

# The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program

National Capital Region

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Washington, D.C.



## THE CONDUCTOR

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

Summer 2007 Issue no. 21

After being offline for a short period, the resurrected website for the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom returns:

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr>



Coming soon to your web screen: the Network to Freedom has begun a project to contribute to the National Park Service WebRangers website.

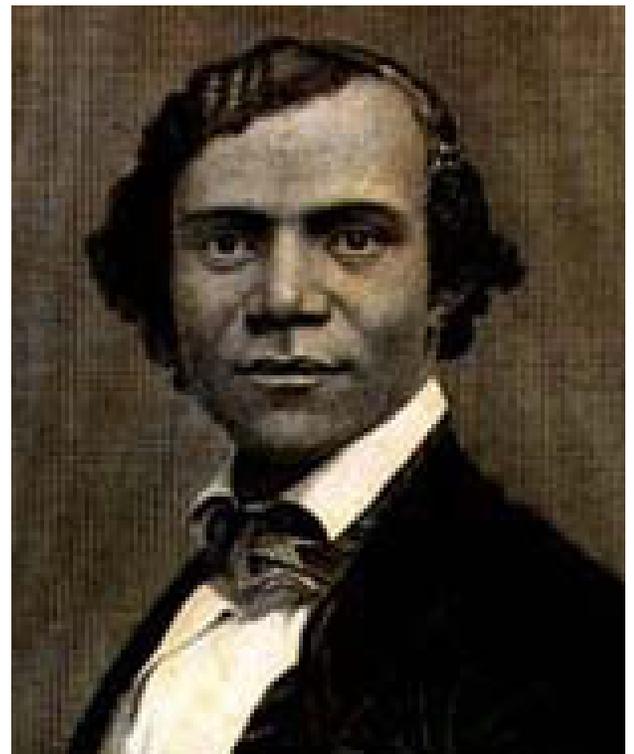


## News from the Network to Freedom

The next public review of nominations will be held on September 12, 2007, in Georgetown, KY to kick off the Friends of the Network to Freedom Association Conference held on September 10-15, 2007. "Looking Back, Moving Forward," will be held by the new Friends of Underground Railroad in conjunction with the Network to Freedom at the Underground Railroad Research Institute at Georgetown College. Featured speakers will be Bob Stanton, Steven Marc, creator of Underground Railroad photo collages, and Queen Quet, Chieftess of the Gullah/Gee Chee Nation. There will be two days of pre-conference tours.

The NTF Application Review meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 12, 2007, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., at the Thomas and King Conference Center, Georgetown College campus. As part of the week long conference, the NTF Staff will host the NTF Application Workshop, Thursday, September 13, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon. Those unable to attend the conference who want application information, may contact [jenny\\_masur@nps.gov](mailto:jenny_masur@nps.gov).

On Saturday morning, there will be a post-conference session for members of the Friends of the Network Association. The group is still actively recruiting members.



Henry Bibb, a Kentucky freedom seeker.

# National

## Robert Smalls Remembered

On Monday, May 14, 2007, a ceremony was held at Fort Moultrie (part of Fort Sumter NM, South Carolina) to commemorate the 145th anniversary of Robert Smalls' daring escape from Charleston harbor. Dr. Andrew Billingsley, author of the recent Yearning to Breathe Free: Robert Smalls of South Carolina and His Families spoke at the ceremony.

On May 13, 1862, Smalls, a 23-year-old enslaved pilot, and eight of the crew, commandeered the *Planter*, a Confederate transport steamer. On board were Small's wife, children, and 12 other freedom seekers; the ship bypassed the rebel forts in the harbor, and sailed to the nearest Union vessel to surrender. Smalls became the first black captain of a US vessel, and a South Carolina legislator and militia brigadier general. He served five terms in the US Congress. For nearly 20 years he was US Collector of Customs in Beaufort, South Carolina, where he lived as owner of the house in which he had been enslaved.



