Acknowledgements

Having grown up in Los Angeles surrounded by the stories of the men who built it, I wanted to uncover the forgotten stories of the women who lived and worked alongside them. Although Los Angeles is often considered one of the most progressive cities in the country, it has done little to document or preserve women’s history. History must expand to tell the whole story, not half.

This thesis was possible because of the historians who have dedicated their careers to promoting preservation. Resources such as Heather A. Huyck and Peg Strobel’s book, *Revealing Women’s History: Best Practices at Historic Sites*, as well as Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman’s book, *Restoring Women’s History through Historic Preservation*, informed the current practices for preserving women’s history. Additionally, the dedication of the professors and adjunct professors in the Master’s of Heritage Conservation program at the University of Southern California’s School of Architecture inspired me to research a topic out of passion.

Finally, I would like the acknowledge my coworkers, a team of Architectural Historians, who pushed me to finish my thesis. Over the last year, they have helped me improve my research and writing skills and taught me the importance of our job. Preservation conveys the stories of our past to better inform our future. Without it, all would be forgotten.
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Abstract

While Los Angeles is known for being the city of seemingly eternal youth, nothing lasts forever, and this is most evident in the years of forgotten women’s history in the city. Because of their marginalization throughout much of the past, many of the most influential women in Los Angeles have not been recognized for their achievements. In this thesis, I will highlight some of the women who have significantly affected the history of Los Angeles in order to give them a voice. Each of these women are buried in the historic Evergreen Cemetery in Boyle Heights, and have no other memorial to their accomplishments. Today, their grave sites are the only vestige of their memory. By using the cemetery as a public history archive and examining the lives of some of the women buried there, I intend to create a record of the important women who built this city. Thus, allowing members of the public to better understand the lives and challenges women faced during the creation of Los Angeles. Women have always been significant figures in history, yet up until recently, their contributions have not been acknowledged. With greater representation of women’s history, we can begin to create a more balanced and inclusive understanding of the past. Each of these women used their resources to better the world around them, and in return their success should be remembered and celebrated.
Introduction

On March 2, 2023, the World Bank reported that the global pace of reforms for the equal treatment of women has “slumped to a 20-year low” and established that on average, women experience 77% of the legal rights that men do across the world.¹ Nearly 2.4 billion adult women worldwide still do not have the same rights as men. In 2022, gender-related legal reforms hit a low since 2001 with only thirty-four reforms proposed across eighteen countries. However, the World Bank suggests that it would take about 1,549 reforms to create a significant change in gender equality throughout the world. Reform fatigue seems to have set in particularly in developing countries where women have already inherited the right to established norms such as owning property. Yet women in these countries are often still underrepresented in government positions, and action to encourage equality within leadership has slowed in recent years.²

Closing the gender gap would promote inclusive development and encourage women’s participation in positions of authority to create a fully democratic process. Inter-Parliamentary Union Secretary General, Martin Chungong, commented on March 3, 2023, that:

We’re seeing ongoing progress in the number of women in politics this year, which is encouraging. However, we still have a long way to go to reach gender equality when we see the current rates of growth. With the interlinked crises of climate change, geopolitical tensions, economic instability, and social inequality, the world needs to better harness the talents of women and encourage them to enter politics sooner rather than later.³

In a world that continues to subject women to a lower standard of liberty, addressing gender inequality and injustice matters now more than ever and it begins with inclusive representation of women. Education on woman’s history is a way of spreading knowledge and experience in order

to change the perception of a historically patriarchal society. Despite a general increase in the field of women’s studies over the past decade, many historic sites associated with women’s history have not been comprehensively researched, preserved, or interpreted. Therefore, this thesis is intended to contribute toward making the history of women in Los Angeles more visible, by providing additional information on three influential women.

Women have significantly contributed to Los Angeles’ cultural environment for generations, yet most of the City’s history perpetuates the idea that men have impacted its legacy the most. It is typical that places associated with minority history are recorded less than those associated with white/European history. Los Angeles is one of the world’s most populated cities with an estimated population of about 3,849,297 residents in 2021, and 50.5% of its population are women. The relative lack of emphasis on women’s history is not exclusive to Los Angeles, but in a city with as much modern day influence as Los Angeles, the continued acknowledgment of woman’s history has the ability to affect millions of tourists visiting the city every year and encourage further change.

This thesis investigates women’s history in Los Angeles and tells the stories of three women who made significant contributions to the history of the city, but have no memorial to their achievements, other than their grave sites. Each of these women are buried in the historic Evergreen Cemetery, yet they are not widely known about today. Charlotta Bass, Nellie Truelove, and Lela Campbell Murray were fiercely independent women who set out to make a difference in their communities with their dedication to service and community. There is an abundance of women’s history in the city that has been forgotten and ignored, so research in this

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thesis reveals sites associated with each of these women that have yet to be recognized as places of historic significance.

Located in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Boyle Heights, Evergreen Cemetery is one of the oldest cemeteries in the city. Established by the city in 1877, the site was originally beyond the border of the city’s urban center and contained a five acre “potter’s field” where unidentified persons were cremated and buried in a single grave each year. It was the first cemetery to allow burials for minority groups, however it was still segregated with separate sections for each ethnicity. The various sections include established sites for African Americans, and citizens of Chinese, Mexican, Japanese, and Armenian descent, as well as members of the Jewish faith and a whole section for the burial of carnival people called “Showmen’s Rest.” The site is home to an extremely rich and diverse history and includes the graves of many prominent figures in Los Angeles, such as Biddy Mason, the Van Nuys family, and numerous World War II heroes. Evergreen Cemetery was dedicated to supporting community members who otherwise would not have had access to burial grounds, and today it stands as a memorial for underrepresented stories from Los Angeles’ history.

Chapter 1 will introduce the story of Charlotta Bass, who was an activist, educator, newspaper publisher, and editor, and the first African American woman to be nominated for Vice President of the United States. Bass left a legacy of activism and helped to pave the way for those to come after. Seventy years later, the first female African American Vice President, Kamala Harris, is in office and Bass’s story feels more relevant now than ever. In a New York

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6 “Evergreen Cemetery,” Los Angeles Conservancy.
Times article about overlooked figures, Bass’s great-great-great niece was quoted saying, “It gave me goose bumps to see how far we’ve come.”

Although this is a start, we still have more to go as far as equality and representation. Today, only three percent of the city’s historically designated resources are associated with African American heritage. While much of the historic African American built environment has been destroyed, the stories of those like Charlotta Bass live on to encourage awareness of underrepresented histories, so we can better preserve African American heritage in its richness.

Chapter 2 will discuss the impact Salvation Army officer Nellie Truelove had on Los Angeles history from her arrival in 1895 until her death in 1904. Although she lived in the city for only nine years, she was relentless in her mission to help women. Truelove worked for a Salvation Army rescue home and primarily focused her efforts on rescuing women from abuse. She did so by visiting bars and brothels to find women in need of help and bringing them back to a rescue home. Even when pressed by authorities to refrain from placing herself in the middle of danger, she persisted and ultimately became the first female police officer in Los Angeles. Her courage changed the lives of many young women and children during the early days of the city and paved the way for future female officers in in the Los Angeles Police Department.

Chapter 3 will uncover the history of the first African American dude ranch in California, the Overall Wearing Dude Ranch, created by Lela Campbell Murry and her husband Nolie Murray in the 1930s. During this time of segregation in Southern California, places of recreation

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and leisure primarily restricted Black visitors. Black Angelenos left the city to seek “all-Black” communities in the Mojave Desert where they could escape discrimination and create a space defined by Blackness rather than white racial supremacy. The Murrays saw this as an opportunity to create a haven for Black leisure, so they constructed their dude ranch in Victorville where the all-Black community, Bell Mountain, had already begun to form. The popularity of their dude ranch increased throughout the 1930s and ‘40s and in 1949, it was integrated to include white guests before the rest of the nation welcomed the idea of integration.

Lela was an early contributor to a culture of racial equality.

