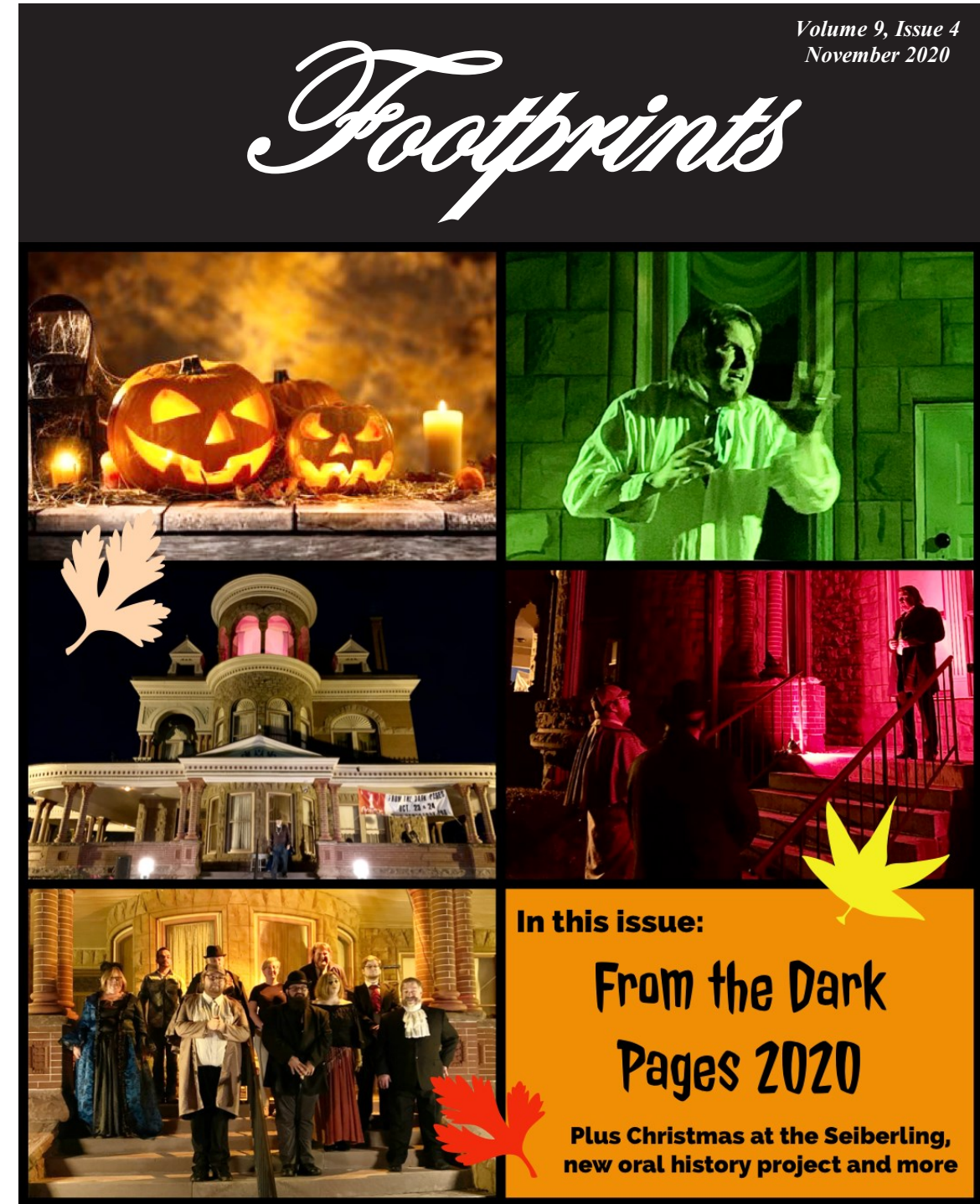


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Historical Society
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Kokomo, Indiana 46901

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Historical society as busy as ever

**Cheers,
Catherine
HCHS Executive Director**

Howard County Historical Society
2020 Annual Meeting
January 12, 2021
6:00-7:15 PM

Gil Porter presents
the story of
Aliff Henry,
Howard County
pioneer!

Windmill Grill dinners
will be available for
pickup!



Local personalities
try their hand
at Howard
County Jeopardy!

Attend in person or online at hchistory.org
Kokomo First Church of the Nazarene
2734 S Washington St, Kokomo, IN 46902

More details
available on our
website!

Howard County
JEOPARDY!

Windmill Grill



Membership

Our new and renewed memberships

Richard and Betty Alexander	Alan and Prudence Harnish	Thomas and Kathryn Rethlake
James Allman	Phyllis A. Hedrick	Glenn Rodgers
Ron and Pam Barsh	Mark and Peggy Hobson	Blake and Jennifer Rollins
Larry and June Barton	Catherine Hughes	Robert and Diana Rostron, Jr.
Don and Gail Beaton	Peter Inman	Dana Scruggs
Marilynda Bennett	Dave and Linda Kitchell	Thomas and Judy Sheehan
Dave Broman and Joyce	Phillip and Diane Knight	Bill and Lyn Shirley
Cylkowski	Gale and Donna Leiter	Charles and Sharon Short
Judy Brown	Wayne and Susan Luttrell	Edward and Dixie Stone
Jim and Donna Calabro	Thomas and Marsha Maple	Linda Stout
Rosemary Pike	Juanita Martin-Davis	Cathy Stover
Hilary Crook	Brent and Mary Jo McClellan	Greg and Melody Sumpter
Joe Dunbar	Thomas and Mary Donna Morr	J. Alan Teller
Charles and Mary Duncan	Jerry and Marcia Nelson	Ronald Tetrick
Craig Dunham	Fred Odiet	Edward Trobaugh, Major
Barbara Dutton	Tom and Betty Poppas	General, U.S. retired
Teresa Fields	Gilbert W. Porter	Pat Waymire
H. Lee Fritz	Don and Marti Pries	Paul and Shelly Wyman
Glenn and Nancy Grundmann	Sharon Reed	

bility in our cash-strapped field. She talked about wanting history to matter and sharing stories with visitors that surprised them, made them curious and wanting to know more. These interactions are the most meaningful for history museum staff and why we are in this business. She recognized the passion of those in this field who are “navigating the truths of history, the challenges of memory, and the out and out battles about the ideas of heritage.” The predominant impression I came away with from the conference is that there are many more perspectives on this work than mine. It highlighted critical issues facing history muse-

ums. While I am a veteran in the field and have led my share of conference sessions, I need to make sure I am open and listening and not thinking I have all the answers. This conference presented me with many opportunities to learn. I heard the call by panelists to make sure I am doing all I can to move the needle on equity and inclusion. I was challenged to be innovative and nimble in my thinking. I was reminded that there is so much more work to be done to make museums truly meaningful and equitable as places to work and to visit.

