

CHRIS CLARK
COMMISSIONER

W. RAY LUCE DIRECTOR

# ANNOUNCEMENT OF LISTING IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

W. Ray Luce, Division Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, is pleased to announce that the property identified below was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on the date indicated:

### **Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery**

**DeKalb County** 

August 9, 2009

We hope that the recognition of the architectural and historical significance of this property, combined with the benefits of National Register listing, will assist in the preservation of the property. Additional information on preservation programs is available from our office.

Thank you for your interest in historic preservation.

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of	Property					
	me Dona es/site numbe			er House and Ce nut House	emetery	
2. Location	n					
street & nu city, town county state			(X) vic	nwoody Road sinity of GA 089 zip code	30356	
( ) not for p	oublication					
3. Classific	cation					
Ownership	of Property:				Categor	ry of Property:
( ) private (X) public-s ( ) public-s ( ) public-f	state				( ) build (X) distr ( ) site ( ) struc ( ) obje	cture
Number of	Resources w	ithin Pı	operty	: <u>Contribu</u>	ting	<b>Noncontributing</b>
	buildings sites structures objects total			6 1 1 0 8		1 0 2 0 3

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification				
As the designated authority under the National Historic Prethat this nomination meets the documentation standards for Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria.	or registering properties in the Nation I requirements set forth in 36 CFR Pa	al Register of		
Richard Cloves	Co.15-09			
Signature of certifying official  W. Ray Luce Historic Preservation Division Director Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer	Date			
In my opinion, the property ( ) meets ( ) does not meet the National Register crite	ria. () See continuation sheet.			
Signature of commenting or other official	Date			
5. National Park Service Certification				
I, hereby, certify that this property is:				
( ) entered in the National Register				
( ) determined eligible for the National Register	•			
( ) determined not eligible for the National Register		All states and the states are states as the states are states are states as the states are states are states as the states are states ar		
( ) removed from the National Register				
( ) other, explain:				
( ) see continuation sheet	Keeper of the National Register	Date		

### 6. Function or Use

### **Historic Functions:**

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

**Current Functions:** 

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

# 7. Description

#### **Architectural Classification:**

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

#### **Materials:**

foundation STONE

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other N/A

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery is located on the corner of Chamblee-Dunwoody and Vermack roads in a residential area southeast of Dunwoody in DeKalb County adjacent to the city of Atlanta. DeKalb County is near the center of the Atlanta metropolitan region. Largely rural until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, DeKalb County underwent rapid and extensive suburban development starting in the 1950s, and virtually all of the county today is suburban or urban. The house, constructed c.1870 for William J. Donaldson, is a two-story, central hall, modified Plantation Plaintype building with a rear ell added in the 1880s that underwent significant changes in 1935 when then-owner Lois Patillo Bannister renovated the house. She hired architect Francis Palmer Smith to design a series of alterations consistent with the popular 20<sup>th</sup>-century Colonial Revival style. Changes to the exterior façade of the original building include the replacement of the one-story, fulllength front porch with a square-columned portico and the addition of three wall dormers. Examples of Bannister's interior alterations include the addition of pedimented door surrounds, paneled cabinets, and elaborate moldings. The house's floor plan was expanded to 11 rooms and included the addition of new family living spaces, bedrooms, closets, and bathrooms. The 2.8-acre property also contains five contributing outbuildings built and/or altered during her ownership: barn, guesthouse, blacksmith shop, commissary, and washhouse. The cemetery's 27 plots contain the remains of three generations of Donaldson family members who died between 1883 and 1931 including the gravesites of William J. and Milly A. Donaldson who built and lived in the house in the 1870s.

The Donaldson-Bannister House is a two-story, 11-room, modified Plantation Plain-type, Colonial Revival-style building with a central hall floor plan. The façade has a narrow columned portico and three wall dormers. The front of the house is clad in lapped pine siding and has a symmetrical appearance. The front entry door has an overhead transom light and two sidelights. There are five

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six-over-six sash windows on the front of the house. Prior to 1935, the façade had a one-story, full-length, porch and lacked wall dormers (Attachments 1-2). In 1998, then-owners Linda and David Chesnut replaced the wrought iron columns on the narrow portico with new wood columns after the porch suffered storm damage (Photographs 1-6, 8).

In 1998, a tornado severely damaged the house. The storm destroyed the front portico and the stone and brick masonry chimney located on the east side of the house. The tornado also damaged the lapped pine siding and several windows located on the northeast corner of the house (Photograph 9). Then owners Linda and David Chesnut restored the home to its 1935 external appearance (Attachment 3).

The east side of the house has a stone and brick masonry chimney and four six-over-six sash windows. The side gabled roof extends to the rear over an enclosed interior room that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a one-story rear porch. The enclosure of the one-story rear porch was completed during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Donaldson family still owned the house. Lois Patillo Bannister added a one-story stone exterior room to the rear of the enclosed rear porch in 1935. The one-story addition has two nine-over-nine sash windows and a door with plain side pilasters and a pediment. The one-story room that was added in 1935 replaced a rear porch that was built by the Donaldson family c.1870. The south end of the one-story room has a stone and brick masonry chimney and two six-over-six sash windows (Photographs 9-11). In 1935, Lois Patillo Bannister added an enclosed breezeway that connected the house to a newly constructed garage. The garage has a hipped roof and is clad in lapped pine siding. The west side of the garage has two six-pane window encasements. A rear ell extends along the west side of the house. William Donaldson added the rear ell to the house during the 1880s. The rear ell has a side-gabled roof. Lois Patillo Bannister added the three wall dormers to the rear ell in 1935. The west side of the house also has a stone and brick masonry chimney (Photographs 7, 12).

Lois Patillo Bannister altered the interior in 1935. She changed the house's type and style. Prior to 1935 the two-story building was a Plantation Plain-type house with a central-hall plan and rear ell. In 1935, Bannister replaced all doors and windows, expanded the rear ell adding a breakfast area and utility closet, replaced the shed porch with a one-story family room with an attached porch, installed new moldings and pediments, reworked existing mantels, and added Colonial Revival-style cabinets in the dining room, kitchen, and family room. Bannister also replaced the house's wooden walls with plaster. Bannister's alterations were influenced by work done at Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia.

During the 1970s and late 1990s owners Linda and David Chesnut made a number of alterations to the home. The walls and ceilings that had been plastered in 1935 were covered with sheetrock during a 1970s renovation. During the 1970s a full bathroom and a walk-in closet were added to the second floor. The Chesnuts also renovated the downstairs bathroom at that time. The 1998 tornado damaged the interior and destroyed a portion of the roof. Water damaged the sheetrock walls and wood flooring in rooms located along the east side of the house.

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The front portico opens into a long central hallway. The pine flooring that exists throughout most of the house was installed c.1870 by William Donaldson. The floors were refinished following the 1998 tornado. In 1935, Lois Patillo Bannister installed the extant baseboards and crown molding that can be found in every first floor room except for the kitchen. Bannister also installed a chair rail in the hallway and dining room, and applied Colonial Revival-style pediments and door surrounds on doorways located along the central hallway (Photograph 26).

The first room located to the right off the central hallway was historically used as a bedroom. Lois Patillo Bannister installed the fireplace mantel and marble surrounds in 1935. This room suffered severe water damage during the 1998 tornado (Photograph 19, 21). A parlor room is located across the hall from the bedroom. The parlor and the bedroom are the same size and have the same baseboards, crown molding, windows, and mantels. Triangular pediments adorn the entrances to both rooms (Photographs 20-22). The dining room is located to the left off the central hallway. This room was built c.1870 by William Donaldson. Lois Patillo Bannister renovated the room in 1935 adding the chair rail, two wood paneled cabinets, crown molding, and baseboards (Photograph 23). During the 1970s, former owners Linda and David Chesnut turned a room located across the hallway from the dining room into a bathroom and powder room. In 1935, Lois Patillo Bannister removed the c.1870 shed porch that was located along the rear of the house and replaced it with a significantly larger family room with an attached porch. The family room's wood paneled wall covering was installed in 1935. The variation of the Colonial Revival style inspired by Colonial Williamsburg helped popularize wood paneled wall coverings (Photograph 25). A door leads into the kitchen located in the rear ell. In 1975, the Chesnut family renovated the kitchen installing new cabinets and appliances. The renovations also altered the 1935 brick fireplace (Photograph 24).

