

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Post-COVID lockdown, BHC Members were quite busy in 2022.
- BHC Five-Year Strategic Plan implementation has begun.
- "The African American Community is a valuable historical resource that connects us from the past to the future with all of the great and significant contributions African Americans have made and are making here in Alabama and throughout these United States." BHC Chair & Member At-Large Lateefah Muhammad, Esquire

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

42nd Annual Heritage Festival in Anniston 2

BHC Annual Preservation Forum, Selma 2

Hobson City Founders' Day 2

The Ridge's Old Federal Road Festival 3

BHC & ACBM are 3 Partners

Mobile, Alabama: 3 Site for BHC Meeting

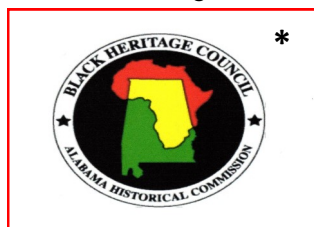
BHC Joins ASALH 4 for Conference

BHC Year in Review

Let us make 2023 another Happy and Productive Year!!! The Year 2022 began as a "breakout" year of sought. From March 2020 and for almost two years, everyone was on lockdown. The BHC was no different. 2022 began on a sad note with the passing of BHC Collegiate Institution Rep. Dr. Paul Mohr of Montgomery on Jan 3. This came while the BHC was still mourning the 2021 transitions of former BHC Member David Tuck (Aug.), and two then-current members 1st Cong. Dist. Rep. Dr. Joycelyn A. Finley of Mobile (Oct.), and Vice-Chair Elvin D. Lang of Montgomery (Nov.).

Beginning in February 2022 through December 2022, BHC Members actively participated in various preservation events and

projects inside and outside of the African American community in Alabama. In this Inaugural Issue



of the **Black Heritage Update**, we highlight some of our work.

We began with **1)** a special virtual meeting on Feb. 8 with BHC Executive Committee Members and AHC Senior Staff to discuss various matters, followed by:

2) Governor's Mansion Authority meeting, The Hill House, Feb. 15; **3)** Feb. 19, 42nd Annual Heritage Festival, Anniston; **4)** Feb. 28, Alabama Humanities Alliance

virtual honoring its 2022 Fellows, including Atty. Bryan Stevenson and posthumously Cong. John Lewis; **5)** Mar. 25 and 26, BHC 1st and 2nd Quarterly Meetings at ADAH Building, Montgomery. Director Steve Murray welcomed BHC and shared a field guide on **Making History at 250**; **6)** Annual Meeting of Alabama Historical Association, Apr. 7-9, Florence; **7)** BHC Five-Year Strategic Plan action plan discussed, Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, Apr. 23; **8)** Annual Cemetery Preservation Alliance Workshop, New Market, Apr. 30; **9)** May 28, Executive Committee met virtually to discuss the Plan; **10)** Open House, Pickensville Rosenwald School and Museum, June 4; **11)** BHC's virtual 3rd Quarterly Meeting on June 25; **12)** 123rd Annual Founders' Day at Hobson City, Aug. 18; (*cont. on pg. 4*)

BHC Chair Emerita & Co-Founder Turns 90



L-R: Dorothy Walker, Frazine Taylor, Louretta, Lateefah Muhammad, and Debra Love at Celebration.

On November 19, 2022, Mrs. Louretta Carter Wimberly was

celebrated by her family, friends and colleagues at historic First Baptist Church in Selma, AL. It was indeed a grand occasion.

Born November 17, 1932, "Miss Lou" has been involved in historic preservation for most of her adult life. She is one of the founders of the Alabama Black Heritage Council which started as a "Black Caucus" in the 1970's with several other Alabama African American preservationists.



Louretta served as chair of the Council for several years, and still serves today as Chair Emerita and Member At-Large. BHC presented a framed Resolution honoring her work as an educator and preservationist.

*One of three BHC logo designs by Mark Driscoll, former AHC Staffer, c. 2003.

42nd Annual Heritage Festival in Anniston, AL.



BHC Georgia Calhoun (r) with Sarah Freeman, band director, White Plains High School in Anniston. Sarah performed both the National Anthem and the Negro National Anthem on saxophone at Festival's Opening Ceremony.

"Building A Black Heritage Legacy: Preserving Our Churches, Schools, Communities and Cemeteries."

The Festival was held at the Longleaf Botanical Gardens Event Center in Anniston, Sat., Feb. 19, 2022. BHC Member At-Large Mrs. Georgia Calhoun of Choccolocco, AL. started the Festival in 1980. She has coordinated it each year with the help of an organizing team. At age 92, Mrs. Calhoun has no intentions of stepping down because of the importance of the Festival to young people. They learn about African American history through their research to compete for prizes during the Festival. All students, grades pre-

kindergarten to 12th grade, regardless of race, gender, religion, or ethnicity, are welcomed to participate and do. Miss Georgia insists on all children participating. And, she has plenty of help through the many sponsors of the event and community organizers.