The Analysis Chapter compares resources associated with the women profiled in this thesis to established eligibility criteria for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) in order to determine if they are eligible as significant resources. If eligible, these resources could be preserved and designated to continue sharing the stories of these women. While women have often been the driving force of preservation in the United States, their contributions to the country’s history are underrepresented. Identifying previously unpublicized places where each of these women actively contributed to the history of Los Angeles reveals the lack of awareness of women’s history in our city and the need to share the stories of women. In using tangible resources to convey women’s history within the fabric of Los Angeles, the city has the ability to broaden the focus of its culture to include the other half of its population.

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Chapter 1: Charlotta Bass

Figure 1.1 - Image of Charlotta Bass (1874-1969). Source: University of Southern California Digital Library.

Born in Sumter, South Carolina in 1874, Charlotta Spears Bass was the sixth out of eleven children in her family.\textsuperscript{11} Little is known about her early years. As a child, she received a public education, and even attended a semester of college at Pembroke College in Brown University.\textsuperscript{12} At twenty years old in 1894, she moved in with her brother in Providence, Rhode Island, where she worked for the Black owned newspaper, \textit{Providence Watchman}, selling ads and subscriptions for ten years.\textsuperscript{13} In 1910 she moved to Los Angeles for supposed health reasons. During the period when Bass first moved to Los Angeles, the African American community had

evolved along with influxes of migrations but was still a growing minority within the city.\textsuperscript{14} At first, she took a job selling subscriptions for a newspaper then known as \textit{The Owl}, but later changed to \textit{The Eagle}. Founded in 1879 by John J. Neimore, formerly enslaved in Texas, the publication was one of the oldest and longest running African American newspapers in Los Angeles. By 1912, Neimore arranged for Bass to take control of the newspaper and its associated printing business after his death.\textsuperscript{15} When she succeeded him as the owner, Bass became the first African American woman to own and operate a newspaper and changed its name from \textit{The Eagle} to \textit{The California Eagle}. She took advantage of her platform to inspire reforms that would counter police brutality, restrictive housing, and racism. When Bass first became involved with \textit{The Eagle}, she made it a point to cultivate “community consciousness” by promoting neighborhood events, and Black businesses, as well as by reporting on civil rights causes.\textsuperscript{16} In 1913, Joe Bass joined the paper as a reporter from the Midwest, and in 1914 he became editor alongside Charlotta, and the two married. They worked together for twenty years until his death in 1934 and made significant changes to the paper that garnered its success for years to come.\textsuperscript{17}

In advocating for justice and equality in their articles, \textit{The California Eagle} was openly contradicting the white owned newspapers that encouraged racial segregation. In 1920, just ten years after Bass moved to Los Angeles, the African American community formed less than three percent of the total population, with about 15,579 citizens.\textsuperscript{18} However, with the population

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, 122.
\textsuperscript{17} “Charlotta Bass (U.S. National Park Service).”
growth came an increase in discrimination. African American communities were confined to the east side because of racial restrictions on housing.¹⁹ Civic and social organizations helped to create roots and middle-class activists who aimed to represent the diversity of the African American culture by encouraging community engagement.²⁰ The Los Angeles branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was formed in 1914 and in 1921 the National Urban League opened a Los Angeles branch.²¹ The emergence of such civil organizations encouraged the establishment of the two African American owned newspapers, *the

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¹⁹ “Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.”

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Figure 1.2 - Charlotta Bass and local businessmen outside the offices of The California Eagle at 4071-75 Central Avenue in the 1930s. Source: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research.
California Eagle and the New Age, which provided a new avenue for communities of color to speak out against discrimination. Along with a monthly news magazine called the Liberator, these publications celebrated the achievements of African American citizens and promoted local businesses and institutions to create a sense of community.\(^{22}\)

Bass’s goal was to champion the success of the Black community and reveal the effects of institutionalized racism on minority communities.\(^{23}\) However, not everyone agreed with her beliefs. In an attempt to detail the crimes of the Ku Klux Klan, Bass was targeted by the group and received death threats for her actions. In 1925, she published a letter from the head of the local Klan that revealed a plan to eradicate local Black leaders for various crimes. Although the Klan head, G.W. Price, sued for libel, Bass won the case. The Klan targeted Bass after the case, sending eight Klan members to her office one night while she was alone, yet after realizing she was carrying a pistol, the intruders left.\(^{24}\) The paper became a source of inspiration as well as information for the Black community, and strongly advocated for civil justice as well as community engagement, with reports on local businesses, churches, clubs, and social events.\(^ {25}\) Additionally, her weekly column, “On the Sidewalk,” acknowledged social injustice in Los Angeles for all minority communities and promoted reforms that would combat the derogatory image of people of color in the mainstream media. When the D.W. Griffith movie, The Birth of a Nation, premiered, Bass used her platform to speak out against the film’s racist image of African Americans. Likewise, she exposed the racist hiring processes and restrictive housing covenants in Los Angeles that excluded people of color and promoted social segregation. Regardless of the

\(^{22}\) Ibid., 23.
\(^{24}\) Mariana Brandman, “Charlotta Spears Bass (1880-1969).”
\(^{25}\) “Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.”
efforts of others to silence her, Bass and *the California Eagle* prevailed and became one of the most influential African American papers on the west coast. However, she still found herself reevaluating the scope of her work after her husband’s death, and it was around this time that she searched for other ways to bolster the fight for justice.

![Bass speaking at a rally](image)

**Figure 1.3** - Charlotta Bass speaking at a rally when she was running for Congress in the 14th District. Source: Security Pacific National Bank Collection/Los Angeles Public Library Collection.

As a champion of civil liberties, Bass embraced politics and civil groups to stimulate community support. After the Great Depression led to a nationwide economic downfall, minority communities were hit the hardest. Racially discriminatory labor policies increased, making employment scarce for people of color, and by 1934, the African American unemployment rate
reached fifty percent.\textsuperscript{26} Often, Black workers were excluded from jobs in the manufacturing and entertainment industries, the two most stable industries in Los Angeles at the time, so they were relegated to service positions. Further constraints, such as restrictive covenants and segregation in public places, continued to reinforce discrimination against people of color. Bass recognized this disparity, and during the 1930s, joined the NAACP, the Urban League, the Civil Rights Congress, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association to encourage the presence of Black citizens in politics. Due to the success of her political activism, Bass endeavored to campaign for leadership positions within Los Angeles to bring her concerns to a wider audience. She ran for Congress twice, once in 1944 and again in 1950, as well as for Los Angeles City Council in 1945.\textsuperscript{27} Although she never won any of her campaigns, she used her platform to challenge patriarchal leadership and created paths for Black radicalism in the media and political arena.

During the post World War II era, the population increased in Los Angeles as well as the racial and class divisions. White residents attempted to restrict access to home ownership, leisure space, and jobs, and resisted the idea of Black leadership. Likewise, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 had to be established to overcome the state and local barriers that prevented African Americans from the right to vote. While white bigotry hindered her ability to win in the polls, it gave her opportunity to publicly shed light discrimination within politics. In her 1952 speech for the Progressive Party at Madison Square Garden, Bass claimed, “We want a government that acts for people, not for profits. We want the wealth of our land used for life—not death. We want a government that will enforce the constitutional rights of people, not destroy them”\textsuperscript{28}. It is clear

\textsuperscript{26} Josh Sides, \textit{L.A. City Limits African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 296.
\textsuperscript{27} Freer, “L.A. Race Woman: Charlotta Bass and the Complexities of Black Political Development in Los Angeles,” pp. 625-627.
\textsuperscript{28} Charlotta Bass, “Address by Mrs. Charlotta A. Bass,” American Labor Party Rally, Madison Square Garden, October 27, 1952, Additional Box 1, Progressive Party Campaign, 1952-Speeches, Charlotta Bass Collection, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research (SCLSSR), Los Angeles, California.
that she recognized the symbolism in her campaign as the first Black woman to campaign for vice-presidency at time when African Americans did not have the right to vote in every state.

