

A Gathering at the Crossroads

For Such a Time as This!

First Edition

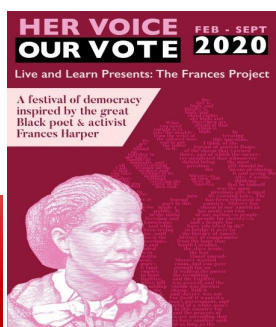
Fall 2020



JOHN W. FRANKS, MINISTER
ANNE AMOS GARNETT, LEAGUE
ADAM AMOS PARADE, MARSHAL
ROSSO C. ASTWOOD, STATE WORKER
JAMES AUSTIN, STATE WORKER
FRISBY, BATTIS, COUNCIL
WILLIAM BATTIS, STOREKEEPER
GWENDOLYN BENNETT, ARTIST-POET
J. ROBBIN BENNETT, ATTORNEY
MARY BENNETT, BUSINESSWOMAN
A. DANNEE BISS, POLICEMAN
JOSEPHINE W. BISS, HOUSEHOLD OF RUF.
PETER C. BLACKWELL, COUNCIL
JANIE BLALOCK-CHARLESTON, TEACHER
MARY BRAXTON-ROBERTS, TEACHER
CASSIUS BROWN, COUNCIL
D.A. BROWN, TEACHER
HARRY BURRS, STATE WORKER
SYDNEY BURRIS, MUSICIAN
JOSEPH FUSTUL, TEACHER
W. ARTHUR CARTER, ATTORNEY
W. JUSTIN CARTER, ATTORNEY
CHARLES J. CARTER, IS. AMENDMENT
DAVID CHESTER, COUNCIL
AMELIA CHESTER, HOUSEHOLD OF RUF.

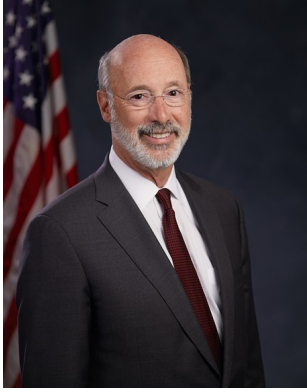
Created for the Commonwealth Monument Project by Becky Ault and Art Research Enterprises, Inc, Lancaster, Pa

Sponsored in part by:



Pennsylvania Leadership Roll Call

EXEMPLARS OF CITIZENSHIP!



GOVERNOR THOMAS W. WOLF,
47th Governor of Pennsylvania



Eugene A. DePasquale,
Auditor General-Pennsylvania
William Howard Day Fellowship Recipient



Kathy Boockvar,
Pennsylvania Secretary of State



Curt Topper Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of General Services

HONORARY PLACEMAKING COMMITTEE- IRVIS EQUALITY CRCLE *PRESERVING THE PAST; MAKING HISTORY!*



Senator Arthur L. "Art" Haywood-PA
4th District



Senator Sharif Street -PA
3rd District



Senator Timothy P. Kearney-PA
26th District



Senator John DiSanto-PA
15th District



Senator Jay Costa-PA
43rd District

HONORARY COMMITTEE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 15TH AMENDMENT *STEWARDS OF THE FRANCHISE!*



Rep. Stephen Kinsey- PA
201st District



Rep. Jordan A. Harris-PA
186th District



Rep. Ed Gainey -PA
24th District



Rep. P. Michael Sturla-PA
96th District



Rep. Brian Joseph Kirkland -PA
159th District

HONORARY COMMITTEE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT *A TOAST TO TENACITY!*



Rep. Patty Kim-PA
103rd District



Rep. Sue Helm-PA
104th District



Rep. Margo Davidson-PA
164th District



Rep. Carol Hill-Evans-PA
95th District



Rep. Joanna McClinton-PA
191st District

A GATHERING AT THE CROSSROADS – FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS!

LENWOOD O. SLOAN – THE COMMONWEALTH MONUMENT PROJECT

Two years after my graduation from George Armstrong Westinghouse High School in 1966, I returned to Pittsburgh and my childhood neighborhood of Homewood. It was a terrible experience.

After the announcement of MLK's assassination, after the nation watched Robert Kennedy shot right there on television, after the riots and burnings of the Democratic Convention August 1968, after the people united in protest and burned their own neighborhoods down, the federal redevelopment administration razed the Neighborhood.

I remember walking through the empty lots trying to remember where was Goode's pharmacy, or Gaither's floral shop. Was this pile of rubble and bricks the remains of Dorsey's record store or Trowler's cleaners? They were all places that gave me my first jobs and my first understanding of Black enterprise and prosperity.

Before leaving, I picked up shattered pieces of colored glass which I imagined were the tears of my people.

It's the story of Black neighborhoods in Detroit, Oakland, Baltimore, South Central LA, Chicago, inner city Atlanta, Boston, York, Altoona, Lancaster and Philadelphia to name only a few. All either completely dissipated and decimated or simply neglected, their services cut off and left to wither and decay.

Dozens more stand calcified and gentrified with only hallowed ghosts of a proud African American past.

I've been so many places in my life and times. Although born in Pittsburgh and educated in Philadelphia, I often refer to myself as Pennsylvania's foster child. You see, I am a refugee of the 2005 Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. I sought prompt succor in Central Pa and have been here ever since.

Foster children are always looking for their people. As African Americans, we are usually able to find signs and symbols of them at the edge of one place or underneath the freeway of another.

But, walking the four-mile Harrisburg Riverfront Park with friends and fellows, we were not able to find a single monument plaque or iconic object honoring African Americans. Indeed, we could find only one iconic artifact honoring women! Something had to be done.

This summer, Pennsylvania will simultaneously commemorate the 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment, which gave African American men the right to vote, and the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which extended franchise to women.

For Pennsylvanians, this year also marks the first time that Juneteenth is an official state holiday! While Americans, young and old alike, take to the

streets to make renewed demands for equity, parity, and justice, government officials are faced with a visceral and increasingly violent backlash to tributes, buildings, and monuments that have only served to confirm a history of White supremacy.

However, here in Pennsylvania, a coalition of more than 40 organizations and 200 diverse citizens are poised to place the first monument to the value of the vote ever to be located on a state capitol grounds in the history of the United States.

The new public arts installation was created by the A.R.T Enterprises Inc of Lancaster, Pa. It represents the first monument to either African Americans or women to be placed on the Commonwealth's capitol complex in its history.

John Melham and Associates of Harrisburg, coordinated the site preparation and achieved the architecture and engineering of the monument site. Pennsylvania was the 4th State in the Union to ratify the 15th Amendment and 7th in the nation to ratify the 19th. We have much to be proud of and thankful for.

Yet, Pennsylvania's Samuel Randall, Speaker of the House in 1876, was also among those who cast deciding votes to end Reconstruction.

So, Pennsylvania and the nation must be vigilant about the quest for freedom.

The new monument will be placed upon the K. Leroy Irvis Building Lawn of the Capitol Complex. Irvis was the last African American from any state to achieve the office of Speaker of the House since Reconstruction.

Thus, the placement of the monument there and the dedication to the Irvis Equality Circle becomes as much an act of reparation as a beacon for Americans to practice their citizenship and cast their vote as a way to change systemic abuse and oppression.

The great Abolitionist, Martin Delany, stated, "Every people should be the originators of their own destiny!" Therefore, the new work, entitled "A Gathering at the Crossroads", is more than monument.

It's a movement to replace old symbols of power and supremacy with new inclusive public art works that ignite civic dialogue and animate our democracy.

This Jubilee edition newspaper combines the literary style of a 19th century publication with the animation and vitality of 21st century graphic narratives.

A souvenir of the Commonwealth Monument Project, it serves as both a civics primer on the value of the vote and a time capsule collection of articles. The contributors who share their intelligence and critical thinking form a legion of thought leaders from across the Commonwealth in 2020.



Between these covers are their reflections on the crossroads of the historic benchmark anniversaries of the 15th and 19th amendments and the first statewide Juneteenth Celebration. Together, they help to link today's currency of news events to the lessons learned from the efforts of the 19th century African American abolitionists, civil rights activists, and suffragists. We could not have achieved this landmark initiative without the leadership of PA Senator Arthur Haywood who introduced S.R. 158 and Senators Sharif Street, Vincent Hughes Jay Costa, John Gordner, Pat Browne, John Di Santo, and Tim Kearney who co-sponsored the resolution. PA Representative Patty Kim introduced the companion resolution, H. R. 415 in the House of Representatives which as co-signed by Representatives Stephen Kinsey, Ed Gainey, Joanna Mc Clinton, Jordan Harris, Margo Davidson, Sue Helm, Brian Kirkland, Sue Helm, and Susan Delozier. Their bi-partisan 2019 resolutions authorized the placement of the monument on the Capitol grounds.

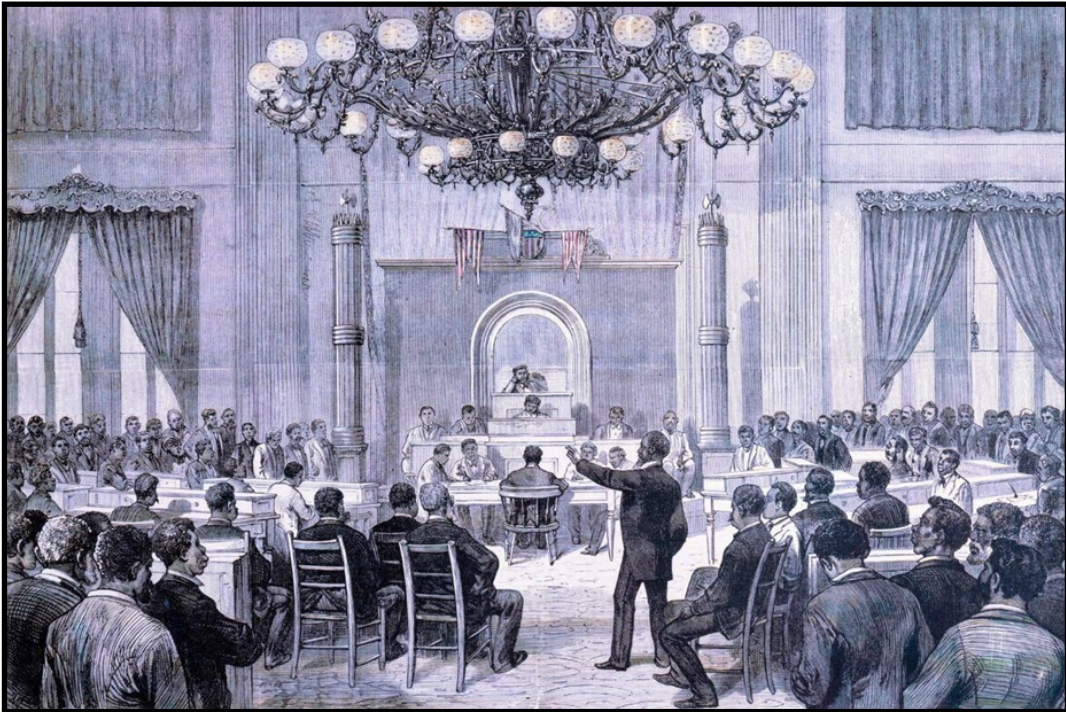
Special thanks to Dauphin County Commissioners, City of Harrisburg, The Foundation for Enhancing Communities, Highmark, M&T Bank, and UPMC for their generous support of the Commonwealth Monument Project. Thanks also to The International Institute for Peace Through Tourism, Ms. Peggy Grove, Mr. Fred Clark, The Pennsylvania Abolitionist Society, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for underwriting the commission of this compelling and amazing new work. They are truly the vigilant guardians of the franchise.

We invite you to enjoy this compilation of articles and images which contextualizes our challenges, movements, achievements, and aspirations across 150 years. Along with these exemplars of freedom, liberty equity, and parity are we working together to make a change!



The Colored Conventions Project

P. Gabrielle Foreman - Founding Director, The Colored Conventions Project



An engraving of a "colored national convention" in Nashville in 1876, printed in Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper. Credit-Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper

As a white mob vented its rabid outrage on the rising numbers of Cincinnati's Black residents, the riot of 1829 gave sharp teeth to anti-Black violence beyond slavery's borders. On the run from assault and destruction, hundreds of Black families fled; some reports say two thousand of the city's migrants were forced to flee to Canada. As the news spread, Black leaders from the country's free states gathered to protest and plan. In 1830 they met Philadelphia in the first of hundreds of national and state "Colored Conventions" held in almost every state in the US and across Canada. Black communities held multi-day conventions to organize for voting and legal rights for seven decades; they fought for educational access and justice and for equal treatment in their work, labor and travel. Together they laid the foundation for Black newspapers, schools and colleges and lobbied against slavery, discrimination and racism. By the turn of the century hundreds of thousands of convention goers had traveled to the halls and churches which hosted these meetings. Their organizing speaks to the very issues that continue to call for reform, resistance and reparations today.

Five of the first six national conventions were held in Philadelphia, which must have been ironic to its Black residents as they lost their right to vote and also saw their churches, halls and neighborhoods burn in the thirty years before the Civil War. The leadership included the lions of the nineteenth-century including Philadelphia leaders such William Whipper, lawyer John Rock, Dr. J.J. Gould Bias, artist Robert Douglass, Jr., voting rights activist Octavius Catto, and one of its few recognized women delegates, nationally recognized speaker, poet and novelist, Frances E.W Harper. They met there mindful that the Declaration of Independence had been penned and adopted in Philadelphia and that the city had hosted the nation's constitutional conventions. Delegates met at Bishop Richard Allen's invitation and in his historic church, Mother Bethel, in the last year of its founder's life. It was a meeting that began a movement.

Radical white abolitionists often followed the organizational lead of antebellum Black reformers, not the other way around. The inaugural Colored

Convention meeting predates the establishment of the American Anti-Slavery Society by a full three years. Black editors founded *Freedom's Journal* in 1827 four years before the start of the *Liberator*. The history of the Convention movement upends a genesis story that situates radical abolition and its white leadership as the stars of nineteenth-

century freedom movements. Likewise, the focus on the Underground Railroad serves up narratives of progress and international alliance. Though important, they often obscure African American alliances and debates, networks and institution building that are made clear through the convention movement. The issues this Black-led organizing highlights: voting, educational and labor inequities that still haunt North America today, are obscured by the relative erasure of this first sustained movement for full Black citizenship rights.

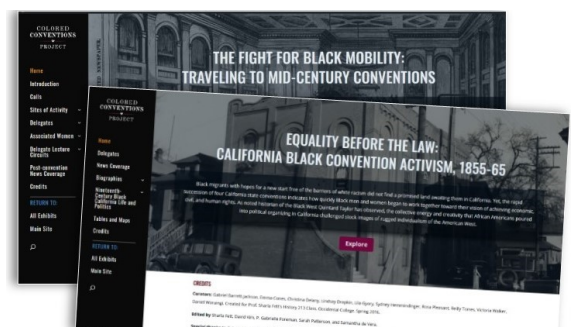
Convention participants lobbied relentlessly against voter suppression; like Octavius Catto, some died exercising these political rights. As the Civil War dawned, African American men could vote in a mere five of thirty-three states. Yet, Black communities refused to be deterred from participating in civic life. They enumerated their rights at these multi-day meetings: to vote, to testify in court, to serve on juries, and be tried before a jury of their peers. These were the rights they met to contend for, they proclaimed; "these are the rights we shall have." From Philadelphia to Arkansas, they petitioned state and national legislatures for "equality before the law and the right of suffrage" that was "bought with our blood," that we "earned and deserve," announced one convention chair. Though the NAACP is often understood to mark an "early" phase in Black movements for civil rights, it is actually an extension of well over half a century of organized state and national conventions and legal advocacy.

