

# *Jackson County Historical Society News*

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The Jackson County Historical Society will meet at the Historic Jackson County Courthouse on Sunday, November 16, 2014 at 2:30 p.m. for a program by Boniface McDaniel on Jefferson Plantations. Those interested are welcome to attend. The courthouse is the home for the Jackson County Welcome Center and the Historic Archives.

*Directions: Take I85 S to GA-82 S turn left on Holly Springs Rd. (exit 140 ) Tturn right on Jett Roberts Rd to GA-11 S/ US-129 S Washington Street, turn left ito Jefferson. Courthouse is on the right. For iformation call Tina 706-207-6889*

*Jackson County Historical Society*

*P.O. Box 1234, Commerce, Georgia 30529*

*(706) 207-6889*

## Newsletter

Jackson County Historical Society dues run from September to September and can be mailed to:

Jackson County Historical Society  
P. O. Box 1234, Commerce, GA 30529:

Individual –\$15, Family –\$25, LIFE members –\$100

The Historical Society's collection contains research books on North Georgia counties, the Carolinas and Virginia, surnames and family files, and microfilm housed in the Heritage Room of the Commerce Public Library. A new microfilm scanner is available for the census, newspapers, Confederate pension records and various films. It has the capabilities to send images as an e-mail and copy to a flash drive. An index of the collection and past newsletters from 1997-2013 can be viewed on the library website:

<http://prlib.org/our-libraries/commerce-public-library/>

The Jackson County Historic Courthouse Welcome Center and Historical Archive has opened. It houses mortgage records, tax digest dating back to 1797, civil court dockets, court files, superior court minutes, family histories, photographs. The archive hours are 10am-3pm; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday. call 706-387-7684

## JCHS Officers 2013-2014

President:	Shirley Wilson
Vice-President:	Marie Parks
Recording Secretary:	Boniface McDaniel
Treasurer:	Tommy Benton
Directors:	James Mathis Jerry Legg
Past Presidents:	the late, Joyce Ethridge the late, Ann A. Jarrett the late, Richard Chambers the late, Jean H. Booth Betty Ann Mathis James Mathis Ralph Freeman Carol Tanner Marie Parks Tina Harris Charlotte Mealor Caine Campbell

**Historic Farms in and Around Jefferson** *excerpted from: Jackson County Comprehensive Plan: Historic Resources*

## The Rise and Fall of Cotton

The early settlers were yeoman farmers who practiced subsistence farming. As the population increased and cotton markets opened, farmers turned to cotton production as a cash crop. The community around Talmo was noted for its very fine grade of short staple cotton. With the building of the railroad through Harmony Grove (now Commerce), the town flourished as a cotton market from 1880 to 1910, receiving cotton from Jackson, Banks, Madison and Franklin Counties.

The incorporation of the Harmony Grove Mill in 1893 enhanced the market. By 1899, the Jefferson Cotton Mill was chartered, and the cotton market was booming in Jackson County. At one time, Jackson County had 19 cotton gins and six cotton seed oil mills.

As the county's population grew, roads were made to connect farms with cotton gins and village stores and towns with neighboring county seats. When the boll weevil struck Jackson County in 1921, however, cotton production declined and market prices fell sharply. Further destruction to the market occurred with a sustained drought, and cotton was never able to make a comeback.

As cropland was taken out of production, some farmers turned to other means of making a living. Many farmers went to work in the textile mills, manufacturing plants, and poultry dressing plants in the area. Many farmers who remained in the business converted their farms from crop production to beef cattle or poultry production. Poultry production began in the county after 1926.

**Jackson County Poultry and Cattle Farming** *excerpted from: Jackson County Area Chamber of Commerce*

Poultry production in Georgia began in 1924 when M. E. Murphy of Talmo, in Jackson County, started growing broilers on a large scale basis. Jackson Countians have moved to the forefront in this enterprise, continually ranking in the top five counties in broiler and egg production. The county also ranks near the top in beef cattle numbers and livestock income in the State. Georgia's oldest registered Angus cattle herd was begun in the 1930's by Jackson Countian Jimmy Johnson."



*Shields-Ethridge Home Ethridge Road, Jefferson. Centennial Heritage Farm*

The Shields-Ethridge Heritage Farm is another historical museum that serves as an educational and interpretative facility in Jackson County. The Shields-Ethridge Heritage Farm Foundation, Inc. was created in 1994 as a non-profit organization established to preserve the existing buildings on the 152 acres. The Foundation's Board of Directors is represented by members of the Ethridge family. It is unusual to find such a collection of intact historic buildings that exist in their original location. The mission of the Shields-Ethridge farm is: To provide and operate an educational and interpretative outdoor museum that uses historic preservation to increase awareness and understanding of Georgia's agriculture and natural history.

