

Rosedale News

Margarette Joyner, Editor



Historic Rosedale

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African American Legacy Project

The African American Legacy Project is gearing up for its annual Black History Month Celebration and we are so excited to share it with you! There will be exhibits throughout the buildings, a “gathering” honoring the enslaved, the preached word, singing, dancing, actor interpretation, refreshments and more. The specifics of the event will be forthcoming and we are looking forward to you joining us. If you are interested in getting involved with AAL, please contact Margarette Joyner, Program Coordinator at margarette.joyner@historicrosedale.org.

It is the mission of Historic Rosedale to interpret three important themes; the ancestral families who owned the house and surrounding property, the enslaved and freed African Americans who worked and lived on the land through many generations, and the unique architectural features, decorative arts, and natural landscapes that are showcased in the 1815 historic house and its nine acres of gardens and grounds.

What's Next?

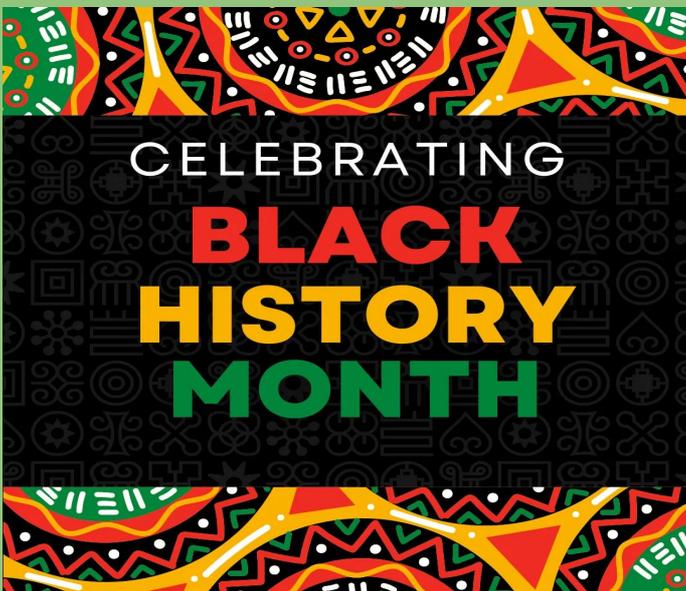


“Christmastide of the Enslaved”
December 1, 2024 - January 3, 2025

Candlelight Christmas Tour
December 22, 2024
6:00 p.m. (door open at 5:00)

“Tidbit”

The precursor to Black History Month was created in 1926 in the United States, when historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH) announced the second week of February to be “Negro History Week.” This week was chosen because it coincided with the birthday of Abraham Lincoln on February 12 and that of Frederick Douglass on February 14, both of which Black communities had celebrated since the late 19th century.



Barbara Jackson, Chairman
African American Legacy Project
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“Christmastide of the Enslaved”

by Margarette Joyner

Historic Rosedale’s newest Exhibit “Christmastide of the Enslaved” enlightens visitors to the realities of those enslaved individuals working on plantations during the holidays. Throughout their three-day Christmas respite, which was standard in the South, many enslaved people engaged in festivities that included music, dancing, communal meals, and the receipt of gifts. Their holiday jubilation masked a general longing for freedom and prosperity that festered during the rest of their days. They might have appeared happy at Christmas, especially in the presence of those who kept them in bondage, but they could hardly forget the daily threats of family separation that abridged their liberty, especially during this time of year when their owner’s debt’s were due. Before and after the widespread Christianization of African captives in the American South, the enslaved Christmas festivities celebrated survival and fellowship in the face of great adversity. In other words, even in the midst of oppression and pain, they created moments joy and found love in spite of their circumstances.

Candlelight Tour

Candlelight makes everything more magical! Experience Historic Rosedale by candlelight as it was seen by residents and visitors in the past. Come visit our 1815 historic home and gardens, lit by a combination of candlelight and minimal electric lighting decorated in a variety of Christmases past: a Victorian Christmas dinner in the Great Hall, a 1940’s wartime Christmas in the family parlor, the main bedroom decked in period mourning commemorating residents who passed at the holidays and our cellar kitchen sharing traditions of the enslaved African-American community at Rosedale. This festive guided tour will also feature a holiday performance of strolling characters courtesy of Queen City Groove www.queencitygroove.com and light holiday treats at our pavilion. Gates open at 5:00 and the house tour begins promptly at 6.

From the Garden

by Sandy Maguran



We are pleased to announce the achievement of ArbNet Level II accreditation for the Dr. Larry Mellichamp Memorial Arboretum at Historic Rosedale. Our nine-acre arboretum has a collection of historic trees such as the chestnut oak and antique roses including the Cecile Brunner. The official dedication will be in April of 2025. Come visit year round to study evergreen and deciduous trees and woody shrubs.

Hi Honey!

By Ra-an Wiley



Here at Rosedale, the bees have been working feverishly to produce sweet, golden, delicious, local honey. These pint-size jars for sale in our gift shop are flying off the shelves! Beyond just tasting great, honey is a pure source of plant-based protein. It contains minerals, enzymes, and B vitamins, which impart immune-boosting properties. Stop in and pick up a jar before they are all gone!

A Garden Welcome from The Weed Lady

by Ronna Abbott

Greetings from the Weed Lady!

