



TODAY FOR TOMORROW

Capturing our community through photography



The West Tennessee Historical Society presents the **Today for Tomorrow** project as an exciting way to teach our high school students the importance of learning and preserving our history through hands-on participation.

WHAT

The mission of the **Today for Tomorrow** project is to visually record our community today to build an archive for the generations of tomorrow. This contribution of digital photographs will be invaluable to the researchers, historians, filmmakers, artists, and community members of the future.

WHY

This project is based on the Memphis Legacy Project created by Willy Bearden, Memphis author and filmmaker. To date, Mr. Bearden and Linley Schmidt have contributed over 7,000 photographs of Memphis today to the Memphis Public Library & Information Center's digital archive. Mr. Bearden, working with the West Tennessee Historical Society, is happy to see his vision spread to all of West Tennessee. "The thing that resonates with me is that it doesn't mean anything today if I take a picture of, say, the YMCA or the Redbird's stadium. But I tell you, in 25, 50, 100 years, it's going to blow somebody's mind, and I just love to be – and what to be – a big part of that," stated Mr. Bearden.

The members of the West Tennessee Historical Society hope that you will pursue this project in your area. The WTHS is happy to assist you by connecting you with people in your community that can make your project a success. Please contact Executive Director Carol Perel at prlax@aol.com or 901.276.7154 with any questions or concerns you may have.

We also ask that you share our mission with project participants:

The West Tennessee Historical Society is the umbrella heritage organization for the Western Grand Division of Tennessee. Within its twenty-one counties, it supports historical programs, archives, publications, preservation, markers, museums, and other historical collections. Thus, the society promotes all aspects of state and local history. Visit our website at www.wths-tn.org and our Face Book page – West Tennessee Historical Society.

WHO

Although suggested for high school students, anyone can participate in **Today for Tomorrow**, individually or in a group setting. This project could be accomplished as part of a classroom assignment, service project, or summer mission by schools, service organizations (4H, Girl Scouts, and Boy Scouts), church youth groups, etc. Participants should be coordinated by an adult leader with a strong knowledge of the community who can assign locations to be photographed. School faculty, librarians, local and county historians, and members of genealogy and history groups may serve as excellent project leaders.



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WHERE Anywhere! Prominent sites in the community are a good place to start – historic buildings, public spaces, unique structures – but ultimately, any place accessible by and convenient for the participant is worth documenting. Some suggested categories to consider:

- Buildings (banks, hospitals, libraries, courthouses, etc.)
- Historic sites
- Residential areas
- Infrastructure (roads, dams, bridges, railroads, etc.)
- Industry
- Natural landmarks (rivers, streams, parks, etc.)
- Businesses
- Families and groups
- Group activities (festivals, social, sports, meetings, etc.)

HOW

Take a picture. For this you will need a cell phone with picture taking capabilities or a digital camera. Phones and cameras must have the ability to connect to a computer. 10 mega-pixel or greater is best, however 10 mega-pixels or less will work.

Record where and when the image was captured. Each photo must have documentation: full address of location, date, description, name of photographer. Names of people in a photograph is a plus, but not required. Some phones and cameras allow for captioning of each photograph, however we suggest a written record is a must.

Create a DVD of the pictures. For this step, you will need a blank DVD-R(s) on which to record the images and access to a computer with software to accept digitized photographs and burn DVDs. Computers with appropriate software are most likely available at school or home, and possibly at your public library and city and/or county records office.

Deposit the DVD at the library. Submit a DVD to the West Tennessee Historical Society at: 663 South Rembert, Memphis, TN 38104. Be sure to include the written documentation for the photographs. Make as many copies of your DVD as you need to send to your school library, public library, county archives, and state library.

WHEN

There does not have to be a time frame; in fact this project is never-ending. Changes arise every day, thus the purpose of photographing our surroundings is to record change. One location may be photographed multiple times to capture changes caused by weather, construction, etc.

WHY NOT?

The benefits are endless: creating a dialogue of history, contributing to the recorded history of our nation, broadening students' awareness of their own community, and creating opportunities to explore and develop new interests.

This project is very simple - take a picture, share it, and pat yourself on the back and know that many years down the road people will be very happy that you recorded **Today for Tomorrow**.