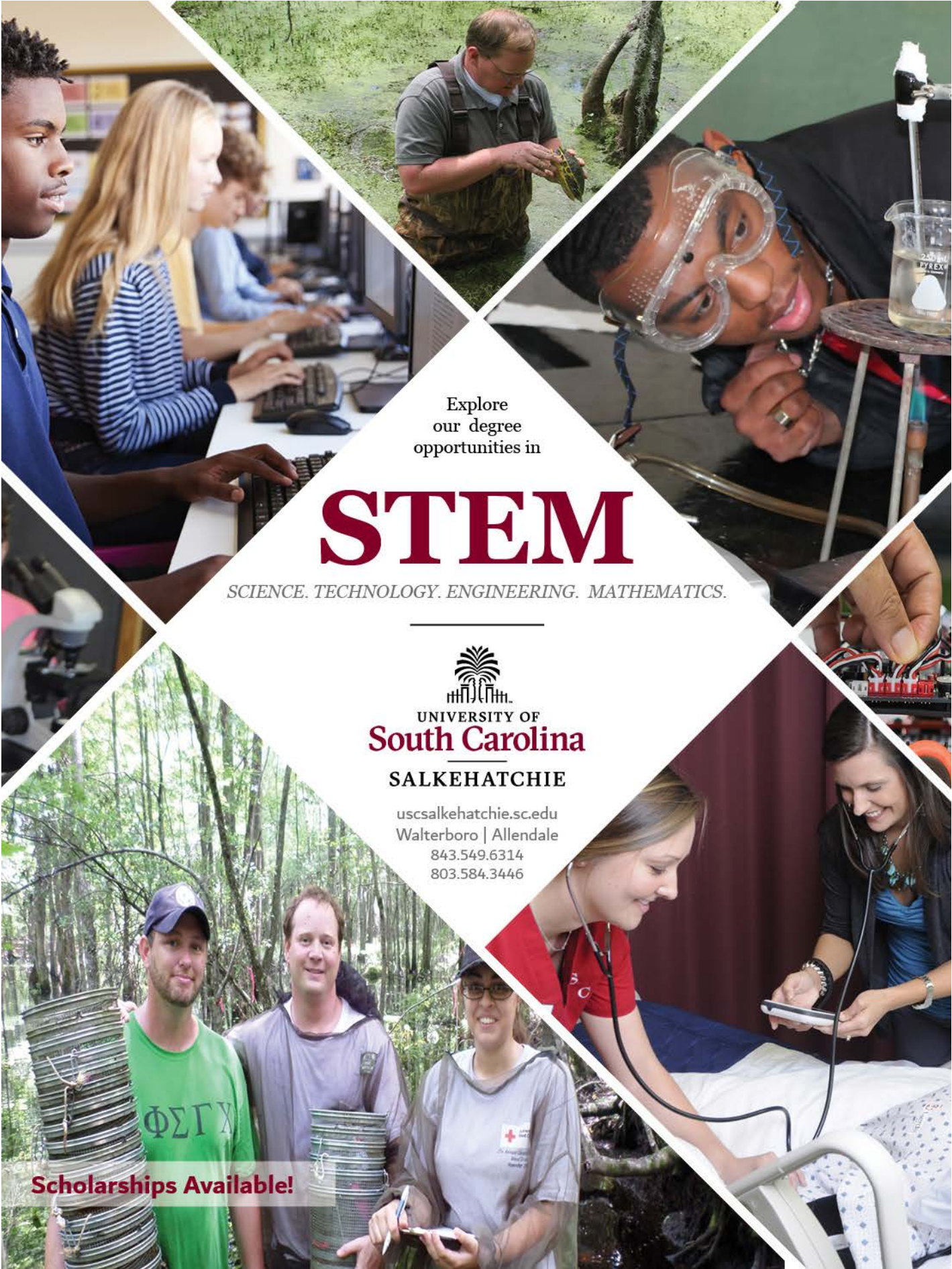


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# Edingsville: a lost beach town



PHOTO BY DUNCAN M. FITZGERALD

**A LOST CITY.** Arrows point to where Edingsville Beach once stood. The luxury resort for the local wealthy planters between Savannah and Charleston is now submerged beneath the water near Botany Bay at Edisto Island.

By Vicki Brown

If visitors walked along the coastline near Edisto Beach State Park and looked out to the Atlantic Ocean, they would be shocked to know that there is a town submerged under water near the actual coastline.

Just northeast of Jeremy's Inlet near Botany Bay, a resort island-town once called Edingsville, or "The Bay" by locals, was busy and growing in the 1820s.

Developed by the Edings family, who were prominent planters on Edisto Island, the resort boasted summer homes built by families who wanted to escape the Lowcountry heat and "Country Fever", which was actually malaria transmitted by mosquitoes.

According to Nate Fulmer of the USC College of Arts and Sciences, the town was only accessible by water until plantation owner Benjamin Edings built a causeway to join Edingsville with Edisto Island. He began a real estate business and sold or leased lots to those who could afford the steep prices of this luxurious location.

Edingsville consisted of 60 houses with several churches, a school house, fresh water cisterns, boathouses, businesses and saloons. It was all the rage of the early 19th century, and the popular place for the wealthy to stay. The houses along the


beach were built with two stories and had porches that faced the ocean. Another row of houses overlooked the marsh.

The rich plantation owners between Savannah and Charleston gathered there every summer.

