Mound Bayou Request for Assistance
Black Towns & Settlements Initiative with
University of North Carolina
Myrna Smith-Thompson

The City of Mound Bayou contributes much to the history of African Americans in the United States and especially to the history of the state of Mississippi. In collaboration with the Black Towns and Settlements Alliance and University of North Carolina the City of Mound Bayou wishes to begin building a sustainable community by demonstrating that historic preservation supports economic, environment and cultural endurance. It is proposed that by reimagining the City of Mound Bayou’s historic sites, documents and artifacts, a model can be created for historic interpretation using young people who reside in this rural community. By exposing this under publicized information via youthful involvement, technology, project implementation and learning, the depth and scope of the rich history of Mound Bayou can become widely known and preserved.

The City of Mound Bayou lacks the means to promote public awareness and heritage appreciation for its rich legacy. A dual purpose goal of this project is to:

- create a sustainable, easily updated audio-visual tool with digitized and web presence to increase public awareness and tourism by marketing and restoring documents, photos and artifacts;
- while simultaneously encouraging, training and employment options for young rural community residents to promote heritage appreciation, associated with the City of Mound Bayou’s establishment, development and continued existence.

Technical support and assistance is requested to implement a project to promote public education and heritage value via audio-visual tour and online presence. This virtual tour will be posted online and linked to the homepage of the City of Mound Bayou’s website, other Mississippi and African American websites as well as other pertinent websites. The project will include digitization of documents, community artifact and photos as well as commentary on individuals and remaining properties and sites that are contributory and designated as historic. The project will include audio-visual presentation of significant historical sites and historic property architectural details. The project can, additionally promote public education, develop an easy to update on-site walking or virtual tour including recapture of community events while simultaneously creating a tourism marketing tool.

‘History will judge us by the difference we make in the everyday lives of children’. Nelson Mandela

A youth recruitment effort to interest high school students in participating in a ‘Historic Preservation Club’ begins in November, 2014. It is anticipated that 20 high school students will be involved initially. Youth representatives from churches will be solicited as well as recommendations from historic preservation groups, the school, social organizations and youth groups. Discussions are planned with the local school board to consider credits for participation. Initial request will be to provide youth participants with community service credit. It is hoped that in the future academic credit can be given students with establishment of a historic preservation curriculum. The students’ participation will initially be an after-school activity. Small participation incentives will help facilitate recruitment.
Proposed incentives include donated light meals of pizza etc. and tee shirts denoting connection

With University of North Carolina Southern Collections

Example: UNC Light blue tee-shirt with JFK royal blue letters: Perhaps a kid can design bleeding blues OR something else.

Mound Bayou Historic Preservation Club
BRINGING THE BLUES TOGETHER
UNC Southern Collections
AND
Future Mound Bayou Historians

Teleconference with participating students and UNC Southern Collections personnel at an early meeting (December, 2015) to promote the importance of historic preservation and provide infrequent opportunity to for the youths to participate in teleconference. UNC expert personnel will be requested to reiterate potential benefit to participating. The Mound Bayou Heritage Club will be informed of and encouraged to become more aware and informed on the historic value of, legacy and historic properties in the City of Mound Bayou.

The anticipated outcome for students and the community at large are:

- An on-line presence for the City of Mound Bayou that will include visual audio presentation of a chronology of
  - Births
  - Baptisms
  - Weddings
  - Deaths (funeral services)
- Historic visual presentation for community education and research use
- Collection of community ‘storytelling’ documents, photos and artifacts

Students’ participation product will be the facilitated training for the creation (with UNC facilitated training) of an online presentation that will include a virtual tour that introduces the City of Mound Bayou including its origins and early development. The virtual tour will end with information that promotes tourism and content that encourages viewers to visit the City of Mound Bayou. The created product will also be usable to showcase community events and activities.

