

**RALEIGH, N.C.** (February 1, 2022) — F.W. Woolworth store in Greensboro put [North Carolina](#) on the civil rights movement map. Six decades later, the [N.C. Civil Rights Trail](#) is guiding students of history to points of interest beyond the place where the sit-in movement took hold.

With newly designated sites, this initiative of the [N.C. African American Heritage Commission](#) features 14 stops with as many as 50 to be included when the trail is complete. Some stops commemorate protests sparked by the Woolworth sit-in, a story preserved at the [International Civil Rights Center & Museum](#). Other sites salute landmark court cases. And two should inspire a celebratory round of golf.

“Many of these stories come as a revelation,” said Visit North Carolina Director Wit Tuttell. “When you visit places where people took a stand, their stories inspire courage at a time of resonance with the issues at stake during the civil rights era.”

For travelers in pursuit of knowledge during [Black History Month](#) and beyond, Shelby, High Point and Raleigh are among the destinations that connect past and present with attractions and experiences that make a getaway worthwhile. Here are starting points for exploring the trail, a complement to the [U.S. Civil Rights Trail](#).

Shelby’s 20th-century history includes chapters as a political powerhouse and a major textiles center plus a list of natives and residents well-known to music fans: Earl Scruggs, Don Gibson, Alicia Bridges and Patty Loveless. Top picks for a civil rights-related tour:

- **104 E. Warren St.** From the Civil Rights Trail, the site commemorates the [Shelby Sit-Ins](#), “African Americans, led by local high school students, held sit-ins and picketed businesses in February 1960 to demand desegregation.” The business at the Warren Street address is [Buffalo Creek Gallery](#), one of Uptown Shelby’s shopping pleasures, and a mural depicting native son/NFL Hall of Famer Bobby Bell can be found a couple of blocks west.
- **Earl Scruggs Center.** The namesake banjo master adds star power to a regional history museum that illuminates the complexities of history in a place where Old South and New South meet. The Turning Road gallery, which focuses on economic, social and cultural change, includes oral histories plus a panel about David Lee and the Washington Sound. And the Common Threads touch table invites visitors to explore intersections of music, culture and social structures.
- **Cleveland County African American Heritage Trail.** Curated by the Scruggs Center, the driving tour covers 11 churches, schools and other sites, including the Washington Theatre, the only local theater that opened all seats to African Americans during segregation.
- **Sunset Cemetery.** Amid the monuments and funerary art, find the graves of [Thomas Dixon Jr.](#), a white supremacist whose novels were adapted as “The Birth of a Nation,” and [W.J. Cash](#), whose “The Mind of the South” confronted Southern culture. An independent committee is investigating unmarked graves in the cemetery’s “colored” section that might hold the remains of people who were enslaved.
- **Support Black-owned businesses.** Stay near the heart of town at the stately [Morgan & Wells Bed & Breakfast](#); fill up at [Sweethouse Bakery](#), [Phyllis’ Sweet Shop](#) and [Upscale Soulfood Restaurant and Catering](#); and shop at [Golden Thingz Natural Shop](#) and [Imperial Comics and Games](#).

Known as the “Home Furnishings Capital of the World,” High Point boasts a vibrant culture, a flourishing culinary scene and intriguing pockets of history. Top picks for a civil rights-related tour in the hometown of John Coltrane and Fantasia Barrino:

- **[Blair Park Municipal Golf Course](#)**. From the Civil Rights Trail, the courses is where prominent African American doctors H.H. Creft, Perry Little and George Simkins “forced the City of High Point to review its long-standing policy of segregated recreational facilities by playing golf at the Blair Park municipal course in December 1954.” Play a round and add nine more holes at Greensboro’s **[Gillespie Golf Course](#)**, a Civil Rights Trail site where six black players fought to integrate the municipal course.
- **John Coltrane sites**. The Core Gallery at the **[High Point Museum](#)** museum displays the piano that the legendary composer-saxophonist played while growing up in High Point. In the heart of town, Coltrane all but comes to life in Thomas J. Warren’s 8-foot **[bronze sculpture](#)**. And the **[Blair-Coltrane House](#)** (118 Underhill St.), where he lived growing up, is open for tours during the **[John Coltrane International Jazz & Blues Festival](#)**, held over Labor Day weekend, and on other occasions.
- **Historic Washington Street neighborhood**. **[Visit High Point](#)** provides a map of this once-flourishing Black business district. A mural depicting the late community leader Louis Haizlip was dedicated in 2021 as the kickoff for development of an African American History Trail. The High Point Museum offers occasional neighborhood walking tours.
- **Support Black-owned businesses**. Feast at **[Unwind on Main Café and Bar](#)**, **[Uncle Cheesecake](#)** and **[Mayberry Ice Cream & Sandwich Shop](#)**.

