

Recently Unveiled Map Showcases Natchez's Role in Civil Rights Movement, Provides Self-Guided Tour

NATCHEZ, MS, UNITED STATES, October 9, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A recently published map highlights the importance of [Natchez](#), Mississippi's history during the Civil Rights Era as a self-guided tour. The Natchez Civil Rights Trail Committee and the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture ([NAPAC](#)) collaborated on the project titled, "Map of Civil Rights Sites in Natchez, Mississippi," a full-color publication available for free. It includes a QR code that takes readers to an online version of the map. A grant from the [Mississippi Humanities Council](#) funded the map's creation and publication.



The Civil Rights Trail Committee at the NAPAC Museum. The committee members from left are Carter Burns, Robert Pernell, Mayor Dan Gibson, Mimi Miller, Lance Harris, Roscoe Barnes III, Bobby Dennis, Rev. Clifton Marvel Sr., and Kathleen Bond.

"This map is a convenient tool and handy resource for anyone to learn more about the civil rights movement in Natchez. Not only does it give locations, but also a glimpse of the people involved in making this city grow into a place of compromise and inclusion for all its citizens," said Bobby Dennis, executive director of the Natchez Museum of African-American History & Culture, known colloquially as the "NAPAC museum."

The map began in mid-2022 after the Mississippi Freedom Trail marker was approved for the Dr. John Banks House, which served as the NAACP headquarters in the 1960s. "We believed the map would serve as a supplement to that marker and help to interpret the broader history of the Natchez Movement," stated Robert Pernell, who also chaired the "Proud To Take A Stand" project, the first Civil Rights monument in Natchez, located at the corner of Jefferson Street and North Canal Street.

Natchez was approved to be listed on the Mississippi Freedom Trail by the Visit Mississippi and

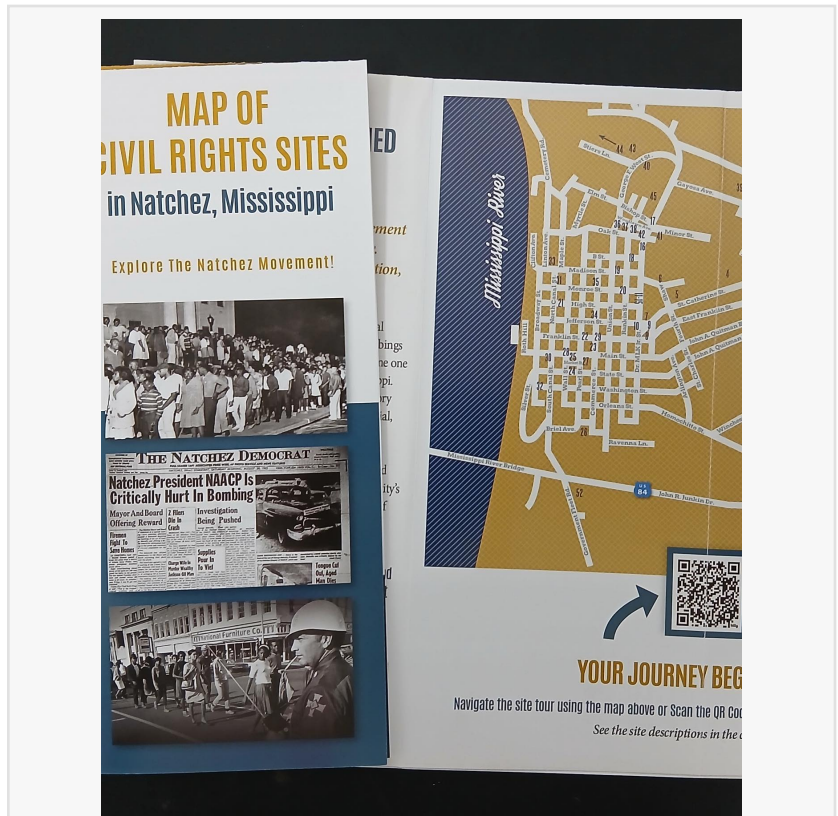
Mississippi Humanities Council. With this designation and first historical marker, the City of Natchez was included on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail. The marker was unveiled in April 2023.

