

ILLINOIS STATE MUSEUM

The Living Museum

VOLUME 73, NUMBER 4 • FALL 2011–WINTER 2012



NEW PHILADELPHIA ARCHAEOLOGY:
THE FIRST TEN YEARS

The Living Museum

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Terrance J. Martin, Claire Fuller Martin, Christopher Fennell,
Anna Agbe-Davies, and Paul A. Shackel
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Around the State with Director Bonnie Styles

I hope you enjoy this issue of *The Living Museum*, which highlights our collaborative archaeological research at the New Philadelphia site in Pike County, Illinois. This research has enriched our understanding of the early African-American experience in Illinois and provided hands-on experiences for 85 college students from throughout the country. We have shared the research results with colleagues and the public through scientific and popular publications, educational programs, websites, and other productions (see page 14). We included artifacts and stories about the site in the first part of our exhibition, *From Humble Beginnings: Lincoln's Illinois: 1830–1861*. This exhibition can be seen at our Dickson Mounds Museum through September, and we are developing an online version so it will be available throughout the world. The New Philadelphia project provides an excellent example of the ways that we engage our communities in research and educational experiences.

We are celebrating the 25th anniversary of our Lockport Gallery with 25 special events and activities! Visit the Museum's website and the Lockport Gallery Facebook page for details. Please join us for these free public events. The Lockport Gallery opened on May 3, 1987 and has served hundreds of thousands of visitors since that time.

Dickson Mounds Museum continues to build on the opportunities offered by the Emiquon Campus and partnership with the University of Illinois-Springfield, The Nature Conservancy, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A recently added exhibition features original artwork created by the Emiquon Corps of Discovery. The ISM-Chicago Gallery developed and launched a new exhibition that features the human figure in works by over 50 Illinois artists. It will show there through late May and later travel throughout the Museum system. There are exciting developments at all of our facilities. Visit our website and Facebook page to learn more. ■

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COVER New Philadelphia Project crew
and the trench excavated across the cellar of
Louisa McWorter's house in 2011.
PAGE 3 Refuse concentration discovered
during excavations to expose foundations of
Louisa McWorter's house in 2010.

Photographs by Doug Carr



NEW PHILADELPHIA ARCHAEOLOGY:
THE FIRST TEN YEARS

Terrance J. Martin, Claire Fuller Martin, Illinois State Museum;
Christopher C. Fennell, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign;
Anna S. Agbe-Davies, University of North Carolina;
and Paul A. Shackel, University of Maryland

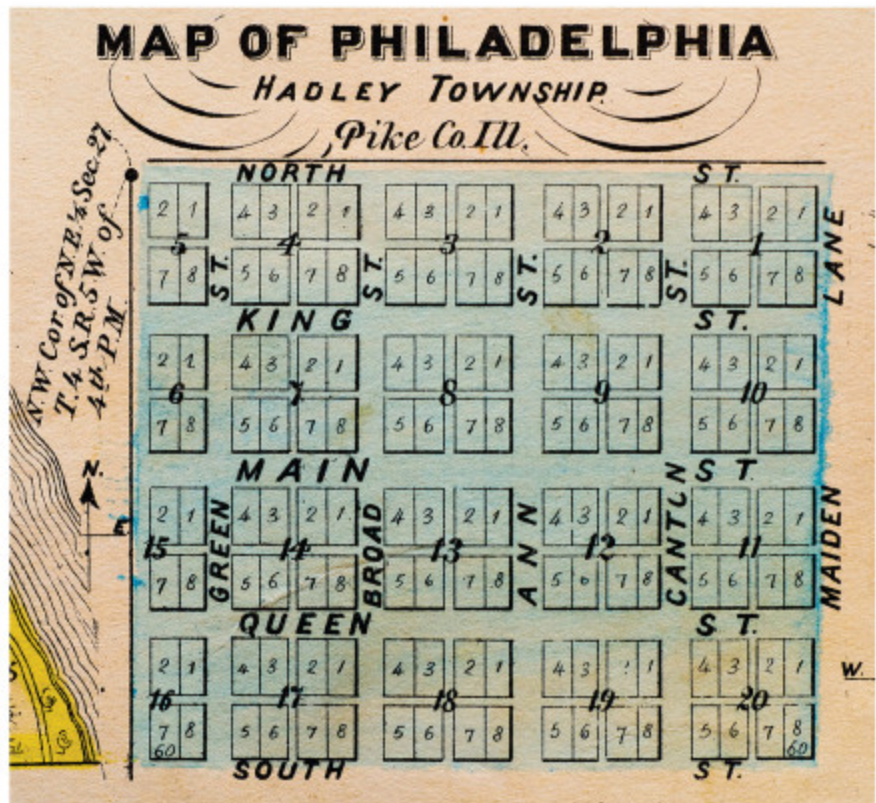
In 1836, Frank McWorter platted a town
in Pike County and called it *Philadelphia*.

