

In Celebration Of Black History Month: Remember Way Back When

▲Black History Remembered

History is nothing more than the way we have lived our lives. Where we made our livelihood, who we called our enemies, our friends and our lovers, where we did business.

It's important to remember way back when: there is much to be proud of. For instance, in the '40s there were 150 black-owned businesses in Winston-Salem.

Certainly one of the largest and most popular was Safe Bus Inc., formed in 1926 when several businessmen who operated jitneys combined operations. Jitneys were steam-driven vehicles. The rest of Winston-Salem got around on street cars, but black community had been left off streetcar lines.

The first officers for Safe Bus were H.F. Morgan, J.H. Hairston and C.R. Peebles. They began operations with a fleet of 35 busses and a city-wide five-cent fare. In 1941, they acquired Camel City Cab Company, which had operated from the corner of Third and Church streets.

By 1947 they operated 48 busses and 36 taxicabs, and employed 146 people with a payroll of over \$250,000.

Progressive Bakery, managed by Charles McLean, had two late-model delivery trucks to handle its delivery route.

Charles T. Martin bought and operated a Pure gas station on the corner of Fifth St. and Claremont Ave. James A. Ellington operated a well-stocked grocery store, its walls lined with canned goods from ceiling to floor, complete with candy and chewing gum from California.

At least one East Winston business that thrived five decades ago is still going strong: the assets of Winston Mutual Life Insurance approached the quarter-million dollar mark in 1940. Winston Mutual continued to grow, and merged with Golden State in 1985. Today, the building, constructed in 1969, stands as a five-story landmark in the black community.

This week we launch Black History Month remembering Carter G. Woodson, the father of black history, and other black heroes of the 20th century. They are black legends in their own time.

Historians characterize Washington as a man whose "placating demeanor" masked his undercover, behind-the-scenes strategies that ultimately undermined segregation and racism.

Booker T. Washington was born into slavery on a plantation in Franklin County, Va., to Jane Ferguson, a slave and a white man. He was freed after the Civil War and went with his mother to West Virginia to join Washington Ferguson, whom his mother had married during the war. He worked in the salt furnaces and coal mines by day and studied at nights with the help of a local African-American teacher.

In 1872 he entered Hampton Institute, where he worked as a janitor. After graduating with honors in 1875, Washington (he had changed his name) returned to West Virginia to teach for two years before returning to Hampton to teach in a program for Native Americans. In 1879 he received a masters degree from Wayland Seminary.

In 1881, his destiny took shape when he was recommended for, and received, a job as principal of a new basic school for African-Americans at Tuskegee, Ala. When he arrived in Tuskegee he found nothing — no land, buildings or funds for this school. So he started from scratch, teaching 30 students in a shanty donated by an African-American church. Next, he borrowed money to buy an abandoned plantation and relocated the school to this site.

Now he had the beginnings of an established institution that he could shape in accordance with his own educational philosophy. Economic independence, he believed, was the key for true liberation. His emphasis for young men was on carpentry, printing, smithing, shoemaking, farming, etc. For young women he emphasized cooking, sewing and other homemaking skill. Emphasis was also placed on "moral sciences," hygiene, manners and religious services.

For 34 years Washington would head Tuskegee, watching it expand by the time of his death to an institution of 2,000 students and 200 African-American staff and faculty, including the agricultural scientist George Washington Carver. Washington was a highly successful fund-raiser, supported by many northern white philanthropists.

He rose to true national prominence among the white business community in Atlanta and his now-famous speech at the Cotton States and International Exposition of 1895, the year that Frederick Douglass died. Because of the same speech, however, he was bitterly denounced by DuBois and

William Monroe Trotter of the Boston Guardian. He urged African-Americans not to push too soon for racial equality, and he ensured whites at the exposition that "in all things that are purely social we can be as separate as fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

By 1900, when he published his first autobiography, he was revered in the white community as the chief spokesman for African-Americans. His prominence was solidified the following year when he published his second, highly acclaimed autobiography *Up From Slavery*. The book, which espoused his philosophy, was a best seller and translated into more than a dozen languages. He was married three times — to Fannie Norton Smith, who died in 1884; to Olivia A. Davidson, who died in 1889; and to Margaret J. Murray in 1893 — with one child from the marriage and two from the second.

The debate over Washington continues. He was seen by Marcus Garvey as a visionary whose philosophy on self-help and trades skills were at the heart of self-determination for African-Americans, but Washington died before Garvey arrived in the United States to meet him. Washington's admirers say the thousands of successful Tuskegee graduates are testimony enough to his importance in African-American history.

