

Growth of Historic Sites

Teaching Public Historians to Advance Preservation Practice

Brent Leggs

ABSTRACT: Cultural heritage sites that bring forward the African American narrative have served a crucial role in redefining our collective history and, ultimately, reconstructing a national identity that reflects the country's true diversity. Preservation professionals and grassroots leaders harness the power of place and the influence of historical figures to inspire and advocate for equity, funding, and recognition of our shared cultural legacy. This paper examines a range of Black heritage sites to reinforce the notion that preservation comes in many different forms and can be used as a tool to empower Black communities. Through historic preservation practice, storytelling, and partnerships, the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund is scaling up the preservation movement to ensure the full American story will be shared with future generations.

KEY WORDS: historic preservation, African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, National Association of Colored Women, National Register

The Negro's life and labors are inseparably entwined with the life and ideals of the American Nation – and at this storehouse [Cedar Hill] shall establish our claim to immortality.¹

In a 1915 newspaper column surrounded by skin whitener advertisements, Marie A. D. Madre of the Federation of Colored Women's Clubs of the District of Columbia ardently appealed to the citizens of the nation's capital to save the home of Frederick Douglass. Her powerful words in *The Washington Bee*, linking the preservation of Black heritage sites and Black stories with the full context of who we are as a nation, could have easily been written today:

I appeal to you to do your full duty in this movement to save the magnificent homestead of Frederick Douglass on Cedar Hill, Anacostia, one of the picturesque spots in the country and dedicated as is no other spot to the preservation of the liberty and civic uplift of our 10,000,000 colored Americans.²

¹ "Save the Frederick Douglass Home!," *The Washington Bee*, January 6, 1917, 2, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

² Ibid.

In many ways, the birth of the African American historic preservation movement can be traced to this moment, and to the big house on a hill, overlooking the US Capitol Building. After the 1895 death of the prominent African American abolitionist, social reformer, author, and statesman, Frederick Douglass, his second wife, Ellen Pitts Douglass, purchased the property from his heirs for fifteen thousand dollars. Pitts Douglass's vision for Cedar Hill, as a tangible legacy of Douglass's life and work, sparked the creation of the Frederick Douglass Memorial and Historical Association in 1900.³

Over the course of the next sixteen years, numerous—albeit unsuccessful—attempts were made by Congress, fraternities, Booker T. Washington, and others to raise sufficient funds to clear the home's title. In 1917, the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) under Mary B. Talbert's leadership at last launched a successful national fundraising campaign to preserve Cedar Hill. Using the success of President George Washington's Mount Vernon estate as a business model, organizers envisioned the home as a historical mecca for Black Americans. With this as NACW's vision, Talbert published a powerful call to action in *The Crisis*, the official publication of the NAACP, stating:

We conclude that this is the psychological moment for us, as women, to show our true worth and prove that the Negro woman of to-day measures up to those strong and sainted women of our race, like Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Amanda Smith, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper and others who passed through the fire of slavery. . . . We believe the attainment of the goal [restoring Cedar Hill] depends upon the enlistment of every Negro, man, woman, boy and girl in America. We seriously realize that it will require us to mobilize all the resources of our Association to show that we are not afraid to put ourselves on record as being able to save the home by one day's co-operative effort.⁴

Framed as a moral imperative, Talbert called on every African American citizen to send in a mere ten cents to save the memory of Frederick Douglass. Within two years of formally joining the project, the NACW crusade raised an estimated fifteen thousand dollars, enough to clear the title and other accrued expenses. Upon receiving the deed, the NACW burned the document and spawned a new movement in its ashes.⁵

Fast forward one hundred years, and passionate grassroots leaders and preservation professionals continue to expand the American narrative, while inspiring

3 Francis J. Grimke, "The Second Marriage of Frederick Douglass," *The Journal of Negro History* 19, no. 3 (July 1934): 324–29.

