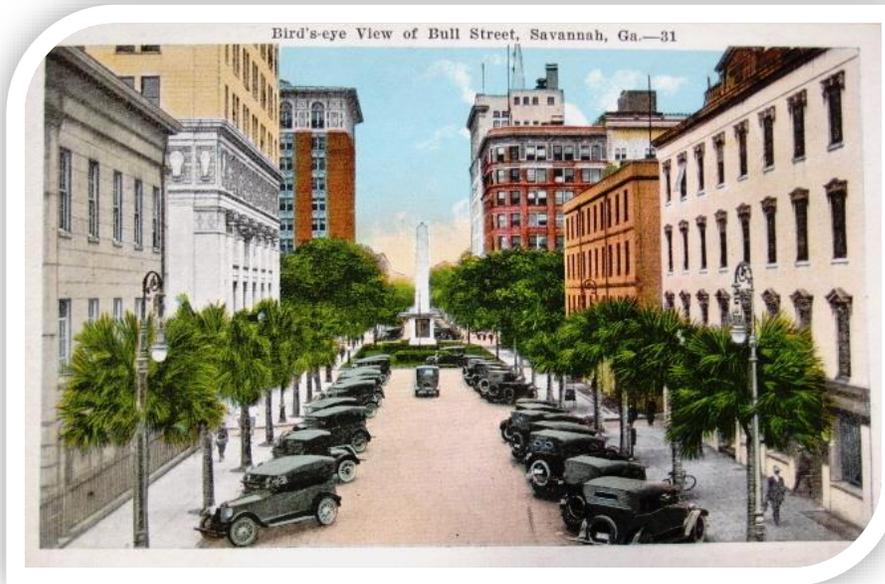# History is Monumental

This program utilizes the famous monuments of Bull Street as focal points for Colonial and Revolutionary War period history. At each stop, participants will discuss the importance of the historical figures memorialized, their life, and their contributions.

Let us begin by talking about **Bull street** itself!

- **WHO**: It was named for **Colonel William Bull** of Charleston, South Carolina who helped James Oglethorpe create the layout plan for the city of Savannah.

- **WHAT**: **Bull Street** runs from City Hall, through five of the Historic District's prettiest squares, namely Johnson, Wright, Chippewa, Madison and Monterey to Forsyth Park. Many significant buildings, commercial, governmental and religious – along with beautiful historic homes were built along the street and around its squares. Many of Savannah's monuments, too, are located in the Bull Street squares, again chosen for their importance and centrality.

- **WHERE**: Bull Street is one of Savannah's most prominent boulevards, literally dividing the city in East and West.

- **WHEN**: 1733

- **HOW**: James Oglethorpe worked with Colonel William Bull to lay out the new city. Bull served as the city's first architect, overseeing the design and construction of the earliest buildings. These early structures were all the same and were very basic single-story clapboard homes, 24×16 feet in size with a loft above and a small yard in the back. Oglethorpe and Bull originally laid out four wards in two rows along the Savannah River. The wards were directly correlated with the garden and farm lots located outside of the city, so communities were kept together both inside

and outside of the city. Each ward centered on a square and had four tythings on the north and south sides of the square. Tythings were rows of house lots, ten lots long. On the east and west sides of the square, there were trust lots used for public buildings such as churches or the courthouse.

The Monuments of Bull Street

Let's begin with the Greene Monument in Johnson Square

- **WHO**: The Monument in the center of the square is named after Nathaneal Greene (1742-1786), a great hero of the American Revolution, 2nd in command to George Washington.

- **WHAT**: The Monument is a fifty foot tall marble obelisk.

- **WHERE**: Johnson Square was the centerpiece of the Derby Ward, named after James, 10th Earl of Derby, one of the 21 Trustees of Georgia. The Square was named after South Carolina's Colonial Governor, Robert Johnson who had aided Oglethorpe and his people by providing food and escort from Beaufort to present- day Savannah. This was the first square of Savannah and is the very site where Archibald Bulloch, revolutionary patriot and the first President of the Provincial Council of Georgia read out the Declaration of Independence to the people of Georgia for the first time.

- **WHEN**: The monument was put in place in 1825

- **HOW**: Greene was originally buried in Colonial Park Cemetery but Savannah locals decided to move his body to Johnson Square in 1902. A few years after his death, Nathaniel Greene's son drowned in the Savannah River. He is also buried in Johnson Square next to his father.

