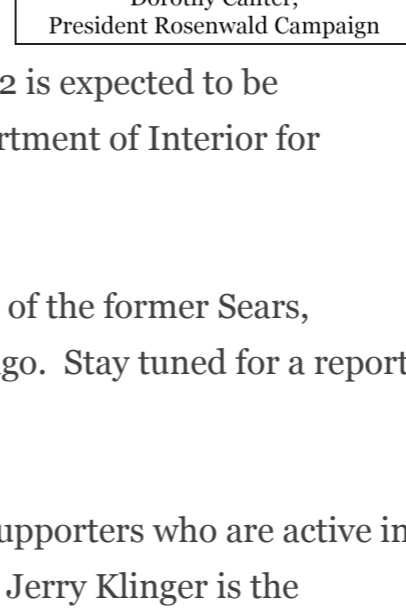


President's Message

It is exciting to be able to report that the 10-minute film about the Campaign is now publicly available. It has been an important tool in disseminating the story of Julius Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Schools, and we are so appreciative of the many contributions by its director and producer Charles Poe. We encourage interested groups to use it for their events.



The special resource study of sites associated with Julius Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Schools started by the National Park Service in 2022 is expected to be completed in the Spring of 2024. It will then be submitted to the Department of Interior for further review.

Yesterday Campaign representatives toured several sites that were part of the former Sears, Roebuck merchandising facility in the North LaSalle section of Chicago. Stay tuned for a report on the visit in the January 2024 newsletter.

Three of the articles in this newsletter were contributed by Campaign supporters who are active in preserving the legacy of Julius Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Schools. Jerry Klinger is the President of the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation, which has fabricated and installed numerous historic markers commemorating both individual Rosenwald Schools and all the schools in particular counties. It is currently working on additional markers. Alan Nussbaum's photographic documentation of the restoration of the St. George Rosenwald School near Charleston, South Carolina, over more than five years is not only complete but visually arresting. It is worthy of a museum exhibition. And Kim Phillips will soon be telling in a book the story of yet another Rosenwald Fund Fellow who made a difference. The Campaign is grateful to them and invites more articles of this type for future newsletters.

The Campaign is continuing to collect memorabilia that will be donated to the visitor center of the eventual National Historical Park. We have purchased the two children's books on integration by May Justus mentioned in Kim Phillips's article. We have also purchased books by a number of other Rosenwald Fund Fellows, including a first edition of *Black Manhattan* by James Weldon Johnson.

And we have created a new trifold Campaign brochure that we are sharing at various venues and with supporters to distribute at their events.

Julius Rosenwald said

I do not see how America can move forward if some of its people are left behind.

We at the Campaign are committed to building on the work undertaken by Rosenwald and his key partners a hundred years ago, work dedicated to extending the promises of equality and opportunity to all Americans, now and in the future.

Campaign's Award-Winning Film Goes Public

"Rosenwald: Toward A More Perfect Union" is an award-winning short documentary about the Julius Rosenwald and Rosenwald Schools Campaign. It is now publicly available on The Parks Channel website and can be accessed here: <https://theparkschannel.com/explore-parks/julius-rosenwald-schools-nhp-campaign>

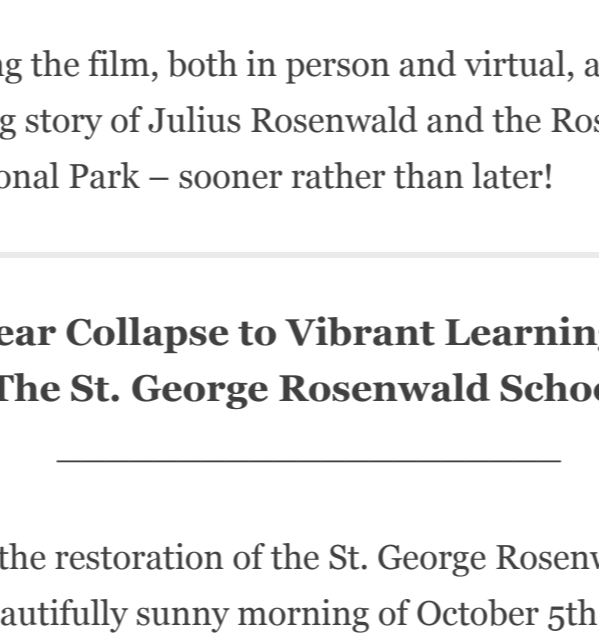
The film has been shown in conjunction with a number of programs, and more are to come. On October 14 it was screened continuously at the Rosenwald Courts Apartments as part of the annual Open House Chicago celebration. Three hundred people attended. Completed in 1929, the complex was built by Julius Rosenwald as affordable housing for middle class African Americans. It underwent an award-winning restoration several years ago.



