

Our New Interactive Website Continued

*Thomas found on our myfamily.com (printed with permission)*

**Connecting Some Dots...AA History, Genealogy & the UGRR posted Feb 19, 2005**

While visiting Beverly Grays Website and the names she had connected to early Ross County, Ohio history I noticed some of the same surnames that played an important role in the history of Clark County, Ohio and the UGRR efforts in Clark County. There are also a couple of Ross-Champaign County, Ohio connections.

<http://www.coax.net/people/lwf/gr>

**BRADLEY**     Ross County

Joseph Bradley 1802

Sarah Bradley 1802

Joseph Bradley and family since 1799 Robert Bradley -----

Indenture to Mary Scott 1816

Physs Bradley 1807 marriage

Leah (?) Bradley marriage 1800

Sarah Bradley, becomes Sarah "Aunt



1006 Lornberry Lane  
Columbus, Ohio 43213

Return Service Requested

To order a copy of our new book *The Freedom Seekers* please visit our website [www.ohionderrailroad.org](http://www.ohionderrailroad.org)

Sally" Bradley who marries George Gammon about 1829. They settled in Springfield, Ohio and used their home, built in the early 1850's, as a "safe-house" on the UGRR. The house is currently undergoing restoration as "The Gammon House". The restored home will be used as an UGRR Interpretive Center for Springfield and Clark County. **PILES**      Ross County

researchers should look beyond our respective counties and regions for the connections that made the UGRR such a successful operation. The UGRR, is currently written and researched as a "loosely organized" network, doesn't recognize the depth and inter-connectivity that was prevalent at the time, especially in the community of the "free blacks".

Art Thomas' personal website "Families of Arthur Lee Thomas ... Springfield, Ohio" is located at

<http://familytree-maker.genealogy.com/users/t/h/o/Arthur-L-Thomas/?Welcome=1043928174>

Springfield & Clark County area. Robert and is documented as being a "valued colored member of the Springfield UGRR Association". This "secret"

organization is written about in the "Sketches of Springfield" memoirs of Daniel S. Morrow who was the organization's Secretary. At the time of his death (1886), Piles left and estate of over 100,000 dollars. The Piles' Wills and Estate Papers may be read at the Clark County Heritage Library and Archives.

We as a group of UGRR researchers should look beyond our

respective counties and regions for the connections that made the UGRR such a successful operation. The UGRR, is currently written and researched as a "loosely organized" network, doesn't recognize the depth and inter-connectivity that was prevalent at the time, especially in the community of the "free blacks".

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The Piles family migrates to the Springfield & Clark County area. Robert and is documented as being a "valued colored member of the Springfield UGRR Association". This "secret"

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Leah (?) Bradley marriage 1800

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Members:

I wish to extend a thank you to all who have wrote or spoke to me after being elected President of the Friends of Freedom, and I humbly except the challenge of the responsibility to serve such a outstanding organization. I have been selected to serve at a unique time in its history, where in a decade it has grown from the four members meeting on the back porch of Cathy Nelson's home, to a membership of over 85 persons nationwide.

You have been a part of a organization in which when it started there was no indication of any history of the Underground Railroad in the state, to now where there are 28 markers statewide in communities, and on highways that proudly indicate that the Underground Railroad was a part of that local community's history.

Nationally, you have been recognized for your achievements by selection by the White House Trails and Rails program as part of the National Millennium Trail that not only spotlighted the Underground Railroad in Ohio, but also sparked interest in other organizations to duplicate this work in their own regions of the country.

You became persons who challenged the orthodoxy of history, that the Underground Railroad was an insignificant part of the history of this state. We can proudly see our members quoted in the national media, and members are now considered the final arbiters of the Underground Railroad in their local communities.

However, no organization can rest on its laurels, and remain relevant in the community and the Friends of Freedom is no exception. We must embark on a period of growth and challenges in the twenty first century that further honors our heroes of the nineteenth century. With this in mind I ask you for a new commitment to activism within the organization. We need you to give even more time and more effort, and join those who continue to work to honor our past by making us a better organization in the future. [www.douglasthomas@hotmail.com](mailto:www.douglasthomas@hotmail.com).

I look forward to your assistance.