In 1824, the Marquis de Lafayette toured America. He was the last surviving French general of the American Revolutionary War. He toured 24 states from July 1824 to September 1825, and was received as a hero at many stops. He traveled by stagecoach, horseback, canal barge and steamboat more than 6,000 miles accompanied by his son Georges Washington de La Fayette, named after George Washington, social reformer Frances Wright and his secretary Levasseur. During March of 1825, Lafayette visited Edingsville, remarking in his diary that the community was "altogether picturesque."

According to author Bob Hart, the beach there had massive sand dunes with forests on the other side. Some of the dunes were 20-30 feet high. As time went by, however, homeowners began to notice that the tides were eating away at the beachfront. Eventually, erosion began to damage some of the homes. Almost 20 homes had to be abandoned.


The town began to seriously decline after the devastation of the Civil War. Many



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Once the work was progressed far enough for a plane to land safely, the department of Airways and Commerce placed Walterboro on their air maps. At this time, Mr. Fripp brought his plane from the Charleston airport and proceeded to build a hangar for it.


Anderson Field was dedicated in 1933, and by 1937 the town was able to purchase the airfield outright. Then began the process by local, state and federal agencies to fund the enlargement of the existing hangar and to pave the three runways.

In February of 1942, the airfield was leased from the town by the United States Army Air Corps. An additional surrounding 3,712 acres were also purchased and combined to become the Walterboro Army Airfield, which opened in August of 1942. The base housed a many as 6,000 United States military troops as well as hundreds of German prisoners.

This airfield was the largest sub-base in the 3rd Air Force and served as the last training base for pilots headed overseas for duty. Among these pilots were the famous "Red Tails" Tuskegee Airmen. Many of the "Doolittle Raiders" pilots were handpicked to come to the Walterboro Army Airfield to become instructors and role models for the new B-25 trainees.

The Walterboro Army Airfield closed after the war in October, 1945, and the United States Army deeded the base back to the town and the county jointly, renamed as Lowcountry Regional Airport.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF EDISTO BEACH MUSEUM

**HIGH DUNES.** The wealthy resort town of Edingsville sported massive sand dunes with forestry behind. The town was all the rage in the early 1800s but has since been lost.

plantations were destroyed during the war, finances were lost, and the South's economy was in ruins. African American farmers took over some of the abandoned land and began to create lives for themselves as sharecroppers.

In 1864, African American abolitionist Charlotte Forten, who had been teaching freedmen after the war and had heard about this exclusive resort called Edingsville, visited the island with union sailors, according to artist and writer Charlotte

Hutson Wrenn who researched Forten.

The abolitionist wrote in her diary that the beach was beautiful, but the "once desirable homes were desolate, dismantled and appeared abandoned."

By post-war 1866, there were only 41 homes left, along with two churches and one billiard saloon. Erosion began to claim more and more houses.

To make matters worse, the hurricanes of 1885 and 1893 demolished most of the homes and businesses there.

Now, the only traces of this beachside community are artifacts that sometimes wash ashore. People have found glass, bricks, ceramics, pottery, and cattle bones that have come in with rougher tides.

Artifacts from Edingsville are exhibited in the Environmental Learning Center located at Edisto Beach State Park. State Park officials ask that if anyone finds an artifact that may belong to Edingsville to please pass it on to the park rangers.

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# Call them Happie

By Heather Ruppe

A story that began as one woman's reinvention of herself has turned into a booming business that sends a little southern flavor to every part of the country. Ginger Hodge is the owner of Happie Chicks Boiled Peanut Company, a small business based out of Edisto Beach that is sending some southern flare to people in every part of the United States – and throughout the world. What started as an ice cream truck quickly turned into a larger idea, when Ginger started to start selling boiled peanuts alongside her ice cream. The original thought was to add something salty to the sweet treats.

Fast forward to today, and the now 10-year-old business is celebrating a decade of success.

The business now has a second local driver and they are doing daily runs to Edisto Beach State Park. They also are selling boiled peanuts online. "We started the Web site to get us through the winter, but it's taken off and it's bigger than we ever could have imagined," she said. They now ship local boiled peanuts to every state in the nation and to places as far away as Guam. "It has almost doubled every year," said Hodge, co-founder and lead ice cream trucker. Hodge, who is a graduate of College

of Charleston, left corporate America in 2008 and moved to Edisto Beach, where she decided to sell ice cream to tourists. Then came the boiled peanuts and now she is thriving, she said. "It's word of mouth and I'm so blessed."

This year, the business added new flavors to their boiled peanut selection, giving all taste buds something to enjoy.

When asked what makes her boiled peanuts so special, she said the water at Edisto is magical for cooking for peanuts and grits. "It's not delicious for drinkin', but it does a little something extra for boiled peanuts," she said.

Hodge is also the author of an award-winning children's book, "When Donkeys Fly." The book won the Mom's Choice Award for being the most motivational book for children, giving Hodge the nudge she needed to keep doing what her heart told her to do. Now, Hodge has written her second book, "Charlotte and the HAPPIE Truck." It is based on the true story of their rescue dog, Charlotte.

"We got Charlotte and she was a rescue, but she had had a pretty rough life. She had been on a chain for three years. She had never been inside a house, or inside a car," she said, adding that it took her three hours just to get her inside the house. "One thing she loves is riding in the happie truck."



