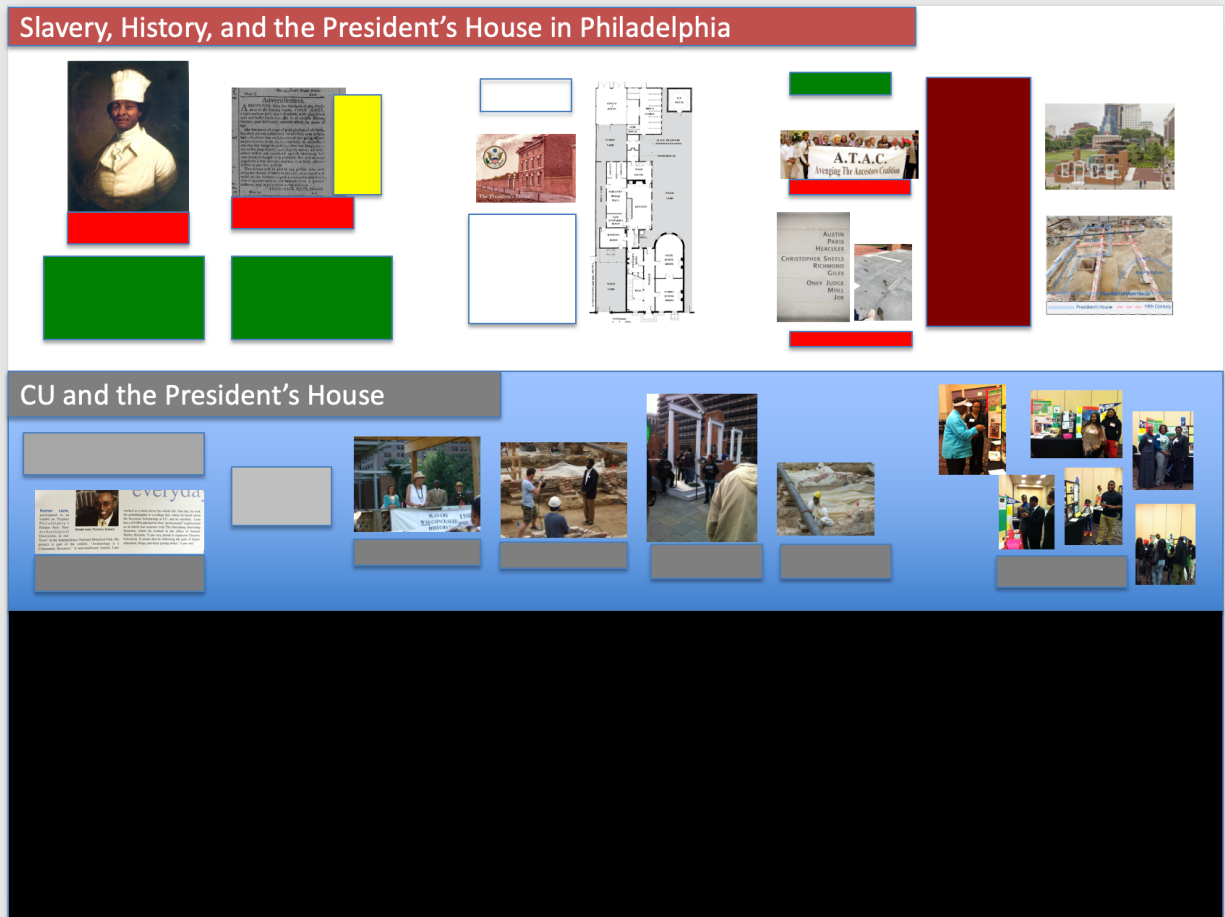


Resilient Lives display
Leslie Pickney Library, Cheyney University of Pennsylvania (2016)

Key to display commentary (text) found below:



Resilient Lives, a small, temporary display in the CU Leslie Pickney Hill, has a two-fold purpose: It provides some new, but largely unknown, inspiring history and it provides an example of how Cheyney educated-citizens are also 'making history' -- in this case by helping bring forth a more complete and truthful narrative about America's beginnings.

