

Reflections



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



Georgia African American
Historic Preservation Network

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THE ZACH HUBERT FARM: A CENTENNIAL FAMILY FARM

The Zach Hubert Farm is an African American farm located in rural Hancock County. Zacharias (Zach) Hubert, the family patriarch, was born in 1844 in Warren County. He was born enslaved by the Benjamin B. Hubert family, French Huguenots who migrated from Virginia and North Carolina. In the late 18th century, the Huberts established their Georgia plantation. Zach's grandparents were Bob and Sarah, who married around 1793. Their youngest child was Paul, Zach's father. By 1819, Paul was the foreman on the Hubert plantation. Paul memorized passages from the Bible without being able to read or write. In fact, he was encouraged to preach by Hiram Hubert when Georgia law considered it a criminal offense. He was permitted to marry Jincy, a house servant, in 1832. Paul and Jincy were the parents of 11 children born into slavery, including Zach.

Soon after establishing the Hubert plantation in Georgia, the elder Benjamin Hubert left control of the plantation to his son, Matthew. As Zach was growing up on the Hubert plantation, he was the constant companion of Henry Clay Hubert, Matthew's son. In spite of Georgia slave laws, Henry taught Zach how to read and write. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Zach informed his parents of the pending conflict from newspaper accounts he had read. When Matthew Hubert was called to serve in the Confederate army, Paul continued to oversee plantation farm operations. In 1862, many of the Hubert slaves were sent to work in the Confederate munitions factory in Macon. By November, 1864, when General Sherman's army

moved through Warren County, only Paul, Jincy, their children, and ten elderly slaves remained on the Hubert plantation.

After the war ended, Zach, now 21, and his brother Moses convinced their father to leave the plantation and seek a place to rent and farm. With the assistance of their former master, the family rented land about three miles from the plantation, received a bale of cotton, and the Hubert family name. Paul Hubert died in 1868, and the family gradually left the rented farm. In 1869, Zach was the first to leave. He rented a 20-acre farm near Powelton in Hancock County.

Zach continued his friendship with Henry Clay Hubert and often consulted with him about farming methods. On an annual visit to the old Hubert plantation, Zach learned from Henry that some whites were willing to sell land to anyone in Hancock County (including freedmen.) Zach went to Sparta, the county seat, to find out who would be willing to sell him and his family land. He found a lawyer named Henry Burt, who wanted to sell 165 acres of

timberland at \$10 per acre. The land was about 12 miles from Sparta in Mayfield, and Burt expected annual installments of \$550 for three years.

When Zach visited the land, he discussed it with several African American tenant farmers who had lived in the area since enslavement. The land was covered with tree stumps and boulders, and had never been farmed, in spite of productive farms nearby. Undaunted by this information, Zach traveled to his mother's rented farm to convince his family to purchase the land. Only his brothers David and Floyd agreed to Zach's plan for



The Camilla-Zach Country Life Center was built by Benjamin F. Hubert in honor of his parents. The log cabin center is one of the buildings in the Camilla-Zach Community Center historic district, listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 2, 1974. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

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THE ZACH HUBERT FARM: A CENTENNIAL FAMILY FARM

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a family farm. When they met with Burt to draft an agreement, he was astounded when Zach read it aloud to his brothers. Burt inquired how Zach learned to read and write since it was illegal during slavery. Zach simply stated he learned how to read and write when slavery ended, never revealing that Henry Clay Hubert taught him. Zach and his brothers expected full title to the land if all installments were paid in three years, and Burt agreed.

During the next three years, the Hubert brothers cleared 100 acres of farmland, planting vegetables and cotton. They held 65 acres for a timber reserve and recycled their profits solely for mortgage payments and supplies. When they took the final payment to Burt in 1874, he told them they could continue to rent the land with an option to buy later, but the agreement was invalid since there were no witnesses. Burt also informed the Huberts that he would remove them from the land if they did not pay the rent in one week. The brothers continued to rent the land they rightfully owned, while Zach was assigned the task of finding a white lawyer who would bring legal action against Burt.

For the next 18 months, Zach Hubert traveled across central Georgia to find a sympathetic white lawyer who would represent them. Finally, while in Crawfordville, he discussed the case with Poulton Thomas. Thomas examined the original land contract and decided to influence Burt to honor the agreement, as he and Zach were acutely aware that their chances of winning the case in a white court were marginal. Thomas threatened Burt with breach of contract. In 1876, almost five years from the original 1871 agreement with Burt, the Hubert brothers became the first African American property owners in Hancock County.



