



The TALKING DRUM

Stories



Amherstburg Freedom Museum Celebrates Fifty Years of Black History and Universal Inspiration



Museum Fundraiser: Canada's Renowned Nathaniel Dett Chorale to Perform May 3rd in Windsor



Summer Student Positions and Scholarship Opportunities Announced

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.

277 King Street, Amherstburg, ON N9V 2C7

Phone: 519-736-5433

Email:

curator@amherstburgfreedom.org
www.amherstburgfreedom.org

Follow the Amherstburg Freedom Museum on our social media channels: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, YouTube, and Bluesky!

May 2025



Students of Black Joy at Amherstburg Public School Demonstrate Leadership through a Special Museum Fundraising Initiative



Thanks to the Students of Black Joy at Amherstburg Public School who, under the leadership of educator Raquel Hurst, spearheaded a special March Break fundraiser that resulted in \$990 for the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. After a school visit by the Windsor Express President and CEO Dartis Willis, the Students of Black Joy were inspired not only to sell game tickets to friends and family as a means of raising funds for the Amherstburg Freedom Museum,

but to involve peers from eight other local schools in the endeavour.

Museum President Monty Logan was presented with the cheque during a Windsor Express home game at the WFCU Centre. Special thanks to these student leaders for their enthusiasm and commitment to making a positive impact, and to the Windsor Express which always strives to support community non-profits such as the Amherstburg Freedom Museum.

Charitable Gaming.



Community Good.

Thank you, Charitable Gaming Windsor & Paradise Gaming Centre!

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to both **Charitable Gaming Windsor** and **Paradise Gaming Centre** for their continued support. Through 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! For more information about how Charitable Gaming supports non-profits and local communities across Ontario, please go to <https://charitablegaming.ca/>

The Talking Drum

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

277 King Street,
Amherstburg, ON N9V 2C7
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Aanand Arya
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Museum Fundraiser: Canada's Renowned Nathaniel Dett Chorale to Perform May 3rd in Windsor



**The Amherstburg
Freedom Museum
Presents**

The Nathaniel Dett Chorale

A concert in celebration of the
museum's 50th anniversary

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

Tickets

\$40 General Admission

\$30 Students

**SATURDAY,
MAY 3, 2025
7:30 PM**

All Saints' Anglican Church
330 City Hall Square
West, Windsor

Come and hear Canada's
premier professional choral
group dedicated to
Afrocentric music of all styles,
including classical, spiritual,
gospel, jazz, folk and blues.

**amherstburgfreedom.org
519.736.5433**





Nathaniel Dett Chorale May 3rd Concert, “Shout for Joy,” to Feature Works by Multiple Black Composers

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum will present a concert by the celebrated Nathaniel Dett Chorale at All Saints' Anglican Church Windsor, May 3rd at 7:30 pm. The Nathaniel Dett Chorale is Canada's premier choral group dedicated to Afrocentric music of all styles, including classical, spiritual, gospel, jazz, folk and blues. You won't want to miss this performance. Tickets are on sale now at amherstburgfreedom.org.

The May 3rd concert will feature works by J. Rosamond Johnson and James Weldon Johnson, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Moses Hogan, Undine Smith Moore, Adolphus Hailstock, and R. Nathaniel Dett himself.

The Nathaniel Dett Chorale is Canada's first professional choral group dedicated to the creation, performance, and preservation of Afrocentric choral music. The multi-faceted vocalists of The Nathaniel Dett Chorale perform all styles and genres of music appropriate to the traditions of Africa and its Diasporas. The Chorale's mission is to build bridges of understanding, appreciation, and acceptance between communities of people through the medium of Afrocentric choral music.



Who was Nathaniel Dett? He was born October 11th, 1882 in Drummondville (now Niagara Falls), Ontario to parents who had been freedom seekers. In 1901, Dett began studying piano with Oliver Willis Halstead and three years later he was accepted to Oberlin Conservatory, where he majored in piano and composition. He also studied at Harvard University and in 1932 he graduated with a Master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Dett published roughly 100 compositions, mainly piano, vocal, and choral work. Among his most popular compositions are Listen to the Lambs (1914), Somebody's Knocking at Your Door (1919) and I'm So Glad Trouble Don't Last Always (1919). Alongside his other talents, Dett was a choir leader and teacher, an avid essayist, and a poet. His 1911 Album of a Heart contained 30 poems on topics such as love, nature, and music.

