



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Independence National
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Seizing Freedom New NPS Exhibit on the Underground Railroad

Independence National Historical Park (INHP) tells many true stories about liberty and equality in our new nation. Opening on July 3, 2009, in the Independence Visitor Center, a new National Park Service exhibit, *Seizing Freedom*, will tell the story of the Underground Railroad in Philadelphia and how many slaves gained their liberty through their own efforts. The Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be held on **Friday, July 3, 2009, at 5:30pm, in the Independence Visitor Center.**

In an exciting complement to the new exhibit, Independence NHP is now making available the re-print of Absalom Jones and Richard Allen's "Narrative." This pamphlet, first published in 1794, is one of the first publications in America produced by African Americans. It reveals a compelling account of the role played by black citizens during the yellow fever epidemic that ravaged Philadelphia in 1793. This republished booklet is available only at the Pemberton House Bookstore located at 316 Chestnut Street.

This new exhibit reminds us that Independence Hall was not only where the Declaration of Independence was signed, but also the location of fugitive slave trials to free or deny liberty to African Americans. The exhibit also highlights some of the organizations, people, and places which played an important role in the Underground Railroad in Philadelphia. Neither a railroad nor underground the Underground Railroad is the name given to the many ways that enslaved African Americans escaped slavery. Often operating without organization, many people, both black and white, helped enslaved African Americans seize their freedom. Philadelphians played a vital role in this national movement.

This exhibit will remain on display in the Independence Visitor Center for one year and then be permanently relocated to park classrooms for use with school groups. The park currently offers outdoor walking tours that focus upon the Underground Railroad for school groups.

This exhibit has been funded in part by the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom and the William Penn Foundation. More information about the Underground Railroad is available at the Network to Freedom website, <http://home.nps.gov/ugrr>. More information about Independence NHP's Underground Railroad programs is available at www.nps.gov/inde.

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