

WOODLAND CEMETERY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN BURIAL GROUND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT

DECEMBER 2022 *Monthly Newsletter* VOLUME 2, ISSUE 12



New blue ribbons attached to better identify the flags that denote unmarked burials. Photograph by Marquise Drayton

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 will provide information about the cemetery team trip to the College of William & Mary, explain the findings of the Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee, provide research, community engagement updates, and highlight some upcoming local events.

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Cemetery Team's Visit to the College of William & Mary

On October 30-November 2, 2022, the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground team traveled to the College of William & Mary (W&M) to meet with the Lemon Project team and their community partners for nearly a week's exchange of ideas on both respective historic preservation projects. The Lemon Project: A Journey of Reconciliation works to reckon with the College of W&M's more than 300-year-old past concerning African Americans, from the enslavement era to the contemporary university. The multifaceted project is named for Lemon, an enslaved man who was owned by W&M. According to their mission statement, "The Lemon Project builds bridges between William & Mary and African American communities through research, programming, and supporting students, faculty, and staff."

Upon arrival, the cemetery team met

with community organizations and student researchers over dinner on campus to learn about the different ways of engagement they use to serve the public locally. Earlier the following day was a historical campus tour of W&M. The Clemson team visited the Wren Building (the nation's oldest academic building), Hearth: Memorial to the Enslaved, and the Sankofa Seed statue dedicated to the first Black students to integrate the school. The focus later during the same day was on historic preservation as the cemetery team visited the First Baptist Church Archaeological site in Colonial Williamsburg, the Historically Black History exhibit at Bruton Height School, and Oak Grove Baptist Church.

A visit to special collections in the library occupied the first part of the final day. The cemetery team examined early African American artifacts about W&M and toured the "Strollin'" exhibit, high-



Dr. Jody Allen explaining Hearth: Memorial to the Enslaved Monument to the cemetery team at the College of William & Mary. Photograph by the Lemon Project

lighting Black Greek Letter Organization history at the college. The Community Quilt Project capped off the second half of the last day, where members of the cemetery team contributed to the storied year-long endeavor. The Woodland Cemetery team would like to thank Dr. Jody Allen, Dr. Jajuan Johnson, and Dr. Sarah Thomas for hosting this fruitful exchange.

Cemetery History Series #13

Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee 2001-2018

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

Twenty-two years ago this December, President James F. Barker established the Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee to oversee the long-term care and maintenance of the Cemetery site. President Barker felt that he was entrusted with an obligation to “preserve and honor the past” and the contributions of the past campus leaders who are buried in the cemetery. To that end, he charged this seven-member committee with oversight and recommendations for grounds maintenance, public relations to raise the profile of the cemetery to the Clemson community, and to fundraise to make capital improvements to the site which are evident today.¹

In 2001, the Stewardship Committee began compiling a documentary history of Woodland Cemetery and the antebellum records regarding the Calhoun family burials on the site. They proposed working with the Clemson World alumni magazine to publish a series of articles about Woodland Cemetery and the contributions of the early leaders who were buried there from 1924. The articles would aid in raising awareness for the cemetery restoration project that the Committee oversaw from 2002-2010.²

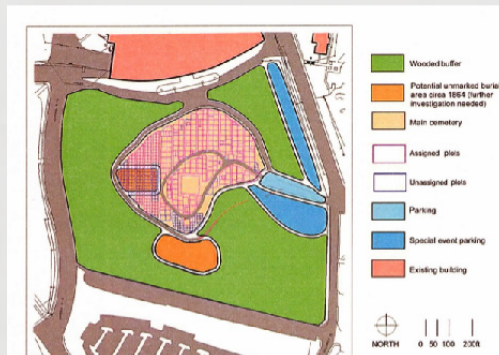
By 2004, the Stewardship Committee had developed a plan for the capital improvements to Woodland Cemetery that included taking down the existing fence surrounding the cemetery, installing hedgerow and building a stone façade entrance on Williamson Road and at the cemetery gates, constructing the forecourt terraced and landscaped

entrance, and replacing and improving retaining walls to match the stonework of the gates and forecourt area. The project was split into three phases and was estimated to cost \$600,000. While the majority of funds raised would be by private donation, the University matched funds at 1:2 ratio. The work as first proposed in 1997, was carried out from 2005 to 2010.³

Following Clemson’s budget cuts that ended Archaeologist Carrel Cowan-Ricks’ dig on Cemetery Hill, the Board of Trustees moved ahead with plans to expand Woodland Cemetery on the west side of the hill. However, a strip of land the width of the Calhoun plot was carried down the hill to the outer road of the site as an area that might contain burials of enslaved persons. Part of the Stewardship Committee’s task was to follow up on how much if any of this area was available to

use for burials of campus faculty, staff, and administrators. The committee, in conjunction with Historic Properties and Facilities, asked the SC State Archaeologist Jonathan Leader to come to Clemson to conduct a ground penetrating radar survey of the area in question. The results of that survey in 2005 were inconclusive. While the archaeologist reported that there was no evidence of an African-American burial ground on the hill, he never submitted a full report to President Barker nor the Board of Trustees, and only sent a partial powerpoint presentation with no context or methodological analysis.⁴ Additionally, his field notes were requested but have not been received to to date. In 2005, the Board of Trustees approved the expansion of Woodland Cemetery to the northwest corner near Memorial Stadium, based on this report.

