

Timeline of Events

1960's Civil Rights Movement of St. Augustine, Florida

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Local & National Background

In Topeka, Kansas, a black third-grader named Linda Brown had to walk one mile through a railroad switchyard to get to her black elementary school, even though a white elementary school was only seven blocks away. Her father, Oliver Brown, tried to enroll her in the white elementary school, but the principal of the school refused. Brown went to the head of Topeka's branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and asked for help. The NAACP was eager to assist the Browns, as it had long wanted to challenge segregation in public schools. With Brown's complaint, it had **"the right plaintiff at the right time."** Other black parents joined Brown, and, in 1951, the NAACP requested an injunction that would forbid the segregation of Topeka's public schools.

The U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas heard Brown's case. At the trial, the NAACP argued that segregated schools sent the message to black children that they were inferior to whites; therefore, the schools were inherently unequal. One of the expert witnesses testified that:

"...if the colored children are denied the experience in school of associating with white children, who represent 90 percent of our national society in which these colored children must live, then the colored child's curriculum is being greatly curtailed. The Topeka curriculum or any school curriculum cannot be equal under segregation."

The Board of Education's defense was that, because segregation in Topeka and elsewhere pervaded many other aspects of life, segregated schools simply prepared black children for the segregation they would face during adulthood. The board also argued that segregated schools were not necessarily harmful to black children; great African Americans had overcome more than just segregated schools to achieve what they achieved.

The judges agreed with the expert witnesses; in their decision, they wrote:

"Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children...A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn".

Previously, in the case of Plessy vs. Ferguson a black man was found guilty of sitting in a **"white"** car instead of a **"colored"** car and went to jail. In his case it was argued in court that separate laws applied to schools as well. Since there was no Supreme Court ruling that overturned Plessy, the court felt compelled to overturn the Board of Education.

Brown and the NAACP appealed to the Supreme Court and their case was combined with other cases that challenged school segregation in South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware. The Court had to make its decision based on whether or not desegregated schools deprived black children of equal protection of the law. When the case was decided, in 1954, Chief Justice Earl Warren read the decision of the unanimous Court and struck down the *"separate but equal"* doctrine of *Plessy* for public education, ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, and required the desegregation of schools in the United States.

Through most of the southern United States, beginning in the latter part of the 19th century and becoming the entrenched law of the land by the early years of the 20th century, *segregation* by race was the legal system. That is, by law, blacks and whites were separated in all public facilities. Blacks could not eat in restaurants, stay in hotels or motels, swim in public beaches or pools, or attend the same schools or churches if any of these facilities or institutions were used by white people.

In St. Augustine, a black person could not get a drink of water from a public fountain or use the restrooms in public facilities. Although they could purchase goods from the local stores, they could not sit at the lunch counter and order food in the same store. State and local police forces as well as the courts of the state were all required to uphold and enforce these laws. Educational and job opportunities: although the law did not require it-were restricted on the basis of race.

In St. Augustine, by 1964 — ten years later — only 6 black children had been admitted to white schools, and the homes of two of the families of these children had been burned by local segregationists and other families had been forced to move out of the county because the parents had been fired from their jobs and could find no work.

In the spring of 1964, a major Civil Rights Bill was pending in the United States Senate. This bill, if made into law, would outlaw all segregation on the basis of race in all public facilities. That is, if the facility, such as restaurants, hotels, beaches, buses, trains, restrooms, etc, were open to public use, no one could be denied the right to use it on the basis of race. Major civil rights demonstrations in many southern cities had convinced most Americans that the laws of segregation violated the constitution of the United States and were morally wrong.

The House of Representatives had passed the Civil Rights Bill on February 10, 1964, and a majority of senators had declared they would vote in favor. A group of senators from southern states began a ***filibuster***: a non-stop speech preventing any action on any bill from taking place. Senate rules require a 2/3rds vote to halt a filibuster. There were not enough Senators willing to do so. Teams of Senators had kept the speech going for weeks. The Civil Rights movement seemed stalled- hopes for the passage of this bill began to dim.

Atmosphere in St. Augustine

It was in that atmosphere that demonstrations in St. Augustine played a major role in securing the needed votes to stop the filibuster and pass the Civil Rights Bill.

