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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.



Wade Hampton Bowers III

A GIANT IN CAY HISTORY – CAY HISTORY SPOTLIGHT

In the annals of Crispus Attucks History, the name Wade Hampton Bowers commands as much respect now as it did during his tenure as Crispus Attucks Director. Mr. Bowers was small in stature but had a huge presence about him. When he walked the halls of Crispus Attucks, everyone knew that a certain level of behavior was expected.

Mr. Bowers was the first African American to receive the Golden Deed award from York's Exchange Club. He was one of the first persons of his race to serve in radio and television conducting a series of choral performances on NBC beginning in 1939. He was and accomplished singer and musician. He was known as the Black Caruso.

(see Bowers on p. 4)

DNA VS ZIP CODE

By Jeffrey Kirkland

People in York City live 10 fewer years than residents of Dallastown. TEN YEARS! (per Healthy York County Coalition from study paid for by WellSpan).

In some census tracts in York City, HALF of the children have lead paint poisoning (per the York City Health Department).

York County has the fourth-highest number of children poisoned by lead of all of Pennsylvania's 67 counties." (see DNA on p. 2)

THE OLD BANDSTAND

The old Bandstand in Penn Park was a place steeped in York's African American culture and tradition. It was a source of Spiritual energy for our community.

Over the years, as we faced difficult times in this community, the Bandstand served as a rallying point for Blacks to come together, gathering strength from each other. At other times it was a place of fun, relaxation and sharing good times.

(see Bandstand on p. 5)

LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

By Ben Werkley

Randy Christie has spent much of his life creating change by helping to break down boundaries that previously divided people. From battling school segregation on his way to being one of the first black Pennsylvania State Troopers, Christie's life is an example of how one person can help to create positive change.

(See Christie on p. 7)



DNA (continued from p. 1)

York City has the highest concentration of buildings with lead paint problems. York City is where poverty is concentrated in York County and a disproportionate number of people living in poverty are people of color. The lead paint crisis disproportionately affects people of color in York County. The mostly white business, political and community leadership of York County has not yet addressed York's lead paint crisis in a significant way, despite the fact that, in some census tracts in York City, HALF of the children have lead poisoning per York City Health Department. I am inspired to repost this article in response to an email I received from Mr. Bill Swartz. Bill was discussing the detrimental effect of various chemicals and substances present in the environment, on the health of those residents who are subject to abnormal exposure to these chemicals.



The zip code where you live can be a major determinant of many issues that impact our health and our lives....I posted this piece several months ago to bring awareness to what is allowed to take place in poor or lower class neighborhoods. Now here are some more photos of an eyesore and hazard that has been allowed to exist in a decent neighborhood where I used to

live. The 100 block of West Cottage Place is a decent neighborhood. I just think it is a travesty this eyesore has been allowed.

For the first time in our history, the United States is raising a generation of children who may live sicker and shorter lives than their parents. Reversing this trend will of course depend on healthy decisions by each of us. But not everyone in America has the same opportunities to make healthy choices.

As I was driving through the city today, doing what I do, I happen to turn down East

Princess Street. As I drove I noticed a cloud of dust rising as other cars were going past. As I look further I noticed that one side of the street appeared to be a different color than the other side. As I investigated even closer, I realized the dirt and dust that covered the street was a pollutant coming from the Junkyard that is located in the 500 block of East Princess Street. The dust not only covered the street but the sidewalks, the cars and any plants that are able to survive. Now this junkyard



East Princess Street looking West

has been located here for as long as I can remember, well over 50 years, but it has always been a sore spot for me. As I became more politically aware I always thought that there has to be some major polluting going on there with the chemicals coming from the collected junk seeping into the ground in that area.

Upon reading many articles and scientific journals about health and life expectancy as it relates to where you live, I became even more sensitized to these major violations of our community health. Many of these articles conclude that an essential key to your health may be related to your zip code, actually saying that your zip code or where you live might be as important to your health as your Genetic Code.....