Robert Smalls

---

## Network Bill

U.S. Senator Joe Biden. (D-DE) introduced the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Reauthorization Act of 2007. The legislation will raise the authorized level of funding for the program from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million (including the originally mandated annual funding for community grants). Recent National Park Service financial estimates have shown the future of the Network in great risk, as it will have a funding shortfall of over 79 percent by the year 2011 if no action is taken. Sen. Biden was joined by Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) and eight Senate co-sponsors in introducing the bill. This bill has already been introduced in the House of Representatives by Reps. Mike Castle (R-DE) and Alcee Hastings (D-FL),

## History Day

This year the White House Visitor Center, as in previous years, hosted an event highlighting the achievements of students participating in National History Day. It is an annual competition designed to inspire teaching and learning of US history. Since 1974, the competition has sponsored regional, state, and national contests for projects submitted by students in grades 6-12. Contestants conduct extensive research related to a general annual theme, and present their findings in one of the following categories: exhibits, documentaries, performances, or papers. Students thus develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students participate individually or as part of a group of up to five students. Students from public, private and home schools may participate. National awards are lucrative – up to \$5,000 and university scholarships. The finals are held locally.

# National Adventure Cycling

After three years of research and planning, Adventure Cycling Association, North America’s largest bicycling organization, and the University of Pittsburgh’s Center for Minority Health are inaugurating a 2,000 mile Underground Railroad Bicycle Route. The new route will introduce people of all cultural backgrounds to the adventure and health benefits of bicycle travel. Maps for the route steer cyclists along low-traffic roads, and feature elevation profiles, historical notes, and information on camping, lodging, and worthwhile historical sites along the way.



While freedom seekers took no one route, the cycling group chose a route representative of the journey that would also pass through areas of historic significance. Mobile, Alabama, was chosen as a starting point because it served as an entry point for slave ships. The end point, Owen Sound, Ontario, Canada, on Lake Huron’s Georgian Bay, was home to blacks escaping Civil War-era enslavement.

The route winds north through river valleys, small towns, and wildlife refuges to Kentucky and Ohio, before reaching Lake Erie, Niagara Falls, and Owen Sound on Lake Huron’s Georgian Bay. Maps can be viewed at [www.adventurecycling.org/routes/undergroundrailroad.cfm](http://www.adventurecycling.org/routes/undergroundrailroad.cfm). One upcoming tour, from the Peace Bridge into Canada, past Niagara Falls, follows Lake Ontario. The initiating riders are designed to arrive in time for the 145th Emancipation Celebration at Owen Sound in August 2007. The cyclists will be featured guests at the weekend event consisting of a parade, live music, speakers, arts and crafts, food vendors, story telling, and gospel singing. See [www.adventurecycling.org/tours/2007ugrrcelebration.cfm](http://www.adventurecycling.org/tours/2007ugrrcelebration.cfm).

.....

# Museum Closes

The Maryland Historical Society (MHS) has announced the closure of a site on the Network to Freedom. The “President Street Station,” run as the Baltimore Civil War Museum, will no longer be open to the public starting September 1, 2007. Freedom seekers such as Frederick Douglass, Henry “Box” Brown, and William and Ellen Craft passed through President Street Station. The closure of the Civil War Museum, along with the Maritime Museum, will save MHS about \$50,000 a year in a move to counter the current annual deficit. MHS has approached the B&O Railroad Museum in hopes that it will wish to take over the Civil War Museum.



## Library Fire

On April 30, the Georgetown Branch Library, Wisconsin & R Streets in northwest DC, was hit by a three-alarm fire that destroyed the roof and most of the second floor, the location of the Peabody Room. The Peabody Room's unique collection begun 140 years ago, included priceless historical documents, photos, files on Georgetown properties, maps and paintings. Of note were a rare map of Civil War fortifications and an 1822 portrait of Moslem bondsman Yarrow Mamout. Rescued items suffer from fire, smoke and especially water damage. Fifty boxes from Peabody Room were rushed into a tractor-trailer freezer truck to prevent mold and moved to Ft. Worth, Texas. The branch had no sprinklers, and two of the fire hydrants closest to the library did not work. Rebuilding the public library could cost between \$15 million and \$20 million, a sum promised by DC Mayor Adrian Fenty. Archivist Jerry McCoy had warned authorities of fire hazard at the Peabody Room and he predicts that it will take time and money to set up the remnants in the Washingtoniana Division at Martin Luther King Library.

