

The Japanese Garden in the Atlanta Botanical Garden highlights the presence of the Japanese/Japanese American community in Georgia and represents the long history of cultural exchange between Japan and the United States. On August 21, 2025, a new **Oribe lantern** was gifted from Fukuoka, Atlanta's Japanese sister city.

The first-known Asians in Georgia were Chinese laborers recruited to widen the **Augusta Canal** in the 1870's. After the canal project was complete, a small group of the original 165 Chinese men remained, making a living in Augusta as owners of grocery stores and laundries. The descendants of these laborers are still in Augusta today, continuing to gather for Chinese language lessons, community potlucks, and cultural activities at the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association building - the site of the first Asian American historical marker in Georgia.

The **Kia Plant** in Troup County was established in 2006, directly and indirectly creating jobs for over 14,000 individuals in Georgia. Kia collaborated with West Georgia Technical College to establish a certification program to provide students with skills and industry-recognized credentials. This also led to an increased emphasis on STEM classes in local school curriculum.

The **Al-Farooq Masjid** was founded in 1980 to serve a growing population of South Asian, Arab, and American Muslims, including university students. The mosque is the first majority-immigrant mosque in the city, and one of the largest in the Southeast. Due to its location in the heart of Atlanta near Georgia Tech and Georgia State University, many students in religious studies courses, local residents, and tourists attend regular tours of the mosque.

The **Statue for Peace** in Brookhaven, Georgia, was dedicated in 2017 to honor the memory of young girls and women from Korea, China, and the Philippines who endured gender-based violence during World War II. It was created through community efforts led by Asian Americans and their allies, in addition to support from city leaders. The statue stands for peace, resilience, and human rights. It invites people from all backgrounds to reflect on the painful history and work together for a better future.



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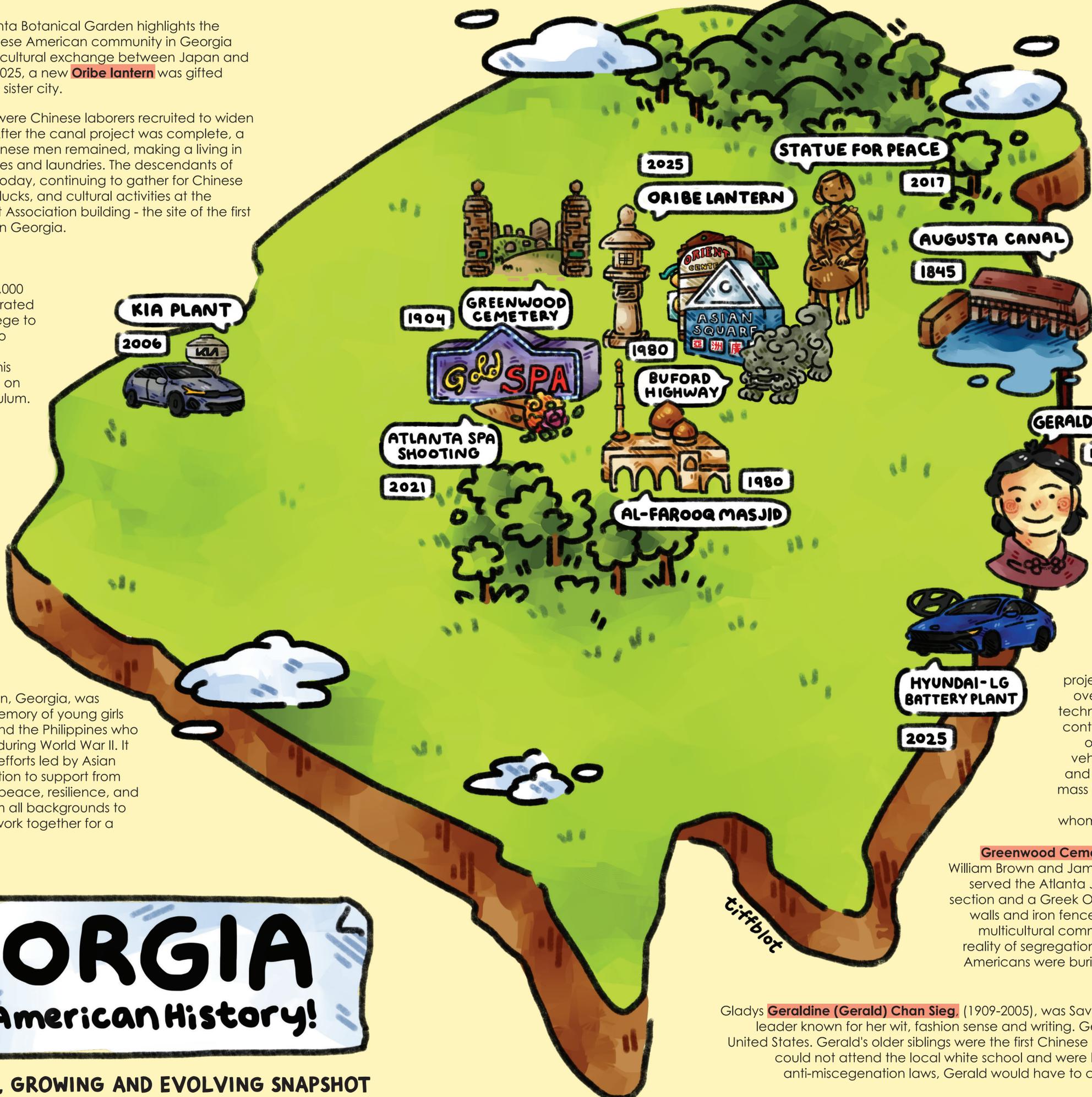
**Buford Highway** is a vibrant stretch of road outside Atlanta well known for Asian, Latin American, and African immigrant-owned restaurants and grocery stores. Though it was formally known around the 1980s as an international corridor, immigrant settlement began primarily in the 1960s due to political instability in Southeast Asian countries, China, and Korea. The Buford Highway community continues to serve as a home away from home for new and old immigrant generations through language schools, ethnic houses of worship, nonprofits, and professional services in-language (legal, real estate, automotive, etc.).

