
Buffalo Soldiers Research Museum Newsletter

Volume 9 - Issue 4

Published four times each year ~ January, April, July & October

Indianapolis-based *Buffalo Soldier Tour* for Super Bowl 46 *Phase 1*

Plenty of sports-minded people will be in Indianapolis for Super Bowl 46. The Hoosiers are hosting this event on February 5, 2012 at Lucas Oil Stadium. Who knows the teams that will play but we are getting ready. The Buffalo Soldiers Research Museum is developing a self-guided tour of people and places that focus on military life. Many of the places are specifically related to the Buffalo Soldiers and other African American soldiers.

Stay tuned...

We will post updated information in our January 2012 newsletter.

The tour begins downtown at the center of the city. The **Soldiers and Sailors Monument** is positioned at the point where north meet south and east meets west. It commemorates Indiana's military men of all wars prior to WWI. Since 1902, it has stood as a tribute as the only Civil War monument dedicated to ordinary soldiers and sailors. When constructed, it cost nearly \$600,000 which would cost about \$500 million today. It was built with gray oolitic limestone and stands 284 feet and 6 inches. Each side of the monument has special significance - the Mexican War and War with Spain on the south elevation and a cascading fountain with 5,000 gallons of water flowing every minute on the east elevation. Above the fountain is the Dying Soldier sculpture with cavalry and charging infantry and artillery. The Indian and British wars are on the north elevation while the west elevation represents the homecoming with the Return Home and Peace sculptures. Several slaves and black soldiers can be identified on the south elevation. Inside the monument is the Col. Eli Lilly Civil War Museum and gift shop. Visitors can walk up 32 flights of stairs for a panoramic view of the city.



Stop at the **Indiana Historical Society** located downtown on the canal at 450 W. Ohio St. It houses lots of military history and African American life in Indiana. We met Francis O. Patterson who donated her collection which included photos of her relatives who served in the Spanish American War.



The **Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial** is located in Military Park at Michigan and West Streets - on the north bank of the White River State Park. The memorial is a group of 27 curved glass walls. Each wall is between 6-10 feet tall and represents 15 conflicts dating back to the Civil War. Recorded stories by Medal of Honor recipients are played throughout the day to help visitors learn about recipients. A total of 78 African Americans received the Medal of Honor and 23 were Buffalo Soldiers.

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Shine with pride when you find their names and listen to their stories.

Crispus Attucks High School and Museum is located at 1140 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.

This school opened in 1927 as the first and only public high school for African American students in Indianapolis. It is also known for its Collegiate Gothic/Tudor Revival style and terra cotta detailing. CAHS was a strong source of pride for the city and was known for its outstanding faculty. Dr. John Morton Finney, WWI Buffalo Soldier, was hired as one of the first teacher and later served as principal. Visit the museum which is housed inside the school.



John Morton Finney Indianapolis Public Schools Educational Service Center located at 120 E. Walnut St. is named in honor of WWI Buffalo Soldier and the oldest practicing lawyer in Indiana. The honor is appropriate since Dr. John Morton Finney earned 12 college degrees; the final one was earned at Butler University at the age of 75. He practiced law until the age of 106

Jasper Tyree's home, Francis O. Patterson's uncle is located on 25th & Boulevard. Pl. (Currently, another family lives in this house, so to protect their privacy we did not include the full address.) Jasper Tyree served in the 24th Infantry in the Spanish American War. The Indiana Historical Society has photos of the Tyree family and soldiers in the 24th Infantry during the Spanish American /war.

Tillman H. Harpole American Legion Post 249 is located at 2523 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. This post is named in honor of Tillman H. Harpole who was a member of the first class of 639 men at the training camp at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. On October 15, he was appointed as First Lieutenant, Infantry Section Officers Reserve Corps and entered active duty. He served with Company M, 372nd Infantry at Camp Funston, Kansas. Later, he went to Camp Stuart, Virginia. On March 30, 1918, Harpole left the United States headed to France with the 372nd Infantry Regiment, 93rd Infantry Division. This regiment was assigned to a French division, fought in several battles including attacks in the Champagne and Lorraine sectors. They spent a period of training in the Argonne from June 6 - July 14 and were part of the French 157th attached to the 10th Army Corps. They fought in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive between September 26 and October 8. Harpole served in the Air Defense sector and was killed in action on October 5, 1918. Tillman H. Harpole was buried in Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in Romagne, France. He was awarded the World War I Victory Medal and the World War Victory Button.



Outside of the American Legion Post 249 are 78 flags poles commemorating the African American Medal of Honor recipients – it is called the Avenue of the Stars. The flags are raised on special occasions throughout the year.

Doc Burton's home was located at 961 W. 26th St. (Currently, no home is on this vacant lot.) Burton served in the Spanish American War. Local newspapers noted that Burton was the first American soldier to reach the top of San Juan Hill and that he was one of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders.

