

Ben Hill County

County Formed July 31, 1906

County Seat Fitzgerald

Incorporated Cities Fitzgerald

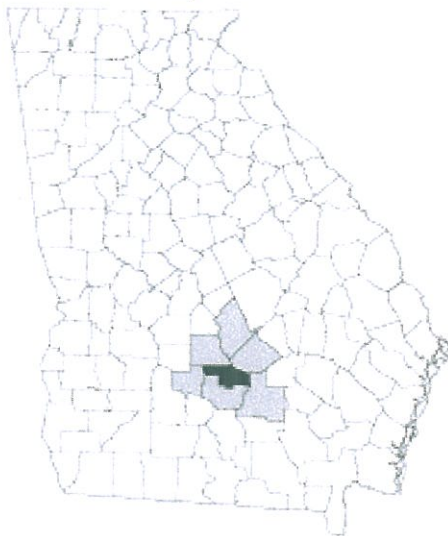
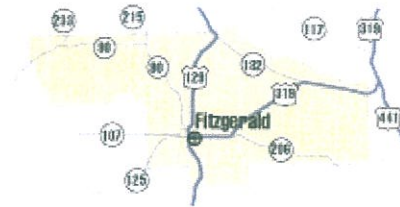
Total Area 251.8 square miles

History Ben Hill County was created in 1906, from Irwin and Wilcox counties, and was named for Benjamin Harvey Hill, U.S. Senator from Georgia, a Whig leader, and a staunch opponent of Reconstruction.

The Historic District on South Lee and South Main streets in Fitzgerald is listed on the National Register. The old railroad depot is now home to the Blue/Gray Museum.

The county has only one incorporated city, Fitzgerald, which was founded by former Union soldiers on a 50,000 acre tract owned by the non-profit American Tribune Soldiers Colony Company. The citizens of Fitzgerald, pledging unity with their former enemies, named streets after leaders of both armies. The early concentration of population in the city aided the county's industrial development. The colony also founded the first public school in Georgia to offer free books and tuition.

Points of Interest Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County maintain nine recreational parks and one river access park at the Ocmulgee River. These facilities



Depot in Fitzgerald

offer playgrounds, team sports, natural areas, meeting and concert shelters, and public boat ramps.

Annual Events Events include the Blues and Grays Festival in October, the Ebony-in-Arts Festival in the Spring, Colony City Chase in October and the Fourth of July Celebration.

County <http://www.benhillcounty.com>

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Grand Theatre

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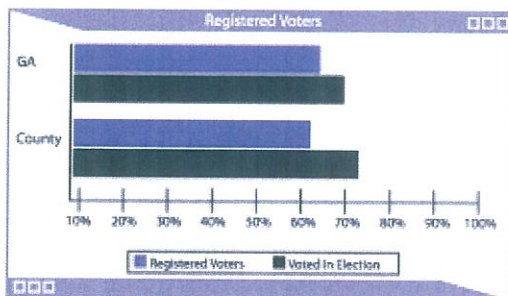
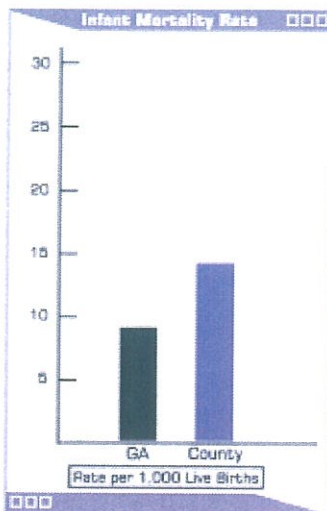
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Demographics

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Ben Hill County



- According to the Census, in Ben Hill County, 63.3% of the residents were white and 32.6% were black. Hispanics, who can be identified as either white or black in the Census data, made up 4.6% of the county's population. Statewide, 65.1% of residents were white, 28.7% were black and 5.3% were Hispanic.
- In Ben Hill County, 27.5% of the county's residents were age 18 or younger, while 13.3% were age 65 or older. Statewide, 26.5% were age 18 or younger and 9.6% were age 65 or older.
- The Census reports 10.5% of Ben Hill County's households were headed by females with children under 18 years of age, compared with 9.0% statewide. Total households with children under 18 comprised 33.2% of all households in the county and 35.0% of those in the state.

- Between 1996 and 2000, Ben Hill County school system reported an average high school dropout rate of 9.2%, for students in grades 9 to 12. Statewide, this rate is 6.8% for the same period of time.
- Ben Hill County spent an average of \$4,915 per student for public education each year between 1996 and 2000. This expenditure was less than the state wide average of \$5,285
- Based on the 2000 graduating class for Ben Hill County school system,

50.8% of the students were eligible for the HOPE Scholarship Program. The scholarship is available to eligible students to attend a post-secondary school in Georgia. Statewide, 57.9% of the graduating students were eligible for the HOPE scholarship.

