

The Mary Turner Project

We are a diverse, grassroots collective of VSU students, faculty, and local community members who are committed to racial justice. That commitment involves educating ourselves and others about the presence, multiple forms of, and the effects of racism, so that we may become involved in eliminating it.

The MTP is currently converting data from the 1860 Census (for Lowndes and other counties throughout Georgia) with the goal of posting it in a searchable form on a free, public website. We are currently in the process of uploading these slave schedules for Georgia counties. We are seeking volunteers who would like to be involved in digitizing this data to make it accessible to decedents and researchers. Please contact us to become a part of this exciting historical project.

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For more information on how you can get involved:

www.maryturner.org
www.slavecensus.com
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Relevant Landmarks Tied to Slavery/Slave Owners

The Peoples Building (200 N. Patterson where the Kings Grill is housed) was built by Judge Richard Peoples who owned 4 people in 1860.

The Wisenbaker Building (northwest corner of Hill Ave. and Patterson St.) and the **Wisenbaker-Roberts House** (“Valdosta’s Oldest House”) was built by William Wisenbaker, who in 1860 owned 2 people in 1860 (both were 35 years old).

The Converse Building (121 Patterson St. – Baus Blue) was built by Albert Converse who in 1860 owned 10 people ranging in age from 2 to 60 years old.

The Dasher House (413 E. Central Pl.) was built by J.A. Dasher who in 1860 owned 25 people ranging in age from 44 years to 1 year old. There are five more houses built by Dasher in the Fairview neighborhood.

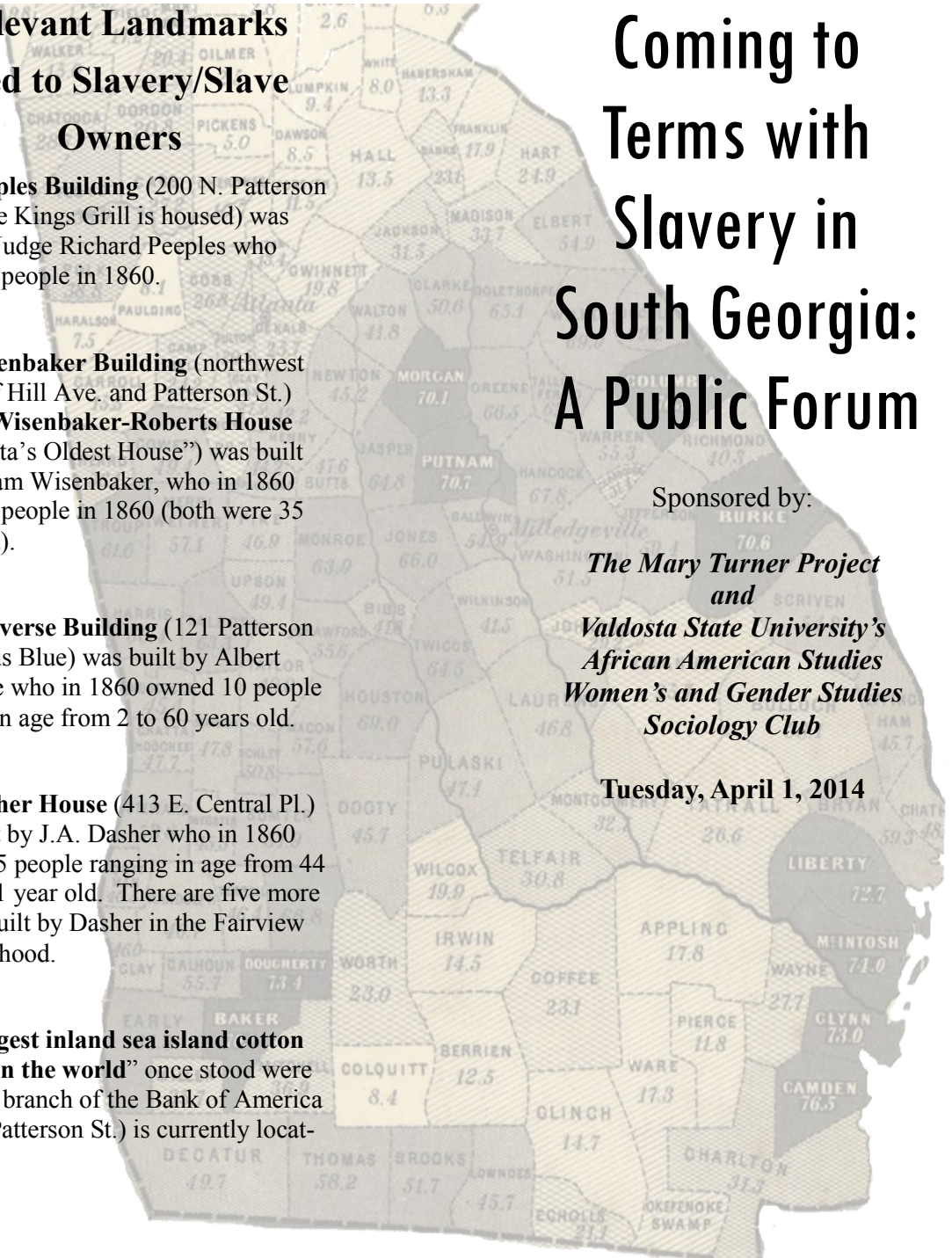
The “**largest inland sea island cotton market in the world**” once stood where the main branch of the Bank of America (106 S. Patterson St.) is currently located.

