



MADISON-MORGAN CONSERVANCY

CREATING A CULTURE OF CONSERVATION

WINTER, 2013-2014

NEWSLETTER AND ANNUAL REPORT

LAND CONSERVATION, FARMLAND PROTECTION, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In this highly compartmentalized world, we tend to distinguish between and among things that actually share more similarities than not. In our world of resource conservation, this happens a lot. Think about it - just start naming the organizations you know dedicated to resource protection: GA Conservancy, Ga Trust for Historic Preservation, Land Trust Alliance, National Trust for Historic Preservation, and so on... our many partners...

Not only are natural, agricultural, and historic resources often located in proximity to one another (especially in this historically agrarian landscape of Morgan County), the tools used to protect these resources are mostly the same. For instance, conservation easements, sometimes called preservation easements or facade easements, are used to protect all these resources.

As you may know by now, we do things a bit differently here at the Madison-Morgan Conservancy. Always have. This organization is the first county-wide conservancy in the state, and our holistic approach to conservation allows us to participate in a variety of projects on a local scale, so that we can protect all those resources - natural, agricultural, and historic. We do not hold conservation easements like land trusts, but rather work with landowners who want to use easements to protect their property and then connect them with a land trust (this process has resulted in approximately 1,750 acres being permanently protected in Morgan County). This affords us time to 1) work with farmers on things like regional food hubs and FARMeander, 2) work with developers to improve their plans through our development review committee, 3) create and host educational forums for the public, 4) work with landowners in protecting/rehabbing their historic structures, and 5) act as a resource for city and county planners on greenprinting and transfer of development rights (TDR).

This year much of that work will be showcased in our favorite event. Yes, it's time for the Greenprint Ramble! Save the date of Saturday, October 18th. You'll see farmland, wildlife habitat, and historic structures protected by private landowners through conservation easements; you'll see Hard Labor Creek State Park's CCC Camp; you'll see a restored one-room school house at Wallace Grove Baptist Church; and everything in between!

Also this year, we hope you'll join us for the inaugural FARMeander WEEKend! We are partnering with GA Food Tours to create this two-day event, April 12-13, with up to eight farms open and the opportunity to taste the bounty of Morgan and Newton Counties.

We will also continue with our educational forums and conservation easement work and will host a few other fun events. We hope to see you in March at the Membership Supper and in May at Derby Day! Bring your friends and encourage them to join the Conservancy - our membership is growing, and we want to continue on that trajectory.

We are very grateful to all of our members, grantors, volunteers, and partners for a successful 2013. It's amazing what we can accomplish together - let's do it again in 2014.

Sincerely,

Robert Trulock, President

*Right: Balance Rock.
Permanently protected in
2013 by a donated
conservation easement.*

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BALANCE ROCK PROTECTED!



Balance Rock, one of Morgan County's most interesting cultural and natural resources, has been protected permanently by the donation of a conservation easement by the landowner. Jamie Hamilton and his family have voluntarily given up development rights on 264 of the 275-acre property to protect the natural resources existing there, including the granite outcrop known as Balance Rock and both sides of Hard Labor Creek for nearly a mile. Wildlife habitat and timber resources are also protected.

So, what is Balance Rock, you may ask? Ask a native Morgan Countian for the fun stories. It's played a part in many people's lives. And geologically, it's fascinating.



Geologists estimate that most of the granitic rocks that outcrop in the Piedmont of the southeastern United States are approximately 300-350 million years old. These outcrops were formed by the intrusion of molten granite into preexisting country rock at a depth of about sixteen kilometers below the surface. Over millions of years, erosion removed thousands of feet of overlying rock, exposing the more resistant bodies of granite.

Our sincere thanks go out to everyone involved in this project: Jamie Hamilton and family, Athens Land Trust, Will Wingate, and Russell Bennett, among others.

WE NEED... DO YOU HAVE?

