



Flannery O'Conner
Childhood Home
Savannah, Georgia

Happy 95th Birthday, Flannery!

Dear Flannery Supporter:

Ninety-five years ago today, on March 25, 1925, Mary Flannery O'Connor was born in Savannah, Georgia. Despite her short life, she went on to become one of the greatest novelists and short story writers of the 20th century. Her childhood home on East Charlton Street eventually fell out of family hands. But 30 years ago, a group of visionaries, professors from Armstrong State University, formed a charitable foundation and purchased the home, restoring it and opening it for tours. Over the years, it has become a major hub of Savannah's free literary events, including an annual birthday celebration in Lafayette Square.

Due to the COVID-19 virus and our concern for the health and safety of staff, volunteers, and the public at large, the home is closed until further notice. Events have also been postponed, including the birthday celebration.

As you may know, the lion's share of our income derives from tourism. During our closure, provided you are able, we invite you to commemorate Flannery's birthday by becoming a Friend of Flannery. One-year museum memberships start at only \$30 and include admissions, mailings, and other benefits. They are available for **purchase online here**. Memberships will be effective starting on the date the museum reopens so that you may receive the full benefit of your membership.

If you or anyone you know is celebrating an upcoming birthday, our online store is also **open with books and other cool swag available for purchase**.

I was in Atlanta three weeks ago and had the opportunity to visit the Flannery archives at Emory University. Although she was a notoriously bad speller, something she readily admitted, Flannery had beautiful penmanship! There was so much to see, and I only had a few hours. But during my visit I was able to comb through Flannery's letters, report cards, childhood drawings, handmade cards, recipes, religious memorabilia and more. And then my hands landed on her prayer journal. It was a blissful moment I'm still mulling over how to describe.

Despite her crippling illness, Flannery's heart and pen nonetheless flourished. Now more than ever her bravery and good humor can serve as ongoing inspiration for us all. In closing, I leave you with an entry from Flannery's *Prayer Journal*, the words of a young woman writing in the midst of her own feelings of discouragement and anxiety: "Dear God, About hope, I am somewhat at a loss. It is so easy to say I hope to – the tongue slides over it. I think perhaps hope can only be realized by contrasting it with despair. And I am too lazy to despair."

On behalf of our foundation manager and the entire foundation board, thank you for your support over the years. Our thoughts are with you and your families in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

Beverly Willett
Board President



FLANNERY O'CONNOR CHILDHOOD HOME | www.flanneryoconnorhome.org