



Finding Fortune: A Journey through Historic Preservation

THE MISSION OF THE T. THOMAS FORTUNE FOUNDATION IS TO UPHOLD THE CIVIL RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE LEGACY OF T. THOMAS FORTUNE THROUGH HISTORY, EDUCATION, THE ARTS, PUBLIC PROGRAMMING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH



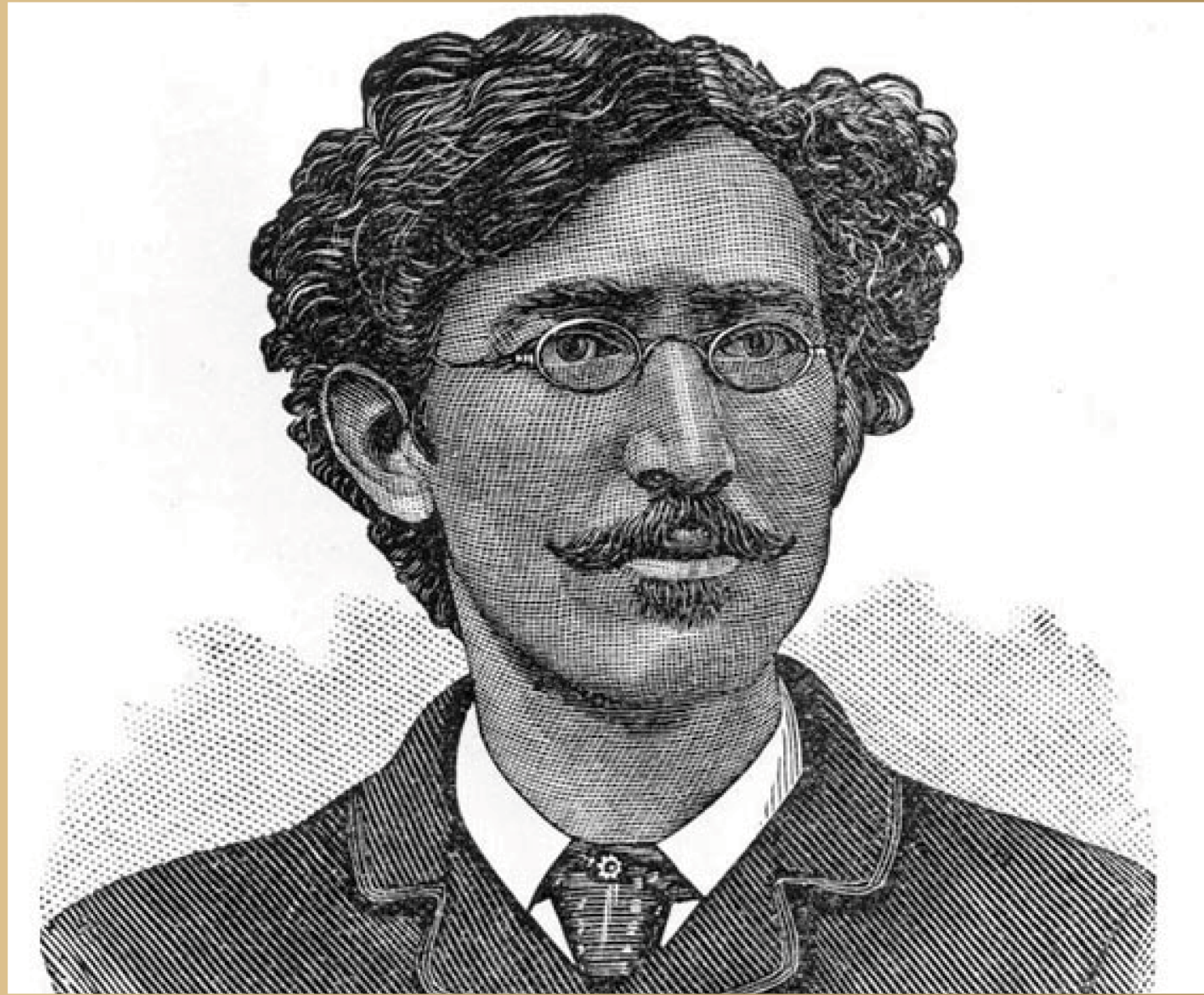
T. Thomas Fortune: The Most Famous Person You Have Never Heard of

Who is T. Thomas Fortune . . .