In 1935, Lois Patillo Bannister added a breakfast room, utility room, and garage onto the existing rear ell. The breakfast room has a cast-iron, wood-burning stove and maple wood flooring. The utility room's historic materials were replaced in 1975 during a renovation. The one-story garage has a hipped roof and interior space for two automobiles (Photographs 10-11, 17-18).

A staircase is located in the central hallway. The staircase faces away from the house's main front entrance (Photograph 26). A central hallway once extended from the second floor landing. Owners Linda and David Chesnut subdivided the hallway in 1975 to create an upstairs bathroom. In addition to the 1975 bathroom, two rooms flank the second floor landing (Photograph 27). On the left is an upstairs bedroom. This room was severely damaged during the 1998 tornado. Most of the room's historic materials were damaged during the storm. The pine floors and some of the wallboards were salvaged and restored by owners Linda and David Chesnut. The closet leads to attic storage space (Photograph 30). A doorway located to the left of the second floor landing leads into a hallway. At one end of the hallway there is a study. On the other end of the hallway there is a master bedroom. Donaldson family descendants recall that this area was once a large open space used as sleeping quarters for the children and for dances. During Lois Bannister's ownership this space remained unchanged from its appearance during the Donaldson family's tenure. The Chesnut family subdivided the space into a master bedroom, bathroom, closet, and study during the 1970s (Photographs 28-29).

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The Donaldson-Bannister House was part of a working farm between c.1870 and 1931. William Donaldson once owned more than 1,000 acres in the area. He grew a variety of crops including corn and cotton and raised livestock on the property. Donaldson built three of the extant historic outbuildings located on the property. The washhouse was built during the 1870s and is located behind the rear of the house. The washhouse is a rectangular-shaped, side-gabled building clad in weatherboard siding (Photograph 14). Donaldson also built a commissary building during the 1870s. This building likely sold goods to tenants and/or sharecroppers that farmed on Donaldson's property. The commissary is a rectangular-shaped, front-gabled building clad in weatherboard siding with a covered front stoop. The building has a basement that was used for storage. The commissary is located a few hundred yards behind the house (Photographs 15-16, 38). The blacksmith shop is located next to the commissary. The shop is a rectangular-shaped, side-gabled building clad in weatherboard siding. Lois Bannister likely enclosed an open portion of the shop during the 1930s (Photographs 15-16, 38). Donaldson also dug a well and built a well house located in front of the house. The well house has been significantly altered and no longer resembles its historic appearance. The well, however, is a contributing historic structure (Photograph 39).

Lois Bannister built a guesthouse and a barn on the property in 1935. Bannister used the building to quarter her domestic servants. The small "L-shaped" guesthouse is located to the rear of the house. This side-gabled building has an enclosed porch. The guesthouse once had three rooms: two bedrooms and a bathroom. In 1975, the two bedrooms were consolidated into a single room to be used as meeting space (Photographs 13-14). Bannister built a side-gabled, three-stall barn in 1935. The barn's roof has a small cupola with a decorative wrought iron weather vane (Photographs 31-38).

There is a small cemetery on the property. The cemetery is located to the west of the house. A chain link fence surrounds the cemetery. The cemetery's 27 plots contain the remains of three generations of Donaldson family members who died between 1883 and 1931 including the gravesites of William J. and Milly A. Donaldson (Photographs 43-44).

The Donaldson-Bannister House was once part of a 1,000-acre farm. Most of the farmland associated with this house was sold off during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1935, Lois Bannister hired a landscape architect to transform the remaining farmland into lawns with a formal garden and brick herringbone walks (Photograph 12). A semi-circular wall, a fountain, and a gazebo were added to the property during Bannister's ownership. Today, the property is surrounded by a number of late-20<sup>th</sup> century residential developments (Photographs 40-41).

There are several noncontributing buildings and structures on the property. A barn was recently built directly behind the historic stable. The barn is a front-gabled one-and-a-half story building clad in weatherboard siding (Photograph 37). There is a noncontributing swimming pool located between the house and cemetery. The pool was added to the property during the 1970s (Photograph 42). The well house located in front of the house was rebuilt after the original structure was destroyed by a tornado in 1998 (Photograph 39).

8. Statement of	f Significa	ınce	**···			***************************************
Certifying offici properties:	al has co	nsidered th	ne significan	ce of this p	roperty in rel	ation to othe
( ) nationally	() sta	itewide	(X) locally			
Applicable Nation	onal Regi	ster Criteri	a:			
( ) A ( )	В	(X) <b>C</b>	( ) <b>D</b>			
Criteria Conside	erations (l	Exceptions	s): (X) N/A			
( ) <b>A</b> ( )	В	( ) <b>C</b>	( ) <b>D</b>	( ) <b>E</b>	( ) <b>F</b>	( ) <b>G</b>
Areas of Signific	cance (en	ter categor	ries from ins	tructions);		
ARCHITECTURE LANDSCAPE AF		URE				
Period of Signifi	icance:					
c.1870-1942				•		
Significant Date	s:					
c.1870-Date of co 1935-Lois Bannis 1942-Lois Bannis	ster purcha	ses house				
Significant Pers	on(s):					
N/A						
Cultural Affiliatio	on:					
N/A						
Architect(s)/Buil	der(s):					
Smith, Francis Pa	ılmer—arc	hitect				

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### Statement of significance (areas of significance)

#### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery is located on the corner of Chamblee-Dunwoody and Vermack roads in a residential area southeast of Dunwoody in DeKalb County. The house is a twostory, central hall, modified Plantation Plain-type building with a rear ell constructed c.1870 for William J. Donaldson that underwent significant changes in 1935 when then owner Lois Patillo Bannister renovated the house. She hired architect Francis Palmer Smith to design a series of alterations consistent with the popular 20<sup>th</sup>-century Colonial Revival style. Changes to the exterior facade of the original building include the replacement of the one-story, partial-length, front porch with a narrow columned portico and the addition of three wall dormers. Examples of Bannister's interior alterations include the addition of pedimented door surrounds, paneled cabinets, and elaborate moldings. The house's floor plan was expanded to 11 rooms and included the addition of new family living spaces, bedrooms, closets, and bathrooms. The property also contains five contributing outbuildings built and/or altered during her ownership; barn, questhouse, blacksmith shop, commissary, and washhouse. The cemetery's 27 plots contain the remains of three generations of Donaldson family members who died between 1883 and 1931 including the gravesites of William J. and Milly A. Donaldson. The Donaldson-Bannister House is significant in the area of architecture at the local level as an excellent example of the work of Francis Palmer Smith based on a renewed public enthusiasm for colonial precedents coinciding with the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg. It represents the work of a skilled architect who applied Colonial Revival-style elements to an existing Plantation Plain-type house. Additions and alterations of this kind demonstrate the popularity of the "Williamsburg" Colonial Revival design. The Colonial Revival redesign of this older house is an especially good example. The cemetery is significant locally in the area of landscape architecture because this family cemetery is an excellent example of a type of funerary landscape associated with rural agricultural homesteads in Georgia prior to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The cemetery's grave markers are also good examples of common marker types found in turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup> century Georgia.

### **DETAILED SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT:**

In the area of <u>architecture</u>, the significance of the Donaldson-Bannister House is twofold—both as an excellent example of the popular 20<sup>th</sup>-century Colonial Revival style applied to a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Plantation Plain-type house and as the work of a master, Francis Palmer Smith. William and Martha Donaldson built a Plantation Plain-type house c.1870. As documented in *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*, the Plantation Plain is "one of the earliest house types in Georgia" and "most of the few surviving examples were built between about 1820 and 1850 in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain regions." The Donaldson-Bannister House is a good and late example of a Plantation Plain-type house because of its two-story block at the front, with a central hallway plan.

In 1935, elements of the Colonial Revival style were applied to the Plantation Plain-type house. A new interest in America's colonial heritage grew out of the Centennial International Exhibition held in

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Philadelphia in 1876. The exhibition celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the *Declaration of Independence*. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, colonial buildings were being carefully studied for correct proportions and details. In some cases this resulted in the construction of new houses that were almost exact copies, while many architects applied this popular style to existing houses during renovations. The 1926 commencement of the re-creation and restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, funded by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., under the supervision of landscape architect Arthur Shurcliff and the architectural firm of Parry, Shaw, & Hepburn also contributed to the mass popularization of the Colonial Revival style. As documented in *Georgia's Living Places* the:

Colonial Revival was very popular in Georgia for a long period, from the 1890s through the 1940s and beyond. It was often found in suburban neighborhoods next to many other revivals popular at the same time. During the 1930s and 1940s the style was sometimes referred to as Williamsburg.

