

## Oconee County Arts & Historical Commission Application for Historical Marker Consideration

Proposed Marker Title: The Lynching of Allen Green

Proposed Marker Location (physical address & description):  
Short Street, Walthalla, SC - near location of old Oconee  
County Jail

Is this location privately owned? If yes, list owner.

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Is this location maintained to ensure historical marker visibility and security?  YES  NO

Please attach a BRIEF historical narrative (1-2 paragraphs indicating what the marker might say and why it is historically significant).

If requested, can you provide copies of relevant primary and secondary historical resources to substantiate this historical narrative?  YES  NO

*Approval of this application does NOT guarantee a historical marker. If approved, the Oconee County Arts & Historical Commission will work with the requesting organization to complete the historical marker application process through the South Carolina Department of Archives & History (SCDAH). If approved by SCDAH, the Oconee County Arts & Historical Commission will directly facilitate the production of the approved historical marker using SCDAH approved vendor Sewah Studios.*

To view the SCDAH Historical Marker Program Criteria visit

<https://scdah.sc.gov/historic-preservation/programs/historical-markers>

Requesting Organization: Lake Hartwell Country

Contact Person: Josh Johnson

Email/Phone: josh@lakehartwellcountry.com, 864-646-3782

Signature: 

RETURN TO:

Oconee County Arts & Historical Commission  
1099 South Cove Rd.  
Seneca, SC 29672

**Proposal to erect a State  
Historic Marker concerning  
the lynching of Allen Green in  
Walhalla, 1930.**

Joshua Johnson  
Museum Site Coordinator  
Lake Hartwell Country  
[josh@lakehartwellcountry.com](mailto:josh@lakehartwellcountry.com)

This proposal is for a state historic marker to be erected by the Oconee County Arts & Historical Commission with the intention of telling the history and honoring the memory of Allen Green, Oconee County's last recognized African American lynching victim. The marker will help tell the true history of the unlawful murder of Allen Green and reveal a deeper story about race relations and the Black history of Oconee County.

Of the twenty-four Oconee, South Carolina, DAH markers, only four currently concern African American history and all of them are schools. This marker would be an important addition to the historical markers representing the African American history of our county. Additionally, less than three of our DAH markers are concerned with events that occurred in the county, rather than locations or individuals, and would represent a further diversification of topics covered by our historical signage.

It should also be noted that there are currently four other South Carolina DAH Historical Markers concerning lynchings in South Carolina: one in Florence County, two in Greenville County, and one in York County. There is precedent set by our sister counties in this regard. Additionally, Greenville, Union, and Abbeville Counties have historical markers sponsored through other organizations concerning lynchings that occurred in those places. Two such markers were raised in 2021, and three more are planned to be raised in Greenville.

This proposal is submitted by Joshua Johnson of Lake Hartwell Country (The Pendleton District Historical, Recreational and Tourism Commission) and supported by the Seneca City Museums in the Department of Arts, History, and Culture.

### **Historical Background**

Allen Green, born c.1880, was an African American citizen of Walhalla who worked for the Oconee Telephone Company and as a supervisor in the Walhalla Street Department. As a volunteer fireman, Green was credited with saving the town of Walhalla from major fires on two different occasions. Walhalla Mayor Robert Ballentine was elected in the late 1920's after campaign promises that he would fire Green from his job in the city.

In 1930 Allen Green was wrongfully charged with the assault of a white woman. Green was arrested by Sheriff John Thomas on April 20th and locked in the city jail. During his pre-trial hearing, the woman he allegedly assaulted repeatedly testified that he had not committed any crime until her husband finally coerced her into saying Green assaulted her. Even Sheriff Thomas testified that he believed Green was innocent.

## **The Lynching**

Around 11pm on the night of April the 23rd a mob gathered at the Chicopee Ball Field, eager to take Green from the jail and give him what they thought was just due. A young man attempted to stop the gathering mob when one of its leaders told the group, "It's time to get this thing over."

