

HISTORIC UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SITE

# OHIO'S HISTORICAL *Underground*

## RAILROAD TRAIL



The Underground Railroad was neither underground nor a secret. It was a network of safe havens, often in the form of churches, schools, and homes, where fugitives could find refuge. The movement was a moral and humanitarian endeavor, and its participants were often cloaked in secrecy to avoid the wrath of slave catchers.



John Rankin House in Ripley

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## RAILROAD TRAIL



During the 19th century, a network of secret routes and safe houses were set-up to assist enslaved African Americans to escape through free states into Canada. This passage for freedom seekers became known as the Underground Railroad, which stretched across the U.S. and included states like Ohio. [Learn more at Ohio.org/UGRRTrail](http://Ohio.org/UGRRTrail).



National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati

### 1. National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center immerses visitors into the stories of the Underground Railroad.

### 2. Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Cincinnati

Harriet Beecher Stowe was an abolitionist and women's rights advocate who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the popular 19th century novel credited with laying the groundwork for the Civil War.

**VISIT:** [Spring Grove Cemetery](#) in Cincinnati. The final resting place of several key figures in the fight against slavery, including abolitionists, conductors on the Underground Railroad, and Civil War soldiers who fought for the Union.

### 3. The Ohio Freedom Path in Cincinnati (start)

The Ohio Freedom Path is an audio guide that features a walking tour that uses the existing Ohio to Erie Trail to tell Ohio's Underground Railroad history.

**VISIT:** [Six Acres Bed and Breakfast](#) in Cincinnati. This historic home was built by abolitionist Zebulon Strong who helped freedom seekers along their journey to Hamilton Pike, the next safe house along the Underground Railroad route.

### 4. The Clermont County Freedom Trail in Batavia

The Clermont County Freedom Trail features 42 historical sites, 22 of which are on the [National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom](#).

### 5. The Ross-Gowdy Museum of Historic New Richmond

Home of Thomas Gowdy who was a defendant along with Henry Poindexter in the famous Ohio Supreme Court case *Anderson v. Poindexter*.

### 6. John Parker House in Ripley

After being born into slavery, John Parker was able to purchase his freedom. Parker was also a noted abolitionist and 'conductor' on the Underground Railroad.

### 7. John Rankin House in Ripley

The Reverend John Rankin was an ardent abolitionist who assisted enslaved people on their paths to freedom. His home is also part of the [Appalachian Freedom Heritage Tour](#).

**VISIT:** [Red Oak Presbyterian Church](#) in Ripley was led by Reverend James Gilliland, who was the leader of a strong network of conductors on the Underground Railroad.



Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Cincinnati



## 14. “The Underground Railroad in Southeastern Ohio” at The Farmers Castle Museum in Belpre

“The Underground Railroad in Southeastern Ohio” is a permanent exhibit of The Farmers Castle Museum that details the rise of the freedom movement along the Ohio River shoreline of Washington County.

**VISIT:** [Harmar Cemetery](#) is the oldest cemetery in Marietta. It is the burial site of abolitionist David Putnam, Jr., and several pre-Civil War multiracial families who called Harmar their home.

## 15. Underground Railroad Immersive Journey at The Multicultural Genealogical Center in Chesterhill

The new Underground Railroad Immersive Journey hosted by the Multicultural Genealogical Center offers the opportunity for visitors to search for clues that freedom seekers used.

**VISIT:** Kincaid Cave (sometimes referred to as Henman Cave) was used to hide freedom seekers. It is part of [Historic Henman Cave Park](#) in Chesterhill.

## 16. The Paint Creek Freedom Trail in Greenfield

The Paint Creek Freedom Trail highlights the town’s role in the Underground Railroad by highlighting the locations and homes used at the time to aid freedom seekers.

## 17. Springboro Underground Railroad Walking Tour

Springboro once played a pivotal role along the Underground Railroad. Many of the documented safe houses can still be explored on guided walking tours offered by the Springboro Area Historical Society.

## 18. Gateway to the Underground Railroad and Civil War in Preble County, Ohio - Preble County Historical Society Museum in Gratis

This exhibition was created to honor once enslaved Preble County Underground Railroad conductor Gabriel Smith, who led fugitives throughout Southwest Ohio and Eastern Indiana. The exhibition includes both Underground Railroad and Civil War information for Preble County.