4 Lauren Walser, "Mary B. Talbert: The Preservation Champion You Might Not Have Heard Of," *National Trust for Historic Preservation*, May 21, 2014, <https://savingplaces.org/stories/mary-b-talbert-preservation-champion#>.

5 "State Clubs Meet," *Cayton's Weekly*, Seattle, Washington, June 19, 1918, 4, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*.



The A. G. Gaston Motel was built in 1954 as a place of luxury for African Americans during segregation. (Photo courtesy of the City of Birmingham Archives)

a new generation of activists to advocate for African American historic places. Their contributions strengthen our understanding of history and, ultimately, help to reconstruct a national identity that reflects America's diversity. Protecting and preserving our tangible and intangible cultural heritage fulfills our need to connect to the past while providing a framework of ideals for our future. The lessons learned from the preservation of African American historic sites across the country, beginning with Cedar Hill, benefit us all.

Why Preserve?

Before we delve into this preservation movement, the need for it, and its best practices, let's begin with a central question: Why preserve the past at all? If African American historian and sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois were alive, he might give us the best concise answer: the souls of Black folk embody the historic places we preserve.

To reference just one example, visitors can tour the diverse collection of historic sites across the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument in Alabama and see firsthand where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, Reverend Ralph Abernathy, and African American foot soldiers of the Civil Rights Movement developed and implemented the Birmingham campaign,



The Sixteenth Street Baptist Church is one of several Civil Rights Movement landmarks in Birmingham where visitors can experience tangible history. (Image courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Photo by Mark Sandlin)

“Project C,” for defeating segregation across the South. In 1963, armed only with the truth and their fearless resolve in the spiritual battle against immorality, these men, women, and children tested and affirmed the timeless idea that purposeful collective action can change the world. Today at these sites, visitors experience a multilayered, visceral history and learn from the stories of courage, freedom, and community organizing that has shaped who we are as a people and a nation today. In 2017, President Barack Obama established national monuments in Alabama and South Carolina to preserve America’s sites of activism, achievement, and community.

Preservation of African American historic sites can also empower Black youth, and all Americans, through the intersection of heritage conservation with culture, social justice, and entrepreneurship. It also reveals a rich historical narrative that extends far beyond the typical slavery and civil rights dichotomy that has come to superficially define the Black experience. In Atlanta and Richmond, for example, the restored homes of Alonzo Herndon (1858–1927) and Maggie Lena Walker (1864–1934), founding presidents of insurance and bank companies respectively, help the nation learn more about the entrepreneurial spirit of African American men and women. The residential tower at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx may be unassuming from the outside, but within its walls it contains stories about the birth of hip-hop

and the emergence of a revolution in music. In Washington, DC, the chance to see the homes of Carter G. Woodson (1875–1950), the founder of African American history as an academic field, and Mary Church Terrell (1863–1954), the Progressive Era community leader and women’s rights activist, provide a younger generation with role models that exemplify higher education, self-confidence, and leadership. The recognition, designation, and protection of these sites span throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and follow in the footsteps of the NACW mission.

There is another compelling reason for this necessary work: For decades, the traditional preservation movement has often neglected and undervalued Black sites, in part because they tend to be vernacular structures that do not personify beautiful architecture. In other cases, their means of construction were not meant to last the test of time, so there is little, if anything physically left to save. Hence, too often, the historic imprint of Black people has been rendered invisible in American cities and rural communities.

This is not to say that important Black sites have been totally ignored. As a professional working in this field for some time, I have found that the preservation of historic African American places often happens on an informal basis. Each time someone gives to a church’s building fund, that person is helping rebuild historic fabric. Whenever volunteers mow the grass at a historic cemetery, they are conserving important cultural landscape. When relatives gather at the family farm for a reunion or to celebrate Juneteenth (June 19, 1865, when official emancipation through the Thirteenth Amendment was widely announced), they are honoring the African American past.

