

SLAVE DWELLING PROJECT CONFERENCE

————— 250 Years and Counting —————

Reckoning, Resilience, and Remembrance

October 1–3 at Embassy Suites
North Charleston, South Carolina

Significant funding for the conference has been generously provided by



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Many thanks to our host hotel, Embassy Suites, North Charleston.



An exact prospect of Charlestown, the metropolis of the province of South Carolina from loc.gov

SLAVE DWELLING PROJECT CONFERENCE

250 Years and Counting

Reckoning, Resilience, and Remembrance

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

4:00 pm Registration
Embassy Suites, North Charleston

6:00 pm ~ Ballroom.....Welcome Reception with Heavy hors d'Oeuvres
Divided Loyalty + Sleeping with the Ancestors with Book Signing
Joseph McGill, Jr. and Herb Frazier

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2026

7:45 am Registration
Embassy Suites, North Charleston

8:30 am - 9:15 am.....*Black Pioneers: Reclaiming Their Stories*
Melanie Roberts

9:30 am - 11:00 am *Resting Places as Living Landscapes*
Salvatore Dellaria, Ph.D.
Raquel Fleskes, Ph.D.
Joanna Gilmore
LaSheia Oubre B.A
Theodore Schurr, Ph.D.

11:15 am - 12:15 pm..... *Panel: Enslaved Resistance*
Dr. Paul Pressly
Valarie Thompson

12:15 pm - 1:00 pm..... Lunch / Networking
Embassy Suites, North Charleston

1:00 pm - 1:45 pm..... *Exploring Freedom Seeking Through Provocation and Evocation*
Ted Johnson

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm..... *Bearing Witness to Zones of Quarantine
and Resistance on Tybee Island, Georgia*
Julia Pearce
Kara Bridgeman Sweeney

3:15 pm - 4:45 pm..... *Workshop: From Hold to Seashell:
Ancestral Roots to Revolutionary Routes*
Rachael Keri Williams

5:00 pm End of Day 1 of Presenters, Dinner on your own

7:00 pm ~ Ballroom..... *Title of Performance*
Aunt Pearl Sue and the Gullah Kinfolk

continued on next page

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2026

7:45 am – 8:00 am.....Load Busses for Downtown Harbor Cruise
Busses will depart promptly at 8:00 am, please pack a light snack and bottle of water
Embassy Suites, North Charleston

9:00 am – 12:00 pm ~ Downtown Revolutionary Harbor Cruise

12:00 pm.....Load Busses to return to Embassy Suites, North Charleston

12:30 pm – 1:15 pm..... Lunch / Networking
Embassy Suites, North Charleston

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm.....*Genealogy and the Legacy of the Revolutionary War*
Margaret Seidler

2:45 pm – 4:00 pm..... *Panel: Connections to Henry Laurens*
Todd Long
William Tate

4:00 pm.....End of Day 2 of Presenters

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2026

8:30 am – 9:00 am..... SC 250
Molly Fortune, Executive Director

9:15 am – 10:45 am *Carolina to Canada and Beyond*
Rebecca Moffatt
George H. McDaniel
Dr. Bernard Powers

11:00 am – 12:00 pm.....*Panel: Political Impact of Slavery During the War*
John Dower
Cerille Naussau

12:00 pm – 12:45 pm ~ Ballroom Lunch / Networking
Embassy Suites, North Charleston

12:45 pm – 2:00 pm..... *Remembering the Ancestors: Documenting the Middle Passage and
Plantation Slavery in Georgetown County, South Carolina*
Dr. Jodi Barnes
Ron Daise
Lynn Hanson
Beatrice Rodrigues

2:15 pm – 3:15 pm..... *Panel: The War and the Pee Dee Region*
Dr. Terrie Gaskins-Bryant
Louis Venters

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm..... *Film and Q&A: Echoes of the Forks of Cypress*
Frederick DeShon Murphy

4:45 pm.....End of Day 3 of Presenters

6:00 pm ~ Ballroom.....Dinner

7:00 pm ~ Ballroom..... **Keynote Address:**
Dr. Kellie Carter-Jackson
with introduction by Elizabeth Chew, South Carolina Historical Society



KEYNOTE SPEAKER: DR. KELLIE CARTER-JACKSON

Saturday, October 3, 2026 at 7:00 pm
Embassy Suites, North Charleston, SC

presented by SC 250

****Book signing to follow***

Kellie Carter Jackson is the Michael and Denise '68 Associate Professor of Africana Studies and the Chair of the Africana Studies Department Wellesley College. She is the author of *We Refuse: A Forceful History of Black Resistance* (Seal Press) and the award winning book, *Force & Freedom: Black Abolitionists and the Politics of Violence*.

Her essays have been published in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *The Nation*, *the Boston Globe*, *CNN*, and a host of other outlets. She has been featured in numerous documentaries for Netflix, PBS, MSNBC, CNN, and AppleTV.

