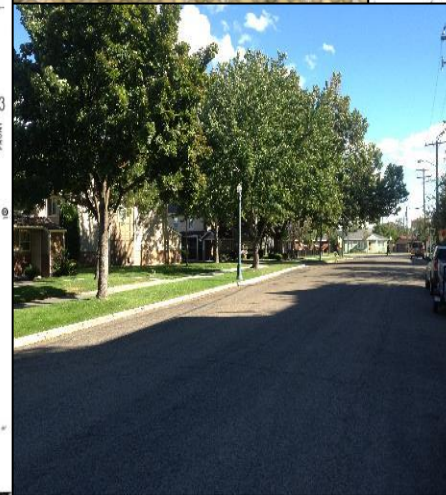
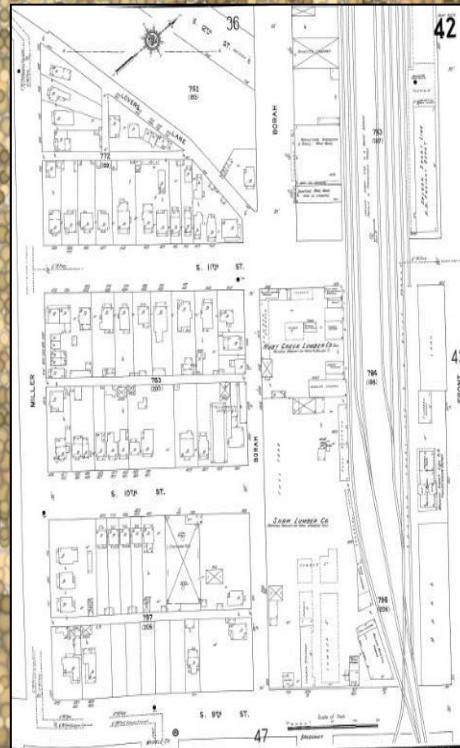


