

Preserving History Through Archaeology



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GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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Georgia Trust of Historic Preservation's 2020 Places of Peril

The Georgia Trust's *Places in Peril* program seeks to identify and preserve historic sites threatened by demolition, neglect, lack of maintenance, inappropriate development, or insensitive public policy. The list raises awareness about Georgia's significant historic, archaeological and cultural resources. Through this program, the Trust encourages owners and individuals, organizations and communities to employ preservation tools, partnerships, and resources necessary to preserve and utilize selected historic properties in peril. Historic properties are selected for listing based on several criteria: Sites must be listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the Georgia Register of Historic Places; sites must be subject to a serious threat to their existence or historical, architectural, and/or archeological integrity; and there must be a demonstrable level of community commitment and support for the preservation of listed sites. In November the Georgia Trust chose the following sites for this year's *Places of Peril*:



Antioch Baptist Church (Crawfordville, Taliaferro County c. 1899)

The Story

Boasting a congregation that dates back to 1886 when it was founded by freed slaves from southern Taliaferro and northern Hancock counties, Antioch Baptist Church is one of the most striking examples of a religious building in rural Georgia with its imposing Gothic Revival-style towers flanking a wide doorway. Having acquired four acres for both a church and a cemetery from a nearby landowner, the church was constructed in 1899 by local craftsmen. Every August descendants of the original congregation return to worship and reunite at this church with a long and proud history.

The Threat

Still much admired and photographed, the church no longer holds regular services—leading to increasing signs of neglect. Water damage is visible inside and out, and the restrooms have been closed off. Though some financial support continues to be provided by descendants of the original congregation, the fate of the building relies on the larger community to use and care for this unique landmark.

*Photo Credit: MotorSportMedia /
Haltson Pitman and Nick Woolever*

Asbury United Methodist Church (Savannah, Chatham County c. 1887)

The Story

With a congregation celebrating 150 years, the Asbury United Methodist Church on Savannah's Abercorn Street stands as the only African American United Methodist church in the historic Victorian District. The original building dates to 1887 with several modifications through the early twentieth century. It has served Asbury United Methodist since 1927 and played a vital community-building role, hosting numerous local groups, and organizations beyond its home congregation.

The Threat

The church building faces many needed repairs to regain its place serving the full community. Deterioration due to water intrusion has left many portions of the building unusable. The sanctuary remains in regular use, but lack of accessibility inhibits some congregants' attendance. Faced with the choice of remaining in the historic building or seeking a new place of worship, the church is determined to raise the necessary funds to stay.



Photo Credit: Rebecca Fenwick

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Photo Credit: Georgia Trust

Cary Reynolds Elementary School (Doraville, DeKalb County c. 1961)

The Story

Originally named Sequoyah Elementary School, Cary Reynolds Elementary School contributes architecturally to the mid-century Northwoods Historic District. The school is an early design of mid-century architect John Portman, whose other works include Atlanta’s Hyatt Regency and Peachtree Center. Opened in 1961, the school features several of Portman’s signature stylistic motifs—including the central green space and light wells above the windows.

The Threat

The building—long slated for SPLOST funding to tackle deferred maintenance—remains in need of significant investments to improve the performance of the building and the quality of life for its students and faculty. Advocates fear that the school (without the promised interventions) will be abandoned and demolished despite its historic significance. A recently formed community support team hopes to stave off such an outcome, seeking ways to repair and rehabilitate the building and grounds to ensure its continued use.

Central State Hospital (Milledgeville, Baldwin County c. 1842)

The Story

Central State Hospital was Georgia’s first psychiatric institution—eventually becoming the largest mental hospital in the United States and the second largest in the world. Central State was chartered by the legislature in 1837 with the intent of providing Georgians suffering from mental illness or developmental disabilities with a safe and humane environment. The complex includes nearly 200 buildings—dating from 1842 to the mid-twentieth century, and features a remarkable variety of architectural styles situated on nearly 2,000 acres.



Photo Credit: MotorSportMedia / Haltson Pitman and Nick Woolever

The Threat

Previously a *Places in Peril* site in 2010, Central State Hospital has continued to suffer from neglect since its full closure in 2013, leading to further deterioration. A redevelopment authority is working to manage the site, and the train depot is being repurposed into Georgia’s Old Capital Museum. However, the scale of the campus and the current condition of many buildings has made fundraising and investment a daunting challenge. An embrace of the historic architecture and utilization of the economic incentives available to preservation projects could provide further avenues to redevelopment.