To be sure, some significant sites associated with African American history are formally recognized and serve as permanent reminders about our ancestors and their journey in America. For instance, the African Meeting House in Boston is the oldest existing Black church built by Black artisans, and it conveys the story of the abolitionist movement as the embodiment of social change. The Rosenwald Schools across the South, where many African American children received an education during the Jim Crow years, are the physical manifestation of Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald’s social movement in response to a crisis in Black education. The Clayborn Temple in Memphis, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led his final campaign in the Sanitation Workers’ March, is a historic monument to the battle for human rights and to the dignity of the thousands of Black male and female bodies in silent protest. Regrettably, however, relatively few places important to or representative of the African American experience enjoy this level of recognition and preservation. And, sometimes the physical evidence of a place’s history has deteriorated or has simply disappeared.

This raises a complex question: What is the best approach for preserving a site that lacks tangible and visible history? For example, sites like Shockoe Bottom—the center of Richmond, Virginia’s slave system and economy—serve then and now as physical symbols of systematic violence and oppression. Although steeped in



The African Meeting House in Boston relates the story of the abolitionist movement as the embodiment of social change. (Photo courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation)

a painful chapter of American history, these ancestral spaces can connect African Americans to our forebears while forcing our nation to face the unfinished progress of emancipation and equality. Through preservation practice, community activists and preservation organizations joined forces in 2015 to eliminate the impending threat of incompatible development by defeating a \$79.6 million proposal to construct a minor league baseball stadium in Shockoe Bottom. Although its future continues to be debated and negotiated, the Richmond community has shaped a new vision for the site through a community-driven planning process that seeks to conserve this archeological site and sacred ground. In preserving Shockoe Bottom, history is reclaimed to heal and reconcile our nation's past injustice and to honor the resilient nature of our African American ancestors. Such stories and places might otherwise be lost because the practice of urban renewal has led to the abandonment and erasure of African American historic sites in urban areas across the country.

Many Americans have come to associate certain physical structures as landmarks because they are consonant with an Eurocentric vision of great Americans and events in history. Arguably, in doing so, however, cities and communities overlook some of the most important places where history happens: the buildings, neighborhoods, and landscapes, sometimes declined or derelict now, where ordinary people



The conservation of Shockoe Bottom is the result of a community-driven planning process. (Photo courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation)

made extraordinary contributions. For example, when social justice advocates, artists, and preservationists restore sites in North Carolina like the childhood home of civil rights activist, lawyer, and author Pauli Murray in Durham and the birthplace of pianist, composer, and vocalist Nina Simone in Tryon, it showcases both the imbued elegance of simple, unadorned houses, as well as the political activism and indelible artistry of African American women.

Both women were gifted, revolutionary, and unapologetic voices of the past. Simone introduced to the world a sense of depth and darkness through her music that could only be rivaled by the richness of her soul and the toughness of her skin. Her legacy is rooted in raw musical genius, and without question, her words continue to mold future generations. Meanwhile, through intellectualism and legal research, Murray challenged the social and political structure of American society. Even today, the legacy of her legal attack on both segregation and “Jane Crow” (a term she originated to draw attention to how racial and sexual discrimination affected Black women) helps correct the nation’s imperfections on race and inspires a commitment to social justice. There are similar historic places in communities across America that are defined by the courage, vision, and achievement of great African Americans of every generation.

By preserving the beauty, uniqueness, complexity, and significance of historic African American sites, we can craft a more accurate American narrative and identity. We stimulate revitalization and foster interest in places that today seem

to exist without history or meaning. These cultural sites can anchor us and expand our sense of pride and agency.