Introducing: the River Street Digital History Project

William A.
White, III

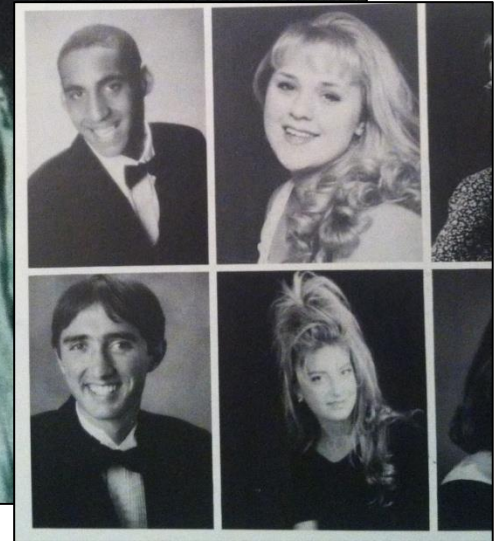
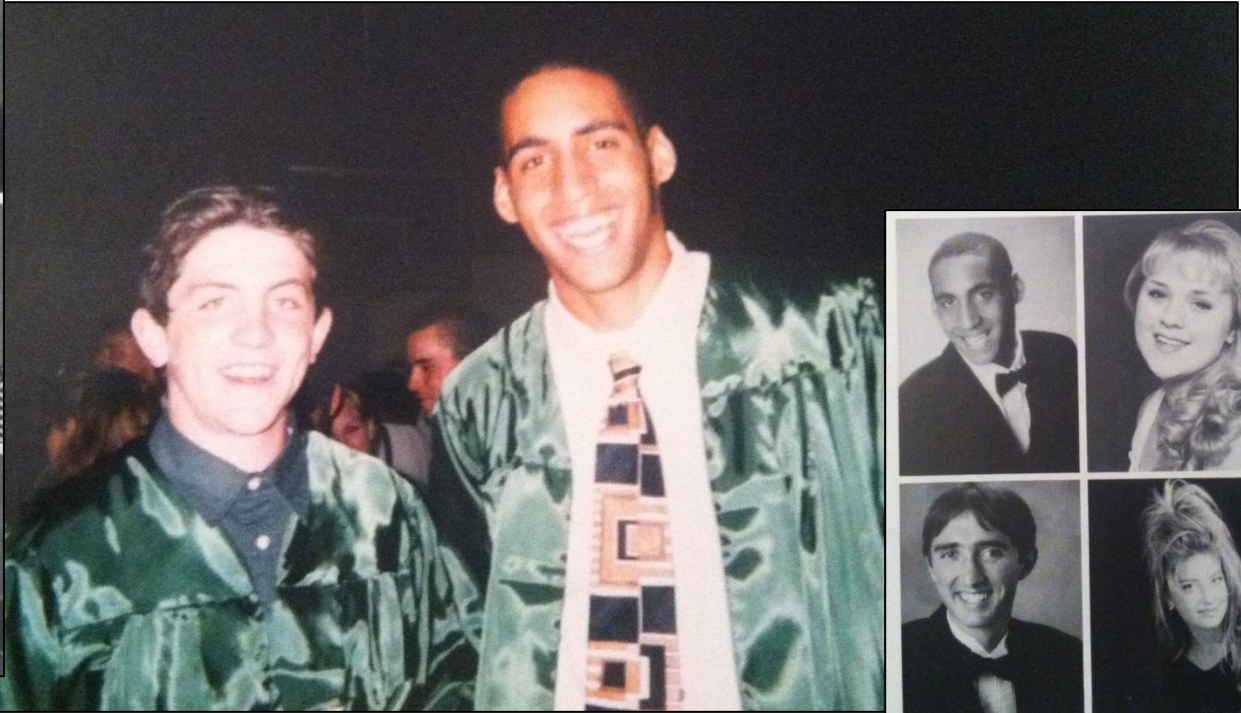
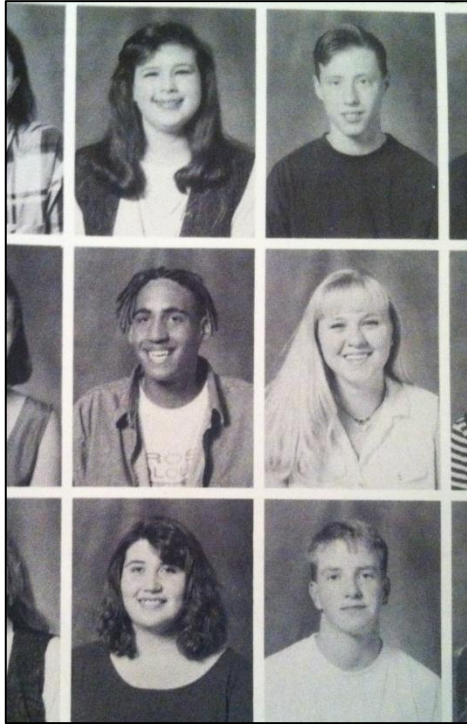
PhD Student
School of
Anthropology
University of
Arizona
Tucson, Arizona



CHARLES REDD CENTER
FOR WESTERN STUDIES

BOISE CITY
DEPT OF ARTS
& HISTORY

About Bill White, III



- Grew up in Boise
- Graduated from Borah, Boise State, and the University of Idaho
- Always wanted to be an archaeologist
- Am currently a PhD student at the University of Arizona



About the Project:

- Initially conceived in 2003 as a graduate student at the University of Idaho
- 2006– Pam Demo’s thesis “Boise’s River Street Neighborhood- Lee and Ash Streets”
- Mateo Osa (1981) *Survey of River Street Neighborhood*
- Susan Stacy (1995) *River Street Area Reconnaissance Area*
- Boise State History Department websites

River Street Digital History Project Goals:

- Create an online compendium of information related to the River Street Neighborhood
- Collaborate with former residents
- Provide space for descendants to document their history
- Share history of the neighborhood with the rest of the world



Descendants Warner Terrell (left) and Dick Madry (right) in River Street, summer 2014