Founder D. Brainerd Blyden-Taylor named The Nathaniel Dett Chorale after internationally renowned African Canadian composer R. Nathaniel Dett (1882-1943) to draw attention to Dett's legacy, to the breadth of

Afrocentric choral music, and to be a professional choral ensemble where persons of African heritage can be well represented. Currently in its 26th Season, The Nathaniel Dett Chorale is also Artist in Residence at The Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on Africa and its Diasporas at York University.

The Nathaniel Dett Chorale has gained global renown, particularly after being the only Canadian ensemble invited to participate in events surrounding President Obama's 2009 Inauguration in Washington, DC.

Tickets to the May 3rd concert, a fundraiser for the Museum, are \$40 per adult or \$30 per student. Tickets may be purchased at amherstburgfreedom.org or at the door.





Amherstburg Freedom Museum Celebrates Fifty Years of Black History and Universal Inspiration



2025 is the Museum's 50th anniversary, and we are looking forward to celebrating with all of you! In 1975, founder Melvin "Mac" Simpson, with the support of his wife Betty, founded the North American Black Historical Museum, now known as the Amherstburg Freedom Museum.

What began as a modest volunteer-run museum temporarily housed in the Nazrey African Methodist Episcopal Church hall, highlighting the history of the Black community in and near Amherstburg, now shares Black history and

universal inspiration with people from across Turtle Island and the world.

In the first four months of 2025 alone, the museum was visited by many Essex County residents of all ages but also individuals, families, and tour groups from across Ontario and Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, New York, Massachusetts, Florida, Colorado, New Zealand, and Spain.

Fiftieth anniversary celebrations began in earnest in February with the acclaimed original play *The Price of Freedom*, written by Carlos Anthony and produced by Arts Collective Theatre in collaboration with the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. The play based on the true story of freedom seeker John Anderson was a hit with audiences, including a special matinee performance for over 500 students from local schools.

The fiftieth anniversary celebration continues with a concert by the Nathaniel Dett Chorale on May 3rd. Ribs & Ragtime on June 14th will have special meaning this year as we celebrate our fiftieth anniversary as well as the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of Amherstburg's own Shelton Brooks (1886-1975) by whom the annual Ribs & Ragtime event has always been inspired. (Ragtime: get it?)

The Walter Perry Emancipation Golf Classic on August 9th at Coachwood Golf & Country Club and a spectacular anniversary gala on September 20th at the Caboto Club, featuring keynote speaker Bishop Paul S. Morton, will be events not to be missed.

Stay tuned for announcements regarding additional events and exhibits honouring the Amherstburg Freedom Museum's fiftieth anniversary in 2025. And please pause to appreciate our special 50th anniversary logo designed by Chris Porter: you will see it throughout our celebrations, including on some very special merchandise we have made available for the occasion.





Celebrating Fifty Years: Join in the Excitement! For more information visit amherstburgfreedom.org/50-2/

3 Event Ticket \$225

Includes three (3) event tickets—one admission to each of the following: the Nathaniel Dett Chorale Concert (May 3), Ribs & Ragtime (June 14), and the 50th Anniversary Gala (September 20). Purchasers will also have their name listed in the 50th Anniversary Program Booklet, receive six (6) individual museum subscriptions, and be issued a charitable tax receipt.

3 Event Ticket + VIP \$225

Includes three (3) event tickets—one admission to each of the following: the Nathaniel Dett Chorale Concert (May 3), Ribs & Ragtime (June 14), and the 50th Anniversary Gala VIP Seating (September 20). Purchasers will also have their name listed in the 50th Anniversary Program Booklet, receive six (6) individual museum subscriptions, and be issued a charitable tax receipt.

4 Event Ticket \$375

Includes four (4) event tickets—one admission to each of the following: the Nathaniel Dett Chorale Concert (May 3), Ribs & Ragtime (June 14), Walter Perry Emancipation Golf Classic (August 9th) and the 50th Anniversary Gala (September 20). Purchasers will also have their name listed in the 50th Anniversary Program Booklet, receive eight (8) individual museum subscriptions, and be issued a charitable tax receipt.