*C. Douglas Thomas*  
C. Douglas Thomas

Current Officers:

- Cathy D. Nelson  
Founder & President Emeritus, State Research, Coordinator
- C. Douglas Thomas  
President
- Beverly Gray  
Vice President
- Maria Jones  
Interim Treasurer
- Monique Mapp  
Historian
- Sylvia Morgan  
Secretary
- Charles Miller  
Nominating Committee
- Carey Steele  
Newsletter Editor

For Membership inquiries please contact: [www.douglasthomas@hotmail.com](mailto:www.douglasthomas@hotmail.com)  
For Newsletter information contact: [www.randolphugrr@yahoo.com](mailto:www.randolphugrr@yahoo.com)

Profit & Loss Statement 12/25/04 Through 5/1/05

<b>INCOME</b>	
Beginning Balance	7,129.73
Uncategorized Income	6,133.72
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<u>13,263.45</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Bank Charge	6.00
Bank Charge Refund	29.00
Book Registration	269.95
Marker	1,700.00
Member Reimbursements	41.74
Kathy Nelson	100.00
Don Ross	46.92
Marta Jones	59.00
Sharon Montgomery	247.66
<b>TOTAL Members Reimbursements</b>	<u>247.66</u>
Returned Checks	35.00
Summit 05 Expense:	
The Kemley Connection	100.00
<b>TOTAL Summit 05 Expense</b>	<u>100.00</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<u>2,387.61</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES</b>	<u>10,875.84</u>

**The Freedom**  
*Researching and preserving the path of the Ohio Underground Railroad*

ISSUE 1  
CELEBRATING OUR TENTH YEAR  
SPRING, 2005

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Friends of Freedom Society

**Seekers**

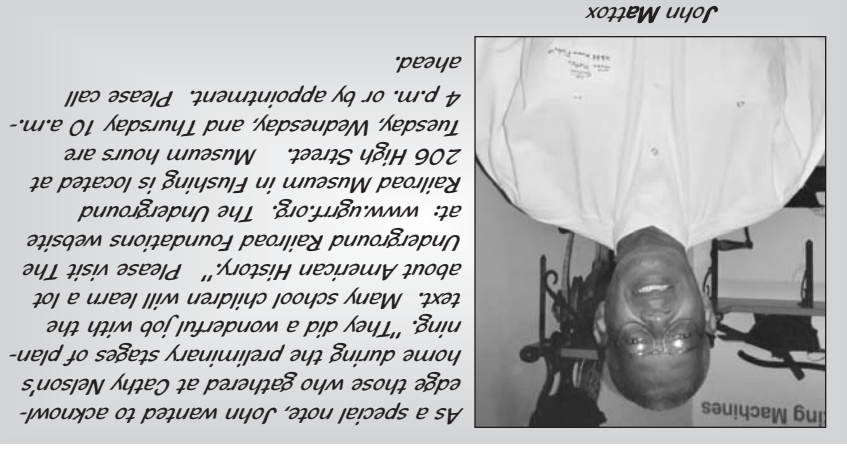
## Freedom Seekers: The Story of Ohio's Underground Railroad

*Written by Beverly Gray*

to the Underground Railroad story. The Friends of Freedom Traveling

Quilt is also on display.

The exhibit was made possible through a partnership of Bob Evans Farms, Friends of Freedom Society, Inc., the Wayne National Forest and the Underground Railroad Museum at Flushing.



Museum located on the Bob Evans Farm at Rio Grande, Ohio. The exhibit traces the history of Africans who were captured and brought to this country as slaves, but who eventually reached freedom through their own perseverance and the kindness of strangers.

A power point presentation, which shows Fifty Ohio Underground



Evans Farm Manger, Bob McKinness and Gayle Leslie also of the Bob Evans Farms provided coordination and technical support for the project.

The museum and the exhibit are open daily through Dec. 31, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 1 through May 27 and Sept. 5 through Dec. 31. Hours Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day are 9:30 a.m. to 5:30.

The Bob Evans Farm is located 6 miles south of Route 35 East at Rio Grand.

## The 2005 Summit

Our Tenth Annual Ohio Underground Railroad Summit "Comin' Home: A Silver Anniversary Celebration" will be held October 14-16, 2005 at Ohio Dominican University in Columbus Ohio.

