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HUNTSVILLE CIVIL RIGHTS TIMELINE

By Kelly F. Hamlin

Kelly Hamlin earned a masters in 2015 from the University of Alabama, Huntsville, her theses focused on local history and specifically the civil rights movement in Huntsville. The Review will include a portion of her theses in two parts with the timeline in this issue and in December the narrative that supports the timeline. The Editor

1950

- Huntsville's population is 16,437.
- Wernher Von Braun and the Army's German rocket team move to Huntsville.

1952

- Due to its status as a federally-run military installation, Redstone Arsenal instituted a policy of non-segregation and removed all "Negro" and "White" signs.

1954

- May 17: The Supreme Court decides in *Brown vs. Board of Education* that racial segregation in public schools violated the 14th Amendment of the Constitution.
- May 31: In what is known as *Brown II*, the Supreme Court clarifies that the states are expected to desegregate public schools "with all deliberate speed." The vagueness of these guidelines meant that segregated states like Alabama would not hurry to change their ways.

1956

- Redstone Arsenal employs 9,000 and brings \$30 million in new construction to Huntsville.
- Army Ballistic Missile Agency established at Redstone.

- June 4: Huntsville opened one of its city swimming pools to blacks only, the first public pool open to blacks in the city.

1958

- February 1: Explorer I is first satellite to orbit the Earth, with the help of Von Braun's Huntsville team.
- November 3: For the first time, the black community had access to a city library, located at Cavalry Hill Junior High with Reverend H.P. Snodgrass at its head.

1960

- Wernher Von Braun made Director of NASA's new George C. Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville.
- September 8: President Eisenhower visited Huntsville to commemorate the opening of Marshall Space Flight Center.

1961

- In 1961 there were 3,198 building permits issued at a value of over \$37 million. An additional \$14 million in permits were issued for new building projects on Redstone Arsenal.
- May 14: Freedom Riders attacked in Anniston. One of these riders was Hank Thomas, who would later spur Huntsville's entry into the civil rights movement.

1962

- 20-year-old Hank Thomas, a Howard University student and field agent from the civil rights group Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) arrived in Huntsville in January 1962. With his guidance, black students from Alabama A&M University and Council High School received training in non-violent techniques and began their first sit-ins protesting segregated downtown stores and lunch counters that month.

- January 3: Huntsville's first sit-ins. Across the city, groups of black students took a seat at the whites-only lunch counters of W.T. Grant Co. on Washington St., the H&H Walgreen Agency, the Trailways Bus Station, F.W. Woolworth & Co., and Sears & Roebuck. The students were refused service and left quietly after being ignored. Later that evening, 30 black students in four cars attempted to purchase movie tickets at the whites-only Parkway Drive-In Theater and Woodey's Drive-In Theater and were turned away. Two different groups briefly held sit-ins at the Big Boy Restaurant the same night.
- January 4 & 5: In the second and third days of Huntsville sit-ins, over 75 students participate.
- January 5: Huntsville's mayor, R.B. Searcy, met with a delegation of 6 leaders from the black community, headed by Dr. John L. Cashin Jr, but the group was unable to come to an agreement about the state of race relations in the city.
- January 6: First arrests of civil rights movement in Huntsville. An old Huntsville law allowed any business owner to have the police arrest anyone deemed to be "trespassing" on their property. This allowed business owners to arrest the protestors who were involved in sit-ins, but it did not stop the students' enthusiasm. Alabama A&M student Frances Sims, age 19, and Council High School student Dwight W. Crawford, age 16, were the first to be arrested as they sat at the Walgreen's lunch counter.
- January 6: An anonymous caller threatens to detonate bombs at Woolworth's and W.T. Grant Co., two businesses that were facing pressure from sit-in protestors.
- January 8: Thirteen black protestors were arrested and jailed overnight for trespassing during their sit-ins at G.C. Murphy Co in Parkway City Mall, Liggett's

Rexall Drug Store in the Heart of Huntsville Mall, and Walgreens.

