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UGRRI  
Underground Railroad Research Institute



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*Live. Learn. Believe.*

*Looking Back, Moving Forward*  
UGRRI  
Underground Railroad Research Institute  
GEORGETOWN  
COLLEGE

Summer 2006  
Issue 3, Volume 2



# The Voice of Freedom

"Looking Back, Moving Forward"

Issue 3, Volume 2

Newsletter of the UGRRI

Summer 2006

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## Mason County to Commemorate Bethel Baptist Pastor Gallenstein announces plans to recognize Rev. Elisha W. Green

Mason County Judge Executive James L. "Buddy" Gallenstein has initiated plans to honor the life and work of Reverend Elisha W. Green (circa 1816 -1893), a former enslaved African American who purchased his freedom, founded and constructed a church, a theological seminary, and aided in freeing slaves. The 1844 founder of Bethel Baptist Church in Maysville, Green began his religious ministry in Paris, KY following his baptism in the Licking River at Mayslick, KY. Upon construction, Green's new church, Bethel Baptist, marked the edge of the then free black community of Maysville. The church remained an important part of Mason County history until the original church building burned in 1972, causing the congregation to relocate.

One of eight children, Elisha Winfield Green was born into slavery "six miles to the right of that place on the Georgetown turnpike" date unknown. A contemporary of Georgetown African American Minister George Dupee, Green was ordained into the Baptist ministry by Georgetown First Baptist Church minister Elder Ward during the 1840s. Green received land to build Bethel Baptist Church as a gift from fellow Baptists and other members of the white community of Maysville in 1854 for the primary purpose of constructing a church to promote Baptist faith among free and enslaved African Americans, says Judge Gallenstein.

Judge Gallenstein wishes to commemorate Green's life not only as a freed slave and early Kentucky abolitionist, but also for his efforts to



Site of the original Bethel Baptist Church in Maysville, KY, where the Green memorial will be constructed.

promote Christian faith during one of the darkest periods of American history. The memorial will permanently mark the spot where Bethel Baptist Church once stood, which is currently a vacant city lot. The memorial would consist of a skeletal framework of the church, complete with replicas of doors and windows reminiscent of the original structure placed upon a stone or cement platform, symbolizing the foundation of the church (the original foundation stones of the church remain on-site). The inside center of the church frame would contain a life-size image of Green, with one hand extended representing his freedom from enslavement and the other holding a Bible demonstrating Green's commitment to faith. Broken chains will lie at Green's feet, indicating his successful escape from slavery.

Intended for use as a meditation and reflection garden, Judge Gallenstein states the lot will contain benches and a clear view of the Ohio River. In addition, Judge Gallenstein would like to see the current Mason County historic marker representing Reverend Green and Bethel Baptist Church moved to the location of the memorial and the site of the original structure. Currently, a historic marker commemorating Reverend Green and Bethel Baptist Church is located at the church's second location on Forest Avenue in Maysville.

Gallenstein estimates the total cost of the project to be \$150,000. He has already received \$50,000 from the Kentucky State Legislature to fund the project. Those interested in contributing to completion of the project should contact the Director of the Underground Railroad Research Institute at 502-863-2203 or Judge Gallenstein's office at 606-564-6706.

See inside for more on the life of Reverend Green.



The original Bethel Baptist Church. Photo courtesy of UGRRI Director Alicestyne Adams.

# UGRRI Honored for Preservation Efforts by Ida Lee Willis Foundation

The UGRRI was honored at the Governor's Executive Mansion in Frankfort, KY, with the Ida Lee Willis Memorial Foundation Preservation Project Award "in recognition of the significant accomplishment involving the preservation and rehabilitation of the James A. Sullivan Slave Quarters in Georgetown." UGRRI Advisory Committee Chair, Dr. Doris Wilkinson, was also honored at the May 25, 2006 event and recognized with receipt of the Ida Lee Willis Memorial Award for "her lifelong dedication to history and historic preservation."