*IF YOU CAN PROVIDE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING, PLEASE CONTACT US.
YOUR DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.*

HERMAN MILLER AERON CHAIR OR
SOME OTHER WONDERFUL ERGONOMIC CHAIR
LATERAL FILE CABINET (2-DRAWER OR 4-DRAWER)

CONSERVANCY RECEIVES GREENSPACE COMMISSION AWARDS

The Conservancy is honored to announce that the City of Madison Greenspace Commission presented us with two 2013 everGreen Awards this year: first for our assistance in the Washington Park Playground project, and second for our partnership with Kelly Products Inc. in building a teaching garden at Morgan County Elementary School.

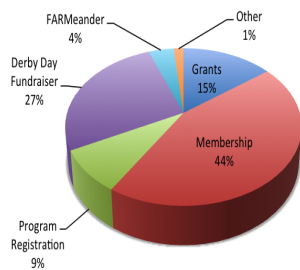
The awards were presented at the Greenspace Commission's Fall Fete on November 7th at Bonar Hall by Chairman David Land and Vice Chairman Rick Crown. It was a fun evening with a bonfire, hot dogs, beer, and s'mores.

We thank the Greenspace Commission for all they do to protect greenspace and steward the natural resources in the City of Madison. They continue to use their Greenprint Addendum to plan for the protection of natural resources, scenic resources, as well as passive and active recreation opportunities.

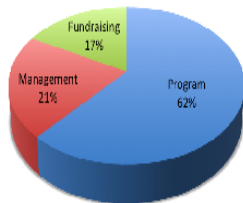


ANNUAL REPORT

2013 Income - \$135,040



2013 Expenses - \$133,682



Financially the Conservancy had its best year yet in 2013.

Our membership continues to grow, and we are so pleased that 44% of our income is from that membership.

Our Watershed Donors contribute at the highest membership levels, and our goal is to raise enough through Watershed Donors to match the Waterfall Foundation grant of \$50,000 we received in 2012. If you are interested in being a Watershed Donor, please contact us.

Another factor in making this year the best year yet was the success of Derby Day. We depend on Derby Day to help us meet our income needs, and we are so honored that so many of our members and others in the community supported us last year. We need your support again in 2014, so please participate by attending, sponsoring, or contributing to our rockin' live auction (run by Tommy Breedlove). Derby Day is the Conservancy's only fundraiser.

The mission of the 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.

WALTON MILL EXPLORATION



Left: David Dodge meandering through mill foundations. Center Left: Laura Duvekot and Wayne Vason present to the group. Center Right: Watershed Donors at bridge over Little River. Watershed Donors at a surviving house chimney.

Fun in the sun one beautiful October day - the Conservancy's Watershed Donors convened for an exploration of Walton Mill.

In 1809 Georgia's industrial revolution began right here in Morgan County on Little River! We didn't know this until this summer, when our Intern, Laura Duvekot, discovered the lost town of Antioch and the site of Georgia's first cotton mill. Today the site is owned by two separate landowners who invited us to explore the area to unravel the mystery of a series of foundations on their properties. Twelve weeks later, we had documented that the extant resources include two cemeteries, foundation ruins of at least two industrial structures and four houses, the remains of two nineteenth century houses, a metal truss bridge, and multiple historic roadbeds.

The site was home to continuous industrial activity for about 150 years, beginning as early as 1809, when Georgia's first cotton mill began producing yarn on the western bank of the Little River. The business venture known as Whatley's Mills appears to have become the center of a healthy community, which contained a church and post office, and research shows the settlement evolved into a small town, called Antioch. Though this early enterprise was short-lived, coming to an end in the 1820s due to a nation-wide recession, the industrial activity continued on Little River after Peter Wyche Walton purchased the mill site and adjacent properties. Walton and his descendants eventually established a 4,000-acre plantation and simultaneously operated a sawmill, gristmill, and cotton gin or mill there. One of the current landowners is a direct descendant of P.W. Walton, Wayne Vason. Mr. Vason and his daughter Katie founded the Conservancy in 2000.

We thank Linda and Bill Killmer and Lee and Wayne Vason for hosting us on that beautiful October day. The tour of both properties from such knowledgeable and passionate landowners was enlightening and very special. Thanks also to Georgia Power for their support of this event and thanks to Hallie Jane's Catering for a delicious supper with delicious local food!



