

# NEW MUSEUM: AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORY FINALLY RECEIVES TRIBUTE



Nearly 150 years have passed since the abolition of slavery in USA, yet the descendants of former slaves have not had a museum which would commemorate their ancestors. Until this year; the groundbreaking ceremony took place in February.

Ever since the abolition of slavery in 1863, many descendants of former slaves have been calling for a tribute to their ancestors in the U.S. **Generations have been trying to suggest a bill which would establish the National Museum of African American History and Culture.**

While such efforts started soon after the Civil War ended, they only came into fruition this year. In February, the groundbreaking ceremony took place in Washington D.C., featuring the first black president Obama as well as former first lady Laura Bush.

The \$500-million museum was first approved by Congress in 2003. While Congress offered to provide part of the funding, at least 50% will have to come from public collections as well as sponsorship. In fact, some \$100 million have already been donated by both large corporations as well as individual contributors.

The collection will focus on portraying 200 years of black life in the United States and those responsible for finding the artifacts have been travelling around the country, collecting items of interest which will then be on display.

**Some 35,000 artifacts are sought to make up the collection and as of today, some 20,000 are already assembled.** These feature slave garments from 19th century, a slave cabin and shackles worn by slaves brought from Africa, or many items donated by the collector Charles Blockson, which belonged to the famous female abolitionist Harriet Tubman. These feature her book of hymns or a lace shawl which was a gift from Her Majesty Queen Victoria. The museum will open in 2015 and will hopefully be a big success.

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