



SPATIAL STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE



Seven generations have passed since African Americans began to develop an independent community in Gainesville and Alachua County, Florida.

Gainesville's African American history—from slavery to freedom after the Civil War; from the early and remarkably integrated society of the late 19th century to the strict segregation of the Jim Crow period; from struggles for integration during the 1950s and 1960s to emerging questions about the power of cultural identity—is contained in the buildings, streets, and in oral histories identified with Gainesville's African American community.

These "spatial stories" bear witness to lives well lived, often in trying circumstances. They provide a glimpse into a cohesive and rich segment of our community too often rendered invisible because of a lack of traditional historical documentation.

These stories, told primarily through individuals' memories about places, are the result of environmental decisions made as many as seven generations ago that continue to shape our community's daily life. In order for the next generation—Gainesville's eighth since the close of the Civil War—to make wise decisions about the politics of space, it will be prudent to visit the results of choices made long ago.

Credits:
Florida Humanities Council
University of Florida Oral History Program
Florida Community Design Center, Inc.
The Matheson Historical Museum, Inc.
University of Florida School of Architecture

Sources:
University of Florida Oral History Collection
Roland A. Foulkes, "Seminary Street (An Historical Portrait of an African American Business Community)"
Edward Loring Miller, "Negro Life in Gainesville. A Sociological Study," 1938
La Tanya Simms, "City of African-American Heritage," 1999

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"I taught all ages. I taught grades one through six. In fact, it was primer through six, for the most part. That was in the one-room school. In the later years, after 1935, most of the time I taught in two-teacher schools where there were two and three teachers. But prior to that time, I was in the one-room school. Over the county, there were forty-four little red schoolhouses."

Thelma Jordan

"Alachua County during that time was noted for the tung oil industry, especially true out on the Newberry Road, some hundreds of acres of nothing but tung oil groves. In the summertime and spring there'd be blossoms on those tung oil trees just beautiful to behold. If you'd go out to Newberry Road there you'd see all that beauty..."

A. Quinn Jones



Plantations

Plantations played a major role in the economy and settlement patterns of northern Florida. Many plantations held one or two African American families as slaves, and several held as many as 20 families. While this is a painful period of Florida's history, the fact that plantations existed in Alachua County is key to understanding later settlement patterns, surnames and customs.

Karapaha. This 1,500 acre plantation, owned by the Hale family, was located off of Archer Road, about one mile southwest of present day Arredondo.

Bailey. This was a 2,000 acre cotton plantation near the Sweetwater Branch.

Stringfellow. This plantation, containing tung groves on the Newberry Road, was located along Newberry Road at Fort Clark. It joined the Rutledge community on the south and west.

Coldough. Located south of Gainesville, perhaps around the current Coldough Hills subdivision.

Thomas. Located around what is now the Sugar Hill neighborhood.

Strickland. Located south of Gainesville beyond the former Thomas Plantation and current Sugar Hill neighborhood.

Roper.

Lewis. Located two or three miles southwest of Gainesville.



Settlements

In addition to African American neighborhoods found within small towns throughout Alachua County, a number of distinct settlements emerged after the Civil War. In many cases, freed slaves aggregated in areas that had been specifically set aside for their relocation or in places close to their ancestral plantation homes. Throughout the last seven generations, some of these settlements, such as Jonesville, have changed character considerably or disappeared entirely. Others retain their independent, typically rural character.

Negro Shanty Areas. Structures identified on the 1884, 1887 and 1892 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, located at the corner of Depot Avenue and Main Street just north of the Dutton and Company Cotton Ginney.

Daysville. Located near Publix and Windmeadows Apartments at Butler Plaza.

Arredondo. A settlement near the plantations of the Hale and Chestnut families, six miles southwest of Gainesville on Archer Road.

Wacahoota. A settlement south of Williston Road near Levy Lake.

