

RIGHTS
TRAIL

A RISING TIDE

New sites offer travelers
many reasons
to visit the trail

BY ROBIN ROENKER

The U.S. Civil Rights Trail continues to grow. And as it does, its impact grows, too.

With the addition of 13 new attractions in 2022, the trail now includes more than 130 historic destinations across 14 states and the

District of Columbia.

The newest additions to the trail include three sites in Tennessee, one in Missouri, nine in Louisiana and one in Virginia.

As the trail grows, so too does the richness of the history it encapsulates. Here, we celebrate these newest venues to join the trail: places where people and events helped forever shape the fight for civil rights in America.

THE NEGRO LEAGUES BASEBALL MUSEUM IN KANSAS CITY, WHICH HONORS BLACK BASEBALL PLAYERS FROM THE SEGREGATION ERA, IS ONE OF 13 NEW SITES ON THE U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL.

Courtesy MODT



UNSUNG
HEROS

ROBERT B. HAYLING

Born in 1929 in Tallahassee, Florida, Robert B. Hayling was a highly educated man with degrees from Florida A&M University and Meharry Medical School. After a stint in the U.S. Air Force, he opened a successful dental practice in St. Augustine in 1960 and was the first Black dentist in the state elected to the American Dental Association.

The racism Hayling experienced in St. Augustine compelled him to participate in numerous crusades, including participating in sit-ins at white-only establishments, organizing peaceful protest demonstrations, joining the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and NAACP, and speaking out with Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders in and around the area.

Death threats, rejection and retaliation from both whites and Blacks, and other actions could not dissuade Hayling, and his strong convictions earned him the nickname The Father of St. Augustine's Civil Rights Movement. In the process, Hayling dramatically altered the destructive trajectory of racism here and throughout the state of Florida.



AN EXHIBIT OF THE HISTORIC
"I AM A MAN" DEMONSTRATION
IN MEMPHIS

Courtesy TNDDTD

TENNESSEE

Few, if any, states have contributed more to the music history of the United States than Tennessee, thanks to its towering contributions to country, rock, soul and blues, among other genres. Now, with the addition in Tennessee of two music-focused museums to the U.S. Civil Rights Trail, visitors can learn how that rich music history directly shaped the history of the civil rights movement.

Opened in fall 2020 in Nashville just across the street from the Ryman Auditorium, the National Museum of African American Music celebrates African American music across all genres. In doing so, it richly showcases how music formed an energizing soundtrack to the civil rights movement.

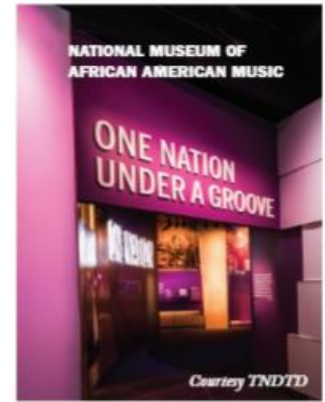
"When you explore the 'One Nation Under a Groove' exhibit in particular, you truly feel how these stirring melodies really inspired the civil rights movement and how those songs evolved with the issues of the day," said Mark Ezell, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and secretary/treasurer of the U.S. Civil Rights Trail Marketing Alliance.

Across the state, in Memphis, the Stax Museum of American Soul Music pays tribute to the array of talented soul and R&B artists who recorded with Stax Records, including Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, and Booker T. and the M.G.'s.

"More than just a label that recorded some of the most indelible, timeless music in history, Stax Records provided a company culture that was inclusive, where people of all races and genders worked together like family at a time of extreme racism and sexism in the United States and particularly in Memphis and the South," said Stax Museum executive director Jeff Kollath.

Also in Memphis, the new I Am a Man Plaza, situated near Clayborn Temple, another U.S. Civil Rights Trail site, commemorates those who participated and rallied in the historic 1968 Memphis sanitation strikes.

TNVACATION.COM



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF
AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC

ONE NATION
UNDER A GROOVE

Courtesy TNDDTD

"Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier... was actually the beginning of the modern-day civil rights movement in this country."

— BOB KENDRICK
NEGRO LEAGUES BASEBALL MUSEUM



STAX MUSEUM
IN MEMPHIS

By Ronate Booz, courtesy TNDDTD



MEMPHIS' LORRAINE
MOTEL

Courtesy TNDDTD

LOUISIANA

Louisiana boasts nine new sites to the U.S. Civil Rights Trail this year, each having played a unique and pivotal role in Louisiana's civil rights story and in the U.S. civil rights story as a whole.

"Before, we had only one location on the national civil rights trail, in New Orleans, and now, with these new sites, Louisiana will be a force on the national trail," said Louisiana Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser in a press interview. "We are proud of these new spots that have been added to the trail here in Louisiana."