Springfield Baptist Church was organized in 1865, and services were held in a brush arbor until the building was constructed on land donated by Zach Hubert.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

following year, and was named Springfield Baptist Church in honor of one of the large springs the Hubert brothers discovered when they cleared the land.

As Zach and Camilla Hubert raised their family of 12 children, Zach began plans for his next project, a community school. Though the African American community supported his ideas, Zach could not receive any aid from Hancock County. Zach Hubert and the African American community in Springfield contributed a \$15 monthly salary, room, and board to hire a black teacher, Fess Smith, from South Carolina. Hancock County did not provide any financial support for the Springfield school until 1900. By 1915, one of Zach's sons, John Wesley, obtained a grant from the Julius Rosenwald

Fund. John Wesley Hubert was the principal of the Cuyler Street Junior High School in Savannah, and formerly taught at Tuskegee Institute. He contributed five acres of land to expand the school to an industrial high school.

The Springfield community became a model for farming in Hancock County by the 20th century. As Zach Hubert's farm continued to grow, he opened a small store on his farm in 1902, so farmers would not have to travel great distances for supplies. He also bought more land and purchased 1,500 acres before Camilla died in 1925. When Zach died the following year, his children met with the Springfield community and informed them of their plans to continue farming operations, while implementing new economic development initiatives. Benjamin (Ben) Franklin Hubert, one of Zach's sons, was teaching at Tuskegee Institute. He agreed to direct the farm and these projects.

Throughout their lifetime, Zach and Camilla Hubert believed education was the key to success for their 12 children. Ben and his brothers all graduated from Morehouse College, while five sisters graduated from Spelman, and the youngest girl, Mabel, graduated from Jackson State College. Several Hubert children pursued careers as educators. Zachary Taylor Hubert was the president of Jackson College and Langston College. Willis J. Hubert, son of John Wesley, was the academic dean at Morehouse College. The female Hubert children were teachers, and Jincy Hubert Reeves was a Jeanes supervisor in Georgia.

Moses Hubert was a county farm agent, but Ben Hubert was destined to continue Zach's legacy in agriculture. After graduate study at Amherst and the University of Minnesota, he directed agriculture departments at South Carolina State College and Tuskegee Institute. In 1930, Ben Hubert became the president of Georgia State Industrial College (presently Savannah State University), a post he held until his retirement in 1945.

In 1929, Ben Hubert purchased 417 acres of the Zach Hubert farm from his siblings. The following year he organized the Association for Advancement of Negro Country Life, and became the executive secretary. George Foster Peabody and Eleanor Roosevelt were members of the association. By 1932, while



The Springfield Rosenwald school provided industrial education to over 200 students. This photo appeared in Lester F. Russell's *Profile of a Black Heritage*. In 1977, Russell dedicated his book to the Hubert family of Georgia.



Dr. Charles DuBois Hubert was director of the Morehouse school of religion and professor of church history. Photo courtesy of The Camilla and Zach Hubert Foundation

THE GEORGIA CENTENNIAL FARM PROGRAM



The Camilla Hubert Hall dormitory was built at Georgia State Industrial College to provide housing for women during the presidency of Benjamin F. Hubert.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

president of Georgia State Industrial College, Ben Hubert completed the Camilla-Zach Country Life Center. The center hosted educational workshops for African American farmers from Georgia and neighboring states, sponsored demonstrations on soil conservation, and held annual jamborees.

In 1958, Benjamin Hubert, who never married, bequeathed his farm to his siblings upon his death. The youngest sibling, Mabel Hubert Warner, purchased it from her sisters and brothers in



Piney Rest is the cottage that provided lodging for faculty who taught at the school and the Camilla-Zach Country Life Center.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

1962. Her son, Dr. Clinton E. Warner, is the present owner of this Centennial Family Farm. Dr. Warner uses 174 acres of the farm as a timber reserve, just as Zach Hubert and his brothers once envisioned when they purchased the farm 130 years ago.



The community store provided supplies to Springfield farmers and was a meeting place for evening social activities. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

In the fall, the Georgia Centennial Farm Program celebrates the state's agricultural heritage at the Georgia National Fair. The Georgia Centennial Farm Program honors farms owned for 100 years or more at a special luncheon on the opening day of the fair. On October 4, 2002, thirty Georgia farms received recognition in three award categories at the luncheon.