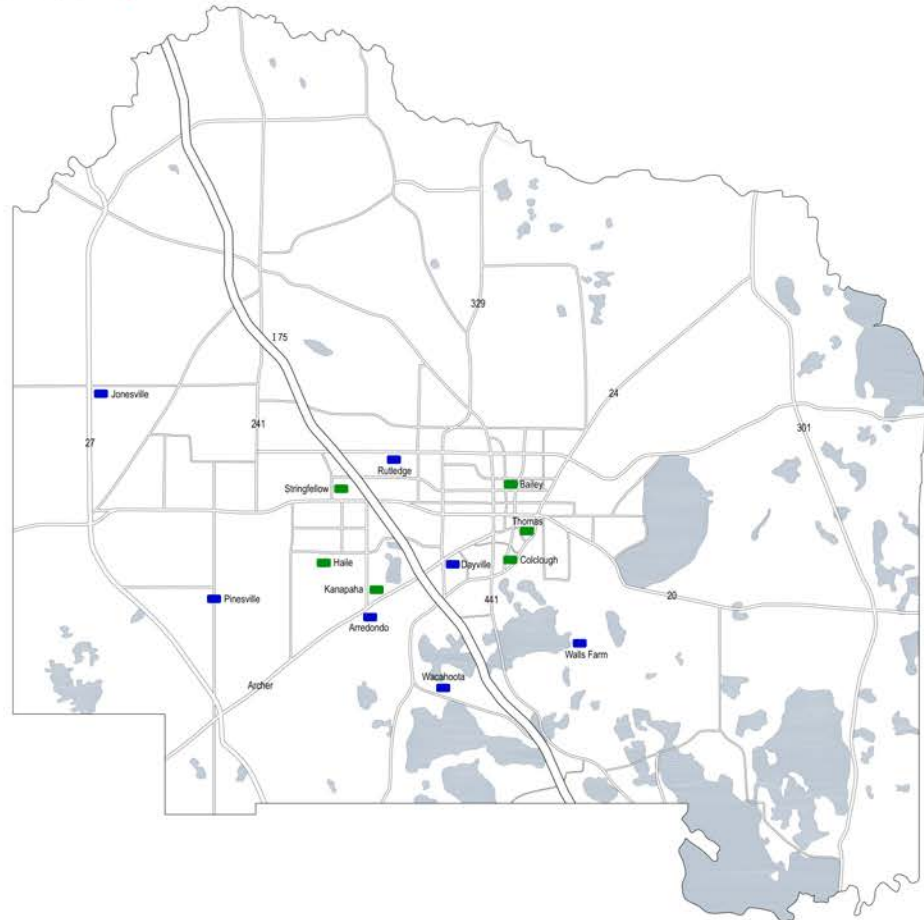
Rutledge. Located north of the current Richmond subdivision. Residents from nearby plantations settled here after the Civil War.

Jonesville. Located about 14 miles west of Gainesville, reaching from the former Stringfellow farm to Alachua to a settlement called Pineville.

Josiah T. Walls Holdings. A 1000 acre farm owned by Josiah T. Walls, located on the eastern edge of Payne's Prairie. Walls was a former slave. He became the first African-American U.S. Congressman from Florida and Gainesville's mayor.



Alachua County





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE



"There was a barber shop downtown I know as late as in the 1950s... The barber shop was across from what was Robinson's Market... That's now a parking lot down there. There was a barber shop down there, and a grocery down there... That was called Union Street, now that I think of it... That's because on Saturdays folks would come to town and they would go down there and unite... That was the meeting place, that was the Union."
Leslie Parker-Cosby



"The children attending this school came from all over the city... If they lived in the Spring Hill area, they walked... If they lived in the Porter's addition area, they walked to Union Academy... This was the same through the years until they built two other schools in the city... Williams Elementary and Duval, which we could say was in recent years... Because I was teaching by the time they built Williams Elementary... I was one of the first teachers at Williams Elementary."

Thelma Jordan

"At that time (around 1957 or 1958), remember, the city of Gainesville did not supply water to anyone who did not buy electricity... Most of, or a large portion of, black Gainesville did not have electricity, so the city would not supply them water... It did run a pipe down into southeast Gainesville with a tap at the end of it, so African American citizens... would bring their bottles and containers and get water from the tap."

