

Columbus, Georgia: Examining the Public History Landscape of a Southern City

by

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Abstract

Across the globe, individuals and groups compete to control memories of the past in order to present a favorable view of local history. This can result in the omission of other group narratives, controversial issues experienced by society, or lead to false historical claims. This thesis explores public history on the landscape in Columbus, Georgia, and how one Southern community has dealt with providing an inclusive account of local history. This study focuses on the development of cultural and institutional growth in the city after World War II. This case study examines the Historic Chattahoochee Commission, Columbus Museum, National Civil War Naval Museum, and the Historic Columbus Foundation to understand how local history is interpreted, preserved, and exhibited.

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List of Abbreviations

CSA	Confederate Salvage Association
CSS	Confederate States Ship
CSU	Columbus State University
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
GHS	Georgia Historical Society
HAER	Historic American Engineering Record
HDPS	Historic District Preservation Society
HCC	Historic Chattahoochee Commission
HCF	Historic Columbus Foundation
HSF	Historic Savannah Foundation
NASM	National Air and Space Museum
NCWNM	National Civil War Naval Museum
NEH	National Endowment for the Humanities
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPS	National Park Service
SIA	Society for Industrial Archeology
UDC	United Daughters of the Confederacy
USS	United States Ship
WWI	World War I

WWII World War II

Introduction

The Chattahoochee River rises high in the Blue Ridge Mountain of Georgia, flows southwesterly towards the Alabama state line, and deposits into the Gulf of Mexico.

Archeological evidence suggests for centuries humans have lived along the banks of the river as an important water source for their community.¹ The communities and people on the river have grown and altered the surrounding physical landscape. While the river's flow remains constant, society continues to change around it. Creating a sense of place is a fundamental part of human society, but how people interpret and understand it changes. A community can define place as the geological and natural make-up of their surroundings: lakes, rivers, mountains, and forests. Over time, people have come to see buildings, roads, and man-made objects constructed on the landscape as essential to place-making. People change the landscape to meet the needs of society.

Columbus, Georgia's location along the fall line of the Chattahoochee River attracted settlers to charter a town in 1828 as a site for potential industry and to open the state's western frontier to commercial trade. The city's natural landscape changed as mills, dams, and city planning altered the dense marsh-like conditions of the territory. Today, Columbus is located one hundred and seven miles southwest of Atlanta, Georgia and is the state's third largest city.² The historic landscape of the city has dramatically changed since its early days as a pioneer trade center. In Spring 2013, the city will breach milldams to create a new outdoor recreational

¹Lynn Willoughby, s.v. "Chattahoochee River," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-950&hl=y> (accessed March 4, 2013).

² Columbus, Georgia Convention & Visitors Bureau, "Columbus Facts," http://visitcolumbusga.com/contact/columbus_facts (accessed March 1, 2012).

experience for residents and tourists alike. Numerous Columbus historical organizations use public history to communicate, preserve, and commemorate the history of Columbus to its residents, tourists, nation, and world. It houses the Georgia State Theatre at the Springer Opera House, several museums, historic sites, parks, and National Register properties. The city's history and demographics offers a suitable location to conduct a study of how historical organizations respond to community changes. This thesis examines how one Southern community's local institutions responded to issues of race, class, and memory when interpreting, commemorating, and preserving local history.

The 2010 U.S. Census shows Columbus as having an equal distribution of white and black populations however, local historical interpretation does not reflect an equal representation of historical experience.³ Columbus, like many Southern cities, was characterized by racial divisions between whites and blacks. The racial barrier affected how local history was interpreted –most often an elitist-white narrative was constructed that excluded blacks. Local museums, publications, and historic preservation efforts in Southern communities reinforced this interpretation.

This study focuses on cultural and institutional growth in Columbus from World War II to present. Three Columbus historical organizations were selected to conduct this case study out of many other possible agencies in the city. The study examines the Historic Chattahoochee Commission, Columbus Museum, National Civil War Naval Museum and the Historic Columbus Foundation's development and work in the city. By examining these three organizations, the case study uncovers how memory, museums, and historic preservation play a role in creating and changing the public historical landscape. The Historic Chattahoochee Commission is an

³ United States Census Bureau 2012 –White population 46.3%, Black population 45.5%, with minorities consisting of 12.2%. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13/1319000.html> (accessed March 1, 2013).

important interstate agency charged with promoting local history in the Chattahoochee Valley Region, and relies on continued community support. Exhibition practices of the National Civil War Naval Museum and the Columbus Museum are examined to determine how local narrative is interpreted over time. The Historic Columbus Foundation is a leader in local history publications and is involved in the historic preservation of the city's heritage. All three institutions share objectives to interpret the city's landscape and progress over the course of the city's history. Each organization has a stake in control over what history is interpreted and excluded, and public access to historical information.

This case study examines Columbus' public historical landscape to understand the issues public historians encounter when interpreting local history. The public historical landscape can be defined as the natural geological features as well as man-made structures –buildings, roads, and dams –imposed on the natural. It can encompass churches, parks, monuments, memorials, museums, buildings, or sites that have important memories associated with them. The latter is subject to continuous change as communities demolish, alter, or construct new structures on the landscape. The study focuses on the man-made structures that create the diverse landscape of Columbus. For the local citizen, the landscape is filled with personal experiences, thus making it open to individual or group interpretation. The public historical landscape is part of a greater understanding of the community's past as it can reinforce what local literature remembers about the past, what it excludes and includes, or allow the community to reinterpret the landscape in a way that is more representative. In Columbus, the public historical landscape emerged from local historical literature dedicated to preserving an elitist white historic view of the past, and neglected to include other classes and minorities. Museums and historic sites emerge as a way

for visitors to reflect and form deeper connections to their past.⁴ These institutions were founded on civic movements and later controlled local history interpretation. As new generations place their mark, local history is subject to continued reinterpretation and re-evaluation. This case study reveals the difficulties experienced by institutions in Columbus as they struggled to embrace a diverse local history narrative. During 1980s and 1990s, Columbus was involved in a series of debates about how to integrate excluded memories into local history. Within a community, local citizens and grassroots movements created much of the public historical landscape that exists in communities today. The public history field has seen increased grassroots involvement in interpreting, commemorating, and preserving local history. In communities across the South, public historians, museum professionals, and preservationist play an important role in place making and mediating local debates as new narratives are incorporated in the community and on the landscape. Overall, local organizations are adapting to meet twenty-first century societal needs, trends, and expectations.

Early historical interpretations of Columbus reflected a limited view of the past as an elitist and familial history that honored the city's founders and industrial elites. In a post-Civil Rights era, minority groups that fought for equality challenged established interpretations of the past. The consensus view of Columbus history long focused on contributions made by individuals in business and industry. This consensus view influenced the decisions made by local organizations in preservation, commemoration, and exhibition. The stories and memories interpreted by local groups in control had lasting effects that are still present on the landscape.

⁴ Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 32.

The city developed quickly from a small pioneer town into an industrial Southern city when its first mill opened in 1828. By the 1860s, the city boasted several textile mills, gristmills, and sawmills, exported cotton from area plantations, and was the home of the Columbus Iron Works. Due to its industrial capabilities, the city became an important manufacturing center for the Confederacy during the Civil War. The city continued to produce goods for the war until the final days of the Confederacy. Union General James H. Wilson captured the city and instructed his troops to destroy the city's industrial works, which was a major blow to the city's economy.

The period following the Civil War was a difficult time in Columbus given that its industries were destroyed and slaves set free. The traditional public history representation of this period focuses on the quick restoration of city mills and industry, but neglects to discuss new racial relations. The Freedmen's Bureau provided funds to establish a school for African American children in the city of Columbus. Despite new freedoms, the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and increased racial violence against blacks restricted the liberties of those living in the city. Segregated public facilities in Columbus, as in most of the South, further limited African Americans politically and socially. Columbus historian Craig Lloyd describes the tense climate for blacks living in Columbus as oppressive, with violence a common occurrence. For example, in 1912 a young black boy accidentally shot and killed his young white playmate. He was tried as an adult and found guilty of manslaughter. The white boy's family retaliated against the judge's lesser charge of manslaughter by kidnapping the black boy and executing him outside of city limits. The white family members who participated in this event were never prosecuted for their actions. The *Columbus-Ledger's* reports of numerous racial incidents for much of the early twentieth century demonstrate white efforts to keep African Americans "in their place," despite

emancipation.⁵ Stories of racial violence were common in newspapers, but over time these reports were no longer acceptable to publish stories of racial conflict and were not preserved or interpreted on the landscape because they were perhaps too difficult for the community to discuss.

The African American community consisted of many hard working individuals –some with specialized skills and others who worked odd jobs as cooks, seamstresses, etc., or worked on the docks as laborers in the city mills. However, early histories of Columbus did not depict or analyze their experience. African Americans were omitted from local histories primarily because they were perceived as insignificant and having no role in shaping society.⁶

Local historians of Columbus describe the city’s history in the twentieth century as marked by technological advancements and greater civic involvement. This era witnessed great industrial and economic. Until the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans experienced little of this growth. The nation experienced two world wars, an economic depression, and industrial expansion near the end of the century. In Columbus, mills dominated the social and political life of the city. Important changes to the landscape included the U.S. War Department’s decision in 1918 to open Camp Benning a military post designed to meet the need for military bases in the South during World War I. The temporary post became a permanent training base in 1922, named after a local Confederate war hero, Henry Lewis Benning. The Great Depression of the late 1920s and 1930s affected city industries, which often relied on New York bankers’ loans to keep their businesses afloat. The outbreak of World War II spurred activity and training at Fort

⁵ Craig Lloyd, *Eugene Bullard: Black Expatriate in Jazz-Age Paris* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 3.

⁶ Faith Davis Ruffins, “Mythos, Memory, and History: African American Preservation Efforts 1820-1990,” In *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, by Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 507.

Benning. The war mobilized the country's home front and rallied the nation to support the servicemen fighting abroad, and in this Columbus was no different.⁷

Local historians examining major changes in the community post World War II offer little on African American activities during this phase in the development of the city and during the Civil Rights Movement. Primus King and Dr. Thomas H. Brewer were significant civil rights activists in the black community. Primus King challenged the all-white Democratic primary in 1944 to allow blacks the right to register and vote in Georgia Democratic primaries. King filed a federal lawsuit against the Muscogee County Democratic Party Executive Committee. A Federal Court Judge in Macon, Georgia ruled in King's favor. This set a precedent in the state of Georgia that all blacks retained the right to vote in Democratic primary elections.⁸ This was an early civil rights victory achieved by a local Columbus native. Dr. Thomas H. Brewer served as vice-president for the Columbus chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Dr. Brewer participated in the NAACP's orchestration of King's lawsuit. Many in the black community remembers him as an inspiring leader dedicated to guaranteeing the black right to vote throughout the state and in the south.⁹ Tragically, he was gunned down by a local white merchant-politician in 1956 and his killer was never charged with the crime. A historic marker was erected a few feet away from the place where he was killed and commemorates his life, and is the only marker mentioning the Civil Rights Movement in the city. The Columbus NAACP chapter was active in local civil rights activities. Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. was invited by the chapter and gave a speech on March 8, 1968, in the city as

⁷ Roger Harris, *Our Town: An Introduction to the History of Columbus, Georgia*. (Columbus, GA: Historic Columbus Foundation, 1992), 42-50.

⁸ Craig Lloyd, s.v. "Primus e. King 1900-1986," *New Georgia Encyclopedia* <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-2921&hl=y> (accessed January, 23, 2013).

⁹ Historic Chattahoochee Historical Marker, "Muscogee County -Dr. Thomas H. Brewer", <http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/index.php/historic-markers/georgia/muscogee-county> (accessed March 13, 2013).

local authorities looked on.¹⁰ While not discussed in many local histories, Columbus black citizens were active in the Civil Rights movement and had several leaders orchestrating protests and events. The end of segregation in the United States created new possibilities for African Americans to be recognized as participants in history and not bystanders, but local communities, such as Columbus, were often resisted change.

The 1970s and 1980s was a period of greater national efforts to incorporate the African American experience into American culture. In 1976, President Ford proclaimed National Black History Month and Martin Luther King Jr. Day became an official day of observance in the 1980s.¹¹ Beginning in the 1970s, Columbus saw African Americans elected to city and state leadership positions. While social change occurred in the community of Columbus, its historic organizations were slow to show an inclusive narrative. By the 1970s in Columbus, former centers for local business located in the city's downtown district and city mills were closing. The economic decline in Columbus and the Chattahoochee Valley region prompted city leaders to create a new economic plan for the city. The Historic Chattahoochee Commission (HCC) was one organization established to generate economic growth through heritage tourism. HCC used the Chattahoochee Valley public historical landscape not only to benefit local economies, but also encouraged communities to take pride in their history. In Columbus, city planners worked with the Historic Columbus Foundation to restore its historic areas to create a new tourist destination. By the 1980s, Columbus boasted new neighborhood historic districts, parks, a new convention and trade center, and expanded art and historical collections at the Columbus Museum. As political and social changes occurred in the community, this led to re-interpretation of local history. The following chapters share stories of challenges experienced by local

¹⁰ Judith Grant, *Black America Series: Columbus, GA* (Charleston: Arcadia, 2000), 28-30, 74.

¹¹ Paul A. Shackel, *Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration and the Post-Bellum Landscape* (New York: AltaMira Press, 2003), 15.

historical organizations in their efforts to create an inclusive interpretation of history. A more comprehensive approach to local history meant incorporating African American narratives in publications and on the landscape.

Across the nation and world, communities share concerns about the control, power, and influence over local memory. People use various methods to interpret and remember the past. Museums, public or private, provide a central gathering space where the community can discuss and learn about their history. Public commemoration may use memorials, monuments, historical markers, or other projects as a way to interpret and present the past. Acts of commemoration inspire grassroots efforts to establish greater monuments – a structure, building, or roadside marker- to make a remembered past a shared official past. John Bodnar categorizes these acts as official or vernacular cultural expressions.¹² Official culture or history is defined as the consensus view of local history controlled and interpreted by elites, historical organizations or governments. In Columbus, the Historic Columbus Foundation and the Columbus Museum are key institutions actively interpreting local history. The local history interpreted in these institutions, while often deemed official, is often sanitized. Vernacular culture can be defined as the people's history – non-elite grassroots accounts and memories- separate from official history that offers a different interpretation than official history, and does not need official sanction to be seen as a reputable view of the past. Museums create official versions of vernacular memory, but alternative interpretations can exist outside of official history. For example, a museum

¹² For more on public memory, see John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), Sanford Levinson, *Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York: The New Press, 1999), and Paul A. Shackel, *Myth, Memory, and the Making of American Landscape* (Tallahassee: University of Florida Press, 2001). For exploring tragedy on the landscape, see Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997). For exploring issues of race on the landscape see, Paul A. Shackel, *Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration, and the Post-Bellum Landscape* (New York: AltaMira Press, 2003).

exhibit may interpret the lives of mill workers, but mill workers may have their own account of life in the mills. People can influence and pressure institutions to incorporate their stories into official history.

Commemoration allows individuals or groups to forge memory on the landscape and garner community recognition. Vernacular groups look to government or official institutions for recognition and approval of commemoration plans. Control over public memory is present at national and local levels of society. Within these levels, groups vie for control over traditional historical interpretations that share favorable memories of the past. Those in control may omit controversial issues dealing with race, injustices in society, or false historical claims on past events. The commemorative process reveals challenges experienced by vernacular groups to receive acknowledgement from official institutions. Some vernacular groups in Columbus became active in the Historic Chattahoochee Commission's historical marker program as a way to include stories not commonly known or remembered in the community. For example, official historical organization struggled to incorporate Alma Woodsey Thomas, a premier twentieth century contemporary African American artist into official history. The Historic Columbus Foundation eventually recognized her with a roadside marker at her childhood home. Recognition by one agency can convert vernacular memory into official memory.

Communities determine what is important to remember in their time. Historically, certain African American memories and experiences have been excluded from the public landscape at the national and local level. Paul Shackel's case study of the National Park Service's (NPS) attempt to incorporate African American sites into the national register and national parks reveals opposing points of views within one government agency trying to incorporate African Americans narratives into Civil War site interpretations. They worked to interpret difficult

memories involving racial discrimination and violence as part of this process. For instance, NPS was a leader in meeting the needs of a new American society in the 1970s, but found the task of interpreting an inclusive history controversial. For example, the NPS's traditional representation of the First and Second Battles of Manassas only provided a military history focusing on battlefield tactics, maneuvers, and casualties. Congressional mandates required national parks to address slavery at these battlefields. Some park rangers and battlefield enthusiasts were initially reluctant to discuss anything outside of military history. At Manassas, some went as far to remove African American structures, important to interpreting their presence during the war, from the landscape.¹³ The National Park Service was progressive in creating and interpreting an inclusive history at Civil War and provides a model public historians can use within their communities as they address race on the landscape.¹⁴ As in the case of NPS, incorporating forgotten histories or memories take time and proper planning can ensure its success. In Columbus, local organizations were reluctant to interpret African American sites in the community until the late 1980s. Similar to the internal disagreements among park rangers, communities also make decisions to adopt or dismiss an inclusive approach when interpreting the landscape. Shackel's academic method of examining the NPS' approach to interpreting slavery concludes that Americans must remember the good and the bad to reach a more inclusive past on the landscape.¹⁵ The NPS' response to slavery showcases how history is complex, difficult, and often muddled but it is important to interpret the 'warts and all' of local history in order to provide the community a stronger sense of its past, present, and future. By uncovering

¹³ Paul A. Shackel, *Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration, and the Post-Bellum Landscape* (New York: AtlaMira Press, 2002), 18-19.

¹⁴ Pithcaithley, Dwight. "A Cosmic Threat: The National Park Service Address the Causes of the Civil War." In James Oliver Horton and Lois e. Horton *Slavery in Public History: the Tough Stuff of American Memory*. New York: New Press, 2006.

¹⁵ Shackel, 169.

and discussing difficult elements of the past in a neutral environment, it can help the community accept the realities of the past and not be jaded by sanitized versions.

The public historical landscape is comprised of sites that remember and connect the past with the present. Sites can celebrate, honor, or allow a community to grieve after a tragedy, but can also be sites of contention. The physical act of standing where history happened or at a site that remembers a particular moment of time is powerful.¹⁶ Political and social change can influence a community's decision to remove, alter, or keep existing interpretations. This can be seen in local communities across the nation and around the world. Sanford Levinson discusses the changing nature of public monuments in a culturally diverse society. Levinson's analysis of Southern monuments reveals on-going racial issues present in southern communities. One case, the Liberty Monument in New Orleans, Louisiana was targeted by African American city leaders in the 1990s, who wanted to remove a white supremacist nineteenth century marker. It commemorates New Orleans' White League Democratic group's attempt to overthrow the Republican government party after the Civil War. Democratic leaders later commemorated the event with a memorial. African American city leaders argued it was no longer representative of New Orleans. City leaders may advocate for the destruction or removal of monuments from the landscape, but they may also give new meaning to them. In 1888, the Millennium Monument in Budapest, Hungary was designed as a public monument to celebrate Hungary's founding, but also to celebrate the nation's future as a new century dawned on the horizon. Designers displayed statues of Hungarian national heroes, the nation's ties to Christianity, and celebrated its membership in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The nation envisioned by the monument's designers, however did not survive beyond World War I. While under Communist rule,

¹⁶ James Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York: New Press, 1999), 27.

Hungary's leaders used the site to promote a dictatorship and new communist ideas. In Budapest, political power altered the landscape and transformed an existing memorial to convey a message to a new generation of Hungarians.¹⁷

Debates and issues on public memory are universal. These examples demonstrate that every community over time has new groups and leaders that use power to control the interpretation of historic sites. As Levinson suggests, monuments can be altered to fit new ideals a community may have over time. In a larger context, public commemoration encourages new participants and creates a new environment for participation by outside groups.¹⁸ Some citizens are motivated to change existing narratives to present an inclusive history, while others defend past presentations. The public landscape is susceptible to changes in leadership and community interpretations of the past, present and future. In Columbus, political leaders and community groups contributed sites that interpreted their view of the city's past. Like many communities in the nation and around the world, Columbus' historic sites and monuments have undergone significant changes during the period from the 1980s into the early 2000s as social and political movements challenged the limited interpretation of the city's local history.

Also confronting issues of memory are local history museums and organizations. Recent museum trends aim to reach a broader audience and meet the needs of a changing society. As communities address concerns related to race and representation on the landscape, museums are also expected to incorporate diversity in their institutions. Museums developed over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth century from institutions seen as temples, or institutions of higher

¹⁷ Levinson, *Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 6.

¹⁸ Levinson, 50.

culture, to public forums of engagement and education.¹⁹ Grassroots efforts in the Columbus created public and private local history institutions. Community members enter museums with expectations that they can relate personal histories with local exhibitions. In the 1990s, Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen surveyed a cross section of Americans to learn how “popular history making” allowed people to actively use and understand the past through personal experiences. The authors challenged the belief that the American public was disinterested in historical activities, and compiled hundreds of surveys to suggest this assumption was false. Their study revealed the active roles American’s have in constructing history and the types of history-related activities that engage the public. Attending history museums and historic sites were popular activities listed by respondents. Rosenzweig and Thelen discovered museums were regarded as trustworthy institutions because of the public assumption that they interpreted “real” or “true” histories.²⁰ While the study is dated, it finds that Americans value and trust historical institutions –a significant find for public historians to consider when accessing the communities and audiences they serve. This is a reassuring find for local institutions dependent on a captive audience, but it also suggests the importance of accountability. Based on Rosenzweig and Thelen’s discovery, Columbus natives visit local history museums and expect to find a past that connects with their personal or familial recollections of the community. It is important to assess what is interpreted and excluded in museums as these institutions control public perception of local history.

Museums and historic agencies are continually challenged to reinterpret local history as outside forces alter the public historical landscape. Robert Archibald argues that small towns are

¹⁹ Duncan Cameron, “The Museum Temple or Forum,” in Gail Anderson’s, *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004).

²⁰ Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 32.

in a crisis as they combat the rise of suburban and commercial development. Unable to compete with larger commercial chains, small businesses abandoned once thriving social and economic centers along traditional main street districts. Communities were left with deteriorating historic buildings and no choice but to demolish them. Columbus natives also faced the realities of increased urban development and the impact it had on the city's former commercial district along Broadway Street. Archibald identifies that the role of a public historian in changing times is to be a facilitator of useful storymaking that incorporates a new interpretation of a community's shared past.²¹ This new interpretation includes a diverse narrative involving multiple perspectives on local history. The Historic Columbus Foundation combatted the destruction of historic buildings important to the city's past and encouraged economic renewal through preservation. In Columbus, public historians interpret the city's historic districts, work in local museums, and are active in the city's mission to preserve its architectural heritage.

The following thesis presents the impact of race, class, and memory on the public historical landscape of Columbus. The study examines a selection of historical organizations and groups currently to interpret local history in the community. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Columbus confronted the issue of race through the inclusion of previously excluded African American memories in the official view of history. Following World War II, Columbus experienced tremendous growth and change. This case study examines select institutions that contributed to the city's growth and development. Still visible today are many historic institutions and agencies established by local citizens wanting to enhance the city's status. The Columbus Museum of Arts and Crafts Inc. opened its doors in 1953 as the city's first fine arts and local history center. The fine arts collection exhibited works of renowned national and

²¹ Robert Archibald, *The New Town Square: Museums and Communities in Transition* (New York: AltaMira Press, 2004),

international artists and provided art education classes to the public. Its local history exhibits featured donated Native American artifacts excavated from the region. During the Civil War Bicentennial, James W. Woodruff launched a citywide effort to salvage two Confederate navy ships from the Chattahoochee River from 1961-1963. Woodruff personally managed, invested private funds, and oversaw the excavation of the two ships. The ships renewed interest in Civil War history in the city. Once recovered, the ships were brought ashore to create the Confederate Civil War Naval Museum. Salvage efforts attracted state and national attention, making it an important event in the city's recent history. Shortly after the salvage effort, local citizens looked for other ways of preserving and restoring local history. After the passage of the National Preservation Act in 1966 Columbus established a historic preservation society to combat increased urban growth which threatening historic neighborhoods and homes. As a result, community activists formed the Historic Columbus Foundation to promote historic preservation as a means for economic revitalization.²²

Chapter one examines group participation in a regional marker program. Historians often focus on the period after a monument, marker, or memorial is erected (final product on the landscape), but discussion over the process of public commemoration and community involvement is far less frequent. As the literature suggests, motives to participate include control, power, and influence. A group's political agenda and self-recognition are contributing factors. Arguments made by Bodnar, Loewen, and Shackel concerning the final product are used to critically analyze the history presented on these markers. This chapter uncovers issues of memory present in the commemoration process. It uncovers the difficulties local groups face when incorporating new narratives on the landscape. It is crucial to discuss what is included and

²² Roger Harris, *Our Town: An Introduction to the History of Columbus, Georgia* (Columbus, GA: Historic Columbus Foundation, 1992): 56-57; 62-63.

excluded by markers, and to acknowledge controversies involved in the process. An analysis of group motivation helps public historians move beyond examining the final product and look at the process involved in erecting a historical marker in order to see a perspective discussed less frequently in public commemoration.

