

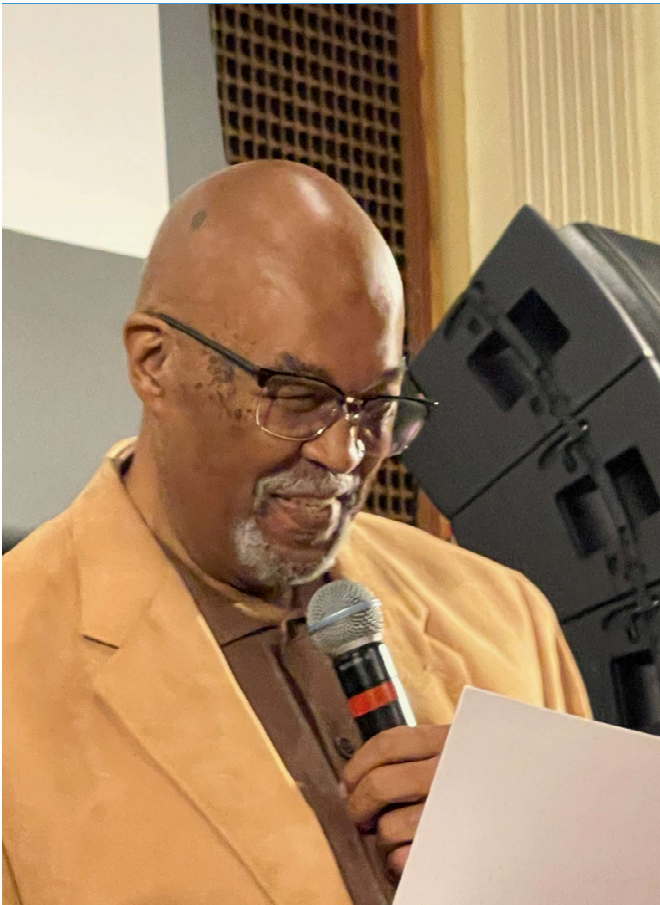
CAY HCC Celebrates Women’s History Month



CAY HCC Journal

Journal of The Crispus Attucks York History and Culture Center

We will explore the history and culture of York’s African American community to foster an open dialog about past, present, and future racial issues while promoting multicultural harmony.



CAY HCC Historian Jeffery Kirkland

HCC LAUNCHES COMMUNITY OUTREACH

On February 23, 2024, CAY HCC Historian Jeffery Kirkland paid tribute to Black History Month by curating a talk and viewing of the film “A Man Called Adam” starring Sammy Davis, Jr. at the Appell Center for the Performing Arts in collaboration with the York County Community Foundation. The film depicts the life of jazz cornetist Adam Johnson, his struggle with alcohol and the guilt he feels after an auto accident that costs the lives of his family.

Jeff began his talk by discussing the contribution of record shop owner Torling “Rit the Record King” Ritter whose passion for music inspired Jeff and generations of Yorkers. Jeff then described the era that the movie encompasses in the following words “During this era, music was parodying the signs of the times. You Had Marvin Gaye talking about the Vietnam war, James Brown’s Say it Loud, Lee Morgan playing Search for the new Land, and John Coltrane’s Alabama.” Between 100-150 people attended this first HCC Community Outreach event.

HCC CELEBRATES THE ARTS

This issue highlights the art of Frankie Greer. CAY has an extensive collection of his art. (See page 4)

BUILDING THE HCC

Building foundations are complete. Stuart and Tate Construction is raising the East and West stair towers and elevator encasement. Three layers of cinder-block have been laid atop the foundation so far. The steel structure for the elevator will soon be placed. (continued on p. 2)

LIVING HISTORY PROJECT



Ruby Woodyard-Nelson was born the second child of 11 brothers and sisters to Silvia and Steven Nelson on April 13, 1924 at York Hospital.

(continued on page 3)

CAY HISTORY SPOTLIGHT

To celebrate Women’s History Month, we highlight the story of Mrs. Mildred Chapman. She served as CAY Executive Director from 1953 -1963. (continued on page 2)





Mildred Chapman

CAY HISTORY SPOTLIGHT (Cont.)

Mildred Chapman moved to York, PA with her husband William in 1941 where they opened the first black funeral home. She assisted with the administrative functions of the business while also serving as Director for the women's and girls' programs and events at Crispus Attucks Community Center. Mrs. Chapman received her degree in pharmaceutical chemistry from Howard University but was unable to find work in her field due to racism and discrimination. Despite this, she became a leader in the African American community and an inspiration to generations of young girls. She taught them to take pride in their appearance and carry themselves with dignity. She has had a lasting impact and a legacy that continues to this day.

“Have dignity in the way you look.”