What made this story remarkable was that “Free Frank” McWorter had purchased himself, his wife and his sons out of slavery, and that his purpose in laying out the town was to raise money in order to free his two eldest daughters and their children.

Free Frank McWorter was born in slavery in South Carolina in 1777. His owner brought him to Kentucky, where he met his wife Lucy, who was enslaved on a neighboring farm. Free Frank’s owner allowed him to work for wages, and he was eventually able to establish saltpeter works, buy land, and purchase the freedom of his wife and children. Some of his children and grandchildren remained in bondage when Free Frank and Free Lucy left Kentucky. The fractured family arrived in Hadley Township in the spring of 1831. The McWorter family members were the first settlers in the township. They established a farm and throughout the 1830s, Free Frank and his sons acquired a total of 800 acres in Hadley Township. One of these parcels was 80 acres directly south of McWorter’s original farm. McWorter purchased the property for \$100 in 1835. In the fall of 1836, he had 42 acres of it surveyed and filed a town plat with the county. Philadelphia, also called New Philadelphia, was the first town in the United States to be platted and registered by an African American.

The Illinois State Museum (ISM) became involved in the New Philadelphia Archaeological Project ten years ago, when the New Philadelphia Association (NPA) asked for help in preserving and interpreting the location of the long-abandoned town. This request led to an exciting and productive partnership between the ISM; the NPA; seven universities; and several federal, state and county agencies. Two grants from the National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates (NSF-REU) program helped to fund six seasons of field work from 2004 through 2011. Eighty-five undergraduate and graduate students have participated in the NSF-REU and University of Illinois field schools.

The New Philadelphia Archaeological Project has been the subject of dozens of newspaper, magazine and television reports, and was featured in an episode of PBS's *Time Team America*. The project directors, students and consultants have produced term papers; senior theses; master's theses; papers and posters presented at state, national and international conferences; journal articles; and a book. At present, three graduate students are working on Ph.D. dissertations emanating from the project.



Map of "Philadelphia" from the 1872 *Atlas Map of Pike County, Illinois* (p. 84).

The town consisted of 20 blocks with a total of 144 lots. Each lot was 60 feet by 120 feet. Most of the blocks in the eastern and southern portions of the town were never developed and remained in the hands of the McWorter family throughout the town's history.

Courtesy of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library; photograph by Doug Carr



ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS

The first question posed by archaeologists and non-archaeologists alike was does any evidence of New Philadelphia survive beneath the surface? Portions of the site had been cultivated and terraced. Local residents reported helping to remove old foundations. Walk-over surveys and geophysical studies quickly established that remains of the town did survive. As the excavations began, archaeologists were surprised to find that Block 8, which had been described as “the Square” and “the Park” by 20th-century residents, had not originally been a central green space. In fact, it had been inhabited in the early years of the town by several families and was probably the site of the post office and the school. Contrary to our original impression that the town had begun to die out by 1880, we discovered evidence that new homes were still being built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

FEATURE 14

Feature 14 was a large cellar excavated in Block 8. It probably belonged to the house of Rev. C.S. Luce, a Baptist preacher and the first postmaster of New Philadelphia. This building most likely served as the Luce home and the U.S. Post Office, and may have also been the site of religious meetings and school lessons in the late 1840s. Analysis of the artifacts recovered from the cellar suggests that the house was demolished in the 1860s and used as a refuse dump. By that time, the property was owned by Dr. A.B. Cobb, who may have been responsible for the glass medicine bottles found in the cellar.

