

Rosedale News

Margarette Joyner, Editor



African American Legacy Project

The African American Legacy Project is excited to announce the upcoming Annual Juneteenth Celebration! The celebration will feature the Drums 4 Life Drum Circle, as well as a host of activities throughout the grounds such as rain stick and quilt making for children, blacksmith demonstrations, and a quilt exhibit by African American crafters in the cellar.

The Historic Rosedale Juneteenth Celebration is part of the museum's African American Legacy Project which aims to promote the truthful, compassionate, and equitable presentation of those African Americans, both enslaved and freed, who lived and worked at the site. The event on June 21st both strives to fulfill this mission and to offer a meaningful program to commemorate this history. Though the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, not everyone in Confederate territories was immediately freed. On June 19, 1865, in Galveston Bay, Texas, an army of about 2,000 Union troops proclaimed the message of the executive decree that stated that the more than 250,000 still enslaved people in the state were free. This day came to be known as Juneteenth." All are welcome to participate in the event which is *free of charge*. Tours of the 1815 building (\$15 fee) will also be available.

Barbara Jackson, Chairman
African American Legacy Project
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Historic Rosedale

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<http://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?



"Juneteenth"

June 21st
10:00 - 2:30

"Archaeological Exhibit"
The month of July & August

Tidbit

Nicknamed "The Hornet's Nest"

Why is the Hornet so prevalent in our city?

It's actually a historical reference. In 1780, General Cornwallis led his troops into Charlotte, but due to the strong fight the locals put up, they didn't stay long.

Thus, Cornwallis dubbed Charlotte a "Hornet's Nest of Rebellion."



Rosedale: Can You Dig It! The Archaeology of Historic Rosedale

by Cheralyn Lambeth

With over 200 years of history, the grounds at Historic Rosedale have absorbed numerous relics and reminders of its past inhabitants. Pottery, horseshoes, broken china, and even the coal and charcoal of past fires have all been found scattered throughout the site's 9 acres. Join us in July for our newest exhibit "Rosedale: Can You Dig It!," featuring the fascinating artifacts discovered on the grounds that help tell the stories of Rosedale's past. This exhibit runs through the end of August and is included with regular house tours. For more information, and to purchase tickets, please visit our website at historicrosedale.org.

From the Executive Director *Deanna Witte-Walker*

Greetings!

While I am brand new to Historic Rosedale and fairly new to Charlotte, I feel very much at home here. I appreciate the warm welcome that I have received from the staff, Board members and volunteers.

A little about me: I am originally from Long Island where my husband and I raised two sons. While we loved our time there, we were ready for a new adventure and our older son turned us on to Charlotte. I've been working in the museum field for sixteen years, beginning with part-time work. I eventually spent the last six years as an Executive Director. During that time, I also earned an MA in Museum Studies from the City University of New York.

I will be spending the next few months getting acquainted. While I need to understand how things operate, I also aim to learn the culture of our organization. People are at the heart of Historic Rosedale and the more I both observe and chat with others, the more insight I hope to gain. To this point, I invite you to call, email or set up a time to stop by so we can meet. I look forward to the conversations to come in the days and months ahead.

From the Garden

by Sandy Maguran



The Dr. Larry Mellichamp Arboretum at Historic Rosedale officially opened at a dedication ceremony highlighted by keynote speaker, Paula Gross.

The event was attended by many gardening enthusiasts including Jeff Gilman, current Director of the University of North Carolina Charlotte's Botanic Garden.

For more information, please contact Sandy Maguran, Gardener, at 704-335-0325.

Ronna Panek Abbott

With solemn hearts, we announce the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Ronna Abbott, whose presence will be deeply missed. She departed this realm of life on April 11, 2025 at the age of 82.

In the quiet moments of reflection, amidst the gentle rustle of leaves and the whispered song of the stars, we shall carry Ronna's memory with us, a guiding light illuminating the path ahead. May Ronna's journey be filled with peace and serenity, as she finds rest in the embrace of eternity.

A Garden Welcome from The Weed Lady
by Ronna Abbott

Until we meet again!

