

## New KURC Website, Teaching Tools

by KURC Board Member Debbie Burston



Keeping you informed about the exciting things KURC is planning is very important to us. Reading the *Lantern*, as you are now, is a good way to learn what KURC has been up to. However, if you missed a few

issues in the past, there is another fine place to find them: the new KURC website. If you are new to KURC, and want to learn about our mission statement and what makes us tick, there is only one place to find out: the KURC website. Several years ago, Board members Chris Densmore and Terence Maguire were asked to write short informational stories about the people and places of the UGRR for a local newspaper. These pieces would have been lost without the opportunity to bring them back for you to read. Where can you find them? The KURC website!

Our hope is that the Corona Virus restrictions will be lifted soon, and we will again have the opportunity to introduce this fascinating region to all those with a thirst for history. By going to the website, you will find all the tour dates we have already established for 2020. Last year we needed to add a great many more tours than we had anticipated because of the increased interest in our area. We hope that the interest is just as great this year so we will need to add more tours as dates fill up.

Our wish is to expand the website not only to include all the exciting events sponsored by KURC, but to make it a vibrant learning destination. We are looking into adding information for children. This may include books being read online, puzzles and scavenger hunts to help educate children about the Underground Railroad and how it operated and who was involved in the Kennett Square area. We

will also create a list of other Underground Railroad centers in surrounding areas. There are many in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, and New York.

We welcome you to stop by at [www.kennettunderground.org](http://www.kennettunderground.org). Learn a bit more of the outstanding history we are privileged to have surrounding us. Please leave us a message or ask us a question. We are always happy to help you gather information.

### Projects in the Works...

We are working to provide you with a guided tour to take in your own car. We are using an app called PocketSights. A free download, it allows us to upload a tour that you can follow through the area, learning as you go. Our goal is to have two tours. They will both cover the same places but one will be shorter; the other will give twice the information about each location. You can choose the amount of learning you would like. We are very proud of our self-guided tour created by one of our own, Michele Sullivan.

We have been out with our masks and Purell and have found a wonderful hike you may wish to take. The walk is about 35 minutes, under two miles and will take you from Delaware to Pennsylvania while following the White Clay Creek, as many freedom seekers did 150-180 years ago. We are working to create another PocketSights tour so as you walk you can learn about features of the landscape that made it a perfect route for those escaping slavery.

Our next project is to create classroom lesson plans for middle school teachers. As we don't know what public school will actually look like in the future, we hope to create a lesson plan with everything the teacher needs to teach and the student needs to learn about the Underground Railroad in our area. We were invited by the Chester County Intermediate Unit to create and share this lesson plan. We want to thank them for including us, as most textbooks do not provide a great deal of information about the UGRR.

Please keep an eye on our website where we will announce the completion of these projects. We hope you will stay safe and well as we all adjust to our new reality. \*\*\*

### KURC and the Covid-19 Pandemic

*Like everyone else, the Kennett Underground Railroad Center has been impacted significantly by the pandemic. We were just getting comfortable in our newly-acquired home in the Dr. Isaac D. Johnson House. Then came the lock down. Programs that KURC had developed so well, bus tours and UGRR presentations, were also curtailed.*

*But we have adapted. Board meetings held on ZOOM have allowed KURC to maintain forward momentum. Individuals and committees have corresponded and generated some very creative ideas for new programs. We will be ready to resume our well-developed programs. We hope to see you soon.* **John O'Neal, President of the Board of Directors**

# KURC Board Welcomes tonya thames-taylor

*No, the headline above does not contain typos. Dr. thames-taylor prefers her name in lower case. Below is an introduction to her.*

**Question:** *tonya thames taylor, why are you interested in the Kennett Underground Railroad Center (KURC)?*

**thames-taylor:** I am a Southerner who came of age in the progressive, coastal town of Gulfport, Mississippi, located not far from New Orleans, Louisiana. I attended integrated schools that unquestionably fostered my creativity, encouraged my curiosity, and tolerated my shenanigans. I vividly remember hearing, for the first time, the words “underground” and “railroad” used together. I was in third grade. My white teacher asked a thoroughly integrated classroom, “Would you want someone to come and steal your bicycle?” Of course, we all resoundingly said, “No!” “That was what the Underground Railroad supported. The Underground Railroad was a criminal enterprise that denied people their legal property,” she said.

