



# THE CONDUCTOR

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

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## Is The Network to Freedom Program at Risk?

Budget projections for the Network to Freedom (NTF) program are alarming. Last fall, the NTF went through the process of Core Operations in Omaha, the MWR headquarters (from which the program is run). NTF as presently known will disappear if the shortfall in salaries and operating funds is not resolved. NTF has suffered from inadequate funding since its inception. Static budgets and program cuts have now reduced the actual budget of the NTF to \$479,000 while salaries and costs rise. NTF's budget will be reduced by 72 percent by the year 2011, effectively terminating the program. The national and the 6 region-

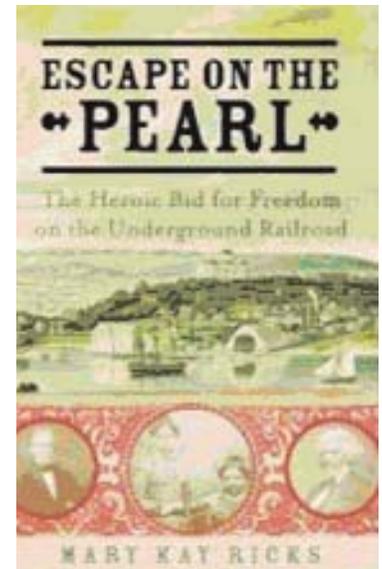
al managers participated in the Core Operations Session along with superintendents Susan Trail (Monocacy NB) and Celeste Bernardo (New Bedford Whaling NHP). Attending as interested outside observers were Alan Spears of National Parks Conservation Association and Alicestyne Adams, organizer of the new NTF Friends Group. The managers were asked to define the mission of the program and strategize ways to trim costs although the program is already doing "more with less." Managers were requested to envision the scenario of a national program with only 3.0 or 1.5 FTE. Already, because of the still-

to-be enacted FY 07 Federal budget, there will be no NTF community grants to distribute.

Hope may lie with either NPS Regional Directors or with a bill before Congress (H.R. 1239), co-sponsored by Representatives Alcee Hastings (D-FL) and Michael Castle (R-DE) to increase the program's to \$2,000,000. H.R. 1239 would resolve the financial crisis threatening the existence of this program's budget and would allow NTF staff to fully pursue and fulfill their Congressional mandate "to honor and interpret the history of the Underground Railroad."

# Local Author Launches New Book on The Pearl Affair

To publicize her new book, THE ESCAPE OF THE "PEARL": THE HEROIC BID FOR FREEDOM on the Underground Railroad, Mary Kay Ricks, principal of Tour DC, appeared at several book signings in the DC area, including Asbury United Methodist Church on April 25. At the signing at Sumner School, Ms. Ricks shared the limelight with descendants of the featured Edmondson family and with representatives of two local churches with involved parishioners - Asbury United Methodist (12th & K Sts. NW) and Mount Zion United Method Church (Georgetown). Those on the panel were people instrumental in the author's research on the Pearl. Many in the audience also helped with Ms. Ricks' research; for example, descendants supplied family history and documents. Published by William Morrow, THE ESCAPE ON THE "PEARL": THE HEROIC BID FOR FREEDOM on the Underground Railroad, the book is new in 2007.



## New "Slave Narrative" At University of Virginia

The University of Virginia Library has added a previously unknown African-American slave narrative to the University's Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library. The narrative called, "Rambles of a Runaway from Southern Slavery," was first published in Stratford, Ontario, in 1869. The 72-page autobiographical account tells the story of a bondsman born in Virginia who escaped to freedom in Canada.

REVIEW THE MOVIE **AMAZING GRACE**  
FOR *THE CONDUCTOR*

Send your review to [jenny\\_masur@nps.gov](mailto:jenny_masur@nps.gov).  
Note that there is a website associated with the movie: <http://www.amazinggracemovie.com>

## New NCR Sites Accepted into Network to Freedom at Santa Fe Public Review

Public review for Round 13 was held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on March 28, 2007. Fifteen new members (in 6 states and DC) were approved, bringing the national total up to 300. There are now 2 more NCR members as the review committee approved the two NCR applications -- a site application for the African American Civil War Memorial [administered by Ford's Theater], and a traveling trunk and curriculum program sponsored by the President's Park, "Slavery and the Underground Railroad, With a Focus on the Nation's Capital and Surrounding Areas." Out of the 14 NCR parks, the following others have sites or programs on the Network to Freedom: GWMP (Arlington House and Camp Greene and Contraband Camp); NACE (Frederick Douglass NHS and Berry Farm [Oxon Cove]); C & O Canal (Ferry Hill and Shawnee Old Fields Village Site); and Harpers Ferry NHP.

