And a Good Thing It Is!” *Savannah Morning News* (12 July 1954) 18:3-4.

“City Hall’s Birthday Celebrated.” *Savannah Morning News* (12 August 1954) 28:1. Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Archives/Records Cleared Structure/Basement Repainted 1954 September 17

On September 17, 1954, City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the City Manager, then Frank A. Jacocks, to clear the City Hall basement of all papers and records dating prior to 1927 that were considered

“of no value” to the daily functions of the city government so that this under-utilized space could be put to better use for other purposes. The resolution specifically mentioned that City Council minutes, resolutions, ordinances, and property deeds would not be disposed. Jacocks told the local newspaper that no valuable papers would be discarded, but “stacks and stacks of worthless old papers [had been] piled up in the basement” which was in the process of being cleaned up and repainted white.

The resolution as passed by Council reads as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah in Council Assembled, and it resolved by authority thereof,

That due to the immense accumulation of old records and documents, books, etc., in the basement of the City Hall that are of no value, and due to the fact that space which is now being utilized for the safe keeping of records, etc., could be used for other purposes and to relieve the need for additional space in the City Hall,

The City Manager is authorized to cause to be removed from said basement all records, documents, books, etc., which date back prior to January 1, 1927, with the exception of ordinances and resolutions of the City Council, and deeds and documents of various properties belonging to the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1954.

“City Seeks to Dispose of Old Records.” *Savannah Morning News* (17 September 1954) 36:2.

Official Proceedings of City Council (17 September 1954) 311. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/City Hall 5-Day Work Week 1955 April 18

On April 18, 1955, City Hall workers switched to a five-day work week schedule under a new plan initiated by City Manager Frank A. Jacocks. Previously, City employees worked six days a week, including Saturdays. In the event of an “emergency” engineering problem, citizens were directed to contact the city garage by telephone.

“City Hall Closed.” *Savannah Morning News* (23 April 1955) 13:1.

Municipal/City Hall Computers 1955 May

In May 1955, City Manager Frank A. Jacocks was authorized by City Council to contract for the lease of IBM equipment for the handling of the City’s water bills, tax bills and general financial accounting. Jacocks estimated the savings to the city would be between \$10,000 and \$12,000 a year plus an additional \$30,000 in salaries. The new computers were installed in the City Hall building.

“IBM System to be Placed in City Hall.” *Savannah Morning News* (28 May 1955) 18:1.

Municipal/First & Second Female Clerk 1955 June 10

On June 10, 1955, Mrs. Katherine S. Redmond was named Clerk of Council after sixteen years of service with the City of Savannah making her both the first and second female to serve in the capacity of Clerk of Council. In 1942, Mrs. Redmond became secretary to the Clerk of Council, then P. J. McNamara. When he died in office in 1945, she became acting clerk until February 1946 when William S. Ray was appointed Clerk of Council and Redmond became his assistant. Ray was succeeded by Mrs. Nola M. Roos, the first woman appointed Clerk of Council. After Roos resigned in January 1953, Redmond was again named acting clerk before being unanimously appointed Clerk by City Council. She was therefore the first woman to serve as acting clerk in 1946 and the second woman to be appointed Clerk in 1955.

Mrs. Redmond began her career at City Hall in 1939 when her husband died.

“I had never even been inside City Hall before I came to apply for the job,” Mrs. Redmond confessed with a smile. But she’s found it an interesting place throughout 24 years and six different mayors.



Clerk of Council Katherine Redmond and students, March 20, 1963.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Robert McDonald. “City Fathers for a Day.” *Savannah News Press* (20 March 1963).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“City Council Clerk’s Position Has Many Facets.” *Savannah Morning News* (8 August 1963). Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1960-1969. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

“Mrs. Redmond is Appointed by Council.” *Savannah Morning News* (11 June 1955) 20:5.

Official Proceedings of City Council (10 June 1955) 457. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Movie

1955 June 13

On June 13, 1955, Twentieth Century-Fox filmed a scene for the motion picture *View from Pompey’s Head*, starring Richard Egan, in the area adjoining City Hall to the east. Eight parking spaces on the north side of Bay Street, the area and ramp leading behind the building, and Factors’ Walk, all to the east of City Hall, were closed off for several hours in the morning. The scene was shot using the façades of Thomas & Hutton Engineers and Haines, Jones & Hill Insurance office, on Factors’ Walk east of City Hall. Several City Hall employees and a newspaper boy, who normally sold papers in front of City Hall, were used as extras as Richard Egan walked across the foot bridge into the door of the Thomas & Hutton office (the engineer firm’s sign was replaced with one bearing the name of the law firm in the movie). In the afternoon, a hidden camera caught natural footage in Johnson Square.

“Movie Magic to Provide ‘Fast Trip’.” *Savannah Morning News* (14 June 1955) 24:1.

“Parking to be Restricted Today.” *Savannah Morning News* (13 June 1955) 18:5.

Events/All-America City Award

1956 January 10

On January 10, 1956, Savannah received its first All-America City award for the year 1955. The banner from this award now hangs on the east wall of the Council Chamber of City Hall and reads “Savannah All-America City.” Dr. George Gallup, president of the National Municipal League (co-sponsor of the award with *LOOK Magazine*) and Director of the American Institute of Public Opinion, presented the award and banner to Mayor W. Lee Mingledorff, Jr. “in recognition of progress achieved through intelligent citizen action.”

The award was received in response to the efforts of the community to restructure the municipal government in order to put the City on stable financial feet after years of mismanagement of the City’s funds and over-borrowing. The people successfully fought a campaign for a new charter which called for a council-manager form of government that soon began to implement the changes necessary to pull the City out of the red hole it had dug itself into.

In July 1955, Representative Frank S. Cheatham, Jr. and Charles F. Wood, former president of the Jaycees, traveled to Seattle, Washington to present Savannah’s bid for the All-America City award. On December 27, 1955, it was announced that Savannah had been chosen from a pool of 137 cities as one of eleven recipients of the 1955 award “for outstanding citizen initiative” in improving Savannah’s political situation. The people’s will in the successful restructuring of Savannah’s government, from a weak mayor system to a council-manager system, was proclaimed as:

Modern-day proof of the inherent strength of our representative democracy...in which the people acting in concert, can make their government anything they really want it to be.



All-America City Award banner, awarded for 1955.
Photographed by L. Spracher, 2005 for City of Savannah Research Library & Municipal Archives.
Used with permission.

“11 Cities Win All-America Honors.” *National Municipal Review*, Volume XLV, No. 1 (January 1956) 47.

““Look” Article on City to be Released Soon.” *Savannah Morning News* (20 December 1955) 29.

LOOK Magazine (10 January 1956) 35.

“Savannah Among 11 Cities Given ‘All-America’ Award.” *Savannah Morning News* (16 December 1955) 19.

Savannah...’55. Annual Report, City of Savannah, Georgia. City of Savannah, Georgia, 1956. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1955, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Spracher, Luciana. “A Brief History of the Establishment of Savannah’s Council-Manager Form of Government” (February 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/Residential Parking Stickers

1956 January 20

On January 20, 1956, Mrs. Louis O. Crovatt, a property owner and resident of 228 East Oglethorpe Avenue, frustrated by pile a parking tickets received from parking in front of her own residence, confronted the Mayor during a City Council meeting demanding he pay for them. She felt that the ticketing was denying her “free access to her property,” and suggested that the City provide her with a sticker allowing her free parking on her block. Council referred the matter to the City Manager and her grievance resulted in residential immunity stickers for those living in the metered downtown area.

Official Proceedings of City Council (20 January 1956) 60; (3 February 1956) 63-64; (17 February 1956) 69. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

“Year’s Review for Savannah, 1956 in Pictures.” *Savannah Evening Press* (26 December 1956) 10. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Vertical Files: Savannah History, 1950-1959.

Municipal/Employee Strike

1956 July 16

On July 16, 1956, employees of the City’s Scavenger, Sanitation, Water, Engineering, Recreation, and Park & Tree departments went on strike in response to a change in the pay plan for City laborers. Following requests from the local municipal employees’ union, the City had converted to a weekly pay period, as opposed to bi-weekly, and planned to pay overtime after forty hours a week, instead of forty-five hours. In the transfer, a week’s salary had been withheld because the City could not pay workers for hours they had not yet worked. When the checks were distributed, employees were confused and thought they had taken a pay reduction rather than a pay increase with the overtime change. Two picket lines were formed on the 16th, one at the City Lot and one in front of City Hall, with strikers carrying signs reading “Restore Wage Reduction” and “Unfair to City Employees [sic].”

The strike, involving about 450 workers, lasted for three days. On the afternoon of July 18th, during a lengthy meeting at City Hall, City officials, led by Mayor W. Lee Mingledorff, Jr., and union representatives, led by John E. DeBorde, came to an agreement which ended the strike. Overtime would still be paid after 45 hours a week, and the money set aside for the overtime change (\$72,000) would instead be used towards “across-the-board” raises. Each hourly worker was given a 6 cents an hour raise, and each salaried worker was given a \$12 month raise. Workers returned to work on July 19th after tons of garbage had piled up around the city. The City refused to pay the employees for the three days of the strike. However on July 25th, Council authorized City Manager Franck Jacocks to raise the minimum wage of all City laborers to \$1 an hour to adjust “inequities.”



Employees picket in front of City Hall, July 1956.

“Year’s Review for Savannah, 1956 in Pictures.” *Savannah Evening Press* (26 December 1956) 10.
Used with permission.

“City Labor Minimum Set at \$1.” *Savannah Morning News* (26 July 1956) 30:1.

“City Orders Strikers to Return.” *Savannah Morning News* (17 July 1956) 22:1.

Parr, William H. “City Strike Settled on New Pay Pattern.” *Savannah Morning News* (19 July 1956) 36:1.

“Year’s Review for Savannah, 1956 in Pictures.” *Savannah Evening Press* (26 December 1956) 10.

Municipal/Professional Development 1956 October

In October of 1956, City Manager Franck Jacocks presented certificates in the Council Chamber to several city employees who had recently completed a new in-house training program developed by Jacocks as the first phase of a program designed to increase employee efficiency and supervisory leadership. To earn the certificate, employees attended two-hour sessions weekly.

“In-Service Helpful to All Staffs.” *Savannah Evening Press* (8 April 1957) adv 5:5.

Files: Savannah History, 1950-1959. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/City Hall Workers 1956

The 1956 Annual Report for the City of Savannah, published in the *Savannah Evening Press*, included photographs of “behind-the-scene” workers at City Hall that the average citizen may not have been aware of, including those taking care of routine clerical work in the basement levels.

There are many behind-the-scene workers in municipal work in all departments. It is these employes [sic] who daily take care of routine clerical details and over-all assist in the operation of your city.

“Behind-Scene Workers in City Hall.” *Savannah Evening Press* (8 April 1957) adv 7:3-5.

Municipal/Departments Moved 1957 February

During the month of February 1957, several offices in City Hall were moving around as renovation work on the Gamble Building neared completion. The City Manager’s office moved to space on the fourth floor formerly occupied by the Director of Public Works and the Purchasing Department. The Civil Service Board and the Metropolitan Planning Commission left City Hall and moved to the Gamble Building.

“Several City Hall Offices Will be Moved.” *Savannah Evening Press* (18 February 1957). Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1950-1959. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/Information-Complaint Desk 1957 April 1

On April 1, 1957, a new “Information-Complaint Desk,” initially staffed by Mrs. Ann Salsburg Hancock, was set up by City Manager Frank Jacocks in a corner of the first floor rotunda of City Hall. Jacocks desired to centralize incoming complaints so they could be routed to the proper department, receive faster service, and trouble spots could be identified.

The information station was immediately popular with the public. Mrs. Hancock served as an unofficial greeter for the City in addition to giving directions to departments, answering questions about dog licenses, and listening to unhappy taxpayers. On October 1st, she began taking work orders, at telephone number AD 3-4209, and forwarding them to the appropriate department.

Collins, Jack. “New City Hall Complaint Desk Proving to Be Popular Facility.” *Savannah Morning News* (9 May 1957) 36:6.

“Complaint, Query Center is Provided.” *Savannah Morning News* (1 October 1957) 24:1.

"Use Your City's New Efficient "Service Station" For Information or Service Dial Adams 3-4209." *Savannah News Press* (30 March 1958).

Structure/Dome Repairs

1958 March 14

On March 14, 1958, City Council authorized a contract with Dahl Carter & Son, of Jacksonville, Florida, for \$1,350 for repairs on the interior glass dome of City Hall.

"City Hall Odds and Ends." *Savannah Morning News* (15 March 1958) 10A:4.

Official Proceedings of City Council (14 March 1958) 430. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Politics/4-Year Mayor and Alderman Terms

1958 May

In May 1958, Savannahians voted in favor of a four-year term for the Mayor and Alderman as opposed to the previous two-year term. A bill proposing the four-year term had been brought before the State Legislature in January. Many felt that the two-year term was too short for an administration to effectively carry out programs and created a feeling of insecurity for non-elected officials with the possibility of Council changing every two years. On October 6, 1958, the new Mayor and Aldermen began a four-year term with their inauguration.

"Four-Year Terms Proposed for Mayor, Aldermen." *Savannah Morning News* (20 November 1957) B12:1.

Structure/Roof Repairs

1958 September-December

In September 1958, after Council discovered old plaster was crumbling or missing due to leaks, a \$3,075 contract was awarded to Georgia Waterproofing & Erection Company for masonry roof repairs for City Hall. By December, workmen were busy on top of City Hall repairing joints between the large stone blocks of the building to block leaks. The work was being completed by James Thompson and James Johnson.



Waterproofing City Hall tower, December 1958.

City Hall Folder: "City Hall Gets Waterproofed." *Savannah Morning News* (18 December 1958).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

"City Hall Gets Waterproofed." *Savannah Morning News* (18 December 1958).

Official Proceedings of City Council (12 September 1958) 81. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

A Century of History 1960 ~ 1969



Teenage Good Citizens pose with City Hall rotunda fountain, 1964.
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Archives/Records Management Program ***1960 June***

Between June 1960 and January 1961, the City Manager's office was actively involved in sorting and cataloging the vast accumulation of City records in City Hall's basement.

Through the years, apparently, nothing much has been thrown away except for used paper cups from City Hall drinking fountains.

Originally started by City Manager John O. Hall as a means of cataloging the records to determine what should be disposed, preserved and microfilmed, the project soon became the City's first serious venture into records management.

Several times the aged books have almost been sent to the junk pile. In fact, ex-City Manager Frank Jacocks ordered them destroyed but the mayor and aldermen stopped the move before many of the records were carried away.

To avoid the loss of valuable records, City Manager John O. Hall was having the records catalogued before any decisions were made regarding their disposition. Mayor W. Lee Mingledorff, Jr. informed the newspaper that several years earlier, the Georgia Historical Society had microfilmed some Council Minutes (twenty-four rolls of microfilm of the minutes from 1790-1900) and would probably be asked for a

recommendation on which additional records should be preserved on microfilm as a way of reducing volume without losing any information. "There are some very important records down there and I believe we should have them microfilmed," the mayor said.

Hall assigned the project to Picot Floyd, his assistant (and future Savannah City Manager) and a graduate of the Advanced Institute of Records Management of the National Archives. Combined with Hall's experience supervising records programs for the City of Montevideo and the Ministry of Public Health of Uruguay, the two City officials began to identify distinct records series. Floyd was quoted saying that 578 different series of records going back to 1792 had been identified falling into three groups: those with no historical curiosity value or importance to the continuity of City business; those with a purely historical value; and those with a historical as well as business value.

Items deemed to have no historical value or business value would be discarded, including traffic citations and multiple copies of purchase orders for office supplies purchased in the 1940s. An example of a record which would be saved for purely historical reasons would be the minutes of the old Board of Health from the early 1800s, while the Council Minutes continued to have both historical value and importance for the continuity of business.

In addition to addressing the mass of old records, Floyd faced the future accumulation of City records and prepared a catalog and a "Program Retention Schedule Filing Manual" to assist departments with storage and retention of records. Basically the manual was a proposed filing system listing over 500 series or categories of records with recommendations for storage, transfer and disposal to help departments get a handle on their records in a minimum of time.

In addition to the preservation of certain records, Floyd said, "We are equally anxious to put some houseworking order into the accumulation of city records."

Records of all descriptions are now stored haphazardly from the rotunda dome to the second basement, mostly an overflow from adequate cabinets housing the more important documents.

Georgia State Archivist Mary Givens Bryant compared Floyd's manual to that of the National Archives and described it as "one of the most professionally arranged I've ever seen. If you can carry this program out, you will be far ahead of any city government in Georgia."

Flanders, Joe. "Old City Records to be Preserved." *Savannah Morning News* (21 June 1960) 10B:5-6.

Roseberry, J. R. "Council Resolution Will Aid Cleanup of Old City Records." *Savannah Morning News* (11 February 1962) 1C:4-6.

Whitfield, Archie. "City Hall Tradition Broken by Cleanup." *Savannah Morning News* (23 January 1961) 10B:6-7.

Events/Movie ***1961 May 2-21***

During the month of May 1961, Universal-International Pictures and Melville Productions (co-owned by Gregory Peck and Sy Bartlett) filmed scenes for the motion picture *Cape Fear*, starring Peck and Robert Mitchum, in Savannah over a period of about three weeks. The movie was based on the novel *The Executioners* by John D. MacDonald. "Savannah's inherent qualities as a movie locale and its reputation as a 'good movie town' resulted in the decision to shoot the Peck-Bergen film here," as well as the availability of the necessary locations, including a plantation, a yacht basin, and a courthouse. Locations used in the filming included Grove Point Plantation, swamps in Bryan County, Factors' Walk and City Hall.

Filming of the psychological murder story, also starring Polly Bergen and Lori Martin as Peck's terrorized family, began on May 2nd at Grove Point Plantation. The first scene of the movie was later shot at City Hall with Robert Mitchum, playing "a psychopathic ex-convict plots [plotting] retribution for a fancied wrong," arriving into town and looking for Gregory Peck, a lawyer. The interior of City Hall, depicted as a courthouse in the film, was recreated in a Hollywood studio for interior scenes, however all the exterior views were shot on location in Savannah.

Melville Productions, the movie company, left Savannah on May 21st after filming one-third of the film on location in Savannah. Over \$250,000 of the film's \$3 million budget was spent in Savannah.

Cobb, Lamar. "'Cape Fear' Troup Ends Stay in City." *Savannah Morning News* (22 May 1961) 7B:7-8.

"Hollywood to Film Movie Here." *Savannah Morning News* (23 February 1961) 3D:4.

Lowery, John. "Movie Making Begins Here at Leisurely Southern Pace." *Savannah Evening Press* (2 May 1961) 16:4.

"Movie Filming Begins Today." *Savannah Morning News* (2 May 1961) 8B:6-7.

Norris, Mary Ann. "Hostess to Hollywood." *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (21 May 1961) 6-7.

Savannah Evening Press (10 April 1962). Vertical Files: Moving Pictures-Savannah. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Savannah Morning News (7 April 1962). Vertical Files: Moving Pictures-Savannah. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"Two Movie Stars Arrive in Savannah." *Savannah Morning News* (1 May 1961) 10B:1.

Artifacts/Mayors' Portraits

1961 November 29

On November 29, 1961, portraits of three former mayors were unveiled in City Hall. Present for the unveiling of their own portraits were former mayors Peter Roe Nugent (1945-1947), Olin F. Fulmer (1949-1955), and W. Lee Mingledorff, Jr. (1955-1960). Current Mayor Malcolm Maclean hosted the ceremony in the mayor's reception room at 3:30 in the afternoon. A fourth portrait, of former mayor John G. Kennedy (1947-1949), had recently been hung. Mayor Maclean arranged for the ceremony of the three "forgotten" portraits when he noted they were missing from the City's collection.



Mayor Malcolm Maclean unveils new mayors' portraits, November 29, 1961.

"Four Mayors." *Savannah Evening Press* (30 November 1961).

Vertical File: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1960-1969.

Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

"City Hall 'Gallery' To Get 3 Additions." *Savannah Morning News* (27 November 1961). Vertical File: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1960-1969. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"City Hall Honors Former Mayors." *Savannah Morning News* (30 November 1961) D10:4-6.

"Four Mayors." *Savannah Evening Press* (30 November 1961). Vertical File: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1960-1969. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Archives/Records Placed under City Manager 1962 February 14

On February 14, 1962, City Council passed a resolution placing the City's records under the jurisdiction of the City Manager to dispose of as he saw fit.

A maze of unsorted material has been gathering height and dust in the basement of City Hall since it was built in 1904. The three rooms in which the records are now sorted are so crowded that box-jumping calisthenics are required to inspect them....



Mayor Malcolm Maclean sifts through archival records in City Hall's basement, February 1962.
City Hall Folder: "City Hall [Mayor Maclean and records boxes]" (February 1962).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Council initially decided a formal resolution was not needed to accomplish the task of sorting the records begun in 1961 by City Manager John O. Hall and his assistant, Picot Floyd. Floyd set up a retention schedule and filing system to aid departments with the disposal of unnecessary documents and the retention of valuable ones. However, non-elected City officials were apparently hesitant to dispose of old records for fear of criticism from citizens and work towards the new records management program had been very slow. Mayor Maclean therefore requested Council pass a resolution giving the City Manager the authority to dispose of records as necessary. The resolution mentioned both the unnecessary retaining of records and those of historical value:

WHEREAS many of the records of the City of Savannah that have been accumulated have outlived their usefulness and,

WHEREAS, some of the records being kept in some of the various city offices have a continuing business value or historical value, and,

WHEREAS there is no central administrative control over the storage, disposition, reproduction and retention period for the municipal records of all types.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Alderman of the City of Savannah...that the City Manager of the City of Savannah be empowered to establish

administrative control over the municipal records...of whatever type or form in which the records exist or may exist, whatever age any record may attain, or of whatever size the records may be.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of the City of Savannah be empowered to dispose of any record or records in the course of the regular business operation of the City consistent with established records management and archival procedures...

Official Proceedings of City Council (14 February 1962) 37. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Roseberry, J. R. "Council Resolution Will Aid Cleanup of Old City Records." *Savannah Morning News* (11 February 1962) 1C:4-6.

Municipal/Professional Development ***1962 March 2***

On March 2, 1962, City Manager John O. Hall presented certificates to fourteen City officials, in a ceremony held in the Council Chamber, for completion of a special fourteen-week course in Supervisory Methods in Municipal Administration given at Armstrong College and taught by Mary H. Strong, Director of the Department of Community Service at Armstrong.



City Manager John O. Hall presents certificates to City employees, March 2, 1962.
Staff Photo by Robert McDonald. "City Officials Receive Diplomas." *Savannah Morning News* (3 March 1962) 1B:6-8.
Used with permission.

"City Officials Receive Diplomas." *Savannah Morning News* (3 March 1962) 1B:6-8.

Structure/Tower Clock ***1962 June 2***

On June 2, 1962, after fifty-eight years, the original hands of City Hall's tower clock were replaced by Rufus G. Jackson, of Springfield, Ohio, a specialist in tower clocks. Jackson was in town to service the clock's mechanism and paint the eight-foot dials when he found the hands in sore need of replacing. He had a spare set of cypress hands, made for the courthouse clock in Linden, Alabama, which he used to replace the original hands. The new minute hands were four feet, six inches long. The new hour hands were four feet, twenty-eight inches long. According to Jackson, at the time, "In the normal course of events they will not have to be replaced again for another half-century." Rufus Jackson is the same man who converted the clock to electrical operation in September 1945.

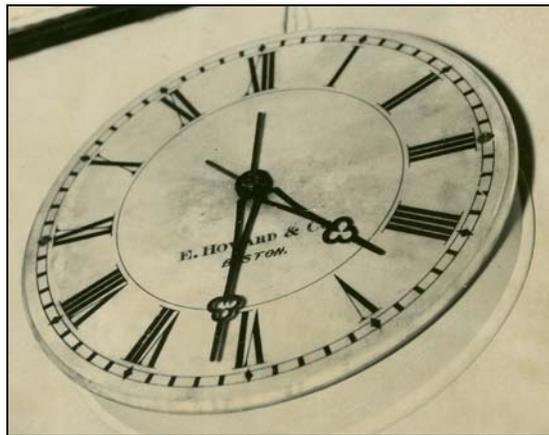


Rufus Jackson provides maintenance for City Hall clock mechanism, June 2, 1962.
 City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Will Land. "Jackson, Right, Adjusts Machinery in City Hall Tower" (3 June 1962).
 Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Kelly, Patrick. "City Hall Clock Has New Face." *Savannah Morning News* (3 June 1962). Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Council Chamber Clock 1962 July 19

On July 19, 1962, Mayor Malcolm Maclean, "apparently tired of having City Hall officials not know the time of day," ordered the replacement of City Hall's wall clocks throughout the building, including the clock in the Council Chamber. The marble-faced clocks were the original ones ordered from E. Howard & Company, of Boston, and installed in 1905 when the building was first opened. They were all connected to each other and the tower clock, so when one had technical problems they all did, which apparently had been a continual problem for about ten years.



Original City Hall interior wall clock, July 1962.
 City Hall Folder: "Gotta Go, Says Mayor" (20 July 1962).
 Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

While the other clocks in the building were completely replaced, the Council Chamber's clock was renovated. The clock's mechanism was apparently replaced, while the original marble face and bronze frame were retained. However, cleaning of the face resulted in a loss of the original lettering marking the manufacturer which used to appear in the center of the marble face below the hands. In October 1963, the *Savannah Evening Press* ran a photograph of the renovated Council Chamber clock:

Mrs. W. C. Carson, Jr., Chamber of Commerce employee, walked over to City Hall yesterday to inspect the beautiful new clock ...in Council Chamber. The clock replaced an old one which developed trouble in keeping time.



Original marble and bronze wall clock in the Council Chamber, July 1962.
City Hall Folder: "Council Chambers Clock" (n.d., c.20 July 1962).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



Renovated Council Chamber clock, October 1963.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Buddy Rich. "Newest City Clock" (8 October 1963).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Gotta Go, Says Mayor." *Savannah News-Press* (20 July 1962).

"Newest City Clock." *Savannah Evening Press* (8 October 1963).

*Events/N. S. Savannah Visit
1962 August 22-28*

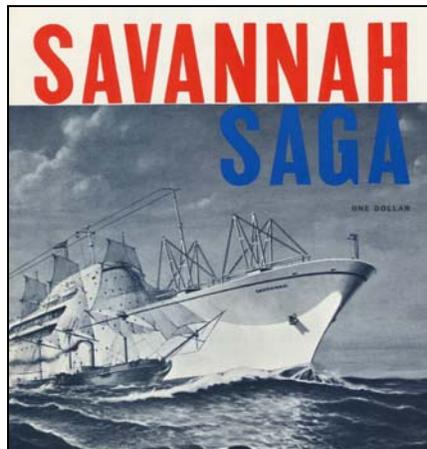


*N. S. Savannah approaches downtown Savannah, August 22, 1962.
V. & J. Duncan Antique Maps and Prints, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.*

On August 22, 1962, the *N. S. (Nuclear Ship) Savannah*, the world's first atomic-powered merchant ship, sailed into the port of Savannah and docked at the State Docks in Garden City. Formal ceremonies were led by the N. S. Savannah Celebration Committee which had maintained offices in City Hall leading up to the ship's arrival. The ship was escorted up the Savannah River, past City Hall, by the Coast Guard Artillery and a cover formation of helicopters. Anticipating arrival, the local newspaper predicted:

The noise accompanying the colorful welcoming ceremonies is expected to grow to a deafening crescendo when the white-hulled ship glides by City Hall where the fire boats will spray their greeting and other ships in the harbor will have their whistles screaming.

