

January 29, 1986

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

CONTACT: Ann Reynolds, 259-5027

FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON LOCAL AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

Nashville's fifth annual conference on local Afro-American history and culture will be held Wednesday, February 12, in observance of Black History Month, with a pre-registration session planned for Tuesday evening, February 11.

Sponsored by Tennessee State University's Department of History and Geography, and School of Arts and Sciences and by the Metropolitan Historical Commission, the conference will officially begin with a pre-registration session, on Tuesday, February 11, 6:00-7:30 p.m. at the Fisk University Library. A videotape of NBC's White Paper: Nashville Sit-Ins will be shown. Special Collections and the Van Vechten Gallery, where Fisk's Stieglitz Collection is housed, will be open.

The Wednesday all-day meeting will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m. at the TSU Downtown Campus at Tenth and Charlotte and will conclude at 3:30 p.m.

---more---

Afro-American conference.....page two

The conference was begun in 1981 to provide a setting for historians, educators, students, and other interested persons to share results of new research into local Afro-American history and culture.

Speakers and topics include: "1890s Lynching in Tennessee-Nashville," Mrs. Gloria McKissack; "Bluff City, Tennessee: An Experience in Black Politics," Ms. Cynthia Wells; "A Report on the Lecture/Exhibit Series, I've Been to the Mountain Top: A Civil Rights Legacy," Dr. Jessie C. Smith; "Meharry Medical College and the Movement Years," Mr. James Summerville; "The Dawning of a New Day: The Nashville Sit-Ins," Mrs. Linda T. Wynn; "Reflections on the 1960 Lawson Case at Vanderbilt," Dr. Paul Conkin; "The Knoxville Sit-Ins: June-August, 1960," Dr. Cynthia Fleming; "Black Musicians in Music City USA -- An Ethnographic Profile," Dr. C. Dewitt Johnson.

The work of local black artists will be on exhibit throughout the day.

Continuing a series on Afro-American leaders, four new pamphlets have been published and will be given to conference participants. This year's publications profile Union Transportation Company, William Edmondson, National Baptist Publishing Board, and the Reverend Kelly Miller Smith, Sr.

Contributors to the conference include Citizens Savings Bank and Trust, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church; J.W. Frierson Church of Christ Development Foundation; First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill; WSM-TV Community Affairs; and National Baptist Publishing Board.

The \$4.00 per person and \$3.00 per student registration fee includes lunch. For additional information, call the Metro Historical Commission, 615/259-5027.

# Leaders of Afro-American Nashville



NATIONAL BAPTIST PUBLISHING BOARD 1896-

During the spring of 1896, the National Baptist Publishing Board was established in Nashville by the Reverend Richard Henry Boyd (1843-1922). After becoming secretary of the Home Mission Board of the Negro National Baptist Convention, Boyd pursued the idea of providing literature for the Convention's member churches. On his arrival in Nashville, he received help and advice from Reverend C. H. Clark of Mount Olive Baptist Church, officers of the African Methodist Episcopal Sunday School Union, and the white Southern Baptist Convention's publishers. The latter establishment lent Boyd their presses to print the first publications of the National Baptist Publishing Board. The Board was first located in the Brown Building on Cedar (Charlotte) Street before moving into three buildings on Second Avenue North and Locust Street. To equip the facility, Boyd sought the services of a white man to visit auctions and bid for machinery because the rules of segregation would not allow blacks to engage in such activity.

The main purpose of the National Baptist Publishing Board was to publish literature for denominational use. Also, the Board published books which gave accounts of the denomination's history and books on a variety of secular subjects, including Richard H. Boyd's *The Separate or "Jim Crow" Car Laws* (1909). With a plant valued at \$350,000 by 1913, the National Baptist Publishing Board became one of the largest business enterprises owned and operated by blacks in the United States.

The Reverend Boyd presided over the publishing board until his death in 1922 when his son, Henry Allen Boyd, assumed the leadership of the company. Henry Allen Boyd implemented new business practices and operational procedures which promoted the growth of the business. He directed the company for thirty-seven years.


