

BALANCING ROLES:  
THE INTERPRETATION OF THE TAYLOR-GRADY HOUSE

by

CATHERINE ANN RUSHING

(Under the Direction of James Reap)

ABSTRACT

“The Taylor-Grady House is an Athens, Georgia architectural jewel, currently operated by the Junior League of Athens as a rental facility for weddings and events. Despite the house’s iconic image in the community, few understand its very interesting history. This thesis hopes to design and implement an interpretation plan that will assist in guiding the house’s educational, preservation, and operational goals to ensure its continued benefit to the Athens community and to share its past.”

INDEX WORDS: Interpretation; house museum; interpretation plan; Athens history; Henry W. Grady; Athens Junior Assembly; Junior League of Athens; Greek Revival Architecture; small house museum

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## INTRODUCTION

House museums are a popular form of history education because of their physical connection to the past, and their potential for education on social history, decorative arts, culture, and the built environment. Most house museums, despite location, age, style, or size, were all once residences, and a “residence is a universally understood space” that can create a “holistic learning environment.”<sup>1</sup> Visitors can understand this fundamental purpose of an historic residence, but only through proper interpretation can one connect his or her personal experience with the house’s history. The Taylor-Grady House in Athens, Georgia is a wonderful example of a well-preserved house with an extensive history. Unfortunately, its lack of an interpretation plan and the balancing of its multiple functions are preventing visitors from experiencing its full potential as a house museum.

Its construction dates to 1844. Its current envelope has remained close to the original form. It remained a single-family residence for the first 125 years, changing ownership only seven times. Since Athens Junior Assembly bought it in 1969, the house has served as their headquarters, and has been available as both an event venue and a public attraction. The house is a prominent example of the Greek Revival style, and it stands out even within the context of Athens’ vast stock of antebellum homes.

Athens historian Charlotte Marshall has documented the history of the Taylor-Grady House, but her research has never been applied to its interpretation. Despite its local iconic

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<sup>1</sup> Donnelly, Jessica Foy. “Past, Present, and Future” *Interpreting Historic House Museums*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2002. 23. Print, 3

status, the Taylor-Grady House has a history that's still a mystery to many in Athens; everyone is familiar with the house and recognizes its image, but few know that one of the wealthiest men in the state built it or that the Grady School of Journalism and Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta are named for journalist Henry Grady (1850-1889), who grew up in the house. In addition to the public's ignorance of the house's history, the Junior League has also begun to lose its connection to the history of the house by hosting ever fewer events and meetings there.

As important as the Taylor-Grady House is to Athens, its history and museum quality are not important factors in how the house is used. Since its 1969 renovation, the house has played three roles: an event venue, a headquarters for the Junior League (originally Junior Assembly), and a house museum. The lack of focus on its history is apparent in the lack of planning for house's interpretation and preservation.

According to the American Association of Museums, "Interpretation is a dynamic process of communication between the museum and the audience...and how the museum delivers its content."<sup>2</sup> This thesis will create a new way of sharing the content of the Taylor-Grady House with its different visitors through an organized and improved interpretation plan. This interpretation plan will include parameters for creating an advisory panel, instructions for developing a mission statement, and make suggestions for a new permanent exhibit. This exhibit will consist of informational panels and an updated self-guided tour. The goal of this thesis is not to dictate the final product for the interpretation plan and exhibit, but merely to provide guidelines for creating a successful interpretation plan specifically for the Taylor-Grady House. The roles and operation of the Taylor-Grady House will not change, but the priorities should be altered to supply more attention to the educational and historical aspects of the house. This thesis

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 269

has as its goal not only the creation of the exhibit and advisory panel, but also a discussion of measure for continued protection of the house's historic integrity.

PART I:  
THE BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

*Table 1: Ownership and Occupants of the Taylor-Grady House*

<b>c.1844</b>	<b>The house was built by Robert Taylor</b>
<b>1853</b>	<b>Robert Taylor gave the house to his youngest son, Richard Deloney Bolling Taylor and his bride Sarah Jane Billups</b>
<b>1863</b>	<b>William Grady purchased the house from Richard D. B. Taylor (David Crenshaw Barrow, Sr. was listed as occupant)</b>
<b>1872</b>	<b>Anne Grady sold the house to her brother-in-law John Nicholson (Rev. Skinner was the occupant at this time)</b>
<b>1886, April</b>	<b>John Nicholson sold the house to John Eberhart</b>
<b>1886, Nov.</b>	<b>Eberhart sold the house to Mrs. Louise D. Dubose</b>
<b>1917</b>	<b>Mrs. Dubose sold the house to Jesse Hoyt Beusse</b>
<b>1930</b>	<b>Mrs. Beusse sold the house to Oscar D. Grimes</b>
<b>1950</b>	<b>O. D. Grimes sold the house to sisters, Lois and Lucy Lampkin</b>
<b>1951</b>	<b>Lucy sold her shares to her sister Lois Lampkin</b>
<b>1966</b>	<b>The Lampkin estate is sold to the Athens Junior Assembly; the title is immediately transferred to the City of Athens.</b>
<b>1968</b>	<b>The City of Athens leased the house to the Junior Assembly</b>

## CHAPTER 1

### THE TAYLOR FAMILY, 1844 - 1863

Robert Taylor (1787-1859) built the Taylor-Grady House in 1844, and it remained in the Taylor family until the Civil War. Taylor was an Irish immigrant who, through hard work, climbed the social ladder of Savannah and created a vast empire built on cotton. At his death he was considered one of the wealthiest men in the state<sup>3</sup> and was the largest slave owner in Clarke County. His cotton plantations stretched across Georgia, but his few surviving descendants and large decreases in the value of his estate after the Civil War greatly reduced his financial legacy. All that remains of his wealth is his landmark house.

Robert Taylor was born in Cookstown, County Tyrone, Ireland, on January 1, 1787 and was brought to Georgia at a young age to join his father's cousins, the Holmes and Galphins of Savannah.<sup>4</sup> According to his obituary, Taylor's father instilled in him from a young age the desire to be a businessman,<sup>5</sup> despite his uncle's hopes for young Robert to pursue a European education, and at age fourteen he began working at his father's business.<sup>6</sup> This early training was manifested throughout his life by his many successful business endeavors in Madison, Savannah and Athens. Taylor became an entrepreneur at the age of twenty-one. In 1808, he received a business license to open a tavern in Morgan County near Madison, Georgia,<sup>7</sup> taking

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<sup>3</sup> Morris, Sylvanus. "Stroll V. Up Prince Avenue." *Strolls about Athens During the Early Seventies*, 25. Athens, Ga.: Digital Library of Georgia, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> *The Southern Banner* (Athens, Georgia), Obituary of Robert Taylor. Aug. 25, 1859. p. 3 c. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Business License. June 27, 1808. Morgan County Interior Court Minutes of 1808, Madison, GA.

advantage of the many stagecoaches stopping there.<sup>8</sup> That same year, Robert Taylor was commissioned as a major in the Georgia State Militia.<sup>9</sup> He was beginning to build his empire and splitting his time between Savannah and Madison. When he was about twenty-five, he became a partner in the Savannah firm Taylor, Davies and Taylor.<sup>10</sup> And at about the same time (1811), in a sales receipt for the purchase of some slaves, he was described as a “planter of Morgan County.”<sup>11</sup>

When he was twenty-nine, Taylor married seventeen-year-old Harriet Caroline Jones, of Chatham County, on July 20, 1816, in Savannah.<sup>12</sup> In 1817, he purchased land in Morgan County on Indian Creek for \$1,500, which became their summer residence, Innisfail Plantation.<sup>13</sup> Robert and Harriet’s first child, James Jones Taylor, was born in 1817. Their second son, Robert Walter Taylor was born April 19, 1819 in Savannah. A third son, Thomas Crawford Taylor did not survive past a year.<sup>14</sup> In 1821, both Taylor’s business partner<sup>15</sup> and his wife died. His younger son, Robert Walter died, too, the next year, at the age of three, and is buried with her.<sup>16</sup>

But Taylor lived on, and six years later, remarried on July 14th, 1827, in Savannah,<sup>17</sup> to widow Elizabeth Deloney Bolling Berrien. A scion of an illustrious Savannah family and a

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<sup>8</sup> “History,” Madison Georgia Official Website: <http://www.madisonga.com/index.aspx?nid=72>; Internet; Accessed on 11 Jan. 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Photocopy of certificate for Robert Taylor’s commission of major by the Georgia State Militia, taken from the Georgia Archives. Scrapbook, ca. 1972-1980; privately held by Mrs. Charlotte Marshall, Athens, Ga.

<sup>10</sup> *The Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger*, “Notice.” Jan. 21, 1812. p. 3 c. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Sales Receipt of slave purchase by Robert Taylor, July 1811. Morgan County Records.

<sup>12</sup> Chatham County, Georgia. (July 20, 1816) Marriage Records No. unknown. Deed Book GG, p. 126 Chatham County Court Records, Savannah.

<sup>13</sup> Land Purchase Sales Receipt, by Robert Taylor from John Taylor, 1817. Morgan County Court Records. Madison, Georgia.

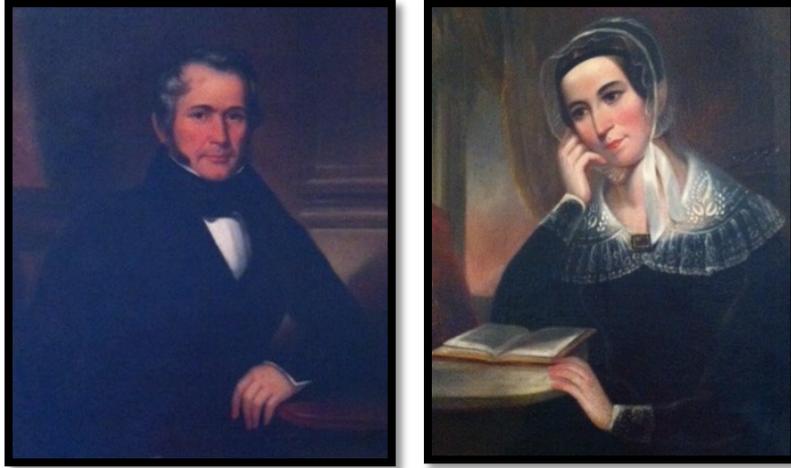
<sup>14</sup> Family Cemetery plot in Madison, GA.

<sup>15</sup> *Savannah Georgian*, “Dissolution of Co-partnership” Nov. 8, 1822. p. 3, c. 1.

<sup>16</sup> *Savannah Georgian*, “Obituary of Robert Walter Taylor,” July 16, 1822, p. 3, c. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Chatham County, Georgia. Marriage License No. 1183 by clergyman Abiel Carter at Christ Church (July 14, 1827) Historical Society, Savannah.

descendant and the Bolling and Deloney families of Virginia, she was known as Eliza.<sup>18</sup> Taylor adopted her daughter Martha from her first marriage.



*Figures 1 - 2: General Robert Taylor and his second wife Elizabeth "Eliza" Deloney Bolling Berrien Taylor. Both portraits were painted by George Cook, a renowned southern naturalist painter, in 1838. Cooke also painted the mural of St. Peter's Cathedral in the University of Georgia Chapel (1847).*



*Figure 3: Child portrait of Richard D. B. Taylor at eleven years of age by George Cooke (1841)*

According to a letter from his adopted daughter Martha Deloney Berrien, "Mr. and Mrs. Taylor spent their winters in Savannah, and spent their summers in Athens, where they entertained lavishly."<sup>19</sup> Their first son together, Robert Galphin Twiggs Taylor, was born February 12, 1829, in Savannah. The next year, Richard Deloney Bolling Taylor, was born July 30th, 1830, in Athens. She gave birth to a third son, Thomas Davies Taylor, on February 18th, 1832, in Savannah, but he died after only a week of life.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Obituary of Elizabeth Deloney Bolling Berrien, *Athens Southern Banner*, July 3, 1840, p. 3, c. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Letter to Mrs. John Monroe from Mrs. Robert Taylor Nesbitt, 1930, in possession of William Bray of Athens, Georgia transcribed by Charlotte Marshall's personal scrapbook.

<sup>20</sup> Family Bible of Elizabeth Deloney Bolling Berrien Taylor, The University of Georgia Special Collections Library, Athens, Georgia.

The Taylors were active in the social affairs of Savannah and Athens. He was a member the Union Society of Savannah in 1828, which was a charity for children's Bethesda Orphanage in Savannah,<sup>21</sup> and a member of the Chatham County Grand Jury.<sup>22</sup> She served as Director of the Savannah Domestic Female Missionary Society.<sup>23</sup> Taylor never ran for public office, but was appointed to serve on a committee of thirteen to celebrate the re-election of President Andrew Jackson.<sup>24</sup> In 1834, he was appointed to a committee of twenty-four known as the "Citizens of Chatham County Friends of the Union." The members of this committee were described as "distinguished for years, talent and respectability."<sup>25</sup>

During these years Taylor continued to expand his cotton business in Madison and Athens. In 1835, he made one of his largest land purchases, 700 acres in Morgan County from the estate of James Irwin.<sup>26</sup> According to tax records, Taylor also had been accumulating land in Clarke County during the 1830s, and owned property on Prince Avenue, in the Cobbham neighborhood and the Buena Vista farm northwest of Cobbham.<sup>27</sup>

After the Panic of 1837, there was an increase of business in Athens and the population began to grow as well.<sup>28</sup> In 1838, Robert, Eliza and their two young sons transferred their permanent residence to Athens so their sons could attend the University of Georgia. Roberts' oldest son James Jones Taylor was already living in Athens and would become a Colonel in the 24th regiment, 3rd division of the Georgia Militia.<sup>29</sup> James lived in a lavish house, also built by

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<sup>21</sup> Record of Taylor's membership in the Union Society. Scrapbook, ca. 1972-1980; privately held by Mrs. Charlotte Marshall, Athens, Ga.

<sup>22</sup> *Savannah Georgian*, "Appointees for Grand Jury," Jan. 27, 1823, p. 2 c. 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Savannah Georgian*, April 28th, 1832, p. 2, c. 2.

<sup>24</sup> *Savannah Georgian*, March 2, 1833, p. 2., c. 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Savannah Georgian*, "Citizens of Chatham County Friends of the Union" Feb. 6, 1834, p. 2, c. 1

<sup>26</sup> Morgan County Deed Records. Jan. 6, 1829. S. J. Colbut represented Taylor and was highest bidder at \$2,040.

<sup>27</sup> Clarke County, Georgia. Superior Court. Deed Record, Jan. 18, 1839. Book Q, p. 373. Deed Book X, 109.

<sup>28</sup> Hull, Augusta Longstreet, p. 134.

<sup>29</sup> *The Southern Banner* (Athens), "James Taylor Colonel in 24<sup>th</sup> Regiment," Aug. 1, 1839. p. 3, c. 3

General Taylor, located across Prince Avenue from the Taylor-Grady House. This residence was known as the Fowler House.<sup>30</sup>

In 1839, Taylor purchased the lot west of what is now the Taylor-Grady House from John A. Cobb. “The Village of Cobbham,” created in 1834 by Cobb, has been described as Athens’ first suburb.<sup>31</sup> After the Panic of 1837, Cobb began selling the property in lots. In 1839, according to a tax record, Robert Taylor purchased from Cobb eight acres on the north side of what would become Prince Avenue. This was in addition to the 28.8 acres of Buena Vista farmland he already owned, bought from Dr. Alexander B. Linton in 1837 for \$576.<sup>32</sup> Robert Taylor began to build a home on the eight-acre tract, and construction was almost completed when the new house burned to the ground. An article in an *Athens Southern Banner* in November 1838, entitled “FIRE,” blamed a “vile incendiary” for the fire which was estimated to have caused between the eight and nine thousand dollars worth of damage.<sup>33</sup> According to one source, the builder eventually confessed that he set fire to the house in order to receive a new contract to rebuild.<sup>34</sup> The Taylors were living elsewhere in Athens,<sup>35</sup> and in 1844 Taylor

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<sup>30</sup> Marshall, Charlotte, “Homes of Prince Avenue,” unpublished book. The Fowler house was a fraternity house until the 1950s when it was demolished to provide parking for First Baptist Church of Athens.

<sup>31</sup> “Athens Clarke County Historical Timeline.” ACC Unified Government. [athensclarkecounty.gov](http://athensclarkecounty.gov). <http://athensclarkecounty.com/115/Historical-Timeline> Internet; Accessed on 3 Jan. 14.

<sup>32</sup> Land Purchase, Linton to Taylor 28.8 acres. Athens-Clarke County Tax Records. (source Q372) 1837

<sup>33</sup> “FIRE,” *Athens Southern Banner*, Nov. 8, 1838: “*We regret to announce the total destruction by fire of the handsome dwelling belonging to Maj. R Taylor in the western part of town. It occurred on Sunday night between nine and ten o'clock and is supposed to be the work of some vile incendiary, although we believe that no suspicions as to the person or persons engaged in the fiendish work are yet entertained. The building had not been finished but was so near done that it would have been ready for occupancy in a few weeks. The loss is probably 8 or \$9,000.*”

<sup>34</sup> Sylvanus Morris, L.L.D. “Strolls About Athens: During the Early Seventies” General Library, The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia. (25-26).

<sup>35</sup> It was originally believed that Taylor rebuilt his house to host the wedding of his favorite stepdaughter on June 23, 1839. This information had been based on letters of descendants, who were not alive at the time of the construction, and the date was disproved from records of deeds. Charlotte Marshall discovered this discrepancy when researching the deed records of the land purchase. The actual date of construction of the Taylor-Grady House is circa 1844.

purchased the current site of the Taylor-Grady House at auction, according to the Thomas Survey of Athens.<sup>36</sup>

Elizabeth D. B. Taylor died in Athens on June 19th, 1840 when her sons were 11 and 10 years old, leaving her cousin, Lucy Anne Barnes, to manage the Taylor residence.<sup>37</sup> Robert Taylor was again left a widower, now with three sons. That same year, he was reported to own forty slaves and ten carriages.<sup>38</sup> His land empire had grown to include properties in Lee, Clarke, Morgan, Irwin, Cherokee, and Early counties.<sup>39</sup> According to the 1850 census, General Robert Taylor was worth \$200,000 as a planter,<sup>40</sup> with several plantations maintained by 271 slaves.<sup>41</sup> In 1841, Taylor became a brigadier general in the Georgia State Militia, a commission he resigned just four years later.<sup>42</sup> According to a record of his pew rental and membership in the Presbyterian Church, he had a stroke in his later years and sometimes used a wheelchair,<sup>43</sup> which may be the reason he resigned from the militia. It may also explain the fact that his bedroom was apparently located on the first floor.

To place Taylor's ownership of slaves in historical context, it is important to know that slavery was commonly practiced in Clarke County during the 1800s. In the 1810 census, Clarke County's population was 7,628, with slaves representing one-third of the total population. It is historically interesting to note, the percentage of the slaves in the population had doubled fifty years later, in the 1860 census, when the population of Clarke County was 11,218 people, and

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<sup>36</sup> Hull, Henry Longstreet. "Annals of Athens, Georgia," 1801-1901. Athens, Georgia: Digital Library of Georgia, 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Taylor, Robert, last will and testament. Jan. 28, 1850. The Junior League of Athens archives.

<sup>38</sup> 1840 Census Athens, Clarke County. Georgia. Accessed at <http://www.usgarchives.net/ga/clarke/census.html>

<sup>39</sup> Robert Taylor's Tax Record for 1840. Clarke Co. Tax Records. The sum of land drew \$5,200 of interest

<sup>40</sup> 1850 Census Athens, Clarke County, Georgia. Athens District, Reel No: M432-65, p. 20A. Accessed at [www.census-online.com/links/GA/Clarke/](http://www.census-online.com/links/GA/Clarke/)

<sup>41</sup> Taylor, Robert, last will and testament.

<sup>42</sup> Executive Minutes of the Second Brigade of the Third Division of the Georgia Militia, Saturday, April 19th 1845. Milledgeville. The Georgia Archives. Transcribed by Charlotte Marshall on May 18, 1979.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Charlotte Marshall, by author, at the Taylor-Grady House, Athens, Georgia. 14 Jan., 2014

two-thirds of them were slaves. Among whites, only ten percent were slave owners and two percent were “planters.”<sup>44</sup> General Robert Taylor had up to 271 slaves in 1847 distributed among his different plantations in Early, Morgan, Irwin, Lee and Cherokee counties.<sup>45</sup> The large slave population was a major factor in the burgeoning economy and cotton industry of early Athens.

In 1850, the “body servant” or highest ranked slave of General Taylor, Isaac Mills, approached Taylor for permission to marry Aggy, a slave of similar rank in the Cobb household. After permission from both Taylor and Cobb, a wedding was planned by Mary Ann Cobb and took place at her residence that year. According to historian

Christopher Lawton, the wedding ceremony and festivities were a display of Mrs. Cobb’s ability to lavish her slaves with wealth.<sup>46</sup> He describes the situation as an act of the Cobb family’s display of wealth: “After Aggy and Isaac made their vows, and Mary Ann’s pageantry faded, there remained the fact that their ceremony was only a show. As slaves, their marriage was only a de facto union, and nothing legally bound the two



*Figure 4: The only known photo of Aggy Mills, wife to Taylor’s body slave Isaac Mills*

together beyond the will of their masters. Despite their love for one another and their struggle to create meaningful lives for their family, they were often separated to serve their masters.”<sup>47</sup>

Lawton's view of the marriage reflects the general attitude towards slavery in the eighteenth century South, however, General Taylor's final will offers a glimpse of a more benevolent side of a slave owner.

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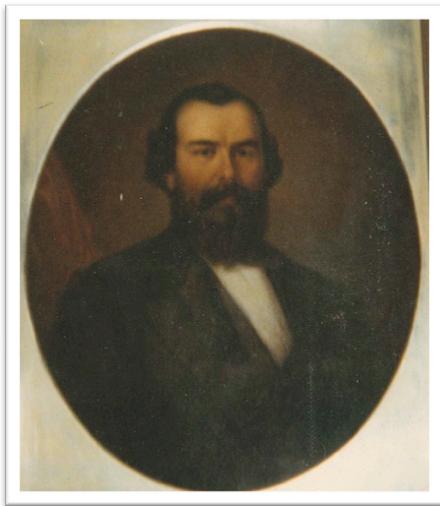
<sup>44</sup> Thomas, Frances Taliaferro. *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke County*. Athens: University of Georgia, 1992. Print.

<sup>45</sup> Taylor, Robert. Last will and testament. Transcribed by Charlotte Marshall.

<sup>46</sup> Lawton, Christopher, “Aggy and Isaac Introduction” *Georgia Virtual History Project*. Internet. 10 Feb. 2014 <http://georgiavirtualhistory.com/seenunseen-exhibition-on-public-history/aggy-mills/aggy-and-issac-introduction/>

<sup>47</sup> Lawton

It was in 1850 that Taylor wrote his first will. His original heir was his sister Catherine Swift. His gratitude to his cousin, Lucy Anne Barnes for rearing his sons is demonstrated in the annuity he left her in case of his death. His will shows his devotion to his family. In it he says, “My children are more dear to me than life itself,”<sup>48</sup> and he shares his aspirations for them to become “virtuous and enlightened in education,” to practice “morality”...and be “industrious” and “honorable in all things, respecting the rights of others.” Taylor’s two younger sons fulfilled those hopes, graduating from the University of Georgia in 1850,<sup>49</sup> and joining their father as cotton planters.<sup>50</sup> Robert married to Laura Tallulah Harris in 1851,<sup>51</sup> and Richard married Sarah Jane Billups on October 6th, 1853. Taylor gave Richard and his new wife the Prince Avenue mansion as a wedding present.<sup>52</sup>



*Figure 5: Portrait of Richard Deloney Bolling Taylor*

By 1857, two of Taylor’s three adult sons, James Jones and Robert, had died, as well as his sister, Catherine Swift. In a codicil of Taylor’s will, written two years before his death, he left his money, several plantations, and the majority of his slaves to his granddaughter and cousins.<sup>53</sup> Taylor’s will also provided several slaves with an annual stipend of twenty dollars. He

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<sup>48</sup> Taylor, Robert, Last will and testament. Jan. 28, 1850. Item 1. Proven in court of Ordinary September 5, 1859 by Charles M. Reese and Leonidas Franklin.