The event was hosted by the Kentucky Heritage Council and Preservation Kentucky to recognize statewide historic preservation efforts. Bestselling author and known Kentucky preservationist, Linda Bruckheimer, was the keynote speaker. Bruckheimer spoke of her love and involvement in Kentucky historic preservation, stressing the needs and challenges associated with these efforts.

Other state Preservation Project Awards were given to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Winchester, Otto M. Budig Theatre in Covington, and the John Dale House in Shelby County. Bluegrass Trust for Historic Preservation of Lexington and the BRIDGES team of Green County Middle and High Schools received Service to Preservation Awards. Awards were also given to elementary, middle, and high school students from various Kentucky schools for their participation in the Preservation Kentucky photo essay contest themed "Working Places / Places That Work."

Ida Lee Willis, the widow of Kentucky governor Simeon Willis was named the first chairman of the Kentucky Heritage Council in 1966 and was well-known throughout Kentucky for her historic preservation efforts. The memorial foundation bearing her name, currently chaired by Steven Collins, has presented awards for preservation efforts since 1979.



David Morgan, State Historic Preservation Officer and Director Kentucky Heritage Council; Dr. Robert Bryant, Georgetown College; Linda Bruckheimer; Alicestyne Adams, UGRRI; Dr. Rosemary Allen, Georgetown College Provost and UGRRI Advisory Committee; and Frank Mason, representing owners of the James A. Sullivan Slave Quarters.

## UGRRI & UBL attend Black Achievers Banquet

by Katheryn Mucker, UGRRI Fellow and GC UBL President

UGRRI Director Alicestyne Adams attended the YMCA Black Achievers Awards Banquet April 15, 2006, with five Georgetown College Union of Black Leaders members—Phillip Bullock, Candas Smith, Breona Taul, Katheryn Mucker and Christopher Hawkins. The group was also joined by Georgetown College alum, former UGRRI intern and UBL President, Kimberly Murray. The event was held at the Lexington Center, Bluegrass Ballroom.

The YMCA of Central Kentucky Black Achievers Program exposes 7th through 12th grade students to educational and career opportunities through programmed activities, mentoring, and community based support. The keynote speaker for the evening event was John H. Jackson, Chief Policy Officer of the NAACP who gave a remarkable speech about struggles facing black youth today. According to Jackson, many teens simply don't have the means to achieve their goals and, because of this, more are becoming content with doing nothing.

The objective of this program "is to expose students to a wide variety of careers while assisting them in developing the skills necessary to compete successfully in the daily market and to present



Katheryn Mucker, Phillip Bullock, Alicestyne Adams, Chris Hawkins, Kimberly Murray, Breona Taul, and Candas Smith attend the YMCA Black Achievers banquet in Lexington, KY. Photo courtesy of Alicestyne Adams.

Adult Achievers and community volunteers to the Youth as positive role models. To develop the individual talents, academic and leadership capabilities of today's youth."

## Owens-Lalude Presents The Long Walk to Kentucky Teachers in GC Graduate Class

Mrs. Judith C. Owens-Lalude presented her interpretative program, *The Long Walk*, to Dr. Rebecca Powell's EDU 591 class, "Closing the Achievement Gap: Implementing Culturally Responsive Literacy and Content Instruction."

The purpose of Lalude's program is to introduce 4th-6th grade-aged children to the real escape of slaves in western Kentucky, and acquaint them with knowledge of the lives of women and children who lived and escaped from slavery.

*The Long Walk* tells the story of nine-year-old Wednesday and her escape from Fairfield, KY, with her mother. Owens-Lalude presents the story in authentic period costume, using props. She is preparing *The Long Walk* as an interpretive program she hopes will be included in the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program. The UGRRI served as a reviewer for the National Park Service to aid Mrs. Lalude in gaining acceptance into the program. Owens-Lalude seeks to present her story and performance for critique to audiences that work with children to ensure that *The Long Walk* communicates effectively to its intended audience.