Chapter two examines the National Civil War Naval Museum and Columbus Museum's interpretation of public history. Civic movements established both organizations as a means to preserve and interpret local history. This chapter examines how local history became more inclusive over time. A 1960s salvage effort to raise two sunken Confederate gunships from the Chattahoochee River resulted in the creation of the Confederate Naval Museum –dedicated to interpreting Confederate naval history during the Civil War. The civic pride once shown towards the museum diminished in a post Civil Rights society. The Confederate Naval Museum underwent significant changes in the 2000s to appeal to a socially and politically diverse culture. The Columbus Museum is the region's premier art and local history center. Established in 1955, early exhibitions interpreted Native American archeological remains in the Chattahoochee Valley Region and artifact collections donated by prominent individuals. In the late 1980s and 1990s, the museum updated exhibitions to provide a broader interpretation of the region's history. Museum designers and curators incorporated for the first time topics such as slavery, women, Civil Rights, and the lives of mill workers as part of a museum expansion in 1989. This chapter discusses the issues confronted by the Columbus Museum as it strives to become more inclusive and meet new expectations of modern museumgoers.

Chapter three examines the historic preservation efforts of the Historic Columbus Foundation (HCF). The formation of the foundation in 1966 created a local organization concerned with saving the city's architectural heritage. HCF carried out an ambitious plan to

promote historic preservation as a tool for economic growth and development. As a leading publisher of local history, the Foundation used publications to showcase its accomplishments and educate the public on the importance of historic preservation. Publications communicated organizational goals and shaped public perception of local history, thus this chapter takes a closer look at what is included in local literature. As previous chapters address organizational responses to societal change, chapter three also discusses HCF's response to changes in the community. HCF reexamined its preservation and education goals to meet new trends in preservation work and to interpret African Americans into the landscape.

Public historians are challenged to interpret an ever-changing society. By understanding how a community constructs local narratives, public historians can play an important role in facilitating change and modeling responses to controversial issues. This case study of Columbus, Georgia provides public historians with a way to understand the dynamics of a Southern city. Three historical lenses— official, vernacular, and academic —offer a window into the public historical landscape. This study examines past and current public history work in Columbus to create the public historical landscape that is interpreted and preserved today. This assessment connects academics with the current work being conducted by professionals in the field. Greater discussion on the grassroots effort in creating the public historical landscape is lacking, and one goal of this study is to generate discussion among different groups and encourage future studies. Academics and professionals have a role in assisting communities in incorporating difficult or neglected memories of the past. Every small town has a story of change and progress, but the presentations of these stories involve changes to the public historical landscape.

Chapter 1

Commemorating the Past:

Examining the Process of Commemoration in the Historic Chattahoochee Historical Marker Program

At the turn of the twentieth century, the city of Columbus, Georgia featured public watering fountains for the convenience of passing pedestrians along Broadway Street. City fountains provided a refreshing cool drink of natural spring water to people and animals: the lowest bowl for dogs, a medium size bowl for people, and a large drinking bowl for horses. Today, a solitary fountain stands on the block of Broadway and 10th street as a reminder of the city's past. The fountain does not work and only a historical marker describes its former use to pedestrians. The city dedicated this historical maker as a way to, "offer our community an identity and sense of history in our public spaces."¹ The fountain is located in a designated historic district in Columbus and plays a part in the preservation of the city's past.

The historical marker contributes a unique piece of history to the landscape. The "Fit for Man and Beast," historical marker began with a group's attempt to preserve the last watering fountain in the city. This chapter focuses on the grassroots effort to produce and commemorate famous Columbians, historical events, and sites. In general, public commemoration celebrates and remembers a particular person, event, or site meaningful to one group or individual. A case study of the Historic Chattahoochee Commission (HCC) Historical Marker Program examines two organizations process to erect a historical marker: the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) and the Historic Columbus Foundation (HCF). The UDC erected a historical marker commemorating Confederate General Henry Lewis Benning in historic Linwood Cemetery. HCF

¹ Historic Markers, "Georgia," Historic Chattahoochee Commission, http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/tour_markers.cfm?GetPage=2&county+13 (accessed November 3, 2012).

historical markers dedicated to Alma Woodsey Thomas and Eugene Bullard were selected to discuss the challenges local organizations face when incorporating forgotten African American narratives on the landscape. Within the community, history is debated, and decisions are made that influence the public perception of local history. Public memory reflects a shared perception of the community's past, thus making commemoration efforts controversial. These are sites where the community negotiates its understanding of the past and present, offering a model for public historians to examine the community public historical landscape. These processes help other communities address how to construct or reinterpret historical narratives.

State and government commissions first developed historical marker programs in response to the booming automobile industry at the turn of the twentieth century. States across America began initiatives to erect historical markers along major roadways to increase tourism at important sites and homes.² Since 2000, state budget cuts relinquished historical marker programs into the hands of public-private partnerships, as one sees with the HCC. Historical societies now play a substantial role in the success of historical marker programs. Private organizations organize marker applications and require private sponsors to fund the cost of marker fabrication and installation. The shift from state markers to private commemoration has increased the number of diverse markers in some states. State and private agencies' motives reflected the potential economic benefit of tourism, and at times were unconcerned with designating diverse cultural heritage sites.

² Historical Markers Guidebooks, introductions into the history and start of several historical commemorative markers of the twentieth century. Margaret T. Peters, *A Guidebook to Virginia's Historical Markers* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1985), Muriel H. Wright, George H. Shirk, and Kenny A. Franks, *Mark of Heritage* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1976), Sarah Davis McBride, ed. *History Just Ahead: A Guide to Wisconsin Historical Markers* (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1999), Fred Brown, *Marking Time: East Tennessee Historical Markers and the Stories Behind Them* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005), and Melba porter Hay, and Thomas H. Appleton Jr., eds. *Roadside History: A Guide to Kentucky Highway Markers* (Frankfort, KY: Kentucky Historical Society, 2002).

State and private markers, however, cannot escape scrutiny by historians or community members who do not agree with its content, or possible location. Historian James Loewen is critical of historical marker text, arguing that they present a distorted, manipulated, or false historical account. Loewen examined historical markers across America in an effort to uncover historical inaccuracies and erasures of public memory. He advised individuals to question history presented at sites and for visitors to explore what is not interpreted. Loewen argues markers once erected, create controversy in the community, but this case study finds that controversy begins at the outset –originating in the application process. Public commemoration begins at the grassroots level, and at this level interpretive decisions are made that influence current historical debate. Historians often focus on the period after a monument, marker, or memorial is erected (product), but discussion of the process is far less frequent. As the literature suggests, motives to participate in commemoration include control, power, and influence. A group’s political agenda and recognition are contributing factors to the finished product. The case study focuses on two Columbus organizations competing for control over public memory and recognition from an official historical organization.

During the 1970s, Alabama and Georgia passed individual state legislation to create an inter-state heritage commission. Alabama politicians Bill Neville and Jimmy Clark, both Eufaula residents, advocated for an interstate commission to stimulate development and growth in the Chattahoochee Valley region. Supported by Alabama Governor Albert Brewer, the state legislature first established the Historic Chattahoochee Commission in 1970.³ Alabama is credited for founding the commission, but Georgia initiatives and legislation followed suit. Alabama and Georgia worked across borders to create an agency because of its interstate cooperation. In 1979, the 95th United States Congress passed a law “granting the consent of

³ Historic Chattahoochee Commission, Organization Overview Document, October 2012.

Congress to the Historic Chattahoochee Compact between the States of Alabama and Georgia,”⁴ and President Jimmy Carter, a native of Georgia, signed the act formally recognizing the earlier interstate initiatives.

The Historic Chattahoochee Compact was an interstate agreement designed to promote “historic preservation, and tourism, and to establish a joint interstate authority to assist in these efforts.”⁵ It formally recognized the HCC to oversee and carry out the goals of this legislation. The act led to local initiatives and state support for revitalizing an economically depressed region in Alabama and Georgia. The Chattahoochee Trace Region, as it is now known, consists of eighteen counties along the banks of that river. It starts in Chambers County, Alabama and Troup County, Georgia and travels south to the rivers mouth at the Gulf of Mexico.⁶ This initiative was the first of its kind and remains the only interstate heritage agreement to date.

According to its mission statement, the HCC “is charged with promoting heritage tourism, history education, and historic preservation throughout the Chattahoochee Trace region of Alabama and Georgia.”⁷ The commission aims to present the region’s native, pioneer, and industrial past to the public today. The HCC interprets the region’s broad history through various programs and local community projects. The commission issues several publications on the history of the region, attracts tourist by hosting various events, encourages enterprise, provides grants to local organizations, and has a historical marker program to commemorate its history.

The HCC initiated the Historic Marker Program in 1978 to encourage tourism and involvement from the community. It has become one of the commission’s most successful

⁴ U.S. Congress, House, *Historic Chattahoochee Compact October 14, 1978*, 95th Congress., H Doc. 95-462 (<http://congressional.proquest.com.spot.lib.auburn.edu/congressional/result/congressional/pqpdocumentview?accountid=8421&pgId=9794b544-68bb-4b74-bcf4-9a9940c61439&rsId=139D6078D82>) (Accessed October, 10, 2012).

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Historic Chattahoochee Commission, “About HCC –General Information,” <http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/contact.cfm?GetPage=1> (accessed October 15, 2012).

⁷ Ibid.

programs boasting over three hundred roadside commemorative markers to date. HCC commemorative marker programs offer individuals of the Chattahoochee Trace region the opportunity to remember local individuals, sites, and events by selecting marker subjects they wish to commemorate. HCC acts only as a mediator, and relies on continued community initiative and support to continue this program.

Current HCC Director Mike Bunn believes that local community groups drive the success of the marker program.⁸ Commemorative markers offer the unique opportunity for residents to memorialize local individuals, sites, and events. Participants in the marker program are responsible for raising an estimated two thousand dollars for fabrication fees; they must receive county approval to raise a roadside marker, and must submit historically sound research with the application. It is a major undertaking by private groups or individuals to complete the process. The process is long, from initial inquiry to application, culminating with an erected marker. HCC acts as a mediator and final arbiter over commemorative marker applications and has final authority to accept or reject proposed marker texts. Markers must include two scholarly citations to support the account proposed. Personal interpretation or biased wording cannot be placed on markers. This does not suggest, however that controversy escapes the program and is not recognized on the landscape.

Interested applicants complete required paperwork and follow mandated guidelines by the HCC. The Historic Marker Program uses guidelines from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Policy of Parks and Historic Sites Division's commemoration of persons, events, and places.⁹ State of Georgia and HCC guidelines remain relatively broad in an effort to attract community support and a variety of marker topics. Each category has guidelines for

⁸ Mike Bunn interview by author, Columbus, GA, September 7, 2012.

⁹ Historic Markers, "Historic Marker Guidelines," Historic Chattahoochee Commission, <http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/index.php/historic-markers/historic-marker-guidelines> (accessed October 16, 2012).

applicants to meet in order to erect a marker. To commemorate a particular individual, the guidelines state, “an individual must be deceased for over twenty years and have contributed such a distinction that the individual is mentioned in at least one authoritative historical work.” Individuals are eligible for commemoration with markers if their death is tied to their fame, or if they have a connection to the area for an extended period of time.¹⁰ Pat Garrett, for example, was born outside the city of Cusseta, Alabama and is remembered by his community as the western sheriff who captured Billy the Kid.¹¹ Despite the Garrett family’s move from Alabama when Pat was a child, the community remembers his notoriety with Billy the Kid and later achievements in law enforcement. Garrett thus qualifies under the “native to the city” category. The proposed time lapse between death and commemoration offers the community time to reflect, research, and identify key individuals for this honor. Within small communities, this also may limit the number of individuals open for commemoration.

HCC guidelines place greater restrictions on historical events. Such sites must be located within one mile of a paved highway for ease of marker erection, and also mentioned in at least one authoritative historical work. Sites eligible for commemoration include: “Military operations, regional Native American history; the creation of a work or art or literature or formerly unknown mechanical device, which has been of lasting inspiration or benefit to society; or an act of such historic importance as to have changed the course of history of either state.”¹² No mention of a recommended time lapse is stated for events in the guidelines. Such places are determined by local organizations with available primary and secondary source material to validate its significance. Groups or individuals identify what history they want to commemorate

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Historic Markers, “Alabama- Chamber County” Historic Chattahoochee Commission, <http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/index.php/historic-markers/alabama/18-alabama/48-chambers> (accessed October 16, 2012).

¹² Historic Chattahoochee Commission Organization Overview Document, October 2012.

first and then apply to the marker program. One marker in Eufaula, Alabama commemorates the lives affected by the Creek Indian Removal. It explains to the reader the expulsion of the natives and includes a speech by Chief Eufaula to the Alabama Legislature.¹³

The final commemorative category is historic buildings. Historic preservation is a key element to HCC's mission in the Chattahoochee Trace Region. Guidelines identify historic buildings in existence, wholly or in part, within one mile of a paved highway. Historic buildings can have ties to previously mentioned individuals or historic events. The community of Fort Gaines, Georgia commemorates an old lattice bridge with a connection to the famous architect Horace King, a renowned eighteenth century African American bridge builder.¹⁴ Guidelines also include historic homes of "aboriginal cultures, or historical events in the Cherokee Creek, or Uchee nations, or identified with Spanish exploration or occupation."¹⁵ Native land areas may not remain in perfect condition, but are identified and marked on the landscape. Archeological excavations have uncovered Native American settlements in various locations with an assortment of artifacts. This creates awareness in preserving such sites. The 'historic building' category is interpreted broadly and includes a variety of potential buildings such as: churches, forts, homes, and other historic sites.

Overall, the marker program does its best to provide the community an opportunity to emplace commemoration on the landscape, but the process has some exclusions. Guidelines allow a range of potential markers that meet every requirement of the program, but what about applications that do not meet every requirement? Markers not located along a major roadway, or that are not easy for the public to access do not receive a marker. As roadways change it may

¹³ Historic Marker, "Alabama-Barbour County," <http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/index.php/historic-markers/alabama/barbour-county> (accessed October 16, 2012).

¹⁴ Historic Markers, "Georgia," http://hcc-al-ga-org/tour_markers.cfm?GetPage=2 (accessed October 16, 2012).

¹⁵ Ibid.

also become more difficult to find potential sites. This discriminates against sites not located within a few feet of a road, thus limiting the possibilities for commemoration. A potential problem with the individual category is how much of a stretch can one community make to claim a person? Pat Garrett has a loose connection to the area, but with the approval of the Commission some sites may be open to personal interpretation. The historic building or site category encompasses a range of potential markers, but it does privilege structures that remain on the present landscape. This may pose to be a problem as communities change overtime and development may remove potential sites. Greater care must be taken to consider significant future events and the proper place for commemoration. The marker program favors places that are relatively easy to travel and view. Individuals who may consider participating may find it too difficult to receive support because of regulations, thus making the marker process not as appealing to all. Despite some of these concerns, the case study finds the HCC marker program is popular and respected in the Chattahoochee Valley Region. Local groups work hard to fund, research, and complete the process. The marker program serves as a medium for community place-making and commemoration.

Over fifty commemorative markers co-sponsored by private organizations exist within the city limits of Columbus. The Historic Columbus Foundation in 1981 dedicated the first marker at the home of Dr. John Pemberton, creator of the Coca-Cola beverage formula. Participants in the process compete for control over memory and to receive public recognition for their efforts. Three commemorative analyzed in this chapter commemorate the lives of natives of the city and share co-sponsors motivated by recognition and having a memory represented on the landscape. The markers include a Confederate general, an African-American artist, and an African American World War I hero. The study examines the marker erection

process by detailing the history of co-sponsors in Columbus, a discussion of controversies or inaccuracies, and community response.

The study finds that while the city has an official narrative of its past, not all groups agree with current commemorative efforts. The United Daughters of the Confederacy's participation is motivated by their desire to preserve on the landscape Civil War memory. In the case of African American painter Alma Thomas, the community confronted heated debates surrounding how her memory would be best preserved and presented, and the community remained gridlocked in debate before private interests took control of matters. Eugene Bullard is remembered as a World War I hero flying for the French and as the first known African American combat aviator in WWI history. Bullard, however, was an expatriate and identified himself as French rather than American. How then does the community of Columbus incorporate his achievements into local history? These case studies reveal the daunting challenge of incorporating forgotten narratives onto the modern landscape, highlighting how various groups act to present these narratives to present society.

United Daughters of the Confederacy

According to the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), they are a patriotic, benevolent, historical society dedicated to preserving Confederate memory in the South.¹⁶ Immediately following the Civil War, as Karen Cox notes, women became leaders in the movement to memorialize the Confederacy, according to a characteristic narrative commonly referred to as the 'Lost Cause.'¹⁷ Southern women took the initiative to honor veterans, aid widows and orphans, and memorialize the Confederate deceased in powerful public acts of

¹⁶ United Daughters of the Confederacy, "About the UDC," <http://www.hqudc.org/> (accessed October 30, 2012).

¹⁷ Karen Cox, *Dixies Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2003).

eneration. Local women's groups, such as the Ladies Memorial Association, organized events to keep Confederate memory alive and honor the patriotic sacrifice of their loved ones.

Established in 1894, the UDC joined scattered memorial groups known as "Daughters of the Confederacy" throughout the South. The daughters, sisters, and mothers of Confederate soldiers were among the first members to comprise this group. Present membership requires women to prove lineage to someone who fought or provided aid to the Confederate cause. The UDC emerged as one of the most socially and politically effective organizations in the South after the Civil War, establishing political and social control over Confederate memory. Members defended a harmonious and romanticized the 'Old South,' and validated the master-slave racial hierarchy. In their local communities, UDC members organized events, parades, fundraisers, and memorials. Southern white children benefitted from scholarships from the organization to advance their education. The UDC controlled textbook material in Southern schools and interpreted the "War Between the States," as they named it, as a conflict to defend states rights against the federal government, and not a conflict over slavery.¹⁸

Lizzie Rutherford Ellis, a prominent citizen of Columbus, organized one group of women to decorate soldier graves in Linwood Cemetery after the war. The memorial effort inspired Ellis to champion other Southern women's groups to decorate Confederate soldiers graves and observe a day of remembrance. Following her death in 1873, the Georgia General Assembly officially recognized April 26 as Confederate Memorial Day.¹⁹ Established in 1898, the United Daughters of the Confederacy Columbus chapter is named in her honor. The success

¹⁸ Cox, *Dixies Daughters*, 1; United Daughter of the Confederacy, "About the UDC" http://www.hqudc.org/about_udc/index.htm (accessed November 21, 2012).

¹⁹ David S. Williams, s.v., "Lizzie Rutherford 1833-1873," <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-2901&sug=y> (accessed October 23, 2012).

of the UDC relies on the dedication of its members to carry out its mission and serve the community through philanthropic projects.

The powerful UDC of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century became controversial in a post Civil Rights society. Today, the UDC faces new social challenges and resistance. Columbus city leaders now shy away from signs of involvement or association with the organization. The UDC does not discuss politics, and insists it is a patriotic historical society. Despite its ostensibly apolitical stance, it still undertakes acts that can be deemed political, such as Confederate grave decorating, which is highly political and controversial in present society. Historian William Blair describes the communal effort involved in commemorative acts such as decorating graves following the end of the Civil War as participatory, but most importantly these acts maintained a sectional identity that defied complete assimilation with the union.²⁰ This act of remembrance carries on an apolitical tradition into modernity, despite claims it remains a gesture to confederate soldiers. The Historic Chattahoochee Commission's marker program benefits the UDC, which finds itself in a delicate relationship within the Columbus community.²¹

There are several sites in Columbus dedicated to honoring General Benning's memory and legacy –Fort Benning, two historical markers, and a burial monument. The number of locations dedicated to Benning reveals an undisclosed conflict over space and memorialization. Each site competes to attract visitors and gain greater recognition over the others. The naming of Fort Benning is most widely recognized the landscape. Thousands of infantry soldiers train annually on base and the fort contributes millions of dollars to the local economy.²² Fort Benning is known throughout the community and nation, but public access to the fort is

²⁰ William Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 32.

²¹ Interview with UDC member by author, Columbus, GA, October 16, 2012. Interviewee wished to remain anonymous. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-822&hl=y> (accessed, April 1, 2013).

²² Beryl I. Diamond. "Fort Benning," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*,

restricted. To learn more about the base's history, the public can pay to visit National Infantry Museum, located outside of the fort's gates. Visitors can learn a brief history about the base and tour the museum's exhibits dedicated to the national infantry story. Benning plays a minor role in the overall presentation, and is only mentioned because the base is named in honor of him. The public has free access to learn about and commemorate Benning by visiting either of the historical markers or monuments erected in his honor. Two historical markers share similar interpretations of Benning's life and service, but the location of the markers reveal competition over public perception of Benning. Benning's family also erected a controversial burial monument that remembered him with greater military honors than he received. The markers and monuments show how Columbus over time reinterpreted and negotiated its understanding of the past and present. It also demonstrates how local groups play a major role in community debate over local history. The UDC's marker dedicated to General Henry Benning is the organization's first historical marker with the HCC and demonstrates the organization's continued community presence, albeit more reserved than in the past. The group was selective in choosing the right local Civil War hero to commemorate. Other famed local Confederate generals, such as Raphael Moses a Jewish Confederate General, could have been commemorated, but the chapter chose to

commemorate Benning because of his familial ties to a current member and because of his notoriety in Columbus.²³

In the neat rows of Linwood Cemetery stands a historical marker honoring the life and accomplishments of Henry Lewis Benning. On March 31, 2012, the Lizzie Rutherford Chapter 60 erected the marker to honor a Confederate general and native of the city. The marker portrays Benning as a man of conviction and faithful service to the Confederacy.²⁴

The UDC faced the difficult challenge of what to include and exclude in the marker text. While drafting the marker text, one member noted, “we had to make every word count.”²⁵ The HCC does not participate in the text writing process and only makes final edits on what is submitted. Groups at any point can back out if they do not agree with the edits. The UDC chapter voted on the proposed marker text and as a chapter approved the marker.²⁶ The marker text mentions Benning’s military and political career. He served as solicitor-general in Columbus and sat on Georgia’s Supreme Court bench for six years.²⁷ He ardently defended state’s rights and served as voting delegate in favor of the state’s secession from the federal government. He enlisted in the Confederate army, entering as



General Henry Lewis Benning
Photo Courtesy of New
Georgia Encyclopedia Online

²³ Lewis Regenstein. “Raphael Moses,” *New Georgia Encyclopedia Online* <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-2908> (accessed April 30, 2013).

²⁴ Gen. Henry Lewis Benning marker text, see Appendix II.

²⁵ Interview with UDC member

²⁶ Benning photo courtesy of New Georgia Encyclopedia

²⁷ Charles Pou, s.v. “Henry Lewis Benning 1814-1875,” *New Georgia Encyclopedia Online*. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-3813&hl=y> (accessed October 23, 2012).

a colonel and later achieving the rank of brigadier general. The marker notes Benning's greatest contribution to the landscape is the United States military base named in his honor. The UDC marker does not mention any controversy surrounding Benning's memory or the marker location. The marker does not interpret his personal life, his views as a secessionist, or his ardent defense of slavery. The UDC does not include details on his social or personal life, but instead focuses on the least controversial details of his memory.

Benning's memory however, is far more complex. The marker attempts to simplify Benning's memory to make it more palatable in present society, where Confederate memorialization is controversial. The marker's location in Linwood Cemetery is significant also to the UDC chapter because of the cemetery's history and its location as the final resting place for many of Confederate soldiers. The cemetery is a site where the UDC can observe and better control commemoration efforts to preserve Confederate memory in the twenty-first century. They consider Benning a powerful force in Confederate and local Columbus history and argue his memory goes unrecognized or forgotten by the greater public.²⁸ The marker serves as a way to commemorate and reeducate the public on Benning's accomplishments.

Linwood Cemetery houses competing interpretations of Benning's life. A large stone monument and Confederate flag mark Benning's tomb with the UDC historical marker a few feet away. Monument and grave inscriptions recall aspects of Benning's life not included in marker text. The monument erected by Benning's family reads "Henry L. Benning Maj. Gen. C.S.A. Old Rock," Benning received the nickname, "Old Rock," for his steadfastness and dedication in battle during the war.²⁹ His epitaph follows a traditional style, "Henry L. Benning son of Pleasant

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Pou.,s.v. "Henry Lewis Benning 1814-1875,"

M. and Malinda Benning April 2, 1814- July 10, 1876. He Was a Man.”³⁰. On site exist two competing interpretations of Benning’s life: his family’s memorial at the gravesite and historic facts presented on the marker.

The monument inscription, “Henry L. Benning Maj. Gen. C.S.A.,” is a subtle change in rank: however, this is significant for interpreting his role in the military. Major General is a rank Benning never officially received from the Confederacy, but one the family felt owed to him. A UDC member explains the controversy as an unfortunate circumstance; Benning’s promotion paperwork did not follow through before the war ended.³¹ Due to Historic Chattahoochee Commission guidelines, the UDC can state the historical fact that Benning was a Brigadier General. Within Linwood Cemetery, the family remembers Benning with greater honors than historians recognize. By excluding this debate from marker text, the UDC does not reject the family’s promotion of Benning to Major General, nor does it attempt to rectify it for site viewers.

