

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

FEBRUARY 2024 *Monthly Newsletter* VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2



Where the road meets the klingstone pathway on one of a few sections of the campus cemetery (Marquise Drayton).

The Cemetery Preservation Project seeks to tell the stories of the known and previously unknown burials located in the 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 advertise new cemetery tour dates for Black History Month 2024, acknowledge the history of sharecroppers and domestics at Fort Hill, provide research and community engagement updates, and highlight some upcoming local events.

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### Free Walking Tours of Clemson University's Woodland Cemetery for Black History Month 2024

For Black History Month 2024, the cemetery team will offer several free cemetery tours during February. Review these available tour times on our [tour calendar](#). Registration for the Black History Month tours [is encouraged](#) but not required. Here are the following dates and times available for booking:

- Thursday, February 8, 2PM
- Saturday, February 10, 2:30PM
- Wednesday, February 14, 2PM
- Thursday, February 22, 2PM
- Saturday, February 24, 2:30PM
- Wednesday, February 28, 2PM

We offer tours to groups with a maximum of 60 people. After reg-

istering, you will receive an email if your group tour is confirmed. Please allow at least two business days to receive your booking confirmation. We encourage those interested in signing up to schedule a tour at least one week in advance.

Since July 2020, ground penetrating radar (GPR) has revealed over 500 anomalies believed to be unmarked burials in the African American Burial Ground, A. P. Calhoun Family Plot, and Woodland Cemetery on the Clemson University campus. Research points to these burials belonging to people of African descent with long connections to Clemson's history, including those who were free and enslaved, sharecroppers, tenant farmers, domestic laborers, convicted laborers, and wage workers and their families.

Schedule a free walking tour to learn about the history of this site and how to get involved with efforts to protect, preserve, and memorialize this sacred ground.

When you take a tour, you will also see the new improvements to the sacred space from the 2023 Pathways Enhancement Project, including new benches, klingstone pathways, and a new gate near Gate 16 of Memorial Stadium.



White flag that represents an anomaly believed to be an unmarked burial (Marquise Drayton).

## Cemetery History Series #2

### Slavery by Another Name in Sharecroppers, Tenant Farmers and Domestic Workers in Clemson

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

Last month's edition of the newsletter featured a story that discussed enslaved people at Fort Hill Plantation and their lives with the Calhouns. This month, we will discuss the continuation of African American labor through sharecropping, tenant farming, and domestic workers. Following the Civil War, the formerly enslaved had newfound freedoms as they were no longer considered property. From once-prohibited education provided to Black children to voting rights given to Black men, these newly earned rights came after the divided country fought over "the peculiar institution" of chattel slavery. However, attaining citizenship, freedom, and "40 acres and a mule" was difficult for many formerly enslaved people. Conceptually, it was different to go from being considered commerce as 3/5th a person to becoming a whole person under the court of law. In various instances, the formerly enslaved returned to the plantations where they had labored for a new form of slavery by a different name: sharecropping.<sup>1</sup>

The war left the South in financial disarray during the Reconstruction Era as former plantation owners tried to replace the institution of slavery with something similar. The sharecropping system was a 360-deal debtor loophole that the lender (typically, the previous enslavers) kept the borrower

(the formerly enslaved) in through credit and repayment of agriculture.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Green Clemson, a Confederate soldier pardoned by US President Andrew Johnson,<sup>3</sup> went into a sharecropping agreement with some former enslaved people of Fort Hill Plantation in 1868.<sup>4</sup> It included living quarters for the sharecroppers' families, farming tools, animals for farm labor, access to firewood, rationed bread, and seed from the previous season's harvest.<sup>5</sup> However, like the debt owed for previous crops, the profit made by the borrower was heavily in favor of the lender. Duff Green Calhoun, a Confederate veteran and Andrew Pickens Calhoun's son, used 2 printed contracts provided by the Freedman's Bureau for freedmen and women that kept them bound to the land they once worked for free, starting in 1866.<sup>6</sup> Clemson wrote out four contracts for the formerly enslaved, beginning in 1867.<sup>7</sup> The January 1871-January 1872 contract included many women who agreed to work for Clemson as sharecroppers.<sup>8</sup>

One thing to point out is the lack of transparency of these sharecropping contracts with the indication of illiteracy in marking an "X" between their

first and last names.<sup>9</sup> The contracts were read to them before they signed. But they would not be able to remember all of the details. Clemson's agent's record book was used if any disputes arose about work/pay, making it even more difficult to ensure they were treated fairly. Understanding how the freedmen and women were not allowed to read during enslavement, there would be no fair way for them to understand what they signed up for.

