

Join us on a tour of the southeastern portion of Morgan County. Seats on the bus for the Conservancy-guided tour are available for just \$5. These buses will leave from the City of Madison Parking Deck promptly at 2 p.m. Bus space is limited, so please reserve your seats soon.

Anyone interested in taking a self-guided tour along the Greenprint Ramble route should feel free to do so. On Saturday, October 22, 2011, the Madison-Morgan Conservancy will have erected signs to help guide the tour. Please plan to leave the City of Madison (former Avado) Parking Deck between 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. The tour will take two to three hours, depending on how much talking and sightseeing you choose to do.

If you're the adventurous type, feel free to use this tour guide to ramble anytime.

The Madison-Morgan Conservancy is also hosting a supper, "The Bounty of Morgan County" at Willow Oak Farm on October 22nd after the tour. The menu has been set by local farmers, and supper will be made from local meats, cheeses, vegetables, nuts, and dairy, fresh from farm to fork (see the back page for the menu). The limited seating at the supper has already sold out. If you do not have tickets, we invite you to join us in 2013 for the next Greenprint Ramble.

Please call the Madison-Morgan Conservancy at (706)342-9252 to make your reservation for the bus tour. We look forward to rambling with you through the "best part of the South."

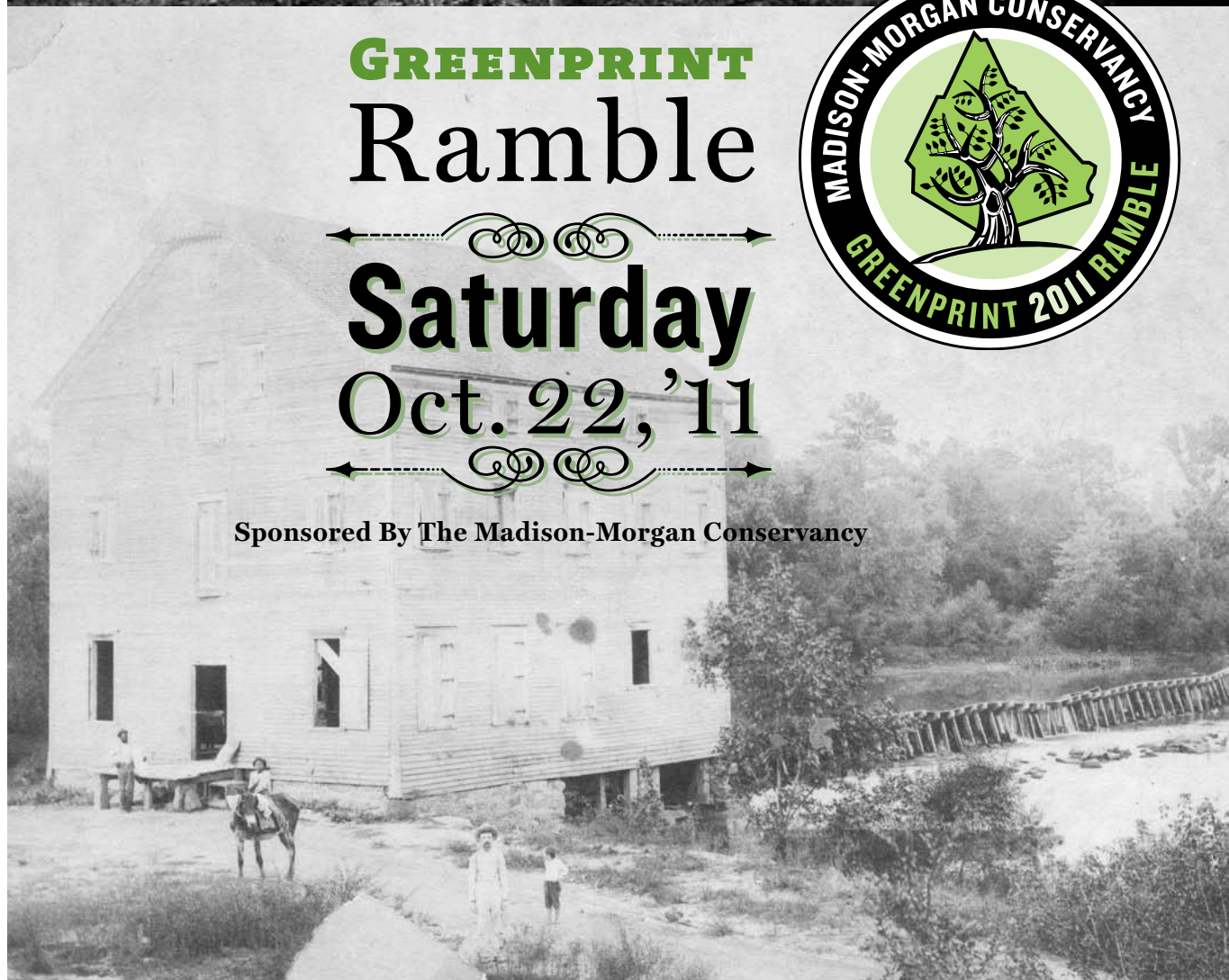


← [**BEST PART** of the **SOUTH**] →

GREENPRINT Ramble

← →
Saturday
Oct. 22, '11
← →

Sponsored By The Madison-Morgan Conservancy



Before we drive the first mile of the Greenprint Ramble, the Board of the Madison-Morgan Conservancy wants to acknowledge with gratitude the extraordinary work of Tour Chair Ken Kocher and the hours of hard work dedicated to this project by Becky Sherwood and Christine McCauley. Through months of research and countless interviews, these stories have been gathered and compiled into an invaluable record of Morgan County’s heritage. The Conservancy owes a debt of gratitude to the Morgan County’s Resource Preservation Advisory Board, Morgan County Archives, and the City of Madison Planning Department for their work in collecting oral histories, promoting Madison and Morgan County’s heritage, and for sharing with us their technology and knowledge.

Driving this route, you will see a variety of agricultural, natural, and historic resources, many of which are listed on the Morgan County Greenprint and on the Madison Greenprint, and you will hear the stories of many of the families who have shaped our beautiful landscapes over the years. We hope you enjoy what you see and hear as you ramble through the “best part of the South.”

Enjoy the Madison-Morgan Conservancy’s 2011 Greenprint Ramble!

Start your engines!!! Set your trip-o-meter; mileage numbers starting with “0.0” will appear to help you confirm your location with the accompanying site description.

Leave the City of Madison (former Avado) Parking Deck behind the Chop House and adjacent to the Creamery.

Turn Right

Turn Right onto Hancock Street

As the seat of government for Morgan County, Madison was laid out on a grid with a central **public square**. As noted on the Town Square marker, the square has been home to two courthouses, both lost to fire. Historically, the courthouse square was a gathering place, both formal and informal. This tradition continues today as folks from all over the county meet and pass time while visiting the Post Office.

#1

The courthouse moved to this location in 1907 when Morgan County’s citizenry completed a facility reflecting the beginning of a new century. This Beaux Arts style **Courthouse**, designed by J.W. Golucke, remains in service today. The building currently houses the Superior, Probate, and Magistrate Courts and a Law Library.

THE TOWN SQUARE MARKER

Reserved for public use in the original 1809 town plan, the public square was also used to establish the early town limits, first drawn as a half-mile radius (1822) and then as a mile radius (1849). This method formed circular town boundaries: a common early town planning technique in Georgia.

The square has also been in continuous use as public property – County Courthouses (1st c.1810-1844; 2nd 1845-1907), City Hall (1909-1916), Town Park (1917-1930), and U.S. Post Office (1931). The City occupied the former courthouse until it burned in 1916. A year later, the City sold the property to the federal government but negotiated its use as a park until construction commenced on the post office.

Public accessories and amenities have long adorned the square. The 1856 Braswell Monument anchors the west corner. On the prominent north corner stood the town “Market” (1851-c.1885), a Victorian gazebo (c.1901), and later the city “Police Shack” (c.1950-75). The 1908 Cooke Fountain was also sited here (1925-31) when street paving began.

Placed by: City of Madison Bicentennial Commission, 2010



Photo of the second courthouse built in 1844. The clock tower was added in 1895. The building served as City Hall from 1909 until it burned in 1916. Source: Morgan County Archives.



Photo of the current courthouse during construction. Construction was supervised by William Cavin who also was the builder for the A&M School, the Post Office, and City Hall. Source: Morgan County Archives.

Turn Right

Turn Right onto Jefferson Street

COMMUNITY SETTLEMENT MARKER

Establishment of Madison was part of a larger movement to settle the Georgia frontier and the westward population shift. The first division of town land created 48 original lots, each measuring 100 by 200 feet. Lots were sold on February 23, 1809, with the average lot sale being \$155. Early dwellings and enterprises were modest, frame structures.

Lot #6 sold for \$111 to Reuben Rogers who built a dwelling. Known as an I-House or Piedmont Plain, this type of structure was particularly popular in the Upland South and often built by well established farmers and townsfolk. The Rogers House (c.1810) is significant as the last remaining residence from the period of the town's founding on its original lot.

Opened for tourism in 1992 and later joined by the Rose Cottage (1893), the house serves as an excellent example of community cooperation: property ownership by Morgan County; leadership and funding for restoration, furnishings, and operation by the City; and management of the museum complex provided by the Morgan County Historical Society.

Placed by: City of Madison Bicentennial Commission, 2010

Pause

#2

0.1 Pause at the Rogers House and Rose Cottage

The **Rogers House** [179 E. Jefferson Street] was built by Reuben Rogers c.1810 and, by 1829, according to census records, 18 people lived in the house. The dwelling received an 1873 update from Martin L. Richter when the Victorian decoration - such as the porch balusters, sawn brackets and frieze - was added. This is referred to as Folk Victorian, meaning Victorian decorative elements have been applied to an otherwise simple house form.

#3

The little Victorian cottage next door, known as the **Rose Cottage**, was originally located along the Georgia Railroad in east Madison. Its builder was Adaline Rose, who was born into slavery in 1864. In 1891, she purchased a tiny lot for \$50, - less than two tenths of an acre - and built this house. It has been told by those who knew her that Mrs. Rose built her house by taking in washing and ironing. Price per wash load: 50¢ The City of Madison moved the cottage here, to use as a museum, through an agreement with Morgan County which owns the land.

Turn Right

0.1 Turn Right onto Pine Street

If this were 1809, or anytime during the first 13 years of Madison's existence, you would be traveling along the de facto city limit with platted city land on the right and county land on the left. However, the distinction was somewhat moot at the time since, during those early years, the Justices of the Inferior Court handled both city and county business.

Pause

#4

0.1 Pause at E. Washington Street

#5

0.2 The Boon Cottage [239 E. Washington Street] on the left and the **Speed-Bearden House** [234 E. Washington Street] across from it were built in the first decade after Madison's creation, though both were just beyond the original town grid. They represent the first development of East Washington Street.

Turn Left

0.2 Turn Left onto E. Washington Street

East Washington Street was originally the main road leading from Madison to Eatonton and on to the state capital of Milledgeville. It was the "Hwy. 441" of its day and like today transportation drew development. The rise and fall of Madison's economic fortunes - tied to cotton for many decades - is reflected in the construction dates of the houses between Pine and Vine streets. Four houses date to the 1850s, five to the 1890s, and three to the early twentieth century.

#6

If you think speculative development is something new, take the example of J.W. Bearden whose home at **328 E. Washington** sat at the center of the block between Plum and Poplar. In 1895, Bearden carved off lots to either side and built speculative housing. Moving up the street several years later he repeated the process including the subdivision of Pine Street into small cottage lots.

#7

Of course, community settlement has not ceased. The 1822 half-mile radius city boundary has expanded, and homes and businesses continue to be developed in Madison. Just ahead, a quick look up Maxey's Lane you will spy **Markham's Hill** subdivision, developed by Robert Terrell in 2007. Markham's Hill is also known as **Blueberry Hill** and is one of the resources listed on the Morgan County Greenprint as worthy of protection. Though Mr. Terrell developed a portion of the hill, he also protected six acres of the hill in perpetuity with a conservation easement.

Green Text denotes resources listed on either the Morgan County Greenprint or the Madison Greenprint.



The Rogers House during restoration in 1995.
Photo by: Marshall "Woody" Williams.



A dilapidated Speed-Bearden House in 1964. The columned front portico was added in the early twentieth century. Source: A Visual Survey and Civic Design Study for Madison, Georgia.



The J.W. Bearden House, built c. 1870. Bearden served as mayor and was involved in several business ventures in Madison.

The Madison-Morgan Conservancy '11 Greenprint Ramble

It's unclear whether the inspiration for the name springs from the flora growing there or the popular Fats Domino version of the song Blueberry Hill!