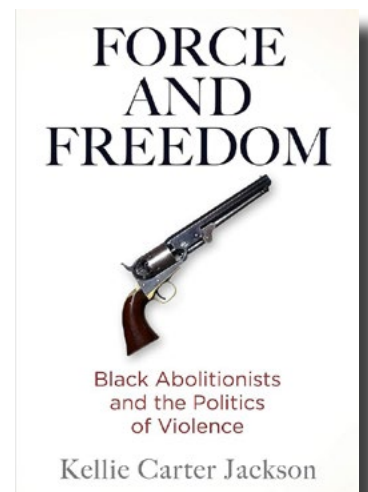
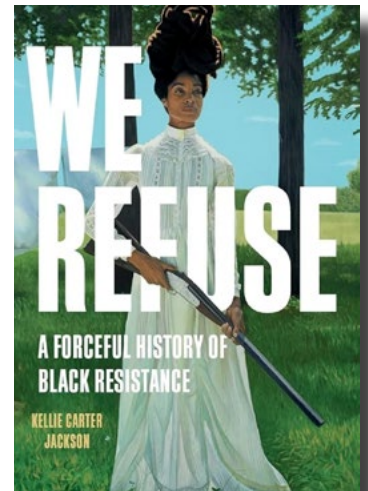
She has also been interviewed on Good Morning America, CBS Mornings, MSNBC, and countless podcasts. She co-hosts the podcast, "This Day in Political Esoteric History" with Jody Avirgan and Nicole Hemmer.

She is Executive Producer and Host of the award winning "You Get a Podcast! *The Study of the Queen of Talk*," formerly known as "Oprahdemics" with co-host Leah Wright Rigueur.

Carter Jackson served as a Historian-in-Residence for the Museum of African American History in Boston and is commissioner for the Massachusetts Historical Commission. She lives in the suburbs of Boston with her husband and three children.

Thank you to Turning Page Bookshop for handling book sales. Turning Page Bookshop is a beloved literary haven nestled in the vibrant state of South Carolina. Since its establishment in June 2014, the shop has journeyed from Seneca to Goose Creek to Charleston, and still proudly stands as the only Black-owned brick-and-mortar bookstore in the state of South Carolina. They are thrilled to be pioneers in this space and hope to see more such enterprises flourish across the state.

Thank you to SC250 for their support.





Dr. Jodi A. Barnes

Remembering the Ancestors: Documenting the Middle Passage and Plantation Slavery in Georgetown County, South Carolina
Saturday, October 3 at 12:45 pm

Dr. Jodi A. Barnes is an archaeologist with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, who strives to learn about the past and share that knowledge with the public. She received her Ph.D. in Anthropology from American University in Washington, DC and her Graduate Certificate in Women and Gender Studies and B.A. in Anthropology from the University of South Carolina. Her current research ranges from the archeology of a Gullah Geechee fishing village to the impacts of climate change on cultural heritage sites in Georgetown County. She is a co-founder of the Behind the Big House Program in Arkansas and she is a member of the research committee for the Middle Passage Committee documenting the history of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in the port of Georgetown.



Ron Daise

Remembering the Ancestors: Documenting the Middle Passage and Plantation Slavery in Georgetown County, South Carolina
Saturday, October 3 at 12:45 pm

Ron Daise, a son of St. Helena Island, SC, is an author, Emmy-nominated performer, educator, cultural interpreter, and Co-Chairman of the Georgetown, SC Middle Passage Ceremonies Steering Committee. His productions and recordings about Gullah Geechee culture and history have documented his heritage for decades. His publications began with *Reminiscences of Sea Island Heritage*, in 1986. Several books and recordings have followed, including his *Geechee Literature Series* and his most recent historical novel, *Raptors in the Ricelands*, by Belle Isle Books.

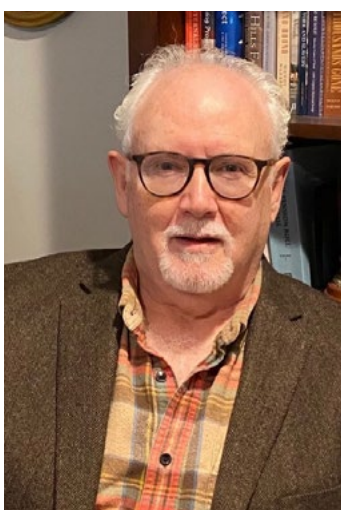
From 2004-2022, DAISE served as Vice President for Creative Education at Brookgreen Gardens in Murrells Inlet, SC, where his accomplishments, in part, garnered him the 2019 SC Governor's Distinctive Achievement Award. He is known by many as "Mr. Ron" from "Gullah Gullah Island," the Nick Jr. TV's award-winning children's program of the 1990s. Daise also is a former chairman and charter member of the federal Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission and currently serves on the Charles Joyner Institute for Gullah and African Diaspora Studies Advisory Board at Coastal Carolina University. He is featured on exhibits at the International African American Museum, Charleston, SC, and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, DC.

A graduate of Hampton Institute (now Hampton University) in Hampton, VA, Daise and his wife Natalie Daise reside in Georgetown, SC, and are parents of two adult children.



