

AAHM Sojourner

Newsletter of the
SPRINGFIELD AND CENTRAL ILLINOIS AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MUSEUM

VOLUME 3, NO. 2

SPRING /SUMMER 2019

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AAHM Invites Nominations for Gala Honorees *Organizations That Support Central Illinois Black Communities*

The Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum (AAHM) is seeking nominees from throughout Central Illinois for its 8th Annual “Honoring Our Heritage Award: Celebrating Organizations That Support and Empower the Black Community.” This event will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 3000 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois on October 10, 2019 beginning with a reception and silent auction at 6 p.m.

followed by dinner and program at 7 p.m.

The Honoring Our Heritage Awards traditionally recognize those who have made significant contributions to Springfield and Central Illinois community. This year, instead of individuals, we will recognize organizations, companies, foundations, churches, and/or charities. Nominations must be received electronically or postdated by 5 p.m. Friday, May 24, 2019.

Criteria for Nominees

Nominees may be organizations, companies, foundations, churches and/or charities that have made significant contributions to the African American Community in Central Illinois and/or to the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum.

Nominees must not have been previously honored or recognized by the AAHM.

Nominees must operate in Central Illinois Counties. See inset for counties served by the Museum.

Individuals may make multiple nominations but must follow the criteria for each individual nominee.

Nominating

- Contact the Museum for an application form.
- Submit nominations no later than Friday, May 24, 2019.
- Submit by email to jany9001@gmail.com, by email to siaahf@yahoo.com or by mail to: African American History Museum, PO Box301, Springfield, IL 62705,

Central Illinois Counties

- Region 1 – Sangamon, Menard, Macon, Christian, Montgomery, Shelby, Moultrie
- Region 2 – Tazewell, McLean, Ford, Mason, Logan, Dewitt, Piatt
- Region 3 – Iroquois, Vermillion, Champaign, Douglas, Edgar, Coles, Clark, Cumberland
- Region 4 – Pike, Jersey, Calhoun, Scott, Macoupin, Green, Madison
- Region 5 – Adams, Brown, Schuyler, Hancock, McDonough, Fulton, Cass



Springfield and Central Illinois
African American History Museum

OUR MISSION

* We will tell authentic stories about African American life in Central Illinois, past and present, celebrating and sharing our history and culture while planning our future.

* We will do this through scholarship, oral history, exhibits, partnerships, our board of directors, our supporters and our friends. We are and will continue to be community builders.

* We recognize that our stories are unique but connected to those of other communities and we will support those interconnections. We will be integral to the cultural life of our area. We will partner with like-minded organizations. We will be proactive in our community. We will study and apply best practices in business, scholarship and communication.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Kevia Maloney, Museum Coordinator

AAHM website: spiaahm.org

Email: siaahr@yahoo.com

Address: 1440 Monument Ave.,
Springfield, IL 62702

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 301,
Springfield, IL 62705

Telephone: 217-391-6323

Follow us on Facebook

Letter from the President

Hello Museum Members and Supporters:

Our mission did not end when we opened the doors to our current location: it only began. Since then we have been building collections of exhibits, expanding our public programs, building connections, staging special events and grand openings for our awesome exhibits; and continuing our hard work to make sure “your” Museum is the best little Museum in Central Illinois.

We still have a lot more to do together. We have more history to share, more stories to tell, more exhibits to develop, more hearts to inspire. I encourage you to donate to the Museum.

That can be in many forms; in-kind donations, monetary donations, volunteer time, and encouraging friends to become members of the Museum. I also invite you to come and volunteer on one of our many committees.

I urge you to stand strong with us and renew your membership. We appreciate all your previous support. You must come and see our new exhibits. They are awesome, informative, educational and inspiring.

Sincerely,
Nell R. Clay
President, AAHM
Board of Directors



Message from Museum Coordinator Kevia Maloney

It has been only six months since I began as the Coordinator of the African American History Museum, and I can say that it has truly been an adventure! Many things make the Museum a wonderful place to work. The beautiful, serene, and historic location of our Museum is a blessing, and the many devoted board members and volunteers are inspiring. I have been involved in planning and producing exhibits and in the most exciting part, the Grand Openings to the public.

Much of my time involves interacting with the public, welcoming visitors and providing tours. Some interactions are such fun, like helping school children scramble to find answers to our scavenger hunt. Other times are intense, as when visitors are shocked by the Race Riot exhibit or overwhelmed by experiencing the realistic Middle Passage exhibit.

