

The Altamaha Echoes

Lower Altamaha Historical Society Newsletter

October 2000

LAHS Board of Directors Meeting, October 19, 2000 – 4:30 P.M. –
St. Andrew's Parish House

AUTOGRAPH PARTY AT LAHS , OCTOBER MEETING

Buddy Sullivan will be Autographing his two new books at the LAHS October Meeting. "Darien and McIntosh County" and "Sapelo Island" are both filled with Vintage Photographs of these respective communities. See "LAHS Book List " in this Newsletter for prices.

LAHS Meeting , October 19, 2000, 7:00 P.M. – St. Andrew's Parish House

HOSPITALITY: Jackie Jenkins, Ward Milner, Everett Moriarty, Lillian Schaitberger

DUTCH TREAT SUPPER, 5:45 p.m. at B & J Pizza

The Jekyll Island Club, "Recalled to Life" will be the program presented by Sue Anderson, Public Relations and Guest Programs Director at the Jekyll Island Club Hotel. In a slide presentation Ms Anderson will relate the history of the Jekyll Island Club, its demise and its resurrection as a first class resort. "Recalled to Life", as Dickens would say it. This National Historic Landmark is an example of the way historic preservation and entrepreneurship can breathe life back into a National Treasure.

Ms. Anderson has a B.A. in English from Hanover College in Indiana and graduate studies in business from the University of Texas and from Miami University of Ohio. She has special interest in local history and architecture. Her association with the Jekyll Island Club Hotel, since 1990, has provided a unique opportunity to research and write about this extraordinary Historic Site.

UNVEILING CELEBRATION AT LAHS , November Meeting

***Cemeteries of McIntosh County Georgia* Published in 2000 by Lower Altamaha Historical Society will be unveiled at the LAHS November Meeting. Gratitude is extended to Mattie Gladstone and the Cemetery Committee for accomplishing this detail work for the people of McIntosh County.**

LAHS Meeting, November 16, 2000, 7:00 p.m.– St. Andrew's Parish House

HOSPITALITY: Tannis Cross, Donna Garner, Annabelle Saiter, Genevieve Wynegar

DUTCH TREAT SUPPER , 5:45 p.m. at B & J Pizza

"St. Catherines Island Wildlife Survival Center: Conservation of Vanishing Species" will be the program , presented by Jeff Spratt of Darien. Jeff Spratt is the Curator of the Wildlife Conservation Society's (formerly the New York Zoological Society) St. Catherines Wildlife Survival Center. He has been employed on the island for the past eleven years, rising from an intern to his present position. Jeff's major areas of interest are tortoise biology and endangered species reintroductions.

Jeff is a native of western Pennsylvania and received a bachelor's degree from Hiram College, Hiram Ohio. His masters degree was awarded on him from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Jeff and his wife Kelly are members of LAHS. They live at The Ridge with their daughter Hannah.

*LAHS Christmas Covered Dish Dinner Party
Wednesday Evening, December 13, 7:30 P.M.
Belvedere Island Plantation Club House*

Decorated for Christmas, the Belvedere Island Plantation Club House will be the setting for the 2000 LAHS Holiday Celebration. Bob and Jean Hawkins will be our host for the evening. The entree, table set up and drink will be provided. LAHS members are asked to make reservations and bring a Covered Dish. Maps and a sign up sheet for reservations and Covered Dishes will be available at the October and November meetings. For additional information, contact: Bob and Jean Hawkins, 912 832 6588

GEORGIA HISTORICAL MARKER 089-2, 1954
-Located on US 17/GA 25 at Midway Church

Button Gwinnett - In this Saint John's Parish, (now Liberty County), lived Button Gwinnett, signer of the Declaration of Independence, member of the Continental Congress, Speaker of the Assembly, and President of the Executive Council. He also was a member of the Convention that met in Savannah in October, 1776, in which he played a prominent part in drafting the first Constitution of the State of Georgia.

Born in Gloucestershire, England, in 1735, son of a Church of England vicar, Button Gwinnett came to Georgia in 1765 and acquired a store in Savannah. He shortly purchased St. Catherines Island in this parish. He moved to the island at once and engaged in farming and cattle raising. His business was transacted in Sunbury, then a thriving port.

On May 16, 1777, Mr. Gwinnett was mortally wounded in a duel fought on the outskirts of Savannah with Gen. Lachlan McIntosh, dying on May 19. Mr. Gwinnett's grave is supposedly in Savannah, but its exact location is unknown and unmarked. One of his rare autographs sold for over \$50,000.

NOTE: Button Gwinnett's grave has been located in Savannah's Colonial Park Cemetery

LAHS suggest an item from our Book & Epherima List and a membership to LAHS for your love ones at Christmas. These items may be purchased at the Oct. and Nov. meetings or orders sent to LAHS- P.O. Box 1405, Darien, Ga. 31305.

