

Slavery at the University of Virginia:
A Catalogue of Current and Past Initiatives

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Virginia IDEA Fund, an officially recognized alumni group, is pursuing an initiative focused on the university's historical relationship to slavery, and commissioned this report in order to catalogue and describe a number of past and current initiatives related to this history. This report is the first phase of a project to enhance awareness of the role of enslaved persons in the construction and early life of the University of Virginia. The initiatives presented in this report occurred or are occurring both on Grounds and in the surrounding Charlottesville community, and include the following:

- “Slaves at the University of Virginia, a 2003 research paper by local historian Gayle Schulman, is one of only two known papers to be written on the subject of slavery at the university. The other is a 2006 undergraduate thesis by Catherine S. Neale titled “Slaves, Freedpeople, and the University of Virginia,” which expands upon Schulman’s research.
- A small slate memorial honoring the service of both free and enslaved workers during the construction of the university’s original buildings was approved by the Board of Visitors and installed in 2007. The student group Memorial for Enslaved Laborers (MEL) has advocated for several years for a larger memorial that would provide greater recognition.
- The grant-funded organization University and Community Action for Racial Equity (UCARE) is comprised of university faculty, staff, and students as well as Charlottesville community members. One of the group’s goals is to further understand the legacy of slavery and segregation in the university’s history as well as in the Charlottesville community. UCARE members hope to help the university and adjacent communities come together to identify actions that could improve their relationship and lead to reconciliation.
- A report on the findings of archaeological investigations that occurred in 2006 and 2007 in the Pavilion VII garden was submitted by Rivanna Archaeological Services to the University of Virginia Office of the Architect in 2008. The report offers, for the first time, extensive evidence of the various outbuildings that once occupied the Pavilion gardens, and concludes that at least one of the outbuildings discovered likely served as living quarters for slaves.
- The South Lawn addition, which was completed in 2010, raised interesting cultural issues for the university. It is located in an area known as “Canada,” which was once an early community for free African Americans in Charlottesville. The homestead of Catherine “Kitty” Foster as well as the adjacent African American burial grounds were preserved in a one-acre park, and the homestead is now marked by a “shadow catcher.”
- Monticello (Thomas Jefferson Foundation) and the Smithsonian Institution have recently made efforts to further explore and share information about Jefferson and slavery with visitors. The exhibition Slavery at Jefferson’s Monticello: Paradox of Liberty spent nine months at the Smithsonian Museum of American History in 2012. In the same year, Monticello began offering visitors a new tour, Waiting on Liberty: Slavery in Jefferson’s “Great House,” that focuses on the experiences of enslaved persons at Monticello.
- In 2012, the IDEA Fund advocated for and funded the installation of a plaque near the University Chapel honoring Henry Martin, who spent over fifty years at the University of

Virginia both as an enslaved worker and a paid employee. The group also worked with the Office for Diversity and Equity to organize a panel discussion addressing Mr. Martin's experience at the university and African American life in Charlottesville.

- The University Guide Service (UGS), a student-run organization that provides daily tours of the Rotunda and the Academical Village, is working to enhance their guides' understandings of slavery in the university's past so that more of this information is incorporated into these tours. One of the group's student leaders is also guiding a project to create a brochure specifically addressing the history of African Americans at U.Va., which will be available in the Rotunda and used on tours.
- The Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, which will open in January 2013, will enhance the community's understanding of African Americans in Charlottesville's history. The Heritage Center is located in the historically significant Jefferson School City Center.
- Two University of Virginia faculty members, Professors Maurie McInnis and Kirt von Daacke, have recently begun a project to organize and create a database of a large number of documents related to the early history of the University.
- In fall of 2012, sixty-seven grave shafts likely belonging to enslaved and/or free African Americans were discovered adjacent to the northern wall of the University Cemetery. While there is no plan to excavate the graves in an attempt to gather more information, a newly-formed Gravesite Commemoration Committee will make a recommendation about how to memorialize the site.

The catalogue presented here is not static. Given the extent to which slavery is an inextricable part of the University of Virginia's history, it is likely that new discoveries will continue to be made and that new initiatives will be developed. There are many opportunities for the University of Virginia to continue and build upon the work that has already begun. Possibilities include (but are not limited to) continued research and scholarship, physical memorials, digital recreations, a comprehensive website, the enhancement of its presentation of its history to visitors and the public through displays and specialized tours, symposia, exhibitions, and additional archaeological investigations. The development of a larger framework—one with institutional backing—to guide these projects would offer a critical opportunity for ensuring that a more complete and inclusive history of the University of Virginia is presented to students, faculty, staff, visitors, and the community.

INTRODUCTION

Despite an abundance of research on so many aspects of University of Virginia's history, the university's relationship to slavery is a topic that has been explored by very few historians. Enslaved persons (owned by faculty or hired by the university from community members) were an integral part of life at the university during its formative decades. However, slavery is often missing in the presentation of the university's history to visitors as well as its own students, faculty, and staff. Two premier institutions – Monticello (with which University of Virginia is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the Smithsonian Institution – have recently pursued deeper understandings of Thomas Jefferson's life as it relates to slavery and yet the university as a peer institution has largely been absent from these efforts. While there have been a number of events, scholarly activities, and proposed initiatives on- and off-Grounds to address this aspect of the university's past, these projects have lacked an cohesive framework and, in some cases, institutional backing.