Gratitude for the support

The Howard County Historical Society staff and board are grateful for the outpouring of aid we've received these past months in support of the Society and the Seiberling Mansion, both from funders and from private supporters like you. In addition to the PPP loan we secured this spring, we were also fortunate to receive funding from Indiana Arts Commission as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Se-

curity (CARES) Act economic stabilization plan of 2020. We have also been awarded grant funding for our upcoming Christmas video and virtual experience from the Community Foundation of Howard County, and the Indiana Historical Society has awarded funding for a new oral history project, Voices of Pandemic and Protest. We are excited about the future and our continued growth, even in the current moment of Covid-19 and social unrest.

Flamekeepers

With immense gratitude for all those whose donations support our mission and programs

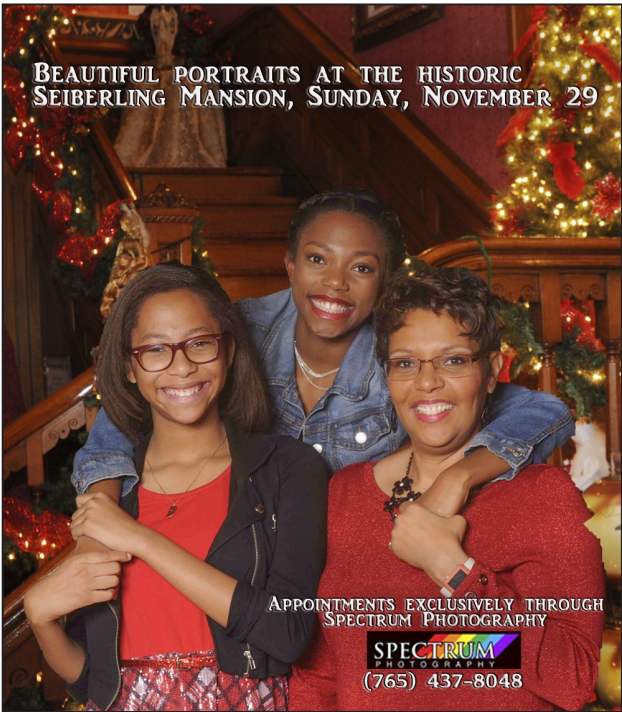
Silver	Bronze	Friends
Larry and Irene Rolland	Caldwell Monument Company/ Troy Caldwell	Jeremy and Terri Burke
	Ken and Linda Ferries	Charles and Mona Graham
	Tom and Lynn Folkers	
	Rev. Kenn Freeland	
	Harry and Roberta Hanson	
	Tom and Jeanne Harrell	
	Shirley and Stout Funeral	
	Homes/Marty Stout	
	Wayne and Susan Luttrell	
	Darrell and Jule Rider	

From the president

Our membership is fundamental

Fundamental to the Howard County Historical Society is our membership. They are part of the historic fabric of the community. It is their connection to the past, involvement in the present and investment in the future that prepares an inheritance for coming generations. This is true in all demographics and sectors of our community. We are grateful for our current membership for showing their children and grandchildren the importance of connecting to local community. The decision to become a member shows an acknowledgment of people, places and things from our past, which strengthens the foundation of the community future. Membership is empowering and supports preservation of our history through collections, programming and exhibits for future community members. Members have invested their time serving on the HCHS Board of Trustees, volunteering on committees and as hosts, and sharing their knowledge. They have invested their talent with events throughout the years. We are blessed to have members invest financially in the historical society's needs, from the replacing the roof to ongoing campaigns in this time of COVID-19. Our current uncharted waters are navigated with membership connections, continual backing and financial investment in the Howard County Historical Society. We are very much appreciative of your support!

Sharon A. Reed
President
Howard County Historical Society



In this issue

2 From the director	10 Church roots
3 President's column	date back to 1851 settlement
4 Seiberling Christmas continues	13 Hall of Legends nominations now accepted
5 Christmas sponsor spotlight	14 History of long-gone Friends meeting
5 Carriage rides information	16 What kind of ancestor will you be?
6 From the Dark Pages — COVID style	18 Donors recognized
9 Project to capture pandemic and protest histories	18 HCHS annual meeting info
	19 Support appreciated
	19 Membership

Christmas at the Seiberling

Lighting Ceremony and Virtual Tour Premiere
6-9 PM November 28, 2020
Evenings 4-8 PM December 3, 4, 10, 11, 17 and 18
Candlelight Tour 4-8 PM December 19
Timed tickets on sale now!
www.howardcountymuseum.org

Christmas continues at the Seiberling

The decorators are preparing, lined up with stockpiles of Santa-themed supplies, readying to sprint to the finish line once again to create the magic of Christmas at the Seiberling.

Caretaker Bill Baldwin and his helpers are stringing lights across the campus. The press release will alert the media. Carriages are standing by. The videographer, Sam Pittman, is planning his shots for the virtual tour. Santa is preparing for his entrance.

The good news is that Christmas at the Seiberling will carry on in the face of COVID-19 with many safety measures in place. Touring will happen each night with timed ticketing for \$5 in groups of 10 people every 15 minutes and allow for social distancing. The lack of crowding will help people to easily see the decorators' achievements in 45 minutes. Required mask wearing will keep attendees safe. Constant sanitizing will help. Tickets must be purchased in advance on our website: www.hchistory.org.

