

Summer 2023

The LEGACY

A Publication of Watson-Brown Foundation, Inc.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
MUSIC TO OUR

Ears

THE REIGN
of
ROCOCO REVIVAL

LUXURY AND TASTE

Summer
AT CAMP



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OUR MISSION

The Watson-Brown Foundation, through creativity, diligence and financial support, labors to improve education in the American South by funding its schools and students, preserving its history, encouraging responsible scholarship and promoting the memory and values of our spiritual founders.

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SUMMER CAMP IS UPON US!



Goodrum House

BY BARBARA HYDE

Camp time is upon us, and for Kenneth Steele, the son of Clara Steele (May Goodrum's housekeeper), summer camp was always a time of great joy. It is where he gained his independence, learned how to commune with nature, and play sports with other boys his age. He started attending Camp Dixie in Clayton, Georgia in the early 1930s when he was about seven or eight years old. Camp Dixie was started by A.A. "Pop J" Jameson in 1914 in the mountains of North Georgia. Pop J started the camp as an extension of his work at the YMCA. He loved being outdoors and teaching young people to love nature as well. Originally, the boys slept in tents and learned to rough it on the mountainside, but eventually the camp's popularity grew. Twenty-five cabins were built in long rows housing five to six boys in each along with a counselor. Eventually, Pop J upgraded the cabins to have bathrooms and running water along with other structures to house the dining room.

It was at Camp Dixie that Ken learned how to play sports, shoot a 22-gauge rifle, backpack through the woods, and

canoe and kayak on the spring-fed lake. Fishing, metal and leather working, and cooking over an open fire were skills that were taught by the counselors who were of college age.

As Ken tells it, "I looked forward to going every year. It was where I built character, learned how to communicate with my peers, and learned how to be independent. It was one of the happiest times in my life. I have good memories of Camp Dixie." It was at camp where Ken first rode a horse. The camp lake was where he first learned to swim. Camp Dixie was a month-long escape from the hustle and bustle of city life in Atlanta and the home life of Goodrum House.

Each summer, his mother Clara, and stepfather Bob Cody, would drive him from Buckhead to Clayton for an anxious farewell. Clara would dress up for the occasion. May Goodrum presumably paid for the camp fees and loaned the car for the drive up to the mountains. Ken loved the excitement of the drive — the slow change of scenery from stone-clad buildings to the beauty of the soft-sloping green



Ken and his mother Clara Steele



Ken at Camp Dixie ca. 1935



Ken in front row third from left, ca. 1931



Ken sounding the Dinner Gong, ca. mid-1930s

mountains filled with the sound of birds and insects. Clara and Bob would settle him in until the dinner gong sounded the time for parents to leave. Ken returned each summer until he failed high school algebra and had to attend summer school his freshman year, after which he never returned to the boy's camp as one of the campers.

Many years later in the 1970s or early 1980s, Ken made the trip from Florida to return for a visit to the camp. It had closed some years earlier and the forest crept up to the buildings, reclaiming its lost land. The lake had begun to fill with the silt of

the surrounding landscape, but it didn't stop him from traipsing the grounds and reminiscing about the good times he had there. Camp Dixie eventually reopened and was successful for a bit of time afterward, but with the recent two years of COVID-19, the camp finally had to close again. It was sold to an undisclosed buyer in 2022. Perhaps the land still whispers with the raucous laughter of young boys who will greet the next generation of children who will play amongst the stately pine and cool mountain breeze.

CAMPUS NOTES



Watson-Brown Scholars in Action

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG

JUNIOR, BENEDICTINE COLLEGE

Sophomore year was a learning year. After freshman year, when I was meeting everybody and adjusting, I began sophomore year settled. I lived in an apartment on the outside of campus rather than a dorm in the center. My classes began to narrow into major-related classes, so the new people I encountered narrowed as well. I had become familiar with the small town in Kansas. And, as a side note, I deleted social media. My time was forced to be intentional. In order to see people, I had to try to make myself visible on campus, as I no longer lived in the center. Time with friends became a choice, not a natural occurrence. And I had to be intentional with what I did; sitting on a couch is not as fun without any distractions on my phone. But this led to much growth. For example, I honed in on my disc golf skills, a sport that I picked up freshman year, and I found other things to do. I explored the nooks and crannies of Atchison, Kansas, through fishing, exploring, and participating in local events like fresh markets and auctions to look around and experience where I lived more.

I had to be intentional with myself and look inward. Without the noise of my phone, as well as being in the middle of Kansas, I was able to evaluate myself and think about who I wanted to be. I started a prayer group called Morning Bible Study which meets at 7 a.m. every Thursday before class. We have grown to eight men. I was invited to the core team of Hunger Co., which is a meal delivery organization which serves the less fortunate of Atchison. I was invited to the core team of Regnum Christi,



William Armstrong

a Christian group on campus that hosts many activities. I will oversee starting and running Conquest next semester for middle school boys to grow in friendship with God and each other.

