



Heritage Matters

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Idlewild: A Hidden Gem In Northern Michigan Re-Emerges

Betty Boone / Director of Cultural Economic Development, Michigan State Housing Development Authority

During the second decade of 20th-century America, a magical place arose from discarded forests in northern Michigan: Idlewild, known by many as “Black Eden.” The story of Idlewild, Michigan, is a true American story: one of determination, pride, failure, recovery, celebration, and renaissance. Idlewild, a community listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is engaged in a unique rebuilding process using the strength of its heritage and the creative resilience of its residents. In partnership with the State of Michigan and others, Idlewild is participating in a cultural economic development project designed to help preserve its past, overcome lingering internal challenges, and rise from decades of neglect.

Homesteaded in 1912 and platted in 1915, Idlewild was one of several dozen African American resorts established throughout North America during segregation. According to the National Resource Team (NRT), a national group of distinguished scholars: “At approximately 3,000 acres, Idlewild is the largest land based historically African American resort ever assembled in the United States. It is a rare and valuable national resource with physical and cultural significance.” Like most of these resorts, Idlewild grew to social and economic prominence only to spiral downward in the late 1960s after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, when African Americans could legally exercise once forbidden recreational and entertainment choices. Today, Idlewild stands with five other surviving historic “African American Beaches:” American Beach (Florida); Freeman Beach (North Carolina); Highland Beach (Maryland); Oak Bluff (Massachusetts); and Sag Harbor (New York).

Idlewild, approximately 35 miles east of Lake Michigan, and 240 miles northwest of Detroit, attracted investment by notables such as Madame C. J. Walker, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois,

Reverend Robert L. Bradby, Sr., Charles W. Chesnutt, Louis Armstrong, and Joe Louis. Idlewild quickly emerged as an intellectual/recreational/cultural nexus for both celebrity and striving African Americans. Idlewild attracted hundreds of hard working middle-class African American families who purchased land in lots of 25' x 100' for \$35 each or \$1 down and \$1 per month, and built vacation homes, sleeping cottages, and businesses.

Idlewild grew into a thriving resort community, a welcome beacon of freedom for African Americans throughout the country as a shelter and respite from the storms of segregation and confinement of urban living. By the 1950s, Idlewild was home to more than 300 businesses and emerging as a premiere entertainment destination. Often called the "Las Vegas of the Midwest," Idlewild hosted the Arthur Braggs Idlewild Review and presented nationally known artists like Della Reese, Jackie Wilson, Betty Carter, and The Four Tops in its many nightclubs. The Fiesta Dolls, Casa Blanca Hotel, Paradise Club, Club El Morocco, and Flamingo Club were legendary. During its heyday, Idlewild attracted over 20,000 visitors on a weekend and was an economic engine in West Michigan. However, by the late 1960s, many had abandoned Idlewild for resorts newly open to African Americans. Fewer than a dozen businesses exist in Idlewild today.

In 2007, the state of Michigan recognized the significance of Idlewild by establishing the Idlewild Michigan Transformation Initiative and later the Idlewild Centennial Commission to help change the trajectory of economic decline in this once thriving resort community, and foster its recovery through preservation, revitalization, and celebration.

A citizen-led partnership and community engagement, along with monthly partner meetings, offered forums for dialogue and collaboration. Spearheaded by Michigan's governor, this partnership included a multitude of local, state, and federal agencies: land banks; Michigan colleges and universities; individual legislators; African American and cultural economic organizations; and numerous special interest groups. Partner-assisted strategic planning took place in town hall meetings and around kitchen tables, resulting in the creation of a vision statement, master plan, and feasibility studies. Community beautification efforts enhanced the main entrance into Idlewild. US Highway 10, a major transportation artery and tourism route at the northern boundary of Idlewild, was resurfaced and landscaped. The top community priority, removal of blighted "non-contributing" structures, had begun.

These actions did not go unnoticed by those who had long profited from Idlewild's decline. There were roadblocks, setbacks, and naysayers. New community leadership emerged. Periodic frustrations and

disappointments gave way to critical analysis, creative problem solving, and exuberance. Camp Idlewild of Michigan was founded. The Idlewild Oral History Project documented numerous untold family histories and priceless artifacts. Comprehensive rehabilitation of the Henrietta Summers Senior Center commenced. The community hosted the Idlewild Writers Conference, attracting writers from thirteen states. The historic Charles Chesnutt House was privately purchased with plans for restoration and establishment as a national writers retreat.

In 2010 a more robust Idlewild Music Fest re-emerged and two new local businesses were launched. Yates Township offices moved into a new facility, creating a municipal center with improved amenities and a future thirty-acre public recreation area. A new Lake Idlewild Access Park opened.