- January 8: In a mass meeting of the black community held at First Baptist Church citizens form the Community Service Committee, which will go on to organize and support the struggle for civil rights in Huntsville.
- January 10: After sitting at the whites-only lunch counter at Walgreens, 18 protestors aged 16 to 21 were arrested and spent the night in jail, bringing the total arrested in the last week to 35.
- January 14: While Hank Thomas was leading a sit-in at the Heart of Huntsville mall, someone entered his vehicle and doused the drivers' seat with oil of mustard, a severe skin irritant. When Hank returned to his vehicle he was severely burned by the caustic substance and had to be taken to the hospital, where Dr. Sonnie W. Hereford III tended to him. Dr. Hereford served as the doctor for all CSC members and local participants in the civil rights movement who might be injured in the course of their activism.
- January 22: Marshall Keith was a white employee of Redstone Arsenal who had been participating in the recent sit-ins. On the night of January 22 he was forced from his home at gunpoint by masked attackers who drove him away from the city, beat him and forced him to strip naked. Then they doused his body with oil of mustard, the same severe skin irritant that was used against Hank Thomas the week before. After his recovery from the severe burns, Keith moved away from Huntsville.
- January 31: Over the month of January, Huntsville's black community embraced the efforts of over 250 Alabama A&M and Council High students to fight for racial equality through sit-ins. The Community Service Committee established regular mass meetings every Monday evening and trained students in non-

violent techniques. Activists soon began leading picket lines in front of downtown stores with discriminatory policies, carrying signs with slogans such as "I ordered a hamburger, but they served me a warrant!" or "This is Rocket City, U.S.A., Let Freedom Begin Here!"

- February 4: CORE Field Agents Hank Thomas and Richard Haley Arrested for Picketing at Walgreen's.
- February 13: The State Board of Education, which oversees Alabama A&M, forced University President Dr. Joseph F. Drake into early retirement in response to the role of A&M students in the Huntsville sit-ins. Governor John Patterson, chairman of the State Board, said the school urgently needed a president "who will require discipline, make the students behave themselves and make them study."
- February 14: Due to anxieties over the activism in Huntsville and thanks to the efforts of Alabama Attorney General MacDonald Gallion, the Congress of Racial Equality was outlawed in the state of Alabama. CORE field agents Hank Thomas and Richard Haley ceased their organizing efforts in Huntsville.
- February 27: About 150 civil rights demonstrators gathered at the Madison County Courthouse on the square in Huntsville. There they joined in singing hymns and leading prayers for their cause.
- March 19: Thanks to the fundraising of the Community Service Committee, Martin Luther King spoke at the Negro First Baptist Church on Church Street and later to a crowd of about 2,000 at Oakwood College. He was accompanied by Ralph D. Abernathy, another significant figure in the national civil rights movement.
- April 10: Martha Hereford was six months pregnant and Joan Cashin was accompanied by her four-month-old infant when they were arrested for sitting-in at Walgreen's. They were joined by CSC President

Reverend Ezekiel Bell, Reverend S.F. Lacey, and student activist Frances Sims.

- April 19: After refusing to post bond, Joan Cashin, Martha Hereford, and Francis Sims were placed in the Madison County Jail. Although Huntsville Mayor R.B. Searcy signs an order permitting the release of Hereford and Cashin without bond, the two women refuse to leave until their fellow protestor Sims is released as well. They spend 33 hours in jail before they are released. Just as its organizers had hoped, the event brought attention to the cause as national news outlets picked up the story.
- April 22: Blue Jeans Sunday. Traditionally, Huntsville businesses enjoyed a seasonal boom in business as families would go shopping for clothing in preparation for Easter celebrations. In an act of protest against the discriminatory policies of Huntsville's downtown businesses, African-Americans boycotted clothing stores in the city and instead shopping in neighboring cities such as Fayetteville and Athens. In a show of solidarity, all participants wore plain, cheap blue jeans instead of expensive new sets of "Sunday best" clothing. This activism was a dramatic economic blow to the city's businesses, who counted on the annual Easter rush to boost their profits.
- April 26: Protestors began sit-in campaigns at the Nugget Restaurant, the Krystal, and the A & F Cafeteria.
- April: African-American students took a new approach to protesting segregated movie theaters. Two or three protestors would get in line to buy a movie ticket. When each one reached the counter and asked for a ticket, the clerk inevitably would not sell to him or her because of their race. They went to the back of the line, waited patiently, and asked to buy a ticket once again once they reached the counter. This technique frustrated theater owners, held up lines, and made