Historic Preservation as Urban Regeneration

The best way to restore vitality and livability to the historic urban environment is to build on its strengths, by saving and enhancing the character and ambience that make each neighborhood unique. The human scale and mixed-use properties that typically define the urban fabric of these neighborhoods foster intimate social connection and place making. Studies strongly suggest that this feeling of connection and belonging helps keep individuals physically and psychologically healthy.⁶

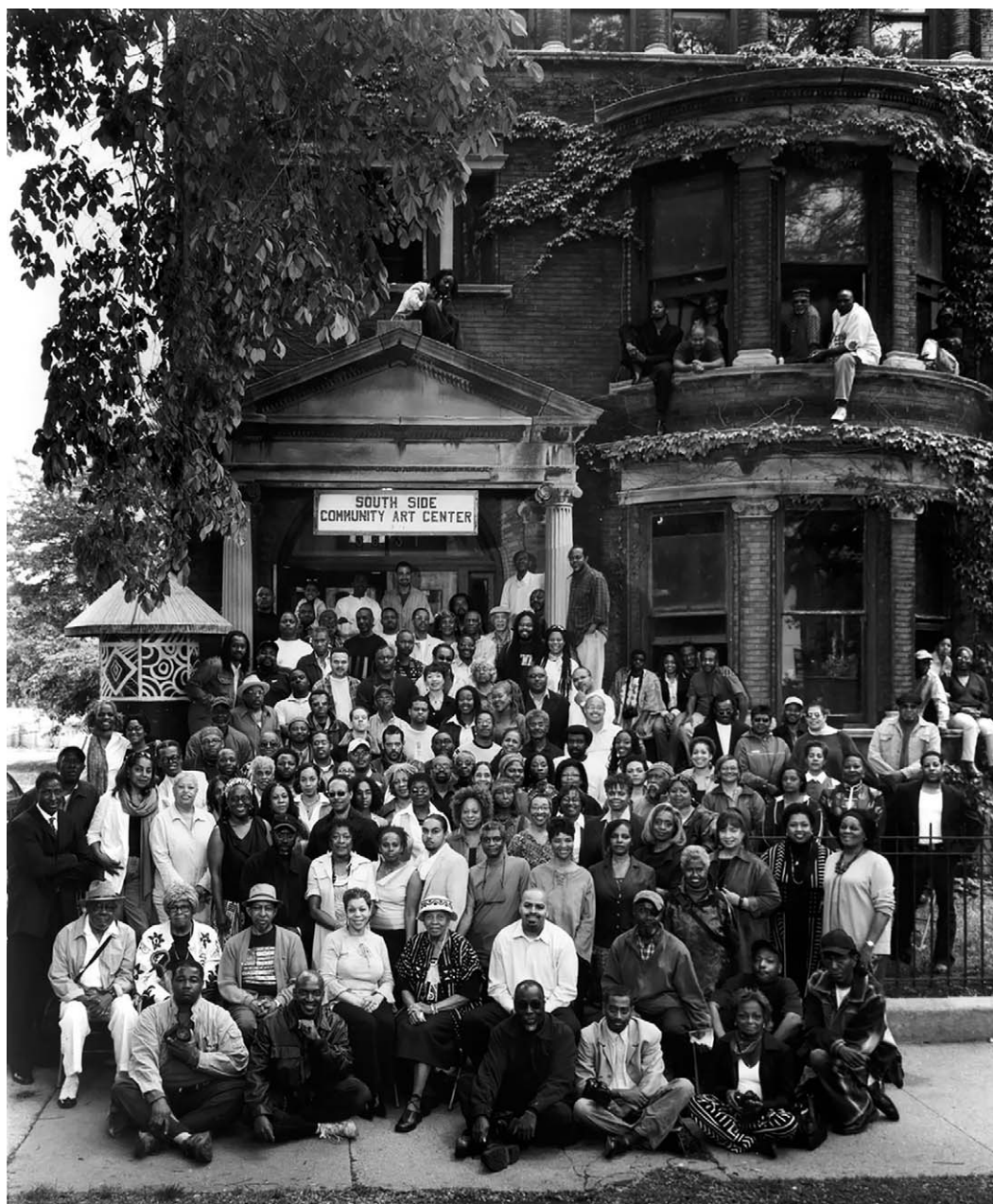
But the opposite is also true, that lack of character and continual environmental disruption can actually age us more quickly. When years of divestment and poor maintenance leave primarily African American neighborhoods with vacant and dilapidated buildings, public officials and citizens often seek a quick solution by razing the deteriorated structures and destroying the neighborhood's soul. As historic structures age, the challenges of preserving them and the neighborhoods they anchor multiply. Preservation works to facilitate the physical survival of these historic sites and promote responsible and inclusive development.

