

Reflections



A Program of the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources



Georgia African American
Historic Preservation Network

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EXPLORING THE HISTORY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS ON SAPELO ISLAND

Sapelo Island, a Georgia coastal barrier isle, is a natural haven for birds, sea turtles, plants and salt marshes. The island's natural beauty provides a perfect setting for ecological research and is the home of the Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve. Since no bridges connect Sapelo to the mainland, visitors must catch the ferry to explore the waterways providing accessibility to the island from the dock at Marsh Landing. In the midst of this isolated island lies an African American community that has survived since slavery, maintaining Gullah/Geechee customs and contributing to the cultural heritage of Georgia.

American Indians inhabited Sapelo's 16,500 acres 4,000 years ago, and Spanish explorers established a mission on the island in 1566. In 1762, Sapelo Island was purchased by Patrick Mackay, who introduced large scale plantation agriculture and slave labor. Mackay's estate was sold to John McQueen of South Carolina in 1784. Beset by financial woes, the island was sold to a group of Frenchmen in 1789. These royalists, fleeing the French Revolution, equally divided the island into tracts including Chocolate, Bourbon and Raccoon Bluff. African slave settlements were established in these plantations on the north end of Sapelo. In 1800, the estate of one Frenchman sold Blackbeard Island to the U.S. government for use as a timber reserve. Other French land and the slaves were purchased jointly by Edward Swarbreck, an English sea captain, and Richard Leake, father-in-law of Thomas Spalding.

After Leake died in 1802, Spalding inherited the south half of the island, leaving ownership of the north half to Swarbreck. Spalding became the most powerful landholder in McIntosh County: 1825 tax records indicated his land holdings totaled 7,910 acres. Spalding relied heavily on his 400 African slaves to produce cotton, sugar cane and rice, as these crops were similar to those found in their homeland in western Africa. Bilali, an overseer of Spalding's vast plantation, was the most influential African slave on the island.

A Muslim, Bilali maintained writings in Arabic that now reside in the University of Georgia library. Bilali ensured the survival of African traditions to slaves on Sapelo by teaching the Gullah/Geechee language and African customs that survive today through his descendants in Hog Hammock.

During the Spalding era, at least five slave settlements were on Sapelo: Raccoon Bluff, Shell Hammock, Belle Marsh, Lumber Landing, and Hog Hammock. At the eve of the Civil War, 370 African slaves resided in these settlements. They were promised "forty acres and a mule" after the war as a



Chocolate Plantation on Sapelo Island in McIntosh County is believed to have been built c.1812 - c.1820 by Edward Swarbreck. The site consists of over 15 tabby structures, including individual slave cabins (above).

Photo by Elizabeth A. Lyon

result of General William T. Sherman's "Order No. 15" in January 1865. Freed blacks also returned from the mainland in expectation of land, but President Andrew Johnson later rescinded this order. By the late 1860s, 900 free African Americans occupied settlements scattered throughout Sapelo Island and continued working on the farm owned by Spalding's descendants on the south end. In 1878, Thomas Spalding II sold land in Shell Hammock and Hog Hammock

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AFRICAN AMERICANS ON SAPELO ISLAND

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to African Americans. Gradually, Spalding's descendants, following a number of failed financial schemes, sold their land to investors.



Behavior Cemetery is an African American burial ground located in one of the slave settlements on Sapelo Island. The cemetery reflects African burial customs, with graves marked by personal items. Behavior Cemetery's oldest tombstone is 1890, but residents attest to hundreds of unmarked graves. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1996, Behavior Cemetery remains the largest burial ground on Sapelo Island.

Photo by Elizabeth A. Lyon

In 1911, Howard E. Coffin, a Detroit automobile executive, visited Sapelo and became the second millionaire to own most of the land on the island. African American settlements were not purchased by Coffin. He reintroduced cattle-raising, roads, greenhouses, and modern residences to the island. African Americans continued to work for Coffin's agricultural, dairy and fishing operations and operated his yacht and supply boats linking Sapelo to the mainland. The Coffin era on Sapelo continued to the Depression, and by 1934, he sold the island to tobacco heir R. J. Reynolds, Jr.

