



The TALKING DRUM

Stories



Windsor-Essex Black History Month Kick-Off Recap



A Celebration of Black History Month Recap



Save the Date! Freedom Achievers with Tejai Travis

About Us

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum is a curated archive that preserves and shares Amherstburg's stories of the Underground Railroad, and the compassion and solidarity it took to make this network possible.

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March 2023



Windsor-Essex Black History Month Kick-Off

It was great to gather together in-person for the 2023 Windsor-Essex Black History Month Kick-Off at the Caribbean Centre! The Amherstburg Freedom Museum had the pleasure of co-hosting with the Essex County Black Historical Research Society, Windsor West Indian Association and Black Women Of Forward Action. The audience enjoyed such beautiful and moving performances from local artists including Erik E-tomic Johnson, Bunmi Africa Onanaye, Nadine Manroe-Wakerell, Mbonisi Zikhali Zomkhonto, and Teajai Travis. Windsor-Essex has so much talent!

We also heard greetings from ECBHR President Irene Moore Davis, Windsor West Indian Association President Herma Brown, AFM Board Director Cari-Lynn Ristic and Black Women of Forward Action President Angelina Ebegbuzie. Thank you to all of the sponsors including University of Windsor Office of Human Rights, Equity, and Accessibility, Arbor Memorial, Women's Enterprise Skills Training, Racialized Academics & Advocates Centering Equality and Solidarity, Christina Simmons and Bruce Tucker.



The Talking Drum

The Talking Drum is published monthly by the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. Contributions, story ideas, suggestions and feedback are always welcome. Please contact Mary-Katherine Whelan at curator@amherstburgfreedom.org

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A Celebration of Black History Month

Throughout February, the Amherstburg Freedom Museum partnered with the River Bookshop to host Black History programming. Here is a recap of the events from *A Celebration of Black History Month: Looking Forward from the Past*.

Day 1: We began our celebration of Black History month with the River Bookshop at the opening of *Rarely Seen: Art from the Amherstburg Freedom Museum Collection*. Throughout February, art from the Amherstburg Freedom Museum was on display in the River Bookshop and the art featured a mix of styles, techniques, and subject matter related to the Black experience. We are also grateful to members of The Artists of Colour Dennis K. Smith, Lois Larkin, Wanda Relf, Susan Johnson Washington and Lana Talbot, who donated five pieces as part of a silent auction. You can view Rarely Seen virtually on our YouTube Page <https://youtu.be/hrsmjx-1Liw>



Day 2: *A Celebration of Black History Month: Looking Forward from the Past* continued the evening of February 3rd as we welcomed the Windsor Symphony Orchestra who were joined by extremely talented vocalist Florine Ndimubandi for the concert 'Celebrating Black Voices: The Chevalier de St. Georges'. The audience and a 25-piece orchestra packed the Nazrey AME Church!





A Celebration of Black History Month

Day 3: A Celebration of Black History Month: Looking Forward from the Past, hosted by Amherstburg Freedom Museum and River Bookshop, featured an author talk with Desmond Cole, author of *The Skin We're In*, on February 4th. He spoke about his experience, and historic and current injustices. There was also a really engaging discussion with the audience. We cannot think of a more appropriate place than the Nazrey Church to host this event. This Church was a place of refuge against the injustices experienced by Freedom Seekers escaping enslavement and oppressive laws in the US, but also a gathering space for Black Canadians to commune together to discuss issues they faced in Canada and also a space to organize as a community against racism and discrimination. Thank you to everyone who attended this event and to Desmond Cole for his powerful presentation.



Day 4: It's Storytime at the River Bookshop with Amherstburg Freedom Museum Board Director Cari-Lynn! On Sunday, February 5th, Cari-Lynn visited the River Bookshop to read Black History children's books including *Hair Love* by Matthew A. Cherry and Illustrated by Vashti Harrison, *Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles and Illustrated by Jerome Lagarrigue, and *More Than a Peach: Changing the World ... One Crayon at a Time* by Bellen Woodard and Illustrated by Fanny Liem. Thanks to all the young readers for coming out!



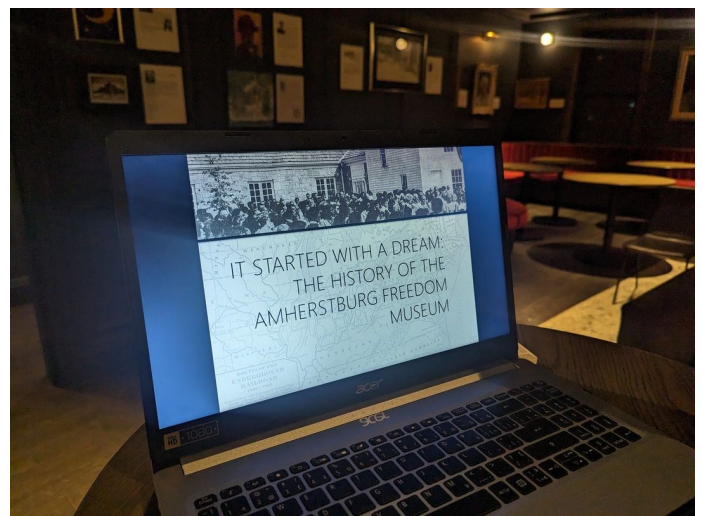
A Celebration of Black History Month



Day 5: There was a great turnout on the evening of Wednesday, February 8th for Researcher Willow Key's presentation, "Windsor's Black Mecca: Recovering the Stories of the McDougall Street Corridor." Willow is a second-year graduate student in the Department of History at the University of Windsor. Her research explores the effects of postwar urban renewal on Windsor's historic Black neighbourhood known as the McDougall Street Corridor.

