

GROUND LEVEL

climbed out, the bus went up in flames.

With National Guard escorts, the rides later resumed with more than 300 riders eventually filling jails in Jackson, Miss.

Hank Thomas, now 50, was one of the Greyhound riders. He plans to be at the museum's July 4 dedication. "It's a part of history that we must keep alive."

OLE MISS

James Meredith applied to the University of Mississippi at Oxford, re-lighting the "states' rights" fuse that almost led to an explosion in Little Rock four years earlier.

School desegregation had been the law of the land since 1954, but Meredith had to sue to force his admission. That was the easy part.

Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett claimed state sovereignty, defying orders by President John F. Kennedy to admit Meredith. For four days state highway patrolmen, sheriff's deputies and local police blocked Meredith's path.

The gallery includes an audio display with the awkward taped telephone conversation between a determined Kennedy and Barnett on Sept. 30, 1962.

Kennedy dispatched federal troops to escort Meredith to class. Two people died in a riot that night, and Kennedy dispatched more troops. During the next six weeks, snipers fired shots at Meredith and a bomb exploded in his dormitory.

He graduated with a degree in political science Aug. 18, 1963. On his gown he wore an upside-down version of the "Never" slogan which segregationists had worn to show their determination.

"PROJECT C": BIRMINGHAM

The "C" in the gallery title is for "confrontation," epitomized by Birmingham public safety commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor.

Birmingham was targeted in 1963 because of open racism and laws forbidding public "mixing of the races."

As sit-ins and marches progressed, newsreels show Connor unleashing dogs on protestors and turning fire hoses on children. Kennedy then pushed sweeping civil rights legislation and said, "The civil rights movement owes Bull Connor as much as it owes Abraham Lincoln."

Dr. King, accused of inflammatory tactics, defended himself in his famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." A copy, on display in this gallery with a recreation of Dr. King's Birmingham jail cell, explains his unwillingness to wait.

MARCH ON WASHINGTON

The city-by-city desegregation effort was not changing the widening economic gap between blacks and whites.

Union organizer A. Philip Randolph helped organize the 1963 "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom."

On Aug. 28, 1963, an estimated 250,000 people walked from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial. Televised coverage at the memorial helps dramatize the focus on economic and political rights, education, jobs and housing.

FREEDOM SUMMER

In spite of headway in the late 1950s and early 1960s, huge numbers of Southern blacks were not registered to vote.

In 1964, more than 1,000 volunteers, mostly white Northern college students, began 44 projects in Mississippi, including voter registration, schools, community centers, medical care and legal aid.

A Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was organized with the aim of replacing the all-white delegation at the Democratic National Convention in August.

The gallery will include news footage from the convention in Atlantic City, N.J., where President Lyndon Johnson tried to arrange a compromise between the rival delegations.

(Additional buildings to the left)

SELMA

Selma, Ala., was majority black in 1965, but blacks were only 1 percent of registered voters in Dallas County. Intimidation, tests and repeated delays kept blacks from the polls.

Staffs of the SCLC and SNCC targeted Selma for demonstrations and voter registration projects. Dr. King was arrested along with hundreds of demonstrators as blacks were slowly registered.

Protest leaders then decided to march from Selma to the capitol in Montgomery. And Selma officials provided grist for front-page coverage in every major newspaper and on television, with mounted troopers clubbing marchers on streets filled with tear gas. They are among the most dramatic photographs in this gallery, which also will include a re-creation of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, which served as a bottleneck for marchers twice stopped there by armed troopers.

The march was repeated under the protection of 1,800

Alabama National Guardsmen federalized by President Johnson. In Montgomery, state troopers prevented marchers from delivering a voting rights petition to Gov. George Wallace, but five months later Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law.

MARCH AGAINST FEAR

Activists were increasingly dissatisfied with the slow pace of change in the South, and some mounted individual campaigns in hopes of speeding the process.

James Meredith, the student who had integrated Ole Miss in 1962, said he still did not feel blacks could move freely or safely. To dramatize his fear (and encourage voter registration) he set out from Memphis on June 5, 1966, planning to march 220 miles to Jackson, Miss.

On the second day of his march with a few friends, Meredith was wounded by a white man who stepped from the underbrush and fired three shots. Movement leaders vowed to

continue the march. When Meredith recovered, he led the marchers to Jackson where SNCC's Stokely Carmichael urged blacks to "build a power base in this country so strong we will bring (whites) to their knees every time they mess with us."

Photographs of Meredith, his march and those who continued his effort will be focal points of this gallery. In his effort, Stokely Carmichael used the term "black power." SNCC and others were moving away from Dr. King's nonviolent philosophy.

In Louisiana, a black group called "Deacons for Defense and Justice" formed in Bogalusa and added 50 chapters across the state with arsenals of grenades, machine guns, pistols, rifles and shotguns. The group inspired "black pride" and made white extremists think twice about causing trouble.