*I found my thrill / On blueberry hill / On blueberry hill / When I found you
The moon stood still / On blueberry hill / It lingered until / My dreams came true*

This portion of Morgan County was ceded to the State of Georgia by the Creek Indian Cession of 1802 and was subsequently distributed through the first Georgia Land Lottery in 1805. Although Morgan County was established in 1807, no courthouse could be built until the county seat, Madison, was established. Prior to this, the Wilson-Finney-Land House served as the courthouse for all intents and purposes. Up ahead, you will see the Wilson-Finney-Land House. In Georgia's frontier days, the use of an existing house as the temporary courthouse during a county's early years was relatively common. However, few houses originally used as courthouses exist today, making this house particularly significant.

The **Wilson-Finney-Land House** [1750 Bethany Road] was constructed c. 1806 and was the main house of a once extensive cotton plantation with holdings in excess of 3,500 acres. Over the years, the original I-house not only gained additions but also Greek Revival, Italianate, and Craftsman details, all pointing to distinct periods of development. The house is listed on the Madison Greenprint as an important Historic Landmark to protect. Current owner Tim Reilly says about living in such an important structure, "The Wilson-Finney-Land House has become a focal point for celebrations among our family and friends, and adds a timeless sense of continuity to all the celebrations that have occurred here since 1806."

EARLY PUBLIC FORUM MARKER

Common among new counties during the settlement period, Morgan County (1807) first transacted public business at a private residence—Fields Kennedy's home. After Madison was designated as county seat in 1808 and until the construction of a formal courthouse, the Superior and Inferior courts met here at the dwelling of Abraham McAfee (sheriff/local militia captain). The Inferior Court was responsible for county improvements as well as Madison's initial survey and town layout.

McAfee's home (c.1806) is a form known as an "I-house"—two stories tall and one room deep typically with a central hall. Like many of Madison's early residences, the building featured rearward expansion, multiple porch additions, and the influence of popular architectural styles over time. Because of its significance, the property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2004 and became the first individual historic property designated outside of the Madison Historic District (NR 1974, 1990; locally designated 1989).

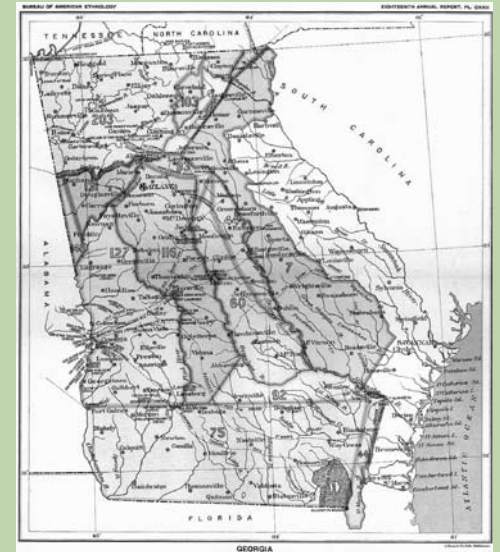
1.7 Cross By-Pass and continue onto Bethany Road

On November 19, 1864, as Union General Slocum and his troops approached Madison, they were greeted by Joshua Hill, Mayor of Madison, who asked the General if he would post a soldier in front of each house so as to prevent "looting and rude conduct." Slocum did this, and so these acts were held to a minimum. The army remained in Madison for about six hours, long enough to burn the depot, cotton gins, hundreds of bales of cotton and twist miles of rail, known to some as "Sherman's Neckties."

Slocum's Army then set out towards Eatonton along Washington Street and down what is now known as Bethany Road. As we follow the route of Slocum's troops on their March to the Sea, notice the beautiful vistas along Bethany Road. The **Viewshed along Bethany Road** is listed on the Morgan County Greenprint as a preservation opportunity.

Now that we have a little breather, let us welcome you to the Madison-Morgan Conservancy's Greenprint Ramble.

The purpose of this Greenprint Ramble is to get you out into areas of Morgan County where you might not otherwise go, so you can see for yourself the resources listed on both the Morgan County Greenprint and on the City of Madison Greenprint. These resources tell just part of the story of Morgan County's history and it is our desire to interpret much more of that history along this route. Today, you will see natural, agricultural and historic resources that are incredibly valuable to Madison and Morgan County; and we, the Conservancy, are dedicated to promoting the wise use of these resources. We hope you will enjoy this Ramble; and we hope what you see will impress upon you the importance of protecting the structures, farms, and natural resources that are the founding elements of Madison and Morgan County.



Map of Indian cessions in Georgia. The 1802 and 1805 Creek cessions include the area that is now Morgan County. Source: The 18th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology—1896-'97, Vol. II.



The Wilson-Finney-Land House not only served as the courthouse but also as the residence of the sheriff, Abraham McAfee.

#9

3.3 Up ahead you will see **The Oaks Plantation** [2550 Bethany Road]. Constructed c. 1830 along the stagecoach route from Charleston to New Orleans, it is an excellent example of Greek Revival style architecture. The house was the center of William Jackson Orr’s plantation, which stretched from Plainview to Buckhead. It was such a large plantation it was described in miles rather than acres.

Orr’s son, James, grew up here, and it was here he met and fell in love with Jesse Andrews, the wife of one of the black hired hands. James and Jessie maintained an unspoken relationship, living in neighboring houses on the Orr plantation where their children were raised. One, George Andrews was father to Benny Andrews, renowned artist, and Raymond Andrews, noted novelist. Benny and Raymond spent their early childhood here, later moving to sharecrop on C.R. Mason land. In his later years, George himself became a folk artist.

#10

Once known as the **Sugar Creek Farm**, the house on your left [2728 Bethany Road] was built c. 1870. Daniel Fowler DeWolf moved to this house in 1884 in the hope of saving the life of his only son, whose health had given way. Sadly, DeWolf lost his son and put the farm up for sale in 1888. An ad for the sale of the property echoes what we believe today: that this is “the pleasantest, healthiest summer and winter climate east of the Rockies; [and the] best part of the South.” DeWolf remained in Georgia until 1900, improving his farm and especially his cultivation of peaches. In an 1895 Morgan County promotional piece entitled “A Fruit Paradise,” the peaches grown at Sugar Creek Farm by Mr. DeWolf were described as “Some of the most beautiful peaches ever seen in Atlanta...”

#11

4.4 Now, imagine 12,000 soldiers of the Union Army’s 20th Corps marching down this road. Reaching **Sugar Creek**, they made camp for the night while General Slocum set-up headquarters just up the road in the Benjamin Harriss house (c. 1834).

Can you see how straight Sugar Creek is through these bottomlands? Well, in the 1920s, this part of Sugar Creek was dredged and straightened in an effort to dry out the bottomlands to create a more productive environment for agriculture.

#12

5.3 The board fence along the road signals that you have reached the property now known as **Willow Oak Farm** [3351 Bethany Road]. Jane and Frank Carter became the 5th owners of this property when they purchased this farm in 1973; and they, with their four children and many grandchildren, have managed the land as a wildlife preserve. The Carters and their farm manager, Luke Wilkins, have planted 980 oak trees in the bottom lands as well as 11,000 long leaf pine trees throughout the property.

The house that Slocum used as his headquarters during the March to the Sea was apparently lost to fire. It is hypothesized that the historic Willow Oak Farm house, built c. 1867 by Richard Harriss, sits in the same location. As you pass by, notice to your right the **historic house**, and the **new Carter House** just to its left. Also, notice across the road a replica of a **tenant house** once found on the property.

#13

#14

Veer Right

5.5 Veer Right onto Bethany Church Road

Bethany Church Road is listed on the Morgan County Greenprint as a Scenic Road.

BETHANY MARKER

The community of Bethany, anchored by the Bethany Baptist Church, appears on maps after 1915. A church congregation was established before then at nearby Alliston’s Grove; however, tradition holds that they disbanded after the Civil War. In 1869, two acres of land were given from the Baldwin Estate to the Bethany Baptist Church Trustees, some of whom had previously been members of Alliston’s Grove. The deed for the land indicates that a school had already been established in this community, and in 1915, an educational survey of Morgan County identifies the Bethany school as, “...highly improved and beautified...” (with) “...drives and walks, flowers and vines, pavilion and play houses... playgrounds, tennis, may pole, etc.

Unlike many rural communities, Bethany did not develop on a railroad line, but was situated on a main thoroughfare between Madison and Eatonton in Shepherd’s Militia District. Post office records from 1900 indicate the community was comprised of about 500 individuals. In 1897 at least five cotton gins existed in Shepherd’s District; additionally, a number of large dairies were established in this area when the dairy industry began to thrive in Morgan County.

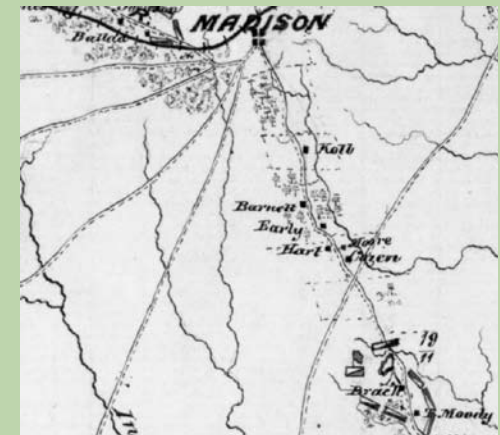
The small community of Zachry, also located in Shepherd’s District, was located eight miles south of Bethany; it was the site of a small community of houses, a cotton gin, and a general store.



The Oaks Plantation as pictured in the USDA Soil Conservation Service “Soil Survey, Morgan County, GA” dated September 20, 1965.



DeWolf’s ad for the sale of Sugar Creek farm as it appeared in “The Cultivator & Country Gentleman” Albany, NY February 2, 1888.



Campaign map drawn by Major R.M. McDowell, Chief Topographical Engineer, Left Wing, Army of Georgia, showing the 20th Corps’ encampment on Sugar Creek, November 19, 1864.



Willow Oak Farmhouse built c. 1867 by Richard Harriss may have been built on the remains of the house Union General Slocum used as his headquarters during his March to the Sea.

#15

5.7 Up ahead, you will see **Bethany Baptist Church** [1080 Bethany Church Road] which has long been an anchor for the community of Bethany. The Church was established in 1868 by a number of citizens including Benjamin Harriss, who is buried at the highest point in the cemetery there, and the Crew Family whose house we will see just up the road. According to Rachel Harper, before the Civil War there was a community called Alliston Grove, which, too, included a Baptist Church. During the Civil War, the congregation of Alliston Grove diminished as men went to war and women and children moved in with relatives. By the end of the War, just a few members remained, and in 1867 the congregation disbanded. Mr. Alliston was approached by four families requesting that he give them the church building if they promised to rebuild it in the middle of a more densely populated section of the county. That church would be called Bethany.

So in 1867, Benjamin H. Harriss, Jack Wood, Tom Moody, and Nathan Massey assisted in moving the church. The sills, beams, studs, rafters, and anything else that could be salvaged was hauled to land donated by Thomas Beverly Baldwin. The one room church building was completed in 1868 and dedicated to the community of Bethany. In a little while, we will pass by Alliston Grove and see the site of that original church.

6.4 Pause at the Old Crew Place

The **Old Crew Place** [1421, 1431, & 1441 Bethany Church Road] was a typical turn of the century homestead and had a typical collection of outbuildings: **house, commissary**, smoke house, horse barn, **corn crib, tenant house**, silos, blacksmith's shop, corn mill, and cotton gin, among others. Rarely do you find so many of the buildings still standing, making the Old Crew Place one of Morgan County's most significant historic resources.

Current owner Evelyn Bone is a descendant of Charles Percy Crew, who bought this land in 1910, after moving here from the Reese community where Mr. Crew owned a store. The family continued to run the store and their dairy in Reese until 1935, when they began raising cotton and beef cattle instead.

The 1936 Rural Electrification Act made available to non-profit cooperatives federal loans for rural electrification. Charles Percy Crew sat on the board of directors of the local electrical co-op, Central Georgia EMC, which was chartered in 1937. It's not surprising, therefore, that the Crew Family was among the first 100 families in Morgan County to receive electricity; they were #69.

6.4 Turn around in Old Crew Place Driveway and go back up Bethany Church Road

As you drive back towards Bethany Baptist Church, look for a **road marker** in front of the church. Don't miss it - it sits low and close to the road. Its cross shape is not related to the church, although it may be mistaken as a religious marker. In actuality, it is an old road sign indicating the directions toward Madison and Eatonton reminding us that this remained a main road into the twentieth century.

After the area now known as Morgan County was ceded by the Indians, it was distributed through land lotteries in 1805 and 1807, giving settlers land lots of 202.5 acres each. The lottery system promoted settlement by yeoman farmers who farmed at a subsistence level. The increasing market and profitability of cotton led to its dominance and a fairly rapid consolidation of land holdings. The resulting "planter class" farmed the land with slave labor until the end of the Civil War. The loss of that free labor gave rise to the tenant farming system, the imprint of which can still be seen on the land. This system perpetuated cotton farming into the twentieth century, and by 1920, Morgan County had 76,000 acres planted in cotton, yielding 36,000 bales.