The Donaldson-Bannister House reflects the Colonial Revival style through its massing, symmetry, simple classical details, and the design of windows and doors.

By the time Lois Bannister retained Francis Palmer Smith (1886-1971), the architect was already well established in his career. According to Robert M. Craig in *The New Georgia Encyclopedia:* 

Francis Palmer Smith . . . was an academic architect in the prevailing tradition of early-twentieth-century eclecticism. His breadth of interests and range of practice were as extensive as those of any architect of his period in Georgia. He began his career as an architectural educator and ended his long practice as an architect with a reputation as the most accomplished of his generation in Atlanta. In between, he built collegiate buildings for the Georgia Institute of Technology . . . whose department of architecture he directed from 1909 to 1922; designed traditional homes for conservative clients who preferred neoclassical and medieval vernacular styles for their domestic environments; pioneered a new popular modernism in Atlanta through two major skyscrapers in the city in the art deco style; and specialized in his late work in church design, preferring the Gothic style as precedent for most of his ecclesiastical projects.

Prior to remodeling the Donaldson-Bannister House, Smith had designed homes for Samuel J. Pattillo, Bannister's father, and John Ray Pattillo, her uncle. During the Great Depression, Smith also completed several Beaux Arts-style homes in Chattanooga, Tennessee, for Coca-Cola Bottling Company executives as well as a number of retreats located along the Georgia coast.

The Donaldson-Bannister House cemetery is significant in the area of <u>landscape architecture</u> as an excellent example of a family cemetery—a type of funerary landscape associated with rural agricultural homesteads in Georgia prior to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Settlement patterns in the American South from the colonial era through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century gave rise to the development of small cemeteries on family-owned property. Most cemeteries are segregated according to factors such as race, class, kinship, ethnicity, and religion. Family cemeteries are a physical manifestation of kinship

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that often extends across multiple generations. There are countless cemeteries of this type in Georgia today because of the state's long agrarian history. The cemetery's grave markers are also good examples of common marker types found in turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup> century Georgia.

### **National Register Criteria**

The Donaldson-Bannister House meets National Register Criterion "C" at the local level of significance in the area of <u>architecture</u> as an excellent example of the thorough application of Colonial Revival-style elements in an early 20th-century residential renovation project in Georgia.

The Donaldson-Bannister House meets National Register Criterion "C" at the local level of significance in the area of <u>landscape architecture</u> as an excellent example of a family cemetery—a type of funerary landscape associated with rural agricultural homesteads in Georgia prior to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

# Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance is c.1870-1942. William Donaldson built the house c.1870. The period of significance ends when Lois Bannister sells the house in 1942.

# Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

House—contributing building
Guest House—contributing building
Wash House—contributing building
Barn—contributing building
Commissary—contributing building
Shop—contributing building
Cemetery—contributing site
Well—contributing structure

Well House—noncontributing structure Swimming Pool—noncontributing structure Barn—noncontributing building

# Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

The Donaldson-Bannister House is located in DeKalb County, Georgia. DeKalb County was created

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in 1822 from portions of Henry, Gwinnett, and Fayette counties. DeKalb is located in north Georgia. Creek and Cherokee Indians inhabited the area until their removal following the 1821 signing of the Treaty of Indian Springs. William Hensley (Henslee) owned the property where the extant Donaldson-Bannister House is located between 1830 and 1844. According to local historians, Hensley received title to the 202.5-acre tract of land via a land grant. Hensley sold the property in 1844 to a relative, Maxwell Hensley. Maxwell Hensley then sold the property to Josiah Powers three weeks after his initial purchase. Powers was the father of Sarah Ann Powers Donaldson (1840-1866)—William J. Donaldson's second wife. Josiah Powers sold the property on November 7, 1858 to S.P. Wright who two weeks later resold the property to A.H. Adams. Adams was the father of Martha "Milly" Adaline Adams Donaldson—William J. Donaldson's third wife.

William J. Donaldson was born on October 12, 1826. Donaldson married three times and fathered 14 children. He married Nettie Lucretia Reeves on November 20, 1851. During his first marriage, Donaldson lived in the Cross Keys District of DeKalb County and likely lived in his father-in-law's (James W. Reeves) household. Sometime during the 1850s, William J. Donaldson purchased a farm worth \$2,500 near the town of Calhoun located in Gordon County, Georgia (northwest Georgia). Nettie Donaldson died sometime between 1857 and 1860. Donaldson married Sarah Ann Powers on March 10, 1861. During the Civil War, Donaldson served as a private in Co. F, 36<sup>th</sup> Georgia Infantry Regiment, Confederate States of America. His knee was severely injured during an unspecified battle. Sarah Ann Powers Donaldson died during the winter of 1865-1866. William Donaldson married Martha Adaline Adams on February 1, 1866. Donaldson returned to DeKalb County and began farming on land owned by his father-in-law Jesse H. Adams. About 1870 Donaldson built a two-story Plantation Plain-type house on the Adams' family property. On December 6, 1875, William Donaldson purchased the 400-acre tract of land where his house was located from Jesse Adams. As his family expanded, Donaldson added a rear ell onto his house during the 1880s. During the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Donaldson accumulated more than 1,000 acres of property in De Kalb County. Donaldson died on November 1, 1900 (Attachment two).

Following William J. Donaldson's death, his widow, Martha Donaldson, managed the farm with the help of her children until her death on February 5, 1931. Under her management, conditions at the farm deteriorated due to declining crop yields and rising costs associated with farming. Upon her death the property was subdivided into 25-acre tracts and sold during an estate sale.

Lois Pattillo Bannister purchased the 25-acre tract that included the Donaldson house at an estate sale held on August 6, 1935. Lois Pattillo was born in September of 1892 in the city of Buford, Gwinnett County, Georgia. Her father, Samuel Jackson Pattillo (1864-1940), owned the Pattillo Lumber Company whose sales office was located in the Healey Building in downtown Atlanta. The family also owned a lucrative construction company. The Pattillo family moved to the Inman Park neighborhood in Atlanta during Lois' childhood. Her family socialized with many of the city of Atlanta's wealthiest families. Lois Pattillo was a member of the Inman Park Girls' Club—a prestigious socialite organization. Between 1910 and 1911 she attended Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, part-time where she enrolled in a variety of music and English literature courses. Pattillo did not graduate from Agnes Scott College.

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Lois Pattillo was married three times. Jesse Joe Neer, her first husband, was a native of Ohio. He died on August 27, 1921, less than one year after his marriage to Lois Pattillo. John Hill, Lois' second husband, was a prominent architect and engineer. They were married on March 14, 1925. Hill was a native of Columbus, Georgia, and a graduate of the Cornell University School of Architecture. He made a fortune designing, manufacturing, and selling machinery to textile mills. His prior marriage to Stacey Earnest of Atlanta ended in divorce. Their marriage ended after six years upon his death on November 28, 1931. Lois Pattillo Hill inherited her husband's small fortune following his death. Between her second and third marriages Lois Pattillo Hill purchased the Donaldson House and hired architect Francis Palmer Smith to transform the c.1870 Plantation Plaintype house into a Colonial Revival-style vacation home. Smith had designed homes for Lois' father and several of her family members prior to redesigning the Donaldson House. From 1909 until 1922, Smith was the chair of the department of architecture at the Georgia School of Technology (now Georgia Institute of Technology). According to architectural historian Robert M. Craig, Smith "designed traditional homes for conservative clients who preferred neoclassical and medieval vernacular styles for their domestic environments; pioneered a new popular modernism in Atlanta through two major skyscrapers in the city in the art deco style; and specialized in his late work in church design, preferring the Gothic style as precedent for most of his ecclesiastical projects."

In 1937, Lois Pattillo Hill married Leland Bannister. Bannister was an officer in the United States Marine Corps. The couple temporarily used the Donaldson House as a retreat. Bannister sold the house on October 19, 1942, while her husband was serving as an officer in the Pacific Theater during World War II. After the end of World War II, the couple lived in New Mexico and California. Leland Bannister died on January 31, 1955. Following his death, Lois Bannister returned to Atlanta where she died on March 16, 1956.

