

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

MARCH 2024 *Monthly Newsletter* VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3



Temporary granite markers now accompany the white flags in denoting the over 500 anomalies believed to be unmarked burials as well as honoring those buried in graves in the African American Burial Ground that were destroyed when soil was removed for the dikes around Lake Hartwell. (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 Carrel Cowan-Ricks Day of Remembrance at Clemson University, include information about the upcoming 2024 Hidden History Camp at Clemson University, share anecdotes from those who knew and worked with the late Professor Cowan-Ricks on Cemetery Hill in the early 1990s, provide research and community engagement updates, and highlight some upcoming local events.

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2024 Carrel Cowan-Ricks Day of Remembrance at Clemson University

Please join the African American Burial Ground, A. P. Calhoun Family Plot, and Woodland Cemetery Historic Preservation Project team at Clemson University to commemorate the 3rd annual Carrel Cowan-Ricks Day of Remembrance during Women's Celebration Month on March 6, 2024. Each year, we honor Professor Carrel Cowan-Ricks as one of a few Black female archeologists nationwide in the early 1990s and for accelerating our current-day work for the cemetery project.

A luncheon will occur in Freeman Hall's Annex Lobby Area (211 Fernow Street) at noon. This free event is for students but registration is required. Attendees will hear from the cemetery project's Creative Inquiry Team as they talk about their research in history and archaeology. Archeologist Dr. David Markus will show artifacts

collected during the 1990s archeological dig Cowan-Ricks conducted in the cemetery. Please RSVP [here](#).

At 2 PM, there will be a free walking tour of the cemetery with special guests (Robert Kemp, Morgan Molosso-Crocker, Sarah Adams, and Carrel Cowan-Ricks' students) at various stops to help with the storytelling. It is free and open to the public. Parking available at the cemetery. If you would like to attend, please click [here](#) to register.

At 5 PM, in Ballroom A (2nd floor) of the Hendrix Student Center, "30 Years on Cemetery Hill: The Past, Present, and Future of Research" will be the keynote program to commemorate Cowan-Ricks. The program is a panel discussion between those who worked with Professor Cowan-Ricks in the 1990s and the current cemetery team of the 2020s. It is free and open to the public. Registration is

not required to attend the event. Parking available across from the Hendrix Student Center.



3rd Annual Carrel Cowan-Ricks Day Commemorating the Legacy of Clemson University's First Black Archeologist Wednesday, March 6, 2024

<p>12:00-1:00 PM Food and Forum featuring Cemetery Project Creative Inquiry Team Member Research Talks</p> <p>Dr. David Markus will show artifacts collected during the archeological dig Cowan-Ricks conducted in the cemetery</p> <p>Free Lunch Freeman Hall Annex (211 Fernow Street)</p> <p>RSVP required (registration link): https://fb.gy/1Zwnea</p>	<p>2:00-3:00 PM Cemetery Tour with special guests: Robert Kemp Carrel Cowan-Ricks' Students Morgan Molosso-Crocker Sarah Adams Meet at Woodland Cemetery Williamson Road Entrance</p> <p>Free and Open to the Public Parking available at the Cemetery</p>	<p>5:00 PM 30 Years on Cemetery Hill: The Past, Present, and Future of Research</p> <p>Panel Presentation featuring Members of the Cemetery Project and Carrel Cowan-Ricks' Students Hendrix Center, Ballroom A (2nd floor)</p> <p>Free and Open to the Public Parking available across from the Hendrix Center</p>
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Hidden History Camp at Clemson University (June 17-21, 2024, from 8:45am - 4:00pm)

Camp Overview

This summer, Clemson's Cemetery Project team is offering a new one-week day camp about Hidden History at the University! We offer a variety of interactive activities for campers, including historic site tours, archaeology digs, explorations of the archives, and family history activities, all arranged to provide an unforgettable summer camp experience right on campus!