A recent population-based analysis of life expectancy across United States, funded by the Robert Johnson Foundation (RWJF), found that geographic disparities in life expectancy in our nation are large and growing, and can be explained in large part by differences in race/ethnicity and socioeconomic factors such as income, education, and employment status.

If DNA represents our biological blueprint, ZNA (zip code at birth) is the blueprint for our behavioral & psycho-social makeup and is just as powerful a determinant of our life expectancy as our DNA.

Our ZIP codes can determine everything from our access to healthy food, to the safety of our neighborhoods, to the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink—factors which have a huge influence on whether we get sick in the first place.

To further illustrate how where we live can affect our health, RWJF has supported the development of maps which show how babies born just a few miles apart often have dramatic differences in life expectancy.



Wow, there it is. Who is keeping watch on this



A little while back I posted some photos of major smoke pollution pouring from the smoke stack at the Crematorium over on Kings Mill Road.



Another Health Hazard placed right in the middle of our community without regards to the environmental and human damage it is causing. In addition to that, just in the recent past a huge cell phone tower was placed right in the vicinity of where our children have to travel back

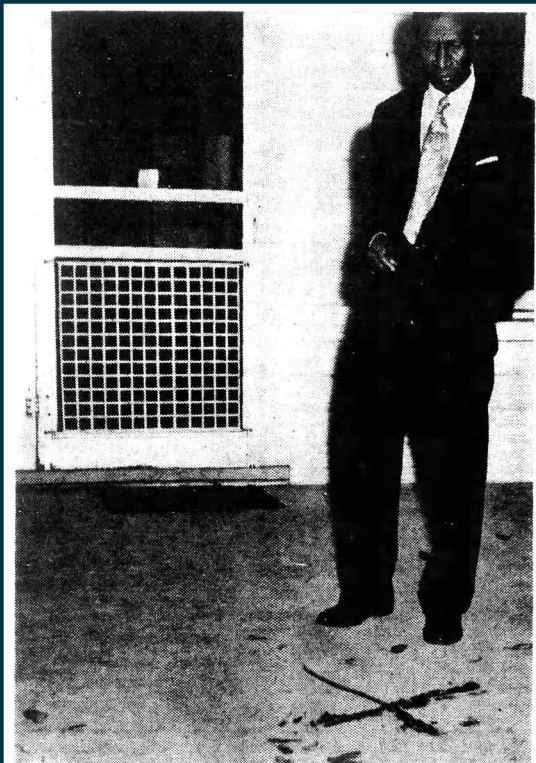
and forth to McKinley school, again without regard for the overall safety and Health of our community, or our children.

Politicians and others in authority will argue that these pollutants are no threat to us, our community or our children, but again I will bet you a dollar to a dime that these entities would never be allowed to be placed in a more affluent locale.

Now I submit to you that these violations of the sanctity and health of our community would not and could not happen in any of our more affluent communities. This is exactly the conclusions reached by many of the studies on Zip Codes and Health. Besides the detrimental effects these toxic entities have on our health, they serve as major drivers in the skyrocketing cost of healthcare for those who are least able to afford it. Not in my Backyard is a powerful refrain if you have the clout to back it up.

BOWERS (continued from p. 1)

Mr. Bowers came to Crispus Attucks from Dayton, Ohio in 1952, to serve as Director of Education. He served at Crispus Attucks for 22 years. He was born in Savannah, Ga. Mr. Bowers attended St. Benedict DeMoore Catholic Academy in Dayton and eventually graduated from Morehouse University. He had extensive experience in directing dramas, operettas, pageants, choirs and orchestras. In April of 1953 Mr. Bowers, being a trained tenor, presented a recital of classical and sacred music at the Faith Presbyterian Church under the auspices of the Men of Faith Club at the church. Mrs. Irene Saxon, a noted musician here in York, accompanied him on the piano.



—Photo by The Gazette and Daily
CROSS BURNED — Wade H. Bowers, 723 South Duke street, stands beside a wooden cross that was burned on his front porch Wednesday evening. Police Chief William H. Kapp said yesterday the incident appeared to be a prank and that police were seeking young people. Bowers is education director at Crispus Attucks center.

