

# Call & Response

News from the  
South Carolina African American Heritage Commission



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Winter 2008 Volume III, Number 1

## Message from the Chair

Jannie Harriot



Greetings,

Fifteen years ago, the General Assembly passed a joint resolution creating the South Carolina African American Council. The need for the Council was evident by the lack of attention given to the preservation of the African American experience in South Carolina. The Council, which became the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission in 2001, has spent the last fifteen years assisting the Department of Archives and History with preserving the heritage of African Americans throughout the state.

During the past year, the Commission reached out to citizens statewide in many ways. Last April, the Commission with the assistance of state Archives and History sponsored a workshop in Columbia - "In Our Trust: Preserving the African American Church in South Carolina - Buildings, Histories, Records, and Cemeteries." It was well attended by clergy and lay members. In May, People to People of Hartsville, Sonoco and the citizens of Hartsville sponsored "Preserving our Places In History in the Pee Dee." The keynote speaker was Hartsville native and noted Duke University Susan B. King professor, Dr. Sherman James. Then, in September, we repeated the "In Our Trust" workshop at Francis Marion University in Florence. The Avery Research Center for African American History & Culture at the College of Charleston, Francis Marion University, Florence School District I, Ideal Funeral Parlor and Smith Funeral Home were sponsors.

One of the highlights of the year was sponsoring the press conference for Congressman James Clyburn (SC-6) to announce the members of the Gullah/Geechee National Heritage Corridor Commission, and it was held at the Avery Research Center. Congressman Clyburn, Congressman Henry Brown (SC-1), representatives from the SC General Assembly, the National Park Service, and dignitaries from various areas of government throughout the corridor attended this historic event.

This January, we held our second annual meeting and third "Preserving Our Places In History" awards program. See more on this on pages 2-3.

The Commission meets quarterly and we welcome your attendance at our meetings as well as your ongoing support and comments. For more information about the Commission, visit our website at <http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/afamer/hpaahcommission.htm> or feel free to contact me at 843-332-3589.



The Gullah/Geechee Commission and alternates (left) and Congressman Jim Clyburn, Gullah/Geechee Commissioner Emory Campbell and Art Frederick, National Park Service Southeast Region Deputy Director (right). Both photos were taken at the October '07 press conference in Charleston. *Photos by Cecil Williams*



*The mission of the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission is to identify and promote the preservation of historic sites, structures, buildings, and culture of the African American experience in South Carolina and to assist and enhance the efforts of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.*

## In The News

### South Carolina African American Heritage Commission Holds Annual Meeting and Awards Program

At its second annual meeting on January 25-26, 2008 in Spartanburg, the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission elected officers, presented its third annual *Preserving our Places In History* awards and held sessions for the participants who came from across the state.

The Commission began on Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, by electing officers. Officers for 2008 are: Jannie Harriot of Hartsville, chairperson; Leon Love of Lexington, vice-chairperson; Alada Shinault-Small of North Charleston, secretary; and Marvin Dulaney of Charleston, treasurer.

On Thursday evening at Mount Moriah Baptist Church's Life Center, the Commission presented awards to two individuals, two projects and an organization that have demonstrated or made an outstanding contribution to the preservation and interpretation of African American history and culture in South Carolina during the past year.

#### Lifetime Achievement Award - Ronald Daise

Ronald Daise is an educator, author, entrepreneur and historian. His productions, recordings, and writings throughout his 30-year professional career have documented Gullah/Geechee heritage in an exemplary manner that transcends stereotypical points-of-view of the culture. Most recently, he has published *Gullah Branches, West African Roots*, an unparalleled study in its artistic promotion and preservation of Gullah/Geechee heritage and culture through stunning photographs, poetry, memoirs of personal experiences, spirituals and short stories.



Ron Daise (left), of Pawley's Island, stands with SCAAHC Commissioner Bernie Wight. *Photo by Terry James*

#### Individual Award - Clifton W. Anderson

Mr. Anderson is the chairman of the Kershaw County Clean Community Commission in Camden, South Carolina. With grants, community support, and through his tireless efforts, Mr. Anderson succeeded in adding an African American Corridor to the



Camden Trace, producing a brochure documenting the area's history, and raising the consciousness of the entire Camden community about the need to preserve the African-American experience in Kershaw County.

Clifton W. Anderson of Camden talks about his project. *Photo by Terry James*

#### First Project Award - Woman's Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina

In 2001, the Woman's Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention began a statewide project to collect, document and preserve its history. The project culminated in 2006 with the publication of *Born to Serve: A History of the Woman's Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina*, the first comprehensive history of a Women's Baptist State Convention and a model of how other organizations can develop preservation projects and write their organizational histories.



