A Self-Reliant People

GREAT DEANWOOD HERITAGE TRAIL

In the 1800s, much of Washington's development followed decisions made by city leaders and investors, who favored areas northwest of the Anacostia. Land here remained relatively untouched, and many streets were unpaved into the 1960s. Because builders chose not to apply racial restrictions on who could buy here, African American migrants found Deanwood welcoming, affordable, and convenient. The pioneering National Training School for Women and Girls, founded by Nannie Helen Burroughs (whose portrait appears on each Deanwood Heritage Trail sign), attracted educators to the neighborhood.

New residents often built their own homes and created communities where for years no one locked their doors, adults treated all children as their own, and children behaved accordingly. On this trail you will see the rich parkland, handcrafted dwellings, and religious and social gathering places that have made Deanwood an oasis of dignity and self-determination for generations.

-maker: Linda Donavan Harper, Mara Cherkasky, Sarah

Greater Deanwood today encompasses the historic neighborhoods of Deanwood, Burrville, Lincoln Heights, and Whittingham.

Long a country town at the edge of Washington, DC's urban center, Deanwood was forged out of former slave plantations during the decades following the Civil War. It became one of Washington's earliest predominantly African American communities.

Greater Deanwood Heritage Trail is produced by Linda Donavan Harper, Mara Cherkasky, Sarah

The trail begins at the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail station. To follow the trail, we recommend that you take Metrorail U8 (toward Capitol Heights) to the stop at Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue and Division Avenue, then turn right on Division Avenue and walk one block to Sign 1. The trail ends at the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail station.

Please note: Sign 1 is located at Division Avenue and Foote Street. To follow the trail, we recommend that you take Metrorail U8 (toward Capitol Heights) to the stop at Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue and Division Avenue, then turn right on Division Avenue and walk one block to Sign 1. The trail ends at the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail station.

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