The work agreements outlined by Thomas Green Clemson not only kept the formerly enslaved in a cycle of debt but checked for behavior while at work that was viewed as rebellious. These rules included "not keeping fire arms or deadly weapons" and "not inviting visitors nor leaving the premises during work hours without written consent."<sup>10</sup> In instances of theft at Fort Hill, the assumption of "guilty until proven innocent" ruled for those found with stolen goods.<sup>11</sup>

Manual labor was not limited in the fields either. Domestic work occurred at Fort Hill, from cooking food to rendering childcare.<sup>12</sup> It was more common for women to work in

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## Cemetery History Series #2

*Continued from previous page* the household—many of whom were formerly enslaved people.<sup>13</sup>

For decades, both free and enslaved Black laborers worked the land in which we see today. As the college was established in 1889, convicted laborers followed from 1890 to 1915, helping to build everything, including four buildings for

Clemson College that are still standing. What followed them were wage workers in the early 20th century and their families. Enslaved persons and other laborers who work on the land may be buried in the cemetery. During Black History Month 2024, we ask that you consider the intergenerational nature of the project with how African Americans have impacted

the land grant institution from the antebellum era to contemporary times.

By Marquise Drayton  
Community Engagement Assistant  
African American Burial Ground, Andrew Pickens Calhoun Family Plot, and Woodland Cemetery Historic Preservation Project at Clemson University

CITATIONS: 1) Tetreau, Jared. 2023. "Sharecropping: Slavery Rerouted." PBS.Org. WGBH Educational Foundation. August 16, 2023. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/harvest-sharecropping-slavery-rerouted/>.

- 2) Ibid.
- 3) Caroline M. Ross on behalf of Fort Hill. "Fort Hill-Parlor." Clio: Your Guide to History. July 30, 2020. <https://theclio.com/entry/104472>.
- 4) "Articles of agreement between Thomas G. Clemson and freedmen and women, 1868 January 1" (1868). Thomas Green Clemson Papers, Mss 2. 1134. <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/tgc/1134>
- 5) Ibid.
- 6) "The Reconstruction Era" in History of the African American Burial Ground. Woodland Cemetery Historic Preservation. <https://www.clemson.edu/about/history/woodland-cemetery/histories/burial-ground.html>.
- 7) Ibid.
- 8) "Articles of agreement between Thomas G. Clemson and freedmen and women, 1871 January 1" (1871). Thomas Green Clemson Papers, Mss 2. 1159. <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/tgc/1159>.
- 9) "Articles of agreement between Thomas G. Clemson and freedmen and women, 1867" (1867). Thomas Green Clemson Papers, Mss 2. 1133. <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/tgc/1133>.
- 10) "Articles of agreement between Thomas G. Clemson and freedmen and women, 1867" (1867). Thomas Green Clemson Papers, Mss 2. 1133. <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/tgc/1133>.
- 11) "Articles of agreement between Thomas G. Clemson and freedmen and women, 1871 January 1" (1871). Thomas Green Clemson Papers, Mss 2. 1159. <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/tgc/1159>.
- 12) Cassettes 1 & 2 (Viola Williams), Mss 282, Black Heritage in the Upper Piedmont of South Carolina Project Collection, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, SC.
- 13) Cassette 1 (Lucille Vance/Yolanda Harrell), Mss 282, Black Heritage in the Upper Piedmont of South Carolina Project Collection, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, SC.

## Research Update

Research Historian Dr. Mandi Barnard has been working on compiling lists of African American wage workers at Clemson's campus and of African American Agricultural and Home Demonstration Extension agents, and continuing to gather information on enslaved persons at Fort Hill. She has completed a chapter on A.P. Calhoun for publication in an edited volume.

Historian Dr. Sara Collini is continuing to work with Deborah Robinson and Dr. Barnard on the database project that is helping narrow down the names of individuals who may be buried in unmarked graves in the cemetery. The Creative Inquiry class for the Spring 2024 semester has also started, and seven new students joined the team. They are history, chemistry, and education majors. The students will be researching archival documents to help the

project team recover names of those who may be buried in the cemetery, as well as participating in community engagement events and cemetery tours.

