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**History Center to Unveil ‘Orlando Collected’ on April 12**

*Major new exhibition reveals the city’s storied past during its 150th anniversary year*

ORLANDO, Fla. – April 2, 2025 – In honor of Orlando’s 150th anniversary in 2025, the Orange County Regional History Center presents a significant new exhibition, *Orlando Collected*, which opens at the downtown Orlando museum on April 12, 2025.

The exhibition invites museum visitors to explore Orlando’s history through 150 rarely seen items from the collections of the Historical Society of Central Florida, along with historical photographs and other images and artifacts that reveal the city’s varied past in fresh and surprising ways.

The 150 featured items range widely from the feathered phenomenon of Billy the Swan, an early Orlando legend, to the signature sunglasses of activist Billy Manes, who died in 2017. Other notable items include Orlando’s original 1875 incorporation documents, a dress worn by Tupperware icon Brownie Wise, and a purse carried by Lena Clarke, accused of a sensational murder at the San Juan Hotel in 1921.

The variety of items presents a fascinating mix, notes Azela Santana, the museum’s executive director. “Whether you’re a lifelong resident or new to Orlando, this exhibition invites you to connect with the city’s past in a deeply personal way, discovering both familiar touchstones and surprising new narratives. It is a celebration of collective memory, shaped by the people who call Orlando home.”

“The strength of *Orlando Collected* lies in the stories it weaves together – stories of everyday life, beloved institutions, and unexpected treasures that define our community,” Santana notes. The museum’s team of curators, led by Katie Kelley, collaborated with individuals and organizations throughout the city in choosing items for *Orlando Collected*, so that the result reflects a rich variety of perspectives.

“I’m over the moon about participating,” says Vicki Landon, Orange County’s administrator for Arts & Cultural Affairs, who chose items related to Orlando’s Bob Carr Theater for the exhibition. “I started my career in the arts and cultural community with the Orlando Opera Company and worked my very first arts events in the Bob Carr Theater,” Landon recalls. “It’s so meaningful to me to have items from the Bob Carr displayed as part of our community’s performing arts history.”

Guests are invited to register for a special exhibition preview on Friday, April 11, 2025, from 7 to 9 p.m. Information and a link are available at [TheHistoryCenter.org/Events](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Events). *Orlando Collected* opens to the public on April 12 and is slated to be on exhibit at the History Center through January 11, 2026. Orlando Health is the presenting sponsor for *Orlando Collected* with additional support from Hilb Group. The exhibition is included with museum admission.

**The Orange County Regional History Center**, housed in a historic courthouse at 65 E. Central Blvd. in downtown Orlando, features four floors of permanent and special exhibitions. The museum is a Smithsonian Institution affiliate and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It is funded in part by Orange County Government through the Community & Family Services Department under Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings and the Board of County Commissioners. The Historical Society of Central Florida Inc. is supported by United Arts of Central Florida and sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. For more information, visit [TheHistoryCenter.org](http://TheHistoryCenter.org).

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