Lastly, I was invited to join a small group of researchers who research and publish stories about business leaders in America who implement their faith into their business. I have been blessed much with these experiences and the gifts have trickled down into my personal life as well. I have a wonderful relationship with my girlfriend, Sally, still from freshman year. I have grown deeper friendships and made new ones through my experiences, and have been able to do things like go skydiving, kayaking, and other things which have been amazing. It has not all been easy, in fact, it was my most challenging year. But through the challenge, I was able to have my most successful year yet, achieving all A's for the first time and doing it both semesters. And I have grown in my relationships with people through sharing challenges as well. I am thankful for these challenges as they have forged me into a better person. And I am thankful to Watson-Brown for helping me have this opportunity to grow.



Louisa Brown

LOUISA BROWN

JUNIOR, FURMAN UNIVERSITY

With COVID restrictions lifting, this past semester has been filled with exciting new experiences. One such opportunity was a weeklong trip to Northern Ireland to study its history and culture. This trip was my first time overseas, and I learned so much about the world and myself

from the experience.

Another opportunity I had was participating in a month-long study experience at Walt Disney World. Along with three professors and 14 fellow students, I traveled to the most magical place on Earth to study data analytics and operations research. As part of the trip, I completed my own research project based on data I collected throughout the Disney World parks. I was even able to present my research to Disney professionals and network with data analysts in their company. From the experience, I am more confident in my future goals of pursuing a career as a data analyst.

This summer, I will continue to gain experience in the field of data analytics as a mathematics research fellow. I will spend the summer working alongside three math professors and four fellow students on projects that involve data analysis. My project centers on partnering with a local baseball team to optimize the operations of their concessions stands. I am excited to use this summer to gain more experience and knowledge in this field.

CHELSEA CASH

JUNIOR, WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

My sophomore year was filled with exciting twists and unexpected turns. This was my second year with the option of online classes, and although I appreciate the flexibility that the online classes gave me, I will always say that I prefer in-person teaching because it is much harder to understand material over a screen. Thankfully, this past spring, I was able to experience an almost normal semester at Winthrop. I started as a history major to create a career as a museum curator, but about halfway through the fall semester I realized it was not the career for me. I came to college to make a difference and I realized I couldn't do that if I had my nose stuck in a book reading about the past.

Last fall, I took a required American Government class and while taking this course, I met an amazing professor who helped me see what majors and careers could help me make a real change in our society. I fell in love with political science and by the week of registration for spring, I was a political science major. Politics have always been a part of my life because of my dad; he would always have the news

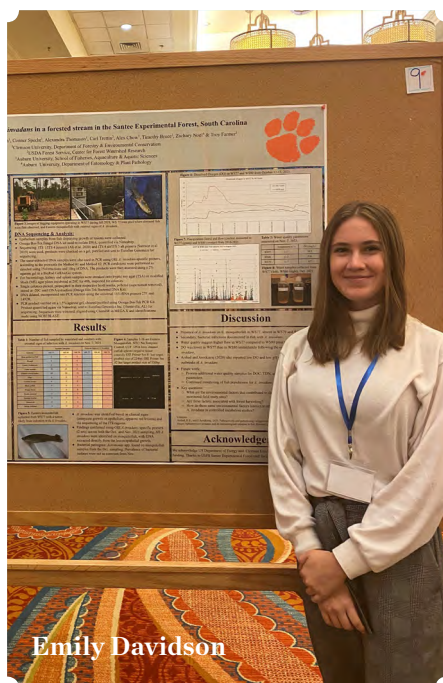
on when I came into the room and it took me a year of college classes to realize that politics and helping people are my passion. My advisor helped me change my major and this past spring I took five politically related classes and added a legal studies minor. I chose to take six in-person classes this spring and I finally felt like I was starting to get into a groove. I was loving college, and changing my major helped me remember why I love school and came to college. Although I was taking all these classes and often felt overwhelmed, I found a home with the Model United Nations team at Winthrop. I never knew what it meant to fit in until I was asked to join the team and take the class this spring, and I am so happy I decided to join. I met some of my closest friends through the team and I found what I wanted to do after I obtained my undergraduate degree. Through Model United Nations, I was able to unlock a multitude of options for my future and I found a love for international relations.



Chelsea Cash

I am most surprised how fast these two years have passed. I was welcomed to Winthrop with open arms when I first came to school two long years ago, and choosing Winthrop was the best choice for me. I struggled to adjust to the college life my first year here and my grades started to see the consequences. I thought I was going to have to leave and say goodbye to my future but both the Watson-Brown Foundation and Winthrop University offered me a second chance, and I have worked these past two years to prove that they picked the right person. I have

decided that after I graduate in 2024, I will attend law school with the goal of becoming a civil rights attorney and one day either a judge or an ambassador to the United Nations. This fall, I am going to be studying a semester away at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to take some law courses and to experience the city in preparation for the spring, when I hope to travel abroad to Florence, Italy to research foreign policies and to experience the art of Italy. These two huge opportunities are only possible because of this scholarship. I am grateful for the chance to be one of the few students who get to represent scholars of the foundation, and I cannot wait to see what the last two years of undergrad hold for me. The first half of college has flown by and I now see why people say to enjoy it. These four years won't be enough, but I am glad to have had the good times and bad times with everyone I love most by my side. I had a less exciting year than most of the other recipients of this scholarship, but I could not have asked for a better year for my second year in college.