While much has been accomplished, there is much more to do. Idlewild's transformation is a long-term project, requiring long-term strategic engagement and unwavering commitment. As Idlewild moves through this process, it is attracting new partners and investment. These types of partnerships will help sustain Idlewild's recovery and revitalization. The governor-appointed Idlewild Centennial Commission is busily planning the 100-year anniversary celebration of the founding of Michigan's remarkable "Black Eden." ❖

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In 2009, with the assistance of a federal Preserve America grant, a survey of resort properties was conducted and an unprecedented five state of Michigan historical markers were dedicated in one day.

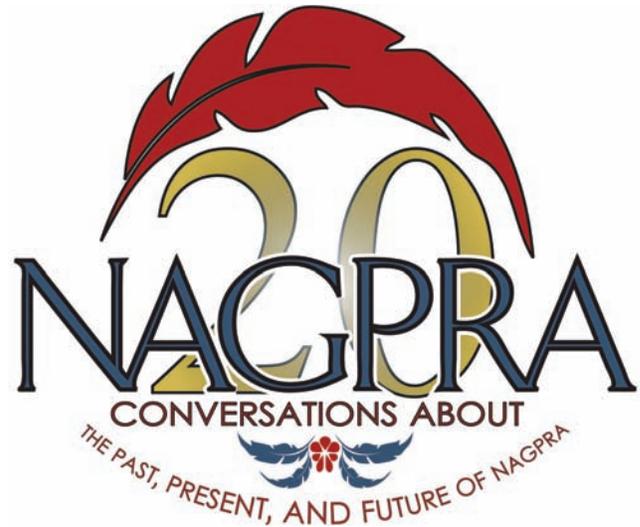
NAGPRA at 20: Two-Day Symposium Marks 20th Anniversary of the Passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

Sangita Chari / National Park Service

After decades of lobbying for the repatriation of American Indian human remains, sacred objects, and ceremonial items from museums to their tribes of origin, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) was passed on November 6, 1990. NAGPRA requires museums and Federal agencies to inventory and identify Native American human remains and cultural items in their collections, and to consult with culturally affiliated Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages and corporations, and Native Hawaiian organizations regarding repatriation. NAGPRA also provides a process for working with tribes to return Native American human remains and cultural items found on Federal and Tribal land and increases protection of Native American burial sites.

On November 5-16, 2010, over 275 representatives from museums, federal agencies, and tribes gathered at the George Washington University in Washington, DC for a two-day symposium to mark the 20th anniversary of the passage of NAGPRA. The National NAGPRA Program and the George Washington University Museum Studies Program and Anthropology Department partnered to host “NAGPRA at 20: Conversations about the Past, Present, and Future of NAGPRA.” The format and content of the symposium was shaped by a six-member planning committee of NAGPRA implementation experts from museums, tribes, and federal agencies. Committee members included Fred York, National Park Service; Patricia Capone, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology; Shannon Keller O’Loughlin (Choctaw), Indian Nations Attorney; Eric Hemenway (Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians), Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians; Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, Denver Museum of Nature & Science; and Joe Watkins (Choctaw), University of Oklahoma. Their vision for NAGPRA at 20 was stated as follows:

NAGPRA at 20 is a forum to remember the past and why NAGPRA was created, to discuss present-day best practices and challenges, and to plan for the future of NAGPRA. As we mark the 20th anniversary of the passage of the law, we aim for the symposium to be a forum to critically assess and evaluate the first two decades of implementation through panels, case studies, featured speakers, and audience participation. The intent is to allow for open dialogue about what has and has not worked. The goal of the symposium is to work toward a shared vision for tribes, museums, Federal agencies, and the National NAGPRA Program on the direction NAGPRA should take for the next 20 years. The



hope is to address the wounds of the past and look toward a more just future.

The symposium featured 12 panels comprised of Native American tribal members, Federal agency employees, and museum professionals from around the country. A special emphasis was placed on featuring speakers that worked on NAGPRA implementation issues for their tribe, museum, or Federal agency on a daily basis. The symposium began with a look back at the history of how NAGPRA was created and then moved to a discussion regarding the challenges and best practices related to NAGPRA implementation. Sessions were devoted to examining the relationship between Federal agencies and tribes, new NAGPRA regulations, legal issues, best practices in consultation, and the use of science and oral traditions in NAGPRA. A session was devoted to considering current challenges to implementing NAGPRA with the goal of turning the information gathered in the session into a document for the National NAGPRA Review Committee to consider. The Review Committee is a Federal advisory board that monitors and reviews NAGPRA compliance and makes annual recommendations to Congress for improving the process. The final session was dedicated to looking toward the future of NAGPRA and the challenges that lie ahead.