moviegoing more inconvenient for those willing to patronize segregated theaters.

- Late April: After months of repeated requests from movement leaders, Huntsville Mayor R.B. Searcy finally agreed to create a biracial committee to address the city's racial problems.
- May: Joe D. Haynes and Joseph Ben Curry, two African-American employees at Marshall Space Flight Center, filed complaints with the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity. They claimed that they had been overlooked for promotions and had been given inappropriate job assignments due to their race.
- May 13: On Mother's Day several families peacefully integrated Big Spring Park, which had previously been open only to whites.
- May 18: Former Huntsville residents and Alabama A&M students gathered in front of the New York Stock Exchange and passed out 1,000 handbills reading "To invest in Huntsville, AL is to invest in segregation." The story increased pressure on Huntsville businesses and was picked up by the Associated Press.
- May 19: Then campaigning for governor, George Wallace spoke at the Huntsville courthouse. Civil rights demonstrators attended the event and released hundreds of balloons carrying messages about Huntsville's discriminatory practices.
- June 1: Rev. Ezekiel Bell, Dr. Hereford, and Martha Hereford drove to Chicago and distributed thousands of handbills at the Mid-West Stock Exchange reading "To invest in Huntsville, AL is to invest in segregation." Copies were mailed from Chicago to members of the Huntsville city council.
- July 9-11: After negotiation with the mayor, about half of Huntsville's restaurants agreed to desegregate at 11:00 a.m. over the course of a three-day trial period.

Small groups of African-Americans were served that day at Liggett's Drug Store, W.T. Grant's, G.C. Murphy, Woolworth's, and other lunch counters.

- July 19: The then-independent student civil rights organization from Alabama A&M University merged with the Community Service Committee.
- October: With the assistance of the NAACP, 35 Huntsville families filed lawsuits to desegregate Huntsville City Schools.
- November 9: The CSC sent a letter to the Superintendent of Huntsville City Schools, pointing out that the African-American child of a Redstone Arsenal employee had been denied entry to his nearest school, the all-white Madison Pike. Instead he had to register across town at Cavalry Hill, an all-black school. Copies were sent to higher officials such as the Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, the Director of the U.S. Commission of Civil Rights, among others.

1963

- Huntsville's population is 105,000.
- Huntsville was one of the ten fastest-growing cities in the country, with the population growing at a rate of 400 people per week.
- At the beginning of 1963 there were only three schools that Huntsville's black students could attend: Councill High with grades 1-12, Cavalry Hill with grades 1-9, and West End with grades 1-6. There were 25 schools for white children in the city.
- January 18: In the first attempt to enforce *Brown v. Board* in Alabama, the U.S. Department of Justice sued Huntsville and Madison County to prevent 500 black children of Redstone Arsenal employees from being barred from attending schools with white children. The case, *United States vs. Madison County Board of Education & City of Huntsville Board of*

Education, was dismissed on a technicality in May of 1963.