In addition, the virtual tour premiering on our Facebook page and website Nov. 28 will allow anyone to access Christmas at the Seiberling

remotely for free. Santa will arrive from the North Pole, flying past Kokomo landmarks, with a mission to save Christmas traditions at the Seiberling! He is aware of how the pandemic is threatening the holiday season and wants to make sure no one misses out. Voting on your favorite decorations will be possible through the website. We are happy to thank the Community Foundation of Howard County for their generous grant for the production of the virtual tour.

As in the past, charitable sponsors have made each night of Christmas at the Seiberling possible, and this year is no different. We want to thank each of them for their philanthropy in supporting this annual community tradition. For their generous giving, we appreciate The Wyman Group, Community First Bank of Indiana, Ivy Tech Community College Kokomo, Coca Cola Bottling of Kokomo, Indiana University Kokomo, Financial Builders Credit Union, First Farmers Bank & Trust, Security Federal Savings Bank, and Duke Energy.

Buy your tickets online for opening night, Nov. 28, 6 to 9 p.m.; Dec. 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 4 to 8 p.m.; Candlelight Night, Dec. 19, 4 to 8 p.m.

The stages were separated into five areas: recruitment, onboarding, service, engagement and recognition/transition, often citing the work of Board Source, the national center for non-profit boards, as a reference and resource. Throughout this session, attendees were brought back to the issue of equity and inclusion, prominent in the entire conference.

Panelists emphasized how crucial it is to try new avenues in recruiting board members to best represent the community being served. They agreed that often board spots can be filled by inviting known colleagues or community leaders, leading to a uniformity that may not be best for the organization's growth.

One suggestion was to consider "emerging museum professionals" to fill board openings, who are young and passionate about museums and might be interested in serving.

They stressed that onboarding of board members needs to be intentional, explicit and thorough so that all parties are clear about the commitment and policies of the organization and how they might be most able to contribute. Sample agreements and orientation materials were offered.

The service and engagement sections focused on how board members can be the best ambassadors for their organization, connecting to government officials, local businesses and community organizations. The importance of the boards' role in being champions for progress and brave practice in the organization to foster and promote equity was also highlighted.

The historic house museum

Very valuable to those of us who love the Seiberling Mansion was a pre-recorded session titled "Places that Innovate: Reimagining Historic House Museums."

Panelists looked at challenges, particularly in this time of COVID and protests, to historic house museums, the most common type of museum in the United States. Nationwide, museums have lost at least \$33 million a day due to closures this year.

While panelists highlighted the increasing variety of historic house museums, citing the

late musician Prince's house as an example, they also reminded attendees that over the last few decades, data has shown declining attendance.

However, more recently an AASLH study showed attendance on the rise 8.8% in historic house museums. This turn-around is a new trend. Panelist Kenneth Turino conjectured that this is about new sites telling stories of African-American history and old sites telling new stories that include African-American and LGBTQ history. Data from Wilkening Consulting reveals that both white people and people of color want to see more inclusive history.

Past surveys of the public have characterized historic house museums as elitist, self-reverential, culturally old fashioned and boring. Panelists therefore exhorted the leadership of historic house museums to determine their relevance today and get that message out to the public.

Another huge challenge named is poor stewardship or deferred maintenance. It takes a lot to keep up with historic house museums. Additionally, one panelist humorously pointed out that so many historic sites do the same activities, candle dipping and butter churning, and cautioned that the way to survival was to tell the unique story that your historic house museum might represent.

This session was pertinent to the Howard County Historical Society in myriad ways. We must respond to the common assumption that our historic house museum is disconnected from the community and show how the HCHS can be meaningful, inclusive and contribute to the quality of life here.

Conclusions

I was inspired by Christy Coleman, the Jamestown-Yorktown CEO and a thought leader and innovator in the field. In her reflective closing keynote address, she declared the conference one of the most meaningful and evocative of the past decade. She highlighted how AASLH pivoted quickly to a virtual format and offered free and affordable access options for the first time, recognizing the need for afforda-

A report from the AASLH virtual conference

What kind of ancestor will you be?

By Catherine Hughes
HCHS Executive Director

The first virtual national conference of the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) took place over Zoom from Sept. 23 through 30.

With 2,245 registrants, attendance surpassed last year's in-person conference in Philadelphia by 1,000 people. This annual professional development opportunity, open to all levels of history museum practitioners including staff, volunteer and board, strives to inspire best practices and growth in the field and a spirit of solidarity for all.

From the opening plenary session that introduced the conference theme: "What Kind of Ancestor Will You Be?," it was clear this would be a new kind of conference with its virtual format and a stated open and critical approach to history. Social justice and equity were in the foreground throughout. It was announced at the beginning that AASLH is joining the National Council on Public History survey to look at gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the public history field with the aim of producing data that will help enact meaningful change. Attendees were encouraged to take part in the survey.

Conference program chair and moderator Omar Eaton-Martinez began the conference by answering the conference theme for himself. He declared that he wanted to be an inspiring ancestor like his father, who immigrated from Puerto Rico and worked for NASA Goddard Space Flight Center for 40 years. His father's story is now in the National Museum of African-American History and Culture (NMAAHC). Eaton-Martinez cited others who paved the way for his career. He highlighted the diversity of the upcoming conference, with many firsts including a general session with all-black wom-

en panelists, an all-Indigenous panel, and a talk with an Afro-Latino curator with an Afro-Latino interviewer. He issued a clarion call to our professional community to "inform the conscience of our communities and help them see the humanity in one another" with our work.

On race and gender

The opening general session, "#MeToo, and #BlackLivesMatter: Black Women Leaders Overcoming the Double Burden," explored the intersection of race and gender and the challenges that emerge at that juncture for four female museum leaders.

Christy Coleman, CEO of Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, was the moderator. Citing several studies, Coleman reported that while 65 percent of museum staff are female, 85 percent of museum leaders remain white men. Furthermore, only 4 percent of museum leadership (such as top managers and executive directors) are women of color.

Each panelist brought stories of what it has been like for them as black women leaders to maintain and sustain their organizations. Their experiences have put into question assumptions that have been at play in recruitment, fund raising, managing capital campaigns and mentorship. They highlighted paths they have taken and opportunities they have been given by people who inspired and helped them to become leaders and emphasized the need for good mentors as essential.

