

WOODLAND CEMETERY PRESERVATION PROJECT

MAY 2022 *Monthly Newsletter* VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5



Photograph by Brian Stack

The Woodland Cemetery Preservation Project seeks to tell the stories of the known and previously unknown burials located in Woodland Cemetery on the Clemson University campus. Through research and community engagement we intend to uncover as much as we can about this historic space and to properly commemorate all who are buried here.

In this issue, you can read about the May 2022 Black Business Expo and find out how to submit to our 2022 Research Symposium. The issue also contains updates on research, community engagement, and our Creative Inquiry class. Additionally, you can find a new edition of the History Series.

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Local Black Business Exposition

Join us on Saturday, May 21, 2022 between 12pm and 4pm for the Black Business Expo. The Expo will be held at the Littlejohn Community Center in Clemson, South Carolina. Admission and parking are free.

Local vendors will be on site serving food and showcasing their products and services. Come out and support local Black-owned businesses operating in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the Black Business Exposition, please email Dr. Brian Stack (bestack@clemson.edu) by Friday, May 13.

The Littlejohn Community Center is

located at 644 Old Greenville Hwy, Clemson, SC. Parking will be available at Abel Baptist Church, directly behind Littlejohn Community Center. That address is 150 Abel Road, Clemson, SC.

The expo is a collaboration between Clemson University's Legacy Council, the Woodland Cemetery Project and its Community Engagement Council, the Clemson Division of the Small Business Development Center, and *for the love of community*. We aim to leverage the University's unique resources to benefit local African Americans seeking empowerment through entrepreneurship.

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Creative Inquiry Class

The students in the Creative Inquiry (CI) class are finishing up their projects, which include researching sharecroppers at Fort Hill Plantation and their families, exploring the impact of Memorial Stadium and surrounding parking lots on the cemetery, and talking with former students of Professor Carrel Cowan-Ricks who worked on the Cemetery Hill Archaeological Project in the early 1990s. The students presented their work in progress to the public at the Focus on Creative Inquiry Research (FoCI) Showcase at the Watt Innovation Center at Clemson in early April. Their work will also be incorporated into the visual history of the cemetery and the website. We will be offering the CI class again in Fall 2022, and it is open to all Clemson students. Please email Sara Collini (collini@clemson.edu) for more information. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to stay up to date with the CI team's latest work.



Cemetery History Series #6

Maintaining and Marking Woodland Cemetery, 1924-1959

This is part of an ongoing series highlighting various aspects of Woodland Cemetery history.

Following the Board of Trustee's approval of a campus cemetery in July 1924, the College began considering how to properly mark, maintain, and memorialize the burials in Woodland Cemetery.

Until 1938, plots were assigned by the Woodland Cemetery Committee and tracked on a map kept by the Committee's chair, Professor Samuel Maner Martin. Later, the process for selecting a plot was done through a form kept on file with Clemson's Business Manager, J.C. Littlejohn. At the cemetery, the outlines of many of the plots were delineated by placing concrete markers along their boundaries.¹

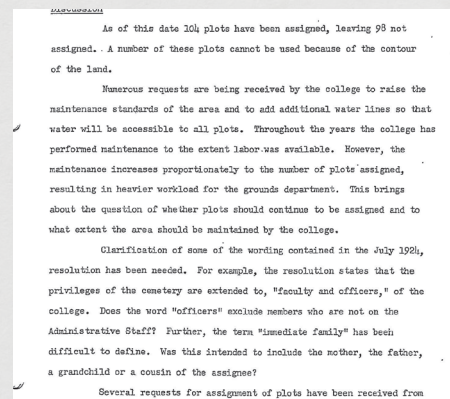
Recognizing a need to enhance the appearance of the cemetery, Trustees appropriated \$1,200 for renovations which would include an entrance marker reading "Woodland Cemetery," the marking of the "colored graveyard" on cemetery maps, the removal of dead trees that would be replaced with new ones indigenous to the cemetery, a new survey of the cemetery that would standardize the plot sizes, and

