



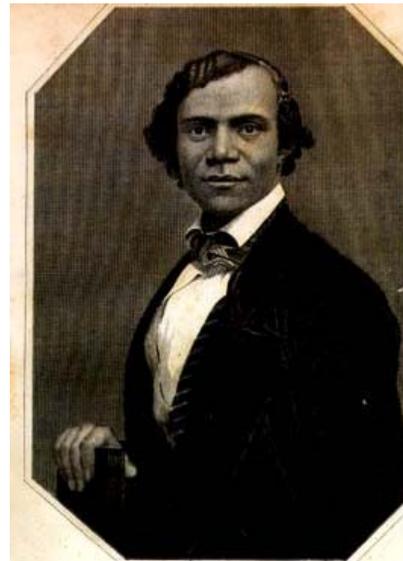
# Network to Freedom



## Proposed National and International Henry Bibb Trail

*“But I thank God that I am not property now, but am regarded as a man like yourself....”*

—Henry Bibb to his former Kentucky Slave Master, William Gatewood, 1844



Henry Bibb, *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb, An American Slave, Written by Himself*, 1849; available on line by University of North

*By Alicestyne Adams, Director, Underground Railroad Research Institute, Georgetown College, Kentucky*

In December 1838, a twenty-four year old mulatto slave named Henry Walton Bibb slipped away from the William Gatewood Plantation in Trimble County, Kentucky in a quest to gain his freedom. Born one of seven slave children on a plantation in Henry County (now Shelby County) in 1815, Bibb witnessed the sale of each of his brothers, sisters, and mother into slavery; the demoralization of his wife Malinda, through a life of forced prostitution; and the sale of Malinda and their

daughter, Mary Frances, to slave traders. Following several attempts to rescue his family, Bibb successfully made his final escape from slavery in 1837. Bibb first established himself in Michigan as a man of demonstrated character, as well as a national and international political leader, founding the Michigan Liberty Party in 1840, the Michigan Free Soil Party in 1848, and the American Continental and West India League. He also served as chairman of the North American Convention of Colored People. Bibb fled to Canada following passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law, where he

went on to publish Canada’s first African American newspaper, *Voice of the Fugitive*, in 1851; marry his second wife—a free black woman from Connecticut—Mary Miles; organize the Refugee’s Home Society, an organization designed to aid escaping slaves in purchasing homes and lands in Canada; and with wife Mary, establish schools for African Canadian children and adults in the community of Sandwich, Ontario, Canada.

Based upon the work of Bibb Scholar, Dr. Afua Cooper of York

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Great Rivers Greenway District Commissioners Approve \$200,000 for Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing Underground Railroad Site

By Doug Eller

At the August 2005 meeting of the Great Rivers Greenway District, Commissioners approved \$200,000 toward the development of the Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing, Missouri's first nationally recognized Underground Railroad site. The Great Rivers Greenway District is the public organization leading the development of a region-wide system of interconnected greenways, parks and trails, known as the River Ring, which will join two states and cover an area of 1,216 square miles.

Awarded funds will provide the resources necessary for Grace Hill Settlement House to lead a capital campaign to build the site design--a result of a representative Advisory Committee action and of extensive community meetings held last year in North St. Louis City, supported in part by a Network to Freedom grant. Grace Hill Settlement House is a United Way social service agency supporting empowerment to low-income communities in the St. Louis area.

The Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing site is open for visits and has become an interactive cultural area celebrating freedom and re-connecting people back to the Mississippi River. The site celebrates an event that occurred in 1855 when nine people, including two children, attempted to seek freedom by crossing from Missouri, a slave state, to Illinois, a free

state. The Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing is located just north of the Merchants Bridge on the Mississippi River.

Last May, the Great Rivers Greenway District and the Whitaker Foundation sponsored the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing. The site truly became a place where people were drawn to celebrate freedom and heritage. The St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* reported that approximately 1500 attended as participants came and went throughout the day; up from 200 attending each of the previous 2 years. Besides the performances, the Celebration offered food vendors, cultural wares, and information by event partners. Who attended? Families, primarily African American men, women, and children from North St. Louis City and County and across the River from Illinois, and they came to spend the day. Families brought their coolers, tents, and even tricycles. A teacher brought her students to put their feelings into written essays. Bicyclists came by happenchance and stayed. Children and parents listened to stories, heard songs of

freedom, and were riveted to the power of the reenactment of the Mary Meachum story. You could hear a pin drop when Esther and her children were captured by the sheriff. After the performance the need to react, to do something to be a part of this powerful statement on freedom was expressed by everyone coming together as one body to launch balloons on the riverbank. A cheer went up with the balloons as they successfully made

their way north. In between the performances, people explored the riverbank, sat in the skiff used in the reenactment to feel what it may have been like to cross the waters, and just enjoyed each other surrounded by history, land, river and sky. People reconnected with their past and themselves by returning to the River.

