



Reflections

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CONNECTING TO LAND AND COMMUNITY: TWO AFRICAN AMERICAN CENTENNIAL FAMILY FARMS

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The Charleston-Allen Farm in Morgan County and the Garfield Hall Farm in Bulloch County are African American farms that received Georgia Centennial Family Farm Awards at the Georgia National Fair in October 2010. Since 1992, the Historic Preservation Division (HPD), the Georgia Farm Bureau Federation, the Georgia Dept. of Agriculture, the Georgia National Fair and the Georgia Forestry Commission recognize farms that remain owned by a single family for 100 years or more, achieve centennial status, or are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Nine African American farms, including these 2010 awardees, have received Centennial Family Farm Awards since the program's inception. Two of these African American family farms, the Carranza Morgan Farm in Sumter County and the Zack Hubert Farm in Hancock County, are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Charleston-Allen Farm in Morgan County began in 1890 when Anna Charleston, who was born enslaved just 30 years prior, was deeded nearly 300 acres of land for her oldest daughter Alameda, whose father was one of the wealthiest white landowners in Morgan County. He gave Anna a copy of his will to

keep in her home so no one else could claim it during the turbulent years of Reconstruction. Alameda lost some of the acreage over the years, but her mother held on to 172 acres that she left to her children. Though she had no formal schooling, Anna Charleston was determined to provide an education for her children. She sent one of her children to a private school in Social Circle, and her other children and her brothers helped her on the farm. Anna also donated lumber for the Plainview Baptist Church, one of the oldest African American churches in Morgan County.

The family raised cotton, corn, cattle and pigs. Today, the family land totaling 200 acres is bisected by Interstate 20, but 100 acres are committed to tree production. The tree farm produces

both planted pine and natural hardwood trees. Odessa Allen Hall and Wanda Huff are the family descendants who received the award. Anna Charleston was the grandmother of Odessa Hall and the great grandmother of Wanda Huff. The other owners are the heirs of the Cora Charleston Pettigrew estate.

Odessa Hall, who is now over 90 years old, is the eldest living descendant of Anna Charleston. Her deceased husband, Leo Hall, taught agriculture at the



Pine and natural hardwood trees are abundant on the Charleston-Allen Farm in Morgan County.
Photo by Charlie Miller

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CONNECTING TO LAND AND COMMUNITY: TWO AFRICAN AMERICAN CENTENNIAL FAMILY FARMS

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Jeanne Cyriaque, Sandra Hall Cummings, her mother, Odessa Hall and Joy Melton hear stories about the Interstate 20 ramps and how that project bisected their farm. Photo by Charlie Miller

Willow Hill Elementary School in Bulloch County. Odessa, who received a master's degree from Columbia University in the 1950s, was also a teacher. She taught at Pearl Middle School in Madison. This school would later become the Morgan Middle School during the Equalization School era in the 1950s. Mrs. Hall also taught at the William James School in Bulloch County. Her father-in-law was Garfield Hall, the second Georgia Centennial Family Farm Award recipient in Bulloch County.

The Hall family was connected to their land through enslavement and sharecropping until 1904, when R.D. Saturday purchased 150 acres of land that is located near U.S. Hwy. 80 in Portal, Bulloch County. Saturday was the grand uncle of Garfield Hall. He purchased the farm from Saturday in 1928 for \$3,980. Today, two of Garfield Hall's granddaughters, Sandra Hall Cummings and Gwendolyn Jones West, own 114.9 acres, and other cousins own the rest of the family acreage that totals nearly 160 acres.



One of the landscape features on the Garfield Hall Farm is a fishing pond that the family uses for recreation and reunions. Photo by Charlie Miller

The Garfield Hall Farm produced cotton, corn, tobacco and peanuts. Their livestock consisted of chickens, turkeys, hogs and rabbits. Today, the Hall Farm has 40 acres in tree production, while retaining 115 acres. Sandra Hall Cummings remembers the time when the farm operated a Gulf Oil station and had a small community store. Though this structure no longer exists, the farm boasts of the best fishing pond in the Portal community.

The Hall family members were teachers and students at the Willow Hill Elementary School in Portal, and their family land is located near the school property. The Willow Hill School in Portal began as a private school in 1874. It remained a private school supported by the local community until 1920, when it was sold to the Bulloch County Board of Education for a mere eighteen dollars. Garfield Hall was one of the members of the Board of Trustees at Willow Hill. It served the African American community in Bulloch County for 125 years until it closed in 1999. One of the first buildings at Willow Hill was a Rosenwald School. It was built almost entirely by the surrounding community, including the Halls, with a modest contribution of \$250 from the Rosenwald Fund.