- January 18: In his inaugural speech, Alabama Governor George Wallace pledges to uphold “segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever.”
- March 11: Only four families remain on the court case against Huntsville City Schools. Initially the case involved 35 families, but many faced extra discrimination and pressure from the white community as a result of their decision to press for integration. Only four families were left on the case by March. The four were representing the students Sonnie W. Hereford IV, John A. Brewton, Veronica T. Pearson, & David Piggie.
- March 25: Dave McGlathery & Marvin T. Carroll were black employees of Redstone Arsenal. Both applied for admission at UAH but were turned down because they did not meet admission requirements. In May both men would file lawsuits against the University.
- April 3 - May 10: Birmingham Campaign. For over a month, the leaders of Birmingham's civil rights movement organized a slew of activist activities in the city to bring public attention to their cause in hopes of change. Bull Connor, Birmingham's notoriously racist Police Commissioner, reacted with violence at several occasions. Just as organizers had predicted, the violent reactions of Birmingham's white community brought national attention to the severity of the race problem in Alabama.
- May 16: Robert Carl Bailey was hired as the city's first black policeman by a unanimous vote of the City Council and Mayor R.B. Searcy. At the same meeting the Council voted to desegregate the drinking fountains at the Madison County courthouse.

- May 18: President Kennedy toured Huntsville, spoke to a crowd of 10,000 at Redstone and toured MSFC facilities with Wernher von Braun.
- Spring: Huntsville Hospital begins desegregation.
- June: Marshall Space Flight Center begins affirmative action program.
- June 11: Robert Muckel, a 29-year-old white schoolteacher from Nebraska, was the first person to integrate a public educational institution in Alabama when he attended a summer science institute at Alabama A&M College. When Muckel applied for admission he did not realize that A&M was a historically black school and was surprised when he unintentionally broke a barrier in Alabama education.
- June 11: Governor George C. Wallace made his infamous "stand in the schoolhouse door" to block the University of Alabama from admitting black students Vivian Malone & James Hood. Later that day and out of the spotlight, the two successfully enrolled and registered for classes.
- June 13: David McGlathery, a black mathematician working on Redstone Arsenal, enrolled at UAH without incident. Many feared that Governor Wallace would take a stand in Huntsville as he had in Tuscaloosa two days earlier and the National Guard 169th Combat Engineering Group was federalized in anticipation of a fight. McGlathery had no problems enrolling.
- June 18: In a Washington D.C. meeting of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, Attorney General Robert Kennedy insisted that Marshall Space Flight Center take action to remedy the racial inequalities of the Center's workforce.
- June: Leaders from NASA, the Department of Defense and the Civil Service Commission met to address the "lack of equal employment opportunity for Negroes in

Huntsville, Alabama." They decided to take action within the city to ensure more African Americans would be employed in the city's federal industries. The group would conduct surveys of housing and federal employment practices in Huntsville and provide assistance to Alabama A&M and Tuskegee Institute to develop engineering programs. They also met with Huntsville's military contractors to stress the importance of equal employment opportunity. They directed Wernher von Braun to give personal attention to developing programs at Marshall to provide opportunity to black applicants. Later that summer NASA Associate Administrator George Mueller praised MSFC's equal opportunity program as "imaginative and well-rounded."

- July 5: Following the federal example, many of the largest federal contractors in Huntsville met and formed the Association of Huntsville Area Contractors. They agreed upon a goal of racial equality within their businesses and soon began a campaign of work with local high schools and Alabama A&M to make engineering programs available to black students, hoping to increase the number of qualified black applicants for jobs in the space and defense industry. Milton K. Cummings of Brown Engineering served as the committee's spokesman until L.C. McMillian, a black college administrator from Texas, was hired later in 1963 to serve as AHAC's executive director.
- August 13: Judge Grooms of the District Court in Birmingham ruled that Huntsville had to begin integration in September of 1963 and must submit a plan to the court for the desegregation of all city schools. Two weeks later Huntsville presented Grooms with the Freedom-of-Choice plan, in which black students could petition to join a white school starting with 12th grade in 1963 and adding one more grade each year. Grooms rejected this plan, but did accept

an amended plan soon thereafter. The city planned to integrate 1st grade & 10th-12th grades in 1964, 2nd & 9th grades in 1965, 3rd & 8th grades in 1966, 4th & 7th grades in 1967, and 6th grade in 1969.

