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A Guide to Greater Philadelphia's Black History Month Events and African American Cultural and Historic Sites

A citywide exploration of events, museums, landmarks, churches, galleries, memorials and tours.

PHILADELPHIA, February 20, 2024 – Philadelphia history is African American history, dating back to the first ships carrying enslaved peoples to Pennsylvania and the Revolutionary War through abolition, civil rights and into modern day.

The region is home to the founding church of the African Methodist Episcopal denomination (Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church), the country's first major museum devoted to Black American history (The African American Museum in Philadelphia) and many former stops along the Underground Railroad.

Historic sites like Cliveden, Stenton and The President's House as well as dedicated institutions like The Colored Girls Museum, Aces Veterans Museum and Lest We Forget Museum of Slavery tell of the successes, struggles and contributions of African Americans through the centuries.

And numerous monuments to Black figures dot Philadelphia, including the All Wars Memorial to Colored Soldiers and Sailors, the Negro Leagues Memorial and the city's first public statue representing an African American, the Octavius V. Catto Memorial which depicts the bravery of the 19th-century Civil Rights advocate.

To help inform your coverage throughout Black History Month, we've assembled the below guide to the plethora of local museums, landmarks, churches, memorials and walking tours that reflect on both origins in the African continent and history on the American continent through a host of educational and cultural opportunities.

We've also included details on some of the Black History Month events taking place in the weeks ahead.

Historic Sites

[Cliveden](#)

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Cliveden, 6401 Germantown Avenue

At Cliveden, tours and artifacts uncover details about life on Northern plantations, efforts to escape enslavement and the legal maneuverings of one of the North's largest owners of enslaved people to run a plantation in abolitionist Philadelphia. Among major research projects highlighted at the museum (and online) is the Illuminating Hidden Lives: Black Stories of the Mid-Atlantic Region project, seeking to make documents relating to enslaved and free African American people represented in the Chew Family Papers accessible.

[The Concord School House and Upper Burying Ground of Germantown](#)

The Concord School House and Upper Burying Ground of Germantown, 6309 Germantown Avenue

Located in Germantown, the Concord School House and Upper Burying Ground features an intact schoolroom from 1775 and one of the oldest cemeteries in Philadelphia, dating back to 1693. Inside the school site, visitors can view the original desks used by Black students and abolitionists in the 1850s. The site is open to the public on the second Saturday of each month July through October and other times by appointment. Entry is free with a suggested donation.

[The Divine Lorraine Hotel](#)

The Divine Lorraine Hotel, 699 N. Broad Street

Built in 1892, the original Lorraine Hotel opened its doors in 1900 (at 10 stories tall, one of the city's first high-rises) as luxury apartments for Philadelphia's wealthy residents. In 1948, the North Broad building was sold to Father Reverend Major Jealous Divine, who reopened it as The Divine Lorraine Hotel, the first residential hotel in the nation to be fully racially integrated — as long as residents followed Father Divine's rules against smoking, drinking, profanity and fraternization. The building sat abandoned for 15 years before being redeveloped first as rental units and now again as a luxury hotel.

[Historic Eden Cemetery](#)

Historic Eden Cemetery, 1434 Springfield Road, Darby

The Historic Eden Cemetery in suburban Delaware County, established in 1902, operates as the oldest Black-owned cemetery in the nation still in use, and a monument to the Civil Rights Movement and Philadelphia's 7th Ward. As cemeteries across Philadelphia were condemned at the start of the century, the 53-acre site became a "collection cemetery" where the gravesites of Black Philadelphians — some dating back to the 1720s — were permanently relocated. Among the 93,000 African Americans interred at Eden include important figures like Julian Abele, Marian Anderson, Octavius V. Catto, James Forten, Absalom Jones and William Still.

[Historic Fair Hill](#)

Historic Fair Hill, 5501 Germantown Avenue

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A Quaker burial ground built in 1703, Historic Fair Hill is the final resting place of many prominent abolitionists and activists, including Lucretia Mott, Robert Purvis and several Black leaders of the Underground Railroad. Today, the North Philadelphia site — originally deeded to English Quakerism founder George Fox by William Penn — also operates as an environmental education center with programming in early literacy, community building, advocacy-based history and urban greening. Also on-site: several murals, including The Underground Railroad, which depicts Purvis, Mott, Box Brown, William Still and other key local anti-slavery figures.