Information about NAGPRA at 20 can be found at the National NAGPRA Program website (www.nps.gov/nagpra). Check for transcripts of the symposium later this year. ❖

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Indigenous Expressions: Winter Gathering

Jim Brangan / Assistant Director, Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership, Lake Champlain Basin Program

The Champlain Valley, an area of New York and Vermont associated with the linked waterways of Lake Champlain, Lake George, the Champlain Canal, and the Upper Hudson River, is the traditional homeland of the Mohawk, Mahican, and Abenaki people. The cultures of these people were evolving long before French explorer Samuel de Champlain first journeyed here in 1609. They continue to grow, making new discoveries about themselves and sharing their heritage with others.

Participants from the Native American community came to the ECHO (Ecology, Culture, History, and Opportunity) Lake Aquarium and Science Center in Burlington, Vermont last winter to celebrate their culture and share it with the general public. Funded by the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership (CVNHP), the two-day “Indigenous Expressions: Winter Gathering” event convened and closed with traditional drumming and singing.

The opening night featured displays of indigenous attire for the “Materials of Culture: 10,200 years of Abenaki Clothing, Ceremony, and Implements” program. Native American models wore authentic or reproduced period costumes, spanning from the last Ice Age to today. The professionally coached models walked among the crowd, displaying their authentic headgear, dress, and implements. Fred Wiseman, Abenaki Historian and Professor of Humanities at Johnson State College, compiled the collection and interpreted each display. The remarkable and moving

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event was considered one of the highlights of the weekend. The Circle of Courage dancers from Swanton, Vermont also performed at the opening event. These Native children are taught dances that correspond with the heritage of their ancestors in after-school lessons. They performed four dances to traditional music with one of the young performers sharing an introduction and short history about each dance. The children also unveiled photographs that related directly to their family and heritage. These photos were displayed in the ECHO lobby for three weeks following the event.



Native American models wore authentic or reproduced period costumes, spanning from the last Ice Age to today, as they walked through the crowd of visitors at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain. Photo courtesy of ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center.

The Saturday roundtable discussion “Ancient People, Modern World: Honoring Our Past, Protecting Our Future” was particularly meaningful. In this program, a Native American panel shared their views on the historical economic and social barriers to their people. The comfortable atmosphere enabled members of the public to ask questions and engage in discussion with panel members.

The press coverage was outstanding for the event, which attracted 207 guests in addition to over 100 native families and performers on Friday, February 19, 2010. The programs on Saturday attracted 742 visitors. A short documentary of the event, “Artful Word: Winter Gathering of Native People at ECHO,” is available online.

Saturday’s schedule was enhanced by spontaneity. Several members of the Abenaki community brought their hand-crafts into ECHO where they provided impromptu demonstrations and encouraged visitors to participate. At one point, 20 people watched Vera Longtoe Sheehan demonstrate the use of sweet grass to make netting.

New York archeologist Charlie Paquin displayed many examples of atlatls for a hunting demonstration at the event. Dozens of visitors eagerly joined him outside to learn the history of these spear-hurling tools and to attempt throwing techniques. Charlie also enthralled guests in his use of clay, a history of how it was gathered, and offered a time line of its practical and ceremonial functions. An expert flint knapper, Charlie delighted visitors by demonstrating that ancient craft as well.

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The ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center began its partnership with the Native American community of the Champlain Valley in 2007 in preparation for the 2009 Quadricentennial of Samuel de Champlain’s exploration of the lake. The Indigenous Expressions partnership has fostered exhibits, interpretive programs, and cultural events at ECHO’s highly visited Burlington waterfront location.

The Indigenous Expressions partnership continues into 2011 through support by the CVNHP. This newly

designated national heritage area identifies the interpretation of historical, archeological, and ethnographic research as a key objective of its management plan. The CVNHP recently awarded an additional \$10,000 grant to ECHO to continue its well-established collaborative partnership with the Native American community to collect, share, and archive interviews with contemporary Abenakis and Mohawks. The produced audio pieces will complement the ECHO interpretive exhibits, website, and the Indigenous Expression Portrait Gallery through traditional and new technologies. ❖

i For more information contact Jim Brangan, Assistant Director, Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership, Lake Champlain Basin Program, at 802.372.3213, address: 54 West Shore Road, Grand Isle, VT 05458, email: jbrangan@lcbp.org



The Indigenous Expressions: Winter Gathering event convened and closed with traditional drumming and singing. Photo courtesy of ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center.

National Register Nominations

Christine H. Messing / National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers / Rustin Quaide / National Park Service

1 Madonna Acres Historic District

The Madonna Acres Historic District was the first residential subdivision of Raleigh, North Carolina, built by African Americans for African Americans in the early 1960s. This was an especially significant accomplishment considering segregation was still in full force in Raleigh, and most black residents were limited to living in the inner city. The district consists of 40 custom built homes, mainly ranches and split-levels, with sizable lawns averaging a quarter acre each, and attached carports. The exteriors are brick with decorative accents in stone or wood, with large picture windows and planters as common features. Madonna Acres' location adjacent to the campus of St. Augustine's College has much to do with the district's establishment.