Furthermore, she continued to convey her political platform through her civil rights activism. Bass, along with fourteen other prominent African American female figures from the time, used her platform to create the National Sojourner for Truth and Justice Club in 1951 to 1952, to improve working conditions for Black women. The group was a radical Black women’s human rights organization that was inspired by Sojourner Truth’s activism in the previous century. Their first rally was held in March 1951 in Washington D.C., to protest the government’s complicity with racism. Within two weeks, one-hundred-thirty-two women from fourteen states responded to the call. They mobilized against postwar racism, critiqued foreign policy during the Cold War, and disclosed human rights violations against African Americans. These women used their identities as mothers and wives to appeal to the average citizen while revealing the effects of racism. Together, their mission was to uplift African American women across the country and promote equal rights.

In 1952, Bass dared to further her political ambition and became the first African American woman candidate to run for Vice President. Bass campaigned under the Independent Progressive Party of California with her running mate Vincent Hallinan, using the slogan, “Win or lose, we win by raising the issues.” Although the Republican candidates, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Richard M. Nixon, won the presidency that year, she and Hallinan garnered

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29 “Charlotta Bass (U.S. National Park Service),” National Park Service.
140,000 votes and used their campaign to promote issues such as civil rights, organized labor, military budgets and universal health care.\(^{33}\) Previously, she had ties to both the Democratic and Republic parties, but chose to abandon them in favor of the Progressive party because she felt the other parties ignored Black empowerment and women’s rights.\(^{34}\) Bass and Hallinan’s progressive platform was considered radical at the time, but they were able to bring the conversation of social justice to wider audience. It was ten years after their candidacy that the Voting Rights Act would pass, and two years before segregation would be abolished in schools. To Bass, winning was not the point of running for office, she was trying to invoke a new perspective on the political agenda. During her campaign, she was quoted saying:

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This is a historic moment in American political life. Historic for myself, for my people, for all women. For the first time in the history of this nation, a political party has chosen a Negro woman for the second highest office in the land. It is a great honor to be chosen as a pioneer. And a great responsibility. But I am strengthened by thousands on thousands of pioneers who stand by my side and look over my shoulder -- those who have led the fight for freedom -- those who led the fight for women's rights -- those who have been in the front line fighting for peace and justice and equality everywhere... These pioneers, the living and the dead, men and women, black and white, give me strength and a new sense of dedication.35

Despite losing her bid for Vice President, Bass spent over fifty years fighting for justice and equality, and was a steadfast fighter for justice. She retired to Elsinore, California but continued to be active in her community and gave speeches to civic groups, before passing in 1969.36

Yet, regardless of her contributions to the political and social fabric of Los Angeles, her memory has not been adequately preserved, even her own burial site which is marked under her husband’s name. There is only one existing monument to her legacy. In 1990, the house Bass shared with her husband, Joseph, was listed in the National and California Registers. However, the former office for The California Eagle is currently an appliance store, and has yet to be designated. The property was first identified as a potential historic resource in 2017 in SurveyLA’s, Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement for the African American History of Los Angeles.37 On June 26, 2023, the City of Los Angeles’ Office of Historic Resources (OHR) and the Getty Conservation Institute announced that they would be nominating the California Eagle Offices at 4071-4075 South Central Avenue for its association with Bass. The nomination is part of the Getty’s project, African American Historic Places, Los Angeles, that has worked to protect and celebrate the city’s African American heritage since 2005. 38

36 Mariana Brandman, “Charlotta Spears Bass (1880-1969).”
Only recently is Bass being recognized as a historic figure, after being acknowledged as the first female African American to run for Vice President. It has been seventy-one years since Bass’s campaign, but in 2021, the United States finally elected its first female African American Vice President, Kamala Harris. Today, Bass’s legacy is now being examined under new light, and the conversations she began so long ago are beginning to be acknowledged. While memory and historic documentation are the only link to her past, they are defining a revolution that has only currently begun to take form. Her early activism, as well as the activism of others in her community, has helped bring more awareness to gender and racial segregation in politics today. As of January 2023, the United States has a record number of women in Congress (149) with about twenty-eight and half percent of the seats in both the House of Representatives and the Senate held by women, an over fifty percent increase from only a decade ago. Additionally, the 118th Congress is the most diverse in history; about a quarter of the members of the House of Representatives and Senate are racial or ethnic minorities. Although these statistics could be better, they represent a growth in diversity through the country. Ultimately, Charlotta Spears Bass accomplished exactly what she hoped to when she used the slogan, “Win or lose, we win by raising the issues.” While the civil rights she fought for over seventy years ago are still conversations that the United States still struggles with today, her impact on Los Angeles reverberates still.

Figure 1.5 - Charlotta Bass’s grave in Evergreen Cemetery. View looking north, 4/17/2021.
Chapter 2: Nellie Truelove

Figure 2.1 - Image of Nellie Truelove (1863-1904). Source: The Salvation Army Florida.

Nellie Truelove was born in London, England in 1863, and traveled across England and the United States before settling in Los Angeles. Research was unable to determine much about Truelove’s early life. Prior to coming to America, Truelove was a nurse in the seaside town, Eastbourne, just south of London. As a child, she was raised in the Episcopalian faith and joined the Salvation Army in the late 1880s after attending meetings led by Evangeline Booth, the seventh child of the founders of the Salvation Army. Truelove was so inspired by Booth’s teachings that she left her career in nursing and committed to over thirteen years as a Staff-

Captain for the Salvation Army. However, she faced criticism from her family for leaving her job and education behind to enlist in training school for the Salvation Army.41

The Salvation Army was founded in London in 1865 by the Methodist Reform Church minister, William Booth, and his wife, Catherine Booth, with the intention of bringing services to the homeless and hungry and spreading Christian teachings.42 It was originally called the East London Christian Mission, but the organization's name changed in 1878 after William dictated a letter to his secretary saying, “the Christian Mission is a volunteer army” before deciding to cross out the word “volunteer army” and replace it with “salvation army.”43 Thus began the advent of the Salvation Army, and their journey to rehabilitate anyone in need of help. The organization was modeled after the military with William as the General and converts who were known as Soldiers of Christ known or Salvationists. They wore uniforms, carried their own flag, and sang their own hymns as they ministered throughout England. However, they were subjected to violence from organized gangs, who often attacked their troops. Yet despite adversity, the Salvation Army claims to have converted about 250,000 people between 1881 and 1885.44 By the time Truelove joined the group, training schools were in session all year round and were entirely supported by the Salvation Army. While in training, female converts lived together in one building where they were trained in a variety of skills such as cooking, housework, Bible study, and the doctrines of the army. Additionally, soldiers abstained from drinking alcohol, smoking, illegal drugs, and gambling, and were required to subscribe to the creed of the Salvation Army known as the Soldier’s Covenant. Men and women alike were permitted to join

43 “The History of the Salvation Army,” The Salvation Army USA.
44 Ibid.
and climb the ranks, but they were only allowed to marry other soldiers. They trained for four months before being transferred to a corps, and after a total of sixteen months of training, they would become officers.45

![Salvation Army Flag](image)

**Figure 2.2** - The Salvation Army flag that represents their war against sin. The red symbolizes the blood of Christ, the yellow is for the Holy Spirit, and the blue is for the purity of God. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

The Salvation Army provided opportunities for women that were not available elsewhere. Although it was established under the Christian faith, the organization was not constrained by traditional religious beliefs. Its intention was to develop strategies to reach the masses for Christ. Allowing female participation and authority equal to that of a man was a technique that gained the organization greater access to the masses so it could better spread the Christian faith. This was unusual compared to most evangelical theologies that restricted the roles of women to traditional positions of submission. However, it was the Salvation Army’s philosophy that by placing trust in Christ, people could be saved from their sins and that everyone was equal in the eyes of Christ, so practiced a revivalist faith that encouraged an anti-sectarianism nature.

Ultimately, its goal was to convert people to Christianity, through the process of treating them in

a Christ-like manner. Most of the female officers came from small towns where they had few career options and religious restrictions. Although their choices to join the Salvation Army was often considered unorthodox for the time, it allowed them to pave a path for themselves and help other women.46

After her training, Truelove started working in Glasgow and London to establish homes for “fallen” women rescued off the streets. In those days, the word fallen was used to refer to women who were unwed mothers or prostitutes. Fallen women were considered to have lost their innocence and to have fallen from the grace of God.47 In essence, they were associated with transgression against the social norms of the nineteenth century. Yet, the Salvation Army was dedicated to providing free accommodations to these women and promoted their rehabilitation through religious and moral instruction. Soon they began to spread their efforts to America, and it was there that Truelove made her mark as a leader of the Salvation Army.