### About the Great Rivers Greenway District

*The Great Rivers Greenway District, formerly known as the Metropolitan Park and Recreation District, was established in November 2000 by the successful passage of the Clean Water, Safe Parks and Community Trails Initiative (Proposition C) in St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County, Missouri. For more information about Great Rivers Greenway District, visit [www.greatrivers.info](http://www.greatrivers.info).*

### About Grace Hill

*Since 1903, Grace Hill has been serving St. Louis neighborhoods by filling in the gaps not provided by government social services. Today it is the ninth largest nonprofit organization in St. Louis. Its 30 sites and nearly 500 employees provide low-income St. Louisians with primary-health care, health-education programs, housing developed from rehabilitated structures, child-care centers and oversight of neighborhood child-care providers, adult-education classes on topics ranging from job-hunting skills to navigating the social-services system, and dozens of other services. Last year Grace Hill helped more than 70,000 St. Louisians—approximately one-fifth of the city's population.*

*Grace Hill's mission is not only to help those in need, but to teach them self-sufficiency and to strengthen community ties in St. Louis neighborhoods.*

*For more information, contact:*

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[www.gracehill.org](http://www.gracehill.org)*



# Congratulations to the New Network Listings

The fall 2005 public review meeting for Network to Freedom applications was cancelled due to Hurricane Katrina. During subsequent review via telephone, the regional coordinator committee accepted the following 17 listings into the Network.

## District of Columbia

Camp Greene and Contraband Camp [site]  
“From Slavery to Freedom” [program]

## Illinois

Illinois College—Beecher Hall (Chapel) and the site of the College Building (1832-1852) [site]  
Pettengill Home Site [site]

## Maryland

Berry Farm [site]  
Jacob Leverton Dwelling [site]



Rockland, Washington County, Maryland, from where James Pennington escaped. Pennington wrote *The Fugitive Blacksmith*, one of the great slave narratives of American history and became a respected community leader. Photo by Dean Herrin, Catoctin Center for Regional Studies.

Rockland [site]  
Shawnee Old Fields Village Site [site]

## Michigan

W.W. Harwood Farmstead [site]

## New Mexico

Harriet's Return [program]

## New York

Cayuga County Historian's Office [facility]  
Cayuga Courthouse [site]  
Howland Stone Store [site]  
James Canning & Lydia Fuller House [site]  
Seymour Library [facility]  
Site of Martha & David Wright House [site]

## Pennsylvania

Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church [site]

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## Congratulations to...

**Washington Senior High School, Washington Court House, Ohio; The Bloomingburg Cemetery Trustees; and high school history teacher Paul LaRue**, honored with the *Save Our History Distinguished Leadership Award* by the History Channel for their project to compile a history of the cemetery, inventory veteran's headstones, complete a Network to Freedom application, apply for funds to purchase markers for unmarked graves, and develop a historical pamphlet. Kudos to Paul for his ongoing efforts to engage high school students in documenting local history.

Canon National Park Science Scholar **Daniel Sayers**, a student at the College of William and Mary, is researching the use of the Great Dismal Swamp by African American freedom seekers,

The **Catoctin Center for Regional Studies**, a Network to Freedom facility, received a National Endowment for the Humanities America's Historic Places grant for a broad, 2 year project about the Civil War era in the mid-Maryland region. Part of the project looks at African American issues, such as the Underground Railroad, John Brown's raid, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney and the Dred Scott case, and African American soldiers in the war. The Center will create a website, sponsor a conference, lecture series, and bus tours.

Congratulations to Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CUVA) Interpreter **Pamela Machuga**, the 2005 Midwest Region's Freeman Tilden Award winner. The annual Award, sponsored in partnership with the NPS and the National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA), recognizes outstanding contributions to the public through interpretation by a NPS employee. Ranger Machuga's program *Experience the Under-*

*ground Railroad* is a partnership between CUVA and Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad and is part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. Staged with the assistance of approximately 35 volunteers, the interactive program engages visitors in the role of escaping slaves. Throughout the program they meet first-person characters who provide a glimpse of the 1850s, hear a variety of opinions regarding slavery in Northeast Ohio, and experience the difficulties and dangers faced by escaping slaves. The program occurs the 1st and 2nd Saturday in November and has a capacity of 600 visitors. For more information call the park's visitor information, (800) 445-9667, or see [www.dayinthevalley.com](http://www.dayinthevalley.com).

