Brailsford Reese Brazeal was an African American economist and Dean of Academics at Morehouse College. From the late 1920s until he retired from Morehouse College in 1972, Dr. Brazeal’s leadership in research, publications, and academic standards helped Morehouse College achieve national significance as an institution of higher learning. Brazeal was a native of Dublin (Laurens County). He attended Macon’s Ballard Normal School until his family moved to Atlanta, where Brazeal completed high school at Morehouse Academy in 1923. Brazeal received his bachelor’s degree from Morehouse College in 1927, and completed his master’s degree in economics at Columbia University in 1928.

Dr. John Hope, who was Morehouse College’s first African American president, hired Brazeal as an economics instructor in 1928. By 1934, Brazeal was a professor of economics, head of the Department of Economics and Business Administration, and Dean of Men. Brailsford Brazeal was the recipient of two fellowships from the Julius Rosenwald Fund to pursue advanced studies in economics. While the history of the Rosenwald Fund community school building program is widely known, the fund also provided fellowships to many African American scholars. With this assistance and aid from Morehouse College, Brazeal received his Ph.D. in economics and political science from Columbia University in 1942.

Brailsford Brazeal published *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters* in 1946. This book was based upon his dissertation research on the Pullman train-car porters and their successful efforts to form America’s first African American labor union. This book remains a standard reference in labor history, American economic history and race relations.

Dr. Brailsford Reese Brazeal
Photo courtesy of the Brazeal family

Brazeal subsequently wrote an unpublished biography about the Brotherhood’s union leader, A. Philip Randolph.

When George Pullman first arrived in Chicago in 1859, he had learned the art of moving buildings from his father, Lewis Pullman, who had patented a device to roll huge edifices away from the banks of the Erie Canal. After successfully applying this skill in a number of public works projects in Chicago, George Pullman envisioned a hotel on...
He Was a Morehouse Man: The Legacy of Brailsford Reese Brazeal

Jeanne Cyriaque, continued from page 1

wheels with his luxurious, “palace” sleeping cars. To provide overnight accommodations and dining to the emerging middle class traveler, Pullman needed a workforce to provide personal services. This workforce who provided the necessary work of bellhop, cook, dining car attendant, maid and janitor were called Pullman porters, and they were African American men. Dr. Brazeal conducted some of the research for his dissertation by working as an assistant cook in the trains’ kitchens on the New York City line that traveled south. Pullman porters worked longer hours and made considerably lower wages than whites, as they monopolized other positions such as conductors on the Pullman sleeping cars. Yet, a porter job provided unique employment opportunities that encouraged the Great Migration of thousands of African Americans from the segregated south. The Pullman porters relied on tips from their expert personal services, and were discouraged from forming unions.

By 1925, the Pullman Company was the nation’s largest private employer of African Americans, and the company used intimidation tactics, company spies, and harassment to deny the porters’ pensions and company benefits. Dr. Brazeal’s book discussed how A. Philip Randolph and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters organized an eleven-year effort to eventually be presented an international charter by the American Federation of Labor in 1936.

In 1962, Cornelius V. Troup published Distinguished Negro Georgians. Brailsford Brazeal wrote the introduction to this book while he was Academic Dean at Morehouse College. “Although I am a native Georgian and have lived and worked in Georgia virtually all of my life, I have learned for the first time that many distinguished persons whom I know or have read about are also natives of this state. Many of them were born in remote places in the state and had to obtain their education in vicarious ways which were enough to baffle and discourage persons of even extra-ordinary ability.”

Brazeal’s comments on African American education in Georgia pointed out the fact that “without private, church-supported schools many of the persons mentioned in this book would never have attained an education which proved to be the key to their achievements.”

In 1933, Brailsford Reese Brazeal married Ernestine Erskine of Jackson, Mississippi. Ernestine Brazeal was a graduate of Spelman College. She received her master’s degree in American history at the University of Chicago. Mrs. Brazeal taught at Spelman and served as the college’s alumnae secretary. In 2003, the Spelman College Messenger featured an article about Mrs. Ernestine Erksine Brazeal that was written by one of her former students, Taronda Spencer. She is the Spelman College archivist and historian. “I learned how to be a Spelman woman from her example. Because of Mrs. Brazeal’s foresight, scholars and researchers are documenting the importance of Spelman’s place in the history of women’s education nationally and internationally. Her legacy and her spirit will forever be an integral part of the essence of Spelman.”