---

## Grimes Plaque at GWU

On July 18, 2007, Underground Railroad Conductor Leonard Grimes was honored by a plaque dedicated on the campus of George Washington University. Through the efforts of retired Ambassador Ronald Palmer and staff at the university, Leonard Grimes received his due at the site of his former property at 22nd and H Streets, NW, Washington, DC. Leonard Grimes was a free African American from Leesburg, Virginia, who ran a hack business in Washington. He was caught with an enslaved family in his carriage, and was convicted as an accomplice in their flight and sentenced to the Virginia penitentiary. After release he and his family moved to Massachusetts where he continued to act on behalf of those accused of being "fugitive slaves," subject to return to enslavement under the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law.

Harriet Tubman




---

## Educational Award

The Harriet Tubman/Underground Railroad Interpretive Project has been selected to receive the Maryland Historical Trust's 2007 Educational Excellence Award. The awards ceremony was held on Friday, June 1, 2007, at Washington College in Chestertown as part of Preservation Maryland's Annual Preservation & Revitalization Conference. This project, implemented in two phases, publicizes the inspiring story of the Underground Railroad and its famous conductor Harriet Tubman. The project consists of three parts: a 105-mile self-guided driving tour called "Finding a Way to Freedom;" three indoor exhibits at visitor entry points to the Underground Railroad Scenic Byway in Dorchester and Caroline Counties; and four roadside signs. This project has been the springboard for other related initiatives.



Civil War era photograph of contrabands.

## History Corner

### A Regular Slave Hunt

Perhaps as many as several hundred free blacks and contrabands—men, women, and children—were seized by the Army of Northern Virginia during the Gettysburg Campaign and were enslaved. A dramatic instance occurred in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, a farming community of thirteen hundred people in Franklin County, Pennsylvania.

By the outbreak of the Civil War, free blacks had been living in this area in the path of Lee's invasion for several generations. The 1860 census listed 1,738 blacks and mulattos living in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, working as small farmers, craftsmen, and laborers. State law provided that bondsmen escaping into the state were to become free so the area became a haven for freedom seekers. Franklin County lay by the slave state of Maryland and its southwest corner is just six miles from the Potomac River and Virginia.

The June 22, 1863, entry in the diary of Charles Hartman, a member of Greencastle, Pennsylvania Town Council, recorded, "One of the exciting features of the day was the scouring of the fields about town and searching of houses for negroes [sic]. These poor creatures, those of them who had not fled upon the approach of the foe, concealed in wheat fields about the town. Cavalrymen rode in search of them and many of them were caught after a desperate chase and being

fired at." On the afternoon of June 16 thirty to forty African-American women and children, taken at Chambersburg, were brought to Greencastle in wagons headed for Virginia. In charge of them were a Confederate chaplain and four soldiers. As they came through town the rebels were disarmed by a band of citizens, apparently led by Tom Pawling, the owner of Antrim House and a militant abolitionist. The women and children were freed, but the rebel chaplain demanded reparations of \$25,000, threatening to burn the town if not paid. The citizens had no means to pay this ransom and stood fast in the face of the threats. When the ultimatum's deadline passed, the town remained standing and the angry Southern clergyman departed without his "slaves."

By Ted Alexander, Excerpted with permission from *North & South*, Volume 4, #7, September 2001.