The historical marker in Linwood Cemetery is, however, the second dedicated to Benning in Columbus. The Georgia Historical Society (GHS) erected a marker located at Benning’s home along Broadway Street in 1953.³² The home is no longer present and is now the site of an industrial park. A small green space and fountain are situated on the property near the marker. The marker is located in a high traffic and popular walking area of downtown Columbus. Visitors still can stroll through the park, sit by the fountain, and read about Benning’s accomplishments. The GHS marker also describes Benning’s political career and includes a list of battles served. The 1953 marker does not mention Fort Benning in its narrative. The two markers share equal interpretations of Benning’s life, but marker placement suggest its

³⁰ Grave inscriptions located at Henry L. Benning grave in Historic Linwood Cemetery, Columbus, GA.

³¹ Interview with UDC member

³² Georgia Historical Society Historical Marker Index, “General Benning,” Georgia Historical Society <http://www.georgiahistory.com/markers/2002> (Accessed October 30, 2012).

placement is important in commemoration. The first historical marker was erected on the site of his former residence. GHS perhaps deemed the overgrown and neglected Linwood cemetery an unsuitable location at that time. In 1997, the UDC established a foundation dedicated to preserving and restoring the historic cemetery.³³ Gaines Foster estimates that 70 percent of Confederate monuments from 1865 to 1885 were placed in cemeteries. Confederate cemeteries represent are sites of solemnity in which the fallen rest. Cemeteries are sites of permanence and were used by Confederate organizations to continue practice of memorialization. Confederate burial arrangements and monuments also reflected communal mourning, which resulted in allotting portions of public cemeteries to the fallen. After the war, it became an important part of the Southern psyche to impart on future generations the sacredness of these grounds and to remonstrate that they should never forget their cause.³⁴

The UDC's marker is not located along a major roadway and requires prior knowledge. Once within the cemetery's boundary, visitors can see the UDC's contribution to local history through their effort to preserve and conserve the historic cemetery. The UDC's influence over Linwood Cemetery creates a space where it controls interpretation of Benning's memory for visitors. The site director is a member of the chapter and a Benning descendent. For her, this marker is sentimental and a personal achievement. This act carries on the tradition established by its founding members. For the UDC, place determines control over interpretation of Benning's memory. The GHS's historical marker was located outside of the cemetery, a site reexamined by

³³ Historic Linwood Cemetery is located in Columbus, Georgia and is managed by the Historic Linwood Foundation. The foundation is the result of Lizzie Rutherford UDC Chapter of Columbus' effort to create an organization to care for the neglected cemetery. The cemetery dates back to 1829, after the first surveyor to the area's son died. Prominent residents buried in Linwood cemetery include John. S. Pemberton, creator of the Coca-Cola secret formula; Augusta Howard the founder of Georgia's Women Suffrage Association; and Lizzie Rutherford Ellis founder of Columbus United Daughters of the Confederacy chapter 60. For further information see Linda J. Kennedy *Historic Linwood Cemetery: Images of America* (Arcadia Publishing, 2004).

³⁴ Gaines Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 40. Kristin Dunn Johnson, *No Holier Spot of Ground: Confederate Monuments and Cemeteries of South Carolina* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2009), 13.

the UDC as no longer relevant for Benning's commemoration. The Historic Columbus Foundation officially recognizes the UDC's marker location as this generation's new commemorative site. The UDC's involvement in the program not only successfully commemorates Benning's memory, but it also recognizes the UDC's contribution to preserving the historic cemetery.

Historic Columbus Foundation Historical Markers

During the 1960s, America experienced a decade of social unrest and government reforms- the Civil Rights Movement, assassination of President John F. Kennedy and Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., and the Vietnam War. Americans used historic preservation as a means to hold on to a meaningful past in a changing society. In the wake of this preservation movement, prominent Columbus citizens took action to preserve buildings meaningful to the city's heritage. Established in 1871, the Springer Opera House served as the city's premier theater of fine arts. Known as, "the best example of Victorian Opera House east of the Mississippi River," Columbus citizens considered it a jewel of its past, but it was left to deteriorate as a result of the great depression during the 1930s.³⁵ Years of neglect placed the opera house on the city's demolition list. Faced with this potential loss, prominent community members banded together to save the Springer in 1963.³⁶ This group raised funds to stabilize the structure and later launched a fundraising campaign for its restoration.

Saving the Springer inspired the establishment of a preservation society, the Historic Columbus Foundation (HCF), in 1966. Historic Columbus Foundation's partnership with the Historic Chattahoochee Commission is intended to support institutions in the region with similar

³⁵ Roger Harris, *Our Town: An Introduction to the History of Columbus, Georgia*. (Columbus, GA: Historic Columbus Foundation, 1992), 29.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 29.

goals to promote and preserve local history. HCF is the only preservation society in Columbus dedicated to historic preservation, heritage education, and community revitalization. It promotes the use of historic preservation in city development plans and oversees the restoration of historic homes, buildings, and city mills. Participation in the HCC Historical Marker Program is one way to commemorate memory on the landscape. Historical markers provide accessible sources of historic information to the public. To date, the Foundation is the largest participant in the marker program with a contribution of thirteen markers since 2000.

HCF also functions as an intermediary organization for community members who want to be involved in the historical marker program.³⁷ Individuals agree to provide financial support for the marker and have their name listed as a co-sponsor. Proposals go before the Foundation's board of trustees for approval before proceeding with the HCC marker process. HCF conducts all research and writes marker text, but may involve co-sponsors to aid in the research process. Participants understand the foundation has final authority over text narrative. Researchers consult local archives, newspaper collections, and may use oral histories to support marker text claims. Conflict can occur between co-sponsors over text-narrative, but the foundation aims to provide a non-biased, accurate historical account. Overall, the foundation has effectively worked with co-sponsors to complete the process.³⁸

While the UDC historical marker highlights issues regarding space and commemoration, two HCF historical markers in this next segment of the chapter deal with issues of incorporating new narratives into local history. The markers commemorate two African Americans, Eugene Bullard and Alma Woodsey Thomas, who lived in turn of the twentieth century Columbus, and left the booming industrial town for greater opportunities. Alma Woodsey Thomas was an

³⁷ Justin Krieg, interview with author, October 19, 2012.

³⁸ Ibid.

acclaimed artist and Eugene Bullard a recognized French World War I hero. The people of Columbus wanted to incorporate their memories into local history despite the fact that they achieved fame outside of the city. The community faced issues regarding their race and where to commemorate these individuals on the landscape. By the end of the twentieth century, a greater number African American held city leadership positions and were involved in local and state politics. As a result, the shift in political influence resulted in efforts to



Eugene Bullard
Photo Courtesy of Smithsonian
National Air and Space Museum

include the African American experience as part of local history. They worked to create a shared and diverse community memory into the twenty-first century.³⁹

HCF dedicated a roadside marker at the childhood home of French World War I hero Eugene J. Bullard. Erected February 15, 2008 the marker stands along Talbotton Road, a busy roadway in Columbus. Bullard was born on October 9, 1896 in the city's Rose Hill district. His parents were former slaves who moved the young family to Columbus in search of greater job opportunities. His father, William Bullard, worked on the docks for local entrepreneur W.C. Bradley. The near lynching of his father at the hands of Bradley's foreman haunted young Eugene, who ran away in 1906 to escape the racial injustices of the south.

Bullard stowed away on a ship sailing to Europe and found a land of new freedoms, equality, and independence. Bullard went on to become a prized boxer, performing in Vaudeville shows traveling the continent, and enlisted in the French Foreign Service in World War I. He

³⁹ Bullard Photography Courtesy of Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, "Air Space Blog" <http://blog.nasm.si.edu/aviation/eugene-j-bullard/>

fought valiantly in the Battle of Verdun and was wounded. The French government awarded Bullard the Croix de Guerre in the spring of 1916 for his heroism in battle. His wounds prevented him from returning as a foot soldier and set his sights on becoming a combat pilot. The French military granted Bullard an opportunity to train as a pilot and went on to become the first African American to engage in air combat. While fighting for the French, Bullard achieved recognition as a war hero. After the war, he remained in France and became a successful business owner in Paris operating a boxing gym and jazz club. He was forced to leave France as Nazi forces invaded France in 1940 and forced to leave his daughters in the care of close relatives during his escape back to the United States. Bullard was later reunited with his daughters and settled his family in Harlem, New York.

Bullard found his new life in America difficult to adjust to. He attempted to join the French Veterans of the Great War in New York, but his war compatriots denied him invitations to veterans' functions because of his race. He was not included in war commemorative events and American news media did not broadcast his achievements as an acclaimed fighter pilot. In America, Bullard retreated to a quiet life with his family and found work for a decorated war hero difficult to find. He worked odd jobs as port security officer and elevator operator before his death. The French government, however, maintained its ties with Bullard by inviting to participate in Bastille Day celebrations in 1949 and making him a chevalier of the Legion of Honor for his distinguished military and civilian service in France. His return back to America placed him back in a segregated society where he was denied equal opportunities and rights.

The 1960s marked the first time Bullard's story received national attention. While working as an elevator operator at Rockefeller Center in New York City, the host of the *Today Show* asked Bullard to share his story on live TV. The on-air interview was the beginning of a

long journey to formally recognize Bullard as part of America's World War I history. Before his death in 1961, Bullard wrote a personal memoir and autobiography, *All Blood runs Red*, but it was never published. Bullard's memory received greater attention posthumously.⁴⁰

In the late 1980s, the tide began to turn in the midst of national efforts to recognize Bullard's achievements. In 1988, Bullard received his first official recognition when a dormitory at Gunter's Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama. It was named in his honor for students attending the non-commissioned Officer's Academy. He was also included in Gunter's 'Heritage Hall,' a history of enlisted men and aviation. His daughter Jacqueline O'Garro, grandson Richard Reid and great grandson attended the commemoration. In a *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer* interview following the dedication, Columbus State President Frank Brown stated that Bullard blazed the trail for African American young men, like the Tuskegee Airmen, to achieve combat success. The newspaper also mentioned that Montgomery's commemoration renewed local interest in Bullard.⁴¹

The Georgia's Aviation Hall of Fame at Warner Robins Air Force Base also inducted Bullard in the hall's inaugural dedication ceremony. The site includes a plaque describing his military successes and a portrait relief. Jacqueline O'Garro was unable to attend the ceremony, but shared her response to the honor with the *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, "I didn't expect this government to honor my father (because much of his fame came in France)...It is nice to know that regardless of whether you are black, white, green, if you do something you will be honored."⁴² O'Garro's quote reflects on the societal changes that made her father's recognition

⁴⁰ P.J. Carisella and James W. Ryan issued the first publication on Bullard's life and war experience. *The Black Swallow of Death: The Incredible Story of Eugene Bullard, the World's First Black Combat Aviator* (New York: Marlborough House Inc., 1975). Carisella and Ryan's publication was unsuccessful in generating public awareness of Bullard's story and remained the only biography published until Craig Lloyd's *Eugene Bullard: Black Expatriate in Jazz-Age Paris* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2000).

⁴¹ Liza Benham, *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, November 19, 1988.

⁴² Kembal Perry, *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, August 26, 1989.

possible. Bullard received further honors as the U.S. Air Force awarded him the rank of second lieutenant posthumously and included him in the U.S. Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio in 1990.⁴³ In 1992, the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum (NASM) unveiled a sculpture of Bullard that would be incorporated into the museum's permanent World War I exhibition. Bullard's incorporation into the NASM World War I gallery finally officially recognized his contribution in American history.

The NASM completed the process started by previous military and state efforts to honor Bullard's memory, but the journey remained incomplete. In some cases, national commemoration can occur before local commemoration. The decisions to honor Bullard at the state, national, and military levels were significant factors that made Columbus residents aware of its lack of participation. External forces can encourage communities to participating in national commemoration efforts. Columbus citizens and city leadership official lobbied for a memorial for a man they considered a hometown hero.

Craig Lloyd, Columbus historian and former CSU archives director, began a project in the late 1980s to research the life and service of Eugene Bullard.⁴⁴ Lloyd's research on Bullard led him to contact the Columbus Metropolitan Airport to suggest they erect something in honor of Bullard following the NASM's exhibition. In a 1989 proposal, Lloyd requested that the Columbus Metropolitan Airport formulate a plan to honor Bullard at the airport –for instance with a plaque or renaming of a terminal. Lloyd argued to the commission that Bullard was worthy of recognition because his achievements and character were formed by his Columbus parents and brief time in the city. He concludes the proposal by stating:

⁴³ Craig Lloyd , "All Blood Runs Red," *A Century of Flight: Military Pioneers Who have Made Aviation History* (Smithsonian Publication, 2003).

⁴⁴ Mary Margaret Byrne, "When 40 percent is an Impressive Turnout," *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, March 11, 1988.

Would it not be only appropriate, but also opportune, for Columbus –become the peaceful bi-racial community of Bullard’s hopes –to celebrate its accomplished native son? And at what better place than our airport –symbolic, as it is, of the trailblazing feat that will assure Eugene Bullard his place in history?⁴⁵

The reference to a bi-racial society suggests Lloyd’s belief that the community was ready to honor black citizens on the landscape. Bullard’s roots in the city made him an ideal figure meriting commemoration. Despite Lloyd’s personal sentiments, the airport commission tabled the proposal and ignored Lloyd’s inquires on its status. The city or airport commission may not have been prepared to honor Bullard at a public facility. Mrs. Merryll Peason, former director of the Columbus University Library, wrote a letter to Columbus Mayor Frank Martin mentioning the commission’s responses to Lloyd’s inquiry. Penson’s letter to the mayor is one example of how local citizen expected city leaders to play a greater role in commemorating Bullard. Columbus did not recognize Bullard publically and many in the community sought to change the silence on the public historical landscape.

In response to the NASM’s recognition in 1988, Columbus Mayor Frank Martin wrote a letter to the airport director Mark Oropeza, expressing his hope that; “ members of the [sic] airport commission consider erecting a memorial plaque in honor of Mr. Eugene Bullard.” Martin also mentions the increasing volume of inquires from local citizens, “as to why the [sic] airport commission has not recognized Bullard’s contribution in spite of the fact that a request was made approximately a year ago that such action be taken.”⁴⁶ The year old inquiry references Lloyd’s letter and proposal. CSU President Frank Brown also contacted the airport director to pressure the commission to respond. In a letter addressed to Mayor Martin, Brown urged the mayor to assist in the commemoration effort, “I urge you and other persons in leadership

⁴⁵ Craig Lloyd Letter to Mark Oropeza, March 31, 1989, Eugene Bullard Vertical file, Columbus State Archives, Columbus, GA. (hear after cited as Lloyd MSS).

⁴⁶ Honorable Frank K. Martin letter to Mark Oropeza, October 20, 1992. Eugene Bullard Vertical File, Columbus State University Archives, Columbus, GA. Lloyd MSS.

positions in our city to consider an appropriate recognition and move forward with such recognition in a speedy fashion.”⁴⁷ The community and city leaders pressured the airport commission from 1989 to 1992 to acknowledge their request and develop a plan for a memorial.

The community’s letters and the participation of city leaders resulted in the commemoration of Bullard at the Columbus Metropolitan Airport in June 1993. The members of the airport commission decided to wait until completing a \$12 million dollar expansion project. Interviewed by the *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer* about why the plaque was delayed, Scott Wise, a member of the airport commission stated, “ We didn’t want to just throw it in there.” Those interested in seeing Bullard commemorated accomplished their goal. The end product resulted in a physical memorial to Bullard that included his memory on the landscape.

Eugene Bullard has since become an important figure discussed often in local history, news, publications, and pop culture. Bullard was featured in the 2005 Columbus Museum exhibit featuring noted local African Americans from 1870-1970. Bullard is recognized as a war hero who overcame racial adversity to achieve great things. Craig Lloyd’s, *Eugene Bullard: Black Expatriate in Jazz Age Paris*, provides an accurate and colorful account of Bullard’s life abroad and in America. Bullard’s memory has inspired local screenwriter Michael Burks to create a screenplay based on Bullard’s life. Bullard’s World War I experience was the inspiration for a character in the 2006 motion picture *Fly Boys*.

Due to Bullard’s popularity and acceptance in local culture, Craig Lloyd contacted the Historic Columbus Foundation to erect a marker commemorating Bullard at the site of his childhood home on Talbotton Road, which had been replaced with apartment complexes. HCF worked with Lloyd to complete the HCC marker application and fund the cost of the marker. The

⁴⁷ Frank Douglas Brown letter to the Honorable Frank K. Martin, October 22, 1992 Eugene Bullard Vertical File, Columbus State University Archives, Columbus, GA. Lloyd MSS.

marker stands on the side of the road and is visible to passing cars and pedestrians walking on the sidewalk. Lloyd used years of personal research to complete the marker text. Dedicated in 2008, the marker has two sides with different text –with one side providing a short biographical paragraph, and side addressing his military success. On side one, the marker details his family’s connection with W.C. Bradley, his father’s near lynching and mother’s death. Lloyd decided to include the difficult memories of Bullard’s troubled childhood. It describes his journey to Europe and simply states he lived abroad for twenty- eight years.

Side two of the marker text focuses on his success as the first black combat aviator. Lloyd includes Bullard’s full military experience and honor received. The marker states Bullard flew “some twenty missions as a French pilot.”⁴⁸ This information is needed for readers to understand that Bullard was not any ordinary pilot and his accomplishments were unique in early twentieth century Europe. Readers can also learn about Bullard’s life during the interwar years as a club owner, his marriage to a Parisian woman, and the family they started together. Lloyd concludes the marker by mentioning his return to America after Nazi occupation of France and his life in New York until his death in 1961. Side two of the marker begins with the highlights of Bullard’s military career and ends with a depressing statement of an uneventful life in America: “ Bullard came to New York where he worked in obscurity for the rest of his life.” The marker leaves an important question for the reader –why did his life end in obscurity? The marker fails to discuss the racial climate he experienced back in America and the reasons why he opted to retreat to a quiet life –racial discrimination, lack of job opportunities, and being denied recognition for his service by the U.S. military. Overall, Lloyd’s historical interpretation of Bullard provides an uncontroversial summary of his life. Similar to the UDC’s interpretation of

⁴⁸ Historic Chattahoochee Commission Eugene Bullard Marker Text see Appendix IV.

Benning, the focus remains on his military achievements abroad and his exceptional story of overcoming adversity.

HCF's sponsorship of the marker preserves a significant memory on the Columbus historical landscape. Like Bullard's, other homes on the city's outskirts housed many of the city's early working class African Americans. Local history omitted Bullard until the 1990s, when he was accepted as an important African American figure. The city claims Bullard as part of its historical narrative and emphasizes his status as a war hero. Craig Lloyd remains unsure if the marker adds to Bullard's notoriety, but it helps preserve his memory for future generations.⁴⁹ Perhaps his story, like many others, will also make way for other minorities to be a part of local history. The people of Columbus fought to have Bullard commemorated and included as part of their history. Despite a near century of obscurity, the Bullard commemoration and marker is one example of how communities reinterpret their local history over time.

Over the last thirty years, Columbus has recognized the accomplishments of local African American men, but often excluded the contributions of African American women. HCC's second historical marker shares the story of Alma Thomas, an exceptional African American female. Thomas and Bullard share similar life experiences –both left the city of Columbus to escape discrimination and achieved fame later on in life outside of the city. Both overcame adversity in their lifetime and received recognition after death. The people of Columbus found it easier to incorporate Bullard's narrative on the landscape due to Fort Benning's presence on the landscape. Commemorating Thomas's memory on the landscape proved more difficult and controversial because the community could not agree how to commemorate Thomas –was she to be remembered as an African American, woman, or both?

⁴⁹ Email Correspondence with Craig Lloyd with the author, February 12, 2013.

One recent marker is dedicated to the home of Alma Woodsey Thomas, a native of the city and acclaimed artist.⁵⁰ HCF worked with current homeowners Terry and Shannon Wilson to commemorate the life of this twentieth-century African American female painter. Born in 1891, Thomas grew up in a middle class home with a successful businessman father and seamstress mother. Her father, John Harris-Thomas, purchased a lot in 1889 and built a Victorian Style home of the family. The Thomas family lived at 441 21st Street until Alma was the age of fifteen, when the family moved from Columbus to Washington D.C. to escape racial tension and segregation in the south.



Alma Woodsey Thomas
Photo courtesy of Alma Woodsey
Thomas: *A Retrospective of the Paintings*

The move north provided Thomas and her sisters' greater educational opportunities. Alma attended Howard University, and was amongst the university's first class to receive a fine arts degree. With this degree, she taught high school art in District of Columbia schools until her retirement in 1960. She dedicated the rest of her life to pursue a career as a contemporary artist. Thomas was the first African American woman to have a solo-exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.⁵¹ Her accomplishments include exhibitions in the Corcoran Gallery, the Smithsonian Institution and prestigious distinctions awarded to her. The Thomas family's success is an incredible story, but was not incorporated into local history until the 1990s. Frank Schnell, former archaeologist and historian for the Columbus Museum

⁵⁰ Alma Woodsey Thomas marker text, see Appendix III.

⁵¹ Merry A. Foresta, *A Life in Art: Alma Thomas 1891-1978* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), 40.

described their exclusion from local history as; “a side of African American history we almost never hear about in Columbus.”⁵² Interpretation of Thomas’ life and memory became a controversial issue as the community dealt with issues of presentation, race, control, and preservation.

The family home remained an important memory for Thomas, who shared stories of her childhood home with close Washington friends.⁵³ Despite nostalgic memories of her youth, the home’s condition deteriorated over the course of the century. Community activism called for city officials to purchase the home and make it public property. In 1994, the Columbus Housing Authority purchased the property, which the *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer* reported was, “surrounded by weed-filled vacant lots...a crumbling roof...[with] stark signs of spreading deteriorations.”⁵⁴ The purchase of the property generated public debate amongst preservationists and community members about the home’s future. Competing parties were divided on key issues of race and politics. At the surface, debate seemed to loom over the home’s restoration and public use, but a greater issue lay underneath that divided the community on how best to approach the situation. Preservationists and the art community favored of the home’s restoration at its current location, with it converted into an art museum for tourism. Civil Rights supporters argued that the home should be relocated to a proposed ‘Black Historic District,’ and serve as a landmark for this historic tour.⁵⁵ The district included other historic African American homes, the Liberty Theatre, and a number of historic black churches. Each side saw benefits to local history, but competing interest groups also sought to focus on the benefits of heritage tourism.

⁵² Jim Houston, “Saving History,” Main, *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, Wednesday August 17, 1994.

⁵³ Adolphus Ealey, “Remembering Alma,” *A Life in Art: Alma Thomas 1891-1978* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution press, 1981), 11.

⁵⁴ Jim Houston, “Saving History,” Main, *Columbus Ledger –Enquirer*, Wednesday, August 17, 1994.

⁵⁵ Richard Hyatt, “Housing Officials Consider Black Historic District,” Front, *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, Wednesday, July 2, 1997.

Columbus residents attempted to negotiate a public memory that benefitted everyone, but competing narratives resulted in its failure. Each group aimed to place Thomas into pre-fabricated narratives to receive group recognition and attract potential tourists. Competing groups struggled to incorporate Thomas's memory on the landscape because they tried to classify her in political and racial historical categories –as African American or according to her gender. Black heritage supporters presented a narrative of race and achievement over diversity. They hoped to gain equal representation in the community by placing her into a racial category that included other famed local African Americans. Art enthusiasts wanted to showcase and interpret her talents as an artist first, and mention race second. They advocated a home gallery to make her collection of artwork accessible to the public and provide financial benefits to the community through admission charges. Everyone wanted to benefit and control how Thomas would be remembered on the public landscape, yet neither group was able to reach a compromise. The Thomas family home first brought the people of Columbus together, but interest groups diverted public attention away from the home and instead on private plans.

While each side argued for their proposal's acceptance, the home received no attention. Despite initial concerns, no restoration work was done for five years. All agreed the home needed repairs, but this required major financial contributions public funds could not meet. With the house in disrepair, the Historic Columbus Foundation had no option left but to put it up for public auction in 1999. The foundation made every attempt to find a business or community group to adopt the project, but found none before reaching the decision to auction the home.⁵⁶ With the house on auction, Army Major Terry Wilson and his wife Shannon saw it as an opportunity to take on a new restoration project. The Wilsons long admired its Victorian

⁵⁶ Tim Chitwood, "Alma Thomas Childhood Home Burns –Historic House in Rose Hill Neighborhood was Almost Fully Restored Before Fire," A-1, *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, Saturday, January 6, 2001.

architectural style, without any prior knowledge of its historical importance to the community. The Wilsons placed a bid of \$43,000 on the property, won their bid, and became its new homeowners.

The Wilsons, however, did not expect the purchase to embroil them in local controversy. Community members expressed their resentment over the property's loss for future public use. State Representative Calvin Smyre argued that private purchase eliminated future plans for the betterment of the community; instead, the property benefitted private enterprise.⁵⁷ The community also questioned the legality of the purchase, as it remained unclear if the Housing Authority had the right to sell the home given that a member of the Thomas family potentially retained property rights over the house. Challenges against the home's purchase never amounted to anything. Despite public protest and questions over property rights, the Wilsons retained full rights to the property and made the home a private residence.