Alumni formed a nonprofit and purchased the Willow Hill Elementary School for adaptive reuse as the Willow Hill Heritage and Renaissance Center. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

The current Willow Hill Elementary School was built in 1954 and is significant because state funds were used to construct this separate, yet equal school. Gwendolyn Jones West's mother and Sandra Hall Cummings's parents taught at Willow Hill. Both ladies and their cousin Alfonzo Hall participated in a class reunion in 2007 that drew over 300 persons.

Do you know about a 100-year-old farm in your community that is deserving of centennial recognition? Applications for the 2011 Centennial Farm Awards are currently available on the HPD website and are due by May 1st, 2011. Photos of each of the 2010 farms are available on our Flickr page. For further information, contact Steven Moffson, who is chair of the Georgia Centennial Farm Committee. He can be reached at 404-651-5906 or by email at steven.moffson@dnr.state.ga.us. ■



Cousins Gwendolyn Jones West, Alfonzo Hall and Sandra Hall Cummings gather at the Hall family farm. Photo by Charlie Miller

OCHLOCKNEE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH: ONE COMMUNAL SPACE AMONG MANY IN RURAL GRADY COUNTY

*Joy Melton, African American Programs Assistant
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Ochlocknee Missionary Baptist Church is located in rural Grady County, 12 miles southwest of Thomasville, Georgia. Richard L. Hadley is a deacon of Ochlocknee Missionary Baptist Church. He plays hymnals during services on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. Hadley compiled a narrative of the church history in preparation for a National Register Nomination. The church and cemetery were listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 17, 2010.



Ochlocknee Missionary Baptist Church is an example of a rural church built by African Americans in Grady County during the early 20th century.

Photo by James R. Lockhart

Slaves founded Ochlocknee M.B.C. in 1848 on the outskirts of Pebble Hill Plantation. The congregation moved to its present location at 521 U.S. Highway 319 South in 1918 after a fire destroyed the previous church. Lula Reid Hadley, who sold the property to the church, was born in 1874. Lula married Richard Hadley, Sr. when she was only 15 years old with a second grade education. Mrs. Hadley had seven children and possessed many musical talents including playing the violin, piano, accordion, and harmonica. Lula Reid Hadley, who passed away in 1969, is buried in the church cemetery.



"Mother Lula" was considered the first mother of the church. She sold the property to the Ochlocknee congregation. Photo courtesy of Richard Hadley

The church and cemetery rest on a 1.9-acre lot accessed by a driveway off of Highway 319. The church, built in 1918, is a rectangular, wood frame building with a front gable roof and steeple and vestibule added in 1947. Elements of the Colonial Revival style are present in the form. Building materials

consist of a standing seam metal roof, original weatherboard siding, and wood cornices. Interior spaces include a pastor's study, choir area, sanctuary, utility room, pulpit, and classroom. The concrete block 1970s building houses the kitchen and fellowship hall. The church and fellowship hall are connected by a covered breezeway. Located in the rear of the church is a concrete baptismal pool. The cemetery, begun in the 1930s is located adjacent to the church and contains graves of several members of the Hadley family including WWI and WWII veterans. Joyce Hadley donated an acre of land that connects Ochlocknee Church and the cemetery.



The church cemetery is the final resting place for several members of the congregation, including the Hadley family. The oldest burials are from the late 19th century.

Photo by James R. Lockhart

Ochlocknee M.B.C. has a shared heritage with other nearby churches and plantations. Most of the Ochlocknee church members resided within a one-to-two mile radius of the church and lived close to Sinkola, Melrose or Pebble Hill Plantations. Mrs. Pansy Ireland Poe inherited Pebble Hill Plantation in 1936 and donated the materials and \$400 to build a steeple for Ochlocknee M.B.C. in 1947. Forrest Monroe, an African American building contractor, erected the steeple and vestibule in front of the main sanctuary.

Several churches including Mercy Seat Christian Church built in 1919, Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church organized in 1885 on Pebble Hill Plantation, and Trinity C.M.E. Church organized in 1883, maintained a cooperative fellowship. Ochlocknee, Mercy Seat and Piney Grove held baptisms at the nearby Ochlocknee Pond. Furthermore, many of the children of these churches and plantations attended Ochlocknee School, one of two schools for children grades one through seven at Pebble Hill. Richard's brother Jack Hadley co-authored *African American Life on the Southern Hunting Plantation*.