Board member growth

"The Life Cycle of a Board Member" was organized by the small-museum affinity community and presented a thorough look at what a current board member of a history museum might expect and what might be expected of them, and, furthermore, how to be an exemplary board member.

Sponsor spotlight

Coca-Cola, Ivy Tech team up to bring you a smile

Almost synonymous with the celebration of Christmas, the "Coca-Cola Santa Claus" has been offering "a Coke and a Smile" on behalf of the famous beverage for more than 100 years.

With "A Celebration of Santas" the theme for this year's Seiberling holiday festivities, Ivy Tech Community College Kokomo and Coca-Cola Bottling of Kokomo are partnering to make sure the celebration includes the jolly old elf of soft drink fame.

Throughout the month of December, "Coca-Cola Santas" will fill the Seiberling's second-floor foyer and one bedroom, courtesy of decorators from Ivy Tech and Coca-Cola. The partners are also sponsoring the Dec. 4 "Christmas at the Seiberling," purchasing the in-person tickets to distribute to students, staff and supporters. And, as a real gift to the community, Ivy Tech and Coca-Cola Kokomo have purchased all the tickets for the afternoons of Dec. 5 and 6 and donated them to Howard County's five school corporations to distribute to dual credit teachers.

"Ivy Tech Kokomo has been a sponsor of the Seiberling's holiday celebrations for nearly a dec-

ade. We felt it was very important to continue that support and help in transforming traditions to meet the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Ivy Tech Kokomo Chancellor Dean McCurdy. "We are excited to join with Coca-Cola Kokomo. This is our way of being 'Santa's helpers,' giving back to the community, supporting the historical society, entertaining our students and employees and thanking our local teachers, especially those who are our partners in the dual credit programs, for all they do."

Coca-Cola of Kokomo President Craig Severns said, "The Severns family and Coca-Cola Kokomo have long supported the mission of the Howard County Historical Society, and we're proud to partner with Ivy Tech for Christmas at the Seiberling this year."

"We're especially glad to have the opportunity to share the Seiberling holiday experience with teachers who have been so challenged with new schedules and new ways of teaching," he continued. "Their dedication to the students in this community is helping us all 'keep the spirit alive.'"

Christmas at the Seiberling Carriage Rides

Begin the holidays with
a visit to the magnificent
Seiberling Mansion and
a romantic horse-drawn
carriage ride through
the historic district.



November 28, 2020
6-9 PM
Call 765-452-4314
for reservations

FROM THE DARK PAGES

The show goes on — with COVID restrictions, of course

By Dean Despinoy

A tour through the mansion is normally a cheerful and welcoming journey to the past. However, a few years ago, HCHS Curator Stew Lauterbach proposed a new idea from a discovery he'd made.

In his father's papers, Stew had found a macabre theatrical script called "From the Dark Pages." His father was among the script's writers, all members of the Sherlock Holmes Society: Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis. The play had been performed for 10 years by Indiana Landmarks at the Morris-Butler House.

Stew was inspired, and received permission to use the now-dormant script at the Seiberling Mansion. Board member Dana Osburn jumped at the chance, and became the chairperson for organizing the inaugural event in 2017.

"From the Dark Pages" is a fun and entertaining way to combine Victorian mystery writers' inventions with the real mystery of Jack the Ripper's identity in the amazingly period-



Teresa Fields, HCHS board member and Dark Pages committee chair, acted as the fortune teller on the Elliott House porch, reading Tarot cards for visitors.

appropriate interior of the dimly lit Seiberling Mansion.

For this production, local actors, museum staff and volunteers came together to bring to life characters from Arthur Conan-Doyle, Mary Shelley, Robert Louis Stevenson and Bram Stoker.

Small parties of guests were escorted through the mansion, stopping in different rooms to witness vignettes that combine to present the murder mystery of Jack the Ripper, loose for the evening in the mansion. Observers were immersed in the action as they traveled from room to room, witnessing the strange interactions between various characters, all the while collecting clues to the mystery.

But alas, not even Sherlock Holmes, with the expert medical advice from Dr. Watson, could discover a way to safely create the fun and intimate experience of "From the Dark Pages" inside the mansion during COVID-19. Fortunately, board member Teresa Fields, this year's "Dark Pages" committee chair, with other creative minds, found a way to continue the tradition outside, using the grounds surrounding the mansion. The result was similar to those famous ghost walks through graveyards and spooky neighborhoods so popular in places like New Orleans.

This year, guests arrived in the parking lot of the Elliott House to find it teeming with activity. Their first stop was the check-in table for ticket purchase or verification, receiving their colored wristband designating one of the evening's four time slots.

Staff ensured everyone was properly masked and understood the spacing requirement for COVID protection.

The rustically decorated parking lot, with bales of hay for seating around two fire pits, offered warm locations to visit. The refresh-

humans should not enslave each other, and those in the Big Miami Reserve sympathized with these sentiments, including the Baileys and others who began to meet in 1842 in private homes.

Members of Newbury Indulged Meeting were soon joined by other Friends, migrating from North Carolina and Henry and Wayne counties in Indiana. To accommodate a growing number of worshippers, a log meetinghouse was built at the forks of the creek in 1847.

Newbury Indulged Meeting was allowed to meet as a preparative meeting on the 22nd day of ninth month (September), 1848.

At some point, Friends at Deer Creek Antislavery Meeting and those of their members who had adventured into the Miami Reserve as early as 1842 and formed Newbury Preparative Meeting were "censured" by Mississinewa Monthly Meeting for their refusal to abide by the federal law regarding runaway slaves.

Honey Creek (now New London) Preparative Meeting was organized by Mississinewa in 1845 and became a monthly meeting in 1846. Antislavery sentiments also existed within this meeting, but Mississinewa does not appear to have censured Honey Creek Friends as it did members of Deer Creek and Newbury.

By around 1855, all Friends in Indiana felt led to defy the law and shelter runaway slaves. This caused many of the antislavery meetings to dissolve as they were accepted back into membership by their former mother meetings.

