

often conduct public outreach on Facebook.com where the institutions and the community can share information, research tips and tools, and images. There are several community-driven projects and institutions such as the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library that have extensive collections posted to social media websites. The University of North Alabama has a public history degree program and is the steward of the Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area (MSNHA). A National Heritage Area is a site designated by Congress and the NPS with the intent of identifying and preserving historic, cultural, and natural resources which span beyond a single property to form a comprehensive landscape. The MSNHA covers most of Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, and Morgan counties and seeks to promote heritage tourism through education, conservation, and preservation. Two additional locally-run projects specifically focused on African American heritage and history are the Shoals Black History Project and Project Say Something, both of which collect local history and conduct oral histories from the Shoals area.

## HOW TO USE THIS ATLAS

This book is organized by county as a series of maps with points of interest. Chapters include an introduction to the county, a map of the points of interests followed by brief summaries of each point's historical significance to the community of color in North Alabama, and a topical essay. The points of interest include communities, churches, cemeteries, schools, and plantations, followed by information on significant events, people, and themes. All points of interest are mapped with color coded numbers that correlate with the text and are arranged alphabetically per chapter. Madison and Morgan counties include maps of African American landowner parcels. The counties of DeKalb, Jackson, and Marshall have been combined into one chapter.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

**COMMUNITIES:** People are the core of a community, but it is the places and institutions that they create which identify a community on the landscape. The federal census records were used to reveal statistical information about communities such as how many households comprised a town in a given year. Individuals identified as people of color and farm owners were tallied and studied further for possible associations with churches, cemeteries, schools, and plantations.

**CEMETERIES:** In 1901, the state of Alabama rewrote its constitution. In response to political and social changes prompted by Reconstruction and the success of a minority of an elite class of people of color in politics, business, and education, the new state constitution effectively disenfranchised people of color and legislated several segregationist

