Formers' Corner

Blythe Semmer is a training specialist in the Office of Federal Agency Programs at the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C., where she works with federal preservation policy and program improvement activities. She earned her M.A. in History, with an emphasis in Public History, from MTSU in 1998.

Click on the photo or click here for Blythe's video. This video is best viewed in Quick Time. (In other applications, it may play horizontally.)

Scholars

The Memphis Massacre Symposium

Last spring, the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (TCWNHA) provided major support for "Memories of a Massacre: Memphis in 1866, a Symposium Exploring Slavery, Emancipation, and Reconstruction." The free event took place at the University of Memphis and was organized by Dr. Beverly Bond and Dr. Susan O’Donovan.

The symposium was the highlight of the first-ever public recognition of the effects of the racially motivated violence that engulfed Memphis 150 years ago. Symposium speakers included Timothy S. Huebner and Charles McKinney of Rhodes College, Stephen V. Ash of the University of Tennessee, and Julie Saville of the University of Chicago. CHP assistant director Antoinette G. van Zelm moderated the “Radicalization of Reconstruction” panel.

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The symposium encouraged significant public engagement and featured lively Q&A sessions. Related activities included a teacher workshop led by Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU and an exhibition at the Orange Mound Gallery that combined the TCWNHA's traveling exhibition on Emancipation and Reconstruction with an artistic interpretation by Paul Thomas. The Memphis Massacre blog features video footage from the symposium, and the @MemphisMassacre Twitter account remains active.--Antoinette van Zelm, assistant director.

**Partners**

**Northeast Nashville History Project**

The Northeast Nashville History project, a partnership between the Center for Historic Preservation, First Baptist Church East Nashville (FBCEN), and the Nashville Public Library’s Special Collections Division, was awarded a $2500 grant by the National Humanities Alliance (NHA) in early July. Grant funding will extend the Spring 2016 community history digitizing project carried out by CHP staff and graduate students to include public programs during the Fall of 2016 that will focus on the neighborhood’s historic housing patterns, continuing gentrification, and past history of civil rights activism. Featured speakers will include MTSU history professors Dr. Louis Woods and Dr. Louis Kyriakoudes.

In late 2015, CHP director Dr. Carroll Van West was invited to assist the Metropolitan Nashville Historical Commission in assessing historic properties north of East Nashville’s fast-developing Main Street corridor. Dr. West and CHP graduate assistant Denise Gallagher Fisher, who has been researching the African American history of this section of the city for her M.A. thesis, created a driving tour brochure, Places, Spaces, and Voices, to capture important community landmarks. (Download the brochure here: Side A and Side B.) Community members Sam McCullough and Leslie Boone worked with Gallagher Fisher to organize several history days with community elders. Digital humanities fellow Susan Knowles, graduate assistant Sherry Teal, and a team of MTSU graduate student volunteers welcomed participants to share historic materials in digital form with the Special Collections Division of the Nashville Public Library. The NHA grant funding will support the creation of promotional resources, such as reprints of the brochure, production of historical graphics, and social media tools. --Susan Knowles, digital humanities fellow.

**Leaders**

**Juneteenth at McLemore House**

On Saturday, June 18, the African American Heritage Society hosted its 12th annual...
Juneteenth celebration at the McLemore House Museum in Franklin.

Juneteenth, a celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, dates back to the end of the Civil War. Upon his arrival in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, U.S. Gen. Gordon Granger issued General Order #3 proclaiming that all enslaved people were now free. Despite continued violence and hardship following the order (more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation!), newly freed citizens set aside that date for annual celebrations of freedom, which later spread to other states.

On a beautiful afternoon, a large crowd of residents and visitors gathered under the McLemore House’s shady trees to enjoy the day’s events. The celebration included musical performances, opportunities to learn more about healthy living, face painting, food trucks, games, and a cakewalk with cakes donated from local organizations, including the Governor’s office. The crowd included multiple generations, providing a great opportunity for children to learn firsthand about the challenges and triumphs their ancestors experienced during the ongoing freedom struggle.

Between musical performances, attendees shared powerful stories about their own lives and experiences during and after the Civil Rights movement. The McLemore House Museum opened for free tours, and visitors were able to view “Harvey McLemore: A Journey From Slavery to Freedom,” the museum’s new exhibit sponsored by the TCWNHA.

Every year, the Juneteenth celebration grows in scope and attendance as organizers strive to share Franklin’s rich African American heritage with residents and visitors. To learn more, visit the McLemore House Museum located at 446 11th Avenue North. --Laura Holder, TCWNHA federal liaison.

Upcoming

October 3-31: Traveling Exhibition from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, Emancipation and Its Legacies, the Heritage Center of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County, Murfreesboro.

2016 Anniversary Events (celebrating the 20th year of the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, the 50th year of the National Historic Preservation Act, and the 100th year of the National Park Service):

Nov. 9: Heritage Center of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County (5:30-7:00 p.m.)
Nov. 10: Glen Leven, Nashville (12:30-2:00 p.m.)
Nov. 11: Location to be Determined, Franklin (12:30-2:00 p.m.)
Nov. 14: East Tennessee History Center, Knoxville (12:30-2:00 p.m.)

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Nov. 18: Parker's Crossroads Visitor Center, Parker's Crossroads (12:30-2:00 p.m.)