In New Orleans, visitors to the civil rights trail can enjoy stops at Canal Street, site of the city's first sit-in at F.W. Woolworth's and a place where for two years activists picketed for equal access to eating and restroom facilities at businesses along the corridor. The city is also home to the Dooky Chase Restaurant, a favorite local gathering point for civil rights activists such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Thurgood Marshall, and McDonogh 19, the elementary school desegregated by three first-graders — Leona Tate, Tessie Prevost and Gail Etienne — November 14, 1960. Known as the McDonogh Three, the girls were escorted to school by U.S. marshals every day, and they were the only students to attend the school for months in the midst of widespread backlash at desegregation.

In Baton Rouge, new civil rights trail sites include a commemorative marker for the Bogalusa to Baton Rouge March, found adjacent to the Louisiana State Capitol, where many civil rights marches ended, and one at the Old



State Capitol in Baton Rouge, a 1953 staging area for free rides to work during the nation's first, large-scale citywide bus boycott. A third marker in Louisiana's capital city can be found at the K.H. Kress Department Store Lunch Counter, the site of historic downtown lunch counter sit-ins.

Another newly added trail site in Louisiana is the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, formerly known as Southwestern Louisiana Institute, which historically enrolled its first Black student in 1954, becoming the first previously all-white undergraduate college in the Deep South to desegregate. In Bogalusa, the Robert "Bob" Hicks House is the site of a family-home-turned-civil-rights-base for officers of the Bogalusa Civic and Voters League and local chapters of the Congress of Racial Equality. And in Alexandria-Pineville, an exhibit at Camp Beauregard spotlights the contributions of an experimental unit of Black soldiers, the so-called Patton's Panthers, who were part of Gen. George Patton's Third Army in World War II.

"The Louisiana Civil Rights Trail marker unveilings are a continuing effort to recognize and bring to life Louisiana's role in the modern civil rights movement," said Nungesser.

Additional historical information about the sites, along with firsthand stories from citizens connected to the history of each venue, is available on the state's civil rights trail website.

LOUISIANACIVILRIGHTSTRAIL.COM



Photos courtesy LA Office of Tourism



Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History.

Housed in a mansion that once was home to the Danville Public Library, the museum tells of the fight for desegregation of the library through "The Movement," a permanent Civil Rights exhibit.

virginia.org/blackhistory



VIRGINIA

History comes full circle at the Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History in Danville, Virginia. Housed in a historic antebellum mansion that once belonged to tobacco tycoon William T. Sutherlin and once hosted Confederate President Jefferson Davis, the site now celebrates African American history in the region.

Exhibits educate visitors on issues including the Danville race riots of 1883, Reconstruction, the Jim Crow Era and the more modern civil rights movement.

One key moment in Danville's modern civil rights history occurred at the property in 1960 when the mansion was serving as an all-white library. Fed up with unequal access to facilities, a group of 16 African American students staged a sit-in in the building to protest segregation.

"This site is specifically valuable to Danville because it's both the site where rights were revoked and the site where, via sit-ins, the beginning of efforts to reestablish them happened," said Elsbeth Dixon, the museum's executive director.

Today, the museum is home to an expansive exhibit called "The Movement," which outlines the Danville civil rights movement and its key events and participants. The museum also includes the "Camilla Williams Collection," an exhibit that celebrates the famed soprano who was born in Danville and became the first African American to sign a contract with a major American opera company.

DANVILLEMUSEUM.ORG



Photos courtesy Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History



MISSOURI

In Kansas City, Missouri, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum celebrates the many talented players of the Negro Leagues while skillfully telling the story of the American civil rights movement through the lens of sports.

"Visitors are sometimes surprised at how closely aligned the story of the Negro Leagues is with the social advancement of our country," said Bob Kendrick, the museum's president. "You come here and meet some of the greatest athletes to ever play the game, but that story is also housed against the backdrop of American segregation."

Exhibits spotlight talented, trailblazing players like Jackie Robinson, whose integration into major league baseball in 1947 predated the desegregation of the military by one year and the U.S. Supreme Court decision on school desegregation by seven.

"The museum makes the bold assertion that Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier wasn't just a part of the civil rights movement, that it was actually the beginning of the modern-day civil rights movement in this country," Kendrick said. "This was 1947. This is before Brown v. Board of Education. This was before Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was merely a sophomore at Morehouse College when Robinson signed his contract to play in the Dodgers organization."

Through in-depth exhibits that celebrate the game and its talented African American players, the museum also tells a deeper story about American history. Various galleries spotlight early, 19th-century pioneers of the game, as well as contributions of both its well-known and lesser-known 20th-century talents.

"We're about more than just a baseball story," Kendrick said. "People come here and see how what was happening on the field and with the teams echoed what was happening in America as a whole."

NLBM.COM

BUCK O'NEIL TRIBUTE PARK AT THE NEGRO LEAGUES BASEBALL MUSEUM



Courtesy MDOT