

The Corhaven Graveyard Project

March 31, 2016

Coracle

2883 Quicksburg Road
Quicksburg, VA 22847
inthecoracle.org

Executive Summary

Coracle is a nonprofit organization based in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and is currently undertaking a project that involves healing the wounds of America's history as it relates to slavery and the ongoing effects in contemporary society. **The Corhaven Graveyard**, focuses on the past as it seeks to recognize and preserve a pre-Civil War slave cemetery in Shenandoah County, VA to honor those buried there and to look forward towards reconciliation by educating the present generation to bring about understanding and healing.

The Corhaven Graveyard Project

corhavengraveyard.org

Background

Throughout much of Virginia's history up until the Civil War slavery was a major part of every-day life. By 1760, there were over a 140,000 slaves in the Virginia. Slavery was present in the Shenandoah Valley and up to 14% of the population was enslaved during the 19th century in the Shenandoah County. The Corhaven Graveyard is a legacy from this era that needs preservation, and those who lay in it should be honored.

First named the "Sam Moore Slave Cemetery", the Corhaven Graveyard was first verified by local historians in 1984. The site matches descriptions of slave cemeteries as defined by Lynn Rainville's paramount publication, *Hidden History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia*. These features include: fieldstone grave markers, a high elevation, distance from the manor house, certain fauna, and along an old fence line, with water nearby (Holman's Creek). Those buried there would be slaves from what was, the nearby Edge Hill Plantation, a slaveholding plantation from 1732-1865.

In 2014, work began with members of the community to preserve the cemetery as a place for honoring those buried there who were not honored in their own lifetimes, and also for future generations to visit and reflect so that they may know and understand this sad chapter of American history.

The Corhaven Graveyard is scheduled for dedication on April 30, 2016 and currently Coracle is raising the necessary funding for the materials and physical completion of the graveyard along with the funding needed for routine maintenance over the next three years. Funding raised is also necessary for regional and state related outreach and educational programs and the necessary part-time staff needed to support such programs.

What has been done

In 2015 members of the local community including students and teachers of the Stonewall Jackson High School History Club, visitors from northern Virginia, and gardeners of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association gathered to begin clearing overgrowth and invasive vegetation. Together they nipped away old fencing, sawed down young trees, pulled weeds, removed fallen logs and branches, which revealed more graves, more depressions and flagstones, and thus tripled the size of the known area. Since that time we have continued to clean the area and demarcate graves, have had it surveyed, and visited and verified by the archeologist from the western part of the state of Virginia, and have had the area studied with ground-penetrating sonar with guidance from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA. (see Appendix)

Who has contributed

Already the early efforts to preserve the Corhaven Graveyard have brought people together from all walks of life from the local community and region. The following groups and individuals have already contributed in significant ways both volunteering with physical labor and also funding.

- Stonewall Jackson High School History Club
- The Haddock Family Foundation
- Nancy Stewart
- The Kohrs family
- Tommy Nichols
- Mike Dorman
- Mark Bowyer
- Newman Surveying
- Cambridge School–Baltimore, MD
- Lowe’s Company, Inc–Woodstock, VA
- Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners Association
- Triplett Technical Center
- Massanutten Regional Governor's School
- Coracle and the Haley family
- The William H. Logan Jr. family
- Kris Thomas Construction
- James Madison Univ. Dept. of Geology & Environmental Science
- And many others.

We look forward to putting these names on a bronze plaque as an expression of thanks, and any others who are able to significantly contribute by the dedication service on April 30.

Graveyard Development Plans

We continue to research primary historical resources, converse with members of the community that might be connected with the site in some way, and engage archaeologists to continue mapping and documenting the site.

The goals of the James Madison University investigation focused on the identification of burial locations to ensure protection during development, future maintenance of the site, and recovery of information about the cemetery for use in the memorial design process.

The land has been surveyed for overall restoration and proposed improvements include signage for the short carpath to the graveyard area and parking, signage and a monument and memorial area to the cemetery, a walkway to the graveyard and fencing to protect the graveyard boundaries, memorial plaques, and an information kiosk. (see Appendix) We are also registering the Graveyard with state and federal agencies.Á

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Graveyard Images

The images below show work being done by different groups to clear the area for preservation and also what the area looks like after being cleared with gravestones now visible, ready for archeological survey.



Funding

Below are the costs associated with both the preservation of the Corhaven Graveyard and the education and reconciliation efforts that will be launched once the graveyard is completed and ready to receive visitors in greater numbers.

Year	Completion Costs and Dedication	Maintenance	Staff for Completion, Education & Reconciliation Efforts
2016	\$15,000	\$3,500	\$9,500
2017	-	\$3,500	\$6,500
2018	-	\$3,500	\$6,500
Subtotal	\$15,000	\$9,500	\$22,500
Total	\$47,000		

Thank you for considering

Coracle would like to thank you for considering this proposal request for funding for The Corhaven Graveyard. Your investment in this projects would make a tangible difference in healing the wounds of America's history as it relates to slavery and the ongoing effects in contemporary society for this generation and the next.

How to give

To invest in this project, funds may be designated and given online through the Coracle website (<https://inthecoracle.org/support/>) or mailed to:

Coracle
2883 Quicksburg Rd.
Quicksburg, VA 22847

About Coracle

Coracle is a registered non-profit organization, 501(c)3 that exists to inspire and enable people to be the presence of God in the world by offering spiritual formation and Kingdom action. We do this through ministries of mercy and justice, offering spiritual direction, providing group and personal retreats, mission trips, and creation care. The founder and current Executive Director is the Rev. Bill Haley.

