On this self-guided walking tour of Georgia Ave./Pleasant Plains, historical markers lead you to:

– The route President Lincoln once rode to reach his summer cottage.

– Howard University and its luminaries.


– The site of Griffith Stadium, the one-time home of the Washington Grays, the Washington Senators, and the Washington Redskins.

– Novelist and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston’s rooming house.

– The site of an early German/Irish immigrant neighborhood where cows, pigs, and sheep ran free.

How many dreams and memories reside along Georgia Avenue! Walk this trail to relive the heyday of Seventh and T, its musicians and impresarios. Meet shop-keepers, intellectuals and activists, and all who thrived along one of DC’s oldest thoroughfares.
Welcome.

The neighborhoods along Seventh Street and Georgia Avenue — at the same time linked to official Washington and a world away from it — have witnessed human endeavor at its most earthy and its most exalted. Follow *Lift Every Voice: Georgia Ave./Pleasant Plains Heritage Trail* to meet those responsible for the birth and growth of the country’s first African American liberal arts college, the stars and the star-struck of Seventh and T, the revelers at Schuetzen Park, and the corner grocers, barbers, poets, and bootleggers of Georgia Avenue.

This keepsake guide summarizes the 19 signs of *Lift Every Voice: Georgia Ave./Pleasant Plains Heritage Trail*.
Lift Every Voice
Georgia Ave./Pleasant Plains Heritage Trail

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As you walk this trail, please keep safety in mind, just as you would while visiting any unfamiliar place.

On the cover: Detail of photo of Howard Hall by Carol Highsmith.
Library of Congress
WASHINGTON'S 12TH neighborhood heritage trail tells the story of Georgia Avenue — from Shaw, where it's called Seventh Street, to Petworth. Along the way it passes through Pleasant Plains, named for an 18th-century estate that spread north and west of Columbia Road, and through Park View, just north of Howard University.

The trail's name, *Lift Every Voice*, is borrowed from James Weldon Johnson's poem, later set to music and known as the “Negro National Anthem.” “Lift ev'ry voice and sing / Till earth and heaven ring / Ring with the harmonies of Liberty.” The name speaks to the rich African American history and culture of this area, and to the variety of voices you will encounter here.

Once known as the Seventh Street Turnpike, Georgia Avenue was built to extend Seventh Street beyond the city, which originally ended at Florida Avenue. Seventh Street started where it does today, at the wharves of Washington's Southwest waterfront, and continued through the main market square to the original city line. The turnpike carried Civil War soldiers to battle and President Lincoln to his summer home. It ran deep into Maryland, serving farmers who supplied the city.
During and after the Civil War (1861-1865) thousands of formerly enslaved people arrived in Washington, ready for new lives. They needed work, education, shelter, and medical care. To train leaders for this rapidly growing community, Howard University opened in 1867. Freedmen’s Hospital, founded by the U.S. government, soon moved near Howard and became its teaching hospital.

Nestled around the university and hospital was Howardtown, an area of small wood-frame houses that grew out of a wartime settlement of formerly enslaved people. Across Georgia Avenue was Cowtown, originally a community of German and Irish immigrants. Farm animals roamed freely in this area, and slaughterhouses and saloons operated along the turnpike.

After the Civil War streetcars carried crowds to Schuetzen Park, an amusement park and beer garden north of Howard University built by German Americans. In 1891 baseball fans began streaming into Howardtown’s Nationals Park. Griffith Stadium took over the spot, hosting sporting events, high school cadet drill teams, mass baptisms, concerts, and more.

As the 19th century gave way to the 20th, zoning laws closed the amusement park, and rowhouses took over the site. New housing and businesses replaced Howardtown and Cowtown. African Americans outnumbered, but did not entirely replace, white residents.

As Howard University became the national center for African American scholarship, the 1910 opening of the Howard Theatre made Seventh and T a black cultural mecca as well — long before U Street became Washington’s “Black Broadway.” Here young Duke Ellington worked after school as a soda jerk, and was inspired to compose his first music.
For African Americans, this area was a sanctuary, but one that sometimes collided with the racist society around it.

In the summer of 1919 racial tension around the country ran high. Valiant and patriotic African American veterans of World War I (1914-1918) had come home to find segregation more rigid than ever. Blacks vowed to fight it; whites vowed to stop them. Rioting broke out in many cities, including Washington. Thousands of black Washingtonians rallied here at the intersection of Seventh and Florida and successfully defended their neighborhood.

Peace returned. Zora Neale Hurston matriculated at Howard. New theaters, clubs, and restaurants opened here. Max Silverman’s record store helped launch local R&B musicians. Howard University Medical School graduated physicians who served the community and the nation, and its law school trained attorneys who would build the successful legal case against American segregation.

The 1960s arrived, bringing the Civil Rights, Feminist, Black Power, and anti-war movements. Howard University students seized the president’s office, successfully demanding a more socially relevant curriculum and more say on their campus.

Disturbances rocked the nation again in 1968, after the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Seventh Street here was hard hit, and did not recover for decades. Still, the late 1970s saw the arrival near Howard University of African-themed shops. Caribbean businesses also opened, serving a community with roots in this neighborhood since the 1940s.

