2011 SESAH Annual Meeting  
Charleston, South Carolina  
Cartledge W. Blackwell,  
Mobile Historic Development Commission

With over sixty papers, SESAH’s twenty-ninth annual meeting was a resounding success. Not only was the three day event well attended, but also enjoyed by all. Ashley Williams, Allyson Miller, and the College of Charleston/Clemson University preservation program all deserve a round of applause for being such excellent hosts. From scheduling multiple concurrent sessions to arranging tours, they are to be congratulated for their hard work. The centrally located Francis Marion Hotel functioned as an ideal venue for intellectual exchange and historical excursions.

The Francis Marion Hotel provided annual meeting attendees with convenient access to Charleston’s vibrant urban core.

An introductory address by longtime Charleston mayor Joseph Riley kicked off the meeting. Ever the booster, Mayor Riley described the preservation policies and development initiatives that shape the experiences of residents and visitors alike. The upbeat tone of this opening address set the tone for the whole of the meeting.

Continued on page 4

2011 SESAH Study Tour  
Charleston, South Carolina  
Jennifer Baughn,  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Saturday’s walking tour in Charleston’s Lower Peninsula started out overcast and dreary, but by the end of the morning the sun came out and blue skies helped us finish with a bounce in our step. So many people signed up for the tour that we broke up into three manageable groups guided by Charleston’s certified tour guides. Our walk took us through the earliest, previously walled section of the city, but focused more on the late Colonial and early nineteenth-century neighborhood that developed after the need for walls had passed. While focusing on a few individual houses and one garden, our guides along the walk also kept up a steady patter of historical information leavened with interesting and sometimes true stories.

Certified Charleston tour guides led SESAH members through remarkable historic buildings including the Nathaniel Russell House.

Our first building, the Nathaniel Russell House (1808), is a prim and proper Federal-style brick townhouse on its exterior, but the interior is alive with intricate plasterwork and carved wood. Although the architect for this house is not

Continued on page 14
From the President

Dear Friends of SESAH,

Last October at our annual meeting in Charleston, North Carolina, I was handed SESAH’s ceremonial trowel by Michael Fazio. What an exciting moment! I officially became SESAH’s president. I take this post with honor and respect and hope to serve you well.

I am glad to report that our society is in very good standing. I would like to take this opportunity and thank all of you who have worked so hard towards this achievement. Here is the state of SESAH:

Finance: Due to well-managed conferences, increased membership, and good bookkeeping practices, we can enjoy a surplus budget. At our next meeting in October of 2012, the budget committee (president, vice-president, and treasurer) will present some options of how to utilize the additional funds. We will open the discussion to the board and call for membership suggestions.

Publications: Many thanks to the past co-editors of ARRIS: Leslie Sharp, Mark Reinberger, and Paul Sprague, for publishing two excellent issues of the journal. We welcome the new editors: Barbara Klinkhammer and Greg Kalas, who are currently working on Volume 23 (2012). Thanks to Ben Ross for his editorial work on SESAH’s newsletters, and thanks to Mikesch Muecke who continues to update SESAH’s website.

New initiatives: At the last business meeting, the membership approved two of the board’s initiatives. First, we approved the establishment of an “Emerging Professional Scholarship”. This initiative will provide a $400 scholarship to an architectural historian to attend and present a paper at the SESAH’s conference. Thanks to Jennifer Baughn who was instrumental in establishing and handling this scholarship. The second initiative established the new post of membership director. Thanks to Tara Mielnik who stepped forward to serve in this capacity. Please note that these two initiatives were proposed as an experiment for one year. At our next meeting we will discuss and decide their continuation.

Board Officers and Directors: We welcome the new Board’s State Representatives: Cartledge W. Blackwell III (Alabama); Kim Sexton (Arkansas); Ashley Robbins Wilson (South Carolina); and Tara Mielnik (Tennessee). As the board members rotate, we thank the ones who served their term and look forward to welcoming new directors. This year we need to fill the following posts: SESAH’s secretary, Preservation Officer, At Large Director, as well as representatives from the following states: Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Texas. If you would like to be considered for a position on SESAH’s board of directors, or if you would like to nominate your peers for one of these posts, please email the names to myself at ageva@arch.tamu.edu or to Lee Gray at legray@uncc.edu.

Annual meetings: Thanks to Ashley Robbins Wilson and her team for organizing a successful conference and great tours in Charleston. Their preparation and endless attention to the needs of the members made it all possible and enjoyable. It was a wonderful annual meeting with an extremely positive atmosphere. The high turnout for the Charleston meeting was the key to our financial surplus.