PHOTO PROVIDED


**SERVING UP FLAVOR.** The Happie Chicks boiled peanut and ice cream business is sending local flavors across the United States. The group recently added new flavors to their boiled peanut selection, including low salt.




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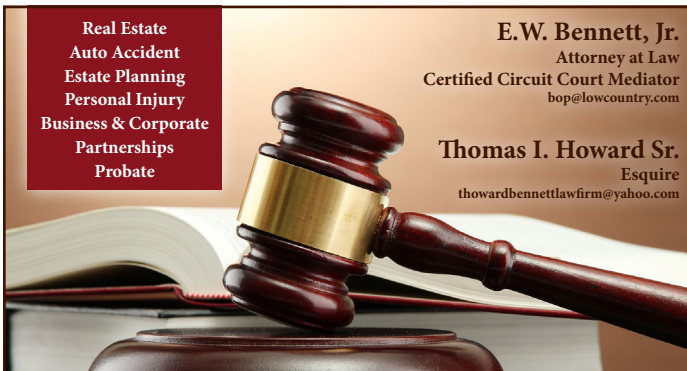


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PHOTO PROVIDED

**SERVING UP HAPPIE.** Ginger Hodge, the co-owner of Happie Truck, poses with children who buy her boiled peanuts and ice cream. Hodge's business is based out of Edisto Beach, but is sending locally-made boiled peanuts across the nation.

Charlotte hid in the back of the truck for a year before she mustered the courage to meet some of the patrons who were buying boiled peanuts.

"She is a different dog. She loves being around people," she said, about Charlotte. The books and the Happie Chick boiled peanuts are available for sale while visiting

Edisto Beach, at the Edisto Beach State Park or online at [www.buyboiledpeanuts.com](http://www.buyboiledpeanuts.com).



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# Islandton has a unique son in LaVern Polk

By Heather Ruppe

LaVern Polk is a man who loves his community and has spent his entire life working to improve the very place that he holds dear.

A native and lifelong resident of the rural Colleton County community of Islandton, Polk has spent decades volunteering and working hard for his neighbors.

But, don't expect him to boast. Polk will rarely say a good word about himself, and instead puts the spotlight back on those around him who he says work even harder. "We have a great group of people out here. These people are hard workers and real active in the parts of this community," he said. "Everybody likes their community, I guess, but Islandton is special."

Polk is the current chairman of the Colleton County Fire-Rescue Commission. His role began in 1981 when he was a volunteer fireman at the original Islandton Fire Department: Polk's father was also a fireman in this department.

Keeping up with the family tradition, Polk's son, Jared Polk, is also a fireman in the same department.

"He is a terrific person, honest and caring," said Colleton County Fire-Rescue Chief Barry McRoy. "Mr. Polk is a great community servant who works many hours behind the scenes that nobody ever sees and he seldom takes credit for any of it," he said.

In addition to keeping his community safe by being a part of the community fire department, Polk has served as the longtime chairman of the Coastal Electric Cooperative board. He is also the treasurer of the Hudson Masonic Lodge No. 373 in Islandton and serves diligently in his church. Born and raised in Islandton, Polk only left his beloved rural Colleton County community when he joined the U.S. Air Force, where he served for four years.

Now at 71 years old, Polk is retired twice - once from the Mead Westvaco Forestry Division and again from a separate career in banking: he is the former manager of Enterprise Bank.

"Since 2016, you could say I've been pretty much retired," Polk said, laughing.

"We farm, my brother and I," said Polk, adding that he actually helps to build roads as a favor to his friend, who owns a local construction business. "I do whatever comes up, to help," he said, laughing.

"When you live in a rural area like this, it takes a lot of people to get things done."

When asked what he is most proud of, Polk said he is most proud of being part of the Islandton community and being a part of the "group" that helps to protect his home.

"I'm very proud to be a part of the fire department," he said, adding that he doesn't want any credit for working and volunteering. According to Polk, serving your community is what a person should do.

"This is a whole group effort," he said. "Everybody in the county and in Colleton County Fire-Rescue and at county council, they've all worked hard to get everything out here done."

"This is a joint effort," he said. "It's been a pleasure for me, though."







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# Keeping traditions alive

By Heather Ruppe

Using the Lowcountry's lush landscape and picturesque scenery is a group of people who come together quite frequently to keep a local tradition alive.

The Lowcountry Hunt is comprised of dozens of Colleton County and other area businesses and residents who participate in the beautiful and skilled sport of fox hound hunting.

"It is a union of humans and animals in the beauty of nature's setting. Man is an observer mounted on a horse, the vehicle that allows him to follow and observe the hounds as they hunt the fox. The scenario unwinds before the fox hunters' eyes and ears with the sound of the huntsman's hunting horn as hounds give chase," according to the Masters of Fox Hounds Association and Foundation.

Fox hunting has a long legacy in America, with the first American President, George

Washington, participating in the sport, which was first documented in the United States in 1650.

Hundreds of years later, the sport is still alive in Colleton County. The purpose of this style of hunt, of fox chasing, is not to kill the fox, but simply to enjoy the chase.

The sport is also a beautiful one: riders must follow etiquette, including a dress code, manners and a protocol for the hunt. Locally, The Lowcountry Hunt was founded by Nina Burke, who is one four Masters of Fox Hounds for this organization. The others are Melinda and Mark Shambly and Chris Bates, of Hendersonville. Burke has dedicated her life to horses, horseback riding and to preserving the art of fox hound hunting. For more than 65 years, she has helped to showcase this style of hunting in Colleton County and throughout the greater Lowcountry region.

