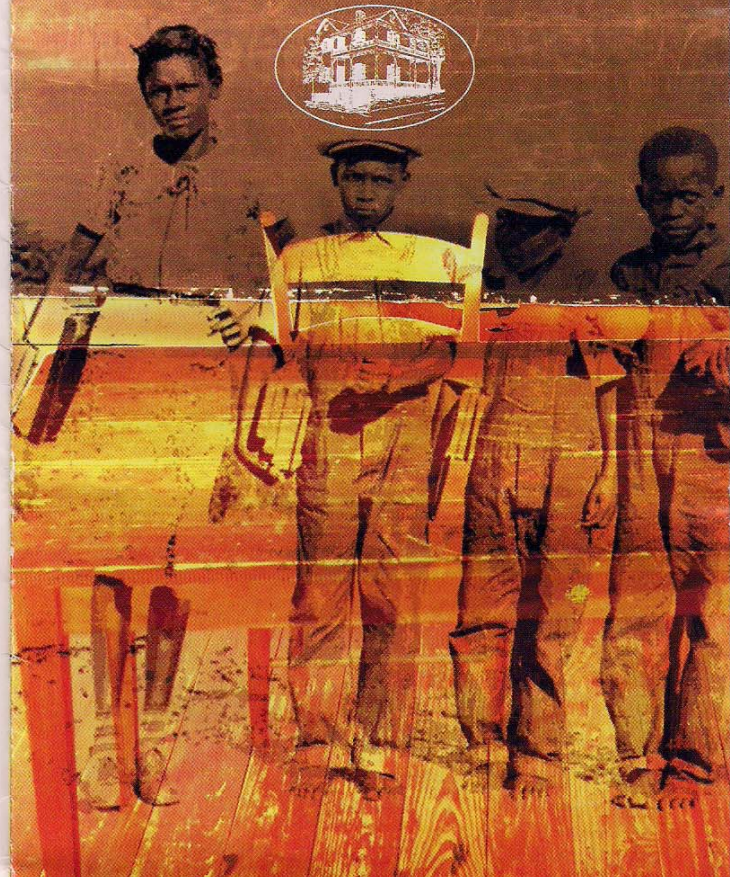


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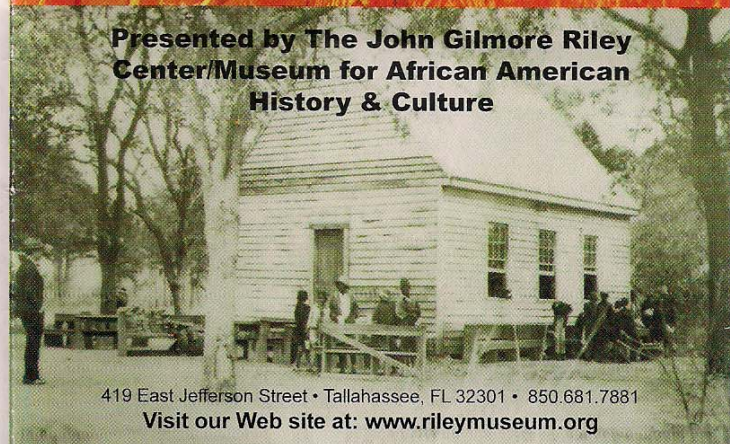
Front Cover

The John G. Riley Center/Museum Milestone Memories

From Segregation to Desegregation
African American Schools in Florida



Presented by The John Gilmore Riley
Center/Museum for African American
History & Culture



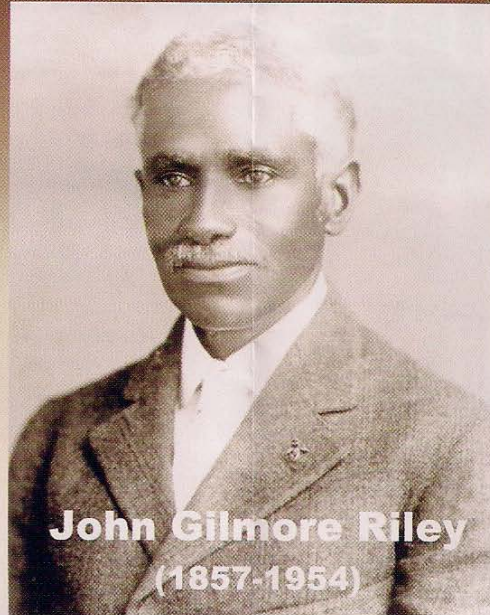
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Visit our Web site at: www.rileymuseum.org

John G. Riley Center/Museum for African American History & Culture
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Inside



About The Riley Center/Museum...

