

# Sacred Heart / Whitemarsh Cemetery Committee

January 31, 2024 meeting

# Agenda

Welcome

Opening prayer

Overview since last meeting

Archeological update

Cemetery research update

WMHS

Preservation

Vision / Design

Clearing & Cleaning hillside

Finances

Discussion

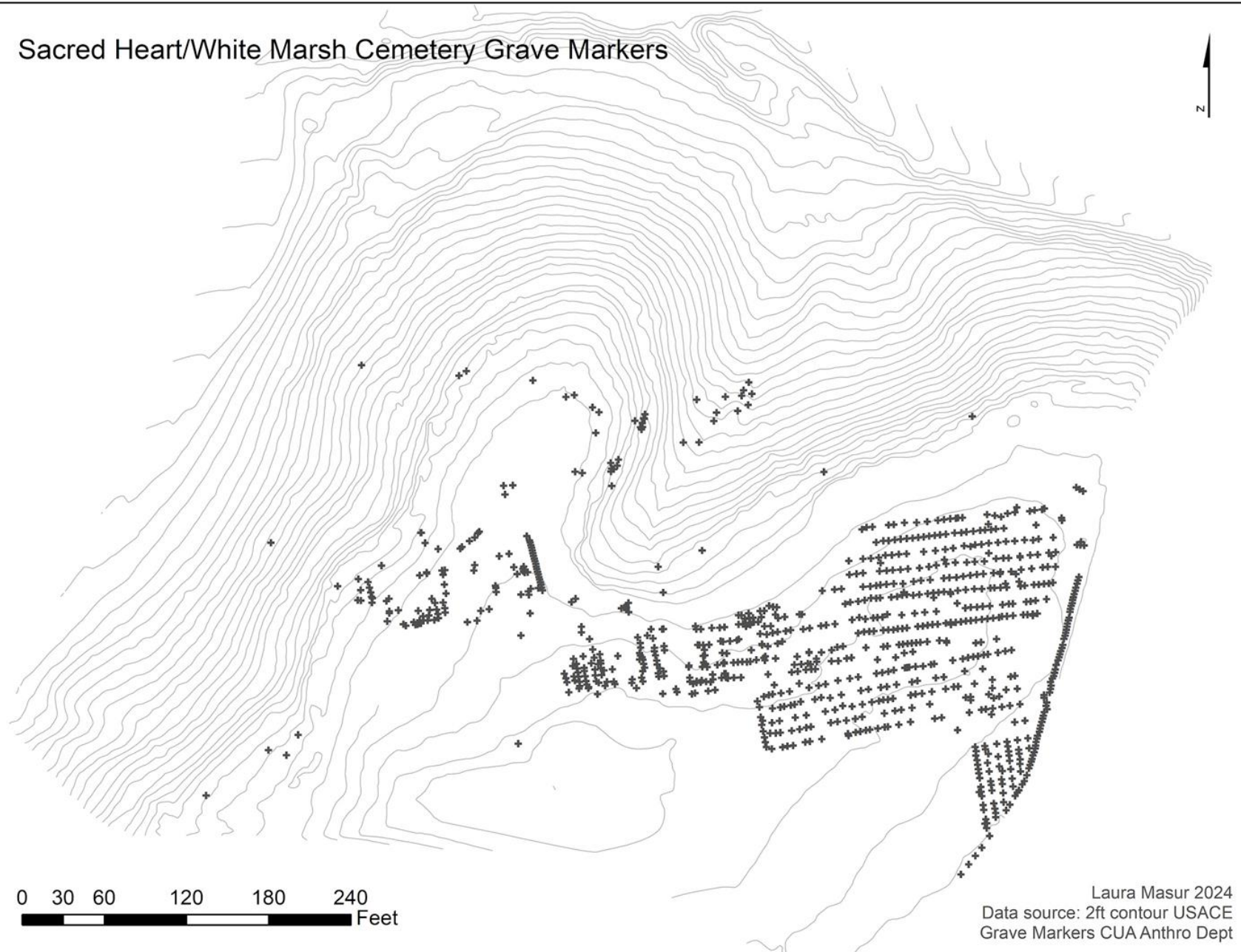
# 2023 Summary

- Cleared most of ~7.5 acres of thick vegetation on steep terrain to allow archeological fieldwork
- Filled 21 commercial dumpsters w/logs, brush, briars, etc. (that's a lot!)
- Performed over 2000 volunteer hours on site at the cemetery/hillside
- Multi-source research to double our list of known burials to well over 2,100 (and counting)
- Archeological work which identified several hundred potential burial markers in the woods/hillside that were previously hidden
- Conducted extensive research on the property and people of White Marsh / Sacred Heart
- Hosted and conducted multiple outreach events to raise awareness
- Started an environmental /erosion survey to assess & ensure preservation and mitigation...initial measures
- Organized and created processes to support these and related functions
- Collaboration between parish, descendants, diocese, Catholic University, Jesuits
- Creation of White Marsh Historical Society

