

OSSABAW ORACLE

A Publication of the Ossabaw Island Foundation

June 2020



Genesis participants from 1970 at 2010 reunion, interviewed by Dr. Mark Finlay, right.

Genesis: 50 Years Ago Founding Ossabaw Island's Intentional Community

In 1970 on Ossabaw Island, Eleanor “Sandy” Torrey West and her husband Clifford were feeling some successes. Their interdisciplinary residency program for established professionals, The Ossabaw Island Project, was in its 10th year. The Wests recognized that a separate and different experience for young people was needed, one that could bring to Ossabaw a completely different group of visionaries.

This new experience was Genesis — a cooperative, intentional, semi-sustainable community. Operating at historic Middle Place on Ossabaw Island from 1970 to 1983, Genesis was a place for emerging and exceptional creative young people to experience, and be impacted by, the island. Genesis members, selected by an application process, lived in the community for a week, two weeks, a quarter or a semester. Participants were to work on projects while at

Genesis, in addition to creating a community. Their studies and projects ranged from the creative and liberal arts to the sciences to agriculture and forestry.

“We were here for a reason — to be part of an ecological movement,” said Tom Thomas, a Georgia Tech student in the first Genesis group. “We knew that what we were doing here was in the process of trying to save the island from development. There are people that are out there, across that sound, that would probably still like to develop Ossabaw Island today if they could...”

“It was 1970 which, as you remember, was the first year of Earth Day,” said Rob Rivers, a Georgia Tech student. “It was very much in the consciousness of everybody about the importance of the environment.”

(Continued on page 6)

Revealing the Voices & Mystery of Ossabaw Island

Executive Director's Letter



Photo by eThree Media

Georgia legislation HB 906 threatens Ossabaw Island's protected status.

I am often asked, “Is Ossabaw really safe from development, or could the State of Georgia just sell off parts of the island?” Until recently, my answer has always been that Ossabaw Island is safe, because it is designated as a Heritage Preserve by the state—the highest level of land use protection in Georgia. (In 1978, as part of the island’s sale, Ossabaw was the first state property to receive Heritage Preserve protection, and is one of the largest Heritage Preserves.)

But in March 2020, in addition to COVID-19 bearing down on all of us, TOIF was confronted with a serious threat to Ossabaw’s protections: **Georgia House Bill 906, which seeks to allow up to 15 acres of any Heritage Preserve property in Georgia to be sold or transferred to any buyer, for any use.** The only protections on the sold property would be conservation easements, which can be broadly drafted to allow just about any use.

Ossabaw Island is one of 122 Heritage Preserve properties in Georgia. Over 344,000 acres of land in Georgia are protected by this designation, including some of Georgia’s most important historic sites and most unique and unspoiled wild areas. Many of those areas are popular fishing and hunting locations; several sites include historic buildings of national significance. Ossabaw Island’s importance is on par with these properties and could be vulnerable to potential sale, in increments of 15 acres or less, if HB 906 were to pass.

Current Protections

Georgia’s Heritage Preserve (HP) protections are defined in the state code, “to be held by the state in trust for the benefit of the present and future generations of the people of the State of Georgia... [for] the best and most important benefit to the public.” State law requires that HP lands can only be transferred to counties or municipalities; requires that only the legislature can approve the transfer of those lands or the removal of the HP designation; defines what the land can be used for if transferred to a city or county, and requires that counties and cities return the land to the state if they no longer want it. These rigorous protections are what convinced Eleanor “Sandy” Torrey West and her family to sell Ossabaw Island to the state as their legacy.

The Threat

House Bill 906 opens a door for Ossabaw and other Heritage Preserves to be removed piecemeal from use by generations of Georgians, subdivided and conveyed out of state ownership to a wide array of possible owners (including private entities) for just about any use, without input from the General Assembly. The appointed Department of Natural Resources Board and the State Properties Commission would have the final decision.

Status of HB 906

On March 12, despite TOIF efforts to oppose this bill, the state House of Representatives passed HB 906 with only seven “nay” votes. The bill moved over to the Senate on March 13; the legislature suspended its session effective March 14. As I write this, they are expected to reconvene on June 11. Will this bill be considered by the State Senate in June? We do not know.

What You Can Do?

If the bill moves forward, whether in June or in another legislative session, we will need our Georgia “Ossabaw Army,” as Mrs. West would say, to contact Georgia’s state elected officials to protect Ossabaw Island and all of our Heritage Preserves.

Thank you for your support of Ossabaw Island, now more than ever.

Elizabeth DuBose
Executive Director
Ossabaw Island Foundation



Visit Ossabaw Island in 2020?

By Julian Buckmaster

All visits to Ossabaw Island of 6 or more people were canceled from March 15 through the end of May, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have kept the following summer and fall public trips to Ossabaw on the calendar, and are developing new ways to experience Ossabaw Island that comply with social distancing and new health guidelines.

It is our hope and intention to host these events in 2020, but we reserve the right to cancel trips, including up to the day of the trip, due to unforeseen circumstances associated with COVID-19, including insufficient ticket sales.

For the trips listed below, the maximum group sizes have been reduced in order to maintain social distancing on the boat and in our buildings. All check-in activities will be done using safety protocols. Sanitization procedures are being implemented. All visitors are required to wear masks during check in, on the boat and inside the buildings, and to maintain 6-foot distance from all other visitors unless they are members of your household. Visitors must provide their own masks.

Our highest priority is the safety of our visitors and staff. Thank you for your understanding as we all work together to make your Ossabaw Island experience the best it can be.

How to Register: The following trips are sponsored by The Ossabaw Island Foundation and are open to the public. Fees vary. To register, visit ossabawisland.org or 912-344-3900. Pre-registration required.

Turtle Hatching Day Trips or Weekend Trips

Day Trips:

Mon. July 20

Tue. July 21

Weekend Two-Night Trips:

Fri. July 24 – Sun. July 26

Fri. September 11 – Sun. September 13

Accompany Georgia DNR Sea Turtle Conservation Program interns as they inventory loggerhead turtle nests for eggs and live hatchlings on Ossabaw Island's South Beach. In 2019, a record-breaking 647 sea turtle nests were documented on Ossabaw.

