

Edmonia Johnson Simmons (1912-1992) was born in Hartwell, Georgia and attended school in Anderson, South Carolina. Her formal music training was received from Hampton Institute (University), where she received the Bachelor of Science degree. She received the Master of Music Education degree from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. Her career in music education spanned over fifty years, having taught at Sterling High School in Greenville, SC and at Howard High School in Chattanooga, Tennessee, from which she retired in 1975. She continued as a piano teacher and church music director.

Her professional music involvement included membership in the Music Educators National Conference, Tennessee Music Educators Association, Chattanooga education in Musical Arts Board Member, and Life Member of the Tennessee Vocal Teachers Association. Her top priority extended to active membership at Orchard Park S.D.A. Church, where she served as Music Director, Pianist, Organist, Sabbath school teacher, and Treasurer, the Avondale S.D.A. Church School, member of the Church and School Boards, and organizer of the King's Daughters and Bykota Clubs for Women. Mrs. Simmons received numerous awards and notable recognition for her outstanding teaching and performances, including "Teacher of the Year" (1960), Principal Bond Award, Evans Foundation Master Award (1968), and Tribute for Exceptional Service to Howard High School, where a biographical plaque and picture is placed in the Howard Hall of Fame.

Her civic and community involvement included membership in the Chattanooga African-American Museum, CO-founder of the Chattanooga Choral Society for the Preservation of African-American Song, and founder of the Chattanooga Chapter of the National Hampton Alumni Association, for which she served as President for 25 years. With untiring enthusiasm, she has ignited the torch of inspiration and appreciation for quality music in the hearts of hundreds of her students that has led them to notewor-

Everett O'Neal (1938-1996) was Music Director of the Chattanooga Boys Choir for twenty years. Under his direction, the choir toured nationally and internationally to much acclaim.

He began his music career playing in dance bands with his father. His own group, the Everett O'Neal Orchestra, was a New Year's Eve tradition at the Chattanooga Choo Choo for 17 years. He received both the Bachelor and Master degrees from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He undertook additional graduate study at the School of Sacred Music, Union Theological Seminary in New York. Among his teachers were Thomas Alexander, Chattanooga; Mildred Andrews, University of Oklahoma, organ; Harold Cadek, piano; William Gephardt, New York, voice; and Earl Berg, New York, Conducting.

Mr. O'Neal was a teacher and supervisor in the Hamilton County School system for 25 years, teaching math and music at Red Bank Junior High and High Schools, and served as Director of Secondary Education. He was a Coordinator of the Hamilton County Music Festival for many years.

Mr. O'Neal was Choirmaster at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Bursar of the Sewanee Church Music Conference, and a recruiter and conductor of large school and church children's choral groups. Throughout his career, Mr. O'Neal made artistic contributions to thousands of students and audience members in Chattanooga and throughout the world.

Over thirty years ago, Mr. O'Neal conceived the idea for an annual memorial concert for his good friend, Mrs. Edmonia Simmons. Upon his passing in 1996, the choral tribute was expanded to include him. Since 1994, choirs have joined together in song and praise to large audiences throughout the Chattanooga community.

32nd Annual Edmonia Simmons - Everett O'Neal Memorial Concert



presented by
Bridges of Harmony Heritage Choir
and
Chattanooga Boys Choir

Harrison Center
Sunday, February 9, 2025 · 3:00pm



32nd Annual Edmonia Simmons - Everett O'Neal Memorial Concert

**Harrison Center
Harrison, TN**

**Sunday, February 9, 2025
3:00pm**

Somebody's Knocking At Your Door.....Raymond Wise
How Excellent Is Your Name V. Michael McKay
No Matter What.....Raymond Wise
I Sing Because I'm Happy Rollo Dilworth
Faithful Over a Few ThingsGlenn Burleigh
City Called Heaven.....Josephine Poelinitz