# Archeology—Cemetery Mapping - January 2024

- Completed mapping 900+ definite grave markers. Includes:
  - All inscribed gravestones
  - Modern graves at top of hill
  - Iron crosses
  - Corner markers
- Finished mapping, measuring, and evaluating potential grave markers west of the ravine. Includes:
  - All non-inscribed stones (fieldstones)
  - Evaluating likelihood that stones were grave markers
  - Initial data checking and cleanup

# Sacred Heart/White Marsh Cemetery Grave Markers



Laura Masur 2024  
Data source: 2ft contour USACE  
Grave Markers CUA Anthro Dept

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Field record?	GM (Grave Marker number)	Notes 2023-24	Picture ID	Initial Source (SH: Sacred Heart, J: Jeletic, F: Findagrave)	Last Name	First Name	Row	Id No.	Date of Birth	Date of Death
2					SH	Abbott	Catherine	A	2		
3	x	674		IMG_4338	SH	Abbott	Leonard	A	1		
4	x	778	Headstone birth 1927	IMG_2724	SH	Abercrombie	Roy E	N	21	10/4/1905	9/25/1996
5	x	778	Not vacant. Headstone death 2021	IMG_2724	SH	Abercrombie-vac ant	Virginia M	N	21	4/10/1905	
6	x	696		IMG_4320	J	Abeyta	Eulalia Carolina	A	46	9/13/1934	12/23/2011
7	x	696		IMG_4320	SH	Abeyta	Mark	A	46	6/15/1984	10/11/2000
8	x	684		IMG_4328	SH	Abrams	Dorothy Koontz	A	20	6/23/1914	11/16/2003
9	x	691		IMG_4325	SH	Aceituno	Andres A	A	29	8/18/2020	9/1/2014
10	x	691	Not vacant. Headstone 08/01/1926-08/23/2018	IMG_4325	SH	Aceituno-vac ant	Rosamaria F	A	30		
11	x	704		IMG_4313	J	Adair	Elizabeth A	M	5	6/26/1941	3/27/2008
12	x	704		IMG_4313	J	Adair-vacant	Billy L	M	5	5/18/1938	
13		688		IMG_4325	SH	Adair	Billy L	M	5	5/18/1938	3/27/2008