Richard and his wife, Patricia, began the project in 2008 by collecting very old church records from its archives. Technical assistance was provided by the Jack Hadley Black History Museum and Perida Mitchell, an Ochlocknee church member whose expertise as staff at the Thomas County Public Library aided the project. ■

MEDICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN A TIME OF SEPARATION: SEGREGATED HEALTHCARE FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN GEORGIA

Joy Melton, African American Programs Assistant
Historic Preservation Division

Increasingly, more African American healthcare professionals and facilities began to emerge in what became known as the black hospital movement beginning at the end of the 19th century. This article is the second in a series about the history of healthcare for African Americans in Georgia (See December 2010 issue of *Reflections* for the first article). Blacks and whites contributed to the black hospital movement, which aided in the improvement of health within African American communities.

Several African American doctors were successful in establishing their own medical practices to support African American communities. Dr. John Henry Jordan was the first black medical doctor in Coweta County where he opened an office in downtown Newnan. Dr. Jordan created the Medical Aid Organization for disease prevention and health education. As he gained more patients, he opened a hospital next to his home. Even white families began to seek his medical care. Today, Dr. Jordan's two-and-one-half story Queen Anne house and former hospital in a one-story bungalow are located in the Pinson Street neighborhood in Newnan. Other physicians were actively involved in their communities during the civil rights movement including Dr. Thomas Brewer, a founding member of the NAACP in Columbus and Dr. William G. Anderson, president of the Albany Movement.

Dr. Frederick Douglass Funderburg is a unique example of an African American doctor who treated both whites and blacks during segregation. Dr. Funderburg attended undergraduate school at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina with the financial help of Dr. Don Wilburn. After spending one year at Columbia University Medical School in New York he transferred to Meharry Medical School in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1922, Dr. Funderburg graduated second in his class since he did not qualify for first place as a transfer student. Dr. Funderburg moved to Monticello after graduation to take over the practice of an African American doctor there who died. The practice thrived. On January 21, 1946, Dr. Funderburg was featured in *Time* magazine in an article titled "Medicine: What Color is Death?" for his medical care of up to 60

white patients a day during an influenza or flu epidemic in 1938. Many white members of Monticello and the neighboring counties continued to call on Dr. Funderburg for medical assistance resulting in a patient population of 45% white six months after the epidemic. Funderburg Drive is a street in the Washington Park neighborhood in Monticello that is named in his honor. Funderburg Park was recently established in the African American community with the help of his granddaughter Jacqueline Smith.



The Funderburg residence is located in the Washington Park African American neighborhood in Monticello. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

Besides doctors, midwives were respected positions in the African American community. Born in 1884 to former enslaved parents, Katie Hall Underwood was the last of many midwives on Sapelo Island to deliver African American residents of Gullah/Geechee descent. The Gullah/Geechee people are descendants of slaves who lived in U.S. coastal regions and barrier islands who can trace their ancestry to West Africa. Underwood carried a black bag with her containing medicines, natural remedies and a little book in which she recorded the names of all babies she delivered. Family members recall one day when Katie traveled seven miles from the north end of Sapelo Island where she delivered a baby in the morning to the south end to deliver a baby that evening. Katie's image was featured in *National Geographic* in 1971. Underwood died in 1977.



Katie Hall Underwood was a midwife on Sapelo Island from the 1920s to 1968. In 2007, the ferry that transports visitors to Sapelo Island was named in her honor.



Dr. Funderburg's office is a contributing resource in the Monticello Historic District. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

A number of hospitals throughout Georgia were funded by municipalities, charitable donations or were operated by schools. These hospitals had a significant impact on providing care for African Americans. Lamar Hospital in Augusta (Richmond County) was erected in 1894-95 for the care of African Americans with funds from the 1872 estate of Gazeway B. Lamar, a white businessman. The 75-bed capacity hospital was located on Gwinnett Street (presently Laney-Walker Boulevard). The *Atlanta Constitution* described it as a “well equipped, two-and-a-half story frame building.” The building burned in 1911, but no one was injured. Once the four-story Lamar Wing of University Hospital was built in 1915, African American patients were transferred to that facility.

