

WOODLAND CEMETERY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN BURIAL GROUND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT

OCTOBER 2023 *Monthly Newsletter* VOLUME 3, ISSUE 10



The Younts South Club at Gate 16 lies directly across from Woodland Cemetery on Press Road. 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 cover biographical information on the keynote speaker for the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University, inform the public on other historic cemeteries around the state owned by Clemson University, and provide research, community engagement updates, and highlight some upcoming local events.

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2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium Keynote Speaker - Curtis Patterson

Sculptor Curtis Patterson will deliver the keynote address titled "Retrospective of My Work" for the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University. The main event is in the Hendrix Student Center at 6 PM. A native of Shreveport, Louisiana, Patterson understood the importance of working with his hands as the grandson of a master carpenter. He received his bachelor of arts degree in art education from Grambling State University and his master of fine arts degree from Georgia State University. His stop at the latter school is notable because he was the first African American to earn an MFA in Sculpture from GSU. From 1976 to 2007, Patterson was a faculty member at the

Atlanta College of Art. His earlier art involved paintings, wood, and ceramic pieces and later evolved into steel statues and cast iron large-scale projects. His previous public works include the Andrew Young Tribute in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, "the Celebration of a Champion" Monument to Jesse Owens at Ohio State University, the "Equine Rhythm" statue at the Texas Horse Park in Dallas, TX, and "Spiral Justice" at the State Capital Grounds in St. Paul, Minnesota. For more information on Curtis Patterson, please visit [here](#).

The [deadline](#) to register for the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium is October 4. In-person registration costs \$25 per person. Students can register

for free (K-12, undergraduate, and graduate). Registration includes all panel presentations, the keynote lecture, selected field trips, lunch on Tuesday, October 10, and refreshments. Workshops cost an additional \$15 each. Virtual registration is \$10 per person (keynote and panel presentation only).



Curtis Patterson. Photograph by [visart.org](#).

Cemetery History Series #10

Off-Campus Statewide Gravesites that belong to Clemson University

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

Although Clemson University is devoting major attention to documenting the history of Woodland Cemetery and the African American Burial Ground Project on its main campus and honoring all who are buried there, the higher education institution is also seeking to preserve 15 grave sites on 33,000 acres it owns throughout South Carolina.

There are a variety of cemeteries on these off-campus sites, including those affiliated with families and churches, as well as some located in heavily wooded areas with graves that are both unmarked and marked by headstones.

Clemson is committed to working with researchers and local communities to document the history of all of these sacred sites and to ensure that they are protected. More information about this initiative can be found on Clemson University's Statewide Grave Sites website.

1) **The Clemson Experimental Forest (CEF)** in Oconee/Anderson/Pickens Counties contains four sites identified and confirmed as known gravesite locations. These include the John Ewing Colhoun Family Cemetery, Lawrence Family Cemetery, Lieutenant William F. Grant Site, and Lieutenant Benjamin Lawrence Site. Acquired by Clemson University in 1954, the Clemson Experimental Forest encompasses approximately 17,500 acreage. The estimated number of graves in the CEF is

approximately 255+, with 240 unmarked burials.

2) The cemetery for enslaved people who worked at Andrew Pickens' Hopewell Plantation and the Simpson Cemetery site of Mt. Jolly Plantation are at **the Piedmont Research and Education Center** in Anderson/Pickens Counties. Hopewell contains three headstones, with most of the depressions marked by field stones. There are twelve headstones at the multigenerational Simpson and Taliaferro Family Cemetery. Like Hopewell, field stones lie within the space, denoting how old the graveyard is. Clemson University took ownership of the properties from 1932-1960, totaling approximately 4,400 acres.

