

Submitted photo
Descendants of Free Frank McWorter visited the Barry Public Library and Museum during their visit to Pike County. Jessica Brown, a descendant of Free Frank's daughter, Sarah and Deneysel Kirkpatrick, a descendent of Solemn McWorter, one of Free Frank's sons. Kirkpatrick, was thrilled to find her great-grandmother, Thelma McWorter, in a 1924 Barry High School yearbook, when Thelma graduated.



New Philadelphia meets with McWorters and historical experts to determine ways to help site

By **BETH ZUMWALT**

Pike Press

Since 1996, the New Philadelphia Association (NPA) has been an organization of local history activists. NPA met its ambitious goal: to preserve the site as a national park. Since Dec. 29, 2022, the Hadley Creek location is a national stage, attracting attention and visitors from all over.

Since the National Park designation, visitors to the park have doubled, nearly tripled.

Now the National Park Service (NPS) will operate and develop the site, but not by themselves. What role will the New Philadelphia Association play?

The NPA is convened a mix of people and skills, old and new, locals and not, all interested in New Philadelphia succeeding. a group of interested people met last Wednesday evening through Friday noon at Sprague's Lodge in Kinderhook in a private brainstorming session. The goal of informing the National Park Service, and transform-

ing itself to meet the national, even international opportunity.

"We tried to keep it a third-third and a third," Phil Bradshaw, president of New Philadelphia. "It was pretty close. We had 37 people, eight to nine local people, 10 family members, and eight to nine experts in basic civil history."

Among the group were certain dignitaries, beside Bradshaw.

"We had Brigadier Donald Scott, (ret), who was the general chief officer of the Library of Congress and is interested in New Philadelphia, because he is a native of Monroe City, Mo.," Bradshaw said. "We also had the president of the National Library Association, a Wall Street stock broker, a curator at the Lincoln Library."

Bradshaw said the meeting was put together and facilitated by the University of Illinois.

The Deputy of the Midwest Park Service and our local park director, Chris Collins, also attended," Bradshaw said.

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Help

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Any time a new park is added to the National Park Services roster, a foundation document must be put together.

Bradshaw said the document must be put together within 3 years with the first anniversary of the declaration rapidly approaching.

"The deputy of the Midwest Park Service told me the information presented at this one day and a half meeting would play a major park in the document," Bradshaw said, who said the deputy was impressed with what had been accomplished.

"We have the story boards, the kiosk, the virtual tour," Bradshaw said. "One of our weaknesses is people like to get their National Park Service Passport stamped and there is no full-time person to do that. They have to go into Barry to the library to get it stamped."

Bradshaw said fundraising will probably be a resource New Philadelphia could assist.

"Many times the National Park Service can't get funding for something that is needed or can't get funding very quickly," Bradshaw said. "Sometimes it takes a long time. New Philadelphia could become a source of help."

Bradshaw said the NPA will remain the NPA instead of becoming a "Friend of New Philadelphia."

"There is a lot of steps that have to be taken to become a Friend of status," Bradshaw said.

Bradshaw said a written report will be available in a few weeks and he hopes to get it shared with the community as soon as it is completed.