EMILY DAVIDSON

SENIOR, CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

This semester, I've gotten to experience a lot of new things. My undergraduate research program was able to present a poster at the Southeastern Division American Fisheries Society chapter meeting in Charleston. It was incredibly interesting to participate as an undergraduate student, as most of the attendees were graduate students

or people working in that field of study. It was honestly one of the first times I've felt like I've been exposed to the "real workforce." The other big highlight of this semester was going to St. Rose, Louisiana over spring break with a group from my church to help with disaster relief from the hurricane back in August. It was incredibly rewarding to be able to spend my time serving that community while learning more about their culture.



BRANDON FU

SOPHOMORE, GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

One of the most remarkable aspects of my first year in college has been the people. Although I am just a freshman at Georgia Tech, I have had the opportunity to meet so many extraordinary people. A person who lived in my hall had competed internationally in underwater robotics design competitions. He continues his passion in college — designing a Mars rover for another competition with a team. Another is a talented orator and debater. He competes in the university's mock trial team against other colleges. There are many others whom I admire similarly for their talents and passions.

I feel this anecdote is the essence of college, it is a gathering of talented minds and passionate hearts all in one place to better themselves and connect with others. It is enriching to have been able to meet these people, and college is one of the best places for opportunities like that.

EMILY GARCIA

SENIOR, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

I met Justin Simpson last spring while working on an investigative story for The Red & Black, the University of Georgia's student-led newspaper. After my first interview with Justin, I learned that he was a graduate student in the philosophy department at UGA, he aspired to be a philosophy professor, and sometimes, he slept in his car to afford attendance at academic conferences.

Justin was one of several graduate students who spoke with me about the financial burden of the university's special institution fee or the SIF. The SIF costs both undergraduate and graduate students \$450 per semester. Among other things, the fee funds graduate student teaching assistantships, which some graduate students argued was essentially having them pay to work.

Graduate students can get their tuition waived by participating in research or teaching assistantships at the university. However, these tuition waivers do not cover fees, including the SIF. Graduate students must pay the SIF themselves. Justin said the cost of fees reduced his annual stipend from \$19,000 to \$17,000.

As a result of his financial situation, Justin shared with me that he felt unable to fully participate in the world of academia.



While working on this story, I also learned that the Graduate Student Council's advocacy committee conducted a survey of the financial situations of graduate students in 2020. Out of 221 respondents, 94% indicated that they experienced financial difficulties and 21.9% indicated that they run out of money from their stipend payment before the month ends, every month.

The Red & Black published the story in March 2021. At the bottom, Justin is quoted saying, “If this fee goes away, I won’t see the benefits, but I realized how detrimental this has been to my life and I wouldn’t want another graduate student to live through it.”

This year, the University System of Georgia eliminated the special institution fee for graduate students.

While my story about the financial burden of university fees on graduate students was not the first or last of its kind, it contributed to the public’s awareness of the issue. Of course, my reporting would not have been possible if not for the trust of graduate students, like Justin, to allow me to share their stories.



Aliyah Griffin

ALIYAH GRIFFIN

SENIOR, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA AIKEN

My junior year at USC Aiken was terrific. I learned so much about myself this year. I am ending my junior year and moving on to my senior year of college, and it feels surreal. I wanted an opportunity to learn more about my career, so I became a nurse extern at one of the local hospitals in the area. The job has been so rewarding and has given me a better insight into nursing. I am so excited for the summer to be working as an extern and working with one of our university’s most remarkable leadership experiences. I get to be a freshman orientation leader (called a Pacesetter) at USC Aiken. I am ecstatic to be working with a wonderful group of leaders this summer and telling

everyone about USC Aiken. I am so happy to be moving on to my senior year with the goals of being more involved on campus and getting ready for my career as a nurse! Thank you, Watson-Brown Foundation!