So, with that analogy, the seeds of my understanding of the Underground Railroad were planted. With the emphasis being placed on property rights, the die was cast. I did ask that day, “Mrs. T, was it truly underground?” She replied, “No. It was more like a kidnapping at night. They used the word ‘railroad’ as a way to discuss the stops along the way.”

A few years earlier, my family had watched the mini-series, *Roots*. So, my understanding of kidnapping was already negative. A few years later, I would hear the word “kidnap” more often as loved ones warned me to be careful when playing outside because there were kidnappings and murders of children happening in Atlanta.

I graduated from Tougaloo College, one of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). The conversations at Tougaloo emphasized the empowerment of the 1960s Civil and Human Rights Movement, not slavery. I learned the names of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman through passing references in black poetry.

As a history major at Tougaloo, a former plantation that blacks transformed into a college that became an epicenter for civil and human rights politics in Mississippi, I was fortunate to meet many civil rights workers from the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Black Panthers. At that age, I needed to know I was capable of changing the world, so their work inspired me. Many professors taught through the lens of mainly twentieth-century collective struggles. I came to revere civil rights workers as soldiers for human dignity.

Imagine the shock I received when I came to Pennsylvania, at 30, and learned the Underground Railroad was celebrated. I appreciate the work of the KURC because, like civil and human rights work, it emphasizes a grassroots movement that transformed American discourse.

**Question:** *What motivated you to move to Pennsylvania?*

**thames-taylor:** A career. While still a graduate student at the predominately white University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), my trek to Pennsylvania started with a Frederick Douglass Scholars’ Initiative at West Chester University. My dissertation covered lynching. One of Douglass’ final essays discussed lynching and he had written the “Preface” to “Southern Horrors,” authored by anti-lynching journalist Ida B. Wells. So, my introduction to Douglass was through studying lynching, not slavery. As I read more work authored by him, I learned the biographies of black and white abolitionists. I found their work to be instructive in how to create and sustain a movement.

**Question:** *What do you want supporters of KURC to know about why you accepted our invitation to join the board?*

**tonya thames-taylor:** I am passionate about sharing how the interracial Underground Railroad Network serves as an exceptionally good example of how human agency shapes national and global human rights. \*\*\*

*On WCU campus, tonya thames-taylor reads to the statue of Frederick Douglass the speech she gave at a Call for Justice Rally in response to the recent national uprising, June 6, 2020.*



# Meet the KURC Board of Directors

Board members felt that we, too, should give you some idea of our background and what has led us to become volunteers for the Kennett Underground Railroad Center.

**Darleen Amobi:** My sister and I are identical twins from Michigan. We are somewhat different. I use genealogy for historical background, and she uses it for general research. Before retirement we were both elementary teachers, I in special and regular education, and she as an Educational Diagnostician. We had our differences; however we both enjoyed historical learning.

In school I learned about Thomas Garrett and his efforts helping freedom seekers to Canada and other places. In middle and high school I digested many books about the UGRR. In college I read about famous Afro-Americans, such as Sally Hemings.

Thirty years ago I found a house in Hockessin, and joined the Hockessin Historical Society. We built a community museum to cover the local UGRR system. President Joe Lake and I started travelling to different sites and giving lectures on the UGRR. Joe has a graduate degree in history and writes articles and books about Hockessin. He has taught me much of the local UGRR. I am very pleased with this outcome.

**Adrian Burston:** Born in Cardiff, Wales, I moved to Bristol, England in my teens. I decided early that I wanted to become a teacher and, having a love of history, chose it as my college major. Penniless, but wanting to travel, I came to America during my college summers and beyond to work on a wilderness camp in Vermont, spending my days leading hiking and canoeing trips throughout northern New England. At camp in 1979 I met the headmaster of Wilmington Friends who, after a short interview under a pine tree, offered me a job teaching in the middle school. Loving my job, I stayed for thirty-six years.

I knew a little of the history of the Underground Railroad in the Kennett area, but learned much more when my daughter chose to research the topic as part of a project assigned by Terry Maguire. Years later, after my wife and I had both retired, Terry invited us to attend KURC meetings. The rest, as they say, is history.

**Debbie Burston:** I was born in Canada and moved to West Chester when I was seven. I attended the West Chester Area School District where a teacher suggested that with my love of history and research, I might make a good librarian. At Shippensburg University I double majored in history and library science. In the summers, I volunteered at the Valley Forge State (soon to be National) Park as an interpreter. I made and wore the dress of the time and talked with large groups of visitors. I also gave guided

tours through Washington's Headquarters.