Reynolds possessed a keen interest in education and established the Sapelo Island Research Foundation in 1949. He invited scientists to explore the maritime ecological systems on the island. In 1954, the University of Georgia Marine Institute was founded in the dairy complex on the south end. Reynolds built a new school for African Americans at Hog Hammock, and for many years African American cousins Fred and Benny Johnson operated Reynold's ferry, the *Janet*. However, Reynolds and his attorneys believed African American settlements should be confined to Hog Hammock to reserve the north end for a wildlife refuge. By the 1960s, Reynolds engineered land swaps that essentially moved all African Americans to Hog Hammock. After Reynolds died in 1964, his wife, Dr. Annemarie Schmidt Reynolds, continued his plans for the island's preservation. She was instrumental in the Department of Natural Resources' purchase of the north end of the island and its transformation into the R. J. Reynolds Wildlife Refuge in 1969. Reynolds' remaining land on Sapelo was sold to the state of Georgia in 1976. Today, the majority of land in the Hog Hammock community is owned by African Americans. In 1998, DNR developed a management plan for Sapelo's wildlife, fisheries, recreation and historic sites. The Historic Preservation Division continues to encourage preservation of all historic properties and archaeological sites on Sapelo Island.

RACCOON BLUFF

Raccoon Bluff, on the eastern side of the island, became an African American settlement circa 1871, when William Hillery, a former slave, purchased the 1,000 acre tract. William Hillery and Company sold 20 lots to freedmen, and the Raccoon Bluff settlement was the largest African American enclave on the island for nearly a century. The First African Baptist Church was organized circa 1866, and the congregation built the original church at Hanging Bull, a former slave settlement on the west side of the island. The church was destroyed in the hurricane of 1898. The congregation gathered wood washed ashore from the yellow fever hospital and quarantine station at Blackbeard Island and built a new church at Raccoon Bluff circa 1900.

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1996, the First African Baptist Church was the last remaining extant building at Raccoon Bluff by the 1960s, when most African Americans on Sapelo had moved to Hog Hammock. In 1998, the Historic Preservation Division provided a grant for restoration of the church that had remained vacant for 40 years. Early in 2000, Sapelo residents approached Paula Wallace, president of the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), and persuaded her to enlist the aid of SCAD students in the restoration project. Through partnerships formulated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and financial assistance from the Historic Preservation Division's Georgia Heritage 2000 grant program and the Governor's Discretionary Fund and the dedicated labor of SCAD students, restoration was completed by year's end for the First African Baptist Church of Raccoon Bluff. Today, this Gothic Revival church stands as a living testimony to the African religious and Gullah/Geechee culture of the residents of Sapelo Island. The church will be used for services, cultural and community events.



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Photograph Not Available

First African Baptist Church of Raccoon Bluff c.1977.



Residents and friends of the Sapelo Island community celebrate the preservation and rededication of First African Baptist Church of Raccoon Bluff in December 2000. Benjamin Hall, executive director of the Sapelo Island Cultural and Revitalization Society, receives a 99 year lease for the church from Governor Roy E. Barnes.

Photos by Richard Laub and W. Ray Luce

HOG HAMMOCK COMMUNITY

By 1963, the African American population on Sapelo Island had dwindled to 211 residents and 48 houses in the Hog Hammock community. Trained as farmers and fishermen since the 19th century, many residents left the island during the Reynolds era, seeking educational and job opportunities on the mainland. Entering the Hog Hammock community today, visitors are greeted with a sign that reads: "Historic Hog Hammock Community, established circa 1857, 434 acres, pop. 70." These residents continue many traditions first passed on by Bilali, their African ancestor. Current community economic development ventures include bed and breakfast operations, tours, fishing and hunting.



This cottage, shaded by live oak trees abundant on Sapelo Island, is an example of vernacular dwellings built by African American craftsmen in the Hog Hammock community. The Hog Hammock Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1996. Photo by James R. Lackhart

A key island storyteller, activist and historian is Cornelia



Cornelia Walker Bailey, author and storyteller, shares memories of Sapelo's past with visiting historians at a recent retreat. Photo by Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr.