David Chalmers



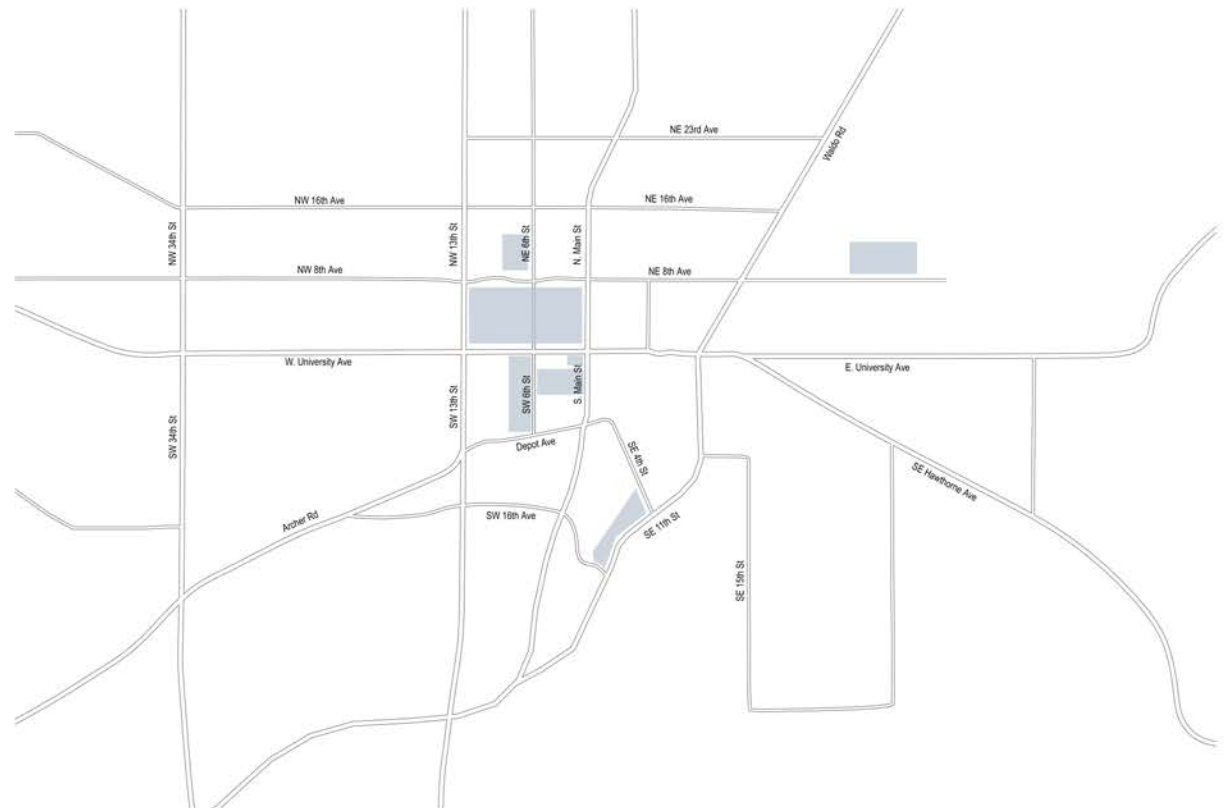
Gainesville's historic African American neighborhoods are found in all four quadrants of the City's historic center... Some, like Sugar Hill, are located near former plantations or other sources of income while others, like Porters, were created as new developments specifically intended for African Americans... As is typical in older neighborhoods, some of the housing stock has deteriorated or been torn down, leaving gaps in some neighborhoods' urban fabrics... These gaps are more pronounced because many residents have family connections to the neighborhoods going back several generations, perhaps making the loss of neighborhood coherence more acutely felt.

Neighborhoods

- Dei's Quarters** Located between Southwest Sixth Street and Southwest Seventh Street, north of Depot Avenue.
- Duval Heights** Located east of Waldo Road and north of Eighth Avenue.
- Fair Grounds Section**
- Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street** Located between Northwest Second Street, also known as Pleasant Street and Northwest Thirteen Street, and between Northwest Third Avenue and Eighth Avenue.
- Pistol Alley** Located west of the railroad bed and north of Eighth Avenue, formerly known as Boundary Street.
- Porters** Located east of the railroad bed and south of Fourth Street, formerly Arlington Street, along the east and west sides of the former Porter Street.
- Red Quarters**
- Seaboard Section**
- Spring Hill** Located west of Williston Road and south of Depot Avenue, east of the headwaters of one branch of the Sweetwater Branch.
- Sugar Hill** Located south of downtown Gainesville, west of Northeast Fourth Street and south of the Sweetwater Branch.
- Union Street** A commercial area, largely accessible to African Americans, located on Southwest First Street.



The City of Gainesville





SPATIAL STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE



The importance of the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street neighborhood has waxed and waned, depending on how welcome African Americans have felt in the larger Gainesville community. Immediately after the Civil War and until the turn of the 20th century, African Americans lived, worked and shopped in relatively integrated circumstances. During the early 20th century, as the legal and social strictures tightened during the Jim Crow period, more African Americans shopped, socialized, learned and worshipped exclusively in the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street neighborhood. Ironically, the period of intense segregation corresponded to a flourishing of the neighborhood, particularly its business district. As efforts to integrate Gainesville took hold and African Americans had a wider range of choices about where to live, shop, work and worship, the neighborhood drifted into decline. Only in recent years, with a growing appreciation of its cultural heritage and historic value, has the neighborhood begun to rebound.