After college I returned to the WCASD, where I worked as an elementary librarian for the next 35 years. I also earned my Master's Degree in Library Science from Villanova and delved into technology and the internet as it began to grow. I truly enjoyed teaching technology to both students and teachers.

I was really excited when Terry Maguire introduced the idea of joining KURC. I would be able to give tours and talk about history again. I have also been able to use some of my technology skills in a great cause.

**Crystal Crampton:** Mary Dugan [one of the original founders of the Kennett Underground Railroad Center] recruited me because of my involvement in Bucktoe Cemetery and the community. At first, I turned her down due to work commitments but helped her out when I could. I am still involved with the Restoration and preservation of Bucktoe Cemetery, helping build and restore community projects, and working with the youth of Kennett Square and surrounding areas. I am not really a history buff, but I enjoy helping people and fundraising for great causes. Mary became a good friend of mine and our church, New Garden Memorial UAME. She has left a GREAT Legacy and BIG shoes to fill. And she is sorely missed!!!

**Chris Densmore:** I'm here because Mary Dugan asked me several months, before her death. She was committed to the Underground Railroad Center and wanted to be sure

See "KURC Board of Directors," p. 8

## Board of Directors

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# These Truths--a History of the United States

by Jill Lepore review by KURC Board member Terence Maguire

*In each **Lantern**, we hope to review a recently-published work that deals with the issues and historical time period that is the focus of the KURC. In this issue, we have two reviews (see pp. 6-7)*

This single-volume, 900+ page history of the United States is ambitious and original. Lepore (*shown below*) is a Harvard professor of history and a remarkably prolific writer; her next published book will be her 13th, on topics ranging from Wonder Woman to the origins of corporate data-mining in the 1950s-60s. She has been a regular and frequent contributor to the *New Yorker*. Her most recent articles deal with plagues throughout human history and *Sesame Street's* impact on early education. To say that her intellect is far-ranging is a dramatic understatement.

*These Truths* begins with Columbus wondering about the native people he encountered on Haiti, (which he dubbed Hispaniola). Did they have a language? Did they have any tools, or religion, or even society? She ends with a Congressional committee grilling Mark Zuckerberg about whether Facebook should be presenting anything that they call "news." In these and others cases in between, the essential questions are "What is true? How are we to judge what is true?"

Lepore's research is intriguing, uncovering patterns and details that this reviewer, at least, has never encountered before. However, to discuss the entire book is too great a task for this publication. Instead, we will examine portions of *These Truths* that deal with the origins of tormented race relations in the American colonies.

Slavery had disappeared from English life centuries before any Englishmen began to cross the Atlantic to settle in the New World; essentially, it was gone shortly after the Norman Conquest. Lepore traces the beginning of slavery in Virginia with the arrival of the British ship *White Lion*, in 1619, with African captives. That same year, "Twenty Englishmen were elected to the House of Burgesses. Twenty Africans were condemned to the house of bondage." (38).

At that time Englishmen were increasingly concerned about self-government and their rights, rejecting King James's arguments about the "divine right of kings." Jurist Sir Edward Coke was opposing James and compiling

English Common Law. Even as they were asserting their inherent rights as Englishmen, the colonists were searching for means of justifying the practice of slavery, which, in the 17th C, was widely practiced in colonies north and south.

John Locke, on whose works regarding government much on American political underpinning was based, was surprisingly involved in both of these arguments. "In the beginning," Lepore quotes Locke, "all the world was America." Locke posited that all men are born into "a state of 'perfect freedom' and 'a state also of equality.'" Humans "created civil society--government--for the sake of order, and the protection of their property." Locke denounced slavery as "so vile and miserable an estate of man." **And yet**, when he wrote the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina, this apostle of freedom and natural rights somehow argued that each Carolina citizen "shall have absolute power and authority over his Negro slaves." Lepore writes:

*"The only way to justify this contradiction, the only way to explain how one kind of people are born free while another kind of people are not, would be to sow a new seed, an ideology of race. It would take a long time to grow, and longer to wither."* (53-55)

Lepore traces the American history highlights we all learned in grade school and beyond: the rise of freedom of the press, the triumphs of Peter Zenger and Benjamin Franklin over colonial governors, the insistence of colonists that they had the right to express disapproval. However, Lepore interweaves these and other examples of burgeoning independence with stories of slave rebellions in the Caribbean. In Jamaica, where blacks outnumbered whites 20-1, successful revolts --"wars for independence," Lepore calls them--resulted in massacres of some whites, throwing white men in the American colonies into terror. In 1741, fires that occurred in New York City were attributed to Negro slaves, with little proof. As a result, 150 were arrested, 30 were brutally executed, and the others sold to sugar plantations, a form of prolonged death sentence (64).