The college was started by the Episcopalians in 1867 as a teacher training school for African Americans, and the other services available on campus, including a hospital, a chapel, and cultural events, established the area as a center of local black community life. Reverend Henry Beard Delany was an early rector at St. Augustine's, later becoming the first African American Episcopal bishop in the United States in 1918. That same year he purchased a tract of land where he lived with his family just east of the campus. Several adjacent tracts were added and subdivided to form the 13 acre plat that would become Madonna Acres.

John Winters, an African American native of Raleigh, had left the area as a child but returned in the 1950s following his education in New York and Virginia. White suburbs were being developed on the north and west sides of Raleigh, while the black residential areas southeast of Raleigh were virtually ignored, so John Winters started his own real estate and insurance business, with Madonna Acres as his first foray into housing development in 1960. He acquired the land from Bishop Delany's heirs and began to plan this subdivision that would allow middle income black families to purchase a new home on a large, scenic lot. The main north-south road running through the long narrow development was aptly named Delany Drive.

Winters drew the initial designs for each home in consultation with the buyers, making custom layouts, often taking advantage of the sloping lots. Almost two-thirds of the original homeowners were educators, many at the neighboring St. Augustine's College but also at the State Department of Public Instruction and public schools in the area. A white subdivision that developed concurrently,



The initial design for each home in the Madonna Acres subdivision was drawn in consultation with the homebuyer to suit individual needs and tastes, and often took advantage of natural features such as a sloping lot. Photo courtesy of the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office.

Battery Heights, helps to illustrate a divergence in housing tastes between the black and white communities, with a tendency for black suburbs to more fully embrace modern design.

The exceptional modernist architecture of Madonna Acres maintains a high level of structural and historical integrity since many of the original homeowners remain in the neighborhood, or have passed their homes on to their descendants. The district is included in the Multiple Property Submission of Post-World War II and Modern Architecture in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1945-1965, and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 1, 2010.

2 Eden Cemetery

Established in 1902 for the African American community around Philadelphia, the Eden Cemetery is a 49-acre public, non-sectarian burial place created in the pastoral tradition of memorial parks of the early 20th century. Located in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, this cemetery became a necessity as the African American cemeteries in Philadelphia were threatened by urban expansion. Two of those cemeteries were eventually condemned by the city's Department of Health, and the cemetery owners then contracted with the Eden Cemetery Company to move the bodies to the expansive new Eden Cemetery.

Established by five prominent African American Philadelphians, the cemetery has always been run by and for the local African American community, allowing respect for African burial customs in the only non-sectarian burial place of this type in southeastern Pennsylvania. Amongst the rolling hills and green vistas, there are 90,000 graves in 23 sections that have developed over the years as more space was needed. The majority of markers are traditional headstones, but a few sculptural monuments exist, as does one above-ground burial vault. Eden Cemetery is still actively used for burials today, but retains the acreage, boundaries, layout, and integrity from the time of its inception over a century ago. Eden Cemetery was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 13, 2010.

Eden Cemetery is still actively used for burials today, but retains the acreage, boundaries, layout, and integrity from the time of its inception over a century ago. Courtesy of Shelby Weaver Splain, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation.



By 1963 the Williams Building had been expanded to include a second floor, which housed the offices of an insurance company and the Arkansas SNCC office. Photo courtesy of Ralph S. Wilcox, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

3 Williams Building

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was an important organization that helped spread the Civil Rights Movement beyond school integration to include voter registration, integration of other public facilities, and backing for black political candidates. In 1963, one of the first offices established by SNCC outside of Little Rock was in Pine Bluff, Arkansas and within a year the group had moved its offices into the Williams Building, where it would remain active until 1967.

The Williams Building was completed in 1960 as a single-story building that housed the Williams Barber Shop. The residential area surrounding the University of Arkansas campus in Pine Bluff began to be populated with commercial concerns in the mid-20th century. By 1963 the building had been expanded to include a second floor, which housed the offices of an insurance company and the Arkansas SNCC office.

Pine Bluff was the first location other than Little Rock to house SNCC civil rights efforts to integrate public facilities. Along with their push for integration in public buildings, SNCC also organized voter registration drives, supported black candidates for political office, and established schools to improve educational opportunities for the black community. Once the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act were passed, support for SNCC faded, and the group eventually folded in 1967.

Since the demise of SNCC, the Williams Building has continued to be an important part of the local black community, currently housing a barber shop, an alterations shop, and an educational facility, while continuing as a reminder of the significance of SNCC and its accomplishments in Pine Bluff. The Williams Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 16, 2010.

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4 American Baptist Home Mission House

The American Baptist Home Mission House is located in Cherokee County, Oklahoma just northeast of the historic business district of Tahlequah. The two-story wood frame house was built in 1905 by prominent local architect/builder, William Alston, as the residence for the president of the nearby Cherokee Baptist Academy. Built on Cherokee land long reserved for educational use, the house embodies the Free Classic style, a subtype of the Queen Anne style, well-suited to the straightforward Oklahoma frontier of the time.

