

Victoria Wilcox



Southern INSPIRATION

By VelDean Fincher

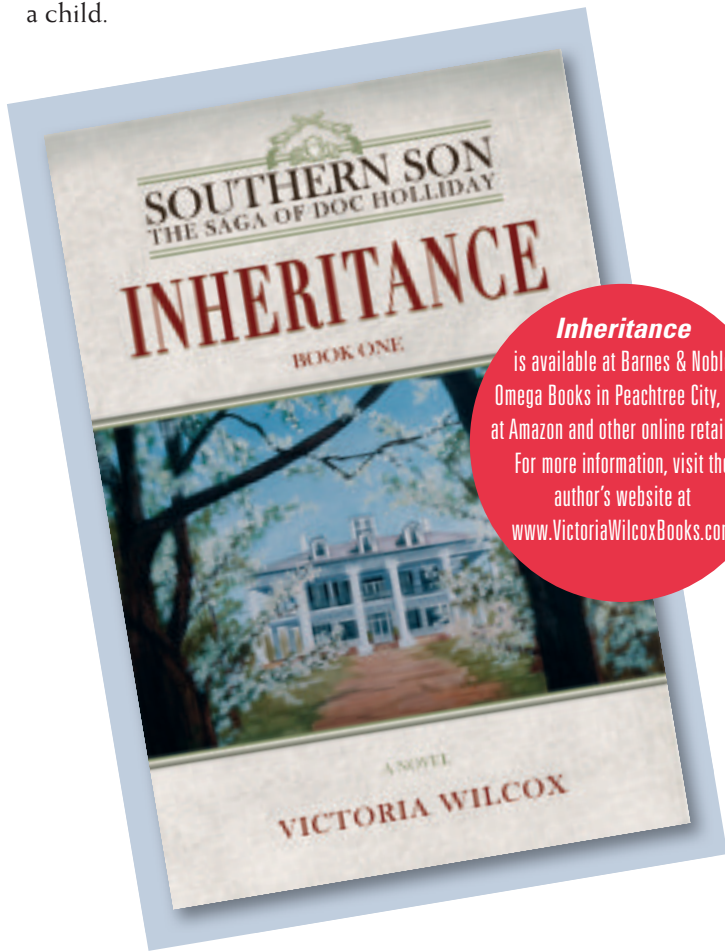
Applause filled the grand ballroom of Atlanta's Marriott Marquis as Fayette County author Victoria Wilcox shared stories of the Old South and the Wild West, of *Gone With the Wind* and Doc Holliday. The event was the Red Hat Society's International Convention, where 1500 guests sat spellbound as Wilcox told how a California native moved to Georgia with her dental student husband, fell in love with an antebellum house in the heart of Fayetteville, and discovered a story that led to an epic historical novel trilogy. So how did a former *Fayette Woman* cover lady (March/April 2001) end up speaking in front of thousands of women from around the world?

The story starts in 1984 when Victoria Wilcox and her husband, Dr. Ronald Wilcox, settled in Peachtree City after his graduation



Author Victoria Wilcox on the porch of the Holliday-Dorsey-Fife with her recently released book *Inheritance* and a March/April 2001 copy of the *Fayette Woman* Magazine with Wilcox on the cover.

from dental school. On one of Victoria's first trips to Fayetteville, she saw and fell in love with a graceful white-columned house standing just off the Courthouse Square. As a writer and history buff she was fascinated, but wasn't even certain that the house was all that old. One thing she did know: someday she was going to have something to do with that house. Then her parents came to visit from California and asked about historic sites in the area, and a call to the Fayette County Historical Society was answered by Bobby Kerlin, who told her that the house was not only authentically old, built before the Civil War, but was owned by the uncle of the famous Doc Holliday, who had played there as a child.



Inheritance is available at Barnes & Noble, Omega Books in Peachtree City, and at Amazon and other online retailers. For more information, visit the author's website at www.VictoriaWilcoxBooks.com

"You mean THE Doc Holliday?" Victoria asked Bobby, "from the OK Corral?" As a native Californian, Victoria knew her Western history: Doc Holliday was a Georgia-born dentist who went west to Tombstone, Arizona and fought alongside lawman Wyatt Earp. She also learned that the house had links to *Gone With the Wind* author Margaret Mitchell and a former Governor of Georgia, making it one of the most historic places in the state.

But the old white-columned house was at risk of being torn down, so Victoria formed a nonprofit organization known as the Holliday House Association to save the house and open it to the public as a museum. The Association's volunteers scrubbed and cleaned, conducted tours of the home, held fundraising balls, told Halloween ghost stories, and hosted historical day camps. As

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The Georgia Bone and Joint doctors (left to right) are Jayson A. McMath, M.D., Michael V. Cushing, M.D., Jack H Powell, III, M.D., George M. Ballantyne, M.D., Michael P. Gruber, M.D., Chad Kessler, M.D.