The 2022 theme, **"Poetry: Put a Rainbow in Someone's Cloud,"** guided the contestants as they prepared for the competitions. During the Opening Ceremony, it was quite fitting to have Alabama's Poet Laureate Ashley M. Jones

recite some of her poetry. Ms. Jones is the first African American to serve Alabama in her position. Her term is 2022-2026. Talladega College Choir also participated.

The BHC surprised Mrs. Calhoun with a Resolution honoring her work with the Festival and as a former educator in Calhoun County. It was presented during the Opening Ceremony, thanks to Sarah Burke Woolmaker who worked with BHC to include it on the Program. Thanks to all, the Festival was very successful and enjoyed by everyone.

BHC Annual Community Preservation Forum

BHC held its Annual Community Preservation Forum in historic Selma, AL. on Sat. Sept. 10, 2022. As is customary, the day before, attendees went on a bus tour of the historic areas of Selma's Multiple Properties District where some are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The tour was led by BHC Chair Emerita and Co-Founder Mrs. Louretta Carter Wim-

berly. She and her preservation group also hosted the BHC in holding its Forum. BHC Forums are always free of charge to the public (as is all of BHC assistance).

The theme was **"Building A Black Heritage Legacy: Preserving Our Churches, Schools, Communities and Cemeteries."** There was a record turnout of attendees for the first in-person Forum since 2019. AHC Staffers

presented on topics that included *"Alabama Historical Marker and Cemetery Preservation Program," "Federal and State Tax Incentives,"* and, *"National Register of Historic Places, Easement Program, and State and Federal Funding Resources."* BHC members also presented on *"Local Success Stories in Preservation," "Preservation Fundamentals: Strategies to Save the Places You Love,"* and *"Funding Opportunities to Assist ... with Preservation"* **For more information, call 334-230-2691.**

Hobson City, Alabama Celebrates 123 Years

BHC Chair presents Resolution honoring Hobson City to Mayor Alberta McCrory at Annual Celebration



Hobson City, Alabama, a small town of 771 residents, 65 miles east of Birmingham and 88 miles west of Atlanta, GA., is the oldest black municipality in the state. On July 20, 1899, 49 landowning, Black Christian (and

mostly business) men from an area known as Mooree Quarters, a predominantly Black community adjacent to Oxford, Alabama, with the help of Ross Black, a white attorney, because Blacks could not practice law in Alabama at that time, filed a petition with Calhoun County Probate Judge E. F. Cook to incorporate into a separate entity from the City of Oxford. On August 16,

1899, the town of more than 400 people, with the self-respect they had gained, became the first city in Alabama established for and by Black people determined to take control of their own destiny and to govern themselves. BHC recognized Hobson City with a Resolution honoring the Town's 123rd Founders' Day Observance and presented it on August 18, 2022. **Kudos to Hobson City, AL!**

The Ridge's Old Federal Road Storytelling Festival



Some of the attendees captured here at the end of Day 2.

The Festival was held on October 28-29, 2022 at Creekwood Estates in Macon County, AL. On the first day, presentations were made on topics ranging from *"The Creek Nation's Presence in ... Macon County, 1800-1836"* by a preservation

officer with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, to *"How Enslavers and the Enslaved Experienced the Landscape and the Built Environment, 1844-1865"* by an Auburn University professor, to *"Black Land Possession and Dispossession, 1865-Present,"* by the executive director of The Black Land Project, to *"African American Pace Family Legacies and Diaspora, 1870-Present,"* by a descendant of the Pace Family.

The second day was geared towards arts and culture. As MC, Tuskegee Councilwoman Norma Jackson kept everything moving right along. There were stories told, music performed, on-site food vending, an art contest awards and presentations, and finally, the Jefferson Davis High School students directed by Georgette Norman in a Reader's Theatre Performance of the play, **Locked**. Dr. Shari Williams is executive director of The Ridge (in turquoise blouse in center of back row in picture). BHC was one of the Festival sponsors.

"The Creek Nation's Presence in ... Macon County, 1800-1836"

BHC Partners with The Alabama Conference of Black Mayors

The Alabama Conference of Black Mayors was founded in 1972 by eight African American Mayors of Alabama municipalities. The Conference celebrated its 50th Anniversary Dec. 2-3, 2022 at the Embassy Suites in Montgomery. The BHC joined in the Celebration.

In 2005, the Alabama Black Heritage Council and The Alabama Conference of Black Mayors mutually agreed to partner to support African Americans in their efforts to preserve Black historic places and their associated histo-

ry, artifacts, and culture throughout Alabama.

The keynote speaker for the Gala on Sat, the 3rd, was Attorney and former Mayor of Prichard, AL, Hon. A.J. Cooper, who was one of the eight founding members. He was introduced by another co-founder, Hon. Johnny Ford, Councilman of Dist. 2 and former Mayor, Tuskegee.

The BHC, one of the Gala sponsors, has plans to work closer with the member cities and towns of the Conference in future preservation efforts.



