

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

Culture Through Artifacts



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AN HEIRLOOM'S JOURNEY

BY ELIZABETH CHANG

• Originally Published September 15, 2016



FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE,
GIFT OF THE BLACK FASHION MUSEUM FOUNDED BY LOIS K. ALEXANDER-LANE

A small flowered skirt worn by a little girl enslaved in Virginia has found a place of honor at the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

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The National Museum of African American History and Culture has nearly 37,000 artifacts, each of which had to be acquired, authenticated and registered in a database. Then, the staff pored through the vast collection to choose 3,000 especially significant items and install them in the cavernous building. To understand the scope of such an endeavor, we traced the odyssey of one small object — a flowered skirt worn by an enslaved African American girl born in Loudoun County, Va. — from acquisition to installation. It was quite a pilgrimage for the little garment and required the assistance of dozens of people.



Joyce Bailey, daughter of Lois K. Alexander Lane

ACQUISITION

Usually, an item is authenticated before it is acquired. But the skirt had already found a home in the collection of the Black Fashion Museum. The small institution, which operated in Harlem and the District, was the brainchild of Lois K. Alexander Lane, who crisscrossed the country asking people to comb through their attics for clothing made by African Americans. “She was determined to let people know the contributions African Americans had made to the fashion industry,” says her daughter, **Joyce Bailey**, who donated the collection to the NMAAHC in 2007, after Alexander Lane’s death.

Among the more than 2,000 items of clothing and accessories were sparkling evening gowns, colorful Broadway costumes and a simple georgette dress made by a seamstress who would change history: Rosa Parks.

But curator Nancy Bercaw was searching for something that would remind visitors of the humanity of those who were enslaved. The collection had a few articles of clothing worn during slavery, and among them she found an “adorable” little skirt made for a young girl. “Somebody really pretty carefully put together that skirt,” she says.

AUTHENTICATION

The Black Fashion Museum had passed on little information about the skirt: The name of the woman it had belonged to (Lucy Lee Shirley), her birth and death dates and locations (1854 in Leesburg, Va.; 1929 in Harrisburg, Pa.), and a Polaroid of the skirt. Authenticating it wouldn’t be easy. As museum cataloguer Katie Knowles says, “It’s not a Renoir painting; it’s a skirt from the 1800s.”

Knowles, a textile expert, determined that, although it was altered later, the material and construction did indicate that the original skirt dates from about 1860: It is in the style of the era. The fabric is typical — a linen and cotton blend patterned with small red, purple, blue and tan flowers. It was hand-sewn with a whipstitch using natural thread.

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 REPRODUCTION & SPECIALTY
 Boyd's Harrisburg (S) City Directory, 1908. 093

Shirley Catharine Mrs., h 421 Hamilton
 Shirley John P. tinner, h 421 Hamilton
 Shirley Lucy Mrs., dressmkr, 1410 James, h do
 Shirley Mary A., wid Harry, h 1426 Susquehanna
 Shirley Philip, h 426 Hamilton
 Shirley Philip, laborer, h 421 Hamilton
 Shirley, see Shiley
 Shisler Albert H., locksmith, 1408 N 3d, h do
 Shisler Ellen, wid Josephus, h 216 Forster
 Shisler Herbert, hostler, h 235 Blackberry
 Shisler John A., electrician, h 1408 N 3d
 Shisler John A., elevator attendant P. R. R., h 240 Harris
 Shisler Theodore E., machinist, h 1696 Susquehanna
 Shissler Annie, dressmkr, 214 Herr, h do
 Shissler Daisy M., h 318 Chestnut
 Shissler Mamie E., saleslady, 30 N 3d, h 318 Chestnut
 Shive Adolphus R., laborer, h 828 S Cameron
 Shive Andrew, laborer, h 1128 Wallace
 Shive Celia, laundress, 1128 Wallace
 Shive Sarah R., tel opr, h 828 S Cameron
 Shive William A., laborer, h 828 S Cameron
 Shiveley Claude S., mgr, 1308 N 3d, h do
 Shively Alice, domestic, 927 N 6th
 Shively Harvey, carpenter, h 26 S 3d
 Shkue Jacob, peddler, h r 1308 Wallace

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But did it belong to an enslaved girl named Lucy? While researchers thought it was likely Shirley was born enslaved, they could not definitively link her to slavery in Loudoun County, where records listed several enslaved Lucys born around 1854.

