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Winter 2006-07

PROFILE: RUSSELL BONDS



Russell Bonds

From Attorney to Author: Bonds Uncovers History in His Own Backyard

In Spring 2002, after seven years, Russell Bonds left Sutherland to become a litigator for The Coca-Cola Company. Four years later, Bonds can add “author” to his list of accomplishments with the October publication of *Stealing the General: The Great Locomotive Chase and*

the First Medal of Honor, the true story of a Union raid behind Confederate lines in April 1862 that resulted in the Great Locomotive Chase and the first awards of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

When Westholme publisher Bruce Franklin received the manuscript, he was immediately struck by the voice. “This was like looking at the first work of someone you can imagine becoming a very important writer,” he said. Released on October 15, 2006, the 464-page retelling of the derring-do of a group of men who commandeered a train and used it to destroy bridges and telegraph lines in Confederate territory generated considerable pre-publication buzz, including its selection as a *Borders Original Voices* title and display on the holiday tables at Barnes & Noble. Franklin ordered a first printing of 20,000 copies – more than quadruple his typical first-print run.

The story of the stolen steam engine has attracted Hollywood before, and according to Franklin, several studios are again expressing interest. Buster Keaton mined it for laughs in his 1927 classic *The General*, and Fess Parker starred in the Disney movie *The Great Locomotive Chase* in 1956.

Bonds spoke about the experience of writing his first novel and the genesis of its story.

Q: *How far back do you trace your interest in the subject?*

A: I am one of a handful of native Atlantans – I grew up in Marietta [a suburb 20 miles northwest of Atlanta], and I live there now. Ever since I was a kid, I have been interested in history. I have written a few articles for *Civil War Times*.

Q: *It’s one thing to be interested and quite another to write a book! What was the foundation?*

A: It’s very much a local story. The raiders boarded the train on the morning of April 12, 1862, a half a mile from the house where I grew up. I was looking for something to read on the topic, and there wasn’t anything except source material; the last full-length book was published in 1956. Other things also drew me to it. Most people focus on the six-hour locomotive chase, but there is so much before and after. Many of the raiders escaped from prison, met President Lincoln and received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

In Midtown Atlanta, on Juniper and Third Streets, wedged between a utility pole and an apartment building, there’s a marker to James Andrews. My book opens there. It’s not a birthplace or a battlefield – it’s the site of an execution. I wonder why the state of Georgia chose to honor a Yankee spy!

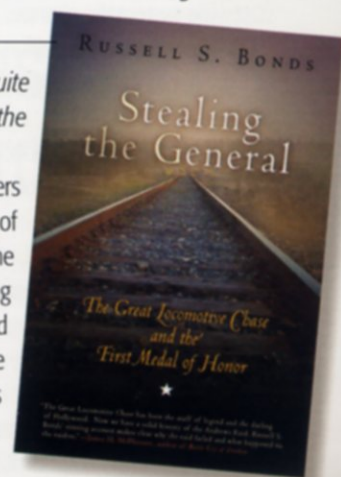
Q: *How did you tackle the research?*

A: I started about four years ago, compiling a bibliography that started out at two pages and grew to 25. I got a lot of good material from the Atlanta History Center and Emory. Then I got to the decision point – am I really gonna write this or what? I started to really bear down and write about two years ago.

Q: *How did you find a publisher?*

A: I completed 10 chapters and I didn’t know if I should take it to a university press or get an agent – I didn’t know how to break in. I was referred through a contact and friend, a Civil War author, to two publishers. I sent Westholme, an independent publisher of history books in Philadelphia, a query and the manuscript, and they accepted.

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Sharon Hill

Former Judge Helps Georgia Appleseed Center Grow As Its Executive Director

Sharon Hill is poised to sow seeds of success throughout the state of Georgia. In November 2005, Hill, a former Fulton County Juvenile Court judge and a Sutherland alumna, became the first Executive Director of the

Georgia Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, one of 18 centers located across the U.S. and in Mexico City. Their charter: to serve as a force for statewide systematic change.

The national organization, whose name references American pioneer Johnny Appleseed, was started in 1994 by the Harvard Law Reunion Class of 1958 to fund public interest law centers around the nation and solve important public policy and social justice problems. Volunteers, including attorneys and other experts, work in teams to analyze and develop solutions to problems facing the region. Depending on the problem being addressed, Appleseed's projects involve working with broad coalitions, issuing reports, participating in regulatory proceedings, bringing lawsuits, managing public education campaigns and meeting with and/or testifying before governmental decision-makers.

