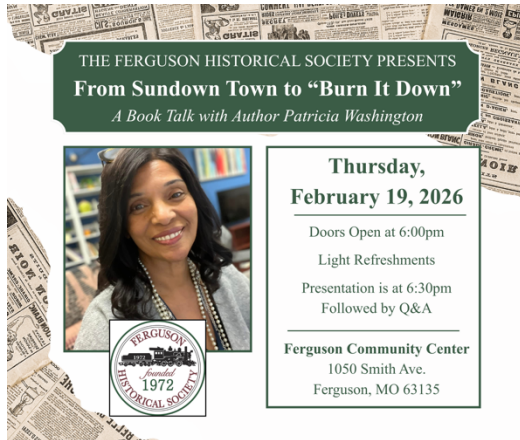



Ferguson Has A History Museum

Ferguson, indeed, does have a Historical Society and a History Museum and we are moving forward with the help of our readers of the past weeks. We encourage any of you reading this article to join in the conversation. Contact information is at the bottom of this article.




THE FERGUSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS
From Sundown Town to "Burn It Down"
A Book Talk with Author Patricia Washington



**Thursday,
February 19, 2026**

Doors Open at 6:00pm
Light Refreshments
Presentation is at 6:30pm
Followed by Q&A

Ferguson Community Center
1050 Smith Ave.
Ferguson, MO 63135



You probably saw this ad in last month's Ferguson Neighborhood News, **it is too late to go to the event** – it has passed and it was wonderful. The event was a collaboration between Patricia Washington author of *"From Sundown Town to 'Burn It Down'"* and the Ferguson Historical Society. The event was held at the Ferguson Community Center.



Apparently, the ad worked as a crowd of around 80 people attended – and they got an evening full of history, information and a good amount of Ferguson Pride. Washington is near finishing her book, in part, about Ferguson being a "Sundown Town" – a town which had laws restricting Afro-American people

from being within the city limits after the sun goes down. In other words – you can work here by day but get out of town by dark and don't come back until the sun rises. Kinloch, a "Black (Negro) Community" was (and still is) just over the Ferguson city limits.



To give you more about Patricia Washington, here is how Jill Holtrop, Director of the Ferguson Historical Society, introduced her:

"Patricia Washington is an award-winning journalist and communications professional with more than 35 years of experience shaping public narrative at the highest levels of government and media. Patricia is a history maker in her own right, having served as the first Black press secretary to the Mayor of the City of St. Louis and later in the same capacity for the St. Louis County Executive, Charlie Dooley. Throughout her career, she has earned numerous journalism and communications awards, and is recognized for her



clarity, integrity, and ability to communicate during moments of crisis and change. The killing of Michael Brown jr. and the protests that followed occurred during the closing days of Patricia's tenure as Communications Director for St. Louis County Executive Charlie Dooley. By day, she was responsible for managing global media attention focused on the region. By night, she felt compelled to bear witness in the streets – standing alongside a community grappling with grief, anger and a demand to be heard.

Today, Patricia serves as the Public Information Officer for the Ferguson Police Department and as Consent Decree Coordinator for the City of Ferguson, working at the intersection of accountability, reform and public trust.

She is the author of a forthcoming book that explores history, memory, and the emotional

through-line from America's era of exclusion to the modern struggle for justice and reform. Please join me in welcoming Patricia Washington."

Prior to the meeting, the Ferguson Historical Society was happy to offer refreshments by hosts Suzanne Cross and Jill Holtrop.



As guests arrived, they were offered the opportunity to enter a raffle. Just prior to the address, FHS President, Mary Haux, called out the winning raffle ticket.

Near the end of the presentation, Washington asked for questions and input. Several people stood up and asked some questions. By the end of the meeting, most people in the room were proud to be connected to Ferguson



As was mentioned earlier, about 80 people attended the event, including past St. Louis County Executive, Charlie Dooley, Ferguson Mayor, Ella M. Jones and several members of the Ferguson Police, including Chief Troy Doyle. When Washington's book comes out, we will let you know – we anticipate adding it to our historic collection.



proposed by a city council member that would build a wall along Suburban at the city limit between Ferguson and Kinloch. While this is not a “Sundown Law”, it's intent was quite clear and many Ferguson residents did not take favorably to it. The protest was held in front of City Hall, probably during a Council meeting. Long-story short – the measure never passed a vote of the Council. In these photos of the event –



perhaps, if you were there, you might recognize a younger self or friend.

If any of you can contribute anymore about this story, please feel free (obligated) to reach out. Contact information is at the end of the article.

As a final note: our first fundraiser in 2024 was to create a web site. Our second one in 2025 was to launch it - and launch it we did!

In a similar note to “Sundown Towns”, I do remember a similar event, long after Ferguson was a “Sundown Town”. From my 80-year plus memory, I recall an event in 1974 to 1976 (maybe some of our readership could provide a more accurate date) that occurred in Ferguson. Apparently, a bill had been





We are on the internet – just a beginning – not a lot yet - but check us out. Thanks to all who have helped, in any way, shape or form.

**Look for our new
website**

Fergusonhistoricalsociety.com.

If you have any suggestions, questions, or items to donate to the Ferguson Historical Society, please contact **Jerry Benner** at fibenner@mindspring.com. If you wish to become a member or make a money donation, you can send it to Ferguson Historical Society at 716. N. Elizabeth Ave, Ferguson, MO 63135. You are also welcome to visit the History Museum. Please email me at the address to set a date and time to visit. Board meetings are on the third Wednesday at 6:30 PM. Interested people are invited to attend the meetings. We have capabilities to do oral histories and would love to add to our collection on any Ferguson or North County subject. *“The Ferguson Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of Ferguson Missouri. Membership is open to all sharing our interest.”*