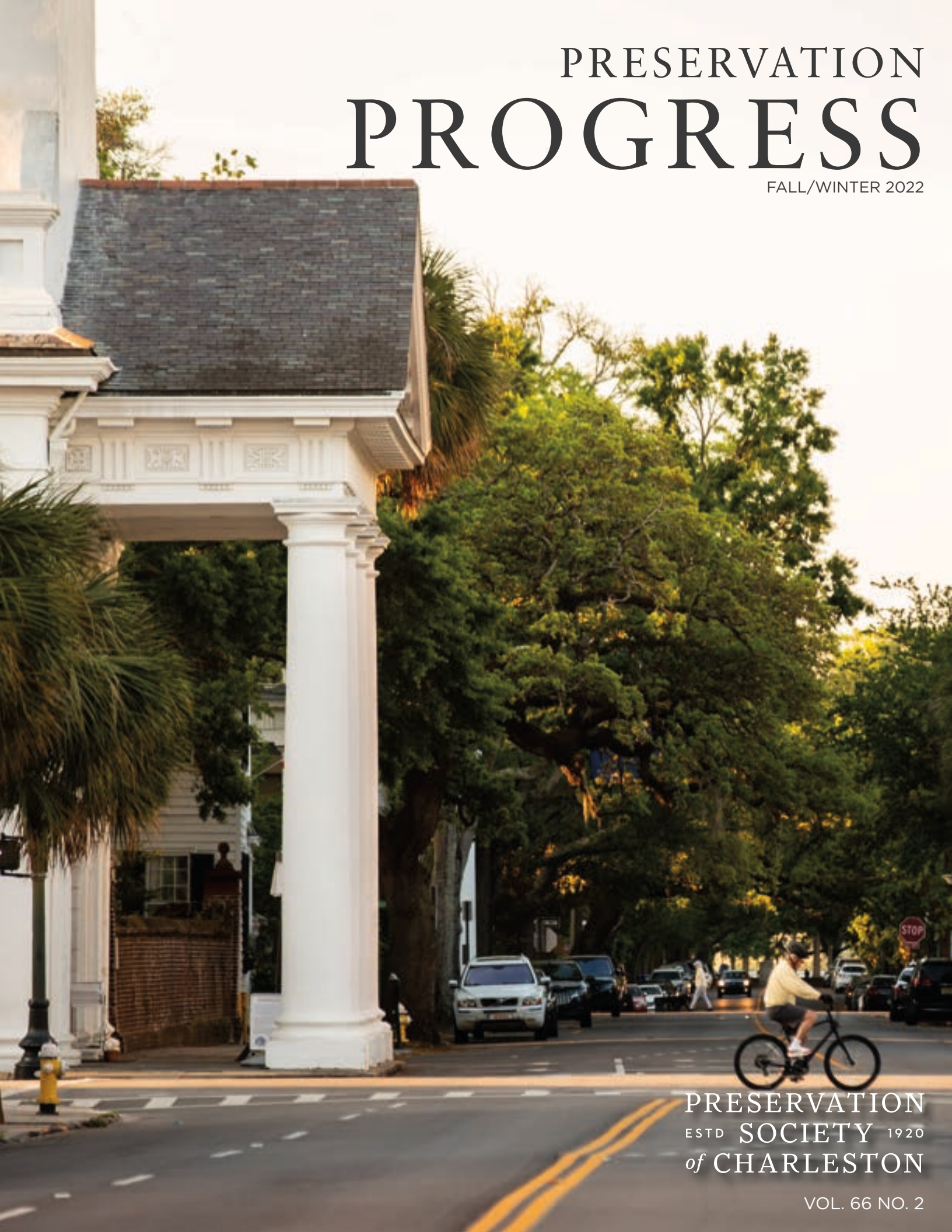
PRESERVATION PROGRESS

FALL/WINTER 2022



PRESERVATION SOCIETY of CHARLESTON
ESTD 1920

VOL. 66 NO. 2

CARRIAGE
PROPERTIES

LOCAL LUXURY, HISTORIC EXPERTISE

Preservation Progress is published by the Preservation Society of Charleston to educate and inform its membership and the public about historic preservation. The Preservation Society of Charleston serves as a strong advocacy leader for citizens concerned about preserving Charleston's distinctive character, quality of life, and diverse neighborhoods. As the oldest community-based historic preservation organization in America, we are the sum total of our members and friends, a dedicated group of residents and supporters of preservation from across the country who believe that some things are worth saving. Individual membership in the Society is $50 and includes a one-year subscription to *Preservation Progress*. Published continuously since 1956, *Preservation Progress* (ISSN 0478-1392) is published at a minimum two times per year and includes a subscription to eProgress. For advertising inquiries or article submission, mail to 147 King Street, Charleston, SC 29401 or e-mail preserve@preservationsociety.org.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Just as the format of "Pres Prog," as it is affectionately known around the PSC, has changed with the times, so our perspectives on the work of preservation have evolved over the decades.

PROGRESS CONTINUES, DECADES ON

by Elizabeth Kirkland Cahill, 2022 Board Chair

The evolution of the PSC's signature publication, *Preservation Progress*, continues under the guidance of our new Director of Public Affairs, Sam Spence. We have come a long way from the two-page, typewritten Volume I, No. I, published in December 1956, in which the lead editorial announced a name change, from The Society for the Preservation of Old Dwellings to the more modern and streamlined Preservation Society of Charleston. And yet — my eye was caught by a sentence in that editorial: "Today the growth of our City is creating increased demands for the limited supply of land for public and private use." That sentence could have been written yesterday. Sixty-six years on, we face the same fundamental challenge in the face of ever-growing tourism, explosive growth and development, and rising waters — how to manage and channel growth in a way that protects Charleston's unique architectural character, safeguards its urban character, and sustains residential livability.

Just as the format of "*Pres Prog*," as it is affectionately known around the PSC, has changed with the times, so our perspectives on the work of preservation have evolved over the decades.

These ever-evolving perspectives are amply illustrated in this fall issue. For example, our commitment to telling lesser-known stories in Charleston's history, which we have been undertaking through our Charleston Justice Journey, continues to blossom with our work documenting and mapping African-American cemeteries, funded by a $50,000 grant from the National Park Service and managed by the ever-capable Anna-Catherine Carroll.

continued on page 5

We have established ourselves as thoughtful and credible resource for resiliency planning; our Director of Preservation and Planning, Erin Minnigan, has become a nationally respected expert on house elevation and was deeply involved in the creation of BAR guidelines to assist homeowners seeking to adapt to changing conditions. This year, too, we are adding a new category to our renowned Carolopolis Awards: our Resilience Award will celebrate exceptional efforts to sensitively integrate flood adaption strategies with historic preservation. The first awards will be presented in 2023 and cement Charleston as a leader in promoting creative approaches for protecting historic properties against changing climate conditions.

Our Community Outreach Coordinator, Kelly Vicario, is constantly out and about in the city forging new connections and partnerships by which we can be even more effective at spreading the benefits of historic preservation far and wide. Her reflection on, "What does preservation mean to you?" is drawn in part from her community work, in which she regularly exchanges views with and hears the perspectives of others whose voices matter. And speaking of those who voices matter, our piece on "African-American Classicism of Charleston," written by Philip Smith, assistant professor at the American College of the Building Arts and erstwhile Preservation Month (2022) speaker, contributes his perspective on Charleston's architectural tradition.

All of this good work is reflected in the pages that follow. Every issue of *Preservation Progress* seems to me to be better than the one before, and I hope you will agree with me that this volume sets a new standard for this venerable and yet ever-fresh publication.

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This will be my last Chairman's column for *Preservation Progress*. In December, I will be stepping down as Chairman of the Board of the Preservation Society.

I joined the Society's board in 2012, drawn by its strong advocacy stances, its integrity, and its faithfulness to preservation principles — all of which remain our hallmarks today. I have served as its chair since February 2015 — longer than I had ever intended! With major organizational transitions occurring in both 2014-15 and 2021-22, not to mention our Centennial campaign and COVID in the middle, every fall it seemed prudent for me to stay on "just one more year." That I am able to step away now speaks volumes about the levels of strength and stability that the PSC has achieved. We are a very different organization than the one I signed on to serve more than a decade ago!