5th Avenue / Pleasant Street Neighborhood



"The churches were along Pleasant Street so therefore the places where people congregated, the theaters, the dance hall, and the grocery stores were on Fifth Avenue. The church was on Pleasant Street. Then you had the Union Academy and the only two schools then were Lincoln and the academy. Then when there was no longer Union Academy, then there was Lincoln. They didn't have Union Academy and Lincoln, they had Union Academy, then Lincoln."

Leslie Parker-Cosby



"...the community was so well-knit. Everybody just loved everybody else, and knew everybody else, and was interested in their neighbor. For instance, if my mama went away and left her clothes out in the hard rain some of the neighbors would take them in and put them on the porch. That type of thing. We do not have that now."

Charonelle Griffin



"Another bell rang when there was a death in the community. It was not a bell, it was a toll, and it had a kind of thud to it that would just go through you. You see we did not have phones to get news around to let someone who lived in the alley or another person who lived far away know something. If you knew that there were sick people in the church and you heard the toll, you would think, somebody is gone. Later the word would get around. That toll told a story, and our church was not the only one. On Sunday mornings you could hear the bells from all of the churches ringing, and it did something to you. You looked forward to going to Sunday School."

Charonelle Griffin





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Union Academy

"My first school was Union Academy...I started school at that location in the first grade. I remember that we had teachers for every grade through the eighth grade...The children's parents had to buy their books. The classroom textbooks were bought by parents. Teachers provided us with all the information concerning travel, cities, and interesting happenings around the world. They sat and talked with us. They gave us the information as they gathered it. Most of the teachers were able to travel somewhere during the summer. When they would come back, they would share with the class the information that they had gained. Most of our teachers had been away to school and I imagine they had gathered lots of information from college libraries where they had attended school for higher education."

Thelma Jordan

"In those days children got more than just the ABCs. They got an education in culture. They got an education in ethical social behavior. You did not hear anything about a child getting spanked for bad behavior, for being ugly, or for being saucy. You were taught what to do and it was assumed that your parents had started you on the way. If you did get a little bit out of place the teacher would tell your momma and you got a spanking at school and another one when you got home. Anybody could speak to a child who was doing something wrong, the neighborhoods were so closely knit. Nowadays they say, "It is none of your business."

Claronell Griffin

The site of the former Union Academy is now occupied by the Rosa B. Williams Center. It is located at 524 Northwest First Street





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Lincoln High School

"So let us say that Lincoln was our social life. We had the school and the church and if we did not have those two..."

Anna Nealy

"(Lincoln High School) was almost a university in itself. I mean in spirit. They had homecoming parades, football games, and basketball games. Lincoln High School was to the blacks what the University of Florida was to the whites."

Lucius Jackson

"They closed Lincoln in the middle of the school term. They told them a week before Thanksgiving that we would be gone when you come back after Christmas. We will be going to Gainesville High School. They started rioting from the day they told them that until Thanksgiving. Those kids stayed out of school, they walked the streets, went to school late and very little learning went on after that. Very few kids came to school...(The faculty) felt just as intimidated as the students and almost as humiliated."

Anna Nealy

Lincoln High School was renamed the A. Quinn Jones School. It is located at 1108 Northwest Seventh Avenue.





STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Saint Augustine Mission

"If they had that little thirty or that thirty-five cents, (your parents) would pay for school. You took your lunch to school with you, and when you got through with your lunch, your mom or dad came to get you. Then after you got up in size, you could take care of yourself. The next school that I went to was supposed to have been a little bit better. A lady who had been a very outstanding teacher that day was Mary Jones. She taught people who were beginners and seemed to have promise, and particularly, if those people could get that thirty-five cents to her. We went to school there until we were ready for the public school...Mary Jones' school was on the corner of Fifth Street, and what we now presently call Church Street."

T.B. McPherson

St. Augustine Daycare, as it is now know, is located at 405 Northwest Fourth Avenue.





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE



Fifth Avenue Professionals

"And we would have a band to come in and play for us. Dr. Ayer had a hall that was very close to the church there. Where that two-story building is, that old building that is raggedy there on Second Street. Right next to our church...Yes, that was the dance hall that we used to give affairs in....Right there in that building downstairs on the first floor was his office. We could go in and get sodas and ice cream, what we called ice cream bars, back then...."

Marie Adams

"Dr. Stafford's office was in his, you see that upstairs building by his house. That was his office."