## Valuable Information

- Cornell University Library has announced that there is now a Friend of Man website containing valuable information about the early Abolitionist movement at <http://cdsun.library.cornell.edu/collect/FOM/index.html>.
- A report on “Bank of America Predecessor Institutions Research Regarding Slavery and the Slave Trade,” Aug. 4, 2005, by Heritage Research Center, Ltd., includes a chapter on two Baltimore banks and one in DC. See <http://www.heritageresearch.com/BofAReport.htm>.
- For the story of John Horse and the Black Seminoles, the “First Black Rebels to Beat American Slavery,” see <http://johnhorse.com/>.
- The Library of Congress has a wealth of resources. Visit “From Slavery to Freedom: The African-American Pamphlet Collection, 1822-1909” at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaphtml/aapchome.html>. Also check out the American Memory Map Collection which has everything from a DC map (1791) to Civil War maps. The maps are downloadable; most are poster-sized, but can be resized.
- NPS has posted: “Fugitives from Injustice: Freedom Seeking Slaves in Arkansas, 1800-1869” on [http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/ugrr/arkansas/arkansas.pdf](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/ugrr/arkansas/arkansas.pdf); “Slavery and the Underground Railroad at the Eppes Plantations, Petersburg National Battlefield,” on [http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/pete/ugrr.pdf](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/pete/ugrr.pdf) “Researching and Interpreting the Underground Railroad” on [http://www.cr.nps.gov/historyonline\\_books/ugrr/exugrr1.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/historyonline_books/ugrr/exugrr1.htm).
- “Chronicling America” Site -- About 310,000 digitized US newspaper pages (1900 to 1910) are accessible through [www.loc.gov/chroniclingamerica](http://www.loc.gov/chroniclingamerica). The coverage will be expanded to 1880-1910 and there will be a searchable database of US newspapers, with select digitization of historic pages, and with information about newspapers permanently maintained at the Library of Congress.

## Grants

- EMC Heritage Trust Project awards cash grants from \$5,000-15,000. Local efforts supported include those that contribute to the digital curation and stewardship of local libraries, museums, or historical society collections and records of local cultural or educational institutions and businesses. Application form at [http://www.emc.com/about/destination/information\\_heritage/heritage\\_trust](http://www.emc.com/about/destination/information_heritage/heritage_trust). Deadline is November 30, 2007.
- The Humanities Council, Washington, DC, requests proposals, for example, for a neighborhood historical resource center or a community oral history project. See <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) on a rolling basis, once submitted 6 weeks ahead of proposed project activities. See <http://www.mdh.org/grants>.

**100 DOLLARS  
REWARD.**

Run away from the subscriber living in Rockville, on  
the night of Monday, the 11th inst. Negro Man,

**TOM HOBAN.**

HOBAN is about 27 years old, of dark complexion, about  
5 feet 10 inches high, answers bluntly when spoken to;  
when he left, drab furred cloth coat and pants-  
s, and black wool hat. He had considerable clothing-  
les, both winter and summer, which he might have  
on. He has a wife about five miles below Rockville  
near Washington turnpike, and is well acquainted in  
Baltimore city.

Will give \$25, if he is taken in the County; \$50 if  
taken in the District of Columbia, or \$100 if taken in  
any of the free States and delivered to me in Rockville.

**JOHN W. ANDERSON.**

Rockville, Montgomery co., Md.

June 13, 1855.

# Announcements & Calendar Events

## Opportunities

### EVENTS

- Sept. 28-30, 2007, Rochester, NY, Frederick Douglass International Underground Railroad Conference which will illuminate stories and people that cross state and national borders and focus on the central role western New York played in the UGRR.
- Oct. 3-7, 2007, Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)'s 92nd Annual Convention, Charlotte, NC, will honor Dr. John Hope Franklin on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the publication of *From Slavery to Freedom*.
- Sept 27-29, 2007, Maryland African American Heritage Preservation Conference "Understanding the Roots of Building Historically Black Communities," Frederick Community College, Frederick, MD. Pre-register by Sept. 17, 2007, through Anita Neal Powell 301-251-2747) or Dean Herrin (301-624-2773) or [lincolnparkhist@aol.com](mailto:lincolnparkhist@aol.com) or visit the web: [www.aapc-md.org](http://www.aapc-md.org).
- Oct. 2-6, 2007, St. Paul, MN, National Trust for Historic Preservation conference.

### MISC

- The third Virginia Forum will convene at the University of Mary Washington, in Fredericksburg, April 11-12, 2008. The VA Forum welcomes proposals for presentations on all topics in VA history. The committee welcomes proposals for individual papers or complete panel sessions, etc. Send a one-page proposal and a one-page vita of the presenter(s) to Dr. Anthony Parent, Department of History, Wake Forest University at [parentas@wfu.edu](mailto:parentas@wfu.edu) by Sept. 28, 2007.
- Visit "At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland" through Oct. 28, 2007, at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture and the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. See <http://www.africanamericanculture.org>
- Encyclopedia Virginia (EV), an online multi-year project, is to debut in 2008, with new sections released every six months; the first iteration of EV will be cover Literature, 20th century History, Business & Industry, and Geography. Entries will run 500-3,000 words. Contributors will receive authorial credit and an honorarium. Contact Karen Wikander at [kwikander@virginia.edu](mailto:kwikander@virginia.edu). Encyclopedia Virginia or VA Foundation for the Humanities, 145 Ednam Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22903.
- For copies of Maryland's "The Underground Railroad: Maryland's Network to Freedom," e-mail or call Cristal Barnett at [cbarnett@choosemaryland.org](mailto:cbarnett@choosemaryland.org) or (410) 767-6278.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Capital Region  
1100 Ohio Drive SW  
Washington, DC20242