The display introduces the long forgotten and suppressed stories of *Hercules* and *Oney Judge*, two of nine enslaved African Americans who lived and labored in the U.S. Executive Mansion in Philadelphia during George Washington's Presidential administration (during the years 1793-1797) – and both of whom took their liberty by running away to their freedom from what was the seat of the Executive Branch of the new U.S. government (prior to the construction of the new capital of Washington D.C.) Cheyney alums played a central role in the civic actions that forced *Independence National Historical Park* (in Philadelphia) to include this omitted history in their public interpretations about the birth of the American nation. The actions of two of these CU alums are presented in the display: Michael Coard, Esq., who majored in English Education and Political Science, (class of '82), and Dr. Shirley Parham, who majored in Education (class of '62) and taught African American history in CU's Social and Behavioral Sciences Department, were instrumental in the grass-roots activism leading

to this 'institutional history' change. They served as the Founder/Leader and Historian (respectively) of *Avenging the Ancestors Coalition (ATAC)*, a community group that includes multiple other CU alums as members and that, along with other concerns, helped to turn this long absent history into public history, and now, public memory.

The display also depicts a resulting memorial, *Freedom and Slavery at the Birth of the Nation*, that now stands at the site of the President's House. Included as well are pictures and maps that highlight the archaeological remains discovered at the location prior to the memorial's construction—foundation walls related to the original 'ceremonial space symbolizing the Presidency' (the first Oval Office), the kitchen where Hercules prepared the first State Dinners, and an *underground passageway* that kept the enslaved persons 'out of view' in a socially segregated landscape. (These ruins are now preserved under glass so that the public can see this historical evidence for themselves.)

CU's 2006 Harrisburg Internship participant, Homer Lane (major: Political Science, class of 2008), prepared a legislative 'white paper' related to the memorial as part of his internship duties. *A Case Study of Policy Implementation, The President's House in Philadelphia: The Implications of Marking the Slave Quarters on the Memorial* was written for Pennsylvania Senator Shirley Kitchen. An article about Mr. Lane's policy paper is included in the display.

Since 2011, more than 45 CU anthropology class students have engaged the public with this new history information presenting the President's House information to the public at the *Black History and Cultural Showcase* -- a Black History Expo held annually at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. The library display includes several photographs showing the students from five different anthropology classes partaking in this civic engagement exercise. (This new display will form part of a course assignment for this semester's Anthropology class students, helping them to prepare for presenting on the President's House at this year's Showcase taking place on March 26th and 27th.)

Dr. Patrice L. Jeppson (Adjunct Assist. Professor, Social and Behavioral Sciences Department) put this display together with the assistance of CU Archivist and Librarian Mr. Keith Bingham. Mr. Bingham suggested the title, *Resilient Lives*, because the subject ties into the campus learning community theme, *Resilience: Still We Rise*. Dr. Jeppson drew upon her own research for the display's materials. She studies how different communities make use of archaeological evidence from the past for social identity and nationalism needs in the present. Dr. Jeppson has written several papers on the President's House site.

Dr. Jeppson hopes that this display not only provides students with a deeper, more accurate, and more meaningful understanding of this piece of American history but that, by highlighting Cheyney's connection to the making of this new history, the display also provides CU students with an example of what general education is supposed to be accomplishing (i.e., a tangible 'end point' example of our learning outcomes in action): Jeppson said, "Gen Ed is important for teaching students how and why to live a meaningful life. It can be hard to lead students to the recognition that education is not, in the end, about grades but rather about changing your life and the lives of those around you. My hope is that the display provides CU students with a real-life example of CU education leading to engaged citizens who are changing society."

The *Resilient Lives* display is on view in the Leslie Pickney Hill Library during Black History Month and Women's History Month.



This painting is believed to depict *Hercules*, an enslaved African American who labored as Cook in the President's House in Philadelphia. Hercules later took his liberty by running away from George Washington's farm in Virginia.

This painting was produced by one of America's most renowned portraitists, Gilbert Stuart, who also painted George Washington.

Hercules was an enslaved African American who in the 1790's made the meals -- including the first State Dinners -- in the Philadelphia mansion that served as the Executive seat of the new U.S. government.