The film will also be shown in the coming months to visiting school groups at New Orleans' Museum of Southern Jewish Experience in conjunction with the exhibition of photographs from Andrew Feller's beautiful book "A Better Life for Their Children: Julius Rosenwald, Booker T. Washington and the 4,978 Schools That Changed America."



The Campaign is also sponsoring a number of events featuring the film and panel discussions on Julius Rosenwald's life and legacy and the remarkable impact of Rosenwald Schools. Events have been held at Temple Emanuel in Closter New Jersey and at the Wayfarer Theater in Highland Park, Illinois. After the film in the theater there was a panel discussion among representatives of the Campaign moderated by Rabbi Steven Lowenstein of Am Shalom synagogue in Glenview, IL.



And the film was also shown at a three-day celebration of Africatown and the Mobile County Training School in Mobile, Alabama. Stephanie Deutsch represented the Campaign and gave several presentations.

Numerous programs featuring the film, both in person and virtual, are planned for 2024. These events help share the amazing story of Julius Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Schools and build support for creating the National Park – sooner rather than later!

From Near Collapse to Vibrant Learning Center: The St. George Rosenwald School

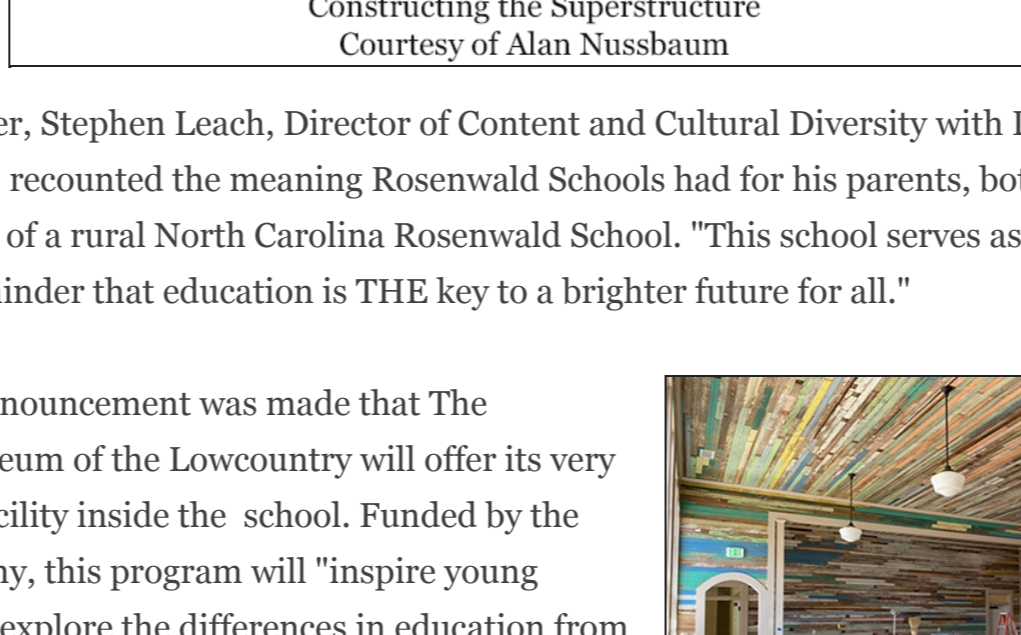
The three-day celebration of the restoration of the St. George Rosenwald School kicked off with the Grand Opening on the beautifully sunny morning of October 6th, 2023. About 1500 community members and friends from across South Carolina attended the first day's festivities. A series of speakers, events and tours highlighted the completion of the almost decade-long "vision to reality" project. The celebration was a living testament to those African Americans who had sought and obtained an education at a time when little to no education was available for them.



