

GSU WORLD HERITAGE INITIATIVE ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Activities

In its first full year of operation, the Georgia State University World Heritage Initiative accomplished several key objectives.

Using historic sites identified by the National Park Service in its three studies published under the overall title of *Civil Rights in America*, as well as listings on the National Register of Historic Places and recommendations by more than 100 movement scholars and historic preservationists, the project director and manager compiled a list of more than 150 places associated with the Modern Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s for further consideration as part of a Serial Nomination of U.S. Civil Rights Sites being considered for inscription on the World Heritage List.

In April 2017 Georgia State University hosted the *World Heritage and U.S. Civil Rights Sites Symposium* at which more than 100 scholars, preservationists, historic property owners and stakeholders gathered to discuss the Initiative. Attendees participated in eight plenary sessions and several breakout discussions, affording movement site representatives their first real chance to network. Lee Sentell and Ed Hall of Alabama Tourism announced the U.S. Civil Rights Trail.

By the end of 2017, scholars had begun to frame a draft of a statement of Outstanding Universal Value that attempts to justify inscription of a preliminary group of about a dozen sites under World Heritage Criteria II, III, and VI.

Over the year Project Manager Anne Farrisee gathered and analyzed data on numerous sites under consideration. Nine graduate research assistants, eight of which were provided by Georgia State University, worked to further develop the materials for the three sites already listed on the World Heritage List - Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Bethel Baptist and Sixteenth Street Baptist Churches in Birmingham – and for several properties identified as suitable for the Serial Nomination by US/ICOMOS in its Gap Study.



Participants at the April 2017 World Heritage and U.S. Civil Rights Sites Symposium at Georgia State University.

Travel

Initial visits to the Tentative List properties and other recommended historic places associated with the movement that might make the Serial Nomination or that could serve as comparable sites resulted in members of the World Heritage Team traveling 12,000 domestic miles in 2017. Project Director Glenn Eskew, Farrisee and GSU Heritage Preservation Program Director



At Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery: Front row – Wanda Battle, tour guide; Anne Farrisee, GSU WH Project Manager. Back row – Rev. Cromwell Handy, pastor; Collier Neeley, AL Historical Commission; Richard Laub, GSU Heritage Preservation Program Director; Glenn Eskew, GSU WH Project Director.

Richard Laub drove across 13 states and stopped in dozens of towns checking out nearly half of the movement-related properties recommended by the NPS studies, scholars and preservationists. In July Eskew clocked in an additional 11,000 international miles to attend the 41st Session of the World Heritage Committee convened in Krakow, Poland. There he witnessed the formal process whereby a nomination is publicly evaluated for inscription. While abroad he toured other World Heritage Sites including Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

On several occasions Eskew and Farrisee made presentations on the Initiative including participation in the US/ICOMOS Leadership Forum in Washington, D. C. and at the State of Georgia Historic Preservation Conference. The

GSU Team also attended the PastForward Conference of the National Trust and met with preservationists and representatives developing other World Heritage nominations. Eskew met with some of the scholars at the Southern Historical Association in Dallas and participated in the NPS Foundational Workshop for the new Birmingham Civil Rights National Park.

Additional Funding

The World Heritage Team submitted two major grant applications over the course of 2017. The first, to the National Trust for Historic Preservation Fund, resulted in a grant of \$5,000 for community outreach. The second, a NPS Civil Rights Grant to offset the expense of additional site visits, has yet to be determined. A \$3,000 GSU Conference Grant and a \$1,250 donation by New South Associates subsidized the Symposium. The GSU Center for Neighborhood and Metropolitan Studies contributed funding for the Symposium and research, and the GSU Heritage Preservation Program contributed to travel costs.

Building Support

To build support for the Initiative, the GSU World Heritage Team developed a website (worldheritage.gsu.edu) that contains information about the project as well as an archive of other relevant material. Press releases in the form of 24 Eblasts have been issued approximately every two weeks to a list that began with 84 addresses but by year end, grew to 291 people. The World Heritage team also reached out to Rev. Bernice King, Congressman John Lewis, former Ambassador Andrew Young and others to build support for the Serial Nomination.