7.3 Turn Right onto Bethany Road

In the early 1900s, though, the boll weevil came to the South. During the 1920s this pest devastated the cotton crop in Morgan County, causing many farming families to lose their land. Shortly thereafter, another blow, the Great Depression, compounded the hardship felt by many of those farmers. The collapse of cotton-based agriculture and a later increase in mechanization hit tenant farmers equally hard, triggering the migration of this largely African American population from the state. The combination of all these events would completely change the face of Morgan County agriculture in the coming decades.

Some Morgan County families survived by augmenting cotton farming with other agricultural practices. Others converted to a completely different agricultural industry, dairy farming. By the 1950s, Morgan County ranked first in the state in number of dairy cows and second in whole milk sales with more than 41 percent of the total farm income from dairy products. This new endeavor, along with fruit and nuts, which accounted for five percent of all farm income in 1959, kept Morgan County agriculture viable in the middle years of the twentieth century.

Pause

#16

Turn Around

#17

Turn Right



Harris Family Grave at Bethany Baptist Church today.



Pictured from left to right: Thomas Crew, Charles Percy Crew, Ethel Crew, Leslie Crew, and Hester Crew. Source: Evelyn Bone.



Road Marker in front of Bethany Baptist Church showing directions to Madison and Eatonton.

Turn Left

8.2 Turn Left onto Barrows Grove Road

Changes in dairy technology led to the consolidation of production into a smaller number of larger operations, causing farmers to seek new avenues of income. Many of the old dairy farms became pastureland for beef cattle and other livestock or were planted with pine trees. Today Morgan County ranks fourth in the state for production of beef cattle and 4th for production of dairy cattle.

The future of agriculture in Morgan County appears bright. Located in proximity to the four largest food markets in GA, the area is well positioned to satisfy the increasing desire for locally produced food. Related to the local food movement is increased interest in agri-tourism giving consumers a direct experience with the land and people involved in producing their food. With Morgan County's two largest industries being agriculture and tourism, Morgan County's farmers continue to be presented with new opportunities to participate in emerging agricultural-related economies.

While nationwide the number of farms and farmers has dwindled, there is a surge of new, sustainable, small farms in Morgan County. These farms are growing diversified crops on small acreage, using only low levels of mechanization, and little or no chemical pesticides or fertilizers.

On your left you will see one of these sustainable farms.

9.4 Elliott and Darby at **Sun Dog Farm** [1541 Barrows Grove Road] grow vegetables, fruits, and herbs without the use of herbicides, pesticides, or chemical fertilizers. Elliott and Darby focus on preserving genetic diversity by growing Heirloom varieties of plants and raising Heritage breed livestock. Their farming practices are low impact and reflect a respect for the ecosystems located on the land. This is a much more labor intensive way of farming that brings back the need for community participation. Crop Mob is part of that community.

What is Crop Mob, you ask? Crop Mob is a group of self-proclaimed landless wannabe farmers who enjoy farming but can't do it for themselves due to their lack of land. Think condos in Atlanta housing young people starved for a connection to the land. These folks organize themselves to help farmers like Tate Tewksbury do the labor-intensive work that needs to happen on these small sustainable farms.

9.8 On your right you will see the site of a Crop Mob—**Tate Tewksbury's farm**. Tate is a leader in Georgia's local food movement and has been instrumental in creating Madison Locally Grown and FARMeander. Everything he produces is Certified Naturally Grown. In order to extend his growing season, Tate needed to build two hoop houses, and 70 Crop Mobsters came to the rescue to help him with the construction!

As you approach Mason Road on the left, look up the hill to see Tinker Farm—Mark and Carol Tewksbury's farm. Tate's father, Mark, is a true homesteader plowing with horses, growing organic vegetables, and raising chickens, hogs, and cattle in a very sustainable way - rotating crops, utilizing manure as fertilizer, and not overusing his natural resources.

Up ahead, you will be turning right onto Baldwin Dairy Road. This road was aptly named for the Baldwin Dairy, which you would see if you turned left. The Baldwin Dairy was one of more than 200 dairies in Morgan County in the 1950s. Only 22 remain today due in large part to the Dairy Herd Buyout Program that began in the 1980s.

Baldwin Dairy Road is listed on the Morgan County Greenprint as a Scenic Road.

10.6 Turn Right onto Baldwin Dairy Road

11.0 Up ahead you will pass near the solitary **gravesite** of one of the first settlers of Morgan County. **Benjamin Fitzpatrick** was buried here in 1821. His marker reads, *"Remember youth I once was young / But three score and fifteen years has come / And into my grave I must go. / Prepare my friends for another world."*

Prior to the cession of 1802, the Apalachee and Oconee rivers, constituted the boundary between Georgia and the Creek Nation, and little was known about the land across the river. According to local legend, in 1795 Booth Fitzpatrick crossed the Apalachee River into what is now known as Morgan County. He explored the land for several days and upon his return told his brothers about his trip. He spoke of the fertile soil and splendid hunting grounds.

Later that same year, he and several men retraced his steps to a branch and spring, the site of his earlier camp. They killed a large buck and fastened the head to a white oak. Someone in the crowd, seizing upon

Green Text denotes resources listed on either the Morgan County Greenprint or the Madison Greenprint.

#18

#19

Turn Right

#20



Sharecropper and family moving from tenant farm near Madison, 1939. Photographer: Marion Post Wolcott; Source: Library of Congress Farm Security Administration-Office of War Information Collection.



Crop Mob at Tewksbury Farm on August 29, 2010. 70+ Crop Mobsters helped Tate Tewksbury build two hoop houses.



Gravesite of Benjamin Fitzpatrick, one of Buckhead's earliest settlers.

these circumstances, called the branch “Doe Branch” and the spring “Buck Head.” These names survive today. When the County militia districts were laid off in 1807, the district containing the spring was named “Buck Head,” and when the Georgia Railroad laid its tracks through, it designated its depot Buck Head, Georgia.

When Booth and his companions returned to their homes, their news of the land triggered an influx of white settlers despite the land being Creek territory. Benjamin Fitzpatrick, brother to Booth, sent Renny Fitzpatrick, a third brother, to the area to find a suitable location to farm. Settling about one mile south of Buckhead, he erected a log cabin in the fall of 1796. Shortly after, Benjamin Fitzpatrick moved over, settled on the site, and raised a large family. He died November 21, 1821 at the age of 75 years.

12.2 Enter Buckhead

Welcome to **Buckhead** (Morgan County Greenprint), one of the earliest settlements in Morgan County. Buckhead was the frontier in the late 1700s, and early pioneers settled this area beginning in 1796. By 1823 there was a post office and by 1824 a church.

The Georgia Railroad reached Buckhead in 1837 becoming a stop on this important link between Augusta and Atlanta. During its heyday in the early 1900s, Buckhead had a hotel, four general stores, and a meat market, among other going concerns. However, like many small towns in Georgia, things changed with the arrival of the boll weevil and the Depression.

Buckhead was home to the Fitzpatricks, Saffolds, Bells, McWhorters, Jacobs, Gunns, McRees, and Alford. Mr. P.H. McWhorter was from Greene County, and after moving here just prior the turn of the century, he began encouraging other families to move to Buckhead. Among families he convinced to move here from the North Carolina mountains were the Davis and Tamplin families. They moved here around 1902, and were important to Buckhead’s growth. Their descendants continue to serve the Town well.

Most of the historic commercial buildings you see were built between 1890 and 1906 during the Victorian Era.

12.8 Turn Right onto Parks Mill Road

On your right you will see what was the **Davis Brothers’ General Merchandise Store**, constructed by P. H. McWhorter in 1890. Also known as the Sugar Cane Mall, this building housed a dentist office, casket shop, drug store, milliner’s shop, and general store, which sold shoes, cloth, kerosene for lamps, groceries, candy, and ice.

The addition on the right was built by R.M. Baker as a **drug store** and was eventually used as part of the Davis Brothers’ store.

Attached to the left of the store was once the **Bank of Buckhead**. The bank failed as a result of the upheaval of the cotton economy caused by the boll weevil in the 1920s.

Just past the empty lot is **Bell’s Grocery**. Constructed in 1904 for E.L. Alford, Mr. Jacobs purchased this store for use as a general store and eventually sold the building to Turner Bell. Renamed Bell’s Grocery, residents could buy just about anything, including Purina feed and seed for farming operations.

The last lot on this block was the site of **Riley Taylor’s meat market**. An African-American businessman, Mr. Taylor would slaughter an animal on Thursday and everyone would come buy their meat for the weekend.

Turn Right onto Seven Islands Road

This building on your left was built in 1910 for \$626.00 as the **Buckhead Jail**. The building has been used as a polling place and Town Hall. Today the building is in need of repair, and the Town would like to restore the building to use again as the Town Hall.

12.9 Turn Right onto Davis Street

On your right you will see the **posts of the hitching rail** that remain from the horse, wagon, and carriage days. Folks would ride to town to do some shopping and hitch their horses here for the duration of their outing. Imagine Buckhead in those days, thriving and busy with people shopping and visiting. It was such a bustling town that a book of Code and By Laws was written by Town Council in 1920. A bell rang at 9:00 o’clock every night and all women were to get off the streets. Another bell rang at 10:00 o’clock, which meant for everybody to close the stores and go home.



Sunnyside Hotel, on Wagnon Street (Baldwin Dairy Road), built by Ashbury Hannah c. 1890. It burned in 1933. Source: Morgan County Heritage website.



Plat of downtown Buckhead in 1929 showing the locations of buildings, wells, water tanks, etc. Source: Morgan County Heritage website.



Davis Brothers' General Merchandise Store, built in 1890 by P.H. McWhorter. Source: Barbara Bell Tyson; Morgan County Heritage website.



Bell family children sitting atop the well in the middle of the road in downtown Buckhead.

Turn Right

#21

#22

#23

#24

#25

Turn Right

#26

Turn Right

#27

#28

#29

Turn Right

Turn Left

#30

#31

Loop Back
& Turn Left

Turn Left &
Pause

Turn Right

Turn Right

On your left you will see an **empty lot** where George Davis once had a house. Can you see the allee of trees along what was once the drive to the house? He lived here with his wife Emma and their 10 children. George owned and operated the Davis Brothers’ General Merchandise Store just across the street. What a nice commute! If you look to the **upper story** of this building, you will see where Charles McClain Davis sold caskets. Hopefully not too many!

Turn Right onto Baldwin Dairy Road

In the middle of this paved road you can see a **medallion**. This is where there was once a well used to water horses. If you remember from the last Ramble, Bostwick also had a well in the middle of town, as did Madison at one time.

Turn Left onto RR Street

On your right is the site of the former **Buckhead train depot**. There used to be four passenger trains stopping here each day. The mail was brought to Buckhead on the 11am train. The first depot building was built in 1840 but was burned 24 years later by Union General Geary’s Division. The second depot building was constructed one year after that fire and was in use for another 91 years before it was removed in 1956. It was from here that children would pay 15¢ to ride to Madison and back.

13.0 Here you can see the rise in the road leading to what used to be the **bridge** over the railroad tracks. Built in 1914, the bridge was destroyed in 1980. Children crossed the railroad on this bridge as they walked to school, passing the Bell Family’s cotton gin and seed house just on the other side of the tracks. In the mid 1900s, if you lived within a mile and a half of the school, you were not allowed to ride the bus.

Loop back around turning left onto McWhorter Street.

13.1 Turn Left onto Baldwin Dairy Road. Pause at the stop sign.

Here, from the center of town, you can see the remnants of what was once a thriving town. Buckhead was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2002 for: 1) its architectural integrity of its remaining historic buildings; 2) as a good example of historic development along the railroad; and 3) its ethnic heritage of historic resources associated with the African-American community in this small rural town.

13.2 Turn Right onto Parks Mill Road

BUCKHEAD MARKER

One of the earliest settlements in Morgan County, the area around Buckhead was still in close proximity to Native American Territory in the early 1800s. According to local lore, a group of hunters tracking game crossed the Oconee River from Greene County and found this area to be ideal for settlement. To attest to their good fortune, the head of a buck deer killed by the hunters was hung in a tree.

Though the town of Buckhead was formally incorporated by the Georgia Legislature in 1887 and recorded in 1908, the earliest document reference to this community dates to 1819 in an account ledger for a general store located here. By 1823, a post office had been constructed, and by the 1830s, the Georgia Railroad came through Buckhead. A Methodist Church was organized in 1824, and a Baptist Church in 1890. A four-room schoolhouse that had ten grade levels, employed eight teachers, and possessed an auditorium was constructed in 1900.

Buckhead also enjoyed a thriving commercial center that included four general stores, two drug stores, a bank, a cotton buyer’s office, three restaurants, a barber shop, a livery stable and a hotel. Industries included a cotton gin, a grist mill, and a blacksmith shop.

Several large fires have taken their toll on Buckhead through the years destroying many of its old buildings. Additionally, the agriculture economy has shifted from cotton production to dairy operations.

13.2 Turn Right onto Seven Islands Road

The Victorian Era residential development of Buckhead can still be seen along Seven Islands Road. Despite a few modern intrusions, much of the historic fabric still remains. The houses date from the late 19th century through the early 20th century and are generally vernacular in design with some Folk Victorian and Craftsman detailing.

