

PHOTOGRAPHS THAT CHANGED AMERICA

THE FIGHT TO INTEGRATE BEACHES AND POOLS

St. Augustine is America's oldest city and in 1964, before Disneyworld was built, it was Florida's most popular tourist attraction. With some of the most beautiful beaches in the world, St. Augustine was a mecca for swimmers. In 1925, Gertrude Ederle and Eleanor Garatti blew away the competition at the Alcazar Hotel Pool in the first of many A.A.U. National Swimming Championships that the city hosted. But like many southern cities, St. Augustine's beaches and pools remained segregated ten years after the Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. the Board of Education*.



In the summer of 1964, St. Augustine became the target for a massive non-violent civil right demonstration, led by Dr. Hayling, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph Abernathy, ISHOF Gold Medallion recipient Andrew Young, and other major civil rights leaders.

When attempts were made to integrate the beaches of Anastasia Island demonstrators endured abuse, beatings, and verbal assaults by White segregationists without any retaliation.

The demonstrations came to a climax when Martin Luther King, Jr. was arrested for trespassing at the segregated Monson Motel. A few days later, on June 18, 1964, a group of black and white protesters jumped into the swimming pool at the Monson Motel. In response, the owner of the motel, James Brock, who was a usually shy and passive man, was photographed pouring muriatic acid into the pool to get the protesters out. Photographs of this, and of a policeman jumping into the pool to arrest them, were broadcast around the world and became some of the most famous images of the entire Civil Rights Movement.

The photographs have been credited with helping per-

suade undecided legislators to vote in favor of the Civil Act of 1964 outlawing segregation in all public places and facilities. The United States Senate passed the Act on June 19, 1964 and President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the bill into law on July 2, 1964.