The award-winning Colored Conventions Project (CCP) brings this buried history to digital life, gathering the records of this movement at ColoredConventions.org and making them fully and freely available for the very first time. Founded at the

University of Delaware in 2012 and soon to be located at Penn State (where its faculty leadership will launch the Center for Black Digital Research), the team is made up of a diverse group of scholars, graduate student leaders, librarians, undergraduate researchers as well as community, arts and North American teaching partners. The team seeks to mirror the social justice commitments of the movement into its core principles. It also seeks to reintegrate Black women's centrality into its digital exhibits which have been widely adopted in college classes and soon will be featured in our high school curriculum. CCP's international Feb. 14th Douglass Day transcribe-a-thon, which we call a day of collective love for Black history, and the projects publications and presentations also shed light on the very Black women—barrier-breakers such as Frances Harper—who were largely written out of the official records. CCP's next public symposium will bring together the public, archivists, scholars and arts partners from the region and from Canada to examine the life and legacy of Mary Ann Shadd Cary (<https://coloredconventions.org/events/>). Hailing from one of the founding families of the convention movement, like Harper, she became one of its few women delegates; she also started the first newspaper in the North America to have a Black woman at its helm and went on to become the first Black woman to enroll in an American Law School. The Colored Conventions Project also seeks to learn with and from other cultural and education groups in the region and beyond. Its monthly Saturday workshop series in Philadelphia explores both digital tools for Black research and an ethics of accountability and care that honors the many ancestors whose stories and organizing our projects, work and activism seeks to honor. To learn more, please visit us at ColoredConventions.org.



An engraving of an 1869 convention in Washington, published in Harper's Weekly. Credit-Jim Casey Collection



COLORED CONVENTIONS
PROJECT

Beloved Community

Vashti Dubois – The Colored Girls Museum

Please forgive the long silence. I pray that you and yours are keeping well and safe.

It took many days and weeks for me to write anything... to say anything. Everything has changed so quickly, and continues to change. It is difficult not to react, not to respond, not to try to say or do something.

It is difficult to be still.

It is difficult to stay on the porch.

Sitting on the porch, staring into this uncertain future is an indulgence I cannot afford, but I have done it anyway; not out of wisdom, but out of fatigue. I have, like many of you, been fighting for so long, building for so long, that this is just too much.



I cannot talk about racism anymore.

I cannot talk about economic, ecological, domestic, gender and sexual violence anymore.

It hurts my heart to say Black lives matter. It hurts my ears to hear it. What does it mean that we have to say it at all?

I am busy tending my sick and mourning my dead. Yes, there have been losses during this time --and the rituals I have come to know and need for grieving and letting go have no place in a pandemic.

Ancestors occupy spare chairs and other empty places until they cross over.

My prayers are with you, and everyone on the front line and in the line of fire: in the hospitals, at home, on these streets; fighting for justice and the simple right to live.

I thank you.

I thank you for doing what I cannot do right now. I thank you for making it possible for me to tag out and sit on the porch, till I can do otherwise.

While protests were beginning around the country two Saturdays ago, my three adult children, my daughter's partner, my grandson and I gathered together on our front porch for the first time since this pandemic began three months ago. We came together to welcome my older brother home from his two months stay in the

hospital. My six-year-old grandson was holding a paper sign, his entire face, except his young worried eyes, covered by his too big mask.

We resisted the urge to pile on to my older brother, hugging and kissing him as the technician rolled his wheelchair up the walkway.

Instead, we clamped our arms to our sides and pulled all the hugs and feeling we had been saving for my brother into our eyes and voices. We cheered.

Our mouths made smiles behind our masks that we hoped he could see.

They angled his wheelchair towards the steps, and I stood back while he was lifted onto the front porch. In another part of Philly, communities were gathering in the streets, protesting the loss of Black lives by policy, pandemic, and the police. Protests seemingly ignited by the rage and frustration surrounding the recent brutal and senseless deaths of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and too many others to name here. I wondered what our beloved ancestor Barbara Neeley, friend, board member, novelist, organizer, and no-nonsense long-time warrior for justice, would say at a time like this.

I meditated.

I prayed.

I sat on the porch.

My late husband Albert Stewart and our three children moved back to New York from Boston. We lived in the house I grew up in for a few months before getting a place of our own. I would get up early every morning, tiptoe through the small house, make coffee and go outside to sit on the porch. Every morning I got up a little earlier than I had the day before. I was hoping to catch the exact moment when God was hanging the sun.

I tried to remember my mother, standing on that porch, being alone with herself, freedom dreaming or catching her breath.

I couldn't find that memory anywhere. Even as a child I was an early riser.

Still, I never caught Mama porch sitting by herself. And no matter how early I got up, then or now, I have yet to catch God hanging the sun.

We cannot say when it will feel right and safe to open these doors again to welcome you inside. So, I wonder if you would consider taking a moment to do some porch or stoop sitting with us?

During the summer or on the weekend when the chores were done, Mama would tell me and my brothers to go sit on the porch. "Stay where I can see you," she would say. It was not until I had children of my own that I realized that's how Mama gave herself a break.

Getting to sit on the porch was a treat for us. Our lives were closely supervised by Mama. It was a big deal to graduate from looking out the window at the world to being able to sit outside and feel it, touch it, smell it. *(continued on page 16)*

Why Octavius Catto remains a civil rights icon in Philly

Carol Clark Lawrence



As leaders of the Octavius V. Catto Memorial Fund, we have been moved to see "A Quest For Parity," the memorial dedicated to O.V. Catto at City Hall, become a beacon for civic reflection as our city confronts its racial challenges in the wake of George Floyd's death.

The memorial is more than simply a tribute to an extraordinary individual; it is a symbol of an aspirational America. It has, in effect, become "ground zero" for peaceful prayer and thoughtful dialogue among Philadelphians about our city's future. Few know the many contours of his story and the importance of understanding that Catto's work remains unfinished.

O.V. Catto was murdered on South Street at the age of 32. Catto and his compatriots were indeed like the many young peaceful protesters today, seeking to have America live up to the founding ideals expressed in our Declaration of Independence. In fact, Catto frequently referenced the Declaration in his oratory and he spoke about how Black lives mattered and deserved the same civil rights as Whites.

During his short lifetime, he witnessed many injustices against Black people, including violence, segregation in housing, the lack of decent education and the absence of access to public accommodations. He lived and taught school in the 7th Ward, the heart of Philadelphia's Black and immigrant communities, located between Spruce and South Streets from 7th Street to the Schuylkill River. African Americans were crowded into marginal housing and living with minimal incomes due to the lack of meaningful employment opportunities.

Nonetheless, Catto was an optimist and dedicated his life to breaking down barriers of social injustice, pushing the boundaries of social constraints and working with other African Americans and White abolitionist and unionist leaders across the country to change forever the meaning of the United States Constitution.

Catto's greatest legacy is his work towards ratification of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments, which reframed what it means to be an American and laid the foundation for the work of those who came after him. Among them, Ida B. Wells, Thurgood Marshall and Martin Luther King. Historian Eric Foner calls these Amendments, *America's Second Founding*, and it is these fundamental changes in America that inspired the French to give our nation the Statue of Liberty.

After the completion of Branly Cadet's stunning O. V. Catto Memorial, championed for decades by Mayor Jim Kenney, the Memorial Fund introduced an educational outreach program. We partnered with cultural institutions and the Philadelphia School District's Curriculum Office, with support from Philadelphia corporations and foundations, to train a cross section of educators to teach over 11,000 students about Catto and the meaning of his life and legacy. This initiative *(continued on page 14)*

“Bury Me in a Free Land”: Frances Harper’s Final Resting Place, Eden Cemetery

V. Chapman-Smith and Sheila Jones



Frances Harper’s end of life choice to be buried at Eden Cemetery is presented her biographies mostly as a footnote.

What is overlooked is how this choice provides further insights into not only Harper’s last years, but also fills in information about personal aspects of her life that have remained hidden, because very few of personal journals, diaries and papers survived the passage of time. This is despite the fact that Frances willed her personal library, papers and manuscripts to her cousin Parker Bailey, a highly respected English teacher at the M Street School in Washington, D.C. and an early graduate of Harvard. The few extant personal documents in the public record (her will) and her burial plans, which have been overlooked, add deeper context to interpreting Frances’ published writings, as well as an understanding of her thinking. Her final wishes show that Harper not only was an ardent social and political activist in life, but she also carried her beliefs to her grave in a way that further define her life and reveals what Eden Cemetery meant to the community it served.

At age 33, one of Harper’s best-known poems, *Bury Me in a Free Land*, was first published in the *Anti-Slavery Bugle*.

First stanza:

Make me a grave where’er you will,
In a lowly plain, or a lofty hill;
Make it among earth’s humblest graves,
But not in a land where men are slaves

Last stanza:

I ask no monument, proud and high,
To arrest the gaze of the passers-by;
All that my yearning spirit craves,
Is bury me not in a land of slaves

The origin of the poem is believed to be from a letter she wrote in 1858 to William Still, who was a lifelong friend. Still published Harper’s letter in his book *The Underground Railroad*. Harper wrote Still of her separation from her family in Baltimore, Maryland (a

slave state), her life and her concern about dying at a young age, because her health seemed to be failing at that time. She said: “My health is not very strong, and I may have to give up before long... Well, perhaps it is my lot to die from home and be buried among strangers...” Harper recovered and lived to the age of 86. The poem and letter reveal deep personal political commitment, as well as a desire for community connections. Her words seem to say that if she were buried in a land of slaves, it would be her personal hell.

Harper initially came to free Philadelphia in 1853. (The historical record shows that the last formerly enslaved person in Pennsylvania was released from her indenture in 1847 as required under Pennsylvania’s Gradual Abolition Act.) Frances immediately connected to William and Letitia Still and anti-slavery activities in the city. She stayed only about a year and moved on to Boston and the abolition circuit, where she pursued a grueling lecture schedule, while also writing. In 1860, she settled in Columbus, Ohio, a free state, and married Fenton Harper and purchased a farm using the royalties from her published works and from her lectures. After Fenton’s death, Frances returned to Philadelphia and purchased a home in 1870 for herself and her daughter Mary at 1008 Bainbridge Street. This is the same year that she joined William Henry Furness’ Unitarian Church and remained a member until her death in 1911. Thus, Philadelphia became the place where Frances Harper put down strong roots for the rest of her life. She did maintain the Ohio farm and it was listed among her assets in your last will, dated January 4, 1909. Years later, she acquired another home in Philadelphia at 775 37th Street, which also was listed among her assets in her final will. Her daughter, Mary, predeceased her in 1908. At Mary’s death, Harper made another important decision about her permanent “roots”: Where to purchase a burial site for Mary and herself? She chose to stay in Philadelphia and had two choices: Merion Memorial Park in Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania and Eden Cemetery in Collingdale, Pennsylvania. Frances chose Eden Cemetery’s John Brown section.

Frances Harper had relatives outside of Philadelphia and we know from her will that she maintained strong connections to them. In her later years, she was especially close to Emily Bailey, who cared for her in her last years. She also left much of her estate to various cousins, who lived in Washington, D.C. and Boston. However, it is here in Philadelphia where Harper established strong personal connections and friendships within the black community and especially among the circle of women, who were anti-slavery and women’s rights activists and joined Harper in several social services endeavors. Frances became such a key figure within Philadelphia’s black elite community that in William Dorsey’s scrapbooks (edited by Roger Lane), she is described as the “dean” of the women’s circle upon the death of Sarah Mapps Douglass in 1888. This standing is quite remarkable, because Sarah was born into a prominent black abolitionist family whose lineage dated back to colonial Philadelphia and was among Philadelphia’s most prominent black elite. Both Sarah and Frances were elder statesmen among this group of

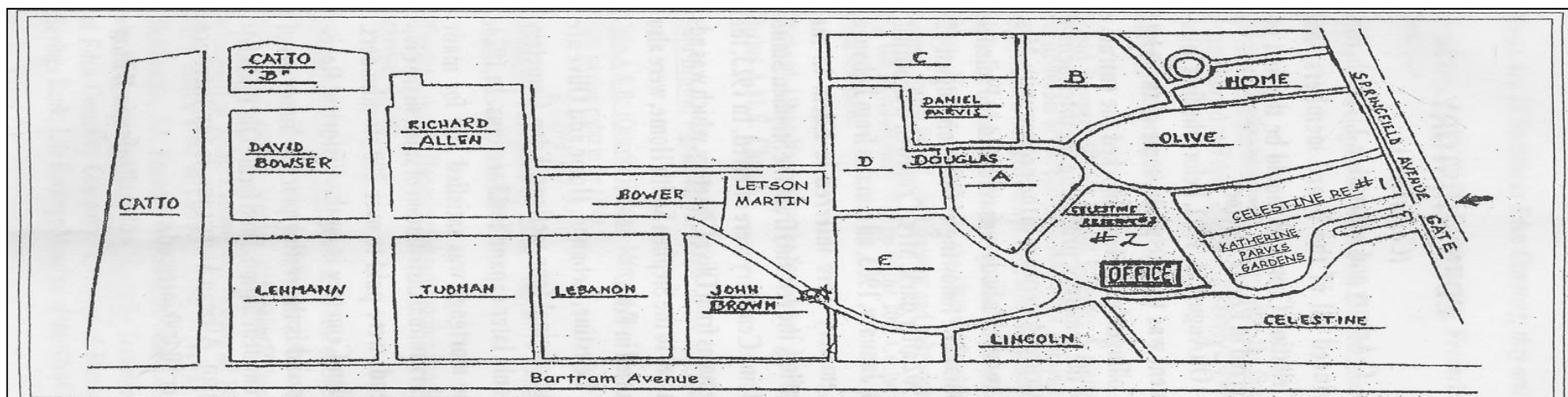
women, as they were the second generation of black female abolitionists and the first generation counted among women’s rights advocates. Although Fannie Jackson, the longtime principal of the Institute for Colored Youth, was among the elders in this community of black women, she was twelve years younger than Harper and did not have as an expansive network as Frances, due to Harper’s literary presence.

So why would Frances Harper choose Eden Cemetery as her final resting place over Merion?