In 1894, Truelove immigrated to the United States, where she furthered the presence of the Salvation Army, and continued her work helping the downtrodden. She first moved to New York, but later moved to Cleveland and then Chicago before settling in Los Angeles in 1895.48 Most of her work consisted of entering bars and brothels to find women in need of help and bringing them back to Salvation Army rescue homes for rehabilitation. In Los Angeles, she worked in the “red-light district” where she rescued women from brothels and cribs.49

Prostitution at this time had developed within a few concentrated blocks by the 1870s when the

46 Daphne Spain, How Women Saved the City (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 107-108.
49 “The History of the Salvation Army,” The Salvation Army USA.
Los Angeles Daily Star reported on, “the flood of prostitution that has, of late, come upon the city.”

By 1874, the presence of brothels increased so much that the mayor created an ordinance that prohibited “houses of ill fame and prostitution in certain parts of the city.” Additionally, anyone prosecuted for establishing a brothel was fined $200 or sentenced to sixty days in prison. Although prostitution was legal, it was restricted between the blocks of Third and High streets in downtown Los Angeles, a neighborhood that was referred to as the red-light district. While the area was initially a residential neighborhood, it shifted to include mixed-use structures during the 1880s, and the establishment of brothels began in some of the statelier homes. Police raided the first two brothels identified on Alameda Street in 1887, and within the next decade the presence of prostitution continued to increase regardless of police raids.

By the time Truelove moved to Los Angeles, prostitution was still centered in downtown along Alameda Street, however, the culture of prostitution had changed. Police seemed to ignore prostitution, and brothels were displaced by cribs. Cribs were easily constructed buildings that included a series of single rooms with a door and window and were rented for a six-hour period. The prostitutes lived elsewhere and worked on the streets to find customers to bring back to their crib, whereas a brothel or parlor house would house prostitutes and provided space for socialization with a customer before the women engaged in a transaction.

Often, the women working in cribs were paid less than those in brothels and faced poor working conditions. Likewise, crime was centered in this area, and cribs were home to both drug abuse and physical violence.

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52 Ibid., 109.
53 Ibid., 109.
Truelove was dedicated to saving these women. Los Angeles was dangerous, but her faith was stronger than her fear and she believed in every woman she met, regardless of their circumstances.

![Image of The Social Evil]

**Figure 2.3** - “The Social Evil: A Crusade Against Prostitution” in *The Los Angeles Times*, from June 23, 1892. Source: ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

By 1898, the Salvation Army needed officers to run its new Los Angeles Rescue Home located at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue in the Lincoln Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, and Truelove was recruited to operate it.\(^{55}\) Lincoln Heights was originally a portion of the Pueblo de Los Angeles, but subdivided in 1873, along with Boyle Heights, to become one of the city’s first suburbs. It was known as East Los Angeles because of its location east of the Los Angeles River and was a popular destination for working class residents during the first decade of the twentieth century.\(^{56}\) Under Truelove’s leadership, the Rescue Home became a refuge for women who wanted to reform their lives. There was room to house up to fifty women and included a day nursery, surgical and maternity rooms, and a maternity ward, as well as a sitting room on the

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\(^{55}\) Kathy Lovin, “Nellie: The First Female Member of the LAPD.”

second floor for women to socialize during the evenings. Truelove was passionate about providing care for women who had been degraded and needed healing physically and spiritually. Many of the women in her care came from troubled homes, and some were pregnant or already had small children. Often she was called to mediate arguments between women in her care and their clients, and was once reported to have put herself in the middle of a fight between two drunk and troublesome women saying, “Now, I’m for both of you, so if you want to fight, you can fight me!” Truelove was so determined to rescue these women that she ignored the Los Angeles Police Department’s plea for her to cease trespassing. Because the police realized they could not stop her from continuing her rescue work, in March of 1903 they gave her legal authority to do so by granting her a tin star and billy-club, making her the first female police officer in Los Angeles. This allowed her to continue her rescue work with more authority and enabled her to communicate with the police about ongoing issues. Additionally, from July 1903-1904 she placed an advertisement in the Los Angeles Herald stating, “Any girl in need of a friend or advice, call and see Staff Captain Nellie Truelove as the Salvation Army Home 2670 N. Griffin Ave. If you have no money, you need not stay away.” Her passion for helping others appeared as personal as it was professional, and she used every opportunity to reach out to others. However, she died just one year after becoming an official member of the force and left

58 Frances Dingman, “’His Love Is Worth It All!’.”
60 “Capt. Truelove Wins a Crown: Noble Salvation Woman Goes Home to Glory,” ProQuest Historical Newspapers (Los Angeles Times, January 8, 1904), https://www-proquest-com.libproxy2.usc.edu/docview/1492508496/fulltextPDF/C5F82E08F5514BF8PQ/1?accountid=14749
behind forty-three women and children at the Rescue Home who, “loved her with the affection that a child bestows a mother.”

Figure 2.4 - “She Wears a Star” in *The Los Angeles Herald*, from 4 March 1903. Source: ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

In 1904, Truelove developed a cancerous tumor and died on January 7th with her last words reportedly being, “take care of my girls” and, “it was worth it all.” As an unmarried Christian woman without children, she chose to forge her own path in life and resist social boundaries that were placed on women. Even when she was pressed by the authorities to refrain from placing herself in potentially dangerous situations, she was unrelenting in her mission to help others. Although she did not conform to the standard social normality for a woman of her time and had only been in Los Angeles for five years, she was a beloved figure among the community. Thousands of people lined the streets on the day of her funeral as eight policemen escorted her hearse to Evergreen Cemetery. When they passed through the red-light district, bar owners and bar tenders stood outside in respect of the woman they knew and respected. Even though her achievements have not been formally recognized by the City of Los Angeles, her peers remembered her with a great sense of appreciation for her bravery and selflessness, and

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63 Kathy Lovin, “Nellie: The First Female Member of the LAPD.”
64 Ibid.
newspapers sang her praises. At the time of her death, Truelove was fundraising $8,000 to buy the Rescue Home and had even launched an appeal to raise another $6,000 for a two-story addition. By the time of Truelove’s death, 80% of the women who were under her care were either married or no longer working as prostitutes.65 An article from 1929 in the Los Angeles Sentinel reported that there were twenty-four babies, all under three months of age, at the Truelove Home saying that the Truelove Home deserves its name as, “There is no finer work the world over than the salvaging of babyhood, of girlhood and motherhood.”66 In honor of her commitment, the Rescue Home was named the Truelove Home decades after her death. Decades later, the Truelove Home was renamed the Booth Memorial Center and continued to operate for over eighty years before closing in 1992. However, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from the years

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1906, 1920, and 1951 reveal that the original Truelove Home from 1899 was demolished and replaced with the building that exists today.\textsuperscript{67} An original building permit for the property could not be located. According to Zimas, a web-based mapping tool developed by City Planning that provides zoning information for properties located in Los Angeles, the current building at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue was constructed in 1926.\textsuperscript{68} Additionally, historic newspaper research indicates that in 1962 a hospital wing was added to the north elevation.\textsuperscript{69} Although the original building where Truelove worked no longer exists, the extant building appears to represent an association with the Salvation Army that can interpret Truelove’s story through the preservation of the Salvation Army’s.

Today, the building is home to the Los Angeles Leadership Academy and no longer bears any visible association with Truelove and her rescue work. Although she only worked in Los Angeles for five years, her courage changed the lives of many young women and children during the early days of the city. There are no longer any monuments to her contribution, but in the words of one Los Angeles Herald author in 1904 she is acknowledged for her influence, saying:

In the good she did Captain Truelove erected and left behind a nobler monument than money could buy, and one that will live when others less bravely won will have crumbled into dust. For, even when the name of Nellie Truelove shall have been forgotten, the influence of her life work will live in the hearts of others and be a help and an inspiration to them.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{70}“She Did What She Could,” California Digital Newspaper Collection (The Los Angeles Herald, January 9, 1904), https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19040109.2.132&srpos=1&e=-----190-en--20--1--txt-txIN-Nellie%2BTruelove-ARTICLE---1904---1.
Without her passion and dedication to her faith and beliefs, many women would have become victims of the violent culture of prostitution. Even if she is not remembered, her legacy was carried on in the lives of those she rescued, and she still deserves to be celebrated for her commitment to the women of Los Angeles.