In 1940, Brailsford Reese Brazeal purchased an American Foursquare-type house that is located just west of Morehouse College. Brazeal made few changes to this house during his lifetime. In 1962, a rear addition was added that reflected mid-20th-century ranch house influences, such as built-in bookcases and a stone fireplace.
Two African American Properties Receive Georgia Heritage Grants in SFY 2006

Carole Moore, Grants Coordinator
Historic Preservation Division

The Georgia Heritage Grant Program was created in 1994 to provide "seed" money for the state’s many historic properties needing financial help in order to begin or complete the expensive rehabilitation process. In support of HPD’s African American program, local governments and organizations with African American properties always are encouraged to apply for a Georgia Heritage grant. Last fall, eight applicants were awarded grants for preservation projects around the state, including two African American properties—the T.J. Elder School in Sandersville and the Farmers Alliance Hall on Sapelo Island. Each project received a $20,000 development grant for foundation and floor repair/stabilization, and a new roof.

The Farmers Alliance Hall, built in 1929, is a dominant visual element of Hog Hammock, an intact Gullah/Geechee community on the Georgia coast, and served as an important meeting place throughout its long history. Although the building is now in a deteriorated condition, the community has continued to use the surrounding grounds for its annual “Cultural Day at Sapelo Island,” an event sponsored by the Sapelo Island Cultural and Revitalization Society, Inc. (SICARS). Because of its location, Sapelo Island is included within the boundaries of the proposed Gullah-Geechee Heritage Corridor that is currently being considered by the U.S. Congress, following a three-year study by the National Park Service.

The Brazeal House is located west of Morehouse College on Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard (formerly Ashby Street). A one-story wing was added to the house in 1962, but otherwise it remains essentially as it was when Dr. Brazeal died in 1981.

Photo by James R. Lockhart

Soon, the Brazeals had two daughters: Ernestine and Aurelia. Though the Brazeals lived in a segregated south, Ernestine Brazeal did not want her children to be born in segregated hospitals, and traveled to Chicago to have both of her daughters. Ernestine and Aurelia Brazeal attended a private girls’ school in Massachusetts, and both are Spelman alumnae.

Aurelia Brazeal is a diplomat in residence at Howard University. She is a former Ambassador to Ethiopia, Kenya, and the Federated States of Micronesia. She promotes job opportunities for the Department of State to students who are pursuing Foreign Service careers. Ernestine Brazeal recently retired from her advocacy career at Head Start in the greater Atlanta area. She lives in the Brazeal home. Ernestine Brazeal supports the work and ideas of the Spelman College Women’s Research and Resource Center. The center ensures a feminist environment for scholarship, activism, leadership and change.

The Brazeal House was always a place where students could gather for mentoring sessions with Dr. Brazeal in a family atmosphere. One Morehouse tradition that Dr. Brazeal particularly liked was to invite freshmen students to his home during their first week at Morehouse College. The students would have a chance to socialize with distinguished faculty and alumni. Maynard Jackson, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Warner Meadows were guests at these sessions in the Brazeal House during their college careers at Morehouse.

The Delta Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa elected Brailsford Brazeal for alumni membership at Columbia University. Brazeal envisioned a Phi Beta Kappa chapter at his institution, and by 1967, it was approved for Morehouse College. In 1961, while serving as the advisor for the honors program at Morehouse College, Brazeal achieved additional support from the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. Under his guidance, Morehouse College was second among Georgia institutions in the number of students receiving Woodrow Wilson fellowships.

Brailsford Reese Brazeal was an active participant in voter education and registration drives throughout Georgia in the 1960s. He retired from the faculty of Morehouse College in 1972, after a career that spanned over 40 years. He died in his home in 1981. Brailsford and Ernestine Brazeal are buried at South View Cemetery, an African American cemetery that was established in 1886 by nine Atlanta black businessmen.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

Cornelia Bailey shares stories about the Saltwater Geechees of Georgia.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

The Brazeal House is located west of Morehouse College on Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard (formerly Ashby Street). A one-story wing was added to the house in 1962, but otherwise it remains essentially as it was when Dr. Brazeal died in 1981.