- **Age Group:** Middle-schoolers, 6th - 8th graders
- **Date and Time:** June 17-21, 2024, 8:45am - 4:00pm
- **Location:** Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina
- **Rates and Payment:** The camp fee is \$150. Registration for Summer 2024 season is now open. We encourage you to register early as space is limited. Register by 11:59PM on May 31, 2024. A \$25 deposit is required at the time of registration, and a balance of \$125 is due by May 31, 2024. Once registration reaches capacity, we offer a waitlist and will contact you if space becomes available. [Camp Registration - Sign Up Today!](#)

Camp Activities

The staff at Hidden Clemson Camp have built an exciting schedule of activities all week long to engage campers in hidden history, archaeology, genealogy, and technology:

- Campus Tours, including Memorial Stadium, the catacombs, and the Adobe Digital Studio
- Historic Site Visits, including Fort Hill Plantation House, Cemetery Hill, Hopewell Plantation, Fort Rutledge, and more!
- Archaeological Dig and 3D Artifact Printing
- Family History Activities
- Explorations of the Archives and Brickmaking
- Team Activities, including games!

Things to Know: Parent Information

Everything you need to know before sending your child to Hidden History Camp at Clemson University.

Billing and Registration Information: Contact us by phone 864-656-8855 or email HHC@clemson.edu. The camp fee is \$150, with a \$25 deposit due at time of registration. The balance of \$125 is due by May 31, 2024.

The last date for a refund minus a \$25 processing fee is June 3, 2024. The last day for a 50% refund is June 6, 2024. There will be no refunds for withdrawals after June 6, 2024. Withdrawal requests must be received in writing (email is sufficient).

Location and Directions: Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina. The location for drop-off and pick-up is Sistine Circle in front of Sistine Hall, 515 Calhoun Drive, Clemson, SC, 29634.

Arrival and Departure: Check In and Drop-Off for each day is 8:45am, with early drop-off times available at 8:00am for an extra fee. Pick Up is between 3:30pm - 4:00pm.

Food: Campers will eat lunch every day at the McAlister Dining Hall on Clemson's campus, which provides several options for healthy and nutritious meals. Please note on the Registration Form if your child has any food allergies or other food related issues. Please do not send food with your child. Every camper will receive two snacks each day.

Staff: All camp staff, including faculty, staff, and student counselors, are employed by Clemson University and have undergone a background check. The ratio of campers to counselors is 4:1. Staff will undergo pre-camp training and supervise campers all day.

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Hidden History Camp at Clemson University (June 17-21, 2024, from 8:45am - 4:00pm)

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Items to Bring:

- Sunscreen
- Bug spray
- Water bottle labeled with camper's name
- Hat
- Rain jacket
- Tennis shoes

Contact Info:

Cemetery Historic Preservation Project
Sirriner Hall 220
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29634
864-656-8855
HHC@clemson.edu

Hidden History Camp

June 17-21, 2024
9 AM to 4 PM

Middle schoolers (6th – 8th grades) can experience history in this summer day camp that features hands-on activities, field trips and games.

ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE:

- Digging Dirt: Discovering Buried Treasures
- Archive Exploration: Finding History's Secrets
- Story Keepers: Interviewing Eyewitnesses
- Time Warp: Visiting Historic Places
- Discovering Origins: Claiming Your Place in History

Cost: \$150 per child (covers special guest appearances, expert instructors, portfolios, t-shirt, lunch, snacks, transportation to and from field trip locations and supplies.