# Candidates for Eleventh Round

The following candidates are being considered for inclusion in the Network to Freedom in the tenth round of applications. On March 15, 2006 from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, at the South Miami Community Center (305-668-7232), 5800 Southwest 66th Street, South Miami, Florida, the regional coordinator committee will review and vote on the applications listed below. The public is invited to attend. For further information or to comment on the applications, please consult the Network website at [www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr](http://www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr), or contact Diane Miller, National Park Service, 601 Riverfront Drive, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, or by phone at 402-661-1588.

## District of Columbia

- Southwest Heritage Trail Marker Detailing the Pearl Affair [site]

## Georgia

- Auburn Avenue Research Library [facility]

## Illinois

- Dr. Hiram Rutherford Home [site]
- Gillett House [site]

## Indiana

- Decatur County Courthouse [site]
- Dr. Samuel Tibbets Home site [site]
- "Freedom is my Home" [program]
- James Harrison Cravens House [site]
- Isaiah Walton Home site [site]
- Ohio & Mississippi Railroad [site]
- Ripley County Indiana's Underground Railroad Curriculum [program]
- Stephen S. Harding Houes [site]

## Indiana (continued)

- Union Freewill Baptist Church (1843-1914) [site]

## Iowa

- Iowa Freedom Trail Program—State Historical Society of Iowa [program]
- Theron Trowbridge Site [site]

## Maryland

- Burial Sites at Brooks United Methodist Church Cemetery [site]
- Finding a Way to Freedom [program]
- Gorsuch Tavern [site]
- Jane C. Sween Library, Montgomery County Historical Society [facility]
- Sandy Point Farm House [site]

## Nebraska

- Huston Russell Log Cabin and Cave [site]

## Nebraska (continued)

- Squire Kennedy Homestead Site [site]

## New York

- M'Clintock House [site] (Woman's Rights National Historical Park)
- Park Church [site]
- Thomas and Elizabeth James House [site]

## Pennsylvania

- Fair Hill Burial Ground [site]
- Grave of US Congressman Thaddeus Stevens [site]

## Virginia

- Juneteenth Theatre Company [program]

## Wisconsin

- Joshua Glover Monument/Cathedral Square [site]

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## Henry Bibb Trail

*(Continued from page 1)*

University and Parcs Canada, Canada became the first nation to recognize the life and accomplishments of the Bibbs, honoring them both as national Canadian heroes. The proposed Bibb Trail, initiated in Kentucky by historian and primary researcher, Ms. Diane Perrine-Coon, is supported by the Underground Railroad Institute, the Kentucky Heritage Council, and the Oldham County Historical Society. If successful, the proposed trail will encompass sites directly associated with the life of Henry Bibb and his successful escape to freedom. A member of Sandwich Baptist

Church, a stop on the Underground Railroad, Henry Bibb wrote his autobiography in 1849, five years prior to his death in 1854. His remains are buried in the community of Sandwich, his home.

## Niagara Movement Commemoration

The Niagara Movement, initiated by W.E.B. DuBois, was the cornerstone of the modern civil rights movement in America. From August 15-19, 1906, the Movement held its first public meeting on American soil at the campus of Storer College in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. This movement became the backbone of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

To commemorate this important movement, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park (NPS) is planning a curriculum guide, an academic symposium, and a weekend of public events, including a Youth Discovery Tent.

For information: [www.nps.gov/hafe/niagara](http://www.nps.gov/hafe/niagara)

## Historic Eleutherian College Named One of 11 Most Endangered

In June 2005, Historic Eleutherian College was named as one of the 11 Most Endangered Sites in the country by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. While inclusion on a list of endangered sites might seem a dubious distinction, it is an opportunity to bring nationwide attention to the significance of the site and its struggle for preservation. Eleutherian will not receive funds directly from the National Trust, but will receive technical assistance and will be included in a media blitz to promote the project through public service spots and the History Channel. Such nationwide publicity will hopefully result in making more grants and private donations available for restoration of this important site.



ard Moe, said in a press conference that "America's story isn't told only in skyscrapers and grand mansions. Though it's a modest structure, Eleutherian College is a major landmark in the history of education, the struggle for emancipation, and the epic story of the Underground Railroad. It needs to be fully restored so that new generations of Americans can visit it and be inspired by it."

President of the National Trust, Rich-

## Congratulations to New National Historic Landmark

Congratulations to Mount Pleasant Historic District in Ohio for being designated as a National Historic Landmark on April 5, 2005 by the Secretary of the Interior. The historic village of Mount Pleasant was established in 1803 by Robert Carothers, an Irishman from Virginia, and Jesse Thomas, a Quaker from North Carolina, and is important for the role it played in the antislavery movement and the Underground Railroad. Incorporated in 1814, the town became a center for pork packing and shipping and was especially successful in the milling industry. The strong Quaker population in Mt. Pleasant preached and practiced its abolitionist views and published anti-slavery literature, such as Benjamin Lundy's *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. A station on the Underground Railroad, the town was a refuge for fugitive slaves and a welcome home for free blacks. Local residents built and administered a school for free black children, and in 1848 established a Free Labor Store which sold no products that were produced by slave labor. Rice, for instance, was made by Quakers and cotton

was made by German immigrants, but nothing sold in the store was produced from the efforts of slavery. The store remained open until 1857. As an important station on the Underground Railroad and a distinct voice in the abolitionist sentiment, the village of Mount Pleasant played a vital role in the antislavery movement.



