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Stories of Atlanta: Iron & Ambition

The Georgia Archives Lunch and Learn presentation, “Stories of Atlanta: Iron & Ambition,” by Lance Russell, will be held onsite. The presentation is on Friday, April 14, 2023, from noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Georgia Archives, 5800 Jonesboro Road, Morrow, Ga.

The Lunch and Learn presentation is free, and no registration is required.

Lance Russell looks at the City of Atlanta not through the eyes of a Historian but through the eyes of a Filmmaker. It’s the stories of Atlanta that captured Lance’s attention and led him to create a YouTube channel dedicated to telling Atlanta’s history through video stories.

Narrated by Lance, each of the channel’s 200 short stories – many with surprise endings – combine to paint a vivid, binge-worthy chronicle of a city driven toward greatness.

“The story of the city of Atlanta is the story of its people,” says Lance. “Unique among America’s great cities, Atlanta exists not because of its strategic location or abundant natural resources, Atlanta exists because of its people. Technology in the form of iron sparked the founding of Atlanta, but it was the ambition of the people of Atlanta that turned a railroad junction point in the middle of nowhere into one of America’s great cities. Unplanned and unexpected, the history of the city of Atlanta is a story of Iron and Ambition.”

In his “Stories of Atlanta: Iron & Ambition” talk, Lance explains how his interest in storytelling fueled a 50-year filmmaking career that led him to discover his passion for telling the Stories of Atlanta.

In a presentation filled with photographs and videos, Lance tells how a famous TV game show host – the best man at Elvis’ wedding – and a professional wrestling announcer led him to create one of Atlanta’s treasured historical resources.

In Lance's entertaining and thought-provoking presentation, you'll learn:

- Who hit the longest homerun in baseball history and exactly how many miles it traveled.
- Why a major Atlanta boulevard is named after a 15th century, Spanish conquistador.
- How Underground Atlanta ever got underground in the first place.
- And why there are so many Stories of Atlanta that nobody's knows.

As Lance would say, "There's a reason for everything. You just have to know the story."

Lance Russell is an Atlanta-based filmmaker and media communicator who, for over three decades, has been entrusted by clients to tell their stories. A seasoned producer with an innate ability to cut to the heart of the matter, Lance's instincts are tailor-made for today's "media bite" culture. Brief, poignant and always entertaining, Lance's current passion is bringing Atlanta's colorful and inspiring past to life with his "rest of the story" style video series, Stories of Atlanta. "History's best communicators," says Lance, "have always been storytellers. It's in our DNA. 'Once upon a time' is how we got to where we are now."

The Georgia Archives is a unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The Georgia Archives identifies, collects, manages, preserves, provides access to, and publicizes records and information of Georgia and its people, and assists state and local government agencies with their records management.