Festivities planned by the Celebration Committee included films and art exhibits at the State Docks, dedication of the new Emmet Park Fountain honoring the three ships named for the city, harbor tours on the *Visitor* docked at the foot of Bull Street sponsored by the Historic Savannah Foundation and the Junior League, and White Line Tours leaving from the Cotton Exchange.



*Cover of "Savannah Saga," (N. S. Savannah souvenir book), 1962.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia
Used with permission.*



Silver Savannah tea service examined by Mayor Malcolm Maclean and Mrs. Dorothy Owens, 1962. "Savannah Saga." (*N. S. Savannah* souvenir book), 1962. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia. *Used with permission.*

At a formal ceremony welcoming the ship held at the State Docks, Mrs. Marion Faircloth Baker, U. S. Collector of Customs in Savannah, presented papers to the *N. S. Savannah* designating Savannah as the ship's home port. The silver tea service first given to the cruiser *U. S. S. Savannah* in 1938 and a scale model of the *S. S. Savannah** were also given to the ship at this time. Mayor Malcolm Maclean presented special citations to the commodore and all members of the crew designating them as "citizens of the city of Savannah."



Mrs. Willis Wilder (nee Cornelia Sams Maclean) poses with the official flag of the City of Savannah, August 1962. Photograph by Robert McDonald. "Mrs. Wilder with the Flag She Designed." *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (5 August 1962) 6:1. *Used with permission.*

Led by Mrs. Henry Sayler, the official flag of the City of Savannah was reproduced for the special occasion by Annin Flag Company, of New York. Fifty large flags (three feet by five feet) were manufactured for use on local buildings, while hundreds of small, souvenir flags (four inches by six inches) were made for children to wave; "It will be the first time in the history of the city that her own special banner will be known to thousands."

The flag was almost forgotten by all except perhaps for the City Hall janitor whose duty it was to hang it under Old Glory.

When the new flags were delivered, Mrs. Sayler personally delivered one to City Hall to hang in the Council Chamber.

The *N. S. Savannah* sailed from the State Docks at 10 o'clock on the morning of August 28th, passing City Hall around 10:20 am, en route to Norfolk, Virginia. After a brief stay in Norfolk, the ship began her world tour with a trip to the World's Fair in Seattle via the Panama Canal, followed by an official visit to Greece.

During its stay in Savannah, an estimated 35,000 people toured the ship. Over \$27,000 was spent on the ceremonies and advertising associated with the *N. S. Savannah's* visit, paid for by local sponsors including the City of Savannah, Chatham County, the District Authority, and the Chamber of Commerce.

**This model of the S. S. Savannah was built by Paul Herring, of Astoria, New York, at the request of Rayonier, Inc., a major user of the Port of Savannah. Herring also constructed the official model of the S. S. Savannah in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution. Herring's model for the Smithsonian was completed shortly before this time and replaced an earlier model based on an improper scale similar to that used for the model at one time displayed in City Hall (which is based on measurements of 120 feet length and 29 feet width). New research of the ship's register indicated that the S. S. Savannah was actually only 98 feet long and 25 feet 10 inches wide. Rather than weighing 350 tons, she was probably just over 319 tons.*

"NS Savannah Sailing Today." *Savannah Morning News* (28 August 1962) 1A:1-2.

"NS Savannah Visit Proved Expensive." *Savannah Morning News* (31 August 1962) 7B:2-3.

"Nuclear Ship Gets Home Port Papers." *Savannah Morning News* (23 August 1962) 9A:1-2.

"Nuclear Vessel Leaves Savannah." *Savannah Morning News* (29 August 1962) 10B:5-6.

Roseberry, J. R. "Accurate SS Savannah Model Will Be Given to Nuclear Ship." *Savannah Morning News* (4 August 1962) B10:4-6.

Roseberry, J. R. "Home Port to Greet Sea Queen." *Savannah Morning News* (22 August 1962) 1A:9.

Sieg, Gerald Chan. "A Brilliant, Unfamiliar Flag." *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (5 August 1962) 6:1.

Sieg, Gerald Chan. "Will it Fly Again?" *Savannah Morning News-Evening Press Magazine* (2 July 1967) 3.

Structure/Fallout Shelter Designation

1962 September 19

On September 19, 1962, City Hall became the first public fallout shelter designated in the State of Georgia. Mayor Malcolm Maclean and Colonel Jack R. Harris, U. S. District Engineer, placed a sign in front of the public building, chosen during a national survey, designating it as a site to serve the public in case of a nuclear disaster. City Hall was the first of many sites identified throughout the state and signs were scheduled to go up in Atlanta the following week.



Mayor Malcolm Maclean installs "Fallout Shelter" sign in front of City Hall, September 19, 1962.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Buddy Rich.
"First Fallout Shelter" (19 September 1962).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



Mayor Malcolm Maclean installs "Fallout Shelter" sign in front of City Hall, September 19, 1962.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Buddy Rich. "State's First Shelter" (19 September 1962).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"First Fallout Shelter." *Savannah Evening Press* (19 September 1962) 18:4.

"State's First Shelter." *Savannah Morning News* (20 September 1962) 8D:1.

Archives/Records Deposited with Georgia Historical Society 1962 October

During October 1962, Acting Assistant City Manager Tony Magoulas picked up on the archival work of Picot Floyd, who had resigned his City position to become Director of the Historic Savannah Foundation, Inc., in the basement vaults of City Hall.

Deep in the heart of the Savannah City Hall, behind locked doors, are two rooms that are a historian's dream.

Inside these musty caverns are many hundreds of dusty, age-eroded volumes containing the written history of the transactions and operations of Savannah's city government dating back to the 1700s....

As you walk down the rows of ledgers, registers, scrapbooks, tax digests, etc., the dates spring out like a parade of history: 1791, 1804, 1861, 1898, 1937....

The great majority of records stored in the vault were in use before the invention of typewriters, printed forms and duplicating equipment....

Finally, as we move along the rows, we come to boxes of punched paper cards and tapes, six-part tax forms on reproducing paper, filing cabinets and plastic-bound ledgers giving mute testimony to the advent of automation and modern record keeping.

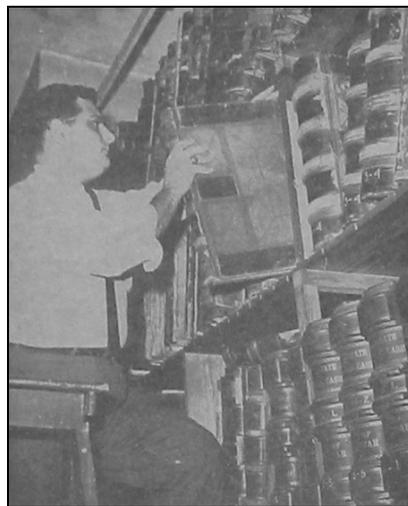
Magoulas separated records for the City to maintain in the vaults from those to be picked up that month and deposited with the Georgia Historical Society for preservation in climate controlled storage.



Old City record books sorted for move to Georgia Historical Society, October 1962.

Staff photograph by Andrew Hickman. "Musty City Hall Vaults Hold Savannah's History." *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (21 October 1962) 4.
Used with permission.

The vault will be maintained as a storage place for accumulated records as in the past, and who knows? ...Perhaps a hundred years from now punched cards and tapes may have some historical significance and the cycle will be repeated once more in the year 2062!



Tony Magoulas shelves City record book in organized City Hall basement vault, October 1962.

Staff photographs by Buddy Rich and Andrew Hickman.
"Musty City Hall Vaults Hold Savannah's History." *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (21 October 1962) 4.
Used with permission.

Magoulas, Tony. "Musty City Hall Vaults Hold Savannah's History." *Savannah Morning News Magazine* (21 October 1962) 4. Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Roseberry, J. R. "City Offers Old Files to Society." *Savannah Morning News* (14 September 1962) B10:4.

Structure/Air Conditioning

1963 May 22

On May 22, 1963, City Council approved the \$63,744 bid of Southeastern Air Conditioning Company, Inc., of Savannah, for installing a natural gas cooling and heating system in City Hall. The bid was above the budgeted \$55,000 earmarked for air conditioning the first and second floors of the building, however the additional cost would provide air conditioning for the entire building. Council appropriated the additional funds from the Airport Commission.

"Air Conditioning Gets Council's Nod." *Savannah Morning News* (23 May 1963) 10D:5-6.

Official Proceedings of City Council (22 May 1963) 96; (29 May 1963) 113. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Civil Rights Movement

1963 Summer

During 1963, Johnson Square, centrally located in the heart of the business and commercial district of Savannah, served as an important meeting site during the local Civil Rights movement. Hosea Williams and Benjamin Van Clark, of the Chatham County Crusade of Voters (CCV), led several mass marches into the square where they addressed large groups.

City Hall served as a backdrop, and symbol of the municipal government, during this tumultuous time. When the downtown boycott began in March of 1960, Mayor W. Lee Mingledorff, Jr. and City Council passed an anti-picket ordinance in an attempt to force an end to the economic protest. The Mayor ordered police to "clamp-down" on demonstrations and protestors. A bi-racial committee was established to work with the various groups towards an end, however the Mayor handpicked the members of the committee and the NAACP refused to meet with the committee which they felt did not fairly represent the interests of the African American community.

Incoming Mayor Malcolm Maclean brought a new sense of cooperation and goodwill to the table. Under his leadership, the City hired its first African American employees other than custodians and messengers, including Ruth Glover Ladson in the City Revenue Department and Lois Williams Tindall in the City Personnel Department. City Manager Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa recalled the events of the time and the City's response, twenty years after the fact:

We, meaning the city, never attempted to stop black demonstrators from marching though we did ask that they tell us where they were going to be and what their route was going to be so that we could ensure that necessary precautions would be taken to ensure that everybody would be protected. Then it grew larger. First there were daytime marches. Then they have nighttime marches and I was present at every march and the city attorney was present at most of them with me. Our purpose was to ensure that the police did not overreact and that police exercised extreme care and caution to conduct themselves within the law.

During a 1963 protest, local marchers were arrested in front of the Holiday Inn as they were preparing to go over the bridge. Reverend Andrew Young, program director for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and future mayor of Atlanta, was arrested and retained at Travis Field, used for jail overflow. Mayor Maclean sent a car to Travis Field to pick Young up and had him brought to City Hall where Young and Maclean met until three or four in the morning. A second car was sent for Benjamin Van Clark who joined them in the office. Mayor Maclean was willing to listen and work with the interested parties towards a mutually beneficial outcome.



Benjamin Van Clark leads a march up Bull Street with City Hall in the background, 1963.

Photograph by Frederick C. Baldwin.

"...We ain't what we used to be." Savannah: Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences, Inc., Savannah, Georgia, 1983.

Used with permission.

Several times, City Hall provided a place for important meetings and negotiations between African American community leaders and white businessmen, with Mayor Maclean serving as the moderator. Following a June 11th lunch-time demonstration in Johnson Square, several hundred people marched to City Hall led by Benjamin Van Clark. Maclean met with a large percentage of the group in the Council Chamber. Clark gave the Mayor twenty-four hours to give the demonstrators their "freedoms." Maclean reasoned with the crowd and explained that the City's job was "to maintain law, order, and public services," and they could not force private businesses to do business with anyone they didn't want to. The meeting broke up around 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and Clark and several others adjourned to the Mayor's office for further discussions. Again on June 25, 1963, City Hall hosted a closed 2 ½ hour meeting, this time between white businessmen and representatives of the African American community. A proposal for token integration of certain businesses for three months followed by gradually increasing integration after that began to develop between the two groups.

Under the enlightened leadership of Mayor Maclean real progress was made and Savannah's public facilities were desegregated one year before federal law required it. He arranged to have such things as parks, swimming pools and the main library opened to everyone, Black and White alike.

Brown, Tony. "The Summer of '63." *Savannah Morning News* (11 September 1983) 1G.

"City Council Bans Racial Marches." *Savannah Morning News* (18 July 1963) 1:4.

"Negroes Call Off Savannah March." *Savannah Morning News* (15 July 1963) 1:8.

"Oral Histories Complement Photo Exhibit." *Savannah Morning News* (11 September 1983) 1G:1.

"Pastor Says Negroes Seek 'Gradual Integration' Here." *Savannah Morning News* (28 June 1963) 1:7.

"Significant Places in Savannah's Civil Rights Movement" (museum exhibit, viewed June 2005). Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum, Savannah, Georgia.

"Support from the White Community" (museum exhibit, viewed June 2005). Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum, Savannah, Georgia.

"Thousands Join 'Freedom' March." *Savannah Morning News* (12 June 1963) 1:6.

Tuck, Stephen G. N. *Beyond Atlanta: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Georgia, 1940-1980*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2001.

"...We ain't what we used to be." Savannah: Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences, Inc., Savannah, Georgia, 1983. p39

***Structure/Clerk of Council's Office Renovation
1964***

During 1964, the Clerk of Council's office on the second floor of City Hall was renovated.

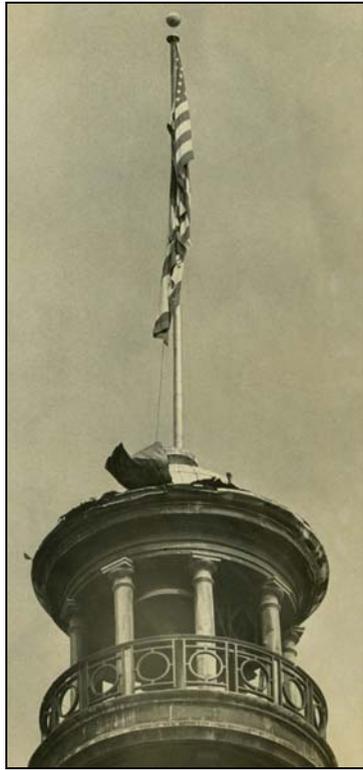
City of Savannah, Georgia, Annual Report, Fiscal Year January 1, 1964, through December 31, 1964. City of Savannah, Georgia, March 1965. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1964. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Structure/Dome Roof
1964 March 18***

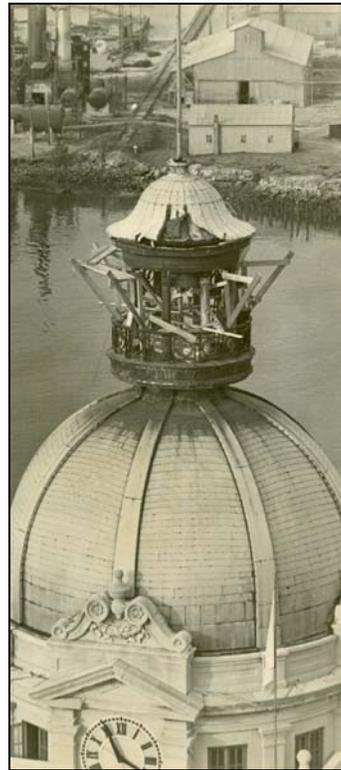


Copper roof of City Hall's cupola torn, March 1964.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Gene Taggart. "City Hall Dome Trouble" (18 March 1964).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On March 18, 1964, it was discovered that a section of the copper upper dome (cupola roof) had been torn loose and was flapping in the breeze. At first, the damage was thought to have been caused by a recent storm, however it was soon discovered that the steel cable running from the flag pole had been improperly rigged resulting in "flaying" of the cupola's edges. A new steel cable was installed through a hatch in the dome to avoid future damage. The old copper dome cladding had to be replaced and K. & H. Construction Company was contracted at a cost of \$4,200 to make the necessary repairs. Scaffolding was erected on December 9th, 1964 from which the construction company completed the work. By the following Memorial Day, the American flag was flying high on City Hall's restored upper dome.



Damage on cupola's roof, September 1964.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by David Beatty.
"City Hall Dome is Tattered" (25 September 1964).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



Scaffolding installed on cupola for repair work, December 1964.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Andrew Hickman.
"New 'Lid' for City Hall" (10 December 1964).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



City Hall's repaired cupola with hatch and railing for raising flags, May 1965.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Robert McDonald. "Long May it Wave" (31 May 1965).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“City Hall Dome Trouble.” *Savannah News Press* (18 March 1964).

“City Hall to Get New Copper Dome.” *Savannah Evening Press* (25 September 1964). Vertical Files: Savannah-Politics and Government, 1950-1959 [misfiled] (unmarked envelop). Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

“Long May it Wave.” *Savannah Evening Press* (31 May 1965).

“New ‘Lid’ for City Hall.” *Savannah Morning News* (10 December 1964).

Events/Georgia Day

1965 February 12

Georgia Day, now a two-week Georgia Heritage Celebration, began in 1965. Local students laid a wreath on the Oglethorpe Memorial Bench, just west of City Hall in the Strand, before marching to Washington Square where Mayor Malcolm Maclean read a proclamation from Governor Carl E. Sanders declaring the day “Georgia Day.” British Vice Consul Gerald Underwood presented the Mayor with a portrait of King George II for whom the colony, now state, was named. Underwood hoped the portrait would find a home in City Hall. Georgia Day events evolved slightly over the years and now include the singing of “Happy Birthday” by area school children to the State in front of City Hall.

DeBolt, Margaret Wayt. *Savannah: A Historical Portrait* (3rd Edition). Gloucester Point, VA: Hallmark Publishing Company, 2001. p203.

“Oglethorpe Given Modern Welcome.” *Savannah Morning News* (13 February 1965) 10B:4.

Structure/Roof Repairs

1965 March 24

On March 24, 1965, City Council approved the low bid of John L. Kenny Roofing Company for \$3,567 for repairs to the City Hall roof. The work was started and probably completed in 1965.

City of Savannah, Georgia, Annual Report, Fiscal Year January 1, 1965, through December 31, 1965. City of Savannah, Georgia, 1966. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1965. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (24 March 1965) 495. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Electrical Systems

1966

According to the 1966 Annual Report, the electrical systems of City Hall were updated.

City of Savannah, Georgia, City Manager’s Annual Report, 1966. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1966. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Riverfront Revitalization

1966 January

In January of 1966, the *Savannah Evening Press* published a sketch of a proposal for the revitalization of the area of the riverfront just behind City Hall showing an extended riverfront plaza similar to what would become a reality in the 1970s.

Haeberle, Kathy. “Plan for Beautification of Riverfront Unveiled.” *Savannah Evening Press* (28 January 1966) 1A:8.

Structure/Exterior Lighting***1966 April***

During 1966, the dome was illuminated with floodlights. The previous year, suggestions for lighting the dome were put off until the exterior could be cleaned. Provisions were made in the 1966 budget for the cleaning and wiring and by April the wiring was being installed.

Haeberle, Kathy. "At 62, She's Finally Getting a 'Name'." *Savannah Evening Press* (14 April 1966). Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Exterior Cleaning***Structure/Dome Painted******1966 April-May***

As early as January 1963, City Council and the City Manager were discussing the best methods for cleaning the exterior of City Hall. However it wasn't until April 1966, that Council authorized the contracting of the Savannah Steam Cleaning Company for \$9,750 to clean the exterior by sandblasting, paint the dome and cupola, and repair and repaint the windows.



City Hall's exterior stonework being cleaned by the Savannah Steam Cleaning Company, May 1966.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Buddy Rich. "City Hall Blasted" (9 May 1966).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

During May, over sixty-years of dirt was removed by sandblasting crews "as part of an overall face-lifting costing nearly \$10,000." Sandblasting was followed by the painting of the copper dome in an effort to halt

deterioration caused by air pollutants. Unfortunately, the “aqua blue” color used was not a hit with the community.

Bird, Sarah O. “A History of City Hall on Bay Street, Savannah, Georgia.” Final Report of a Project of the Georgia Governor’s Intern Program for the City of Savannah, Georgia Office of the City Manager Research Library, Savannah, Georgia (August 1980). piii.

“City Hall Blasted.” *Savannah Morning News* (9 May 1966). Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

City of Savannah, Georgia, City Manager’s Annual Report, 1966. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1966. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Haerberle, Kathy. “At 62, She’s Finally Getting a ‘Name’.” *Savannah Evening Press* (14 April 1966). Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (2 January 1963) 417; (9 January 1963) 430; (13 April 1966) 170. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Friday the 13th
1966 May 13

On Friday, May 13, 1966, *Savannah Evening Press* photographer Buddy Rich snapped a photograph of the American flag flying upside down on City Hall:

An Unlucky Day—Okay, Friday the 13th is supposed to be a day when things seem to go wrong...like Old Glory flying upside down on City Hall’s dome. You guessed it. The picture was made this morning on this bright 13th day of May—a Friday.



The United States flag flying upside down on City Hall, May 13, 1966.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Buddy Rich. “An Unlucky Day” (13 May 1966).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“An Unlucky Day.” *Savannah News Press* (13 May 1966).

Structure/Dome Access***1966 July 27***

On July 27, 1966, City Council approved the low bid of \$587.50 to Savannah Ship Repair Company for providing and installing an access door to the City Hall dome.

Official Proceedings of City Council (27 July 1966) 287. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Historic District Created***1966 November 13***

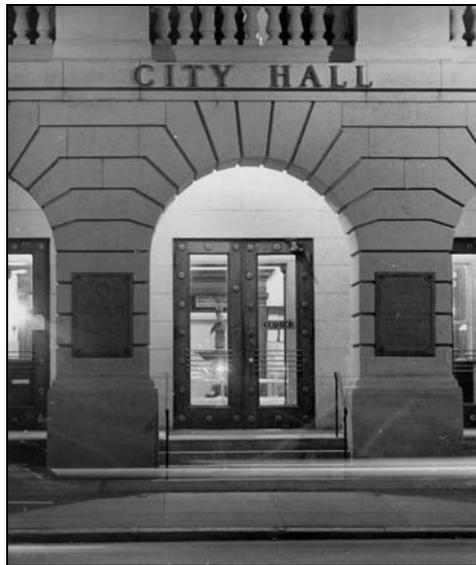
On November 13, 1966, the area of the city known as "Old Savannah" was designated a National historic district, referred to as the Savannah Landmark Historic District. The designation was approved by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall on the recommendations of an advisory board that found the area "possesses[d] exceptional value as an illustration of the history of the United States" and included many buildings of "architectural merit" including the Customs House, Factors' Walk, the Green-Meldrim Mansion, and City Hall. The designation helped preserve the original 1733 plan of the city based on a system of wards and squares by educating people of its importance and uniqueness.

City Hall, located on the Yamacraw Bluff overlooking the Savannah River at the head of Bull Street, is an important contributing property to this district as a symbol of the City government, chartered in 1790, and as an unbroken use of the site for public purposes since the settlement of the colony in the 1730s.

"Old Savannah Made National Landmark." *Savannah Morning News* (6 November 1966) 1C:1.

Structure/Signage***1966 November 15***

On November 15, 1966, the name "City Hall" was mounted in separate letters above the front entrance of the building on the Bay Street façade. Council had approved the signage on August 24th following Mayor Malcolm Maclean's April recommendation that "the city make things easier for guests by affixing some sort of lettering to the building to officially designate it as the headquarters of Savannah's government."



"City Hall" mounted over Bay Street entrance, November 1966.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Wyman Ayer. "Named, At Last" (16 November 1966) 8B:1.
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

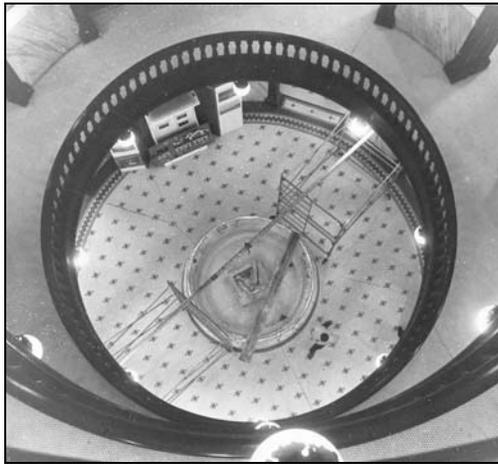
She [City Hall] was cheated out of a champagne christening—the gold letters went up unceremoniously during the afternoon. The sign must have looked as if it belonged. A Morning News photographer, assigned to photograph the new lettering, couldn't find it on his first trip there. It was too obvious, he vowed.

Haeberle, Kathy. "At 62, She's Finally Getting a 'Name'." *Savannah Evening Press* (14 April 1966). Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

"Named, At Last." *Savannah Morning News* (16 November 1966) 8B:1.

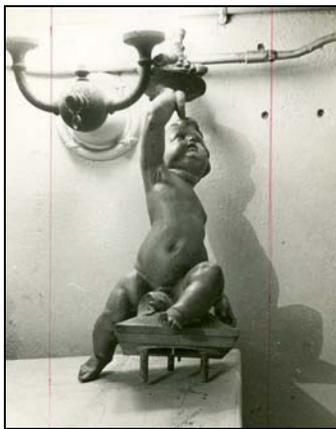
Official Proceedings of City Council (24 August 1966) 339. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

***Structure/Fountain Cleaned
1968 February***



City Hall's fountain removed from the marble basin for repairs, February 1968.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Buddy Rich. "From Rotunda's Top, Repairs Make Strange Pattern" (24 February 1968).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

In February 1968, after springing a leak, the City Hall fountain was removed and cleaned while plumbers worked in the fountain basin. During the meantime, the cherub from the top was stored in the basement; "The jolly little fellow is expected to be back in his old place within a few weeks." After the restoration work was completed, the fountain was reinstalled and operated smoothly again. Soon after, gold fish were returned to the basin.



Bronze cherub from the top of City Hall's fountain stored in basement during repairs, February 1968.
City Hall Folder: "Cherub Waits in Basement" (24 February 1968).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

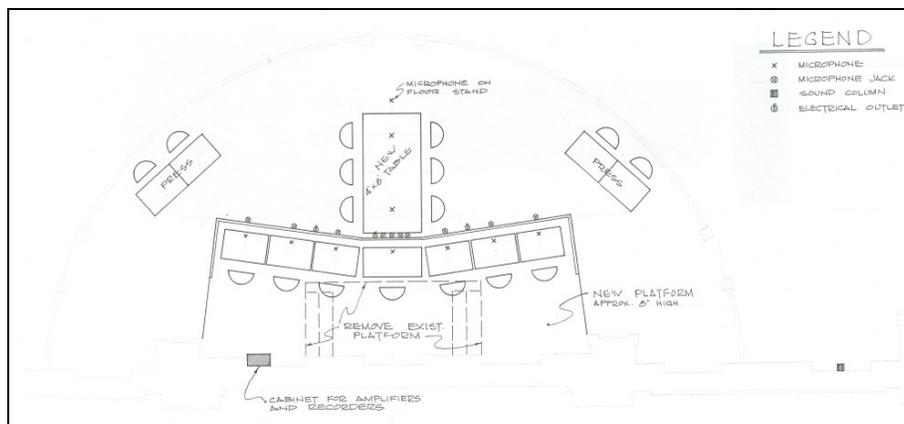
“Something’s Missing at City Hall.” *Savannah Evening Press* (24 February 1968) 16:4.

