

2018

Rivertown Methodist Church Cemetery



Chatt Hills History
Chattahoochee Hills, GA
www.chatthillshistory.org

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RIVERTOWN METHODIST CHURCH CEMETERY

Laurie Searle • March 7, 2018

The Rivertown United Methodist Church Cemetery is located on Rivertown Rd, about 1/8 mile north of Campbellton Redwine/Cedar Grove Rd.

The cemetery's location is at the site of the first wood constructed church. The first deed was recorded in 1887 and the name of the church was Pleasant Hill Methodist Church. The congregation met at this location until May 1977, when it moved into its new church building at 9325 Rivertown Rd.



The cemetery has approximately 70-80 grave sites and is still in use by the church. The oldest inscribed grave marker is 1931, the newest is 2018.

The Rivertown United Methodist Church and its cemetery has historical significance for the city of Chattahoochee Hills, as it is only one of two African American churches still active.

CEMETERY SURVEY

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1. Location		
a) Name of cemetery: Rivertown United Methodist Church Cemetery		
b) County: Fulton		
c) Specific location: On Rivertown Rd towards the river, approximately 1/8 north of Campbellton Redwine/Cedar Grove Rd.		
d) USGS Topographic Map Quadrangle:		
e) Cemetery Coordinates:	Latitude: 84.738224 w	Longitude: 33.618236 n
f) Cemetery number on map:		
2. Property Owner		
a) Name: Rivertown United Methodist Church		
b) Mailing Address: 115 Perimeter Center PL # 630 Atlanta GA 30346		
c) Phone:	d) Email	
3. Classification		
a) Public: <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Federal		
b) Private: <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Church <input type="checkbox"/> Fraternal <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
c) Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Abandoned <input type="checkbox"/> Maintained, but not used <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Currently being used		
d) Size: Approximate number of graves: 70-80 Approximate size of cemetery: one acre		
e) Type: <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Slave <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		

4. Accessible to Public	
a) <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted, explain: Cemetery is on private property	
5. Condition	
a) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well maintained and preserved b) <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly maintained	
c) <input type="checkbox"/> Overgrown, easily identifiable d) <input type="checkbox"/> Overgrown	
e) Not identifiable as a burial site, but known to exist through tradition or other means. Explain:	
6. Cemetery Enclosure	
a) Is the cemetery enclosed by a wall, fence, hedge, etc? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Cemetery is fenced.	
b) State condition of wall, fence, hedge, etc.: Excellent	
7. Tombstones or Markers	
a) Are stones or markers present? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No b) If yes are they inscribed? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
c) Number of readable stones or markers: 54 d) Date of last known burial: 2018	
e) Date of earliest known burial: 1931. f) Are there unusual stones? No.	
g) Have markers been damaged? Explain: At least two markers are broken but appear to have been replaced.	
h) Note any hazards imperiling the cemetery's existence: None	
8. Has this cemetery been listed in an existing published or unpublished cemetery survey: Cemetery was recorded by Charles Steed in 2005 and is posted to Find A Grave website.	
9. Historical or other special significance of cemetery, if any: African American Cemetery and Church.	
10. Any other information:	
Canvasser: Laurie Searle Date: March 7, 2018 Chatt Hills History Lsearle@bellsouth.net 770-463-5169	

TOMBSTONE SURVEY

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This cemetery was previously recorded by Charles Steed in 2005 and is posted to the Find a Grave website. All entries in his survey but a few have photos of the grave sites. Those that do not have photos were not visible during my 2018 survey, so it is unclear as to whether these names may have been added as anecdotal evidence.