Coming to Terms with Slavery in South Georgia: A Public Forum

Sponsored by:

*The Mary Turner Project
and
Valdosta State University’s
African American Studies
Women’s and Gender Studies
Sociology Club*

Tuesday, April 1, 2014



Area Artifacts from the Slavery Era

By 1860 there were at least 2,399 enslaved people (46% of the total population) in Lowndes County and there were 249 slave owners among the 2,850 white residents (9% of the entire white population of all ages). While some whites owned dozens of people, the most common number of enslaved people owned by white slave owners was 1 person.

The county seat of Valdosta was incorporated in 1860 and named after one of Governor George M. Troup's six plantations, Vald'Aosta. In 1850, Governor Troup owned 209 slaves in Laurens and Montgomery Counties. Land for the new town (Valdosta) was purchased from William Wisenbaker (owner of 2 slaves) and two of the four men commissioned to set up Valdosta, William H. Goldwire and James Harrell, also owned slaves (6 and 7 people respectively).

The **largest plantation** in Lowndes County in 1860 was owned by Rebecca Jones (widow of Berry Jones). She also owned 37 people who ranged in age from 3 to 90 years old. The Jones home sat on the northwest corner of the intersection of Jerry Jones Dr. and Gornto Rd. Today

that location is occupied the Church of Latter Day Saints. The **“Jo-Ree Mill-pond”** (on the curve of Jerry Jones Dr.) embankment and dam was constructed by the slaves of Berry and Rebecca Jones.

The **largest slave owner** in Lowndes County in 1860 was Rachel Jones who owned 96 people who ranged in age from 62 to 1 year old.

Major Valdosta Street Name Origins*

Patterson St.: local Confederate Captain James Patterson, owner of 14 slaves in 1860 who ranged in age from 50 years old to 1 year old.

Ashley St.: William Ashley, owner of 17 people in 1860 who ranged in age from 50 years old to 2 years old.

Troup St.: Governor George M. Troup who in 1850 owned 209 people in Laurens and Montgomery Counties.

Forrest St.: Nathan Bedford Forrest a General in the Confederate Army, slave trader, slave owner, and leader in the Ku Klux Klan.

Gordon St.: John Brown Gordon a General in the Confederate Army and leader in the Ku Klux Klan.

Lee St.: General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Confederate forces during the Civil War.



Toombs St.: Sen. Robert Augustus Toombs owned 16 people in 1860 ranging in ages from 60 to 2 years old.

Hill Ave.: Sen. Benjamin Harvey Hill, who in 1860 owned 60 people ranging in age from 50 to 3 years old. Hill initially opposed secession from the Union because he thought it might lead to the end of slavery.

Jerry Jones Drive: Jeremiah “Jerry” Jones, son of Berry and Rebecca Jones. In 1860 Jeremiah Jones owned 12 people ranging in age from 14 years old to 1 year old.

Converse Ave.: Albert Converse owned 10 people in 1860 who ranged in age from 60 to 2 years old.

Dasher Ln.: J.A. Dasher owned 25 people in 1860 who ranged in age from 44 years to 1 year old.

Briggs St.: W.H. Briggs owned 13 people in 1860 ranging in age from 48 years to 9 months old.

*We suspect that Wells St., Rogers St., Wisenbaker Ln., Spivey Ln., Watson Ln., Kings Ln., and Youngs Ln. are named after local slave owners and are in the process of researching those names.

Sources: Lowndes County Historical Society Archives; U.S. Census Bureau Slave Schedules; City of Valdosta; City of Valdosta Community Development Department; Jane Twitty Shelton's *Pines and Pioneers, A History of Lowndes County Georgia 1825-1900*; St. Julien Ravenal's *Life and Times of William Lowndes of South Carolina, 1782-1822*; General James Jackson Chapter—Daughters of the American Revolution's *History of Lowndes County Georgia, 1825-1941*; *New Georgia Encyclopedia*.