Boise Department of Arts and History Grant

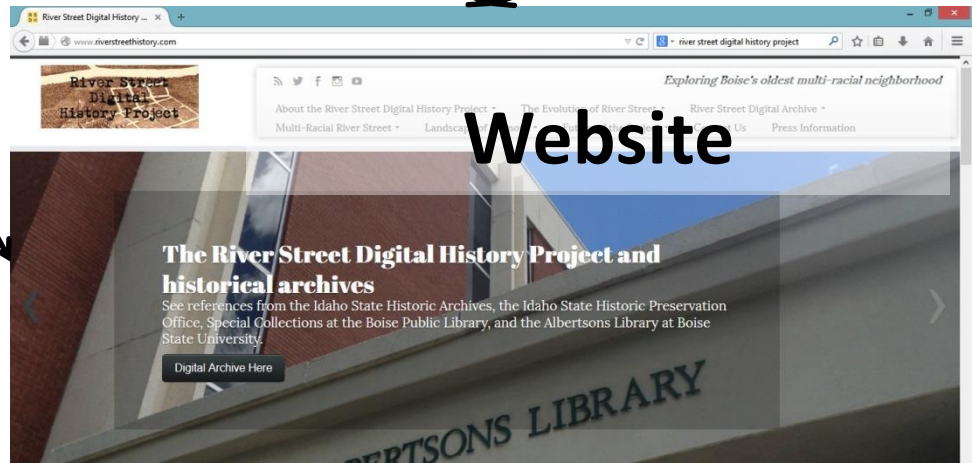
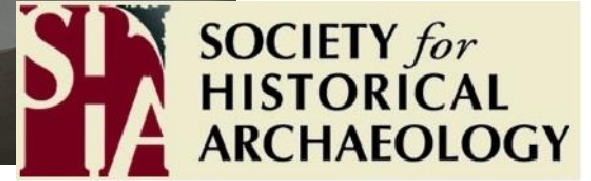
Generously funded 2014 fieldwork, website creation, and forthcoming publication

Travel funded by Charles Redd Center for Western History at Brigham Young University

Additional funding provided by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Arizona



Archival Research



Website



About the River Street Digital History Project

The River Street Digital History project centers on the creation of a website designed to disseminate digital copies of existing archival data, short segments of newly collected oral history interviews,

...

[Read more »](#)



River Street Digital Archive

During the summer of 2014, a wealth of archival documents were digitized in preparation for their dissemination via this website. This website owes a debt of gratitude to the employees of the Idaho State

...

[Read more »](#)



Multi-Racial River Street

From the late nineteenth century to the 1960s, a diverse group of Boiseans called River Street home. Interviews with some of the neighborhoods current and former residents revealed a community where persons ...

[Read more »](#)



Navigation

- > About the River Street Digital History Project
 - > Previous River Street Studies
 - > Acknowledgements/Funding
 - > Data Collection and Distribution Strategies

Website has 6 main sections



About the River Street Digital History Project



Race relations remains a central issue in American politics, economics, and culture. Interactions between African Americans and Euroamericans has been a focal point of historical archaeology for the last 30 years. The River Street Digital History Project is centered on the River Street Neighborhood, which was the historical home for most of the non-white population of Boise. This research will focus on two principal questions:

What role did race play in the lives of River Street Neighborhood residents?

How did the racialization of African Americans by Euroamericans effect the creation of whiteness as a racial construct?

The River Street Digital History project centers on the creation of a website designed to disseminate digital copies of existing archival data, short segments of newly collected oral history interviews, and photographs from private collections. The website also supports a Google Earth-based Global Information System (GIS) plugin that will be used to create a self-guided or virtual tour of the River Street Neighborhood using a smartphone, tablet, or computer. The Google Earth tour will also be linked to the reminiscences of former neighborhood residents in such a way that tourists will be able to see family photographs and listen to audio files describing a number of historical locations as they once were. The final result will be a comprehensive compendium of historical data in an easily accessible format that highlights the interesting and unique history of Boise's largest multi-ethnic and multi-racial enclave.

