New Philadelphia and our path to becoming part of the National Park Service

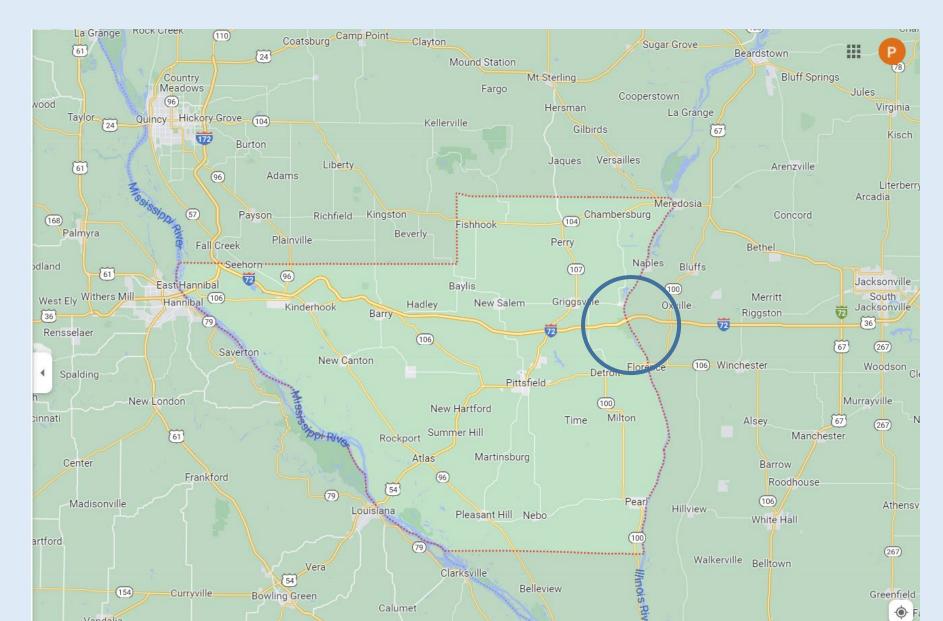
Paul A. Shackel

Department of Anthropology University of Maryland

June 6, 2023



Bridge crossing Illinois River



Center for American Archaeology (1998)

Mormontown Site - Pittsfield, IL (1839-1845)

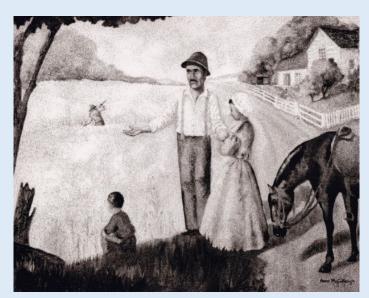
New Philadelphia (1836 – 20th c)

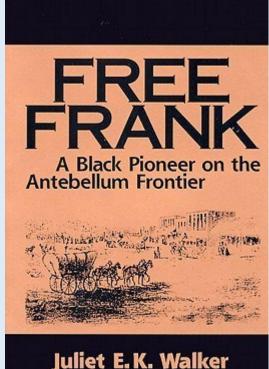




Memory of New Philadelphia

- Emancipation Centennial painting (1963)
- Matteson (1964) oral histories
- Helen McWorter Simpson (1981)
- Juliet Walker (1983)
- Frank McWorters grave site
 - -NRHP (1988)







Vibert White



Meeting at University of Illinois, Springfield (June, 2002)



New Philadelphia Land Trust



F

1939 aerial photograph

F



Roger Woods and Phil Bradshaw



The walkover survey

F



The Archaeological Survey (began in fall 2002)