Presenting this program to UGRRI and Dr. Powell's evening graduate class allowed Owens-Lalude to gain input from teachers across Kentucky; according to Powell, students

in her class represented "Grant County, Shelby County, [and] even some from as far away as Barbourville and Louisville." The program was presented on April 19, 2006.



Judith Owens-Lalude presents *The Long Walk* to Dr. Rebecca Powell's Georgetown College graduate education EDU591 class, at the LRC.

# Friends of the UGRRI

U.S. Department of Education

Georgetown College

National Park Service  
Network to Freedom Program

Washington High School,  
Washington Courthouse, OH

Friends of Forks of the Road  
Historical Society,  
Natchez, MS

Kentucky Heritage Council

Kentucky African American  
Heritage Commission

Kentucky Department of  
Libraries and Archives

Ohio Friends of Freedom

Uncle Tom's Cabin  
Historic Site,  
Dresden, Ontario, Canada

African American Military  
History Museum,  
Washington, D.C.

Buxton National Historic Site  
and Museum,  
Ontario, Canada

Harriet Tubman Foundation,  
Auburn, NY

Freedom Time Underground  
Railroad Museum,  
Maysville, KY

Bennett College,  
Greensboro, NC

Bethune-Cookman College,  
Daytona Beach, FL

Caflin University,  
Orangeburg, SC

Clark-Atlanta University,  
Atlanta, GA

Dillard University,  
New Orleans, LA

Houston Tillotson College  
Austin, TX

Paine College  
Augusta, GA

Philander Smith College,  
Little Rock, AR



by Andrea Durbin, UGRRI  
intern and Georgetown College  
Rising Junior

## Through Floods and Flames

Reverend Elisha W. Green was a former slave who became the first minister of the First African Baptist Church in Paris, KY who went on to become one of the founders of The Kentucky Normal and Theological Institute. Green was highly regarded by many who knew him, yet still faced a number of hardships and great discrimination during his time. Despite this, Green's accomplishments proved not only beneficial to him, but also to the African American community in Kentucky.

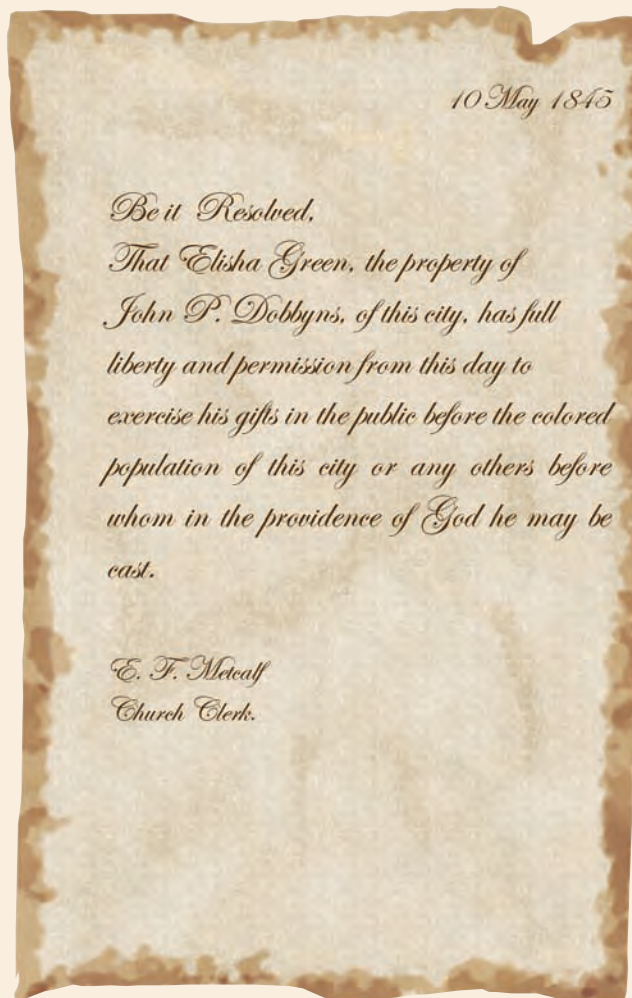
Green was born in Bourbon County, KY, near Paris in the early 1800s; exact date unknown. At the age of 10, Green was separated from his mother and taken to Mason County, KY, to work for the Dobbyns family; Green worked for the Dobbyns family until he bought his freedom, but remained in Mason County throughout his life.

