



Underground Railroad Free Press®

News and views on today's Underground Railroad

urrFreePress.com

July, 2006
Volume 1, Issue 1

The original Uncle Tom's cabin now a protected State historic site in Bethesda, Maryland

Underground Railroad Free Press Debuts

Welcome to the first issue of *Underground Railroad Free Press* reporting on today's Underground Railroad. Though you will see the occasional historical article, *Underground Railroad Free Press* concentrates its reporting on today's organizations, programs, efforts and issues involved in identifying and preserving Underground Railroad sites and legacy.

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tial mailing list of over 800. Email us at publisher@urrfreepress.com with email addresses of those to whom you would like us to provide *Underground Railroad Free Press*.

Underground Railroad Free Press is independent of any other organization and will provide occasional editorials. We welcome news, articles, letters to the editor and advertising. Please see page two for submission guidelines.

Federal Protection for Tri-state Underground Railroad Area

New federal protection of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground as a National Heritage Area has been proposed in the United States Senate by Senator George Allen and the House of Representatives by Congressman Frank Wolf, both of Virginia. On June 22, the Senate Subcommittee on Natural Resources began hearing testimony on the designation.

One of the richest concentrations of our nation's history, the Journey Through Hallowed Ground contains a dense concentration of Underground Railroad sites, the homes of nine presidents, many colonial, Revolutionary War and Civil War sites, several national parks, and scores of other historical features. In 2005, the National Trust for Historic Preservation designated the Journey

Through Hallowed Ground as one of the nation's most endangered historic sites.

The 175-mile Journey Through Hallowed Ground straddles several miles on either side of US Route 15 from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania to Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home near Charlottesville, Virginia.

Along the 175-mile route are dozens of Underground Railroad safe-houses and routes, many concentrated in Frederick County, Maryland. Dobbin House in Gettysburg and the Fairfield Inn in Fairfield, Pennsylvania have very interesting exhibits of actual Underground Railroad hiding places in their buildings.

See HallowedGround.org, DobbinHouse.com and TheFairfieldInn.com.

New York City Site Threatened By Urban Redevelopment

As part of the City of New York's redevelopment plans for Brooklyn, several homes dating from the 1800s used as Underground Railroad safe-houses are threatened with demolition to erect a garage for luxury condominiums desired by the developer Forest City Ratner. The threatened neighborhood along Duffield Street also carries a strong oral tradition of having been a seat of abolitionism.

Joy Chatel, owner of one of the old safe-house homes, heads the effort to reverse the City Council condemnation decision.

Chatel forced a postponement of the Council's vote on the Downtown Brooklyn Plan after bringing to light inaccuracies in the report of the City's historical consultant. Her work has convinced Council member David Yassky, a Congressional candidate, to change his position to now protect Duffield Street.

Says resident Daniel Goldstein, "The victory that we win here and at the Atlantic Yards is important for the city and state. If we don't win, developers will become even more emboldened."



Maryland's Potomac-to-Doubs Route of the Underground Railroad, one of three Maryland Underground Railroad sites designated in 2006 by Scenic America as threatened.

Scenic America Lists Three Threatened Underground Railroad Sites in Maryland

Scenic America's state affiliate, Scenic Maryland, has listed the Potomac-to-Doubs Route of the Underground Railroad as one of seven threatened Maryland historic sites.

Bucktown and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, both of which are Maryland Underground Railroad sites, also made Scenic Maryland's 2006 list.

Harriet Tubman, the well known figure of the Underground Railroad, was born a few miles from Bucktown and moved to a plantation there as a young child. She escaped when she was 27 and made a number of trips back to the Bucktown area to rescue relatives and friends who she spirited to freedom on the Underground Railroad.

The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal runs along the Maryland side of the Potomac River and was crossed countless times by Underground Railroad freedom seekers fleeing north. Several crossings enter Frederick County, Maryland's Potomac-to-Doubs Route.

The 185-mile canal begins in Washington, DC and runs to Cumberland, Maryland. Begun July 4, 1828, it operated from 1850 until 1924 and was used to haul coal, grains and livestock to market. In the 1960s when there was talk of building a freeway over the canal, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas led a preservation effort resulting in the canal being named a national park.

For more, visit scenic.org, ScenicMaryland.org and nps.gov/choh/index.htm.



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On Today's Underground Railroad

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Underground Railroad Free Press is a free newsletter published by Cooling Springs Farm, 2455 Ballenger Creek Pike, Adamstown, Maryland, 21710. Current publication frequency is bi-monthly. Back issues are available at no charge. *Underground Railroad Free Press* is distributed by email and by special arrangement on a limited basis via postal mail. Send email addresses of new recipients and changes of email addresses to publisher@urrfreepress.com.

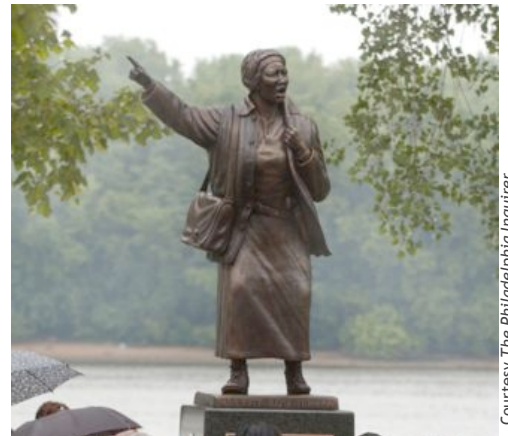
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Bristol, Pennsylvania Dedicates Tubman Monument

The monument shown here of Harriet Tubman was dedicated June 24 in Bristol, Pennsylvania through which Tubman sometimes traveled on her journeys as an Underground Railroad conductor from Maryland to upstate New York where she lived. Bristol is a suburb north of Philadelphia on the Delaware River.



Courtesy The Philadelphia Inquirer

For an account of the monument, its dedication and the role of Bristol in the Underground Railroad, see *The Harriet Tubman Journal's* forthcoming August issue at harriettubmanjournal.com.

Underground Railroad Site on National Television July 24

On July 24, Home and Garden Television will air on its *If Walls Could Talk* program a feature on Cooling Springs Farm. This will be a rerun of the showing of April 16. See your local schedule.

On October 6, 2005, HGTV visited Cooling Springs to film for *If Walls Could Talk* which features old homes with a revealed history. The segment tells the story of seven generations of the Michael family at Cooling Springs and of the family's roles in the Underground Railroad. Just the day before, the roof of the farm's spring house, where Underground Railroad freedom seekers were shel-

tered, had been restored.

Since Cooling Springs Farm was opened to the public as a historic site in 2004, nearly 500 visitors have toured or performed research. Visitors include descendants of freedom seekers, researchers, school classes and tourists. Most recently, three generations of a Montgomery, Alabama family toured the farm, and just before that a man with his three grandchildren.

Cooling Springs Farm is owned by *Underground Railroad Free Press* publisher Peter Michael and his wife Vicki.