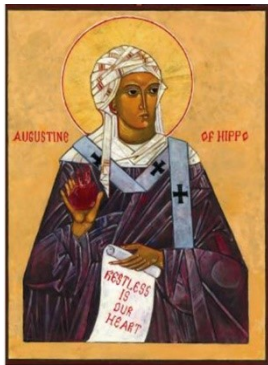


September 2021

Dear Family and Friends,

Learned a lot through encounters this August – on my first trip outside Kenya since covid. I was curiously learning her/his/ourstory.

First stop: **Florida**.



We (family – Aya and Soutcho<sup>1</sup> – and friends) spent a Saturday at **Lincolnville Museum in**

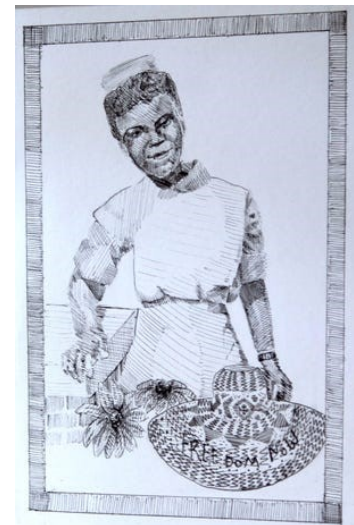
**St. Augustine** – touted as the oldest continually inhabited European-established city in the United States

of America (USA). Sixteenth-century colonists named it after Saint Augustine of Hippo born of Saint Monica –

Berbers born in present day Algeria. The Spaniards who came to the northern shores of current-day Florida displaced the indigenous Timucua population.<sup>2</sup>



We visited the **“Women Who Made a Difference”** exhibit<sup>3 4</sup> at the museum. I recall the story of Katherine Twine, a nurse. She wore a wide-brimmed straw hat – just in case she was arrested during a demonstration for civil rights and escorted to an area in the searing sun behind the prison. “Kat Twine created her small shade with her beautiful wide hat.”<sup>5</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> Gninnanhoyan was in Mexico City (teleworking), came down with covid, and so could not travel to meet up with us in Florida. We supported him and sent healing energies from a distance.

<sup>2</sup> About resistance to invaders by indigenous peoples: [Seminole Wars | New Georgia Encyclopedia](#)

<sup>3</sup> [St. Augustine exhibit to showcase Black women who made a difference \(staugustine.com\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> The museum director speaks to the press about the exhibit: [5 prominent Black women to be featured in Lincolnville museum exhibit \(news4jax.com\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Henry-and-Kat-Twine.pdf \(stjohns.k12.fl.us\)](#)

The next weekend, we went on a **walking tour** with Miss B. We met at Flagler College – founded only in 1968 and named after a railroad tycoon. It was not, however, the city's first institution of higher learning.

**Miss B. took us back to the 1960s and made her/his/ourstory come alive.** We walked through the neighborhood of Lincolnville – still referred to by old timers as “Little Africa.” It was renamed after U. S. President Abraham Lincoln, on January 1, 1863, signed an executive order – the Emancipation Proclamation (legally ending slavery). Youth in St. Augustine played a significant role 100 years later, during the Civil Rights Movements, in pressuring U. S. President Lyndon B. Johnson to sign the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964 (I was a few months old then).

Miss B. shared with us historical photos of members of the Ku Klux Kan (KKK) – out in the streets of St. Augustine in the 1960s. She suggested, as we walk, that we imagine participating in a march for civil rights with such men and women in pointy white hats intimidating us. Yes – women were members of the KKK. I had not thought about it before. They sewed the

godawful hoods and robes, including even for children. Then we were to imagine dogs (brought from the police station) released from the hotel onto the protestors. Protesters were teenagers. They learned to protect their head and abdominal area if attacked. If their parents protested, they would lose their jobs. Some young people sat in at the Woolworth's counter.





People also participated in **kneel-in and wade-in protests** in St. Augustine. Some things have changed since then. Others have not. Tourists still visit St. Augustine, but how many Black-owned businesses are granted business permits? How wide is the circle in which resources flow? I only learned later about this initiative, for a future visit: Growers Alliance Cafe and Gift Shop<sup>6</sup>, a nonprofit started by a Kenyan native. The population of the city is about 12% Black.