The 1991 opening of Metrorail’s Green line prompted a modest revival of this storied artery. Two decades later the community, and music fans from all over, cheered as workers started to restore the long-empty Howard Theatre and return it to its past glory.
THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 4, 1968. The news that the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., has been assassinated in Memphis makes its way like lightning through the city. Nearby at 14th and U Streets — once the cultural heart of DC’s African American community and a bustling area where hundreds change buses and shop — faces register first shock and then anger. People demand that businesses close out of respect for Dr. King. Then individuals begin breaking windows, looting some places, burning others. The violence spreads along U Street to this intersection, where, over the next three days, almost every white-owned business on Seventh between S Street and Florida Avenue is destroyed.

A United Planning Organization leader tells the Washington Post that day, “Black Americans feel more divided from white Americans than at any time in this century.”

In addition to expressing grief, the 1968 riots were a response to historical inequities in housing, jobs, and schools, and to the city’s neglect of black neighborhoods. “We’re burning the rats and roaches along with everything else,” proclaimed a youngster who had just set fire to a store here. The rubble and crime left behind scarred this neighborhood for years, and those who once enjoyed its restaurants and clubs stayed away. While officials and activists worked on rebuilding plans almost immediately — a playground opened in summer 1969 where Waxie Maxie’s had stood at 1836 Seventh Street — it would take many long years and the 1991 opening of this Metro station to make substantial progress.
back in the day, Seventh and T was the place to go for a good time. Once the Howard Theatre opened in 1910, restaurants, nightclubs, and businesses followed. As Marita Golden wrote in Long Distance Life, “Seventh Street, dressed in neon, scented with the hungry perfume of passion, hummed and whistled and scatted its way into the night.”

Seventh Street inspired. DC native Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington based his first composition, “Soda Fountain Rag,” on the nearby Poodle Dog Café, where he worked after school as a soda jerk around 1915. In the 1960s under-aged fan and neighbor Reggie Kelley “delighted in hanging outside the doors” of Mike’s New Breed at 1912 Seventh Street “listening to the house bands.”

In 1938, at 1836 Seventh, Max Silverman started what became the Waxie Maxie’s chain of 28 record stores. Fans of Sarah Vaughan, Buddy Rich, and rising local black artists flocked to Silverman’s jam sessions and to live radio broadcasts held in the storefront’s window, the “goldfish bowl.” The teen-aged Ahmet Ertegun, son of Turkey’s ambassador to Washington, was a frequent customer. Inspired by the R&B of Seventh and T, Ertegun founded Atlantic Records in 1947, eventually recording DC’s Clovers, as well as Ray Charles, the Rolling Stones, and many others.

The Southern Aid Society Building and Dunbar movie house opened on this corner in 1921. African American architect Isaiah T. Hatton designed the building, and Lewis Giles, Sr., just starting a long career as a Washington architect, was chief draftsman.
The legendary Howard opened in 1910 as the nation's first major theater built for African Americans. It offered plays, variety shows, concerts, and movies. In the 1930s, under manager Shep Allen, the Howard became part of the segregation-era “Chitlin’ Circuit” for African American performers. Allen’s Amateur Night contests launched Billy Eckstine, Pearl Bailey, and many others. Godfather of Go-Go Chuck Brown, the inventor of “DC’s own sound,” first worked outside the Howard Theatre as a youngster, calling: “Shoes shined, shoes shined, five cents, a nickel, or a half a dime!”

As the neighborhood went, so did the Howard. Although the theater escaped damage in the riots of April 1968, audiences thereafter avoided the riot-scarred neighborhood. The Howard closed in 1970, reopened in 1974, and closed again. Rehabilitation started in 2010.

For years, the Howard’s stage doors opened to Wiltberger Street near the Wonder Bread Bakery, formerly Dorsch’s White Cross Bakery. Fans would linger amid the aroma of fresh bread, watching for performers bound for U Street night spots or an after-show soiree at Cecelia’s. This area’s bakeries included two others near Howard University: Corby (later Continental) and Bond Bread. Baseball fans leaving Griffith Stadium remember stopping for fresh doughnuts.

Near the Howard Theatre at 614 S Street was Jean Clore’s Guest House and after-hours club. “Well-known dignitaries from every walk of life” stayed at Clore’s “swanky homey hotel,” according to the black press of the 1930s. In 1982 the New Community Church moved into the building.
Shortly after midnight on July 22, 1919, James Scott, an African American Army veteran, boarded a streetcar at this corner and nearly lost his life.

A few days before, a white mob, including many veterans of World War I, had terrorized Southwest DC, randomly attacking black people in retaliation for an alleged assault on a white woman. Spurred by rumors and newspaper headlines, attackers targeted other black neighborhoods. But Scott didn’t know this. Boarding the streetcar here, he was stunned to hear white passengers yell, “Lynch him!” As he attempted to flee, the conductor shot at him three times.

That summer race relations were tense nationwide, with rioting in many cities. African American Washingtonians who fought bravely overseas came home to a city more segregated than ever. President Woodrow Wilson’s administration had established separate facilities for black federal employees. Unemployment was high. African Americans who had been respected as soldiers vowed to fight U.S. racism. Most whites vowed to keep them “in their place.”