Today, we have a solid balance sheet, a committed, versatile, and talented staff, a peerless Board of Directors, an impressive new CEO, and widespread, enthusiastic community support. Our retail shop and fundraising operations continue to post record numbers. Our Advocacy staff members enjoy the respect of planners, politicians, and the City's review boards, from the BAR to the BZA, and continue to make a difference in achieving better project outcomes. Our membership continues to grow at a record pace, and this fall, for the 46th year, we have shared Charleston's architectural heritage with both locals and visitors through our re-imagined Fall Tours.

While this transformation was in some ways gradual and incremental, our Centennial Campaign in 2020 has been central to the PSC's revitalization. In this historic effort, we raised over $6 million for an advocacy

endowment, new technologies, and expanded outreach activities. Not only did this effort bolster our resources, it gave us new confidence and heightened our public profile. We continue to reap the benefits of the campaign every week, in ways large and small.

All these achievements are the work of many people, including wonderful donors and supporters like you. It has been fun to be a part of it. And, while I certainly have mixed feelings about leaving, there could not be a better time to step away, because I am confident that the organization is in good hands. Having worked closely with our new President & CEO Brian Turner for the past several months as he has transitioned into his new role, I find myself more impressed every day with his embrace of our mission, his devotion to the staff, his interest in our members, and his thoughtful perspective. He is going to be amazing. He is already amazing. And the staff he leads is equally amazing.

We also have a clear succession plan for Board leadership. Our Vice Chairman, attorney Andy Gowder, will step into the Chairman's position on Jan. 1, with Elizabeth Hagood serving as Vice Chairman. With a robust legal practice and extensive service on other nonprofit boards, Andy will bring subject matter expertise, a wide-ranging network, and a great deal of experience to his role as the next PSC Board chair. Our strong committee chairs Laura Gates (Nominating and Governance), Jim Mabry (Finance), and Deb Treyz (Advancement) will remain in place, and John Massalon will take over from Andy as Chair of our Advocacy Committee. We are blessed to have an incredibly strong and engaged Board of Directors, each of whom brings experience, wisdom, and enthusiasm to the Society's work.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to the many people who have shared in this journey with me — staff, Board, and our wonderful, varied, passionate membership. All of us have a hand in protecting this extraordinary city. I intend to remain engaged in and supportive of the work of the Preservation Society, and I hope you will, too. Thank you for your faith in us over the years, thank you for making these successes possible, and thank you for sticking with us as we continue to stand up for Charleston.

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THE STATE OF THE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

by Brian R. Turner, President & CEO

In these first few months at the helm, I've heard many thoughtful, diverse perspectives on how the PSC can effectively leverage our influence to make positive impact in the city. In this listening, what is clear above all else is that Charleston is one of the world's most cherished places. Our sense of responsibility to its community of advocates must be the key driver of our work.

On paper (and in the perfect lighting of Instagram), Charleston is a world-class city. Its desirability has driven land value higher and higher; its beauty is no secret. But it is becoming all too common to ask of recent projects, "How did that happen?" We can feel defeated when we see architecture unbefitting of our reputation or see firsthand a new development that adds to our flooding woes. Sometimes it seems like the bar for excellence in design is getting lower.

The city's growth must be informed by a vision, a long-term strategy that adds respectfully to the craftsmanship and care for the built environment Charleston is known for. Too often these days we are left wondering whether our values for long-term thinking are truly shared by those making the decisions.

Case in point: Union Pier, where the City, contrary to our urging, declined to present its own vision for the site in its Comprehensive Plan update last year. In 2023, our elected leaders are poised to vote on a highly consequential zoning plan, and yet there is no direction as to what the zoning should be. It is incumbent on all advocacy leaders in the city to ensure that community values lead this process, not a developer-dictated vision driven solely by the capital market.

Other growing pains must be expected in a place of such great desirability. Issues of mobility, affordability, overtourism, design, and water management all demand focused attention. Our staff is eager and well-prepared to work with City leadership at every opportunity on planning initiatives to ensure that our growth strategy is balanced and well-informed, and prioritizes the needs of Charleston's residents first.

To succeed, we must acknowledge a lesser known, but no-less-important challenge: city staffing. Those who commit their careers to public service must be commended and we recognize that turnover is high. These times demand aggressive efforts to recruit and retain innovative thinkers. Quite simply, we can't craft creative and responsive policies to our pressing challenges without compelling participation from the public sector. And it is fair game for us — all of us — to press elected and appointed officials on these matters.

We also must take seriously our responsibility to educate and inform, in collaboration with our partners. Ensuring an informed citizenry through every means possible is embedded in our organizational culture. We could devote all our energy to self-promotion, but that is not why I took this job. We are strongest when we work together with the many outstanding partners we have in Charleston, organizations and individuals, who share the PSC's values for good stewardship of the place we have inherited.

Our staff is immensely grateful for the strong vote of confidence placed in us by you, our members. Our member-focused mission is what has always driven our momentum and empowered our team. In 2023, look for the Preservation Society to be more prepared than ever to be an effective force in critical discussions about our city's future.

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There is a positive reality to Classicism and the African-American diaspora, particularly, in Charleston ... These buildings serve as examples of well-proportioned, durable architecture that have stood the test of time against fire, flood, and war.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN CLASSICISM OF CHARLESTON

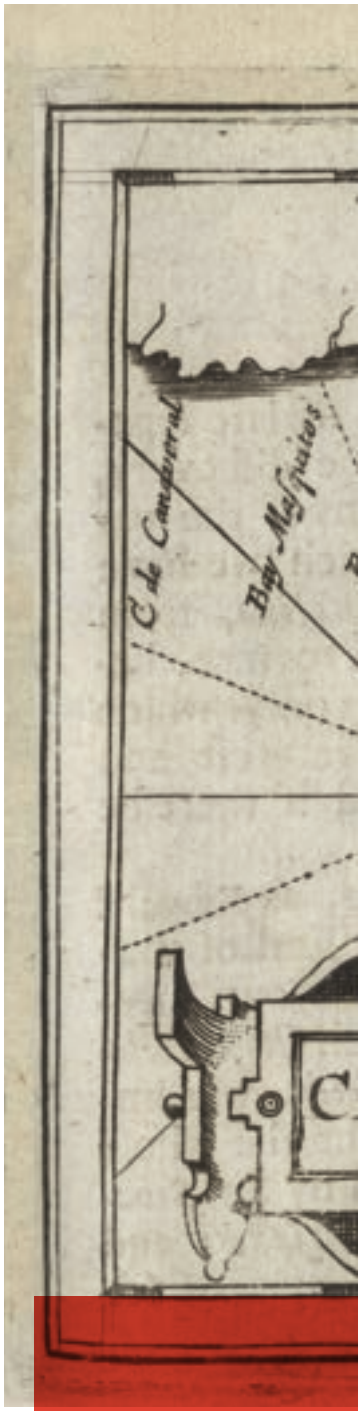
Talents, traditions of enslaved Africans built revered local architecture

by Phillip Smith

Within the African-American community, there exists a myth that classical and traditional architecture is a legacy of oppression and racism. While there is a negative association of this tradition to the plantations of the Old South, there is a positive reality to Classicism and the African-American diaspora, particularly, in Charleston, South Carolina. The historical architectural record of Charleston is defined by remarkable structures that exemplify the very best of American Classicism. From Georgian to Beaux Arts, buildings such as Miles Brewton House, Trinity United Methodist Church, and the U.S. Customs House. These buildings serve as examples of well-proportioned, durable architecture that have stood the test of time against fire, flood, and war. More importantly, it could be said a vast majority of structures in the city constructed before 1865 was built, detailed, and to an extent, designed entirely by the enslaved of Charleston. There was a deeply rooted understanding of building in relation to the human scale that derived as early as the great structures of Egypt. Centuries before arriving in British North America, Africans from various regions of the continent had developed building practices utilizing locally sourced materials including stone, mud, and wood to create communities. It was this knowledge, in addition to published Western European architectural treatises, that informed the creation of the city of Charleston as loved in the present day.

