

40th ACCORD Newsletter

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It Happened In 1964

Ms. Betty Jean White, a participant in the Civil Rights Movement and a member of 40th ACCORD, has shared with us some clippings from the Daytona Beach newspaper that she has kept for the past 40 years. Here are some excerpts from those articles that bring back memories of those days when heroes walked these streets:

- ⇒ On July 1, 1964, George Allen, WNDB News Director states in his Article, *7 Men In Key Roles In Crisis*, said that historians reflecting on the social revolution of the American Negro will look upon St. Augustine agony as the end of an Era, and will chronicle the names of seven men as the players in the drama...St. Augustine has become the scene of the final battle over segregation based on Constitutional interpretation...
- ⇒ ...those seven are *Dr. Martin Luther King*, Chief advocate of total integration by non-violent means
- ⇒ *Hoss Manucy*, recognized leader of extremists white segregationists
- ⇒ *Governor Farris Bryant*, who ran a conservative platform in 1960
- ⇒ *Attorney General James Kynes*, who opposed the Civil Rights Bill in his bid for re-election and who was defeated
- ⇒ *Sheriff L.O. Davis* of St. Johns County who owed his political life to the segregationist
- ⇒ *Bryan Simpson*, judge of the U.S. District Court who was committed to the policies of the national administration
- ⇒ *Attorney Dan Warren*, who has taken a public stand on reasonableness
- ⇒ Each of these men contributed significantly to events reported in explosive headlines around the world—headlines which told of hooliganism, fiery speeches, mob violence, and silent marches. Headlines that reported police apathy, personal injury, and gnawing fear...
- ⇒ There were problems to be discussed...no place to discuss them...and no one to discuss them with
- ⇒ ...saga in St. Augustine reached an impasse June 11, 1964
- ⇒ Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. came to St. Augustine near the end of May to press for integration in the Ancient City...found himself confronted by well-organized opposition from the Klu Klux Klan, The Ancient City Gun Club, and Manucy's Raiders...ramrodded by "Hoss Manucy...(King) unable to make progress by negotiations, took his demonstrations to the streets
- ⇒ In St. Augustine Rev. King encountered Sheriff L.O. Davis, who deputized members of The Gun Club and Manucy's Raiders to help quash the marches
- ⇒ The City of St. Augustine City Officials passed anti-demonstration ordinances and Judge Simpson struck down the ordinances after hearing charges of Police brutality and unconstitutional restraint ordered the demonstrations be resumed
- ⇒ St. Augustine officials ignored jury recommendations to form a bi-racial committee
- ⇒ Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. considered halting demonstrations in St. Augustine if four requests were granted:
 - total integration of hotels/motels/restaurants
 - employment of Negro police and firemen
 - dropping charges against those arrested for demonstrating
 - the formation of a Bi-racial committee
- ⇒ Governor Bryant said, "Upon one thing all men can agree. We cannot solve this problem through violence. Violence is anarchy and anarchy is the enemy of freedom".
- ⇒ St. Augustine is the first city in the land of the free
- ⇒ In a July 2, 1964 DBNJ Editorial reported that—The most significant civil rights bill in our History is now a Civil Rights Act. It is the law of the land

- ⇒ Such courageous people were willing to risk their lives and limbs in the struggle for civil rights in such a peaceful way
- ⇒ This law says that the invisible chains are to be removed
- ⇒ *Reasonable men must agree that mistakes were made by both White and Negro in St. Augustine, Wise men will not attempt to fix blame, but will work to heal the wounds*
- ⇒ On July 2, 1964, LBJ signed the strongest civil rights law in nearly a century, "to eliminate the last vestiges of injustices in America"
- ⇒ On July 3, 1964, Washing AP reported that LBJ delivered a conciliatory statement to the nation by radio and television and to more that 200 lawmakers, civil rights leaders, and government officials on the spot—"We have come now to a kind of testing,...Let us Pray..."
- ⇒ (LBJ) *"We must not fall. Let us close the springs of racial poison. Let us pray for wise and understanding hearts. Let us lay aside irreverent differences and make our nation whole. Let us hasten that day when our unbounded spirit will be free to do the great works ordained for this nation by just and wise GOD who is FATHER of all"*.



Dare Not Walk Alone

by Jeremy Dean

Early this year I was asked to have a Show at the Flagler College Art Gallery based on the documentary film I am working on about the civil rights struggle in St. Augustine and its effect on the community today. The idea for this work is a reaction to what I felt when I began to learn about the things that happened here during the 1960's. It was like finding out something horrible about someone you thought you knew, as if I went into my grandparent's attic and found out that they were Nazis.

So I wanted to create a homelike environment where things at first appear fine but upon closer inspection, they are not quite right. Names and numbers became important through this process because most of the people involved in this struggle have been forgotten; however what they did here changed the course of history. I also wanted to convey to people of my generation what it was like to be discriminated against for something as arbitrary as a color, forcing us all to examine our own prejudices.

Upon entering the show, people were asked to take a

ticket. The tickets were different colors, and an attendant would only let those with a white ticket through the front door labeled "*White*", all others had to go through the back door labeled "*Colored*". The signs were replicas of those that formerly hung throughout the south segregating white from black water fountains, waiting areas and eating establishments.

Continuing with the theme, the first room contained a comfortable chair placed next to a photo album with the lettering "*Memories*". Inside were digital stills pulled from 1964 film footage of the KKK marching through the city gates of St. Augustine, the arrest of Dr. King, children holding protest signs, and demonstrations at the beach. This was done to play off the image St. Augustine projects of being a quaint tourist town that takes pride in its history.

