

"I can, with one eye squinted, take it all as a blessing."

-- Flannery O'Connor

## Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home Newsletter Spring 2017

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### President's Message

Two recent happenings highlight the continued significance of the impact of the writings of Flannery O'Connor.

The first event is the annual Flannery O'Connor Birthday Parade, which took place in Lafayette Square on Sunday, March 26. The weather was splendid and the eclectic crowd were the makings of a festive occasion. Some of the highlights include authors autographing their "first editions," vendors selling cotton candy, the ubiquitous gorilla, curious parishioners leaving Sunday Mass at the Cathedral, cell phone photography, the Sweet Thunder Strolling Band and a peacock-themed birthday cake.

This gathering was originally designed to create an event that, in some manner, reflects the eccentricities one finds in many of Flannery O'Connor's short stories and to celebrate the life and legacy of one of America's greatest authors.

The second event is the Live Oak Public Library's free showing of the recently released documentary about the life of Flannery O'Connor titled "Uncommon Grace" on April 11. It was a full house. This documentary also recently aired on GPB.

These two happenings clearly demonstrate the fact that the influence and appreciation for Flannery's literary endeavors are now available to those of the electronic era.

In conclusion, I would like to offer my gratitude to the board members of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home Foundation. They are dedicated individuals who are committed to the ongoing physical preservation of the Childhood Home and continue to foster programs and activities to keep the "spirit of Flannery alive" and accessible to all her ardent followers.

Sincerely,

J. Kevin Boland  
Board President  
President, Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home Foundation



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## Spring Lecture Series Concludes on May 28th

The [Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home](#) is pleased to continue the 2017 Spring Lecture series on May 28th. This event, the last in a series, is free and open to the public.

The lecture will take place at 4 p.m. in the parlor of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home, located at 207 E. Charlton Street on Lafayette Square in downtown Savannah.

### SUNDAY, MAY 28 Iridescent Quill - "The Power of Storytelling"

Members of the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home Peacock Guild Writer's Salon, a talented group of local authors, will share original writing, carrying Flannery's rich tradition of storytelling into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Don't miss the chance to hear from some of Savannah's emerging and established writers.



[Learn more!](#)

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## Annual Flannery Birthday Party and Parade A Resounding Success!

As reported by the *Savannah Morning News*, Georgia Public Broadcasting and multiple local television news outlets, the 2017 Flannery O'Connor Birthday Celebration in Lafayette Square on Sunday, March 26 was a fabulous and thrilling party.

Hundreds of locals, visitors, friends and strangers gathered to enjoy coffee and tea from the Sentient Bean, treats from Old South Cotton Candy Company and Savannah Square pops and to channel Flannery through the soulful sounds of the Sweet Thunder Strolling Band. Dozens of local authors shared their works on this beautiful spring day, with the generous coordination of the Book Lady Bookstore.

Our dressed up and decked out guests indulged in the most beautiful cake, courtesy of Zee at our own downtown Savannah Kroger, as per tradition. All were welcome to tour the Home between rounds of chicken bingo, where we also debuted our 2017 Flannery O'Connor t-shirts, which feature a Panhandle Slim image and favorite Flannery quote: "I am if you ain't."



Our deepest gratitude goes out to all the volunteers, vendors, friends, Flannery devotees and passers-by who helped make the day such a delight. Without the unmatched blend of fun and

quirky folks who come out to honor Flannery, our celebration couldn't exist as the diverse, inclusive, welcoming, community event that it is.

Mark your calendar for March 25, 2018!  
Next year, Flannery's party falls on her actual birthday!

## 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 photo of Catherine "Cousin Katie" Flannery Semmes, was recently returned to the Home from the Savannah Diocese, which had been generously storing historic materials for the foundation before a dedicated archive space was created.

Cousin Katie was a second cousin of Flannery's mother, Regina. Throughout Flannery's childhood in Savannah, Katie acted as a wealthy benefactor to her family. This photo depicts Cousin Katie circa 1890, at about 22 years old, having just graduated from St. Joseph's Academy, near Augusta, Georgia.

