



The Institute Newsletter

Notes from the Executive Director

Fall 2022

Hello!

It's been an exciting summer for the Andalusia Institute!

In late spring, we found out that Senator Raphael Warnock's office had advocated successfully for a request for funding a literacy partnership between Andalusia Institute of Georgia College and the Baldwin County School District. Once we receive the go-ahead from the Department of Education, we will be facilitating an opportunity for collaboration between the local District teachers and students and Georgia College to develop an eight to nine-week literacy module devoted to Flannery O'Connor and Milledgeville.

We barely had put those plans in motion when we heard from the National Endowment for the Humanities that we had been awarded a grant to host an NEH Summer Institute on Flannery O'Connor with Dr. Bruce Gentry of Georgia College and Dr. Robert Donahoo of Sam Houston State University as Co-Directors in Summer of 2023.

Twenty-five participants will be selected to work in Milledgeville on Flannery O'Connor-influenced projects in order to enhance their roles as teachers and scholars in post-secondary education. In addition to Dr. Gentry and Dr. Donahoo, participants will have an opportunity to work with many well-known scholars in both O'Connor and Southern Studies and to work directly with Nancy Davis Bray in Georgia College's Special Collections.

Stay tuned on our website and Facebook page for further information on both projects. In addition, I'm looking forward to our Fall lineup of virtual and live events—it will be a splendid end to the year.

As always, keep in touch and let me know what you're thinking about.

Take care and best wishes,

Irene Burgess



(Image by Iris Terdjiman,
<http://www.iristerdjiman.eu/>)

Interview with Matt Davis

Matt Davis is Director of Historic Museums at Georgia College, which includes Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion, Andalusia: The Home of Flannery O'Connor, and the Sallie Ellis Davis House.

When did you first discover Flannery O'Connor?

I read *A Good Man is Hard to Find* when I was in high school in my Honors English class and remember being struck with the rather unexpected ending and macabre humor. Flannery was floating around during my undergraduate years, but I became better acquainted with her work while working on my master's thesis on the Brown-Stetson-Sanford House. I was conducting research on the entire history of the property and my last chapter had a large portion detailing the history of the Sanford House, which was Flannery's favorite restaurant in town ran by two of her closest friends. I had the opportunity to interview Mary Jo Thompson, who made me (most appreciated by a graduate student) several of the menu items from the Sanford House, including Flannery's favorite permanent chiffon pie. She shared many stories of her friendship with Flannery and this was certainly helpful to my research.



As I entered into my professional career, I got to know Miss Louise Florencourt and worked closely with the directors at the old foundation through the museum's Watson-Brown Foundation Junior Board of Trustees who helped to fund several restoration projects on the outbuildings at Andalusia. When the farm was donated to the university in 2017, I had a crash course in learning the stories and her overall history. Bruce Gentry was kind enough to drop by several readings and I listened to her stories almost on a continuous loop in my car for the first few months following the transfer. It has been an interesting journey to where I am now, but I feel Flannery was always peeking around the corner.

What do you think you learned about O'Connor by living in the Milledgeville area and working at Georgia College?

Flannery was a keen observer of all things around her and this observational power served her well in incorporating elements of her daily life, events, and people she knew not only in her stories, but her drawings as well. I think this was one of Flannery's stronger traits and certainly aided her writing as it provided depth to her stories and certainly has elements of the city within them. I appreciate this and also Flannery's wonderful sense of humor that also helped to expose the good and bad of this small southern town.

If you were to meet O'Connor, what would you like to ask her?

Honestly, I think we would have a good laugh about Andalusia being turned into a museum as I am not sure how she would feel about the general public touring her home. Who knows? This could have been an excellent element for a story that was unwritten. All kidding aside, I would like to ask her about the house, her time there, what have we gotten wrong, what have we gotten right, and I would also love to have an in-depth discussion about my favorite short story, "The River."

What's the most surprising thing that you learned by your work with Flannery O'Connor?

I think people fixate on the 'southern gothic' tag of O'Connor's writings, but I have always appreciated her sharp sense of humor. This is borne out in her writings for sure, but her personal correspondence really shines a light on this element of her personality. As someone who was coming to know Flannery, this was truly surprising.

What's something about you that people might not know?

I don't know if many people know that I am also a musician who plays saxophone and still performs in a few groups as I have time. Outside of that, I love doing yard work and improvement projects around my home, traveling, and spending as much time as possible with my family.



(image by: David Hinds)

Andalusia Institute Virtual Schedule for Fall 2022

All events open to the public

Thursday, August 18--4:30 and 7:00 PM (Eastern, virtual): Dr. Bruce Gentry leads discussion on Flannery O'Connor's "The Artificial N---."

Thursday, September 1—7:00 PM (Eastern, virtual): Mary Carpenter will discuss her recently released middle-grade biography, *Flannery O'Connor: A Girl Who Knew Her Own Mind*.

Thursday, September 8—7:00 PM (Eastern, live and virtual): Join us at Andalusia, Home of Flannery O'Connor, for Dr. Monica Miller's release celebration of *Dear Regina: Flannery O'Connor's Letters from Iowa*. In partnership with Andalusia, Home of Flannery O'Connor.

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/64b85e84dca04f9fbf31649d96a02e80>

Thursday, September 15—4:30 and 7:00 PM (Eastern, virtual): Dr. Bruce Gentry leads discussion on Flannery O'Connor's "A Stroke of Good Fortune."

