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Final

GREENWICH VILLAGE HONORS 'ROOTS' AUTHOR ALEX HALEY

A commemorative plaque was placed on this building at 92 Grove Street in Greenwich Village to honor Alex Haley who co-authored Malcolm X's autobiography after conducting 50 interviews with him at the site while

living there. After the autobiography was published, Haley's next project was the Pulitzer Prize winning "Roots: The Saga of An American Family," which became a popular television series.

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Greenwich Village honors 'Roots' author Alex Haley

A historic plaque has been placed on a Greenwich Village building where "Roots" author Alex Haley lived and co-authored the autobiography of Malcolm X.

The plaque was placed at 92 Grove Street in a brief ceremony attended by descendants of both men.

"Few places are as important as 92 Grove Street, where a historic meeting of the minds took place between Alex Haley and Malcolm X for a series of interviews that led to one of the most important works of non-fiction of the 20th century," said Harry Bubbins, the special projects director for Village Preservation.

Haley conducted 50 interviews with Malcolm X at the site between 1963 and 1965. The autobiography was published in 1965, shortly after Malcolm X's assassination.

Among those attending the plaque dedication was Malcolm X's daughter, Ilyasah Shabazz. She noted her father's 94th birthday is May 19 and said she's "glad to see this recognition that honors his life and work...Alex Haley played an immeasurable role in helping the world to create a more accurate portrait of who my father was."

Also in attendance was Haley's niece, Andrea Blackstone.

"Placing a plaque to mark the place where my Uncle Alex interviewed Malcolm X celebrates the important role

that two African Americans played in American history," she said. "Their cultural impact can be preserved to spark educational exploration for future generations..."

Zaheer Ali, oral historian at the Brooklyn Historic Society, said the building "is more than historic, it's sacred."

"In this intimate space, Malcolm X offered up his life story before an audience of one," Ali said. "Alex Haley in turn crafted one of the most important books of the 20th century, one that has informed and transformed the lives of millions of readers worldwide."

The building sits across from the Stonewall National Monument designated in 2016 by President Barack Obama.

Following "The Autobiography of Malcolm X," Haley's next project was the Pulitzer Prize winning "Roots: The Saga of an American Family," which he wrote while living in rural Jamaica.

Haley died in 1992 and is buried in a yard beside his childhood home in Hening, Tenn.

Haley's plaque is the 14th placed by the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation. Among others are at the former homes of writer James Baldwin and poet Frank O'Hara and the site of rock music venue the Fillmore East.

— Text by Causewell Vaughan



Andrea Blackstone and Harry Bubbins after unveiling the plaque.

Photo: Village Preservation



Brian Jones of the Schomburg Center

Photo: Causewell Vaughan



Ilyasah Shabazz, Malcolm X's daughter

Photo: Village Preservation



Zaheer Ali of the Brooklyn of the Brooklyn Historical Society

Photo: Causewell Vaughan