Plaque in downtown St. Augustine, Florida, at the site of a drinking fountain erected for Colored people during Jim Crow days. *Photo: Kathryn Toure*

Two confederate statues were removed<sup>7</sup> from the city's Plaza. Relics of the Civil War, however, remain: large black cannons<sup>8,9</sup>. On the same Plaza is a site<sup>10</sup> – “Largely ignored by locals and overlooked by tourists” – where **enslaved persons were auctioned off to the highest bidder**. Later in my travels, I heard a performer in Liberty, Missouri, impersonating an auctioneer at a “slave market.” Never had I imagined before the auctioneer or what he would be saying...

I recommend the walking tour with Miss B.<sup>11</sup> and other walking tours of historically Black neighborhoods.

<sup>6</sup> [Florida Black Businesses You Should Know | VISIT FLORIDA](#)

<sup>7</sup> [UF has Confederate statue removed from St. Augustine before dawn \(news4jax.com\); Crews remove St. Augustine's Confederate memorial from the Plaza \(staugustine.com\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> “The plaza is surrounded by large cannons which make for a fun vacation photo op.” ?! [Plaza de la Constitucion | Visit St Augustine](#)

<sup>9</sup> See “**The Neutral Ground**,” a Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) film on the removal of the Confederate statues in public places in New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>10</sup> [St. Augustine's "Slave Market": A Visual History - Southern Spaces](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Ms.B!! - Review of St. Augustine Black Heritage Tours, St. Augustine, FL - Tripadvisor](#)

“Meet” some inspiring people from St. Augustine thanks to a **civil rights library**<sup>12</sup> initiative at Flagler College. Lincolnville native [Carrie Johnson](#) talks about growing up in a segregated St. Augustine, knowing her neighbors, continuing to bike on her three-wheeler around the city and sharing observations and suggestions with city commissioners. [Audrey Nell Edwards](#) recounts her experiences sitting in with others at the Woolworth’s counter to order a hamburger and a coke, being arrested, going to reform school, meeting Jackie Robinson, attending the 1964 World’s Fair, and more.

While still integrating St. Augustine her/his/ourstory, on another day, we were headed south toward Fort Meyers for a tour of **Echo Global Farm** – started by a man from Burkina Faso in West Africa – but turned back because of news of tropical storms Fred and Grace. Fred was announced as a “potential cyclone.” A girl from Kansas knows what to do in a tornado, but I got nervous driving south on a peninsula toward the unknown. Am now thinking of those dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Ida, which made landfall in Louisiana at the end of August.

From Florida, I flew into Philadelphia, **Pennsylvania** and took the SEPTA (train) to impressive 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station to take an Amtrack commuter train to Absecon, **New Jersey** where my sister and her husband picked me up. The next day, we appreciated time together and sealife in Tuckerton and Barnegat bays.<sup>13</sup>

Later in my trip, I learned that the Loretto sisters, from their motherhouse in **Kentucky**, are discussing how to go about investigating more thoroughly



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<sup>12</sup> <https://civilrights.flagler.edu>

<sup>13</sup> Pictured is mosaic work by my sister, who recently retired from teaching science.

their linkages with the institution of slavery<sup>14</sup> and with residential schools for Native Americans, and how to engage in reparations. Thanks, cousin Alice, for the connection(s) and conversation(s) about this (and more).

Let us move westward – toward Kansas City.

**Monks Mound** (in Illinois) is the largest Pre-Columbian [earthwork](#) in the Americas and the largest pyramid north of Mesoamerica. It is constructed almost entirely of layers of basket-transported soil and clay. The beginning of its construction dates from 900–955 CE (common era). The concrete staircase follows the approximate course of the former wooden stairs. Located at the [Cahokia Mounds UNESCO World Heritage Site](#), the mound size at its base is roughly the same size as the Great Pyramid of Giza.



Until 300 CE, the [Hopewell](#) hunted in the areas around Kansas City. The **Mississippi** tribe occupied the area between 760 and 1290 CE. These tribes, which were stationary, were joined by the tribes of **Kansa, Osage, Oto** and **Missouri**. They spread over the states of Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska and depended on the large supply of buffalo and wild game for their sustenance. In 1825, the federal government forced the Kansa and Osage tribes to give up their land along the Missouri River and move to reservations in central Kansas. There are no reservations in Missouri; in Kansas, the **Kickapoo** and **Pottawatomie** tribes have federally recognized reservations.