Salvatore Dellaria, Ph.D.
Resting Places as Living Landscapes
Thursday, October 1 at 9:30 am

Salvatore Dellaria, Ph.D. is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Architectural History at the College of Charleston, where he teaches courses on modern architecture, American architecture, and commemorative practices, including monuments, memorials, and museums. He earned his PhD in the History of Architecture and Urban Development from Cornell University in 2023, with a dissertation examining housing and politics in racial capitalist Britain. His current research explores the intersections of architecture, memory, and political economy in the American South, with special attention to the evolving memorial landscape of Charleston.



John B. Dower
Panel: Political Impact of Slavery During the War
Saturday, October 3 at 11:00 am

John B. Dower is a public historian, lecturer, researcher, and writer from North Kingstown, Rhode Island. He is the past-president of Smith's Castle Historic House Museum, considered to be the oldest surviving plantation house in America. John lectures regularly on enslavement to various historical associations and other civic groups throughout Rhode Island and New England. John has also served as a consultant to numerous organizations, including the National Museum of the United States Army, where he researched the men of color who served in the Black Regiment from Rhode Island during the American Revolution. That research culminated in a current exhibit at the museum featuring the Black Regiment of Rhode Island. He is also working on a book about the Black Regiment that he hopes to finish next year. John is in charge of the college internship program at Smith's Castle, where students help contribute to the scholarship of the former plantation. John has appeared on the PBS show "Treasures Inside the Museum," where he shared stories about significant artifacts related to enslaved people at Smith's Castle, and he will appear in the upcoming Rhode Island PBS series "Rhode to Independence." John attended Empire State University, the University at Albany, and Stony Brook University. He holds a BA in Social Studies and an MA in American History. John offers a unique frame of reference on the story of enslavement as a descendant of both the enslaved and enslavers.



Raquel Fleskes, Ph.D.
Resting Places as Living Landscapes
Thursday, October 1 at 9:30 am

Raquel E. Fleskes is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Dartmouth College and an archaeogenomic researcher specializing in community-engaged approaches to colonial-era North American history. Fleskes has led and contributed to research at sites including Jamestown, Avery's Rest, and the Anson Street African Burial Ground (ASABG) in Charleston, SC. Her scholarship emphasizes the integration of genetic research into public interpretation and memorial practice. She has been involved with the ASABG Project since 2017, and was responsible for generating the ancient DNA data from the Anson Street Ancestors and carrying out community engagement for the project.



Molly Fortune
SC 250
Saturday, October 3 at 8:30 am

Molly Fortune serves as Chief Executive Officer of the South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission, the state's official organization leading the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. She works with Commissioners, legislators, state agencies, nonprofit partners, and leaders across all 46 counties to deliver a meaningful and forward looking statewide initiative. Since joining SC250 in 2022, she has overseen the establishment of county level committees statewide, implemented a multi year strategic framework, and stewarded more than \$7 million in grants supporting education, preservation, tourism, and community driven programming. Her leadership has elevated awareness of South Carolina's pivotal role in the Revolutionary War while advancing long term preservation and heritage tourism development. Previously, Molly served as Executive Director of the Newberry Opera House, where she led more than 150 events annually and strengthened the cultural and economic vitality of downtown Newberry. She also held leadership roles at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta and with the United States Department of Defense as a Cultural Resource Specialist in historic preservation. Molly holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Converse College and a Master of Fine Arts in Historic Preservation from the Savannah College of Art and Design, graduating summa cum laude with distinction. She is married to Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Kemper, U.S. Army Retired, and is the proud mother of two daughters.



Dr. Terrie Gaskins-Bryant
Panel: The War and the Pee Dee Region
Saturday, October 3 at 2:15 pm

Dr. Gaskins-Bryant is the founder of Saint Teresa Community Outreach and Empowerment (STCOE), a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving African American cemeteries, historic structures, and community narratives shaped by slavery, segregation, and resilience. She currently leads preservation initiatives at the Hanna African American Cemetery and the P. D. Cockfield House, a National Register-listed property connected to both enslaved and free families whose lives reflect the complexities of the Revolutionary and post-emancipation South.

Her public history work bridges genealogy, art, and education. She is the creator of *Marion's Merry Men of the Pee Dee: A History Coloring Book*, an arts-based educational project that introduces hidden Revolutionary-era figures—enslaved, free, and militia-connected—through storytelling and visual interpretation. As a descendant of both enslaved people and white Patriot families, Dr. Gaskins-Bryant brings a lived perspective to conversations about reckoning, memory, and shared regional history.

Her work emphasizes community engagement, intergenerational learning, and making difficult histories visible, accessible, and rooted in place.



