



# THE CONDUCTOR

The official newsletter of  
The National Capital Region  
Network to Freedom Program

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## African American Civil War Memorial Transferred to National Park Service

At long last on November 4, the African American Civil War Memorial was officially transferred to the National Park Service National Parks - Central, by the Washington, D.C. Government. The sculpture is the only national memorial honoring the long unsung United States Colored Troops (USCT). It is located on the corner of 10th & U Streets NW. The magnificent sculpture, "The Spirit of Freedom," by Ed Hamilton, depicts the African Americans who served the Union. As describe by Hamilton, "The backside consist of a family group as the soldier, a son leaves for war. The front has three infantry soldiers and a sailor as protectors of the fight for freedom." Behind the sculpture are walls with the names of those who served in the USCT -- both black soldiers and their white officers. The names have been drawn from records at the National Archives.

On May 22, 1862, General David Hunter, organized a full regiment of blacks. Hunter said to the Secretary of War: "I reply that no regiment of

*'fugitive slaves' has been or is being organized in this department. There is, however, a fine regiment of persons whose late masters are 'fugitive rebels' - - men who everywhere fly before the appearance of the national flag, leaving their servants behind them to shift as they can for themselves...The experiment of arming the blacks, so far as I have made it, has been a complete and even marvelous success."*

Visitors should also be inclined to tour the African American Civil War Memorial Museum located a few blocks from the Memorial at 1200 U Street NW. The mission of the Museum is "to tell the true Story of 209,145 black soldiers whose names are listed on the Monument's Wall of Honor...." To learn more about the museum, please visit the website: <http://www.afroamcivilwar.org>

You can also visit the National Park Service website dedicated to the memorial at: <http://www.nps.gov/afam/>



African American Civil War Memorial,  
"The Spirit of Freedom".  
Photo Courtesy of Ed Hamilton.

# New Members Join The Network to Freedom Program

On September 15, Network to Freedom (NTF) Program Coordinators met formally for the last time this year in Baltimore, Maryland to review applications submitted in July. NTF proudly announces and congratulates new members into the National Capital Region and surrounding areas (VA/WV/MD) that were determined eligible. These sites are as follows:

**Roedown Plantation** Anne Arundel County, MD. This site is significantly related to the Underground Railroad because William Parker, the leader of the Resistance at Christiana, Pennsylvania, spent the first 17 years of his life enslaved at the Roedown Plantation before escaping to freedom.

**The Downtown Norfolk Waterfront** Norfolk, VA. The Waterfront has an ample amount of



Coordinators hard at work at the Network to Freedom Application Review meeting. NPS Photo.

documentation supporting numerous freedom seekers who left from this site during the time span from the American Revolution through the Civil War.

**The West Virginia State Archives** Charleston, WV. The Archives is a great facility complete with primary sources that can be used to research UGRR history in Virginia, West Virginia, and Ohio. Many freedom seekers passed through West Virginia

on their way to freedom in Ohio.

**Site of the Arrest of William Chaplin (1850)** Montgomery County, MD. This incident is commemorated in Jesup Park. William Chaplin, a former member of the Albany Vigilance Committee, helped many in Washington, D.C. to freedom. He also worked with Gerrit Smith to get funding to rent the schooner ship, *The Pearl*, for the largest attempted escape of enslaved persons in 1848. Unfortunately as a result of his arrest, he was tried in both D.C. and Rockville, Maryland and was sentenced to the penitentiary. Abolitionists posted bail for him and he fled to New York state.

**Rural Legacy Trail** Montgomery County, MD. This is an experiential trail that was created to simulate the Underground Railroad for families.