- Between 1995 and 1998, the infant mortality rate (infant deaths per 1,000 live births) was 14.3 for the county. The statewide rate was 9.2 during the same period.
- In 2000, the number of physicians in the county per 1,000 population was 0.8, compared with the 1.9 state average. Ben Hill County had 4.3 hospital beds per 1,000 population in 2000, which was greater than the statewide average of 3.1 beds per 1,000 population.
- The 2000 index crime rate (crimes per 1,000) for Ben Hill County was 5.4. Statewide, in 2000, the rate was 3.4. Of the total index crimes reported, 12.0% were violent crimes, while 88.0% were property crimes.
- In 2000, 62.1% of the adult population in the county was registered to vote. Of those registered voters, 73.0% voted in the 2000 general election. Statewide, in 2000, 64.1% of eligible Georgians were registered to vote. Of those registered, 69.6% voted in the general election that year.

Community	Population			Growth (%)	
	1980	1990	2000	1980-1990	1990-2000
Ben Hill County	16,000	16,245	17,484	1.5%	7.6%
Fitzgerald	10,187	8,901	8,758	-12.6%	-1.6%

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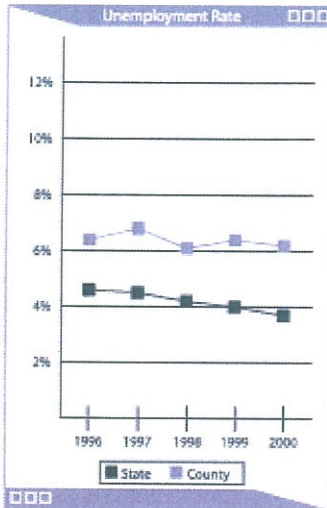
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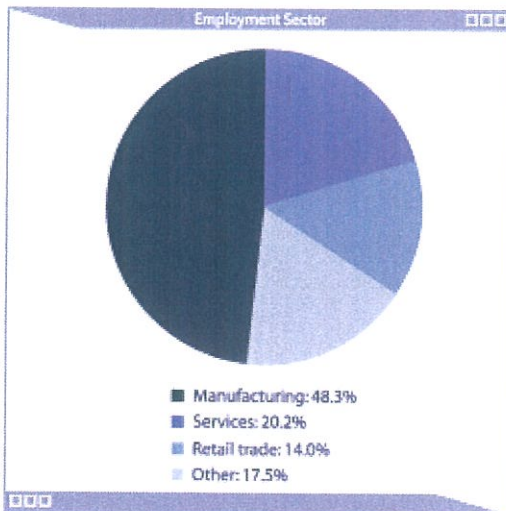
□□□ Economy

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Ben Hill County



- In the year 2000, the average weekly wage for all the employment sectors in the county was \$461. This amount was less than the statewide average of \$622.
- In Ben Hill County, Manufacturing is the largest employment sector providing 48.3% of the jobs. The other predominant employment sectors are Services and Retail trade. Statewide, the service industry is the largest employment sector, contributing 25.6% of the state's jobs.
- Between 1996 and 2000, Ben Hill County's annual unemployment rate was higher than the state's rate, averaging 6.3% compared with the state's average of 4.2%. Nationally, the unemployment rate for the same period averaged 4.8%.



Top Employers - 1999

Deep South Products Inc

Delphi Automotive Systems Corp

- The county per capita personal income in 1999 was \$22,537, as compared with \$27,324 for Georgia and \$28,546 for the United States.
- Ben Hill County's median household income in 1997 was \$26,126. This amount was less than the state's median household income of \$36,372 in that same year. Nationally, the median household income in 1999 was \$37,005.
- During 1997, 21.2% of the

Modern Fibers

Pioneer Housing Systems
Inc

Shaw Industries Inc

In alphabetical order.

county's population lived below the poverty level, compared with Georgia's rate of 14.7% and the national rate of 13.3%. In addition, 30.7% of the children under the age of 18 lived below the poverty level in Ben Hill County. Nationally, 19.9% of the population under the age of 18 years lived below the level of poverty.

