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Update: May 14th Community Collecting Initiative
Local Coalition to Collect, Document, and Preserve an Authentic Record of the
May 14, 2022 Targeted Mass Shooting

Buffalo, NY – October 16, 2023 – One hundred years from now, how will the Buffalo 5/14 Massacre be remembered?

How do we ensure a record of the event and the generational impacts of racism before this tragedy? How do we create a collection with integrity, accuracy, and trusted historical documentation?

The May 14th Community Collecting Initiative is setting out to create a historical record so that future generations have a deeper understanding of this tragedy.

WHO ARE WE?

In a joint effort from a coalition of professionals, survivors, and the community impacted by the May 14, 2022 massacre, we are collecting, documenting, and preserving an intentional and authentic record of the horrific event that occurred. We come together to create an inclusive model for shared stewardship to benefit current and future generations. This work is a process of discovery to encourage awareness of systemic racism and inspire actions to dismantle it.

As of this release, our coalition includes Buffalo African American Museum, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, The Buffalo History Museum, Burchfield Penney Arts Center, Canisius University, Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House, Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor, The Patricia H. and Richard E. Garman Art Conservation Department at Buffalo State University, Uncrowned Queens Institute for Research & Education on Women, Inc., victims' family members, survivors, and broader community members. We welcome the Buffalo Together Community Response Fund's support of the May 14th Community Collecting Initiative as a resource in their mission to develop a long-term, community-informed plan to accelerate the revitalization of East Buffalo by addressing economic and racial inequities.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We are collecting, documenting and preserving an intentional and authentic record of the horrific event that occurred. This collection work will include, but is not limited to, oral history recordings and the preservation of mementos that will create a repository of collective memory.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Creating this historical record will demonstrate to current and future generations a true account of the tragedy that took the lives of ten innocent people, wounded three others, and forever changed the history of our city. This record is intended to recognize the complexity of historical interpretations, encourage critical thinking, healing, and reflection, and to honor the shooting victims.

“In the aftermath of 5/14, we have an opportunity to tell the full story of that horrific event, but to also give it context and to use it as the impetus to mitigate and or eliminate the disparities that made our community vulnerable and a target long before 5/14,” said committee member Garnell Whitfield, son of May 14 victim Ruth Whitfield. “Through this process of discovery and the honest discussion of these issues, we honor our loved ones and are creating the change that their sacrifice demands.”

The *May 14th Community Collecting Initiative* will continue providing updates. Those interested in learning more should visit <https://www.buffalolib.org/may-14th-community-collecting-initiative>.