

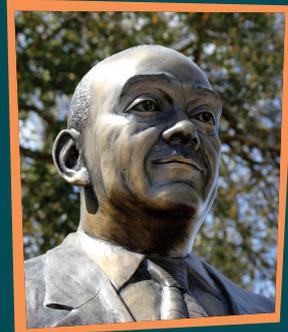
## BIOGRAPHY OF PERRY HARVEY, SR.

Born in Thomasville, Georgia in 1908, Perry Harvey, Sr. moved to Tampa with his family in 1928. He found work as a longshoreman on Tampa's busy docks, and quickly noticed the poor working conditions and low pay. Seven years later he helped organize the International Longshoremen's Association, Local 1402. Through his leadership he brought better wages and improved working conditions to Tampa's predominantly black dock workers.

Harvey worked tirelessly on behalf of his fellow workers, friends, and neighbors. He provided jobs for those who sought employment, loans for those in need, and encouragement to those who were down.

A leader by example, he became an important force in Tampa's Civil Rights struggle and was appointed by Florida Governor LeRoy Collins to serve on the state's bi-racial committee. He also worked with Congressman Sam Gibbons to create the Head Start Program. Harvey passed away in 1972 at the age of 64.

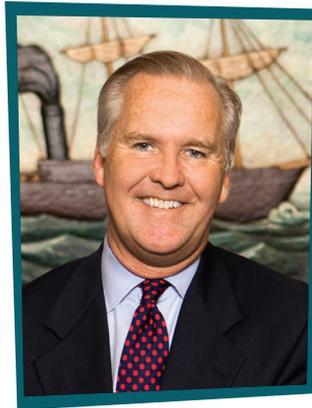
## PERRY HARVEY, SR. STATUE: JOEL RANDELL



For a man who was larger than life as a leader and family man, it is fitting that Perry Harvey, Sr.'s statue is also physically larger than the man himself. Created by Joel Randell, Harvey's statue stands just to the east of the original Central Avenue and is facing the ENCORE! development, which is the historic location of The Scrub. His outstretched arms welcome all visitors to learn about the important history of his neighborhood.

## MAYOR BOB BUCKHORN

Perry Harvey, Sr. Park is set in the heart of the city and was once the backdrop of Tampa's African American music and nightlife. This park is built over the old Central Avenue, a street which hosted many African American musicians and artists. Hank Ballard had a great influence upon this area as he wrote The Twist while seeing kids dancing on old Central Avenue.



This park contains Leaders Row, honoring the past leaders of Central Avenue, the iconic Bro Bowl and a lawn for concerts, art shows and other events. Perry Harvey, Sr. Park is one of the few parks that exist around Florida, if not the only one, that permanently commemorates African American culture with incredible public art, live entertainment, and beautiful community spaces.

With the establishment of ENCORE!, the old Central Park Village public housing complex, which was built to restore hope and provide people with affordable downtown living, the founding of this park fits perfectly with the area's mission to provide "a place to play, to gather and to reflect." Perry Harvey, Sr. Park serves as one of the most cherished city spaces and will honor Tampa's deep African American roots for years to come.

Walk through Leaders Row, take in the history of this great city, and enjoy!

Mayor Bob Buckhorn

In addition to the significant amount of art and history at Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, there are public amenities including an interactive fountain, performing space, basketball courts and a skate park.

Perry Harvey, Sr. Park is located at 900 East Scott Street.

The park hours are sunrise to sunset.



For information on scheduling events at the park call (813) 274-8854 or e-mail [specialevents@tampagov.net](mailto:specialevents@tampagov.net)

For more information on the art featured in Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, please visit [tampagov.net/Arts](http://tampagov.net/Arts).



Text by Rodney Kite-Powell



Perry Harvey, Sr. Park  
History Through the Arts

## HISTORY OF THE SCRUB AND CENTRAL AVENUE

The Scrub, once Tampa's oldest and largest African American neighborhood, traces its history to just after the Civil War, when newly-freed slaves built homes in a scrub palmetto thicket outside of the Town of Tampa. The heart of The Scrub was the Central Avenue Business District.

Between 1900 and 1930, the black population of Tampa quadrupled (from 4,382 to 21,531), and the number of African American businesses on and around Central Avenue rose to over 200. By the 1930s, Central Avenue offered everything necessary for daily life.

Construction of I-4 and the urban renewal projects in the 1960s disrupted business and dislocated customers. The district itself escaped demolition at the time, but it could not escape the 1967 riots that swept the country. The last business closed on Central Avenue in 1974 and the street south of I-275 has completely vanished. Only a handful of buildings remain nearby.

## GATEWAY SCULPTURES: JAMES SIMON

Providing a welcoming entryway into Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, James Simon's sculptures of musicians, dancers, and a jukebox help highlight the importance of music to the history and culture of the historic Central Avenue Business District. The spirit of music and dance permeates the air around the artwork. Duplicating a familiar yet bygone scene, the dancers enjoy the music flowing from the jukebox while the "live" musicians play "next door;" sights and sounds that were once seen and heard along Central Avenue every night.



Photo by Amy Martz

## HISTORY WALK LIFETILES: RUFUS BUTLER SEDER

History is the art in Rufus Seder's LIFETILES work on the history of The Scrub and Central Avenue. By using historic photographs as the basis of the artwork, Seder makes these individual moments come alive to tell various stories of the past. The LIFETILES installation explores a variety of themes, including business leaders, civil rights, health, education, social activities and religion. The timeline wall puts these into context, while the Hey Day wall shows the importance of local and national music acts in Central Avenue's history.



James E. Tokley, Sr., Poet Laureate, Tampa-Hillsborough County

## LEADERS' ROW: MICHAEL PARKER

Leadership takes on many forms. Some leaders are forceful and dominant, while others work behind the scenes and offer quiet support and encouragement. Regardless of style, the substance is the same. Michael Parker's work demonstrates leadership in all its forms in his "Leaders' Row." Motivating, prodding, assisting, nurturing, and even financing the dreams and aspirations of single individuals and whole communities, the men and women featured here provided both a bedrock foundation to build upon and boundless success to strive toward. Each one left their mark on the city and on the lives of those they inspired.



## TIMELINE PAVERS

A ribbon of colorful concrete connects fourteen large, inset pavers that tell the chronological story of The Scrub and Central Avenue. Starting with the creation of The Scrub immediately following the Civil War and moving through its growth and the growth of Central Avenue, stories of culture, commerce, religion, and recreation guide visitors through the park and the neighborhood's history.



## CLAY TILE MURALS: NATALIE BLAKE

Art and history are not confined to the boundaries of Perry Harvey Sr., Park. To the east of the park is the residential community called ENCORE!, a planned mixed use development built by the Tampa Housing Authority. Natalie Blake's three large ceramic tile murals tell the story of Tampa's African American community from the city's pioneering days to the rise and decline of The Scrub and Central Avenue through the construction of the ENCORE!. Blake's dynamic use of symbolism and nature – the sun, river, and trees – and real scenes like churches, musicians, and Central Avenue – combine to tell the rich story of a place and its people.

