

The image shows the exterior of a stone building with a covered walkway. The building has a rustic, stone masonry appearance with dark wooden beams supporting the roof. There are several windows with decorative glass and a central entrance door. A large American flag is visible on the right side of the building. The foreground shows a paved area with white parking lines. The text "City of Stone Mountain Welcome Center and Museum" is overlaid in large white letters.

City of Stone Mountain Welcome Center and Museum

Update August 18, 2026



JUNETEENTH

FREEDOM DID NOT COME ALL AT ONCE.

Although President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, it was not until **June 19, 1865**—more than two years later—that freedom reached the last enslaved African Americans in Texas. On that day, over **250,000 people** finally learned they were free as Union troops arrived to enforce the end of slavery.

This date, now known as **Juneteenth**, has become a powerful symbol of delayed justice and enduring hope. It marks both a moment of liberation and a reminder of the long struggle for equality that followed.

Recognized as a **federal holiday in 2021**, Juneteenth invites all Americans to reflect on the legacy of slavery, honor the resilience of African Americans, and celebrate freedom. Today, it stands as one of our nation's most meaningful commemorations—second only to Independence Day.

Emancipation Exercises

Reflection, Celebration, and Commitment



Up Shermantown
Towns of Stone Mountain

Originally Black community located in the southeast corner of the city, between Main Street and Stone Mountain, it became what the city called Stone Mountain's first suburb, with about 20 other would grow through the twentieth century.

Writers and schools anchored the community, while contributing to the household economy, making it a vital neighborhood. Shermantown was also an active community, committed to advancement and eager to support civil rights.

City of Stone Mountain Looking Southeast, 1934. Highlighting Shermantown

City of Love
Respect

During the mid-twentieth century, local chapters of the NAACP organized annual Emancipation Exercises to commemorate the abolition of slavery and reflect on the ongoing struggle for equality. In Atlanta, these exercises were held each January at Big Bethel AME Church or Wheat Street Baptist Church in Sweet Auburn. Shermantown community members for generations had lived history, culture, and civic engagement.

The term "Juneteenth" was chosen deliberately. These events were not only celebrations of freedom but also calls to action—encouraging participants to continue the work of advancing civil rights. Presentations, historical vignettes, and speeches helped educate attendees and foster collective reflection on the meaning of emancipation in contemporary life.

Shermantown residents regularly traveled to attend, demonstrating strong civic involvement. Their participation was often recognized in the Black press.

Education and Opportunity

Civic Engagement

Reflection and Celebration

Mountain Day



FIRST FORAY –
JUNETEENTH POP UP
EXHIBIT



- ✓ Juneteenth interpretation
- ✓ History of Shermantown
- ✓ Display of Stone Mountain D
- ✓ Photo essay by Dean Hesse

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METRICS

- ✓ Over 150 visitors toured the exhibit at the event
- ✓ The exhibit was open Saturdays during June attracting approximately 20 “walk in” visitors each day, many of whom had never been in depot
- ✓ Artifacts were lent by Elaine Vaughn, Evelyn Herans, and the Stone Mountain Memorial Association.
- ✓ Photographer Dean Hesse gave permission to exhibit his photographs from Stone Mountain Day
- ✓ SMHS volunteers logged 175 hours





- BIG THANKS TO PUBLIC WORKS AND SMHS VOLUNTEERS!



Key Takeaways

- ✓ Juneteenth exhibit materials designed for multiple uses. Can be used next year
- ✓ Shermantown interpretation remains on exhibit through the year and is a start on City neighborhood displays.
- ✓ T-shirts which featured unique designs and exhibit banner used for display at this year's Stone Mountain Day
- ✓ Visitors were enthusiastic about the start of the museum





Exhibits Under Development

Proposed Color Palette
below



2026/2027 EXHIBIT SCHEDULE

October 2026 — *Our Hometown: Telling Our Story*

Discover the people, places, and events that make Stone Mountain feel like home. This artifact rich exhibit invites visitors to explore the stories that connect generations, celebrate community pride, and reveal the character of our hometown.