Now we look forward to SESAH’s next meeting, which will be held in Athens, Georgia on October 17-20, 2012. To make this conference successful we need your participation and the exchange of your scholarly ideas. Please submit abstracts to Mark Reinberger at reinberg@uga.edu by June 15, 2012 (see details www.sesa.org).

I hope to see all of you in Athens. In the meantime, if you would like to correspond with me please email me at ageva@arch.tamu.edu.

Anat Geva
Texas A&M University

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2012 Yearly Dues

It’s time to renew your membership in SESAH for calendar year 2012. The address label on this newsletter includes the last year through which your membership has been paid. Included in your dues are the annual edition of ARRIS: Journal of the Southeast Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (v. 23, 2012), hard copies of the semi-annual SESAH Newsletter, and eligibility to present a paper at our annual meeting (Athens, Georgia, October 17-20, 2012). Membership levels are listed below:

- Individual.......................... $35
- Student (current ID required) ................. $20
- Contributing .............................. $50 min.
- Institutional .................. $60
- Library Subscription to ARRIS ............... $40
- Life (payable in 3 installments if preferred).... $500

Please send a check, made out to SESAH, to:

Julia Smyth-Pinney, SESAH Treasurer
630 Headley Avenue
Lexington, KY 40508-1308

Questions? Additional information on the SESAH website: http://polytekton.com/sesah/sesah/About.html
OR: Contact Julia Smyth-Pinney at the above address, or by email: jsmyth@uky.edu
From the Editor

One of my ongoing research projects is an examination of the work of Indiana’s mid-nineteenth century architects. The architects of this period are poorly documented and much of their work has been lost, compromising our understanding of one of the boom periods in Indiana’s history, the era of canals and railroads. While attending the SESAH Annual Meeting at Jackson, Mississippi, in 2010, I learned from Jennifer Baughn and Bill Gatlin that an architect named Joseph Willis was active in Jackson in the 1850s. I was aware of a Joseph Willis who practiced in central Indiana during the 1840s, designing a number of significant Greek Revival public buildings (all demolished by the 1930s). Although documentation of Willis’ work is scanty, he was among a handful of accomplished architects in Indiana during this period and was responsible for some of the most imposing civic buildings built in the state before the Civil War.

Joseph Willis, Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb (1848-50) and Masonic Temple (1848-50), Indianapolis

A little research revealed that Willis resigned his position as supervising architect of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb at Indianapolis in 1850. He appeared in Mississippi by 1852 and settled in Memphis, Tennessee by 1858, practicing there into the 1880s. This is one of several connections between architects and carpenters in Indiana and the Deep South during the 1850s that I have encountered in the past year: a reminder of the small world of architecture.

Benjamin L. Ross
Editor, SESAH Newsletter
RATIO Architects, Inc.
Indianapolis, Indiana
BLRoss@gmail.com

Send correspondence and submissions for publication to the SESAH Newsletter editor. Deadline for submission of material for the Fall 2012 issue is August 3, 2012.

The SESAH Newsletter has been published since 1983. Visit www.sesah.org to download recent issues.

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Printed by Allegra Print & Imaging, Nashville, Tennessee.
Welcome New Board Members!

Alabama representative Cartledge W. Blackwell is an architectural historian with the Mobile Historic Development Commission. Blackwell received his B.A. in Art History and Historic Preservation & Community Development from the College of Charleston and his M.A. in Architectural History from the University of Virginia. His primary area of research is the architecture and art of the lower south. He is currently writing a book on Alabama born artist-designer Clara Weaver Parrish which is to be published by the University of Alabama Press.

Tennessee representative Tara Mitchell Mielnik is the federal programs coordinator and historian for the Metropolitan Nashville Historical Commission, where she oversees the federal preservation programs such as the National Register of Historic Places, historic properties survey, and Section 106 review, at the local level. Tara holds a BA in political science and third world studies from the University of the South in Sewanee, an MA in American history from Middle Tennessee State University, and received the first PhD awarded in Public History from MTSU. She contributed articles in the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture and is the author of New Deal, New Landscape: The Civilian Conservation Corps and South Carolina’s State Parks (University of South Carolina Press, 2011). Her research interests include New Deal-era architecture and commemorative architecture in the American South. Tara lives in Old Hickory, Tennessee with her husband, two hockey-playing sons, and two dogs.