Green Text denotes resources listed on either the Morgan County Greenprint or the Madison Greenprint.



An undated photo of the Buckhead depot. The signs above the doors denote the segregated waiting rooms. Source: Morgan County Heritage website.



Children gardening at the old Buckhead School located on a site near the former Buckhead Methodist Church. Source: Educational Survey of Morgan County Georgia, 1915.



Students at the Buckhead School in 1905. Source: Gail Wade; Morgan County Heritage website.

#32

13.7 On your right is one of the many **dairies** that have at one time been owned by the Bell family. Begun in the 1930s, the dairy is currently owned by Margaret Bell and is still in operation. Interestingly, the farm is located within the city limits of Buckhead and helps define the edge between town and country.

Seven Islands Road is listed on the Morgan County Greenprint as a scenic road. Once known as the Alabama Road, the old road was an important emigrant route to the west. Travelers from northeast Georgia and the upper Carolinas followed the trace to the Mississippi Territory, Louisiana and later Texas. Although no longer following that original route, our Seven Islands Road continues to be an important route in Morgan County taking travelers from Buckhead westward.

SEVEN ISLANDS ROAD MARKER

The Seven Islands - Alabama Road - was an important emigrant route to the west. Travelers from northeast Georgia and the upper Carolinas followed this trace to the Mississippi Territory, Louisiana, and later Texas.

Originally an important link in the Oakfuskee or Upper Creek Trading Path, the Seven Islands Road became a wagon road long before the Creeks were expelled from Georgia. As an Indian trail, the Seven Islands path, crossed both the Oconee and Apalachee rivers at what is now Swords, Ga. When Park's bridge was opened about 1807 some eight miles from here, however, the trace began there on the west bank of the Oconee and ran to the Seven Islands of the Ocmulgee.

Beyond the Seven Islands, the road travelled westward via Indian Springs, where it became the Alabama Road. The Alabama ran past Marshall's Ferry on the Flint to what is now Columbus and crossed the Chattahoochee at Kennard's Ferry to join the Federal Road a few miles west of Fort Mitchell, Ala.

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1993

Interstate 20 was constructed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Thanks to a few local leaders including State Senator Roy Lambert, I-20 follows a route through Morgan County. But it was not initially planned that way. One day Senator Lambert was joined by Waymon Carmichael on a trip to Atlanta to meet with the GA DOT. The planned route of I-20 ran closer to Eatonton, and Lambert and Carmichael wanted to change the route. Mr. Carmichael owned a significant amount of land in his cotton farming operation and offered to donate 600 acres of land to the DOT. That single donation made it financially feasible for the DOT to change the route so that I-20 ran through Morgan County, just south of Madison.

14.6 Cross I-20

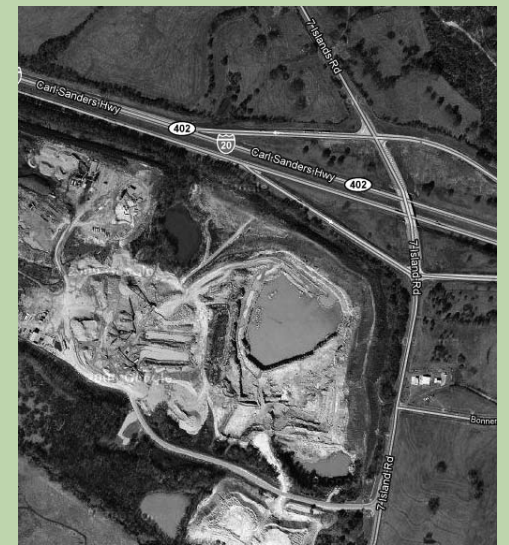
14.9 After crossing the I-20 overpass, you will see **Lafarge Aggregates** [1761 Seven Islands Road]. This quarry was established to provide aggregate for the construction of I-20. It continues to provide crushed granite today.

The I-20 connection to Atlanta is part of the transportation network that has been so important to Morgan County's agricultural development. I-20 running east and west and HWY 441 running north and south have been integral to Morgan County farmers' ability to get their products from the farm to the market. Here in the heart of Morgan County's dairy industry, I-20 was especially important in getting the milk from the farm to the Atlanta Dairy for further distribution.

15.1 You can see here Bell Bridge as it crosses Sugar Creek. This is where kids would swim almost daily in the summers in a deep **swimming hole**. The water was so deep that Irene Paul's parents even built a diving board.

We are in the midst of Bell Country. Most of the land around here was once engaged in dairy farming, and much of it was owned by the Bell family.

In 1903 the Bell family moved here from Hall County with their three sons: Joe, Turner, and Terrell. The Bell businesses included farming, saw milling, cotton ginning, and a country store. After the sons were grown, they had their own farms, stretching from Bethany Road to Buckhead along Seven Islands Road.



Aerial view of the quarry at Lafarge Aggregates.
Source: Google Maps.



Tenell Bell, Jim Bell, Barbara Bell, Joe Bell, Virginia Bell, Turner Bell, Estes Bell in Florida. Source: Barbara Bell Tyson; Morgan County Heritage website.

#33

#34

After the boll weevil devastated the cotton crop in the 1920s and because cotton farming had depleted the soil, son Joe diversified his businesses to include a sawmill, a cotton gin, and wheat and timber production. During his life as a farmer, Joe Bell was a conservationist, constantly improving the soil. With the coming of the Great Depression, Joe and Turner each turned to dairying, which was beginning to be a lucrative endeavor. Atlanta was growing, and so was the demand for milk in the area. In addition to dairy farming, Joe Bell began to ship milk from the local dairies to Atlanta. Because there were no refrigerated trucks, the milk was shipped at night in 20-gallon cans.

Turner Bell also ran a sawmill and cotton gin, as some cotton was still grown in the area. He, too, had a dairy. He also built a chicken house to raise chickens replicating the successful poultry production occurring in North Georgia. Chicken feed was shipped to Buckhead in boxcars on the railroad.

As more people in this area turned to raising livestock, such as cattle and chickens, Turner Bell became a Purina dealer in Buckhead and sold feed to the local farmers for their chickens and cows. This feed was sold in printed cloth sacks suitable for clothing, and many people can still remember wearing shirts, dresses, aprons, and other garments made from them.

Turner Bell’s sons, Curtis and Charles, took over the dairying business after they graduated from the University of Georgia, while son Terrell was mayor of Buckhead.

16.8 Up ahead, you will see what is known as **Bell’s Crossing** [intersection of Seven Islands Road and Bethany Road], the site of the former Bell’s store, where they ground corn and sold groceries and tobacco and served the residents of this community of Bethany. Bethany is unlike most communities in Morgan County, in that it is very spread out. The church, school, and stores were not located together near a cross-roads like in most communities. Regardless of the expansiveness of Bethany, the community was very tightly knit. Irene Porter Paul remembers the night that her family’s barn burned to the ground. The loss was devastating, but the response from the community was heartwarming: the Porters’ neighbors and friends from all over Bethany came out for a barn raising. The barn they built still stands today.

16.8 Turn Right onto Bethany Road

In order to service this wide-spread community, Gordon Brewer owned and operated the Rolling Store. Mr. Brewer traveled all over the eastern and southern part of the county selling various staples as well as cigarettes, candy, chewing tobacco, and snuff.

As you crest the hill, take a moment to soak in the views of these historic landscapes—some of the most beautiful in all the county.

16.8 Turn Right into Steffen Thomas Museum

17.9 As we turn into the **Steffen Thomas Museum** [4200 Bethany Road] take a look to the left of the museum to see the old **Bethany School**. The old structure has been adapted to be a home. The Bethany School was the second school in Georgia to be standardized, and in 1913 was mentioned as the one school that deserved

special mention in the Annual Report of the GA Dept. of Education to the GA General Assembly. “In beauty of grounds, tastefulness of interior furniture and decoration, in excellence of work, management of children, social relations, cheerful co-operation of parents and children, industrial work, cleanliness, sanitation and general good spirit and order, I have never seen its equal in either city or country. It’s one teacher, Miss Stella Nolan, the patrons, and the children most richly deserve an honored place in this or any other school report.”

“The Steffen Thomas Museum of Art is dedicated to providing art education programs and projects for children and families in rural Northeast and Middle Georgia communities. Using Georgia artist Steffen Thomas’ work as examples of creative expression the museum provides opportunities for children to develop their own talents, a deeper understanding of themselves, of their connections to all living things and of their responsibility for preserving the environment.”

Turn around in Steffen Thomas Museum parking lot, turn Left to go back down Bethany Road

As you can see there are many dairies in Morgan County. According to Larry Massey, who was the State Dairy Inspector for Georgia, in the 1950s, Georgia was a big dairy state and Morgan County had the highest number of dairies in the state. Neighboring Putnam County had fewer dairies but had more dairy cows. Because there was a surplus of milk nation-wide, dairy farmers got together and decided to buy out dairies to change the market dynamics and reduce competition.

Green Text denotes resources listed on either the Morgan County Greenprint or the Madison Greenprint.



Dairy cows in a field of clover in Morgan County. Source: unknown.



Students and teacher at Bethany School in 1910. Source: Educational Survey of Morgan County Georgia, 1915.



Sharecropper and family moving from tenant farm near Madison, 1939. Photographer: Marion Post Wolcott; Source: Library of Congress Farm Security Administration-Office of War Information Collection.

#35

Turn Right

Turn Right

#36
#37

Turn Around

Three of these Dairy Herd Buyouts occurred in the 1980s and resulted in fewer and larger dairies in Morgan County. Before the 1980s, there were approximately 200 dairies here. Today, there are 22 dairies with 5,300 dairy cows and a farm gate value of more than \$15 million ranking Morgan County #4 in the state for dairy.

Morgan County Cooperative Extension Agent Bobby Smith says, “I still think that dairy farms are a viable farm enterprise in Morgan County. We have the infrastructure with a local feed mill and dairy supply store that many communities don’t have. There will continue to be dairies in Morgan County as long as we have young people who love it enough to come back and work hard to be the next generation in dairy farming.”

19.1 Cross Seven Islands Road

Current County Commissioner Sammy Cathey grew up in this area of Morgan County and milked cows here at the **Bell Dairy** until he finished High School. Many of Mr. Cathey’s family members continue to farm, raising chickens, dairy cows, and beef cattle. After 32 years working at Bell South, he retired, returned to Morgan County, and now manages farms for a few out-of-town landowners who lease their land to local farmers. “This is the future of agriculture,” Mr. Cathey says, referring to the trend of out-of-town landowners leasing land to local farmers. Leasing land allows farmers to invest more in their operations (transportation, marketing, etc.) than they would be able to if they purchased the land outright.

20.2 Remember that Bethany Church was constructed from a church at **Alliston Grove**? Well, this is Alliston Grove. See what’s left of **Huff’s Store**. If these quaint gas pumps don’t make you nostalgic, this might: they’re set at 35 cents/gallon.

You are now entering a Groundwater Recharge Area.

Do you know where the water from your kitchen faucet comes from? It comes from either underground (groundwater) or streams (surface water). Most county residents get their water from a well, tapping the groundwater source. Areas, like those around you now, are where the groundwater supply gets replenished. A Groundwater Recharge Area is where water percolates through the soil into the aquifers below. It is from these aquifers that many Morgan County residents get their drinking water.

Surface and ground water are two separate entities, but they are part of an interrelated system. Groundwater bubbles up through the earth through what we know as springs. These springs provide the base flow for our streams and rivers. Without that base flow, our streams and rivers would run intermittently, only when we have rain. In times of drought, which seems constant these days, we can see how important our groundwater is to our water supply in general.

20.7 Turn Right onto Cedar Grove Road

Groundwater Recharge Areas are very important in sustaining the groundwater supplies. If this groundwater recharge area were paved over, the water that now percolates into the ground to refill the aquifers would instead run off downstream into the rivers and eventually to the ocean. Next time you are offered a glass of water in Morgan County, remember the importance of areas like these.

21.5 Up ahead, notice the well managed **timber stands** along the road. Forest-related industries play a major role in Georgia’s economy, providing 118,423 jobs and contributing \$27.7 billion to Georgia’s economy. Of Georgia’s 37 million acres of land area, 67% is forestland most of which remains in private ownership. Nearly all of Georgia’s forestland is timberland, meaning it is available for commercial use, and Georgia has more privately owned timberland than any other state in the nation. In addition to these economic benefits, the state’s forestlands provide a myriad of benefits to citizens, including clean air and clean water. Did you know that two out of every three raindrops falling in Georgia lands on forests? Our forests are, therefore, one of the most significant factors affecting our water quality and quantity.

22.0 Turn Left onto Kingston Road

Ahhhh, don’t you love Morgan County’s gravel roads. There are 86 miles of gravel roads in Morgan County, making 20% of all our roads gravel. Gravel roads slow you down, demand that you relax. Do you hear that whisper in the pine trees? “If you build it, they will come.” But this is a caveat rather than a directive. Improved roads invite development, and while some development is desirable, it should always remain in balance with our timber and agriculture which is, somewhat literally, Morgan County’s bread and butter. Dirt roads are a check on development that cost zero dollars! Not to mention dirt roads contribute to the character of Morgan County providing the agri-tourist the opportunity to have an authentic agrarian experience.

