

Moore's Ford Memorial Committee Activities - Spring 2007

April 21 Cemetery Workday: Work Resumes to Restore Former Slave Cemetery

On Saturday, April 21, please join with Moore's Ford Memorial Committee volunteers and high school scholarship applicants from Athens-Clarke, Oconee and Walton Counties as we resume work on Zion Hill Cemetery restoration. At the three acre cemetery, we will pick up trash, cut brush and paint hundreds of wooden crosses that have been installed over unmarked gravesites. We will begin at 9 a.m., break for lunch and a brief program at noon, and resume work to finish. The MFMC will provide some lunch, but if the spirit grips you, bring a dish and folding chairs to sit in.

Bring: Workers will need gloves, boots and work clothes. We will provide a chain saw, several string trimmers/brush cutters, paint and brushes, sledge hammers, trash bags, tarps and loppers for cutting brush. But if you have any of these items, please bring them.

Zion Hill, a historic African American cemetery, contains the gravesites of former slaves dating from the Civil War and more recently, the gravesite of Mae Murray Dorsey, killed in 1946 by a lynch mob at the Moore's Ford Bridge. Tragically, it was overrun by development several decades ago and was abandoned. A flat bed truck loaded with dozens of tombstones was seen leaving the site during construction.

Our multiracial citizens group has undertaken the job of restoring what is left of the cemetery. Mae Murray's gravesite and that of her family apparently lies underneath an asphalt parking lot. In 1998, we placed a grave marker for her in that part of the cemetery still intact. Inscribed on her marker, "May Your Suffering Be Redeemed in Brotherly Love."

That spirit will be evident on Saturday as this work continues. Scholarship students from our tri-county area and Oxford College of Emory University have worked hard on Zion Hill in the past. When complete, Zion Hill Cemetery will have hundreds of wooden crosses for all those buried there, a fence around the perimeter and a sign. Also under discussion is a memorial marker, with names inscribed of all individuals and families known to be buried at Zion Hill, and designation of the cemetery as a historic site.

Directions: drive to downtown Monroe, from Main St. or Highway 11, turn west at the light on Alcovey Street (across from Hardees), go ¼ mile and turn into parking lot just past B & B Small Engine Shop. Cemetery is behind engine shop.

Please join in the fellowship on Saturday.

Thursday, April 26 - Eighth Annual Moore's Ford Memorial Scholarship Banquet: we gather at 6:30 p.m., dine at 7 p.m. with Weaver Dee's Delicious Fine Foods, then award six \$1,000 scholarships and \$100 merit awards to twelve finalists. Please join us - at the Sanctuary, 13 Barnett Shoals Road in downtown Watkinsville. Bring your family and friends. \$10 admission. Please RSVP Rich at 706-769-0988.

Saturday, May 5 & Sunday, May 6 - Tabling at Human Rights Festival: we need volunteers to man the Moores Ford Memorial Committee's exhibit at the 29th Annual Athens Human Rights Festival. Location - College Ave in downtown Athens (across from UGA's arches), 3 p.m. till midnight. We speak at 2:30 p.m on Sunday.

Saturday, May 12: MFMC Regular Meeting, 10 a.m., at The Sanctuary, 13 Barnett Shoals Road in downtown Watkinsville. Students are welcome. We would love to recruit more younger people for our organization.

Welcome to our "Moore's Ford Family." Please call us at 706-769-0988 if you need more information.