2020–21 University of Richmond

Burying Ground Memorialization Committee Final Report

February 1, 2022

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

BURYING GROUND MEMORIALIZATION COMMITTEE

Final Report Executive Summary

The University charged the Committee with identifying appropriate means to memorialize the enslaved people who lived and labored on this land prior to the University's arrival. We followed intersecting paths of exploration and consultation:

- Extensive original research discovered the names of dozens of enslaved people who worked on the plantations and farms that occupied the land since the late eighteenth century.
- Guided by an expert local historian, we identified more than a hundred descendants of the families most likely to have had family members interred in the burying ground.
- The Committee met with those descendants at the Burying Ground site, at local churches, and online to hear their thoughts and suggestions.
- Meetings and conversation with faculty, staff, and students within the University identified aspirations and principles to guide the memorialization. All agreed on the need to acknowledge the harm done by the institution and to approach the work realistically, authentically, and with humility.
- Collaboration with two skilled architects experienced in the memorialization of enslaved people, in Virginia and beyond, helped place our work in larger context and advance our conversations toward concrete solutions.

From those dozens of conversations, leading design principles emerged:

- *The Burying Ground site should remain sacred and lightly touched.*
- *The Burying Ground should be unique, accessible, and inviting.*
- *The Burying Ground should balance sentiments of reconciliation and resilience with the certainty of an enduring struggle.*

Based on that work, the Committee has forwarded three possible design concepts that reflect lessons learned in its work. President Kevin F. Hallock will oversee the next steps in memorialization.

Introduction

On behalf of the University of Richmond's Burying Ground Memorialization Committee, we are pleased to submit our final report.

Our charge was to engage with our community, both inside the University and beyond; to share research about our complex history; and to explore appropriate means to memorialize the enslaved people who lived and labored on this land prior to the University's arrival, and specifically to recommend an appropriate memorialization, including a physical memorial, of the enslaved burying ground located here. The following report documents our work to fulfill this charge and includes three concepts of a physical memorial that we recommend for consideration.

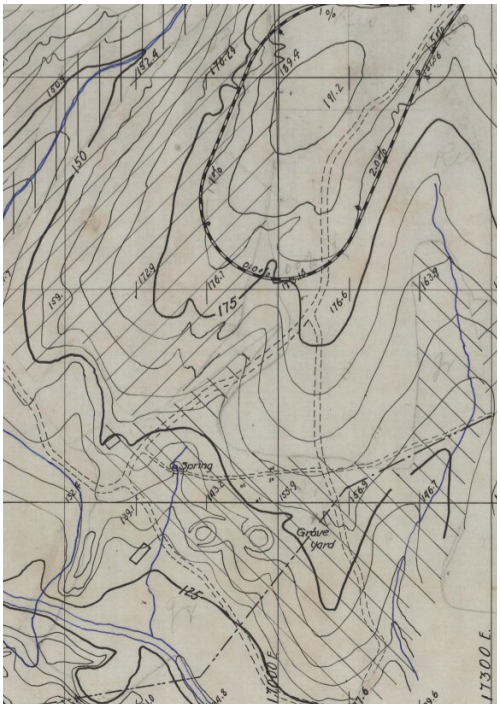
We are proud of the University of Richmond's Making Excellence Inclusive Report and Recommendations that called for this important work, the institution's ongoing commitment to telling and sharing a fuller history, and the creation and support of the Burying Ground Memorialization Committee. We are deeply appreciative of the committee members and our advisors for their energy, insights, and adherence to our guiding principles. Our work was enhanced and enabled by our design and community engagement consultants. We are especially grateful to Mrs. Brenda Dabney Nichols, author and Henrico County public historian, who offered wise counsel and introduced us to descendant communities linked to the history of enslavement on this land; President *Emeritus* Ronald A. Crutcher for his leadership in ensuring the history of enslavement on this land and information about the burying ground was brought to light; and to Shelby M. Driskill and Dr. Lauranett L. Lee for their excellent research that provided a strong foundation for our work. We are also grateful to President Kevin F. Hallock for his steadfast commitment and support.

