



The Real Rosewood
Foundation, Inc.

PO Box 252
Archer, FL 32618
(352) 214-6003

www.RosewoodFlorida.com

lizzieprj@aol.com

sbirch2@gmail.com

A STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR BLACK LIVES | June 9, 2020

We condemn the death of George Floyd, allegedly caused by Officer Derek Chauvin in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 25, 2020.

We condemn the deaths of all victims, both known and forgotten, of police and vigilante violence. We add the names of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and Tony McDade to the roll call of Black lives stolen from past to present. We say their names alongside Emmett Till (1955), Amadou Diallo (1999), Trayvon Martin (2012), Sandra Bland (2015), and countless others.

We condemn the inaction of Officers Tou Thao, J. Alexander Kueng, and Thomas K. Lane, who were allegedly complicit in Mr. Floyd's death.

We condemn the actions of Amy Cooper, Svitlana Flom, and countless others who weaponize their white privilege to harm and endanger the lives of Black people.

We stand in solidarity with the *Black Lives Matter* movement.

The Real Rosewood Foundation, Inc. stands to honor the history of Rosewood, Florida and the memories of the victims and survivors of the 1923 Rosewood massacre. In pursuit of this mission, we are attuned to the parallels that exist between the Rosewood massacre and the present-day, systematic destruction of Black lives and communities. Racism and hatred for Black people lived in hearts and minds of the perpetrators who razed Rosewood to the ground, terrorized nearby Black communities, and stole innocent lives. This very same racism exists today.

We call upon the names of the victims of the Rosewood massacre: Lexie Gordon, Sarah Carrier, Samuel Carter, James Carrier, and Mincy Williams. Their lives, like George Floyd and countless others, were stolen in an act of extrajudicial execution and public lynching. The perpetrators of the Rosewood killings were never brought to justice. A special grand jury found no evidence on which to base any indictments. Today, countless innocent Black people have been killed in the name of law enforcement and vigilante justice, and our judicial system has failed to bring these murderers to justice. This pattern of violence and unaccountability cannot continue. **We call on our state and federal legislators to enact criminal justice reforms so that justice may be served.**

We must turn to the history of racial violence in America and learn lessons from it. The Rosewood story teaches us that racial violence takes many forms and it relies on active and passive participation by the privileged. Fannie Taylor, a white woman from Sumner, Levy County, Florida, gave a false testimony of assault that incited a lynch mob, led by her husband, James Taylor. For seven days, the mob terrorized the community of Rosewood by murder, rape, and destruction. Fannie Taylor weaponized her privilege as a white woman to inflict harm on the innocent and unsuspecting people of Rosewood. We have witnessed false testimonies against Black people for doing the most innocuous daily activities – a student sleeping in her dorm, a child selling water from her front stoop, people gathering for a barbeque, a man telling a woman to leash her dog, or a teen playing music in his car. False testimony turns any activity performed by a Black person into a potential death sentence. **We call on non-Black people to cease the use of false testimony as an exercise in white privilege.**

History also teaches us of the long-standing role of law enforcement in the deliverance of racial violence. Policing in America began with a systematic effort to capture fugitives from slavery. Police have also been active participants in lynchings throughout the Jim Crow era. The system of law enforcement is, at the root, anti-Black. **We call on local and state governments to enact stringent reforms to the policing of Black people and communities. We call upon law enforcement officers, as individuals, to hold yourselves and your fellow officers accountable for protecting and serving your communities, including Black people.**



The Real Rosewood
Foundation, Inc.

PO Box 252
Archer, FL 32618
(352) 214-6003
www.RosewoodFlorida.com
lizzieprj@aol.com
sbirch2@gmail.com

The Rosewood story exposes the worst aspects of humanity, but it also gives us hope. The people of Rosewood clung to one another for survival, seeking refuge in the swamps. These refugees were aided by white allies who utilized their privilege in service of others:

- John and Mary Wright, white residents of Rosewood, safeguarded their Black neighbors within their home, protecting them from the lynch mob;
- Sheriff Robert "Bob" Walker, aborted the lynching of Aaron Carrier (the man accused of assaulting Fannie Taylor) and worked to quell the massacre;
- John and William Bryce, train conductors who provided safe transport for the Black men, women, and children of Rosewood who were fleeing death and destruction.

The Real Rosewood Foundation Board is comprised of a nonpartisan and multi-racial body. As such, we deeply value intersectionality and coalition building across our communities, regardless of difference, towards harmony and reconciliation. **We call upon all non-Black people to actively engage in an anti-racist lifestyle and to emulate the bravery and selflessness of the Rosewood allies. It is our shared responsibility to build a world that is safe for Black people.**

For the reasons stated above and in solidarity with the *Black Lives Matter* movement, the Real Rosewood Foundation, Inc. will implement the following measures:

- A transition of the Foundation's educational platform to better situate the Rosewood story within the broader history of racial terror and lynching in the United States and to expose the current methods of anti-Black violence at work today;
- The sustaining and reframing of the Foundation's mission to include and prioritize advocacy for the humane and just treatment of Black people;

In our quest for historical truths, we cannot overlook the plight of the living.

Signatories – Executive Committee:

Pedro Jermaine, Vice President
John Jenkins, Sr., Co-Founder
Stephanie Birch, Board Chair
Joy Glanzer, Secretary
Daryl Jackson, Treasurer
Teri Jones, Parliamentarian

Signatories – Board Members:

Deandra Caison
William Cervone
Princess Cooper
George Gillis
Hazel Gillis
Jamar Hebert
Anita Jenkins-McCarter
Jordan Marlowe
Dr. Kalai Mathee
Carol Richardson
Leontre Robinson
Dwight Samuel, Jr.
Gerald Urso
Linda Williams