Lucy Craft Laney, an African American educator and philanthropist, and Amelia Sullivan helped to found the three-year program of the Lamar School of Nursing to train black female nurses in 1906. By 1939, students were housed in the Stoney Nurses Home, which was named for Dr. George N. Stoney, a prominent local black physician who was the only African American doctor allowed to practice at University Hospital when it opened in 1914. The Lamar School of Nursing closed in 1956, though black nurses continued training at University Hospital. The Lamar School and the Barrett School of Nursing for whites remained separate until 1965, when they merged as the University Hospital School of Nursing. On October 4, 2001, the Georgia Historical Society dedicated a marker at the Stoney Nurses Home of the Lamar School of Nursing.



The Stoney Nurses Home in Augusta is a brick, three-story, Neo-Classical Revival building with a four-columned portico. The Medical College of Georgia School of Nursing currently occupies the building.

Photo by Joy Melton

Albany gained the Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in 1911 with help from influential white citizens. African Americans such as Henry McNeal Turner, A.M.E. bishop in Georgia, offered a lecture in support of the building fund. Efforts to build the hospital began as early as 1904. Judge Francis F. Putney, who contributed heavily to the building fund, requested that the hospital be named after his mother. The Phoebe Putney Hospital was unique since Judge Putney also requested that the hospital serve both whites and blacks. Both races were housed in a red brick building with a tile roof, columned porches, 25 beds and an operating room.

The Americus Colored Hospital was erected in 1923 with funds from Dr. W.S. Prather. Doctors and medical professionals of all races could practice at this hospital. The hospital closed in 1953 when the Sumter Regional Hospital was built under the Hill-Burton Act. This legislation was also known as the Hospital Survey and Construction Act that was a U.S. federal law that passed in 1946. The act provided federal grants and loans to improve the physical plants of hospitals throughout the United States. Facilities that received funding were not allowed to discriminate based upon race, color, national origin or creed, but could provide separate facilities in the same vicinity until 1963 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against segregation.



The Americus Colored Hospital was one of the few healthcare facilities in Georgia where African American doctors, nurses and pharmacists could practice in the early 20th century. A Georgia Historical Society marker was dedicated on the hospital grounds on January 24, 2009.

Photo by Joy Melton

In 1918, Dr. Harvey Van Buren opened the Van Buren Sanitarium in Statesboro. Reverend Dr. C.T. Walker, pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Augusta for over 40 years, delivered the dedication address on December 22, 1918. The \$6,500 facility was a twelve-room, well-lit and ventilated, arts and crafts style structure designed by African American architect Wallace A. Rayfield. Rayfield received his early education from the famous African American educator Lucy Craft Laney in Macon. Rayfield later received a certificate from Pratt Polytechnic Institute, a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Columbia University, and taught mechanical and architectural drawing at Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute (presently Tuskegee University).



Dr. Harvey Van Buren

Source: History of the American Negro, Georgia Edition, Vol. II, 1920

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African American architect Wallace A. Rayfield designed the Van Buren Sanitarium in Statesboro, Georgia. Dr. Van Buren provided important medical services during the 1918 influenza pandemic.

Photo courtesy of Harvey Van Buren, Jr.

Architectural features of the hospital included bracketed deep eaves, a columned full-length porch and corbelled brick chimneys. This sanitarium fulfilled a great need for African American healthcare in the area. During World War I, when an influenza epidemic plagued Statesboro, Dr. Van Buren's sanitarium was an important place for flu victims. Dr. Van Buren practiced medicine and surgery until his death on July 8, 1964.



Some remnants of the historic landscaping and gardens that once surrounded the hospital are present on the facility grounds today.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

Charity Hospital was opened in Savannah on April 15, 1931. Its origins date to the founding of the McKane School for Nurses on September 4, 1893. Drs. Cornelius and Alice Woodby McKane, West Indian physicians, operated the school in their home at Liberty and Montgomery Streets until 1896. That same year the McKane's moved to another remodeled five-room wooden residence on Florence and 36th streets to establish the McKane Hospital for

Women and Children. On February 12, 1901 the name was changed to Charity Hospital and Training School for Nurses to address the growing need for treatment of African Americans of both sexes.



Charity Hospital is located in the Cuyler-Brownville Historic District in Savannah. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as an individual property in 1985. A Georgia Historical Society marker was dedicated at the site in 2003 to recognize its association with the McKane School for Nurses.

Photo by Terry Hayes

The 1931 Colonial Revival style brick building was erected with community-fundraising and private donations from the Ida Rosenwald Fund (an organization for promoting black physicians), Mrs. Henry W. Hodge and other white and black citizens. The south façade has a portico with a porch on each floor, with wood and concrete serving as decorative elements, and the central portion has a three-story pavilion. Charity Hospital was a public facility housing 43 beds with an 80-bed capacity. It contained numerous clinics including the Colored Women's Federation Clinics and was staffed by black and white physicians. The *Journal of the Medical Association of Georgia* described Charity Hospital as "a splendid example of interracial amity and cooperation." The hospital closed in 1964 and the building was used as a private nursing home from 1967 to 1976. In 2007, the building was rehabilitated for housing.