The University of Virginia IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, access) Fund, an officially recognized alumni group, is interested in supporting a project to enhance public knowledge of this aspect of the university's unique history. To that end, the group commissioned this report, the aim of which is to provide an overarching view of various initiatives dealing with the historical fact of slavery at the University of Virginia, in order to assist interested parties in envisioning the best path forward.

Research for this report was conducted primarily in spring through fall of 2012. Faculty members familiar with this topic were consulted in order to identify key stakeholders, and meetings with these stakeholders occurred throughout 2012 (see Appendix A). The information gathered, along with additional online and print research, was used to develop the following catalogue of initiatives, presented in rough chronological order. It is the author's hope that the information included can be useful in furthering an institutional response to this important, yet painful, part of the University of Virginia's history.

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CATALOGUE OF INITIATIVES

This catalogue was developed in response to a perceived need for a comprehensive source describing past and current initiatives addressing the University of Virginia's historical relationship to slavery. Its purpose is to provide a resource for those groups and individuals interested in exploring this history and in identifying opportunities for collaboration. The initiatives below are presented in rough chronological order.

“Slaves at the University of Virginia,” Gayle M. Schulman (2003)

Gayle Schulman, a local historian, conducted research for her paper “Slaves at the University of Virginia” and presented it to the African American Genealogy Group of Charlottesville/Albemarle in May 2003. It is the earliest known research paper to focus entirely on the topic of slavery at the University of Virginia. The names and histories of a number of the enslaved individuals who lived on Grounds are included. Schulman pays particular attention to Isabella Gibbons, who lived part of her life on Grounds in Pavilion VI and was owned by a U.Va. faculty member. After Emancipation, Gibbons went on to become an educator in the community and a teacher at the Charlottesville Freedmen’s School. The paper also deals with a number of individuals who were enslaved at Monticello and then sold to University of Virginia faculty members after Thomas Jefferson’s death.

“Slaves, Freedpeople, and the University of Virginia,” Catherine S. Neale (2006)

Catherine Neale, who received an undergraduate degree from the College of Arts and Sciences in 2006, wrote an honors thesis for the Corcoran Department of History focusing on enslaved persons and freed African Americans who worked at U.Va. It is one of only two available research papers on the subject. Building upon Gayle Schulman’s research for her paper “Slaves at the University of Virginia,” Neale provides a more extensive overview of the nature of slavery at the university. Details such as names and brief biographies of enslaved persons who lived on Grounds are included. Neale also focuses on the “paradox” of Jefferson as a proponent of the ideals of liberty and freedom and Jefferson as a slave-owner. She writes, “Jefferson’s self-proclaimed hobby of his old age, U.Va., inherited the struggle between liberty and slavery from its father.”¹ Neale’s work, completed while she was an undergraduate student, provides a solid foundation from which historians might enhance scholarship on this subject.

Memorial Honoring the University’s Original Labor Force

In February of 2007, the University’s Board of Visitors approved the installation of a slate memorial in the brick pavement of the passage under the south terrace of the Rotunda.² The memorial reads:

“In honor of the several hundred women and men, both free and enslaved, whose labor between 1817 and 1826 helped to realize Thomas Jefferson’s design for the University of Virginia” (see Figure 1). A committee chaired by Brian Hogg, Senior Preservation Planner in the Office of the University Architect, designed the memorial as part of an effort led by President John Casteen III to honor the university’s “original labor force,” which included enslaved workers. While the installation of the memorial represented a notable milestone at the University of Virginia, the memorial has been criticized by some faculty and students as inadequate due to its relatively small size and only brief mention of enslaved laborers.

At the same 2007 Board of Visitors meeting, a second committee, also chaired by Brian Hogg, was charged with conducting research to identify enslaved workers and other persons of color who participated in constructing the university’s original buildings and grounds.³ It was proposed that the information gained from the committee’s research be incorporated into a “commemorative and interpretive site that will be part of Phase II of the South Lawn Project.”⁴ However, this committee ceased meeting after the installation of the slate memorial and the interpretive site has not been pursued further.

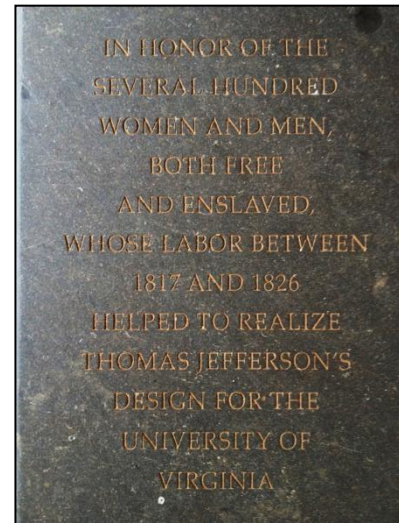


Figure 1: Slate memorial installed near the Rotunda in 2007

University and Community Action for Racial Equity (UCARE)

In early 2007, the Virginia General Assembly passed a resolution that expressed regret for the state’s role in the slave trade.⁵ Shortly afterward, the University of Virginia Board of Visitors passed a commendation of this resolution, expressing a particular regret for the university’s role in the employment of enslaved persons.⁶ A group of faculty, students, and Charlottesville/Albemarle community members was formed following these two events with the intent to “understand and remedy the University’s legacy of slavery, segregation and discrimination within and outside of the University,”⁷ calling their group University and Community Action for Racial Equity (UCARE).