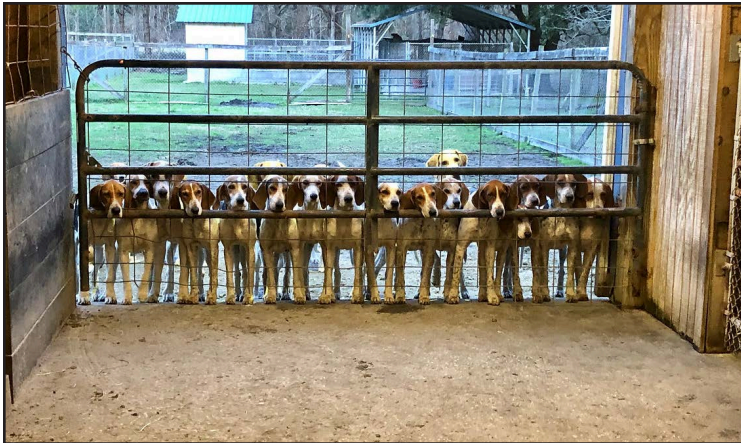
"It is about etiquette and heritage," she said.

Recently, The Lowcountry Hunt held its largest fundraiser of the year. This event drew 87 horses and 100 guest riders from nine states. They came to Walterboro to participate in a silent auction, three hunts, a cocktail buffet and an oyster roast. The raised funds help to pay for the hounds and to fund the club for ongoing clubs and activities.

As part of the traditional style of hunting, Burke and her group use Tony Gammell, a professional huntsman. He commands the dogs in the hunt, she said.

"He trains the hounds and they respond only to him. It's quite a process," she said.

The Lowcountry Hunt has many scheduled hunts throughout each year. In 2022, these hunts began in January and continue through March. They are held at various plantations and sites across the Lowcountry, from Charleston to Savannah. These sites include Colleton County.







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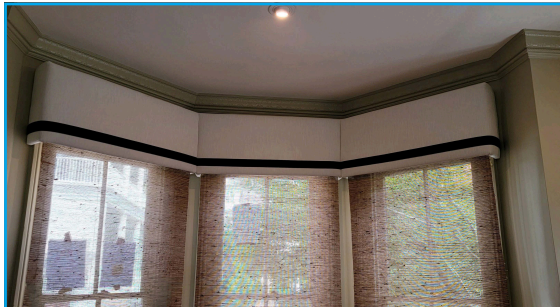
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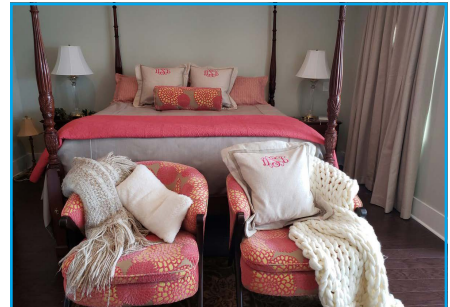
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# Five Historic Black Cemeteries to Visit in Colleton County

Elizabeth Laney

Colleton's historic African American cemeteries are everywhere - from a memorial garden alongside a major highway to community cemetery slowly being subsumed by a forest.

Some are attached to historic churches and were founded by leading African American families as the final resting places of women and men who helped shape, support and sustain our communities. Whether they were founded 140 years ago or just over 40 years ago, many of our African American cemeteries are suffering from neglect and many are not even recognized by historical markers.

Here are five local cemeteries that showcase Colleton County's rich African American history. Help protect and preserve these cemeteries by showing respect within cemetery bounds, reporting suspicious activity in the cemeteries and encouraging local groups to sponsor clean up days.

## **Billy Fields Family Cemetery** (Late 19th/Early 20th Century)

**Open to the Public?** Yes.

**Historic Marker?** No.

**Location:** Donnelley Wildlife Management Area, Bennett's Point, SC

Visitors come upon the Billy Fields Family Cemetery suddenly, at the end of a long drive from the main entrance to the Donnelley Wildlife Management Area. The small plot, directly alongside the road, consists of three unprepossessing headstones, facing to the west, surrounded by a wrought iron fence. Additional headstones are visible throughout the grounds of the nearby lodge which was once the churchyard of Ebenezer Baptist Church, later relocated to nearby Bennett's Point Road.

The headstones are those of William B. "Billy" Fields (1876 - 1924), a local African-American farmer and landowner, his mother Mary (1846 - 1911) and his grandmother Sarah (1818 - 1896) - three generations of the same family who owned much of the surrounding land since the 1870s. Billy's

grandfather, also named William Fields, owned as much as 500 acres of land in the area just five years after the end of the Civil War, the largest African American landowner in the area. Now the majority of land once owned by the family is cared for by the SC Department of Natural Resources.

## **Fox African-American Cemetery** (Late 19th Century - present)

**Open to the Public?** Yes.

**Historic Marker?** No.

**Location:** Old Fox Cemetery Lane, Cottageville, SC

Trees, vines and fallen leaves obscure most of the historic Fox African American Cemetery at the end of Old Fox Cemetery Lane on the Jacksonboro Road just outside of Cottageville. Even standing in the middle of the cemetery visitors have to strain their eyes to pick out the scattered headstones, sunken graves and lichen-covered memorials of the almost 140-year-old cemetery. Its origins are closely tied to the nearby Cottageville Cemetery, a burial ground for members of the local white community.