Photo by James R. Lockhart

The Farmers Alliance Hall is the central venue of the Sapelo Island Cultural and Revitalization Society (SICARS) annual Cultural Day at Sapelo Island.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

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Two African American Properties Receive Georgia Heritage Grants in SFY 2006

Carole Moore, continued from page 3

In the fall of 2001, SICARS was awarded a SFY2002 predevelopment grant in the amount of $8,100 to develop a feasibility study for the preservation of the Farmers Alliance Hall. As a natural progression of that grant, they applied for and received its current grant. According to SICARS director Carolyn Dowse, restoration of the Farmers Alliance Hall will make it possible for the building to return to serving the Hog Hammock community, once again becoming a viable force in raising awareness of the heritage of African Americans on Georgia’s sea islands. “Completion of this restoration project will help preserve examples of the architectural style and highlight the ingenuity of former slaves and descendants of slaves during the early 20th century,” she said. In addition, she added, “The project will restore pride in the achievements of a once enslaved people and provide a venue for the preservation of the Gullah/Geechee culture.” The current SFY 2006 grant is expected to be completed this fall.

Located in Sandersville is the T.J. Elder School. It was built in 1927-1928, partially with aid from the Rosenwald Fund and is the first Rosenwald School in Georgia to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The school was named in honor of Professor Thomas Jefferson Elder, who was a community leader and principal of the school. It is presently owned by the Washington County Elderite Alumni Association. According to project manager Elizabeth Robinson, the completion of the rehabilitation will provide the community with a spacious, historic, multi-purpose building to be used for educational and cultural programs, including tutorials, musical concerts, classical dance performances, fine art exhibits, reunions and other gatherings. “The long range plans are,” she said, “to 1) become a repository for data on all remaining Rosenwald structures in the state and 2) prepare and distribute rack cards featuring the building and its historic documents and photograph collection.” Work on the T.J. Elder School began in January and will be completed in the fall.

The selection of award recipients, which in recent years has varied from seven to 15, depending on the amount of funds available, is based on various criteria, including need, degree of threat to the resource, project planning, and community benefit. Geographical and demographical distribution and variety of resource types and uses are also considered in award decisions. Grants are available for both development and predevelopment projects. Development projects include stabilization, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration activities. Predevelopment projects include plans and specifications, feasibility studies, historic structure reports, or other building-specific or site-specific preservation plans. The maximum grant amount that can be requested is $40,000 for development projects, and $20,000 for predevelopment projects.

In order to be eligible for funding, applicants must be a local government or private, secular, nonprofit organization and have documentation of matching funds (equal to at least 40% of the project cost). The property for which funds are being requested must be listed in, or eligible for listing in, the Georgia Register of Historic Places, and be listed prior to reimbursement of funds. All grant assisted work must meets the applicable Secretary of the Interior’s “Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation.”

This year’s grant applications will be available late April/early May with a submission deadline in July. For further information about the grant program, please contact: Carole Moore, Grants Coordinator, Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources at 404/463-8434 or email her at carole.moore@dnr.state.ga.us.

The NCSHPO Excellence in Historic Preservation Award

W. Ray Luce, Division Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Historic Preservation Division

In 1976, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO) was incorporated to provide an association of State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO). Each year the NCSHPO sponsors an annual meeting to facilitate information exchange within each of the nation’s SHPO offices. During the 2006 annual meeting the NCSHPO held its second awards ceremony to recognize outstanding initiatives in state preservation offices. African American Programs as a new initiative demonstrates the impact of linking volunteerism with dedicated staff support to establish Georgia as a leader in regional and national efforts to preserve African American history and culture. For this reason, the Georgia SHPO received a 2006 Excellence in Historic Preservation Award for its African American Programs.
Georgia has been in the forefront in seeking ways to identify African American historic resources for many years. A statewide network of volunteer preservationists known as the Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network (GAAHPN) was established in 1989. The current chairman of GAAHPN is Isaac Johnson, who leads the Steering Committee. These volunteers and the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) published a guide that identified African American resources, hosted periodic conferences, and developed brochures and other educational tools to raise awareness of the contributions of African Americans to Georgia’s built and cultural landscape. In 2000, these volunteers and HPD sought financial resources from the Georgia legislature to establish a full-time position dedicated to African American preservation in HPD. The person that was selected as coordinator of African American Programs is Jeanne Cyriaque.