Despite facing the challenge of having to postpone our work due to the COVID-19 outbreak shortly after we formed, the committee adapted to virtual charettes and meetings. The dozens of conversations with hundreds of participants over the last twenty-four months were enlightening, humbling, and, ultimately, inspiring. We learned a great deal from members of the descendant community, members of the University community, and one another on the committee.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as co-chairs for this committee.

Dr. Edward Ayers
Committee Co-chair

Mr. Keith McIntosh
Committee Co-chair



History & Background

Westhampton Park, Railway Company Park Tract, Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

University of Richmond Burying Ground, Courtesy of Baskervill

In January 2020, then-President Ronald A. Crutcher established the Burying Ground Memorialization Committee to engage a range of stakeholders in discussions about memorializing the enslaved burying ground located on what is now our campus and the history of this land, including its sustained intersections with enslavement.

Specifically, the committee was charged with:

1) engaging the campus and broader community in constructive dialogue about the complex history of the land on which the University of Richmond is now located;

2) engaging stakeholders in discussions about memorializing the enslaved who lived and labored on these grounds and the burying ground where we believe some of them rest; and

3) making a specific recommendation to the President and Executive Vice Presidents about appropriate memorialization of the burying ground and the land's connections to enslavement, including a physical memorial.

The establishment of the committee arose from extensive research into the history of enslavement on the land that is now the University's campus, and specifically into the question of the existence of an enslaved burying ground here, as described below.

Charles F. Gillette, Road Grading on the Richmond College campus, 1912–13, Courtesy of Virginia Baptist Historical Society

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In fall 2018, Shelby M. Driskill began a year of graduate work in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies at UR, and independent research focused on compiling known information on the enslaved burying ground and seeking additional archival materials that shed light on a 1935 account of graves at the site, the exploitation of enslaved labor by the land's owners, and the overall history of the property between 1702 and 1910, when the University of Richmond, then Richmond College, acquired two contiguous tracts for its present campus. The portion of research that depended on the analysis of historical maps and plats and the creation of geographic information system (GIS) overlays was conducted in partnership with Douglas Broome, in Information Services. Ms. Driskill and Mr. Broome began sharing their findings with members of the campus community in spring 2019 and Driskill developed the digital narrative, *Paths to the Burying Ground: Enslavement, Erasure, and Memory on the Campus of the University of Richmond.* In recognition of the importance of this research, and following on the recommendations from the Presidential Commission for University History and Identity, President Crutcher initiated the Inclusive History Project in fall 2019. At that time, the University also engaged Naeva Geophysics to undertake a ground penetrating radar (GPR) study of the burying ground site to determine what physical evidence may remain. The results were inconclusive due to the common factors of unfavorable soil and ground conditions. Ms. Driskill continued her research on the burying ground as part of the Project led by Dr. Lauranett L. Lee. *"Knowledge of This Cannot Be Hidden": A Report on the Westham Burying Ground*, found in Appendix A, a distillation of the research findings, was submitted by Dr. Lee and Ms. Driskill in January 2020.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Almost a decade before the University of Richmond, then Richmond College, acquired the property for its new campus, there was already documented awareness of a graveyard at the site. Landscaping records from 1901 to 1902 include a map on which the burying ground is indicated with the words "Grave yard" and business documentation refers to the site as the "negro burying ground."[1] The research details three periods when graves in the burying ground were desecrated by the institution first known as Richmond College, then the University of Richmond.

- In 1912, as the campus was being developed, the burying ground was marked on a preliminary sketch of a new road and correspondence reveals that "at least twenty graves" were in the way of its construction. The landscape designer in charge of the Project raised concerns about what his foreman referred to as the "old cemetery." He asked that the human remains be "removed to some cemetery" since the planned excavation "would break into graves," and further requested that the area be cleared of "all human remains" before the opening of campus, fearing student pranks. Critically, this points to the apparent visibility of graves at the time. J. Taylor Ellyson, the head of the institution's Board of Trustees and chair of the Committee on New Buildings and Grounds, replied that despite a Virginia law that forbade disruptions of graveyards, "I do not know that we will have any trouble in regard to this graveyard." A later account of laborers accidentally uncovering a "pile of bones and sculls" *[sic]* in an adjacent area may reflect the site where the human remains in the line of the road were reburied.[2]