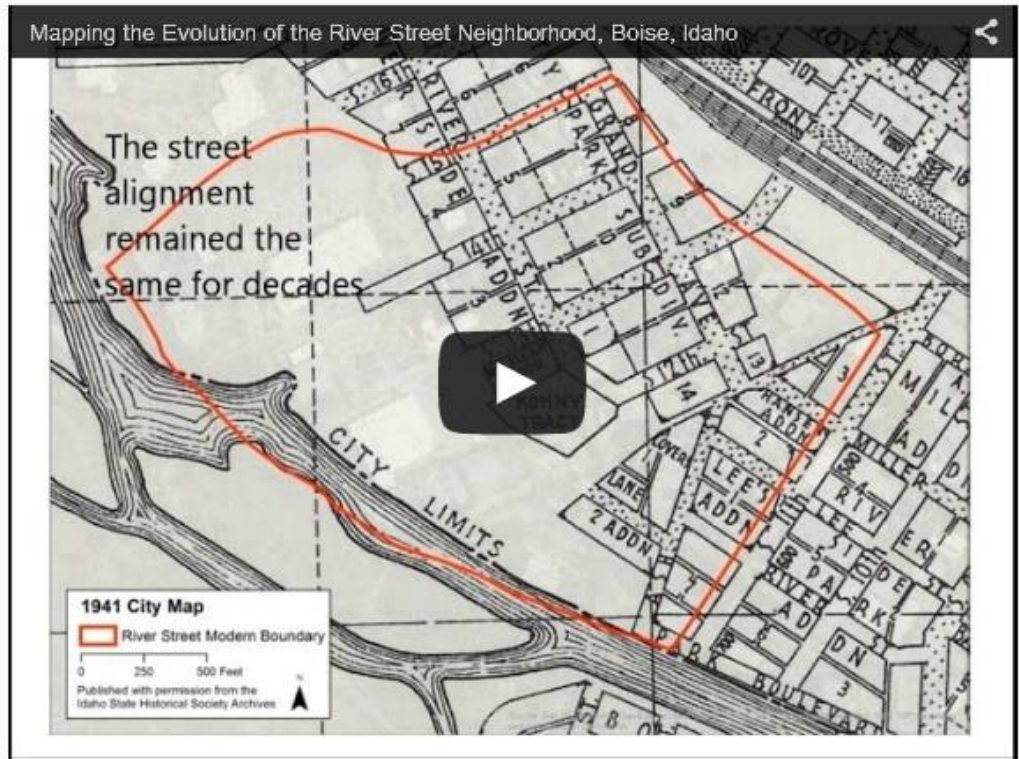
Acknowledgement of funding sources, data collection strategies, and project goals

History of River Street from prehistory to present

- Within Western Shoshone territory
- Part of John McClellan's homestead until 1890s
- Railroad arrives in 1887; River Street platted: Riverside, Miller, City Park Additions in 1890s
- 1900s– 1920s– River Street becomes working-class residential neighborhood
- 1940s—African American soldiers live in neighborhood
- 1950s—1960s— Neighborhood thrives as multi-racial place
- 1970s– decline and urban renewal



The Evolution of River Street





River Street Digital Archive



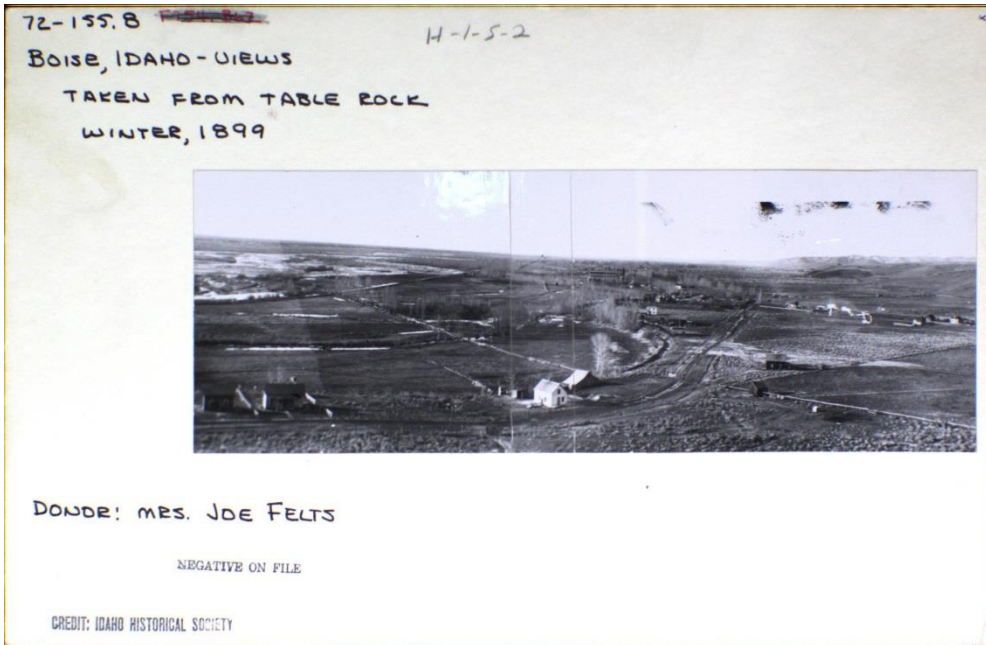
paint pictures in my mind.