Weekend trips include an ecological tour of Ossabaw, led by coastal ecologist/naturalist John "Crawfish" Crawford.

A Hands-On Indigo Dyeing Experience: Ossabaw Island Indigo Day Trips

Fri. September 18

Sat. September 19

Sun. September 20

Elizabeth DuBose and Mark Frissell share the history of Ossabaw indigo, provide instruction on creating fresh leaf indigo dye vats, and guide participants through the dyeing process. Limited to 6 people per day.

To sign up for emails on the latest information on Ossabaw events, text OSSABAW to 22828 from your phone.



Roger Gene Parker: 1935–2020

Remembering Ossabaw Island’s Salt Water Cowboy

Roger Gene Parker, known by many as Ossabaw Island’s Salt Water Cowboy, was an integral part of the Torrey/West family management team for Ossabaw Island for over six decades. He was a cattleman, a friend, a storyteller, and a master of the barbecue pit. He was a family man. He never met a stranger. He always wore his cowboy hat and was seldom far from a glass of whiskey or a cigar. Roger could repair anything on his truck, his boat and his tractor. He had a keen eye for the ladies. He knew every road, causeway, field and marsh of Ossabaw Island.

Roger died at his home in Richmond Hill, Georgia on March 9, 2020, after a year-long illness, surrounded by his immediate family. He was 84.

Born November 21, 1935, in Ways Station, Georgia, Roger first went to Ossabaw Island to work for his uncle, Arthur Graves, in 1951 at age sixteen. Graves managed the cattle operation known as Circle T Ranch for Bill Torrey, Eleanor “Sandy” Torrey West’s older brother.

Working on and off the island during his early years, Roger returned to Ossabaw full time in 1970. With his late wife, Sarah, he helped Mrs. West and her husband manage the island for Genesis and the Ossabaw Island Project. “They asked me to be in charge of all the animals, meaning the horses, cattle and pigs,” said Roger in a 2016 interview.

His first task in 1970 was to create and fence off a two-acre garden for the newly-formed Genesis program. Roger was impressed that over the Genesis years, “those kids really grew a nice garden.”

Roger’s days on Ossabaw were filled with, “repairing trucks, road work, repairing cattle fencing, trapping hogs for removal by barge and moving cattle around the island.” His favorite place on the island was Middle Place and Buckhead Creek, because it was protected from storms.

In the 1970s Roger purchased “90 head of cattle” from Mrs. West. From this island stock he provided meat for the Ossabaw Island Project, Genesis, and the families working on

the island. In 1990 he moved the herd to Stilson, Georgia, where he continued to raise cattle until his retirement.

“On the hill” (aka the mainland) and on the island, Roger was known for his BBQ butts and Sarah’s famous BBQ sauce. Roger prepared the pig for the first 16 years of the Ossabaw Island Pig Roast & Art Auction.

Roger retired from Ossabaw Island when Mrs. West left the island in 2016. He continued to visit the island after retirement, preparing barbecue for TOIF events and assisting with care for the Torrey-West estate. His last trip was in December 2019.

“What I miss most is the quiet place with no sirens or trucks. Ossabaw was a great place to live. No better place,” he said.

Roger and Mrs. West remained friends until his death. In late February, Mrs. West and Roger had supper at his home; sitting side-by-side, he told her stories about the island and they laughed together.

Roger’s death is a heartbreaking loss for the Ossabaw Island Foundation and for anyone who met him, whether on Ossabaw or “on the hill.” He was as much a part of Ossabaw Island as the trees, the birds, and the marsh.



Roger Parker and Gail Smith by Stacey Wells Photography.

Roger Gene Parker was preceded in death by his wife, Sarah Parker; a sister, Vivian Callahan; brothers Bobby, Hollis, and “Stanfield” Willie Parker.

He is survived by a brother, Julian Parker; son, Grayling Parker (Denise); granddaughter, Amanda Parker; great-granddaughter, Grey Esser; step-granddaughter, Jessica Kesler; many other relatives; and hundreds of friends in coastal Georgia and across the state.

The Ossabaw Island Foundation Trustees and staff extend our condolences to Roger’s family and friends. We miss him deeply.



Georgia Outdoors presents “Ossabaw”

A new TV episode now streaming on GPB.org

(Dedicated in memory of Roger Parker)

OSSABAW

Georgia Outdoors is an Emmy-winning TV show produced by Georgia Public Broadcasting.

In this new episode, host Sharon Collins explores Ossabaw’s mystery and history. Featuring new footage from 2010 – 2019.

Get close to a nesting loggerhead turtle, wading endangered wood storks, and sunning alligators. Includes a Roger Parker interview.

Watch “Ossabaw” on gpb.org/television/shows/georgia-outdoors

(Genesis Continued from Cover)

Genesis operated close to the land, with no running water or electricity. A typical day involved independent scientific research or creative projects, plus activities contributing to community life.

The task of the early groups was to establish a Genesis campus at Middle Place — an old plantation site, timber and cattle camp on Ossabaw's Buckhead River. Abandoned buildings were retrofitted for housing, dining and the Cook Shack. Students milled wood, built new tree house living quarters and an outdoor shower. They helped Roger Parker repair fencing and roads across the island. Roger taught them how to slaughter and butcher hogs.

Routine chores included: prepping cooking firewood, milking the cow, gathering eggs, and collecting honey. Each community member was assigned a rotating Cook Day for preparing meals, tending the two-acre organic produce garden, and cleaning the outhouse. Once per week, staples from town arrived, via delivery or an off-island trip by a Genesis member.

Genesis members in subsequent years built a solar shower, a sauna, and the iconic Tower House (constructed from lumber milled from trees felled on Ossabaw in 1979's Hurricane David.)

