## THE WILLIAM TUCKER 1624 SOCIETY COMMEMORATION

Bridging the Gap 1619-2021



FRIDAY, AUGUST 20, 2021 11:00 AM

Tucker Cemetery
1 Sharon Court, Hampton, VA 23666





#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the William Tucker 1624 Society is to educate the greater public about the lives of the first Africans to arrive in Virginia. The Society is a non-profit organization named after the first African child born and baptized in the English colonies. William was born to Antoney and Isabella, two Africans "of the twenty and odd Negroes" brought to Point Comfort, Virginia in August 1619 aboard the White Lion. The Society seeks to conduct research into his life and that of his descendants. Our goal is to gain insight into the strength and resilience of the Africans who helped to build and populate the United States of America.

The Tucker Cemetery is a landmark in the city of Hampton, Virginia. The "Old Colored Burial Ground," as it was once known, is one of the oldest cemeteries in Hampton, Virginia. This sacred burial ground is located within the Aberdeen Gardens community. The Tucker Cemetery is a permanent resting place for generations of Tuckers and others of African descent. The Society considers the care and maintenance of the Tucker Cemetery, to be a sacred obligation.

#### William Tucker 1624 Society Board of Directors

President	Vincent Tucker
Vice-President	Dr. Felicia Tucker-Lively
Treasurer	Walter Jones Sr.
Immediate Past President	William Floyd Tucker
Members-at-Large	Brenda Doretha Tucker
Members-at-Large	Verrandall Tucker

**PRESERVATION** 

**BEAUTIFICATION** 

**EDUCATION** 

Email: wt1624society@gmail.com • Phone: 757-774-6892 • Website: williamtucker1624society.org

# Bridging the Gap Order of Program

#### Rita Addico Cohen

Mistress of Ceremony

Drum Call	
Libation Ceremony	
Welcome	
Invocation	
Solo	
Recognition of Special Guests	
Greetings	
Introduction of Ambassador Espírito Santo	
Introduction of Minister Jomo Fortunato	
Remarks	
Closing Remarks	
Closing Litany	
Closing Song"Lift Every Voice and Sing" Led by Brenda Doretha Tucker	





#### 400 Years of Perseverance: 1619-2019 Litany

**Leader:** God of all people, races and nationalities, on this day, August 25, 1619, 400 years ago, you were there with our ancestors when they landed as kidnapped enslaved people from Angola, West Africa at Point Comfort, present-day Fort Monroe in Hampton, VA.

**People:** Thank you Lord for being with them throughout the voyage through the Middle Passage and by their side when they arrived.

**Leader:** They were in a land that was strange to them and they did not understand the language that was being spoken.

**People:** Thank you Lord for giving them the wisdom to create a language to deceive or mock those who held them captive, to communicate secretly with each other, and to plan revolts and methods of escape. Thus, enabling them to lean on each other.

**Leader**: The Midwife that arrived in 1619 brought her healing spirit with her on the voyage and ensured comfort to the women during childbirth.

**People:** Thank you Lord for providing our ancestors the spiritual and physical comfort during the birth of future generations.

**Leader:** Throughout these 400 years, we have witnessed your keeping power and we have been recipients of your love and grace.

**People:** Thank you for our ancestors who listened to your voice and were obedient to your call to hold steady, have faith and wait on your deliverance.

**Leader:** Our ancestors used their faith to survive the horrors of the Middle Passage, slavery, Jim Crow and every manner of institutional and structural violence with their souls intact. This was not only a political act, but it was a revolutionary act.

**People:** Faith and prayer were, and still are, means of resistance.

**Leader**: Today we are called to give thanks for the great gifts of our ancestors that make our lives richer and fuller.

**People:** May your spirit continue to infuse this generation and future generations with courage, hope, and grace.

#### 400 Years of Perseverance: 1619-2019 Litany (continued)

**Leader:** Help us to teach our young our culture and their history, so they will know who they are and who they can be.