22.8 Turn Right onto Bethany Road

12 Tickets available from the Madison-Morgan Conservancy at (706)342-9252



View of Bell Dairy from Seven Islands Road. The Bell Family has been farming this land since the early 1900s when they arrived in Morgan County. This farm was first a cotton farm and is now a dairy farm.



Early photograph of the Bell family. Source: Cathey family; Morgan County Heritage website.



Lester Beall’s 1937 poster for the Rural Electrification Administration illustrating the advantages of electricity.

Turn Around
#41

22.9 Go to house and turn around in driveway

This is the **Zachry Kingston House** [6300 Bethany Road]. Built around 1811, Abner Zachry purchased this property in 1835 and it remained in the family for many years. Does the house form look familiar? It should, you’ve seen it at the Roger’s House at the beginning of the Ramble. Here, the Federal style portico of the front porch has been restored returning the house to its original look. Also, notice that the owners have added onto the house while managing to maintain the original form. This house was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

What a beautiful vista and wonderfully secluded setting. However, this is not what Abner Zachry was getting when he bought his house. He was buying on the edge of a village called Kingston. Benajah King bought land lot 299 in 1805 and in 1817 he began carving off small lots at the crossroads creating the town of Kingston. The 1837 A Gazetteer of the State of Georgia noted that Kingston “contains 4 houses, 2 stores, some shops, and a house of worship for the Baptists and Methodists, seldom used.” (The author was a minister and could be pretty snarky about church attendance!) Kingston vied with Eatonton for access to the first railroad, but this grand dream did not come to fruition and Kingston disappeared before the end of the nineteenth century.

23.1 Pause at intersection of Mt. Zion Road

Look in the trees on the opposite corner, just off the road, and you’ll see the **Old Joshua Hill Place**. Constructed in the years following the Civil War, this house served as Joshua Hill’s country place after his other plantation was burned by Slocum’s troops.

Turn Right onto Mt. Zion Road

23.4 Shortly after the end of the Civil War, Joshua Hill permitted the newly freed African American in the surrounding community to build **Mt. Zion Baptist Church** [1791 Mt. Zion Road] on his land. Hill then deeded this property to the congregation in 1872. The congregation eventually added a school building and a Society House on the property. Today, you can see the church (rebuilt in 1971), Society House, and cemetery; the school building has been moved from the site.

The little building to the left of the church, built in the 1940s, was the “Society House” for the Brothers and Sisters of Unity. Such mutual aid societies were once common in rural African American communities. These societies functioned essentially as insurance cooperatives and would cover a member’s costs for burial including a headstone. Some also provided sick pay during times of illness.

According to Earnest Butler who attended school here, the Mt. Zion school was a two-room building which served grades 1–7 with one teacher, Ms. Thelma Kelly, who would go back and forth between the two rooms to teach her pupils. In 1957, after consolidation of the Morgan County Schools, Earnest attended Pearl Street School, which is now the Morgan County Middle School.

Earnest’s brother, the late County Commissioner, Walter Curtis Butler, Jr., is buried in the cemetery here, as are his great grandparents and grandparents. From Bob Butler, whose name is listed on the corner stone, to 79-year old Walter Curtis Butler, Sr., who still cuts the grass on the grounds, the Butler family has long been a significant part of Mt. Zion Church.

Walter Curtis Butler, Sr., was instrumental in getting Mt. Zion Road paved. You will see that the bridge here is named for him. His son, Commissioner Butler, was also familiar with the need for good roads and he had experience in what it took to actually build a good road – he helped build I-20 in the late 1960s.

25.0 Pause at the intersection of Parks Mill Road

If you were to turn right here, you would eventually end up near what was once the legendary Park’s Mill.

Turn Left onto Parks Mill Road

The late Grayson White and his family lived for many years on the Park’s Mill property, about which you will soon hear more. Grayson’s father, Fred worked as a mail carrier and eventually became President of National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association. In his effort to improve roads for rural mail carriers, Mr. Fred White told Georgia’s Governor at the time, Marvin Griffin, that if he would pave the road to White’s house, he would throw a big barbeque for him. Well, the road was paved, and on May 30, 1958, there was indeed a big barbeque: Senator Roy Lambert welcomed the Governor to a throng of more than a thousand people. The Letter Carriers proclaimed Governor Marvin Griffin as “the best friend rural Georgia ever had.” Archivist Woody Williams attended the barbeque and recently reminisced about the importance of the event to Morgan County.

Green Text denotes resources listed on either the Morgan County Greenprint or the Madison Greenprint.



The Zachry Kingston House was built c. 1811 as an I-house. The house is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



Mount Zion’s Society House, now expanded, served as the meeting place for the Brothers and Sisters of Unity.



Mr. Walter Curtis Butler, Jr. served as County Commissioner and is buried at Mt. Zion Baptist Church Cemetery.



F.L. White with his postal delivery buggy. The sign on the porch reads, “Post Office, Riverside GA,” Park’s Mill P.O. Designation. Source: Vanishing Georgia Collection.

Pause
#42

Turn Right
#43

Pause

Turn Left

Cross the I-20 bridge

As we approach Swords, get your tumblers out. A contemporary of Jack Daniels Distillery, J.B. Swords Distillery manufactured whisky until Prohibition brought that to an end. Tipplers during Prohibition were not deprived of their elixir though, for bootleggers made sure there was plenty of moonshine to be had.

In 1892, an article in the Athens Banner lamented the moldering demise of an ante-bellum plantation known as the Blue Spring Place. It noted, "The spring from which the place gets its name is one of the finest in Georgia. The rock has been blasted away, and the water so clear and beautiful that it appears blue, gushes forth with a boldness rarely seen in this country. Once we heard a visitor say that it looked wrong to see that water run off without being utilized in some way. We heartily said, 'Amen.'"

26.6 Turn Right onto Blue Springs Road

26.8 John Buchanan "Buck" Swords said, "Amen" as well; and in 1895 he began to buy land here, eventually amassing a farm of some three thousand acres. Mr. Swords needed the pure spring water for his **distillery** business, which he established just north of where Blue Springs Road crosses the railroad. On the remainder of his vast land holdings, he grew cotton and harvested timber.

27.3 Pause at the Swords House

Up ahead, you will see the **John B. Swords House** [1380 Blue Springs Road]. This is the house that John B. and Su Briney (Moon) Swords built on the former Blue Springs plantation. The house here now evolved from a two-room cabin and the structure of that cabin is still evident inside the walls of this beautiful home. Also still standing on the property are the smokehouse and old barn. The legendary blue spring, bounded by a tall rock wall, is in the woods behind the house and continues to flow with crystal clear water – a tasty treat in the hot summer!

James Moon and his family live here now and run this dairy. Jim's wife, Sylvia, and sons Hunter and Jay are intimately involved in dairying. Jim is a third generation dairyman, following his father here on this farm. Just down the road, his grandfather started a dairy in the 1930s. The Moons raise all their own dairy cattle, breeding them here on the farm; and they distribute and market their milk through Dairy Farms of America, the largest dairy co-op in the country. Mayfield and Kroger use the Moon's milk for their dairy products.

THE MARCH TO THE SEA MARKER

On Nov. 15, 1864, after destroying Atlanta and cutting his communications with the North, Maj. Gen. W.T. Sherman, USA, began his destructive campaign for Savannah – the March to the Sea. He divided his army [US] into two wings. The Right Wing marched south from Atlanta, to feint at Macon but to cross the Ocmulgee River above the city and concentrate at Gordon.

The Left Wing (14th and 20th Corps), Maj. Gen. H.W. Slocum, USA, marched east to Decatur where the 20th Corps, Brig. Gen. A.S. Williams, USA, took the road to Social Circle, striking the Georgia Railroad there and destroying through Madison.

On the 19th, at Madison, the 2nd Div., Brig. Gen. John W. Geary, USA (formerly Mayor of San Francisco), was detached to burn the R.R. Bridge 13 miles E of Madison. At Buckhead, after his advance "exchanged a few shots with the enemy's scouts," Geary burned the depot and large stocks of cord wood, ties and cut timbers.

At Blue Spring (Swords), he camped on Col. Lee Jordan's plantation where he "found 280 bales of cotton and 50,000 bushels of corn stored for the rebel Government." That day, about five miles of track, the R.R. bridge over the Oconee River, ferry boats on the Apalachee River, several mills, gins and presses, and about 250 more bales of cotton were destroyed.

On the 20th, Geary marched to Park's Mill, which he burned, destroyed the ferry boat there, and turned south into Putnam County to rejoin the 20th Corps south of Eatonton.

27.8 The **Swords Community Cemetery** on the left is where John Buck Swords and his family are buried. J.B. Swords established this cemetery and, prior to willing it to Swords Methodist Church, ruled that the plots at the bottom of the hill would cost \$5 and those at the top of the hill would be \$10. The Church has since changed this rule, but it is not surprising to find at the very top of the hill the grave of John Buck Swords.

14 Tickets available from the Madison-Morgan Conservancy at (706)342-9252



Atlanta Constitution, March 15, 1971: Mr. and Mrs. Fred White watched from their house while their barn was submerged as the rising Oconee River ran wild and wide in Morgan County.



The Park's Mill site on the banks of the Oconee River, c. 1807, included a grist mill, ferry, the Parks Family Home, tavern, and inn. Source: Vanishing Georgia Collection.



J.B. Swords House as it exists today. The house evolved from a two-room cabin. The Moon family removed the aluminum siding to reveal the decorative wood details.



Moon Family: Jim Moon, Hunter Moon, Sylvia Moon, Jay Moon.

Placed by: Georgia Historical Commission, 1957

Turn Right

#44

Pause
#45

#46

Turn Left

#47

28.0 Turn left into the Oconee National Forest boat ramp and turn around after pausing for a long view of Lake Oconee

Welcome to the Oconee National Forest. Only one small piece of the forest is in Morgan County, and you're seeing it here at the Swords Recreation Area!

28.1 The Oconee National Forest was created in 1959 when President Dwight D. Eisenhower proclaimed 96,000 acres of federal land to be set aside for conservation. Here you can see what used to be the Apalachee River and what is now beautiful Lake Oconee.

Three and a half miles downstream, after the confluence of the Apalachee and Oconee Rivers, is the former site of the Parks Mill constructed c. 1807. In addition to the gristmill and the ferry, Park's Mill was the location of the Park family home, which also served as a general store, post office, tavern and inn for travelers along this route. None of this exists today. By the 1930s, the mill and dam had collapsed and, in 1978 when Lake Oconee was created, the Parks family home was relocated to Woods Road in Morgan County.

The White family purchased the Parks Mill Property in 1897 as the second owners of the property, and the property still remains in that family. Mr. and Mrs. Fred White, who owned the Park's Mill property when Lake Oconee was created, were not pleased about the flooding of Lake Oconee – they lost a significant portion of their farm, and even watched from their house while their barn was submerged as the rising Oconee River ran wild and wide in Morgan County.

PARK'S MILL MARKER

The construction of Park's Mill is thought to be contemporary with the creation of Morgan County by act of the Georgia Legislature in 1807. It was created on the banks of the Oconee River on land that was intermittently part of Greene County and Morgan Counties, as the county boundary in this area shifted several times during the 19th century. In 1839, it is identified as being in Morgan County, and it is known as Parks Bridge. Then in 1919 it appears located in Greene County, identified as Parks Ferry.

In addition to the grist mill and the ferry, Park's Mill was the location of the Park family home, which also served as general store, tavern and inn for travelers along this route. Around the turn of the century it was a Post Office site, although records suggest that the site was known as Riverside given its location on the banks of the Oconee River. In the 19th century this was a significant early route for traffic between Greene and Morgan Counties [sic], but by the 1930s the mill and dam had collapsed. The house was relocated to Woods Road in Morgan County at the time that Lake Oconee was created, where it is identified by another historical marker.

Because of the individuals who take pride in this community, Park's Mill is recognized as a significant part of our county history.

Placed by: Morgan County Bicentennial Committee, 2009

Turn Right

Leave Oconee National Forest, and Turn Right onto Blue Springs Road

Not far from here, this road crosses Lake Oconee. Of course, before the lake was created, the road crossed the Apalachee River. J.B. Swords, owning land on the Morgan County side, and L. B. Chambers, owning land on the Greene County side, built a bridge across the Apalachee River around 1913 at their own expense hoping to direct the growing automobile traffic through their land. The bridge was 400 feet long and rose 60 feet above the water.

J.B. Swords' ambitions did not end with distilling, farming, and bridge building. He went on to build an entire town for himself and his family. The legislative act incorporating the Town of Swords appointed J.B. Swords as mayor and his son and son-in-law as two of the three councilmen.