[Native American culture in Kansas City](#), see also: [History of the native peoples of the Kansas City region | KCUR 89.3 - NPR in Kansas City](#)

While there are people of Native there are currently no federally Native Americans were forced to Removal, and this included all the Indian Removal Act (1830) [Chickasaw](#), [Delaware](#), Illini, [Kanza](#) [Otoe-Missouria](#), [Osage](#), [Quapaw](#), other tribes inhabited and have



American descent in Missouri, recognized tribes in the state. Most leave the state during Indian original tribes in Missouri. Before there were nine tribes in Missouri – or Kansa (Wind People), [Ioway](#), [Sac & Fox](#), [Shawnee](#) –, however connections to this land.”

[Missouri's Native Peoples - Indigenous Tribes of Missouri - LibGuides at Jefferson College \(jeffco.edu\)](#)



Anna Brown (left) and Mollie Burkhardt (right) with their mother, Lizzie. Anna was murdered and her mother likely poisoned for their headrights (to access resources such as land, under an oppressive guardianship system) during the infamous Osage County Reign of Terror in the 1920s. [Mollie survived](#).

[The Tribes of Missouri Part 3: Homecoming • Missouri Life Magazine](#)

<sup>14</sup> See [Southern veils: The sisters of Loretto in early national Kentucky \(louisville.edu\)](#) and [O Hail, Mary, Hail: The Long Complicated History of an American Convent --- Laura Michele Diener | Numéro Cinq \(numerocinqmagazine.com\)](#)



Bobby Blue, a Choctaw Indian originally from Oklahoma, and his wife Nancy were leaders in Kansas City's American Indian community since the early 1960s. The Blues were integral in starting the first American Indian social club in Kansas City and later the city's first federally-funded non-profit organization – the Heart of America Indian Center.

[Native Americans in Greater Kansas City - Land Acknowledgement: A Resource Guide – UMKC University Libraries](#)

The InterTribal Buffalo Council buffalo to 16 tribes in nine states. tribally-managed buffalo herds genetics and lineage of the largest buffalo herd, also known as

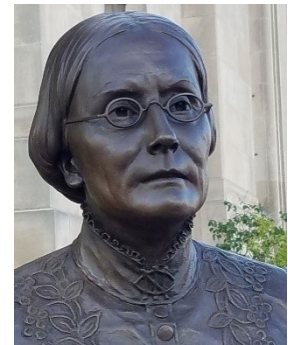


(ITBC) transferred 40 Yellowstone This helps develop and sustain while preserving the unique and continuously free-roaming American or plains bison.

[quapawtribe nwslttr nov2020](#)

[ITBC](#) is a federally chartered membership of **69 federally** whose mission is to restore preserve our historical, cultural, relationship for future generations. To reestablish healthy buffalo populations on tribal lands is to reestablish hope for Indian people. Returning buffalo to tribal lands will help heal the land, the animal, and the spirit of Indian people.

In Liberty, Missouri, a life-size statue of suffragette Susan B. Anthony was unveiled in 2019, on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the State of Missouri's ratification of the 19th amendment. I noticed in my travels that stones with **RBG**<sup>15</sup> on them had been placed by visitors at the foot of the statue. Unfortunately, when women won the right to vote in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, this applied mainly to white women, though women of different races and ethnic groups had fought with them for the vote.<sup>16</sup> The suffragette movement was exclusionary rather than inclusive. A Kansas City mural or monument will soon recognize **several Kansas City women of color suffragettes**.