“To me the human connection was equally as important as the island connection,” said Kevin Donovan, a Genesis participant. “The island is kind of a catalyst to help the human connection grow and I think a lot of it had to do with Genesis. [In contrast with the Ossabaw Island Project], in Genesis ... you were in a much... tighter group. You had to work together and you were expected by the other people to provide for some of their needs.”

The concept of Genesis grew out of college study trips to Ossabaw Island in the late 1960s, especially from Shorter College in Rome, Georgia. Those trips were organized biology and science classes led by professors, many of whom became advisors to the Wests when Genesis began. Especially instrumental were Dr. Phillip Greear of Shorter College; Dr. Peter Paul Kellogg, ornithologist; Eugene Odom, University of Georgia ecologist; and Bob Hanie, founder and first director of The Georgia Conservancy.

The first 35 Genesis residents arrived on Ossabaw in June 1970 for a three-month experience. For some, life at Genesis was more than they bargained for. Despite believing in Genesis' philosophical ideals, the realities of living so far off the grid were too difficult. Within days, some students left.



2009 Reunion for Genesis directors and participants.

For those students who stayed, the effect of Genesis was profound.

“They told you about the snakes, they told you about the bugs, they were warning you. You were prepared for the dangers but you weren't prepared for how you were going to fall in love with the place,” said Harriet Bass, Clark University (Massachusetts) student.

“I loved nature before I came here, but I never lived in it for any kind of extended period,” said Larry Earl, a Georgia State student. “It definitely affects you, and it changes you, and you really understand what it means to be connected to it. That's part of ecology too.”

Al Bradford became the first Genesis director in 1971. “At Genesis nobody was really looking over your shoulder to say ‘you've got to produce six paintings; you've got to finish your novel; you've got to study your birds,’” he said. “A few people just ended up so into Genesis that they would spend most of their time fixing the buildings and working in the garden.... The point was engagement and we were cut off from all the requirements of our normal lives.”

“It would not have been the same experience had they come here alone,” said Helen Hamada, a Genesis co-director. “It was being thrown together with people of various backgrounds, various disciplines, but everybody... intently focused on a project and coming together... Having to negotiate and realizing that we were all interdependent on each other.”

Sources for quotes and photos:

Ossabaw Island - In the Beginning - Reflections on Year One of the Genesis Project (film, 2011)

Ossabaw Meeting - 2009 (film, 2016)



The End of Genesis Launched A Lifelong Friendship

by Mary Cameron

The sound of horses circling the house in the middle of the night, a peacock's piercing cry, Sandy's laughter around the kitchen table at dinner, rain dripping down the copper gutters, heart pine popping in the fireplace... these are the sounds of Ossabaw.

I was a Genesis Project member during the last weeks of the project. My project at Middle Place was painting on silk. The amazing structure that earlier project members had built was my studio. We cooled off in Buckhead Creek and danced on top of the old sawdust pile (Mount Middle Place). Our connection to the people in the Main House was by a hand held radio. We stood on the hood on a pickup truck with a giant kitchen whisk to get a signal. Cell phones were a futuristic fantasy. Piling in the old VW bus for a trip out to South End Beach was a special treat. It was hot! It was summer. It was the end of an era on Ossabaw.

I was fortunate to meet Sandy before that last boat left loaded with project members and their luggage. We hit it off. Connected. I was invited to return. That conversation on the final day of Genesis was the beginning of thirty years of visits and correspondence with Sandy.

We had many adventures together. An evening visit on the porch of a tabby cabin with Queenie Mae Williams, who worked as a cook at the Main House. Fishing for the first time with Roger Parker. Sitting around the kitchen table with various island employees, always with a handful of dogs around our feet. Errand days in Savannah in an old wood-trimmed station wagon with Sandy driving, and later with me driving on our "town day" adventures.

Some memories that stand out:

- Sitting in the sunroom listening to Sandy reading a short story written by a project member as the rain washed the patio.
- Decorating for Christmas in 1989, with a tree we cut in the woods. Snow bending down the palmettos and leaving white lines down the backs of donkeys. Feeding baby pigs out of a bread pan, and trying to keep baby birds alive that fell down a chimney.
- Picking magnolia branches to fill the enormous glazed urns in the entry hall.
- Walking down Cane Patch with Sandy (Lucky the pig, and dogs, following behind).
- Gathering oysters on a low tide foggy morning to roast by the edge of the vast marsh that evening.
- Sandy teaching us a word game over a holiday candlelight dinner that ended in a nonsense story and more laughter.
- Low country boils spread out over the picnic table.

And in the later years, bringing up a supper tray to Sandy's room and ending the day in the old caned rocker pulled up next to the bed, still finding things to have an uncontrollable laugh about.

*Mary Cameron is an artist living in Englewood, Florida.
All photos courtesy of Mary Cameron.*

Coastal Nature, Coastal Culture: Conversations on Georgia's Environmental Histories

A six-part lecture-and-discussion course featuring leading environmentalists, historians, and writers of coastal Georgia.

Sponsored by The Learning Center at SCI in Savannah & the Ossabaw Island Education Alliance.

Course Leader:

Dr. Paul M. Pressly, Director Emeritus
Ossabaw Island Education Alliance

Mondays at 2:00pm, September 28 through November 2
Skidaway Island Presbyterian Church, 50 Diamond Causeway, Savannah*

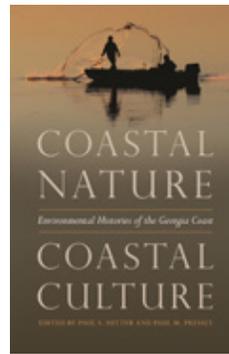
Program fee: \$60 series price for members; \$90 for visitors
Individual lectures: \$10 for members; \$15 for visitors.

Full-course registration includes ability to purchase a discounted copy of Coastal Nature, Coastal Culture by Paul S. Sutter and Paul M. Pressly, eds. Discounted price: \$23.00 (with full course registration only) Retail book prices: \$30.00 from TOIE, and \$32.95 list price.