Each day brings new visitors. In April we had two young visitors from Denmark, a family of four from the West African country of Benin, and the husband and daughter of Rep. Katie Hall (D.-Indiana), the Congresswoman who spearheaded an effort to make Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King’s January 15th birthday a national holiday. (The King Holiday bill was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on November 2, 1983.) Who will grace us with their presence next week? I hope it will be you, and I look forward to being part of the many adventures that await us here at the Museum.



is the quarterly newsletter of the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum, 1440 Monument Avenue, Springfield, Illinois. Sue Massie, editor

Mother Priscilla Baltimore founds Brooklyn, IL

Forgotten Illinois

By Kathryn Harris

Stories of enslaved African Americans in the “free” state of Illinois...

The story of an African American woman who founded a city....

These are two stories that are forgotten and seldom told in “Thy “Wondrous Story, Illinois”, but with a grant from Illinois Humanities, Tara McClellan McAndrew and Kathryn Harris brought these remarkable stories to center stage and thereby increased our knowledge of Illinois history in its first half century.

Conducting research in the Illinois State Archives, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library—Manuscripts Department and other repositories, McAndrew identified not only narratives, but also images of enslaved and indentured African Americans. “Their stories are obscure and difficult to find because”, as McAndrew stated, “the enslaved and indentured were often not allowed to learn to read or write, to testify in court against whites, and they were

not featured in the newspapers of the period except for notices in newspapers which described them as “run away property.” They were considered second class citizens, at best.

Harris shared the little-known story of Mother Priscilla Baltimore, the founder of Brooklyn, Illinois’ first all black town. Often referred to as “the Harriet Tubman of the West”, she ferried escaping enslaved African Americans from the slave state of Missouri to the “free” state of Illinois and helped them to begin their lives as free people of color. Founded in 1829, though not incorporated until 1873, Brooklyn ranks with New Philadelphia as a thriving and bustling town in early Illinois history.

McAndrew and Harris also gratefully acknowledge the research assistance that was provided by Mary Disseler, Carolyn Harmon, Vincent “June” Chappelle, Kathy Dehen, and Mary Yokem.

Their research was presented not only to members of the Lincoln Land Academy of Life Long Learning on April 2 but also to visitors to the Museum on May 4, 2019.

Early African American Pioneer Families of Springfield

Pioneer Families

By Elizabeth Alexander

Within Central Illinois, there are hundreds, maybe thousands, of African Americans whose ancestors arrived in this area more than one hundred and twenty years ago and still have descendants here. The 1800’s brought people from all over the United States, from Georgia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Alabama, and Missouri and others from further east, from Virginia, North Carolina and Maryland. They came out of enslavement from desperate times and through perilous travel. They came to freedom and to establish their homes, farms, and businesses, thereby insuring a quality life of stability and safety for their families.

The Museum has been honoring

some of these families for a year in a unique exhibit and will be saluting five new families in May. We invite you to be with us at 5 p.m on Sunday, May 26, 2019 for the revealing (opening) of exhibits of these families; the Osbys, the Neals, the Woodsons, the Hubbards, the Cummings, and the Johnsons.

We are thankful for the members of these families who have contributed to the richness of our exhibit. The researchers for this program are Patricia James Davis, Mary Helen Yokem, Elizabeth Alexander, Vincent June Chappelle, Nell Clay and Deborah

Brothers. The Museum is deeply appreciative of their dedicated efforts to present these families’ histories, struggles and successes, for the education and enlightenment of the public.



What's New at the AAHM

PROGRAMS, EXHIBITS, SPECIAL EVENTS, SUMMER CAMP

FEBRUARY 23: BLACK HISTORY BOWL

The Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum held its first Black History Bowl on February 23, 2019. All three Springfield District 186 High Schools were invited to participate. The preliminary round was held at Springfield Southeast High School on February 6, 2019 (rescheduled due to weather from January 30, 2019). Schools were allowed as many teams of four as student participation allowed. Lanphier and Southeast had two teams and Springfield had one. The preliminary round produced Lanphier's A Team, Southeast's A Team, and Springfield High. The Lanphier B Team scored higher than Springfield and Southeast B Team and was invited to participate in the finals.

The final round was held at the Museum with many parents, friends and well-wishers present. Students and the audience were enthusiastic and energy was high. The competition was extraordinary and lessons of sportsmanship, camaraderie, and civility were demonstrated by all teams.

The Lanphier A Team emerged victorious and was congratulated by all. The Rudy Davenport Traveling Trophy was presented to Lanphier High School. Each winning team member also received an individual trophy. Team members in both the preliminary and final rounds were given certificates of participation. A winner's plaque is on display at the AAHM – Lanphier has the first entry.

