



Foundation Document Overview

Charles Pinckney National Historic Site

South Carolina

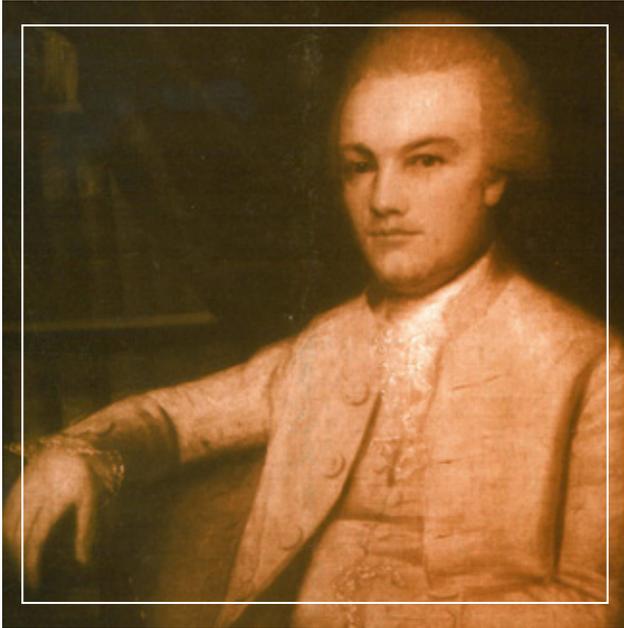


Contact Information

For more information about the *Charles Pinckney National Historic Site Foundation Document*, contact: chpi_superintendent@nps.gov or (843) 881-5516 or write to:

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Purpose



CHARLES PINCKNEY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE communicates the legacy of Charles Pinckney, a framer and signer of the United States Constitution and a leading public servant of the new nation, by preserving a 28-acre remnant of his coastal plantation Snee Farm and interpreting the lives of its inhabitants, enslaved as well as free.



Significance

Significance statements express why Charles Pinckney National Historic Site resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

1. Charles Pinckney National Historic Site honors Charles Pinckney, a contributing drafter of the United States Constitution and signatory from the state of South Carolina.
2. Snee Farm offers outstanding opportunities to learn about the social, political, and economic environment of the 18th and 19th century indigo and rice plantations of the South Carolina Lowcountry and the role these plantations played in shaping the young nation as well as the lives of their inhabitants, both free and enslaved.
3. In a career spanning 42 years, having served as a Revolutionary War soldier, state legislator, governor, U.S. Congressman, South Carolina Constitutional Convention delegate, and Minister to Spain, Charles Pinckney exemplified the ideal of public service.
4. Due to their high level of integrity, the archeological resources in the park create a tangible link to the lifeways of the people who worked and resided at Snee Farm, from the Pinckneys and subsequent owners to those that toiled in the fields. Future archeological investigations will continue to provide new insights into our understanding of Snee Farm's past.



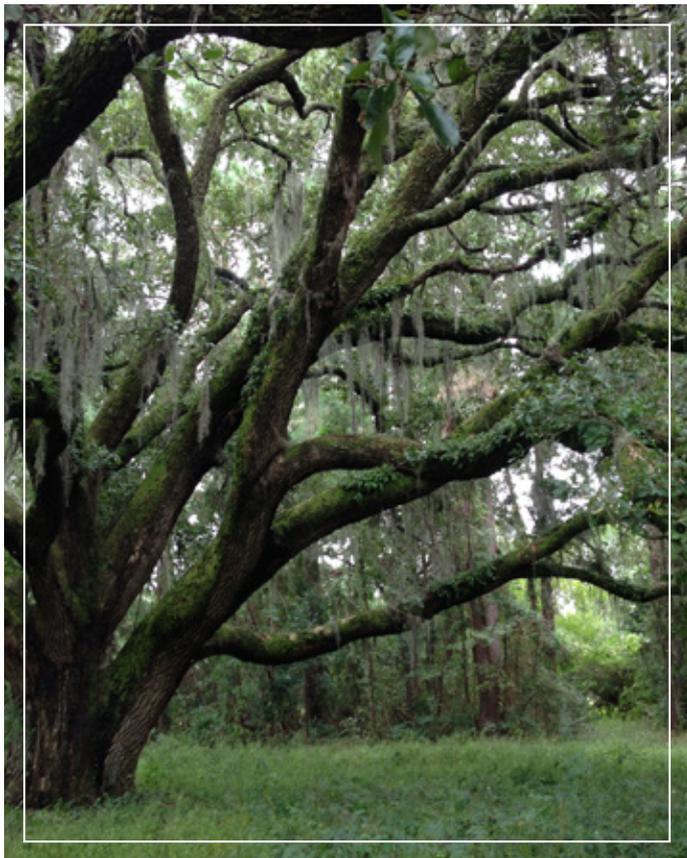
Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Archeological Resources**
- **Museum Collection**
- **Farmhouse**
- **Remnants of the Historic Landscape**

Charles Pinckney National Historic Site contains other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

