



# Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Who:** The Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band, Inc.,  
P.O. Box 6366, Moore, Oklahoma, 73153.

**What:** Announcement of preservation project 1902 for recently procured  
Historic Creek Freedmen Cemetery, aka the Thomas Smith Cemetery.

**When:** August 14, 2021, 10:00AM-12:00PM CDT

**Where:** Thomas Smith Cemetery, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

**Why:** To Preserve and Protect the unique history, heritage, and genealogy of the  
Muscogee Creek Freedmen “Black Creeks” who were removed to Indian Territory  
(Oklahoma) on the Trail of Tears.

### *News:*

The Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band has recently acquired the Thomas Smith  
Cemetery, Located at 20989 E 41 ST S, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma,74014.

The cemetery is the resting place for many original enrolled Creek Freedmen of the  
Muscogee Creek Nation of Oklahoma. Join us as we commemorate the legacy of the  
founder Creek Freedmen Thomas Smith, Civil War Veteran William Lacy Sr. Creek  
Freedmen Adam Manuel, Creek Freedmen Lucinda Postoak-Lacy, The Barnett's, Hines,  
McIntosh, Ananias (A.N) Pegues, and all that rest in the Thomas Smith Cemetery.

Please join us in the commitment to preserve and protect this historic treasure. We have  
already made significant progress, but much more work is needed.

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We are pleased to announce that the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, a fraternal organization dedicated to preserving the history and legacy of heroes who fought and worked to save the Union, organized in 1881 and chartered by Congress in 1954 will join the event. Members of the Oklahoma Department of the SUVCW will provide a Color Guard for the ceremony.

The guest presenter is Mr. Calvin Osborne. Osborne is a native Tulsan who attended Booker T Washington High School. In 1991, Calvin joined Company B of the 54th Massachusetts Civil War Reenactors (the 54th). The 54th was specifically formed by the National Park Service to film the award-winning Tri-Star motion picture "Glory." The 54th has been instrumental in the filming of civil war movies, documentaries, and historical films, including "Gettysburg," "Gods and Generals," "Sommersby," "Andersonville," "Lincoln," and others.

Osborne is currently serving his second term as President of the 54th. He is a direct descendant of William Lacy Sr., a former slave who became a civil war soldier with the 1st Kansas Colored Infantry (79th USCT). William Lacy married Creek Freedwomen Lucinda Thomas Postoak-Lacy, a woman who was also a former slave in the Creek Nation in the Oklahoma Indian territory. He has been the subject of a short CNN video related to his ancestors' military history and working with Ancestry conducting voiceovers.

Calvin earned a B.S. in Management from William Jewell College and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He is an attorney currently practicing law in Washington DC, where he lives with his wife and two daughters.

Additionally, we invite the family members to join us and share some historical facts about their ancestors that lay rest in the Thomas Smith Cemetery.

According to Mr. John Hines (81) and Mr. James Hardman, both Creek freedmen descendants whose ancestor's resting place is in the Thomas Smith cemetery. Both state that the cemetery is the resting place of some affected by the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

Hardman, a Creek Freedmen descendant, interviewed his grandmother Eva T. Lacy in 2002. Eva Lacy states that her mother, Malissa Green-Lacy, her brother Edgar Lacy, and her grandmother Lucinda T. Lacy (Buried in TSC) lived on Greenwood that fateful day the massacre took place. Although they all survived that day, she made mention of others.

The land donated in 1902 was from the original Muscogee Creek Nation land allotment of Thomas Smith, Creek Freedmen, roll # 4943, who received 160 acres of land. The Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band is so please to acquire 1 acre of an original Creek Freedmen allotment.



There are a dozen or so military graves, the oldest dates to the Civil War. The 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry (later the 79th U.S. Colored Infantry) was an African American regiment that served in the Union Army during the American Civil War.

The regiment was organized before the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation and without federal authorization, thus becoming the first black unit to see combat alongside white soldiers during the war in October 1862.

The oldest grave marker is that of M. Jordan, the birth date of May 18, 1808, who died Oct 28, 1902. Also, a member of the last Creek Council was A.N. Pegues, born in 1879, who died around 1959.

There are approximately 300 people buried in the cemetery and a dozen or more who served in the military. They served in the Civil War, WWI, WWII, and the Vietnam war.

Creek Freedmen Sarah Rector's story is more widely known as the "Richest little Colored girl," who became a millionaire overnight as her Creek allotment was booming in oil. There was also another Creek Freedmen, whose family allotment was also booming in oil.

Adam Manuel's resting place is also in the Thomas Smith Cemetery. His son, Luther, was considered the richest colored boy due to the oil and gas leases on his land allotment. While the family allotment was originally assumed to be worthless, it became the most valued allotment in Creek Nation. Manuel was receiving \$20,000.00 to \$50,000.00 a month.

The Thomas Smith Cemetery has fallen into disrepair as many graves have sunken and headstones damaged, requiring a great deal of care and restoration. The Barnett gated section is overgrown and inaccessible, and there is another section of graves adjacent to the Barnett section that is overgrown and inaccessible. Our objective is to clear out the dense trees and greenery so that the families can access their loved ones' graves.

Shamefully some have used the cemetery as a dumping ground. We managed to clean up much of the trash, and the very next day, someone had dumped more junk on the cemetery grounds. The Thomas Smith Cemetery requires fencing, new signage, regular maintenance, sinking monument repair, and more.

As part of the Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band's Mission of promoting self-sufficiency in preserving our unparalleled cultural heritage, the MCIFB acquired the cemetery to protect and preserve the unique history and heritage of the Muscogee Creek Freedmen.



The MCIFB's goal is to capture and continue to tell our ancestors' stories and honor and protect the lives of the Creek Freedmen and all those whose resting place is Thomas Smith cemetery.

We cannot allow this little-known treasure rich in history to continue to diminish and fall into disrepair. We are grateful to the citizens in the community who contacted the MCIFB for help and to all who have helped over the years. You have done a noble job of managing the grounds to the best of your ability.

We are taking bids from contractors to donate the labor and material needed to restore and continue preserving this essential and somber historical marker. Thomas Smith Cemetery requires the following: signage, fencing, tree cutting, Seasonal ground maintenance, GPR services, and more. Any donations are greatly appreciated. Please reach out to us at [mcifb@1866creekfreedmen.com](mailto:mcifb@1866creekfreedmen.com) [www.1866creekfreedmen.com](http://www.1866creekfreedmen.com). 405-405-732-5889.

The MCIFB is a 501(C) (3) organization. Your gift is tax-deductible to the full extent provided by law.

Thank you!

Rhonda K. Grayson  
Sharon Lenzy-Scott  
Jeffrey D. Kennedy

Please refer to the attached FAQ for more information about the Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band and its mission.