racy and Social Change, a facility to be located downtown. As longtime friends and supporters of the Du Bois Homesite, we hope you will celebrate with us this important step forward.

Given the importance of Great Barrington and the Homesite to Du Bois throughout his life, as well as the national landmark status of the Homesite, it makes sense for the W.E.B. Du Bois National Historic Site to be established in Great Barrington. The vision and program plan, W.E.B. Du Bois Boyhood Homesite and Great Barrington: A Plan for Heritage Conservation and Interpretation, which was produced in 2008, recognized that the Homesite could not tell the whole story of Du Bois’s long life and prodigious contributions. The Homesite is a sacred place for contemplating the place and people that shaped Du Bois in his early years and for recognizing the African American presence in rural New England.

During the past year, scholars from UMass Amherst and members of the Friends of Du Bois Homesite as well as an array of specialists in design and fund-raising have been creating the organizational infrastructure necessary for building a national destination. The immediate goal is to raise seed money to hire an executive director with the qualifications to build a national board and organization once a director is hired. We have produced a beautiful fund-raising brochure (the cover is shown on the first page of this newsletter) and are in the process of creating a website www.DuBoisNHS.org. The website is being developed, and we anticipate will be up and running by April.

The Friends will continue to be the fiscal agent and to incubate the fledgling organization once a director is hired. We have written a business plan, which projects the total capital and operational costs for developing the three venues at $12 million over a 10-year period. Fiscal agent and to incubate the fledgling organization once a director is hired. Your support and contribution for this crucial next step is especially appreciated. Contributions are payable to W.E.B. Du Bois National Historic Site and may be sent to:

The Du Bois National Historic Site
Housatonic Heritage
P.O. Box 493
Salisbury, CT 06068

We are counting on those of us whom remembering Du Bois is imperative! 1

1 We gratefully appreciate the pro bono design work by Daniel & Roberts for the brochure and website.

2 Thanks to Dolores Root for assistance with this article.
Chatter

By Bernard A. Drew

Berkshire Natural Resources Council owns rugged mountainside acreage on East Sheffield Road in Great Barrington. The site, running through the open lot, is the Wm. Taylor Day Forest Area. The property once belonged to Warren H. Davis of Great Barrington, a lumberman and land speculator who harvested timber on the land then sought to sell it. He first offered it to W.E.B. Du Bois before eventually transferring it to Day, who was a lawyer in town.1 Correspondence in the University of Massachusetts, Amherst Special Collections and Archives — available through CREDO — affords opportunity to learn more about how Du Bois became interested in acquiring his grandfather’s old place on Route 23. The Great Barrington High School alumni association invited Du Bois to speak at a reunion. Clarence Sweet exchanged several letters, and invited Du Bois to stay at his house near the town. Du Bois said, but my wife Nina and daughter Yolande will come too. I will stay at the Berkshire Inn. You wouldn’t be a trouble, Sweet replied, but look, the inn has just been repainted. You may not be comfortable there. Edgar Wiloughby has a nice little inn on Rosseter Street and he takes in a high class of Negro guests. We’ll stay at the Sunset Inn then, Du Bois answered. And they did. The Sunset Inn was next door to Davis’s home. While Du Bois attended the reunion, Davis had shown Du Bois’s wife Nina. “the stretch of land with the lake” that Davis said he had been thinking about buying! He liked it, but it was beyond his fi-

Credo is entry to a fascinating past

Special Collections and University Archives at the University of Massachu-
setts, Amherst, in October 2011 officially launched its Credo website which affords access to some 145,000 digitized pages from the W.E.B. Du Bois Papers — roughly through 1946 — according to Jeremy Smith, digital project manager (successor to Aaron Robinstein, whom we in Newsletter No. 4.
The website is easily found at http://credo.library.umass.edu/
Chancellor Robert C. Holub described Credo as “vast and essential” and “a dynamic electronic museum available to all anywhere.”

Have I got a building lot for you! Warren Davis said

And he became interested.
Du Bois in a letter dated 11 September 1925 asked Davis for a biography for a profile to appear in The Crisis. Du Bois said he had been thinking about “the stately home with the lakes” that Davis had shown Du Bois’s wife Nina. He liked it, but it was beyond his fi-

Du Bois wrote back 16 September to say, “You have mentioned a lake. I think you mean the building site I talked to you about, two miles South of Gt. Barrington near the Brookside Estate.
This particular farm has no build-
ings on it but a very high elevation that over looks the Connecticut Valley also the Catskill Mountains. The tract I refer
to has a frontage on the main highway, what is called the East Road, that leads from Gt. Barrington to Sheffield. The two parcels of land added together would contain 159 acres. There is a small brook running through the open lot.2

He would sell it for $2,000, Davis wrote. If Du Bois decided to build, Da-
vis would furnish the lumber at cost.
The property is the extremely rugged June Mountain1 land that is now the Wm. Taylor Day Forest Area. The only accessible building spots are close to the road; when farmer John Chadwick owned the place, he allowed Frank Mason to squat there in the 1890s and

Davis said he would consider buying it, but he did not pursue the matter any further. The property is still there.

Du Bois in a letter dated 23 June 1925 to Du Bois: “I am still holding the June Mountain tract which Mrs. Du Bois looked at. If you do not care to purchase all of this tract I would be willing to keep half of same myself and sell you the balance.”
Du Bois had lost interest.
Davis kept the land for another year, then passed it to lawyer Day.
Du Bois obviously wished to own land in Great Barrington, little knowing the role Davis would play in the acquisition of the Burghardt homestead by Du Bois’s friends in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as a 60th birthday gift in 1928 — or the role Davis would play decades later in the acquisition of the same homestead by Walter Wilson Abel Nash.

He had 95 years of “an extremely productive life,” Bromery said of Du Bois, “and all of his papers are now together and on the 23rd floor above us.”

1 This material is adapted from a Warren Davis chapter in Drew’s new book, Remarkable Davis. A 1750s forerunner in Stockbridge, the 1860s lumberman John Chadwick in Pittsfield and a 1920s lumberman in Great Barrington all broke barriers as land speculators in Berkshire County. Massachusetts They Were All African-american. (Attic Revivals Press, 2012, 104 pages, $17.50).
2 Sweet’s first letter was dated 1 June 1925. Du Bois’s telegrams were dated 7 and 16 July.

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