Above, center: The north half of a cellar (Feature 14) in Block 8 was investigated in 2006. The New Philadelphia site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places based on its archaeological potential. Therefore, only portions of features are excavated, so as to preserve the resource and to document the archaeologists' presence. Photograph by Gary Andrashko

Left: Reporters and film crews often visit the New Philadelphia excavations. The most elaborate coverage was the filming of a *Time Team America* episode on New Philadelphia during the 2008 season. Photograph by Joe Conover

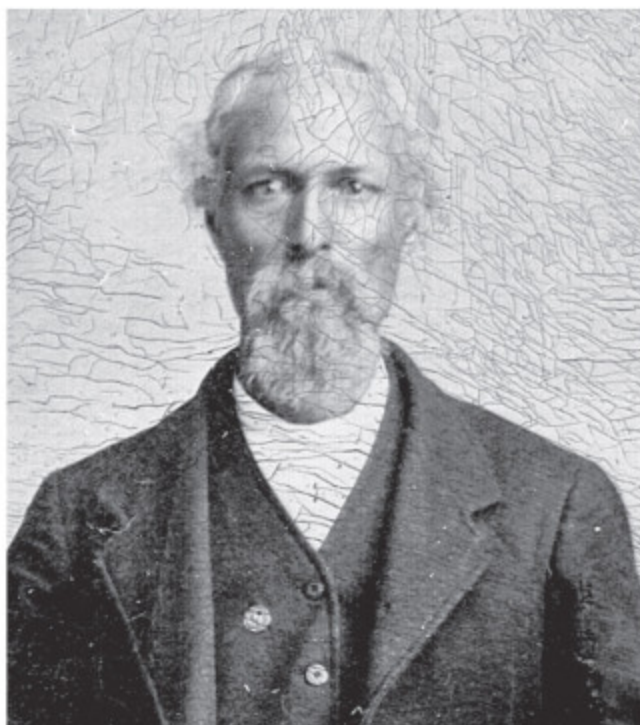


BLOCK 4, LOT 1

Lot 1 in Block 4 was the front door to New Philadelphia. For much of the 19th century, a country store stood on the north part of the lot. In the early years of the town's existence, the south part of the lot was occupied by Yankee shoemaker Spaulding Burdick. Three major features were excavated in Block 4, Lot 1. These were a cistern or well, a pit cellar and a privy or storage pit. They yielded bricks, mortar, and ceramics dating to the 1830s and 1840s. One of these features contained a piece of mortar (probably chinking from a log cabin) with the clear impression of a corn cob.

BLACKSMITH SHOP

The site of the town's blacksmith shop has been of interest, and will probably be the subject of future study. Historical research indicates that at least four different men plied the smith's trade in New Philadelphia, from about 1850 until the trade died out in the 1910s. In 2006, a search was made for the last smithy, that of Free Frank's grandson Squire McWorter, Jr. Although a great deal of ash and iron were recovered, no building foundations or remains of the forge were found. We still do not know whether all of the town's blacksmiths worked in the same location, or whether there was more than one forge in 19th-century New Philadelphia.



Top: A piece of mortar or chinking found in Block 4 has the impression of a corn cob. Photograph by Doug Carr

Above: Alexander Clark was New Philadelphia's blacksmith from the late 1840s until 1870. The son of early settler Kezia Clark and the brother of Louisa Clark McWorter, Alexander married a granddaughter of Free Frank and Lucy McWorter.

Courtesy of Hans Conle White, Charles and Dee Porter, and Karen Wall

Left: Wrought iron trivet found during the 2011 excavation of Louisa Clark McWorter's house. It could have been made at New Philadelphia by her brother Alexander, or her son Squire McWorter, Jr., both of whom were blacksmiths.

Photograph by Doug Carr





LOUISA MCWORTER'S HOUSE

The most extensive excavations have been at the site of Louisa Clark McWorter's house in Block 13. Located roughly in the center of town, this was always the most highly valued property on the tax rolls. Documentary research suggests that the house, originally built in the late 1840s, might have been destroyed and rebuilt in the 1860s. It survived until the late 1930s, and memory sketches of the house and its outbuildings appear in the reminiscences of former New Philadelphia resident Larry Burdick.



Left: Louisa Clark McWorter

(1824–1883). Photograph courtesy of Hans Conle White, Charles and Dee Porter, and Karen Wall

Above: Louisa McWorter's house as it looked in the 1930s. The sketch was made by Lorraine "Larry"

Burdick, who grew up in

New Philadelphia in the 1920s and 30s. Situated on high ground

near the center of town, this was the most imposing structure in the community. Sketch courtesy of the Pike County Historical Society

SCHOOLHOUSE

The location and nature of the first schoolhouse is the subject of a close interdisciplinary collaboration. Using both archaeological and historical evidence, we have investigated three possible locations of the schoolhouse and studied the fluctuating educational conditions for African Americans in 19th-century Illinois. This work continues to deepen our understanding of the complexities of race and education in the Illinois past.