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## Underground Railroad Heritage Tourism in Maryland

The Maryland Office of Tourism Development has announced a new initiative to celebrate the Underground Railroad with a heritage tourism brochure to be released to the public on Harriet Tubman Day, March 2006. Marci Ross, the Tourism Office's Resources Development Manager, is excited and enthusiastic. Membership in the Network to Freedom Program will determine eligibility for the statewide map/brochure. It will be comparable to other MD Tourism brochures issued on the Civil War, and most recently, on the Star-

Spangled Banner and War of 1812 in Maryland. Ross' aim is to include sites in every Maryland county and Baltimore City. Because of its proximity to the free state of Pennsylvania, the Chesapeake Bay, as well as to two cities with large free black populations (DC, Baltimore) and to major transportation routes, Maryland is loaded with the history of freedom seekers.

To identify sites, facilities, and programs in addition to the thirteen now on the Network to Freedom, a workshop was held in September at

the Belair Mansion (itself a Network member), in Bowie MD. At the workshop, coordinators explained the application and documentation process. It is not too late to prepare an application for the January 15, 2005, deadline. This will be the last opportunity to join the Network to Freedom Program in time for inclusion on the Maryland UGRR brochure.

For more information, contact Jenny Masur (202-690-5166, [jenny\\_masur@nps.gov](mailto:jenny_masur@nps.gov)).

# Douglass' Ledger & Cossack Hat On Loan

by Cathy Ingram, Curator,

Frederick Douglass National Historic Site

A ledger and hat from the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site museum collection is on loan to the new National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (NURRFC) in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The NURRFC is located on the north bank of the Ohio River, which marked the dividing line between the North and South. Thousands of enslaved persons used the Underground Railroad network to flee to freedom throughout the United States and internationally. Using the Underground Railroad as a lens through which to explore a range of freedom issues, the Freedom Center offers lessons and reflections on the struggle for freedom in the past, in the present, and for the future.

While living in Rochester, New York, Frederick Douglass often helped slaves who traveled along the Underground Railroad. At the same time, he played a public role in leading the fight to abolish slavery in the United States. The ledger, on loan to the NURRFC, lists the names of those who subscribed to his abolitionist newspaper, "Frederick Douglass' Paper", in the 1850s. His Cossack hat is also on display.

The artifacts will remain at the NURRFC until July 2005.



A close up photo of the cossack hat on loan, and Frederick Douglass wearing the hat. NPS Photo.

# Regional Director Wins Network to Freedom Award

Terry Carlstrom, the National Capital Regional Director, received the Network to Freedom Award for his unwavering support of the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program. He will be greatly missed once he retires in January 2005. The Network to Freedom family thanks Terry Carlstrom for his many years of support and wishes him much success in his future endeavors as he embarks on a new beginning.



Regional Director, Terry Carlstrom and UGRR Coordinator Jenny Masur  
NPS Photo.

# Conference Features Panel on Frederick Douglass

Although this year the 31st Washington D.C. Historical Studies Conference at the City Museum on November 5-6 focused on the anniversary of desegregation, there was a panel, "Washingtonian Frederick Douglass: Life in the Federal City," moderated by Marya McQuirter. One speaker was Park Ranger Eola Dance, Frederick Douglass NHS, who presented "Frederick Douglass and Family Life."



Park Ranger Eola Dance delivering presentation. NPS Photo.

# Personal Reflections: A Visit to the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

*by Mel Reid, Equal Employment Manager, National Capital Region*

While visiting family and friends during a recent weekend getaway to my home state of Ohio, I also had the opportunity to venture to the newly opened National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati. Located in the downtown area directly across the Ohio River from the state of Kentucky, the new Freedom Center seems to have been tactfully and accurately situated with regard to conveying the many told and untold stories of enslaved peoples' attempts to escape across the river to Ohio and beyond to freedom.

These ever-moving thoughts were certainly with me as I approached the Freedom Center's rather majestic structure. I also could not help but to reflect upon the many meetings and related gatherings in the many places that I had personally attended, where the issues of how, where and why to best address the controversial subject of slavery and the underground railroad was often-times hotly contested. And yet, as I anxiously entered through the doors of the Freedom Center, most of those previously contested differences of opinion did not really seem that significant to me at that moment. In fact, I was quite impressed with just how well the Freedom Center uniquely communicated the various complex aspects and issues of enslavement, as well as the quest for freedom by way of the underground railroad. In particular, the four floors of exceptional exhibits, videos, images, artifacts, kiosks, interactive presentations and



National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Photo courtesy of The Freedom Center.

creatively layered historical perspectives all served very well to educate and indeed highlight the many remarkable struggles involving faith, perseverance, patience, guts, sacrifice and unwavering support on the part of many with varied ethnic backgrounds.