UCARE’s goals, as stated on its website, are: “First, to understand the role that the University played in administrative, faculty and student support for slavery and racial segregation and discrimination; second, to understand the legacy of that role and its impact on present day racial disparities on and off grounds; and third, to find ways to address and repair that legacy.”⁸ UCARE members hope to help the University and adjacent communities come together to identify actions that will lead to reconciliation. Dr. Frank Dukes, Director of the Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia, is the director of the group and is supported by four interns (former and current students.) The group received three-year funding from the Andrus Family Fund in February of 2009, and as well as an additional two-year grant of \$142,000 from the same fund in September 2012 to continue its work.

In November 2011, UCARE released a report titled *Call for Reflection and Action*, the stated purpose of which was to highlight the linkage between past and present, between university and community, and between knowledge and action; to distill in one document the calls to action that various groups are currently pursuing, laying out the challenges that must be addressed by responsible individuals and institutions within the university and neighboring community; and to capture a moment in time in the university's and the community's collective and independent work on these complex issues.⁹ The report contains information garnered from anonymous interviews with community members, some of whom are also employed by U.Va. The authors spoke with members of the community about what the passage of the Virginia General Assembly and Board of Visitors resolutions meant to them, and concluded that the answers were "disheartening for anyone who cares about the university or about university-community relations."¹⁰ The report identifies a number of themes present in the interviews, including arrogance and isolation, the "Plantation," continuing racial discrimination, and resentment about distortion and omissions of history and image. Thus, one of the central arguments of the report is that the University of Virginia's relationship with the surrounding Charlottesville community is in need of repair.

Some of the beneficial aspects of the University presence in Charlottesville are stated as well. The report includes a list of some of the U.Va. programs whose missions align with UCARE's vision and goals, as well as examples of the responses of other universities to their historical relationships with slavery. It concludes with a list of goals and actions that might be implemented at the University of Virginia and in the Charlottesville community in order to improve their relationship.

Memorial for Enslaved Laborers (MEL)

Memorial for Enslaved Laborers (MEL)¹¹ is a student-led action group of University and Community Action for Racial Equity (UCARE) that was organized in 2010. MEL was formed after student leaders (including the Student Council Diversity Initiatives Committee) distributed a survey to the entire university community. The survey, which received approximately 800 replies, asked questions about the small slate memorial installed in 2007 in the passage under the south terrace of the Rotunda and asked participants for feedback about the idea of proposing a new memorial. In 2010, MEL organized a panel discussion titled "The Slave Experience at U.Va.," which brought together faculty members at U.Va. with knowledge of this history. MEL also sponsored a competition for memorial concepts in 2011 in partnership with Student Council, UCARE, and the Black Student Alliance. Three of the submissions were selected as winners and can be reviewed on the group's website.¹²

MEL student leaders continue to pursue their vision of a memorial for the enslaved laborers who once worked and lived on Grounds. In the 2012-2013 academic year, Jared Brown, a Fourth-Year student and Chair of the group, is working with other MEL members to produce a formal report summarizing the group's proposals and will submit it to University of Virginia administrators, including President Teresa Sullivan and Vice President and Chief Officer for Diversity and Equity Marcus Martin. The group has support from both Student Council and the Faculty Senate in its pursuit of a memorial on Grounds that is bigger, more noticeable, and a greater acknowledgement

of the role of enslaved workers in the construction of the university. Jared Brown has estimated a two to three year timeline to the completion of such a project. MEL leaders acknowledge that working productively with the university's administration on this project is the best path forward, and hope that the process for decision-making will be as transparent as possible.

“The Slave Experience at U.Va.” Panel Discussion

An event titled “The Slave Experience at U.Va.: Uncovering the Truth” occurred on April 5, 2010 in Minor Hall 125 at the University of Virginia. Professors Ervin Jordan (Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections), Phyllis Leffler (Department of History), and Scot French (Department of History) made presentations to students and faculty. Their lectures focused on the experiences of enslaved persons who contributed to the construction of the University, the process of integration, and current research opportunities with the potential to accurately portray life in Jefferson's Academical Village. The event was sponsored by Student Council, University and Community Action for Racial Equity (UCARE), and the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African and African American Studies. Full videos of the presentations are available online.¹³ Professor Jordan has written a forthcoming book on the African American experience at U.Va.

Archeological Investigations in the Pavilion VI Garden

Rivanna Archaeological Services (Stephen M. Thompson, Principal Investigator) submitted a report titled *Archaeological Investigations in the Pavilion VI Garden* to the University of Virginia Office of the Architect in May 2008. The university commissioned this work, which took place from November 2006 to November 2007, from Rivanna Archaeological services in order to identify any important artifacts or structural remains that might be disturbed in the Pavilion VI garden during a planned restoration. The report documents the architectural remains and archaeological deposits of four nineteenth century outbuildings within the Pavilion VI/Hotel D garden. One of the significant outcomes of this report is the finding that at least two of these buildings probably served