Left: Shovel-testing the 20 foot by 30 foot parcel purchased by the school board in 1858. Photograph by Terrance Martin

Above: Fragments of slate board and pencils found at New Philadelphia are examples of artifacts that might be associated with a schoolhouse. However, we found none in the shovel-test of the 1858 parcel. Photograph by Doug Carr

FAUNAL ANALYSIS & REGIONAL FOODWAYS

Each year of the field school, the students are introduced to the identification of animal bones. Several students have gone on to coauthor faunal reports and articles. Using these analyses, we studied the differences in foodways and agricultural choices that were made by New Philadelphia residents and farmers. We found that these choices were strongly influenced by whether the people came from New England, the middle states, or the Upland South. This work led to a refinement in archaeologists' understanding of regional foodways in the Midwest.

GEOPHYSICAL TECHNIQUES

The New Philadelphia Archaeological Project has been fortunate to employ many cutting-edge technologies. Our decisions about where to excavate were aided by Dr. Michael Hargrave, Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (CERL), who used geophysical techniques to detect subsurface anomalies to locate archaeological features. Magnetic field gradient and electrical resistance techniques detected the remains of house foundations and cellars near the streets, whereas non-residential features were found in the middle of the lots. Other techniques for investigating subtle aspects of landscape history included a light detection and ranging (LiDAR) survey and low-altitude photography using ultra-light aircraft.

Above: Each summer, students participated in five weeks of fieldwork and then spent five weeks at the ISM Research and Collections Center, identifying and cataloging artifacts and biological materials. Analysis of animal remains showed that a family's regional background influenced their preference for pork, beef, poultry or wild animals. Photograph by Joe Conover

Right: In order to study biological remains, sediment samples from excavated areas had to be processed by flotation at the ISM Research and Collections Center. Analysis revealed oak, hickory, hazelnut, black walnut, blackberry/raspberry, ground cherry, maize, and wheat. Photograph by Gary Andrashko





Dr. Michael Hargrave instructed students in the application of geophysical techniques, such as electrical resistivity, as a way of discovering the location of subsurface cultural features and where archaeological excavations would be most informative.

Photograph by Pat Likes

Above: View to the north from the ultra-light aircraft during the 2005 low-altitude survey of the New Philadelphia site.

Photograph by Dr. Tommy Hailey

Below: Focusing on landscape history through geological techniques, Dr. Arthur Bettis and Mary Kathryn Rocheford (University of Iowa) collected sediment cores from many areas of the New Philadelphia site in order to detect how physical, biological, and chemical processes have been impacted by different land-use activities. Photograph by Terrance Martin



POPULATION

Frustrated by casual, sometimes fantastic, estimates of New Philadelphia's population, we attempted a detailed, person-by-person accounting of who lived within the town limits in the mid-19th century. By comparing property tax records, land deeds, census records and genealogical data, we concluded that the peak population was 66 people, living in 13 households, in 1855. Historical research also indicated that the population of New Philadelphia was more homogeneous than previously thought. There were few foreign immigrants, and the majority of both African- and Euro-American residents came from Kentucky, Ohio, New York and New England.