4 Event Ticket + VIP \$475

Includes four (4) event tickets—one admission to each of the following: the Nathaniel Dett Chorale Concert (May 3), Ribs & Ragtime (June 14), Walter Perry Emancipation Golf Classic (August 9th) and VIP seating at the 50th Anniversary Gala (September 20). Purchasers will also have their name listed in the 50th Anniversary Program Booklet, receive eight (8) individual museum subscriptions, and be issued a charitable tax receipt.

General Admission (Gala) \$125

General Admission includes: Entry to the 50th Anniversary Gala, A gourmet dinner and refreshments, Live entertainment and guest speakers. and Access to exclusive anniversary presentations.

VIP Ticket (Gala) \$500

Enjoy a premium experience with the highest level of benefits, including six subscriptions to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum, two tickets to the Gala with prime seating, recognition in the program booklet, and a charitable tax receipt for \$350.

Partner Ticket (Gala) \$300

Enjoy an elevated experience with benefits, including four subscriptions to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum, two tickets to the Gala with general seating, recognition in the program booklet, and a charitable tax receipt for \$150.

Museum Supporter Ticket (Gala) \$175

Benefits include two (2) subscriptions to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum, one (1) ticket to the Gala with general seating, recognition in the program booklet, and a charitable tax receipt for \$100.



Upcoming Events: Tickets Are Available Now!

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum Presents

RIBS & RAGTIME

Tickets \$60

Celebrating 50 Years of Black History
Education and Honoring Composer Shelton
Brooks

**SATURDAY
JUNE 14TH, 2025
4-8PM**

At The Amherstburg Freedom Museum

AMHERSTBURG FREEDOM MUSEUM

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED FOR
RIBS & RAGTIME!**

**3-8PM
14
JUNE**

TO VOLUNTEER, PLEASE
CALL 519-736-5433



Upcoming Events: Tickets Are Available Now!

AMHERSTBURG FREEDOM Museum

50TH ANNIVERSARY

WALTER PERRY EMANCIPATION CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

SATURDAY AUGUST 9TH, 2025

COST: \$150
INCLUDES: GOLF, CART, MEAL

SHOT GUN START @8AM
REGISTRATION @7AM

COACHWOOD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB,
7525 Howard Ave, McGregor, Ontario

CONTACT:
MONTY LOGAN: +1(313)378-2217 | DERRICK HURST: +1(519)981-4997 | RICHARD HOLLAND: +1(519)590-5738 | RAYMOND FRANK: +1(519)562-6434

E-TRANSFER CAN BE SENT TO: CURATOR@AMHERSTBURGFREEDOM.ORG

50TH ANNIVERSARY
A VIEW FROM THE PAST
A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

AMHERSTBURG FREEDOM Museum

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SHARING BLACK HISTORY

SEPT 20TH 2025

@6PM

GIOVANNI CABOTO CLUB
2175 Parent, Windsor, ON

EVENT ATTIRE: FORMAL

TICKETS:
VIP: \$500 | PARTNER: \$300 | SUPPORT: \$175 | GENERAL ADMISSION: \$125

BISHOP PAUL S. MORTON
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

We are pleased to welcome Bishop Paul S. Morton back to Windsor as our Keynote Speaker for the 50th Anniversary Gala Celebration on September 20th. The well respected faith leader, author, and two-time Grammy nominee is a son of Bishop C.L. Morton, Sr., founder of Windsor's Mt. Zion Church of God in Christ and the Greater Mt. Zion Tabernacle in Detroit. Bishop C.L. Morton, Sr. is remembered for his radio broadcasts which reached mass binational audiences starting in the 1930s and for his Detroit River baptisms which drew thousands of people to Windsor.



Bus Trip to St. Jacob's, Ontario May 10th: Reserve Tickets by May 6th!



A Day Trip to St. Jacobs, Ontario



Bus trip fundraiser for the Amherstburg Freedom Museum

Price
\$169
per person



AMHERSTBURG
FREEDOM MUSEUM
BLACK HISTORY
universal inspiration.

