



**Freedom Trails at the Crossroads: Paths to Telling
the Underground Railroad Story through
History, Teaching, and Technology**
September 16-19, 2009
Indianapolis, IN

Conference Agenda

Wednesday, September 16

- 9:00 am-4:00 pm** **Pre-Conference Northern Route Underground Railroad Tour**
This tour will include visits to historic Underground Railroad sites and other points of interest in Northeastern Indiana. The tour will include a visit to the home of abolitionists, Levi and Catherine Coffin in Fountain City (Newport), Indiana. Their home was referred to as the Grand Central Station of the Underground Railroad and is now a National Historic Landmark. The tour will also visit African American Settlements that date back to the early half of the 19th century in Randolph County Indiana and Darke County Ohio. Early residents of the settlements purchased thousands of acres of land and established two churches and four schools. Residents were also active in the Underground Railroad and fought in the Civil War. These rural communities are home to two Network to Freedom sites, the James Clemens farmstead, who was one of the founding members of the settlements and the Union Literary Institute founded in 1845 by Free Blacks and Anti-Slavery Quakers.
- 5:00-6:00 pm** **Registration**
- 6:00-8:00 pm** **Friends of the Network to Freedom Reception**

Thursday, September 17

- 7:30 am** **Registration**
- 8:00-9:30 am** **Meeting of the Friends of the Network to Freedom Association and Breakfast**
- 10:00-11:45 am** **Opening Ceremony and Keynote**
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Keith Griffler
"Escaping the Land of the Free: History, Myth, and the Meaning of the Underground Railroad"
- Dr. Keith Griffler is Chair of the Department of African American Studies at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York. His most recent book is Front Line of Freedom: African Americans and the Forging of the Underground Railroad in the Ohio Valley. He also co-wrote, co-produced and co-directed a historical documentary short, "Wade in the Water," which looks at the journeys of fugitive slaves traveling through the Ohio Valley.
- 12:00-1:30 pm** **Lunch**

1:45-3:30 pm

Session 1- Myths and Realities of the Underground Railroad: Evaluating and Re-Evaluating Definitions and Histories of the Underground Railroad

Moderator: Dr. Keith Griffler, Chair of the Department of African American Studies at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York

Panelists:

- Mr. Tom Calarco, Independent Scholar (Cincinnati, OH)- “Who Got It Right: Siebert or Gara? A consideration of current revisionist history of the Underground Railroad”
- Dr. Larry Gara, Professor Emeritus-Wilmington College (Wilmington, OH), “Another Look at the Underground Railroad”
- Dr. Kate Clifford Larson, Simmons College (Boston, MA)- “Long Lost Legends, Myths and Fakelore of the UGRR”
- Ms. Susan Cook Soderberg, Free-Lance Writer and Public Historian (Germantown, MD)- “Quilts on the Underground Railroad: Message or Myth”

3:45-5:15 pm

Session 2- America’s Historic Sacred Places: Centers for Freedom and Economic Justice

Join Elizabeth Ann Terry, Director of Training for Partners for Sacred Places and The Rev. James M. Moody, Sr., Pastor of Quinn Chapel A. M. E. Church in Chicago to learn more about the *New Dollars/New Partners for Your Sacred Place* and the role that America’s sacred places played in the road to freedom. This interactive session will highlight the stories of two such congregations: Chicago’s Quinn Chapel A. M. E. and the Menallen Monthly Meeting in rural Pennsylvania. This session is ideal for those interested in telling the story of congregational and community connections, the role of sacred places in the movement for social and economic justice, and the role of sacred places in heritage tourism.

Session 3- Hoosier Women and the Fight for Freedom

Moderator: Dr. Veta Tucker, Director of the Kutsche Office of Local History and Associate Professor of English at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids (Allendale), Michigan

Panelists:

- Ms. Kendra Clauser, Project Coordinator, Teaching American History, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis- “‘Tho’ We are Deprived of the Privilege of Suffrage’: The Henry County Female Anti-Slavery Society Records, 1841-1849”
- Ms. Dani Pfaff, Research Manager, Indiana Historical Bureau- “Slavery in Indiana”
- Ms. Jeannie Regan-Dinius, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology- “Women and the Underground Railroad in Indiana”

6:30-8:30 pm

Dinner Theater by Freetown Village “A Matter of Justice”

Set in 1870, Freetown Village school teacher Matilda Addison, invites a friend to assist her with a presentation to her students. Matilda wants to educate her students about the Indiana judicial system and its relationship to African Americans. John Freeman, a wealthy African American man living in Indianapolis, was falsely accused of being a run-away slave from Kentucky. With the help of her students, they recreate the cases of Freeman v. Ellington and

Freeman v. Robinson in which an African American man filed suit against his white accusers.