The Friends at New London Monthly Meeting were also involved in helping runaway slaves in their flight to Canada and freedom. However, such activities were done secretly and no public statements were made about their clandestine activities. The secrets died with the members and were never disclosed. Evidence and hearsay exists about these activities, but nothing appears in any minutes of the meeting.

Because Newbury Preparative Meeting never reached the status of a monthly meeting, all transfers of membership receipts and removals and local finances were handled by Deer Creek. The preparative meeting appears to have held its last meeting during May 1857.

Newbury memberships have been reconstructed from meeting records preserved by Mississinewa and Deer Creek, and from the later records of New Salem.

In addition to the Baileys and others who arrived in 1842, in quick succession came Dr. Jefferson Horine, James Lancaster, Samuel Barr, Jesse Ellis, Moses Jones and wife Eunice Macy and their families, settling around the newly platted village of West Liberty, east of the forks of the Wildcat.

By 1857, many of these Quakers began moving farther west into Iowa and Kansas. Those remaining after 1855 appear in the early records of New Salem Meeting, which is still active south of Greentown.

By 1871, the original log meetinghouse of Newbury Preparative Meeting was dismantled, and the only evidence on the site today is the active cemetery, also known as Union Civil Cemetery, on both sides of County Road 300 South, just east of C.R. 1100 East. It is a quiet, well-kept burial ground, where many of the early settlers lay at rest, but who are hopefully not forgotten.



This simple meeting house was once the home of New London Friends. Today they still meet, but now in a stone church, which replaced this building. Newbury Friends Preparative Meeting built a log meeting house in 1847. The meeting no longer exists and the log building was disassembled in 1871. A cemetery is all that remains at the site.

The brief tension between early Quaker settlers in Howard County

History of the Newbury Friends Preparative Meeting (1842-1857)

By Ron Tetrick

The presence of the Religious Society of Friends, often referred to as Quakers, in the early days of Howard County has been noted in these pages before (“Were Friends First?”, February 2020), but their development follows a very specific protocol set out by the national Friends organization.

If you thought you knew how these meetings proliferated, think again. Of course, these pioneering Friends brought their faith with them. They also built roads, worked against slavery and created communities. Friends played a big role in the early years of settlement of Howard County. This is the story of those who began Newbury Preparative Meeting.

In 1842 Henry Bailey, from Grant County, his sons, David and Levi, and sons-in-law Elijah Anderson, Robert Felton and Pleasant Jones and their large families settled near the forks of Wildcat Creek near what is now West Liberty. About the same year, Thomas Moorman, Charles Philip Baldwin, Charles O. Fry, James Lancaster and Elliot Mason cut a road through the forest from Jonesboro to the community and staked their claims. The land had not been surveyed at this time.

Friends had to follow a very specific pattern when setting up new places of worship, called “meetings”: first, an “indulged” meeting for “First Day” (Sunday) worship is allowed by the mother meeting.

Later, as the community becomes larger, permission is granted for a “preparative” meeting, which also allows worship on a midweek day, such as fourth or fifth day (Wednesday or Thursday).

As the meeting becomes financially stronger,

permission is given for “monthly” meeting status, at which time the transfers of memberships, recording of births, marriages and deaths, and the creation of committees for specific purposes (such as nominating, finance, care of the poor and widows, property trustees and elders) are permitted. However, while they may have followed the same pattern, developing Quaker groups did not always agree on their ideals.

While Mississinewa Monthly Meeting (now Marion) was established in 1832, Deer Creek Antislavery Preparative Meeting — in defiance of Mississinewa — organized itself in 1843, four miles south of Marion on what later became known as the Old Kokomo Road. This road ran from Jonesboro westward to a point on Wildcat Creek and then along the north bank to what later became Kokomo (now Sycamore Street).

Mississinewa Monthly Meeting was an “orthodox” meeting, which means that the members were very sensitive to the community in which they lived.

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, passed by the U. S. Congress on Sept. 18, 1850, was part of the Compromise of 1850, and allowed southern slave-holders to pursue runaway slaves across the Ohio River into Ohio and Indiana.

This action polarized citizens and caused a division among Friends. Would they follow their consciences and aid and abet runaway slaves or report them to their southern masters? Orthodox Friends, including Mississinewa Monthly Meeting, felt that they should obey the law of the land.

Deer Creek meeting felt very strongly that



A blood-curdling scream is heard and the shadow of another knife attack appears on the third floor of the Seiberling Mansion.

ment table had “From the Dark Pages” treats for sale, as well as s’more kits that could be made at the fire pits, all specially crafted by Teresa Fields.

Many took the opportunity to view the 1922 silent movie “Nosferatu” being shown to make sure guests were in the proper state of mind for their upcoming adventure.

Others, concerned as to what the future may bring, visited the tarot reading table.

What happened next?

As the clock struck the hour, a Ghost Host escorted the brave souls from the Elliott House to the starting point of the ghoulish tour. Arriving at the front, left side of the mansion, they were greeted by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his literary creation, Sherlock Holmes. At this point, there was no turning back as the game was afoot. The audience took their first step on

the 50-minute trip back in time, helping Doyle and Holmes, hot on the trail of Jack the Ripper.

(As the show continued, everyone was pleased and sometimes startled to meet, and interact with Queen Victoria, Edgar Allen Poe, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.)

Toward the end, as the group strolled on the path in front of the mansion, a blood-curdling scream was heard. Looking back at the Seiberling, they turned just in time to see two shadowy figures on the rotunda above the entrance to the mansion just as one shadow collapsed. Have they just witnessed yet another murder by the fiend? Suddenly, a figure ran from the front door, crossing the lawn just feet from the shocked spectators and Holmes, who with cat-like reflexes, grabbed the man and a fight ensued.

But wait, can this be? Holmes was rendered helpless and the Ripper had a knife at Holmes’ throat. With only seconds left to Holmes’ survival, Dr. Watson suddenly appeared from behind a tree and shot his trusty military pistol, putting an end to Jack the Ripper. Slightly embarrassed at needing to be rescued, Holmes addressed the spectators, then turned and departed with his trusted companion. The entire cast took a bow from the main steps of the mansion. After surviving the experience, the weary time travelers could warm their mortal bodies at the fire pit.