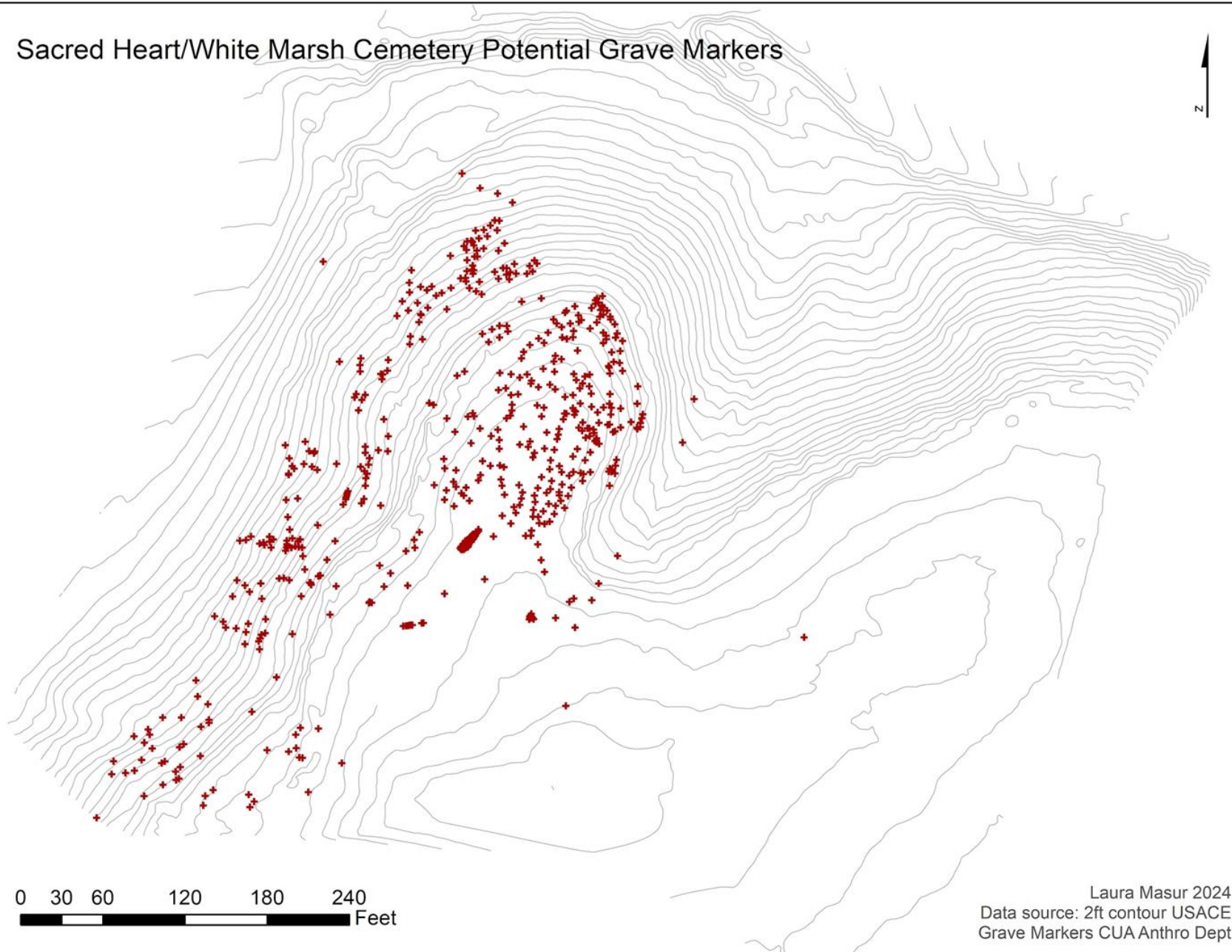








# Sacred Heart/White Marsh Cemetery Potential Grave Markers



Laura Masur 2024  
Data source: 2ft contour USACE  
Grave Markers CUA Anthro Dept