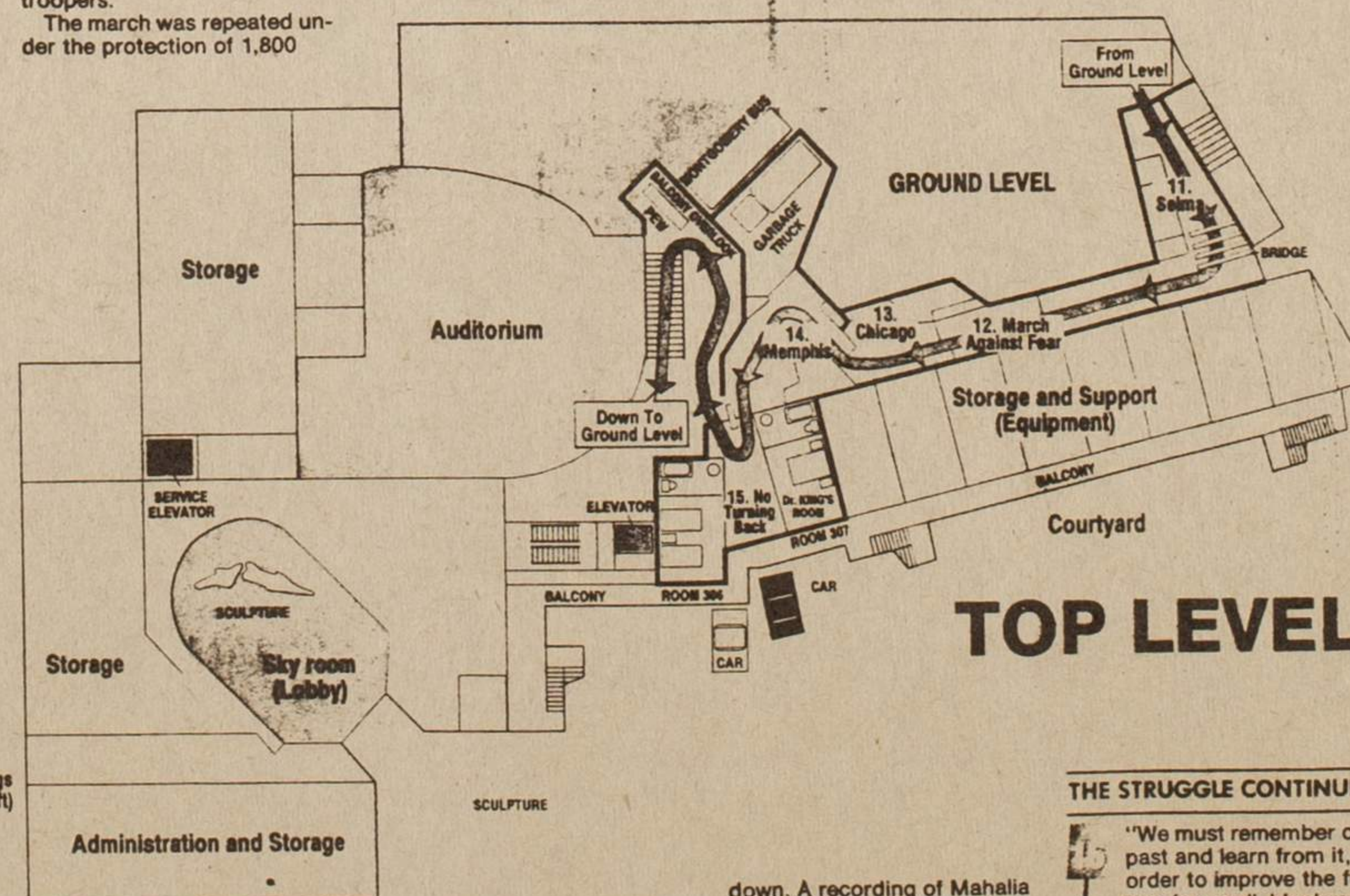
CHICAGO

In the summer of 1965, Dr. King and the SCLC chose Chicago as a battleground over urban slums, segregated public schools and de facto segregation.

The city is this gallery's symbol of urban struggle and mob-like reaction. Photographs in the gallery, of white crowds pelting marchers with bricks and bottles, are reminiscent of city after city in the South and of racial conflicts that observed no boundaries.

Migration from the South had helped quadruple Chicago's black population from 1940 to 1960, and the Urban League claimed as early as 1956 the city was "the most segregated city in the United States."

In the summer of 1966, tempers flared when firefighters turned off hydrants in ghettos. A three-day riot killed two and injured hundreds before the National Guard restored order. The Freedom Movement then moved demonstrations from ghettos to all-white neighborhoods where residents attacked marchers. Promises from the city quieted some marchers, and growing protest of the Vietnam War diluted manpower more.



TOP LEVEL

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

"We must remember our past and learn from it, in order to improve the future for us all. Ideals and dreams, organizations and individual efforts, commitment and dedication are just as important — and necessary — today as they were a few decades ago. The struggle will continue, with determination and courage . . ." says a panel in this area.

To that end, the museum asks visitors for their parting thoughts. A bulletin-type marker board is provided "to offer your own thoughts about what you have seen in the museum, or what you feel constitutes the important civil rights issues facing our society today and in the future."

down. A recording of Mahalia Jackson singing *Precious Lord*, Dr. King's favorite hymn, will play in the background.

Beyond the room, visitors also will see a retrospective of Dr. King's philosophy in excerpts from his own speeches and the teachings that inspired him. A pew from his Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery sits in the lobby area.

At this point, visitors can stand at an interior balcony with a panoramic view of most of the museum. But, from city bus to charred Greyhound to sanitation truck, it's not over, says the introduction to the last exhibit.

NO TURNING BACK

Dr. King had been the most powerful presence in the movement. His methods of "nonviolent resistance" incited change by forcing Americans to face the problems of the underprivileged.

This gallery includes the restored room Dr. King occupied at the Lorraine and the balcony where he was gunned