City councils / commissions, parks and recreation services / departments, and many community-based organizations are involved in this and other work to

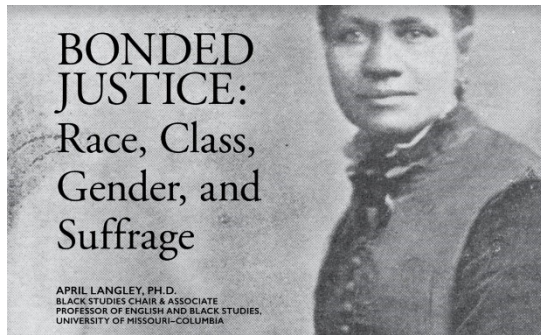


<sup>15</sup> In honor of U. S. Supreme Court Justice and women's advocate Joan **Ruth Bader Ginsburg**, [Ruth Bader Ginsburg \(wikipedia.org\)](#), who died on September 18, 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Most Black men and women did not have an opportunity to vote until the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. Some background: [African American Women in the Suffrage Movement: Then, Now, and Forever](#)

honor people and movements in public places. Members of the Greater Kansas City Black History Study Group are providing input into the initiative to honor women of color suffragettes.

For women's equality week in Kansas City, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) hosted the following event with



Dr. April Langley<sup>17</sup> and Dr. Carmaletta Williams<sup>18</sup>: **Women's Suffrage, Racism and Intersectionality: One year after the 19th Amendment Centennial**<sup>19</sup> (1.5-hour video; contact me if you wish to view the video but the links in the footnote have expired).

Note that Black women in Lawrence, Kansas, before women received the right to vote, were very active in the hotly contested 1883 elections in their city.

These elections saw the elevation of John L. Waller—editor-owner of the Western Recorder [African American newspaper]—to a seat on the local Board of Education by “a good majority” by the electors of the sixth ward. The same issue [of the newspaper] thanks the African-American women of Lawrence for their effort in securing the elections of black officials and whites friendly to African-Americans. **Although not allowed to vote themselves**, they hosted dinners for friendly candidates and assisted in ensuring their men voted on the day of the election. The Western Recorder printed, “These ladies deserve much praise for their fidelity to principle. They labored the live long day for the success of the Republican ticket, on behalf of the colored voters of this city.” (emphasis added)<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> April Langley, Associate Professor and Chair of Black Studies (she, her, hers), University of Missouri, is author of “Bonded Justice: Race, Class, Gender, and Suffrage,” *Missouri Humanities Journal* (pp. 10-12), Summer 2019, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fZCyWHkT-ccac7JNGFken8j7kshwr8LB/view>

<sup>18</sup> Carmaletta Williams works as Chief executive officer, Black Archives of Mid-America in Kansas City

<sup>19</sup> Women's Suffrage, Racism and Intersectionality (video). Speaker view:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/UVdwpjb7\\_owkZkHiCCG1XzQa-](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/UVdwpjb7_owkZkHiCCG1XzQa-wdeFIA1XCAQlu3XWabcKp79rDoU9a9amZGrlqAM.a162mEA0W-wL4xUn)

[wdeFIA1XCAQlu3XWabcKp79rDoU9a9amZGrlqAM.a162mEA0W-wL4xUn](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/UVdwpjb7_owkZkHiCCG1XzQa-wdeFIA1XCAQlu3XWabcKp79rDoU9a9amZGrlqAM.a162mEA0W-wL4xUn). Gallery view:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/OTsiJ63qLYTm\\_kCFafAmNYaUdcbb238h5VCxybtXWIP\\_8m2zS4cr9gz5soheQaxBo6pt4NI4R77PsRKR.AnB-S-6WaVyjHBQR?autoplay=true](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/OTsiJ63qLYTm_kCFafAmNYaUdcbb238h5VCxybtXWIP_8m2zS4cr9gz5soheQaxBo6pt4NI4R77PsRKR.AnB-S-6WaVyjHBQR?autoplay=true)

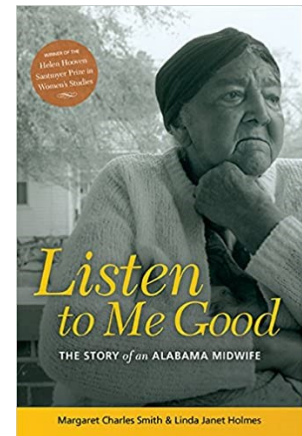
<sup>20</sup> Fowler, P. E. (Summer 2013 – Spring 2014). Breaking ground in Canaan: African-American community in Lawrence, 1870–1920. *University of Kansas Journal of Undergraduate Research*, pp. 9-19.