[The Johnson House Historic Site](#)

The Johnson House Historic Site, 6306 Germantown Avenue

A crucial part of the Colonial Germantown Historic District, The Johnson House Historic Site attained a National Historic Landmark designation for its key role in the Underground Railroad. Tours, displays and artifacts offer visitors an opportunity to learn about the injustices of slavery and the 19th-century resident Johnson family — five siblings (and their spouses) from a Quaker abolitionist family — who participated in the Underground Railroad and risked their lives offering refuge to freedom seekers. Among the freedom fighters who stayed at the house include William Still and (according to family lore) Harriet Tubman.

[Liberty Bell Center](#)

Liberty Bell Center, 526 Market Street

The Liberty Bell Center — home to the Liberty Bell and its dedicated museum since 2003 — invites visitors to learn about the connection between the bell and African American history. Videos and interactive displays explain how the abolitionist movement adopted the object as a symbol of freedom based on its inscribed quote from Leviticus, “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.” Beginning in the late 1800s, the bell traveled around the country to expositions to help heal the divisions of the Civil War, reminding Americans of earlier days when the nation came together to fight for independence.

[The President’s House: Freedom and Slavery in the Making of a New Nation](#)

The President's House, 530 Market Street

This free open-air exhibit located next to the Liberty Bell Center centers on viewable structural fragments of the nation’s first Executive Mansion where Presidents Washington and Adams resided during their terms, and where nine enslaved African people were indentured — including Ona Judge, who escaped to freedom despite Washington’s efforts to capture her. At the Independence National Historical Park site, visitors can explore the paradox of slavery and freedom and the events that transpired through illustrated glass panels and video reenactments.

[Stenton](#)

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Stenton, 4601 N. 18th Street

James Logan's storied career included serving as secretary to William Penn, mentor to Benjamin Franklin and mayor of Philadelphia. (Hence his namesake Logan Square in Center City.) Logan's former plantation, known as Stenton, is a surviving example of early Georgian-style architecture and now serves as a museum featuring exquisite woodwork, preserved details and Logan's 2,700-volume library used for research by revolutionaries like Franklin and John Bartram. Situated on three of the original 500 acres in Germantown, the site once housed enslaved people, including housekeeper Dinah, who reportedly saved the mansion from being burned during the Revolutionary War.

[Underground Railroad Sites in Bucks County](#)

Various locations including Newtown Theatre, 120 N. State Street, Newtown

Located just northeast of Philadelphia, Bucks County is home to a number of significant sites, stops and locations along the Underground Railroad. Towns like Yardley, Bristol, Newtown, New Hope and Doylestown feature churches, farms, taverns and more where enslaved people were hidden and aided on their journey north, per this detailed guide to Underground Railroad Sites in Bucks County from our colleagues at Visit Bucks County. A convenient self-guided driving tour map is available on Google Maps.

[Washington Square](#)

Washington Square, 210 W. Washington Square

Six-and-a-half acre Washington Square, one of city planner William Penn's five original square parks, was once known as Congo Square. A wayside in the city-block park describes activities occurring on the site three centuries ago where both free and enslaved Africans, up to a thousand at a time, gathered during holidays and fairs to celebrate traditions of their homelands. The square also served as a burial ground (known at the time as a potter's field) for the city's early Black population, including many victims of the 1793 Yellow Fever epidemic.

[Valley Forge National Historical Park](#)

Valley Forge National Historical Park, 1400 N. Outer Line Drive, King of Prussia

World-famous Valley Forge National Historical Park in present-day Montgomery County tells the well-known story of the winter 1777-1778 encampment of Washington's Continental Army, a fighting force that included many African American soldiers and brigades. The park is also home to the Patriots of African Descent Monument which honors those of African descent who served during the Army's Valley Forge encampment.