Next, lets head to **Wright Square** where two monuments come to our attention. The central monument is dedicated to **William Washington Gordon** while the humbler monument in the corner of the square is dedicated to **Tomochichi**.

WHO: William Washington Gordon and Chief Tomochichi

- William Washington Gordon, Mayor of Savannah from 1834 until 1836. During his mayoral service, he was elected to the Georgia General Assembly as a member of the House of Representatives in 1835. In 1838, he was elected to the Georgia Senate. He founded and served as the first president of the Central Railroad and Banking Company of Georgia, which would later be reorganized as the Central of Georgia Railway.

- Tomochichi was the chief of the Yamacraw Indians and Oglethorpe's friend – together they signed the treaty of friendship and the charter for the colony of Georgia.

WHAT: In 1739, Tomochichi, was buried in Wright square. His coffin was transported by river from Yamacraw Village to Savannah, where a traditional English military funeral was conducted in his honor. James Oglethorpe, being his close and trusted friend served as one of his pallbearers. He also arranged for a pyramid of stones to be placed over his friend's grave in Wright Square in observance of Indian tradition. Tomochichi had requested in his lifetime that he be buried in Savannah among his English friends!

According to Professor Robin Williams, a few decades later the pyramid of stones that had been placed in Wright Square disappeared. About 100 years later, a pretty garden mound was placed on the site that in the 20th century was often mistaken for Tomochichi's tomb. In 1882, that mound was destroyed to make way for a monument to William Washington Gordon – which stands at the center of the square today.

Professor Williams explains that the monument was erased from public memory, disappearing from maps that document various "small urban features" probably due to a fear of Native Americans who came to be viewed as enemies during the French and Indian Wars. Tomochichi remained an obscure figure until Charles C. Jones published a detailed biography about him in 1868.

In 1899, Gordon's daughter-in-law, Nellie Kinzie Gordon, and the president of the Society of the Colonial Dames of America arranged with the Stone Mountain Monument Company to have a granite boulder sent to Savannah as a Monument to Tomochichi. The Stone Mountain Company offered the boulder at no cost. Mrs. Gordon refused so they sent a bill for $1.00, payable on Judgement Day. She sent the payment with a note saying she would be far too occupied with her own affairs on Judgement Day.

- **WHERE**: Wright Square is located in Percival Ward and is one of the four original wards of the city. It was named after Lord Percival who is regarded as the man who named Georgia in tribute to King George II. It was renamed Wright Square in 1763 after James Wright, the third and last Royal Governor of Georgia who ruled during the Revolution.

- **WHEN**: Gordon's monument was placed in 1882. Tomochichi's monument was placed in 1889.

- **HOW**: The boulder was placed in Wright Square where it remains to this day. Tomochichi is celebrated as a co-founder of the colony of Georgia alongside James Oglethorpe. The Bronze tablet reads "In memory of Tomochichi – the Mico of the Yamacraw – the Companion of Oglethorpe – and the friend and ally of the colony of Georgia." Professor Williams is critical of the placement of the boulder and describes it as being in a subordinate position to the Gordon monument.

Next, lets head to Chippewa Square and examine the monument dedicated to James Edward Oglethorpe, founder of the Colony of Georgia.
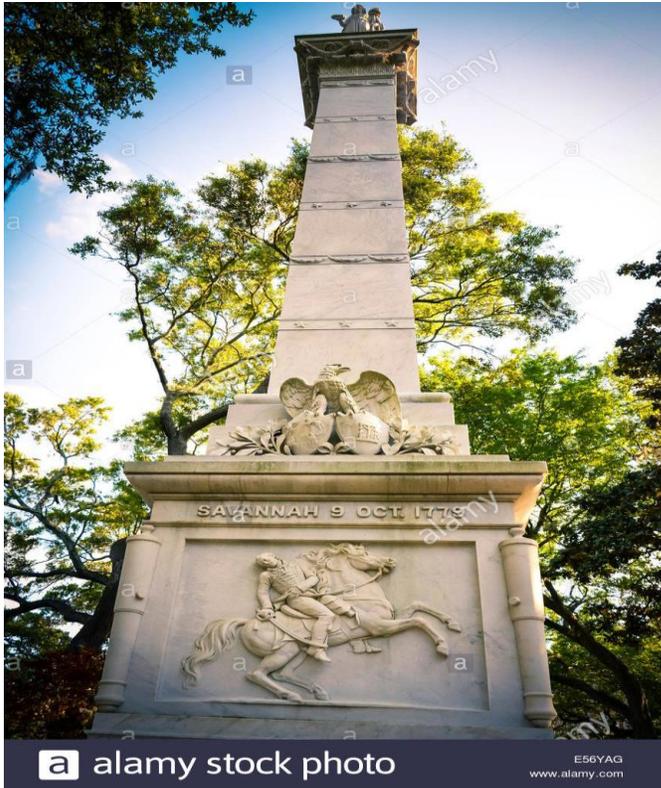