Both cemeteries were supposedly founded in 1885 after members of the Willis family, who owned the land, agreed to set aside portions of their property as segregated burial grounds for the burgeoning Cottageville community. One of the oldest headstones in the cemetery is that of a Rose Holmes who died in 1906, as well as several gravestones belonging to members of the Jennings and Farmer families dating to WWI. One of the most important local African American historic sites, it is also one of the most neglected. Visitors to this cemetery should be cautious while exploring as there are many sunken, unmarked graves.

## **Heavenly Rest Memorial Gardens** (Late 20th Century - present)

**Open to the Public?** Yes.

**Historic Marker?** No.

**Location:** Hwy 17-A, Walterboro, SC

Most people driving out of Walterboro on Hwy 17-A probably pass right by Heavenly

Rest Memorial Gardens without more than a glance. The most visible feature of the non-descript burial ground just past the Forks Gas Station is the tall white post surmounted by a cross and three church bells that stands at the center of the cemetery. Inscribed in the cement at the base of the post is the date of the cemetery's founding - 1979.

Heavenly Rest was founded by the Harry W. Tracy, the co-owner of Maree-Tracy Funeral Home, and a member of a family with roots in Walterboro going back to the Civil War if not before. Many of the Tracy family ancestors, including members of the Tracy, Maree and Waring families, are buried in Walterboro's historic Live Oak African American Cemetery. Harry, his brother Ralph, his parents and two of his aunts, as well as members of many other well-known local families like the Manigos, Nesbits and Moultries are interred at Heavenly Rest Memorial Gardens.

## **Live Oak African-American Cemetery** (Late 19th Century - present)

**Open to the Public?** Yes.

**Historic Marker?** No.

**Location:** DeTreville Street, Walterboro, SC  
Many of Walterboro's most notable African American citizens and families rest beneath the centuries old oaks and waving Spanish moss of Live Oak African American Cemetery. Established as a burial ground for the congregation of St. Augustine Episcopal Church (modern Church of Atonement) in 1890, the original 2 ¼ acres of Live Oak were donated by local blacksmith Joseph Dorman. The earliest burials date to just after the cemetery's founding and include one of the county's first black state representatives (William Driffle d. 1890), at least two Union veterans, several Reconstruction-era politicians and civil servants, as well as that of prominent businessmen and women, esteemed educators and honored religious leaders from throughout the 20th century. The cemetery was expanded twice - in the 1950s and then again in the 1970s. Today Live Oak African American Cemetery is, in actuality, three sections all owned by separate entities and with no active cemetery



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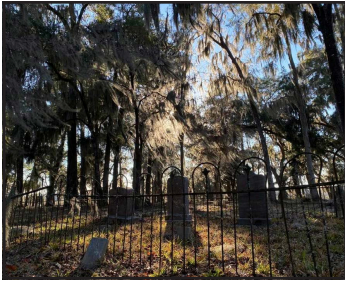
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PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**Billy Fields Cemetery** - Billy Fields Family Cemetery inside the Donnelley Wildlife Management Area.



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**Billy Fields Headstones** - Headstones of William "Billy" Fields and his grandmother Sarah.



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**Fox Cemetery** - Fox African American Cemetery just outside of Cottageville, SC.



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**Fox Headstone** - The oldest known burial at Fox African American Cemetery - Rose Holmes, died 1906.



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**Heavenly Rest Cemetery** - Heavenly Rest Memorial Gardens just past the Forks Gas Station on 17-A.



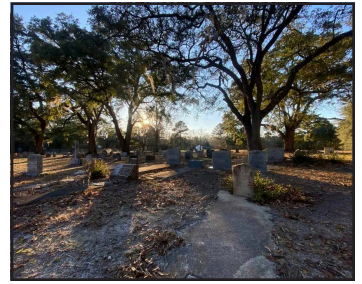
PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**Heavenly Rest Headstone** - Grave of Harry W. Tracy, founder of Heavenly Rest and co-owner of the Maree-Tracy Funeral Home.



PHOTO BY WESLEY LANEY

**Live Oak Cemetery** - Live Oak African American Cemetery on DeTreville Street in Walterboro, SC.



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**St James Cemetery** - The cemetery at St. James the Greater Catholic Church at Catholic Hill, SC.

association to help manage burials, perform regular maintenance or otherwise care for the cemetery. One of Walterboro's most important African-American historic sites is disappearing before our very eyes.

### St. James the Greater Catholic Church Cemetery

(Late 19th Century - present)

**Open to the Public?** Yes.

**Historic Marker?** Yes.

**Location:** Catholic Hill, SC

The cemetery at St. James the Greater lies quietly at the back of one of the most historic African-American churches in Colleton County. The church is rich in history - the congregation is almost 200 years old while the current church building is almost 90! The earliest African American graves in the cemetery, however, date to the late 19th century including that of Diana Bolen. Born into slavery in 1806 she was

an active member of St. James, a church which her descendants still attend today, until her death as a freedwoman at age 93 in 1899.

The cemetery is still active with burials ranging in date from the late 19th to the early 21st century. For the interested taphophile (a lover of cemeteries and gravestones) there are a variety of headstone styles from hand carved to laser cut, classic crosses to a large, laser cut motorcycle.

Elizabeth Laney is a Local Historian who



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**St. James Headstone** - Headstone of James Jackson at St. James the Greater Catholic Church graveyard.