RYOCHI JIMENEZ

SOPHOMORE, COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

I was initially majoring in biology, but after taking the introductory course to International Studies, I realized I wanted to pursue this passion and integrate it with my pre-med track. I had planned to study abroad later in my college career, but I never expected to be immersed in a study abroad experience in my first year. To my surprise, after earning a spot in the International Scholars Program, I was offered a scholarship to study in Vieques, Puerto Rico. The two-week course combined both biology and international studies disciplines as we learned about the biological conservation of coral reefs in the Caribbean as well as the impacts of globalization on the small island of Vieques. Aside from reading some background information of Vieques prior to the trip, it was even more incredible to explore the island and get to know the people. This trip was my first time traveling abroad without family, and I learned so much as a person, a scholar, and aspiring doctor. Although I am still at the beginning of my career path, I want to integrate my passion to practice medicine with my desire to understand the people and the world around me from both a global and local perspective. Now that I am home for the summer, I plan to shadow physicians



Ryochi Jimenez

in the hospital setting while working a summer job at Waffle House. Once I return to campus in the fall, I also plan to become more involved in research through the Women’s Health Research team as well as other pre-med student organizations now that I have the first year of college under my belt.



Rakaiya Martin

RAKAIYA MARTIN

JUNIOR, COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

This year was great to me! With COVID finally coming to a halt, campus started to open up more and more. This year I was able to maintain my 3.9 GPA and A’s in every class. Also, I was able to get involved more on campus. I was promoted to a LSAMP Scholar due to my academic and personal achievements. I joined the National Council of Negro Women to surround myself with women who look like me and women who are trying to better themselves in every aspect! In this organization, I am a part of three fundamental committees: the financial literacy committee, women’s health committee, and mental health committee, which I was just appointed to as co-chair. Furthermore, I was selected to join the Presidential Envoy team at CSU, a prestigious position on campus that allows students to work alumni events and network with the executives of the school. I began tutoring for the Boys and Girls Club of the Chattahoochee Valley this year as well. I tutor elementary grades and love the kids; they have taught me more than I could have imagined. I volunteer at multiple hospitals and work as a student assistant at CSU’s

Counseling Center. In addition, I continue to excel in the Honors College and my various academic studies. With all my involvement on campus, I am currently in the process of starting my own organization for African American pre-med students; I am so excited for the impact it will have on my fellow classmates! Lastly, this summer, I am looking forward to interning at ClinCept, a clinical research company. As a future doctor, each one of my involvements has enhanced me as a student and individual. This year has taught me patience, optimism, and resilience, and with every year accomplished, I continue to flourish!



Alexander Ollinger

ALEXANDER OLLINGER

SOPHOMORE, WOFFORD COLLEGE

This year during the January interim, I took On-Stage in the British Isles, a two-week study abroad class with other Wofford students. I had never been to another country nor had I studied much theater before, but experiencing the culture of London and Edinburgh was one of my favorite experiences during my freshman year.

During the trip, we saw a wide variety of performances in several unique venues. We started out our first day in London by attending a Shakespearean play in a playhouse that was designed to recreate an authentic experience of how people would see the very same performance hundreds of years ago. We also went to the Royal Opera House and saw *The Marriage of Figaro*, which surprised me as it ended up being my favorite performance. Our class attended several modern shows as well

such as *Six*, which is a modern musical about the wives of Henry VIII in a style like *Hamilton*. After a train ride along the coast to Edinburgh, we saw some standup comedy, and at the conclusion of our trip had a traditional Scottish dinner with poetry by Robert Burns read aloud.

Outside of the organized performances, we had the opportunity to explore these cities at our own pace and saw an incredible amount of historical and culturally significant sites. My personal favorite was walking to the top of the city of Edinburgh and getting a guided tour of the castle located there. Another highlight of the trip was climbing Arthur's Seat, a mountain right next to Edinburgh, and getting one of the most incredible views I have ever seen of the historical old town part of the city. Having the responsibility of making my own plans for a trip in such a unique place was a new experience for me and I greatly enjoyed it. After having taken this course, I now intend on taking a whole semester abroad as I have learned just how much I love being involved in the culture of other places and people.

JACOB PRICE

SOPHOMORE, DUKE UNIVERSITY

When I first arrived at Duke, I felt almost instantly at home. I was surrounded by individuals from around the country and even the world, yet I felt accepted and truly a part of the university. With this newfound comfort, I was able to fully explore my



Jacob Price

intellectual interests whole-heartedly, and I joined as many clubs as I could. Though I only ended up sticking with a couple, they expanded my passion for civil engineering and the environment. I enjoyed learning in a classroom setting and built relationships not only with my classmates, but professors as well. In my introductory engineering class, I constructed a vehicle for helping elderly individuals get their trash bins up steep driveways, developing skills in the process I never would've imagined learning as a freshman. Currently, I am taking classes through the Duke in Berlin summer program, while simultaneously immersing myself in a rich culture. After this program ends, I am doing a second study abroad program in Seoul; I am extremely excited to connect with a part of my identity while exploring a new city with my classmates.