Another line of research new to this reader was Lepore's contrast between the opposition of many people of the 13 American colonies to "taxation without representation" in the 1760-70s; and the apparent acceptance of those taxes by British colonists in the Caribbean. Lepore gives a simple reason: planters there were fearful that the talk of revolution in Boston and Virginia and Philadelphia would foment rebellion among their own oppressed peoples. The British on the islands were outnumbered by blacks 8 to 1, and a great many British troops were stationed there to protect

See "*These Truths*," p. 5



# When Comes the Great Jubilee?

by Chris Densmore, KURC Board Emeritus  
and retired Curator, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College  
This article was originally published in 2014 in the *Kennett Paper*

One of the most famous hymns by Methodist Charles Wesley is “Blow, Ye the Trumpets, Blow” with the refrain, “the year of jubilee is come.” For many people “jubilee” was just a time of celebration. For others jubilee is more specifically a fiftieth anniversary. There is an older, Biblical, meaning of *jubilee* that is found in the book of Leviticus. In the Bible, Jubilee is a festival held every fifty years which includes the freeing of all slaves. Abolitionists understood Jubilee as the day when slavery would end. When they sang the Wesley hymn, they were not singing simply of liberation from sin, which was probably Wesley’s meaning, but liberation from enslavement. It helped that the words cast on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia quoted Leviticus: “Proclaim Liberty Throughout the Land and to the Inhabitants thereof.”

Over the years, various dates were and are used for the Jubilee. Great Britain ended slavery in all of its colonies on August 1, 1834, and Emancipation Day is celebrated in Canada and in parts of the West Indies on August 1. It was

also celebrated by free African-Americans in the United States until the Civil War. For a time August 1st was replaced by January 1st, the anniversary of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. In the District of Columbia, slavery ended on April 16, 1862, and that date was celebrated.

In 1863 and 1864, large parts of the South were under Confederate control. In Texas, the end of slavery did not become effective until the Union victory in 1865, and the local Emancipation Day was June 19, marking the date in 1865 that the official end of slavery was proclaimed. In recent years, “Juneteenth” has been commemorated nationwide as the final end of legalized enslavement.

*So the next time you visit the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, remember that the inscription of “Proclaim Liberty Throughout the Land” has meaning not only for the liberty of the United States, proclaimed July 4, 1776, but for the liberation of all enslaved people. \*\*\**

## KURC Celebrates Juneteenth, 2020

from “*These Truths*,” p. 4

those whites. Tax money well-spent, those whites must have felt. Even so, bloody slave revolts occurred (83-84).

As the American Revolution approached, Lepore tells us, some of its leading thinkers began to question the very notion of slavery. The Massachusetts political thinker James Otis wrote a pamphlet called *Rights of the British Colonists, Asserted* in 1764. Lepore quotes him: “‘The Colonists are by law of nature free born, as indeed all men are, white or black’...Slavery, Otis insisted, ‘is the most shocking violation of the laws of nature.’” (86). One year earlier, Benjamin Franklin had changed his mind about those of African descent and considered them as potentially equal to whites. Virginian James Mason argued in a letter to George Washington that slavery could cause the fall of the British Empire. Quakers had already largely made up their minds that slavery was an abomination, and by the start of the revolution, “read out” (disowned) any meeting members

who still retained slaves.

Though the American Revolution might have heralded an end to slavery, it was perhaps an action by British military forces that cemented the coupling of American love of liberty with the acceptance of slavery. The British promised freedom to any colonial slave who would run away and join British efforts to put down the American uprising. Suddenly, the proposal of freedom for enslaved people became a weapon against the American colonies. Lepore states, “The Revolution was at its most radical in the challenge it presented to the institution of slavery and at its most conservative in its failure to meet that challenge” (105).

*These Truths* offers rich perspectives on the contradictory nature of American history and beliefs. What is dealt with in this review is but a small portion of the whole.

