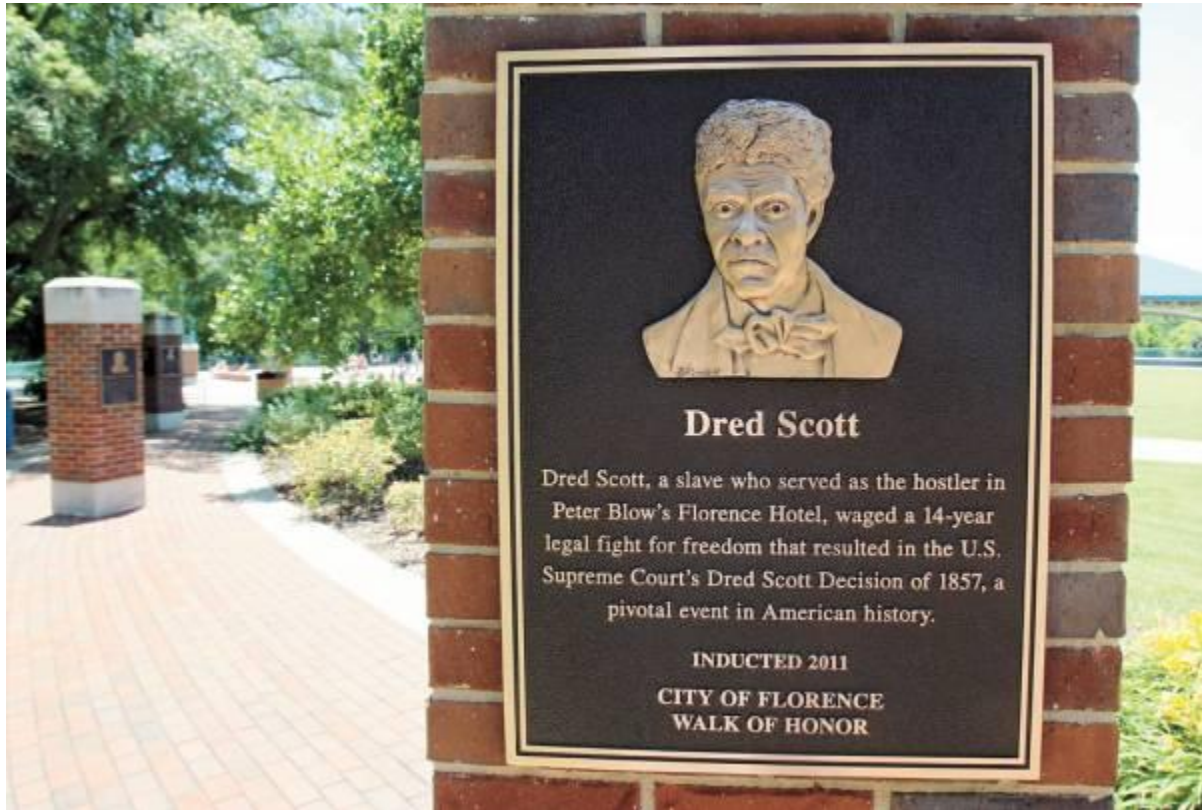


FLORENCE

4th Walk of Honor class unveiled

By Robert Palmer
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Jim Hannon/TimesDaily

A plaque honoring Dred Scott, one of four new inductees to the Walk of Honor, is seen at River Heritage Park in Florence.

Four men have been added to the Walk of Honor in River Heritage Park, joining 24 men and women from Florence and Lauderdale County.

Plaques honoring chemical engineer Frank P. Achorn, golfer Stewart Cink, photographer Charles Lee Moore and Dred Scott, a slave who took his argument for freedom all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1857, were unveiled this week.

All live or had lived in Florence or Lauderdale County, which is one of the criteria for induction into the Walk of Honor.

"We choose four people each year," said Billy Warren, chairman of the 11-member committee that accepts nominations and makes the selections.

“It’s a lengthy list we choose from, which is pretty remarkable because you have to be either a native or lived here for at least three years,” he said. “You would think the list would be fairly small since we’re not the most populated place on the planet, but that’s not the case.”

Maybe the most important criteria for inclusion is the impact an individual has had in the national and international arena. Among those already inducted are Sam Phillips, W.C. Handy, T.S. Stribling, Hank Klibanoff and Rear Admiral Fran McKee.

The concept for honoring native sons and daughters with bronze plaques took shape while River Heritage Park was under construction. Mayor Bobby Irons said he and others began discussing ways to honor residents who had achieved national acclaim with something more than a certificate on a wall.

“I wanted to make it broad and not just single out one individual,” he said. “We realized we needed a committee to brainstorm it.”

Irons said he realized an opportunity for something unique existed at River Heritage Park, so plans were made to alter it to include the Walk of Honor.

“The committee has done a wonderful job. I give them all the praise,” he said. “This tells a lot of history about our area, and the people from here who have had an impact on this country and the world.”

The first class of inductees was unveiled in 2007. It included 16 people, Warren said, because they wanted to show the public how broad-based future selections would be.

So, how difficult is it to narrow a list of nominees to just four people?

“We don’t have outright arguments,” Warren laughed, “but we’re not bashful. This is too important to just acquiesce or get on a stump. It’s all about compromise, really.”

Nominees from the past remain on the list for consideration in the future, he said.

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