She currently serves as lead researcher for the *We Were Here: Recovering the Stories of the McDougall Street Corridor Project* as part of the University of Windsor's Anti-Black Racism Student Leadership Experience Grant and in partnership with the Essex County Black Historical Research Society. She also serves as lead researcher for the "McDougall Street Corridor Walking Tour," a joint project between the University of Windsor, Centre for Cities, and Parallel 42. This project is funded by the Canadian Urban Institute and the Federal Economic Development Agency of Southern Ontario. Willow did a fantastic job and there were many great questions from the audience. Thank you Willow and everyone who attended!

Day 6: On the evening of Thursday, February 9th, Amherstburg Freedom Museum Staff, Curator Mary-Katherine Whelan and Assistant Curator Dr. Lorene Bridgen-Lennie, gave a presentation at the River Bookshop titled "It Started with a Dream: The History of the Amherstburg Freedom Museum." They shared the history of the Museum, its mission and the content they share. They really appreciate everyone who came out to support the Museum.





Windsor BME Church 92nd Annual Valentine Tea



This year's British Methodist Episcopal Church of Windsor 92nd Annual Valentines Day Tea was hosted at All Saints Anglican Church on Sunday, February 12th with guest speaker Mrs. Florence Logan. Amherstburg Freedom Museum President Monty Logan, Vice President Barbara Porter and Director Cari-Lynn Ristic were also in attendance. Did you know it was the Church Aid



Society of the BME Church that started this event?

Thank you to Harold Goldin for providing photos from the event.

Thank you Charitable Gaming Windsor & Paradise Gaming Centre

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Community Good.

Amherstburg Freedom Museum would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to **Charitable Gaming Windsor** and **Paradise Gaming Centre** for their continued support. Throughout the years, they have helped us keep the Museum open and running, and allowed for us to continue to offer programming that shares the significant history of Freedom Seekers and Black settlers in this region. Thank you!

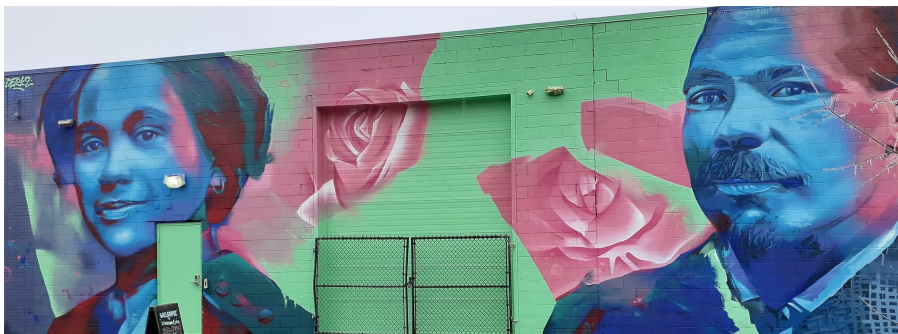


A Family's Journey



On Saturday, February 18th Amherstburg Freedom Museum Board Vice President Barb Porter gave a presentation about her family's connection to the No. 2 Construction Battalion at the Kingsville Military Museum. It was a great turnout and we are grateful to everyone who came out to hear Barb speak. A special thank you to the Mayor of Kingsville Dennis Rogers for attending and to the Kingsville Military Museum for hosting us.

McDougall Street Corridor Black History Murals



It was a great turnout at WindsorEats for the unveiling of three Black History Murals depicting residents of the McDougall Street Corridor on February 23rd. These beautiful murals were painted by DERKZ, Jermaine Baylis, and Ed Irmen,



and were commissioned by the Essex County Black Historical Research Society thanks to funding from the Government of Canada's Tourism Relief Fund and support from FedDev and Ontario's Southwest.

DERKZ created the mural for Ada Kelly Whitney (the 1st woman of African descent to teach in an Ontario Public School Board) and James L. Dunn (1st Black Canadian City Councillor for Windsor in 1887). The Alton C. Parker (1st Black detective in Canada and founder of Uncle Al's Kids Party) mural was



created by Jermaine Baylis and Ed Irmen created the mural for Fred Thomas (athlete, veteran and educator). A particularly moving part of the event was when family members of these figures spoke and shared memories. You can visit these beautiful murals at 400 Erie Street East and 920 Mercer Street.



Freedom Achievers with Teajai Travis

On April 15, 2023 at 11am the Amherstburg Freedom Museum, in partnership with the Amherstburg Community Foundation, will host our next Freedom Achievers Speaker Series Guest, Multicultural Community Storyteller for the City of Windsor, Teajai Travis. This event will also give mentees an opportunity to speak with mentors and ask questions. To register, please go to findyourpath.givesmart.com

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