

# AFRICAN AMERICAN BURIAL GROUND, ANDREW P. CALHOUN FAMILY PLOT, AND WOODLAND CEMETERY HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT

NOVEMBER 2023 *Monthly Newsletter* VOLUME 3, ISSUE 11



2023 Day of Remembrance on Day 2 of the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University. Photograph by Dr. Rhondda Thomas.

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 recap the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University, acknowledge a veteran buried in Woodland Cemetery ahead of Veterans Day, provide research and community engagement updates, and highlight some upcoming local events.

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## Recap of the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University

On October 9-10, 2023, the third annual Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium was held at Clemson University. Over the two days, the symposium brought together research concerning memorializing historic burial grounds and cemeteries in America and globally and the multifaceted efforts to commemorate such spaces.

On Day 1, morning tours of local historic cemeteries were held at King's Chapel AME Church, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, New Hope Baptist Church, Hopewell Plantation, and Clemson University. Following the field trips, there were interactive afternoon workshops focused on genealogy, cemetery preservation at Old Stone Church in Clemson, SC, researching family history. Keynote Speaker and Sculptor Curtis Patterson delivered his address, "Retrospective

of My Work," to an audience of 30+ people in the Hendrix Student Center Ballroom the evening on the first day. Patterson's earlier art involved paintings, wood, and ceramic pieces and later evolved into steel statues and cast iron large-scale projects. He spoke about his previous public works in Atlanta, GA, Dallas, TX, Columbus, OH, and his native home, Shreveport, LA. Patterson's works honor not only Andrew Young, Rosa Parks, and Jesse Owens but also unsung heroes hidden from the history books.

On Day 2, there were panel presentations on historic cemeteries from various researchers. These included representatives from the Girl Scout Troop 1967, Louisiana State University, Duke University, the University of Tennessee, Fort Bend Independent School District, Charleston County Coroner's Office,

NC State Historic Sites, Praise View A&M University, the College of William and Mary, Clemson University, and more.

We also held our first annual Day of Remembrance program to honor all who are buried in the African American Burial Ground, the Andrew Pickens Calhoun Family Plot and Woodland Cemetery. Trustee David Dukes, chair of the Legacy Council, and Dr. Rhondda Thomas, coordinator of research and community engagement made brief remarks and a moment of silence was observed. A wreath for each burial ground was placed at the entrance to the cemetery.

We want to thank the Legacy Council, Clemson University School of Architecture, Clemson University Historic Preservation Graduate Program, and Clemson Historic Properties for co-sponsoring the event.

## Cemetery History Series #11

### Veterans Day at Woodland Cemetery: Honoring Sergeant Archie DePriest Stern

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

The war to end all wars ended in armistice at 11:00 AM on November 11, 1918. In the years since, Armistice Day, or Veterans Day, as it is known now in the US, is a time to honor those who have served in the Armed Forces. On this year's 104th Veterans Day, the cemetery project honors Sergeant Archie DePriest Stern. Sergeant Stern was a detached recruit with the 8th Infantry, USAR, who served his final years at Clemson College. He worked under Captain R.W. Johnson as an instructor of Military Tactics for the R.O.T.C. Stern was a veteran of the Philippines Campaign and served in the US Army of Occupation, in France and Germany from 1919-1923.

Archie Stern was born on March 8, 1881, near Glenville, WV. His father and mother, Jacob Stern and Julia DePriest, immigrated from Germany to the US in 1857, settling in the area of what is today West Virginia. Stern later served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Sergeant Stern was the eighth of 11 children. His father and brothers worked as saddlers, making saddles and tack for horses. In 1904, at 23, Stern enlisted in the US Army Coastal Artillery Corps (CAC). The CAC was tasked with harbor defense of the US mainland and US territories acquired in the Spanish American

War of 1898. Each coastal port was fitted with innovative fixed munitions. By WWI, CAC installations were essential in preventing U-Boat attacks on the coast.

Sergeant Stern served stateside at Fort Mott, NJ, and at Fort Casey and Fort Lawton in Washington State. He also served for a time in Panama at the Canal Zone. From 1915-1918, he was stationed in Manila, The Philippines, defending that port during WWI. Although his enlistment records are incomplete, Stern reenlisted again in 1919, at Camp Meade, MD, as a private with the 35th Co. Field Artillery, 9th Replacement Unit, US Army Expeditionary Force. While it is not known what role Stern played in France and Germany with the US Army of Occupation, it can be inferred that his years of experience with coastal defense and knowledge

of munitions would be vital to the task of maintaining the peace in Europe following adoption of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.

