

THE DEUCES — THROUGH THE YEARS

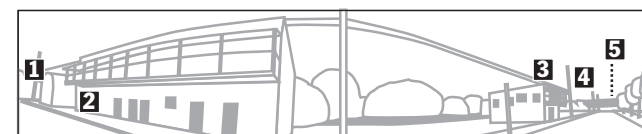


This photo is made from four separate photos stitched together in digital software, giving it a fishbowl appearance. The view is of 22nd Street looking west, starting at 10th Avenue S at the Boys and Girls Club (far left round shape – the old Royal Theater) and moving north to the Interstate 275 overpass.

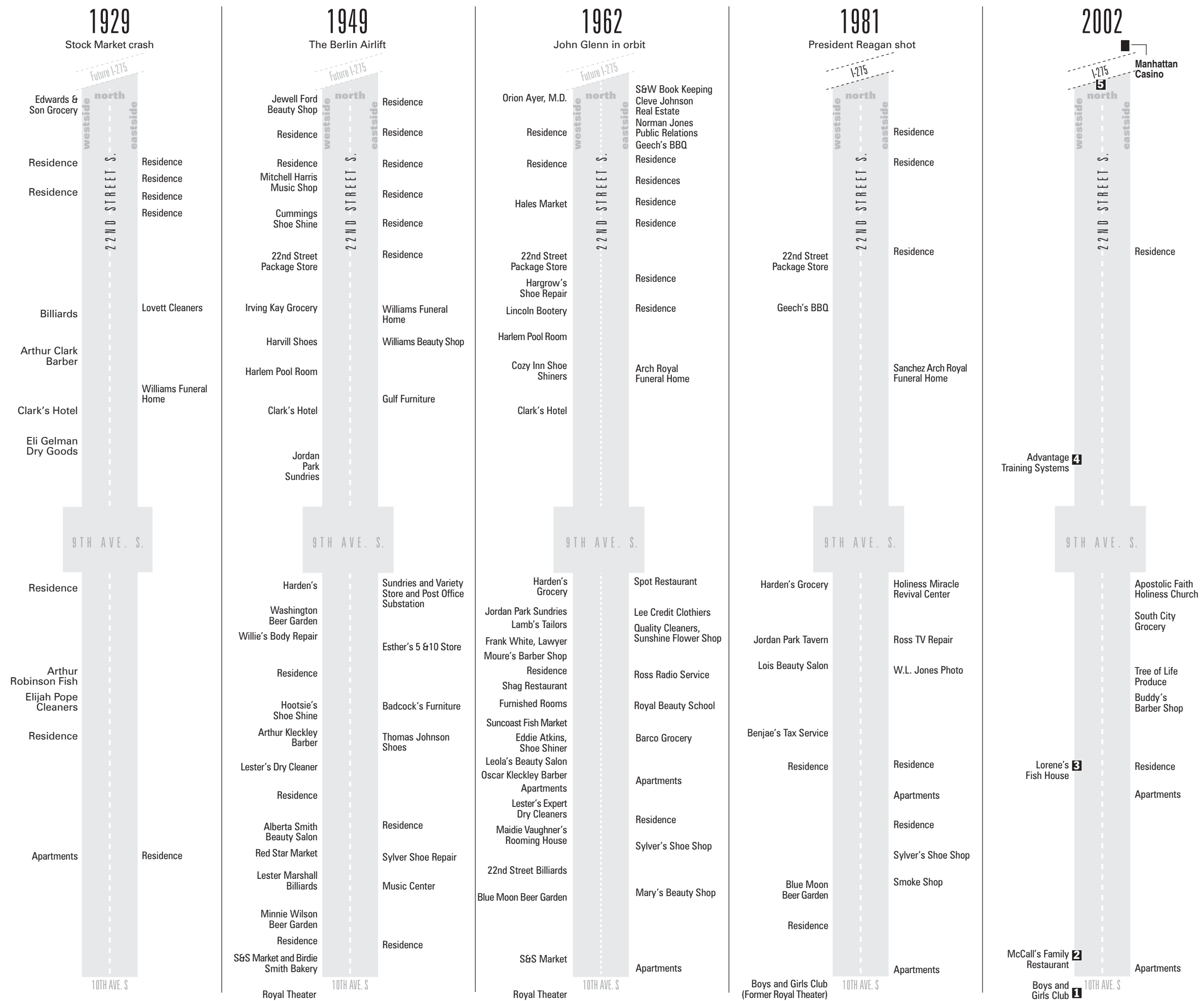
Times photo — JACK ROWLAND

THE STORY OF TWO BLOCKS

In 1962, you could step out your door, cross the street and get a shoe shine at Cozy Inn, then lunch at the Shag, and later, get a haircut at Oscar Kleckley's. You could visit your lawyer and buy groceries at Barco's store. Dr. Orion Ayer could examine you. When it was too late for that, you could make your funeral arrangements at the Arch Royal. Here's how two blocks of The Deuces evolved through the years.