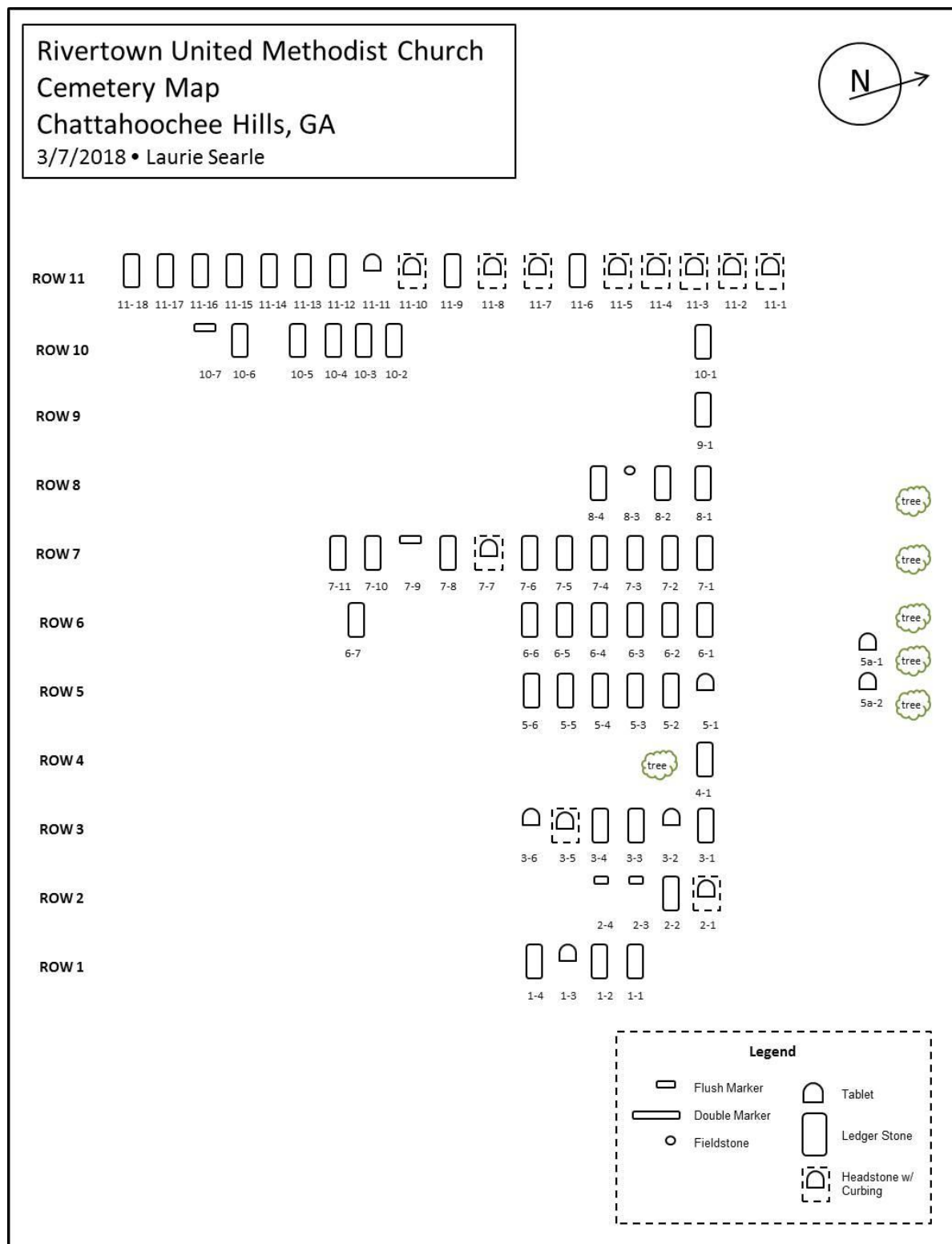
Surname	First name	DOB	DOD	Location	Inscription/Note
Mitchell	Fred	3/16/1903	12/28/1986	Row 1-1	
Mitchell	Salay	3/15/1904	12/3/1995	Row 1-2	
Merritt	Leroy	12/19/1943	12/23/1990	Row 1-3	
Merritt	Clarence James	3/8/1929	12/25/2010	Row 1-4	
-	-	-	-	Row 2-1	Can't read inscription.
-	-	-	-	Row 2-2	Unmarked ledger stone
-	-	-	-	Row 2-3	Unmarked sign.
Merritt	James		1937	Row 2-4	
Harper	Emma B.	7/4/1899	1/14/1980	Row 3-1	
-	-	-	-	Row 3-2	Unmarked fieldstone
Collins	Agnes	6/6/1919	2/?/1986	Row 3-3	
Bryant				Row 3-4	Can't read inscription.
Bryant	Whittie P.	1914	1993	Row 3-5	
Ferguson	Wallace Eugene	4/17/1942	10/12/2000	Row 3-6	
Scott	Rosetta D.	1909	3/29/1972	Row 4-1	
Daniel	Richard	10/20/1947	6/27/1956	Row 5-1	
Cochran	Elvira	-	5/?/1957	Row 5-2	
Daniel	Steward Mack	3/9/1903	11/30/1983	Row 5-3	Daddy & Granddaddy
Daniel	Lena Mae Reeso	9/12/1908	2/12/1997	Row 5-4	Mama and Grandmother
Daniel	John Alvin "Red"	8/2/1944	5/11/1988	Row 5-5	
Daniel	Carl Mack	5/22/1940	6/14/1999	Row 5-6	
Daniel	Richard			Row 5a1	Broken tablet near woods.