#### **Georgia Centennial Farm Award**

Georgia Centennial Heritage Farms (1): Shields-Ethridge (1993 – owner Joyce Shields Ethridge)

Centennial Farms (1): Holder Plantation (1993 – owner Richard Katz)

Centennial Family Farms (4): Carson Farm (1993 – owners: Sarah and Clarence Carson); Johnson Farm (1994 – owner: James Johnson); Hays and MacDonald Farm (2008 – owner: Betsy Hays MacDonald); Shirley Farm (2012 – owner: c/o Diane Ariail, daughter of Lewis & Julia Shirley)

Since 1993, the Georgia Centennial Farm Program has recognized **451** farms around the state. The program is a partnership between: Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources; Georgia Farm Bureau Federation; Georgia Department of Agriculture; Georgia Forestry Commission; and Georgia National Fair and Agricenter; support from Georgia EMC.

Recognition is given to farm owners through one of three distinguished awards. The **Centennial Heritage Farm Award** honors farms owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more that are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The **Centennial Farm Award** does not require continual family owner-



*Niblack-Evans House - Storey Street, Jefferson . A plantation home that fronted several thousand acres*

ship, but farms must be at least 100 years old and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The **Centennial Family Farm Award** recognizes farms owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more that are not listed in the National Register of Historic Places.”

### **Georgia Centennial Farms Overview**

In the state of Georgia, farms that contribute to the state’s agricultural heritage are recognized by the Georgia Centennial Farm Program. This program is administered by the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with the Georgia Farm Bureau Federation, the Georgia Department of Agriculture, the University of Georgia, College of Agriculture and Environmental Services, the Georgia National Fair and the Georgia Forestry Commission.

The program recognizes farms through three types

of award categories: (1) the Centennial Heritage Farm Award, (2) the Centennial Farm Award and (3) Centennial Family Farm Award. Each category requires that eligible farms use a minimum of 10 acres for agriculture production or earn \$1,000 in farm generated income. Other requirements pertain to each category involving ownership and National Register listing as follows: Centennial Heritage Farms, owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more and listed in the National Register; Centennial Farm Award, at least 100 years old and listed in the National Register; Centennial Family Farm, owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more and not listed in the National Register.

### Centennial Farms in Jackson County

In Jackson County, four farms are recognized as Georgia Heritage Farms from the three categories. These farms include:

1. Shields-Ethridge Farm (Centennial Heritage Farm)
2. Holder Plantation (Centennial Farm)
3. Carson Farm (Centennial Family Farm)
4. Johnson Farm (Centennial Family Farm)

*Centennial farms omitted from this list - the Hays and MacDonald Farm (Centennial Family Farm) and the Shirley Farm (Centennial Family Farm)*

Jackson County's history indicates that farms played an important role in its economic development during the 19th and 20th centuries. Farms also comprise many of the county's historic resources as well as cultural landscapes. Farms in Jackson County, more generally, contribute to its rural character and its inherent qualities. The recognized farms not only represent important cultural resources, but may possess opportunities related to tourism and promoting the county's quality of life.

### Other Agricultural Resources

**Sells Community** is located off state Route 53 south of Hoschton near the intersection of Watkins and Jackson Trail roads. This community began as a dairy farm. The owner's main house, a store, and tenant houses comprise a small farming community historic district.

**The Duke Farm**, sometimes known as the Hallelujah Farm, is located on Highway 60 and was the site of one of the official state distilleries. This site has been specifically identified as suitable for centennial farm designation.

**State Arboretum:** A 318-acre forest deeded to the University of Georgia in 1980 from the estate of Jason Newton Thompson. The forest is two miles southwest of Braselton and includes more than 100 species of native Georgia trees.



*Cheatham Farm House, Holder Siding Road, Jefferson. Farm traces back to a land grant for Revolutionary Service*

**Historic Jackson County Farms not listed on National Register or Designated as Centennial Farms** *excerpted*

*from: Natural Resources, Jackson County Comprehensive Plan, Community Assessment, Technical Appendix*

“The 1998 comprehensive plan specifically identifies and maps 32 scenic views and sites in Jackson County. They are listed below. (*the farms shown below have been excerpted from that list*):

Crow’s Lake Fish Farm

Booker Farm

Sell’s Mill Farm

Jimmy Johnson Farm

Terry Farm

4-W Farm

Donald Child Farm

Aaron McKinney Farm

Wayne Miller Farm

Barbara Lizenby Farm

John Long Farm

John Braezeale Farm

Shields-Ethridge Farm

Williamson-Maley-Turner Farm

Nunn-Bourchard Farm (just off Hwy 98, north of Commerce; currently an organic farm [“The Veggie Patch at Bouchard Farms”] – participant in Jackson County’s Farm to School program; farm goes back to Civil War period, approx. 500 acres in size at that time)