Following the restoration of English monarchy after the English Civil War, Charles II signed the Charter for the Colony of Carolina and granted a large tract of land to eight proprietors on March 24, 1663. By April of 1670, 150 settlers, including one enslaved African, sailed up the Ashley River and established Charles Town. Ten years later, the settlement abandoned this location and re-established Charles Town in its

continued on page 17



About the Author

Phillip Smith is a professor of Classical Architecture and Design at the American College of the Building Arts in Charleston, S.C. He is a graduate of the College of Charleston and the University of Notre Dame School of Architecture. He also sits on The Charleston Museum Board of Trustees and has volunteered as an expert interpreter on the Preservation Society's annual Fall Tours.

Image courtesy North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

present location at Oyster Point. These new inhabitants of the colony, primarily the second- and third-born sons of wealthy Barbados sugar planters, brought with them their ambitions of wealth borne upon the legacy of exploitative plantation agriculture. Between 1680 and 1700, the enslaved population of Charles Town grew from 200 to 2,400, and by 1740 39,155 people of African descent were enslaved in the now Royal Colony of South Carolina. A majority of these enslaved people originated in the Western African rice growing region that includes modern day Benin, Nigeria, Togo, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, The Gambia, Senegal and portions of Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

Justin Falk Photography

Importation of West Africans from this region was deliberate. It was discovered shortly after the establishment of the colony that conditions were ideal for the cultivation of rice. An abundance of freshwater rivers and tidal creeks that responded to coastal tides and a subtropical climate that allowed for hot, humid summers and cool mild winters nearly mimicked the rice region of West Africa. These enslaved people had an extensive knowledge and deeply rooted agricultural traditions of rice cultivation and processing. And it was with this knowledge that the South Carolina colony thrived and became the wealthiest colony of the 13 well through the American Revolution.

Successful rice plantations were established along the Ashley, Cooper, Wando, and Santee rivers. Familiar names such as Drayton Hall, Middleton Place, and Snee Farm not only produced thousands of pounds of rice and millions of dollars, but also the founders of the United States. Arthur Middleton, signer of the Declaration of Independence, inherited Middleton Place in 1755. One hundred enslaved people labored for a decade to complete the main house and formal gardens. The original main house was in the style of the English Country Tudor and Dutch influences, which can be seen in the gable ends of the house. The brick structure was constructed by slave labor and the masonry used was produced on the property. Charles Pinckney, signer of the Constitution, Governor of South Carolina, and Minister to Spain under Thomas Jefferson, owned Snee Farm and held 58 enslaved people who cultivated rice and indigo.

Pinckney, as most rice planters, also held urban residences within the city of Charles Town, later Charleston with the start of the American Revolution. Uniquely, the Pinckney Mansion, destroyed by fire, was completed in 1746. Charles Pinckney tediously recorded all the work being done at the site. He consistently mentions an enslaved man by the name of John Williams, who was born to an enslaved mother and a white father on the Wappoo Plantation.

Eliza Lucas had inherited Wappoo and its slaves upon her father's death and later married Charles Pinckney. John and Eliza had successfully developed a method for the processing of indigo. Williams had created wooden indigo vats that allowed for raw indigo to cure in water, producing the finest dye that earned more than £225 per shipment, Williams was known for this exceptional skill in carpentry and joinery was approached by Charles in 1746 with a set of architectural drawings and a contract for his labor in the construction of the Pinckney Mansion.

Pinckney, like Jefferson, was a gentleman architect and had developed architectural plans that reflected his European travels and took into account his accomplished carpenter John Williams. In that same year Pinckney wrote, "An Account of Carpenters and Joiners Work Proposed to be done in a Brick

The Pinckney Mansion (above and right), burned in 1860, included a prominent central window feature similar to the rear facade of the Miles Brewton House (left).

Photo by George Barnard, courtesy Getty

House for Charles Pinckney Esq at the North End of the Bay of Charles Town," which documented designs for the woodwork of each floor of the house as well as specific rooms. He referenced examples found in other homes in Charleston to serve as precedent. On the ground floor, Pinckney requested, "2 outside cellar door frames 4-1/2 feet wide, 6 feet 2 inches high with a beed and single architrave, 4 inner cellar cases with a beed — no architrave." This "beed and single architrave" refers to bead and reel molding for the architraves of the door. Pinckney's request that the four interior cellar door frames have no architraves emphasizes the cellar's function as a working area rather than a formal space. On the first floor, Pinckney specified details such as, "One large Venetian window upon the half pace of the stairs according to the plan … Best parlour to be wainscotted on the Chimney side, with double cornice round, surbase, window seats and jambs." This particular detail of the fenestration in the stair hall became a common element of mid to late 18th century Charleston mansions. On the second floor, Pinckney specified details such as: "The dining room ceiling to be coved into the roof, so as to make this room at least 14 foot high in the clear." Interestingly, the Miles Brewton House, completed in 1769 features a near identical stair window in both proportion and height above the stair landing as well as the proportions of the dining room. Pinckney's 1746 "Carpenters and Joiners Work Proposed" document suggests John Williams was certainly a master carpenter. Not only did Williams complete a vast amount of the mansion's woodwork, but he supervised the work of at least eight men. Among them were the enslaved men Charles, Pompey, Patrick (Williams' apprentice), Caesar, Peter, Prince, and Archer, as well as a white man by the name of Charles Richmond Gascoynes who promised to pay off his debt owed to Pinckney through working under Williams' supervision.

The Pinckney Mansion's architectural significance has often been compared to Drayton Hall, suggesting that Pinckney used the Ashley River plantation as a primary precedent. However, tests have discovered that the roof timbers of Drayton Hall were harvested in the winter of 1747, giving Drayton Hall a construction timeline of 1748 to 1752. According to the Pinckney papers, by October 1747, the masonry work of the mansion had been complete, and by the end of that month, bills for payment for the slate roof work had been submitted. Together, this indicates that the Pinckney Mansion predated Drayton Hall by two years. For John Williams, this

Features of Drayton Hall closely mirror design elements found on earlier Charleston buildings inspired by Classical architecture.

"It was the skilled labor of John Williams and the enslaved that he oversaw that brought to life the ideas Charles Pinckney could only express on drafting paper."

evidence indicates that Pinckney's architectural designs and Williams' execution of these designs may have influenced the design of Drayton Hall. The design undoubtedly influenced the Miles Brewton House, particularly the dining room, which is nearly identical to the one in the Pinckney Mansion. Due to the striking similarity of these elements and the timeline of construction, it is thought that Williams very well may have been responsible for the carpentry of the Miles Brewton House as well.

At the time of its completion in 1750, the Pinckney Mansion was one of the first Palladian villas to be built in Charleston, and one of the earliest homes in the United States to have a temple front superimposed on its façade. The façade of the house consisted of five bays. The three center bays comprised the architectural focus of the Ionic temple front. Marble pilasters separated each of the three center bays and supported an entablature and pediment. It has been suggested that Pinckney not only introduced the pattern of the temple front into Charleston's architectural lexicon, but that he was also one of the first in the colonies to emphasize the orders against a brick facade, a defining feature of American Georgian architecture. But it was the skilled labor of Williams and the enslaved that he oversaw that brought to life the ideas Pinckney could only express on drafting paper.

On May 12, 1750, Charles and Eliza Lucas Pinckney granted Williams his freedom. Three weeks later, Williams placed an advertisement in the South Carolina Gazette for work as a carpenter and joiner, noting that he was a free man of color. He continued to work for Pinckney after the completion of the mansion. In a June 1750-April 1752 document titled, "The Hon. Charles Pinckney Esq. to Jne Williams," Williams recorded the tasks completed by himself and men enslaved by Pinckney, including Williams' former apprentice, Pompey. Williams noted tasks completed by himself and men enslaved by Pinckney, including altering dormer windows, putting on latches and locks, mending a table, putting up bedsteads, and carting cypress boards. Importantly, this document and others indicate that John Williams was not the only enslaved man to benefit from his own building talents. By teaching other enslaved men the carpentry and joinery trades and supervising their work, Williams equipped those men with skills that elevated them to the status of craftsmen. Because of Williams, these enslaved men were able to earn wages, contract work for themselves, gaining a degree of independence formerly unimagined.