LAHS profits from all sales

Sapelo Lighthouse, 3D Silhouette, gift boxed, 2000
Designer, Patsy Gullett - Executed by Linda Hawk \$28.00
produced by LAHS S&H 5.00

<i>Darien & McIntosh County</i>	\$19.00
By Buddy Sullivan	S&H 3.00
<i>Vintage Photographs</i>	
<i>Sapelo Island</i>	\$19.00
By Buddy Sullivan	S&H 3.00
<i>Vintage Photographs</i>	
<i>Cemeteries of McIntosh County Georgia</i>	
Published in 2000 by	
Lower Altamaha Historical Society	\$30.00
	S&H 5.00
<i>Early Days on the Georgia Tidewater</i>	
The Story of McIntosh County & Sapelo	
by Buddy Sullivan	\$40.00
	S&H 3.00
<i>Memories of McIntosh</i>	\$ 7.00
by Buddy Sullivan	S&H 1.00
<i>SCOTS OF MCINTOSH</i>	\$ 2.00
compiled by Lillian Shattbecker	S&H 1.00
<i>The Darien Journal of John Girardeau</i>	
<i>Legare, Ricegrower</i>	\$25.00
Edited, with an Introduction,	S&H 3.00
by Buddy Sullivan	
<i>Sapelo: A History</i>	\$7.00
Researched & written	S&H 1.00
by Buddy Sullivan	
<i>HISTORIC MCINTOSH COUNTY AFGHAN</i>	\$50.00
Colors: HUNTER GREEN, CRANBERRY	S&H 5.00
<i>TABBY: A Historical Perspective of an</i>	
<i>Antebellum Building Material</i>	\$5.00
<i>in McIntosh County, Georgia</i>	S&H 1.00
By Buddy Sullivan	
<i>The Hurricane and Tidal Wave of 1898</i>	
<i>In McIntosh County, Georgia</i>	\$5.00
Edited by Buddy Sullivan	S&H 1.00
<i>DAR Sapelo Island Christmas Ornament</i>	
<i>Commemorative of Relighting</i>	\$10.00
<i>Sapelo Light--September 6, 1998</i>	S&H 2.00

Living on the Georgia Tidewater – Kelly Spratt, LAHS member and wife of Jeff Spratt who will present our November program, has contributed the following article for the Altamaha Echoes. Kelly worked with her husband Jeff on St. Catherines Island prior to the birth of their daughter Hannah. Through the years, those person's living on St. Catherine's Island, Georgia have truly experienced the magic of "Living on the Georgia Tidewater"

St. Catherines Island is a 14,000 – acre barrier island located approximately 4 miles east of Liberty County, Georgia. Like her sister islands, St. Catherines was formed as a dune ridge along a former beach shoreline some 40,000 to 25,000 years ago. When the Ice Age glaciers began to melt and sea levels rose, the island chain we know of as the Golden Isles began to form. Sometime before 2500 B.C., the Guale Indians arrived on St. Catherines Island. Over the next 4,000 years, the Guale lived in various camps and settlements throughout the Island. In the late 1560's a group of Jesuit missionaries were sent north from the newly established Spanish colony of St. Augustine to determine the feasibility of building a network of missions along the coast. Soon after, Franciscan monks established the Mission Santa Catalina de Guale on St. Catherines Island. In 1597, a Guale Indian rebellion took place and spread along the coast. Two Spanish priests were killed at Santa Catalina and the Mission was burned to the ground. By 1605, the Mission was rebuilt and remained until 1680 when English forces from Charles Town laid siege to Santa Catalina. The Spanish were able to withstand the attack, but abandoned the Mission shortly thereafter. For the next 300 years, the location of the Mission was a mystery.

In 1748, the Creek Indian Mary Musgrove, who had served as an interpreter for General Oglethorpe, came to live on St. Catherines with her husband, the Reverend Thomas Bosomworth. This notorious couple lived there until their deaths and are buried somewhere on the Island. In 1765, Button Gwinnett purchased the Island. St. Catherines remained his primary home until his death due to wounds incurred during a duel with General Lachlan McIntosh in 1777. The house built on the Island by Gwinnett still stands today. During the antebellum period, the Island passed through a number of ownerships, eventually falling into the hands of Mr. Jacob Waldburg. Waldburg operated a thriving cotton plantation and built a cotton gin, the remains of which still stand on the north end of St. Catherines. During the Civil War, Waldburg abandoned the Island and many of the black slaves that lived there. The end of the War brought the charismatic and visionary Tunis Campbell to St. Catherines Island. Believing himself to be the appointed governor of the region, Campbell composed a constitution, a Senate and a House of Representatives to rule the freed slaves that occupied the area. His headquarters for the "government" was the Gwinnett House on St. Catherines. He also established two schools on the Island. Eventually, federal troops were sent down to remove Campbell and his kingdom fell apart.