Surname	First name	DOB	DOD	Location	Inscription/Note
Mahomes	Wallace Dupont	2/24/1939	9/14/1963	Row 5a2	Broken tablet near woods.
Sumlin	Thomas Lee Roy	1942	1958	Row 6-1	
-	-	-	-	Row 6-2	Unmarked ledger stone.
-	-	-	-	Row 6-3	Unmarked ledger stone.
Knox	Mamie Lou	6/18/1911	2/8/1983	Row 6-4	We love you
-	-	-	-	Row 6-5	Can't read inscription.
Knox	Thomas Wesley	6/19/1924	12/12/2002	Row 6-6	St2 U.S. Nave WWI Jan 19, 1924 - Dec 17, 2002
Knox	Clarence	1/8/1919	6/?/1983	Row 6-7	
Knox	Lunie W.	7/3/1893	4/7/1961	Row 7-1	
Knox	Hattie Pearl Bryant	6/19/1900	6/3/1983	Row 7-2	
Knox	John W.	9/28/1922	8/19/2004	Row 7-3	
Knox	Mary E.	10/14/1914	3/18/1979	Row 7-4	
-	-	-	-	Row 7-5	Unmarked ledger stone.
Knox	Booker T.	7/2/1944	7/23/2013	Row 7-6	
-	-	-	-	Row 7-7	Unmarked tablet, child's grave.
Johnson	Alton Lewis	12/3/1957	4/16/2001	Row 7-8	"Big Al" Gone with Dad to catch the Big one (picture of fish)
-	-	-	-	Row 7-9	Unmarked tablet.
Johnson	A.J. Asburie	10/16/1923	4/16/2006	Row 7-10	Gone to catch the big one (picture of fish)
Johnson	Selma Knox	12/3/1927	1/26/2018	Row 7-11	Age 90
Cochran	Essie	4/22/1922	10/12/1975	Row 8-1	
Tute	Hattie Catherine	9/19/1934	2/19/2014	Row 8-2	Age 79
-	-	-	-	Row 8-3	Placeholder in ground.
Williams	John Rickey Jr.	1/16/1971	9/12/2009	Row 8-4	Beloved son and father
Tute	Harvey Lee	-	-	Row 9-1	Rejoice in the Lord always and again, I say rejoice.
-	-	-	-	Row 10-1	Unmarked ledger stone.
-	-	-	-	Row 10-2	Unmarked ledger stone.
-	-	-	-	Row 10-3	Unmarked ledger stone.
Clark	Jacquelyn Renee	2/28/1969	2/19/2018	Row 10-4	Age 48
-	-	-	-	Row 10-5	Unmarked dirt area.