After the Emancipation Proclamation and the passing of the 13th Amendment, Fortune attended Freedmen Schools. Fortune was bi-racial (his Father, Emanuel was the son of an enslaved mother and took the name of the Irish plantation owner John Fortune, who he believed to be his father). T. Thomas Fortune's mother was of Native American and African ancestry. He could have passed as a White man, but instead he fought for the rights of Black people making this his life's work, and the reason he is known as a trailblazing social justice crusader. In 1877, he attended Howard University in Washington D.C. to study law. However, he veered off into journalism and ventured North to New York, where 1887 he had founded three newspapers, The New York Globe, New York Freeman, and The New York Age, the most widely read Black newspaper of its time. That same year Fortune founded, the National Afro American League, the first successful Black political organization with 27 chapters across the nation. A precursor to the NAACP. Fortune was a TRAILBLAZER! He opened the door to political organizing. He also popularized the term "Afro American," stating that "colored" and "negro," were common nouns and that Black people should be identified by the origin of their ancestry and that was Africa.



TIMOTHY THOMAS FORTUNE
ALTHOUGH BORN INTO SLAVERY
IN 1856, ROSE TO BE A
TRAILBLAZING ACTIVIST AND WAS
DUBBED "THE BRIDGE TO THE
MODERN-DAY CIVIL RIGHTS
MOVEMENT, FORTUNE AND HIS
WIFE, CARRIE, AND THEIR SON
FREDERICK, LIVED IN RED BANK,
NEW JERSEY FROM 1901-1911.
THE FORTUNE'S WERE
POLITICALLY ACTIVE IN RED
BANK AND GARNERED NATIONAL
AND INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION



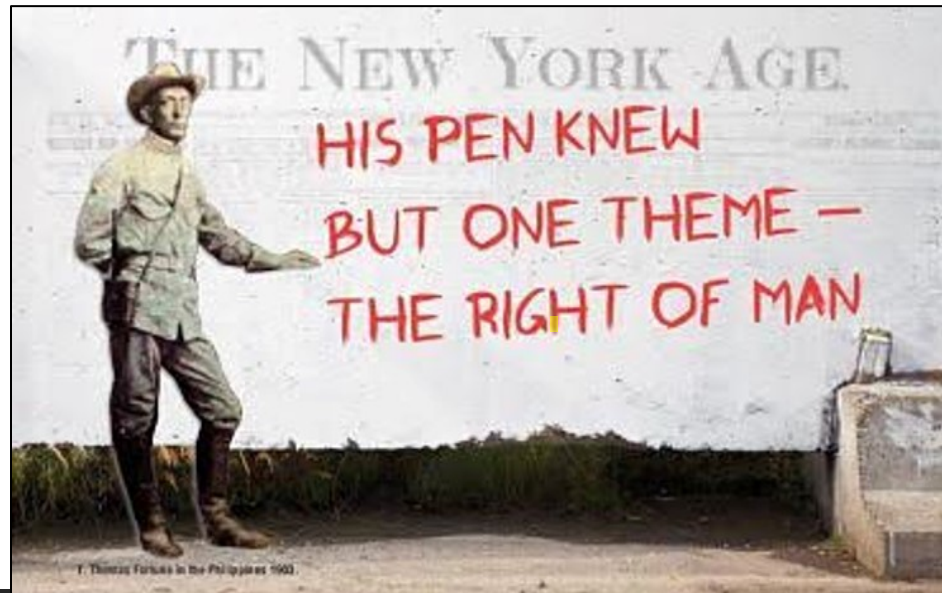
T. THOMAS FORTUNE

The Premiere Black Newspaper



Fortune Spoke Truth to Power in the The New York Age, which was said to have rivaled the New York Times

