

The Monitor



A Publication of Vernacular Georgia

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“...to promote and sustain the focus of Georgia’s historic vernacular architecture and its setting, and to encourage its preservation.”

President’s Column

Surely one of the most famous quotations of our times is George Santayana’s maxim, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Remembering the past, as Santayana recommends, is becoming increasingly difficult in the fast-paced, budget crunching world of today.

Vernacular Georgia honors the past as reflected in the structures human beings make for shelter and for business, not just grand public buildings and mansions, but common homes, barns, stores and factories as well. The structures of the past, even simple ones, give us clues to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, resources and beliefs of the people who lived before us. As an organization, we hope to focus public attention on the built environment of Georgia and promote its preservation.

People with means may save and rehabilitate an old structure, or maybe even several structures. No one individual, however, can preserve and revitalize a large area with unique assets and heritage like what we are going to see on our next excursion March 16.

Established by congress in 2006, the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area represents years of work by dedicated volunteers, businesses and government agencies to identify, preserve and utilize the unique features of southeast Dekalb County and surrounding areas. The Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area Alliance organizes the activities of the heritage area, and is responsible for creating the comprehensive feasibility study and exhaustive management plan required by the National Heritage Area program. The management plan, a 160-page document, is a great source of ideas for programs and preservation activities anywhere.

Congress began establishing National Heritage Areas in 1984. There are currently 49 national heritage areas across the country. Georgia has two other National Heritage Areas: the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area established in 1996, and the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor established in 2006.

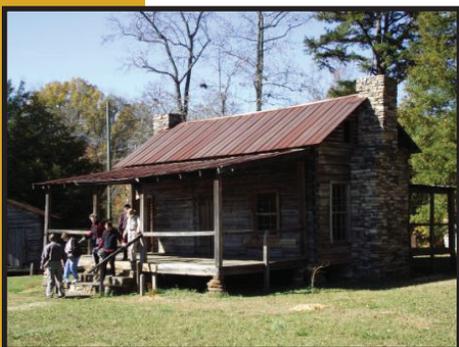
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Crawford W. Long Museum



Medicine case on exhibit in the Long Museum.



Elijah Veal Log Cabin, 1832, at Heritage Village at Hurricane Shoals Park.



Jackson County Courthouse, constructed in 1879.

President's Column continued

The Gullah/Geechee Corridor extends along the coast from Jacksonville, Florida to Wilmington, North Carolina. All three Georgia Heritage Areas have web pages to guide you to their rich recreational and educational activities.

These Heritage Areas demonstrate the people's determination to remember their history and make it a resource for the culture of today. Their efforts are inspiring, and they show what can be accomplished when people work together. I hope to see you at the March 16 excursion. Thank you for your support of Vernacular Georgia.

Mike Shadix

Autumn Excursion 2012

Jefferson Journey is History!

Vernacular Georgia members who participated in the Journey to Jefferson last fall enjoyed near perfect weather as they explored the historical treasures of Jackson County, Georgia.

The first stop was the Crawford W. Long Museum in downtown Jefferson. Long, a native of Danielsville, Georgia, performed the first surgical procedure using ether as anesthetic at his office in Jefferson on March 30, 1842.

Long had to fight for his recognition because he did not publish his experiments with ether until he saw another doctor's report on ether in 1846. There were several competing claims about who was first to use ether, but Long had the witnesses and documents to prove his claim. A year after Long's death in 1878, the National Eclectic Medical Association declared Long the authentic discoverer of anesthesia.

At the museum, we saw artifacts from his career, a variety of ether delivery systems, medical implements and a model 1840's doctor's office created from period furniture.

When we finished touring the museum, we went back to our cars and drove about 10 miles out of town to the fantastic Hurricane Shoals Park on the banks of the North Oconee River. The park includes a heritage village created by the dedicated and enthusiastic members of the Tumbling Waters Society of Jackson County, the non-profit organization that supports the park.

Over the past 20 years, the society has moved numerous old structures to the park to preserve them and make them easily

available for the public. Highlights of the Heritage village include the Miles Wilson Matthews Chapel (built in 1933), the Freeman Log Cabin (built in 1840) and the grist mill originally built in 1870 and rebuilt by the Tumbling Waters Society in 1980.

After lunch at Sweet Peas Country Cuisine, we returned to downtown Jefferson for a guided tour of the beautiful old court house now being renovated by Jackson County. The 1879 courthouse, largely unused since a new courthouse opened in 2004, has received a complete exterior renovation. Phase two of the multi-million dollar project will be the restoration of the ground floor for a welcome center, historical archive and county offices once again.

Our guides at the courthouse were Gene Barrington, a VGA member and the architect in charge of the exterior renovations, and a representative of the Jackson County Historical Society. We toured the entire building, the highlight of which was the enormous courtroom on the second floor with a 25 or 30 foot ceiling and a balcony.

The most intrepid VGA members climbed into the clock tower for a close look at the clock mechanism and a beautiful bird's eye view of the city.

The courthouse tour ended our Journey to Jefferson. We could not have had a better day to explore a county that takes its history seriously and enjoys a widespread public

Upcoming Spring 2013 Excursion



Please join us for our next excursion on Saturday, March 16, 2013 when we will explore the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, located in DeKalb and Rockdale counties. A national heritage area is a designation of the National Park Service for an area that is notable for cultural, natural, and recreational uses. The Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area features amazing resources that span everything from geology to ecology, and historic preservation to recreation. We will focus on some of the architectural treasures of the area, including the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, the historic tabernacle of the Smyrna Presbyterian Church, as well as other notable homes and farms.

You can find more information about the heritage area at the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance website:

www.arabiaalliance.org.

Email any questions about the upcoming excursion to vernaculargeorgia@gmail.com

See You There!

