

BISHOP RICHARD ALLEN

HISTORIC PANEL DEDICATION

Sunday, June 25, 2023

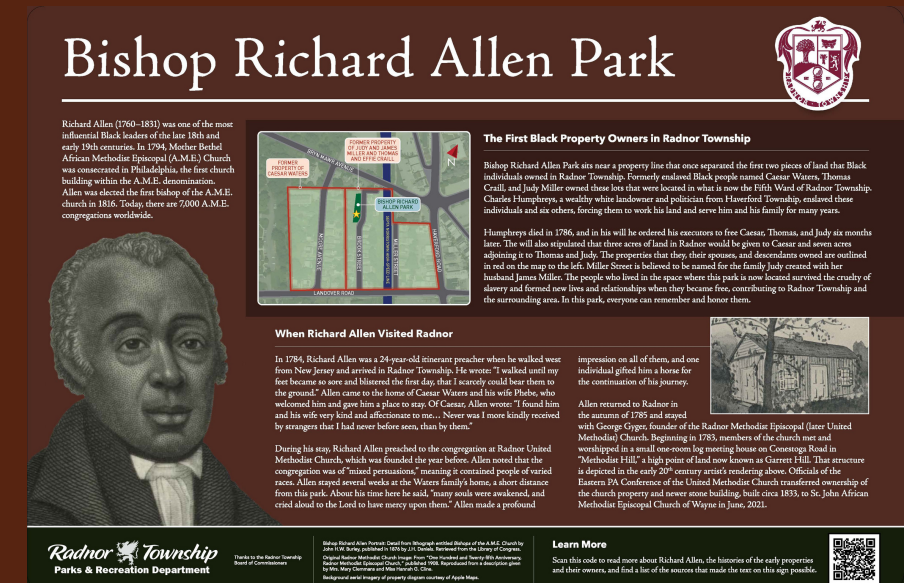
Bishop Richard Allen Park

227 Brook Street in Bryn Mawr



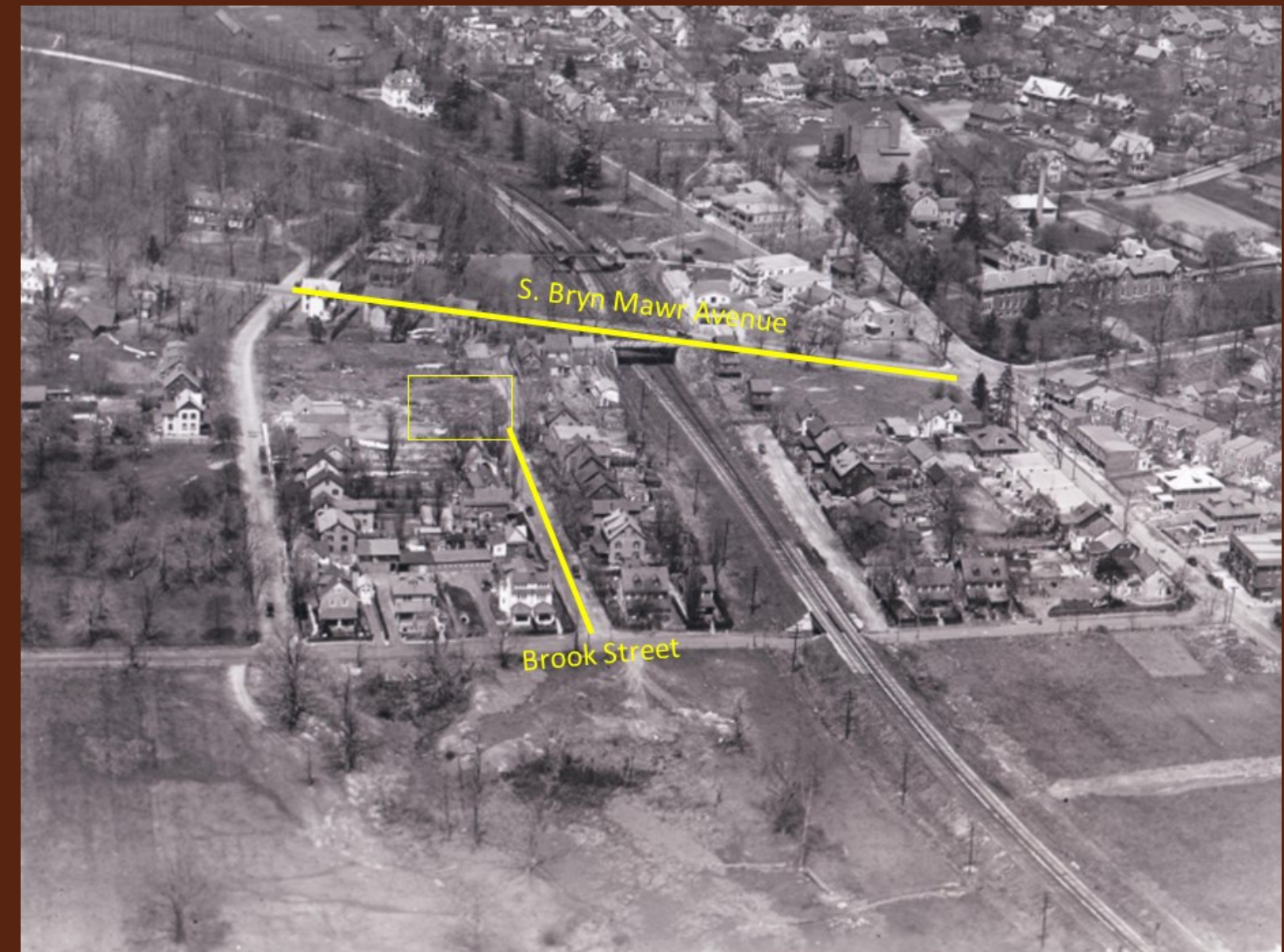
RICHARD ALLEN 1760-1831

FOUNDER AND FIRST BISHOP OF THE
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Thank you to everyone who attended the Bishop Richard Allen Historic Panel Dedication!

We gathered to honor and celebrate Bishop Richard Allen, the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and his remarkable influence in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Bishop Richard Allen Park sits near a property line that once separated the first two pieces of land that Black individuals owned in Radnor Township – formerly enslaved Black People named Caesar Waters, Thomas Crail, and Judy Miller owned these properties.



Bishop Richard Allen Park



Richard Allen (1760–1831) was one of the most influential Black leaders of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In 1794, Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church was consecrated in Philadelphia, the first church building within the A.M.E. denomination. Allen was elected the first bishop of the A.M.E. church in 1816. Today, there are 7,000 A.M.E. congregations worldwide.



The First Black Property Owners in Radnor Township

Bishop Richard Allen Park sits near a property line that once separated the first two pieces of land that Black individuals owned in Radnor Township. Formerly enslaved Black people named Caesar Waters, Thomas Craill, and Judy Miller owned these lots that were located in what is now the Fifth Ward of Radnor Township. Charles Humphreys, a wealthy white landowner and politician from Haverford Township, enslaved these individuals and six others, forcing them to work his land and serve him and his family for many years.