In 1978, Tallahassee preservationists banded together to save the then-deteriorating 1890s era home of Professor John Gilmore Riley.

Riley, a freed slave, was among the first African Americans to secure a Florida Teaching Certificate. He served as principal of Lincoln Academy for over 30 years. His advocacy for change in public school administration had state-wide impact. Riley was a dynamic community leader, and served as a ranking officer in the Royal Arch Masons. He was also successful in business and amassed a fortune in real estate. John Riley was a positive role model and mentor to thousands of students.

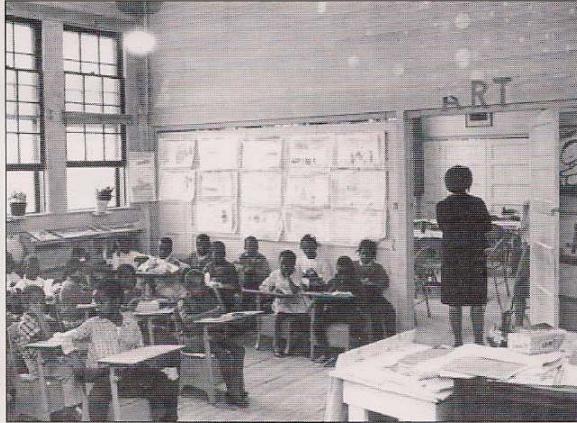
In 1995, a diverse group of citizens established a museum at Riley's former home. Since then, the Riley organization has acquired a considerable library of documents, photos, and artifacts pertaining to the contributions of people of color to Florida's growth. The collection is housed at the Riley Archives on the campus of Tallahassee Community College. Riley educational products are in use in every school district in the state.

Althemese Barnes has served as the Executive Director of the Riley Center/Museum since its inception. Under her guidance, the organization has been nationally recognized for their innovative work in the field of heritage preservation. She is the founder of the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network (FAAHPN) and continues to work tirelessly to preserve the rich legacy of Florida's past.

Special thanks and recognition goes to Dr. Mae O. Clemons, PhD and author of *Florida's Forgotten Legacy: Segregated Black Secondary Schools*. Dr. Clemons' dedication to documenting the contributions of Florida's African American educators was the inspiration for the Milestone Memories Project. Her research served as the foundation for information included in the exhibit and its related educational products.



Milestone Memories



The history of Florida's African American schools embraces decades of contrasting experiences. Limited resources were counterbalanced by eager volunteers and the out-stretched hands of strangers. Segregationist policies – born in the tradition of slavery and ignorance – were offset by the enlightened leadership of dedicated educators.

Public education was not a high priority for most Americans until the latter days of the 19th Century, but for emancipated slaves and their children, education was paramount. Learning was perceived as the first step on a path toward securing property, civil rights, respect, and a better standard of living.

The journey was not easy. Funding was hard to come by, buildings were often sub-standard and teachers worked for shamefully low wages. Promises were made and seldom kept. Governmental entities perpetuated the myth that "black" schools simply could not make the grade.

African American schools overcame that perception by training students who excelled in every field. Graduates became doctors, lawyers, ministers, military officers, politicians, inventors, and government officials. They were excellent schools – and more. They were anchors for communities afloat in a world where the color of your skin determined whether you could approach any door - or be forced to choose the one marked "colored". Schools were a source of pride and centers for positive social interaction. These buildings were sanctuaries where issues of concern could be openly discussed and acted upon.

The Milestone Memories Project has examined the legacy of African American schools from all perspectives. We invite you to travel with us as we learn about the things that were wrong with a segregated system and the things that transcended its limitations.