- August: The hearing officer for the Haynes & Curry discrimination cases found that both men had been victims of racial discrimination during their time at MSFC. He recommended that Haynes be promoted and Curry be reassigned to more appropriate duties. In his report he noted that of 7,335 employees at Marshall, only 52 of them were black. Furthermore, blacks comprised only 0.5% of employees in the more coveted GS-5 through GS-11 positions. He concluded that "a pattern of discrimination has and continues to exist at Marshall."
- September 3: St. Joseph's Catholic School, today known as Holy Family Catholic School, welcomes twelve white students who were the first to enroll in the previously all-black Catholic school. The students and their families were seeking a Catholic education, not necessarily trying to make a statement about civil rights. St. Joseph's was the first integrated private school in the state of Alabama.
- September 3: All Huntsville city schools were scheduled to open for the 1963-1964 school year. Four children involved in the lawsuit planned to integrate their four schools: Sonnie Hereford IV at Fifth Avenue School, Victoria Pearson at Rison Junior High, John Brewton at East Clinton, and David Piggee at Terry Heights. At 6:20 a.m., Alabama state troopers announced on local radio that all schools would be closed, by Governor Wallace's order. Huntsville's Board of Education stated that all city schools should open anyway, but families were shocked to find around 150 state troopers blocking students from entering the four integrated schools. Huntsville's families and leaders were furious at Governor Wallace

for interfering in the city's federally-mandated integration. Huntsville's School Board later announced that school openings would be delayed until Friday September 6.

- September 3: Mobile, Birmingham, and Tuskegee were also under federal orders to integrate. Governor Wallace delayed schools in all four cities and sent state troopers to block students from entering. Huntsville's families of all races were outraged at Wallace's actions.
- September 6: State troopers were waiting for students and families at Fifth Avenue, Rison, East Clinton & Terry Heights on the morning of Friday, September 6. They announced that Governor Wallace had once again closed four of the city's schools rather than allow them to integrate. Huntsville's families were furious! NAACP lawyer Constance Baker Motley, who had helped to file the initial integration suit, immediately left to meet with Judge Grooms in the District Court at Birmingham. There they filed a restraining order against Governor Wallace prohibiting him from interfering in Huntsville's federally-mandated integration.
- September 9: Four black students peacefully integrated four of Huntsville's schools without any resistance: Sonnie Hereford IV at Fifth Avenue School, Victoria Pearson at Rison Junior High, John Brewton at East Clinton, and David Piggee at Terry Heights.
- September 9: Governor Blocks Integration in Tuskegee, Mobile, Birmingham. Whites in these cities applauded the governor's stand against integration and continued to support segregation. In Mobile, white high school students led protests against black enrollment. Birmingham's whites surrounded the schools with crowds shouting segregationist slogans and waving Confederate flags. In Tuskegee, white high schoolers boycotted their integrated school, refusing

to attend and leaving the building empty except for the 13 black students.

Huntsville City Schools: Student Enrollment and percent of Blacks, 1963-1964			
<i>Schools</i>	<i>Total Enrollment</i>	<i>Black Students</i>	<i>% of Blacks</i>
Blossom-wood (1-6)	692		
Bradley (7-9)	746		
Butler (10-12)	1258	3	0.24
Cavalry Hill (1-9)	851	851	100
Chapman Elementary (1-6)	1135		
Councill (1-12)	1129	1129	100
Davis Hills Elementary (1-6)	994		
Davis Hills Junior High (7-9)	704		

Hamlin: Huntsville Civil Rights Timeline

East Clinton (1-6)	551	1	0.18
Fifth Avenue (1-6)	639	1	0.16
Highlands (1-6)	697		
Huntsville High (10-12)	1246	1	0.08
Huntsville Junior High (7-9)	851		
Lakewood (1-6)	964		
Lee (9-12)	1305		
Lincoln (1-6)	551		
Madison Pike (1-6)	1114	5	0.45
Monte Sano (1-6)	271		
Ridgecrest (1-6)	1334		
Rison (7-8)	521	1	0.19
Terry Heights (1-6)	575	1	0.17
University Place (1-6)	627		