History brought into the Digital Age

We've all heard stories from our grandparents and older relatives about the "Old Days." I sure do. I can recall sitting in the living room listening to my grandparents, great aunts, and great uncles talk about the way things used to be. How our families came to live where they do today, who's related to whom, and great deeds done in bygone days. I sat with rapt attention, hanging on their every word— doing my best to imagine the setting of those stories— in the process, doing the best to

NAME: STEWART, Bessie
DATE: December 17, 1980
INTERVIEWER: Mateo Osa
LOCATION: Boise, Idaho

INTRODUCTION: This is an interview with Bessie Stuart



NAME: BUCKNER, DOROTHY
DATE: January 23, 1981
LOCATION: Boise, Idaho
INTERVIEWER: Mateo Osa
SUBJECT: Lea Street
REEL NO.: 375
OH NO.: 562





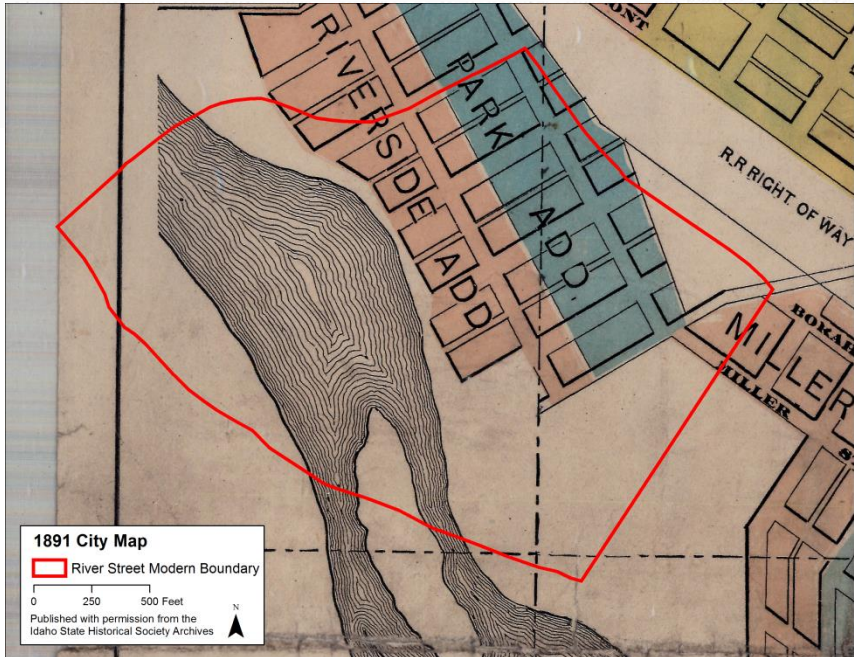
Landscape of Memory



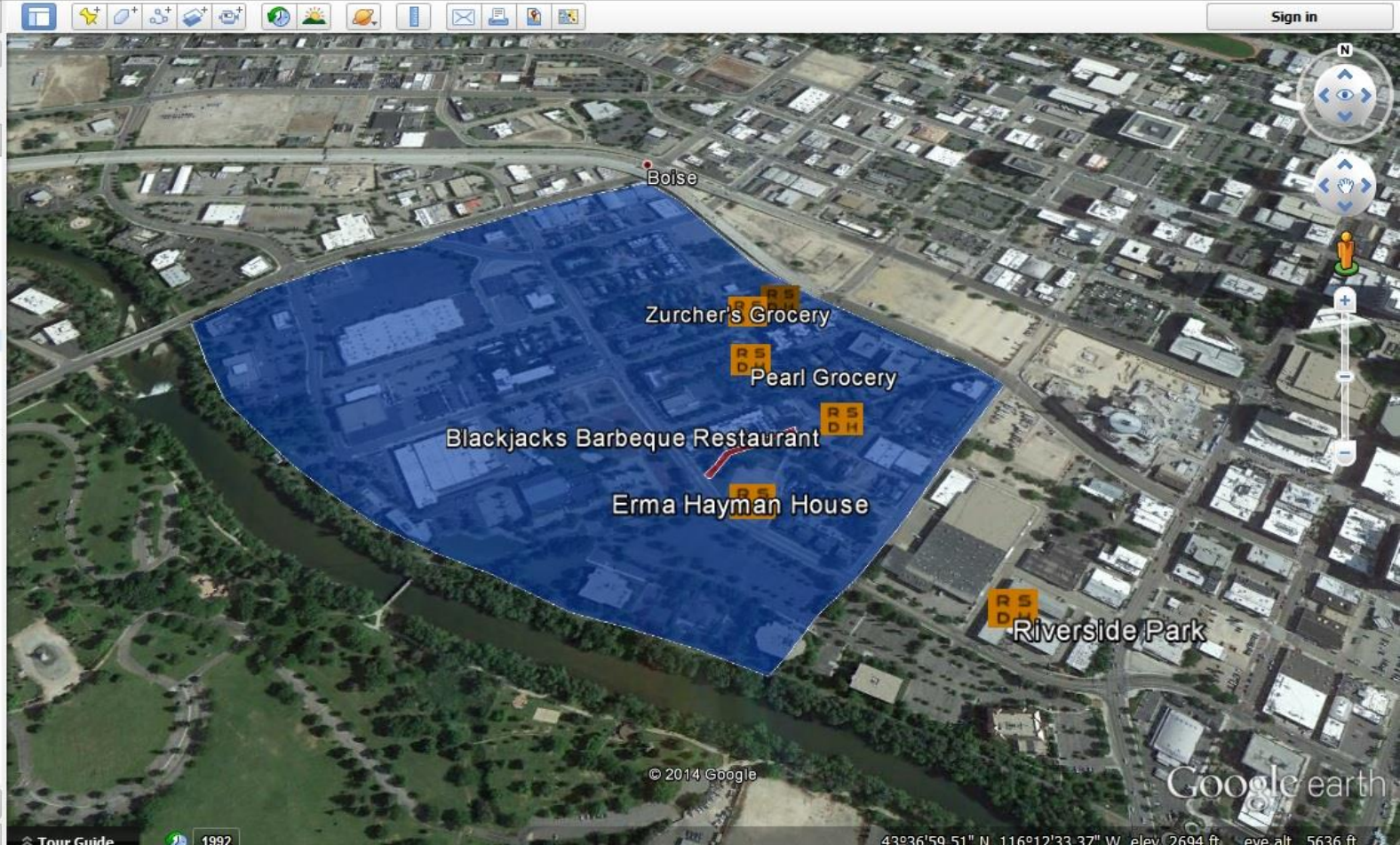
[Click Here](#) and learn how you can take a Google Earth tour and download overlay maps of the River Street Neighborhood

The Concept of Memoryscapes

What the heck is a memoryscape? It's a term I borrowed from geography, but it refers to a phenomenon that we all are familiar with. Human beings exist on a living planet. Earth would exist with or without us. However, we are unable to know the natural world in which we live without viewing it through the lens of our experiences and our culture. We relate to the world around us—our houses, streets, offices, hiking