Origins of the St. Augustine Movement

- **March, 1960**, Congress, at the urging of Florida Senators Spassard Holland and George Smathers, passed a resolution authorizing the establishment of a Quadricentennial Celebration Commission to plan for the 400th Anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine for 1965. When committee named, no one from the Black community was represented
- **March 15, 1960**, Six students from Florida Normal College, a Black school located on West King St at Holmes Boulevard, launched a Sit-In at the Woolworth's Lunch Counter (Viola Edwards, Clayton Pittman, Robert J. Lovett, Josephine Williams, Calhoun Christian, and Alfred Lee)
- **March 16, 1960**, another Sit-In was staged by the students. They were not arrested but sat until closing
- **No** complaint filed by the management of Woolworth and students arrested on Tuesday, March 15th were released to the custody of the school. Students were represented by Daytona Attorney Joseph W. Hatchet who later became a Federal Judge
- **March 17, 1960**, eight more students stage a Sit-In at the Woolworth's Lunch Counter and were beaten by an angry mob as they came out of the store
- **1961** Mr. Hank Thomas is arrested for a one-man sit in at the McCrory's lunch counter on St. George Street., An attempt was made and to label him insane and committed to a mental institution, but this never happened. Rev. Thomas Wright said that Hank's bail was paid by Mr. Sammy Davis, Jr. Hank Thomas went on to become one of the original Freedom Fighters, who rode Greyhound Buses through the south, protesting segregated facilities at bus stations. He was also a founder of SNCC (the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) one of the leading civil rights groups of the 1960's
- **March 1963**, Mrs. Fannie Fulwood & Mrs. Eliza Hawthorne, representing the St. Augustine NAACP, wrote President John F. Kennedy, asking that he oppose a federal grant for the city's celebration because they excluded Blacks and would not meet with them to iron out the city's racial problems
- **June, 1963** picketing continued with sit-ins at area lunch counters
- **July 23, 1963** sixteen blacks, seven of which were teenagers, were arrested at local lunch counters. Four of the juveniles, Samuel White, Audrey Nell Edwards, Joe Ann Anderson, and Willie Carl Singleton who

were arrested at Woolworth's were held because their parents would not sign a form stating that they would refrain from further demonstrations until age 21

- **The four teens** who became known as *The St. Augustine Four* - spent a month in the county jail and five months in reform schools in Marianna and Ocala for having attempted to be served a hamburger at the lunch counter
- Demonstrations continue by the black community under the leadership of Dr. Hayling
- **Labor Day, 1963** NAACP Black Leaders and citizens have a mass protest at the Slave Market. Rev. Goldie Eubanks arrested along with twenty-six others. Rev. Eubanks was sentenced to six months in jail, and others fined \$100
- **September 18, 1963** Ku Klux Klan hold a rally on US1 South where the Big Lots Store is now located. Four civil rights activists- Dr. Hayling, James Hauser, Clyde Jenkins, and Jimmie James Jackson went to observe from a distance, but were captured and taken into the rally where they were beaten unmercifully and stacked like firewood to be burned. Another sympathetic observer, a Daytona minister, Rev. Cheney sneaked away and called the FBI and the Governor who in turn called Sheriff L.O. Davis to rescue the men before they were killed
- **October 23, 1963**, white racists threw gasoline-filled bottles at the homes of George Smith and his neighbor on Gault Street near the Fountain of Youth
- **October 24, 1963**, racists had been riding through town shooting into Black homes. One of them, William Kinard was shot in the head and killed near the intersection of Martin Luther King Ave and Duero Street. Rev. Goldie Eubanks was arrested along with Richard Eubanks but later let go for lack of evidence against them. No one was ever charged for the murder
- **January 14, 1964**, The St. Augustine Four were ordered released from reform school by Governor Ferris Bryant and the Florida State cabinet. This was in response to national publicity about the injustice of their case
- **January 21, 1964**, the car belonging to the Brunson's was set afire outside the Fullerwood School while they were at a PTA meeting. They were among the first Black families to send their children to a previously all-white school.
- **February 7, 1964**, the home of Dr. Hayling was shot up with buckshot narrowly missing his pregnant wife and killing the family dog name Madonna
- The Gault Street home of the Bungum Roberson family was firebombed by racists and burned. Today only the steps remain. The Robersons were active in the civil rights movement, and had sent their children to Fullerwood School.
- **February 10, 1964**, Dr. Hayling paid a visit to Governor Ferris Bryant's office to let them know of the seriousness of the St. Augustine racial crisis and of the need for protection for its Black Citizens
- **March 6, 1964**, Dr. Hayling, Henry Twine, Rev. Goldie Eubanks, Mrs. Katherine Twine and others travel to Orlando to seek help from Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)
- **March, 1964**, SCLC starts mobilizing their forces to St. Augustine under the direction of Dr. King's special projects director Rev. Hosea Williams in order to capture national attention
- **March 22, 1964**, the first wave of college students from the North convene on St. Augustine to participate in demonstrations
- **March 25, 1964**, a white minister and college students from the North picket the Visitors Information Center
- **March 26, 1964**, many students as well as 72-year old, Mrs. Mary Peabody, wife of an Episcopal Bishop and mother of Governor Endicott Peabody of Massachusetts, along with several distinguished friends come to St. Augustine to help with the movement
- **March 28, 1964**, Mrs. Barbara B. Allen former resident of St. Augustine who lived in New York at the request of Dr. Robert B. Hayling came down to help with feeding the demonstrators but found her way to a sit-in at St. George Street Pharmacy requesting to be served "...*coffee, black like me*", and was immediately arrested and placed in the back seat of a police car with a snarling dog. Allen was charged with inciting a riot and conspiracy to overthrow the American Government
- **March 30, 1964**, Mrs. Peabody and a group of black citizens seek admission to Trinity Episcopal Church in downtown St. Augustine and are not allowed: church doors locked
- **March 31, 1964**, Mrs. Peabody arrested and jailed for participating in a bi-racial sit-in at the Ponce de Leon Motor Lodge Restaurant along with Mrs. Donald J. Campbell, wife of the dean of the Episcopal Theological Seminary at Cambridge, Mass., and Professor J. Lawrence Burkholder, a Harvard Divinity