The Summit Committee members for 2005 are Cathy Nelson Chairperson, Dawn Edwards, Sharon Lytle, Don Ross, Chuck Miller and Douglas Thomas. The annual Summit will be changed from every year to every other year and that during the off year, a major bus tour to serve as a fundraiser will be offered.

Please see our website for registration and information.

[www.ohioundergroundrailroad.org](http://www.ohioundergroundrailroad.org).

Printed by AA Blueprint Co. Akron, Ohio 44305 | Designer Kit Lang

## Our Place in Time

*Written by Monique Mapp*

This year The Friends of Freedom Society will be celebrating it's remarkable 10th anniversary. Each month in " Our Place", we will celebrate memorable moments in our history from the first meeting to the latest historical marker dedication. Feel free to submit to me any events or memories that I may not know about to be published in "Our Place".

At the conference this year I would like to do photo timeline of events in our history, if any of you have photos that you would like share please let me know so that I can make arrangements for copies.

## Jacob Gaskins and the Underground Railroad

The Jacob Gaskin marker was dedicated on Saturday, February 12, 2005 at the Farways Golf Course, which was the site of Jacob's homestead. It is located at 1500 Rogwin Circle, North Canton in Stark County.

Michael Miller, the administrator for the city of North Canton, had

dedication ceremony and to the students of Hoover High School for their efforts

Special thanks to the North Canton Heritage Society for hosting the

was he who primarily wrote the marker

sought recognition for Jacob Gaskins for

### Marker Text for Jacob Gaskins

*This site was the homestead of Jacob Gaskins, and a station on the Underground Railroad. Jacob was an African-American born as a slave in 1792 in Winchester, Virginia. His first master died during his childhood, and freed only his adult slaves.*

*Jacob continued enslaved until adulthood. Once freed, he continued to work for his second master and share in the profits. Jacob relocated to Plain Township in 1817, being one of the first African-Americans to live in Stark County. He married Hannah Robinson shortly thereafter. With little money, but a natural talent for business, he increased his fortune and acquired a large property. He succeeded despite restrictions placed on African-Americans in Ohio who were denied the right to vote, who could not send their children to public school, and who had to pay a 500 dollar bond just to live in Ohio. After Ohio ratified the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1870, giving African-Americans the right to vote, Jacob became the first African-American to vote in Plain Township. He died in 1873.*

*Donated by the Citizens of North Canton.*



## News and Achievements ...

### Juneteenth 2005 and the Unveiling of the Oberlin Underground Railroad Marker

*The Oberlin African American Genealogy & History Group will feature the Oberlin United States Colored Troops of the Civil War as part of the Juneteenth Celebration June 18, 2005.*

*The Event Schedule is as follows:*

*Thursday, June 16: 6:30 p.m. - Wright Park*

*Tribute to the United States Colored Troops*

*Friday, June 17: 10:00 a.m. - Westwood Cemetery*

*Historical Tour of Westwood Cemetery,*

*Margaret Chrstian Tour Guide of USCT*

*12:00 Noon - Copeland Quilt: First Church*

*4:30 pm - Spring Street Park Race Relations Picnic*

*6:30 p.m. - Westwood Cemetery, MAFA Memorial Service*

*8:00 p.m. - Tappan Square, Concert in the Park featuring*

*The E.T. King Band*

*10:00 a.m. Opening Ceremonies*

*12:00 noon Parade*

*The Underground Railroad Marker Unveiling is at 10 a.m.*

*For More information, please visit their website:*

*http://www.geocities.com/oberlinagealogy*

*Congratulations to Maria Jones, who was the featured speaker at the Ohio State Association of School Boards meeting in Columbus Ohio on April 26,2005. Her topic was "Organizing the Business Office" and this has led to her being invited to the State County Auditors Association meeting later this year.*

## Join Us Online at our New Interactive Website

MyFamily.com is an

Interactive Website for Friends,

Families & Groups. Our MyFamily.com

website has been visited by 22 mem-

bers since its start, and is a fantastic

way to communicate with Friends of

Freedom members. From the latest

events, news, pictures, events, and even

recipes, the online site helps fill the

information "gap" between quarterly

meetings. Any member who has paid

their Annual Fee is eligible for an

invitation. If you would like to join us

online, please contact Art Thomas at :

[athomas9@woh.rr.com](mailto:athomas9@woh.rr.com). An email

address is required for access

*The following is an excerpt written by Art*

Continued on back page