Clinton and Sally Warner receive the Centennial Farm Certificate of Honor from W. Ray Luce, Historic Preservation Division director. Dr. Warner is a retired surgeon, and Chairman Emeritus of the Morehouse School of Medicine.

To qualify, the farm must be a working farm with a minimum of ten acres actively involved in agricultural production or earn \$1,000 annual farm generated income. Additional requirements for each of the three award categories are:

The **Centennial Heritage Farm Award** is the first category. Farms must be owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The **Centennial Farm Award** is the second category and does not require continual family ownership; however, farms must be at least 100 years old, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The **Centennial Family Farm Award** is the third category and includes farms that are owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more, and are not listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) administers the Georgia Centennial Farm Program. HPD sponsors the program, along with: the Georgia Farm Bureau Federation, the Georgia Department of Agriculture, the Georgia Forestry Commission and the Georgia National Fairgrounds. The Centennial Farm Committee is comprised of members from each of these organizations. Applications are accepted throughout the year with a deadline of **March 1, 2003** for the next award year.



For more information or an application, contact:

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AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY: A TOOL FOR PRESERVING THE BUILT HERITAGE IN THE WEST END HISTORIC DISTRICT

Karl Webster Barnes, Chairman
Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network

Since inception, West End has been an activity center, a commercial node that historically embodied a cultural landscape. During the last quarter of the 20th century, popular acceptance of cultural pluralism, or multiculturalism began to emerge. Original streets in West End were named after Confederate generals. Now, prominent African American Atlantans are included in street names.



Karl Webster Barnes
GAAHPN Chairman

A multiculturalism public review process led the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to award a \$1.6 million grant to the City of Atlanta for a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Livable Center Initiative (LCI) for the West End area. The FY 2004 LCI grant will provide architecturally and historically sensitive streetscape design and intersection improvements in the West End commercial area and

neighborhoods adjacent to the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) West End station. The grant will enhance the connectivity between and within the four historic districts that surround the MARTA station: West End, Adair Park, the Atlanta University Center, and Castleberry Hill.

The ARC-LCI promotes quality growth by encouraging greater mobility and livability “within” employment and town centers. The LCI program encourages communities to develop innovative ways to deal with growth. Objectives of the ARC grant include: reducing reliance on single-occupant automobile trips; promoting a balance between housing and employment; enhancing the commercial/residential village’s historic identity; and encouraging pedestrian mobility. The city is encouraging land use



The area surrounding the West End MARTA station will incorporate smart growth strategies to encourage commercial development and sustain the historic integrity of the West End Historic District. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

in close proximity to transit stations to promote a balance between housing, employment and recreational opportunities. To support the ARC grant, the city will provide \$1.2 million from the Quality of Life Bond fund for streetscape design that enhances and compliments the historical integrity and connectivity of the commercial and residential areas of the West End.

The West End Merchants Coalition, surrounding neighborhood districts, and West End Neighborhood Development (WEND) met with representatives of the City of Atlanta Bureau of Planning, ARC, and MARTA to develop an “integrated strategy” that defined the elements of the West End LCI. During these meetings, WEND and other residential neighborhood participants successfully articulated the *spirit and power of place* in the community originally called White Hall and now West End. Neighborhood residents convinced the city, ARC, and MARTA that local and national historic district designations and associated architectural design standards were critical elements in the LCI process. The city understood the neighborhood’s commitment to historic preservation, and changed the name from the West End LCI to the *West End Historic District LCI*.

The *West End Historic District LCI* strategy combines numerous new urbanism principles, historic preservation standards, heritage tourism tools and the WEND vision within the LCI concept. Individually, each program has significant requirements and unique benefits. Collectively, these policies and guidelines make the *West End Historic District LCI* a significant preservation gateway “tool” for the city and the West End.

Other components in the *West End Historic District LCI* strategy are Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and a new zoning ordinance to create a Special Public Interest (SPI) district. One goal of an SPI district is to create vertical density and view around MARTA stations. The West End Historic District integrated LCI strategy ensures that the height of buildings cannot exceed five stories near the station. Thus, the fabric of the historic districts will be protected from insensitive development.