# Cedar Hill Reopens



On April 23, Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior, ceremonially reopened Frederick Douglass NHS. The site called Cedar Hill, which was the last home of the famous man, was designated in 1988, and commemorates the life of Frederick Douglass, a freedom seeker who became one of the great men of the nineteenth century. Reopened to the public in February 2007, Frederick Douglass NHS had a 3-year, \$2.7 million preservation project, in part thanks to a Save America's Treasures grant. Our own Monta Coleman, architect extraordinaire, was involved in the much-needed renovation.

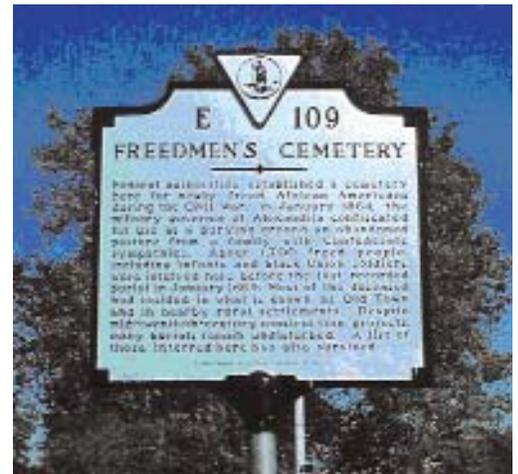
To visit, it is recommended that groups of 10 or fewer make a reservation, and those larger are required to reserve. For reservations by phone, call 1-877-444-6777, or make them online (<http://www.recreation.gov>). Tour times are: 9:00, 12:15, 1:45, 3:00, 3:30 pm. For a virtual tour of the Douglass home, visit the online exhibit "American Visionaries: Frederick Douglass."

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## News on Alexandria Freedmen's Cemetery

This spring, the City of Alexandria will host a re-dedication ceremony honoring the 1,800 African American men, women, and children buried at the Alexandria Freedmen's Cemetery from 1864 to 1869. The Freedmen's Cemetery is located on the southwest corner of South Washington and Church Streets. It has languished for 138 years.

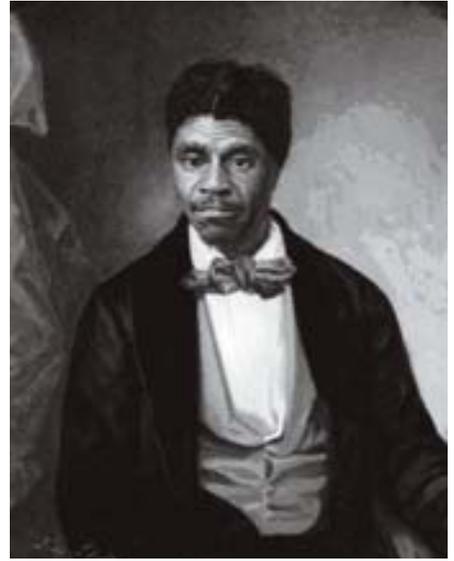
The re-dedication ceremony will include an illumination of 1,800 candle-lit bags (luminarias), one for every person buried at the cemetery; the lights will be labeled with each individual's name, age, and date of death. The bags will celebrate the lives of these forgotten people for the first time since the cemetery was abandoned in 1869.



The re-dedication ceremony is the beginning of a three-year process in which the City will demolish modern buildings, conduct an archaeological investigation to ensure the protection of the graves, and create the Alexandria Freedmen's Memorial Park, scheduled to open in 2010.

# New Novel on Dred Scott

Author Mary E. Neighbour discussed and signed Speak Right On, her novel about Dred Scott, the former bondsman at the heart of the 1857 Supreme Court decision which declared that African Americans, even when free, were not American citizens. Scott's bid to obtain his freedom when his master crossed into a free state failed. The signing was held on Tuesday, March 6, at the Library of Congress. Guests included: U.S. District Court Judge Henry E. Autry of St. Louis and Richard Hollyday, great-great grandson of Scott's attorney Montgomery Blair (who lived in Montgomery County, MD, while Postmaster General). Also featured was a special video presentation from Lynne M. Jackson, Scott's great-great granddaughter and founder of the Dred Scott Heritage Foundation.