Reverend Walter J. Pack was the first to hold the position of president and pastor while living in the house for five years, during which he transformed the struggling mission school into a successful preparatory school attended by 320 Native American students. In early 1910 the house was sold to Pearl Baggette, a Cherokee tribal member and teacher, who, as a single widowed mother raised four daughters there, three of whom attended Northeastern State University, the successor of the Cherokee National Female Seminary, which had grown up around the Cherokee Baptist Academy.

The American Baptist Home Mission House represents the association of the Cherokee Nation with the missionary efforts of the Baptist church, and the conscious efforts of the Cherokee people to assimilate in order to survive the steady westward movement of American people, politics, and culture. The structure has retained a high level of historical integrity, having been occupied throughout its existence by active members of the Cherokee Nation, all educators or their student boarders attending the university. The American Baptist Home Mission House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 3, 2010.

The American Baptist Home Mission House has retained a high level of historical integrity, having been occupied throughout its existence by active members of the Cherokee Nation. Photo by Brad A. Bays, courtesy of Oklahoma State University and the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Office.



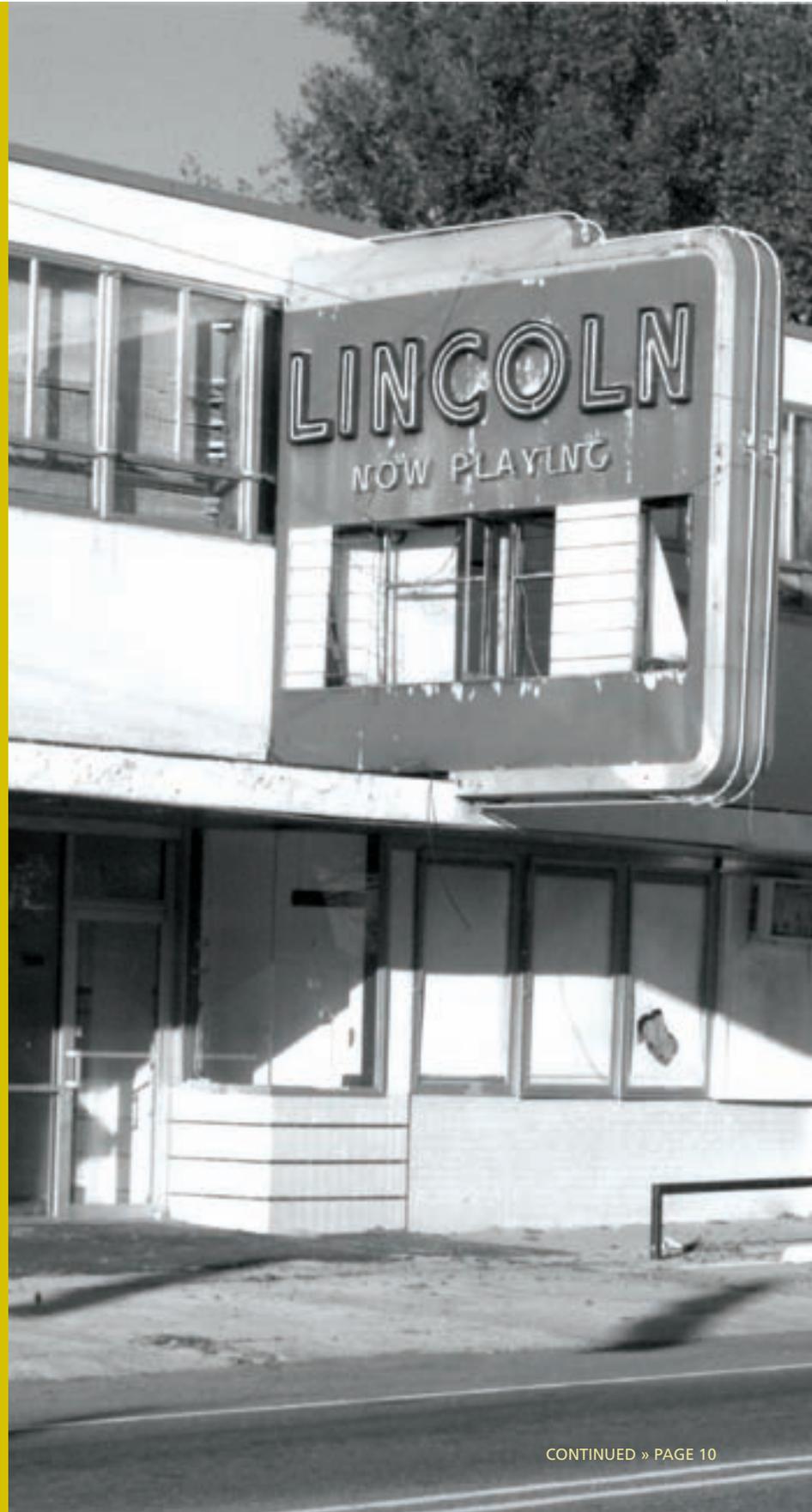
5 Lincoln Theater

The Lincoln Theater is a two-story brick veneered building near downtown Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Built in 1950 by a local African American physician, Dr. A.L. Chatman, the Lincoln Theater was an important social gathering place for the surrounding black community. While segregation was still in full force, it is easy to understand the preference of most African Americans for attending a local black theater in their own neighborhood rather than suffer the indignity of sitting in the segregated section of a white theater. Of the three black theaters in Baton Rouge, the Lincoln was the most modern, both in style and amenities. The Art Moderne marquee welcomed theatergoers into a 500+ seat theater, the largest of the three venues.

Having been air conditioned since it was built, the Lincoln was undoubtedly a popular gathering place during the hot summer months as one of the few places to stay cool. Used for movies and live theatrical and musical events, it seems the theater may have also played a role in the Civil Rights Movement as a meeting place for planning local bus boycotts, and as a venue for voter registration.

Since its construction, the Lincoln Theater building has also been home to other businesses such as a barber shop, laundry, and pharmacy, with professional offices on the second floor. Alterations to the interior and exterior of the building have been minimal over the years. The theater remained in use until the mid-1980s but has sat vacant since then. The property was purchased in 2009 as the future home of the Louisiana Black History Hall of Fame that is currently in the fundraising and planning stages. The Lincoln Theater was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 7, 2010.

The Art Moderne marquee of the Lincoln Theater welcomed African American theatergoers into this 500+ seat venue. Courtesy of Donna Kricker, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.



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6 Westbrook Cotton Gin