State president Dr. Lucille S. Whipper of Mt. Pleasant accepts the award for the WBEMC. *Photo by Terry James*

#### Second Project Award - the Rock Hill Historical Marker Committee and the Piedmont Regional Association of Realtors

These two groups collaborated to preserve a very important site in downtown Rock Hill related to this nation's civil rights history—the 1961 Friendship Nine sit-ins. In January 2007, forty-six years later, these two groups commemorated the nine Friendship Junior College students' "jail no bail" strategy by erecting a state historical marker and by making a part of the McCrory's building a permanent historic site.



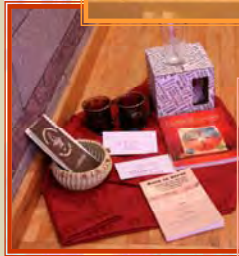
Members of both Rock Hill groups pose with their award as SCAAHC Chair Jannie Harriot watches. *Photo by Terry James*

**Organization Award - 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, Company I Civil War Reenactment Unit.** The 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment travels all over South Carolina doing reenactments, teaching school children and others about the often unknown role of African-American soldiers in the American Civil War, and engaging in authentic demonstrations of soldiering in the War.



Co. I members accept their award from SCAAHC Commissioner Abel Bartley. Photo by Terry James

The 54<sup>th</sup> has become the leading organization in the state promoting the preservation of the history of African Americans in the Civil War.



### More Glimpses of the SCAAHC 2008 Annual Meeting

The SCAAHC gratefully acknowledges its sponsors for the 2008 Annual Meeting: **African American Historical Alliance; City of Spartanburg; Gullah/Geechee Angel Network; James E. & Emily E. Clyburn Foundation; Mount Moriah Baptist Church; National Park Service; Soft Blue Educational Software; South Carolina Department of Archives & History; and Sweet Grass Basket Cultural Arts Festival.**

#### Right panel photos:

**Top center** - SCAAHC Commissioner Barbra W. Jenkins discusses the Rosenwald School project recently undertaken by the Orangeburg chapter of The Links, Inc.; **Second left** - Raffle items include treasures from around the state; **Third right** - Tracy Hayes shares info on the state's Rosenwald Schools (see a related article on pg. 6); **Fourth left** - Attendees admire colorful handmade quilts from Liberia, displayed by the West Africa Council of SC; **Bottom right** - Judge James Talley, former Spartanburg mayor, gives a well-received message during lunch; One of the majestic stain glass windows at Mount Moriah's Family Life Center provides the backdrop for these photos. Photos by Terry James

### Preservation Project Profiles Marker Unveiling at Randolph Cemetery, Columbia

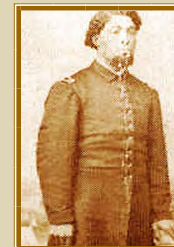
**Leon A. Love  
SCAAHC Vice-Chairperson**

On a cold Saturday morning on February 2, 2008, a crowd gathered at Randolph Cemetery in Columbia. Unlike most gatherings at this cemetery for the last hundred years, this group came to unveil a historic marker.

Senator Kay Patterson and other state, county and city-elected officials reminded the crowd of the many contributions of African Americans to the building of South Carolina and the significance of this event. A task force staffed by Elaine Nichols, African American Curator, SC State Museum and Robin Waites, Historic Columbia Foundation and chaired by Frank Washington worked for several years to identify graves, clean the grounds and install a historic marker. Jannie Harriot, Joseph McGill and Leon Love represented the SCAAHC on the task force.

Founded July 1, 1871 by a small group of African-American men, the cemetery honors Senator Benjamin Franklin Randolph (1837-1868) who was assassinated by whites. Born in Kentucky, Randolph's family moved to Warren County, Ohio when he was a small child. He attended school there and later (1854-7) enrolled in Oberlin College's preparatory school. From 1857-1862, he attended, but did not graduate from the Collegiate Department.

Randolph Cemetery is believed to be the only cemetery in America to contain the remains of ten African American legislators from the Reconstruction period.



Senator B. F. Randolph

### Dedication of the African-American Cemetery Memorial at the College of Charleston

**Kayla Foster, Graduate Intern,  
Avery Research Center,  
College of Charleston**

On February 7, 2008, the College of Charleston dedicated the recently-installed African-American Cemetery Memorial, which is located on Rivers Green at the Adlestone Library. The College erected the memorial in honor of the cemeteries of the Brown Fellowship Society, the Humane Brotherhood, and a third cemetery identified as "Macpelah," that occupied the site.