Lepore makes clear that the United States has always been and is still an experiment, the outcome of which is not at all certain, especially in these troubled times. \*\*\*

# The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition

by Manisha Sinha

review by KURC Board member Michele Sullivan

Manisha Sinha (*shown right*), professor at the University of Connecticut, has written a radical, brilliant and encyclopedic analysis of abolitionist history. She asserts that the first abolitionists were the slaves themselves. Her work documents many ways in which slaves' various forms of resistance were foundational to social, political, and economic improvement from the early 1700's and beyond. "Self-emancipated slaves were at the cutting-edge of the abolition movement" (460).

The professor makes very clear that black people were ahead of Quakers or other whites in their abolitionist efforts for freedom. Sinha doesn't suggest a "moral hierarchy," but she does want readers to understand African Americans' early and profound efforts for abolition. She also brings attention to the crucial role of women. Ira Berlin, (2016) writes, "*Women were abolition's most effective foot soldiers... Female antislavery societies were some of the first founded, and women abolitionists emerged as leading orators, writers and organizers of abolition*" (266).

One of the most important contributions her work makes is the parallel she draws between abolition and other more recent liberation movements. (e.g., gay rights, women's rights, labor rights, etc.) Early abolitionists provided the ideological foundation for those by referring to the Declaration of Independence and Christian beliefs about equality and the Golden Rule.

Sinha looks at revolutions in the colonies and Haiti as models and incentives for slave resistance. The relationship between British abolitionists and those of the colonies strengthened both groups. The chapter on black abolitionists provides evidence about how their communities and churches fortified black identity and the creation of self-help organizations to provide relief, encourage political action, and support "moral uplift." At that time, "moral uplift" referred to a multi-factored concept for self-improvement, including temperance, education for literacy or a trade, elimination of all vice, self-discipline and hard work.

The following are important examples of the strength of black leadership and their communities.

From 1619 when slaves were kidnapped and brought to the colonies, there were many social and legal efforts to control them. Out of some seemed desperation, the American Colonization Society in 1816 developed a plan: emigration to West Africa, an opportunity for blacks to escape their chronic victimization by violence, riots, and racist laws. It would provide an opportunity to establish African-based, free communities. This "offer" only superficially hid the dominant culture's wish to get rid of the "Negro Problem." The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania endorsed the

Colonization Society plans.

The proposal was met angrily and with uniform rejection. African-American responses were essentially, "No! This is our country, and we will not be pushed out. We are here to stay and insist on having all the legal rights and protections given to others. We made much of the wealth for others and built nearly everything in the colonies. We demand equality and citizenship!" Pamphlets and news articles reached out to all in Philadelphia, followed by petitions with hundreds of names that were sent to the state legislators.

In 1830 another milestone was created: the Colored Conventions. These were "powerful symbols of black political organization...encouraging activism at the state and local levels" (208). Reverend Richard Allen and others brought to Philadelphia as many as 1,000 leaders from Pennsylvania and the east coast. These Conventions made for what we now call "networking." The meetings helped develop leaders and provided inspiration and collective efforts to influence social conditions. They also became a significant means of communicating with their communities and encouraging awareness and political participation. Conventions became so useful and successful that they continued on local and state levels even after the Civil War.

A fact of interest to those of us who live in Chester County is that nearby Philadelphia had the largest community of free blacks in the country and was the historical nexus for *The Slave's Cause*.

I love reading this book and have read certain sections multiple times. While the *Slave's Cause* is long (700+ pages), don't let that discourage you from reading the book. It's thought-provoking and worth it.

Several years ago, as I read about the Underground Railroad in Chester County, I wondered why I wasn't learning much about the roles of African Americans. This became the incentive to go to the Chester County Historical Society among other places. Within about a year, we uncovered at least 100 black abolitionists in Chester County alone! Now why did I have to go find African American abolitionists myself? Dr Sinha suggests that some of what I had been reading was "...based on a whitewashed understanding of abolition that reads out the black presence" (4). I might



See "Sinha," p. 7

## Articles and Websites Recommended by KURC Members

Members of the current KURC Board, past BOD members, and friends of our purpose are often searching publications and websites for new information about our topic. These efforts are part of our mission: “to preserve the heritage and engage the public about the historic abolitionists and freedom seekers of this area and beyond.”