Madeline Robertson

MADELINE ROBERTSON

SOPHOMORE, FRANKLIN OLIN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

This was my first year at college, and I had an amazing time. For the first time in my life, I didn't have to devote so much of my time and energy to classes I did not care about. I took a variety of classes, but all of them related to something I enjoyed. I took a math class that had us design boats and program robots. I took a music class that gave me music writing assignments, rather than just theory. I took a programming class that gave me the chance to redesign the sign-up system for the machine shop that I spend so much time in. The shop has been a particular highlight of my first year. The shop has everything a

person could ever want, from a water jet to an epoxy and composites lab. I got a lot of use out of that composites lab this year, as I was part of the rocketry structures team. This year, Olin rocketry has been working on a rocket to launch at the IREC competition in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico (in just a few weeks now!). The rocket will go to 10,000 feet.

As part of the structures team, I designed a nose cone that would be ideal for our rocket, then promptly scrapped it because we didn't have the resources to fabricate a nose cone. We are working on creating a carbon fiber filament winding machine that will allow us to create the nose cone of my dreams, but that will be a project completed sometime next year. For the time being, I found the best pre-made nose cone and ordered that. After the rocket itself was built and passed off to the avionics team for electronics work, I moved on to designing the next generation of Olin rocketry fins. We want to make fins that have an airfoil as their profile, so they will generate less drag. This means that we can't just cut out a sheet of fiberglass into a profile. Towards the end of the school year, I was toying with printing a 3D core, with such low-in fill that it is almost just a shell, then laying it up with carbon fiber fabric for strength. Another option would be laser cutting ribs in the shape we want, then laying that up with carbon fiber fabric. One thing I plan on trying either this summer or next year, is to use the shopbot machine to cut foam into the proper shape before, once again, laying it up with carbon fiber. I managed to get my hands on some prime blue foam to try this with at my job this summer.

I was lucky enough to be hired by the Olin machine shop this summer, which means I get to spend 40 hours a week in one of my favorite places on Earth. I am only two weeks in at this point, but I have already helped design the new 3D printing room, designed and cut many tool storage bins, updated some safety signage, made many, many stickers, and got to work on several other improvement projects. My hope is that I can use this experience to get hired in the shop during the school year so I can help teach other people about the incredible variety of machines at their disposal. I have had a full year, and I am all geared up for another good one. Next year I am signed up for some pretty tough classes, all engineering based of

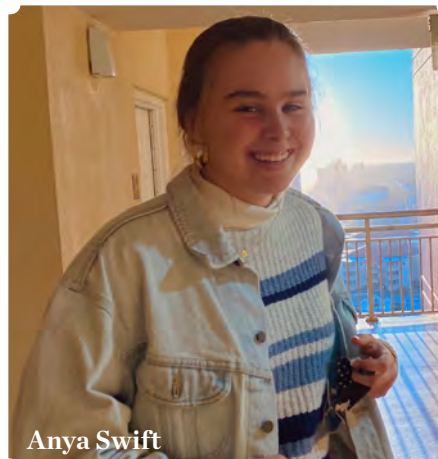
course. I am also leading the payload team of rocketry. This scholarship has helped to make all this possible, and I just really want to thank all of you folks involved with the foundation.



NIRANJANA SIVAJI

SENIOR, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Even though junior year had a lot of memorable moments, the thing that stands out is my involvement with UNICEF at UGA and organizing our Pie A Professor event. Through UNICEF at UGA, I have been a part of various events and they have all been really fun. However, the event that I enjoyed the most is our Pie A Professor event. For Pie A Professor, we got professors to volunteer to be pied in the face to raise money for UNICEF's Ukraine Humanitarian Fund. We organized a venue, coordinated with professors, and got a lot of the UGA community to donate to pie their favorite professors. In the end, we raised over \$2,500 in donations. One professor had more than 50 pies thrown at him! Coordinating an event like this and raising money for such an important cause was the most memorable thing that I did this year.



ANYA SWIFT

SOPHOMORE, CHARLESTON
SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

My freshman year went by in a whirlwind of new friends, new experiences, and many academic challenges, but it will go down in the books as one of my favorite years of my life thus far. One memorable experience inside the classroom began with an intimidating walk to sophomore-level microeconomics on my second day of classes. I knew that I would be the only freshman in the class with a variety of sophomores and juniors, and I had a flutter of nerves wondering if I would be able to measure up to my peers. A few classes in, the professor, a sweet and incredibly intelligent older man who had a passion for the subject and an affinity for going on philosophical tangents about various economic topics, quickly became my favorite professor. I made the highest score of the class on my first exam and a perfect score on my last and loved every minute of the class. While I would not enjoy the topic as a profession, the combination of the professor, the subject, and my success made the class an exhilarating start to my college academic career.

OF LUXURY AND TASTE



BY SAM THOMAS

In the 1830s, Louis Philippe brought to the French population, and subsequently to England and America, a new style of furniture. It was out with the old classic period and in with the new Racaille style, a revival style of furniture design known as French antique. In America, the style took off, particularly in the South beginning in the 1840s, although on this side of the pond, we referred to it as Rococo Revival.