Hercules (also referred to in documents as Herculas or "Uncle Harkness") was well known in Philadelphia both for his food and for how he presented himself. Martha Washington's grandson once

wrote that Hercules was “as highly accomplished and proficient in the culinary arts as could be found in the United States”.

Other historical records indicate that Hercules walked the streets of Philadelphia in a velvet waistcoat carrying a gold-handled cane. Historians have determined that Hercules likely earned money to buy his clothing “by selling leftovers and kitchen waste” which he had been granted permission to do.

In 1797, after Hercules had been returned to Washington’s Virginia farm, he ran away to his freedom. He took his liberty on February 22, which was Washington’s 65th birthday. The future king of France, Louis-Philippe, who was visiting Washington’s farm recorded this about Hercules’ escape:

The general's cook ran away, being now in Philadelphia, and left a little daughter of six at Mount Vernon. Beaudoïn ventured that the little girl must be deeply upset that she would never see her father again; she answered, "Oh! Sir, I am very glad, because he is free now."¹

¹ Louis-Philippe, *Diary of My Travels in America*, translation by Stephen Becker (New York: Delacorte Press, 1977), p. 32.

May 23

Advertisement.

A BSCONDED from the household of the President of the United States, ONEY JUDGE, a light mulatto girl, much freckled, with very black eyes and bushy black hair. She is of middle stature, slender, and delicately formed, about 20 years of age.

She has many changes of good clothes, of all sorts, but they are not sufficiently recollected to be described—As there was no suspicion of her going off, nor no provocation to do so, it is not easy to conjecture whither she has gone, or fully, what her design is;—but as she may attempt to escape by water, all masters of vessels are cautioned against admitting her into them, although it is probable she will attempt to pass for a free woman, and has, it is said, wherewithal to pay her passage.

Ten dollars will be paid to any person who will bring her home, if taken in the city, or on board any vessel in the harbour;—and a reasonable additional sum if apprehended at, and brought from a greater distance, and in proportion to the distance.

FREDERICK KITT, Steward.

May 23

6101

To-morrow will be landed.

ONEY JUDGE, an enslaved African American female born in 1773, escaped to her freedom from the 'Executive Mansion' in Philadelphia where George Washington lived and worked while President of the new United States. Oney Judge labored as the personal body servant of Martha Washington. This newspaper notice, published after her successful escape to freedom, documents George Washington's efforts to have her recaptured and returned with the promise of a reward.

The Pennsylvania Gazette, May 24, 1796.

ADVERTISEMENT.

ABSCONDED from the household of the President of the United States, ONEY JUDGE, a light mulatto girl, much freckled, with very black eyes and bushy hair. She is of middle stature, slender, and delicately formed, about, 20 years of age.

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FREDERICK KITT, Steward

May 23

The enslaved young woman, ONEY JUDGE, was brought to Philadelphia by Martha Washington when George Washington set up his Presidential administration in the 'Executive Mansion' in Philadelphia (the 'White House' before the White House was built). Historical records from the time document that Oney accompanied Mrs. Washington on shopping trips and on social visits around the city.

Oney Judge ran to her liberty by fleeing from the President's House when she learned that she was to be given away as a wedding gift to Martha Washington's granddaughter (a descendant from Martha Washington's first marriage). With the help of Free Blacks living in Philadelphia, Oney made her escape one evening while the Washington's were eating dinner.