Following Lois Bannister's sale of the property, the house changed owners six times between 1942 and 2005. Prominent Buckhead landscape architect Frank A. Smith owned the property between 1956 and 1973. In 1975, J. David Chesnut purchased the property. The Chesnut family added a pool and an additional barn to the property and renovated the house's interior during the late 1970s. In 1998, a tornado severely damaged portions of the house (Attachment 3). The Chesnut family restored the house to its pre-tornado appearance prior to selling the property in 2005 to DeKalb County.

9. Major Bibliographic References
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Craig, Robert M. <i>Atlanta Architecture: Art Deco to Modern Classic</i> , 1929-1959. (Gretna, La.: Pelican Press, 1995).
"Francis Palmer Smith, 'Beaux-Arts' Architectural Educator in the South." <i>Southeastern College Art Conference Review</i> 13, no. 3 (1997).
Davis, Elizabeth and Ethel Spruill. <i>The Story of Dunwoody.</i> (Atlanta: Williams Printing Company, 1975).
DeKalb County, Georgia. Probate Court. Will Book C.
Office of the Clerk, Superior Court. Deed Book(s) H, P, S, Y, AA.
Office of the Clerk, Superior Court. <i>Deed Book Volume(s) 418, 459, 573, 640, 1093, 2983, 3095, 3351.</i>
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, <i>Georgia's Living Places:</i> Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings. Atlanta, 1991.
"Lois Pattillo Bannister." Obituary. March 17, 1956. Atlanta Journal and Constitution.
Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A
<ul> <li>preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested</li> <li>preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued date issued:</li> </ul>
( ) previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
) designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
Primary location of additional data:
X) State historic preservation office
) Other State Agency
) Federal agency
) Local government ) University
Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property

2.8 acres

**UTM References** 

A) Zone 16

**Easting 747969** 

Northing 3757941

# **Verbal Boundary Description**

The Donaldson-Bannister House is bounded to the southwest by Chamblee-Dunwoody Road and to the east by Vermack Road. Late 20<sup>th</sup>-century residential housing bounds the property to the north and the west. The boundary includes the cemetery located to the west of the Donaldson-Bannister House as well as the historic outbuildings located to the east and northeast of the house.

# **Boundary Justification**

The 2.8-acre boundary represents the last vestige of the property associated with the c.1870 Donaldson family farm and the 1942 Bannister retreat.

### 11. Form Prepared By

#### State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Keith S. Hébert/ Historian organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources mailing address 34 Peachtree Street, Suite 1600 city or town Atlanta state Georgia zip code 30303 telephone (404) 651-5568 date 3-25-2009 e-mail Keith.Hebert@dnr.state.ga.us

### Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) ( ) not applicable

name/title Lynne B. Byrd organization The Dunwoody Preservation Trust, Inc. mailing address 5455 Chamblee Dunwoody Road city or town Dunwoody state GA zip code 30338 telephone 770-451-0230 e-mail lynnebyrd@mindspring.com

( )	property owner
(X)	consultant
( )	regional development center preservation planner
( )	other:

# **Property Owner or Contact Information**

name (property owner or contact person) Marvin Billups organization (if applicable) Parks Department, DeKalb County mailing address 1300 Commerce Drive city or town Decatur state GA zip code 30030 e-mail (optional) N/A

### Photographs

Name of Property: Donaldson-Bannister House

City or Vicinity:DunwoodyCounty:DeKalbState:Georgia

Photographer: James R. Lockhart

Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Date Photographed: September 2008

## Description of Photograph(s):

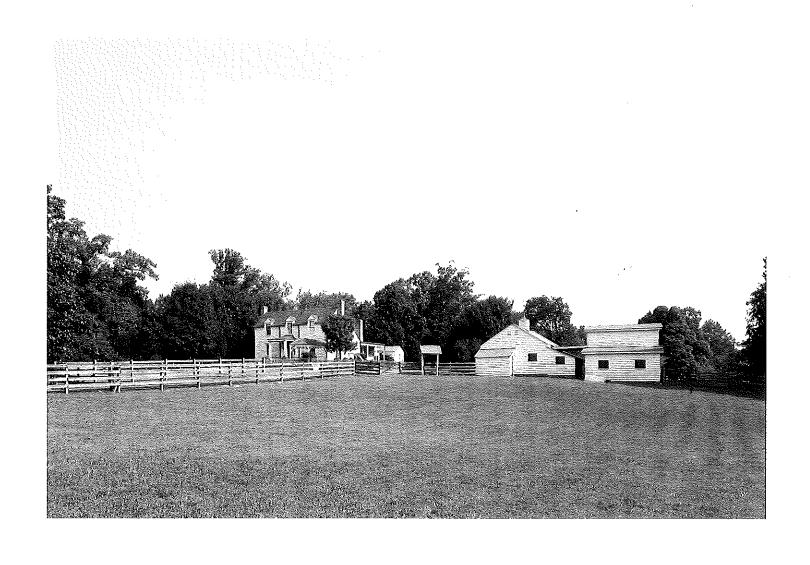
Number of photographs: 44

- 1. Landscape; photographer facing northwest.
- 2. Façade; photographer facing northeast.
- 3. Façade; photographer facing northwest.
- 4. Façade; photographer facing north.
- 5. Façade; photographer facing north.
- 6. Façade; photographer facing northeast.
- 7. West Side of House; photographer facing northeast.
- 8. Façade; photographer facing north.
- 9. East Side of House; photographer facing west.
- 10. East Side of House; photographer facing west.
- 11. Garage; photographer facing southwest.
- 12. East Side of House; photographer facing south.
- 13. Guest House; photographer facing north.
- 14. Guest House and Wash House; photographer facing south.
- 15. Commissary and Shop; photographer facing west.
- 16. Commissary and Shop; photographer facing southwest.
- 17 Garage Interior; photographer facing northwest.
- 18. Garage Interior; photographer facing northwest.
- 19. First Floor Bedroom; photographer facing southeast.
- First Floor Interior; photographer facing west.
- 21. First Floor Interior; photographer facing east.
- 22. Living Room/ Parlor; photographer facing southwest.
- 23. Dining Room; photographer facing southeast.
- 24. Kitchen; photographer facing northwest.
- 25. Family Room; photographer facing north.
- 26. Central Hallway; photographer facing west.
- 27. Second Floor Landing; photographer facing south.
- 28. Master Bedroom; photographer facing north.
- 29. Master Bedroom; photographer facing south.
- 30 Second Floor Bedroom; photographer facing northwest.
- 31. Barn; photographer facing northeast.

### **Photographs**

- 32. Barn; photographer facing east.
- 33. Barn; photographer facing south.
- 34. Barn; photographer facing east.
- 35. Barn; photographer facing east.
- 36. Barn; photographer facing west.
- 37. Noncontributing Barn; photographer facing west.
- 38. Landscape; photographer facing southwest.
- 39. Well House; photographer facing southwest.
- 40 Landscape; photographer facing northwest.
- 41. Landscape; photographer facing northwest.
- 42. Pool; photographer facing northwest.
- 43. Cemetery; photographer facing northwest.
- 44. Cemetery; photographer facing northwest.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph 2 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 3 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of

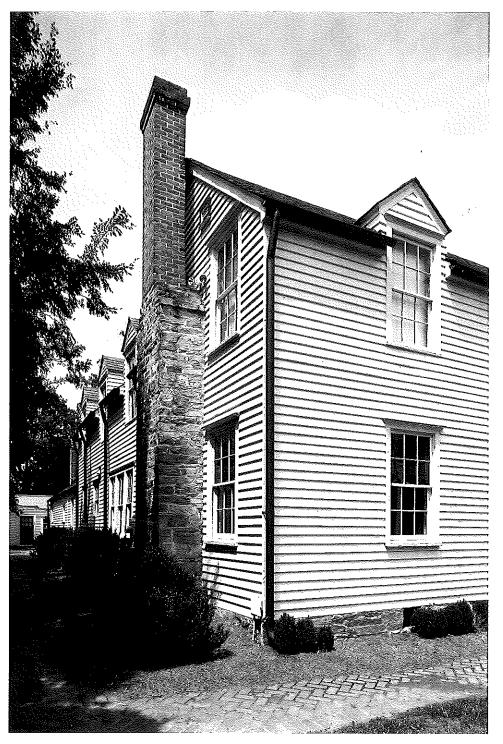


Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph 5 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia

Photograph of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 7 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of L