Genealogist Deborah Robinson continues her research on documenting the families of convict laborers and enslaved families and training our project undergraduate assistant and Creative Inquiry honors student to do family history research. Meanwhile, there has been a breakthrough in the study of one enslaved family in particular, the details of which she will share in an upcoming newsletter. Also, there are forthcoming workshops at which Robinson is preparing to give presentations this spring.

# Monthly Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2024  
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## Community Engagement Update

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

On January 8, 2024, Marquise Drayton met with Lecturer Jeff Townsend from the Clemson University Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management (PRTM). Townsend, an expert in adaptive sports, will be the point of contact that Drayton will be working with for the Engaging in Diverse, Guided Experiences (EDGE) program focused on event planning during Spring 2024. A section of the course program will curate a student-centered event for the campus cemetery.

Various requests for scheduled tours came in as news went out about the cemetery reopening from last month's issue. These inquiries include the Clemson University Emeritus College, Student Affairs' Spring Family Weekend, the Undergraduate History Club, the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice, the Department of Philosophy and Religion, and visiting students from the Clemson Masters of Public Administration online program.

## 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.

**For the Love of CAAAM Valentine's Gala. Saturday, February 17, 2024, 7-11PM. Littlejohn Community Center's Gymnasium. 644 Old Greenville Highway, Clemson, SC 29631.**

Please join the Clemson Area African American Museum for a celebration of love at their Valentine's Gala. It will be on Saturday,

The cemetery project is looking for tour guides. There are six stops on the cemetery tour. At each stop, a docent provides an introduction to the site with the expectation of memorizing all stops in the long term. Have what it takes? Here are the following steps to become a docent for the team:

- 1) Attend a one-hour Woodland Cemetery tour guide training
- 2) Shadow as a tour guide for at least two one-hour cemetery tours
- 3) Provide an introduction to one of the six stops at least twice during a cemetery tour with a mentor
- 4) After this training, you will receive a link to a Google doc to sign up to be a docent or guide (**Must learn at least one or more stops of the cemetery tour to participate**)
- 5) Complete an introduction at each of the six stops. You should expect to practice your part for another couple of hours until you learn it fully and are comfortable in your ability to convey the information. You will give a tour twice with your mentor and then on your own

6) Once you meet the satisfaction criteria, you will become a tour guide. If you want to practice giving the tour in the cemetery, please contact the Community Engagement Assistant ([mdrayto@clemson.edu](mailto:mdrayto@clemson.edu))

You are expected to conduct at least 5-6 tours for a four-month semester. These estimates for time commitment equate to roughly 12 hours each semester for beginner tour guides.

If interested, please email [mdrayto@clemson.edu](mailto:mdrayto@clemson.edu) or [afamburials@clemson.edu](mailto:afamburials@clemson.edu) for more information.



Tour Guide Flyer for those interested in helping with the cemetery project.

## Upcoming Events

### *Continued from previous page*

Enjoy a discussion of *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks* by Jeanne Theoharis (adapted for young people) at the Lunney Museum at 1:00 PM. Cassandra Moore will discuss the book on February 17 at 1:00 PM during this African American Read-In event for those who are in grades 7-12. [Registration is required.](#) Free Event! An adult must accompany minors.

**Black History Month Luncheon. Thursday, February 29, 2024, with doors opening at 10:45AM. Littlejohn Community Center. 644 Old Greenville Hwy, Clemson, South Carolina 29631. Guest Speaker: Dr. Khalid el-Hakim, the founder of Black History 101 Mobile Museum.**

Get ready to celebrate Black excellence with the Clemson University Commission on the Black Experience (CBE), the City of Clemson, and the Clemson Area African American Museum's (CAAAM) Black History Month Luncheon! This year's program will be held at the Littlejohn Community Center in Clemson, SC, on February 29 for food, fellowship, and community spirit. The theme is "African Americans and the Arts." The guest speaker will be Dr. Khalid el-Hakim, the founder of Black History 101 Mobile Museum. Those invited include some of the area's high school students, community members, and Clemson employees. Doors open at 10:45 AM.



## 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, Andrew P. Calhoun Family Plot 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
- Candace Boatwright, 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