Turn Left

#48

28.8 Turn Left onto Swords Road

The **Swords United Methodist Church** was constructed in 1912. Celebrating its 100th Anniversary next year, this Gothic style church has not changed much at all since it was built. The seats (not pews) in the church with their wrought iron bases and wooden seats alternate in size from small to medium to large, presumably to accommodate the various sizes of the people in a family. Other architectural details of note in this church are the stained glass windows and the beadboard ceiling.

Turn Right

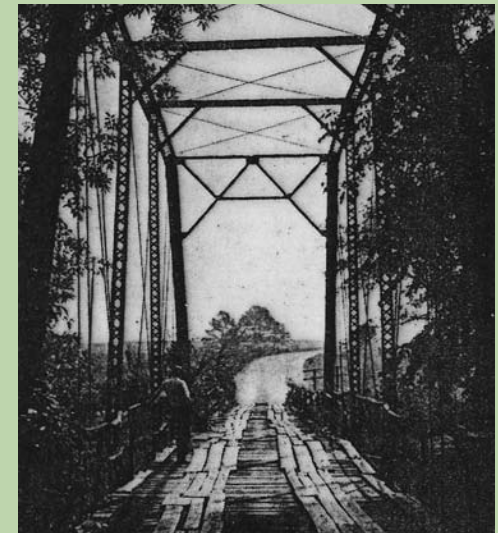
28.9 Turn Right to stay on Swords Road

29.0 Up ahead you can see what remains of the commercial center of Swords, which burned in the 1980s.

Green Text denotes resources listed on either the Morgan County Greenprint or the Madison Greenprint.



John "Buck" Swords' grave can be found at the very top of the hill in the Swords Community Cemetery.



Undated photo of Swords Bridge crossing the Apalachee River. The Bridge was constructed in 1913 by J.B. Swords of Morgan County and L.B. Chambers of Green County.



Undated photo of Swords bridge crossing the Apalachee River. Note that the land has been cleared in preparation for the flooding of the river to create Lake Oconee. The bridge was destroyed in the process.



Swords Methodist Church c. 1920. Source: John Wright; Morgan County Heritage website.

#49
#50

#51

Pause

#52

#53

Here, Swords built a large brick building to house the Swords Supply Company the J. B. Swords Bank and the Swords Post Office. To your right, you will see all that remains—a modern addition to that former building. See the remaining brick wall and the original **enclosure for the vault?** To your left you'll see the **bank vault** itself by a tree. The community also had a warehouse, a gristmill, a cotton gin, a schoolhouse, and a jail.

Cross the railroad tracks

In 1910, J. B. Swords persuaded the Georgia Railroad to construct a depot and a six-car sidetrack allowing him to ship timber, cotton, and liquor (kinda sounds like a country band doesn't it?). To your left, you will see the site of the old **Swords Train Depot** that was removed in 1956.

Pause at the Bond House

John B. Swords built this neo-classical revival **house** [1280 Swords Road] for his daughter, Lula May, and her husband Emory Bond in 1919. Emory owned and operated a gristmill in addition to extensive farming and timber interests in the Swords area. Lula May served as the postmistress for the Swords community until her death in 1935.

The current residents, Tom and Mitzi Prochnow, are the 4th owners of this house. They saved it from complete deterioration after the previous owner demolished the rear of the house with an aim to double the size for a bed & breakfast. The interior had been gutted and many of the architectural details stolen. Mitzi was surprised to find the columns in a moldy box in the garage.

Tom, a sculptor, uses the former owner's helicopter hangar (yes, you read that right!) as his art studio – that's where all the magic happens. Speaking of magic, look to your left and see the **deer** bounding through the woods. This dynamic sculpture is one example of Tom's work.

Continue on Swords Road

In a 1914 Madisonian article, C.M. Furlow wrote, "John B. Swords is one of Morgan County's rugged and picturesque characters. ... [The type who] smoothed the rough places in our life as a nation, and gave America with all of its glorious history to the present generation and their children, forever." Sadly, fate would turn against Swords. Prohibition closed the distillery in 1918, the boll weevil wrought havoc on cotton in the 1920s, and lightning burned the cotton gin to the ground in 1924. The state legislature repealed the Town of Swords charter in 1927, a scant 18 years after its inception. Nonetheless, Mr. Swords continued to live a comfortable life in the community until his death in 1940.

Swords is listed on Morgan County Greenprint as a Historic Community

SWORDS MARKER

Named in honor of the family who contributed substantially to the economic success of the community, Swords has its roots in the success of the J.B. Swords Distillery. This industrial operation was an early manufacturer of whiskey and was a contemporary to Jack Daniels Distillery. Swords developed in proximity to the community of Blue Springs, one of the earliest communities in Morgan County. Blue Springs derived its name for the healthy natural water sources located in this area, which was an essential resource for Swords Distillery. In addition to the distillery, farms in the area produced cotton and timber, and in 1910 the Georgia Railroad constructed a side track and depot in Swords which facilitated easier transport for these commodities.

Formally incorporated by the Georgia Legislature on August 16, 1909, the Swords community boasted of a bank, post office, school building, and jail. Its commercial center boasted of a general supply store, blacksmith shop, grist mill, cotton gin, and several cotton warehouses. The Swords Methodist Church was constructed in 1912, and a community cemetery is located on Blue Springs Road in proximity to Lake Oconee. Prohibition in the 1920s brought about the demise of the distillery business. The reduction in the demand for passenger rail caused the removal of the depot in 1956, and the commercial center of Swords was destroyed by fire in the 1980s.

Though no longer incorporated, because of the individuals who take pride in this community, Swords is recognized as a significant part of our county history.



Old Swords Jail.



The old Swords Train Depot. The depot was removed in 1956, the same year the Buckhead Train Depot was removed.



Bond House built in 1919. Built by J.B. Swords for his daughter Lula May and her husband Emory Bond.



Emory Allen Bond and Lula May Swords Bond married in 1903.

Placed by: Morgan County Bicentennial Committee, 2009

Turn Right

29.6 Turn Right onto Parks Mill Road and go into Buckhead

#54

Georgia boasts a colorful mineral heritage since the first small shipments of kaolin were sent to England in the mid-18th century. Gold and precious gems have been found in our hills! One of the many amethyst deposits scattered through the crystalline rocks of the Appalachian Piedmont lies just off to your left. Amethyst is a type of quartz, purple in color, used often in jewelry, though the Greeks drank out of amethyst cups to ward off drunkenness. This vein of amethyst is a lighter purple, almost lavender, and therefore less valuable than the ideal grade of “Deep Siberian” which is very dark purple with flashes of red.

30.5 Look back into the trees to your left where, in 1964, Mr. Max Parker, great uncle of Amy Massey Bell and Larry Massey, managed the mining of **amethyst** from a cotton field. Back then, this road to Buckhead was surfaced with amethystine quartz, and was probably the only road anywhere that was paved with jewels.

Though there was never enough amethyst to be shipped by train to other markets, there are (or have been) a few amethysts from this deposit on display at the Capitol in Atlanta.

Area farms, on the other hand, have long produced cotton and other crops in quantities large enough to supply other markets, and this railroad to your right served our farmers well, hauling Morgan County crops to those larger markets.

In 1833, the Georgia Railroad was organized as one of the first two railroads chartered in Georgia. The rail was constructed in a westerly direction from Augusta, reaching Buckhead in 1837 and reaching Marthasville, later renamed Atlanta, in 1845. Augusta was initially the largest market for Morgan County’s farmers, only 84 miles by train from here. Atlanta is even closer and is now the largest consumer market in the state. Morgan County farmers continue to benefit from their proximity and connection, first by rail and now also by interstate, to that market.

The railroad sustained and grew towns along its line. Buckhead is a prime example. While Kingston withered and died, Buckhead grew and incorporated. It became an access point for both shipping out farm products as well as receiving supplies and manufactured goods. This spurred commerce, industry, and population growth.

33.2 Up ahead on your left you will see the **Buckhead Baptist Church**, which was organized in 1890. This church building was constructed in 1894. When the Methodist church burned in 1914, the Baptist congregation offered their Methodist brethren use of the church. The Baptists met in the morning and the Methodists in the afternoon. Although a 1929 revival here was so big that a tent was needed and it lasted an extra week, membership began to decline such that in 1946 the church began to share a pastor with Rutledge Baptist Church.

In a 1964 article entitled “The Church and the Declining Community,” Mrs. Joe Bell was quoted as saying “We think the population loss has stopped, and a new lake will be made here within the next few years that will attract many people. There is also a new super highway coming close to Buckhead. If our church can ready itself to meet the changes, we will stay strong.”

33.3 Turn Left onto Saffold Road

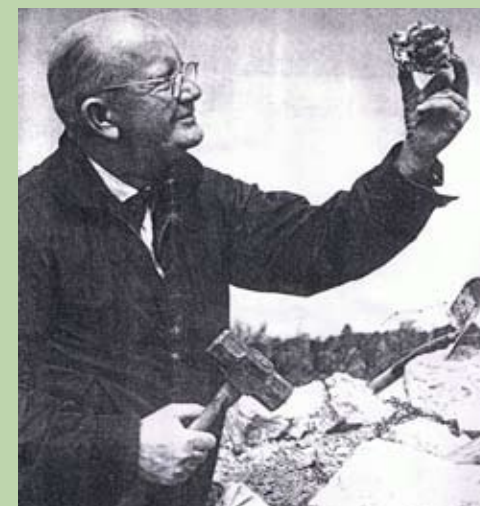
Dr. Seaborn Jones Saffold was born in 1789 in Wilkes County and moved to Buckhead in 1810. He was the first doctor in the area and practiced medicine from Athens to Monticello. In 1845 he built a vernacular version of a Greek Revival style house, known as the Saffold House, just down the road and lived there with his wife and two sons.

Why Seaborn Jones? Prior to Dr. Saffold’s birth, his mother and father discussed what to name their soon-to-be-born son. Mr. Saffold told his wife that on his trip to Augusta, he would stop the first ugly man he saw, ask him his name, and, whatever the name, it would be their son’s name. An ugly Seaborn Jones was encountered on the way and there has been a Seaborn Jones Saffold in every generation since.

33.5 On your left you will see the **home and gardens of Louise and Percy Tiller** [1110 Saffold Road]. Louise and Percy met picking peaches while Louise was in high school. Percy lived in Rutledge at the time and would walk 22 miles to Buckhead just to see Louise. They married after two months of courting and have been married for 50 years.

Throughout their lives, the Tillers and their sons Blake, Melvin, Victor and the late Fredrick, have worked in the farming industry as well as at Wellington in Madison. Most of their jobs, though, were related to agriculture: picking cotton, feeding calves for Charles Bell, picking peaches on the Mason land, hauling milk for S.J. Saffold and Williams Dairy Farm, working at Godfrey’s Seed, and working in the chicken plants in Rutledge, Bethlehem, and Monroe.

Green Text denotes resources listed on either the Morgan County Greenprint or the Madison Greenprint.



Max Parker examines an amethyst from the amethyst mine on the road to Swords, once paved with jewels.



An undated photo of the Buckhead Baptist Church and the house that was located beside it. The house was purchased by E. Hudson and moved to Lake Oconee. Source: Gail Wade; Morgan County Heritage website.



The Saffold House, built in 1845, is a vernacular version of a Greek Revival style house.



Louise Tiller in her garden.

#55

Turn Right

#56

Louise grew up growing vegetables and raising animals; and today she continues that tradition on a smaller scale. Louise brings home plants every chance she gets, even trading plants with friends. If you can't find her in her garden, you might find her at New Bethel Church or visiting other churches to sing and give devotions during Women's Day.

Turn Left
#57

33.5 Turn Left onto Perriman Road

33.6 On the left, what was once Mr. Perriman's **house** that served as a store where folks could buy clothes and other necessities.

#58

#59

On your right you'll see the **African-American Mason Hall** and beyond that a one-story, brick building. Constructed from bricks donated by Buckhead resident and African-American businessman, Riley Taylor, this **African-American school** served Buckhead's black students. Louise Tiller went to school here until 1958 when many rural black schools were consolidated into the Springfield School. At the same time the other rural black schools were consolidated into the Bostwick and Pearl Street schools.

That consolidation was not easy for many rural students. Alfred Murray remembers the city kids challenging the rural kids, bullying them to some degree; and Mr. Murray recalls the very moment in 5th grade that he decided to stand up for himself against a bully. "It was tough," he said; but he knew that education was the key to a better life, and in 1964 he graduated from high school as valedictorian of his class.

Turn Left
#60

33.8 Turn Left onto Parks Mill Road

To your right back in the woods, is the **John O'Flaherty House**, built c. 1896. The "Rock House" served as a tavern for people stopping on the train, and there was reportedly a still in the basement. Now home to Gail and John Wade (descendants of the Davis Brothers who owned the General Merchandise Store in Buckhead), the house continues to be an authentic link to this community's beginnings.

On the other side of the railroad track to your right, there were a few houses where the Gandy Dancers lived. What are Gandy Dancers, you ask? Well, they worked on the railroad fixing the tracks. They got their name, apparently, in reference to the rhythmic movements characteristic of such work, all the while singing chants to coordinate the work.