What would make Eden a particularly good choice for her and Mary? Founded in 1902, Eden was established as a “collection site” for displaced and abandoned African American cemeteries and burial grounds. It was designed and organized to incorporate final resting places for cemeteries and churchyards condemned in Philadelphia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Eden founders sought to create in their cemetery a solution that unified black people and offered them a place of respect and dignity. This can be seen in the cemetery sections which were set aside for the condemned cemeteries, and others named for famous African-Americans, non-African-Americans (important to African-American history), and Eden’s founders. The cemetery map displays how this plays out on the ground of the graveyard. (*map on next page*)

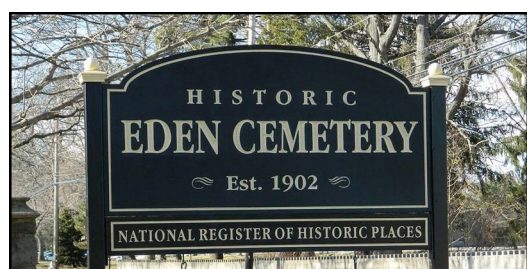
In planning the site, Eden’s founders made plans for burials from Olive Cemetery, Lebanon Cemetery and the Stephen Smith Home, while creating new burial sites with Celestine and John Brown. Celestine, named for the Celestine Cromwell, the wife of one of Eden’s organizers who died unexpectedly, was the site of the first burial in December 1902.

When Lebanon Cemetery was condemned in 1899 and Olive in 1902, Philadelphia’s black elite families, in particular, once again faced a challenge in providing a respectful place to bury their dead. Throughout Philadelphia’s history, black cemeteries held both social and political meanings. White racism forced the establishment of separate black cemeteries, even in the early days when blacks were “members” of white congregations like St. George’s and Christ Church. Less affluent blacks were often relegated to potter’s graveyards, where both white and black “paupers” were buried. Such cemeteries were sprinkled across the City and often fell victim to grave robbers. Over the years, many early African American cemeteries, like that at St. Thomas African Episcopal Church, were relocated to Olive and Lebanon, when the City sought to make improvements to sanitary and sewage systems or open up land for development. It was during Harper’s later years between 1899 and 1902 that black burials became a crisis issue. No new African American cemeteries could be created within the City limits. Eden founders sought a solution in suburban Philadelphia that would also provide for earlier burials from Olive, Lebanon and the Stephen Smith Home for the Aged. Their creation was an action of black agency, enabling the expression of black independence, while reflecting symbols of African American heritage and community continuity. As a sage in the black community, Harper would have understood and related to this. She would have also known first-hand when her activist contemporaries and friends, William Still and Jacob White, Jr., died in 1902 before Eden was open for burials in December 1902. Both men were laid to rest at Merion. Jacob White, Jr.’s situation was ironic and perhaps heart-breaking, since he co-



owned Lebanon Cemetery with his father and had arranged for his best friend, Octavius V. Catto, to be buried there. White would not be placed with his community in the cemetery he created. (Years later in 1945, the Still family had William and his wife reinterred at Eden.)

Merion was and is a respectful burial place for African Americans. However, its founding purpose was different from Eden and it was not seen in the same way by the African American community. Merion was established by James Smart, who embraced the ideals of some radical Reconstruction Republicans. Smart loved and respected people from all walks of life and he established Merion Memorial Park for people of all color and all religions. (The diversity of the site can be seen in the Chinese burial section today.) The cemetery's eight sections are named to honor prominent personalities who were notable in Art, Music, Politics and Science, including some African Americans. Merion also was willing to accept Lebanon cemetery remains. However, it is not known what the specific plan would have been, since Merion administrative records were destroyed in a fire. During the burial crisis years, some African American families did choose Merion. However, with the opening of Eden in



December 1902, Lebanon transfers began in 1903 at Eden, making it the place of dislocation and community continuity.

Harper purchased her gravesite at Eden in the John Brown section lot 487. John Brown was one of the two opened sections at the site to the public. From its opening, the John Brown section was very popular among Philadelphia African Americans. Between 1902 to 1904, there were 161 burials in that section. The other sections, including Lebanon relocations amounted to 79 burials at Eden during the same time period.

Why was John Brown popular in the African American and what did he mean to Frances Harper? John Brown was a much beloved person in Philadelphia and revered as a historic visionary and martyr. In Philadelphia, he had many allies in

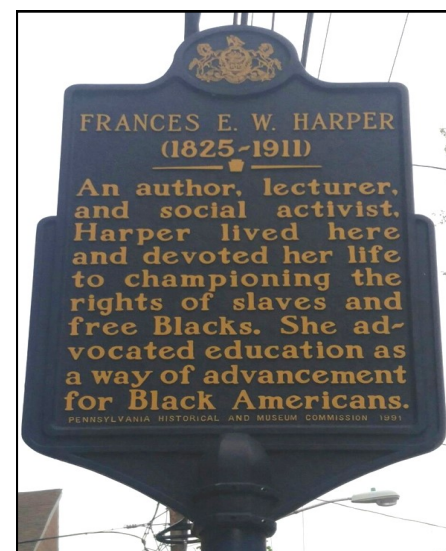
his quest to destroy slavery, including counting many black elites among his supporters. At his hanging, Philadelphia's black community draped mourning bunting and ribbons from their homes and held a vigil at Shiloh Baptist Church, officiated by Jeremiah Asher and William Furness. For Frances Harper, the connection to John Brown was deeply personal. She was a close friend of John and Mary Brown. After Brown's failed raid at Harper's Ferry, she wrote him a letter proclaiming slavery "the giant sin of our country" and said that Brown's sacrifice correlates to that of Christ at Mount Calvary. She also wrote a letter to Brown's wife, congratulating her on her bravery and nobility and sent her money as a token of "gratitude, reverence and love". Among Harper's circle of activist women, John Brown was celebrated to the end of their lives. They not only recognized his role in triggering the Civil War and the eventual liberation of enslaved blacks, but they also saw him as an advocate for rights for women. In his *Provisional Constitution* in 1858 for the new states he was planning to create, Brown proposed equality for women and specifically mentioned the rights to vote, hold office and bear arms. From this, one can understand that the Eden John Brown section would hold deep meaning to Frances Harper and be the place she would want to be final home for her and Mary.

In death, Eden also keeps Harper linked to the community she selected and made her own. Surrounding Harper in the John Brown section are many others of her time, who had strong feelings and connections to John Brown, among them are a number of United States Colored Troops. The reinternments from Lebanon and Olive also brought her together with both women and men, who were her activist allies and on the front lines for freedom, social reform, suffrage and women's rights. Among these individuals are: Gertrude N.F. Mossell, Caroline Still Anderson, Elizabeth Greenfield, Charlotte Forten (Grimke's grandmother), Grace Douglass, Rebecca Cole, Sarah Mapps Douglass, Letitia Still, Thomas Fortune, George Henry White, William Still, Octavius Catto, David Bustill Bowers, and Jeremiah Asher. Perhaps Frances Harper found her personal heaven at Eden Cemetery.

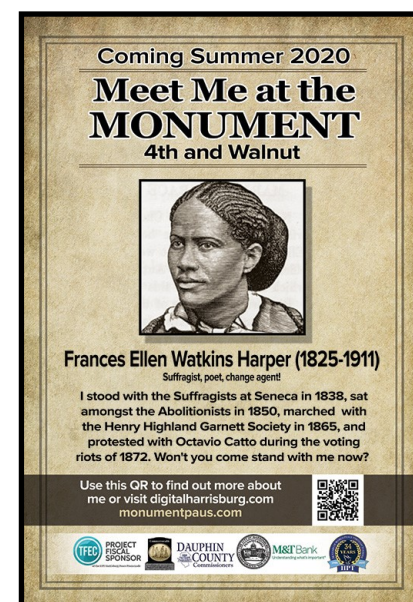
About the authors: V. Chapman-Smith is a social and civil rights public historian. Sheila Jones is Eden Cemetery's public history and education coordinator.



Harper's original grave marker, not the marker from the Unitarian Church. The photo is courtesy of Robert L. Smith



Frances E W Harper Historical Marker 1006 Bainbridge St Philadelphia PA



“Safeguard to our Liberties, Common Property of All”*: *William Howard Day and the Fifteenth Amendment*

Dr. Todd M. Mealy, Ph.D.

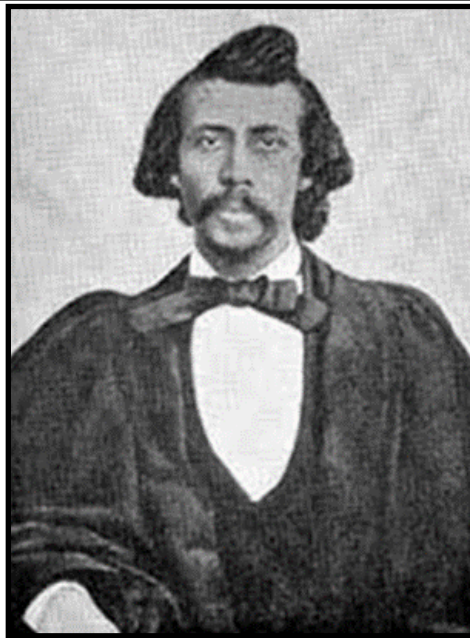
The church’s pews had been stuff with euphoric singing and jubilant tears, with hugs, smiles, and dancing, raised arms and shouts of “In your name we praise!”

The worship hall inside the Wesley Union A.M.E. Church on South Street in Harrisburg was, according to newspaper reports, “one of the most enthusiastic meetings ever held” by African Americans in the city. Educator and newspaper publisher O.L.C. Hughes facilitated the jubilee. Celebrants coauthored a resolution, calling the Fifteenth Amendment, “the only safeguard to our liberties, the common property of all.”

While those words are credited to Prof. Hughes and 13 other men, they echo the oratorical cadence and sentimentalities of a visibly absent pioneer to the suffrage movement from the church that evening. Fixed in Delaware was William Howard Day, an agent of the National and Pennsylvania State Equal Rights Leagues responsible for educating the public about suffrage and to convince future Black voters to cast ballots for Republican candidates. Though not yet a permanent Harrisburg resident when the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified into the U.S. Constitution on February 3, 1870, Day had frequented the city since the fall of 1865. At the moment, however, Day’s services weren’t needed in Harrisburg since the Pennsylvania general assembly a year earlier had voted for the Fifteenth Amendment. He was in Delaware that evening fulfilling two other duties. The first was to lobby The First State’s legislators to vote for ratification (which Delaware would not do until 1901). Second, Day was the superintendent of Freedmen’s Bureau schools across the state and he was still overseeing the construction of schools for freedmen, including writing curriculum and the hiring of teachers during a time when the Freedmen’s Bureau was on its last leg.

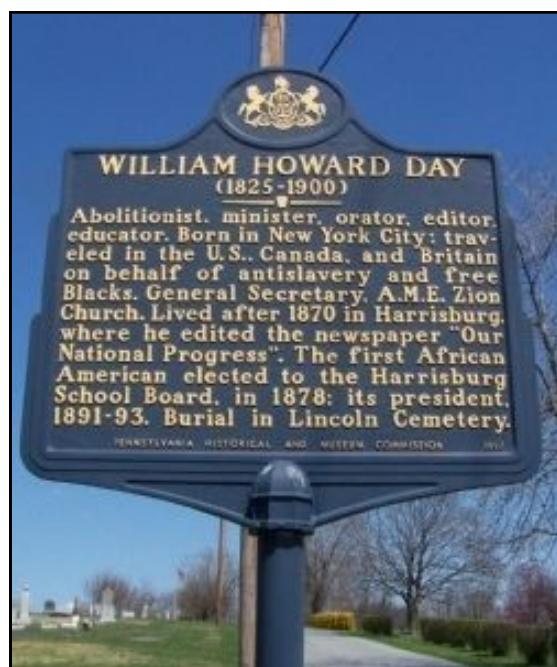
Day instead celebrated with African American citizens in Wilmington the day of the Fifteenth Amendment’s ratification. A parade that featured gun salutes and a visit to the house of Thomas Garrett, the esteemed white Quaker abolitionist responsible for aiding the escape of almost 3000 freedom seekers, was the peak event of the jubilee. Day helped carry Garrett around Quaker Hill in an open carriage that included the inscription “Our Moses.” The celebration ended with Day’s keynote speech. “I recognized the good hand of God,” Day told the jubilant crowd. Though he admired Garrett, Day wasn’t sold on the display of white-savior paternalism. “I acknowledge the positive effort of the Republican Party [but] That influence is *our* own! With all due respect to others, we have won the recognition which we celebrate today.”

The Fifteenth Amendment immediately enfranchised 960,000 African American male voters. Over 90 percent of the new electorate resided in former slaveholding states. Virtually all black voters were destined to cast ballots for Republican candidates. It was clear that the balance of power swung in favor of Republicans in important local elections across the North and in state offices across the South.



As the November 8, 1870 mid-term election-day approached, Democratic voters launched voter suppression tactics by issuing threats to black voters. Day assumed leadership to mobilize African American voters in Delaware. He solicited the help of then-president of the National Equal Rights League John Mercer Langston and J. Sella Martin, the current Law Dean at Howard University, to canvass black communities across the state endorsing Republican candidates and explaining voting procedures. Day’s rallies became targets of the Ku Klux Klan. And on election-day, tax collectors listed hundreds of black voters “dead” or “having left the state.” Democratic supporters used violence to block black voters before Day sent word to take refuge inside “their own churches, their own schools.”

After the 1870 election, Day collaborated with O.L.C. Hughes in Harrisburg on a project to honor, in his words, “the many changes happening to use after the war.” Day and Hughes published the *Our National Progress*, a key source of black voices in Republican politics. The newspaper’s crest featured a voting ballot floating in the heavens. He also worked more directly in politics specific to Harrisburg in 1871.

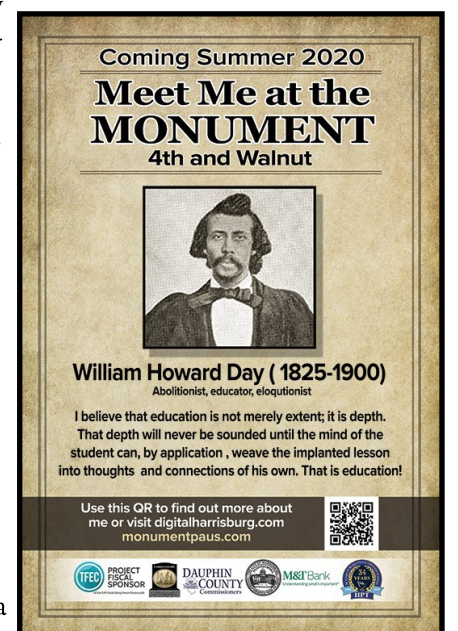


Day saw the upcoming 1871 elections as an opportunity to expand legislation concerning two important issues impacting black Pennsylvanians. Pennsylvania’s constitution was last ratified in 1838. That document restricted voting rights to white men. As long as the language of the constitutions of the commonwealth and that of the federal government conflicted, efforts to suppress black voters would remain far-reaching. Additionally, schools in Pennsylvania remained racially segregated according to an 1854 statute. Both issues could be rectified if Republicans expanded power at the local and state levels.

