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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 13, 2026

**Georgia Archives Presents the 2026 April History Symposium**  
***Tracing Footsteps: Beyond the Founding Story in Revolutionary Georgia***  
**April 10–11, 2026**

The Georgia Archives is proud to present the 2026 April History Symposium, *Tracing Footsteps: Beyond the Founding Story in Revolutionary Georgia*, a two-day event examining underrepresented voices of the Revolutionary era in the South as the nation approaches the 250th anniversary of independence. Through perspectives often left out of traditional anniversary narratives, this year's symposium invites attendees to reconsider how the era was experienced, remembered, and recorded.

This year's symposium will highlight stories that complicate the familiar "founding" narrative of America's Revolution, including the life of Austin Dabney, the legacy of Nancy Hart, and Loyalist voices that reveal the divisions within communities. Together, these sessions show how race, gender, class, and allegiance shaped the choices people made and the consequences they lived with long after the fighting ended. Understanding these perspectives is essential not only for historical accuracy but for recognizing how public memory gets built and whose experiences are elevated or erased.

To view and share the event flyer, please visit: [tinyurl.com/AHS2026Flyer](https://tinyurl.com/AHS2026Flyer).

The symposium is free and open to the public and will take place in person at the Georgia Archives, located at 5800 Jonesboro Road, Morrow, GA 30252. Advance registration is strongly encouraged. Walk-ins are welcome as space allows. Register here: [tinyurl.com/GAArchivesAHS2026](https://tinyurl.com/GAArchivesAHS2026).

This event is sponsored in part by the Clayton County Tourism Authority ([seeclaytoncountyga.com](https://seeclaytoncountyga.com)) and the Friends of Georgia Archives and History ([FOGAH.org](https://FOGAH.org)).

## Schedule

### **Day 1 – Friday, April 10, 2026**

**12:00 PM – 1:00 PM: *Whose American Revolution Was It—and Whose Is It?* by Dr. Gregory Nobles**

(April Lunch & Learn, part of the April History Symposium) The American Revolution was not just a two-sided struggle between Great Britain and British-American colonists, but a conflict that engaged a wide range of people across

the eastern half of North America and beyond. The war divided colonists of similar class and regional identities. It led many people of color, including Indigenous people and free and enslaved Black people, to take sides and, at times, change sides. This presentation explores the Revolution as a complex continental event, considers what it meant to different people at the time, and examines what it continues to mean during the semiquincentennial year.

**1:30 PM – 2:30 PM: *The Story of Austin Dabney: A Black Georgia Soldier of the American Revolution* by Dr. Robert S. Davis**

Austin Dabney is one of Georgia's most enduring Revolutionary War stories, but he was also a real person. Wrongfully held in slavery, Dabney joined the Patriot cause, was wounded in battle, and survived after being rescued by a fellow soldier and aided by the soldier's family. For his service, Dabney received a Revolutionary War pension, and the state paid to secure his legal freedom. This presentation traces the documentation of his life and legacy and places his story in the context of Revolutionary Georgia and Wilkes County.

**Day 2 – Saturday, April 11, 2026**

**10:00 AM – 11:00 AM: *Sir James Wright and the Price of Loyalty in Georgia* by Dr. Greg Brooking**

This presentation examines how Georgia's journey to independence unfolded and how Royal Governor James Wright, known for his political acumen and steadfast loyalty to the Crown, delayed Patriot efforts longer than any other colonial governor. It highlights the complex political dynamics that shaped Georgia's role in the fight for independence.

**11:15 AM – 12:15 PM: “War Woman” Nancy Hart in Legend and Memory: How One Woman's Patriotism Inspired Generations of Georgia Women** by Dr. Katie Brackett

Nancy Morgan Hart is best known for her faceoff with British troops in the Georgia backcountry during the Revolutionary War, where she leveraged her role as a woman and homemaker to trick enemy troops and take them hostage. Nancy's bravery and exploits became legend, particularly among women, and her story found its way into textbooks, cartoons, storybooks, and other material culture, where it often served as a non-traditional, gender-bending, and comedic example of women's roles in wartime. Nancy's story can tell us much about gender, patriotism, and how American society expected women to participate in armed conflicts, including the American Civil War, when a group of women formed an all-female militia named in honor of Hart. This talk will tell Nancy's story and the story of other Georgians inspired by her dedication to country, as well as what her story can tell us about the nature of patriotism.

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The Georgia Archives, a unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, identifies, collects, manages, preserves, and provides access to records about Georgia and its people. It also assists state and local government agencies with records management. This work is done within the framework of the University System of Georgia's mission to create a more highly educated Georgia.