

Press Kit

# Drayton Hall Stories:

A PLACE AND ITS PEOPLE



George W. McDaniel

# THE FIRST BOOK OF ITS KIND IN THE NATION!



This groundbreaking book, features over 50 interviews with descendants (White and Black), historians, preservationists, educators, donors, architects, tourism leaders, and more.

Like pieces of a mosaic, each interview combines with others to create a new picture of this one place, a historic Charleston icon.

Stories reveal never-before-shared family moments, major decisions in preservation and site stewardship, and pioneering efforts to transform a former plantation into a site for understanding and racial conciliation.

Book Title	Drayton Hall Stories: A Place & Its People
Page Count:	335 pages
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	Evening Post Books
Pub. Date	May 2022
ISBN	978-1-929647-67-5
Price	\$39.95
Formats	Hardcover, eBook
Where to Buy	<a href="http://eveningpostbooks.com">eveningpostbooks.com</a> , <a href="http://shop.draytonhall.org">shop.draytonhall.org</a> , and wherever fine books are sold

## MEET THE AUTHOR

George W. McDaniel, PhD, is the President of McDaniel Consulting, LLC, a strategy firm that helps organizations build bridges to its broader constituents. For more than 25 years, he served as the Executive Director of Drayton Hall, a historic site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Charleston, SC.



A native of Atlanta, he earned a BA from Sewanee, an MAT from Brown University, and a PhD from Duke. Interspersed through those years were travels to many places – Europe, Africa, Vietnam – where he saw peace and war and learned by experience about cultural differences and commonalities. Beginning with the Smithsonian Institution, he has built a career in education and history museums, earning awards at local, state, and national levels.

"Sometimes we become so focused on sharing facts & details... that we miss the magic of the story. This book conveys Drayton Hall's magic – and that is what visitors remember and why they come back."  
– Helen Hill, CEO,  
Explore Charleston,  
Convention & Visitors  
Bureau

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## PRAISE FOR DRAYTON HALL STORIES



“McDaniel has meticulously uncovered the many personal connections and stories that help bring this amazing place to life.”  
—Paul Edmondson, President, National Trust for Historic Preservation

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“Their stories illustrate the power of place in America’s history.” —John E. Fleming, Ph.D.,  
Past Chair, American Association for State and Local History

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“Filled with revealing insights...pertinent to understanding the full story of historic places.”  
—Spencer Crew, PhD, former Interim Director,  
National Museum of African American History & Culture, The Smithsonian Institution

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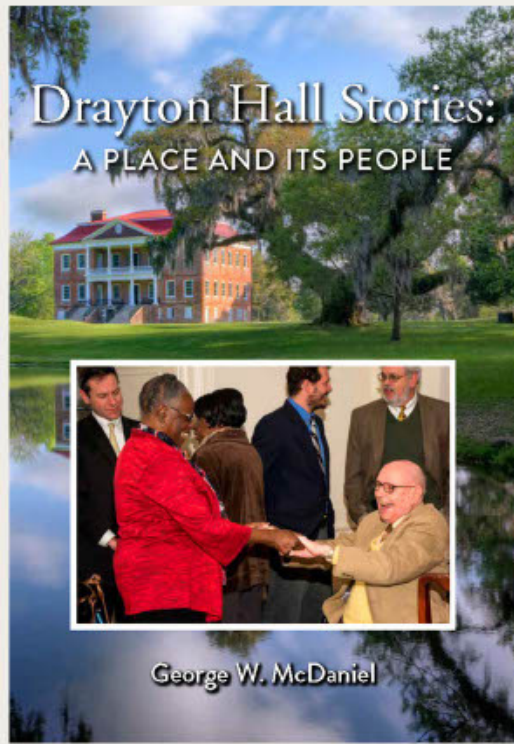


“George McDaniel continues to inspire with his broad vision for historic preservation.”  
—Carol B. Cadou, Executive Director, The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America & National Headquarters, Dumbarton House

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR STATE & LOCAL HISTORY

## Excerpt from Preface

By featuring people across the spectrum and by my interview questions, it is my hope that we see how all of us blend the professional and the personal. Since social identity shapes perceptions, this book features a mix of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, profession, and connection to the site. I make no claim that this mix is exhaustive. Indeed, it is my hope that its limits will serve as inspiration for more efforts to be made in documenting the recent history of Drayton Hall and other historic places.

The cover photograph of Charlie Drayton and Catherine Braxton illustrates that hope. Charlie Drayton, the last owner of Drayton Hall, is the descendant of slave owners, and Catherine Braxton, a descendant of the enslaved. His grandfather “owned” her great grandparents, including the enslaved Catherine for whom she is named. For reasons we may guess but not know, they greeted each other with heartfelt gladness. They did not pose. As Larry Goodwyn [my professor at Duke] used to say, “we’ve been round the barn too many times” to believe that the wall of racism is down, but that wall does have cracks, which lets the light through, and in that light, at least for the moment, is where Charlie and Catherine were. If they can find light, why can’t we? With many cracks, that wall will topple. If historic sites, especially in the South, could create more cracks and transform the challenges of their “tangled heritage” into opportunities, why could they not lead the way in toppling that wall?

My lived experiences - including serving in the Peace Corps in a rural village in Togo, West Africa, and fighting with the First Infantry Division between Saigon and Cambodia, where I was blown up twice - are different from most historians and taught me that we benefit by seeing life from both the top down and the bottom up and are influenced by things seen and unseen. Such experiences have shaped the formation of Drayton Hall Stories.