A key attendee was Former Mayor of St. George Anne Johnston, who long appreciated the historical importance of the school and was singularly responsible for moving the restoration project forward even though the building seemed on the brink of collapse. She stated that she had been "entrusted with a sacred mission." Ralph James, Chair of both the event and the St. George Rosenwald School Board, along with fellow Board Members Doug Reeves and Edith Oldham, proudly and enthusiastically welcomed guests. Mr. James noted that we should "never doubt what a small group of committed individuals can achieve." With the Ribbon Cutting ceremony, he declared this school officially "Open" and a "Dream to Done."

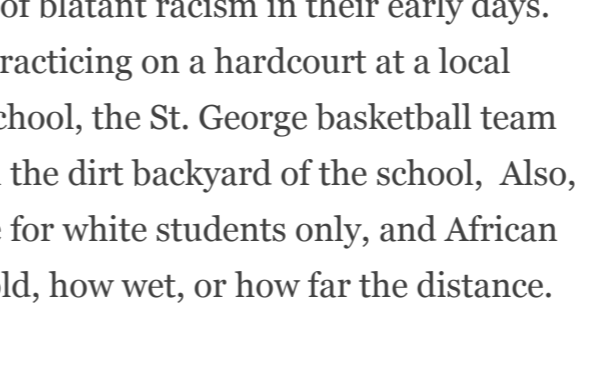
Admiring the finished structure was the distinguished Charleston Restoration Architect Glenn Keyes, who had evaluated the decaying structure for the Town of St. George and deemed the building "restorable and worthy of restoration." The town purchased the building in 2014, and Keyes developed the plan for its complex restoration that included erecting a massive superstructure covering the entire building to allow it to dry out before restoration work began.

Also present were former State Senator John Matthews and former Representative Patsy Knight, both of whom were instrumental in acquiring significant public funding to make the extensive restoration possible.



Keynote Speaker, Stephen Leach, Director of Content and Cultural Diversity with Disney Entertainment, recounted the meaning Rosenwald Schools had for his parents, both of whom were graduates of a rural North Carolina Rosenwald School. "This school serves as a beacon of hope and a reminder that education is THE key to a brighter future for all."

The exciting announcement was made that The Children's Museum of the Lowcountry will offer its very first satellite facility inside the school. Funded by the Boeing Company, this program will "inspire young minds" as they explore the differences in education from when the school was operational to the present time. In addition, the Dorchester County Library will be opening a branch inside this impressively restored building. Mr. James commented, "The true spirit of collaboration and tireless efforts will bring young children in to experience the joy of learning."



Former Graduates of the Class of 1949-50 Sallie Cokley Mack Berry, Ordie Columbus Brown, and Clara Mac Dixon Britt shared stories from their school days. Their pride, dedication, and perseverance were evident as they recounted details of blatant racism in their early days. Forbidden from practicing on a hardcourt at their local white-only high school, the St. George basketball team had to practice on the dirt backyard of the school. Also, school buses were for white students only, and African American students had to walk to school no matter how cold, how wet, or how far the distance.

Alan Nussbaum, a Charleston resident who photographically documented the entire process of saving the school, said, "It was an honor and a privilege to have been a part of this important restoration project. The completed St. George Rosenwald School is ready to inform visitors about African American education in the South prior to integration and to demonstrate that the nation is better when we work and live together."

Julius Rosenwald partnered first with Booker T. Washington and then with nearly 5,000 African American communities across the South to help provide schools such as the St. George School. These people from very different backgrounds and cultures understood that education is key to equal opportunity and to leading a better life; they worked together to make the nation more equitable and democratic. The restored St. George Rosenwald School is carrying on that tradition as a new center for learning and community activities.

