

Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mary McLeod Bethune Council House NHS
Administered by National Capital Parks - East
Washington, DC



The Mary McLeod Bethune Trail

1. Mary McLeod Bethune's Birthplace



Mary McLeod Bethune was born July 10th, 1875 in Mayesville, South Carolina. Born Mary Jane McLeod, she was the 15th of 17 children and the first in her family born free. Bethune's childhood home was a small cabin built by her father and brothers on their cotton farm. After the opening of the Trinity Presbyterian Mission School near Mayesville, little Mary Jane became the first in her family to receive a formal education. She excelled in her studies and quickly realized the value of her education. This early opportunity afforded Bethune a lifetime of successes.

1940 Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Road, Mayesville, SC 29104 || (803) 453-5014

2. Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History



Lucy Craft Laney was born in Macon, Georgia, on April 13, 1854 to freed slaves. She learned to read by the age of four and entered the first class of four students at Atlanta University by the age of fifteen. She taught briefly in Macon, Milledgeville, and Savannah before eventually settling in Augusta, Georgia where she made her greatest contributions. She established the first kindergarten for black children, the Haines Normal and Industrial Institute, and established the Lamar Nursing School. She was also instrumental in chartering a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Miss Laney befriended and mentored Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune when she came to teach at the Haines Normal and Industrial Institute. Mrs. Bethune's experience crystallized her passion for educating youth. With the wisdom she acquired from Miss Laney, Mrs. Bethune laid the foundation for her own school.

In 1987, Miss Laney's home was purchased by Delta House, Inc. In the spirit of continuing her legacy, the home was restored as the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History.

1116 Phillips Street, Augusta, GA 30901 || (706) 724-3576 || www.lucycraftlaneymuseum.com

3. Bethune-Cookman University and the Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation



Mary McLeod Bethune realized the value of education early in life. As a young teacher, she strove to give young people the same educational opportunities that were afforded to her. In 1904, Mary McLeod Bethune moved to Daytona Beach, Florida and decided to open her own school called the Daytona Normal and Industrial School for Girls. Later, her school would merge with the Cookman Institute to become Bethune-Cookman College. Today, the school is a fully accredited university.

About the Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation National Historic Landmark

Fondly referred to as the "Retreat," this historic home was built in 1904. During her years as president of the thriving Bethune-Cookman College, the home was where Mrs. Bethune raised her son and grandson, hosted various dignitaries and guests, and spent her last years after retirement. In 1953, two years before her passing, Mrs. Bethune willed the home to the Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation to serve as the organization's headquarters and a place to "awaken people and have them realize there is something in the world they can do." Today the home is preserved as a museum on the campus of Bethune-Cookman University.

640 Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Boulevard, Daytona Beach, FL 32114 || (386) 481-2121 || www.cookman.edu

4. 137th Street YWCA



On December 5th, 1935, the NCNW held their first formal meeting at the 137th Street YWCA in Harlem, New York. Two years later, a young employee of the YWCA and local activist named Dorothy Height was formally introduced to Bethune. Bethune's mentorship helped propel Height's career, eventually landing her Bethune's former post as president of the NCNW.

