

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION TRAINING ST. MARYS, GEORGIA APRIL 27-28, 2007

**Patricia Barefoot** is an eighth generation native of coastal Georgia and currently serves as Historic Preservation Planner for the ten-county area Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center. She received an A.B. History from Georgia Southern University and M.A. Anthropology from the University of Georgia. Past employment experiences range from retail sales, social work, parks and curatorial care of artifacts and archival documents. Patricia is the author of four books, three in Arcadia Publishing's *Images* series about *Brunswick, the City by the Sea, St. Marys and Camden County* and *Cumberland Island*. She worked with Assistant GIS Technician, Reggie Allen to produce, in June 2005, a spiral bound document entitled *Photographic Documentation and Inventory of Structures: Hog Hammock Historic District, Sapelo Island, Georgia*.

**Cornelia Bailey** is one of Georgia's most vocal defenders of her home, Sapelo Island, and of its African American heritage. Born and raised on Sapelo Island, in 2000 she published a cultural memoir, *God, Dr. Buzzard, and the Bolito Man* detailing her childhood experiences as well as the history of African Americans on the island for over 200 years. Cornelia continually fights against the loss of her community's cultural heritage, raising awareness of the challenges facing Sapelo through public speaking and writing. She and her husband conduct tours of the island and teach others about their community's rich and treasured history. In May 2004 she received a Governor's Award in the Humanities in recognition of her work on behalf of the African American population of Sapelo Island and the Geechee culture.

**Debbie Britt** is an Interpretive Ranger with the National Park Service, Cumberland Island National Seashore. Since moving to St. Marys 17 years ago, she and her family have restored three historic homes in the area. Debbie was very active on the preservation commission, serving for over 10 years, six years as chairman. She has worked with the National Park Service, The City of St. Marys, and Land Resources LLC on several projects such as The Cumberland Island Museum, Bachlott House, HGTV 2004 Dream Home and Orange Hall. Debbie has also served on the Orange Hall Foundation.

**Monica Callahan** is Planning & Community Development Director for the City of Madison. She staffs seven citizen commissions appointed to oversee a range of community planning functions - including historic preservation, downtown development, greenspace conservation, corridor management, cemetery stewardship, comprehensive planning, etc. Originally from Ashburn in Southwest Georgia, she attended Mercer University as an undergraduate and graduate school at the University of Georgia. She is a principal in Piedmont Preservation, a firm devoted to cultural resource management providing a range of preservation services through the Southeast. Through her work as both a public servant and a private consultant, Monica encourages all local planning decisions to incorporate a preservation perspective.

**Pratt Cassity** is Director of the Center for Community Design & Preservation at the University of Georgia's School of Environmental Design and a faculty member who teaches graduate courses in Historic Preservation and supervises student research in several disciplines. He works extensively on public service programs in preservation, landscape design, and community planning in the United States, Croatia, Slovakia, France, and West Africa. He provides assistance to state agencies regarding community planning, design review, the Certified Local Government Program, and downtown development programs such as Main Street and the Georgia Better Hometown Program. Pratt served as Executive Director of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions for 12 years and now serves as Executive Advisor to the National Alliance and coordinates local and national preservation training through the Alliance's Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program (CAMP).

**Bill Gross** is the owner and president of W.H. Gross Construction Company, a residential and commercial construction company in Kingsland, Georgia. Since its founding in 1983, this company has completed over 2,500 residential and commercial projects. Bill has been voted "Builder of the Year" seven out of the past eight years by the *Tribune & Georgian* newspaper. He was awarded the contract for the *Home and Garden Television Dream Home 2004* in St. Marys, which garnered national attention for excellence in construction. Active in the community, Bill is a member of the Coastal Conservation Advisory Council and the Camden County Chamber of Commerce.

**Ken Kocher** is a native Illinoisan who now calls Madison his home. He received a Bachelors Degree in History from the University of Illinois and completed the Master's in Historic Preservation program at the University of Georgia. He is a founding partner of Piedmont Preservation, a historic preservation consulting firm specializing in historic resource surveys and historic district design guidelines. Past positions include Design Coordinator for Main Street Louisiana and Certified Local Government Coordinator for the State of Mississippi. In addition to his work with Piedmont Preservation, Ken serves as staff for the Monticello and Madison Historic Preservation Commissions.