Elder Watson Diggs Indianapolis Public School #42 is located at 1002 W. 25th St. It is home to 508 students in kindergarten to sixth grade. School 42 is named in honor of Elder W. Diggs who served as teacher and principal for 26 years. Diggs was among the first 10 students to enroll at Indiana University. On January 5, 1911, he and nine other men formed Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity at Indiana University. He served as a Grand Polemarch (president) from 1911-1917 and traveled around the country to support newly formed chapters. Kappa Alpha Psi is the only national Greek letter organization with its Alpha Chapter at the Indiana University campus. In 1916, Elder Diggs was the first African American to graduate from Indiana University's School of Education. In the same year, he moved to Indianapolis where he began teaching. When World War I started, Diggs entered the first Negro Officer's Training camp at Fort Des Moines, IA. On October 15, 1917, Diggs along with 638 captains and lieutenants received their commissions. Elder Watson Diggs was assigned to Camp Sherman near Chillicothe, OH. Camp Sherman was one of the new training camps and soon became the third largest camp in the nation. By the end of World War I, more than 40,000 soldiers trained there.



Elder Watson Diggs

In June 1918, Diggs went to France for combat against Germany. He was part of the 3rd Battalion, 92nd Division of the American Expeditionary Forces. Elder W. Diggs was assigned to the 368th Infantry. These units fought bravely across France with the final battle at the French city of Metz where the Germans had built a fortress. For the first time, a black regiment under the command of black officers from Fort Des Moines led the attack in a major battle. The 92nd Division fought to within 800 yards of the German fortress when the bugle sounded announcing the end of the war. Diggs continued his involvement with Kappa Alpha Psi and for his outstanding contributions and relentless efforts to improve and expand the fraternity, he was awarded the first Laurel Wreath in 1924. This is the fraternity's highest recognition of achievement. He also served as their Grand Historian from 1938-1939

John Morton Finney's home is at 57th & Illinois St. (Currently, another family lives in this house, so to protect their privacy we did not include the full address.)



John Morton-Finney served in the 24th U.S. Infantry Regiment from 1911-1914 and went to the Philippines. He rose to the rank of sergeant and applied for an officer's commission. In 1913, his commander told him that, although he had the intelligence and the education to be an officer, he was disqualified due to his race. When the commander said that he wouldn't be able to go to the officer's club, Morton-Finney responded that he didn't want to go to the officer's club; he wanted to be an officer. He earned a citation from General John J. Pershing for his service in the Philippines.

Trooper Morton-Finney received an honorable discharge; then, earned his first college degree from Lincoln College in Missouri. He began teaching in a one-room schoolhouse but when World War I started, he returned to the military. He served in France in the American Expeditionary Force and saw

the destruction; survivors of mustard gas and the graves of 30,000 Frenchmen.

After the war, he earned degrees in math, French, and history then, moved to Indianapolis in 1922. He taught junior high math and social studies at Indianapolis Public Schools #27 and #17 where he also served as principal. In 1927, he was hired as one of the first teacher at Crispus Attucks High School. He served as head of the foreign language department - teaching Greek, Latin, German, Spanish, and French. During World War II, he was cited for directing the rationing tickets program for African Americans in Indianapolis. Various merchandise such as meats, sugar, butter, gasoline, and rubber were strictly rationed.

Morton-Finney's love for learning remained constant. He earned master's degrees in French and education and in 1935, earned his first law degree. He later earned four more degrees. During an interview with Wallace Terry on his 100th birthday, he said "... a cultivated man would never say - I finished my education - because he graduated from college. There is no end to learning."



John Morton-Finney - educator, lawyer, and humanitarian - earned 12 degrees including a law degree from Indiana University and a degree from Butler University when he was 75 years old. He practiced law until he was 106 and died on January 28, 1998 at the age of 108. He received a full honor military memorial service and was laid to rest at Crown Hill Cemetery. Indianapolis Public Schools Board honored this dedicated teacher who taught for 47 years. In 2000, they unanimously voted to rename the Center for Educational Services to the Dr. John Morton-Finney Center for Educational Services.

Crown Hill Cemetery

Entrance at 34th and Boulevard Pl.

Crown Hill Cemetery, founded in 1863, is one of the largest cemeteries in the United States. Over 163,000 people have been laid to rest in this beautifully landscaped 550 acres memorial. The city's tallest hill is on the grounds where poet, James Whitcomb Riley and President Benjamin Harrison are buried. Notable African Americans include WWI Buffalo Soldier Dr. John Morton Finney, Julia Carson – former member of the US House of Representatives, Hoosier architect Walter Blackburn, Carmon's parents – Clenard and Sara Weaver, and many, many more. A section is also dedicated to the Civil War soldiers from the United States Colored Troops (USCT) 28th Regiment. Get a locator map to discover the details.



The tour ends here.....

For more information about the Buffalo Soldiers and/or plans for the 2012 Super Bowl tour, contact the

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