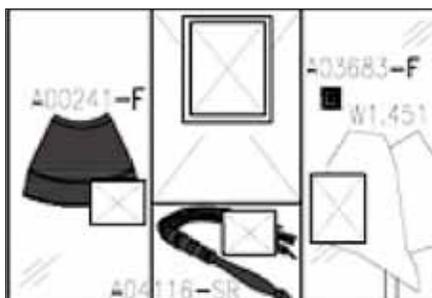
Museum cataloguer Kamilah Stinnett had more luck on the Harrisburg end. Through findagrave.com, she found a headstone in an African American cemetery there that almost precisely matched the birth and death dates. She also found a Lucy Lee Shirley in **address directories** from Harrisburg beginning in 1900. And census records showed a Lucy Lee Shirley, who was born in Virginia, living in Harrisburg in 1910 and 1920.

“A lot of time when you’re doing historical research on enslaved men and women, it’s really hard to find information. So the fact that ... there is something of a paper trail of her was exhilarating,” Stinnett says.

DOCUMENTATION

While the Black Fashion Museum used a 1980s-era catalogue of index cards and Polaroid photos, the NMAAHC relies on a much more detailed digital database, called the Museum System. Each item is first registered with basic information. Then cataloguers describe the object physically and add context and metadata. Photographers create digital images of the item, so every item will have both a digital record and a digital surrogate in the database. As staffers glean more information about an artifact, including from oral traditions, they can add it to the record. “Right now it tends to be more of the dry documentary history, but I’m really hoping it will spark more stories,” Bercaw says. After review, the record is made available online. Because so many of the items came from the public and not everyone will be able to visit the museum, Bercaw says, “it’s really important that people have access to these objects and to the stories.”

INSTALLATION



Curators decided to include the skirt in a section of the “Slavery and Freedom” exhibit called “The

Nurturers,” which will highlight objects symbolizing work, life and enslavement. The skirt will represent life. “People would take these skills and this knowledge that they had and use it to produce objects of love for the people that they did love,” Bercaw says.

The staff had to carefully consider how to display the fragile item, which bears the marks of time in stains and holes and worn patches. “We try not to make everything look pristine, but we want to make sure it’s stable enough so it can survive as long as possible,” Knowles says. Rather than hanging the skirt on a mannequin-like device called a Dorfman form, conservators suggested mounting it on an angled support panel to reduce stress on the threads.

The exhibition installation team then set up the display case based on **plans drawn up by the exhibit designers**, showing where the objects, images and text should go and how they should be mounted. The exhibition label text, written by the curators, focuses on the care that went into crafting the skirt. That, Bercaw thinks, is the exhibit’s most important story. “People’s ability to continue to love when people are constantly sold and being taken from them is something that I can never quite get over.”

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For a while she was a name and a status — enslaved. Now we know more

BY ELIZABETH CHANG

• Originally Published September 15, 2016

Who was Lucy Lee Shirley? According to the scant information passed along to the National Museum of African American History and Culture, she was an African American woman who was born in Leesburg, Va., in 1854, died in Harrisburg, Pa., in 1929, and once wore a little flowered skirt.

The museum substantiated the basics of Shirley's life when it decided to feature her skirt in its "Slavery and Freedom" exhibit. As I worked on a story about the skirt, I became intrigued by her and turned up more details — as well as living descendants who didn't know that one of their family heirlooms would be featured in the Smithsonian's newest museum.