Working with the GAAHPN Steering Committee, the African American Programs coordinator helped to develop a series of strategies to encourage African American preservation initiatives, provide technical assistance, and increase membership in the network. One of the significant outcomes of this effort was the development of Reflections, a quarterly publication that informs Georgians about African American preservation projects and cultural heritage initiatives.

Jeanne Cyriaque writes and edits guest articles for Reflections, which is used as an educational tool to illustrate African American associations with buildings and heritage initiatives that are significant in Georgia history. The publication is distributed by mail to members of the network and the HPD mailing list. Each issue of Reflections is also posted on HPD’s website: www.gashpo.org. Reflections articles discuss the services offered by the SHPO and their application to specific African American projects. This publication highlights collaborations and partnerships and is a critical educational tool to increase diverse participation in preservation. As a result of this publication initiative that was implemented in 2000, the GAAHPN network membership increased from 300 members to 2,075 today.

African American Programs implemented a research study to survey, document and list in the National Register of Historic Places the historic schools that were known as Rosenwald Schools. These schools were built in Georgia from 1915-1936, and were pivotal elements in African American education during segregation. The coordinator and interns identified 40 remaining schools and continue to seek additional ones from the 242 that once existed. African American Programs has done far more than simply locate these schools. Technical assistance is continuously provided to numerous preservation groups that are finding new uses for the 40 buildings that are still standing. Jeanne Cyriaque represents the Georgia SHPO in a regional task force convened by the National Trust to preserve Rosenwald Schools. She is a frequent presenter at National Trust conferences and numerous other national, state and local conferences dedicated to the preservation of Rosenwald Schools.

African American Programs has also supported preservation initiatives associated with Georgia’s Gullah/Geechee culture. By working with sites and projects in Georgia coastal regions, African American Programs and GAAHPN support pending federal legislation that will establish a Gullah/Geechee National Heritage Area.

In 2004, GAAHPN sponsored Georgia History Through the Eyes of African Americans. This conference was held in Augusta, and included workshops that discussed African American historic districts, genealogy and technical tools for historic preservation. The African American Programs coordinator and the GAAHPN Steering Committee conducted a fundraising campaign to sponsor this conference entirely through corporate and nonprofit support. They developed a partnership with historic Springfield Baptist Church to provide the meeting venue and luncheon for 75 participants. The conference banquet speaker was Georgia Commissioner of Labor Michael Thurmond, and included a signing of Freedom, his book about Georgia history from its earliest settlement through the end of the Civil War.

African American Programs sponsored Underground Railroad South at the 2004 state preservation conference in Savannah. The workshop was held at First Bryan Church, and drew 100 participants. The participants learned about the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program, and speakers discussed two Georgia sites associated with the program: Fort Pulaski National Monument and the From Africa to Eternity Traveling Exhibit. Since this workshop, two additional Georgia programs have applied to become members of the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program. During the 2005 state historic preservation conference, GAAHPN sponsored the opening reception, Thomasville Conversations, at an African American-owned historic home that is used as a conference center in Thomasville.

African American Programs encourages increased enrollment of minority students in historic preservation programs by sponsoring a part-time internship in HPD. These students have assisted the coordinator by conducting research for the Rosenwald initiative and writing articles for Reflections. The coordinator mentors graduate students from several programs, lectures on African American historical themes, and serves on thesis review committees.

African American Programs and GAAHPN are catalysts in expanding the involvement of African Americans in preservation both in Georgia and nationally. The coordinator and the chairman of GAAHPN, Isaac Johnson, are officers of the African American Preservation Alliance, a national organization formed to increase diversity in preservation.
Keeping Our Eyes on the Prize: The 2006 Conference of the African American Preservation Alliance

Jeanne Cyriaque, Secretary
African American Preservation Alliance

The mission of the African American Preservation Alliance (AAPA) is to promote the preservation of African American cultural heritage and historic places. To build diversity in preservation, the Alliance encourages the organization of statewide networks and individual membership to increase participation in the preservation movement.