As mobs raged, some 2,000 African Americans rallied here. Veteran sharpshooters manned the Howard Theatre’s roof; others patrolled Seventh Street. Clergymen called on President Wilson to protect the community. By the time U.S. troops quelled the violence, seven people were dead and hundreds were injured. But African Americans took pride in the successful defense of their neighborhoods.

Among those decrying the violence was William A. Taylor, founding pastor of the Florida Avenue Baptist Church, 623 Florida Avenue. The original 1913 church building was replaced in 1964.
Abe Pollin remembered sitting in Griffith Stadium's bleachers as a child. “I would look out at these good seats and say, ‘Some day, maybe I will get a good seat.’” When Pollin’s MCI Center opened downtown in 1997, the respected real estate developer got himself — and gave his city — thousands of good seats.

Griffith Stadium occupied this block until it was razed in 1965. (Howard University Hospital opened here ten years later.) During the 1940s, Griffith crowds cheered batting superstar Josh Gibson of the Homestead Grays, the Negro League team that won more games than any other hometown team. Here ace pitcher Walter Johnson led the all-white Washington Senators to their only World Series victory in 1924. While Griffith was one of DC’s few public venues open to all during segregation, the races sat separately.

Griffith also hosted the Washington Redskins (1937-1961), student cadet competitions, National Negro Opera Company performances, and mass baptisms conducted by Elder Lightfoot Solomon Michaux, whose Church of God still stands just across Georgia Avenue. The charismatic Michaux organized affordable housing, had his own radio show, and served bargain meals at the Happy News Café.

In 1946 impresario David Rosenberg hired prominent African American architect Albert Cassell to design a music hall at 815 V Street. Soon after, Duke Ellington lent his name to a nightclub there. By 1952 WUST Radio occupied the facility, hosting evangelical broadcasts, jazz, and later, reggae and go-go concerts. After WUST moved to Virginia, the 9:30 Club relocated there from 930 F Street.
During the Civil War (1861-1865), thousands of formerly enslaved people came to Washington in search of new lives. They needed work, education, shelter — and health care. In 1862 the U.S. government responded with Freedmen’s Hospital, at 12th and R Streets, NW.

Less than a decade later, Freedmen’s moved near Fifth and W Streets and became Howard University’s teaching hospital. At a time of strict segregation, Freedmen’s, like the university itself, was open to all, offering high-level care and education.

Freedmen’s focused on training physicians, but also became a top research institution. Pediatrician Roland Scott pioneered studies on sickle-cell anemia. Washingtonian Charles R. Drew, who developed life-saving methods for mass blood banking during World War II, headed Freedmen’s Surgery Department from 1941 until his death in 1950. From 1908 until 1975, Freedmen’s operated here. The name changed to Howard University Hospital when it reopened on Georgia Avenue.

Among the Howard-associated physicians who cared for their community was Ionia Whipper, a graduate who sheltered unwed mothers in her home/clinic at 511 Florida Avenue during the 1940s. Former faculty member Simeon Carson opened a private hospital at 1822 Fourth Street. During national Civil Rights demonstrations Freedmen’s treated participants free of charge.

Just east of here is the edge of what oldtimers called Howardtown, an area of wood-frame houses that grew from a settlement of formerly enslaved people during and after the Civil War. The Kelly Miller Dwellings replaced much of Howardtown in the early 1940s.

The 1930 class of nursing students on the front steps of Freedmen’s Hospital, which closed when Howard University Hospital opened on Georgia Avenue.

Scurlock Studio Records, Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Back in the ‘60s, everyone came to Ed Murphy’s Supper Club, in the 2200 block of Georgia Avenue. Originally suits and ties were mandatory for the club’s high-powered male patrons. But as the Black Power movement grew, the dress code relaxed to include dashikis or turtlenecks for the civil rights and DC statehood activists who gathered there.

In 1978 Murphy built the ambitious Harambee House Hotel, and reopened the supper club on its second floor. “Harambee House came into my father’s spirit during the height of the 1968 riots,” recalled Murphy’s son Keith. When it opened, Harambee House was one of the few first-class hotels built, owned, and operated by an African American in U.S. history. With African décor and high-end amenities, the hotel attracted guests such as Jesse Jackson and Louis Farrakhan. Stevie Wonder, Nancy Wilson, and other top entertainers performed in the supper club. The Kilimanjaro Room hosted press conferences by Muhammad Ali, Coretta Scott King, Carl Stokes, and John Conyers. After two years of punishing debt, however, Murphy sold the hotel to Howard University.

Beginning in the early 1900s, the blocks on the west side of Georgia Avenue were filled with industrial activities: junk yards, plumbing shops, and bakeries. During the streetcar era (1862-1962), youngsters entertained themselves watching “the pit,” the point in the route where southbound streetcars switched from overhead electric wires to an underground power source (and vice versa for northbound trains). Congress had banned the use of overhead wires south of Florida Avenue.
Before 1871, this area was an Irish and German immigrant neighborhood known as "Cowtown."

That’s because cows, pigs, and sheep roamed freely here, while those kept in Washington City, south of Boundary Street (today’s Florida Avenue), had to be penned. A stream bordering Sherman Avenue carried away the reeking refuse from Cowtown’s slaughterhouses.

