



# Common Bond

MTSU Center for Historic Preservation Newsletter

## Center Prepares Getty Survey of UT Campus



*Ayres Hall on UT-Knoxville campus*

Hall, and Estabrook Hall. The River Road Historic Area on the UT Agricultural Campus has, among its distinctive buildings, Morgan Hall, McCord Hall, Brehm Animal Sciences Building, and the unique glass, steel, and concrete TVA Greenhouse. The Knoxville firm of Barber and McMurry designed many of the buildings in both areas in a distinctive red-brick Collegiate Gothic style.

The CHP also gave close attention to important historic homes owned by the university. Nationally significant architect Charles Barber designed Tyson Alumni Hall (1907–8) for Lawrence Tyson, a U.S. senator and World War I hero from Knoxville. Knoxville native and, later, important Texas architect John F. Staub designed Hopecote (1924), a stunning example of Arts and Crafts

*Cover continued on page 4*

Throughout 2007, the Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) worked with the University of Tennessee's Community Partnership Center as well as the UT faculty senate to assess the historical and architectural resources of the UT-Knoxville campus. The survey, funded by the Getty Foundation, sought to identify the university's best heritage assets and create a campus preservation plan.

Van West and CHP architectural historian Elizabeth Moore carried out the survey with the assistance of UT students. MTSU master's student Julie Lenger conducted a specialized assessment of the campus's various monuments and memorials. West and Tim Ezzell of UT presented the survey findings to the UT administration and the wider community through broadcasts on the university television station, UTTV.

West and Moore determined that of particular merit were two large historic areas. The Hill on Cumberland Avenue includes such landmarks as South College, Ayres Hall, Jessie Harris Hall, Hoskins Library, Peay Hall, Perkins



*Morgan Hall on UT-Knoxville campus*

## MTSU Preservation Classes Contribute to Tennessee Communities

In the 2007–2008 academic year, the CHP again worked closely with the MTSU History Department to provide outstanding experiential learning opportunities for students through research/public service projects in Tennessee communities.

In the fall semester, Dr. Van West's Seminar in Architectural History class prepared two historic structures reports: one on Free Hills Rosenwald School in Clay County and another on the Niota Railroad Depot in McMinn County. Both buildings were listed in the National Register of Historic Places, but plans were needed to find new uses for the buildings and to lay out a roadmap for future preservation work. Susan Knowles, Paul Hoffman, Katie Merzbacher, Amanda Hall, and Gary Ferguson prepared the two reports.

In two classes this spring semester, students are working on seven Tennessee projects. Three groups are working on National Register nominations for a historic garage and community building in Oliver Springs in Anderson County, the Everbright Avenue historic district in Franklin, and Bluff View Farm in Dickson County. Other community projects include a historic structure report for the Durham Chapel Rosenwald School in Sumner County, a furnishings plan for the Longstreet House in Hamblen County, and a heritage inventory for the Pinewood Community in Hickman County. Center staff and students also are carrying out a site development plan for the Buford Pusser House Museum in McNairy County. Pusser was a law enforcement hero who became nationally famous through the *Walking Tall* movies of the 1970s.

Paul Hoffman, Katie Merzbacher, Jinn Ling Lin, Karen Hargrove, Elizabeth Goetsch, Megan Akerstrom, Katherine Looney, Liz Smith, Heather Bailey, Kristen Deathridge, Betsy Snowden, and Amanda Ratliff are working on the spring projects.



*Niota Depot, McMinn County*



*Students at Durham Chapel Rosenwald School, Sumner County*



*Students at Bluff View Farm, Dickson County*

# Partnering with the Ph.D. Program



Spurgeon King,  
Ph.D. assistant

## Spurgeon King Ph.D. Candidate

Spurgeon King (B.S., History and International Affairs, Florida State; M.A., History/Historic Preservation, MTSU) is a second-year Public History doctoral candidate with an assistantship at the Center for Historic Preservation. While at the center, Spurgeon has coauthored a historic structure report for the Longstreet Headquarters in Russellville, Tennessee; completed a National Register nomination for Elmwood, a Civil War–era farmstead north of Murfreesboro; contributed entries on Civil War battle sites in East Tennessee to the *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*; and assisted with the Franklin Battlefield National Historic Landmark application. He recently helped survey sites for a Civil War driving tour of ten counties in Tennessee. King also assisted with a landscape resources inventory conducted by the Metropolitan Nashville Historical Commission in association with the MTSU History Department and contributed to the Montgomery Bell Office Historic Structure Report completed by the CHP. In April, he will assist Dr. Van West as a panelist for the historic preservation working group at the National Council on Public History Conference in Louisville. King’s dissertation will be a military history of the Civil War in upper East Tennessee.