Mr. Bowers said that, “while attending Morehouse he was impressed with the positive impact of learning about Black Culture and History had on the students there”. When he arrived at Crispus Attucks, a Black History club was one of the first programs he initiated.

Like many of the Crispus Attucks Directors before him and after him, Mr. Bowers was very active in York’s political and social activities. He was honored by the Brotherly Love Elks Lodge #228, the Crispus Attucks Association, the Community Progress Council and the Charles E. Williams Post #794 of the American Legion as “Man of the Year” with a testimonial dinner at the Yorktowne Hotel for his long record of community service.

He served as President of the Board of Directors of the Community Progress Council, a member of the South-Central Board of the American Lung Association, and as Vice-President and Chairman of the Community Coordination Committee of the York NAACP, on which the author’s mother, Mrs. Gladys E. Kirkland, also served. Mr. Bowers also served on the York Economic Development

program, the York City Schools Art Council and the York County Bicentennial Commission.

Mr. Bowers guided Crispus Attucks through one of the most turbulent times in its History. During those politically charged times of the Late 1960's, the Crispus Attucks Board of Directors came under fire from community groups who felt that not enough was being done at the Center to educate and uplift the community. Members of these groups included the Black Unity Movement, Congress of Racial Equality and other community members. They expressed their dissatisfaction by forming a rival CAY Board of Directors and attempting to delegitimize and replace the legal Board of Directors.

The United Way of York, a major funding source of Crispus Attucks, threatened to pull funding from CAY if the rebel Board took control. After much consternation, anxiety, and alleged intervention by United Way, the attempted coup was beaten back by Mr. Bowers. CAY then moved forward with trying to access a better building. When questioned by the press on whether or not the United Way threatened to pull funding, United Way President Laverne Grandy refused to answer that question, rather saying they supported Mr. Bowers actions 100%.

On November 12, 1964 Mr. Bowers telephoned York City Police at 11:45 pm to report that a burning cross placed in a soda bottle had been put on his front porch. His son Edward answered a knock at the door, saw the burning cross and kicked it into the yard. Police explained the cross which measured 18 inches high and 16 inches across was bound together with wire and wrapped with rags soaked with some type of flammable chemical.

Mr. Bowers was married to the beautiful Alice T. Salmons Bowers. He had three sons: Wade IV, Stephan, and Edward.

Mr. Bowers was 87 years old when he died in 1993. He was a founding member of York's Friendship Baptist Church. Mr. Bowers is interred at Susquehanna Memorial Gardens in York.

BANDSTAND (continued from p. 1)