"We are so honored that our family's history will forever be a part of America's history," said Shirley's great-great-granddaughter, Lori Anne Douglass of New York, who recalls seeing the skirt as a teenager and being told that her grandmother's grandmother had been born a slave. Neither she nor other relatives, however, knew any details about Shirley's childhood, and though there are Loudoun County records from the 1850s that list several enslaved children named Lucy (there were probably more, because not all slave

holders registered births), it is difficult to connect them to Lucy Lee Shirley because there are no last names and the dates do not match exactly.

But Lucy Lee Shirley shows up in the pages of history as an adult, and these appearances tell a story as moving as the one conveyed by the skirt she once wore. What follows is an abbreviated account pieced together by an amateur genealogist.

The first possible record of Lucy Lee Shirley I could find, and the only one in Virginia, is an 1882 Loudoun County marriage certificate for a John N. Shirley and a widow listed as "Lucy Claggett (Lucy A. Lee)" — though again the age is a bit off. The couple were married by the Rev. William Robey, a free African American who had been ordained as a minister and who taught black children in Leesburg before and after the war.

When or why Shirley left for Harrisburg is unclear, but such a move is not surprising. A onetime stop on the Underground Railroad in a state that was early to emancipation, Harrisburg already had a sizable free black population at the end of the war and offered employment and educational opportunities.

The family must have been living there before 1893, because in June of that year one of the Harrisburg newspapers described the funeral

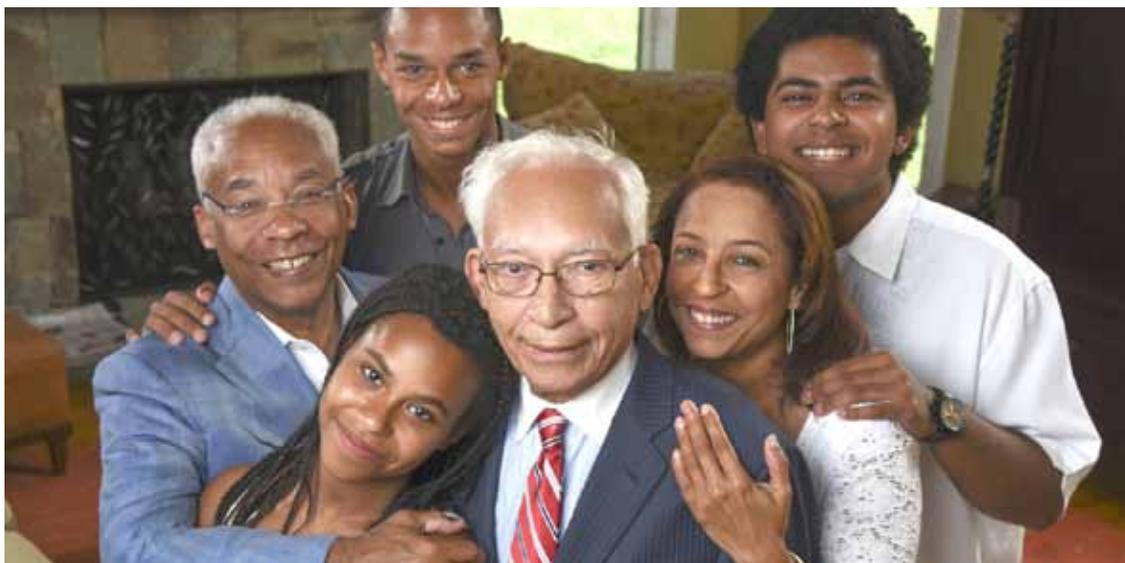
of 9-year-old Robert Shirley, whose death was a "severe shock." The article, which listed Robert's parents as the Rev. John and Mrs. Lucy Shirley, said he was the brightest pupil in his class, and that his fellow students sang his favorite hymns "in a feeling manner" in a church "filled to the utmost capacity."

There was a March 21, 1899, item noting that "John Shirley, who says he is a preacher of the gospel," had been charged with assault and battery on his wife, who testified that she was "treated shamefully and chased out of the house in the dead of night in her night clothes." The next day, he was acquitted and "the costs were placed on the prosecutrix."

