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Hometown America SAVANNAH Georgia

What do ghosts, a Christmas gift, Olympic yacht races, the Girl Scouts, and Forrest Gump have in common? Find out by visiting our hometown, Savannah, Georgia.

Set along an inland harbor where the Savannah River meets the Atlantic Ocean, Savannah boasts a riveting history.

Englishman James Oglethorpe founded Savannah in 1733. He named the colony of Georgia for his benefactor (patron), King George II.

After making friends with Yamacraw Indians, Oglethorpe laid out a planned city of broad roadways and tree-filled squares, around which stately homes were eventually built.

So lovely was the result that Union General W.T. Sherman spared Savannah on his March to the Sea during the U.S. Civil War. Sherman's troops destroyed much of Georgia — but not Savannah. Instead, the people of Savannah surrendered their city to save it. Sherman presented the untouched city to President Abraham Lincoln as a Christmas gift in 1864. Today, the city is home to the Third Infantry Division at Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield.

Strolling through Savannah's neighborhoods is like traveling back in time. Homes and buildings reflect many architectural styles, from French château and Victorian gingerbread to Craftsman bungalows and the modern ranch. The historic district north of Victory Drive is lined with a palm tree for every one of Savannah's World War I casualties.

The historic district was the birthplace of Juliette Gordon Low, who founded the American Girl Scouts in 1912, and to civil-rights leaders such as Ralph Mark Gilbert and Julian Bond.

Savannah is also home to many legends — about pirate ghosts, the Revolutionary and Civil wars, and the mass graves of citizens struck down by a yellow-fever epidemic in the mid-1800s.

The city's historic areas and coastal scenery have provided an ideal location for the film and advertising industries. Movies such as *Forrest Gump*, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, and *Forces of Nature*, as well as numerous TV commercials, have been filmed in Savannah.

With 86,700 acres of marshes, 420 miles of tidal waters, numerous islands, and the Atlantic Ocean as its vista, Savannah was an obvious pick for the sailing and yachting events in the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. The city not only continues to host regattas (sailing races) and other water sports, it has relied on its waterways for a living.

Savannah is the fourth-largest U.S. port and the third-largest port on the East Coast. Almost a tenth of the city's population works at the Georgia Ports Authority, on the docks, and in the trucks that carry merchandise inland.

Savannah is also home to industries that require water to make their products, including paper, sugar, and chemicals. The annual Seafood Festival on River Street and the Blessing of the Fleet on the banks of the Wilmington River attest to the importance of shrimping and fishing to Savannah's economy.

Numerous ethnic groups have given Savannah a cosmopolitan atmosphere. The city boasts an abundance of festivals that combine international food, music, and dance. The grandest of events, however, is the St. Patrick's Day Parade, one of the largest in the U.S. The all-day party includes thousands of revelers who dye the Savannah River, grits, their dogs' fur, and their own hair Kelly green in honor of the Irish patron saint.

In 2004, the G8 Summit will be held on Sea Island, south of Savannah. The summit is a gathering of the major industrialized nations to discuss economic and political issues. Sea Island and Savannah are bracing for the thousands of participants, protesters, and press representatives who will descend on the area.

MAP: Savannah

PHOTO (COLOR): By From left to right: Emily Cass, Schae Bulloch, Nikita Carpenter, Lindsey Bailey Emma Iocovozzi, and Chelsea Michael, eighth-grade students, Oglethorpe Charter School

PHOTO (COLOR): This Savannah home is an example of Victorian gingerbread architecture.

S'mores

Founded in Savannah in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Low, the Girl Scouts are credited with inventing S'mores (as in "give me some more"), a fun campfire food. The recipe, recorded in the 1927 Girl Scout Handbook, is simple:

- 4 graham crackers
- 2 milk chocolate bars
- 4 marshmallows

Break graham crackers and chocolate bars in half. Place one half of a chocolate bar on each of the cracker halves. Toast the marshmallows on sticks over a campfire. Place toasted marshmallows on top of the chocolate and then cover each sandwich with the

other cracker halves. (Note to urban campers: Make the sandwich, and then place it on a paper towel in the microwave for 10 to 15 seconds.)

PHOTO (COLOR): Have S'more!

Put Your Hometown in Junior scholastic

Here's your chance to tell other US readers about your hometown. It's easy — and a fun activity for your whole class.

Tell us, in 500 words or less, what is most interesting about your hometown. Where is it located? Who first settled there? How has your hometown changed since its founding? How do people make a living? What are some of the most interesting local customs, events, or landmarks? What is it like to be a kid growing up in your hometown?

Full details are in the Teacher's Edition. Mail by February 15, 2004, to: Hometown America, Junior Scholastic, 557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

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