As in 1870, when rumors of conspiracies to subdue the black vote spread across the commonwealth during the fall of 1871, the Pennsylvania State Equal Rights League assigned Day to organize black voters both Harrisburg and Philadelphia. When in Harrisburg, he typically addressed potential voters at the Wesley Union A.M.E. Zion Church. In Philadelphia, he spoke at rallies in the neighborhoods of Southwark, Moyamensing, and the blocks between Pine and South streets with Octavius V. Catto, a teacher at the esteemed Philadelphia Institute for Colored Youth. At each rally, Day suggested voters organize themselves into neighborhood teams responsible for protecting one another.

Despite the advice, nothing short of an armed battle would have stopped the violence that occurred in the City of Brotherly Love on election-day, October 10, 1871. The police failed to suppress Irish Democrats who assaulted black voters standing in line to cast ballots. Day escaped the bloodshed that day, but his friend Catto was one of three men murdered in the chaos, having been shot four times, including a fatal wound to the heart, while walking home to prepare to volunteer with a brigade that would try to bring peace to the city. Catto’s death did not stop more than 1000 people that gathered on the lawn of Capitol Park in Harrisburg on October 13 to celebrate the Republican Party’s overwhelming electoral victory. At the post-election rally, Day detailed his friend’s murder. He called Catto, “a courteous gentleman and valiant soldier, who died as he had lived, without fear and without reproach.” If ever the feeling of reluctance to exercise the vote surfaced, he said, the people should draw inspiration from their martyred brother.

In the winter of 1872, Day took the experiences of the first two elections after the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment to his friends at the Pennsylvania State Equal Rights League. He worked with John Mercer Langston, William Forten, and William Nesbit to draw up a plan for a coalition that would serve the purpose of protecting the black electorate against vigilante violence. They called it the Union Central Republican Club. It would unapologetically champion black interests and strive to ensure the safety of black voters.
(Continued on next page)



Harper at the Crossroads

Nathaniel Popkin

We use the word crossroads here, a brilliant term describing a state of being—an intersection—and a possible direction, a choice: here we stand at the crossroads. The intersection demands a choice, perhaps, you have to turn one way or the other. You can't stay in the intersection, it's too fraught perhaps, it's too complicated—too much converging at once, in one place. But the conversion demands our stillness to observe it, to stay with it, to understand it most completely. This is the point of intersectionality, that brilliant framework that so many of our most astute young people, it seems, comprehend without explanation. I do suggest that convergence happens in place—ideas don't exist somewhere detached. In fact, the place converges too—and changes on account of that convergence. This is how history lives and how I urge us to confront it and make it present.



Frances Ellen Watkins Harper

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper moved to 1006 Bainbridge Street in February 1871. She'd spent more time in this city than anywhere outside her Ohio farm, and most of that time working with William Still on the U.R.R., organizing alongside the legendary Forten women, and challenging the city's segregated streetcars. She also wrote extensively, and spoke incessantly on justice. Here she is, speaking in 1867 demanding the right to vote for black men in front of the Social, Civil, and Statistical Association of the Colored People of Philadelphia at National Hall, feet from where we sit, on the 1200 block of Market Street. Sometimes the intersections break through time, or put another way, we, today, intersect with the past as a matter of breathing, or walking.

Here's Harper:

“I have, in the course of my life, had to put a mustard plaster on myself. Now, I don't like a mustard-plaster, and yet I would rather suffer an hour with it than suffer a pain in my chest for a week. I don't know but what we have needed Andrew Johnson in this country as a great national mustard-plaster, to spread himself all over this nation, so that he might bring to the surface the poison of slavery which still lingers in the body politic. But when you have done with the mustard-plaster, what do

you do with it? Do you hug it to your bosom, and say it is such a precious thing that you cannot put it away? Rather, when you have done with it, you throw it aside.

Now, my friends, why do you not do the same with Andrew Johnson, and impeach him (applause), and bring him before the bar of the nation, and prove to the world that this American nation is so strong, and so powerful, and so wise, that the humblest servant beneath its care, or the strongest, is not to behave without its restraint.”

Yes, Frances Harper, we're listening still: we need to throw away the mustard plaster that's drawn out all the poison. Yes—we'd better do it before it's too late.

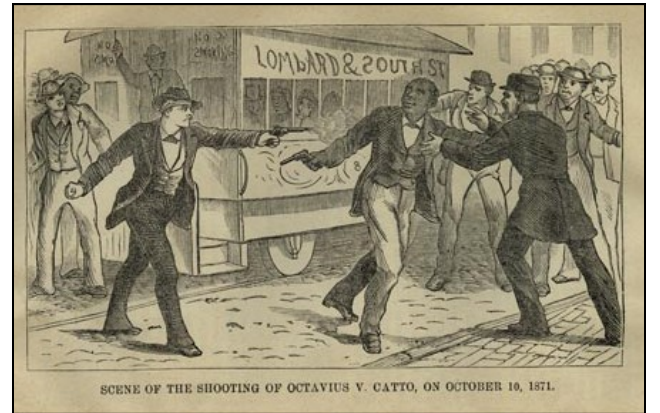
A little later in the talk at the hall that's by the way where SEPTA is headquartered today, Harper took on the segregation of the streetcars, and mentioned the story of a black woman being beaten, which was her story in the intersection of race, place, and gender:

“Friends, when that man kicked that woman, he kicked me. He kicked my child, and he kicked the wife and child of every colored man in Philadelphia. He kicked the wife, sister, and child of every colored man who went out to battle and to lay down his life for his country; and I am here to-night to protest against it.”

William Still was the first to advance the issue of the streetcars and Octavius Valentine Catto, along with educator Caroline LeCount, his fiancé, finally got the law changed. That had happened in 1869, two years after this speech and two years before Harper moved in. 1006 Bainbridge is two blocks from 912 South Street, where Catto lived, and mere feet from the Institute for Colored Youth, where Catto and LeCount had been students and were now teachers (Catto was the boys principal). From 1006 Bainbridge you can see the ICY, you can hear the sounds of the students—the very best of any race in Philadelphia—you can hear the oration of the great Catto, baseball legend, soldier, agitator, organizer. In the intersection here is not only a historical convergence of great minds and courageous people, but others who, like Presidents Johnson and Trump, use fear as a weapon, and they are led by ward boss William McMullen, whose firehouse, tavern, and home are there in between. Intersections can be fraught.

Harper understood this implicitly, standing as she was just then at the convergence of voting rights for black men and for women. Intersectionality has such powerful potential to get us out of our own lanes, but in the push for the 15th amendment, which had to happen in that instant, suffragist leaders Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony attempted, not without good cause, to say, what about the women, but by which they meant white women, really. And in this, instead of seeing the opportunity for what Harper called “our great bundle of humanity,” they really wished to denigrate black male suffrage. Harper saw right through it, saying, famously, “Elizabeth Cady Stanton's sympathy for Sambo is very questionable.”

Harper switched tactics, sticking to the Lucretia Mott-founded American Equal Rights Association, which sought equal rights for all, but without privileging one over the other, instead of joining Stanton and Anthony. This ERA was perhaps the first American intersectional initiative and it's in this context that Harper honed her sense of justice still further. In part because Stanton and Anthony's facetious intersectionality didn't account for the reality of black women.



Depiction of Catto's murder as told by witnesses—
Historical Society of Philadelphia

By 1871, the 15th amendment had passed granting the franchise to black men. A 16th amendment doing the same for women was now the expected hope. In Philadelphia, Harper knew the upcoming mayoral election in October 1871 would be a great test. Did she know the (literal) intersection of her ideals and her visions and those of Mr. Catto would end not in triumph but total despair and tragedy? The intersection was, indeed, dangerous, as Octavius Catto lost his life protecting that first significant vote, murdered by William McMullen's men.

The violence had started on election eve, literally outside her door, when McMullen men murdered black men, making widows of their wives and orphans of their children (one man was even shot in front of his daughter). This fact isn't incidental, for Harper understood that female poverty was connected to racism and to gender discrimination. She later would discover the intersection of these realities with alcohol and fought for temperance. She saw how all these things converged and intersected ultimately with the presidential politics of the day. And now sitting here today we are grateful find her in the crossroads; she never left. Let's listen well.

Howard Day

Continued from previous page

That year, Day's efforts resulted in another sweeping victory for the Republican Party. A constitutional convention was subsequently called to rewrite Pennsylvania's constitution. The matter of Black male suffrage was atop the convention's agenda. On December 16, 1873, a draft that included Article VIII, Section 1: “Every male citizen twenty-one years of age . . . shall be entitled to vote at all elections” was submitted to a vote of the people. It went into effect January 1, 1874.

To see William Howard Day as a safeguard to liberty is to center the efforts of countless African Americans who labored for the right to vote at a time when they possessed no legislative power at any level of government. To center Day in this monumental fight is to render him among the bravest who battled successive waves of blood, generation by generation, year by year, and borne onward still, until the vote became common property of all (with an asterisk).

Are Non-voters Engaging In Self-Disenfranchisement: A Question and The Cure

William Connor

Are Americans willfully surrendering their power by not voting? To be clear, a majority of voters define themselves as supporters of liberal policies and thus are inclined to vote the Democratic ticket whenever the opportunity arises. However, despite that clear majority, why was the Democratic Party unable to win a pivotal presidential election in 2016 among cries of gerrymandering, voter suppression, political manipulation by secret-money political action committees who've manipulated data provided by social media tycoons, timely "fake news," among others, all of which are scientifically evident and extensively reported-upon methods that political scientists and special interests' groups utilize to gain an "in bad faith" edge at the polls.

I challenge you to reflect on yourself, your peers, and your community, to identify the one thing that matters politically. When all is said and done on election day, you having exercised your right to vote and having used your voice to inform your peers about the candidates who will represent your, your demographics', and your community's interests to guarantee that a semblance of your voice is at the bargaining table when lawmakers are shaping our nation's laws that create the shared framework for all members of society to live.

While lawmakers are the ones who settle on the frameworks in which we all live, we *must* use our voice and our vote to secure a quality of living for ourselves, for people like us, and for people in all of our different communities whose causes we sympathize with and whose values we share, so that all can be treated as equals within the eyes of the law, and so that all have the opportunity to explore life through, both physically and spiritually, as many of the venues life will allow. With lawmakers being the ones who set the boundaries, it is *our responsibility* to show up and express the causes and values we deem important and significant to provide a guide for those lawmakers, or to flat-out elect the ones singing our hymn.

With so many public and private interests' groups lobbying and propagandizing different values and visions of what America should be both through public information campaigns and the exchanging of the hundreds of millions of dollars by donors to buy/endorse candidates' positions, it is easy for any one individual to feel completely overwhelmed by the gravity of the opposition, and to be made to feel that their voice and opinions are meaningless in the larger political debate. However, despite all of the ways it may seem the world is working against you, those like you, and those who you socialize with, it is important to remember that *you* also have a voice and a vote that *can* influence people and your community.

There is an old saying that bluntly defines the meaning of an election in our society. It reads, simply, "Elections have consequences." For those in tune with our society and current events, the election of 2016 and the new round of political appointees and politically confirmed leaders that run our federal, state, and local institutions—making ideological policy practice—the election has delivered a sobering, gut-wrenching, and enraging sense of hopelessness that day-in and day-out of insensitive and segregationist tweet after tweet, scandal after scandal of political figures using public positions for private gain, and the suppression and targeted enforcement of unjust laws that violate our communities and destroy human life, we have to come to terms with and find outlets to turn our emotions derived from hopelessness into meaningful change.

While the 2018 midterms began showing a nation fed up with the status quo, a status quo where greed is promoted, where civil rights are revoked and violated, where lies profusely pour out of our nation's leadership mouths and social media accounts, where healthcare is made exclusive and denied to the most vulnerable, where leadership stokes the flames of partisanship to sow division and reinforce chaos, and, evidently, a nation that discriminates when evaluating the worthiness of human life, we must take these emotions and set them to work for this next presidential election cycle in which the balance of power will be literally be determined to American life.

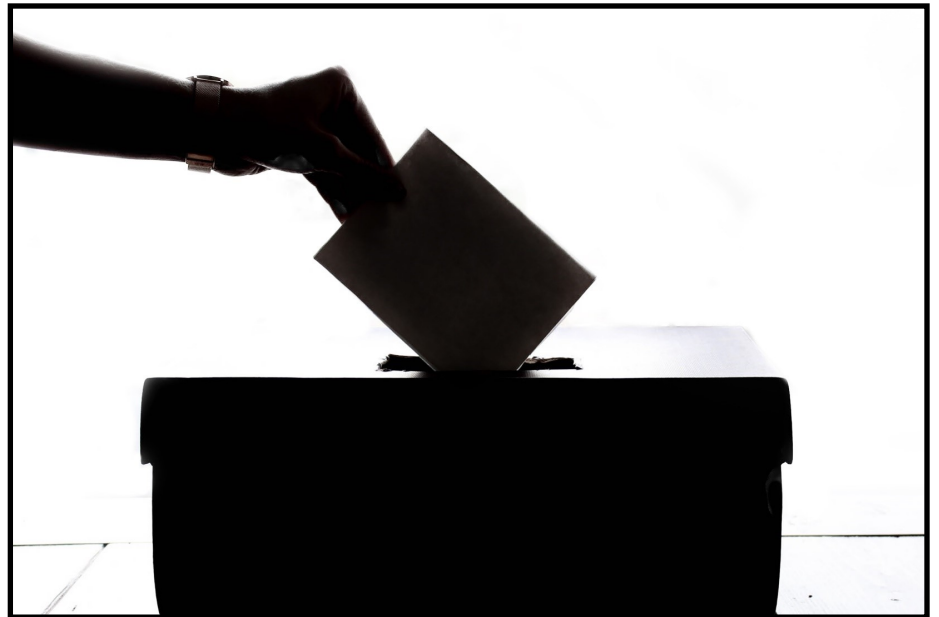


Photo by Element5 Digital from Pexels

For if we do not vote, and we do not make our opinions and our values heard, are we not engaging in self-disenfranchisement. Are we forgetting the revolutions that secured our rights to use our voice and peacefully assemble? Are we forgetting the war that turned slaves and indentured servants into free and celebrated pillars



Photo by cottonbro from Pexels

of their communities? Are we forgetting the sacrifices that secured *all* of us the right to vote? Are we forgetting all the blood that has been spilled and the status quos challenged, shattered, reassembled, and reformed?

As the year 2020 continues to strike down our most human freedoms and behaviors, let's let our frustration, fear, anger, and pain out so that we can secure the hope of a better tomorrow, a freer tomorrow, a tomorrow where we *all* can belong and enjoy our lives at peace; and a tomorrow where our leadership unifies us and solves *all* of our problems. Share your emotions with your family, your friends, your colleagues, your neighbors, and all of those who you share a community with, and then *vote!*



Race and the Woman Suffrage Movement

Angela P. Dodson

As the centennial of the 19th amendment's ratification in August 1920, approaches, a narrative seems to be developing that somehow the suffrage movement is not relevant to African Americans because of its track record for discriminating against or dismissing black suffragists, because of a long history of dissonance between white and black feminists to the present day, and/or because most blacks in the South remained disenfranchised anyway.

As women seek greater leverage in the political system, now is the time to examine and credit the contributions of all suffragists and expand our knowledge of the entire movement as an example of what can happen if people focus on the commonalities, instead of their differences.



