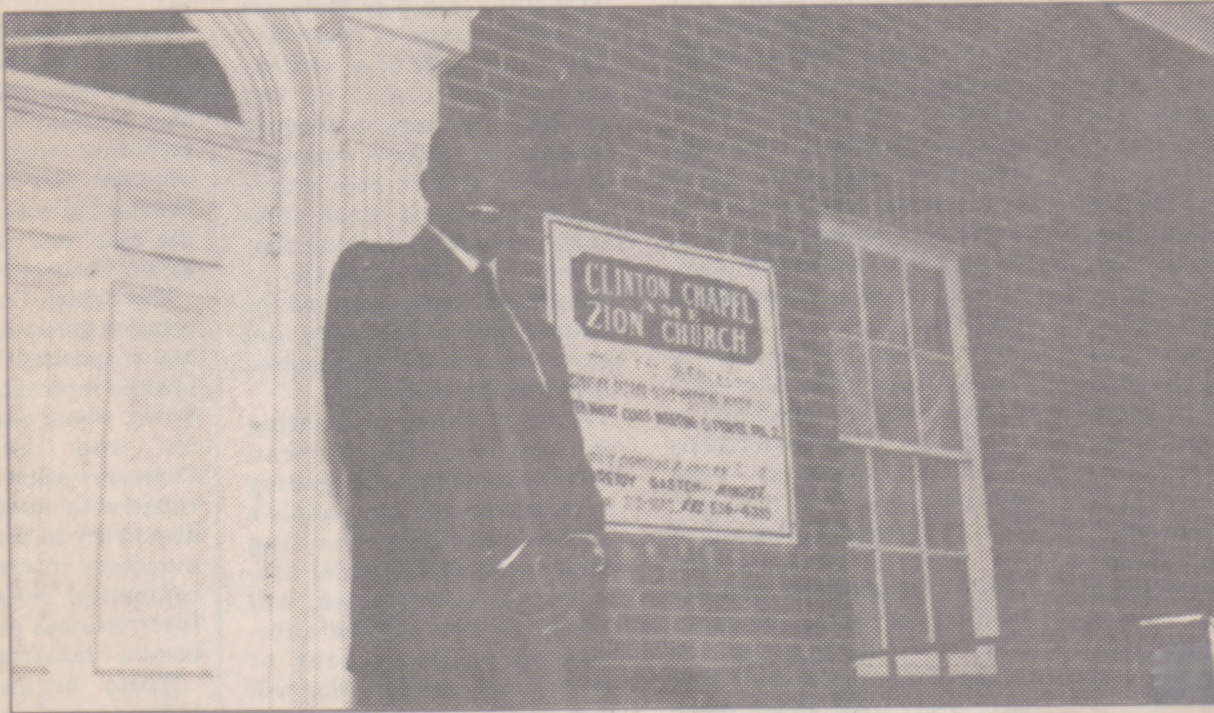


# STRICTLY BUSINESS

## HERITAGE TOURS



PHOTO/JAMES BROWN

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### *Two-year-old effort recalls history, culture*

By John Minter  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

**J**uan Whipple was listening to a presentation about Charlotte's African American past when the idea hit him — a riding tour of historic sites.

The rest is history, someone may say 50 years from now.

For now, Whipple's two-year-old Black Heritage Tour company is growing.

This week, it's providing tours of Charlotte's historic African American landmarks for the Church of God's 55th annual National Youth Convention.

The firm has also put on tours for the Baptist Lott Carey Convention and the Progressive National Baptist convention.

"Ninety-five percent of the tours have been for people not from Charlotte," Whipple said. "People's main interest is in Queen Charlotte and her African American heritage. When they see the queen, that answers all the questions. She ties everything together."

The tour visits to the Queen Charlotte statue uptown and

sites such as Clinton Chapel AME Church, Charlotte's oldest black church, Johnson C. Smith University, the Afro American Cultural Center and the new Carolinas Stadium.

The stadium is being built where the Good Samaritan Hospital, believed to be the nation's oldest hospital for African Americans, once stood.

Other sites include the Martin Luther King Jr. statue in Marshall Park uptown and the late John McDonald's complex of businesses on Beatties Ford Road.

Whipple said the tour lasts about 2 1/2 hours, covers 15.2 miles, includes 28 sites and answers questions such as:

"How much did it cost to have a black university named after you?"