- Residents of Ben Hill County received total government transfer payments amounting to \$4,439 per capita in 1999, compared with \$3,302 per capita statewide. Transfer payments include retirement and disability insurance benefit payments, medical benefits, unemployment insurance benefits, and veteran's benefits payments.
- According to the Georgia Department of Revenue's Net Property and Utility Digest, Ben Hill County's assessed property value amounted to \$257.9 million in 1999, resulting in a per capita assessed property value of \$14,741. At the state level, per capita assessed property value in 1999 equaled \$24,462.

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Quick Facts

2000 Population

17,484

2002 Job Tax Credit Tier

1

2001 Tax Millage Rate

31.110

Legal Organ

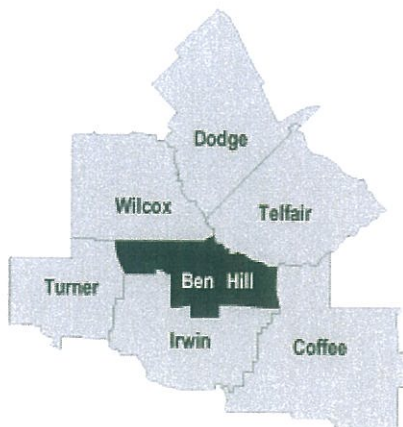
The Herald Leader

Form of Government

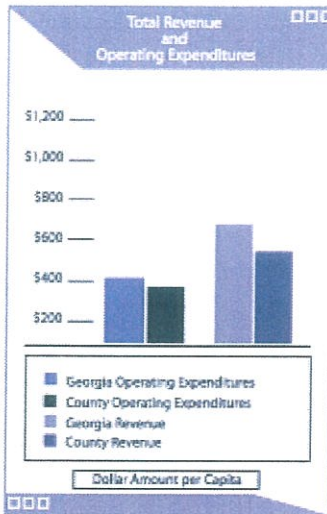
Commission-Manager

Service Delivery Region

Region 11 - Douglas

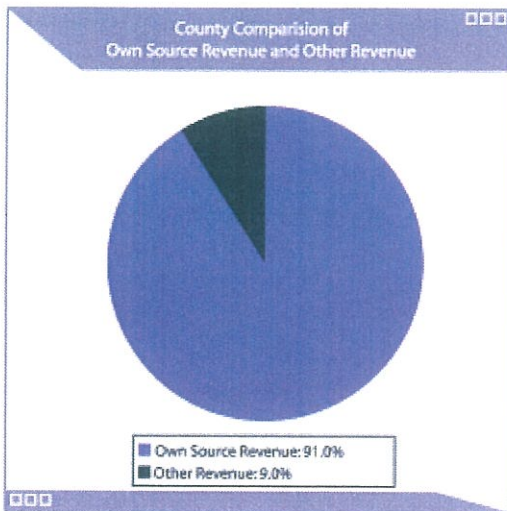


- Ben Hill County collected \$6.7 million in total revenues in 1996. In 2000, the county received \$9.4 million, an increase of 40.4%. Total revenue in 2000 equaled \$539 per capita. The statewide revenue per capita for this same year was \$679.
- From 1996 to 2000, own source revenues for Ben Hill County rose from \$6.3 million to \$8.6 million, an increase of 36.9%. Own source revenues include revenues from property taxes, sales taxes, excise and special use taxes, and service charges and fees. Per capita own source revenues amounted to \$491 in 2000. This compares to a statewide per capita amount of \$611.
- The county collected an average of \$197 per capita in property taxes during the past five years. This amount was greater than the average of \$191 per capita collected by similarly-sized counties. For the same period, the average per capita amount of county property tax collected in Georgia was \$190. On average, property taxes accounted for 43.4% of the county's own source revenue during the period of 1996 to 2000.
- General operating expenditures for Ben Hill County in 1996 equaled \$5.1 million, or \$293 per capita. In 2000, general operating expenditures rose by 23.0% to \$6.2 million, which was \$357 per capita. General operating expenditures per capita for similarly-sized counties was \$399 in 2000. The statewide average was \$404 per capita during the same period.



- Historically, the top three expenditure categories for counties are public safety, administration, and health and human services. In 2000, Ben Hill County spent \$1.6 million or 17.2% of total county spending on public safety which includes spending for law enforcement, fire services and jails. Spending for administration totaled \$1.5 million, amounting to 16.4% of total expenditures. The county spent \$1.5 million or 15.8% of total spending on health and human services.

- From 1996 to 2000, Ben Hill County had no long-term debt outstanding each year. Similarly-sized counties held an average of \$129.73 per capita during the period.



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DP-4. Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics: 2000
Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data
Geographic Area: Ben Hill County, Georgia

NOTE: Data based on a sample except in P3, P4, H3, and H4. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf3.htm>.

