

"Anybody who has survived his childhood has enough information about life to last him the rest of his days."

-- Flannery O'Connor

# Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home Newsletter Fall 2017

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## President's Message

Several months ago, members of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home's Board of Directors made a one-day pilgrimage to Andalusia, the home on the outskirts of Milledgeville, Georgia where Flannery lived out her adult life. Even though she died at the early age of 39, in her short span of years she created a body of work - novels, short stories and voluminous letters - that are literary masterpieces.



One of the travelers to Milledgeville was Francis Allen, who was supportive of all aspects of the Board's endeavors. God called him Home on August 30, 2017. May he rest in the peace of God's loving embrace.

On our visit to Andalusia, we had a brief moment when the peacock demonstrated the beauty and grandeur of his fan-shaped feathers. Flannery cared for and loved this unusual and distinctive bird. Hence, we name our annual fundraiser the Peacock Party. This year's event takes place on Friday, October 13, 2017, 6-9 pm at the Catholic Pastoral Center - Boland Hall, 2170 East Victory Drive. It will be a splendid occasion. For more information, please see the article below or visit [www.flanneryoconnorhome.org](http://www.flanneryoconnorhome.org)

In these past months, Flannery O'Connor has been designated as a Pivotal Catholic of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as it pertains to her literary output. This unique designation will certainly draw more visitors to her Childhood Home in Savannah. In the past 12 months, approximately 4,000 visitors have graced the premises at 207 E. Charlton Street.

Gratitude to all the members of the Board of Directors - they are truly dedicated in making sure that this home will be kept in excellent physical condition and that the spirit of Flannery will be preserved and nurtured for all future generations.

Sincerely,

J. Kevin Boland

President, Board of Directors

Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home Foundation

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## Mark Your Calendar! Annual Peacock Party Set for Oct. 13

The Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home will host the **2016 Peacock Party**, celebrating the 28<sup>th</sup>

anniversary of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home Foundation, Inc. and the ongoing effort to preserve this award-winning author's legacy on Friday, October 13 from 6 to 9 p.m.

This annual soiree will take place at Boland Hall, located at the Catholic Pastoral Center at 2170 E. Victory Drive. The event will include heavy hors d'œuvres, libations, a silent auction and live music by the Cory Chambers Jazz Band. All proceeds will support ongoing programs, maintenance and outreach initiatives at the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home in Savannah.

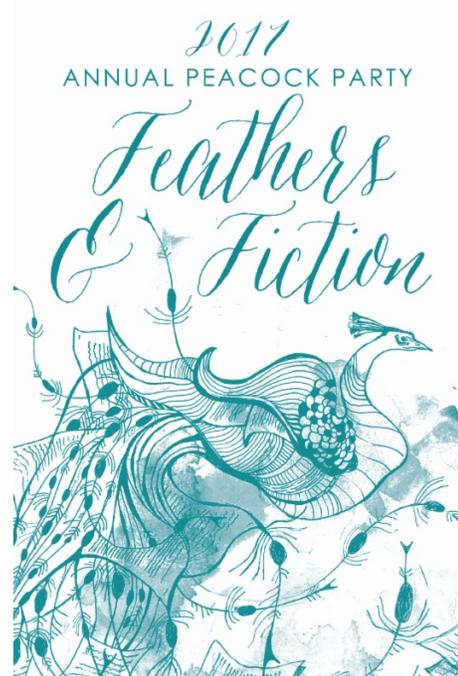
**Advance tickets are \$45 per person and \$80 per couple.** Tickets will be available for \$50 per person at the door the night of the event.

Flannery inspired attire is optional, but always encouraged.

Period-appropriate dress is optional. Please RSVP by calling **912.233.6014**, emailing **flanneryoconnorhome@gmail.com**, or purchasing tickets online via [PayPal by clicking here](#). Sponsorships are also available.

We hope to see you there!

[Learn more!](#)



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## Fall Lecture Series To Kick Off on September 24

The [Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home](#) is pleased to announce the schedule for the 2017 Fall Lecture Series. All events are free and open to the public.

The lectures take place in the parlor of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home, located at 207 E. Charlton Street on Lafayette Square in downtown Savannah.

The fall schedule is as follows:

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**  
**Christine Olson - "Weird Science" - 4 p.m.**

What happens when scientific fact and narrative combine in creative writing? How can looking to the natural world for inspiration inform or transform a poem or piece of prose? From horseshoe crab blood to mastodon teeth to sightless worms, there's a vast and fascinating world of material to draw upon in writing. Poet and creative nonfiction writer Christina Olson will speak about her experiences writing "weird science" and the way that looking to the sciences has resulted in some of her most successful work.