Having witnessed the wonders of this work across America, the National Trust for Historic Preservation recognizes the power of preservation as an effective tool for sustainable revitalization and urban regeneration. As part of our *Atlas of ReUrbanism* research, we recently evaluated the age, diversity, and size of *all* buildings—not just historic buildings—in fifty cities across America, and examined how each block performed according to different economic, social, cultural, and environmental performance metrics. What we found made a convincing case for preservation. Across all fifty cities examined, and when compared to areas with only new buildings, areas with a mix of old and new buildings have sixty percent more women- and minority-owned businesses, seventy-five percent more residents of color, and twenty-seven percent more affordable housing units. To put it simply, older buildings provide local residents with more affordable commercial space and housing options—key assets for marginalized communities.⁷

Therefore, this study proved that historic preservation, even in the face of urbanization, is the path to a more diverse urban future. To keep our cities equitable, accessible, and prosperous, with opportunities for all, we must work to reuse older buildings to create more jobs and walkable neighborhoods, supporting more minority- and women-owned businesses, and addressing urban issues of affordability and displacement—issues that disproportionately impact African

6 Kevin M. Leyden, Abraham Goldberg, and Philip Michelbach, "Understanding the Pursuit of Happiness in Ten Major Cities," *Urban Affairs Review* 47, no. 6 (April 28, 2011): 861–88, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087411403120>.

7 Margaret O'Neal, "Atlas of ReUrbanism: Buildings and Blocks in American Cities," *National Trust for Historic Preservation*, November 17, 2016, <http://forum.savingplaces.org/blogs/margaret-oneal/2016/11/17/the-atlas-of-reurbanism-buildings-and-blocks-in-american-cities>.



The South Side Community Art Center, founded in 1940, empowers Black youth through the intersection of heritage conservation and culture. (Photo courtesy of the South Side Community Art Center Archives)

Americans. Whether it was a nineteenth-century slave jail rehabilitated as an office space by the Alexandria chapter of the National Urban League in Virginia, or the National Trust's Hands-On-Preservation Experience Crew (HOPE Crew) comprised of young people who receive hands-on training in the preservation

trades—an art form once mastered by African Americans—preservation can be an urban regeneration tool with untapped potential. In short, cities need old buildings and new solutions for revitalization.⁸

Preserving the Full History

Now that we have established *why* African American historic preservation is important, let's talk about *how* we go about doing it. An important first step is getting sites recorded on the National Register. Inclusion in America's official listing of historic places brings national recognition of the property's significance, eligibility for certain federal and state tax benefits, and qualification for federal preservation grants when funding is available. At the same time, owners are still free to maintain, manage, or dispose of their property as they choose.

Unfortunately, as it stands now, this official record of historic places reflects the sheer amount of work that still needs to be done to do justice to African American history. A study conducted a decade ago of the nearly 87,000 sites then listed on the National Register found that fewer than two thousand places were formally recognized for their contributions in African American history and design, and under 10 percent of the listings highlighted underrepresented communities and women.⁹ These numbers reveal not only an exclusivity in preservation, but on a deeper level, demonstrate what is considered worthy of recording in our history. This inequity arguably extends beyond the confines of preservation rhetoric and mirrors social and political issues today.

The good news is the National Register is also a great place to begin work on rectifying these disparities, by adding more sites of African American interest. Although a State Historic Preservation Office formally nominates properties for listing in the National Register, anyone may prepare a nomination for consideration, including individuals, public historians, local organizations, and local governments. Preservation advocates can also leverage another tool called local designation to protect sites. Locally designating an individual building or historic district can offer legal protection against preservation threats such as incompatible alterations and demolition.