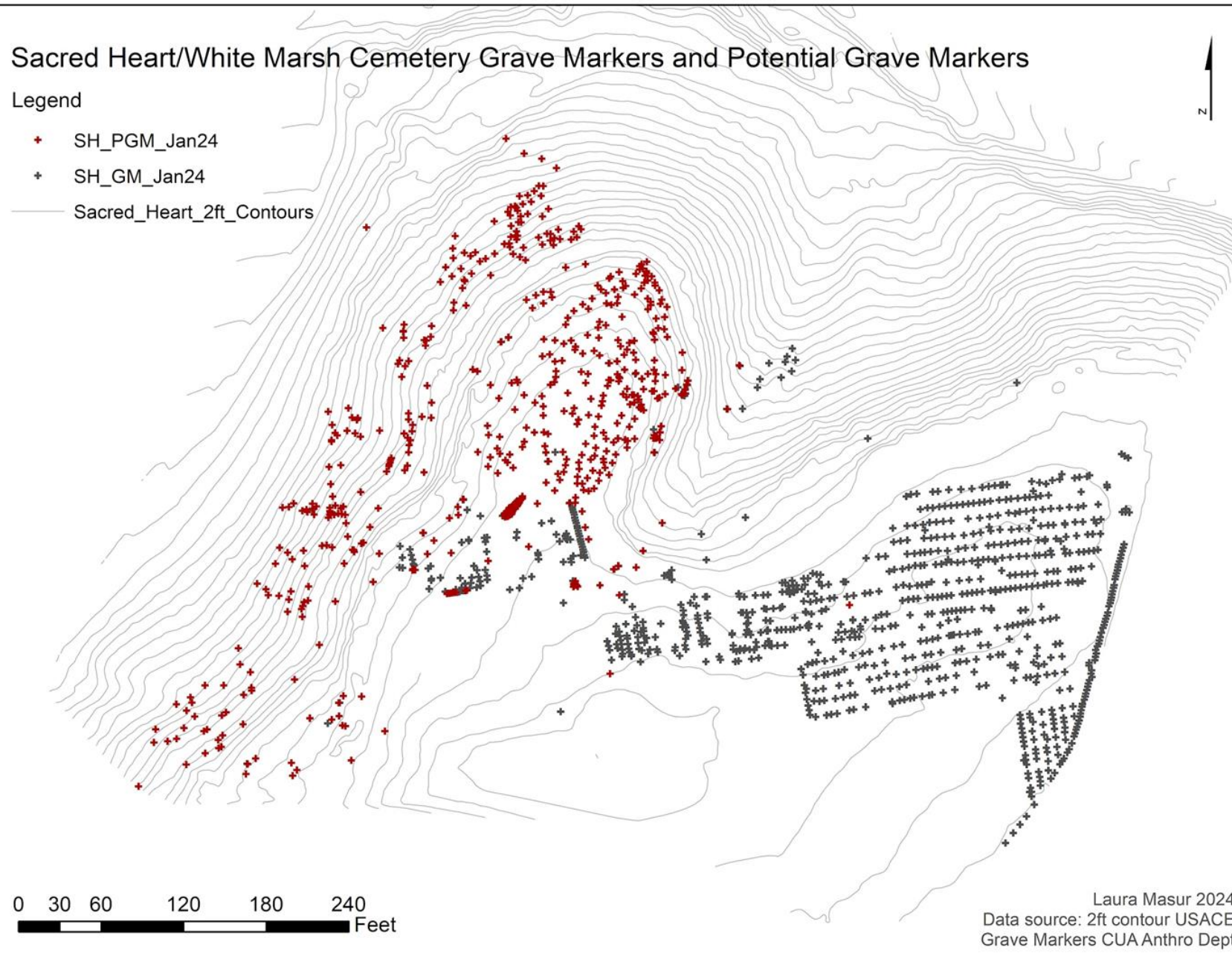
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Stone Number (PGM)	Marker material	Stone color	Stone above ground height (cm)	Stone length (cm)	Stone width (cm)	Shaped (Y/N)	Shape at top edge (natural, squared, arch)	Stone is stable or loose	Stone is tilting	Stone is broken or exfoliating	Stone shows plant or lichen growth
2	589	Sandstone (fine grain, no large pebbles)	Reddish purple	3	19	8	No	Natural	Stable	Not tilting	Broken	None
3	584	Stone with large pebbles	Gray	5	25	15	No	Natural	Stable	Not tilting	Broken	None
4	233	Sandstone (fine grain, no large pebbles)	Reddish purple	37	28	15	Yes	Squared	Loose	Not tilting	Broken	Plant or lichen growth
5	234	Sandstone (fine grain, no large pebbles)	Reddish purple	30	35	19	Yes	Squared	Loose	Not tilting	Broken	Plant or lichen growth
		Sandstone (fine grain)										