Mary Church Terrell

My book, *Remember the Ladies: Celebrating Those Who Fought for Freedom at the Ballot Box*, certainly mentions the racist components of the long campaign to gain the vote for women in our nation, but it takes a much broader view of the movement. Published first in hardback in May 2017, it was released in paperback March

5, 2019. Mine is not just about black women in the struggle, nor is it a book about how a handful of stoic white women in flowy white dresses stormed the castles of injustice and won victory for us all. I accepted a challenge from my publisher, Center Street/Hachette, to write about what it took to win the right to vote for women in this country in anticipation of the centennial of the 19th Amendment and how it has impacted politics since then. As a journalist, I wanted to tell that story as fully, impartially and inclusively as I could.

Part of my quest in researching this book was to find out what motivated each woman to become a leader in a movement that challenged thousands of years of law and tradition. What kind of woman would do that and endure the firestorm? For some, the fuel was anger. For others, it was altruism.

Women in the United States, and elsewhere, had no rights to speak of, and not voting was among the least of their deprivations. Women generally could not own property, divorce, gain custody of children, get an education, preach or address secular audiences that included men. To learn about the individuals who broke those chains, I had to read the biography, sometimes multiple biographies, of many women and men involved, women as diverse as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the most tenacious and controversial white leaders of the movement, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett, the crusading African American journalist and suffrage leader.

As I researched, I began to see themes and connections among certain people and events, and it became clear early on that our nation's tortured racial history was a big part of the story.

In many ways, the history of race in the United States is inseparable from the history of the woman suffrage movement, as it is from so many issues. Indeed, the women's rights movement was rooted in the anti-slavery movement.

Suffrage leaders generally set the 1848 women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, N.Y., as the beginning of the long struggle for equity. However, one of the conveners of that meeting, Lucretia Mott, a Quaker preacher from Philadelphia, emphatically rejected the notion that this was the start. Instead, she traced the women's movement to the female anti-slavery conventions of the 1830s, in which white women and black women met together. A mob opposed to "race mixing" broke up a convention in Philadelphia in 1838 and burned the building where it was held to the ground that night, just days after it opened.

Organizing any movement for women would have been difficult before the abolitionist cause gathered steam in the North. Until then, few women had ever spoken before audiences of men and women together. The first American woman to do so was a free black lecturer, Maria W. Stewart of Boston, who spoke on abolition, the education of girls and other issues, from about 1831-33. Other black women who emerged as abolitionist lecturers in the 1850s were Frances E. W. Harper, also a free black woman, and Sojourner Truth, who freed herself.

Frederick Douglass, the famed black abolitionist editor, publicized, addressed and reported on women's conventions, beginning with Seneca Falls in 1848. Douglass attended many more women's rights gatherings over the next five decades, even after a great falling out in the movement over whether to support the 15th Amendment — securing the right to vote for freed black men — while asking women to wait. "This hour belongs to the Negro," declared Wendell Phillips, a white Bostonian who took over as head of the American Ant-Slavery Society in 1865. "As Abraham Lincoln said, 'One war at a time,' so I say, 'One cause at a time.' This is the Negro's hour."



Mary B. Talbert



Ida B. Wells

Some women, including Frances Harper, agreed, but Sojourner Truth did not. "I am glad to see that men are getting their rights, but I want women to get theirs, and while the water is stirring, I will step into the pool. Now that there is a great stir about colored men's getting their rights is the time for women to step in and have theirs," she said.

Ironically, Stanton and Anthony had set up office in New York City during the Civil War to gather petitions demanding passage of the 13th Amendment to make emancipation permanent in the Constitution and lecturing for abolition.

After the war, with white women's suffrage at stake, Stanton began writing virulently racist editorials, railing against giving the vote to uneducated black men and immigrants while elite white women waited. Confronted about her stance by a white abolitionist man, she had stormed out of a meeting of the American Equal Rights Association, which was formed in 1866 to fight for voting rights "irrespective of race, color or sex" and with Anthony, formed an organization to work for the women's cause only.

Racism continued to mar the good efforts of suffragists for the next 50 years, when the 19th amendment was secured, but that should not dampen the enthusiasm for celebrating this milestone for women. To do otherwise dishonors the memory of black women and men who fought long and hard for ratification of the 19th Amendment and marginalizes their role. Black women in the South were still often disenfranchised, but those outside the region organized and voted enthusiastically, and if white women had not gotten the vote, black women certainly would not have. Fear that black women's votes would shift the balance in the South and topple white supremacy fueled efforts to deprive all women of the vote and prolonged the movement for more than 70 years. The women's rights movement of the 19th and 20th centuries also secured other important rights that women enjoy today, notably opportunities for education and employment — though the struggle for pay equity, economic justice, and other rights continues for all women.

Angela P. Dodson is a longtime journalist and the author of *Remember the Ladies: Celebrating Those Who Fought for Freedom at the Ballot Box*. She also wrote the introduction to a 100th anniversary edition of *Jailed for Freedom: A First-Person Account of the Militant Fight for Women's Rights*.



Signing the Juneteenth Resolution

OPAL WALK AND JUNETEENTH 2020

Ron Brown

Dear Family,

On June 19th, 2020, 93-year-old Ms. Opal Lee took a Virtual Opal Walk!

Ms. Lee's 2020 National Opal Walk kicked-off in Texas, home of Juneteenth. Social medial tools provided the opportunity for a crossroads with the launch of a PA official Juneteenth National Freedom Holiday Celebration Historic YouTube Documentary on **Philadelphia's PA Old 7th Ward & Old City.**

The African American men of the 7th Ward led new USCT recruits from across the Commonwealth to Philadelphia's Camp William Penn where they trained before entering some of the most critical battles of the remaining years of the Civil War. As most readers well know, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in April 1863, legally freeing all enslaved people in the Confederate states — even though the proclamation couldn't be enforced in the areas that remained under Confederate control. But some Black people were kept enslaved for months or years after the Confederate surrender in April 1865 ended the Civil War.

The origins of Juneteenth, history for both Texas and Pennsylvania begin on June 19th 1865, when Pennsylvania's 25th Corps of the United States Colored Troops joined General Granger's 2000 Union Troops

The 25th Corps, composed of 6 infantry from Camp William Penn, began their final freedom march from plantation to plantation, freeing the enslaved of African origin in Texas. The occasion marks the day the last group of enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, were informed of their freedom by Union troops. Their 7th Ward community welcomed them home in 1865 where they were re woven into the fabric of African American life.

We intended to bring sojourners on the quest to freedom to the streets of Philadelphia in April, 2020 to fall like a legion behind Ms. Opal Lee and rediscover the Old 7th Ward. We also pledged to help her with the unified petition initiative to make Juneteenth a national holiday

The pandemic crisis and the paradigm shifting social-political events which followed made that impossible.

In late spring 2020, V. Chapman Smith, Amy Hiller and I developed content for a 4-hour virtual Opal Walk of Philadelphia's 7th Ward.

Following Juneteenth 2020, I have had the opportunity to finish-up with some national Juneteenth strategic elements.

Throughout the early summer, a virtual model was constructed around our work based on my original template. Amy Hiller and Joe Becton

video-taped live content/footage for inclusion in the model. Amy Cohen added the resources edited from *History in the Making* Production content/footage she and others produced.

The 4-hour video content is being edited as an educational resource for the Philadelphia School Board, home schooling, and distance learning sites, and lifelong learning programs. The viral tour video will support the planning of future 2020 and 2021 Opal Walk Philly events.

Throughout the coming months, I am interested in hearing from you about the role you'd like to play in Opal Walk Philly in the future. View the upcoming video with your family, school, church, or neighborhood.

It would be helpful if you could share with me your thoughts about elements you would like to see included in a 2020-2021 Opal Walk Philly series.

We're the only state in the nation with a city mayor, Jim Kenney (Philadelphia) and state governor, Tom Wolf (PA), simultaneously designating Juneteenth a state/city legal holiday for its employees. On the same day!

On June 19, 2019, the Commonwealth became the second state in the nation to pass Juneteenth Legislation with a Bill (HB619). One year later, governor Wolf stated,

"The period of slavery in America stained our nation's promise of liberty and justice for all. Juneteenth celebrates an end to this shameful period, recognizes the contributions of Black American culture and marks a renewed commitment to ensuring the reality of equality and opportunity for all Americans."

"This Juneteenth, people across Pennsylvania and the world will celebrate this important day of independence," said Governor Wolf on June 19, 2020. "This is a moment to honor African American history and reflect on how each of us can promote equality, liberty and justice for all people."

"In recent weeks, people around the nation have joined together to demand an end to systemic racism and oppression of African Americans," said Gov. Wolf. "Freedom for all is not fully realized until every person is truly free. This Juneteenth we have an opportunity to unite against injustice and create lasting change that will make Pennsylvania and our nation a better place for everyone."

Currently, we are participating in writing Juneteenth legislation into law to be a national holiday

But our efforts began almost two decades ago when HR236 was submitted by PA's State Representative John Myers, and declared by a House of State Representatives votes, of 191-0, Nineteen years later, we are still playing a key role in Juneteenth being declared a National Holiday and are just steps away from achieving our goal.

As of this publication, we are approaching the 100,000 signatures committed from Pennsylvania. At Freedom Day, 2020, we were just 35,000 signatures away.

By late summer, our coalition will help Ms. Opal Lee topple the 1,000,000 petition signatures needed for Juneteenth to be designation of a National Holiday.

There is no doubt in my mind, with your will and determination that we will be giving our 93-year-old elder Ms. Lee, the 2020 Juneteenth gift she has asked for during the past 4 years.

Indeed, our efforts grew by quantum leaps as the injustices of the pandemic, protests against the death of George Floyd, police brutality and systemic racism increased.

Special thanks to V Chapman Smith, Amy Cohen, Amy Hiller, Joe Becton, Sharmaine Matlock Turner, Rev Mark Tyler Lenwood Sloan, Tayyib Smith, and Zemoria Brandon, Momo St.Clair, Asia Weatherford, Will Conner, and Gary Sheppard hanks also to Diane Leslie and Andrew Carn for adding the credits and a finishing touches to our Virtual Opal Walk documentary.

Kudos to Brandon, Devon, Glynis, Eva, and Jimmy, the Millennial Juneteenth team, for all of your support.

Please take the time to envision what a 2021 National Juneteenth product might look like. Then email me and express your thoughts.

Finally, 2021 will be the 20th anniversary since Pennsylvania Juneteenth Coalition first introduced Juneteenth legislation.

I ask this fundamental question: "When Juneteenth National Freedom Day is declared a national holiday; and we get our freedom, what do we plan to do with it?"

In Spirit,

Ron Brown



Opal Lee



October 10, 1871: A Fateful Day in the Quest for Universal Suffrage

By Amy Cohen, Director of Education
History Making Productions

African American men received voting rights, by law if not in practice, with the ratification of the 15th Amendment in 1870. The 19th Amendment extending suffrage to American women took until 1920. Locally, an 1871 mayoral election demonstrated the challenges faced by both groups as they tried to access the franchise.

October 10, 1871 was Election Day in Philadelphia. The top of the ticket featured Democrat James Biddle against Republican challenger William Stokley. The incumbent Democratic Party relied on the support of the large Irish American community. Democratic hegemony was threatened by the newly enfranchised black male voters who were sure to vote Republican, “the party of Lincoln.”

Well before black men were given voting rights, tensions ran deep between the African American and Irish American communities. The Irish saw blacks as their rivals for low-skilled jobs, and the groups lived in proximity throughout pockets of South Philadelphia. Within the ranks of the police force were many Irish Americans who feared their employment would be in jeopardy should the Republicans win the mayoral election.

Not surprisingly, the first opportunity for blacks to exercise their hard-won right to choose a new mayor became a day of chaos in Philadelphia. The morning started badly at a polling station at 6th and Lombard Streets. According to a report in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, “Early in the morning, several quarrels occurred between the colored voters, the police, and the roughs who had congregated about the window. As the crowd gradually became larger the ill-feeling between the parties was considerably increased by a number of intoxicated persons, who seemed to have no other idea than that of engaging in a free fight.”

The article continues, “The colored voters allege that they were unjustly treated by the police and in many cases forced from their proper position in line to make way for white voters. Some white roughs who were present appeared bent on adding fuel to the flame and creating a riot if they could.”

In the early afternoon, Mayor Daniel Fox arrived on the scene and relative calm was temporarily achieved by roping off the voters from others in the crowd.

Once Mayor Fox had returned to his office, however, reports of policemen and others seeking to prevent African Americans from voting continued to pour in. The mayor was summoned to court as judges sought to ensure access to the polls. People came to the court describing extensive rioting in the vicinity of Lombard and St. Mary’s (now Rodman) on the east side of Broad Street.

As described in the *Inquirer*, “In the streets paving stones and brickbats were flying in all directions and from some of the homes occasionally a stray bullet would come.”

As the riot eventually spread south to Fitzwater Street, citizens continued to complain about police violence against black voters. Arrest warrants were issued for a few officers, but then quickly rescinded, as authorities concluded that a full complement of police would be needed to restore order. In retrospect, this seems like an odd decision given that police, both uniformed and

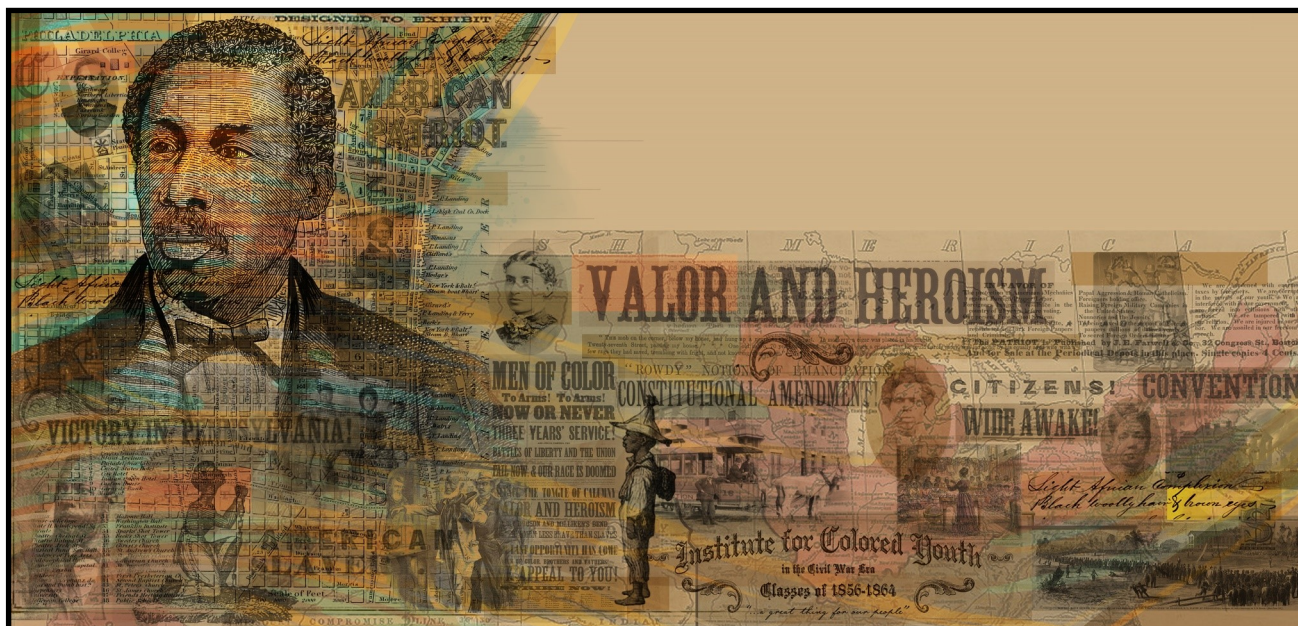


Image credit Mural Arts Program of Philadelphia

plainclothes, were among the worst offenders in perpetrating violence and voter intimidation.