Once the capital improvements had been made, and the PR and fundraising campaign were completed, the task of the Stewardship Committee moved to maintenance and preservation of the cemetery, working with IPTAY to reduce total parking for game day within the cemetery, and to look toward future cemetery plots expansion on the southeast corner of Cemetery Hill. The stewardship committee has not met since 2018.⁵



Clemson University Facilities Campus Planning Services, “Woodland Cemetery Preservation and Development Plan: A Summary of the History, Present Status, and Long Term Development Goals,” 31 in Woodland Cemetery Preservation and Development Plans, 2002-2015, WCSC 8. tigerprints.clemson.edu/woodland

In 2020, a new round of ground-penetrating radar surveys began tied to the disrepair of the area on the south side of Cemetery Hill that had been designated as the site of enslaved and convict burials.

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Those surveys have recovered the locations of hundreds of unmarked burials believed to be those of African Americans across the Cemetery Hill, including the West

side which had been cleared for modern burials in 2005. Today, the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Historical Preservation Project supports the

Legacy Council's work of ensuring the long-term preservation and memorialization efforts of Woodland Cemetery.

CITATIONS

- 1 James F. Barker, "Presidential Charge," Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee (WCSC) 5, Series 613. Clemson University Libraries and Archive, www.tigerprints.clemson.edu/woodland.
- 2 Meeting Minutes, 2001. WCSC 19, pg 2-8. See Also, "Plot Allocations and Maintenance, 1938-2002," WCSC 16 and "Site History, 1895-2008," WCSC 9.
- 3 "Annual Reports," 2003, WCSC 20. 3-4. See Also, Clemson University Facilities Master Planning Group, Proposal "The Cemetery Hill Development and Expansion Program," August 1997, In James F. Barker Presidential Records Series 336, Box 224. Clemson University Libraries and Archive.
- 4 Jonathan Leader, "Ground-Penetrating Radar Analysis," 2005, WCSC 2. Letter from J. Leader to James Barker, n.d. referencing February 11, 2005 GPR findings. In James F. Barker Presidential Records, Series 336, Box 224.
- 5 "Minutes," 2012-2018, WCSC, no. 31, 32, 33, 34, 36.

Research Update

Dr. Mandi Barnard spent November continuing research of events that happened during President Mell's service between 1902 and 1910. She has been working with Dr. Sara Collini's CI class and Sarah Richardson's English 1010 Service Learning class to assist students with obtaining archival materials for their final projects. She has also been working with Dr. Otis Pickett, University Historian, to coordinate and share research.

Dr. Sara Collini has continued to work with the undergraduate students in the Creative Inquiry class. They have conducted archival research for their projects, created storyboards, and are now working on building the Virtual Tour of the cemetery in ArcGIS Storymaps. Each student will write and create one stop on the tour. The Virtual Tour will feature videos of the cemetery space, primary source documents, and oral history audio clips. Dr. Collini also attended an Oral History Training Workshop led by Dr. Doug Boyd at the University of Kentucky and organized by Dr. Le Datta Grimes, Oral Historian at Clemson University Libraries.

As Genealogist for the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Historic Preservation Project, Deborah Robinson studies the family histories and historical backgrounds of those interred in the cemetery to establish descent and identify family members that aligns with Clemson's current and future preservation plans. Her recent work includes researching people affiliated with the cemetery. These are Clemson employees, historical figures, enslaved



The first stop for the Woodland Cemetery virtual tour

African Americans, sharecroppers, domestic workers, convicted laborers, as well as wage workers to trace lines of descent or succession. In addition to consulting sources that contain genealogical information such as vital records, city directories, court records, photographs, publications, and oral history interviews, Robinson is also developing genealogy workshops, and will soon be writing social media posts with helpful genealogy tips to aid families and community members in building their own family trees and telling their own stories.

Community Engagement Update

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Marquise Drayton attended the Seneca City Museums' Winter Nights holiday event on November 3 and 17, 2022. On his second visit, Museum Director Nick McKinney gave him a tour of the Lunney Museum, while Founding Director Shelby Henderson gave him a tour of the Bertha Lee Strickland Cultural Museum.