# Sacred Heart/White Marsh Cemetery Grave Markers and Potential Grave Markers

## Legend

- SH\_PGM\_Jan24
- SH\_GM\_Jan24
- Sacred\_Heart\_2ft\_Contours

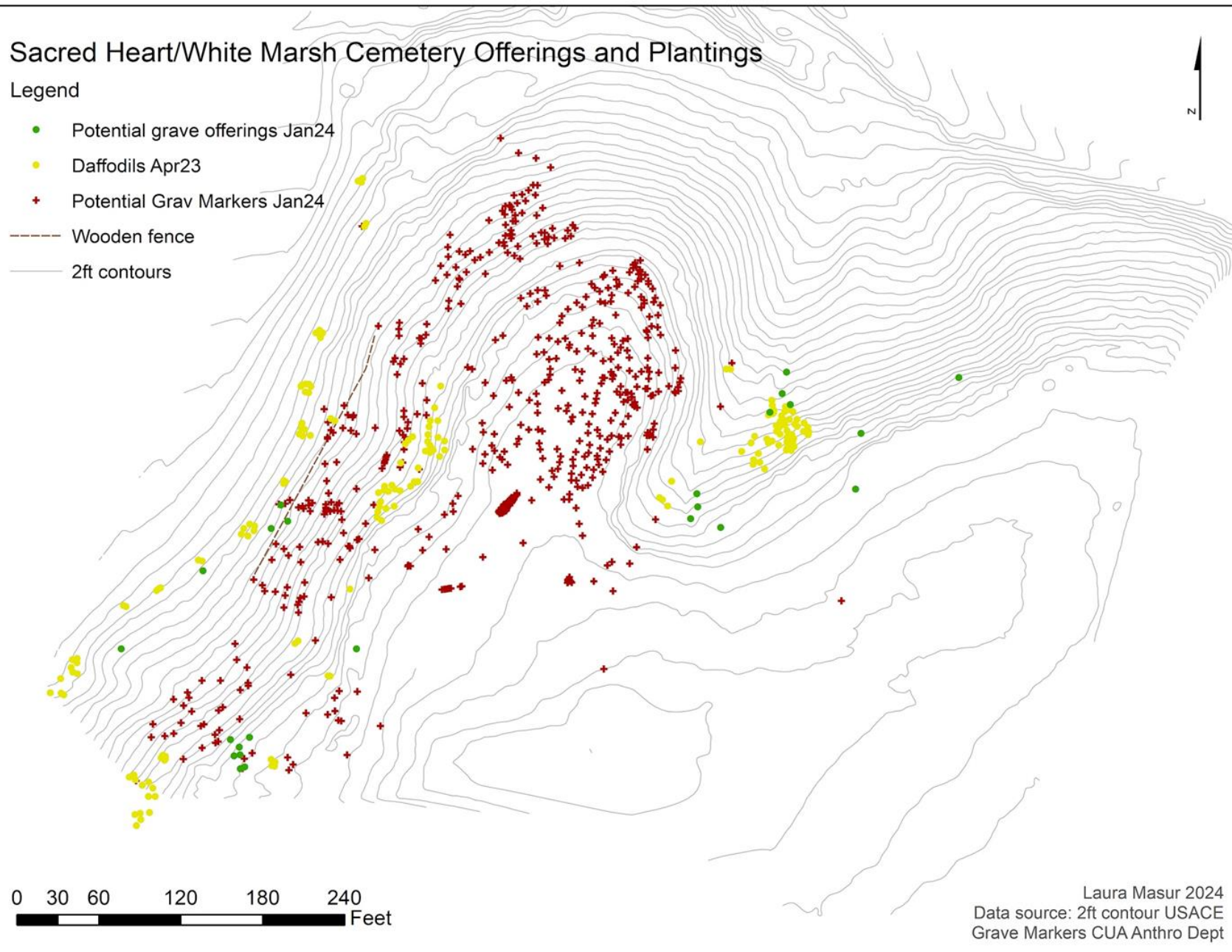


Laura Masur 2024  
Data source: 2ft contour USACE  
Grave Markers CUA Anthro Dept

# Sacred Heart/White Marsh Cemetery Offerings and Plantings

## Legend

- Potential grave offerings Jan24
- Daffodils Apr23
- + Potential Grav Markers Jan24
- - - Wooden fence
- 2ft contours



Laura Masur 2024  
Data source: 2ft contour USACE  
Grave Markers CUA Anthro Dept



# Cemetery Mapping - January 2024

- Remaining field tasks
  - Map, measure, and evaluate potential grave markers east of the ravine. Estimate ~200, majority near ravine and at northeastern top of hill.
  - Map ~25 potential grave markers near the parking lot
  - Collect data from ~12 potential grave markers
  - Map datum points for engineering team to line up grids
- Analysis
  - Develop database design(s)
  - Data cleanup
  - Analysis and Reporting (including Prince George's County and Maryland Historical Trust)
  - Making data accessible

# What would you like to know about the cemetery?

This influences our database design. For example:

- Which areas of the hillside most likely contain burials (as opposed to natural stone outcroppings)?
- What is the relationship between burial time period and place of burial?
- Were certain parts of the cemetery used, then re-used at a later period of time?
- Where can we identify burial clusters associated with family and/or race?
- Who, that was buried in the cemetery, had been enslaved?

Share your questions:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12U5LS4PvnfH95JDgrEHJITh5M5oDxC5GNnoI3I7Lzkg/edit?usp=sharing>



# Research

- Version 1.0 of the burial list has been completed: 2,157 identified burials, 42% have known locations 750+ are known/likely to be African-American
- Reviewing & cross-checking data...new finds
- This is a "living resource" to refine and expand over time; still soliciting info/data from descendants, other researchers, etc., some next-stage research that could yield more names
- Next: structure/format of public-facing resource — review, approval, technical solution
- Integration of archeological and research data
- Working on relationship with Catholic Cemeteries; ultimately need to reconcile our data, lists, on-line presence, etc. with them
- Productive meeting on Jan 17th with several descendants and WMHS/Kevin Porter
- Begin developing individual and family biographical profiles to augment the burial list

# White Marsh Historical Society





# Preservation





# Vision / Design

## BURIALS AT MONTICELLO

Unlike the Jefferson cemetery located on the Monticello mountaintop, the Burial Ground for Enslaved People does not have formal headstones. Instead, only shallow east-facing depressions and five fieldstone grave markers identify this place as a burial ground.