In the second room a TV displayed a video loop. The piece was cut from archival film footage of the St. Augustine civil rights movement and the 2004 Martin Luther King Day march in St. Augustine. Surrounding the TV were hand written names of over 300 participants of the St. Augustine civil rights movement. Some were written on the wall, others on a constructed brick wall, with the caption: "*We learned to recognize the sound of flying bricks*". The bricks were used to help the viewer get a sense of the size and weight of the objects that were thrown at the nonviolent demonstrators in 1964.

Along the full length of one wall was a time line of notable dates of the national civil rights movement, beginning when the first slave was sold in America, till present day 2004. It gave a break down of how St. Augustine fit into the civil rights movement, including significant dates and achievements. Also included were national milestones and accomplishments, such as going to the moon. The piece ended with racial statistics of school, jobs and voting in St. John's County, such as: of the nearly 2,000 student attending Flagler College, only 33 are black and there is only one black professor at the institution. This was not meant to be inflammatory, but to simply be information that could illustrate how St. Augustine fit into the national movement and also to bring these issues into a contemporary dialogue.

When asked if racism still exists in St. Augustine, a civil rights demonstrator said, So in the last piece, a picture of KKK members holding a rally in the downtown St. Augustine slave market was placed in forty different frames, with the caption: "*Racism St. Augustine 1964-2004*".

This is by no means a comprehensive look at all that happened but simply one person's attempt to understand these events and how they still affect us.

This is dedicated to those who dared to walk through the streets of St. Augustine despite overwhelming odds, to stand up for freedom and equality for us all.



The St. Augustine Four

by David Nolan

The civil rights movement brought forth many heroes who set an example for America and the world. Some were old. Some were middle-aged. Some were young. We, the 40th ACCORD do honor some of the youngest of those heroes of the 1960s. They came to be known as "The St. Augustine Four": *Audrey Nell Edwards, JoeAnn Anderson, Willie Carl Singleton, and Samuel White.*

Young people formed the shock troops of the civil rights movement, and many efforts were made to suppress them. Among the most discreditable legal efforts in this regard took place in St. Augustine, Florida in July 1963 when a local judge tried to force young teenagers who had been arrested for their civil rights activities to promise that they would take part in no more demonstrations. They were also pressured to say that movement organizer Dr. Robert Hayling was guilty of contributing to the delinquency of minors. Had they done so, says Dr. Hayling, "my goose would have been cooked."

Some were intimidated by the judge. But the St. Augustine Four, with the support of their families, refused to go along with this injustice. So the judge had them first jailed, then sent to reform schools in Marianna and Lowell. When NAACP lawyer Earl Johnson attempted to get them released, the judge claimed that they were beyond the jurisdiction of the legal system. National newspapers like the Pittsburgh Courier and the New York Times wrote about the case of the St. Augustine Four. It finally took an action of the Florida governor and cabinet to get them released in January 1964. Jackie Robinson was among those who praised them for their courage--and he was certainly someone who knew about courage!

We, four decades later, want to say thank you to the three surviving members of the St. Augustine Four (and their families), and to honor the memory of the late Willie Carl Singleton. They are heroes of the freedom movement whose sacrifices should never be forgotten.



Reflections on the State of Civil Rights

How far have we come since Sixty-Four,
The year the rights act was supposed to settle the score.
To make our world peaceful King had in mind,
But have we done our part to remake mankind.
Hate crimes and racism still exist,
Every night on the news we see the problems persist.
Are we able to step aside and recognize our brother,
Or are we so blind
that we simply can't accept one another.

This is our moment to step up and express our love,
For the human race that each one of us is a part of.
And brake down the barriers that set us apart,
And act with the love that comes from the heart.

We must make a push for the problems to stop,
We can't just look the other way
and hope that they drop.
What will our children think of the world that we made,
What if this exists for another decade.
Could you live with yourself if you let this one go on,
Or are you ready to step up and be counted upon.
For the ball is in your court, don't you see,
Its time to wake up and set your mind free.

This is our moment to step up and express our love,
for the human race that each one of us is a part of.
And brake down the barriers that set us apart,
And act with the love that comes from the heart.

Author Unknown



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Mrs. Gwendolyn Duncan, President
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Mrs. Audrey Willis, Finance Secretary
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**All Civil Rights Demonstrators
of the 1963-'64 Civil Rights
Movement, their families, friends,
& concerned citizens**

Are

*Cordially Invited to
Attend*

40th ACCORD

Commemoration

Anniversary to Commemorate the
Civil Rights Demonstrations

June 17 - 20, 2004

**Four Days of Events
Documentary Film by Clennon King Film**

maker, Book Signings, Historical Tours with Historian David Nolan, Historical Displays, BBQ by Ronz Ribz & Thingz, Recreational Activities, , Guest Civil Rights Speakers, Forum on Healing, Banquet Honoring All Demonstrators, Unveiling of Marker, and more. Please make plans to be there.



Our Mission Is:

Remembering, Recognizing, and Honoring those who risked their lives to attain civil rights for all and celebrating St. Augustine's pivotal role in the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



Need Hotel Accommodations?

The 40th ACCORD has signed contracts with local hotels/motels for out-of-town guests. Please call Ruth Motley for further information at (904) 829-5693

*** ATTENTION ***

*All Choirs are Cordially Invited to
Participate in a
Cavalcade of Choirs
during the*

40th ACCORD Commemoration

Sunday, June 20, 2004

2:00 P.M.

Plaza de la Constitucion

Downtown St. Augustine, Florida

Please join us for the unveiling of a marker in honor of all those who participated in the Marches, Rallies, Sit-Ins, Wade-Ins, Sleep-Ins, and Pray-Ins led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.