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CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS: ANDREW WADE HOME BOMBING



Photo courtesy of the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

LOUISVILLE — Andrew Wade, an African American Korean War veteran, and his family benefitted from the friendship and assistance of Anne and Carl Braden when he sought to purchase a home in Louisville. The white Bradens were committed to racial integration and equal opportunity. The Bradens offered to purchase a house for the Wades in a traditionally white section of the city and then transfer the title to them.

When the Wades moved into the home in May 1954, neighborhood furor erupted. The home was shot at and a cross was burned in the yard. This incident coincided with the Supreme Court's decision in the *Brown vs. the Board of Education* case. This landmark decision struck down the separate but equal doctrine of Jim Crow in education facilities across the nation.

The situation deteriorated further when, on June 27, the house was bombed. The Wades' wish to live where they desired was ignored and they moved to the traditionally west side black section of Louisville. The people who bombed the house were never brought to justice. However, this incident proved to be an important herald for the open housing drive that accompanied much of the civil rights movement's goals of justice and equality and produced legislation such as the 1968 Fair Housing Act. As a legacy to the Bradens and Wades efforts, the Wade home now sits in a diverse neighborhood.

The Kentucky Oral History Commission (KOHC), administered by the Kentucky Historical Society, is dedicated to supporting documentation of Kentucky's rich history along with the issues confronting its people. Pass the Word (passtheword.khs.gov/) is an online database from the KOHC that facilitates discovery of more than 30,000 oral history interviews from Kentuckians in all 120 counties, located in more than 100 repositories across Kentucky.

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