Election Day 1871 is best known for the assassination of scholar, civil rights activist, Civil War recruiter, Pennsylvania National Guardsman, athlete, and voting rights crusader Octavius Valentine Catto. In addition to Catto, two other black men were shot and immediately killed and another later died of gunshot wounds. Scores were injured.

Frank Kelly, the gunman who shot Catto, was able to slip away, probably with police assistance. When captured in Chicago several years later, he was brought back to face trial. In spite of more than twenty black and white eyewitnesses identifying Kelly in court, he was acquitted by an all-white jury.



Caroline Burnham Kilgore

On that same turbulent Election Day, a woman named Carrie S. Burnham attempted to vote. Accompanied by her future husband and carrying documents indicating that she was a United States citizen, a Philadelphia resident, and a taxpayer, she tried to cast her ballot at a polling station in a liquor store at Broad and Wood Streets. Burnham was turned away.

On a different day, Burnham’s bold effort might have made headlines. With all of the violence and death of October 10, 1871, however, her story was relegated to the final paragraphs of a multi-columned page. She sued and took her case all the way to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Although Burnham lost, she published her lengthy argument in a book dedicated to “the women of Pennsylvania, and all women who desire to be free; and also, all the men, possessed of sufficient noble

manhood to bear equality.”

Earlier in 1871, Burnham, who already held a medical degree, had applied to the University of Pennsylvania Law School but was rejected because of her sex. She attempted to attend lectures but was barred from this as well. She studied independently but was prohibited from taking the bar exam.

In 1881, after ten years of effort, she became the first female law student at the University of Pennsylvania. By then she had married her Election Day escort, Damon Kilgore. She finished law school and, after petitioning the General Assembly several times, in 1866 was finally allowed to take the Pennsylvania bar exam. In 1888, she took over her husband’s law practice following his death.

In 2013, alumnae of Penn Law School named the Kilgore Society in her honor. This networking and mutual support group for female attorneys is unlike anything that would have been available to Kilgore herself. During most of her years in practice, she was the only female lawyer in the state. Carrie Burnham Kilgore died in 1909, eleven years too early to see women finally get the vote.

And what were the results of the election of 1871? In spite of the violent attempts to suppress the black vote, William Stokley was elected on the Republican ticket. While Carrie Burnham Kilgore remains an obscure figure, in 2018 voting rights martyr Octavius Catto was belatedly recognized with a large memorial installation on the south side of City Hall. Kilgore, Catto, and countless others made enormous sacrifices to expand the franchise. Please vote in November! We are all better off when more of us take advantage of the rights that others fought so hard to gain.

To learn more about Octavius Catto and Election Day 1871, see Emmy Award winning short film, *Octavius V. Catto: A Legacy for the 21st Century* at historymakingproductions.com/ovc

Amy Cohen Amy Cohen spent 20 years as a social studies teacher, most recently at Masterman. She is currently the Director of Education at History Making Productions where she develops educational materials to accompany documentaries about the Philadelphia region. Amy was born and raised in Center City long before the era of sidewalk cafes and pop up beer gardens. She now lives in West Mount Airy with her husband—also a lifelong Philadelphian—and their two daughters.



The photo by The Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

Why Octavius Catto remains a civil rights icon in Philly

continued from page 5

engaged teachers addressing how their own perceptions on race impacted their teaching. It also focused on students' views on race from lived experiences and civic conversations through their study of the racial violence that ended Catto's life. In the future, an expanded educational initiative, at all levels, is envisioned as we continue to seek financial support for ongoing programming.

As we think about next steps for building a stronger community in Philadelphia, it is our duty to mold articulate and vigilant citizens for our future. We must strive to enable more young people to learn about Octavius V. Catto and how they can complete his unfinished revolution.

Carol Clark Lawrence, James B. Straw, and V. Chapman-Smith leaders of the O.V. Catto Memorial Fund



The photo by The Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

South to Spruce

Momo St. Clair

I walk to and from work daily. I leave my house early in the morning and walk all the way up from South Philly to the heart of the city. Philadelphia is a good city for a walk— history lives concurrent with the modern. The buildings look like all the centuries combined: 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st. I find myself walking alongside ghosts who walk these streets. Ghosts who carry the scent of history.

As I walk, I can hear their clicking shoes and rustling dresses and hooves of horses pounding the pavement. The history books I read come alive.

Once I cross over South and until I cross over Spruce, I find myself in a world that has become familiar to me. It's a world that has been growing inside my head. The Seventh Ward. Called Afrika City because of its large population of black folks, this section of the city was the microlab for W.E.B. DuBois's sociological study, *The Philadelphia Negro*. Commissioned by the University of Pennsylvania as a way to gather data so that certain influential white citizens could understand why the black population was not able to participate in the social life of the city, *The Philadelphia Negro* would lay out DuBois's findings that the social circumstances created by racial discrimination was the cause of the depraved nature of the Seventh Ward (and the "turpitudes" of some). The horror with which the white citizenry looked upon their fellow black citizens was a horror of their own creation.

What is a human to do when they live in a city and everything around them conspires to strip them of every opportunity to conduct life as a human being? How is that human being able to attain the basic needs to survive? What emotional map and circuitry is created in that human's brain? How does that affect what we call morality? What happens when this is an entire demography? What happens when that demography possesses its own hierarchy? These are the questions that challenge me as I walk between South and Spruce. These are the questions DuBois meticulously and scientifically answers using sociology. These are the questions I want to answer using theater and fantasy.

DuBois, the brilliant archivist, made a map of the Seventh Ward, color coded to show who lived in what residence based on class classification. I consulted the map, mapping my walk between South and Spruce. Mostly working class black folks and white folks lived on those blocks. Two houses are coded black, designating members of the criminal class.

I found out about the Seventh Ward when I moved to Philadelphia in 2017. I started to read *The Philadelphia Negro* as a way to acclimatize myself to the city. It was shocking to me how contemporary it read. Many parts of the black experience still reflect the insecurity, instability and strain that DuBois outlined in 1899. But what DuBois cannot fully capture in his numbers are the emotions that permeate the street. I hear them as I walk from South to Spruce. I hear a woman who has to go clean up from her employer's New Year's Eve party the night before. She is rushing but she has time to share a story with a friend. They laugh together. There is a shot in the house down the block—the house colored black. Their laughter is cut short as they hurry on.

Who lived in that house? Why did DuBois designate it the residence of a criminal? Did the person who lived there allow DuBois admission to their home? How did DuBois interact with them? Did his Puritan New Englandness peek out?

Saidiya Hartman, in her book *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments* writes "[DuBois] was the repository for all that striving and disappointment, the collector of anecdotes and stories, the one cleaving to all those bruised lives. What could he set down in orderly sequence on schedules, when so much exceeded this? The information he stored in his memory?" The idea for my play, *Mr. DuBois*, came as I pondered on what it would be like for W.E.B. DuBois to visit the different homes of the residents of the Seventh Ward—both the native Philadelphians and the new arrivals from the South—and hear their stories three decades out from the Civil War. The more I researched and learned, the more I realized that for a play to explore the levels of complexity outlined in *The Philadelphia Negro*, it had to be more than just a realistic piece. I would have to let loose the imagination in my head. One filled with magic, mystery and pageantry.

I decided to write a myth.

By creating a mythical world, I explore the spiritual, emotional and psychological effects of the black experience in America. By creating a pantheon of deities out of the black residents I am exploring how one wakes up every morning and carries on when you live in a world that puts a strain on your ability to self actualize.

As the mythical world of New Jerusalem grows inside my head, crossing over South Street feels like crossing into sacred ground. I see the people as I peek down the narrow streets. I hear the carriages of the Caterers of Addison street. I feel the residents walking to go open the windows to let in new air into their employers house or power the elevators to bring them up and down. Crossing Spruce, bleeding out of the Ward into Rittenhouse, I feel the pride of knowing that great people lived there, making a way out of no way.

Thought Leader Presentation on the Evolution of *Girl Truth: What Lens Are You Looking Through?*

Nancy Gilliman – November 14, 2019

I would like to use information found in a brief paragraph written by Jone Johnson Lewis about Frances Harper to connect legacy to currency.

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, born to free black parents, was orphaned by the age of three, and was raised by an aunt and uncle. She studied Bible, literature, and public speaking at a school founded by her uncle, William Watkins Academy for Negro Youth. At 14, she needed to work, but could only find jobs in domestic service and as a seamstress. She published her first volume of poetry in Baltimore about 1845...

In the first sentence, we see that Frances Harper was born into a good situation – both of her parents were free - but by the time she was three, she was orphaned. There are many girls today being born into situations – good and bad. Many go on to find themselves in orphan like states – physical death is not always the culprit. Sometimes the culprit is mass incarceration. Sometimes it is addiction. Sometimes it's mental illness. Sometimes it is poverty. Sometimes, the parents are absent while being present. What happens to those girls? What happened to Frances?

The paragraph goes on to tell us that she was raised by an aunt and uncle; that she studied Bible, literature, and public speaking at a school founded by her uncle, William Watkins Academy for Negro Youth. Thank God for her village stepping in to raise her and prepare her.

The Evoluer House is a part of the village stepping in to raise the girls of whom I speak today. Evoluer is a French word which means “to evolve”, and we assist in the evolution of teen girls between the ages of 13 – 18 by providing summer programs designed to build self-esteem and capacity for college preparedness, work readiness, responsible adulthood, economic independence and civic-mindedness. The program meets girls where they are, acknowledging the reality and pressures that they face. Like Frances' aunt and uncle prepared her, we are here to help prepare them. Legacy to currency.

The paragraph continues with, “At 14, she needed to work, but could only find jobs in domestic service and as a seamstress. She published her first volume of poetry in Baltimore about 1845...” Frances was born in 1825, so she was 20 when her first volume of poetry was published. What happened between the ages of 14 and 20? Like many of our girls today, Frances was doing what she had to do so she could do what she wanted to do. She was young. She was gifted. She was Black. She was prepared to let her voice be heard. She was prepared, but there was no platform – no place for her to raise her voice - the Weekly Challenger states that it was as a lecturer that Harper had her greatest impact. Imagine the greater impact if she had a platform to speak during that 6-year period. The girls of whom I speak today do not have to imagine.

In November of 2018, the Evoluer House took part in an On the Table Philly discussion with graduates from

the summer program – all between the ages of 14 - 20. Our conversation topics ranged from constructing a new narrative for girls of color, living free while fighting for equality, & why there is power in being unapologetic girls of color. During the conversation, the girls were asked what The Evoluer House could do that we were not already doing. The girls expressed that Evoluer was already doing everything - it was them that needed to do more. They expressed their interest in setting up a Young Politics Club, Peer to Peer Mentoring, creating a data base of resources for young women of color & a podcast – the platform where their important conversations could continue. Almost nine months to the day of this historic meeting, *Girl Truth: What Lens are You Looking Through?* was birthed. This podcast, by girls of color for girls of color, gives them the platform to share their stories, create their own narratives and talk about things that are important to them. I serve as producer and advisor, but they are the content creators.

Season one topics include Representation of Women of Color in the Media, Stress & How to Manage It, The Use of the “N” Word in Music & Role Models – Where to Look for One & How to Be One. There are also special “story” episodes in which young ladies share their personal stories. Our first story episode, “*Leaving Puerto Rico*”, Jennielee Hilario, an award-winning graduate of our program, tells her story of surviving Hurricane Maria, leaving her homeland and starting life over in Philadelphia.

The next podcast to be released is “*I Am Not a Terrorist*”. Baiyinah Gough shares her experience of growing up a young Muslim girl in Philadelphia.

Some may ask is this platform a necessity? Is anybody really listening to what a teen girl has to say?

Since the podcast launched on August 14, 2019, it has maintained a steady presence on Apple Podcast United States Non-Profit Chart, peaking at number 12. It entered the Apple Podcast Non-Profit Chart in Ghana at number 6 and peaked at number 3. Two episodes are currently charted in addition to the podcast itself. The listening audience includes Ghana, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Lithuania, India, Puerto Rico, Minnesota, Arizona, Illinois, Delaware, Texas, North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia, Georgia, Maryland, Washington, DC, California, NY, NJ and PA. Four continents, six countries. So, I would say, yes! Everyone has a voice, and we need to – we have to be willing to listen.

I would like to conclude with a quote from Frances Harper herself. *We may be able to tell the story of departed nations and conquering chieftains who have added pages of tears and blood to the world's history; but our education is deficient if we are perfectly ignorant how to guide the little feet that are springing up so gladly in our path, and to see in undeveloped possibilities gold more fine than the pavements of heaven and gems more precious than the foundations of the holy city.*

From legacy to currency. Thank you.



Girl Truth: For Frances

Nancy Gilliman

In her 86 years, Frances Harper accomplished a lot. Yet, the sad fact remains that Frances Harper lost precious years. She was prepared to walk in her purpose at the age of 14, but the time didn't provide a platform. The time dictated that “children were to be seen, not heard”. Especially true for “coloreds”. Especially true for girls.

It would have been a beautiful thing if Frances had been given a choice after her period of preparation. A place to speak. An opportunity to be heard. After all, shouldn't preparation lead to purpose? It should, but for Frances, it didn't. Instead her period of preparation was followed by what could have been a void. I say could have been, because Frances made a choice. She chose to exercise the spirit of our Creator and create out of that void a vehicle to let her voice resonate – to allow it take form, take shape. Though the audacity of the audible was out of her reach, her pen was a ready instrument – and she used it fiercely.

But isn't that the nature of the young? The gifted? The Black & Brown? If we can't find a way, we create one. And yet the question remains – how much more could she have accomplished if between the ages of fourteen and twenty the opportunity existed for her to exercise what was described as her greatest gift – to speak.

Though far removed from Frances' day and time, alumnae from the Evoluer House, a non-profit organization dedicated to preparing young girls of color for bold and bright futures, are standing in her stead & making her voice heard globally through the internationally acclaimed podcast, **Girl Truth: What Lens Are You Looking Through?**

Girl Truth is a podcast by girls of color between the ages of fourteen and twenty. We used to say that the podcast was for girls of color, but we quickly learned that this misnomer limited its power and potential. This podcast – the stories, the narratives, the conversations - is for all people. Girls of color have an important voice and a unique perspective, and the world is listening - from the United Arab Emirates to the Netherlands - from Japan to Angola – from Cambodia to Russia and so many other nations.