- In 1947, as the same road was being widened, two graves were broken into during excavation. Richmond's two city newspapers reported on the event, each citing University officials who described the graves as being those of enslaved people: "the skeletons of slaves buried more than 100 years ago" and "a burying ground for slaves in the Ante Bellum period." The remains were reburied by the University "almost immediately a few hundred feet away." A large front-page photograph in the *Richmond*

[1] [Hubbard notes], Olmsted Associates, Westhampton Park, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, United States Department of the Interior and Library of Congress.

[2] Field Book No. 14, Records, W.W. LaPrade and Brothers, 1912, 21, Library of Virginia; Warren H. Manning to J. Taylor Ellyson, July 20, 1912, University Archives, University of Richmond, Virginia Baptist Historical Society (VBHS); J. Taylor Ellyson to Warren H. Manning, July 23, 1912, VBHS; H.H. Harlan, Zion Town: A Study in Human Ecology, Charlottesville: University of Virginia (1935), 14.

News Leader shows the site of the desecration and its position relative to the road and a campus building.[3]

- In the mid-1950s, during an upgrade of steam tunnels at the site, a "series of graves" was uncovered by workers. An engineer recalled that the discovery of graves "stopped the work" and "the University arranged to have the bodies buried someplace else." He also recounted having heard of the discovery of bodies during the 1912 road construction.[4]

Ms. Driskill's historical research also revealed the long history of enslavement on the land that contains the current campus and the antebellum landowners' exploitation of the men, women, and children they held. The names and family groups of hundreds of enslaved people held by a string of landowners have been located in deeds, insurance documents, newspaper items and other sources that extend from 1742 to 1865.[5] While most of these records refer to these people by their first names only, there are a very small number of full names as well as an identifiable group of four brothers. Recognizing that these individuals and families might be traced to living descendants, Ms. Driskill shared their information with Henrico County historian and genealogist, Mrs. Brenda Dabney Nichols, who began preliminary genealogical research in fall 2019.

RESPONSE TO RESEARCH FINDINGS

In January 2020, responding to the research findings, then-President Crutcher stated, "This devaluing of human life and dignity conforms with the long and painful history of dehumanizing enslaved persons. The Board of Trustees and I are deeply saddened by these discoveries. We profoundly regret the acts of desecration and the silences in our historical narrative." President Crutcher then announced the formation of the Burying Ground Memorialization Committee, with the charge as outlined above. The committee comprised faculty, staff, students, administrators, alumni representation, and Trustee representation, and several members of the University community served as advisors. The full committee roster can be found in Appendix B.

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[3] "Human Bones Unearthed at U. of R.," *Richmond News Leader*, October 31, 1947; "Skeletons Are Found on U. of R. Campus," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, November 1, 1947.

[4] Oral history interview, Ed Boynton, site engineer with the Wiley Wilson Company, Boatwright Memorial Library, interview conducted by Neil Bromilow, 1993, digital image of interview collected by Dywana Saunders.

[5] See Shelby M. Driskill and Douglas Broome, Paths to the Burying Ground: Enslavement, Erasure, and Memory at the University of Richmond, digital narrative, 2019.

Our Work

University of Richmond Burying Ground

Dr. Lauranett L. Lee

The committee began meeting in January 2020. At the start, the committee spent time reflecting on shared intentions that would guide our work together. Collectively we agreed to strive for:

- *intentionality*
- *humility*
- *honesty*
- *reverence*
- *respect*
- *sacredness*
- *honor*
- *thorough and documented work*
- *changing the narrative*
- *care*

These principles have shaped our work over the past two years.

Early on we realized we needed additional expertise to meet our charge and enact our principles. We were fortunate to work with and learn from several consultants, each with a different and critical role in the process.