**People**: Inspire us with a vision for the future and use that vision to direct the paths of future generations.

**Leader:** We thank you Lord for the gifts, talents, uniqueness, and cultural blessings you have poured out upon our people.

**People:** May we always appreciate the blessings you have bestowed upon us.

**Leader:** We thank you for our mathematic, scientific, and literary genius. We thank you for jazz, spirituals, gospel, and the blues. We thank you for beautiful locks of hair and beautiful shades and complexions of skin, and even for soul food.

**People:** May we always appreciate our unique beauty and gifts you have bestowed upon us.

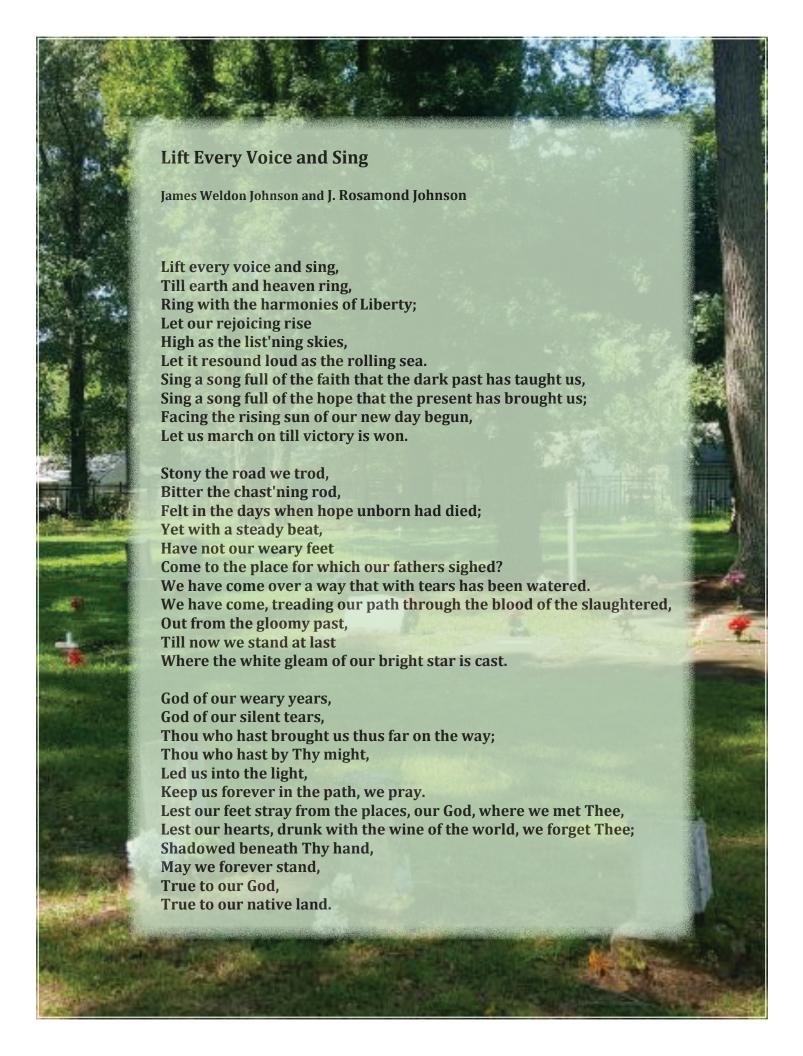
**Leader:** We thank you for the wisdom, strength, and determination we learned from our ancestors and for the blessings and love of family.

**People:** Thank you Lord for your continued presence throughout these 400 years, and as we begin our 401st year, continue to cover us with your grace and mercy.

**All:** And we stand today, Oh God, as a people united in love to remember, reflect, honor, and celebrate the heritage, history, and legacy you have given to us. And we ask that you grant us strength, courage, faith and humility, sufficient for the tasks assigned to us that will keep us forever in thy path, we pray. Amen.