When I agreed to produce the podcast, I didn't have Frances Harper in mind. I wasn't aware of the silence that was generated on her behalf when she was a young. I didn't factor in the six years she had lost. I only knew the voices of young girls of color needed to be heard & their perspective had to be added to the “conversation”.

But then again, maybe Frances had been whispering to me all along, as the ancestors sometimes do. Maybe she got in my ear saying, “The girls have been taught well. Now what?” Maybe it was she encouraging me to create this opportunity for them – for in creating it for them, we've also created it for her.



Bobby Simmons, 18 - Marching Selma to Montgomery, 1965

A Diploma in One Hand, and a Voter Registration Form in the Other

Yaasiyn Muhammad, Social Studies Curriculum Specialist
School District of Philadelphia, Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

2020 marks the one-hundredth anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, and the 150th anniversary of the passage of the 15th Amendment. These two amendments were supposed to guarantee suffrage to all American citizens; however, the recent commemoration of the Edmund Pettus Bridge Crossing in 1965 reminds us that it took a civil rights struggle in the 1950s and 1960s to truly secure the right to suffrage for all American citizens. On July 1, 1971, with the passage of the 26th Amendment, the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18. This amendment

opened the door for young Americans to make their voices heard in the 1972 presidential election, however turnout of new voters has steadily declined since 1972, with young voters (18-29) having

the lowest turnout rate of every other age group in every election. Here in Philadelphia we are witnessing something very exciting, grassroots efforts to energize, educate, and register young voters have caused the turnout rate amongst Philadelphians aged 18-34 to increase by 111% between the 2014 and 2018 General Elections (City Commissioner Al Schmidt). It was these grassroots efforts that energized us at the School District of Philadelphia to do more.

Voter education and registration should be a rite of passage for every senior in the School District of Philadelphia. Just as these seniors expect to pay senior class dues, attend prom, submit forms for class trips, and fill out college applications, these seniors should all expect to fill out one more form: a voter registration application. It has become the goal of the Academic

Office within the School District of Philadelphia to register every eligible senior before they leave our halls and go on to accomplish their college and career aspirations. It is incumbent upon us to empower teachers, students, and school leaders to bring about a culture of civic engagement in their schools, a culture that will work to diminish disillusionment in the electoral process, by increasing student awareness of the impact of their vote.

Most seniors in the school district of Philadelphia have a civics and economics course called Social Science, it is in this space that our students are receiving the necessary voter education and are presented with one of many opportunities to register to vote. But the key to establishing a culture of civic engagement within our high schools is by promoting peer-to-peer voter registration initiatives, in which fellow seniors and underclassmen engage in discourse about the issues they may want to influence and how their vote can impact those issues. Across Philadelphia, voter registration clubs have convened and are sending teams of students into Social Science classrooms, senior advisories, and hosting assemblies in order to spread the message that their vote matters. Today we are closer to our goal of establishing a tradition of civic engagement through voter education and registration in our schools. Voting is not the only form of civic engagement, but it is an essential step that has brought massive change to our nation. With seniors leaving our schools registered to vote, and in some cases, having already voted in their first election, they are set on a path to become lifelong voters and engaged citizens. I implore you to remember the sacrifices of those who came before us and join us in this work, you can do this by adopting a high school, asking your teenager if they've registered to vote, supporting local organizations that are working on registering young people every day, and by hosting get out the vote activities within your communities. Remember, it is the young people who will lead, we've got to set the example.

Beloved

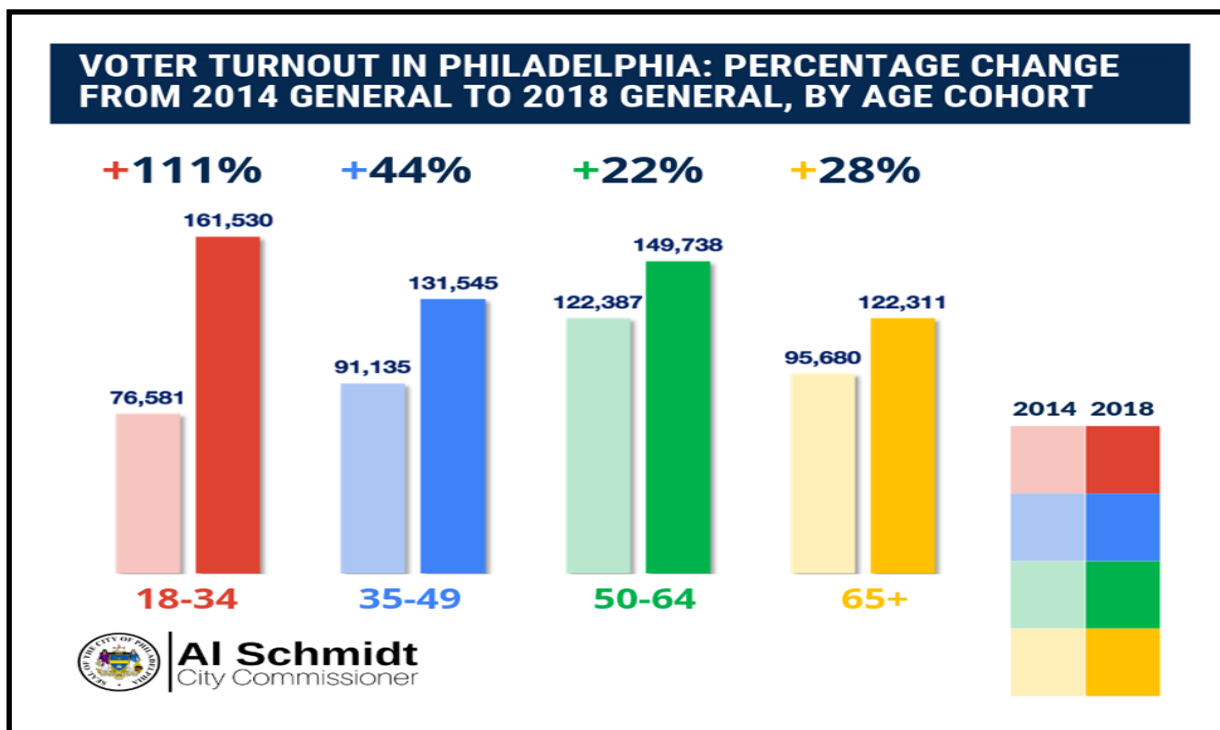
continued from page 5

Our house was a twin. Our stoop was connected to the Waters, and even though I was not allowed outside the gate, I could have conversations. On some days, I would gradually move myself from the porch to the stoop. I could swing my legs and chat with Robin, Marlo, Shawn, Tyra, Tony, Angelo, while watching the world go by. I could not walk down the block to the Carters, or Lucky, Simone, or Rodney, but I could see them sitting on their porches too.

The porch was especially alive when the summer heated up. It was the only cool place.

Sometimes, during a summer rainstorm, Mama would prop open the front door, and we would all sit on the porch inhaling the fragrance of the rain. We would reach out to catch it, fascinated by how it would come down sideways. The porch was a place of discovery.

One of our favorite rituals at The Colored Girls Museum was taking your pictures on the porch... hanging out after tours were over on the porch... telling stories on the porch.



Lancaster and the Struggle for the Franchise

Dr. Leroy Hopkins

Article III on voting rights in the revised PA State Constitution of 1838 restricted the right to vote to white men.

This action deprived men of African descent of a right that many had exercised. The response was immediate. Some members of the Constitution's Legislative Committee refused to endorse the exclusion, including State Representative Thaddeus Stevens of Gettysburg. Protest meetings of free Africans met to petition the legislature to remedy this wrong. Men from Lancaster County were involved in a number of those conventions, notably **Stephen Smith and William Whipper**, the wealthy Black entrepreneurs and clandestine workers on the Underground Railroad from the Riverfront community of Columbia.



Stephen Smith



William Whipper,

An important protest meeting was held in Harrisburg in 1848. This was to be the only convention which a number of Lancaster Countians attended. This movement began in 1830 when Bishop Richard Allen (1760-1831), founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, called free Africans in the Middle Atlantic region to Philadelphia to strategize about how they could resist the growing racism and discrimination that threatened their existence in a country which they had helped to build but had defended in the Revolution and the War of 1812.

The Lancaster delegation to the Harrisburg Convention of 1848 was William Whipper, Leonard A. Williams, William H. Wilson, Washington Webster, and Robert Boston. Besides Whipper, only the life of Mr. Boston has been the subject of recent research. Washington Webster was a laborer from Fulton Township and it is likely that Messrs. Wilson and Williams led similar lives. Telling their stories must remain a matter for another occasion... Still, it is significant that despite their stations in life, Lancaster's representatives at the 1848 convention in Harrisburg were motivated to promote the common good by agitating for the right to vote.

But who was Robert Boston?

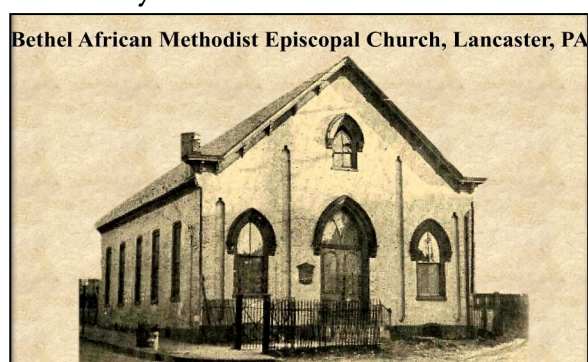
Entrepreneur, civil rights activist, religious leader & Underground Railroad operative

Robert Boston was born about 1815 probably in Lancaster. His parents were John and Sarah Boston, likely among the earliest members of Lancaster's A.M.E. Church. Both are buried in the cemetery adjoining the church. Robert took up the trade of barbering, likely by apprenticing with another African American barber. On December 20, 1837 he married Melesena Williams at Lancaster's First Reformed Church. In May of that same year he opened a shop on the East side of North Queen Street near Penn Square.

Around the time of the Harrisburg Convention, Boston was involved with Edward Rauch (1820-1902) and several others in league with Congressman Thaddeus Stevens (1792-1868) working as "freedom spies" to thwart the efforts of slave catchers from Maryland. *See historical marker*

At some point before 1860 Boston took on pastoral duties at Bethel A.M.E. Church. Rev. Thomas Henry acknowledged in his 1872 autobiography that in 1862 the A.M.E. conference appointed him to the Lancaster (Pa.) Circuit.

"I found the church at Lancaster in a very bad condition. Through the exertions of Rev. Robert Boston, we got the church under a good slate roof. I found Rev. Mr. Boston to be a true and trustworthy brother."



Photographer unknown. Courtesy of the Leroy T. Hopkins, Sr. & Mary Taft Hopkins Study Center of Bethel AME Church.

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal, Lancaster PA
Located on Strawberry Street at North Street. Established circa 1820. Originally known as Saint James African Church until about 1843, after which (1848) the congregation was chartered as The African Methodist Episcopal Church of the City of Lancaster. Following rebuilding of the church after a fire in 1879, the Church became known as Bethel AME.

The Equal Rights League in Pennsylvania

As a result of the conventions held throughout Pennsylvania the Pennsylvania Equal Rights League was organized in 1864. No record of involvement of Lancastrians has been discovered, except for William Whipper.

In 1866 Whipper was in a delegation that appealed directly to President Johnson to give free Africans the vote. A Southerner with traditional Southern racial antipathies, Johnson proved to be unmovable on that question as he was on all questions of race.

15th Amendment returns the Franchise

After much agitation Congress granted African American men the right to vote in Washington, D.C. and in the territories on January 8, 1867. This happened despite President Johnson's veto. The Republican senate overrode Johnson by a vote of 29-10 three years before a constitutional amendment granted the right to vote to all men regardless of race.

The Pennsylvania legislature refused to budge on its exclusion of Black voters, but when the 15th Amendment was enacted by Congress, Pennsylvania was the 12th state to ratify it. Ratification occurred on March 25th, 1869 and William Nesbitt, president of the Pennsylvania Equal Rights League, urged subsidiary leagues in 50 counties of the Commonwealth to



celebrate on April 26 this remarkable second step, after Emancipation, to full citizenship.

No Lancaster County auxiliary of the Equal Rights League has been found, but at a meeting in Lancaster's Bethel A.M.E. Church to plan the celebration, Robert Boston, a clergyman at the church, was called to chair the meeting. A planning meeting was also held in Columbia.

On the "Day of Jubilee," according to the local press, a service was held at Bethel A.M.E. Church led by the pastor Rev. Cuff. About 300 persons, Lancastrians and residents of Eden Township, assembled at the intersection of South Queen and Middle (now Howard Avenue) Streets and marched along the main streets of the city to the Commons, an open field opposite the Locomotive Works in Lancaster's Northeastern ward.

The procession was led by Abraham Maxwell. A Civil War veteran and member of Bethel he would later become the first African American market master at Central Market.

The Assistant Marshall was George Wells (1811-1881), a blacksmith by trade who soon became proprietor of the first Blacks-only hotel "The Sumner Hotel" on Howard Avenue. The aides to the marshals were: James Howard, Daniel Clark, Edward Mellon (sic), and William Jones. James Howard likely led the African American delegation of Lancastrians at Thaddeus Stevens' funeral two years before.

Daniel Clark likely served as 1st Sergeant in the 8th USCT regiment and was buried in Bethel's cemetery. Edward "Mellon" is probably "Millen". The 1910 "Negro Business Directory" said Edward Millen was the largest African American property owner in Lancaster and the person who organized Stevens Greenland Memorial Cemetery after Bethel A.M.E.'s cemetery became full. It is also likely the same Edward Mellon (sic) was a pall bearer for Lydia Hamilton Smith, property manager and confidante of Thaddeus Stevens.



This historical marker is permanently installed in front of the City of Lancaster Visitor Center

Do You Know Me? The Intergenerational Quest for 100 Distinguished Voices of Harrisburg's African American Community

Katie McArdle, Jean Corey, and David Pettegrew

*Our world, so worn and weary,
Needs music, pure and strong,
To hush the jangle and discords
Of sorrow, pain, and wrong.*

*Music to soothe all its sorrow,
Till war and crime shall cease;
And the hearts of men grown tender
Girdle the world with peace.*

—Frances Harper, excerpt from “Songs for the People”

The quest for descendants of 100 African-American change agents began at the moment that the Commonwealth Monument Project launched an initiative to celebrate the milestones of the passing of the 15th and 19th Amendments and to tell the stories of the families of Harrisburg's Old Eighth ward, who, like Frances Harper, invested their gifts, talents and passions in the pursuit of freedom and equality.

We were eager to join the endeavor! Fueled by a desire to understand the racial landscapes of central Pennsylvania, we saw an opportunity to document African-American historical resilience against the backdrop of perennial injustice. In fact, Messiah College's Office of Diversity Affairs, Center for Public Humanities, and Digital Harrisburg Initiative had been working for several years to unearth local history through research and public educational programs. Faculty and students had digitally curated federal census data related to all individuals living in Harrisburg between 1900 and 1930. We were especially eager to learn more about the history and stories connected to the thriving community of the Eighth Ward, Harrisburg's original African-American community and multi-ethnic neighborhood, which community mentor, Calobe Jackson, Jr., had taught us so much about.