**Figure 2.6** - Nellie Truelove’s grave in Evergreen Cemetery with a quote reading, “It is worth it all. Underneath are the everlasting arms.” View looking north, 4/17/2021.
Chapter 3: Lela Campbell Murray

Figure 3.1 - Image of Lela Campbell Murray (1887-1949). Source: the California Eagle Photograph Collection, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles.

Lela Campbell Murray was born Lela O. Campbell in Hopkinsville, Kentucky in 1887, and was the eldest of three children of the formerly enslaved Isaac and Susie Campbell. Her parents were teachers at a segregated Christian school, and in 1889, the family moved to San Diego, California. Unfortunately, they endured several family tragedies after the move. Murray’s father suffered a stroke that resulted in partial paralysis and left him susceptible to mood swings, and in 1903, her brother, Newton Campbell, fell ill with pneumonia and passed away Christmas morning. Isaac and Susie’s marriage collapsed after the loss of their son, and this led to a bitter divorce that drove Isaac to shoot Susie in 1904, in front of Murray and her

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sister, Vivian Campbell. Three years earlier, Isaac had been arrested for insanity, thus he pleaded insanity during his murder trial, but was found guilty and sentenced to life at San Quentin State Prison, where he died seven years later. The sisters then moved to Utah to live with distant relatives. Murray helped pay the bills by playing the piano and even managed to finish high school. By 1907, the girls moved to Los Angeles with their aunt, Maud Stallings, a widower who took them into her home. Although she experienced a tumultuous childhood, Murray found success in Los Angeles and made her legacy there as a successful entrepreneur.

In 1905, the sisters moved to Los Angeles and worked hard to establish themselves in the city. Murray worked as a maid for a private family and joined multiple clubs and organizations such as, the Philips Temple Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA). Her aunt’s social connections allowed Murray to leave her tragic past behind and start fresh. By 1913, Murray married Nolie Murray, who had made a name for himself as the “King of the Bootblacks,” after founding a successful chain of shoeshine stands. Likewise, he created another business, Murray’s Pocket Billiard Emporium and Cigar Stand on the corner of Central Avenue and 9th Street and was a founding member of the Colored Workingmen’s Club as well as the Golden West Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. Within six years, the couple owned a house in the west-side of Los Angeles, which was known as a well-to-do area. By the 1920s, both were lucrative business owners in downtown

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75 Ibid., 131-132.
78 Ibid., 129-130.
Los Angeles; Nolie was a co-proprietor of a bail bond business and Lela owned a clothing and dry goods store, and they had become prominent figures in the Black Angeleno community. However, Lela began to experience respiratory problems, so the couple sought to join the growing African American community in the desert at Bell Mountain near Victorville, California.  

![Figure 3.2 – 1921 Map of the Bell Mountain Area. Source: Richard D. Thompson.](image)

Most of the landowners at Bell Mountain were migrants from Los Angeles who had built themselves up during a time of rising Black nationalism amongst racial restrictions. Although they had built lives for themselves in Los Angeles, they were facing growing efforts to separate Black and white culture within the city. Racial restrictions were fueled by increasing racial violence and constrained the growth of Black and minority populations in the city to allocated Black areas. Interest in “all-Black” communities began to spread amongst Black Angelenos, and

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many chose to move to the Mojave Desert to create homesteads to escape the growing segregation of the city. Real estate options were limited in cities, but in Bell Mountain there were vast opportunities to create a space defined by Blackness. Thus, African Americans began to reshape the urban and rural environments of the desert to escape discrimination, and the Murrays followed suit.

Figure 3.3 - Lela and Nolie Murray at Murray’s Ranch, with the caption at the bottom reading, “Only Negro Dude Ranch in the World.” Source: the Miriam Matthews Photography Collection, UCLA Library Special Collection, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

In 1928, they purchased a forty-acre cattle ranch and set out to create The Overall Wearing Dude Ranch (also known as Murray’s Dude Ranch), an oasis away from the racism of the city and its segregation. The ranch was located at the northwest corner of what is now the intersection between Waalew Road and Dale Evans Parkway in Apple Valley. Initially, Lela ran a small chicken ranch on the property while Nolie stayed in Los Angeles where he managed

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a social club. However, it was not long before Nolie left his position to work full time on the ranch with Lela, so they could create a facility for underprivileged Black children. The couple took in children sent by parents in need of help, as well as children with disabilities.\textsuperscript{82} However, during Great Depression the Murrays were unable to sustain their youth home. Inspired by the rise in dude ranches in the state, they converted the property to a dude ranch and became the only dude ranch available to African Americans in California. Upon enter the property, a sign above the entrance announced, “’There are only two places in the world to go, Murray's Dude Ranch and Paris, France.’”\textsuperscript{83}

The Overall Wearing/Murray’s Dude Ranch became a popular vacation spot for Black families and gained further notoriety as a film set for Black western movies. By 1937, the Murrays’ connections in Los Angeles enticed celebrity guest to visit the ranch, and it broke headlines when Joe Louis, a heavyweight boxing champ, vacationed at the property. Life Magazine published photographs of the boxer on his vacation, and business began to rapidly increase.\textsuperscript{84} One guest referred to the notoriety of the ranch, saying, “All of the colored celebrities would spend their vacations on Murray’s Dude Ranch… If they wanted to go to a dude ranch they went to Murray’s Ranch.”\textsuperscript{85} Such publicity caught the attention of African American movie producers who sought the ranch as a filming location. All four of Herbert Jeffries’ Black western films were set on the ranch as well as films such as “Harlem on the Prairie” from 1937, “Two-Gun Man from Harlem” from 1938, “The Bronze Buckaroo” from 1939, and “Harlem Rides the

\textsuperscript{82} Mark Landis, “How ‘Murray’s Overall Wearing Dude Ranch’ Came to Be in the High Desert.”
\textsuperscript{83} “Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.”
Range” from 1939. The success of the dude ranch allowed the Murrays to expand the compound, and by the late 1930s, the ranch boasted twenty buildings,

![Life magazine photo of Joe Louis at Murray’s Ranch in 1937. Source: Richard D. Thompson.](image)

including a dining hall and recreational facilities such as tennis courts, a swimming pool, horse stables, and a baseball field. Additionally, African American celebrities such as Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, Hattie McDaniel, Nina Mai McKinney, and Lena Horne began to frequent the ranch.\(^86\)

The luxury accommodations of the ranch within a rural setting appealed to a sense of nostalgia for the American West and promoted a sense of respite from the racial discrimination of the city. Likewise, it satisfied a need for recreational activities among middle-class African Americans who were often restricted from public places of leisure at the time.

Murray’s Ranch is significant for its association with the Black community’s ability to overcome institutional racism as a place of leisure during segregation in California. At this time, Jim Crow segregation fueled the culture of leisure as an activity exclusive to white families.

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Public parks, beach and even National Parks practiced racial segregation to exclude African Americans from their parks. So, after gaining publicity in the 1930s as the only dude ranch available to African Americans, Murray’s Dude Ranch was included in the 1941 edition of the Greenbook as a “Tourist Home” welcoming to people of color. Throughout the 1940s, the dude ranch was known for its racial integration with friends of the Murrays noting that, "The ranch has its own fair employment practice policy and hires cooks, pantrymen, yardmen, stable attendants and maids for their ability, not their color. There are three white employees, four colored and one Japanese." While white locals began visiting the ranches amenities in the early 1940s, white guests did not spend the night until 1949 when the ranch was profiled in the Workers Union newspaper. After the article, Lela received inquiries from people of every race interested in staying at the ranch, so it became integrated even before the rest of the nation began practicing integration.