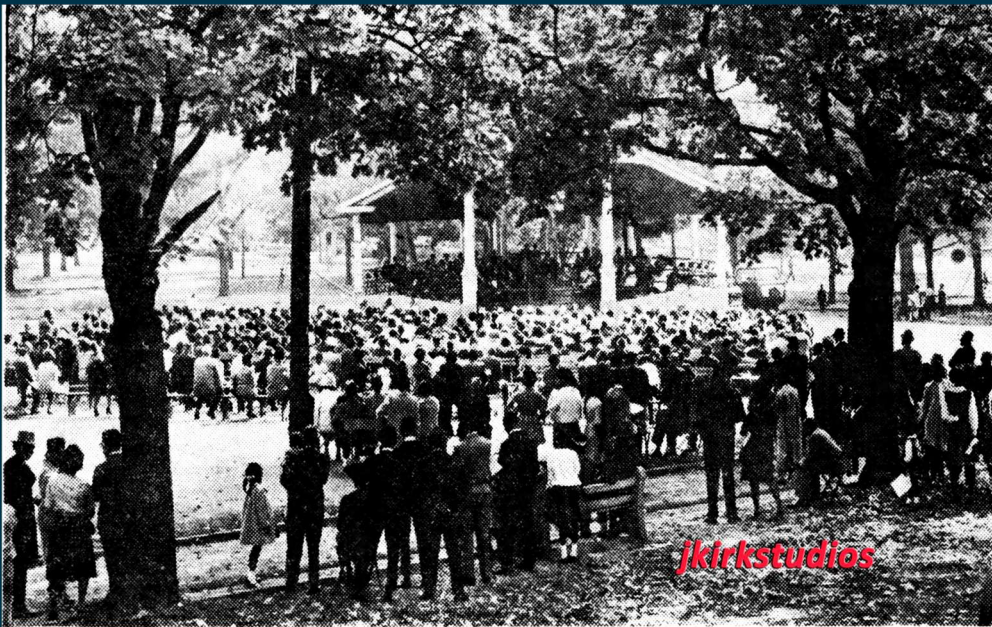
Over the years many significant events have happened around the Bandstand including the largest Civil Rights rally ever held in this city (in 1963) with over 1500 people in attendance. It was spectacular. That Sunday afternoon saw people from every Black church in York march from their churches to Penn Park at 12:30 PM singing "We Shall Overcome" in a show of unity unsurpassed in York's History. NAACP official and Master of Ceremonies for the event William Barber told the crowd that "Negroes in York will no longer patiently accept racial injustice. We will no longer be denied the freedom to develop to our full potential." Dr. Russell Hackley, President of the local chapter of the NAACP, told the rally that every Black organization in York would be active in this effort.

Rev. Richard Manning, pastor of Shiloh Baptist church and head of the Ministers Monthly Fellowship told the crowd that the Negro Ministry has a very important role to

play in this uplifting effort. Manning said "to play our part we will move our programs out of our churches on to the streets as Jesus did when he talked to the multitudes." Rev. Thomas Montouth of Faith Presbyterian church delivered the invocation. Wade Bowers and Hildegard Beard were vocalists in the program.



Every political organization in the city was represented on the dais including; Mayor John Snyder; City Council president Fred Schiding; The Republican and Democratic county Chairmen; York Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Woodrow Brown; Jack Barnhart, president of the York Labor Council; John Padden, Executive Director of the Manufacturers Association of York; Richard Coesens, President of the Chamber of Commerce; Marty Goldman, from the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith; and John Zimmerman from the State Human Relations Commission.



Other organizations represented, in addition to all of the Black churches were: Crispus Attucks Association, Charles E Williams Post 794 of the American Legion, the Brotherly Love Lodge Elks of World, Queen Esther Temple, IBPOE OF W, Household of Ruth, Social Friendship Lodge #42 Masons, and the Deborah Chapter 26 Eastern

Star. This was an absolutely powerful, historic event.

Other important events held at the Bandstand included the 1968 student protest over the use of police dogs and police brutality, Unity Day festivities, and the 1980 Pan

African Unity Festival (which featured Queen Mother Moore and Civil Rights activist Frankie Getter as speakers).

It was traumatizing when it was torn down. It was like destroying a vital piece of our community. It was torn down deliberately by the enemies of man, who realized its potential as a rallying point for future grievances and community uplifting events. It was particularly disturbing when the powers that be spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to restore a similar edifice on Farquhar Park.

Unfortunately, the loss or passing of many of the Black community's historic places and organizations happens all too often. Although the physical edifice may have passed on, our ancestral connections and its spirit lives on.....

“If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”

- Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

CHRISTIE (continued from p. 1)

Randy Christie grew up on Gas Alley, a small alleyway between Queen Street and Pine Street here in York, PA. Christie was the third of eight children. Both of his parents were from the south and had moved up north to Pennsylvania during the Great Migration, his father was from Maryland and his mother was from Bertie County, North Carolina. Christie grew up poor. In his interview, Christie recalled “I didn't realize that we were as poor as we were but y'know, I was never hungry, I always had clothes on my back.”