The change in style came along with the introduction of machine-made furniture that adapted very nicely to the curves, carvings, and intricate asymmetrical scrolls that characterizes Rococo. The invention of machinery specifically created to produce this style of furniture brought about a mass production, which contributed to a sudden decrease in prices and mass appeal. In 1848, the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce touted that every description of furniture, almost from the common bedstead to the most costly articles, were made in some of the extensive steam establishments.

On a trip to America in 1845, Sir Charles Lyell of England mused that he viewed house after house gorgeously fitted up in satin and velvet draperies, woolen carpets, marble and inlaid tables in a style being more Parisian than English. He went on to ponder how the furniture styles of the colonies could outshine those of their mother country.

Andrew Jackson Downing, credited as the father of American Horticulture, promoted not only gardens and garden design, but also wrote extensively on the different styles of architecture of the mid-nineteenth century. In his 1850 book *Architecture of Country Houses*, Downing wrote that “the style of one’s house should be emblematic of one’s values and beliefs, and reflect the way one wanted to be viewed by society.” Victorians of the period took these words to heart and Rococo Revival fit right in. Always quick to adopt and adapt to anything new, Americans became enthralled with the new style. In a very short period of time, Rococo Revival emerged as arguably the most dominant furniture style of the nineteenth century.

Those who craved it the most were American women. After all, men already had their unique style of furniture and furnishings in the form of the Gothic style. It was now women who began

driving attitudes of luxury and taste in everyday living, which again, fit in nicely with Victorian society. The Thomas R.R. Cobb family was no exception, which one might expect since Tom Cobb lived in a house full of women.

Beginning in 1852, Marion L. Cobb started outfitting her house, just like women all over the South, in Rococo Revival style furnishings, especially in her newly completed new parlor. In April of that year, Tom wrote to his brother Howell, “I am just home from Charleston where I have been on a trip with Marion Judge L & my two oldest girls. We went to buy a little furniture & had a pleasant trip.” We can be sure that much of this furniture, if not all, was Rococo Revival. Most likely on this Charleston trip, Marion purchased the settee and chair presently seen in Tom’s private sitting room.

Rococo Revival-style furnishings were especially considered the most popular style for the design of drawing rooms and parlors and considered feminine because of its distinctive features, the most obvious being in the sweeping, graceful curving “S” shape of its legs. Writers also noted that the typical parlor of a home in the 1850s should include two sofas or settees, two armchairs, four side chairs (all with matching upholstery), a center table, and an étagère. Often the addition of fringes and/or tassels decorated the upholstery, while the furniture itself used primarily one of three woods: oak, mahogany, or rosewood. Although in the South, there was also an increase of Rococo Revival furniture made of oiled black walnut.

The style continued in its popularity until about 1870 when other styles, such as Renaissance, became more popular. The most frequently seen furniture pieces exhibiting Rococo Revival styling were chairs, and the T.R.R. Cobb House is fortunate to have a number of excellent examples of Rococo Revival style furniture within its holdings, all of which descend through the Cobb family or associated families.

The style’s distinctive features are so apparent to the viewer that even children can discern the style. Several years ago while taking a group of local third graders on a tour of the T.R.R. Cobb House, we stopped in one of the front rooms and I asked the students what we called a particular piece of furniture for sitting. I was pointing at one of our Rococo Revival settees. I



Lamar family lady's parlor chair



Tom Cobb Parlor chair



Lamar family gentleman's parlor chair

wanted them to understand the difference between a couch, a sofa, and a settee. Figuring I'd receive guesses of couch or sofa from the students, several hands immediately shot up in the air. Finally, I selected one determined young lady and again asked her what we would call this particular piece of furniture. "Rococo Revival" she answered without hesitation. As I stood there staring at her, my attention then drifted up to the couple of teachers and a few parents standing at the back of the room, all of us with our mouths wide open and eyes about to pop out of their sockets. I finally got enough composure back and answered, "That's right!" Then I asked her, "Where did you

learn that?" To this she replied, "I was here in the first grade." Never underestimate the information a child can retain.

The chairs themselves were known as lady's chairs, parlor chairs, or slipper chairs, and were frequently accompanied by a gentleman's chair. The two look very similar, however, the gentleman's chair is usually a little larger and wider and has arms. They designed lady's chairs to be armless so that they could accommodate women's heavy skirts and bustles.

The term slipper chairs refers to small, armless chairs with high, more contoured backs and a large seat. Many think the term originated because the style and curvature of the back tended to encapsulate the person who sat in one, much like sliding one's foot into a slipper. But in reality the name originates from the practice of using these chairs in bedrooms or sitting rooms where men put on their shoes and women put on their slippers.