various repairs to walkways, roads, and waterlines.²

Nevertheless, maintenance and memorialization at Woodland Cemetery remained a problem for decades to come. By 1955, campus facilities were unable to maintain a high standard of care for the increasing number of burials in the cemetery and were only doing work on site when time allowed.³ Because maintenance and upkeep were under the purview of the Trustees, not the descendants

of the employees buried there, the lack of available funding and a stable maintenance plan became something that the Trustees needed to handle. Several descendants of white Clemson employees buried at Woodland offered to fund its upkeep if the Trustees could not allocate the required funds, but their offers were rejected. For example, in 1958, W.A. Morrison, the son of Clemson Professor William Morrison, told Henry H. Hill, director of Clemson Auxiliary Enterprises, that his sister was willing to donate \$1000 to start a trust fund to care for the cemetery, which contained their family's plot. It is not clear if this proposal was accepted by the College.⁴

In addition to struggling to maintain the burials of white Clemson employees, the College also failed to mark and protect the African American burials in Woodland Cemetery. In May 1946, the College Building and Grounds Committee passed a motion proposing that "a suitable marker be placed on Cemetery Hill commemorating the spot where certain slaves and convicts



"A Report on Woodland Cemetery," December 5, 1957, Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee, "Site History, 1895-2008" (1895), Clemson University Facilities, Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, Clemson, SC, <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/woodland/9>

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Cemetery History Series #6

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were buried,"⁵ but the proposal was never enacted. A similar proposal was made by David J. Watson, the director of the College physical plant, in 1957. Watson asked that the College enclose the graves "within [a] securely constructed wire fence,"⁶ but this

was also not enacted. Furthermore, a 1952 Building and Grounds Committee proposal to name the Camellia Test Garden southeast of the cemetery after Judge Crawford, an African American employee who had worked at the College for over 50 years, also

never materialized.⁷ The unwillingness to memorialize African American graves and employees at Clemson was part of this decades-long history of failing to protect and appropriately commemorate all the graves in Woodland Cemetery.

1 J.C. Littlejohn to Harold Major, 29 March 1954, Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee, "Plot Allocations and Maintenance, 1938-2002" (1938), Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/woodland/16>.

2 "A Report on Woodland Cemetery, December 5, 1957," Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee, "Site History, 1895-2008" (1895), Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/woodland/9>.

3 "A Report on Woodland Cemetery, December 5, 1957," Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee, "Site History, 1895-2008" (1895), Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/woodland/9>.

4 Henry H. Hill, "Memorandum, for the Record - August 1, 1958," Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee, "Plot Allocations and Maintenance, 1938-2002" (1938), Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/woodland/16>.

5 "Minutes of the Building and Grounds Committee, 11 March 1946," Series 7, Box 1, Folder 6, Robert F. Poole Presidential Records, Committee Files, 1928-1955, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries."

6 David J. Watson to Henry Hill, 22 November 1957, Box 2, Folder 17, Carrel Cowan-Ricks Papers 1991-1993, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries.

7 Minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting, 29 October 1952, Series 36, Box 26, Box 9, Faculty Senate Records, 1894-1988, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries. https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/faculty_senate/4.

Research Update

Dr. Mandi Barnard is continuing research on Andrew Pickens "A.P." Calhoun using his manuscript collections from the South Caroliniana Archive and speeches he gave at commercial and agricultural society meetings in the 1850s. She is also working with an Alabama genealogist to track down deeds of sale for A.P.'s plantations there.

Dr. Sara Collini has continued to work on the visual history of the cemetery with our undergraduate research assistants. We are using maps and photographs of the cemetery and surrounding landscape to show the history of the area and how it has changed from the 1700s to the present day. The visual history features several "Before and After" photographs at pivotal moments in the cemetery's history, as well as interactive maps and image galleries. The visual history will be made available to the public along with our website re-design later in 2022.