In 1835, Green married Susan Young. After three years of marriage, he and his wife were nearly separated: "[My wife's owner, Mrs. Sissen,] sold my wife in the expectation of sending her south, or 'down the river,' as the expression was. My master, John P. Dobbyns, gave the negro-trader the money and sent him out of there"<sup>1</sup>. Despite the purchase, Dobbyns' financial condition did not permit him to keep Green's wife and children. He sold them to Mason County resident John C. Reid who kept the family for ten years until Mr. Dobbyns re-purchased them in 1845.

During the intervening years, Green was licensed to preach at the newly-formed First African Baptist Church by Paris Baptist Church clerk E. F. Metcalf on May 10, 1845 (see photo

below). Of the formation of the church, Green said, "...the colored church was a slave to the white Baptist church. So long as we complied with their ideas and judgment in the matters of worship, we could remain a separate and distinct church, but when we failed in their judgment to comply, the act must be rescinded and then all the members of the African church were back in the white church"<sup>2</sup>. Despite strict rules, the formation of such a church and appointment of Green as pastor was remarkable. In fact, Green could remember a time when black independent worship was impossible:

"...I [attended] a kind of Sabbath school [as a child in Bourbon County], gotten up by some of the blacks on the place and in different portions of the neighborhood. I, with some others, went and about the time we had gotten in a good way enjoying ourselves, the Patrollers came and whipped all the grown persons in the school-house... The object of the slaveholders was not to have the blacks gather in meetings or anything else, because, said they, when together that way, they (the



In 1845, Green was authorized to preach by Paris Baptist Church Clerk E.F. Metcalf. Text courtesy of The Life of Rev. Elisha W. Green; original art by UGRRI.

# The Life of Reverend Elisha W. Green, in Mason County, KY

negroes) would make plots to run off”<sup>3</sup>.

On November 1, 1848, thirteen men from the white church in Mason County loaned Green \$850 to purchase his family and gave him flexible terms for repaying them (see photo below); they told Green, “If you never pay it [back], we will never trouble your family.” Green paid the money back anyway. Green purchased his freedom from Mr. Dobbins using wages earned as a preacher. Despite being a free man, Green was regularly stopped by slave catchers who inquired as to who his owner was and Green would tell them, “Mr. Green”—meaning himself—so the traders would not question him further. Green claimed it became even more difficult to travel after he became free:

“...I was more of a slave after I bought myself than before. Before this I could go many places without interruption, but when I became a freeman I could not cross the Ohio River [sic]”<sup>4</sup>.

Green was discriminated against not simply because he was a black man, but also because he was a black man licensed to preach. In 1853, while preaching in Flemingsburg, KY, he preached to an African American audience at the white Methodist church he was permitted to use when whites were not. However, Green claim, “I did very well for some time until they (the Methodists) saw the influence of the Baptists, through my instrumentality, was becoming strong”<sup>5</sup>. Soon, the Methodist parishioners began holding their class-meetings later, therefore cutting and effectively removing Green’s time to preach. When Mr. Hendricks, the pastor of the Presbyterian Church heard of this, he allowed Green to use his space. However, Green says this arrangement also did not last long: “When it was so that I could not [use the Presbyterian Church to preach], I would be favored with the Christian Church. By this time the white Baptists saw that I was in the act of doing good, when they favored me with the use of their church regularly”<sup>6</sup>.

