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FEATURED

America250 lecture series attracts interest in Milton

By HANNAH YAHNE

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Dr. Marianne Holdzkom, second from right, stands with members of the Robert Forsyth Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution Jan. 13 after giving a lecture on John and Abigail Adams for the Milton Library's America250 series.

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MILTON, Ga. — More than 70 people turned out Jan. 13 for the first lecture in the Milton Library's America250 series, a program featuring the partnership of John and Abigail Adams.

Marianne Holdzkom, Ph.D., a professor at Kennesaw State University, imparted her knowledge of the couple gained through years of studying the colonial and revolutionary history of the United States. She published a book in 2023 analyzing the way the second president is portrayed within popular culture and among scholars.

Holdzkom guided attendees through the Adamses' relationship, pieced together through the couple's correspondence beginning in 1762. It was the first of around 1,100 letters shared between the power couple, as Holdzkom referred to them.

"She changed him," she said. "And, so, I think that's one of the reasons why this love story of theirs is so remarkable."

When John traveled during the American Revolution, Abigail grew independent. She raised four children on her own, educated them and maintained farmland alongside their hired farmhands. The Adamses had no slaves.

"This is one thing that makes this couple different from a lot of other founding couples," Holdzkom said. "John and Abigail Adams never owned an enslaved person."

Another rarity was Abigail's will, discovered after her death in 1818. She had a couple thousand dollars in war bonds and jewelry that she left to her granddaughters and nieces, and John served as the executor of her will.

As America's 250th birthday approaches, so does the 200th anniversary of John Adams' death. Holdzkom said she'll be in the couple's hometown of Quincy, Massachusetts, that day, and that there's nowhere she would rather be.



Over 70 attendees listen as Dr. Marianne Holdzkom shares details on the life and partnership of John and Abigail Adams at the Milton Library's first installment of the America250 lecture series.

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Carl Jackson, a member of the Milton Historical Society since 2020, said Holdzkom brought the couple to life in her lecture. It wasn't so much about the politics or issues at the time, but about the connection the Adams shared.

"To me, it's the best part of history," Jackson said. "We're not that different than the people that proceeded us, just the things around us might be different."

The Milton Library will continue to collaborate with the Milton Historical Society and Alpharetta and Old Milton County Historical Society to provide lectures on the country's founding days. The Robert Forsyth Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution joined to help transport the crowd back in time.

Milton Branch Library officials say the turnout for the first lecture exceeded expectations.

The next lecture in the America250 series will feature North Springs High School history teacher Greg Brooking, Ph.D., to provide insight on Georgia's political divisions, military challenges and contributions in the fight for independence. The event is Feb. 10 at 6 p.m. in the Milton Library, 855 Mayfield Road.



Dr. Marianne Holdzkom lectures on the life and partnership of John and Abigail Adams during the first installment of the America250 series hosted at the Milton Library.

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By JAMIE GODIN

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Tags

Milton | Community | Milton Branch Library | America250 Lecture Series | Dr. Marianne Holdzkom
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Sons Of The American Revolution

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