



## **PRESS RELEASE**

March 6-12, 2017

Underground Railroad Coalition of Delaware, 302-383-8507

### **Delaware and Maryland Commemorate Harriet Tubman Day with the National Park Service in “Find Your Freedom” Week Events and Programs**

Museums and historical societies in Delaware and Maryland will highlight themes of escape from slavery, the Underground Railroad and abolitionism next week. “Find Your Freedom” week is a cooperative project with the National Park Service (NPS) and other partners, celebrating the grand opening of the Harriet Tubman Visitor’s Center in Church Creek, Maryland. Public programming at Harriet Tubman State Park and National Monument begins on Saturday, March 11th. This is the second year for Find Your Freedom Week.

Delaware events will include special tours and programs in Wilmington, New Castle, Odessa, Dover and Seaford. Museums and sites that interpret the program themes will be open during the celebration, and include Tubman Garrett Park and the Riverwalk in Wilmington; The New Castle Court House Museum; Appoquinimink Preparatory Friends Meeting; Historic Odessa Foundation in Odessa; First State Heritage Park; John Dickinson Plantation in Dover; the Star Hill Museum in Camden; and, the Seaford Historical Society. All of the sites have been designated as “Network to Freedom” sites, programs or archives by the NPS. Most sites have Network to Freedom cancellation stamps, and stamp folders will be provided to visitors. Many of the sites are part of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway.

### **Delaware Events:**

#### **March 7-11**

**Run for Freedom tours;** 10:00 am – 4:30 pm, John Dickinson Plantation, 340 Kitts Hummock Road, Dover, DE 19901

The John Dickinson Plantation will be offering special tours, Run for Freedom, African American history-based tours that explore the lives of three enslaved individuals who escaped from bondage.

#### **March 6-12**

**Stories of Courage and Freedom;** 9:00 am – 4:30 pm (Mon-Sat), 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm (Sun), The Old State House, 25 The Green, Dover, DE 19901

Join us at the Old State House as we celebrate National Harriet Tubman Day and begin by acquiring the Old State House Network to Freedom Cancellation Stamp.

In her fight to lead others to freedom, Harriet Tubman came to Delaware in service to the Underground Railroad. Her quest for freedom inspired others in the state to join the cause. Tours each day focus on the stories of bravery, courage and freedom among Delaware citizens including Underground Railroad conductor Samuel D. Burris.

## **March 6-10**

**Tales of Slavery and Freedom Walking Tour of the Dover Green;** 10:00 am – 3:00 pm, John Bell House, 43 The Green, Dover, DE 19901

Learn about Delaware's complicated positions regarding freedom and slavery, and its role as a border state during the Civil War. Find out how a brave group of runaway slaves known as the Dover Eight made a daring escape from the Dover Jail with some help from Harriet Tubman at the beginning of their journey. Hear about famous African-American Richard Allen and his connections to the Golden Fleece Tavern. Beginning at 10 a.m., walking tours leave on the hour from the John Bell House and travel around The Green, lasting approximately 45 minutes. The last tour leaves at 3 pm. In the case of inclement weather, the stories from the tour will be told indoors.

## **Friday, March 10**

**Appoquinimink Friends Meeting Open House;** 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, 616 W. Main Street (Rte. 299 west of Rte. 13), Odessa, DE

Quakers who worshiped in this 1785 brick Quaker Meeting House will be on hand to interpret the events related to the Underground Railroad. Activists John Hunn, John Alston and Daniel Corbit, all lived in the vicinity. Records held at Swarthmore College's Friends Historical Library indicate that they were known agents on the path taken by freedom seekers in lower New Castle County, Delaware. To the west, at Middletown High School, is a memorial to the Hunn and Alston families, which includes two Benches By the Road, from the Toni Morrison Society. One was sponsored by Appoquinimink Friends at the site of John Hunn's farm. Parking on site; no restroom available.

## **Saturday, March 11**

**“Last Stop to Freedom,” Wilmington’s Enduring Role in the Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman’s Legacy;** 1:00 am – 12:30 pm, Wilmington Friends Meeting House, 401 N. West Street, Wilmington, DE 19801

Discover the lasting Quaker contributions to Wilmington and the Underground Railroad by learning about the partnership between Thomas Garrett and Harriet Tubman. An historical scavenger hunt coupled with an interactive Power Point presentation on the historic grounds of the Wilmington Friends Meeting House will provide fun, learning and lively discussion.

**The Underground Railroad in Delaware - Public Program;** 11:00 am – 3:00 pm Delaware Historical Society, Delaware History Museum and Old Town Hall, 504 N. Market St., Wilmington, DE 19801

Walk in the footsteps of freedom seekers and the abolitionists who helped them in Delaware. Meet Harriet Tubman, John Tillman, and Thomas Garrett through various interactive activities and explore the Jane and Littleton Mitchell Center for African American Heritage. Also on view will be a small temporary exhibit entitled Deliverance in Delaware: The Underground Railroad in the First State.

**Harriet Tubman’s Tillie Escape through Seaford;** 3:00 pm, Seaford Museum, 203 High Street, Seaford, DE 19973

Starting at the Seaford Museum, we will walk down to the town wharf where Harriet Tubman and slave "Tillie" arrived from Baltimore to start their journey north. Curator, Jim Blackwell, will lead this group tour that takes the route that Harriet Tubman took in Seaford as he re-tells the story of one of Harriet's most dangerous escapes.

## **Saturday & Sunday, March 11 & 12**

**Thomas Garrett and his Role in the History of Delaware Slavery;** Saturday at 11am & 1pm, and Sunday at 2pm, New Castle Court House Museum, 211 Delaware Street, New Castle, DE 19720; free but reservations required 302-323-4453

Program begins with an exploration of slavery in Delaware. The development and activities of the Underground Railroad in the state will then be described through the museum's "Flight To Freedom" exhibit, explaining how local Abolitionist Thomas Garrett directed the 1845 escape of the Hawkins family from slavery in Maryland to freedom in Pennsylvania. The program will end in the courtroom with a discussion of the 1848 Federal trial of Garrett for violation of the Fugitive Slave Act for assisting the Hawkins family from slavery to freedom. This portion of the presentation will be in the actual courtroom where the Garrett trial occurred.

## **Friday, March 24**

**Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad;** 7:00 – 9:00 pm Delaware Historical Society, Delaware History Museum and Old Town Hall, 504 N. Market St., Wilmington, DE 19801

Kathryn Harris will perform her one-woman show re-creating the life and experiences of Harriet Tubman. An evening performance, part of the Society's *Untapped History* program series, will be followed by an interactive version of Pictionary.

\$7.00 members, \$10.00 non-members

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