Surname	First name	DOB	DOD	Location	Inscription/Note
-	-	-	-	Row 10-6	Unmarked ledger stone.
Holsey	Christopher E.	10/23/1980	12/15/2006	Row 10-7	
Dixon	Flora Phillips	4/11/1923	2/21/1960	Row 11-1	
Allen	Kenneth D.	11/29/1959	12/14/1960	Row 11-2	
Dixon	John	5/22/1892	4/?/1964	Row 11-3	
-	-	-	-	Row 11-4	Unmarked tablet outlined in stone.
Dixon	Louvenia	10/12/1880	5/8/1968	Row 11-5	
Dixon	John W.	-	-	Row 11-6	
Echols	Baby Darnell	04/30/1921	12/14/1992	Row 11-7	Unmarked tablet outlined in stone.
-	-	-	-	Row 11-8	Unmarked ledger stone.
Neely	Ella	8/5/1955	5/?/1979	Row 11-9	
Dixon	John Henry	9/11/1944	8/5/1993	Row 11-10	
Dixon	Willie A.	8/27/1951	5/27/1999	Row 11-11	
Dixon	Elbert Thomas	6/22/1953	4/19/2000	Row 11-12	
-	-	-	-	Row 11-13	Unmarked ledger stone.
-	-	-	-	Row 11-14	Unmarked ledger stone.
Arnold	Ernest	04/17/1924	10/20/1991	Row 11-15	
Arnold	Mary Finely	03/15/1921	12/10/2002	Row 11-16	
Arnold	Clara Odess	04/30/1921	12/14/1992	Row 11-17	
Arnold	Bryant Vinson	01/19/1949	09/09/2007		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. No photo.
Arnold	Paul L.	-	09/03/2005		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. No photo.
Bryant	Clara Moses Cook	8/2/1874	2/4/1956		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. No photo.
Bryant	Dock J.	1/?/1862	2/13/1931		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. No photo.
Clark	Rebecca	11/21/1948	5/7/2008		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. Photo included of small sign.
Dixon	Dave	1867	1/26/1937		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. No photo.
Dixon	Tyler Lee	3/29/1953	6/13/2006		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. Photo included.
Knox	Henry	9/8/1902	8/4/1976		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. Photo included.
Short	James	1911	1988		Not found. Listed in 2005 Survey. Photo included.

CEMETERY MAP

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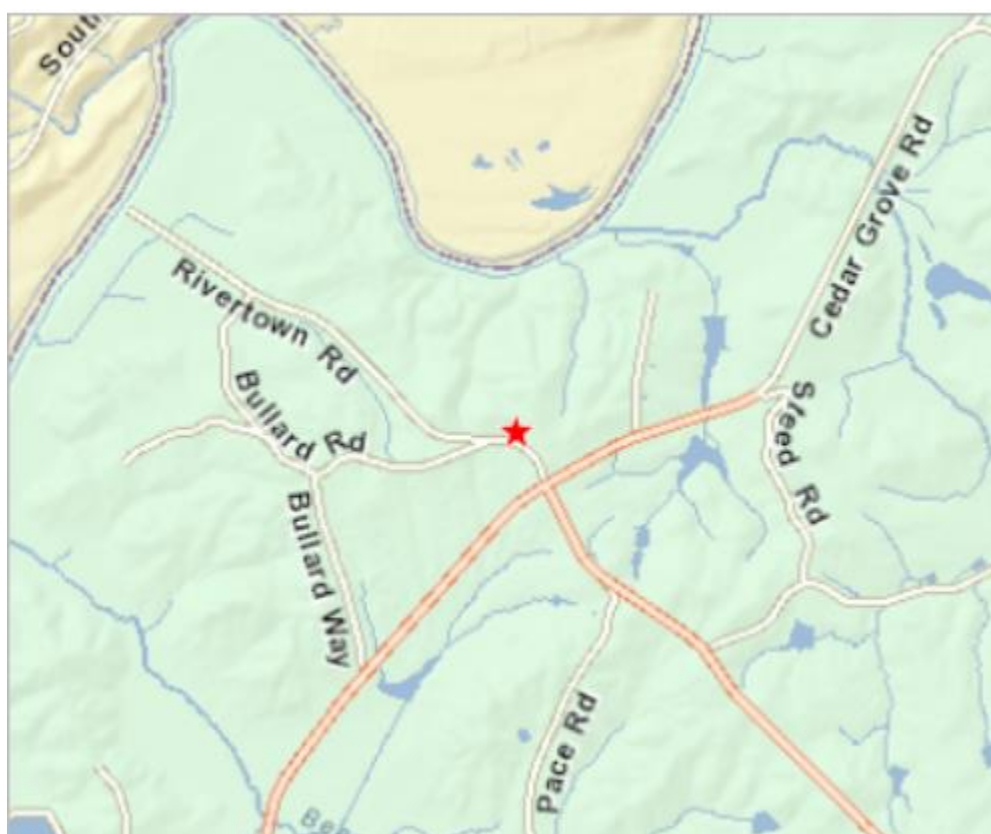
PHOTOS