School professor, and five St. Augustine Negroes, Mrs. Nellie Mitchell, Mrs. Lillian Roberson, Mrs. Georgia Reed, Miss Kuter Eubanks, and Mrs. Rosalie Phelps

- **May 19, 1964**, St. Augustine Mayor Joseph Shelley and Earle Newton, director of the Quadricentennial Celebration give an interview to NBC News Reporter Ray Scherer in Washington, D.C. criticizing Mrs. Peabody and saying that there were no racial problems in St. Augustine
- **June 5, 1964**, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holds a press conference and declares that he may summon a, "...nonviolent army" here from all over the South for massive demonstrations against racial discrimination
- **June 7, 1964**, beach cottage of Dr. & Mrs. Canright at 5480 Atlantic View, on Anastasia Island, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was to stay was riddled with bullets after directions to it were printed in the local paper
- **June 11, 1964**, Dr. Martin Luther King was arrested in St. Augustine on the steps of the Monson Motor Lodge Restaurant: the only place in Florida that he was arrested
- **June 12, 1964**, State Attorney Dan Warren calls the St. Johns County Grand Jury into session to probe the violent racial conflicts in St. Augustine.
- **J. B. Stoner**, a lawyer and member of the Ku Klux Klan, the National States Rights Party and other hate groups, stood at the market where slaves were once sold, and told an eager audience of white men, women, and children, that, "*the only way to white supremacy is to rid congress of all those who voted for the Civil Rights Act and get that 'nigger' loving Lyndon Johnson out of Washington*". Later that evening white segregationists marched through the Negro section of town
- 200 White segregationists marched once again through Lincolnville waving confederate flags and a huge banner that said, "***Don't Tread on Me***". Negroes lined the streets laughing and singing, ***We Love Everybody***
- **June 15, 1964**, Jackie Robinson, first Negro to break major league baseball's barrier, flew to Florida to support racial demonstrations. Robinson, the next day, spoke at a rally at one of the local churches and said President Johnson should use "***action instead of words***" in the civil rights situation
- **June 15, 1964**, Governor Ferris Bryant issues Executive Order #3 ordering each and every officer of the Division of Corrections as assigned by the Director of the Division of Corrections shall become a member of the Special Police Force as created by Executive Order #1 and remain in effect until revoked by further order
- **June 16, 1964**, Jackie Robinson, former infielder for the Brooklyn Dodgers and first black athlete to break the color barrier in professional baseball, spoke at St. Paul A.M.E. Church on Martin Luther King Avenue to a group of about 600 people and encouraged them to maintain the struggle
- **June 17, 1964**, Sheriff L.O. Davis sends a telegram to Governor Farris Bryant requesting permission to transport prisoners (civil rights demonstrators) to Duval County Jail, including Arthur Funderberk, Russell Perkins, Vertell Duncan, Loucille Plummer, Jeanette Smith, and others
- Demonstrators had a pray-in at the steps of the Monson Motor Lodge Restaurant during a night demonstration
- **June 18, 1964**, Monson manager **James "Jimmy" Brock** is captured in a photo broadcast around the world, pouring muriatic acid into the pool to get demonstrators out
- Two whites and seven Negroes integrated the Monson Motor Lodge Pool, an off duty police officer, **Henry Billitz** jumped into the pool to get the demonstrators out and was photographed. The picture was broadcast around the world
- The largest contingency of Rabbis were arrested for peaceful demonstrations at the Monson Motor Lodge and local restaurants along with Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, and others
- **June 19, 1964**, Revs. Andrew Young, C.T. Vivian, and Hosea Williams were arrested and later bonded out of the SJC jail
- **June 20, 1964**, Peter Bancroft and Charles Al Lingo were attacked at the "Whites Only" beach along with a 15 year-old Negro girl was also attacked and suffered a broken nose.
- **June 21, 1964**, White segregationists and Negro demonstrators march pass one another in a double demonstration downtown near the Slave Market
- **June 22, 1964**, **Peter Bancroft** along with four Negroes try to integrate the local First Methodist Church and were arrested when they refused to leave the church steps. The group was charged with trespassing with malicious intent, breach of peace, and conspiracy. Bond was set at \$100 per charge. (Forty years later the church would apologize for having people arrested and turning them away from their doors in 1964). Civil rights demonstrators held two Wade-Ins at St. Augustine Beach. White males armed with clubs and sharp objects ran toward the demonstrators who were swimming and according to a state police report by