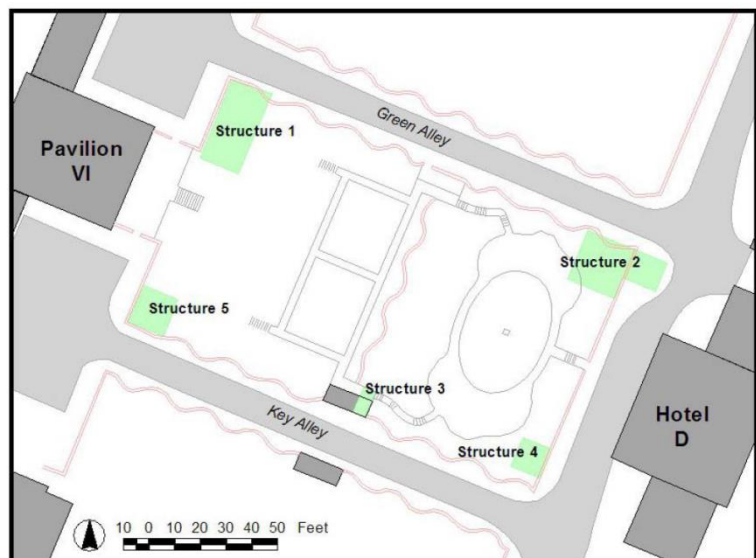


Figure 2: Map showing approximate locations of Pavilion VI outbuildings
(Source: Thompson, *Archaeological Investigations in the Pavilion VI Garden*)

as living and/or working spaces for slaves owned by the residents of Pavilion VI and Hotel D (see Figure 2). The discovery of these spaces and artifacts provides new insights into early life in the Academical Village.

The archaeological excavations detailed in the report offer, for the first time, extensive evidence of the various outbuildings that once occupied the space in the Pavilion gardens. The discovery of items of personal adornment and hygiene, including fragments of toothbrushes, fragments of a soap dish, part of a comb, and several buttons in the former location of an outbuilding led the archeologists to conclude that it is likely this particular space served as living quarters for enslaved persons. Thus, as the report points out, the Pavilion gardens once served very different purposes than they serve today. Though in modern times the gardens function as places for entertainment and reflection, they were utilitarian in their beginnings.¹⁴ The insights provided in this report are vital to broadening common understandings of the University's history.

The University of Virginia has commissioned a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) to be prepared in the upcoming year by Heritage Landscapes (Vermont), with input from Rivanna Archaeological Services. A CLR documents the significance and history of a cultural landscape, defined by the United States National Park Service as "a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values."¹⁵ The CLR will determine and describe the significant elements of the Academical Village and their treatment since the construction of the university. It will also include an extensive history of the early university. This forthcoming report, scheduled for completion in 2013 or 2014, will be a useful guide for any project dealing with this history.

The South Lawn/ "Canada"

The South Lawn addition, completed in 2010, raised significant cultural issues for the university. The South Lawn, which now houses three academic departments and a number of interdisciplinary programs, is located in an area known as "Canada" that was once an early community for free African Americans. The homestead of Catherine "Kitty" Foster, a free black woman who lived near the university from 1833 to 1863 on Venable Lane, as well as the adjacent African American burial grounds, were preserved as a one-acre park next to the South



Figure 3: Memorial at site of Kitty Foster Homestead
Photo Credit: Tom Daly
Source: McNair, "Going South: But Where's the Lawn?"

Lawn project when construction began. Foster was a seamstress who worked doing laundry for faculty and students in the early to mid-nineteenth century, and who bought the property in 1833. Her descendants lived there until 1906. The site of Foster’s home is now marked by a “shadow catcher” (see Figure 3), which is the size and shape of her former house and which marks the building’s outline in shadow lines. The South Lawn project is viewed by many as a successful model of the integration of past and present communities.

Slavery at Jefferson’s Monticello: Paradox of Liberty

The exhibition Slavery at Jefferson’s Monticello: Paradox of Liberty spent almost nine months (January 27-October 14, 2012) at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. It was created by Rex Ellis, associate director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture (slated to open on the National Mall in 2015) and Elizabeth Chew, curator at Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson. The exhibition focuses on the seeming contradiction between Jefferson’s espousal of the ideals of liberty and equality and his role as a slave-owner. Jefferson’s sometimes inconsistently expressed philosophical opposition to slavery is presented alongside the economic situation that kept him “trapped” as a slave-owner. That is, he was unable to fulfill his professed desire to rid himself of his involvement with the institution of slavery largely because the society and the economy in which he was entrenched were dependent on the free labor of slaves. Rather than vilify Jefferson, the exhibit asks visitors to engage with some of the complex philosophical challenges with which it is supposed Jefferson may have struggled. What does it mean for the author of the Declaration of Independence, a document deeply entrenched in the values of liberty and equality, to have owned hundreds of slaves during his lifetime?

