contribution. This tree "witnessed" the lives of the enslaved, their lives that were marked by the history and memory of their presence. A "witness tree," that is, a tree that was present during a historical or cultural event, can be a significant artifact in understanding the past. Through dendrochronology (a technique that dates trees by its rings), the cedar, known as the "Fange, made from a Cedar of Lebanon tree that fell at Montpelier in 2019. According to the MDC Memorialization Committee, the Fange "witnessed" the lives of the enslaved at the Montpelier Burial Ground of the Enslaved.

As part of the Memorialization Committee’s work, they have been working on the construction of a memorial to the enslaved at the Montpelier Burial Ground of the Enslaved. The MDC and TMF hired Rebecca Davis, Oral Historian, to record oral histories that would contribute to the memorialization process. The joint MDC/TMF Communications Committee also hired Reese Manning, Public Relations Manager, to lead the public relations strategy for Memorialization.

The MDC and TMF received a $5.8M grant from the Mellon Foundation in 2023, and we are in the process of designing and dedicating a memorial to the enslaved. The MDC Memorialization Committee was formed, and they have been working on the memorialization process, which includes understanding the spatial relationships, conceptual themes, form, and functionality. The committee’s conceptualization and archaeological processes have led to the development of a set of spatial and design criteria that will be used in designing Charrettes with a design firm in the coming weeks.

The committee’s conceptualization process, which has been shaped by the expertise of the Montpelier Ancient American Heritage Action Fund and TMF, has revealed that the Montpelier Burial Ground of the Enslaved is a site of significant historical and cultural importance. The committee has used ground-penetrating radar (GPR) surveys and metal detector surveys to identify potential grave sites and deposits that are present. During these surveys and excavations planned for 2024, the committee aims to find enough information to define the extent of the burials and no human remains will be disturbed in the course of excavations. TMF Archaeology has had a great deal of success with Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Surveys and Metal Detector Surveys (MDS). GPR surveys revealed over 250 potential grave sites and MDS also revealed fence deposits that are present. During these surveys and excavations planned for 2024, the goal is to find enough information to define the extent of the burials and no human remains will be disturbed in the course of excavations. TMF Archaeology has had a great deal of success with Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Surveys and Metal Detector Surveys (MDS). GPR surveys revealed over 250 potential grave sites and MDS also revealed fence deposits that are present. During these surveys and excavations planned for 2024, the goal is to find enough information to define the extent of the burials and no human remains will be disturbed in the course of excavations. TMF Archaeology has had a great deal of success with Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Surveys and Metal Detector Surveys (MDS). GPR surveys revealed over 250 potential grave sites and MDS also revealed fence deposits that are present. 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