It was recently suggested that these many readings be shared more broadly with you, our readers and new members. While not all of these items are readily available, they can be found in libraries or by subscription to journals and online sources. Each item will be accompanied by a brief description or explanation.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/David-Walker>

The abolition movement is older than most people realize. David Walker (1797 North Carolina -1830 Boston) was a free black man who early on radically urged slaves to fight for their freedom in his pamphlet *Appeal ... to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829). That his death occurred shortly after the publication of his *Appeal* seems more than coincidental.

*Originalpeople.org*. Abraham Galloway, slave who became state senator, honored with roadside marker in North Carolina - Abraham Galloway is another African American hero who was, like so many black persons, not acknowledged as such in American history. Galloway ascended from slave to being an elected senator, always helping other black people in their upward quests, and with great adventures. This website is a great place to find more heroes to admire.

[http://urrfreepress.com/index\\_files/March\\_2020.pdf](http://urrfreepress.com/index_files/March_2020.pdf)

Underground Railroad Free Press welcomes guest articles, database entries of Underground Railroad sites and organizations, notices of forthcoming events for Datebook, and display advertising. Visit us at [urrfreepress.com](http://urrfreepress.com) for information on these programs. We make it easy. Underground Railroad Free Press® Independent Reporting on Today's Underground Railroad Peter H. Michael, Publisher info@[urrfreepress.com](mailto:urrfreepress.com) 301 | 874 | 0235

<https://longislandwins.com/columns/immigrants-civil-war/pat-cleburne-the-south-cant-use-black-soldiers-without-ending-slavery/>

The proposal Patrick Cleburne made on January 2, 1864 to arm blacks to fight for the Confederacy is often understood as either promoting the use of armed slaves to preserve slavery or as a naïve proposition for emancipation that ignored what the South was fighting for.

It was neither. At the heart of his proposal was the conclusion that the war for slavery had already been lost. Now white Southerners were battling for survival.

*Microsoft Word - 030605-debs-laborandthecolorquestion.docx* “Labor and the Color Question” Terre Haute, Ind., June 5, 1903. “The following letter, dated May 23, 1903, has been received from Mr. Gurley Brewer, editor of the *Indianapolis World*...” The *World* was a newspaper for African Americans, and this article deals with the conflicting issues of Booker T. Washington’s advocacy of industrial education for young Negroes and the attitudes of existing labor unions, which were almost exclusively white, and apparently wished to remain so.

[https://www.pottsmmerc.com/news/west-chester-professor-offers-nuanced-view-of-black-history-in/article\\_b7430732-5738-11ea-a38c-eb8c45df8468.html?fbclid=IwAR2gdFvz4ZhfrPSLDy7M3rRc6M8s54k6Z0PHVBiQRL9SbofUGJ\\_5zjiESk4](https://www.pottsmmerc.com/news/west-chester-professor-offers-nuanced-view-of-black-history-in/article_b7430732-5738-11ea-a38c-eb8c45df8468.html?fbclid=IwAR2gdFvz4ZhfrPSLDy7M3rRc6M8s54k6Z0PHVBiQRL9SbofUGJ_5zjiESk4)

Reporter Evan Brandt in the *Mercury* describes a thought-provoking talk given by Professor tonya thames-taylor, of West Chester University (and KURC’s newest board member), to a gathering at the Pottsgrove Manner. She discussed the impact African Americans had on the building of America, the language used in history to describe slavery, and how American history has been packaged. She described how some African Americans who traveled north to the greater Pottstown area managed, against incredible odds, to build lives for themselves, to complete their apprenticeship, to buy land in the area, and to establish their own communities. Yet, the speaker argued, the descendants of these enslaved peoples still struggle to achieve the American dream.

<https://myauctionfinds.com/2020/05/11/robert-purvis-a-black-abolitionist-you-may-have-never-heard-of/?fbclid=IwAR1ijwr0R4ou5w0htaPThcM-BHh6fnmKpXW0gr-zhzlGd-JxZbdiLUulUjs>

This article introduces an African American abolitionist not as well-known as he should be-- Philadelphia’s Robert Purvis (1810-1898). A co-founder of the American Anti-Slavery Society, he was an UGRR agent, friend and colleague of William Lloyd Garrison, Lucretia White, and John G. Whittier. He also helped complete Robert Smedley’s book *The UGRR in Chester County*... after Smedley died at an early age. \*\*\*

**from “Sinha,” p. 6**

also add, it doesn’t include nearly all of the women married to the designated abolitionist. After all, women were “only” providing shelter, cooking and serving, making clothes, sometimes being courier to the fugitives and often directing slave owners or mercenaries away from the fugitive’s path. \*\*\*

**From "KURC Board of Directors," p. 3**

that it would continue. Mary was somewhat in awe of me, because I had been a professional archivist for nearly forty years at this time, head of Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College, and a writer of books and articles.

