



AFRICAN AMERICAN  
**HISTORY** MONTH 2026

# Passport to Freedom:

*250 Years of African  
American History in the  
South Carolina Lowcountry*



# HOW TO USE THIS PASSPORT

## **VISIT**

- In person • self-guided • virtual
- Check hours/access before you go

## **STAMP**

- There is 1 official stamp for all sites
- Self-guided or virtual? Take a selfie/screenshot and get stamp at USCB (see website for details!)

## **REFLECT**

- Use the prompt on each page
- Jot brief thoughts or questions

## **RESPECT**

- Sacred sites & active community spaces
- Follow rules, hours, and guidance

## **PLAN AHEAD**

- Parking • accessibility • appointments
- Travel with awareness

## **FINISH STRONG**

- Collect multiple stamps
- Be eligible for recognition & prizes

## **QR CODE**



**Scan QR code for more details and updates including:**

- site info & hours
- virtual links
- event dates
- prize eligibility and prize list

SECTION ONE

# Roots of Freedom:

*From Enslavement  
to Emancipation*



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# Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park

40 Harriet Tubman Way, Hilton Head Island, SC 29926



This is where formerly enslaved people built the nation's first self-governed freedmen's town—designing their own government, schools, and community life during the Civil War.



*What does self-determination look like today, and how does Mitchelville challenge common narratives about formerly enslaved communities?*

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# Harriet Tubman & Robert Smalls Monuments at Tabernacle Baptist Church

901 Craven Street, Beaufort, SC 29902



These monuments honor two Lowcountry heroes whose courage—Tubman's as an abolitionist and scout, Smalls' as a Union naval hero and statesman—helped reshape the meaning of freedom in America.

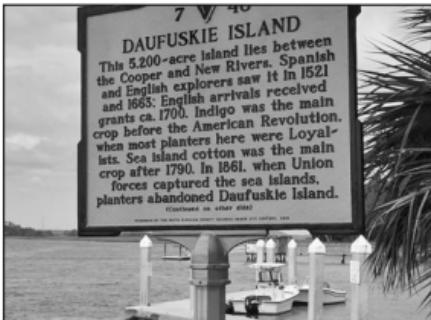


*How do individual acts of bravery create collective change?*

STAMP  
HERE

# Daufuskie Island Historic District

Daufuski Island, SC



Preserved Gullah homes, churches, and landscapes reveal a community shaped by isolation, resilience, and cultural continuity after Emancipation.



*What parts of culture survive when isolated? What parts grow stronger?*

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# Garvin-Garvey House

63 Wharf St, Bluffton, SC 29910



Built by a formerly enslaved man, this home symbolizes land ownership, family stability, and progress for African Americans during Reconstruction.



*Why is ownership—of land, labor, or knowledge—central to freedom?*

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HERE

# The Emancipation Oak at Camp Saxton

27 Pinckney Blvd, Port Royal, SC 2993



This is where the Emancipation Proclamation was first read in the Lowcountry on January 1, 1863, marking a turning point in Black freedom and national identity.



*How might hearing the Proclamation here have felt to newly free people?*

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SECTION TWO

# Schools of Liberation: *Education as Freedom*



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# Penn Center National Historic Landmark District

16 Penn Center Circle East, St. Helena Island, SC 29920



Founded in 1862, Penn School was one of the first schools in the South for formerly enslaved people and remains a pillar of Black education, activism, and cultural preservation. **Join Queen Quet, Chieftess of the Gullah Geechee Nation at the St. Helena Branch Library on Penn Campus, Feb. 19, 5:30pm for Roots of Black History.**



*How does learning function as a form of liberation?*

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# The Mather School

## *Interpretive Center at Technical College of the Lowcountry*

921 Ribaut Rd. TCL Campus, Building 1 Beaufort, Sc 29901



Established by Rachel Crane Mather, this school prepared Black women for teaching and leadership roles during Reconstruction.



*What barriers still exist for Black women in leadership today?*

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# Robert Smalls Leadership Academy

43 W. K. Alston Drive, Beaufort, SC 29906



Named for a local hero who championed public education, the academy connects today's students to a legacy of civic responsibility and educational empowerment. **RSLA is the host site for the Beaufort County School District's African American History Education Conference, Feb 12-14.**



*How can knowledge of local history reshape a student's sense of purpose?*

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# Cherry Hill School

210 Dillon Rd, Hilton Head Island, SC 29926



This one-room schoolhouse represents the grassroots determination of rural Black communities to educate their children despite limited resources



*What can Cherry Hill's history teach us about community investment in youth today?*

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# USCB Historic Beaufort Campus *Mural & Historical Markers*

801 Carteret St, Beaufort, SC 29902



From US Civil War hospital to a 'Colored School', multiple historical markers on campus highlight Black leaders and community history, linking higher education to regional civil rights stories. **USCB's Institute for the Study of the Reconstruction Era (ISRE) located at 1106 Carteret St., is currently the only research institute focusing solely on the Reconstruction Era attached to an organization of higher learning in the nation.**