Mamie Saunders

"Well, a number of years his examining room was in the room that we are sitting in. And the room to the west of here was a waiting room. During office hours the living room had sliding doors and it was kept closed...Dr. Parker was never admitted to the hospital staff. Surgery that he did was performed in the room that we are in, in the early years of his practice."

Leslie Parker-Cosby

"Dr. Cosby started practicing dentistry in August of 1950...His office was located in Dr. Stafford's old office, over the garage in Mrs. Stafford's backyard."

Leslie Parker-Cosby

Dr. Parker's medical office was at 303 Northwest Fourth Street. Earlier he practiced with Dr. Ayers on Northwest Second Avenue and Northwest Seventh Street.

Dr. Ayer's medical office was located at Northwest Second Avenue and Northwest Seventh Street.

Dr. Banks's medical office was located at 635 Northwest Sixth Street.

Dr. E.A. Cosby's dental office was originally located in Dr. Stafford's office at 518 Northwest Second Street, also known as Pleasant Street.

Dr. Joyce Cosby's current dental office is located at 635 Northwest Sixth Street.

Dr. Debose's dental office was located at 22 West Columbia Street, also known as Seventh Avenue, on the corner of Second Street and Eighth Avenue, also known as Boundary Street, and at 430 Northwest Fifth Avenue.

Dr. Stafford's dental office was located at 518 Northwest Second Street, also known as Pleasant Street.





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Fifth Avenue Commerce

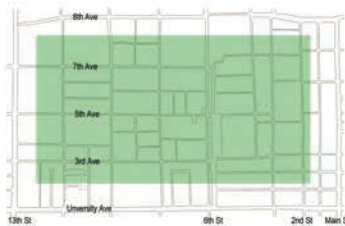
"...when I was growing up, that (the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street neighborhood) was the only place you could go. I remember there was a restaurant down there, there was a trailer at first, that was operated by Mrs. Sarah McKnight. Then there was a little drugstore that was operated by Reverend Cato, and if you wanted to go anyplace you went on one side of the street to Reverend Cato's little drugstore and you ate there or bought a sandwich or what have you or either go across on the other side to Mrs. Sarah McKnight's and eat and that was just about the extent of it...."

Cora Roberson

"Sarah McKnight's Lunchroom. It was down there. Miss McCray's Diner it was down there on Fifth Avenue. Davis' Beer Room was right around the corner from right where Duncan's Funeral, that was Davis' Beer garden. That is right. And Miss Annie McCray's place was right where, that...thing that is all boxed up now that used to be, two doors from there was Miss McCray's Café and restaurant and the other was a grocery store right no the corner and up from there was Cliff's Beer joint and then Oscar, no, Kado's (sic) Drugstore and then Oscar Gilbert's shoe shop. That was the businesses."

James Williams

Between 1938 and 1954 the Annual Gainesville City Directories listed about 30 Seminary Street businesses. Two of these, Mom's Kitchen, at 1003 Northwest Fifth Avenue, and Plummer's Barber Shop, at the corner of Northwest Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street, are owned by descendants of previous owners and bracket the current business district.





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Dunbar Hotel

"It was originally a cottage, then in later years the Dunbars bought it and made it a hotel out of it....When the Shaws lived there, next to the Shaws lived Altamese Cook's mother, and next to her lived Miss Mary Felma. Cook's father and Miss Mary Felma's husband were brothers. There was nothing but weeds, I mean, no businesses. They used to park cars over there to load up watermelons. Watermelons, cucumbers and tomatoes."

Claronelle Griffin

The Dunbar Hotel, now known as Pleasant Place, is located at 732 Northwest Fourth Street .





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Glover and Gill

"...the (Lincoln High) school sponsored dances after games, they were allowed to have assemblies at that particular time. We attended our school dances because I remember we could get name bands to come down, you know Cab Callaway has played here? We had all our dances upstairs in the (Glover & Gill) building. We had all our dances up there: Freshman hop spring festival, junior-senior prom. Your junior year you gave it and your senior year you attended."

Leslie Parker-Cosby

"Wabash Auditorium was the main dance hall and right now it's Eccles Florist and Barber Shop on Fifth Avenue. Upstairs was the main dance hall. They'd rope off a little place and put a couple in there, a boy and a girl and we'd get in there and see if we could outdance the others. I made me a little money dancing. My grandmother used to tell me (she was quite religious), 'Boy, you just making a monkey out of yourself.' (Laughter)... 'Wabash Hall...was the main hangout for the young people. That's where they did the dancing. Down beneath was a grocery store run by the Glovers."