Before the Pinckneys left Charleston for Britain in 1753, Charles recorded that Williams paid him £4 for "a Book of Architecture." The book was, *A Book of Architecture, Containing Designs of Buildings and Ornaments*, by James Gibbs. Published in 1728, the treatise opens by defining the nature of the publication and the audience. The collection of designs was "undertaken at the instance of several Persons of Quality who were of opinion, that such a Work … would be of use to such Gentlemen as might be concerned in Building, especially in the remote parts of the Country, where little or no assistance for Designs can be procured. Such may be here furnished with Draughts of useful and convenient Buildings and proper Ornaments; which may be executed by an Workman who understands Lines, either as here Design'd, or with some Alteration, which may be easily made by a person of Judgement." This pattern book contained 140 plates, including a double-page perspective of St. Martin-in-the-Fields' floor plan, elevations, and sections. Including country houses and churches, the book offered a wide variety of buildings and decorative types, from chapels and university buildings, tombs, and sarcophagi, to chimneypieces, windows, door surrounds, niches, pavilions, obelisks, gates, vases, and sundials. Gibbs' influence throughout Pinckney's designs for the Pinckney Mansion is most notable in his design for a coved ceiling in his dining room, which are featured in the publication.

Unknowingly, Gibbs declares that the designs found within his publication could even be built by an enslaved person, who were considered inferior in all aspects of 18th-century society. But Williams' purchase was only legal with his securing of freedom. The 1739 South Carolina Slave Code made it illegal to teach an enslaved person to read or write.

Anyone caught doing so could face a fine of £100 and six months in prison, and in some cases could be executed. Pinckney, an active politician, was aware of the law and would have followed it to the letter. John Williams is a remarkable character during this time. Defying the odds, Williams did learn to read and write as shown in his record-keeping, and The Pinckney Mansion set forth a precedent for the 18th century Georgian building stock of Charleston and was executed by men who were strictly forbidden to be formally educated in the Western sense. Unable to understand written English, these men managed to create these architectural masterpieces. Perhaps it is simply a matter of imitation, or perhaps an inherent and ingrained knowledge — knowledge as deep as their very DNA, knowledge from tradition passed from generation to generation. In a similar manner in which the Romans relied upon Egyptian quarries and stonemasons, Charlestonians depended upon the knowledge of the enslaved to maintain a thriving and growing city and colony.

The importance of Williams' purchase of these writings reaches much further than the Pinckney Mansion and its influence on domestic architecture in Charleston. Along with St. Michael's Church, the success of Gibbs' book established St. Martin-in-the-Fields as the prototype of many churches in the English-speaking world, and by the 1730s the church had become the most compelling Protestant church form. He introduced its characteristic six-column temple portico, allowing an unbroken continuity from its outer columns to the evenly spaced pilasters of the north and south elevations. And for the first time, the building's spire rose directly from the pediment. The temple portico, multi-tiered steeple, and the treatment of the internal columns and galleries became the standard, particularly in the newly founded North American colonies. St. Michael's in Charleston was the first of colonial churches to follow the example of St Martin's.

Construction of St. Michael's Church began in 1751, and from October 1752 until November 1754, Samuel Prioleau Jr., who was secretary of the church commissioners and was responsible for administering project funds provided by the provincial government, began recording tallies of enslaved workmen. These tables show not only the names of the enslaved who constructed St. Michael's brick walls, columns, and steeple, but also the owner, the number of days each worked and how many men were present each day and each month. Within these tally sheets, Charles Pinckney is recorded three times as having enslaved men working on-site at St Michael's. These men named Scipio, Joe, and Cudgeo, worked a combined total of 334 days, and on August 7, 1755, Pinckney received a certificate for £125 to cover this exact number of days at the rate

St. Martin-in-the-Fields (left) on Trafalgar Square in London was the model for Charleston's St. Michael's Church (right).

of seven shillings and six pence per day. Just three years earlier, these enslaved men very likely worked closely with Williams during the construction of the Pinckney House. The training they would have would have allowed them to effectively execute work on St. Michael's. Familiar with architectural details set forth by the requests of Pinckney, they would have little difficulty understanding the construction and composition of St. Michael's. From newspaper accounts, we know that the freedman Williams is still working in the city after the completion of the church in 1761. It very well could be that Williams himself served as an expert eye and master craftsman, particularly in regard to interior woodwork and the extensive timber framing details within the roof and steeple. The architect of St Michael's is unknown, but Williams may have embodied the pre-Enlightenment Master Builder, of equal status to Andrea Palladio, the renowned Italian Renaissance architect. Evidence for this remains to be discovered.

Indeed, the institution of slavery has left a permanent stain upon American society, but it was through this unfortunate practice that the traditions of continental Africa survived. Just as many aspects of American culture such as music, food, and visual arts have African-American influences, so does architecture. American Classicism is rooted not only in the Greco-Roman, but in the richness of the village mindset of the African-American community. John Williams is but one example of hundreds of enslaved Black craftspeople who toiled in the construction of colonial and pre-Civil War America. In the case of Charleston, credit must be given to these craftspeople in developing not only the built environment, but also the affluence of this city. The legacy of men like Williams lives on through modern times. Eighty percent of African-American sacred architecture derives from a Classical or Traditional precedent. Of that 80%, nearly half follow the example of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. The importance of the church in the African-American community has and continues to be paramount. As an institution, it is the heart of the community, the very place where prayers are made, and souls are inspired to change the world. Ninety percent of the main administrative buildings of historically Black colleges and universities are classically designed. Leading institutions have modeled these central structures after Independence Hall. As we continue to have conversations around racial and social justice, we must remember that the Vitruvian triad — Firmitatis, Utilitatis, Venustatis — leads us not only in the design of architecture but also in the design of new American society, where, indeed, "All men are created equal."

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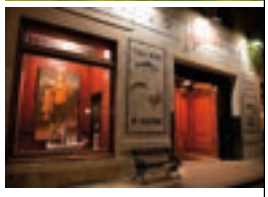

Hood's expertise in preservation is something we're passionate about, and we look forward to continuing to restore the past, one building at a time.

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Two issues currently at the center of the PSC's work have also risen to prominence on the national preservation agenda: climate resilience for historic buildings and African American burial ground preservation.

THE NATIONAL PRESERVATION AGENDA

How the PSC is addressing preservation issues playing out across the country

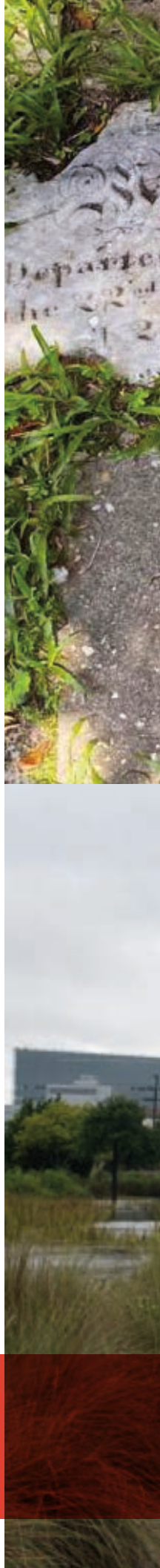
by Erin Minnigan & Anna-Catherine Carroll

