**Historic All Black Towns of Oklahoma Still in Existence**

**Clearview**

Passing through Clearview, known previously as Lincoln, was the Fort Smith and Western Railroad and a brief yet important detail of African-American history. In 1913 in the small Black town in Okfuskee County, the "Back to Africa" movement inspired visions of wealth and prosperity that would materialize if the African-American population moved to the Gold Coast of Africa. The economy of Clearview vigorously prospered throughout the early 20th century with several factories and recreational facilities. This prosperity however was halted with the tragedy of the Great Depression and the discontinued service of the railroad.

Route 1 Box 1199  
Clearview, OK 74880

**Grayson**

Formerly known as Wild Cat, Grayson was said to be named after a Black Creek tribal leader. The all Black town maintained its own postal service from 1902-1929. Grayson, located in south McIntosh County, was important as a city that produced coal and other minerals.

Route 3 Box 517-A  
Grayson, OK 74437

**Langston**

Langston, promoted by E.P. McCabe in the early 1890's, was named after John H. Langston, a black Reconstruction era congressman from Virginia. The *Langston City Herald*, produced by McCabe to promoted immigration to Langston, consequently led to an exodus from other states such as Arkansas, Texas and many states from the Deep South. The town, coined "The Only Distinctively Negro City in America," also encouraged many disenfranchised and disillusioned Blacks to trek to Langston. Although prosperity and Black self-sufficiency were ideas and goals proposed by the promoters of the town, many black migrants to Langston did not flourish financially and remained poor.

City Hall  
222 Tolson  
Langston, OK 73050

[**Langston University**](http://www.langston.edu/)

Langston University was established in 1898 in a church in the town. The severe segregation of the time kept many African-Americans from attending schools of higher education. Yet, with a grant and the perseverance from many of the town's citizens, Langston University was created. Today, the legacy of Langston University continues to thrive in the small town.

**Red Bird**

Only a few miles from Coweta, the family of E.L. Barber founded Red Bird in 1902. Similar to Taft, the city was a mecca for Black farmers' markets and provided exchange opportunities throughout the region. The Oklahoma Constitution that would ultimately disenfranchise African-Americans mostly recognizes the townspeople of Red Bird for leading a political campaign against a 1910 amendment. Its population peaked during the 1920's with about 400 residents.

P.O. Box 222  
Red Bird, OK 74458  
918-483-4400

**Rentiesville**

Located seventeen miles southwest of Muskogee, Rentiesville possesses a unique blend of musical and academic achievements. This all-Black town is home to famed blues-man D.C. Minner who annually hosts the Dusk 'Til Dawn Blues Festival in Rentiesville, a festival that attracts blues artists and fans alike. Also defining the small town, which was established in 1903, is its pivotal role in the Civil War. Oklahoma's most significant Civil War event, the Battle of Honey Springs, was fought in Rentiesville and is known as the "Gettysburg of the West."

P.O. Box 34  
Rentiesville, OK 74459

* [Rentiesville Dusk 'Til Dawn Blues Festival](http://www.dcminnerblues.com)

**Taft**

Located in eastern Oklahoma, Taft boasted a predominately black market for farmers in the early 20th century. The town was previously named Twine after the well-known lawyer, editor, and politician W.H. Twine. Taft was renamed in honor of president William Howard Taft in 1908. The all-Black city, founded in 1903, has since lost some of its economic stronghold but exists today as a town that profits from being an employee of the state of Oklahoma; Taft employs nearly 1600 people at the Jess Dunn correctional facility and the Eddie Warrior facility for women combined. However, the town itself is only home to a few hundred inhabitants. In addition, Taft boasts the first elected African-American female mayor in the nation, Lelia Foley- Davis.

City Hall  
208 W. Seminole  
Taft, OK 74463

**Tatums**

Located in the northern part of Carter County, Tatums, was named for the two brothers who founded it, Lee B.Tatum and E.G. Tatum. L.B Tatum, thus firmly securing the town's establishment, created a federal post office for the town in 1895. The oldest wood frame church building in the all Black towns, Bethel Missionary Baptist, was erected in 1917 in Tatums and still stands today.

P.O. Box 147  
Tatums, OK 73087

**Tullahassee**

The all-Black town of Tullahassee is the oldest of the Black towns in Indian Territory. Tullahassee, meaning "old town" is derived from two Native American words: "tulwa" meaning town and "ahassee" meaning something old. The town was created circa 1850, about fifty years before Oklahoma was recognized as a state. Originally established as a mission for the Creeks in 1850, the Creeks left the city in 1880 after a devastating fire. The Creeks left behind the Tullahassee Mission School to their former African slaves. One relic still standing that revives memories of the dynamic past of Tullahassee is the A.J. Mason General Store. During the prosperous years of the town, Mason's was an attraction not only for the citizens of the town but also for many in the area.

P.O. Box 1248  
Tullahassee, OK 74466

**Vernon**

The recognition of founding Vernon is primarily given to Edward P. McCabe, the founder and promoter of Langston. The town, located eight miles southwest of Muskogee, was a rural farming community. Vernon, founded in 1895, was the site of one of the first Rosenwald schools in Oklahoma and had its own post office built in 1920.

**Wewoka**

The town of Wewoka was founded by Seminole Chief John Horse in 1866 and is the capitol of the Seminole Nation and the County Seat of Seminole County. The town, whose name means "barking waters," was first inhabited by Seminole Freedmen who arrived in 1849 and were assigned their own land, The first trading post and post office were established in Wewoka in 1866, making it the heart of the business in the area.

City Hall  
123 S. Mekusukey  
Wewoka, OK 74884