Kate Semmes was a well-known and beloved philanthropist in Savannah throughout her lifetime and lived next door to Flannery, at 211 East Charlton, until her death at 90 in 1958.



Learn more about Cousin Katie, her role in Flannery's life, and her reaction to *Wise Blood* by visiting the Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home for a tour!

## CREATING FLANNERY Lecture Draws a Full House

The Flannery O'Connor Childhood Home was proud to host visiting lecturer Daniel Moran, all the way from New Jersey, for a lively and fascinating discussion on April 9. His expertise and enthusiasm kept a full house rapt during an afternoon's discussion of Flannery O'Connor's



literary reputation, from its formation to its evolution.

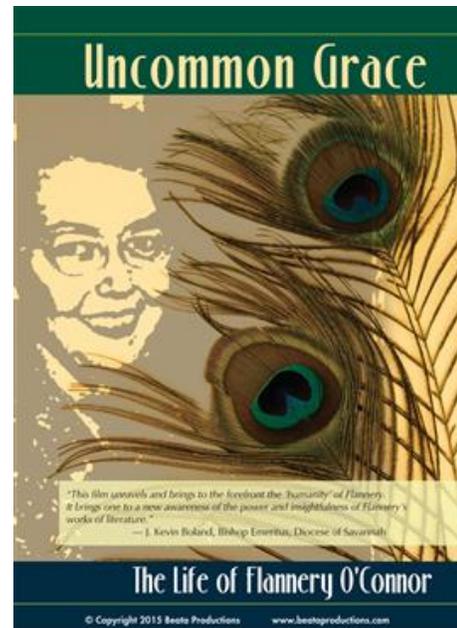
Mr. Moran is a distinguished friend of the Foundation whose recent book, *Creating Flannery O'Connor*, is currently available at the Home in hardcover and will be published in paperback this fall. We are grateful to the author for participating in the Spring 2017 Lecture Series.

## GPB Airs New Flannery O'Connor Documentary

*Uncommon Grace: The Life of Flannery O'Connor* recently won Best Documentary at Georgia Film Festival

A beautifully made new documentary about the life of Flannery aired on Georgia Public Broadcasting on Tuesday, April 11 at 7p.m. Several Childhood Home Board Members attended a viewing in Savannah on March 25 and returned with rave reviews.

Our own Board President, Bishop Emeritus J. Kevin Boland, is featured in this first-ever feature length film exploring the people and events shaping the life of the remarkable Flannery O'Connor. The Home also owns a copy and has the DVD for sale.



## Become a Friend of Flannery!

**Our membership program has an exciting new logo and flyer!**

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)
- \$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 groups and teachers, please call **912.233.6014** or email us

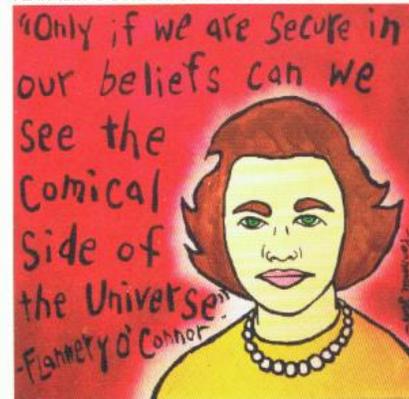
at [flanneryoconnorhome@gmail.com](mailto:flanneryoconnorhome@gmail.com).

Thank you very much for your support!

## Friends of Flannery

### Membership Enrollment

FLANNERY O'CONNOR CHILDHOOD HOME FOUNDATION



Annual memberships include unlimited admission to the Home, subscription to our e-newsletter, and invitations to special events.

- Individual, \$30     Student (with ID), \$10
- Family, \$50
- Patron, \$100 (six guest passes)
- Peacock Circle, \$500 (includes two tickets to our Peacock Party)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*I'd like to make an additional gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.*

To join online, visit [FlanneryOConnorHome.org/support](http://FlanneryOConnorHome.org/support)  
OR return the bottom of this form and payment to:



MFOCCH  
207 East Charlton Street  
Savannah, GA 31401

The foundation greatly appreciates your support, which is fully tax deductible and crucial to our mission.

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