

CAY HCC Celebrates
Black 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.



CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

On the morning of January 15, 2024, the din of heavy equipment and the crunching of asphalt could be heard as the site of our November 15 ground-breaking became an active construction zone. (continues on page 2)

BUILDING THE HCC

Site preparation has begun. The asphalt has been removed from the HCC’s footprint. The storm drains have been installed. We have begun pouring the foundation. The stair and elevator casements are next.

LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

The HCC is committed to giving York’s African American community the opportunity to tell their stories in their own voices. We would like to hear your life experiences. Each of us has a story to tell. Seeing and hearing history through the eyes of the people who lived it will allow us to create a complete narrative for current and future generations. It is possible that your story could be used in the HCC’s living history programming. If you are interested in sharing your story, please contact Jeff Pacl at jpacl@crispusattucks.org

CAY HISTORY SPOTLIGHT

To celebrate Black History Month, we highlight the story of Rev. David Orr, (1902-1973) a



founding member of CAY and president of the Board of Directors. Despite his 8th grade education, David became an ordained minister and entrepreneur. He owned several businesses including a barber shop, a restaurant, a grocery store, and a refuse company. (continued on page 3)



A HAPPY DAY

Jeff Kirkland, Jeff Pacl, Bobby Simpson, and Chip Dalton arrive early for the ground-breaking ceremony for the CAY HCC on November 15, 2023.

Construction Begins (cont.)

In a worthy tribute to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's legacy, Crispus Attucks York (CAY) began building the new History and Culture Center (HCC) on his birthday, a vision that has been years in the making. With the opening of the CAY HCC, there will finally be a space in York devoted to telling the comprehensive story of the county's Black community. The common thread throughout the CAY History and Culture Center will be the story of how the African American community, in the face of adversity, discrimination, and violence came together through Crispus Attucks York and created a diverse and thriving culture, a proud legacy that continues to this day.



Bobby Simpson supervises site preparation for the HCC



When completed, the CAY HCC will be a 17,214 square foot, three story building with a rooftop terrace. An artist's rendering appears above courtesy of Murphy and Dittenhafer, our architects.

“Our lives begin and end the day we become silent about things that matter”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Rev. David Orr, CAY Founder

CAY HISTORY SPOTLIGHT (CONT.)

Rev. Orr migrated to York from Bamberg, South Carolina during the Great Migration in the late 1920's in search of work with the railroad. He worked many jobs including selling ALAGA (which stands for Alabama and Georgia) syrup door-to-door and as a janitor. He eventually managed to save enough to purchase a dump truck and began a hauling business. During the Great Depression, Rev. Orr worked on the WPA-New Deal project to redevelop Codorus Creek. The economic hardships of the Depression were particularly challenging to African Americans who lacked equitable access to relief efforts. This void was recognized by community leaders including Rev. Orr, Dr. George Bowles, and Rev. Thomas Montouth. In 1931, they formed Crispus Attucks to meet the social service needs of African Americans. Early efforts focused on child care, employment services, housing and recreational activities.

Rev. Orr led the way in integrating housing in York County when he purchased his family home in an all-white suburb. He fought tirelessly for equality for the black community as a member of CAY, the NAACP, and within his role as V.P. of the York Men's Civic Council. He was President of the CAY Board of Directors during a very challenging time in our history. He was a strong supporter of the civil rights movement and the nonviolent methods of Dr. Martin Luther King. He led the effort to build our current CAY Center on 605 S. Duke St. As a tribute to his character, we will be naming our CAY HCC cultural event hall after Rev. Orr (see below). We had a wonderful conversation with his son Mr. Charles Orr, who provided much of the information in this article. Charles began his CA life as a Kindergartner with Helen Thackston as his teacher. It is an honor to have him as the first interviewee for the CAY Living History Project.



INTERIOR VIEW / EVENT SPACE