ARE YOU READY TO RAMBLE???

It's almost time again for the Greenprint Ramble! October seems to be right around the corner. This year we will take you on a tour of the western portion of Morgan County, in and around Rutledge. A jaunt through the countryside will take you through pastoral agrarian landscapes and past beautiful and interesting historic structures, all the while exploring the history of the families who lived in and built the communities of Dorsey, Fairplay, Reese, and Rutledge.

I just so happens that a month after the Ramble is the 150th anniversary of the Union troops led by General Slocum camping on Dixie Hwy. And yes, they camped at what is now Ardenlea Farm, the Ainslie's farm on Dixie Hwy. And yes, that is where we will be having supper! And yes, local meats, cheeses, veggies - the works - we'll do it all again.

Details of the Greenprint Ramble | Saturday, October 18 | Western Slice of Morgan County

Tour: 2 p.m.

Supper: 5:30 p.m.



SPONSORS NEEDED

If you are interested in being a sponsor, or would like to contribute in any way, please contact us. The Ramble is not a fundraiser, but we work to make it break even.

INFORMATION NEEDED

We have just begun the research process, so if you would like to share your stories about the western side of the county, we would love to hear them. Please contact us.



SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUPPER

Saturday, March 22, at the Barn at Malcom's Crossroads

FARMEANDER WEEKEND

April 12-13, see up to eight farms, check our website for details in February

DERBY DAY 2014

Saturday, May 3, 4:30 pm, at Goose Creek Farm with a live horse race

GREENPRINT RAMBLE

Saturday, October 18, Tour at 2pm through western slice of Morgan County,
Supper at 5:30 pm at Ainslie's Ardenlea Farm

FARMEANDER 2014 BRINGS FARMEANDER WEEKEND

FARMeander through Morgan and Newton Counties in 2014!

Back by popular demand, the third version of FARMeander was published in October and launched at the Bostwick Cotton Gin Festival on November 2nd. With the help of Sean Dunlap of A Good Shovel Consulting and Colleen Hall of Hall Smith Office we have yet another beautiful product and a new and improved user-friendly design.



This year FARMeander is expanding to include FARMeander WEEKend. This 2-day event will be organized by Georgia Food Tours (aka Athens Food Tours) and will provide visitors with the opportunity to see up to eight farms and to taste the bounty of Morgan and Newton Counties. Look for more details on our website in February, 2014.

Thanks to everyone who made FARMeander possible this year, including: Central Georgia EMC Foundation, Madison-Morgan CVB and Chamber of Commerce, Newton County CVB and Chamber of Commerce, The Center for Preservation and Community Planning in Covington, the Conrads Family Foundation, and all the FARMeander entities.



Madison-Morgan Conservancy | P.O. Box 752, Madison, GA 30650 | 706-342-9252 | www.mmcGeorgia.org

HOW FOOD HUBS ARE HELPING NEW FARMERS BREAK INTO LOCAL FOOD

By Sean Powers for GPB News, Mon., January 20, 2014 8:01am (EST)

Lots of consumers are smitten with local food, but they're not the only ones. The growing market is also providing an opportunity for less experienced farmers to expand their business and polish their craft.

But they need help, and increasingly it's coming from food hubs, which can also serve as food processing and distribution centers. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that there are about 240 of them in more than 40 states plus the District of Columbia.

Donna O'Shaughnessy and her husband, Keith Parrish, are first-generation farmers in rural Chatsworth, Ill., about two hours south of Chicago. They sell dairy products and meat, and raise a host of animals, including a few colorful peacocks. For many years, they ended each year in the red. But business took off about five years ago, with restaurant owners as far away as Chicago putting in orders.

They say they owe a lot to a year-round local food hub called Stewards of the Land, started in 2005 by Marty and Kris Travis, farmers in nearby Fairbury, Ill. It's one of two the couple started in rural Illinois.

The Travises became middlemen to fill a hole in the market. "As we go, we can incubate these farms, and get them on their feet to do their own things," Marty says.

Members of their food hubs include about 40 small family farmers, each of whom pays a small fee to join. In exchange, they get cheaper liability insurance, and access to a much larger pool of clients and training.

