

Agents of Change

A Learning Experience & Discussion About Early Labor Union Organizing in Ohio's Hocking Valley Coal Fields & How It Relates to Modern Day

Saturday, August 9, 2008

(9-9:40AM) Arrive New Straitsville/Museum Visit

Coffee, Fruit, Muffins, Tour of New Straitsville History Museum-200 West Main St.

(9:45AM) Voices of the Little Cities: The Key Players

Reassemble at Dunkle Hall to hear profiles of owners such as William P. Rend, John Buchtel and John D. Martin and Union organizers Chris Evans, Richard L. Davis, William T. Lewis, Bill Bailey and others as a review the story told on day one of the nationally significant role the miners (and owners) of the Little Cities in the nation's early labor movement. Theatrical reading of the writings, accounts and oral histories of these individuals and other Little Cities residents will enliven the story of the early labor movement.

(11AM) Keynote: Within the Context of the Nation's Labor Movement

Labor historian Dr. Warren Van Tine of the Ohio State University takes the "place-based" story of labor union organizing in the Little Cities and places it within the context of the overall national labor scene during this time period.

(Noon) Lunch

(12:45PM) Shawnee Coal Mining Museum

Take to the road via conference transportation to have a first hand look at the tools and labor of the miners of this region as local treasure Jack Shuttleworth shares his collection of tools and demonstration of early mining practices in his garage museum.

(1:30PM) Shawnee Historic District & Knights of Labor Opera House

One of the best-standing examples of a boom mining town in the eastern United States, Shawnee is also home to one of the first labor union halls built in the country, the Knights of Labor Opera House constructed in 1881. Visit this building, another opera house and other businesses in the Shawnee Historic District.

(2:30PM) Rendville Town Hall & Baptist Church

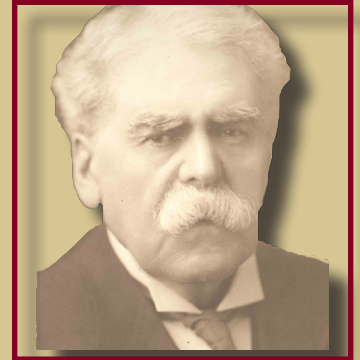
African Americans and immigrants from nearly every country on the European continent came to work in William P. Rend's mines at Rendville, creating a great social experiment and the birthplace of leadership for many African Americans. Among those who came here were Adam Clayton Powell, Sr.; Richard L. Davis, the man credited with breaking the color barrier in the UMWA; and Dr. Isaiah Tuppins, the first African American mayor in the northern U. S. and first African American medical doctor in Ohio.

(3:00PM) Voices of the Little Cities: The Words of Richard L. Davis

Visit the Rendville Cemetery, burial site of Richard L. Davis. Hear James Green read the writings of this union activist whose advocacy in favor of brotherhood among all miners in the UMWA launched him to the National Executive Board in the early years of the union as he broke the color barrier and led the union to welcome all races and nationalities during its formative years.

(3:50-4:30PM) Closing Discussion

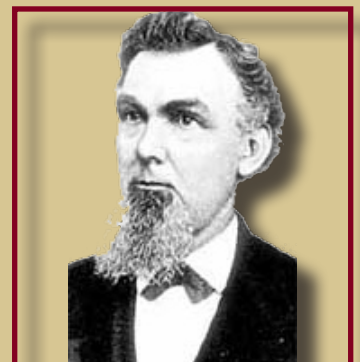
After returning to New Straitsville, the event comes to a close with a serious conversation regarding the impact that the miners and the events of the Hocking Valley Coal era have had on the nation's labor history. Moderator Dr. Warren Van Tine will challenge those gathered to compare the issues of the Gilded Age, over a century ago, to labor issues of today, including the role of immigrant labor, the struggle for union representation and the impact of the wide chasm between the wealth of workers and corporate owners during both of these eras.



William E. Rend



Worn by Chris Evans!



John Buchtel



Warren VanTine