In 1900, there was an obituary for another child, 11-year-old Naomi, also bright and popular and taken suddenly. This obituary made clear that John was no longer residing at the home and mentioned Naomi's sister and Lucy's daughter, Lulu Shirley, who was living in Long Branch, N.J.

Throughout the years, there were frequent references to Lucy's involvement at the Harris AME Zion Church, such as her membership in the Perseverance Club. The papers also occasionally mentioned her other children: Cora, who would marry and move to Maryland, Frances and Lloyd.

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When Lucy died after a long illness in 1929, the papers revealed that she froze her husband out of her will, leaving him \$1 and her children Frances, Lloyd and Cora, \$1,650.

It's remarkable that a woman born into slavery — described variously as a caterer, housekeeper, servant and dressmaker; who may have been widowed once; who apparently had a violent husband; who was a mother of six and lost at least two young children — seems to have supported several children alone for years, and was able to educate herself and her family, contribute extensively to her church and leave her children more than \$23,000 in today's money.

What could account for Lucy Lee Shirley's accomplishments, besides her obvious grit? Perhaps it was her acquaintance with the Rev. Robey. Or perhaps it was living in Harrisburg. "There are stories of people who are that successful because of determination, because they were living in the right place and the right time, and because they made certain alliances, certain connections, that enabled them" to succeed, says Edna Greene Medford, a professor of history at Howard University.

That certainly seems to be the case for Lucy Shirley. And success didn't stop with her.

Lucy Shirley's daughter Cora Handy would become a teacher.

One of Cora Handy's daughters, Cornelia Douglass, would work as an administrator in the New York state unemployment insurance office.

Cornelia Douglass's son, Lewis Douglass, would become a New York Supreme Court Justice.

And both of Lewis's children, Lori Anne Douglass and David Douglass, would become partners at law firms.

When he was given some details about Lucy Shirley's life, David Douglass said it reminded him of his grandmother Cornelia, "who was this extraordinary, strong woman who did these amazing things." Cornelia was also the descendant who had the foresight to share the skirt with posterity, first in 1974's "The Black Book," a historical scrapbook of African American life, and then with the Black Fashion Museum, which later donated it to the Smithsonian.

And now, in 2016, the skirt and some of Shirley's descendants have come almost full circle: David Douglass, a K Street lawyer, is raising a son and daughter in Silver Spring, Md. — just a few miles from the museum where their great-great-great-grandmother's skirt will go on display as a tender relic of love and persistence. ■

Elizabeth Chang is an editor for the magazine.

Some of the descendants of Lucy Lee Shirley. At center is Shirley's great-grandson Lewis Douglass. On each side his children, David Douglass and Lori Anne Douglass, who are Shirley's great-great grandchildren. Shirley's great-great-great-grandchildren are Ella Douglass, bottom left, Edward "E.J." Douglass, top left, and Darwin "Trey" Davis III.

(JAH/CHIKWENDIU/THE WASHINGTON POST)

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TEACHER NOTE

What You Will Find in the Cards

You will find three sets of “cards,” one set in each of the three resource guides. I am sure you will imagine a number of uses for them. What follows are a few ideas and observations.

If you have additional activities for using them or if you photograph of your students involved in one of these activities, please share them with me at LangeJour@comcast.net.

We hope the activities, activity sheets, reprints and other resources we provide through the NIE program make your teaching experience more enriching.

— Carol Lange, editor and writer, The *Washington Post* NIE program

- When you print the cards use heavier stock or laminate the cards, if you plan on extended use. This will also be beneficial if a color printer is not accessible.
- Cards may be used together on a sheet or cut into pieces.
- Images are from the collection of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, many of which accompanied *The Washington Post*'s coverage.
- All may be used for a scavenger hunt during a visit to the NMAAHC.