Each piece of furniture, whether a chair, table, or even sofa, originally exhibited small brass casters on their feet for ease in moving the furniture around. Over the years, many Rococo Revival chairs, tables, and settees had their casters removed for one reason or another, lowering the seat by about 1.5 inches. Anyone who has a piece of Rococo Revival furniture should check to see the hole on the underside of the feet. This hole is where they inserted the rod attached to the caster. The next time you see a piece of Rococo Revival furniture without its casters and someone tells you the chairs and settees were lower back then because folks were shorter, they were not. Politely correct them of their error, and if you don't, I'm sure one of our third graders will, and perhaps a few of our first graders.



THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE COMES TO HICKORY HILL



Sticks & Stones

BY MICHELLE ZUPAN

Oh, Grandfather bought a car, a big Chalmers, when we were quite little girls. We must have been six or younger. It didn't have any doors in the front. It had little whirl seats for children in the back, which we thought were just made for us. I can remember, of course, there was no paving within hundreds of miles. The ladies wore these long dusters and veils all tied over their hats. The car was used on state occasions and once in a while to go driving, but he still kept the carriages. – Georgia Watson Craven, oral interview

Georgia has a rich automotive history — from the first speed limit posted in 1902 in Savannah to the first car assembled in Atlanta in 1909, the people of the Peach State were early adopters of the horseless carriage. Given that there were few paved roads, that is quite a legacy! Thomas Watson was one of those early adopters. According to the McDuffie Progress in April 1910, Watson purchased the automobile that Georgia Craven recalled. It was a brand new Chalmers Detroit with seven seats..

In campaigning the State, I have been all over it, in my old Chalmers-Detroit, and may do so again, for the Chalmers is still able to go, and so am I.

Marcus Watson, c.1900

Hon. Thos. E. Watson has purchased a handsome seven passenger Chalmers-Detroit touring car.

Marcus Watson, c.1900

In 1907, Hugh Chalmers was recruited to join the Thomas-Detroit Motor Company of Buffalo, NY; the company would soon bear his name. The Detroit model came out in 1909. It won 69 major automotive competitions and races, a record for a car costing less than \$2,000. The 2,851-mile Glidden tour cemented the car's reputation as being strong-running, reliable, and sporty. The 4-cylinder Chalmers could travel at a top speed of 50 miles per hour. All attributes that would appeal to the Sage of Hickory Hill. But the Watsons' Chalmers was not without its problems.

But once in a while we did go out in the car, but there were only a few cars in Thomson and I remember once taking a drive so to speak a few miles out of town with...my Aunt Agnes, and her husband, Uncle Oscar. It was in the summertime and our legs were bare and our feet may have been bare too, but my feet began to feel hot. All of a sudden, the car was on fire and we had to just jump. I don't think it had any doors on it, but we did jump and we had to telephone for them to send the horse and buggy to take us home.

— Georgia Watson Craven, oral interview

While on his way to the Augusta Federal Courthouse in June 1912 to answer allegations of sending obscene literature through the mail, Tom Watson's Chalmers broke down and the party traveling, including the Federal Marshal, had to catch a ride with a local resident. However, Watson had the automobile for many years, and towards the end of his life, he purchased an Apperson Jackrabbit, which, according to Georgia Watson Craven, "was a very snazzy car at that time."

Tom Watson had to purchase his Chalmers in Augusta, but Thomson, Georgia eventually had its own Chalmers dealer by 1919. However, the Chalmers company began to decline in the early 1920s. Walter Chrysler was brought in to rescue the brand and the Chrysler Corporation was born. The last Chalmers rolled off the assembly in 1923; they were 6-cylinder and equipped with Lockheed hydraulic brakes.

The Efficiency of the Chalmers

SO much favorable comment has been made on the engine of the Hot Spot Chalmers that we are inclined to feel that many overlooked the other great essentials of this magnificent car.

There's 117 inches of wheel-base in a Hot Spot Chalmers and every inch denotes high efficiency.

Radiator to rear axle, it indicates perfect design, superior material, rare skill in workmanship, and an attention to detail that lifts it far above competition in price.

Service department records prove this high efficiency in a Chalmers by figures; it averages in cost to owners less than one per cent per year of the list price of the car for repair parts.

As a matter of fact once an owner's license plate is bolted on the Hot Spot Chalmers the car seldom returns for service.

Give it gas, oil, grease, water, and fair treatment and it'll respond like the fine "creature of steel" it is.

Price, \$1685 f. o. b. Detroit

**J. L. NEAL,
THOMSON, GA.**

The Watsons advertised in the October 21, 1906 edition of the Augusta Herald.

Chalmers

CHALMERS MOTOR CO.
Detroit, Mich. U.S.A.

1917 Chalmers advertising booklet, Hickory Hill collection

MR. J. F. WATSON BUYS HANDSOME TOURING CAR

Mr. J. F. Watson has just purchased a large seven-passenger Chalmers Detroit Touring car. This is one of the company's latest models and is one of the handsomest cars in Thomson. It is a 50-horse power and has six cylinders, being the first and only six cylinder car in town. The sale was made through Mr. L. J. Porter, who is local agent for the Chalmers Detroit Co.