Kim Sexton, of the University of Arkansas, is the new Arkansas representative. Barbara Klinkhammer and Gregor Kalas of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, are the new editors of ARRIS, Journal of the Southeast Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians. Ashley Robbins Wilson from South Carolina has agreed to serve a second term.

2011 Annual Meeting, Continued from page 1

2012’s papers were as varied as years’ past. Subjects ranged from the theoretical to the stylistic. From an examination of Urban Renewal’s effects on race relations in midcentury Memphis to the ubiquitous Mount-Taras that litter the world, reflection and humor went hand in hand. Attendees were at a loss as to which of the concurrent sessions to attend. The usual skirting back and forth between sessions ensued.

A Thursday evening reception at the Aiken-Rhett house museum finished off the first day. Owned and operated by the Historic Charleston Foundation, this landmark property ranks among the best preserved antebellum residential ensembles in the South. The main house’s tiered piazzas proved ideal spaces for conversation while the back lot’s extensive service buildings allowed for inquisitive exploration.

Friday’s papers were equally as stimulating as Thursday’s. At the annual business luncheon, held between the morning and afternoon sessions, delicious Lowcountry fare was enjoyed by all. The Best of the South Award and Publication Awards were presented and new officers were elected.

Witold Rybczynski delivered an outstanding keynote address before a packed house. Held at the restored Sottile Theatre, Rybczynski’s lecture was a fitting finale to two days of excellent presentations. A pub crawl for graduates followed the keynote address. Charleston’s numerous night spots made for a long evening of revelry. Saturday morning’s tour, described as well in the newsletter, included tours of neighborhoods beyond the “old and historic district,” that area most trafficked by tourists and touted by magazines, and Drayton Hall plantation.

Future SESAH Meetings

2013
Charlotte, North Carolina

2014
Fayetteville, Arkansas

The urban campus of the College of Charleston was among the countless attractions within walking distance of the hotel during the 2012 SESAH Annual Meeting.
The Southeast Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (SESAH) will hold its 30th Annual Meeting in Athens, Georgia, from October 17-20, 2012. The SESAH Host Committee invites abstracts for individual papers or proposals for session panels, consisting of three to four papers and a chair. As with all SESAH conferences, papers and sessions may address any and all aspects of the history of the built environment as well as any geographical region, historical period, or scale.

Abstracts should be sent by June 15, 2012 to Mark Reinberger, College of Environment and Design, 609 Caldwell Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602, or email to reinberg@uga.edu.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be clearly labeled with the applicant's name, professional affiliation, contact information, a brief C.V., and the title of the proposed paper. Proposals for session panels should include: the title of the session; the names, affiliations, contact information, and C.V.s of all participants; and abstracts of each paper. If by email, please send materials as PDF or MS Word attachments. Digital presentations are required (that is, no slides anymore). Submission of an abstract is considered a commitment to attend the meeting.

Applicants will be notified of their acceptance by June 15, 2012. Authors of accepted proposals must submit the complete text of their papers to their session chair by September 30, 2012; SESAH reserves the right to drop presenters who do not fulfill this requirement. All participants must be current members of SESAH by the meeting date and must register for the conference; there are discounts for students and for those that pre-register by September 15, 2012.

SESAH offers a limited number of travel grants to help graduate students attend the meeting to deliver papers. If you are a graduate student, identify yourself as such in your submission; you will be sent a travel grant application of your paper is selected.
Registration Fees:

Advance Registration (postmark before September 15) $125
Late Registration (after September 15) $175
Day Pass (excluding banquet lunch) $75
Students (with photocopy of valid student ID) $50
Richard Guy Wilson lecture & reception only $20

SES AH Membership:

Individual $35
Student $20
Contributing $50+
Life $500

All conference attendees and participants must be members of SESAH. Membership dues are for one calendar year. All SESAH members receive the annual journal ARRIS as well as the SESAH Newsletter (2x/year).

Saturday Study Tour: $40 $______

Walking tour of the University of Georgia campus in the morning, followed by lunch. Bus tour of Madison, GA in the afternoon. (Cost covers bus ride & afternoon tour, morning tour free) limited to 30

TOTAL $_______
REGISTRATION FORM

Please write your name and institutional affiliation and/or city as you would like them to appear on your badge and in the participant directory:

Name: ____________________________

Institutional Affiliation: ___________________ City: __________________

Mailing Address: Street: __________________________

City/State/Zip: __________________________

Email Address: __________________________

Dietary Restrictions/Preferences: __________________________

Will you need transportation for the six-block walk to the Special Collections Library for the keynote speaker and reception: __________________________

SESAR member? ______ All conference attendees and participants must be members of SESAR.