This Litany was written at the request of Rev. Dr. Gregory M. Howard
Senior Pastor First Baptist Church East End, 3000 Jefferson Avenue,
Newport News, VA
Institutional Member ASALH
President, Baptist General Convention of VA
Interim Dean, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Virginia Union University

Researched and written by Audrey Perry Williams, President Hampton Roads Branch, ASALH





## In Memory





Debra D. Miller

**Debra D. Miller,** a native of Newport News, learned her Tucker family history from her grandmother, Florence Claiborne Matteau. She was always quick to share stories of the Tucker family and her knowledge of Virginia Tucker Claiborne, her great-grandmother, born into slavery in Isle of Wight, and the daughter of Samuel and Millie Tucker. Debra leaves to treasure her memory her daughter Nicolle Miller; sisters Julia Bradshaw Hurling and Earline Bradshaw Jackson; brother Arnold Miller; and a host of loved ones.



Virginia Tucker Claiborne





**Carol Virginia Tucker Jones** 

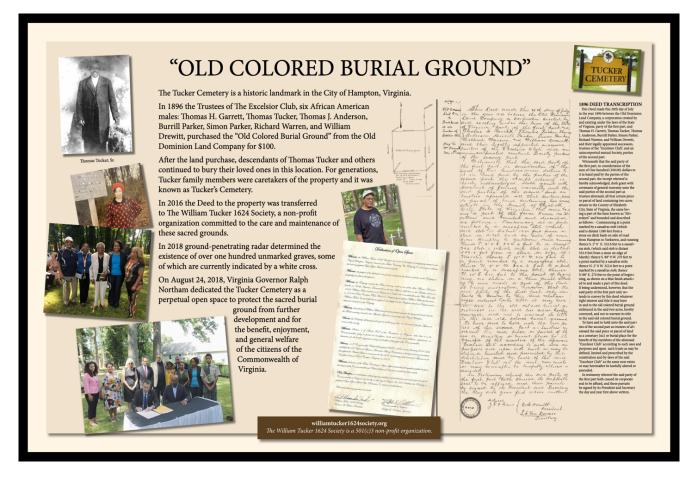
Carol Virginia Tucker Jones, born in Newport News, VA, was the daughter of Alexander Samuel Tucker and Mary Howell Tucker. In 1994, dressed in regal African attire, Carol represented her branch of the Tucker Family on the "Symbolic Sail" during the 375th Commemorative Ceremony in Jamestown, Virginia. Carol's love of family was reflected in her organizing family fundraising activities to support the Tucker Cemetery and often accompanying

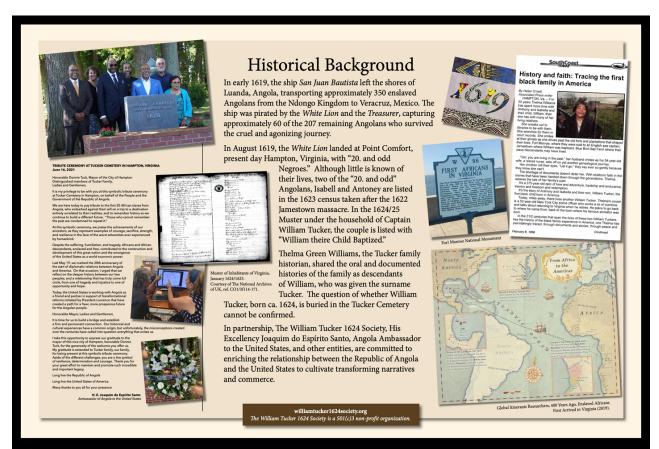
her cousin and family historian, Thelma Green Williams, to speaking engagements. A founding member of The William Tucker 1624 Society, she can be seen in many of the media interviews commenting how proud she was of the family. Her children, grandchildren, and greatgrandchilden are continuing her legacy and commitment.