<sup>49</sup> “Catalogue of Trustees, Officers, and Alumni of University of Georgia: 1786-1908 according to 1850 alumni records” Page 56. [http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/1906catalogue/pdfs/1906\\_Catalogue.pdf](http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/1906catalogue/pdfs/1906_Catalogue.pdf)

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 57.

<sup>51</sup> “Taylor Family Tree” created by Charlotte Marshall.

<sup>52</sup> Deed Transfer from Robert Taylor to Richard D.B. Taylor in 1853. Athens, Clarke County Record.

<sup>53</sup> Codicil of Robert Taylor's last will and testament, Dec. 14, 1857. A transcribed copy is in Charlotte Marshall's personal scrapbook.

requested that his son Richard ensure that all “faithful servants” are “well fed, clothed and cared for” as long as they live<sup>54</sup> and “no negro families are to be divided.”<sup>55</sup> Taylor specifically mentioned that his “favorite servant” Isaac Mills, was to receive \$50 a year for the rest of his life.<sup>56</sup> Executor, John Cobb, has the power to intervene to secure his wishes. Many of the Athens properties of the Taylor family were sold to the Grady family during the war and the rest were slowly sold off over the generations.

Taylor lived in Athens until a tragic accident occurred during a trip to his Madison property when he was departing a train. Taylor, who was seventy-two at the time and feeble from his earlier stroke, fell onto the track and the moving train amputated both his feet. He was rushed to a local doctor’s home. News of the accident returned to Athens, and a death notice was expected to follow.<sup>57</sup> Taylor died a few days later on August 2nd, 1859. According to his obituary, Taylor sent messages of love and farewell to his family and friends in Athens: “Not a murmur of complaint escaped his lips, and his spirit passed peacefully away.”<sup>58</sup> Taylor was buried at the Madison Cemetery in the family plot.<sup>59</sup>

Richard lived in the home with his wife Sarah Jane Billups Taylor until she died in 1860.<sup>60</sup> It can be assumed that Richard Taylor no longer occupied the residence after the death of his wife, and lived elsewhere in Athens. David C. Barrow, Sr. (father of future chancellor of the University) was listed on the deed as a resident of the house during these years. Richard Taylor remarried in 1863 to Katharine McKinley, and sold the house after the Barrow family moved out. While on furlough from fighting in Virginia during the Civil War, William S. Grady

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid, Item 11.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, Item 21.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, Item 17.

<sup>57</sup> *The Southern Banner* (Athens, Georgia), “Deplorable Railroad Accident,” Aug. 4 1859. Page unknown.

<sup>58</sup> *The Southern Banner* (Athens, Georgia), “Obituary of Gen. Robert Taylor,” Aug. 25, 1859. p. 3, cl 1.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Charlotte Marshall by author, at the Taylor-Grady House, Athens, Georgia. 14 January, 2014.

<sup>60</sup> Taylor, Robert, Last will and testament, Jan. 28, 1850. Item 1. Proven in court of Ordinary September 5, 1859 by Charles M. Reese and Leonidas Franklin.

approached Richard Taylor with interest in the property; he purchased the house in July 1863 for \$20,000 with inflated Confederate money.<sup>61</sup> Along with the sale of the house and eight acres on Prince Avenue (named in 1859), Grady also acquired the 338 acres of the Taylor's Buena Vista farm.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Warranty deed. Athens Clarke County Tax Records. Book X, p. 109, July 18, 1863.

<sup>62</sup> Warranty deed, Transfer of Buena Vista Farms from Richard D. B. Taylor to William S. Grady, July 18, 1863.

## CHAPTER 2

### HENRY GRADY AND HIS FAMILY, 1863 - 1872

Henry Woodfin Grady (b.1850-d.1889), one of the namesakes of the Taylor-Grady House, was a nationally known figure from 1860-1880 for his contributions to journalism and his influence on the economic resurgence of the South after the Civil War. He was a successful orator who convinced investors from the North to reexamine the commercial opportunities of the South-after the economic loss from the war. He played an important role in the restoration and growth of the city of Atlanta.

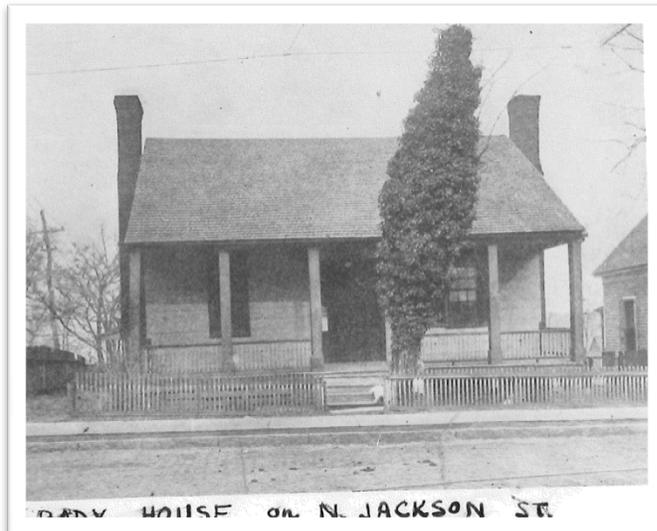


*Figure 6: Henry W. Grady, Courtesy of the University of Georgia Libraries*

Henry Woodfin Grady was born in Athens on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1850 to parents William Sammons Grady and Anne Eliza (Gartrell) Grady. His father was a native of North Carolina, “a

man of sturdy frame, strong mind and sterling character” who came to Athens to work as a businessman. William owned a mercantile store and later the Athens Gas Plant, which installed the first gas streetlights in downtown Athens.<sup>63</sup>

Henry Grady was born in a modest foursquare weather-boarded house on the southwest corner of Jackson and Hoyt streets. His family later lived near the present-day intersection of Thomas and Broad Streets, before acquiring the Taylor-Grady House in 1863.<sup>64</sup> Both of the early Grady homes were demolished in the 19th century, leaving the Taylor-Grady House as the only home in Athens with a connection to Henry Grady.



Figures 7: Image of Mrs. Anne Gartrell Grady. Figure 8: Henry Grady's birthplace, corner of Hoyt and Jackson Streets, photo by David L. Earnest in 1956.

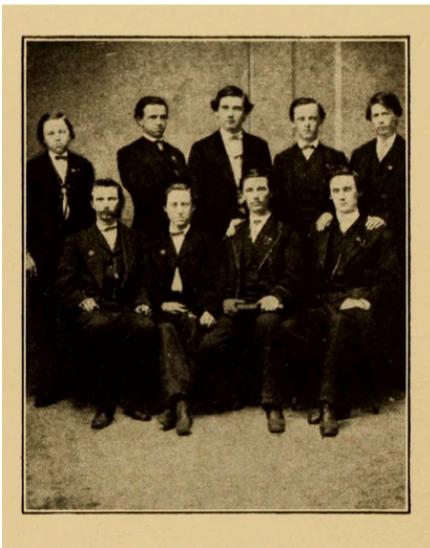
When the Civil War began, Henry's father, William Grady, left his mercantile business to his partner, John W. Nicholson and joined the Confederate army, traveling to recruit men in North Carolina. He had achieved the rank of Major and returned to Athens in April of 1862 on

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<sup>63</sup> Reed, Thomas Walter, *History of the University of Georgia*. "Ch.VII: The Administration of Chancellor Andrew A. Lipscomb from 1866 to 1874." pp. 847-858.

<sup>64</sup> Hull, Augustus Longstreet, and Henry Hull. *Annals of Athens, Georgia, 1801-1901*. Athens: Banner Job Office, 1906. (139).

furlough-to recruit more “infantry for his company”.<sup>65</sup> It was during this trip to Athens, that William Grady purchased the house and the 338-acre Buena Vista farm<sup>66</sup> from Richard D. B. Taylor in June 1863. He then returned to his infantry in Virginia, while his wife Anne and her seven children, including Henry, moved into the house. William Grady was wounded a few weeks before the end of the Civil War in the 1864 siege of Petersburg, Virginia, during the Battle of the Crater. Being too injured to return to Georgia, William Grady died a few months later in Greenville, South Carolina.<sup>67</sup>



*Figure 9: Grady, standing second from left, is amongst fellow alumni of the Eta Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity, History of the Eta Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity: For its First Fifty Years*

At the end of the war, the University of Georgia resumed its classes, January 3, 1866.<sup>68</sup> Henry began his education while living in the “white pillared house” on Prince Avenue, as he later referred to this home.<sup>69</sup> He was very well rounded in his interests during his schooling, athletically, socially and scholastically. He was a pitcher on the first University baseball team in 1867.<sup>70</sup> He was also a founding member of the Eta Chapter of the Chi Phi fraternity at the University of Georgia.<sup>71</sup> Henry continued to be a devoted fraternity alumnus throughout his life, being elected as the first Grand Alpha (National President) from

<sup>65</sup> Coleman, Kenneth. *Confederate Athens*. Athens: University of Georgia, 1968. Web. 4 Jan. 2014, p. 42.

<sup>66</sup> Clarke County, Georgia. Superior Court. Deed Book X, 109.

<sup>67</sup> *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Mother of the late Henry Grady is to be buried here this afternoon.” Article clipping, date and page missing. Hargrett Special Collections Library.

<sup>68</sup> “Athens Historic Timeline” Athens-Clarke County Government Website <http://athensclarkecounty.com/115/Historical-Timeline> 3 Feb. 2014.

<sup>69</sup> Reed, p. 852

<sup>70</sup> Reed, p. 850

<sup>71</sup> “History of the Eta Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity: For its First Fifty Years.” Eta Trust Association, Atlanta, GA. 1917, p. 10. Accessed online at <https://archive.org/details/historyofetachap00chip>

the South in 1882. It is interesting to note, and speaks well of Henry's persuasive abilities, that his election occurred after the Northern and Southern chapters joined together.<sup>72</sup> At the university, he studied public speaking, practicing his skills as a member of the Phi Kappa Literary Society and debate team. Early on, Henry was a natural speaker and left his mark on the university and Athens.<sup>73</sup>

Grady received his diploma in 1868<sup>74</sup> and immediately left Athens to study law at the University of Virginia.<sup>75</sup> After Henry graduated, his mother, Ann Grady, downsized into a "six-room bungalow on Barber Street" and rented out her mansion to the Rev. Dr. Skinner.<sup>76</sup> According to Nixon's biography of Grady, "after he suffered a disappointing defeat in an 1869 college political contest at the University of Virginia, Grady switched his focus from politics to journalism, and from there, Grady developed his literary style."<sup>77</sup> He practiced the relatively new technique of news interview, and eventually developed his "stringer" reporting techniques, which he used later in his career.<sup>78</sup>

After finishing school, Grady moved to Rome, Georgia and worked for "*The Rome Courier*."<sup>79</sup> During this time, he reunited with his childhood sweetheart<sup>80</sup> Julia "Jule" King of Athens and they were married in Athens on October 5, 1871.<sup>81</sup> The couple had two children,

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<sup>72</sup> "History of the Eta Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity," p. 18.

<sup>73</sup> Reed p. 850

<sup>74</sup> "Catalogue of Trustees, Officers and Alumni of the University of Georgia," p. 7.

<sup>75</sup> Nixon, Raymond B. *Henry W. Grady: Spokesman of the New South*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1943. Print.

<sup>76</sup> Morris, Albert. "Home of Henry Grady Stands Just as it Did When Great Editor Was Student at University Here." *Athens Banner*, July 16, 1942.

<sup>77</sup> "Henry W. Grady." *Georgia Writers Hall of Fame*. 13 Jan. 2014. Internet; Accessed January 3, 2014.

<http://www.georgiawritershalloffame.org/honorees/biography.php?authorID=14>.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Harris, Joel Chandler. *Joel Chandler Harris' Life of Henry W. Grady, Including his Writings and Speeches: A Memorial Volume*. New York: Cassell, 1890.

<sup>80</sup> *Early County News*. Editorial, 1972. Article clipping, Junior League of Athens.

<sup>81</sup> "Grady, Henry Woodfin, 1850-1889." *Henry Woodfin Grady Papers, 1828-1971*. Emory Finding Aids: Emory University, n.d. Internet; accessed 7 Jan. 2014. <http://findingaids.library.emory.edu/documents/grady28/>

Henry King Grady (whose name was later changed to Henry Woodfin Grady, Jr.),<sup>82</sup> and Augusta “Gussie” King Grady (who became Mrs. Eugene R. Black).<sup>83</sup>



*Figure 10: Grady's beloved family in 1888: wife Julia, son Henry, daughter Augusta, and Henry.*

In 1871, Grady began to work for the *Commercial* newspaper in Rome, Georgia. He then moved to Atlanta and became co-founder of the *Atlanta Daily Herald* in 1872 with friends Col. Robert A. Alston and Alexander St. Clair Adams.<sup>84</sup> Grady redesigned the layout of the newspaper and used modern headlines, which received praise, but his new techniques were too expensive to maintain and the paper was short-lived. Before the newspaper's demise, Grady utilized his journalistic skills to influence the future of the South. On March 14, 1874, Grady published an editorial in the *Herald* entitled "The New South," in which he advocated industrial development as a solution to the postwar South's economic and social troubles. His aggressive, no-nonsense writing style and promotion of railroad development in Atlanta brought him to the

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<sup>82</sup> Parker, David B. "Henry Grady's Will." Article clipping, Junior League Archives.

<sup>83</sup> "Mrs. E. R. Black Dies: Henry Grady's Daughter." *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, Jan. 1, 1969.

<sup>84</sup> Harris, 60.

attention of Evan P. Howell and W. A. Hemphill, major stockholders of the *Atlanta Constitution*.<sup>85</sup>

When the *Atlanta Daily Herald* closed down in 1876, a financially strapped Grady became the Atlanta correspondent for *The New York Herald*.<sup>86</sup> His articles soon drew the attention of the Northern readers interested in Southern politics and economics. He wrote about subjects ranging from orange crops in Florida and diversified farming in Georgia, to dramatizing the electoral troubles of the 1876 presidential election.<sup>87</sup> He later began writing editorials for *The Atlanta Constitution* from New York. Eventually, his interesting topics won him a permanent editor's job with the *Atlanta Constitution*.<sup>88</sup> According to The Georgia Writers Hall of Fame, Grady "regularly contributed 'Man About Town' columns on themes political and civic, as well as interpretative news stories and essays on politics, temperance, and other issues. He also personally covered the local games of Atlanta's first professional baseball team."<sup>89</sup> His reputation as an accomplished journalist continued to grow, prompting shareholder Evan Howell to offer Grady one-fourth ownership of the newspaper in 1878 for the price of \$20,000, along with the position of managing editor.<sup>90</sup> He accepted the offer and by 1880, the fledgling newspaper was thriving under his editorial leadership.<sup>91</sup> The *Constitution's* value had increased enormously by the time of Grady's death. He had a modern form of writing news and "his reports for the *Constitution* were refreshingly clear, vivid, and became very popular" amongst readers.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Grem, Darren. "Henry W. Grady (1850-1889)." New Georgia Encyclopedia. 11 Oct. 2013. Web. 18 Dec. 2013.

<sup>86</sup> "Henry W. Grady." Georgia Writers Hall of Fame. 13 Jan, 2014  
[www.georgiawritershalloffame.org/honorees/biography.php?authorID=14](http://www.georgiawritershalloffame.org/honorees/biography.php?authorID=14)

<sup>87</sup> Harris, 61.

<sup>88</sup> Grem.

<sup>89</sup> "Henry W. Grady," Georgia Writers Hall of Fame.

<sup>90</sup> Harris, 77.

<sup>91</sup> "Henry W. Grady," Georgia Writers Hall of Fame.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

As managing editor at the *Atlanta Constitution*, Grady was an important influence on both the economy and reputation of Atlanta, and he often shared his desire to contribute to the city's progress.<sup>93</sup> Grady published numerous articles in the *Constitution* proclaiming Atlanta's superiority over other Georgian cities. In 1887, Grady successfully lobbied for the establishment of the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, defeating the prospects of competing cities of Macon and Augusta. Grady also used his position as editor to endorse his own political views, such as his support for anti-liquor laws.<sup>94</sup> He became very politically involved in Atlanta, joining and eventually leading the "Atlanta Ring", a group of men who influenced much of the politics of the time. Grady was a political force, using the *Constitution* to coax voters into supporting fellow "Ring" member, Joseph E. Brown for the U.S. Senate in 1880.<sup>95</sup>

With the "Atlanta Ring's" influence in Georgia politics firmly established, Grady turned his attention toward promoting the city's economic development. Invited to speak at the 1886 meeting of the *New England Society* in New York City, Grady preached the promises of a "New South".<sup>96</sup> Though Grady was not the originator of the idea of Southern and Northern unity, it was his position and advocacy of improving the relations between the North and South that helped to spur northern investment in Atlanta industries.

The famous New England dinner speech in 1887 gained him a national reputation as the voice of the South. He presented his "New South" speech to major northern tycoons and important figures, including J. P. Morgan, Charles Tiffany and 373 other members of the *New England Club*.<sup>97</sup> Interestingly, also in attendance was General William T. Sherman, responsible

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<sup>93</sup> "A Card from Henry W. Grady," Grady, Henry W. *The Atlanta Constitution*, Atlanta, GA. Oct. 4, 1899 (? he was dead for ten years?)

<sup>94</sup> "Henry W. Grady." Georgia Writers Hall of Fame.

<sup>95</sup> Grem.

<sup>96</sup> "Henry W. Grady." Georgia Writers Hall of Fame.

<sup>97</sup> Garrison, Webb. "Grady's Speech wins over hostile Northern Audience" Scrapbook Section, *Atlanta Constitution*. published during the 1980s. page unknown. not online.

for the Union's march through Georgia using "scorched earth" strategies.<sup>98</sup> Members were meeting at Delmonico's restaurant in New York City. The 81st anniversary of the New England Club was being celebrated that night, December 11, 1886, and Henry Grady, freshly shaven and looking far younger than his thirty-six years, was prepared to be the last speaker for the night. The musicians played the tune, "Marching through Georgia," a direct insult to his state when finally, close to midnight, Judge Horace Russell, the society's president, offered a toast to the "New South," cueing Grady's turn to speak.<sup>99</sup> Grady faced these Northerners, ready to make an impact. He began without a manuscript, with a quotation from Benjamin H. Hill: "There was a South of slavery and secession; that South is dead...a South of union and freedom; that South, thank God, is living, breathing, growing every hour." In the first three minutes, Grady's speech brought several applauses from the audience, transforming a hostile or indifferent audience into expectancy. He continued for a one half hour, even sardonically complementing Gen. Sherman: "He is considered an able man in our parts, though some people think he is kind of careless about fire."<sup>100</sup> His humor, as well as his passion and love for his region, inspired the northern audience and he was able to encourage a new perspective in the national consciousness for the future of the post-civil war South.<sup>101</sup> Grady continued to make appearances and speeches addressing the northern elite in an attempt to further sell the potential of the South. Another important speech by Grady was presented to the Bay State Club of Boston in 1889 just before his death.<sup>102</sup> It succinctly states the primary issues bearing on the southern economy:

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<sup>98</sup> "William Tecumseh Sherman" Wikipedia. 4 Feb. 2014. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Tecumseh\\_Sherman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Tecumseh_Sherman)

<sup>99</sup> Garrison

<sup>100</sup> Garrison

<sup>101</sup> Nixon, p. 7.

<sup>102</sup> "Henry Grady Sells the New South," History Matters. Internet; Accessed 1 Feb. 2014 <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5745/>

***Henry Grady to the Bay State Club of Boston, 1889***

I attended a funeral once in Pickens county in my State. . . . This funeral was peculiarly sad. It was a poor “one gallus” fellow, whose breeches struck him under the armpits and hit him at the other end about the knee—he didn’t believe in *décolleté* clothes. They buried him in the midst of a marble quarry: they cut through solid marble to make his grave; and yet a little tombstone they put above him was from Vermont. They buried him in the heart of a pine forest, and yet the pine coffin was imported from Cincinnati. They buried him within touch of an iron mine, and yet the nails in his coffin and the iron in the shovel that dug his grave were imported from Pittsburg. They buried him by the side of the best sheep-grazing country on the earth, and yet the wool in the coffin bands and the coffin bands themselves were brought from the North. The South didn’t furnish a thing on earth for that funeral but the corpse and the hole in the ground. There they put him away and the clods rattled down on his coffin, and they buried him in a New York coat and a Boston pair of shoes and a pair of breeches from Chicago and a shirt from Cincinnati, leaving him nothing to carry into the next world with him to remind him of the country in which he lived, and for which he fought for four years, but the chill of blood in his veins and the marrow in his bones.

Now we have improved on that. We have got the biggest marble-cutting establishment on earth within a hundred yards of that grave. We have got a half-dozen woolen mills right around it, and iron mines, and iron furnaces, and iron factories. We are coming to meet you. We are going to take a noble revenge, as my friend, Mr. Carnegie, said last night, by invading every inch of your territory with iron, as you invaded ours twenty-nine years ago.

Source: Henry Grady Sells the “New South” History Matters

*Table 2: Speech by Henry Grady*

Over his personal life and career, Grady had many admirers who praised him for his unique personality. Grady had two biographies written about him by employee and friend, Thomas Walter Reed and another by former colleague Joel Chandler Harris.<sup>103</sup> Thomas Reed claimed Grady was a free thinker and motivated to succeed, but had a unique way about him: “His work was of a brilliant type, but in the business office there was too much red ink on his ledger. He was never what one would call a good businessman. He was full of enthusiasm and rarely took

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<sup>103</sup> Joel Chandler Harris of Eatonton, Ga. (1848-1908) joined the staff of the Atlanta Constitution as an editor in 1876, not long before Henry Grady became a permanent editorial writer. Harris is best remembered for writing the Uncle Remus stories, featuring Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox. He published *The Life of Henry Grady* in 1890, one year after his death.

into account the financial cost of his ventures. He was too free and generous [in] nature to keep the business offers full.”<sup>104</sup> Another colleague of Grady at the *Constitution*, Joel Chandler Harris,<sup>105</sup> praised Grady’s originality as his greatest strength as a journalist. “His methods were entirely his own. He borrowed from no one. Every movement he made in the field of journalism was stamped with the seal of his genius. He followed no precedent.”<sup>106</sup>

## His Death

Henry Grady’s life was unexpectedly cut short at the age of thirty-nine. He was returning to New York City from his December 12th speech in Boston when he began feeling ill. According to a news source, “Henry W. Grady of Georgia was laid up with a bad cold at the Fifth Avenue Hotel after his return from Boston, and his physicians forbade his going out for a while.”<sup>107</sup> He made the trip back to Atlanta where a reception awaited his arrival. His pneumonia worsened and he died shortly after arriving on December 23, 1889. He was buried Christmas Day, 1889 in Atlanta’s Oakland Cemetery, and later transported to Westview Cemetery.<sup>108</sup> News of his death quickly spread across the country, making headlines in every major paper in the country, and thousands were reported sorrowing at his tomb. “The South Will Never See His Like Again” headlined the *Constitution*, and at his memorial service, its employees escorted his grieving family.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Thomas Walter Reed was hired and worked for Grady as a reporter at the Atlanta *Constitution* in his later years, and he had a “grateful appreciation” for his employer.<sup>104</sup> Reed’s strong admiration of Grady gives a glimpse of his personality in the “History of the University of Georgia,” where he refers to Grady as “bright” and “sunny-tempered.” Reed even shares Grady’s favorite book growing up: Hugo’s *Les Miserables*.  
*Thomas Walter Reed, “History of the University of Georgia.” Ch.VII: The administration of Chancellor Andrew A. Lipscomb from 1866 to 1874*, Reed. (851). [http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/cgi-bin/ebind2html.pl/reed\\_c07?seq=49](http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/cgi-bin/ebind2html.pl/reed_c07?seq=49)

<sup>105</sup> Harris, p. 29

<sup>106</sup> Harris, p. 30

<sup>107</sup> *Boston Daily Globe* (Boston, Mass.). “Mr. Grady has a cold.” Dec. 16, 1889, p. 3.