No records of burials involving Monticello's enslaved people describe the community's funerary traditions. An account of a child's funeral in the late 1860s at a nearby plantation may reveal continuations of earlier customs. After a procession to a burial ground in a grove, Robert Hughes, a minister who was born into slavery at Monticello, led the mourners in prayers and hymns as the grave was filled and then covered by tree boughs.

*He buried them as property, we honor them as people*  
Civil rights activist Julian Bond



Descendants of the enslaved community came together at Monticello for a reunion in 2018. The Burial Ground for Enslaved People is a place for descendants to remember all who have come before them and how they carry on their ancestors' legacies.

Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello





# Cleaning / Clearing





# Finances

- MHT Grant
- Recent expenses
- Budget build



Cemetery preservation

Environmental/erosion assessment & mitigation



WHITE MARSH  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EST 2023



# WHITE MARSH PLANTATION

## A Journey Back into African American History

In 1729, the wealthy merchant-planter James Carroll bequeathed his land holdings and enslaved laborers to the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits. It was here that the Jesuits established a mission atop the 100-foot hill known as Carrollsburgh, which became a central location for Catholics in Maryland. The predominately African American community became known as White Marsh, where over 400 people over multiple generations were forced into labor to help build the Roman Catholic Church in America.

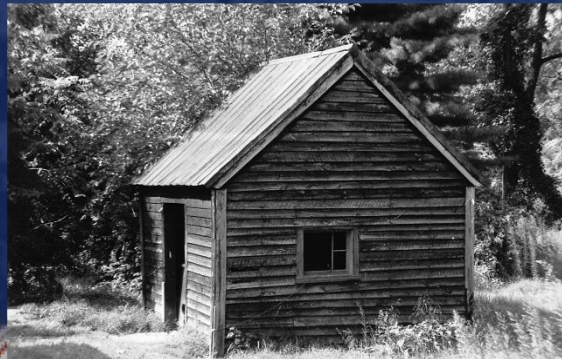
### Twelve Pound's Reward.

Prince-George's county, May 1, 1795.  
**A**BSENTED themselves from my service since the late Prince-George's and Anne-Arundel county courts, the following twelve NEGROES, calling themselves QUEENS; Simon, Billy, Jack, Lewis, Hea, Paul, Matthew, and Tom, very black negroes, and Tom, Billy, Nick, and Fanny, of a brown complexion; they are all young, hearty, and well made negroes, and quitted me for no other reason but because they were not fet free at the last court. As I have recognised for the said negroes I conceive that I do not forfeit their services, nor lose any share of my authority over them, before trial; I do therefore promise the above reward to any person who will inform me where the aforefaid negroes may be found, and be witness against such persons as harbour or employ them, or TWENTY SHILLINGS for each one. I likewise forewarn all persons from harbouring or employing the said negroes at their peril, as I am determined to prosecute every such person agreeably to law.

1

JOHN ASHTON.

The Queen family was one of the largest family units enslaved by the Jesuits. Several members of the Queen family sued for their freedom and won, while others remained enslaved. Freedmen like Simon and Proteus Queen were married to women enslaved at White Marsh. As a result, many of their descendants were eventually sold South between 1823 and 1838.



There were several living quarters for the enslaved community at White Marsh. Some lived in 12 x 24 cabins with their family units, others were allowed to build their own cabins at their own expense. Old Isaac was forced out of his cabin after the 1838 sale and sent to live in the meathouse with wife, similar to the one depicted above. Image courtesy of Anne Arundel Genealogical Society.



Sacred Heart Chapel at White Marsh. The basilica is one of the few surviving structures that connects these lands to the Jesuit's history of enslaving African Americans.



Monica Queen (1860-1889) was the daughter of William and Susan Queen, descendants of the Jesuit Enslaved Community.



# Our Mission



The White Marsh Historical Society (WMHS) is an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit research organization, dedicated to researching and memorializing the African Americans that either lived, labored, died or were buried at the Jesuit-operated White Marsh plantation in Prince George's County, Maryland.