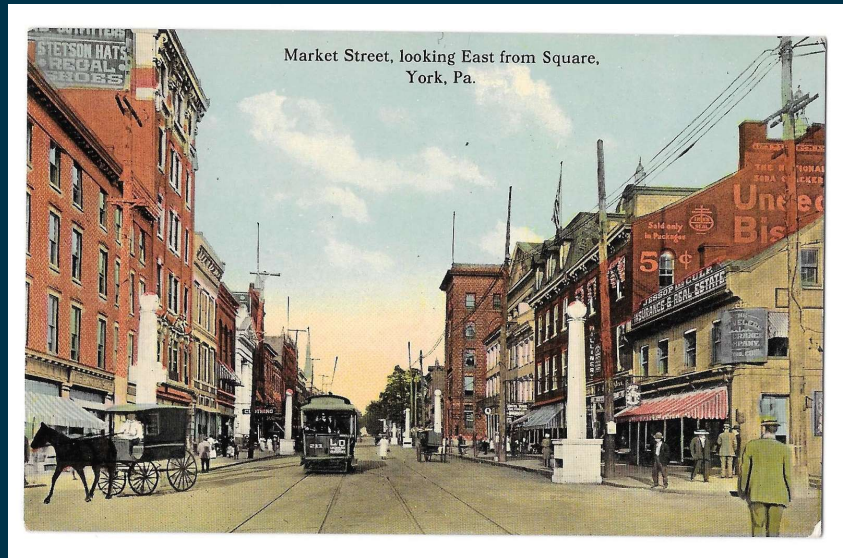
-Mildred Chapman

BUILDING THE HCC (Cont.)

Photo shows scaffolding surrounding the East and West Stair towers

CAY HISTORY SPOTLIGHT (CONT.)

Ruby's father was a factory worker and her mother worked as a volunteer at Crispus Attucks York. Growing up, she recalls a happy childhood playing with her siblings and attending Aquilla Howard and Smallwood segregated elementary schools. Later, she attended Hannah Penn Middle School and William Penn High School. The classrooms were fully integrated. Other activities at the schools were not. Six of her brothers served in various branches of the U. S. Armed Forces. She remembers that there was no electricity in her house until she turned 13 years old. Streetcars navigated down the main street in York. Automobiles could be seen driving alongside horses and buggies. The ice man and the milk man made their daily rounds.



Market Street, looking East from Square,
York, Pa.

When asked how the community has changed over the years, Ms. Nelson responded that it was much safer when she was growing up and she felt that she could go anywhere at all hours in relative safety and knew the policemen by name. It wasn't until she was 35 that she heard racially charged derogatory language being directed at her.

In general, Ms. Nelson feels that she has always been treated well in York. She feels so blessed to be 99 years old. She says she doesn't know how it happened, she didn't eat right and she danced all the time and expects to dance right into Heaven.



August 28, 1963

National Archives

When asked about her involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, she recounted that she and several members of her family participated in the August 28, 1963 March on Washington. She remembers that during the '68-'69 riots there were tanks going up and down the alley behind her house. She says "When I looked out the window, the gun was almost in my face!" She

saw a furniture factory burning at the corner of Queen and South Street. "I looked out the window and saw people running and carrying on." Thank you Ms. Nelson for your insight.



Armored Personnel Carrier Photo courtesy of York Daily Record

Mrs. Ruby Nelson expects to dance her way right into Heaven!

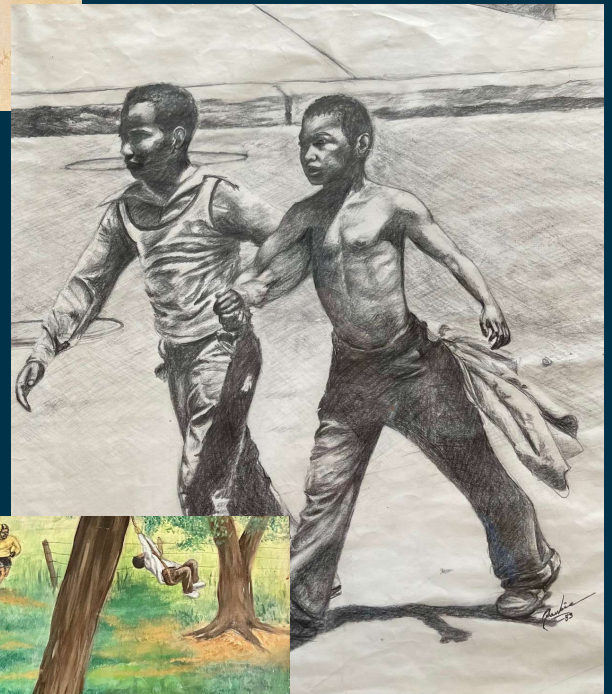


HCC CELEBRATES THE ARTS

Frankie Greer is a self-taught artist and musician. These are just some of the beautiful artworks that are on display at the CAY Community Center. The varied themes of his compositions speak to his talent and artistic expression in conveying the experiences of York's African American community. His work portrays everyday life, from the images of children playing, to eliciting feelings of raw emotion. His paintings show us our innermost joy and pain.

The drawing below portrays a

moment from Bobby Simpson's childhood as he was being pulled away from a fight by his big brother William "Sonny" Simpson. Bobby, Sonny, and Frankie grew up on the same street together.



"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

-Maya Angelou