In one-year's time, the Wilsons dramatically improved the home's condition, investing \$100,000 to accurately restore it. An unfortunate fire in July 2001 damaged significant portions of the home and reversed much of the work up to that point. A second restoration was launched and successfully restored the home. With restoration work complete, Terry Wilson approached the Historic Chattahoochee Commission to co-sponsor a marker in honor of Alma Thomas. Despite community controversy, the erection of the Alma Woodsey Thomas historical marker officially recognizes her as part of local history and credits the Wilson's dedication to the project.

The commemorative marker does not mention the years of neglect, controversy over ownership, or a fire that almost destroyed the home forever. This may not be necessary to include in the text, but it remains a recent memory to current citizens. The Wilson's marker thus

⁵⁷ Ibid.

serves as a middle ground for competing narratives. It does not capitalize on her memory, nor does it favor a black heritage or art narrative. The Thomas family home is closed from public view, but this marker invites readers to learn the history behind the Victorian home. Alma Thomas' childhood home stands in beautifully restored condition. The colorful descriptions she shared with friends are once again brought back to life. The Wilsons became a part of the Thomas story and such preservation efforts not only benefited the new homeowners, but the community as well. The Wilsons saved a part of local history and by participating in the marker program integrated Thomas' story on the Columbus landscape.

Participation in the HCC Historical Marker program creates community enthusiasm and participation. The process of commemoration reveals the complex social and political debates that occur within a community. The three case studies examine private efforts to recover lost or forgotten memories on the landscape. Participants make decisions throughout the commemorative process that impact the community and historical debate. Control over space is an important factor participants consider before starting the process. Completing the process fosters a sense of entitlement and power over the site.

The examination of the HCC historical markers reveal how the community dealt with issues of control, power, and memory in the cases of Benning, Thomas, and Bullard. The UDC demonstrates how organizations can use the program to carry out traditional acts of remembrance and support official local history narratives. The UDC always favored cemetery commemoration and argued that the site of Benning's grave was the proper site for commemoration. It also is important to note how new markers can replace or ignore previous

commemorative efforts. As Sanford Levinson argues, communities have the power to alter the landscape and include new memories for future generation.

The Historic Columbus Foundation markers demonstrate how difficult it can be to incorporate forgotten memories into local history. Unlike Benning, Thomas and Bullard received no formal recognition by the community for nearly a century. It is a delicate process by which the community struggled where and how best to commemorate each individual. Bullard was not incorporated into local history until national efforts were completed; even then commemorations were delayed. In the case of Thomas, commemoration efforts were delayed as community members debated over control and place. The community's inability to reach a compromise removed the home from public ownership to private. The Thomas family story is an example how competition for control and power can prevent community memorial efforts.

The inclusion of Thomas and Bullard on the public historical landscape contributes a piece of American history to the overall local narrative. Faith Davis Ruffins traces the development of African American collections in America from the late nineteenth century to present, and finds a lack of diversity in holdings across the nation, arguing that the exclusion of black history is a result of discriminatory views towards African American culture. The few collections that do exist interpret and preserve the works of accomplished blacks in American society often excluding much of the vernacular material culture and oral histories.⁵⁸ Traditional preservation strategies sought to reinforce the heroic and selected individuals who fit the elite's vision of what they wanted them to be.⁵⁹ The same approach can be used when examining the African Americans that are commemorated in Columbus. Many attained accomplishments that

⁵⁸ Faith Davis Ruffins, "Mythos, Memory, and History: African American Preservation Efforts 1820-1990," *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, by Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 507.

⁵⁹ Christine Mullen Kreamer, "Defining Communities Through Exhibiting and Collecting," *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, by Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 376.

superseded the average African American in their communities. Thomas became an acclaimed painter, and Bullard a decorated World War I veteran. These are important findings for communities to consider when choosing whom to commemorate and making decisions about what to include in local historical interpretation.

The markers highlight how communities struggle to interpret meaningful stories about the past and present. Each participant wants his or her marker erected and recognized by the general public. People want to believe that they contributed to local history a lost or forgotten piece of local memory. Changes in city leadership and acceptance of the city's diversity increased in public acceptance of new narratives in the 1980s and 1990s. The historical marker program shows commemoration remains important to people on the local level. Loewen criticizes the interpretation that exists on the American landscape today, but fails to recognize how communities are changing to be more inclusive. America has experienced growth in the late twentieth and twenty-first century to include a range of topics and events. Columbus is a part of this growth and continues to incorporate diverse people, places, and events significant to its local history. The HCC Historical Marker Program is one useful example to understand the process involved in local commemoration.

The chapter first introduced the story of the "Fit for Man and Beast," a fountain preserved on the landscape in effort to save a last piece of the community's past. The fountain is no longer in working condition, but serves as a reminder of the city's progress. The historical markers commemorating the lives and legacies of Benning, Bullard, and Thomas solidify their importance in local history and preserve their stories for future generations. The UDC's marker provides a sanitized view on his life. The marker's location in Linwood Cemetery and ties to the UDC, make it a target for controversy, open for community debate. Thomas and Bullard's

marker are seen as long overdue commemorations that needed to be done. The three markers discussed in this chapter deal with issues of inclusion, acceptance, and, in Benning's case relevance. Groups can be motivated for various reasons to participate in commemorative programs, and it is important to assess the grassroots process of historical interpretation. One can see how the community can quickly become active supporters or defenders of a shared past. HCC measures its success in the number of markers, but for participants, completing the process and erecting a marker is enough.

Chapter 2

Blending the past with present: Development of Columbus Local History Interpretation

“Discover the charm of Columbus. What progress has preserved.” This phrase on the Columbus Convention & Visitor’s Bureau website welcomes visitors to the city and captures city efforts to preserve its historical past. The city’s vibrant history is now part of a marketing and economic development plan for the city. Locals and visitors can tour famous homes, visit historic sites, and enjoy a variety of museums to learn about the city and region’s history. The city’s identity today is linked to its historical past, which is comprised of public historical sites. While chapter one analyzed the growth of historical roadside markers as part of the public history landscape, this chapter examines historical interpretations available to locals and visitors in two local history museums –Columbus Museum and the National Civil War Naval Museum. The Columbus Museum is the city’s premier fine arts and local history center. The National Civil War Naval Museum is dedicated to interpreting and exhibiting Civil War amphibious warfare artifacts. This case study examines the development of these institutions from the 1950s to the present. The study assesses the overall historical interpretation presented by these institutions to determine what is presented, preserved, and omitted. The community looks to identify with local institutions and find histories that relate with their past. It reveals the slow progress by both organizations to interpret a broader local history narrative and deal with interpretative issues of race, class, and memory. Both institutions were forced to respond to a culturally diverse audience

by the late 1980s and 1990s. From the early 2000s to the present, both institutions launched new interpretive efforts to modernize exhibits to appeal to and attract a changing society.

In response to social and political changes, cultural institutions across the country experienced similar issues as those faced by Columbus local museums. By the end of the twentieth century, Edmund Gaither argues cultural minority groups that were previously excluded in their community no longer accepted that status.¹ Minority groups looked to their local, governmental, and state leadership positions for greater representation and inclusivity. Groups omitted from earlier elitist accounts looked to local institutions to find histories that represented them. Local museums were challenged to address concerns about their lack of diversity. As a result, the Columbus Museum and the National Civil War Naval Museum had to change their exhibition approaches to meet the needs and expectations of a changing society. Public historians can use the lessons learned by these two cases to examine how local institutions accept and address modern societal change.

Columbus Museum

In 1941, prominent citizens chartered the Columbus Museum of Arts and Crafts Inc., to meet the need for a local art and culture center in the city. They chartered the city's first museum without a building, museum director or funds, but with a mission –“to serve as a museum of the arts, crafts, and historical objects, promoting educational and cultural activities.” The city's first art museum began as an idea that one day the city could come together and build this institution.² The museum's early leadership was largely comprised of the city's prominent white men and

¹ Edmund Gaither, “Hey That’s Mine!: Thoughts on Pluralism and American Museums,” *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 56.

² William Winn, *Building on a Legacy: The Columbus Museum* (Columbus, GA: Columbus Museum, 1996), 5.

women, who envisioned a center that elevated the status of Columbus and brought refined entertainment to the city.

As the United States entered World War II in 1941, museum plans were placed on hold while the nation supported the war effort. Despite delays, local citizens made generous contributions that provided a substantial foundation upon which the museum could grow. Mrs. Georgia Collier Comer of Savannah, the widow of a Columbus industrialist, left a bequest of \$85,000 in honor of her sister, Mrs. Euphan Collier Stewart to the chartered museum. Stewart was a pioneer in the local arts movement at the turn of the twentieth century and is remembered for her efforts organizing the first children's art show and introducing art classes to Muscogee County Public Schools. Collier's bequest left a building fund for the future museum. In 1947, W.C. Bradley left his Columbus home to the city stating the site be used and maintained, "for public education, and recreational or park purposes."³ Bradley's daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. D. Abbott Turner, donated the Bradley home on Wynnton Drive and nine surrounding acres for the creation of the art museum. In 1951, the city saw renewed efforts to organize the museum when Edward Shorter, famed American artist, was appointed first museum president to oversee operations and build the institution. The city of Columbus celebrated the opening of the museum in 1953 and received thousands of visitors within the first year. The early years of the institution relied on the important public partnership with the Muscogee County School Board. The museum received funds from the school system for annual operation costs, but little with which to build a collection.

The museum offered art instruction classes, art programs in schools, and art shows. The history center developed from Mrs. Isabel Patterson's private collection of regional Creek

³ Winn,12.

artifacts. Mrs. Patterson was an amateur archeologist who uncovered various Indian artifacts in the 1930s while excavating in the lower Chattahoochee region.⁴ Her work inspired the Columbus community to become involved in digs and support the preservation of Native American artifacts. Mrs. Patterson's donated collection combined with community involvement contributed to museum plans to become a regional history center.

The early success of the museum can be attributed to individual's commitment to donating private collections, purchasing art for the museum, and making generous financial contributions to the center. Under the leadership of Edward Shorter, the museum transformed the former home of W.C. Bradley into a modern arts center with seven galleries. The ground floor galleries housed an art shop and Mrs. Patterson's Indian collection. The first floor held the Confederate Abbey, a room filled with Civil War artifacts, mementos, and furnishings donated by the UDC Lizzie Rutherford Chapter and its president Anna Caroline Benning. Early donors were individuals and families of Columbus' elite, who supported the museum in its early years. Their actions preserved cherished family collections for the future benefit of Columbus citizens, while increasing the scope of the museum's first historical collections.⁵ Donors influenced the types of programs and exhibitions the museum organized, thus museum was limited to tell a history that recognized the contribution of its early founders and elite families. Gradually, museum leadership expanded its collections and exhibitions to become more public.

Early exhibitions included several art shows of American and international works of art. Annual art exhibitions reflected the refined taste of the museum director and donors. Shorter wanted to keep the museum open to the public six days a week and provide the public with several exhibits. He had to balance meeting public demands for exhibits, with an obligation to

⁴ Maynard R. Ashworth, "Loyalty Built Columbus Museum," *Ledger-Enquirer*, March, 3, 1963

⁵ Winn, 23.

showcase refined works of art and local artifacts. In 1951 the museum opened a permanent exhibition –the Museum of Indian Arts and Civilization in the Chattahoochee valley a new exhibit that interpreted 10,000 years of prehistory Georgia. Dr. A.R. Kelly, head of the Department of Anthropology and Archeology at the University of Georgia called the opening of the new exhibit a, “turning point in the development of museums in the South.”⁶ The museum dedicated the renovated section in honor of Mrs. Patterson’s tireless work for the preservation of native regional artifacts.

The museum grew over the course of the 1950s to include a new wing that provided several rooms for arts and crafts classes as well as arts programs. The Indian section received a new curator, Joe Mahan, a noted regional archeologist, who worked to expand the exhibition. He introduced a new diorama in the exhibit that featured three human figures shown in a village life scene –a cornfield with Indian women at work and realistic burial mounds, and other features found in area archeological digs. Mahan developed an important relationship with the displaced Yucchi Tribe in 1958, leading to them to donate artifacts for the museum’s collection and exhibits. Over the course of a decade the museum became a leader in southeastern Native American artifacts and an important depository for archeological digs sin the region. ⁷ Under Mahan’s direction, the museum strengthened its archeological exhibition, but failed to broaden its collection scope to include more regional artifacts.

The museum experienced an increase in private artifacts and visitors in the 1960s. Due to its success, it launched a \$250,000 building expansion campaign to meet an urgent demand for more exhibition space. One news report noted the museum was one of the “liveliest spots in

⁶ Winn, 27.

⁷ Ibid, 29,32, 34.

town... unlike so many cases associated with other museums.”⁸ During the Civil War centennial celebration, the city was involved with several projects and events commemorating the Civil War. The museum saw an increase in visitors who toured the Confederate Abbey to see local Civil War Artifacts. The Columbus Museum’s Civil War room exhibited war photographs, memorabilia collected by Columbus and Valley residents, family letters, and General Henry L. Benning’s silver service on loan from the his daughter August Crawford Burgard, a member of the local UDC chapter. By 1963, the museum had completed its building campaign and hosted an exclusive gala reception for its donors and members. Exhibitions continued to focus on premier art shows and showcasing the latest additions to the Indian section.

Despite increased space, much went unchanged in the museum’s interpretation of local history from 1953 to the mid 1980s. Exhibitions did not reflect current events in American society – the Civil Rights and the women’s movement, the Vietnam War, and the Cold War – or changes in Columbus society. Museum leaders –directors and the board of trustees –were influenced by the local political and social climate when making interpretive decisions. Based on research of early historical exhibitions, museum officials made a decision to tell a positive account of local history. Native American history was not considered to be a controversial topic since few remained in the area. Interpreting the life of the African Americans or city mill workers proved challenging to discuss due to local politics. In its early years, the museum attempted to create an environment free from controversy and provide visitors with a rich educational experience.

The city and its people were changing and the museum could not protect its walls from interpreting difficult and diverse narratives. A planned multi-million dollar expansion in the

⁸ Ibid, 35.

early 1980s provided the museum with an opportunity to address concerns regarding its lack of cultural diversity. There were internal and external forces that affected the curatorial decisions of the exhibition. Internally, museum leadership had to reach a compromise on what to include and omit from the gallery exhibition. External forces required the museum to include a comprehensive look at local history. The museum began work on a state of the art modern facility to house its growing collections, provide more gallery space, a children's center, and a gallery dedicated to Chattahoochee Valley history. History curator Fred Fussell described the new *Chattahoochee Legacy Gallery* as a place where, "We're going to show the other side.... We will show history not as –'This is what happened to them, but as –'This is what happened to us'⁹ Exhibition designers and curators aimed to provide a narrative based on the experiences of real people from the region. For example, an urban slave cabin is one architectural feature included in the exhibit that highlights what life was like for a slave living and working in the city, while also showing how the experience as a slave in an urban environment differed from the plantation. The new exhibit discussed Columbus' history and provided a more inclusive history of the Chattahoochee Valley Region as a whole. It was a daunting task and a challenge to blend its past exhibitions with a new cultural narrative. History curators had to strike a balance to include the established view of local history with new and untold narratives of the region.

In a 1988 National Endowment for the Humanities Grant application, the museum outlined its extensive plans to provide a diverse historical interpretation of the region. Museum designers and developers envisioned a gallery that chronicled the history of the Chattahoochee River Valley Region from pre-history to the modern day. The goals outlined in the application state that it would provide a greater understanding of regional history, draw connections between

⁹ Winn, 83.

regional events in relation to national events, and interpret the human experience as history affected people in the region. In their words, the goal of the *Chattahoochee Legacy Gallery* is to provoke the visitor to consider their own history in relation to greater national occurrences.¹⁰ The museum received the grant to help complete the exhibit. As is clear in the application, the museum incorporated a culturally diverse narrative to meet national humanities guidelines. This demonstrates the influence funding can have on museums. Previous exhibits considered the interests of private donors and showcased their collections. The museum's decision to apply for national funding required the institution to create a new exhibit that explored various historical topics, figures, and events that showcased the community's diversity. Museum leaders had to balance expectations from local donors and audiences while convincing the NEH that exhibit objectives and themes also appealed to a national audience.

The *Chattahoochee Legacy Gallery* is designed to take visitors on a chronological tour of the region's history. Thematic sections subdivide the gallery to highlight major historical periods. A timeline is located on the exterior walls of the gallery to guide visitors through various periods of local history. Related artifacts and interpretive text panels are used to discuss key figures and events. Artifacts from the museum's collection are showcased in various inset wall cases throughout the gallery. The gallery used architectural reconstructions in the space to interpret the lives of its inhabitants during different periods: an Indian dwelling, a spare block house at Fort Mitchell, an urban slave house, a nineteenth century school room, a mill interior, a 1920s shotgun house, a Fort Benning tent, and a contemporary carport. Upon entering the gallery, visitors first encounter an archeological dig discussing the natural history of the region. As visitors continue on, they are introduced to Native American culture and the museum's

¹⁰ Columbus Museum, *Chattahoochee Legacy Permanent Exhibition NEH Grant 1988*. Columbus Museum Archives, 2-3.

extensive archeological collection. This section discusses the development of the Mississippian Culture and the presence of Native American culture still present on the landscape. The next section discusses European contact and trade between the two civilizations where visitors learn about trade and conflict. Next, visitors learn about the city's founding and life of early Columbus settlers. The tour takes readers through antebellum life, the Civil War years, twentieth century invention and enterprise, and Fort Benning history. Exhibition curators' selected artifacts to provide a greater understanding of the past through material culture.

The exhibition presents a positive history of change in the Chattahoochee Valley, showcasing the evolution of life in the valley –emancipation of African Americans, the role of the textile mills, and new technological developments. While attempting to provide a history of the region, the completed exhibition stops at 1976 with Carter's presidential election. The exhibition omits recent local or national events, and instead focuses on major pre-1976 events in local, Georgia, or national history. The exhibition fails to discuss or significantly address issues of race, tragedy, or controversy experienced in the community. African Americans are featured on a separate wall apart from the timeline, and include famed African-Americans and a brief mention of the Civil Rights movement in Columbus –Horace King, famed blues singer Ma Rainey, performer Blind Tom, and Civil Right activists Primus King. While steps were taken to include some African American history, it is easy for visitors to pass over this section. The gallery's interpretation of gender is unbalanced –favoring prominent white men over women or working class men. Women included in the exhibit are primarily from the elite class and educated. While the opening of the new exhibit provided an important step towards becoming

more inclusive, more could have been done to incorporate a critical approach to interpreting local history.

Exhibition updates to the 1988 *Chattahoochee Legacy Gallery* are an essential step towards modernizing the exhibit to meet twenty-first century visitor needs. John Falk and Lynn D. Dierking examine what motivates people to visit museums and what visitors take-away from the overall experience. Museums are constantly conducting reports and analyzing visitors, but Falk and Dierking suggest a model that looks at what a museum has to offer that interests its visitors. Museum content and exhibitions are the first areas visitors examine before making the decision to attend the institution. Once the decision is made to attend, an important component affecting visitor experience is the exhibition and design of the space. Visitors enter museum spaces today with expectations regarding presentation. When the overall design is poorly done, people feel dissatisfied. In 1996, a brief exhibit update to the gallery incorporated a few African Americans into the narrative –Alma Thomas and Eugene Bullard for example. Due to limited time and resources further plans to provide more interpretation were cut. A recent update was launched in January 2011 to address remaining concerns that the exhibit lacked diversity and to make aesthetic changes to the overall design. History Curator Rebecca Bush and her exhibitions team are currently working on updating the exhibit. She hopes to update a thirty-year gap in the timeline with information surrounding the change of city leading up to the 2000s. Plans include updating the overall appearance to incorporate a fuller diverse narrative placing women and African Americans in their respective period. The museum has responded over the course of twenty years to incorporate diversity not only in the gallery, but also in the art and temporary exhibitions it provides annually.

The *Chattahoochee Legacy Gallery* is receiving a face-lift at the moment, as new displays, interpretive texts and maps; and a fresh coat of paint were used to change the overall appearance of the space. Much of the design and narrative flow from the 1988 exhibit remains, but recent changes do include new interpretive text panels and new historical maps. Falk and Dierking's discussion of exhibit design influencing visitor experience are concentrated on key areas –design, space, shape and mass, color, texture, and proportion and scale.¹¹ Space available for new designs is limited to available wall space and inset wall display cases in the gallery. As visitors walk through the exhibit, designers chose to make a visual distinction between periods by painting each section a different color. Color can add depth and influence the mood of the visitor. Mixes of cool and warm colors are used to give the gallery a new look. Former display cases placed many objects in the same case, making it seem overcrowded and unappealing. Renovated displays have fewer objects and attention to proportions improved the overall design. Artifacts are used to incorporate texture and patterns in the space like the use of Native American pottery, period clothing, and artifacts ranging of various textiles.

New updates to the gallery include changes to architectural reconstructions. They hope to add more interactives and new multimedia, as well as more interpretive texts to describe the various dwellings. The 1988 design did not include any multi-media presentations or visitor interactions. New multi-media devices respond to changing social and cultural circumstances, which is a needed addition to relate with today's tech savvy society. For example, the educational department hopes to include iPads in the gallery's schoolroom helping kids complete simple rudimentary lessons while touring the museum. A new educational program for young children is under development to provide more hands-on activities. For example, in the Fort

¹¹ John Falk and Lynn D. Dierking, *Learning from Museums: Visitor Experiences and the Making of Meaning* (Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press, 2000), 123.

Benning tent children will be able to write letters to soldiers overseas and thank them for their service. Children can also try on mock desert uniforms and stroll through the barracks, previously off limits to adults and children. Exhibition updates not only address the need for more diversity, but also enhance the visitor's experience throughout the gallery. Visitors have an engaging experience and can enjoy the ongoing changes to the exhibit space. The renovations to the gallery are exciting, but require more time and funding in order to complete the project. The Columbus Museum remains a leader in interpreting local history in its galleries, and it is imperative that the renovation of the gallery be completed to offer a diverse historical narrative.¹²

National Civil War Naval Museum

The National Civil War Naval Museum (NCWNM) at Port Columbus is an important regional and national history center. The current museum opened in 2001 after a major development project to build a new modern facility to house two important local Confederate naval artifacts: the ironclad *CSS Jackson* and the gunboat *CSS Chattahoochee*. Port Columbus boasts that it is the only museum in the world dedicated to telling the complete naval history of the Civil War. The recovery effort of these two Confederate ships played an important role in preserving a particular moment of the past. With the salvage effort complete by 1964, the city turned its efforts to creating a museum, the Confederate Naval Museum and attracted visitors locally and from around the Southeast. The salvage effort was a moment in which the community could rally together to preserve a part of their Southern culture and be a part of the Civil War Centennial Celebrations. By the 1980s and 1990s, people were at odds over the museum's existence in the city –some argued it was not representative of modern society, while

¹² Interview with Rebecca Bush by author, January 24, 2013.

others argue it was part of their Southern heritage. The museum became a politically charged institution that encountered difficulties receiving the same financial support and respect. It was almost forgotten twenty years later the investment the community made in supporting the salvaging of the two ships. The details behind the salvage effort show the community's commitment to saving history, but overtime this sentiment was lost in newer generations. The institution was affected by competing memories of the Civil War, which led to the museum leadership's decision to create a new identity for the institution –the National Civil War Naval Museum.

Civil War centennial celebrations came at a difficult time for American society as it faced issues surrounding civil rights. Dramatic changes to end racial segregation and the fight for equality spurred controversy surrounding Civil War celebrations at the local and national levels. At every level, commissions were appointed to organize public commemorative activities. In the South, centennial commemorative events were directly linked to the ongoing struggle for integration. Southern whites used the centennial to rally Southerners to react against federal encroachment of states' rights in the aftermath of *Brown vs. Board of Education*. African Americans were not included in Civil War centennial committees and only a few served on boards elsewhere. For African Americans, the centennial was an opportunity to promote a black counter-memory of the Civil War and to show political action against staunch segregationists. Black counter-memory presented the participation of blacks in Union forces, and highlighted the political and social advancements provided by the passing of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth U.S. Amendments. African American civil rights leaders used the emancipation story to

counter-attack white efforts to diminish the Civil Rights movement.¹³ Despite the heightened political and social climate in the nation, white southern grassroots movements organized local celebrations in the community. The Columbus Confederate gunboat salvage was a local effort to participate in a national movement.

Columbus looked to commemorate their past as a major Confederate manufacturing center producing weapons and supplies, and enlisting local men to support the war effort. The Confederacy established the Confederate Naval Yard, which under operation of James H. Warner transformed the Columbus Naval Iron Works into an operation that supplied ships' machinery, ordnance, and engineering expertise throughout the Confederacy.¹⁴ In response to the Union blockade, the Confederate Navy commissioned the construction gunboats and ironclads to protect major seaports and rivers.¹⁵

The gunboat *CSS Chattahoochee* was commissioned in 1861 by the Confederate Navy Department for the defense of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint river system. This gunboat was expected to rival the gunboats of the Union fleet and was part of the Confederacy's overall strategic plans to build a naval fleet. The gunboat's completed design measured 130 feet in length with six mounted cannons. During the construction of the *Jackson* in Columbus, miscommunication between the Confederate Navy and Army departments led the army to build obstructions on the Apalachicola River. This affected the navy's plan to send the *Jackson* to the gulf as the obstructions impeded its path. The gunboat *Chattahoochee* never reached the sea or saw major battle. A boiler explosion in May of 1862, halted Confederate plans and the ship was

¹³ Robert J. Cook, *Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 9-13.