BHC Members present Resolution in tribute to the 50th Anniversary of The Alabama Conference of Black Mayors.

BHC 1st Quarterly Meeting Held in Mobile, Alabama

New BHC Member Robert Battles, Sr. hosted the 1st Quarterly Meeting. Sat, Dec. 10 in Mobile, AL. The meeting was designed to take care of business matters, which included the elections of officers. Elections were tabled until further notice. In addition to approving the 4th Quarterly Meeting Minutes, the meeting served as an orientation for new members who were given over-

views of roles of positions in the AHC and the BHC.

After the meeting, Battles arranged for Tour Guide Jason Lewis to show BHC Members some of Africatown. Members visited Old Plateau Cemetery, founded in 1876, Union Missionary Bapt. Church on Africatown Blvd, organized in 1869, and other historic sites.



BHC Members in Mobile at the Africatown Cultural Museum & Gift Center owned by R. Battles, Sr.



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History should not be a mystery.
We MUST tell our stories!

The Black Heritage Council serves in an advisory capacity to the Alabama Historical Commission and advocates for the preservation of Black landmarks, history, and culture in Alabama. It is the only statewide and state-related organization whose primary focus is the preservation of African American historic places, artifacts, and culture in Alabama. We presently have 16 volunteer Councilmembers who are located throughout the state. Interested persons should contact Mr. Theo Moore, II, BHC Coordinator, with questions about the Council and for additional information about a historic project with which they need assistance. Please visit the BHC webpage for more on our year in review. The BHC has launched its Five-Year Strategic Plan. If your organization would like a copy of the Plan, please contact the BHC Coordinator at the phone number on the left, or email blackheritagecouncil@ahc.alabama.gov. Remember: there is no charge for BHC assistance! It is a free service to citizens.

We're on the Web!

ahc.alabama.gov/blackheritagecouncil.aspx

BHC JOINS ASALH FOR ITS 107TH CONFERENCE

The Conference was held Sept. 28-Oct. 2, 2022 at the Renaissance Hotel in historic Montgomery, AL. Through BHC Coordinator Theo Moore, II, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) requested BHC Members to serve as moderators for its 107th Conference Film Festival, sponsored by the Black Hollywood Education & Resource Center. BHC Chair Lateefah Muhammad, Esq. and 3rd Cong. District Rep. Kwesi Daniels, Ph.D. were assigned films. The first film, **Hidden In Full View**, addressed the issue of lynching. Next, **Reclaiming Power ...** addressed maternal health. Two more films, one directed and produced by BHC Coordinator Moore, were on **Africatown**.

One other session attended by BHC members was the Annual Banquet during which BHC Chair Emerita & Member At-Large Frazine K. Taylor was given the **Dr. Dorothy Porter Wesley Award**. The Award is bestowed for "Excellence in Contributing to the Information Profession."

Another session BHC Members attended was the Annual Luncheon, during which we had the opportunity to gather with a colleague, doctoral candidate Majella

Chubb Hamilton of *The Ballard House Project, Inc.* of Birmingham. Hamilton was the Team Leader who helped to guide the BHC in its Five-Year Strategic Plan process from July 2020-Oct. 2021.

The Conference was an overall success. BHC has another partner in historic preservation—**ASALH!** Next year's 108th Annual Conference is scheduled for Jacksonville, FL.



BHC Members with The Ballard House Project Team Leader Majella Chubb Hamilton at ASALH Conference are Debra Love, Loretta Wimberly, Frazine Taylor, Muhammad, and Daniels.

BHC Year in Review, continued from pg. 1

13) BHC Annual Community Preservation Forum, Selma, Sept. 9-10; **14)** AHC Public Meeting, proposed nomination, National Register, Peacock Tract Neighborhood, Montgomery, Sept. 22; **15)** 107th ASALH Conference in Montgomery, Sept. 28-Oct. 2; **16)** BHC mourned the passing of Member, Mrs. Sangeretta Gilbert Bush of Montgomery, Oct. 8; **17)** The Ridge Old Federal Road Storytelling Festival, Oct. 28-29, Creekwood Estates, Macon County; **18)** Re-Grand Opening of Scottsboro Boys Museum, Decatur, Nov. 9; **19)** Nov. 12, BHC Special Meeting, Birmingham, appointed two new members, Robert Battles, Sr. of Mobile and Eddie Davis, Jr. of Meridianville (*more on them on the BHC webpage*); **20)** Zoom Meeting with AHC Senior Staff, Dec. 1; **21)** Dec. 2, Premiere of "The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks," Rosa Parks Museum, Montgomery; **22)** Alabama Conference of Black Mayors 50th Anniversary Gala, Dec. 2-3, Montgomery; **23)** Governor's Mansion Christmas Celebration, Dec. 7; **24)** BHC 1st Quarterly Meeting, Mobile, Dec. 10; **25)** 1st Annual Kwanzaa Celebration presenter, Troy, Dec. 17; **26)** Governor's Mansion Candlelight Tour, Dec. 19.