While the livestock and slaughterhouses eventually left, the low-income, multi-ethnic neighborhood’s poor reputation remained. Odessa Marie Madre, DC’s own “Al Capone,” grew up here and later ran a Cowtown “jill joint” selling bootleg liquor. By the 1940s juvenile gangs known as the “Bonecrushers” and “Fifth Street Tigers” committed not-so-petty crimes. Then local police officer Oliver Cowan created the Junior Police and Citizen Corps, so youth could “solve its own problems.” Unlike the segregated Boys’ Clubs and Boy Scouts, the Corps encouraged interracial friendships and included girls. Juvenile arrests dropped dramatically.

From the 1880s to the 1950s, Garfield Hospital stood just west of here. Garfield Terrace, DC’s first public housing designed for elderly residents, replaced the hospital in 1965, bringing innovative wheelchair-accessible foot paths and community kitchens.

Corby Brothers Bakery opened across Georgia Avenue in 1911. Charles and William Corby grew very rich after inventing machines and processes that revolutionized baking and led to mass distribution of bread. Eventually Continental Baking Co. bought out the Corbys, and the factory turned to making Wonder Bread. Howard University then bought and adapted the old plant for offices and shops.
As the Civil War ended in 1865, most formerly enslaved African Americans arriving in the District could not read or write. In 1867 the First Congregational Society, after considering opening a school to train teachers and preachers, instead established Howard University to teach liberal arts. The university has graduated such notables as Vernon Jordan, Toni Morrison, Jessye Norman, and Andrew Young.

During the segregation era (1880s-1950s), white universities discriminated in their hiring. But Howard hired African Americans with PhDs, assembling a faculty of extraordinary gifts and accomplishments. Luminaries included historian Carter G. Woodson, philosopher Alain Locke, sociologists Kelly Miller and E. Franklin Frazier, artist Lois Mailou Jones, and educator Lucy Diggs Slowe. Appointed in 1926 as Howard’s first black president, the Reverend Mordecai W. Johnson elevated Howard from a small, underfunded institution into “the Capstone,” a highly respected, PhD-granting university.

In the early 1930s, under Dean Charles Hamilton Houston, Howard’s law school trained future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. The two later led an NAACP team whose efforts eventually toppled legal segregation in America, including in public schools (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954). On that team were Howard law professors James M. Nabrit (later Howard president), George E.C. Hayes, William H. Hastie, and Spottswood Robinson III, and historian John Hope Franklin.

Atop the hill is Howard Hall (1869), originally home to the Civil War hero for whom the university is named. General Oliver Otis Howard led the Freedmen’s Bureau, helped found the school, and served as its third president.
Howard University has a long history of student activism. Students of the 1930s and ’40s protested lynchings nationwide and discriminatory DC businesses. In the early 1960s students organized sit-ins, registered voters in the South, and discussed pan-African theories. In 1966 university traditions merged with the Black Power movement when students elected the Afro-sporting activist Robin Gregory as Homecoming Queen.

The following spring students protested the Vietnam War, charging that black soldiers fought for “freedom they do not have” at home. After students boycotted classes, Howard dropped the required military (ROTC) training that put many on the path to Vietnam. In March 1968 students demanding a more Afrocentric curriculum seized the Administration Building. Writing to President James M. Nabrit, himself a civil rights icon, students insisted that Howard open to the wider black community, produce “leaders who take pride in their true identity,” and become “the center of Afro-American thought.” The negotiated settlement gave students more say in curricular and disciplinary issues. One month later a stunned campus united in grief over the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Many graduates continued the struggle. Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Toure) chaired the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and eventually moved to Guinea and worked for pan-African revolution. Student leaders Charlie Cobb and Anthony Gittens co-founded DC’s first Afrocentric bookstore, the Drum and Spear. Former theology student Douglas Moore led the Black United Front and helped found the DC Statehood Committee.
The body of water that inspired the line in Howard University’s alma mater, “far above the lake so blue stands old Howard firm and true,” is McMillan Reservoir, which opened in 1902 to supply water to the city. The reservoir and the Old Soldiers’ Home grounds nearby created a green oasis for Howard and the surrounding community. On summer nights before World War II, families fled their hot rowhouses to sleep on blankets near the cooling water.

Howard’s neighbors, long uplifted by the university’s intellectual life, have enjoyed its traditions, especially Homecoming. In 1926 a crowd of 16,000 dedicated Howard’s new stadium, and cheered as the Bisons crushed Lincoln University’s Lions, 32-0. The annual Thanksgiving Day football game was the centerpiece of Classic Week’s concerts, receptions, and dinner dances.

Among the speakers at the 1926 stadium dedication was its designer, Professor Albert Cassell. The architect oversaw Howard’s expansion in the 1930s, designing 16 campus buildings.

Lynn C. French, who grew up near the campus, remembered attending Howard commencements with her family beginning in the 1940s — not only to cheer graduating friends and relatives, but also to hear the inspirational speeches. Just a year after signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964, President Lyndon Johnson addressed the graduates, pledging to enforce equal rights for all Americans: “It is not enough to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.” More recently Colin Powell and Oprah Winfrey have addressed the graduating class.
Lift Every Voice: Georgia Ave./Pleasant Plains Heritage Trail is an Official Washington, DC Walking Trail. The 1.9-mile route is defined by 19 illustrated historical markers, each capped with an H. Sign 1 stands just outside the entrance to the Shaw-Howard U station at the northeast corner of Seventh and S Streets, and Sign 19 is just outside the Southbound exit of the Georgia Ave-Petworth station, both on Metrorail's M Green line. You may begin your tour at any sign. The uphill walk offers about two hours of gentle exercise. If you prefer to walk downhill, begin at Sign 19, at the Georgia Ave-Petworth station.
During the Civil War, thousands of once-enslaved people crowded into DC, desperate for shelter, work, and protection. In 1863 the National Association for the Relief of Destitute Colored Women and Children opened a shelter in Georgetown.

