

PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release:
February 19, 2010**

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The Torch Passes on Philip Simmons Foundation Announces New Officers

Charleston, SC – After 18 years as President of the Board of the **Philip Simmons Foundation, Inc.** David C. Floyd, resigned to continue his work with youth and to pursue a doctoral degree.

In his letter of resignation, Floyd states: *“I greatly admired and loved Philip Simmons.... I first met Mr. Simmons in a Charleston Business and Professional Association meeting in the early 1980's and upon my becoming president of the Association during that same timeframe, Philip became like a mentor to me by always providing great support and encouragement. And later on as a member of St. John's Reformed Episcopal Church, he greatly influenced me in his role as a church leader with his sincere, caring, and supportive nature. He was such a wise man of great spirituality and always exemplified encouragement and great love and support for young people in the church and in the Charleston community.*

“I am super happy to have been a part of a project that not only honors and recognizes Philip Simmons and his works, but one that will forever be a part of the historical archives of Charleston and South Carolina.”

Replacing David Floyd as President/CEO is Elmer Gilliam , Jr.. He is an electrical engineer with 23 years of development and management experience in the pharmaceutical industry. He resides in Cary NC with his wife and two children. He is the son of Lillian Simmons Gilliam, daughter of Philip Simmons..

Other elected officers are: Jimmie Cobbs, Financial Secretary and Olga Pickering Burke, Treasurer. David C. Floyd became the first President Emeritus of the board.

The **Philip Simmons Foundation, Inc.** was established in 1991 to develop the grounds of the St. John's Reformed Episcopal Church as a tribute to their most renowned member, the late Philip Simmons, master blacksmith, (June 9, 1912 - June 22, 2009). Its mission also includes documenting all of his works as a major project to preserve his legacy.

In 2008, the Foundation purchased the home and workshop of Mr. Simmons from him. The site was listed among the :”11 Most Endangered Places in America” by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2007. The City of Charleston's Planning Department approved the home for use as a museum to preserve his legacy. It is scheduled to open to the public in the very near future.

The workshop will continue to operate as a working shop in the tradition of Philip Simmons -- hand forging designs for customers who commission their services. His workshop is being operated by Joseph "Ronnie" Pringle and Carlton Simmons (his cousin and nephew) who apprenticed with him from the age of 13 -- the same age that Philip Simmons was allowed to work in the blacksmith shop of Peter Simmons.

Their craftsmanship can be seen in ironworks designed by Philip Simmons throughout the city of Charleston. The Gazebo at the Charleston International Airport, the Welcome Gate at Charleston Visitor Center, and the fence and gates at the Philip Simmons Garden at St. John's Reformed Episcopal Church to name a few. The entrance gates at the Matthew J. Perry Federal Courthouse in Columbia was a major commission in 2005. Most recent works include the Cemetery Gate at Mepkin Abbey in Moncks Corner, SC, the Trophy for the LGPA Ginn Tribute hosted by Annika, and the entrance sign to the Firefly Distilleries on Wadmalaw Island, SC. New commissions are on the drawing board for fabricating during the next three months.

Philip Simmons never advertised or knocked on doors for business. He let his work speak for itself. He always said "A satisfied customer is an advertising customer." The Simmons Blacksmith Shop is continuing that tradition. Small items will be available in the gift shop that will be located in his home.

For more information about the Philip Simmons Foundation, Inc. and its projects, visit the website: www.philipsimmons.us.

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