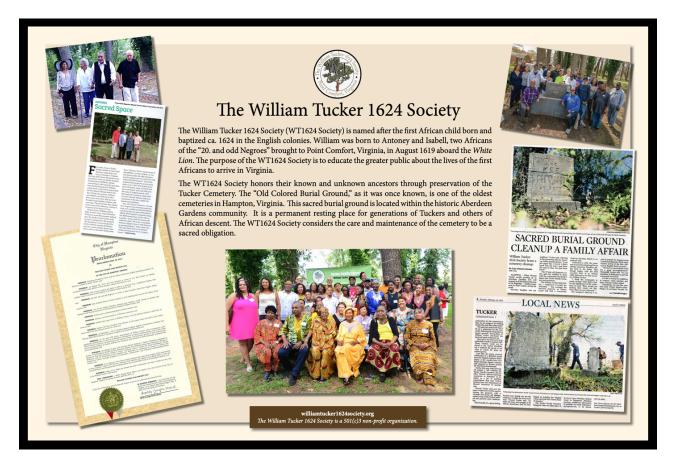


The William Tucker 1624 Society would like to thank the 400 Years of African American History Commission for the grant funding to obtain the three informational and educational panels at the Tucker Cemetery. As a historic landmark, The Tucker Cemetery contributes to America's narrative of the earliest African arrivals in present day Hampton, Virginia. The panels are strategically located on the outside perimeter of the cemetery to maintain the sacredness of the space and allow respectful reflection and education.









## Guest Program Participants

#### Atumpan Edutainment, Inc.

Atumpan Edutainment, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) arts for education ensemble. Corey the Talented Blind Guy is the ensemble's playwright, principal storyteller, and a featured member of Atumpan's cast and percussion orchestra. LaQuita Marie is the artistic director of Atumpan Edutainment's original stage-play productions and digital content. In addition to serving as Atumpan Edutainment's lead musician and choreographer, LaQuita Marie has directed several productions for Atumpan Edutainment and several theater companies.

For over 20 years, Atumpan's teaching artists have shared engaging teaching strategies and a blend of world music, folklore, and dance to make Atumpan Edutainment a leading performance ensemble throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region. Their performances have been featured at Jamestown in Williamsburg, VA; Tryon Palace in New Bern, NC; The Bronze Kingdom in Orlando, FL; and at professional development conferences for teachers, K-12 schools, universities, museums, and festivals throughout the country. Atumpan Edutainment has also produced 4 audiobooks: Oink Yeah: The Three Little Pigs Remix (2011), Savannah Winds (2013), S.A.F.A.R.I. (2014), and Three Blind Mice: Against All Odds (2015). AE's audiobooks have reached audiences across the country and around the world in countries like Thailand, Australia, and a host of African countries. AE's audiobooks can be purchased on iTunes, the Google Play Store, Amazon, and CD Baby.

Atumpan Edutainment's "Blind Guy, His Wife, Their Life" YouTube channel serves as an additional platform focusing on entertainment, career choices, and health and wellness while changing the narrative of "normal." Viewers can discover how blind guys like Corey get things done, crack up laughing with personal stories, or tune in to the weekly live broadcast "Blind Guy, His Wife, Their Life Live" to get tips and hacks from a variety of professionals from Cory and LaQuita Marie's personal network of professionals.



2019 Cemetery Program

#### Rita Addico Cohen

Rita Addico Cohen, Founder and Executive Director of Tidewater African Cultural Alliance (TACA) began performing as a Traditional Ghanaian Dancer and singer at the age of 4 in her hometown of Accra, Ghana. Beginning in college, she performed as a professional musical theatre/opera singer from New York to Texas. She sang with the Virginia Opera and toured with the Paragon Ragtime Orchestra in the title role of Treemonisha.

TACA strives to connect the greater Tidewater area through community outreach; community service; educational programs; and cultural arts and events. TACA moves to restore well-being and advance the status of Black people worldwide by addressing issues of equity and access in our global society. Our Vision is Solidarity through the celebration of the African Diaspora worldwide.