<sup>108</sup> “Henry Grady” Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\\_W.\\_Grady](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_W._Grady) 10 Feb. 2014

<sup>109</sup> *Boston Daily Globe* (Boston, Mass.) “Death of Death” Dec. 26, 1889. p. 1.



*Figure 11: Crowds gather in Atlanta around platform for the dedication of the Henry W. Grady Monument located on Marietta Street on October 21, 1891. Courtesy of Vanishing Georgia, Georgia Archives, University System of Georgia*

## **His Legacy**

In his short life, Grady was able to make an astonishing impact on the state of Georgia and the South. Grady County in Georgia and Oklahoma were named in his honor. Places in Atlanta named for him include Grady Memorial Hospital, Henry W. Grady High School, the now-demolished Henry Grady Hotel, and the Henry W. Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia. A bronze statue was erected in his memory in Atlanta on Marietta Street in October 1891, in the presence of the governor of New York, of Georgia and relatives of Henry Grady.<sup>110</sup> There was a liberty ship named in honor of the late Henry W. Grady: the S.S. Henry W. Grady during World War II. Its christening and launch was on October 22, 1943 in Brunswick, Georgia.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> *Boston Daily Globe* "Grady in Bronze", Oct. 22, 1891. p. 11.

<sup>111</sup> The Atlanta History Center. Collections: Raymond B. Nixon Photographs of the S.S. Henry W. Grady. <http://album.atlantahistorycenter.com/store/Category/462-raymond-b-nixon-photographs-of-the-ss-henry-w-grady.aspx>

### **Controversial Support of Segregation:**

Even 50 years later, his legacy was reflected in the *Atlanta Constitution* on the anniversary of his death: “Henry W. Grady departed from this world with characteristic suddenness, while a stunned nation mourned that he left “his great work unfinished.”<sup>112</sup> He will always be remembered for his advocacy to unify and instill trust between the North and South and his attempt to spur northern investment in Atlanta industries. But even despite such achievements, Grady’s New South was not universally accepted. Agrarian pundit Thomas E. Watson criticized Grady for allegedly “submitting Georgia to northern interests and oppressing farmers.”<sup>113</sup> Grady was also accused of trying to downplay the racial unrest in the South to appease the Northerners’ interest in southern industrial investment, as well ignoring the post-slavery culture. According to his critics, “In numerous *Constitution* editorials Grady claimed that African Americans enjoyed ‘fair treatment’ in Georgia and throughout the South. Though such rhetoric pleased white southern readers, few northern reformers looked past the region’s record of black disenfranchisement, exploitation, and violence.”<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> “Henry W. Grady Dead Fifty Years Today,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, 24 Dec., 1939, p. SM1.

<sup>113</sup> Grem

<sup>114</sup> Myrdal, Gunnar, and Sissela Bok. *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*. New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Publishers, 1996.

## CHAPTER 3

### OTHER OCCUPANTS, 1873 - 1968

There were several changes in ownership of the Taylor-Grady House after the Grady family sold the property. These different owners and occupants created other dimensions in the history of the house and its connection to Athens, all having a great impact on the Taylor-Grady House as it exists today.

#### **1. John W. Nicholson**

Ann Gartrell Grady cut a road perpendicular to Prince Avenue next to her property (now Grady Street) sometime between 1868 and 1870 in order to divide and sell off lots. The diminishing size of the property is seen in each successive tax record. Ann moved into a smaller bungalow on Barber Street<sup>115</sup> and sold the mansion to her brother-in-law, John W. Nicholson, in 1872 for \$6,000.<sup>116</sup> Nicholson was a business partner of the late William S. Grady in the High Shoals Factory and Athens Gas Works.<sup>117</sup> They first met when Nicholson was a clerk in Williams' mercantile shop, later became business partners, and also married two Gartrell sisters, thus becoming brothers-in-law. During the Civil War, when William returned to fight in his home state of North Carolina, Nicholson remained in Athens to run the gas business. After William's death at the Battle of the Crater in Virginia, Nicholson "bought a controlling share of Henry

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<sup>115</sup> Morris, Albert. "Home of Henry Grady Stands just as it Did when Great Editor Was Student at University Here." *Athens Banner*. July 16, 1942. Page unknown.

<sup>116</sup> Deed of Henry Grady to John W. Nicholson, October 9, 1871, Clarke County Deed Book "Z," 236-37.

<sup>117</sup> Gagnon, Michael J. *Transition to an Industrial South: Athens, Georgia, 1830-1870*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U. P., 2012, p. 92. Print.

Grady's inheritance of his father's estate, including the house and the Gas Works."<sup>118</sup> Nicholson was also a member of the Southern Mutual Insurance Company in Athens from 1874-1886 and owned the Franklin House and the Wray-Nicholson House.<sup>119</sup>

## **2. John Eberhart 1886**

In 1886, Nicholson sold Taylor-Grady to John Eberhart for \$7,000.<sup>120</sup> For unknown reasons, Mr. Eberhart only owned the house for a few months before selling it again.

## **3. Mrs. Louise D. Dubose 1886-1917**

Mr. Eberhart sold the Taylor-Grady House to Mrs. Louise Dubose in 1886 for \$6,500.<sup>121</sup> She owned the house for thirty-one years, a period during which many changes were made, such as adding an attached kitchen and converting the dovecote into servants' quarters.<sup>122</sup>

## **4. The Beusse Family 1917-1930**

In 1917 Mrs. Dubose sold the home to the wealthy Jesse Hoyt Beusse for \$17,000.<sup>123</sup> Beusse, who had been a captain during the Spanish-American War, was the son of Henry Beusse, the first mayor of Athens.<sup>124</sup> He lived in the Taylor-Grady House with his wife and family until 1930. He had lost his fortune when the stock market crashed in 1929. Beusse, who died in

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<sup>118</sup> Gagnon. P.207.

<sup>119</sup> "Wray-Nicholson House" UGA Heritage, Campus Lore.

<http://www.alumni.uga.edu/alumni/index.php/site/heritage/c/103/1748> 12 Dec. 2013

<sup>120</sup> Warranty deed, John Nicholson to John Eberhart, April. 1886. Athens Clarke County Courthouse, Athens, GA.

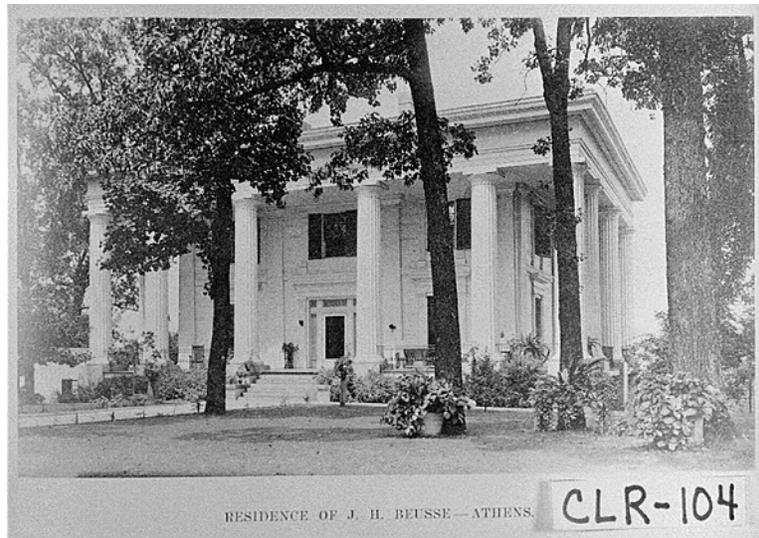
<sup>121</sup> Warranty deed, John Eberhart to Louise D. Dubose, Nov. 1886. Athens Clarke County Courthouse, Athens, GA.

<sup>122</sup> This is determined from comparing Sanborn maps from 1913 to 1918.

<sup>123</sup> Warranty deed, Louise D. Dubose to Jesse Beusse, 1917. Athens Clarke County Courthouse, Athens, GA.

<sup>124</sup> Interview with Nancy Bunker Bowen, with author. Email. 28 February 2014.

1931,<sup>125</sup> had deeded the Taylor-Grady House to his wife, Mrs. Jessie M. Beusse in 1930, at which time house's value was set at \$40,000.<sup>126</sup>



*Figure 12: Image of the Beusse residence taken in 1919.*

## **5. Oscar D. Grimes 1930-1950**

The fall in property values during the Great Depression is reflected in the 1930 sale price of \$14,500 paid by Oscar Dennis “Denny” Grimes. He was listed as “superintendent” at the Milstead Manufacturing Co. in 1917,<sup>127</sup> but it is said that he and his wife, Virginia Dobbs Grimes, inherited the money used to purchase the house, where they resided there with their three daughters.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Death date confirmed by headstone in Oconee Hill cemetery

<sup>126</sup> Title transfer, Mr. J Beusse to Mrs. J Beusse, 1930. Deed Book \_\_\_\_, Athens-Clarke County Courthouse.

<sup>127</sup> America's Textile Reporter: For the Combined Textile Industries, Volume 33, Issue 10  
Published 1919, New York Public Library. Page 113.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=\\_AJZAAAAYAAJ&lpg=PA114-IA5&ots=UQ7EqjKY34&dq=%22o%20d%20grimes%22%20athens%20ga&pg=PA114-IA5#v=onepage&q=%22o%20d%20grimes%22%20athens%20ga&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=_AJZAAAAYAAJ&lpg=PA114-IA5&ots=UQ7EqjKY34&dq=%22o%20d%20grimes%22%20athens%20ga&pg=PA114-IA5#v=onepage&q=%22o%20d%20grimes%22%20athens%20ga&f=false)

<sup>128</sup> Interview with Jane Mann via Tom Wilfong, childhood acquaintance of Lynda Grimes Jan. 14, 2013.

## 6. The Lampkin Twins 1950-1966

Mr. Grimes sold the Taylor-Grady House in 1950 to Mr. Cobb Lampkin for \$29,000,<sup>129</sup> who then transferred the title to his twin daughters, Lois Cobb Lampkin and Lucy Phelps Lampkin. The sisters soon began making renovations to the house. Lucy was an eccentric ballroom dance instructor and wanted to create a dance studio by joining the front and rear parlors on the main floor. Apparently, a falling out with her sister Lois prevented these plans from ever coming to fruition.<sup>130</sup> Lucy instead lived elsewhere. In 1951, she sold Lois her interest in the property for \$20,811.<sup>131</sup> Lois died on Dec. 25, 1964 after an illness.<sup>132</sup> Family members disputed the reciprocal will between the sisters, but in the end Lucy Lampkin regained ownership of the estate.<sup>133</sup>

In 1966, the Lampkin estate sold the house for \$90,000 to the Athens Junior Assembly, which immediately transferred the title to the City of Athens. By October 1968, the city was leasing the Taylor-Grady House to the Junior Assembly.<sup>134</sup> Lucy was a supporter of the Junior Assembly and donated several antiques to the house.

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<sup>129</sup> Warranty deed, O.D. Grimes to Cobb Lampkin, 1950. Athens-Clarke County Courthouse, Athens, GA.

<sup>130</sup> "Lucy Phelps Lampkin Papers 1920-1967." New York Public Library. Internet; accessed. 10 Jan. 2014. <http://archives.nypl.org/dan/19847>

<sup>131</sup> Title transfer, from Lucy Lampkin to Lois Lampkin. 1951. Athens-Clarke County Courthouse, Athens, GA.

<sup>132</sup> Interview with Charlotte Marshall, by author, 10 Jan. 2014.

<sup>133</sup> Lampkin v. Edwards, 222 GA 288 (1966), 149 S. E. 2d 708. Justia U.S. Law. Supreme Court of Georgia. 14 June 1966. Web.

<sup>134</sup> "Timeline of the Athens Junior Assembly" The Junior League of Athens. [www.jlaweb.org](http://www.jlaweb.org)

## CHAPTER 4

### THE JUNIOR ASSEMBLY AND JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ATHENS, 1969 - PRESENT



*Figure 13: Athens Junior Assembly Founders, 1935*

The Junior Assembly, now the Junior League of Athens, was a women's organization founded on community service and is responsible for the preservation of the Taylor-Grady House. The Assembly began as a small group of women in the 1930s, founded by three individuals: Eugenia Blount, Elizabeth Hall, and Marie McHatton. They recognized a need for healthcare in Athens and organized twenty-two other able women to begin assisting the needs of the community.<sup>135</sup> Most of Junior Assembly members were from wealthy families and childless, and therefore had the time and ability to serve. During its early years, the goal of the Junior Assembly was to meet community needs by helping to provide for child and healthcare in Athens. By 1960 the mission

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<sup>135</sup> The Junior League of Athens. "The History of the Junior Assembly of Athens, Georgia." N.d. The Junior League of Athens. 3 Jan. 2014. <http://www.juniorleagueofathens.org/athens/npo.jsp?pg=about2>

of the Junior Assembly was “to foster interest among its members in social economic, educational, cultural and civic conditions in the community of Athens and Clarke County and to make efficient their volunteer service.”<sup>136</sup>

Within its first ten years of service, the Junior Assembly became the chief source of charity, maternity and baby care. Its first project in 1935 was the maintenance of a charity bed at Athens General Hospital, and this project “continued for 30 years as a fund for payment of charity maternity cases.” The Junior Assembly sponsored movies for children, fashion teas, and contests to raise funds for their projects. In 1944, the Assembly opened the Simon Michael II clinic in downtown Athens, where, according to their logbook, they served over 22,000 patients.

The Junior Assembly eventually expanded and set up other clinics in town, including the Heart Clinic in 1950, the Speech School that same year, as well as the Walking Blood Bank and the Eye, Ear and Nose Clinic in 1952. A nursing home program was instituted in 1957, as was the Hospital Shop at Athens General Hospital. By its 25th anniversary in 1960, the Junior Assembly was financing and operating weekly health clinics with 5,708 annual patient visits, plus some 600 annual sessions in nursing homes, children’s theater groundwork, and other aid programs.

### **A New Headquarters**

Urban Renewal was affecting Athens during the 1960s, and many of the historic structures were in danger of demolition. The current day Athens Welcome Center, or Church-Waddell-Brumby House, was one the oldest residences in Athens and was in danger of demolition. The Junior Assembly, which wanted to preserve the historic structures in Athens,<sup>137</sup> jumped into action to

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<sup>136</sup> Parker, Betsy. “Athens Junior Assembly” Athens Banner Herald & the Daily News. May 25, 1969 Page 1-C

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Sylvia Gibson by author. Phone.. January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Athens, Georgia

save the historic landmark in 1965. The women at the time had been using the YWCA building on Hancock Avenue as their meeting location, but the preservation project to renovate the Church-Waddell-Brumby House would make it in their new headquarters.<sup>138</sup>

The original plans were to move the Church-Waddell-Brumby House from its downtown location to the back lot of the Taylor-Grady House. The move turned out to be far more expensive and difficult than planned, with electrical wires blocking the route, so the plans failed to materialize. Mayor Julius Bishop instead suggested that the Assembly should restore the recently acquired Taylor-Grady House. The Assembly redirected its focus and began planning the new restoration project. In return for their restoration efforts, the Assembly received a 35-year lease with the agreement to “restore and manage the house, with any expenditures toward the restoration made by the Assembly to apply against the rental fee of \$100 per month.”<sup>139</sup>

With that, a new era was introduced in 1968 with the signing of the Taylor-Grady House lease on October 1, 1968.<sup>140</sup> The members quickly assembled a planning committee and with the help of many donors and local businesses, the Assembly began restoration of the house in the fall of 1968.

The house was officially named the Taylor-Grady House for its builder and its most celebrated occupant. When renovations were completed, the house was opened for public viewing on May 23, 1969 during the Spring Tour of Homes. The debut of the house for the many descendants from the Taylor and Grady families had been held on May 7th, 1969.<sup>141</sup> Grandsons Henry W. Grady of Atlanta and Eugene Black (son of Augusta Grady Black) of Florida and New

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<sup>138</sup> Interview with Junior Assembly sustainer Sylvia Gibson. Phone interview on Jan. 10, 2014

<sup>139</sup> Maisie T. Underwood, “Eight years later the Taylor-Grady House,” Athens Banner Herald, 12 May 1974.

<sup>140</sup> Biehl, Ada. “Grady Home is Restored: Women Seeking Funds To Complete Project” The Atlanta Constitution, 28, Nov. 1969. p. 9B

<sup>141</sup> Original Program, Junior League of Athens Archives.

York were invited to attend.<sup>142</sup> In 1976, the Taylor-Grady House became Athens' first designated National Historic Landmark.<sup>143</sup>



*Figure 14: A few ladies of the Junior Assembly working on the rear stairs during the renovations of their new headquarters at the Taylor-Grady House in 1969.*

The Junior Assembly opened a consignment shop called the “Women’s Exchange” at Taylor-Grady in the room beneath the kitchen wing. Proceeds from sold items supported the Assembly’s programs and the house also created income from being a rental facility for private and civic functions. A part time “hostess” was hired to give tours and greet visitors. Even during the busy restoration of the new headquarters at the Taylor-Grady House, members continued to staff the Assembly’s eight clinics. In 1970-1971, eighty-five “Active Members” and eleven “Provisional Members” gave over 10,000 hours to clinic and committee tasks.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Booker, Meg Gunn. “Augusta Grady portrait Arrives to Grace Taylor-Grady Parlor.” Athens Banner Herald, March 24, 1975. p. 5.

<sup>143</sup> Mary Jane Gregory and Ralph Christian (December, 1975). National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination: Robert Taylor - Henry W. Grady House

<sup>144</sup> “History” Junior League of Athens. [www.juniorleagueofathens.org](http://www.juniorleagueofathens.org)

## **Transition to Junior League of Athens, 1981 - Present**

The Assembly always intended to become a “Junior League”, but the population of Athens did not meet the population requirement.<sup>145</sup> Finally, in September of 1978, the Assembly submitted an application for membership to the Association of Junior Leagues (AJL). The AJL is a national organization founded in 1901 and “is an organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, (developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.”<sup>146</sup>

Two official visits from the Association of Junior Leagues were made in 1979, with AJL affiliation imminent. Over forty former members of the Assembly accepted the Assembly’s offer of mass reinstatement prior to the first AJL orientation program in May. In 1980-1981, the Junior Assembly completed its affiliation with the Association of Junior Leagues. On October 28, 1980, following an Association vote and a vote by the membership, the former Junior Assembly of Athens became the 243rd Junior League in the Association of Junior Leagues, and was incorporated as the Junior League of Athens, Georgia, Inc. With this affiliation came the literal broadening of the organization’s horizons, with a number of delegates attending state, regional, and national conferences. The new Junior League of Athens continues to serve the Athens area through community service, volunteer programs, and leadership training, as well as by maintaining the Taylor-Grady House as an historic Athens landmark.

*Table 3: Timeline of Junior Assembly and Junior League*

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<sup>145</sup> Interview with 1977 Junior Assembly President Charlotte Marshall.

<sup>146</sup> “Our Mission.” The Association of Junior Leagues Website. <http://www.ajli.org/?nd=p-who-mission>

### **Junior Assembly Timeline**

- 1935- Founding year; first project, maintaining a charity bed at Athens General Hospital**
- 1938- A weekly well-baby clinic**
- 1939- Pre-natal Clinic**
- 1940- The first Cargill Follies**
- 1946- Clinic, donated to Assembly in memory of WWII soldier, Simon Michael II**
- 1950- The Heart Clinic and Speech School**
- 1952- The Walking Blood Bank and the Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic**
- 1957- Nursing Home Visitation Program and the Hospital Shop at Athens General Hospital opened**
- 1960- Assembly celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary**
- 1963- “A Cook’s Tour” cookbook is published and sold**
- 1965- Initial attempt to acquire Church-Waddell-Brumby House as headquarters**
- 1967- Proposal of the restoration of Taylor Grady House**
- 1969- The Taylor Grady House restoration debuts at the Spring Tour of Homes**
- 1970- The Women’s Exchange opens; location in the Taylor Grady House; UGA’s Landscape Architecture students partner with the Ladies Garden Club to design and install historic landscape at the Taylor-Grady House**
- 1978- The Junior Assembly applies for membership to the Association of Junior Leagues.**
- 1980- Official affiliation with the AJL, the incorporation of Junior League of Athens, Georgia**
- 1981- The “Kaleidoscope USA” project with Hallmark, Inc.**
- 1982- The Child Advocacy Substance Abuse Prevention Program**
- 1985- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the Junior Assembly / Junior League of Athens**
- 1990- The “Bargainza” community thrift sale begins and more child-focused programs**
- 1992- “Sincerely, Athens” and “Koffee Klinik” programs**
- 1994- Auxiliary organization formed to support Athens Community Council on Aging**
- 1995- The Arnocroft House on Milledge Avenue is donated to the JLA from founding member, Eugenia Arnold Friend.**

*Table 3: Timeline of Junior Assembly and Junior League of Athens*

## CHAPTER 5

### THE ARCHITECTURE

The Taylor-Grady House in Athens, Georgia, is built in the Greek Revival style, a form of architecture originally inspired by the temples of ancient Greece. It was widely employed in the Old South prior to the Civil War.<sup>147</sup> One of the popular residential forms of this style in Athens and elsewhere in the South incorporates a two-story full portico with a central hallway and a double-pile floor plan. A wide entablature conceals a low-hipped roof except at the rear, which makes such houses look flat-topped when viewed from the front and sides. Painted white clapboard and flush siding are de rigueur. The front entrance is comprised of a wooden paneled door topped with a transom and flanked by rectangular sidelights and fluted pilasters. Taylor-Grady, a wood-frame structure standing on a masonry basement and foundation is a fine example of this particular manifestation of the Greek Revival style.

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<sup>147</sup> McAlester, Virginia, and A. Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1984. Print.



*Figure 15: The current façade of the Taylor-Grady House*

Multiple large Greek Revival homes existed along Prince Avenue, built by wealthy families in the 1840s and 1850s. These large antebellum homes were popular near the city because they demonstrated the community's growing wealth and prosperity. This style also was a symbolic connection to Athens, Greece, and democracy, and the Doric order represented masculinity and purity.<sup>148</sup> Taylor's house has been an enduring monument to his wealth, which is still manifest in the force of its style and the solidity of its brick columns. The Greek Revival style was not popular merely as an expression of prosperity. It was also functional because homes designed along such lines were comfortable in the hot southern climate. The shady columned porches cooled air round the house and many homes, including Taylor-Grady, were built on piers to increase airflow. The high ceilings, the tall windows and doors, the operable

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<sup>148</sup> Collins, Peter. "Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture 1750-1950." London: Faber and Faber, 1965.

interior transoms, all helped cool the interior. Louvered shutters allowed airflow while providing shade. During the winter, central fireplaces on all floors maintained heat. The full portico was used in the Greek Revival style across the country, but the three sided, wrap around portico was inspired by the French inspired Gulf Coast region, where it allowed a cross breeze in the warmer climate.

