

NATIONAL HERITAGE SITES RESEARCH COMMITTEE (NHSRC) UPDATE

July 2022

Submitted by Dr. Bettye J. Gardner and Barbara Spencer Dunn

Co-Chairs, NHSRC

Committee Members: Bettye J. Gardner, Co-Chair; Barbara Spencer Dunn, Co-Chair; Co-Chair; Elizabeth Clark-Lewis, Vincent Deforest, John Whittington Franklin, Jarvis Givens, Dale Green, Jim Harper, Ida Jones, Lionel Kimble, Lopez Matthews, Janet Sims-Wood, Gabrielle Tayac, Amber Wiley, Francille Wilson, Ex-Officio: Marvin Dulaney, President, Sylvia Cyrus, Executive Director Note for information: Omar Eaton-Martinez, resigned May 2022

National Heritage Sites Research Committee Update

Principal Investigators have been selected for each of the following projects.

A Historic Context Study of African and African Americans in South Florida [\$129,792]

Met with PIs who provided an update on April 13 and June 17th. The team conducted their first trip to South Florida to begin research of the archives on location. They reported a productive research opportunity and have planned a second visit later in the fall.

Note for information: The Principal Investigators (PI(s)) will “produce an annotated bibliography and comprehensive scope of work that explores the lives of Africans and African Americans in the past 500 years in the region now known as South Florida including its connection to the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world.” The PI team of Drs. Portia Hopkins and Synatra Smith began work on October 1, 2021.

Booker T. Washington National Monument National Register Nomination Update [\$75,000]

Met with the Principal Investigators (PIs), Dr. Arlisha Norwood and Ms. Elvatrice Belsches, on February 28, to solidify the proposed timeline for the project. On June 27, 2022, the PIs provided an extensive update of the ongoing work on this Task Agreement. Their recent work included a tour of the Booker T. Washington Site and engagement with the NPS representatives at the site. The project is scheduled to end in August 2023. Their next check-in will be in September 2022.

Note for information: This project will complete National Register of Historic Places documentation of Booker T. Washington National Monument. This project will update the 1989 National Register of Historic Places Nomination to be consistent with recent determinations of historic significance made by National Park Service (NPS) and the Virginia Department of Historic Resource. The commemorative period significance is defined as the time from Booker T. Washington’s birth in 1856 to his emancipation in 1865. The PI team of Dr. Arlisha Norwood and Ms. Elvatrice Belsches began work on January 10, 2022.

Martin VanBuren Historic Site: A Special History Study of Free and Enslaved Africans at Lindenwald [VanBuren's home in upstate New York [\$85,000]

The PI for this project, Dr. Cheryl Gooch, conducted her first visit to the site and has made significant progress discovering new research that will enhance the final product. The NPS expressed how pleased they are with the progress to date.

Note for information: The primary goal of the project is to produce a Special History Study (SHS) that will provide critical baseline research and historic context for African American history at Lindenwald, the historic home of Martin Van Buren at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site (MAVA), and the broader community of Kinderhook in Columbia County, NY. This project will provide needed historical and ethnohistorical information that will inform an archaeological investigation at the site to kick off the following year. The PI, Dr. Cheryl Renee Gooch, began work on February 1, 2022.

Visual Anthropology of the Statue of Liberty within the African American Community [\$118,300]

Met with the PI, Emma Silverman, on February 9, February 23rd, and April 6 to provide clarity on several elements of the project. The PI hired two assistants for the project by May 2022.

Since the PI is located in California, one of the assistants hired lives directly in New York City to be available to work consistently with the archives at the Statue of Liberty NPS site. The PI had some medical conditions that disrupted her first visit to New York. She is presently planning her first visit in the fall and has kept in direct contact with her assistants who have made significant progress.

Note for information: A historic resource study will be produced that records the historical and contemporary use of the imagery of the Statue of Liberty among African American communities for political, commercial, and other social means. PI, Dr. Emma Silverman's, start date is February 15, 2022.

DeSoto National Monument – Africans in the DeSoto Expedition [\$53,787]

Met with Researcher on the project, David Wheat, on June 15 who provided a very thorough update on the project. David traveled abroad to conduct extensive research on the project. The PI, Jane Landers, is developing the final report from the research provided. We received word that the NPS contact who envisioned this Task Agreement, Stanley Bond, is retiring. We expect introduction to the new NPS contact once the process is completed.