In early years of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a rise in anti-Asian sentiment, rhetoric, and targeted race-based crimes. The **Atlanta spa shootings** that occurred on March 16, 2021 took the lives of 8 people, 6 of whom were Asian and Asian American women. This sparked a national call-to-action and brought Asian American communities together to fight against anti-Asian American racism.

The **Hyundai-LG Battery Plant** in Savannah was projected to transform the rural economy by creating over 40,000 jobs across Georgia and advancing U.S. technology. The site was under construction as Korean contract workers were gearing up to train U.S. workers on specialized skills to produce electric and hybrid vehicles. On September 4, 2025, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) executed the largest mass raid in U.S. history at the Hyundai-LG Battery Plant construction site in Savannah. 475 workers, 317 of whom were Korean nationals on Visas, were detained.

**Greenwood Cemetery** was established in 1904 by business partners, William Brown and James Mayson. Containing over 3000 burials, it initially served the Atlanta Jewish community. Between 1910-1911, a Chinese section and a Greek Orthodox section was created, separated by stone walls and iron fences. This cemetery is a testament to the increasingly multicultural community in turn of the century Atlanta, as well as the reality of segregation between ethnic and religious groups. No African Americans were buried there until 1987, when C.R. Jones, Atlanta's first Black councilman was laid to rest at Greenwood.

Gladys **Geraldine (Gerald) Chan Sieg**, (1909-2005), was Savannah's first Chinese American poet, a community leader known for her wit, fashion sense and writing. Gerald's father immigrated from China in 1889 to the United States. Gerald's older siblings were the first Chinese children born in Georgia. Due to segregation, they could not attend the local white school and were homeschooled for several years. Later, because of anti-miscegenation laws, Gerald would have to cross state lines to marry her husband, Edward Sieg.



# GEORGIA

## Asian American History!

A LONG-STANDING, GROWING AND EVOLVING SNAPSHOT