Walker Bailey, a descendant of Bilali. Bailey's ancestors once resided in Belle Marsh, but her family was forced to move to Hog Hammock in 1950. Bailey describes herself as a Saltwater Geechee in her book, *God, Dr. Buzzard, and the Bolito Man*. Cornelia Walker Bailey can be reached at 912/485-2206 or www.gacoast.com/geecheetours.html. Yvonne Grovner learned how to make world famous Sapelo sweetgrass baskets from the late Allen Green, a Sapelo craftsman, while in his 90s. These baskets are world famous, and virtually identical to baskets found on the western African coast. Grovner shares this legacy with her family, who make baskets in their home. The baskets can be ordered at 912/485-2262.

Stanley Walker knits fishing nets, a skill he has practiced for 21 years. Lula Walker operates Lula's Kitchen, serving fresh oysters from the island marshes. Benjamin Hall, executive director of the Sapelo Island Cultural and Revitalization Society, spearheaded efforts to preserve the First African Baptist Church at Raccoon Bluff. These residents, influenced by Bilali, continue the legacy of Gullah/Geechee on Sapelo Island, a Georgia treasure!

WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY? AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT IT?

Dr. David Colin Crass, State Archaeologist
Historic Preservation Division

These are the two most common questions I get from folks when I tell them about the Historic Preservation Division's Archaeology Education and Protection Program. In fact, most people know at least something about archaeology, usually from watching the Indiana Jones movies or reading *National Geographic* magazine. Although the Indy movies are great entertainment, they bear only a passing resemblance to the science of archaeology.

The short answer to the first question is easy. Archaeology, at least in the U.S., is a branch of anthropology, the study of humankind and its origins. Archaeologists study past human societies through the material things they left behind. In practice, whether one is studying prehistoric stone tools that are 6,000 years old or the ruins of a tubby slave cabin on one of Georgia's barrier islands, that means studying garbage, literally material that has been thrown away. It also means studying buildings that are evidenced by the soil stains left behind by rotted posts; studying gardens that have disappeared but still leave remaining traces under the surface of the earth of paths and beds; and studying forest cover through pollen analysis.

The answer to the second question, however, is a bit more complex. Those of us who are involved in historic preservation are, by definition, interested in the past. The fact that every state in the union has a state historic preservation office is a result of federal and state recognition that the past is important. Understanding the past through archaeology is absolutely critical to our larger preservation efforts. Why? In order to answer this, we have to explore what it is that the discipline of history examines.

The latest archaeological evidence indicates that humans have occupied North America for approximately 13,000 years. The written records that form the raw data of the discipline of history go back to 1540 when the Spanish explorer De Soto landed in Florida and made his way up into Georgia and westward. North American Indians were pre-literate and preserved their history through oral tradition. Most of the buildings that we see on the Georgia landscape are even younger—the oldest date to the 18th century. Simple math tells us that the written records in our archives and the buildings around us are the tangible evidence of about 3.5% of the time humans have occupied Georgia. So learning about our past *only* through those avenues is like parting the curtains on a window just a crack and expecting to fill a room with sunlight.

Moreover, preserving and studying historic buildings and written records *alone* is less representative than it might seem at first glance. Not only does it leave out American Indian culture but it significantly under-represents the lives and contributions of enslaved Africans, Hispanics, tenant farmers in the postbellum south, women and children. Why? Because for most of American history, literacy has been the privilege of the few. With the exception of the Works Project Administration (WPA) Writers Project and several other notable examples, for instance, most of our historical knowledge of enslaved Africans up until about 25 years ago came from records kept by their owners—not by the people themselves.

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WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY? AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT IT?

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In fact, the answer to why we need archaeology is: this is the only method to preserve the achievements and lives of many of the people that have lived before us. Some of the most important archaeological sites in the country are in Georgia. Starting with research begun about 25 years ago, Georgia archaeology has helped revolutionize our view of the lives of enslaved African Americans, especially on our coastal barrier islands. Their distinctive Gullah culture still exists, although in neighboring states like South Carolina it is under threat from coastal development. Here in Georgia we are blessed, because most of our fragile barrier islands are preserved either through state, federal, or concerned private ownership. While this has led to the conservation of the beautiful maritime forests and marshes that are home to hundreds of species of wild animals, it has also led to the preservation of world-class archaeological sites. The accompanying article by Dr. Ray Crook of the State University of West Georgia details his excavations of Gullah sites on Sapelo Island, which have helped to tell the story of Georgians long since gone, whose stories we can learn through the science of archaeology.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES UNIT

