

Aiken Colored Cemetery
Name of Property

Aiken County, South Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Funerary Subcategory: Cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Funerary Subcategory: Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
N/A

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>N/A</u>
walls	<u>N/A</u>
roof	<u>N/A</u>
other	<u>N/A</u>

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance

1852-1956

Significant Dates

1852

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository:
S.C. Department of Archives & History

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 9.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1 <u>17 432892 3714627</u>	3 <u>17 432646 3714440</u>	5 <u>17 432681 3714660</u>
2 <u>17 432793 3714391</u>	4 <u>17 432630 3714532</u>	6 <u>17 432757 3714686</u>

___See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Regina K. Monteith
 organization _____ date 1 August 2006
 street & number 530 Kilbourne Road telephone (803) 779-8526
 city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29205

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens, Inc.
 street & number P. O. Box 944 telephone _____
 city or town Aiken state SC zip code 29802-0944

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended(16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). **Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Aiken Colored Cemetery is located in the northwestern section of the City of Aiken in a predominantly African-American neighborhood. Its boundaries include Hampton Street, Northwest on the north, Florence Street, Northwest on the east, Abbeville Avenue, Northwest and various lots off Abbeville Avenue to the south, and various lots off McCormick Street, Northwest to the west. The topography is relatively level in the northern end, but sloping in the southern end.

The landscape of the cemetery involves a system of meandering unpaved roads. There are two entrances on Florence Street, marked by brick columns, and one on Hampton Street. Defined by the roadways in a relatively strict geometric layout are lots of 20' to 22' square.

The cemetery's monuments consist almost entirely of marble, granite, and cement in the form of tablets, ledgers, and obelisks with an occasional vault-top marker and a unique arched brick vault. Many plots have a central family stone with smaller individual markers. Some graves have broken or toppled markers or other damage. Many graves have only metal funeral home markers, often missing nameplates. Many graves are simply unmarked. The lots display a variety of boundaries, mostly low concrete block, brick, and marble walls and wrought iron fences of various styles, some with gateways and brick pillars. A metal chain threaded through metal stakes marks one plot. One grave features an aluminum canopy the length of the grave. The plots are varied and some unique, adding to the character of the cemetery.

The cemetery's landscape includes predominant plantings of massive cedars, historically appropriate for nineteenth-century African-American cemeteries, pines, and oaks. In the spring, "living memorials," also common to African-American cemeteries, of daffodils bloom on some plots and in the summer, daylilies. Through recent efforts by volunteers the landscape has been cleaned up and cleared of debris, volunteer growth, dead and diseased limbs and trees, and weeds.

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Aiken Colored Cemetery, established in 1852, is the principal burial ground for African-Americans in the City of Aiken. It is significant under National Criterion A in the area Ethnic Heritage and Criteria Consideration D for its long association with the African-American community in Aiken, as represented by the graves of slaves, freedmen, prominent leaders of the Reconstruction era in Aiken County; merchants, bankers, lawyers, doctors, ministers, and educators in Aiken and Aiken County from 1852 to the mid-twentieth century. It is also a locally significant and intact example of a vernacular cemetery, still in use today, illustrating common black burial customs over a period of more than one hundred and fifty years.

The cemetery, now Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens, was the only public burial ground for African-Americans in the City of Aiken from the mid-nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. Purchased by the City of Aiken from James Purvis in 1852, this cemetery, originally four acres but later enlarged to the present 9.5 acres, also served as a public burial ground for paupers. In continual use since 1852, it is the final resting-place of African-Americans in the Aiken community, many of them prominent leaders in this city.

The City of Aiken supervised the cemetery until 1892, when it deeded the cemetery to the Aiken Cemetery and Burial Association with the provision that the organization maintain the property as a burial ground. The trusteeships were handed down in the African-American community, and the cemetery was maintained with the assistance of the City of Aiken. Between 1968 and 2006, Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens, Inc. has incorporated and re-incorporated to maintain ownership of the cemetery, which was granted to it in a 1988 lawsuit. Currently, the members of the Board of Trustees of Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens, Inc. include long-time supporters as well as new, younger members of the African-American community committed to the preservation and revitalization of the cemetery.