Turn Right

34.1 Turn Right onto Buckhead Road

#61

#62

34.3 On your right, you will see another of Buckhead's beautiful churches. In 1824, Alexander Fitzpatrick deeded land here for a meeting house for educational or religious purposes. Over the years, the property has had several buildings including the 1900 Buckhead School and a 1908 church. This Romanesque Revival style, brick church, originally the **Buckhead Methodist Church**, was built in 1915 after the earlier church was lost to fire.

On your left, you will see the **Buckhead School Gymnasium**, built in 1939 but closed after consolidation in 1968. Attached to this structure was the second Buckhead School, built in 1919 for white children. It was from here that students found their own way to show their patriotism during World War II. One day, they all decided to go out and pick cotton instead of going to school, so that they could make enough money to buy a new American flag for the school.

Still a patriotic spot, it is the location of Buckhead's annual 4th of July celebration, a barbeque and fireworks display, hosted by the town and volunteer fire department.

#63

On your left, you will see the **Gunn Cemetery**. Maintained by the City of Buckhead and a group of dedicated volunteers, this cemetery is home to some of the first pioneers in Morgan County. Thanks to the efforts of former Buckhead City Council member Gail Wade and many local donors, the city's cemetery will have funds available for several years of upkeep. Every 5 years, Mrs. Wade raises money through a letter writing campaign. The money goes to the City of Buckhead to pay for continued maintenance of the cemetery.

Turn Right

Turn Right onto Apalachee River Road

So what is this Greenprint you've heard about? In its simplest form, a Greenprint is a map of resources and a plan to protect those resources. Imagine a blueprint for the construction of a house, and then think Greenprint for the protection of natural, agricultural, and historic resources.

In 2003, the Greenprint process was initiated; and in 2004 Morgan County adopted the Morgan County Greenprint as part of its Comprehensive Plan. Following up on preliminary data gathered through that



The Rock House, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1991, was constructed of granite brought by train from Stone Mountain. Source: Gail Wade; Morgan County Heritage website.



Railroad worker housing in Buckhead was probably similar to these houses located elsewhere in the county. Photographer: Marion Post Wolcott; Source: Library of Congress Farm Security Administration-Office of War Information Collection.



The 1919 Buckhead School sat on the site now occupied by the Buckhead Fire Department. Source: Gail Wade; Morgan County Heritage website.



Map of Buckhead as it existed in 1910.

Turn Left

county-wide process, the City of Madison conducted and adopted their own Greenprint in 2009 which includes information specific to the City of Madison.

35.6 Turn Left onto Sugar Creek Church Road

Along this Greenprint Ramble tour, you see many of the resources identified on these two Greenprints, including the Historic Landmarks in Madison, Groundwater Recharge Areas, scenic roads, scenic views, and other important natural, agricultural, and historic resources.

Not far from here is an area known as Sugar Creek, which was once a thriving community with farms, a church, schools, and businesses. Both the Tamplin and Morris families lived and farmed land around Sugar Creek for many years.

Wayne Tamplin’s grandmother came to the Buckhead area around 1904 from Robinsville, NC in a wagon. His ancestors were farming here when the boll weevil struck in the early 1900s. For them and for many other families, the Depression began much earlier than the stock market crash of 1929, and in 1922, they lost their farm. They left this area and moved north of Madison on Hwy 83 where they sharecropped land until they could purchase it outright. Today, much of the Tamplin family still owns and farms the land up there where they raise beef cattle, soybeans, and wheat with the help of their son-in-law, Lee Nunn.

Louisa Christine Davis Morris purchased part of the former Tamplin farm in 1922 following her husband’s death. Her great-grandson, Roy Morris, now owns the old homestead, which you will see in a few minutes, and much of the Morris family still lives and works in Morgan County.

37.5 In 1806, before Morgan County’s incorporation, a congregation was organized just a few miles from here at **Sugar Creek Baptist Church**. The original site of the church is now under the waters of a large farm pond. Prior to the War Between the States, both whites and blacks attended that church, but in 1867, the black members left to establish their own church: Smyrna Baptist Church, which we will see in just a few minutes. The white congregation eventually built this church building in 1915.

37.5 Turn Right onto HWY 278

38.2 Turn Left into Hundred Acre Farm, continue to the first drive and turn around

Welcome to **Hundred Acre Farm**! Enjoy the views as you drive up the driveway to what is one of Morgan County’s most loved inns. Host to many intimate farm weddings, the Farmhouse Inn at Hundred Acre Farm is also a bed and breakfast with access to beautiful Lake Oconee. Guests can hike a woodland trail, canoe through quiet waters along the Oconee National Forest, feast on pasture-raised eggs and sustainably grown vegetables, or simply sit on the porch and enjoy the agrarian views.

In 2008, Ellis Johnson, current owner of Hundred Acre Farm, protected 92 acres of his 105-acre farm by donating a conservation easement. Thanks to Ellis, the prime ag soils, the hardwood forests, and the agrarian landscape along HWY 278 will remain forever.

Farm manager, Wes Holt, works here and at his family’s Sunflower Farm near Rutledge to promote agri-tourism and the local food movement, and both farms were instrumental in the production of FARMeander and in creating Madison Locally Grown.

Go back out to HWY 278 and turn Right

So what is a conservation easement anyway?

In essence, a conservation easement is a promise to future generations that Morgan County will continue to have farmland, timberland, historic structures and landscapes, and natural habitat. A more technical explanation is that conservation easements permanently restrict land use in order to protect some desirable conservation value. Not one-size-fits-all, conservation easements are flexible tools, each designed to meet the hopes and needs of the particular landowner and their land. This personal decision to restrict their property in some manner, usually by removing the right to develop, truly makes a conservation easement a gift to the future.

Fortunately, placing a conservation easement on land is not an entirely altruistic act. Donating a conservation easement can result in significant federal and state income tax incentives, estate tax benefits, and potential property tax benefits. Best of all, the landowner retains ownership and can sell, lease, or will the property at any time.

The benefits of land preservation extend to the rest of us as well. In addition to environmental benefits and improvement of the county’s quality of place, easements contribute to a balanced tax digest in Morgan

Green Text denotes resources listed on either the Morgan County Greenprint or the Madison Greenprint.

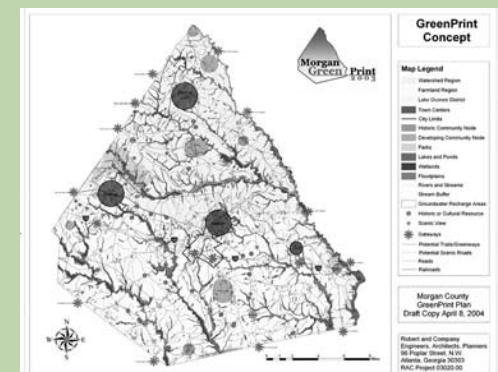
#64

Turn Right

Turn Left

#65

Turn Around



Morgan County Greenprint Concept Map.



Sugar Creek Baptist Church.



View of Lake Oconee from Hundred Acre Farm.
Photo courtesy of Scott Finsthwait.



FARMeander! A map and farm tour planning guide for the farms in and around Morgan County. Pick up your FARMeander at the Conservancy office or at Madison’s Visitors Center.

County. Unlike a field of houses, a field of cotton contributes more in taxes than it demands in services. That cotton doesn't need schools, paved roads, (much) fire protection, or connection to a sewer system. The goal of every county is a balanced tax digest and conservation easements help achieve this with no cost to the county.

Morgan County is rich in natural, agricultural, and historic resources, so it is not surprising that many landowners here have chosen to use conservation easements to protect a total of 1012 acres. Nationwide the trend is even stronger: as of 2010, approximately 40 million acres had been protected by conservation easements. The Conservancy hopes to add to these numbers and will continue to aid any landowners interested in protecting their land.

#66

39.8 See here the **Tamplin-Morris homestead** [3010 Greensboro Road] mentioned just a bit ago. Wayne Tamplin's father was born in this house, and Wayne's grandfather's blacksmith's shop was here on property. Today Gay and Roy Morris raise honeybees here, perpetuating a species that is at serious risk. Their honey is delicious too!

#67

40.1 Goose Creek Farm [2931 Greensboro Road] is another permanently protected farm in Morgan County. Current owners Janet and Bob Beauchamp have protected a total of approximately 275 acres here. A homestead dating from the early 1800s, this farm is thought to have been home to the Almand and Morton families, some of whom are buried to your left in a cemetery at the crest of the hill.

The Beauchamps built their home in the 1960's with changes and additions accruing over the years. The most dramatic recent change came with the tornado of April 28, 2011, which raged through Morgan County, causing widespread destruction and leveling a grove of ancient oaks right in front of the house, including one of the largest white oaks in Morgan County.

If you were to drive up to the house, you may also notice the extensive and eclectic collection of folk art, especially several sculptures by noted Morgan County artist Blue Chilton.

The Beauchamps cherish the views, natural resources and productivity of this land, and they have crafted a series of conservation easements that protect those values. Their easements protect Goose Creek and its associated riparian resources and adjacent hardwood forests, all of which support a wide variety of wildlife, including a healthy population of colorful fox squirrels.

They wanted to be sure to keep the wildlife preserve area separate from the productive farmland, where they raise grass-fed beef.

Have you ever eaten at Farm 255 in Athens, at FarmBurger in Decatur, or at the Conservancy's Membership Supper? If so, you have feasted on Goose Creek Farm's Cooke Cattle Company grass-fed beef! As the main supplier of grass-fed beef to these restaurants, George Cooke, son-in-law to the Beauchamps, is expanding his grass-fed beef operation by contracting with farmers across the state to raise grass-fed cattle on their land.

#68

40.3 See **Custom Dairy Equipment & Warehouse** [2840 Greensboro Road] on your right. Ask any dairy farmer and they will tell you the dairy supply man is your best friend. Why? They take care of both your refrigeration and vacuum systems (milking machines) neither of which you want out of commission for too long. Morgan County once had several of these businesses, including Milk Transport owned by E.L. Tamplin, Jr. and Joe Eidson and located in the old Creamery Building in downtown Madison. Such businesses are a reminder that agriculture is part of the larger Morgan County economy and the loss of farmland means the loss of jobs.

#69

You are now entering another Groundwater Recharge Area

41.0 On your left you will see **Smyrna Baptist Church** [3800 Greensboro Road]. This is the church that formed in 1867 when the black congregation of Sugar Creek Baptist Church broke away from the white congregation. Like many churches, Smyrna Baptist Church also maintained a school on the property. In the 1940s, Reverend Mitchell raised money from the Morgan County Board of Commissioners to build a school to replace their aging school building. The new school was built just across the railroad track. I.V. Henry and Alfred Murray both remember attending school there and tell the story of how Reverend Mitchell would get volunteers everyday to help build the school. Though just a boy at the time, I.V. Henry remembers helping with the construction in this community-wide effort.



Foot bridge over Goose Creek at Goose Creek Farm.
Photo courtesy of Scott Finsthwait.



Black Squirrel in a pine tree at Goose Creek Farm.
Photo courtesy of Scott Finsthwait.



Smyrna Baptist Church as it exists today.

#70

42.4 On your right, you will see the **Lambert Family Farm**. For many years, the Lambert family has made significant contributions to Morgan County in transportation, recreation, business, industry, politics, and agriculture.

In 1906 Ezekiel Roy (E.R.) Lambert, Sr., from Clarkesville, bought this farm following his graduation from UGA Law School and started his law practice in Madison. E.R. Lambert, Sr. went on to serve as city judge, on the Bank of Madison Board, and in the Georgia State Legislature. He also farmed cotton and corn with the help of a number of sharecroppers on the Lambert Farm.

E.R. Lambert, Jr., “Roy,” followed in his father’s footsteps, attending UGA’s Law School after serving in the Navy in WWII, practicing law in Madison, serving on the Bank of Madison Board, and farming – he converted his father’s farm into Lambert Dairy and operated it with John Thrasher in the 1950s-1960s. In May of 1954, after a blind date and three years of dating, Roy married Christine Davis of Brownville, TN. That same year, Roy was elected to the Georgia State Senate as the youngest member in the Legislature.

Christine Lambert says of the late Roy Lambert, “We are so fortunate to have had positive leadership in Morgan County over the years. Roy and Adelaide Ponder [owner of the Madisonian newspaper] were good friends and together helped shepherd Morgan County through some difficult times: integration, building I-20, creating Lake Oconee, building a bypass, resisting the widening of Madison’s Main St., etc. They always had the long view in mind.”

E.R. Lambert, III, “Zeke,” is the third generation farmer on the Lambert Family Farm. Raising row crops, alfalfa hay, beef cattle, and timber, Zeke is an example of how each generation evolves with the changing face of agriculture.

42.9 Here at **Georgia-Pacific’s Woodcraft Mill**, materials harvested from forests are converted into plywood, among other materials. With more than 40,000 people at approximately 300 locations in North America, South America and Europe, Georgia-Pacific is one of the world’s leading manufacturers and marketers of tissue, packaging, paper, pulp, building products and related chemicals.