During the Reconstruction Period, the Island again passed through several hands, while a population of slave descendants continued to live and farm there. In 1876, Jacob Rauhers of Savannah bought the Island and established an elite private game preserve. By the end of WWI an oyster business was established on the south end of the Island by a Rauhers descendent, Captain Umbler. This operation supplied oysters up and down the east coast. A store was built and a church established, which was largely attended by blacks from neighboring islands. In 1929, the Rauhers family sold the Island to three investors from New York: Coffin, Wilson and Keys. Their intent was to build an exclusive vacation resort. The country was fast approaching economic crisis, however, and their dreams were never realized. The threesome was forced to sell the Island back to the Rauhers family. The Island played a defensive role during WWII as army guards were stationed at points throughout the Island as lookouts for enemy submarines.

In 1943, Edward John Noble, a businessman from New York, purchased the Island from the Rauhers family and began a cattle business there. Noble died in 1958, but the Island remained in his estate under control of the E. J. Noble Foundation. Noble's daughter, June Larkin, along with her husband Frank Larkin, founded the St. Catherines Island Foundation, which operates the Island today. In 1974, the St. Catherines Island Foundation entered into an agreement with the New York Zoological Society to establish a breeding center for rare and endangered species. This Wildlife Survival Center remains in operation today with over 40 different species of birds, mammals and reptiles in its collection. The Center specializes in the reintroduction of endangered species back to their native habitats all over the world. In addition, the Foundation supports a large archeological project on the Island through the American Museum of Natural History. In 1980, Dr. David Hurst Thomas rediscovered the lost Spanish Mission site on the Island. Examination and interpretation of the site and its artifacts continue to this day. The S.C.I.F. continues to support a variety of scientific research and conservation efforts on the St. Catherines Island, a truly unique place.

SAPELO ISLAND

National Estuarine Research Reserve

Sapelo Island enables visitors to see virtually every facet of a barrier island's natural community, from the diversified wildlife of the forested uplands, to the vast expanses of salt marsh and the complex beach and dunes systems. The Visitor Center, located near the mainland ferry dock brings to life both the natural and cultural history of Sapelo, while guided tours of the island enable visitors to experience the African-American community of Hog Hammock, the University of Georgia Marine Institute, the Reynolds Mansion and Sapelo Island's 1820 Lighthouse.

SAPELO ISLAND VISITORS CENTER: 912-437-3224 in Meridian is open daily except Mondays. This interpretive center for Sapelo has much to offer. Reservations for the four hour regular tours of the Island on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays and the six hour extended tour on the last Tuesday of each month are made here. Sapelo Island Visitors Center also has the information on special group tours and School Field Trips and privately owned and operated opportunities and activities at Sapelo Island. A Gift Shop which includes Books, Art Objects, Pictures and Posters and wearing apparel is available at the Visitors Center.

SAPELO ISLAND NATIONAL
ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE
P.O. Box 15, Sapelo Island, Ga. 31327
Phone 912-485-2251, FAX: 485-2141

The SINERR is managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, and is administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

LOWER ALTAMAHA HISTORICAL SOCIETY Corporate & Life Memberships

Corp: Sapelo National Bank, William Parker, President
The Book Shop, Inc., Harold & Virginia Hicks
Life: Malcolm & Muriel Bell - Darien Telephone Co.
Mrs. Caroline B. Davis - Gus & Marg Hallum
Alfred W. Jones

FORT KING GEORGE STATE HISTORICAL SITE

P.O. Box 711-Darien, Ga. 31305-----912-437-4770

ALTAMAHA CANOE EXCURSIONS

October 23 - Altamaha River (Advanced)

November 6 & 7 - Altamaha River (Intermediate)

THE FORT BY CANDLELIGHT

Saturday, October 14, 2000 - 7 P.M. - 10 P.M.

Visit the fort during the evening hours and absorb a unique candle lit atmosphere. Experience first hand colonial nighttime leisure and entertainment festivities. Learn about a soldier's life at Fort King George and view artillery drills in addition to many other presentations on military life in colonial America.

DRUMS ALONG THE ALTAMAHA

Friday & Saturday, November 10 & 11-10A.M.-5 P.M.

Though it only stood for seven short years, 1721-1727, Fort King George's existence stands as a tremendous contribution to our state's history. In this event we honor and commemorate it's significant legacy. A battle reenactment will be fought and several other colonial demonstrations will be conducted throughout the day.

LOWER ALTAMAHA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 1405 - Darien, Georgia 31305

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 P.M. The Society extends a hearty welcome to all.

L.A.H.S. OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2000-2001

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Lower Altamaha Historical Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 1405
Darien, Georgia 31305