Notable in particular on display was an authentic "Slave Pen." This building which appeared to be an oversized one room log cabin, was actually salvaged from a Maysville, Kentucky farm and was originally used to warehouse slaves being sold down the Ohio River to points south and west. As one might imagine, this awesome artifact was certainly a powerfully riveting reminder of a difficult time gone by. However, because the wood and cement of the structure appeared to be very clean and new (perhaps due to the Center's preservation efforts), several of those around me as well as I were left with a bit of a false impression. It appeared that slaves lived in nice new log cabins. It also seemed to be a stretch of the imagination (at least for me) that slaves dined on

hand painted porcelain dishes as another exhibit boldly claimed. Nevertheless, most of the other items observed seemed fairly accurate and essentially told the stories in a somewhat palatable and tasteful manner.

Perhaps my favorite display (and there were several), was an original Officer's sword and Regimental flag of the famed Cincinnati Black Brigade. This truly amazing group of heroes was among the very first African American fighting units to ever serve in the Civil War.

My National Underground Railroad Freedom Center experience certainly moved me and others to tears on more than one occasion. And yet, because it was all so emotional, informative and long awaited by so many, I can hardly wait for my next visit there. I did express these sentiments to several of the Freedom Center staff and they further assured me that the majority of their consistently culturally diverse visitors have expressed similar feelings.

As a proud born and bred Ohioan, I am just thrilled that the Freedom Center now exists in my home state. I strongly encourage all walks of life to pay the Freedom Center a visit. It is hoped that your visit will be as rewarding as mine truly was.

For more information about the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, visit their website at <http://www.freedomcenter.org>

# Gilder Lehrman, An Experience

by Monta Coleman, Architect, National Capital Region

On Sunday, July 10th 2004, I arrived at Bradley International Airport in Hartford, Connecticut ready to begin training for work. I was very fortunate to have been chosen to participate in a week - long Summer Gilder Lehrman Institute course entitled, "Passages to Freedom: Abolition and the Underground Railroad"; held at Yale University. Gilder Lehrman offers summer courses in a variety of historical topics for school teachers and National Park Service (NPS) employees. I was armed with my summer readings that included four books and copies of several articles that were mailed to us to read prior to arriving.

Once I was on the campus of Yale University, I was in awe at the many classical gothic buildings. As I approached the dormitory where all of the participants would be staying, I instantly thought back to the time I first went to college. I was an eighteen year- old girl who was wondering if she would get along with her roommate, find her way around campus, and if the food was good in the cafeteria. Fortunately for me, I liked my roommate, a public middle school teacher from Brooklyn NY, the urban campus was easy to navigate, and the food was great.

Unlike other training/courses throughout my government career, my Gilder Lehrman experience does not begin to compare. The class included 32 students, (30 school teachers and 2 NPS employees). Gilder Lehrman Institute did an exceptional job of selecting a diverse group of participants. There were students from Utah, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Oklahoma, New York, Rhode Island, Maryland, Virginia, Texas, Georgia, North Carolina, Florida and one international student from Canada. The combination of ethnicities, religions and political backgrounds and beliefs, was so appropriate for a successful class on Abolition and the Underground Railroad. The interaction between all of us provided an additional educational element that I did not anticipate. The instructors included: Dr. David Blight (Yale University), Dr. James Horton (George Washington University), and Dr. Lois Horton (George Mason University). All are published scholars in the field of abolition and slavery. Their teaching methods were not limited to a series of lectures, but included very interactive discussions with students, visits to the Yale archives and library for primary sources, and invited guest lectures including

Catherine Clinton, author of Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom. We also ventured to Boston, Massachusetts for a day long excursion. Some of the sites we visited included: Boston African American National Historic Site (NHS), Augustus Saint-Gauden's "The Shaw Memorial", and Tremont Temple Baptist Church, the first integrated church in the country. It was truly an inspirational day for all the participants. Because we went to Boston armed with our newly acquired knowledge of abolition, we each felt that we were a part of the "Boston experience", and not just typical visitors glazing through sites and information.

