



Shake Rag

walking
tour



A Tour
of the
African-American
Historic District
in
Bowling Green
Kentucky

**139 State St.
Brunton Home**

Built around 1925, this Bungalow was the home and office of Dr. Isaac B. Brunton, a beloved physician in the community. The efficient yet stylish Bungalows were symbols of modernity in the early 20th century.

**140 State St.
Southern Queen Hotel / Covington-
Moses Home**

Built in 1906 by James Covington, the Southern Queen hotel served black travelers who were unable to stay in Bowling Green's white hotels. It was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Covington and their niece Mrs. O.A. Moses. Mrs. Moses, a graduate of Fisk University and the University of Illinois was the first librarian of State Street High School. Mrs. Mattie Covington sold lunches to students before the school cafeteria was built.



**200 State St.
State Street High School Gymnasium**

A landmark in Bowling Green, it was the location of many championship games for the State Street High Mustangs. The Gym annex was built in 1929.



Photo by
Johnny Heston



**201 State St.
Lee Square**

The George Washington Carver Center is located on part of a parcel of land historically known as Lee Square. Bowling Green founder Robert Moore donated the land in 1802 for use as a public square for African American residents.



202 State St.

Former location of State Street High School. It was the first public school for African Americans in Bowling Green built in 1885.

By 1886 the school had a roster of 411 students in eight grades. State Street High School represented a major accomplishment for the neighborhood and students achieved many successes in academics and athletics. Over half of the graduating class of 1929 went on to college. The school was razed in 1962.

229 State St.

Until 1927, the Bowling Green Academy for Girl's Dormitory was located at the site where Bowling Green Auto Sales is now.

302-304 State St.

The former location of the Bowling Green Academy. Founded in 1884, the Presbyterian Private Academy was one of only a few educational institutions available to African Americans in Bowling Green. It was razed in the 1950s.



315 State St.

Hi-Way Drive Inn

The Hi-Way Drive Inn, built in 1945, was a neighborhood cafe that also served travelers. Prior to the construction of 31W Bypass, State Street was part of the Dixie Highway, the main route through Bowling Green.

332-334 State St.

Built in the 1930s, these two distinctive Bungalows are mirror images of each other. They were owned by John Brown, a stone mason. He and his wife owned and operated Nancy's Tea Room on 3rd Ave. in the ShakeRag District.



**340 State St.
State Street Baptist Church**

Built in 1898, this Victorian Gothic Romanesque Revival style church replaced an 1873 building destroyed by fire. Organized in 1838, it is the oldest African American congregation in Bowling Green. State Street Baptist Church has been a cornerstone of the community.



**412 State St.
Former Bowling Green-Warren County
Public Library, Colored Branch**

Miss Bessie Woods ran the library which was established in her home in 1947. The branch had 3,500 books, a children's room and recreational programs.



**414 State St.
Alice's Beauty Shop**

Built in the 1920s, this is one of three duplex Bungalows on the 400th block of State Street. Alice purchased the shop in the 1940s and continued its operation until 1995. Many young beauty college graduates were given internships in Alice's shop. Today, under different ownership, it continues to operate under her name. Listed on the National Register.



**418 State St.
The Frank Nister House**

Built in 1875, this two-story Victorian Eclectic style home is one of the oldest houses still standing in the neighborhood.



**459 State St.
O.D. Porter and Tourist Home**

Built around 1890, this two and a half story home is a Victorian Free Classic style structure. It was the home of Doctor O.D. Porter, a graduate of Fisk University Medical School. He was one of the first Black physicians in Bowling Green. After his death, his widow operated the house as a tourist home.

**506 State St.
Underwood-Jones
Home**

This prominent brick house of two and a half stories was the home and office of Dr. Z.K. Jones. Built in 1875, the structure is Second Empire mixed Italianate style with a Mansard roof.