Design Consultant: The University brought on Burt Pinnock, Principal, and Sonny Joy-Hogg, Project Designer, at Baskervill to provide assistance in putting together and executing a transparent, inclusive, and collaborative design process.

Community Engagement Consultants: Gwen Corley-Creighton and Patte Koval, each with extensive experience in facilitation and community engagement joined our team, providing insights into sharing the burying ground research in the wider community and on campus; bringing organizational acumen and technical support for pilgrimages, campus-community design conversations, and community meetings; and providing record keeping while consistently centering the guiding principles of the committee.

Descendant Community Consultant: Mrs. Brenda Dabney Nichols, descendant, public historian, and author of *African Americans of Henrico County*,

played a vital role in reaching out and connecting with descendant families whose ancestors were enslaved on this land and nearby land and thus who may be interred in the burying ground.

These consultants worked with the committee and with one another, demonstrating collaboration, collegiality, and a shared sense of purpose.

Although we cannot know with certainty today who is interred in the burying ground, we felt strongly that we had a responsibility to identify and engage as many descendants of those whose ancestors were enslaved on this land as possible. We have been moved and honored by the opportunity to develop relationships with those descendants. In this process, we also learned a great deal about the lives and accomplishments of these families as they resettled nearby after Emancipation, deepening our own understanding of the city, the region, and African American history.

Together with the consultants, the planning team agreed on a phased approach to our work rooted in an iterative design process: (1) educate and share the research on campus and with the community, particularly descendants; engage stakeholders in learning about, and when possible visiting, the burying ground on campus; (2) begin the design phase, including a brief overview of the history, sharing types of memorials to generate capacious thinking, and seeking input on the emotions participants want the memorial to evoke; (3) share initial design concepts based on the input from the first design conversations and receive input; and (4) share revised concepts based on feedback and provide a vision statement to guide selection of final design and implementation. A timeline of our effort is captured in Appendix C.

In our work with the descendant community specifically, we were guided by our principles and mindful of the need:

- To acknowledge the harm done by the institution and approach this work realistically, authentically, and with humility
- To prioritize the engagement of members of the descendant community, recognizing that descendants are individuals and not a monolith
- To allow time for authentic connections and the building of relationships, as well as to ensure the relationships are sustained
- To be prepared for a range of responses from descendants
- To provide creative ways for descendants to engage with the history, the site, and the design process
- To make active listening a priority in all interactions surrounding the individual and collective past

Throughout the process outlined below, the committee met regularly for updates, discussion, and to plan next steps. The minutes of the committee's meetings are provided in Appendix D.

Participants at an Exploring Design Concepts conversation, October 2021

Dr. Lauranett L. Lee and Shelby M. Driskill present at a campus-wide forum in Weinstein Hall, March 2020

Dr. Lauranett L. Lee and Shelby M. Driskill present at a campus-wide forum in Whitehurst Hall, February 2020

EDUCATION AND REFLECTION (PHASE 1)

In support of UR's educational mission and in order to create a foundation for community input on memorializing the burying ground, the committee's first priority was widely sharing the burying ground research. These efforts included:

- The release of Shelby M. Driskill's research report "Knowledge of This Cannot Be Hidden": A Report of the Westham Burying Ground at the University of Richmond in January 2020. The report, executive summary, and links to Ms. Driskill's graduate Project, Paths to the Burying Ground: Enslavement, Erasure, and Memory, were put on the UR website and shared with the University community through an email by the President.
- At the same time, the University shared the research with the Richmond region. President Crutcher's column, "Understanding History to Tell a More Inclusive Story" in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* acknowledged the history of the burying ground on campus and expressed regret on behalf of the University for the desecration of the sacred space in the 20th century. The piece also included an email address for community members, especially descendants, to share information and ask questions.
- Starting in January 2020 and continuing over the past two years, Dr. Lee, director of the Inclusive History Project team, and Ms. Driskill, author of the report on the burying ground, shared the research in classes at UR, at a School of Professional and Continuing Studies forum, at two campus-wide forums, with campus operations staff, and with alumni. With the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020 and the University's switch to remote instruction, the historians pivoted, continuing to disseminate the findings via Zoom, creating videos for the UR website and first-year student orientation, and collaborating with faculty participating in the institutional history faculty cohort, a program launched in 2019 to support faculty incorporating UR's past into their courses. Many of these courses, which cross a wide-range of disciplines, have engaged with the burying ground, creating new ways for students to interact with and understand this history. Over the past two years, Ms. Driskill and Dr. Lee have presented on (at times with tours), the burying ground to classes, two institutional history faculty cohorts, admission tour guides, a Roadmap Class, and an Osher Institute class, among others. In fall 2020 and 2021, each first-year student learned about the burying ground — and in 2021 — visited — as part of new student orientation.