District 186 staff who assisted and encouraged students will be given certificates of appreciation at the School Board Meeting on April 22, 2019. We count this Black History Bowl a huge success and look forward to even greater participation next year. (The Black History Bowl was organized by Gail Simpson.)

MICHAEL BRACEY PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBIT

Award-winning Chicago-based photographer Michael Bracey has received rave recognition for his lectures and exhibitions in the United States and abroad. His accomplishments include the CAAAP (Chicago Alliance of African-American Photographers) Portfolio of the Year award (2001), a Chicago Arts Assistant Council grant (2004), a Hutchinson Arts Association Council grant (2004), and the Illinois Arts Council Fellowship (2003) for Africans Within the Americas, a ten-year project of travel to twelve countries documenting commonalities among people of African descent, resulting in a traveling exhibition and a book. His exhibit includes some of these pictures.

His books are *Urban Waters*, *People-Places-Peru*, *The Black Christ Festival of Portobelo (Panama)*, *Ten Days in Morocco*, *It's All about the Hats*, and *Ten Days in Guatemala*, all self-published. His book, *Rivers of Women* is co-authored Missouri Poet Laurette Shirley LeFlore. It was published by 2LeafPress.org in 2013.

His new book, co-authored with poet Ruth Goring, is *Caras Lindas de Colombia (Beautiful Faces of Colombia)* was published June 2018.



U.S. POSTAGE STAMPS FEATURE AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN

African Americans have been honored in many ways. One way is to be approved for a U.S. postage stamp. In the past 70 years, 100 African Americans have been honored on U.S. postage stamps, 40 of whom are women.

The U.S. Postal Service has developed criteria that must be met to be placed on a postage stamp. The person must be an American and must be nominated. The Postal Service will honor those that have made extraordinary and enduring contributions to American society, history, culture or environment.

This new exhibit features African American women who have made extraordinary contributions and sacrifices. Some of the 40 women honored are Ida B. Wells, Harriet Tubman, Mary McLeod Bethune, Althea Gibson and Dorothy Height.



THE ILLINOIS FREEDOM PROJECT

As you walk into the Museum you see this awesome exhibit entitled the Illinois Freedom Project. This exhibit, developed by the National Park Service, shows inspiring and empowering stories about determined African Americans and others who overcame colossal obstacles.

It shows how Illinois went from a slave state to a free state, the progress made and some of the people that fought and died for that progress. Some people mentioned are Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, Ida B. Wells and Carter G. Woodson.

We thank the Lincoln Home National Historic Site for the loan of this exhibit.

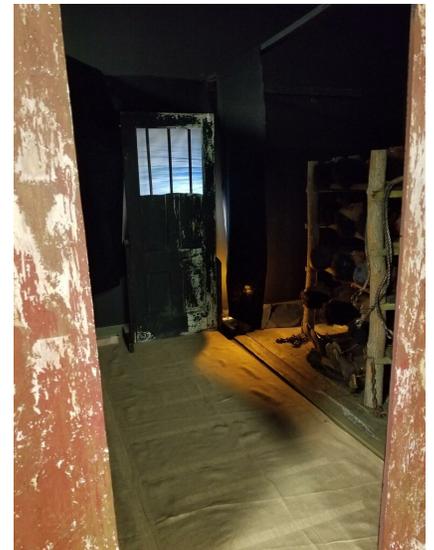


THE MIDDLE PASSAGE EXHIBIT

The Middle Passage refers to the horrific, forced journey of millions of captive Africans shipped to the Americas as part of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. The exhibit includes a replica of a slave ship, with a dark and gloomy atmosphere that imitates the cramped interior of a slave ship.

The exhibit was designed and constructed by Jim Betts, an instructor at LLCC and retired scenic department head at Paramount Studios. Mr. Betts was recently inducted into the Central Illinois Film Commission Hall of Fame.

Alice Boykin constructed the physical images representing slaves. Korbin “Kas” King of Magnify Art Gallery presents an artistic image of “Mother Africa” weeping and mourning over the capture of her children. The exhibit includes a representation of the “Door of No Return”, narratives on the History of Slavery and The Middle Passage, and pictorial images from Tom Feelings’ book, *The Middle Passage*. This story, as horrific as it was, is being presented by the AAHM in a very realistic way.



PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA EXHIBIT

It is appropriate that we put President Obama’s exhibit next to the Middle Passage. From slavery to the White House is a true reflection of resilience of strong people.