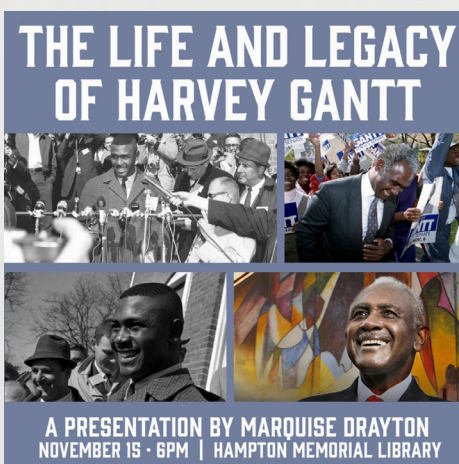
On November 15, 2022, at 6PM, Drayton gave a talk at the Hampton Memorial Library in Easley, SC, on "The Life and Legacy of Harvey Gantt" for a small audience of 15 people. He narrated the story of Clemson's first Black student's journey using an ArcGIS StoryMap he created during his digital history class when he was a graduate student in the Clemson History Department. This virtual project won him first place for "Best Story Map" at the 2019 GIS Day event in Cooper Library at Clemson University. The event for Pickens

County Library System was planned ahead of the 60th anniversary of "Integration with Dignity" at Clemson in January 2023.

On November 20, 2022, Drayton helped volunteer parking at the 10th annual Jaquial & Community Turkey Drive at Littlejohn Community Center. Later during the day, he ate and watched as Dr. Rhondda

Thomas gave the keynote address on Black Clemson history for the commemorative event.

Drayton has involved himself more in the community, serving as the secretary for the Friends of CAAAM (Clemson Area African American Museum). Lastly, he continues to lead tours of Woodland Cemetery into mid-December. For November, he helped lead eight tours of 220 total people.



Advertisement by Pickens County Library System

On November 9, 2022, Dr. Rhondda Thomas attended the unveiling of a sculpture created by Herman Keith Jr. that commemorates five local Black residents who were lynched in Anderson County, South Carolina. The artwork was commissioned by the Anderson Area Remembrance and Reconciliation Initiative of Anderson County. Event organizers said the ceremony is part of "an ongoing effort to foster dialog, promote education, and encourage conversations with a goal of inspiring harmony."

Upcoming Events

More detailed information and registration for Zoom events can be found on the cemetery web page and our social media. Email mdrayto@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.

Clemson Area African American Museum's Kwanzaa Celebration: A community-wide annual celebration of African American Culture in Upstate South Carolina, December 27-29, 2022, 6-9PM, 214 Butler St, Clemson, SC 29631

The Clemson Area African American Museum (CAAAM) will be celebrating

the seven principles of Kwanzaa during three days, December 27-29, 2022 from 6-9PM. The multiday event will be held at 214 Butler St in Clemson, SC, and it is free and open to the public.

Kwanzaa celebrates the ties that bind African communities in the diaspora with 7 principles of life: Unity-UMOJA, Self-Determination-KUJICHAGULIA,

Collective Work & Responsibility-UJIMA, Cooperative Economics-UJAMAA, Purpose-NIA, Creativity-KUUMBA and Faith-IMANI.

The first day of the Kwanzaa celebration will be a festive day of African drumming, food and celebration of "Unity in the Community." The second day of the Kwanzaa celebration will be

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dutiful day of collective work & responsibility with a youth forum asking "What do our youth need to be productive in this society" and a drumming circle performance. The final day of the Kwanzaa celebration will be a lighthearted family friendly gathering with various activities, a fashion show and Red Table Talk.

The link to register is [here](#) for those who wish to attend.

Lunney Museum's Candlelight Tours, December 9, 16, and 20, 2022, 6-7PM, 211 W South 1st St, Seneca, SC 29678

The Seneca City Museums are excited about the return of our Candlelight Tours at the Lunney Museum in historic downtown Seneca, SC. See the museum fully decorated for the holiday season. Experience the beauty of the Lunney Museum by candlelight on December 9th, 16th, and 20th beginning at 6:00 pm. The Lunney Museum is located at 211 W South 1st St, Seneca, SC 29678.

The link to book is [here](#) for those who wish to attend.



Meet the Research and Community Engagement

- Dr. Rhonda 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
- Sally Mauldin, Board of Trustees Office Staff
- Dr. Mandi Barnard, Research Historian
- Dr. Sara Collini, Postdoctoral Fellow in University History
- Deborah Robinson, Genealogist
- Dr. David Markus, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice, Registered Professional Archaeologist 5174
- Marquise Drayton, Community Engagement Assistant
- Ka'tia Reyes, Undergraduate Communications Assistant
- Jessica Foster, Graduate Research Assistant
- Alleyia Bailey, Undergraduate Research 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