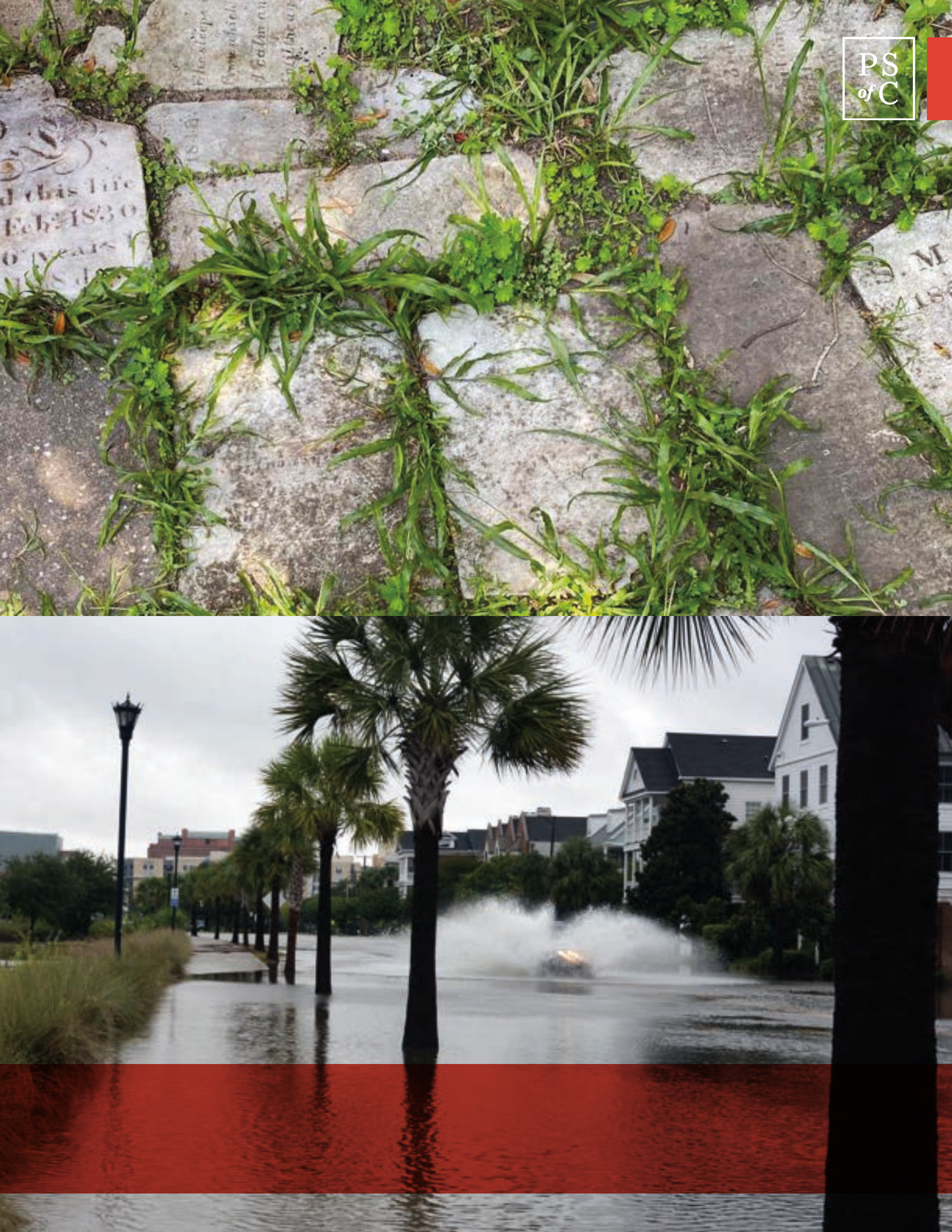
Charleston has long been a vanguard of the national historic preservation movement, and the PSC has been at the heart of it all since our founding in 1920 as the oldest, local, preservation organization in the U.S. From the establishment of the nation's first historic district protected by zoning in 1931, to the adoption of the first local tourism management plan in 1978, to hosting an international symposium on the impacts of the cruise industry on historic communities in 2013 — other cities look to Charleston as a thought leader on the cutting edge of the issues shaping the ever-evolving movement.

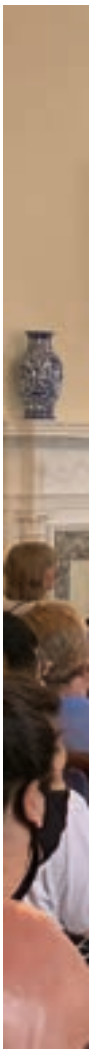
At the PSC, we take this responsibility seriously as we allocate staff time and resources toward emerging challenges. To inform our advocacy and projects, PSC Staff not only assess the needs of our members and the community, but actively engage in the national preservation conversation. Through relationship-building, we broaden our horizons while finding common ground with new partners.

Two issues currently at the center of the PSC's work have also risen to prominence on the national preservation agenda: **climate resilience for historic buildings** and **African American burial ground preservation**. Over the past several years, the PSC has championed local policy to support better outcomes in each of these areas, and our work is strengthened as we collaborate with communities fighting similar battles to create synergistic efforts. In the pages to follow, we invite you to read more about the PSC's ongoing advocacy and projects that advance this important work.

continued on page 27







BUILDING RESILIENCE FOR COASTAL COMMUNITIES

by Erin Minnigan, Director of Preservation and Planning

Charleston is not alone in our battle with rising seas. We are among dozens of coastal cities trying to learn to live with water while maintaining a special sense of place and livability for residents. This is why we feel collaboration with other communities is essential as we chart a course for the future, so we can work together on solutions that benefit everyone. Preservation Society staff attend national conferences, to take part in conversations on shared experiences and to learn about innovative resilience approaches from across the country.

At past conferences, we have been pleased to share the pioneering efforts Charleston is undertaking to address flooding. Foremost, our city is ahead of the curve on supporting adaptation projects for historic properties. Following the intense storm events from 2015 to 2017, the preservation community and city government realized action was necessary to prevent further flood loss and enhance the long-term preservation of historic properties. Through a community-driven, collaborative process, Charleston developed the first local design guidelines for elevating historic buildings, tailored to the city's unique architectural environment. This document has since served as a model policy for numerous other communities, and helped inform the Guidelines on Flood Adaptations for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, recently published by the National Park Service.

It has also been an enlightening experience to hear about how other communities are tackling resilience. Norfolk, Virginia, for example, is one of the most progressive municipalities in utilizing regulatory strategies to address changing climate conditions. At this year's Keeping History Above Water conference in Norfolk, PSC staff learned about planning policies the city has instituted in response to the long-term challenges posed by sea level rise.

First, the city adopted Vision 2100 as part of Norfolk's Comprehensive Plan in 2016, which outlines high-level goals for more resilient land use. One strategy included dividing the city into four distinct areas of various, allowed development intensity, based on flood risk and citizen input on "community

Erin Minnigan (above) presents at the Keeping History Above Water Conference in Charleston in 2021. Norfolk, Va., is another city devising new solutions to live alongside water (right).

Images provided

assets" deemed worthy of protection. This was followed by an update to Norfolk's Zoning Code in 2018, which established a "resilient quotient system" requiring new development to incorporate measures for flood risk reduction, stormwater management, alternative energy options, and water conservation. Charleston can look to innovative policies like this as the city embarks on its own process to develop a Water Plan and update its Zoning Code in the coming years, especially since implementing elevation-based zoning, or zoning that directs the most intense development to higher ground, has already been identified as a goal.

At the Preservation Society, our work is also evolving in response to new challenges, and when it comes to the future of Charleston, we recognize that preservation *is* resilience. That's why this year, we were thrilled to introduce a new Carolopolis Award category that celebrates exceptional efforts to sensitively integrate flood adaptation strategies with historic preservation. In early 2023, the first Resilience Awards will be presented and help cement Charleston as a leader in promoting creative approaches for protecting historic properties against changing climate conditions. As we face a future where coastal communities are increasingly at risk, the PSC looks forward to continuing to collaborate with our local and national partners on building resiliency for our collective architectural heritage.

Elevating buildings is one way owners are mitigating stormwater impacts, as seen at 1 Water Street (above, right) and with single houses on Rutledge Avenue (below left) and Savage Street (below).

Images provided

Justin Falk Photography

"When it comes to the future of Charleston, we recognize that preservation is resilience."

MAPPING CHARLESTON'S BLACK BURIAL GROUNDS

by Anna-Catherine Carroll, Manager of Preservation Initiatives

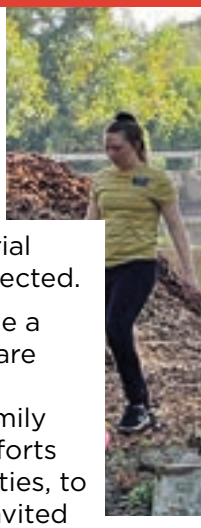
This spring, the Preservation Society was awarded an African American Civil Rights grant by the National Park Service (NPS) to launch the Mapping Charleston's Black Burial Grounds initiative. The PSC's objective is to implement a community-led, open-source mapping project to produce a comprehensive inventory of historic Black burial grounds in the City of Charleston. The project proposal was bolstered by support from the International African American Museum, the City of Charleston, and Tulane University, who will be key partners in this effort.

The understudied national landscape of Black burial grounds is emblematic of the ongoing struggle toward racial justice in the U.S. Underrepresented in traditional surveys and disproportionately impacted by discriminatory land use practices, Black burial sites are more likely to be considered "abandoned" or lost from public memory altogether than white cemeteries. For the first time in U.S. history, this problem shared by communities across the country is taking center stage. In 2020, the Senate passed the earliest form of what is now known as the "African American Burial Grounds Preservation Act" that, if enacted, would enable the National Park Service to support local governments and organizations in efforts to identify, research, preserve, and interpret historic, African American cemeteries.

Charleston's unmarked Black burial grounds are now especially vulnerable to development pressures amid unprecedented, regional growth. Building on the national narrative, the PSC was at the forefront of advocacy efforts that led to the passage of the City's first cemetery protection ordinance in 2021. A major preservation win, the local ordinance enables the City to stop construction if a developer receives notice that burial sites are present. However, there is currently no inventory of burial sites empowering City officials to work proactively with developers to avoid accidental and willful desecration. That is exactly the information gap the PSC aims to bridge through implementation of the NPS grant-funded project.

Images provided

Construction was halted near the Oak Bluff cemetery on the Cainhoy peninsula (top), one of many sites vulnerable to development and environmental pressures, as seen at Monrovia Cemetery (bottom left). At McLeod Plantation Historical Site on James Island, unmarked burials are memorialized with a sign (bottom right).



A community-led effort

Over the next two years, the PSC will work alongside residents and project partners to identify and define the boundaries of at-risk, Black burial sites in developing a comprehensive cemeteries data layer, which will be integrated into the City's mapping platforms as a planning and preservation tool. In addition to strengthening local cemetery protection, this project will produce a template for other communities seeking to map and protect under-documented burial grounds.

The first step toward implementation of the project is information gathering. This fall, the PSC and our partners at Tulane University are surveying existing sources to create the foundation of what will become a growing database of burial sites in the City of Charleston. Equipped with an understanding of the city's documented burial landscape, stakeholder engagement will kick off in the spring to begin the process of illuminating Black burial grounds currently undocumented and unprotected.

This essential community dialogue will provide a platform for residents and descendants to share their knowledge of these historic burial sites significant to their own neighborhood and family histories. The primary goal of engagement efforts will be to ensure Charleston's Black communities, to whom these resources belong, are not only invited to participate in this documentation process, but to shape its outcomes.

Through this project, the PSC aims to reinforce that each burial site is a significant place of remembrance that conveys important and painful truths in the American story. We are now challenged to recognize, protect, and maintain these sites before they are lost. You can learn more about other ways the PSC is partnering with community members to contribute to this effort by visiting preservationsociety.org.

An unmarked burial ground was found during the construction of the Gaillard Center in 2013, and the remains of 36 people of African descent were documented and reinterred.

The Preservation Society is collaborating on a number of community-led efforts to help better document Black burial grounds in Charleston, including the African American Cemetery Restoration Project, which supports preservation of sites like the Morris Street Baptist Church Cemetery (above) and Heriot Street Cemetery (below)

Images provided

THE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF CHARLESTON SHOP

by Quanie Miller, Digital Communincations Coordinator

If you had asked anyone in January 2016 what they thought about the Preservation Society Shop at the corner of King and Queen streets, they probably would have looked at you, puzzled: "What shop?" That was when Andy Archie, now PSC's Director of Retail, first arrived. Revenue was nowhere near the $2 million dollars the PSC Shop now brings in annually and the Shop never really took off like its King Street neighbors.

Andy knew, with a few tweaks and a committed staff things could turn around at 147 King Street.

One of the first things he analyzed was the inventory. There were locally made products (not enough), along with tourist-driven knickknacks. And the book selection was fine for the local titles, but he saw a clear opportunity to expand it based on the fact that there were no other book stores around at the time. He then assessed the space itself; it was just "flat," he said. The thing is, the Shop already had the hard part down: the best location in downtown Charleston, if you ask Andy, and a staff that enjoyed being there. All they needed to do now was liven up the place a little.

Since the Shop didn't have a lot of money to spend on inventory, several local makers agreed to sell products on consignment. As business began to pick up, Andy noticed one brand really seemed to resonate with people: Brackish.

As customers came in, curious about the intricate feather bowties in the display window, Andy was surprised by their reactions. Sure, people seemed mesmerized by how beautiful the bowties were, and amazed by the intricacy of the craftsmanship. But Andy was dubious. Would all this interest translate into paying $200 for a tie?

Turns out: Yes, it did.

Brackish eventually expanded its line to include women's accessories, and sales at the Shop skyrocketed. Overall, the retail business has grown more than fivefold, putting nearly $1 million back into the local maker and craftsman community, like North Charleston's Smithey Ironware Co.

"They started with two skillets, a 10-inch and 12-inch. Now, the selection is expansive and remains really high-quality," said Shop Manager Johnathan Free. "Our success is that mixture of locally made products we have that you can't get everywhere."

And people have responded, with PSC members and passers-by supporting those entrepreneurs in droves.

"I can remember days when hitting $1,000 in sales was considered a big day, and just this past Member Appreciation Day, we brought in more than $50,000," said Grayson Flowers, who's worked at the Shop since 2016. "Bringing together a solid team, along with the support of the Society, has really allowed us to change what's possible for a nonprofit 'gift shop.'"

From the colors and textures of Brackish to each handcrafted Smithey pan, there's a story behind each product about the real people who are part of the Charleston community and are affected by what the Preservation Society does as an advocacy organization.

The Preservation Society Shop has come a long way, and it has Andy, the Shop staff, and an incredible stable of local makers to thank.

"We could not do it without the retail team," according to Andy. "Johnathan, Grayson, Summer, Christiana, Dotty, Emily, Holly, and Katherine — be sure to say hello next time you stop by."

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The Phillips Community, near Mount Pleasant, became the first local settlement community to be nominated to the National Register in 2022.

Increasingly, it is clear that new experiences and perspectives will best help us understand the evolution of preservation.

WHAT DOES PRESERVATION MEAN TO YOU?

by Kelly Vicario, Community Outreach Coordinator

Charleston has retained its distinct character through earthquakes, hurricanes, revolutions, occupations, and other conflicts over 350 years, but development and growth are among the modern forces that threaten to fray to its historic fabric. A unique city requires thought-leaders with passion for preserving the lived experiences of resident Charlestonians in addition to its storied structures. In this pivotal time, understanding the history and context of a place is necessary to strike a balance between development and preservation.

Working in the preservation field, it is easiest to remain focused on tried-and-true familiar professional methods, but increasingly, it is clear that new experiences and perspectives will best help us understand the evolution of preservation. The Preservation Society is committed to promoting an earnest approach to enhancing the beauty and legacy of this city through conversation, preservation, and adaptive reuse.

Continued discussion about a preservation vision for the next generation prompted us to call on some friends and neighbors to ask, "What does preservation mean to you?"

Q: What does preservation mean to you?

Marcus: For me, it means to prioritize history because of the significance it has. It can be land or language. The degree to which we preserve something can speak volumes as to where we are as a society or community. We have lost things because we did not prioritize and realize the importance of some sites. But now the tide has turned, and in the last 50 years we record history differently.