Descendants gather at the Burying Ground

Shelby M. Driskill

- With input from the descendant community consultant and descendants who had visited the burying ground, and with assistance from the design consultants, the University erected temporary signage (above) and a protective perimeter at the burying ground. Facilities team members took great care in devising a solution to place the signs on top of a granite slab to avoid disturbing the ground. The temporary signs provided a brief overview of the history with a QR code to the research report while banners around the site helped mark the space and draw in visitors to learn more.
- Pilgrimages to the Burying Ground: While the committee had originally planned to meet in April 2020 with descendants carefully identified by Mrs. Nichols' genealogical work, the limitations on gatherings due to COVID-19 required us to pivot and ultimately sparked innovation. After careful thought, Mrs. Nichols, with support from the community engagement consultants, planned and successfully implemented five pilgrimages to the burying ground. Mrs. Nichols led descendant pilgrims on a drive from Three Chopt Road to the burying ground, providing context ahead of time, onsite remarks and reflection time, the distribution of the research reports, and additional genealogical information on each family that she had carefully researched. The community engagement team distributed and received feedback forms that included reflection questions, space for comments, and a place to express interest in participating in the process in the future, in person or via Zoom. Several members of the committee attended each pilgrimage to offer greetings, answer questions, and demonstrate support. Over the course of these pilgrimages, 78 individuals were introduced to the history of the burying ground and the possibility that their enslaved ancestors may be buried at the site.

The pilgrimages evoked a wide range of responses, from deep reverence to sadness to anger, and in response the committee and consultants offered reflection sessions on Zoom for descendants to discuss their experiences interacting with the research and the burying ground site. These sessions yielded important insights for the committee and design consultants and created new connections between descendants from different families.

Mrs. Nichols' report to the committee documenting her extensive work to engage members of the descendant community are provided in Appendix E.

DESIGN CONVERSATIONS (PHASE 2A)

The next phase in the process built on the educational work to engage stakeholders in sharing their perspectives on the optimal ways to memorialize the space. During fall 2020, the design consultants held three charettes — via Zoom due COVID-19 — to share a wide-range of memorials and elicit affective ideas for the space (Appendix F). Over 160 attended and the design consultants took this input, along with the information collected from descendants at the pilgrimages, to begin a first round of designs.

Along with these Zoom sessions, an in-person design conversation was held outside for descendants in late August at Pilgrim Journey Baptist Church as well as a Zoom session in September. This effort was made possible due to the relationships Mrs. Nichols has built and the behind-the-scenes planning work of the community engagement consultants. After sharing a brief history of the burying ground, the design consultants took the group through the design charette while the committee members in attendance listened.

DESIGN CONVERSATIONS (PHASE 2B)

In fall 2021, after processing the input from phase 2a, the committee held three charettes for stakeholder feedback. After a brief recap of the process, the design consultants led participants through a design conversation, presenting the content from phase 2a that inspired each concept. Together, campus and community members responded to six design concepts, providing input on each one and completing a survey with preferences and comments (Appendix F). One hundred eighty-eight people participated in this phase.

DESIGN CONVERSATIONS (PHASE 3)

After reflecting on the feedback received in phase 2, the designers presented a vision statement for the site and three revised design concepts during three sessions in late fall. Along with these sessions, a separate conversation for descendants was hosted at Pilgrim Journey Baptist Church as part of a descendant "Meet and Greet" planned by Mrs. Nichols. This well-attended event catalyzed relationship building across families and of-the-moment feedback into the designs, which shaped the final variations submitted to the Burying Ground Memorialization Committee in December 2021.