North Carolina’s capital city has abundant history and places to explore it, starting with the **[N.C. Museum of History](#)**. Its “Story of North Carolina” anchor exhibit includes an exploration of the civil rights era. Other key points of interest for civil rights travel:

- **[Village District](#)** (formerly Cameron Village). From the Civil Rights Trail, the site commemorates February 1960 sit-ins where “130 African American students entered multiple Raleigh establishments despite a meeting between church and city leaders to head off civil disobedience in the city.” The shopping district’s recent name change acknowledges the Cameron family’s legacy as slaveholders.
- **[Martin Luther King Memorial Gardens](#)**. The first public garden solely devoted to Dr. King and the civil rights movement, the space features a life-size bronze sculpture by Abbe Godwin, a water monument and a picnic shelter. The gardens are part of the **[U.S. Civil Rights Trail](#)**, which also includes Shaw University’s **[Estey Hall](#)**, the first U.S. building constructed for the education of Black women.
- **[John Chavis Memorial Park](#)**. Named for a free Black preacher and Revolutionary War veteran, the 26.5-acre park opened in 1937 as a “separate but equal” counterpart to Pullen Park. Features included a swimming pool, athletic fields, tennis courts, picnic shelters, an amphitheater and an Allan Herschell carousel that’s still in operation. Renovations to the park were completed in 2021.
- **And more**. Visit Raleigh extends the options with its **[African American Cultural Heritage guide](#)**, a guide that includes St. Augustine’s University and its **[historic chapel](#)**, the **[Pope House Museum](#)** and the **[City of Raleigh Museum](#)**.
- **Support Black-owned businesses**. Shop at the **[Black Friday Market](#)** and the **[Zen Succulent](#)**’s Raleigh store; fill up at **[Oro](#)**, **[Crema](#)**, **[Jack’s Seafood & Soul Food](#)** and **[Oak City Fish & Chips](#)** at Morgan Street Food Hall; and indulge at **[Adara Spa](#)**.

For destinations and organizations interested in becoming part of the N.C. Civil Rights Trail, the application process is open through Aug. 19. Find details **[here](#)**.

#### **About the N.C. Civil Rights Trail:**

An initiative of the N.C. African American Heritage Commission with support from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation and Visit North Carolina, the N.C. Civil Rights Trail will be developed with community involvement across the state. Forty to 50 sites will be designated with at least 10 in Tier I and 2 rural North Carolina counties in alignment with Gov. Roy Cooper’s **[Hometown Strong](#)** initiative. Completion of the program is targeted for 2024 at a cost of \$173,500 to cover a full-time program coordinator; development of a digital GIS map; development of an interactive web portal, featuring at least 150 sites; and up to 50 physical community-based markers.

**About the N.C. African American Heritage Commission:**

Created in 2008, the African American Heritage Commission is a division of the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The commission works across the department to preserve, protect and promote the state's African American history, art and culture for all people. Its endeavors include the identification of heritage sites, compiling resources for educators, extending the work of national programs such as the National Park Service's Network to Freedom Underground Railroad, and independent initiatives including Oasis Spaces: Green Book Project. [aaahc.nc.gov](http://aaahc.nc.gov)

**About the William G. Pomeroy Foundation:**

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation is committed to supporting the celebration and preservation of community history; and to raising awareness, supporting research and improving the quality of care for patients and their families who are facing a blood cancer diagnosis. One of their initiatives is helping people to celebrate their community's history. They meet this by providing grants to obtain signage in the form of roadside markers and plaques. Since 2006, they have funded over 1,300 signs across the United States, all the way to Alaska. [Wgpfoundation.org](http://Wgpfoundation.org)

**About Visit North Carolina:**

Visit North Carolina is part of the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#). Established in 2014, the EDPNC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that oversees the state's efforts in business and job recruitment and retention, international trade, and tourism, film and sports development. The mission of Visit North Carolina is to unify and lead the state in developing North Carolina as a major destination for leisure travel, group tours, meetings and conventions, sports events and film production. For more information on North Carolina's destinations and travel assets, go to [VisitNC.com](http://VisitNC.com).

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<https://media.visitnc.com/Explore-Civil-Rights-Stories-on-NC-Getaways>