The audio-visual virtual tour will be accessible on-line for free, and would be open to a world-wide market. It will be more accessible to younger generations who use technology and will be valuable to ignite youthful interest in Mound Bayou’s history. Mound Bayou’s several historic organizations and many individuals/families have photos and historic documents. A digitized photo feature of the tour will provide an excellent educational tool to transfer historic information for families and the community at large and thus liven the presentation of the City’s rich history.
This project will also contribute much to a crucial goal to create a balanced partnership with local government, citizens, and the numerous historic organizations who often independently work to identify and implement historic preservation activities. This project is designed to provide opportunity for individuals and groups to work independently on selected segments of the online presence, in partnership, by means of youthful learning leadership. This can provide prospect for partnership, while preserving the unique goals of each of the historic preservation entities. Supplementary, the acquired skills from training provided by UNC Southern Collections and other staff will create a new supportable, viable, young technological entity that can be matchlessly contributory to a historic preservation effort. Each of the entities, individuals and families will have opportunity to select content and segments for the virtual tour such as photos, information, commentary and/or artifacts. This information will be presented to the experts (U. of North Carolina for assistance for evaluation, sharing across entities, use and significance for the project).

TENTATIVE ACTIVITIES TIMELINE

November-December, 2014

- Recruitment of (20) high school students to participate in Historic Preservation Club (MB)
  - Local churches, historic organizations, individual recommendations with contractual agreement with recommender and student signed (MB)
  - Publicize plans to gain access to historic documents/photos/artifacts (MB)
- Create Activities/Promotions for Historic Preservation Club in community (MB)
- Development of High School Historic Preservation Club Curriculum (6 weeks) (U of NC)
  - 14-18 year old students to acquire 3 basic skills/information units
    - Digitization and its use in historic preservation
    - Environmental controls in historic preservation
    - Interview & Presentation skills for historic preservation
- Review of curriculum as developed for overview understanding of volunteers (MB & UNC)
- Letters of explanation to property owners of buildings to be considered for inclusion in virtual tour (MB)
- City will promote the audio-visual tour to residents via announcements/newsletters (MB)
- Provide a minimum of five (5) artifacts, documents, photos for restoration/preservation representing Mound Bayou (MB & UNC)

March, 2015- July, 2015
• Workshop for clergy (Historic role of church in maintaining community records and historic involvement of Black church in preservation efforts (UNC))
  o Each church will be asked to identify 2 youths to represent their church in 2nd round of project and deal with the births, baptisms, weddings, deaths within that congregation

• Training workshop with required equipment and technology for 20 high school students in Historic Preservation Club INTRO (UNC)
  o Basic digitization of documents/photos etc.
  o Basic study of ‘family’ history
  o Making presentations & ‘how to get information during interviews
    ▪ Receptive Listening
    ▪ Interaction Skills
    ▪ Presentation Skills

• Four (4) Field Trips March, April, May, June to local area restored properties in state
  o Taborian Hospital, Mound Bayou, Mississippi
  o Amzie Moore Home, Cleveland, MS.
  o Wesley Memorial Methodist Episcopal – Greenwood, MS
  o B B King Museum, Indianola, MS
  o Home of Dr. Theodric James, Columbus
  o Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, MS
  o Starksville Colored Cemetery, Starkville, MS
  o Others
  o Local college Historic Preservation/Archivists Department

  (Travel logistics and resources to be determined for expansion/ decrease)

• Demonstration of historic preservation capabilities of UNC of 5 items representing Mound Bayou selected by UNC Archivists (MB)

• Continue work to use Bank Building as initial site for museum (MB)

• Initial Inventory of existing documents/photos artifacts from historic organizations (UNC)
  o Student participants in learning experience work with UNC staff 6 wks. (UNC / MB)

  (Funding sought for summer employment stipends for students)
• Project pre & post evaluation to determine participants skill levels
  - Computer digitization
  - Documents/photos/artifact basic preservation methods
    - Environmental control
    - Handling
  - Interview techniques and interaction skills to acquire stories
• Development of start-up collection of documents, photos and artifacts to establish a community museum (UNC) *(Charles Banks Building, Mound Bayou, MS)*

July, 2015

Community Presentation of Mound Bayou Historic Preservation Club at Founders Day, 2015

• Recruit new members for the Mound Bayou Historic Preservation Club

August, 2015

• Recruitment of (20) high school students to participate in Historic Preservation Club (MB)
  - Local churches, historic organizations, individual recommendations with contractual agreement with recommender and student signed (MB)
  - Publicize plans to gain access to historic documents/photos/artifacts (MB)
• Expand historic preservation curriculum