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph **q** of **44** 



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia

Photograph

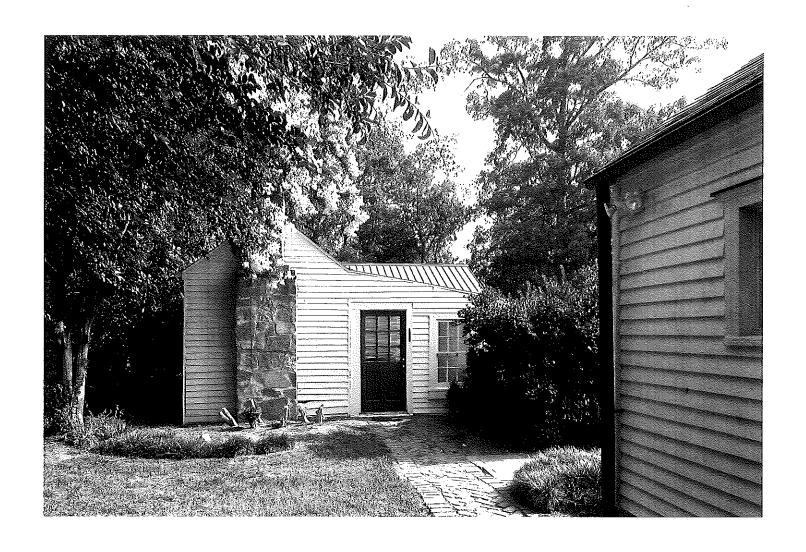
of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia

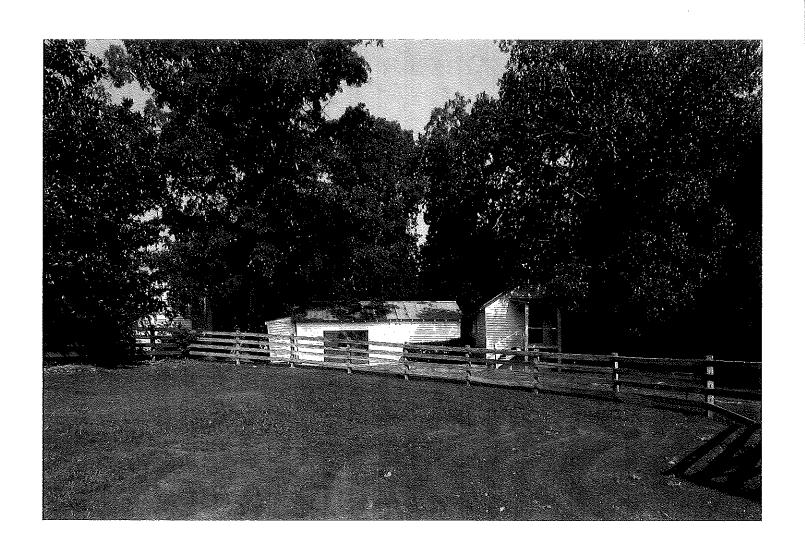
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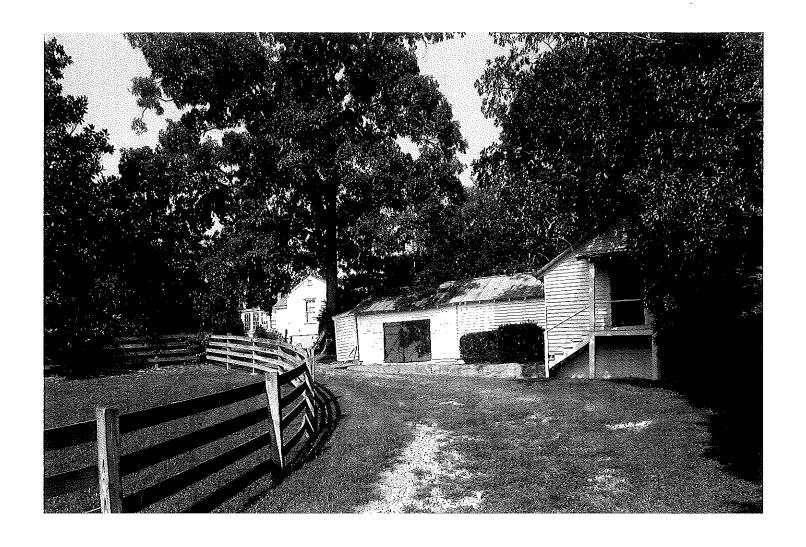
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Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of



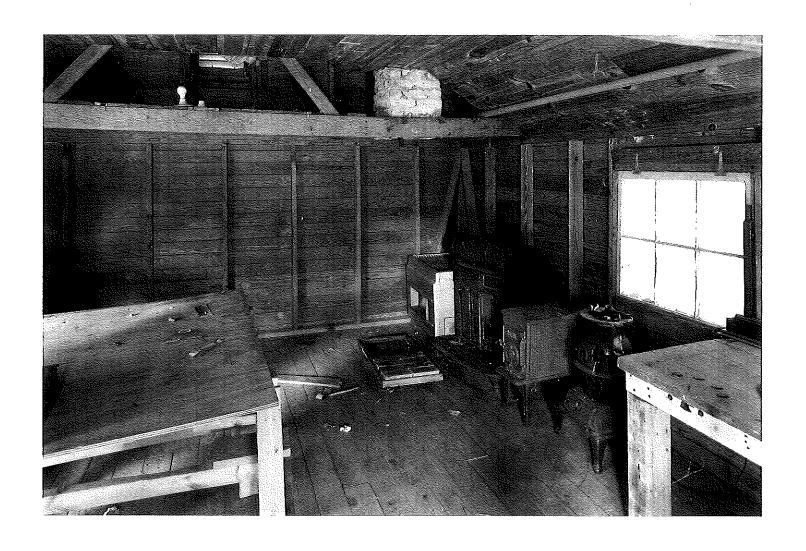
Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 15 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of 44





Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia

Photograph 25 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 26 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of 44