Subject	Number	Percent
Total housing units	7,623	100.0
UNITS IN STRUCTURE		
1-unit, detached	4,619	60.6
1-unit, attached	131	1.7
2 units	312	4.1
3 or 4 units	224	2.9
5 to 9 units	157	2.1
10 to 19 units	69	0.9
20 or more units	182	2.4
Mobile home	1,918	25.2
Boat, RV, van, etc.	11	0.1
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT		
1999 to March 2000	169	2.2
1995 to 1998	790	10.4
1990 to 1994	491	6.4
1980 to 1989	1,531	20.1
1970 to 1979	1,374	18.0
1960 to 1969	993	13.0
1940 to 1959	1,500	19.7
1939 or earlier	775	10.2
ROOMS		
1 room	53	0.7
2 rooms	118	1.5
3 rooms	713	9.4
4 rooms	1,327	17.4
5 rooms	2,023	26.5
6 rooms	1,636	21.5
7 rooms	992	13.0
8 rooms	408	5.4
9 or more rooms	353	4.6
Median (rooms)	5.3	(X)
Occupied Housing Units	6,673	100.0
YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT		
1999 to March 2000	1,257	18.8
1995 to 1998	1,896	28.4
1990 to 1994	932	14.0
1980 to 1989	1,172	17.6
1970 to 1979	622	9.3
1969 or earlier	794	11.9
VEHICLES AVAILABLE		
None	848	12.7
1	2,618	39.2
2	2,048	30.7
3 or more	1,159	17.4



U.S. Census Bureau

American FactFinder

FACT SHEET

Ben Hill County, Georgia

Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights:

General Characteristics - show more >>

	Number	Percent	U.S.		
Total population	17,484	100.0	100%	map	brief
Male	8,369	47.9	49.1%	map	brief
Female	9,115	52.1	50.9%	map	brief
Median age (years)	34.8	(X)	35.3	map	brief
Under 5 years	1,282	7.3	6.8%	map	
18 years and over	12,675	72.5	74.3%		
65 years and over	2,328	13.3	12.4%	map	brief
One race	17,349	99.2	97.6%		
White	11,059	63.3	75.1%	map	brief
Black or African American	5,706	32.6	12.3%	map	brief
American Indian and Alaska Native	36	0.2	0.9%	map	brief
Asian	49	0.3	3.6%	map	brief
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0.1%	map	brief
Some other race	499	2.9	5.5%	map	
Two or more races	135	0.8	2.4%	map	brief
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	800	4.6	12.5%	map	brief
Household population	17,117	97.9	97.2%	map	brief
Group quarters population	367	2.1	2.8%	map	
Average household size	2.57	(X)	2.59	map	brief
Average family size	3.09	(X)	3.14	map	
Total housing units	7,623	100.0	100.0%	map	
Occupied housing units	6,673	87.5	91.0%		brief
Owner-occupied housing units	4,449	66.7	66.2%	map	
Renter-occupied housing units	2,224	33.3	33.8%	map	brief
Vacant housing units	950	12.5	9.0%	map	

Social Characteristics - show more >>

	Number	Percent	U.S.		
Population 25 years and over	10,990	100.0			
High school graduate or higher	7,232	65.8	80.4%	map	brief
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,046	9.5	24.4%	map	
Civilian veterans (civilian population 18 years and over)	1,458	11.5	12.7%	map	brief
Disability status (population 21 to 64 years)	2,455	26.0	19.2%	map	brief
Foreign born	591	3.4	11.1%	map	brief
Male, Now married (population 15 years and over)	3,380	53.5	56.7%		brief
Female, Now married (population 15 years and over)	3,473	48.5	52.1%		brief
Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years and over)	806	5.0	17.9%	map	brief

Economic Characteristics - show more >>

	Number	Percent	U.S.		
In labor force (population 16 years and over)	7,891	59.7	63.9%		brief
Mean travel time to work in minutes (population 16 years and over)	18.3	(X)	25.5	map	brief
Median household income (dollars)	27,100	(X)	41,994	map	
Median family income (dollars)	33,023	(X)	50,046	map	
Per capita income (dollars)	14,093	(X)	21,587	map	
Families below poverty level	879	18.7	9.2%	map	brief
Individuals below poverty level	3,810	22.3	12.4%	map	

Housing Characteristics - show more >>

	Number	Percent	U.S.		
Single-family owner-occupied homes	3,022	100.0			brief
Median value (dollars)	60,700	(X)	119,600	map	brief
Median of selected monthly owner costs	(X)	(X)			brief

With a mortgage	703	(X)	1,088	map
Not mortgaged	246	(X)	295	
(X) Not applicable.				

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)
