

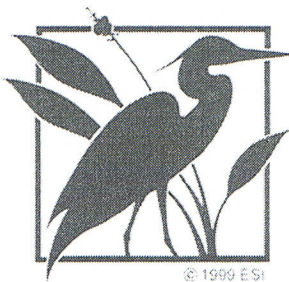
INVESTIGATION OF THE BARBEE-HARGRAVE CEMETERY

CHAPEL HILL, ORANGE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA



By: Scott Seibel, RPA

For: Chapel Hill Preservation Society



**Environmental Services, Inc.
524 South New Hope Road
Raleigh, NC 27713**

ESI Project Number AR11-050.00

May 2010

INTRODUCTION

Environmental Services, Inc. (ESI) was contracted by the Preservation Society of Chapel Hill (PSCH) to conduct an investigation of the Barbee-Hargrave Cemetery (**Figure 1**), which covers approximately 0.25-acre and is located within a circular drive at the northern end of Greenwood Road. The Town of Chapel Hill owns the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery and is responsible for its maintenance. The purpose of the investigation was to identify, if possible, both marked and unmarked, undocumented burials within the cemetery.

Involved in the investigation were Scott Seibel and Terri Russ of ESI. The investigation consisted of pedestrian inspection, soil density testing, and the recording of the locations of potential grave shafts using a Sokia Total Station. The investigation was conducted in May 2011.

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE CEMETERY

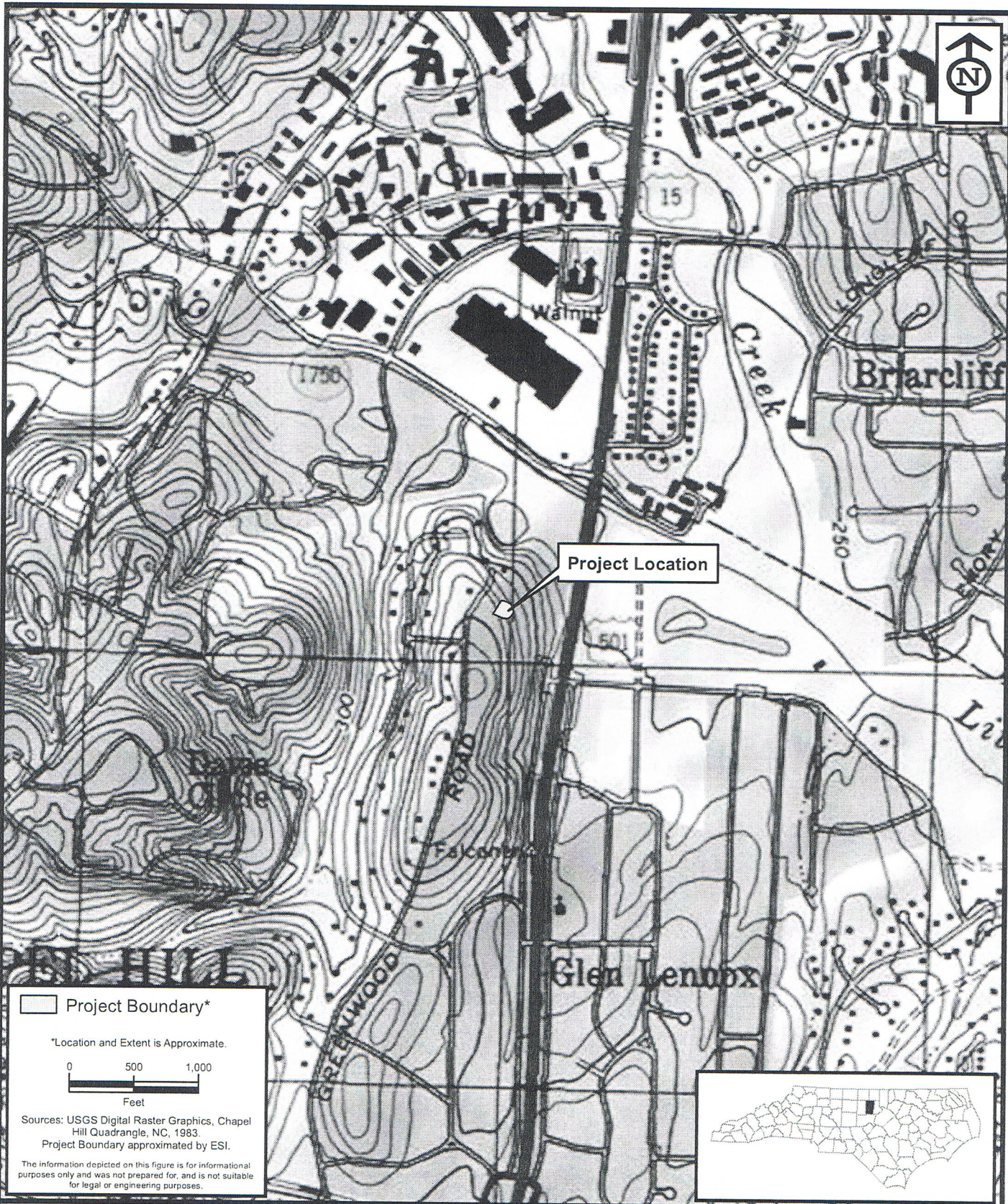
A detailed history of the property on which the cemetery is located and the Morgan, Barbee, Hargrave, and Strowd families has been prepared by David Southern for the PSCH (Southern 2011). The following information is summarized from his report.