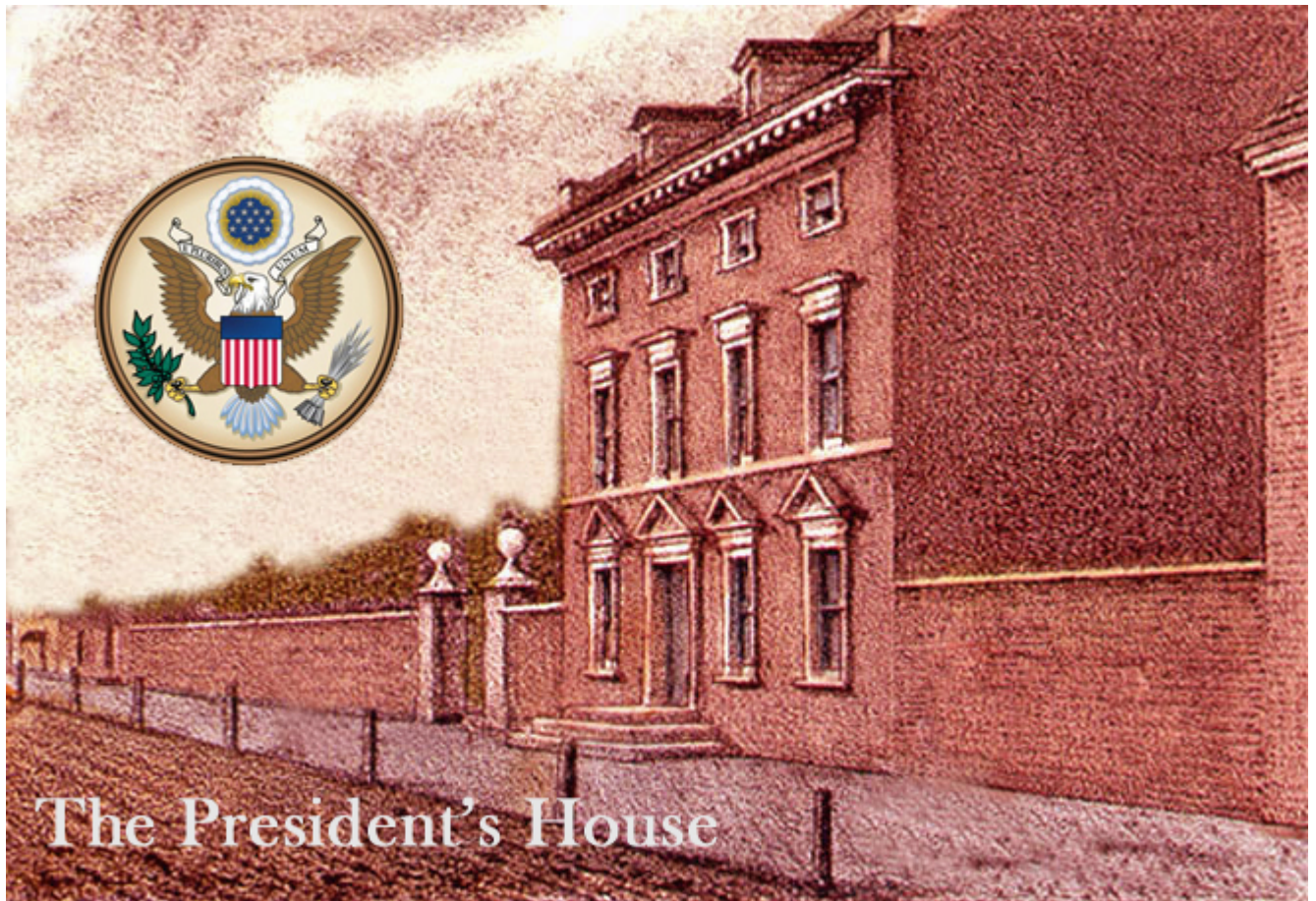
Oney made her way by ship to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Her location however soon became known to Washington who made several attempts to recapture her -- but failed. She remained a fugitive slave until her death, more than 50 years later, in 1848.

In New Hampshire, Oney married a free Black sailor, Jack Staines, and had three children. She learned to read and became a Christian. We know many details about her life because she was interviewed by abolitionist newspapers in the years before her death. She was asked, whether she was sorry that she left the Washingtons, since her life had been a difficult one after her escape. She replied,

*"No, I am free, and have, I trust been made a child of God by the means"*²

² Washington's Runaway Slave", *The Granite Freeman*, Concord, New Hampshire (May 22, 1845), President's House, Independence Hall Association, US History.org, accessed 15 February 2016.

SLAVERY at The President's House in Philadelphia



Image, adapted from the Annals of Philadelphia, John F. Watson, Lithograph after Watercolor by William Breton, posted at Independence National Historical Park President's House website at <http://www.nps.gov/inde/learn/management/publicinvolvement.htm>, accessed Feb. 15, 2016.