TOTAL REGISTRATION FEE (from page 1): $ ______

Please make checks payable to: The Classic Center

Check number: ______________________ or Credit card number: ______________________

Check □ Visa □ Mastercard □ Credit card expiration date: ______________________

Name that appears on Credit Card: __________________________
(All information is handled by a secure server)

Registration can be completed online at: http://tinyurl.com/SESAR-2012

OR send completed registration form with payment to:

The Classic Center
Conference Registration
300 N. Thomas St.
Athens, GA 30601
Registration@ClassicCenter.com

Angi Harben
[706-357-4540]
THE 2012 SESAH CONFERENCE HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Hilton Garden Inn, at the Classic Center

http://www.hi-athens.com/

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390 East Washington Street, Athens, GA 30601 [706-353-6800]
- Business Center
- Great American Grill (cook to order breakfast)
- On-site convenience store
- Lounge
- 24hr Pavilion Pantry
- Indoor Pool

Holiday Inn

http://www.hi-athens.com/

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197 E. Broad Street, Athens, GA 30601 [706-549-4433]
- Free Parking
- Free Newspaper
- Refrigerator/Microwave
- Indoor Pool
- Free High speed internet

Foundry Park Inn & Spa

http://www.foundryparkinn.com/

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295 E. Dougherty Street, Athens, GA 30601 [706-549-7020]
- Complimentary Parking
- Complimentary Hotel Shuttle (within 5 mile radius)
- Melting Point Music Venue (on-site)
- Full Service Day Spa (on-site)
- 32-inch Flat Panel TV
- Historic Hoyt House Restaurant (on-site)

Additional Information: Limited Availability Friday, October 19

TRAVEL:

Athens is located in Northeast Georgia, just 61 miles northeast of Atlanta. Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport is easily accessible via regular airport ground shuttles and car rental. If driving from Atlanta take I-85 North from Atlanta to GA 316 (Exit #106). Follow 316 East for approximately 40 miles to the Athens Perimeter (Loop 10). (www.groometransportation.com/athens.html)
# 2012 SESAH CONFERENCE OUTLINE (all times EST)

## Wednesday, October 17, 2012

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>6:00-9:00pm</td>
<td>Board Meeting, Dinner</td>
<td>Foundry Building, Classic Center</td>
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## Thursday, October 18, 2012

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<tr>
<td>10:00-11:30pm</td>
<td>Paper Session 1</td>
<td>Foundry Building, Classic Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00-2:00pm</td>
<td>Lunch on your own in town</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00-3:30pm</td>
<td>Paper Session 2</td>
<td>Foundry Building, Classic Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00-5:30pm</td>
<td>Keynote Speaker - Richard Guy Wilson</td>
<td>Auditorium, Special Collections Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30-7:00pm</td>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Founder's Garden, UGA campus</td>
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<td>Dinner on your own in town</td>
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## Friday, October 19, 2012

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<tr>
<td>8:30-10:10am</td>
<td>Paper Session 3</td>
<td>Foundry Building, Classic Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00-10:30am</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30am-12:00pm</td>
<td>Paper Session 4</td>
<td>Foundry Building, Classic Center</td>
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<td>12:15-1:45pm</td>
<td>Lunch and business meeting</td>
<td>Foundry Building, Classic Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00-3:30pm</td>
<td>Paper Session 5</td>
<td>Foundry Building, Classic Center</td>
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<td>Dinner on your own in town</td>
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## Saturday, October 20, 2012

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00-11:00am</td>
<td>Tour of University of Georgia by University Architect, Danny Sniff</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00am-12:00pm</td>
<td>Bus to Madison, Georgia</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00-1:00pm</td>
<td>Lunch on your own in Madison, Georgia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-3:30pm</td>
<td>Tour of Madison, Georgia by bus</td>
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Louisville philanthropists and art collectors Steve Wilson and his wife, Laura Lee Brown, recently announced plans to convert a group of historic buildings in downtown Lexington into another 21c Museum Hotel—a combination boutique hotel and contemporary art museum. The project will include a renovation of a 15 story Beaux Arts building designed by McKim, Mead, and White in 1912 for the Fayette National Bank. The first 21c Museum Hotel opened in Louisville in 2006. That project utilized five historic bourbon and tobacco warehouses on Main Street. The Louisville location was named the No. 1 hotel in the United States two years in a row by readers of Condé Nast magazine. The Lexington proposal stands in contrast to a vacant block across the street from the project where a number of significant nineteenth and early twentieth structures were demolished to make way for an as yet unrealized hotel, condomin- ium, and retail complex.