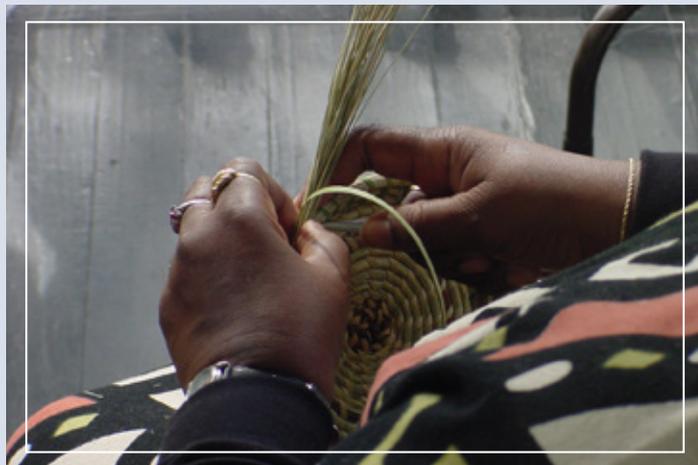
- **Other Agricultural Structures**
- **Park Grounds as a Refuge**



Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- Charles Pinckney was a signer and framer of the U.S. Constitution whose contributions are recognizable in the structure of the federal government today.
- Charles Pinckney’s career in public service influenced the course of South Carolina and U.S. history during his lifetime and after his death, and reflects the ideological and political struggles of a new nation transitioning from a British colony to self-rule.
- To its various inhabitants, Snee Farm plantation served as home, livelihood, country retreat, political seat, or a form of prison. It embodies the social, political, and economic structures of 18th century rice and indigo cultivation in the South Carolina Lowcountry that relied on the contributions of enslaved Africans and that generated the region’s wealth and power.
- As a place where enslaved Africans adapted their cultures and traditions to survive, and as an example of a grassroots effort to save a piece of our nation’s history, Snee Farm reflects the meaning and significance of identity and community.
- Snee Farm archeology connects visitors to the lifeways of the farm’s inhabitants, expands our understanding of social and cultural constructs of Lowcountry plantation life, provides opportunity to inspire curiosity, and instills awareness of broader cultural perspectives.



Description

Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, located outside Charleston in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, is a 28-acre remnant of Charles Pinckney's original 18th-century 715-acre plantation known as Snee Farm. Purchased by his father Colonel Charles Pinckney in 1754 (three years before the younger Pinckney's birth), Pinckney spent his childhood splitting time between the Snee Farm "country home" and the family's downtown Charleston residence. Pinckney inherited Snee Farm in 1782 and continued to grow rice and indigo at the plantation using an enslaved workforce.

Shortly after the Revolutionary War, Pinckney became immersed in American political endeavors that would occupy the next 40 years of his life. His most famous accomplishment was the inclusion of more than 25 clauses in the final draft of the U.S. Constitution. In addition, Pinckney served four terms as governor of South Carolina and as Thomas Jefferson's Minister to Spain (1801–1805). While his political and social life was based out of his Charleston home, Pinckney used Snee Farm as an accessible country retreat and source of agricultural income.

The demands of Charles Pinckney's political career made it difficult for him to manage his extensive land holdings, which included six other plantations besides Snee Farm. Conveyed by Pinckney to trustees in 1816 and sold in 1817, Snee Farm had a number of subsequent owners, one of whom built a new coastal cottage-style house on the site of the Pinckney home around 1828. Snee Farm remained intact as an agricultural property into the 20th century, although by the 1930s the farm had the character of a country vacation residence rather than a working farm.

The burgeoning suburban development of Mount Pleasant, formerly known as Christ Church Parish, in the late 20th century finally resulted in the breakup of the Snee Farm property. In the early 1970s, all but a 28-acre core of the original Snee Farm was sold for housing development and a golf course. Snee Farm was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on April 13, 1973, and was also designated as a national historic landmark on November 7, 1973.

Later, a developer purchased the last 28-acre remnant of Snee Farm in 1986. Roads were rough graded and some utilities were installed. In 1988, the Friends of Snee Farm purchased the 28-acre core of Snee Farm from the developer, including the circa 1828 farmhouse and surviving 20th-century agricultural outbuildings. Following congressional authorization of the site, the Friends of Snee Farm sold the site to the National Park Service, ensuring preservation of the core of Snee Farm.

Congress established Charles Pinckney National Historic Site in 1988 to preserve the site of Pinckney's former home at Snee Farm in present-day Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, and to interpret his life, the lives of Snee Farm's free and enslaved inhabitants, and the early history of the United States. Although the original Pinckney house and outbuildings of Snee Farm no longer stand, the existing 1828 farmhouse that remains today and the surviving outbuildings tell the story of agrarian patterns of South Carolina's Lowcountry from the mid-17th to the late-20th century. With the house as a backdrop, and because no physical structures from Pinckney ownership of the property remain, the National Park Service emphasizes discoveries from archeological investigations to tangibly connect the Pinckneys to

Snee Farm and to provide evidence of the cultural environment that influenced Pinckney and the first decades of the United States as a young nation. The park is administered with nearby Fort Sumter National Monument.