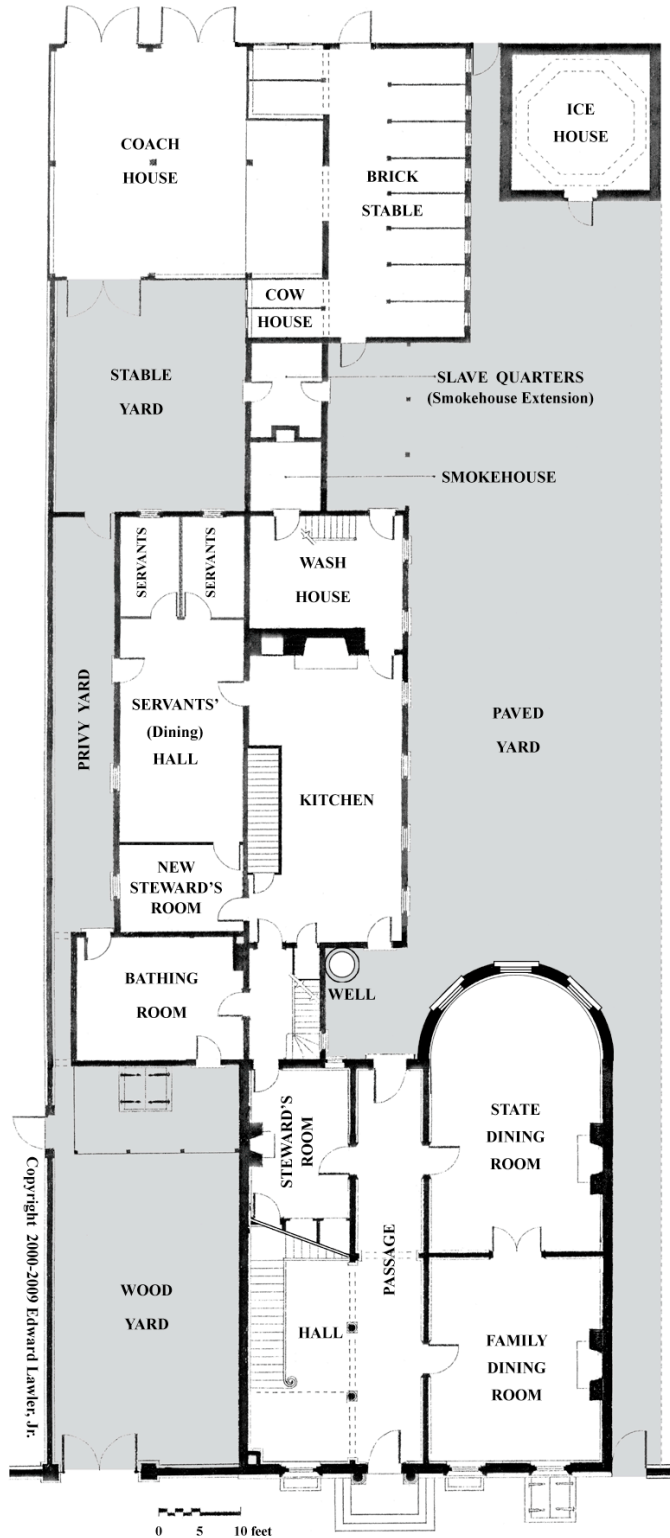
Between 1790 and 1800, before completion of a new capital city (Washington, DC), the United States government was based in the City of Philadelphia. The Executive Branch, represented by the Office of the President, operated out of a grand, three story, brick structure referred to as The Executive Mansion.

This house functioned like today's 'West Wing' as a place of administrative activity. The living quarters, akin to today's 'East Wing', occupied a series of associated outbuildings located on the same property-- a detached, or separate, kitchen, a smokehouse, a dining hall, a servant's hall, an ice house and stables. The property, originally built for the widow of the mayor, had stood for 30 years when it was rented for use as the Executive Mansion on behalf of the American people.