The Westbrook Cotton Gin in Liberty, Mississippi is a two-story corrugated metal building constructed c. 1909 by a group of local farmers to process cotton. The gin was sold to E.H. Westbrook about three years later. Cotton farming in Mississippi increased exponentially in the first half of the 19th century, becoming a primary staple of the economy and a source of power for the South prior to the Civil War. This power and economic stability, however, was made possible through slave labor.

After the Civil War, cotton farmers had to rebuild their neglected fields and establish alternatives to a slave workforce. Sharecropping became the norm in the region well into the 20th century. While Westbrook was the largest cotton gin in Amite County, there were six other cotton gins in operation at the same time, all two-story open plan buildings to accommodate the ginning equipment and allow farmers to drive their cotton-laden trucks in one end, unload inside the building, and drive out the other end. Westbrook Cotton Gin is the only surviving example in Amite County, with minimal alteration.

By the early 1960s the Civil Rights Movement was very active in southern Mississippi. In August 1961, Herbert Lee, a local black farmer and charter member of the Amite County NAACP, joined Robert Moses in registering black voters in Liberty, and offered to drive Moses around the county in an effort to register even more black voters. United States Justice Department representative John Doar also came to Liberty to meet with the black community. When Doar asked if there were white men in the region who they felt threatened by, the name E.H. Hurst, a local farmer and member of the Mississippi legislature, was mentioned. Although there are differing accounts of how it transpired, on September 25, 1961 Herbert Lee was shot and killed by E.H. Hurst at the Westbrook Cotton Gin.

Three black men and two white men testified that the shooting was in self defense, so Hurst was never charged. Many believed that the black witnesses had been coerced by local white authorities, and one of the black witnesses subsequently gave a confidential statement to the local FBI officials that he believed Hurst had murdered Lee because of his voter



The Westbrook Cotton Gin represents two significant parts of Mississippi history—the cotton industry and the Civil Rights Movement. Courtesy of Nancy Bell, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Division of Historic Preservation.

registration activities. After continuous harassment, false arrests, and beatings, that witness was found dead in January 1964, the victim of a brutal murder. Voter registration efforts in Amite County did not stop for long, and Herbert Lee's tragic death was memorialized by the movement in the song "We'll Never Turn Back." The Westbrook Cotton Gin represents two significant parts of Mississippi history—the cotton industry and the Civil Rights Movement. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on November 10, 2010.

7 Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium

Built in 1962, the Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium in Utulei, a village on American Samoa's largest island of Tutuila, has been the center of community activities. The architect is not known, although there is likely a connection to the Fourteenth Naval District Construction Battalion, on loan from Pearl Harbor to work on American Samoa's construction projects. The eastern islands of Samoa came under US control in 1900, but were virtually ignored in the following decades. In July 1961 the US government was called out for their neglect in the *Readers Digest* magazine article "Samoa: America's Shame in the South Seas." The recently appointed Governor H. Rex Lee took on the task of building the islands' infrastructure, and improving education, healthcare, and transportation. Having spent 25 years with the Department of the Interior as a specialist in American Indian and dependent peoples, Lee was a good choice to get American Samoa back on track.