Museums

[Aces Veterans Museum](#)

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Aces Veterans Museum, 5801 Germantown Avenue

Located inside historic Parker Hall, a restored World War II USO site for African American soldiers and their families, Aces Veterans Museum honors Black and minority veterans. Organized under the motto “Every Day is Veterans Day,” the Germantown museum features exhibits and memorabilia committed to supporting, educating, serving and celebrating the often-overlooked contributions of minority veterans, including the African American Veterans exhibit featuring a curated collection of artifacts and captivating photographs from the Second World War.

[The African American Museum in Philadelphia](#)

The African American Museum in Philadelphia, 701 Arch Street

The African American Museum in Philadelphia (AAMP), founded in 1976, was the first institution built by a major U.S. city to preserve, interpret and exhibit the heritage and culture of African Americans. A singular highlight at AAMP is the permanent exhibit Audacious Freedom: African Americans in Philadelphia 1776-1876 which takes a fresh and bold look at the stories of people of African descent in America and their unheralded impact in the founding of the nation. Other exhibitions and programs reveal the history, stories and cultures of heroes and figures across the nation and throughout the African diaspora.

[The Colored Girls Museum](#)

The Colored Girls Museum, 4613 Newhall Street

Historic, residential Germantown is home to the comfortable dwelling of Vashti DuBois, who built her lived-in “memoir museum” to be “equal parts research facility, exhibition space, gathering place and think tank.” Inspired by and dedicated to Black girls and women, the space’s displays don’t always contain historic artifacts, but they always are true to history.

[Kennett Underground Railroad Center](#)

Kennett Underground Railroad Center, 120 N. Union Street, Kennett Square

Open each Saturday afternoon, this small museum in Chester County’s Kennett Underground Railroad Center highlights events in the struggle for the abolition of slavery through a timeline of national and local heroes, figures and activities in the abolitionist movement to end slavery, including a large interactive display board. Guide-led bus tours of key area sites related to the Underground Railroad are also available.

[Lest We Forget Museum of Slavery](#)

Lest We Forget Museum of Slavery, 5501 Germantown Avenue

The Lest We Forget Museum of Slavery (LWFSM), founded in 2002, is the only museum of its kind in Philadelphia, displaying thousands of “slavery artifacts” — including shackles, chains, whips, coffles and

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branding irons — which restrained, confined and often killed the enslaved Africans who were forced to wear them. The Germantown institution also features ship manifests, auction signs, sales, documents and Jim Crow objects that segregated and stereotyped African Americans. The LWFSM is open for tours by appointment.

[Museum of the American Revolution](#)

Museum of the American Revolution, 101 S. 3rd Street

Telling the story of the Revolutionary War through personal accounts, the Museum of the American Revolution includes several exhibits and artifacts documenting the African American experience during the tumultuous time in early America. Exhibit subjects include Black Loyalist soldiers, Africans enslaved in Virginia, George Washington's enslaved valet William Lee, 14-year-old James Forten who volunteered aboard a privateer ship and Phillis Wheatley, America's first published Black female poet.

[National Constitution Center](#)

National Constitution Center, 525 Arch Street

At the National Constitution Center (NCC), artifacts and exhibits illustrate important Constitutional moments in the struggle for equality for African Americans, including pivotal Supreme Court cases and the fight for amendments establishing rights for all. The museum displays a rare copy of the Emancipation Proclamation signed by President Lincoln and the original signed copy of President Obama's A More Perfect Union speech (delivered in 2008 at the NCC), as well as the permanent Civil War and Reconstruction: The Battle for Freedom and Equality exhibition, the first in the nation to explore the amendments that ended slavery.

[National Liberty Museum](#)

National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut Street

The National Liberty Museum presents the enduring story of liberty, both in history and today. The Heroes from Around the World gallery spotlights notable people from all walks of life and time periods who protected and advanced freedom, including well-known figures such as Nelson Mandela and everyday heroes such as Gail Gibson, a New Orleans nurse whose bravery helped save lives during Hurricane Katrina. The Live Like a Hero gallery showcases teachers, students, police officers, firefighters and other ordinary citizens who use their voices and talents to advocate for positive change.

[The National Marian Anderson Museum](#)

The National Marian Anderson Museum, 762 Martin Street

An understated facade fronts the three-story former home of opera singer, humanitarian and Civil Rights icon Marian Anderson in the Graduate Hospital neighborhood. The National Marian Anderson Museum celebrates the life and work of the contralto, the first African American to perform at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Anderson is best remembered for her 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial —

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singing outdoors to 75,000 attendees because Constitution Hall refused to allow her to perform indoors — but she first honed her talents before parishioners at Union Baptist Church just across the street from the museum.

