

# The Athens Historical Society, Inc.



## Meriwether Lewis' Georgia Days

**James P. Hendrix, Jr.**

**Sunday, March 16, 2003**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Athens-Clarke County Library Auditorium**

Meriwether Lewis, born in Virginia in 1774, lost his father when only five years old. His mother's remarriage a year later, to Captain John Marks, led to a move by the family to the Goosepond community in northeast Georgia in the mid-1780s. While it is uncertain precisely when the family moved, and whether young Meriwether was part of that initial migration, it is clear that he spent a significant amount of time in this wilderness Georgia setting in the 1780s and early 1790s.

It is conventional to say that Meriwether's "Georgia days," occurring at such a formative age in his life, helped to shape and hone the skills that later served him so ably as co-leader of the 1803-06 Lewis and Clark Expedition. Dr. Hendrix will discuss this thesis, as well as the even clearer evidence that Lewis, the "designated physician" for the expedition, learned a great deal about herbs and other natural medicines from his mother, particularly during the time-span the family was in Georgia. Hendrix's presentation will also attempt to comment, more generally, on the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which stands as America's greatest epic.

A native of North Carolina, James P. Hendrix, Jr. received his AB from Davidson College and his MA and Ph.D. in history from Louisiana State University. His principal training was as a historian of the American South, but in recent years he has focused on the American West, especially Lewis and Clark and their impact on the early years of American art and literature. His articles and book reviews have appeared in *The Journal of Southern History*, *The North Carolina Historical Review*, and *Louisiana History*, among other publications, and in 2001 he published two articles related to Lewis and Clark in the journals, *We Proceeded On* and *The Great Plains Quarterly*. He has presented scholarly papers and talks on historical subjects to academic and lay audiences in Georgia and elsewhere. He is a member of numerous professional societies, including Phi Alpha Theta, and is on the editorial board of the Atlanta Historical Society.

Jim Hendrix also has enjoyed a long, distinguished career as an educator, and since 1991 has been the Headmaster of The Lovett School in Atlanta, where he also teaches an honors course in American Studies, combining U. S. History and American Literature.

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***Don't forget to renew your AHS membership for 2003!  
If your mailing label does not say "2003," won't you send your dues today?***

### **AHS Officers for 2003**

In accordance with AHS Constitution Article V, Sec. 4, members in attendance at the January business meeting voted by acclamation to accept the slate prepared by the nominating committee of Wilson Elder (chair), Goodloe Erwin and Charlotte Thomas Marshall. Our thanks to the committee and to these members who give so generously of their time.

**President:** Verner Chaffin  
**Vice-president:** Betty Alice Fowler  
**Secretary:** Jodie Guy

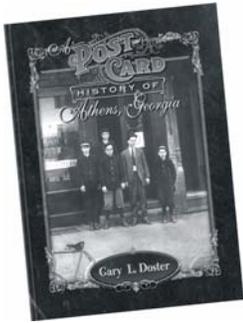
**Treasurer:** George Smith, Jr.  
**Historian:** Eve B. Mayes

#### **New Board of Directors for the term 2003-2005**

Milton Hill  
Henry Vittrouer  
Wilson Elder

#### **Board of Directors for 2002-2004**

Rufus Adair  
Stan Henderson  
Anne B. Segrest



## AHS's Best Seller: *A Postcard History of Athens, Georgia* A Gift to the Society & the Community

The Society's publications have always been well received, but not until Christmas 2002 did we have a best seller. Keeping the 17 retailers supplied was a breathless and thrilling experience, right into the drizzle of Christmas Eve.

AHS published Gary Doster's book with the expectation that its unusual approach would make it a valuable addition to the corpus of excellent books about Athens. Some scenes included are not available in any other book, and much of the information accompanying the illustrations has been out of the public consciousness for many decades.

A great many of these postcards had not been reproduced since their appearance 75 to 100 years ago. They are historically valuable because they afford a view of some homes, businesses, schools, churches, street scenes, and social life of Athens and its people not available in any other form. The postcards in this book are from the collection of Gary Doster, a lifelong student of Athens history. The captions accompanying the pictures are informed by his detailed knowledge of local history and enriched by collaboration with Charlotte Thomas Marshall.

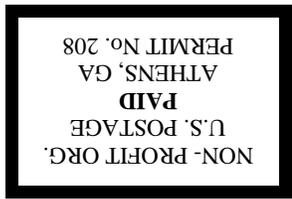
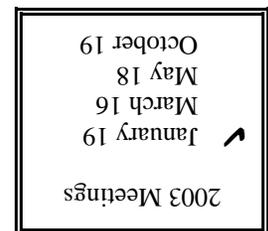
Work on the compilation began in the spring of 2001 when the AHS Board accepted Mr. Doster's generous offer for the Society to reap all the profits from the publication. Working with him were Charlotte and George Marshall, who five years earlier edited the Society's *Remembering Athens* by Susan Frances Barrow Tate. Although Mr. Doster had already energetically researched the subjects of the pictures, scrutiny in preparing the postcards for publication prompted new questions and further inquiry. Many Society members and other Athenians generously shared their recollections and memorabilia and several agreed to read the manuscript and offer suggestions. The Society has always taken great care to insure the accuracy of its books.

The imaginative arrangement of pictures and text is a result of the professional skill and personal commitment of graphic designer Bill Reeves. The attractive dust jacket was also designed by Reeves.

Marketing and distribution were managed by Charlotte Marshall, with the constant and able assistance of George and Gary. Society members who gathered to work diligently in October to assemble and mail the pre-publication offer and in late November to package and send the mail orders included Mary Bondurant Warren, Eve and Rick Mayes, Alston Steiner, Robert Hale, Charlotte Marshall, Faye and Gary Doster, as well as granddaughters LeAnna and Emily Doster and their friend Ramey Butler. Treasurer George Smith has kept busy making deposits and keeping records of the expenses and income. In addition, he contributed 100 cardboard mailers, significantly decreasing the Society's distribution costs. Pick-up day on December 6 was managed by Robert Hale, Mary Warren, Charlotte and George Marshall, and Doster.

Hearing the reader response to Doster's book has been a heady experience. People who ordered one copy during the pre-publication offer came back to buy multiple copies after receiving their book. They told others they had to buy a copy. Some purchasers made it as far as their car before they began reading and then lost all track of time. *Border's Books* bought more than 350 copies of the book and sponsored a signing on December 22, which they reported was one of their most successful events ever.

In the past the Society ordered 1,000 copies of *Historic Houses of Athens* and 700 copies of *Remembering Athens*, both of which are now out of print. Sensing that *A Postcard History of Athens, Georgia* was going to sell itself, the publication committee placed an order for 1,500 books. Three months after publication fewer than 100 copies remain! Mr. Doster has not only made a significant gift to the Society's coffers, but he has also added luster to its imprint.



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