Weatherly Heights (1-6)	620		
West End (1-6)	383	383	100
West Huntsville (1-6)	641		
Westlawn Junior High (7-9)	920	1	0.001
Whitesburg Elementary (1-6)	1174		
Whitesburg Junior High (7-9)	708		
Total	23201	2377	

1964

- January 18: Beginning in the Spring semester of 1964, 10 more of Huntsville's black students enrolled in previously all-white schools. Six students entered at Madison Pike Elementary, 1 at Westlawn Junior High, 1 at Huntsville High, and 2 at Butler High. This made a total of 14 black students attending schools that were previously all-white.
- July 27: Judge Grooms in Birmingham was not satisfied with Huntsville's attempts to integrate. He ruled that the city must make an effort to educate the public about the application for transfer to white schools and recommended publishing an announcement in the *Huntsville Times*.

- August 28: Madison County Schools made its first move toward desegregation when four black students enrolled in Sparkman High School for the fall semester of 1964.
- October 29: After NASA Administrator James Webb announced that Huntsville's racial climate had to improve in order to keep NASA in Alabama, the CSC responded with a glowing telegram thanking him for his support.

1965

- May: Dr. John Cashin reported to the CSC mass meeting that City Solicitor Charles Younger had told him, "It isn't my job to give you any assistance, boy, you'd better stay in your place if you know what's good for you."
- June 14: An article in the *New York Times* praised MSFC Director Wernher von Braun for supporting an end to racial segregation in Alabama. In April and May he had bluntly warned the state's leaders that if Alabama continued its resistance to federal desegregation mandates, the multi-million-dollar federal space research industry in Alabama could be negatively affected or even cancelled completely.
- July 6: The Citizens' Council was an all-white community organization formed to maintain racial segregation and inequality. The speaker at their July 6 public meeting was Sheriff Jim Clark of Selma, a man notorious for his defense of segregation. Dr. John Cashin led 16 black protestors and about 20 white supporters to the meeting where they joined the audience, shocking the segregationists who led the meeting. When the white leaders asked Huntsville's Police Chief W.F. Dyer to remove the black audience members, he refused because the meeting was held on city property open to the public. The protestors sat calmly in the audience through the meeting as Jim Clark and others fumed over the intrusion.

- U.S. Civil Service Commission establishes Summer Employment of Youth program at Redstone Arsenal to employ needy local high school and college students of all races.

1966

- April: U.S. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach moved to have Huntsville City Schools completely desegregated by September of 1966.
- The city's plans for desegregation were less effective once North Huntsville's white families moved en masse into South Huntsville, further reinforcing the naturally segregated white and black neighborhood schools.
- Redstone Arsenal hires its first black interns in the Civilian Personnel Program, Mr. John Nelson & Mr. Leroy Daniels.

1967

- April 6: The U.S. Justice Department was not satisfied with Huntsville's token progress toward school desegregation, so they filed a suit in District Court ordering complete desegregation of the city's schools by the next fall. This pushed the city's goal to 2 years ahead of the present plan.
- September 21: The Dept of Justice, as an intervener in the *Hereford v. HCS* case, filed formal complaints against the Huntsville City Board of Education, accusing them of establishing freedom-of-choice procedures which, allegedly, were dishonest, created a terrible situation, and resulted in an unfair burden on black parents.
- Huntsville City Schools desegregates its faculty in the 1967-1968 school year.

1968

- April 5: The entire nation mourned the death of Martin Luther King Jr. In Huntsville, over 500 college

students from Oakwood College & Alabama A&M marched along with a police escort to the courthouse for a candlelight service in King's memory.

1969

- John Nelson appointed as the Army's first ever Equal Employment Opportunity Action Officer, working under Luther Adams, Civilian Personnel Officer, to ensure that careers at Redstone are accessible to qualified applicants of all races.
- July 20: Huntsville joined the nation in celebrating Apollo 11's successful landing on the Moon. The city took special pride in the event because of MSFC's critical role in developing the Saturn V rocket that carried Apollo 11 into space.
- Fall: The NAACP filed a lawsuit through the Civil Rights Department of the U.S. Government, charging that Huntsville City Schools had failed to comply with the 1963 court decision to integrate.

