

Media Contact: Jeff Dinger, Communications Manager
Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance
p: 678-699-2768 | e: jeff@arabiaalliance.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 08, 2023

Arabia Alliance To Host Community Archaeology Day At Bruce Street School

The Alliance partnered with New South Associates and Martin Rickles Studio to offer locals a chance to excavate, screen for artifacts and engage in genuine archaeology.

Lithonia, GA – Come see what we dig up! The Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance has partnered with New South Associates and Martin Rickles Studio (MRS) for a special Community Archaeology Day at Lithonia's [Historic Bruce Street School](#), the first public school for Black students in DeKalb County. On Sunday, May 28th, the Arabia Alliance will open up the site to the public where participants will be able to excavate, screen for artifacts, and engage in a genuine archaeological investigation to help us uncover the stories of Bruce Street School's past.

"Archaeology sheds light on the history that wasn't written down," said Anne Dorland of New South Associates, a women-owned small business providing cultural resource management services. "By excavating the objects that were left behind by the historic people of Bruce Street School, we can paint a fuller picture of what life was like at the school. The community archaeology day will allow the people who are most connected with the site's history to engage with the process of discovery. We believe that the community should be involved in every step of the investigation as drivers of the research."

New South Associates recently conducted a geophysical survey using ground-penetrating radar (GPR) to look into the earth beneath the Bruce Street School ruins. GPR is a remote sensing technique used by archaeologists to identify potential buried historic features (e.g., cellar pits, trash pits, latrines). These GPR results will guide the placement of archaeological excavations, including the Community Archaeology Day, scheduled to take place the final week of May. Within the school ruins, GPR located a possible cellar, chimney, pits, and structural features. Outside the school, potential historic living surfaces, building debris, and pits were detected.

"We look forward to continuing to work with the community to uncover and honor the history of the Bruce Street School," said Carley Rickles, cofounder of MRS, an interdisciplinary design studio in Atlanta. "At the next community event we will work with the New South team to engage community members in the archaeological process, discovering what remains from the School and possibly what predated it. Following the

event, MRS will work with the Alliance and the community to determine what elements will be reinterpreted on site, and in other accessible archives."

The Arabia Alliance is currently in the midst of its Capital Campaign, a grass-roots effort to raise \$100,000 from the community. This money will help prepare the Bruce Street School ruins for a larger transformation into a multi-use amphitheater and community events space with community garden and food forest. That revitalization will also mean preserving this incredible site's history for generations to come. For more information or to donate today, [click here](#).

###

About the Arabia Alliance

The Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance is dedicated to protecting, connecting and sharing the unique history, rich culture and engaging landscapes of the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area (AMNHA) for the benefit and enjoyment of all. The staff and volunteer board of the Arabia Alliance work with partners across the AMNHA to ensure that everyone can benefit from the cultural and natural resources of the National Heritage Area. For more information, visit www.arabiaalliance.org.