paths, and the rest of the world—based on the things we've done, stuff we've heard, and the social rules that guide our conduct (these rules of conduct are also part of our culture). Landscapes are human constructs that come from the perspective of our culture because culture is embedded so *owing the terrain upon which we live.*



- My Places
- Sightseeing Tour
 - Make sure 3D Buildings layer is checked
- River Street Walking Tour
- River Street Google Earth Tour
- 1_Idaho.kmz
- 2_Boise, Idaho.kmz
- 3_River Street Boundaries To...
- River Street Boundaries To...
- 4_Original Neighborhood Bo...
- 5_Warehouses.kmz
- 6_Former Residential Core.kmz
- 7_Approximate floodplain.kmz
- 8_Approximate boundary of ...
- 9_Riverside Park.kmz
- 10_Lover's Lane/Pioneer Stre...
- 11_Blackjacks Barbeque Rest...
- 12_Pearl Grocery.kmz
- 13_Zurcher's Grocery.kmz
- 14_Erma Hayman House.kmz
- 15_John Bertram House.kmz
- 16_Gravel Pit.kmz
- 17_Lee Street.kmz
- River Street Plats and City Maps
- Temporary Places





Multi-Racial River Street



From the late nineteenth century to the 1960s, a diverse group of Boiseans called River Street home. Interviews with some of the neighborhoods current and former residents revealed a community where persons of all races and creeds were judged based on the content of their character. In this place where Boise's "others" were permitted to live, River Street residents found a way to get along and interact against a backdrop of a less permissive society.