[Paul Robeson House and Museum](#)

Paul Robeson House, 4951 Walnut Street

West Philadelphia's Paul Robeson House served as the residence of the esteemed human rights activist, scholar, attorney, stage and film actor, professional football player and bass-baritone singer during the last decade of his life. Tours (offered Thursdays through Saturdays by appointment only) give visitors a chance to hear songs he recorded over his lifetime, learn about Robeson's politics and activism and explore his life of accomplishments, including his family's 18th-century roots in Philadelphia and the time he spent in the city up to his passing in 1976.

[Philadelphia Museum of Art and Parkway Central Library](#)

Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway

Julian Abele, the first African American to graduate from the University of Pennsylvania with a bachelor's degree in architecture, played a key role in designing two of Philly's most iconic buildings: the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Free Library of Philadelphia's Parkway Central Library branch, both located on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. The Philadelphia-born architect designed the famed Beaux-Arts look of the library's main building which opened in 1927, and created the exterior terracing of the art museum, including its world-renowned front steps made famous in the 1976 film *Rocky*.

[Tides of Freedom: African Presence on the Delaware River at the Independence Seaport Museum](#)

Independence Seaport Museum, 211 S. Christopher Columbus Boulevard

Guest-curated by University of Pennsylvania professor Tukufu Zuberi, the Tides of Freedom: African Presence on the Delaware River exhibit at the waterfront's Independence Seaport Museum uses the river as a backdrop to exploring the African experience in Philadelphia from the city's founding through today. The 300-year-old story tells of Middle Passage, enslavement, emancipation, Jim Crow and Civil Rights through compelling first-person accounts and artifacts from the museum's collection, including an original ledger containing dozens of entries detailing sales of enslaved Africans in 1760s Philadelphia.

[Underground Railroad Museum at Belmont Mansion](#)

Belmont Mansion, 2000 Belmont Mansion Drive

Home of abolitionist judge Richard Peters, opponent to the Fugitive Slave Act and precedent-setting judicial decision-maker, Belmont Mansion been preserved and transformed into Fairmount Park's Underground Railroad Museum. Visitors can view historical artifacts and hear narratives about the site's history, including that of Cornelia Wells, a free African American woman who lived there. The museum is open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and reservations are recommended.

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Tours

[7th Ward Tribute Walking Tour](#)

Guided and self-guided tour

Route starts at Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church, 419 S. 6th Street

The art and history experience Legacy Reclaimed: A 7th Ward Tribute honors the lives — and lesser-known history — of 19th-century Black residents of Philadelphia's old 7th Ward, an important part of the Underground Railroad and Great Migration, and former home to 15,000 Black residents including Octavius V. Catto and W. E. B. Du Bois. As part of the event, a 90-minute guided 7th Ward Tribute Walking Tour takes you to nearly a dozen sites, including new art installations and several homes and businesses. Tours leave from Mother Bethel AME Church Fellowship Hall at 11 a.m. The guided tours run through February 23, 2024, but if you miss them, you can still explore using a self-guided map.

[Black History on South Street: A Self-Guided Tour](#)

Self-guided tour

Various locations including Engine 11 Philadelphia Fire Department, 601 South Street

The South Street district might be where the hippest meet and the dancin' is elite, but there is also a bevy of important Black history. Black History on South Street: A Self-Guided Tour, from the South Street Headhouse District business organization, features both stops at historic sites from long ago like the all-Black Engine #11 fire station and Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church and more modern important locations like the Avenue of The Roots, murals honoring skateboarder Roger Browne and the Black women of the Philly AIDS Thrift Shop and spots seen in the Boyz II Men Motownphilly music video.

[The Black Journey: Original Black History Tour of Old City](#)

Professionally-guided tour

Tours start at Independence Visitor Center, 599 Market Street

Black Americans' role in the nation's founding often goes undiscussed. But The Black Journey: Original Black History Tour of Old City journeys past sites like the Liberty Bell to walk in the footsteps of early African Americans, enslaved people, slave-owners and abolitionists. The tour visits historic places like Congo Square (now Washington Square), old London Coffee Shop where enslaved people were inspected and sold, the former Philadelphia Prison site, Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church and more. Tours meet in front of Independence Visitor Center every Saturday at 2 p.m. (advance reservations required).