F





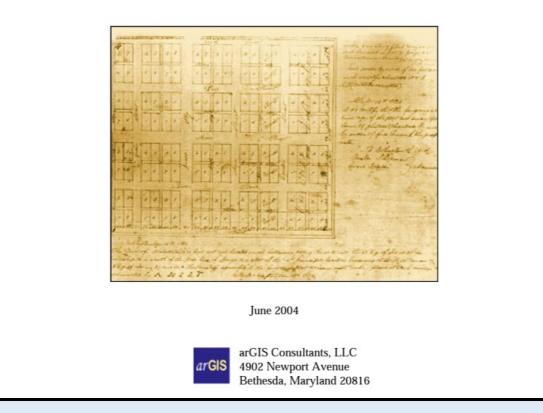




New Philadelphia Project Pedestrian Survey: Final Report and Catalog

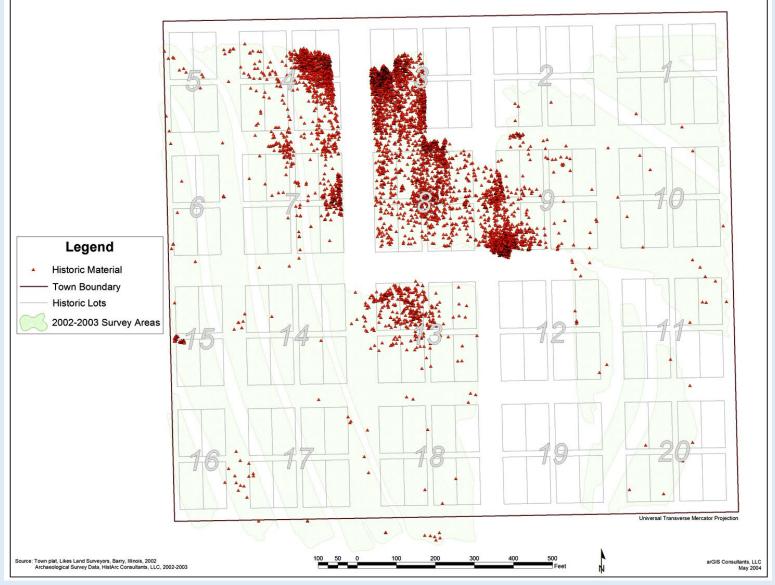
Phase I Archaeology at the Historic Town of New Philadelphia, Illinois

Tom Gwaltney



Oakley-Lindsay Foundation of Quincy Newspapers Inc.





Distribution of Historic Artifacts

NSF- REU - 2004-2006, 2008-2011

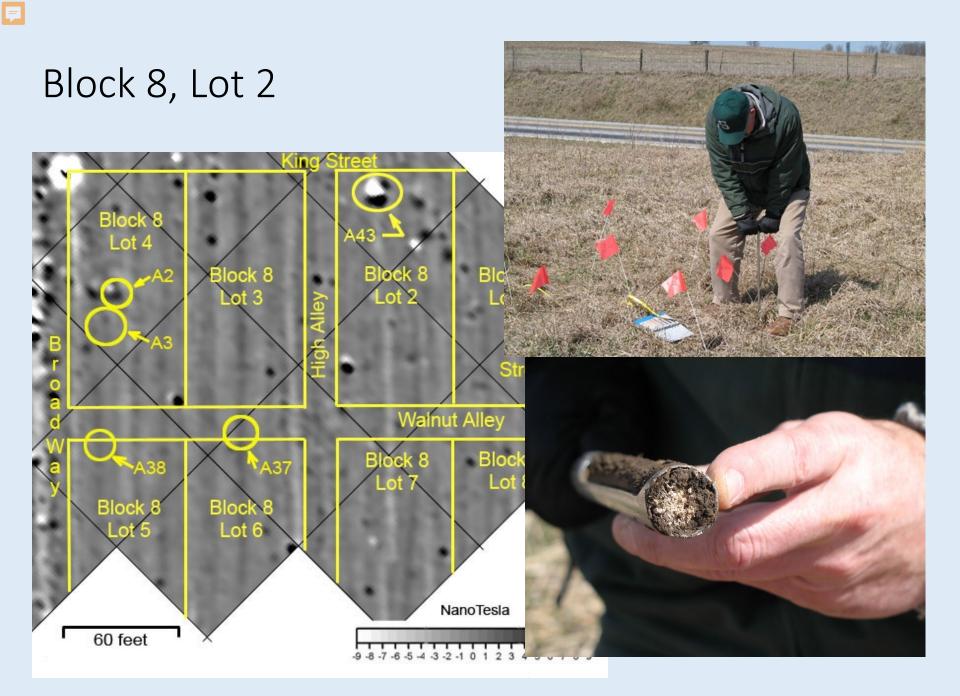
- University of Maryland
- University of Illinois
- Illinois State Museum
- University of North Carolina



