

# WOODLAND CEMETERY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN BURIAL GROUND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT

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Press Road (beside Woodland Cemetery) is temporarily closed to non-service vehicles due to construction in the area. 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 notify viewers of the new deadline to submit Call for Proposals for this year's research symposium, research about the genealogy of a convicted laborer buried at Woodland Cemetery with Deborah Robinson, and provide research, community engagement

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## **New Deadline to Submit Call for Proposals for the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium**

The deadline to submit Call for Proposals for the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University is now Monday, August 14, 2023. The link to submit an abstract/summary is [here](#).

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 visitations and remembrance rituals 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

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- 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.

## Cemetery History Series #8

### Researching the Genealogy of Sam Barber, a Convicted Laborer Buried in Woodland Cemetery

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

The common thread that weaves through all those interred in Woodland Cemetery is each played an integral part in the university's current existence. Part of the cemetery's genealogy research agenda is contextualizing the stories of the enslaved African Americans, sharecroppers, domestic and convicted laborers, and wage workers, including their families, who do not have headstones. Genealogists understood early the importance of cemeteries to family history and spent time recording information gleaned from graveyards.<sup>1</sup> Through careful documentation, we're researching descendants to identify current family members by gathering evidence from a variety of sources, including vital records, censuses, wills, and oral histories.

Our research uncovered information on Samuel Barber, a convicted laborer who worked at Clemson College during its inception. The 1880 federal census says Sam was born about 1856 in Fairfield County, South Carolina, to Jacob and Jemima Barber, was twenty-two, and lived at home with his parents and younger brother, Charles.<sup>2</sup> Jacob was a farmer. His wife and two sons were laborers. We have not found much about Sam's daily life at Clemson except that he died at 41, 18 December 1900, while still a leased prisoner.<sup>3</sup> Sam was one of twelve laborers, documented so far, who are likely buried in Woodland Cemetery in unmarked graves. Clemson

College mainly leased African Americans from the South Carolina state penitentiary. All cleared the land, made bricks, erected buildings, planted and harvested crops, built dikes, and made roads and sidewalks.<sup>4</sup>

The 1900 federal census listed Sam Barber (transcribed as Bucher) as one of twenty-six prisoners at Clemson College. He and both parents were native-born South Carolinians. Sam was literate, a homeowner, and married for five years. South Carolina did not record marriage records state-wide until 1911.<sup>5</sup> However, some counties did compile them earlier, like Charleston County. For example, [City of] Charleston, South Carolina, U.S., Marriage Records, 1877-1887 are on Ancestry.com.<sup>6</sup> Because Samuel was married in 1895,<sup>7</sup> likely in Charleston, since that's where he was convicted of Grand Larceny and sentenced to four years, his marriage is not in this record set.<sup>8</sup> We also have not identified his wife yet. That said, we did unearth significant information about Sam's family through the life of his brother Charles.

A 1937 interview by the Works Progress Administration documents Charles, 81, living with his daughter Maggie. Mary Wylie, his wife, died two years earlier. Charles did not name his children in the interview, but said they had ten "...Some dead, some marry and leave." He related that Ozmund [sic] and Elizabeth Barber enslaved

his family in Great Falls, on the Wateree River, in South Carolina, where Charles was born.<sup>9</sup> And, according to family lore, both his parents were born in Africa, (the 1900 census lists their birthplace as South Carolina<sup>10</sup>) brought to Virginia during the transatlantic slave trade, taken to Winnsboro [Fairfield County, South Carolina] by the slave driver, then sold to Osmond Barber's father. Osmond Barber is the son of Sarah T. Barber according to her Chester County, South Carolina will dated, 14 December 1896.<sup>11</sup> His father likely predeceased his mom, since he is not mentioned in the will.

About his parents' African birth, he says "They never did talk lak [sic] de other slaves, could just say a few words, use deir [sic] hands, and make signs. . . Yes sir, they, my pappy and mammy, was just smuggled in dis part of de world, I bet you!" Charles was likely referring to the Slave Trade Act of 1807 meant to prohibit international importation of newly enslaved persons. It did not affect the domestic slave trade.<sup>12</sup> Charles further recounted that during the Civil War "Mistress [enslaver Elizabeth Barber] and de chillum have to go to Chester to git a place to sleep and eat, wid kinfolks." The 1860 Federal Slave Schedule dated 15 October 1860, for Chester County, South Carolina lists Osmund Barber holding twenty-three enslaved people in bondage.<sup>13</sup> The oldest person was a 90-year-old male,

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## Cemetery History Series #8

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the youngest were two eight-month-old infants. Sam and Charles could have been among the children listed since they were born about 1856 and 1862, respectively. Enslaved person's ages are approximated since few slaveholders kept detailed

vital record information for their bondspersons.