Bridges of Harmony Heritage Choir

Wayfarin' StrangerAppalachian folk hymn, arr. Reginald Unterseher
***Thinking** Michael Mitchell, Jr.
Count on MeBruno Mars and Ari Levine, arr. Janet Day

Chattanooga Boys Choir Concert Choir

Hope Lingers On.....Andrea Ramsey
Hold Out Your Light..... African-American spiritual, arr. Stacey V. Gibbs

Chattanooga Boys Choir Cantabile

We Are the Music Makers..... Reginal Wright
Crowded Table.....Lori McKenna, & Brandi Carlisle, arr. Andrea Ramsey

Chattanooga Boys Choir Combined Ensembles

Senzeni Na.....trad. South African
When We Are Singing.....Somos del Señor, arr. Kevin Padworski

Combined Choirs

** premiere performance of "Thinking" by Michael Mitchell, Jr.*

Harrison Center



The Harrison Center is a Community Center and Senior Center aimed at serving Hamilton County citizens by providing a variety of amenities. Housed in the former Harrison Elementary School, the center is operated by the Hamilton County Department of Parks and Recreation. Upon opening in the summer of 2024, the center now features a fitness center, indoor batting cages, a recreation room, community spaces, event and classroom spaces, and more. For more information, contact the Hamilton County Parks & Recreation Department by visiting the center's website at parks.hamiltontn.gov/413/Harrison-Center, via email at RecCenter@HamiltonTN.gov or by calling (423) 209-7890.

"Thinking" by Michael Mitchell

Today's presentation of "Thinking" by the Chattanooga Boys Choir marks the first performance of this new work by Bridges of Harmony Heritage Choir director Michael Mitchell Jr. Based on a text by late 19th/early 20th century poet Walter D. Wintle, "Thinking" - also referred to as "The Man Who Thinks He Can" - challenges everyone to keep a mindset of resilience, positivity, and determination, especially in the face of struggles or challenging circumstances.

Thank You for Your Support

All proceeds collected benefit the scholarship funds of both the Chattanooga Boys Choir and the Bridges of Harmony Heritage Choir. Feel free to include a donation using the link found at www.chattanoogaboyschoir.org/support or by scanning the QR code. Thank you for your support!



Edmonia Simmons- Everett O'Neal Memorial Concert Venues

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| 1994 - Orchard Park Seventh Day Adventist Church | 2010 - Greater Friendship Primitive Baptist Church |
| 1995 - Orchard Knob Baptist Church | 2011 - McCallie School |
| 1996 - Heritage Center | 2012 - Howard Academy of Academics & Technology |
| 1997 - First Baptist Church (E. Eighth Street) | 2013 - Chattanooga State Community College |
| 1998 - St. Timothy's Episcopal Church (Signal Mtn.) | 2014 - New City Fellowship |
| 1999 - Second Baptist Church (E. Third Street) | 2015 - UT-Chattanooga Patten Chapel |
| 2000 - Brainerd United Methodist Church | 2016 - Westside Baptist Church (Alton Park) |
| 2001 - Chattanooga School for the Arts & Sciences | 2017 - Ooltewah United Methodist Church |
| 2002 - Orchard Park Seventh Day Adventist Church | 2018 - First Baptist Church (Golden Gateway) |
| 2003 - First Cumberland Presbyterian Church | 2019 - Phillips Temple CME Church |
| 2004 - Tucker Baptist Church | 2020 - First-Centenary United Methodist Church |
| 2005 - Bessie Smith Hall | 2021 - virtual / on-line |
| 2006 - New Monumental Baptist Church | 2022 - Combined Civil Rights Tour (AL,GA,TN) |
| 2007 - Olivet Baptist Church | 2023 - Baylor School |
| 2008 - New City Fellowship | 2024 - Oakwood Baptist Church |
| 2009 - Second Presbyterian Church | 2025 - Harrison Center |

Program cover artwork: "We All Sing" by Jayda Mitchell.