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANEY

**St. James History** - Granite cross from St. James the Greater Church Cemetery against a backdrop of the 1935 church building.

manages the Walterboro, SC History Notes Facebook page and serves as the Reference Librarian at the Colleton County Memorial Library.

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# Diary of a home brought back to life

By Vicki Brown

In January of 2019, reconstruction began on a rickety old house located at 7666 Point of Pines Road on Edisto Island. It was the old Hutchinson House.

Most long-time residents of the island knew about the house, but rarely visited it. The house was brought to the attention of the Edisto Island Open Land Trust (EIOLT) and that's when the neglected house came to life again through a series of donations and grants.

In January of 2019, a canopy was installed, and an external support frame was built to keep the house stabilized while restoration work was going on. By the fall of 2020, the support and canopy were removed to reveal the old house restored to its former glory. It was alive again and almost a living, breathing symbol of a simpler life long gone.

Who were the Hutchinsons?

James "Jim" Hutchinson was born into slavery around 1836, and was owned by Isaac Jenkins Mikell on Edisto Island.

During the Civil War he managed to escape in 1863 with his family. He volunteered with the Union Army as a scout, even finding and turning in his previous owner's son. He then served on two ships for the Union Army during the war.

He was given a land grant after the war, but his title was revoked by the presidential order in 1868 and he lost that land.

On Edisto Island, he became a leader of

the local freedmen community during the Reconstruction Era after the war. Called the "Black Kings of Edisto" at the time, the group was made up of former slaves.

According to EIOLT, in 1875, Hutchinson pooled his money together with the other freedmen and purchased Shell House Plantation as part of a land cooperative with other shareholders. In 1874, Jim was appointed the Trial Judge for Edisto Island and entered into a partnership with several other investors to start the Toglio Ferry Company.

On July 4th 1885, Hutchinson got into an argument with a man named Frederick Barth from Wadmalaw. He was shot and killed by Barth who was convicted of murder. Barth appealed his sentence and was acquitted by an all-white jury.

At his death, Jim left a portion of his property to one of his sons, Henry. Then, Henry, who had been born a slave in 1860, married Rosa Swinton and built the Hutchinson House on that property in 1885. It is a rare example of African American Victorian architecture of the Restoration era.

The Hutchinson family were prosperous in a time when the south was in ruins. They farmed and operated a cotton gin on the island, and their wealth can be seen in the porch that wraps around the house and decorative ornamental wood beams, brackets and molding lining the roof.

Henry Hutchinson made a living by producing and selling Sea Island Cotton

to Charleston markets. He planted his own lands in cotton and ginned cotton for his neighbors. His gin was built inside the Clark Manor's old house where cotton from the field was cleaned, ginned, and packed in bales to be shipped to market. According to EIOLT, Henry is believed to have owned and operated a steam-powered McCarthy Gin, which at that time was expensive and modern machinery. Henry handled the processing and shipping of the cotton and distributing the profits.

Descendants of the Hutchinson family lived in the house until the 1980s. In 2016, they sold the house to the EIOLT. The EIOLT is in the process of stabilizing and restoring the Hutchinson House and will ultimately open it to the public as a museum and to provide a place for the community to gather together for programs and events.

The Hutchinson House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

## Restoration progress

The house was succumbing to the elements quickly, and so to protect it from further deterioration, a huge 32-foot canopy was constructed over the roof of the house.

Even though the crew of Artis Construction, under the direction of the co-owner Guyton Ash, along with John Girault, executive director of EIOLT, was restoring and renovating the house, it had to meet current building codes. That posed some

Continued on page 18



PHOTO PROVIDED

**A FAMILY REMEMBERED.** Henry and Rosa Hutchinson are pictured here with their daughters Lula and Mabel. Lula worked to try and preserve the house before her death.



PHOTO PROVIDED

**A BEAUTIFUL BEGINNING.** The Hutchinson family stands in front of their home with their horse and buggy in the late 1800s. Henry Hutchinson built the home with his own hands, some say as a wedding present to his wife, Rosa.



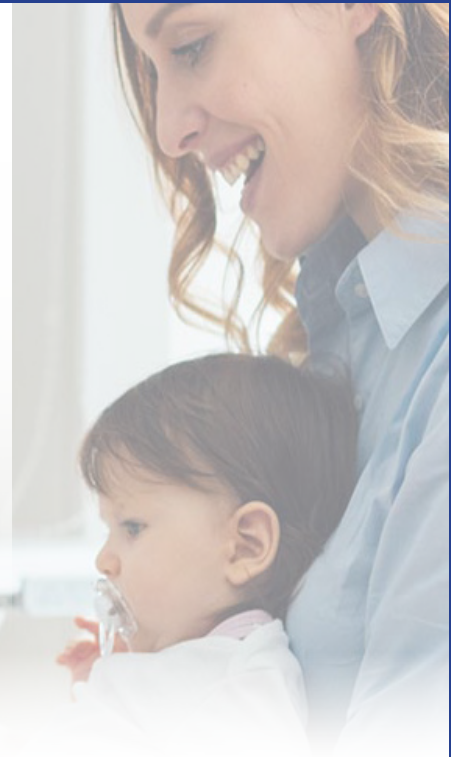
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problems in trying to keep to the original architecture of the house.

But the restoration was exact and precise as it could be.