The tri-annual South Pacific Conference was scheduled for July of 1962, to be held for the first time in American Samoa. One of a multitude of civic projects undertaken at that time, the 800-seat auditorium was built in the center of the village near the government offices, public library, central bank, high school, and television station. The overall design of the auditorium utilizes elements of traditional Samoan architecture such as the domed roof and low eaves, but employs modern engineering and materials suitable for the large open interior space and the prevalence of hurricanes in the region. The rounded

roofline of the building caused the local population, who embraced the new auditorium as a symbol of the island's move toward centralized government, to affectionately call the building *Fale Laumei*, or the turtle building. The auditorium, later named for Governor Lee, was completed in time for the South Pacific Conference. In 1965, Samoa was again featured in *Readers Digest*, this time in an article called "Samoa: America's Showplace in the South Seas."

Since its construction, the Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium, as the only indoor gathering place of this size on the island, has been the venue for theater productions, Chinese acrobatics, and a circus, as well as sporting, political, and educational events. A \$3.2 million renovation was undertaken to add modern amenities like air conditioning, upgrades for accessibility, and computerized sound and lighting systems for the stage, while preserving the original exterior design. The renovation was completed in 2007. The most recent Territorial Constitutional Convention was held at the auditorium in July of 2010. The Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on November 12, 2010.

The rounded roofline of the Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium caused the local population to refer to it affectionately as *Fale Laumei*, or the turtle building. Photo by Joe N. Weilerman, American Samoa Historic Preservation Office.



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8 Guam's Outdoor Ovens Multiple Property Submission

Four outdoor ovens built in Guam in the 1940s and 1950s were listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 3, 2010, as part of a Multiple Property Submission. These four ovens, the Won Pat Outdoor Oven in Sinajana, the Quan Outdoor Oven in Piti, the Paulino Outdoor Oven in Inarajan, and the Baza Outdoor Oven in Yona, retain characteristics of the oven type originally introduced by the Spanish to Guam during the Spanish Colonial Period (1668-1898). This type of oven, or *hotno* in the native Chamorro language after the Spanish term for oven, *horno*, represents one of the many social and cultural adaptations that occurred in Chamorro culture as a result of the Spanish colonial influence in the Mariana Islands.

Guam's *hotno* is similar to the Spanish *horno* in that the walls of the beehive or barrel-shaped vault store heat generated by a fire built within the chamber. When the oven is hot enough, the ashes are swept out, the foods are placed in the chamber, the openings are sealed, and the foods bake or roast by the heat given off by the oven walls as they cool. Originally these stone and brick ovens were probably built to provide bread and other foods to foreigners living on Guam after 1668, prepared in ways with which they were familiar.

Over time the Europeans taught the Chamorro people, who were already familiar with the concept of cooking foods using hot rocks, how to build and use these ovens. The foods cooked in the *hotno* included bread (made from corn and later wheat flour), biscuits made from grated coconut and tapioca, arrowroot, breadfruit, and *essok* (dried breadfruit), and meat from animals introduced by the Spanish (including pigs, chickens, turkeys and goats).

During the Spanish period, the ovens at the Spanish governor's residence in Guam were used to prepare dishes for visiting dignitaries. During the First American Period (1898-1941), owning an oven was an indication of social and economic power. Most of the ovens were destroyed in World War II and are now in ruins, but the tradition of building and cooking in them has not been completely lost, as at least two ovens built in the 1990s are still in use. Gradually, due to a combination of factors, *hotno* use declined in Guam. Both the post-war manufacture of gas and electric stoves and the extensive time involved in preparing the food led to the wide-scale decline of the traditional *hotno*.



The Paulino *Hotno* retains characteristics of the oven type originally introduced by the Spanish to Guam during the Spanish Colonial Period. Photo by Darlene Moore, courtesy of the Micronesian Archeology Research Services and the Guam Historic Resources Division.

i For more information about the National Register visit <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr>

Anacostia Grants Program

Anne O. Brockett / Historic Preservation Office, Washington, DC

Residents of Anacostia in Washington, DC are forging a resurgence of pride in their historic urban neighborhood. After years of slow decline, the neighborhood was just starting to be discovered by first-time home buyers when the real estate bubble burst. The city's Historic Preservation Office (HPO) stepped in and is not only helping long-time residents maintain and revitalize their homes, but it is also helping new buyers cement their investment in Anacostia.

In 2006, the District of Columbia initiated a new grant program for historic properties. Spearheaded by the Historic Preservation Office, the program was legislated and funded by the DC Council, which allocated \$1.25 million in the first round of funding. The Historic Homeowner Grant Program is now available to the District's low- and moderate-income homeowners to make improvements to their homes in historic districts. The grants of up to \$35,000 assist with exterior and/or structural work. HPO monitors the proposals, consults with applicants, and provides site visits

with owners and contractors. A match is required on a sliding scale, based on income, ranging from zero to 50%.

