BLACK HISTORY MONTH FACTS

Black History Month is celebrated annually to honor and celebrate the achievements of African Americans. It is a time for acknowledging the important place of African Americans in U.S. history. What we now call Black History Month originated in 1926 and was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson as “Negro History Week.” The month of February was selected to honor Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln who were both born in that month. February has been designated as Black History Month by every U.S. President since 1976.

In 1865, slavery was abolished by the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Black History Month celebrates the central role of African Americans in U.S. history. This month showcases the stirring stories of African-American people who triumphed—many of whom faced unimaginable hardship to contribute to American life.

To celebrate this month, visit our African American Landmarks, Subject Markers, and Half Mile of History stones placed within our historic downtown. Learn about the individuals who enriched Tyler’s history and achieved exceptional successes in their areas.

AFRICAN AMERICAN Heritage Trail

City of Tyler Planning Department

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Visit our website to learn more at
www.TylerHistoricPreservation.com
WELCOME

Welcome to Tyler! You'll find us a warm and welcoming community with a strong appreciation of history.

We know that our diversity contributes to our great community. As you travel to see the various landmarks, subject markers and Half Mile of History markers outlined in this brochure, remember with us the incalculable contributions made by the African-American community to our heritage. Enjoy!

1. **Gladys and T.B. Stewart Park**
   (2713 Frankston Hwy.) was donated to the City in 2012 by Gladys and T.B. Stewart, who were long-time St. Louis Community residents. Stewart Park is a heritage park, which, when construction is finished, will tell the history of one of the oldest African-American neighborhoods in the area.

2. **Katie A. Stewart**
   (1407 S. Lyons Ave.) learned the value of an education from her parents and the everlasting impact of one's contribution to the community.

3. **Butler College**
   (1900 Bellwood Rd.) was established by the Reverend Cornelius M. Butler, born in Alabama before the turn of the century, and freed from slavery at the age of 17. He was taught to read and write by his wife. In 1905, Rev. Butler led the East Texas Baptist Association to establish the East Texas Baptist Academy, where he served as the first principal. In 1924, the Academy was renamed Butler College in honor of Reverend Butler.

CONTINUED INSIDE (unfold for more)

To Apply for a
HALF MILE OF HISTORY LANDMARK
or a
TYLER HISTORIC SUBJECT MARKER

Contact the
City of Tyler Planning Department
423 W. Ferguson St.
Tyler, Texas 75702
(903) 531-1175

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African American Heritage Trail

1. Ivy Service Center, Gamma Omicron Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., formerly known as the Ella Reed Public Library and the Tyler Negro Public Library (1890 W. Walters St.) was chartered in 1891. The first recorded beginnings of the Tyler Negro Public Library date back to the World War II era. In July 1941, the Tyler Negro Public Library was chartered and located in the back room of Bethel Baptist Church. In the fall of 1943, the Library was moved to 108 W. Walters St. In November 1980, the Library requested the name be changed to the Ella Reed Public Library. It is a home of a church and community leader who was highly respected by Tyler's African American Community.

2. Bethlehem First Baptist Church (112 W. Walters St.) was established in 1868. This church was known as the First Baptist Church for African Americans. In 1982, a new church was built on West Front Street. It was the first brick church in Texas built by African Americans.

3. M.P. Tinnus Educational Building (711 W. Oldwood St.) was built in 1916. The two-story educational building includes an office, a general assembly area and a downstairs prayer chapel that once remained open 24 hours a day. This building contains some of the original stained glass windows.

4. J.P. Tinnus House (764 W. Oldwood St.) was built in 1939-1939. The house is one of the finest remaining pastoral residences in the city. It was designed by renowned architect M.P. Tinnus, who was known for his design of public buildings and his attention to detail.

5. St. James Episcopal Church (458 N. Butler Ave.) was built in 1915. It was the first African American Episcopal Church in Tyler, and it is considered one of the most significant historical sites in Tyler.

6. W.B. Lee Campell (8-10 College Ave.) received her degree in music, a rare accomplishment for an African American woman in the 1930s, and began her career teaching at Virginia State University.

7. Charles Evans Coleman (112 W. Evans St.) was Tyler's first African American practicing attorney. He led a radical movement to help African Americans vote. He ran against the sitting city councilman, organized the North Tyler Voter's League, which led to the creation of a black voting machine. He became a member of the state legislature.

8. Henry Miller Morgan (202 N. Brance Ave.) opened the first historically black college in Tyler, in 1909. The school, known as Tyler Junior College, was established to provide education for African Americans who were denied access to higher education.

9. Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist Church (902 N. Sure Ave.) was built in 1958. It served as a place of worship for the African American community in Tyler.

10. Thomas Jefferson, Sr., and Annie Mae Givens House (2040 N. Gran St.) was built in 1912. Thomas Jefferson, Sr., built the American Gothic style home during the oil boom for his wife and four sons. The house was later home to several generations of the Givens family.

11. Texas College (100 E. Ferguson St.) is the oldest institution of higher learning in Tyler. It was the first college for African Americans in Texas. It was founded in 1894 as East Texas Normal College.

12. Emmett J. Scott High School (1000 Exposition Ave.) was established in 1916. It was the first African American public school in Texas.

13. McMichael Museum (100 N. Main St.) is a museum that showcases the history of African Americans in Tyler.

14. Texas College Museum (110 E. Ferguson St.) is a museum that showcases the history of African Americans in Tyler.

15. Emmett J. Scott Senior High School (1000 Exposition Ave.) was established in 1916. It was the first African American public school in Texas.

16. Black Female Faculty on the Texas College Campus (1900 Gran St.) was established in 1924. It was the first African American public school in Texas.