Actually, *I was in awe of her*. She was what academics call an "independent researcher"-- people who learn new things, tell important stories, and care about both facts and interpretations. They keep the world on its proper axis.

My father put fresh flags on the graves of veterans in my township, and others nearby. For a child, this was a wonderful outing. I saw the memorials for soldiers of the Revolution, the Civil War, and others down to the present.

I knew about slavery, which I thought a terrible injustice, probably before I knew any African American people. So, planting flags for Memorial Day left me with three abiding interests: history in general, the Civil War in particular, and how my country could have gotten so lost.

**Dick Kittle:** As I was growing up, my family moved around a lot. That impacted me. I wanted a more stable life. I went to UD, majored in history, and wrote senior paper on the Deer Park Tavern (local history). I took a job at Wilmington Friends School. There I enjoyed coaching and teaching history in the Upper and Middle School, especially American history. After 42 years at WFS, I retired. Shortly afterward, Terry Maguire convinced me to join KURC. Because I was the Head of the Athletic Department at Friends, supervising a large budget when I retired, it was suggested that I become Treasurer of KURC, and I did.

**Terry Maguire:** I was interested in history from the time I could read. In college I learned much about the abolition movement. I still use those texts for research for KURC.

In 1980 I came to Wilmington Friends. After some years I became fascinated with local history, especially the way Friends School was part of it. I eventually wrote a history of the Brandywine Valley for my students. Kelsey Burston and Dick Kittle's three kids read it and did projects such as Adrian described. The last chapter of *Desperate River, Qui-*

*et Creek*, is on the UGRR in this valley. In 2006 I met Mary Dugan, who had read my book and insisted I join KURC. After retiring in 2011, I did. Sadly, Mary died in 2013; but I am pleased to help promote her vision for KURC.

**John O'Neal:** I was a close friend of Mary Dugan. I am from an Army family with every generation serving including fourteen Union soldier ancestors in the American Civil War. I served in Viet Nam and observed a civil war. My genealogy research led me to look closely at American history between 1830 and 1860 which includes the active period of the underground railroad. Learning from Mary Dugan about the local underground railroad activity added to my interest in that period of American history. As my ancestors have done, I continue to place American flags on U.S. veterans graves in the tradition of Decoration Day now called Memorial Day.

**Lynn Sinclair:** I love genealogy and local history research. I met Mary Dugan on a KURC bus tour. Later I ran into to her at the Chester County Historical Society library. Mary made herself available and knew where to find me, and she started having KURC meetings at the Sunrise Cafe, which I used to own and run. We had a Mary Dugan table there with the KURC map under a glass top.

**Michele Sullivan:** I've long been interested in American history. I became a psychologist, but I also taught at the University of Delaware. When teaching, I always included women and minorities.

I am a Quaker, and I've always known about their condemnation of slavery. Years ago I went on a tour with Mary Dugan, and I was surprised by the number of Quakers involved in UGRR. I was invited to join KURC and become a tour guide for KURC.

While leading tours, I noticed how few blacks or women were given credit for their work. My research resulted in my locating at least 100 African American abolitionists in Chester County alone, many never before discovered. I am currently writing a publication, including other forms of resistance in addition to escaping via the UGRR. \*\*\*

## Scheduled KURC Heritage Bus Tours for 2020

Our family-friendly tours are led by knowledgeable guides in a comfortable, climate-controlled bus. We visit documented UGRR sites, historic homes and Quaker Meetinghouses while learning about local abolitionists and anti-slavery activity including the contributions of local African Americans and their faith communities. These two-hour Sunday tours start at 1:30 pm at the Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center, 300 Greenwood Road, Kennett Square 19348

**July 19**

**August 16**

**September 20**

**October 18**

Tickets are available through registration with Eventbrite, which can be found on the Events Section of our Facebook page or our website. Self-guided tours are available; if you are interested, contact us by phone (484)-544-5070, or email us at [info@kennettundergroundrr.org](mailto:info@kennettundergroundrr.org).