Eugene Mack

The Glover & Gill Building, also known as Wabash Hall, is located at 916 Northwest Fifth Avenue.





STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE



Mt. Carmel Baptist Church

"Mt. Carmel was about the largest church in the black community. It was a great potential, it is still a great potential. Many things had to be done...We placed emphasis on tithing and sacrificing for God. We put aside the money raising. We came in with a youth program, with youth directors and so forth. And we revamped the music for the church. For a long time we had a part-time director of music, Mrs. Green, and we went all out to get better musicians for the church, people who had special training in music. Over a period of time we started saving money to build a new church because the old church was already in its last days. It was very limited in terms of its facilities...The church must have been built in the 1940s. And not an old building, but no parking spaces, no classrooms for instructional purposes, and it just did not have any of the facilities."

Reverend T.A. Wright

Mt. Carmel Baptist Church now meets at its new sanctuary at 2505 Northeast Eighth Avenue. The original church was located at Northwest Fifth Avenue and Northwest Third Street.





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Friendship Baptist Church

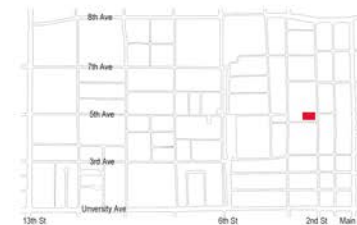
"I have been there (at Friendship Baptist Church) for fifth-five years. Right in that church I was a member, a trustee, a treasurer of the church, a member of the choir, and I still am holding something in that church...Friendship Baptist Church, Mt. Carmel and Mt. Pleasant and what was the other church at that time....those were the old churches."

James Williams

"I always went to church and Sunday School. I was the superintendent of Friendship. When I went to church on Sunday, we all went. All the children got ready and went to Sunday School. I did not send them ahead of me. We went along together, my husband too...(It was) a family affair. That is the way we went all through life."

Mattie Hendley

Friendship Baptist Church is located at 426 Northwest Second Street, also known as Pleasant Street.





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE



Mt Pleasant Methodist Church

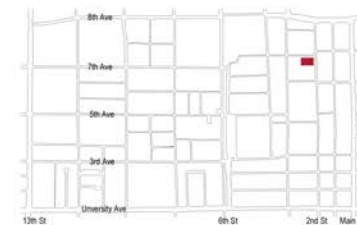
"Well, the wedding was a very beautiful affair to me. I can see it now, two of my sisters wore pink, Martha and Wanita, and two cousins, who were daughters of my mother's brother, they wore blue and my maid of honor, who had been my roommate four years at Fisk, she wore yellow, and I was married at Mount Pleasant Methodist Church by Reverend McClain."

Leslie Parker-Cosby

"The building is just like it was. There was always a Sunday School. What we called a Sunday School department is called a second unit now. That is where Rosetta goes for prayer meeting. But, the church was just like it is now, I mean, except for the chandeliers and all those things. We did not have central heating as we have now. We had a big wood stove, one of those big old pot-bellied things. It was tall, and the pipe went all the way up to the ceiling. That used to heat the church...Our church choir was out of this world. We used to have a contest every now and then, just for the sake of having a contest, between the Friendship Choir and Mount Pleasant Choir."

Claronelle Griffin

Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church is located at 630 Northwest Second Street, also known as Pleasant Street.





STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE



Funeral Homes

"By the kindness of Reverend H. B. Higgs of Mount Carmel Baptist Church and also through the courtesy of the Hughes and Chestnut Funeral Home the writer was permitted the privilege of attending a funeral service. It was that of a woman who had evidently been very active in community work and there was a large crowd that packed the auditorium to capacity and overflowed into the street...Sobs could be heard now and then from friends and relatives already present. Then came the immediate family; sons and daughters. One young woman had to be partially supported and led to her seat by her husband. She continued to wail and mourn throughout the service and apparently fainted once...There was a song by the choir, the members of which were dressed in white, and even above the music and singing one could hear intermittently the wails of certain members of the family. Now and then all through the hour persons in the congregation cried out in loud wails and mournful sounds. The sermon was brief and well adapted to the occasion...The minister ended his remarks by raising the strains of the familiar song: 'I'll be Waiting up There' and the audience caught it up with fervent emotional spirit...Then came the time to view the remains of the dead for the last time. The line was formed orderly and the ushers directed the procedure with tact and efficiency. On reaching the casket some who had been quiet and reserved broke forth into loud and uncontrollable weeping. Some few apparently fainted and fell back into the arms of friends or ushers and were quickly removed to seats. All during the slow passage of this single file line the pianist continued to play over and over in mournful monotony one selection."

