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### **Richmond Hill's Ford-Era Heritage Trail Earns Statewide Tourism Award**

**Richmond Hill, Ga.** - [The Richmond Hill Convention & Visitors Bureau](#) recently received statewide recognition from the Georgia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus for its leadership role in developing tourism opportunities in Bryan County. The Georgia Tourism Award, presented to the Richmond Hill CVB on February 4, specifically recognized the revamped Driving Trail of Henry Ford's Southern Town, part of the Coastal Bryan Heritage Trail, and its accompanying app.

"We created this app to cater to the modern tourist, who uses technology to learn more about the communities they visit. The Driving Trail of Henry Ford's Southern Town was the perfect project to integrate the available technology with history," said Christy Sherman, Executive Director. "On behalf of the Richmond Hill Convention and Visitors Bureau, I am honored to accept this award."

While the trail has been around for several years, this project introduced significant updates, including:

- Newly selected sites and a revised driving trail booklet and app;
- New audio narration and additional historic photos;
- A better GPS map system for improved navigation; and
- Model A cars placed strategically at select sites along the trail as designated “selfie spots” with faux license plates featuring QR codes directing visitors to “Rev up their adventure” and “Fuel their fun” with links to local shopping, attractions, and dining.

The app is a free, GPS-enabled app that guides visitors along a self-guided driving tour of Richmond Hill. The tour includes many of the people and stories that make up the area’s rich heritage, including Henry Ford and his wife, Clara, who purchased 85,000 acres in Richmond Hill in 1925 and made the community their winter home for nearly 25 years. Other categories include African American History, Civil War, Colonial Sites, Historic Cemeteries, Historic Churches, Historic Homes, and Native Americans. Once downloaded, users start a narrated driving tour and follow directions to visit historic sites. The app is available for download at [visitrichmondhill.com/Itineraries-History.php](http://visitrichmondhill.com/Itineraries-History.php).

The Georgia Tourism Awards recognize individuals, organizations, and businesses that demonstrate leadership, creativity, initiative, innovation, service, and partnership while making an impact on the travel and tourism industry in Georgia. The Bill Hardman Sr. Tourism Champion Award was renamed in honor of Bill Hardman Sr. in 2014 in recognition of his tireless support and guidance to the entire tourism industry. There are four categories under the Tourism Champion umbrella in which a Tourism Champion award may be given: Private Sector, Partnership, Product Development, and Government. Award recipients are individuals and organizations that have taken leadership roles in developing tourism opportunities in communities across the state.

The 2025 Georgia Tourism Awards were presented at the Georgia Association of Convention and Bureaus Annual Conference, held February 2-5 in Gwinnett, Ga. More than 10 organizations and individuals across the state were recognized for excellence in leadership, creativity, initiative, innovation, customer service, and partnership.

#### **ABOUT GACVB:**

The Georgia Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (GACVB) is a resource for Georgia’s destination organizations and allied travel, hospitality, arts, and community development industry partners to maximize the impact of the visitor economy via tourism education, leadership development, and legislative awareness at the local, state, and federal levels. Its mission is to be the unified voice of Georgia’s destination marketing organizations (DMOs) and provide industry education, advocacy, and professional development opportunities to members.

For more information, visit [gacvb.com](http://gacvb.com).

**ABOUT RICHMOND HILL:**

Located on the Great Ogeechee River, just south of Savannah, Richmond Hill, Ga., is a great place to spend a day, stay the night, and explore Henry Ford's Southern town. The automotive industrialist made Richmond Hill his winter home for almost 25 years. Visitors today can feel Ford's influence through exhibits at the Richmond Hill History Museum and on the Coastal Bryan Heritage Trail while also enjoying the scenic beauty of the area that first attracted him here. Richmond Hill is also a great location for exploring Historic Savannah, Tybee Island, and all of coastal Georgia. For more information, visit [www.visitrichmondhill.com](http://www.visitrichmondhill.com).

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**Photo caption, from left to right: Sam McDuffie, GACVB Vice President; Christy Sherman, Executive Director, Richmond Hill Convention and Visitors Bureau; and Chris Hardeman (son of Bill Hardeman), GACVB Board Ex-Officio**