

WOODLAND CEMETERY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN BURIAL GROUND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT

JULY 2022 *Monthly Newsletter* VOLUME 2, ISSUE 7



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 we encourage you to submit to our 2022 Research Symposium, explain the process by which sections of Cemetery Hill were turned into parking lots, provide research, community engagement, and masterplan updates, and highlight some upcoming local events.

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Paper Proposals Due for 2022 Research Symposium

Paper, panel, and workshop proposals for our 2022 Research Symposium are due on July 15, 2022. This year's theme is "Historic Cemeteries in Cultural Contexts, Local to Global."

This theme encompasses the broadest conception of burial grounds, from local cemeteries to shipwrecks on the seafloor. Over two days, the symposium will bring together research concerning historic burial grounds and cemeteries; the local, national, global, and cultural contexts of cemetery research and community engagement; and the multifaceted efforts to commemorate such spaces.

We encourage proposals from the public, professionals, scholars, and

graduate students of all disciplines. Potential topics might include:

- Public and community archaeology
- Various burial practices and markers
- Global religions and syncretism
- Expanding conceptions of burial sites
- Cemetery visitation and remembrance rituals
- Mapping, geolocation, LiDar, GPR and geophysical tools
- Community engagement, including descendant communities
- Education and pedagogy involving cemeteries
- Histories and legacies of colonialism, slavery, and racial inequality
- Environmental cemetery histories



- Institutional history, including campus histories and burial grounds
- Memorialization efforts and memorial design
- Reframing, reclaiming, and/or decolonizing cemetery research and archives

Proposals should be submitted to afamburials@clemson.edu. Direct questions to the same email or call 864-656-8855. More information [is on our website](#).

Cemetery History Series #8

Environmental Change: From Cemetery Hill to Parking Lots

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

The contemporary parking lots to the west and south of Woodland Cemetery were once part of Cemetery Hill. Yet between 1960 and 1965, this land was changed from a wooded, sloping hill alongside the Seneca River into graded parking lots a mile east of Hartwell Lake. The reasons for this environmental disruption were twofold: to increase parking for athletics and students and to protect campus lands from Hartwell Dam.

By the late 1950s, the 20,000-person capacity of Memorial Stadium was not enough to hold Clemson's increasingly engaged football fans. Between 1958 and 1960, Clemson added 30,000 seats to the stadium, which included the construction of an additional 18,000 bowl seats in 1958, and over 5,000 seats in the West End Zone.¹

More than doubling the size of the stadium brought along an additional set of complications, and finding parking for these newly accommodated fans was chief among them. In an effort to add parking close to the stadium, Clemson constructed

a parking lot adjacent to the West End Zone in 1958. This parking lot necessitated removing the houses of a Black neighborhood where many Clemson mess hall workers lived, in an area called the Bottoms. Families living in the Bottoms would have been able to see the graves of their family members and other members of the Black community just up the hill in the African American burial ground. However, by the late 1950s the poor condition of many of the Clemson-owned houses in the Bottoms would have cost the college a significant amount to repair, making the parking lot a more financially-viable option.²

The construction of Hartwell Dam also likely influenced Clemson's decision to change this space. Since the 1950s, Clemson had been in conversation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about how best to protect campus lands from being lost to the creation of Hartwell Dam, as discussed in this newsletter's June issue. Following almost a decade of back-and-forth between Clemson administrators, government bureaucrats, and state

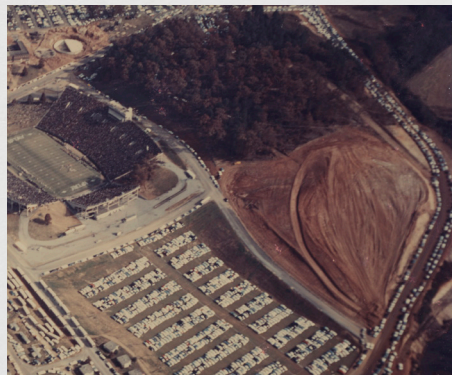
and federal politicians, the parties came to an agreement that would protect the stadium and its nearby lands through the construction of two diversion dikes.³

Having convinced the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that the dikes were necessary to protecting essential college lands, the college quickly went to work developing this newly-protected land and hiring companies to build these dikes. In 1960, Clemson and the Corps signed contracts with the Nello Teer Company to grade a portion of Cemetery Hill and to quarry rocks that could be used in the construction of the diversion dikes.⁴ The grading process can be seen in the aerial photographs below.