*The Village of Mt. Pleasant Historic District is located in Mt. Pleasant, Ohio and is roughly bounded by Third, North, High, and South Streets. While most of the buildings are private, the [Mt. Pleasant Historical Society](#) offers Underground Railroad walking tours which include tours of several houses within the district. Call 1-800-752-2631 for further information.*

## Announcements

### NTF Coordinator Changes

Northeast Coordinator Tara Morrison remains on a detail appointment. Sheri Jackson continues to cover daily operations with the Network to Freedom Program. Sheri may be reached at [sheri\\_jackson@nps.gov](mailto:sheri_jackson@nps.gov) or 215-597-7050.

### New Address for NTF Coordinator

National Capital Region Coordinator Jenny Masur has relocated to a new office. Her new contact information is:

Interpretation and Education  
National Capital Region  
National Park Service  
1100 Ohio Drive, SW  
Washington, DC 20242  
[Jenny\\_masur@nps.gov](mailto:Jenny_masur@nps.gov)  
202-619-7136 voice  
202-619-7159 fax

### Upcoming Conferences

Organization of American Historians/  
National Conference of Public Historians  
Joint Conference, April 19-22,  
2006, Washington, DC [http://  
www.oah.org/meetings/2006/](http://www.oah.org/meetings/2006/)

American Association of State and Local History, September 13-16, 2006, Phoenix, Arizona, [http://www.aaslh.org/  
anmeeting.htm](http://www.aaslh.org/anmeeting.htm)

Association for the Study of African American Life and History, September 27-October 1, 2006, Atlanta, Georgia, [http://  
www.asalhh.org/91stconvention.html](http://www.asalhh.org/91stconvention.html)

Oral History Association, October 25-29, 2006, Little Rock, Arkansas, [http://  
omega.dickinson.edu/organizations/oha/  
org\\_am\\_rock.html](http://omega.dickinson.edu/organizations/oha/org_am_rock.html)

National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference, October 31-November 5, 2006, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; for information on competitive scholarships to cover lodging and transportation, contact Jeffrey Harris at 202-588-6027 or [free\\_harris@nthp.org](mailto:free_harris@nthp.org)

### New Publication

DeRamus, Betty, *Forbidden Fruit: Love Stories from the Underground Railroad*, Atria Books; [bjderamus@aol.com](mailto:bjderamus@aol.com)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
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NATIONAL  
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD  
NETWORK TO FREEDOM

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

#### National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program Coordinators

**NOTE: New Address**  
National Park Service  
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Omaha, Nebraska 68102  
[www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr](http://www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr)

Diane Miller, **National**, [diane\\_miller@nps.gov](mailto:diane_miller@nps.gov)

James Hill, **Midwest**, [james\\_hill@nps.gov](mailto:james_hill@nps.gov)

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Sheri Jackson, **Northeast**, [sheri\\_jackson@nps.gov](mailto:sheri_jackson@nps.gov)

Barbara Tagger, **Southeast**,  
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Guy Washington, **Pacific West & Intermoun-  
tain**, [guy\\_washington@nps.gov](mailto:guy_washington@nps.gov)

## Underground Railroad Bicycle Course

Adventure Cycling Association (ACA) and the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Minority Health have joined together to develop a course from Mobile, Alabama to Owen Sound, Canada. This course follows lightly traveled back roads and bicycle paths for 2000 miles following the Tombigbee River, the Tennessee River, the Ohio River, through central Ohio, along the southern shore of Lake Erie, crossing into Canada at Niagara Falls, and then across Ontario to Owen Sound.

The ACA is developing maps of the course, to be published by Spring 2007. The ACA, a non-profit organization will conduct the first organized tour along the length of the Underground Railroad bicycle course.

To share your ideas or information about sites along the route, see [www.adventurecycling.org/forums](http://www.adventurecycling.org/forums). For more information, please contact Ginny

Sullivan, Adventure Cycling Association, at [gsullivan@adventurecycling.org](mailto:gsullivan@adventurecycling.org).

### Contribute to the Newsletter

Please forward notices, items of interest, articles, or topic suggestions for consideration to Diane Miller at NPS, 601 Riverfront Dr., Omaha, Nebraska 68102 or at [diane\\_miller@nps.gov](mailto:diane_miller@nps.gov).