Also in Lexington, the institutions of higher education, the city, and preservation groups have hired Philadelphia-based consultants U3 Ventures to make proposals on improving the cultural, economic, and physical interactions between the institutions and their communities in an effort to improve Town/Gown relations and promote vibrant, livable neighborhoods near the university campuses.

**News from Mississippi**

Bill Gatlin,
Mississippi Department of Archives & History

We have launched Mississippi’s new online database on our department website: http://mdah.state.ms.us/senseofplace/2011/10/14/mdah-introduces-new-database-of-historical-resources-in-state/

Jennifer Baughn has been the moving force behind this accomplishment.

**Dr. Michael Fazio** was appointed to the newly-created Starkville (MS) Historic Preservation Commission and elected chairman of that august body. He and the commission are working on design guidelines and commission procedures.

**Member News**

**Michelangelo Sabatino** (Associate Professor at the University of Houston and SESAH Texas Representative) has been awarded the 2012 Alice Davis Hitchcock Book Award by the Society of Architectural Historians for his *Pride in Modesty: Modernist Architecture and the Vernacular Tradition in Italy* (2010). Last year in Charleston, S.C., Professor Sabatino was awarded SESAH's 2011 Best Book Award. His co-edited book (with Jean-François Lejeune) entitled *Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities* (2010), received a 2011 Commendation from the International Committee of Architectural Critics (CICA) gathered in Tokyo for the UIA conference.

**David Sachs** has been awarded the Regnier Faculty Chair in Architecture. Sachs serves as Secretary to SESAH. He holds a BS in economics from Stetson University, a professional MA from Rice University, and doctorate in architectural history from the University of Michigan. After ten years of architectural practice, he joined the faculty at Kansas State University, were he has taught design studios, professional practice courses, and seminars on architectural history; and has served as Department Head and as Director of the Kansas City Academic Program. In the fall of 2011 he was awarded the Department’s distinguished faculty award, which will help to support his ongoing research on the work of Abend / Singleton Associates, a twentieth century Kansas City architectural firm.

**Anat Geva**, Associate Professor of architecture at Texas A&M, and President of SESAH is the 2011 recipient of the competitive J. Thomas Regan Interdisciplinary Faculty Prize, an award recognizing faculty who are committed to interdisciplinary teaching, research and service in the built and virtual environment disciplines.

**Deadline Extended**

The deadline for abstract submission to SESAH’s Annual Meeting is extended to June 15, 2012. Please send abstracts to Mark Reinberger at reinberg@uga.edu

For details visit www.sesah.org and click on “Opportunities.”
2011 SESAH Award Winners

2011 Best of the South: Preserving Southern Architecture Award

The Best of the South: Preserving Southern Architecture Award honors an outstanding preservation or restoration that demonstrates excellence in research, technique, and documentation.

Established in 1999 by the Texas Legislature, the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program of the Texas Historical Commission has facilitated the full restoration of 45 historic county courthouses in Texas to date, with eight additional projects anticipated for completion by the end of 2011. This award recognizes the program’s recent restoration of five historic county courthouses in Texas. Over the past decade, the program has provided $227 million in grant funds with local matches exceeding $150 million. This investment has generated 8,579 jobs and more than $238 million in local tax revenues while also promoting downtown revitalization and heritage tourism. The restoration of a county courthouse can have a significant impact on a community’s pride and sense of place, causing the general public to consider the importance of historic buildings and other icons of public memory and meaning. The impacts of the program have been particularly visible in small and rural communities, where courthouse restorations have served as a catalyst for downtown revitalization. The Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program highlights the power of historic preservation projects to revitalize communities, promote economic development and job creation, increase local tax revenues, and to reinforce a community’s pride and sense of place. The program’s most recent projects build on a decade of progress, serving as an outstanding example of the wide-ranging impact of historic preservation.

Many of the Program’s past restorations have had a dramatic impact, as seen in the 1894 Goliad County Courthouse

2011 SESAH Book Award

Michelangelo Sabatino, Pride in Modesty: Modernist Architecture and the Vernacular Tradition in Italy (University of Toronto Press, 2010).