By Neda Nussbaum

NOTE: History of St. George Rosenwald School

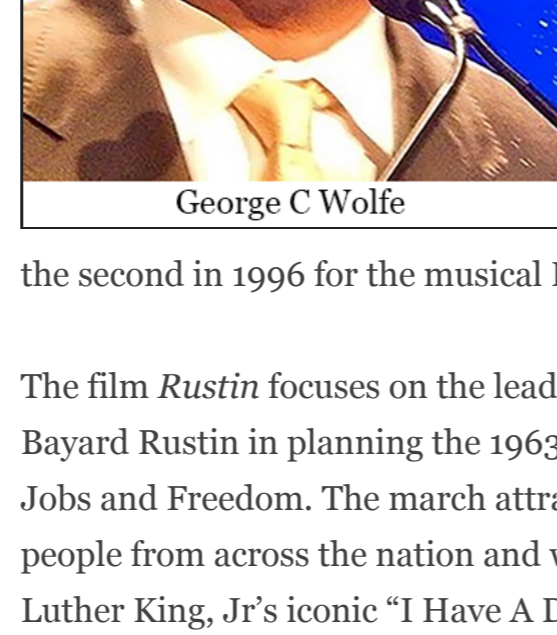
The St. George Rosenwald School was built in 1925 as a six-teacher school in a vibrant African American community. More classrooms were added to the school on three separate occasions. The school closed in 1954 when its students were transferred to an "equalization school." Such schools were built in southern states as a means of avoiding school integration by providing "separate but equal" education until they were ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in the Brown v. Board of Education lawsuit. The building was used until 1970s as training center for civil rights workers, for agricultural programs and for social events and as a Head Start Center. Thereafter, it was abandoned. The school became part of the African American Civil Rights Network in February 2021.

To watch a video by Longleaf Productions on the restoration of the school, visit: <https://vimeo.com/426438917>

Did You Know?

Did you know that George C. Wolfe, director and a producer of the new film *Rustin* about Civil Rights activist Bayard Rustin, attended a Rosenwald School in Frankfort, Kentucky? And that his mother was that school's principal?

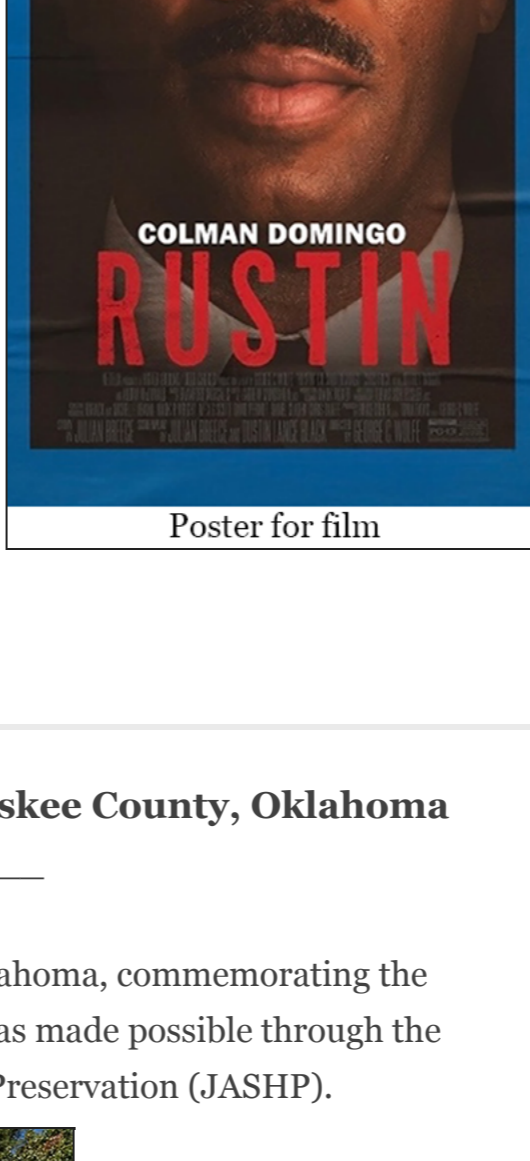
In Aviva Kempner's 2015 documentary *Rosenwald* Wolfe fondly remembers the time his mother took preparing her lessons and caring for the school. It was seeing that film that inspired Dorothy Canter to launch The Campaign to Create the Julius Rosenwald & Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park.



