

# Collector's Journal

A SERVICE OF COLLECTORS ALLIANCE

## 2017 Frederick Douglass National Historic Site Quarter - District of Columbia

### *Thirty-Seventh in the America the Beautiful Quarters Collection*

Frederick Douglass National Historic Site in the District of Columbia is featured on the second of five America the Beautiful Quarters issued in 2017. The coin is also the thirty-seventh in the overall collection; the series started in 2010 and coins are issued at the rate of five per year.

The Frederick Douglass coin followed the coin for Effigy Mounds National Monument in Iowa; it will be followed by three additional coins in 2017: Ozark National Scenic Riverways in Missouri, Ellis Island (Statue of Liberty National Monument) in New Jersey, and George Rogers Clark National Historical Park in Indiana.

Eventually, the series will include coins for each of the 50 states, Washington, D.C., and the five overseas U.S. territories. Each coin highlights a National Park or other national site within the featured jurisdiction, and the coins are released in the order in which the sites were set aside by the federal government. Coins for circulation are issued one-at-a-time, and production for each design is restricted to only about 10 weeks.

America the Beautiful Quarters are made for circulation at both the Philadelphia and Denver Mints; they are identified by a small "P" (Philadelphia) or "D" (Denver) mint mark under "In God We Trust."

Frederick Douglass National Historic Site preserves the Cedar Hill home and 8.5 acre estate that once belonged to abolitionist and statesman Frederick Douglass from 1877 until his death in 1895. Douglass was born into slavery in 1818. He escaped to freedom, and his sensational 1845 autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, became a bestseller and made him a national celebrity.

Douglass believed that all people should be free, so in addition to fighting against slavery, he wanted equal rights for women. He became a trusted advisor to President Abraham Lincoln during the



Civil War, and he recruited African-Americans to fight for the Union cause. After the war, he held various positions in Washington, D.C., including U.S. Marshal for the District of Columbia. He was the most well-known African-American in the late 1800's, and he issued another autobiography, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, in 1881.

Douglass's estate sits above the Anacostia River in southeastern District of Columbia, where it enjoys a panoramic view of the city. The highlight of the Cedar Hill house is Douglass's study.

The design of the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site Quarter features an image of Douglass as an elderly man seated at his writing desk. His Cedar Hill home is shown in the background.

In addition to the final design, U.S. Mint artists submitted five additional design suggestions. One featured Douglass as a young man making a speech from a podium; one showed Douglass and Lincoln during one of their meetings to plan the emancipation of slaves; the third design was similar to the eventual design, but with the north star to represent Douglass's anti-slavery newspaper, *North Star*; and the final two designs depicted different views of Cedar Hill. Representatives of Frederick Douglass National Historic Site helped select the final design.

The Frederick Douglass National Historic Site Quarter was released by the U.S. Mint in April, 2017.

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