Ross Crane was the architect-builder most responsible for the proliferation of the Greek Revival style in Athens. He first came to Athens from New Jersey as a brick-mason to rebuild New College after it burned in 1830.<sup>149</sup> He then built the University of Georgia's Chapel on North Campus, one of the first Greek Revival structures in Athens. He went on to build several Greek Revival and Italianate mansions<sup>150</sup> in the city and was soon in great demand as a builder among wealthy Athenians.<sup>151</sup>

Crane's utilization of the Greek Revival style was emulated in Taylor's mansion. However, we do not know the builder of the house, though the secondary influence of Savannah is suggested by the more refined forms, such as the use of curved walls in the interior and stylized anthemion (or wild honeysuckle motif) ornaments around the exterior door. Such features not seen in houses for which Crane is the known builder. Taylor's house was also one of the earliest homes in Athens to have a "periteral portico," or columns across the front and down the sides of the house's exterior.<sup>152</sup> Also for the first time in Athens, Greek window surrounds with pilasters supporting an entablature appeared. The inclusion of the thirteen Doric columns

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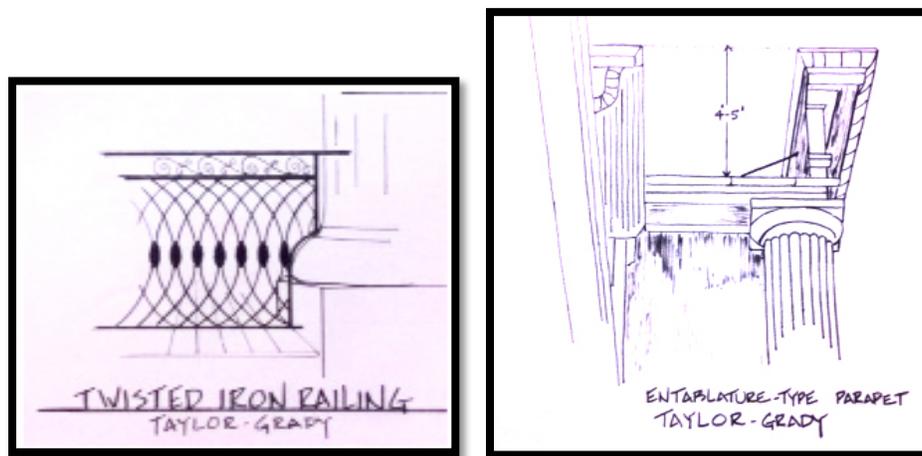
<sup>149</sup> Thomas, Frances Taliaferro. *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke County*. Athens: University of Georgia, 1992. Online. P. 38.

<sup>150</sup> Other Athens landmarks he designed were the First Presbyterian Church in 1856, built in the Greek Revival temple form, and his personal house, the Greek Revival mansion located the end of Market St (now Washington Street) in downtown Athens.

<sup>151</sup> Thomas, 38.

<sup>152</sup> Reinberger, Mark. "Greek Revival Suburban Villas in Athens, Georgia." Essay. 2012

around the house is, according to legend, representative of the thirteen original colonies,<sup>153</sup> although this explanation seems unlikely, because the front facade has a very normative six columns. The differing number of columns on the sides corresponds with the varying number of windows, which are determined by the asymmetrical plan. The placement of columns flank the windows, allowing a clear line of sight. It has also been suggested that the iron grillwork railing symbolizes the unity of the colonies, but this is mainly based on oral histories.<sup>154</sup>



Figures 16 and 17: Details of the iron railing and entablature. Sketches from professor John Linley's 1981 Landscape Architecture class project comparing the architectural details of the Taylor-Grady House with the Treanor House.

On the site of the Taylor-Grady House are currently three auxiliary structures: an original pigeon cote, a smokehouse, and an unadorned well structure. The pigeon cote and smokehouse complement the Greek Revival style of the house; they are symmetrical with the white stucco. The pigeon cote was designed for pigeons to fly into the small holes below the exterior molding and roost inside, where they would be considered as a food source. An 1870 plat indicates that

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<sup>153</sup>Thomas, 40.

<sup>154</sup> Charlotte Thomas Marshall, "Tour of the Taylor-Grady House," Spring 1975. Special Collections, Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, Athens, Georgia.

the pigeon cote was later used as an unattached kitchen. The 1974 National Register nomination form indicated a well house consisting of four fluted Doric columns supporting an entablature and roof.<sup>155</sup>

### Alterations to the Architecture

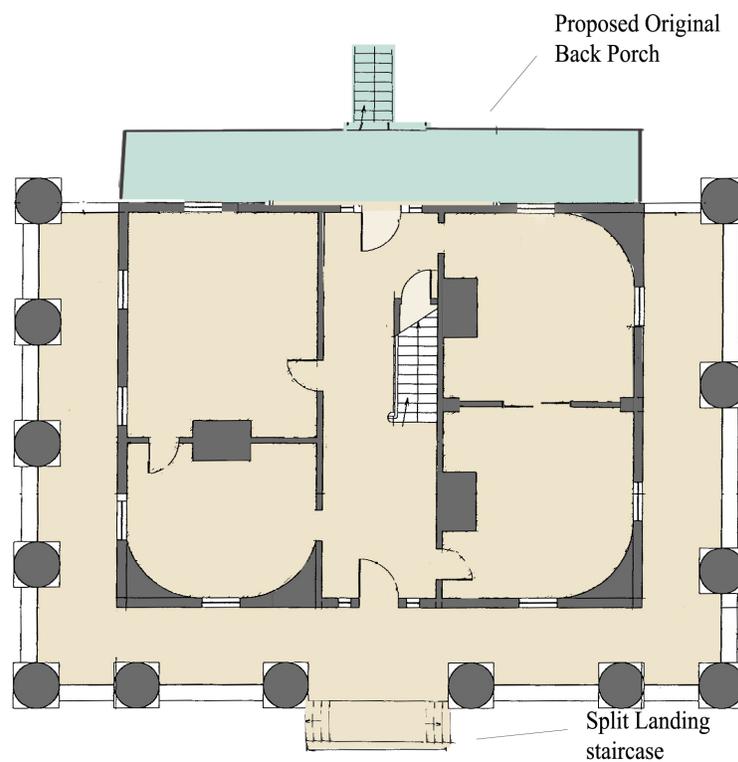


Figure 18: The proposed original plan of the house, with a substantial back porch and split front stair

During the time between its construction and its acquisition by the Junior Assembly, the house underwent additions and changes, but the most of the house that stands today is original in form and structure. The original floor plan of the house has remained intact, with the central

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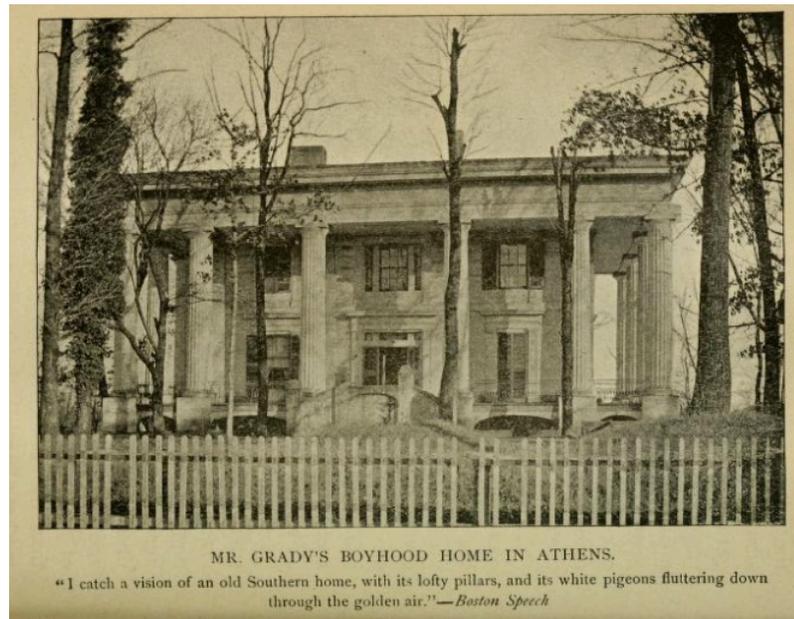
<sup>155</sup> Gregory, Mary Jane and Ralph Christian. *National Register of Historic Places*. "Robert Taylor-Henry Grady House." American Association for State and Local History. Nashville, Tennessee. 1975

hallway flanked by asymmetrical room groups on each side. This configuration is reflected in the second floor plan, with identical fireplace and window placements. Up until the 1960s, it had always been used as a residential dwelling, mostly for single families. Most of the rooms retained the original function, except for the current dining room, which was used as the master bedroom until 1950.

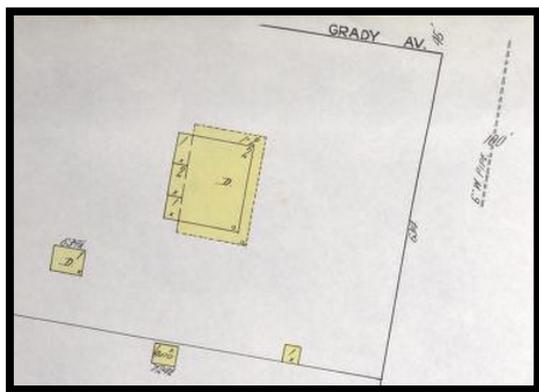
The exterior has also remained in its original state of white painted stucco, with the only major alterations being the additions of porches and a wing on the rear facade. Although there is little evidence as to what changes were made to the house by the first few occupants, changes to its envelope can be seen in fire insurance maps dating to around 1900. Other changes to the house can be studied through antique postcards and photographs, but there is little documentation predating 1890.

### **Mrs. Louise Dubose 1886-1917**

Most records of the changes to the house begin during the era of ownership by Mrs. Louise Dubose, who occupied the house from 1887-1917. According to a post card from 1890, there was originally a double-sided staircase approaching the front entrance. There is no proof that this was the original configuration of the staircase. However, whether or not, it was changed to the current configuration, as seen in a 1908 postcard, during Mrs. Dubose's ownership.



*Figure 19: A photograph of the house c.1890 shows the house as it was purchased by Mrs. Dubose in 1886. The front double stairs were removed sometime before 1908, as seen in next figure, a postcard postmarked 1908..*

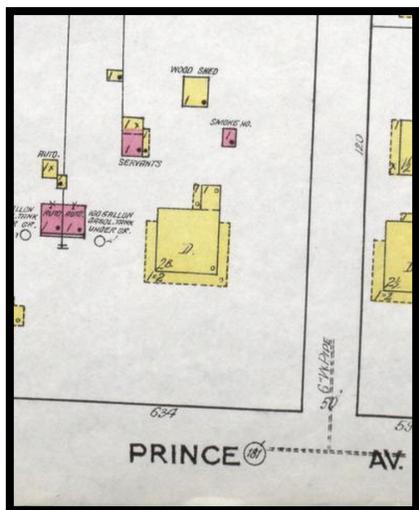


*Figure 20: The 1913 Sanborn map shows the house with three room additions on the north facade, with the center addition at 2 stories.*

According to the National Register nomination description, the hipped roof kitchen wing was added around 1900,<sup>156</sup> but the Sanborn maps imply it was constructed between 1913 and 1918. Very little evidence remains regarding any changes from this original layout until the 1918

<sup>156</sup> National Register Nomination, “Description” p. 10

Sanborn map; a wing was constructed behind the northeast corner, presumably as an attached kitchen with a one-story porch on the west wall. The 1918 map also includes a one-story brick structure addressed as 634 1/2 Prince Ave, which is labeled as “Servants.” This structure was the former dovecote refurbished as living quarters for servants.



*Figure 21: The 1918 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows a change of function for the dovecote, the addition of garages, and a woodshed.*

### **Beusse Family 1917-1930**

The Beusse family updated the house by adding electricity and other modern systems. In the 1918 Sanborn map, the dovecote is used as servants’ quarters with two attached porches; the smokehouse is still in use and there is a third wooden structure labeled as a shed. The dining room was used as a bedroom on the main floor and the southeast room on the main floor was the parlor and the northeast room was the dining room. A butler’s pantry existed between the attached kitchen wing and the dining room.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Letter from Ms. Lucy Phelps Lampkin on March 29<sup>th</sup> 1969, to Diana Argo, members of the Athens Junior Assembly Renovation Committee.

### **Oscar D. Grimes 1930-1950**

During the occupation of the Grimes family, much of the original integrity of the house remained. The “original chandeliers, semi-circular rooms and stained-glass window” at the landing on the interior stairs all existed during their occupancy, and the dovecote was still in use as an unattached kitchen.<sup>158</sup>



*Figure 22: HABS Survey photo c.1939*

### **Lampkins 1950-1966**

During the Lampkin ownership during 1950-1955, Lucy and Lois Lampkin made many changes to the house, which were recalled in a 1969 letter from Lucy Lampkin to a member of the Junior Assembly. The twin sisters enclosed the back porch on the main floor and added a window. The second floor porch was also enclosed with sheetrock so that it could be used as a sleeping

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<sup>158</sup> Morris, Albert. “Home of Henry Grady Stands Just as it Did When Great Editor Was Student at University Here.” *Athens Banner*. July 16, 1942. P.2.

porch.<sup>159</sup> During this time, the current dining room was used as a bedroom, and the frame of a window that faced the back porch was converted into a closet. The apartment was installed in the basement with a kitchenette and two bathrooms. Water supply lines were added to the house as well as a new gas furnace. The total expenditures were greater than \$22,000. Ms. Lucy removed the pocket doors and the dividing wall that separated the front parlor and back dining room, in order to create a ballroom. Cabinets were added to the butler's pantry and new flooring added to the front porch.<sup>160</sup>

After the death of Lois, and while Lucy lived elsewhere, the house was uninhabited for thirteen years, during which it was vandalized and fell into disrepair. The chandeliers, fireplace mantles and other architectural detailed were all was stolen, but the plaster lighting fans on the ceiling remained.

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<sup>159</sup> Letter from Ms. Lucy Phelps Lampkin

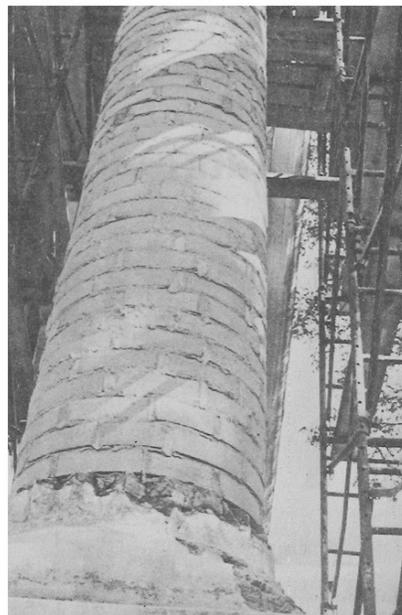
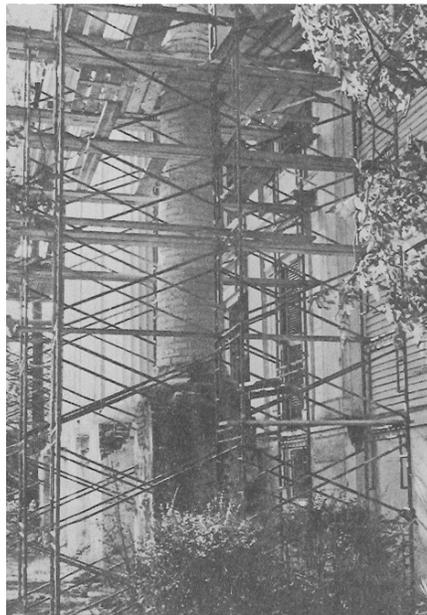
<sup>160</sup> Letter from Ms. Lucy Phelps Lampkin

## The Renovation of 1969



*Figure 23-26: (clockwise from top left): HABS (1936) photo by L. D. Andrew shows the original plaster medallion during Grimes occupancy that still remains; While it stood empty for thirteen years, the house was vandalized and stripped of architectural details such as the mantles and chandeliers; the condition of the house in 1968 when the Junior Assembly took on the renovation project; The rear façade of the house in 1968 before the rear porch addition.*

The renovation by the Junior Assembly of Athens was the first major construction project to repair and restore the house after a decade of inattention. The project succeeded with the hands-on work of the ladies of the Junior Assembly along with contributions from local businesses and private donors.



*Figures 27-29: Mr. Bill Mathis sharing plans with Mrs. Cabiniss, Mrs. Terry, Mrs. Gibson and Mrs. McLeod, the Executive Committee of the Taylor-Grady House in 1968; Two images of the exposed bricks within the columns during construction.*

Mr. Bill Mathis, of Mathis Construction Co., and architect Wilmer Heery led the renovations. Mathis donated his time, materials, stock and his expertise to the restoration of the house.<sup>161</sup> Many structural repairs and updates were made to the envelope of the house, the

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<sup>161</sup> “Patron Saints of the Taylor-Grady House” Video. Collaborated by the Junior League of Athens in 2012.

interiors, and the air conditioning system.<sup>162</sup> The porch addition on the western exterior of the kitchen wing was removed and a new porch with mirrored flanking stairs was added to the rear of the house. The Assembly projected that a budget of at least \$10,000 would be required to modernize the archaic kitchen. Interior decoration was completed by the ladies, which included interior painting, wallpapering, and providing appropriate window treatments.<sup>163</sup> During renovations, the house was still rented for events, which took place in completed areas of the house. The rental fees contributed towards the restoration fund.



*Figures 30-32: The ladies were completely involved with the renovation. Inside, the women cleaned the entire house, wallpapered the main floor rooms, painted, and picked out fabrics for drapes.*

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<sup>162</sup> Biehl, Ada. "Grady Home is Restored: Women Seeking Funds To Complete Project" *The Atlanta Constitution*, 28, Nov. 1969. p. 9B

<sup>163</sup> Biehl

## The Landscape



Figure 33-34: The house was not the only project undertaken by the Junior Assembly. The landscape was overgrown in 1968. The dovecote on the left shows remains of the servants' quarters, and a well cover existed in the middle of the yard with a colonial structure.

The Assembly joined with University of Georgia students in the School of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Design in 1968 to create a plan and scaled model of the house and grounds. Two seniors researched historic gardens of Greek Revival homes and a front yard boxwood garden was deemed appropriate for the style and period house. However, because of existing mature trees, the designers opted to place the boxwood garden in the side yard<sup>164</sup> and the Junior Ladies Garden Club assisted in the implementation of the plan and completed the boxwood plantings in November 1968.<sup>165</sup> They also added a patio and brick walkways and maintained the gardens.

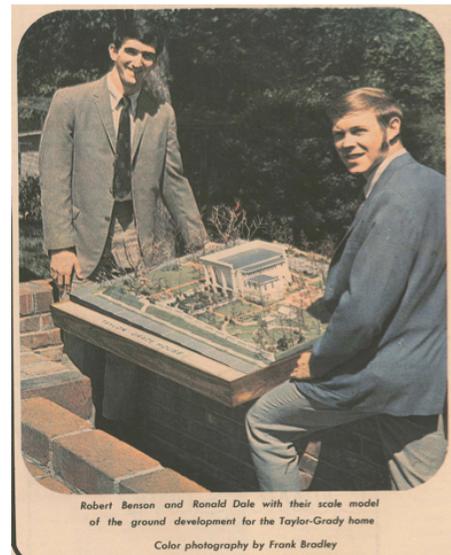


Figure 35: Landscape architect students created a historic landscape plan in 1968.

<sup>164</sup> Tritt, Bob Jr. "Students Assist Athens," May 18, 1969. *Athens Banner-Herald and Daily News*, pp. 1, 8-9D.

<sup>165</sup> Biehl.

### **1975 National Register Nomination**

Once the house was fully completed, Mary Jane Gregory and Ralph Christian of the American Association for State and Local History, prepared the 1975 National Register and photographed the property. They concluded that the house had only received minor alterations, except for the removal of the pocket doors to create the ballroom and the addition of the 1950 extensions to the back porch and the 1969 rear portico.<sup>166</sup>

### **Renovations during the 1980s and 1990s**

In the 1980s, the Athens Junior League continued to implement modifications and renovations to the Taylor-Grady House in conjunction with the City of Athens. In January 1986, a project to refurbish the house began, which required that the house be closed for ten weeks. At a cost of \$31,000, the ballroom, downstairs hall, and upstairs hall were painted and the floors refinished. The second floor east bathroom, known as the groom's bathroom, was updated and the interior flooring was restored.<sup>167</sup> The City of Athens also completed major outside repairs including restoring some of the damaged wood under the front portico.

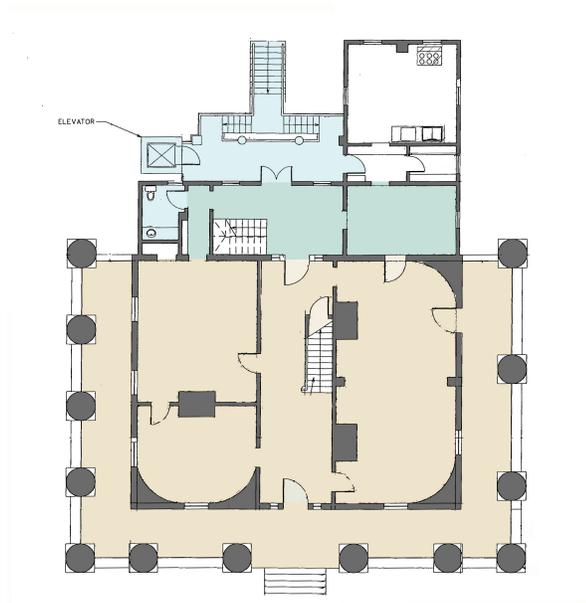
In 1993, the Junior League of Athens renewed the lease contract on the Taylor-Grady House with Athens-Clarke County, securing the lease agreement between the League and the County until the year 2003. The City began extensive exterior renovations including porch replacements, painting and wood repair, as well as research and design for handicapped access to the house. At the end of 1994, the membership approved a substantial release of funds from restricted accounts to refurbish the interior of the Taylor-Grady House. In the late nineties, an

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<sup>166</sup> Gregory, Mary Jane and Ralph Christian. *National Register of Historic Places*. "Robert Taylor-Henry Grady House." American Association for State and Local History. Nashville, TN. 1975

<sup>167</sup> The Junior League of Athens. History "Early 1990s"  
<http://www.juniorleagueofathens.org/athens/npo.jsp?pg=about2&tab=Early%201990%27s>

elevator shaft was added to the rear porch of the house as a result of the City's enforcement of American Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.<sup>168</sup>



*Figure 36: The floor plan of the house after the Junior Assembly's 1969 renovation, with the elevator shaft being an addition from the 1990s.*



*Figure 37-38: Photos of the front porch restoration in 1980.*

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<sup>168</sup> Interview with Robert Baird of Athens Clarke County Central Services Dept., Feb. 21, 2014. Athens, Ga.

## **The SPLOST Project in 2004**

The League partnered with the City of Athens in 2004 to complete an historic restoration for the Taylor-Grady House. The project consisted of repairs and restoration and was funded by the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County under the SPLOST Program (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) as Project #37. The SPLOST funds, along with matching funds from the Save America's Treasures matching grant, totaled \$524,462 for construction, material costs, and labor.<sup>169</sup> The Jaeger Company, of Gainesville, Georgia implemented the Design/Build project and a cultural landscape assessment under the direction of a board comprised of three historic preservation specialists, two Athens Junior League representatives, two Athens-Clarke County Central Services Department representatives, and a Project Administrator.<sup>170</sup>

The restoration of the house was based on Henry W. Grady's occupancy of the house from 1863-1872 and based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation (1995). The architectural work throughout the project included repairs of the interior and exterior, including upgrades to the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems. Other improvements included the installation of sprinkler and alarm systems. Restoration Craftsmen of Atlanta were responsible for the paint investigation, which was used to determine the wall paint colors during the period of significance, Grady's residence in the late 1860s.<sup>171</sup>

## **Interior Improvements**

During this 2004 restoration, the office on the main floor was relocated to a room in the basement. The cooking area was converted into a warming kitchen, where the cooking

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<sup>169</sup> Save America's Treasures Original 2004 Application. 2004 SPLOST Project description. The Junior League of Athens. Athens, Ga.