The Rosenwald School Wolfe attended was located on the grounds of Kentucky State University, from which his parents had both graduated and where he spent one year. He graduated from Pomona College with a degree in theater and later earned an MFA in dramatic writing and musical theater from New York University.

George Wolfe has won two Tony Awards for directing, the first in 1993 for *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* and the second in 1996 for the musical *Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk*.

The film *Rustin* focuses on the leadership role played by Bayard Rustin in planning the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The march attracted more than 250,000 people from across the nation and was the occasion for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s iconic "I Have A Dream" speech. John Lewis, also an alumnus of a Rosenwald School, was one of the warm-up speakers.



Rustin is less well remembered than King and Lewis but the compelling film with a remarkable performance by Colman Domingo as Rustin will surely change that. He was a dynamic figure, dedicated to civil rights and to non-violent but persistent agitation for equality. The film opened at select theaters on November 3 and is now available on Netflix. It is well worth seeing.

The telling and retelling of history goes on!

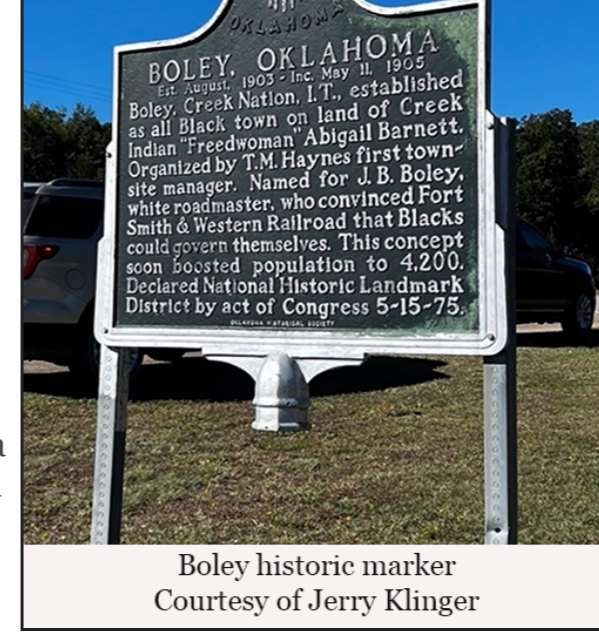
Commemorating Rosenwald Schools in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma

On October 14, a historical marker was dedicated in Boley, Oklahoma, the Rosenwald School facilities of Okfuskee County. The marker was made possible through the generous support of the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation (JASHP).



Boley was established as an all-Black town on the land of Creek Indian "Freedwoman" Abigail Barnett in 1903. When the Five Tribes - Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminoles - were forcibly removed from their homelands in the 1830s-40s, people enslaved by the tribes accompanied them on the long "Trail of Tears" journey to Indian Territory. Ms. Barnett's family was part of that story. Following the Civil War those enslaved persons were freed.