For everyone who attended the dedication, it was an important event highlighting the diverse and unique history found in Charleston.

Dr. David Cohen, Dean of Libraries at the College, served as Master of Ceremonies. The program also included remarks by Charleston mayor Joseph P. Riley; College of Charleston History professor Bernard Powers; Anthony O'Neill, president of the Brown Fellowship Society; Alexandria Russell of the Black Student Union; SGA president Whitney Hinds; and the College's president, P. George Benson. The Rev. Jimmy Gallant concluded the dedication ceremony with a prayer and a blessing of the memorial.

A diverse audience of students, faculty, and community leaders attended the dedication. At least sixty people were present. Many were unable to find a seat, and stood in order to listen to the important messages of preservation and remembrance. SGA president Whitney Hinds commented, "I thought that the dedication ceremony was poignant and respectful...We are lucky to have such a beautiful and important memorial on our campus."

As a student, it was important for me to see the effort that the College made to honor the cemeteries of the free black community that used to live within proximity of our campus.

See photo next page



Attorney Tony O'Neill, president of the Brown Fellowship Society, unveils the College of Charleston's African-American Cemetery Memorial. Photo by Otis Pickett

**Spotlight on...**  
**Felicia Flemming-McCall**  
**Cheraw**



Felicia Flemming-McCall joined the SCAAHC in 2007 and hails from Cheraw. She recalls, "I learned about the Commission several years ago and attended some of the seminars with the hope of becoming more involved. It is very important to have a commission such as this one to preserve the legacy and history of African Americans in South Carolina. Through my involvement with the commission, I plan to encourage others to get actively involved in preserving the African American history in their communities. It is imperative that we preserve our legacy so future generations will know our contributions to South Carolina."

Felicia has been interested in African American history since reading *Prince Among Slaves* by Terry Alford in the ninth grade. After reading this historical account, she realized that she did not have an accurate understanding of slavery or African American history. When she returned home from college, she joined her family's funeral home business.

Over the course of the thirteen years at the funeral home, she has become very knowledgeable of the African American experience throughout Chesterfield County, which has led to the publishing of her pictorial book *African Americans of Chesterfield County, South Carolina* that will debut this fall. Felicia is looking forward to completing this project because it will be the first time in the county's history that a book will be published highlighting African American contributions.

Felicia is general manager of Flemming's Funeral Home, Inc. She began her apprenticeship during her junior year in high school and joined the family business in 1995 after graduating from Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service in Atlanta, GA. She is a 2003 graduate of Northeastern Technical College in Cheraw. Felicia is married to Norris K. McCall and is the proud mother of two daughters, Nannie and Sydney, and a stepson, Jordan.

**News from the**  
**South Carolina Department**  
**of**  
**Archives and History**

*Elizabeth M. Johnson*  
*Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer*

**Landmark and Preservation Conference Planned**

The second annual Landmark and Preservation conference will be held March 27-28 in Greenville. The conference schedule includes educational sessions, workshops, tours of sites in Greenville and Greenville county, the statewide Preservation Awards, and a progressive dinner along Main Street. For more information contact Jennifer Revels at 803-896-6171, [revels@scdah.state.sc.us](mailto:revels@scdah.state.sc.us). The conference brochure is online at <http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/preslanbro08W.pdf>

**Recent National Register of Historic Places Listings**

The National Register is a list of places important in our local, state, and national history that are worthy of recognition and preservation. For more information about the National Register go to <http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/natlregs.htm>

**Mary H. Wright Elementary School** in Spartanburg is significant for its association with the statewide struggle over racial equality in education during the 1950s. Constructed in 1951, it was one of the first buildings in the state funded by the statewide sales tax that financed the equalization program of

Governor James F. Byrnes. It was named for a local Southside resident and black educator. Listed August 3, 2007. More information is available at <http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/spartanburg/S10817742060/index.htm>

**Seashore Farmer's Lodge No. 767** on James Island in Charleston County (built circa 1915) is significant as an illustration of the importance of fraternal orders in the life of the lowcountry African American community in the early twentieth century. The Lodge provided, as its creed mandated, support for its members and celebration of life with music and recreation. Listed October 3, 2007. More information is available at <http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/charleston/S10817710181/index.htm>

**Hope Rosenwald School** near Pomaria in Newberry County is significant for its role in African American education in South Carolina between 1925 and 1954. It is one of the few remaining examples of the nearly 500 schools built for African American children in the state with financial assistance from a fund established by Julius Rosenwald, CEO of Sears & Roebuck. Listed October 3, 2007. More information is available at <http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/newberry/S10817736031/index.htm>