[The Black Journey: Seventh Ward Tour](#)

Professionally-guided tour

Tours start at Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church, 419 S. 6th Street

The Black Journey: Seventh Ward Tour travels down the streets that were home to one in three 19th-century Black Philadelphians under the direction of an in-person guide. Tours meet in front of

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Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church every Sunday at 2 p.m. and explore sites in the neighborhood that was Philadelphia's early epicenter of Black culture. See where W. E. B. Du Bois penned *The Philadelphia Negro* in 1899 and visit African American schools, churches, institutions, buildings and homes of residents, abolitionists, educators and Civil Rights activists (advance reservations required).

[Kennett Underground Railroad Center Tours](#)

Professionally-guided tour

Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center, 300 Greenwood Road, Kennett Square

The Kennett Underground Railroad Center offers two hour-plus-long guide-led bus tours, visiting documented Underground Railroad sites, historic homes of local abolitionists and Quaker Meetinghouses where African Americans connected with their faith communities throughout the Kennett Square area. Tours run March through October on the third Sunday of each month at 1 p.m., departing from the Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center.

[Once Upon A Nation Storytelling Benches](#)

Various locations including Independence Square, 111 S. Independence Mall West

Family-friendly Once Upon A Nation Storytelling Benches feature free true tales spun by professional (and often costumed) speakers at locations around Philadelphia's Historic District. Told in just three to five minutes each, the stories recount details about some of our nation's earliest citizens, well- and not-so-well-known, who shaped America's history including Frederick Douglass, Ona Judge (an enslaved woman who escaped George Washington's Philadelphia home) and Caroline LeCount, who successfully won the right for all people to ride in Philadelphia's streetcars. Benches are open on select days Memorial Day through Labor Day.

[Philadelphia Historic African American Tours](#)

Step-on tour

Pick up at Independence Visitor Center, 599 Market Street

Guide Charlene Palmore-Lewis' step-on Philadelphia Historic African American Tours take groups on a two- to two-and-a-half hour excursion around some of Philadelphia's most important sites, focusing in on the African American figures and stories key to each. The tour, customized to each group, visits locations like the Liberty Bell, President's House, Philadelphia Museum of Art (and Julian Abele's Rocky Steps), The African American Museum, Marian Anderson Residence, stops along The Underground Railroad, and even the legendary studios of Gamble and Huff.

[The Philadelphia Inquirer Anti-Slavery Walking Tours](#)

Self-guided tour

Various locations including Johnson House Historic Site, 6306 Germantown Avenue

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Early Philadelphians were heavily involved in the abolitionist movement, and the path of the Underground Railroad passed through the city helping enslaved people find freedom here or onward north into Canada. Two free self-guided Philadelphia Inquirer Anti-Slavery Walking Tours — one through Old City and Society Hill and another around Northwest Philadelphia — guide visitors to anti-slavery landmarks like the Henry Minton House, where Frederick Douglass attended meetings and John Brown is said have stayed on his way to raid Harpers Ferry, and Germantown's Johnson House Historic Site which served as an Underground Railroad stop and legend says hosted Harriet Tubman.

[The Philadelphia Inquirer Black History Historical Marker Tour](#)

Self-guided tour

Various locations including Paul Robeson House & Museum, 4951 Walnut Street

Philadelphia's history is rich with important moments involving the Black community, but many aren't tied to a specific museum or attraction. Instead, they are memorialized by permanent historical markers which help preserve these legacies around the city. This self-guided Philadelphia Inquirer Black History Historical Marker Tour map helps lead you through the city and learn more about figures like 19th- and 20th-century painter Henry Ossawa Tanner, a young Wilt Chamberlain and the Christian Street YMCA where got his start and Laura Wheeler Waring who painted portraits of W. E. B. Du Bois and Marian Anderson.