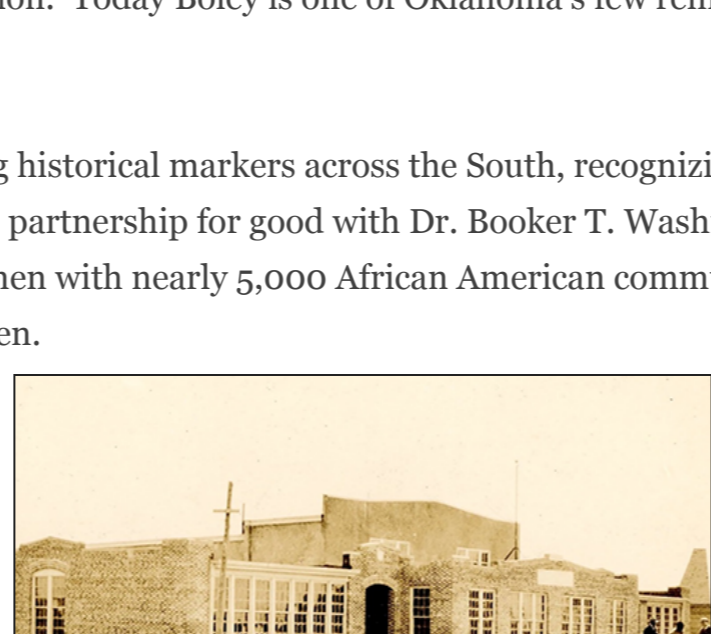
The Town of Boley was named in honor of J.V. Boley, a White man who was the roadmaster for the Fort Smith and Western Railroad. Convinced that African Americans could govern themselves, Boley worked hard to share his vision. The Town of Boley was incorporated in 1905 as "Boley, Creek Nation, Indian Territory."



By 1911, Boley attracted many African Americans from throughout the South seeking to escape the Jim Crow laws. The town prospered. It was a haven for African American enterprise, potential, and refuge from racism. Its population rose to 4,200. But after Oklahoma became a state in 1907 residents of Boley could not escape Jim Crow laws beyond the Town's borders. African American children were not permitted to go to school with White children. State and County personnel deliberately discriminated against African Americans, directing most of the funding to White schools. Except for Boley, Okfuskee County was primarily rural and poor.

After WWI, the fortunes of Boley paralleled those of the railroad. Both went bankrupt in 1939 during the Great Depression. Today Boley is one of Oklahoma's few remaining historic African American towns.

JASHP has been donating historical markers across the South, recognizing the unique mission of Julius Rosenwald and his partnership for good with Dr. Booker T. Washington, President of Tuskegee Institute, and then with nearly 5,000 African American communities who thirsted for education for their children.



Placing a historical interpretive marker needs two key elements for success -- a willing partner and time. JASHP approached Boley about donating a Rosenwald marker to the Town in 2022. Amanda Bradford, Administrative Representative for Boley, accepted the partnership with JASHP. She was the key link. She knew everyone, and everyone knew her.

Amanda wrote on the Boley Facebook page --

Julius Rosenwald, in partnership with Booker T. Washington, made an indelible mark in African American education by building Rosenwald Schools across the South in the early 20th century. This marker, donated by the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation and proudly supported by the Town of Boley Chamber of Commerce and the Oklahoma Historical Society, celebrates their enduring legacy... these schools became beacons of hope during a time of segregation, providing education and opportunity to countless young minds.

The front side of the marker tells the story of the 14 Rosenwald Schools and three teacher homes built in Okfuskee County and their role in advancing education during the time of segregation. It also covers Boley High School, which received support from the Rosenwald Fund even though it was not a Rosenwald School. The reverse side of the marker has a sitting map of the Rosenwald Schools and images of four representative schools. The Town proudly installed the marker next to the Boley Oklahoma Historical Society Marker adjacent to Boley's Community Park, where it would have maximum visibility.

The dedication was attended by former Rosenwald students and the representatives from Boley and surrounding communities. All acknowledged that the Rosenwald schools had made a difference then, are still doing so and will continue to do so in the future, for all Americans, whatever color they may be.

As Julius Rosenwald so aptly stated,

"I do not see how America can go forward if part of its people are left behind."