American History and Culture Through the African American Lens

- ▲ These longer, rectangular cards provide larger images for students to study details. What can they guess about the images without reading the labels?
- ▲ Work in pairs or small groups. Use the labels as starting points. What do they know of the time period, person or event? Pool their collective knowledge to write a brief statement. Then do a fact check.
- ▲ Divide the class into nine groups, each with a different card. Use this as an exercise in finding reliable sources online and/or in print resources in your school's media center.

Artifacts Narrate a Story

- These will be quite small if cut apart, but it is possible to distribute them to the class (or pull a card from a box). Find all you can about the item or person in a 30-minute online search.
- Many of the images are referenced in President Obama's remarks at the NMAAHC dedication ceremony. Give students the speech and see if they can find the allusions and the images in the cards.
- If you read the cards down, you will find that they have a theme or common thread: 1794 to 1863, relate to slavery; Harriet Tubman to Lawrence McVey, different types of battles or seeking of freedom; “whites only” to shards of glass, segregation and civil rights; black-gloved fists to T-shirt, seeking rights amidst acknowledgement; Brown to Robeson, music; Jemison to The Wiz, achievement in various fields; Robinson to Obama, talent acknowledged (admittedly a little harder to categorize); Smith to Boom Box, the arts. Eight student groups could be assigned columns to determine the category and write Jeopardy-type questions. The next step would be to scramble the questions to see if students can identify the image that relates to it.

Artifacts Speak to You

Describe It

1936, Track Shoes, Jessie Owens



Tell Its Story

1925-1954, Desk, Hope School



Sketch It

Work of Art

1871, Beverage Service, Wormley Hotel



1939, Outfit Worn at Lincoln Memorial Concert, Marian Anderson



Choose Your Own

Fedora, Michael Jackson



Early 1800s, Slave Cabin, Edisto Island, S.C.



Choose Your Own

Artifacts Speak to You

Describe It

Bible, Nat Turner



Tell Its Story

Drinking Fountain



Sketch It

Hat or Headgear

Pair of salt and pepper shakers in form of "Mammy" and "Chef"



Quilt



Dress or Evening Gown

1984-1996, Olympic Medal, Carl Lewis



Voodoo Guitar



Jewelry

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The artifacts and stories that brought the African American museum to life

BY MARCIA DAVIS

• Originally Published September 15, 2016

Elaine Thompson is the keeper of her family's stories. It's been that way for decades. The former high school English teacher and civil rights activist, 83, can trace her lineage to the 1700s, to Samuel Thompson, who was free before the Civil War and the wealthiest black man of Loudoun County.

On both sides, Thompson's ancestry is filled with men and women who were free before Emancipation. They worked hard, kept loved ones close and built a way for their progeny in the state that would become the heart of the Confederacy.

She has kept much of this history in her home office, in files tucked into the drawers of a wooden desk that sits below long bookshelves weighted with such authors as David Levering Lewis, Taylor Branch, Annette Gordon-Reed and Barack Obama. A historian, she's there on the bookshelf, too, with "In the Watchfires: The Loudoun County Emancipation Association, 1890-1971."

For years, in one of those drawers among the files sat a small tin box that belonged to her maternal great-great-great-grandfather, Joseph Trammell. Inside the box was proof



ALEX JAMISON

In 1852, Joseph Trammell was a free black man living in the slave state of Virginia, but he needed papers to prove it. He carried those papers in this metal box that he made himself.

of his freedom, papers certified by the Loudoun County clerk that the then-21-year-old, who bore a small scar on his forehead and a longer one — six to seven inches — on his left wrist, was indeed a freeman. The year: 1852.

Traveling without those papers could mean being re-enslaved, or if you were born free, kidnapped into bondage for the first time.

Trammell made the box to protect his papers and his life, Thompson said. She speculated that he probably was free before 1852, because his name appeared on an earlier petition to have freemen removed from Loudoun County. Virginia required freemen to leave the state unless they legally requested to stay. Joseph

Trammell stayed, most likely because of family, Thompson believes.