February 2027 — *Innovative Stone Mountain*

From Cloud's Tower to laser technology, Stone Mountain has always been a place where big ideas found expression. *Innovative Stone Mountain* invites visitors to discover how new tools, technologies, and creative thinking shaped everyday life here—connecting people, strengthening tourism, supporting learning, advancing industry, and enriching the cultural life of the community.

MUSEUM LAYOUT – OUR HOMETOWN: TELLING OUR STORY



- Donated Cabinets from the Fraternal Order of Police, refurbished by SMHS, Handily Delivered by Public Works
- Cabinets are lighted and lock for security

Sample of Cabinet Artifacts Arranged by Theme:

Wilbur Kurtz's painting Skirmish at Stone Mountain

Historic Maps

Historic Photographs

Historic Newspapers

State Championship Trophy – Men's Stone Mountain High Basketball

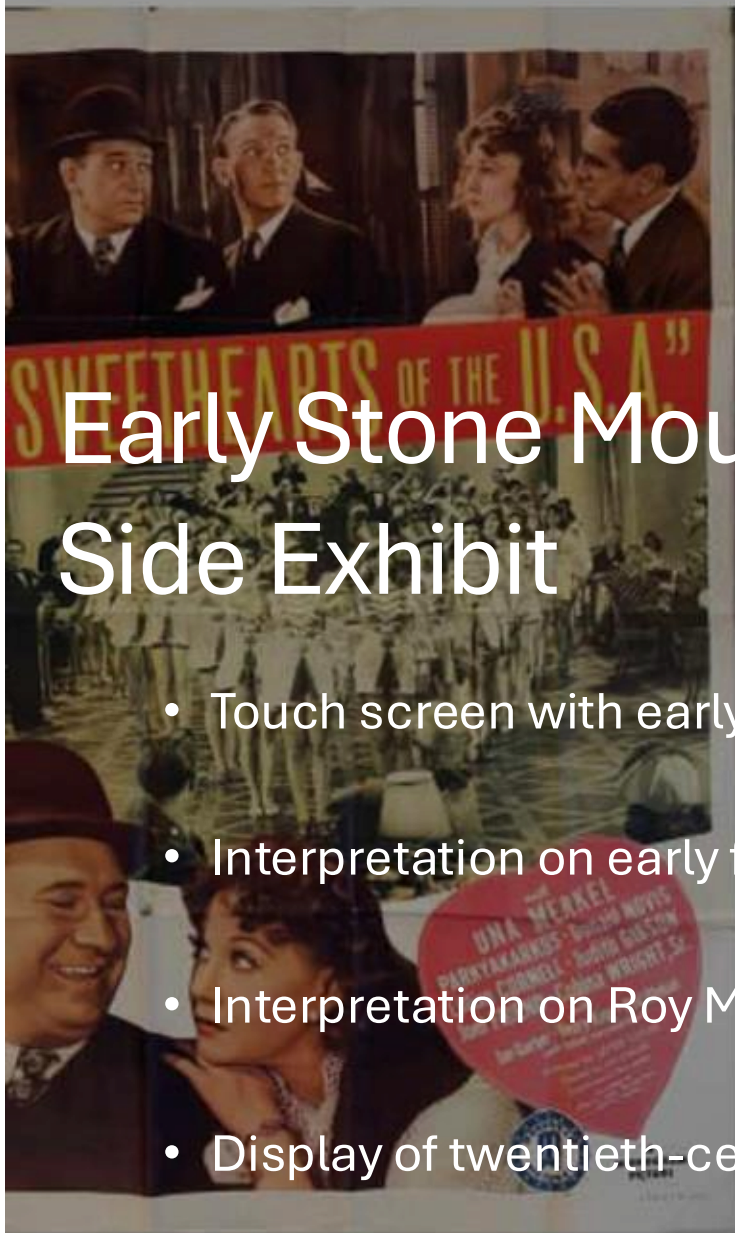
Hard Rocks Baseball Cap (Simulated)