When Henry Allen died in 1959, Theophilus Bartholomew Boyd, Jr., was elected secretary-treasurer and chief administrator of the National Baptist Publishing Board. As a young man, he had worked in every department of the publishing plant and was fully acquainted with all aspects of the business. It was during T.B. Boyd, Jr.'s administration that the National Baptist Publishing Board experienced its most prosperous period. For the sum of \$60,000, the Board purchased 4.5 acres of land on Centennial Boulevard and erected a one million dollar building with 51,000 square feet of space for publishing operations and administrative offices. After serving the National Baptist Publishing Board for twenty years, Dr. T.B. Boyd, Jr., died on April 1, 1979, and was interred in the Woodlawn Mausoleum.

The fourth generation of leadership was provided by Dr. T.B. Boyd, III. He too continued the Boyd tradition of progressive leadership. Under his leadership, the National Baptist Publishing Board continued to modernize its operations and expand the circulation of periodicals to over 5,000,000 volumes per day.

—Linda T. Wynn

This publication is a project of the 1986 Local Conference of Afro-American Culture and History in Nashville. Information was compiled by the Planning Committee of the Local Conference on Afro-American Culture and History with editorial assistance from the Department of History at Tennessee State University. The Metropolitan Historical Commission assisted with design and printing.


---



# Leaders of Afro-American Nashville

---

THE UNION  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMPANY 1905-1906



The Union Transportation Company was chartered on August 29, 1905, because of Tennessee's new streetcar segregation law (July 1905). The company was capitalized at \$25,000, in shares of ten dollars each. The incorporators were leaders of black Nashville: Preston Taylor, president; George W. Henderson, treasurer; Richard Henry Boyd, purchasing agent; James C. Napier; C. Victor Roman; Bishop Evans Tyree; George W. Washington; William D. Chappelle; Luke Mason; T.G. Ewing; J.W. Grant; H.T. Noel; A.T. Sanders; J.G. Merrill; Robert Robertson; William Beckham. The Union Transportation Company was organized to provide "a convenient transportation for Negro messengers, merchandise, traffic and freight throughout the cities and towns of Tennessee and the United States." Although the charter was worded to allow for the operation of streetcar facilities in other parts of Tennessee, Nashville was its immediate goal. News of the new business venture and the appearance of a temporary system of horses and wagons for transporting black passengers around the city gave new life to the two-month-old boycott. The white street railway operators endured economic hardship in the face of determination exhibited by black Nashvillians. For example, the Nashville Transit Company reportedly lost \$500 per week by mid-September.

The purchasing agent for the Union Transportation Company, Richard H. Boyd, bought five large (fifteen passenger) steam-propelled automobiles and took an option to buy twenty more vehicles. The company employed ten men, and the officers donated their time. The autobuses arrived in Nashville on September 29, and the dedication ceremonies were held in Watkins Park on October 2, 1905. The regular lines of travel were started on Tuesday, October 3. Four of the five cars

were in constant service and a fifth car was held in reserve.

The Union Transportation Company soon experienced problems. The steam-propelled buses lacked adequate power to traverse the steep grades of Nashville's terrain and keep regular schedules. To correct the problem, the company's officers traded the machines for fourteen electric automobiles that carried twenty passengers each. Emboldened by the support of the *Nashville Globe*, the company put its electric cars into operation in January 1906. After having its batteries ruined because of overcharging at the Nashville Railway and Light Company's facilities, the Union Transportation Company installed its own dynamo and electric generating equipment at the Nashville Baptist Publishing Board's facilities. This proved to be a futile effort because the batteries could not be adequately charged by the new generator.

The demise of the Union Transportation was waiting in the wings. The impetus required to maintain the enormous financial undertaking had ceased, and payment on the subscribed stock slowed. Also, in April 1906 the City of Nashville indicated its plan to levy an annual privilege tax of \$42 per car. These taxes and persistent battery trouble caused the company to cease operations by mid-summer.

Black Nashvillians were brought to the gateway of significant black enterprise and victory over Jim Crow by the Union Transportation Company. Although an enterprise that began in opposition to segregation succumbed, it was a first step in a black civil rights struggle that lasted a half century and culminated in the destruction of Jim Crow practices in public facilities.