Churches

[African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas](#)

African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, 6361 Lancaster Avenue

In 1792, Bishop Absalom Jones founded African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, the nation's first Black Episcopal church (near what is now Washington Square), with a congregation made up of members of the Free African Society, also founded by Jones. Today, the church's traditions of outreach and spirited worship continue in West Philadelphia's Overbrook Farms neighborhood. Tours of the historic building and its archival collection are available with advance request. Bonus fact: Bishop Jones was a direct ancestor of architect Julian Abele, a key designer of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Parkway Central Library.

[Arch Street Friends Meeting House](#)

Arch Street Friends Meeting House, 320 Arch Street

The historic Arch Street Friends Meeting House and Burial Ground in Old City, founded in 1682, was deeded to the Society of Friends by Quaker William Penn, and its congregation featured several outspoken abolitionists. In 1779, the Quakers who worshipped at the society voted to expel any member who refused to free his slaves.

[Christ Church](#)

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Christ Church, 20 N. American Street

The vaunted, circa-1744 house of worship known as Christ Church — where Benjamin Franklin, George Washington and Betsy Ross were congregants — is a significant site in the history of slavery and abolition in Philadelphia. Over its early history, the church ordained Absalom Jones (founder of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, see above) as the nation's first African American Episcopalian priest, baptized a quarter of free and enslaved Africans in Philadelphia, helped establish a permanent school for enslaved children, and was a key site where enslaved Philadelphians were able to receive baptisms, hold weddings and attend funerals.

[Historic St. George's United Methodist Church](#)

Historic St. George's United Methodist Church, 235 N. 4th Street

The Historic St. George's United Methodist Church, the oldest Methodist church in continuous use in the nation dating back to 1769, welcomed Black worshippers and licensed Richard Allen and Absalom Jones as its first African American Methodist lay preachers. In 1787, a dispute over segregated seating policies led to a permanent walkout and the creation of both the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas (see above) and Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church (see below). Portraits, items of worship, manuscripts and other artifacts are on display in the original building's HSG Museum & Archives and tours are available by appointment only.

[Mother Bethel African American Methodist Episcopal \(A.M.E.\) Church and Richard Allen Museum](#)

Mother Bethel (A.M.E.) Church and Richard Allen Museum, 419 S. 6th Street

Founded by Bishop Richard Allen in 1794, Mother Bethel Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church sits on the oldest parcel of land in Philadelphia continuously owned by African Americans, and is the mother church of the nation's first Black denomination. Today, Mother Bethel is an active church in Society Hill (where the congregation worships weekly), archive and museum. The onsite Richard Allen Museum houses the tomb of the first Bishop of the A.M.E. Church and church artifacts dating to the 1600s. Reservations are required for museum tours (free with requested donation), which are available Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Monuments & Memorials

[All Wars Memorial to Colored Soldiers and Sailors](#)

All Wars Memorial to Colored Soldiers, 1958 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy

Located in the west park of Logan Circle, the All Wars Memorial to Colored Soldiers and Sailors monument honors African American servicemen from Pennsylvania who fought in conflicts from the Revolutionary War to World War I. The granite memorial is over 21 feet tall and features 10 figures plus a central female representation of Justice holding a laurel wreath and crowned by four eagles guarding The

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Torch of Life. The sculpture set was dedicated in 1934 at its original site in Fairmount Park before being moved to its current location facing the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in 1994.

[Engine Company #11 All-Black Firehouse](#)

Old Engine Company #11, 1016 South Street

Organized in 1871, the Philadelphia Fire Department didn't integrate until 1886 when it began employing a single African American firefighter at Engine Company #11 on South Street. In 1923, Engine #11 became the city's only all-Black firehouse, with a full complement of 20 Black firefighters (though still under a white captain, lieutenant and engineer), which remained in place until desegregation in 1952. A historical marker sits at the original firehouse at 10th and South, and the mural Mapping Courage honoring the history of Engine #11 can be seen on the current firehouse (opened in 1976) at 6th and South.

[Negro League Memorial](#)

Negro Leagues Memorial, Belmont Ave & Parkside Ave

A former wooden stadium on the edge of Fairmount Park, 44th and Parkside Ballpark (formally Penmar Park) opened in 1903 and was home to the Negro Leagues' Philadelphia Stars from 1936 until 1952 and held up 10,000 patrons. Today the site, which saw the likes of Josh Gibson and Satchel Paige grace its field, is Philadelphia Stars Negro League Memorial Park, constructed in 2004, which features a historical marker, the seven-foot high Negro Leagues Memorial Statue and the Mural Arts program's Philadelphia Stars: a tribute to Negro League baseball collage mural.

