



14 Green Way

This house was built in 1872 for Albert Osceola Jones, a free Black man from Washington, D.C., who moved to Charleston after the Civil War.

His initials and the number 14 are etched on its glass doors.

After slavery, Black men voted, and South Carolina elected its first interracial government, which created its first system of public education for all residents. From 1868 to 1876, Mr. Jones was clerk of the State House of Representatives. He lost his position and this house with Reconstruction's dismantling and Black Carolinians' voting and civil rights nullified. Racist textbooks misrepresented Reconstruction as an era of corruption and incompetence. For a time, A.O. Jones's story was lost. Architectural historians credited a white family with building this house. It was almost razed for a parking lot before the College of Charleston purchased it in 1964. It was a dormitory from 1973 to 2013, then renovated as office and student space that uses solar energy.

In 2019, College of Charleston researchers confirmed Mr. Jones was the original owner of this house. Rediscovering this story inspires us to continue researching Black people's many contributions to our city.

The College of Charleston's Center for the Study of Slavery in Charleston co-sponsored this plaque as a display of its continuing research.



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63 1/2 Coming Street



In 2021, a copper alloy slave tag was discovered here, stamped “1853” and “SERVANT.”

The City of Charleston produced and sold these tags (then called “slave badges”) and required enslaved persons to wear them if their enslavers hired out their labor. The tag was found in the remains of a two-story building that served as a kitchen, an office and a dwelling from the mid-1800s to 1906. It is evidence that enslaved men and women worked on this land.

This neighborhood, known as Harleston Village, was home to many enslaved people, including July, Charity, Carey, Charles, Morris, Bob, Jonathan, Diana, Isaac, and Judy, who all lived at 18 Bull Street.

Nearby, free people of color also lived, owned property and maintained churches and burial grounds. African-descended people continued to enrich the neighborhood during and after Reconstruction. In 1882, Black employees in the household on this site included William Lambert, laborer; Paul Samson, driver; Jane Bell, washerwoman; and Mary Moore, servant.

The College of Charleston acquired this property in 1971. In 2021, during construction of a solar pavilion, students and faculty in the College’s Center for Historical Landscapes excavated thousands of artifacts and portions of this structure. This sign, showing the slave tag, and the nearby brick hearth are testaments to the resilience of Black people and their contributions to the city.



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9 College Way

Built in 1835 and lived in for over a century by the descendants of a French Catholic family that fled the overturn of white rule in Santo Domingo, this house was home to the Book Basement, once Charleston's leading independent bookstore. John Zeigler (1912–2015), whose family owned the house, and his life partner, Edwin Peacock (1910–1989), opened the store in 1946 on the birthday of their friend, writer Carson McCullers. Other internationally renowned authors, including Langston Hughes and Maurice Sendak, visited here. Writers, artists and readers, gay and straight, Black and white, sought this store as a haven, where culture was elevated, and all were respected and welcomed.

The Book Basement operated at this location until the College of Charleston bought the property in 1971. John Zeigler continued to provide the College philanthropic support for the School of the Arts and its students, furthering the careers of young musicians from around the globe.

This plaque recognizes, affirms and honors Edwin Peacock and John Ziegler for maintaining a welcoming public space. Together, they made the College of Charleston community better by their example and generosity.



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Committee on Commemoration and Landscapes, 2024



Civil War Monument

This 1961 marker commemorating the first shots of the Civil War does not mention the causes of the conflict. In its 1860 “Declaration of Immediate Causes,” South Carolina, the first state to secede, called for secession to protect the institution of slavery. It explains that slave-holding states were being “denied the rights of property,” meaning the right to enslave humans:

“Those [non-slaveholding] States have assumed the right of deciding upon the propriety of our domestic institutions; and have denied the rights of property established in fifteen of the States and recognized by the Constitution; they have denounced as sinful the institution of Slavery....”

In 1961, Charleston’s centennial celebrated the Confederate cause. Although a majority of South Carolina’s population had been emancipated by the Civil War, Jim Crow segregation laws persisted 100 years later. When the national Centennial Commission came to Charleston, Madaline Williams, an African American delegate, was barred from staying at the Francis Marion Hotel, causing President Kennedy to move the Commission to the Naval Base.

Acknowledging Charleston’s past role in the 1961 celebration, the College of Charleston affirms its core values of diversity, equity and inclusion.