Helen: To me it can be off-putting, because preservation can be used in such an exclusive way. To preserve something is often something personal and retains a system of values. There is an entry point where preservation can be inclusive, wherein there is intentionality to include communities with rich cultures and being involved in the conceptual phase of what it means to preserve rather than one side of the spectrum and someone else deciding what it might mean to preserve the idea of Charleston.

Marcus McDonald is an educator, community leader, and a lead organizer of Black Lives Matter Charleston.

Helen Mrema is a poet, public speaker, and a former community organizing advocate for the American Civil Liberties Union - South Carolina.

Skip Mikell has long ties to North Charleston, now a resident of the Union Heights neighborhood, at the southern end of the city.

Jonathan Boncek photo courtesy *Charleston City Paper*

Residents are working to preserve community institutions on Charleston's Eastside.

Q: Can you share about your experiences with preservation?

Skip: The community I am a part of now, known as Union Heights, has existed since 1890. Union Heights was subdivided in 1919 to become a distinguished community from the former Belmont Plantation which existed in the neck area of Charleston. It previously existed as a Black settlement community with a railroad depot following the Civil War.

The house I live in was constructed in the 1930s as a boarding house, and it had 186 rooms. This building is known as the Big 16 and was constructed by some of the migration workers from the Navy shipyard. There was a point in time where this location housed 16 families, which is where the term Big 16 derives from. This home shares the story of migrants finding commonality in shared living space, which led to creating a community of their own. The history of the Lowcountry has not always been kind, but the history of Charleston is a part of who we are.

I have learned that families bring families and that trend is what we see as a result of this community and other communities, it is the familial connections and commonality that grow deep roots.

Marcus: Preservation is a diverse fight, from fighting to preserve settlement communities like the Phillips community to historical narratives like the Black Panther movement. Preservation still feels like it's dominated by individuals who have the time and resources. While preservation is happening, there also is a need for regeneration, ways to preserve but also to empower communities that have not historically had the support to pursue preservation efforts.

Q: In an ideal world, what would preservation look like to you or for you?

Helen: It would mean inclusive intervention, preservation a benefit for all. We would begin with addressing inequities, examining the differences between the Eastside and the Westside of Charleston. Tourists are found in the areas that are clean — even the basics of street sweeping strengthen a community.

Marcus: My vision is for preservation to amplify and address current-day issues, because a lot of what we see is cyclical. Preservation should support community spaces where Black and underrepresented groups can be visible and benefit from the effects, an example might be the Battery and how that has benefitted the community from health and well-being aspects, but also the economic benefit of foot traffic.

Q: What about preservation has made you feel like it is for you or not for you?

Helen: It is more than being invited to a table where oftentimes communities are left out of that conversation and someone else has dictated what is worthy of preservation. The knowledge about the conversation of preservation must be accessible — beautification on the Eastside is bursting at the seams to be engaged in a more transformative way. Preservation for me is preserving the Eastside community that is still intact. There is an inherent difference in that community but the deep seeded community is still there. The narrative sometimes can harp on all the negative things and forget to highlight the heart of an historic and culturally diverse community.

Skip: A few years ago, St. Luke's Reformed Episcopal Church, located at 60 Nassau Street, wanted to build back the church and discovered there was little that the Preservation Society could do. There is and was greatness in the history of that church, as it doubled as a laundromat, school and church. When the school was built, it became a place for women to learn how to sew. The long-standing history created passion to pursue preservation and expansion of the church. It is amazing to know that my mother and I were baptized in this building and to see the original floor boards that my mother set foot on during her infancy.

I appreciate structural preservation in the downtown area, one example I like is the freedman cottages. I now understand better how the name is misleading to the public, despite the title of 'freedmen cottages,' it does not mean that the people were truly free. I did my research and learned that they were labored to construct these buildings and having them still standing allows their stories to be shared, to speak to us and display their craftsmanship.

❖❖❖

At the Preservation Society, we recognize that preservation is a multifaceted conversation and there are many important perspectives on in our work throughout Charleston. As we continue our outreach in the community, we welcome this diversity of thought, which inevitably helps make the preservation movement strong.


PRESERVATION SOCIETY
ESTD
CHARLES

THE FALL TOURS OF ARCHITECTURE, HISTORY, AND GARDENS

October 5 – 29, 2022

by Virginia Swift, Manager of Programs

The Fall Tours is one of the Preservation Society's most popular and celebrated programs. For 46 years, tour-goers have enjoyed immersing themselves in the illustrious architecture, dynamic history, and signature landscapes of Charleston. Proceeds from the Fall Tours provide substantial support towards our work, but this year we wanted to make the program just as beneficial for you as it is for us. With a new lens and focus on quality over quantity, we redefined our Fall Tours program, opting for smaller group sizes and in-depth educational experiences. With the goal of more closely connecting patrons with our mission and initiatives, we are also modeling sustainable tourism practices.

This year's Fall Tours program was nearly cut in half. While we continued to offer traditional House and Gardens Tours, they took place on Saturday afternoons only for up to 200 guests. New specialty offerings including the Preservation in Progress Tour and Adaptive Designs for Rising Waters Tour, both led by PSC staff members, which explored topics and projects that we engage with on a regular basis. Throughout the month of October, small groups of 15 guests also embarked on walking tours throughout the city led by certified and professional tour guides. Insider's Tours allowed up to 60 guests per tour to get an in-depth look at some of the city's finest architecture and gardens led by local experts such as architects and horticulturalists.

Though we encountered occasional waitlists on high demand tours, the feedback we received about these changes was overwhelmingly positive, from our members, volunteers, homeowners, and the public. The millions of travelers that come to Charleston each year are undoubtedly lured by the city's architectural beauty that preservationists have worked to defend. But the quality of the visitor experience is at risk when tours and attractions romanticize and inaccurately characterize the city's past. By updating our volunteer program and bringing in experts as interpreters, this year's Fall Tours were a step in the right direction towards mitigating this issue and setting a standard.

Just as we do with our advocacy work, the Preservation Society will continue to develop a high-quality tours offerings and push for better tourism practices that are sensitive to the city's historic nature and downtown livability. To our wonderful volunteers, interpreters, homeowners, and sponsors, your support is an essential piece of our programming and we cannot thank you enough for helping in this endeavor.

Photos by Justin Falk Photography

A special thank you to our 2022 Fall Tours sponsors

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Donor Spotlight:
Mary Pope Maybank Hutson

Mary Pope Hutson is the Senior Vice President for Alumnae Relations and Development and Communications at Sweet Briar College, and the Chairwoman of the National Park System Advisory Board. She is a dedicated advocate for the built and natural environment, having worked as Executive Director for the Lowcountry Open Land Trust in Charleston, and later serving as the Executive Vice President for the National Land Trust Alliance in Washington, D.C.

Mary Pope is a proud member of the Preservation Society, generously pledging a planned gift in support of our Centennial Campaign in 2020, and continuing to invest our work throughout the year. About her support she says, "In my experience, I know the value of a planned gift for a non-profit organization like the Preservation Society. It's a win-win because there are many ways in which both the donor and the organization can benefit." The Preservation Society accepts a variety of gift types, all with their own set of tax incentives and advantages depending on the philanthropic goals of each donor. Mary Pope elaborates, "Planned giving is foundational for any longstanding advocacy organization. These gifts have a particular meaning for loyal supporters because it allows them to continue to advocate for causes they care about well into the future – and preserving Charleston's cultural legacy is certainly a cause worth supporting in purpituity."

The cornerstone is the very first stone laid, marking its place and date in time, and critical to the success of the whole enterprise – just as our supporters have always been for the Preservation Society.

ANNOUNCING THE CORNERSTONE SOCIETY

Leave a Legacy for Charleston

by Courtney Theis, Director of Advancement

We are honored to announce a new legacy society for those who include the Preservation Society in their estate plans. Membership in this group will provide enduring support for historic preservation in our city. Over the past 102 years, the PSC has amassed a track record of meaningful advocacy work in Charleston. With a planned gift, you can support that work for generations to come.