Unfortunately, Lela fell ill in 1949 and died on March 18. Her obituary in the California Eagle stated, “There was seldom a movement initiated for the advancement of the Negro in Los

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89 Hadley Meares, “The 1930s California Dude Ranch That Broke Racial Barriers.”
90 Ibid.
Angeles that did not claim her active interest.” 91 As someone who was active within social justice at the time, it is on no surprise Lela went on the establish an iconic place among the Black community of Southern California. Nolie continued to run the ranch and remarried, but the ranches popularity decreased during the 1950s as recreational opportunities in California became less segregated. 92 In 1955, Nolie sold the ranch to singer and actress Pearl Bailey, who renamed the ranch The Lazy B and renovated the buildings on the property. Nolie kept five acres of the property for his own motel, the Desert Heart Motel, and remained until his death in 1958. Bailey continued to run the ranch until the late 1980s when she decided to sell the ranch because of work obligations as an entertainer. However, by 1988, the ranch had been abandoned and an infestation of brown recluse spiders prompted the Apple Valley Fire Department to burn down the buildings. 93

Today, the physical remnants of Murray’s Ranch no longer remain, its memory is slowly fading out of the public memory. The Murrays created a place of peace and solitude away from prejudice and discrimination that promoted integration during a time of segregation Southern California. As the first African American dude ranch it encouraged leisure and recreation for families that would otherwise not have had the opportunity to seek such accommodations. Although the Murray Ranch has a history of progress, there is little documentation of the history at the site. Places have the ability to portray the emotions and beliefs of society throughout time and retain remnants of the past even when the physical elements no longer remain. The whitewashing of the history of recreation in Southern California tells its own story of

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92 Ibid.
discrimination and censorship that is important to recognize to fully understand the history of the state. In acknowledging the history of the Murray Ranch and the progressive culture Lela established at the site, her story can continue to raise awareness of the history of social injustice in Southern California.

![Figure 3.5](image1.jpg)

**Figure 3.5** - Lela Campbell Murray’s grave in Evergreen Cemetery. View looking south, 4/17/2021.
Chapter 4 - Analysis

This chapter will analyze the eligibility of sites associated with each of the women profiled in this thesis to preserve their legacies in Los Angeles. With no other physical memorials to their achievements, their stories will continue to fade over time, unless efforts are made to recognize their contributions to the fabric of the city. This thesis is only a start, acknowledging existing places that will reflect the significance of these women and maintain their legacies for years to come. The former California Eagle Offices at 4071-75 Central Avenue in Los Angeles, the former Truelove Home at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue in Lincoln Heights, and the land that formerly hosted Murray’s Dude Ranch at the intersection between Waalew Road and Dale Evans Parkway in Apple Valley, are still places today that bear an association with the significance of Charlotta Bass, Nellie Truelove, and Lela Campbell Murray respectively, and if preserved, could continue to share their stories. Significance of each site will be based on established eligibility criteria for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). Local criteria for the City of Los Angeles were not used in the evaluation due to the location of Murray’s Dude Ranch in the City of Victorville. To be considered a significant resource in the NRHP and CRHR, a resource must meet at least one of the following criteria:

**Criterion A/1.** That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

**Criterion B/2.** That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

**Criterion C/3.** That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or
that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

**Criterion D/4.** That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.  

The Former California Eagle Office

Today, the building that once housed The Eagle headquarters is still standing, but it is now an appliance store. In 2017, the building was noted as a potential resource in SurveyLA’s, Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement for the African American History of Los Angeles, and as of June 2023, it has been nominated for Historic Cultural Monument designation, but it has yet to designated. As a result of the evaluation below, the property at 4071-75 Central Avenue appears eligible for listing in the NRHP or CRHR under designation criteria A/1 and Criterion B/2. The property was found eligible for its association with “Social History” in the City of Los Angeles, and its association with the noted figure, Charlotta Bass, as demonstrated below.

![Figure 4.1](image)  

*Figure 4.1 – A comparison of the 4071-75 Central Avenue from the 1930s and 2022. Sources: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, and Google Maps.*

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Criterion A/1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

To be eligible for listing under Criterion A/1, a property must have a direct association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The period of significance for this property reflects its association with the California Eagle and Charlotta Bass, who was the publisher of the newspaper at the property from 1912 to 1951.

The building at 4071-75 Central Avenue in Los Angeles was home to the newspaper, The Eagle, founded in 1879 by John J. Neimore. After his death in 1912, Charlotta Bass took control of the paper, changing the name to The California Eagle. From 1915 to 1970, Los Angeles imposed deed restrictions and segregation because of institutional racism at the time. During this period, Bass used The California Eagle to speak out against police brutality, restrictive housing, and racism. By 1925, The California Eagle had become the largest African American newspaper in California. Although Bass sold the property in 1951, the newspaper continued to run until 1964. The property is known to be directly associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the history of African American newspapers and racial activism in Los Angeles, therefore, the property does appear eligible under NRHP Criterion A or CRHR Criterion 1.

Criterion B/2. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

To be found eligible under Criterion B/2 the property must be directly tied to an important person and the place where that individual conducted or produced the work for which he or she is known.

In, 1912, Charlotta Bass became the first African American woman owner and newspaper publisher in California. The paper became a source of inspiration as well as information, and strongly advocated for civil justice as well as community engagement. Additionally, her weekly
column, “On the Sidewalk,” acknowledged social injustice in Los Angeles for all minority communities and promoted reforms that would combat the derogatory image of people of color in the mainstream media. By using her platform to expose racial injustice, she became a leader within the Black community of Los Angeles and her passion for activism led her to a career in political activism. She joined the NAACP, the Urban League, the Civil Rights Congress, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association in the 1930s to encourage the presence of Black citizens in politics. In 1944 and again in 1950, she ran for Congress and in 1945 she ran for Los Angeles City Council. Bass continued to run the *California Eagle* during her political engagements and used the paper to report on her political activism to further the spread of her activism. She maintained ownership of the paper until 1951, just before her campaign as the first African American woman Vice Presidential candidate in 1952. The building at 4071-75 Central Avenue was the center of her significance during her life, therefore, the property appears eligible under NRHP Criterion B or CRHR Criterion 2.

**Integrity Discussion**

To qualify for listing in the NRHP or CRHR, a property must possess both significance and integrity. As such, below is an integrity assessment for the former California Eagle Office at 4071-75 Central Avenue.

**Location:** The extant building is sited on the original location of construction in its original orientation, and therefore retains its integrity of location.

**Design:** The property at 4071-75 Central Avenue has diminished integrity of design. The property’s original conception and planning has been retained. The property retains its original visual cohesion and arrangement on the property. However, many of its original materials and
openings have been altered. Therefore, the property at 4071-75 Central Avenue has diminished integrity of design.

**Setting:** The property at 4071-75 Central Avenue retains integrity of setting. Research indicates that the setting has remained largely the same over the years. The earliest available historic aerial photography of the property during its period of significance are from 1948 and 1952, and they reveal that the surrounding area contains primarily residential properties with some commercial and institutional.⁹⁵ Over time, some of the residential properties have been replaced with commercial and institutional development but the area remains largely residential. As such, the property at 4071-75 Central Avenue retains its integrity of setting.

**Materials:** The building at 4071-75 Central Avenue retains integrity of materials. Building permits for the property prior to 1999 could not be obtained, but the building appears to have undergone alterations including window replacements, added metal security doors, and added metal security rails to the first-floor windows. Although these changes have diminished the property’s overall integrity of materials from its period of significance, they are minimal alterations; therefore, the building retains integrity of materials.

**Workmanship:** The building 4071-75 Central Avenue has diminished integrity of workmanship. Buildings that retain their integrity of workmanship retain the evidence of the builder that constructed the building and the methods of construction and original finishes. Because the building’s original materials have been altered, the physical evidence of the building’s

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craftsmanship from the period of significance has been diminished. Therefore, the property at 4071-75 Central Avenue has diminished integrity of workmanship.