Fountain Hall (Atlanta, Fulton County c. 1882)

The Story

A National Historic Landmark, Fountain Hall was built in 1882 and features an iconic clock tower that still stands over the city. It remains the most prominent building on the original campus of Atlanta University, which was founded in 1865 to educate newly emancipated African Americans. Originally named Stone Hall, the building was constructed on a hill between Gaines Hall and South Hall housing faculty offices, classrooms, and a chapel. In the early 1930s the building was transferred to Morris Brown College



Photo Credit: Georgia Trust

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and was renamed to honor former college president Bishop William A. Fountain.

The Threat

Boarded up and unused since 2003, Fountain Hall has fallen victim to both vandalism and the intrusion of weather. Lack of upkeep has resulted in an increasingly compromised structure. Left unattended, the building could face a similar fate to its historic neighbors, Gaines Hall and Furber Cottage, both severely damaged by fire in recent years. Nevertheless, many alumni, preservationists, and individuals are committed to preserving this historic building. With recent momentum and attention the time for action is now.



*Photo Credit: MotorSportMedia /
Haltson Pitman and Nick Woolever*

Heritage Park (Griffin, Spalding County c. early 20th century)

The Story

Heritage Park is a community space that reflects the efforts to provide education to African Americans in the South during the twentieth century. The park includes a Rosenwald School, equalization school, gymnasium, and community garden. Built in 1929, the Rosenwald School was built using funds from the collaborative efforts of Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald of Sears, Roebuck and Company. The program strived to improve the quality of education and resources for African Americans in the South. The equalization school, built after state legislation enshrined the doctrine of “separate but equal,” carried on the legacy of African American education into the 1950s.

The Threat

For decades, Heritage Park has been used as a gathering place for the community to host events and bring awareness to the history of the sites. In recent years, the park and the properties have been subject to neglect, vandalism, and lack of maintenance. Allocated SPLOST funds have proven to be inadequate for a full restoration of the site, although community support for the project remains strong.

John Nelson Deming Home (Valdosta, Lowndes County c. 1898)

The Story

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, carpenter John Deming moved from Canada to Georgia, where he would establish himself as the preeminent master builder in the rapidly growing city of Valdosta. Deming was responsible for many of the city’s most ornate and imposing houses constructed between the late 1800s until the 1920s—most notable among them The Crescent, completed in 1899 for Colonel W. S. West, who later became a US senator. Deming built his own two-story, eclectically styled home on a corner of North Oak Street in 1898 using leftover materials donated by Colonel West from his own soon-to-be-completed property.



Photo Credit: Rebecca Fenwick

The Threat

The property was rezoned in 2006 for potential new office buildings, and the house along with three neighboring properties was swiftly purchased by an investment group. The houses have sat vacant since that time. Lack of maintenance has resulted in a rotting cornice, deterioration of the porch, and holes in the roof and cladding. Applications for demolition have been blocked by the local historic preservation commission, but the building continues to decline, while hope remains that someone will be able to acquire the property and restore it to its former glory.

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Masonic Lodge #238 (Dalton, Whitfield County c. 1915)

The Story

Masonic Lodge #238 stands at what was once a thriving commercial intersection at the heart of Dalton's African American community. Featuring distinctive details, the lodge (built in 1915) offered commercial space on the ground floor while the second floor served as the Masonic meeting hall for African American members. The lodge formed a vital part of the fabric of a small but vibrant community that included a doctor's office, a beauty shop, a funeral parlor, and school.

The Threat

The building has deteriorated significantly in recent years, leading to a loss of much of the interior. Stabilization of the structure is urgent to enable its potential rehabilitation. With recent growth in downtown Dalton, including a museum in the former school across the street, there is hope and support throughout the city for saving the lodge.



Photo Credit: MotorSportMedia / Rich Sainato

Nolan Crossroads (Bostwick, Morgan County c. 1905)

The Story

With structures that span nearly a century the complex of buildings at Nolan Crossroads represent the transition from slavery-based agriculture to the sharecropping economy of the post-Civil War South. The earliest extant house dates to 1817 when the property was part of a large plantation. The Nolan family, which bought the land in the 1850s, transitioned to an extensive tenant farm, and constructed the main Neoclassical house with its impressive, curving porch in 1905. Buildings still standing are a former commissary for tenant farmers, a mule barn, and several tenant farmhouses in varying states of disrepair. The rural landscape in the vicinity of the property remains remarkably undeveloped.



Photo Credit: MotorSportMedia / Haltson Pitman and Nick Woolever

The Threat

While the original I-house continues to be used by the current owners, the remaining structures show years of neglect. The main house carries signs of considerable water damage and rot, as well as crumbling foundations. Its notoriety and rural location have resulted in multiple break-ins and the destruction or removal of many original features. Other buildings have suffered from vandalism and neglect.