Each year the Alliance sponsors an affinity event in the city where the National Trust for Historic Preservation annual conference is held. The national preservation conference provides educational and field sessions and opportunities for Alliance members to meet and mentor participants in the National Trust Diversity Scholars Program.

During the 2005 annual conference in Portland, the Alliance sponsored an awards reception. A Celebration of Black Military History in the Pacific Northwest was held at the General Oliver O. Howard House in the Fort Vancouver National Historic Reserve. Fort Vancouver was once home to the 24th and 25th Infantry of Buffalo Soldiers.

At the reception, the Alliance honored Ron Craig, who developed a documentary to preserve the legacy of York, the African American servant who accompanied William Clark during the Lewis and Clark expedition. Carl Flipper, who is a descendant of Henry O. Flipper, was honored for his work with the Buffalo Soldiers Historical Society. Donald Whitbeck received an award for his book, A Man Named Moses. The book chronicles the accomplishments of Moses Williams. He was a Buffalo Soldier. Moses Williams received a Congressional Medal of Honor and is buried at Fort Vancouver.

Save the date for the 2006 AAPA conference that will be held in Memphis, Tennessee from August 3-6. The host for this conference is the Tennessee Cultural Heritage Preservation Society, one of the AAPA statewide networks. Keeping Our Eyes on the Prize is the theme for the conference that will be held at the University of Memphis conference center. The Middle Tennessee State University historic preservation center is currently reviewing conference session proposals, so look for additional program and registration information in the next issue of Reflections.

J.W. Joseph, Symposium Chair
Society for Georgia Archaeology

Material Reflections of Georgia’s African American Past

The Society for Georgia Archaeology (SGA) is pleased to present a symposium on the material culture of Georgia’s African American past at its 2006 spring meeting. This symposium brings together archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians to look at African American life in Georgia through the landscapes, structures, crafts and objects that African Americans created and employed. While African American history was not well recorded, the material legacy of Georgia’s African American communities is particularly rich. Papers in this session will address the landscapes of African American households and communities from plantations, tenant sites, and urban locations; African American building techniques and architecture, including recent discoveries from the Ford Plantation and Ossabaw Island; African American crafts and industry, including Colonoware, a pottery reflecting the interaction of African American and Native Americans that is found on Colonial coastal plantations; and the archaeology of African American sites, including excavations on both freed and enslaved sites, in both rural and urban locations, from the Colonial era into the late 19th century.

May is archaeology month, so visit www.thesga.org for information about SGA activities and lectures. This will be a fascinating look at the African American experience in the state and will present a number of projects and findings that have not been made public before.

The symposium will be held at the Auburn Avenue Research Library (AARL), 101 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, on May 20th from 9a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The Auburn Avenue Research Library (AARL) is devoted to reference and archival collections on African cultures and the African American experience and has exceptional collections and facilities. For more information, visit the library’s website at www.af.public.lib.ga.us/aarl. The AARL is located in Atlanta’s Sweet Auburn District, one of the most significant places in African American life in the south, and home to the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, Ebenezer Baptist Church, the APEX Museum of African American History, and many other sites. Visit www.atlantaheritage.com/sweetAuburn.html for more information. The symposium is free and open to the public. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. For further information, please contact Dr. J. W. Joseph, symposium chair, at jw joseph@newsouthassoc.com or (770) 498-4155, x102.

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The Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network (GAAHPN) annual meeting will be held June 8-10 in Brunswick, one of Georgia’s oldest cities. Founded in 1770, this port city was chartered in 1856, and is currently commemorating its sesquicentennial anniversary. **Celebrating Our Coastal Heritage** is the theme for the 2006 annual meeting.

Participants are encouraged to arrive early for an evening opening reception on June 8th. The annual meeting workshops will be held all day on Friday, June 9th. at the historic First African Baptist Church.

Brunswick’s First African Baptist Church is the program site for the Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network’s annual meeting.

Photo by Jeanne Cyriaque

☐ Enclosed is my $50 check or money order to attend the annual meeting. Please mail me a brochure.

☐ Yes, I plan to attend the annual meeting. Please mail me a brochure.
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 2,075 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](http://www.gashpo.org). Preservation information and previous issues of *Reflections* are available online. Membership in the Network is free and open to all.