- The failed attempt of Reconstruction (1865-1877)
- Anti-Lynching campaign (Ida B. Wells)
- Government inspired laws that promoted slavery and segregation
- Encouraged Migration to the North
- Economic injustice
- Education



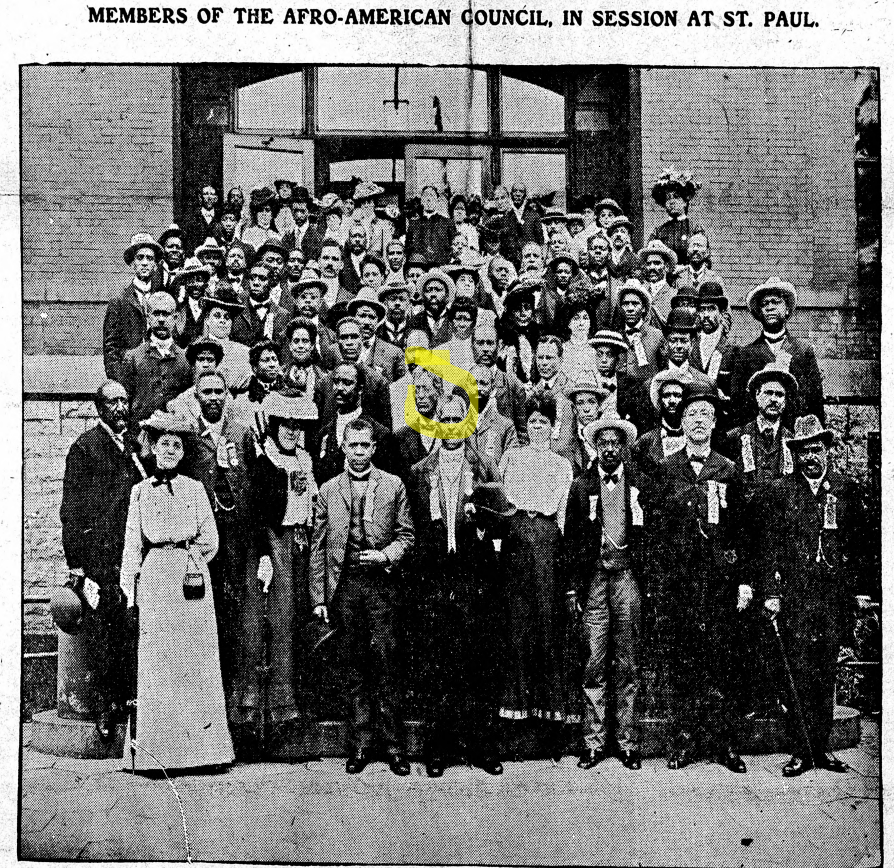
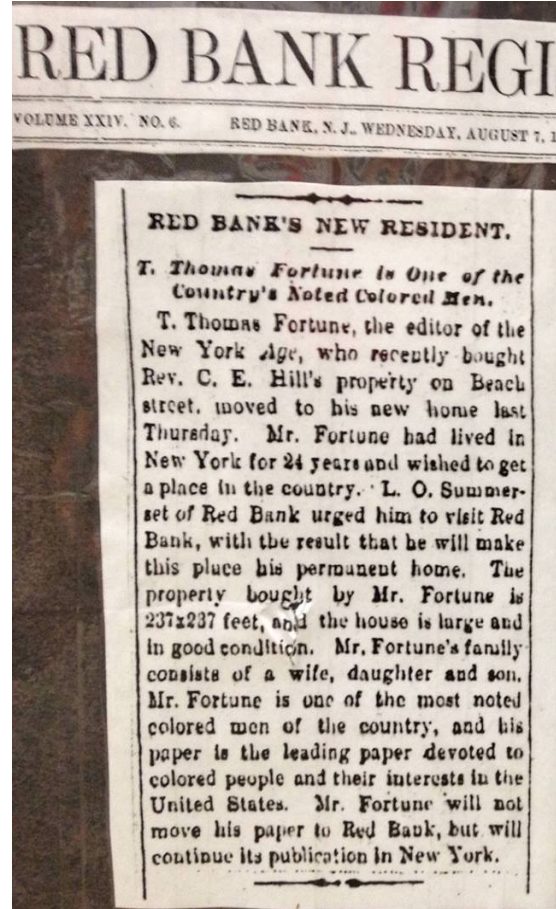
I believe in the divine right of man, not of caste or class