CONFRONTING SCHOOL SEGREGATION

Growing up, Christie started to break boundaries before he was even in grade school. When Christie's family moved down to York from Harrisburg, Christie's mother, Cora Christie, wanted to enroll him at the closest school to where they lived, the Pine Street School. However, York's public schools were still segregated at that time. Randy spoke about how school segregation affected his family during his interview. “Pine Street School was funny because back then when I started they had Aquila Howard, which was a Black school. And when my mother moved here she took us, because there were three of us who were school-aged at the time, down to the Pine Street School to sign us up. They [the school district] told her ‘They can't go to school here. Black kids go to school at Aquila Howard.’ and she said ‘Is this the York City School District?’ and they told her yes. She said ‘Well I'll tell you what I'm going to do. First day of school I'm gonna drop them off right here, and if you want them to go to Aquila Howard, you take them to Aquila Howard.’ She dropped us off [at Pine St.

school] and that's where we went to school." Cora Christie found a small way to stand up to and fight the racist system of segregation in York by sending her three Black children to an all-white school years before the Supreme Court struck down school segregation.

Christie would continue to go to the Pine Street school until it closed in 1955. He and all of his classmates at Pine Street would be transferred to the newly built Alexander Goode Elementary School. Just one year before the Goode School opened, the Supreme Court of the United States handed down its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* where the court struck down the principle of "separate but equal" that had been established in a previous Supreme Court Case, *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Chief Justice Earl Warren who penned the Court's opinion wrote that "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." Acts of defiance like those exhibited by Cora Christie, helped to break down the wall of segregation.



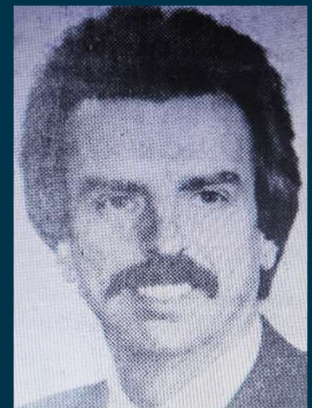
Supreme Court of the United States, 1954

The Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* may have helped to end school segregation in York, Pennsylvania and across the country, but it did not end the discrimination many African Americans experienced daily. Randy Christie said he never noticed much racism directed toward him while he was attending the Pine Street School. During his interview he wondered aloud if he never really saw much racism since he was so young and just didn't know what he was looking for. In his neighborhood, Christie

recalled the white kids and the Black kids playing together and he never noticed much racism coming from the white kids. Most of the racism that he experienced came from the parents and other adults living in his neighborhood.

Randy Christie recalled two incidents of Racism that he encountered as a young man. The first occurred when he attempted to join a local youth football team. "[I] Went out for the team, and everybody, all of the kids went out for the youth football team. We got to practice. Then they started issuing uniforms, their uniforms were kept in somebody's house in a garage, so we had to walk a couple of blocks to get the uniforms. We lined up and everybody in front of me got a uniform and they got to me and said 'We're all out of uniforms.' I could look into the garage and see boxes of uniforms."

Another incident occurred when he was a teenager. Christie and a group of his friends were on their way home from a singing event in Lancaster County. Four kids were riding together in a car. Randy said "We were coming up George Street and at that point in time, George Street was like one way going north and we came out of Gas Alley which is a couple blocks away from where I grew up. We came out of Gas Alley right there at George Street. We pulled out onto George Street and there was a cop car that came



Gerald Sweeney
Courtesy of YDR

out of Gas Alley behind us, a cop car that came out of Gas Alley on the other side, and two cop cars came up George Street, and one came down George Street going the wrong [direction] and [the cops] just boxed us in. We're wondering what the hell is going on? What did we do? [Officer] Sweeney walked up to the car and says 'Oh we got a bunch of n---rs here, we're gonna have some fun!' We looked at each other and said 'Uh oh!' Well, at that time [police officer] Newt Brown pulled up, and he knew all of us. He just looked down at us and said 'These are some good boys. Let them go.' And they [the police] all dispersed." Randy Christie and his other friends were saved from abuse by the intervention of Newt Brown, they were quite lucky with this.