Michelangelo Sabatino’s Pride in Modesty expands, deepens and challenges our understanding of twentieth-century modernism both in Italy and beyond. Sabatino does this by taking his reader on a hundred-year journey across the diverse landscape of Italian architecture from national unification in 1871 to the work of Aldo Rossi in the 1970s. As he investigates well-known movements such as Futurism, Rationalism and Neo-Rationalism, he shows how inadequate the canonic modernist narrative has been in accounting for form and meaning in architecture. What he shows to be far more potent and pervasive in shaping architectural discourse is the influence of the vernacular tradition. Navigating his way through political, social and regional contexts, Sabatino shows us an Italian architecture that is at once more complex and more familiar than we have ever known.

2011 SESAH Journal Article Award


For White House History, McDonald has produced a tour de force. Not just what happened when, but a view into the
process by which the talents of and tensions between creative geniuses (Jefferson, Latrobe) produced remarkable architectural achievements. Newly discovered materials and ingenious insights based on them as well as on long-known documents, make this essay the pick of the crop for the SESAH Best Article of 2011 award.

**2011 SESAH Essay Award**


In this ambitiously synthetic essay, Ann McCleary traces the circumstances that fueled the development of towns along Virginia’s Valley Turnpike, from the settlement patterns that defined their establishment in the colonial period to the characteristic buildings that dominated their development into the early twentieth century. Deftly ranging in her analysis from town plans and public squares to commercial buildings and brick I-houses, McCleary trains a subtle eye on both the external influences and local circumstances that shaped these varied towns. As her compelling narrative reveals, the turnpike and the networks of communication it forged contributed significantly to the development of a regionally distinctive architecture across the Shenandoah Valley.

**2011 Student Travel Grant Winners**

**Congratulations!**

Chloe Costello  
University of Arkansas  
Michelangelo, Dissection, and the Medici Chapel

Justin Greving  
University of Virginia  
Accounting for Lady Nugent’s “Creole House”

Laura Keeley  
University of Delaware  
Joel Hurt: Forgotten New South Hero

**New Books**

*The Architecture of Francis Palmer Smith* by Robert M. Craig takes an in-depth look at the role of history in design for Smith and his generation, who believed that architecture is an art and that ornament, cultural references, symbolism, and tradition communicate to clients and observers and enrich the lives of both. Craig examines not only Francis Palmer Smith’s work as the principle designer of Atlanta-based Pringle and Smith, one of the leading firms of the early twentieth-century South, but also Smith’s career leading up to his work for Pringle and Smith, including his studies at the University of Pennsylvania and his job as the head of a new architecture program, in 1909, at the Georgia Institute of Technology. With the continual presence of Francis Palmer Smith’s architecture in the heart of Atlanta and throughout the south, Craig adds a vital historical background to the study of not only this architect, but also to the many architects influenced by Smith’s style.

Craig’s other works include *Bernard Maybeck at Principia College: The Art and Craft of Building* and *Atlanta Architecture: Art Deco to Modern Classic, 1929–1959*.

Carl R. Lounsbury’s book *Essays in Early American Architectural History: A View from the Chesapeake* was published by the University of Virginia Press in November 2011. Pamela H. Simpson’s *Corn Palaces and Butter Queens: A History of Crop Art and Butter Sculpture* is now available from the University of Minnesota Press.
In Memoriam
Pamela H. Simpson (1946 – 2011)

With wisdom, verve, and poise, Pam Simpson served SESAH to the very end of her life, which, sadly, came just prior to our annual meeting last fall. Even as her health was waning, Pam was still planning to attend the meeting while she faithfully and judiciously completed her work on the publication awards committee. Few members have been so dedicated or have given so much to SESAH.

Pam was an exemplary scholar, teacher and mentor. Having earned a B.A. in art from Gettysburg College in 1968; an M.A. in art history from the University of Missouri in 1970; and a Ph.D. in art history from the University of Delaware in 1974, she taught nearly her entire career at Washington and Lee University. Twice she served as head of the Department of Art and Art History and for five years she served as assistant and then as associate dean of the college. Her books include: The Architecture of Historic Lexington, co-authored by Royster Lyle, Jr. (1979); Cheap, Quick and Easy: Imitative Architectural Materials, 1870-1930 (1999), which won several awards, including the SESAH Book Award. She co-edited with Cindy Mills, Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art and the Landscapes of Southern Memory (2004). Her most recent book, Icons of Abundance: The History of Corn Palaces and Butter Sculpture, will be published by the University of Minnesota Press. Pam’s articles, reviews (several in Arris) and exhibition catalogs, like her books, examined the shape and meaning of architecture as a vital part of American life and culture.

