

## An Anacostia Business



Benjamin Ordway Greenwood, (right) founder and owner of Greenwood's Transfer and Storage, Inc.

Benjamin Greenwood's business career began when he operated a grocery store in 1920. He didn't make a lot of money when he first started out, so he had to sell cords of wood, coal, and ice. He even owned a bus company. Greenwood's Transfer and Storage, Inc. began as a moving business in 1922. It was first located at 1259 First Street, S.E., across from the Navy Yard.

In 1945, the company built its first furniture storage **warehouse** at 822 Howard Road, S.E. in Anacostia. Greenwood's also had warehouses in other parts of southeast Washington. A large part of the business was storing household furniture. Greenwood's trucks moved materials and supplies between Washington, D.C., Maryland, Delaware, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. In many cases the company had to fight racial prejudices to get bonding, insurance, and Interstate Commerce Commission licenses to travel from state to state. The company won D.C. and Federal contracts through competitive bidding.



Helen Greenwood Allen gives a presentation on the history of Greenwood's Transfer and Storage, Inc., at the Anacostia Museum and Center for African American History and Culture on December 14, 2002.

After Benjamin Greenwood's death in 1964, the company continued to grow. Catherine Greenwood, widow of Benjamin, became the president. Two of their adult children, Helen Greenwood Allen and Reginald Greenwood, remained in the **corporation** and continued to expand the business. At one time Greenwood's Transfer, Inc., owned 45 trucks and had over 200 regular employees. With help from the U.S. Labor Department, the United Planning Organization, and the Opportunities Industrialization Centers, the company trained and employed drivers and laborers.

Greenwood's Transfer and Storage, Inc., continued to serve the public until 1995.

## An Interesting Business

Locate a business that is, or was, in your community.

(Place a drawing or photograph of the business, here.)

Name of business. \_\_\_\_\_

Type of business. \_\_\_\_\_ Year it was established \_\_\_\_\_

Address of business. \_\_\_\_\_

This business is/was important to the community because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What others have said about this business.

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of person quoted)

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of person quoted)

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of person quoted)