

Volume XI, No. 2

The Freedom Seeker

Summer, 2014

The Myers Residence - a Great Place to Be

Paul Stewart, Scholar-in-Residence at Russell Sage College, and Co-Founder, URHPCR, Inc.

If you're looking for an educational, exciting, and inspiring activity come visit The Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence. Groups and individuals have visited The Myers Residence as visitors, volunteers, for meetings, or to engage in activities. These visits and meetings take place despite the fact that the restoration of the building is far from complete. The Myers historic site draws people because of its special significance as a well-documented site of national significance. The site is on the National Register of Historic Places, the NYS Underground Railroad Freedom Trail and the National



Network to Freedom of the National Park Service. In the month of May 2014 alone, Young Abolitionists have met at the residence twice, members of the Hudson Mohawk Appalachian Mountain Club have come to work in laying out a

Most of their meetings and activities have been in or around The Myers Residence.

The Hudson Mohawk Appalachian Mountain Club volunteered to help Underground Railroad History Project upgrade the trail that cuts across the properties associated with The Myers Residence. The Myers Residence properties



include more than just the building of the Myers Residence. URHPCR owns six property lots adjacent to and near The Myers Residence. The other lots variously include one that was once lived on by Abram Johnson, Harriet Myers' father, and one lived on by Dr. Thomas Elkins, another key abolition activist. Several other lots



support the work of The Myers Residence in various ways. Combined with other volunteers and members of URHPCR, some twenty people helped upgrade and expand the trail between Third Street and Livingston Avenue that stretches across the Abram Johnson Garden.

Young Abolitionists, a project of Underground Railroad History Project, is a group of teens who meet in celebration of the abolitionist history of our community

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and its connection with today. Eight to twelve teens from a variety of area schools have met regularly for the past three years. They have studied abolitionist history, done grounds work, created fundraisers, gone on fieldtrips, produced educational programs, and re-enacted characters from the 19th century.

Staff, volunteers and friends of the Martin Van Buren Historic Site recently visited The Myers Residence to look at what a site in development was like and to learn how URHPCR interprets the Underground Railroad history of the site. It was an opportunity for networking and exploring important features of the Myers Site story.



History Day this year was May 4th and, as (Cont'd. on p. 2)



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The Freedom Seeker is a publication of Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc., a non-profit corporation dedicated to promoting knowledge of the 19th century Underground Railroad Movement and its legacy in the Capital Region, in New York State, and in the United States. This newsletter is published three times a year.

Editorial inquiries can be sent to
info@undergroundrailroadhistory.org

The Myers Residence (cont'd)

part of the History Day program at the Albany County Historical Society, 40 people came up to visit The Myers Residence. Spending time both outside and inside The Residence, where they could hear the story and



be in the place where important history took place, the visitors heard about the Myers family, the neighborhood, the Underground Railroad and the stories of freedom seekers (fugitives from enslavement) who were referred to the Myers Residence from points south.

In addition to these many visitors The Myers Residence hosts an annual 4th of July Celebration, is a stop on the National Park Service Passageways program, hosts a summer program with as many as 40 teens who work and learn, hosts archeology programs, and is the location of many other meetings, occasional fund raisers and open houses. If you're looking for a place to spend some time related to an exciting history, visit The Myers Residence.



July 4, 2014
11am - 1pm

What to the Slave is your Fourth of July?

The Stephen and Harriet Myers
Residence
194 Livingston Ave.
Albany, NY

Underground Railroad History Project
www.undergroundrailroadhistory.org

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Alice Green, Founder and Executive
Director, Center for Law and Justice

*Slavery by Another Name: Mass
Incarceration In Modern America*

Join us!

Thought provoking questions about democracy, liberty, and civic engagement are as relevant today as they were in 1852 when Douglass asked his audience, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?"

Please bring a chair

Program - 11am - 12noon

Refreshments and
conversation - 12noon - 1pm

Admission free

A restroom facility will be
available

Breaking Free: Civil War, Emancipation, & Beyond

CALL FOR PROPOSALS (please note, title has changed, call for proposals content has not changed)

The 14th annual UGRR Public History Conference
April 17-19, 2015
at Russell Sage College and The Myers Residence

2015 commemorates the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War, the assassination of Lincoln, and the start of reconstruction. Proposals are requested for workshops, presentations and activities that explore the relationship of the UGRR to these developments and to the complexities of shaping the emerging society which followed the Civil War, as well as exploring the relationship of these developments to our present day.

Full details are available on the conference pages at
www.undergroundrailroadhistory.org.

Submission deadline - October 20, 2014

"A chance to network, make new friends, learn history, have fun, purchase a book or two, hear some excellent cultural presentations." (anonymous, 2014 conference)



Welcome to new board member Christine Cowieson. Christine is the Coordinator of Campus Events at Schenectady County Community College. As the previous Coordinator of Special Events at Russell Sage College, Christine brings with her an extensive background in events organizing and business administration. Welcome, Christine!

Exterior restoration construction begins July 7 - walls, windows, entryways, bearing wall, and more will come 'under the knife' of Yankee construction, bid awardee. Watch the URHPCR Facebook page for continuous updates.