Officer Sweeney is a name that often comes up when one looks into the numerous incidents of police brutality that occurred in York at that time. Sweeney would take any opportunity he could get to attack York's Black community. Christie and his friends narrowly avoided a potential beating and maybe even death at the hands of Officer Sweeney. This would not be the last time in Randy Christie's life where he narrowly avoided death nor would it be the last time Christie would experience racism.

MILITARY SERVICE



Airman Randy Christie

For most of his life, Randy Christie knew that he wanted to serve in the United States military, his father had served, and so had many of his uncles. A few of his uncles had made careers out of their military service serving for nearly 20 years. During his senior year of high school, Christie started to have some second thoughts about whether he really wanted to go into the military, perhaps college would be a better choice for him. This was shot down by his high school guidance counselor who told him he could get a job at one of the factories in York or he could join the military. Earlier in high school, Christie had joined the White Rose Drum and Bugle Corps where he would meet one of his mentors, Bob Zarfoss. Zarfoss had taught Christie how to play percussion and had become like a second father to Christie. Zarfoss had served in the United States Air Force (USAF) and he recommended that Christie should consider possibly joining the Air Force. Not

long after that, Christie took the test to join the USAF.

After he finished basic training, Randy Christie got stationed in New Jersey. Christie was assigned to the United States Air Force Security Police (USAFSP) (now known as the United States Air Force Security Forces USAFSF) The Security Forces/Security Police are the ground combat units and military police for the United States Air Force. In practice, most of what the USAFSP did when Christie was there and what the USADSF does today is provide security for bases, make sure everybody on base is following the law, and provide ground support with things like convoys, search and

destroy missions, and provide ground combat support. Christie enjoyed his time stationed in New Jersey but it did little to help prepare him for his next deployment.



Rocket City -Courtesy of USAF Police Alumni Association

ROCKET CITY

Randy Christie's next deployment was to Da Nang Air Base in Vietnam. Christie recalled how intense this was, "The next thing I know I'm in Vietnam, ducking and covering my head because [everything is] blowing up around you and bullets are flying by!" Christie also recalled the intense heat he experienced in Vietnam, "It was maybe 110 degrees in the shade." In his interview, Randy also recalled the nickname that the soldiers had for Da Nang Air Base at the time, "I was stationed at Da Nang, and at that time it was called

'Rocket City' because we got rocket attacks a couple of times every week."

Randy Christie almost fell victim to some of these rocket attacks while stationed in Da Nang. Christie didn't claim that his survival was simply luck. "To this day people tell me, man you're lucky, and I tell them, I'm not lucky, just blessed." One of the incidents that led Christie to this conclusion was the time he was almost blown up by a Vietnamese rocket. Christie recalled this story during his interview saying, "One time, a rocket hit a JP4 fuel storage tank...dead center and the Rocket was a dud. It just hit, and then dropped off." This incident led Christie to believe that Da Nang Air Base was poorly designed. "Whoever designed that base I don't know what they were thinking. It was really stupid because right beside the storage was security. We were the only armed branch of the Air Force over there. We provided security, did search and destroy missions, and convoy escorts with the Marines and Army. So right next to this JP4 fuel storage was their security and their armed branch. Right across the street was the officers. That's where all the officers' quarters [were]. So, had that thing not been a dud and [if] it exploded, it would have wiped out their security and the officers. I'm thinking, man who came up with this?"

"To this day people tell me, man you're lucky, and I tell them, I'm not lucky, just blessed."

- Randy Christie

HANOI HANNAH

Another thing that Randy Christie vividly recalled was a North Vietnamese propaganda Radio operator named Hanoi Hannah. "They had a lady over there [that] was called Hanoi Hannah, and every night she was on the radio. She would tell us when we were gonna get hit, and where the rockets were gonna land, and 75 to 85

percent of the time she was spot on.” Christie recalled a specific example of Hanoi Hannah correctly telegraphing where a rocket was going to hit on the base. “They [the USAF] built a new chow hall. Big, huge, modern chow hall on one side of the base [in] Da Nang. The night before Hubert Humphrey, [who] was the Vice President, he was supposed to come and dedicate this chow hall. The night before this dedication she said ‘I know your Vice President is supposed to come tomorrow and dedicate the new chow hall, not gonna happen! It’s not gonna happen because we’re gonna drop some rockets on it tonight!’ And that night, dead center. A rocket dead center [on the chow hall].”