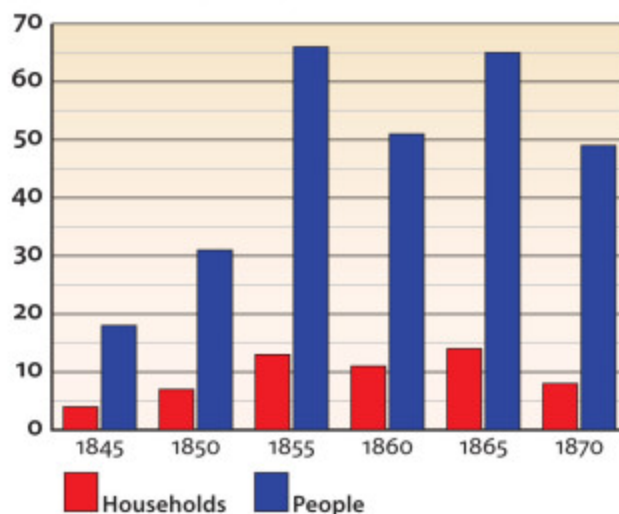
RAILROAD

When the Hannibal and Naples Railroad was built in 1869, it passed through the towns of Barry and Baylis, missing New Philadelphia by less than one mile and creating a stop called Hadley Station. Members of the New Philadelphia Archaeological Project carry on a lively discussion over the significance of this event. One side argues that the railroad company, based in the former slave state of Missouri, may have deliberately bypassed New Philadelphia because it was a predominantly African-American community, choosing a more difficult route across high ground, where the train required a helper engine. The other side argues that Hadley Station was so close to New Philadelphia as to make no difference to the surrounding community; that it was actually on the property of Free Frank's heirs and thus amounted to an extension of New Philadelphia; and that the route avoided low-lying swampy areas that are prone to flooding.

Detail of Hadley Township from the 1872 *Atlas Map of Pike County, Illinois* (p. 100). New Philadelphia is located in Section 27. The McWorter family farm is located in Section 22.

Courtesy of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library;
photograph by Doug Carr

New Philadelphia Population: 1845–1870



ARTIFACTS



Some of the noteworthy artifacts recovered at New Philadelphia include prehistoric lithics; buttons from Civil War-era uniforms; a Grand Army of the Republic badge and an Illinois State Fair Old Soldier's badge; a William Jennings Bryan campaign button; an 1837 "hard times" token from New York; an array of children's toys



and doll fragments, including a tiny 1930s compass that still works (at left); domestic items such as thimbles,

needles, canning lids, ceramic dishes, and glass bottles; and a hand-wrought iron trivet found in Louisa McWorter's house and probably made by her brother or her son, both of whom were blacksmiths. The artifacts are curated at the Illinois State Museum's Research and Collections Center, where they remain under study by archaeologists and graduate students.



From the top: Artifacts washed, sorted and set out to dry; pepper-sauce bottle, transferware plate, fragment of a "Frozen Charlotte" doll, examining a bottle for a maker's mark, ceramic marble, 1900 William Jennings Bryan campaign button, Civil War-era uniform button, novelty compass set in carved elephant. Photographs by Joe Conover and Doug Carr

PRESERVATION OF THE SITE

Building on the efforts of the New Philadelphia Archaeological Project, the site of New Philadelphia is now on the National Register of Historic Places, has been designated a National Historic Landmark, and is being considered as a National Park. Ensuring protection of the site's archaeological resources, the Archaeological Conservancy purchased nine acres of the town site. The New Philadelphia Association continues its work to secure ownership of the land and has begun a major project to improve the interpretation at the site.



Above: Project codirector Anna Agbe-Davies discovered old wagon ruts below a gravel layer when she looked for traces of the former King Street.

Photograph by Doug Carr

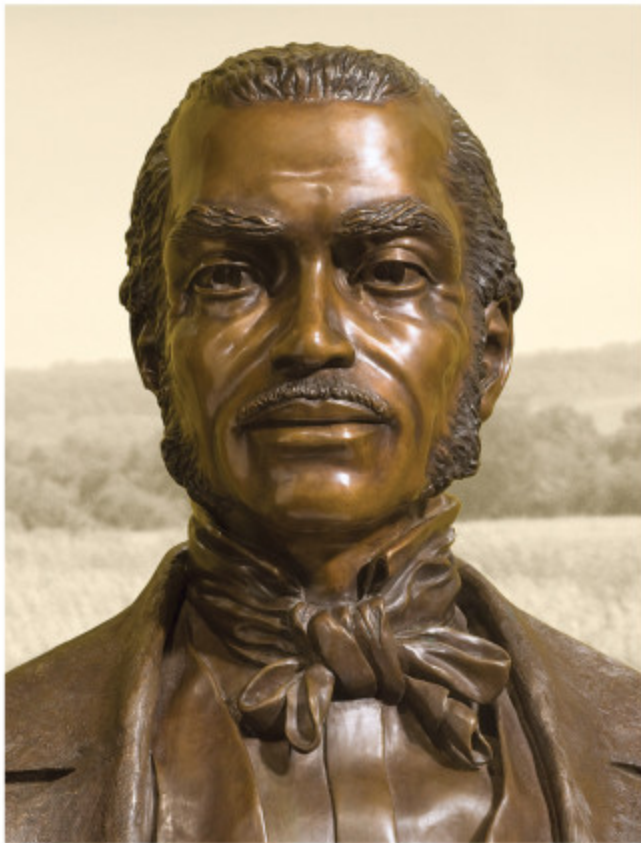
Left: An Illinois Department of Transportation sign and a tripod for screening sediments are symbols of ongoing research at New Philadelphia.