U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center



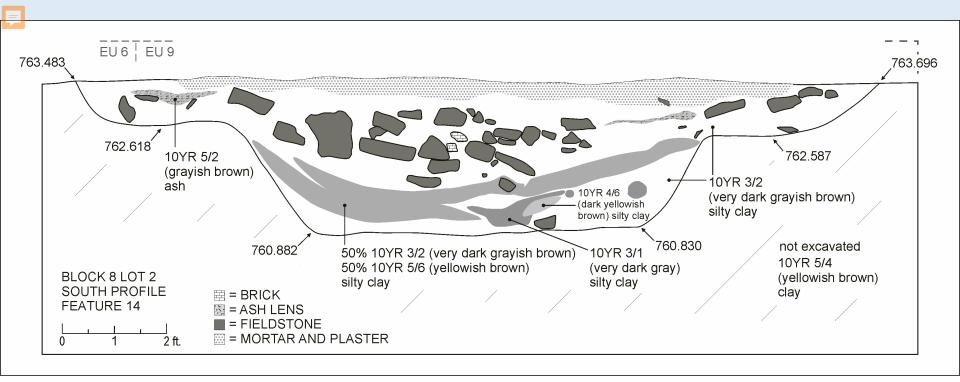
Magnetic field gradiometer





Block 8, Lot 2









Block 8, Lot 2



Twentieth-Century House Foundation



Fred and Nancy Venicomb, 1900 - 1938

Some results

- Despite plowing the site is intact (NRHP)
- Residents settled near each other on Broadway and Main Streets (not a segregated town)
- Artifacts challenge the perception of frontier
- Despite connections to markets still self reliant for food



Traditional Memory Challenged

- Remembered as an all black town
 - Census Research 25-35% African American
- Only a few families settled the town
 - At least several dozen different families
- Town died after 1869
 - Building phase around 1900
- "where black and white Americans lived together peacefully on the antebellum Illinois frontier"
 - Oral histories sundown town & Klan violence

National Register of Historic Places (2005)



THE TOWN SITE NEW PHILADELPHIA FOUNDED 1836 BY FREE FRANK MCWORTER IS LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AUGUST 11, 2005

National Register of Historic Place (2005)

Listed in the NRHP for the *potential of archaeology providing nationally significant information* about the lifeways and economic and social relationships of African Americans and European Americans in a pioneer town on the frontier.



On The Internet: WWW.LATIMES.COM

FRIDAY, JULY 14, 2006

COLUMN ONE A Land of Racial Harmony?

 New Philadelphia, Ill., settled by a freed slave, was seen as a colorblind utopia. Amid doubts, town descendants want the truth unearthed.

By P.J. HUFFSTUTTER

HADLEY TOWNSHIP, III. Sandra McWorter knelt on the soil and gingerly swept through the dirt with a tiny brush to find hints of her heritage.