The property on which the cemetery is located is connected with the Morgan family. Mark Morgan, a Welsh immigrant who received a grant of 600 acres in 1763, known as the Chapell tract, between Morgan and Bolin creeks. Mark Morgan married Sarah Hinton; the Hinton family owned numerous plantations in eastern Wake County in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. One of their sons, Hardy Morgan, received grants in 1779 and 1788 east of the Chapell tract, which included land now occupied by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The cemetery is located on land that was part of these grants.

The property passed through the Morgan family and finally the Sheriff of Orange County to Jesse Hargrave in 1845, the result of an auction of 935 acres of property to fulfill a debt owed by Lemuel Morgan to William Barbee. Jesse Hargrave was related to William Barbee through marriage to Barbee's daughter Margaret. Robert Strowd came to own the land in the 1870s. In 1928, the property was subdivided and sold for development. Paul and Elizabeth Lay Green, who developed the Greenwood subdivision in the 1940s and 1950s, purchased a number of the parcels. The Town of Chapel Hill currently owns the cemetery.

A survey of the cemetery was conducted by Margaret Nygard in 1973, supplemented by research conducted by Roger Foushee. The survey suggested that the Barbee-Hargrave Cemetery is an African-American cemetery and contains between 40-50 burials dating sometime between 1790 and 1915. The burials are believed to include slaves of the Barbee and Hargrave families as well as their free descendants. Reportedly, the cemetery contains the remains of George Hargrove, who died in 1910, and his wife Charlotte Hargrove. One engraved headstone, now no longer visible or extant, read "Thomas" and "1805."

The cemetery was cleared of low lying vegetation by the Town of Chapel Hill in 2010. This resulted in the removal of periwinkle and potentially other forms of vegetation often identified



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Project Location
Barbee-Hargrave Cemetery
 Orange County, North Carolina

Project:	AR11050.00
Date:	May 2011
Drwn/Chkd:	CD/SS
Figure:	1

with cemeteries. Vegetation currently consists of semi-mature hardwood trees (**Figure 2, top**), none of which is large enough to have been standing when the cemetery was in use. The ground surface is exposed to the elements, and erosion as the result of rain and runoff is almost certainly occurring. Some linear depressions that correspond to grave shafts are still visible, but the clearing of vegetation by the town has resulted in the filling in of some depressions that were visible in early 2010. Two large outcroppings of granite are located along the southeastern side of the cemetery, next to Greenwood Road. Apart from the small granite field stones used as head stones and foot stones, there are a number of granite stones scattered across the area that do not appear to be associated with any burial.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The goal of the project was to identify the locations of marked and unmarked graves within the roughly 0.25-acre project area. Given the small size of the project area and the visibility of some grave shafts and field stone markers, it was determined that a combination of pedestrian inspection and soil density testing (e.g. soil probing) would yield the best results.