Photograph by Gary Andrashko



Photograph by Gary Andrashko

Left to right: New Philadelphia Archaeology Project directors Terrance J. Martin, Christopher C. Fennell, and Paul A. Shackel with fifth- and sixth-generation Frank McWorter descendants Sandra McWorter, Gerald McWorter and Mei-Ling McWorter Leonard.



THE LEGACY OF FREE FRANK

One of the most rewarding aspects of the New Philadelphia Archaeological Project is the involvement of the present-day residents of Pike County and of the descendants of families who once lived in the New Philadelphia community, most notably the McWorter family. Several fifth-generation descendants of Free Frank have been active in the promotion and preservation of the site and have served on the board of the New Philadelphia Association. In 2005, the McWorter family held a large reunion at the town site and in 2006 they helped sponsor “A Day of Discovery,” at which New Philadelphia descendants were invited to share and record their family stories. The involvement of the descendants has helped the New Philadelphia Archeological Project to link the past to the present, and to keep alive Free Frank McWorter’s legacy of freedom, education and perseverance. ■

Above: Bust of Free Frank McWorter by Shirley McWorter Moss. Courtesy of Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library; photograph by Doug Carr
Below: Young McWorter descendants visited the field school in 2005. Courtesy of Christopher Valvano; photograph by Elizabeth Davis.



THE NEW PHILADELPHIA
PROJECT PARTNERS

Archaeological Conservancy
DePaul University
Hannibal-LaGrange University
Illinois Humanities Council
Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative (IREC)
Illinois State Museum
John Wood Community College
McWorter Family
National Center for Preservation
Technology and Training
National Park Service
National Science Foundation (REU)
New Philadelphia Association
Sprague's Kinderhook Lodge
U.S. Army Engineer Research
and Development Center, Construction
Engineering Research Laboratory (CERL)
University of Illinois, Springfield
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
University of Iowa
University of Maryland
University of North Carolina

**Books, Journals, and Magazines About
the New Philadelphia Archaeological Project**

- Fennell, Christopher, Terrance J. Martin, and Paul A. Shackel (Editors)
2010 *New Philadelphia: Racism, Community, and the Illinois Frontier*.
Historical Archaeology 44:1-157.
- Gay, Malcolm
2008 *A New Life in New Philadelphia*. *American Archaeology* 12(3):26-31.
- King, Charlotte
2008 *New Philadelphia, Illinois: An Exceptional Town, an Exceptional
Opportunity*. *Illinois Antiquity* 43(2):3-7.
- MacKenzie, Dana
2005 *Ahead of Its Time? Founded by a Freed Slave, an Illinois Town
was a Rare Example of Biracial Cooperation Before the Civil War*.
Smithsonian 35(10):26-28.

- Martin, Terrance J., Paul A. Shackel, and Christopher C. Fennell
2004-5 *New Philadelphia: The XYZs of the First Excavations*.
The Living Museum 66(4):8-13.
- Martin, Terrance J., Paul A. Shackel, and Christopher C. Fennell
2005 *New Philadelphia*. *Outdoor Illinois* 13(10): 26-28.
- Picat, Iris
2009 *Preserving New Philadelphia; The Conservancy Obtains a Portion
of the First Town Founded by a Freed Slave*. *American Archaeology*
13(3):45.
- Pinkowski, Jennifer
2005 *Integrating the Frontier; A Town Founded by a Former Slave
Resurfaces in Illinois*. *Archaeology* 58(5):42-47.
- Shackel, Paul A.
2005 *Local Identity, National Memory, and Heritage Tourism: Creating a
Sense of Place with Archaeology*. *Illinois Antiquity* 40(3):24-26.
- Shackel, Paul A.
2011 *New Philadelphia: An Archaeology of Race in the Heartland*.
University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Shackel, Paul A., Terrance J. Martin, Joy D. Beasley, and Tom Gwaltney
2004 *Rediscovering New Philadelphia: Race and Racism on the Illinois
Frontier*. *Illinois Antiquity* 39(1):3-7.
- Steinbacher, Michele
2004 *Digging in at New Philadelphia*. *Illinois Heritage* 7(6):26-28.