—Linda T. Wynn

---

This publication is a project of the 1986 Local Conference of Afro-American Culture and History in Nashville. Information was compiled by the Planning Committee of the Local Conference on Afro-American Culture and History with editorial assistance from the Department of History at Tennessee State University. The Metropolitan Historical Commission assisted with design and printing.

---

# New this year

Pre-Registration Session  
February 11, 1986, 6:00-7:30 p.m.  
Fisk University Library

NBC's White Paper: Nashville Sit-Ins will be shown. Van Vechten Gallery and Special Collections will be open.

February 12, 1986  
Tennessee State University  
Downtown Campus

# Afro-American Culture & History

## 5th Annual Local Conference

- 8:30- 8:55 a.m. Registration and Coffee
- 9:00- 9:25 a.m. Opening Remarks: Dr. Roy P. Peterson, Interim President, TSU  
Dr. Wendolyn Bell, Acting Dean, School of Arts and Sciences, TSU  
Mr. John L. Connelly, Chairman, Metropolitan Historical Commission
- 9:30-10:05 a.m. "1890s Lynching in Tennessee-Nashville," Mrs. Gloria McKissack
- 10:10-10:45 a.m. "Bluff City, Tennessee: An Experience in Black Politics," Ms. Cynthia Wells
- 10:50-11:00 a.m. Break, Refreshments-Atrium
- 11:05-11:40 a.m. "Meharry Medical College and the Movement Years," Mr. James Summerville
- 11:45-12:00 "A Report on the Lecture/Exhibit Series, I've Been to the Mountain Top: A Civil Rights Legacy," Dr. Jessie C. Smith
- 12:00- 1:00 p.m. Lunch in the Atrium-free with registration
- 1:05- 1:40 p.m. "The Dawning of a New Day: The Nashville Sit-Ins," Mrs. Linda T. Wynn
- 1:45- 2:15 p.m. "Reflections on the 1960 Lawson Case at Vanderbilt," Dr. Paul Conkin
- 2:20- 2:50 p.m. "The Knoxville Sit-Ins: June-August, 1960," Dr. Cynthia Fleming
- 2:55- 3:25 p.m. "Black Musicians in Music City USA — An Ethnographic Profile," Dr. C. Dewitt Johnson
- ALL DAY EVENT Exhibit of work by local Afro-American artist, Professor Viola Wood.
- 1986 PUBLICATIONS Histories of Mrs. Preston Taylor, Union Transportation Company, William Edmondson, National Baptist Publishing Board, and the Reverend Kelly Miller Smith, Sr.

SPONSORS  
TSU School of Arts and Sciences  
TSU Department of History and Geography  
Metropolitan Historical Commission

PLANNING COMMITTEE  
Bobby L. Lovett  
Lois C. McDougald  
Reavis Mitchell  
Ann Reynolds

Jessie C. Smith  
Viola Wood  
Linda T. Wynn

Parking available at TSU Downtown and First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill.

TO REGISTER: Please fill out this section and return it by February 5 to: Metro Historical Commission  
701 Broadway, B-20  
Nashville, TN 37203

Please include a check for \$4.00 per person, \$3.00 per student for registration and lunch.  
Make checks payable to: TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION: HISTORY DEPARTMENT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a student or representing a school, business, church, or other organization? If so, where?

Bulk Rate  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Nashville, TN  
Permit No. 2673

Metropolitan Historical Commission  
701 Broadway  
Nashville, TN 37203

# Afro-American Culture & History

## 5th Annual Local Conference

# Afro-American Culture & History

## 5th Annual Local Conference

Tennessee State University and the Metropolitan Historical Commission are the sponsors of the fifth in an ongoing series of annual conferences which coincide with Black History Month. The conference will bring together historians, educators, students, and other interested individuals for a program on local Afro-American history and culture. The conference will be held at the Tennessee State University downtown campus on February 12, 1986.

*Fisk University  
Junior Class of 1898  
Special Collections  
Fisk University Library*