[https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/bitstream/handle/1808/15031/Fowler\\_jur14.pdf](https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/bitstream/handle/1808/15031/Fowler_jur14.pdf)

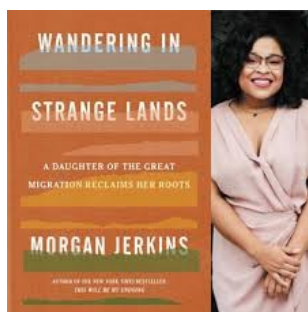
On a beautiful day in Kansas City, I met up with Joanna Farmer. She had suggested we meet at the Unity Village bookstore and café. It was my first ever visit to Unity Village. I admire the work of Joanna, speaking up about mental health challenges and supporting and inspiring our young people, for example through [The Stability Network](#). I believe I first met Joanna at a meeting organized by Communities Creating Opportunities. We have worked together<sup>21</sup> and stayed in touch since.

Carol Coburn was delighted that the **Buchanan Initiative for Peace and Nonviolence** at Avila University is reaching broader audiences at the university and in Kansas City. The Initiative and its first activist-in-residence – from Chad – are featured in the university's alumni magazine.<sup>22</sup>

I spoke throughout my travels with Linda Holmes who is finishing a book on **traditional birth attendants** in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Ghana, based on interviews she conducted in 2019. She calls for the recording of the stories of Black midwives and mentions a monument to a midwife in a historically Black neighborhood near where she lives in Virginia. Black midwives supported women and families – Black and white – across the southern part of the USA and probably beyond.



Through conversations with Linda, we realized that we have a midwife and herbalist in our family lineage – Grandma Aya from Katiola. Pictured here is an earlier book by Linda that I am finally reading. Wow – learning a lot from Mrs. Margaret of **Alabama**! What wisdom.



Another book I am reading: *Wandering in Strange Lands: A Daughter of the Great Migration Reclaims Her Roots*. Morgan Jerkins first takes us to the Lowcountry – along the coasts of **Georgia** and **South Carolina** – to learn more about Gullah Geechee culture. The visit by ferry to Sapelo Island is still fresh in my mind...<sup>23</sup>

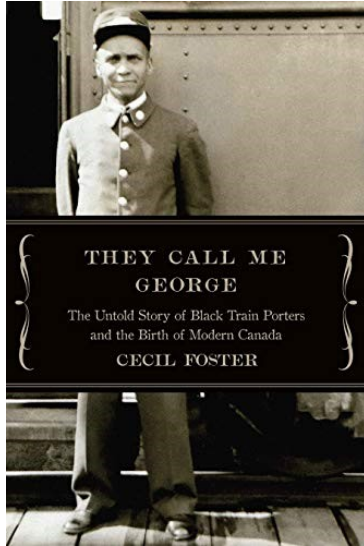
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<sup>21</sup> [Reflecting on Empower Missouri and a Life of Service: Conversations with Mary Kay McPhee](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Planting the Seeds | Accent Summer 2021 | Avila University](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Sapelo Island Cultural and Revitalization Society \(sicars.org\)](#)

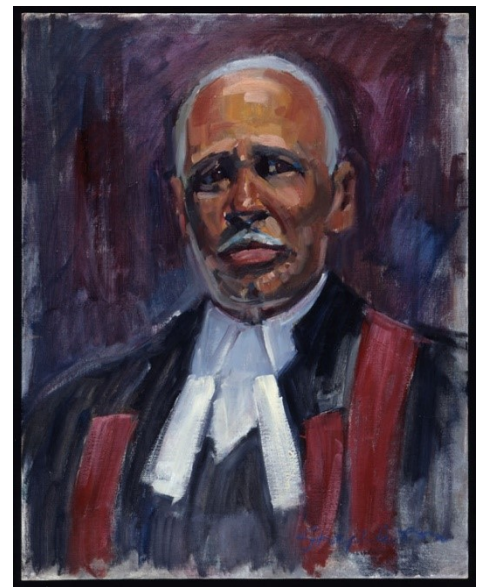




While traveling, I was also reading two (other) books. *They Call Me George: The Untold Stories of Black Train Porters and the Birth of Modern Canada* reveals how the Black community in Canada worked for multiculturalism – for example through a 30-person-strong delegation of people including porters that **traveled by train from Toronto to Ottawa in 1954 to meet with the Minister of Immigration** and advocate for social justice.<sup>24</sup>