**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15 - 4 p.m.**  
**Father Gavin Dunbar - "Pastoral Ministry in Flannery O'Connor's 'The Enduring Chill'"**

Father Gavin Dunbar, the Rector of St. John's Church in Savannah, will consider the pastoral ministry of "Father Finn - from Purgatory" in O'Connor's short story, "The Enduring Chill." Originally written in 1958, the story focuses upon Asbury, a writer from New York who returns home to his mother's farm in the South after being diagnosed with a serious illness.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19 - 4 p.m.**

**Melanie Bowden Simón- "Exploring Flannery O'Connor's Themes in Modern-Day Cuba"**

Melanie Bowden Simón – author of the *La Americana*, an acclaimed memoir about her journey of discovery from Savannah to Havana – will discuss how her own personal experiences in Cuba echoed Flannery O'Connor's remarkable power to find grace and beauty in life's darkest moments. Drawing on her own experiences with love and loss, Simón will share a universal story that resonates with Southern-inspired themes that define O'Connor's fiction.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 - 3 p.m.**

**Dr. Robert Strozier - Reading of Truman Capote's "A Christmas Memory"**

Retired Armstrong State University English professor Dr. Robert Strozier will deliver the 28<sup>th</sup> annual holiday reading of Truman Capote's short story, "A Christmas Memory." Don't miss this annual holiday tradition. Come early, as seating is limited!

[Learn more!](#)

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## Author Ann Hood Delights Audience at Ursrey Lecture

On September 1, the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home presented a lecture by acclaimed author Ann Hood at Trinity United Methodist Church.

Hood is the author of *The Obituary Writer*, *The Book That Matters Most*, *The Knitting Circle*, *The Red Thread*, *Comfort* and *An Italian Wife*, among other works. She is the recipient of two Pushcart Prizes, a Best American Spiritual Writing Award, a Best American Food Writing Award, a Best American Travel Writing Award and the Paul Bowles Prize for Short Fiction. She currently lives in Providence, Rhode Island.

In her lecture, Hood shared personal stories about the transformative power of literature. Growing up in a mill town in Rhode Island, Hood discovered the transformative power of books and learned to channel her imagination, ambition and curiosity as both a reader and a writer.



The Ursrey Lecture Series is endowed in memory of the brothers Terry and Ashley Ursrey, native Georgians who, like Flannery O'Connor, were lifelong devotees of all things Southern, particularly the art of storytelling. The series debuted in 2008 with a talk by Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Michael Cunningham and has included illustrious contemporary authors like Roxane Gay, Robert Olen Butler, Luis Alberto Urrea, Jaimy Gordon and Allan Gurganus.

***Special thanks to Ursrey Lecture sponsors Mrs. Alene Ursrey, John Hunt and Betsy Cain for their generous support in making this free lecture series possible.***

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## From the Flannery Archives

One of the responsibilities of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home is to create a digital archive of the Foundation's historic materials, including rare letters, photos and other items.

This 1945 image of Flannery is from her senior yearbook photo as an undergraduate at the Georgia

State College for Women in Milledgeville. Flannery started college at the age of 17 and graduated at the age of 20. She earned a journalism scholarship to attend graduate school at the University of Iowa, where she became part of the Writer's Workshop and found her voice as a writer of fiction.

We hope you enjoy a glimpse into the archives at the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home. There are many additional O'Connor family photos on display at the Home year-round.

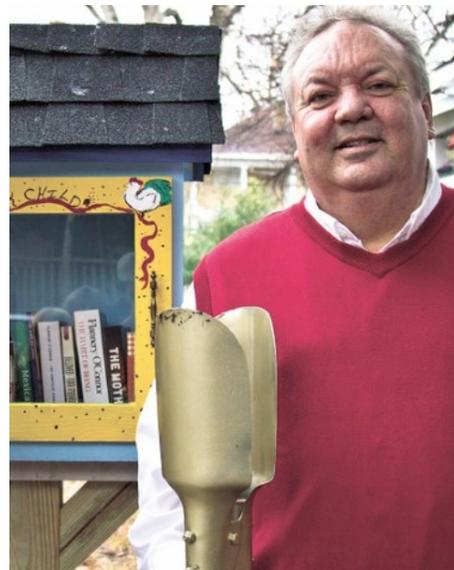


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## Little Library Trail to be Completed in Memory of Francis Allen

At the August 2, 2017 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home voted unanimously to complete the Flannery O'Connor Little Library Book Trail in honor of board member Francis Allen. Allen started the Trail, which connects Savannah to Milledgeville, offering free books at various stops along the way.

Sadly, Francis passed away in Savannah on August 30, 2017. In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations in memory of Francis be sent to the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home to complete the Little Library Book Trail.



Please click [HERE](#) to read a lovely tribute to Francis Allen, written by board member Jessica Lebos.

Please click [HERE](#) to make a donation to the Flannery O'Connor Little Library Book Trail in memory of Francis Allen.

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## Become a Friend of Flannery!

Would you like to support Flannery O'Connor's legacy in Savannah? There are many ways you can help support the work of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home.

Friends of Flannery members receive our newsletters and mailings about other special events, as well as additional benefits at various levels of annual giving:

\$30 (Individual)  
\$50 (Family)  
\$100 (Patron)



Flannery O'Connor  
Childhood Home

\$500 (Peacock Circle)

**Donations can be made online by clicking [HERE](#).**

Checks can be mailed to:  
Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home  
207 East Charlton St.  
Savannah, GA 31401

For more information, or special membership opportunities for students and teachers, please call **912.233.6014** or email us at **[flanneryoconnorhome@gmail.com](mailto:flanneryoconnorhome@gmail.com)**.

Thank you very much for your support!

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Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home | 912.233.6014 | [flanneryoconnorhome@gmail.com](mailto:flanneryoconnorhome@gmail.com)  
[flanneryoconnorhome.org](http://flanneryoconnorhome.org)



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