**The Harriet M. Cornwell Tourist House** is significant as an example of segregation in Columbia. From ca. 1940 to ca. 1960, the Cornwell Tourist Home served as place where African Americans could find lodging and one meal a day. While no sign advertised it as a tourist home for blacks, the house and its address were advertised nationally in publications titled *The Negro Travelers' Green Book* and the *International Travelers' Green Book*. Listed October 5, 2007. For more information see <http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/richland/S10817740141/index.htm>

**The Progressive Club** on Johns Island in Charleston County is significant for its association with events and persons important in the Civil Rights Movement, beginning with the building's construction in 1963 until the death of the Club's founder Esau Jenkins in 1972. It was a vital community center, providing a home for the Club's legal and financial assistance program, adult education program, dormitory lodging, and as a community recreational, child-care, meeting place and grocery store. It is the only remaining building in the state to house a "Citizenship School" where adult education classes and workshops enabled African American citizens to register, vote, and learn about the political process. Listed October 24, 2007. For more information see <http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/charleston/S10817710183/index.htm>

**South Carolina's**  
**Rosenwald Schools Project**  
*Tracy Hayes*  
*National Trust for Historic Preservation*  
*Rosenwald Initiative Program Assistant*

It's a rare occasion to get out of the office and in the field for survey work, so when Leah Brown from the SC Department of Archives and History presented the opportunity to hunt for Rosenwald Schools in Charleston County recently, off we went! Rosenwald Fund records at Fisk University indicate that 14 Rosenwald schools had been built for African-American children in Charleston County in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Using the Fisk records and USGS mapping information, Leah had already located one school on Wadmalaw Island—a two-teacher type school built in the 1927-28 Rosenwald Fund budget year. After stopping by that school and talking to the owner who graciously allowed us to photograph the exterior, we went on to search for the Red Top School. That school was also a two-teacher type funded in 1927-28. Our search proved fruitless, however, and we believe that the Red Top School has been lost.

The exercise reinforced the endangered status of Rosenwald Schools. Perhaps the most frequently asked question is "How many schools still exist?" and our answer is still "We don't know." Of the more than 5000 Rosenwald-funded structures built across 15 states, we estimate that 10-15 percent remain, and a large percentage of those are in poor condition. Survey work is expensive and time-consuming. Two schools cost us three hours time, not to mention travel expenses. South Carolina had 500



Rosenwald structures. Two weeks prior to the Charleston County excursion, we had the opportunity to venture out into rural Spartanburg County.

Google Maps and Google Earth pinpointed the location of *Brooklyn School*, seen above. Nearly two hours later we had located and photographed the school, being careful not to trespass on private property, and returned to Spartanburg. Brooklyn School is in good condition and is owned by Brooklyn AME Church. For more information on these and other South Carolina Rosenwald Schools, visit the Department of Archives and History Rosenwald Schools website at <http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/afamer/roseninro.htm> or visit the National Trust Rosenwald Initiative website at [www.rosenwaldschools.com](http://www.rosenwaldschools.com).

## Guest Corner

### Meet the African American Historical Alliance Linda Brown

The African-American Historical Alliance (AAHA) is a South Carolina-based non-profit organization that was formed after a ceremony in Charleston in 2005 that marked the grave of Isaac Sawyer, a member of the famed 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment, who settled in Charleston and became a barber. The realization that many more stories like Sawyer's would be lost to history if something were not done to publicize them, prompted the founding of the Alliance.

Governed by a diverse board whose members share a passion for South Carolina and its history, particularly during the critical years of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Alliance marked the grave of another 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts luminary in 2006. Stephen Atkins Swails also settled in South Carolina following the Civil War. He worked for the Freedmen's Bureau, finally moving to Williamsburg County where he was elected both County Auditor and State Senator, serving as President pro tempore of the Senate. Swails also served as Mayor of Kingstree.

Last year, the Alliance continued its recognition of the pioneering heroes of the Civil War and Reconstruction by honoring African-American lawyers, judges and legislators who served during that time.

This November celebration was a two-tier affair, beginning with an afternoon symposium, organized by USC law professor Lewis Burke. The symposium consisted of two panel discussions by distinguished authors and academics, which embraced the lives of Jonathan Jasper Wright, Richard H. Cain, William Whipper, Robert Brown Elliott, George Washington Murray, Robert Smalls and Thomas E. Miller.

That evening, the Alliance honored four contemporary African Americans as living representatives of the legacy of the men who served during the Civil War and Reconstruction by bestowing upon them the Alliance's *Legacy of Freedom* award. Those honored were Congressman James Clyburn, retired Supreme Court Chief Justice Ernest Finney, Federal Judge Matthew Perry and State Senator Kay Patterson.

