

The African-American Heritage Trail in Cleveland

In 1993, a group of black journalists independently developed a self-guided tour of sites with historical significance related to the black community in Cleveland. The result is this African-American Heritage Trail.



CLEVELAND

1. Garrett A. Morgan Water Treatment Plant 1245 West 45th Street

An inventor of some note, Morgan and other rescuers used a safety hood (gas mask) he invented to save two workers trapped in a water department tunnel under Lake Erie after a gas explosion.

2. Cleveland Municipal Stadium 100 Alfred Lerner Way

In 1947, Larry Doby signed with the Cleveland Indians baseball team and became the first black player in the American League. In 1975, the Indians made Frank Robinson baseball's first black manager. Browns Stadium now occupies the old stadium's site.

3. Cleveland City Hall 601 Lakeside Ave.

Carl B. Stokes was elected the 51st mayor of Cleveland in 1967. He was the first black mayor of a major city.

4. St. John's Episcopal Church 2600 Church Ave.

A final stop for slaves on the Underground Railroad before taking a boat across Lake Erie to freedom in Canada.

5. Jesse Owens statue, Fort Huntington Park West Third and Lakeside Avenue

In 1936, Jesse Owens, a graduate of East Technical High School, won four gold medals in track-and-field at the Olympic Games in Nazi Germany.

6. John O. Holly Building U.S. Post Office 2400 Orange Ave.

Holly founded the Future Outlook League in 1935 to promote racial equality using nonviolent means.

7. St. John African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church 2261 East 40th Street

Founded in 1830 by the Rev. William Paul Quinn, it is Cleveland's oldest African-American church.

8. Central High School 2225 East 40th Street

Established in 1846, it was Cleveland's first public high school. Many notable African-Americans attended the school. It is now the Carl & Louis Stokes Central Academy with students from kindergarten through eighth grade.

9. Louis Stokes Museum 4302 Quincy Ave.

The Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority opened the museum on Sept. 13, 2007, at Outhwaite Homes, a public housing development. In 1938, Louise Stokes moved to Outhwaite Homes with her children Carl and Louis.

10. Phillis Wheatley Association 4450 Cedar Ave.

Coming to Cleveland from the South in 1905, Jane Edna Hunter found it difficult to find housing. Her experience led her to start the Working Girls Home Association, which was renamed the Phillis Wheatley Association in 1911.

11. League Park 6601 Lexington Ave.

Opened May 1, 1891. Was home to the National League Cleveland Spiders, the American League Cleveland Indians and the Cleveland Buckeyes of the Negro American League.

12. Eliza Bryant Village 7201 Wade Park Ave.

Eliza Simmons Bryant, the daughter of a slave, and her family came to Cleveland in 1858 and became well known for her humanitarian efforts on behalf of "people of color." To fill the need for nursing home care for elderly African-Americans at a time when they could not get into segregated homes, she spearheaded the drive that led to opening the "Cleveland Home of Aged Colored People" on September 1, 1896.

13. Karamu House 2355 East 89th St.

In 1915, a pair of Oberlin graduates, Russell Jelliffe and Rowena Woodham opened a settlement house. The "Playhouse Settlement" became a magnet for some of the best African-American artists of the day. The Playhouse Settlement was renamed Karamu, a Swahili word meaning "place of enjoyment," in 1941.

14. Olivet Institutional Baptist Church 8712 Quincy Ave.

African-Americans migrating north following the Great Depression were in search of a welcoming place of worship. In early 1931, a group of former members of Triedstone Baptist Church formed the New Light Baptist Church. A shift in religious focus resulted in changing the name to Olivet Institutional Baptist Church.

15. Operation Black Unity 10411 St. Clair Ave.

On July 10, 1969, Operation Black Unity initiated a boycott of McDonald's restaurants by picketing four eastside McDonald's at East 83rd Street and Euclid Avenue, East 91st Street and Kinsman Road, East 142nd Street and Kinsman Road and East 105th Street and St. Clair Avenue. Mayor Carl Stokes intervened and negotiated an agreement that led to black-owned franchises in Cleveland.

16. Hough Riots Obelisk 4450 Cedar Ave.

Commemorates the riots from July 18-24, 1966, in the Hough neighborhood. The National Guard was called in to restore order.

17. Cozad-Bates House 11508 Mayfield Road

Part of the Underground Railroad, it was built before the Civil War by a prominent abolitionist family in what is now the University Circle area.