3) The identified gravesites of **the Edisto Research and Education Center (Edisto REC)** in Barnwell County include three locations: one near the ruins of a church, another adjacent to a hay barn, and the third at the edge of a once alfalfa field. Clearing work was completed on these sites in February 2022. Old Church has identified five headstones, with 60+ estimated graves primarily unmarked. The Christmas Tree Field Hay Barn has an estimated 15-20 graves but no identifiable headstones. The V.L. Cave/Alfalfa Field has one Veterans Administration headstone, with an estimated two graves via the oral history of husband and wife. Clemson acquired the Edisto REC between 1936-1952, spanning approximately 2,360 acreage.

4) 1971 was when the university acquired **the Pee Dee Research and Education Center (Pee Dee REC)** from the Dargan and Pierce Families, covering approximately 2,300 acres of 20+ estimated graves. The Pee Dee REC in Darlington/Florence Counties includes one confirmed cemetery and two other possible sites. The Old Dargan/Pleasant Grove Cemetery has two headstones, with 20+ unmarked metal funeral home markers where some are legible to read. The estimated number of graves at the African American burial ground in the forest is unknown. The W. Standard site and Pitner Center Grassed area have no headstones nor estimated grave count. The former is potentially a family cemetery for a Revolutionary War officer where historical descriptions match the possible location, while the latter GPR survey found no evidence of graves despite oral history accounting for there being once.

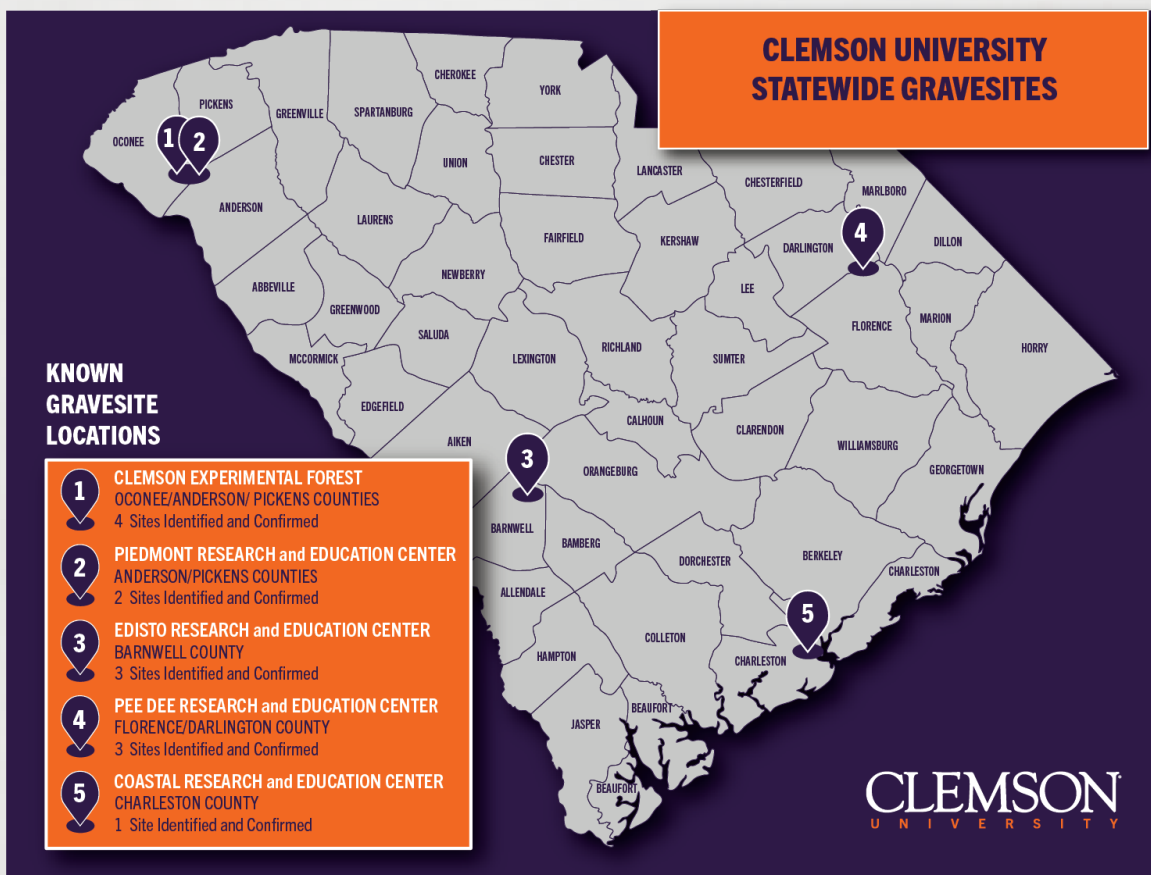
5) **The Coastal Research and Education Center** in Charleston County identified the Old Mill gravesite as a confirmed burial ground. There are an estimated 50+ graves among its 325 acres. Clemson University acquired the land from 1932 to 1944. Though to be called "Old Mill" from oral history, the cemetery has three headstones.