There were over a hundred men in the mob, some as young as 14 and many from the neighboring towns of Seneca and Westminster. The man who attempted to disperse the crowd raced to the jailhouse to warn Sheriff Thomas but he was too late. Just as the Sheriff came down the stairs the mob entered the jail. Thomas announced they could not have Green but was quickly disarmed and hit over the head with the butt of a pistol. Allen Green was driven through downtown Walhalla down the old Salem road and tied to a tree somewhere outside of West Union.

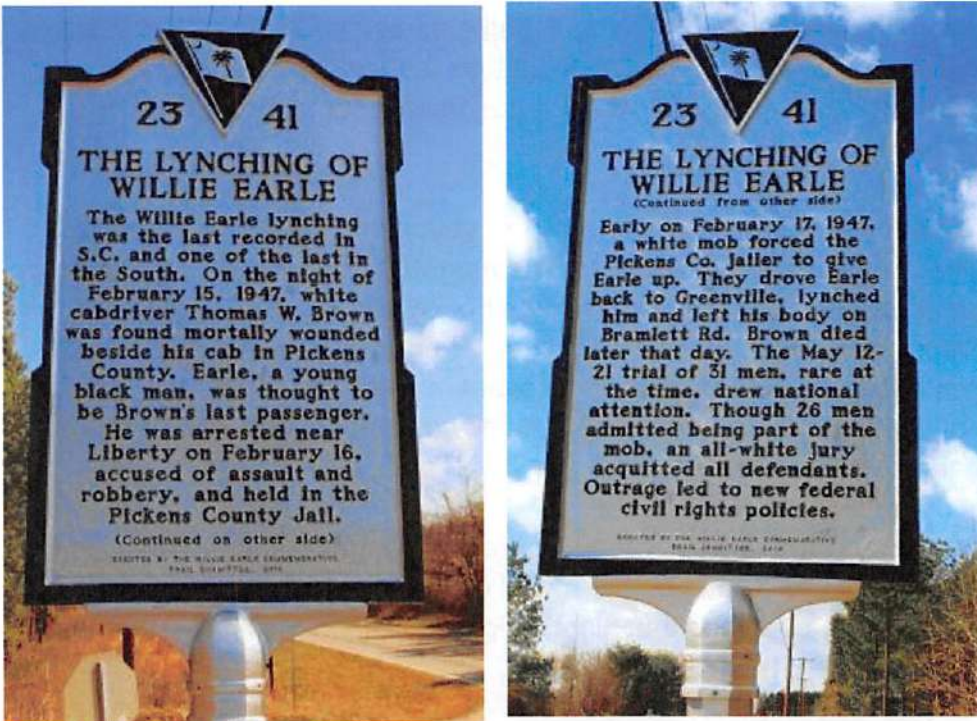
According to eyewitnesses, Green was propped in front of a large tree and prayed in the dim light of the assembled mob's cars, before a shot rang out, followed by dozens of others. His body fell to the ground and that night a sign was left on the spot, "Here Allen Green got his parole, and here he got his lynch."

Around 3am an undertaker arrived from Seneca to take Green's body and, within the week, he was given a night-time burial in an unmarked grave. His death certificate stated that the cause of death was "numerous gunshot wounds to head and body, killed by mob."