These were the words that T. Thomas Fortune said in a speech titled: "The Present Relations of Labor and Capital," on April 20, 1886 before the Literary Union, in Brooklyn, New York. He was 30 years old.

“Progress Moves Forward Ever Backward Never”

Fortune in Red Bank

Fortune’s arrival in Red Bank was announced in the Red Bank Register on Aug. 7, 1901. He breaks the white real estate covenant by purchasing the home he dubbed “Maple Hall,” from Rev. C.E. Hill, when he and his family moved from Brooklyn to Red Bank. He and his wife, Carrie, were civically engaged residents of Red Bank.



Rt. Rev. Alexander Walters, of New Jersey, is in the Center of the Front Row, and Booker T. Washington Stands at His Right. Mrs. Ida Wells Barnett Stands at President Walter's Left.

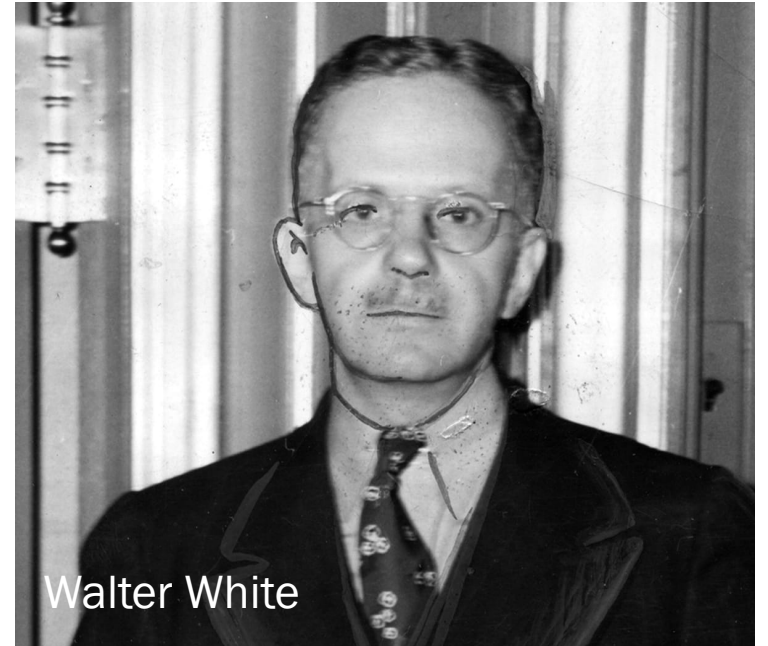
Fortune’s wife Carrie Fortune was a founding member of St. Thomas Episcopal Church, which is still a part of the religious community of Red Bank. She was also a founding member of the National Urban League. Their son, Frederick, named after Frederick Douglass, graduated from Red Bank High School in 1910. He was the only Black student in his graduating class.