**VISIT:** The Gabriel Smith Memorial Gateway to Freedom Display at the [Preble County District Library](#) in Eaton. This permanent exhibit displays documentations and items relating directly to abolitionists, alongside additional elements related to those who were enslaved and freed in Ohio during the time period.

## 19. The Gammon House in Springfield

George and Sarah Gammon were free persons of color who helped other freedom seekers on their journey north to freedom.

## 20. The Kelton House Museum & Garden in Columbus

The Kelton House was the historic home of the Kelton Family who held strong anti-slavery ideals and helped to shelter freedom seekers.

## 21. Hanby House in Westerville

The Hanby House was the home of abolitionist and composer Benjamin Hanby who is most known for the song “Darling Nelly Gray.”

## 8. Underground Railroad Walking Tour in Ripley

The self-guided Underground Walking Tour in Ripley takes visitors to the sites in the area connected with the Underground Railroad.

**VISIT:** The [Union Township Public Library](#) in Brown County is a Network to Freedom site which contains a vast collection of Underground Railroad research – the [Anti-Slavery Collection](#).

## 9. John T. Wilson Homestead in Peebles

John T. Wilson was an abolitionist and conductor on the Underground Railroad. Wilson’s homestead played a significant role during the time, serving as a stop on the Underground Railroad. It is also part of the [Appalachian Freedom Heritage Tour](#).

## 10. Adams County Heritage Center in West Union

The Adams County Heritage Center is recognized for its congregation leader John Graham, an outspoken abolitionist who used his home as a station on the Underground Railroad.

## 11. “The Crossing”—Underground Railroad Mural in Portsmouth

The mural by artist Robert Dafford honors freedom seekers and Scioto County residents who aided them along the Underground Railroad.

## 12. The River-to-Lake Freedom Trail in Portsmouth (start)

The River-to-Lake Freedom Trail is part of the commemorative highway along U.S. Route 23 and State Route 4 that served as part of the Underground Railroad.

## 13. John Gee Black Historical Center in Gallipolis

Part of the [Appalachian Freedom Heritage Tour](#), this cultural and educational center ensures the preservation of tradition, culture, crafts, music, and art of the African Americans in Southeast Ohio. It is also on the NPS’ National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.





### 29. The Mount Pleasant Underground Railroad Historic District

Mount Pleasant contained multiple Underground Railroad stops and represented a multi-racial community of people working together to assist freedom seekers.

### 30. The Spring Hill Historic Home & Underground Railroad Site in Massillon

The site was home to both the Rotch and Wales families who were abolitionists and part of the Underground Railroad.

### 31. Haines House Underground Railroad Museum in Alliance

The family of Quaker John Grant, who lived in the Haines House, were abolitionists and many of their family members were 'conductors' on the Underground Railroad.

### 32. Underground Railroad Trolley Tours at the Salem Historical Society

The Underground Railroad trolley tours in Salem highlight important sites in the abolitionist movement and include a slideshow of many of the places freedom seekers were hidden.

### 33. The Sutliff Museum in Warren

Located on the second floor of the Warren Trumbull County Public Library, the Sutliff Museum is a memorial to anti-slavery activists Levi and Phebe Sutliff.



### 34. Hubbard House Underground Railroad Museum in Ashtabula

Built by William and Katherine Hubbard, the home was a northern terminus on the Underground Railroad. Its code names were 'Mother Hubbard's Cupboard' and 'The Great Emporium'.

### 35. The Anti-Slavery Movement and The Underground Railroad in Hudson

This virtual walking tour with the Hudson Library and Historical Society consists of 16 stops throughout Hudson, which was known as the "citadel of abolitionism."

### 22. Lucy Depp Park in Powell

Founded in the 1830s by freedman Abraham Depp, this site served as a stop on the Underground Railroad offering refuge to freedom seekers guided by a bell signal from the Depp home.

### 23. Heritage Freedom Trail – Alum Creek State Park in Delaware

While walking the trail, visitors can learn about the local history of the Underground Railroad, which includes the 19th century community of Africa, Ohio, a historic free Black community.

### 24. The Stone Academy in Zanesville

The Ohio Anti-Slavery Society held state conventions in the building known as The Stone Academy in 1835 and 1839. The [Putnam UGRR Interpretive Center](#) is also housed at The Stone Academy.