Other discrimination against Green’s preaching was more blatant. While in Georgetown assisting Bishop George W. Dupee in 1855, he was approached by “a white man ... with a stick in his hand” who “asked if there were any white men there.” The answer to this question, of course, was “no.” The man next demanded that Green come down from the pulpit, and Green complied. Despite such struggles, Green persevered and has since become known not only for his ministry but also for paving the way for the Mason County African American community. Green stated:

“People may look at me now and say that I see an easy time and everything seems to be going well with me. If it is so, I can say that I have come through ‘floods and flames’ to enjoy them. I have often been in a condition that I knew not what to do. It seemed sometimes that circumstances would overcome me, but I am thankful that Providence has always provided a way by which I could come out of those unhappy moments of discontent”.

Reverend Elisha W. Green passed away in 1893, and Kentucky bid farewell to a beloved minister and friend.

## Works Cited

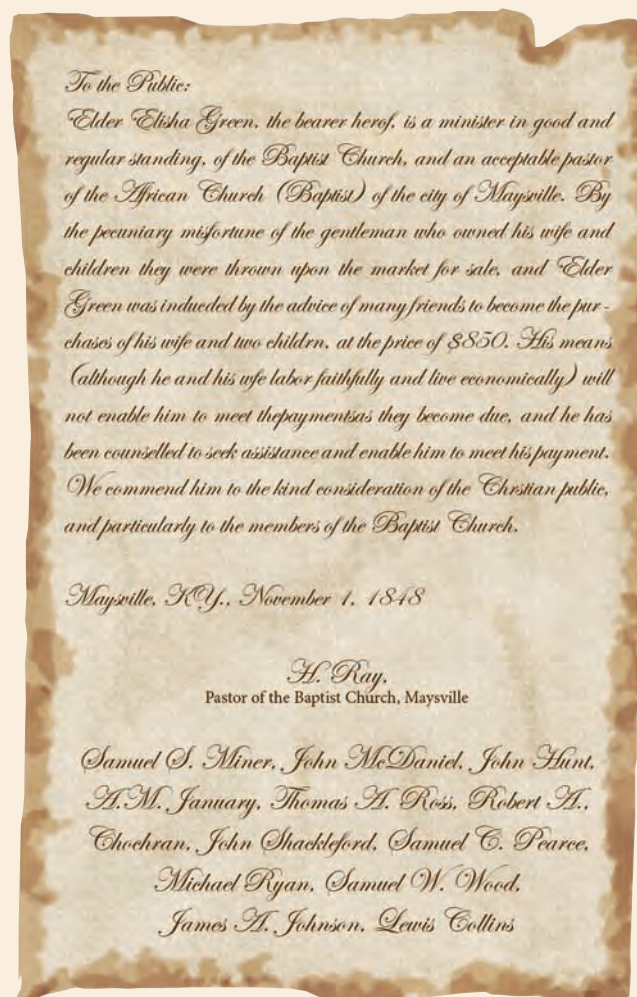
*The Life of Rev. Elisha W. Green, one of the founders of the Kentucky Normal and Theological Institute—Now the State University at Louisville; Eleven Years Moderator of the Mt. Zion Baptist Association; Five Years Moderator of the Consolidated Baptist Educational Association and Thirty Years Pastor of the Colored Baptist Churches of Maysville and Paris. Written by himself.*

Electronic edition.

<<<http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/greenew/greenew.html>>>  
1 pg. 3; 2 12; 3 pg. 2; 4 pg. 14-15; 5 pg. 9; 6 pg. 6; pg. 11



Elisha W. Green, as his picture appears in his autobiography. Photo courtesy of <<<http://docsouth.unc.edu>>>



In 1848, the thirteen men named above loaned Green \$850 to purchase his family. Text courtesy of *The Life of Rev. Elisha W. Green*; original art by UGRRI.