UF Student Edward Loring Miller, 1938

Chestnut's Funeral Home is located at 18 Northwest Eighth Avenue.

Dorsey's Funeral Home is located at 727 Northwest Second Street, also known as Pleasant Street.

Duncan Brothers' Funeral Home is located at 428 Northwest Eighth Street.





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

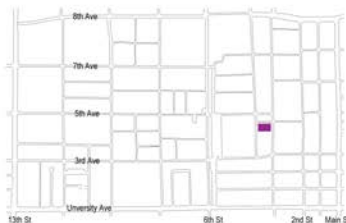
Masonic Lodge

"(The Household of Ruth) is a national organization composed of both men and women. However, men are entitled to higher degrees than women. Meetings are held in The Rising Sun Hall on North Arredona Street. This is the oldest public building in Gainesville for Negroes with the exception of Union Academy. The local chapter started in Gainesville in 1909 with about 30 members but has decreased slightly since 1909, the year of organization. It is primarily a benevolent and social order for the mutual pleasure and benefit of its members. Membership declined during the worst of the depression years and money was withdrawn from the banks and divided among members, especially widows.

The local chapter (of Masons) owns Rising Sun Hall. This building was constructed about 1887 and the upstairs room has been used for meetings of various secret orders ever since. The lower part was operated as a dance hall for a number of years and now has become a very cheap type of beer parlor. The meeting room upstairs has been used by Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Calanthes, Order of Ruth and by the Seven Stars of Consolidation. The second and last of these have disbanded."

UF Student Edward Loring Miller, 1938

The African Rising Sun Hall was located at NW 3rd Street and NW 4th Avenue





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ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Wilhelmina Johnson Center

"I had about the richest environment that one could think of at Bethune-Cookman. I don't think it could have been richer. I don't think I could have learned more. I think all the positive direction for my life came from my home and also the presence of a mother and father into my life and good people, in general, good teachers, and the influence of Bethune-Cookman gave me my philosophy of life. It gave me my base and I'm glad that I had a positive direction. I'm glad that I wasn't taught to hate people even to this day, even though I have been through a lot of trying experiences because after all we evolved quite a bit, but we, up to this day, we haven't reached the highest potentials that blacks should have in this society, but I didn't let that embitter me because bitterness is something like a disease. Whenever you get bitter, then you can't accomplish for the fact that you have a great stumbling block in your way."

Wilhelmina Johnson

The City firehouse located at 321 Northwest Tenth Street was renamed the Wilhelmina Johnson Center. It is home to the Cultural Arts Coalition.





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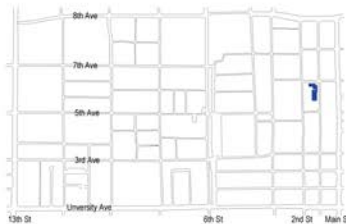
Rosa B Williams Center

"Black people need to start going to the polls. Burning down a building or cussing some people out, that means nothing. Everything is political. If you let those political people know that you will see them at the polls they will learn to respect you. They will at least try to represent something you want. Now, whether you vote for whom I'm supporting or not, go to the poll and vote. Make that a habit.

I like Gainesville. I wouldn't choose any other place. I think Gainesville is a really nice place to live. You're not going to see any changes until the people in Gainesville realize that not everything is rosey and peachy-peachy. That's one part. Another part is things will change if people start working together and stop fighting each other. Start recognizing people."

Rosa B. Williams

The Rosa B. Williams Recreation Center, formerly the Negro Library, was rededicated by the Gainesville City Commission in the 1980s. It is located at 524 NW First Street. Previously the Union Academy stood on this site.





STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Fifth Avenue Theaters

"(for socializing) the clubs organized and Mr. (Metts) had a theater and it was silent pictures at that time...the theater was located on what was Pleasant Street that is now Second Street. And it is located right next to where (Dorsey's) funeral home is. That is where the theater was."

Marie Adams

"The (Rose) theater was down there near the barber shop and the taxi cab stand. It was back over in there. Then they moved that down across the railroad tracks; they were called the T and J Railroad tracks."

Janie Roberts

"They had a show down there called Lincoln Theater. It was down where the cab stand is. Later on, they moved the theater up here. They moved it from down there. They moved it up here to where they had this vacant lot. There's nothing on it now...it was Lincoln Theater but later on they called it the Rose Theater. It was nice. We had nowhere else to go but there."

Reverend James Cato

The Metts Silent Theater was located near Dorsey's Funeral Home on Northwest Second Avenue, also known as Pleasant Street.