¹⁴ Maxine Turner, *Navy Gray: Engineering the Confederate Navy on the Chattahoochee and Apalachicola Rivers* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 153-154.

¹⁵ Michael Lee Lanning, *The Civil War 100: the Stories Behind the Most Influential Battles, People, and Events in the War Between the States* (Naperville, Ill: Sourcebooks, 2006), 103.

towed up river to Columbus for repairs.¹⁶ The *CSS Jackson* was designed to showcase the Confederacy's technological advancement in naval warfare. It was to be a state of the art vessel measuring over two hundred feet long and nearly fifty feet wide, mixing the best engineering knowledge with new weaponry, and previous riverboat technology. The *CSS Jackson* took three years to complete and the war had changed dramatically by the ship's completion in 1865.

Union General Wilson's raid of Columbus in 1865 destroyed much of the city's industry and naval yard. Union forces captured the *CSS Jackson* only a few weeks short of completion. She was loaded with flammables, set fire and cut loose to drift down river. The *CSS Jackson* drifted some twenty-five river miles south of the city before sinking. The *CSS Chattahoochee* met the same fate as her crew scuttled the gunboat, floated her down river, and set fire. Acting Union Rear Admiral H.K. Thatcher reported to the U.S. Navy the resting spot of the charred gunboat, "Twelve Miles below Columbus, at the Race Pass is the wreck of the Chattahoochee, a rebel gunboat. Her machinery under water, she has been burned as far as possible; it is probable that her hull could be raised at a low stage of water..."¹⁷ The ships were believed lost forever as casualties of war and became a part of local folklore. Their discovery a hundred years later created enthusiasm in the city to save them. As the ships emerged from their watery grave, a wave of civic pride swept through Columbus and across the South.

The "River Rats" as they were known, were a group of men who used the river for recreation and explored its many wreckages. It was not uncommon for people exploring the river to encounter shipwrecks. The River Rats approached city officials with information surrounding

¹⁶ Turner, 199.

¹⁷ "The C.S.S. Chattahoochee, 1865" National Civil War Naval Museum Archives, Columbus, Ga. Document detailing the history and salvaging of the gunboat.

what they believed to be the wreck of the gunboat *Chattahoochee* in 1961.¹⁸ The site was located twenty-five miles down stream, resting on the *Chattahoochee* riverbank on Fort Benning property. This claim peaked the interest of several key Columbus residents, but it especially caught the interest of James Woodruff. Woodruff was a prominent citizen of the city whose family fortune was comprised of several local businesses, regional radio stations and Coca-Cola stock. Woodruff is recognized as the individual who championed the salvage effort and renewed interest in the city's Confederate past. Woodruff and several key city people incorporated the Confederate Salvage Association (CSA) to oversee the salvage project, cleverly selecting a name that shared the same initials as the Confederate States of America. This non-profit organization's purpose was, "to collect, raise funds, for the promoting, salvaging, restoring, recovering, rebuilding...guarding relics, artifacts, souvenirs, and mementos of the War Between the States or Civil War."¹⁹ Woodruff was elected president of the association and managed the salvage operations. Crews were sent on December 12, 1962 to inspect the site and develop salvage plan to recover the *CSS Chattahoochee*. The salvage project relied on public-private partnerships to assist in collecting funds and transporting workmen and equipment to the site. The state of Georgia became involved and offered the CSA \$30,000 towards salvage efforts.²⁰

The salvage crew consisted of several members from the local Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees), and local citizens. This project relied for its completion on the continued support of the local community. Crews worked daily for two years, not knowing the amount of work needed to recover the ship. On multiple occasions the salvage effort was delayed due to

¹⁸ Interview with Ken Johnston, National Civil War Naval Museum Director, January, 2013, Columbus, GA.

¹⁹ Confederate Salvage Association Application to Superior Court 1962, Confederate Salvage Association, Inc. M8 Folder 1, Columbus State Archives, Columbus, GA

²⁰ Joel Turner, *Georgia Magazine, Columbus Issue* (February-March 1963), 19.

weather conditions or the river flooding the work site. The *Columbus-Ledger* provided daily updates on the *CSS Jackson* and *CSS Chattahoochee* salvage, and included any interesting finds of the day. The community was heavily invested in the project and it remained a topic of popular discussion throughout the salvage effort.

Days into the dig, salvage crews made astonishing discoveries of large pieces of iron plates which they removed from the site. This was a peculiar find for a ship constructed entirely of wood. It also reports that the ship was much larger than expected, leading to the local conclusion that they had not found the *CSS Chattahoochee*, but instead the *CSS Jackson*! The discovery of the *Jackson* was a surprise and created greater obstacles than previously expected. The ship was stuck under a thick layer of mud and was too heavy for cables to be placed under the hull to lift it out of the water. The Army Corps of Engineers helped the salvage effort and constructed a temporary dam (cofferdam) around the perimeter of the ironclad, where water would be pumped out and allow crews to perform an archeological dig. The cofferdam was completed by the end of December 1962. Volunteer work crews endured tough conditions –it was muddy, wet, and temperature fluctuations throughout the year made work difficult. Despite the work conditions and distance from town, men arrived daily to work on site. Many men felt honored to work the recovery because they felt they were part of saving history.

Georgia Historical Society Archeologist Jerry Meyer did not arrive on site to supervise the excavation until later. Work crews worked with available tools and had limited experience with historical excavations. By today's standards, some of the methods used would appall professionals. Dynamite was used on two occasions to free the ship from the mud. Cranes with buckets were used to scoop out large amounts of artifacts that were then placed on the bank.

Work crews and site visitors could pick through the remains and take what they wished. The site was not professionally managed, but work crews passionately worked to recover the ship. Meyer emphasized professional training for preserving artifacts upon recovery. Despite Meyer's involvement, the effort largely remained under the control and orders of the CSA. Despite having no formal training, and the use of explosives, the dig was supported by the community. Volunteers worked in the rain, cold, and summer heat to save an important part of the city's history.²¹

While crews worked to recover the *Jackson*, scouts were sent out to find the wreckage of the *Chattahoochee* located twelve river miles from the city. Woodruff now had to manage two separate salvage operations. The Army Corps of Engineers responded to the CSA's request for aid to remove the gunboat. The *Mobile Press* reported on Saturday, October 2, 1963:

The Mobile district office said yesterday that engineers gave an assist to Columbus residents who have been seeking to salvage the sunken vessel from the Chattahoochee River and use it as a Civil War Shrine...the snagboat Montgomery [is] being used on river to remove channel obstruction, and the snag boat gently nudge the old gunboat to shallower water, where salvage operations by Columbus historical groups began.²²

The Army Corps of Engineers identified the *Chattahoochee* years before as an obstruction in the waterway and aided in its removal. The Corps arrived in September 1963 and three weeks of dive excavations resulted in the recovery of several artifacts. The ship's hull was found to be intact with machinery and cannons recovered by divers. Crews worked in November to place cables underneath the ship to lift it out of the water, but crews were unsuccessful in removing the remaining portion due to increasing water height from the newly constructed dam in Eufaula, Alabama. Further salvaging efforts were placed on hold, but ultimately dismissed because of expenses involved in recovering the ship.

²¹ Ken Johnston, interview with author, February 5, 2013.

²² "Engineers to Aid Old CSA Gunboat," *Mobile Press*, October 12, 1963.

After the recovery, plans to establish a museum were vague. The city of Columbus gave the CSA a piece of property along the river to place the ships, but given that a museum would involve additional fundraising, museum plans were put on hold. The *CSS Jackson* was placed on land in July 1963 after floating devices were attached on each side and floated up stream. The *Jackson* required the assistance of the Fort Benning 557th Engineer Battalion and county bulldozers to pull it ashore. Once on land, the ship's separated hull pieces were laid on the grass and left sitting in a field. Plans were made to eventually hold the ship with crossties, and concrete tiers to keep the prow section level with the stern. For the time being, the ship rested on the grass and was open to the elements. A few miles down river, the section of the *CSS Chattahoochee* removed from the water was relocated in April 1966 to Columbus, next to the *CSS Jackson*.

Once on dry land, greater attention was paid to conservation, preservation, and the exhibition of the two ships. Following the *CSS Jackson* salvage effort, the city donated a vacant lot and Georgia Historical Commission provided funds towards establishing a museum. Donated funds were used to contract a local construction firm start the first stage of the Confederate Naval Museum. A small shed on the property was converted into a small museum and artifact holding room. The *Columbus-Ledger* reported the first stage of the project, "included building two ramps and a concrete observation deck, a new museum enclosure, and provide heating and air to facilities. The second stage included removing dirt from a sunken court entrance to the museum and a scaled down version of a ramp and deck for the *Jackson*." The early museum site offered no protection for either ship. People were free to walk the ship's hull or remove splinters as keepsakes. The ship was fumigated and the wood treated to provide some conservation. The

improper care and management was due to limited funds. The first museum director, Jerry Meyer, preserved the ships and archived hundreds of artifacts with available resources. A concrete shelter was later added in 1964, but the ships remained exposed to the elements on three sides. The Confederate Naval Museum preserved the memory of the city's civil war contribution for future generations. Columbus hoped to attract visitors to see the rare Confederate relics during the centennial and years after. The city was recognized for its efforts to salvage an important piece of Civil War history. However, The first museum emerged haphazardly –it lacked clear institutional plans from the outset- thus affecting the overall presentation and preservation of the ships. Long-term plans were not in place to ensure continued financial support or larger institutional goals for the museum. The site operated more as a roadside attraction and lacked institutional oversight.

The Confederate Naval Museum remained largely unchanged from the 1960s to the late 1990s, only interpreting Confederate navy history. Its exhibitions included artifacts from the salvage efforts. It was difficult for the museum to operate after the centennial with limited resources and a poor museum facility. Bruce Smith was hired in 1998 as museum director to revamp the historic site he often heard referred to as a “pile of sticks.”²³ Smith recalled putting out two fires when individuals threw cigarette butts into the wreckage. The ironclad's hull was rotting and when it rained the museum flooded, allowing mildew to grow in the artifacts storage room. Over the course of thirty-five years, the museum no longer attracted the audience it did in the past and was neglected by city leaders. The site operated on limited funds and was in poor condition.

²³ “Civil War Naval Museum Sails into Uncharted Water,” *Columbus Ledger Enquirer*, December 20, 2011. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.spot.lib.auburn.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=13BC72E1D3ADDB68&p_docnum=3&p_queryname=12 (accessed January 30, 2012).

A few reasons may exist for the decline of the museum. First, its major benefactor James Woodruff, died unexpectedly in an automobile accident. The museum had lost a major supporter and community ally. Second, controversy within the community surrounding a Confederate Naval Museum in a post Civil Rights society may also attributed to its degradation. One newspaper article in the *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer* suggested it was a topic of heated debate – did it represent a discriminatory past or Southern heritage? In 1995, the newspaper published letters received by locals in response to an article discussing the role of the museum in modern society and many respondents expressed mixed emotions regarding its meaning. One man answered, “Do we have to take in consideration all races, in all things, at all times?...I would also like to remind him [the articles author] that he lives in Georgia, and he will have to look at a Confederate flag. If he doesn’t want to look at it, he doesn’t have to.” This response is racially charged and shows one perspective that some, though not all, may have towards those who disagree with supporting the museum.

Another respondent called the man to face reality, “Like it or not the war happened...If he wants to bury his head in the sand and not see reality, he can do that. But to me the more realistic thing to do would be for him to simply not go.” The executive director of the Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau responded to the ongoing debate by taking a neutral stance and stating the role of the museum plays as part in the city’s local history, “The Confederate Naval Museum is part of American history. It is part of our overall packaging of the city. That is why so many city leaders are working to preserve it. But this preservation effort is not meant as a longing to return to the days of slave trade and persecution of prejudicial issues.”²⁴ These letters provide insight into community debate concerning the city’s changing landscape. Public

²⁴ “Letters,” *Ledger-Enquirer*, December 30, 1995.

institutions, like the Confederate Naval Museum, were caught in the cross fire as the community debated the potential for a more inclusive approach to local history.

The City of Columbus in the late 1990s and early 2000s launched the “Columbus Challenge,” a rebranding campaign to revitalize the city’s downtown. The Bradley-Turner Foundation remains a leader in supporting community revitalization in Columbus. It has made generous contributions to the city of Columbus and remains invested in seeing the city reach its full potential as fine arts center of the South. In 1996, the Foundation launched a capital campaign to challenge the Columbus community to match its \$20 million dollar donation for a new performing arts center – the RiverCenter for the Performing Arts. Funds from the campaign would benefit local institutions needing updating, preservation work on historic buildings, and a new center of the performing arts arena. The “Columbus Challenge” selected several local institutions to receive portions of the funds to support capital and building projects, and programs for seven local institutions.²⁵ The fundraising campaign awarded the Civil War Naval Museum \$7.3 million toward the construction of a new museum under the condition museum leaders would rebrand the institution as a national museum that represented both sides of the conflict.²⁶ The Bradley-Turner Foundation supported the revitalization of the old museum into a world class and modern national museum. The new facility, located a mile from the former site, is 38,500 square feet and safely houses the ironclad and gunboat in a climate, temperature, and humidity controlled facility. The museum not only provided adequate housing for artifacts, but museum leadership decided to rebrand the museum. When the museum’s doors opened in 2001,

²⁵ Laura McCarty, “The Bradley-Turner Foundation,” *New Georgia Encyclopedia Online* <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-1956> (accessed April 30, 2013). The seven institutions that received funds include the Coca-Cola Space Science Center, the Columbus Museum, the Columbus Symphony, the Historic Columbus Foundation, the Liberty Theatre Cultural Center, and the Springer Opera House.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

it no longer was the Confederate Naval Museum, but the National Civil War Naval Museum at Port Columbus.

The Museum's rebranding aimed to attract a wider audience and tell a national narrative of Civil war naval history. Port Columbus is the only museum in the world dedicated to telling the complete naval history of the Civil War. The museum presents both sides of the conflict – Union and Confederate –with recovered artifacts and wreckages, reconstructions, models, and interpretive text panels. A new approach included a national narrative, filled with multiple perspectives from all sailors. Renaming the institution and broadening its focus helped to dissolve tension within the community concerning its role in the city. The museum also chose to interpret the role of African Americans in the Civil War. Unlike the former Confederate Naval Museum, the overall exhibition appeals to a contemporary audience and recognizes the importance of including a whole narrative of Civil War human experiences.

Its stated mission is to “preserve the military and technological advances of the American Civil War Navies.” Civil War Naval history is presented to visitors in four galleries, each dedicated to presenting various aspects of naval warfare. While the museum presents a general overview of naval history, it includes much of the Chattahoochee River and Columbus history in the Civil War. Exhibition and interpretive text includes the stories of soldiers, sailors, civilians, free blacks, and slaves. The museum does a wonderful job melding the military and technological with the every-day human experience shared at various points along the tour.

The museum's exhibition highlight remains the iron clad *CSS Jackson* and *CSS Chattahoochee*. The *Jackson* is housed in its own gallery, the *CSS Jackson Gallery*, and is dedicated in honor of James Woodruff, who continues to be remembered for his tireless recovery

effort.²⁷ The Jackson Gallery was built to properly house the ironclad and visitors today can view the ship from multiple perspectives. Visitors first encounter the massive ship from an observation deck. A ghost structure outlining the top of the ship is suspended from the ceiling for visual impact. This allows visitors to visualize the structure, as it would have appeared. A painted mural of the Chattahoochee Riverbank is behind the building, adding to the visual presentation of the artifact. Visitors can walk downstairs from the observation deck and walk around the ironclad. At this point, visitors are impressed by the sheer size and craftsmanship. Ropes and signage are used to prevent visitors from touching the ship.

The *CSS Chattahoochee* is located in the Center Gallery. Visitors can see the gunboat from multiple perspectives. The lighting cast on the wreckage is dark, with sepia colored spotlights illuminating the thirty-foot section for visitors. This lighting creates an ominous mood surrounding the ship, a sense of looking at the wreckage still under the muddy waters. Unlike the *Jackson*, the *Chattahoochee* does not require as much space to house the artifact and visitors can enjoy walking around the gunboat and view its engines still attached to the ship. The exhibition in the Center Gallery includes an artifact display of recovered items from the ship, a blown-up picture of the *USS Hunchback* crew, and several large-scale naval battle portraits. The *USS Hunchback* photo is used to interpret the diversity found in the Union Navy. African Americans are pictured standing mixed in with white sailors. The portraits show three different arenas for naval warfare –brown water for rivers, green water for harbors and bays, and blue water representing sea warfare. In each portrait, the visitor can see the various naval vessels used in each arena.

²⁷ National Civil War Naval Museum James Woodruff gallery signage, Columbus, Ga.

The museum does an excellent job incorporating the local ships into a larger narrative of Civil War Naval history. On the outside grounds, a reconstructed model of the *USS Water Witch* is available for visitors to tour. Visitors can walk through the deck of the ship and gain a sense of what it was like to fight in the navy. It includes rope ladders, masts, and all the intricacies of working on a ship. Visitors can walk the grounds and get close to salvaged cannons. Without a guide, the only interpretation is a small text panel greeting visitors before they walk outside. Interpretive text labels are not included on the *USS Water Witch*, but is used interpretively through various living history programs the museum offers. Information is limited to visitors choosing the self-guided tours, but the museum does offer a free cell phone audio tour that has corresponding exhibit stop numbers to share more information about an artifact. The *Water Witch* does have an audio stop number and more information is briefly shared over the phone to visitors.

In the Main Gallery visitors can stroll down an extensive Civil War Naval History timeline and view the museum's collection of rare navy flags. The introductory timeline label includes Union and Confederate histories for various points of the war. Visitors learn about the strengths and weaknesses of each navy, important naval battles, advancements in technology, political issues, and important figures. The timeline is text heavy, but the museum's mission is to share this lesser known history to the public, thus it is necessary. The timeline includes interpretive text panels, photographs, and artifacts. Beautiful Confederate and Union navy flags line the wall of the Main Gallery. The history of the Civil War Naval flags is fascinating and rarely represented. Few flags survived and those that did took years to locate, forming part of the museum's personal collection or obtained as loans. One collection of seven flags, the Fox

Collection, is on loan from the Massachusetts Historical Society. The museum collaborates with various museums and institutions to find rare naval artifacts to include in their exhibition. In touring the museum, visitors will recognize the rareness of Civil War naval artifacts and the great care the museum takes to preserve them. Many were taken from wreckages, and require and costly conservation.

A modern approach to exhibition and design was used to create a positive visitor experience. The designers include several reconstructed navy ships, ironclads, and vessel, models that serve as important educational tools for visitors to learn what it was like to serve in the navy. A reproduced model of the *USS Hartford* located in the Main Gallery impresses the visitor with its reproduced interior and exterior. It includes beautiful wood paneling and once inside, visitors can see the accommodations for sailors, officer quarters, and the captain's quarters. The museum spares no detail in recreating each scene for visitors. The exterior of the ship includes portholes, the ship's mast, and cannon to give the visitor a valuable learning experience. In the Albemarle Gallery, visitors are taken to a replica of the North Carolina port town of Plymouth where the ironclad *CSS Albemarle* is docked. Visitors can walk inside the ironclad and see how the boat operated, where the cannon was situated, and how the crew lived on board. The exhibition design is well constructed, and no detail spared. Sounds of crickets chirping and waves crashing on the dock set the mood for the visitor as they walk through the gallery.

Throughout the exhibition are wonderful model reconstructions that show technology from both Confederate and Union forces. The design execution pays attention to every detail for the visitor. As guests tour the *CSS Jackson*, they first see the vessel from an elevated point,

which provides a wonderful view of what remains of the ship's hull. Guests can then walk down stairs and see the wreckage at eye level. The strengths of the museum lie in its artifact collection and exhibition design. The museum has a storyline that flows from room to room with an assortment of things for viewers to see, touch, or feel. Artifact labels and interpretive text panels identify and tell the story behind the object.

One weakness of the self-guided tour is the lack of a full story of sailors, soldier, and civilians. At various points along the tour, various crews are mentioned and there is discussion of what it was like to be a sailor, but much of this information is available through guided or various living history programs. The free African American involvement is briefly mentioned, but an African American living history program (Black In Blue) is available by special request. Some text panels include the story of Horace King's contracted work for the Confederacy, and that of John Lawson, who served in the US Navy. The story of women is also not mentioned much in the exhibit, but a program is also available for groups. While this limits the self-guided experience, it does add to the experience of those who can attend such programs. Key interactives, such as the mobile device tour, incorporate today's technology with the visitor experience. Falk and Dierking reiterate how personal knowledge and experiences shape the museum experience and the mobile tour will help visitors use familiar technologies to interact with the museum.²⁸

The museum plans various public programs for visitors to enjoy and that are designed to attract tourist. Events are planned around a central theme or topic. As mentioned, the Black in Blue program shares the African American story. The River Blast is a huge event that occurs in March that attracts many visitors annually. It discusses civilians in service and the role of women

²⁸ Falk and Dierking, 12.

in the war. Public programming is a wonderful way to increase support for the museum, but it is also important for the museum to give back to the community. As one example, it offers outreach programs for schools unable to afford a field trip to the museum. A school can contact and arrange a program to be performed on campus. A fee is still required, but it helps the museum fulfill its mission to share the lesser-known naval history of the Civil War. The museum does an excellent job with public programs and has a steady base of visitors who attend regularly, including military families from Fort Benning. The NCWNM has transformed to meet the needs and expectations of today's visitors. Museums can adapt and change their message, but without the fundamental support of city leaders, increased funds and community support is needed to ensure success. It is important for the community to remember that city funds were used to save the museum and it stands today as an institution that has responded to change.

Twentieth century and twenty-first century museums have developed overtime to become centers of education and public forum.²⁹ A shift took place, as museums looked to reinvent themselves in response to changing audiences, and concerns vagueness in how museums defined the communities they served, worked with, and interpreted.³⁰ Museums have emerged as public centers that aim to enlighten and foster community within their institutions. This is achieved by developing programs that meet the needs and expectations of a diverse community. At the local level, museums continue to reinvent themselves to be seen as more than just a community attic into institutions that empower the community by giving it a sense of its self –histories about its

²⁹ Duncan Cameron, "The Museum Temple or Forum," in Gail Anderson's, *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004).

³⁰ Kenneth Hudson, "Attempts to Define Museum," In Jessica Evans and David Boswell's *Representing the Nation: A Reader- Histories, Heritage, and Museums* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

past, present, and forward way of looking at the future.³¹ The transformation that occurred more broadly in local museums was from being about ‘something’ to being for ‘somebody.’³² That ‘somebody’ is comprised of the diverse people and memories that look to be represented in their community institutions. Museums can be a ‘third place’ in the community outside of the home and workplace where people can gather in an environment that fosters dialogue and discussion. National and locally, museums are stepping away from their elite pasts and playing a greater role in educating and cultivating the people of the community. The narratives of transformation, revitalization, and community empowerment can be seen when examining local museums of Columbus.³³ In Columbus, The Columbus Museum and the National Civil War Naval Museum were transformed into local institutions address the needs of the community by broadening its collections practices to support its new exhibition practices. In the case of the NCWNM it completely reinvented itself to no longer be a site of controversy, but of national civic pride. The Columbus Museum ‘s history exhibitions shifted away from telling the stories of the city’s industrial elites and gradually began to include more histories of the people in the Valley.

Today’s changing culture requires museums to reevaluate their audience and how best to appeal to them. The visitor experience is a fundamental concern to museum professionals, as it is used to gauge the success of programs and exhibitions as well as to meet trustee expectations. In the past thirty years, museums have dealt with increased pressure to adapt and meet the needs of a changing society. The community remains responsible for change, as museums become institutions for public forums and debate. Museums today cannot operate as they did fifty years

³¹ Amy K. Levin, *Defining Memory: Local Museums and the Construction of History in America’s Changing Communities*. (Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2007).

³² Stephen Weil, “From Being about Something to Being *for* Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum,” *Dadalus* 12 (Summer 1999).

³³ John Cotton Dana, “The New Museum,” In Hugh H. Genoways and Mary Ann Andrei’s *Museum Origins, Readings in Early Museum History and Philosophy* (Walnut Cree, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008).

ago, but must look to new ways to include diversity into their exhibitions. Exhibits are one lens that public historians can use to examine the success of an institution. John Falk discusses the importance of not only having quality design elements, but also presenting material that resonates with an individual's past experience. An essential part of meeting the needs of the visitor is to provide content that relates, interests, or teaches new things.³⁴ In Columbus, museum leadership adopted an inclusive approach to local history that would be more effective in relating to locals.