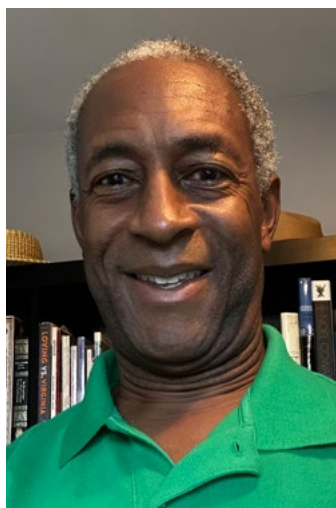
Joanna Gilmore, M.A.
Resting Places as Living Landscapes
Thursday, October 1 at 9:30 am

Joanna Gilmore is a Public History and Community Engagement Advisor and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the College of Charleston, and she is a co-founder of the Anson Street African Burial Ground Project in Charleston, South Carolina. Since 2015, she has played a central role in developing long-term relationships with descendant and community stakeholders, guiding the reinterment of the Anson Street Ancestors in 2019, and helping shape the annual May 4 reinternment anniversary. Gilmore has collaborated with many local institutions in Charleston to support interpretation, exhibition design, public education, and memorialization. Her experience includes facilitating oral histories, coordinating community programming, and stewarding partnership-based research.



Lynn Hanson
Remembering the Ancestors: Documenting the Middle Passage and Plantation Slavery in Georgetown County, South Carolina
Saturday, October 3 at 12:45 pm

Lynn Hanson, Professor Emerita of Francis Marion University, taught in the English department before retirement and served as a founding co-director for the Belle Baruch Institute for South Carolina Studies at Hobcaw Barony. In retirement, Dr. Hanson is a Research Affiliate with the University of South Carolina's Baruch Institute for Marine and Coastal Sciences. Her research provides insights into the human activities on Hobcaw Barony that shaped the environment that scientists study today. In 2022, she began recovering the names of the enslaved people who carved Hobcaw's former rice plantations from the landscape and who labored on them through the end of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Currently, she is compiling a dataset of the named enslaved people on Friendfield Plantation over a 50-year period and tracing the demographic history of that plantation's African American community.



Ted Johnson
Exploring Freedom Seeking Through Provocation and Evocation
Thursday, October 1 at 1:00 pm

Ted Johnson is a recent National Park Service retiree who served 22 years as an interpretative park ranger and community engagement specialist. He researched, co-created, and facilitated a wide variety of African American history and culture-based programs and large-scale projects designed to ensure that more diverse and lesser-known stories are included in America's national historical narrative. Career highlights include interpreting the difficult history of Kingsley Plantation site, collaborating extensively with the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission and inlying communities, and developing programming with surviving foot soldiers of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement in St. Augustine, Florida. He was also a recipient of the agency's 2025 Excellence in Interpretation Award. Ted's work focuses significantly on researching and interpreting various aspects of the nation's history of enslavement and freedom seeking. Before retiring, he most recently served as the Southeast Regional Program Manager for the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom and is continuing to support that program as a contract historian. He is honored and very excited to have the opportunity to engage and share ideas with attendees at this year's conference.



Todd Long

Panel: Connections to Henry Laurens
Friday, October 2 at 2:45 pm

Todd Long is a historian of Colonial Virginia history from Glen Allen, Virginia. He is a graduate of Longwood University with a B.A. in History with a concentration in Public History. He has operated his blog, Todd's Archives, since 2020. His blog centers around topics from Colonial Virginia, expanding on all aspects of Colonial Virginia history including the history of slavery in the Old Dominion. Some of his research has uncovered previously unknown history of slavery at certain historic sites. Todd is also a former Chair of Publicity and Historian for the Old Brick House Foundation in Colonial Heights, Virginia, where he conducted research on the history of enslavement at Old Brick House, located in the Conjuror's Neck Subdivision of Colonial Heights. He is the founder of the Facebook group, Voices For Historical Justice, which he formed in response to efforts to remove the history of underrepresented groups from historic sites, museums, and institutions. The group includes numerous historians, archaeologists, historic interpreters, museum professionals, and educators who work to continue advocating for telling truth to history and calling attention to the injustices that continue to occur today in excluding underrepresented groups from historical narratives.



George H. McDaniel

Carolina to Canada and Beyond
Saturday, October 3 at 9:15 am

George H. McDaniel is director of interpretation and education at Middleton Place Foundation in Charleston, S.C. He received his B.A. in history from Davidson College and, after a decade playing and performing as a musician, he returned to school and earned his M.A. at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi.

Dedicated to uncovering and illuminating the stories of those marginalized or underrepresented, McDaniel's work at places like Audubon South Carolina, South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust, and Magnolia Plantation & Gardens has sought new ways to look at old sites. At Middleton Place Foundation, McDaniel is developing innovative interpretive and educational programming which utilizes the vast array of resources available and explores the long history of the site. McDaniel hopes that through exploring the living landscape visitors will gain a deeper appreciation of the ways history is very much alive and present in their lives today.



Rebecca M. Moffatt

Carolina to Canada and Beyond
Saturday, October 3 at 9:15 am

Rebecca M. Moffatt (B.A, B.Ed., M.S.H.P) is an Instructor of Historic Preservation at the College of Charleston, where she teaches courses in research methodology, documentation, building pathology, and conservation. She is particularly interested in adaptive reuse and cultural preservation through the built environment. Through her continued research on historic buildings as material history, she explores the positive impact these structures can have on communities.