While in Europe, Sergeant Stern met his wife, Anna P. Schwartz as they both sailed out of Bremen, Germany. They returned to the US in 1923 at Fort Screven, GA, where she met Stern where he was stationed. Anna Stern was from Glogau, Silesia, Prussia which is now in Poland. In 1925, Stern and his wife came to Clemson, where he worked as a military tactics instructor for the R.O.T.C. program. According to *The Tiger* student newspaper, Stern was well liked and respected among faculty and cadets. Anna Stern shared the same admiration said in her obituary from *The State* newspaper. Sadly, Anna Stern became sick with leukemia and died on May 17, 1927. She was the first person buried in the newly established Woodland Cemetery and was the first spouse of a campus employee buried there.

In August 1928, Sergeant Stern reenlisted for his final two years of Army service before retirement. At 47 years old, and recently recovered from an operation, he had just returned to Clemson in autumn of that year. On the evening of



Archie Stern's military tombstone in Woodland Cemetery at Clemson University.  
Photo from [Find a Grave](#).

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## Cemetery History Series #11

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November 5, Stern was seen in his military uniform walking to Woodland to visit Anna's grave. It was after 10 pm. The following morning, he did not report for duty. Three weeks later, the Board of Trustees went public with Stern's disappearance, and appealed for help locating him. He had left his car, belongings, and bank account untouched. Months passed. In March of 1929, a man in Elberton, GA pulled a body from the Savannah River following a flood from a dam. Documents on the body and the uniform gave the identity of the

deceased as Sergeant Archie Stern.

The Clemson community was in shock. The verdict of the coroner's inquest was death by homicide. However, the Board of Trustees believed Stern took his own life in sorrow over the loss of his wife Anna. Stern's siblings believed he had been killed. To this day, no one knows what happened to Sergeant Stern. His body was taken back to Clemson by Lieutenant R. W. Johnson, a main officer under the R.O.T.C. commandant, and buried

beside Anna at Woodland Cemetery. Sergeant Stern was the fourth Clemson burial at Woodland. He was the first active-duty US military personnel to die and be buried here, and he was the first veteran of the US Armed Forces honored at the campus cemetery.

By Dr. Mandi Barnard  
Research Historian  
African American Burial Ground,  
Andrew P. Calhoun Family Plot,  
and Woodland Cemetery Historic  
Preservation Project at Clemson  
University

CITATIONS: 1) Press Clippings, Series 37, Military Science Department Information File, Clemson Special Collections Library, Clemson University Libraries.  
2) US Armed Forces Enlistment Records, Ship Manifests, Immigration and Naturalization Files, and Press Clippings from US National Archives on Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com.

## Research Update

Research Historian Dr. Mandi Barnard presented research updates at the 3rd Annual Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium on October 10. She has been working in ArcGIS Pro to plot the location of plantations associated with the Calhoun family. She has resumed research in the archive connected to the founding of Clemson and the early business of the Board of Trustees.

Historian Dr. Sara Collini presented with Dr. Barnard on research and digital storytelling for the cemetery project at the recent Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson. Dr. Collini has also continued to work with the students on our Creative Inquiry Team. They recently learned about digital history methods used to research histories of the cemetery and used the tool JuxtaposeJS to compare aerial images of the cemetery over time. The students also learned about archaeological methods used at the cemetery from Dr. David Markus and Alleyia Bailey, then analyzed some of the artifacts excavated from Cemetery Hill in the 1990s by Professor Carrel Cowan-Ricks, including porcelain dishware, Indigenous projectile points, and fragments of glass bottles from tailgating trash. Genealogist Deborah Robinson had a very busy

month of workshops, conferences, and advising. She attended the Virtual Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society 2023 Annual Conference. She also presented at Genealogy Adventures Live, Virtual; Woodland Cemetery 2023 Annual Research Symposium, Clemson University, SC; Goldenview Baptist Church Genealogy Workshop, Clemson, SC. Deborah is also advising students in our Creative Inquiry Class who have chosen genealogy research as their term project. She continues to work on her various research projects.

On October 25, 2023, Dr. Rhondda Thomas made a presentation at the virtual Sandbach Tinne Conference sponsored by the University of Bristol's Digital Futures Institute with Clemson University Colleague KC Howle, Endowed Chair of Collaborative Computing, about the development of a digital humanities project that will examine the interconnectivity of plantations owned by the Calhoun-Colhoun-Bonneau-Pickens families and the members of enslaved communities whom they bought, sold, mortgaged, gifted, and forced to labor.

## Community Engagement Update

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On October 5, Marquise Drayton, Dr. Rhonda Thomas, and University Historian Dr. Otis Pickett led a bus tour of campus chronicling African American history at the university for the Clemson Black Alumni Council as part of homecoming week programming. Stops related to the cemetery included Press Road in between Woodland Cemetery and Memorial Stadium and Tiger Walk, the former location of "the Bottoms" or "the River" African American neighborhood. On October 10, Drayton presented on Black funeral processions and traditions at the 2023 Historic Cemeteries Research Symposium at Clemson University.