Residents of the West End Historic District have additional goals. The LCI participants understood one of the underlining principles of economic development – if you have resources that no other community has, you must develop and market these resources. During the early 1990s WEND created a “vision statement” and strategies that the neighborhood adopted. The vision painted a picture of the future that clarifies the direction of the organization and helps individuals to understand why and how they should support the organization. The vision created a picture of the destination. The strategy defined the logic of how this vision will be achieved.

This strategy focused on the unique attributes of the West End Historic District and surrounding neighborhoods where we can excel and have a competitive advantage. The West End has a plethora of “first class” historic and cultural resources that make our community a unique “heritage tourism” destination. These



St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church is a community landmark building in the commercial corridor of the West End Historic District.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

resources include: the Saint Anthony of Padua Catholic Church; a public library; the Fulton County West End Performing Arts Center; and, the Shrine of the Black Madonna Bookstore and Cultural Center.



This home on Ralph David Abernathy Blvd. was a residence for nuns who served the parishioners of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

The Atlanta University Center (AUC) includes six colleges: Clark Atlanta University, Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College, Morehouse School of Medicine, Morris Brown College, and Spelman College. Most of these institutions were established immediately following the Civil War and the AUC is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The West End and AUC historic districts provide the foundation for an African American “town & gown” community similar to DC’s Georgetown, Chicago’s Hyde Park or NYC’s Greenwich Village – a special place of memory! These resources are the underpinnings of our competitive advantage and will allow us to create the *Historic West End Special Public Interest (SPI) District for Culture, Arts, Theater and Heritage Tourism*.

Through the convergence of the WEND vision, LCI/TOD objectives and historic preservation standards, we tailored the goals of the *West End Historic District LCI*. Gateway markers will enhance the historic districts. Streetscape and pedestrian/bicycle linkages are planned to provide access to a range of travel modes including transit, roadways, walking and biking. We are examining alternatives for underutilized or vacant property by encouraging medium development, employment, shopping, and recreation choices. An urban neighborhood commercial “Main Street” program is planned.

Like the initial visionaries of the White Hall Tavern in 1835 and the West End Village in 1868, the West End residents of the mid-1970s remain vigilant. We have a sense of time, place and history. We pledged to ourselves that we would reshape our West End neighborhood’s economic, social and cultural patterns. WEND is working with developers to shape a perspective and understanding that the Black college campus and neighborhoods that surround it are “living cultural records of post-bellum America.” WEND is educating developers to preserve the built heritage and consider projects that compliment public memory and built heritage.



The Park Street United Methodist Church was constructed in 1912, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 9, 1997. Clark Atlanta University uses this building for a music and art complex.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

The old Sears site served as the commercial heart of West End and surrounding neighborhoods. The infrastructure and name recognition are in place. Creating a pedestrian-scaled vertical mixed-use project at the site of a former Sears store makes more economic sense than subsidized low-income garden apartments. It creates an anchor for heritage tourism and associated commercial trade.

With the assistance of a Governor’s Discretionary Fund grant, WEND expanded the boundaries of the local historic district to match the National Register district. We are using these funds to facilitate the creation of West End Historic District architectural design guidelines. Through these integrated efforts, we recognize that “heritage tourism and the associated commercial activities are the basic units of the West End Historic District’s competitive advantage.” Our activities will continue to make a difference in the Atlanta community – ***Watch West End’s Phoenix Rise!***

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES LISTINGS

*Davia Brown, African American Programs Assistant
Historic Preservation Division*

In the late 1800s, Athens was the site of an African American residential area known as New Town. This community evolved to meet the housing needs of workers from the emerging railroad line and other industries in the region. While the railroad helped to establish the African American community, it simultaneously separated the white southern neighborhood from



The vernacular architectural style of Brightwell Shotgun Row is similar to houses in the Caribbean and Africa. Photo by James R. Lockhart

the black northern neighborhood of Athens. White residents lived in the Boulevard community near downtown Athens and were almost completely separated from their African American neighbors in New Town.

A common type of residence for African Americans in the south was the shotgun house, but the double shotgun house is a unique style found only in Georgia. Athens, Clarke County, has 45 shotgun and 16 double shotgun houses. Between 1935-1940, Helen Brightwell built three double shotgun houses on Barber Street, north of downtown Athens. Designed with four main rooms and an enclosed rear porch, these shotgun houses became single-family residences for working class African Americans. The tenants represented both laborers and skilled tradesmen, and their professions included industrial worker, cook, mechanic, janitor, presser, fireman, and a gardener.