“Spanning approximately 214 million acres, the forests of the southern United States provide a number of ecosystem services that benefit communities throughout the region. For instance, these forests purify water, regulate the timing and magnitude of water runoff and water flows, provide recreational opportunities and scenic vistas, and mitigate the effects of global warming by sequestering carbon. Southern forests are also among the most biologically diverse temperate forests in the world.”

44.0 Cross the by-pass

If you couldn’t tell by the recurring themes in this Ramble, the mission of the Madison-Morgan Conservancy is to provide public education on conservation matters and to protect and enhance the heritage and quality of life of the residents of Morgan County by preserving historic sites, greenspace, farmland, and timberland. The Conservancy, founded in 2000, was the first county-wide conservancy in the state. Our holistic approach to protecting Morgan County’s quality of life and critical resources consists of five programs: Conservation Easements, Development Review, Educational Forums, Resource Inventory, and Farm to Market Alliance. We believe our work is timely and important, and our growing membership seems to confirm our belief. We would like to publicly thank all our members for their moral and financial support over the years and for shaping and protecting this county, the best part of the South.

44.7 Enter Madison’s Historic District

44.8 Back in Beautiful Madison where many of the families you just heard about lived or worked, including the Lambert Family whose house, **Hilltop**, is on the right. It was built in 1838 by Samuel Shields as a wedding gift to his daughter, Julia Ann, upon her marriage to Thomas Jefferson Burney.

Main Street runs along the ridge separating Hard Labor Creek from Sugar Creek, which helped determined Madison’s location. This explains why the town’s streets do not orient to the compass. Always the bustling road to Greensboro and on high ground, it is no wonder that many of Madison’s oldest houses, the homes of early prominent citizens, are located here.



Zeke Lambert, Christine Lambert, and Roy Lambert in a cotton field in 2000.



Here at Georgia-Pacific’s Woodcraft Mill, materials harvested from forests are converted into plywood, among other materials. Two of every three raindrops falling in Georgia fall on forests, making our state’s timberland significant factors in our water quality.



Hilltop, like the Rogers House and the Zachry Kingstont House, is an I-house. The front portico, however, is Greek Revival in style. Source: Joe Smith.

#71

#72

The Madison-Morgan Conservancy '11 Greenprint Ramble

It is also here that the loss of three houses to a fast food restaurant prompted the citizens of Madison to take steps to protect the architectural heritage of the community. The city designated the Madison Historic District in 1989, and since that time residents and visitors alike have benefited from the protection of our cultural resources.

As you can see, Morgan County and its towns and cities are beautiful places. They look the way they do because of the families, businesses, and agricultural activities of the past, some of which you have seen today. It has been with great care that our landscapes have been shaped over many years. So, please, support your local farmers, celebrate your local history, and protect your local resources.

{}{}{}{ AFTERGLOW }{}{}{}

By Rose Koralewsky

The sun has set behind the hills, / But limpid skies its radiance show;
The heavens bloom like one vast rose– / It is the afterglow.
Dear Lord, when my life’s sun has set, / And I am gone, as all must go,
Grant that I too may leave behind / A lovely afterglow.

Thank you for supporting the Madison-Morgan Conservancy by rambling through Morgan County. We hope you enjoyed your tour!

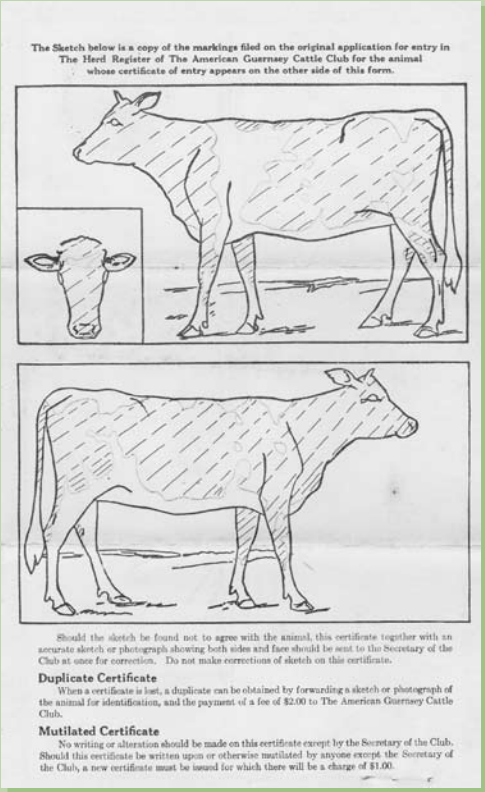
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The Madison-Morgan Conservancy is thankful for all the time and assistance provided by countless individuals throughout the Ramble’s year-long research process. We are especially thankful to those of you who shared your stories with us:

**Carolyn Ainslie
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Ken Kocher
Chris Lambert
Zeke Lambert
Randy Latimer
Shirley Andrews Lowrie
Carolyn Bell Massey
Larry Massey
Sylvia and James Moon and Family
Gay Morris
Alfred Murray
David Nunn
Irene Paul
Mitzi and Tom Prochnow**

**Jeanne Symmes Reid
Tim Reilly
Sandy Sanford
Richard Simpson
Wayne Tamplin
Tate Tewksbury
Joyce Thomas
Louise and Percy Tiller and Family
Barbara Tyson
Wayne Vason
Gail and John Wade
Laura Wheat
Luke Wilkins
Woody Williams**



Proof of registration of a bull named Major of Rose Lawn in the Guernsey Cattle Club. Also notes the transfer of ownership in 1931 from M.C. Ball of Thomasville, GA to Mr. J.H. Cochran of Swords.

From the Morgan County Greenprint:

“The Morgan County Greenprint Plan will serve as a long-term strategy for the preservation of features that are valuable to Morgan County residents and land-owners: the rural landscape, open spaces, agricultural lands, forests, environmentally sensitive resources, historic properties and structures, and a general quality of life. The Plan recognizes the inevitability and desirability of growth and economic expansion, seeking to balance allowance for growth with strategies to achieve significant preservation goals. Implementation of the Greenprint will involve actions from government leaders as well as private entities and citizens, beginning with the inclusion of Greenprint concepts in the Morgan County Joint Comprehensive Plan. Ultimately, the success of preservation efforts in Morgan County will be greatest if Greenprint planning continues as an ongoing process of collaboration among all members of the Morgan County community.”

From the City of Madison Greenprint:

“The City of Madison has set a precedent for protecting its quality of life through actively managing its growth patterns, providing high quality services, preserving its history and culture, and providing greenspace and parks to its residents. With significant public and stakeholder involvement, Madison’s Greenprint Addendum was created to inventory and prioritize the many greenspace and recreation resources that are valuable to residents... 30 Greenspace Opportunities and 38 Historic Landmarks were identified through the Greenprint Addendum process as important to the existing and/or future greenspace pattern in Madison. The Greenprint Addendum will serve the City well as a basic planning tool and should be used as the foundation for the City’s Greenspace Policy.”

Not a Member?

Join the Madison-Morgan
Conservancy by calling:

(706)342-9252

or online at www.mmcgeorgia.org

The Madison-Morgan Conservancy Board of Directors is immensely grateful for the sponsors who made this ramble possible and for the Committee who made it happen. We give a special thanks to Co-chairs Emily Buck and Ken Kocher for their creativity and passion for their respective roles: sourcing healthy, local food and ensuring academic excellence in historical research.

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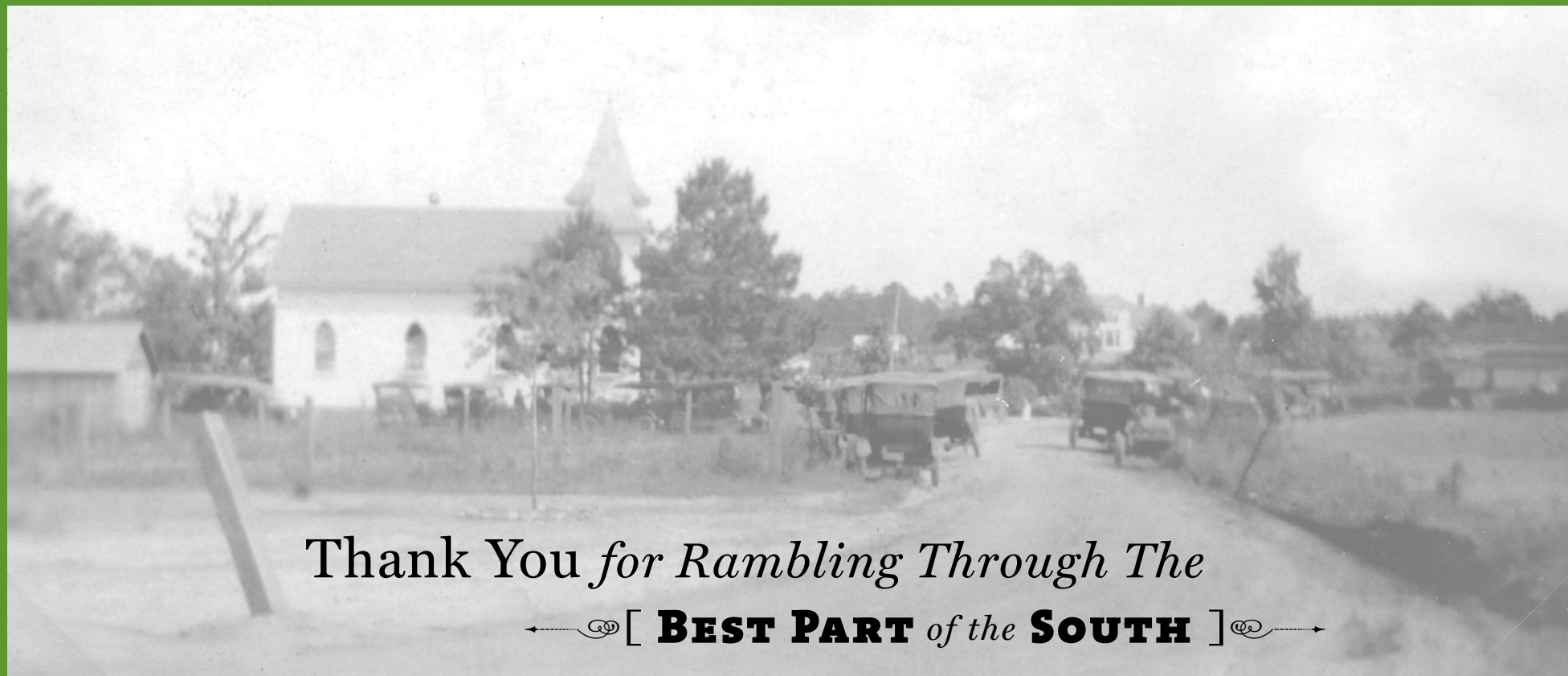
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Thank You for *Rambling Through The*

← [**BEST PART** of the **SOUTH**] →

*2011
Greenprint Ramble
Committee:*

Co-Chairs Emily Buck and Ken Kocher

Tour Committee:

Ken Kocher, Chair

Colleen Hall

Christine McCauley

Becky Sherwood

Supper Committee:

Emily Buck, Chair

Carolyn Ainslie

Mary McCauley

Ashley Nichols

Jennifer Palmer

Supper Hosts:

The Carter Family and Willow Oak Farm

Volunteer Coordinators:

Emily Buck

Julie Davie

Becky Sherwood

*Greenprint Ramble Supper at
Willow Oak Farm*

❧ **SOLD OUT** ❧

The Carter Family will host the Ramble supper at their Willow Oak Farm, one of Morgan County's premiere wildlife preserves.

In our effort to support Morgan County's agricultural industry, supper will be made from local meats, cheeses, vegetables, nuts, and dairy. Taste the bounty of Morgan County from these local farms:

Bee Factory Rob Bennett Venison

Burge Organic Farm **Buttercup Farm**

Greendale Farm **Hundred Acre Farm**

Johnston Dairy Farm **Lambert Farms**

Plow Point Farm **Sunflower Farm**

Tagyerit Farm **Tewksbury Farm**

Tinker Farm **Verner Farms**



The Bounty of Morgan County

2011 Greenprint Ramble Supper

Locally Grown, Raised, and Prepared

Appetizers

Butternut Squash Soup

Crudités—Cheeses, Spiced Pecans, Pickled Okra, Pesto, Peach Salsa, Pâté, Fresh Bread and Homemade Butter

Grits Bar with Bacon, Scallions, Cheddar, and Homemade Butter

Venison Meatballs

Main Courses

Carved Standing Rib of Beef

County Line Grilled Chicken

Whole-roasted Pasture-raised Pig

Sides

Corn and Butterbean Salad with Edamame

Garden Salad with Lettuce, Fennel, and Feta

Green Beans and Apples

Honey-glazed Carrots

Roasted Sweet Potatoes

Southern Cooked Greens

Squash Casserole

Dessert

Hand-picked Blueberry Cobbler

Homemade Vanilla Ice Cream

**Fresh From Farm To Fork:
Planting Seeds For Conservation**