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State Historic Preservation Office Seeks Information About African American Historic Sites in Idaho

Call Out Part of an Initiative to Illuminate Idaho's Diverse Cultural History

(Boise, Idaho) – The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a division of the Idaho State Historical Society, is crowd sourcing information to help learn more about unique and significant sites in Idaho associated with African American history.

Black Americans have been part of Idaho's story since York, an enslaved man, was compelled to accompany Lewis and Clark on their epic expedition across the West and through present-day Idaho.

Historic places associated with Black Idahoans can be difficult to identify. Institutional racism, exclusionary history, and a historically small percentage of African Americans in the state means the physical imprint of their contributions is underrepresented in architectural and archaeological site records, said Dan Everhart, Outreach Historian with the SHPO. It also means that many of their stories remain untold, he said. Through this initiative, the SHPO will add information received from the public into its historic sites database, a repository of historic places in Idaho.

Over the past two years, the SHPO has worked to make this hidden history more visible. A statewide historic context of African American Civil Rights in Idaho has helped identify previously undocumented sites across the state: ([https://history.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/African American Civil Rights in Idaho MPD DRAFT.pdf](https://history.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/African-American-Civil-Rights-in-Idaho-MPD-DRAFT.pdf)).

"With help from the community, we (SHPO) will continue to illuminate Idaho's African American history through crowd-sourced stories, further diversifying Idaho's historic record," Everhart said.

The request to the public is simple: Share with SHPO any knowledge of places associated with African American history in Idaho. This includes buildings and archaeological sites, civil rights related, or simply part of Idaho's Black history. Follow this link to share what you know: <https://forms.microsoft.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Y3o7xW4tlk2HyZ9YP20cgZ9Sdy>

cjOEZivKMf8Q0f7fJURE1SUIkzTzRCVFIQMzdPR0VYMVJJVDVXVy4u. You can also contact Outreach Historian Dan Everhart at (208) 488-7461 or dan.everhart@ishs.idaho.gov.

With your help, SHPO can document these places and begin to tell the story of African Americans in Idaho more widely, and with more context and authority.

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The Idaho State Historical Society is an extraordinary system of cultural and historic resources comprised of the Idaho State Museum, State Archives, State Historic Preservation Office, and Old Idaho Penitentiary and Historic Sites Program. Our vision is to make history essential and accessible through dynamic and gratifying services that inspire, enrich, and engage all Idahoans. Learn more at www.history.idaho.gov