By contemporary standards, museums must create a comprehensive approach to interpreting African American and minority history in their institutions. Edmund Gaither further argues that a comprehensive history, “rejects models that approach history as either/ or,” meaning the separation of African American or American history.³⁵ While this may be a radical approach in the South, it does hold all museums to higher standards in practice. Falk admonishes museum professionals conducting surveys on target audiences and visitor numbers to consider the individual, not an ethnic or age group, when analyzing their audience. Falk discusses the complexities of defining an individual's identity, but concludes that a person is comprised of many experiences that are not dictated by their gender, race, ethnicity, age, or other variables museums try to assess about their visitors.³⁶ Columbus faced an identity crisis because the former perception of African Americans, mill workers, Latinos, Asians and other minorities were omitted in its public institutions. The museum's identity reflects society and needs to offer every individual a sense that his or her history is included and exhibited. People need a sense of place

³⁴ John H. Falk, *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2009), 23-26.

³⁵ Edmund B. Gaither, “Hey That's Mine!: Thoughts on Pluralism and American Museums,” *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 57.

³⁶ Falk, 26.

where they can foster and preserve community memory. The Columbus Museum and the National Civil War Naval Museum changed exhibition practices to better relate to the community. Local institutions use objects to tell the stories of its citizens and make connections between the past and present generations. As Robert Archibald states, “objects, photographs, works of art, documents, folktales, and buildings are symbols –symbols for the thoughts, actions, and aesthetics of people made our place.”³⁷ Local institutions empower a community to take pride in their past.

In the National Civil War Naval Museum, John Howard shares memories with his grandchildren of how he frequented the *CSS Jackson* salvage site with his father as a young man. Mr. Howard uses the museum’s current exhibition of local history to make important familial connections with younger generations so that one day his descendants can look back on this salvage effort with pride.³⁸ Former mill village families can tour the *Chattahoochee Valley Gallery* and share their experience growing up in a mill village. Perhaps, grandparents can reminisce about their experience as “lunch toters” and share what it was like with their family members while touring the exhibition. The exhibitions in both Columbus institutions offer a way for locals to reflect on city changes and make personal connections with national events.

The Columbus Museum and at the National Civil War Naval Museum made significant strides in providing a balanced approach to exhibiting local history. The same issues of race, class, and memory continue to affect decisions made by museum leaders across the nation. Since the 1950s, museums have incorporated more diverse narratives in response to a changing society. Local museums modified exhibitions to appear more modern and include new interactives for today’s museum visitor. Columbus museums have responded to internal and

³⁷ Archibald, 78.

³⁸ Interview with Jack Howard, February 5, 2013, Columbus, Georgia

external forces to ensure the success of its institutions. As public historians, we must look to the past to understand the future of our institutions. Columbus museums have responded to internal and external forces to ensure the success of their institutions. Some museums may take a cautious approach to discussing difficult issues, but do so only at their expense. With museums concerned with attracting and appealing to a broader audience, they must strive for inclusivity for betterment of their community.

Chapter 3

Race, Class, and Memory: Historic Columbus Foundation's Role in Preserving and Interpreting Local history

When I was five, I remember getting on the street car by myself and going uptown to the Grand Theatre, on the west side of Broad Street. On Saturday morning, they had children's matinees...I could go by myself. The streetcar fare was a nickel. It cost a dime to go to the movie and a nickel to come back home.¹

-Mary White Coppage

Mary White Coppage grew up at the turn of the twentieth century and saw first hand the dramatic technological improvements in her hometown. She spent her childhood attending a matinee, going to her father's bookstore, and playing with other children on Broad Street. Mrs. Coppage remembers a city drastically different from the way things are today. By the 1960s, the city's historic commercial district and neighborhoods were far from picturesque—the grand theatre she visited was in poor condition, automobiles replaced streetcar lines, and the neighborhoods she lived in as a young girl were close to demolition. Mrs. Coppage's memories share one perspective of growing up in Columbus and the sites important to her. Her memories place us in a different place and time in Columbus' history. Memories like Mrs. Coppage's show how a city can grow and change in one lifetime.

Preservation not only protects buildings, but the memories and stories associated with them. Historic preservation played a significant role in the redevelopment of Columbus at the end of the twentieth century. Saving the Springer Opera House in 1966 was only the first step in revitalizing the city's historic commercial district and neighborhoods. In cities across America, people mobilized against the affects of urbanization for modern facilities, interstates, or parking lots. In Columbus, city planners used urban renewal as a means to modernize the city, which

¹ Roger Harris, *A Historic Tour of Our Town Columbus, Georgia Coloring Book* (Third Printing, 2006).

caused the destruction of homes. In 1966, prominent local citizens established the Historic Columbus Foundation (HCF) in response to what they believed was the destruction of the city's history. This agency was dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and educating the public on the city's heritage. HCF leaders and supporters were determined to save and restore remaining historic structures. The first decade of the organization was spent in creating a neighborhood historic district and nominating homes to the National Register. By the late 1970s, HCF was a key player in preserving industrial and commercial historic sites through adaptive reuse. Early preservationists worked with private and public entities to promote an economic plan using preservation as a means to regenerate economic growth and civic pride in the city. During the 1980s and 1990s, the Foundation shifted its focus to become more active in heritage education and community outreach.

Over the past forty-five years, HCF has been responsible for interpreting local history and teaching the community about its historic surroundings. This chapter explores how HCF interprets the public history landscape through its publications and education outreach programs. Organizational publications shape public perception of the community and are key sources for understanding how local institutions reinterpret the public landscape. Early preservationists aimed to restore the homes, businesses, and neighborhoods of its industrial-social elites. Omitted from their work were African Americans and lower class white neighborhoods. HCF publications from the 1960s and 1970s emphasized the progress of preservation projects and educated the public about historic preservation. In the 1980s and 1990s, HCF refocused publications to interpret local history to a general audience and school age children. The Foundation became active in educating children through classroom visits and field trips. Over

time, HCF responded to changing in audiences and preservation trends to remain relevant in the community.

For public historians, this case study demonstrates how local preservation groups create and influence understanding of community space. Columbus offers a model to examine the continuous reinterpretation and re-evaluation of historic landscapes by preservationists –what is included, excluded and added over time. As new generations become the interpreters of local history, a buildings meaning and significance for a community can change. HCF publications and educational outreach inspire future preservation efforts, and communicate why the institution is an important part of the community. HCF has extended its mission to include a variety of community programs and projects that benefit the community. Unlike local museums responsible for interpreting history within their institutions, HCF is responsible for the entire public historical landscape –thus allowing it to branch out and be involved in historic preservation, education, publication, community economic development, and tourism. This chapter discusses the issues faced by HCF as it broadened its scope to meet the needs of the entire city.

National Preservation Movement in America

The ongoing preservation work in Columbus today is part of a national effort to promote historic preservation in communities across the U.S. As historians note, the American preservation movement did not begin in the 1960s, but has a substantial history involving private and government actions to save historic sites dating to the early nineteenth century. Early private preservation activities focused on the restoration of homes belonging to iconic historical figures and associated national landmarks. For example, the Mount Vernon Ladies Association worked to save the home of President George Washington. The government used funds to protect sites too large for individuals to manage such as natural landmarks. The creation of the National Park

Service in 1916 provided government assistance to designate and preserve national parks.² Over the course of the twentieth century, public and private preservation initiatives involved larger community rehabilitation projects. Some of the nation's wealthiest men were involved in the restoration of complete historical towns –Colonial Williamsburg was reimagined and restored by John D. Rockefeller, and Henry Ford championed the restoration of Greenfield Village. Preservationists in Charleston, South Carolina created the nations first historic district to restore deteriorating historical neighborhoods. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Historic Sites Act of 1935 to “preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance.” Roosevelt's programs gave unemployed Americans jobs conducting surveys and identifying American landmarks across the nation.³ Together men and women participated in the preservation movement to renew national pride.

The establishment of National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 were landmark measures that bolstered the American preservation movement. The National Trust for Historic Preservation brought together government and private efforts to effectively promote preservation across the nation. The Trust issued publications to inform members of preservation groups throughout the country and provide updates on new trends and projects. The Trust also served as an advocacy agency and owned and managed historic properties.⁴ As a quasi-public agency, the Trust lacked government incentives for communities to participate. The introduction of the interstate road program and the urban renewal program following World War II resulted in the social displacement and

² Norman Tyler, Ted J. Ligibel, and Ilene R. Tyler, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles and Practice* (New York : W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), 32.

³ Tyler, 39-40. President Roosevelt under the Federal Works Agency used employees from the Civil Works Administration, Public Works Administration, the Section of Fine Arts, the Works Progress Administration, and the American Institute of Architects to carry the historical survey.

⁴ Tyler, 42.

widespread demolition of local landmarks and historic neighborhoods.⁵ Responding to increased urbanization, locals mobilized to attack the destruction they saw occurring in their communities.

The passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 promoted the protection of historic homes and neighborhoods from destruction. This act changed historic preservation efforts for communities across America. It established the National Register of Historic Places to create historic districts comprised of distinguished homes and neighborhoods, provided legislative funding for preservation activities, and established the State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. This Act provided communities with what they needed: support, incentives, recognition, and counsel. The National Park Service maintains records of all documentation and is open to the public. Local preservationists were able to attract new investors interested in taking advantage of low interest rate loans for home renovations. The National Historic Preservation Act encouraged local communities to use preservation as a method of economic renewal.

Preservationists used the act to encourage city leaders to participate in and invest public funds into their projects. After 1966, historic groups and preservation societies began to enlist historic properties, create historic districts, and turn back the hands of time in their communities. Across the country, city leadership incorporated historic preservation into their community development plans, often including a preservationist on city boards. At the local level, preservationists worked to attract private capital to fund large-scale renovation plans and gain community support. They could not financially support every restoration project –thus, it was imperative to attract community interest in their efforts.

⁵ William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1997), 62.

Saving History: Creating the Columbus Historic District

In the immediate aftermath of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Columbus preservationists rallied together to save the city's architectural heritage. Locals remembered the stately antebellum Martin J. Crawford House, built in 1835, as the site of a Confederate cabinet meeting during the Civil War. The house, located on 209 Thirteenth Street, was demolished in 1954 for a car dealership. Another antebellum home built in 1838, the Pease House, was also demolished in this case for a new a skating rink. These homes were among a dozen historical homes demolished in the city to make way for commercial development.⁶ Columbus preservationists experienced issues and challenges similar to those faced by other communities across America faced –crumbling historic structures on the verge of demolition or already removed from the landscape. Private interest and funds saved the Springer Opera House in 1966, but a sound plan of action with capital was needed to launch an ambitious project to save the city's crumbling historic neighborhoods, commercial district, and antebellum mansions.

HCF is rooted in community activism to save historic city landmarks. The Springer Opera House established in 1871, served as the city's premier fine arts theatre. Known as, "the best example of Victorian Opera House east of the Mississippi River," Columbus citizens considered it a jewel of the past, but it deteriorated during the Great Depression of the 1930s.⁷ Years of neglect placed the opera house on the city's demolition list, and when faced with its potential loss, prominent community members banded together to save the Springer in 1963.⁸ Saving the Springer inspired the establishment of the city's first preservation society, Historic Columbus Foundation.

⁶ Columbus Area Bicentennial Committee, " Chapter II: A Case for Preservation, " *Historic Preservation in Columbus, Georgia*, (April 1976).

⁷ Roger Harris, *Our Town: An Introduction to the History of Columbus, Georgia*. (Columbus, GA: Historic Columbus Foundation, 1992), 29.

⁸ Harris, 29.

Columbus received assistance from the Historic Savannah Foundation (HSF) to organize and establish the city's first preservation society. HSF provided an institutional model for Columbus and became an important partner organization. Immediately following its founding, HCF launched an investigation into the current condition of the historic community. Architectural historian Carl Fiess was hired in 1967 to conduct an inventory and assess the conditions of existing residential buildings. The Fiess report identified 364 buildings of historical or architectural importance within the original city plan of 1828. This report also graded the condition of structures on a scale of good, fair, poor, and very poor; and issued a priority scale of 1 to 4—one being the most imperative to address and four representing a structure of interest but requiring no immediate action. Fiess identified a total of 118 structures with priority levels one and two—meaning these areas required immediate action. Fiess also assessed the condition of homes and found 106 homes in “poor” condition that were located in the Courthouse-South district. Fiess argued that the commercial zoning of neighborhoods located in the Courthouse-South district caused the deterioration of remaining homes. He recommended creating two historic districts—Rose Hill and Courthouse South—as well as a revolving fund to buy homes before finding a suitable owner to carry out renovations.⁹ HCF used the Fiess report to identify immediate preservation concerns. The Rose Hill district was a popular suburb at the turn of the twentieth century and many families left the city to build prominent residences in this affluent Victorian neighborhood.¹⁰ Courthouse-South neighborhood consisted of former homes of the city's founding elite families.

⁹ Carl Fiess Historic Columbus Building Inventory: Muscogee County, GA 1967, Columbus State University Archives.

¹⁰ Clason Kyle, *Images: A Pictorial History of Columbus, Georgia* (Columbus, GA: Historic Columbus Foundation, 1986), 97.

Following the report, HCF established a revolving fund with the generous donation of \$42,000 by the Junior Service League.¹¹ Fiess' recommendation to create two historic districts, however, was not followed. Preservation efforts in the Rose Hill district were neglected until the 2000s while Courthouse-South received immediate attention because it had the largest concentration of Victorian and pre-Civil War homes, and was appealing for direct descendants. The foundation's choice to concentrate its efforts in the Courthouse-South neighborhood resulted in the further deterioration of Rose Hill.

The creation of a historic district in Columbus was a significant step towards restoring the city's historic landscape. As the city's only preservation group, HCF oversaw the reconstruction of an affluent neighborhood in the Courthouse-South district. The National Register of Historic Places formally recognized the Columbus Historic District in July 1969, helping HCF attract more homeowners and investors. The Foundation provided additional support to historic district homeowners by overseeing preservation efforts, providing technical advice, and publicly recognizing restoration work through an annual awards program. District homeowners, excited about the preservation work in their community, established the Historic District Preservation Society (HDPS) in 1975. HDPS became an important HCF partner in promoting the area. By the 1970s, the historic district became a center of activity attracting preservation groups, architectural students, and popular community fundraising events. The Salisbury Fair and Spring Festival Days were early fundraisers used to showcase the district's progress.

¹¹ John S. Lupold, *Historic Columbus Foundation: Champion of Columbus's Historic Resources 1966-2006* (Columbus, GA: Historic Columbus Foundation, 2006), 5.

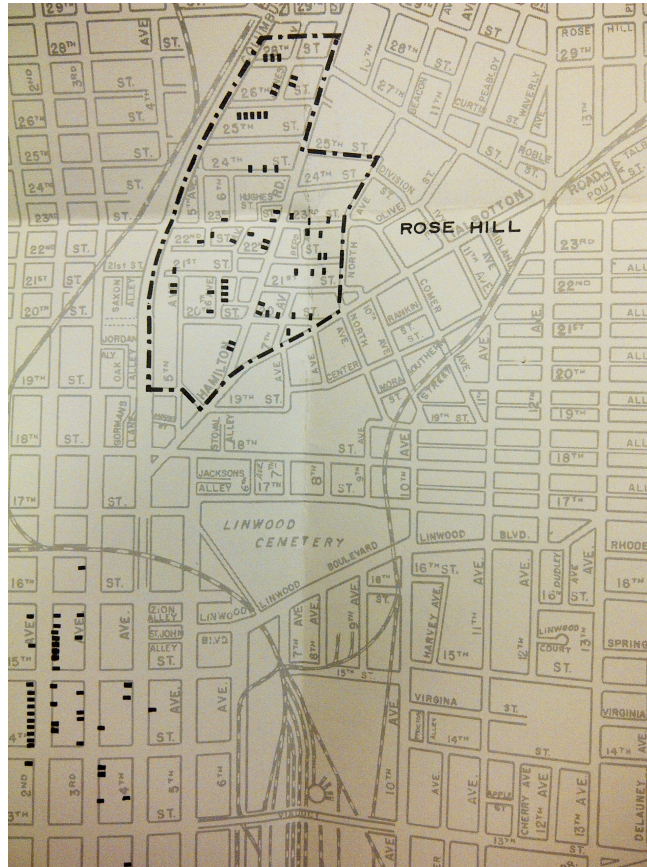


Fig. 1.1
 Fiess Map of Rose Hill Neighborhood District –shows the number of homes identified by Fiess
 in need of preservation and recommended historic district boundaries.
 Map Courtesy of Columbus State University Archives

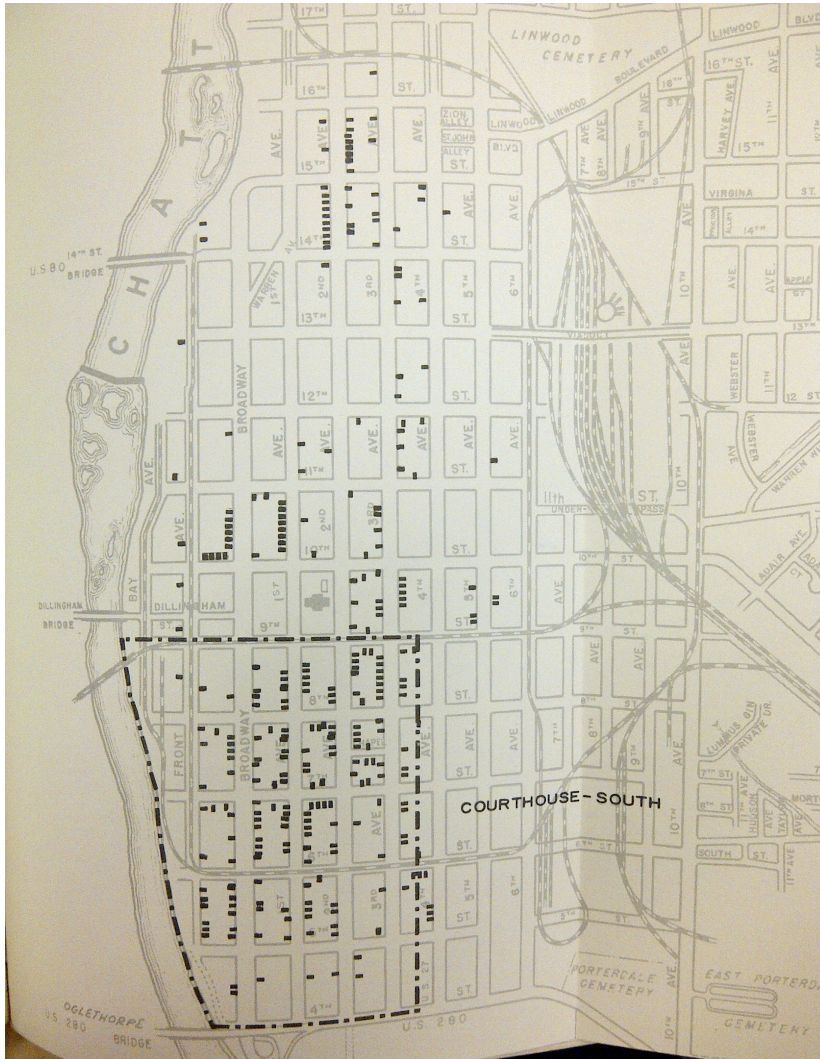


Fig. 1.2

Fieiss Map of Court-House South Neighborhood District –shows the number of homes identified by Fieiss in need of preservation and recommended historic district boundaries.

Map courtesy of Columbus State University Archives

In 1976, communities across the nation celebrated the bicentennial of the country's founding. In Columbus, the bicentennial was an opportunity to reflect on the city's past and showcase the progress of preservation revitalization. The Columbus Area Bicentennial Committee received a grant from the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration to issue a commemorative piece of literature discussing the preservation movement in Columbus.¹² This publication was intended to educate Columbus natives about local preservation work and outline the improvements accomplished in the city. The publication provides a critical look at the landscape before HCF's involvement—the destruction of homes for the sake of modern development—and praises the ongoing work by the Foundation to save the city's history. The publication identifies a clear villain—urban growth—and a clear hero—HCF. The authors convey the importance of investing public funds into restoring the Historic Columbus District. From 1969-1976, HCF restored several homes in the district, changed the commercial ordinance to residential, designated the Springer Theatre as the State Theatre of Georgia, and hosted several fundraisers throughout the year. Efforts were underway to transform the Columbus Iron Works building into a convention and trade center, and to restore the central business district.¹³ To attract more community participation, the bicentennial committee constructed a new park overlooking the Chattahoochee River in the district. The Chattahoochee Promenade was a site where the city celebrated its past and future. The outdoor museum consisted of thirteen flagpoles representing the thirteen original colonies, interpretive plaques, a fountain, and a relocated Victorian cottage to serve as a visitors' center. The city also received a grant to create an amphitheater for outdoor recreational use. Columbus leaders used the occasion to improve the landscape by redeveloping

¹² Columbus Area Bicentennial Committee, *Historic Preservation in Columbus, Georgia*, April 1976.

¹³ *Ibid.*

an unused plot of land in the historic district.¹⁴ While the nation celebrated its anniversary, the Columbus community celebrated the possibilities of its future through preservation.

To the untrained eye the district appears to have withstood the hands of time. In reality, it is a mix of original and relocated homes. The Foundation controlled the reconstruction and overall look of the district. Over the course of twenty years, several homes were relocated to rebuild the old neighborhood's prominence. It became an ideal southern neighborhood built to attract new homeowners, tourists, and investors. The Folly home, original to the district and built during the Civil war, is the city's only octagonal house. Ridiculed because of its odd construction, it was popularly known as May's folly, after its builder Leander May. HCF purchased it in 1969, and the Department of Interior later recognized the home as a National Historic Landmark, adding to the distinction of the neighborhood. James Woodruff Jr. purchased the Goetchius House, a mid-eighteenth century home in 1966 and later moved the house to the Historic District in 1969. Woodruff had the home cut into pieces and relocated to 405 Broadway where he invested heavily in its renovation. Preservationists often disagree about relocating homes from their original location and in Columbus, several homes were relocated to preserve them from commercial intrusion. Today, homes located in the historic district are sought after residential properties and continue to attract ready homebuyers.

The Foundation created a plan to include a collection of historic house museums to attract tourists to the area and for educational programs. Heritage Corner consists of relocated and original homes on the northeast corner of 7th street and Broadway. The historic homes became the centerpiece for historic education and tourism from the 1980s to present. These homes included a range of architectural styles –from an 1805 pioneer log cabin to early twentieth

¹⁴ Ibid.

century architecture. Five homes were used to interpret the city's history by showcasing key periods of the city's development or relating to a historically significant native. Three homes were donated and relocated to the Foundation. It was not uncommon for elite philanthropists to buy homes and later donate them to HCF. For example, the farmhouse of John Pemberton, inventor of the Coca-Cola formula, was donated by the Coca-Cola Foundation and relocated to the historic district. It was used to discuss the origins of the famous beverage, how it began in the city, and the contribution of the Woodruff family to make the beverage an international success. Recent school budget cuts on school field trips have reduced a significant portion of visitors to the site. Local historic house museums across the country have also experienced a decline in attendance. These factors attributed to the Foundation's recent actions to sell three historic houses and keep two open for interpretation. The tour was modified to accommodate recent changes, but still interprets the remaining collection of homes.

Visitors to Heritage Corner receive a guided tour interpreting the history of the city. Guides provide a brief architectural history on home construction and brief biographies of the individuals or families associated with the building. Visitors take a step back in time, as each home interior is decorated in period furniture and design. In addition to historic homes, the Foundation added a slave house and Victorian garden as part of its narrative. The Victorian garden was made possible by the continued effort of numerous volunteers to reproduce a typical 1830s garden. The slave house was originally located elsewhere in the city and later moved to its present site on the tour. The slave cabin interpretation describes the sleeping arrangements, related slave artifacts and architectural features of the cabin. Two slaves associated with local history are Horace King and Thomas "Blind Tom" Bethune. Both men are popular individuals discussed in local history. The cabin includes interpretive text panels describing how slaves lived

in the city or on plantations. Following the slave cabin, the tour takes visitors across the street to see the Confederate Monument erected by the Ladies Memorial Association in 1879. There, the story is told of the last major land battle of the Civil War that ended in the city's destruction by Union forces.¹⁵ The remainder of the tour takes visitors through the Woodruff pioneer cabin, the Walker-Peters-Langdon House, and the Pemberton farmhouse and apothecary shop. Overall, the Heritage Tour of homes provides highlights of local history. Nowhere else in Columbus can one access a collection of preserved homes and learn the history behind them. The tour teaches visitors not only about the history of the home, but also about the role historic preservation played in saving these structures from further peril.

The National Historic Preservation Act created the potential for historic districts and with Fiess' recommendations HCF launched an ambitious project to promote neighborhood regrowth and spur preservation efforts throughout the city. HCF learned from the Springer Opera House that private capital alone could not fund the many projects it envisioned for the city. By the late 1970s and 1980s, the Foundation worked with city leaders to generate tourism to support the local economy. The goal was to transform the city into a popular tourist attraction on the Chattahoochee River modeled after other historic cities such as Charleston and Savannah. The Historic District was a success, but the city still lacked greater attractions and sites needed to attract a large audience. Keeping remnants of the city's industrial legacy remained important to local preservationists. The Foundation expanded its mission and worked to encompass a greater cross section of the community by becoming active in the restoration of old city mills and the central business district.

