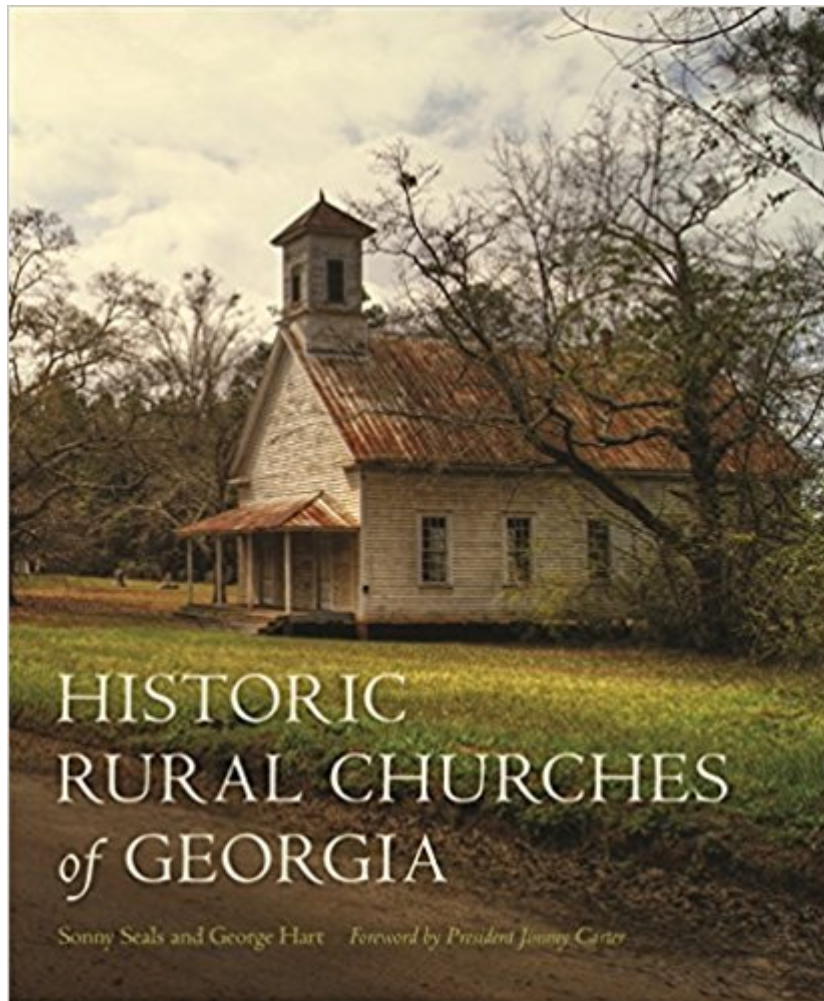




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# Historic Rural Churches Of Georgia



## Synopsis

Aspects of Georgia's unique history can only be told through its extant rural churches. As the Georgia backcountry rapidly expanded in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the churches erected on this newly parceled land became the center of community life. These early structures ranged from primitive outbuildings to those with more elaborate designs and were constructed with local, hand-hewn materials to serve the residents who lived nearby. From these rural communities sprang the villages, towns, counties, and cities that informed the way Georgia was organized and governed and that continue to influence the way we live today. Historic Rural Churches of Georgia presents forty-seven early houses of worship from all areas of the state. Nearly three hundred stunning color photographs capture the simple elegance of these sanctuaries and their surrounding grounds and cemeteries. Of the historic churches that have survived, many are now in various states of distress and neglect and require restoration to ensure that they will continue to stand. This book is a project of the Historic Rural Churches of Georgia organization, whose mission is the preservation of historic rural churches across the state and the documentation of their history since their founding. If proper care is taken, these endangered and important landmarks can continue to represent the state's earliest examples of rural sacred architecture and the communities and traditions they housed.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 432 pages

Publisher: University of Georgia Press (September 1, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0820349356

ISBN-13: 978-0820349350

Product Dimensions: 10.3 x 1.3 x 12.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 47 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #62,562 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in Books > Arts &

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Architecture > Buildings > Religious Buildings #620 in Books > History > Americas > United States > State & Local

## Customer Reviews

During most of its 284 years as a colony and state, Georgia has been a rural setting of field, forest,

glade, and mountain. Therefore, most of Georgia's houses of worship have likewise been rural. Times are changing, both culturally and demographically, but many Georgians still have a strong, almost visceral affection for the rural church. Sonny Seals and George S. Hart understand the charm and importance of the rural church. With the assistance of an outstanding troupe of volunteer photographers, Seals and Hart have done a magnificent job in bringing to us a beautiful selection of rural churches in all their glory—or, as is sometimes the case, faded glory. Open, view, read, and enjoy. (Dan Roper editor, Georgia Backroads Magazine)