Trinh Thi Ngo - Hanoi Hannah

Hanoi Hannah (whose real name was Trịnh Thị Ngọc) was a North Vietnamese broadcast personality who was selected by the North Vietnamese to broadcast propaganda aimed at American servicemen. She attempted to demoralize American troops by reading out negative stories from back home, reading out the names of soldiers who had died, playing anti-war songs, and encouraging soldiers to mutiny or surrender. She even suggested that soldiers' wives and girlfriends back home were cheating on them. In a 2018 New York Times article, “The Mystery of Hanoi Hannah,” writer and former Vietnam War correspondent Don North wrote that, “By then the airwaves over North and South Vietnam had become a confusing battleground of

conflicting propaganda voices. Working on the premise of ‘capture their minds and their hearts will follow,’ both sides supported dozens of radio stations spewing malice and disinformation 24 hours a day. Hannah’s scripts were written by North Vietnam Army propaganda experts, and advised by Cubans.”

One of these attempts at getting soldiers to mutiny or defect was aimed at the Black troops serving in Vietnam. Randy Christie recalled these transmissions during his interview, “She [Hanoi Hannah] used to get on and she would say ‘Hey brothers don’t fight us! Put your guns down because we never called you a n—r!’” In Don North’s article on Hanoi Hannah, North pointed out that Hanoi Hannah’s broadcasts more often amused American servicemen than it demoralized them. Many American servicemen laughed at her broadcasts and they didn’t take much of the propaganda seriously.

After Randy Christie’s eventful time in Vietnam, he was moved to Loring Air Base in Maine. Loring Air Base was located in a remote northern area near Canada that is known for being quite cold. The rapid change from the sweltering heat of Vietnam to the extreme cold of Maine was quite a shock to Christie who quickly came to hate the cold. Christie recalled playing basketball on the base’s team. The team did quite well and won several of the games that they played against some of the local colleges and universities. Eventually, Christie was offered the chance to leave the military early and he took it. Christie enjoyed his time in the military but he simply couldn’t see himself making a career out of it. Especially after his service in Vietnam, he had no intention of staying for 20 years.

Randy Christie returned to civilian life at a rough point in time for both York, PA, and the rest of the country. Race riots were erupting all across the country and York, PA was no exception. Christie did not see any of the violence of the York Riots firsthand, he was living in a different part of the city. He did recall seeing the Armored Vehicles used by the PA State Guard and their patrols up and down the road.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TROOPER

Since Randy was a small child he had wanted to be a police officer. When he was growing up, three of his uncles served with the York City Police Department, they were some of York City's first Black cops and Christie wanted to join them. This childhood dream of Christie's lived on into his adulthood despite some of the racism he faced from York City cops when he was a teenager. Christie was further encouraged to join the police by his service with the USAFSP which was the Air Force's police. Coming out of the Air Force, Christie thought he would join his uncles in the York City PD but one of his old buddies from the Air Force encouraged him to instead take the entrance exam to the PA State Troopers. He was also encouraged to join the State Troopers after he saw a Black State Trooper on the news during a report about race riots in Philadelphia. Around the time that Randy Christie took the entrance exam for the State Troopers, the State Troopers had the goal of recruiting more minorities into their ranks, and the responsibility for this fell onto State Trooper Ron Sharpe. Ron Sharpe was one of the first Black PA State Troopers and he would later go on to be appointed Commissioner of the PA State Police in 1987 making him the first Black commissioner