For example, in 2002, the home of jazz legends John and Alice Coltrane in Huntington, New York was almost lost to demolition. Inside this ranch-style residence, John Coltrane (1926–1967) composed the entirety of his magnum opus *A Love Supreme*, which is considered the embodiment of his life's philosophy and most revered work. Alice Coltrane (1937–2007) also recorded several acclaimed jazz albums at the home, such as *Cosmic Music*, *Universal Consciousness*, and

8 Thomas Day was a successful craftsmen and furniture maker in North Carolina. His life is an example of the role of Black builders as artists. Danny Lewis, "The White House Was, In Fact, Built by Slaves," *Smithsonian.com*, July 26, 2016.

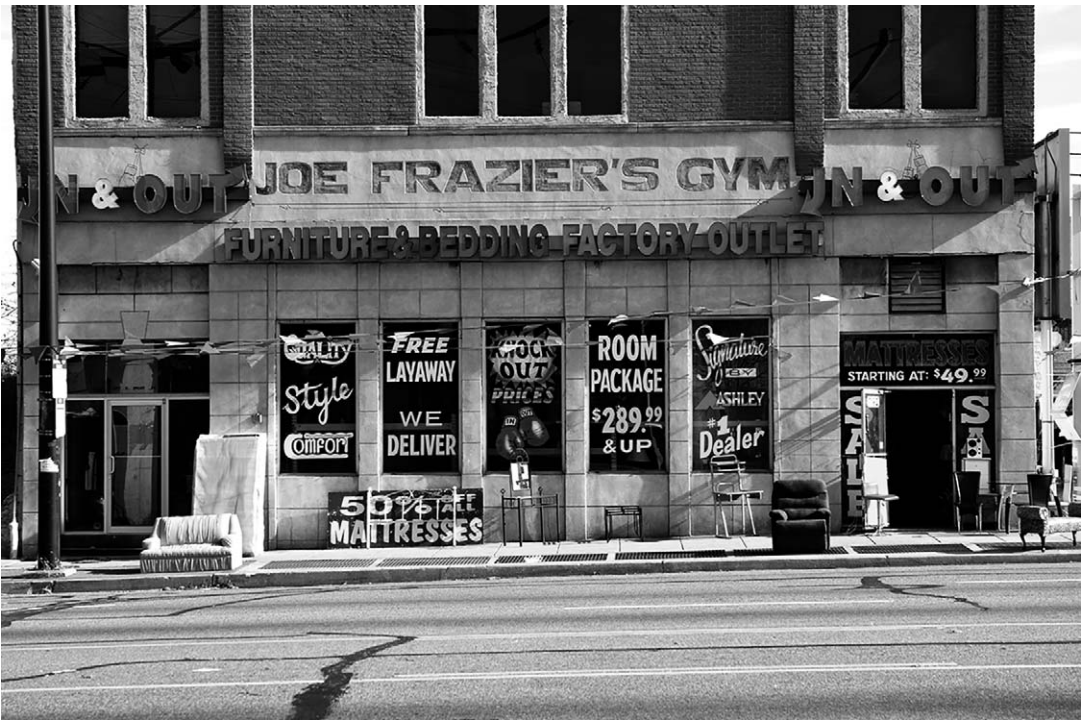
9 Ned Kaufman, "Historic Places and the Diversity Deficit in Heritage Conservation," *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* 1, no. 2 (Summer 2004), accessed March 23, 2018, <https://www.nps.gov/crmjournal/summer2004/article3.html>.



The Mountain View Officers' Club at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, was listed as one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in 2013. While the US Army Garrison proposes its demolition, the National Trust and its partners believe viable reuse options exist. (Photo courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Photo by Steven Meckler)

Transcendence. When the home's future was threatened, concerned citizens were able to use local designation to defend the significance of the Coltrane home from an irreversible fate and in 2004, the property was designated a Huntington Historic Landmark.