The national center funds other state centers that are starting up across the country. The Atlanta center is also funded locally by Sutherland Asbill & Brennan, Kilpatrick Stockton, King & Spalding and Southern Company. Kilpatrick Stockton also provides office space and support services, including a part-time assistant, and Troutman Sanders has recently joined the Board at the same level as the founding funders.

Hill traces her involvement with the Atlanta center to her tenure as an associate judge with the Fulton County Juvenile Court, where she spent eight-and-a-half years before receiving a phone call in the summer of 2005 from Linda Singer, the Executive Director of the national organization. Singer was in town to interview candidates for the executive director position in Atlanta, and Hill's name came up as a candidate. She was immediately intrigued.

"What Appleseed is about, I was already about at the court, which is to look at problems I see over and over and over again and try to come up with a bigger, more systematic response," said Hill. "Not unlike what we did at Fulton County Juvenile Court – hiring the first special education teacher to work at the court to help us evaluate and address truancy issues – Appleseed looks at new approaches. Appleseed can really make an impact as a systematic problem-solver."

The Appleseed philosophy dovetailed perfectly with Hill's thinking and allowed her the chance to pull together her entire professional past. Hill joined Sutherland straight out of law school; she was a summer associate in 1984 and a first-year associate in 1985. Hill said she was "steeped in Sutherland's tradition of public and pro bono service," citing Charlie Lester, Randolph Thrower and John Chandler as "incredible lawyers and incredible influences in the area of pro bono and community

service." After three-and-a-half years at Sutherland, she moved to Atlanta Legal Aid to focus on direct client representation in different areas of poverty law. Next, she moved to Troutman Sanders, which she credits as having another "wonderful pro bono program," then headed by Mark VanderBroek. From Troutman, and after an opportunity to work for Mike Egan (as she did at Sutherland) as the staff attorney for the Senate Special Judiciary Committee during the 1997 legislative session, Hill joined the bench of the Fulton County Juvenile Court, again focusing on poverty law but from a different point of view. As a judge, she embraced a judicial approach in resolving cases called "Balanced and Restorative Justice."

"Although that approach is shared by a number of folks on courts around the state and the nation, it is difficult to implement," said Hill. "Appleseed also uses Balanced and Restorative Justice to do its problem solving. There are three key initiatives Georgia Appleseed is pursuing using this technique: the 'No Child Left Behind' parent involvement project; financial access for Latino immigrants; and justice for people with mental illnesses. In particular, Georgia is a 'gateway' state for Latino immigrants, and this is a huge issue that Georgia Appleseed will address over time."

When asked if she has a pet project, Hill said, "We are in conversation now with a statewide funder and three other collaborative partners to create a coalition around juvenile justice, which would be a great way to leverage my most recent professional experience. By the end of the year, I hope to announce Georgia Appleseed's role in that project. That project would open up new opportunities to bring in other law firm partners to Georgia Appleseed's work."

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Ed Kallal
(For those who
are wondering:
"Yes, BlackBerries
do work on the
Great Wall.")



Ann Fort, Lei Fang,
and Bill Warren

Sutherland Attorneys Head East to Analyze Opportunities for the Firm

Partner Edward W. Kallal, Jr., is spearheading the Sutherland China Initiative, an ongoing program that launched last winter to explore business opportunities in the rapidly growing nation.

According to Kallal, Sutherland wants to be in a position to continue to be involved in the increased globalization of the economy and China's impact on America's economy. "One, we want to be able to provide services and stay relevant to clients as they enter into China and Asia," said Kallal, "and two, we want to understand and be in a position to help Chinese businesses as they come to the U.S."

The genesis of the program was what Kallal jokingly refers to as the "gripe-and-solve system of management." "I was in Mark Wasserman's office griping about a bid we had won, working hand and glove with another international firm we often collaborate with that has offices in China," he explained. "The good news was we won the bid; the bad news was the other firm received a significant percentage of the business.

I said, 'Gee, we really need to get our hands around this issue. We really need somebody on the ground to help us understand what we should do to best help our clients in China.' The next thing I knew, I was in China for two-and-a-half months."

Kallal began planning his visit in late 2005. Said Kallal, "Jim Henderson organized and chaired a cross-team, cross-office committee to work on the project and held regular meetings to hold everyone's feet to the fire. Our Chinese-speaking lawyers helped us pick and obtain protection for a Chinese name for the firm. We developed targeted firms and select practice group brochures and translated them into Chinese and we organized a firm-wide contact list. I finally left for China at the end of February 2006."