To register:

Information: Debbie Hornsby, The Learning Center, 912-236-0363 or dhornsby@seniorcitizens-inc.org

**Course will be offered online as a webinar if COVID-19 restrictions cause cancellation of in-person lecture.*



Lectures and dates:

Why Does the Georgia Coast Matter?

Lecturer: Dr. Paul M. Pressly
Monday, September 28

**St. Catherines Island:
A View of the Coast**

Lecturer: Royce Hayes, retired manager,
St. Catherine's Island
Monday, October 5

The Tragedies of Ebo Landing

Lecturer: Dr. Dionne Hoskins-Brown, Director, NOAA-sponsored programs, Savannah State University, and Chair, Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.
Monday, October 12

The Rhetoric of Ruin: Coastal Georgia Plantations in The Early 20th Century

Lecturer: Paul Pressly.
Monday, October 19

Preserving Georgia's Coastline for Fifty Years

Dr. Clark Alexander, Director, Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, and Trustee, Ossabaw Island Foundation.
Monday, October 26

"The Places Where Water and Land Meet": Writing and Reading the Coastal Georgia Story.

Proposed Lecturer: Jane Fishman, author of four books including The Woman Who Saved an Island, and columnist, Savannah Morning News.
November 2



The Latest on Eleanor "Sandy" Torrey West

In January, our friend Mrs. West, the matriarch of Ossabaw Island, celebrated her 107th birthday. Although unable to attend the TOIF annual meeting, she was feted a few days later at her Savannah assisted living residence. Over 50 of her family and long-time friends packed the party room for singing, birthday cake, hugs and "Sandy stories."

When the COVID-19 pandemic made its way to Georgia, Mrs. West moved in with a friend, so that she would have minimal exposure to COVID-19 and be able to visit family and close friends. The new roommates are liking this arrangement so much that they've decided to continue it indefinitely.



Ossabaw Island Writers' Retreat: Ten Years of Inspired Creativity

by Tony Morris, Director

Ossabaw Island Writers' Retreat Fall Weekend
Fri. October 30 – Sun. November 1

Writing workshops, lectures, readings, one-on-one mentoring by nationally recognized writing faculty are the highlights of this Halloween weekend workshop. Directed by poet, novelist, and writing professor Tony Morris.

Visit ossabawwritersretreat.org or 912-344-3123

For several years, I'd been knocking around an idea for a writing retreat in the region. One day I was speaking to Robin Gunn (now TOIF Project Coordinator) and she asked if I had heard of Ossabaw Island -- that it might serve as a good spot for such a retreat. I knew nothing about the island, but the illimitable and indefatigable Robin insisted I discuss the idea with Paul Pressly, the Ossabaw Island Education Alliance director. How could I say "no?" We set up lunch with Paul, and after his enthusiastic endorsement, I set out to turn the dream into reality.

I established a non-profit dedicated to promoting creative writing, the Ossabaw Island Writers' Retreat (OWR). Our first retreat took place February 14-17, 2011. This allowed the retreat to lead up to the inaugural Savannah Book Festival. I secured commitments from Savannah Book Festival participants Beverly Donofrio, Lenore Hart, and Kathy Smith Bowers to serve on the first OWR faculty.

I was both anxious and excited while preparing for that first retreat: setting up boat schedules; coordinating food preparation; developing program brochures and lodging assignments; developing website application forms, advertisements for Facebook, local media, and national writing magazines. Soon we had enough participants for our first retreat: four days and three nights of one-on-one classes and workshops dedicated to developing manuscripts in fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction.

As we unloaded our gear at Torrey Landing and followed our island host up the causeway to the Club House, we immediately felt the enchantment and deeply mystical atmosphere of the island take hold. Ossabaw's salt-infused breezes rustling through the saw palmettos and whispering through the high pines and live oaks, and the quiet tranquility of the unspoiled natural beauty, enveloped us in its embrace. I knew, right then, that we'd found a perfect sanctuary for writers to develop their creative projects.

Ten years later, we've added two members to the staff, and we now offer a six-day program in the spring and a three-day program in the fall. We've hosted over one hundred writer participants and nearly 20 writer faculty members in this first decade. Since attending our retreat, many participants have been published in magazines and creative journals including O Magazine, Nashville Review, Hayden's Ferry Review, Rattle, Ninth Letter, and American Poetry Review. Fourteen book contracts have been awarded, and many other book projects are underway.

The most valuable benefit and resource at the Ossabaw Island Writers' Retreat is the spirit and attitude gained from the Ossabaw Island experience.

Tony Ray Morris is founder and director of the Ossabaw Island Writers' Retreat. A poet and novelist, he is the author of the novel Deep River Blues, available now from Northampton House, and four poetry books. Morris is managing editor of Southern Poetry Review. He teaches writing at Georgia Southern University.



By Danelle Lejeune

"When I think of Ossabaw, I think of evenings shared with other writers, days spent writing on the big front and back porches and walks through island pathways. I keep a few seashells nearby so I can always think about my time there."—Holly Peterson

"Their New York Times best-selling, incisive, and focused writer/editors who serve as mentors and coaches help you edit and shape what you need to say. This workshop is the real deal. Both advanced and beginning writers benefit richly. I cannot recommend this experience enough."—Janet Hess



By Danelle Lejeune

"The setting is unreal — idyllic, haunting, and largely undisturbed by time, Ossabaw Island isn't quite like anywhere else in the United States. It's the perfect location for clearing out those mental cobwebs and communing with your most creative self."—E. C. Miller

"I actually feel like a writer again. I am excited to return to this magical place, but the truth is this: I inhabit it everyday."—Danelle Lejeune

Ossabaw Fund Contributors

Thank you for your donations to the Ossabaw Island Foundation's Ossabaw Fund, July 2019–May 2020.