Another example was Joe Frazier's Gym in Philadelphia—the boxing venue of the former heavyweight champion of the world. Frazier (1944–2011) lived at the site and trained there for the “Fight of the Century” in 1971 and the “Thrilla in the Manila” in 1975, both against Muhammad Ali. With the winnings from his last fight against Ali, Frazier bought the gym from his investors and renamed it Joe Frazier's Gym. After retiring in 1976, Frazier kept the gym open and mentored younger fighters in the historically African American neighborhood of North Philadelphia. After Frazier's death in 2011, however, a new owner proposed a “facadectomy,” a complete remodeling of the building's granite façade including the removal of Frazier's name. By securing local designation, preservation organizations successfully guarded against the building owner obtaining a demolition permit or negatively altering the building. In 2013, Joe Frazier's Gym was listed in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.



The designation of Joe Frazier's Gym as a Philadelphia landmark protected its granite façade from a new owner's proposed facadectomy. (Courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Photo by Ben Leech)

With designation and recognition secured, employing easements at historic Black sites can guarantee their long-term survival and stewardship. For instance, in Irvington, New York, stands Madam C. J. Walker's Villa Lewaro, an elegant and restored historic residence that embodies the optimism and perseverance of American entrepreneurship. Born Sarah Breedlove (1867–1919) in Delta, Louisiana, Madam C. J. Walker transcended plantation life to become a beauty industry entrepreneur and America's first self-made female millionaire. Once described by Madam Walker as “a Negro institution that only Negro money had bought,” the estate, designed by pioneering architect Vertner Woodson Tandy (1885–1949), was arguably one of the finest and earliest examples of high style residential architecture in the United States. In effect, Walker created an intentional monument of beautiful artistry dedicated to her life as an inspiration to other African Americans. In her will, Walker (or her representatives) described the importance of the home as:

[The Madam] will give the beautiful palace in trust to her race, after the life of herself and that of her daughter. As she thinks of it now it will be held in memoriam of her – a museum or monument – where in after years members of her race may pilgrimage to it, prodding him to renewed energy because of the realism of such a grand result.



The National Trust and the Harold E. Doley Family's nearly three-year partnership culminated in the execution of a deed of preservation and conservation easement that will protect Madam C. J. Walker's Villa Lewaro from future adverse alterations. (Courtesy of Historic New England. Photo by David Bohl)

The home's stylistic elements and history inspired the National Trust to get involved in 2014 to protect Villa Lewaro from any unforeseen future, adverse alterations, or demolition by a future owner. Our nearly three-year partnership with owners Harold and Helena Doley culminated in the execution of a deed of preservation and conservation easement that will protect Madam Walker's significant legacy in perpetuity.

Another important preservation frontier is elevating the African American narrative at traditional historic sites (or already designated historic sites), where Black experiences previously have been treated as tertiary to the stories of famous industrialists, wealthy farmers, former presidents—the “George Washington slept here” trope. In recent decades, preservation has expanded its horizons. The exploration of intersectionality across the spectrums of American culture reveal the multiple layers of stories embedded in these places. As the theologian and activist Desmond Tutu once put it, “My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.”

James Madison's Montpelier, a National Trust Historic Site, for example, conducted onsite archeological research, surveyed extensive historical documentation, and engaged descendant communities to inform the development of their recent



With the National Trust's support, Morgan State University in Baltimore is developing a forward-thinking stewardship plan to guide the future redevelopment of their historic campus and to serve as a national model for other HBCUs. (Photo courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Photo by Paul Burk)

exhibition *The Mere Distinction of Colour*. Visitors now learn not just about James and Dolly Madison, but also about Paul Jennings, an enslaved man who eventually wrote the first White House memoir. Jennings later purchased his freedom after Madison's death, and helped to organize the largest nonviolent escape in American history—the Pearl Incident, in which Black families chartered a schooner to sail to the North. And so now visitors leave Montpelier not just with a better understanding of the father of the Constitution, but also of the social and economic impacts of slavery then and now.