200 West 137th Street, New York City, NY 10030

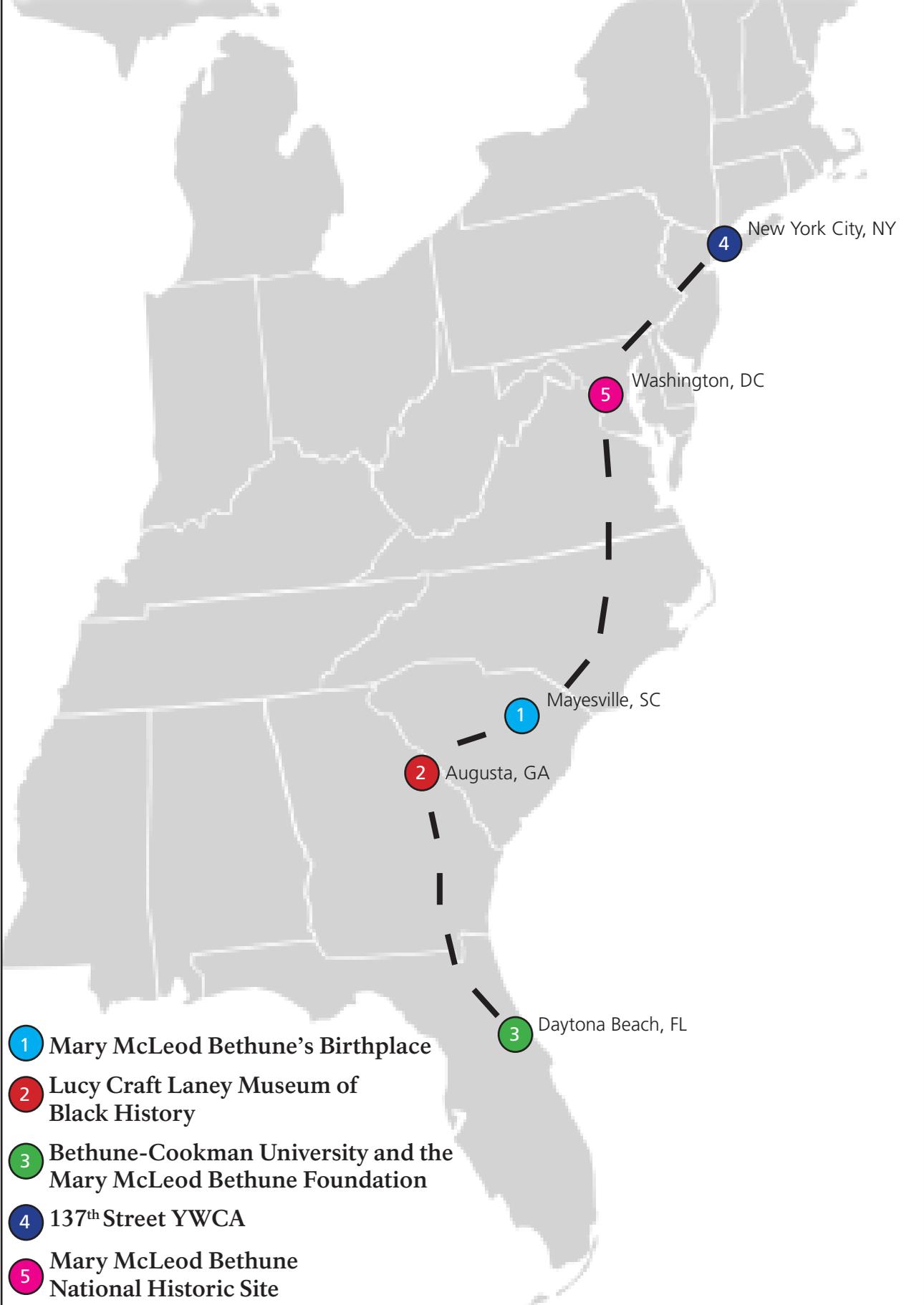
5. Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site



In 1935, Mary McLeod Bethune was offered a position in the Roosevelt Administration. Shortly after moving to Washington, DC to assume her new post, Bethune founded the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). The NCNW's mission was to unite thousands of African American women to combat racial and gender inequality, not just in the United States, but worldwide. In 1943, Bethune established the first national headquarters for the NCNW at 1318 Vermont Avenue. Today, the former headquarters is a National Historic Site, preserved in perpetuity by the National Park Service.

1318 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20005 || (202) 673-2402 || www.nps.gov/mamc

As an educator, activist, and political leader, Mary McLeod Bethune spent her entire life working towards achieving racial and gender equality for all people. Her journey took her around the country and the world. The Mary McLeod Bethune Trail highlights the significant sites attributed to Bethune's life. Along the way, you will discover the people, events, and places that helped shape Mary McLeod Bethune and American history.



The Bethune Trail is made possible by



The National Park Service



The Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation



The Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History