IN PHOTO: 1. Boys and Girls Club (Old Royal Theater) 2. McCall's Family Restaurant, 3. Lorene's Fish House 4. Advantage Training Systems 5. Interstate 275



INCOMPLETE INTEGRATION

Sharply defined black neighborhoods emerged early in the city's history, as shown in the migration charts on this page. Through the years, St. Petersburg's African-American population has hovered around 20 percent of the city's total. With each civil rights victory, fragments of those communities spread over a wider area. But it was an incomplete integration. Black and white people came together in schools, in the workplace and in a few neighborhoods. However, the city didn't become one community,

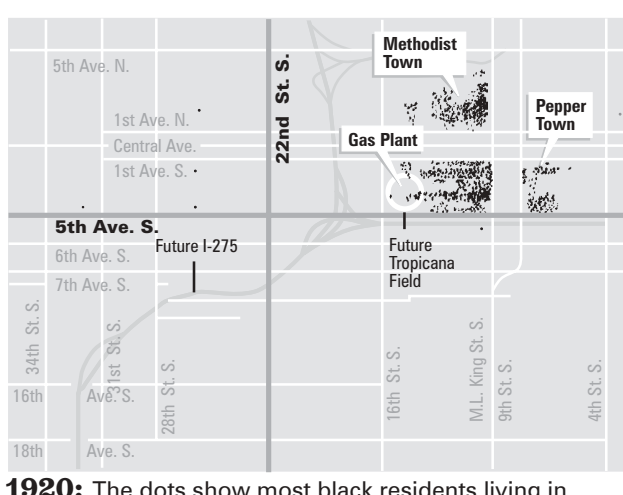
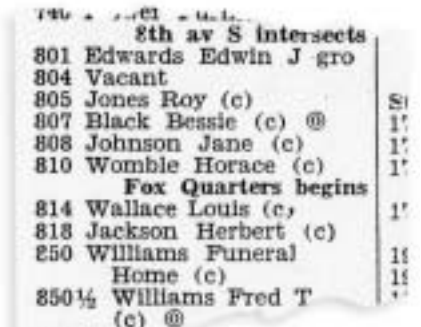
especially in where people live. St. Petersburg's 2000 census shows a concentration of minorities in several abutting neighborhoods in the city's central section. The 22nd Street neighborhood for years has been among the city's lowest in median income. Civil rights advances during the 1950s and 1960s opened new doors for African-Americans, who started attending integrated movies, eating in formerly segregated restaurants and shopping in stores that once catered to whites only. During the 1960s, a trickle of black students began to integrate St. Petersburg schools. In 1971, federal court-ordered busing demolished school segregation here.

People began moving away from old neighborhoods because they were able to — or sometimes forced to — and neighborhoods such as 22nd's began to dissolve. In some places, a sense of community was traded for integration. Twenty-Second Street was already in steep decline when Interstate 275 pushed through its heart in the early 1980s, uprooting houses and businesses. The chart above illustrates the effect on 22nd Street's business district. Relocating often meant better houses for people, but when the interstate crossed 22nd, it shoved out longtime businesses, made it harder to reach others

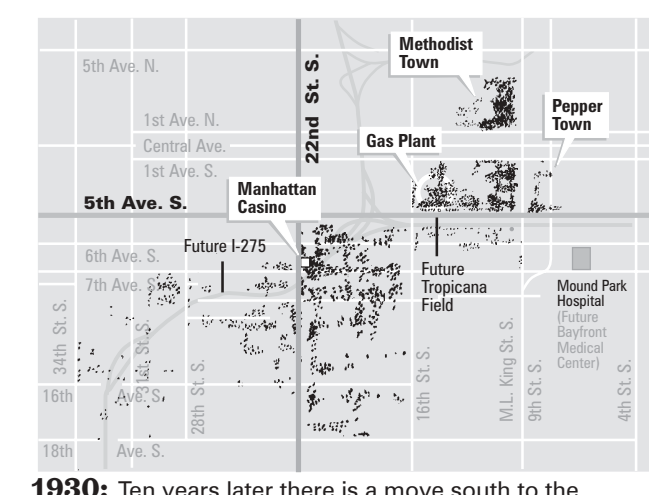
and threw a noisy divide across the neighborhood. "I think it was intended to destroy 22nd," said Moses Holmes, a retired National Education Association lobbyist. "I think it was the primary intent. I think that most African-Americans feel that way." The interstate also displaced a number of families in white neighborhoods, but there was little conspiracy talk. With resignation, they mostly accepted that big projects are bound to be routed where property values mean rights of way can be purchased most cheaply — or where there is less clout to fight City Hall.

MIGRATION TO 22ND STREET SOUTH

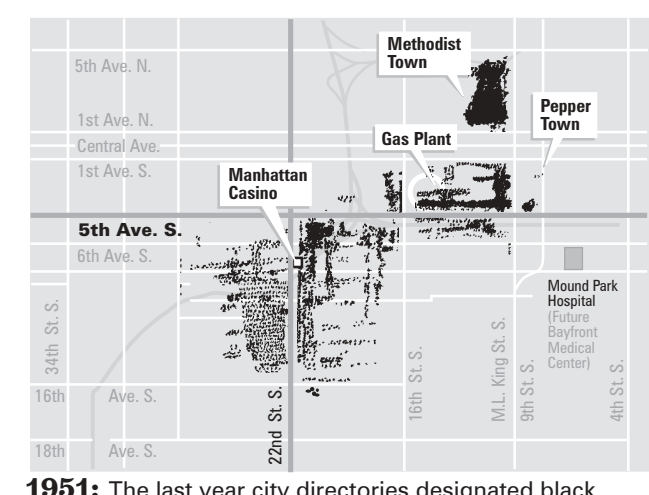
Prior to 1952, St. Petersburg city directories listed African-Americans with a "c" in parenthesis after the name (below). Using these directories we plotted where black families lived in 1920, 1930 and 1951.



1920: The dots show most black residents living in the Gas Plant and Methodist Town sections.



1930: Ten years later there is a move south to the area around 22nd Street S.



1951: The last year city directories designated black residents shows the buildup around 22nd Street.