The clues hidden beneath the wild grasses and rolling hills could give McWorter insight into what life was like for her pionee ancestors in the Land of Lincolr "Free Frank" McWorter bough his freedom from slavery and came here in 1831 to build New Philadelphia - the first town i the U.S. legally settled, platted and surveyed by an African American

Regional lore hails the town as a haven of racial harmony: place where whites and black lived side by side, farmed th land, sold their goods, marrie one another and worshiped to gether - more than two decad before the Civil War. But there no evidence - no record memories, no journals, no nev paper accounts - that proves nisses such camaraderie. Today, New Philadelphia is lily-covered pasture, and Main Street a gravel path to ouse. What remains is le that has teased schola buffs and New Philad dants for years: 1

Smithsonian Magazine

Archaeology Magazine

Chicago Tribune

Los Angeles Times

Boston Globe

St Louis Post-Dispatch

Philadelphia Inquirer

Atlanta Journal Constitution

WHAT REALLY HAPPENEI OWN Los Angeles Ti Smithsonian

DIGS

Ahead of Its Time?

Founded by a freed slave, an Illinois town was a rare example of biracial cooperation before the Civil War - BY DANA MACKENZIE

RURAL PIKE COUNTY, Illinois, olitary highway marker surround by mown grass, potted flowers a small American flag stands by a traveled road. "SITE OF NEW ADELPHIA," it reads. Beyond marker stretch cornfields, trees pentle hills as far as the eye can see vista hasn't changed much since "Free k" McWorter, a former slave, moved his famhere in 1831 and later started the town, the first in erica legally founded by a black person. McWorter dreamed big. New Philadelphia's Main Street

Broadway were some et wide-broader nany streets in New City then. By 1865, illage, likely named he most active urban r for free blacks at ime, had become a or commercial hub 104 white and 56 kinhabitants Rare in er America, blacks whites went to school

her and even intermarried

oday, New Philadelphia isn't even a ghost town. The inal buildings have long since been plowed under, and way and Main Street are part of a gravel driveway that to a farmhouse. But the western Illinois town is comack to life. Archaeologists and college students from nd the country embarked this past summer on a three-year study, combing fields for remnants of the unity. "Archaeologists who study Africanican history have spent most of their time excavating quarters," says Paul Shackel, an anthropologist at the ity of Maryland, who is leading the study. "By excag a free community in which blacks lived before the War, we are breaking into a new genre."

CWorter had been a slave in Kentucky before he bought reedom in 1819 at age 42 by manufacturing and selling eter. He purchased New Philadelphia from the federal ment with profits from farming. It was an investment

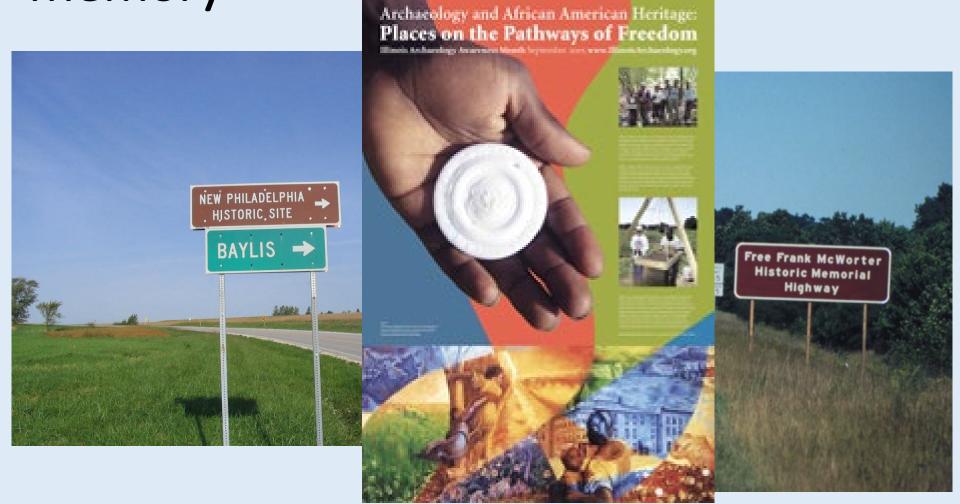
Smithsonian JANUART 2005

The excavation of a town founded by a freed slave may illuminate 1800s race relations (left, a c. 1925 class from the New Philadelphia schoolhouse)

in his family's freedom. Over the course of 40 years, he earned enough from farming and selling land to buy 16 family members out of slavery for a total of \$14,000 (more than a quarter of a million dollars in today's currency). Some of his neighbors, such as farmer and fellow property owner John Walker, were also former slaves who purchased their freedom. Others, particularly after the Civil War, had fewer means: William Butler, freed by Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, arrived in New Philadelphia with nothing but a mule, was given a job by Mc-Worter's son Solomon and, eventually, was able to buy land on the north side of town.