More on Booker T. Washington is found in two of his autobiographies, *The Story of My Life and Work*, and *Up From Slavery*; and also *A Biography of Booker T. Washington*, by Louis R. Harlan; and *Booker T. Washington*, by Bernard A. Weisberger.

BLACK HISTORY
is every month,
week after week,
in the
Winston-Salem Chronicle
"The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly"



The Father of Black History

If not for Carter G. Woodson, much of black history would be lost. He was convinced that if a race has no recorded history, its achievements will be forgotten and finally claimed by others. It was Woodson who campaigned for and established Negro History Week in 1926.

Woodson was born in 1875 to former slaves in New Canton, Va. As a child, he was needed on his parents farm and was unable to attend school most of the year.

When he finally was able to attend high school, he completed his studies in just two years. He was hired as principal of the high school he had attended, and finished college while working there.

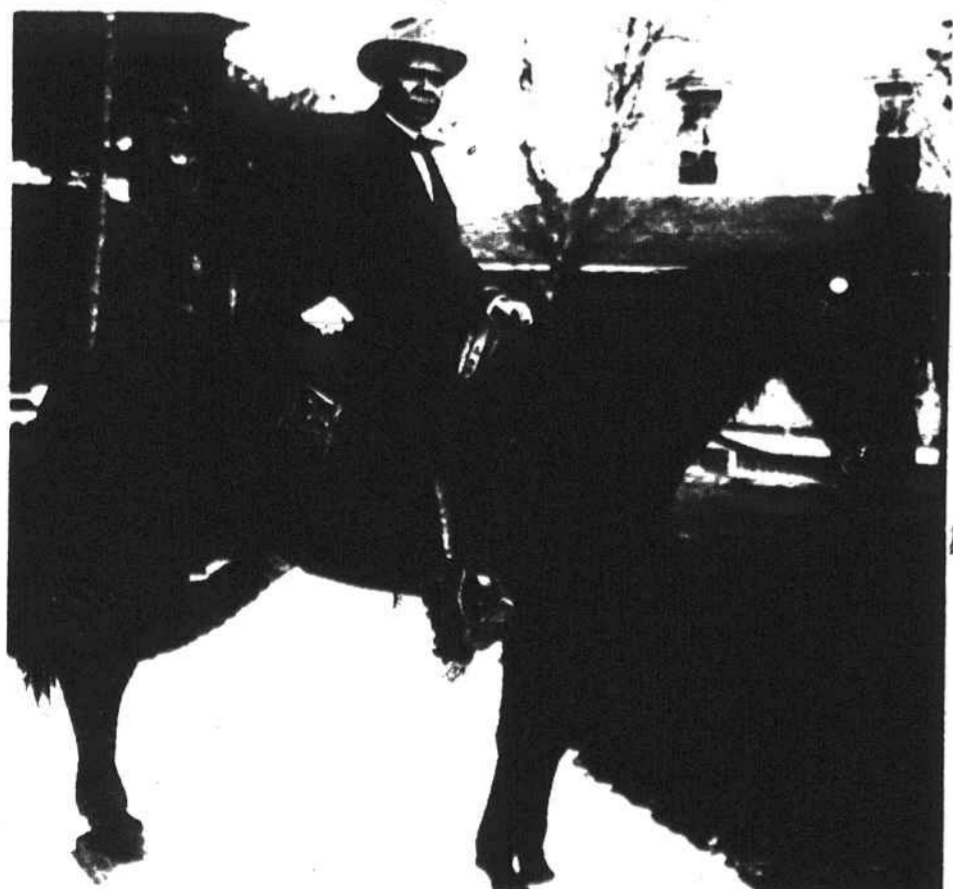
After writing his doctoral dissertation on black history, Woodson received a doctorate from Harvard University in 1912. Just three years later, he founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History.

He established Negro History Week, the forerunner of Black History Month, in 1926.

Woodson died in 1950. His legacy to African-Americans will continue forever.

Booker T. Washington (1856 - 1915)

Booker T. Washington was a former slave who became one of the most influential African-Americans in U.S. History. He graduated from Hampton Institute (now Hampton University) and was the founder of the National Negro Business League and Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University). He held influence over several African-American newspapers



and was supported by white philanthropists who supported the "separate but equal" educational philosophy. Most historians see Washington as an accommodationist whose work-ethic theories put too much emphasis on manual skills, and nothing on classical academic skills. Some modern his-



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Coors Brewing Company is committed to promoting those qualities. That's why we're spending

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