Rose Hill School (Porterdale, Newton County c. 1937)

The Story

Rose Hill is a historically black community in northeast Porterdale that was originally developed in the early 1900s as a segregated residential community for mill workers. The school was built in 1937 by the Bibb Manufacturing Company and also served as a church and a community gathering place. Rose Hill School was the only African American educational establishment in Porterdale while the mill was in operation. The building has remained largely unchanged since construction and reflects a unique era of development in a distinctive mill community.



Photo Credit: MotorSportMedia / Haltson Pitman and Nick Woolever

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The Threat

Unoccupied for many years, the historic school building increasingly bears the scars of decades of neglect and lack of maintenance. Given its state of abandonment, vandalism is a frequent threat. There is wide support throughout the city for the building's repair and preservation—with a hope of finding a future occupant who can once again make the schoolhouse a focal point of the community.

Founded in 1973, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation works for the preservation and revitalization of Georgia's diverse historic resources and advocates their appreciation, protection, and use. As one of the country's leading statewide nonprofit preservation organizations, the Trust generates community revitalization by finding buyers for endangered properties acquired by its Revolving Fund and raises awareness of other endangered historic resources through an annual listing of Georgia's *Places in Peril*. The Trust offers a variety of educational programs for adults and children; provides technical assistance to property owners and historic communities; advocates for funding, tax incentives, and other laws aiding preservation efforts; and manages two house museums (*pictured below*) in Atlanta (Rhodes Hall) and Macon (Hay House). ■ GT



More Diggin's



- **Christmas in Dacula will be on Saturday, December 14 at the Elisha Winn House.** Christmas in Dacula brings together the very best of Dacula and surrounding communities for a variety of family-friendly activities to celebrate the holiday season and foster the spirit of Christmas. Admission is \$3, and parking is available on site. For more information visit the [Christmas in Dacula Web site](#).
- **Candlelight Nights at Atlanta History Center will be on December 13 and 20 from 5:30–9:30PM.** Experience Christmas past with a candlelit stroll through beautifully decorated gardens and grounds and be transported into the warm glow of the holidays. Visit the three historic houses to experience how Southerners celebrated Christmas during the pioneer days (*pictured left*), the Civil War era, and the 1930s. Holiday traditions of years past come alive with interpreters, music, and special activities. This special holiday program is \$20 for the general public; \$15 for members; \$10 for children. For information visit the [Atlanta History Center's Web site](#).

GARS/Fort Daniel News

- **Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) Officers Nominations: It is that time of the year again—Officers Elections. Positions available are President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer. If you are interested, please let Leslie Perry know.**
- **GARS Meeting:** *There will NOT be a regular GARS meeting this month. However, there will be a special-called business meeting at the Christmas Party (See details below) to vote on the new officers.*
- **Fort Daniel Tour:** In celebration of Native American Heritage Month Gwinnett County bus tour (which talked about the Native American history of Gwinnett) stopped by Fort Daniel for a tour (*pictured right*) last month. Though we mostly talk about the military history of Fort Daniel, the area has been occupied since about 1000BCE or earlier according to the archaeological evidence found at the site.
- **SGA Meeting:** Last month at the Society for Georgia Archaeology (SGA) Fall Meeting at Georgia Gwinnett College GARS President Delana Gilmore and several professional archaeologists gave presentations on focusing on this year's theme of what Georgia archaeology will look like in the next decade. Delana Gilmore presented on the topic of "The Ups, Downs, and All-arounds of Being a Chapter President." This years theme focuses on learning from the past to persevere future archaeologists and volunteers to keep supporting archaeological preservation, education, and research.