Variation 2, Courtesy of Baskervill

VISION STATEMENT

Baskervill's synthesis of the input received in the design conversations resulted in the following vision statement for the memorial. The committee strongly endorses this statement and encourages the University to adhere to these principles in the final design.

The initial design concepts for the Burying Ground yielded an active response from the immediate community. These responses correlate across the varying design proposals regarding site intervention strategies, precedence, physical appearance, and feasibility. Additionally, members of the community voiced evocations and desires as to what the Burying Ground should represent. These general comments, interests and disinterests are listed below.

The Burying Ground site should remain sacred and lightly touched. Any interventions on the site should be open and transparent, void of "hiding" corners, and at a human scale. Any illumination of the Burying Ground needs to be conscious of light pollution and relevant to the activity on campus in the evening. The site offers opportunities to allow the memorial to change with the seasons; therefore, the proposed intervention should accommodate this.

Variation 3, Courtesy of Baskervill

The proposed memorial should empathize with the existing University of Richmond campus but not necessarily the architectural precedence. It should avoid referential form-making and overtly modern architecture. Object-like proposals or interventions should be disconnected from precedents that reference westernism, monuments and unrelated historical constructs. From a form-making perspective, the memorial should feel open and less like an enclosed museum. Currently, the Westhampton Lake is the focal water feature in the immediate area; interventions of water or reflecting pools on site should be cognizant of this.

The Burying Ground should be unique, accessible, and inviting in stature. The visibility of names (those buried, descendants) is a strong concept to be explored further. If the idea of disparate elements spread throughout the campus fabric is to be further explored, the origin point should be the Burying Ground. A bench or place of rest was suggested as a gesture of reflection within the immediate site. The proposed design should avoid cold textures and use warm, inviting tones and materials. Western and Central African cultural traditions and symbology should be studied for potential integration into the proposal.

Excessive lighting, technology, and infrastructure within the immediate Burying Ground vicinity should be avoided. Artificial lighting should be carefully curated and designed in a way to discourage vandalism. Sunlight is the preferred source of light. Any technology proposed for the memorial

Variation 1, Courtesy of Baskervill

should be amenable to grow with the memorial as new information is unearthed. The memorial intervention should have a lighter touch while engaging the hillside, meaning minimal footings, drainage, and utility work on site.

The Burying Ground should balance sentiments of reconciliation and resilience with the certainty of an enduring struggle. The experience of the memorial should be active and engaging. The narrative should tell a non-linear story just as fight for injustice and inequality is not a straight line. At its core, the Burying Ground should tell the story of those that are buried there.

Findings & Recommendations

Consultant Burt Pinnock, principal at Baskervill, speaking to participants at an Exploring Design Concepts conversation, November 2021

MEMORIAL DESIGN

Based on this extensive input and iterative process, and consultation with the committee, Baskervill's final report offers three final design concepts. The full report, including many of the verbatim comments offered, is attached as Appendix F.

These designs respond to the desire of the descendant community and the University community to preserve and protect the burying ground site; to convey respect and reverence; to minimize as much as possible disturbance of the land in this sacred space; to provide a space of tranquility and reflection, as well as honor; to identify, where possible, and incorporate the names of the families whose ancestors were enslaved on this land and might be buried here and to allow for the addition of other names as they are identified; to ensure the space is accessible and welcoming to descendants and a prominent presence within the University community; and to select a design that is enduring in its symbolism, consistent with the topography (and thus the land that those buried here inhabited), and evocative of the history and heritage of those interred there.

The committee believes that these three designs capture this ethos and is pleased to recommend them for consideration by the University administration.

Additional Site Considerations

With respect to the site itself, all three design concepts seek to preserve the hillside and the trees, in keeping with what we heard from stakeholders. We agree that the historical topography should be preserved as much as possible. We also want to emphasize the strong view — expressed by the descendant community and the University community — that in constructing the memorial, the University should minimize to the degree possible the further disturbance of the land, as the burying ground has already been desecrated on multiple occasions in the early 20th century.