Documenting place-based histories at both African American and traditional sites can be difficult, but solid historical research can help bridge the gap and make the case for diverse significance and storytelling. Learning from the recent efforts to save the embodied legacies of Black America, the National Trust calls for amplified vigilance for African American places elsewhere and new voices to expand what the public sees as cultural heritage in need of protection and preservation.

"Tell the full history" campaign

Whether it was the home of Frederick Douglass one hundred years ago or the numerous sites under restoration today, places associated with African American



The Founders Library at Howard University is where Thurgood Marshall and Charles Hamilton devised *Brown v. Board of Education*, and where Ta-Nehisi Coates discovered his passion for writing. (Photo courtesy Errol S. Watkis, Facilities Administrator & Head of Multimedia Services, Howard University Libraries)

history and culture are not just wooden, concrete, brick, and steel structures. These sites of cultural memory are stark reminders of the continuing struggle for a more equitable and culturally conscious nation. The lessons that African American sites teach us are all the more important at this moment in our history, as we come to a reckoning with America's Confederate past and see long-simmering racial and ethnic tensions bubble once again to the surface of our politics, culture, society, and public spaces. This is evident in the impassioned debates over Confederate Memorials, the protests over police and gun violence, the National Anthem, and the



As part of the National Trust's Hands-On Preservation Experience Crew, seven hundred volunteers were enlisted to paint the interior of Hinchliffe Stadium, a vacant Negro League baseball stadium. (Photo courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Photo by Duncan Kendall)

Black Lives Matter movement. This is evident even in the success of *Selma*, *Hidden Figures*, *Black Panther*, *Hamilton*, and *Lemonade*, which have revealed a deep hunger for more African American representation in stories and American culture.

That's why, in November 2017, the National Trust launched its initiative called the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund. Born in the wake of Charlottesville, the Action Fund is a twenty-five million dollar, multi-year fundraising and preservation campaign to deepen investment in Black historic spaces and to empower communities through preservation practice.

Regrettably, grassroots efforts to preserve places of African American history and culture are some of the most underfunded. For instance, the National Trust received a remarkable 830 grant proposals in 2018 totaling nearly ninety-one million dollars in funding requests to preserve African American sites in forty-two states nationwide. A response on this scale speaks to the need for significant investment in preserving this impressive collection of places and stories. The nation may be rich in diverse history, but it has often been poor in representation of that history and funding its protection, conservation, and recognition. Today, a new community of national leaders envision a bright future for the growing African American preservation movement. Thanks to the leadership of the Ford Foundation,

The JPB Foundation, the Open Society Foundations, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and the National Park Service, for example, African American sites are shaping a new Black Renaissance and are forging paths to justice and education.

As important, the African American preservation movement recognizes the long tradition we stand on and the responsibility of honoring the past legacies of so many, including the countless preservationists like Joan Maynard, Althemese Barns, Valerie Cunningham, Susan Anderson, Leonard Cummings, and Carl Westmoreland who have struggled to tell African Americans' collective story in the century since Mary Talbert and the National Association of Colored Women saved Frederick Douglass' home. Through historic preservation practice, the Action Fund's National Advisory Council and citizen advocates will fill an important gap in the country's cultural heritage landscape, and further the National Trust's vision of a stronger, more united America where all African American stories are reflected in the places that surround us. By preserving the American landscape, the many contributions of those who have struggled and achieved over the years against all obstacles, the African American preservation movement can achieve its claim to immortality.

• • • • •

Brent Leggs is the director of African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, National Trust for Historic Preservation and clinical assistant professor, Graduate Preservation Program at the University of Maryland, College Park.

The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of Daniela Tai, Fellow, African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, National Trust for Historic Preservation and Jamesha Gibson, Mildred Colodny Scholar, National Trust for Historic Preservation.