[Octavius V. Catto Memorial](#)

Octavius V. Catto Memorial, 2 E. Penn Square

In a city with over 1,500 statues, the Octavius V. Catto Memorial — formally A Quest for Parity — became Philadelphia's first to honor a specific African American in 2017. Catto was a 19th-century civil rights crusader who led efforts to desegregate Philadelphia's streetcars and fought for equal voting rights. On October 10, 1871, the first election day after the 15th Amendment guaranteed African American men the right to vote, he was shot and killed on South Street. Sculptor Branly Cadet created the 12-foot bronze memorial featuring Catto in a powerful stance walking toward a stainless steel ballot box.

Cultural Institutions

[Hakim's Bookstore & Gift Shop](#)

Hakim's Bookstore & Gift Shop, 210 S. 52nd Street

Founded in 1959, Hakim's Bookstore and Gift Shop is the oldest Black-owned bookstore on the East Coast and one of the oldest in the nation. With a collection devoted to Black studies and history, as well as children's literature, biographies, memoirs and rare books from Black authors, the West Philadelphia

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bookseller has long been a gathering spot for activists, intellectuals, academics and community leaders. Founded by historian and scholar Dawud Hakim, the shop was an important location during the Civil Rights Movement and remains a vital fixture today under the leadership of Hakim's daughter Yvonne Blake.

[New Freedom Theatre](#)

Freedom Theatre, 1346 N. Broad Street

Founded in 1966 by John E. Allen, Jr. (and occupant of the former Philadelphia Cotillion Society building in North Philadelphia since 1968), New Freedom Theatre — Pennsylvania's oldest black theatrical organization and one of the nation's most honored Black professional theater companies — has staged productions from such celebrated African American playwrights as James Baldwin, Ossie Davis, Charles Fuller, Ntozake Shange, August Wilson and LeRoi Jones. Its alumni include Hamilton's Leslie Odom Jr., Wanya Morris of Boyz II Men, Living Single's Erika Alexander and Tony and Emmy Award nominee Samm-Art Williams.

[Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts](#)

Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts, 738 S. Broad Street

Formed in 1935 through the efforts of Philadelphia's African American musicians' union (Union Local No. 274 of the American Federation of Musicians), the Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts counted John Coltrane and Dizzy Gillespie among its members and played a significant role in the advancement of jazz in Philadelphia and the world. In 1978, The Clef expanded its mission to include jazz performance, instruction and preservation, becoming the nation's first facility constructed specifically as a jazz institution. A list of upcoming live concerts can be found on its website.

[The Philadelphia Tribune](#)

The Philadelphia Tribune, 520 S. 16th Street

Established in 1884, The Philadelphia Tribune remains the oldest continuously published African American newspaper in the nation. Founded by Christopher J. Perry, the paper has not just reported the news for 140 years, but championed the social, political, and economic advancement of African Americans in Philadelphia, from advocating for Black workers post-Reconstruction to helping end segregation in Philadelphia schools. Known as the "Voice of the Black Community," the paper (originally housed in the Jewelers' Row district) has published from its offices in Graduate Hospital since 1912. An historical marker lies at the site and tours are available by request.

[Destinations Showcasing Black Artists in Philadelphia](#)

Various locations including Woodmere Art Museum, 9201 Germantown Avenue

Visitors can find a phenomenal selection of works by Black artists within permanent collections, special exhibitions and exciting shows at museums and galleries around Philadelphia. Works in media of all

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varieties from local, national and international artists can be viewed at venues throughout the city, including the original prints at the Brandywine Workshop and African masks at the Barnes Foundation — plus in dozens of murals, sculptures and installations of public art in nearly every neighborhood in the city. Peruse our [guide to destinations for works by Black artists](#) to learn more.

