
African American Culture Working Group

Report to the FMFADA

Committee Membership

- Chairperson, **Dr. Laurant Lee**, Curator of African American History, Virginia Historical Society
 - **Harvey Bakari**, Colonial Williamsburg, Manager of the African American History Interpretation Department at Colonial Williamsburg
 - **Christy Coleman**, President, The American Civil War Center at Tredegar
 - **Vernon Courtney**, Executive Director Hampton University Museum
 - **Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander**, Associate Professor of History at Norfolk State University
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Committee Charge

- The Historic Preservation Advisory Group charged the African American Culture Working Group to:
 - Identify important African American interpretive themes that need to be developed at Fort Monroe;
 - Identify unique and creative methods for telling the African American story at Fort Monroe; and
 - Identify partner organizations and individuals that need to be involved in telling the African American story at Fort Monroe.
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Interpretive Themes

- Arrival of Africans at Old Point Comfort
 - Exploration of the lives and status of freeborn and enslaved peoples
 - Research old communities (i.e. Slabtown, Goose Alley, Bay Shore) and black migration patterns relative to the resort industry
 - Chief Black Hawk's incarceration
 - Labor studies with emphasis on maritime industries
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Interpretive Delivery Mechanisms

- Chronological timeline
 - Walking trails with historic markers
 - Public monuments
 - Commissioned public art
 - Public programming
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Potential Interpretive Partners

- Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia
 - Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society of Hampton Roads
 - Contraband Historical Society
 - James River Plantations
 - Norfolk State University
 - Hampton University
 - Mariners Museum
 - National Park Service
 - Museum of the Confederacy
 - Virginia Historical Society
 - Local churches (all denominations)
 - National women's organizations
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Current Activities

- Involve Dr. Dianne Swann-Wright and Mr. Robert Charles Watson as resource specialists in the interpretive master planning process
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Next Steps

- As soon as possible, and as data is received:
 - Review and comment on the Army's Cultural Landscape Report
 - Review and comment on the Army's National Historic Landmark revisions
 - Review and comment on the Army's National Register nominations
 - Review the Casemate Museum's collections
 - Review Army's documentation relative to the Contraband Cemetery location
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Next Steps (cont)

- Develop a research plan and associated budget to support further exploration of the interpretive themes identified above
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Questions?