The Anacostia Historic District served as the pilot for the program. This National Register district, originally called Uniontown, encompasses approximately 550 structures. The area was platted in 1854 and is one of the city's earliest suburbs.

To date, the DC Historic Preservation Office has completed over 50 grant projects in Anacostia totaling \$1.5 million. At least one project has been completed in every block of the historic district, and in some cases as many as three or four. The resultant benefits of the program are being realized in both big and small ways. Yards that had been untended are cultivated again by owners proud of their restored front facades. Neighbors who did not participate in the program are painting their houses for the first time in years as they "keep up with the Joneses." Inspired by the changes, other DC agencies have dusted off old proposals and installed new signs marking the historic district.

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This Anacostia home had fallen into disrepair, prompting the homeowner to apply for a grant through the DC Historic Preservation Office. Courtesy of the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office.



The Anacostia Grants Program funded the rehab of the house, owned by Clarence Alston, a math teacher at a DC public charter school. Courtesy of the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office.

Anacostia Grants Program
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Most importantly, the grant program has put Anacostia back on the map as far as builders and developers are concerned. When the grant program kicked off, applicants were required to find their own contractors and provide three estimates. In the aftermath of the downturn in real estate, small builders were only too happy to have a shot at a government funded project. After completing their grant projects, some of these builders purchased vacant lots in Anacostia and built new speculative houses, while others bought vacant structures to restore and resell.

Following the success of projects in Anacostia, the program was fine-tuned and expanded to 11 other historic districts with low- to moderate-income residents. Overall, the economic and social changes currently taking place in Anacostia are due in large part to the Historic Homeowner Grant Program. Using historic preservation as a tool, the city has created an environment that promotes long-time homeowners staying in the family home while also encouraging an influx of new families. ❖

i For more information on the Anacostia Grant Program, contact Brendan Meyer at brendan.meyer@dc.gov. General inquiries for the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office can be sent to historic.preservation@dc.gov.

Mission of the National Park Service

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and the values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service also cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

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Conferences and Commemorations

Conferences

May 2011

National Trust for Historic Preservation – 2011 Main Streets Conference, Des Moines, IA

On **May 22–25**, 2011, Iowa will celebrate 25 years of developing one of the strongest Main Street Coordinating Programs in the country. The conference will be held at the Polk County Convention Complex on **May 22–25**, 2011.

For more information about this conference, visit <http://www.preservationnation.org>.

Landmark Committee Meeting, Washington, DC

This meeting is open to the public and will be held at the National Trust for Historic Preservation building on **May 24–26**, 2011. Nominations will be available at <http://www.nps.gov/nhl/>.

For more information, contact Alexandra M. Lord, Branch Chief, National Historic Landmarks Program, at alexandra_lord@nps.gov.

American Institute for Conservation 39th Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA

The theme of the meeting is "ETHOS, LOGOS, PATHOS: Ethical Principles and Critical Thinking in Conservation." The event will be held at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown on **May 31–June 3**, 2011.

For more information, visit www.conservation-us.org/meetings.

June 2011

82nd League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) National Convention & Exposition, Cincinnati, Ohio

The Duke Energy Convention Center will host this event **June 27–July 2**, 2011.

For more information on the convention, visit <http://www.lulac.org/convention>.

September 2011

American Association of State and Local History, Richmond, VA

AASLH's 2011 annual meeting will take place **September 14–17**, 2011, in Richmond, Virginia.

For more information, visit the AASLH Meeting website, <http://www.aaslh.org/anmeeting.htm>.

October 2011

National Trust for Historic Preservation – National Preservation Conference, Buffalo, New York

Buffalo is an important laboratory for examining and debating the conference theme of alternating currents in preservation. The conference will be held **October 19–22**, 2011.

For more information, visit <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/training/npc/>.

Commemorations

Historic Preservation Month / May

Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month / May

Jewish American Heritage Month / May

Great Outdoors Month / June

American Heritage Month / July

Archeology Month / August



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Heritage Matters

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Winter Gathering

Anacostia Grants Program

National Register
Nominations

NAGPRA at 20: Two-
Day Symposium Marks
20th Anniversary of
the Passage of the
Native American
Graves Protection and
Repatriation Act



About Heritage Matters

Heritage Matters highlights the many diverse cultural resources/historic preservation projects that are underway in the National Park System, the National Park Foundation, the National Parks Conservation Association, state and local governments, and other partnership organizations. This newsletter also showcases preservation activities occurring within diverse communities. It is distributed to preservation partnership organizations, including federal agencies, State Historic Preservation Offices, Tribal Preservation Offices, private preservation organizations, related organizations, schools, and individuals.

Cover Image: Idlewild Lake in Summer, photo courtesy of Sheryl E. Thomas