Born and raised in Atlantic Canada, Ms. Moffatt worked at several historic sites in the region, in a variety of roles, before moving on to her current position with College of Charleston. This intersection of personal and professional provides Ms. Moffatt unique insight into these underrepresented stories of the connections between Charleston and Atlantic Canada and the legacy of those who journeyed between their shores.



Frederick DeShon Murphy
Echoes of the Forks of Cypress
Saturday, October 3 at 3:30 pm

Award Winning Documentarian. /Mental Health Therapist Frederick Murphy has dedicated his career to exploring the intricacies of race and culture in America through a compelling and evocative lens. His work delves deeply into communities of color experiences, shedding light on historical and contemporary issues of racial identity, social justice, and cultural heritage.

With a keen eye for storytelling and a commitment to authentic representation, Murphy's films provide a nuanced perspective on the struggles and triumphs of marginalized communities.

His dedication to this genre not only educates and informs but also fosters a greater understanding and appreciation of the rich tapestry of American culture, making his contributions both significant and transformative in the cinematic landscape.

Film Synopsis:

Echoes of the Forks of Cypress explores the lives of the enslaved and enslavers at the Forks of Cypress plantation in Florence, AL. The documentary highlights their struggles, resilience, and the plantation's historical significance. It then shifts to the present, where descendants from both sides come together to confront and heal from their shared past. The enslaved and free people of Forks of Cypress had North Carolina roots. Many branches of these enslaved families later settled in Middle Tennessee, where they were tasked with grueling labor in the region's iron furnaces. Sarah Moore Jackson, owner of the Forks of Cypress, was a descendant of the Moore family of Orton Plantation. She was a childhood ward of the Cameron family of Stagville.



Cerille Nassau
Panel: Political Impact of Slavery During the War
Saturday, October 3 at 11:00 am

Attorney Cerille Nassau is a public historian, speaker, and storyteller dedicated to preserving and sharing the vibrant, complex tapestry of Southern and African American history. He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia and his law degree from Nova Southeastern University's Shepard Broad Law Center. This unique background allows him to blend legal analytical precision with historical research to challenge audiences to look closer at the forces that define the American South. His work makes centuries-old history feel immediate, actionable, and deeply relevant to modern conversations. His presentations reveal how the history of everyday people shapes our contemporary world, regularly speaking at cultural centers, schools, and civic events to inspire audiences to explore and protect their own local histories.

Attorney Nassau is active on social media at Dirty South History on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram.



LaSheia Oubre, B.A.
Resting Places as Living Landscapes
Thursday, October 1 at 9:30 am

La'Sheia Oubré is a retired educator and community leader active in African-American heritage and public history initiatives in Charleston. As a co-founding member of the Anson Street African Burial Ground Project, she has helped develop accessible educational programming, connect local schools and families to the project's ongoing work, and support intergenerational participation in annual memorial events. Oubré brings deep relationships within the community and experience coordinating collaborative, culturally grounded learning events, including the annual May 4 reinternment anniversary.



Julia Pearce
Bearing Witness to Zones of Quarantine and Resistance
on Tybee Island, Georgia
Thursday, October 1 at 2:00 pm

Julia Pearce is a social justice activist who has worked to transform the cultural landscape of Tybee Island, Georgia, for over 13 years. A retired Community Mental Health Registered Nurse, she attended Spelman College and founded the 501c3 TybeeMLK Human Rights Organization in 2013.

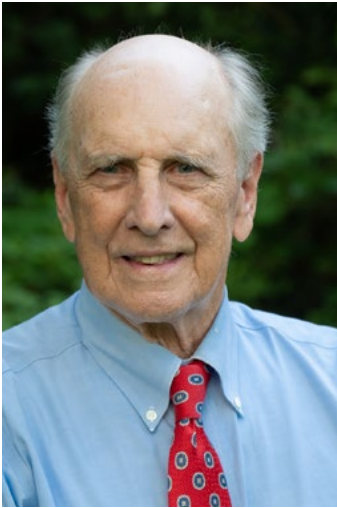
Under her leadership TybeeMLK established Tybee's annual Juneteenth Wade-In five years before the federal holiday existed. Following the social unrest of 2020, she successfully led the passage of the Tybee Race Equity Resolution, paving the way for the Tybee Black History Trail and the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day. Her organization's impact has helped the City of Tybee win the State of Georgia Visionary Award for three consecutive years.

Most recently, Julia has expanded her work internationally. Serving as an Ambassador of Goodwill to Cape Coast, Ghana, she helped forge a historic link between the Ghanaian "Door of No Return" and the Tybee Lazaretto, uniting the African Diaspora in a shared history of resilience. She is currently focused on establishing the Lazaretto Healing Memorial.