**Loretta Hylton** has over twenty-seven years experience with local, state, regional and national Historic Preservation organizations. Presently, she serves as Director of Planning and Building for Camden County, Georgia and has recently been appointed to serve on the Downtown Development Authority for the City of Kingsland, Georgia. She has also served as a planner for the South Georgia RDC in Valdosta, Georgia and for the City of Visalia, California and Planning Director for the City of St. Marys, Georgia. Loretta was instrumental in the City of St. Marys winning the vinyl siding court case involving a lawsuit with a private citizen.

**Fred Mercier** is a native of Connecticut who now lives in the John Rudolph House in the St. Marys Historic District. He received a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering from Georgia Tech and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of North Florida. Among various roles he has played in the Aerospace Industry, he has been responsible for Facility and Site Planning. Fred is a past two-term member of the St. Marys Historic Preservation Commission and has served as Chairman. While on the HPC, the commission developed design guidelines and historic district review. Fred has also served on several local committees including the St. Marys Downtown Development Authority Design Committee.

**James K. Reap** is an attorney who specializes in historic preservation issues. He has served as chair of the preservation commissions in the City of Decatur and DeKalb County and as vice chair in Athens, Georgia. He is a founding member of both the Georgia Alliance and National Alliance of Preservation Commissions. He teaches preservation law at the University of Georgia and Georgia State University and conducts preservation commission training around the country. James was one of the first two preservation planners in Georgia and served as Deputy Executive Director of the Northeast Georgia RDC. He is currently President of the Legal Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

**Joe Smith** is the architectural principal for Hall Smith Office (HSO), a multidisciplinary design firm located in Madison, Georgia. HSO's work focuses primarily on renovations and alterations to historic homes within the Historic District in Madison. Joe is a Commissioner on the Madison HPC. For a decade prior to establishing HSO in 2006, Joe was an associate architect with Coburn Architecture, PC in Brooklyn, New York. Joe spent his undergraduate years at Duke University and received his Master of Architecture degree from the Yale School of Architecture.

**Mike Todd** is a chemical engineer by education but has been involved with the restoration of historic properties for many years. Most of his work has been in the Athens area and involved single and multi-family residential structures. In 2002, he and three partners purchased the Fitzpatrick Hotel building in Washington, Georgia and began a two-year restoration project that resulted in the grand re-opening of the Fitzpatrick Hotel in June 2004. Mike and his partners continue to own and now operate the Fitzpatrick as a full service hotel with restaurant and event/conference facilities. He also serves as Assistant Chairperson on the Planning and Zoning Commission in Winterville.

**Christy Todd** is a partner in the Fitzpatrick Hotel project in Washington, Georgia. She received her Bachelors and Masters in Business Administration from the University of Georgia and spent a number of years working in banking and small business accounting. As a result of her business background, she played a significant role in coordinating the financing of the Fitzpatrick Hotel restoration. Christy currently works for the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia as a Business Analyst and continues to handle the marketing at the Fitzpatrick Hotel.

**Max Tinsley** has been the Planning Director for the City of St. Marys since 2003. Portions of his City responsibilities involve providing staff support to the historic preservation commission. Originally from North Carolina, Max graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from the University of Southern Illinois and completed his Master's degree in Public Administration from Webster University. He completed his Doctorate in Public Administration from Madison University in 2002 while working as a police officer for the City of St. Marys.

**Roger A. Weaver** is the Planner for the City of St. Marys, Georgia. Prior to relocating to Georgia, Mr. Weaver served as board member for two Historic Architectural Review Boards in Pennsylvania, as well as the HARB-CLG Advisory Board for the entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Mr. Weaver and his wife personally owned and restored two National Historic Landmark structures that were also listed on the National Register. Recently retired after 28 years of private practice as Architect, Planner, and Historic Preservationist, Mr. Weaver was appointed as Planner for the City of St. Marys in the fall of 2006.