*Remembering the Past – Redirecting the Future – Reconstructing Our History*



# Programs and Future Projects

- History Program
- Genealogy Program
- Jesuit Enslaved Community Project
- Oral History Project
- Education and Community Outreach

*Remembering the Past – Redirecting the Future – Reconstructing Our History*

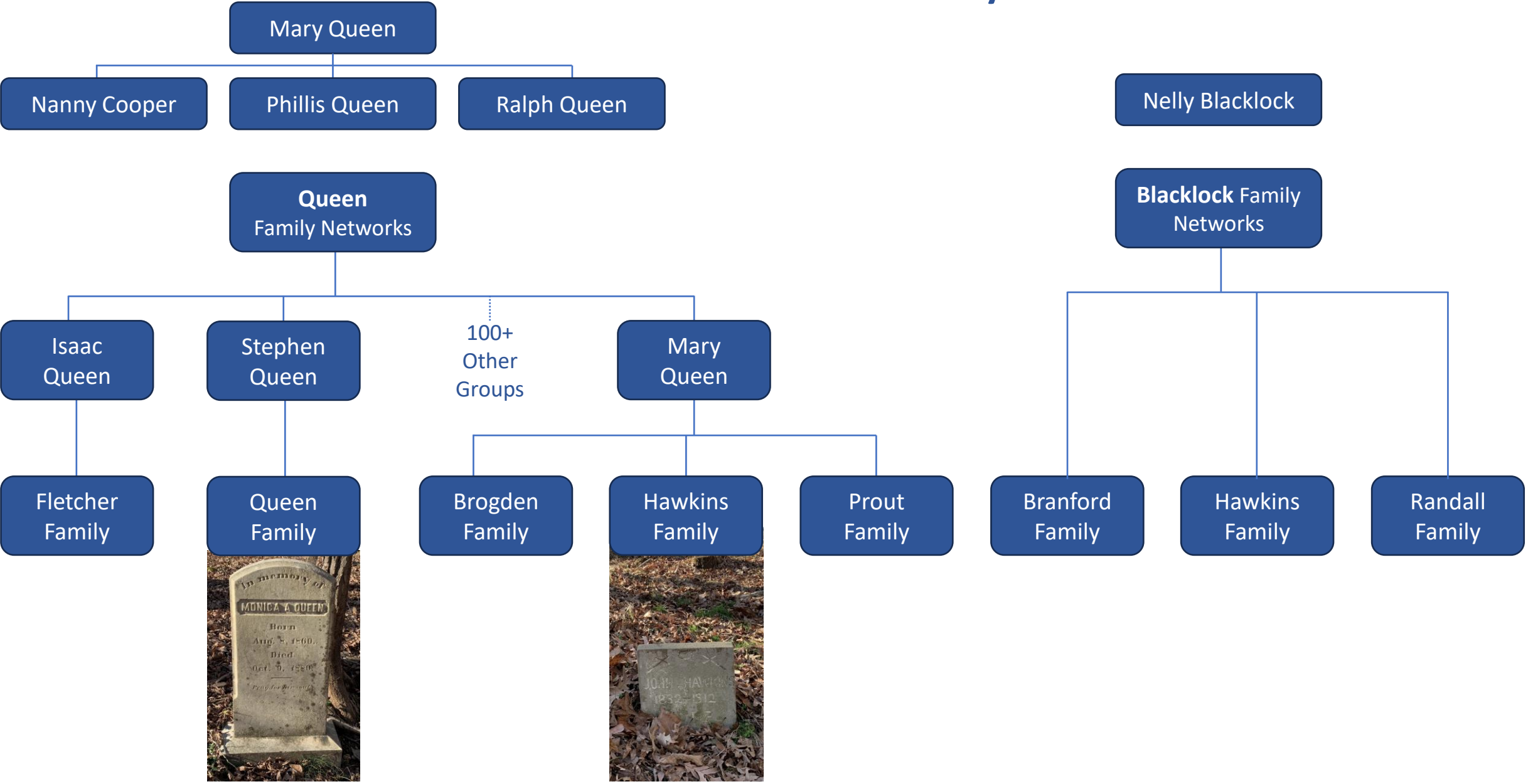
# Jesuit Enslaved Communities in Maryland

White Marsh Mission	Bohemia Manor	Deer Creek Mission	St Joseph's Mission	St Thomas Manor	Newtown Manor	St Inigoes Manor
Maryland	Maryland	Maryland	Maryland	Maryland	Maryland	Maryland
St Louis, MO	Wilmington, DE		Wilmington, DE	Ascension Parish, LA	Ascension Parish, LA	Ascension Parish, LA
Ascension Parish, LA	Philadelphia, PA		Philadelphia, PA	Iberville Parish, LA	Iberville Parish, LA	Iberville Parish, LA
Iberville Parish, LA	New Jersey		New Jersey	Terrebonne Parish, LA	Terrebonne Parish, LA	Terrebonne Parish, LA
Terrebonne Parish, LA						