"The new generation of farmers is a little over half the group," says Marty. "Many of them were under the age of 18 when they joined. We're very interested in growing great produce, but we're also very passionate about growing great farmers."

One up-and-coming farmer is Derek Stoller, 16, of Fairbury, Ill. He joined Stewards of the Land when he was just 9-years-old and growing Indian corn. Since then working in his parents' backyard and putting his family to work he has moved on to other things like beets, parsley and carrots, grossing about \$15,000 in 2012.

Stoller admits he has no idea if he will stay in agriculture forever, or what he will do with the rest of the life. But he's encouraged by his success so far.

Doug O'Brien, the acting under-secretary of rural development for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, says the infrastructure for local food is still lacking but growing fast. "Food hubs respond to that call," he says.

The USDA was awarded a nearly \$100,000 grant in June 2012 to provide technical assistance to farmers to form three food hubs in Central Illinois.

One of the people behind that effort is Terra Brockman with the Edible Economy Project, a group working to create a community-owned food hub and farmer-owned cooperative serving farmers and consumers in a 32-county region of central Illinois.

She estimates the region loses about \$5 billion annually because people buy food and agricultural inputs from outside the area.

"It used to be that when we talked about rural development, we talked about prisons and factories, and you know we're finally at the point where it's like, 'Hey, look around. In Illinois, when you're talking rural, you're talking farming,'" Brockman said. "Particularly this kind of small farming, direct marketed, feed your community kind of farming, where the money does stay and circulate within your community."

O'Brien expects the USDA to continue supporting food hubs, though some farmers worry that could lead to more regulations. But at least for now, they do not appear to be keeping food hubs from growing.



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Madison-Morgan Conservancy

P.O. Box 752, Madison, GA 30650 | 706-342-9252 | www.mmcGeorgia.org | info@mmcGeorgia.org

Annual Membership Form

Support the Conservancy's mission with your annual membership:

- ☐ Daniel Morgan Society _____ \$5,000 + (Watershed Donor Level)
☐ Benefactor _____ \$1,000 + (Watershed Donor Level)
☐ Supporter _____ \$500
☐ Donor _____ \$250
☐ Preservationist _____ \$100
☐ Conservationist _____ \$50
☐ Naturalist _____ \$20

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JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE MADISON-MORGAN CONSERVANCY TODAY!

NEW MEMBERS

Kaye & Stan DeJarnett
Bonnie & Lynn Hull
Lori & Duncan Hume
Stephanie & Michael Keener
Linda & Bill Killmer
Susan & Bill Kurtz

Lottie Lewis
Karen & Kelly Mahoney
Renee & Karl Meyer
Donna & Dennis Myers
Eric Joyce & Judi Perazzo
Melissa Piche

Kathy & Chuck Plumley
Kate & J.P. Roberts
Lee & Sandy Sanford
Nancy Vaughan

THANK YOU

Ainslie Family
Beauchamp Family
Burge Plantation
The Center for Community Preservation and Planning in Covington
Central Georgia EMC Foundation
Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta
Community Foundation for Morgan County
Conrad Family Foundation
Conservation Tax Transfer

Laura Duvekot
Georgia Power
GA Trust for Historic Preservation
A Good Shovel & Sean Dunlap
Colleen Hall
Harvest of the Heart
The Kendeda Fund
Bill Killmer
Ken Kocher
Madison Greenspace Commission
Madison Studios
Madison-Morgan Chamber and CVB

Madison-Morgan Cultural Center
Phyllis Martin
Morgan Stanley Foundation
Newton County Chamber and CVB
NuArt Printers
Dan Rather
UGA MHPs and Cari Goetcheus
Vason Family
Pat Walker
Waterfall Foundation
Watershed Donors
Joe York

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL - CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

If you are a Conservancy member, please check the mailing label on the front of this newsletter. The date printed above your name is the date on which you last paid your annual membership dues. Please renew your dues annually, and consider renewing your membership at a higher level, so that we can continue to expand our programming.

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Madison-Morgan Conservancy
P.O. Box 752
Madison, GA 30650

Return Service Requested

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