

Preserving History Through Archaeology



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GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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Happy Holidays
from GARS and FDF

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GARS/Fort Daniel News

- **OFFICERS ELECTIONS:** It is that time of the year again—Officers Elections. Both Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) and Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) have leadership roles opened: for Fort Daniel—Vice President, Secretary, and two Board of Directors positions; and for GARS—Vice President. If you are interested in serving in a leadership role, please contact [Cindy Horsley](#) for FDF and [Delana Gilmore](#) for GARS.
- **FORT DANIEL FOUNDATION ANNUAL MEETING:** The date for the annual meeting of the Fort Daniel Foundation will be announced to FDF members through email after December 11.
- **GARS MEETING:** The next in-person GARS meeting will be on Wednesday, February 23. Guest speaker will be Maureen Meyers from New South Associates. More details will be available soon.
- **GARS SOCIAL:** Keep an eye on your email and the [GARS Facebook](#) page for in-depth details on upcoming GARS social events.

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE:

If you would like to join or renew your GARS membership, please contact [Delana Gilmore](#); and for FDF membership please contact [Cindy Horsley](#).



More Diggin's



- **GWINNETT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING:** The next Gwinnett Historical Society meeting will be on Monday, December 6 beginning at 6:30PM with a time of food and socializing. (Please bring a snack food to share.) Guest speaker will be Chuck Warbington, City Manager of Lawrenceville, who will be speaking about the importance of knowing and understanding the history of your community as growth takes place. For more details visit the [Gwinnett Historical Society's Web site](#) or [Facebook page](#).
- **HOMESCHOOL DAY at ATLANTA HISTORY CENTER:** Holidays in History will be the featured themed for the December Homeschool Day at the Atlanta History Center on Thursday, December 16 from 10:30AM to 12:30PM. Students will experience how Christmas was celebrated in years past from the 1860s Smith Farm to the 1930s Swan House and beyond. Space is limited and tickets are required. Pricing is \$8 for students and \$10 for adults and free for adult members. For more information visit the [Atlanta History Center Web site](#).

Georgia Trust of Historic Preservation's 2022 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*:



*Photo Credit: Georgia Trust for
Historic Preservation*

Ansley Park (Atlanta, Fulton County c. 1904)

The Story

First developed in 1904, Ansley Park was Atlanta's first suburb designed specifically with the automobile in mind—featuring wide, curvilinear streets and several parks. The historic neighborhood was named for its developer, Edwin P. Ansley, and includes some of Atlanta's most architecturally significant residences. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, this historic district is comprised of houses designed by a who's-who of renowned architects including Neel Reid, Philip Trammell Shutze and P. Thornton Mayre.

The Threat

Although the neighborhood is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it has not been designated by the city as a Local Historic District, which would offer protections from demolition through city ordinance. Without that protection and review, the past decade has seen many historic, architecturally significant homes demolished and replaced with insensitive infill. Nearing a point of no return, the district risks losing its National Register designation—and the valuable incentives that come with it—if too many contributing buildings in the Ansley Park neighborhood are lost.

Chattahoochee Brick Company (Atlanta, Fulton County c. 1878)

The Story

Located on the banks of the Chattahoochee River, the Chattahoochee Brick Company was founded in 1878 by former Atlanta mayor James W. English. The company was notorious for its extensive use of convict leasing, where hundreds of African American inmates were forced to work in deplorable conditions without regard to their safety, leading some scholars to refer to the convict leasing system as "slavery by another name." Many of these men were worked to death or left permanently disabled from extreme punishments. Convict leasing at the Chattahoochee Brick Company did not cease until the early 20th century. Industrial production at the site continued through the early 21st century. Today all that's left on the site is a vacant, overgrown lot.



*Photo Credit: Georgia Trust for
Historic Preservation*

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The Threat

The land is currently zoned for industrial use, and the brick company structures have already been lost to prior development attempts. Many people, including descendants of Chattahoochee Brick Company convicts, consider the site hallowed ground. Preservation of the site will generate healing, foster dialogue and lead to an understanding of a difficult chapter in Atlanta's history. While the buildings and kilns are gone, the site retains significance worthy of recognition and protection.



*Photo Credit: Haltson Pitman /
Walter Sippel / MotorSportMedia*

Gay, Georgia Fairgrounds (Gay, Meriweather County c. 1882)

The Story

Originally a small farming community, the town of Gay was incorporated after its first store and post office were opened by William Gay in 1882. The town experienced little growth until 1907 when a railroad line came through. In following years the small town flourished with the broader agricultural trends of the state—first cotton and then peaches. In 1972, after a period of decline in activity, descendants of William Gay established what became known as the “Cotton Pickin’ Fairgrounds” on the site of the town’s cotton gin and peach packing complex with eleven original structures. Since then, the fair has been held on the first weekend of May and October every year—providing an opportunity for arts and crafts, live music and food centered around the town’s antiques business and agricultural roots.