It is the mission of the AAHA to support awareness of youth and adults in the involvement of African Americans in the Civil War and Reconstruction period in South Carolina. To this end, it published the proceedings of the 2007 Legacy of Freedom celebration and made them available to high schools throughout the state.

The Alliance will continue this mission on May 17<sup>th</sup> as it further honors Robert Smalls by dedicating a marker to him in Charleston. Audrena Hill's film, *Robert Smalls: A Patriot's Journey from Slavery to Capitol Hill*, will also be screened as part of the event.

The date of the event is significant because on May 13, 1862, Smalls, who was pilot of the transport steamer *Planter*, commandeered the boat while its white crew was ashore, and along with his wife, children, and 12 other slaves, sailed the boat to the nearest Union ship blockading Charleston Harbor. Smalls reportedly brought the *Planter* alongside the Union ship, raised his hat high in the air and announced, "Good morning, sir! I have brought you some of the old United States' guns, sir!"

In addition to the dedication of the Smalls marker, the African American Historical Alliance is looking toward the opportunities afforded to honor many more unsung and under-appreciated heroes in our nation's history during the 2011 sesquicentennial anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War.



**Top:** AAHA Co-chair Billy Jenkinson  
**Bottom:** Federal Judge Matthew Perry, state Senator Kay Patterson and retired SC Supreme Court Chief Justice Ernest Finney  
*Photos by Trio Solutions Inc.*

## Events Calendar

### March

#### Charles Pinckney National Historic Site *Gullah Heritage: Saturday Series*

Each Saturday in March

1254 Longpoint Road, Mt. Pleasant

<http://www.nps.gov/chpi/planyourvisit/events.htm?om=1&ov=2008&prk=chpi>

#### The Carolina Lowcountry and Atlantic World (CLAW) presents

##### *Ending the International Slave Trade: A Bicentenary Inquiry*

March 26 - 29, 2008

College of Charleston

<http://www.cofc.edu/atlanticworld/Conferences%20Page/conferences.html>

#### 2008 Landmark and Preservation Conference

March 27 - 28, 2008

Hyatt Regency

220 North Main Street, Greenville

<http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/presianbro08W.pdf>

#### 2008 National Main Streets Conference

##### *Enriching Main Street Through Entrepreneurship and Diversity*

March 30 - April 2, 2008

Philadelphia, PA

<http://conference.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=12058>

### April

#### The College Language Association presents its 68th Annual Conference

##### *(Re)Roots and (Re)Routes: Transatlantic Connections in Language and Literature*

April 9 - 12, 2008

College of Charleston

<http://www.clascholars.org/>

#### The McNeil Center for Early America Studies presents *Atlantic Emancipations Conference*

April 10 - 12, 2008

University of Pennsylvania

3355 Woodland Walk, Philadelphia

<http://www.librarycompany.org/emancipations/>

**Call & Response** is the official newsletter of the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission and is published three times annually.

Views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History (SCDAH). Information published is at the discretion of the Editorial Board. The Commission extends its heartfelt gratitude to SCDAH graphic artist, Tim Belshaw, for his ongoing technical and graphics support.

#### Historic Landscapes: Planning, Management, and Cultural Landscape Reports

April 29 - 30, 2008

Charleston

<http://npi.org/sem-ls.html>

### June

#### South Carolina African American Heritage Commission

##### Quarterly Meeting

June 6, 2008

11:00 AM

Avery Research Center

125 Bull Street, Charleston

<http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/afamer/hpaaahcommission.htm>

#### Sweet Grass Cultural Arts Festival

June 6 - 7, 2008

Mt. Pleasant

[www.sweetgrassfestival.org](http://www.sweetgrassfestival.org)

#### The National Trust for Historic Preservation presents Preservation Leadership Training 2008

June 21 - 28, 2008

Portland, ME

Application deadline: March 31, 2008

<http://www.nationaltrust.org/plt/>

Please visit the African American Heritage Events Calendar for upcoming local, state, and national events. <http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/afamer/hpaaahevents.htm>

If you would like to have your event listed, please send your event name, date, location, and website or contact information at least three (3) weeks prior to the event to Leah Brown, African American Programs Coordinator, SCDAH at [brownl@scdah.state.sc.us](mailto:brownl@scdah.state.sc.us).

#### Call & Response Editorial Board:

Terry James, SCAAHC board member, Florence  
Joseph McGill, Jr., SCAAHC board member, Ladson  
Alada Shinault-Small, SCAAHC board member, North Charleston