Stewart, Dorothy H. (Department of History, Armstrong State College). “The Monuments and Fountains of Savannah: A Report on an Internship for the Savannah Park and Tree Department.” City of Savannah, Georgia Park and Tree Department, June 1993. p398. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.PT.1993-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Council Chamber Renovations

1968 May

In May of 1968, the City’s Engineering Department prepared plans for minor renovations to the Council Chamber, including installation of microphones on the mayor’s and aldermen’s desks, a cabinet for amplifiers and recorders, and new electrical outlets. In addition, the old platform, raising the mayor’s desk above the aldermen’s desks, was replaced with a larger platform placing the mayor’s desk on the same level with the six aldermen’s desks.



“Proposed Modifications to Council Chamber, City Hall” (9 May 1968). Drawn by J.N.P. Plan #24.1, City of Savannah, Georgia Engineering Department Retrospective Plans and Drawings. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives. Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“Proposed Modifications to Council Chamber, City Hall” (9 May 1968). Drawn by J.N.P. Plan #24.1, City of Savannah, Georgia Engineering Department Retrospective Plans and Drawings. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/City Hall Museum Suggested

1968 December

Near the conclusion of every year, people have a tendency to look over the accomplishments and events of the past year and make predictions and promises for the coming year. In that spirit, the local newspapers often run a recap of news events from the previous year. In 1968, the *Savannah News-Press* interviewed four local leaders, Savannah Mayor J. Curtis Lewis, Jr., County Commission Chairman Robert F. Lovett, Savannah City Manager Picot B. Floyd, and O. K. Armstrong, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Planning Commission, to gather their insights into the community’s future for the coming decade.

All four men indicated a lean towards consolidation of city and county governments which would probably necessitate a new government building. What would become of the 1905 City Hall building? Some suggested it could become a library or a museum. Though this never happened, it was not the first time a museum had been suggested for the historic building.



City Hall suggested as a museum, December 1969.
City Hall Folder: Staff photograph (and superimposing) by Ross Parsons. "City Hall Could Become a Museum" (28 December 1969).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"What's in Store for Savannah During the Upcoming Decade?" *Savannah Morning News* (28 December 1969) B1:1.

Structure/Dome Painted
1969 March

In March 1969, the City Hall dome was repainted.



City Hall's copper dome freshly painted, March 1969.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Buddy Rich. "Dome Repainting" (31 March 1969).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Dome Repainting" *Savannah Morning News* (31 March 1969).

Artifacts/City Exchange Newel Post
1969 April

In early 1969, the newel post from the old City Exchange stairway was returned to City Hall by a local chapter of the Colonial Dames of America. The newel post, containing the seal of the State of Georgia, had been given to the Colonial Dames when the City Exchange was demolished in 1904 to make way for the City Hall building. At the time, the newel post was placed in City Manager Picot Floyd's offices.



City Manager Picot Floyd examines seal on the old City Exchange newel post, April 1969.
 City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Buddy Rich. "Relic Returned to City" (2 April 1969).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Relic Returned to City." *Savannah Evening Press* (2 April 1969).

Municipal/All-America City Award
1969 April 9

On April 9, 1969, Savannah celebrated her second All-America City award for the year 1968 (the first was for the year 1955) with a luncheon, afternoon parade and public meeting at the Municipal Auditorium. In front of an audience of two-hundred and fifty people, Mayor J. Curtis Lewis, Jr. accepted the award from Columbia, South Carolina Mayor and Regional Vice President of the National Municipal League Lester Bates who described the community as "a lovely city on the offensive."

The award, announced on March 20th by co-sponsors *LOOK Magazine* and the National Municipal League, recognized the community's efforts to clean-up low-income areas, fund home renovations and provide financial assistance for small black-owned businesses. Savannah was selected from a record pool of 156

cities, and the eleven recipients were chosen for “outstanding citizen action to solve major community problems.”

City Manager Picot Floyd called the recognition a “tribute to the citizens of the community, who, when faced with a serious community problem, were able to marshal their resources and pull together toward a solution.” The City received a second All-America City banner which flew from City Hall in celebration.

“All-America Spread Unfolded.” *Savannah Morning News* (1 April 1969) 8B:4-6.

“Day-Long Celebration Held for All-America Savannah.” *Savannah Morning News* (10 April 1969) 1A:7.

Dlugożima, Barbara. “Savannah All-America City Again; Rehabilitation Project Cleared Way.” *Savannah Morning News* (20 March 1969) 1A:4-5.

“‘Giant’ Celebration Planned for All-America City Award.” *Savannah Morning News* (21 March 1969) 14B: 1-3.

“Giant Celebration to Greet Award.” *Savannah Evening Press* (20 March 1969).

“1968 All-America Cities Named.” *National Civic Review* Vol. LVIII, No. 4 (April 1969) 191-192.

“Nixon Wires Congratulations.” *Savannah News Press* (20 March 1969).

“Savannah Only Georgia City to Win Twice.” *Savannah News Press* (20 March 1969).

“Savannahians Weren’t After Award When Cleanup Began.” *Savannah Morning News* (10 April 1969) 1A:4-6.

“Teamwork Won Title, Lewis Says.” *Savannah Morning News* (20 March 1969) 1A:5.

Municipal/Credit Cards Accepted ***1969 September***

In September 1969, the City began accepting payment for City bills, tickets and taxes through credit cards at City Hall. Council approved the proposal by City Manager Picot Floyd with Mayor J. Curtis Lewis, Jr. saying, “I see no objections to this as long as we get the money.” The City agreed to accept the three major credit cards then serviced by the local banks.

“Owe City Hall? Credit Welcomed.” *Savannah Morning News* (6 September 1969) 10B:1-2.

Events/Movie ***1969 November***

In early November 1969, the thirty-seven minute feature *Savannah Story* was filmed in Savannah, including scenes of City Hall.

Savannah News Press (3 November 1969). Vertical Files: Moving Pictures-Savannah. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/City Song ***1969 December 23***

On December 23, 1969, City Council adopted the song “Ballad of Savannah,” composed by local dentist Dr. Roy Blackburn, as the official song of the City of Savannah in celebration of the 180th anniversary of the chartering of the municipal government on December 23, 1789. Betty Rose Palmer sang the ballad accompanied by her husband, Ken Palmer, on guitar. Blackburn “was inspired to write the melody and lyrics by the city’s charm.” Ken Palmer and George Rody arranged the song and Betty Palmer recorded it. Council was given copies of the record and Mayor Lewis “commended” Dr. Blackburn for his efforts. The lyrics are as follows:

*The moon shines down through tall trees,
While the moss sways so peacefully in the breeze,
As we stroll through the parks of this old southern town,
We can feel the quiet peace that is here all around,*

*Savannah is so sweet and dear to me,
This lovely old town with so much history,
The parks, old homes that were built in the past,
Their beauty is here and it always will last.*

*Creeks and rivers you see all around,
Flow through marshlands of beautiful gold and brown,
The tide comes in and the tide flows out,
There's a ghostly mist in the night all about,*

*The warm summer goes then the winter wind blows,
As we sit by the fire and we gaze at the coals,
Silver dew on the grass, memories of the past,
These joys in our hearts forever will last.*

*Tybee beach we have strolled on the sand,
There we found true love as you held my hand,
Those days of our youth were so dear to me,
When my love and I played down by the sea,*

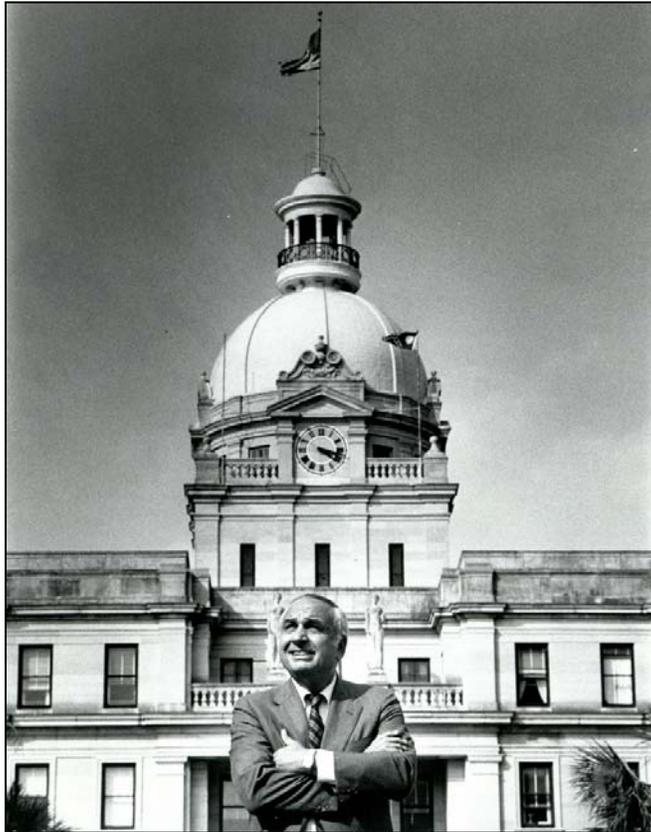
*The friends we have known through the years,
We have all shared our joys along with the same tears,
The tall, green pine trees, the blue skies up above,
In Savannah our home, the place that we love.*

In the resolution passed by City Council adopting the song Council stated, "The Ballad of Savannah sets forth, in music and poetry an accurate description of the grace, charm and heritage of Georgia's oldest city...Savannahians are encouraged to learn the words and music...and to sing it often."

Official Proceedings of City Council (23 December 1969) 472. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Ryan, Joe. "Savannah to Get Official City Song." *Savannah Morning News* (21 December 1969) 1C:1.

A Century of History
1970 ~ 1979



Mayor John P. Rousakis poses in front of City Hall, n.d.
VM 1678 John Rousakis Visual Materials Collection. Box 1, Folder 8, Item 20.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Events/Japanese Visitors
1970 February 6

On February 6, 1970, during a City Council meeting, Mayor J. Curtis Lewis, Jr. presented Captain A. Nagata, of the Japanese freighter *Savannah Maru*, with a Key to the City. The freighter, one of several ships in the world and history bearing the name Savannah, was in port to take on general cargo.

“City Welcomes Namesake.” *Savannah Morning News* (7 February 1970) 1B:6-8.

Structure/Bell Repairs
1970 July

In July 1970, Danny Weaver placed a new control inside the bell tower which made it possible to ring the bells manually, in addition to the automatic device already on the City Hall clock.

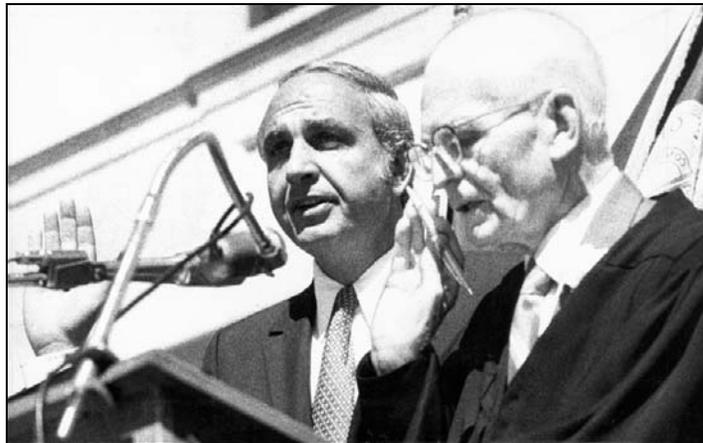


Left: Danny Weaver works in City Hall bell cupola, July 1970. Right: Looking up from clock story to cupola framework, July 1970.
 City Hall Folder: Staff photos by Buddy Rich. "City Hall Bell Tower Renovated." *Savannah Evening Press* (10 July 1970).
 Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"City Hall Bell Tower Renovated." *Savannah Evening Press* (10 July 1970). Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/Inauguration Via Telephone
 Politics/First African American Alderman
 1970 October 5***

On October 5, 1970, John P. Rousakis was inaugurated as Savannah's mayor in an outdoor ceremony in front of City Hall before several hundred people. Rousakis would go on to serve twenty-one years as mayor and become Savannah's longest serving mayor in history. Sworn in with Rousakis were his slate of aldermen, including H. C. "Nippie" Morrison, Leo E. Center, F. M. "Woody" Chambers, Esbey Thompson, Frank Rossiter, and Bowles C. Ford.



John P. Rousakis Being Sworn In (5 October 1970).
 VM 1678 John P. Rousakis Visual Materials Collection, Box 1, Folder 1, Item 3.
 Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Two notable “firsts” happened at the inauguration of this 127th Administration, the most important being the inauguration of Savannah’s first African American alderman, Bowles C. Ford. Ford, a native of Columbus, Ohio, was a fifty-five year old graduate of Ohio State University and an insurance executive. He moved to Savannah thirty-four years earlier to take a position with Guaranty Life Insurance Company. At the time of his election, Ford co-owned the Acme Insurance Agency with his wife, Edwina W. Ford. In August of 1970, following the City election, Ford told reporters, “I was elected by the people to serve the people, not to represent just Negroes.” Ford had the support of his fellow alderman who elected him Chairman of Council. He served two consecutive terms as a Savannah alderman.

The second “first” of that day was that Ford took the oath of office via telephone. Ford suffered a heart attack on August 17, 1970 while in Columbus, Ohio and was unable to attend the inauguration ceremony at City Hall. As a public service, the local Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Company arranged a line between City Hall and Ford’s residence allowing Ford to hear all of the ceremony and those at City Hall hear his voice. Ford read the oath of office along with the other five aldermen. Unfortunately, the loudspeaker failed to carry his voice over the noise of the crowd. The legal papers requiring his signature were later taken to his house. Sutlive told the crowd the phone oath made Bowles Ford “our first electronic alderman.” Ford took his regular place on City Council at the December 11th meeting.

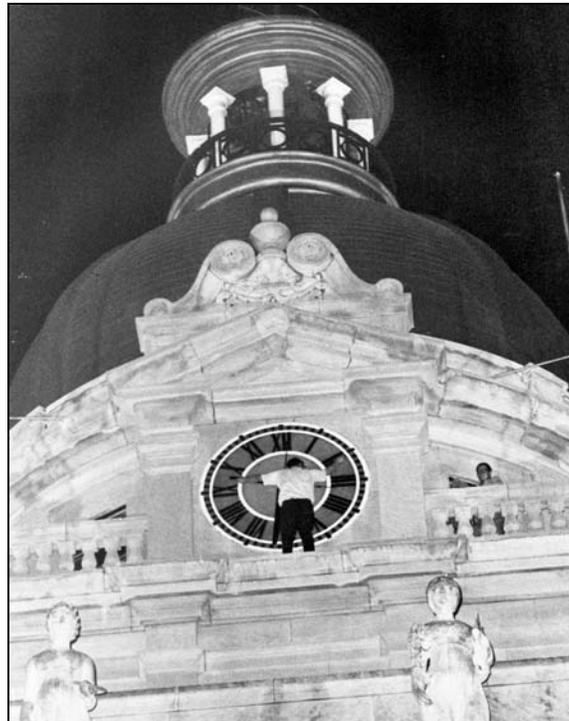
“Bowles Ford’s Health Fine; Will Assume Duties Dec. 11.” *Savannah Morning News* (3 December 1970) 10D:3.

Dlugoziama, Barbara. “End Factionalism, Rousakis Asks.” *Savannah Morning News* (6 October 1970) 1A:1.

“Ford to Take Oath Via Telephone Link.” *Savannah Morning News* (1 October 1970) 1D:1.

“Negro-Alderman has Plans to ‘Serve all the People.’” *Savannah Morning News* (6 August 1970) 8D:1.

Structure/Tower Clock
1970 October 25



Al Henderson adjusts City Hall’s clock hands, October 1970.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Don Hardigree. “Time on His Hands” (26 October 1970).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The importance of the City Hall clock did not necessarily diminish as personal watches became more prevalent during the twentieth century, as this news item from the 1970 Eastern Standard Time “fall back” attests to:

All over Savannah citizens busily switched clocks back one hour yesterday—with the exception of a few forgetful souls—so they’d operate on Eastern Standard Time. Aware that folks all over town depend on the big clock over City Hall, Al Henderson, special assistant to Mayor John Rousakis, balances on a ledge around the dome to turn the clock’s huge hands back. Mack Armstrong (right) stands nearby to give Henderson aid on his precarious perch.

“Time on His Hands.” *Savannah Morning News* (26 October 1970).

Events/Urban Renewal Plan

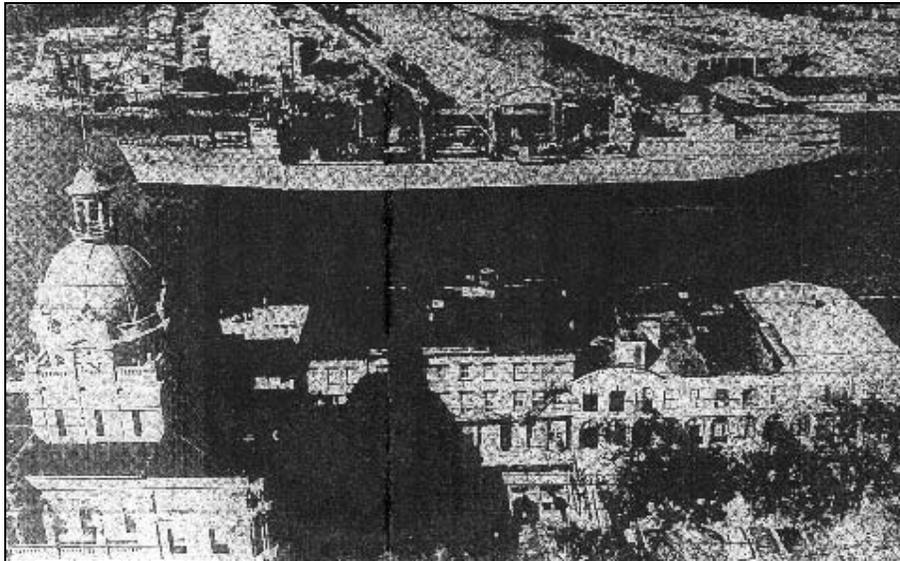
1971 January 12

On January 12, 1971, a meeting was held at City Hall to unveil the draft of the \$15 million Central Urban Renewal Area plan to about fifty federal, state, county and city officials. “The 2 ½ hour session was aimed at feeling the pulse of the community before seeking local approval of a final plan that will be submitted to the federal government.” The plan, representing twenty months of preparation by Eric Hill and Associates, Inc., local residents and public agencies, encompassed a large section of the city roughly bordered by West Broad Street (Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard), Broughton Street, Whitaker Street, and Liberty Street. Representatives of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Georgia Historical Commission, the National Park Service, the Housing Authority, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, Candler Hospital, the Historic Savannah Foundation, and members of the Project Area Committee were present.

Haerberle, Kathy. “\$15 Million Urban Renewal Plan is Unveiled at City Hall.” *Savannah Morning News* (13 January 1971) 1D:1.

Events/U. S. S Savannah

1971 March 17-22



U. S. S. Savannah glides past City Hall, March 17, 1971. Staff photo by Buddy Rich.

“Fully Irish in Spirit, Navy’s Savannah Here for St. Pat’s.” *Savannah Morning News* (17 March 1971) 1D:4-8.
Used with permission.

On St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1971, the new *U. S. S. Savannah* arrived for her first visit to Savannah after a twenty-seven hour trip from Norfolk, Virginia. The *U. S. S. Savannah* was an AOR-4, an auxiliary-oil-replenisher (the fourth one built by the Navy) to service and replenish warships at sea carrying "virtually everything a Navy fighting ship needs...so that they won't have to withdraw from combat zones." The 659-foot-long *U. S. S. Savannah* was capable of carrying over seven million gallons of black oil, jet fuel, aviation gasoline, as well as food and ammunition. Ships could be serviced simultaneously from either side while helicopters took off from the deck.

On March 22nd, the *U. S. S. Savannah* continued on to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for additional inspections and training. Her home port was Norfolk and she was assigned to the Atlantic Ocean for duty.

"Fully Irish in Spirit, Navy's Savannah Here for St. Pat's." *Savannah Morning News* (17 March 1971) 1D:4-8.

"'Savannah' in the Fleet." *Savannah Morning News* (6 December 1970) 1C:1.

"USS Savannah Ends Visit." *Savannah Morning News* (23 March 1981) 1B5.

Politics/First African American to Preside over Council Meeting 1971 May 13

On May 13, 1971, Alderman Bowles C. Ford presided as Mayor at a City Council meeting and became the first African American to serve in that capacity in Savannah's history. Ford took the mayor's chair after Mayor John P. Rousakis left the Council meeting early and Mayor Pro Tempore Frank P. Rossiter asked Ford to take his place. Alderman H. C. "Nippy" Morrison and City Manager Picot Floyd pointed out that it was the first time a black had served as Savannah's mayor and "Ford was given a round of applause by those in the council chamber."



City Council, including Bowles C. Ford (center standing), October 7, 1974.
VM 1678 John P. Rousakis Visual Materials Collection, Box 1, Folder 7, Item 6.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Alderman Takes Over for a First." *Savannah Morning News* (14 May 1971) 1D:8.

***Municipal/City-County Building Proposed
1971 May***

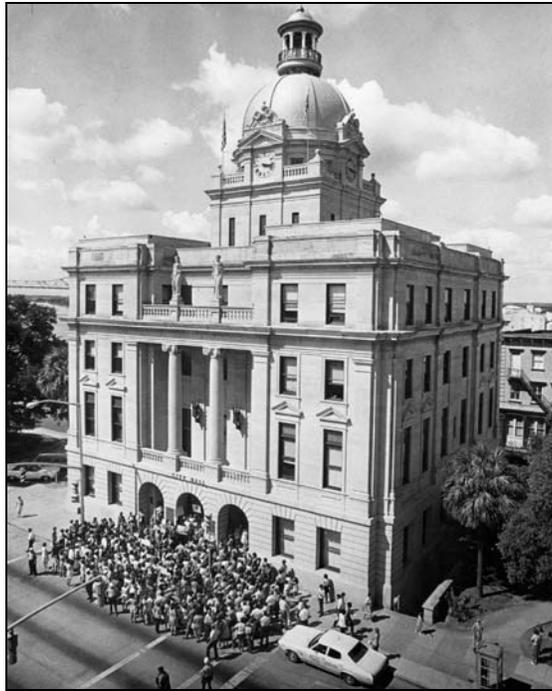
In May 1971, a movement was made to purchase the land directly west of City Hall as the site for a new city-county “government center.” The site was currently under consideration for development by Merritt Dixon, III and H. Mitchell Dunn as a hotel. However, the Housing Authority of Savannah approved an application for a federal early-land acquisition loan under the Riverfront Urban Renewal plan which would allow design of a city-county building to proceed while the riverfront urban renewal project was being planned.

The local newspaper quoted Mayor John P. Rousakis as stating the riverfront had been under consideration for a new city-county complex for some time, while Chatham County Commission Chairman Robert F. Lovett said, “I think we could really have a lovely building which would improve the riverfront immensely and would settle the future for that land there.”

In the end, the Hyatt Regency Hotel was erected on the site adjacent to City Hall to the west.

Haeberle, Kathy. “City-County Building Eyed for Site West of City Hall.” *Savannah Morning News* (29 May 1971) 1A:5-6.

***Events/Anti-Busing Protests
1971 September 8-9***



Busing protestors gathered in front of City Hall, September 1971.
City Hall Folder: Staff photos by Richard Sommers.

“School Busing Foes Gather at City Hall for Second Day.” *Savannah Morning News* (10 September 1971) 1B:6.
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

On September 8, 1971, about seventy-five protestors opposed to elementary school desegregation through busing gathered in front of City Hall. Mayor John P. Rousakis tried to talk with demonstrators from the steps of City Hall and was met with chants of “Down with Rousakis.” In a written statement issued to demonstrators, Rousakis said he was against busing, but that “It won’t do one bit of good to march against anyone.” Protestors responded shouting, “Rousakis won’t help,” and accusing the mayor of sending his

children to private schools. At the time, Rousakis' children were all students in public schools. The Mayor urged demonstrators to write to Georgia's congressional delegation and later in the morning released copies of letters he sent asking for anti-busing aid to Chief Justice Warren Burger, U. S. Senator David H. Gambrell and Congressman G. Elliott Hagan. Around 11:00 am, the group marched south on Bull Street and joined a second group of protestors at the Board of Education building. Protestors returned the following day and the "crowd heard Rousakis repeat [his] busing stand."

Rousakis later told several parents he was "proud that the group had not been rowdy." Mrs. Evelyn Finch, a protestor, said, "This is not a violent group. We're unhappy parents."

"Busing Protestors Gather at Board, City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (9 September 1971) 1A:1-8.

"School Busing Foes Gather at City Hall for Second Day." *Savannah Morning News* (10 September 1971) 1B:6.

***Artifacts/Portrait of George Washington
Events/U. S. Bicentennial Celebration
1971 November 23***

On November 23 1971, the Mayor's Committee on the Bicentennial Celebration of 1976 met and began to prepare for Savannah's '76 festivities. Appointed as an advisory committee, the group adopted a policy for the Bicentennial Celebration of "dignity, permanence, authenticity, economy and pageantry."

As its first act, the committee, led by Chairman A. S. Britt, adopted a resolution asking Mayor John P. Rousakis to restore a portrait of George Washington, painted by the late Savannahian T. Savage Clay, to City Hall where it had hung in the mayor's quarters since the 1940s. The portrait, which had recently disappeared, was a gift to City Hall from the late Herschel V. Jenkins, publisher of the *Savannah Morning News* and *Savannah Evening Press*.

Marshall, Ann. "Panel Lays Groundwork for Celebration of '76." *Savannah Morning News* (24 November 1971) 14B:1.

***Structure/Fountain Converted to Garden
1971 November***



Japanese rock garden in City Hall's rotunda fountain, November 1971.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Walt Johnson. "Farewell, Fish." *Savannah Morning News* (4 November 1971).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Around November 1971, the City Hall fountain was turned into a Japanese garden. For years, the fountain basin was the home to several goldfish. A pump failure caused all but one of the goldfish to die prompting the decision. The last goldfish was moved to the Chamber of Commerce (the old Cotton Exchange building) and the fountain was turned off. The fountain basin was lined with fiberglass and then filled with decorative rocks.

"Farewell, Fish." *Savannah Morning News* (4 November 1971).

Stewart, Dorothy H. (Department of History, Armstrong State College). "The Monuments and Fountains of Savannah: A Report on an Internship for the Savannah Park and Tree Department." City of Savannah, Georgia Park and Tree Department, June 1993. p398. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.PT.1993-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Artifacts/Freedom Shrine

1971 December 7

On December 7, 1971 (the anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor), at 4:30 in the afternoon, the Exchange Club of Metropolitan Savannah presented the City with a Freedom Shrine for the City Hall rotunda. The shrine contained reproductions of 325 years of historical documents of national significance ranging from the Mayflower Compact to the World War II Japanese surrender. The set of reproductions was given to the City to replace a set stolen from City Hall's lobby. Alderman H. C. "Nippy" Morrison accepted the shrine on behalf of the City from Shrine Committee Chairman J. Howell Tilton. The Freedom Shrine documents were displayed in the first floor rotunda of City Hall until November-December 1989 when they were removed so the area could be repainted.