We do not yet know the full environmental impact of this push to increase parking and protect the campus from flooding, but the environmental changes at the site were significant. By the winter of 1960, the trees in the area southwest of the stadium were cleared, as seen in the aerial photographs below. The



1956 Campus Aerial Photograph, courtesy Campus Facilities. Memorial Stadium is visible in the upper right. The neighborhood in the bottoms is at the bottom.



Above: Aerial view of Clemson Memorial Stadium and Clemson College Campus, Series 100, [Clemson University Libraries](https://www.clemson.edu/libraries). Portions of Cemetery Hill have been deforested but not yet graded.



Right: 1963 Aerial Photograph, courtesy Campus Facilities. The parking lots South of the cemetery have been graded.

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Cemetery History Series #8

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area was then graded to create sports playfields which doubled as gameday parking into the late 1970s.⁵ Between 1975 and 1983 portions were paved with asphalt.⁶

The next issue of this history series will detail the 1960 Court Order that

Clemson sought and received, which granted them permission to disinter and reinter remains on the west side of Cemetery Hill when constructing these parking lots. The article will also explain what we know about the human remains that were discovered when the parking lots were created.



Filling of the Seneca River, 1960. Series 100, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries.

1 Sam Blackman, Bob Bradley, Chuck Kriese, and Will Vandervort, *Clemson: Where the Tigers Play* (New York: Sports Publishing, 2013), 258-259.
2 Henry H. Hill, "Housing Report," February 25, 1955, Series 87, Box 27, File 18, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries.
3 Corps of Engineers Site Plan, Series 11, Folder 1, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries; Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees with Representatives of the Office of the Secretary of the Army, the Chief of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and Members of the South Carolina Congressional Delegation, December 20, 1956, Series 30, Box 8, Folder 3, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries.
4 Agreement between the Nello L. Teer Company and the Clemson Agricultural College of South Carolina, Series 11, Folder 679 Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries; Memorandum of Understanding Between Nello L. Teer Company and the Clemson Agricultural College, Mss 366, Carrel Cowan Ricks Papers, Box 2, Folder 17, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries; US Army Corps Bid Mailer, in College of Agriculture Office of the Dean, Series 76, Box 44 Folder 2, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries.
5 Labeled aerial photograph, James Dalton Photograph Collection, MSS 0306, Folder 1, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries; Bill McLellan to Dean Walter Cox, July 28, 1978, Athletics Department Records, Series 40, Box 57, Folder 13, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries.
6 Bill McLellan to Mr. P. E. Bradham, July 19, 1978, Athletics Department Records, Series 40, Box 52, Folder 2, Special Collections and Archives, Clemson University Libraries.

Research Update

Dr. Mandi Barnard has been coordinating the Cemetery Team's archival research objectives at Clemson Special Collections Library as we enter the preservation phase of our project. Dr. Barnard has identified collections and topics of interest to guide the Team's summer research agenda. She has also been in the archives working through these materials to aid in the creation of a preservation plan for the cemetery.

Dr. Sara Collini, with the help of our Spring 2022 undergraduate research assistants Nolly Swan and Lucas DeBenedetti, has completed the visual history of the cemetery in ArcGIS. It will be publicly available soon. She has also been researching mentions of the cemetery in the collections of Student Affairs and the Athletic Department in the campus archives. She is investigating the full impact of Memorial Stadium construction projects on Cemetery Hill. Ground work, including grading and sloping of the land, occurred near the northern edge of the cemetery in the late 1950s, during a seating expansion project, and in the late 1970s for the construction of the south upper deck and new Press Road. In 1980, part of the eastern area of Cemetery Hill near the entrance on Williamson Road was leveled for a new IPTAY parking lot.

Dr. Rhondda Thomas has been investigating changes in the geographical landscape within Woodland Cemetery from the establishment of the college until the 1960s. She has also been researching the forced movement of Black wage workers



David Ingram, "Soccer Field Relocated; IPTAY Parking Expands," *The Tiger* (Clemson, SC), April 4, 1980, 1. https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/tiger_newspaper/2402/.

into segregated neighborhoods on and off campus during this time. Dr. Thomas, Marjorie Campbell, project manager, and Shelby Henderson, member of the community engagement council, have also been interviewing candidates for a new genealogist position with the cemetery team who will help document family histories of people buried in modern graves in the cemetery and learn more about Black people who could be buried in unmarked graves in the African American Burial Ground.

In June, the cemetery team visited sites of historic plantations and cemeteries in the Experimental Forest on the Clemson University campus to learn more about the interconnected history of plantations in the area.