Mrs. Addico Cohen is a licensed Zumba® Instructor. She is fluent in 9 languages and a lifelong dancer trained in many international Dance formats. Her exuberant and joyful personality and teaching style have taken her to schools, fitness centers, and dance studios all across the country, as well as to France. A graduate of the Norfolk Academy, Mrs. Addico Cohen holds a BA in Classical Music from UVA, and a Master of Music in Classical Voice Performance from the Manhattan School of Music. She and her ODU/Hampton U professor husband Andrew reside in Virginia Beach, where they are enjoying life as brand-new empty nesters (of two young adult children).

#### Karla Crump

Karla Crump is a native of Hampton, Virginia. A faithful member of Carver Memorial resbyterian Church and a member of the William F. Crump Sanctuary Choir, she has been singing since the age of five. From choir rooms to music studios, she has been blessed with a talent which has been cultivated into one of the most tantalizing voices to grace a microphone in years. Smooth and melodic characterizes her vocal style with her effortless sounding vibe of R & B with a hint of jazz. She has graced the stage of the Hampton Jazz Festival with the likes of Jill Scott, Bob James, and David Sanborn. She has opened concerts for such musical greats as Gladys Knight, The Dells, Jean Carne, Evelyn Champagne King, and Mikki Howard. Karla made her acting debut in September of 2000 as "Sister Gloria" in Dana Hubbard's, "Will a Man Rob God?" where she sang the theme song and worked with award winning gospel artist, LaShun Pace. Inspired by such vocalists as Gladys Knight, Natalie Cole, the late Phyllis Hyman, and many others, she is OUR shining star.

#### **Minister Jomo Fortunato**

Jomo Fortunato, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Environment, was born March 28, 1961 in Luanda, Angola. He served as President of the Administrative Council of the António Agostinho Neto Memorial and editor of the supplement Vida Cultural, also of Jornal de Angola. As a journalist, he was a presenter and creator of the program, "Voices of Semba," series of musical documentaries of TPA, Public Television of Angola. In addition, he served as Cultural commentator for the National Radio of Angola (RNA), and for fourteen years he coordinated and created the Luanda Book and Record Fair.

Minister Fortunato holds a degree in Modern Languages and Literature, variant Portuguese – French from the University of Aveiro, Portugal and a master's degree in Angolan Literature from the Agostinho Neto University. He is a PhD student in Cultural Studies at the University of Aveiro and Minho, Portugal. An educator, he is University Professor of Portuguese Language, Culture and Angolan Literature in the Social Communication courses at the Social Sciences Faculty of the Agostinho Neto University and subscriber of research texts about the history of Angolan Popular Music, literature, and theorization of cultural matters, in Jornal de Angola.

#### Ambassador Joaquim do Espírito Santo

Joaquim do Espírito Santo (born July 12, 1959, in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo) presented his credentials to the President of the United States on September 16, 2019. Before arriving in Washington, he served as the Director for Africa, Middle East and Regional Organizations in Angola's Ministry of External Relations from 2011-2018. A career diplomat, Ambassador Espírito Santo also served as Minister-Counselor at the Angolan Embassy to France from 2004-2009 and as Minister-Counselor and Chargé d' Affaires at the Angolan Embassy to Mexico from 2002-2004. Prior to that, Ambassador Espírito Santo served in various senior positions in Angola's Ministry of External Relations, including as the Director for Europe. Throughout his career, Ambassador Espírito Santo has represented Angola as part of several high-level international delegations and in bilateral and multilateral negotiations, including at the African Union and the United Nations. He is also an accomplished lecturer, having presented around the world on issues related to African development, peace, and security.

Ambassador Espírito Santo holds a degree in economics from Agostinho Neto University (Luanda, Angola) and a master's degree in political science from the School of Advanced Political Studies (Paris, France). He is multilingual, speaking Portuguese, English, French, Spanish, and some African languages. Ambassador Espírito Santo is married and has two children.