"City to Get New Shrine." *Savannah Morning News* (7 December 1971) 2A:8.

"Inter-Department Memo from Brian Gore, Assistant City Manager, to Alderman Morrison, Freedom Shrine Documents" (8 December 1989). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"325 Years of History." *Savannah Morning News* (8 December 1971) 10D:1.

Municipal/Library Expansion

1973 February

In February 1973, expansion of the fourth floor reference library in City Hall was announced in the local newspaper. City Purchasing Administrator James C. Blissett described the enlarging and renovating of the library, which included relocating Assistant City Manager Tom Coffey's office and removing a wall to extend into that space creating a library almost twice its former size. The entrance to the library was moved to the hallway rather than through the City Manager's office. At the same time, the library's ceilings were lowered.

"Expansion Set." *Savannah Morning News* (27 February 1973) 12B:1.

Structure/Restroom Renovation

1973 May

During 1973, the Collins Plumbing Company, of Savannah, renovated several of City Hall's restrooms including those on the basement, third and fourth floors. The basement facility was renovated into a public restroom for men, the third floor into a public restroom for women, and the fourth floor restroom was restricted. This renovation is the first documented updating of City Hall's restroom facilities which at the time were considered "antiquated" and renovation "imperative."

Folder "PB-406-73 Renovations of Restrooms City Hall," Box 5015-001-90. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Movie
Structure/Tower Clock
1975 September-October



Burt Reynolds directing in the Council Chamber, October 1975
Savannah Morning News (28 December 1975) 1B.

Vertical Files: Savannah History, 1970-1979. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

In September and October of 1975, actor/director Burt Reynolds and crew filmed the motion picture *Gator* on location in Savannah and Tybee Island. City Hall was used for exterior night and day scenes, and the Council Chamber served as a governor's press conference room in the movie. One newspaper photograph of the movie filming captured the City Hall tower clock on October 17th shortly after the clock had been damaged by lightening. The clock hands were stopped at 8:22 when the photograph was actually taken at 2 o'clock in the afternoon with "Bert and his gang filming at City Hall[']s] front door."



Burt Reynolds filming in front of City Hall, October 1975.

City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Nancy Finke. "Familiar City Hall Clock Fouled by Lightning." *Savannah News Press* (17 October 1975).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Familiar City Hall Clock Fouled by Lightning." *Savannah News Press* (17 October 1975).

Savannah Morning News (28 December 1975) 1B. Vertical Files: Savannah History, 1970-1979. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Savannah Morning News (17 October 1975). Vertical Files: Moving Pictures-Savannah. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Savannah Morning News (20 September 1975). Vertical Files: Moving Pictures-Savannah. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Visiting Russians

1975 October 13

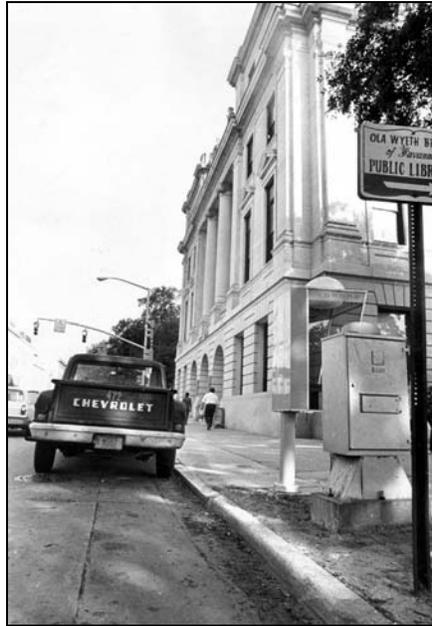
On October 13, 1975, in his City Hall office, Mayor John P. Rousakis greeted three Russian preservationists ending a three-week tour of the United States through a cultural exchange program with the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U. S. S. R. Ministry of Culture. Russian architect Mark A. Orlov, Georgii P. Krutenko, of Kiev, and Sergei I. Sokolov, of Leningrad, escorted by Peter D. Herrick of the National Park Service and an interpreter, met with Rousakis after Savannah was chosen as a three-day focal point by Dr. William J. Murtagh, keeper of the National Register of Historic Places. Sokolov presented the Mayor with a book of photographs of the town of Suzdal, located about one hundred miles outside of Moscow in the "Golden Ring" of historic towns surrounding the Russian city. The group visited the Historic Savannah Foundation and the Chatham-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission while in Savannah, as well.



Mayor John P. Rousakis meets with visiting Russian preservationists, October 13, 1975.
Staff photograph by Buddy Rich. "Tradition Respected—Russians." *Savannah Evening Press* (14 October 1975).
Vertical Files: Savannah History, 1970-1979. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Daniels, Ann Marshall. "Tradition Respected—Russians." *Savannah Evening Press* (14 October 1975). Vertical Files: Savannah History, 1970-1979. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

***Structure/Restricted Parking
1975 November***



On-street parking in front of City Hall, June 1975.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Nancy Finke, "Status of City Hall Curb." *Savannah News Press* (30 June 1975).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

In November 1975, after months, even years, of controversy, parking in front of City Hall was officially restricted and signs posted declaring "official City Hall business only" between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Previously, vehicles could park at the curb in front of City Hall indefinitely and not get ticketed. Former mayor Malcolm Maclean called attention to the matter in the early 1960s, but nothing was done. City Manager Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa finally sought to clear up the legal issue, since the murky situation made any restrictions "unenforcable or unenforced" despite a traditional yellow curb in front of the building. With the signs posted, City workers painted the yellow curb gray and anyone with business in City Hall could now park there.



Restricted parking sign posted in front of City Hall, November 1975.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Nancy Finke, "Parking Restricted in Front of City Hall." *Savannah News Press* (4 November 1975).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“Controversial Curb Restricted.” *Savannah Evening Press* (4 November 1975). Vertical Files: Savannah-City Hall/City Exchange. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

Artifacts/Time Capsule
Events/U. S. Bicentennial
1976 May 8

On May 8, 1976, the United States Bicentennial Time Capsule, a copper hand-hammered chest made by Savannah blacksmith Ivan Bailey, was sealed with wax and placed on display in the City Hall lobby, bolted to a marble slab, to await opening in the year 2076 when its contents would be returned to the descendants of the original donors (to the greatest degree possible). Bailey, who later moved to Atlanta, also sculpted the 1996 Olympic Cauldron for Savannah’s Morrell Park (next to the Waving Girl Statue), the Davenport House fountain, the King-Tisdell Cottage fountain, and the Scarborough House railings. Contents placed in the time capsule included a variety of items from both individuals and organizations, including the 1976 City Budget for the City of Savannah.



Bicentennial time capsule, City Hall lobby, December 2005.
 City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The copper chest, a valuable piece of original artwork, was supposed to be auctioned off at the “Night in Old Savannah” festival with the name of the highest bidder engraved below the lock. Their descendants would then receive the chest in 2076 when it was opened. Unfortunately, all bids submitted were under the \$1,000 mark, the lowest price considered fair since the work was valued at \$1,670. The chest in City Hall remains unmarked, with no owner to claim it in 2076.

To ensure that future administrations would adhere to the spirit of '76, City Council adopted a resolution urging succeeding City administrations to continue to display the time capsule as “an item of continuing interest to the people of Savannah and as a reminder of the Bicentennial Celebration...and that the City administration in office in the year 2076 be invited and urged to lend its best offices toward the disposition of the Time Capsule and its contents as nearly as may be possible....”

“Chest Bids Too Low.” *Savannah Morning News* (25 May 1976) 1B.

“Chest Plan Reflects Faith in the Future.” *Savannah Morning News* (3 May 1976) 1B.

“Deadline Nearing for Bids on Chest.” *Savannah Morning News* (20 May 1976) 9B.

Official Proceedings of City Council (8 April 1976) 282; (1 February 1996) 6. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

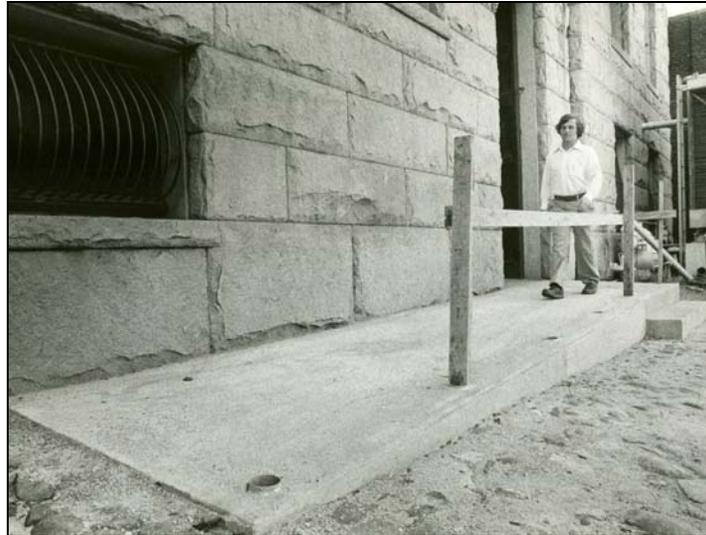
“Time Capsule Item Weigh-in Scheduled.” *Savannah Morning News* (3 April 1976) 14B.

“Time Capsule Planned.” *Savannah Morning News* (14 March 1976) 1C.

Structure/Handicapped Accessibility

1977 March

In March of 1977, a new wheelchair ramp was installed to the back entrance of City Hall as part of a series of changes being made by the City to aid the handicapped.



New ramp at back door to City Hall, March 1977.

City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Don Wallbaum.

“Gary Plumbley Makes Use of the New Ramp for Wheelchairs Behind City Hall.” *Savannah News Press* (1 March 1977).

Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

“Gary Plumbley Makes Use of the New Ramp for Wheelchairs Behind City Hall.” *Savannah News Press* (1 March 1977).

Structure/Air Conditioning & Heating

1977 April 7

On April 7, 1977, City Council authorized a contract with Nettles Refrigeration for the replacement of City Hall’s chiller and heating unit for \$44,434.

Official Proceedings of City Council (7 April 1977) 64. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/Reorganization of Offices

1977 April

In April of 1977, the City Engineering Office moved from the fourth floor of City Hall to the basement level of the Gamble Building. The Gamble Building space was recently vacated by the Public Development Bureau. Up until this time, the Engineer’s office had been located on the fourth floor of City Hall, the department’s home since the building was occupied in December of 1905.

Green, Rick. “2 City Offices Moving on Up—To Top of Gamble Building.” *Savannah Morning News* (19 April 1977) 1B:4-6.

Structure/Window Boxes**1977 August 24**

On August 24, 1977, employees of the Park and Tree Commission installed window boxes on the Bay Street side of City Hall for seasonal decoration. “The mayor [John P. Rousakis] became enthusiastic about the beautification idea on his recent trip to Greece where he enjoyed the practice of placing seasonal flowers on public buildings.”



Window boxes installed on Bay Street façade, August 1977.

City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Richard Sommers. “Flowers for City Hall.” Savannah News Press (25 August 1977). Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

“Flowers for City Hall.” *Savannah Morning News* (25 August 1977) 1B:4.

Artifacts/Photographs of City Hall and Bay Street**1977 August 28**

On August 28, 1977, the *Savannah News-Press* published a Features and Opinion special called “Yesteryear in Savannah” featuring five photographs found in old files of the Park and Tree Commission by Director Jerry Connor. One of the images depicted City Hall, probably around the 1940s or early 1950s, as seen from Johnson Square with the azaleas in bloom. Two photographs were taken along Bay Street in May of 1910 and showed the landscaping of the period in the Strand around City Hall.

“Yesteryear in Savannah.” *Savannah News-Press* (28 August 1977) 1D.

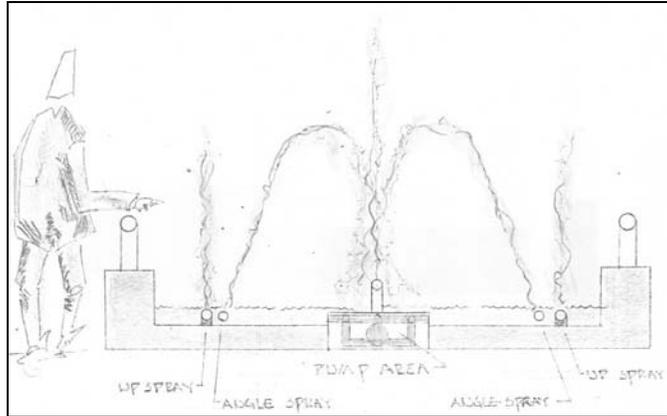
Municipal/Phone System**1977 September**

In September 1977, the City switched to a new \$47,000 telephone system which enabled employees to place conference calls with three persons, have calls ring in another office when one worker was away from their desk, and notify a worker of a waiting priority call. The new system helped to diminish the number of busy signals to the City’s number, 233-9321, by doubling the capacity of the switchboard.

“New City Phone System has “Bugs” to Work Out.” *Savannah Morning News* (24 September 1977) 1B:1-2.

Structure/Fountain Restoration
1977 September-November

During the fall of 1977, the City Hall fountain was restored and put in proper working condition. In August, there was some discussion about replacing the original cast bronze fountain with a spray ring similar to those in Johnson Square at a cost of about \$450. Under the proposal, the original fountain would have been dismantled and placed in storage. Fortunately, a little background research confirmed that “the fountain is as historical as the building,” and H. & M. Foundry was contracted to refurbish the fountain under the guidance of the Park and Tree Commission.



Sketches of proposed spray ring for City Hall's rotunda fountain, n.d.
 Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20.
 City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The work restored water to the fountain basin which had been used as a planter since the early 1970s. Unfortunately, the shield with the seal of the City was not returned to the fountain when it was reassembled. The work was finished in November after some discussion about the final finish between Mayor John P. Rousakis and City Manager Arthur A. “Don” Mendonsa. The final choice, an aged brown, was the suggestion of Dorothy Sheffield, the City Manager’s administrative assistant.



City Hall rotunda fountain restored, November 1977.
 City Hall Folder: “City Hall Fountain Gets Refurbishing.” *Savannah News Press* (14 November 1977).
 Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Annual Report to the Mayor and Alderman 1977. City of Savannah, Georgia, 1978. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1977. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"City Hall Fountain Gets Refurbishing." *Savannah News Press* (14 November 1977).

"Inter-Department Memo from Dorothy to Berta, City Hall Fountain in Lobby" (24 August 1977). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo from Jerry Connor, Park and Tree Director, to City Manager" (19 August 1977). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (6 October 1977) 209. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Stewart, Dorothy H. (Department of History, Armstrong State College). "The Monuments and Fountains of Savannah: A Report on an Internship for the Savannah Park and Tree Department." City of Savannah, Georgia Park and Tree Department, June 1993. p398. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.PT.1993-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

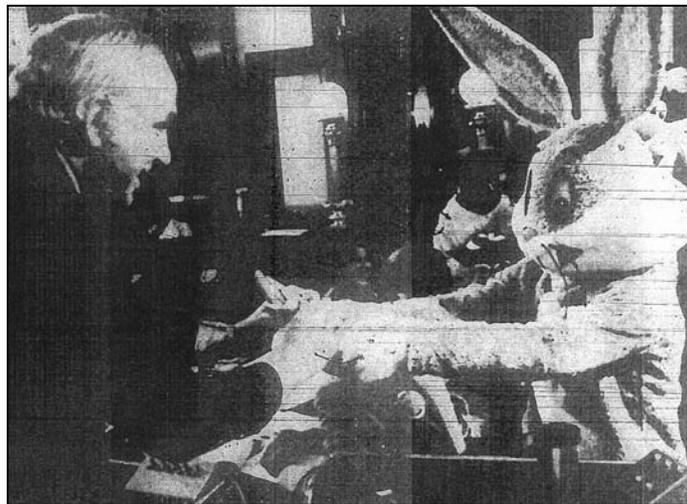
"View from the Top." *Savannah News Press* (1 September 1977).

Events/Half-Rubber Tournament

1977 October 6

On October 6, 1977, City Council met for "one of the more light-hearted city council meetings of recent years" when Mayor John P. Rousakis awarded the World Championship Half-Rubber Tournament trophies and received "honorary carrots" from Bugs Bunny.

The City's Leisure Services Bureau sponsored a round-robin half-rubber tournament won by the four-man team of Charlie Russo, Denny Herb, Marion Alexander, and Harold "Rocky" Leonard (absent from the Council meeting). Russo, Herb and Alexander accepted trophies of small half-rubber bats, usually made of sawed-off mop or broom handles, with half-rubbers attached and painted gold. The team was sponsored by the Parker-Wright Men's Store. Rousakis read a proclamation declaring the day a holiday in tribute to the "half-rubber championship team of the world."



Mayor John P. Rousakis greets Bugs Bunny, October 6, 1977. Staff photo by Don Wallbaum.
 "Hizzoner the Mayor gets Carrots from Bugs Bunny." *Savannah Morning News* (7 October 1977) 1B:1-2.
 Used with permission.

Following the half-rubber presentation, Bugs Bunny and members of his road show, including Batman, spokesman of the group, the Tasmanian Devil, and Sylvester the Cat, appeared before Council. Bugs Bunny handed out real carrots, shook hands with the Council members, and said he hoped they would pass a Bugs Bunny Bill so he could retire in Savannah after his show business career.

Mayor Pro Tem Frank Rossiter, noting the quips from the half rubber proclamation and the large animals, said, "With half rubber, I think we're half nuts." No one was heard to disagree with him.

"Half-Rubbers and Carrots." *Savannah Morning News* (7 October 1977) 1B:1-2.

***Structure/Landscaping the Strand
1977 December 5***



City employees remove trees from the Strand adjacent to City Hall, December 1977.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Robert Kempf. "City Hall Tree Removal" (6 December 1977).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On December 5, 1977, employees of the Park and Tree Commission removed old trees and shrubs from the park in the Strand adjacent to City Hall on the east. The removed landscaping was replaced by shorter, more colorful varieties of plants to make the park more attractive and colorful for eight to nine months out of the year. Several benches and two new arches over the entrances to the Factors' Walk footbridges were added, as well. The arches replaced old ones made out of bent sections of pipe. According to Park and Tree Director Jerry Connor, the work was "designed to keep the area delicate."



City employees remove trees from the Strand adjacent to City Hall, December 1977.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Robert Kempf.
"Flowers and Bowers Part of City Hall Area Beautification." *Savannah News Press* (6 December 1977).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Flowers and Bowers Part of City Hall Area Beautification." *Savannah News Press* (6 December 1977).

Municipal/First Black Female City Administrator
1978

In 1978, Carolyn H. Bell became the City's first female, African American administrator when she was promoted to the position of Central Services Director, a role that put her directly responsible for six support functions of the City, including risk management and insurance, central warehouse and switchboard, custodian and messenger service, building and electrical maintenance, electronic-equipment repair, and safety and training.

"Carolyn H. Bell." *Savannah Morning News* (13 February 1981) F1:3-4.

Structure/Electrical System Upgrades
1978-1979

On June 1, 1978, City Council approved a contract of \$4,824 with Rosser, White, Holbs, Davidson, McClellan, Kelly, Inc. for engineering services related to electrical improvements for City Hall. In February 1979, the Empire Electric Company was hired for \$54,931 to rewire the municipal building, under the supervision of Central Services, and work continued into July.

Annual Report to the Mayor and Aldermen 1979. City of Savannah, Georgia, May 1980. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1979. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building-Council Chambers, 1978-89," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo from City Manager to Mayor and Alderman, City Hall/Gamble Building Facilities Improvement Plan" (2 January 1986). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building Facilities Study," Box 1501-001-62. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (1 June 1978) 353; (8 February 1979) 181. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia

Politics/First Female Alderman
1978 November 2

On November 2, 1978, Dr. Harris Lentini was inaugurated as Savannah's first female alderman elected by the people. Lentini served one term (November 2, 1978 to October 4, 1982) under Mayor John Rousakis, representing the 6th District.

**The only other woman to serve on Council up until this time was Mrs. Sarah Berrien Casey Morgan who was elected by Council to fill the unexpired term of George R. White in 1923. Morgan served only four days and her term represented an honorary measure on the part of Council.*

"Election Day Passed Quietly, No Need to Open the City's Polls." *Savannah Morning News* (12 July 1978) 1B:1.

"Lentini and Rhodes Winners in Demo Primary Runoff for City Council." *Savannah Morning News* (21 June 1978) 1A:3.

"Mayor, Council Sworn In." *Savannah Morning News* (3 November 1978) 1A:1.

Events/Mayor Rousakis' 50th Birthday
1979 January 11

On January 11, 1979, during a regular City Council meeting, City employees and Council members surprised Mayor John P. Rousakis with a 50th birthday party. Eli Karatassos and Al Henderson, the mayor's current and former assistants, interrupted the Council meeting singing "Happy Birthday" and carrying a birthday cake ablaze with fifty candles and a fire extinguisher to "protect the building." Mayor

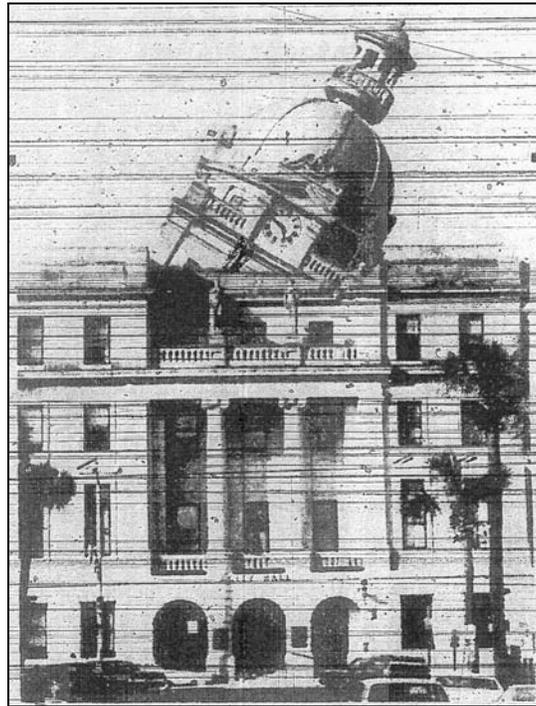
Rousakis ignored the interruption for as long as he could, but when the cake was placed on his desk, he stopped reading the resolution he was in the middle of proposing to Council.

After failing to blow the candles out twice, the mayor joked they must have been lit by Alderman Roy Jackson “who has the reputation for being a thorn in the mayor’s side.” Gag gifts followed, including a “Key to the City” from Alderman Leo Center, a senior citizens identity card from Alderman H. C. “Nippie” Morrison, a large stirring spoon since the Mayor is known for his cooking skills from Alderman Harris Lentini, and Grecian hair color solution from Karatassos. City Manager Arthur A. “Don” Mendonsa’s gift was a statue, wrapped in the Sunday comics, labeled “I’m not a problem drinker. It’s the thing I do best.” Rousakis playfully threw it on the floor and began reading the funnies.

Green, Rick. “Meeting is Interrupted: Happy Birthday, Mayor.” *Savannah Morning News* (12 January 1979) 1D:1-3.

Events/April Fool’s Joke
1979 April 1

For the April 1, 1979 issue of the *Savannah Morning News*, staff photographer Bob Morris doctored a photograph of City Hall to make the dome look like it was caving in as an April Fool’s joke.



Doctored photograph of City Hall for April Fool’s Day, April 1, 1979.
“Crisis at City Hall.” *Savannah Morning News* (1 April 1979) 1A:5-6.
Used with permission.

“Crisis at City Hall.” *Savannah Morning News* (1 April 1979) 1A:5-6.

Structure/Dome Repainted
1979 October 4

On October 4, 1979, City Council approved a contract with the Miller Painting Company to repaint the City Hall domes (main dome and cupola) for \$5,400 to help protect them from air pollution and the natural elements. The work did not require approval of the Historic Review Board because it did not entail a color change; the domes were to be repainted the same greenish color that upset so many in 1966. The contract

specified that the color would be as close as possible to that of aged copper, similar to the trim of the nearby Cotton Exchange, while the cupola columns would be white and handrail black. The Miller contract included furnishing and installing a new pulley and “roll-pipe” assembly for raising the flag on top of the cupola from the fourth floor so City Hall workers would not have to climb all the way to the top to raise and lower the flag each day.



Miller Painting Company employees scrap old paint off of City Hall's dome, November 1979.
City Hall Folder: Staff photos by Steve Bisson. "Reggie Miller scraping the dome" (21 November 1979).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

In November 1979, Ricky Jeffcoat and Reggie Miller, of the Miller Painting Company, prepared the surface for painting by scraping the dome of loose paint. During the several weeks it took to scrape and paint the dome, the flag was raised daily.



Reggie Miller scrapes paint off of City Hall's dome six stories above Bay Street, November 1979.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Steve Bisson.
"It's Dizzying Sight from City Hall Dome as Painting Begins." *Savannah News Press* (21 November 1979).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

By December, the work was complete, however everyone was unhappy with the finish coat's color. A local news photographer labeled his photograph of City Hall, "sparkling new tacky color on dome." The City Manager complained, "The green color applied to the Dome looks terrible. It is much too bright a green and therefore too great a contrast with the building...[it] should be more nearly the natural patina on a copper dome like that on the small dome on top of the old Cotton Exchange."



City Hall with "sparkling new tacky color on dome," December 1979.
City Hall Folder: "City Hall" (December 1979).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

In March 1980, the City modified the painting contract with the Miller Painting Company and they returned to the project, sanded the existing finish coat and applied one finish coat in a color selected by the City. The final cost of the project was \$8,791.23 and the completion report was not signed off on until September 25th, 1980.

Annual Report to the Mayor and Aldermen 1980. City of Savannah, Georgia, April 1981. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1980. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"At the Top." *Savannah Morning News* (22 November 1979) 12D:5-6.

Barton, Tom. "Victorian Area Loan Program OKed by City." *Savannah Morning News* (5 October 1979) 1B:1.

"City Hall Dome Painting Recalls Controversial 'Brush'." *Savannah Morning News* (29 November 1979) 1A:3-4.

Folder "PB-912-78 City Hall Dome," Box 5015-001-91. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo from Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa, City Manager, to Richard Monteilh and Tim Witsman, Color of Dome" (31 December 1979). Folder "PB-912-78 City Hall Dome," Box 5015-001-91. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"It's Dizzying Sight from City Hall Dome as Painting Begins." *Savannah News Press* (21 November 1979).

Oetgen, Albert. "Painting Dome's More than 'Coverup'." *Savannah Morning News* (29 November 1979) 9A:1-4.

Official Proceedings of City Council (4 October 1979) 366; (6 March 1980) 63. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

A Century of History
1980 ~ 1989



City Hall and Bull Street palms seen from Johnson Square, n.d.
City Hall Folder. Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Structure/Council Chamber Benches
1980 January 24

On January 24, 1980, the City's Purchasing Director accepted new benches recently purchased from Southern Seating, Inc., of Ocee, Florida, for \$3,584. In 1978, City Manager Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa asked City Council to authorize the purchase of new wood benches for the Council Chamber. Mendonsa described the current seating as incompatible with the character of the room and "makeshift at best...comprised of theater seats from the old auditorium and a conglomeration of other chairs of various design, age and condition." He suggested replacing the hodge-podge seating with wood benches either custom fitted to the room or ordered from a catalog in a style and color compatible with the original furniture inside the railing (the aldermen's desks).