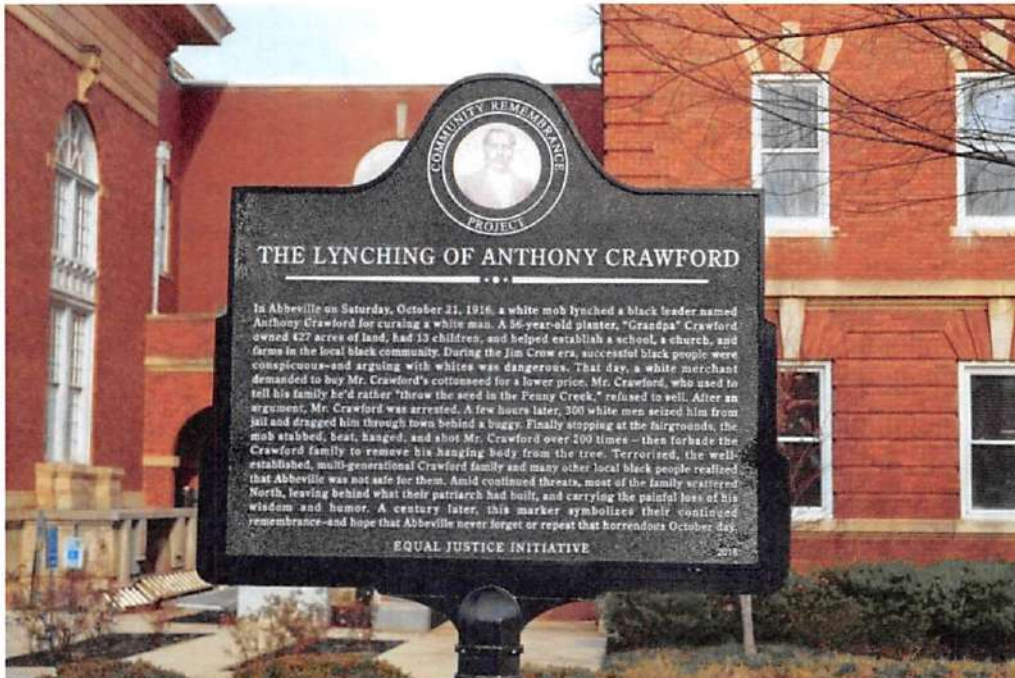
After several decades, a headstone was placed at Allen Green's gravesite by family members. Of the over 50 white men indicted for Green's murder, only 17 went to trial, including Mayor Robert Ballentine and Alvin Jones, the city night watchman. All 17 were acquitted or found not guilty by an all-white jury. Green's widow was awarded \$2,000 by the county for damages when it was proved he was not guilty of the crime for which he was lynched. Oconee County never paid those damages. The bullet riddled tree which Green was murdered in front of was stripped of its bark and wood, serving as souvenirs of the lynch, and destroying evidence of the crime.

Erecting this marker will help restore what was erased by those who sought to remove his inalienable and civil rights.

Example of one of the State Historical Markers in Greenville



Example of a lynching marker raised by other organizations in Abbeville County



CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important (See instructions on back of certificate.)

1. PLACE OF DEATH

County of OCONEE  
Township of WEST UNION  
or  
Inc. Town of Wayner  
or  
City of \_\_\_\_\_

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Bureau of Vital Statistics  
State Board of Health

Registration District No. 3506

(No. \_\_\_\_\_ St. \_\_\_\_\_ Ward \_\_\_\_\_)

File No.—For State Registrar Only

6574

Registered No. 19  
(For use of Local Registrar.)

(If death occurred in a Hospital or institution give its NAME instead of street and number.)

Residence—  
In City \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs. \_\_\_\_\_ Mos. \_\_\_\_\_ Days \_\_\_\_\_

2. FULL NAME ALLEN GREEN

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3. SEX MALE 4. COLOR OR RACE CILORED 5. SINGLE MARRIED  
MARRIED  
WIDOWED  
OR DIVORCED  
(Write the word)

6. DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month) (Day) 1 (Year)

7. AGE 51 yrs. - mos. - dys. IF LESS than 1 day hrs. or min.

8. OCCUPATION  
(a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work Laborer  
(b) General nature of Industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer) Town Employee

9. BIRTHPLACE (State or Country) S.C.

10. NAME OF FATHER Dont Know

11. BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country) S.C.

12. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Dont Know

13. BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country) S.C.

14. THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE  
(Informant) W.D. Addison  
(Address) Seneca S.C.

15. FILED May 5 1930 R.A. McLees  
Local Registrar

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

16. DATE OF DEATH APRIL 24, 1930  
(Month) (Day) (Year)

17. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from Apr 18 to Apr 30, 1930, that I last saw him about 1905A about 172 hrs. min. and that death occurred, on the date stated above at 1905A m. The CAUSE OF DEATH\* was as follows:

Numerous gunshot wounds of head & body. (Killed by mob.)