In inviting us to the Commonwealth Project, Director Lenwood Sloan charged us with an important and lofty mission: to connect past and present by seeking descendants of the 100 Voices. Our student researchers for the Digital Harrisburg Initiative, led by Ms. Rachel Williams, responded by developing “Harvesting Harrisburg History” postcards (Figure 1) featuring the names of each of the 100 women and men alongside identifying information: addresses, birthyear and birthplace, occupations, and family members. The cards came in sepia color and bearing old-timey font like an old faded newspaper clipping. Bearing the simple question, “Do You Know Me?,” the cards marked a symbolic inverse of the “wanted” runaway slave posters that were posted in Harrisburg in the 1850s. Here, rather, was the quest to discover and celebrate the historic change-agents and their descendants. We posted each of the 100 cards on our Digital Harrisburg website and the Old Eighth Ward Facebook page with the lead “Do you know me? Seeking descendants of...”



Dr. Jean Corey, Mr. Lenwood Sloan, and Messiah College's Center for Public Humanities Fellows among Printed Signs of the 100 Voices at the Future Site of the Gathering at the Crossroads Monument

To our surprise, the replies came in, week after week in a slow but steady trickle of interest in connecting, contributing, and leading. Some came from intrigued community members with leads to possible descendants, others from specialists—genealogists, archivists, librarians—fascinated by the intergenerational quest. Many came from descendants themselves, living in the Harrisburg region or across the state and country, with offers to participate in the project with their families. Through emails, comments on social media, and phone calls, we learned about family lore, childhood memories, and treasured photographs. Each revelation brought jubilation from our student teams and the project's contributors. Over 50 descendants, representing living members from as many individuals of the 100 Voices, contacted us.

The recognition of living descendants among us created an immediate vitality that energized our various contributions to the Commonwealth Monument Project: researching, writing, and designing posters, webpages, and interactive maps of the Old Eighth Ward (a campaign called “Look Up, Look Out”); publishing a booklet featuring names, faces, and biographies of the 100 Voices; hosting poetry workshops for local students; and contributing resources to a brilliant original play written by Sharia Benn: *Voices of the Eighth: Rhythms of Resilience*. The descendants were the guiding rhythm of the orchestral production that is the Commonwealth Monument Project.

Most memorably, we saw the vitality of descendants during a wave of poetry workshops that utilized curated census data as inspiration for student poetry. To inspire the Marshall Middle School students, local guest poet, the late Marian Dornell, shared her own Harrisburg-based poetry, and Messiah students mentored the middle-school students in crafting poems that imagined life through the eyes of these historic Eighth Ward residents. Workshop participant and Marshall Middle School student Wesley Pena randomly selected a postcard for one Hannah Braxton Jones and wrote a poem, “Music Is My Life,” that imagined her life in the Old Eighth. As Wesley was reading his poem aloud – in a strike of fate that none of us could have predicted – Ms. Dornell revealed that she was, in fact, a descendant of Hannah Braxton Jones (Figure 3)

That harmony grew still richer as an ambitious group of descendants, led by Dr. Sharonn Williams, descendant of Ephraim Slaughter, contacted us to share their genealogical research experience and findings (Figure 2). Dr. Williams and her Harrisburg-based Genealogy Working Group scoured census records, marriage records, death certificates, city directories, historic newspapers, and other resources to develop brief summaries of each individual's life. One of these members, Ms. Charlotte Glover, who was a descendant of Hannah Braxton Jones, even took the time to revise Wesley's poetry according to her knowledge of Hannah's life. It was a full circle moment for our group – a moment when the beauty of the project's



Dr. Sharonn Williams and Ms. Charlotte Glover show the results of their research to Professors Jean Corey and David Pettegrew

multigenerational melody transcended language.

This was just one watershed moment among dozens like it. Descendant after descendant told ancestors' stories of exquisite resilience, vocal advocacy, generous cultural contribution, and bold political action. Descendants like Mary and Ann Braxton shared treasured family artifacts and written narratives. Others, like Ms. Yvonne Hollis, descendant of Maude Coleman, inspired us with the ways that their bold, engaged lives echo the legacies of their ancestors. Charlotte Glover, Sharonn Williams, Betty Curtis, and others collaborated with our student researchers to capture the lives of the 100 Voices for the published booklet. These biographies—the songs of the people—do not deny the systemic injustices and wrongs of the past but give hope for a more just, peaceful world full of resilient voices.

We are grateful to have had the chance to hear these voices and to learn from them, and we hope that you, too, take the time to listen carefully to the music – “pure and strong” – that they have created.

The stories of the 100 voices, a descendants list, and other works of the Commonwealth Monument Project are available via the Digital Harrisburg website: digitalharrisburg.com.



Marian Dornell and Wesley Pena with the Census Data card

" Young voices- Speaking for the Ancestor"

compiled by Dr. Jean Corey, Messiah University

Drawing on just the 1910 census data from the Old Eighth ward and her imagination, Marshall Math Science student, Tashiyah Nichols, wrote this poem about 22 year-old Lenna Jackson during a Poetry in Place workshop. Performing the poem around the monument pedestal during a Toast for Tenacity celebration, Tashiyah was able to bring Lenna's voice to a gathering of 4 generations of women (and men) celebrating Pennsylvania's ratification of the 19th amendment. and never had the chance to exercise her right to vote.



Tashiyah Nichols is currently a ninth-grade student at Sci-Tech High School. She looks forward to 2024, when she will have the opportunity to honor the legacy of Lenna Jackson by heading to the polls.

Through My Eyes By Tashiyah Nichols

Say it's hard;
people put their lives over mine.
I am mulatto.
Always drawn to my black side, but no one really accepted me.
My whole family hated by the entire community—you would have thought we did something to them

Twenty- two, life is still the same—
working in an office, passing as a white person,
I have privilege that some don't.
But office work is hard, with mostly males running the place;
females pushed aside to write letters, most of them not important.
But, I stick in there knowing I need the money to support my two sisters, my mom, and my dad

I thought being mulatto could help me
get through race issues,
because I'm both black and white,
but it looks like I was wrong.

My name is Lenna Jackson, and this is how I see it.



As a 6th grader at Marshall Math Science Academy, TreShawn Bordner wrote these poems during a Poetry in Place workshop that invited students to write a poetic history to accompany the exquisite quilted history of African

Americans in Dauphin County created by the African American Quilters Gathering. Inspired by William Howard Day's struggle for justice, TreShawn expressed his own commitment to resistance his poem, "What Happened to the World."

Now a sophomore at Central Dauphin Technical School, TreShawn continues to follow William Howard

Day's example of using pen and voice to challenge today's systemic injustices.

Reverend William Howard Day: Who Am I? by TreShawn Bordner

My heart is pumping
With pain and success.
Is it ever going to rest?
With a Master's degree
And my head in the sky,
All I can see is beauty.
Why?
Day in and day out I struggle
to Advocate for Equal Rights.
Newspaper editor, in Cleveland, Ohio
and heavily involved in the Underground Railroad.

Who Am I?

I am Reverend William Howard Day.

The Underground Railroad by TreShawn Bordner

Slaves, color, what does it mean?
When we fight and fight.
Trying to escape.

The Underground Railroad.
That's where I'll go.
God show me the path
so I can escape.

This is one terrifying place.
Whips and guns on our back,
The pain we feel,
does it ever make you sad?

Come on God, answer my word,
the Underground railroad
is my ticket to home.

Just let me be free
and I'll leave you alone.
Together we stand,
Together we fall,
We are one and that's all.

Wesley Pena wrote "Music is My Life" during "Remembering the Old Eighth Ward," a Poetry in Place workshop led by Marian Dornell. Imagine the surprise and delight when Wesley drew a card with

1910 census data for "Hannah Braxton Jones," Ms. Dornell's own great-grandmother! As Wesley drafted and revised his poem, she encouraged him to draw on his own imagination to bring Hannah's story to life.*

Over the past two years Wesley has shared his imaginative rendering of Hannah's story in many different venues, including the 2019 launch for the monument at the state capitol, where Wesley shared the podium with city, county, and state leaders gathered to pledge their support of the monument. Sadly, Marian Dornell was too ill to attend the ceremony, but found

enough strength to send this note: "Please tell Wesley how proud I am of him and what he has done to honor my great-grandmother Hannah Braxton Jones's legacy. I am deeply moved by what wonderful Wesley has done by using the arts to bring our previously unspoken history to life."

The city of Harrisburg lost Marian just a few weeks later, but her legacy lives on in the dozens of students she encouraged to listen and learn from the often "unspoken" history of their community, and the power of their own voices to shape the future.

Music is My Life By Wesley Pena

Music is my life.
Shoo shoo do din do din din shoo shoo pop
Here in my neighborhood I hear jazz music
all over the place.

Music is my
life.

I love going to 2nd Baptist Church (the church Daddy and I founded)
and hearing the choir sing those beautiful songs
that play in my head all day
Amazing grace how sweet the sound.

Music is my life.

I love opera, just this year, Marian Anderson came to our town
And we all crowded into the Board of Trade Auditorium to hear her!
Deep river, My home is over Jordan. Deep river, Lord. I want to cross over into campground.

Music is my life.

Through hard times music helped me through it all,
and I've known hard times.
Labeled a "mulatto," I was always caught between two worlds.
But true love knows no color.

When momma died, we were so heartbroken.
We cried all day, just to think "why momma why"?
Without momma's paycheck, we started to run out of money;
that's when I started to sing at the restaurant down the street
to earn some money.

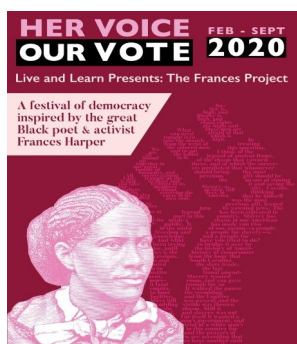
Music is my life

That's when I really found the love for music,
Now, not to just listen to it, but to *sing* it
I keep playing the music I love
And during every concert I wear a black dress
(that looks amazing with my caramel skin).
Daddy comes to all my shows and never misses one of them.

Music is my life.
And I will never give up until the day I die.
My name is Hannah Jones



Sponsored in part by:



Contributors to Gathering at the Crossroads Include:

Ron Brown, the Founder and CEO of the Pennsylvania Juneteenth Coalition and Co-Founding Commissioner African and Caribbean Immigrant Affairs City of Philadelphia. He organized Germantown's Juneteenth celebration for the last two decades.

V. Chapman Smith is a community activist who retired with over 30 years of executive leadership experience in organization capacity building, records administration, and public history programming that includes work on education reform issues and community/international engagement.

Catto Memorial Committee: Mr. Jim Straw (co-chair), Mrs. Carol Lawrence (co-chair), and V. Chapman-Smith (lead on education initiatives)

Amy Cohen is Director of Education of History Making Productions who develops curricular materials to accompany the documentaries, which she presents at primary and secondary schools and universities, and other venues.

William Connor is a warrior for social justice and a recent graduate of Penn State Abington with a dual major in American Studies and History. His field of study and publishing has been in the Civil War to the 1970s with a focus on the marginalized and the oppressed.

Dr. Jean Corey professor of English and Director of the Center for Public Humanities at Messiah University.

Angela P. Dodson is author of "Remember the Ladies: Celebrating Those Who Fought for Freedom at the Ballot Box" about the woman suffrage movement in the United States and women's political gains up to the present.

Vashti Dubois is Executive Director/Founder of the Colored Girls Museum. Skilled in Nonprofit Organizations, Youth Development, Program Evaluation, Volunteer Management, and Public Speaking.

P. Gabrielle Foreman, founding faculty director of the Colored Conventions Project is the Paterno Family Liberal Arts Professor in Literature with appointments in Penn State English Department, African American Studies at Penn State and Penn State History Department.

Nancy Gilliam produces the Philadelphia podcast Girl Truth: What Lens Are You Looking Through? "Girl Truth" is a product of Evoluer House, an award-winning nonprofit committed to assisting teenage girls in surpassing racial, economic and other societal barriers.

Dr. Leroy Hopkins is a Professor Emeritus of German from Millersville University where he taught from 1979-2015. He has written and published articles on local African American history.

Ms. Sheila Jones, Friends of Eden Cemetery, public history and education coordinator.

Ms. Katie Wingert McArdle is a writer and researcher currently serving as the head swim coach at Dickinson College.

Todd M. Mealy is the founder of the Equity Institute for Race-Conscious Pedagogy, LLC, and the Director of Equity and Instruction at The Bond Educational Group. He is the author of books about race and sports culture and contributing writer for Pennsylvania Heritage Magazine.

Yayssim Muhamad is curriculum specialist at The School District of Philadelphia who develops social studies curriculum for Philadelphia's students in grades K-12 and professional development for educators based on displayed needs.

Lenwood O. Sloan is well known across the U.S. as a catalytic agent, animator, and facilitator of cultural and heritage programs. For the past 40 years, Mr. Sloan has provided inspiration, leadership and technical assistance both in the public and private sector.

Momo St. Clair is a writer and educator based in the city of Philadelphia. He spent his childhood in Jamaica before moving to the Bronx at the age of 14. He's the product of a CUNY education: Brooklyn College and Hunter College. He wants to become like his hero, LeVar Burton and encourage everyone to read.

Dr. David Pettegrew is a professor of history at Messiah University and coordinates the Digital Harrisburg Initiative

Nathaniel Popkin is a Philadelphia-based writer, editor, and historian, author of Song of the City, The Possible City, Lion and Leopard, Philadelphia: Finding the Hidden City, and Everything is Borrowed. He is the co-editor of Who Will Speak for America? And co-founded the Hidden City Daily

The Gathering at the Crossroads Newspaper was made possible by:

Brandon H. Blake, art director of Moonstone Arts Center, is a visual artist, poet and martial arts instructor. Brandon incorporates his knowledge of eastern philosophy with western issues to both educate and inspire others. He is responsible for the art and design of the Gathering at the Crossroads newspaper and the graphic presentation of The Struggle to Vote.

Larry Robin, director of the Moonstone Arts Center, produces programs on poetry and history as well as publishing poetry books. The newspapers he produced for Moonstone's Hidden History series led him to this project. He is editor of the Gathering at the Crossroads newspaper and conceived the graphic presentation on the struggle to Vote.

Lenwood Sloan is the executive editor for this special publication. In that capacity, he has coordinated the journalistic and research contributions from six regional partnerships including Philadelphia, West Chester, Lancaster, York, Harrisburg, and Pittsburgh. Sloan is a frequent print and production coordinator for historical publications. He is a featured writer for Central Pennsylvania's SHOWCASE NOW Magazine and guest contributor for Harrisburg area's THE BURG. Mr. Sloan's cultural and heritage articles have been included in The Wayward Macbeth, Reimagining Ireland, and New Orleans's Gambit Magazine.

The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC) is the official fiscal agent for the Commonwealth Monument Project, an initiative of the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism - Harrisburg Peace Promenade. This publication is dedicated to the memory of the late, great Joseph Kelly, past executive director of the Pennsylvania Humanities Council.