

In Orange County

School Building Cites Essex Native

Orange County Public Schools dedicated a new administration building on Monday, April 30, in honor of two persons who made lasting contributions to Orange County. The new Taylor Education Administration Complex, the school division's central office building, is named for both Essex County native Gussie Bayton Taylor and the 12th U.S. President, Orange County native Zachary Taylor.

Gussie Bayton Taylor, born in 1903, was a native of Ozeana (now Dunnsville) who attended the public schools of Essex County before going on to graduate from the Rappahannock Industrial Academy and Virginia State College (now University).

She began her career teaching in Middlesex in 1922-23, and taught one year in Essex before going to Orange County in 1925, where she worked for 43 years. She was a supervisor of Negro education dur-



GUSSIE BAYTON TAYLOR

ing segregation and worked hard to make the integration of schools successful. Upon her retirement in 1968, she was hired by Orange

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2A Rappahannock Times, Tappahannock, Va., Wednesday, May 16, 2007



Relatives of Gussie Bayton Taylor who attended the dedication of the Taylor Education Administration Complex in Orange were (l-r) Griselda Amy Bayton, Nathan Bayton Jr., Kyla Bayton (front), Mary Elizabeth Williams, and Luther Williams.

Gussie Bayton Taylor

Orange Cites Essex Co. Native

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County Schools as a consultant and faithfully served as a recruitment specialist for the Early Childhood Stimulation Program.

After retirement, Bayton Taylor moved back to Essex County and spent her final years among family at her beloved Ozeana, sharing a duplex with her sister, Ruby Bayton

Holmes. Bayton Taylor died in 1989, and is buried at Angel Visit Baptist Church.

President Zachary Taylor, born in 1784, in Orange County, joined the United States Army in 1808, receiving a commission as a First Lieutenant of the Seventh Infantry Regiment. He fought in many wars, including the Black Hawk War (1832), the Second Seminole War (1835), and the Mexican-American War (1846). As a result of his war hero assets, Taylor received the Whig nomination as President in 1848. During his presidency, he stressed the importance of statehood, siding with the anti-slavery movement and advocating the entry of more free states to the Union.

Located in the Town of Orange, the Taylor Education Administration Complex occupies a building that was originally built in the 1950s as the all-black Prospect Heights Elementary School. After school integration in 1965, it became an intermediate school. The

building, which had been expanded and tripled in size to accommodate more than 1000 students, was used as a school until a new middle school was built in 2004. It recently received state-of-the art renovations, and became the new school central office in January of 2007.

Portraits of Gussie Bayton Taylor and of President Zachary Taylor hang in the building's lobby and were unveiled as a part of the dedication ceremony.

The portraits were unveiled by Gussie Bayton Taylor's niece, Mary Elizabeth Williams of Reston, and her nephew, Nathan Bayton Jr. of Center Cross. Bayton Taylor's niece-in-law, Dr. Griselda Amy Bayton, her nephew-in-law, Luther Williams, and her great grand niece, Kyla Monet Bayton, were also in attendance. Other local persons attending the dedication were Bayton Taylor's cousin Earl Bowler and his wife Barbara Bowler, and Bessida Cauthorne White.