For more information on how Clemson University works to preserve grave sites in South Carolina, please click [here](#).

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Cemetery History Series #10

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Research Update

Research Historian Dr. Mandi Barnard continues to research and recover the names of the enslaved in archival collections held at Clemson, the SC Department of Archives and History, and online repositories.

Historian Dr. Sara Collini has been working with the students on the CI Team, learning about the interdisciplinary methods used to research the history of the cemetery. The students took a behind-the-scenes tour of Special Collections and Archives at Clemson with the archives staff and analyzed two historical maps of campus.

Genealogist Deborah Robinson made a presentation to Dr. Collini's Cemetery Creative Inquiry Team on what a Genealogist does, and the tools one uses. She shared her research on Sam Barber, as an example. Barber was one of twelve convict

laborers known to be buried on Cemetery Hill at former Clemson Agricultural College, without a headstone. These predominantly African American males cleared the land, made bricks, erected buildings, planted and harvested crops, built dikes, and made roads and sidewalks as free laborers contributing to current-day Clemson University. Deborah continues to document the enslaved family of Polydore and Menemin, who labored at Fort Hill, and will be used as a model for future research projects.

Dr. Rhondda Thomas conducted research at the SC Department of Archives and History to locate more details about the convicted laborers who died while working at Clemson and are believed to have been buried in Cemetery Hill between 1890 and 1915.

Community Engagement Update

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

On September 20, 2023, Marquise Drayton gave a virtual tour of Woodland Cemetery to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) members at the Historic Ballenger House in Seneca, SC. Attendees were very interested in how the 1960s Hartwell Dam project came about, the ongoing Pathways Project at Clemson University, and the Woodland Cemetery Preservation Project memorial phase. Other cemetery tours included walking tours on campus at sites related to the cemetery for the Clemson Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice and the Clemson Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management (PRTM).

On September 21, Deborah Robinson, Dr. Rhondda Thomas, and Drayton attended the 2023 Preserving Historic Cemeteries Workshop at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History in Columbia, SC. They

informed other attendees of the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University in October 2023. Also, Drayton connected with Christina Griswold and Katie Martin of the Upstate Cemetery Preservation Alliance to get more K-12 students involved in preserving cemeteries in Upstate South Carolina.

On September 27, the cemetery team hosted their annual back to school Kahoot trivia event for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members at Gate 16 of Clemson Memorial Stadium. The audience of 40+ were divided up into teams of three to contest questions and answers on Woodland Cemetery history, Clemson University history, and Clemson Football history. Refreshments from Raising Canes was served, Clemson swag was distributed, and a participant won a giveaway for a Clemson Football game-issued jersey. The site of the Younts South Club was intentionally chosen since 2022 due to its adjacent proximity to the campus cemetery. Guests this year could see the ongoing iron

gate working being done across from the stadium entrypoint on Press Road as they entered into Gate 16.