#### FROM THE NATIONAL GREAT BLACKS IN WAX MUSEUM

#### A MESSAGE FROM THE ANCESTORS

As you leave this monument to human tragedy and triumph, remember us – but not in anger or sorrow. . .

#### REMEMBER

We did not struggle to keep our minds from being shackled, only to have you to turn away from learning and the wise ways of the elders.

We did not endure bondage,
for you to become a slave to drugs and alcohol.
We did not die by the millions,
for you to kill one another by the thousands.
We did not ward off their insults and claims of our inferiority,
for you to hate yourself.

We did not become their human commodity - - their black ivory, their black gold - for you to put material things over your people, even your own families and children.

We withstood their slaughterhouse slave ships, their "seasoning" and "breaking," for you to walk in unity and live with dignity!

By Dr. Elmer P. Martin
Founder, The Great Blacks in Wax Museum, Inc.
1601-03 East North Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21213

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The William Tucker 1624 Society is grateful to all who have assisted in the continued restoration of this sacred burial ground and or assisted in the preparation of today's program.

The City of Hampton, The Honorable Donnie Tuck, Mayor Hampton Convention and Visitors Bureau, Mary Fugere, Exec. Director City of Hampton Public Works Solid Waste Department Fort Monroe National Monument, Eola L. Dance, Superintendent (Acting) Fort Monroe Authority, Glenn Oder, Exec. Director **Embassy of The Republic of Angola** 

Karla Crump

**Audrey Perry Williams** 

Affordable Printing & Copies, Inc.

**Darren Peoples** 

Michael Parker

**Buckingham Greenery** 

Yendidi Restaurant

Tidewater African Cultural Alliance, Rita Cohen, Exec. Director

**Envirosigns** 

**Ric Murphy** 

City of Hampton Parks and Recreation

Aberdeen Gardens Historic & Civic Association

**Springhill Suites** 

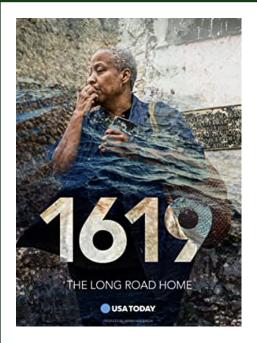
**Cemetery Volunteers** 

Hope Tucker

Shalawn Tucker

The William Tucker 1624 Society & their Families









## 1619: The Long Road Home

Wanda Tucker is trying to document an audacious claim: that her family, the Tuckers of Tidewater Virginia, are directly descended from the first child born to the first Africans to arrive on the mainland of English America 400 years ago. For Wanda, the path back to Angola represents a spiritual journey, filled with conflict and doubt.

#### 15min 2019

Directors Genres Subtitles Audio languages Jarrad Henderson Documentary English [CC] English





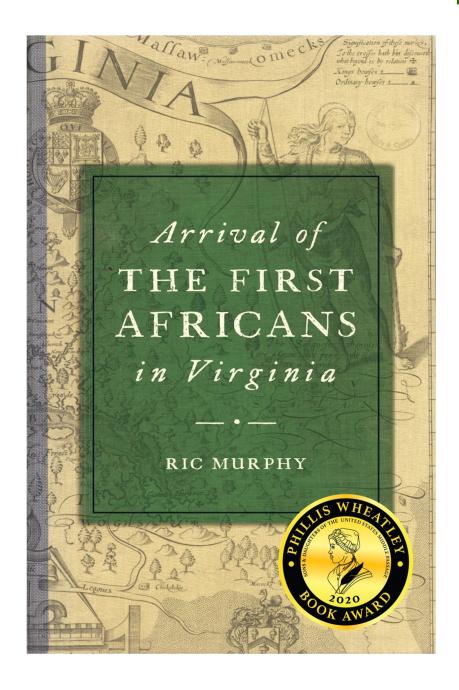








# Congratulations William Tucker 1624 Society



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