



This is a brief historical outline of the Fifth District of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. It is not intended to be a complete history. The available documents are sketchy at best and in some cases nonexistent. Former Fifth District Representative Bro. Edward Morant (2008-2012) conducted some of the research and initiated the process of capturing our Fifth District history using the GILL and the Omega Men of Distinction books provided by Brother Carl Blunt, Former 1st Vice Grand Basileus. This record is meant to move this documentation forward in attempt to develop a more complete history of our beloved district. In 1919, under the direction of the 7<sup>th</sup> Grand Basileus, Brother Raymond G. Robinson, twenty chartered members organized Delta Chapter in Nashville, Tennessee. It was the first chapter to be established in what is now known as the 5<sup>th</sup> District. It is recorded that it was in Nashville at the 1920 Conclave that Carter G. Woodson delivered an inspiring address entitled, "Democracy and the Man Far Down". The address was so eloquent and moving, that the Fraternity decided to devote a week each year to focus on disseminating more accurate information on the life and history of the Negro. Thus, Nashville can also be considered the birth place of what is now known as "Black History Month".

1922 saw the establishment of Theta Omega Chapter in Louisville, Kentucky during the administration of the 9<sup>th</sup> Grand Basileus, J. Alston Atkins, who was also a charter member of Delta Chapter. During this period, authority was given the Grand Basileus to appoint representatives of the Grand Chapter, identified as District Representatives, to assist in the supervision of the chapters. Five such representatives were appointed at that time: Charles W. White, (New England States), Carter L. Marshall (Mid Atlantic States), L.R. Hill (Central States), William J. Faulkner (Southern States) and George L. Vaughn (Western States). Records do not clearly note which District Representative was appointed to supervise the chapters within the states of Tennessee and Kentucky. Other chapters currently in the 5<sup>th</sup> District were not established until 1925, when Epsilon Phi in Memphis and Gamma Phi, also in Nashville, were formed under the 11<sup>th</sup> Grand Basileus Brother George E. Vaughn.

The first attempt to structure the Fraternity into Districts occurred in 1937. During this period, the Fraternity was organized into eleven (11) Districts. At this point the state of Tennessee was in the Fifth District along with Mississippi and Arkansas. However, the state of Kentucky was positioned in the 8th District along with Kansas, Minnesota, Colorado and Missouri. Brother Z. Alexander Looby served as the first 5th District Representative from 1938 to 1941.

The most significant movement toward forming the 5<sup>th</sup> District as we know it today came during the administration of Z. Alexander Looby as Grand Basileus (1940 – 1945). Brother Looby served as Grand Basileus during the challenging years of World War II. Despite the dwindling number of active Brothers and potential members as a result of the war, Brother Looby was successful in establishing 14 new chapters. Among the chapters then formed were: Theta Iota (Jackson, TN) in 1944 and Kappa Iota (Chattanooga, TN) in 1945.

Still evolving in its search for the most efficient organization, the Fraternity made the decision in 1945 to re-organize now into 12 Districts. It was at this point that the 5<sup>th</sup> District in its present form encompassing the states of Tennessee and Kentucky was created. The first 5<sup>th</sup> District Representative after this re-organization was Brother L. W. Beasley, who served from 1945 to 1960, which remains the longest term served by any 5<sup>th</sup> District Representative.

In 1984 Brother Willie A. Smith, who served as the 11<sup>th</sup> Fifth District Representative, was elected Grand Keeper of Records and Seals at the 64<sup>th</sup> Grand Conclave in Louisville, KY, thus making him the second 5<sup>th</sup> District Brother to become a Grand Officer.

Later, in 2010, Brother Horace Chase, who served as the 19<sup>th</sup> Fifth District Representative was elected Grand Keeper of Finance at the 76<sup>th</sup> Grand Conclave held in Raleigh, North Carolina. He became the third 5<sup>th</sup> District Brother to garner a Grand Officer position.

A rich history within the Fifth is developing, and with our drive, talent, and perseverance, much more history is yet to be written.

*Founders*

- Edgar A. Love
- Oscar J. Cooper
- Frank Coleman
- Ernest E. Just

- William R. Asbury
- Willie A. Smith
- Roscoe Crump
- Frank Bowden
- Robert Jefferson

*Industry*

- Glenn D. Sessoms

*Public Service*

- George Washington Lee

*Grand Basileus*

- Z. Alexander Looby

- Albert Berry
- Frank Royal
- L. A. Westley
- Fred Pickett

- James Netters

- Jerome Ryans

- Vasco Smith, Jr.

- L. A. Westley

*Editor of the Oracle*

- Nathaniel D. Williams

- L. W. Beasley
- A. A. Branch

- Mark Yates

*District Representative*

- Sam McKenzie
- Bryan White
- Earl Young
- Edward Morant

- Z. Alexander Looby
- A.A. Branch
- Walter Davis
- W. J. Hale

*Sports*

- Jim Green

- Ed Temple

- Horace W. Chase

*Law*

- Benjamin L. Hooks

*Arts*

- Don Q. Pullen

- Richard D. Jones

- Henry F. Jackson, Jr

- Ronald T. Griffin

- Ralph Johnson

*Civil Rights*

- Wilbert Bond, Sr.

- Mark Bishop, Jr.

- Clearthur Morris, Sr.

- Benjamin L. Hooks