Websites

- New Philadelphia: A Multiracial Town on the Illinois Frontier. National Park
Service Teaching with Historic Places Lesson Plans: <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/13onewphila/>
- New Philadelphia Archaeological Project. <http://www.histarch.uiuc.edu/NP/>
- New Philadelphia Association. <http://www.newphiladelphiaill.org/>

Documentaries

- Davies, Janet
2006 *Rediscovering a Black Pioneer's Dream*. ABC Channel 7 Chicago.
- Dixon, Graham
2009 *New Philadelphia, Illinois*. *Time Team America*. Oregon Public
Broadcasting.
- Drake, Steve
2009 *New Philadelphia*. *Prairie Fire*, Episode no. 801. WILL-TV Urbana.
- McDonald, Mark
2004 *New Philadelphia Site Visit*. *Illinois Stories*. WSEC-TV. Springfield.
- McDonald, Mark
2005 *New Philadelphia Laboratory Work*. *Illinois Stories*. WSEC-TV.
Springfield.

Suggested Reading

- Shackel, Paul A.
2011 *New Philadelphia: An Archaeology of Race in the Heartland*.
University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Walker, Juliet E. K.
1983 *Free Frank: A Black Pioneer on the Antebellum Frontier*.
The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington.



Elizabeth Rupprecht, *Untitled*, c. 1995, from *Luminous Ground* **S**

ILLINOIS STATE MUSEUM

Through January 6, 2013

Luminous Ground: Artists With Histories offers a kaleidoscopic panorama of the work of eleven diverse Illinois artists who share three important similarities: 1) the creation of life-long bodies of work of the highest caliber; 2) the influencing of multiple artists across generations, not only by their art but through teaching and community involvement; and 3) commitments of fifty to sixty years or more to the exploration of creativity.

CHICAGO GALLERY

Through May 25, 2012

Figurism: Narrative and Fantastic Figurative Art from the Illinois State Museum Collection brings together historical and contemporary body-based art that emphasizes the power and range of the uses of the figure in Midwestern art. Doug Stapleton, Assistant Curator of the Illinois State Museum Chicago Gallery, brings together the work of over fifty artists, including Marcena Barton, Samuel Himmelfarb, Carl Hoekner, Linda Kramer, Kerig Pope, Barbara Rossi, and Eleanor Spiess-Ferris.

Opening in June 18, 2012: *Civil War Era Quilts*

LOCKPORT GALLERY

May 6, 2012 through October 5, 2012

Focus 4 is composed of four solo exhibitions featuring the work of four Illinois artists: Steven Robnett, Don Seiden, Mario Trejo, and Rebecca Wolfram. Steven Robnett, draughtsman and painter, narrates the human experience from multiple perspectives in tightly rendered compositions of charcoal, pastel, and colored pencil. Don Seiden—painter, sculptor, and art therapist with more than 50 years experience—explores life, art, and the creative process utilizing mixed media. Mario Trejo utilizes the process and repetition of mark making to explore the macro and microcosms of the universe and the mind in compositions that resonate between calm fluidity and struggling chaos. Painter Rebecca Wolfram delves into the effects of culture, custom, and tradition as they reflect and shape social behavior and society.

DICKSON MOUNDS MUSEUM

Through September 30, 2012

From Humble Beginnings: Lincoln's Illinois 1830-1861 (Part 1) tells the story of the natural landscape and the challenges facing settlers in the Lincoln era. Featured in the exhibition are historical maps, survey equipment, household furnishings, agricultural tools, rifles, archaeological artifacts from New Philadelphia and Southern Illinois tavern sites, and audio presentations of pioneers' letters.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS ART & ARTISANS CENTER

Through July 22, 2012

From Humble Beginnings: Lincoln's Illinois 1830-1861 (Part 2) tells the story of Northerners and Europeans flooding Illinois' resident population—dominated by upland Southerners—and the impacts of social reform, the Illinois & Michigan Canal, railroads, and the rise of Chicago. Featured in this exhibition are historical maps and paintings, pistols, diverse household furnishings, agricultural tools including an 1855 corn planter, archaeological artifacts from Nauvoo and other sites, and audio presentations of period music.