Thus, we favor a design that: a) can be built on top of the present ground surface as much as possible, rather than excavating for foundations—or that minimizes the depth where excavation must occur; and b) that minimizes the square footage that will be disturbed.

We were fortunate to have as an advisor to the committee Dr. Elizabeth Baughan, associate professor of Classics and Archaeology. She provided a set of specific further recommendations concerning site integrity and minimizing disturbance to the burials we believe are likely to be present. Those are provided in Appendix G, and we ask that they be carefully considered as plans for memorial design and construction progress. Baskervill has likewise highlighted in its recommendations the need to minimize land disturbance.

Finally, once the memorial is in place (and perhaps even during construction), we recommend adequate wayfinding signage on campus and easy access to the site and nearby parking.

As the University considers these recommendations and next steps, all members of the committee will be available for consultation and to respond to any questions throughout this process. It may also be helpful for continuity for some subset of the committee to serve in an advisory capacity through Project completion, with respect to design, descendant community communication, and planning of events to mark key milestones, including the dedication of the memorial.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

After reflecting on the process and suggestions made by committee members and consultants, the Burying Ground Memorialization Committee also wishes to convey the following additional recommendations:

Education and Dissemination of the Research

As the research makes clear, understanding the history of this land and its intersections with enslavement, including the treatment of the burying ground, and the knowledge about post-Emancipation lives and the descendants of those enslaved on this land, provides important insights into the history of our University, our region, the state, and even the nation. We encourage faculty, staff, and students to continue to pursue ways in which the history of the land and the burying ground specifically can be integrated into the academic

Brenda Dabney Nichols, 2021, Photograph by Jamie Betts

mission, as communicating and expanding this knowledge is one of the most important living memorials to the enslaved an academic community can create. Current examples of this include the institutional history faculty cohort, a Roadmap course, and a visit to the site during new student orientation. We also encourage the University to reach out to museum partners, including the Black History Museum and Cultural Center, the Virginia Museum of History and Culture, Library of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Virginia Union University to explore opportunities for sharing the research with the broader public and connecting the history and future memorial to historical sites and education in the region. We also recommend that the University consider regular participation in the Universities Studying Slavery consortium as a way to gain and share knowledge about this work.

To preserve the record of the work completed to date, we ask that Ms. Driskill's excellent research report on the burying ground be added to the collection of the University Library, if that has not already occurred, and that this report in its entirety also be deposited in the appropriate collection (whether that is the University Library's holdings, Special Collections, or University archives) and made readily accessible to anyone interested in this work.

The Descendant Community

The committee is deeply grateful to Mrs. Nichols and the members of the descendant community for their collaboration, candor, and trust. We believe strongly that the University must maintain dialogue with the descendant community in the future, and we hope that more members of the descendant community will continue to be identified and engaged. Specifically, the committee recommends:

- Continued connection, relationship building, and regular communication with descendants, including updates about each step of the memorialization process and ensuring substantive descendant input in the planning for

the memorial dedication ceremony and robust participation in that event; if appropriate, we recommend that the University consider inviting each known descendant family to place an object or message within the wall of the memorial as it is constructed.
- Support for efforts to identify additional descendants; continued outreach by the University to any new descendants identified in the future to share the research and information about the site and memorial.
- An annual program for members of the descendant community at the burying ground site (if so desired by the descendants).
- Exploration by the University of appropriate further means to address the University's desecration of the burying ground.
- Consideration of providing access to ancestry.com or other resources to support descendants in learning more about their family histories.
- Institutional commitment to ongoing descendant community access and maintenance of the burying ground as a sacred space.
- If the University considers a specific name for the burying ground going forward, we urge that descendants be consulted in that process and their views be given great weight.

It may be appropriate to identify a specific office or offices within the University to serve as the primary point of contact for the descendant community to advance the University's stewardship of that important relationship, as well as to play a role in planning the memorial dedication event.

Conclusion

The committee is honored to have been entrusted with this responsibility, and we look forward to the realization of this important and meaningful memorial.