

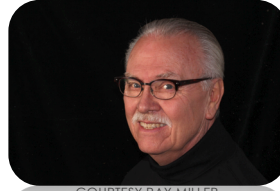


UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREE PRESS®

Independent reporting on today's Underground Railroad

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Freedom Center, WGBH and Muelder Are 2014 Free Press Prize Laureates



COURTESY RAY MILLER

In the seventh annual awarding of the Underground Railroad Free Press Prizes, *Free Press* honors the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Boston television station WGBH, and Underground Railroad program head Owen Muelder as 2014 winners. The Free Press Prizes are regarded as the international Underground Railroad community's top honor.

Cincinnati's Freedom Center receives the 2014 Free Press Prize in Leadership for establishing its facility, programs, support and overall national leadership as the world's premiere Underground Railroad institution since the Center's founding in 2004.

For its innovative creation of an interactive Abolitionist Map of America emphasizing Underground Railroad sites, *Free Press* has named Public Broadcasting System (PBS) affiliate WGBH of Boston as winner of the 2014 Hortense Simmons Prize for the Advancement of Knowledge.

Knox College's Owen Muelder is awarded the 2014 Free Press Prize for Preservation preserving the history of the Illinois Underground Railroad,

founding and heading Knox College's Galesburg Colony Underground Railroad Freedom Station, and long serving the greater Underground Railroad community.

Free Press is delighted once again to award these annual prizes. We congratulate this year's winners and thank our readers and others who put forth nominations.

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

After the concept of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center was first proposed in 1994, a nationwide fundraising campaign headed by John Pepper, the then CEO of Proctor & Gamble headquartered in Cincinnati, raised \$110,000,000 over the next decade. Ground was broken for the Freedom Center in 2002, and in 2004 over 20,000 people attended the grand opening of the Center which immediately became the nation's and world's flagship Underground Railroad organization. In its first year, the Freedom Center hosted 180,000 visitors from all fifty states and thirty-five countries, by far the

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The annual Free Press Prizes for leadership, preservation and advancement of knowledge are announced.

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To combine New England fall color and Underground Railroad tourism, visit this New Hampshire inn and a Quaker meeting house.

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Former Free Press Prize Judge Ambassador Ronald D. Palmer is fondly remembered.

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Dr. Samuel Lemon's gripping historical novel of his Underground Railroad ancestors debuts.

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Racism is finally thwarted as a high school diploma is awarded fifty-five years late.

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As in our editorial, racism is not yet thwarted as we call on Washington, DC's National Football League franchise to forego its racist name.

3

Two New Hampshire Underground Railroad Destinations

One of an occasional series on Underground Railroad sites

We thank subscriber Bob MacArthur of Center Sandwich, New Hampshire, who reminds *Free Press* readers that the Underground Railroad reached as far north as the Granite State. Near his home are the North Sandwich Quaker Meeting House and Center Harbor's Lavinia's Inn and Tavern. Lavinia's occupies the historic 1820s Coe House which was used to shelter freedom seekers. Visit <http://laviniasdining.com> and <http://northsandwich.quaker.org> for more. Or visit the state where Fall color is expected to peak in early October.



Lavinia's Inn and the North Sandwich Quaker Meeting House

Free Press Remembers Ambassador Ronald Palmer

Founding Free Press Prize Judge Ronald D. Palmer died April 21 in Edgewater, New Jersey, of lung cancer and lingering effects from a stroke suffered in 2009 said a daughter, Alyson Palmer. He was 81.

Raised by a single parent and his uncles, Palmer became the first graduate of Howard University to pass the United States Foreign Service Examination, eventually serving as Ambassador to Malaysia, Togo and Mauritius. After retiring, he taught international relations at George Washington University until 2001.

In his retirement, he became interested in the Underground Railroad and began writing and lecturing, particularly on un-

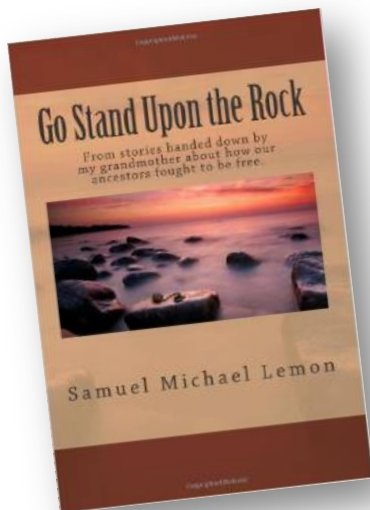
sung conductors and station operators such as Hagerstown, Maryland's Rev. Thomas Henry and Frederick, Maryland's Bishop William Quinn, both of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He joined *Free Press* in 2008 and resigned in 2010 after his stroke.