Pam served SESAH steadfastly and generously, serving on numerous committees, as Virginia state representative, and twice as president. She chaired paper sessions at nearly every meeting. Together with Delos Hughes she edited three volumes of Arris, making substantial improvements to its publication quality. In 2000, again with Delos Hughes, she co-hosted the annual meeting in Lexington, Virginia. Then, in 2005, Pam heroically stepped in to supervise the annual meeting in Ft. Worth, Texas following the death of Jay Henry. It was a memorable and well-run meeting.

As much as Pam was a devoted SESAH member, she was also an active participant in several other professional organizations. She was a founding member and one-time president of the Vernacular Architecture Forum. She was a faithful and energetic participant in the Southeastern College Art Conference (SECAC), attending every annual meeting since 1976 and serving as president and as editor of the peer-reviewed Southeastern College Art Review, from 1979 to 1992. Pam also served on the board of the national Society of Architectural Historians.

Whenever Pam lectured or presented a paper, she would attract an audience. Her lecture style was winsome and accessible; her research was carefully considered and clearly presented. Above all, her lectures were models of the historian’s craft. In this she exemplified her own memorable advice and admonition to would-be paper-givers as set forth in her canonical essay: “Crimes and Misdemeanors.” We shall not forget her example or her advice. Pam Simpson was a mentor, model and friend to us all.

- David Gobel

In Memoriam

Most graduate students studying architecture spend two to four years acquiring an advanced professional degree. For a small group of students in the graduate field of History of Architecture and Urban Development, however, the process is a much longer one. These students typically spend a decade doing course work and teaching, research, field work and writing, and earn both an M.A. and Ph.D. For John M. O’Brien III, this process took 25 years, and resulted in a nearly 900-page study of the Italian architect Bernardo Vittone’s openwork domed churches, a significant contribution to the field of Italian eighteenth century architecture. That O’Brien achieved this after a 1995 accident that left him a quadriplegic is nothing short of amazing.

O’Brien came to Cornell in 1984 with the goal of writing a dissertation on Vittone. As an undergraduate at Rice University, he discovered the architect’s work in a small book on Renaissance and Baroque architecture by Henry Millon, and fell in love with the openwork domes. He continued his studies in art and architecture, earning a B.A. in art history

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In Memoriam: John M. O’Brien, continued from page 13

from Memphis State University in 1979, and a B.A. in
medieval studies and a B.Arch, both from the University of

Arriving at Cornell with the specific intention of studying
Vittone’s work, O’Brien profited from study of medieval
architecture with Robert G. Calkins and architectural theory
with Val Warke, in addition to a focus on Renaissance and
Baroque architecture with Martin Kubelik and Christian
Otto, respectively.

Awarded the M.A. in 1989 for a study of the Tempietto at
Maser, O’Brien began focused work on Vittone. The Fine
Arts Library and the Slide Library. “While at Cornell, I was
also fortunate to have access to fellow student Elwin Robison,
M.A.’83, Ph.D.’85, who studied Guarino Guarini, another
Piedmont architect,” O’Brien recalled. “In addition, my
studies led me to a network of scholars, including Chiara
Passanti, Hellmut Hager and Julia Smyth-Pinney, whose
knowledge of the Piedmont and the Accademia di San Luca
was extremely valuable. Susan C. Scott, a historian now
teaching at McDaniel College, was a generous and genuine
colleague, who shared information and discussed my ideas,
but also read and edited several versions of my dissertation.”

In 1993, O’Brien left Cornell to teach at the University of
Tennessee, Knoxville, and to continue his research and writ-
ing. But in late September 1995, an accident left him a quad-
riplegic, changing his life dramatically, and placing severe
obstacles in the path of his dissertation process. O’Brien
described his disability classification as “a C-6, functional C-7
incomplete quadriplegic,” – which means that while his legs
were paralyzed, he had almost full range of motion in his
arms, with paralysis of hands and fingers. The accident re-
sulted in little residual physical pain, but psychic and psycho-
logical pain and the work of learning to accomplish basic
daily tasks remained – as well as the daunting task of finishing
a dissertation.

“At the time of the accident, I had written the first two chap-
ters,” O’Brien recounted. “I had the final three chapters to
write after I was paralyzed.” With site visits and most re-
search completed, the intensive work of synthesis, analysis
and writing lay ahead. After the accident, “the problem I had
was in the actual doing of it, and in not knowing whether I
could or would finish it.” The University of Tennessee, where
O’Brien remained an adjunct professor, offered technical
assistance, and Otto, his advisor, kept in touch and urged him
to stay with the work of writing and revision. “For those ten-
plus years,” O’Brien remembered, “Chris would call periodi-
cally and ask the same question, much like Rex Harrison’s
Pope Julius II in *The Agony and the Ecstasy*: ‘When will it be
finished?’ – and this became one of my motivations.”