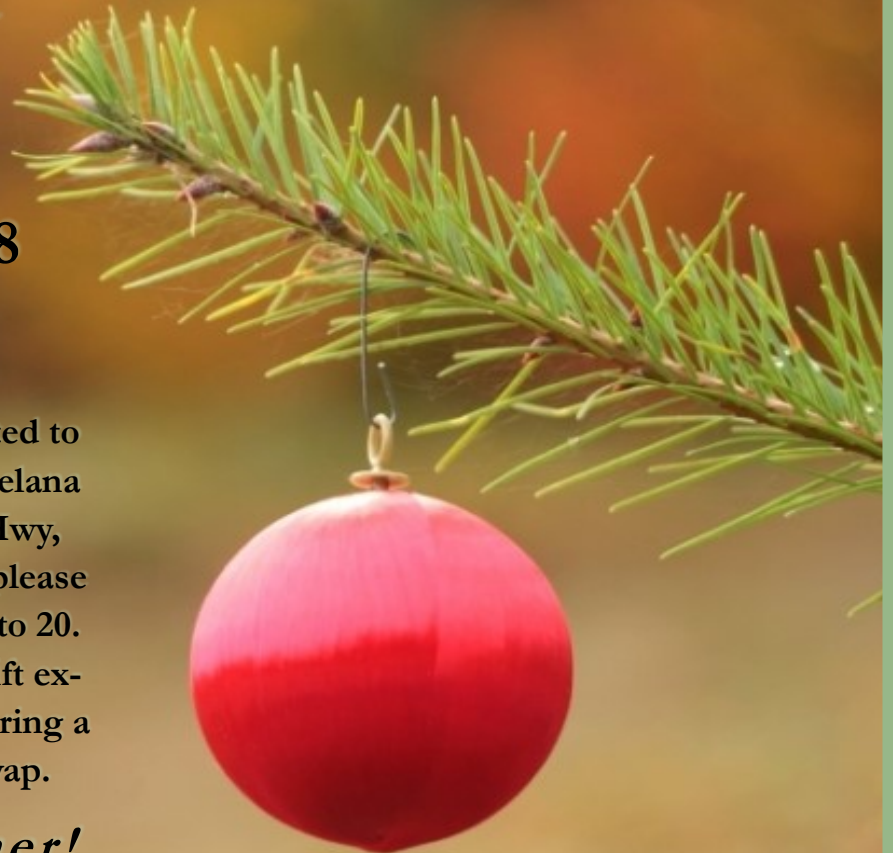
Christmas at the Fort

Sunday, December 8

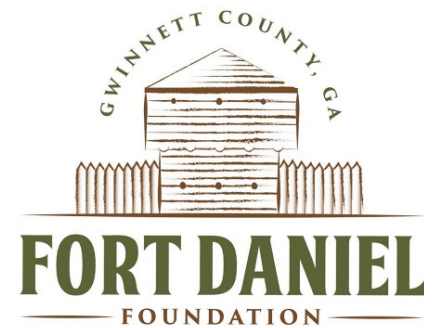
5–7PM

All GARS and FDF members are invited to the Christmas Party at the home of Delana and Chris Gilmore (2505 Braselton Hwy, Buford). It will be potluck; therefore, please bring a covered dish that can feed up to 20. There will be the traditional snag-a-gift exchange (AKA Dirty Santa), so please bring a wrapped gift to participate in the swap.

Let's be merry together!



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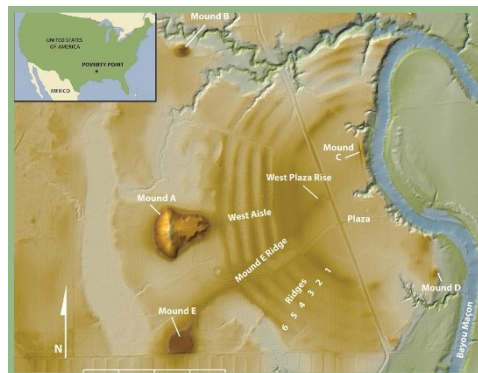
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Scientists Use 3-D Ground Penetrating Radar at Poverty Point

Excerpt from an article featured on [KEDM Public Radio Web site](#) on November 26, 2019

Poverty Point site in West Carroll Parish, Louisiana, is one of only 24 sites in the United States and 1,121 worldwide approved by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization in 2014 as a World Heritage Site. Much of the research, documentation, and preservation of the site is a result of the work of station archeologist Diana Greenlee, PhD, an adjunct professor at the University of Louisiana Monroe. Greenlee led the process to nominate and secure the UNESCO designation.

Last month Greenlee and a team of visiting archaeologists and scientists conducted cutting-edge research using high-resolution 3-D ground penetrating radar (GPR) to explore the West Plaza Rise. Questions remain about the creation and significance of the West Plaza Rise. Greenlee believes the research will help determine the formation of West Plaza Rise (which could be manmade) and its use by ancient civilizations.



“Poverty Point World Heritage Site is a remarkable earthworks site built by people who lived by fishing, hunting, and gathering wild plant resources. Dating from about 1700 to 1100 BCE, the site is known for its five earthen mounds (a sixth mound was added by a later culture), six C-shaped earthen ridges, and a large central plaza,” stated Greenlee. “There is an intriguing high spot in the relatively flat plaza at Poverty Point. . . . Based on its location relative to other earthworks and several post circles, we think the West Plaza Rise could be a significant, yet under-appreciated, part of this amazing created landscape”

Funding for the 3-D GPR study is from the National Park Service’s National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, Advocates for Poverty Point, and the Spatial Archaeometry Research Collaborations Program. The SPARC Program is based at the Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies at the University of Arkansas and funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation. ■ KEDM

GARS OFFICERS

www.thegars.org

President: Delana Gilmore
Vice President: Jenna Tran
Secretary/Treasurer: Kay McKenna

To keep up with the latest digs and activities from GARS follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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www.thefortdanielfoundation.org

President: Jim D’Angelo
Secretary: Cindy Horsley
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