Here are highlights from some of River Street's former residents' reminiscences. The complete audio recordings of these interviews will be available for public

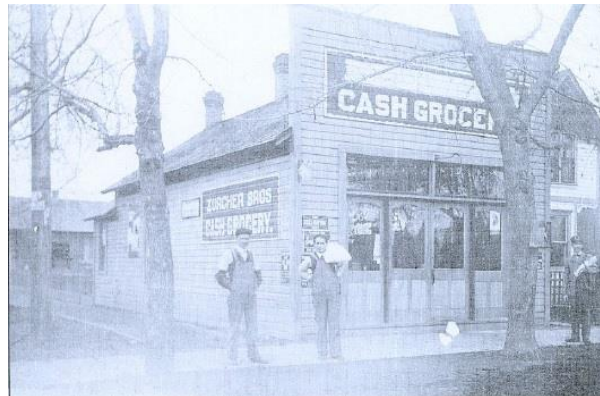
viewing at the Idaho State Historical Society's Archives in Boise.

[Click Here](#) if you want to see a summary of the oral history interview with Dick Madry

[Click Here](#) if you want to see a summary of the oral history interview with John Bertram

[Click Here](#) if you want to see a summary of the oral history interview with Lee Rice, II

[Click Here](#) if you want to see a summary of the oral history interview with Warner Terrell, III



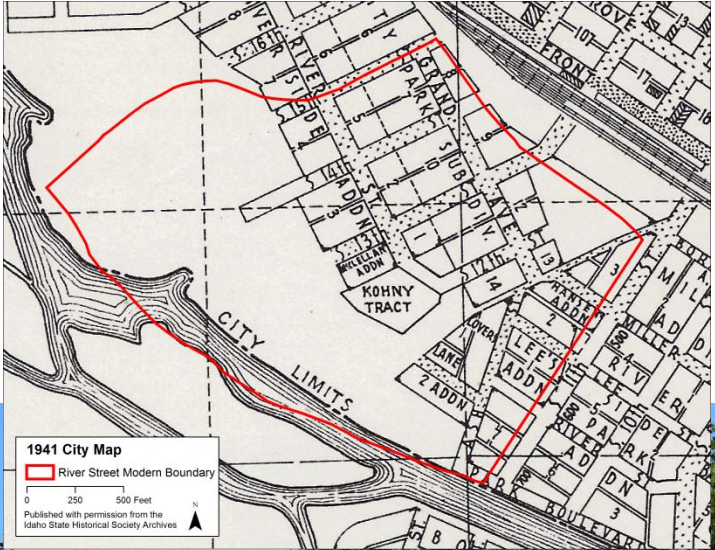
Findings:

First and foremost, River Street was a vibrant, multi-racial community



Findings:

River Street was essential to race differentiations in Boise



Findings:

Understanding how race is created is important for our understandings of race in the modern world; River Street provides a unique case study



Protester and police in Ferguson, MO (2014)

Future Research:

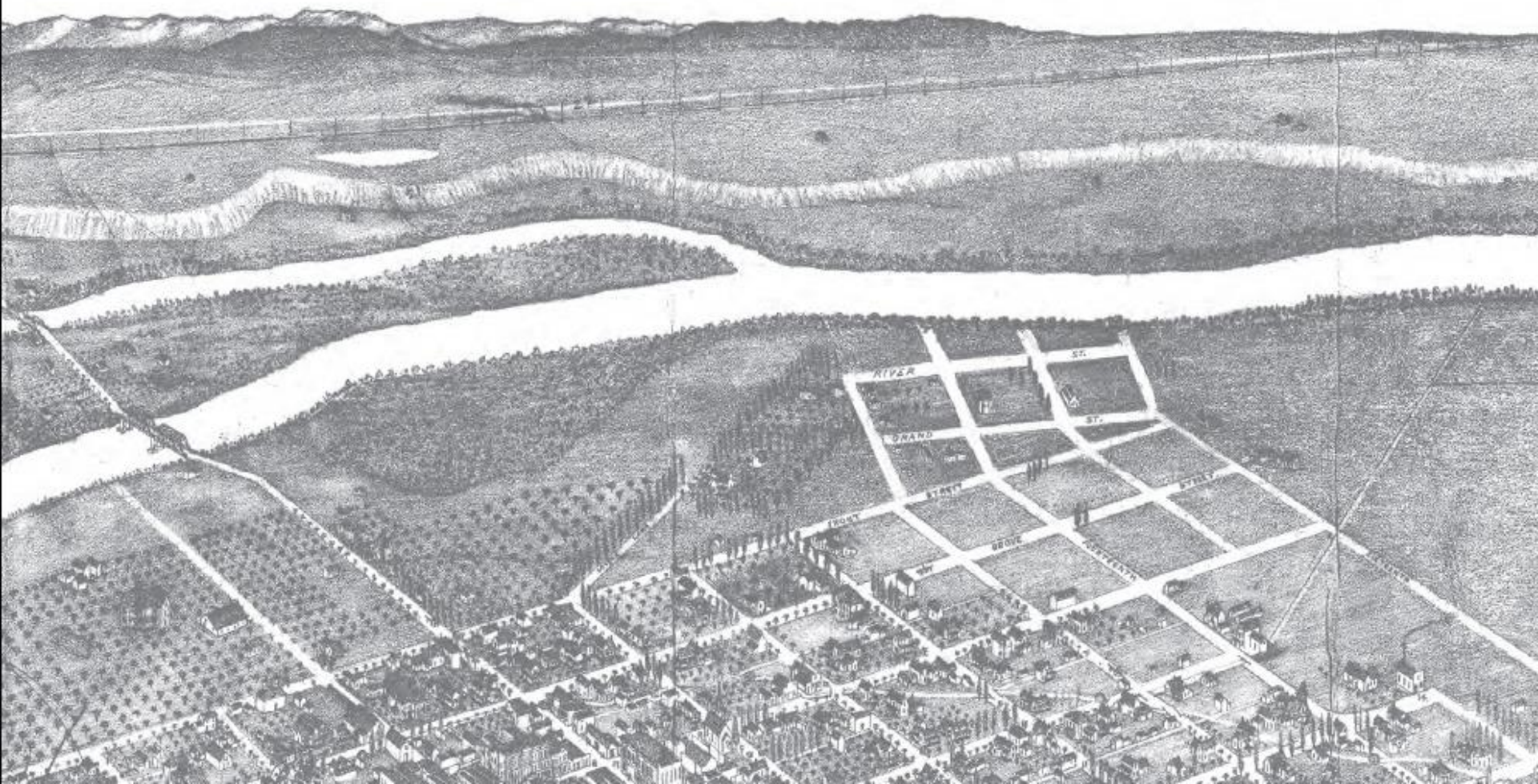
- Complete paperback and eBook of the project findings from 2014
- Continue collecting oral history interviews and digitizing materials
- Continue adding to website
- Poster at 2015 Society for Historical Archaeology Conference in Seattle
- Public archaeology project at the Erma Hayman House
- Finish dissertation
- Expand project to heritage conservation program



*Erma Hayman House
(2014)*

Living on the South Side of the Tracks: The River Street Digital History Project and Boise, Idaho

William A. White, III



Acknowledgements:

- Warner Terrell, III, Dick Madry, John Bertram and Lee Rice, II for their time and stories
- Dr. Jill Gill at Boise State University for her guidance and assistance
- Pam Demo for sharing her compendium of information
- The South Side of the Tracks Kids who allowed me to attend their 2013 reunion
- Members of St. Paul Baptist Church
- Michal Davidson and the rest of the staff at the Idaho State Historical Society Archives
- Belinda Davis, Mary Anne Davis, and Shannon Vihlene at the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office for helping me even though I didn't have an appointment
- Cannon Daughtrey and Rita Sulkosky for their awesome GIS and map digitization work

- Most importantly, Ann Fackler, Rachael Reichert, Terri Schorzman, and rest of the staff at the Boise City Department of Arts and History