Major J. W. Jourdan, "...several white people arrived...proceeded into the water, starting a fight with the Negroes." An hour later another riot ignited when whites again attacked the Negroes

- **July 2, 1964**, In a historic moment, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlawing segregation in hotels, motels and restaurants, and outlawing job discrimination (not just against Blacks, but also against women)
- **July 4, 1964**, Governor Farris Bryant appoints State Attorney Dan Warren to play a key role, peace maker, in stopping the race violence in St. Augustine. September 3, 1964, Charles Al Lingo and Arthur Funderberk file suit in federal court against St. Johns County Sheriff L.O. Davis for conspiring with the City of St. Augustine to deny them their civil rights
- **July, 1964**, Negroes continue to test the new Civil Rights Act by integrating the motels, hotels, restaurants, and the theatre. Some demonstrators were turned away with excuses from managers stating that their policy was not to serve locals
- **July 14, 1964**, Henry Twine and a New York attorney, Robert Preiskil were beaten outside the Congress Inn (now Howard Johnson's Express on San Marco Avenue) after the manager, William Chew (head of the White Citizens Council) refused to serve them
- **July 15, 1964**, White segregationists picketed motels and restaurants that served the Negroes
- **July 21, 1964**, the Ku Klux Klan threw a fire bomb into a motel that had temporarily integrated
- **Judge Bryan Simpson** of Jacksonville ordered Flagler Hospital to integrate after a suit by Dr. Robert B. Hayling.
- **July 22, 1964**, State Attorney Dan Warren launches an investigation into so called, "...anti-Semitic and lawless groups..." operating in St. Augustine which were a constant threat to the tranquility of the State of Florida. He issues arrest warrants for the KKK
- **July 23, 1964**, Restaurant operator, Louis S. Connell, of the Santa Maria Restaurant, testified that he was scared to serve Blacks in his restaurant, because of threats from white racists. Willie Bolden of SCLC was turned away when trying to integrate the Santa Maria Restaurant. (In 2003, on a return visit to St. Augustine, he finally ate at the restaurant, with his grandson)
- Russell R. Allen of Marty's restaurant on U.S. 1 at State Road 16 turned Blacks away also
- **August 5, 1964**, a Bi-racial committee of 10 was appointed by the Grand Jury includes 5 blacks and 5 whites--but most whites refuse to serve, and the effort collapses
- **August 13, 1964**, Negroes test 17 restaurants in the city and were accepted at all of them. Representatives of the FBI and the Department of Justice looked on from a distance to see that restaurateurs complied with the Civil Rights Act
- On **October 14, 1964** it was announced that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had won the Nobel Peace Prize. St. Augustine Police Chief Virgil Stuart told **The New York Times**: "*I consider it one of the biggest jokes of the year. How can you win the peace prize when you stir up all the trouble he did down here?*"

Sources of Information:

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The Florida Historical Quarterly, (Volume 84, Spring 2006, Number 4)," Florida Room: Battle for St. Augustine, 1964: Public Record and Personal Account" by Claudia Slate.

First hand accounts from Dr. Robert B. Hayling, Barbara B. Allen, Cora Tyson, Hattie White, Janie Price, and Attorney Dan Warren

Excerpts taken from the following website:

<http://www.watson.org/~lisa/blackhistory/early-civilrights/brown.html>