Humphreys died in 1786, and in his will he ordered his executors to free Caesar, Thomas, and Judy six months later. The will also stipulated that three acres of land in Radnor would be given to Caesar and seven acres adjoining it to Thomas and Judy. The properties that they, their spouses, and descendants owned are outlined in red on the map to the left. Miller Street is believed to be named for the family Judy created with her husband James Miller. The people who lived in the space where this park is now located survived the cruelty of slavery and formed new lives and relationships when they became free, contributing to Radnor Township and the surrounding area. In this park, everyone can remember and honor them.

When Richard Allen Visited Radnor

In 1784, Richard Allen was a 24-year-old itinerant preacher when he walked west from New Jersey and arrived in Radnor Township. He wrote: "I walked until my feet became so sore and blistered the first day, that I scarcely could bear them to the ground." Allen came to the home of Caesar Waters and his wife Phebe, who welcomed him and gave him a place to stay. Of Caesar, Allen wrote: "I found him and his wife very kind and affectionate to me... Never was I more kindly received by strangers that I had never before seen, than by them."

During his stay, Richard Allen preached to the congregation at Radnor United Methodist Church, which was founded the year before. Allen noted that the congregation was of "mixed persuasions," meaning it contained people of varied races. Allen stayed several weeks at the Waters family's home, a short distance from this park. About his time here he said, "many souls were awakened, and cried aloud to the Lord to have mercy upon them." Allen made a profound

impression on all of them, and one individual gifted him a horse for the continuation of his journey.

Allen returned to Radnor in the autumn of 1785 and stayed with George Gyger, founder of the Radnor Methodist Episcopal (later United Methodist) Church. Beginning in 1783, members of the church met and worshipped in a small one-room log meeting house on Conestoga Road in "Methodist Hill," a high point of land now known as Garrett Hill. That structure is depicted in the early 20th century artist's rendering above. Officials of the Eastern PA Conference of the United Methodist Church transferred ownership of the church property and newer stone building, built circa 1833, to St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church of Wayne in June, 2021.