Dr. Bernard Powers
Carolina to Canada and Beyond
Saturday, October 3 at 9:15 am

Bernard E. Powers Jr. earned the Ph. D in American history at Northwestern University. He is professor emeritus of history at the College of Charleston and director of its Center for the Study of Slavery in Charleston. His *Black Charlestonians: A Social History 1822-1885*, was designated an "Outstanding Academic Book" by Choice Magazine. Powers is co-author of *We Are Charleston: Tragedy and Triumph at Mother Emanuel*, about the city's 2015 racially motivated murders. He also edited *101 African Americans Who Shaped South Carolina*. Powers appeared in documentary films, including, *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross* and *Emanuel: The Untold Story of the Victims and Survivors of the Charleston Church Shooting*. He has been active in the area of public history, serving on the board of Historic Charleston Foundation, the South Carolina Historical Society and as a consultant to historic sites and museums. For many years Powers served on the board of Charleston's International African American Museum which opened in June 2023. In 2019 the Association for the Study of African American Life and History recognized his "research, writing, and activism in the field of African American life and history" with the Carter Godwin Woodson Scholars Medallion.



Dr. Paul Pressly
Panel: Enslaved Resistance
Thursday, October 1 at 11:15 am

Paul Pressly is both an educator, historian, and active in the civic life of Savannah. He is Director Emeritus of the Ossabaw Island Education Alliance, a partnership between the Georgia Board of Regents, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and the Ossabaw Island Foundation. He earned degrees from Princeton, Harvard, and Oxford, including a Ph.D. in history.

He is the author of *On the Rim of the Caribbean: Colonial Georgia and the British Atlantic World* (University of Georgia Press, 2013) and *A Southern Underground Railroad: Black Georgians, Spanish Florida, and Indian Country* (UGA Press, 2022). He co-edited *Coastal Nature, Coastal Culture: Environmental Histories of the Georgia Coast* (UGA Press, 2018). He acted as assistant editor for *African American Life in the Georgia Lowcountry: the Gullah-Geechee and the Atlantic World* (UGA Press, 2010).

In 2009, he received the Governor's Award in the Humanities. He is the recipient of the 2025 John Macpherson Berrien Award, presented by the Georgia Historical Society for lifetime achievement in and service to Georgia history.

From his years with the Ossabaw Island Foundation, he is especially interested in the intersection of academic and public history and the challenges of ensuring a healthy dialogue.



Melanie Roberts
Black Pioneers: Reclaiming Their Stories
Thursday, October 1 at 8:30 am

Melanie Roberts, Berkeley Plantation, Charles City, Va, Researcher/ Historical Interpreter, Member of National Association of Interpreters. While working as a historical interpreter at Berkeley Plantation, Melanie researched, created and is currently giving historical tours about the individuals enslaved at Berkeley. Her research has uncovered the names and history of previously unmentioned people enslaved at Berkeley and primary documents to support their stories. She created the first exhibit at Berkeley dedicated to honoring the lives of the enslaved, currently on display in the cabins used for the production of the 2019 Oscar-nominated film *Harriet*. Her documentation and storytelling has reclaimed the truth of American chattel slavery at a site where it started.



Beatrice Rodrigues
Remembering the Ancestors: Documenting the Middle Passage and Plantation Slavery in Georgetown County, South Carolina
Saturday, October 3 at 12:45 pm

Beatrice Rodrigues is an interpretive guide and co-owner of the Gullah Museum of Georgetown. Alongside her sisters—Julia House, Janette Rodrigues, and Anna Freeman—she preserves the legacy established by their parents, Andrew and Vermelle Rodrigues, who founded the museum in 1997. A dedicated steward of Gullah Geechee culture, Beatrice specializes in sharing the history, crafts, and stories of the Lowcountry, ensuring her family's mission of cultural education continues for future generations. In addition to her work at the museum, Beatrice serves as co-chair of the Georgetown, SC Middle Passage Marker Committee, where she leads efforts to honor and memorialize the enslaved Africans who arrived through the port of Georgetown.



Theodore Schurr, Ph.D.
Resting Places as Living Landscapes
Thursday, October 1 at 9:30 am

Theodore Schurr is a Professor in the Department of Anthropology and the Director of the Laboratory of Molecular Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a Consulting Curator and a member of the Repatriation Committee in the Penn Museum of Archeology and Anthropology. For several decades, he has investigated the genetic prehistory of indigenous populations from Asia and the Americas. His current research also includes studies of genetic diversity in modern populations from Georgia (Caucasus), Pakistan and Kazakhstan; bioarchaeological projects exploring the colonial history of eastern North America; and projects investigating the role of the mitochondrial DNA in complex diseases, metabolism, and adaptation. As a senior member of the Anson Street African Burial Ground Project, he has contributed scientific research that deepens our understanding of the Ancestors, allowing for more effective memorialization and public interpretation efforts.



Margaret Seidler
Genealogy and the Legacy of the Revolutionary War
Friday, October 2 at 1:30 pm

Native Charlestonian Margaret Seidler is a retired leadership development and conflict resolution consultant. For 30 years she worked to build stronger organizations and communities. She has been published widely in the field of Polarity Thinking, a method to address polarizing issues.

A nationally recognized public speaker, Margaret has presented weekly at Charleston's Old Slave Mart Museum, sharing her family's history, three generations of slave traders who sold at least 10,000 human beings. Her story of reckoning and repair has reached more than 8500 people, including locals and visitors from across America and the world. She uses her personal historical truth as a bridge to understand America's story and make life better for all.