At the end of the week, I was physically drained but emotionally charged. I was so thankful to have experienced such an incredible week on a professionally and personal level. I encourage all who can to apply to a summer course offered by the Gilder Lehrman Institute.

For more information, visit their website at [www.gilderlehrman.org/index.html](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/index.html)



Group Picture of all participants. NPS Photo.



Instructors: Blight, Horton & Horton. NPS Photo.



Participants in Boston. NPS Photo.

# It Is Time To Make Some New Friends

by Elizabeth Rankin-Fulcher, President, Friends of the Underground Railroad

If Harriet Ross Tubman were to here today what would she say about Friends of the Underground Railroad, Inc.? I'd like to think she would be pleased that Friends was organized to promote collaborations among grassroots groups while educating the public at - large. The idea for Friends was conceived by Dr. Barbara Woods. In January 2003 at the Sumner School in Washington, D.C., she brought together activists, professionals and educators to discuss her vision - a nationwide non - profit organization supporting the legacy of the underground railroad movement, funded by foundation and corporate grants and individual donations.

In September 2004, in Baltimore, Maryland, Friends introduced the organization at its first of many quarterly meetings planned for around the country. More than 100 folks participated in this 2-day event which included a business meeting, half- day seminar and evening reception hosted

by Friends member Louis Fields, President of Black Baltimore Historical Tours. Tentative meeting sites for 2005 are Kansas, California, Rochester, New York and Columbus, Ohio - all of which will be hosted by local underground railroad organizations.

Friends is dedicated to ensuring that every American understands, appreciates and is inspired by the legacy of the underground railroad movement and its importance to our entire history of these United States. In its efforts to ensure that future generations will be inspired and motivated to maintain the history of the underground railroad movement.

We invite you to keep history alive - join Friends. Supporting memberships range from \$25 for individuals to \$500 for corporations; contributing memberships range from \$250 for Friends to \$10,000 for Freedom Seekers. Donations reach us at

Friends of the Underground Railroad, Incorporated:  
938 E. Swann Creek Road, Suite 125,  
Fort Washington, Maryland 20774;  
telephone 301/560-0170,  
e - mail us at [info@friends.org](mailto:info@friends.org). Also,  
visit our website at  
[www.friendsoftheundergroundrailroad.org](http://www.friendsoftheundergroundrailroad.org).  
Friends is a 501c(3) non - profit organization.

Friends is deeply grateful to Dr. Barbara Woods who saw the need and conceived the idea of Friends upon the passage of HR 1635\*. We look forward to your support in helping us keep the legacy of the underground railroad alive!

\*The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act signed into law in 1998.

\*\*Elizabeth Rankin-Fulcher is the direct descendent of abolitionist Rev. John Rankin of Ripley Ohio. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

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## Frederick Douglass & The Underground Railroad

by Eola Dance, Park Ranger, Frederick Douglass National Historic Site

On September 23, 2004 an audience of diverse ages came together at Arch Development Center in Southeast Washington, D.C. to uncover the captivating history of the Underground Railroad and the participation of Frederick Douglass in the quest for freedom. The Underground Railroad Network to Freedom National Capital Region Coordinator, Jenny Masur, discussed the history of the Underground Railroad (UGRR) and defined the people and places associated with the Network to Freedom. From Masur, the audience learned that any person, family, organization, church or building that assisted in the flight for freedom could be considered a part of the UGRR.

Park Ranger Eola Dance discussed the history of Frederick Douglass and the UGRR. As an abolitionist in Rochester, New York, Douglass' home served as a station for freedom seekers escaping north to Canada. The Douglass family assistance to freedom seekers is an example of how families worked together to ensure the safe passage of others on the UGRR.

