The core idea of this exhibit will be to reevaluate the contribution of the enslaved workers buried in the cemetery at Catoctin Furnace, while also showing how studying the cemetery and their remains allows more information about them to come to light. It will consist of three primary sections, beginning with an introduction to slavery at the furnace, providing a background to the history of the institution and introducing the visitors to the people likely buried in the cemetery. The second portion will continue contextualizing the slavery within the environment of the furnace and will introduce the location of the cemetery, including information on its upkeep and the number of graves. The final portion of the exhibit will focus on the excavations of the cemetery and the results from the analyses of the skeletons.

1979 excavations, Catoctin Furnace slave cemetery

2014 geophysical survey, Catoctin Furnace slave cemetery

Metal trouser buttons (top), wrought nails (bottom left), and machine-cut nails (bottom right) recovered from slave cemetery (circa 1790-1840).

Results of archaeological and geophysical investigation of the African-American cemetery at Catoctin Furnace (above center), skulls recovered from the site (above right), photograph of in-situ skeleton (bottom left), proposed space for the “Slavery at Catoctin Furnace” exhibit within the Museum of the Iron Worker (bottom right).