(Duration) \_\_\_\_\_ yrs. \_\_\_\_\_ mos. \_\_\_\_\_ days  
Contributory \_\_\_\_\_  
(SECONDARY)  
(Duration) \_\_\_\_\_ yrs. \_\_\_\_\_ mos. \_\_\_\_\_ days

18. Where was disease contracted if not at place of death? \_\_\_\_\_  
Did operation precede death \_\_\_\_\_ date of \_\_\_\_\_  
Was there an autopsy? yes  
What test confirmed diagnosis? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signed) John T. Davis M.D.  
(Address) \_\_\_\_\_

\*State the Disease causing Death, or, in deaths from Violent Causes, state (1) Means of Injury; and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal or Homicidal.

19. Place of Burial or Removal Flat Rock- Walhalla DATE OF BURIAL April 24, 1930

20. UNDERTAKER Peek & Addison ADDRESS Seneca . S.C.



# Oconee County Arts & Historical Commission Mural Trail Application Form

Proposed Mural Title: DEFENDING FREEDOM

Proposed Mural Artist: JIM & DONNA JURAS

Proposed Mural Location: 13 SHORT ST. WALHALLA OCONEE MILITARY MUSEUM

Is the Mural Indoors or Outdoors? (Circle One)  Indoors  Outdoors

Is the Mural accessible to the public? YES

If Indoors, what are the days/hours available to the public for viewing?  
THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY 11-4 AND BY APPOINTMENT

Is the Mural located on Public or Private Property? (Circle One)  Public  Private

Does the property owner consent to allow the Mural be listed on Mural Trail? YES  
OCONEE MILITARY MUSEUM BY: M. G. FISSELER, PRESIDENT  
Property Owner Name (Print) Property Owner Signature

Mural Description (to be used on website listing-limited to 500 characters)  
DEPICTIONS OF MAJOR U.S. MILITARY CONFLICTS  
ALONG WITH MEMORABLE QUOTES RELATING TO  
WAR AND PEACE.

Completed Forms are to be submitted to:

Oconee Parks, Recreation & Tourism  
Mr. Phil Shirley  
1099 South Cove Road  
Seneca, SC 29672  
[pshirley@oconeesc.com](mailto:pshirley@oconeesc.com)

Applications will be presented at the monthly meeting of the Oconee County Arts & Historical Commission



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1911

1911

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1911

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**Phil Shirley**

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**From:** Heather Hawkins, SC250 <hhawkins@southcarolina250.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 25, 2022 10:27 AM  
**To:** Phil Shirley  
**Subject:** SC250 Launches First Grant Program

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.



[County 250 Committees](#) | [Grant Program](#) | [Feature](#) | [Upcoming Events](#)

## **The 250th Anniversary is Here!**

The SC American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission (SC250) considers the American Revolution anniversary years 1770-1783 | 2020-2033.

So what was happening 250 years ago in 1772? One thing was a Scotch-Irish migration into South Carolina. A few years later many of these immigrants would be staunch Patriots and help turn the tide of the war in the Backcountry.

Keep reading to learn more about the Revolutionary Era and how you can help celebrate 1770-1783!



## County 250 Organizing Grant is Now Live!

In an effort to ensure that all counties across SC have Sestercentennial programming highlighting their unique role in the American Revolution, the SC250 Commission will be issuing a grant to each county to aid in the formation of their own County 250 Committee and kick start their efforts.

These \$3,000 grants are non-competitive, but they are **only issued to the "official" County 250 Committee** from each SC County upon the completion of a grant application with clearly defined program goals.

[Learn More About This Grant Program](#)

## How Does A Group Become The "Official" County 250 Committee in Each SC County?

1. Verify Whether or Not Your County Already Has A Committee
2. Reach out to SC250 for Guest Speakers and Help with Organizing Your Group
3. Gather Your County's Stakeholders Making Sure to Be Intentionally Inclusive
4. Complete a Contact Information Spreadsheet (Sample Available)
5. Give Your Committee an Official Name (We like [County name] County 250 Committee.)
6. Have Your County Government Pass A Resolution (Sample Available)
7. Register with SC250

[Learn More About County 250 Committees](#)

## Register in the Discover SC Web Grants Program