Her book, *"Payne-ful" Business: Charleston's Journey to Truth*, is the winner of both the 2025 Phillis Wheatley National Book Award and the Afro American Historical and Genealogical Society International Book Award. Margaret also received the 2025 SC Governor's Award in the Humanities. www.payne-fulbusiness.com.



Kara Bridgman Sweeney
Bearing witness to zones of quarantine and resistance
on Tybee Island, Georgia
Thursday, October 1 at 2:00 pm

Kara Bridgman Sweeney is an educator and professional archaeologist in Savannah, Georgia. She serves as director of the Digging Savannah public archaeology initiative, and as Senior Lecturer of Anthropology at Georgia Southern University. Dr. Bridgman Sweeney is a member of Tybee MLK Human Rights Organization, and a founding member of the Lazaretto Coalition, a branch of Tybee MLK that works to learn more about Africans who were held in quarantine at Tybee Island in the 18th century.

Dr. Bridgman Sweeney serves as a member of the Advisory Council for the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Center at Georgia Southern, and as a volunteer with the African American Historic Resources Project (a partnership with Archaeology in the Community and the Southeastern Archaeological Conference). She has provided service as a Review Board member for the Georgia National Register of Historic Places, and as a representative on the City of Savannah's Archaeology Task Force.



William Tate
Panel: Connections to Henry Laurens
Friday, October 2 at 2:45 pm

William Tate is a registered architect and professor of architectural design at James Madison University. He is the founder of Umbau--a guerrilla architecture studio.

Tate's education is Wake Forest University and Virginia Tech.

He worked with Ricardo Legorreta in Mexico City and while in Mexico City, met Luis Barragán

He currently runs summer studios in Vienna, Austria. His teaching, work, and readings focus on building Puccini, the Land, field theory, Möglich, Surges, choreography, in-betweens, memory, justice, film, civil rights, and the contrapuntal, All Applied to landers and qanats.

William practices photography with Leica monochrom cameras and Leica is his philosophy.

He is married with several grandchildren.



Valarie Thompson
Panel: *Enslaved Resistance*
Thursday, October 1 at 11:15 am

Valarie Thompson is an educator and curriculum designer with over twelve years of experience teaching U.S. History, World History, and African American Studies. Her work centers on helping students and communities engage critically with the histories of the African Diaspora through inquiry, material culture, and place-based learning. Thompson has developed classroom and community projects that explore memory, resistance, and cultural survival, including initiatives focused on maroon societies, sacred traditions, and the legacy of enslaved communities in the American South.

Recognized as a Richmond County Top 5 Teacher of the Year, Thompson also creates lesson plans and instructional resources for museums, cultural institutions, and educational organizations seeking to connect historical scholarship with K-12 classrooms. A teaching fellow with the National Center for Civil and Human Rights and an active collaborator with social studies organizations, she designs interdisciplinary materials that link archival research to contemporary issues of identity and justice. Thompson is committed to amplifying under-told narratives and empowering young people to see themselves as stewards of history. She will serve as a panelist for the session *Enslaved Resistance*, which examines resilience and cultural resistance across the Global African Diaspora.



Louis Venters, Ph.D.
Panel: *The War and the Pee Dee Region*
Saturday, October 3 at 2:15 pm

Louis Venters, Ph.D. is a professor at Francis Marion University, where he teaches courses in African, African American, and U.S. history and is co-coordinator of the concentration in Public History & Archaeology and the History Internship. Inside and outside of the academy, his work focuses on histories of race, religion, and social change; equity and sustainability in rural and urban planning; heritage tourism, historical memory, and cultural and environmental stewardship; and the empowerment of young people and historically marginalized communities. He has collaborated on a number of site studies, reports, and exhibits, including the Francis Marion Trail Commission's driving tour of sixteen Revolutionary War sites in eastern South Carolina (2011) and the multiple-award-winning mobile travel guide, *The Green Book of South Carolina* (2017), and he is the author of two monographs, *No Jim Crow Church: The Origins of South Carolina's Bahá'í Community* (University Press of Florida, 2015) and *A History of the Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina* (History Press, 2019). He currently serves as secretary of the board of directors of Preservation South Carolina and is a past member of the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission (ex officio) and the State Board of Review of the National Register of Historic Places. He is a frequent public speaker, and he engages wider audiences about history, policy, planning, the environment, and plant-based health and fitness on social media as @theshreddedscholar. He has lived and travelled widely in Africa, the Americas, and Europe. He resides in Florence with his family.



Rachael Keri Williams, MSW

***Workshop: From Hold to Seashell: Ancestral Roots to Revolutionary Routes
Thursday, October 1 at 3:15 pm***

Rachael's work begins with the maps no one has drawn but are written in and between our bodies, carried through water, thread, blood, stone, and story across mediums: Black cemeteries, textiles, family histories and national archives.