The National Home, managed by prominent African American women, was the city’s only foster facility for black children. It taught them basic skills and placed them for adoption. Eventually the home moved to 733 Euclid Street. Its successor donated its building to the Emergence Community Arts Collective, which opened in 2006.

Miner Normal School (later Teachers College), founded in 1851 to train African American teachers, once occupied 2565 Georgia Avenue. At 800 Euclid Street is Banneker High School, DC’s model academic high school since 1981. The school borders Banneker Recreation Center, with one of the few public pools open to black swimmers before desegregation in the 1950s.

Dolores Tucker, who grew up at 1000 Euclid, remembered a neighborhood filled with teachers. After Tucker’s mother Gladys Williams left teaching to raise her family, “teachers on their way to school used to stop at our home to have coffee with my mother,” she said. “It was Grand Central Station.”

On the southeast corner of Georgia and Fairmont, Italian immigrants Frank and Mary Guerra opened the original Howard Delicatessen in 1923. In 1988 Kenny Gilmore took over the business. Gilmore, godson to the Guerras’ daughter, had grown up two doors away and worked in the deli as a young boy.
Along the “Nile Valley”

Georgia Avenue and Girard Street NW

With its Afro-centric shops and connections to Howard University, this stretch of Georgia Avenue has been called the “Nile Valley.” Blue Nile Botanicals opened first at 2826 Georgia in 1977. Hodari Ali, a former editor of Howard’s student newspaper, followed with Pyramid Books at 2849 Georgia, where businessman Kenny Gilmore remembered finding “the whole 360 degrees of black life.” Filmmaker and Howard Professor Haile Gerima opened Sankofa café/bookstore at 2714 Georgia in 1999.

Long before the bookstores arrived, the Cardozo Sisters operated a hair salon across the street in Howard Manor. Founded in Elizabeth Cardozo Barker’s upstairs apartment, the salon set a refined tone. Its uniformed staff were prohibited from “speaking loudly, gossiping, or calling customers by their first names.” The three daughters of DC educator Francis Lewis Cardozo, Jr., trained dozens of hairdressers. Barker, a member of the city’s Board of Cosmetology, fought successfully to desegregate the profession.

Ernest Myers began cutting hair at the Eagle Barber Shop, 2800 Georgia, in 1947 and eventually bought the business. In order to attract mothers and their young sons, Myers recalled, he played only Christian radio music before 2 pm. Some high-powered clients, including Howard University presidents, first came to Myers as students.

Deas Delicatessen opened in 1961 at 2901 Georgia, one block north, offering Howard students a three-meal-a-day plan, and serving such celebrities as comedian/activist Dick Gregory and the Urban League’s Vernon Jordan.

Discover more: DC native Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington lived with his wife Edna and their son Mercer at 2728 Sherman Avenue from about 1919 to 1921.
Rowhouses on this block were built by developer Harry Wardman, whose buildings are known for elegant, solid construction. When these became available in 1912, buyers snapped them up. Among them were an electrician, a policeman, and an iron worker.

All were working class, and all were white. Wardman, like most developers of his era, had added a covenant, or agreement, to the deeds prohibiting sale or rental to “any Negro or colored person under a penalty of Two Thousand dollars.” Despite the covenants, by 1930 the houses were all occupied by African Americans. The change happened partly because of the race riot that occurred near here in 1919, and partly because black residential sections near U Street and Howard University expanded, and owners chose to ignore the agreements. In 1948 the Supreme Court declared racial covenants unenforceable.

Racial change is never permanent, though. In 1956, when Lily Jones and her family moved to Hobart Place, she found a few white neighbors: “When we moved in,” recalled Jones, “they moved out.” In her time on Hobart Place, Jones saw Latino families come and go, and the return of whites. Recently multi-racial block parties resumed here, where Jones and her husband George raised eight children in their “sturdy, well-built” house.

This block’s best-kept secret may be its tiny “pocket parks.” Responding to requests from the Hobart Place Block Club, Lady Bird Johnson, wife of President Lyndon B. Johnson, added Hobart Place’s existing parks to her campaign to beautify Washington. Local philanthropists Carmen and David Lloyd Kreeger funded the work.
“What do you think I was doing in Washington all that time if not getting cultured. . . . Treat me refined.”

— ZORA NEALE HURSTON TO LANGSTON HUGHES, 1931

The house at 3017 Sherman Avenue once was a boarding house for Howard University students. In 1923 a determined and talented young woman from the tiny town of Eatonville, Florida, lived here while earning an Associate's Degree at Howard. In a short time she would win international acclaim as novelist and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston.