**Feeling:** The property at 4071-75 Central Avenue has diminished integrity of feeling. Because the property retains its integrity of location, setting, and materials and only has diminished integrity of workmanship, it is still able to convey a sense of a particular period during which the Charlotta Bass occupied the property. Therefore, the property at 4071-75 Central Avenue retains integrity of feeling.

**Association:** The property at 4071-75 Central Avenue does not retain its integrity of association. The building is no longer occupied by the California Eagle and its use has changed throughout the years. Therefore, the property at 4071-75 Central Avenue does not retain sufficient integrity of association to convey its significance under Criterion A/1.

**Summary of Evaluation Findings**

The subject property was evaluated in consideration of NRHP and CRHR designation criteria and integrity requirements. As a result of the evaluation, the property retains integrity in location, setting, materials, and feeling, but has diminished integrity of workmanship, and does not retain integrity of materials or association. The National Register Criteria for Evaluation states that for a property eligibility under Criterion A or B, “Integrity of design and workmanship, however, might not be as important to the significance.” 96 Therefore, it appears to retain sufficient integrity. Additionally, it’s significance as a resource eligible under both Criteria A and B proves it retains exceptional importance. Additionally, it is more closely associated to Bass than her

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former home because it was the place of Bass’ productive life. It is where she achieved her success as publisher, writer, and business owners, and is associated with her political campaign. Therefore, the property appears eligible under Criterion A for its association with the “Social History” of Los Angeles, and Criterion B/2 for its association with Charlotta Bass. It is a rare example of Bass’ legacy in Los Angeles and is recommended eligible for inclusion in the NRHP and CRHR.

The Former Truelove Home

Today, the property that was the site of the former Truelove Home at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue is home to the Los Angeles Leadership Academy. Although it is listed as a contributor in the Lincoln Heights HPOZ, it has yet to be evaluated for individual significance. As a result of the evaluation below, the property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue appears eligible for listing in the NRHP or CRHR under designation Criteria A/1 for its association with “Social History” connected to the history of the Salvation Army and women’s rights in Los Angeles, as demonstrated below.

**Figure 4.2** – A comparison of the 2670 N. Griffin Avenue from 1924 and 2022. Sources: The Salvation Army Museum of the West and Google Maps.

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Criterion A/1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the
broad patterns of our history;

To be eligible for listing under Criterion A/1, a property must have a direct association
with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The
historic context statement for Women’s Rights in Los Angeles explains that the period during
which the Rescue Home first opened reflects a period known as “The Progressive Era:
Temperance, Suffrage and Civic Reform” that last from 1890 to 1911. This period saw the
beginning of women’s organizations and activism in Los Angeles.98 The period of significance for
this property from 1926 to 1992 reflects its association with the Salvation Army, who occupied
the property from the head of the rescue home from 1898 to 1992. The property meets Criteria
Consideration G as a property that continued to achieve significance into a period of less than 50
years before recommendation for its exceptional significance as one of the foremost social
institutions in Los Angeles. Although the original building was demolished and replaced in 1926,
the site remained the host of the organization for 94 years.

The property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue was the site of Salvation Army Rescue Home from
the late 1890s that primarily catered to women and children in need of help. Many of the women
who were cared for at the Rescue Home were victims of abuse or exploitation. With the rise of
prostitution in downtown Los Angeles during this period, women faced greater threats of violence
as the culture of prostitution shifted from brothels, that give women more authority in their
transactions, to cribs where they were more prone to attacks. Philanthropic and civic organizations
expanded during the 1890s to focus on issues of women’s suffrage and bring attention to the need

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for reform, and the Rescue Home was established to offer rehabilitation to women in need. It was a response to the violence against women and provided a safe space for women to gain independence and recover. Because of this, many of the women who entered through its doors left to find better lives for themselves and their children. While the culture of the city was beginning to recognize a need for women’s rights reforms, the Rescue Home facilitated the change by actively addressing the needs of women at the times. Therefore, the property does appear eligible under NRHP Criterion A or CRHR Criterion 1.

**Integrity Discussion**

To qualify for listing in the NRHP or CRHR, a property must possess both significance and integrity. As such, below is an integrity assessment for the former Truelove Rescue Home at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue.

**Location:** The extant building is sited on the original location of construction in its original orientation, and therefore retains its integrity of location.

**Design:** The property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue retains its integrity of design. The 1926 property was altered between during the 1960s to enhance its functionality as a Rescue Home. Likewise, the property’s alterations were made during the property’s period of significance and have acquired their own design importance. Therefore, the design of the Rescue Home from the period of significance, remains largely intact and the property retains sufficient integrity of design to convey its significance under Criterion A/1.

**Setting:** The property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue retains integrity of setting. Research indicates that the setting has remained largely the same over the years. Lincoln Heights was developed as a

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residential suburb in 1873 and the area has continued to remain primarily residential. Research was unable to locate historic aerial photography or maps from the building’s period of significance. However, historic topographic map of the property from 1898, 1900, 1904, 1907, 1908, and 1910 indicate that the surrounding area maintains its original street grids and plan.100 Although, some of the residential properties appear to have been replaced, the area remains largely residential. As such, the property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue retains its integrity of setting.

**Materials:** The building at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue retains its integrity of materials. Although the building has undergone various alterations since its construction in 1926, such alterations occurred within the property’s period of significance. Thus, the building on the property retains key exterior materials from its period of significance, and sufficient integrity of materials to convey its significance under Criterion A/1.

**Workmanship:** The building 2670 N. Griffin Avenue was constructed in 1926 and altered between during the 1960s for functional and efficiency purposes. Buildings that retain their integrity of workmanship retain the evidence of the builder that constructed the building and the methods of construction and original finishes. Although the building’s original materials have been altered, physical evidence of the building’s craftsmanship from the period of significance has been retained. Therefore, the property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue retains sufficient integrity of workmanship to convey its significance under Criterion A/1.

**Feeling:** The property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue retains its integrity of feeling. Although alterations have changed the buildings appearance, the property retains its integrity of location,

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setting, and workmanship, thus it retains the presence of physical features from its period of significance that continue to convey a sense of that particular period. Therefore, the property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue retains sufficient integrity of feeling to convey its significance under Criterion A/1.

**Association:** The property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue does not retain its integrity of association. The building was converted to an elementary school in 2010 and no longer functions as a rescue home. Likewise, the interior of the property was remodeled to reflect its change in use and does not contain a physical association with the building’s past function.\(^\text{101}\) Therefore, the property at 2670 N. Griffin Avenue does not retain sufficient integrity of association to convey its significance under Criterion A/1.

**Summary of Evaluation Findings**

The subject property was evaluated in consideration of NRHP and CRHR designation criteria and integrity requirements. As a result of the evaluation, the property appears eligible under Criterion A for its association with the “Social History” of Los Angeles. Additionally, it retains integrity in location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling, but does not retain integrity of association. Therefore, it is recommended eligible for inclusion in the NRHP and CRHR. Through interpretation of the Salvation Army’s history at the site, Truelove’s story can be preserved and shared. Signage or exhibitions can act as educational tool to teach the history of the site in a way that can’t be understood through documentation alone.

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\(^\text{101}\)“Permit Information for 2670 N. Griffin Avenue,” Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (City of Los Angeles, n.d.), https://www.ladbsservices2.lacity.org/OnlineServices/.
The Former Murray’s Dude Ranch

Although Murray’s Dude Ranch no longer exists, it had a history spanning over thirty years on the site between Waalew Road and Dale Evans Parkway in Apple Valley where there was the only dude ranch available to African Americans during racial segregation in California. As a result of the evaluation below, the former Murray’s Dude Ranch property appears eligible for listing in the NRHP or CRHR under designation criteria A/1, B/2, and D/4. The property was found eligible for its association with “Social History” in the City of Los Angeles, its association with the noted figure, Lela Campbell Murray, and its ability to likely to yield information important in history, as demonstrated below.

Figure 4.3 – A comparison of the land hosted the Murray Dude Ranch from 1924 and 2022. Sources: Mapping “The Green Book” and Google Maps.

