



Underground Railroad Free Press®

Independent reporting on today's Underground Railroad

urrfreepress.com

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Call for Nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2010 Underground Railroad Free Press Prizes. Fillable, easily completed nomination forms may be downloaded by clicking on Prizes at our website, urrfreepress.com.

Nominations are reviewed by an expertly qualified international Panel of Judges who select three annual prize winners in Leadership, Preservation and Advancement of Knowledge. Individuals may be nominated for any prize, and organizations for the Preservation and Knowledge prizes. Past years' winners may be read about at our website.

Judges are Underground Railroad authors Carolyn Frost and Fergus Bordewich, journalists Lawrence Hall and Wayne Young, and Professors Hortense Simmons and Judith Wellman. Canadians Frost and Hall make the panel international. See our website for bios.

Nominating remains open until June 30. The 2010 winners will be announced in the September 15 issue of *Free Press* and their bona fides and photos posted to our website at that time.

**What Would You Like to Know
From the 2010 Free Press Survey?**

Underground Railroad Free Press is the sponsor of annual surveys of the international Underground Railroad community. We conduct the surveys each May, provide full results on the *Free Press* website and summarize results in our July issue each year.

These surveys measure knowledge, attitudes and practices of people and organizations of the international Underground Railroad community, aid in development, planning and promotion of programs, and let us all know more about the contemporary Underground Railroad.

(continued on page two)

Underground Railroad Stamp Planned

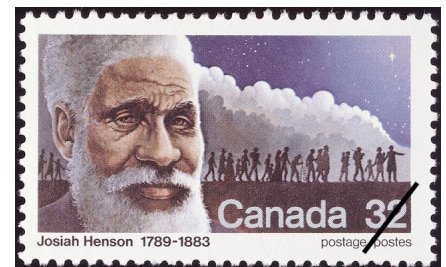
Senators Tom Carper and Ted Kaufman and Representative Mike Castle, all of Delaware, have requested that the United States Postal Service issue a stamp commemorating the Underground Railroad. The "Together for Freedom" stamp is the idea of Robert Seeley, a direct descendent of Thomas Garrett. This is believed to be the first United States stamp to honor the Underground Railroad.

In their December 22 letter to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, the delegation cited collaboration between safe-house operators Thomas Garrett of Wilmington, Delaware, and William Still of Philadelphia, a day's journey apart for freedom seekers.

The Quaker blacksmith Garrett and his family aided 2,700 freedom seekers through the end of the Civil War. Still published 190 accounts of more than 900 freedom seekers in his landmark *The Underground Railroad* in 1872.

The delegation said, "Working across racial, economic, religious and political boundaries, Garrett and Still moved freedom seekers from the border state of Delaware through the free state of Pennsylvania into safe communities in other states and Canada."

The only other known Underground Railroad stamp is Canada's of 1983 honoring Josiah Henson on the 100th anniversary of his death. Henson became the title character of Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.



Third US-Canadian Border Underground Railroad Monument

At its dedication in October, Lewiston, New York's Freedom Crossing Monument became the third memorial along the border between the United States and Canada to honor the Underground Railroad. The first two were the twin sculptures of Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario, across the Detroit River from one another. (See our March, 2008, issue at the *Free Press* website for an article and photos.)



Lewiston's Freedom Crossing Monument looks across the Niagara River a few miles north of Niagara Falls to St. Catharines, Canada, and honors Lewiston Underground Railroad conductor Josiah Tryon (1798-1886) who ferried freedom seekers across the river to Canada in his boat. Tryon is shown here in the photo of the Monument handing a baby to its fugitive mother.

Lezlie Harper Wells, a descendent of freedom seekers who crossed the Niagara River, addressed the more than 500 people attending the dedication ceremony. Lewiston sculptor Susan Geissler designed and created the \$230,000 monument which was funded primarily by the Town of Lewiston and private foundations. The monument may be viewed live at historiclewiston.org/freedomcrossing/webcam.html.

The Lewiston route was also memorialized by the late Margaret Goff Clark in her 1969 school text *Freedom Crossing*.

John Brown Photo Portrait Collection Compiled

In conjunction with last October's 150th anniversary of John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Jean Libby has compiled an annotated collection of the twelve known photographic portraits of Brown, the first collection of its kind. The series is on permanent display at Harper's Ferry National Historical Park, and through April exhibited as *Picturing John Brown* at the National Archives branch in Philadelphia, then to Topeka, Kansas.

The abolitionist Brown, an Underground Rail-

road safe-house operator, was one of history's fiercest opponents of slavery. His failed raid, intended to incite a slave rebellion and topple slavery in the South, was a proximate cause of the Civil War.

Libby has published the photographs, dating from 1848 through 1859, the year Brown was hanged, in her *John Brown Photo Chronology Catalogue of the Exhibition at Harper's Ferry* which may be ordered online and through book stores.