Deposit: \$25 deposit due when registering

Balance: \$125 due by May 31, 2024

For more information,
email HHC@clemson.edu
or call 864-656-8855.

www.clemson.edu/about/history/woodland-cemetery/symposiums/camp.html



Cemetery History Series #3

Recounting Stories of Carrel Cowan-Ricks and the Archeological Dig at Woodland Cemetery

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

Clemson University hired Carrel Cowan-Ricks of Michigan in the Department of Historic Houses and the College of Architecture in 1991. At the time, she was one of just three Black female archeologists in the United States. Tasked with finding evidence of a historic Black burial ground on the western slope of Woodland Cemetery as expansion pressures came with space decreasing for modern burials for Clemson employees, Cowan-Ricks could not do this endeavor alone. She began her Cemetery Hill Archeological Dig Project, which included herself, Clemson University students, Anderson middle schoolers, and other volunteers. They conducted three digs on the hill's west side, thought to be the Historic African American Burial Ground, where enslaved people and convicted laborers lay resting. In continuing to honor the late professor during Women's Celebration Month, here are several recounts from those who knew and worked with Cowan-Ricks.

"Dr. Cowan-Ricks was an inspirational person with patience and encouragement to investigate and challenge the history you think you know about. Using archaeology as her instrument to help others understand the past and carefully excavates the items in the earth to help tell the story of those who came before us. Her first summer out at Woodland Cemetery, or "Cemetery Hill," was exciting and hot! Her research from the archives of Clemson University and other locations helped us start this journey 100-plus feet from the Fike family plot along the SW corner of the cemetery. The excavation was only two months that summer, and we opened several grid locations, revealing old coins and unexpected

22-gun shells in different areas and all the rocks of different sizes, you can imagine." - (Richard "Rick" Owens, then a Clemson undergraduate student majoring in civil engineering)

"About the only thing I can remember is that Carrel knew her stuff. She was tough on us, but we listened and learned. The one thing she made sure we did, one thing she hammered in our heads, was to take notes on everything. Even if it seemed minuscule. To this day, I take notes of everything, and it's all thanks to her. It helped me in the archeological dig and in life. That's the important thing: make sure to document everything." - (Rochonda Rice, then a student at Southwood Middle School in Anderson, SC)

"When the school first approached us about participating in an archeological dig, I was so excited. As a middle schooler, I envisioned an Indiana Jones-style adventure with lots of activity. The reality of the dig was very different. It was exciting, but it required lots of hard work. I found out very quickly that Dr. Cowan-Ricks took the dig very seriously, and it was nothing like the movies. She taught us how to excavate slowly, preserve the integrity of the dig, and carefully note our findings. Dr. Cowan-Ricks showed me that archaeology was about two things: hard work and passion. (Anyone who was willing to pursue their dreams in the midst of the South Carolina summer heat and humidity day after day had to have passion!) When I look back on that time, I am grateful that Dr. Cowan-Ricks was willing to share her experience and knowledge with my classmates and me. I learned a lot and gained a newfound respect for real archaeologists." -

(Lauren Anderson, then a student at Southwood Middle School in Anderson, SC)

"What I recall about Carrel is that she was very passionate, dedicated and motivated by her work on the cemetery project. My understanding was that students could volunteer to be part of an archaeological dig of sorts on the Clemson campus. I studied Landscape Architecture - perhaps our professor at the time, Lolly Tai, told us about this opportunity. I appreciate cemeteries as a landscape, and I also enjoy looking for things. I thought this would be a great experience. I don't think I was able to attend many field days as the semester progressed.

I do recall the first time we walked the site and simply scouted the area. I think I picked up a shard of pottery and gave it to her. I was clearly uninformed as to the fact that you do not do that! (Ha!) She took the well-meaning find and put it in a baggy, and we located/flagged the general area it came from.

On a side note, I did have a phone conversation with her regarding the potential location of some off-campus African American burial mounds (rock mounds) and thought she might be the best person to look into it. However, since it was on private property, I don't think she was able to - but I'm confident that if she could have, she would have!" - (Jennifer "Jenny" Lefort Thurman, then a Clemson undergraduate majoring in landscape architecture)