Before entering the Public History doctoral program at MTSU, King worked as a preservation consultant in upstate New York for over 20 years. During his consulting career, he completed numerous National Register nominations, architectural surveys, and tax act projects. He coordinated a central business district façade rehabilitation program in Seneca Falls and taught a preservation course at Syracuse University as an adjunct professor in the Department of Design. King was also licensed by the New York Department of State to teach preservation disclosure requirements to realtors, and he authored a preservation manual for historic district commission members in New

York. In addition, he completed various standards and guidelines booklets, articles, and op-ed pieces.

When questioned about his reasons for returning to Middle Tennessee State University, King said, “Basically, it was simply time for a change. I had always wanted to earn a doctorate and the Public History program offered me a chance to go for it. Working at the Center for Historic Preservation and with professors in the History Department has proved quite stimulating, and there is no better place in the world to re-fight the Civil War than Tennessee! I am very grateful for this opportunity to achieve some long-standing scholarly goals.”



Susan Knowles,  
Ph.D. assistant

## Susan W. Knowles, Ph.D. Candidate

Susan W. Knowles (B.A. French and Art History, Vanderbilt University; M.L.S., George Peabody College; M.A., Art History, Vanderbilt University) is a second-year Public History doctoral candidate with an assistantship at the Center for Historic Preservation. Since coming to the Center for Historic Preservation, Knowles has created art- and architecture-related entries for the *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, written National Register nominations, assisted with layout for a local history museum exhibition, and assisted with historic preservation survey work. Knowles, who will be writing her dissertation on the use of Tennessee marble in civic architecture, presented poster sessions at the American Historical Association annual meeting in Atlanta and the National Council on Public History in Santa Fe during 2007.

Before entering the Ph.D. program in Public History at MTSU, Knowles worked at the Metropolitan Nashville Arts Commission, Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art, and the Country Music Hall of Fame. Since 1992, Knowles has been a consulting curator for

*Ph.D. Program continued on page 4*

## Partnering with the Ph.D. Program

continued from page 3

museum exhibitions and projects related to Tennessee art and history for the Tennessee State Museum, the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Fisk University, the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, Humanities Tennessee, and the Customs House Museum in Clarksville. She contributed the chapter “Two Hundred Years of Sculpture in Tennessee” to *A History of Tennessee Arts* (UT Press, 2004, ed. Carroll Van West) and was one of the primary essayists in *The Art of Tennessee* (Frist Center for the Visual Arts, 2003).

While a research fellow at the center, under the direction of Van West, Knowles has coauthored two successful historic district nominations for the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School (now Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts) as well

as reports on the Niota Railroad Depot and the Free Hills Community Center (a former Rosenwald school). In fall 2007, she made a presentation on visual art resources in Tennessee to the southeast chapter of the Art Librarians Association of North America. Of her involvement with the center, Knowles said, “Being engaged on a daily basis with some of the foremost authorities on Tennessee architecture and preservation has contributed greatly to my education. Experiencing the wealth of Tennessee’s cultural landscapes first-hand and working with communities to assist them in appreciating their built environment is both exciting and gratifying.” She is now involved in center projects in Madisonville, Crossville, and Gatlinburg and looking forward to beginning her survey work related to the Tennessee marble industry in the upcoming months.

## Center Prepares Getty Survey of UT Campus

continued from cover

style. The Early Learning Research Center (1937) was a New Deal-supported building that gave the university a modern nursery school as well as a Colonial Revival-styled home where students could study to be model homemakers and learn modern standards in child care. The Cowan Cottage, an Italianate-styled remnant of the post-Civil War Cowan estate, is the university’s second oldest building, constructed circa 1879.

The university’s post-World War II period was also studied. The buildings initially associated with the desegregation of UT, such as Dabney Hall and the Taylor Law Library, were identified. One often overlooked modernist jewel is the Silverstein-Luper Hearing and Speech Center (1958–59), designed in a Wrightian style by Painter, Weeks, and McCarty. Stokely Athletic Center and Armory, built in 1958 and 1966, was an extremely important building for its association with UT athletics and recreation and also for Vietnam War protests.



*C. E. Brebm Animal Sciences Building on UT-Knoxville campus*

“As Tennessee’s flagship university,” noted West, “the UT campus has many important heritage assets. Documenting this historic campus gives us new insights of how education, engineering, agriculture, home economics, athletics, and race have shaped modern America. It was a privilege working with Dr. Ezzell and the UT team to produce this model study.”