One way we formulate survey questions is to ask our readers what they would like to know which has led to interesting and useful questions since we began the surveys in 2007. We also extend a special query to executives of the major Underground Railroad organizations.

So what would you like to know about what is happening with the Underground Railroad community, its people or trends? Just email us your questions and we will do our best to include them in the 2010 *Free Press* survey.

To view or download reports on all previous *Free Press* surveys, click on Surveys at our website.

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Review: Every Student Deserves *Safe Harbor*. Adults, too.

Pennsylvania producer Main Street Media's *Safe Harbor*, an Underground Railroad documentary, is deservedly drawing a growing list of prizes and the praise of reviewers.

The hour-long DVD's commentators include some of today's most prominent Underground Railroad executives, authors and academicians. Their observations make *Safe Harbor* both an expert and down-to-earth reflection, not so much on how the Underground Railroad movement unfolded but on its impact on today's moral consciousness. The production would have benefitted from commentary by those "on the ground", Underground Railroad descendants and site owners.

Safe Harbor's import is the illumination of the moral imperative of what historian Fergus Bordewich has called the war for the soul of America. While a few important historical figures and events are recited, the thrust of the production is how the Underground Railroad shaped American history, how it drove the nation's social evolution and the movement's resurgent legacy today.

Among the plaudits which the documentary has garnered are the Newspaper Association of America's Best Original Curriculum Prize, the Pennsylvania Association of Museums' top Institutional Achievement Award and being named to the American Library Association's Top Ten Resources for Black History Month. These are just a few.

Already a fixture at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, more than 2,500 schools and libraries, and the training programs of four federal cabinet departments, *Safe Harbor* deserves an even wider audience. There are still not enough good off-the-shelf Underground Railroad educational tools like *Safe Harbor*, the best we have seen. We encourage *Free Press* readers to urge local school boards to adopt this affordable gem into their curricula.

A Reader Wants to Know . . .

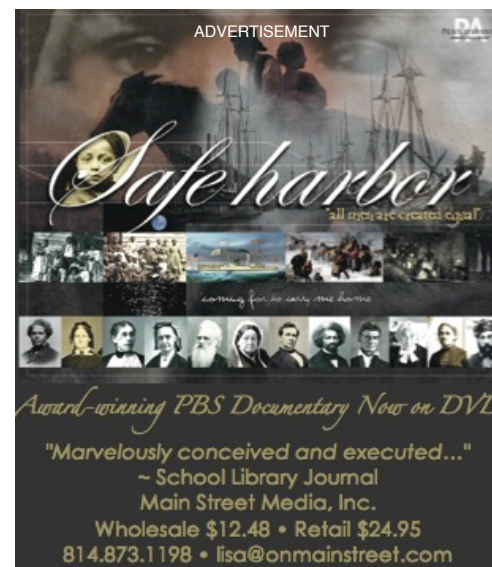
A *Free Press* subscriber would like to know when was the earliest published reference using the term Underground Railroad. He has turned up a December 17, 1844, article in *The National Anti-Slavery Standard* stating that a St. Louis newspaper had used the term in an article on November 11 of that year.

The nation's first rail line, still in daily use, was laid down in 1831 from Baltimore to Point of Rocks, Maryland. The first use of the Underground Railroad term would have occurred long enough after this so that the nation would have had enough time to gain an understanding of what an actual railroad was.

If you know of a dated verifiable use of "Underground Railroad" in writing or speech before our reader's 1844 date, please email *Free Press* at editor@urrfreepress.com. Thank you.

Safe Harbor

Color stereo DVD. All ages. ISBN 0-9741375-0-2
Main Street Media- mainstreetmedia.tv
Teacher Resources- wqln.org/safeharbor
Producers- Lisa and Richard Gensheimer
Director- Michael Sparks
Narrator- Charlotte Alston



Why Advertise In *Free Press*?

We have over 2,500 subscribers and three to four times that many readers, the largest audience of any Underground Railroad news publication. Our audience grows at about 25 percent per year. We reach both core and periphery of the Underground Railroad community including most smaller programs and sites. With measured market share of 54 percent, more people use *Free Press* for Underground Railroad news than all of our competitors combined. Our market share is more than twice that of our closest competitor. As far as we know, we are the only Underground Railroad publication which offers advertising. Rates are affordable so get your word out.

Did You Know . . .

. . . that Maryland had more free Blacks than any other state as early as 1810? Census by census through 1860, the number of free Blacks in Maryland rose and exceeded that of any other state through emancipation in 1865. By 1860, Maryland's free Blacks numbered nearly half again as many as any other state's.

Though Maryland remained a slave state, Union or not, until she rewrote her constitution in November, 1864, when slavery was abolished in the state, still slightly more than half of all black Marylanders were enslaved in 1860. The proportion varied from nearly forty percent in the southern Maryland and Eastern Shore tobacco coast counties to less than one percent in Maryland's pro-Union western counties.