¹⁵ Charles Misulia. *Columbus, Georgia, 1865: The Last True Battle of the Civil War* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010).

Saving History: Industrial Sites and the Historic Commercial District

HCF wanted the community to see its public landscape in a new light—a city revitalized by adaptive re-use. Early industrial forefathers transformed Columbus into a major manufacturing city of the South, thus creating the city’s landscape around major mills and factories. By the 1970s, the city’s leading industries were slowly declining due to new global market demands and changes in manufacturing trends. In 1971, Columbus consolidated city and county governments to promote economic growth by greatly expanding the city. City leaders hoped to create a diversified economy and depended less on its main two industries—textiles and US military.¹⁶ As a result, the city’s industrial historic fabric became of interest to local preservationist and city developers. In 1977, the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) surveyed the city’s significant river mills, focusing on developing adaptive reuses for vacant mill buildings.¹⁷ The report led to the National Park Service declaring the Columbus Historic Riverfront Industrial District a national landmark. In April 1979, the Society for Industrial Archeology (SIA) hosted its annual Conference in Columbus to discuss ways in which the city could benefit from its industrial landscape and published a tour consisted of forty-four tour stops that ranged from mills, dams, bridges, and railroads for conference attendees. Additional stops on the tour included the Confederate Naval Museum, Cast Iron Bank, and Columbus Industrial High School. The goal of the tour was to identify key industries responsible for building the local economy and landscape. The wealth generated by industrial elites supported banks, museums, education, and other businesses in the city. The SIA publication made apparent not only how

¹⁶ John S. Lupold, *Columbus, Georgia 1828-1978* (Columbus Sesquicentennial Inc., 1978), 120.

¹⁷ John S. Lupold, “Historic Columbus Foundation 1966-1978,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, vol. 63 (1979), 134.

significant the city's roots are in industry, but the reality that many of its factories would soon be closed.¹⁸

The Columbus Iron Works remains an iconic landmark in the city of Columbus. Founded in 1853, the Iron Works was known for the steam engines and boilers it produced. At one point the Confederate Army used the factory to manufacture steam engines and boilers for Confederate Navy gunboats. Union forces destroyed large portions of the factory, but its owners quickly recovered and diversified its production. As a result, the Iron Works became a major producer of ice machines in the early twentieth century, and produced farm tools, wood and coal-burning stoves, heaters, and Char-Broil Barbecue Grills.¹⁹ By the 1960s, under the ownership of W. C. Bradley Company the decision was made to move its operation to a new site in Bradley Industrial Park in north Columbus because it was expected to be too costly to modernize the factory.²⁰ It was purchased by the city of Columbus in the late 1970s to launch a multi-million dollar project to convert the factory into a modern convention and trade center. Interior designers included towering machinery parts as part of the aesthetics of the convention center. When the Columbus Iron Works Convention and Trade Center opened in 1979, it became the first city funded preservation project. The completion of the trade center inspired continued efforts to find new adaptive uses of former city mills factories. The Old Empire Mills, located across the street from the Iron Works, was converted into a hotel to support the convention center.²¹ Of course, not every mill was saved, but the success of the Iron Works inspired the community to look for alternatives before demolishing historic sites.

¹⁸ John Lupold. *Industrial Archeology of Columbus, Georgia: A Tour Guide for the 8th Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial Archeology* (April 1979).

¹⁹ Harris, 19.

²⁰ John S. Lupold, Virginia Tucker Peebles, Matthews Dismuke Swift, and Elizabeth Kelly Barker, *Heritage Park: A Celebration of the Industrial Heritage of Columbus, Georgia* (Columbus: Historic Columbus Foundation, 1986), 50.

²¹ Lupold, *Columbus, Georgia 1828-1978*, 134.

The city's historic commercial district was located a few blocks from the Columbus Iron Works, which was also in desperate need of revitalization. Harry Kamensky, a local businessman, was the first to invest to restore the Rankin Square business district and generated additional local investment in the project. Kamensky purchased the Rankin Hotel on Broadway and Tenth Street and the adjoining business block across from the Springer Opera House.²² By 1979, new small businesses opened on this block and changed local perception of the historic district.²³ This was encouraging news for city planners and preservationists as they worked collectively to attract other investors in the commercial district.

The city and the commercial district received a major boost during the late 1990s as the city embarked on a fundraising campaign to redefine the city in the new millennium. The Bradley-Turner Foundation challenged Columbus citizens to transform the city into a leading art and cultural center. The foundation donated \$25 million dollars with the condition that the community had to match its donation. The success of the Columbus Challenge provided city funds to launch a major revitalization project in the city's historic downtown. Funds from the campaign were used to build a modern performing arts center. The RiverCenter is part of the Columbus State University music department and host's concerts, shows, and performances. Columbus State University purchased several downtown buildings to create a downtown campus with student housing. The university is a major investor in the area and has constructed new structures and adaptively reused old buildings.²⁴ Today, the commercial district is buzzing with activity as new restaurants, student housing, small businesses, and offices contribute to the commercial district's new look. The Columbus Challenge successfully transformed the historic

²² Lupold, *Historic Columbus Foundation: Champion of Columbus's Historic Resources 1966-2006* (Columbus: Historic Columbus Foundation, 2006), 17.

²³ John Lupold, "Revitalizing Foundries, Hotels, and Grist Mills In Columbus," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, vol. 63 (1979), 139.

²⁴ Lupold, (2006), 23.

commercial district and the city continues to draw in investors to accomplish its full restoration goal.

In Columbus, adaptive reuse saved the historic make-up of the area's commercial and industrial heritage. Preserving the city's most recognized buildings strengthened the HCF's role as the city's lead preservation advisor, reinforced by serving as ex-officio members on the board of the Office of Economic Development.²⁵ The Foundation continues to influence public opinion on historic preservation through its partnerships with city organizations.

Preservation by HCF and the city of Columbus shaped how late twentieth-century Columbus natives began to understand and interpret their surroundings. The Foundation created a hierarchy of important structures and sites in the community deemed important in the landscape. Early preservation projects restored the landscape of the industrial elite –their homes, offices, and factories. Outside of this limited view existed other neighborhoods and structures of historical importance. The decision to give immediate attention to the historic district, commercial district, and industrial sites delayed aid to other sites. Preservationists often neglected historic black and working class communities, leading to the destruction of much of the built environment. In response to growing social changes and diverse city leadership, the foundation made greater strides in the 1980s and 1990s to preserve a broader social narrative of the city. This meant including African American and working class neighborhoods in preservation goals and projects. Overall, the Foundation had to expand its scope and mission to provide assistance in other neighborhoods in order to remain relevant in the community.

²⁵ Lupold (2006), 18.

Interpreters of Local History

From the 1960s to the late 1970s, HCF worked to preserve and interpret the physical landscape of the city, but by the 1980s, the foundation broadened its services to promote and support heritage education. HCF published commemorative literature on the occasion of its decennial anniversaries. It also supported heritage education literature, including Roger Harris' *Our Town: An Introduction to the History of Columbus, Georgia*, which became a popular publication for Columbus heritage education, and Clason Kyle's, *Images: A Pictorial History of Columbus Georgia*, a popular pictorial history of the city. Noted Columbus historian John S. Lupold was often commissioned to write brief histories on the city. Lupold's *Columbus 1828-1978* was a popular work of local history often cited in many publications. As a whole, these publications share similar narratives about Columbus's founding, industry, and local elites, but a closer examination reveals a gradual progression by HCF and authors to present an inclusive historical narrative. Some publications presented a limited history focused on the elites –while others included a range of topics, individuals, and multiple perspectives to appeal to a changing community.

John S. Lupold's, *Columbus 1828-1978*, was not intended as a scholarly source, but instead meant to accompany more substantial works on Columbus.²⁶ Lupold states that Georgians and Columbus natives were largely unaware of the city's development and its rich history. This may be attributed to the limited numbers of historical texts made available to the public and local historical organizations only recently established. Lupold used archival materials slowly being accumulated for the Columbus State University archives to complete his first publication. Lupold provides a concise sanitized account of major local political, social, and

²⁶ Lupold cites traditional works: Etta Blanchard Worsley, *Columbus on the Chattahoochee*. (Columbus: Columbus Office Supply, 1951). Nancy Telfair, *The Columbus, Georgia Centenary: A History of Columbus, Georgia, 1828-1928*. (Columbus: Columbus Office Supply, 1929).

economic events. It lacks an honest and critical view of local history. The publication's descriptive narrative and photographs, however, appeal to a general reading audience. Lupold constructs a different narrative that pays greater attention to a social history of the city –non-elite, women, and African Americans.

The city's industrial history is frequently discussed in early HCF literature, often neglecting the importance of agriculture to the city's early economy and society. In his publication, king cotton reigned supreme in Columbus as many plantation owners grew, sold, and shipped the precious commodity from the river port city to national and international markets. The wealth attained by agricultural elites was visible in the stately homes and slaves they owned. The disproportion between the elites and working class is not discussed. Lupold states the economy and social activities revolved around cotton planters, a part of the past some local historians tend to pass over to instead focus on industrial history.²⁷

It would be difficult to talk about the city's agricultural economy without discussing slavery. Lupold not only discusses slavery, but also includes a brief discussion the social and religious life of slaves in the city. A large population of slaves resided in the county and city. Blacks and whites participated in many daily activities in the city, though never as equals. Religion was an important aspect for both white and slave cultures. Many slaves and free blacks attended white congregations, until churches allowed the formation of black congregations. His books fail to discuss the importance of these independent black churches in the African American social and political community. African American churches played a major role in the black community and continue to do so today. Overall, Lupold's presentation of antebellum society depicts a city dependent on industry, agriculture, and slaves. It is not until the end of the

²⁷ John S. Lupold, *Columbus, Georgia 1828-1978* (Columbus, GA: Columbus Sesquicentennial, Inc., 1978), 16.

Civil War when the city underwent major changes in every aspect of society –especially the emancipation of its slaves.

Following the end of the Civil War, Lupold addresses displaced farmers and former slaves moved to cities in search of jobs, and the troubles they faced in the city. Whites found jobs working as operators in city mills, while blacks were disappointed by the lack of jobs available to them. White businesses and factory owners did not hire blacks, hoping it would drive them back to the country. This population of migrant ex-slaves moved into huts on the southern part of the city known as the “Bottoms,” between the city limits and suburb of Wynnton. Lower-class whites lived in mill villages such as Bibb City, and also created a close-knit community outside of city limits. Lupold used a cautious approach when discussing the life of the slave and mill worker. He provides enough detail to describe their activities, but does not include discussion on race relations or violence.²⁸ Lupold includes enough detail to inform the reader of life for whites and free blacks during Reconstruction, but does not take a critical view towards the treatment of both the working class poor and blacks.

During the Progressive Era, women were education reformers in the community. Women’s benevolent societies assisted the children of mill workers. Lupold states the number of black children receiving a rudimentary education outnumbered white mill worker’s children. This was attributed to the number of white mill children who worked as “lunch toters”- children who carried lunches to mill workers. The Head, Heart, and Hand society opened the first school that accommodated the schedule of mill children by including a break in the school’s schedule to allow them to carry out their duties and return. Women are depicted in the publication as educated elite philanthropists, and do not show women in power. Women play a minor role in

²⁸ Lupold (1978), 31.

Lupold's publication and instead it focuses on a broader discussion of the city's development and progress.

Lupold presents the social hierarchies that existed in the community for much of its history, including the industrial elites, working class, and African Americans. This is a limited way to discuss the community that does not include enough information on the latter two categories. By 1978, the community Lupold interprets was in transition. The social hierarchy continued, but was broadened by the growth of the city's population. City leaders consolidated city and county governments to expand the size of the city. This was done to generate more economic growth through increased tax revenue. The decline of city mills required leaders to attract new industries to diversify the local economy. Lupold concludes the publication by arguing that future urban development will rely on historic preservation to attract tourism and promote economic growth. Lupold describes the local preservation movement as "having an important economic, social, and even psychological impact on the city."²⁹ Its historical homes and commercial center were being renovated and optimism abounded about the potential for the city to bounce back from its previous urban decline. This optimistic look at the city's future may be influenced by the excitement over supporting preservation in the community. It may also be influenced by the Foundation's decision to hire Lupold for this publication.

Clason Kyle worked as the *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer* travel editor, and from the outset played an important role in promoting Columbus historic preservation. As early as 1963, Kyle participated with other Columbus historians in the "Stay and See Georgia" program giving tours of the city's historic sites. During the movement to save the Springer, Kyle gave speeches and slide presentations on the topic of saving the Springer Opera House to civic groups,

²⁹ Lupold (1978),126

churches, and any willing listener.³⁰ Kyle's publication, *Images: A Pictorial History of Columbus, Georgia*, was a commemorative piece celebrating the Foundation's twentieth anniversary. Kyle uses a variety of archival images from the *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer* photograph collection, as well as local archival material, to create a pictorial narrative of the city's history. The reader can leisurely peruse the book and learn local history through primary source material. The publication includes photographs, documents and drawings to show how the city's changed landscape over time. The selections of photographs in the publication were purposely chose to convey a story of change and progress attributed to the legacy of Columbus' industrial elites. Photographs include portraits of city founders, great town homes and plantations, and technological investments that modernized the city. Kyle includes the role of elite men and women in the development of the community. The publication is intended for local readers, but its history is not representative of everyone in the community. The book is segmented into chapters discussing various periods of local history –starting with the founding of the city and leading up to Columbus in 1985. Kyle bases much of his publication's work on that of other local historians, including Lupold, and shares similar narratives, themes, and individuals mentioned in popular local literature.

Kyle's interpretation of local history looks through the eyes of the city's elite. The women featured in the publication are white, educated, and privileged. Women participated in social and familial spheres of society –often pictured as the wives, nieces, or daughters of leading industrial men. Kyle includes the development of women organizations and the first female college in the eighteenth century³¹. Groups such as the Women's Reading Club emerged

³⁰ Lupold (2006), 4.

³¹ Clason Kyle cites: Etta Blanchard Worsley, *Columbus on the Chattahoochee*.(Columbus: Columbus Office Supply, 1951). Nancy Telfair, *The Columbus, Georgia Centenary: A History of Columbus, Georgia, 1828-1928*. (Columbus: Columbus Office Supply, 1929). Katherine Hines Mahan,

as away for women to “study and improve their minds,” and the first group was established in 1888.³² High society events show women dressed in fashionable clothing. Overall, Kyle’s publication interprets the daily life of socialites and fails to include more representation of women from other classes or races. One does not gain a sense from the publication that women played a major role in the development of key local institutions, such as the Columbus Museum and the Historic Columbus Foundation. Kyle’s main focus in the publication is on the private capital and industry that produced the wealth of the city.

Kyle includes African American in the publication, albeit in small bits throughout the publication and only in subservient roles or focuses only on selected famous individuals. A photograph contributed by a Columbus native shows her with her siblings next to their “mammy.” Kyle interprets the role of the “mammy,” a female slave caretaker as, “an integral part of the family and was dearly loved by her masters.” Kyle’s depicts slavery as a “faithful servant” institution –not uncommon in early twentieth century Southern interpretation of slavery, but problematic for a 1980s publication. Kyle does not depict life for blacks in the community after the Civil War. Famed African Americans included in the text are Horace King, Gertrude “Ma” Rainey, Eugene Bullard, and Booker T. Washington. By 1986, these individuals were beginning to be mentioned and discussed in the community. Their accomplishments are interpreted as exceptional in the period in which they lived. Kyle’s interpretation of African Americans in local history is unbalanced. On one page, the reader can learn about a famous African American and on another see a troubling early twentieth century photograph that shows

Showboats to Soft Shoes: A Century of Musical Development in Columbus, Georgia, 1828-1928 (Columbus: Columbus office Supply, 1968). John Lupold, *Columbus, Georgia 1828-1978* (Columbus: Columbus Sesquicentennial Inc., 1978). Margaret Whitehead, Margaret and Barbara Bogart. *City of Progress: A History of Columbus, Georgia*. (Columbus: Columbus Office Supply, 1978), and John Martin *Columbus, Georgia, 1827 -1865*. (Columbus: Thomas Gilbert, 1874).

³² Kyle, 56.

two black men lynched by a white crowd in the city's commercial center. The only interpretation accompanying the photograph suggests the men fell subject to mob rule.³³ The publication glosses over the Civil Rights Movement and desegregation as if neither event occurred in the community. He also includes a 1971 photograph taken of an African American protest to show the violence ensued by racial tension in the community. Street riots took place in the city reportedly four days. State troopers were eventually brought in to restore order. Kyle interprets this event as leading to the improvement of white and black relations, "as something that must be worked at."³⁴ He does not include information if the police harmed any rioters or if the protests died out quietly. If one were reading only Kyle's publication, the reader is led to believe that blacks lived in the city but did not contribute to the development of it.

Kyle's 1986 publication lacks a social history representative of the whole community. For public historians, it provides some insight into how HCF viewed the past as shaped by elites while others were mere observers. Although Kyle's publication lacks diversity, it does effectively show through photographs changes on the landscape –rise of new buildings, technological advancements, and popular trends. Lupold's earlier publication highlights the experiences of the community more broadly. Kyle's publication offers a nostalgic and forward-looking view of the city, while Lupold uses research to guide his local history. The society Kyle elaborately detailed for much of the publication no longer remains. The city was linked to a major interstate highway, making it more accessible for commerce and travel. African Americans served in leadership positions and sought representation in local politics. Kyle concludes his work by highlighting changes in the city will endure as a growing Southern city, "There seems to be a 'new order' present in Columbus... that 'new order' seems to be coming to

³³ Kyle 111-112.

³⁴ Kyle 261.

grips with one where business and industry happily coexist with respect for human rights and admiration for the arts.”³⁵ Both Lupold and Kyle see a future that no longer supports the social life of the elite, but instead sees their role in historic preservation as a way to control the interpretation of local history and the landscape.

By the 1990s, HCF began to reinterpret local history to represent a greater cross section of the Columbus community in its *Our Town* series. The series became an important educational resource for heritage education and teachers could incorporate the series into teaching plans. The *Our Town* series consists of three publications – Roger Harris’ *Our Town an Introduction to the History of Columbus, Georgia* was intended for a general audience; a supplemental children’s publication, *A Historic Tour of Our Town: Columbus, Georgia Coloring Book*; and *The Architecture Styles of Our Town: Columbus, Georgia*, a technical architectural history publication for high school students.

Whereas Kyle’s publication focuses on the social and economic lives of the elite, Harris’ *Our Town* provides a condensed sanitized social history of the city. It does an excellent job incorporating various stories and people of Columbus, but like the previous publications discussed, does not critically analyze local history. The publication appeals to a general audience looking for a brief induction to local history. By broadening the publication’s focus, Harris achieves a more representative look at the various peoples, businesses, churches, and buildings that contributed to the city’s development, and is thus able to attract the interest of a larger audience. From an education standpoint, the text allows teachers to correlate various national themes and events with local examples. For example, Harris’ discusses the role of immigration by Europeans in the years following the city’s establishment. By 1860, over six hundred foreign

³⁵ Kyle, 222

individuals resided in the city. New migrant families and children may relate to his topic and can learn about the contributions immigrants have made in the community.³⁶

Harris also incorporates old and new business histories of industries that started in Columbus and that continue to manufacture goods in the city. John Pemberton and Coca-Cola are names commonly associated with Columbus, but in this publication readers also learn about the Royal Crown Cola Company founded in 1912 by Claud Hatcher. His company, Nehi Inc., bottled Royal Crown Ginger Ale and Chero Cola, a popular soft drink at the turn of the twentieth century. The company remains in Columbus and continues to produce beverages. Nehi Inc. is an important name in the community and is now included in the city's soft drink history.³⁷

Familiar faces and names make their way into Harris' interpretation of black history, but he makes the decision to not discuss slavery. Harris provides more interpretation of African American culture and advancement in the city. Harris includes widely recognized names such as Blind Tom, "Ma" Rainey, Horace, King and Eugene Bullard and other local African Americans as part of a greater discussion of the black advancement in the twentieth century. Black education is emphasized in the publication. The Claflin School was the first public school in Columbus founded in 1868. Harris also includes William H. Spencer, an advocate for the educating black children at the turn of the twentieth century. Local civil rights activist Primus King is included to highlight the fight for equality within the community. It also recognized the role of black churches and congregation as important cultural institutions.³⁸ Harris provides a limited scope of local black history and is a significant step in a major local publication towards broadening their role in the community. Harris' first publication of the *Our Town* series successfully interprets a bit of everyone's history –African American, industrial, civic, and

³⁶ Harris 30.

³⁷ Harris, 40.

³⁸ Harris, 16, 18, 22, 32, 43.

women's history. Harris' approach to discussing local history in themes updated the historical narrative by including new perspectives and recent events.

The *Our Town* children's activity coloring book takes children on a historic tour of the city that includes historic figures and architecture. The coloring book teaches young children key city landmarks as a way to make-up of the city. Children color can color a selection of homes, buildings, and people significant to local history. For example, an image of Chief William McIntosh is used to discuss Indian removal to the west and the Native American influence on the landscape today in terms of place names. Homes included in the coloring book consist of those located on Heritage Corner, and National Register homes located outside of the historic district. While the publication helps children learn city landmarks, it also publicizes the preservation work of HCF. Teachers use the coloring book as part of classroom discussion, and until recent educational budget cuts, books were used to prepare children for field trips to Heritage Corner. The director of community outreach makes classroom visits to elementary and middle school grades. The director provides in school field trips that range in topics –an architectural styles slideshow, heritage corner traveling truck show, hands on history programs, a black heritage program and a seminar on Native Americans.³⁹ The *Our Town* series encourages teachers to use local examples when discussing national events. This color book is a fun and engaging way to teach future generations about Columbus' public historical landscape. Children receive a limited view of the city and may not see sites that are meaningful to them or representative of where they live in the city. HCF strives to teach young children about the city they love and interpret, but needs to broaden its approach to include the sites children value and

³⁹ Interview with Callie Hecht, Historic Columbus Foundation March 7, 2013

identify with today. By doing this, the Foundation can hope to ensure future leaders who appreciate the sites significant to the Foundation and incorporate new city landmarks.

The third publication of the *Our Town* series was designed for high school students interested in architecture or interior design. This publication also appeals to professional audience interested in architectural history. *The Architecture Styles of Our Town: Columbus, Georgia* identifies several architectural styles in the city. The publication uses technical architectural language to describe home features –a glossary of architectural terms is included to assist the reader. The publication is an opportunity for the Foundation to promote the community’s rich assortment of architectural homes, but also showcase many of the homes it saved. The publication identifies historic structure’s dating from the nineteenth century to present.

The publication includes a mix of architectural styles found in residential, commercial, and religious buildings around the city. For example, the White Bank Building features the Italianate style and is an iconic commercial building in historic downtown. The building’s façade is prefabricated cast iron, which allowed the builder to use it as a load bearing support for the two street facing sides of the structure. The White Bank Building is a popular image used in promoting downtown development. The former Greyhound Bus Station, built in Art Moderne style, now serves as a popular Bar-B-Q restaurant. Some buildings identified in the publication were readapted for use as commercial or office space. This publication completes the *Our Town* series by returning to the historic landscape that inspired the preservation process.

In the *Our Town* series, readers see familiar buildings included in this text, making it an important addition to local literature. Former Historic Columbus Executive Director –Virginia Peebles –discussed the Foundation’s commitment to heritage education as aiming to, “instill a

sense of place and a sense of pride in this community.”⁴⁰ The *Our Town* series played a major role in promoting HCF’s work and educating the community. The heritage preserved and promoted in the publications represents a small percent of Columbus’ public historical landscape, yet it remains an important focus for heritage education. Its impact is profound, as heritage tourism became an integral part of the city’s economic redevelopment plan. Even as the public historical landscape of the city dramatically changed between 1976 and 1996, HCF literature did little to highlight these transformations. During this period, HCF publications largely interpreted a consensus view of history filled with dynamic entrepreneurs, socialite women, and a city transformed by technological advancements. Subsequent changes in local publications and preservation aimed included minority voices, a shift from the traditional industrial narrative to discussing a city with a diversified economy, and a working class narrative. New interpretations emerged in response to meeting the needs of a diverse community. In creating and defining space, the Foundation omitted other sites from 1966 to 1996. Early preservation efforts focused on reviving the city’s past, but neglected to interpret the complete landscape. The landscape was not representative of everyone, especially African Americans. In the twenty-first century, HCF reinterpreted the landscape in a way that allowed more people to connect and identify with it.

Saving History: New Goals and Mission in the 21st Century

At its fortieth anniversary, the Historic Columbus Foundation celebrated new triumphs in preservation work and honored its influential executive directors who raised awareness of historic preservation and carried out ambitious goals to save the city’s history. During 1997-

⁴⁰ Virginia Peebles introduction in Roger Harris, *A Historic Tour of Our Town Columbus, Georgia Coloring Book* (Third Printing, 2006).

1998, the Foundation played a significant role in the Columbus Challenge Campaign. Portions of the proceeds raised by the campaign created the Community Projects Foundation. It donated \$1 million to the Foundation, which was used for its endowment and revolving fund. The campaign's impact is seen in the complete redevelopment of the city's historic commercial center.