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# Marker for Leonard Grimes Planned at George Washington University

Finally, Underground Railroad conductor Leonard Grimes will be honored near the site of his property, now part of George Washington University campus. Efforts to get a plaque put up on campus were led by Ambassador Ronald Palmer. Grimes was born in Loudoun County, VA, but was a resident in DC when arrested helping Patty and her children try to find freedom. Grimes was convicted and sent to the penitentiary in Richmond. Because of references from influential white men in Leesburg, Grimes served only a couple years of his sentence. After a spiritual transformation while in prison, Grimes became a minister. When released, he and his family moved to Massachusetts. Grimes became the minister of the 12th Street Baptist Church in Boston, and an advocate for "fugitives" like Shadrach Minkins and Anthony Burns.



# Who Knows the Story of Kitty Payne?

Recently the Rappahannock Historical Society hosted Kitty Payne's relatives. Kitty Payne and her children were living in Rappahannock County, VA, enslaved, when they were freed by Mary Maddox in 1843. Kitty's family and Mary Maddox moved to Adams County, PA, where Maddox stayed with them for ten months. After her departure, Samuel Maddox, Jr., a nephew of Mary Maddox's deceased husband, claimed rights to the family and hired Thomas Finnegan to kidnap and bring them back to VA. The family languished in a Rappahannock Jail for almost a year while they were defended by a lawyer hired with the help of Quaker friends. In Adams County, Thomas Finnegan was found guilty of kidnapping and the Maddox nephew gave up his claim to Kitty and her family. Kitty and her family returned to Adams County where Kitty died in 1850. The story has been researched by Debra McCauslin who used court records and newspaper accounts, found with the help of the book by one of Kitty's descendants, Guide My Feet, Hold My Hands.

## New Liverpool International Slavery Museum to Open In August

The city of Liverpool was Europe's major slave trading port in the 18th century. Opening on August 23, 2007, the International Slavery Museum is expected to become one of the world's leading centers for the study of slavery and its legacies, and the only museum in the world dedicated to transatlantic slavery. Liverpool's existing Transatlantic Slavery Gallery, opened in 1994, has been successful, so the new museum will expand its scope. The new museum will examine not only the historical aspects of slavery, but also slavery's many contemporary impacts -- issues of freedom, racial identity, and human rights. The new museum plans to add a Centre for the Study of International Slavery in 2010, which will have first-class education facilities and further exhibition space.

## Ready For a Disappointment?

Joel Bresler announces a new website on the American "folk" song, "Follow the Drinking Gourd," at: <http://www.followthedrinkinggourd.org/> [www.followthedrinkinggourd.org](http://www.followthedrinkinggourd.org) This song resonates with musicians, educators, authors of children's books, and the general public, because it is considered to date from the days of the Underground Railroad. Surprisingly, the song could not possibly have been sung by freedom seekers. The line in the chorus, "for the old man is awaitin' for to carry you to freedom," was written by folksinger Lee Hays eighty years after the Civil War. The song has been misinterpreted over the last decade. Bresler believes that versions of the Drinking Gourd song were sung by black Americans dating back to at least the early 20th century if not earlier than that; however, there was no Drinking Gourd song complete with map information sung in the pre-Civil War South.

# NCR UGRR UPDATES & INFORMATION

## Valuable Information

-Click on: <http://www.h-net.org/~dclist/RCHSFullText.html> for the full-text of the early issues of the Records of the Columbia Historical Society. Volume 1 has not been digitized and the downloadable full text of volume 17 is not available.

-To see a study by Kathryn Grover for New Bedford Whaling NHP on whether whaling ships that stopped in Alaska had freedom seekers as seamen, visit the park website.

-Exhibit at Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, "At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery" (dates and name of catalogue) open until ...

-To see a study by Kathryn Grover for New Bedford Whaling NHP on whether whaling ships that stopped in Alaska had freedom seekers as seamen, visit the park website.

-The Library of Congress's American Memory Map Collection has everything from a map of D.C. in 1791 to Civil War maps. Maps are downloadable in JPG2000 or MrSID formats. Most of the maps are poster-sized, but can be resized and printed.

## New Books

-- But One Race: The Life of Robert Purvis (State University of New York Press, 2007), by Margaret Hope Bacon.