Hurston devoured Howard's opportunities. She performed in campus theater, joined Zeta Phi Beta sorority, and co-founded the student newspaper, which she named *The Hill Top*. She published her first short story in *The Stylus*, Howard's literary magazine. She attended renowned poet Georgia Douglas Johnson's literary salon, meeting the best-known black writers of the time. To support herself, Hurston cleaned houses and waited tables at the exclusive, all-white Cosmos Club. New York's black literary leaders discovered Hurston, who soon left for Harlem. There she helped spur the New Negro Renaissance, a period of intense cultural productivity and racial uplift. She went on to study ethnography under Franz Boas at Columbia University and later collected folklore, returning occasionally to DC for professional meetings. In 1943 Howard honored her with a distinguished alumna award.

At the corner of Kenyon Street and Sherman Avenue is Chavez-Bruce Preparatory Public Charter School. Built as the Blanche K. Bruce Elementary School, it opened for “colored” students in 1898. Monroe Elementary, at Georgia and Columbia, opened for white children in 1889, then switched to the “colored division” in 1931. Four decades later Bruce and Monroe merged in a new building at Georgia and Irving.
Back when this area was open fields, the German American Schuetzen Verein (marksmanship society) created an amusement park. Washingtonians flocked to Schuetzen Park for target shooting, concerts, dancing, bowling, and picnics. The breezy, hilltop beer garden drew hundreds on hot summer nights. The 12.5-acre park stretched roughly from Kenyon south to Hobart Place.

The fun ended in 1891, however, when Congress banned the sale of alcoholic beverages within a mile of the nearby Old Soldiers’ Home. As saloons closed and property values soared, the society sold the park. Soon rowhouses arose in “Park View,” named for the nearby Soldiers’ Home grounds.

For four decades, Arthur E. Smith’s Modern School of Music offered top-notch instruction to children and adults, first at 749 Park Road and then at 3109 Georgia. Smith trained at DC’s Armstrong High School, Howard University, and the Julliard School before founding the school in the mid-1930s. Graduates included jazz saxophonist Charlie Hampton, who led the Howard Theatre’s house band in the 1960s.

From 1963 until his death in 1983, Morris Morgan of Morgan’s Seafood, 3200 Georgia Avenue, served steamed crabs and spiced shrimp to neighborhood regulars and city politicians. Former DC Councilmember Charlene Drew Jarvis called Morgan “the ombudsman of Georgia Avenue” for 20 years of fostering community connections.

John P. Murchison, Jr., opened Inter-City Mortgage at 3005 Georgia Avenue in 1968 as a pioneering full-service, federally approved African American mortgage lender. With white-owned banks still making homeownership difficult for blacks, the company helped thousands become homeowners.
CARIBBEAN IMMIGRANTS discovered this stretch of Georgia Avenue in the 1940s, bringing island culture along with jerk chicken, curry, and coco bread. Many, like Eric Williams, who later led Trinidad and Tobago to independence in 1962, came to study or teach at Howard University. Others came seeking better jobs. The 2000 Census showed that Caribbean-born residents formed DC’s second-largest immigrant group.

Because they spoke English, immigrants from the former British West Indies found transition to DC life relatively easy. They held tightly to their traditions, opening businesses and organizing an annual festival on Georgia Avenue. Mike and Rita’s opened on this block in 1974, specializing in roti (curried meat and potatoes wrapped in a flaky dough). Across the street, at Lamont, Brown’s Bakery served patties and spice buns. When it opened in 1980 almost three dozen West Indian establishments occupied this stretch of the avenue. Georgia Avenue Day and Carnival parades have featured spectacular costumes, calypso music, and dancing.

On Morton Street, to the east, the DC Housing Authority built the Park-Morton public housing complex in the early 1960s. The complex housed African Americans whose homes in Southwest DC were demolished during urban renewal to make way for modern apartments and offices.

DISCOVER MORE: Dr. Charles R. Drew, who developed a method for storing blood plasma on a mass scale during World War II, was head of surgery at Freedmen’s Hospital. In the early 1940s he lived with his family at 3324 Sherman Avenue, Apartment 1.
Braving a blizzard in February 1936, eager customers lined up to experience a modern, self-service, cash-only supermarket. Nehemiah Cohen and Samuel Lehrman’s Giant Food here on Georgia Avenue was the chain’s first. Although the Memphis-born Piggly Wiggly chain pioneered the supermarket concept, it took Giant to capture DC consumers.

Giant moved into the former Park View Market, which had opened in 1923 with 180 tiled stalls. Before the supermarket, food shopping meant stopping at stand-alone bakeries, butcher shops, and other specialty stores, or at stalls inside a market shed. In all cases, shopkeepers filled the orders. Although mom-and-pop stores offered customers credit between paydays and also delivery, Giant’s efficiency and lower prices nearly made small specialty stores obsolete.

Despite the arrival of supermarkets, small corner groceries continued to serve neighborhoods. Many were owned by Jewish families who belonged to the city-wide buying cooperative District Grocery Stores, or DGS. In the 1930s, three Jewish groceries operated on the 3300 block of Georgia, and at least 15 along the route of this trail.

The ornate police substation at 750 Park Road opened in 1901 as the 10th Precinct headquarters, serving 15 square miles of “suburbs” stretching north from Florida Avenue and Benning Road to the District line, and west to Rock Creek.