Initial meetings were arranged with contacts that Sutherland attorneys had, including associate Rob Lamb, who Kallal credits as being a "huge

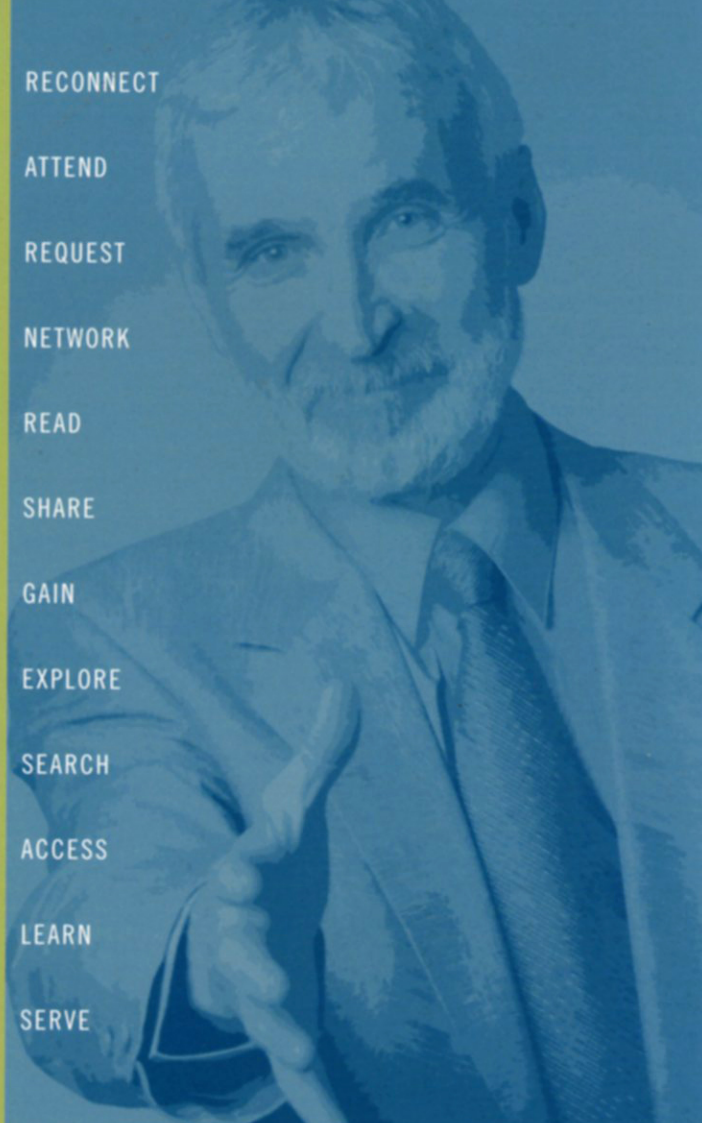
asset." Said Kallal, "It was useful to go to talk to indigenous Chinese law and software firms. We met with a broad and interesting set of international and Chinese lawyers, people in business, diplomats. It was a good cross-section. We're networking as broadly as we can."

In addition to Lamb, who has made four trips to China – despite having four small children and recently relocating to Atlanta from Phoenix – a group from the Intellectual Property team including Blair Jacobs, Bill Warren, Ann Fort and Lei Fang traveled to China in April. Three of them spoke at a seminar in Shanghai, and all participated in calling on firms and prospective clients. Additionally, Bill Wildman attended a conference in Beijing in April, Mark Herlach spoke about nuclear energy at a Beijing conference in June, and Jim Groton spoke on alternative dispute resolution in the construction sector at a conference in Beijing in August. In September, Kallal joined Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin in a Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce delegation visiting several cities.

Moving forward, the team has identified areas that make sense in relation to the value that Sutherland can deliver into China. "The areas on our preliminary list where we think we can make a difference are first, of course, IP; then energy; insurance; construction and the area of alternative dispute resolution; real estate, particularly hotels and resort development; and the timber industry," Kallal said. "These represent a good match of our expertise with our existing client base."

Handling the nuances of Chinese business etiquette was eased by having Lamb and Lei Fang, who is originally from Shanghai, as resources. Still, Kallal noted that hierarchy has more emphasis and importance in China than it does here. "Older and more senior people are addressed differently than junior people. I was 'Mr. Kallal,' Rob was 'Rob.' They pay more attention to that." Similarly, Kallal mentioned the elaborate system of delivering and receiving business cards as unique.

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