The interest of Freetown Village residents in the judicial system has been generated by two events. Four black men were the first to serve on a jury in Indianapolis and the 15th Amendment was passed which allowed African American males the right to vote. Each of these events has sparked in Freetown Village residents the fervent hope that freedom and justice for all Americans as promised in the U.S. Constitution has finally come.

About the Artists

Freetown Village was organized in 1982 and has been touring since 1985 reaching audiences of approximately 50,000 people annually through touring programs. The troupe consists of approximately six actors who play different characters performing in a variety of programs. Touring theatrical performances are usually conducted by one to three actors. The actors are trained in history, costume and theater in order to accurately portray composites of the 3,000 black men, women, and children who lived in Indianapolis in 1870. Each script is researched in order to accurately bring history to life. Educational guides are available upon request.

Friday, September 18

8:00 am Registration

9:00 am-12:15 pm Historical Re-Enactor Workshop

(Limited Seating and Pre-Registration Required)

Historical re-enactments are becoming increasingly vital to the preservation and dissemination of the history of the Underground Railroad. Schools, museums, historic sites, tourist attractions and others utilize the skills of historical re-enactors to make the past come alive. This workshop consists of two interactive professional development sessions. In the first session, local, regional and national organizations will share their expertise regarding the “business” of living history. They will discuss creating a living history experience, audience identification and development, marketing trends, and industry standards. In the second session, panelists will highlight the importance of authenticity to first-person character interpretation through research, script writing, and costume development. Participants must pre-register for this workshop as seating is limited.

Session 1 (9:00-10:30 am)- The Business of Living History

Moderator:

Panelists:

- Ms. Michelle Evans, Guest Experience Manager, Conner Prairie Museum
- Mr. Rodney Lomax, Community Affairs & Cultural Initiatives Marketing Director, Indiana State Museums and Historic Sites
- Mr. Don Wollenhaupt, National Park Service, Southeast Region, Chief of Interpretation

Session 2 (10:45 am-12:15 pm)- History Comes Alive

Moderator: Ms Deborah Asante, Founder and Artistic Director of the Asante Children's Theatre

Panelists:

- Ms. Charlotte A. Battin, Actress, Dancer, Choreographer, Model and Play Director "Freedom is My Home"
- Ms. Eunice Brewer-Trotter, Editor, The Indianapolis Star and Ms. Ethel Brewer-McCane, Director, Praise Stage Production Theatre Company – "The Mary Bateman Clark Story"
- Mr. Bryan Prince and Mrs. Shannon Prince, Buxton National Historic Site & Museum- "A Shadow on the Household"

9:00-10:30 am

Session 4- Community Partnerships and Telling the Story of the Underground Railroad at a Crossroads of the Ohio Valley

Moderator: Mr. Peter Morrin, Executive-in-Residence and Coordinator, Arts and Culture Partnerships Initiative, University of Louisville

Panelists:

- Dr. A. Glenn Crothers, Associate Professor of History, University of Louisville
- Ms. Sally Newkirk, Director, Carnegie Center for Art and History (New Albany, Indiana)
- Dr. Carol Ely, Executive Director, Historic Locust Grove

Session 5- Indiana Quakers, Black Migration to the Midwest, Race, and Law to 1865

Moderator: Wilma Moore, Senior Archivist, African American History at the Indiana Historical Society

Panelists:

- Dr. Thomas Hamm, Department of History, Friends Collection & College Archives, Earlham College (Richmond, IN)
- Ms. Vanessa Julye, Friends General Conference (Philadelphia, PA)
- Ms. Donna McDaniel, Independent Author (Southborough, MA)

10:45 am-12:15 pm

Session 6- Documenting Legal and Geographical Routes to Freedom

Moderator:

Panelists:

- Dr. J. Mike Crane, Lecturer, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater- "The Geography and Modes of Escape from Slavery in the Lower Ohio River Valley"
- Dr. Jason Lantzer, Adjunct Faculty, Butler University- "Escaped Slaves and the Federal Courts: The Cases of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania"
- Dr. Kathleen G. Velsor, Director of the Underground Teaching Partnership and Associate Professor, SUNY College at Old Westbury- "Sketch of the Life and Labors of Rev. Henry Highland Garnet' a Second Look"

Session 7- Rebellion, Revolt, and Insurrection: Violence in the Service of Freedom

Moderator: Stephen E. Towne, Associate University Archivist, Indiana University-Purdue University, Special Collections and Archives

Panelists:

- Mr. David S. Dreyer, Friends of the Forks of the Road Society, Inc.; Indiana African American Genealogy Group; Sheridan Historical Society (Natchez, MS)- "George Boxley: From Spotsylvania Co. VA to Sheridan, Indiana"
- Dr. Debian Marty, Associate Professor of Communication Ethics and Chair of the Philosophy, Pre-Law and Peace Studies Department, California State University Monterey Bay- "Looking for William Jones of the 1847 Kentucky Raid: White Abolitionist and Underground Railroad Conductor"
- Dr. McKivigan, Mary O'Brien Gibson Professor of History and the editor of The Frederick Douglass Papers, Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis- "John Brown, Harpers Ferry, and the Underground Railroad"

12:30-1:30 pm

Lunch

1:45-2:45pm

Keynote: Dr. Margaret Washington

"Sojourner Truth and Freedom Pathways"

Dr. Margaret Washington is a professor of history at Cornell University. Her most recent major work is *Sojourner Truth's America*, published in 2009 with the University of Illinois Press. This definitive biography unravels Sojourner Truth's world within the broader panorama of American history, slavery, the black freedom struggle and other significant reforms in the turbulent era of Abraham Lincoln. She has served on the New York State Humanities Council, NEH media panels, and presently serves on the board of advisors of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. Professor Washington is a frequent advisor and consultant on PBS films, including the award-winning series, "Africans in America," and the Sundance award-winning feature film, "Daughters of the Dust."

3:00-4:30 pm

Session 8- Digging for Freedom: Archaeology and the Underground Railroad

Moderator: Dr. Cheryl LaRoche, Historical and Archaeological Consultant

Panelists:

- Mr. Douglass Jones, Archaeologist and Review and Compliance Manager for State Historic Preservation Office, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs "Archaeological Investigations at Underground Railroad Sites in Iowa"
- Mr. Lewis Jones, PhD Student, Indiana University, Bloomington
- Dr. Paul R. Mullins, Associate Professor and Chair of Anthropology at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis

Session 9- Education, Religion, and the Underground Railroad Moderator: Dr. Louis Holtzclaw, Dean, School for Adult Learning, Indiana University (Retired)
Panelists:

- Mr. Owen W. Muelder, Galesburg Colony Underground Railroad Freedom Center at Knox College (Galesburg, IL)- “Reverend Samuel G. Wright - Western Illinois UGRR Conductor”
- Ms. Peggy Seigel, Board Member, Allen County Fort Wayne Historical Society; African/African American Historical Society of Fort Wayne- “Religious Leaders in the struggle Against Slavery”
- Mr. Roane Smothers, Union Literary Institute- “Union Literary Institute, Pre-Civil War African American Settlements”

Session 10- The Atlantic Slave Trade Database
(Limited Seating and Pre-Registration Required)

Dr. David Eltis will provide a workshop on using the web version of "The Transatlantic Slave Trade" database. The database comprising 35,000 slave trade voyages between 1526 and 1866 allows the construction of a revised 350-year profile of the slave trade. Participants must pre-register for this session as seating is limited and must provide their own laptop with wireless internet capabilities.

Dr. Eltis is the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of History at Emory University. His research interests are the early modern Atlantic World, slavery, and migration- both coerced and free. He is the author of *Economic Growth and The Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New York, Oxford Univ. Press, 1987) which won the British Trevor Reese Memorial Prize, and *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000). He is currently at work on a census of the Atlantic slave trade, a book on slave ship revolts, an analysis of the identity of captive Africans put on board slave ships, and is co-editing the *Cambridge World History of Slavery*.

6:00-9:00 pm

Experience Indianapolis- Indianapolis Downtown Walking Tour

Walking along the Central Canal and nearby Indiana Avenue, participants will see significant buildings and sites relating to the early history of African Americans in Indianapolis, ranging from the late 1830s to 1930s. Kisha Tandy, Assistant Curator of Social History at the Indiana State Museum, will narrate the history of this west side African American neighborhood. The 10 block walking tour will begin at the restored headquarters (Williamson Center) of the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana with light refreshments, hosted by the African American Landmarks Committee and end at Buggs Temple, a former church associated with African American history and culture from the late 1800s through mid-1900s. Today, the restored building houses two restaurants, the Creation Café and Euphoria (<http://www.indycanal.com>), where participants will be able to dine on their own at the end of our tour. Other sites included on the tour include the Madame C. J. Walker Building and the Ransom Place. The tour includes roundtrip transportation to and from downtown Indianapolis.

Saturday, September 19

8:30 am-4:30 pm

Post-Conference Southern Route Underground Railroad Tour

Step back in time to discover Southern Indiana's Underground Railroad heritage by visiting Lancaster and Madison Indiana. Located on the Ohio River, an active crossing point for freedom seekers fleeing the bondage of slavery, the area has long been recognized for its wealth of history, landmark architecture and historic preservation. Participants will tour the Historic Eleutherian College, a designated Civil War site, founded in 1848 by anti-slavery advocates to educate students without regards to race or gender. The tour will also include a visit to the Georgetown District, site of a Free Black Community and other points of interest.