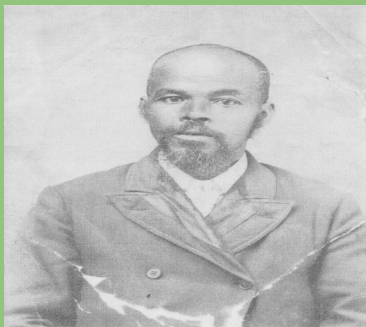
About the Inhabitants

by Cheralyn Lambeth

Harriet Davidson Caldwell (1806-1845) was the youngest daughter of Sarah Frew Davidson and NC State Senator William Davidson. As such, she was the niece of Rosedale's builder, Archibald Frew. In 1833, Harriet and her husband, Dr. David Caldwell, bought Rosedale with money left to her from her mother, and there had a total of eight children, four boys and four girls. Under the Caldwells, Rosedale became an important site to the growing Charlotte/Mecklenburg area, but in 1845, tragedy struck as an epidemic of a disease called erysipelas gripped the region. It wiped out a quarter of the population. Harriet and three of the children succumbed to the illness. Wanting to make certain her girls especially were well cared for in the event of her death, Harriet sent for Cherry, an enslaved woman who had taken care of her as a young girl in her childhood home, The Grove Plantation. Having to leave her own family, Cherry came and cared for the newly motherless children, once again underscoring her role in Rosedale's legacy.

Descendant Spotlight

by Margarete Joyner



George Caldwell was born enslaved at Rosedale. The grandson of Nat and Agnes Caldwell, George was a skilled blacksmith like his grandfather. George was a young boy at the time of Emancipation. As a free adult, he was a successful entrepreneur in Charlotte, owning one blacksmith shop in Uptown, and another in the affluent Myers Park area. George married twice and had several children: Vernie Caldwell Henderson, Sarah Caldwell Knox, Ada Caldwell Johnson Klutz, Agnes Caldwell Gray, and Jeff Caldwell. Many descendants of George Caldwell actively participate in the African American Legacy Program at Historic Rosedale.

(Photo: Historic Rosedale Foundation)

Laborers

by Martin Foil

A word from our Blacksmith

Summer is here and things are heating up – literally – at the Historic Rosedale blacksmith shop! Our resident blacksmiths – Jason, John M., John W. and Martin are on hand throughout each month to teach inquisitive guests about the enslaved smiths at Rosedale and demonstrate 19th century blacksmithing at the same time. Guests can also test their mettle by operating the forge bellows! See our website, www.historicrosedale.org for up to date schedules. Remember to check out the Rosedale Gift Shop where we have many hand forged items available for sale!



Jason Blanchett

The Gift Shop

We are happy to announce that we have been making some changes in the gift shop! With new displays and rearrangements, come see it for yourself! We are grateful to all the artisans who have graced our shop with their handmade items.



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!

[Membership - Historic Rosedale](#)



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

"This is My Letter to the World"
by Emily Dickinson, 1862

*This is my letter to the world
that never wrote to me
The simple news that nature told
with tender Majesty
Her message is committed
to hands I cannot see
For love of Her sweet countrymen
Judge tenderly of me.*

Did you know?

Thomas Jefferson was interested in the natural world, studying fossils and making observations about plants and animals.

A Word From The Board

by Janet Levy

The past few months have been very busy at Rosedale! The Board and I are grateful to all those who contributed financially and to those who invested personal time and energy to help Rosedale reach its goals. I am personally grateful to several Board members who volunteer regularly on-site in the area of maintenance, gardening, collections and many other ways. We are also grateful to our volunteers, including Ms. Jane Hicks, Ms. Janet Dyer and Mr. Martin Foil, who strengthen our programming through tours, work in collections and in the smithy.

With the advent of warmer weather, we will continue with repairs and renovations to the exterior of the house, with the excellent carpentry work of Mr. Bill Bridgeman of Gaston County. As for staffing, Eric Hairston started as a volunteer docent and is now a part-time staff member. We were sad to lose Laura Olls when she decided to focus on other opportunities. She will be hard to replace. Also, we hired a new Executive Director, Mrs. Deanna Witte-Walker. Rosedale has not had an Executive Director since 2022, and we are thrilled to have filled this position. We invite our members and friends to come out to Rosedale and bring new people with you. The financial support by members like you is key to fiscal stability.