Ambassador Palmer's marriage to Euna Scott ended in divorce. He later married Princess Tengku Intan Badariah inbi Sultan Abu Bakar of Malaysia. He leaves two children from his first marriage, Derek Palmer of Los Angeles and Alyson Palmer of New York, and two grandchildren. He rests in the retired diplomatic officer section of Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington, DC.



Ambassador Ronald D. Palmer

Lemon Novel Eases Shortage of Underground Railroad Fiction



Dr. Samuel Lemon grew up in Media, Pennsylvania, where his great-great grandparents arrived as runaway slaves during the Civil War. Sheltered by local Quakers, his ancestors prospered and became prominent members of the community. *Go Stand Upon the Rock* is based on his family's handed-down oral traditions, and on his doctoral dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania. He is Assistant Professor at Neumann University and formerly worked at WHYY, Philadelphia. A Quaker, Dr. Lemon is writing a sequel to *Go Stand Upon the Rock*.

Dr. Samuel Lemon's *Go Stand Upon the Rock* is a worthy addition to the still thin bookshelf of Underground Railroad novels written by descendants of freedom seekers, conductors and station operators. The book tells a deeply moving story

based on events in the lives of a runaway slave and his family who witness some of the most compelling moments in American history. It is a tale of unsettling plantation life, courageous women, dramatic Civil War battles, heroes, hoodoo, and the indomitable strength of the human spirit.

This novel is based on the family history handed down to the author by his maternal grandmother, Maud Ray Ridley Ortiga, granddaughter of former runaway slaves. Fiercely proud of his ancestors, Samuel Lemon spent countless hours at his grandmother's side committing her remembered history to memory as they poured over a trove of old family photographs. Lemon grew to love his forebears who died long before he was born and eventually became his family's historian which made him determined to achieve two goals: to see that his ancestors no longer rested in unmarked graves and to solve the mysteries of who his ancestors were, where they had come from and how his current family came to be.

Go Stand Upon the Rock tells of Dr. Lemon's ancestors escaping slavery in the mid-1860s, and that none in his family ever returned to their places of origin or even knew where they were. What began as a noble quest to uncover roots became a cultural detective story, with only the names of the plantations and slave quarters serving as faint clues. Lemon discovered the remarkable accuracy of his family's age-old oral history, and that everything his beloved grandmother told him would prove true. Lemon added to what was passed down to him through historical and genealogical research at the Na-

tional Archives, the U.S. Census, and countless books and websites, all of which enabled him to turn his family history into a doctoral dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania in 2007.

Go Stand Upon the Rock is an interwoven tapestry of a remarkable family's journey through history beginning with Cornelius Ridley's epic 300-mile journey to escape bondage on his enslaver father's plantation. The book begins on the Bonnie Doon plantation in Southampton County, Virginia, where Lemon's ancestor Cornelius, mulatto son of his wealthy, slavemaster father, was born in 1839 eight years after Nat Turner's Rebellion. Avoiding any rosy or revisionist retrospective on "genteel" plantation society, *Go Stand Upon the Rock* fathoms the historical events and complex social and biological relationships between masters and slaves.

The story also follows Ridley's wife, Martha Jane Parham, as she strives to escape her horrible fate as a breeding woman on neighboring Fortsville Plantation. Lemon says that learning what she endured made an indelible impact on him. Unlike her husband who was able to pass for white, Martha Jane was forced to escape separately. The story follows her perilous flight with two young children to the safety of a company of U.S. Colored Troops where she meets a young black soldier from Pennsylvania who is wounded during one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War—the Battle of New Market Heights, Virginia—and who has an unexpected role in her life a half century later. This first part of the Ridley

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Underground Railroad Free Press Editorial



Change the Name Now

For 81 years, the Washington, DC, franchise of the National Football League has blithely disparaged Native Americans with a racial slur, and now, under fire from all directions, tries to pass the practice off as "tradition." This year, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office canceled the team's six registered trademarks, ruling that the word "redskin" is disparaging. It is beyond time that the name Redskins and the team logo be retired to the dustbin of racism past.