### 25. Nelson T. Gant Homestead in Zanesville

The Nelson T. Gant Homestead was the home of a formerly enslaved man whose entrepreneurial endeavors led him to becoming one of the wealthiest men in the U.S.

### 26. The Historic Prospect Place Estate in Trinway

Historic Prospect Place was the home of the George Adams family. George B. Adams held strong anti-slavery ideals and chose to move his family to the free state. His son, George W. Adams, continued his father's legacy and became an abolitionist and Conductor on the Underground Railroad.

### 27. Underground Railroad Museum in Flushing

The Underground Railroad Museum preserves the past with exhibits portraying the history of the Underground Railroad in Ohio and life in the 1800s.

### 28. Historic Roscoe Village in Coshocton

The acknowledged host of the [Underground Railroad in Coshocton](#) County was Prior Foster, a well-respected African American who lodged freedom seekers in his shanty at Harbaugh Corner.

### 36. The John Brown House in Akron

John Brown was a famed abolitionist, who historians view as the first U.S. citizen committed to absolute racial equality.

### 37. Spring Grove Cemetery in Medina

Spring Grove Cemetery is the final resting place of courageous individuals who played vital roles in the Underground Railroad. As a designated site in the NPS' Underground Railroad [Network to Freedom](#), it preserves and shares the legacies of these brave individuals.

### 38. The Cozad-Bates House Interpretive Center in Cleveland

The Cozad-Bates House acts as a museum highlighting the area's history as a point of anti-slavery activism, while honoring freedom seekers through exhibits and installations.

**VISIT:** Cleveland's [Saint John's Episcopal Church](#) served as one of the final stations for freedom crossing Lake Erie into Canada. It hosts "[Station Hope](#)," an annual multi-arts event honoring the history of St. John's Episcopal Church.

### 39. Woodland Cemetery in Cleveland

Woodland Cemetery was the first site in Cleveland included in the National Park Service Underground Railroad [Network to Freedom](#). Along its Underground Railroad Memorial Walkway are etched bricks highlighting people connected to the UGRR.

### 40. Underground Railroad Sculpture in Oberlin

Located on Oberlin College & Conservatory's campus, the sculpture commemorates the town as a major stop on the Underground Railroad.

**VISIT:** At Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, see the monuments dedicated to the [Oberlin-Wellington Rescue](#) and to Leary and Copeland - Oberlin's [Harpers Ferry Martyrs](#).

### 41. Monroe House at the Oberlin Heritage Center

The Oberlin Heritage Center explores Oberlin's remarkable abolitionist and Underground Railroad history. Available tours include the Monroe House, owned by abolitionist lecturer, Underground Railroad agent, and Ohio politician James Monroe.

**VISIT:** The "Freedom's Friends: Underground Railroad and Abolitionist" and "Civil War to Civil Rights" [History Walks](#) are education tours put on by Oberlin Heritage Center.

### 42. Westwood Cemetery in Oberlin

Historic Westwood Cemetery contains the burials of hundreds of individuals involved in the fight to end slavery.

**VISIT:** See historical sites on the "[Downtown Oberlin Walking Tour of Civil War Monuments](#)" walking tour.

### 43. Historic Lyme Village in Bellevue

John and Sarah (Thatcher) Seymour were abolitionists who helped freedom seekers to Lake Erie where they could be transported to Canada. The Seymour House is recognized as a historic stop on the [River-to-Lake Freedom Trail](#).



### 44. Follett House Museum in Sandusky

Operated by the Sandusky Library, the former home of Oran and Eliza Follett served as a shelter for freedom seekers.

### 45. The Underground Railroad Historic Walking Tour in Sandusky

The walking tour was developed by the Erie County Historical Society to highlight the region's role in the Underground Railroad.

### 46. "Path to Freedom" at Facer Park in Sandusky

Recognizing Sandusky's role in the Underground Railroad, Facer Park's sculpture, [Path to Freedom](#) is a symbolic representation of a fearless family escaping the chains of slavery.

### 47. The Black Heritage Library & Multicultural Center in Findlay

Visitors to the Center will see physical and digital artifacts from before the Emancipation Proclamation, the Underground Railroad, the Buffalo Soldiers, the Civil Rights Era, and many other periods.

### 48. Lathrop House in Sylvania

Lucian and Larissa Lathrop were strong advocates for anti-slavery and part of the Underground Railroad network.