<sup>170</sup> 2004 SPLOST Project description. The Junior League of Athens. Athens, Ga.

<sup>171</sup> 2004 SPLOST Project description.

equipment was replaced with warming ovens and commercial grade appliance to facilitate event catering. The first floor underwent a paint analysis and finishes were restored for the center hallway, ballroom, dining room and parlor. The second floor underwent system upgrades, repairs, and painting. The second floor bathroom was upgraded with new finishes and plumbing.<sup>172</sup>

### **Structural Improvement**

The structure of the flooring on the first floor was reinforced by sistering the supporting joists per the requirements established in the Structural Narrative and the Code Analysis.<sup>173</sup> An elevator and shaft were added to the northwest corner of the building and an accessible restroom was installed on the basement level according to ADA requirements. The existing first floor bathroom was retrofitted to comply with new ADA standards. The second floor space, which is not considered public space except for bridal parties, did not undergo ADA upgrades.<sup>174</sup>

### **Exterior Improvements**

The SPLOST program project was initially intended to repair and restore the existing 6-over-6-over-6, triple-sash hanging windows, which were added sometime after the original construction of the house. They once gave access to the porch, but after inspection, several window components were deemed beyond repair. So the windows were replaced with 9-over-9 inoperable windows. Descending to floor level and formerly operable, the existing windows had allowed for the lower and middle sash to be raised and, thus, permitted walking passage to the

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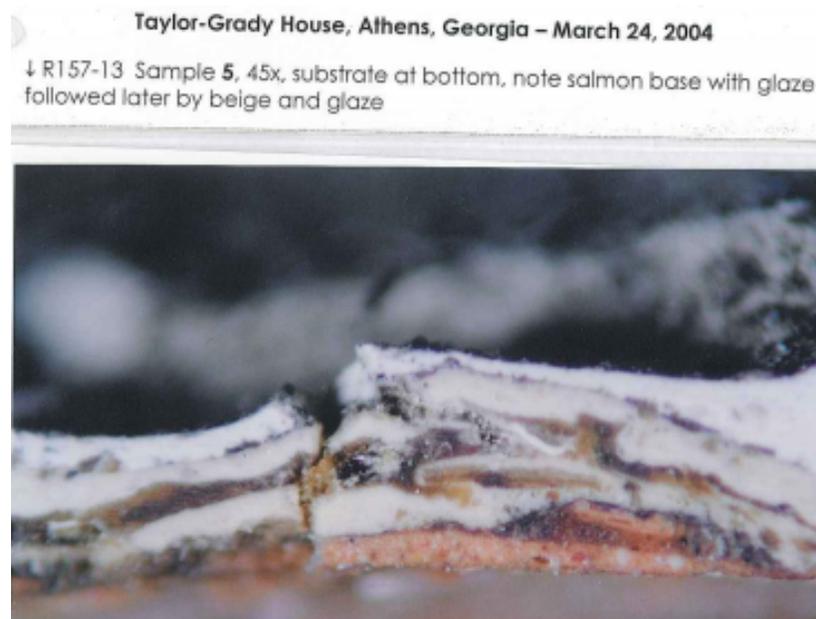
<sup>172</sup> 2004 SPLOST Project description.

<sup>173</sup> Taylor-Grady House 2004 Renovations. ACC Unified Government, SPLOST Program Management, Project 37. Architectural narrative LAS Job. No. 24004-00. Page 2

<sup>174</sup> 2004 SPLOST Project description.

porch. After the restoration project, the rear window in the ballroom was re-designed as a door, to continue to allow passage to the porch. Many exterior shutters were missing, but those remaining were analyzed for the original paint samples and restored.

The exterior surfaces, including trim, siding, fencing, and woodwork were inspected and repaired or replaced in kind. Sections of the parapet, cornice, and column capitals had deteriorated and were also replaced in kind, matching all original material. Railings, too, were strengthened to achieve required loading capacities. Chimneys were inspected and refitted with flashing to code. All paint removal was done carefully to avoid compromising historic integrity.<sup>175</sup>



*Figure 39: Sample of paint recovered from the paint color analysis of main floor hallway*

From the paint investigation, preliminary findings determined that the moldings throughout the main floor were not present during the period of significance. The baseboard and window trim, and sash samplings, however, indicated only minor changes since their

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<sup>175</sup> 2004 SPLOST Project description.

construction. “A salmon base coat and reddish brown glaze are found on [the unchanged elements]” and much evidence survived in the second floor hallway, showing a consistent layer of Venetian red paint. By examining the surfaces hidden under the door hardware, the investigators found that the doors existed in their natural finish until relatively recent times.<sup>176</sup> The dovecote was at one point considered to serve as an additional restroom space, but due to budgetary concerns, it was deemed to serve as a storage space.

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<sup>176</sup> “Re: Taylor-Grady paint investigation preliminary findings.” Correspondence from Steve Tilander of Restoration Craftsmen, Atlanta to Jeff Prine for the Historic Paint Analysis Report, SPLOST Project #37, Athens Clarke County Unified Government 2004.

CHAPTER 6  
THE COLLECTION

In 1969, after the renovations were completed, the Junior Assembly created a system for receiving and acknowledging donations to the house. The Taylor-Grady House contains a collection of over 200 pieces, mostly donated by Albert Dobbs Sams (1905-1986). Various other private individuals and local businesses have donated pieces to the collection. There are also several pieces on loan from the University of Georgia.



*Figure 40: Portrait of Mr. Albert Dobbs Sams*

## The Albert Dobbs Sams Collection

Albert Dobbs Sams (1905-1986), one of the largest benefactors of decorative arts in Athens, generously contributed the majority of the antique collection at the Taylor-Grady House. He is responsible for the antiques at several historic houses during the seventies. In addition to the Taylor-Grady House, he donated antiques to the Church Waddell Brumby House, Demosthenian Hall, the Joseph Henry Lumpkin House, and White Hall.<sup>177</sup> Up until his death, he continued to donate from his personal collection, the unofficial Albert D. Sams Decorative Arts Collection, to collections throughout Athens.

Sams inherited from his father the ownership of the Athens Coca Cola Bottling Company as well as an admiration for historic preservation and antiques. He was a charter member of the Society for the Preservation of Old Athens in 1959, and was also a member of the Athens Historical Society. His expertise in historic architecture and the decorative arts was self-taught and Sams gave lectures on various subjects to local groups such as the Junior League and Garden Club.<sup>178</sup>

Albert Sams was not only the largest contributor of the furnishings, but he also advised the type and period of furnishings consistent with the house's aesthetic appeal.<sup>179</sup> His portrait, hangs in the parlor and at its dedication in 1987, his wife Anita Sams explained how much he loved the Taylor-Grady House. "It gave him great personal pleasure to restore it to its former beauty."<sup>180</sup> When donating furniture to a house's collection, Sams put much consideration into its style. The items that he gave to the Taylor-Grady collection are comprised mostly of

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<sup>177</sup> Therrien, Michelle M. "Albert D. Sams and the Church-Waddell-Brumby House: Reconciling This Benefactor's Intent with Emerging Reinterpretation Philosophies." Thesis. The University of Georgia, 2005. Athens: University of Georgia, 2005. Print.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Maisie T. Underwood, "Eight years later, the Taylor-Grady House," *Athens Banner Herald*, 12 May 1974.

<sup>180</sup> "The Patron Saints of the Taylor-Grady House." Video. Junior League of Athens. 2012.

Sheraton, Empire, and Regency pieces. Sams became very involved during the restoration of the house in 1969. He is responsible for the recreated fireplace mantles and the attached exotic revival mirrors in the ballroom and dining room. *See Appendix A of Sams' Donations from 1969-1974.*

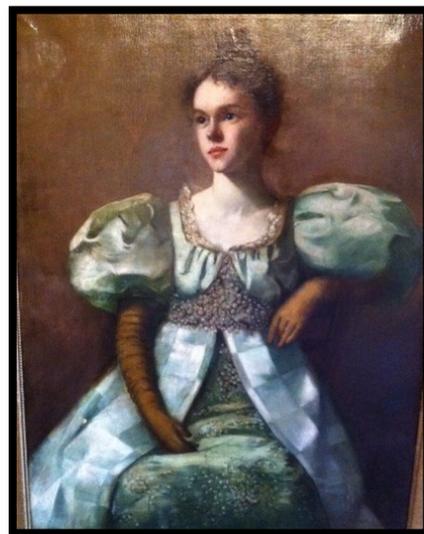
### **University of Georgia Loaned Collection**

On July 9th, 1969, John L. Green, Jr., the Vice President for Business and Finance at the University of Georgia, Athens, signed the loan agreement for the collection, loaned to the Taylor-Grady House, to be insured and maintained by the membership of the Junior Assembly. Today, there are still eighteen of these pieces on display at the house. *See Appendix B for Loans from the University of Georgia*



*Figure 41-42: Two 19th century globes and a cherry four-post bed on loan from the University of Georgia.*

## Other donations to Taylor-Grady



*Figures 43-44: Mr. and Mrs. Eugene R. Black, Jr. of New York stand with Mr. Albert Sams, his sister Mrs. Edwards Sams and Mrs. Dick Ferguson during the donation of Augusta's portrait; Augusta King Grady, daughter of Henry Grady, appears in the 1895 portrait at age nineteen in her mother's wedding dress (Artist: Ella Clayton Merrell). It now hangs in the dining room at Taylor-Grady.*

The portrait of Augusta King Grady Black, daughter of Henry Grady, was donated to the Taylor-Grady House in 1975 by her son, Mr. Eugene R. Black, Jr. of New York. Mr. Black attended the debut of the newly renovated Taylor-Grady House and decided that the portrait of Augusta belonged in the house.<sup>181</sup> The portrait, by Ella Clayton Merrell in 1895, is hanging in the dining room and was restored in January 2013.

The Pilot club donated the secretary in the library<sup>182</sup> and Sustainer members of the Junior Assembly donated the pair of reproduction Italian Empire chandeliers in the ballroom to replace the original fixtures removed from the house. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Rowland donated boxwoods for the garden and the Mr. and Mrs. Hal Cofer donated the grass seed. Eugenia Arnold Friend

<sup>181</sup> Booker, Meg Gunn. "Augusta Grady portrait Arrives to Grace Taylor-Grady Parlor." *Banner-Herald*. 1975, p. 4c.

<sup>182</sup> "Pilot Club Donates Secretary" *Athens Banner Herald*. May 1970, p.4.

donated the Louis XV style crystal chandelier in dining room.<sup>183</sup> Merry Brothers Brick Company of Augusta, Georgia donated 25,000 brick pavers for the landscape walkways and patio.<sup>184</sup>

During the dedication ceremony of the Taylor-Grady House's renovations from the 2004 SPLOST Project, Robert and Denise Morris donated the two Georgia Cooke paintings of General Robert Taylor and his second wife Eliza B. D. Taylor.<sup>185</sup> In 2012, a descendant of the Taylors donated the childhood portrait of Richard Deloney Bolling Taylor. According to family legend, the large hole in the bottom right corner of the painting is the result of a musket shot.<sup>186</sup> The painting is the third George Cooke painting now housed at Taylor-Grady. It was restored, leaving the supposed musket hole, and now hangs in the main hallway.

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<sup>183</sup> "Patron Saints of the Taylor-Grady House" Video by Junior League of Athens, 2012.

<sup>184</sup> Cox, Dana P. "History of the Restoration of the Taylor-Grady House" In the Junior Assembly Archives at the Taylor-Grady House. p. 12

<sup>185</sup> Program for the Dedication ceremony of the 2004 SPLOST Renovations. The Taylor-Grady House, Athens, Georgia. Nov. 16, 2004

<sup>186</sup> Robert Morris interview, by author. Phone. 18 February 2014.

PART II:  
THE INTERPRETATION OF THE TAYLOR-GRADY HOUSE

## CHAPTER 7

### BACKGROUND ON HOUSE MUSEUMS & INTERPRETATION

The developmental history of house museums is congruent with the movement of historic preservation. House museums' advancement was dependent on the same landmark events that formed the field of historic preservation, beginning with the momentous formation of the "Ladies of Mount- Vernon" in the 1850s.

Ann Pamela Cunningham and her supporting group of women established the first private and voluntary preservation task force to save the childhood home of George Washington from destruction; hence they were referred to by the namesake property, Mount Vernon.<sup>187</sup> The philosophy and template for the creation of future house museums would be based upon the decisions made by Ann Pamela Cunningham and her volunteers, the "Ladies of Mount Vernon."<sup>188</sup>

Another landmark event in the field of preservation was the creation of the National Parks Service in 1916, which "served as the mechanism for the expanded role of the federal government in the development of house museums during the mid-twentieth century."<sup>189</sup>

In 1910, William Sumner Appleton advanced the appreciation of the house museum independent of its association with an historical figure or event, advocating the concept of

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<sup>187</sup> Alexander, Edward P. *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1979. 127. Print.

<sup>188</sup> Donnelly, Jessica Foy. "Past, Present, and Future" *Interpreting Historic House Museums*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2002. 23. Print.

<sup>189</sup> Donnelly, 26

architectural and aesthetic significance.<sup>190</sup> He was the founder of the *Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities* (SPNEA) and is credited with promoting and preserving many “aesthetically pleasing” buildings of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. His criteria for a building’s preservation was not only to be beautiful, but to have “had historic significance, and could be independently supported.” Appleton died in 1947, but the SPNEA is still active today, though the organization’s name has been changed to *Historic New England*.<sup>191</sup>

The restoration and re-creation of Colonial Williamsburg in 1935 by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. inspired the idea of a living history museum, where the education it provides extends beyond the confines of the interiors, while also employing a multi-disciplinary approach to research through archeology, architecture and history.<sup>192</sup>

Finally, a notable landmark event with respect to the correlation between house museums and the historic preservation movement is the establishment of The National Historic Trust in 1949 by congressional charter. This privately endowed, nonprofit organization, based in Washington, D.C., provides support for the preservation of historic buildings, including houses, through its programs, resources and advocacy.<sup>193</sup>

The growing appreciation of the history of America during the country’s bicentennial celebrations in 1976 prompted the public’s interest in the past, and house museums were the used to explore this past.<sup>194</sup> A large increase in the number of house museums occurred during the second half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and over 6,000 historic house museums were created within sixty years between the end of World War II and the year 2000.<sup>195</sup> As the historic preservation

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<sup>190</sup>Alexander, 127

<sup>191</sup>Donnelly, 25

<sup>192</sup> Donnelly, 27

<sup>193</sup>Donnelly, 28

<sup>194</sup> Donnelly, 29

<sup>195</sup> Donnelly, 28-29

movement grew to become an important part of American culture, the house museums became an integral part of the movement providing physical evidence of the past. All of these landmark events in the movement of historic preservation greatly influenced the development and appreciation of the house museum's formation, operation, and interpretation. This appreciation is a tribute to the past and pertains to current and future house museums as well.

### **Interpretation Theory**

During the mid-nineteenth century, there was an expansion of research in the field of preservation through archaeology and research that created the need for a professional staff to operate house museums.<sup>196</sup> Academic programs and theories developed on how to properly interpret a house museum for greater educational benefit and a better visitor- experience. The most notable theorist on interpretation is Freeman Tilden. Considered the “Godfather of Interpretation,”<sup>197</sup> he was one of the first people to set down the principles and theories of heritage interpretation in his 1957 book, *Interpreting Our Heritage*. His words, “Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection” are the “most oft-cited phrase in all the interpretation literature.”<sup>198</sup> While working for the US National Parks Service, Tilden was able to apply his “sense of humor and keen perception of human nature” in order to formulate a plan for public relations and interpretation in the 1940s.<sup>199</sup> His many lectures and writings on the topic are widely applicable to interpretation in all aspects of education: natural history, large museums, and national parks, but his theories

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid, 32

<sup>197</sup> Elizabeth Goetsch “Beyond Tilden.” History and Interpretation Blog via Blogger.com. Posted March 23, 2013. Internet; Accessed February 23, 2014 <http://www.historyandinterpretation.com/2013/03/thinking-beyond-tilden.html>

<sup>198</sup> Ham, Sam. “From Interpretation to Protection: Is There a Theoretical Basis?” *Journal of Interpretation Research*, vol. 14 no. 2: 49-57, (2009). Internet; Accessed February 2, 2014 <http://www.interpnet.com/docs/JIR-v14n2.pdf>

<sup>199</sup> Tilden, Freeman, and R. Bruce Craig. *Interpreting Our Heritage*. Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina, 2007. 6. Print.

also directly apply to the proper interpretation for house museums. In his 1957 book, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, considered to be the definitive text for generations of interpreters, Freeman Tilden defined six principles of interpretation, listed below with further explanation tied to the goal of this thesis.<sup>200</sup>

1. “Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.” This principle is the most important of Tilden’s advice for interpretation, and is acknowledged in every resource regarding interpretation. The connection between the visitor and the content of any exhibit is the objective for all museum interpretation and without that connection, there is no purpose for the exhibit. This connection is more easily accomplished when the experience of the visitor and motivation for visiting are understood.<sup>201</sup>
2. “Information... is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However all interpretation includes information.” This principle relies on proper research to form the foundation of any exhibit. From that foundation, the use of creativity is needed to present that information.
3. “Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.” This explains the need for multi-dimensional exhibits to share the information or content with the audience. All house museums are unique, and their interpretation is also unique. The use of creativity correlates to this principle of interpretation being art, and the creative usage impacts the decision process of choosing these mediums for the exhibit.

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<sup>200</sup> Tilden, 18

<sup>201</sup> Donnelly, 238

4. “The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.” Education is the goal with house museum interpretation, but the route to accomplishing that goal is indirect. The visitors must enjoy the exhibit and through their enjoyment, passively learn the intended educational themes.
5. “Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.” The overview or theme of the exhibit must be introduced before numerous details are discussed. In this principle, Tilden is referring to the absorptive capacity and understanding of a visitor during a visit to a museum. No matter how interesting a single part of the exhibit’s narrative may be, the association of the exhibit feature to the theme will be lost if the exhibit premise has not been represented. This refers to historical context as well.
6. “Interpretation addressed to children (up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.” A separate educational program for children, I propose, should be created through the Athens Historic House Museum Association. Children are not included as the current audience of the house, and thus this principle is not a focus for this thesis.

Five of the six principles by Tilden are the basis of content and design decisions throughout the process of creating the interpretation plan and materials. They are also the foundational standards for other guides to interpretation and small museum planning. The other main resources for the development, design and organization of the interpretation plan for the Taylor-Grady House were: Book 5 of *The Small Museum Toolkit* series, “Interpretation: Education, Programs, and Exhibits”, as well as Jessica F. Donnelly’s *Interpreting Historic House*

*Museums*, which is a collection of fourteen different essays by various preservation professionals.

Donnelly's *Interpreting* reflects the six principles of Tilman through a compilation of several authors focusing on historic house museums. This 2002 volume of essays covers the many approaches to interpretation of historic residences and themes that may rise from a residential perspective. The second essay, "Interpretive Planning: Why and How" by Barbara Ambramoff Levy, offers Tilman's definition of 'interpretation' before providing the guidelines for developing a strong interpretation plan. Reflecting Tilman's first principle, she instructs museum boards developing interpretation plans to determine the audience, and then choose how the museum will communicate with said audience. Other chapters of Donnelly's *Interpreting* continue to employ Tilman's theory, while adding modern perspectives for interpretation. The third essay, "Interpreting the Whole House" by Rex M. Ellis, discusses integrating the sometimes controversial or ignored 'other stories' of a house's history into interpretation plans. He specifically discusses the topic of slavery. There is a "broadening of perspectives" and increasing level of interest in minority history, which he explains is changing the way that house museums interpret their history.<sup>202</sup>

The other literary resource, Book 5 of *The Small Museum Toolkit* series, "Interpretation: Education, Programs, and Exhibits," builds upon the works of Tilman and Donnelly. The *Small Museum Toolkit* collection of six books, written by thirty-four experienced museum professionals, covers a wide range of topics for small museums. Book 5 focuses on the interpretation of small museums and provides very straightforward and adaptable steps for researching and developing a successful exhibit and educational program. The fifth book was

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<sup>202</sup> Donnelly, 61

published in 2012, and lends the most direct guide necessary for the current state of the Taylor-Grady House. Book 5 adapts the principles created by Tilman and applies them to current day small museums. Book 5 also references Donnelly's *Interpretation* as a resource "especially helpful in interpretation."<sup>203</sup> The constant reminder to connect with the audience's education and experience through exhibit design is interwoven through every chapter. All three literary resources (Tilman, Donnelly and Book 5) offered a similar process from different perspectives, equally contributing to the development and direction of the interpretation plan for the Taylor-Grady House.

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<sup>203</sup> Legutko, Cinnamon. *The Small Museum Toolkit*. "Interpretation: Education, Programs and Exhibits." Lanham, Md.: AltaMira Press, 2012. 24

## CHAPTER 8

### CURRENT ORGANIZATION

Preservation author Donnelly says, “No two house museums are alike. What works at one place may fail at another, so each site must discover what it can and cannot do.”<sup>204</sup> The primary role of the Taylor-Grady House is to serve as an event rental facility for the community. It has been used in this capacity for over forty years and is considered a highly desirable location for weddings and private events due to its opulent architecture, proximity to downtown Athens, and modest prices. In the last five years, the house has had an increase in the average of events each year, with twenty-seven events in 2009 and thirty-six in 2013. The estimated number of events for 2014 is expected to continue to increase. Each wedding can accommodate 50 to 300 guests, with an average of 150 guests. Other events include smaller social gatherings, which average around 30 to 50 guests. Income produced by the Taylor-Grady House as a rental facility is determined by the guest count of the individual event.<sup>205</sup>

An additional role of the house is to serve as headquarters for the Junior League of Athens (JLA), which oversees and leases the house from the City of Athens. The JLA maintains the interiors, while the City maintains the landscape, mechanical systems and the exterior. The JLA uses the conference room and dining room for monthly meetings. The basement of the Taylor-Grady House stores over seventy-five years of JLA and Junior Assembly archives and the organization uses the house to host various JLA events and fundraisers throughout the year.

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<sup>204</sup> Donnelly, 270

<sup>205</sup> Numbers based on Weddings and Events averaged from 2009 through Spring 2014

The third role of the house is to serve Athens as a small house museum for the public, open for self-guided tours during the part-time office hours.<sup>206</sup> This role of house museum is substantiated by the Taylor-Grady House's long history and national landmark status, but this role cannot interfere with the other two roles. Because funding is limited, tours must be self-guided and are only available during the part-time office hours, Monday through Friday. The Taylor-Grady House is associated with the Athens Historic House Museum Association which is comprised of four house museums located within a mile of each other: The Church-Waddell-Brumby House or Athens Welcome Center, the Lyndon House, the T. R. R. Cobb House, and the Taylor-Grady House. Through this organization, educational programs are developed for the public and local schools. The Museum Mile, offered through the Athens Welcome Center, provides the only guided tour of the four houses, and accounts for up to 30 visitors to the house each month.<sup>207</sup>

### **The Current Role as a House Museum**

Currently, there is not an interpretation plan for the Taylor-Grady House. The only tour document for the house is a short, six-page document that is printed as needed for visitors. This leaflet's content is a product of researcher and former Junior Assembly president, Charlotte Marshall, and the original house "hostess," or docent, Ms. Laurie Hill Thompson's tour pamphlet, *The Taylor-Grady House: Epitome of an Era*.<sup>208</sup> There are no documented references for this information, with some content based on verbal histories and anecdotal information on objects unassociated with the property. The tour content lacks attention to the architectural

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<sup>206</sup> 2004 SPLOST Project #37 Introduction. Junior League of Athens.