The Lincoln Theater was located on Northwest Fifth Avenue at the address described as 936 West Seminary Street, or Fifth Avenue.

The Rose Theater began at 936 West Seminary Street, or Fifth Avenue. It later moved to the 400 block of Northwest Fifth Avenue.





STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE



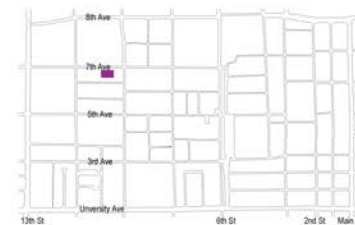
Jesse Aaron's Residence

"Jesse Aaron began making sculpture only late in life. He was over seventy when his wife temporarily lost her sight because of cataracts: he was consequently forced to quit his job as a chef to stay home and take care of her. He opened a nursery on his three acres in Gainesville, selling flowers and vegetables. An operation restored his wife's sight in 1968, but Aaron had to sell the nursery to pay the medical expenses. He had never been without work and prayed that God would reveal an occupation for him. 'In 1968 at three o'clock in the morning, July the fifth,' Aaron reported, 'the Spirit woke me up and said 'Carve Wood' one time. I got up at three o'clock in the morning, got me a box of oak wood and went to work on it. The next day or two I finished it'..."

He would choose a piece that suggested human or animal forms and draw them out of the wood. 'God put the faces in the wood,' Aaron insisted. 'Don't bring me a piece of wood and ask me to carve something out of it. 'Cause I won't. Don't tell me what you want, it might not be there, you understand?'"

From *Black Folk Art in America 1930-1980*

The Jesse Aaron Residence is located in the 1000 block of Northwest Seventh Avenue.





STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

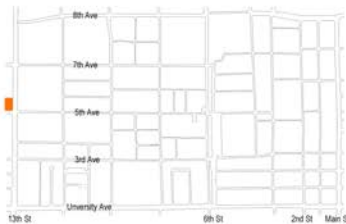
ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Humpty Dumpty

"There was a local restaurant that was called Humpty Dumpty, a drive-in type restaurant with a part you could go in...the strategy that day was when two or three cars with blacks would drive into the drive-in section, we would get into the restaurant...I recall walking in and the manager was outside trying to get the blacks in the cars off the drive-in section. We went inside the building and sat down, and they asked us to leave. We just stated that we wanted to buy a hamburger. After we got in they locked the door so the other blacks couldn't come in."

Joel Buchanan

The Humpty Dumpty site is now the location of Krispy Kreme Donuts at 310 Northwest Thirteen Street.





SPATIAL STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

College Inn

"I usually had to put the picket in front of the College Inn at noon on Sunday for I guess an hour or two-hour period, from 11:00 to 1:00. I volunteered because people likely to do this would be more likely (to be) in church than I was. So we used to get a big flood at 12:00 from St. Augustine (Church and Catholic Student Center) next door. All the people who were going to be taking communion had fasted before. Then they would have communion and bring Jesus in, and they would have segregated Sunday lunch at the College Inn. I must say that at the same time St. Augustine allowed the Student Group for Equal Rights to organize and hold its picket or assembly on the grounds of the church as well."

David Chalmers

"And when I came home, my husband told me that Larry had been out, nothing doing, just to go. And that made me so mad and scared, but I did not want him to know I was scared. I didn't know what to do. I was scared to death they'd get my child. He went over here on University Avenue to the College Inn. He was over there, him and Keneen. They got in. I do not know how they got in, but they told them, 'I do not care how, you get out the best way you can, but you better get out of here.'"

Mamie Saunders

The College Inn, later known as the Purple Porpoise then as Gator City, was located at 1728 West University Avenue.





STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

Florida Theater

"The students picketed the Florida Theater downtown one Sunday night and then it got pretty violent. When the students left from downtown and came to Fifth Avenue, they threw bricks, broke cars, and stuff like that, getting back at the people who were messing with them. I thought somebody would get killed that night. But nobody got killed, some people got roughed-up quite a bit, but nobody got killed."

Reverend T.A. Wright

"(T)he NAACP was still picketing different places in Gainesville: 13th Street, the College Inn across from campus, the Florida Theater downtown, there was a restaurant-motel where Albertson's is, and that day we were testing to see if blacks were allowed to go into restaurants."

Joel Buchanan

The Florida Theater, now known as The Palace, is located at 233 West University Avenue.





SPATIAL STORIES FOR THE EIGHTH GENERATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN GAINESVILLE

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