**More Historic Jackson County Farms**

**excerpted from “Jackson County Turn-of-the-Century Barns 1999-2000” by Publishers of *The Jackson Herald*,**

Gilmore-Minish Farm – Holly Springs Road (barn built in 1917)

Maddox-Cornett Farm – Hoschton area (barn built circa 1898)

Freeman Dairy Farm - Galilee Church Road, Jefferson (barn built in early 1900s)

Smith Farm – Nicholson area (barn built in 1940s)

Nix-Shirley Farm – Hawkins Shed Road (barn dates back to late 1800s)

Stringer Farm – Davis Road, Jefferson (barn dates back to early 1900s)

Parks Farm – Pendergrass (barn built in 1882)

Fleming Farm – Harrisburg District (barn built in 1890s)

Bolton Farm – Jefferson River Road (barn built in late 1800s)

Harrison-Long Farm – Long Farm Road, Jefferson (barn built circa 1850s)

Edwards Farm – Hwy 82 North ( barn built in late 1800s – moved to present location from Whitmire Farm in 1950s)

Marlow Farm – Marlow Road, Maysville (barn built between 1849 and 1855)

Cheatham-Hays-MacDonald Farm – W.H. Hays Road (barn built in 1860s; Centennial Family Farm)

Hardman Farm – Blacks Creek Church Road, Commerce (barn built in 1930s)

Hayes Farm – Hoschton (old barn torn down in 1999)

Duck Farm – Braselton (“Old Red Barn” built in late 1800s)

Fite Farm – Galilee Church Road (barn built before 1920s)

Nix Farm – Hwy 82 South, Arcade (barn built in late 1920s; torn down in 1994)

Sailors Farm – Lewis Sailors Road (barn built in 1893 using granite taken from rocky ridge near Academy Church)

Evans Property – Ridgeway Church Road (barn built in early 1900s)

Hanson-Carlyle Farm – Hwy 129 North Business, across from Bell’s Plaza (barn built in 1920s; now torn down)

Kinney Farm – Mountain Creek Church Road, Pendergrass (barn built circa 1900)

Fowler-Cook Farm – Mountain Creek Church Rd & Cook Rd (barn built circa 1900)

Whitmire Farm – Wheeler Cemetery Road, near Maysville (barn built in early 1900s)

Cheatham-Strickland Farm – Holders Siding Road, Jefferson (barn between 1894 and 1900; Rev. War land-grant farm)

Legg-Mahaffey Farm – off Jett Roberts Road (barn built in 1850s)

Blackstock-Puett Farm – west of Jefferson (barn built before 1913)

Wood Farm – Ednaville Road, Braselton (barn built in 1945)

Brock-Parks Seven Farm – Holly Springs Road (barn built in early 1900s)

Barnish Property – Broad and Hall Streets, Hoschton (barn built circa 1867)

Williamson Farm/Vaughn-Overton Property – Elm

Street, Jefferson (barn built late 1800s; torn down 1999)  
Nix-Shirley Farm – Apple Valley (barn built in late 1800s;  
Centennial Family Farm)  
Martin-Nixon Property – John Collier Road, South Jack-  
son (barn built before 1930s)  
Boswell-Beck-Ledford Farm – Beck Road, Commerce  
(barn built in late 1800s)  
Smith-Freeman Farm – Hoschton (barn built circa 1905)  
Martin Farm – GA 82 Spur, north of Dry Pond (barn  
built in 1905)  
Dunson Farm – Commerce area (barn built circa 1900)  
Williamson-Maley-Turner Farm (The Round Barn) built  
in 1913; National Register of Historic Places. – Hwy 15 -  
3777 Commerce Rd, Jefferson, GA 30549

The Round Barn has attracted much interest both  
because of its unique architecture and because of the

reputation of selling the highest quality mattresses at the  
lowest price. It still retains the effects of a barn. A silo  
runs in the center of the structure and houses the office.  
Customers can look up to see the original rafters and the  
wooden roof.

The Round Barn is listed on the National Register of  
Historical Sites. The Round Barn was built in 1913 by  
George Williamson who used the structure in conjunc-  
tion with a dairy operation. In the late 1930's, Hugh and  
Jessie Maley purchased the barn and surrounding house  
and land. After some repairs and painting to the barn,  
Mr. and Mrs. Maley's only child, Dories and her husband  
Louis Turner, began a successful business in 1964. Mr.  
Turner retired in 1994, but their daughter and son-in-  
law, Imogene and Mark Roncadori, continue the busi-  
ness tradition.



*Round Barn, Highway 15, Jefferson. National Register of Historic Places*

Jackson County Historical Society

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*Mitchell-Turner House, Lawrenceville Street, Jefferson. Colonel John Turner donated land to build Jefferson High School*