<sup>207</sup> Budget of AHHMA Museum Mile Tour Monthly Income, 2012-2013

<sup>208</sup> Thompson, Laurie Hill. "The Taylor-Grady House: Epitome of an Era." Anthemion Press, Athens, Georgia. 1979.

history of the house, focusing mainly on the attractive, however, non-original antiques and the general functions of other furnishings. For example, a sewing machine in the bride's room is described in detail. It is important to note, there is no mention or homage paid to the donors of the significant collection of furnishings, including Mr. Albert Sams.

Visitors regularly have many questions after completing the self-guided tour. A survey of visitors over a six-month period provided a compilation of commentary from visitors' responses to the question, "What changes would you like to see made to the Taylor-Grady House?" A common suggestion is to add information to the tour guide or simply written "Improve tour guide."<sup>209</sup> The creation of a comprehensive interpretation plan could address these concerns.

## **Audience**

There is a great advantage to the division of roles of the Taylor-Grady House as a rental facility, league headquarters, and house museum. These three roles together bring a larger audience to the house than it would receive solely as a house museum. According to all sources for interpretation theory, it is recommended to identify and understand the audience of the house museum in order to create an interpretive plan that will properly connect with their experiences.<sup>210</sup> The twenty-six to thirty-two weddings and events each year at the Taylor-Grady House expose the house to approximately 3,500 guests annually. The guests who attend social events at the house provide a larger audience for an accessible interpretation, facilitating in public education.

The Junior League averages 150 "Actives" members with 30-40 "New Members" each year, but the use of the house by all members is infrequent. During the New Member training,

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<sup>209</sup> See attached survey.

<sup>210</sup> Legutko, 103; Donnelly, 10, 36

the new members are given a brief introduction to the history of the Taylor-Grady House and the Junior Assembly, but this training only includes a vague timeline. The use of the house as the JLA headquarters brings an additional group that could benefit from a new interpretation plan in order to dive deeper into the history of their headquarters. Although the continued use of the Taylor-Grady House as the fundraising venue for the Junior League of Athens has diminished, the remaining fundraising projects that invite the public into the house do bring an additional audience and functional opportunity for a new interpretation plan.

According to a visitor survey conducted at the Taylor-Grady House from June to December 2013, the monthly number of visitors (not including event guests) ranges from 30 to 50 people.<sup>211</sup> These visitors are from all over the country, and from as far as The United Kingdom and Brazil. When asked what brought them to tour the Taylor-Grady House, the majority said they were drawn to the antebellum architecture. About one half of the new visitors were recommended to visit the house museum by the Athens Welcome Center. Less than a twenty-five percent were revisiting after attending a wedding event at the house. Another twenty-five percent live in Athens and were curious to see the interior and learn more about the house. A few visitors were students from the University of Georgia or Athens Technical College who came for research purposes.<sup>212</sup>

By better understanding of the interests of the different demographic groups visiting the house, a new interpretation plan can address their different experiences when creating the content for the exhibit. For example, the next bride that reads the exhibit panels may enjoy the fact that her wedding ceremony shared the same location as the first wedding in 1970. Junior League members may make a connection with past Junior Assembly members. The house could function

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<sup>211</sup> Save America's Treasures Application 2004 for the SPLOST Project, The Junior League of Athens.

<sup>212</sup> Survey conducted by the Taylor-Grady House. June – December 2013.

as an enhanced resource for University students and other academics providing a better understanding of topics such as antebellum architecture, 19<sup>th</sup> century furniture, the decorative arts, and the significance of the Taylor and Grady families to Southern history.

### **Balancing Roles**

The role of rental facility does provide a larger audience for potential education, but it also impacts the process for developing an interpretation plan. The Taylor-Grady House is different than other typical house museums in Athens because of its primary role as a rental facility. The house is one of many historic house museums in the country that provides rental space for special events as a means of income for financial survival.<sup>213</sup> Research on the effect of renting house museums as venues has determined many disadvantages for the museum includes the liability and potential damage or loss of historic integrity through physical wear on the houses and collections. Despite these risks, many house museums continue to proceed with rentals. Another disadvantage of allowing a house museum to host events is “the museum [staff and board] may gradually make decisions based on the needs of special events, and not for the advancement of the educational programs, building preservation, or collections care”<sup>214</sup> It has been suggested that this is the case for the Taylor-Grady House and because of this prioritization of the rental facility over the educational aspect, the interpretation must stay in an isolated place in the house, as to not interfere with the rental facility function or aesthetic. Also, because of the increased wear and tear of the house, the interpretive exhibit needs to be designed in a two-dimensional form and non-interactive in order to prevent any issues with disorderly event guests.

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<sup>213</sup> Hannah, Lindsay S. “The Impact of Special Events on Historic House Museums” Thesis. Master of Science, University of Pennsylvania. 2001.

<sup>214</sup> Hannah, p. 10

The use of artifacts and objects within the interpretive exhibit will also need to be kept to a minimum to avoid liability or maintenance issues.

The Taylor-Grady House currently serves various roles as rental facility, organization headquarters and a house museum, which create opportunities to serve a larger audience. By better understanding the respective audiences' experiences, a formal interpretation plan can be created to properly educate them on the house's significance, historically and architecturally. This interpretive exhibit should be flexible in its location in the house, durable, educational, accurate and enjoyable to provide an audience with an experience he or she can relate as a guest of the Taylor-Grady House, no matter which role brings them to visit.

## CHAPTER 9

### THE PROPOSED INTERPRETATION PLAN

An Interpretation Plan is defined as: "a framework for understanding the museum, by relating specific places and people, of the past and present, to each other and to a larger cultural and historical idea."<sup>215</sup> The interpretation plan for the Taylor-Grady House will be different than its counterpart house museums in Athens, Georgia. The Lyndon House, T. R. R. Cobb House and Church-Waddell-Brumby House all have uniquely different educational focuses, unique missions and forms of interpretation. The Taylor-Grady House must create a mission that finds a balance between public education and income production as a rental facility. According to the *Small Museum Toolkit*, an interpretation plan should be created by first defining the museum's "major themes, interpretation philosophy, specific content," and then developing "recommendations of strategies to carry out discussed content."<sup>216</sup> The following are recommendations to achieve a functional house museum and rental facility for the Taylor-Grady House.

#### **1. Create an Advisory Panel/Committee**

Enlisting a group of professionals to serve on a committee as an Advisory Panel will provide a consistent process to follow for any changes suggested or made to the Taylor-Grady House, ensuring that the operation of the house is maintained and all regulations are adhered to for event rentals. This panel will consist of the Administrative Assistant; the Chairs of the Junior League's

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<sup>215</sup> Legutko, 10

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, 12

Taylor-Grady House Committee; recruited volunteers from the JLA Sustainers who are interested in the house's operation; and a representative from either the Georgia Museum of Art or a volunteer with comparable background in the decorative arts, who can offer a specialized view on the decorative arts collection. This Advisory Panel will be responsible for creating a mission statement for the house and ensuring that the house and its operation abide by this mission statement.<sup>217</sup> Other duties of the Advisory Panel will include overseeing major and minor interior maintenance, approving and researching any additions made to the antique collection and their placement, and approving any new museum interpretation. The parameters for this Advisory Panel can be based on those of the Church-Waddell-Brumby House. The meetings of the panel should take place quarterly, or as deemed necessary. The chair of the committee would be elected to initiate the meetings, take notes and call to order. This panel would edit and approve of any changes to the self-guided tour and informational panels.

*See Appendix C for The Taylor-Grady House Advisory Panel Example*

## **2. Create a Mission Statement**

Creating a mission statement should be the first goal of the Taylor-Grady Advisory Panel in order to guide all decisions pertaining to the preservation of the house, the antique collection, and its daily operation. *The Toolkit for Small Museums Book 1: "Leadership, Mission, and Governance"* recommends that the mission statement exists to explain "why the museum exists, and for whom?" This mission statement can simply proclaim a present criterion against which the operations of the museum should be referred to<sup>218</sup> or it can provide a future goal for the museum as a vision statement. The latter definition suggests an example mission statement:

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<sup>217</sup> Interview with Evelyn Reece, by author. Email. Feb. 14, 2014.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid, 35

*The Taylor-Grady House is an architectural treasure that will serve the City of Athens as a public rental facility and as a small house museum, promoting its well-preserved architecture and 19<sup>th</sup> century antique collection for the enjoyment of the public and the use as a venue for future events.*

The mission adopted by the Advisory Panel should guide all decisions concerning future exhibit content, permanent installations and any educational programs.

The *Toolkit* also recommends creating an “Interpretive Statement of Purpose” which is a byproduct of the mission statement. This statement aids in the decision of themes for exhibits, and defends any changes to the original narrative.<sup>219</sup> When a museum exhibit is self-directed and non-linear, great challenges arise in forming clear communication with its audience. A theme or main message should be created to unify the content of the museum exhibit.<sup>220</sup> A theme can be created beginning with simple facts, then conceptualizing a theme, and from that theme, creating a storyline that will be the foundation of the museum exhibit.

The theme selected for the example informational panels is, “The well-preserved antebellum home was built by a wealthy cotton merchant, was the college residence of a nationally significant journalist, survives because of 20<sup>th</sup> century women’s activism, and today displays a valuable 19<sup>th</sup> century decorative arts collection.” This theme is never clearly stated in the panels, but its implication keeps the focus of the interpretation on all things relevant to the house, without diverting to sub-themes such as, for example, the life of Henry Grady or other topics that may not pertain directly with the house.

The Interpretive Statement of Purpose will also help keep any controversial subject matter that may arise in the new interpretation plan in context. According to Legutko, “There is a

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid, 7

<sup>220</sup> Legutko, 76

common institutional fear of changing course into areas that may distort the museum's identity and message when addressing difficult issues."<sup>221</sup> The historic association of the house with slavery as part of Clarke County history would be one example.

### **3. Create the Exhibit**

The interpretation tools, or interpretive mediums, will be used to carry out the defined mission of the house museum, its themes, and educational goals of the Advisory Panel. The proposed mediums to be used for the interpretation are the installation of an exhibit consisting of three information panels and an updated self-guided tour. Tilden sometimes spoke of "Planned In-action" concerning the development of interpretation programs and exhibits.<sup>222</sup> He also advocated the idea of "Nothing In Excess" when creating an experience for visitors of museums. He promised that sometimes, understating or minimizing the interpretation is the best approach to convey a powerful message. Currently, the technology available for museum interpretation is great, from audio tours, cell phone tours, interactive screens, and motion activation to GPS Geocaching.<sup>223</sup> In the case of the Taylor-Grady House museum, technology can be woven into the exhibits and programs, but in an inconspicuous manner. The current array of technology did not exist when Tilden developed interpretation theories, but his message remains true, that sometimes the viewer wants to see the site or object in its natural state. "The interpreter, when dealing with aesthetic values [historic architecture in this case] succeeds by providing [to the visitor] the best possible vantage point to see the beauty," and he or she must "do all that can be

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<sup>221</sup> Legutko, 76

<sup>222</sup> Tilden, 112

<sup>223</sup> Sherman, Aliza. "How Tech is Changing the Museum Experience." *Mashable* Blog. Internet; Accessed 14 Feb. 2014. <http://mashable.com/2011/09/14/high-tech-museums/>

discreetly done to establish a mood or sympathetic atmosphere.”<sup>224</sup> Tilden referred to the historic sites that “speak for themselves,” and exhibits should avoid overstating any interpretation plan. The more passive approach best applies to the Taylor-Grady House. Because of the retention of original architectural fabric, little needs to be done to emphasize its architectural beauty. This approach is also appropriate because the majority of people experiencing the house’s interpretation will most likely be visiting with non-educational intentions, such as attending events. The interpretation will need to be subtle, yet alluring, to encourage visitors to learn when they had not come for that purpose.

### **Main Theme and Message**

The main theme and message need to be clearly expressed and supported throughout the narrative for the visitors to understand its purpose. An exhibit without a common theme can overwhelm the visitor with too much information and/ or too much unrelated material. The main message or theme should indicate what the exhibit displays, the attitude by which the information is displayed, and what the visitors take away when the experience concludes. The proposed theme and main message for the Taylor-Grady House is, “This house is important because of its architecture, its history of occupants, its collection and current use.”

To share this message, the mediums for carrying out the proposed interpretation plan will be three informational panels and an updated, self-guided tour, with additional information on the Taylor-Grady House website to allow for further online research. The informational panels will provide the most general information, such as brief biographies of the builder and namesake of the house, and an overview of the architecture. The self-guided tour material will supplement the informational panels by further explaining the architecture and decorative arts collections and

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<sup>224</sup> Tilden, 120

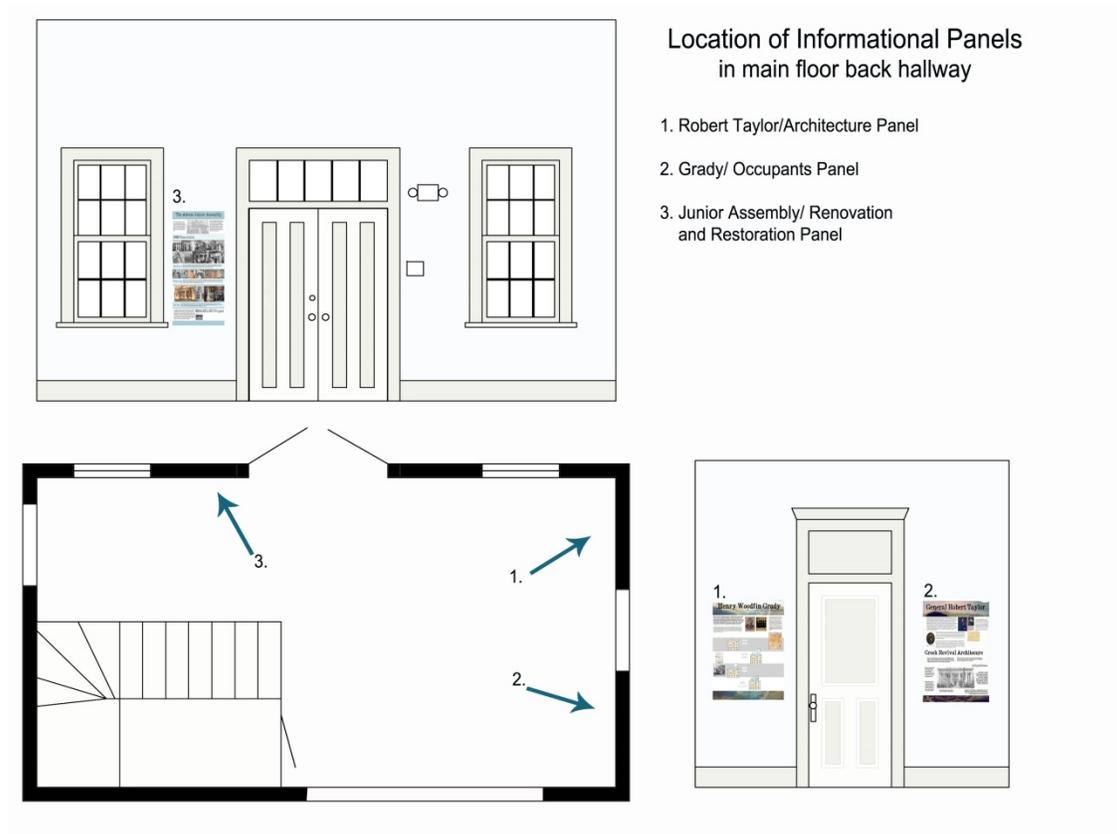
specific antiques in each room. The website will provide more information for those researching specific topics.

### **A. Informational Panels**

Informational panels are affordable, low maintenance and can be updated easily.

By applying non-permanent panels to the walls in the back hallway of the Taylor-Grady House, the integrity of the house will be unaltered. Their location and visibility will not interfere with events, but will still allow guests of weddings and other events to read and learn the house's history.

## Proposed Location of Panels:



*Figure 45: Location of Informational Panels in Main Floor Back Hallway*

The location of the panels is very important when considering the highest visibility while not interfering with the rental space. The back hallway on the main floor is found to be the best location for several reasons: the space is ADA accessible, it has the highest traffic volume for museum visitors and event guests, will not interfere with event space aesthetics, nor jeopardize the historic integrity of house. Because the house is used as a wedding venue and event space, there is a concern about altering the aesthetics of the interiors. Many vignettes created by the antique furniture in the house offer backdrops for photo opportunities. Including museum interpretation panels or exhibits in the historically accurate and more attractive rooms of the house would interfere with aesthetic appeal of these rooms. The back hallway is not furnished, so

currently it is only used as a means of access to the backyard/reception space. It is, however, still a highly visible location where visitors and guests of events can pause to review the exhibited information.

The second floor's northeast bedroom was the original location for the proposed interpretation plan, as there is available open space. It is only in use during weddings as an extra space for groomsmen prior to the event and is seldom utilized, and has the least traffic. The original idea of placing the exhibit and interpretation in the upstairs northeast bedroom was reconfigured to the main floor after realizing the inability of wheelchair access to the said location. According to the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) all public facilities must comply with physical accessibility standards,<sup>225</sup> and because the elevator only has access to the main floor, this exhibit must be placed in an area where all members of the public can benefit from it. The historic photos of the Junior Assembly, currently in this space, will be moved to the Supper Room and supplemented with Junior League of Athens informational panels.

## **Graphic Design**

The *Small Museum Toolkit* recommends that panel layout should be easy to follow and able to be read out-of-order. The text should be large enough to read (minimum of 18-point font) and on a contrasting background in a simple font. The text should not be tedious, with a recommended seventy-five word maximum per paragraph.<sup>226</sup> Each paragraph should begin with a headlining first sentence in order to summarize the content and encourage the visitor to read the entire text. The message should be written in an active voice, rather than passive, and should use common

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<sup>225</sup> Donnelly, 168-191

<sup>226</sup> Legutko, 89

language, avoiding technical terminology. Graphics and images should entice the audience to the panels, and be aesthetically pleasing while supportive of the content. All borrowed images will have permission to reproduce and be at a high pixel per inch ratio (between 300 and 400 dpi).<sup>227</sup> The proposed panels have borders with scenes from the George Cooke painting of “Carr’s Hill.” These borders not only visually group the panels together but depict images of early Athens life that support the panel content. The scenes bordering the Taylor panel show the growing city on the horizon and cotton labor at the bottom. The scenes bordering Grady’s panel show the university in the distance and a boxcar with “Athens” evoking ideas of industrial growth.

## **Content**

The content for the exhibit panels will be divided among three hanging panels. The first will provide a brief biography of the builder, General Robert Taylor, along with the architectural significance of the Taylor-Grady House. The second panel will include the biography of the national figure and house occupant, Henry Grady and the changes made in the house by its different occupants. The third panel will focus on the 1969 restoration by the Junior Assembly, with a brief history of the Assembly and Junior League of Athens.

Most interpretation theory resources recommend addressing the controversial topics in a straightforward, but sensitive matter. According to Donnelly, “Museums make the greatest contribution to public education when they provide audiences with tools to both celebrate and critically analyze American history.”<sup>228</sup> The story of Isaac Mills, Taylor’s head slave, and his marriage to Aggy, a slave of the neighboring Cobb residence, is an example of a sensitive topic, slavery, and is a documented account that needs to be shared. It fills out the overall story of the

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid, 89

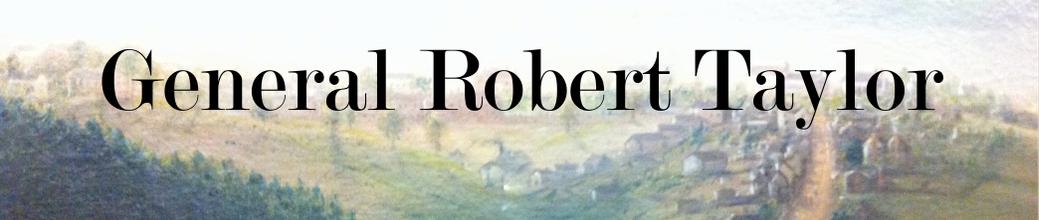
<sup>228</sup> Donnelly, 75

house, by showing that a master could, in a sense, be “supportive” of the aspirations of a slave. One cannot know exactly how Taylor and Isaac felt about one another, but by reading the quotation from Taylor’s will regarding Isaac’s marriage to Aggy, the visitor can form his or her own opinion of how Taylor treated his servant. The final selection of text to be included on the informational panels will be at the discretion of the Advisory Panel, but the following is suggested based on research of the house combined with recommended theories of interpretation.

### **Text For Panels**

The main theme of the information panels is “This house is important because of its architecture, its history of occupants, and its current use and collection.” The content focuses on the namesakes of the house, which anchor the panels by a prominent heading to emphasize their significance. The content of the panels goes into more detail of Taylor and Grady's biographies than the self-guided tour, which focuses more on the physical features of the house.

## PANEL I: General Taylor & Architecture



# General Robert Taylor



These two oil portraits of General Robert Taylor and his second wife Elizabeth Deloney Bolling Taylor are by American artist George Cooke as is the portrait of young Richard Taylor, now in the front hall. Cooke, who is known for his work throughout the South in the early nineteenth century, also painted the mural of Carr's Hill which graces the borders of the informational panels.

The builder of this house, Robert Taylor (1787-1859), came to Savannah from County Tyrone, Ireland, with his family when he was a young boy. By the age of 21, Taylor, an ambitious man with an excellent head for business, began to acquire land for cotton production. In time, he was recognized as one of the wealthiest planters and cotton merchants in Georgia. At his death, Taylor, who also held the rank of General in the Georgia Militia, left an estate valued at \$450,000 and included 17,000 acres of cotton land on several plantations across the state.

Taylor and his family spent the lavish winter social season in Savannah, but escaped the summer heat upcountry in Athens. Taylor and his second wife Eliza Deloney Bolling moved their permanent residence to Athens in 1837 in anticipation of their sons' attendance at the University of Georgia. In 1844, Taylor began construction of this house. In 1853, when his youngest son Richard Deloney Bolling Taylor married Athens belle Sarah Jane Billups, Taylor presented this house to the young couple as a wedding present and retired to his plantation in Morgan County.



Richard Deloney Bolling Taylor, his portrait shown above, was the inheritor of the house as a wedding gift. He was in the 1850 graduating class of the University of Georgia and followed his father as a cotton planter. His child portrait hangs in the front hallway.

In 19th century Georgia, slavery was an accepted practice that supported an agrarian economy based largely on cotton production. Taylor, who owned as many as 271 slaves, was the largest slave owner ever to live in Clarke County. The 1860 federal census reveals that fully two-thirds of the Clarke County population was enslaved.



Above is the only known image of Aggy Mills, who was married to General Taylor's "body servant" Isaac Mills. They were given a lavish wedding by Mary Ann Cobb at the Cobb residence on St. Angelo in 1850.

Taylor, who outlived two wives and three of his four sons, died at the age of 72 from injuries suffered in a freak railroad accident in Madison, Georgia, in July 1859. His grand home in Athens passed out of the family in 1863 when Taylor's sole surviving son Richard sold it to Maj. William S. Grady for \$20,000 in greatly inflated Confederate currency.



## Greek Revival Architecture

The term Greek Revival was first used in the 1840s to describe an architectural style made popular by renewed interest in the art and history of ancient Greece. In Athens, Georgia, it was a symbol of wealth and high society. Greek Revival architecture exists across the country, but the 2-storied portico, influenced by French architecture along the Gulf Coast, was particularly suited to the region's warm and humid climate.

- A three-sided porch allowed breezes to flow freely into the house during the hot summer months
- The main floors sit high above the ground to increase access to natural airflow
- High ceilings, tall windows and doors on opposite sides of the house, along with operable transoms above interior doors, allowed cross-breezes to cool the interior
- Legend says that the 13 Doric columns around the house represent the thirteen original colonies, however, their arrangement is simply based on the placement of the house's windows and allow an unobstructed view.