For the younger audience, the puppet show "Freedom Train", introduced Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Harriet Beecher Stowe and John Brown. One of the puppet characters the youth met was a young boy who was very excited about history. Together, they learned how reading,

writing and having the courage to help others were key elements in obtaining freedom. Please contact the site for more information and show dates at 202-426-5961.



National Park Service employees: Monta Coleman, DeMar Rodger, and Noelle Trent pose with puppets. NPS Photo.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS & CALENDAR EVENTS

## Slave Descendents Freedom Society Meet

On Thursday, October 14, 2004 at the BWI Airport Marriot, from 8:30am to 12 o'clock noon the Slave Descendants Freedom Society held its first national symposium, "Moving Towards The Promised Land: A Conversation with Descendants of Notable Former Slaves." Descendants of notable history makers met for an interactive panel discussion on America's transatlantic slave trade history and the accomplishments made by their enslaved ancestors inspite of the odds against them. Present were descendants/relatives of former African Americans such as freedom seeker Moses Grandy, UGRR conductor William Still, Kunta Kinte (as told in the autobiography "ROOTS", by Alex Haley), and the leader of the famous Virginia uprising, Nat Turner. The Moderator of the panel was the host of "Daybreak with Anthony McCarthy", WEAA 88.9FM (Morgan State University).

## City Museum of Washington, D.C.

In May 2003, we proudly celebrated the stunning renovation of the Carnegie Library building and the opening of Washington's first museum dedicated solely to telling the story of the history of our city. However, since then the board of trustees has had to face the reality that the historical society was undercapitalized for its new job. The difficult decision was made to close all museum exhibits by the holidays, but to keep the Carnegie Library building open for use of the library, public programming, special events, and visits by school groups.

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION UGRR WILL MISS THE MUSEUM WHILE IT IS CLOSED.

## Call For Articles

The "HERITAGE MATTERS" Newsletter is seeking articles for their next issue.  
Due Date: April 1, 2005

**For more information contact:**  
Brian Joyner, Cultural Resources Diversity Program  
National Park Service at  
brian\_joyner@nps.gov

## African American Experience Section Workshop

The African American Experience Section is hosting a three - day workshop related to the American Civil War on March 13-15, 2005. It is being held in Washington, DC. Presentations for the workshop should feature either a cultural or historical theme. Submissions that provoke awareness and challenge conventional notions about culture, living history, material culture (including period dress), historical research and educational theory are welcomed.

**Deadline for submission: January 11, 2005.**

Submit abstracts to:

Debra A. Riley

5 Cable Hollow Way

Largo, Maryland 20774 or

e-mail your papers to: [impressive\\_debra@yahoo.com](mailto:impressive_debra@yahoo.com)

## African Americans & Civil War Conference

The conference will include topics on African Americans before, during, and after the Civil War and ancillary issues. Sectional issues will also be presented in order to facilitate discussion of the historical threads that connect the Civil War to today, especially for African Americans. The dates for the conference will be May 26-28, 2005.

For more information contact:

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## Do You KNOW?

1. Do you know information about the Antebellum History of Shiloh and Second Baptist Churches in Washington, DC?
2. Do you know information about the Elizabeth Keckley store located in Washington DC prior to the Civil War?

*If you KNOW, contact Jenny Masur at  
[Jenny\\_masur@nps.gov](mailto:Jenny_masur@nps.gov)*

*How do you deal with sensitive issues of slavery and UGRR? Direct your contributions to: [Jenny\\_masur@nps.gov](mailto:Jenny_masur@nps.gov)*



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Washington, DC 20242



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The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (NTF) was created by Congress in 1998 to honor those who resisted slavery through flight. The Conductor Newsletter was established to inform readers about areas of interest as it relates to the NTF program within the National Capital Region.

Jenny Masur,  
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Monta Coleman,  
Editor, Design & Layout  
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Comments? Please send to:  
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