For generations, that freedom tin has passed from one hand to the next. Thompson got it from the daughter of her now-deceased Aunt Molly, a woman who lived into her 90s.

"She wanted me to have it," Thompson said of the tin. "She wanted me to preserve it. And I wanted to, but then when I started, I said, 'What am I going to do with this?' Even though people in the family are interested in family history, I just couldn't decide who to give it to.

"I said it needs to be in a place that's safe, somewhere it will be cared for. This museum, well, that's the place for it."

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PAUL HOLSTON/AP

“I knew in my heart that so much of the history was in the basement, trunks and attics,” said Lonnie Bunch, the museum’s founding director.

Which explains how Joseph Trammell’s freedom tin, after traveling across more than a century, from one descendant’s hand to another, is artifact 2014.25 at the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Thompson went online and completed a form set up for people who thought they had something of historic value and wanted it considered for the 19th Smithsonian museum.

Curators came running.

This is how it’s been in the nine years that a team of curators, museum specialists and others has been working to fill a museum that itself was once a distant hope. The lobbying for it began in the early 1900s, and Smithsonian officials are not being hyperbolic when they say it is a museum that was a century in the making, which is also the name of an exhibit on the subject.

Finally, it is fact, a deep footprint on the Mall, its doors opening months before the Obamas leave the White House.

“African American history is our history,” the website notes, meaning a nation’s. The point is underscored by the prime location, steps from the Washington Monument and where, through the frames of the museum’s glass walls, you can stare in the direction of Jefferson and Lincoln and ponder all of what America has been — and, Smithsonian officials hope, imagine what this country can still become.

Inside the museum are markers of a nation’s racial history and bloodied path to democracy: from the remnants of a slave ship to a slave cabin to a segregation-era train car and shards of glass from the 16th Street Baptist Church of Birmingham, Ala., where four little girls were killed on a September Sunday morning not so long ago.

The museum also honors the road of a people struggling and striving and, in so many cases, soaring to places where they were never meant to be. A Tuskegee airplane hangs from the ceiling, Chuck Berry’s Cadillac gleams, and everywhere you turn are stories of excellence and achievement and a culture at the center of a nation. But when items were still in the talking stages, one of the questions was: What was left to be collected? There were African American museums across the country, the Smithsonian already had its own artifacts, universities had historical papers and singular art collections, and on and on.

Founding director Lonnie Bunch believed there was plenty undiscovered and pledged that a museum would open with 30,000 artifacts in its possession. “I knew in my heart that so much of the history was in the basement, trunks and attics,” Bunch said on a recent morning in his offices in the Capital Gallery Building in Southwest Washington.

“The goal was not to just collect to collect,” he said, “but to collect in a focused way to make sure you could tell the story of women in business, or you could tell the story of enslavement.

“The way to do it was to help people realize how crucial their story was, no matter how small, to understanding the whole narrative of African American history. So people really felt that giving was about legacy, the way to kind of honor those on whose shoulders they stand.”

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The museum that started with zero artifacts is approaching 37,000. About 3,000 will be in the inaugural exhibition.

Here is the house that Bunch, his staff and a nation built.

In assembling a team, Bunch looked for balance, the right kind of collaborative tension. He needed those who had worked at the Smithsonian and those who had not. He needed seasoned staffers and younger ones at the dawn of their careers. And mostly he wanted people who saw and believed in the museum's mission above all else, above their egos and their ambitions.

"What I really was looking for were people who recognized that this was bigger than they were," said Bunch, who was most recently the director of the Chicago Historical Society. "That this was not about them. If you came to this job because it was going to make your career, that's not who I wanted. ... It was a family coming together."

Because this would also be true: It was going to be difficult, weighted with the uncertainty of fundraising, lifted by a demanding vision and faced with the profound challenges inherent of a reckoning between a nation's past and its present. And if they did it right, it could help the country reach higher ground.

How do you speak honestly about the brutalities of slavery in a country in which many don't know that it was enslaved hands that built the White House? How do you show "the unvarnished truth" about the legacy of families being ripped apart, or the murderous terrorism of Jim Crow?