Returning as director of From the Dark Pages after a one-year hiatus, Elizabeth McQuiston did a wonderful job in adapting the experience to a totally outdoor venue. Dustin Huddleston joined the cast for the first time as Sherlock Holmes, with veteran Dark Pages actors James Ashcroft playing Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Jordan Kenyon playing Jack the Ripper. Of the remaining cast, five out of this year’s cast of 10 have been in all four productions — often in different roles.

As a true testament to the quality of the acting, during a final dress rehearsal for the production, the actors playing Holmes, Watson and Jack the Ripper were practicing their moves for the fight scene on the front lawn of the mansion. Someone from the neighborhood across the street from the Seiberling was so

concerned at the spectacle, they called the police. Upon their arrival, the police were quickly informed of the theatrical event. The police response was registered on Facebook's Kokomo Police Scanner page, to which a quick-thinking friend of the Howard County Historical Society added the website address to purchase tickets.

This two-night event was well attended and well run by staff, volunteers and helpful board members. The public seemed to really enjoy a fun Halloween-timed experience and the suitably chilling grounds of the Seiberling mansion. HCHS was happy to provide a much-needed, yet safe, diversion for many as we all continue to persevere during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Above, Dr. Jekyll, left, and Mr. Hyde are portrayed by Jay Eccent.

Left, Jack the Ripper (Jordan Kenyon) terrorizes Sherlock Holmes (Dustin Huddleston) in the closing scenes as Dr. Watson (James Holloway) tries to protect his partner.

During rehearsals, a neighbor found the scene so realistic, the Kokomo Police were called.

DEAN DESPINOY
PHOTOS

Limitless greats from Howard County

Nominations for 2021 Hall of Legends now being accepted

By Dean Despinoy
HCHS Publications Committee Member

The Howard County Hall of Legends is an annual celebration of the incredible contributions of people, both living and passed, who have ties to Howard County.

Since its inception in 2010 by the original committee chair, Craig Dunn, the Howard County Historical Society has continued the tradition of inducting six individuals or deserving organizations into the Hall each year. The 2019 Hall of Legends class increased those honored to a total of 61.

Normally, the selection committee starts meeting in May to review the long list of nominated individuals and organizations to start the difficult task of choosing the "best of the best."

In addition to the list of individuals nominated in past years, but not selected, there are also several new nominations each year. Additionally, members of the selection committee may also nominate a candidate.

Reviewing the 61 people and organizations who have so far been inducted, you can quickly appreciate their incredible accomplishments for Howard County — and many times the country and even the world.

Having been a member of the selection committee, I was struck by one amazing fact. The selection committee is not even close to running out of exceptionally qualified candidates. This fact in itself is a tremendous compliment to Howard County residents and a testament to the quality of the individuals who have made and continue to make up our community.

COVID-19 forced the question of when to safely pay tribute to the next group of honorees. The lockdowns and various state response levels made it impractical and dangerous to complete the selection process and hold the induction ceremony in August, which often brings people together from all parts of the country and world. The Hall of Legends committee took the opportunity to find a new date in the year for this annual event, when it is not so crowded with other activities.

The good news is we have no statute of limitations on excellence. Those who will be nominated for their exceptional contributions can be still be chosen for this honor.

The next Hall of Legends class will be announced on March 18, 2021, the 10th anniversary ceremony of the event.

The planning committee understands we will most likely still have some COVID restrictions or special requirements. For that reason, a video tribute and virtual ceremony will be made and shown on March 18. More

details will follow.

Nominations are being accepted for the Class of 2021 until Dec.31, 2020. The required information for the nomination is listed under Hall of Legends on the HCHS website: howardcountymuseum.org. After completion, the nomination should be mailed, emailed or hand delivered to Hall of Legends, Howard County Historical Society, 1200 W. Sycamore St., Kokomo, IN 46901 or to legends@howardcountymuseum.org.

"Having been a member of the selection committee, I was struck by one amazing fact. The selection committee is not even close to running out of exceptionally qualified candidates."

DEAN DESPINOY
HALL OF LEGENDS
SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBER

at the corner of Morton (Havens) and North Washington streets. Eventually the colored school was built next door to the A.M.E. church on Sharp Street, and reassigned as the segregated Second Ward district. Incidentally, the name “Douglass” for Kokomo’s colored school was being used as early as 1900, predating the historic 1919 building on North Bell Street.

Kokomo’s A.M.E. church has served congregants and citizens continuously since about 1872, a faithful and fruitful member of the global African Methodist Episcopal church. The first independent Protestant denomination founded by black people, it’s the largest major African-American Methodist denomination with 2.5 million members, making it one of the largest Methodist denominations in the world.

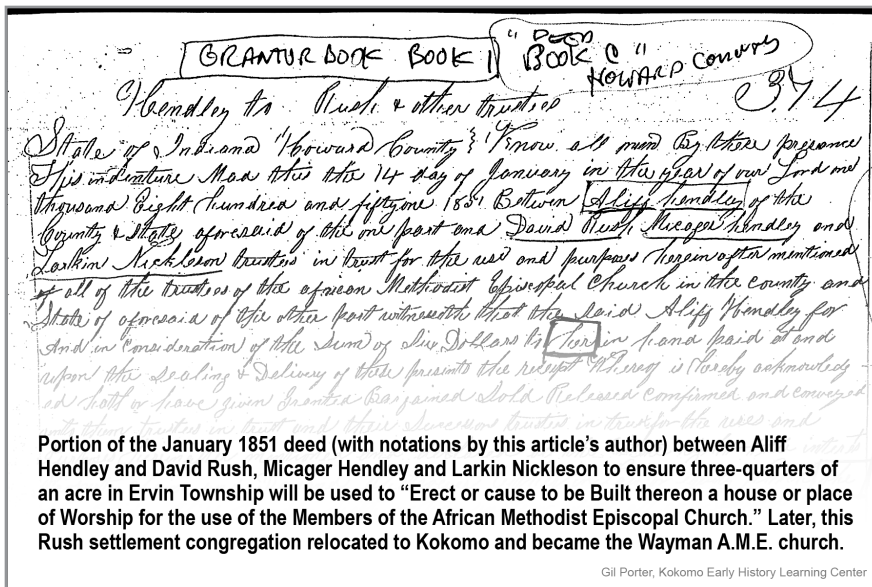
Kokomo’s A.M.E. church became Wayman A.M.E. when the legendary theologian and minister Alexander Walker Wayman dedicated the facility during a church-building tour through the Midwest in November 1875. Following the Rev. Rush, the Rev. Johnson Burden was named pastor, after serving as the area circuit-rider preacher since 1869.

