

WOODLAND CEMETERY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN BURIAL GROUND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT

MAY 2023 *Monthly Newsletter* VOLUME 3, ISSUE 5



Opening of Woodland Cemetery to groundkeepers for upkeep during the Pathways Project.
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 2023 Call for Proposals, explore the role of archaeology in uncovering Clemson's history, provide research, community engagement updates, and highlight some upcoming local events.

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2023 Call for Proposals-2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University

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 third annual Research Symposium. This year's theme, "Commemoration and Memorialization of Historic Cemeteries," focuses on various rituals and practices that are associated with remembering and honoring the dead. Over two days, this symposium will bring together research concerning memorialization of historic burial grounds and cemeteries in America and globally, and the multifaceted efforts to commemorate such spaces.

We encourage proposals from the public, professionals, scholars, and graduate students of all disciplines who are engaged in commemorating and memorializing 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:

- Memorials for enslaved laborers on university/college campuses
- Identification and memorialization of unmarked burials
- Memorialization practices for historic grave sites and burial grounds
- Public and community observances, programs, rituals, and commemorations
- Cemetery visitation and remembrance rituals
- Engaging descendant communities in memorial design and development
- Community-engaged memorial design and development
- Documenting cemetery history to support memorialization projects
- Design of plaques, markers, monuments, and memorials for historic cemeteries
- Cleaning and/or restoration of markers, headstones, and monuments in historic cemeteries

- Memorialization of historic burial grounds within contemporary cemeteries
- Memorial photographs of the deceased
- Oratory and memorialization
- Funeral, memorial, and celebration of life programs, customs, and services
- Music and memorialization
- Memory and memorialization
- Spatiality of memorials for historic cemeteries

Panel proposals should include a title, 50-word abstract of the panel theme, a 250-word summary of each presentation or paper, and a 2-page C.V./resume for each participant. Panels will run 75 minutes and should include at least three presenters and a chair. Individual paper proposals should include your name, a paper title, a 250-word summary of the paper and how it addresses the symposium theme, and a 2-page C.V./resume. Paper proposals will be grouped into panels if accepted.

Proposals submitted [here](#) by July 31, 2023, will receive full consideration.

Cemetery History Series #5

The Role of Archaeology in Uncovering Clemson's History

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

One of the most significant points the ongoing research and community engagement of the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Historic Preservation Project has brought to the fore is the deep and often overlooked history of the landscape Clemson University now occupies and the connection this history has to different eras and the University's rise and development. Archaeology has an important role to play in this effort to document and honor the legacy of the communities that once lived on this landscape through the identification, preservation and long-term stewardship of cultural resources. As a land grant institution, Clemson University is responsible for over 42,000 acres of property throughout the state of South Carolina provided by the Morrill and Hatch Acts that consists, in part, of the ancestral landscape of the Cherokee people, a revolutionary war fort, several former plantations where enslaved African Americans were forced to reside and work, Civilian Conservation Corps work sites, university buildings that were built by African American convict laborers, and World War II military training grounds. Collectively, these time periods constitute what is believed to be well in the hundreds of archaeological sites, though most of our knowledge of their locations come from the broader Clemson and South Carolinian community who have a deep passion for the history of the school and the state.

The site of Fort Rutledge highlights the way in which archaeology can serve to illustrate the interconnectedness of the university's cultural landscape. Indigenous occupation on the land that is now Clemson started at least 10,000 years ago, and radiocarbon dating from pottery recovered from the site point to a considerable presence of peoples approximately 1,400 years ago. These

peoples were the ancestors to the Lower Town Cherokee who established the town of Esseneca prior to the arrival of Europeans. Colonial era naturalists and botanical explorers, such as William Bartram, were guided to Cherokee lands by enslaved persons who represent the first people of African descent to pass through Clemson's eventual landscape. These explorer accounts give an indication of the size of Esseneca when, during a nighttime raid on July 31, 1776, South Carolina militia attacked the British-allied Cherokee town. The battle, while small, resulted in the death of the first Jewish American soldier in the Revolution, Francis Salvador, who died in the care of a servant who was likely African American. The battle is notable not only for the casualties it caused on both sides but the transformation that occurred to the landscape in its aftermath. Following their defeat to the Cherokee, the South Carolina militia returned several months later and completely razed the town and all of its crops along the Seneca River, now beneath the waters of Lake Hartwell. In an effort to exert control of the region, Fort Rutledge was erected on the ridgetop overlooking the river basin.

In operation until it was dismantled by the British in 1780, the fort served as the location for prisoner exchanges during the treaty of Dewitt's Corner and as the holding location for at least one runaway slave.

After its dismantling, memory of the fort's location and its history began to fade, and during the 19th century, references to its deteriorating state were common. In an effort to preserve its memory, members of the Pickens Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), comprised mostly of the wives of Clemson faculty, commissioned an excavation to locate the corner bastion of the fort using African American convict laborers provided by the university, some of whom may be buried in Woodland Cemetery. In 1908, the Board of Trustees authorizes the use of funds and labor to erect a monument at the fort's location at the request of DAR using that same labor. Throughout the early 20th Century this landscape is incorporated into the university infrastructure; as cattle and alfalfa fields, as the location for pumping stations and farm storage and eventually as water treatment and hazardous water disposal facilities. During this time articles in *The Tiger* reference Clemson cadets looting the site as a recreational activity, underscoring the community's interests in campus history.