Upon entering the exhibition space in the Smithsonian Museum of American History, one encounters a life-size statue of Jefferson in front of a backdrop featuring the names of the approximately six hundred slaves who worked at Monticello during his lifetime. Other items included in the

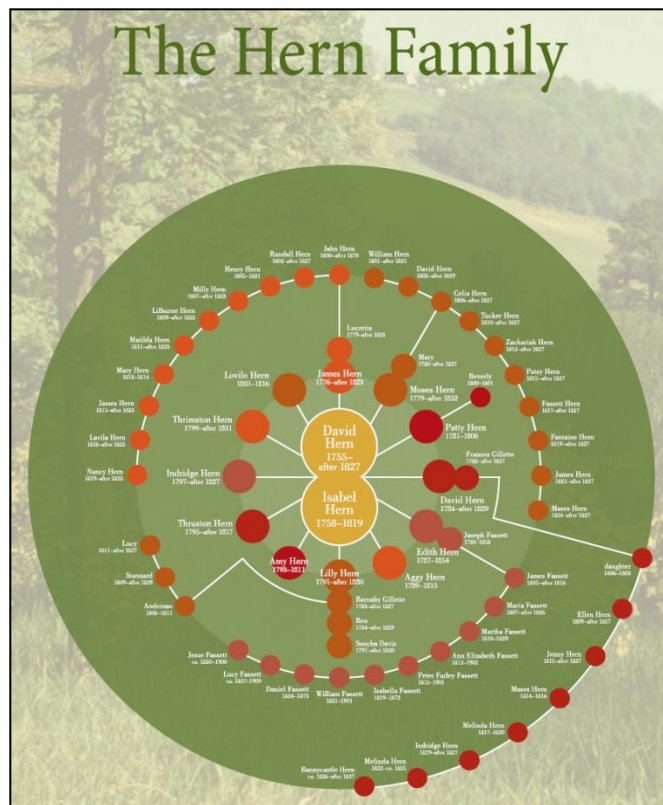


Figure 4: Hern Family Map (on display as part of Paradox of Liberty Exhibit)
Source: Monticello

exhibition are the desk on which Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, as well as a large number of artifacts recovered from archaeological excavations on Mulberry Row, where many of the slaves at Monticello lived and worked, and at Shadwell, Jefferson's boyhood home.

The exhibition also focuses on a number of the large families of enslaved persons at Monticello, based on the research of Lucia "Cinder" Stanton, formerly Shannon Senior Historian at Monticello and author of the book *Those Who Labor for My Happiness: Slavery at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello*. There are several visual presentations of the Hubbard, Granger, Hemings, Fossett, Gillette, and Hern families (see Figure 4) which demonstrate the large family networks at Monticello. The stories of these descendants are explored further in a portion of the exhibition devoted to Monticello's Getting Word oral history project, begun in 1993 with the goal of preserving the histories of the African American families at Monticello.¹⁶ A video that reveals the research and interview process for the project runs continuously.

The exhibition does not focus explicitly on the nature of slavery at the University of Virginia. However, it is known that a number of slaves owned by Jefferson at Monticello were sold to university faculty members. Figure 4 is a map of the Hern family on display in the exhibition. After Jefferson's death, three children of David and Isabel Hern were sold to individuals employed by the University of Virginia. Lily and Ben Hern were sold to a German professor of languages, and Thrimston Hern (born 1799) was sold to University of Virginia Proctor Arthur Brockenbrough for \$600 in 1829 in order to complete the stonework at the Rotunda.¹⁷ A number of historians at Monticello believe that Thrimston Hern helped Thomas Jefferson lay the cornerstone of the University in 1817.¹⁸ The exhibition is an intellectual springboard for further research and exploration into the ties between slavery at Monticello and at U.Va.

Waiting on Liberty: Slavery in Jefferson's "Great House"

The Waiting on Liberty tour at Monticello was first offered to the public in February 2012. In contrast to the tours traditionally offered at Monticello, Waiting on Liberty focuses on the lives and perspectives of the enslaved African Americans who lived at Monticello and were owned by Thomas Jefferson. Visitors are encouraged to view rooms and other spaces from the perspective of enslaved workers, and the two-hour session begins and ends with a group discussion. The processing session that concludes the tour provides an opportunity for participants to discuss the entire experience with other tour group members and guides.

Monticello has also compiled the online exhibition Landscape of Slavery: Mulberry Row at Monticello, through which visitors to Monticello's website can learn about the principal plantation street and center of work and domestic life for the free and enslaved people there.¹⁹ This exhibition is the first part of a multi-year project to help real and virtual visitors understand Monticello, which was occupied not only by Thomas Jefferson and his family, but also by hired workers and approximately 130 enslaved people in any given year.²⁰ The goal of this project is to help visitors gain a more complex and accurate understanding of Monticello. In the near future, visitors to Monticello will be able to explore mini-exhibitions and interpretation stations along Mulberry Row,

and all of these new materials will be accessible on Monticello’s website so that the information is available to those who may be unable to physically visit the historic site.

Topics explored in the online exhibition include: treatment, economy, labor, skills, resistance, family, and picturing Mulberry Row’s people. The various types of work performed on Mulberry Row are also detailed. The exhibition includes digital maps, models, and animations (some of which are on physical display at Monticello) that were created by Earl Mark, associate professor of architecture at the University of Virginia. These digital creations depict the various stages of the development of Mulberry Row as it grew to accommodate the size of the plantation. The future plan for this project includes the restoration of mountaintop roads and the reconstruction of several original buildings.

Honoring Henry Martin

Henry Martin (1826-1915) was known to generations of students and faculty as the University of Virginia bell-ringer. Born at Monticello on July 4, 1826, the day Thomas Jefferson died, Martin spent over fifty years at U.Va. as both an enslaved worker and an employee. In 2012, two events exploring Henry Martin’s life and time at the University were sponsored as part of the annual Community MLK Celebration, a calendar of events honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. A panel of historians discussed “The

Enduring Legacy of Henry Martin: African American Life in Charlottesville and the U.Va.