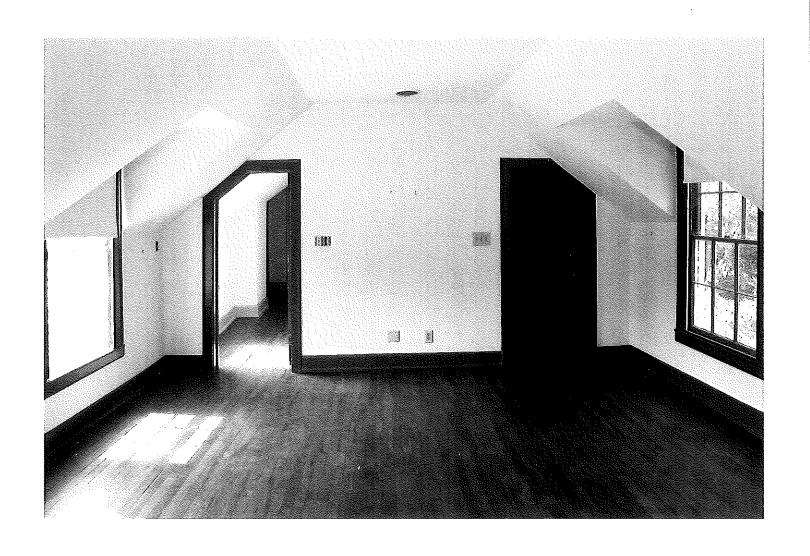


Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia

Photograph

of

44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia

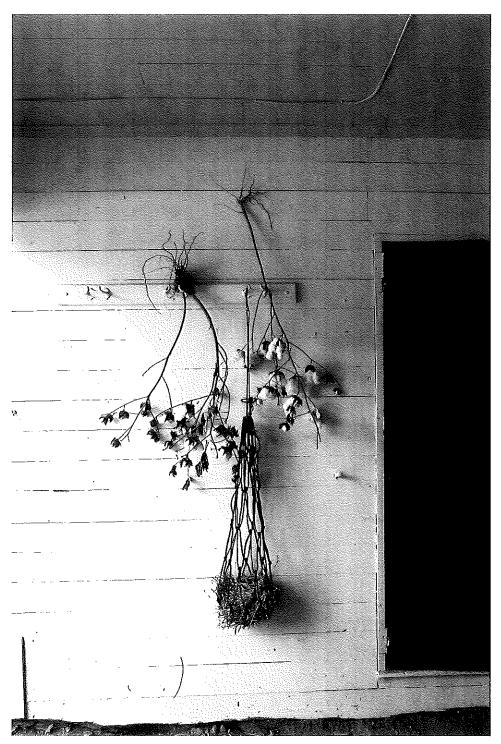
Photograph 30 of 44



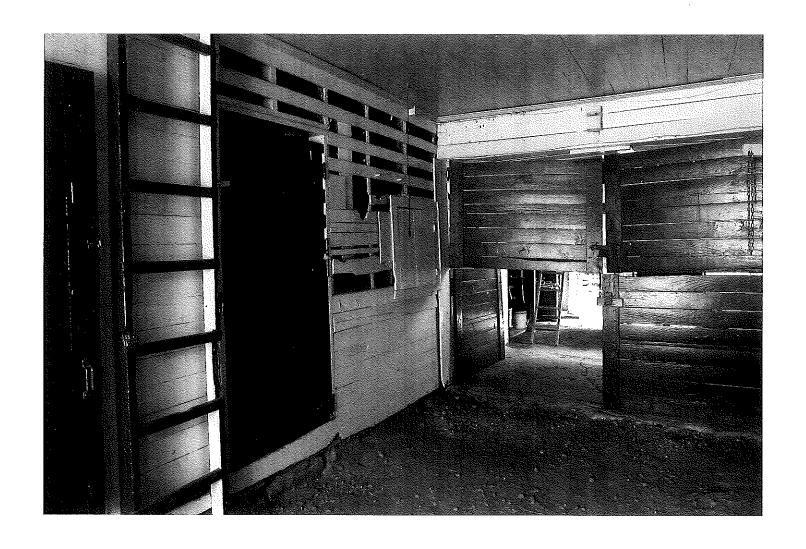
Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph 31 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 32 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph



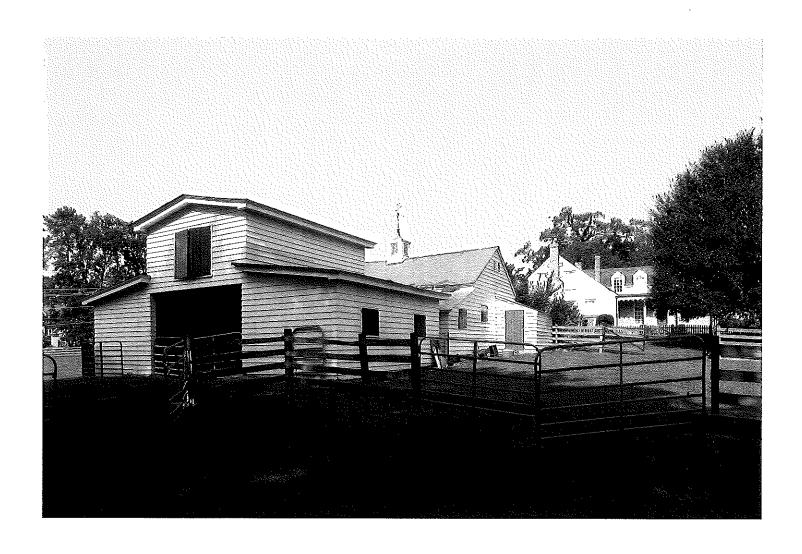
Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 35 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 37 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery
DeKalb County, Georgia
Photograph **3g** of **44** 



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 39 of 44



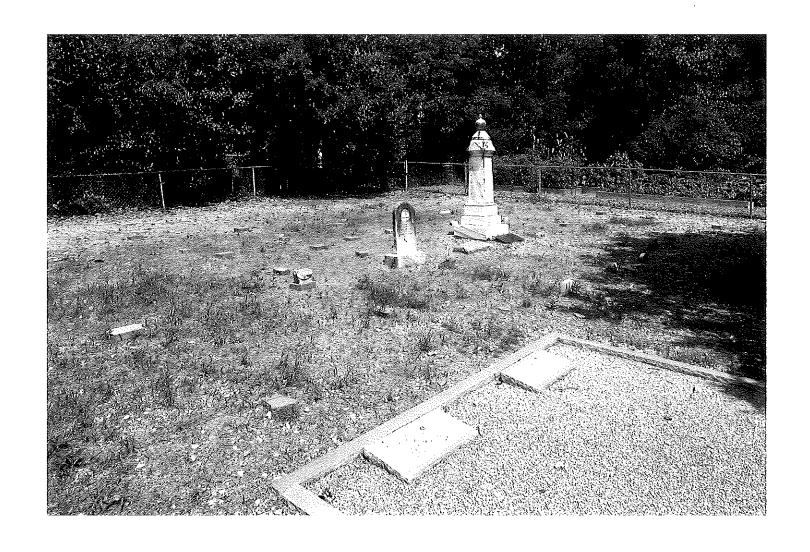
Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 40 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph of



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 42 of 44



Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph **43** of **44** 



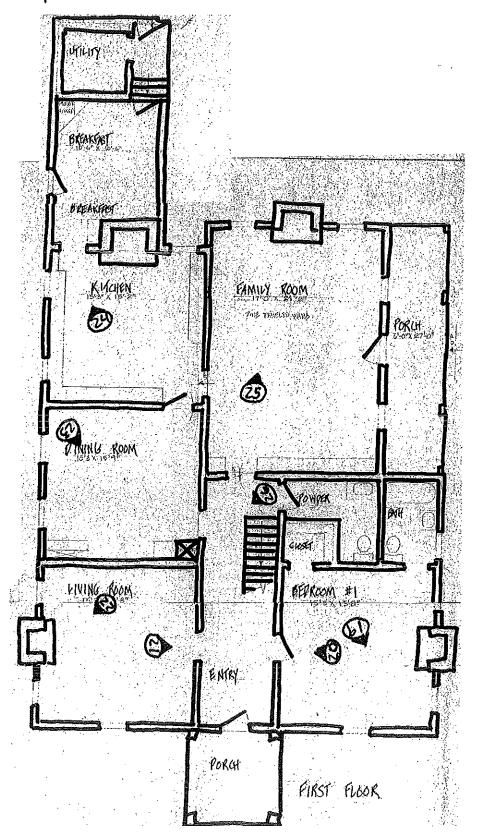
Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery DeKalb County, Georgia Photograph 44 of 44

# DONALDSON-BANNISTER HOUSE AND CEMETERY DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: |" = 9.5"

DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPH: **③** 

NORTH: ↑

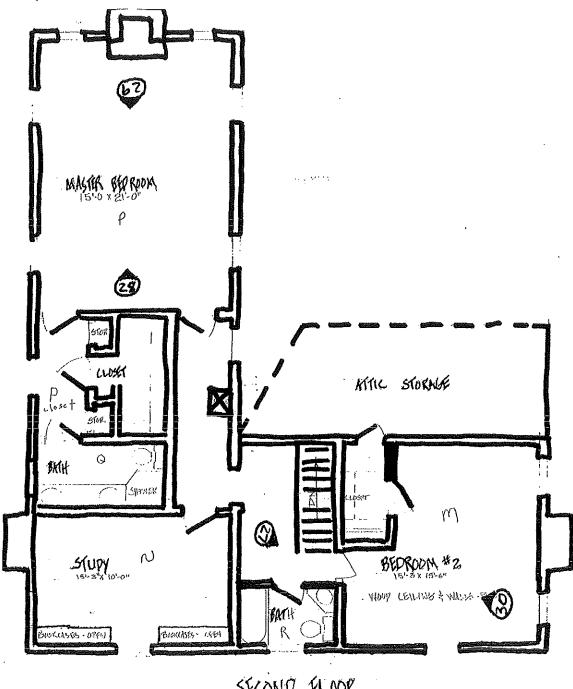


#### **DONALDSON-BANNISTER HOUSE AND CEMETERY DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA**

SECOND FLOOR PLAN SCALE: |"= 7.4"

DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPH: 6

NORTH: ↑

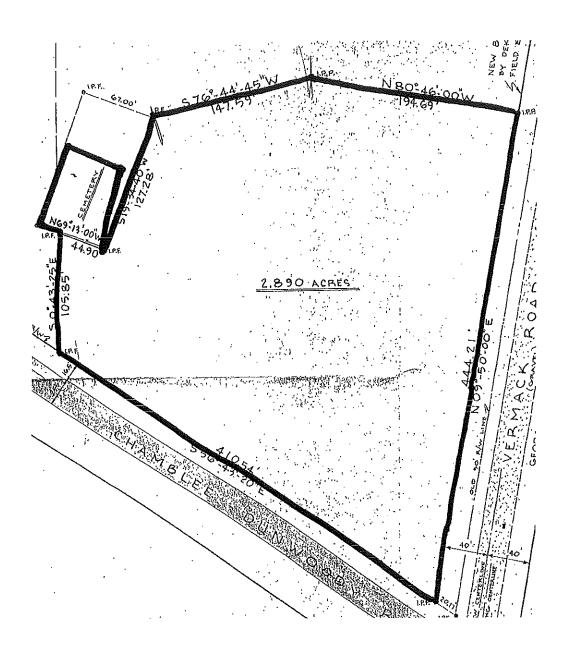


SECOND FLOOR

#### **DONALDSON-BANNISTER HOUSE AND CEMETERY DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA**

NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY: SCALE: 1"= 87'

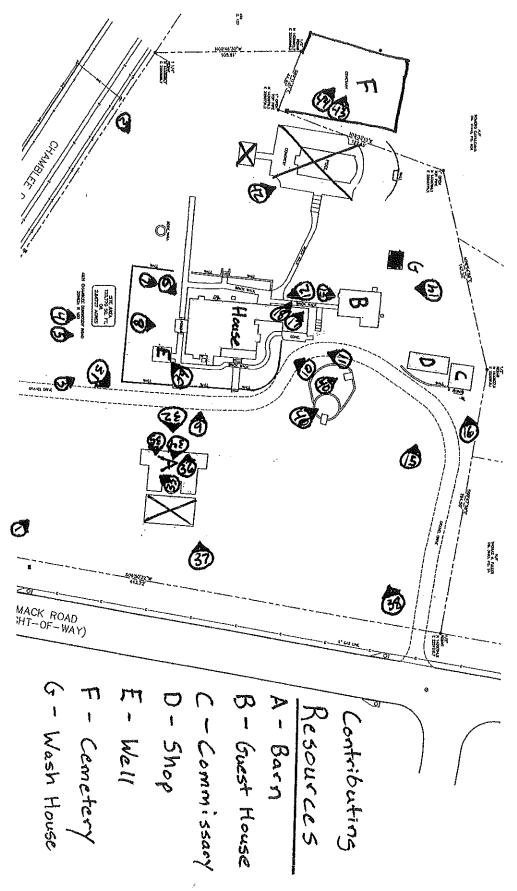
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DONALDSON-BANNISTER HOUSE AND CEMETERY DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA

SITE MAP

SCALE: 1"= 70'
DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPH: @
NORTH: ^



## **DONALDSON-BANNISTER HOUSE AND CEMETERY**

DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT ONE: Sketch of Donaldson-Bannister House drawn by descendant of William J. Donaldson.



# DONALDSON-BANNISTER HOUSE AND CEMETERY DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA

ATTACHMENT TWO: Photograph of Donaldson family c. 1895.

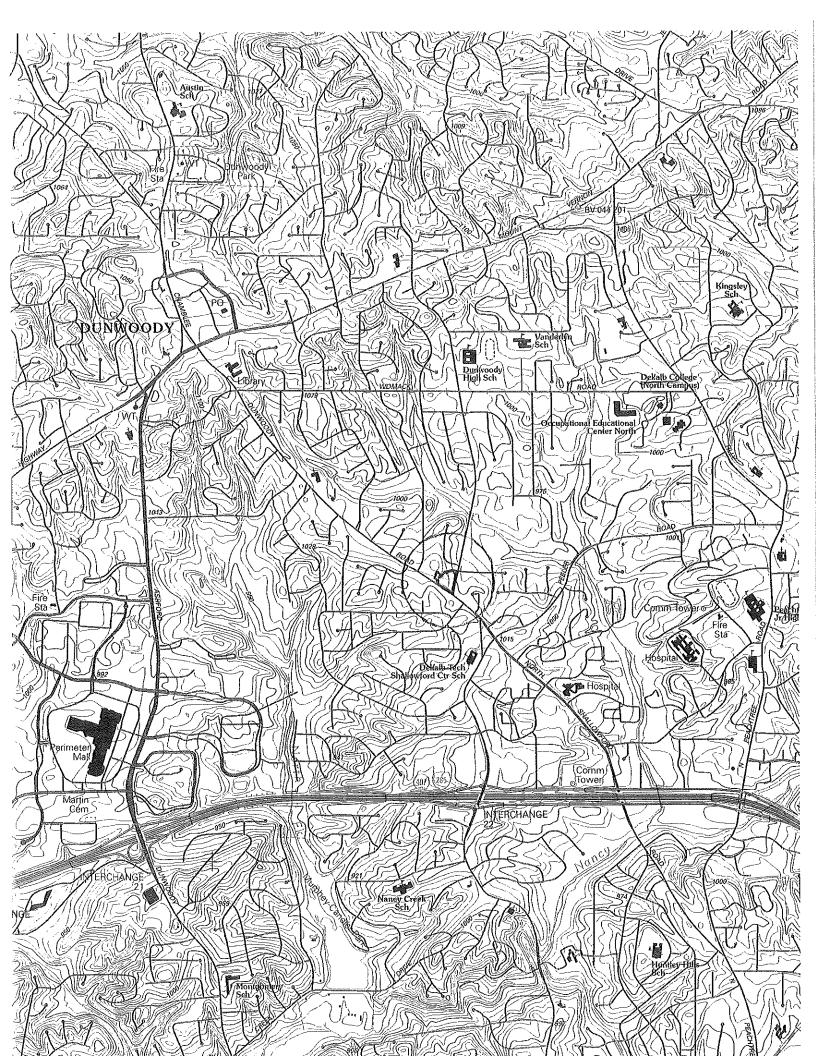


The Original Donaldson Home, Chamblee-Dunwoody Road. 1st Row, left to right: Iames Donaldson, (wife) Adaline Adams, Amanda Keith, Mrs. Young Donaldson, Baby Albert. Standing: Alec, William A., Mattie Donaldson Cobb, Carrie Donaldson King. Name of dog unknown!

# **DONALDSON-BANNISTER HOUSE AND CEMETERY**

DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT THREE: Photograph of Donaldson-Bannister House following the 1998 tornado.





# Old Courthouse on the Square 101 E. Court Square 101 E. Court Square 102 Pecatur Grania 30930

print

#### Denaldson-Bannister Farmhouse opening to the public this

Sunday 104,373,1088 | Fax 404,373,8287 | Email dhs@dekalbhistory.org | Web www.dekalbhistory.org

by Staff Reports 09.26.12 - 03:17 pm

The Dunwoody Preservation Trust will host the second Preservation Celebration at the Donaldson-Bannister house and farm Sunday from noon to 4 p.m.

This community awareness event celebrates the history of the home built in 1870 with tours and family friendly activities reminiscent of historic times. The home and farm is located at the corner of Vermack and Chamblee Dunwoody Roads. Admission is free as are most activities.

A similar event was held in the spring and both events are funded with a \$5,000 donation from Dunwoody City Councilmember Adrian Bonser, her husband Brian Bonser and the Gendell Family Foundation, along with numerous other volunteers and sponsors. The celebration events are intended to raise awareness and educate the community on the restoration needs for the house, now a city owned park, in order for it to be fully enjoyed by the community.

There will be something for everyone at this community event, including guided tours of the grounds, self-guided tours of the house, games and activities for children and adults including: corn hole, horseshoes, a petting farm, 3-legged-races, a deejay to provide musical entertainment and food including barbecue provided by a local chapter of the Knights of Columbus and Boy Scout Troop No. 477.

A cake auction returns for this event and will include cakes and pies. The live auction begins at 1:30 pm. Anyone interested in donating a cake or a pie for the auction is asked to call (678) 641-1186.

All proceeds and donations from the event will go to the restoration of the Donaldson-Bannister farmhouse and property.

Handicap parking will be available on-site and golf cart rides offered to assist citizens from this area of parking to the house. Parking will also be available on side streets and at the nearby Dunwoody Place North Condominium Association complex at Independence Square (corner of Chamblee-Dunwoody Road and Peeler Road). Parking is discouraged along Vermack Road.

Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets and chairs; no coolers or pets are allowed. Volunteers are still needed and those interested can contact Bonnie at (770) 671-0863.

