**Charles Oxley Hatcher**

When the Hatcher family moved to Yellow Springs from Cincinnati, Ohio, I was 13 years old. I was glad to leave Cincinnati where our black community thought they were privileged, and I felt that I had little in common with them. In Yellow Springs I felt freer and more in tune with black and white friends. I spent most of my time with the boys my age, and there were only 2 black girls in my class. Although my father, his father and I had attended the AME church in Cincinnati on occasion, my mother’s strong Episcopalian heritage meant that we attended the Episcopal Church in Dayton.

My five short years in Yellow Springs were spent with work and lots of fun. I worked washing pots & pans at the Antioch Inn; I worked at a watercress farm just outside of the town and had a very successful business selling ice cream from a bike with a freezer. I played baseball with my father as umpire. I went with a few other black friends to Chinle Indian Reservation on a work project sponsored by the Presbyterian Church. I played lots of HS basketball with Charlie (Lazzie) Coles. We also had a Do Wop Trio (me, Phil Lawson and Dickie Brown) that became a quartet with Lee Morgan. I went to the senior prom with my white girlfriend with no incident. Of the 55 members of the 1960 Bryan HS class, 10 were National Merit Scholars – and I was the only black scholar.

From Bryan HS David Romer and I went to Ohio State where we wanted to be roommates. The Ohio State University would not allow a white student (David) and a black student (me) to room together so we found accommodations in an international house. Ironically, David’s father had been Langston Hughes’ roommate at NYU.

From The Ohio State University, I transferred to Earlham College where I met and married Ruth. We have 3 children (Charles, Robert and Corinne) and 3 grandchildren

(Charlotte, Harrison and Annelline). I am retired from the Federal Government where I was a Fishery Biologist on the Great Lakes.

Yellow Springs meant freedom for me to be and do whatever I wanted to do in a protected and progressive (aside from the superintendent) environment.

*Charles Oxley Hatcher*