CS Grave marker (original from City Cemetery)

Civil War era Medical Kit

Early Stone Mountain Filmmaking and Theater Side Exhibit

- Touch screen with early film content showing Main Street and granite quarrying
- Interpretation on early filmmakers and what they produced
- Interpretation on Roy Mitchell Theater
- Display of twentieth-century movie posters from Mitchell Theater



*INNOVATIVE
STONE
MOUNTAIN*
OPENING
FEBRUARY 2027

Under Development

From Cloud's Tower to Laser Technology







HIGHLIGHTS:

Exhibit will be Interactive showcasing Stone Mountain's technological evolution from the 1830s through 1983 using artifacts associated with our city and its residents

Television

Communication systems : the phone! the switchboard!

Movie technology

The Radio and the Pharmacy

Distilling

Granite quarrying

First computers



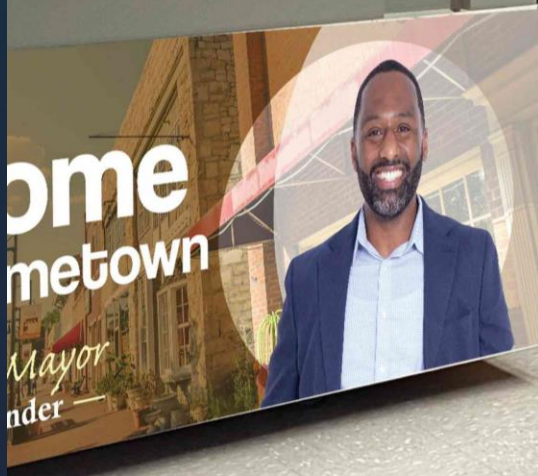
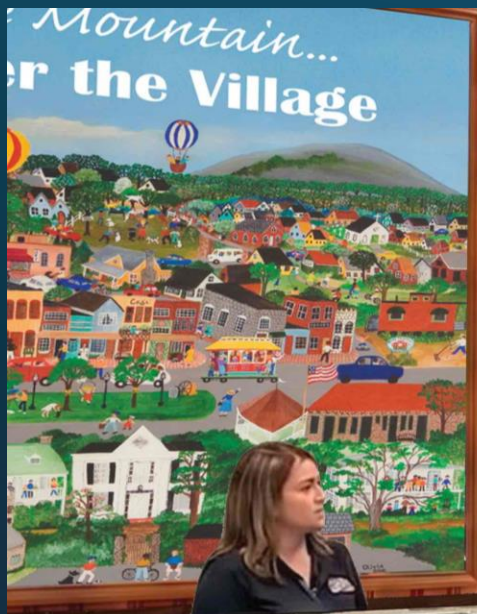


Welcome Center Planning



Welcome Center Conceptual Plan

West Wall



OF STONE MOUNTAIN





Welcome Center Conceptual Plan

Southeast Corner

SIGNAGE

A1



A2



B



C



D



E



A, B or C - Would be hung from rafter tips over main depot entries

D and E would be placed on south wall as an “arrival” or “destination” sign typical for depots



VOLUNTEERS

Serem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce dignissim pretium congue.
Cras sit amet massa in massa, pellentesque viverra nibh ac vehicula massa.

Volunteer Campaign Progress

- Created application which was approved by city lawyer
- Call out for Volunteers went out August 10
 - SMHS Newsletter
 - Village Forward
 - Stone Mountain Woman's Club
 - City Churches
 - Agnes Scott College
 - Georgia State University
 - Stone Mountain High School
 - City Social Media
- Training to be held in early September at depot
 - Depot Tour
 - Stone's Throw Tour