Who could view Emmett Till's casket — also in the museum — without its echoes ricocheting through the deaths of a Trayvon Martin, a Jordan Davis, a Tamir Rice?

It would be a living museum, not one engaged with the past with cool detachment. The facts of our collective past are meant to educate and offer context to our decidedly non-post-racial nation as it wrestles with its future.

The work would be filled with discovery, excitement and disappointment, success and roadblocks, sometimes massive, sometimes just hiccups.

Like the day Bunch left the Smithsonian Castle, heading to his new office, then at L'Enfant Plaza. The door was locked. Nobody in management or security knew who he was. He returned to that locked door and was wondering what to do.

"And along comes a brother who is the maintenance guy, and he's pushing this cart and he has a crowbar," Bunch says. "So I broke into our first offices."

Museums are in the narrative business. It's their job to tell stories. Curators are its choreographers, the folks who understand the required intimacy between the story and the right artifact, who coordinate the waltz between the telling and the showing.

"Just like we are shaped by DNA, we are shaped by historical memory," Bunch said. "What artifacts do is, yes, they stimulate memory, but maybe more importantly what they do is humanize grand issues, so that you are not engaging with slavery,

but an individual. And so one of the challenges of any history museum is to be able to talk at a macro level but to have you feel at a micro level. And that's what I think artifacts allow you to do."

The work has been assisted by a scholarly advisory committee. The legendary scholar John Hope Franklin was chair until his death in 2009. It was Franklin always in Bunch's ear during meetings, urging him to have the courage to tell the "unvarnished truth" and to know here was an opportunity to educate and to make change.

The process is collaborative. Curators meet regularly to present their finds and make the case for why they belong in the collection.

Artifacts have arrived many ways. The museum had a wish list for some, such as a slave ship and slave cabin; some have been purchased, such as the fur-collared green velvet dress Lena Horne wore in a scene for the 1943 movie "Stormy Weather"; and some donations have come through the museum-sponsored "Save Our African American Treasures" events across the country. The Smithsonian couldn't visit every attic or garage, sort through every trunk or closet, so it issued a call.

And the people responded.

■ To continue with this article and learn about more artifacts and the people who shared them, go to

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/the-artifacts-and-stories-that-brought-the-african-american-museum-to-life/2016/09/14/a7348fa6-648d-11e6-be4e-23fc4d-4d12b4_story.html

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Artifacts in Your Attics, in Your Homes and in Your Community

“Curators meet regularly to present their finds and make the case for why they belong in the collection. Artifacts have arrived many ways. The museum had a wish list for some, such as a slave ship and slave cabin; some have been purchased, such as the fur-collared green velvet dress Lena Horne wore in a scene for the 1943 movie Stormy Weather; and some donations have come through the museum-sponsored ‘Save Our African American Treasures’ events across the country. The Smithsonian couldn’t visit every attic or garage, sort through every trunk or closet, so it issued a call. And the people responded.”

— *“The artifacts and stories that brought the African American museum to life,”*

Marcia Davis, *The Washington Post*, September 15, 2016

When the National Museum of African American History and Culture opened its doors in September 2016, they had more than 36,000 artifacts. Count the number of items that you care about — and would not want to lose. Ten? Twenty? More than 90? Where do you keep them? Are some collector’s items, still in their original boxes and unopened? Or are they well worn from use — and some childhood abuse?

1. What items are special to you? What have you saved from childhood that has special memories associated with it? That reflects something about you?
2. What item represents your family? Or that reflects something about your family’s livelihood?
3. Does your family have items that were possessed by grandparents or older generations? Do you know anything of the stories behind these items?

Ar•ti•fact

an object made by a human being, typically an item of cultural or historical interest; shaped by man, such as a tool or a work of art; may also be cotemporary, mass-produced and inexpensive if it reflects society or popular culture

4. In a group share the items you have listed. What items do you think could be considered artifacts? Would these items make a cut to be in a museum of your community’s history and culture? Would these items be considered:
 - an artifact of the 21st century?
 - an historic link to previous generations?
 - a personal connection to your school? To your childhood? To your family?
5. Take photographs of each member of your group holding the item that is meaningful to him or her, that reveals something of importance to each one.