Read more about Bishop Richard Allen, the histories of the early properties and their owners, and the sources that made the text on the historic panel possible.



Learn More

Scan this code to read more about Richard Allen, the histories of the early properties and their owners, and find a list of the sources that made the text on this sign possible.





A special commemorative
coin was distributed at the
event to honor
Bishop Richard Allen
and to memorialize the event.



BISHOP RICHARD ALLEN HISTORIC PANEL DEDICATION

Tammy Cohen, Radnor Township Director of Parks & Recreation

Blessing and Prayer

Reverend Carolyn C. Cavaness, Pastor

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church Ardmore

Radnor Township Board of Commissioners

Maira Mulrone, Ward 5 - President

Sean Farhy, Ward 7, Parks & Recreation Board Representative

Bill White, Radnor Township Manager

Lisa A. Borowski, State Representative 168th Legislative District

Mary Coe, Parks & Recreation Board, Chair

Reverend Carolyn C. Cavaness, Pastor

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church Ardmore

Reverend Dr. Mark Kelly Tyler,

52nd Pastor Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

Reverend Dr. Charles H. Lett, Sr., Presiding Elder

West Main Line District

Representative, Prince Hall Masons

Gregory Prichard, Prichard Design & History Studio

Bishop Richard Allen Historic Panel Designer

Colin McCrossan, MA History Class of 2023 / Villanova University

Anne Minicozzi, MFA, MA / Villanova University

CommUNITY Breakfast Collaborative

UNVEILING OF THE BISHOP RICHARD ALLEN HISTORIC PANEL!

Special Recognition

Closing Prayer - Reverend Glenn Shepherd, Pastor

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Bryn Mawr



Thank You to the Radnor Township Board of Commissioners
for their support of this special event:

Moira Mulroney, President
Maggy Myers, Vice President
Jack Larkin, ESQ
AnnaMarie Jones
Jake Abel
Jim Riley
Sean Farhy

Thank You to Township Manager, William White

Thank You to everyone in the community
who shared this special day with us!



Thank You to special guest speakers and attendees from the Board of Commissioners
Moir Mulroney, President, Ward 5; Sean Farhy, Ward 7; and Maggy Myers, Ward 2



Thank You to Lisa Borowski A. Borowski, State Representative, 168th Legislative District
(and former Township Commissioner); Township Manager William White,
and Mary Coe, Parks & Recreation Board, Chair



Thank You to Honored Guest & Spiritual Leader
Reverend Carolyn C. Cavaness, Pastor of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church Ardmore



We recognized Reverend Carolyn C. Cavaness for her community leadership and celebration of Bishop Richard Allen that extends far beyond the event!



Thank You to Honored Guest & Spiritual Leader
 Reverend Dr. Mark Kelly Tyler, 52nd Pastor of the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church



Additional Honored Guests and Spiritual Leaders included

Reverend Dr. Charles H. Lett, Sr., Presiding Elder of the West Main Line District

Ernest Pendleton, Prince Hall Masons, James Bell Lodge

Reverend Glenn Shepherd, Pastor of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Bryn Mawr



Special Thank You to
Gregory Prichard, Prichard Design & History Studio
Bishop Richard Allen Historic Panel Designer



Thank You to
Colin McCrossan, MA History Class of 2023 / Villanova University

Anne Minicozzi, MFA, MA / Villanova University
CommUNITY Breakfast Collaborative
(not present, Mr. McCrossan shared Ms. Minnicozzi's words)



The Park Dedication to Bishop Richard Allen and Annual Wreath Laying Ceremonies



Park Dedication to Bishop Richard Allen

Tuesday, June 1, 2010

Pictured from left to right:

Rev. Carlos Bounds, Pastor, Bethel AME Church, Bryn Mawr;
the late Bishop Richard F. Norris; Rev. Mark Kelly Tyler, PhD,
Pastor of Mother Bethel AME Church, Philadelphia; and the late
Mrs. Peggy Gaskins, Bethel AME Church, Bryn Mawr



Annual Honoring & Wreath Laying Ceremony
takes place every year on
Bishop Richard Allen's Birthday February 14th



Richard Allen Bronze Statue

Founded on ground purchased by Richard Allen in 1791, the Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church located in Philadelphia, is the mother church of the African Methodist Episcopal denomination. The present structure, erected in 1889, replaces three earlier churches on this site.

A bronze statue of Richard Allen was unveiled during the 200th Anniversary Celebration of the Church in June 2016.

You can visit the statue and Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church located at 419 S 6th St. in Philadelphia.