Note for Information: Africans played an important role in the Americas well before 1619. They made significant contributions to each of the 16th Century Spanish incursions and settlements along the U.S. coast and interior. The DeSoto Expedition provides an excellent example of African impacts on these early events. This project proposes to synthesize information specifically on African expedition members, their activities, and incorporate that information into a report that can be used to develop interpretative and educational material on

African participation in the DeSoto Expedition. The PI is Dr. Jane Landers and the Principal Researcher is Dr. David Wheat (Wheat is subcontracting with Michigan State University).

Seneca Quarry Historic Resource Study of the African American History of the Seneca Quarry Stone Cutting Mill [\$69,000]

Met with PIs David Reed and Gina Lewis on February 15 to introduce all aspects of the project and answer questions for the PIs for this Task Agreement. Met with PIs, along with NPS staff on March 3rd, for the kick-off of this project. Additional Zoom and telephone contact with the PIs reports progress being made. An October check-in is planned.

Note for information: This project will compile research and produce a historic resource study of the African American history of the Seneca Quarry Complex. The study will also provide critical information regarding the African American experience and its relation to the Seneca Quarry Cutting Mill, a historic cemetery, and the C&O Canal from the early 19th Century to the present.

Ongoing Projects

Buffalo Soldiers [83,270]

The peer review process for this TA is completed. The peer reviewed final draft document has been submitted for the final review by NPS. A 508 compliance resource has been secured and will complete the 508 compliance process once NPS returns the draft.

Valley Forge [\$106,000]

PI Justin Clements provided an update to the Co-Chairs on June 23, 2022. A significant amount of new research has been obtained by the PI. NPS expressed how pleased they are with the progress being made. An October 20th showcase is being planned. This committee will ensure the EC is alerted—attendance is open to the public.

Note for Information: Produce a historic resource study for African American participation in the Valley Forge Encampment, 1777 – 1778. PI Dr. Justin Clement is currently engaged in the research component of Phase II.

CAWO [Carter Woodson Home] Place-based Curriculum and Kiamsha Peer-to-Peer Historical Youth Scholars Docent Documentary Project [\$164,764]

This project has been a huge success—two summer programs (2020 and 2021) and a 2022 summer field trip with a contingency of 31 (21 youth; 4 Dunbar and three Kiamsha Chaperones; three NPS representatives) was accomplished. ASALH Historians met the youth at each location to further enhance the historical value of the field trip. A trailer to depict the overall program is being produced by an NPS representative and will be premiered at the ASALH Conference in Montgomery.

Note for information: Two meetings were held with the NPS staff to relay National Park Foundation's (NPF) interest in funding a second co-hort for this project. Program Director and Lead Teacher at Dunbar currently designing the additional program for approval. Meeting held to introduce new staff members at NPF to the ASALH/NPS/Kiamsha team.

Acadia – Historic Resource Study of Participants at Acadia Job Corps Center [\$65,000]

PI Laura Miller and NPS representative Angela Sirna, provided a talk on the results of this historic Resource Study of Participants at Acadia Job Corps Center from 1966 – 1969. The talk is entitled: An Island Apart: Job Corps at Acadia National Park, 1966-1969

Use this link to view the talk <https://youtu.be/tVgCQImD4zU>

The talk introduced the publication of the park's latest Historic Resource Study that looks at the history of the Job Corps at Acadia National Park. The Acadia Job Corps Conservation Center was located on McFarland Hill from 1966-1969. During that time, approximately 900 young men aged 16 to 22 passed through the center's doors. They came to Mount Desert Island from all of the United States and territories (including the Virgin Islands!) eager to participate in the new federal education and work force program. The talk provided information about the Job Corps at Acadia and hear the authors share what it was like to do the detective work it takes to research and document and a untold piece of island history.

Note for information: The extension requested by the Park and PI was granted and the article on the project was submitted.

Completed Projects

Carter G. Woodson National Historic Site National Historic Landmark (NHL) Update

[\$46,500]

The revised version of the Carter G. Woodson NHL nomination that incorporates the responses to the NHL has been submitted. Committee's comments were made in a presentation by the PI Dr. Amber Wiley and Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham [President of ASALH at that time] at the October 2021 meeting. The presentation with the revisions will be considered by the National Park System's Advisory Board (NPSAB) at a meeting tentatively scheduled for late March 2022. Once the NPSAB reviews and forwards the nomination to the Secretary of the Interior for approval, NPS will finalize and share with ASALH.

Minority Participants in the Battle of Cowpens [\$65,593]

The Cowpens National Park Task Agreement incorporated the perspectives of under-represented communities and populations in the southern campaign of the American Revolution at the Cowpens National Battlefield.