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## **MOBILE PRESERVATIONIST RECEIVES AWARD**

**Dora Finley** received the Alabama Historical Commission Black Heritage Council's Idella Childs Distinguished Service Award on Friday, October 10 during the Alabama Preservation Conference held at the Grand Hotel in Point Clear, Alabama. According to Frazine Taylor, Black Heritage Council Chair, the award is named for the late Idella Childs who, as a result of her enviable record as a preservationist of Alabama's Black landmarks, was a gubernatorial appointee to the Alabama Historical Commission. Congressman Jo Bonner and State Representative Joseph Mitchell officiated at the ceremony.

Few Alabama cities can match Mobile's rich and complex legacy of African American culture. The architecture of its African American landmark churches and schools, the homes of its African American leaders and heroes, the strains of the city's music and the flavor of its food tell compelling stories about African American life in America.

For many of Mobile's residents and visitors, this history has long been invisible. You had to know it to see it. Many people knew pieces of it. But few people knew it all. It was a problem waiting to be solved.

Then Dora Finley put her mind to showing people what they can't see for themselves.

From this bright spark, came a grand illumination- Mobile's Black Heritage Trail, a 37 site tour that weaves through the city, guided by markers, print and audio materials linked to public transportation routes.

As a member of the Mobile Historic Development Commission, Ms. Finley was in a position to make her vision a reality and she did. And each of us is so much richer for this revelation.

According to Frank W. White, Alabama Historical Commission Executive Director, this year's conference theme **Historic Preservation: The Original Green** ([www.preserveala.org](http://www.preserveala.org)) promoted awareness that historic preservation is inherently energy efficient.

Architect Joseph Smith from Madison, Georgia, led **Inherently Green and Intentionally Greener**, a historic homeowner workshop teaching why our historic homes are energy efficient and how we can make them more so.

Architect John Williams from Seattle, Washington gave the keynote address "**Saving Historic Resources Sustains Communities**" and led an afternoon workshop on how to rehab historic buildings without destroying their character.

The Alabama Public Service Commission (PSC) underwrote the speakers on sustainability. Angier Johnson, director of the PSC's Consumer Education Initiative, introduced the keynote speaker. The Consumer Education Initiative seeks to educate consumers on the importance and benefits of energy efficiency in their homes.

The Alabama Preservation Conference is held annually by the Alabama Historical Commission, the Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Black Heritage Council.

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