The Threat

Because the grounds are active only two weekends annually, the structures remain largely abandoned and neglected throughout the year. With no prior effort to properly preserve the buildings, there is potential for deterioration and damage to the grounds in the off-season. Additionally, existing zoning in Gay does not provide protection for its historic resources, making the site more vulnerable to the threats of developments.

Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home (Camilla, Mitchell County c. 1940)

The Story

The Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home was a nursing center and private residence of Beatrice Borders, a third-generation African American midwife. Beatrice, nicknamed Miss Bea, was a certified nurse that helped deliver children as a midwife in Camilla and the surrounding area, primarily for white families. Ms. Borders recognized the harsh disparities in natal care provided for African American women, and in 1940 she opened her own maternity home for expectant mothers within her community. She named it the Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home in honor of her mother. This home became a refuge for African American mothers who had nowhere to go during the Jim Crow era.



*Photo Credit: Haltson Pitman /
Walter Sippel / MotorSportMedia*

The Threat

This unassuming structure has not received the attention that its history deserves. The building has been vacant since 2004 and is currently boarded up. Due to deterioration over the years, the home is now uninhabitable, making it more susceptible to threats of demolition. However, thanks to dedicated advocates, the home where Miss Bea served for so many years is now gaining the recognition that may bring about its revitalization.

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Photo Credit: Haltson Pitman /
Walter Sippel / MotorSportMedia

Good Shepherd Episcopal School (Brunswick, Glynn County c. early 20th century)

The Story

The Good Shepherd Episcopal School and the adjacent church are all that remain of the historic Pennick community, a settlement of the descendants of freed men and women in Brunswick, Georgia. Both the school and church were founded in the early 20th century by Anna Ellison Butler Alexander, whose parents had been enslaved. Known as a devout, generous Christian who served her community, Alexander's congregation regularly contributed funds for the less fortunate. Good Shepard gave more to charities around the world than any other church in the Diocese. Because of her leadership, Alexander became the first African-American deaconess in the Episcopal Church in 1907. Almost a century later in 1998, Anna was named

a Saint of Georgia by the Diocese of Georgia, affirming the deep impact she and her school had.

The Threat

Over the years, like many small congregations, Good Shepard has seen a decline in parishioners. Financial resources for the maintenance of the schoolhouse have dwindled. Recent weather damage have taken a toll on the building, leaving portions exposed to the elements. A charming but unassuming structure, the Good Shepard School is worthy of preservation as a resource to continue the legacy of its founding deaconess.

Imperial Hotel (Thomasville, Thomas County c. 1949)

The Story

Built in 1949 and operated until 1969 by Harvey and Dorothy Lewis Thompson, the Imperial Hotel was Thomasville's only hotel that exclusively accommodated African-American travelers prior to integration. The hotel featured a restaurant on the first floor and a barbershop, eight guest rooms, and communal baths on the second floor. The hotel was one of ten hotels featured in the Green Book—a guide for African Americans detailing hotels, restaurants, and shops that would serve them during the Jim Crow era.

The Threat

The Imperial Hotel officially closed its doors to tourists in 1969. The building was then used as offices and briefly served as headquarters for a chapter of the NAACP. The building has remained vacant and unused since 2001—leaving it in a severe state of neglect. Recent efforts to stabilize the building have been successful, yet the long-term future of this important African American cultural resource remains in question.



Photo Credit: Haltson Pitman /
Walter Sippel / MotorSportMedia



Photo Credit: Haltson Pitman /
Walter Sippel / MotorSportMedia

Red Hill Cemetery (Milledgeville, Baldwin County c. 1911)

The Story

Situated on a hill overlooking the 4,000-acre Old State Prison Farm in Milledgeville, the Red Hill Prison Cemetery is home to over 600 graves of incarcerated men and women who died at the prison between 1911 and 1936. License plates manufactured on site were used as grave markers for the deceased prisoners, indicating each grave by number not name. Once the prison moved locations in 1937, these graves were left neglected.

The Threat

The history of this site has remained an afterthought through much of the last century. Trees and undergrowth took over and obscured the graves, while the license plate markers have been left to rust and deteriorate. Efforts to identify the graves indicate the likelihood of more unmarked graves at the site. Without continued advocacy and acknowledgement, the history and context of the site will be threatened once again.

