

Randolph Cemetery

Randolph Cemetery is located in the downtown area of Columbia, S.C. and is the first cemetery formally established for the city's African American community. In 1871, nineteen local black legislators and businessmen came together to form an association to establish a respectable place for burial for blacks in Columbia. Prior to this period African Americans were buried near the river in the local Potter's Field along with poor whites. Seeking to commemorate Senator Benjamin Franklin Randolph's contributions, 19 men in Columbia's African American community created the Randolph Cemetery Association, purchased three acres of land from a pre-existing white cemetery (Elmwood Cemetery) in 1872 for \$900 and an additional acre in 1899.

Although several sources date 1868 as the earliest burials in Randolph Cemetery, there are graves that date as early as 1864, as well as burials from the periods of 1866-1868 and 1870-1871. This suggests that Elmwood Cemetery may have been allowing African Americans to be interred in this area prior to establishment of the Randolph Cemetery Association.

Randolph Cemetery was the most prominent African American cemetery in Columbia from the late nineteenth century throughout much of the twentieth century, and it is the final resting place of many of Columbia's most notable African American figures and families. More than 10 legislators from the Reconstruction Era are buried here including Senator Henry Cardozo, Representative John Palmer, Representative Charles McDuffie Wilder, Senator Benjamin Franklin Randolph, and Senator John Lee.

In recent years a preservation effort has focused on restoring and preserving the historic site.

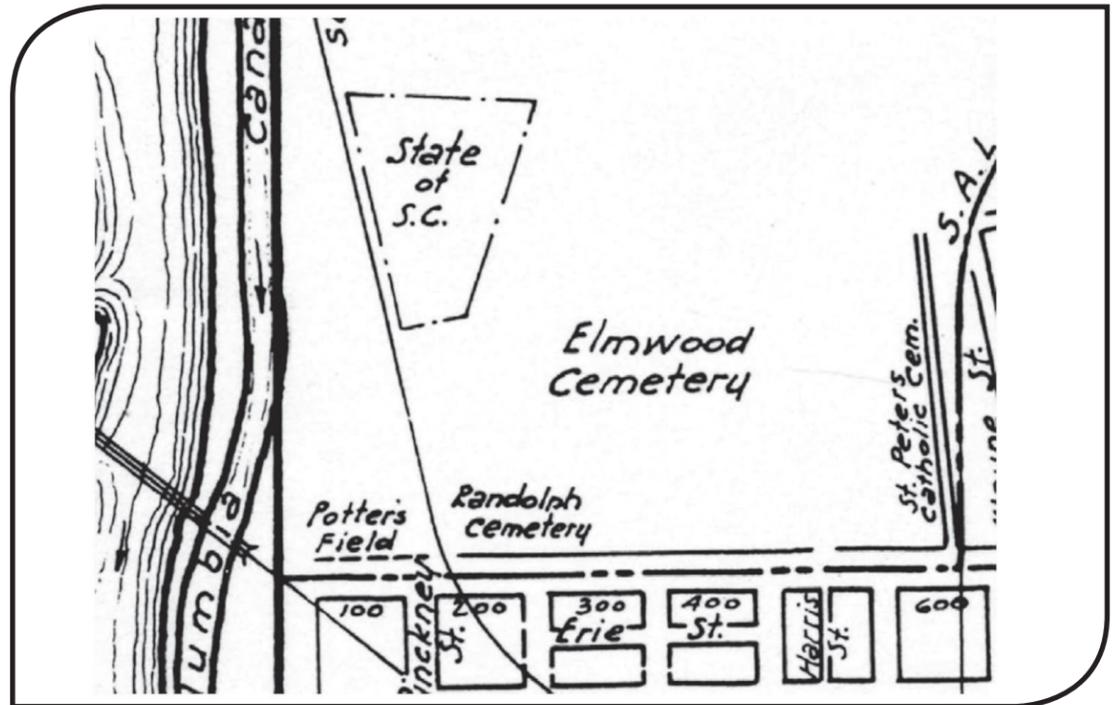


Photo courtesy of the Randolph Cemetery: Mapping and Documentation of Historic African American Site and <http://www.historicrandolphcemetery.org/preservation/>

South Carolina African American History Calendar

December

Celebrates 25 Years.

2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5 1899 – Modjeska Monteith Simkins, known as the "matriarch of civil rights activists" in South Carolina was born in Columbia, SC 1902 – Annie Green Nelson, South Carolina's first known, published, female African American author, was born in Darlington County, SC 1935 – Mary McLeod Bethune, educator, founded National Council of Negro Women	6 1870 – Joseph H. Rainey, first Black in the South Carolina House of Representatives is sworn in
7 PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY 1950 – Casey Manning, the first African American member of the University of South Carolina's basketball team was born	8	9	10	11	12 1963 – Five movie theaters in Columbia agree to admit one black couple each	13 1962 – The Edwards vs. SC trial begins which was in reaction to 187 petitioners consisted of African American high school and college students who peacefully assembled at the Zion Baptist Church in Columbia, SC in March 1961. The students marched in separate groups of roughly 15 to South Carolina State House grounds to peacefully express their grievances regarding civil rights of African Americans
14	15	16 HANNUKKAH BEGINS	17	18 1959 – South Carolina was declared an "independent commonwealth." BLACKS IN CONFEDERACY: Confederacy was the first to recognize that Blacks were major factors in the war conference of branches	19	20 1860 – South Carolina seceded from the Union becoming the first state to secede 1963 – Rev. I. DeQuincy Newman announces more demonstrations will be held despite the objections from the "Committee of 85"
21 FIRST DAY OF WINTER 1865 – South Carolina issues one of the first set of black codes "to regulate the relations of persons of color". Among the codes included those of illegal interracial marriages, master apprentice relations and service contracts	22	23 1863 – Robert Blake, powder boy aboard the USS Marblehead, was the first Black awarded the Naval Medal of Honor "for conspicuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism, and intrepidity at the risk of his own life" in a battle that occurred off the coast of South Carolina on this day	24 HANNUKKAH ENDS	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26 KWANZAA BEGINS	27 1971 – Rev. Jesse Jackson organized Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity)
28	29	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE			