

RECONSTRUCTION COMMUNITIES,

BASS STREET & **MEMORY**




Wagon Settlement - Fort Tregley - 1887

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INTRODUCTION

Are you ready to travel back in time? Each stage of this inquiry is designed to help you build background knowledge, identify patterns and inspire you to create a final project that preserves the history of one of Nashville's first African American communities, Bass Street. As your group works their way through each station, you are responsible for journaling the learning in your field notes. When you see  on a slide header, you are required to journal your findings. How your group decides to split the workload is up to you. Everyone **MUST** equally contribute to the process. Look forward to hearing your pitch presentation!

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS



How did Black people create communities during the Reconstruction and early Jim Crow periods?

In what ways can “progress” shift the identity of a community?

How should we show respect and honor historic locations to preserve their stories and impact?

THINKING ROUTINE: See-THINK-Wonder



DIRECTIONS

Take a 2-3 minutes to closely observe the image and record your observations, thoughts and questions in your field notes.

FORT NEGLEY & BASS STREET BACKGROUND



DIRECTIONS

“Click Me” to access a “Brief History of Fort Negley” written by the museum’s coordinator. Then, turn your attention to the article on the right to learn about the Bass Street Church history posted on their website.



BASS STREET CHURCH HISTORY

Realizing the need for a place to worship, a group of concerned dedicated Christian men and women came together in the year of our LORD 1889. Their purpose was to establish Bass Street Missionary Baptist Church. The original location was 611 Bass Street. The congregation selected Rev. William Baugus as the Pastor. The Church remained at this address until 1909.

From 1909 through 1922 Bass Street Church was located at 627 Bass Street. As the Church grew, a new place to worship was needed. The Church moved to 629 Bass Street and remained there until 1928. Plans were made to erect a new edifice; however, before the plan could be implemented, Rev. Baugus passed in 1929.

After Rev. Baugus passed, the Church selected Rev. Andrew Murray in the year 1930. Rev. Andrew Murray along with his brother, Rev. Burton Murray and others tore down the old building and started construction of the basement of a new Church building at 627 Bass Street. Until the new basement was completed, services were held at 6th and 7th Avenue South. This lasted from 1930 until 1933. Rev. Andrew Murray served three years as Pastor of Bass Street Church and was followed by Major Alexander who served two years. Rev. Burton Murray, who also served two years, preceded him.

In 1937 Rev. Samuel Alexander was selected to pastor Bass Street church. Inspired by GOD, Rev. Alexander took the Church to new heights. In 1937 or early 1938, the construction of the Church started by the Murray brothers was completed under his leadership. Many souls were saved, new organizations were formed and other Christians joined this great congregation. His early mission was finished in 1955, and he was called from labor to reward.

Rev. Monroe Burns was selected to pastorship in 1955. He served faithfully from 1955 until his demise in 1972. During his leadership, the sanctuary at 2005 12 Avenue South was purchased. (The former Cumberland Museum which is now called the Adventure Science Center currently sits on the site of the old Bass Street church). In 1967, the congregation moved into the building at 2005 12th Avenue South led by the under shepherd Rev. Monroe Burns.

Source: <https://www.bassstreetmbc.org/meet-sandra>

As of September 21, 2004, church is located at 3447 Brick Church Pike in Nashville.

BASS STREET TIMELINE



Notes on the Bass Street Neighborhood Archaeological Site on Fort Negley Park Land

by Dr. Angela Sutton

Background History: The entire site of Fort Negley Park is a sensitive area. In 1862, it was home to a contraband camp of nearly 3,000 enslaved and self-emancipated people who built the fort. In 1864, it played a key role as a fortification in the Battle of Nashville, in which 15,000 Black soldiers in segregated regiments of the US Military defended the city from Confederate attacks. After the war, many unclaimed bodies were interred in multiple areas on the grounds in 1865, and not all of them were disinterred. Immediately after the war, many of the 18,000 builders and defenders of Fort Negley remained on that hill and around it to form the Bass Street Neighborhood, the first postwar community of free Black Nashvillians. They withstood numerous attempts by white supremacists to intimidate and destroy the neighborhood, and there are documented cases of Black Civil War veterans taking up arms against members of the KKK in defense of this community. A large portion of today's Black population in the city has ancestral roots in this location and are direct descendants of the people who fought and earned their freedom in the space that is now Fort Negley Park.

In 1957-58, the construction of Interstates 40 and 65 destroyed 90% of the Bass Street Community. That means 90% of the archaeological remains of that first free Black neighborhood is unrecoverable. (See the maps from before then and today below. The red circle is the archaeological area in question.)



DIRECTIONS

“Click Me” to read the timeline from the origin of Bass Street to the latest developments.

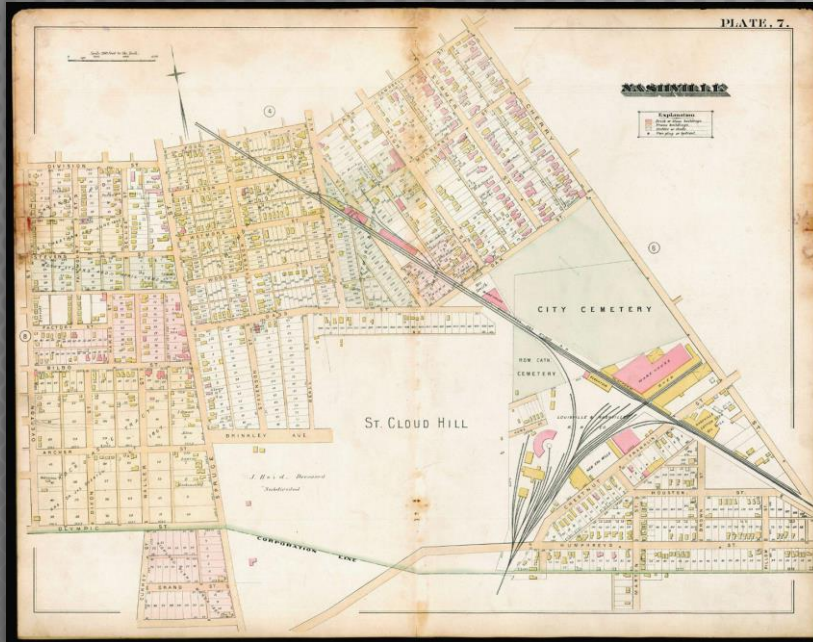


BASS STREET LANDSCAPE



DIRECTIONS

Click on each of the maps to access the website and get a closer look. Find the railroads
City Cemetery, Bass Street, Cloud Hill/Fort Negley on both maps.



"Nashville. Plate 7 from G. M. Hopkins' Atlas of Nashville (1889).



"Fort Negley," 1937, Library Photograph Collection, Drawer 7, Folder 217, 1498, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Tennessee Virtual Archive, <https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll25/id/1581>, accessed 2021-12-27.

BASS STREET CLUES LEFT BEHIND



DIRECTIONS

Use the images to make observations and record any evidence of life you notice in the field notes.

BASS STREET SIGNS OF LIFE



Angela Sutton (She/Her) @DrAngelaSutton

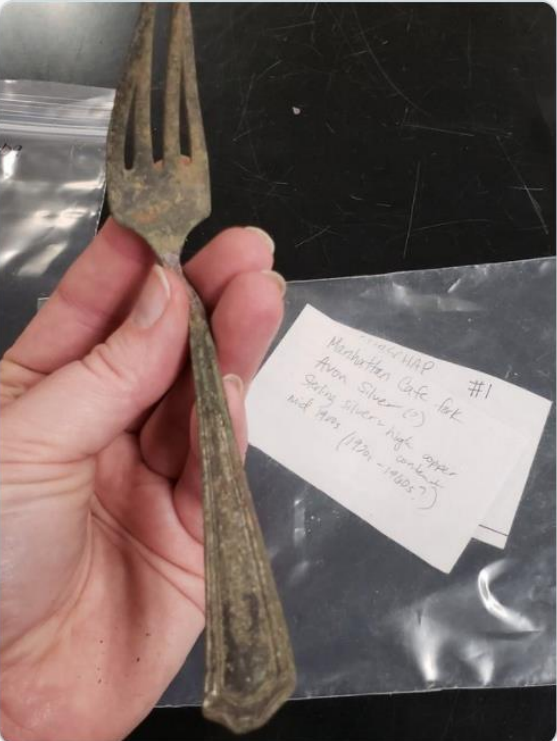
Spent my Saturday at the Tennessee Central Railway Museum, with their archivist Carter Newton. He's indexing their employment records and finding about 20% of the employees from the early 20th century were Black, from neighborhoods around @FortNegley.



3:20 PM · Nov 13, 2021 · Twitter for Android

Angela Sutton (She/Her) @DrAngelaSutton · Nov 13

Oh! And he said that this artifact found at the Bass Street Archaeology dig looks a LOT like the type of silverware used on the trains' dining carts. Often when it was time to replace it, the silverware went home with employees! I'm so curious now.



Angela Sutton is a professor of slavery at Vanderbilt. Click below to access a thread where she shares more about artifacts that have been found.





BASS STREET RESIDENTS

THE NASHVILLE GLOBE.

The Nashville globe. [volume] (Nashville, Tenn.). Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.

MISSES STATON ENTERTAINED.

Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Anderson, of 639 Bass street entertained Thursday night, February 7, in honor of Misses Eddie and Florence Staton, of Columbia. An excellent time was had; refreshments were served and at a late hour the guests departed declaring that they had enjoyed themselves as never before. Those present beside the guests of honor were Misses Antie M. Ransom, Anna Rucker, Nellie Rucker Williams, Messrs. Claud Lee, R. G. Johnson, John Russer and Harris.

February 15, 1907 - Party Host

Haddock-Woods.

Miss Lizzie James Woods, of 579 Tenth avenue, South, while visiting friends in Chicago, was married to Mr. Lemuel Haddock, of 639 Bass street, Sept. 9, at Squire Waldon's office. Mrs. Birdie Butler was the witness. The marriage was kept a secret until last Sunday, when it was made known to both the families. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Black, Mr. Haddock's mother and father and Miss Woods' relatives, also Mrs. Amanda T. Jordan and Mr. Buchanan. Rev. Boone, of St. Paul A. M. E. Church, officiated.

November 22, 1907 - Marriage Announcement

RECEPTION.

A reception in honor of Messrs. James and Palmer Ransom, of Louisville, Ky., was given at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Anderson, 639 Bass street, last Tuesday night. Quite a delightful time was had by all present. Frappe was served by Mrs. Nellie Williams. The guests present were Mr. and Mrs. J. W. DeWees, Misses Maggie Hargraves, Annie Rucker, Rosa Shelby, Tabitha Claybrooks, Coleta Black, Loam Alexander, Johnnie Denny, Artie Ransome, Messrs. Blas, McIntosh, Joyner, Jones, Fisher, Harrison, Roberts, Battle, Hargrave.

January 11, 1907 - Party Host

653 Bass street, Nashville, Tenn., Nashville, Tenn., ec. 12, 1910

Dear Old Santa—I am a little boy of two and a half years. I have been real good, so you must come to me this Xmas. I want a teddy bear coat and leggings, a white felt hat, some blue top shoes, a chu chu train, a drum, a horn and some candles, nuts and fruit. Please don't forget mama and papa. Your good little boy,
CHARLES WINFREY KELLY.

December 16, 1910 - Santa Letter

THE NASHVILLE GLOBE.

DEATH OF MISS MAGGIE KELLY.

Miss Maggie E. Kelly, daughter of Prof. and Mrs. J. H. Kelly, of Columbia, surrounded by the members of the family and sorrowing friends, passed peacefully away about 5:30 o'clock, Tuesday afternoon at the residence of her brother, Mr. John H. Kelly, Jr., 653 Bass street.

Miss Kelly was 25 years old, and during the short span of life allotted her had attracted by those amiable qualities which she possessed, a large circle of friends extending all over the country. She was very popular in her home city and the other cities where, in recent years, she has been a visitor.

Miss Kelly was a graduate of Roger Williams University before the old school building on the Hillsboro Pike was destroyed by fire. After her graduation she began teaching in the city public schools of Columbia, and remained one of the most efficient and beloved members of the corps until her death.

At the close of the school session in Columbia this year Miss Kelly attended the commencement of the Knoxville College, returning by Chattanooga and stopping in this city. In this city she was taking a summer course to further fit herself for her chosen profession. The continual strain on the constitution which had already been weakened by a hard winter session of her school, made her an easy victim to the dread typhoid fever (Continued on Page 7.)

July 31, 1908 - Death Announcement

DEATH OF MISS KELLY.

(Continued from Page 1.)

which was the cause of her death. The remains were carried to Columbia Wednesday afternoon. The funeral obsequies were held from the St. Paul A. M. E. Church, Rev. S. J. Howard, the pastor, officiating. He was assisted by Bishop Evans Tyree.

The Nashville Globe was a Black-owned and operated newspaper that ran from 1906 to the 1930s. Within its first decade of operation, it reached approximately one fifth of Nashville's total population.

BASS STREET RESIDENTS, PART 2



THE NASHVILLE GLOBE.

STAG PARTY.

A most successful and enjoyable stag party was given Saturday night at the residence of Mr. J. H. Kelly, Jr., on Bass street. At 8:30 o'clock the gentlemen began to gather and continued until the number reached twenty-three. The main object of the gathering was to organize a club. All present seemed to manifest great interest in the undertaking. After refreshments were served those assembled were asked to repair to the center room and "look pretty," and Mr. J. J. Lay, one of Nashville's most successful photographers, made a flash-light picture of the group. Mr. Kelly, who was master of ceremonies, called on the following for toasts on the subject before them: Mr. Louis K. Thomas, Sr., Dr. R. H. Voorhees, Mr. Geo. O. Boyd, Mr. A. Goodwine, Dr. J. A. Napier and Chas. W. Kelly. After the few interesting remarks, a temporary organization was formed with the following temporary officers: Mr. J. H. Kelly, Chairman; Dr. R. H. Voorhees, Secretary; Dr. Napier Treasurer. It was decided that the members present would be the chartered members, who are as follows: Messrs J. H. Kelly, Jr., Chairman; R. H. Voorhees, Secretary; J. A. Napier, Treasurer; D. B. Barry, Clarence Harwell, I. C. Moore, Louis K. Thomas, J. C. Mixon, Fred J. Ewing, I. J. Rogan, J. W. Williams, Walter Davis, Geo. McClellon, P. P. Perkins, A. Goodwine, G. H. C. Beadley, J. J. Lay, — Lay, Geo. O. Boyd, Johnson Cockrell, Will Jones, W. Bradley and Chas. W. Kelly. At about 12 o'clock all left feeling quite happy with the

understanding to meet the following Thursday at the Palms for further business.



Learotha Williams
@learothawms



Meet Dr. J.P. Crawford, Grand Chancellor of the Knights of Pythias. 706 Bass St. Nashville TN.

The story of the Bass Street Community has much to reveal about Nashville's historic (and current) relations with its African American residents.

#bassst



10:57 AM · Dec 13, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

DIRECTIONS

"Click Me" to access a full-size page event advertisement. You will need this resource to answer a question in the field notes.



BASS STREET LIVED EXPERIENCES



Phillip Minter Interview

Bass Street: Nashville's First Free Black Neighborhood at Fort Negley



Brother Scruggs Interview

Bass Street: Nashville's First Free Black Neighborhood at Fort Negley



What was life like in the Bass Street Community?

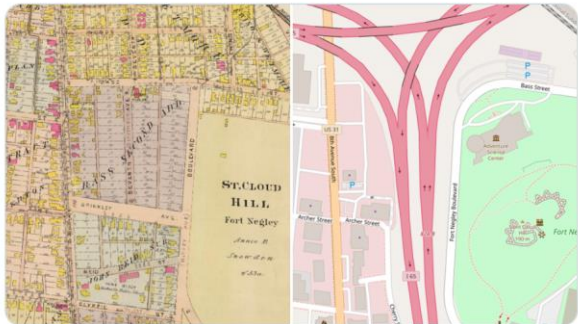
Source: Fort Negley Descendants Project



Angela Sutton (She/Her) 
@DrAngelaSutton

Amazing news:

The @SmithsonianACM museum is doing an exhibit on an African-American neighborhood that disappeared in DC: Barry-Farm Hillsdale. To show how persistent & common this is across our nation, they're using @FortNegley's BASS STREET in #Nashville as a comparison.



3:57 PM · Nov 12, 2021 · TweetDeck

PRESERVING HISTORY



PRESERVING HISTORY: MITCHELVILLE



DIRECTIONS

This is where your group pulls everything together! You've done the heavy lifting of researching. Now it's time to get creative by designing an experience that shares this important part of local history with the world.

Here you will spend some time learning about how a group in South Carolina is taking the steps to tell their story. Get ready to be inspired! Use the field notes to pave the way to your final project. "Click Me" to visit the website.

