



Reflections

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FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY IMPLEMENTS CAMPUS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

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Fort Valley State University (FVSU), founded in 1895, is one of three historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) that are land grant campuses in the University System of Georgia and the Board of Regents (BOR). All of these campuses possess historic properties that are significant buildings in the early development of the colleges. These institutions, with guidance from the BOR, develop preservation plans for their historic buildings that serve as templates for specific rehabilitation projects. The Historic Preservation Division provides technical assistance to these institutions on rehabilitation projects and guidance on the treatment of historic properties, and reviews their campus preservation plans.

FVSU implemented their Campus Historic Preservation Plan (CHHP) with technical assistance from Clement & Wynn Program Managers, who assembled a team of architects, engineers, archaeologists and landscape architects to ensure that the preservation plan incorporates historic buildings as an integral part of campus development activities. The plan provides the university with "...an understanding of the history of the institution, how that history has shaped the physical form of the campus and how it is likely to influence its future." Besides focusing on historic buildings, the plan assessed conditions for all campus buildings that are guidelines for rehabilitating or re-purposing buildings as the university experiences growth.

The FVSU Campus Historic Preservation Plan cites distinct periods of development in the school's history. The Fort Valley State College Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on April 21, 2000. The 16-acre district contains the core of the campus with eleven historic buildings that were constructed between 1896 and 1952. The earliest development period that the plan cites was from 1895-1913.

In 1895, a group of 18 citizens, including three whites, petitioned the Superior Court in Perry to establish the school. A few months later, the school was chartered for 20 years as the Fort Valley High and Industrial School in Houston (now Peach) County. One of the original petitioners, John Wesley Davison, was named principal of the school. He was the school's principal until 1903. Davison solicited contributions for some of the early buildings on the campus, and many were constructed with student labor. One of

the white founders, Francis Gano, purchased land around the school and the nearby neighborhood that was known as Ganoville. The Fort Valley High and Industrial School purchased his house upon his death in 1904. The house was the family residence of three Fort Valley presidents through the mid-1960s, and today it is known as the Benjamin Anderson House, and is used for special campus events. Anderson was a member of the school faculty for over 25 years.

Principal Davison was also successful in acquiring funds for the school through



Founders Hall is one of the buildings that form the core of the campus quadrangle. The building was constructed in 1926 by Ludlow and Peabody of New York City and was also known historically as the Academic Building.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

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Benjamin Anderson House was the residence of one of the school's founders, Francis Gano. Three Fort Valley presidents lived in the home that is still used for special campus events.
Photo by James R. Lockhart

the General Education Board (GEB) and Anna T. Jeanes, who established a fund for the school. The first girls' dormitory, Jeanes Hall, was named in honor of this philanthropist. Though this building no longer remains, another dormitory was constructed named Jeanes Hall. By the end of Davison's tenure as principal, the campus grew to over 30 acres. Gabriel Miller, a graduate of Tuskegee Institute, led the construction of several new buildings on the campus. As a carpentry instructor, Miller involved students who helped to build several campus structures. Miller served as interim principal until the school hired Henry Alexander Hunt in early 1904.

Philanthropist George Foster Peabody and the GEB recommended Henry Hunt to the school, and he administered the next period of development, identified as the American Church Institute Period in the Campus Historic Preservation Plan, through 1938. Hunt graduated from Atlanta University and had additional experience at Biddle (now Johnson C. Smith University) in Charlotte, North Carolina.

In 1913, Hunt received financial backing through an agreement with the American Church Institute of the Protestant



The current Jeanes Hall was constructed in 1952. It is an International Style building that forms the second historic core of the campus. Currently used as a men's dormitory, the Campus Historic Preservation Plan identified this building as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

Episcopal Church. By 1918, the school was under the auspices of the American Church Institute for Negroes with the stipulation that the majority of the board of trustees be members of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta. George Foster Peabody was a member of this board and made significant contributions to Fort Valley High and Industrial School as well as Tuskegee Institute. Peabody was a native of Columbus, Georgia, and devoted his life to philanthropy after a successful business career in New York. His nephew, Charles S. Peabody, was a partner in the firm of Ludlow and Peabody Architects in New York, and constructed several buildings at Fort Valley.