## UGRRI, Advisory Committee, & Friends Visit Maysville, KY

On Wednesday, June 7, 2006, members of the UGRRI Advisory Committee, staff, and friends visited Maysville, KY. Those in attendance, included Dr. Necia Harkless, Dr. Glen Taul, David Morgan, Alicestyne Adams, Cassandra Garner, and Gina Putthoff, as well as UGRRI Fellows Joanna Lile and Andrea Durbin. Brian Evans of the Georgetown College Office of Institutional Advancement, Powell County High School student Egypt Turley, and Georgetown College alum and Mason County native Lisa Cannon were also in attendance.

The Advisory Committee meeting was held at the offices of Mason County Judge Executive Buddy Gallenstein in historic downtown Maysville. The committee learned of Maysville's commitment to historical preservation and interpretation from the Maysville (Mason County) Director of Tourism. In recent years, Maysville has spearheaded an effort to commemorate historical sites in Maysville and the surrounding Mason County. As part of this effort, Maysville has published tour maps specifically geared toward Underground Railroad sites and personalities to aid visitors in self-guided tours to many of Mason County's historic sites. The touring group was later joined by Maysville Mayor David Cartmell who welcomed the group and shared his dreams for the continued historic preservation of Maysville and Mason County historic sites.

The group visited the historic building known as "Phillips Folly," in downtown Maysville. Constructed in 1831, this historical site is now the home to Freedom Time Tours and History Museum. Freedom Time Director, Mr. Jerry Gore, gave a tour of the house, which he states was a slave jail from 1831 - 1834 before to becoming a safe house for escaping slaves in 1839. The group also visited the Germantown Minerva Baptist Church, and the original site of Bethel Baptist Church in downtown Maysville, where plans are currently underway to erect a memorial (see cover story), and a brief walking tour of historic Old Washington founded by Simon Kenton in 1797.



Dr. Glen Taul, intern Andrea Durbin, Mr. Jerry Gore, Judge Buddy Gallenstein, and others visit Bethel Baptist site in Maysville, KY.

## Dr. Doris Wilkinson Sheds Light on Warriors in the Shadows Exhibit Highlights the Role of Women of the Underground Railroad

UGRRI Advisory Committee Chair Dr. Doris Wilkinson shared her exhibit "Warriors in the Shadows: Women of the Underground Railroad" with the public March - February 2006 at the William T. Young Library at the University of Kentucky. Her exhibit was featured as part of the University's celebration of Black History and Women's History months.

Dr. Wilkinson chose the title of the exhibit to acknowledge the activist spirit of the Underground Railroad movement—the war-

rior—and the struggle every slave had to go through not only to live in bondage but also to escape from it in secret—the shadows. This exhibit is the only of its kind to specifically examine the role of *women* in this important movement.

"This is new, groundbreaking history," UGRRI Director Alicestyne Adams told UK's student publication *Kentucky Kernel*. "It's important because the women of the Underground Railroad have never been documented."

Dr. Wilkinson's exhibit was also featured at the UGRRI's first summit in 2003 entitled "Reframing History: The Underground Railroad and American Memory" and was also on display at Lexington's Transylvania University Morland Gallery the same year.

Dr. Wilkinson recently wrote about the UGRRI's affect on the Georgetown College campus culture for the Winter 2005 *Voice of Freedom*. Dr. Wilkinson also received the 2006 Ida Lee Willis Award for her lifelong efforts in historic preservation; more about this honor can be found on page 2.



Dr. Doris Wilkinson's exhibit "Warriors in the Shadows: Women of the UGRR" at the UGRRI's 2003 Summit.

Rust College,  
Holly Springs, MS

Wiley College,  
Marshall, TX

River Road African  
American History Museum,  
Donaldsville, LA

Logan County Historical  
Society

Logan County African  
American History Museum

Mantle Rock Education and  
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