

OFFICE OF DR. JAMES STILL
Creating a "First Class Historic Site"
Acquisition and Development Proposal
BRIEFING

ACQUISITION OVERVIEW

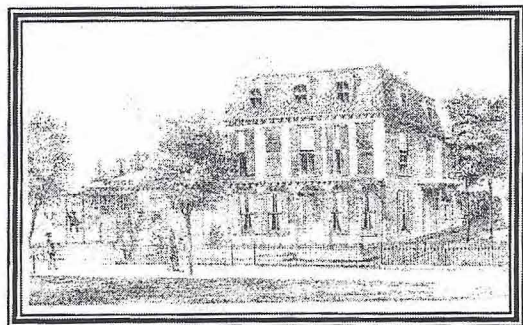
The Office of Dr. James Still is the first African-American historic site to be acquired and interpreted by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. As the inaugural African-American state-owned historic site and to address an incredibly important legacy, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection strives to create a "First Class Historic Site." This briefing provides background information on Dr. Still, his office and his family. Further, this briefing outlines what we envision as the development potential of this incredible resource.

DR. JAMES STILL

- Son of former slaves
- Self-taught medical practitioner (not trained or licensed)
- Distinguished himself as a seller of botanical remedies of his own devising
- Recognized for the effectiveness of his treatments
- Surmounted many challenges to become one of NJ's most respected doctors
- Served a large white and black clientele
- One of 19th Century Burlington County's largest property owners
- Published Autobiography, *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* in 1877
- Upon his death, his possessions appraised at a value of \$19,921



Dr. James Still
"Black Doctor of the Pines"
(1812-1882)
circa 1877



Historic Image of the Office of Dr. James Still (left) and homestead. As Dr. Still was one of Burlington County's largest landowners in his era, these are just two of the many properties he owned. The illustrious three-story home was demolished in 1932. The office remains.

OFFICE OF DR. JAMES STILL

- Located on Church Road in Medford Township, Burlington County
- Listed on State and National Registers of Historic Places, 1995
- Constructed in mid to late 1850s
- Served as location of medical practice from late 1850s to his death
- Property Acquisition
 - ❖ 8.8 acre parcel which is location of former medical office and homestead
 - ❖ Was at risk of being demolished to make way for zoned commercial development
 - ❖ Acquired by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection in February 2006 through the Green Acres Program for \$875,000

FAMILY OF DR. JAMES STILL

- **Parents:** Levin and Charity Still—both formerly slaves in Maryland
- **Siblings:** had 17 siblings; brother, William, was an Underground Railroad pioneer conductor and author of *The Underground Railroad*, which accounts the lives of runaways that traversed Philadelphia; brother, Peter's story of enslavement, freedom and quest to free his wife and children is narrated in Kate E. R. Pickard's *The Kidnapped and the Ransomed*
- **Children:** Dr. Still and his wife, Henrietta Thomas Still, had seven children; son, James, Jr. was the third African American to graduate from Harvard Medical School, which he earned in 1871 with honors; son, Joseph sustained his father's legacy, serving as an herbalist in Medford and later Mount Holly
- **Descendants:** there are presently over 2,000 Still Family members in the Delaware Valley, many of whom live in Lawnside, Mount Laurel and Vineland

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DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

ELEMENTS OF A "FIRST CLASS HISTORIC SITE"

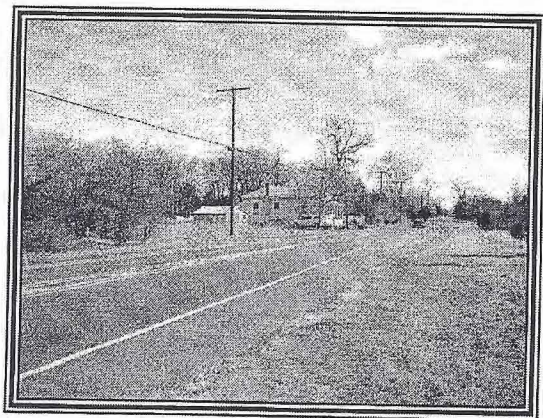
- Preeminent resource
- Original and rare artifacts and materials
- Unparalleled resource interpretation
- Unique and diversified programming
- Premiere attractions and events that encourage re-visitation
- Engaging, positive visitor experience
- Adequate facilities
- Great marketing
- Stable funding base
- Non-esoteric appeal

POSSIBLE INTERPRETIVE THEMES

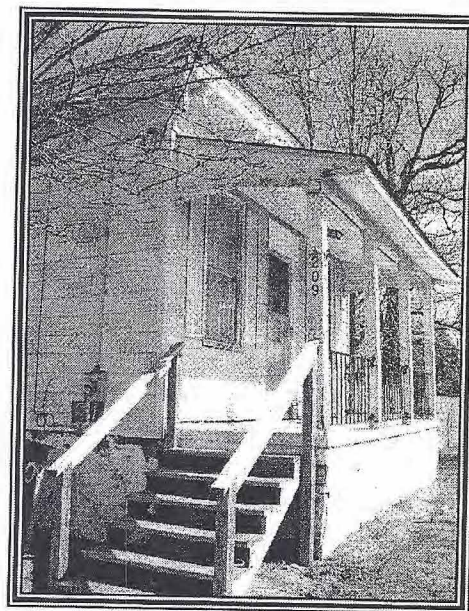
- African-American life in nineteenth century NJ
- Medical botany
- Nineteenth century medicine
- Pinelands history/Life in the nineteenth century

POSSIBLE METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

- Botanical Trail
- Museum/Library/Historic Resource Center
- African American Genealogy Project
- Educational Materials: traveling trunk, lesson plans



Approach to Office of Dr. Still. The property is located on Church Road, Medford Township, Burlington County



Current Image of the Office of Dr. Still

NEXT STEPS

- Conduct Historic Structure Review
- Visit site with Cheryl Hargrove, Heritage Tourism specialist/keynote for 2006 NJ Annual Historic Preservation Conference
- Research primary source materials that inform possible interpretive themes
- Identify financial resources to move the project forward

PARTNERS

- City of Medford
- County of Burlington
- NJ Department of State
- NJ Historical Trust
- South Jersey Tourism Corporation
- Still Family Society

POSSIBLE EXTENDED PARTNERS/FUNDERS

- Ford Foundation
- National Medical Association
- NJ-based Pharmaceutical Companies
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

For more information:
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