Not relying on one primary funding source, Hunt and assistant principal James Torbert, financial agent for the school, solicited funds from wealthy benefactors to keep the school afloat during this period. One benefactor was Arabella Huntington, who donated \$25,000 from the estate of her husband, Collis P. Huntington, a railroad financier. Students contributed labor in constructing a three-story brick dormitory for women. Huntington Hall is the oldest academic building on the Fort Valley campus in continuous use and is the last surviving building that was partially constructed with student labor. Huntington Hall is the recipient of a National Park Service grant that stabilized the building and FVSU is currently renovating the 1908 structure for use as campus administrative offices.

In 1925, the Carnegie Foundation contributed \$25,000 to build a library for the school. It was named for Andrew Carnegie, whose corporation established public libraries after his death in 1919. Ludlow and Peabody constructed a new building on campus that same year with a gift from Mrs. Royal Canfield Peabody. It was named the Peabody Trades Building, and the architect was her son.



Carnegie Hall was the first library for Fort Valley. The building is located on the historic quadrangle and is currently home to the university public safety offices.
Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

By 1926, construction began on the Academic Building that today is known as Founders Hall. It was completed by 1929 and was used as the main academic building/assembly hall. Designed by Ludlow and Peabody, Founders Hall also received financial support from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, who contributed \$2,100.

By 1928, Henry Alexander Hunt shifted the school's emphasis to teacher training and trades. In 1929, the school changed its name from Fort Valley High and Industrial School to Fort Valley

Normal and Industrial School. This change also brought about an expanded curriculum that offered college level classes in education and building trades.



The Peabody building was the first building on campus designated for the building trades. It is one of a series of campus buildings designed by Ludlow and Peabody of New York. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

Aiken and Faulkner, an African American firm in Atlanta, constructed Ohio Hall in 1930. It was built with contributions from the Episcopal Diocese in Ohio with plans developed by Ludlow and Peabody. Ohio Hall was a three-story men’s dormitory constructed of brick and stone. Aiken and Faulkner also built Samuel Henry Bishop Hall, another Ludlow and Peabody building, in 1932. Bishop Hall, a Colonial Revival building with large, arched windows and a central cupola, became the cafeteria/dining hall. It was named for an Episcopal priest who was an official with the American Church Institute for Negroes.



Bishop Hall was constructed by Aiken and Faulkner, an African American firm. It was Fort Valley’s dining hall and today is used as the Mass Communications Center. Behind the building is the historic water tank, a contributing structure in the historic district. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

In 1937, Robert William Patton Hall was completed. Stanislaw Makielski, a professor at the University of Virginia who was associated with the Episcopal Church, designed the building. It originally served as the Home Economics building, and was named to honor Bishop Patton, the executive director of the American Church Institute for Negroes.

With the completion of several brick buildings in the 1930s, the school’s campus was oriented towards a traditional quadrangle rather than facing a road. These buildings and walkways that formed

the quadrangle became “The Oval” or “College Circle”, the historic core of the campus.

Throughout the 1930s, Principal Hunt explored the possibility of the State of Georgia taking over the school, but was unable to reach an agreement with the Board of Regents. Leaders of the American Church Institute for Negroes also supported this move, and negotiations began in earnest in 1937. By 1938, Dean Walter D. Cocking of the College of Education at the University of Georgia issued his report that supported acquisition of the Fort Valley Normal and Industrial School. *The Report of the Study on Higher Education of Negroes* that Cocking authored recommended that Fort Valley replace the State Teachers and Agricultural College in Forsyth that was established by William M. Hubbard in 1900.

Hubbard started his school with seven students in the Kynette Methodist Episcopal Church. Within two years, he obtained white support and petitioned Monroe County to incorporate the Forsyth Normal and Industrial School. By 1916, Hubbard extended classes to the high school level, adding the 10th and 11th grades. The Forsyth Normal and Industrial School was accredited in 1917, and one year later became the state’s first vocational school for African Americans. Another milestone occurred in 1922, when the Georgia legislature passed an act that made Hubbard’s school the “School of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts for the Training of Negroes.” In 1931, the school became the State Teachers and Agricultural College (STAC). Now a unit in the University System of Georgia, STAC was a junior college.

When Cocking’s report was issued, STAC was discontinued as a state school, and its educational responsibilities were transferred to Fort Valley. In 1938, the school changed its name to Fort Valley State College, and the following year it became a four-year college in the University System of Georgia, joining Savannah State and Albany State as Georgia’s African American land grant colleges. The William M. Hubbard School became Monroe County’s first African American public high school.

Other changes impacted Fort Valley State College when it transitioned from a private to a public institution. Just before the transfer, the Fort Valley Normal and Industrial School conveyed 2.5 acres of land to the American Church Institute for Negroes for use as the Fort Valley College Center, Inc. Designed by Stanislaw Makielski, the complex consisted of a church (presently St. Luke’s Episcopal Church), the parish hall, two apartments and the annex that now serves as the rectory.