By Jerry Klinger, President

Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation

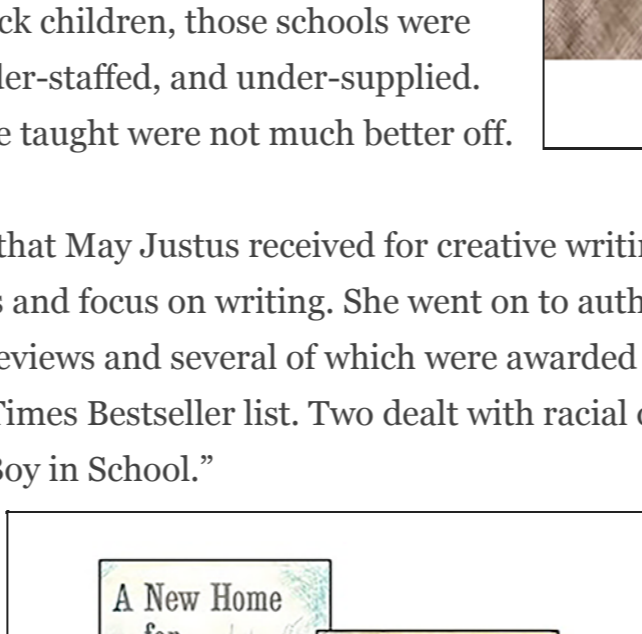
May Justus: A Notable Rosenwald Fund Fellow

Julius Rosenwald believed in social justice and using his wealth to promote the betterment of society. To that end, he established the Julius Rosenwald Fund which, between 1917 and 1948, gave over \$70 million to schools, educators, artists, historians, theologians, reformers, scientists, and writers. One of those writers was May Justus.



Justus was a white schoolteacher in the South during the years of "separate but equal" initiated by the Plessy vs. Ferguson Supreme Court decision in 1896. Teaching children in the coalfields of Kentucky as well as in Grundy County, Tennessee, she saw firsthand that there was generally no "equal" in the separation of races and classes. In both places, if there were schools for black children, those schools were woefully under-funded, under-staffed, and under-supplied. The white schools where she taught were not much better off.

The Rosenwald Fellowship that May Justus received for creative writing in 1939 allowed her to suspend her teaching duties and focus on writing. She went on to author over 60 children's books, all of which received good reviews and several of which were awarded prizes. One of Miss Justus' books made the New York Times Bestseller list. Two dealt with racial desegregation: "A New Home for Billy" and "New Boy in School."

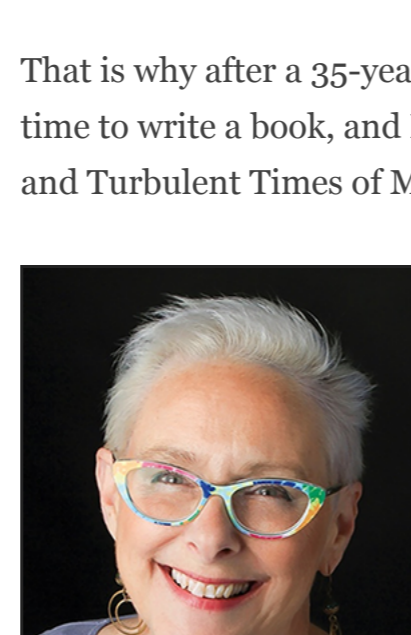


In 1937 May Justus was shaken by a bombing at the Hattie Cotton Elementary School in Nashville. She was at the time involved in civil rights activities at the Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee. As the volunteer secretary-treasurer of Highlander she was one of the people called to testify when Highlander was charged with being a "communist camp." The state of Tennessee revoked the charter for Highlander in 1961 on the grounds that it was not meeting the requirements of its charter as a non-profit.

The public library in Monteagle is named for May Justus.

She was a real mover and shaker, a creator of good trouble in the best ways.

That is why after a 35-year career in advertising, marketing, and online media, I decided it was time to write a book, and I chose Justus as the subject. "On the Mountaintop: The Unusual Life and Turbulent Times of May Justus" is being researched and should be published in a year or two.



By Kim Phillips

"All the other pleasures of life seem to wear out, but the pleasure of helping others in distress never does." - Julius Rosenwald

DONATE

We need your support to create the Julius Rosenwald & Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park.

For questions and suggestions, please write to info@rosenwaldpark.org.

Stephanie Deutsch, editor

November, 2023