George Washington brought nine enslaved African Americans from his Virginia plantation with him to the Philadelphia 'White House' when he set up his Presidential administration there. Oney Judge, Moll, Austin, Hercules, Richmond, Giles, Paris, Christopher Sheels, and Joe (Richardson) labored and lived at the property doing the cooking, sewing, and cleaning, and attending the horses and riding coaches in the stable. These enslaved African Americans lived alongside as many as 24 other individuals who were not enslaved -- indentured servants, hired laborers, Washington family members, and some of Washington's Presidential administration employees. Beyond the house walls lived more than 2000 Free Blacks who were contributing to the development of what was then the largest North American city.

After Washington's term of office was completed, John Adams lived in the house for the first three years of his Presidency. Adams opposed slavery and held no persons in bondage. Adams is the first President to live in Washington, moving there in 1800.

The Philadelphia 'Executive Mansion' became a hotel and then a boarding house, before being torn down in 1832. Nineteenth century stores and factory spaces were built on the space and these, in turn, were demolished in the 1950's when the U.S. government created Independence National Historical Park to preserve and commemorate the places and events associated with the birthplace of the nation.



Conjectural floor plan of the first floor of the President's House in Philadelphia as drawn by Edward Lawler, Jr.

(Edward Lawler, Jr., 2002, Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, updated 2005, at USHistory.org/Presidentshouse/history)

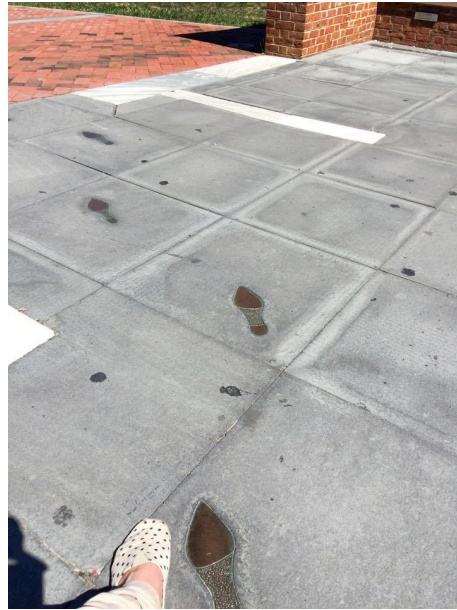
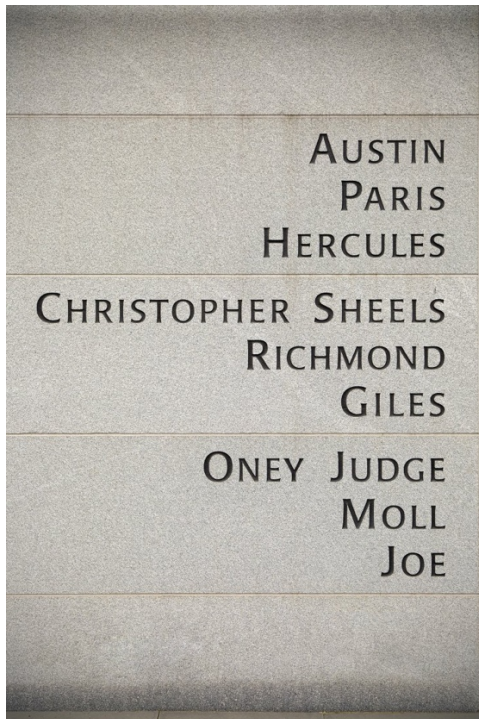
**SLAVERY WAS CONCEALED
HISTORY'S NOW REVEALED**

(Avenging the Ancestors Coalition, 2007)



Avenging the Ancestors Coalition (ATAC) in 2007. ATAC “was founded in 2002 to compel the National Park Service to finally agree to the creation of a prominent Slavery Memorial at the site of the President’s House, which for 35 years had been part of Independence National Historical Park.

(Photo, avengingtheancestors.com, accessed Feb. 15, 2016.)



The names of the nine enslaved African Americans that George Washington brought to the President's House are inscribed on the wall of the memorial erected in Independence National Historical Park in 2010, at the site of the original Executive Mansion.

Brass shoe prints embedded in the paving commemorate Oney Judge's escape to freedom from the President's house.