Gunn & Meyerhoff, architects, prepared plans for fourteen oak benches in a variety of lengths ranging from sixteen to five feet long with a seating capacity of approximately ninety-six. Southern Seating supplied the benches and the work was completed by early 1980.

Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building-Council Chambers, 1978-89," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo from City Manager, Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa, to Mayor and Alderman, Seats for Council Chambers" (19 September 1978). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building-Council Chambers, 1978-89," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Historic American Buildings Survey 1981

In 1981, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, documented the City Hall building with forty-two black and white photographs (contemporary views as well as photographs of original plans and elevations) and a brief narrative of the history of the building (including a description of the building materials, architectural style and details). The City Hall HABS collection (HABS, GA, 26-SAV, 61) is preserved in the Library of Congress, in Washington, D. C., and is available on-line through the Library of Congress' Built in America Collection (http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/habs_haer/).



Interior stained glass dome, 1981.

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS, GA, 26-SAV, 61-29.

Used with permission.

"Savannah City Hall, Bay & Bull Streets, Savannah, Chatham County, GA." HABS, GA,26-SAV,61-, Historic American Buildings Survey (Library of Congress). Library of Congress, Prints and Photograph Division, Washington, D.C.

Structure/Fountain Basin Repainted 1982 March

A March 1982 photograph of the fountain, looking down from the rotunda, captured the basin after it had recently been painted a deep blue-green, refurbished and refilled with water, at the request of the City Manager. Apparently, sometime before 1981 it had transformed into an empty basin painted black and efforts were being made to correct this.

For some time the pool was empty and something of an eyesore, in spite of attempts to fix a small garden or make a fish pool there. Here Dianne Kicklighter, an employee in the city treasurer's office, eyes the work of the Park and Tree Commission crews under the direction of Marmon Thompson.



City Hall fountain basin repainted, March 1982.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Bob Morris. "Renewed Pool View." *Savannah News-Press* (4 March 1982).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Renewed Pool View." *Savannah News-Press* (4 March 1982).

Stewart, Dorothy H. (Department of History, Armstrong State College). "The Monuments and Fountains of Savannah: A Report on an Internship for the Savannah Park and Tree Department." City of Savannah, Georgia Park and Tree Department, June 1993. p398. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.PT.1993-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Mechanical (HVAC) System Upgrades 1982 September 16

On September 16, 1982, City Council approved the contracting of the engineering firm of Rosser, White, Hobbs, Davidson, McCellan, Kelly, Inc. to study the mechanical (HVAC) system of City Hall and develop a multi-year plan for the improvement of the building's systems. The firm outlined a plan that included: replacing the cooling tower; replacing the cooling and heating units in the Council Chamber, Council's Conference Room and the City Manager's office; replacing the existing windows with operable double-glazed windows; developing a facility improvement plan; renovating the clock mechanism; and replacing the air conditioning equipment with a four-pipe system.

The study helped guide the City through the next few years as major renovations were undertaken on the building. During this time, municipal employees slowly began to view themselves as caretakers of City Hall, an historic and valuable asset. However, the period of improvements also emphasized the limitations of the old building, including: inadequate electrical systems for computer terminals; "virtually non-existent" handicapped facilities; the use of prime office space for storage; poor office layout; and inadequate security.

"Inter-Department Memo from A. A. Mendonsa, City Manager, to Mayor and Alderman, City Hall/Gamble Building Master Plan...Consultant Selection" (18 December 1985). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (16 September 1982) 278. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Burglary
1982 September 20

On September 20, 1982, Revenue Supervisor David Sabin came to work at City Hall to find his first floor office had been broken into. Burglars had forced open the front door and rifled through several offices and the concession stand in the rotunda, stealing \$150 and a calculator. Investigators, including Advanced Police Officer P. M. Reilly, examined the offices and dusted for fingerprints.



Police inspect crime scene at City Hall, September 20, 1982.
 City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Neal Williamson. "Break-in at City Hall." *Savannah News-Press* (20 September 1982).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Break-in at City Hall." *Savannah News-Press* (20 September 1982).

Politics/Council Make-up
1982 October 4

The October 4th, 1982 inauguration of Savannah's City Council marked several milestones for the city's political landscape. It was the first time Council had three African American members on its panel at the same time, the result a reapportionment that created the 5th Aldermanic District and led to the election of lawyer Robbie Robinson. The addition of Republican George Zettler to the previously all-Democratic Council created the first bipartisan aldermanic body in Savannah's recent history. Prior to 1978, Council was elected as a slate, or team, representing one party, and during the election of 1978 no Republicans even ran.

Sigman, Shari. "Rousakis Promises Progress at Inauguration." *Savannah Morning News* (5 October 1982) 1B:1.

Events/Christmas Carolers
1982 December 8

On December 8, 1982, Butler Elementary School first and second graders sang Christmas carols from the second floor balcony of City Hall, standing around the railing of the rotunda, for City employees to enjoy.



Butler Elementary School carolers surround second floor rotunda railing, December 8, 1982.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Steve Bisson. "Butler School Carolers." *Savannah News-Press* (8 December 1982).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Butler School Carolers." *Savannah News-Press* (8 December 1982).

Events/Death of Mayor Pro Tem Rossiter
1983 January 10

On January 10, 1983, Mayor Pro Tempore Frank P. Rossiter (elected at large to the 1st District) died at the age of sixty-nine. The following day, January 11, 1983, the flag over City Hall's dome was flown at half staff in his memory. Rossiter was born in Savannah on August 21, 1914. From 1932 to 1966, he served as a reporter and associate editor for the *Savannah Morning News*. During World War II, he served his country as an officer in the United States Navy and participated in the invasion of Normandy. In 1970, Rossiter was elected to City Council and chosen unanimously as Mayor Pro Tempore by his fellow aldermen. He was re-elected to Council in 1974, 1978 and 1982.



City Hall's flag flies at half staff for Mayor Pro Tem Frank Rossiter, January 11, 1983.
City Hall Folder: "Flag at Half-mast for Frank Rossiter" (11 January 1983).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Official Proceedings of City Council (14 March 1983) 422. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Publication of America's City Halls
1984

In 1984, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) published *America's City Halls*, the result of a joint effort between the American Institute of Architects, the United States Conference of Mayors, and the United States Department of the Interior. The publication commemorated the 50th anniversary of the United States Conference of Mayors (1982), the 125th anniversary of the American Institute of Architects (1982), and the 50th anniversary of the Historic American Buildings Survey (1983).

In April of 1981, the project's participants invited the City of Savannah to submit data on Savannah's City Hall for consideration for inclusion in a survey of America's significant city hall buildings. The City submitted the necessary documentation to the United States Conference of Mayors in August of 1981 and Savannah's City Hall was subsequently featured in *America's City Halls* edited by William L. Lebovich.

City Hall appeared twice in the volume, on a full-page spread with four pictures (including an exterior view, and close-ups of the Council Chamber's clock and the mosaic seal of the City), as well as in a discussion of the use of domes and rotundas in city hall architecture.

Lebovich's analysis of City Hall's dome, and the absence of the sculptures Architect Hyman Wallace Witcover originally intended for it, is interesting:

Savannah is known for its 18th-century town plan with its focus on small parks, so it is fitting that its city hall, with its tower, is a highly visible terminus for the parks on Bull Street. The building is intended to have a more lively silhouette. A quadriga (sculptures of chariots and horses) was proposed for the corners of the fifth-floor roof but was not constructed for budgetary reasons; if it had been built, the city hall's domed tower would have related better to the building's lower stories. The design is more successful on the interior, where a four-story rotunda culminates in a colorful, stained-glass dome...

Savannah City Hall...has a complex dome consisting of railings, lantern and pediments facing north, south, east and west, thereby continuing the vertical emphasis of the main mass of the building.

Correspondence, "America's City Halls to John P. Rousakis, Mayor of Savannah," (29 April 1981). City Hall Reference Files: City Hall-America's City Halls (1981 Submission). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Correspondence, "Michael Vaquer, Jr., Assistant to the Mayor, to Valerie Shaw, United States Conference of Mayors, Savannah, Georgia," (31 August 1981). City Hall Reference Files: City Hall-America's City Halls (1981 Submission). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Lebovich, William L., ed. *America's City Halls*. The Preservation Press, 1984. p113, 190.

Structure/Air Conditioning
1984 January 5

On January 5, 1984, City Council approved the purchase of a replacement air conditioning system for the Council Chamber and the pre-Council conference room from Southeastern Air Conditioning Company for \$78,567.

Official Proceedings of City Council (5 January 1984) 205. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/City Council Night Meeting
1984 January 19

On January 19, 1984, City Council experimented by meeting at 8 o'clock in the evening to give "working class people" an opportunity to attend a Council meeting. The idea began when Frances Bright Sanders, head of Local 342 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, asked Alderman

Robbie Robinson to consider holding evening meetings so City employees could attend. Alderman Robinson supported the idea; “Some (night meetings) are needed to let people have the opportunity to see what we’re doing. We have to make sure the working people have an opportunity to come to the city council meetings.” Robinson asked Council to hold at least one in four meetings at night. Council members agreed to hold a trial session. About one hundred people attended the meeting. However, on February 16, 1984, Council turned down Robinson’s proposal to hold periodic regular meetings after 5 p.m. citing added costs for security and the inconvenience to employees who are required to attend the meetings.

Craig, Charles. “City Snuffs Night Meetings.” *Savannah Morning News* (17 February 1984) 1D:2-5.

Craig, Charles. “Council Meets at Night.” *Savannah Morning News* (20 January 1984) 1C:1-3.

Events/30th Anniversary Council-Manager Government 1984 March 15

On March 15, 1984, City Council celebrated the 30th anniversary of the council-manager form of government for the City of Savannah with a surprise anniversary cake presented to Arthur A. “Don” Mendonsa at the City Council meeting. At the time, Mendonsa had been City Manager for eighteen of those thirty years, serving in that capacity from 1962 to 1967 and then rehired again in 1971.

Craig, Charles. “Cella Chills the Council; Italian Parade Permit?” *Savannah Morning News* (16 March 1964) 1D:1.

Craig, Charles. “City Hall Marks 30th Year of Council-Manager System.” *Savannah Morning News* (1 January 1984) 1A: 2-5.

“Happy 30th.” *Savannah Morning News* (16 March 1964) 2D:1.

Official Proceedings of City Council (15 March 1984) 237. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Window Restoration 1984-1985

On August 2, 1984, J. R. Dallas Construction Company, Inc. was awarded a contract for \$89,750 to restore City Hall’s windows based upon the plans of architect Scott Barnard. The work would take over one year to complete and would end up costing about \$115,000. However, the decision to restore rather than replace City Hall’s original windows was deemed worth it since the work would preserve the building’s historic integrity.



City Hall’s windows boarded up during window restoration, August 1985.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Phyl Martin. “City Hall and Its Plywood-Covered Windows.” *Savannah Morning News* (29 August 1985).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

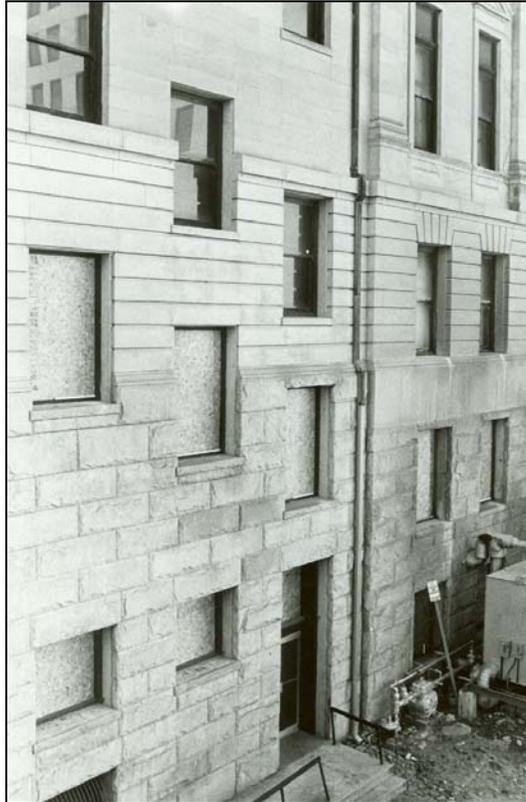
There were several major stumbling blocks along the way, most notably the weight of the replacement glass. At first, five-eighths inch, double-pane, insulated glass was ordered for the work. However, with some windows “massive” at twelve feet tall, the glass was too heavy to be supported by the counter-weights (built in to the window frames). Contractors ordered a second round of glass, of a lighter, tempered stock that was easily supported by the original frames and hardware. The City was able to use some of the five-eighths inch glass in other buildings, but much of it went into storage for future use.

During replacement, the window frames were removed and plywood put up in their place. On average, windows were out for seven to ten days while the glass was replaced and the sashes repaired. Many of the sashes had suffered from wood deterioration over the years and some had to be replaced. Some of the counter-weights were also replaced due to broken or lost parts.

Architect Scott Barnard was happy with the outcome of the restoration project, despite the delays:

Renovation projects aren't quite the same as new construction. It takes a good bit of time.... J. R. Dallas Construction Co. has done a good, quality job. I would venture to say that there's no reason these windows shouldn't last another 80 years.

At the same time the windows were restored, several smaller projects were underway. The rear door of City Hall, accessible from the Bull Street Ramp, was replaced with a handicapped-accessible door. The four front doors on Bay Street were restored to working order. For years, only one had been kept unlocked during business hours, violating the City's own fire codes.



City Hall's rear windows boarded up during window restoration, November 1984.
 City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Phyl Martin. "Windows Boarded up City Hall-Facing Riverstreet" (6 November 1984).
 Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Contract #7614, Box 0115-002-45. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Homans, Michael. "Work Nears End on City Hall Windows." *Savannah Morning News* (29 August 1985) 1D:1-5.

Events/British Visitors**1984 October 11**

On October 11, 1984, Mayor John P. Rousakis welcomed sixteen British men and women from General James Edward Oglethorpe's hometown of Godalming, England at City Hall. The group, in town as guests of the "Friends of Oglethorpe" organization (a Savannah group formed to continue interest in the founder of the Georgia colony), confessed that until Georgia's 250th anniversary in 1983 revived interest in the General, "the small town outside London paid no particular attention to Oglethorpe." Margaret Macfarlane, mayor of Godalming said, "He had been heard of—but we never did much about it until the people from Georgia began to come over."

Mayor Rousakis presented a Key to the City to Macfarlane and Mayor Anne Heath of Waverly Borough, in which Godalming is located.

Darby, Betty. "Britishers Given Memento." *Savannah Morning News* (12 October 1984) 1D:3-5.

Municipal/Broadcast of Council Meetings**1984 November 19**

On November 19, 1984, the City of Savannah, through Cablevision, began delayed broadcasts of City Council meetings to provide greater public access to the workings of the local government.

One long-time observer of the Savannah City Council, watching as the mayor and aldermen conducted their first meeting Monday for delayed broadcast on cable television, suggested that the normally laconic councilmen had developed a touch of talkativeness.

The gavel-to-gavel coverage of the two-hour session, held Monday because of the Thanksgiving holiday, provided all the uncharacteristic excitement of a spirited debate.

There was even a rare dramatic moment when the aldermen, unable to reach a decision by voice vote, held the audience in suspense as they recorded their yeas or nays on the colorful electronic score board in the council chambers.

"Councilmen Get Gregarious in First Televised Meeting." *Savannah Morning News* (20 November 1984) 12C:5-6.

Events/Jobless Ordered to Leave City Hall**1984 December**

In December of 1984, City Manager Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa, at the request of the management of the neighboring Hyatt Regency Hotel, ordered unemployed men, who for years congregated in front of City Hall, to move on. The building, at the prominent intersection of Bay and Bull streets, was a popular place for day laborers to wait and hope to be picked up for a day of work. The Hyatt had recently contributed \$15,000 to a \$100,000 renovation of the Strand landscaping adjacent to City Hall on the west and felt the men did not present the proper image.

Those asked to leave felt that they had been evicted from public property. Samuel Wright told reporters it wasn't the first time it had happened; "The last time we went to talk to the mayor and he let us stay." Wright and his friends shifted to the northwest corner of Whitaker and Bay streets, but worried the move may have cost them some jobs.

Craig, Charles. "City Tells Jobless to Leave." *Savannah Morning News* (28 December 1984) 1C:1.

Structure/City Hall-Gamble Building Improvement Committee**1985 May-December**

In May of 1985, City Manager Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa established a City Hall/Gamble Building Improvement Committee in an effort to ensure that future renovation and restoration work would be in

keeping with the two historic structures owned and utilized by the City. The committee was directed to develop a master plan for the two buildings, often called the City Hall Complex, addressing both the short term and long term structural, mechanical and electrical needs while still maintaining the “historic ambiance.” The committee would also be responsible for ensuring conformance to the master plan and administering any policy related to the plan.

The committee was set up with Carolyn Bell, Director of Central Services, as chairperson, and Chester Brazzell, Robert McAlister, Mari Cote’, Bob Klink and Carlton West (ex officio) as members. As their first task, they drafted a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the procurement of architectural services to perform a facility study on the City Hall Complex from which a master plan could be prepared which would include documentation of the buildings’ current conditions, efficiency level and traffic flow, and alternatives for a multi-year improvement program. During September and October, the committee reviewed proposals from seven architectural firms for a facility study and master plan. Based on written proposals and oral presentations, they recommended the proposal of Bush & Company, Architects, and Surber Barber Mooney, Architects and Planners (the two firms working together) to the City Manager and City Council.

“Inter-Department Memo from A. A. Mendonsa, City Manager, to Mayor and Alderman, City Hall/Gamble Building Master Plan...Consultant Selection” (18 December 1985). Folder “City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989,” Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“Inter-Department Memo from City Manager, Arthur A. “Don” Mendonsa, to Distribution, City Hall/Gamble Building Improvement Committee” (31 May 1985). Folder “City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989,” Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/Direct Phone Lines ***1985 September 18***

On September 18, 1985, the City opened direct telephone lines to all government departments, including those in City Hall, giving citizens faster and easier access to City officials and services. No longer did they have to go through a switchboard. The Essx “direct inward dialing system,” provided by Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company, saved the City about \$8,000 in staff costs.

Craig, Charles. “Direct Lines to City Hall to Save Taxpayers Money.” *Savannah Morning News* (19 September 1985) 12D:1-2.

Structure/Flagpole Repainted ***1986 January 10***

On January 10, 1986, Eddie Yakley climbed to the top of City Hall’s dome and repainted the flagpole.

City Hall flagpole being repainted by Eddie Yakley, January 1986.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Steve Bisson. “Eddie Yakley Paints City Hall Flagpole.” *Savannah News-Press* (10 January 1986).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



"Eddie Yakley Paints City Hall Flagpole." *Savannah News-Press* (10 January 1986).

***Structure/City Hall Complex Facilities Study
1986-1987***

On March 3, 1986, the City contracted with Bush & Company, Architects, and Surber Barber Mooney, Architects and Planners, for a facilities use study of the City Hall Complex, including both the City Hall and Thomas Gamble buildings, for \$32,500. Over a period of roughly eight months, Eugene Surber, AIA and Robert Bush, AIA studied all areas and departments in the two buildings. In their final draft, dated February 12, 1987, they found that space was not used effectively, there was a feeling and appearance of being overcrowded by outdated furnishings and equipment, and ineffective office layout prevailed.

Bush and Surber outlined basic objectives for a maintenance and renovation policy including: providing a safe, pleasant and comfortable working environment; making efficient use of City property, maximizing its potential and protecting the City's valuable resources; and recognizing City Hall as an important image of the City, its strengths, welfare and stability. They specifically pointed out that artifacts related to City Hall, including the original metal furniture, should be kept for historic interest and either used or displayed, both "appropriate applications."

The study pointed out several of the insensitive renovations that had routinely occurred in City Hall over the years, including the predominant use of plywood paneling and acoustical ceiling tile. The City Hall elevator was described as "a prime and embarrassing example of the 'plywood fix' with sheet metal skirting."

These inappropriate materials stand in sharp contrast to the elegant polished bronze elevator door jambs. Another glaring and ugly installation is the plywood screening at the teller counters of the Revenue Department....Ceilings have been lowered without consideration of window openings or the aesthetics of the space.

One bright spot was that during the study renovations were being made on the west side of the fourth floor of City Hall. The architects reported:

...suspended ceilings were removed.... A maze of plywood partitions was removed which allowed for the removal of air conditioning ductwork resulting in more usable, more pleasant work space. The work accomplished is a definite improvement but does not reach the standard which this study will recommend.

Folder "PB-704-85 City Hall Phase III New Piping System-Specifications," Box 3121-001-105. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Folder "PB-704-85 Facilities Use Study of City Hall and Gamble Building-Agreements, Change Orders," Box 3121-001-105. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Folder "PB-705-85 [PB-704-85] Gamble Building Window Replacements-Correspondence-1986," Box 3121-001-105. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo from A. A. Mendonsa, City Manager, to Mayor and Alderman, City Hall/Gamble Building Master Plan...Consultant Selection" (18 December 1985). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Structure/Fountain Cleaned
1986 June***

In June of 1986, Oglethorpe Marble & Granite Company cleaned the City Hall fountain and repainted the basin a cream color. At the same time, several cracks in the fiberglass lining were repaired.

Stewart, Dorothy H. (Department of History, Armstrong State College). "The Monuments and Fountains of Savannah: A Report on an Internship for the Savannah Park and Tree Department." City of Savannah, Georgia Park and Tree Department, June 1993. p398. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.PT.1993-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Handicapped Accessibility
1986 September-November

During the fall of 1986, the City of Savannah rushed to make City Hall more accessible to handicapped citizens to meet a federally imposed deadline of October 19, 1986. The Office of Federal Revenue Sharing required all municipalities receiving Revenue Sharing funds to eliminate all architectural barriers to the handicapped in City facilities or lose Revenue funds. To comply, the City contracted Mark One Construction Company, of Savannah, to remodel an existing office in the basement level of City Hall into a handicapped restroom, and contracted with United Alarm Systems, of Savannah, to install a visual fire alarm system (previously the building was only equipped with an audio system).

Folder "PB-702-85 Building Modifications for the Handicapped-Miscellaneous," Box 3121-001-105. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo to City Manager from Assistant City Manager [Henry Moore], Handicapped Facilities Building Modification" (22 September 1986). Folder "PB-702-85 Handicapped Parking City Hall-Correspondence 1985-1987," Box 3121-001-105. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Inauguration
1986 October 6

On October 6, 1986, City Hall was the scene of the first outdoor inauguration in sixteen years as Mayor John P. Rousakis was sworn in for an unprecedented fifth term in front of about 1,000 spectators.

"City Inauguration Slated for Today." *Savannah Morning News* (6 October 1986) 1C:1.

"Mayor Marks 'Continuation of Course'." *Savannah Morning News* (7 October 1986) 1A:2-4.

Structure/Council Chamber Audio System
1986 November

In November 1986, the Clerk of Council's office ordered a new public address system from Rody's Music Enterprise, Inc., of Savannah, and installed it in the Council Chamber for improved audio quality.

Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building-Council Chambers, 1978-89," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Report to Council (Public Information Office, 11 October 1991) 2. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Dome Gold Leafed
1986-1987



Original color rendering shown to City Council on October 9, 1986, photograph taken at dome reception, April 24, 1987.
 VM 1678 John P. Rousakis Visual Materials Collection, Box 3, Folder 2, Item 16.
 Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On October 9, 1986, at a meeting of City Council, it was announced that the dome and cupola of City Hall would be gold leafed through an anonymous donation. City Manager Arthur A. “Don” Mendonsa, along with Richard DeYoung, of the engineering firm of Hussey, Gay & Bell, presented the project to the Mayor and Aldermen during the pre-Council meeting with a color rendering. Mendonsa relayed that he had been approached by the benefactor, who desired to remain unknown, about two months earlier regarding the project which would enhance the historic district. The gold leaf would replace the controversial greenish paint that had been used on the dome since the 1960s when environmental factors had caused considerable wear and damage to the copper cladding. Gold leaf was considered both prettier and more durable, requiring less time and money in upkeep. In addition, some hinted that a desire to remind Atlanta that Savannah was the first capital of Georgia was a motive for having the only known gold-capped city hall in the state.



City Hall with painted dome, January 1986.
VM 1678 John P. Rousakis Visual Materials Collection, Box 2, Folder 11, Item 1.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Engineer Gus Bell, of Hussey, Gay & Bell, and architect Albert Swanke donated their services and coordinated the project which was originally estimated at \$170,000. Swanke had recently served as a consultant on the French-American Committee for the Restoration of the Statue of Liberty. On October 8, 1986, Bell received approval for a color change to City Hall’s domes from the Savannah Historic District Board of Review. Funds for the project were held through a trustee and were deposited with the City upon approval by Gus Bell to cover payments. The City, in light of the significant donation, waived the building permit fee.

On October 15th, Gus Bell revealed to the media that the Ships of the Sea Museum, then located on River Street, was the official benefactor, but declined to reveal the identity of the trust’s members who were actually funding the project. It was quickly surmised that Mills B. Lane, Jr. was the donor behind the generous gift. Lane, former president and chairman of the Citizens & Southern National Bank, founded the Ships of the Sea Museum and made considerable and significant contributions to Savannah in the past, always to improve and beautify the community, including: funding the renovations of four downtown squares and the Waving Girl Park; restoring several significant architectural structures in the city; and donating land for the campus of Armstrong Atlantic State University.

Lane never publicly acknowledged his involvement in the gold leafing of City Hall's dome, which entailed the initiation of the project and a donation of \$200,000 to the City. On March 26, 1987, wanting to thank him for such a generous gift, but unable to say so outright, City Council adopted a resolution recognizing Lane's achievements and contributions to the community over the years and thanking him for enriching the lives of the people of the city, state and nation. Lane did not attend the meeting.



O'Neil Steeplejacks prepare City Hall dome for gold leaf, October 1986.

City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Phyl Martin.

"Workmen Prepare City Hall Dome for Gold Leafing." *Savannah Morning News* (23 October 1986).

Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

The Jerry O'Neil Steeplejack Company, of St. Augustine, Florida, was contracted in mid-October 1986 for the project. The family-owned company included three husband and wife teams, Jerry and Beverly O'Neil, their sons Darrel and Tim, and their wives, Judy and Linda, respectively. Jerry and Beverly had been working together as steeplejacks since around 1948. Jerry learned the trade from his father and then passed it on to his sons. "What steeplejacks do is go places most people won't – to the top of church spires to make repairs or put gold leaf on crosses and up on courthouse roofs to fix leaks and paint flag poles."

The gold leafing entailed more than just applying gold to the dome. Starting on October 22nd, fall being the ideal time of year due to low humidity, the O'Neils began stripping the old paint off the dome and cupola. They then etched the bare copper metal and applied three coats of primer followed by a coat of size which acts as the glue for gold leaf. Once the size dried to a tack, ten-inch square, tissue-paper thin sheets of 23-karat gold leaf, supplied by Krug-Hastings of Germany, were applied to the surface. A finish coat served as the final step to protect the leaf. The ribs of the dome were painted white. The O'Neils worked under a canvas canopy to protect the work in progress from wind and rain and to maintain an air of mystery and surprise for the unveiling of the completed project. All the work was done hanging from a system of ropes and cables secured to the cupola almost 150 feet above River Street.

