



Issue 110

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

NEGRO SPRITUALS

Negro Spirituals are religious songs of a kind associated with black Christians of the southern United States, and thought to derive from the combination of European hymns and African musical elements by black slaves.

Most Spirituals were sung as a way for enslaved Negroes to release their tensions and to communicate with each other because of the numerous languages and dialects from the various regions of Africa. Understanding each other was very difficult therefore, they had to devise a way to communicate among each other and this was done through songs and many of these songs were widely used as "signal songs".

Singing was the slave's way of expressing their sorrows of the horrific situations that they endured in their everyday existence. The songs of slaves represented the sorrows, heartbreak and suffering that they endured daily.

Many songs had a double meaning to guide slaves in their search to the Underground Railroad and were often religious in nature. A plantation owner would simply hear the religious and Biblical references and assume the slaves were singing for spiritual reasons.

"Steal away" on the surface, meant dying and going to heaven, but also symbolized escaping to freedom. This spiritual was sung by Nat Turner as a signal. Nat, a slave from Virginia who organized a slave revolt against slave owners, used this song to alert other slaves to meetings.

"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" is a code song or coded song, and is one of a handful of spirituals that refer directly to the Underground Railroad. Most of the code words in the spirituals refer to escape from slavery; the code words were used to hide the underlying, secret meaning of the lyrics.

"Follow the Drinking Gourd" Perhaps no song is more closely associated with the Underground Railroad than this one. To follow the North Star was the message embedded in this spiritual; instructions are included in the song to follow the points of the drinking gourd (the Big Dipper) to the brightest star, which is the North Star.

"Wade in the Water" to tell escaping slaves to get off the trail and into the water to make sure the dogs slavecatchers used couldn't sniff out their trail.

"The Gospel Train's A'Comin," Slaves sang the spiritual, The Gospel Train's A 'Comin', to alert other slaves that a group was preparing to escape and travel north to freedom. "Gospel Train" was code for the Underground Railroad.

"Go Down Moses" the story of Moses held special meaning for Christian slaves who saw the plight of the Jews in Egypt as a parallel to their own. Spirituals like this one, which referred to Moses and the freeing of the Pharaoh's slaves, gave singers hope for earthly as well as heavenly salvation.

"Hush, Hush Somebody's Calling My Name" was a song of salvation, silently hoping that their prayers would be heard if everything was quiet.

"We Shall Overcome" is a gospel song which became a protest song and a key anthem of the African-American Civil Rights Movement. The song is most commonly attributed as having descended lyrically from "I'll Overcome Some Day", a hymn by Charles Albert Tindley that was first published in 1900.

Spirituals functioned on many levels for enslaved Africans. While the songs primarily expressed deeply religious convictions, they also reflected deep longings for freedom.

Internet information -edited by VTA

BLACK HISTORY PROGRAMS

Macedonia Baptist Church

February 19, 2017 - 3:00pm

GOLDEN RETREAT SENIOR CENTER

February 28, 2017 - 10:00am

TOWN HALL CLOSED

February 20, 2017

Blackville Public Schools Alumni Association Inc. is forming a "COMMITTEE" to establish a "HALL OF FAME" for alumni that excelled in various fields during their tenure at the area schools. If you are interested in being a committee member contact Jerry Jones 904 349-0499 or e-mail - bvillepublicalumniassoc@gmail.com. Applications due by March 31, 2017

MEETINGS

- February 2, Community Development Corporation. Town Hall, 6:00pm
- February 6, Blackville Music and Arts, Russell's Pizza, 6:00pm
- February 13, BHHS District #19, Board of Education Office, TBA
- February 14, Neighborhood Watch, Tabernacle Baptist Church, 6:00pm
- February 14, Barnwell County Council, Agriculture Building, 6:00pm
- February 21, Town Council, Town Hall, 6:30pm (Tuesday)
- February 23, Downtown Development Association, Russell's Pizza, 6:00pm
- February 27, Barnwell-Blackville NAACP, Barnwell Masonic Hall, 7:00pm

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

February 1, Nia Ford
February 1, Jabarius Johnson
February 5, Nathaniel "Bo" Holman
February 7, Carl Peeples
February 7, JaQuez Williams
February 7, Chris Matheny
February 7, Linda Dowling
February 8, Frenchie Smalls
February 9, Latoya Simpson
February 11, Deidra Fisher
February 13, Darrian Lorenzo Taylor
February 17, Sheqilah Alvin
February 18, Mary Salley
February 21, Jada Smalls
February 21, John Alvin
February 22, Larae Robinson
February 24, Dennis Pernel
February 26, Willie Felder
February 26, Doris Beard
February 28, Rose Johnson-Raysor

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

February 14, Rev. Floyd & Mrs. Lillie Hughes
February 26, Mr. Wayne & Mrs. Doris Beard

LIBRARY NEWS

Pre-school Story Time

February 14 and 28, 2017

10:30am and 4:00pm

FEBRUARY SCHOOL NEWS

February 9, Progress Reports
February 20, President's Day-No School

MES

February 16, SIC - 5:30pm/Circus 6:30pm
February 24, Black History Program – 8:30am

BHJH and BHHS

February 16, Parent Focus Meeting, 6:00pm
February 26, Black History Program - 9:00am

BLACKVILLE CIVIC CLUB'S ANNUAL WAFFLE SUPPER

February 6, 2017
Blackville-Hilda High School Cafeteria
6:00pm to 8:00pm
\$6.00 adults - children \$3.00
6 years old and under **FREE**
LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT

SENIOR CITIZEN LUNCHEON
FEBRUARY 20, 2017 – noon
Blackville Community Center
Sponsored by
Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church

COMING SOON

TASTE OF BLACKVILLE -

**VENDOR APPLICATIONS – ENTERPRISE
BANK**

Published by the Town of Blackville and Blackville Community Development Corporation. Send information to: Blackville@bellsouth.net or vtalston@bellsouth.net add "Newsletter" in subject line. Visit our website: townofblackville.com. Newsletters available by e-mail or at Town Hall.

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