Ossabaw Donkey

Anne M. Ambrose
Michael Arabia
Jamie Arkins
Albert G. Bradford
Marco & Christina Brosius
Dan Burns in memory of Anne & Chuck Woods.
Irene J. Buszko
Venetia Butler
Ellen T. Crowley
Henry Dean
Harriett Delong
Julie Dimond
Robert DiNardo
Marla Gill Dugan
Lawrence Earl
Robert Eason
Susan Lowery Flaherty
Sherry Frazer
Jane Gilchrist
James L. Gilliard
Cooper Glenn
Wanda Granitz
Robin Gunn
Sissy & Joe Hoffman in memory of Frances H. Goldberg.
The Isaacsons
Debbie Jones
Jonas Jordan
Charlotte Keenoy
Margaret G. Livingston
Paul & Debra Mamalakis
Greg & Barbara McCollum
Jerry McCollum & Terry Tatum
Geoffrey H. Movius in honor of Sandy West.
John Pielmeier & Irene O'Garden
Adam Pomeranz
Carolyn Schmidt
Bryan Schroeder
Gilian Shallcross in honor of Eleanor West.
Jennie & Paul Shanor
Eileen Smith
Darlene Spencer in memory of Edward Nix.
Kristin Jeffords Stafford
Karen Steele
Dougless E. Strickland in memory of Jim Bitler and his beloved Indigo Program.
John Train
John Vian
Betsy Wade
Caryl & Carol Warner
Ronald P. Weller
Ron Wendt
Cheryl Windom
Elise Witt

Lucky the Ossabaw Pig

Mary Adams
Tiffany Alewine
Shepard B. Ansley in honor of Archie Davis.
Michael Arabia
John & Cort Atkinson
Cathi Barlow
Wilson Barmeyer
Mr. & Mrs. Craig Barrow III
David Bayne
Brad & Gail Beaman
Edward Benton
Linda Best
Patricia Black in honor of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.
Marcus Bromley
Nancy Bromley
Daniel Bromstad & Eleanor Rhangos
Sharon W. Brooks
Amanda Buice
Tiffany Burckhalter
Susan Burns
Team Callahan at Keller Williams Realty
Dave & Renee Capouya
Jennifer Capouya
Marguerite Carr
Mr. & Mrs. J. Robert Carter
Pamela Chawkin
Joan Clabbers
Susie Clinard
Mary Kay Clyburn
Malcolm H. Cole
William Cornelius
Babe Crockford in memory of Jack A. Crockford.
Ed Croft
Robert Daniels
W. Morgan Derst
Kimberlee Dixon
Cheryl Davenport Dozier
Elizabeth DuBose & Mark Frissell
Aletha Dunlavy
Mr. & Mrs. John Duren
James Elicker
Mike English
Edward Fogarty
Valerie & Michael Foradas
David Freed
Abby Friedman
Cynthia Maurice Garrett
Joy Garrett
Hartford P. Gongaware
Dr. & Mrs. W. Todd Groce
Greg & Vickie Guenther

The Guerry Beam Fund
Mr. & Mrs. Sheffield Hale
Susan & William Hancock
Robert L. Harrison
Janice Hildenbrand
Noel & Terri Holcomb in memory of Roger Parker.
Julian Hood
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Howe
Cecil & Sandra Hudson
William Pearson & Janet Richardson-Pearson
Scott Jarrell
Ulla Birkved Jensen
Janice & Michael Johnson in honor of Michael E. Johnson, Jr.
Mimi S. Jones
James & Cathy Joyce
Jane Kahn
Jan Kapoor in honor of Sandy West.
James T. Kleen
Nita Ann Knight Klein
Lee Kolb
Shirley Lindefeld
Lipp Family
Kitty MacFarlane
Rosemary Magee
John Bell Manly
Helen & Murray Marshall
Mr. & Mrs. Matthews
Gordon Matthews
Cynthia Maurice in honor of Sandy West's birthday.
Richard McBride
Charles McMillan
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Meadows
Richard Michaux
Mabel R. Milner
Gwen L. Morris
Billy Morris
Patricia D. Myers
Beth Nelson
Leandra Nessel
Betty Oliver
Joseph Page
Constance Parramore
Peggy M. Payne
Scott Pendergrast
Beth Reiter
Dr. & Mrs. Dan Rose
John Saillant
Michael Schroeder
Frank W. Seiler
John P. Shealy
Michael Siegel
Mark V. Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Edmund T. Sommer

Mr. & Mrs. Charles G. Spalding
Peter Swiderek
Kenneth H. Thomas in honor of Sandy West.
Mollie Tolbert
Alan & Peggy Usher
Barbara Vaughn
Gilbert & Jane Wells
Lisa White
Leah Willingham
Katrena Wilson
Carmen A. Young
Jennifer Zdunczyk
Dr. & Mrs. Michael Zoller

Fiddler Crab

Inge Brasseler
Jared & Mary Capouya
Timothy E. Coy
Patricia Deveau
Olivia Evans
Helen Hamada
Cathie Hudson
Mr. & Mrs. J. Laurence Dunn
Elizabeth Noe
Dean DuBose Smith in honor of Elizabeth DuBose.
Jane & Bob Springfield
Janet D. Stone
Suzanne H. Williams

Woodstork

Patricia T. Barmeyer
Burton Family Foundation
Matt DiLeo
Jim Noyes
Dr. & Mrs. John B. Hardman
Dr. & Mrs. William T. Moore
Ruth A. Knox
Shirley Lindefeld
Mary Georgia Mohr in honor of Ruth Knox.
Mindi Morrall
Linda Fisk J. Morris
Mr & Mrs. Jeff Kole
Mr. & Mrs. Philip Solomons Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. William Trosch
Amy G. Thorpe
Walks On Wassaw

Snowy Egret

Mr. & Mrs. Waldo Bradley
J.C. Lewis Foundation, Inc.