Mary Church Terrell



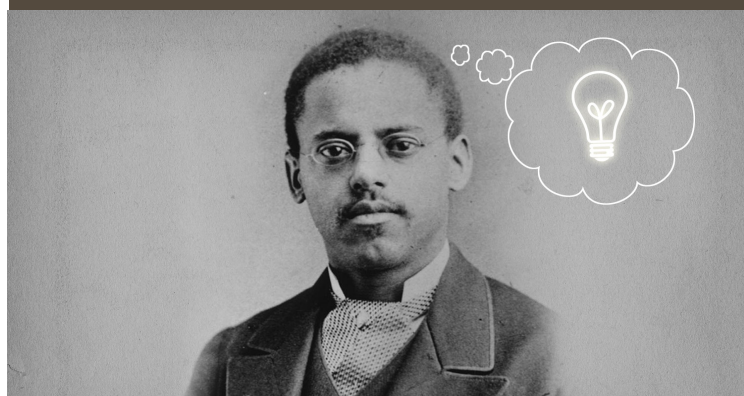
James Weldon Johnson



Walter White



Ida B. Wells



Lewis
Latimer,

Booker T.
Washington



Fortune Contemporaries

In 2012 the T. Thomas Fortune Project Committee was formed and was granted Non-Profit status as the T. Thomas Fortune Foundation in 2017. Board Members and Volunteers





THE
BEFORE
2016

A National Historic Landmark The T. Thomas Fortune Cultural Center

According to the National Parks
Service


*A National Historic Landmark
is a building, district, object,
site, or structure that is
officially recognized by the
United States government for
its outstanding historical
significance.*

The T. Thomas Fortune
Cultural Center is one of the
most significant historic
sites in African American
Heritage and History.



THE AFTER 2019





T. Thomas Fortune
christened the home
Maple Hall

There is an identifying marker
that rests at the edge of the
front lawn with a quote by the
19th and early 20th Century
journalist that reads: “I
believe in the Divine right of
man, not of caste or class,” T.
Thomas Fortune

Sept. 25, 2020

The Exhibit
*A Love Letter
to Count Basie*
Opens

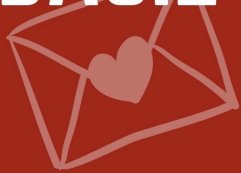


The Unmasking
of the
Count Basie Exhibit
at a mask only event

Know your voting options 

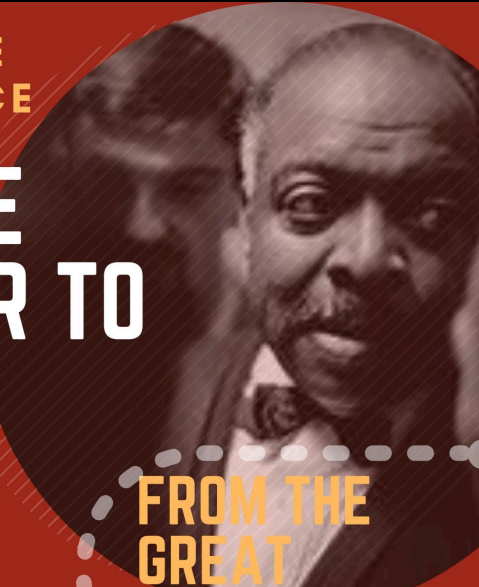
AN ONLINE
EXPERIENCE

A LOVE LETTER TO COUNT BASIE



FROM THE
GREAT
MIGRATION

TO THE
HARLEM
RENAISSANCE



**A LOVE LETTER
TO COUNT BASIE:
FROM THE GREAT MIGRATION
TO THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE**

The rush felt from the stimulating first night of Harlem was seen through my number of eyes. It might have been a young woman entering of the town after days long journey from Mississippi, or a young man from Oklahoma with excitement of being the most great Black resident. Perhaps a thespian's son, who after witnessing the soul-crushing forces that his father endured could find the social heat north as this is depended on it, because it did.