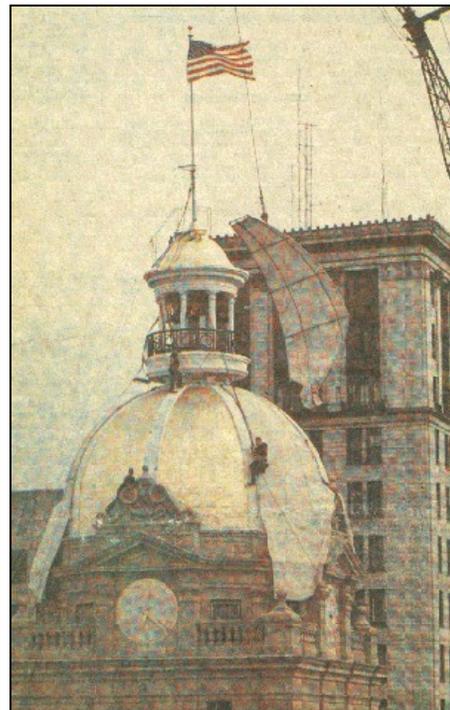
While the steeplejacks worked on the exterior of the dome, the City repaired several leaks and spots in the roof and dome systems, and the stained glass dome was cleaned. After work began, several other areas needing repairs were addressed. The O'Neils were additionally contracted to clean the stonework around the dome and roof top, and remove and repoint all the loose mortar in the stonework above the roofline. In addition, the four faces of the tower clock were cleaned, and the frames, numerals and hands were gold leafed to match the dome. This work was all considered in line with the overall renovation, repair and

improvement of the entire dome structure and raised the final cost of the project to approximately \$235,000 (\$35,000 of which was paid for by the City).



Illustration of City Hall depicted with gold dome on cover of 1986 Annual Report. *Annual Report to the Mayor and Alderman 1986.* City of Savannah, Georgia Office of Public Information, July 1987. Savannah Local Area Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1986. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia. *Used with permission.*

Savannah's gold dome became the theme for 1986. It appeared on the City's annual report and graced Mayor John P. Rousakis' official Christmas card in the form of an original illustration by Savannah College of Art & Design student James Scheibel.



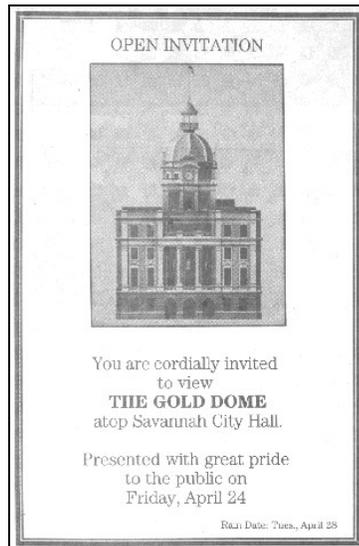
Photograph of unveiling of gold dome. *Annual Report to the Mayor and Aldermen 1987.* City of Savannah, Georgia Office of Public Information, July 1988. p2. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1987. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia. *Used with permission.*

After six months of anticipation and hard work, the gold dome became a reality in April 1987. The O'Neils began removing the canvas canopy, with the help of a crane, at 6 o'clock in the evening of April 23rd. By the following morning, the glistening, new dome was uncovered for all to see. According to local accounts, spectators gathered on Bay Street to watch the unveiling, but the process was long and rather anti-climatic for those witnessing it. It was much more exciting for those who went to sleep one night with a covered dome and woke up the next morning to the new golden dome.



Gold-leafed City Hall dome, April 1987.
 VM 1678 John P. Rousakis Visual Materials Collection, Box 3, Folder 2, Item 3.
 Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The City hosted a public reception at noon on Friday, April 24th to celebrate the completion of the project. An open invitation had been published in the local newspaper inviting all “to view **THE GOLD DOME** atop Savannah City Hall. Presented with great pride to the public....” The reception included a buffet lunch of prime rib served in the Council Chamber during which Rousakis described City Hall’s dome “as a jewel on top of this lovely place called Savannah.”



Dome unveiling reception newspaper invitation, April 1987.
 City Hall Reference Files: City Hall-Dome, Gold Leafing, 1987.
 City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



City Hall Reception-Buffer, April 24, 1987.
VM 1678 John P. Rousakis Visual Materials Collection, Box 3, Folder 2, Item 6.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Annual Report to the Mayor and Alderman 1986. City of Savannah, Office of Public Information, July 1987. Savannah Local Area Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1986. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Annual Report to the Mayor and Aldermen 1987. City of Savannah, Office of Public Information, July 1988. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1987. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

City Hall Reference Files: City Hall-Dome, Gold Leafing, 1987. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Craig, Charles. "A First! Savannah Shines with Gold Dome." *Savannah Evening Press* (24 April 1987) 1A.

Craig, Charles. "Dome Work Under Way." *Savannah Morning News* (23 October 1986) 1B.

Craig, Charles. "Dome's Gilding Being Funded by Ships of Sea." *Savannah Morning News* (16 October 1986) 1A.

Craig, Charles. "Gold Glitters Atop Savannah City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (24 April 1987) 1A:1-4.

Craig, Charles. "Gold Leaf Offered for City Hall Dome." *Savannah Morning News* (10 October 1986).

Craig, Charles. "Here's a Sneak Preview." *Savannah Evening Press* (7 April 1987).

Craig, Charles. "Special Clan, Special Task." *Savannah Evening Press* (24 November 1986) 1:1.

"Decision of Savannah Historic District Board of Review Certificate of Appropriateness, Petitioner Gus H. Bell for the City of Savannah" (8 October 1986). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Dome's Debut Near." *Savannah Morning News* (22 April 1987).

Folder "PB-806-86 City Hall Domes-Contract-HGBD, Contract Modification, Cost Estimate, CIP Detail," Box 3121-001-115. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Gold Dome Tops Card." *Savannah Evening Press* (23 December 1986).

"Gold for the Lady." *Savannah News Press* (8 February 1987).

"Gold on That Thar Dome." *Savannah Morning News* (11 October 1986).

"Gulls-eye Viewing." *Savannah Evening Press* (12 May 1987).

"Gus H. Bell to Don Mendonsa, City Manager" (8 October 1986). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo from Assistant City Manager/Development [Henry Moore] to City Manager [Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa]" (29 October 1986). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo from Assistant City Manager/Development [Henry Moore] to City Manager [Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa]" (17 February 1987). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Irma B. Glover, Trust Officer, to Don Mendonsa, City Manager" (15 October 1986). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Mills B. Lane to Don Mendonsa, City Manager" (3 September 1986). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Mills B. Lane to Mayor John P. Rousakis" (30 December 1986). Folder "City Hall/Gamble Building, 1969-1989," Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (26 March 1987) 390-391. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Fountain Seal
1987 April 23

On April 23, 1987, Atlanta antique book dealer and owner of the Yesteryear Book Shop Frank O. Walsh, III returned the bronze shield bearing the seal of the City that belonged on the fountain in City Hall and was given a Key to the City and a letter of appreciation in return. Walsh discovered the piece, removed from the fountain in the mid-1970s, in a lot of scrap iron he purchased in an Atlanta flea market two years earlier for only \$80. Walsh began tracking the origins of the seal and, with the help of the Georgia Historical Society, Savannah's Historic Preservation Officer Beth Reiter, and the City's Research Librarian Glenda Anderson, the seal found its way back home.



Bronze shield with seal of the City of Savannah re-installed on rotunda fountain, April 1987.
City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Phyl Martin. "Seal on Rotunda Fountain." *Savannah Evening Press* (24 April 1987).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Craig, Charles. "A First! Savannah Shines with Gold Dome." *Savannah Evening Press* (24 April 1987) 1A.

Craig, Charles. "Gold Glitters Atop Savannah City Hall." *Savannah Morning News* (24 April 1987) 1A:1-2.

Structure/Fountain Cleaned & Repaired

1987 June

In June of 1987, Oglethorpe Marble & Granite Company, of Savannah, removed the fiberglass lining from the fountain basin that was installed when the fountain was converted to a Japanese garden in 1971. Beneath the fiberglass they discovered the original tiled bottom that matches the rotunda floor. The marble company also cleaned the bronze fountain and repaired the recycling pump.

Stewart, Dorothy H. (Department of History, Armstrong State College). "The Monuments and Fountains of Savannah: A Report on an Internship for the Savannah Park and Tree Department." City of Savannah, Georgia Park and Tree Department, June 1993. p398. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.PT.1993-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Mayor of Hiratsuka, Japan Visits

1988 January

In January 1988, the Mayor of Hiratsuka, Japan visited City Hall and was greeted by Mayor John P. Rousakis in the Council Chamber.



Mayor John P. Rousakis greets Mayor of Hiratsuka, Japan, January 1988.
VM 1678 John P. Rousakis Visual Materials Collection, Box 3, Folder 6, Item 3.
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

VM 1678 John P. Rousakis Visual Materials Collection, Box 3, Folder 6, Items 2-3. Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Annie Casey Foundation Grant Announcement

1988 March 10

On March 10, 1988, Mayor John P. Rousakis held a press conference on the front steps of City Hall and announced that Savannah was one of five cities in the nation to receive a \$10 million grant from the Annie

Casey Foundation. The grant was combined with City, County, State, local school board and United Way funds to support \$30 million worth of local programs for at-risk youth.

Annual Report to the Mayor and Aldermen 1987. City of Savannah, Georgia Office of Public Information, July 1988. p23. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1987. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Artifacts/Mayors' Portraits
1988 November

In the fall of 1988, the City's Cultural Affairs Department worked with Central Services Director Carol Bell and mayoral aide Tom Kaufman to restore City Hall's Mayors' Portrait Gallery. The portrait gallery, in the second floor rotunda and hallway outside of the Council Chamber (originally the portraits hung within the Council Chamber) includes photographs, photographs of oil portraits and one oil portrait (of Gordon Saussy) of former mayors of the City of Savannah. The City had been collecting the portraits for years. Photographs of the old City Exchange building in 1904, shortly before it was torn down, show early portraits hung in the "Long Room."



Mayors' Portrait Gallery, 2nd floor rotunda, City Hall, May 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.



Mayors' Portrait Gallery, 2nd floor rotunda, City Hall, May 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

By the 1980s, many of the frames, mats and photographs were in poor condition. There was a hodge-podge of frame styles; “Some of them looked like they came from Woolworth’s. Others looked like they came from antique stores,” said Leslie Gordon, then Director of Cultural Affairs. The nicer frames of carved mahogany were reused, while the rest were replaced with simple, elegant frames. A gray-green mat was used on all the portraits to tie the collection together regardless of frame style. The portraits were re-hung in the rotunda and identified with a legend.

At the time, the collection began with a photograph of a portrait of the City’s first mayor, John Houstoun (the original is in the collection of the Georgia Historical Society), and ended with a photograph of J. Curtis Lewis, Jr. As mayors have left office, their portraits have been added to the collection.

Darby, Betty. “Putting the Mayor in Place.” *Savannah Evening Press* (7 November 1988). Vertical File: Public Buildings-City Hall. Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Movie

1989 February 7

On February 7, 1989, Mayor John P. Rousakis hosted a press conference in his City Hall office introducing the director and stars of the motion picture *Glory* who were in town filming scenes for the Civil War epic about the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, the first black regiment in United States history. Film stars Matthew Broderick, Cary Elwes and Morgan Freeman, as well as director Edward Zwick, attended the meeting. Shooting in Savannah included a parade scene on River Street filmed at the end of February before the cast and crew moved on to Jekyll Island and Atlanta.

Moore, Lila. “‘Glory’ Welcomed to Savannah.” *Savannah Evening Press* (7 February 1989). Vertical Files: Motion Pictures. Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Savannah Jefferson Meeting

1989 February 11

On Saturday, February 11, 1989, City Hall played host to the Savannah Jefferson Meeting on the Constitution as part of Georgia Heritage Week. The meeting was “an assembly by and for the citizens of Metropolitan Savannah, to examine and reassess the institutions of American government as we enter our third century under the Constitution.”

Presentations in the Council Chamber included discussions on Issues 1, 2 and 3 hosted by the Jefferson Studies Committee of Metropolitan Savannah and the Massie Heritage Interpretation Center.

Folder “City Hall/Gamble Building-Council Chambers, 1978-89,” Box 0120-001-20. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Architect’s Descendant Visits

1989 March

In March of 1989, Walt Witcover, of New York City, a descendant of City Hall’s architect, Hyman Wallace Witcover, paid a brief visit to the municipal building and spoke with Research Librarian Glenda Anderson.

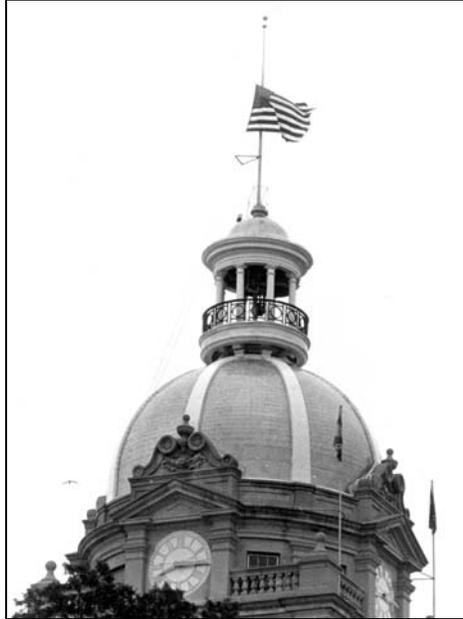
Anderson, Glenda E. A., Library Director (conversation, 4 August 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives.

Events/Death of Alderman Robbie Robinson

1989 December 18

On December 18, 1989, Alderman Robert “Robbie” Edward Robinson (5th Aldermanic District) died as the result of injuries sustained when a mail bomb exploded in his midtown law office. “A noted civil rights attorney” and legal counsel for the Savannah Branch NAACP, Robinson was one of the first African

American students at Savannah High School and an active leader from Liberty City. Robinson was elected to City Council in 1982 and re-elected in 1986 at which time he also became Vice-chairman of Council. The flag at City Hall was raised to only half staff the day following his death. In a memorial resolution adopted by Council on December 28th it was stated, "The Mayor and Aldermen will miss Robbie and his humor, his caring, and his warmth of friendship."



City Hall flag flying at half staff for Alderman Robert "Robbie" Robinson, December 19, 1989.
 City Hall Folder: Staff photo by Paula Gomez.
 "City Hall Flag at Half-mast for Robbie Robinson." *Savannah News-Press* (19 December 1989).
Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Walter Leroy Moody, Jr., a white supremacist, was later convicted of the crime, part of a series of mail bombs sent out in retaliation over failed attempts to overturn a 1972 conviction for possessing a pipe bomb. Moody was sentenced to Alabama's death row for the murder of U. S. Circuit Judge Robert Vance who was killed in Birmingham by one of his mail bombs.

"City Hall Flag at Half-mast for Robbie Robinson." *Savannah News-Press* (19 December 1989) 13:3.

Gross, Doug. "Fallen Heroes." *Savannah Morning News* (20 August 2000). Available on-line at <http://www.savannahnow.com/features/150years/1980cvllead.shtml>.

Official Proceedings of City Council (28 December 1989) 403. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Supreme Court Declines to Consider Appeal in Mail Bomber Case." *Savannah Morning News* (30 May 2002). Available on-line at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/053002/LOCSCOTUSMailBomber.shtml>.

A Century of History
1990 ~ 1999



Bird's eye view of City Hall, June 1992.
City Hall Folder. Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Municipal/“Call City Hall”
1990

In 1990, the City's Public Information Office implemented a 24-hour automated telephone information line, titled “Call City Hall,” accessible by dialing the telephone number 236-SAVH, in an effort to supply citizens with routine information and ease the workload on City employees. Over 130 messages were set up in the \$18,000 message system to answer questions ranging from how to pay City bills to information on upcoming Leisure Services programs. Brochures listing the extension numbers were sent out with the City water bills.

City of Savannah Annual Report 90. City of Savannah, Office of Public Information, June 1991. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1990. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Homans, Michael. “Got a Question About Savannah? ‘Call City Hall’.” *Savannah Morning News* (10 January 1990) 7C:4.

Municipal/Departmental Moves

1991 January

In January 1991, the Broughton Municipal Building, called BMB for short, opened on the corner of Broughton and Abercorn streets. The building was renovated by the City for the expansion of its departments from City Hall and the Gamble Building. During January 1992, the Revenue Department, including the City Treasurer and City Marshal, moved from the first floor of City Hall to BMB. The Revenue Department had been located on the first floor of City Hall since it was occupied in 1905.

“Broughton Municipal Building, An Update.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 29 November 1991). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

City of Savannah Annual Report 1991. City of Savannah, Georgia Office of Public Information, August 1992. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1991. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Inauguration

Politics/1st Female Mayor, 1st Black Female Alderman

1992 January 2

On January 2, 1992, Susan S. Weiner was inaugurated as Savannah’s first female mayor. Weiner, a forty-five year old Republican businesswoman originally from Albany, New York and relative new comer to Savannah and the political arena, upset longtime mayor John P. Rousakis at the polls and served one term as Savannah’s mayor (January 2, 1992-December 31, 1995).

At the same time, Gwendolyn P. Goodman, representing the 2nd District, was inaugurated as Savannah’s first female, African American alderman. Goodman served three terms as alderman, the second as Chairman of Council (January 2, 1992-December 31, 2003).

City of Savannah Annual Report 1991. City of Savannah, Georgia Office of Public Information, August 1992. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1991. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Homans, Michael. “Weiner Upsets Rousakis.” *Savannah Morning News* (8 November 1991) 1A:5.

Municipal/Snack Counter Shutdown

1992 June

In June 1992, after nearly forty years, Georgia Cooperative Services for the Blind, the operators of the City Hall snack counter, announced that the counter would be shut down and replaced by a vending machine due to a decline in sales. The counter was located in a niche of the first floor rotunda created by enclosing one of the pass-throughs between the rotunda and the corridor. At the time of closure, it was staffed by Regina “Tina” Nettles whose husband, Harold, was visually impaired and staffed a similar snack counter at the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers building on Telfair Square.

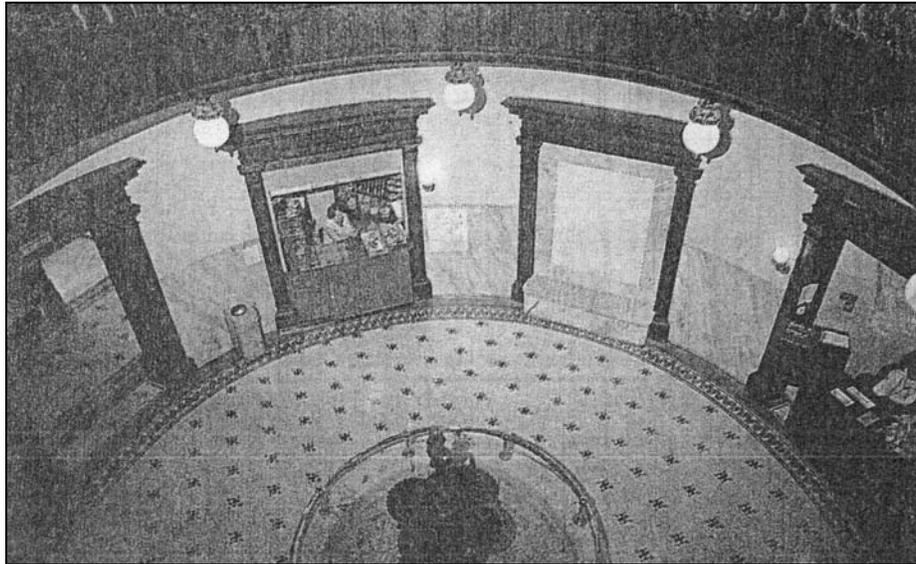


Snack Counter employee “Tina” Nettles chats with City Hall worker, June 1992.
 Photograph by Steve Bisson. “Snack Counter to Shut Down After 40 Years.” *Savannah News Press* (27 June 1992) 1A.
Used with permission.

“It breaks my heart. I feel like I want to sit down and cry,” said Regina “Tina” Nettles, the only employee at the shop on the first-floor rotunda of City Hall. “I guess it’s silly, but this is a piece of history. We’re losing it, and it’s a shame.”

Since the opening of the Broughton Street Building, and the relocation of several City departments and employees, the counter had suffered a severe drop in business, more so by the decreased number of citizens coming to City Hall to pay their parking tickets and water bills.

The snack counter offered a variety of goods, everything from headache powders and cigarettes, to colas and beef sticks. Terri Barnes, administrative secretary in the Clerk of Council’s office, commented on the difference the new vending machine would bring City Hall, not just fewer choices, but less human contact; “It won’t be the same because you won’t have that interaction.... You can’t talk to a machine.”



Looking down into the first floor rotunda with Snack Counter center left and Information Station right, June 1992. Photograph by Steve Bisson. “Snack Counter to Shut Down After 40 Years.” *Savannah News Press* (27 June 1992) 1A. Used with permission.

Homans, Michael. “Snack Counter to Shut Down After 40 Years.” *Savannah News Press* (27 June 1992) 1A.

Structure/Fiber Optic Cable Network & Electrical System Upgrades 1992 August 6

During 1992, the City worked with the Savannah Electric and Power Company on plans to install fiber optic cable to link the computer systems of City Hall, the Gamble Building, Broughton Municipal Building, Fire Department Headquarters and Police Department Headquarters. On August 6, City Council approved over \$480,000 worth of data processing improvement to the City Hall Local Area Network, a network serving City Hall and portions of the Gamble Building. Two weeks later, Council approved an engineering agreement with Rosser Fabrap International, Inc. for \$45,405 for electrical system upgrades to accommodate the increased electrical loads produced by computers at City Hall, the Gamble Building and the Broughton Municipal Building.

Official Proceedings of City Council (6 February 1992) 13; (6 August 1992) 25; (20 August 1992) 24. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Olympic Flag**1992 September 3**

In September of 1990, the City of Savannah was informed that it would host the 1996 Olympic yachting events for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games to be held in Atlanta, Georgia. Two years later, on September 3, 1992, Mayor Susan S. Weiner unfurled the Atlanta Centennial Games Olympic flag in the Council Chamber. "Cheers and thunderous clapping filled Savannah City Council chambers...as the city's 1996 Olympic Games flag was unveiled." Mayor Weiner announced that the flag would be displayed proudly in the Council Chamber and read three resolutions regarding the upcoming 1996 Olympics, one which appointed John McCarthy as Community Olympic Liaison. The flag is still displayed in the Council Chamber along with the United States flag, the Georgia flag, and the official flag of the City of Savannah.

On September 9th, festivities for the arrival of the traditional Olympic flag, traveling from the 1992 Summer Games in Barcelona, Spain to Atlanta, began on River Street. The flag arrived the following day on the U. S. Coast Guard Barque *Eagle* and was greeted along the river front despite a rainy day.

City of Savannah Annual Report 90. City of Savannah, Georgia Office of Public Information, June 1991. Savannah Area Local Documents Collection, SAV.CM.01-1990. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Jivens Named Year's Biggest Story." *Savannah News-Press* (1 January 1993) 1D:1.

Official Proceedings of City Council (3 September 1992). City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Swann, Amy A. "City Council has Olympics Spirit." *Savannah News Press* (4 September 1992).

Municipal/Council Meetings Broadcast**1993 August**

In August 1993, Savannah's Government Channel 3 began programming live broadcasts of City Council meetings. Prior to this, broadcasts of City Council meetings had been delayed.

News Release "Savannah's Government Channel 8." (Public Information Office, 29 July 1994). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Council Chamber Audio/Visual System**1993 October**

In October 1993, television monitors were ordered and installed in the Council Chamber for use during City Council meetings.

"Note from the Public Information Office." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 8 October 1993). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Electrical Systems**1993 October 28**

On October 28, 1993, City Council approved an electrical system upgrade for city buildings, including City Hall, the Gamble Building and Broughton Municipal Building, to provide new electrical distribution systems and branch circuits for personal computers. H. A. Sack Company, Inc. was the low bidder on the project at \$178,749.

Official Proceedings of City Council (28 October 1993) 55. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Poster Exhibit**1994 April 28**

On April 28, 1994, the winning posters of the Fair Housing Poster Contest were displayed in the City Hall rotunda. The contest was sponsored by the City in cooperation with the Savannah-Chatham County Board

of Education to raise awareness of fair housing in the public school system. Fourteen schools participated from which winners were selected from the high school, middle school, elementary school, and kindergarten levels. During the April 28th City Council meeting, the winners, Jamie McCord, Terry Davis, Guy Winn, Kalie Smith and JaTory White, were recognized.

Official Proceedings of City Council (28 April 1994) 14. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Artifacts/Savannah Silver Service
1994 May 23

On May 23, 1994, at a special ceremony in the Council Chamber, the Savannah silver service originally presented to the *U. S. S. Savannah* was returned to the City of Savannah by Joan Yam, a deputy with the U. S. Maritime Administration. The seven-piece silver tea set was purchased for the Navy cruiser in 1938 through contributions from Savannah area school children. Since then it had traveled around the world on Naval ships bearing the name of the city. Since 1981, the *N. S. Savannah*, the silver set's home since its 1962 visit to Savannah, had been part of Charleston's Patriot Point naval and maritime museum. In 1994, the *N. S. Savannah* was preparing to relocate with the Maritime Administration's James River Reserve Fleet with plans to eventually be dismantled. U. S. Representative Jack Kingston, hearing of the move, asked the Maritime Administration to return the service to the community. The tea service was displayed briefly at City Hall and is now stored in the collections of the Savannah History Museum until the Navy commissions a new ship bearing the name of the city.

Puckett, Tom. "Vessel Leaves Today to Find Permanent Port." *Savannah Morning News* (28 July 1975) 1A:1.

"Savannah Silver Service Back Home." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 20 May 1994). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Swann, Amy A. "Savannah Ships' Silver Service Comes Home." *Savannah Morning News* (24 May 1994) 1C.

Events/D-Day Exhibit
1994 June

In June of 1994, the Savannah History Museum provided an exhibit for City Hall's foyer in commemoration of World War II's D-Day.

Report to Council (Public Information Office, 3 June 1994). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/ City Manager Retires
1994 December 31

On December 31, 1994, Arthur A. "Don" Mendonsa retired as Savannah's city manager after twenty-eight years of public service to the City. Mendonsa was and still is the longest serving city manager the City has had in its history. He was replaced by Michael Brown, a former assistant city manager.

"New City Manager on Board." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 16 December 1994). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"News-Press, Readers Survey '94." *Savannah Morning News* (1 January 1995) 1C.

Events/"Arts Alive" Concert
1995 March 1

On March 1, 1995, at 10 o'clock in the morning, over one hundred singers from local schools serenaded City Hall employees from the rotunda in celebration of "Arts Alive" month. A similar presentation was held the following year.