Huntsville City Schools: Student Enrollment and percent of Blacks, 1969-1970			
<i>Schools</i>	<i>Total Enrollment</i>	<i>Black Students</i>	<i>Percent of Blacks</i>
Blossomwood (1-6)	757	31	4.1
Butler (10-12)	2464	271	11
Cavalry Hill (1-9)	970	968	99.79
Chaffee (1-6)	651	19	2.92
Chapman (1-9)	2089	122	5.84
Colonial Hills (1-6)	691	223	32.27

Councill (1-6)	174	164	94.25
Davis Hills (1-9)	2106	248	11.78
East Clinton (1-6)	429	20	4.66
Ed White (7-9)	1058	76	7.18
Farley (1-6)	214	33	15.42
Fifth Avenue (1-6)	479	76	15.87
Grissom (9-12)	1590	11	0.69
Highlands (1-6)	997	64	6.42
Huntsville High (10-12)	1658	91	5.49
Huntsville Middle (7-8)	891	89	9.99
Jones Valley (1-6)	825	7	0.85
Lakewood (1-6)	885	83	9.38
Lee (9-12)	1767	181	10.24
Lincoln (1-6)	506	48	9.49
Madison Pike (1-6)	1072	39	3.64
McDonnell (1-6)	772	50	6.93
Monte Sano (1-6)	216	0	0
Montview (1-6)	646	19	2.94
Mountain Gap (1-9)	1081	17	1.57
Ridgecrest (1-6)	1114	24	2.15

Hamlin: Huntsville Civil Rights Timeline

Rolling Hills (1-6)	1222	282	23.08
Stone (7-9)	1093	218	19.95
Terry Heights (1-6)	651	264	40.55
University Place (1-6)	772	56	7.25
Weatherly Heights (1-6)	1045	13	1.24
West End (1-3)	149	149	100
West Huntsville (1-6)	650	172	26.46
Westlawn Jr. High (7-9)	840	19	2.14
West Mastin Lake (106)	1003	88	8.77
Whitesburg (1-9)	1814	8	0.44
Total	35291	4242	12.02

1970

- Huntsville was sad to hear that their beloved Wernher von Braun would be leaving Marshall Space Flight Center to move to a new position at NASA's headquarters in Washington, D.C.
- August: The Department of Justice filed yet another motion requesting that Huntsville's Board of Education take further action to desegregate the school system. The Justice Department argued that a dual school system still existed in Huntsville and that the Freedom-of-Choice plan should be abolished in the school system.

- August: Redstone Arsenal is commended for hiring more than 70 graduates of Alabama A&M University over the last 3 years of their equal employment opportunity initiatives.
- September: As the new school year began, all but 589 black students were enrolled in previously all-white schools.
- September 2: Judge Grooms ordered the Huntsville Board of Education to work with the Office of Health, Education & Welfare to prepare a plan for a new school system that would be completely unitary, ensuring complete equality of the races.
- October: After reviewing Huntsville's case, HEW Program Officer Robert Morris submitted his new plan for a unitary Huntsville school system. He recommended closing one school and redistricting the students attending Cavalry Hill school, including reassigning many to new schools. He also required Huntsville City Schools to transport some black Terry Heights students into white-majority schools. Huntsville's white residents immediately balked at the plan. Huntsville City Schools denounced it entirely and refused to enact the changes.
- November: Suit filed, *Ralph A. Root, Jr., et al. v. Joseph Stowers, Superintendent of City Schools, et al.* - pleading a motion that the court prohibit the BOE from enforcing the school zoning regulations for the 70-71 year. Dismissed.
- December 1: Hearing to hear a motion of intervention filed by parents of children at University Place School in the zoning dispute.