Tags were placed on boards from the house as each one was removed. The boards were marked or tagged to be replaced in the same exact position and location with the help of students and teachers from the American College of the Building Arts in Charleston. For boards in good shape, the crew had to figure out how to remove the old paint, and for rotten wood, the crew had to figure out how to match the original.

The house itself has two stories and two rooms.

The first floor is 368 square feet with an east and west room, both containing fireplaces. The east room fireplace was removed to repair the chimney and the surrounding material was labeled and marked for reinstallation. After the windows and other work was completed, these pieces were re-installed and put back exactly where they

had originally been.

The house was finished in 2021.

Phase one completed the stabilization, weatherization and first phase of exterior restoration. The Edisto Land Trust has completed half of the work, and now has a goal to raise \$275,000 to complete the project. They are hopeful that Phase two will be completely finished this year.

Phase two will include the interior restoration, replicating the three-sided porch, replacing the decorative trim on the eaves and rakes of the roof, and replacing the north room on the back of the house. A trail around a portion of the Hutchinson House grounds is now open, and after phase two is completed, the entire site will be open to the public. The goal of the Edisto Land Trust is to use the house and site to explain how the land shaped lives on Edisto from the first land grant on the island in 1683. They will include pottery and other artifacts that were from the Hutchinson land during the restoration.

A \$171,512 grant from the Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS) funded through the Historic Preservation Fund and African American Civil Rights grant program paid for most of the work, but donations are still needed to complete The Hutchinson House Restoration Project.



PHOTO PROVIDED

**HISTORY COMES ALIVE.** Restoration crews began dismantling rotted portions of the house and took down salvageable wood that was carefully labeled.



PHOTO PROVIDED

**RESTORATION.** Phase one of the Hutchinson house restoration has been completed. Phase Two includes building a wraparound porch, decorative molding, and completing the inside.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE POST AND COURIER

**RESTORED.** The Edisto Island Open Land Trust purchased the Henry Hutchinson House, picture in this 2017 photo, to restore it for public viewing.



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**UNDER CONSTRUCTION.** Just before work began on the restoration, a canopy was installed and boards were removed and tagged with the original position and room in which the boards were found.



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# Invisible heroes are everywhere

By Vicki Brown

Invisible heroes are everywhere and can be anyone. Each day, people in Colleton walk around and go through their day not realizing that many community servants are working for their benefit all around them. These people are everyday citizens but love the community and want to help. Colleton County Court Clerk Becky Hill, County Councilman at large Gene Whetsel, and County Council candidate/activist Gar Linder met

recently and formed a panel, with the mission being to recognize people in Colleton who have made a difference in the lives of their fellow citizens. Hill, Whetsel and Linder all say they are hoping this will inspire others to devote time to helping others. The three have compiled the names of "unlikely heroes" who either participated in an act of bravery or an unusually kind act in 2020-2021, during the pandemic. Those chosen were: Brittany Brown, Zane Brown, Linda Carter, Sonja Fryar,

John Graham, James Linder, Danny Lyons, Carrie McCray, Johnny McMillan, Lee Murdaugh, Julie Pellum, Ben Stewart, Phillip Taylor, and Pam White. A few others wanted to remain "invisible." The panel is requesting that the community take part in the invisible hero program and suggest names of worthy Colletonians who deserve special recognition. Names may be submitted to [rhill@colletoncounty.org](mailto:rhill@colletoncounty.org) by October 1st. Five names will be chosen for the 2022 year at that time.

Continued on pages 22, 23, 26, 27, 28 & 30



**BRITTNEY GETHERS** - Brittney Gethers was very appreciative of the award she received and surprised. She said she just wanted to help. A gentleman came into the store where Gethers cashiered in Green Pond. But when it was time to pay for his purchase, she noticed that this customer was very disoriented. He became confused about his purchase and handling his money. He even handed her his car keys instead of cash. Alarmed, Gethers immediately took his keys from him and called fire and rescue rather than let him go out and drive into the main highway of 17A where someone could have been killed or seriously injured. Later, she discovered that man had experienced a serious health issue. Her quick thinking saved lives.



**CARRIE MCCRAY** - Believing that helping people is what everyone should do, Carrie McCray proves it every day. She works at Citgo and is busy, but always makes time to feed people dinners at Thanksgiving time. Recently she heard of a family who were in a desperate situation with their children due a lack of a working stove and refrigerator in the home. Using her own money, she purchased the appliances for the family, thereby allowing them to keep the children in the home and the family together. She not only believes in helping others, she actually lives it.





**CITY CLERK** - Becky Hill and Gar Linder showing off the plaques to be presented to worthy Colleton citizens.



**DANNY LYONS** - Danny Lyons believes in helping his community in any way he can. He started the rescue squad as a volunteer before it was a paid position. When he was approached about giving plaques to worthy Colletonians, he didn't hesitate to open his wallet and help. But he frequently does this for events in his community. For the Invisible Hero project, Becky Hill, Gar Linder, and Gene Whetzel come together to submit names, and Danny Lyons funds the plaques. As a community servant, Lyons has always ready and able to lend a hand to help people in need and to make a donation to a worthy cause. He, too, is an invisible hero.