"Arts Alive in Savannah." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 23 February 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Hats off to 'Arts Alive'." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 24 February 1995). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Russian Visitors

1995 March 2

On March 2, 1995, three Russians from Volna Baikala Radio (Baikal Wave), of Irkutsk, Siberia, attended City Council's meeting as part of an international cultural exchange with Peach State Public Radio, of Atlanta, Georgia through the Friendship Force. The three included Tonya, Deputy Director, Innekenti, Director/General Manager, and DJ Yuri.

Official Proceedings of City Council (2 March 1995) 1. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Russian Exchange." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 24 February 1995). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Artifacts/United States Flag

1995 October 26

On October 26, 1995, Mrs. Betty Wilson, of Woodmen of the World, Lodge No. 4, presented City Council with two American flags, one to replace the worn flag flying atop City Hall and one as a spare.

Official Proceedings of City Council (26 October 1995) 1. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/4th Floor Conference Room Renovation

1995 November

In the fall of 1995, the fourth floor conference room was renovated with new white boards, VCR, monitor, slide projector, viewing screen and cable television.

"Conference Room Changes." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 3 November 1995). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Politics/1st African American Mayor

1996 January 2

On January 2, 1996, Floyd Adams, Jr. was inaugurated as Savannah's first African American mayor. Adams, a veteran City Council member was elected in November 1995 in a "history-making election" during which he beat incumbent Susan Weiner, the City's first female mayor, and former mayor John Rousakis, who held the job for twenty-one years. After thirteen years as an alderman, Adams served two consecutive terms as mayor (January 2, 1996-December 31, 2003). At the time of his election, local reporters tried to describe the new mayor:

Despite his years in public office it's difficult to pigeonhole Adams and his political philosophy. He crosses party lines and changes sides in political battles as the need arises. Adams is a lifelong Democrat. But he endorses Republicans when he thinks they're better candidates, and he sometimes fights Democratic leaders.

"Changes on the Way in Politics and Government." *Savannah Morning News* (2 January 1996) 1A:1.

Cheves, John. "A Veteran of City Hall Politics, Adams Becomes Mayor Today." *Savannah Morning News* (2 January 1996) 1A:2-4.

"First Black Mayor Tops News of Year." *Savannah Morning News* (31 December 1995) 1C.

Stastny, Anthony. "City Sets Sail in a Sea of Promise, Opportunity." *Savannah Morning News* (1 January 1996) 1A:1-4.

"The Year in Review." *Savannah Morning News* (29 December 1996) 6C:1.

Events/Sculpture Exhibit**1996 January 17**

On January 17, 1996, a sculpture by local artist Heywood Nichols was unveiled in City Hall. Nichols created a bronze lamb and lion under a tree of knowledge that would eventually be moved to the entrance of the Children's Botanical Garden of Tiles at Garrison Elementary School. The Garden was part of the Arts Ashore project, of the City's Department of Cultural Affairs/Leisure Services Bureau's ceramics studio, for the 1996 Summer Olympics.

"Meet the Artist." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 12 January 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Olympic Legacy Sculpture Coming to City Hall." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 29 December 1995). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/History Exhibit**1996 February**

During February 1996, City Hall's rotunda was the site of a special display, compliments of the Coastal Heritage Society, honoring African American soldiers of the 1st South Carolina Volunteer Infantry Colored and the 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Colored of the U. S. Army, 1862-1865. The display coincided with Black History Month.

"Heritage Honored." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 26 January 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Dome Gold Leaf Repairs**1996 February 15**

On February 15, 1996, City Council approved a new contract with the Jerry O'Neil Steeplejack Company for \$45,000 for touch-up repairs to approximately three-hundred areas on City Hall's gold-leafed dome in critical need of restoration. Originally, \$259,000 worth of restoration work was proposed, but Council rejected that as too expensive. The O'Neil Steeplejack Family, the original contractor on the 1986 gilding of the dome, was awarded the contract without going to bid since the work was considered too specialized for most companies.



O'Neil Steeplejack signature in City Hall clock story from 1986-1987 gold leafing of City Hall's dome, photographed 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

In the nine years since the dome was gilded with 23 karat gold leaf, the environment had slowly beaten down on its surface. Damage by wind, rain, hail and sun had left significant worn spots.

City Hall's gold-wrapped dome, the gleam of Savannah's skyline, is quietly crumbling. Mother Nature is flaking away at the thin, 23-karat gold sheets that cover the dome's copper skin...

In May, the O'Neil Steeplejack Family began restoration work which took several months to complete.

At each worn spot on the dome, the O'Neils must sand down the copper, lay a fresh coat of primer paint and attach a thin layer of gold. That's hard work on the ground; doing it while hanging sideways, five stories up from Bay Street, is down-right tricky.



City Hall's repaired gold dome, c. 1997.
"City Guide 1997-1998."

City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Cheves, John. "City Hall Dome Gets Attention." *Savannah Morning News* (15 February 1996) 1A.

Official Proceedings of City Council (15 February 1996) 45. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Re-Gilding the Gold Dome." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 31 May 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Sidewalk Replaced 1996 May-June

During May and June of 1996, the sidewalk and curbing in front of City Hall was replaced with a new Pennsylvania Bluestone and brick walkway. The new walk extended into Bay Street four additional feet. The project also included new pedestrian crosswalks and additional street lighting in front of City Hall.

"City Hall Gets a Facelift." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 28 June 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Report to Council (Public Information Office, 17 May 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Entry Doors Replaced 1996 June-July

During June and July of 1996, the front doors of City Hall were replaced with new custom-made doors which imitated the original 250-pound oak doors. The original brass fittings were reused to ensure that the new doors would fit in with the turn-of-the-century building. A new electronic locking system was installed to allow employee identity card entry and future video monitoring.

"City Hall Gets a Facelift." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 28 June 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Olympic Flag

1996 July 8

On Monday, July 8, 1996, the official Olympic flag was unfurled on the second floor balcony of City Hall where it hung throughout the Olympic games. Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. was joined by County Commission Chairman Joe Mahany and mayors of several other Chatham County municipalities for the ceremony. The following day, the Olympic torch arrived in Savannah on River Street. Thousands of spectators lined the streets as it made its way to Forsyth Park, before setting out across Chatham County and the state towards Atlanta and the opening ceremony there on July 19th, 1996. Savannah held its own opening ceremony on July 20th on River Street with Walter Cronkite hosting. The sailing competition began on the 21st in Wassaw Sound. Closing ceremonies were held on River Street on August 3rd. The seventeen-day event featured over four-hundred athletes from around the world.

"Olympic Happenings." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 28 June 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"The Year in Review." *Savannah Morning News* (29 December 1996) 6C:1.

Events/Jack Leigh Exhibit

1996 July 18

On the afternoon of July 18, 1996, a reception was held in the City Hall rotunda for nationally recognized photographer Jack Leigh and his new City Hall exhibit. Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. cut the ribbon and officially opened Leigh's exhibit featuring images from his new book *Seaport: a Waterfront at Work*, about Savannah's international port. Approximately fifty-five black and white images were displayed on the four upper floors of City Hall between July 19th and August 10th. During the exhibition, City Hall opened on Saturday from 1 to 5 in the afternoon to allow more people to view the work.

Official Proceedings of City Council (18 July 1996) 15. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Picture This!" Report to Council (Public Information Office, 28 June 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Seaport Exhibit on its Way to Germany." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 9 August 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/2nd Floor Renovations

1996 July-August

During July and August of 1996, the second floor mayor's office in City Hall was renovated. The work included new plumbing, electrical wiring, air conditioning, carpeting and furnishings. The work was motivated by the need to bring the City Hall building into compliance with fire and electrical codes, and to present a good image for visitors during Savannah's 1996 Olympic yachting events. Funding for the renovations came out of a \$170,000 fund for fire safety. Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. told reporters:

We must put our best foot forward and have a place where we can entertain potential clients who can bring business to this city, but, more importantly, we must bring this building into compliance with safety codes.

While image was considered, functionality was stressed. City Manager Michael Brown said, "We have to be reasonable custodians of this building." As the end of the twentieth century neared, the City struggled to keep the balance between a City Hall that was a modern, functioning office building and one that was an intact historic structure. At the time, Alderman George Zettler told the local paper, "It's a beautiful old building, but it just isn't designed for modern conveniences and modern equipment. I really think we ought to turn the building into a museum. We need a modern administrative building."

Official Proceedings of City Council (1 August 1996) 10. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Sechler, Bob. "Renovations Set for City Hall's Second Floor." *Savannah News-Press* (16 July 1996).

Structure/Fiber Optic Cable
1996 December

In December 1996, the City, through a cooperative effort with the Department of Transportation and the City's Engineering Department, installed fiber optic lines for data communication between several city buildings, including City Hall and the Gamble Building.

"City Installs Fiber Optic Lines." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 13 December 1996). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Council Chamber Audio Upgrade
1997 February

During February 1997, an audio upgrade, approved by City Council in January, was installed in the Council Chamber to improve the quality of sound within the Chamber during meetings, as well as in broadcasts of meetings on Savannah Government Channel 3.

"Council Chambers Get New Sound." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 7 February 1997). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Movie
1997 Feb 7-8

On Saturday, February 7, 1997, the Council Chamber of City Hall was rigged and dressed for the filming of a courtroom scene for the motion picture *Gingerbread Man*. The scene was shot the following day, on Sunday, February 8, 1997.

"Email from Jay Self, Tourism and Film, to Luciana Spracher, Library and Archives, City of Savannah, Georgia" (21 April 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Handicapped Accessibility
1997 May 8

As part of the River Street Hospitality Center project, a new ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant ramp was installed at City Hall's back door, giving handicapped citizens greater access between City Hall, River Street, and the new hospitality facility (including public restrooms, visitors center and elevator). In addition, when the elevator and Hospitality Center were designed, the original building materials of City Hall were taken into consideration so that a similar stone facing material was incorporated into the project.

Official Proceedings of City Council (8 May 1997) 15. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Fountain Cleaned
1997 July

During July 1997, City of Savannah Park and Tree employees cleaned the City Hall fountain by removing accumulated mineral deposits. They were also working on improving the plumbing and having a Savannah College of Art and Design student design a new fountain head to improve the flow of water in the fountain.

"City Hall Fountain to be Restored." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 11 July 1997). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Structure/1st and 2nd Floor Renovations
1997-1999***

On August 14, 1997, City Council approved \$179,500 worth of improvements from Collins Construction Company for the second floor of City Hall. The work initially called for additional public restroom facilities (either on the second floor or basement level), and improvements to the Clerk of Council's office, Mayor's office, and Council's conference room.

In order to provide additional work space for pre-Council meetings, it was decided that the Clerk of Council's office would be relocated to the first floor and that space converted to a media room. In order to make room for the Clerk on the first floor, the Management and Auditing Department was moved to the Broughton Municipal Building.

The renovations to City Hall were divided into three phases. Phase I called for the renovation of the Mayor's offices and Council's conference room, and was funded by the money approved by Council in August. Phase II included relocation of the Clerk's office to the first floor, and Phase III entailed the redesign of the old Clerk's office into a pre-Council media room. The costs for Phases II and III were projected at \$200,000.

Phase I began on January 23, 1998. The Mayor's office was relocated to the third floor of Broughton Municipal Building for the duration of the renovation work. This was the first time since occupation of City Hall in 1905 that the Mayor's office was not on the second floor of City Hall. At the time, it was reported that work on the Mayor's offices would take approximately four months and the Mayor expected to be back in City Hall around April 27th. However, the Mayor did not move back to City Hall until June 19, 1998.

On December 8, 1998, City Council approved the bid of Collins Construction Company for \$125,059 for the necessary renovations to the first floor for the relocation of the Clerk of Council's office. The Clerk of Council did not move into the renovated office space until after extensive electrical and fire safety improvements to the building were completed in 1999. Following the move of the Clerk's office, the Mayor's office and the Council Chamber are the only areas in City Hall occupied by the same tenants, or functions, as when the building was first opened and occupied in 1905.

Folder "1999-City Hall Building," Box 1101-001-182 [30-9-2]. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Inter-Department Memo from City Manger to Mayor Floyd Adams, Furniture for Second Floor Renovations" (9 January 1998). Folder "1998-City Hall Building: 2nd Floor Renovation," Box 1101-001-169. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Mayor on the Move." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 12 June 1998). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Mayor's Office Moves...Temporarily." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 23 January 1998). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Memo from Joseph C. Shearouse, Director of Leisure Services, to Michael Brown, City Manager, City Hall Second Floor Improvements" (9 March 1998). Folder "1998-City Hall Building: 2nd Floor Renovation," Box 1101-001-169. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (17 July 1997) 9; (14 August 1997) 23; (26 March 1998) 16; (8 December 1998) 28. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Update on City Hall." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 25 Jun 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

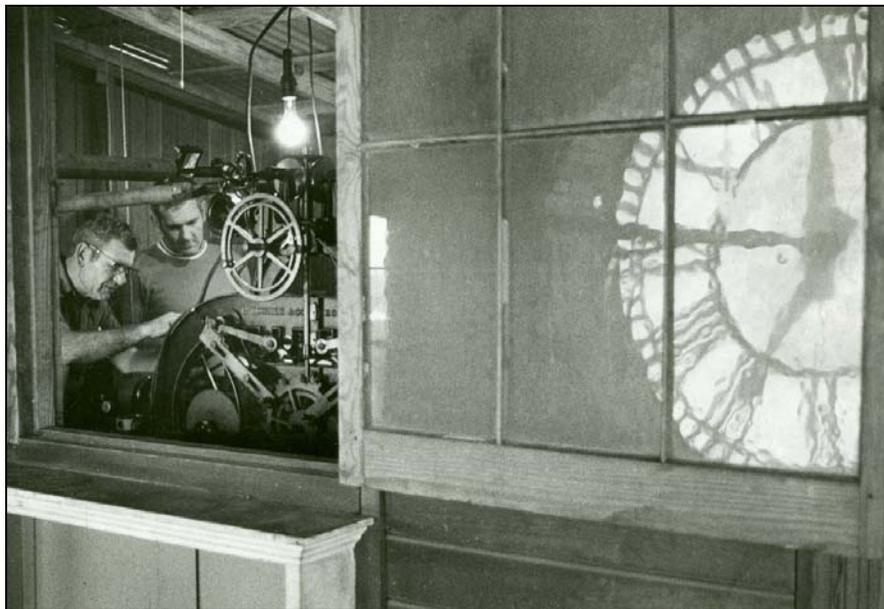
Archives/GHRAB Grant
1998 January

In January 1998, the Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board (GHRAB) awarded the City of Savannah \$15,000 to increase electronic accessibility to the City's archives, re-house archival records in preservation-quality containers, and add 1,000 cubic feet of storage space to the City's Municipal Research Library (now Research Library and Municipal Archives) located in City Hall.

"Quality Services: Grants Help Get it Done." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 9 January 1998). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Tower Clock Renovation
1998 April-August

On April 9, 1998, City Council approved the renovation of City Hall's tower clock and bells through a contract with the Verdin Company for \$28,170. After years of corrosion had eaten away at the bolts holding the clappers inside the bells, fear that one could come crashing down caused City officials to turn the bells off in 1996. Maintenance had also become a problem. The old clock wasn't keeping good time, and parts and repairmen were becoming harder to find. The renovation work, completed by August 1998, consisted of replacement of the original mechanical clockworks with a digital master controller, new mounting supports, and a 45-year electronic bell striker. The new system is controlled by a panel on the fourth floor. After two years, the bells rang again.



Original City Hall mechanical clockworks still installed in clock story, n.d.

City Hall Folder: City Hall Clockworks (n.d.)

Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

Meanwhile, the original clockworks were relocated from the sixth floor "clock story" from where they had been operating the tower clock for ninety-two years. At first, the clockworks were stored with a local antiques dealer until they could be restored with the help of local volunteers, including Savannah Technical Institute students and the National Guard. The piece is now on display in the City Hall lobby.



1906 City Hall clockworks on display in City Hall lobby, May 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“Clock Restoration Update.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 13 Nov 1998). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (9 April 1998) 17. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

“Time for a Change, City Hall Clock Renovation.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 7 August 1998). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Wright, Sharon. “92-year-old Clock Replaced at City Hall.” *Savannah Morning News*.

Structure/Dome & Roof Repairs ***1998 September 24***

On September 24, 1998, City Council approved a contract in the amount of \$31,000 with the engineering firm of Austin, Dillon & Cook to design and prepare specifications for repairs to City Hall’s dome and roof. The contract was part of a \$250,000 plan to modernize the building while preserving its historic features which included the restoration of the City Hall tower clock, and updating the electrical wiring and fire alarm detection systems. Repairs needed on the dome and roof included sealing the interior of the dome.

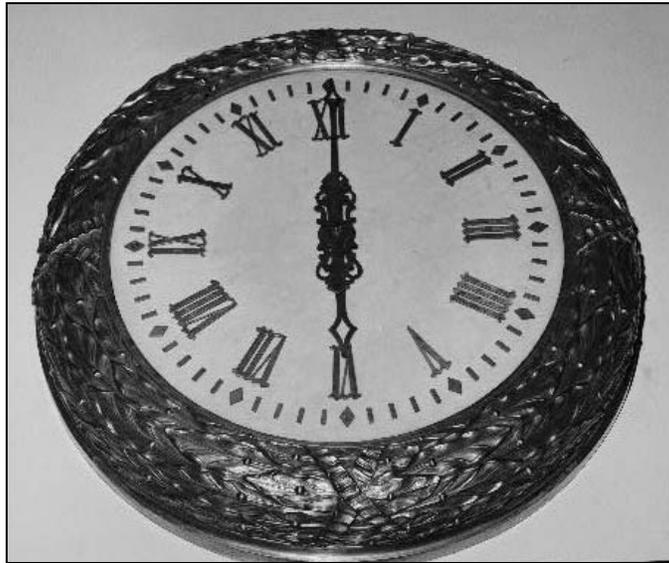
“Council to Discuss Continued City Hall Repairs.” *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 24 September 1998, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/092498/LOCcityadvance.html>).

Official Proceedings of City Council (24 September 1998) 16. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Council Chamber Clock ***1998 October***

During October 1998, the marble and bronze clock from the Council Chamber was removed by the Building Department for repairs. The bronze frame, hands and numerals were polished and lacquered, and

the marble face was cleaned and polished by Pinch of the Past Antiques and Architecturals, a local architectural antiques restoration firm.



Council Chamber bronze and marble clock, 1981.
Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS, GA, 26-SAV, 61-38.
Used with permission.

“City Hall Renovation Underway.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 19 Feb 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“Email correspondence from Bob Bartolotta to Chandra Jones, City Manager’s Office” (23 October 1998). Folder “City Hall/Gamble Building 1998,” Box 0120-001-252. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Spracher, Luciana. Recollection as a former employee of Pinch of the Past Antiques and Architecturals, Savannah, Georgia, 1998-2000 (4 August 2005)

Events/National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference 1998 October 20-25

Between October 20 and 25, 1998, the National Trust for Historic Preservation held their 52nd Annual Preservation Conference in Savannah during which time about 2,500 preservationists from around the nation converged on the city to attend sessions on “The Art and Economics of Preservation.” The city hosted the conference for the Washington, D. C. based organization thirty years earlier in 1968, as well.

National Trust President Richard Moe called Savannah a “veritable mecca” for preservationists, while City Manager Michael Brown hoped the conference would bring together “some of the best thinking nationally for how we can address some of the issues we face.” During the conference, the community received a lot of attention as visitors with a keen sense for historic buildings and their place in history explored the city. It is likely that City Hall received its fair share of admiration during this week-long conference.

Wright, Sharon. “City Prepares for Historic Conference.” *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 18 October 1998, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/101898/LOCnationaltrust.html>).

Structure/Electrical Systems & Fire Alarm Upgrade 1998-1999

On November 5, 1998, Council approved several bids for improvements to City Hall, including an electrical upgrade and installation of a new fire alarm system. Simplex, Inc. was authorized to install

\$83,585 worth of fire safety system improvements and the bid of Braddy Electric for \$175,470 to upgrade the wiring and electrical service for City Hall was approved. The following month, on December 8th, Council approved the bid of Collins Construction for \$69,500 to remove the architectural trim and marble before and after the electrical installation.



Workers in City Hall, February 1999.
"City Hall Renovation Underway." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 19 Feb 1999).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The work began on February 16th, 1999, at the same time renovations were occurring on the first floor for the new Clerk of Council's office. Four contractors were working simultaneously throughout the building. By April, the fire safety component of the upgrade was 30% complete and copper piping was being installed in the rotunda alcoves as part of the electrical upgrades.



Worker on first floor of City Hall, April 1999.
"City Hall Renovation." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 2 Apr 1999).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The final inspection for the new smoke detector and fire alarm system was held on June 24, 1999 and the electrical upgrade was completed at the end of the month, as well. All that remained was the replacement of the architectural trim and marble wainscoting.

"City Hall Renovation." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 2 Apr 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (5 November 1998) 14-15; (8 December 1998) 29. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

PIO News Release (Public Information Office, 28 May 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“Update on City Hall.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 25 Jun 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Welfare to Work Grant Press Conference
1998 November 23

On November 23, 1998, Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. held a press conference in the Council Chamber of City Hall to announce that a Welfare to Work grant had been awarded to the City. The grant provided over \$4 million to the City to assist welfare recipients in job training so they could get back to work.

“Welfare to Work Conference.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 25 November 1998). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

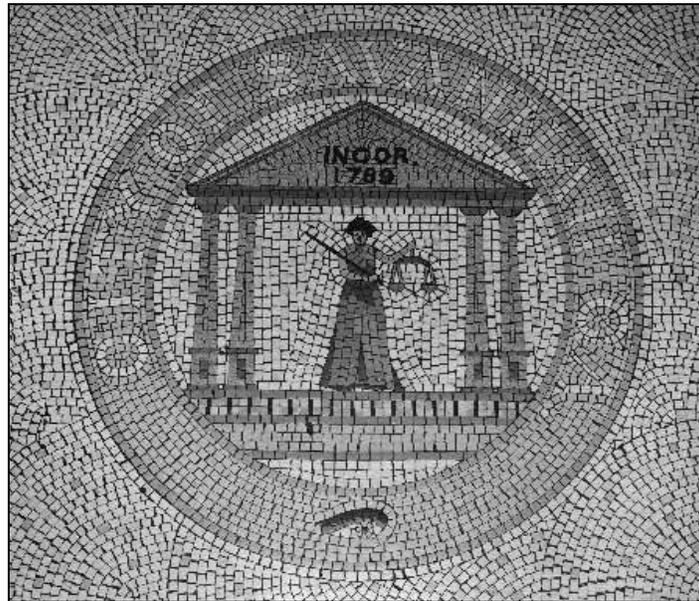
Events/Holiday Concert
1998 December 17

On December 17, 1998, a group of City employees from various departments in City Hall put on a holiday concert in City Hall in the morning. Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr., upon hearing their morning performance, invited them to give Council an impromptu concert at the afternoon meeting. The group sang “Joy to the World” and “Jingle Bells” for Council.

Official Proceedings of City Council (17 December 1998) 2. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Mosaic Tile Restoration
1999 January 28

On January 28, 1999, City Council approved the bid of Marbello Stone for \$33,963 for restoration of the marble and mosaic tile in City Hall.



Mosaic seal of the City of Savannah in City Hall lobby floor, 1981.
 Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS, GA, 26-SAV, 61-26.
Used with permission.



Mosaic tile patterns in first floor lobby, May 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Official Proceedings of City Council (28 January 1999) 35. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Artifacts/Mayor's Portrait
1999 March 26

On March 26, 1999, a mystery portrait of an unidentified mayor long shuffled around City Hall was identified by Georgia Historical Society Visual Materials Archivist Mandi Johnson as Peter Wiltberger Meldrim, mayor of Savannah from 1897-1899. The portrait was matted with the same green mat from the Cultural Affairs Department reframing project of the mayors' portraits in 1988, however it did not have a brass name plate attached to the frame to identify the subject of the photograph. With the portrait identified, Public Information Officer Cathy Long planned to have a name plate made.

Wright, Sharon. "Portrait Mystery Solved." *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 29 March 1999, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/032999/LOCmysteryportrait.html>).

Events/International Student Visitors
1999 April 27

On April, 27, 1999, forty international students visited City Hall, met with City officials and participated in a mock City Council meeting. The 6th, 7th, and 8th graders from Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Mexico, India and Vietnam were in Savannah as part of the English for Students of Other Languages program (ESOL) of the Savannah-Chatham County Board of Education.

"Mark Your Calendars." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 16 April 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

News Release, "International Students Visit City Hall" (16 April 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Emergency Chiller
1999 June 17

On June 17, 1999, City Council approved the emergency purchase of an eighty-ton air cooled chiller from Boen Mechanical for \$63,000 to replace the failing cooling system in City Hall.

Official Proceedings of City Council (17 June 1999) 24. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Zimbabwe Visitors
1999 June 19-25

Between June 19 and 25, 1999, the City hosted a three-person delegation from Mutare, Zimbabwe as part of a government exchange program sponsored by the International City/County Management Association. The cities of Savannah and Mutare were paired together based on similarities in size, geographical location and industry.



Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. with Mutare delegation at City Hall reception, June 1999.
 "Mutare Delegation Highlights." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 29 Oct 1999).
 City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The visit included a reception in the City Hall rotunda with Mayor Lawrence Mudewhe of Mutare and the secretary of the city's chamber. The visitors spent the week meeting with various City officials and departments, during which they gathered ideas regarding housing, water and sewer, human resources, tourism, and economic development. Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. and City Manager Michael Brown had visited Mutare the previous February and were aware of the issues facing the country, of greatest importance housing and unemployment. Mayor Mudewhe remarked of his visit:

Zimbabwe being a developing country, we are still learning. We need to copy from developed countries. I've seen quite a lot and I think we have learned a lot.

"City to Host Mutare Delegation." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 11 June 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Mutare Delegation Highlights." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 29 Oct 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Wiltrott, Kate. "Visiting Zimbabwe Delegation Checks Out Savannah's Infrastructure, Cuisine." *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 22 June 1999, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/062299/LOCmutare.html>).

Events/Georgia Quarter Unveiled
1999 July 23

On July 23, 1999, Savannah got a sneak peak at the new Georgia state quarter at City Hall two weeks before it was due to "hit the streets." After failing to get the unveiling ceremony scheduled in Savannah (it was held on July 19th at the State Capitol in Atlanta), U. S. Representative Jack Kingston, R-Ga., convinced U. S. Treasury Department officials to supply him with quarters for a second ceremony in Savannah.

The Georgia state quarter was the fourth in a series, following Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, commemorating the fifty states, unveiled over a nine year period in the order they ratified the U. S. Constitution. The Georgia coin features a Georgia peach inside an outline of the state surrounded by oak branches, and the state motto "Wisdom, Justice, Moderation." The design was chosen by a committee of the Georgia Council of the Arts from ideas submitted by the public.

Kingston delivered the shiny, new quarters to members of Savannah's City Council, State Representatives Anne Mueller, R-Savannah, and Dorothy Pelot, D-Savannah, Rincon Mayor George Saraf, Springfield Mayor Doris Flythe, Effingham County Commissioner Philip King and Chatham County Tax Commissioner Danny Powers. Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. thanked Kingston for the special treat; "This is a great honor you've bestowed on us."