Community.” An evening event also took place in the Dome Room of the Rotunda, with remarks from President Teresa Sullivan as well as the reading of a City of Charlottesville proclamation to honor Mr. Martin.

As the result of efforts by U.Va. IDEA Fund trustees and the Office for Diversity and Equity, a plaque honoring Henry Martin was installed near the University Chapel in summer of 2012 (see Figure 5).



Figure 5: Plaque Honoring Henry Martin

University Guide Service Tours

The University Guide Service (UGS) is a completely student-run volunteer organization that provides daily historical tours of the Rotunda and the Academical Village, as well as admissions tours to prospective students. The organization has a membership of over one hundred tour guides at any given time and provides over one thousand tours to visitors each semester. Since the tours are unscripted, guides are required to have a high level of knowledge about the history of the University of Virginia, and must make a commitment of at least three semesters (one full semester of training and two semesters as a tour guide).

New guides are trained by other student members with the aid of a six hundred-page manual provided to them at the beginning of their training. There are two documents in this manual pertaining specifically to slavery and the university—one is titled “Jefferson and Slavery” and the other “Slavery and the University of Virginia.” Both of the documents (a total of twelve pages) were compiled several years ago by UGS members in consultation with Cinder Stanton, formerly Shannon Senior Historian at Monticello. Thus, all of the incoming guides are oriented to this history. According to Conor O’Boyle, probationary chair for 2012-2013, there has been an obvious trend over the past few years to emphasize to new guides the importance of honestly and frankly discussing slavery on the tours. Though the topics covered on each tour can vary quite dramatically depending on its leader, Conor expressed that one of his goals was to ensure that all twenty-six of the incoming guides in fall of 2012 were well informed about and comfortable with the topic of slavery in the University’s history. Also as part of the training, Professor Maurie McInnis (Department of Art History) delivers a lecture on the topic to the guides-in-training each semester.

UGS also provides a specialized tour on the history of African Americans at U.Va. and a tour about women at U.Va. Ian Sander, chair of specialty tours, expressed that the history of African Americans tour was offered weekly during 2011-2012, but at times was poorly attended. Each of the specialty tours is currently available at the request of visiting groups. Ian reported that it is one of his goals in 2012-2013 to communicate more widely about the availability of these tours in order to attract more participants. He is currently guiding a project to create a brochure specifically addressing the history of African Americans at U.Va. The brochure will be used in conjunction with tours and will be available to Rotunda visitors.

Jefferson School African American Heritage Center

The Jefferson School African American Heritage Center will open in January 2013 and is located in the Jefferson School City Center, listed on the National Register of Historical Places. The Heritage Center will have a deep historical significance for the Charlottesville community in that it will be located in the renovated building that once housed the Jefferson School, which served African American students beginning shortly after Emancipation. The history of the Jefferson School dates back to the end of the Civil War in 1865, when the New England Freedmen’s Aid Society sent a teacher named Anna Gardner to Charlottesville to open a school for former slaves. The school was

housed in various buildings in the city until 1926, when, as the result of a petition by parents and community leaders to the school board, the city built a high school for African American students in the building now known as the Jefferson School. It is located in Vinegar Hill, a predominantly African American neighborhood that, at its height, was a flourishing commercial and residential area. From 1926 until integration occurred, the school underwent a number of expansions as the population of African American students in Charlottesville continued to grow.

The Jefferson School has been completely renovated and upgraded with state-of-the-art modern features while still retaining the historical qualities and character of the original building. In addition to the Heritage Center, it remains home to the Carver Recreation Center, which offers health and fitness activities for the location population. It also houses other tenants offering a range of educational, social, health, and recreational services for the community. These resident partner organizations include: Common Ground Healing Arts, the Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA), Literacy Volunteers of Charlottesville/Albemarle, Martha Jefferson Hospital, Piedmont Family YMCA, Piedmont Virginia Community College, and The Women's Initiative. The Heritage Center's mission is to "honor and preserve the rich heritage and legacy of the African American community of Charlottesville-Albemarle, Virginia. Through intergenerational offerings, the Center will promote a greater appreciation for and understanding of, the contributions of peoples of color locally, nationally, and globally."²¹

Documenting the University's Early History

Maurie McInnis is professor of American art and material culture (Department of Art History) and associate dean of undergraduate academic programs at the University of Virginia. Her main research interest is in the cultural history of American art in the colonial and antebellum South. Her book *Slaves Waiting for Sale: Abolitionist Art and the American Slave Trade* explores the evolution of abolitionist art and the role of visual culture in the world of abolitionism. She teaches the course Arts and Cultures of the Slave South, as well as a First-Year seminar on the history of the University of Virginia, in which she covers the topic of U.Va.'s relationship with slavery.

Kirt von Daacke is associate professor in the Department of History and assistant dean in the College of Arts and Sciences. His research centers upon social constructions of race, community social hierarchies, and identity in eighteenth and nineteenth century America, with a particular focus on the complex interplay of race and culture in the antebellum South. His first book, *Freedom Has a Face: Race, Identity, and Community in Jefferson's Albemarle*, was published by the University of Virginia Press in October 2012.