Masterplan Kickoff Meeting Held

On June 14, 2022, members of the Legacy Council and staff from Clemson's General Counsel, Board of Trustees office, Campus Planning, and Clemson administrators met with consultants from New South Associates to officially kickoff the preservation plan, which will include guidelines for the creation of a memorial, that will lead to the development

of the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Masterplan. Members of the New South team will soon begin collaborating with the cemetery team and campus planning staff to develop the plan during the coming months. We will provide regular updates in the newsletter as the plan develops.

Community Engagement Update

Marquise Drayton will be joining the project team on July 11, 2022 as our new Community Engagement Assistant. Born and raised in Georgetown, SC, he's coming here from Charlotte, NC. His research interests include slave narratives, the Civil Rights Movement, the post-1865 South, and Black students integration efforts at primarily white higher education institutions, like Clemson. Drayton earned his BA in African American Studies from UNC-Chapel Hill and his MA in History from Clemson University. He enjoys traveling, going to the movies, and watching sports. The project team is excited about the experience and enthusiasm that Drayton will bring to the project. Dr. Brian Stack has stepped off the project to begin a new job as a community college history instructor in Washington State.

Representatives from the cemetery project's research and community engagement teams, as well as from the Legacy Council, attended Juneteenth celebrations in Clemson, Seneca, and Anderson on Saturday, June 18, 2022. This was the first time that the cemetery project was represented in all three cities at the same time. We shared information about the cemetery project and joined our local communities in celebrating



Juneteenth Celebrations in Clemson. Photograph by Craig Mahaffey, Clemson University, Photographic Services, University Relations

this important day. The team also donated cemetery brochures and copies of Dr. Rhondda Thomas's book *Call My Name, Clemson* to the Juneteenth MegaFest in Greenville, South Carolina. We will be working with local communities to plan a program for Juneteenth on the Clemson University campus next year.

Dr. Rhondda Thomas and Sally Mauldin continue to give cemetery tours to small groups. Dr. Thomas also met with the Clemson University's Statewide Gravesite Committee to discuss community engagement initiatives for all burial grounds located on land owned by Clemson. Additionally, the group will be exploring opportunities for collaboration with the South Carolina Department of Archives and History to develop cemetery preservation and memorialization resources for the public.

Upcoming Events

More detailed information can be found on the cemetery web page and our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Email us at afamburials@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.

Free Tours of Woodland Cemetery and the African American Burial Ground at Clemson University, Sunday, July 10, 2022, 12pm, 1pm, 2pm, 3pm

Our only drop-in cemetery tours this

summer will be on Sunday, July 10, 2022. The first tour begins at 12pm and the final tour begins at 3pm.

These one-hour walking tours will introduce you to the research, commu-

nity engagement, and memorialization efforts undertaken by the project team and local community.

Parking is available on site and as well as on Williamson Road adjacent to the

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Upcoming Events

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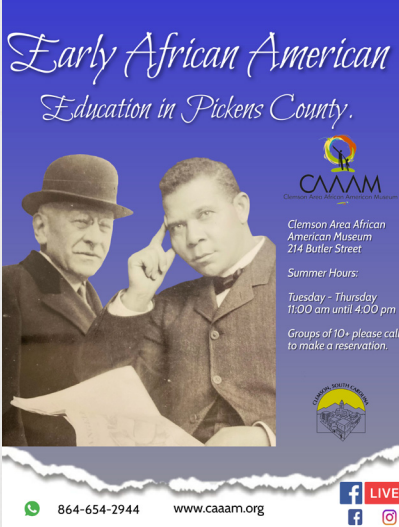
cemetery and in the Sistine Hall parking lot. When traveling to the cemetery please enter Williamson Road via Perimeter Road due to construction at Memorial Stadium. Please wear comfortable walking shoes and bring sun screen, bug spray, and water.

Registration is not required, but you can reserve a spot for the tours and get a reminder message using this [Google Form](#). Please also use that form to let us know about any accommodations you might require for this tour.

If you have questions about the tours or have information to share about the African American Burial Ground please call us at (864) 655-8855, or email us at afamburials@clemson.edu.

Clemson Area African American Museum Open to Visitors

The Early African American Education in Pickens County Exhibit is on display at the Clemson Area African American Museum (CAAAM). Summer hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 11:00am to 4:00pm. Groups of 10 or more are asked to make a reservation. More information is available on the [CAAAM website](#).



Early African American
Education in Pickens County.

CAAAM
Clemson Area African American Museum

Clemson Area African American Museum
214 Butler Street

Summer Hours:
Tuesday - Thursday
11:00 am until 4:00 pm
Groups of 10+ please call
to make a reservation.

864-654-2944 www.caaam.org

LIVE

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.
- Marquise Drayton, Community Engagement Assistant.
- Lucas DeBenedetti, Undergraduate Research Assistant.

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) 656-8855