Physician Assistants:

Elizabeth Fleming, PA-C, Aliza Krug, PA-C, Jared Shafer, PA-C



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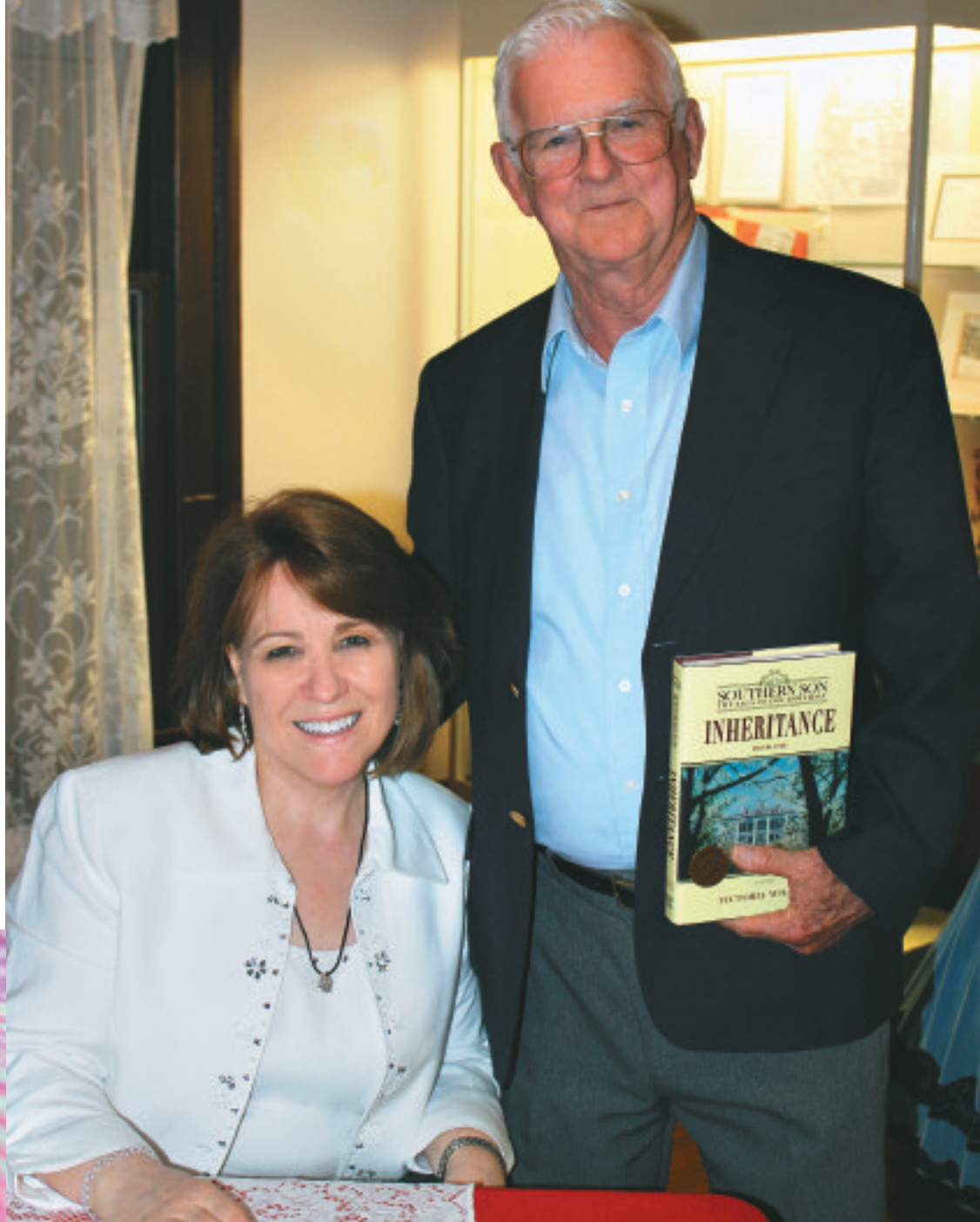
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their efforts brought national interest to the site, the City of Fayetteville stepped in to purchase the home and complete the restoration, now operating the Holliday-Dorsey-Fife House Museum.

But Victoria's work with the house went on, as her research led to a story that had never been told: Doc Holliday's childhood sweetheart was his Jonesboro cousin Mattie Holliday, who became the model for Melanie in *Gone With the Wind*. The story became the start of an historical novel about how a Southern boy became a Western legend. It was an epic tale that took 18 years of research and writing and turned Victoria into a nationally known expert on the life of Doc Holliday. The epic tale is now a trilogy of historical fictions entitled *Southern Son: The Saga of Doc Holliday*. The first book in the trilogy is *Inheritance*, which was re-

Below: Victoria prepares to address 1500 at the April 2013 Red Hat Convention at the Atlanta Marriott Marquise.



Victoria and Bobby Kerlin, former president of the Fayette Historical Society, at the "Inheritance" Premier Party held at the Holliday Dorsey Fife House museum, May 10.

leased in May by Knox Robinson Publishing, London.

"I didn't set out to write a trilogy, or even a novel," reflects Victoria, who now travels the country promoting her book. "I was just a Fayette woman who wanted to do something good in the community by saving a beautiful old house. I didn't know my love of that Old South beauty would lead to a career as a novelist and speaker. But it's a thrill to share Fayette's history with the world."

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Omega Books in Peachtree City, and at Amazon and other online retailers. For more information, visit the author's website at www.VictoriaWilcoxBooks.com.



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