O’Brien did stay with the work, and years of writing pro-
duced the final three chapters. With adaptive tubing, he
wrote, drew and typed – one letter at a time. In this manner,
O’Brien completed a dissertation that is 543 pages of text, a
bibliography, and 246 images arranged in an appendix. He
defended his dissertation by teleconference and turned his
materials in to the graduate school for a May 2009 degree.

Looking back on the twenty-year process of creating his
dissertation, O’Brien asserted that he never got tired of the
subject: “I knew what I wanted to do and I was lucky to be
able to complete it as I envisioned.” Despite the difficulties he
encountered after his accident, he believed that those years of
writing yielded a product that is complete and of consistently
high quality.

- Roberta Moudry

2011 Study Tour, continued from page 1

known, many features are taken from popular architectural
pattern books. Our group met the oval cantilevered staircase,
rising dramatically three stories, with a hushed “wow.”

Our next stop, the George Eveleigh House on Church Street,
took us backward in time to the 1740s. Here we examined the
Colonial brickwork and the finely paneled rooms in the inte-
rior. At 10 King Street, we studied a 1790s Charleston “single
house” just finishing up a renovation. Charleston’s side-entry
townhouse form has been the subject of many architectural
studies, with more to be done, and it was interesting to be
able to walk through the flow of the interior. Students from
the College of Charleston who had helped research the house

The George Eveleigh House
and its changes over time guided our group and pointed out how they came to their conclusions.

Continuing on our walk, we stopped to gaze at the Miles Brewton House on King Street. One of the most complete Georgian townhouse complexes in the country, this c.1769 house also retains its front iron fence topped by *chevaux-de-frise*, a precursor of razor wire. Close observers will notice this menacing architectural detail on a number of antebellum houses around Charleston, mostly dating to the period after the Denmark Vesey slave revolt of 1822.

The sun was peeking through by our last stop, the Simmons-Edward House on Legare Street. The house’s beautifully restored 1820s formal garden has been the subject of a decade-long academic restoration. Sited on a long and narrow urban lot, the garden, separated from the house by a paved “yard” and an iron fence, and is composed of four sections, including a rosary, a small orchard, and several small pavilions. The fine 1820s ironwork at the front garden gates and house entrance is not to be missed.

This walking tour gave us a deeper understanding of the pedestrian-scale city that is Charleston. Walking to each site allowed us to see many other snippets of Charleston history and architecture. We finished on schedule and scattered for lunch in the bright sunshine.

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**Drayton Hall Study Tour**

**Benjamin L. Ross,**

**RATIO Architects**

Drayton Hall is one of those storied historic sites that most of us know from books and photographs before we have ever actually been there. I was particularly looking forward to visiting the house in person, to seeing the aged paint and the early plasterwork, to experiencing the power of the landmark conserved as opposed to the restored and packaged house museum. I was particularly struck by the survival of the house’s fine woodwork and interior details despite the abuses of nineteenth century miner-tenants and twentieth century salvage-thieves. Our group had the rare treat of a behind-the-scenes tour with expert guides, complete with a visit to the attic. SESAH members always ask thoughtful questions and engage in interesting discussion. Several of those present commented on the comfortable, human scale of the house.
ABOUT SESAH

The Southeast Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (SESAH) is a regional chapter of the national Society of Architectural Historians and includes twelve states - Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

The nonprofit organization holds an annual meeting, publishes a twice-a-year newsletter and an annual journal, ARRIS, and presents annual awards, including the “Best of the South” preservation award.

SESAH was founded in 1982 at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta to promote scholarship on architecture and related subjects and to serve as a forum for ideas among architectural historians, architects, preservationists, and others involved in professions related to the built environment. The annual meeting features scholarly paper sessions, business meeting, study tours, and a keynote lecture by a national leader in the field. SESAH members come from across the U.S.

www.sesah.org

SAVE THE DATE!

30th SESAH Annual Meeting
Athens, Georgia
October 17 – 20, 2012

Thank you to David C. Lewis for helping us move forward with the design of SESAH’s logo. Please note on the home page we have the logo without the 25 (years) in the background; and on this page and on pages 5 and 6 we have a logo with 30 (years) in the background.

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Please notify the Treasurer of address changes.