Write a caption to accompany the photograph. The caption should include who and what is pictured and include a quotation from you or someone who knows the story of the item.

You may experiment in writing the caption for each of these readers:

- Your family and friends
- Parents of students and teachers in your school
- Visitors to a community museum

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6. Consider creating or adding to an existing, community history museum. What areas of history and culture should be included to reflect this generation?
7. What do you think about having a wall in the community museum that listed the names of everyone who lived in this town in its first years of existence? As you consider your answer, reflect on the design requirement for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.: All the names of those missing and killed (57,000) must be part of the memorial.
- What is the impact of having the names on a war memorial?
- What would be achieved or understood about your community if the names of first citizens — or all citizens to this day — were listed?
8. Read the first page of the 3-page excerpt of “The artifacts and stories that brought the African American museum to life.”
- What do you know of the freedom tin after reading eight paragraphs? Do readers have more details about the box, about the original owner of the box or about the descendant of the maker of the box?
- What is the color and size of the box?
 - In what way is family part of the story of the box?
 - How helpful is it to include some historical context (Loudoun County, Virginia in 1850s and after)?
 - Why do you think this handmade box was accepted for the museum’s collection?
9. Write a short narrative about one of the items that is meaningful to you.

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What Is Collage?

Simply explained, collage is arrangement of elements in a composition or graphic, where the artist uses glue to adhere the objects to the surface or ground. After gluing the elements down, the work can be sealed with some kind of polymer emulsion to protect the art from damage.



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Romare Bearden's collage "Roots."

The art production method was popularized by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque in 1912. This method preceded Cubism, which marked the beginning of the Modern Art period. To see their works, go online or browse art books to get an idea of the many styles of collage.

Romare Bearden was a successful African American artist who made collage art. He depicted scenes of African American life. His collages are bright and colorful and highly stylistic, filled with energy. His work is on display at the new National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Other artists who made collages include Henri Matisse, Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Motherwell, Jean Dubuffet, Kara Walker, Man Ray, Lee Krasner, Kurt Schwitters, Raoul Hausmann, Joseph Cornell.

Collage comes from the French verb, *coller*, meaning "to glue."

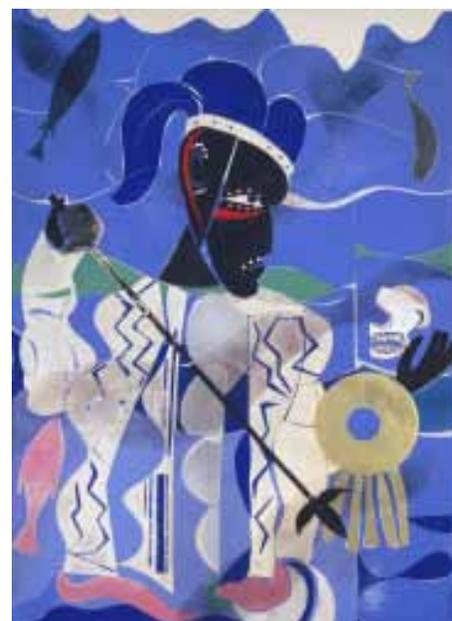
Artists have used found objects to make a new piece of art.

Collage is assemblage. Materials that can be combined or overlaid range from: newspaper and magazine pages, clippings, tickets from performances, string, beads, colored paper, cotton fabric, coffee stirrers, stained coffee filters, old or new photos torn, gift-wrapping paper, postage stamps, some plastics. Beware of non-food or toxic items.



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An example of a collage using musical scores and photographs. Collected by W.E.B. Du Bois.



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Another example of Romare Bearden's collage, "Posiedon-the-Sea-God," is not on display at NMAAHC.