At 3641 Georgia Avenue is the former York movie theater. The York was built by theater mogul Harry Crandall, who also built the Tivoli (14th Street and Park Road) and Lincoln (U Street) movie palaces.
Mr. Lincoln’s Ride

It’s the summer of 1862. Early morning, but already hot and dusty. You’re standing at this spot, when you see a tall man on horseback. It’s President Abraham Lincoln. You’re pleased to see him, but not surprised. After all, he rides by here often.

Georgia Avenue, then the Seventh Street Turnpike, ran between downtown Washington and Rock Creek Church Road, which led to Lincoln’s summer cottage on the grounds of the Old Soldiers’ Home (now the Armed Forces Retirement Home). Though Lincoln generally traveled with military escorts, sometimes he sneaked out before dawn or after dark to journey in solitude.

During the Civil War (1861-1865), Lincoln occasionally stopped to visit with formerly enslaved men and women or wounded soldiers at settlements and Army camps along his route. Harewood Hospital, once located near today’s Washington Hospital Center, was one of these.

In March 1865 southern radical John Wilkes Booth heard that the president would attend a play at Campbell Hospital, then located at Sixth and Florida. Booth plotted unsuccessfully to kidnap Lincoln on his way back to the cottage. But a mere month later, he had his way, assassinating the president at Ford’s Theatre.

For 83 years Engine Company 24, DC’s first fully motorized firefighting unit, occupied the south end of this block. Though the facility closed in 1994, its handsome façade survives on the Metro cooling plant on New Hampshire Avenue just south of here. The Green line opened here in 1999.
Walk It. Hear It.

Let the voices, music, and sounds of the past guide your journey through two of DC’s most exciting neighborhoods.

Cultural Tourism DC

Cultural Tourism DC presents two Neighborhood Heritage Trail Audio Journeys

City Within a City Audio Tour
Explore the Jazz beats, the voices, and the inspiration of the individuals that lived along the Greater U Street Heritage Trail.

City War to Civil Rights Audio Tour
Listen to the stories of the people who shaped the history of a nation as you walk in their footsteps along the Downtown Heritage Trail.

Download the free, award-winning Downtown Heritage Trail Audio Tours at www.CulturalTourismDC.org
neighborhood heritage trail creation
begins with a community, extends through
story-sharing and oral history-gathering, and
ends in formal scholarly research. For more
information, please consult the Kiplinger
Library, Historical Society of Washington,
D.C., and the Washingtoniana Division, DC
Public Library. Also these selected works:

Valerie Boyd, *Wrapped in Rainbows: The Life of


1. **Roads to Diversity:** Adams Morgan

Explore Adams Morgan’s grand mansions and apartments, the location of the first Toys ‘R’ Us, and commerce from around the globe.

**M** Woodley Park-Zoo/Adams Morgan. Ride Circulator to first stop: Calvert St. and Adams Mill Rd. Sign 9 is across Adams Mill Rd.

2. **Tour of Duty:** Barracks Row

Capitol Hill’s Navy Yard and Marine Barracks district is one of the city’s oldest. Hear the Marine Band rehearsing and explore historic Eastern Market.

**M** Eastern Market to Sign 1.

3. **Battleground to Community:** Brightwood

Here, along the city’s first farm-to-market road, is where Union and Confederate troops met in the only Civil War battle to be fought in the District.

**M** Georgia Ave-Petworth, 70-series Metrobuses north to Sign 2 at Madison St. and Georgia Ave., or **M** Columbia Heights, 50-series Metrobuses north to Sign 1 at Colorado Ave., 14th and Jefferson Sts.

4. **Cultural Convergence:** Columbia Heights

Meet the old and new Columbia Heights and the people who changed our world with new technology, ideas, literature, laws, and leadership.

**M** Columbia Heights to Sign 1.

5. **A Self-Reliant People:** Greater Deanwood

Wood-frame houses evoke this traditionally African American neighborhood’s rural past. See where Nannie Helen Burroughs and Marvin Gaye made their names.

**M** Minnesota Ave. to Metrobus U8 (Capitol Heights) to Sign 1 at Division Ave. south of Nannie Helen Burroughs Ave.

6. **Civil War to Civil Rights:** Downtown

Follow the footsteps of Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Walt Whitman, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose lives intertwined with the history of the nation. Download the free audio tour from CulturalTourismDC.org.

**M** Archives-Navy Mem’l-Penn Quarter. Sign 1 on Seventh St. across Pennsylvania Ave.

7. **Village in the City:** Mount Pleasant

Trace the path from country village to fashionable streetcar suburb, working-class neighborhood, Latino barrio, and hub of arts and activism.

**M** Columbia Heights. Two blocks west to Sign 1 at 16th and Harvard Sts.

8. **Midcity at the Crossroads:** Shaw

Immigrants and old-timers, the powerful and the poor have mingled in Shaw since DC’s earliest days.

**M** Mt. Vernon Square/7th St–Convention Center to Sign 12.

9. **River Farms to Urban Towers:** Southwest

Visualize historic, ethnic Southwest amid today’s now-classic Modernist architecture, the result of mid-20th-century urban renewal.

**M** Waterfront-SEU to Sign 1.

10. **Top of the Town:** Tenleytown Heritage Trail

Visit traces of the village that grew up around John Tennally’s 18th-century tavern, and experience the neighborhood that played a key role in two world wars and in the development of modern communications.