"Memories of our lives, o

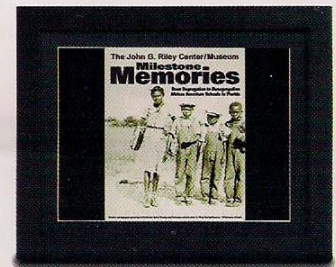
The Milestone Memories Exhibit will be on display at the John G. Riley Center/Museum from August 8, 2008 until October 31, 2008. Visitors may view this exciting collection Monday through Thursday between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm. Special presentations may be arranged by appointment. The exhibit will also travel to selected cities around the state. Contact the Riley Center/Museum at 850.681.7881 for further information.

Banner Stands Four banner stand presentations visually anchor the Milestone Memories exhibit. The banners chronicle important events that influenced the evolution of Florida's present-day educational system and introduce some of the people who helped to effect those changes. This exhibit element examines the influence of government and the courts on the lives of African American students and educators from the founding of the Florida Education Society in 1831, to the 2007 passage of the Florida Educational Equity Act. Striking images help to tell the story of the effort it took to secure an education in days gone by.



Digital Photo Display

This feature of the Milestone exhibit uses modern technology to present historic images in an informative and innovative manner. This display will take the viewer on a short journey to see some of the African American schools that stood in every corner of the state.



Video Production

This poignant presentation features the oral histories of people who attended Florida African American schools during the days of



"Our works, of our deeds will continue in others." Rosa Parks

segregation. These thoughtful first-person accounts bring both pleasant and painful memories to life in a manner that is universally understood.

Desks Two school desks appear in the non-traveling exhibit that can be seen only at the Riley House Center/Museum.

The larger piece dates back to the 1940s and is on loan from Mrs. Gladys Caswell who served as the Assistant Principal at the James S. Rickards High School (Tallahassee) before her retirement.

The smaller desk was typical of those used in the 1920s. It was donated to Riley by the Leon County School District.



Text books These small treasures were recently discovered at an antique shop located in Alford, Florida. They include well-loved versions of: *Using Words – An English Spelling Program* by Lillian E. Billington, copyright 1940 and *Spelling Goals Five* by May B. Lambader, William Kottmeyer and Rose Wickey, copyright 1951.

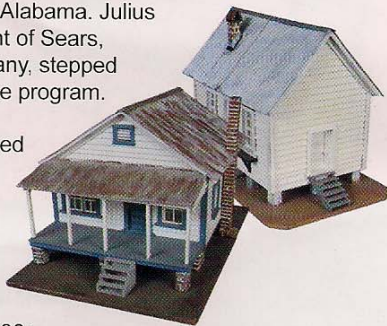
Scale Model of a Rosenwald School

In 1900, Booker T. Washington initiated a program at the Tuskegee Institute to help build African American schools in Alabama. Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck and Company, stepped forward to support the program.

Anxious to do more, Rosenwald established a charitable organization in his own name in 1920.

The Rosenwald Foundation closed during the Great Depression of the 1930s,

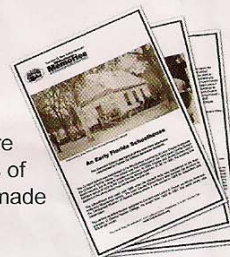
but not before they had paid for the construction of more than 5,000 buildings. In today's dollars, the Fund's contributions would total close to \$63 million. This scale model of a Rosenwald School was hand-crafted by Mr. Hunter Hill - a retired educator who taught at the Lincoln School in Tallahassee, Florida. Its dimensions were taken from copies of original blueprints. The piece is on loan from Mr. Hill and can only be seen at the Riley House.



Lunch Items During most of the operational years of Florida's African American schools, there were no cafeterias. Children would bring their lunch or it would be prepared by instructors or community volunteers. The exhibit displays replicas of some of the foods consumed by students in the late 1800s and provides information about this unique facet of life at an African American school.

Posters and Hand-outs

Several posters - covering topics relating to significant events, African American schools located in Florida and influential educators - are incorporated into the exhibit. Copies of these educational materials will be made available upon request.



Activity Book This publication gives today's students an opportunity to "read more about it". The book invites students to travel back to the 1880s when life was simpler and devoid of the conveniences we take for granted. Suggested activities range from cooking hoe cakes and building a scale model of a Rosenwald school to multiple choice quizzes and story-telling. The book will be available for a nominal fee at all exhibit locations and in the Riley Center/Museum Gift Shop.