- **WHO**: James Oglethorpe, Founded the Colony of Georgia in 1733 after signing a peace treaty with Mico Tomochichi of the Yamacraw Indians.

- **WHAT**: A 9 foot statue of James Oglethorpe stands at the center of the square designed by Daniel Chester French. He is depicted in a British General's uniform of the period. The marble pedestal and base were designed by New York architect Henry Bacon (best known for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC) and shows a carved portion of the charter of the colony. Four lions hold shields on four corners of the base, bearing the Coat of Arms of Oglethorpe, the Colony of Georgia, the State of Georgia and the City of Savannah.

- **WHERE**: Chippewa Square is located in Brown Ward. Laid out in 1815, it was named in order of the Americans killed in the Battle of Chippewa during the War of 1812. It is also known as Theatre Square as it the location of the Savannah Theatre which has been in operation since 1818.

- **WHEN**: Completed by Daniel Chester French in 1910.

- **WHY:** Oglethorpe originally planned on founding a British Colony in North America for the 'worthy poor' of England. However, the Colony actually acted as a buffer, providing British colonies like South Carolina protection from the Spanish threat in Florida.

Moving on to **Madison Square**:

WHO	**William Jasper** (*circa* 1750 – October 9, 1779) was a noted American soldier in the Revolutionary War. He was a sergeant in the 2nd South Carolina Regiment.
WHAT	Standing over 15 feet tall, the monument features a bronze statue of Sgt. Jasper. The figure portrays him in uniform, grasping his sword in one hand, and a wound to his body in the other. At his feet you'll find his hat penetrated by bullets. Relief panels on three sides of the monument present honorable scenes from Jasper's military career.
WHERE	The statue is located in Madison Square, Savannah
WHEN	Died: Siege of Savannah, 1779
HOW	He was mortally wounded a few hundred yards east of this spot on while placing his regimental flag on the British earthworks in the assault by the American and French allied forces on Savannah.

Concluding our tour at Monterey Square

WHO   The Polish nobleman Casimir Pulaski led the cavalry on the American side in the Siege of Savannah and was mortally wounded. The siege is known as the second bloodiest battle of the American Revolution and the British remained in control of Savannah until July 1782, near the end of the war. Count Casimir Pulaski is buried and honored in Monterey Square.

Background: Pulaski's family was involved in a 1768 conspiracy to free Poland from Russian political influence. A few years later, Pulaski was accused of treason and sought refuge in France. By 1777, he sailed for America to participate in the American Revolutionary War with the help of Benjamin Franklin, an American Ambassador to France.

WHAT   Pulaski Monument is made of Italian marble and some granite. It is 55 feet tall and has a bronze relief which shows the moment of his death. He clutches his side where he is wounded, his head is tilted to one side and his horse has two hooves upraised, symbolic that the rider died in battle. The inscription reads: Pulaski, the historic Pole, who fell mortally wounded, fighting for American liberty at the Siege of Savannah, October 9, 1779.

WHERE AND WHEN: . American Revolution/Seige of Savannah

HOW: Following the battle he was rewarded with a commission as brigadier general and placed in command of all American cavalry. He went on to form a special infantry and cavalry unit capable of independent action.

In the Siege of Savannah, he was put in charge of the armies of American and French forces under Benjamin Lincoln and Count d' Estaing.

The battle took place on Springhill Redoubt southwest of Savannah. Pulaski was wounded by a grapeshot in his thigh while leading a cavalry charge. He was carried off the battlefield and placed on the ship the USS Wasp where he died.

Activities:

1. Imagine that you are an urban planner and you get to pick out 6 heroes to honor in your home-town. Who would they be?
2. Name your favorite square on Bull street and explain why it is your favorite.
3. If you were to design a monument for Chief Tomochichi, how would it look? Draw it out.