



6th Cavalry Museum

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6th Cavalry Museum Receives National Park Service African American Civil Rights Historic Preservation Fund Grant

Grant to fund “The 6888th in Fort Oglethorpe,” an exhibit and education program about the only all-female, all-African American unit to serve overseas during World War II.

FORT OGLETHORPE, GEORGIA – The National Park Service (NPS) this week announced that the 6th Cavalry Museum will receive a \$28,000 African American Civil Rights Historic Preservation Fund grant to commemorate and educate the public about the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, the only all-female, all-African American unit to serve overseas during World War II. Before shipping out to England in 1945, the unit did their overseas training at Fort Oglethorpe, then an active U.S. Army base.

The grant is a portion of the \$14 million African American Civil Rights Historic Preservation Fund. The 6th Cavalry Museum joins a total of 51 projects across 20 states and the District of Columbia that have been funded this year. Projects will preserve sites and history related to the African American struggle for equality in the 20th century.

“These grants will fund important projects that document, interpret, and preserve sites that tell the stories of the African American experience in the pursuit of civil rights,” **said National Park Service Deputy Director David Vela, exercising the authority of the Director.** “Thanks to the coordination of public and private partners, these projects will help connect Americans to historic places that preserve American history.”

The 6th Cavalry Museum will use their grant funds to install a permanent exhibit about the 6888th and their experience training for war at the Third WAC Training Center, which was located in Chickamauga National Battlefield during the war.



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"The 6888th Postal Battalion played an extremely important role in WWII, boosting the morale of soldiers even as they waged another war against racism and segregation," said Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Superintendent Brad Bennett. "We are proud that the national military park was a part of this vital story and are pleased that our partner the 6th Cavalry Museum has received this grant to share the fascinating story of the 6888th with local residents and travelers to our region."

The 6888th's overseas assignment was to clear 17 million pieces of backlogged mail to U.S. soldiers and volunteers serving in the European theater of war. The women accomplished the task in six months.

"We couldn't be prouder to have received support for this project," said museum Executive Director Chris McKeever. "The story of the 6888th is one that should be told to every school child and adult in our region. They were an extraordinary unit of soldiers."

The 6th Cavalry Museum is the only entity funded by the NPS program in Northwest Georgia or the greater Chattanooga region. The grant will go towards a permanent exhibit and education program for middle and high school students in the region.

"This exhibit and education program will stand as a solid reminder of the sacrifices that these women made at home and abroad for their country," **said GA State Representative Jeff Mullis.** "I really look forward to attending the exhibit opening and hearing the Fort Oglethorpe part of the story."

Work is already underway. The Chattanooga premiere of "The Six Triple Eight," a documentary that profiles the story of the battalion, drew a huge crowd to the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga in February. A son of a 6888th veteran and his wife were among the attendees. Part of the grant funding from the NPS will be used to find and interview other sons and daughters of 6888th veterans who live in the tristate region.

"The addition of the 6888th Central Postal Directory WAC Battalion exhibit provides an opportunity to enrich residents and visitors of the grand cultural history within Fort Oglethorpe," said City of Fort Oglethorpe Councilwoman Paula G. Stinnett. "These brave and patriotic women accomplished a feat which provided solace to many service men and women who had not heard from their loved ones in several years. It is only just that we honor the 6888th and tell their story to the present and generations yet to come!"

The public can learn more about the developing "6888th in Fort Oglethorpe" exhibit and education program by visiting the 6th Cavalry Museum website or calling (706) 861-2860.



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Congress appropriated funding for the [African American Civil Rights Grants Program](#) in 2019 through the [Historic Preservation Fund](#) (HPF). The HPF uses revenue from federal oil leases on the Outer Continental Shelf, providing assistance for a broad range of preservation projects without expending tax dollars. Grant-supported projects include surveys and documentation, interpretation and education, oral histories, architectural services, historic structure reports, planning, and physical preservation.

For more information about the grants and the African America Civil Rights Grant Program, please visit <https://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/civil-rights/>. Applications for \$15.5 million in FY2020 funding will be available in the fall of 2020.

The 6th Cavalry Museum is an independent nonprofit organization that was founded to preserve the history of the “Fighting Sixth” U.S. Cavalry. With a mission to share history for all, the museum offers low cost and free educational programs, special events, and exhibits that honor the men and women who served at the U.S. Army post at Fort Oglethorpe from 1902 to 1947. The museum is located in the community of Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia on historic Barnhardt Circle, one block north of Chickamauga National Battlefield. To learn more, visit 6thCavalryMuseum.org.