On January 20, 2009, Barack Obama was sworn in as the first African American President in US history. He began his political career in the Illinois legislature, then a US Senator from Illinois, and launched his successful campaign for the presidency on the steps of the Old State Capitol in Springfield.

Hailed as one of the greatest presidential orators in modern history, Obama has a knack for public speaking even his political opponents can recognize. There are many excellent statements by Obama we can quote but here is one. “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”



SUMMER DAY CAMP

“Learn from the Past, Create your Own Future”

July 8-12 . . . 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
For 4th to 6th Graders

The Museum’s award-winning Summer Day Camp will soon be here! Camp will run during the week of July 8 to 12, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Children entering grades four through six are eligible. Campers will enjoy fun-filled days of activities including games and recreation, arts and crafts, participatory history, and

educational entertainment. Snacks and delicious lunches are provided. This is the 4th year for our Summer Camp, and again Pamela King will serve as Camp Director. Many organizations and volunteers throughout Central Illinois contribute to the camp, providing unique and diverse camp programs.



OUTDOOR GAMES



PRIZES AND AWARDS



ARTS AND CRAFTS



COSTUMES AND CHARACTERS



JOURNEY TO GREATNESS



DANCE AND FITNESS

Register now by going to spiaahm.org or visit the Museum office. \$25 holds a spot. Deadline is June 28. Camp is limited to 25 campers. Questions? call 217.391.6323.

2019 Calendar of Events

MUSEUM HOURS: TUESDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, NOON TO 4 P.M.; SATURDAYS 10A.M. TO 5 P.M.

All events will be held at the Museum unless otherwise noted.

JANUARY

January 26, 7-11 p.m., "The Obama Ball", The Inaugural Anniversary Ball
Hoogland Center, 420 S. 6th Street, Springfield

FEBRUARY

February 9, 5:30 p.m., Grand Opening of the Obama Exhibit
February 23, 2 p.m., Finals of the Black history Bowl
February 28, 6-8 p.m., AAHM Annual Membership Meeting

MARCH

March 7, 5:30 p.m., AAUW Program Presentation
March 23, 5:30 p.m., Grand Opening of the Middle Passage Exhibit
March 30, 11:30 a.m., National Women's History Month,
Grand Opening of the African Women on U.S. Postage Stamp Exhibit
March 30, 11:30, Luncheon and Workshop: Stamp Collecting:
Speakers: Bernice Fields and Charlene Blair
The Inn at 825 S. 2nd Street, Springfield
In conjunction with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Springfield and Decatur Alumni Chapters

APRIL

April 27, 5-7 p.m., Michael Bracey Exhibit and Book Signing

MAY

May 4, 5:30 p.m., "Forgotten Illinois", Presentation of Forgotten African Americans in Illinois
Kathryn Harris, Tara McClellan McAndrew, and other contributors
May 26, 3-5 p.m., SpringFest, Cook-Out and Games for All Ages
May 26, 5 p.m., Grand Opening of 2019 Early African American Pioneers of Springfield and Central Illinois

JULY

July 8-12, 2019 Summer Youth Day Camp, Pamela King, Director

OCTOBER

October 6, 12-4 p.m., A Walk Through Oak Ridge Cemetery
The Museum takes part in this Sangamon County Historical Society annual event
October 10, 2019, 6 p.m. reception, 7 pm. dinner, ANNUAL AAHM GALA
Crown Plaza, 3000 S. Dirksen Pkwy., Springfield

Spring Fest
May 26,
3 to 5 p.m.

Come one and all to "SPRINGFEST" prior to the
Grand Opening of the Early African American Pioneers Exhibit
FAMILY, FOOD AND FUN ON THE FRONT LAWN!
(hot dogs, cole slaw, baked beans, chips, lemonade, and cookies)
Free, but donations are welcomed

African American History Museum
Springfield and Central Illinois
P.O. Box 301
Springfield, IL 62705-0301



MEMBERSHIP

Members receive membership cards, the *Sojourner* newsletter and museum communications. Members at the Sustaining level and above also receive invitations to previews, grand openings and special VIP events.

Membership Categories

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$ 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$ 100-\$ 199 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$ 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$ 200-\$ 499 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth/student \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing \$ 500-\$ 999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$1,000 |
- Business Member \$500-\$999 (includes business listing at museum events)
- I would like to pay now for three years of membership . AMOUNT enclosed \$ _____
- Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

Name _____

Street address _____

City, state, zip _____

Telephone number _____

Email address _____

Your check should be made payable and sent to the African American History Museum of Springfield and Central Illinois (AAHM) , P.O. Box 301, Springfield, IL 62705-0301