During segregation, African American healthcare professionals played an important role in their communities to improve the livelihood of people. Hospitals serving African Americans were an important community resource. Doctors, nurses and midwives were social leaders who often tirelessly served others and united people to slowly crumble walls of segregation. ■

THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT WAS: CONVERSATIONS WITH AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN HEALTH

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As a graduate student in the Heritage Preservation Program at Georgia State University, I interviewed three Georgia women in the healthcare field. Dr. Clifford Kuhn's oral history class allowed me to gain fresh insights into how preservationists can pursue the connection of people and places. Lucia Moore Bacote, Christine Miller-Betts and Sandra Cummings each shared compelling stories of their growth during segregation.

Lucia Moore Bacote is 104 years old. She began her education at Spelman College in Atlanta, then moved to the Lamar School of Nursing in Augusta. Mrs. Bacote remembers residing on the fourth floor of the University Hospital Lamar Wing when she was a student nurse. Her work ethic was so good that her co-workers recommended she become a doctor. Instead, she worked at the Metropolitan Insurance Company in Atlanta with expectant mothers. Like all black nurses, she experienced social inequities in the workplace. African American workers were required to use the bathroom in the basement. She was called "Nurse Bacote" rather than "Mrs. Bacote" as whites were called. Surprisingly, when she confronted the head nurse about these conditions, the head nurse announced the next day, "all women will be called Mrs. or Ms. and would use the same bathroom." Mrs. Bacote proudly shared "I did that".



The 104-year-old Lucia Moore Bacote decided to enter the field of nursing during the 1918 flu pandemic. Mrs. Bacote did not get sick when she took care of flu victims.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

Christine Miller-Betts, Director of the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History in Augusta, smiled as she reflected on her story. When growing up in North Carolina her father repeatedly responded, "That's just the way it is" when she questioned segregation practices. Her school experience in the Grady Memorial Hospital Municipal Training School for Colored Nurses correlates with the student movement during the Civil Rights era that challenged prevailing societal behavior. While white students entered the hospital through the front door, African American students entered from the side door in the basement. As class president, she united her classmates in quiet protest to enter through the front door. When her supervisor confronted her, an interesting resolution resulted. Both the black and white students were made to enter through the basement door. Similar to Civil Rights battles, every protest was not a success, but each challenge aided in changing societal behavior today.



Christine Miller-Betts initiated an act of courage for social change during her tenure in the Grady Memorial Hospital Municipal Training School for Colored Nurses. Today, she is the director of the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History in Augusta.

Photo by Joy Melton

As a social worker, Sandra Hall Cummings worked at Grady Hospital after integration when the wounds of racial conflict were still healing. Her patients were amazed when she reminisced on what was once common practice in the architecture of segregation. When Mrs. Cummings began work, the hospital "finally air-conditioned the c-d side," which was the former hospital wing for black patients. The enduring effects of segregation practices were still evident as almost a decade passed until the majority of African American staff shifted from congregating in what was once the black section of the cafeteria. Interestingly, Mrs. Cummings



Sandra Hall Cummings' social work experience has blazed paths for future generations. She was instrumental in nominating two African American family farms for the Georgia Centennial Farm Awards.

Photo by Charlie Miller

was the only social worker employed in maternal and infant care social service at Grady in 1970. This was a government funded project designed to treat women with high risk pregnancies. Sometimes Mrs. Cummings' expert opinion was overlooked and diminished among her co-workers. She remained silent for a while, but then she reflected, "It took my initiative and my demanding my place." It was then that her co-workers listened and respected her for it. Mrs. Cummings enjoys every opportunity she has to share with youth and encourages them to pursue their goals in light of the new societal freedoms we now experience. ■



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ABOUT GAAHPN



The Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network (GAAHPN) was established in January 1989. It is composed of representatives from neighborhood organizations and preservation groups. GAAHPN was formed in response to a growing interest in preserving the cultural and built 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 GAAHPN Steering Committee plans and implements 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 3,000 people 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. Visit the Historic Preservation Division website at www.gashpo.org. Preservation information and previous issues of *Reflections* are available online. Membership in the Network is free and open to all.

Reflections

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