On October 14, Drayton and Deborah Robinson represented the cemetery project at the fall edition of the Free Legal Wills Clinic, Financial Workshop, and Overview of Heirs Property in Clemson, SC. The George and Roszena Shaw Center for Housing Inequality and Economic Growth hosted the community event at Golden View Baptist Church. Robinson held a genealogy workshop while Drayton led a virtual cemetery tour.

On October 21, Drayton participated in the Clemson University Day of

Service with Clemson students, cemetery project manager Marjorie Campbell, and Helen Rosemond-Saunders, secretary for the Blue Ridge Community Center in Seneca, SC. Eleven students helped with beautifying the courtyard of the former high school for Black students turned community center. Later that same day, Drayton represented the cemetery project at the 2023 Oconee County NAACP Freedom Fund Celebration program in Seneca, SC. Many guests were interested in signing up for the monthly newsletter and the giveaways with information on cemetery tours and social media to stay in the loop.

The cemetery team would like to welcome Kathryn Ann Batson as an undergraduate assistant for the project. Batson focuses on fine arts and communications and will assist with photography and art projects. Then, she will move gradually toward research tasks.

On October 23-24, 2023, Dr. Thomas coordinated a two-day campus visit for Kirk Williamson, descendant of Seneca who was enslaved by Ezekiel Pickens, that included a visit to Special Collections and Archives, a meeting with the cemetery team, tours of Fort Hill and Hopewell plantation houses; and a Call My Name tour. On October 26, she and Marjorie Campbell,

Sally Mauldin, Anthony Herrrea, Rick Owens, and Beth Crocker attended the Capturing the Spirit of Oakland Cemetery program to learn more about public program opportunities for the campus cemetery. During the 75-minute tour, among the stories shared by actors and volunteers of people buried in the cemetery was that of Corinne Parks, a Pendleton District, SC, native and daughter of Elizabeth Patsy Moultrie who was employed as a domestic servant by Thomas and Anna Clemson during Reconstruction. Parks migrated to Atlanta in the late 1800s and established a business with her husband. At the end of the presentation, attendees received a copy of Moultrie's Honey Buttermilk Biscuits recipe.



Cosplay performed at Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta, GA, by a Black actress of Corinne Parks, the daughter of Elizabeth Patsy Moultrie who worked as a domestic servant for Thomas G. and Anna Clemson during the post-Civil War. Photograph by Dr. Rhonda Thomas.

## 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.

**Community Big Yard Sale. Saturday, November 4, 2023, from 8 AM to 1 PM. Blue Ridge Community Center. 515 Holland Avenue, Seneca, SC 29678.**

The Blue Ridge Community Center will host a big yard sale for the community in Seneca on Saturday, November 4, 2023, from 8 AM to 1 PM. Their address is 515 Holland

Avenue, Seneca, SC 29678. The proceeds from the yard sale will benefit the nonprofit organization, which was once the old Code Elementary School. Initially, the building began as the segregated Blue Ridge High School, then became Seneca Junior High School after integration before becoming the elementary school. It is \$10 per spot if you would like to sell

items there and \$25 per food truck if you would like to sell food there. Please call 864-247-8090 or 864-8827638 for more information.

**Veterans Parade. Sunday, November 5, 2023, @ 3 PM. Clemson Area African American Museum. 214 Butler St, Clemson, SC 29631.**

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## Upcoming Events

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Celebrate African American veterans' contributions and ALL veterans' service with a Veterans Parade hosted by the Clemson Area African American Museum (CAAAM) on Sunday, November 5, 2023, starting at 3 PM. The parade begins at Golden View Baptist Church (105 Church Street, Clemson, SC 29631) and ends at CAAAM (214 Butler Street, Clemson, SC 29631). Veterans will be honored via float, marching group, decorated wagon, and bicycles. Floats may be transported by or consist of decorated golf carts, lawnmowers/tractors, wagons and bikes. No automobiles except those registered in the parade to transport veterans with mobility issues or parade-registered military vehicles. For more information, please visit [here](#).

**Winter Nights. Select Thursday Evenings in November, from 5 PM to 8 PM. Seneca City Museums. 211 W South 1st St, Seneca, SC 29678 or 208 W South 2nd Street, Seneca, SC 29678.**

Join the Seneca City Museums for select Thursday evenings in November under the stars with live music. Enjoy food and a cash bar provided by 313 Cafe of Seneca, SC. Space is limited. Tickets are required for this event and can be reserved online only. Registrations must be made in advance. No tickets will be available at the event. Free event. Must be Pre-Registered to attend. For more information, please click [here](#).



## 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
- Kathryn Batson, Undergraduate 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; Dalphene Jameson
- 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](mailto:afamburials@clemson.edu) or call (864) 656-8855