In a place where history and preservation can be seen and felt, Charleston embodies the legacy of those who came before us. In its worn marble thresholds, fingerprinted bricks, patinaed roofs, and layers of paint; in its landscapes of stately live oaks, brick-walled gardens, unearthed relics, and sacred grounds; and in its present-day stewards who care for these places, interpret our history, and sustain tradition - this city's preservation ethic is an inextricable part of its identity.

In safeguarding the past, the PSC is seeking to secure a better future for Charleston. The preservation of this city, its traditions, and its unique qualities did not just happen; rather, it has taken the concerted effort of citizens like you, who support our work year after year, lending your voice to issues big and small, and actively participating in civic life. Today, in the face of unprecedented challenges, these efforts are more important than ever.

For the past century, our members have formed the cornerstone of our work, and it is in this spirit that the Cornerstone Society is named. For the cornerstone is the very first stone laid, marking its place and date in time, and critical to the success of the whole enterprise – just as our supporters have always been for the Preservation Society.

The impacts of planned gifts can be truly transformational for the work of the PSC: providing opportunities for professional development and training for our expert staff, bolstering our defense fund to protect the integrity of the public process, and increasing our endowment to sustain the organization over the long-term. These are just a few of the many ways your gift can make a monumental difference.

Please consider leaving a legacy for Charleston and join the Cornerstone Society this year.

To make your commitment, please visit preservationsociety.org/PlannedGiving to learn more or contact Courtney Theis, Director of Advancement at ctheis@preservationsociety.org or 843.722.4630 ext. 17.

SAVE THE DATE: 69TH CAROLOPOLIS AWARDS PRESENTED BY CARRIAGE PROPERTIES

February 2, 2023 at the historic, award-winning Sottile Theatre
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The Carolopolis Awards recognize outstanding achievement in exterior and interior preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, resilience, and new construction projects in the city of Charleston and beyond. The distinctive plaques have come to symbolize excellent craftsmanship, good design, and the importance of compatibility in a historic district. The PSC is proud to be the steward of this program for nearly seven decades.

This February, the Carolopolis Awards will return to the historic, Carolopolis award-winning, Sottile Theatre on the campus of the College of Charleston. We hope you will join us.

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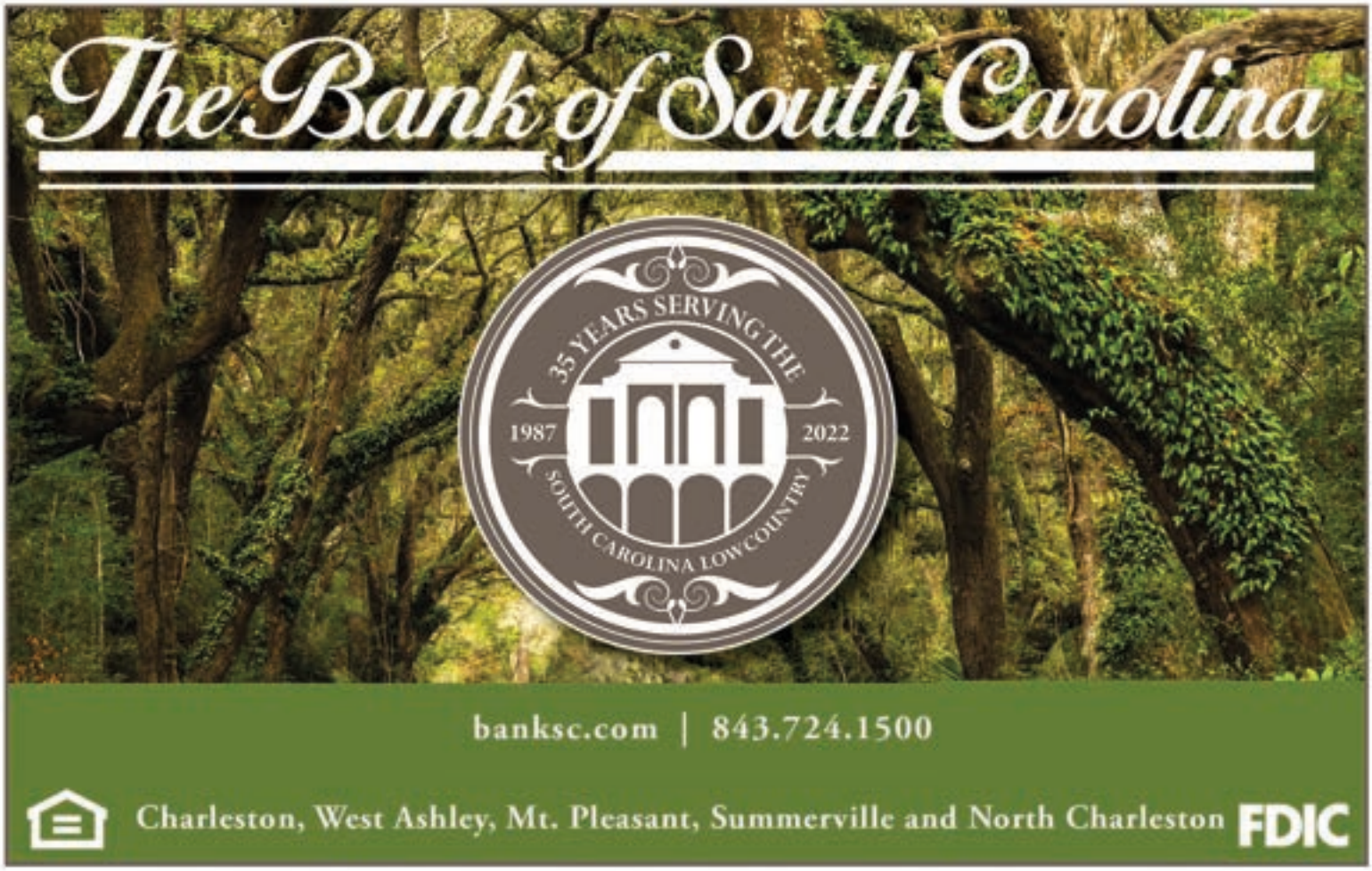

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GIVE MEANINGFULLY TO THE PRESERVATION SOCIETY THIS YEAR

by Courtney W. Theis, Director of Advancement

As we approach the year-end, please accept our sincerest thanks to all our members for stepping up like never before to lend your support to the mission of the PSC. We want to extend a welcome to all our new members this year, many who have enthusiastically voiced interest in historic preservation and a willingness to get more involved in our work. Likewise, we also celebrate our loyal members who continue to renew your membership year over year, and steadfastly answer our calls for urgent action on preservation issues when they arise. Members truly make the Preservation Society.

As a city, we all can see and feel the need for planning and preservation solutions that can meet the demand of ever-growing development and rapid change in Charleston. We must respond with the kind of leadership, expertise, and creativity the PSC is known for with the steady backing of supporters that have always risen to collective action. As you consider your year-end charitable giving, we hope you will count the PSC as deserving of your ongoing support and give in accordance with change you want to see.

We are excited to announce two new giving circles that afford more options for engagement and exclusive educational offerings. Gifts at these levels constitute the core of our annual support and sustain the organization throughout the year.

***NEW* Chairman's Circle: $10,000+**

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ALL PRESERVATION SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS INCLUDE

- Our bi-annual signature magazine publication, *Preservation Progress*
- Our monthly electronic newsletter, E-Progress
- Invitations to the annual Carolopolis Awards, quarterly Membership Meetings, and other special events
- Advocacy alerts on urgent planning and preservation issues as they arise
- 10% discount in the PSC Shop and on select Fall Tours tickets

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ESTD SOCIETY 1920
of CHARLESTON
147 KING STREET
CHARLESTON, SC 29401

The Preservation Society of Charleston is dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of Charleston's distinct character, quality of life, and diverse neighborhoods.

EVENTS CALENDAR

WINTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING
January 19, 2023 | More Information Coming Soon

69TH CAROLOPOLIS AWARDS CEREMONY
February 2, 2023 | Sottile Theatre | Tickets on Sale

CHARLESTON HERITAGE SYMPOSIUM
March 10-12, 2023 | charlestonheritagesymposium.org