Great Egret

Mr. & Mrs. Archie Davis
Todd Eaton & Mario Castro
The Human Fund

A Letter to Our Friends on the State of the Ossabaw Island Foundation (TOIF)

In 2020, just as our busy spring Ossabaw Island visiting season was poised to begin, all of our worlds changed. We had 16 groups in 13 weeks cancel their trips to Ossabaw, in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have reduced or canceled some summer trips, and scaled back our fall activities.

We were saddened to have to cancel these trips. Sharing Ossabaw with old friends and first-time visitors is what we love. This affects not only our mission, but also our bottom line. Projected donations for spring disappeared as well. We rely on the generosity of our supporters to provide two-thirds of our funding each year.

Although trips were canceled, our expenses on Ossabaw Island remained level, due to building painting and equipment replacement needs. Maintaining a barrier island is a year-round effort, even when visits are low.

Some news is good. Thanks to many of you, we had a robust response to our Giving Tuesday Donkey Adoption Campaign. We received a CARES Act Payroll Protection

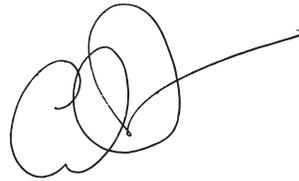
Plan forgivable loan, and a CARES Act grant from the Georgia Council for the Humanities.

Nevertheless, gaps remain in our budget. Although we are close to meeting our original Ossabaw Fund goal of \$55,000, we must now exceed it by \$15,000 to cover part of the shortfall resulting from canceled visits.

Like our matriarch, Eleanor “Sandy” Torrey West, we remain focused on our long term goals of sharing the voices and mystery of Ossabaw Island while preserving the island for future generations.

We ask that you invest in Ossabaw now, as we envision a time when we will resume a full calendar of hosting groups. Please take a moment to contribute to the Ossabaw Island Foundation. Every gift matters.

Thank you for your support.



Elizabeth DuBose
Executive Director

Ossabaw Rock Group Donates Rocking Chairs to TOIF

Did you hear? The band is back together!

The Ossabaw Rock Group is our name for our generous friends who donate rocking chairs for the Club House and Boarding House porches.

Thank you to these rocking chair donors:

Sharon Brooks	Ulla Birkved Jensen
Mario Castro & Todd Eaton	Manly Family
Russ Clark	McLeod Family
Patty Deveau	Gwen Morris
Dickinson Family	Beth Nelson
Katrina & Jeffrey Dinkle	Constance Parramore
Cheryl Davenport Dozier	Jerome Rooney
Keith Carter Edgecomb	Kevin Ryan
Stella Ellsworth	Barbara Vaughn
Jarrell Family	Carmen Young



John Crawford tests out the new rocking chair during the Pig Roast & Art Auction. Daniel Epting auctions off new chairs for the Boarding House.
Photo by Stacey Wells

Join the band of rockers by sponsoring a new rocking chair. Each sponsored chair will be marked with a commemorative plaque. To join the Ossabaw Rock Group visit gagives.org/story/Ossabawrocks



By Julian Buckmaster

Volunteer on Ossabaw Island for Georgia Butterfly Migration Survey

Citizen Scientist/Volunteer Butterfly Survey Training and Orientation:

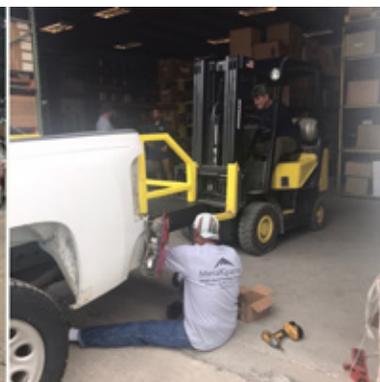
Tuesday, July 28. 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Solms Hall, Armstrong campus of Georgia Southern University
11935 Abercorn Street, Savannah, GA 31419
Register via Eventbrite: [ossabawbutterfly.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ossabawbutterfly-survey-2020)
by Friday, July 24.

Citizen scientists (aka volunteers) trained in butterfly surveying will visit 16 data collection sites on Ossabaw Island one day each week, to count three different species of butterflies. Six volunteers are needed for each week's survey session, Mondays, August 17 – November 9 (except Labor Day). It is not necessary to volunteer for all days of the survey.

For more information, contact volunteer Cam Mathis, 2020 Butterfly Survey coordinator, cmathis101@gmail.com.



Photos by Elizabeth DuBose



“New” Trucks, New Paint on Ossabaw

Two “new to Ossabaw” trucks arrived on the island in April. Thanks to Mike Williams and Tim Lancaster of Metalquarters, Inc. who added retrofitted rear steps and seating, and found us a great deal on the trucks. (top)

The 1887 Club House was repainted this year by Robert Medders of Waverly, Georgia. (right)



By Robert Medders



2020 OSSABAW ISLAND PIG ROAST & ART AUCTION

(Redesigned in the era of social distancing!)
Instead of one big HOG of a party, we're
having three smaller events:

The Three Little Pig Roasts!

Friday October 25

Saturday October 26

Sunday October 27

We are spreading our signature fundraising event over three days to accommodate small groups of visitors, so guests can properly social distance while they enjoy delicious barbecue, tasty lowcountry side dishes, Savannah-brewed craft beers, organic wines. Each day's Little Pig Roast will host a maximum of 60 guests.

Ossabaw-inspired artwork will be available, with live music from our favorite Ossabaw musicians. As plans firm up, we'll keep you updated on ossabawisland.org, via social media, and with emails.

The Three Little Pig Roasts will be similar to our Ossabaw Island Picnic and Hurricane History Tours, which replaced the Pig Roast after Hurricane Matthew in 2016.

Three Little Pig Roast Tickets On Sale September 2

Sponsorships available now!

Thank you to our lead sponsors:

Archie & Sally Davis

Georgia Power

The Ossabaw Island Pig Roast & Art Auction is the sole annual fundraiser for the Ossabaw Island Foundation, held on the grounds of the Torrey-West Estate on Ossabaw Island.