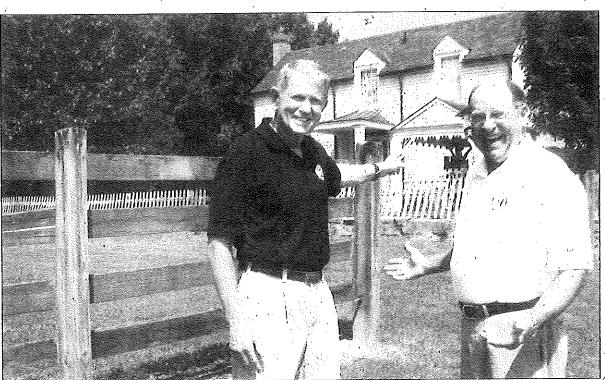
For more information about the event, call M.J. Thomas at (404) 512-2400. or visit www.dunwoodypreservationtrust.org and click the link at the top of the page.

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9/26/2012 4:31 PM

# ひゅへので さのごろり しんし

## Dunwoody looks to future of historic home



Staff / Alicia Lavender

From left, Dunwoody City Council members Denis Shortal and Danny Ross stand in front of the city's newly-acquired Donaldson-Bannister Farm house on Chamblee-Dunwoody Road.

By Gloria Love glove@neighbornewspapers.com

unwoody is considering future uses of the historic Donaldson-Bannister Farm now that it is in city hands after four years as a largely unused

county property.

City Councilman Danny Ross said the Dunwoody Preservation Trust has discussed the use of the 143-year-old property as a "living farm museum." Demonstrations of such common 19th-century agricultural work as clothes washing, soap making and blacksmithing could be featured, he said.

"It could exhibit how farm life actually occurred in 1867," Ross said.

The complex of buildings on three acres at the corner of Chamblee-Dunwoody and Vermack roads requires repairs both inside and out after sitting vacant since 2006. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places last year, and precautions must be taken during restoration to preserve its status, Ross said.

"Volunteer efforts are going to be

very important moving forward," he said.

Councilman Denis Shortal said he hoped residents participate in a Nov. 6 Dunwoody volunteer work day, which will include projects at the farm and other parks it took possession of June 21.

Civil War veteran Jim Donaldson built the facility, which contains a main house, guest house, barn, commissary and other original buildings, in 1867, Ross said.

The house, the second oldest in Dunwoody, was purchased by Lois Bannister in 1935 for use as a summer home. In 1975 the Chesnut family bought and maintained the property "to historical standard," Ross said.

In 2006, the Dunwoody Preservation Trust, of which Ross is a member, approached DeKalb County about using the county's share of state greenspace funds to purchase the property.

Ross said the resulting conflict played an integral role in the formation of Dunwoody as a city.

"We were split into two camps," he said, "those who wanted to become a city and those who did not."

When the county bought the property and let it fall into disrepair, Ross said he approached then-CEO Vernon Jones and was informed the house would be moved to south DeKalb.

A 2007 letter from Jones to Ross states, "It is better to make the farmhouse available to 94 [percent] of the citizens as opposed to only serving 6 [percent] in the city of Dunwoody."

According to Ross, "The citizens

of Dunwoody overnight became very interested in becoming a city. This house was a major linchpin in making that happen.'

Now, the recently formed Dunwoody Parks and Recreation Department has begun a "master plan" process for the maintenance and improvement of the farm and the city's 165 acres of newly acquired parkland, said department manager Brent Walker. .

Walker estimated the plan should be finished around the start of 2011.

"There will also be several opportunities for public input," he said. "It's a long process to put together a solid master plan."

# DeKalb buys house in ghostly condition

Family bids farewell to familiar beings, eerie doings: the lady who watched their daughter sleep, a levitating Bible.

BY CHARLES YOO cyoo@ajc.com

The Chesnuts are preparing to say farewell to all the strangers living in their house in Dunwoody.

The old man. The little girl in a dress and pinafore. The lady who stares out the window. And whoever makes the Bible levitate around the room.

"We have ghosts in our house," said 41-year-old Caroline Chesnut Leslie, the daughter who grew up there. "They're just part of that house. They just don't seem to want to go on."

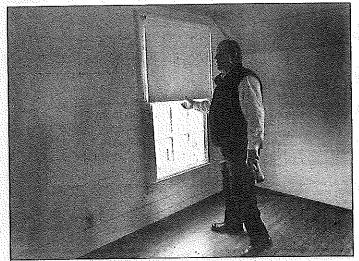
After three decades, the Chesnuts have sold their family estate. The new owner: DeKalb County.

The county recently spent \$1.2 million under its green space program to buy the Donaldson House — named for the original owner, of the late 1800s — and its 3 acres on Chamblee Dunwoody Road.

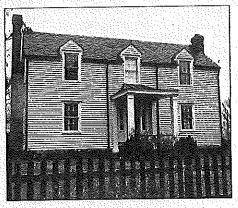
County officials plan to preserve the house, though what use it will be put to they're still not sure. The grounds, with magnolia trees and lots of roses, will become a county public space.

Ever since voters approved a \$125 million bond referendum in 2001, DeKalb has acquired more than 2,200 acres to pre-

➤ Please see HAUNTED, A6



Photos by CHARLOTTE B. TEAGLE/Staff



David Chesnut
opens the shade
in his daughter's
room. During
the family's
three decades
in Dunwoody's
Donaldson House
(left), built around
1870, they often
saw the shadowy
figure of a woman
at this window or
about the room.

#### **Melissa Forgey**

From: Helen Talley-McRae [Helen.Talley-McRae@dnr.state.ga.us]

Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2008 10:33 AM

To: Brock, Gretchen; Burns, Leigh; Melissa Forgey; Hebert, Keith; Rice, Le'Var

Subject: news - Donald- Bannister (and Chesnut) makes Georgia Register

Dunwoody Crier Donald- Bannister (and Chesnut) makes Georgia Register Tuesday, October 21, 2008 1:02 PM EDT

The Dunwoody Preservation Trust hopes to convert the Donaldson-Bannister House to a living, working farm museum. The home Dunwoody residents know as the William Donaldson Farm at the corner of Vermack Road and Chamblee Dunwoody Road has a new name and a new honor. The new official name is Donaldson-Bannister House and Cemetery and the honor is that the home and property were approved for the Georgia Register of Historic Places.

Lynne Byrd of the Dunwoody Preservation Trust, and Vivian Price Saffold of the DeKalb Historical Society researched the property and home and submitted the application for



recognition. Lynne and Vivian were joined by Lynne's husband, Noah, and Joyce Amacher of the Dunwoody Preservation Trust for the presentation. Keith Herbert of the Georgia Historic Preservation office presented the home, grounds, and outbuilding to a panel of judges. Now that the property is on the Georgia Register it will most likely receive approval from the National Register of Historic Places. It will take three to six months to receive that approval.

William J. Donaldson came to Dunwoody and built his home in 1870. After he died in 1900, his wife, Milly Adams Donaldson, managed the farm for the next 31 years. The property was sold off in plots when Mrs. Donaldson died. Mrs. Lois Bannister, a widow, bought the portion of the land that included the old home place. Despite the fact that it was during the Great Depression, she hired an architect and altered the home to become a second home for herself. The architect was Francis Palmer Smith, who was a professor of the Georgia Tech Architectural School. Mr. Smith was the architect of some important downtown Atlanta buildings, including the William Oliver Building.

Certain aspects of the Donaldson-Bannister Home and Cemetery and its history helped it qualify. The first is as a part of women's history, because it was owned and managed by widows at two different times in history. The role they both undertook was not common for women during that time. The second is for architectural significance; it is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style.

There were a couple of other owners after Mrs. Bannister and then David and Linda Chesnut purchased the home and property in 1975. They were the owners in 1998 when a tornado tore through Dunwoody and a large tree fell on the home, causing major damage. The Chesnuts restored the home, plus they added a rose arbor and replaced damaged magnolia trees. The home is currently owned by DeKalb County as part of the new Greenspace program.

Besides the home, there are outbuildings which include a barn, guest house, blacksmith shop, commissary, and warehouse. The family cemetery on the property is where three generations of Donaldsons are laid to rest, including the original owners, William J. and Milly A, Donaldson.

If you pass by the property often, you probably appreciate its beauty and serenity. For me, it brings back memories of driving my two little preschool girls past it regularly about 18 years ago. They loved seeing a horse or two in the pasture. Hopefully, the Donaldson-Bannister Home will be a big part of the new city of Dunwoody's future. The Dunwoody Preservation Trust will ensure that it is properly cared for to keep its new honor.