Historic Randolph Cemetery needs help

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Contributed by Sherry Jaco

Randolph Cemetery was created by black businessmen and opened in 1872 as the first formal, private cemetery for blacks in Columbia and Richland County. It is named for Senator Benjamin F. Randolph (Republican, Orangeburg) who was assassinated in 1868 amid a year of political violence toward whites and blacks. Randolph was a proponent of integrated public education.

The cemetery is home to well over 1,000 graves of blacks of all stations of life from the 1800s-1900s, including at least 12 Reconstruction-era legislators. It is privately owned by the 501(c)3 nonprofit Committee for the Beautification and Restoration of Randolph Cemetery (CBRRC), donations are tax deductible.

Repairs and maintenance over the last decade have greatly improved the appearance of the historic site, but it requires ongoing care. The cemetery has no ongoing source of funding, and in its 150th year, is in dire need of funds to keep the grass cut and continue maintenance of this important historic site.

CBRRC and Randolph Cemetery are participating in the upcoming donor campaign www.midlandsgives.org/randolphcemetery Tuesday, May 3 and urgently need support.

Visit www.historicrandolphcemetery.org for more information.

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