Package Includes

- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Shopping at St. Jacobs Market
- ✓ Shopping in St. Jacobs Village
- ✓ 30 Minute Mennonite Story
- ✓ Lunch

To register:

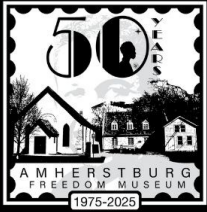


Contact Paula Rigg
at Southland Travel,
(519) 890-9513.



May 10, 2025

Depart from Essex Carpool Lot (Arner & No. 3) 6:00 am or Devonshire Mall 6:30 am. Arrive in St. Jacobs 10:00 am. Itinerary includes St. Jacobs Market, Mennonite Story, St. Jacobs Village. Lunch 1:00 pm. Depart from St. Jacobs 4:30 pm. Arrive in Windsor/Essex 8:00-8:30 pm.



AMHERSTBURG FREEDOM MUSEUM UPCOMING EVENTS

277 KING STREET, AMHERSTBURG, ONT
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



MAY
3

The Nathaniel Dett Chorale Concert

7:30pm, All Saints' Anglican Church, Windsor
\$40 General Admission | \$30 Student Admission

MAY
10

Day Trip to St. Jacobs With Southland Travel

Bus Trip Fundraiser | \$169 Per Person - Includes Lunch
Call Southland Travel at 519.890.9513 to buy tickets

MAY
29

Freedom Achievers: Mayor Dennis Rogers

10am, Amherstburg Freedom Museum | Free Admission

JUNE
14

Ribs & Ragtime: Celebrating Shelton Brooks

4pm, Grounds of the Amherstburg Freedom Museum
General Admission \$60 | Includes Meal & Entertainment

JULY
19

Amherstburg Art Crawl : July 18th-20th

12pm, Art Alley Black History Mural Unveiling | FREE

AUG
9

Walter Perry Emancipation Golf Classic

8am, Coachwood Golf & Country Club | \$160 Per Golfer
Includes Meal, Golfing & Cart

SEPT
20

50th Anniversary Celebration

Join us as we Celebrate 50 Years of Black Excellence
6pm, Caboto Club, Windsor | \$125 Per Person

DEC
'25

Christmas At The Museum

Amherstburg Freedom Museum | \$30 Per Person

AMHERSTBURGFREEDOM.ORG/50 | 519-736-5433 | 1 800-713-6336

Special Guests and Honours

While all Museum visitors are valued and appreciated, we have hosted some very special guests in recent weeks. The Honourable Edith Dumont, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and the Honourable Marci Ien, at then Canada's Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, toured the Museum separately with their respective staff members. In addition, Essex Member of Parliament Chris Lewis presented the Museum with a certificate commemorating the fiftieth anniversary, while Michael Prue, Mayor of Amherstburg, presented a community grant cheque valued at \$8,500 on behalf of the Town.





Canada Summer Jobs Opportunities at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum



AMHERSTBURG FREEDOM MUSEUM



WE ARE HIRING!

CANADA SUMMER JOBS POSITIONS



MAY 16, 2025



277 KING STREET
AMHERSTBURG

519-736-5433
AMHERSTBURGFREEDOM.ORG

ARE YOU BETWEEN 15-30?
INTERESTED IN BLACK HISTORY?
LOOKING FOR A SUMMER JOB?

VISIT
AMHERSTBURGFREEDOM.ORG/
CSJ

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE
FOR MORE INFO!**



Scholarship Opportunities



2025

AMHERSTBURG FREEDOM MUSEUM Scholarship Opportunities

If you are a student of African descent who is currently attending a secondary school in the Essex County region and will be commencing post-secondary studies in September 2025 on a full-time basis, you can apply for a selection of scholarship opportunities. **Scan the QR codes to access the applications.**

Apply Today!

- ✓ Deadline June 30th, 2025
- ✓ Visit amherstburgfreedom.org/scholarships for more information
- ✓ Check each application for eligibility requirements



519-736-5433



amherstburgfreedom.org/scholarships

Amherstburg Freedom Museum
Mac Simpson Award



Amherstburg Freedom Museum
The Maturine-Romain Award



Amherstburg Freedom Museum
Year Wood, Logan, Nolan Award



Amherstburg Freedom Museum
Nancy M. Allen Award





Author, Community Leader, and Media Personality Nikki Clarke Joins Us for a Book Signing



On Saturday, April 26th, the Museum welcomed author and media personality Nikki Clarke. As the author of four previous books, she signed copies of her latest work, *Black Canadian History Coloring Book: Heroes of Past and Present!* Copies of the coloring book are now available in the gift shop.