Marissa Davis is continuing her search for how those enslaved at Fort Hill gained access to the house. She wants to find out the original layout of the property. To do so, she will visit the Deeds Offices in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties to search for the bill of sale between the Calhouns and the McElhennys. This document details the ownership changes for Clergy Hall, which was what the house was known as before it became Fort Hill. Other members of the team plan to go with her to the offices as their projects also are impacted by what might be found in the bill of sale.

Dr. Rhondda Thomas has been finalizing the application for



Aerial photographs of Woodland Cemetery before and after construction in the 1960s. Top: 1956 Aerial Photograph. Bottom: 1963 Aerial Photograph. Photograph credit: Clemson University Facilities, Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, Clemson, SC.

the team's oral history project with Clemson's Institutional Review Board, meeting with the project's preservation plan subcommittee as we move into the next phase of the cemetery project, and encouraging research collaborations between Clemson professors and community partners, including research for the African American local historical site database project that will include the African American Burial Ground in Woodland Cemetery. She also coordinated the development of the theme and format for the second annual research symposium to be held October 24-25 in the Hendrix Center at Clemson.

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Community Engagement Update

Dr. Brian Stack been volunteering with several organizations in the Upstate to promote Black history and the cemetery project. He volunteered at the 2022 Men of Color Summit in Greenville, South Carolina, is helping the city of Clemson plan its Juneteenth celebration, and has been attending events for "Save the Alley," a grassroots effort to prevent the displacement of an African American community in Central, South Carolina.

The project team has also been continuing to give cemetery tours, which will run until mid-May. This semester we have had over 500 people attend tours and learn about the space. The tour was recently revamped to include new information discovered in the last year of research for this project. If you have not yet taken a cemetery tour, or if it has been a long time since you took one, please consider joining us. Information as to how to register can be found below.

We have also been training additional cemetery tour guides. We would

welcome more members of the community to help us give tours. You can sign up to become a tour guide using the application in the section below.

Our undergraduate community engagement assistant, Aundrea Gibbons, has been expanding the reach of our [Instagram](#) account. She also created a story about Dr. Ayana



Undergraduate assistant Lucas Debenedetti gives a stop on the cemetery tour. Photograph credit Brian Stack.

Flewellen that will soon be featured on our Instagram. Dr. Flewellen gave the keynote lecture on Carrel Cowan-Ricks Recognition Day.

Dr. Rhondda Thomas joined Trustee David Dukes and Sally Mauldin in conducting informational sessions via Zoom about the cemetery for Clemson employees and retirees. She and Angela Agard, director of the Clemson Area African American Museum, are developing a presentation titled "Uncovering, Preserving, Sharing and Celebrating local African American History" for the International Town and Gown Conference that will be held at Clemson University on June 7-9, 2022. Their presentation will explore how to recover, preserve, and tell stories about the many contributions of African Americans in building Clemson University and local communities, including those who are believed to be buried in unmarked graves in the African American Burial Ground in Woodland Cemetery. More information about the conference can be found [here](#).

Upcoming Events

More detailed information and registration for Zoom events can be found on the cemetery web page and our social media. Email bestack@clemson.edu to suggest an event or get involved. Please also visit the websites for the [Clemson Area African American Museum](#) and [Bertha Lee Strickland Cultural Museum](#) to find other events going on in the community.

2022 Research Symposium. Cemeteries in Contexts, Local to Global. October 24-25, 2022 at Clemson University

Panel, workshop, and paper proposals are now being accepted for the second annual Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Research Symposium. This year's event will be

held in person at Clemson University. Visit [the symposium website](#) to read more about the theme and for details about the submission process. Proposals will be accepted until July 15, 2022. Please direct questions about the symposium to afamburials@clemson.edu.