Among the significant members of the African-American community buried here are:

Richard Ancrum (d. 1852), probably a slave. His monument, dated 1852 and among the earliest in the cemetery, bears the inscriptions, “A Faithful Servant” and “Aged 86 years.”

E. P. Stoney (1840-1919), a significant local figure during Reconstruction who was described as a “Republican activist.” Elected one of the first Aiken County commissioners, Stoney was one of the U. S. Marshals conducting the U. S. Census of 1870. He also served as Intendant of Aiken in 1871, 1872, 1873, and 1876. Stoney is listed on the 1868 Voter Registration Rolls of the Aiken Election Precinct, Barnwell County. A tailor, he was self-employed; according to the 1870 Census, he owned a home worth \$1,200 and personal property valued at \$700. Stoney continued to live in Aiken until his death in 1919.¹ On his headstone is the inscription “A loving father / A faithful friend / A public benefactor.” Adjoining his marker is that of his wife, Mary Ellen Stoney.

¹ Vandervelde, Isabel. *Aiken County: The Only South Carolina County Founded During Reconstruction* (Spartanburg, S. C.: Reprint Co.), pp. 376, 382, 384, 395.

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Vincent Green (1830-1894), a prominent elder of the Emanuel Presbyterian Church. In 1881, he and his mother contributed the first ten dollars to the Reverend W. R. Coles toward the construction of the Emanuel School (also called Coles Academy) a school for the children of former slaves.² The elaborate inscription on his headstone reads:

In Loving Remembrance of Mr. Vincent Green
Elder of the Emanuel Presbyterian Church
Born Nov. 27, 1830
Departed this Life May 1, 1894
Precious Father thou has left us
Left us yes forever more
But we hope again to meet thee
On that bright and happy shore

Reverend W. R. Coles (d. 1928), a prominent missionary of the Presbyterian Missions for Freedmen. Coles grew up in an orphanage in Pennsylvania, and was educated at Lincoln University. In 1872 he was licensed and in 1873 was ordained as a minister by the Presbytery of Yadkin, in the Northern Presbyterian Church. After eight years as a pastor and missionary, he founded the Emanuel School, also called Coles Academy, in Aiken, in 1881. He may have been the first African-American to head a school in Aiken County. After he retired from the school in 1909,³ he moved to Columbia, where he died in 1928. His death certificate, however, states that Coles was buried in Aiken. Since Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens was the only cemetery where African-Americans could be buried at that time, it is probable that his grave, not yet located and possibly unmarked, is here.

Lillian Murray Rice (1874-1951). A teacher who taught at the Free School and the Schofield School, 1918-1924.⁴

A number of veterans of the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam are buried in Aiken Colored Cemetery. Representative examples include:

Branch Harris, Company M, 10th U. S. Volunteer Infantry, Spanish-American War

William Brooks (1899-1947), South Carolina, Sup. Sgt. U. S. Army, World War I

² Inez Moore Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865-1970*. (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1977), p. 150.

³ "Coles, William R.," in *The Ministerial Directory*, Edgar Sutton Robinson, ed. (Oxford, Ohio: The Ministerial Directory Company, 1898); *Lincoln University: College and Theological Seminary Biographical Catalogue* (Lancaster, Pa.: New Era Printing Co., 1918), p. 116.

⁴ Cecelia Johnson McGhee to Coleen Reed. Oral Conversation, May 25, 2004, Aiken, S. C.

Eddie Hartley (d. 1948), South Carolina, Pvt., QMC, World War I

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Frank Elmo Nobles (1913-1981), Pfc. U. S. Army, World War II

Ernest Little, Master Sgt., U. S. Army, World War II and Korea

Benjamin Robert Raysor (1949-1997), U. S. Army

Many other African-Americans prominent in the City of Aiken are buried in Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens. And as this cemetery was the only burial ground for African-Americans in Aiken, it would seem that most members of this community, from the most to the least prominent, would rest there. The Aiken Historic Register has recognized the significance of Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens, listing it as a landmark 10 July 2006.

Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens is also significant as an intact example of a late nineteenth and early twentieth century vernacular cemetery, illustrating common black burial customs during these periods. The cemetery is laid out in strict geometric squares, sometimes doubled to form larger plots, sometimes halved to form rectangles. The monuments consist almost entirely of marble, granite, and cement in the form of tablets, ledgers, and obelisks, with an occasional above ground concrete block vault and one unique arched brick vault. Most gravestones are fairly simple headstones and footstones surrounding larger family monuments. Occasionally concrete markers running the length of a grave complement a headstone. In other cases, a low coping defines the grave, sometimes filled with marble chips. Some tombstones, such as E. P. Stoney's, are elaborately carved. In most cases, markers bear name, birth and death dates; rank and branch of service, if a veteran; and a brief description and / or a biblical verse. In other cases, such as Vincent Green's marker, the inscriptions are long and complex. In one unique instance, an aluminum canopy extends over the headstone and grave of Elijah Williams, Jr. In another, semi-circular white wire fencing defines a grave site.

As varied as the monuments themselves are the enclosures of family plots. There is some uniformity in the low walls of brick, marble, and concrete block that surround family plots, like, for example, that seen in the plot beyond the fork in the roadway. But many plots have fencing that ranges from the most elaborate to the simplest. One plot, for example, has a brick enclosure, seven courses high, the walls curving at the entrance and surmounted by concrete urns. The Stallings family plot is marked by substantial brick pillars fourteen courses high, one embedded with a marker for Elder W. L. Stallings; low brick walls topped by iron fencing; an iron arch over the entry pillars, and an iron gate.

Other plots are marked far more simply. For example, one fence consists of wooden posts and wire fencing, known colloquially as a "goat fence." Another enclosure uses a chain link strung around the plot through a series of metal stakes topped by a fixture with a hole in it. Although the examples cited, from the most elaborate, to the most simple are among the most striking in the cemetery, the varied definitions of family plots shows remarkable diversity and individuality.

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SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

“Coles, William R.” In Edgard Sutton Robinson, ed., *The Ministerial Directory*. Oxford, Ohio: The Ministerial Directory Company, 1898.

Lincoln University, College and Theological Seminary Biographical Catalogue. Lancaster, Pa.: New Era Printing Company, 1918.

Parker, Inez Moore. *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865-1970*. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1977.

Trinkley, Michael. “Assessment of Pine Lawn Memorial Cemetery, Aiken, S.C.” 23 February 2006. Columbia: Chicora Foundation, Inc., 2006.

Vandervelde, Isabel. *Aiken County: The Only South Carolina County Founded During Reconstruction*. Spartanburg, S. C.: The Reprint Company, 1998.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is shown on the accompanying Aiken County Plat, surveyed August 19 and 20, 1974, and drawn at a scale of 1" = 100'.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is restricted to the historic boundaries of Aiken Colored Cemetery/Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens, comprised of the 4 acres originally purchased from James Purvis in 1852 and the additional 5.5 acres subsequently acquired by Pine Lawn Memorial Gardens.

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property: Aiken Colored Cemetery
Location of Property: Florence Street and Hampton Avenue, Aiken
Aiken County, South Carolina

Name of Photographer: Nicole H. Holland
Date of Photographs: February 23, 2006
Location of Original
Negatives: SC Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina

1. Entrance off Florence Street, Looking West
 2. Cemetery Roadway, Looking West
 3. Cemetery Roadway and Representative Plot, Looking West
 4. Representative Family Plot, Looking East
 5. Williams Family Plot with Canopy, Looking South
 6. Stallings Family Plot, Looking East
 7. Grave of Richard Ancrum
 8. Grave of E.P. Stoney
 9. Grave of Vincent Green
 10. Grave of Branch Harris
 11. Recent Grave, Looking East
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