DIRECTIONS TO PROPERTY

From the intersection of Rivertown Rd and Campbellton Redwine/Cedar Grove Rd (GA Hwy 70), go north towards the Chattahoochee River approximately 1.8 mile. The cemetery is on the right.

Note: Please observe the “No Trespassing” signs and contact the church for permission prior to visiting.



REPORT FOR TAX DIGEST 2018

Tax Year 2018
Parcel ID 08 080000330048
Property Address 0 Rivertown Rd # REAR
Owner Church
Mailing Address 115 Perimeter Center PL # 630 Atlanta GA 30346



PROJECT NOTES

3/7/2018 – Laurie Searle

There are many unmarked graves in this cemetery, and many grave sites listed in the prior survey done in 2005. It is my hope that the Church can help with the recording of the tombstone list by filling in the locations of those unmarked sites.

The following history was found at the Old Campbell County Historical Society, date and author unknown.

Rivertown United Methodist Church

History

Life in the late 1800s was one of simplicity and struggle for mere existence for the black people. This struggle was felt in all areas of living – socially, emotionally, educationally, financially and spiritually. Yet, our fore-parents and relatives moved dreams to realities in their struggle for the establishment of a place to worship and exercise religious freedoms. The place established was a Bush-Arbor, the cutting of canes to form a tent and putting chopped tree limbs around the tent to form the walls.

According to the late Mrs. Nellie Tanner, there were two Arbors. The first one was located on the Tanner's property; the second one was located near the present site of the old church at Rivertown and Rico Roads, possibly on the Cochran's Place.

Religion was a main source of inspiration and guidance for the black people during the Bush-Arbor Days. Therefore much thought was given to building a church as the Arbor Day vanished. It was extremely difficult to build a church because our people didn't have much money. They didn't have financial resources but, they were rich in prayer and faith. Their work as farmers and sharecroppers had made them a people not afraid of work, for it would be this ability to believe and work that would later bring them the reality of a House of the Lord.

During the late 1800s land was expensive. The cost was eighteen dollars (\$18.00) per acre. This amount was more than our fore-parents and relatives could afford. Finally, they worked and saved enough to acquire almost two acres of land and build the first wood constructed church for the Rivertown community. According to our older members, the foundation was made of logs hued out with an ax, with most of all materials donated by friends and neighbors.

The name of the first church was Pleasant Hill Methodist Church. Years later the name was changed to the Rivertown Methodist Church. In 1917, Rivertown, Joes Hill and Bethel Methodist made up one circuit. Years later Rivertown, Joes Hill and Harris Chapel were on the Palmetto Parish.

With the merger of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968 ALL black conferences transferred from the Central Jurisdiction into the Regional jurisdictions in 1974. The name was changed to Rivertown United Methodist Church, located in the Atlanta-College Park District, of the North Georgia Conference.

In 1977 Rivertown was blessed with the assignment as a stationary church with the Reverend Wimbley Hale, Jr., acting as a lay pastor. During the tenure of Reverend Hale the Rivertown Family moved in the direction of independence and acquired three acres of land at a cost of thirty-three hundred dollars (\$3,300.00) from the late husband of Mrs. Rosetta Knox – Mr. Henry Knox.

Reverend Wimbley Hale, Jr. led the people to build a new church with groundbreaking on the fourth Sunday in October, 1976. The Fairburn Hardware and Supply contracted to build the church under the supervision of Barker and Cunningham Architects, Atlanta, Georgia. The members said good-bye to the old church and entered the new one May 15, 1977.

In 1984 Rivertown accepted the first woman pastor Reverend Patricia Perry Pace. With Reverend Pace's leadership on May 15, 1988 exactly 11 years to date (May 15, 1977), we burned our church mortgage.