

# Researching Walterboro's Historic Homes

*Colleton County Memorial Library Resource Guide*

The historic district of Walterboro, SC is home to a number of **historic dwellings** from the 19th & 20th centuries. Thanks to an active historical & preservation society, two historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the work of numerous historians in the 20th century, many of the town's most historic dwellings\* already have some written history attached to them while others can be easily researched with local resources.

\*Other than churches, very few local historic black buildings have been researched or documented. Unless otherwise noted, most resources below probably do not feature historic African-American residences in Colleton.

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*This resource guide is an introduction to the repositories and sources available to those interested in researching historic homes in Walterboro, SC.*

## **Colleton County Historical and Preservation Society**

205 Church Street, Walterboro, SC 29488

843-549-9633, [info@cchaps.org](mailto:info@cchaps.org), [cchaps.com](http://cchaps.com)

Office Hours: M, W, F 9:00 AM - Noon

*Outside office hours by appointment only.*

CCHAPS preserves historic files on many of the historic buildings in Walterboro, as well as numerous photographs of sites throughout Colleton County including homes, plantations, businesses, government buildings, etc. They have also published a number of local history books which contain information about local historic homes including "Colleton County, South Carolina: A Pictorial History."

Check in with CCHAPS by email to ascertain if they already have a file on the home you are researching.

### **Colleton County Memorial Library**

600 Hampton Street, Walterboro, SC 29488

843-549-5621, [colletonlibrary.org](http://colletonlibrary.org)

Open: M - Thu 9AM-8PM, Fri 9AM-6PM & Sat 9AM-5PM

The Colleton County Memorial Library has numerous resources that can help with research on historic properties including local history books, special collections, archival materials and online research tools. Many of these will be described later in this document. The library also has a large local history room (SC Room) where you can access local history books, local maps and more.

### **Colleton County Register of Deeds**

Harrelson Building, 31 Klein St., Walterboro, SC 29488

843-542-2745, [www.colletoncounty.org/register-of-deeds](http://www.colletoncounty.org/register-of-deeds)

Office Hours: M - F 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Colleton County's Register of Deeds office is located on the lowest level of the Harrellson Building in downtown Walterboro. They preserve property deeds and maps going back into the 19th century. You can make copies or take photos of the records.

The Register of Deeds office and its records is **one of the best local resources for investigating black property ownership** and finding clues to the history of local African-American residences, as well as those of other minority groups.

### Books

*The following books or documents make extensive references to local homes. All volumes are available at the Colleton County Memorial Library in the South Carolina (Local History) Room.*

**Around Walterboro South Carolina** by Sherry J. Cawley - Primarily a collection of local postcards, many of the images focus on generic town scenes or businesses. Several historic homes and families are discussed. Includes numerous images of local homes and residential scenes.

**Backward Glances: Colleton County, Vol. 1** by the Colleton Arts Guild - This collection of poems, sketches and brief historical overviews chronicle many local residences in Walterboro and other Colleton County communities.

**Backward Glances: Colleton County, Vol. 2** by the Colleton Arts Guild - This collection of poems, sketches and brief historical overviews chronicle many local residences in Walterboro and other Colleton County communities.

**Colleton County: Snapshots of the 20th Century, Vol. II** by *The Press & Standard* - This photographic history of 20th century Walterboro, features a few prominent homes in Walterboro as well as mentions of numerous local families.

**Colleton County, SC: A Pictorial History** by the Colleton County Historical and Preservation Society - This volume contains numerous references to local homes and families, as well as numerous images of homes and residential properties.

**Narratives of Colleton County** by Beulah Glover - This iconic history of Colleton County does not, necessarily, feature information specifically about local homes. It is, however, one of the best reference works regarding local Caucasian families.

## Maps

### **Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Walterboro**

South Carolina Digital Library

<https://digital.library.sc.edu/collections/sanborn-fire-insurance-maps-of-south-carolina/>

These maps, prepared for insurance purposes, primarily focus on the business district of Walterboro. Many of the homes closest to the business district are included on the maps along with accompanying outbuildings.

Maps for Walterboro exist for 1898, 1905, 1912, 1920 and 1931 and become more extensive the later the year. As of 2022 the 1931 map is not available digitally but researchers can request a viewing of the original map from the archives at the Colleton County Memorial Library.

These maps are **one of the best sources for researching historic African-American homes** in the early 20th century.

### **Town Plat showing track of Tornado through Walterboro, SC on April 16th, 1879**

Copies available at Colleton Museum, with the Colleton County Historical & Preservation Society, Colleton County Memorial Library Vertical File (SC Room) and online at NOAA Central Library online - search for the report of 1879

(<https://library.noaa.gov/Collections/Digital-Docs/Signa-Corps-WB-Annual>)

This hand-drawn map was created by the U.S. Signal Corps while documenting the track of a destructive tornado that hit the residential section of the town in April of 1879. It is because of this event, in particular, that there are few pre-1879 homes left in the town.

Street names are not recorded and, although many residences are indicated on the map, it is not comprehensive. Many smaller residences, such as those of poorer white or black families are not included. **Several well-to-do African American residences are included on the map.** A separate key to the map indicating the names of homeowners is included in the original report on the NOAA Central Library Online (see above) a couple of pages after the map.

### Special Collections at the Colleton County Library

#### **Walterboro Phone Books & Business Directories, 1948 - present**

*Please request access to the collection at the Circulation Desk. Older volumes (1970 or earlier) may have access & copy restrictions.*

The Colleton County Memorial Library has phone books and business directories, recording addresses and phone numbers of local residents, their homes and businesses from the late 1940's onwards. Years may not be continuous between 1948 and 1970, but the library has most volumes from 1970 onwards.

## Additional Documents

### **Hickory Valley Historic District National Register Nomination Form**

[www.nationalregister.sc.gov/colleton/S10817715002/index.htm](http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/colleton/S10817715002/index.htm)

This nomination preserves basic historic information regarding many of the historic homes in the oldest portion of the town.

### **Walterboro Historic District National Register Nomination Form**

[www.nationalregister.sc.gov/colleton/S10817715007/index.htm](http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/colleton/S10817715007/index.htm)

This nomination preserves basic historic information regarding a great number of historic homes and other buildings in Walterboro, SC.

## Onlines Tools

### **Colleton County Parcel Viewer**

<https://www.colletoncounty.org/parcel-mapping>

Look up modern property ownership records with the Colleton County Parcel Viewer. Online records include property transactions from 1986 onwards but include notes about when the buildings on the property were constructed. It is a great place to begin research on historic homes in Colleton County.

### **Colleton's Online Historical Archive (Digital Reel)**

[www.colletonlibrary.org/e-content](http://www.colletonlibrary.org/e-content)

Look up articles on local homes and families in Colleton County's newspapers. The online historical archive, maintained by the Colleton County Memorial Library through their website, contains digitized copies of local newspapers going back to the 1870s. Newspaper articles will sometimes detail property sales, fires, new homes that were being built, histories of certain homes or properties, etc.

**Special Note:** Several street names have changed in Walterboro over the years. You can find more information about street name changes in *Around Walterboro* by Sherry Cawley on pg. 56 or in Beulah Glover's *Walterboro: People and Places Before 1900* on pg. 65 or by referencing the Sanborn Fire Maps for Walterboro, SC located online through the SC Digital Library (see entry under "Maps" above).