## TCWNHA Shares Award with MTSU Grad

Myers Brown, Curator of History and Extension Services for the Tennessee State Museum and graduate of the Public History masters program, was recently honored along with the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area at the 2008 statewide Tennessee Association of Museums conference for the traveling exhibit, *Hoofbeats in the Heartland: Civil War Cavalry in Tennessee*. The exhibit is currently booked through March 2010 at museums across the state. Recent venues have included Travellers Rest, Museum Center at Five Points, Cookeville History Museum, Sam Davis Home and Museum, Meeman-Shelby State Park, and Oaklands Historic House Museum.



Melissa Zimmerman (Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area) and Myers Brown (Tennessee State Museum) accept the Award of Commendation for the Hoofbeats exhibit. Photo courtesy John Perkins, Perkins Photography.

## Smotherman Retirement Reception



Nancy Smotherman with former student workers. Pictured from left to right are Tiffany Godbey, Meghan Dobbs Eades, Brian Eades, Daranee Moore Bigelow, David Jutkins, Nancy Smotherman, Jennifer McBroom Shain, and Margaret Binnicker.

Staff of the Center for Historic Preservation honored Nancy W. Smotherman, former executive aide, on Thursday, December 13, with a retirement reception in the Tom H. Jackson Building. Over 100 current and former students and colleagues from MTSU joined family and friends to wish her well.

## MTSU Reception in St. Paul



MTSU alumni and staff in St. Paul. Pictured from left to right are Jeff Durbin, Michael Fleenor, Elizabeth Moore, Brian Dempsey, Jim Draeger, Chris Hetzel, Brad Wolf, Nancy Tinker Pace, Erick Montgomery, Cynthia Cole Jenkins, Phil Thomason, Anne-Leslie Owens, Laura Stewart Holder, and Susan Knowles.

Over 50 friends, partners, alumni, staff, and students of MTSU gathered at the MTSU reception held during the National Trust for Historic Preservation conference in St. Paul in October 2007.

## Former CHP Grad Assistant Becomes First Ph.D. in Public History



Tara Mielnik with her children after graduation.

Tara Mitchell Mielnik, who served as a graduate research assistant at the Center for Historic Preservation, became the University's first Ph.D. in Public History graduate in December

2007. Mielnik's dissertation, "South Carolina's 'Breathing Spaces': The Civilian Conservation Corps and State Parks in South Carolina," is an important addition to the scholarly literature about the New Deal's impact on the South. "We are very proud of Dr. Mielnik," commented CHP director Van West. "She has set a standard of excellence and professional commitment for future doctoral students to strive for." Dr. Mielnik is a preservation planner at the Metropolitan Nashville Historical Commission.

## CENTER FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Box 80, MTSU  
Murfreesboro, TN 37132  
(615) 898-2947  
(615) 898-5614 (fax)  
histpres@mtsu.edu  
<http://histpres.mtsu.edu>

Carroll Van West, Director  
Caneta S. Hankins, Assistant Director  
Anne-Leslie Owens, Public Service Coordinator  
Elizabeth Moore, Fieldwork Coordinator  
Stacey Graham, Research Professor  
Cindy Duke, Executive Aide



## TENNESSEE CIVIL WAR NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Box 80, MTSU  
Murfreesboro, TN 37132  
(615) 898-2947  
(615) 898-5614 (fax)  
civilwar@mtsu.edu  
<http://histpres.mtsu.edu/tncivwar>



Carroll Van West, Director  
Laura Stewart Holder, Manager  
Michael T. Gavin, Preservation Specialist  
Antoinette G. van Zelm, Historian  
Melissa Zimmerman, Heritage Programming Specialist  
Jennifer Butt, Program Assistant

## Center Staff Updates



*Cindy Duke, executive aide*

The Center for Historic Preservation is pleased to announce that Cindy Duke has joined our staff as executive aide to Dr. Van West. Duke, a native of Detroit, has been associated with MTSU for many years. In 1977, she relocated to Murfreesboro to attend Middle Tennessee State University, where she completed a two-year certificate program in Business Administration in 1979. Upon graduation, Duke immediately went to work at MTSU, serving in the English Department from 1981 to 1992. From 1988 to 1992, she served as secretary to the department chair, Dr. Frank Ginanni. Duke left the English Department to serve as secretary to Dr. Robert Jones, vice president for Academic Affairs, from 1992 to 1994. After successfully owning and operating a convenience store with her husband for nine years, Duke decided to return to MTSU. Welcome, Cindy!

MTSU, a Tennessee Board of Regents university, is an equal opportunity, nonracially identifiable, educational institution that does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. AA202-0308

**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

### Center for Historic Preservation

Box 80  
Middle Tennessee State University  
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

2-25400

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 169  
Murfreesboro, TN