

African American Heritage Challenge

One cannot understand Missouri history, life, and culture without looking to the state's African American history. York, enslaved to William Clark, helped chart the course through Missouri for the Corps of Discovery. Debates about the institution of slavery and the future of enslaved and free Blacks shaped the Missouri statehood process, the resulting Missouri Compromise, and the landmark freedom suit of Dred and Harriet Scott set national policy. Missouri's rich African American heritage is shaped by educators and entrepreneurs, artists and scientists, laborers and business leaders, athletes and musicians who lived, worked or grew up in Missouri's borders.



*The African American Heritage Challenge is sponsored by **The State Historical Society of Missouri**, the premiere center for the study of Missouri history. The mission of The State Historical Society of Missouri is to collect, preserve, publish, exhibit, and make available material related to all aspects and periods of Missouri history. The Society also seeks to generate interest in and appreciation of the rich cultural heritage of the state and its people through education and outreach.*



African American Heritage Challenge ... Visit 10 sites in at least 5 different counties. Remember: Missouri Explorers must be registered in the program, and they are responsible for checking hours and availability of sites. Upload your verification photographs using the online submission form at <https://missouri2021.org/missouri-explorers/> to receive your merit badge button.

Learn about the Sankofa bird on the challenge logo by visiting the website for the Liberty African American Legacy Memorial, a Missouri 2021 endorsed project, here: <https://www.libertylegacymemorial.org/>

Remember, Missouri Explorers, you are responsible for checking hours and availability of sites before arriving.

And a special reminder, Missouri Explorers: be mindful that many of these sites mark struggle, violence, and sacrifice. Remember your pledge to be respectful of your surroundings.

Bates County

Battle of Island Mound Monument

(on the Bates County Courthouse lawn)
1 N. Delaware Street
Butler, Missouri

The monument, designed by sculptor Joel Randall, was erected by The Amen Society to commemorate the victory of the First Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry at the Battle of Island Mound in 1862. Snap your photograph at the monument.

Battle of Island Mound State Historic Site

Marth Road
Butler, Missouri

Battle of Island Mound State Historic Site preserves the site of the Toothman Farm, which the First Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry used as its headquarters and renamed "Fort Africa." Snap your photograph at one of the interpretive signs at the historic site.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/battle-island-mound-state-historic-site>

Boone County

John William ‘Blind’ Boone Home

10 N. Fourth Street
Columbia, Missouri

The home of John and Eugenia Boone has been preserved in Columbia. “Blind” Boone and his wife lived in the home between 1892 and 1929. Snap your photograph at the historic marker in front of the home.

<https://blindboonehome.org/>

Missouri Theatre Side Door

Nineth and Locust Street
Columbia, Missouri

During the period of segregation, African Americans were only allowed to enter the Missouri Theatre from the side entrance and were required to sit in the balcony. A plaque at the side door entrance marks this shameful part of Columbia’s history. Snap your photograph at the Missouri Theatre side door.

Sharp End

Sixth and Walnut Street
Columbia, Missouri

One of over 20 historic markers highlighting people and institutions significant to Columbia’s African American history, the Sharp End marker commemorates the city’s Black business district. Snap your photograph at the marker.

Buchanan County

Black Archives Museum \$

3406 Frederick Avenue
St. Joseph, Missouri
816-232-8471

Housed in the St. Joseph Museums complex, the Black Archives Museum tells the story of African Americans in St. Joseph and Buchanan County. Snap your photograph next to York.

<https://www.stjosephmuseum.org/black-archives-museum>

Coleman Hawkins Statue

Felix Street and Seventh Street
St. Joseph, Missouri

Jazz saxophone innovator Coleman Hawkins was born in St. Joseph on November 21, 1904. Snap your photograph at the statue placed in his honor.

Cape Girardeau

Ivers Square

44 N. Lorimier
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

Currently closed due to construction.

Ivers Square, located on the Court of Common Pleas grounds, is named in honor of James and Harriet Ivers. Born enslaved, James Ivers enlisted in the Union Army in Cape Girardeau. Snap your photograph at the United States Colored Troop Memorial.

Lincoln / John S. Cobb School Site

Corner of Merriwether and Ellis Streets
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

Lincoln School was built in 1890 to educate Cape Girardeau’s African American children. John S. Cobb was the school’s first teacher, and it was renamed in his honor after his death. The school operated until 1953 when it was damaged by fire. It was razed in 1954. Snap your photograph at the interpretive sign.

St. James AME Church

516 N. Street
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

Rev. Winston, Rev. Burks, Professor Samuel Newlin, and Jesse Stanton founded the St. James Society in the Methodist tradition in 1863, two years before the abolition of slavery in Missouri. The current church building was built in 1870. St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church remains an active congregation today. Snap your photograph in front of the church.