As part of the city's redevelopment in the early 2000s, the foundation received funds from Coca-Cola and the Bradley-Turner Foundation to create an outdoor museum dedicated to commemorating the city's industrial heritage –reinforcing a consensus traditional view of the city's past. The park's location in the historic district makes it easily accessible to visitors and is in close proximity to other area attractions –Heritage Corner is across the street, downtown restaurants and retail shops, and the Columbus Iron Works Convention and Trade are also nearby. HCF published *Heritage Park, A Celebration of the Industrial Heritage of Columbus, Georgia*, focusing on the lives of its major entrepreneurs and their families. Heritage Park is also situated in the Historic District –it is across the street from the Chattahoochee Promenade built in the 1976, and Heritage Corner. The park and publication honor the economic contributions made to the Chattahoochee Valley by the patriarchs of Columbus –John S. Pemberton, W.C. Bradley, G. Gunby Jordan, William H. Young, George Parker Swift, George W. Woodruff, and A. Illgles. The publication honors those seen as major contributors of the city's development and whose families continue to contribute to the economic, civic, and cultural life of the community. The descendants of the industrial elite contributed funds to design and build a park to the Columbus patriarchs. The park includes a major water feature representing the Chattahoochee River –a common thread throughout the development of the city's industries. This water feature represents the growth of industry from the Chattahoochee River from 1850-

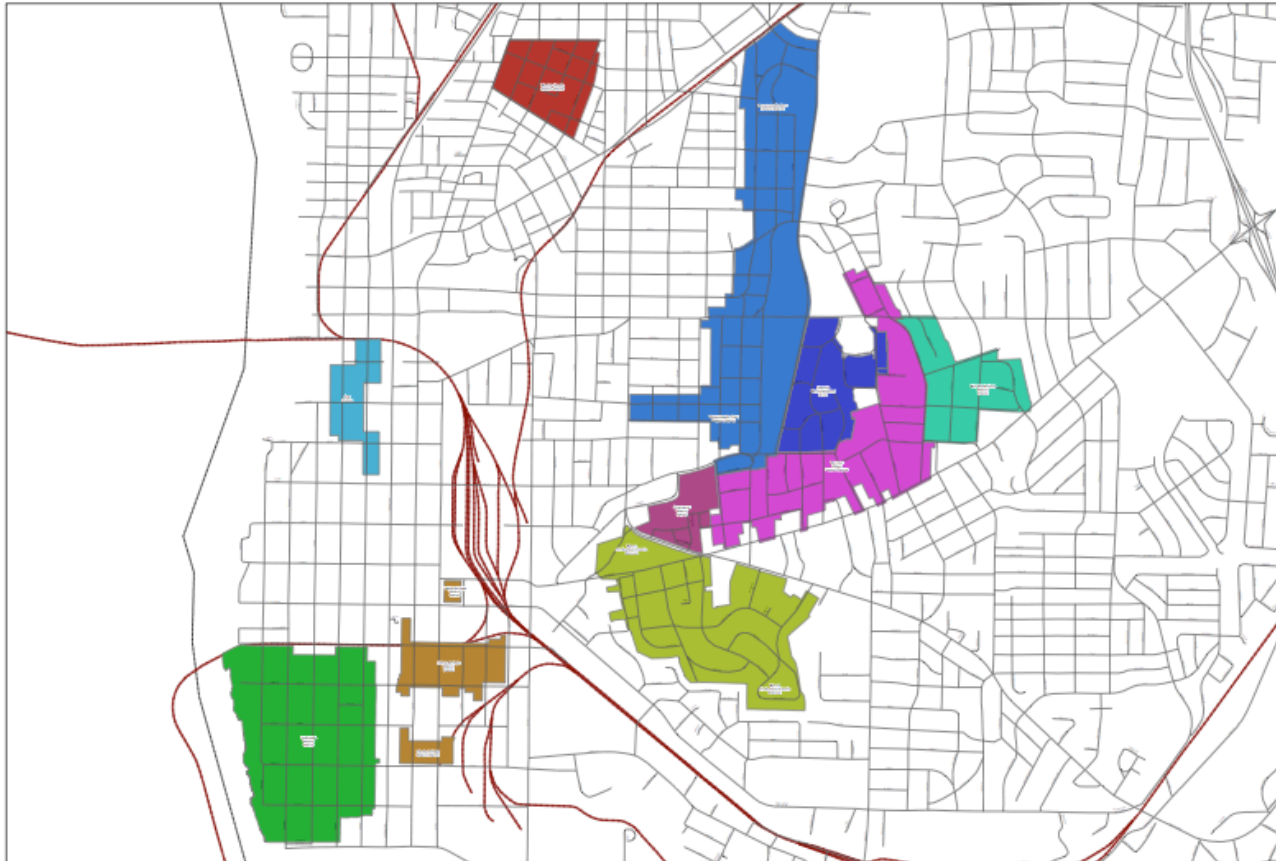
1910. Six sculptures are situated at various points throughout the park representing key industries—Coca Cola fortune, textiles, brick building, milling, iron foundries, and agriculture. The parks location in the historic district contributes another tourist attraction for visitors.⁴¹ The park holds more meaning to descendants, as it was away to continue their presence on the landscape.

With many historic commercial structures and homes located in historic downtown safe from demolition, the Foundation looked to other neighborhoods for future projects. The Foundation concentrated its efforts in 2000 and 2001 on preserving homes in the city’s midtown and “High UPtown” neighborhoods including Waverly Terrace and the Weracoba-St.Elmo Historic District, Wynnton Village, Peacock Woods-Dimon Circle, and Wildwood Circle-Hillcrest.⁴² Following the Historic District Preservation Society’s model, residents formed district preservation groups and were ready to take advantage of their neighborhood’s designation. In the Midtown District, homeowners responded to increased threats of road expansion by rallying together to create a historic district that protected their homes. Recent neighborhood redevelopment plans include the Rose Hill District. Private investors returned to the district in the 1990s, but received no recognition or help from the Foundation until the 2000s. The area was filled with deteriorating homes, squatters and seen as destitute. The restoration of Rose Hill, along with other neighborhoods, is significant because it signifies HCF’s commitment to respond to the needs of the community. More recently, HCF became active in the neighborhood, providing assistance to homeowners as advisors during renovation plans. The

⁴¹ John S. Lupold, Virginia Tucker Peebles, Mathews Dismuke Swift, and Elizabeth Kelly Barker, *Heritage Park: A Celebration of the Industrial Heritage of Columbus, Georgia* (Columbus, GA: Historic Columbus Foundation, 1999), 1.

⁴² High UPtown historic district encompasses Second and Third Avenue from the Lion House at 1316 Third Avenue northward to the railroad tracks, including the former Woodruff homes on Second Avenue.

Columbus police department also increased surveillance in the area to deter vagrants. The Foundation provides assistance to homeowners as advisors during renovation projects.⁴³



Legend

Historic District

	Dinglewood Historic District		Peacock Woods/Diamond Circle		Wild Wood Circle Historic District
	Downtown Historic District		Waverly Terrace Historic District		Wynns Hill Overlook Historic Districts
	High Uptown Historic District		Wereacobe/St. Elmo Historic District		Wynnton Village Historic District
			Liberty Heritage Historic District		

Figure 1.3 CCG GIS Map Catalog-Historic Districts
 Department of Engineering- GIS Division
 Courtesy of Columbus Board of Historic and Architectural Review

⁴³ Krieg Interview

As part of the Foundation's new strategic plans it has redefined its role in the community. The mission statement focuses the Foundation's work on meeting the needs of a changing Columbus society. The acronym REAP is used to communicate the four new HCF goals—restoration, education, advocacy, and preservation. The foundation continues to work on the existing historic district and river front area, but also looks to neighborhoods in historic districts that require assistance. The Foundation has strengthened its educational programming and creates programs that educate all age groups. Children are an important audience for the foundation. HCF has expanded its outreach programs to relate to children from various socio-economic levels. A popular summer program attracting children to learn about their community is Box City. Box City is a national children's program designed to teach kids process of creating a city—design, construction, city planning and the responsibilities of a citizen. Started in 2009, the program has become a great success attracting a total of eighty participants each year. HCF operates two summer break sessions for nine to twelve years old. During the weeklong session, guest speakers give talks on planning, zoning, and design elements of building a city. This program provides a fun hands on learning experience for children as they work in groups to construct a city from a range of materials. Box City supports the Foundation's mission to educate children about the buildings and structures that make-up Columbus.⁴⁴

HCF assumed the position of counsel and offers its services to other organizations working in downtown restoration. The most significant experienced faced by the Foundation is slowly divesting ownership of all but two Heritage Corner homes. This decision was made as

⁴⁴ Interview with Callie Hecht, Historic Columbus Foundation March 7, 2013. Also found additional material discussing the Box City program in Historic Columbus Foundation, *Currents* (Spring 2010), 8. CUBE, "Box City," <http://www.cubekc.org/architivities/boxcity25.html> (accessed March 8, 2013).

historic home tour numbers across the nation have dropped. Lack of public interest, school field trip budget cuts, and operational costs of the historic homes prove too costly to continue. Instead, the foundation works to create a stronger presence in the community through its assistance to revitalize neighborhoods. Begun in 2008, Preservation For Profit is an annual conference that attracts a wide range of people interested in historic preservation. The workshop emphasizes the benefits of preservation in the community. Workshop attendees learn the sustainable impact of reusing historic buildings; the benefits to local economy and, importance historic properties have in building community identity. Guest speakers present various topics related to historic preservation or city planning. The workshop is an opportunity to continue attracting local citizens to invest and protect the city's historic buildings. It also keeps historic preservation at the forefront of future city developments plans.⁴⁵

A significant milestone in the Foundation's recent history is the incorporation of African American sites to the public historical landscape. In a post-Civil Rights era, Columbus faced dramatic changes. Chapters one and two discussed the complexities and debates within the community over incorporating omitted narratives into local history. The memories of Alma Thomas and Eugene Bullard were slow to emerge in publications and public historical landscape. Public preservation work and interpretation of the African American community was virtually non-existent due to they did not have access to power in the twentieth century. Local black leaders renewed interest in Columbus African American cultural beginning in the 1980s. Liza Benham, an African American journalist for the *Ledger-Enquirer*, wrote a series of featured articles discussing black history in Columbus. *The Road From Bondage: A Local History* ran from June 6 through June 13th, 1982 and shared with readers the experience of former slaves in

⁴⁵ Historic Columbus Foundation, *Currents* (Summer 2012), 12.

Columbus living at the turn of the twentieth century. Benham used archival sources and conducted oral histories with black members of the community. Much of the slave culture and living conditions discussed in her articles mirror the experiences previously discussed in Lupold's *Columbus 1828-1978*. Benham recounts the difficulties former slaves faced in finding jobs, given that white business owners did not hire them and mills would not allow them to operate machinery.

The influx of African Americans in Columbus after the Civil War resulted in the establishment of several black communities. The greatest concentration of black homes and business was located on the 600 and 700 Blocks of Eighth Street less than a mile away from the Historic District. The block served as an important commercial and entertainment center for blacks well into the 1980s.⁴⁶ On the 600 and 700 Blocks of Eighth Street African Americans created a sub-culture away from the white businesses only a few blocks away –they could shop, attend the theatre, and own businesses. It was a community largely independent from white businesses and allowed blacks freedoms within their community not available in other parts of the city. This area matters to African Americans who grew up, owned businesses, and have memories there. To discount their memories and contributions to the development of the city is unfair. Their stories and memories comprise the other half of missing local history.

In 1985, Joe Mahan a planner for the Lower Chattahoochee Area Planning and Development Commission attempted to create a National Register district, "Sixth and Eight," in the city's major black commercial area. Mahan surveyed properties and drafted a nomination associated with African Americans, but the state preservation office rejected it claiming the

⁴⁶ Jessica Stephens, "The Changing Face of Columbus Streets: The 600 and 700 Blocks of Eight Street as a Cultural Landscape," *Muscogiana*, Vol. 17, No. 20 (Fall 2006), 31-33.

district lacked sufficient concentration of historic fabric.⁴⁷ As a result, city developers demolished several structures on the block to make way for new redevelopment plans. Any possible collection of historic African American homes and business were lost. Seen as a rough part of town, commercial and residential developers remain reluctant to invest in the area.⁴⁸

In 2001, HCF was successful in designating the Liberty Historic District in what little remains of the city's former African American commercial district. The designation protected important sites such as the Liberty Theatre and the Ma' Rainey house. The City of Columbus with the help of local African Americans created the Black Heritage Trail –a trail that encompassed an eight-mile bus tour of historic black sites through the city. Historic sites included on this tour were historic black churches, the 600th and 700th Eight Street blocks, and homes of influential figures. The tour was included in the Regional National Recreational Trail under the Department of the Interior in 1997. Much work remains to be done in the community to fully incorporate African American in local history, but the creation of the historic district acknowledges a part of the community that had long been omitted from local history.

The Historic Columbus Foundation is responsible for successfully listing over 2,500 properties to the National Register of Historic Places, eleven National Register Historic Districts, and has granted close to \$800,000 in no-interest loans to historic district homeowners for exterior improvements. The *Our Town* series is a successful education program that continues to be a part of the school system for over twenty-five years.⁴⁹ It is part of the Foundation's nature to invest in new projects, publications, and programs that extend its services to the whole community.

⁴⁷ Lupold (2006), 28

⁴⁸ Stephens, 32.

⁴⁹ Historic Columbus Trustee Annual Summary Report, 2012

Nearing its fiftieth anniversary, the Historic Columbus Foundation achieved its ambitious goal save and protects the city's cultural heritage. It remains an important local institution not only dedicated to preserving the past, but also interpreting it. Through publications, education outreach programs, and preservation work, the Foundation is a leader in educating the public on Columbus history. Publications were a popular tool for the organization to discuss the community's preservation progress, but by the late 1980s they were also used to enhance the Foundation's role as local history interpreters. Through educational programs and publications, the foundation discussed race, class, and memory in the city. This approach allowed HCF to appeal to a culturally diverse community and meet new preservation needs in the twenty-first century. The Foundation continues to play an active role in educating, preserving, interpreting, and promoting local history. During its early years, it was devoted to historic preservation –saving the Springer Opera house, historic neighborhoods, and industrial buildings. It later became involved in public heritage education. HCF expanded its focus to recognize the African American community as part of the city's historic fabric.

Today, HCF faces new challenges in identifying with and connecting with a culturally diverse society. The Foundation has placed greater emphasis on protecting the environment and incorporated Preservation for Profit to promote the positive environmental impact to historic preservation has for urban development. To attract tourists, homebuyers, and to boost the local economy, the city has revitalized the historic waterfront district and commercial district. Columbus' historic properties and sites are the center of attention in city development and recreational plans. Much of what remains on the public landscape today is attributed to HCF's success in preserving them. Mary Coppage White may not be able to believe how the city has

changed over time, but she would likely be happy to see many of the homes and buildings of her childhood still on the landscape today.

Conclusion

Reflections of An Academic Public Historian

For Columbus residents, the Chattahoochee River is at the core of the city identity and history. The city's existence today is attributed to its prime location along the fall line of the Chattahoochee River. Without the river, the story that has unfolded in this thesis may read entirely differently. What was once an industrial river has since become a recreational river. The people of Columbus have used the river as a source for commercial trade, navigation, and power. Man used the waterway to export Chattahoochee Valley Region goods to international markets. It was treacherous to navigate and early newspapers frequently reported accidents on its waters. Industrial entrepreneurs arrived in the city hoping to build personal wealth and fortune by harnessing the river's power to supply electricity to their mills. Mills dominated the public landscape until the early twentieth century and provided jobs to the people of Chattahoochee Valley Region and Columbus. "River Rats" later discovered the forgotten Civil War naval gunboats *CSS Jackson* and *CSS Chattahoochee* a few river miles south of the city. The boats were preserved underwater for a century until their salvage in the 1960s. Today's city leaders and public historians have identified the next big city development—an urban outdoor recreation destination. Whitewater kayakers and rafter will soon race down the river's rapids and enjoy what is proclaimed as the longest whitewater course in the world. The city has rebranded itself as a new eco-tourist destination south of Atlanta and expects to attract thousands of visitors to the river. Over a century later, it is no coincidence that the river continues to play a major role in city development and economic plans as it has a continued to provide a way of life and continuity for the city.

While this new thrilling whitewater experience is expected to generate tourism, visitors can also explore the city's other attractions –the Columbus Museum, NCWNM, the Historic District, the RiverCenter, Historic Downtown –and several other parks, historic sites, and museums. Walking down Broadway Street, a visitor can enjoy a meal in one of the several restaurants downtown, walk past the Fit for Man or Beast Fountain, see a play at the Springer Opera House, catch a concert at the RiverCenter, bump into a Columbus State University student, or take a historic bike ride tour throughout the city. The public historical landscape developed over the past fifty years through private and public efforts to preserve the city's history.

This case study reveals that process of creating a public historical landscape is messy, difficult, and at times slow. This thesis explored how local historical organizations responded to social and political changes in order to attract new audiences. Before it could appeal to a greater tourist audience, the city first had to appeal to its local residents. Re-interpreting history generated controversy as new accounts of events or memories were accepted into local history. The organizations examined in this thesis demonstrate a movement occurring in the local community to accept and adapt to changes in society. The consensus view of history that was preserved and interpreted by Columbus prominent citizens became increasingly irrelevant to broader Columbus. In cities across America, local organizations are challenged to create an inclusive narrative that is representative of the whole community. During the 1980s and 1990s, Columbus dealt with interpreting, preserving, and commemoration a greater cross section of the community, while developing public historical sites that attracted locals and tourists to its historic centers –thus generating a new source of tourist revenue for the city.

The greatest achievement made by local historical organizations was the incorporation of African American on the public historical landscape. The examination of the HCC historical markers reveals how, at the outset, the community dealt with issues of control, power, and memory in the cases of Benning, Thomas, and Bullard. The commemoration of Thomas and Bullard demonstrates local historical organizations willingness to recognize African American achievements on the landscape. African Americans were also incorporated into local history exhibits at the Columbus Museum and National Civil War Naval Museum. Exhibitions featured popular local African Americans, but neglected to interpret a greater social history of the Columbus African American population. Local literature and museum exhibitions do not discuss controversial issues such as discrimination or racial violence and instead created a sanitized account of the past. Future collaboration between the black community and historical organizations is necessary to increase African American artifacts in local archives and to redevelop the Liberty District into an equal historic district in the city. There is much work to be done in this aspect of Columbus public history to build stronger relationships and outreach with the African American community and encourage research into local black culture and history.

Incorporating new narratives will not be easy. It will require patience and diligence to broaden local histories in every community. Across America, public historians can assist communities in addressing issues of race, class, and memory on the public historical landscape. Columbus historians, museum professionals, and preservationists were challenged to adapt to new trends to appeal to a broader audience. The stories of Alma Woodsey Thomas and Eugene Bullard are examples of narratives excluded from local history that later contributed rich diversity to the overall historical narrative. By looking at Columbus, Georgia, public historians can see the public historical landscape in a different perspective and question what history is

presented, omitted or missing from the landscape. Finding the missing pieces of local history helps explore the lives of everyone in the community. The present generations growing acceptance of diversity and the terms set in place by financial donors are the driving force behind changing how officials, local people, and academics look at and interpret local story. Organizations looking to receive public funds must address how they interpret or respond to diversity, and larger numbers of visitors look to see diverse historical narratives that encompass a range of cultural and ethnic perspectives. The work of the public historian is ever changing and challenging when confronting new uncharted waters in local history. As Columbus shows, public historians can take away from this study is to be prepared for controversy, resistance, and gradual incorporation of new narratives. It took Columbus almost forty years to address race on the landscape, and yet more must be done to fill in the gaps and provide a critical assessment of the city's past. In other parts of the country, people are embracing the diversity that has shaped their community. The Tenement Museum in New York City discusses with visitors the harsh living conditions and daily life of immigrants around the turn of the twentieth century. The museum is also reaching out to present immigrants as a way of community outreach and encouraging positive discussion about immigrants making a new life in the country.⁵⁰ There are strikingly different approaches to interpreting local history currently being practiced in communities across America. This study encourages academic public historians and field professionals to share the work that is being completed in order to allow others to criticize and discuss major happenings. This can generate interest in developing local historical narratives that include the latest historical interpretations and help other organizations follow emerging public historical trends.

⁵⁰ About Us, "Our Story," Tenement Museum <http://www.tenement.org/about.html> (Accessed May 2, 2013).

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Appendix

I. Fit for man or Beast Fountain, Columbus, Georgia



Photos Courtesy of the Author

II. Historic Chattahoochee Commission Benning Historical Marker Text

Brigadier General Henry Lewis Benning

Location: Within Linwood Cemetery, Columbus, Georgia

Marker Dedication Date: March 21, 2012

Marker Text (same on both sides)

Born in Columbia, Georgia, on April 2, 1814, Henry L. Benning attended Franklin College prior to practicing law in Columbus. As a local attorney and state Supreme Court Judge, Benning played an active role in Georgia's secession in 1861. Entering the Civil War as Colonel of the 17th Georgia Infantry Regiment, he eventually became brigadier general. He was wounded at the Battle of the Wilderness but continued his leadership of "Benning's Brigade" until the surrender at Appomattox. After the war, Benning returned his law practice. He died on July 10, 1875. Fort Benning is named in his honor.

<http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/index.php/historic-markers/georgia/muscogee-county>



Photographs courtesy of the author

III. Historic Chattahoochee Commission Alma Woodsey Thomas Marker Text

Alma Woodsey Thomas

Location: 411 21st Street, Columbus, Georgia

Marker Dedication or Erection Date: November 30, 2010

SIDE 1: ALMA WOODSEY THOMAS

Alma Thomas, nationally known African-American artist, was the eldest of four daughters born to John Maurice Thomas and Amelia Whitaker Cantey. Highly cultured and socially involved, the Thomas family owned this Victorian home in the Rose Hill district, where Thomas was born and lived until the age of 15. Family tradition states that the manuscript for *The Souls of Black Folks*, by W.E.B. Dubois was typed on the front porch of the Thomas home by Alma Thomas' cousin, Inez, who was Dubois' secretary. In 1907, the Thomas family moved from Columbus to Washington, DC to escape racial tension and to seek better educational opportunities. For young Alma, who had demonstrated early artistic interests, the move meant attending a high school that offered art classes. Thomas



later entered Howard University and was that school's very first fine arts graduate.

(Continued on side two) Erected by the Historic Chattahoochee Commission, Historic Columbus Foundation, Inc. and Terry and Shannon Wilson

SIDE 2: ALMA WOODSEY THOMAS

Thomas worked as a teacher for over 30 years. Among her accomplishments were the organization of an Arts League and the development of a program to create art galleries within the schools of Washington, DC. Thomas retired from teaching in 1960 to focus on her own art, exploring color, nature, and abstraction as a member of the Washington Colorist School of Painting. Her work has been recognized by such prestigious institutions as the Whitney Museum, Corcoran Gallery, and the Smithsonian Institution. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration owns several of Thomas' paintings from her "Space" series, and her work can be found in major museums across the country, including The Columbus Museum.

<http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/index.php/historic-markers/georgia/muscogee-county>

* Photo courtesy of *Alma W. Thomas: A Retrospective of the Paintings*

IV. Historic Chattahoochee Commission Eugene J. Bullard Historical Marker Text

Eugene J. Bullard

Location: Talbotton Road, Columbus, Georgia

Marker Dedication or Erection Date: February 15, 2008

SIDE 1: EUGENE BULLARD, 1895-1961

Bullard grew up in a small shotgun style house near this site. His father, William, was a laborer for the W.C. Bradley Company. Eugene completed the fifth grade at the 28th Street School. Shaken by the death of his mother, Josephine, and the near lynching of his father, Bullard left Columbus as a young teenager. In 1912, he stowed-away on a merchant ship out of Norfolk, Virginia. He spent the next 28 years of his life in Europe.



SIDE 2: WORLD'S FIRST BLACK COMBAT AVIATOR

In World War I, Bullard earned the Croix de Guerre, France's highest military medal, as an infantryman at the Battle of Verdun. He later flew some 20 missions as a French combat pilot. In the interwar years, he was a musician, club owner, and celebrity in Paris. He married a Parisian society woman with whom he raised two daughters. When Germany conquered France in 1940, Bullard came to New York where he worked in obscurity for the rest of his life.












<http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/index.php/historic-markers/georgia/muscogee-county>

Bullard Photography Courtesy of Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, "Air Space Blog" <http://blog.nasm.si.edu/aviation/eugene-j-bullard/>

V. Columbus, Georgia Historic Preservation BHAR

Historic Districts Charts

<http://www.columbusga.org/planning/Historic-Preservation/BHAR/Design-Guidelines.pdf>

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|---|--|
|  1. Columbus Historic District |  6. Waverly Terrace Historic District |
|  2. Dinglewood Historic District |  7. Wereacoba-St. Elmo Historic District |
|  3. High Uptown Historic District |  8. Wildwood Circle-Hillcrest Historic District |
|  4. Liberty Heritage Historic District |  9. Wynn's Hill-Overlook Historic District |
|  5. Peacock Woods-Dimon Circle Historic District |  10. Wynnton Village Historic District |
| |  11. Columbus Historic Riverfront Industrial District |



Source: Columbus Planning Department