**ZANE BROWN** - Dr. Zane Brown has served Colleton County since 1994 by helping to feed, clothe, house, and protect people of this county and those passing through who find themselves stranded or at the Medical Center. In the past he served as a chaplain for First Responders, trained chaplains for the Colleton Medical Center, and assisted law enforcement as a reserve deputy. He served as a missionary, planted a local church (Nova) for people who felt uncomfortable in traditional churches, worked with and/or helped sponsor World Changers, Mission Serve, Victory Sports Camps, Synergy Counseling, community bible studies, multi-housing ministries, prison ministries, Hispanic ministries, The Roland Marchant Christmas Project, and state park ministries. He loves people and believes that everyone should follow Jesus' example to help those in need.



**JOHN E. GRAHAM** - John Graham ran a dairy farm and row crop farm while working for SCDNR and being the cofounder of the Smoaks Volunteer Fire Department. He became chief and currently is the Captain of the Colleton Fire and Rescue in Smoaks. He has assisted those in the Smoaks area since 1967 and cared for the people in the small town. With a heart for helping and rescuing people who need assistance, Graham has made service his life's work. "Helping the community is the right thing to do," said Graham.





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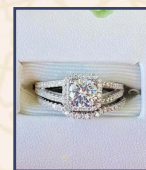
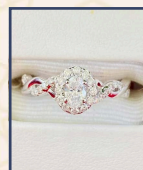
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**JOHNNY MCMILLAN** - Johnny McMillan has farming in his blood. Raised in Lodge, he works on farm land that has been in his family since 1948. "Farming is not a job for lazy people," said McMillan. "Working 10-12-hour days are the norm, and that is with help from family. There have been times that we have had to work all night long." What makes McMillan so special is that he makes time to plant a nearby garden for all of his neighbors. He invites them to come by every year and pick all the sweet corn they want. He enjoys helping his neighbors and the entire community. He is a devoted family man who loves helping people.



**JULIE PELLUM** - Running a grocery store and managing personnel is never easy, and during the pandemic, it was more than hectic and trying. But Julie Pellum was there, leading and taking charge as best she could. Every day she works with customers who need help or employees who need assistance and instructions, and Julie serves with dedication and determination to make IGA the best store in town. "I am surprised but appreciative for this...but it's not just me, it's the entire staff and management that deserve this award. We are a team and could do nothing without each other working together," said Pellum, corporate office manager for IGA.

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**LINDA CARTER** - Linda worked at the courthouse for over 25 years. She knew everyone was very dependable and helpful to every individual who came into the offices. A great public relations person for the courthouse she was very service oriented and was very helpful to anyone who came by the courthouse. She has been missed since she recently retired, but there are residents in the county who will never forget her thoughtful consideration or assistance during a difficult time.

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**PAM WHITE** - Pam White is the face of the Magistrates office in Walterboro. She loves her job and supports the community as a court administrator in the magistrate's office. Very helpful to citizens of the county, she knows her job inside and out and works with knowledgeable professionalism while maintaining a friendly attitude. She works hard to help people in a job where she is often unappreciated. She is an African American female who has risen to become well known in the community as she maintains a calm persona in a difficult job.



**PHILLIP M. TAYLOR, SR.** - As a Colleton County Councilman, Phillip Taylor makes himself available to hear the concerns of the citizens and responds by researching, understanding, and finding solutions. He supports the underserved and uses his skills and abilities to help people whether he knows them or not. He helps clean up the streets, offers community tutoring for kids, helps senior citizens and others with small home and appliance repairs. He delivered 200 turkeys at Christmas time to needy people in the community. Simply put, when he identifies with the need, he tries to find a solution and bring smiles to peoples' faces.



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**SONJA FRYAR** - Sonja works at Walgreens. As a dependable, employee, she also serves the community in various ways as well as takes care of customers at the counter and pharmacy. She loves people and is always willing to help out. The community means a lot to her. Walterboro is her hometown and she exhibits her love for her town while working at the pharmacy every day and in community activities outside of work. For her, helping her fellow Colleton residents is what life is all about.

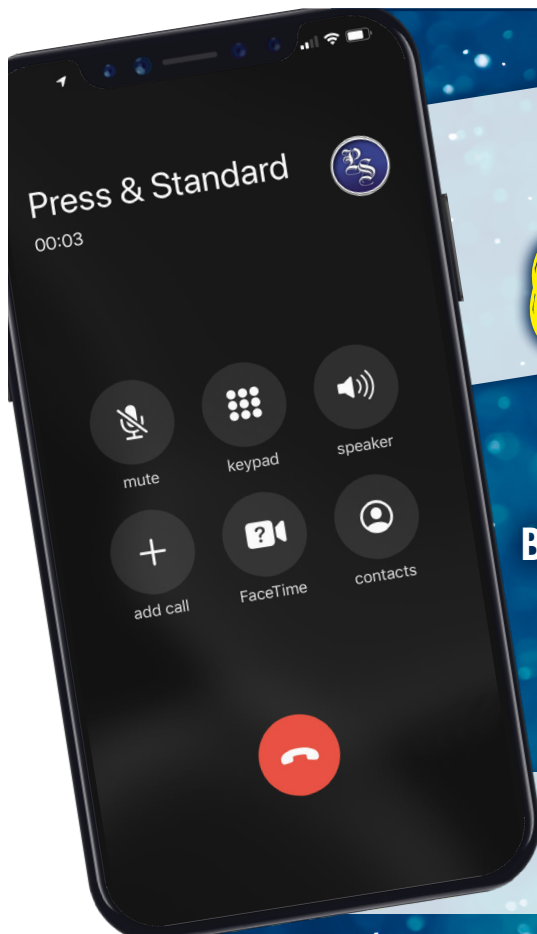
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