



THE PRESIDENT AND MRS. LAURA BUSH

welcome you to

THE WHITE HOUSE

on the occasion of the presentation of the

**2008 PRESERVE AMERICA
PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS**



Monday, May 12, 2008

AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND PROJECT

Discovery of the African Burial Ground on Manhattan reshaped contemporary understanding of American history regarding the role of slavery throughout North America. The site, dated to the end of the 17th century, revealed largely forgotten stories of enslaved and some free Africans in the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam — today's New York City. By 1794 the burial ground held the remains of an estimated 20,000 people. The city grew around and over it, and it was lost. The General Services Administration encountered the site during excavation for a new federal building. After a series of challenges were successfully overcome, the uncovered human remains were respectfully reinterred, and the African Burial Ground became a National Monument that recalls and interprets the lives of these Africans and their important contributions to our nation.

THE CORINTH AND ALCORN COUNTY MISSISSIPPI HERITAGE TOURISM INITIATIVE

Begun as an effort led by the Siege and Battle of Corinth Commission and its partners to preserve a single remnant of a Civil War battleground, this initiative grew into a comprehensive, multi-faceted heritage tourism effort. Included are motor tour packages, 20 miles of affiliated hiking and biking trails, public accommodations and arenas, educational displays, and improvement of a local unit of the Shiloh National Military Park including an interpretive center. Other achievements include preservation and interpretation of the 1857 Verandah House (a National Historic Landmark), revitalization of a historic downtown with the creation of a National Register Historic District, development of a local museum in a historic railroad depot, and preservation and interpretation of the African American story of the Corinth Contraband Camp that included formation of a local African American Historic Society.

CRITERIA FOR AWARDS

The *Preserve America* Presidential Awards are given annually to organizations, businesses, or government entities for:

- exemplary accomplishments in the sustainable use and preservation of cultural or natural heritage assets;
- demonstrated commitment to the protection and interpretation of these assets; and
- integration of these assets into contemporary community life through innovative, creative, and responsible approaches to showcasing local historic resources.

The 2008 *Preserve America* Presidential Award recipients were chosen through a national competition administered by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in cooperation with the Executive Office of the President and in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Transportation; General Services Administration; Institute of Museum and Library Services; National Endowment for the Humanities; President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities; and President's Council on Environmental Quality.



PROGRAM

Welcoming remarks by
THE PRESIDENT

Remarks by
MRS. LAURA BUSH

Recognition of the
PRESERVE AMERICA
PRESIDENTIAL AWARDEES

Reception immediately following the Ceremony

LOWER EAST SIDE TENEMENT MUSEUM

The Lower East Side Tenement Museum protects and interprets the physical and historic legacy of American immigration on Manhattan's Lower East Side, a gateway to America. The museum is situated in a tenement apartment building that is a National Historic Landmark. From 1863 to 1935 this tenement sheltered an estimated 7,000 immigrants. The museum interprets their lives through five restored family apartments. Among last year's 130,000 visitors, 31,500 were K-12 students. Special museum programs directly serve and benefit contemporary immigrants and residents of the diverse local community. Educational offerings include interpreted neighborhood walking tours, free English classes for almost 1,000 students annually, and New York Book Club discussions on urban and immigrant experiences. The museum actively partners with community, preservation, and history organizations.

TEXAS HISTORIC COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION PROGRAM

An innovative state program of the Texas Historical Commission, this project has fully restored 39 courthouses since its inception and is currently helping to restore 27 additional structures. This highly successful matching grant program has provided \$145 million to 64 counties for the preservation of county courthouses and helps revitalize communities, increase local pride, encourage heritage tourism, and support economic development. Courthouses are a focal point of the award-winning Texas Heritage Trails Program and are often the centerpiece of local historic districts and Main Street areas. Among the 254 Texas counties, at least 234 boast historic courthouses, with some dating to the mid-1800s. They include outstanding examples of Romanesque Revival, Italianate, Mission Revival, and adobe styles of architecture. So far, 117 have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places and another 90 are deemed eligible.