Burnham, Maria. "First Quarters Roll into Savannah." *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 24 July 1999, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/072499/LOCquarter.shtml>).

Structure/Fountain Cleaned 1999 October

During October 1999, in the midst of the City Hall renovations, the first floor fountain was cleaned. While work was being done on the building, the fountain had been turned off and allowed to dry which made it easier to remove the mineral deposits that had built up.

"City Fountain to be Working Soon." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 15 October 1999). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Movie 1999 October 30

On Saturday, October 30, 1999, Robert Redford directed a scene for his motion picture *The Legend of Bagger Vance* in the Council Chamber at City Hall. The scene depicted a city council meeting. The movie, starring Matt Damon, Will Smith and Charlize Theron, filmed on location in Savannah for several weeks at sites including Wright Square and the Lucas Theatre. Based on a novel by Steven Pressfield, the film tells the story of a fictional 1931 golf match between Bobby Jones, Walter Hagen, and a hometown war hero searching for his "authentic swing" with the help of a caddie, Bagger Vance.

Downs, Gene. "City Council Members Visit 'Bagger Vance' Film Set." *Savannah Morning News* (4 November 1999) 3C:3.

"Email from Jay Self, Tourism and Film, to Luciana Spracher, Library and Archives, City of Savannah, Georgia" (21 April 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Wyatt, Doug. "'Bagger Vance' Ends Savannah Filming." *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 13 November 1999, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/111399/LOCbagger.shtml>).

Structure/2nd Floor Renovations-Media Room 1999-2002

On December 16, 1999, as the final phase of a three-part renovation of the first and second floors of City Hall begun in 1997, City Council approved the bid of R. L. Construction for \$117,165 for renovations to the second floor. The work primarily consisted of renovating the space of City Hall formerly used as the Clerk of Council's office into a media room for pre-Council meetings, though some minor renovations to the Council Chamber were also undertaken, including re-finishing the floors. The contract was later adjusted for an additional \$4,300 and work was completed on July 19, 2000.



City Hall Council Chamber parquet floor, May 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

After R. L Construction finished the physical construction work, the Public Improvement Office coordinated the purchase and installation of presentation and broadcast equipment for the space making it a state-of-the-art facility for workshops and meetings where information could be efficiently disseminated to the media and public. Audio/visual equipment was mounted to the walls and the custom-made conference table for visual and sound control. The three video cameras are remote-controlled from the fourth floor of City Hall by the Public Information Office (as are all of Council Chamber's cameras).

New furniture was ordered for the room, including a conference table, chairs and lockers for aldermen to store their belongings during meetings. One major delay in the project was the mis-measurement for the conference table, an elliptical table with red oak trim measuring approximately twelve feet by nine feet. When the table was received it was too large for the space and a second table had to be ordered. The first found a new home at the Savannah Civic Center.

The Media Room (at times referred to as the Second Floor Conference Room or Council Workshop Room) was finally put into use in January of 2002. Today it is the site of all pre-Council meetings. The former pre-Council meeting room (or Caucus Room), on the south side of City Hall's second floor, serves as a luncheon space for Council during breaks and as a general meeting space for the City.



Second floor Media Room, December 2001.

"Second Floor Conference Room to Open!" Report to Council (Public Information Office, 7 December 2001).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"City Hall's 'Table-gate'." *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 24 April 2001, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/042401/OPEDtable.shtml>).

Folder "City Hall-Second Floor Renovations-2000 (PB-119)," Box 0110-001-70. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Note This." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 28 April 2000). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (16 December 1999) 16. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Second Floor Conference Room to Open!" Report to Council (Public Information Office, 7 December 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"2nd Floor Update!" Report to Council (Public Information Office, 5 January 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

A Century of History
2000 ~ 2005



United States flag hung from City Hall in remembrance of victims of September 11th, 2001, c. 2001-2002.

City Hall Reference Files.

City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

Structure/Dome Repaired
2000 March-May

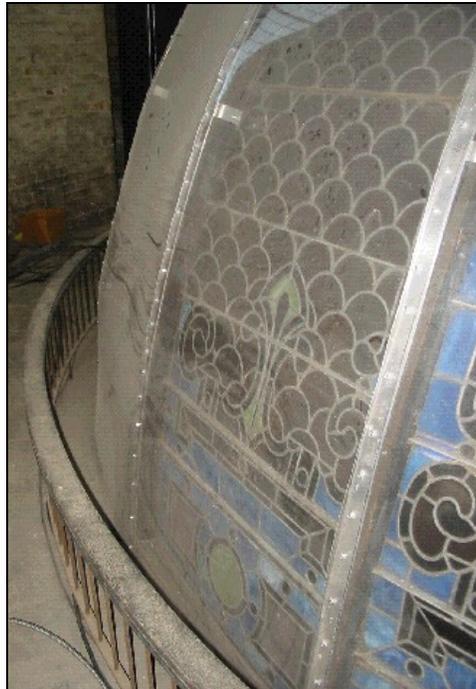
On March 9, 2000, City Council approved the bid of E. & D. Coatings for \$143,310 for repairs to provide structural stability to the interior dome of City Hall. The repairs addressed damage caused by years of water infiltration from a complex, and often leaky, roofing system and several structural elements of the bell tower exposed to the outside.



City Hall interior dome, 1981.

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS, GA, 26-SAV, 61-28.
Used with permission.

The contract outlined approximately six months of work including: repair of the structural steel bands that frame the dome; installation of clear Plexiglas over the stained glass dome to protect it during and after construction work; painting of the steel structure of the dome; replacement of the concrete wood fiber blocks that insulate the dome; and patching of the concrete decking. By May, much of the work had been completed.



Interior stained glass dome with Plexiglass hood, December 2005.
 City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"More Improvements at City Hall." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 26 May 2000). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (9 March 2000) 12-13. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/Mayor's Essay Contest
2000 April***

In April 2000, the first annual Mayor's Essay Contest was held as part of Savannah's local Georgia City Government Week activities. Each year since, local 6th graders are asked to finish the statement "If I Were Mayor, I Would..." During the first year, 150 essays were received from both public and private schools throughout Chatham County.

"Mayor's Essay Contest a Success!" Report to Council (Public Information Office, 14 April 2000). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Report to Council (Public Information Office, 27 April 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Artifacts/China Red Sandalwood Sculpture
2000 May 25***

On May 25, 2000, Dr. Chan Lai Wa[h], founder and president of the China Red Sandalwood Museum in Beijing, China, presented the City with the China red sandalwood sculpture now on display in the Council Chamber. Dr. Wa[h] was a recipient of a Key to the City on May 27, 1999.



China Red Sandalwood sculpture, City Hall Council Chamber, December 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

City Hall Reference Files: "City Hall-Council Chamber Wood Sculpture (Northeast Wall)." City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Municipal/Handicapped Accessibility
2000 July 27***

On July 27, 2000, the Public Information Office began offering closed captioning of City Council meetings to over 18,000 hearing impaired citizens in the Savannah area.

“Closed Captioning Debut.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 21 July 2000). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Window Restoration

2000 August-November

During August 2000, the City’s Building Maintenance Crew began restoration work on City Hall’s 144 windows through a six-step process which included the replacement of glass and damaged wood. The window work was part of the ongoing restoration and upgrades of the City Hall building undertaken by the City over the past few years. Work was scheduled for completion in November 2000.



City employees restoring City Hall’s windows, August 2000.
 “A Clear View from City Hall.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 18 Aug 2000).
 City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“A Clear View from City Hall.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 18 Aug 2000). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Interior Painted

2000 September

During September 2000, the Building and Grounds Department repainted the interior of City Hall on all six floors.

“Take the Steps!” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 15 September 2000). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Elevator Upgrades

2001 January-August

As early as November 2000, City officials began planning the upgrade of the City Hall elevator. However, City Council did not approve a contract with Atlantic Coast Elevator until January 25, 2001. Approximately \$154,700 was allocated to bring the elevator up to fire and safety codes. The improvements included replacement of the motors, controls, and cables, and renovations to the appearance of the car.

While the elevator was being worked on, the City Council meetings were moved to the Chatham County Commissioners meeting room in the old Chatham County Courthouse on Wright Square and pre-Council meetings were held in the Green Room at the Courthouse. City departments located in City Hall were also given the option of relocating their offices during the work, however all, including the Mayor and City

Manager, opted to stay put. A temporary ramp was installed at the entrance of City Hall to accommodate the handicapped since City Hall would not be handicapped accessible by the rear entrance via the elevator.



City Hall elevator renovation, July 2001.
 “What’s Up with the Elevator?” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 20 July 2001).
 City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Originally, work was projected between late-February and mid-April. However, the start date was significantly delayed and the first displaced Council meeting wasn’t held in the County Commissioner’s meeting room until June 28th, 2001. This first relocated meeting was eventful with a major mechanical breakdown in the old Courthouse building. Shortly after beginning the meeting, Chatham County Building Maintenance Supervisor Fred Thompson interrupted City Council to inform them, “Folks, we’ve had a major breakdown and we’ve had to shut down all the air conditioning in this building.” Next, the lights blew, followed by major flooding on the fourth and first floors caused by bursting PVC pipes. Apart from the light failure, all the problems traced back to the fan belt for the air conditioning’s cooling tower which snapped. The system should have automatically shut down, but it didn’t, so the water reached 110 degrees and the pipes, not designed for hot water, burst. Supervisor Thompson joked, “Mother Nature, I guess – or maybe because City Council had its first meeting here. We’ve never had anything like this happen.”



Handicapped ramp to front entrance of City Hall, 2001.
 “Work at City Hall Continues.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 22 Jun 2001).
 City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Work continued on the elevator upgrades in City Hall throughout July and August. ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant call buttons were installed, as well as new control panels, walls and wainscoting to give the interior of the car a whole new look. On August 27, 2001, the elevator went back into service, with all but a few cosmetic details complete. Council meetings resumed in the Council Chamber on September 6, 2001.

“City Hall Elevator to Shut Down.” *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 30 January 2001, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/013001/LOCelevator.shtml>).

“City Meetings Move Back to City Hall.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 31 August 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“Elevator Renovations to Force Move of City Council Meetings.” *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 13 February 2001, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/021301/LOCelevator.shtml>).

“Heads Up! Elevator Goes Down.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 25 May 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Lynch, Shannon. “Breakdown at County Building (and This Time it Wasn’t the Budget).” *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 29 June 2001, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/062901/LOCrepairs.shtml>).

Official Proceedings of City Council (25 January 2001) 19. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

“Road Closings.” *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 3 July 2001, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/070301/LOCheadsup.shtml>).

“Take the Steps!” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 15 September 2000). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“What’s Up with the Elevator?” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 20 July 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“Work at City Hall Continues.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 22 Jun 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Entry System ***2001 January 25***

On January 25, 2001, City Council approved a new employee identity card entry system for City Hall through ADT Security Services for \$19,878. The new system was designed to provide greater security for City Hall property and employees.

Official Proceedings of City Council (25 January 2001) 20. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/Departmental Moves ***2001 March***

During March 2001, the Film Services Office (now part of the Tourism and Film Services Office) relocated from the fourth floor of City Hall to the first floor to make it more accessible to the public. At the same time, the move freed up additional fourth floor space for the City Manager’s offices and staff.

“Film Services Gets New Digs.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 2 March 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Hurricane Screens ***2001 May 31***

On May 31, 2001, City Council approved the purchase of hurricane screens to protect City Hall’s windows, doors and clock faces from Hurricane Protection Services for \$54,816. The screens are made of a lightweight, flexible, synthetic fabric that permits light while withstanding wind speeds up to 200 miles per hour.



City Hall renovation work, 2001.
“Work at City Hall Continues.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 22 Jun 2001).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

Official Proceedings of City Council (31 May 2001) 22. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

“Work at City Hall Continues.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 22 Jun 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Structure/Fountain Restoration
2001 September***

During September 2001, the City Hall fountain underwent a \$3,900 restoration including sandblasting with glass beads to clean off mineral deposits. Four coats of special bronze paint were applied to the surface followed by three clear coats. The seal of the City was polished and waxed. The Park and Tree Department announced that distilled water would be used in the fountain’s system in the future to prevent buildup of mineral deposits and corrosion.



Rotunda fountain, 1981.
Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS, GA, 26-SAV, 61-23.
Used with permission.

"City Hall Fountain Restored." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 14 September 2001). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/9-11 Remembrance

2001 September

In September of 2001, following the 9/11 tragedy in New York City and Washington, D. C., a City employee provided a large American flag which was hung from the second floor balcony of City Hall. The flag had previously been found in the trash and refurbished. When the City could not find a large flag after the events of September 11th, the employee volunteered to let the City use their flag; it "was a wonderfully patriotic gesture." The name of the employee was kept anonymous for personal reasons, but Alderman Gwendolyn P. Goodman suggested that "a commendation be put in the employee's personnel file." On Friday, March 15, 2002, six months after the collapse of the World Trade Center, the flag, flown as tribute to the nation's victims and heroes, was lowered.



United States flag hanging in second floor rotunda of City Hall, c. 2001-2002.
City Hall Reference Files.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Flag Lowered from City Hall." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 15 March 2002). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (18 October 2001) 12. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Haitian Visitors

2001 October 18

On October 18, 2001, a delegation of Haitian-Americans from Miami, Florida visited Savannah in a show of support for the preservation of the site of the 1779 Siege of Savannah. The delegation, led by Mayor Joe Celestin, North Miami's first mayor of Haitian descent, was made up of elected officials, including Vice-Mayor Ossmann Desir, professionals and entrepreneurs. Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr., the City of Savannah, and the Coastal Heritage Society hosted the visit which included stops at the Siege site off of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard in the vicinity of the Savannah History Museum. In addition, members of the Haitian-American Historical Society, including Celestin and Chairman Daniel Fils-Aime, Sr., appeared before City Council to propose a monument in Savannah in honor of the *Chasseurs Volontaires*, the Haitian unit that fought alongside Count d'Estaing and the American forces at the Siege of Savannah.



Haitian tablet in City Hall Council Chamber, December 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

The visit created a dialogue between the Savannahian and Haitian communities, and Mayor Adams later paid a reciprocal visit to Haiti where the City was presented with a tablet depicting the *Chasseurs Volontaires* that now hangs in the Council Chamber.

Adams, James Mack. "Haitian-American Delegation Visits Siege of Savannah Site." *Savannah Morning News* (8 November 2001) 12A.

Official Proceedings of City Council (18 October 2001) 1. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

Municipal/Web Site 2002

In early 2002, the City launched a new web site designed by the Information Services Department to make the municipal government more accessible to citizens. The site featured basic information like local ordinances and site plan reviews, as well as visitor and new comer information. One of the most exciting new features was an interactive kids' page with three games including a puzzle of a photograph of City Hall. The revamped website won an award from Civic.com and rave reviews from locals for "making e-government a reality."

Wilttrout, Kate. "City's Web Site Not Just for Kids." *Savannah Morning News* (web posted 5 February 2002, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/020502/LOCOURGOVcitywebsite.shtml>).

Structure/Handicapped Accessibility 2002 January 30

On January 30, 2002, the City of Savannah, along with twenty other state and local governments, settled a case with the U. S. Department of Justice regarding compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It was estimated that it would take the City about two years and \$300,000 to fulfill the terms of the eleven-point agreement aimed at making all public facilities accessible to all the people.

The targeted buildings included City Hall which got one wheel-chair accessible bathroom and listening systems for the Council Chamber. Technically, City Hall was already compliant with ADA by having handicapped facilities in the River Street Hospitality Center. However, renovating a bathroom in City Hall went one step further to providing handicapped-accessible facilities.

Wayne Dawson, who served on a city-county council dealing with disability issues and navigated the city street's on a motorized scooter, told newspapers at the time he looked forward to the day he could enter through City Hall's front door:

For him accessibility isn't just about being able to get into City Hall. Dawson can enter the building through a series of ramps leading to the back door. But he'd love to come in through the front, like everybody else.

The new assisted listening system was installed by the following January and included a broadcast quality transmitter and ten receivers. The system was produced by Listen Technologies Corporation and installed in compliance with ADA regulations. Those needing assistance could request a receiver through the Public Information Office, the receiver could then be clipped to the user's clothing and the earpiece fit over the ear. Each receiver could pick up Council audio from anywhere in the Council Chamber.

"New Assisted Listening System for Council Chambers." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 17 January 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Wiltrout, Kate. "Savannah Agrees to Improve Access for Disabled." *Savannah Morning News* (1 February 2002, available at <http://www.savannahnow.com/stories/020102/LOCADAsettlement.shtml>).

Structure/Flagpole Replaced 2002 May-September

For a period of approximately four months in 2002, the American flag did not fly from City Hall's dome due to structural problems. The flagpole had rusted to the point of being unsound and a replacement pole had to be custom-ordered. During the interim, the U. S. flag flew from the building below the cupola on the western flagpole.

Official Proceedings of City Council (30 May 2002 25. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council's Office, Savannah, Georgia.

"Old Glory Takes Her Place Again." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 27 September 2002). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/Indonesian Visitors 2002 June 24

On the afternoon of Monday, June 24, 2002, Mayor Herry Zudianto of Yogyakarta, Indonesia received a Key to the City from Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. during a welcoming reception at City Hall. The Indonesian delegation was on its first trip to Savannah.



Indonesian delegation greeted at City Hall, June 24, 2002.
"Welcome to Savannah..." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 5 July 2002).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Company's Coming!" Report to Council (Public Information Office, 21 June 2002). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"Welcome to Savannah..." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 5 July 2002). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/German Visitors

2002 August

During August 2002, ten high school students and teachers from Chemnitz, Germany visited Mayor Floyd Adams, Jr. in City Hall's Council Chamber where they received a Key to the City. The students were participants in the German American Partnership Program and discussed similarities in culture and government between Savannah and their hometown with the Mayor.

"A Visit from Chemnitz, Germany." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 30 August 2002). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Events/9-11 Remembrance

2002 September 11



9-11 memorial wreath in City Hall rotunda, September 2002.
"United We Stand...City Employees Gather to Remember 9-11."
Report to Council (Public Information Office, 13 September 2002).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On September 11, 2002, the City of Savannah held two services in memory of the 9/11 tragedy of 2001. One was held in the first floor rotunda of City Hall with employees gathering around the fountain for a moment of silence and prayer, before pinning white ribbons on a wreath of remembrance. The following year, in 2003, a similar service was held during which the City Hall bells were rung at 9:59, the time of the collapse of the south World Trade Center tower, followed by a moment of silence.



9-11 memorial in City Hall rotunda, September 2003.
"9-11 Remembered." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 12 September 2003).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"In Remembrance." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 29 August 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"9-11 Remembered." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 12 September 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"United We Stand...City Employees Gather to Remember 9-11." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 13 September 2002). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/Tour of Homes and Gardens
2003 March 29***

On March 29, 2003, for the first time, the Historic Savannah Foundation featured City Hall on the 68th annual Savannah Tour of Homes and Gardens. The self-guided, walking tour led tourists and local residents through highlighted homes, gardens and noted buildings throughout Savannah's historic district.

"Tour of Homes & Gardens Comes to City Hall." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 28 March 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/Operation: Yellow Ribbon
2003 April***

As a sign of support for American troops deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Public Information Office initiated "Operation: Yellow Ribbon" in April 2003 encouraging City employees to hang yellow ribbons. As part of the remembrance, ribbons were hung on all the aldermen's desks in the Council Chamber of City Hall.

"Operation Yellow Ribbon: We're Showing Our Colors!" Special Edition Report to Council (Public Information Office, 9 May 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/Citizens' Academy
2003 June-July***



Citizens' Academy Logo, 2003
Report to Council (Public Information Office, 23 May 2003).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

On June 3, 2003, the first session of the new program "Savannah and You: A Citizens' Academy" was conducted in City Hall. The 8-week interactive course introduced citizens to all eight of the City's bureaus through tours and speakers. The first class of citizens was composed of City employees as a test pilot. The course began with "Under the Gold Dome," a look behind the scenes at City Hall, and ended on July 29, 2003 with a graduation ceremony held in the Council Chamber. The pilot program was followed by a regular class of citizens in September 2003.



First Citizens' Academy graduates in the Council Chamber, 2003.
"Citizens' Academy Graduation." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 1 Aug 2003).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

"Citizens' Academy Graduation." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 1 Aug 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

"We're Looking for a Few Good Citizens." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 23 May 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Archives/GHRAB Award
2003 October 30

On October 30, 2003, the Municipal Research Library (now the Research Library and Municipal Archives) accepted the GHRAB (Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board) Award for Excellence in Archival Program Development to the City of Savannah at the first annual GHRAB Awards Ceremony in Atlanta. The Library, headquartered in City Hall, was selected for its outstanding historical records activities over the previous decade, including leadership and excellence in obtaining grant funding and the completion of a multi-year archival program.

"Awards of Excellence!...Excellence in Archives." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 7 November 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Artifacts/City Hall Model
2003 December

In December of 2003, Kirby Gamsby, an eleven-year old student at Hancock Day School, gave Alderman Ellis Cook, her neighbor, a model of City Hall she had made as part of a school project on Savannah's historical monuments. Gamsby said, "I thought Mr. Cook might like to have it since he works there."



City Hall model built by Kirby Gamsby, 2003.
"Student Presents City Hall to Ellis Cook."
Report to Council (Public Information Office, 30 January 2004).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

“Student Presents City Hall to Ellis Cook.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 30 January 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/50th Anniversary Council-Manager Form of Government
2004 March 18***

On March 18, 2004, the City of Savannah celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the council-manager form of government with a special presentation during the regular City Council meeting in City Hall’s Council Chamber. Presented by the Public Information Office and the Research Library and Municipal Archives, the presentation featured a review of the history of the transition from one form of government to another and brief mentions of Savannah’s five city managers. Images of the four former city managers, taken from portraits hanging in the fourth floor rotunda of City Hall, were displayed on the Chamber’s monitors. Curtis Branscome, past president and Southeastern Regional Vice-president of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), attended the meeting and presented a proclamation from ICMA in recognition of the important milestone in the City’s history.



Former Savannah City Managers, left to right: Frank A. Jacocks, John O. Hall, Picot B. Floyd, and Arthur A. “Don” Mendonsa. “City Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Council-Manager System.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 27 February 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

“City Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Council-Manager System.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 27 February 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Official Proceedings of City Council (18 March 2004) 3-5. City of Savannah, Clerk of Council’s Office, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/G-8 Summit
2004 May-June***

In anticipation of increased visitors and threats during the G-8 Summit of May 3-June 11, 2004, City Hall security was significantly strengthened: visitors were limited to the first floor; guests with City business were escorted while in the building; and scheduled tours for tourists and students were conducted by appointment only. For tourists walking in off the street, a video monitor was set up in the first floor lobby where they could view a video produced by the Public Information Office providing a brief history of City Hall and an overview of the City Government. Brochures on City Hall and the *Citizens’ Guide to Government* were made available to those requiring additional information. The G-8 Summit came and went smoothly and many attribute careful planning and forethought to the successful aversion of any trouble that often accompanies this meeting.

“G-8 in Savannah.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 18 June 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“Getting in Gear for G-8.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 23 April 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Structure/Media Room “ON AIR” Lights
2004 July***

In July 2004, at the request of several aldermen, the Public Information Office purchased and installed “ON AIR” lights in the second floor Media Room so that everyone would know when meetings were being taped or broadcasted.

“We Took Your Ideas!” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 2 July 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“You’re on the Air!” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 4 June 2003). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/100th Anniversary of Cornerstone Laying
2004 August 11***

On August 11, 2004, the City of Savannah celebrated the centennial anniversary of the laying of City Hall’s cornerstone with the launching of a series of on-line articles on the planning and construction of the municipal building between 1903 and 1906. The articles, prepared through the Research Library and Municipal Archives, were the culmination of months of research in City and local archives for documents, images and architectural drawings related to City Hall’s birth. The articles were posted on the City’s website (www.savannahga.gov), accessible to the general public, and on the City’s internal intranet, accessible to City employees, over a period of a year and a half (August 2004-January 2006) corresponding with events that occurred in 1904-1906. The articles were saved, both as an on-line archive and in paper format, and a subject indexed prepared for future research use.

Spracher, Luciana (4 August 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Events/Savannah Youth Council Inducted
2004 September 30***

At the September 30, 2004 Council meeting, the newly formed Savannah Youth Council was officially introduced and sworn in. Following the meeting, a member orientation was held in the Council Chamber and a special reception for the Youth Council and their families with City Council was held in the City Hall rotunda at 5:30 in the evening. The Savannah Youth Council was chosen from a pool of almost one hundred applicants of middle school students.



Induction of first Savannah Youth Council in the Council Chamber, 2004.
“Accepting Applications.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 20 May 2005).
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

“The City Recognizes the Distinguished.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 24 September 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Artifacts/Lee & Wheaton Portraits
2004 December***

In December 2004, the life-sized portraits of General Robert E. Lee and former Savannah mayor John F. Wheaton were transferred from City Hall’s Council Chamber to the Civic Center for temporary storage before being permanently relocated to the Savannah History Museum for public display where they could be viewed by a larger segment of the population. An image of former mayor Wheaton hangs in the Mayors’ Portrait Gallery on the second floor rotunda of City Hall. The walls of the Council Chamber were repainted in preparation for new presentation screens and audio/visual equipment.

“Historical Portraits Transferred.” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 17 December 2004). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

“Mayor Offers Portrait a Place.” *Savannah Morning News* (5 January 2005). Vertical Files: Public Buildings-City Hall. Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

***Structure/Council Chamber Audio/Visual Upgrades
2005 April***

In April 2005, the installation of new audio/visual equipment in the Council Chamber was completed with two 78” diagonal screens and two high definition projectors. The new equipment improved the quality and visibility of maps and graphics displayed during City Council meetings, both for the aldermen and for citizens present during the meetings. The projectors are controlled by a touch pad in the Government Channel 8 control room on the fourth floor of City Hall, allowing the same images to be displayed in the Council Chamber and to the television audience during live meetings. The screens were finished with wooden framing to blend into the character of the room and match the original trim as closely as possible. All the installation work was done in-house by the Buildings and Grounds Department.



Council Chamber renovations, 2005.

“Council Goes High Tech!” Report to Council (Public Information Office, 8 April 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Used with permission.

"Council Goes High Tech!" Report to Council (Public Information Office, 8 April 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Structure/Audible Pedestrian Signals

2005 July 11

On July 11, 2005, the City's Traffic Engineering Department demonstrated the new audible pedestrian signals installed at the intersection of Bay and Bull streets, in front of City Hall, for the Savannah Association for the Blind. The audible signals were installed at various busy intersections to assist the visually impaired as they crossed the street. The signals tell pedestrians when to wait, when to cross, and how long they have to cross, in addition to the traditional walk/don't walk lights on the opposite side of the street.

"Demonstration Planned for Audible Pedestrian Signals." Report to Council (Public Information Office, 11 July 2005). City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.



“Art” and “Commerce” statuary on fourth floor of City Hall, Bay Street façade, December 2005.
City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.
Used with permission.

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Local Reference Files: City Hall. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Mayor's Annual Reports, 1906-1917, 1923. City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

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Savannah Morning News Index, 1929-1986. Live Oak Public Library, Bull Street Branch, Savannah, Georgia.

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