Clay County**Garrison School Cultural Center**

502 Water Street
Liberty, Missouri
816-781-7918

Garrison School, established in 1877, was the first public school for African American youth in Liberty and is the only historically Black school still standing in Clay County. Today it serves as Garrison School Cultural Center with an art gallery, cultural exhibits, sculptures, and home to the Clay County African American Legacy Inc. Snap your photo at the Blue Bottle Tree or the Sankofa Bird Sculpture.

<https://ccaal-garrisonschool.org/>

African American Freedom Fountain

1 Courthouse Square (northwest corner)
Liberty, Missouri

Erected by the Clay County African American Legacy, Inc. in 2000, the monument commemorates the contributions of African Americans who shaped the development of Clay County. Snap your picture at the marker.

Cole County**Lincoln University and Soldiers Memorial Plaza**

820 Chestnut Street
Jefferson City, Missouri

Soldiers Memorial Plaza at Lincoln University honors the 62nd and 65th Colored Infantries, which founded Lincoln University in 1866. Snap your picture at the memorial.

Cooper County**John Donaldson Field and Statue**

Glasgow, Missouri

Negro Leagues star pitcher and Glasgow native John Donaldson played 32 professional seasons. He served as pitcher and center fielder when the Kansas City Monarchs were formed in 1920.

Snap your photograph at the statue placed in Donaldson's honor.

Jackson County**American Jazz Museum \$**

1616 E. Eighteenth Street
Kansas City, Missouri
816-474-8463

The American Jazz Museum celebrates jazz as an American art form, one which had roots in Kansas City's Eighteenth and Vine neighborhood. Snap your photograph at under the neon signs from Kansas City's jazz past.

<https://americanjazzmuseum.org/>

Black Archives of Mid-America

1722 E. Seventeenth Terrace
Kansas City, Missouri
816-221-1600

View the permanent exhibition With My Eyes No Longer Blind at the Black Archives of Mid-America, which documents the experience of African Americans in the Kansas City area. Snap your photograph with one of the exhibits.

<https://blackarchives.org/>

Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center

3700 Blue Parkway
Kansas City, Missouri
816-513-0700

Currently closed due to the pandemic.

Named in honor of political and social activist Bruce R. Watkins, the Watkins Cultural Center interprets the African American experience in Kansas City. Snap your photograph at the Watkins exhibit on the first floor.

<http://www.brucewatkinscenter.com/>

The Neck Neighborhood Site (McCoy Park)

N. Delaware Street and N. Bess Truman
Parkway
Independence, Missouri

The Neck was the largest African American neighborhood in Independence following the Civil War. Situated between the Truman Library and Independence Square, the neighborhood was considered an “eye sore” and redeveloped as part of an urban renewal project, which forced African American residents from their homes. Snap your photograph at the historic marker located in the sidewalk.

Negro Leagues Baseball Museum \$
1616 E. Eighteenth Street
Kansas City, Missouri
888-221-1920

The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum tells the story of African American baseball, including the Kansas City Monarchs. Snap your photograph in front of the Museum.

<https://nlbm.com/>

Paseo YMCA / Buck O’Neil Education Center
1822 Paseo
Kansas City, Missouri

The Paseo YMCA – future home of the Buck O’Neil Education Center – served Kansas City’s African American community for decades. The Negro Leagues were founded at the Paseo YMCA in 1920. Snap your photograph at the mural of Buck O’Neil.

Spirit of Freedom Fountain
4700 Cleveland Avenue
Kansas City, Missouri

The Spirit of Freedom Foundation, organized by Bruce R. Watkins in 1977, created the Spirit of Freedom Fountain to commemorate the achievements of Kansas City’s Black citizens. Sculpted by Richard Hunt, the Fountain was dedicated in 1981, a year after Watkins’ death. Snap your photograph at the Spirit of Freedom Fountain.

Jasper County

All the Hands Who Build
E. Broadway and S. Mineral Avenue

Joplin, Missouri

All the Hands Who Build, painted by Kyle McKenzie, celebrates the rich African American culture of Joplin. Snap your photograph at the mural.

Johnson County

Blind Boone Statue and Park
402 Pine Street
Warrensburg, Missouri

John William “Blind” Boone grew up in Warrensburg, where a park and statue honoring him can be found. Snap your photograph at the “Blind” Boone statue.

Lewis County

Lincoln School
S. Fourth Street and Green Street
Canton, Missouri

Built in 1880, Lincoln School served the African American children of Canton until 1955. Snap your photograph in front of the school.

Marion County

Jim’s Journey
509 N. Third Street
Hannibal, Missouri
217-617-1507

Hours by appointment.

Jim’s Journey serves as a memorial to Daniel Quarles, the model for Jim in Twain’s novel The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, as well as a testament to the African American experience in Hannibal and Marion County. Snap your photograph outside the Freedom Center.

<https://jimsjourney.org/>

Mississippi County

Sharecroppers Strike of 1939 Marker
2 miles east of I-57 on Highway 60-62
Charleston, Missouri

To prevent sharecroppers in southeast Missouri – 90% of whom were African American – from directly receiving federal crop assistance, farmers evicted them, leading to camps and protest along Highway 60 and Highway 61. Snap your photograph at the marker at Snow’s Corner.