In a May 2012 meeting with Tierney Fairchild, John Wright, and Meghan Faulkner, Dean McInnis explained that she and Dean von Daacke are in the preliminary stages of a project in collaboration with the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities (IATH) and the University Library to create a database of a large number of documents related to the early history of the university. Its working title is Faculty, Students, and Subjects in Jefferson's Academical Village. The project began during the summer of 2012 and entails conserving, transcribing, digitizing, and

organizing a great amount of largely untouched documentation (for example, Board of Visitors minutes and Bursars accounts). Many of these documents are handwritten, contained in bound books, and have never been catalogued. The project is in its very early stages, but Professor McInnis believes that it is a five to seven year undertaking that will involve dozens of graduate student assistants. At the point when the database is completed and searchable, it will be an invaluable resource for those researching the university's history.

Discovery of Forgotten Graves

In fall of 2012, sixty-seven grave shafts were discovered during an archaeological survey performed by Rivanna Archaeological Services as part of a planned expansion of the University of Virginia Cemetery. The graves are located adjacent to and north of a cemetery wall built in 1915. No clues as to the identities of the persons buried in the previously unknown graves were uncovered during the physical investigations, though it is likely that, given the significant number of grave shafts, the burial site was used by a large population associated with the University of Virginia. Benjamin Ford, Principal Investigator of Rivanna Archaeological Services, notes that with the exception of students, enslaved African Americans were the largest population of individuals living on Grounds during the nineteenth century, when the graves are believed to have been filled.²²

A Gravesite Commemoration Committee was formed in mid-November 2012 with the responsibility of recommending appropriate treatment and interpretation of the newly discovered section of the cemetery. At this time, the university has no plans to excavate the graves. However, the committee will make a recommendation about how to memorialize the site.²³

OPPORTUNITIES

This preliminary list of opportunities for further engagement is intended as a guide for IDEA Fund trustees and others interested in pursuing future projects around the University of Virginia's relationship with slavery. It is a compilation, in no particular order, of possible future steps that were suggested in stakeholder meetings and discussions of this report.

- Work with the Office for Diversity and Equity as well as other university administration offices on an overarching institutional framework and/or approach to its unique early history. As part of this process, it would be instructive to consider the institutional approaches taken by Brown University and others.
- Collaborate with Memorial for Enslaved Laborers (MEL) and other groups on the memorial plan.
- Create efforts similar to the Henry Martin project in order to educate students, faculty, staff, and visitors about enslaved individuals who worked on Grounds.
- Provide support for more archaeological investigations throughout other areas of the original Grounds.
- Support the Cultural Landscape Report committee's work.
- Support the work of and/or collaborate with Deans Maurie McInnis and Kirt von Daacke on the comprehensive database.
- Fund print materials (brochures or pamphlets) to be distributed to visitors to the Rotunda.
- Collaborate with the Office of Public Affairs on the production of a high-quality video focusing on the University's early history that could be shown at new faculty and staff orientations.
- Partner with Monticello in their research. Collaborate with Monticello on events around Jefferson and slavery.
- Support the creation of a historical exhibition focusing on slavery at U.Va.
- Propose and/or support the interpretation of outbuildings in a Pavilion garden.
- Support new interpretive/interactive media in the improved Rotunda Visitor's Center, in collaboration with the Office of the Architect.

CONCLUSION

Over the past decade, an increasing number of colleges and universities across the country have, in a variety of ways, marked their historical relationships with slavery. Brown University, Emory University, the University of Maryland, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, William and Mary, and Yale University have made coordinated efforts on an institutional level to explore the ways in which slavery is entangled with their individual histories. Memorials, courses, archival exhibits, apologies, and the establishment of centers to further related research have been included in the responses of these schools.

Enslaved individuals played an integral role in the construction of the University of Virginia and in the day-to-day operation of the university during its formative decades. Many early faculty members owned slaves who resided and worked on Grounds. And though students were not allowed to bring their “servants” to live on Grounds with them, the enslaved individuals owned by faculty or hired by the university performed essential roles in students’ daily lives during the university’s first several decades.²⁴ As captured in this report, two premier institutions – Monticello (with which U.Va. is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the Smithsonian Institute– have recently pursued deeper understandings of Jefferson’s life as it relates to slavery, and yet the University as a peer institution has been largely absent from these efforts.

A number of efforts have been made in Charlottesville by University of Virginia faculty, staff, and students, as well as community members, to bring attention to the university’s historical relationship with slavery. Some of these on-Grounds initiatives, such as the activities led by University Community Action for Racial Equity (UCARE) and the student group Memorial for Enslaved Laborers (MEL), have increased public dialogue about this particular history. Some, such as the memorial approved by the Board of Visitors in 2007 and the archaeological investigations in the Pavilion VI garden, have resulted in physical changes on Grounds. Other related developments, such as the recent efforts at Monticello to portray Thomas Jefferson’s relationship to slavery and the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center in Charlottesville, have increased public awareness from off-Grounds.

The growth of such efforts and the increasing attention they have drawn represent an important opportunity for the University of Virginia to create a cohesive framework for projects at U.Va. that could guide the incorporation of this history into the university experience for students, faculty, staff, students, and community members. This important step would also define the university’s institutional approach to addressing its relationship with slavery and responding to the significant role that slaves played in the construction and early life of the institution.