Rachael is the founder and executive director of SOAL: SavingOurAncestorsLegacy (501c3), creator of the Action4Heritage project, and the visionary behind the WebAnansi platform. Since 2021, she has led the community-based restoration of Harrisburg's Historic Lincoln Cemetery, one of Pennsylvania's oldest historically Black burial grounds. As a descendant of slavery, Rachael brings her decades of experience as a guerrilla archivist, public historian, technologist, artist, published author, poet, storyteller, traditional craft worker and NOLS wilderness outdoor educator leveraging digital and analog technologies to bring people together and reweave genealogical threads and diasporic memory, even when historical knowledge is seemingly absent.

Williams served as visionary leader for the University of Maine's transformation of C.C. Little Hall into Beryl Warner Williams Hall, using public art, historic artifacts, photos, textiles, and documents to create an interactive multimedia experience that uses Beryl's family history to center Maine's rich Black heritage and create on-campus space for Black joy. Her poetry and work restoring Lincoln Cemetery was the inspiration behind an original play by Sankofa African American Theatre Company, "Voices of the Eighth Part III: Hallowed Ground," which debuted in February 2025.

Her work has been featured across regional and national outlets, such as the National Civil War Museum, PBS WITF, NPR's Codeswitch, Locust Street Art Gallery, PennLive, CBS Local21 News, COMCAST Newsmakers, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the upcoming Gettysburg Black History Museum. You can find her genealogy research and storytelling at LincolnCemetery.org and her personal & SOAL social media sites: linktr.ee/savingourancestorslegacy.



Changing the narrative, one slave dwelling at a time.

THE Slave Dwelling PROJECT

Founded in 2010, the Slave Dwelling Project envisions a future in which the hearts and minds of Americans acknowledge a more truthful and inclusive narrative of the history of the nation that honors the contributions of all our people, is embedded and preserved in the buildings and artifacts of people of African heritage, and inspires all Americans to acknowledge their Ancestors.

www.slavedwellingproject.org



Meet the People that Make the Slave Dwelling Project Possible

Joseph McGill Jr. is the founder of the Slave Dwelling Project in Charleston, SC. By arranging for people to sleep in extant slave dwellings, the Slave Dwelling Project has brought much needed attention to these often-neglected structures that are vitally important to the American built environment. Mr. McGill has conducted over 250 overnights in approximately 150 different sites in 25 states and the District of Columbia. He has interacted with the descendants of both the enslaved communities and of the enslavers associated with antebellum historic sites. He speaks with school children and college students, with historical societies, community groups, and members of the public.

Ashley Bouknight is a community educator and museum consultant for various museums, historic sites, and neighborhood history projects in the southeast. She received a Masters of Arts in Public History and a Certificate in Museum Management from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Arts in Historic Preservation and Community Planning from the College of Charleston. She received a Ph.D. in Public History Program from Middle Tennessee State University. Her research focuses on collections management theory, intersectionality and inclusivity in museums, and community outreach. Dr. Bouknight served as a Curator at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage and the Senior Manager of Professional Development for the American Association for State and Local History.

Rachael Harrell Finch is the Founder & CEO of Engage Preservation Consulting, Inc., a cultural resource management firm dedicated to stewarding historic sites, museums, and communities through innovative strategic initiatives, inclusive practices for preservation and interpretive planning, GIS, and community-forward advocacy. Finch has nearly two decades of experience in historic preservation, museum management, and nonprofit leadership. Finch holds an MA in Public History with an emphasis in Historic Preservation, Cultural Resource Management and Administration of Historical Organizations from Middle Tennessee State University and a BA in History and Political Science from Metropolitan State University in Denver, Colorado.

Frederick DeShon Murphy is the founder of History Before Us, LLC, a project centered on capturing, preserving and advocating influential history. His first film, the award-winning *The American South as We Know It*, explores the lives of survivors of Jim Crow—the courageous individuals who didn't make the headlines. His second documentary, *The Other Side of the Coin: Race, Generations & Reconciliation*, was released on September 2, 2020. A collection of experiences and thoughts addressing the complexities of race in America, the film asks, "How do we reconcile for the sake of future generations and humanity?" Mr. Murphy is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor who finds joy in helping people achieve and retain an optimum level of functioning by focusing on their holistic health. He has a master's degree in Transformative Leadership and serves on the board of the James K. Polk historic site in Pineville, North Carolina.

Tanya M. Timmons, treasurer of the Slave Dwelling Project, has a love for history and believes strongly that if you don't know your past, you can't appreciate your future. She enjoys all things planner related (journals, fountain pens, stickers), traveling, trying new wines, and new love of weight training and Zumba. A project manager at ATI, she also serves as Co-Chairperson of IDEA (Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Advancement) Council. Tanya is married with two young adults.

Jon Williams holds a BA in History from Wake Forest University, an MS in History (Secondary Education) from North Carolina A&T State University, and a Post-Master's Certificate for School Administration from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Jon served as a high school Social Studies teacher for close to 20 years, and as a school administrator for over 8 years serving as Principal of a high school, a middle school, and an alternative school in addition to roles as an Assistant Principal. He was named the McMichael High School Teacher of the Year for 2012-2013 and is a past recipient of the Marcellus Waddill Excellence in Teaching Award from Wake Forest University. Jon has now retired from North Carolina Public Schools and is currently an Adjunct Professor at Wake Forest University in the Education Department.