Pedestrian inspection consists of an inspection of the ground surface to identify signs of burials, such as linear depressions and markers. Soil density testing, or soil probing, employs a thin (~5/8-inch) metal or fiberglass rod on a handle. The rod is inserted into the ground to detect differences in the density of the soil (**Figure 2, bottom**). Typically, an area of disturbed soil is looser and less dense than surrounding undisturbed soil. Linear areas of less dense soil aligned roughly east-west encountered by the probing are marked at each end and numbered in the field as potential unmarked graves. Probing was conducted at 1-foot intervals across the project area. The locations of potential burials were recorded using a Sokia Total Station. It should be noted that the data collected is not survey-grade and is not intended as a substitute for a survey by a licensed Professional Land Surveyor; it is for planning purposes only.

FINDINGS

A total of 53 different potential burials were identified during the investigation based on the soil probing. The term “potential” is used as soil density testing cannot fully confirm or refute the presence of a grave shaft. Only the removal of topsoil to expose the underlying subsoil can absolutely determine if a grave shaft is present, but this was not feasible for the present investigation.

Of the 53 potential burials, 24 had a stone marker at one or both ends, while the other 29 had no visible stone markers. As can be seen on **Figure 3**, there are three main rows of burials identified in the central and southeastern portions of the cemetery. The western and northern ends of the cemetery appear to be less organized; it is possible that some of the potential burials identified in these areas are not actually burials. A roughly rectangular area of disturbed ground was noted in the northeastern quadrant of the project area. It is not known what it represents, but it is aligned generally parallel to the adjacent rows of potential burials.



View of cemetery, facing southeast.



ESI archaeologists Terri Russ (right) and Scott Seibel (left) probe within cemetery.



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Photos

Barbee-Hargrave Cemetery

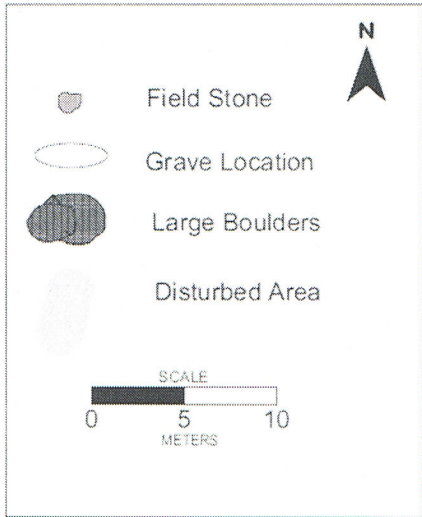
Orange County, North Carolina





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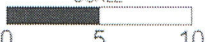
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Figure: 2



 Field Stone
 Grave Location
 Large Boulders
 Disturbed Area

SCALE

 0 5 10
 METERS



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Cemetery Plan
Barbee-Hargrave Cemetery
 Orange County, North Carolina

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Drwn/Chkd: SS/TR

Figure: 3

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the investigation of the Barbee-Hargrave Cemetery resulted in the identification of as many as 53 potential unmarked graves. Although they are termed potential, most of these, especially the ones in the linear rows in the central and eastern portion of the project area, are almost certainly burials. The potential burials recorded within the western and northern portions of the project area are slightly more suspect in their identification, mainly due to the lack of an orderly arrangement. However, they are narrow and aligned in a roughly east-west configuration as would be expected for a burial.

It is possible that additional burials are located underneath the pavement of Greenwood Road or on adjacent properties, specifically to the north and south along the ridge, but the investigation of this potential was outside of the scope of work. However, the arrangement of burials identified during the current investigation suggests that the potential of that is quite low. The landform slopes steeply to the east and west of the cemetery, and no signs of burials were found between those identified during the current investigation and the ditch located between the cemetery and the road.

It is recommended that the cemetery be re-vegetated with grass or some other form of low ground cover. This will help prevent erosion of the exposed ground surface and the filling in of grave depressions or the covering of field stone grave markers with sediment. The creation of signage containing additional information on the cemetery and the cemetery plan would add educational value for the community.

REFERENCES CITED

Southern, David

- 2011 *The Barbee-Hargrave Cemetery, in the circle at the northern end of Greenwood Road in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.* On file, Preservation Society of Chapel Hill, North Carolina.