Black train porters, some from the West

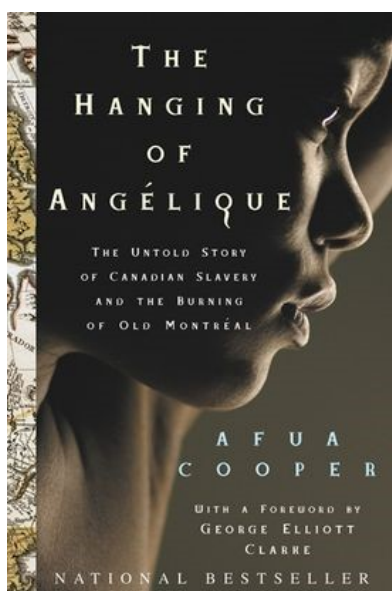
Indies, were very much in touch with the pulse of the nation due to their travels from coast to coast and encounters with elites from multiple walks of life. They were both privileged – to have such work – and oppressed – because they could not advance professionally and suffered excruciating working conditions. Some of them were leaders in immigration and labor reform efforts. I recommend the read.



I came across in a bargain bookstore at Village Market in Nairobi (with my brother, right before my travels) a book about the 1734 fire in Montreal: *The Hanging of Angélique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montreal*. I did not know about this famous person, **Marie-Josèphe Angélique** – a square across from Montreal's City Hall is now named for her –, nor about the well-known and catastrophic fire. I admire the work of

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<sup>24</sup> Since the first versions of this letter, I have learned from friends in Canada that some of them – in their adolescent years – were on the 1954 train ride (a rather ambitious community effort) with their parents and that some women in the Ottawa community provided counsel to [Stanley Grizzle](#) (see above drawing), a Canadian of Jamaican descent. He helped establish in 1938 the Young Men's Negro Association of Toronto, began working in 1940 at the age of 22 as a railway porter (and continued in the profession for 20 years, with an interruption from 1942 to 1946 for military service), and went on to become a labor leader and organizer of the 1954 train ride for the first delegation of Black Canadians to discuss anti-discrimination legislation with federal leaders. His wife, Kathleen (Kay) Victoria Toliver, was a founding member of the Canadian Negro Women's Association.



Afua Cooper who spent 15 years researching for this book. I am impressed how she compellingly brings forth the voice of Angélique to speak across the centuries about the **realities of and resistance to slavery**. Cooper argues that the story of Angélique is the oldest written “slave narrative” in the “New World.” After her trial, Angélique was tortured to extract a confession and hung at the age of 29 years for the crime of burning Montreal, though no conclusive evidence of her guilt was presented during the six-week trial which scribes carefully recorded.

I had the honor and pleasure of celebrating a late Juneteenth in **Liberty, Missouri**, where I lived from 2015 to 2017 and participated in community inquiry<sup>25</sup> projects. One Saturday morning, members of Clay County African American Legacy Inc. held, with support from numerous other organizations, the **groundbreaking for a monument to honor the lives and legacies of over 750 Black people** buried – some in unmarked graves – in the [Fairview and New Hope cemeteries](#)<sup>26</sup>– both of which are segregated. I was happy a brother of mine was able to partake in the subsequent unveiling of plaques to **Sam Houston** and **Ruth Moore** after the parade to nearby Ruth Moore Park.



<sup>25</sup> [Kathryn Toure's Website - Do You Know this Missouri History?](#)

<sup>26</sup> “Cemeteries are places of tribute and memory, connecting communities with their past [...] Preserving and protecting these sacred sites, and the stories they tell, is an integral part of our American heritage.” The African American Burial Grounds Network Act, when passed the US Congress, will help. [New Legislation Seeks to Protect the U.S.' Historic Black Cemeteries | Smart News | Smithsonian Magazine](#)

White elected officials spoke publicly and admitted that they did not know until the last couple of years much about Black history.<sup>27</sup>

Local historians have helped make **Black history in Liberty**<sup>28</sup> come alive.