Clarke is a trailblazing entrepreneur, author, media personality, and community leader. She is the founder, producer, and host of the award-winning *Nikki Clarke Show* on Afroglobal TV as well as www.nikkiclarkenetwork.com. Clarke has previously served in roles such as President of the Ontario Black History Society as well as National Business Manager for the Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce.



Freedom Achievers Program Welcomes Mayor Dennis Rogers

The Museum will welcome guest speaker Dennis Rogers, Mayor of Kingsville, on May 29th at 10 am. Admission is complimentary! This is happening in conjunction with the Freedom Achievers Program. The Freedom Achievers Program brings mentors, mentees together to develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and connections mentees need as they transition into the employment world. To learn more about this program, please go to <https://amherstburgfreedom.org/freedom-achievers-program/>



Jane's Walk Festival Draws Crowds to “Sold Out” Black History Walking Tours



On Saturday, April 26th, the Museum hosted not one but two sold out walking tours as part of the 2025 Jane's Walk Windsor/Essex Festival with Mary-Katherine Whelan and Irene Moore Davis as tour guides.

The 2025 Jane's Walk Festival for Windsor-Essex boasted a schedule of 55 events, making it the second largest Jane's Walk Festival in all of Canada. Jane's Walks (guided walking tours) and Jane's Talks (seated presentations) are free to attend and hosted by volunteers, but for the first time this year, advance registration is required as capacity is limited. Both of the Amherstburg Freedom Museum walking tours, “Beyond the River: The Underground Railroad and Black Community in Amherstburg” and “It Happened in Amherstburg: Black History in Amherstburg”, reached capacity well over a week in advance.

For those who missed out, there are still more opportunities to learn about Black history through Jane's Walk tours scheduled in Windsor May 2nd and 3rd.



“From Mango to Maple: Diasporan Archives at the University of Windsor,” May 2nd at noon, starting at the CAW Student Centre Lobby, University of Windsor (hosted by the Black Scholars' Institute and Leddy Library)

“Exploring the McDougall Street Corridor South of Wyandotte,” May 2nd at 5:15 p.m., starting at Alton C. Parker Park (hosted by the Essex County Black Historical Research Society)

“Across the River to Freedom: Black History in Sandwich Town,” May 3rd at 9:00 a.m. starting at Mackenzie Hall (hosted by the Essex County Black Historical Research Society)

Visit www.windsorjaneswalk.ca for registration and details.





Become a Subscriber and/or Bingo Volunteer



◆ Senior - \$20 ◆ Student- \$25 ◆ Adult - \$35 ◆ Family - \$120

<https://amherstburgfreedom.org/subscribe/>

AMHERSTBURG FREEDOM MUSEUM

Black History, Universal Inspiration



For More Information and To
Volunteer, Please go to

<https://amherstburgfreedom.org/volunteering/>



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Donate to help us to preserve, protect, and display historic treasures. Every gift is tax-deductible in Canada or the United States.

General subscriber benefits include:

Unlimited 1 year free admissions, Invitation to preview exhibition openings, 10% off all items in museum store and name listed in monthly newsletter (with permission), introduction to genealogy research library.

\$20 Seniors (age 65+)

\$25 Students (age 5-22)

\$35 Adults (age 23-64)

\$120 Family (family of 5)

\$100 to \$499 SUPPORTER

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\$500 to \$999 CONTRIBUTOR

All the above plus an invitation to one special event, one exhibition opening or subscriber-only event.

\$10,000+ Legacy

All the above plus recognition on Museum's Donor Wall. Plus two tickets to all events and recognition on our social media pages.



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Payment information

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Annual Fund donation: \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Check # _____ Check date _____

Payable to Amherstburg Freedom Museum



Card # _____

Expiration date _____ Security code _____

Signature _____

Thank you for your support!