The 1917 model purchased by John Forrest Watson.

NOAH FITZER



Alumni Spotlight

BY TIARA HODGES

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARIJANA MARINOVIC

Noah Fitzer hits a high note in the world of musical theater. Produced as their senior project at Agnes Scott College, Noah's one-act musical, "Four's a Party," made its New York City Theater Festival debut in May.



"Four's a Party" performers Mari Walsh, Solveig Svennevig-Brosi, Emily Carlson, Julia Rademacher-Wedd (top row, left to right), Eve Bronsink, and the musical's creator Noah Fitzer.

A slice-of-life musical that focuses on the intricacies of transitioning to post-student life, "Four's a Party" follows four friends as they navigate the challenges of adulthood and struggle to come to terms with their changing lives. Noah began writing the musical their sophomore year of college, while concentrating in music and philosophy. To perform, Noah recruited a cast of friends from their choir to bring the story to life, and that same featured cast reprised their roles at the New York City Theater Festival.

Born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina, Noah attended the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics the last two years of high school. Noah's writing style is inspired by their upbringing and experiences, along with their double major in music and philosophy. They credit their philosophy degree with helping them notice nuances in everyday life and explore the questions that people ask themselves, particularly the problems young people face as they grow up and leave school.

Noah's songwriting process typically starts with an idea or feeling they want to explore. They then start verbally doodling, singing, and putting pen to paper to write the lyrics and music simultaneously. Noah uses notation software to bring their compositions to life, creating demos they can share with others. "I've always wanted to write musicals for a long time. I started songwriting around twelve, and for me, the hardest thing about writing a musical was coming up with a

concept that I was passionate enough about that I'd be willing to spend time on," Noah said. "If I'm going to write a musical, it has to be different than anything you've ever seen. It has to be revolutionary."

Admittedly, Noah was a little nervous for the performance, but mostly excited and grateful their friends from college were helping them achieve this goal. "Being part of a musical is the most exciting and joyful thing you can possibly do. I'm over the moon." Once the cast flew up to New York, they essentially had minimal rehearsal time together on the stage, but Noah was in good spirits. Noah relayed, "I want everyone to have a good time and feel like their time was used efficiently."

Despite never previously considering themselves a director, Noah found it a joyful experience directing the cast during rehearsals. This experience gave them the confidence to pursue their dream of becoming a writer, director of musical theater, or a creative director in general. "I enjoy being a director. My dream would be to write musicals on Broadway. I also have a separate dream of establishing myself as a worker. I love creating big ideas and implementing them," Noah said.

Noah moved to New York City after graduation to be closer to the thriving arts scene. "I love New York and being in the center of the capital of the world. I fell in love with New York when I was five and I always knew I was going to live here," Noah said. Currently, Noah works as an administrator at the Salmagundi Club, a private art institution in Manhattan. The club hosts galleries and social events, and allows Noah to establish themselves in many realms of creativity.

Noah credits the Watson-Brown Foundation scholarship for helping them along the way of pursuing their dreams. Noah asserted, "Getting the Watson-Brown scholarship was huge for me because it widened my options for college." With the help of the scholarship, they were able to attend a college that supported them. "I was able to go to Agnes Scott, which I knew was the better fit for me. It was important I go to school with a transgender affirming atmosphere. That, along with the smaller size, was important for me. I would have had a harder time finding my way in a bigger school. It would have been harder to find my people."

For students seeking to pursue their dreams and write their own stories, Noah offered these words of encouragement with the help of an improv mantra: "Don't try to stifle your passion. Study what makes you excited and allow yourself to be open to a wide variety of learning. Learn about cultures and social situations and how to exist with other people and how to bring out the best in everyone you're around."

As for Noah, their story continues to be written. Looking ahead, they hope to continue writing musicals that are innovative and thought-provoking, and are excited about the possibilities that the future holds.





Julia Rademacher-Wedd



Emily Carlson



Eve Bronsink



Solveig Svennevig-Brosi



Mari Walsh



Noah Fitzer



Eve Bronsink, Mari Walsh, Julia Rademacher-Wedd, Noah Fitzer, Solveig Svennevig-Brosi, and Emily Carlson



OUR FOUNDER

Walter J. Brown was a journalist and a broadcast pioneer who built and chaired what would become Spartan Communications, Inc., one of the larger privately held TV companies in the country.

Early in his career, Brown had an office in the White House when he served on the staff of Secretary of State James F. Byrnes. Brown's enduring love for politics was eclipsed only by his respect for Jimmy Byrnes. Inspired in part by Byrnes's philanthropy — which in 1948 established the James F. Byrnes Foundation — Brown created his own private Foundation in 1970. Named for Thomas E. Watson and J.J. Brown, the men to whom Brown attributed his success, the Watson-Brown Foundation today continues to ensure that hundreds of deserving students are provided the opportunity to excel at the college of their choice.