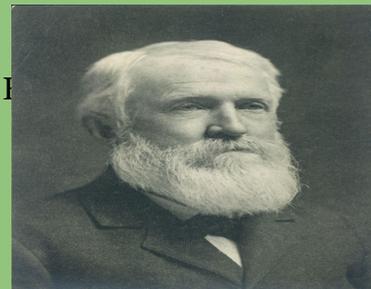
The leaves are falling and we are spreading them around our large gardens! We gather the leaves in front of our admin building and run the lawn mower over them. *(You can do this on your own driveway)*

Rain water or your hose will break down the leaf litter over the winter and help keep the soil moist. Think of it as free mulch!

About the Inhabitants

by Cheralyn Lambeth

Robert Baxter Caldwell (1838-1919) was the youngest son of Dr. David Thomas Caldwell and his wife Harriet Davidson Caldwell. He grew up at Rosedale and returned to the home after the Civil War. His life was saved by an enslaved man named Jefferson Caldwell, who smuggled him home in a coffin from the prison in South Carolina where he was awaiting execution following his arrest for fighting a Union soldier. Baxter took ownership of Rosedale a few years after his return and lived there with his sister Mary Alice Rachel Caldwell and later his nephew and heir Baxter Craighead Davidson. Later in life, Baxter suffered a stroke that paralyzed him and confined him to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. He was cared for until his death by Jefferson who had returned to Rosedale as a hired farm manager.



Descendant Spotlight

by Margarete Joyner



We are so pleased to introduce you to Ms. Betty Jane Caldwell (BJ) who is the third child of Spurgeon and Shirley Johnson Caldwell and a descendant of Lawrence Caldwell. Reared during segregation in Pottstown of Huntersville, NC, she attended Huntersville Rosenwald School #2 for black children when President Eisenhower was elected President. Recently, she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the House of Africa's Juneteenth celebration.

"Without roots everything dies"

Eleanor Shearer, River Sing Me Home

Laborers

by Martin Foil

A word from our Blacksmith

Fall is a great time to visit the blacksmith shop at Historic Rosedale! There's nothing quite like the ring of the hammer on the anvil, the smell of coal smoke in the autumn air and the spectacle of watching an ancient craft being practiced by modern smiths! Our resident blacksmiths – Jason, John and Martin can be found in the blacksmith shop on the second and fourth Saturdays and the second Thursday of each month. Stop by and learn about traditional 19th century blacksmithing and the impact the enslaved smiths had on the Charlotte community. Interested guests can also try their hand at operating the forge bellows! Remember to check out the Rosedale Gift Shop – we have many hand forged items available for sale!



The Gift Shop

by Laura Olls

Rosedale's gift shop has some new items for the winter season! In our Crafters Corner, the artisans have beautifully hand made pieces, perfect for holiday gifts. Margarett Joyner has handmade dolls, Cher Lambeth has some new bee-shaped finger puppets and we are excited to announce that her Clothespin Doll, *Sarah* ranked third at the State Fair! We also have historical toys, pressed soap, books, hooks from our Blacksmith, and mugs that are perfect for coffee or cocoa! I invite you to come check them out on your next visit!

Join the Friends of Historic Rosedale

We've all heard it - *Membership has its benefits*. This holds true at Historic Rosedale. Members receive a host of benefits: Free grounds admission, free guided house tours, discounts at the gift shop, on event tickets, and in some cases discounts on site rental fees. Most importantly, membership fees help fund the often-overlooked general operating expenses of the Foundation. Preservation and special programming can be funded by grants and large individual donors, but it is the everyday expenses of running the site and the Foundation that suffer most from a lack of financial security. This is especially true for private foundations which receive no government funding. Is becoming a member important? **YES!** Become our friend and join today!



Donations! *Every little bit helps!*

Volunteers! *If you have an hour or two, we'll take it!*

**Batting/Multi Purpose Foam
Drums**

Brown Cardboard

Potting soil

Mulch

Poetry Corner

**'Rhyme for Child Viewing a Naked
Venus in a Painting of "The Judgement
of Paris"'**

by Robert Browning, 1872

He gazed and gazed and gazed and gazed
Amazed, amazed, amazed, amazed

Did you know?

When Washington died, he was a lieutenant general. But this three-star rank does not seem commensurate with what he accomplished. After all, Washington did more than defeat the British in battle. Along the way he established the framework for how American soldiers should organize themselves, how they should behave, and how they should relate to civilian leaders. Almost every big decision he made set a precedent. He was the father of the U.S. military as well as the U.S. itself.

So, a law was passed to make Washington the highest ranking U.S. officer of all time: General of the Armies of the United States. Nobody will ever outrank him.

A Word From The Board

by Janet Levy

Fall has been beautiful at Historic Rosedale! Happily, the site escaped any major damage from storms Debby and Helene. Bill Bridgeman from Gaston County is continuing restoration work on the porches and window sills of the main house which show significant wood rot. We have hosted several school groups in the past few months and were pleased to have our blacksmiths on site. Most significantly, Rosedale is actively searching for a new Executive Director and our hope is to have that position filled by spring or summer of 2025. This hiring is possible due to gifts from our board members, but mostly because of the generosity of Mrs. Agnes Weisiger, longtime board member and supporter of Rosedale. We are excited and looking forward to new leadership at Rosedale. In the meantime, we are preparing the house for the Holiday season!