- The columns represent the Doric Order, the most simple and masculine of the orders, representing purity and strength.
- The original windows were triple-sash and allowed access to the porch
- Louvered exterior shutters allowed for airflow and provided shade
- The high style influence of Savannah and Charleston, for example, is shown by Taylor's choice of fashionable curved walls in the interior and stylized anthemion (or wild honeysuckle motif) ornaments around the exterior door

This photograph of the house was taken during the 1939 Historic American Building Survey while O.D. Grimes and his family occupied the house.



Figure 46: Sample Informational Panel "General Taylor/ Architecture"

It is necessary to highlight the builder of the house and share his personal information. The Taylor name is not recognized as a prominent Athens family due to the lack of surviving

male descendants and the division of his wealth. Providing Robert Taylor's biography serves to emphasize his significance to the house and to the history of Athens. His biographical information is placed on the same panel as the information about Greek Revival architecture because he was the builder of the house and chose its architectural style.

Controversial subject matter should not be overlooked when interpreting a house's history. Although some may be offended by the discussion of the slavery, and the lionization of a slave owner, including such information illuminates the topic. The story of Isaac and Aggy may evoke emotion and show an alternative view of the plantation house, one that would not otherwise be shared. This story can be connected to the *Georgia Virtual History Project* website through a smart phone application that will recognize an image on the panel and will direct the smart phone to a video on the relationship between Aggy and Isaac.

### **General Robert Taylor**

The builder of this house, Robert Taylor (1787-1859), came to Savannah from County Tyrone, Ireland, with his family when he was a young boy. By the age of 21, Taylor, an ambitious man with an excellent head for business, began to acquire land for cotton production. In time, he was recognized as one of the wealthiest planters and cotton merchants in Georgia. At his death, Taylor, who also held the rank of General in the Georgia Militia, left an estate valued at \$450,000 and included 17,000 acres of cotton land on several plantations across the state.

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## **Slavery**

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Though he owned hundreds of slaves, Taylor could show particular affection for his “house servants.” When his personal body servant, a slave by the name of Isaac Mill, approached Taylor in 1849 asking to be allowed to marry neighbor Howell Cobb’s nursemaid Aggy, not only did Taylor agree but he helped host a lavish wedding for the couple at Cobb’s home the next year. In his will, Taylor made sure Isaac and 11 other house servants were never to be separated from their families and specified his executor provide them annual stipends, food, shelter, and safety for the rest of their lives.

## **Captions**

These two oil portraits of General Robert Taylor and his second wife Elizabeth Deloney Bolling Taylor are by American artist George Cooke as is the portrait of young Richard Taylor, now in the front hall. Cooke, who is known for his work throughout the South in the early nineteenth century, also painted the mural of Carr’s Hill which graces the borders of the informational panels.

Richard Deloney Bolling Taylor, his portrait shown above, was the inherited the house as a wedding gift. He was in the 1850 graduating class of the University of Georgia and followed his father as a cotton planter. His child portrait hangs in the front hallway.

Above is the only known image of Aggy Mills, who was married to General Taylor’s “body servant” Isaac Mills. They were given a lavish wedding in 1850 by Mary Ann Cobb at the Cobb residence on N. Pope St.

## **Architecture Section**

Many visitors coming to see the Taylor-Grady House are immediately drawn to the grandeur of its architecture.<sup>229</sup> This interest creates the need for a description of the house’s architecture and style. A brief background on the style and its functionality in the South can interest the visitors and draw on their own experience with similar stylistic features that they may have experienced elsewhere, such as the full-story porticos seen throughout Athens. Following are facts about the Greek revival style and the features described are seen in the Taylor-Grady House.

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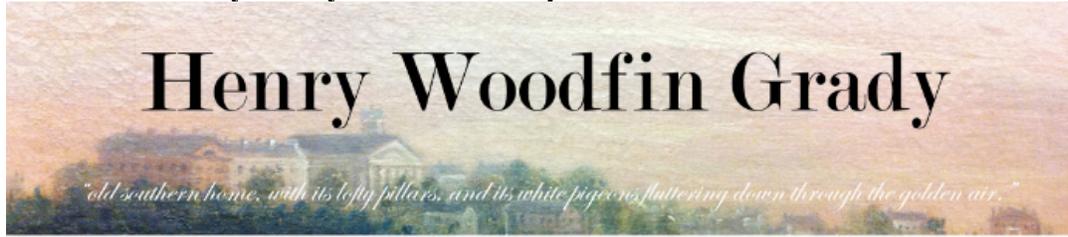
<sup>229</sup> Visitor Surveys Question 2

## **Greek Revival Architecture:**

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- Louvered exterior shutters allowed for airflow and provided shade.
- The high style influence of Savannah and Charleston, for example, is shown by Taylor's choice of fashionable curved walls in the interior and stylized anthemion (or wild honeysuckle motif) ornaments around the exterior door.

## PANEL II: Henry Grady & Other Occupants



If planter Robert Taylor, who built this house, represents the Old South, its most famous resident Henry Woodfin Grady surely represents the New South. Born in 1850 to successful Athens merchant William S. Grady and his wife Ann Gartrell, young Henry lived with his mother and siblings in this splendid Greek Revival mansion while he attended the University of Georgia between 1865 and 1868. His later national acclaim as "Spokesman of the New South" derived from his career as the orator and journalist largely responsible for the successful reintegration of the former Confederacy into the Union after the Civil War.

When this house was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976, it was due primarily to its connection with Henry W. Grady, a person of national importance who never forgot his "old southern home, with its lofty pillars, and its white pigeons fluttering down through the golden air" Although Grady, then managing editor of the Atlanta Constitution, died suddenly of pneumonia at the age of 39, his influence on the national scene is long-standing. He is the namesake of the Henry W. Grady College of Mass Communications at the University of Georgia, the Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, and also Georgia's Grady County.

To read more on the achievements and significance of Henry Grady, visit [www.GeorgiaEncyclopedia.org](http://www.GeorgiaEncyclopedia.org).

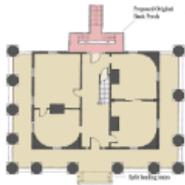


Henry Grady began his studies since the University reopened after the Civil War. He excelled in many social and educational activities. He was a pitcher on the first baseball team, a founding member of the Eta Chapter of the Chi Phi fraternity, and was active debater with the Phi Kappa Literary Society.

## Other Occupants

### 1844

It is likely the original central hall-four-square floor plan of the house remained unchanged for many years after its construction. In 1872, Marie Grady's widow sold the house to John Nicholson, her brother-in-law and late husband's business partner, for the post-war depreciated sum of \$6,000. Nicholson, president of the Athens Gas Works, owned the house for 14 years before moving closer to town and into the home now known as the Way-Nicholson House and owned by the University of Georgia.



### 1886

In 1886, widow Louisa D. Dubose next purchased the house for \$6,500 and lived there for 31 years. During her residency, Mrs. DuBose made many changes to house, including the addition of a kitchen wing on the east side and a sleeping porch on the rear. She also changed the front steps of the porch to their current configuration facing the street.



### 1917

Josef Hoyt Brusse purchased the house from Mrs. Dubose in 1917 for \$17,000 and moved in with his family. During the 13 years Brusse owned the house, he made important updates to the structure, including the installation of electricity and plumbing. The 1918 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows the dovetailed labeled as "servant's quarters." The Sandborn map of 1918 shows the dovetailed labeled as "servant's quarters"



### 1930

In 1930, wealthy businessman Oscar D. Grimes, Jr. purchased the house at the Depression-era bargain price of \$14,500. Grimes and his family lived in the house for the next 20 years without making any further significant modifications.



### 1950

Lacy Cobb Langston and her husband Lee Philip Langston, the last private owners of the house, bought the house from Grimes in 1950 for \$28,000 and immediately began an ambitious program of renovations and updates. They reinforced the main and second floor rear porches, installed a new gas furnace, installed an apartment and kitchenette in the basement, and installed additional water lines into the house. Miss Lacy, an ornate-grade ballroom dance instructor, had the pocket doors between the two rooms on the east side of the rear hallway removed and altered to use the space as a dance studio. An illness suffered by Miss Lacy, however, suspended any further plans for renovations and by 1951, Miss Lacy sold her interest in the house to her sister for \$20,000, a figure that reflected the nearly \$22,000 in improvements the sisters had already made.



### 1969

After 1951, the house sat vacant for 13 years, during which time many original architectural details were lost to vandalism. In 1964, the estate of Lee Langston sold the house to the City of Athens for \$90,000. The City then leased the house to the Athens Historic Assembly, a local non-profit service organization that pledged to restore the house and use it as their headquarters. In 1968, the Assembly opened the newly established and rededicated Taylor-Grady House to the public for tours and rental.

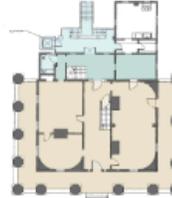


Figure 47: Sample Informational Panel "Henry Grady / Other Occupants"

Henry Grady has a significant role in this exhibit because of his national significance. His life while living in Athens at this home is highlighted, although the focus on Henry Grady is condensed to only include his occupancy at the house during a three-year span. The content of this panel focuses on Grady's education at the University. As Tilden recommends in his six principles of interpretation, this is an opportunity to connect with the audience through the University and college students. His connection with an active fraternity and his involvement with the Phi Kappa Society can directly relate to modern students who have direct or indirect interactions with those societies.

The introductory paragraph summarizes Grady's biography and national significance. This is in a larger text size to capture the reader first, and the following supportive paragraphs are a smaller size. The content focuses on Grady's experiences while attending the University and living in Athens. In order to stay within the main theme and maintain succinct content, further information on his life and achievements is referenced at the bottom of the panel. Following Grady's section is a timeline of changes to the house including short occupancy narratives with explanations of architectural changes.

### **Henry Woodfin Grady**

If planter Robert Taylor, who built this house, represents the Old South, its most famous resident Henry Woodfin Grady surely represents the New South. Born in 1850 to successful Athens merchant William S. Grady and his wife Ann Gartrell, young Henry lived with his mother and siblings in this splendid Greek Revival between 1865 and 1868 mansion while he attended the University of Georgia. His later national acclaim as "Spokesman of the New South" derived from his career as the orator and journalist largely responsible for encouraging the successful reintegration of the former Confederacy into the Union after the Civil War.

When this house was placed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976, it was due primarily to its connection with Henry W. Grady, a person of national importance who never forgot his "old southern home, with its lofty pillars, and its white pigeons fluttering down through the golden air." Although Grady, then managing editor of the

Atlanta Constitution, died suddenly of pneumonia at the age of 39, his influence on the national scene is long-standing. He is the namesake of the Henry W. Grady College of Mass Communications at the University of Georgia, the Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, and Grady Counties in Georgia and Oklahoma.

To read more on the achievements and significance of Henry Grady, visit [www.GeorgiaEncyclopedia.org](http://www.GeorgiaEncyclopedia.org)

### **Other Tenants:**

#### **1872 - 1880s**

It is likely the original central hall-foursquare plan of the house remained unchanged for many years after its construction. In 1872, Major Grady's widow sold the house for the post-war depreciated sum of \$6,000 to John Nicholson, her brother-in-law and late husband's business partner. Nicholson, president of the Athens Gas Works, owned the house for 14 years before moving closer to town and into the home now known as the Wray-Nicholson House and owned by the University of Georgia.

#### **1886**

In 1886, widow Louise D. Dubose purchased the house for \$6,500 and lived there for 31 years. During her residency, Mrs. Dubose made many changes to house, including the addition of a kitchen wing on the east side and a sleeping porch on the rear. She also changed the front steps of the porch to their current configuration facing the street.

#### **1917**

Jesse Hoyt Beusse purchased the house from Mrs. Dubose in 1917 for \$17,000 and moved in with his family. During the 13 years Beusse owned the house, he made important updates to the structure, including the installation of electricity and plumbing. The 1918 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows the dovecote labeled as "servant's quarters."

#### **1930**

In 1930, wealthy businessman Oscar D. Grimes, Jr. purchased the house at the Depression-era bargain price of \$14,500. Grimes and his family lived in the house for the next 20 years without making any further significant modifications.

#### **1950 - 1953**

Lucy Cobb Lampkin and her twin sister Lois Phelps Lampkin, the last private owners, bought the house from Grimes in 1950 for \$29,000 and immediately began an ambitious program of renovations and updates. They enclosed the main and second floor rear porches, installed a new gas furnace, outfitted an apartment and kitchenette in the basement, and installed additional water lines into the house. Miss Lucy, an avante-garde ballroom dance instructor, had the pocket doors between the two rooms on the east side of the main hallway removed and planned to use the space as a dance studio. An illness suffered by Miss Lois, however, suspended any further plans for renovation and by 1951, Miss Lucy sold her interest in the house to her sister for \$20,811, a figure that reflected the nearly \$22,000 in improvements the sisters had already made.

**1953 - Current**

After 1953, the house sat vacant for 13 years, during which time many original architectural details were lost to vandalism. In 1966, the estate of Lois Lampkin sold the house to the City of Athens for \$90,000. The City then leased the house to the Athens Junior Assembly, a local women's service organization that pledged to restore the home and use it as their headquarters. In 1969, the Assembly opened the newly stabilized and redecorated Taylor-Grady House to the public for tours and rental.

## Panel III: The Junior Assembly, Renovation & Restoration



# Junior Assembly

The Athens Junior Assembly (now known as the Junior League of Athens) was founded in 1935 as a women's service organization to meet the welfare needs of local citizens. Within ten years, the Assembly was the county's chief source of charity, maternity and baby care. (The 25 founding members are shown to the left.) By 1969, the members of the Athens Junior Assembly also took on the enormous task of preserving one of Athens' historic treasures—the Taylor-Grady House.



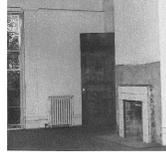
### Before

Although the structural condition of the house was very poor when the Assembly first leased it from the City, members quickly formed a planning committee and—with the help of many private donations and in-kind assistance from local businesses--the Junior Assembly began the renovation of the 124-year-old house in the fall of 1968.







### During

Members of the Assembly cleared and cleaned the entire house, hung wallpaper, and painted walls and woodwork. A central air conditioning system was installed and many structural repairs were made to the envelope of the house. The rear portico and staircase was added to provide convenient access to the rear of the lot.






### After

Albert Dobbs Sams (1905-1986) generously contributed the majority of the antique collection at the Taylor-Grady House. The donated pieces are mainly 19th century American Regency pieces that Sams donated over a two-decade span. Other items in the house were either donated by Athens families or are on loan from the University. The newly renovated house was debuted in May 1969 when descendants of the Taylor and Grady families gathered for a gala reception at the house during the annual Tour of Homes. The house was first rented for a wedding reception in 1970 and has been the venue for hundreds of beautiful Southern weddings and private and public events ever since.





### 2004 SPLOST Project



The Junior League of Athens partnered with the City of Athens in 2004 to undertake a major historical restoration of the Taylor-Grady House. The project, funded by the unified government of Athens-Clarke County under the Special Purpose Local Option Salse Tax (SPLOST) Program as Project #37, consisted of additional structural repairs and an accurate restoration of the house and its décor to reflect the period 1865-1868 when Henry W. Grady was a resident. The project included a paint analysis to determine the paint colors of the walls during Grady's occupancy.



Figure 48: Sample Informational Panels “The Junior Assembly, Renovation & Restoration”

The history of the Junior Assembly is introduced in the third panel, demonstrating the renovation and restoration projects of the house. The brevity of their panel is due to the future creation of a panel solely for the history of the Assembly and Junior League. This panel is image-heavy because the images better interpret the work done by the Junior Assembly than a written summary.

### **The Athens Junior Assembly**

The Athens Junior Assembly (now known as the Junior League of Athens) was founded in 1935 as a women's service organization to meet the welfare needs of local citizens. Within ten years, the Assembly was the county's chief source of charity, and maternity and baby care. (The 25 founding members are shown to the left.) By 1969, the members of the Athens Junior Assembly also took on the enormous task of preserving one of Athens' historic treasures—the Taylor-Grady House.

### **1969 Renovation**

#### **Before**

Although the structural condition of the house was very poor when the Assembly first leased it from the City, members quickly formed a planning committee and--with the help of many private donations and in-kind assistance from local businesses--the Junior Assembly began the renovation of the 124-year-old house in the fall of 1968.

#### **During**

Members of the Assembly cleared and cleaned the entire house, hung wallpaper, and painted walls and woodwork. A central air conditioning system was installed, and many structural repairs were made to the envelope of the house. The rear portico and staircase was added to provide convenient access to the rear of the lot.

#### **After**

Albert Dobbs Sams (1905-1986) generously contributed the majority of the antique collection at the Taylor-Grady House. The donated pieces are mainly 19th century American Regency pieces that Sams donated over a two-decade span. Other items in the house were either donated by Athens families or are on loan from the University. The newly renovated house was debuted in May 1969 when descendants of the Taylor and Grady families gathered for a gala reception at the house during the annual Tour of Homes. The house was first rented for a wedding reception in 1970 and has been the venue for hundreds of beautiful Southern weddings and private and public events ever since.

### **2004 SPLOST Restoration**

The Junior League of Athens partnered with the City of Athens in 2004 to undertake a major historical restoration of the Taylor-Grady House. The project, funded by the unified government of Athens-Clarke County under the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) Program, consisted of additional structural repairs and an accurate restoration of the house and its décor to reflect the period 1865-1868 when Henry W. Grady was a resident. The project included a paint analysis to determine the paint colors of the walls during Grady's occupancy.

These panels provide an overview of history of the house's occupants, the characteristics of its architecture, and the many changes it has gone through over the years. They accomplish this in a subtle way, by utilizing a high traffic room outside of the original structure to avoid interrupting any current operations at the house. The proposed content and layout of the panels follows the guidelines set in place by interpretation theory resources, and all final decisions in content and layout are to be approved by the advisory panel.

## **B. The Updated Self-Guided Tour**

Self-guided tours work well for a large volume of people or heavily trafficked sites because they allow visitors to control over their experience and to shape it to meet their needs.<sup>230</sup>

Consequently, they are ideal for a diversity of visitors, with either different ages, interests, or with a different pace or timeframe. The continuation of using self-guided tours as the main medium for room-by-room interpretation is due to the lack of volunteer docents or budget to create a docent-training program. Correcting misinformation and adding any omitted information will resolve some of the current inaccuracies in the Taylor-Grady House tour leaflet and refresh the look of the self-guided tour. Another benefit of using the self-guided tour will be the opportunity for visitors of the house to learn about the house during rental events. *The Small Museum Toolkit* asserts that the museums need to be prepared for any onlooker willing to

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<sup>230</sup> Donnelly, 199

learn.<sup>231</sup> The new brochures would be kept in a conspicuous place in the back hallway, where they could be replenished as needed.

The new organization of the tour will be presented in a gate-folded brochure with a vertical orientation with three folds, opening to a 14 inch by 8.5-inch legal sized spread. These brochures will fit into a regular rack card container. This configuration will allow additional illustrations and organize the information. The history of the house, exterior description and current information regarding hours of operation will be located on the front and back brochure panels. The first spread will display biographical information on Taylor, Grady, Sams and the Junior Assembly. Including this information on Mr. Sams upfront emphasizes the fact that none of the furniture is original to the house (which is a common misconception of many visitors.)<sup>232</sup> The inside spread of the brochure includes the main and second floor plans with each room numbered with a physical or historical description, followed by any information on antiques or decorative arts. The Taylor-Grady House Advisory panel will discuss the possibility of certain furnishings moving to different locations in the house before the brochure text is finalized.

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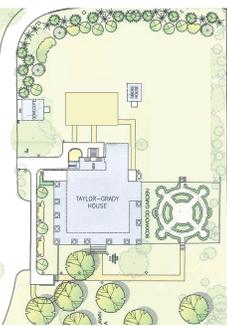
<sup>231</sup> Legutko, 3

<sup>232</sup> Interview with Janet Parker, the Museum Mile tour guide, by author. October 20, 2013, Athens, Georgia.

## Example Self-Guided Tour



**Henry Woodfin Grady**  
Henry Woodfin Grady (1850-1889), who won national acclaim as the editor of the Atlanta Constitution and "Spokesman of the New South," was the son of Athens merchant William S. Grady. Although his father bought the house in 1863 from the Taylor estate, Major Grady's death during the Battle of Petersburg delayed his widow and children's possession of the house until 1865. Although young Henry W. Grady lived here only three years while a student at the University of Georgia, he always cherished his memories of this "fine old Southern home with its lofty columns and the pigeons fluttering down through the golden air."



The Outbuildings and Landscape  
The dovecote (sometimes called a pigeoncote) and the smokehouse are both original to the house. Taylor, like many wealthy planters, probably built dovecote at the rear of his house to assure a ready supply of tender young pigeon, an expensive delicacy, for their family dinner table. The dovecote was later converted serve as an unattached kitchen and still later used as servants' quarters until the first half of the 20th century.

The landscape is a reinterpretation of what a typical Greek Revival home would have. The boxwood garden would have been on the front of the house, but was placed on the side during the 1969 renovations to protect the mature trees in the front yard.

*The Taylor-Grady House Self-Guided Tour*

Welcome to the historic Taylor-Grady House, the only national historic landmark in Athens. This house museum is owned by the City of Athens and has been leased to the Junior League of Athens since 1969. The Junior League operates the house and the city maintains grounds. It is also a rental facility, hosting many weddings each year.



This Greek Revival mansion sits on a raised basement with thirteen fluted Doric columns rising from a three-sided porch. Legend has it that the house's thirteen columns represented the country's original colonies, linked by an ornate iron railing that symbolized their unification. Although the roof appears to be flat, a low-hipped roof is hidden behind the entablature. The house layout is a central-hall plan with an enclosed porch and kitchen wing added around 1900. The basement level and second floor replicate the layout of the main floor.



**General Robert Taylor**  
General Taylor (b.1878 - d.1859) was the builder of the Taylor-Grady House and at one time the wealthiest man in Georgia. As an Irish immigrant, he began as a cotton merchant who built his empire through the state. He gave this house to his youngest son as a wedding gift. As a young child, Robert Taylor (1798-1859) emigrated with his parents from Ireland to Savannah and later became of the wealthiest cotton planters and merchants in Georgia. In 1844, he began construction of this fashionable house in Athens convenient to his local business dealings but also close to his family plantation in Morgan County. When his youngest son Richard married in 1853, Taylor gifted him this house as a wedding present.



**Albert Dobbs Sams**  
Albert Dobbs Sams (1905-1986), former president of the Athens Coca Cola bottling company, was an avid collector of American and European antiques and a dedicated historic preservationist. It was through his generosity that the Taylor-Grady House acquired the majority of its antique period furnishings and decorative objects.

**Hours:**  
Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9AM - 3PM  
Tuesday & Thursday 11:30AM - 3:30PM  
Closed Major Holidays  
Tours are \$3.00 which supports the operation of the house  
Please call ahead for appointment 706-549-8688



**Athen Junior Assembly**  
In 1935, a group of 25 women joined together to use their leisure hours to meet the welfare needs and to support the cultural growth of Athens. In 1969, the members of the Junior Assembly, with the help of many local donors, restored the Taylor-Grady House to serve as their headquarters. The Assembly officially became the Junior League of Athens in 1982.

Figure 49: Self-Guided Tour Brochure Side I: The second and third panels will be the back and front of the brochure. The first and last will be the first spread.

**2. The Parlor Room**  
The portrait is of Mr. Albert Dobbs Sams, generous benefactor of the Taylor-Grady House and donor of most of the house's collection of antique furnishings and decorative pieces. The curved walls are "an architectural detail reminiscent of the Federal Period." The full-length windows originally would have been three-part and pulled up to allow access to the porch and allow more air circulation. The transoms on the interior doors also allowed air circulation. The mahogany sofa is in an American Empire style c1830 with the Napoleonic Bee motif. The window seat is early 19th century with cabriole legs and mahogany scroll edges.