PA State Trooper Randy Christie



Colonel Ron Sharpe (Mr. Christie's Mentor)

of any state police organization. At one point, Sharpe came to York to attempt to find some recruits for the State Troopers. Christie heard about this and decided to go talk to Sharpe about joining the State Troopers. Christie went to the place in town where Sharpe was recruiting people. He recalled this story during his interview, "I went there to see him [Ron Sharpe] and he said '[Are] You interested in signing up for the State Police?' I said 'I've already taken the test, I've got [my] physical and stuff like that coming up.' So, he took my name, address, and phone number. It couldn't have been more than two months later and I get this phone call and he says 'Are you still interested in going into the State Police?' and I said yeah, and he said 'Could you be in Harrisburg to interview? The Deputy Commissioner or one of the Lieutenant Colonels

wants to interview you, can you come up for this interview?' I said 'When?' And he said, this was on like a Monday and he said, 'Wednesday' and I said 'Sure!' I went up there [to Harrisburg] and got this interview and the Colonel said 'All you gotta do is get a haircut and I want you to start at the Academy.' I said 'When?' and he said 'Monday'" The reason why Christie was able to get in so quickly was because several of the white recruits who had been set to go to the academy decided to drop out and Ron Sharpe had suggested that those seats should be filled by minority recruits that Sharpe already had for the academy. Christie also got veterans preference which helped to bump him up a few places.

In 1970 Randy Christie became one of the first Black PA State Troopers and the first African American from York County, PA to ever become a state trooper. Despite being on the job, Christie still experienced discrimination. It was quite challenging to be one of the few Black PA State Troopers. Some of the police officers who had targeted him as a youth were still on the York City police force when he became a State Trooper and he noticed that those guys treated him differently. A common thread Christie described throughout his discussions about his time in the State Troopers was the shocked looks he would get from people who couldn't believe that there were Black State Troopers. Christie recalled that at one point when he was driving down the road in his state police car a driver was so shocked by seeing Christie in the front seat of a patrol car that the man almost crashed into a bridge.

Christie spoke of another racist encounter he had while he was serving in Lancaster County. He liked to eat lunch at a diner called the Columbia Diner. Christie recalled in his interview, "I pulled up there for lunch one day. State police car outside, 'Pennsylvania State Police' [printed] all over the car. I'm in there eating my lunch, I got a State Police uniform with a patch that says 'Pennsylvania State Police.' And this guy walks up to me and he says 'Excuse me, who do you work for?' And I said 'State police.' and he said 'No no no no, I wanna know who you work for?' And I said 'Pennsylvania State Police! The patch says Pennsylvania State Police!' and he said 'No! No no no no Because they don't have any ni...' and he caught himself. He was getting ready to say, 'Because they don't have any n—rs.' And at that point, I said 'You need to get...' I can't use any of the words I really used, but what I basically said is 'You need to get out of my face before you get hurt!' If I would have told him:, [that] a state cop had just stopped me, I beat him up, took his car, took his uniform and it just happened to fit. [If I told him] that hungry homeboy escaped, he would have believed that." Christie was stationed at various places throughout the commonwealth during his 20 years of service with the State Police and a common theme throughout his service was people's disbelief at seeing a Black PA State Trooper.

Randy Christie has stayed involved with the York community and activism. At one point he helped to revive the York Chapter of the NAACP and he held a leadership position in that organization. He focused on fostering a dialogue among the residents of York to help end inequalities in the community. Outside of his community involvement, he continues to be involved in singing and the drum and bugle corps, he also loves to travel.

Randy Christie has spent much of his life breaking boundaries, from helping to end segregation in schools to becoming one of the first Black PA State Troopers. Christie's story is an outstanding example of how one person can help to break down barriers in society.

BUILDING THE HCC



The CAY History and Culture Center

The construction of the HCC is progressing rapidly. The exterior sheathing has been installed. Most of the work is now going on inside the structure. The exterior will eventually have a brick and metal sheathing facade. The general shape of the building is now clearly defined.

**Neither love nor terror makes one blind:
indifference makes one blind.
- James Baldwin**