"At that time, I worked in Capital Projects administration at CU,

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Cemetery History Series #3

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and Woodland Cemetery fell under my area. A place dear to my heart. As we were asked to expand the cemetery, it was a top priority to try and locate the known to exist the appropriately 200 former slave graves that were important individuals to Fort Hill and the 3 to 5 convicts that we had records of who were also buried in that same area. Historic Houses assisted in getting Carrel to come to Clemson to assist. She was a delight to work with, and I even got to help with the archeological digs. A true experience, as I had no concept of the tedious work involved. It was fun. We never found the suspected

graves until after she left. They were further west and to the south... head and footstones clearly there and old crushed fence under very heavy overgrowth. Due to budget issues, Carrel moved on, and later, when some workers found that area, we put another fence around that cemetery. That is the same area y'all worked on originally when students saw the fence. We still had a GPR scan done on the west middle side where Carrel had set up, and nothing was found, but we also marked that area as historic, and there were no assignments made in that area when I retired in 2006. Cemetery oversight was then moved to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees. I have zero

knowledge of who the other 500 souls recently found may be, and in her research, Carrel had nothing noted either. No clue." - (Sonya Goodman, then Director of Property Management in Facilities Management at Clemson University)

Far removed isn't the past in these different recollections that shed light on who Cowan-Ricks was and what she was about. The historical research, genealogy, archeology, and community engagement that the cemetery team does contemporarily rests upon what Cowan-Ricks and her team did thirty years ago on the west side of the cemetery.

Research Update

Research Historian Dr. Mandi Barnard has been working in the archive locating information on the chain of deed for Fort Hill Plantation in the antebellum period, and recovering names of Black Clemson wage workers in the early days of campus history. She continues to work with the team to create a database of the names of enslaved persons at Fort Hill.

Historian Dr. Sara Collini has been working with the Creative Inquiry Team to introduce the history of Clemson's campus, think about race and the built environment, and understand the cemetery's multilayered history. The students recently took a tour of the newly re-opened cemetery and visited the campus archives. Working together as a team, they analyzed the 1854 Deed to Fort Hill Plantation that includes a map of the plantation and a list of the fifty women, men, and children who were enslaved by the Calhouns at Fort Hill at that time.

Genealogist Deborah Robinson has been researching the family of former African American Archaeology Professor Carrel Cowan-Ricks (CCR) in preparation for our 3rd Annual CCR Day event for Women's History Month. Deborah is also creating a middle-schoolers genealogy workshop for Clemson University's 1st Hidden History Camp in June. Her participation in the database project continues with Drs. Collini and Bernard. Deborah's research on documenting the persons buried in the cemetery is also moving forward.

On Friday, February 16, 2024, Dr. Rhondda Thomas, Calhoun Lemon Professor of Literature and Coordinator of Research and Community Engagement for the cemetery project, joined several 12 professors and graduate students in Washington, DC, for an immersion experience, "Histories of Enslaved Communities in Georgetown" organized by Dr. Thaisa Way, Director of Garden and Landscape Studies at Dumbarton Oaks and a faculty member in Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. The group visited Dumbarton Oaks where enslaved persons owned by US statesman John C. Calhoun and his family lived and labored in the 1820s; took the "Ancestral Spaces Tour" at Tudor Place that focused on the lived experiences of enslaved and free people who worked for six generations of descendants of Martha Washington; and walked solemnly through two historic Black cemeteries, Mount Zion Cemetery and Female Union Band Cemetery, that were desecrated by developers but are now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The group has decided to continue conversations about their shared interests in documenting the system of slavery and its legacies on the built landscape and across state borders. Additionally, two scholars, Dr. Mark Auslander, Visiting Lecturer in Anthropology at Mount Holyoke College, and Lisa Fager, Executive Director of the Black Georgetown Foundation, have offered to assist the cemetery team in exploring DC Court and manumission records, freedom petitions, burial records, parish records, runaway ads, and tax records to learn more about enslaved persons owned by and who labored for the Calhouns at Dumbarton Oaks.