Pernell continued, "Now we have a second site approved for a Freedom Trail marker to tell the story of the Natchez Deacons for Defense and Justice. That site is the building that once housed Donnan's Barbershop, where the Deacons met. It is also featured in the new map." The new Mississippi Freedom Trail marker will be unveiled on Saturday, November 9, 2024, with a ceremony at Zion Chapel A.M.E. Church at 2:30 pm. The event is free and open to the public. The new marker will be located at 319 North Dr. M.L. Kings Jr. Street.

Natchez Mayor Dan Gibson stressed the importance of the markers and the key role they play in Natchez telling its complete history and bringing the city together as One Natchez.

"Since the beginning of our administration, we have been working to see the entire history of Natchez told, the good, the bad, and all parts in between," Gibson stated. "Up until then, our city was not even listed as on our state's Freedom Trail or on America's Civil Rights Trail. In less than a month, a second marker will be unveiled in Natchez, placing us solidly on both trails. I applaud the efforts and hard work of those who have been striving to make this happen. Our community is so diverse, and telling these stories goes a long way in not only sharing our amazing history but also in allowing the true healing and reconciliation to take place."

"Our Natchez Civil Rights Trail Committee is really proud of this publication," said committee



The newly published brochure includes a map with listing of sites and a QR code to view online.



The front of the first Mississippi Freedom Trail Marker in Natchez, MS, highlighting the importance of the NAACP and George Metcalfe. It was unveiled in April 2023.

member Roscoe Barnes III of the project. "We were happy to work with NAPAC Museum, and we are grateful to the Mississippi Humanities Council for the grant that made it all possible."

Lynsey Gilbert, interim director of Visit Natchez, expressed her excitement for the new map and tour.

"NAPAC museum and the Civil Rights Trail Committee have done a great job with this publication," she said. "The goal was to give our residents and visitors a convenient pocket guide for self-guided tours that is user-friendly, easy to follow, and easy to share with others. I think they accomplished that goal."



The African American Museum of History and Culture contains exhibits from a number of Natchez related African American historic sites, important citizens and events. Photo: Roscoe Barnes III

Carter Burns, the executive director of the Historic Natchez Foundation, also shared praises, "The Historic Natchez Foundation is excited about the publication of this map of Civil Rights sites in Natchez. The Natchez Civil Rights Movement is nationally significant and it is wonderful to have a convenient map of important sites to allow the public to learn about the people and places involved."

Recommendations for selected sites were received from Ser Seshsh Ab Heter-C. M. Boxley, coordinator of Friends of the Forks of the Road Society. The map's content was also based on the draft document, "List of Civil Rights Sites in Natchez and Adams County," created by Mimi Miller and the Historic Natchez Foundation.

The map's overall look was designed by Vidal Blankenstein of Imaginary Company, Inc. and was printed by Catherine Murray of Murray Printing.

Locations featured on the map include the Home of the Rev. James Stokes, Holy Family Catholic Church, Armstrong Tire and Rubber Company, Shiloh Baptist Church, West Funeral Home, Beulah Missionary Baptist Church, Home of Nellie Jackson, S.H. Kress Department Store, White House Café and Green's Service Station, and more.

Copies of the map can be picked up locally in Natchez at:

- NAPAC Museum, 301 Main Street
- Visit Natchez, 500 Main Street, Suite 1
- Historic Natchez Foundation, 108 S. Commerce Street

- Natchez City Hall, 124 S. Pearl Street
- Visit Natchez at The Depot Visitor Center, 200 N. Broadway Street
- Natchez City Sightseeing Tours, 111 N. Broadway Street, in the lobby of The Natchez Grand Hotel

The tour is also available online at <https://www.visitnapac.net/natchez-civil-rights-trail>.

For more information on this project, contact Bobby Dennis at 601-809-6233 or email at bobbyden@visitnapac.com

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