Archaeology has been recognized as an important tool in historic resource management since the passage of the federal Antiquities Act in 1906 under President Theodore Roosevelt. The 1966 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) codified the role of the individual states in protecting important historical and prehistoric resources. Georgia laws further define the Historic Preservation Division's role in managing the state's archaeological sites. Within the Historic Preservation Division (HPD), the Archaeological Services Unit is managed by the State Archaeologist. This unit brings focus and coordination to a wide variety of programs in resource protection and management.

Archaeology has changed tremendously since the passage of the NHPA. Prior to 1966, it was a discipline with a handful of practitioners. Most excavations were carried out by academic institutions and artifacts became the property of natural history museums. Today, most excavations of archaeological sites are carried out by consultants under the NHPA or other related federal or state laws and regulations. The results of these excavations are then reviewed by HPD archaeologists. Georgia's archaeological consultants are also active in site preservation and education, as is the Society for Georgia Archaeology and the Archaeological Conservancy. The Archaeological Services Unit maintains partnerships with these organizations to alert the public to the fragile, and often hidden, clues to our past which often lie just beneath our feet. For further information, contact the State Archaeologist, Historic Preservation Division, at 404/656-2840.

THE SAPELO GULLAH PROJECT 1992 - 2001

*Dr. Ray Crook, State University of West Georgia
Director, Waring Archaeological Laboratory*

The Gullah, or Saltwater Geechee of Sapelo have their roots deeply planted in the island's sandy soils. For over 200 years they have tilled the fields, fished the tidal creeks, hunted animals and gathered plants along the marsh edges and in the magnolia/live-oak forests, and had their hands in a variety of other economic pursuits. Their unique language and culture bear testament to the human ability to adapt and survive under conditions that challenged their endurance and sensibilities. Under the historic circumstances of chattel bondage, their ancestors created a cultural system that successfully merged and blended the linguistic and behavioral patterns of their native African homelands with those of the dominant Euro-Americans. The result was Gullah – a creole culture that satisfied not only the imposed demands of plantation life, but also the full social, religious, and economic needs of the Gullah themselves. Once thriving along the South Carolina and Georgia coasts, their numbers now are few and widely spread; the survival of their cultural traditions is endangered.

The locations and number of Gullah communities on Sapelo have changed over the years. When associated with plantations, they were relatively contained and situated near work areas. Following the Civil War some Freedmen remained in the slave settlements for a time, while others moved to other locations to establish family homesteads or small communities. Some left the island, others came to make Sapelo their home for the first time. Gullah settlements became well established and grew during the first half of the 20th century. However, most of the homesteads and communities were vacated during the 1950s. R. J. Reynolds had arranged for all the black residents to relocate into the single community of Hog Hammock. The former settlements soon were reclaimed by the island's vegetation and ravaged by the elements. The houses, outbuildings, and other features of the cultural landscape deteriorated to the point where they survived only in memories and as archaeological remains.

Against this backdrop, an anthropological research project was initiated in 1992 to gather and record archaeological and ethnographic information about the Gullah communities of Sapelo Island. This project, initially funded by the Sapelo Island Research Foundation and with the support of the Hog Hammock community and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, has resulted in new information about Gullah life on the island.

The Sapelo Gullah project began with historical research for clues about the locations of former settlements on the island and the identities of their occupants. Old maps, photographs and a few written records provided tantalizing leads and many additional questions. It became clear very quickly that the most important sources of information were the living memories of several elderly Sapelo residents and the archaeological record of the material remains of the settlements.

With the able assistance of Cornelia Walker Bailey, ten members of the Hog Hammock community were identified who had lived in several of the vacated communities and they agreed to participate in formal, semi-structured interviews. Basic life-history



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Photograph

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Available

information was gathered from each participant. Detailed questions were addressed about the communities they had lived in before moving to Hog Hammock. Questions focused on the location and social make-up of each settlement, the number and locations of houses and other cultural landscape features, the economic activities of individuals and households within the settlement, and the relationships among residents with those living in other settlements on the island. The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed, allowing for continuing analysis.