Charles died about 1950. He, his wife, and daughter are all buried in St. John's African Methodist Episcopal Church in Winnsboro, Fairfax, South Carolina, their home church.<sup>14</sup>

Research on Sam Barber and others vital in building present-day Clemson University continues.

By Deborah M. Robinson,  
Genealogist, Woodland Cemetery  
and African American Burial Ground  
Historic Preservation Project

**CITATIONS:** 1) Recording Historic Cemeteries: A Guide for Historical Societies and Genealogists. Chicora Foundation Inc., Columbia, South Carolina, 1998.  
2) 1880 U.S. Federal Census, Township 14, Fairfield, South Carolina; Roll: 1229; page 17A; Enumeration District: 066.  
3) 1900; Census Place: Township 5, Fairfield, South Carolina; Roll: 1527; Page: 15; Enumeration District: 0034.  
4) Annual Reports of the Board of Directors and Superintendent of the South Carolina Penitentiary, Reports and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina at the Regular Sessions, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC.  
5) FamilySearch Wiki contributors, "South Carolina Vital Records," FamilySearch Wiki, [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/index.php?title=South\\_Carolina\\_Vital\\_Records&oldid=5361257](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/index.php?title=South_Carolina_Vital_Records&oldid=5361257).  
6) Charleston, South Carolina, U.S., Marriage Records, 1877-1887 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2007. South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina.  
7) 1900; Census Place: Township 5, Fairfield, South Carolina; Roll: 1527; Page: 15; Enumeration District: 0034.  
8) Thomas, Rhondda Robinson. Convicted Laborers Deaths at Clemson. (Clemson University, 16 December 2022.)  
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## Research Update

Historian Dr. Mandi Barnard has been locating wills, probate records, and mortgages which include inventories of enslaved persons connected to the Clergy Hall and Fort Hill property. Hundreds of names of the enslaved have been recovered and will help inform future research in reconstructing family lineages of African Americans on the site of Clemson's campus. Dr. Barnard has also been conducting research using a collection held at the Huntington Library in California to glean more information about the foreclosure of the Andrew Pickens Calhoun family from Fort Hill in 1866.

Historian Dr. Sara Collini is continuing to research the connections between enslaved communities at Clergy Hall, Fort Hill, Keowee, and Hopewell plantations and tracking relationships through the database. She is also learning more about USACE protocols for relocating cemeteries due to the Hartwell Dam project to contextualize the 1960 court order on Cemetery Hill at Clemson.

Genealogist Deborah Robinson is adding more context to the story of Judge Crawford (1875-1949), a Clemson University wage worker who, starting about 1890, became "... the old colored gardener who worked for Clemson College for approximately 50 years" and is widely credited with developing the Camelia Test Garden

currently part of the cemetery and the South Carolina Botanical Gardens. In a turn of events, Deborah found a connection to Jane Edna Harris Hunter (1882-1971), another former Clemson College employee who worked as a chambermaid in one of the men's boarding houses. Mrs. Hunter went on to found the famed Phillis Wheatley Association, whose flagship building is in Cleveland, Ohio (and a second one in Greenville, South Carolina, modeled after the first,) and who wrote the autobiography A Nickel and a Prayer, initially published in 1941, then edited by Dr. Rhondda Robinson Thomas and republished in 2011. Deborah uncovered that Jane Edna Harris Hunter is the maternal first cousin of Judge Crawford's second wife, Mamie Janetta Winston (1876-1970.) Ms. Mamie is the sister to Jane Edna Harris Hunter's mother, Harriet Winston Harris (1863-1910.).

Dr. Rhondda Thomas visited five historic African American cemeteries in the South Carolina Upstate and Lowcountry to research burial practices for marked and unmarked graves. Cemeteries visited include the Emanuel AME Church Cemetery in Charleston and Richland Cemetery in Greenville. She also noted ornamental garden practices in the cemeteries to help inform the beautification of the African American burial ground at Clemson University.

## Community Engagement Update

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

Marquise Drayton has worked with the cemetery team to update information and beautify the tour guide handbook for upcoming student docents this fall. In addition, he is planning with different groups like Clemson Athletics and Clemson Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) to curate specialized tours that would bring various guests to Woodland Cemetery as a place of living history at Clemson University.