As South Carolina begins to commemorate the Semiquincentennial of its role in the American Revolution, so does Clemson University. Through a grant from the National Park Service and with various stakeholder partnerships including the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the sites of Fort Rutledge and Esseneca are being relocated and their histories interpreted



Entrance to Fort Rutledge beside Clemson University's Walker Golf Course near Lake Hartwell.
Photograph by Marquise Drayton

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Cemetery History Series #5

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for the public, histories that are holistic and inclusive of the many peoples that lived and worked on what is now Clemson's campus. Archaeology aides in the Woodland Cemetery Project in serving as a reminder that the history

that must be honored and memorialized may not always be visible and the narratives that make up this landscape's past often extend beyond the boundaries of time and space that are placed on them. The history of the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial

Ground is the history of this place.

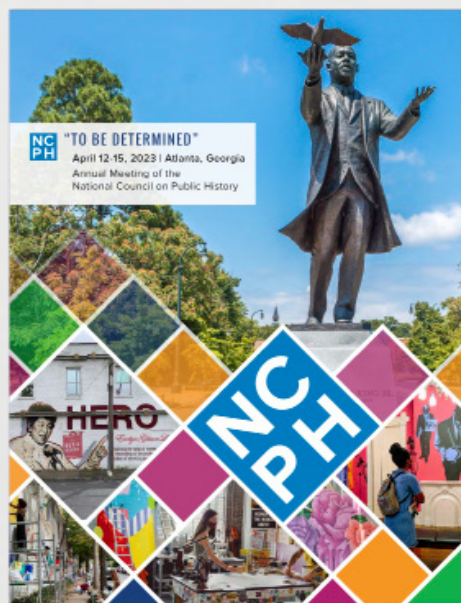
Dr. David M. Markus, Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology, Anthropology
and Criminal Justice

Research Update

Sara Collini has continued to work with the undergraduate students on their research projects and completing final trips to the campus archives. Collini has also been researching plantations and enslaved communities around Fort Hill, including Keowee, Clergy Hall, and Hopewell, and seeking to understand all the connections between families. Additionally, there are a couple account books from Pendleton in the campus archives, including a physician's account book from the 1840s, that provide information on enslaved people and health in the area. Finally, Collini, along with Dr. Amanda Regan in the Clemson History Department, led a workshop on Airtable for the Digital Public History Lab at the National Council on Public History conference in Atlanta.

Dr. Rhondda R. Thomas also attended the National Council of Public History 2023 Conference in Atlanta on April 12-14, 2023. She and Sally Mauldin participated in the program at Atlanta's 48-acre historic Oakland Cemetery and public park, which include a tour, panel discussion, and service opportunity. The knowledge they gained about the cemetery's beautification and volunteer programs, community outreach and events, varied tours, and publications will be adapted for our work at the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground. Thomas also attended several panels about memorialization in and educational programs for historic cemeteries and met public historians who expressed an interest in collaborating with our research and community engagement team.

Rollout of the project genealogy webpage is imminent. In the meantime, Deborah Robinson, genealogist, continues to research the cemetery's interred and make connections to their descendants through engagements and workshops such as the Photograph Event at the Littlejohn Community Center in Clemson which featured storytelling, documents, and photo digitization, as well as discussions about genealogy and family history using FamilySearch.org's "Relatives Around Me" feature. Another such genealogy and family history discussion will take place at the Free Legal Wills Clinic and Financial Planning Workshop on May 6 for the Shaw Center at Golden View Baptist Church in Clemson, SC. Deborah has become a member of the Old Pendleton District Chapter of the South Carolina Genealogy Society and will attend it's upcoming 50th Annual Summer Workshop Series in July, in Columbia, SC. Attending genealogical meetings and discussions hosted by the Anderson and Pendleton Public Libraries are other ways in which Deborah continues to reach out to the surrounding communities so she can listen, learn, and participate in neighborhood events.



Program cover for the 2023 National Council on Public History Multi-Day Conference in Atlanta, GA. <https://ncph.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-Annual-Meeting-Program-Final-Web.pdf>

Undergraduate research assistant Lucas DeBenedetti is graduating from Clemson this May with a BA in history and a minor in anthropology. Lucas has been working with the project for two years, starting in the Cemetery's first Creative Inquiry class in Fall 2021, before becoming an undergraduate research assistant in Spring 2022. Outside of the project Lucas has recently been awarded the William Shannon Morrison Prize, Clemson's top history award, and was admitted in Phi Beta Kappa, the United States' oldest and most prestigious honors society. He also had part of his senior thesis published in Clemson's humanities journal *The Aurantiaco*. After graduation Lucas plans to attend graduate school at the University of North Carolina Charlotte where he will pursue a master's in history.