Rural churches offer a unique window on the soul of Georgia. Through them we gain insight into the architecture, culture, history, and geography of our state. This beautifully illustrated and engagingly written book is an indispensable resource for anyone interested in this vanishing part of Georgia's landscape and a must-read for anyone seeking to understand what it means to be a Georgian and an American. (W. Todd Groce, president and CEO, Georgia Historical Society author of *Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee Confederates and the Civil War, 1860-1870*)

The sight of an old church strikes a chord deep within us, as if the hymns and prayers that rose in them transformed the structures themselves into sanctums. Surely we have entered sacred ground with this rich and lovely book of photographs of Georgia's historic rural churches. The stories of these powerful landmarks had gone untold, until Sonny Seals and George Hart began their quest to honor them. In many ways this splendid book is a pilgrimage into the heart and soul of Georgia's history and culture. It is deserving of a mighty mighty praise. (Janisse Ray author of *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* and *Drifting into Darien*)

To understand the history of Georgia, it is essential to understand the role that religion played in the lives of the people. . . . I am proud to be associated with the book and the movement to preserve the historic rural churches of Georgia. (President Jimmy Carter)

Historic Rural Churches of Georgia has a foreword by President Jimmy Carter, a preface by Seals and Hart telling why they did it and an informative introduction about early religion in Georgia by Mercer University historian John Thomas Scott. It also has some cool old maps of Georgia and excellent, evocative photography by a group of volunteers. . . . Erin Kirk New's elegant design uses the large format well and enhances the plethora of pictures with just enough text of sufficient size to tell this multilayered story without keeping the congregation overlong. . . . This big, beautiful, informative book is well worth its price at \$45 and is a fine gift for anybody interested in Georgia and how it came to be. (Pete McCommons Flagpole)

Some of Georgia's earliest churches offer unique insights into the state's past

Not only is this grand book filled with beautiful photographs of old Georgia churches, it is filled with a plethora of honorable, well written history of these churches! This gorgeous book would make a wonderful gift for a wedding or house warming gift and is priced so reasonable you can purchase one for yourself as well!

This is a must have for anyone wanting a unique view of pre and post civil war Georgia from a perspective not yet captured by any other author or historian. The authors do a terrific job of setting the scene in a quick and descriptive manner allowing the reader to get a glimpse into the community at the time of the formation and construction of the church being highlighted and how it was a cornerstone of life in the community. The photos are terrific and capture the beauty of each church while also highlighting the dire conditions of many and the urgency for action to save these structures and celebrate the communities that developed around them. I love reading about pre and post Civil War history from different perspectives and was pleasantly surprised how many nuggets I picked up from the concise write ups for each church in this book. I would recommend pulling up a Georgia map as you page through this book to maximize your enjoyment. This will allow you to see how near or far the church community was to other communities in Georgia during a compelling time in our nations history.

Sonny Seals and George Hart have produced a "must have" book for any student of history in the south, and may well have spawned a most worthwhile cause in the process. Bravo!

This gorgeous book is long, long over due. It is a treasure to own beyond any other for all who love the old white clapboard churches that are still standing today. Every community should strive to have a budge in their coffers to restore and maintain them. They should all be on the National Register of History places and protected with each generation. These men have gone beyond words with this book, it is that fabulous. I want more copies so I can give them to all I know.

Just received your book & I am Amazed & overwhelmed! I knew it would be great having followed you from your first church posting but What a incredible body of work! I was stunned at the photography. It traps you at the cover & you are literally on a gripping emotional journey with every turn of the page. Your work is indeed a ministry & I pray that as your message is heard more of these beautiful old testaments of rural Georgians faith will be saved.

The photography contained within this book is incredible and is complemented with exceptional stories of the history of these venerable churches. Regardless of your religious beliefs, this book documents the history of the state and its people. For those of us who drive the back roads of Georgia this tome provides insight into the churches and communities that grace the landscape. For those of you who drive the interstate, this book will give you a reason to drive the back roads. I can't say enough about the quality of the photography contained in the book.

Wow! What a wonderful educational journey down the road into Georgia's past. A must read for any lover of Georgia History - the maps really brought things into perspective about how and why we developed as a state.

The photography is spectacular. The accompanying narrative was an education in many previously unknown facets of early Georgia history.

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