Weekly cemetery group tours

Free one-hour tours of Woodland Cemetery run through Friday, May 13. Pre-register your group of 10 or more for a guided walking tour or check our website for drop-in tour dates and times. Find an available time and fill out our registration form through [our](#)

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Upcoming Events

[Google Calendar](#) or email Brian Stack (bestack@clemson.edu)

Free cemetery tour guide trainings

Fill out our [online form](#) or email Brian Stack (bestack@clemson.edu) if you would like to become a tour guide for Woodland Cemetery. Community members, staff, faculty, and students are all encouraged to sign up!

2022 Call for Proposals
Historic Cemeteries in Cultural Contexts, Local to Global Research Symposium
OCTOBER 24-25, 2022
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY
CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

The Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Historic Preservation Project and the Legacy Council at Clemson University are pleased to invite you to participate in our annual historic cemetery symposium. This year's theme, "Historic Cemeteries in Cultural Contexts, Local to Global," encompasses the Wendell Carver Historic Cemetery, from local cemeteries to subjects on the worldwide burial grounds diverse places require recognition and memorialization. Over two days, this symposium will bring together researchers, practitioners, and community members to discuss the local, national, global, and cultural contexts of cemetery research and community engagement and the memorialized efforts to commemorate each space.

We encourage proposals from the public, professionals, scholars, and graduate students of all disciplines who are working to research, preserve, and/or memorialize historic cemeteries and burial grounds. Proposals may be for panels or individual papers that address one or more of the following topics. We especially encourage submissions that are interdisciplinary and collaborative, incorporate diverse viewpoints, or feature projects working toward restorative justice:

- Public and community archaeology
- Historic burial practices and markers
- Cultural traditions and rituals
- Evolving conceptions of burial sites
- Cemetery visitation and remembrance rituals
- Mapping, geospatial, LIDAR, GPS and Geographic Information Systems
- Community engagement, including descendant communities
- Education and public history involving cemeteries
- Historic and historic preservation, stories, and racial inequity
- Environmental cemetery histories
- Institutional history, including campus histories and burial grounds
- Memorialization efforts and memorial design
- Burial, recycling, and/or de-burialing cemetery research and activities

Panel proposals should include a title, 50 word summary of the panel theme, a 200-word summary of each presentation or paper, and 3 papers of interest for each participant. Panels will run 75 minutes and should include at least three presenters and a chair.

Individual paper proposals should include their own title, a paper title, a 200-word summary of the paper and how it addresses the symposium theme, and a 2-page or less paper. Paper proposals will be grouped into panels if accepted.

Proposals sent to afamburials@clemson.edu by July 15, 2022 will receive full consideration

Sponsored by The Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Historic Preservation Project and The Legacy Council at Clemson University

For More Information:
Phone: (864) 656-8855
Email: afamburials@clemson.edu
Website: www.clemson.edu/cemetery

Meet the Research and Community Engagement Team

- Dr. Rhondda Thomas, Calhoun Lemon Professor of Literature, Call My Name Faculty Director, and Coordinator of Research and Community Engagement for the African American Burial Ground and Woodland Cemetery Historic Preservation Project.
- Dr. Mandi Barnard, Research Historian.
- Dr. Sara Collini, Postdoctoral Fellow in University History.
- Marissa Davis, Graduate Research Assistant.
- Dr. Brian Stack, Community Engagement Assistant.
- Nolly Swan, Undergraduate Research Assistant
- Lucas Debenedetti, Undergraduate Research Assistant
- Aundrea Gibbons, Undergraduate Community Engagement Assistant
- 7 Student Researchers, Creative Inquiry in History: The Woodland Cemetery Preservation and Memorial Project, HIST 3890.001, Spring 2022.

And Meet Our Community Engagement Council

- From Anderson: J. T. Boseman, Jack Henderson, Nekaun Swinger, Dr. Beatrice Thompson
- From Clemson-Central: Rosa Grayden; Dalphine Jameson; Pastor Dr. Zackary Johnson
- From Pendleton: Terence Hassan
- From Oconee County: Shelby Henderson; Kathy Jenkins; Helen Rosemond-Saunders

Questions?

Questions about the cemetery project?
Email afamburials@clemson.edu or call (864) 656-855