Some stakeholders will ask why any university should choose to explore parts of its history that are inherently painful and controversial. An eloquent explanation is captured in the *Report of the Brown University Commission on Slavery and Justice*: “Brown is a university. Universities are dedicated to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge. They are conservators of humanity’s past. They cherish

their own pasts, honoring forbears with statues and portraits and in the names of buildings. To study or teach at a place like Brown is to be a member of a community that exists across time, a participant in a procession that began centuries ago and that will continue long after we are gone. If an institution professing these principles cannot squarely face its own history, it is hard to imagine how any other institution, let alone our nation, might do so."²⁵

Similarly, the following words of Thomas Jefferson, our founder, should serve as a guide in this endeavor. He wrote: "This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it."²⁶

This catalogue of initiatives is intended to serve as a stepping-off point from which University of Virginia alumni, faculty, staff, students, and Charlottesville community members might begin to envision a continued path forward to understand and respond to the university's full and rich history.

¹ Neale, 5.

² University of Virginia Board of Visitors, February 2007, 7251-52.

³ Ibid., 7222.

⁴ Ibid., 7222.

⁵ <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp524.exe?071+ful+HJ728H1>

⁶ <http://www.virginia.edu/bov/meetings/07marapr/'07%20APRIL%20BOARD%20MINUTES.pdf>

⁷ <http://pages.shanti.virginia.edu/ucare/home/vision-and-mission-statement/>

⁸ <http://www.ucareva.org/about/>

⁹ UCARE, 2.

¹⁰ UCARE, 5.

¹¹ See the group's website for more information: <http://www.ucareva.org/about/current-projects/memorial-for-enslaved-laborers/>

¹² Winning designs can be reviewed at: <http://pages.shanti.virginia.edu/ucare/about/current-projects/memorial-for-enslaved-laborers/>

¹³ See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4xx4yuGwAo&feature=plcp>.

¹⁴ Thompson, ii.

¹⁵ <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief36.htm>

¹⁶ See <http://www.monticello.org/getting-word>

¹⁷ Stanton, 65.

¹⁸ Dillard 2012.

¹⁹ See <http://www.monticello.org/mulberry-row>

²⁰ Stein, <http://www.monticello.org/mulberry-row/about/donate>.

²¹ <http://jeffschoolheritagecenter.org/index.html>

²² Hull 2012.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Neale, 7.

²⁵ Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice (2006), 6.

²⁶ Thomas Jefferson to William Roscoe, December 27, 1820.

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APPENDIX A: List of Stakeholder Meetings and Communications

Frank Dukes (Director of the Institute for Environmental Negotiation, U.Va.; Project Director, UCARE) with Tierney Fairchild and John Wright, 3/28/12

Elizabeth Chew, Brandon Dillard, Elizabeth Jones, David Ronka, and Cinder Stanton (Monticello) with Tierney Fairchild, Meghan Faulkner, Marcus Martin, Gail Prince-Davis, Deb White, John Wright, and Trula Wright, 3/29/12

Ida Lee Wooten (Director of Community Relations, Office of Public Affairs) with Tierney Fairchild and Meghan Faulkner, 5/7/12

Brandon Dillard and Elizabeth Jones with Tierney Fairchild and Meghan Faulkner, 5/21/12

Gayle Schulman (Local Researcher) with Meghan Faulkner (phone conversation), 5/29/12

Maurie McInnis (Professor of American Art and Material Culture in the Department of Art History and Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Programs at U.Va.) with Tierney Fairchild, Meghan Faulkner, and John Wright, 5/31/12

Elizabeth Jones with Tierney Fairchild and Meghan Faulkner, 6/11/12

Elizabeth Varon (Langbourne M. Williams Professor of American History, University of Virginia) with Meghan Faulkner, 6/21/12 (regarding relevant resources for the report)

Andrea Douglas (Director, Jefferson School African American Heritage Center) with Tierney Fairchild, Meghan Faulkner, and John Wright, 6/22/12

Claire Thompson and Andrea Douglas (Jefferson School African American Heritage Center) with Tierney Fairchild and Marcus Martin, Hard Hat Tour of Jefferson School City Center, 6/27/12

Conor O'Boyle (Probationary Chair, University Guide Service) and **Ian Sander** (Chair of Specialty Tours, University Guide Service) with Meghan Faulkner, 7/18/12

Ervin Jordan (Associate Professor and Research Archivist, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, U.Va.) with Meghan Faulkner (via email), 8/6/12

Jared Brown (Chair, Memorial for Enslaved Laborers) with Meghan Faulkner, 8/7/12

Steve Thompson (Principal Investigator, Rivanna Archaeological Services, LLC) with Meghan Faulkner, 8/7/12

Jared Brown with Meghan Faulkner and Marcus Martin, 8/21/12

Elizabeth Chew with Tierney Fairchild, Meghan Faulkner, and Marcus Martin, 9/7/12

Kirt von Daacke (Assistant Dean, College of Arts & Sciences; Associate Professor, Corcoran Department of History, U.Va.) with Meghan Faulkner (phone conversation), 9/21/12

Marcus Martin (Vice President and Chief Officer for Diversity and Equity, U.Va.) with Tierney Fairchild, Meghan Faulkner, and John Wright, 11/12/12 (regarding newly discovered grave shafts at the University of Virginia likely belonging to African American slaves)

Ian Sander (Chair of Specialty Tours, University Guide Service) with Meghan Faulkner, 11/14/12

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