Harlem, NYC, in the early 1920s was the mecca of the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of Black people and all over the country, but all over the world. The Manual "The Porcelain Land," where it must have seemed to the newly arrived that ANYTHING was possible. That can be said of William "Count" Basie, who retroactively knew Harlem was the place to be.

On a walk through Harlem he might have stumbled upon what was called "Satinwood Corner" on 126th Street and he had a crowd impending with "Swing" and "Cotton Club" on the corner. It was customary to put on your finest clothes and walk the streets with no destination in mind, the only purpose was to see and be seen. The new residents were learning to adjust to the slightly acid smell that came from factory smokestacks along the Hudson River, and how different it was from the smell of a tobacco field in North Carolina.

A number of social, economic, and cultural forces, particularly the Great Migration of Blacks from the South, combined to make Harlem magnet for upwardly mobile Blacks. Slaves' Black an unconditional gate of steady tenement houses, was where music composer, Louis Blaha, was present Fletcher Henderson, W.C. Handy, Bill "The original" Robinson and other Black celebrities and professionals lived.

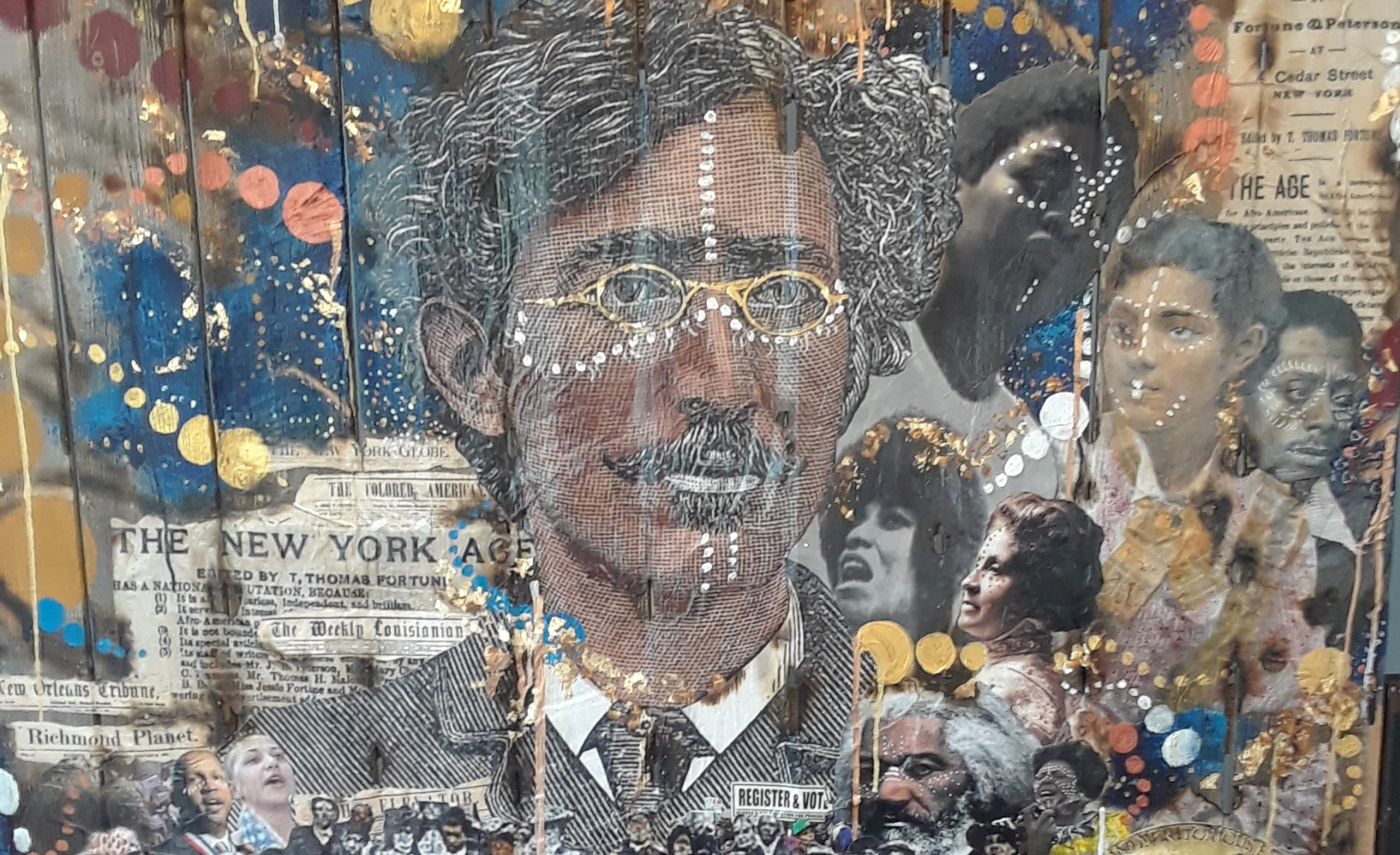
The Harlem Renaissance was a movement in time when "The Great" was at its peak. It was a time long before Langston Hughes wrote in his poem "Harlem" "Roses Grown Deferred" "It was a time when a critical mass of Black people realized their power, their beauty and had high hopes for the future. There has never been a time in American quite like it.