Newton County

George Washington Carver National Monument

5646 Carver Road
Diamond, Missouri
417-325-4151

George Washington Carver National Monument tells the story of George Washington Carver – scientist, educator and humanitarian – who was born enslaved and spent his childhood on this site. The Monument is the first National Park Service unit dedicated to an African American. Snap your picture at the Carver boyhood statue.

<https://www.nps.gov/gwca/index.htm>

Neosho Colored School (Carver attended school here.)

639 Young Street
Neosho, Missouri

Unable to attend the local school in Diamond, George Washington Carver attended this two-room schoolhouse for African American children in Neosho. Snap your picture at the school.

<https://www.facebook.com/CarverBirthplaceAssociation>

Pettis County

Maple Leaf Club Site

Main Street and Lamine Avenue
Sedalia, Missouri

The Maple Leaf Club was one of several African American clubs in Sedalia where Scott Joplin performed. It is believed that Joplin’s Maple

Leaf Rag was named after the club. Snap your photograph at the marker.

Scott Joplin Mural

Second Street and Ohio Street
Sedalia, Missouri

Visit the Scott Joplin mural by Stanley James Herd and snap your photograph there.

Ralls County

St. Peter’s Catholic Church

14690 Gentry Road
Monroe City, Missouri

Born enslaved in Ralls County, Father Augustus Tolton, the first African American priest in the United States, was baptized at St. Peter’s Catholic Church. Snap your photograph outside the church.

Saint Louis City

Field House Museum \$

634 S. Broadway
St. Louis, Missouri
314-421-4689

Visit the home of Roswell Field, who served as the attorney for Dred and Harriet Scott and their daughters. Snap your photograph at the National Historic Landmark plaque.

<https://fieldhousemuseum.org/>

The Griot Museum of Black History \$

2505 St. Louis Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri
314-241-7057

The Griot Museum of Black History provides an opportunity to explore the rich African American heritage of the St. Louis Metropolitan region. Snap your photograph at Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Founder of Black History Month.

<https://www.thegriotmuseum.com/>

Harris-Stowe State University (Henry Givens, Jr. Administration Building)

3026 Laclede Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri

Harris-Stowe State University is a historically Black university that traces its founding to two institutions: Harris Teachers College, founded in 1857 for white students, and Stowe Teachers College, founded in 1890 for Black students. The two institutions were merged in 1954 following the Brown v. Topeka Board of Education ruling. Snap your photograph at the 160th Anniversary Mural in the Henry Givens, Jr. Administration Building. The building is typically open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing

4500 E. Prairie Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri

In 1855, Mary Meachum, a free woman of color, assisted a small group of enslaved men and women cross the Mississippi River from St. Louis to Illinois and towards freedom. The site commemorates Meachum's actions. Snap your photograph at the mural telling Mary Meachum's story.

The Old Courthouse

11 N. Fourth Street
St. Louis, Missouri
314-655-1600

The Old Courthouse in downtown St. Louis, where slave auctions once occurred, was the site of the first two trials of the consequential Dred Scott case in 1847 and 1850. Snap your photograph near the statue of Dred and Harriet Scott.

National Blues Museum \$

615 Washington Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri
314-925-0016

The National Blues Museum preserves the Blues' historical significance as an African American art form and the foundation of American music while celebrating its impact and the musicians who continue to advance the art form through

live performance. Snap your photo with Mamie Smith and her Jazz Hounds!

<https://nationalbluesmuseum.org/>

Scott Joplin House State Historic Site

2658 Delmar Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri

The Scott Joplin House State Historic Site preserves the home of pianist and composer Scott Joplin, where he resided from 1900-1903 and where he produced some of his most well-known compositions. Snap your photograph in the piano room at the end of the tour.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/scott-joplin-house-state-historic-site>

Saline County

Arrow Rock African American Experience Museum (Brown's Lodge)

608 Morgan Street
Arrow Rock, Missouri

Located in Brown's Lodge, learn about the African American experience in Arrow Rock and wider Saline County. Snap your photograph in front of the building.

<https://www.friendsofarrowrock.org/>

Pennytown Historic Site

Located eight miles southeast of Marshall off of Missouri State Highway UU
Marshall, Missouri

Formerly enslaved, Joe Penny purchased eight acres of land in 1871, which formed the foundation of Pennytown, an all-Black town south of Marshall. The Pennytown Free Will Baptist Church is the only remaining structure from the town. Snap your photograph at the church.

Sappington African American Cemetery

Located on Route AA, one-quarter mile south of Sappington Cemetery
Arrow Rock, Missouri

Prominent physician and businessman John Sappington and his extended family owned a large number of enslaved black men, women,

and children. He set aside this tract of land as a burial ground for them. Snap your photograph at the historic marker.