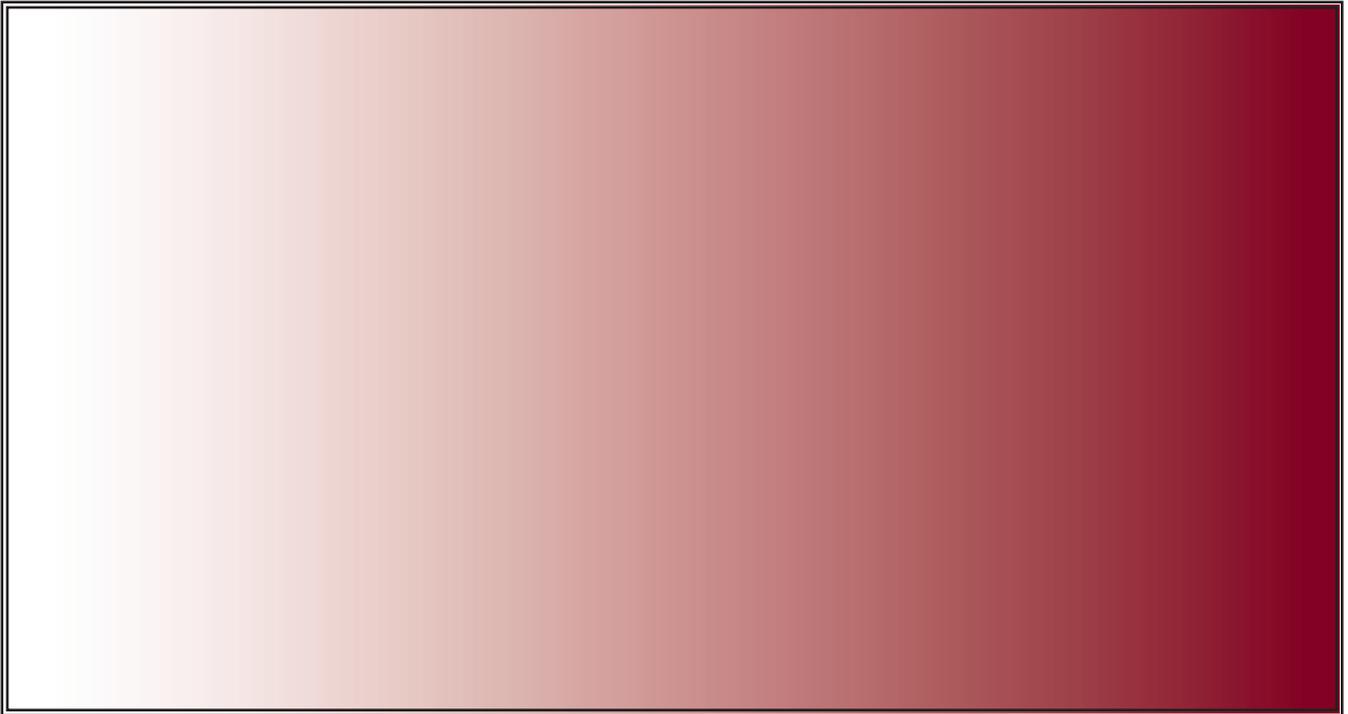


NATIONAL  
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD  
NETWORK TO FREEDOM

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.

Jenny Masur, Editor  
Network to Freedom Manager

Comments? Please send to:  
Jenny Masur, [Jenny\\_Masur@nps.gov](mailto:Jenny_Masur@nps.gov)



[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

[www.nps.gov/ugrr](http://www.nps.gov/ugrr)