The St. Luke’s Episcopal Church complex reflects the philanthropic contributions during the American Church Institute period in Fort Valley’s evolution to a state university. Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

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Horace Mann Bond became President of Fort Valley State College in 1939, and served for the next six years through the World War II era. Bond focused on expanding the college curriculum. A Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics was offered in 1939. The first four-year class graduated in 1941 with 23 students. The student body grew to 888 in the fall and 617 summer school students. By 1944, a degree was offered in Agriculture. That year, 62 students graduated, the highest in school history, but only two were men due to World War II.



Davison Hall was the first brick structure constructed with state funds. Atlanta architect W.J.J. Chase designed the building, a Georgian Revival three-story dormitory for women. Dedicated in 1948, it was named for the school's first principal, John Wesley Davison.
Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

Cornelius V. Troup was Fort Valley's next President; he led the college for the next 22 years. Student enrollment expanded greatly during the Troup years. There were 374 students in 1945, but by the fall of 1964, enrollment peaked at 1,374 students. With the boom in the student population, Troup administered a growth in campus built resources as well. Dr. Donnie Bellamy noted in his



The Alva Tabor Agriculture building is an International Style structure. It is named in honor of the man who served as the Head Itinerant Teacher Trainer in Georgia from 1922 until his death in 1951. Tabor came to Fort Valley in 1938 from Savannah State College (now University).
Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

1996 book about Fort Valley, *Light in the Valley* that "the number of buildings on campus doubled" under Troup's leadership.

Several new buildings were completed during the last decade of the Troup presidency. The Bywaters building was dedicated in 1952. It served as the college's library until 1976 and was named in honor of Jean Leroy Bywaters, a coach and business manager at the college. The Alva Tabor Agriculture building was constructed in 1957 along with the Hubbard Education building. The George N. Woodward building added a gymnasium and auditorium to the campus in 1959. The Campus Historic Preservation Plan identified these buildings that are now at least 50 years old as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



The William M. Hubbard International Style building is the home of Fort Valley's College of Education. It is named for the founder of the Forsyth Normal and Industrial School that later became the State Teachers and Agricultural College.
Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

From 1965-1995, FVSU expanded the campus to the south and east of the historic "Oval". During these 30 years, most campus expansion focused on improved agricultural fields and research facilities, as well as student dormitories. Since 1970, the university has offered a program in Electronic Engineering Technology. By 1972, student enrollment had exceeded 2,000. The Goat Research Complex, built in 1985, became the largest facility of its kind west of the Mississippi River. That same year, the School of Agriculture, Home Economics and Allied Programs were created. On June 12, 1996 the Georgia Board of Regents gave Fort Valley University status. The other colleges for the university are the College of Arts, Sciences and Education and the College of Graduate Studies and Extended Education.

Today, Fort Valley State University consists of two land parcels that total 1,365 acres. The main campus is 622 acres with 96 institutional buildings and seven student residential buildings. The rest of the campus is predominantly agricultural research facilities. Dr. Larry Rivers has served as Fort Valley's President since 2006. He administers a full-time faculty of 97 and an undergraduate/graduate enrollment that exceeds 2,200 students. ■

HELP FOR THE HELPLESS: ANTEBELLUM HEALTHCARE FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN GEORGIA

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Medical care was limited for African Americans prior to emancipation. Although few buildings remain from this period, much history has been preserved about healthcare for African Americans in Georgia. Plantation hospitals and a few urban hospitals were among the institutions where blacks could be treated.

The Georgia Infirmary is recognized as the first public hospital in the United States to provide medical care “for the relief and protection of afflicted and aged Africans.” Reverend Thomas F. Williams, a Savannah merchant, willed the land and \$10,000 to open the hospital in 1816. On December 24, 1832, the Georgia General Assembly chartered the hospital on the Bethesda tract south of Savannah. White men administered and operated the hospital for black patients. Because the hospital was too far from Savannah, two buildings were erected in the vicinity of east 36th Street and Lincoln Street in 1838. Funding was provided for the care of free blacks, while plantation owners were expected to care for their slaves except for emergency cases. The hospital closed for five years following the Civil War, but reopened in 1871. The building has been modified to add electricity in 1905, an east brick wing with a gable roof and quoins in 1944 and remodeling in 1965. The Georgia Infirmary established a nursing school for blacks in 1904 that operated until 1937. In 1974, the structure became a day center for stroke patients and the hospital underwent major revitalization in 2003.