The houses are six, very similar double shotgun homes built back-to-back in two rows, three facing Barber Street and three



In 1996, the current owner rehabilitated these homes and qualified for the tax incentives program of the National Park Service. Photo by James R. Lockhart

facing Crawford Avenue. Brightwell Shotgun Row buildings rest on brick piers with front-gable roofs covered with galvanized sheet metal. Full-width front porches and small, enclosed porches are located at the rear of each building. Side-by-side living spaces were created from a wall that spanned from front to back in both residences. Some homes have baseboards and tongue-in-groove paneling. Coal-burning fireplaces provided heat for the front rooms. Brightwell Shotgun Row is an excellent example of African American settlement patterns in Athens during the early 20th century. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 14, 2001.

New Ogeechee Missionary Baptist Church is located in Burroughs, a rural African American community southwest of Savannah in Chatham County. A cupola covers the iron church bell in the wood-frame building. This place of worship was the site for baptisms, weddings, funerals, and church services.



New Ogeechee Missionary Baptist Church was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 8, 2001. Photo by James R. Lockhart

Originally, the land was part of the Wild Heron Plantation (listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.) In the late 1800s, African Americans purchased land in the Burroughs community, and built the First Bethel Baptist Church. In 1891, some members left this congregation, and founded New Ogeechee Missionary Baptist Church. J.D. Campbell, a member, donated nearly an acre of land for construction of the church. By 1893, the building was completed, and F.E. Washington served as the first pastor. For more than a century, this African American church remained intact and continues to serve the community.

New Ogeechee Missionary Baptist Church is a rectangular building with raised brick foundation piers and a metal roof. Like most southern churches in rural areas, the building lacked running water, electricity, and heat. Six-over-six double-hung-sash windows are evenly dispersed along the front and sides of the building. In the front of the building, double entry doors greet members and visitors. The church cornerstone commemorates the generosity of J.D. Campbell.

A PRESERVATION CAREER CELEBRATION

Carole Griffith, management and information unit manager and deputy state historic preservation officer, is retiring from the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) at the end of this year. Griffith has worked for the state historic preservation office for over 32 years, serving in several capacities. She currently manages the budget and supervises HPD programs for grants, African American preservation, information, and education activities. In her years with HPD, Griffith has worked closely with the National Register and Certified Local Government programs, the National Register Review Board, Georgians for Preservation Action, and The Georgia Trust.



Carole Griffith
Unit Manager, Deputy SHPO
Historic Preservation Division

*Forget the black tie, it's no formal affair.
Just come as you are for that casual flair.
We'll drink, eat, and laugh as we all reminisce.
It's a gathering for a friend that will surely be missed.*

*Retirement Reception in honor of Carole Griffith's
32 years of exemplary service to the
Historic Preservation Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources*

*Thursday, January 16, 2003
5:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Historic Rhodes Hall
1516 Peachtree Street, N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30309*

Contributions are greatly appreciated and can be mailed to Sandra Garrett at 156 Trinity Avenue SW, Suite 101, Atlanta, GA 30303. Please RSVP to Garrett at 404/651-5178 by December 16, 2002. All contributions not expensed will be donated to a preservation education fund that Carole will select.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The Georgia Trust will host the annual meeting and Ramble in Milledgeville on March 28 - 30, 2003. Look for further information about this preservation conference in the next issue of *Reflections*.

AFRICAN AMERICAN PLACES

Tallahassee, Florida is the site for the fifth annual Southeast Regional African American Preservation Alliance conference, February 26 – March 2, 2003. The Alliance is a consortium of southern organizations that encourage preservation of African American heritage and resources. The annual conference workshop topics include funding opportunities, museum practices, partnerships, land conservation, heritage preservation, and advocacy. Tours are planned to the Florida A&M University Archives, African American historic resources in Tallahassee, and the Jack Hadley African American Heritage Tour in Thomasville, Georgia. If you register by February 15th, the fee is \$100. For further information, contact the Riley Center/Museum, 850/681-7881 or 850/681-7000, PO Box 4261, Tallahassee, FL 32315. Hotel accommodations are available at the Doubletree Hotel at a rate of \$89 per night. Reservations must be made prior to February 6th at 850/224-5000 or 800/222-8733. Join the Alliance for African American Places ... a legacy to maintain.

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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 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 1,325 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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Jeanne Cyriaque, Editor

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