Artwork by John McWilliams

Volunteers: Fourth Eagle Scout project on Ossabaw Island

Eagle Scout Chase Hunsicker constructed a full scale replica of a 19th century wooden tabby form, using a historic form design and traditional joinery. Hunsicker and fellow Troop 197 members traveled to Ossabaw Island in February to install his tabby form as a display in the North End Smoke House. The Boy Scouts spent a day cleaning and preparing the Smoke House for the new form.

In the 19th century over 30 tabby buildings were constructed on Ossabaw Island. Plantation owners relied on enslaved African-Americans to perform the complex and labor-intensive construction process.

"This new tabby form is a real work of art," said Elizabeth DuBose, TOIF Executive Director. "It's displayed at eye level. This form will help visitors understand the tabby-making process."



By Elizabeth DuBose

Thank you Eagle Scout Chase Hunsicker and Troop 197 for your contribution to Ossabaw's educational programming.



Aerial view of a large tidal channel. Screenshot courtesy of Southern Spaces.

Your Virtual Tour of Ossabaw Island

New short film now streaming

For a bird's eye view of Ossabaw Island, check out the new 4 ½ minute film *Ossabaw Island Flyover*, posted in the online magazine Southern Spaces, published by the Emory University Center for Digital Scholarship.

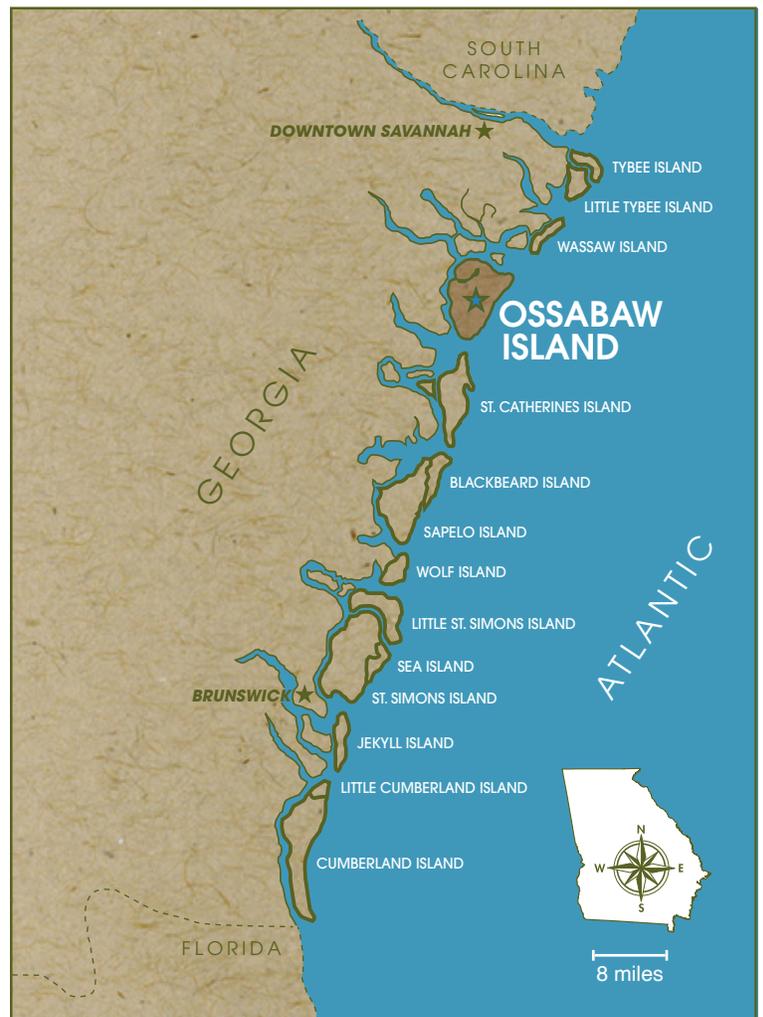
Emory filmmaker Steve Bransford uses drone photography to capture the ecosystems of Ossabaw Island. Written and narrated by environmental science professor Anthony Martin.

Aerial views include a rookery filled with wading birds, a family of hogs crossing a marsh, a forest of cabbage palms, and a time lapse of the rising tide at Boneyard Beach. Featuring footage of damage from Hurricane Matthew.

Watch *Ossabaw Island Flyover* on southernspaces.org/2020/ossabaw-island-flyover



By Southern Spaces



Adopt an Ossabaw Donkey for \$25

Support the Ossabaw Island Foundation

A donkey adoption makes a great gift.

Plan to visit Ossabaw Island on one of our daytrips or overnight stays and you might get to pat your donkeys or feed them a carrot! Ossabaw's donkeys are free ranging but are very social; they like it when guests visit the island.

Your symbolic adoption of one of Ossabaw Island's miniature Sicilian donkeys will help support the Ossabaw Island Foundation. In return for your adoption we will send you or your gift recipient an adoption certificate, and an Ossabaw Island sticker.

Adopt online via TOIF's link on the Georgia Gives donation site: gagives.org/story/Donkey.

Thank you to all who adopted Ossabaw donkeys in 2020 during our Giving Tuesday adoption event in May!

Carmela Aliffi & Jane Fishman in honor of Sandy West.

Jamie Arkins

S. Bacon

Barbara Baker

Martha Barnes

Lynda Beam dedicated to Sandy Eleanor, my island burro.

Brad and Gail Beaman

Anne Berry

Linda Blount

Michele Bosic Folta

Sharon Brooks

J. Grant Brown III

Tiffany Bureckhalter Alewine Happy Birthday Lucas Sivy!!!

Tiffany Bureckhalter Alewine dedicated to Collette Alewine.

Angela Burns

Alan Campbell in memory of M'Liss Williams.

Renee Capouya in honor of Eric Bromley on the occasion of his birthday.

Meta Carr

K. Cerbone

Bradford Christman

Karen Clark

Mary Kay Clyburn

Flynn Clyburn in honor of Mary Kay Clyburn.

Cece Coleman in memory of my treasured mom, Big Connie Coleman.