Please note that exhibition dates are subject to change. To confirm dates, please call the appropriate site.



David Hunter, *Man & Hammer* (detail), c.1935, from *Figurism* **CG**

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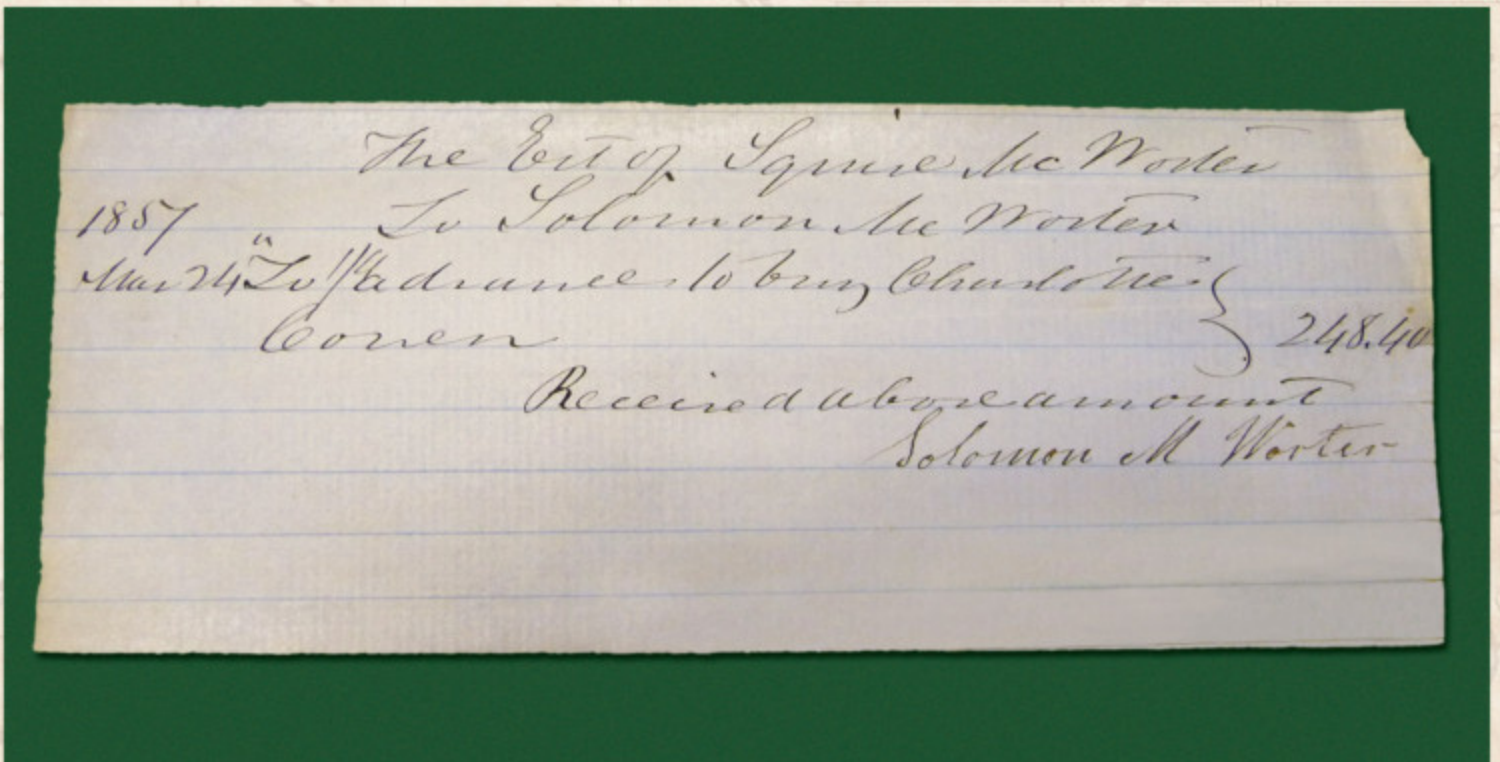
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Address Service Requested



A receipt found in Squire McWorter's probate file

Squire and Solomon were sons of Free Frank. This receipt, dated March 24, 1857, represents a transfer of \$248.40 from Squire McWorter's estate to Solomon McWorter, in order to purchase the freedom of their niece, Charlotte Cowan. Photograph by Claire Fuller Martin