The only obstacle is team owner Dan Snyder with age-old racist excuses: "Fans love the name" (polls say most don't), "Native Americans aren't really offended" (they say they are), and "I love the name and logo" (too bad). Adding insult to injury, Snyder calls the team name "a badge of honor." Snyder's dwindling allies are mostly shrill far-right gasbags like Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck and Pat Buchanan.

The President of the United States, other elected officials, high majorities in public opinion polls, NFL players, coaches and officials, sports commentators, and both conservative and liberal columnists are calling for a new team name. As respected NBC football analyst Chris Collinsworth points out, "If it were the Blackskins or the Brownskins, the name would have already been changed." As Native American Bill Wetzel underscores, "Anybody still fighting for it is on the wrong side of history."

Players and coaches of the Washington team are ducking the issue, afraid of crossing the guy who signs their paychecks and has ultimate say over their jobs. But, as star receiver Pierre Garçon alludes, "It's all up to Dan Snyder."

The move to get the team name and logo replaced has been led by Ray Halbritter, leader of the Oneida Indian Nation. *Free Press* joins Halbritter in calling for the Washington team to drop the offensive name. Do it now, Mr. Snyder.

Free Press invites its readers to suggest a new name for Washington's NFL franchise. Email your entry to us at publisher@urrfreepress.com. We'll send compiled entries to team management.

Robbed Then Restored: A High School Diploma Awarded Fifty-five Years Late

As honor student Alva Earley was about to graduate from high school in Galesburg, Illinois, in 1959, he had already been accepted at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University, two of the nation's top colleges. When the senior and his African American classmates planned a picnic at Galesburg's Storey Park to celebrate their graduation, they chose the whites-only side of the park to make a point. Earley was then threatened by a Galesburg High School administrator that, unless the picnic venue were moved, Earley's diploma would be withheld and he would not be allowed to attend graduation or graduate. The picnic and threats were carried out and that is how matters rested for fifty-five years. To rub it in, the administrator wrote disparaging letters to the two universities which then rescinded Earley's acceptances.

When Earley told the class of 1959 his story for the first time at a 2013 reunion, classmates Owen Muelder and Lowell Peterson were incensed and decided to right the old wrong by urging the Galesburg School Board to award Earley his diploma. Says Muelder, "Here are this community and college founded before the Civil War that were leaders in the anti-slavery movement, and here it was that a little over a hundred years later something so outrageous could have occurred in our community."

On August 8 of this year, Earley officially graduated and was awarded his diploma before a hundred of his classmates at their fifty-fifth reunion.

Said Earley speaking of Muelder and Peterson, "The important thing was not that I got the diploma, it was that they tried to get me a diploma. They cared about me. Let's get beyond hatred to make this world a better place."

Life turned out alright for Alva Earley. When the president of Galesburg's Knox College heard of the high school's action, he admitted Earley to Knox despite his lacking a diploma. Earley finished college at the University of Illinois, then earned a law degree from the University of Chicago and a doctorate in divinity from Northwestern. Dr. Earley spent his career as an attorney for the State of Illinois and as a pastor of his church. Now retired, he lives in La Junta, Colorado, and enjoys attending class reunions.



Earley (R), Muelder (L) and diploma

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Free Press publisher Peter Michael will give two Underground Railroad talks at Common Ground on Seminary Ridge 2014 in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. *The Underground Railroad: The War for the Soul of America* will take place September 26, and *Northward: Reaching Gettysburg on the Underground Railroad* on the 27th. Visit bit.ly/YACTA8 for more.

Prizes

leading number for any Underground Railroad site. In 2012, the Center merged with the Cincinnati Museum Center giving economies of scale to both and permitting the Freedom Center to more easily balance its operating budget.

Located along the banks of the Ohio River in Cincinnati, the Center operates a broad array of programs emphasizing Underground Railroad history, modern-day slavery, nationwide education, site restoration and preservation, exhibits, the Freedom Center's superb museum, and assistance with genealogical search.

The nonprofit Center is funded by a typical combination of earned income, grants and private donations. Since 2007, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center has been one of the three most recognizable Underground Railroad institutions as revealed in annual *Free Press* surveys of the international Underground Railroad community. The two others are *Free Press* and the National Park Service's Network to Freedom program.

The Freedom Center is led by Board of Directors Chair Martin R. Dunn, a Cincinnati attorney, and President and CEO Dr. Clarence G. Newsome, former president of Shaw University and Dean of the School of Divinity at Howard University.