**3. The Dining Room**  
It is possible that it is now used as a dining room was originally General Taylor's bedroom adjacent to the front parlor he used as an office. Not only was a room on the lower floor cooler during the summer, General Taylor had difficulty with stairs after he suffered a stroke soon after the house was built. The room was still used as a bedroom until the 1969 renovation. The closet was originally a window that opened onto to the back porch, but it was converted into a closet during the 1950s. The 1895 portrait is of Augusta Grady Black, daughter of Henry W. Grady, at age nineteen wearing said to be wearing her mother's wedding dress

**4. The Bathroom:**  
A pair of large pocket doors originally separated the front parlor and a rear dining area on the right side of the house. The doors were removed in the 1950s so the two rooms could be used as a dance studio; evidence of the original pocket doors is found in the patched flooring at the middle of the room. The room is 50 feet long and 20 feet wide. The mantels are not original and the mirrors with gilt griffins above them were reproduced during the 1969 restoration to resemble Neoclassical style. The elaborate plaster ceiling medallions are original and were typically painted a dark color to hide the soot generated by open fires in the twin fireplaces. The pair of 20th century reproduction chandeliers are from Italy and were donated by sustaining members of the Athens Junior Assembly. The c1842 portraits by George Cooke of General Robert Taylor and his second wife Elizabeth "Eliza" Deloney Bolling Taylor were donated by a relative of the Taylors in 2005 and are thought to be originally painted to hang in the house. The blue sofa is a Duncan Phyfe style (circa 1810-1820) and the ivory sofa is a mahogany framed American Empire sofa (circa 1820-1840) from NY.

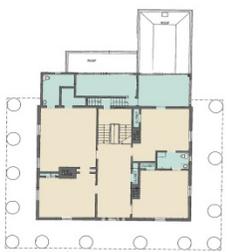
**5. The Upstairs hallway**  
The maple floors are original to the house. All rooms upstairs were originally bedrooms. The blue daybed is rosewood and is circa 1860. The black 'swan branch' chandelier is a Louis XVI reproduction. The mahogany breakfast cabinet (circa 1830) holds twelve porcelain bowls in the "Chusan" pattern.

**6. The Bride's Room**  
This room is currently used as a dressing room for brides. The floral print fire screen is English Regency circa early 1820s was used to protect women's faces from the heat of the fire. The "cherry turned posts rope bed" is on loan from the University of Georgia and dates to 1800. "The mattress would have been straw or feathers and the ropes had to be constantly tightened to prevent sagging." The Late Empire chaise longue [longue] (circa 1840-1860) was also called a "fainting couch" where a woman who wore a tightly-laced corset could rest and regain her breath without mussing her hair or clothes. The table in the corner is an American Sheraton style cherry sewing table circa 1810. Sewing materials were stored in the orange fabric drawer. The bathroom in this room was originally part of the rear sleeping porch, but was enclosed and converted into a bathroom in the 1920s.

**7. The Library**  
The shallow doorway connecting the Bride's Room and the Library is original to the house and once provided badly-needed in-house storage shelves. The Chippendale side chair has ball and claw feet and was made in Philadelphia c1760. The donor of this chair to the Taylor-Grady House also donated a matching chair to the White House in the early 1960s when Jacqueline Kennedy mounted a campaign to restore the White House and its furnishings. The round table is English Regency circa 1825 gaming table. The top tilts up to reveal storage for game pieces.

**8. The Groom's Room**  
The beds were often set at angles to take advantage of cross breezes between windows. The Southern-origin poster bed (circa 1840) is in the Duncan Phyfe style. The pineapples carved in the posts symbolize hospitality. The small mirror on top of the chest of drawers is a gentlemen's shaving mirror circa 1800. The chest is American Empire (circa 1820), and its top drawer of the large size was to accommodate large bonnets worn by women at the time.

**9. The Sitting Room**  
The Queen Anne terrestrial and celestial globes are from 1844, based on the discoveries of Captain Cook, and are on loan from the University of Georgia. The model of the house was created by UGA Landscape Architecture students in 1969. The 20th century bronze figure is Hercules supporting a terrestrial globe.



Second Floor

Figure 50: Self-Guided Tour Brochure Side II: This is the inside spread

## **Brochure Cover**

\*Footnotes listed in this text are to be left out of brochure publication.

### **The History**

A successful planter built this handsome Greek Revival home c.1845 in the elegant residential neighborhood then developing on the western edge of the town of Athens. After more than a century of continuous residential occupation by successive owners, the house stood vacant for 13 years until it was bought by the City of Athens in 1966. Three years later, the Athens Junior Assembly, a local women's service organization, leased the house from the city and took up the challenge of stabilizing the structure and restoring the house to its former grandeur. The City of Athens funded a second major renovation in 2004 through a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. The house was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

### **Exterior**

This Greek Revival mansion sits on a raised basement with thirteen fluted Doric columns rising from a three-sided porch. The thirteen columns, once said to represent the country's original colonies, are an odd number because they offset the layout of the windows. Although the roof appears to be flat, a low-hipped roof is hidden behind the entablature.

The house layout is a central-hall plan with an enclosed porch and kitchen wing added around 1900. The basement level and second floor replicate the layout of the main floor.

## **First Spread of Brochure**

### **General Robert Taylor**

As a young child, Robert Taylor (1798-1859) emigrated with his parents from Ireland to Savannah and later became of the wealthiest cotton planters and merchants in Georgia. In 1844, he began construction of this fashionable house in Athens convenient to his local business dealings but also close to his family plantation in Morgan County. Taylor gave his youngest son, Richard, the house as a wedding present in 1853.

### **Henry Woodfin Grady**

Henry Woodfin Grady (1850-1889), who won national acclaim as the editor of the Atlanta Constitution and "Spokesman of the New South," was the son of Athens merchant William S. Grady. Although his father bought the house in 1863 from the Taylor estate, Major Grady's death during the Battle of Petersburg delayed his widow and children's possession of the house until 1865. Although young Henry W. Grady lived here only three years while a student at the University of Georgia, he always cherished his memories of this "fine old Southern home with its lofty columns and the pigeons fluttering down through the golden air."

**Albert Dobbs Sams** (1905-1986), former president of the Athens Coca Cola Bottling Company, was an avid collector of American and European antiques and a dedicated

historic preservationist. It was through his generosity that the Taylor-Grady House acquired the majority of its antique period furnishings and decorative objects.

### **Athens Junior Assembly**

In 1935, a group of 25 women joined together to use their leisure hours to meet the welfare needs and to support the cultural growth of Athens. In 1969, the members of the Junior Assembly, with the help of many local donors, restored the Taylor-Grady House to serve as their headquarters. The Assembly officially became the Junior League of Athens in 1982.

### **Left Side of Inner Spread**

(Image of First Floor Plan with rooms numbered)

#### **1. The Central Hallway:**

To the right is a c.1810 American Empire marble-topped petticoat table, one of the pieces selected for the Taylor-Grady House by Albert Sams. “Young ladies checked their petticoats in the angled mirror below before leaving the house.”<sup>233</sup> The stairs are original to the house and are constructed of heart pine, the same material originally used for flooring throughout the first floor of the house. The lighting fixture is a French reproduction Empire chandelier in gilt bronze.<sup>234</sup>

#### **2. The Parlor Room**

The portrait is of Mr. Albert Dobbs Sams, generous benefactor of the Taylor-Grady House and donor of most of the house’s collection of antique furnishings and decorative pieces. The curved walls are an architectural detail reminiscent of the Federal Period. The full-length windows originally would have been three-part and pulled up to allow access to the porch and allow more air circulation. The transoms on the interior doors also allowed air circulation. The mahogany sofa is in an American Empire style c.1830<sup>235</sup> with the Napoleonic Bee motif. The window seat is early 19<sup>th</sup> century with cabriole legs and mahogany scroll edges.<sup>236</sup>

#### **3. The Dining Room**

What is now the dining room was originally Robert Taylor’s bedroom adjacent to the front parlor he used as an office. Not only was a room on the lower floor cooler during the summer, it is said that Taylor had difficulty with stairs after he suffered a stroke soon after the house was built. The closet was originally a window to the back porch, but it was converted during the 1950s.<sup>237</sup> The 1895 portrait is of Augusta Grady Black, daughter of Henry W. Grady, at age nineteen. The mahogany china breakfront cabinet (c.1830) is filled with English ironstone china (c.1850). On the chest-of-drawers to the left of the fireplace are two water warming dishes (c.1850), which kept food warm before

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<sup>233</sup> Original tour guide

<sup>234</sup> Hardy p. 14 no.59

<sup>235</sup> Hardy p. 35 No.183

<sup>236</sup> Hardy p. 15. no.68.

<sup>237</sup> Letter from Lucy Lampkin to Diane Argo in 1969.

serving.<sup>238</sup> The mahogany dining table is 120 inches long and in the Sheraton style.<sup>239</sup> The crystal chandelier is a 20<sup>th</sup> century Louis XV reproduction.<sup>240</sup> The oval Chippendale mirror is on loan from the University of Georgia.

#### **4. The Ballroom:**

A pair of large pocket doors originally separated the front parlor and a rear dining area on the right side of the house. The doors were removed in the 1950s so the two rooms could be used as a dance studio; evidence of the original pocket doors is found in the patched flooring at the middle of the room. The room is 50 feet long and 20 feet wide. The mantels are not original and the mirrors with gilt griffins above them were created during the 1969 restoration to resemble Neoclassical style. The elaborate plaster ceiling medallions are original and were typically painted a dark color to hide the soot generated by open fires in the twin fireplaces.<sup>241</sup> The pair of 20<sup>th</sup> century reproduction chandeliers is from Italy and was donated by sustaining members of the Athens Junior Assembly. A relative of the Taylors donated the c.1842 portraits by George Cooke of General Robert Taylor and his second wife Elizabeth “Eliza” Deloney Bolling Taylor in 2005.<sup>242</sup> The blue sofa is a Duncan Phyfe style (c.1810-1820),<sup>243</sup> and the ivory sofa is a mahogany framed American Empire sofa (c.1820-1840) from New York.<sup>244</sup>

#### **5. The Supper Room, Kitchen & The Back Hall**

All three rooms are turn-of-the-century additions. The back hallway was originally an open back porch, then it was given a second story c1900 before it was totally enclosed in the 1950s.<sup>245</sup>

#### **6. The Landing**

The enclosed niche suggests the window on the original rear wall of the house. The grandfather clock is an 1820 Sheraton made in Ilmister, England.<sup>246</sup>

### **Left Side of Inner Spread** (Second floor plan image in center)

#### **7. The Upstairs hallway**

The maple floors are original to the house. All rooms upstairs were originally bedrooms. The blue daybed is rosewood and is c.1860. The black ‘swan branch’ chandelier is a Louis XVI reproduction. The mahogany breakfront cabinet (c.1830) holds twelve porcelain bowls in the “Chusan” pattern.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Hardy p. 10 No. 39.

<sup>239</sup> “Furnishings” tour by Charlotte Marshall April 1983.

<sup>240</sup> Hardy page 11 No. 47

<sup>241</sup> Original Self-guided tour

<sup>242</sup> Pamphlet for the Dedication of the house after the 2004 Renovations. Junior League of Athens.

<sup>243</sup> Hardy p. 18 No. 83

<sup>244</sup> Hardy p. 16 No. 72.

<sup>245</sup> Original self-guided tour

<sup>246</sup> Original Furnishing tour

<sup>247</sup> Hardy p. 29, No. 148 and 149.

## 8. The Bride's Room

This room is currently used as a dressing room for brides. The bathroom in this room was originally part of the rear-sleeping porch, but was enclosed and converted into a bathroom in the 1920s.<sup>248</sup> The floral print fire screen is English Regency from the early 1820s and was used to protect women's faces from the heat of the fire.<sup>249</sup> The cherry turned posts rope bed is on loan from the University of Georgia and dates to 1800.<sup>250</sup> The mattress would have been straw or feathers and the ropes had to be constantly tightened to prevent sagging. The Late Empire chaise lounge (c.1840-1860)<sup>251</sup> was also called a "fainting couch." The table in the corner is an American Sheraton style cherry sewing table c.1810. Sewing materials were stored in the orange fabric drawer.<sup>252</sup>

## 9. The Library

The shallow doorway connecting the Bride's Room and the Library is original to the house and once provided badly needed in-house storage shelves.<sup>253</sup> The Chippendale side chair has ball and claw feet and was made in Philadelphia c.1760.<sup>254</sup> The donor of this chair to the Taylor-Grady House also donated a matching chair to the White House in the early 1960s when First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy mounted a campaign to restore the White House and its furnishings.<sup>255</sup> The round table is English Regency c.1825 gaming table.<sup>256</sup>

## 10. The Groom's Room

The beds were often set at angles to take advantage of cross breezes between windows.<sup>257</sup> The Southern-origin poster bed (c.1840)<sup>258</sup> is in the Duncan Phyfe style. The pineapples carved in the posts symbolize hospitality. The small mirror on top of the chest of drawers is a gentlemen's shaving mirror c.1800.<sup>259</sup>

## 11. The Sitting Room/ Northeast room [globes]

The Queen Anne terrestrial and celestial globes are from 1844,<sup>260</sup> based on the discoveries of Captain Cook, and are on loan from the University of Georgia. UGA Landscape Architecture students created the model of the house in 1969.

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<sup>248</sup> Letter from Lucy Lampkin to Diana Argo, 1969.

<sup>249</sup> Burgess, Frederick William. *Antique Furniture*. S.l.: The classics Us, 2013. 460-62. Print.

<sup>250</sup> Hardy p. 27 No.141

<sup>251</sup> Hardy p. 25 No.128.

<sup>252</sup> Original self-guided tour AND Hardy p. 26 No. 133.

<sup>253</sup> Interview by author with JLA Sustainer Nancy Bowen. Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

<sup>254</sup> Hardy p. 30 No.157

<sup>255</sup> Original self-guided tour. AND Hardy. p30 No. 157.

<sup>256</sup> Original Self-guided tour.

<sup>257</sup> Original Self-guided tour.

<sup>258</sup> Hardy p. 32 No.167.

<sup>259</sup> Hardy p. 32 No.166.

<sup>260</sup> Hardy p. 35 No.186.

## Back of Brochure

### **The Outbuildings and Landscape**

The dovecote (sometimes called a pigeon cote) and the smokehouse are both original. Taylor, like many wealthy planters, probably built dovecote at the rear of his house to assure a ready supply of tender young pigeon, an expensive delicacy, for their family dinner table.<sup>261</sup> The dovecote was later converted to serve as an unattached kitchen and still later used as servants' quarters until the first half of the 20th century.

The landscape is a reinterpretation of what a typical Greek Revival home would have. The boxwood garden would have been on the front of the house, but was placed on the side during the 1969 renovations to protect the mature trees in the front yard.<sup>262</sup>

The Hours of Operation and Contact information are to be included

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<sup>261</sup> McCann, John. "The Truth about Dovecotes" <http://www.mccannhistoricbuildings.co.uk/truthaboutdovecotes/> Jan. 30, 2014.

<sup>262</sup> Tritt Jr., Bob. "Students assist Athens: by developing landscape plans for Taylor-Grady home." *Athens Banner-Herald & The Daily News*. May 18, 1969. 8-D.

## CHAPTER 10

### CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Taylor-Grady House serves many functions for the community of Athens through its connection to the past, its preserved high-style architecture, and use as a house museum and rental facility. The preservation of the physical architecture and collections is important not only for the rental income; it also preserves the house's history and life story. The history is equally important and must be as available to the community as the rental space is available. The stronger the knowledge of the house, the greater respect it will enjoy to ensure its longevity.

By installing an adequate interpretation plan, its history can be displayed and appreciated by all visitors and members of the Junior League. Future visitors can enjoy a more in depth look into the personalities that lived in the house, and a better understanding of Athens' timeline since 1844. This proposed plan would also introduce a new perspective of the history. Addressing the relationship of General Taylor and his slave Isaac can create a new discussion about African-American history. Other channels can be examined in future exhibits or in extensions of the one proposed.

The final product for the new interpretation plan will be at the discretion of the newly formed Advisory Panel. The majority of members who will serve on this panel already have a connection with the house, and their input will be vital to the direction of the mission statement and proposed panels and self-guided tour. The guidelines presented in this thesis are supported

by interpretation theory and museum research, and the process to accomplish the new interpretation plan will be straightforward and effective.

**Recommendations for future research:**

1. Create the Advisory Committee based on provided guidelines. Review and approve content for informational panels, and once the content and graphics are finalized, have them printed and installed. Review and finalize the content and graphics of the updated self-guided tour and print a large quantity for distribution at the house and the Athens Welcome Center. Develop content focusing on the Junior Assembly and Junior League of Athens' history and accomplishments for additional information panels.
2. Move current JLA and Junior Assembly photos from the back hallway to Supper Room and stairs.
3. Incorporate the Georgia Virtual History Project and its phone application, developed by University of Georgia History Professor, Christopher Lawton, into the content of the tour. This will provide a more interactive dimension to the exhibit, where visitors can take a photo with their smart phones of a particular image, such as a map, and a video will open, sharing more information. This can also be referenced on the Taylor-Grady website.
4. Create educational programs for children through the Athens Historic House Museum Association that can unite all four house museums in a half-day school program for local elementary schools.
5. Redesign the website to connect with the Georgia Virtual History Project and provide more accurate historical information to supplement the interpretation plan.

6. Team with the University of Georgia Cultural Landscape graduate program to conduct landscape assessment on the property and grounds. The landscape contains few remaining site features dating to the 1860s Grady period of significance. Most existing landscape elements date to the 1969 UGA School of Environmental Design Student Plan. This design reflects elements of Colonial Revival style, under the advising of Hubert Bond Owens, founder and former Dean of the school. His influence on the design makes the landscape equally important to the history of the house. Utilize this assessment in future planning for the grounds.

7. Consider a re-restoration of the house to be compatible with the period of General Robert Taylor. This would involve reexamining the time period of the furniture collection and accuracy of plant types and location of the boxwood garden. An interpretation of the dovecote as former slaves quarters and unattached kitchen can also be revisited to include an interpretive plan and additional informational panels and self guided tour.

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## APPENDIX A

### EXCERPT OF THE ALBERT D. SAMS COLLECTION

ATHENS, GEORGIA  
December 18, 1969

The following list of gifts to The Athens Junior Assembly for the Taylor-Grady House were received from Albert D. Sams during the year of 1969.

600	Mahogany Sheraton Sofa, having reeded arms and top rail, resting on four turned tapered legs, brass castors in front, with four splayed legs, brass castors in rear. Green Empire style upholstery.	\$ 750.00
600	Mahogany Sheraton Sofa, resting on eight turned tapered legs, brass castors, having one long loose cushion. Green Empire style upholstery.	750.00
607	Dark Stained Rosewood Sheraton Settee, having four reeder turned arm supports and legs, with cane back and sides. Slip seat with striped upholstery.	900.00
612	Mahogany Empire Style Sofa with shaped back and rolled arms, resting on two splayed paw feet in front and two splayed feet in rear. Pale green and tan floral striped upholstery.	500.00
600	Pair Mahogany Sheraton Style Side Chairs, wheat carving on top rail, reeded legs in front, splayed legs in rear, cane seat and back.	400.00
600	Set of Three Mahogany Regency Side Chairs, having carving on top rail, carved shaped splat, turned tapered legs in front, splayed legs in rear. Slip Seats with velvet upholstery. Circa 1825.	350.00
610	Carved Wood Gilt Convex Wall Mirror, having eagle finial, with eighteen knobs inset around frame in high relief.	600.00
610	Oriental Rug with all over design, blue, red and tan coloring. Size 120 inches by 82 inches, (worn).	600.00
610	Directoire Style Armchair, black with gold trim, floral design carved on front of each arm and apron. Pale green upholstery.	500.00
610	Consulate Style Chair, black with gold trim, and floral pattern upholstery.	300.00
610	Small Mahogany Empire Table Shaped round top, octagonal pedestal, triangular base with three ball feet. Circa 1820.	175.00
610	Small Mahogany Empire Table, rectangular top, vase turned pedestal, triangular base with three flattened ball feet. Circa 1810.	175.00
610	Walnut Sheraton Table, square top, two graduated drawers, with four turned legs. Georgia made. Circa 1810.	225.00
610	Mahogany Sheraton Sewing Table, rectangular shaped top with drop leaves, two small drawers, with four turned legs. Circa 1800.	175.00 <i>(175.00)</i>
610	Mahogany veneered Sheraton Style Dress Table, one small drawer, turned pedestal with four splayed legs.	100.00

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE OF COLLECTION ON LOAN FROM THE UNIVERSOTY OF GEORGIA

Taylor Grady House – UGA

	<p>Inventory Number 181901 Bed Four Post Cherry Location: Bride</p>
	<p>Inventory Number 409213 Victorian Black Fender w/bronze trim (around fireplace) Location: Groom</p>
	<p>Inventory Number 436103 Chair Wooden Desk Location: Office</p>

Taylor Grady House – UGA

	Inventory Number 085332 Table Marble Top Victorian (Octagon Shape) Location: Uphall
	Inventory Numbers 085433 and 085434 Globe Celestial Globe Terrestrial Location: Sitting
	Inventory Number 085503 Cabinet China Mahogany Location: Uphall

Taylor Grady House – UGA

	Inventory Number 141166 Statue Bronze 28" w/Base Location: Bride
	Inventory Number 141173 Mirror Oval Gold Chippendale Location Dining
	Inventory Number 141174 Lamps Empire (1 Pair) Location: parlor

Taylor Grady House – UGA

	Inventory Number 085513 Figure Bronze Marble Base (Shepherd) Location: Uphall
	Inventory Number 141161 Table Dining Double Ped Large Little Collection Location: Conf
	Inventory Number 141165 Statue Bronze 28" w/base (broken Hand as of 3/16/2011) Location: Ground Floor Hall

Taylor Grady House – UGA

	Inventory Number 141175 Prints set of 4 Hudson River Location: 3 in Library/1 in Grooms rm)
	Inventory Number 141181 Mirror Oval Victor Large Location: Uphall

## APPENDIX C

### TAYLOR-GRADY HOUSE ADVISORY PANEL SAMPLE

#### Members for Panel:

Representatives from the city  
JLA Sustainers  
Past or Current JLA President  
Representative from the Georgia Museum of Art  
Preservation Professional  
Representative from the Sams family  
Chairs of the JLA Taylor-Grady House Committee

Sub-Committee for volunteering and support

#### Tentative List of Tasks:

- Develop a Mission Statement and Vision Statement
- Develop list of priorities for purchase/donations, replacement of items, repairs, placement of furniture, etc.
- Ensure there is a process for recording all donations to the house and that appropriate maintaining of those records is done
- Develop and maintain a relationship with individuals and businesses who might make donations to the house and/or who might have items to sell for use in the house
- Serve in an advisory capacity for the annual inventory of items and review insurance on items in the house to be sure appropriate value is assigned to all the furnishings
- Serve in an advisory capacity to the League actives, new members and sustainers to ensure that the history of the house is passed along to all associated with the house/Junior League
- Serve as a link with various individuals/groups to encourage rentals of the house for appropriate functions so that the house can raise funds for the league and for house upkeep
- Maintain a close working relationship with the Taylor Grady House/Junior League Administrative Director, Junior League President, Taylor Grady Committee Chair and the Taylor Grady Sustainer "Worker Bee" Committee to ensure that any tasks associated with the house are handled appropriately and in a timely manner
- Advisory Committee will meet a minimum of twice a year and other times as the group deems necessary. Committee members will serve 2 year staggered terms and may be reappointed for additional terms of office. The Junior League President and Sustainer Representative will appoint the members and the Chair for the initial group. The Chair in future years will be elected from within the group each April to serve from May 1 through April 30. The Chair will always be a Junior League Sustainer.