Archaeologists are filling in missing details of how and where the settlers lived. This past May, Michael Hargrave of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers surveyed part of the 42acre town site with a device that uses ground-penetrating electrical and magnetic fields to detect buried objects. From the radar-like images, archaeologists pinpointed 19 promising places to dig, including what was most likely a cellar or a garbage pit in the Butler home.

Archaeology helps place New Philadelphia in the national public memory



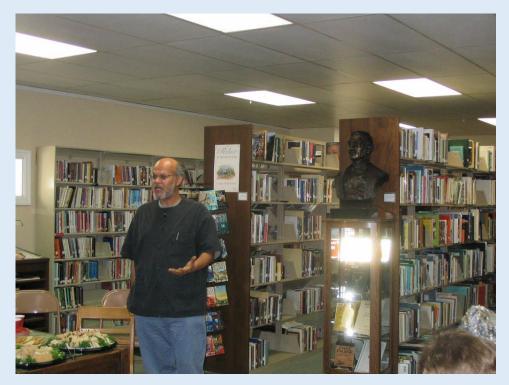
McWorter Family Reunion (2005)



Family reunion at Barry Baptist Church (2005)



Barry Apple Festival (2005)



"How many families have an opportunity at a National Science Foundation grant to add another little piece to the overall clipboard....

We have to figure out a way of not acting like we're writing the Pat Boone version of New Philadelphia, you know – happy, white socks and white bucks kind of version – of American history" Gerald McWorter (from the minutes of the Barry Apple Festival visit, 2 October 2004).



•The Importance of Archaeology

•The Power of Archaeology

Teaching with Historic Places (2005)

Teaching with Historic Places

National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior

New Philadelphia: A Multiracial Town on the Illinois Frontier

New Philadelphia: A Multiracial Town on the Illinois Frontier



(Pat Likes, photographer)

National Historic Landmark NPS – inspection of site



National Historic Landmark (2009)



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National Historic Landmark (2009)

Designated for extraordinary national significance for high archaeological integrity and potential to yield information of major scientific importance of free, integrated rural communities and possibilities the town site possesses to affect theories, concepts, methods and ideas in historical archaeology to a major degree.



The Archaeological Conservancy (2009)

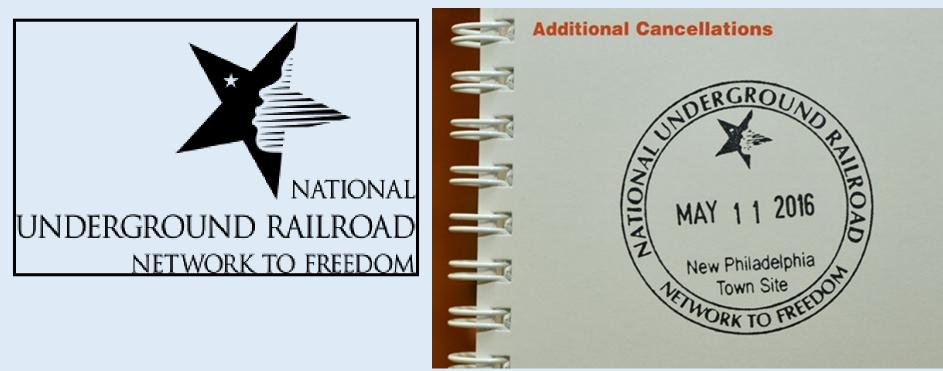


Archaeological Conservancy eyes New Philadelphia land purchase

By DEBORAH GERTZ HUSAR Sep 26, 2009

National Park Service National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (2013)