With information in hand from the oral-history narratives and also from the available historical records, the research project then turned to archaeological survey of the island to locate and record the physical remains of the old communities and homesteads. A total of twelve historic Gullah settlements were located (see accompanying map). Although most of the vacated settlements were overgrown with dense vegetation, the archaeological remains of building foundations, chimney falls, and domestic debris were detected, mapped and photographed.

The oral history and archaeological survey portions of the research produced volumes of raw data. Organizing and archiving these data has proceeded, and interpretation and synthesis is an active project. Additional historical research has been carried out, including detailed examination of 19th and early 20th century census records that reveal important demographic information about the Gullah population of Sapelo Island.

The most recent fieldwork connected with the Sapelo Gullah Project was limited archaeological excavation at two early settlements – Behavior and the closely associated New Barn Creek Site. The buried remains of two small cabins were found that allowed definition of structural floor plans and architectural details. The archaeological data speak clearly, giving us material evidence of creolization among the slaves on Thomas Spalding's early to mid 19th century Sapelo plantation. The Gullah slave cabins were very small, measuring scarcely nine feet long and five feet wide. Each cabin had an earthen floor and a single doorway midway along its northern long wall. In a traditional African fashion, most household activities would have taken place outside the structure. The house itself was primarily used for sleeping and for shelter during inclement weather. The walls were constructed of small wooden posts spaced some six inches apart, with paired posts set in the rounded corners of the structure. Next, the wall posts were interlaced tightly with grapevines. The entire framework was plastered inside and out with tabby mortar, then carefully finished to reveal a smooth white surface. Roofing materials remain undetermined at this point, but may have been palmetto thatch.



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Photograph Not Available

*Excavated Gullah cabin at Behavior
showing base of wattle-and-tabby wall*

These small cabins, previously undocumented, are remarkable examples of the creative blending of African and Euro-American traditions by the early Gullah. Native African wattle-and-daub construction was modified by replacement of the African mud with the plantation tabby mortar for the plastered walls, resulting in a durable wattle-and-tabby Gullah house. The slaves were well acquainted with tabby preparation, as the sand and burned shell mixture (usually with added oyster-shell aggregate) was commonly used elsewhere on Spalding's plantation. The Gullah slaves simply adapted it to their own domestic use, reflecting a basic process of creolization.

*Wattle-and-tabby daub from the
Behavior Cabin
showing grape-vine impressions*



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Photograph Not Available

The Sapelo Gullah Project is far from finished. Much important and new information remains to be gleaned from the completed oral history and documentary studies. Each historic settlement also contains an unexplored archaeological record of Gullah life. It is certain that other surprises await discovery that will add to our understanding and appreciation of Gullah.



Jeanne Cyriaque
African American
Programs Coordinator

Setting the Record Straight

In the last issue on African American Centennial Family Farm Awards, the article failed to include the John & Emma Jane Rountree Farm. The farm, while included in the 1994 official list, was not identified as an African American farm. The editor thanks Dr. Clyde Hall of Savannah for sharing this important finding.



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www.gashpo.org

JOHN & EMMA JANE ROUNTREE FARM: A CENTENNIAL FAMILY FARM

In 1891, John Willis Rountree purchased 40 acres of land in Morven, Brooks County, from James E. Hendry. The land's boundaries included Hendry's Mill Creek and Hendry's old Steam Grain Mill. A year later, Rountree married Emma Jane Stroud and built a small log cabin on the farm for their residence. The Rountree family lived on the farm for the duration of their marriage and raised 15 children there. By 1894, Hendry sold another 25 acres to Rountree, who continued to buy land near his farmstead. By 1917, he had acquired 84 acres of farmland.

John Willis Rountree was a skilled carpenter and farmer. He built a home for one of his daughters, a family farmhouse in 1904, and a barbershop for one of his sons. His carpentry skills were often sought for construction projects in Morven. He was a deacon at Siloam Baptist Church and was instrumental in the building of a Rosenwald school in the community. He encouraged his daughters to attend Fort Valley Normal and Industrial School to become teachers. Rountree's oldest son served in World War I. Emma Jane was an excellent cook and seamstress. She canned farm fruits and vegetables and made clothes for her daughters.