1971

- Of all Army installations nationwide, Redstone Arsenal had highest percentage of black interns on track to become high-level employees.

- January: Police and black students clash at a Butler High School basketball game. Police arrested a Butler teen for allegedly making a telephone bomb threat to the school.
- March: Robert Morris of HEW submits two new desegregation plans for Huntsville City Schools. One proposed combining many of the Huntsville elementary and junior high schools, while the other allowed zones to remain the same but added bus transportation by Huntsville City Schools.
- April 23: Fletcher Sheldon becomes first black man to serve on Huntsville City School Board
- June 26: Judge Grooms ruled to prohibit students at Butler High School to display Confederate flags or sing the Confederate battle song *Dixie* in support of their mascot the Rebels.
- August 2: Many Butler High School students rallied and marched, waving Confederate flags to show their disapproval of Judge Grooms's ruling that the Butler High Rebels could no longer sing *Dixie* or use the Confederate flag. Other students marched to show their support of the change.

1972

- Changes to the school zoning plan would have sent many white students to previously all-black Cavalry Hill School. Instead, many of these white students left the public education system entirely and attended private church schools instead. In an effort to offset this movement, the school system determined that it would make Cavalry Hill an exemplary school. The school was staffed with the most experienced staff, and provided with funding for an enhanced curriculum including industrial arts, career education, art & music in an attempt to draw white students back to the school.

1973

- Missile Command Upward Mobility program established at Redstone to offer training opportunities for lower-grade Redstone employees of all races, making them eligible for future promotions.

1974

- May 16: The city was required to submit all plans for school rezoning to the Department of Justice for approval before they could take effect. Due to the huge growth of the city, Huntsville often had to resubmit new zoning plans by the time they were evaluated.
- July 10: The Department of Justice agreed to a modified zoning plan, sending 6th & 8th grade students from predominantly-black Cavalry Hill to attend predominantly-white Ed White Middle.
- August 14: Judge Grooms approved of the proposed changes to Huntsville's school system.
- August 30: Despite Judge Grooms's approval of Huntsville's zoning plan, the Justice Department did not feel the plan was sufficient and appealed the decision.
- November 20: Judge Grooms rules that Huntsville must take further steps to better integrate Cavalry Hill School.

1975

- January 28: The Huntsville Board of Education submitted a modified plan to Judge Grooms that would reorganize the Cavalry Hill school zone in accordance with the federal requirements.
- February 12: The Citizens for Neighborhood Schools, an organization of over 350 Huntsville parents, filed a motion to block the new zoning plan for Cavalry Hill School.
- March 17: Under the terms of the new plan, 7 school buses moved black and white students between Cavalry Hill, Montview, Highlands, and University

Place schools to integrate the student bodies. Parents opposed to the plan picketed the School Board Central Office, but kept their protest peaceful.

1977

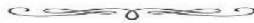
- Prior to desegregation, there was only one private school in Huntsville. By 1977 there were 23 primarily all-white church and private schools that offered an alternative education for families opposed to the public school system.

1984

- Leroy Daniels becomes first black Civilian Personnel Officer at Redstone Arsenal, managing entire civilian workforce on Redstone Arsenal.

2018

- Huntsville City Schools remains under judicial supervision under a consent order until it reaches satisfactory conditions across the schools' system and can prove it does not operate a dual system. More information available at www.hsvdac.com.



Meet the Author

Kelly Hamlin graduated with a degree in U.S. History from Sewanee: The University of the South in 2010, and subsequently completed her Master's degree in Public History at the University of Alabama in Huntsville in 2015. Her work and research has taken her from the National Archives to the world of living history, with a particular focus on digging up untold stories in local history. Kelly is Project Director for Rocket City Civil Rights; a project continuing the work of her Master's Thesis to document and share Huntsville's civil rights era history. She was nominated for the 2019, Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society's Dr. John Rison Jones Award for

Southern History and is the founder and director of Wolf Gap Education Outreach, a southern Tennessee nonprofit organization providing hands-on history and nature education programs.