WGBH

The Boston affiliate of the Public Broadcasting System, WGBH is PBS's single largest producer of Web and television programming including national favorites *Antiques Roadshow*, *Nova*, *Masterpiece*, *Frontline*, *Curious George*, *Arthur*, and *Victory Garden*. WGBH alone produces more than two-thirds of the nationally distributed programs broadcast by PBS. WGBH has been recognized with hundreds of honors including Emmys, Peabodys, DuPont-Columbia Awards, and two Academy Awards.

In February 2012, WGBH began producing "The Abolitionists," the thirty-ninth project of PBS's American Experience, American television's most watched history series. WGBH collaborated with His-

torypin.com to create a permanent interactive abolitionist map at the PBS website and a mobile app for the project. Map content that users upload also lives on the app which is free at iTunes.

WGBH partnered with *Free Press* to generate initial map content.

WGBH's Casey Davis tells *Free Press*, "The focus of the map is on abolitionists and the abolitionist movement, with the Underground Railroad as part of the movement. Contributors upload the majority of content which will be added to indefinitely."

Says Davis, "Contributors upload photographs, audio, video, descriptive data, citations, logos and text which appear to map visitors on the map. Contributors maintain all rights to their own content. The Abolitionist Map is a tool contributors use to expand outreach and programming for their own communities. Users engage with content, use the materials to plot their own Underground Railroad site tours, and 'pin' their own comments and content to the map." Anyone may use the map and app free.

WGBH is led by Board of Trustees Chair Richard M. Burnes, Jr., General Partner of Charles River Ventures, and President and CEO Jonathan C. Abbott.

Owen Muelder

Says Tom Calarco, Underground Railroad author and 2008 winner of *Free Press*'s Hortense Simmons Prize for the Advancement of Knowledge, "If you could give anyone the title, 'Ambassador of the History of the Underground Railroad,' it would have to be Owen Muelder. The first chapter of Muelder's 2007 *The Underground Railroad in Western Illinois* provides one of the best descriptions of the Underground Railroad in print."

Calarco tells *Free Press* that, using primary sources that include the diary of Samuel G. Wright, a Knox College trustee who participated in the Underground Railroad in northern Illinois, and the Illinois letters in the Wilbur Siebert Collection, Muelder developed a compelling picture of the Underground Railroad from Quincy, Illinois, along the Mississippi River to Chicago on Lake Michigan.

Muelder heads Knox College's Galesburg Colony Underground Railroad Freedom Center which memorializes the distinguished roles which the College and Galesburg, where the college is located, had in the Illinois Underground Railroad. He was formerly a college administrator.

Muelder also authored *Theodore Dwight*

See "Robbed," the companion article to this one on page 3.

Weld and the American Anti-Slavery Society published by McFarland in 2011.

Muelder did not come by his Underground Railroad interest and accomplishments by accident. His father Herman Muelder, a history professor at Knox College, authored *Fighters for Freedom* in 1959, and Knox College itself has a founding and long distinguished reputation for promoting human equality.

Knox College was established in 1837 by that everlasting strain of American religious missionaries and social reformers. Knox's founders strongly opposed slavery and espoused the potential of every person regardless of race, gender or financial means to grow, learn and contribute to the good of the community. Opposing slavery in all forms, the founders made it clear that Knox would be accessible to students regardless of race, gender or financial means, and they practiced what they preached. As a result, the college was one of the first in the nation open to both women and people of color.

Knox's early administrators bravely lived out their commitment to social justice: Knox founder Reverend George Washington Gale was indicted for harboring fugitive slaves, trustee Samuel Wilbur was an active participant in the Underground Railroad sheltering and aiding runaway slaves at his own risk, and Hiram Kellogg, the College's first president, stood up in opposition to discrimination against women. This progressive Knox tradition proudly lives on through the continuing egalitarian outlook of the College today and Owen Muelder's Underground Railroad program, writing and tireless promotion of equality.

Review

family saga draws to a close with Cornelius and Martha Jane's brilliant son William, a pioneering African American law student, who miraculously survives a hail of bullets that nearly ends his life and legal career amidst a dangerous political dispute in Chester, Pennsylvania. The incident is captured in detail by local newspapers only a month before his marriage in October 1889 to an elegant, mysterious clairvoyant from the Danish West Indies.

Says Lemon, "The story of my ancestors is a debt I have longed owed them, because they are giants upon whose shoulders I stand today. And there is much more of their saga to tell." We will look forward to your sequel, Dr. Lemon.