"...the New Philadelphia town site has made a significant contribution to the understanding of the Underground railroad in American history and therefore meets the requirements for inclusion in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom"



Legislative History of New Philadelphia

S. 1629 The New Philadelphia, Illinois, Study Act

- 2009 Introduced by Sen. Burris, co-sponsor Sen. Durbin
- 2010 Passed sub and full Energy and Natural Resources Committees

HR 5455 The New Philadelphia, Illinois, Study Act

• 2010 Introduced by Rep. Schock



New Philadelphia Townsite Reconnaissance Survey, 2010 (reported in 2012)

- A reconnaissance survey examines the issues of national significance, suitability, feasibility, and level of National Park Service.
- Determines whether further evaluation through a congressionally authorized special resource study should be considered.



Legislative History of New Philadelphia

HR 1563 The New Philadelphia, Illinois, Study Act

• 2011 Introduced by Rep. Schock

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HR 930 The New Philadelphia, Illinois, Study Act

- 2013 Introduced by Rep. Schock
- Bill passed by House, April 2014

S. 1328 The New Philadelphia, Illinois, Study Act

- 2013 Introduced by Sen. Kirk, co-sponsor Sen. Durbin
- 2013 Sen. National Parks Subcommittee hearing
- 2013 Sen. National Parks Full committee approval
- 2014 included in National Defense Authorization Act – signed into law by President Obama









Smithsonian Museum of American History "Many Voices, One Nation" (June 2017)

Incorporating Western Lands

Beyond the Continent

Creating Community: Chicago and Los Angeles, 1900–1965

New Americans, Continuing Debates, 1965–2000

Places of Negotiation

About

Search this exhibition

The Free Frank McWorter Family

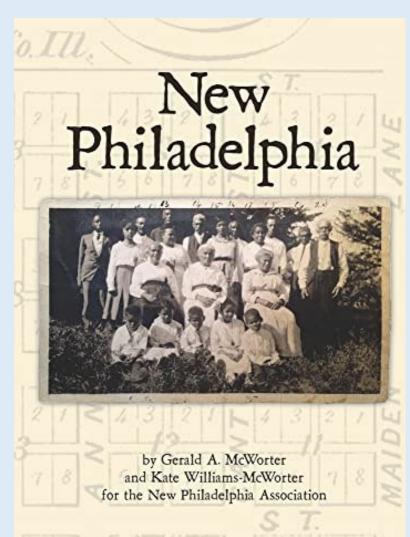
Though living in the free state of Illinois, the family was never entirely safe from slave catchers who moved along the Mississippi River before the Civil War. The McWorters remained in the community of New Philadelphia for generations as farmers and artisans.



Marie Thomas, great-granddaughter of Free Frank, near New Philadelphia, Illinois, early 1900s

Courtesy of Pamela and Sheena Franklin





21 43 21 43 21

Gerald McWorter & Kate Williams McWorter (2018)

Legislative History of New Philadelphia

HR 820 New Philadelphia National Historic Site Act

• 2020 Introduced by Representative Darin LaHood

HR 8224 New Philadelphia National Historical Park Act

- 2021 Introduced by Representative Darin LaHood
- 2022 Passed House Energy and Natural Resources sub and full committees

S. 3141 New Philadelphia National Historical Park Act

- 2022 Introduced by Sen. Richard Durbin and Sen. Tammy Duckworth
- 2022 Passed Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

2022 Included in Omnibus Appropriations Act and signed into law by President Biden



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Universal Values

Values that are considered important for all people:

- •peace
- •freedom
- social progress
- •equal rights
- human dignity

–Kofi Annan, 2002

seventh secretary-general of the United Nations from 1997 to 2006.