The Georgia Infirmary in Savannah is believed to be the first public hospital in the U.S. that was established for African Americans. Today it is a St. Joseph/Candler adult day care health center. Photo by Terry Hayes

The Jackson Street Hospital and Surgical Infirmary in Augusta was established in 1854. This three-story structure contained 50 to 70 beds, operating rooms and a lecture hall. Drs. Henry F. and Robert Campbell were the brothers responsible for erecting the hospital, and Henry led the all white staff. Although the focus was surgical operations, Jackson Street Hospital received any medical cases from African American patients except infectious ones. Patients were transported from floor to floor using ropes and pulleys. Room accommodations included gaslights, fireplaces, and

hot and cold water. Before the Civil War, the Campbell brothers served as editors of the *Southern Medical and Surgical Journal*. Their work with African American patients undoubtedly influenced their findings. Dr. Henry F. Campbell served as an assistant demonstrator of anatomy, professor of anatomy, and professor of surgery and gynecology at his alma mater, the Medical College of Georgia (MCG). The Jackson Street Hospital operated until 1865 when the Freedmen’s Bureau established a hospital in Augusta following the Civil War.



The Jackson Street Hospital and Surgical Infirmary for Negroes was erected on Jackson and Fenwick Streets in Augusta, circa 1854.

Image courtesy of the Medical College of Georgia

In 1852, around the time that the Jackson Street Hospital was established, faculty at MCG purchased a slave known as Grandison Harris from Charleston, South Carolina for \$700. Harris’ role was to illegally disinter or resurrect bodies from freshly dug



This 1877 faculty photograph includes Grandison Harris, pictured at the top center. Harris was a body snatcher at the Medical College of Georgia and was a teaching assistant in anatomy. Photo courtesy of the Medical College of Georgia

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HELP FOR THE HELPLESS: ANTEBELLUM HEALTHCARE FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN GEORGIA

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graves for use at MCG. The cadavers were studied for anatomy and surgical practice, then discarded and covered in the school basement under dirt and quicklime. Harris served as a “resurrection man” or body snatcher from 1852 to 1904. Harris became so good at body snatching that MCG faculty purchased his wife and son in 1858 from a South Carolina plantation to live with Harris in Augusta.

After the Civil War, Harris moved to Hamburg, South Carolina, where he served as a judge under the carpetbagger regime. When the carpetbaggers’ popularity declined Harris returned to MCG and was hired for \$8 per month to continue as a resurrection man by night and a janitor by day. Most of the stolen bodies were African American males, but some were black women, children and poor whites. Cedar Grove Cemetery was one of Harris’ chosen sites for body snatching. Not surprisingly, African Americans in Augusta during that time period were skeptical of receiving medical care at hospitals. Many blacks simply relied on home remedies. Grandison Harris was both feared and revered in the black community for his power to disinter buried relatives and for his high standing among whites. He died in 1911 and was buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery in an unknown location. The secret of the body snatcher of Augusta was not well known until 1989 when construction workers digging an elevator pit in the school basement struck bones.



The bodies of approximately 250 people were stored in the basement of the Old Medical College building in Augusta. Constructed in 1835, the building is a National Historic Landmark. Photo courtesy of the Medical College of Georgia

Besides traditional hospitals, slave owners maintained plantation hospitals for economic reasons since slaves represented an important part of a plantation owner’s property. On some large plantations slave owners invested in facilities for slave health. Plantation hospitals and infirmaries or what slaves called “sick houses” provided medical care. Sometimes slaves served as nurses or in many cases an older black woman was in charge of patient care.

Retreat Plantation’s slave hospital, built between 1800 and 1810 according to a 1936 Historic American Building Survey, is located on the south end of St. Simons Island in Glynn County. The ten-room, two and one-half story slave hospital was constructed of tabby, a mixture of equal parts of lime, sand, water, ash, and oyster shells. Women were housed on the first floor, men on the second, and two slave nurses occupied the attic space as living quarters.

The rooms each had a fireplace and two windows. The stairs were located in the large hallway.

Frances Anne Kemble, also known as Fanny, provided a first hand account of slave conditions on Butler Island in her diary, *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838-39*. Fanny, a famous English actress, married Pierce Butler, unaware that his fortunes were gained from southern slave labor. She wrote about her first visit to Butler Island in January 1839. The infirmary was a large two-story, whitewashed, wood frame building containing four large rooms on each floor. The structure was placed at the end of two rows of houses on the first slave settlement of the plantation. Most slaves in the infirmary lay on the cold ground using dirty, ragged blankets.