**The Black population in Clay County was at about 27% in 1849**, and Blacks contributed to the development of the county, but physical separations were enforced between Blacks and whites in institutions such as housing, school, church, and even cemeteries. For example: An enslaved person recognized that “the master could be at ease in any part of his church edifice. It was all his and he moved about through its aisles as a free man, but the slave was limited in his privileges, and was counted as a good man only as he kept within the limits assigned him.” Also: “African Americans might be given Communion separately, and only after whites had received it.” In the state of Missouri in 1922, a white male high school teacher made up to \$1,039.50 per year, and an African American female elementary school teacher made \$607.50 a year. **How much of this sense of entitlement and how many of these disparities (based on sex and race) continue today?** And how can we individually and collectively recognize, challenge, and undo such systemic racism?

Stories about people buried at Fairview and New Hope cemeteries are being shared over time here: [www.libertylegacymemorial.org/read-the-stories](http://www.libertylegacymemorial.org/read-the-stories). **Hazel Black** worked with two white

colleagues to help ensure stories about the African American community featured in the newspaper. **Katie Brooks** traveled worldwide as an ambassador for the Kansas City Passport Club and was instrumental in developing the first low-income housing development in Liberty.

**Katherine “Aunt Kitty” Thompson Alexander** (1838-1909, pictured here) worked as cook and



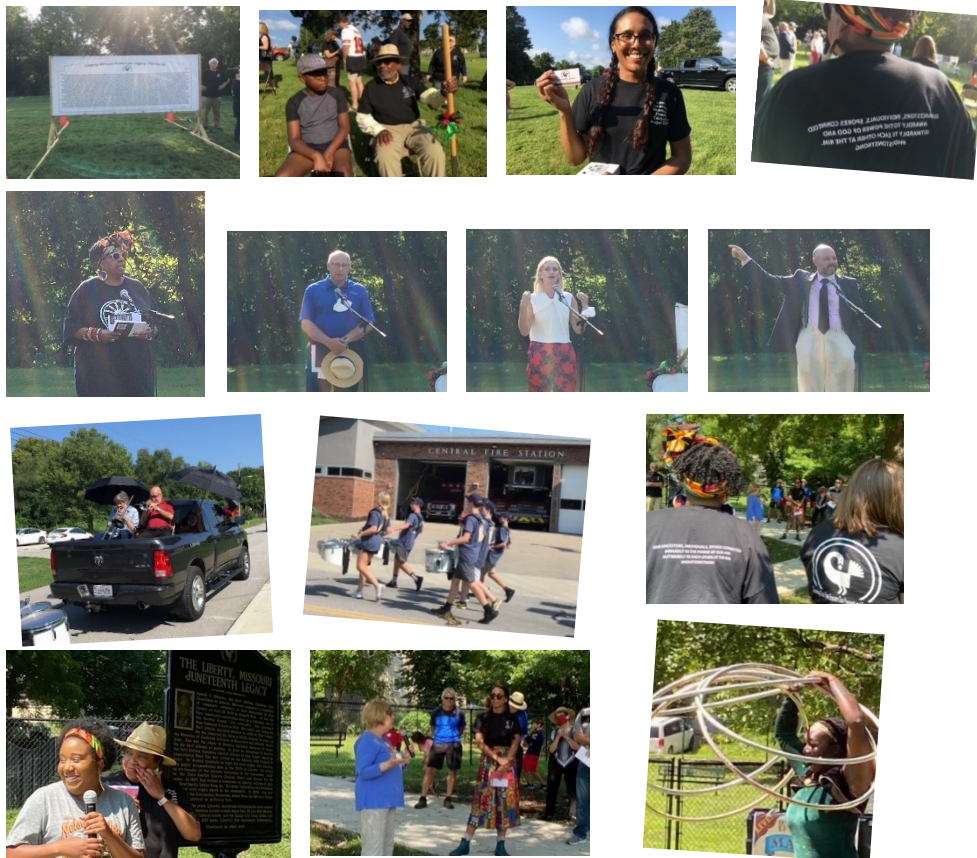
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<sup>27</sup> [Memorial coming to cemetery, additions in Ruth Moore Park | Community Living | mycouriertribune.com](http://www.libertylegacymemorial.org/read-the-stories)