Community Engagement Update

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

With in-person cemetery tours returning for Black History Month 2024, there were over 180 attendees in February to see the new improvements made to the sacred space. Groups who came included the South Carolina Botanical Garden, the Undergraduate History Club, the Clemson University Chapter of the Blue Key Honor Society, prospective students for the Clemson Digital History Doctoral Program, Clemson Forever (Clemson University Foundation), and the Clemson University Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice. If you would like to take a tour in March, please click [here](#) to attend. If you want to be a tour guide, please click [here](#) for training.

On Friday, February 9 at 11:30AM, Marquise Drayton represented the cemetery project at a table for the City of Seneca's 2024 Black History Month Luncheon. There, he encouraged guests to sign up for the monthly newsletter, gave away free promotional material in swag bags and coffee mugs, and suggested others stopping by to see associated projects there in *Call My Name* and the Black Heritage Trail.

On Thursday, February 15 at

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.

Lunch & Learn Program, a partnership between the Blue Ridge Community Center (BRCC) and Clemson University. Every Other Friday (March 1, 15, & 29, 2024) from 12:30-1:30PM. Blue Ridge Community Center. 315 Holland Ave, Seneca, SC 29678.

Join the Blue Ridge Community Center (BRCC) for free lunch and

10AM, Drayton met with Professor Jeff Townsend to discuss onboarding activities for his subset of PRTM (Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management) students in the event planning-focused EDGE (Engaging in Diverse, Guided Education) program. With virtual and in-person cemetery tours to help them understand the nature of the project, ten students will devise a who's who profile of those buried in the cemetery, and ten students will create a nature walking tour of the cemetery for their showcase on April 18. These student-led events will serve as templates for future programming for the cemetery project.

On Thursday, February 15 at 6PM, Drayton and Genealogist Deborah Robinson presented a free virtual cemetery tour for attendees at Hampton Memorial Library in Easley, SC. Pickens County Library System put on this event as part of their outreach for programming during heritage months. Drayton led the tour while Robinson helped to field questions from the audience of 12 there. After the event, the cemetery team representatives met with Dennis Chastain, Blue Wall Vice President of Pickens County Historical Society. A renowned local historian, tour guide, and writer, Chastain inquired about assistance in identifying unmarked burials and crystalized fieldstones of African Americans on burial grounds belonging to the Hagood Family in Pickens County. Drayton and Robinson

a different health and wellness topic every other week. For March, it will be held on March 1, 15, and 29 from 12:30-1:30 PM at the BRCC in Seneca, SC. This series is in partnership with Clemson University. For more information, please contact Kate Henry via email at kghenry@clemson.edu or phone at 4432531981.

gave him contact information for Clemson officials with ground-penetrating radar surveying.

On February 4-6, 2024, Dr. Thomas took a group of students, members of the CI team, research assistants for the cemetery project, and English majors, to Charlottesville, VA, to visit the Memorial to the Enslaved at the University of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, James Monroe's Highland, and the Jefferson School to learn about public memorial, the history and legacies of slavery, and memorials as Clemson prepares to create a Memorial to Black Laborers.

On February 25, 2024, Dr. Thomas visited the Douglass Cemetery in Alexandria, VA. Founded in 1865 by the Douglass Cemetery Association, the burial ground was a non-denominational burial ground for Black Americans named in honor of Black abolitionist Frederick Douglass. More than 2,000 persons are believed to have been buried in the cemetery until 1975. Like the African American Burial Ground at Clemson University, until recently, the sacred site suffered from years of neglect. Thomas will follow up with Alexandria Archaeology to learn more about the project and explore opportunities for collaboration.

A Taste of BRCC, presented by the Blue Ridge Community Center. Saturday, March 16, 2024, from 11am-2pm. 315 Holland Ave, Seneca, SC 29678.

This is a fundraising event for the Blue Ridge Community Center. Attendees will purchase tickets

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Upcoming Events

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at the door, allowing them to sample dishes from some of the best local cooks. A vegan option will also be available. \$10 for ten tastes of more than 20 items. Remember, just a taste! For more information or questions on participating, please contact Eartha White at 8642478180.



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@clermson.edu or call (864) 656-8855