-- The Rescue of Joshua Glover: A Fugitive Slave, the Constitution and the Coming of the Civil War (Ohio University Press, 2007) by Robert Baker.

-- The Forgotten Black Soldiers in Regiments During the Civil War by Juanita Patience

-- From Midnight to Dawn: The Last Tracks of the Underground Railroad in Canada (Doubleday, 2007) by Jacqueline M. Tobin with Hettie Jones.

-- I Have a Home in Glory Land: A Lost Tale of the Underground Railroad by Karolyn Smardz Frost (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2007)

-- Forthcoming, June 2007: In the Shadow of the Civil War: Passmore Williamson and the Rescue of Jane Johnson, by Ned Brandt, with Yanna Kroyt Brandt (The University of South Carolina Press).

# ANNOUNCEMENTS & CALENDAR EVENTS

## Opportunities

- \* Nominate new sites to the **African American Heritage Trail**, through May 15. The current list of more than 200 significant African American history sites on an online database, will expand when new sites are added. The form and criteria are available at [www.CulturalTourismDC.org](http://www.CulturalTourismDC.org).
- \* Visit the exhibit, "At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland" continuing through October 28, 2007, in Baltimore, at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture and the Maryland Historical Society. For further information see <http://www.africanamericanculture.org/>>[www.africanamericanculture.org](http://www.africanamericanculture.org)
- \* Become an intern with The Maryland Historical Society (MHS) if you are an undergraduate or graduate students with a 3.0 GPA or higher and at least three hours available per week during the academic year or summer. Candidates must pass a background investigation report. Send a resume, and an unofficial transcript and cover letter to H. Furlong Baldwin Library, The MHS, 201 West Monument St., Baltimore, MD 21201-4674.
- \* Participate in the 34th Annual Conference on Washington, D.C. Historical Studies, on November 1-3, 2007. The deadline to propose a paper or a presentation is May 15, 2007. Contact Bell Clement, Historical Society of Washington, D.C., 801 K Street NW at Mount Vernon Square, Washington DC 20001, (202) 383-1810 [ordchist@hotmail.com](mailto:ordchist@hotmail.com).

## GRANTS

- \* The Humanities Council of Washington, DC, requests proposals from communities across the District – for example for a neighborhood historical resource center or a community oral history project. Get information at: <http://www.wdchumanities.org> or contact Jennifer Foley at [jfoley@wdchumanities.org](mailto:jfoley@wdchumanities.org) or (202)387-8391 (ext. 15).
- \* Make dreams a reality! The Maryland Humanities Council has Opportunity Grants (up to \$1,200) accepted on a rolling basis, if submitted 6 weeks ahead of proposed project activities. <http://www.mdh.org/grants>
- \* The National Endowment for the Humanities awards grants up to \$5,000 on a non-matching basis to support the preservation of materials. The program promotes preservation planning and preservation training in smaller institutions. The deadline is May 15. <http://www.neh.gov/grants/index.html>
- \* The Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County offers grants to Small and Mid-Size Arts and Humanities Organizations and Grants to Large Arts and Humanities Organizations -- Visiting Artists and Scholars Grants and Creative Projects Grants. Usually the Council offers grant workshops. Visit <http://www.creativemoco.com/funding.html>.
- \* Applications for Save Our History grants are due June 1, 2007. Yearly the History Channel awards \$250,000 in grants of up to \$10,000 to entities that partner with schools or youth groups to teach documentation and preservation of community history. Check <http://www.history.com/minisites/saveourhistory/>



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**U.S. Department of the Interior**

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NATIONAL  
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD  
NETWORK TO FREEDOM

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.

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## ALERT FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE CHESAPEAKE BAY GATEWAYS MEMBERS

US Senators Benjamin L. Cardin, on the Senate Environment and Public works Committee, " and Barbara A. Mikulski recently announced that \$739,000 will be available for the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Program and Watertrails Network during the year. One initiative will be the new Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. NPS provides matching grants to the Gateways program members.

The Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, run by the National Park Service, now has 10 million visitors to its members in 6 states and DC. It is a partnership of parks, refuges, maritime museums, historic seaports and water trails which educate the public about the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. In addition to public education, aims are to improve public access and stewardship of the Bay's resources. Congress created the program in 1983, and it now has 156 "Gateways" including NTF members like Point Lookout State Park, Sotterley Plantation, and Leesylvania State Park. For more information, visit <http://www.baygateways.net>.