

Rosedale News

Margarette Joyner, Editor



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.

African American Legacy Project

By Barbara Jackson



I attended an inspiring program of dedication at Davidson College in remembrance of the enslaved, their descendants, and other African Americans who labored there since its inception in 1837.



Rosedale's acknowledgment of remembrance is a garden located beyond the pavilion.

Exhibits are also available in our dedicated space in the main house throughout the year highlighting the accomplishments of African Americans in music, textile, art, and inventions despite the circumstances in which they lived. These exhibits are included in our house tours. Tours of the of the 1815 building (\$15 fee) are available from Wednesday through Saturday at 11:30 and 1:00. For interest in our programs please feel free to contact Ms. Joyner by email at: margarette.joyner@historicrosedale.org.

*Barbara Jackson, Chairman
African American Legacy Project
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What's Next?



**"Candlelight Garden Stroll and
House Tour"
December 7th
Time - 5:00**

One Night Only Special Event!

**"Christmastide of the Enslaved
Exhibit"
December**

This exhibit enlightens visitors to the realities of those enslaved individuals working on plantations during the holidays. It also highlights the accomplishments of several enslaved individuals who thrived in spite of their circumstances.

Lastly, there will be a display featuring beautifully decorated brooms used during Jumping the Broom ceremonies.

**Black History Month Celebration
February 14th**

Activities throughout the month!

Candlelight Christmas Garden Stroll and House Tour

Come visit our 1815 historic home and gardens, lit by a combination of candlelight and minimal electric lighting, and 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 African-American community at Rosedale. This festive guided tour of our historic home will also feature a holiday performance of strolling characters courtesy of Queen City Groove (<https://www.queencitygroove.com>) and light holiday treats--coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and sweets--at our pavilion. Gates open at 5:00 to allow for a leisurely stroll through our gardens and grounds, and the house tour begins promptly at 6:00.

Christmastide of the Enslaved

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 during this time of year when their owners debts 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 of joy and found love in spite of their circumstances.

***For special holiday hours, please
see our website.***

Tidbit

The Charlotte Metropolitan Area is the largest in the U.S. without a zoo. The North Carolina Zoo, near Asheboro, however is home to one of America's largest chimpanzee troops!

From the Garden *by Tina Wright*

Leaves

The fall season is well named. The word "fall" dates back into the Middle Ages when it referred to literal or metaphorical falling, but by the mid 17th century "fall" began to be used as an alternative for the word "autumn" as a shortened version of "fall of the leaf". At Rosedale the majestic trees have littered the ground with their colorful leaves creating a major task for the season. But, where we can, we *Leave the Leaves*. Leaves provide a beautiful patchwork groundcover that smothers the weeds and they are rich in nutrients that will sustain the trees, shrubs, and plants as they awaken in the spring.

From the Executive Director *Deanna Witte-Walker*

Greetings from Rosedale where we are preparing for our holiday events. We hope to see you on December 7th at the Candlelight Christmas Garden Stroll and House Tour. It promises to be friendly and festive, especially with the addition of Santa in the Smithy. While the house will be closed for tours in January, except for the 17th, 24th, 31st, we will be busy planning for the year ahead. Events aren't the only activities underway. There has also been much work done to keep the house in tip-top shape. Preservation work never ends, and so we must make sure that things like termites, water rot, etc. are addressed.

In my first six months here at Historic Rosedale, I have had the pleasure of getting to know the staff, the board, our volunteers, and many new colleagues in the museum/history/garden network. While there is no shortage of work, I can confidently say that I am really enjoying it. And, I still have much more to explore and learn. How lucky am I to be supported by such a great team!

I look forward to the next 6 months and to the opportunity to meet more of our members. Historic Rosedale is a special place for sure, but it's the people who bring it to life and ensure its future. Please come say hi. Wishing you and yours a beautiful holiday season and all the best for the year ahead. Yours truly!

About the Inhabitants

by Cheralyn Lambeth

Mary Louise Davidson (1916-1996) and her sister **Alice Caldwell Davidson (Abel) (1926-2008)** were born and grew up at Rosedale. They loved the home and its place in Charlotte. By the 1980s however they were struggling to maintain the home and property. Wanting to preserve their historic home, they were instrumental in arranging the sale of the property in 1985 to the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, saving it from developers. The Colonial Dames of America (of which the Davidson sisters were members) had a major hand in raising the funds to purchase and restore the home. It was also Mary Louise and Alice who shared their family stories in hours of interviews, capturing the family's (and Rosedale's) rich history before it was lost.



Descendant Spotlight

by Margarette Joyner



Carlton Brown is a 4th-generation descendant of Nat and Agnes, enslaved at Rosedale. His father was Allen Brown and his paternal grandfather was Lafayette Brown, born in 1862. Lafayette's parents were Isaac Brown and Jane Carr.

Carlton has had a long-term focus for much of his career on developing strategies for creating sustainable restorative human settlement which heal the physical and human fabric of communities. For more details on Carlton's story, please visit the AAL descendants section of our website:

[Homepage - Historic Rosedale](#)

Laborers

by Martin Foil

A word from our Blacksmith

It may be getting cold outside, but it's always warm inside the blacksmith shop! Our resident blacksmiths – Gene, 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! Make sure to come see one of Santa's Helpers on December 7th, get your picture taken and see our amazing Anvil Tree! See our website (www.historicrosedale.org) for up to date schedules. Remember to check out the Rosedale Gift Shop – we have many hand forged items available for sale!



The Gift Shop

By Hunter Hamilton

Celebrate the season with a visit to Historic Rosedale's Gift Shop! We're excited to share a brand-new collection of hats, scarves, and unique gifts perfect for friends, family, and everyone on your holiday list. Whether you're looking for something cozy, locally made, or one-of-a-kind, our carefully curated selection offers something special for every shopper. Make Historic Rosedale part of your holiday tradition and discover gifts that bring warmth, charm, and a touch of history to your celebrations.



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!*

Poetry Corner

“Music When Soft Voices Die”

Percy Shelley, 1821

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so they thoughts, when thou art
gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Did you know?

Thomas Jefferson was a trained lawyer, practicing in Virginia before becoming involved in politics.

A Word From The Board

by Janet Levy

Historic Rosedale has been busy over the last few months. We've had numerous events, many visitors and are thrilled to be now open every Saturday.

Planning continues on completion of the African American Legacy Memorial site, a garden that sits in a quiet spot behind the pavilion. Also, there has been extensive maintenance on the house, especially on the rear porches. Mr. Bill Bridgeman of Gaston County, with help from board VP Tom Spada, has been working hard to replace and repair rotted supports and other wood features. The smaller porch, which served the exit from the main bedroom has been completely removed; it will be replaced with a staircase that resembles the ones on the west side of the house. The main rear porch will be restored to its familiar appearance. The work on the porches is supported by a generous grant from the Mecklenburg Colonial Dames of America. We have also received a grant from the Van Every Family Foundation to paint the entire house. We are very grateful to them and all supporters of Historic Rosedale.

I send my best wishes to everyone for a joyous holiday season and a healthy, peaceful New Year. Thank you for all that you do for Historic Rosedale.