*How can visual storytelling deepen our understanding of history?*

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SECTION THREE

# Voices of the Lowcountry: *Faith, Art, and Cultural Identity*



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# Central Oak Grove Baptist Church

161 Mathews Drive, Hilton Head Island, SC



A historically Black congregation, this church reflects the central role of faith communities in cultural preservation, mutual aid, and civil rights organizing. **Host of Hilton Head Island Gullah Celebration's Gospel Concert featuring Voices of El Shaddai, 2.20 7pm**



*How have Black churches shaped both spiritual and social life?*

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# Gullah Geechee Welcome Center / LyBensons' Gallery

870 Sea Island Pkwy, St Helena Island, SC 29920



This center celebrates Gullah Geechee heritage through art, craftsmanship, and cultural education.



*Why is artistic expression essential to cultural survival?*

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# Wesley United Methodist Church

701 West Street, Beaufort, SC 29902



As one of the region's longstanding Black churches, Wesley UMC represents resilience, fellowship, and a tradition of community leadership.



*What does "community leadership" mean in your own life?*

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# Gullah Museum of Hilton Head Island

53 New Orleans Rd, Hilton Head Island, SC 29926



The museum preserves Gullah traditions, land histories, and family lineages, protecting stories that might otherwise be lost to development.



*What histories are at risk of disappearing without intentional preservation and why does that matter to you?*

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# Ma Daisy's Porch

1255 May River Rd, Bluffton, SC 29910



A cultural gathering space, Ma Daisy's honors Gullah hospitality, storytelling, and intergenerational memory while supporting economic development.



*How do informal spaces—porches, kitchens, shops—shape cultural identity?*

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SECTION FOUR

# Guardians of Freedom: *Military Service, Leadership, and Civil Rights*



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# Harriet Tubman Combahee River Memorial Bridge

US-17, Yemassee, SC 29945



This bridge commemorates Tubman's role in the Combahee River Raid, the first U.S. military operation planned and led by a woman—freeing more than 700 enslaved people.



*How does this story expand your view of women in military history?*

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# Grand Army Hall

706 Newcastle St, Beaufort, SC 29902



Built by Black Civil War veterans, and restored with the help of the Woman's Relief Corps of Beaufort, the Hall honors the legacy of those who fought for Union victory and Black citizenship.



*What does service mean when freedoms are at stake?*

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# Beaufort National Cemetery

1601 Boundary Street, Beaufort, SC 29902



The cemetery is the resting place of many who died for freedom, including United States Colored Troops and generations of Black service members whose sacrifices shaped American democracy.



*How should a nation honor those who fought for rights they did not fully enjoy?*

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# Historic Fort Howell

10 Fort Howell Rd, Hilton Head Island, SC 29926



Constructed by the 32nd U.S. Colored Infantry, this fort protected Mitchelville and symbolizes Black military engineering, labor, and bravery.



*What forms of protection do communities need today?*

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# Cecil Williams SC Civil Rights Museum

1865 Lake Dr, Orangeburg, SC 29115



This museum showcases the work of photographer Cecil Williams and chronicles South Carolina's unsung civil rights leaders.



*Who are some of the overlooked changemakers in your community?*

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SECTION FIVE

# Pathways Forward: *Legacy, Preservation, and Afrofuturism*



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# International African American Museum

14 Wharfside Street, Charleston, SC 29401 & *Virtual*



Located at the site of one of the most significant ports used during slavery, the museum connects global African diasporic history to contemporary culture, innovation, and resilience.



*How does understanding the past strengthen your vision for the future?*

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# Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor

*Virtual only*



This national corridor advocates for the continuity of Gullah Geechee land, language, foodways, and traditions across multiple states.



*Which aspects of Gullah culture do you see shaping possibilities for the future?*

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# Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce

711 Bladen St, Beaufort, SC 29902



The Chamber supports Black entrepreneurship and economic growth, building generational wealth and community opportunity.



*How does economic empowerment shape a community's future potential?*

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# Gullah Geechee Futures Project

*Virtual only*



This artistic initiative centers community voices in planning, sustainability, and cultural preservation, imagining a future where heritage and progress coexist.



*What responsibilities do we carry for the generations coming after us?*

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# Lands End Woodland Beach

Lands End Woodland Beach, South Carolina 29920 & **Virtual**



A cooperatively-owned, beloved historic gathering space for Black families, the beach-front woodlands represent joy, leisure, and community continuity in the Sea Islands.



*In what ways can joy itself be a form of resistance and futurism?*

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# Add Your Own Site/ Event



*Description*

STAMP  
HERE

## PASSPORT CHECKLIST

- Roots of Freedom
- Schools of Liberation
- Voices of the Lowcountry
- Guardians of Freedom
- Pathways to Forward



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