Recent research into early African American settlers in Howard County reveals that the spirit and record of Kokomo’s Wayman A.M.E. family is older than previously understood. Wayman’s roots actually reach back to the Rush settlement. As has been noted, the Rev. Rush, the first A.M.E. minister in the county, was farming in Clay Township as early as 1845. In 1851, he was one of three Howard County residents representing the A.M.E. Indiana Conference as

“trustees in trust” to establish a church here. Along with Larkin Nickleson and Micager (Case) Hendley, the Rev. Rush is named on a land deed (see illustration below) to ensure three-quarters of an acre in Ervin Township will be used to “Erect or cause to be Built thereon a house or place of Worship for the use of the Members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.” This congregation eventually relocated to Kokomo as the Wayman A.M.E. church.

In the early years of the Rush settlement, schoolchildren took lessons in the frame building built on the deeded property. Families gathered for worship in it and buried their dead in the small adjoining graveyard. Among the graves is a striking tombstone, with a lovely rose engraving in memory of Alief [sic] Henley, who died in October 1861. Mrs. Henley was Case Hendley’s mother, the Rev. Rush’s mother-in-law, and a free person of color from North Carolina who was once enslaved.

It was her deed (“Hendley to Rush & other trustees, Jan. 14, 1851”) that set out a parcel of land to be used to start the A.M.E. church in Howard County. Pages 374-376 of Deed Book C in the Howard County Recorder’s office preserves that precious part of her remarkable life story.



Gil Porter, Kokomo Early History Learning Center

Stories of pandemic and protest in Howard County to be recorded in new oral history project

By Linda Ferries

Supported by a \$4,850 grant from the Indiana Historical Society, the Howard County Historical Society is beginning work on an ambitious oral history project to capture “Stories of Pandemic and Protest in Howard County.”

“History is being made every day, especially in 2020 as our country and our community live through this tumultuous year,” said Catherine Hughes, HCHS executive director. “This initiative is part oral history, part collection-based. Its goal is to identify, collect, and preserve stories and objects from members of our community that illustrate their experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement.”

Among similar projects the HCHS has undertaken are extensive oral history collections on the Ryan White story (honored by the Indiana Historical Society), the Palm Sunday Tornado, and Continental Steel.

The need to capture the history being made today was emphasized as the staff looked to find material from the 1918 pandemic to understand how Howard County dealt with that tragedy; little, even in newspaper records, was found. With a mission “to collect, preserve, and share the history of Howard County,” HCHS staff and board members determined to create a record to share today’s stories with community residents of the future.

Work on the project has begun under the direction of the Oral History Committee led by HCHS President Sharon Reed. A new committee member, Central Middle International School humanities teacher James Malone, is leading the pilot phase of the project, working with 6th and 7th grade students to collect stories.

“We’re very excited to give middle school students this opportunity – and, I hope, to foster their love of history,” Catherine said. “The goal with this pilot is to get students’ points of view and have students interview an elder in their lives. We want to include people who represent a variety of racial, generational, and socioeconomic groups to tell a

wide-ranging story.”

The Indiana Historical Society grant will support an expansion of the project across our community. Catherine said the funding will be used to hire a temporary project coordinator to work with the HCHS staff as well as with the community to conduct a broad effort at collecting material, as well as to organize the transcribing process.

“Identifying those directly impacted by the virus, as either someone on the front lines or a victim of the virus, as well as those who have participated in protests or rallies will be the first step in the project,” Catherine said. “Our goal is to identify and collect from the widest breadth of experience,

crossing racial, class and generational boundaries, in order to represent the people of Howard County fully.”

Catherine noted this local initiative is part of an international movement in museums and historical societies “to capture

and record this moment of collective uncertainty in this and other countries’ war against the coronavirus and racial injustice.”

“While there are many organizations now undertaking similar projects, it is imperative for the HCHS to do so locally in order to capture voices of the community,” she wrote in the application for the grant.

“The project will build community across Howard County and connect the present moment with the future,” she concluded in describing the project’s goals. “Specifically, community members will contribute to the historic record of the county, have their voices heard and also be able to contribute meaningful artifacts, such as homemade face masks or COVID-19 death certificates.

This project will provide future researchers and community members the ability to look back and understand this historic moment from a variety of perspectives. In addition, the HCHS can utilize stories collected in exhibits and programs.”

For more information on the project and to learn how to participate, contact the HCHS staff at 765-452-4314 or chughes@howardcountymuseum.org.

Wayman A.M.E. roots date to Rush settlement in 1851

By Gil Porter

Sunday evening worship services sometimes lasted late into the night. One newspaper report recalls the worshippers were “happy” with a “good deal of shouting.” Passers-by walking home from their respective churches would often join the services and “crowd the hall.”

Here, whites and blacks mingled openly and amicably Sunday nights during African Methodist Episcopal church services at a rented third-floor hall in downtown Kokomo (we’re not sure which building, as of this writing). A record from 1871 reports that when the frenetic energy of worship subsided one Sunday in February, the subsequent sermon was a “telling argument” on the glory of Christianity. The preacher spoke with eloquence and authority, extolling his listeners to pay attention to its teachings, which allowed one to “be happier and better in this life, with a certainty for the future” (*Kokomo Tribune*, Feb. 2, 1871).

The pastor was then about 50 years old, a farmer from North Carolina who could not read or write, yet with a presence in the pulpit that led the *Tribune* to declare him “one of the strong vessels in the church” who, when he speaks, “uses no idle words.”