Allison Connor in honor of Sandy Torrey West - with a lifetime of gratitude.

William Cornelius

John Crawford

Sydney Cummings in honor of Philip Lohr.

Lynne Daley

Archie & Sally Davis in honor of Anna B. Davis, Hilliard Davis, Mills Morrison III, and Harry Morrison.

Emily Dickinson Scrivner

Don Donahoe dedicated to Sandy West.

Helen Downing

Elizabeth DuBose in honor of all the Ossabaw Island donkey adopters.

Lawrence Earl

Mike English

Edward Fogarty

Cindy Fuller

Steve Fuller

Dorinda G. Gilmore in honor of Beth Gilmore.

Chris Gooby

Denise Grabowski dedicated to Michael and Julia Grabowski.

Kate Grinalds

Robin Gunn in honor of Ava Kreutzer for graduating from 8th grade.

Maria Gutierrez in honor of Diana, Cody, Mat & Jill.

Ruth Haas

Susan Hancock

Lua Hancock dedicated to Barbara Rudolph, Happy 70th and Moms Day! ILY.

William Harrell in memory of Alexandra Harrell, who loved her donkey Jasper.

Mary Hataway

Regina Holderness in honor of Hilton and Winfield Cay.

Emma Hostetter

Kristin Inman

Kristina Istre on behalf of the

Augusta, Georgia science teachers.

Kristin Jeffords Stafford

Robert Johnson

Susan Joyce in honor of Thomas Joyce.

Allen Joyce

Jane Kahn in honor of Bobby Kahn's birthday.

Jan Kapoor in honor of Mary Helen and Max.

Peter Kastner dedicated to Kate on Mother's Day.

Jane Kilgo

Lee Kolb

Sara Laidlaw in honor of Mark Woodruff and in memory of my brother Greg.

Kathy Ledvina dedicated to Elizabeth DuBose.

LaTika Lee dedicated to Christopher Tamos Lee.

Aaron Lindbloom dedicated to Natalie Lindbloom.

Lora Lord

Cam Mathis dedicated to Leila Sullivan.

Raymond Mino

Lynn Moses

Gazie Nagle

Kathy Neal

Beth Nelson

Amanda Newsom Penn in honor of Joel Penna's birthday this month and our love of Ossabaw Island.

Leslie P. Noe

Melissa O'Brien

Jamie Olson dedicated to Larry Earl who spent several months living on the island many years ago and has enthralled us with stories of his adventures many times. His love for the island and its preservation is inspiring.

Carol Owens

Deborah Palk

Patrick Powers

Mary Reiter dedicated to Katherine Reiter.

Paula Reith

Amanda Roberts Thompson dedicated to Elizabeth, Mark, and Robin for all of your support for UGA Archaeology!

Barbara A. Sayer

Michael Schroeder

Mary Semmelmayr

Gina Stone

Dougless Strickland in honor of Cathy L. Rake.

Zelda Tenenbaum dedicated to Anastasia Kontos for her love of animals and the earth!

Raine Theis

Jeremy Thompson

Christiana Turner dedicated to each of my three adult children (Eleanor, Lawson and Audrey) and my wonderful daughter-in-law (Siria) for bringing me so much joy every day!

Donna Tyer

Gayla Valle

Olivia Vrba

Lori Vrba

Mary Lillie Watson

Lisa White in honor of Sandy West.

Ishmael Williams in honor of Derky, one of the original donkeys who used to come up behind me at night while I was walking on the beach and hee haw and scare the dickens out of me.

Barbara Williams dedicated to Lane Hardina's 12th Birthday.

Photo by Julian Buckmaster



Ossabaw Island Foundation
13040 Abercorn St., Suite 20
Savannah, GA 31419
912-344-3900
ossabawisland.org

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Savannah, GA.
Permit No. 1113

Support the Ossabaw Fund Now



Donate by using the enclosed envelope or visit ossabawisland.org.
Every gift matters. Thank you!

ABOUT OSSABAW ISLAND:

Ossabaw Island is a 26,000-acre undeveloped barrier island on the Atlantic Ocean, owned by the State of Georgia and located in Chatham County. Georgia's first Heritage Preserve, accessible only by boat, is undeveloped and set aside by an Executive Order for natural, scientific and cultural study, research and education; and for environmentally sound preservation, conservation and management of the island's ecosystem.

The Ossabaw Island Foundation (TOIF) is a non-profit 501 (c) 3. Through a partnership with the State of Georgia, TOIF inspires, promotes, and manages exceptional educational, cultural, and scientific programs that are designed to maximize the experience of Ossabaw Island, while minimizing the impact on the island's resources.

Contact us:

Elizabeth DuBose

Executive Director, Ossabaw Island Foundation
elizabeth@ossabawisland.org

Robin Gunn

Project Coordinator, Ossabaw Island Foundation
robin@ossabawisland.org

Paul Pressly

Director Emeritus, Ossabaw Island Education Alliance
pmpressly@gmail.com

Join our Facebook group: Ossabaw Island Lovers
Twitter: [@ossabawisland](https://twitter.com/ossabawisland) Instagram: [@ossabawisland](https://www.instagram.com/ossabawisland)

Ossabaw Island Foundation 2020 Board of Trustees

Chair

John Manly, Savannah

Chair Elect

M. Tyus "Ty" Butler, Jr., Savannah

Treasurer

Mike English, Savannah

Secretary

Leigh Goff, Atlanta

Trustees

Clark Alexander, Savannah
Patricia Barmeyer, Atlanta
Eric Bromley, Atlanta
Archie Davis, Savannah
Cheryl Dozier, Savannah
J. Truitt Eavenson, Savannah
Beryl Gilothwest, Brooklyn, NY
Vaughnette Goode-Walker, Savannah
Denise Grabowski, Savannah
Susan Hancock, Savannah
John C. Helmken II, Savannah
Susan Laney, Savannah
Bryan Schroeder, Decatur

Chair Emerita

Eleanor "Sandy" T. West, Savannah