In Memoriam - Joy Chatel, activist and preservationist, passed away in January of this year. Joy was instrumental in leading the effort to save 227 Duffield Street from development into a park and underground parking garage. In 2007, Duffield Street was co-named Abolitionist Place. Her home at 227 Duffield Street was the home of abolitionists Thomas and Harriet Truesdell.

News and Notes

Mission Statement of URHPCR:

Underground Railroad History Project
researches and preserves the local and national history
of the anti-slavery and Underground Railroad movements,
their international connections
and their legacies to later struggles;
it engages in public education and dialogue about
these movements and their relevance to modern society.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend -

- ♦ **URHPCR Board Meetings** - 3rd Thursday of every month, 5:45 - 7:30pm at Russell Sage College, Troy
- ♦ **Conference Planning Mtg** - 1st Monday of each month, 6:00 - 7:30pm in Rm. 105, Gurley Hall at Russell Sage College, Troy
- ♦ **Building & Properties Mtg** - monthly, 5:30 - 6:30pm at The Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
- ♦ **Finance Committee Mtg** - 2nd Tuesday of each month, 5:30 - 6:30pm at Albany Center for Economic Success
- ♦ **Gardening Committee** - Thursdays, 10am - 1pm, weekly, at The Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence

Information about these meetings and events is available at 518-432-4432 or at info@UndergroundRailroadHistory.org

Coming Next Month!

Canal Cruise on the Caldwell Belle

An authentic 19th century sternwheel paddle boat

Saturday, August 16 — 5:30pm - 7pm

Debut of *Myers Cider*, a custom blend by
Nine Pins Cider Works

Cruise to Northumberland Falls via Champlain Canal Lock 5 while enjoying a narrated tour with music, Chef Ben's hors d'ouerves, and great conversation
Cash bar and URHPCR merchandise will be available

- ♦ **\$65 per person** - advance ticket purchase required - make checks payable to URHPCR or purchase online at www.undergroundrailroadhistory.org/events
- ♦ Seating is limited - do not delay!
- ♦ All proceeds benefit URHPCR
- ♦ Arrange for a carpool by calling 518-432-4432

The 1st Annual Canal Cruise sponsored by URHPCR

***Learn the Past, Be the Present, Create the Future*®**

Welcome and thank you to new and renewing members:

Robin Krawitz; Deborah Abel; Scott Christianson; Tom Ellis; Judith Wellmn; Kenneth Williams; Dora Lee Stanley; Sylvia Barnard; Peter G. Sokaris; Alfred and Lois Siegel; Jacqueline C. Robinson; Stan Malecki; Melissa Richburg; Donald K. Baxter; Suzanne Isaksen; Karen Mahar; Enid Mastriani; Isabel T. Mills; Christine Connell; Margaret Lavelle; Deborah Gross; Nancy Rosenberg; Willie J. Hughes; Brea Barthel; Julia Holcomb; Dorothy Wilsey; Francis Decker; Virgia Phoenix; Martha J. Bennett; Katherine Storms; Joanne Bakerman; Vera Michelson; Brenda Cave-James and Isaac Wooden; David Dova; Annette Johnson; Denise Clement; Allyn Kay Writsel

Invite someone you know to become a member, or give the gift of membership - details available on the Membership Page at www.UndergroundRailroadHistory.org

Questions? Concerns? Contributions? Interested in volunteering? Contact us by calling 518-432-4432 or by visiting www.UndergroundRailroadHistory.org.

Young Abolitionist Teen Scholars' Institute

Young Abolitionists Teen Scholars' Institute

at The Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence - a historic Underground Railroad site
194 Livingston Avenue, Albany, New York 12210

Write, design, draw, build, exhibit and speak! This is an interdisciplinary learning experience aimed at creating a hands-on introduction to careers in history, museum education, curatorial practice, and preservation. Through research and project-based activities, students learn about the inspiring work of local abolitionists as they collaborate in the creation of professional public presentations showcasing what they have learned at the Scholars' Institute. This innovative summer institute is an opportunity for teenagers to not simply learn about, but re-create, a "sense" for the past and its relevance for today!

Enrollment - is open to all teens in the Capital District

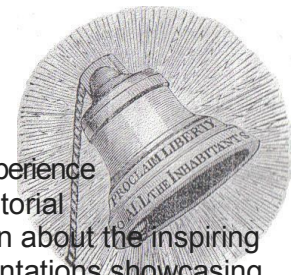
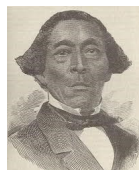
Dates - July 7 - August 1, 2014 with an Open House scheduled on Thursday, July 31 from 1pm - 3pm

Time - 12noon - 4pm Monday through Friday

Cost - \$400 / four weeks, with a limited number of scholarships available based upon need

Full details available at www.UndergroundRailroadHistory.org or by calling (518) 432-4432

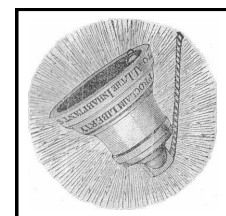
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