The ruins of the Retreat Plantation slave hospital and cemetery remain on the property of the Sea Island Golf Club. Photo by Linda Cooks

Dismayed at the condition of the slaves in the infirmary, Fanny showed the slave midwife that she should keep the firewood fresh, uncover the glazed windows for light, and keep unused blankets folded and rooms swept. Fanny wrote about the challenges of women in slavery, who frequently bore children, many of whom did not survive. Female slaves often visited Fanny in hopes that she would speak to Mr. Butler, the absentee slave owner, to increase the length of time for rest after labor confinement from three weeks to a month and decrease the intensity of work after child labor. Although Fanny could not help the slave mothers decrease their burdens, she gave them food or extra clothing when she could.

Fanny and Pierce Butler’s daughter, Frances Butler Leigh wrote her own account about life on Butler Island, *Ten Years on a Georgia Plantation Since the War, 1866-1876*. Although Frances, like her father Pierce Butler, was in favor of slavery, she attempted to adaptively use the former slave hospital for the benefit of the freedmen. The freed people of Butler Island began to use one of the hospital rooms as a church, where many marriages took place. Frances attempted to set aside the other three rooms for an African American school, a residence for older women who could not work and for younger women during their confinement in child bearing. Frances later housed English workers hired for plantation work in the former hospital rooms.

Susie Baker, later known as Susie King Taylor, was a nurse during the Civil War from 1862-1866 in Company E of the First South Carolina Volunteers (later the 33rd United States Colored Troops or U.S.C.T). In 1848, Susie was born a slave on the Grest Farm, in a coastal area near Midway in Liberty County. While in Savannah, several people taught Susie to read and write. Although hired as a laundress during the war, Susie taught soldiers to read and write. She also cared for sick and afflicted soldiers despite the possibility of catching a disease. When soldiers asked Susie why she was so kind treating them as she did soldiers in her own company, she responded “you are all doing the same duty, and I will do just the same for you.” In her narrative of the war, *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp with the 33rd United States Colored Troops, Late 1st South Carolina Volunteers*, she wrote that her aversion to seeing suffering was overcome during war and replaced with feelings of sympathy and pity for others.



Susie King Taylor served as a nurse with the 33rd U.S.C.T. from 1862-1866. Her narrative records a rare perspective of female African American military life during the Civil War. Photo courtesy of the New Georgia Encyclopedia

Following the Civil War in 1865, the Freedmen’s Bureau established a medical department in Georgia. There were five hospitals in the major cities of Atlanta, Augusta, Columbus, Macon and Savannah. C.H. Taylor, a black assistant surgeon, and Alexander T. Augusta, a black physician who previously served as surgeon with the 7th U.S.C.T. and worked at the Freedmen’s Hospital in Washington D.C., were assigned to work at Lincoln Hospital in Savannah. After a smallpox outbreak in 1865, A.T. Augusta requested a new, permanent pest house and additional medical assistance for the Savannah Bureau. He was refused both, but this caused the City of Savannah to take responsibility for providing medical service to all of its smallpox patients at the smallpox pest house lest the outbreaks continue. A news reporter who visited the Lincoln Hospital in 1867 remarked, “true charity and pure philanthropy are not wiped out of the earth even under the fiercest whirlwinds of political passions . . .”



Alexander T. Augusta, the first black surgeon with the 7th U.S.C.T. during the Civil War, rallied support from benevolent societies, churches and the Freedmen’s Bureau for the care of former slaves in Savannah. Photo courtesy of Arlington National Cemetery

Despite the tensions between the Freedmen’s Bureau desire to persuade local authorities to eventually take responsibility for services to freedmen and southern resistance to federal interference, some good resulted in medical care during reconstruction. Services were offered through hospitals, dispensaries and home visitation programs. Unfortunately, medical services from the Freedmen’s Bureau ended on January 1, 1869, leaving many blacks with limited or no options for professional medical care in a period of segregation. By 1872, the Freedmen’s Hospital in Washington, D.C. was the only hospital allowed to continue under the War Department and later the Department of the Interior.

Although living conditions were not ideal during slavery, African Americans received some medical care from public institutions and private slave owners. During reconstruction emancipated blacks had an opportunity for medical care through the Freedmen’s Bureau. Limited post-reconstruction healthcare options for African Americans eventually led to greater reform in black hospitals during the segregation era. ■



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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 GAAHPN Steering Committee 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 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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