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*African American Heritage in the Upper Housatonic Valley* tells the stories of Black luminaries who have lived in the area—W.E.B. Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, to name but a few—and details the life and times of the many ordinary yet extraordinary African Americans who have made their marks in the region from the 1700s to the present. The book is a guide to the people and places along the African American Heritage Trail, which encompasses the twenty-nine Massachusetts and Connecticut towns in the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. It features 120 photos and illustrations, eight original maps, 67 articles, a timeline, a directory of local and regional resources, and trail guides to fourteen communities.

**TO ORDER**  
*African American Heritage in the Upper Housatonic Valley*

**CONTACT**

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The *African American Heritage Trail* is a project of the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area



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Fitch-Hoose House, 6 Gulf Road

The Fitch-Hoose House, in a corner of town believed active on the Underground Railroad, was built by William Bogart in 1846 and sold to Henry Fitch, a man of African descent. Philip Hoose settled in Dalton in the 1820s. His grandson Charles Hoose bought the story-and-a-half farmhouse in 1868 and three generations of the family lived there for nearly 100 years. One Hoose, Edward, enlisted with the Mass. 54th in 1863. "The house is an authentic illustration of the living conditions of poorer people during the mid to late 19th century, as well as representing the improved domestic standards of African Americans in the same period," according to the National Register listing. The town took the property for back taxes in 2004. The Dalton Historical Commission restored the building and held a dedication in 2018. It is open to the public at specified times.

**SELECTED RESOURCES**

**Berkshire Athenaeum**, One Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield, maintains the county's major local history collection.

**Berkshire Historical Society**, 780 Holmes Road, Pittsfield, houses Alfred Persip's recollections on tape in its oral history collection.

**Mason Library**, 231 Main Street, Great Barrington, was used by James Weldon Johnson and houses a special local history collection.

**Sawyer Library, Chapin Library, and Williams College Archives**, Williamstown. Sawyer Library houses a plaque dedicating a reading room to the memory of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Sheffield Historical Society**, 159–161 Main Street, has a large collection on town history and material on local African American history.

**Simon's Rock College Library**, Alford Road, Great Barrington, houses the Du Bois Collection of African American history and culture.

**Stockbridge Library**, Main Street, has a large local history collection and houses a portrait of Agrippa Hull.

**W.E.B. Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Special Collections and Archives** houses the W.E.B. Du Bois Papers and related materials.



Contact:

Upper Housatonic Valley African American Heritage Trail

- To learn more about these forty-eight sites in the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area
- To arrange guided walking or motor coach tours
- To send tax deductible contributions

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**Our Mission Is**

*To identify, preserve, share, and celebrate our African American heritage in the Upper Housatonic Valley, through the creation of a heritage trail and related interpretive materials*



ABOVE PHOTO: W.E.B. DU BOIS STANDING, LEFT, WITH GREAT BARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1884. COVER PHOTO: CHURCH OUTING BY REV. C. HAYFIELD, MINISTER OF A.M.E. ZION CHURCH IN GREAT BARRINGTON, C. 1893.

# African American Heritage

In the Upper Housatonic Valley



## Trail Guide



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