Red Oak Creek Covered Bridge (Woodbury, Meriweather County c. 1840s)

The Story

The Red Oak Creek Covered Bridge was built in the 1840s by Horace King or his son. Born into enslavement on a South Carolina plantation, Horace King was able to travel freely and was widely respected as a builder and engineer, constructing dozens of bridges in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. The Red Oak Creek Bridge is the only bridge connected to Horace King that is still in use, attracting hundreds of visitors each year.

The Threat

Because the Red Oak Creek bridge has remained open to traffic, there is a consistent threat of damage to the structure. A recent accident damaged several structural braces inside the bridge. With its popularity, the bridge provides an opportunity for improved heritage tourism, greater access for recreation and continued appreciation of history, but first, further protection of the bridge is necessary to ensure its continued longevity.



Photo Credit: Haltson Pitman /
Walter Sippel / MotorSportMedia



Photo Credit: Georgia Trust for
Historic Preservation

Thicket Ruins (Darien, McIntosh County c. early 19th century)

The Story

The tabby ruins are all that remain of a sugar mill and rum distillery built in the early 19th century. At the time, there were high tariffs on the importation of molasses and rum from the West Indies. Operated by enslaved Africans, the site also featured a number of tabby living quarters for the enslaved, four of which remain. After being hit by a hurricane in 1824, operations ceased at the mill and the land was converted to a cotton plantation. Following the Civil War, materials and pieces of tabby were sold to the freed men and women, who established a community nearby named Carnighan. In 1934, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documented the ruins that remained.

The Threat

Being built along the Carnochan Creek, the ruins have worn away over time due to the eroding shoreline. The current residential community has maintained care for the ruins as best they can; however, working buildings are being lost into the creek. The walls of the mill have collapsed and one building has been completely lost. The effects of climate change are a direct threat to this early coastal resource.

West Broad Street School (Athens, Clarke County c. mid 20th century)

The Story

The West Broad Street School, a collection of three education buildings, sits on a piece of land dedicated to the education to African American students from the late 19th century through integration. The Minor Street building, constructed in 1938, dates to the Jim Crow era. The other buildings date to the 1950s, during the equalization era. Although it has not been used as a school for many years, the buildings have remained in use since they were constructed.

The Threat

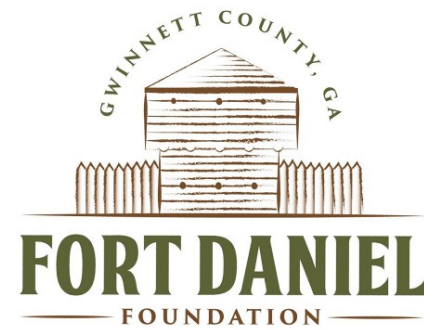
Recently the Clarke County School District proposed demolition of the buildings to allow for new construction of an early learning center. With no preservation guidance, the site's historic architecture is at risk of being severely altered or lost. Local partners and community members have worked tirelessly to advocate for sensitive reuse of the existing buildings, allowing the new learning center to have a tangible connection to its important cultural history. The school district has agreed to reconsider its proposal, though final plans have not been approved and a preservation outcome is not guaranteed.



Photo Credit: Haltson Pitman /
Walter Sippel / MotorSportMedia

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*. ■ GT

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Supporting Georgia's Native American Heritage

Decades ago the University of Georgia (UGA) was gifted two boulders with Native American petroglyphs carved into them. Adorned with spiral designs and other images, these boulders are a testament to Georgia's Native American heritage.

For years these boulders have resided on various parts of UGA's campus and now currently sit in front of Baldwin Hall on North Campus. Unfortunately, the designs are now starting to fade due to weathering. A goal to better protect these unique objects of Native American history was created by having a dedicated and permanent space at the UGA's Laboratory of Archaeology and educating the general public about Native heritage and culture throughout the state.

Working together with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation,

UGA's plan includes housing the smaller petroglyph boulder inside the Lab's atrium and the development of an outdoor green space divided into two areas. The first would host a Native garden full of indigenous



plants of Georgia, a bronze arbor designed by Muscogee Creek tribal artist Dan Brook, and the larger petroglyph boulder. The second area would be a learning landscape focused on an instructional area and "dig pit" to train young archaeologists in the science of investigating the past.

Support for this plan will help to create a learning experience

that will educate students and visitors about archaeology and the Native American history of Georgia.

If you are interested in supporting this endeavor, please visit the [UGA's Web site](#). ■ UGA

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

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