Undergraduate research assistant Alleyia Bailey is graduating from Clemson University with a Bachelors of Science in Anthropology. Alleyia began working with the project in Fall 2022. She has aided the Cemetery project in research and in archaeological analysis of Carrel Cowan-Ricks' artifacts excavated during the 1991-1993 archaeological project. Alleyia has been admitted to the Master of Science in Social Science program at Clemson University and will begin the program in Fall 2023.

Community Engagement Update

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)

Marquise Drayton has been circulating the 2023 Call for Proposals for the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University to respective universities with similar projects, community partners, and previous participants. On April 6, he attended the Clemson University Commission on the Black Experience Community Forum in the Hendrix Center as the staff representative of the commission. This gathering was an interdisciplinary effort to express concerns and suggest improvements on bettering the experience that African Americans have as faculty and staff at Clemson.

Drayton gave virtual cemetery tours to three Clemson History classes and two Clemson English classes. On April 14, he met with Clemson Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management PhD Candidate Felipe Tobar to speak on strengthening the cemetery project's partnership with PRTM. Tobar's background is in complex heritage, cultural memory, and tourism.

On April 12, Drayton helped the George and Roszena Shaw Center for Housing

& Economic Growth at Golden View Baptist Church to spread awareness in the local Clemson community about their Free Legal Wills Clinic and Financial Workshop event at the church on May 6, 2023, from 10AM-2PM. On April 17, Drayton represented the Friends of CAAAM (Clemson Area African American Museum) at the bi-weekly City of Clemson Council meetings. There was a moment when Councilwoman Alesia Smith recognized the old Friends of CAAAM on the floor who transitioned, and Drayton spoke on behalf of the new charitable group's mission.

On April 30, Drayton, Dr. Thomas, Dr. Collini, Deborah Robinson, and Marjorie Campbell attended "The Photograph"

event at Littlejohn Community Center. The local community recorded oral history and shared family photos, and the university digitized family photos and documents. The event was co-sponsored by the Legacy Council, Call My Name, for the love of community, and Clemson Libraries.

Finally, the tour guide handbook process is going steadily to completion for prospective student docents when Woodland Cemetery opens. It will be made available for them at the end of May.

In April, Dr. Thomas attended the "Finding Our Voice" public meeting of the descendants of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and the descendants of families he enslaved at Arlington House in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA. She then joined a group of professionals from around the nation at a convening called the Welcome Table Initiative that aims to create ways for people from diverse background and ideological spectrums to communicate and collaborate with each other. She will be working with some of the descendants of the enslaved families at Arlington House to explore ways to create a Welcome Table at Clemson.



Historical marker for Littlejohn Community Center (historically Littlejohn's Grill).
Photograph by Marquise Drayton

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.

Discussion and Book Signing with Jason Reynolds. Friday, May 5, 2023, @ 7PM. Hampton Memorial Library. 304 Biltmore Road, Easley, SC 29640.

Please join the Hampton Memorial Library in Easley, South Carolina, on Friday, May 5, 2023, at 7 PM for a moderated discussion, Q&A, and book signing with author Jason Reynolds.

Reynolds is the *New York Times* best-selling author of *Miles Morales Suspended: A Spider-Man Novel*, which is

about the African American teenage adaptation of Marvel Comics' *Spider-Man*. He will personalize all copies of *Miles Morales Suspended* and sign (no personalizations) up to two additional books per attendee. Staff will be available to take a photo of you with Reynolds with your phone.

A \$21 ticket admits one & includes 1 copy of *Miles Morales Suspended*. A \$30 ticket admits two & includes 1 hardcover copy of *Miles Morales Sus-*

suspended + 1 paperback copy of *Ghost*. They will have additional books for sale at the event.

This event is co-sponsored by the Fiction Addiction Independent Bookstore in Greenville, SC, Pickens County Library System, and the Clemson Area African American Museum.

Event tickets can be purchased [online](#) through Friday, May 5, at noon. Tickets may be purchased at the door if still

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Upcoming Events

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available, but buy ahead to guarantee your spot. Refunds can be requested up until the ticket cutoff.

Free Legal Wills Clinic and Financial Workshop. Saturday, May 6, 2023, from 10AM to 5PM. Golden View Baptist Church. 105 Church Street, Clemson, SC, 29631.

The George and Roszema Shaw Center for Housing & Economic Growth invites you to a free legal wills clinic and financial workshop held at Golden View Baptist Church on Saturday, May 6, 2023, starting at 10AM. A light meal will be provided. Gervonte Brown & Associates will be available to consult guests about funeral planning and life benefits. Also, the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Historic Preservation Project at Clemson University will host a genealogy workshop by Genealogy Deborah Robinson and a virtual cemetery tour by Community Engagement Assistant Marquise Drayton. The financial seminar will be a collaborative effort between the City of Clemson Mayor Robert Halfacre and State Farm Life Insurance Agent/Pendleton Foundation for Black History and Culture Chair Terence Hassan. For more information, please visit www.shawcenter.net or contact Rosa Grayden at (864) 986-9460. Follow them on Facebook and Instagram @gr_shawcenter_clemson and www.facebook.com/grshawcenter.



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, Woodland Cemetery 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