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HISTORY'S KEEPERS : JUAN WHIPPLE

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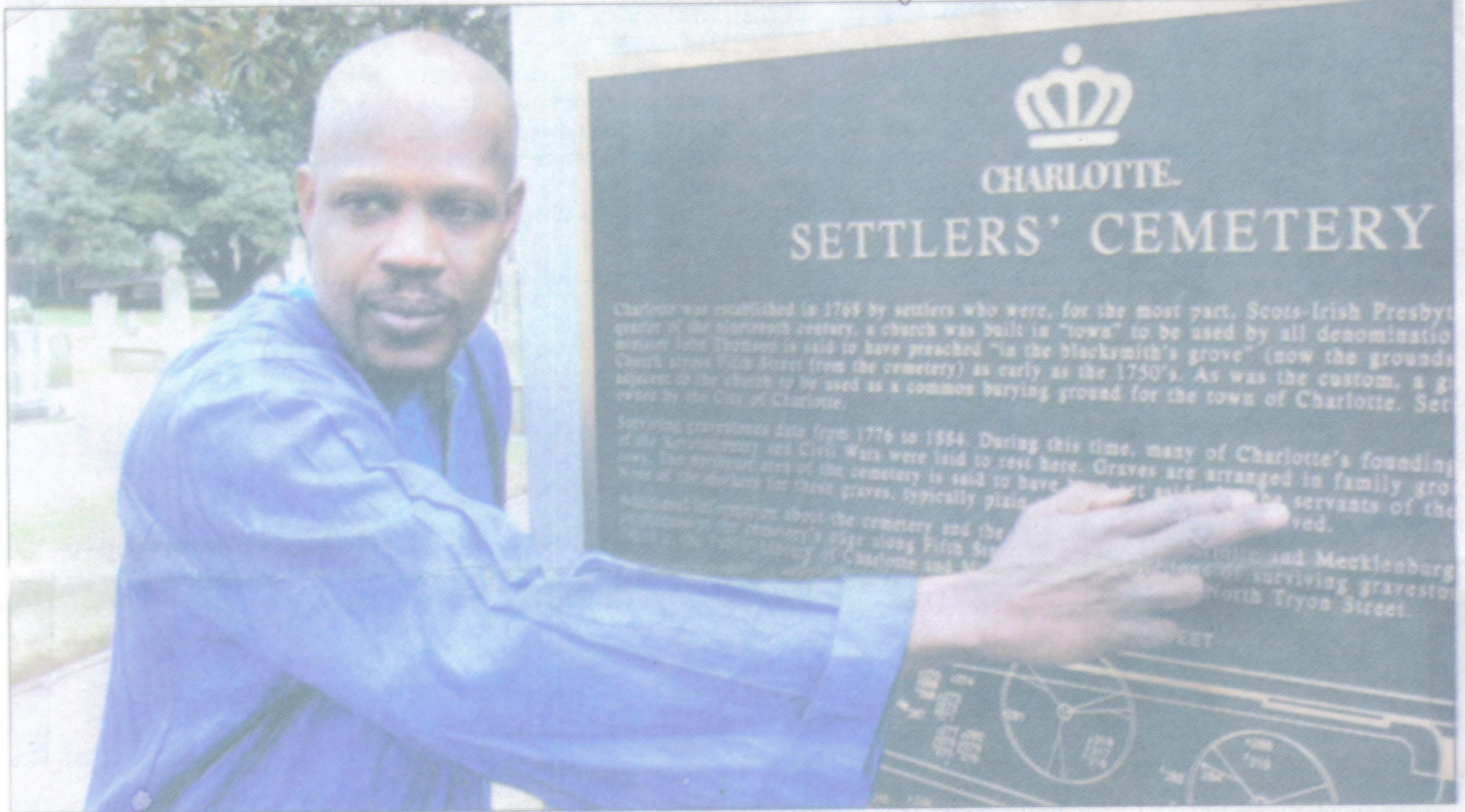


PHOTO: CALVIN FERGUSON

Juan Whipple, [redacted] of Queen City Tours, points to a marker at Settlers' Cemetery uptown. Whipple leads tours of sites important to the shared history of African Americans and whites, dating back to slavery. "It's not just for our people. It's for everybody," Whipple says. "There were more people involved in it than us."

Guiding light

Tour leader shows less visible side of African Americans' legacy in Charlotte society

By Herbert L. White herb.white@thecharlottepost.com

Feeling history is as important to Juan Whipple as teaching it. Whipple, [redacted] of Queen City Tours, will be very busy this month. For seven years, he's led the Charlotte Black Heritage Tour and Pilgrimage, where he retraces the history of African Americans in Charlotte from slavery to today. The three-hour tour, which rolls twice every Saturday, includes 25 sites through uptown and Beatties

Ford Road. The most impressive sites are cemeteries where slaves are buried and a church where they worshiped. But they also hammer home the painful legacy of separate and unequal treatment of black Americans. Whipple doesn't flinch. "I do it to keep it on the conscience of America," he said, "because slavery affects everybody in America, blacks as well

as whites." That's fine with Cathy Schneider of Monroe, who took the tour last year with a friend. As a white woman who grew up in the Midwest, Whipple helped explain the relationship between African Americans and whites. "A lot of people want to say 'good gracious, that was over 200 years ago,'" she said. "But we are the sum of our experiences and

"A lot of people want to say 'good gracious, that was over 200 years ago.' But we are the sum of our experiences and you don't just get over it."

Cathy Schneider of Monroe on black history's impact on race relations.

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