<sup>28</sup> [Black History in Liberty, Missouri — LIBERTY AFRICAN AMERICAN LEGACY MEMORIAL \(libertylegacymemorial.org\)](http://www.libertylegacymemorial.org)



caretaker for the boys of the Boarding Club at William Jewell College for more than 25 years. **James Murray** sold spring water and firewood from his property in south Liberty. **Jesse E. Dodd, Sr.** purchased the dry-cleaning service where he had worked for many years and employed some of his own children and other members of the African American community. The remains of his brother, **Paster Dodd**, are buried at Fairview cemetery with a prominent headstone.<sup>29</sup>



When I walk or drive around Liberty and know some of this her/his/ourstory, I feel more **connected** to what came before and thus perceive the present and future differently than I might otherwise. Without the efforts of networked local historians and organizations, I would be more ignorant and uninformed. **Liberty is a palimpsest of cultures**

<sup>29</sup> I've been asked to write about Lucy Lincoln Jacobs Stewart, a midwife, buried in Fairview cemetery. She was born in the 1850s, married in 1873, and had six children. She outlived her husband and died on February 23, 1939, in her 80s (a few months before my mother was born). What an honor. I have finally learned the value of ancestry.com.

**combining over time.** Such her/his/ourstory was not taught to me at school. I think back and wonder that I was so uncritical about what I was spooned. Did I even recognize my thirst for knowing beyond the narrow confines of our textbooks? The telling of her/his/ourstory needs to be continually unspun and re-spun...

Some of the recent work to unearth stories of African Americans in Liberty has been coordinated by **Professor Emeritus of English Dr. Cecelia A.**

**Robinson**, from Hempstead, Texas, who started living in Missouri in 1969 during her graduate studies. Thus far, she is the only African American to have received tenure as a professor at William Jewell College in Liberty. I lovingly call her the Zora Neale Hurston of Clay County. Many, including **Ann Henning**, a long-term volunteer at Clay County Archives and Historical Library, have assisted such efforts.



I recognize the passion of people like Hazel Black and Cecelia Robinson of Liberty, Missouri, and Miss B. of St. Augustine, Florida, who work(ed) across socioeconomic and color lines to help ensure that we are able to know her/his/ourstory – which makes us more humxn and informs how we fashion the future. These women, and those with whom they work, are real community-builders. And such work is going on across the country. What if it featured more prominently in the media, and in curricula?

I also appreciate **Clay Countians for Inclusion**<sup>30</sup>, led by Theresa A. Byrd<sup>31</sup> of Clay County African American Legacy Inc. and David Sallee, former president of William Jewell College. The organization's members are

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<sup>30</sup> [Clay Countians 4 Inclusion \(cc4i.org\)](http://cc4i.org)

<sup>31</sup> Theresa Byrd is interviewed by the press: [Confederate statue haunts Blacks in Mo. town - StarTribune.com](#) and [Liberty city officials start process to take control of cemetery land with Confederate monument \(kmbc.com\)](#) and [Debate rages on over whether to remove Confederate monument at Liberty Cemetery | FOX 4 Kansas City WDAF-TV \(fox4kc.com\)](#)

working across many social boundaries to educate about racism and discrimination and promote equity, justice, and inclusion. One of the projects is to and ensure that a Confederate monument<sup>32</sup> – topped by a soldier holding the butt of his rifle to the ground and looking directly toward the Black section of Fairview cemetery – comes down from the public cemetery.

I hope this letter from me to you is a way to connect and reflects a moment in time, signs of reckoning with history.

Let me close by sharing that I also visited the gravesite of my mother in Resurrection Cemetery in Lenexa, Kansas. She died December 21, 2020, and, after having attended her funeral virtually, I was able to pay my respects on August 23, 2021. She always reminded us to ensure that our children know they are loved. From generation to generation, they draw on the power of that love to affirm themselves and overcome life's obstacles and be useful. May her soul rest in peace.



Hope you appreciated the stories.

I appreciate that you took the time to read them. Travel well through life – wherever you travel.

With love,



Kathryn Toure

*Mary Kathryn Jirak Navrat Stuchlik Laughlin Olden Tajchman Toure*

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<sup>32</sup> See an essay by David Sallee: [The Lynching Tree — Clay Countians 4 Inclusion \(cc4i.org\)](https://www.cc4i.org/essay/the-lynching-tree-clay-countians-4-inclusion)





Back home  
Happy Ethiopian New Year  
11 September