Drayton and Dr. Thomas met with Dr. Lauren Stephens, the Engaging in Diverse, Guided Experiences (EDGE) Director and Lecturer in the Clemson PRTM Department, virtually in looking ahead to Spring 2024 for event planning ideas around the cemetery project for sophomores in the program. Lastly, Drayton accessed the glass exhibition box in Sistine on the second floor to work on a public display of the cemetery project for people walking by. Various departments in the campus building showcase their work, research, and events in these well-lit display cases. Be on the lookout for what the cemetery project offers soon in Sistine.



Contrary to popular belief, Clemson Memorial Stadium is not nicknamed "Death Valley" because of Woodland Cemetery beside it. Marquise Drayton explaining its origins after his virtual tour for OLLI at the Historic Ballenger House. Post found at <https://www.instagram.com/olliclemsonuniversity/>.

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.

Thursday Night Movies @ CAAAM. 6-8PM. October 12 & 26, November 6* & 9, December 14 & 28. 214 Butler Street, Clemson, South Carolina 29631. *Monday Night Movie

Please join the Clemson Area African American Museum for Thursday Night Movies at CAAAM. Please note: the November 6th showing will be held on a Monday.

It is free admission to attend. Free popcorn and candy will be available. Films shown include *Glory* (1989), *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967), and *When They Could Fly* (2023). For more information, please click [here](#).

Game Night @ CAAAM. 6-8PM. October 5 & 19, November 2 & 16, December 7 & 12*. 214 Butler Street, Clemson, South Carolina

29631. *Tuesday Game Night

Please join the Clemson Area African American Museum for Game Night @ CAAAM. It will be held on select Thursdays not designated Thursday Night Movies. Note: the December 12th edition will be held on a Tuesday. Games available include "Family Feud," "Backgammon," and "Mancala."

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Upcoming Events

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For more information, please click [here](#). Game Night @ CAAAM is funded in part by a grant from Pickens County Recreation Fund.

Free Legal Wills Clinic, Financial Workshop, and Overview of Heirs Property. Saturday, October 14, 2023, starting @ 10AM. Golden View Baptist Church. 105 Church Street, Clemson, South Carolina 29631.

The George and Roszema Shaw Center for Housing & Economic Growth invites you to a free legal wills clinic, financial workshop, and overview of heirs property held at Golden View Baptist Church on Saturday, October 14, 2023, beginning at 10AM. A light meal will be provided. Toshen Poole, a Final Expense Specialist, will be available. Also, the Woodland Cemetery and African American Burial Ground Historic Preservation Project at Clemson University will host a genealogy workshop by Genealogist Deborah Robinson and a virtual cemetery tour by Community Engagement Assistant Marquise Drayton. 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.

Shaw Center
High Quality Community
Housing and Economic Growth Center for Housing & Economic Growth

Join us at our Wills Clinic,
Financial Planning
Workshop, & Overview of
Heirs Property for a
Genealogy Workshop

Saturday,
October 14

10 am
Golden View
Baptist Church
105 Church St
Clemson, SC
29631

Toshen Poole
Final Expense
Specialist

Clemson University's
Woodland Cemetery
Preservation Project
Virtual Cemetery Tour

shawcenter.net
@grshawcenter
@gr_shawcenter_clemson

Save the date!

Learn about your heritage,
how to handle your money &
property, and get a will in the
same day!

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, Strategic Operations Director
- 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
- Candy Boatwright, Graduate Research Assistant
- Amanda Hartman, Graduate Research Assistant
- Alexis Thomas, Undergraduate Research Assistant

And Meet Our Community Engagement Council

- From Anderson: J. T. Boseman, Jack Henderson, Nekaun Swinger, Dr. Beatrice Thompson, Dr. L. Kaifa Roland
- From Clemson-Central: Rosa Grayden; Dalphine Jameson; Pastor Dr. Zackary Johnson
- From Pendleton: Terence Hassan, Deveraux Williams
- 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