**M** Tenleytown to Sign 1.

11. **City Within a City:** Greater U Street

Discover the historic center of African American DC, where Duke Ellington got his inspiration, Madame Evanti composed, and Thurgood Marshall strategized. Download the free audio tour from CulturalTourismDC.org.

**M** U St/African-Amer Civil War Memorial/Cardozo. Sign 1 is at 13th St. exit.
Another Good Walk: Art on Call

**Art on Call** re-uses obsolete police and fire call boxes as mini-showcases for community art and history. Go to CulturalTourismDC.org for call box locations in these neighborhoods:

1. **Capitol Hill**
   Boxes in various media evoke icons of times past, including an old movie theater and the “March King,” John Philip Sousa.

2. **Cathedral Heights**
   Four artists reveal key moments including U.S. Navy women in World War II and origins of the Washington National Cathedral.

3. **Cleveland Park**
   An engaging tour of distinguished residential architecture and notes on the Washington Ballet, the late, lamented Roma Restaurant, and more.

4. **Dupont Circle**
   Twenty-two artists’ clever and whimsical interpretations of the Dupont Circle fountain plus neighborhood history and fire tales.

5. **Forest Hills**
   Four artists present neighborhood lore on restored Peirce Mill, Native Americans who lived in Soapstone Valley, and more.

6. **Georgetown**
   The fabled community’s history and recent past, complete with quips, Kennedys, and colleges.

7. **Glover Park**
   Six artists explore the story of Charles Carroll Glover, the community’s wartime “victory gardens,” punk music roots, and more.

8. **Golden Triangle**
   An array of artistic styles evoke the lively spirit of this downtown area in the shadow of the White House.

9. **McLean Gardens**
   The fabulous Evalyn Walsh McLean, her Hope Diamond, and her Friendship Estate (replaced during World War II by McLean Gardens).

10. **Mount Pleasant**
    Compelling, original bronze sculptures by Michael K. Ross envision historic events.

11. **Sheridan/Kalorama**
    Gilt-edged boxes offer artwork honoring the neighborhood’s diplomatic and cultural pasts.

12. **Southwest**
    The National Cherry Blossom Festival inspired art by six artists.

13. **Tenleytown**
    Artist Lena Frumin celebrates the Hot Shoppes, 1903 firehouse, schools, and Fort Reno.

14. **Woodley Park**
    Artist Nancy McGill highlights Taft Bridge, the Wardman Park, and Woodley mansion (Maret School), and other landmarks.
If you enjoyed walking Lift Every Voice: Georgia Ave./Pleasant Plains Heritage Trail, you’ll want to explore these other District of Columbia Neighborhood Heritage Trails!

Roads to Diversity: Adams Morgan Heritage Trail
Tour of Duty: Barracks Row Heritage Trail
Battleground to Community: Brightwood Heritage Trail
Cultural Convergence: Columbia Heights Heritage Trail
Civil War to Civil Rights: Downtown Heritage Trail
A Self-Reliant People: Greater Deanwood Heritage Trail
Hub, Home, Heart: Greater H Street NE Heritage Trail
City Within a City: Greater U Street Heritage Trail
Village in the City: Mount Pleasant Heritage Trail
Midcity at the Crossroads: Shaw Heritage Trail
River Farms to Urban Towers: Southwest Heritage Trail
Top of the Town: Tenleytown Heritage Trail

Details at www.CulturalTourismDC.org

Visit www.CulturalTourismDC.org to explore the trail and learn about events and attractions that honor African American history in Washington, DC, including the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s life and legacy in DC.

Visit dclottery.com to learn more about the D.C. Lottery’s latest products and services.
Meetings held every
2nd Monday and 4th Wednesday @ 7pm

For information and meeting locations contact:
(202) 462-2285 Sylvia@ecacollective.org
(202) 723-0119 colroadman@yahoo.com
http://sites.google.com/site/pleasantplainsdc/

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with Cultural Tourism DC’s Events Update!

PASSPORT DC

A month’s worth of international art and culture every May. Embassies and international culture centers open their doors and showcase their music, dance, crafts, food, and more!

WalkingTown.DC
BikingTown.DC

Explore the city and discover a new neighborhood or reacquaint yourself with an old one. Each fall, Cultural Tourism DC offers dozens of walking and biking tours throughout all the wards of the city.

Stay on top of what’s happening in DC by signing up for the weekly Events Update.

Enjoy a week’s worth of art, music, film, exhibits and more delivered straight to your inbox every Wednesday.

It’s quick, it’s easy, and it’s free.

CulturalTourismDC.org

Cultural Tourism DC

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Cultural Tourism DC is an independent, nonprofit coalition of more than 230 culture, heritage, and community organizations throughout the Nation’s Capital. We help metro-area residents and visitors experience Washington’s authentic culture and heritage.

Neighborhood Heritage Trails are the Official Walking Trails of the District of Columbia.

The Georgia Ave./Pleasant Plains Heritage Trail Working Group is an ad-hoc, diverse coalition of neighborhood residents, business owners, activists, artists, scholars, and others organized to develop the Georgia Ave./Pleasant Plains Heritage Trail in cooperation with Cultural Tourism DC.

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