In the 1930s, the Rountree farm included barns for horses, mules, and tobacco; a cottonhouse; a smokehouse; and two open water wells. Rountree used half of his land for a timber reserve, providing an additional source of income and fuel for farm operations. Crops produced on the Rountree farm included peaches, vegetables, pecans and tobacco. Twenty-five acres are currently leased as a peach orchard. The remaining 37 acres produce corn, pecans and tobacco.

In 1994, the John & Emma Jane Rountree Farm received the Centennial Family Farm Award; the first African American family farm to receive this award! Rountree's grandchildren and their cousins are the current owners.



John Willis Rountree and his children built this farmhouse circa 1904. The house contained a guest room, parents' room, separate boys' and girls' rooms, and a dining area inside the large kitchen.
HPD File Photo



The Rountree farmstead in the 1930s included a farmhouse, several barns, a corn crib, smokehouse, a mule driven sugar cane grinding mill and two water wells.
HPD File Photo

GAAHPN HOSTS SOUTHEAST REGIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN PRESERVATION ALLIANCE 3RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE - AFRICAN AMERICAN PLACES: A LEGACY TO MAINTAIN



Charlotte Frazier, Chair
Georgia African American
Historic Preservation Network

Augusta, Georgia is the host city for the conference. Conference attendees will participate in a technical workshop on *Saving African American Schools* in the beautiful surroundings of Paine College, founded in 1882 as a training ground for African American ministers and teachers. Paine College is a four-year, co-educational, residential college that is historically bi-racial in establishment and leadership, and predominantly African American in enrollment.



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Photograph Not Available

Haygood-Holsey Hall
Paine College

In 1867, Morehouse College, the nation's only all-male, historically African American institution, was founded in the basement of Springfield Baptist Church. Organized in 1787, Springfield Baptist Church is the oldest independent African American church in the nation. The conference luncheon and additional technical workshops will be held at this historic church. Michael Thurmond, Georgia's commissioner of the Department of Labor, is the featured luncheon speaker.



(Public Domain)

Michael L. Thurmond
Commissioner, Georgia
Department of Labor



Springfield Baptist Church, in downtown Augusta, is the site for technical workshops and the conference luncheon. The church was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

Photo by James R. Lockhart

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Please print or type

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Agency/Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone - -

Fax - -

E-mail Address: _____

This registration form **must** be accompanied by a check for **\$50** (to cover conference materials and meals), made payable to **SRAAPA**. Registration confirmation and program materials will be sent to registrants prior to the conference. **Mail your check and registration form to:**

Southeast Regional African American Preservation Alliance
c/o Louretta Wimberly
3007 North Broad Street
Selma, AL 36701
Telephone 334/875-5894

If your organization is interested in hosting an exhibit,
please contact 843/722-8552.
An exhibitor contract will be mailed or faxed ASAP.

For additional conference information, please call:
843/722-8552 or e-mail: soro@nthp.org

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

The conference host hotel is the Radisson Riverfront Augusta. A conference room rate of \$99 will be honored subject to availability. Reservations must be guaranteed with a credit card.

Radisson Riverfront Hotel Augusta
2 Tenth Street
Augusta, GA 30901
Telephone 706/722-8900
Fax 706/724-0044

ABOUT GAAHPN



Georgia African American
Historic Preservation Network

The Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network (GAAHPN) was established in January 1989. It is composed of representatives from neighborhood organizations and preservation groups throughout the state. GAAHPN was formed in response to a growing interest in preserving the cultural and ethnic diversity of Georgia's African American heritage. This interest has translated into a number of efforts which emphasize greater recognition of African American culture and contributions to Georgia's history. The Network meets regularly to plan and implement ways to develop programs that will foster heritage education, neighborhood revitalization, and support community and economic development.

The Network is an informal group of over 500 people from around the state who have an interest in preservation. Members are briefed on the status of current and planned projects and are encouraged to offer ideas, comments and suggestions. The meetings provide an opportunity to share and learn from the preservation experience of others and to receive technical information through workshops. Members receive a newsletter, *Reflections*, produced by the Network. Membership in the Network is open to all, and Georgians are invited to find out more about their work.

Reflections

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