By 1870, this father, husband, landowner, friend to his community and minister in the house of God, the Rev. David Rush, had lived most of his adult life in Clay Township in Howard County. He and his wife, Lucinda, had arrived sometime in 1844 or 1845 after spending a few years in Wayne Township, Marion County, near Indianapolis. There the Rush extended family joined up with North Carolina’s Lewis Clark and Virginia’s John Hardiman and this group headed north on the Michigan Road to buy property in the residue of the Big Miami

Reserve, collective land reluctantly relinquished by the Miami people through several treaties that culminated in their forced removal in 1846. This area became Indiana’s last county, first called Richardville, then renamed Howard.

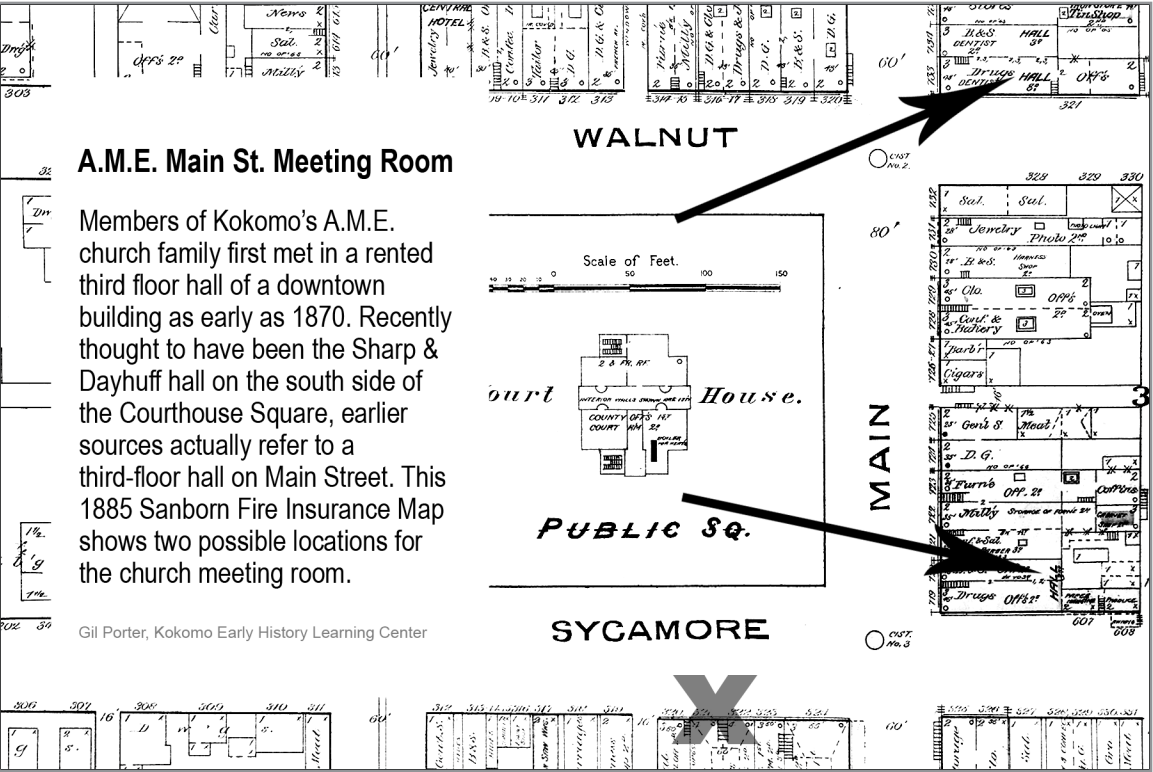
Among the travelers in 1844 was a woman nearly 80 years old from North Carolina who had been enslaved until a manumission petition in 1801 broke the bondage of the woman and her first child. Lucinda Rush, the woman’s second child, had been born free in North Carolina, and now these migrants from the southeastern United States looked for land and future blessings in Indiana. The first record of their presence in what would become Howard County is Nov. 11, 1844. At a state Canal Lands sales office in Delphi, Ind., Lucinda’s mother – Mrs. Aliff Henley – paid \$280 cash in full for 80 acres in what would later be Ervin Township.

Federal land just to the east of Mrs. Henley’s tract had not been released but nonetheless was open to “improvement.” Her son-in-law, the Rev. Rush, began a squatter’s farm on some 50 acres before the public land sale. When the U.S. surveyors came through on Dec. 3, 1846, they put his name and claim in the government’s official field notes, giving him pre-emption rights to the land.

The hardy pioneers had found a home. It was the start of a new life for them, a new Black settlement (the Rush Settlement) for Indiana, and, eventually, a new church for Kokomo.

...

During the 1860s, many of the original landowners and their farming families from the African American settlements in western Howard County moved into town, and the



new Kokomo residents wanted a place of worship all their own.

The congregation first met in a rented space on the third floor of a building on Main Street in downtown Kokomo (see illustration, above). On June 16, 1870, Kokomo residents were invited to join the members of the African Methodist Episcopal church for an “ice-cream and strawberry festival” in the third-floor room that Thursday evening. The funds would go toward “building a new church.”

The town had another chance to support the A.M.E. church fundraising in August 1870. “Ice cream, lemonade, peaches, cakes, etc., will be the order and a general good time is expected,” the *Kokomo Journal* reported. The fundraising committee chairwomen were a Mrs. Turner and Mrs. E.J. Artis, whose surname remains on the church rolls today. The Rev. David Rush himself was appointed “church agent” for the project.

Prior to this, in 1869, a corner lot had been

purchased in the rapidly expanding northeast section of Kokomo, just to the east of the busy Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and St. Louis railroad (Kokomo back then grew north and south along the spine of the rail lines). Contemporary reports and notations on an early city map reveal a blossoming community clustered around the intersection of Sharp (later renamed Richmond Street) and North Lafountain, with 95 African Americans (including 37 children), 26 frame houses, eight businesses, one school and one church — the African M.E. church. The small frame structure would serve the growing congregation until 1909, when the present church building was started a block to the east on the southeast corner of East Havens Street and Apperson Way (called North Kennedy Street in those days).

In contrast to the genial acceptance of the black worship experience, residents were less welcoming when it came time to enroll African American children in the Fourth Ward School