

Editor's Note: American Ancestors' Family Heritage Experience welcomes the general public, please publish for your audience.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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<<< MEDIA ADVISORY >>>

American Ancestors to Name Back Bay Building for Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. at Family Heritage Experience Grand Opening

American Ancestors®, the country's oldest nonprofit genealogical organization, celebrates its 180th year by launching a new public space dedicated to the joy of family history on Newbury Street

BOSTON, MA, Issued April 22, 2025... American Ancestors announces the grand opening of the Family Heritage Experience (FHE), a state-of-the-art, interactive exhibition designed to inspire curiosity and discovery around family history and cultural heritage. A ribbon cutting ceremony takes place at 10:00 am on Thursday, April 24, at the entrance at 97 Newbury Street in Boston's historic Back Bay. The newly renovated building housing the permanent exhibit will be named in honor of philanthropist Thomas Bailey Hagen and Harvard professor and host of the popular PBS series "Finding Your Roots," Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

A highlight of the opening is the permanent installation of Professor Gates's personal family tree, an illustrated work created by artist Tania Crossingham in the medium of gouache on vellum. This piece, featured prominently within the exhibition, developed through meticulous genealogical and DNA research, captures the beauty and complexity of Gates's ancestry and reflects the exhibition's overarching goal: to celebrate the stories that shape who we are. Gates has introduced millions to the power of family history through his PBS series. Now, his legacy is enshrined in a space dedicated to helping all visitors explore their own origins.

Opening to the public on Friday, April 25, the Family Heritage Experience offers a self-guided tour of interactive exhibits, rare artifacts, and commissioned artworks from diverse artists. The facility is open weekly from Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 am to 6 pm and is designed for multigenerational audiences eager to begin or deepen their journey into the past. Admission is \$10 for adults and free for children under 12. For more details, visit fhe.americanancestors.org.

WHEN: Thursday, April 24, 2025, 10 am

WHERE: 97 Newbury Street, Boston, MA (Located in the heart of historic Back Bay)

WHO: Ryan J. Woods, President & CEO of American Ancestors
Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Harvard Professor and host of PBS's "Finding Your Roots"

David Trebing, Board Chair, American Ancestors
Elected public officials and community leaders, special guests and donors

WHY: The Family Heritage Experience is a state-of-the-art, permanent exhibition designed to ignite curiosity about family history across generations. The ribbon cutting marks the official launch of this major public initiative in celebration of American Ancestors' 180th anniversary.

VISUALS & PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES:

- Ribbon cutting with VIPs
- First public preview of interactive exhibits
- Historic artifacts, artworks, and installations
- Building dedication honoring Thomas Bailey Hagen and Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

MEDIA RSVP & COMPREHENSIVE PRESS KIT: fhe.americanancestors.org/presskit

About the Family Heritage Experience

The Family Heritage Experience—an interactive, state-of-the-art exhibition that introduces visitors to the joy of family history research—was launched in 2025 by American Ancestors®, a national center for family history, heritage & culture. The Family Heritage Experience is located on the first floor of American Ancestors' headquarters at 97 Newbury Street, in Boston, Massachusetts. For more information, visit fhe.americanancestors.org.

About American Ancestors

American Ancestors® is a national nonprofit center for family history, heritage & culture based in Boston, Massachusetts that has been setting the gold standard for genealogical research since its founding in 1845. Today, American Ancestors serves 400K+ members and subscribers through AmericanAncestors.org, one of the world's largest online collections of family history resources. In 2025, American Ancestors launched the Family Heritage Experience, an interactive, state-of-the-art exhibition that introduces visitors to the joy of family history research, located at 97 Newbury Street at our headquarters in Boston. American Ancestors is also home to the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center, which preserves New England's Jewish history, and 10 Million Names, a project dedicated to finding the names of the enslaved men, women, and children in pre- and post-colonial America before emancipation. For more information, visit americanancestors.org.