

Creating the Racine Underground Railroad Freedom Heritage Trail:

Commemorating the Proud Legacy of Racine's Anti-Slavery History

Summary:

The Underground Railroad Freedom Heritage Trail in the City of Racine is a memorial to the secret network of escape routes and hiding places initiated by African Americans emancipating themselves from slavery in the 1850's and 1860's. These sites are key points in Racine's abolitionist past. Creating the Racine Underground Railroad Freedom Heritage Trail will place historic markers at 10 key downtown Racine sites, and link those sites to an engaging walking and information tour. This Heritage Trail will help Racine's residents and tourists understand the historical significance of Racine's united effort for justice and freedom during the Underground Railroad era. The Professional Women's Network for Service, Inc. (formerly Racine Chapter of The Links, Inc.) and the Racine Heritage Museum have partnered for over 15 years to detail and document the history of Racine's involvement in the Underground Railroad Movement. Installing historic markers at these sites will enhance their tremendous work to make our community aware of Racine's rich legacy of involvement with the Underground Railroad.

The Freedom Heritage Trail Signage:

This will be a self-guided walking tour highlighting ten downtown sites. The signs will be attractive and informative, easy to understand, and be weatherproof and vandalism-resistant. Additionally, the signs will:

- Provide an educational experience;
- Promote the Racine area's history and cultural heritage;
- Increase visitors' understanding of the City's history; and
- Supplement the Racine area's tourism potential.

Specifically, the signs will commemorate the following people/sites:

1. The Racine Heritage Museum
2. Joshua Glover
3. First Presbyterian Church
4. Site of the former Cartwright Blacksmith Shop
5. Utley & Berch Site
6. Clement's Newspaper Office
7. Armour Livery Stable
8. Dutton & Raymond Warehouse Site
9. Home of Rev. Kinney
10. Site of Colored Union Baptist Church

See the attached description of the Downtown Racine Freedom Heritage Trail signs for the specific locations and text for each sign. Eventually, the City of Racine, the Racine Heritage Museum, and the Professional Women's Network for Service, Inc. plans to enhance this tour with a mobile app that would provide additional context, pictures, and historic information about these sites and Racine's role in the Underground Railroad.