In collaboration with the
Thomas Fortune
Foundation & Cultural Center
and the
INSTITUTE OF JAZZ STUDIES
Rutgers University Newark

Visitors experience the exhibit and view a commissioned collage of writers from the Harlem Renaissance

by Alan Burgess, now a part of the Center's permanent art collection





THE ART OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Commissioned artwork L-R by
artists Lavett Ballard and
Julia Rivera



Racing for Freedom

Monmouth County Freedom Story

**Entwined for Survival: Monmouth County's
Native American People &
The Black Enslaved Population**

The Monmouth County Freedom Story Series

Sponsored in part by the Monmouth County
Historical Commission

Fortune Tellers



Grant Recipient

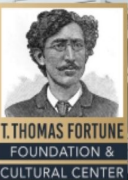
Thank You
OceanFirst Bank





The Foundation operates the Second-Empire Victorian style home as a Cultural Center. The youth education program known as the “Fortune Tellers,” gives students a platform to explore their interests through the lens of social justice. From writers to the use of technology and videographers, the Fortune Tellers are the promise keepers of tomorrow.

Explore *Red Bank!*



T. THOMAS FORTUNE FOUNDATION & CULTURAL CENTER

Download the *Red Bank History App!*

Explore Red Bank with this brand-new walking tour app! Presented by the T. Thomas Fortune Cultural Center, the app provides info on historically and culturally significant locations in Red Bank, with pictures, audio recordings, and stories that bring the town's uniquely rich history to life.

Celebrate Black History Month with the app's featured walking tour, "In the Footsteps of Count Basie". Explore the life of Count Basie and learn about the influential Black Americans who lived in and visited 20th century Red Bank.

In addition, the T. Thomas Fortune Cultural Center will be open every Saturday and Sunday from 1-5pm. Stop by to learn more!

T. Thomas Fortune Cultural Center
94 Drs. James Parker Boulevard
Red Bank, NJ 07701



Red Bank History publicity is sponsored by the Red Bank Business Alliance.

Ready to explore?

Scan the code below to download the app!