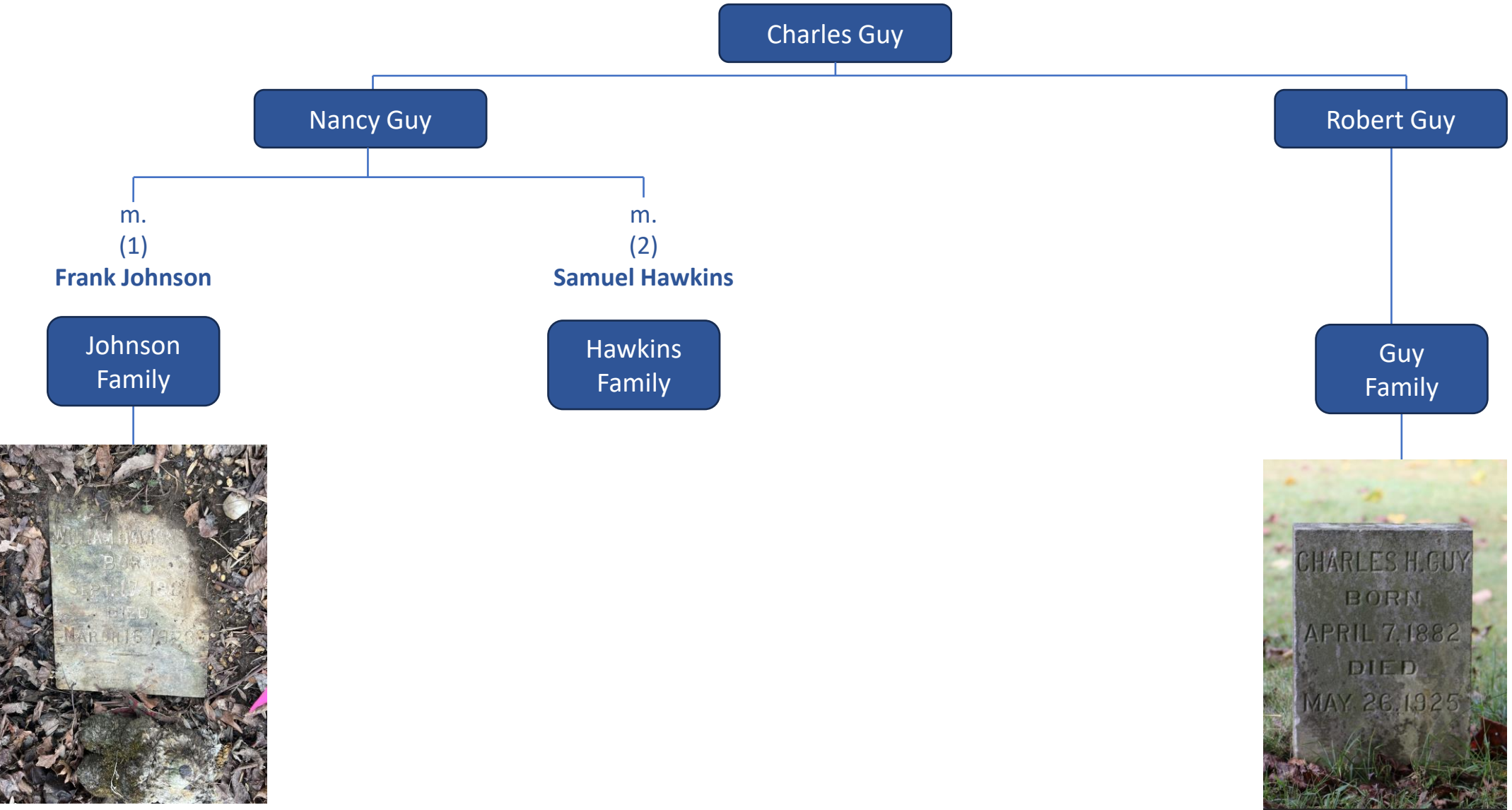
# Some Known Family Networks

## Jesuit Enslaved Community



# Some Known Family Networks

## Black Catholic Families



# Join Us!



Visit

[www.whitemarsh.org](http://www.whitemarsh.org)

Or Email Us

[info@whitemarsh.org](mailto:info@whitemarsh.org)

*Remembering the Past – Redirecting the Future – Reconstructing Our History*