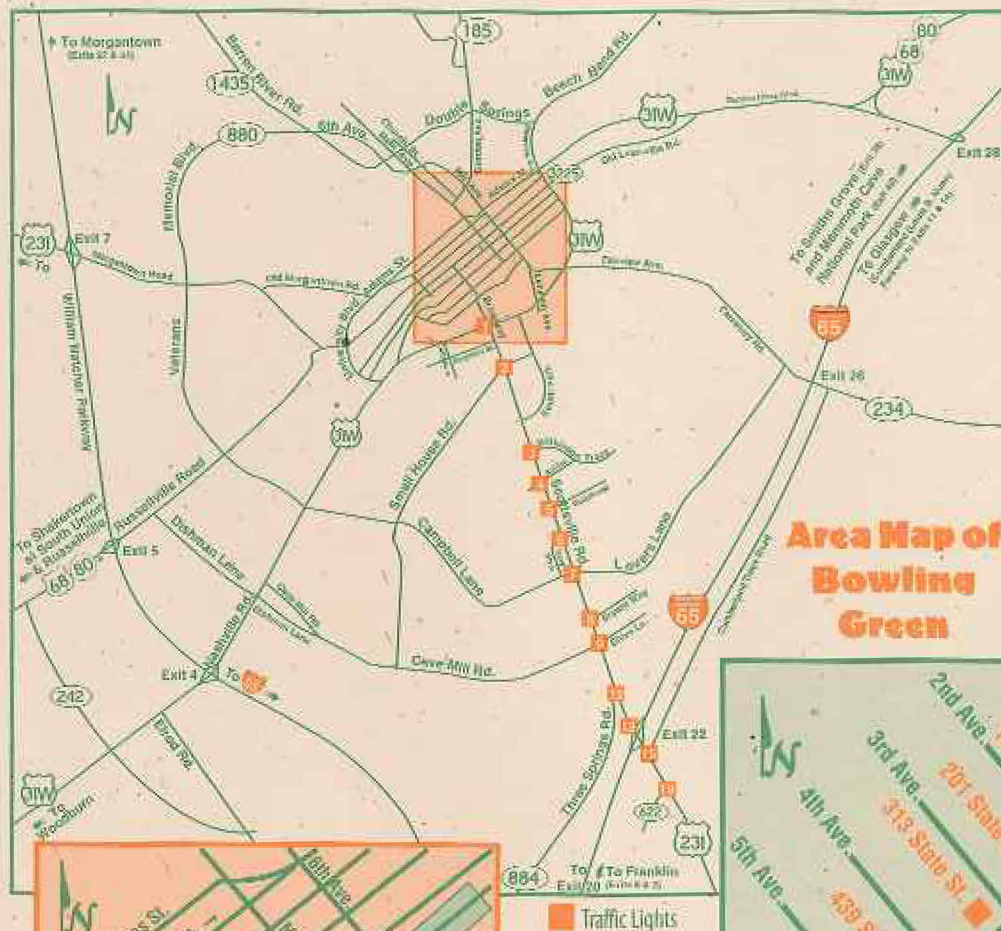


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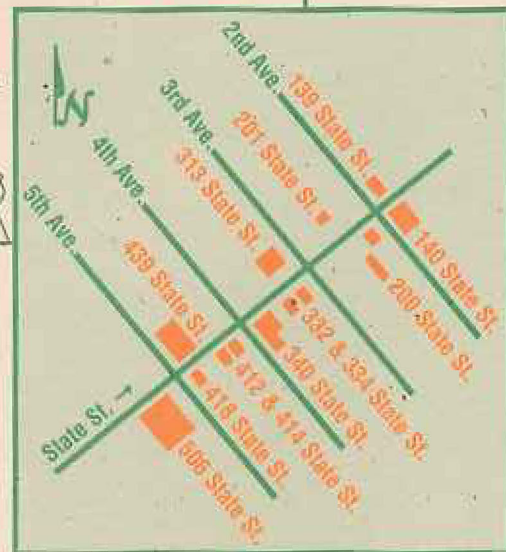
What Does
"ShakeRag" Mean?

Many believe the ShakeRag district received its name from the African-American families who washed clothes and hung them outside on the line to dry. Mondays were designated as "wash days" and they could be seen outside on these occasions shaking the laundry. It is from this "shaking of the rags" that the name "ShakeRag" evolved.

Welcome to the ShakeRag District



Downtown Bowling Green Map



ShakeRag District Map

SHAKERAG HISTORIC DISTRICT

The ShakeRag Historic District, located along the north end of State Street in Bowling Green, Kentucky, was placed on the National Register of Historic places in September 2000. It is Bowling Green's first National Register District recognized for its significance to African American history.

The ShakeRag Neighborhood developed around Lee Square, a parcel of land donated in 1802 for use as a public square. After the Civil War, the neighborhood grew steadily and in the early 20th century, as State Street became part of the Dixie Highway, gas stations and other businesses catering to travelers emerged in the neighborhood.

The architecture of the ShakeRag community celebrates the achievements of a growing professional and middle class community. In addition to the elaborate homes, there are an abundance of early 20th century Bungalows in the neighborhood. Borrowing from the arts and crafts movement, Bungalows were fashionably modern and convenient.

A close-knit community, the ShakeRag neighborhood provided a haven from the pressures of living in and traveling through segregated areas in Bowling Green. Homeowners opened hotels to house black travelers who previously had to sleep in their cars. The community had a network of doctors, churches, schools and businesses.

Today, the ShakeRag Historic District stands as a physical reminder of the accomplishments the community made during times of social and economic hardship. The spirit of the community still thrives in its residents who remember the neighborhood as being,

"Like a Family."

Research provided by Western Kentucky University's Folk Studies Program and made possible by a grant from the Kentucky Heritage Council. Historic Photographs courtesy of the Kentucky Library, Western Kentucky University and Hughes Photography.

**For more information, contact the
Bowling Green Area Convention & Visitors
Bureau at 230-782-0800 or 800-326-7465.**



Printed in cooperation with the
Kentucky Department of Tourism