On June 15, 2023, Drayton visited Historic Richland Cemetery in Greenville, South Carolina, and Old City Cemetery in Spartanburg, South Carolina, to look at African American burial grounds in the Upstate area compared to Woodland Cemetery in upkeep and history. In 1884, the City of Greenville created Richland Cemetery as its first municipal Black cemetery. With six acres over a hillside, Richland has over 1,400 people buried there. The resting place holds Greenville's most prominent African American leaders, which include educators, entrepreneurs, and healthcare providers. Richland Cemetery has a non-profit support group that

advocates for the burial ground's upkeep and preservation. It is on the National Register of Historic Sites. There are many unmarked graves, which unfortunately are difficult to prove given a fire that occurred years ago to the record-keeping for the cemetery. Deeds are the next best way of verifying family plots.

Old City Cemetery began as the Spartanburg Colored Cemetery in 1900. The expansion of the Charleston and Western Carolina Railroad caused the reinterment of graves here from the first African American cemetery in the city. It was known as the New Colored Cemetery until 1928 and later called the Freeman's Cemetery. But since 1959, Old City Cemetery has been its name as an active burial ground. It is



Mable Owens Clarke showing the cemetery team Soapstone Baptist Church, cemetery and schoolhouse. Photograph by Marquise Drayton.

the oldest Black cemetery in the City of Spartanburg, home to prominent patrons of color for the Upstate area.

On July 18, 2023, the cemetery team visited Soapstone Baptist Church in Pickens, South Carolina, to see how a community effort came together to protect and preserve a Black church and slave cemetery. Mable Owens Clarke showed them their Old Soapstone Slave Cemetery, current-day church, and schoolhouse for the formerly enslaved. Soapstone Baptist is the oldest African American church in the Upstate, dating around the end of the Civil War. The soapstone rock upon its mountainous region is how it received its name. The Ku Klux Klan burned the original church structure in 1967. During COVID, the church faced many financial issues of closure and investment interests from leisure/hospitality companies. But Clarke remained steadfast in her faith in mastering the communal fish fry for her church's survival. Her diligence panned out well as the debt was paid, donations were made and people knew her name. Last year, she received the Order of the Palmetto, the highest award a South Carolinian can receive.

## 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](mailto: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.

**BookEnds with Seneca City Museums. Saturday, August 5, 2023, from 11AM-12PM. Lunney Museum. 211 W. South 1st Street, Seneca, SC 29678.**

Bookends is a part of the Seneca City Museums Interactive Multicultural Education (I.M.E.) program. This storytelling and education event includes a reading, discussion, and activity led by the Teacher/Librarian/Media Specialist at Seneca Middle School, Cassie

Owens Moore. This event is focused on children from grades K-6, but anyone of any age is welcome! [Registration](#) is required. Adults must accompany a child attending the event.

Saturday, August 5th, will focus on *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson!

**Tools 4 School Giveaway at CAAAM. Saturday, August 5, 2023 starting @ 9AM. Clemson Area**

**African American Museum. 214 Butler Street, Clemson, SC 29631.**

In partnership with W.A.B Sports Business and former Clemson Basketball player Wayne Buckingham, the Clemson Area African American Museum is hosting a Backpack Giveaway for children in kindergarten through 5th grade on Saturday, August 5th at 9AM. The school supplies will be given out until supplies last so please come early. The back

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## Upcoming Events

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to school drive is held in conjunction with the 2023 Orange and White Gala, hosted at Lakeside Lodge. It is held annually in support of the Wayne Buckingham Scholarship '94 Scholarship Endowment at Clemson University.

**Grill and Greet, hosted by the Harvey and Lucinda Gantt Multicultural Center. Thursday, August 24, 2023, from 6-8PM. North Green and Outdoor Ampitheater at Clemson University. 230 Parkway Dr, Clemson, SC 29631.**

Join the Gantt Multicultural Center in kicking off the year with free food, live performances, and a student organization fair! Grill and Greet allows students to build community while learning about Clemson's multicultural organizations. Grill & Greet is one of the Gantt Center's longest standing cultural events; however, in 2007, the inclusion of student tabling and cultural showcases took this program to new heights. This year's Grill and Greet will be Thursday, August 24, from 6-8PM, at the North Green/Ampitheater area of Clemson University's campus. The Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Historic Preservation Project at Clemson University will be a tabled organization there.



## Meet the Research and Community Engagement

- 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
- Sally Mauldin, Woodland Cemetery Office Staff
- Anthony Herrera, Woodland Cemetery Superintendent
- 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

## 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](mailto:afamburials@clemson.edu) or call (864) 656-8855