Events

[Black History Month Showcase the Hyatt Centric Center City Philadelphia](#)

Hyatt Centric Center City Philadelphia, 1620 Chancellor Street
Through Thursday, February 29, 2024

Philly's upscale Hyatt Centric Center City hotel celebrates local Black artists with its first-ever Black History Month Showcase. This multimedia exhibit spans textiles, paintings, photography, illustrations and sculpture, all produced by various Philadelphia-based creatives. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

[A Raisin in the Sun at Bristol Riverside Theatre](#)

Hyatt Centric Center City Philadelphia, 1620 Chancellor Street
January 30 – February 18, 2024

In 1950s Chicago, a Black family living in the South Side receives a life-changing insurance check — and each member has a different vision for how to use it to pursue the American dream. This critically acclaimed play by Lorraine Hansberry tackles topics like housing discrimination, racism, assimilation and the power of self-determination.

[Leaders and Legends of Philadelphia at Smith Memorial Playground](#)

Smith Memorial Playground, 3500 Reservoir Drive
February 6-29, 2024

Back for its fourth year, Smith Memorial Playground honors the contributions of African American Philadelphians positively impacting our city with this month-long exhibit. This year's honorees include the iconic DJ Jazzy Jeff, Philadelphia's first woman mayor the Hon. Cherelle Parker, community champions Caleb Jones and Andre Wright; NBA hall of famer Wilt Chamberlain, and more.

[The Drunk Black History Show with Gordon Baker-Bone at World Cafe Live](#)

World Cafe Live, 3025 Walnut Street
Saturday, February 17, 2024 | 6 p.m.

Comedian and MTV writer Gordon Baker-Bone delivers history with a twist during this interactive (and intoxicating) Black history comedy show. The set features tipsy special guests taking to the stage to share wild and hilarious anecdotes about history's most prominent Black figures. Tickets are required and food and drink are pay as you go.

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[Rev. Charles Tindley & Marian Anderson Black History Exhibit at Tindley Temple United Methodist Church](#)

Tindley Temple United Methodist, 750 S. Broad Street
Sunday, February 25, 2024 | 1-3 p.m.

This pop-up exhibition celebrates faith, community and the lives of Philly music icons Charles A. Tindley and Marian Anderson. Look forward to live performances, light refreshments, mini-docuseries viewings, historic recordings and photographs, treasured artifacts, and more. Registration is required with a \$10 donation.

[Black History Goat Walk and the Harriet Tubman Living History Experience at Awbury Arboretum](#)

Awbury Arboretum, 1 Awbury Road
Saturday, February 24, 2024 | 1-3 p.m.

Philly Goat Project and Black and Planted put on a workshop and Black History Month performance at Awbury Arboretum. Cuddle real live goats as you walk around the nearly 200-year-old Francis Cope House, experience a live interactive portrayal of Harriet Tubman by actor Millicent Sparks, and then stick around for a plant-and-take workshop about healthy microgreens. The event is free, but register ahead since space is limited.

[Mom Mom's Soul Food Pop-Up at The Dutch](#)

The Dutch, 1537 S. 11th Street
Monday, February 19, 2024

For one night only, The Dutch changes up its reimagined classics and serves a heaping helping of soul food. The dinner special features a multi-course menu inspired by the executive chef's beloved grandmother (known in the community as Mom Mom), and offers creative takes on popular southern classics. Dig into pan-seared cajun shrimp, macaroni and cheese cornbread with braised short ribs, buttermilk fried chicken and more. Reservations are required and a portion of proceeds go toward Everybody Eats, a West Philadelphia charity committed to increasing food security.

[Meet the History Makers and Once Upon a Nation Storytelling at the Betsy Ross House](#)

Betsy Ross House, 239 Arch Street
February 3-25, 2024 | Saturdays and Sundays

Explore the historic Betsy Ross House during the family-friendly Meet the History Makers event. Costumed actors recount amazing stories about prominent members of colonial Philadelphia's free Black community (Saturdays) and Once Upon A Nation Storytellers and share tales of the Black experience in 18th-century Philadelphia (Sundays). Black History Month events at the Betsy Ross House are free to attend.

VISIT PHILADELPHIA®

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Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the site an effective trip-planning tool. Visitors can also find loads of inspiration on Visit Philly's social media channels.

Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of visitphilly.com/mediacenter.