- George W. McDaniel

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## Excerpt from Family Interviews



Rebecca Campbell and Charlie Drayton:  
“Drayton Hall Could Help Bridge the Racial Divide”  
2015 – Drayton Hall

**George:** What does Drayton Hall mean to you?

**Charlie:** It means just about everything. When I was growing up, I didn't realize it was so wonderful. It wasn't until later that I fully appreciated it. Transferring ownership of Drayton Hall in 1974 [to the National Trust for Historic Preservation] was traumatic because it'd been in the family for so long.

**Rebecca:** Drayton Hall means family. My ancestors are buried here. To me, Drayton Hall means Richmond Bowens, Willis Johnson, Catherine Bowens, and Caesar Bowens. I feel their spirits as I walk the grounds.

**Charlie:** I remember Richmond well and considered him a dear friend. We grew up together.

**George:** As descendants of slaveholders and of the enslaved, what would you like to say as take-away messages to visitors?

**Rebecca:** Because my ancestors were born and lived here and now because of my relationship with the Drayton family, I feel a part of Drayton Hall.

**Charlie:** Definitely, you are! I would like to say to you Rebecca, that you are my good friend and that you are just as much a part of Drayton Hall as I am, and my family is. I'd like people to know that we are all from Drayton Hall. Not just me, not just you, but all the people who were born here, who had any connection to Drayton Hall. We all belong to Drayton Hall.

“Drayton Hall means family. My ancestors are buried here.”

-Rebecca Campbell

“Drayton Hall means just about everything”

-Charlie Drayton

# Companion Website Provides Actionable How-To's

USING A HISTORIC PLACE TO

## BUILD COMMUNITY

History can be divisive or unifying – we've seen how its use has resulted in each – it is up to us to choose. This page will help you and your organization get started through instant access to how-to guides, interview transcriptions, select templates and photographs, supporting blog content, and more.



### Why This Project

We all have competing priorities, so you need to be clear and honest about the project's benefit.



### Research

Look to these respected organizations to provide ideas, strategies, examples, and guidance.



### Fundraising

A top priority at the outset is to secure funding – money has a way of changing priorities in favor of such a project.



### Interviewees

How to identify, communicate with, prepare, and develop a genuine rapport with your subjects.



### Archives & Project Management Tools

You'll gain a better understanding of the process as you review transcripts and other assets.



## THE PEOPLE THAT INSPIRED THE BOOK

[WATCH IT HERE](#)



## Tip Sheet: Suggested Questions

### ASK THE AUTHOR

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What motivated you to write this book?

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Why is oral history so important to your work as a historian?

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Your interviewees include family descendants, friends, donors, educators, professionals, and more. Why?

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Your book tells a site's recent history those who lived it. How do you see that connecting with readers?

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You have said that you want your book to be a blueprint to help others engage with their communities. How did you achieve that?

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Places evoke different memories. What is one of your most vivid during the 25+ years that you served as Executive Director of Drayton Hall?

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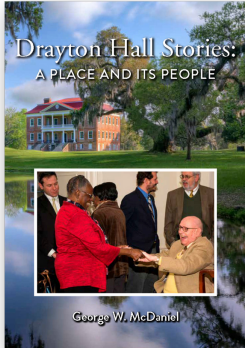
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For Immediate Release

The First Book of its Kind in the Nation!

**DRAYTON HALL STORIES:  
A Place and Its People**

CHARLESTON, SC — This groundbreaking book features over 50 interviews with descendants (White and Black), historians, preservationists, educators, architects, donors, tourism leaders, and more. Like pieces of a mosaic, each interview combines with others to create a new picture of this one place, a historic national icon. Stories reveal never-before-shared family moments, major decisions in preservation and site stewardship, and pioneering efforts to transform a former plantation into a site for understanding and racial conciliation. Readers will come to see Drayton Hall's people not as stereotypes, but as the real people they were — and are.



Drayton Hall Stories - ISBN 978-1-929647-67-5 retails for \$39.95. Please contact (843) 478-1324 for a review copy.

Maps, photographs, lines of descent, a how-to guide, and related website, all provide blueprints for readers who wish to engage in similar projects to build community.

[Click here for the complete PRESS KIT with high-res images.](#)

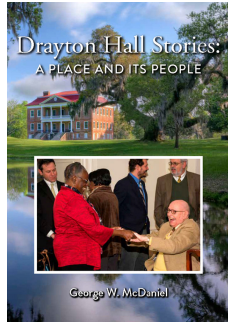
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The author is available for speaking engagements and workshops.  
Visit [www.mcdanielconsulting.net](http://www.mcdanielconsulting.net) or contact [gmcdaniel4444@gmail.com](mailto:gmcdaniel4444@gmail.com)

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Memorial Arch at the African  
American Cemetery at Drayton  
Hall. Photo Credit: Dan Stewart



Drayton Hall's ancient live oak figures prominently in the lives of the descendants and others.  
Photo credit: Copyright Tony Sweet

*"That's what this book is about— this striving towards a more perfect union."*

*— Adam Parker, The Post & Courier, from his interview with author George McDaniel*

## **DRAYTON & BOWENS FAMILY DESCENDANTS**

Charles (Charlie) H. Drayton III was a 7th-generation descendant and the last family owner of the estate. He was the 6th Charles; the 1st Charles, born in 1744, was the son of John Drayton, who founded Drayton Hall. At the time this book went to press, there were three more: Charlie's son, grandson, and great grandson.



Richmond Bowens was born at Drayton Hall in 1908. His enslaved ancestors came from Barbados in the 1670s with the Draytons. In his later years, Richmond returned as Drayton Hall's gatekeeper and frontline ambassador, then as an oral historian on family and community life.

*Lifelong friends, both are interred at Drayton Hall.*

*Illuminating! I plan to use it in the course I teach on historic houses."*

*- Kenneth C. Turino, Historic New England History News*

*"Credit George McDaniel for being a part of the healing process of a nation divided."*

*- Charles W. Waring III  
The Charleston Mercury*