Criterion A/1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

To be eligible for listing under Criterion A/1, a property must have a direct association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The period of significance for this property reflects its association with the Murray Dude Ranch and Lela Campbell Murray from circa 1930 to 1950, after Murray’s death and the decline of the ranch’s
popularity. Additionally, it is related to the theme of “Deed Restriction and Segregation.” 102 At this time, when segregation fueled the culture of leisure, public parks and beaches practiced racial segregation to exclude African Americans. Murray’s Ranch was the only dude ranch available to African Americans and was a symbol of their community’s ability to overcome institutional racism as a place for Black leisure during segregation in California.

The site at the intersection of between Waalew Road and Dale Evans Parkway was home to the first African American dude ranch, the Overall Wearing Dude Ranch (also known at Murray’s Dude Ranch) in the 1930s. It was established to offer a place of leisure to African Americans during a time of segregation in Southern California that prohibited integration in many public spaces. Lela and Nollie Murray located the ranch in the desert where Black communities were forming away from the city and creating spaces defined by their own culture. The dude ranch gained notoriety after it was used as a filming location for several prominent Black western films and celebrities began frequenting the ranch. Likewise, it was featured in many articles throughout the 1930s and 40s and was identified in the Greenbook from 1941 to 1949. By 1949, the ranch began to allow white guests to stay the night and became one of the first integrated establishments at the time. Murray’s Dude Ranch was the first of its kind and progressed the cultural of inclusion and equality at a time when discrimination against people of color was rampant. The site has the potential to yield information about the history of this period and the cultural of the community that prevailed here. While the buildings no longer exist, the memory of the ranch and the effects it had on the Black experience inspired progression during a time of civil and racial injustice against African Americans. The history of Black leisure has a long pattern of erasure in public history and memory. Recognition of the achievements of social

progression at this site and contribute to the preservation of Black stories in Southern California. Therefore, the property does appear eligible under NRHP Criterion A or CRHR Criterion 1.

**Criterion B/2.** That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

To be found eligible under Criterion B/2 the property must be directly tied to an important person and the place where that individual conducted or produced the work for which he or she is known.

In, 1928, Lela and Nolie Murry purchased a cattle ranch where Lela ran a small chicken ranch while Nolie stayed in Los Angeles where he managed a social club. Soon, Nolie left his position to work full time on the ranch with Lela, so they could create a facility for underprivileged Black children. Lela was very active within social justice and her was dedicated to the advancement of African American rights. As an advocate for change, she ran the youth home, until the Great Depression, when the Murrays were no longer able to sustain the property. However, Lela strove to provide a place of comfort for the Black community. Inspired by the rise in dude ranches in the state, they converted the property to a dude ranch and became the only dude ranch available to African Americans in California. The Overall Wearing/Murray’s Dude Ranch became a popular vacation spot for Black families and gained further notoriety as a film set for Black western movies. Additionally, Lela established a progressive culture at the ranch that defied segregation and allowed families that would otherwise not have had the opportunity for leisure to have a place of their own. Murray’s Dude Ranch would not have been the safe haven it was if it were not for the ambition of Lela Campbell Murray. Therefore, the property appears eligible under NRHP Criterion B or CRHR Criterion 2.

**Criterion D/4.** That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.
To be eligible for listing under Criterion D/4, a property must have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The history of the site is association with the historic context of African American leisure and recreation in Los Angeles and is related to the themes of “Social History” and “Deed Restriction and Segregation”. Because the site appears eligible under Criteria A/1 and B/2, it is likely that it may contain information important to history of Murray’s Dude Ranch.

The site at the intersection of between Waalew Road and Dale Evans Parkway has the potential to yield information about the history of this period and the cultural of the community that prevailed here. While the buildings no longer exist, the memory of the ranch and the effects it had on the Black experience inspired progression during a time of civil and racial injustice against African Americans. The history of Black leisure has a long pattern of erasure in public history and memory. Recognition of the achievements of social progression at this site and contribute to the preservation of Black stories in Southern California. Therefore, this site has the potential to yield information important to history and does appear eligible under NRHP Criterion D or CRHR Criterion 4.

**Integrity Discussion**

To qualify for listing in the NRHP or CRHR, a property must possess both significance and integrity. However, because the site appears to be eligible under Criterion D for its ability to yield archeological information, material integrity does exist and therefore is irrelevant to the site’s significance. As such, below is an integrity assessment for the former Murray’s Dude Ranch.

**Location:** Although the building no longer exists, the site has remained undeveloped since its demolition, thus is it likely to contain archeological information about the former property.
Therefore, the property retains sufficient integrity of location to convey its significance under Criterion D/4.

**Design:** The site does not retain its integrity of design. Murray’s Dude Ranch was constructed circa 1930 and demolished in 1988. Therefore, the site does not retain its integrity of design.

**Setting:** The site retains integrity of setting. Research indicates that the setting has remained largely the same over the years. The earliest available historic aerial photography of the property from 1952, reveals the surrounding area was primarily undeveloped. Although there has been some residential development in the area since, the site continues to remain mostly undeveloped. As such, the site retains its integrity of setting.

**Materials:** The site does not retain its integrity of materials. Murray’s Dude Ranch no longer exists on the site. Therefore, there are no materials pertaining to the original building, so site does not retain its integrity of materials.

**Workmanship:** The site does not retain its integrity of workmanship. Buildings that retain their integrity of workmanship retain the evidence of the builder that constructed the building and the methods of construction and original finishes. Murray’s Dudek Ranch no longer exists, therefore, the site does not retain its integrity of workmanship.

**Feeling:** The site retains its integrity of feeling. Because the property no longer exists, feeling is represented through its retention of integrity of location and setting that continues to convey a rural

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identity similar to when the property was extant. Therefore, the site retains sufficient integrity of feeling to convey its significance under Criterion D/4.

**Association:** The site retains its integrity of association. Given that the site retains integrity of location, setting, and feeling under Criterion D/4, it continues to bear an association to its rural past. Therefore, the site retains sufficient integrity of association to convey its significance under Criterion D/4.

**Summary of Evaluation Findings**

The subject property was evaluated in consideration of NRHP and CRHR designation criteria and integrity requirements. As a result of the evaluation, the property retains integrity in location, setting, feeling, and association, but does not retain integrity of design, materials, or workmanship. Additionally, the property appears eligible under Criterion D or its ability to likely to yield information important to the African American history of leisure and recreation during segregation in California. Therefore, it is recommended eligible for inclusion in the NRHP and CRHR.
Conclusion

As a result, each of the properties above appear to retain enough significance and integrity to be eligible for designation as historic resources. In preserving places with forgotten histories, we can honor the legacies of those that made a difference but were never recognized for it. Often the people that become lost in history are those that belong to marginalized communities. Women have been activists, leaders, trailblazers, and more, yet only a fraction of the city’s cultural heritage represent the achievements of women, and most have been forgotten.

The women profiled in this thesis are examples of the stories that have been suppressed beneath the stories of men. Charlotta Bass worked her entire life to bring awareness to the causes that mattered most to her by using her platform with the California Eagle and her political campaigns. Even when she lost her political campaigns, what mattered to her most was that she was able to bring attention to the reality of social justice in American. At a time when minority communities were discriminated in society, Charlotta inspired change and equality. Additionally, Nellie Truelove disregarded her own safety to prioritize the safety of other women. Her selfless acts of empathy saved the lives of many of the women and children in early Los Angeles who were faced with abuse or destitute. Although she lived in the city for a short time, her legacy remained in the lives of the women she saved and the rescue home that continued to care for those in need. Similarly, Lela Campbell Murray moved to Victorville to create a haven for those who had nowhere else to go. During a time of segregation in Southern California, she sought to provide African American citizens with a place of leisure to escape the discrimination of the city. The Overall Wearing Dude ranch encouraged integration before it became legal across the United States and revealed the need for spaces of Black leisure. Each of these women had a significant impact during their life and deserve to be remembered for their achievements.
Although neglect of the city’s female heritage has continued, awareness of it has increased over the last few years. Without sites of women’s history, the city only represents one half of its population. In acknowledging their stories, we can inspire support for the preservation of places that represent forgotten histories to create a more inclusive representation of the city’s history, and in doing so, embolden those today that see themselves reflected in those histories.
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