RED BANK HISTORY APP

“In the Footsteps of Count Basie” Fortune Tellers Ambassadors Behind The APP

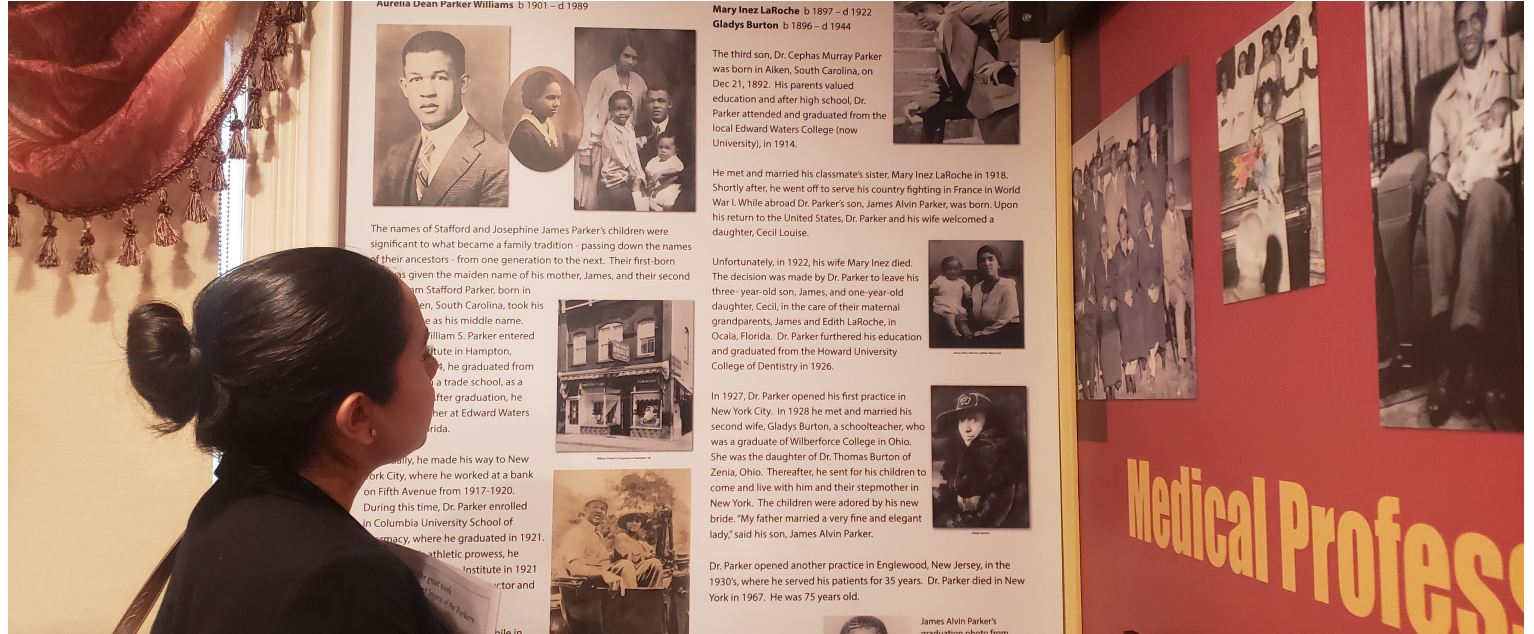
BEHIND THE APP



Nina, Jonah and Mia collaborated with the center to create the Red Bank History App. Their studies and genius have landed them in some of the most prestigious schools in the country. We are proud to have them as Fortune Teller Ambassadors as they move forward in their college careers!

The students used Google's design framework Flutter, so that people with iPhones and Androids could use the app. Google's Firebase was also used to store the information for virtual tours. It was the students who wrote the code for the app. This created the interface for the tours that allow users to use its functionalities.

The goal of this app is to make history fun and interactive while teaching users something new about Red Bank. The creators designed the app for everyone, but noted it would be great to see other young people use it. When asked where they hoped the app would be in five years, both Nina and Jonah said they want to include more interactive tours about Red Bank and other communities. They want this technology to be used to tell stories of the past and present to future generations.



The Parker Family Legacy Room

ANCESTRAL ASCENSION

HBO Max Series The Gilded Age Features T. Thomas Fortune



The show has been renewed for a second season.
Actor Sullivan Jones as T. Thomas Fortune – from
obscurity to The Gilded Age. Thank You for watching.

Please visit www.tthomasfortuneculturalcenter.org

Executive Director: Gilda Rogers