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3aa52a4d0977430ba5c61ac4ef52a862>

Tuesday, October 11—7:00 PM (Eastern, virtual): Dr. Alison Staudinger will discuss "Flannery O'Connor and Fascism."

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/a0217860e70b4653b81e3e60fdd1f685>

Thursday, October 27--4:30 and 7:00 PM (Eastern, virtual) : Dr. Bruce Gentry leads discussion on Flannery O'Connor's "The Lame Shall Enter First."

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/09c1fc043648444298f367175a183d89>

Thursday, November 3—7:00 PM (Eastern, virtual): Dr. Doug Davis of Gordon State College leads discussion on "Science, Technology, and Flannery O'Connor."

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e2d6ac5129aa4221ae44d7d3322a80a8>

Thursday, November 17—4:30 and 7:00 PM (Eastern, virtual): Dr. Bruce Gentry leads discussion on Flannery O'Connor's "A Late Encounter with the Enemy."

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/521c2de93dd94babb514aa872427865c>

Monday, November 28—7:00 PM (Eastern, virtual and live): The 2022-23 Flannery O'Connor Memorial Lecture/Reading, Stephen Corey, poet and former editor of *The Georgia Review*.

"'Did 'Ja Get Caught in That Big Rain?': Trying to Learn a Few Things About Flannery O'Connor."

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/5eea6658c4154b1395e8f0f09cc2985c>

Virtual events are co-sponsored by The Georgia Writers Museum and Allied Arts of Milledgeville.

New Book Releases

Mary Carpenter, *Flannery O'Connor: A Girl Who Knew Her Own Mind*, University of Georgia Press, 2022.

This middle-grade reading level biography of Flannery O'Connor serves as a way to introduce O'Connor and her time to a younger audience.

NEH Summer Institute 2023: Reconsidering Flannery O'Connor

Dr. Bruce Gentry of Georgia College and Dr. Robert Donahoo of Sam Houston State University will host an NEH-funded Summer Institute, "Re-Considering Flannery O'Connor" in Summer of 2023 at Georgia College. For four weeks in June of 2023, we will host 25 teacher/scholars and numerous visiting scholars to learn about teaching and scholarship on Flannery O'Connor at the place where she wrote many of her works.

We welcome advanced graduate students, non-tenured or non-tenure track faculty, and tenured faculty who have a significant interest in Flannery O'Connor or topics associated with Flannery O'Connor and would gain from a four-week advanced immersion in Flannery O'Connor. In the past, individuals from a variety of fields and with a variety of interests have participated successfully in this Institute. At least five of our 25 participants will be non-tenured or non-tenure track faculty, including three graduate students.

Participants will work with six on-site Institute faculty: Thadious Davis (U of Pennsylvania), Tom Haddox (U of Tennessee), Christine Bieber Lake (Wheaton College), John Lowe (U of Georgia), Farrell O'Gorman (Belmont College), and Carol Shloss (Stanford U). They will also spend a week working with material in Georgia College's collection of O'Connor manuscripts and other primary materials.

Even if you don't qualify as a participant, you can join us for our twice a week public lectures on the Georgia College campus, either live or virtually.



(image by: Kelly Puissegur)

Our Mission Statement

Andalusia Institute

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Facebook: [facebook.com/andalusiainstitute](https://www.facebook.com/andalusiainstitute)

Committed to the rich, complex literary legacy of Flannery O'Connor, Andalusia Institute provides a venue where scholarship flourishes, the creative process deepens, and knowledge grows through the inspiration of O'Connor's work. As part of the desire to support O'Connor's legacy, the Institute exists to nurture fresh approaches to the arts and humanities through the innovative collaboration of all types of students and learners—artists, community members, and scholars. Situated in Milledgeville, Georgia, Andalusia Institute is at once regional, national, and international in focus, offerings, and educational outreach. Doing our work at the heart of the liberal arts mission of Georgia College, the Andalusia Institute is devoted to the arts and humanities in its many expressions, while contributing to the cultural vibrancy and economic well-being of the community.

Updates from Andalusia: the Home of Flannery O'Connor

Hello from Andalusia, the Home of Flannery O'Connor!

We've had a very busy but fantastic summer here, and are looking forward to a fantastic and busy fall! Construction on the interpretive center is ongoing, and we recently got the roof frame in place. We plan to open early next year.

Our biggest update is the new exhibit, which will open this month, titled "Where You Make the Money." This exhibit dives into a selection of financial records kept by Regina O'Connor, and what we can learn about the people who worked on the farm, and how the O'Connors made their money. This exhibit will feature several never before displayed artifacts, and is sure to be an interesting experience for all Flannery O'Connor fans.

We will also continue our Front Porch Lecture Series this fall, so please keep your eyes out for updates regarding that, and any other important events, on our social media and website.

Hope to see you here at the museum,
Cassie Munnell, Curator of Andalusia: The Home of Flannery O'Connor.



Keep in Touch!

Your feedback and input are important to what we can accomplish. I invite you to contact me at irene.burgess@gcsu.edu for your ideas of useful programming, projects, and partners. I also invite you to consider donating to the Institute if you have found value in what we do. For information on how to donate, visit our website at www.gcsu.edu/andalusiainstitute