CONTROVERSY AND ADVOCACY

Many important events took place at the President's House in the making of the new nation – as did developments central to America's original sin of slavery. In 1793, while serving in this house, President Washington signed into law *The Fugitive Slave Act* making all Americans complicit in the practice of slavery. But, 200 hundred years on, it was *only* the house's association with two U.S. Presidents that was remembered in American history. The existence of the institution of slavery practiced at this pivotal place and time in the founding of America was *not* included in the story that was told about the nation.

For more than 220 years the history of slavery at the President's House was ignored, overlooked, and or suppressed. The U.S. National Park Service -- and *Institutional American memory* in general -- was forced to

recognize this 'forgotten' history when twenty-first century African Americans and other citizens demanded that the reality of slavery at this place be made known in interpretations to the public and that a memorial to slavery be erected on the spot to commemorate those held in bondage there and elsewhere.

In response to the demands made by advocacy and community groups, a commemoration was erected on the site. Completed in 2010, the commemoration, *The President's House: Freedom and Slavery in the Making of a New Nation*, It features an open-air pavilion marking the outline of President's House. Its walls contain signage and video exhibits interpreting the history of the house, the role of slavery in the household, and the history of slavery in American society.

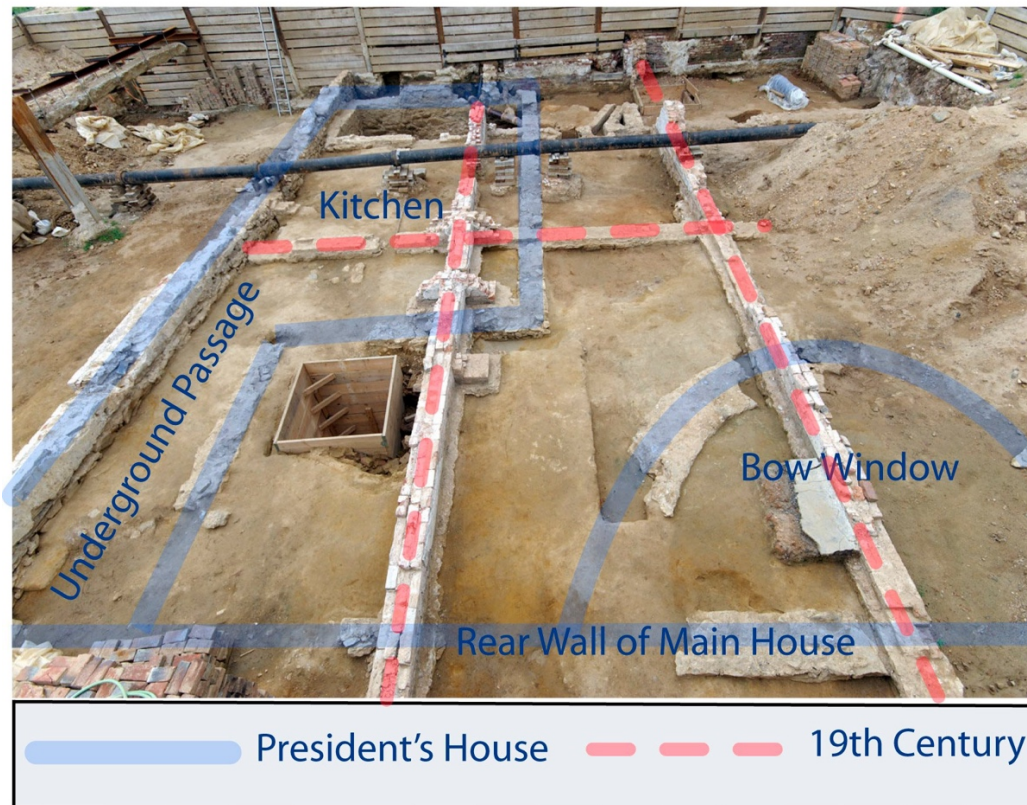
ARCHAEOLOGY

In 2007, prior to building the commemoration, the Mayor's Office of the City of Philadelphia, then occupied by the Honorable John Street, paid for an archaeological excavation to be conducted to identify any remains of the original house structure that might still exist buried in the ground. Important, unexpected, archaeological discoveries were made during this excavation. Six feet from the ruins of the Presidential 'oval' ceremonial space' (Z) -- the precursor to the Oval Office -- were the foundations of the kitchen (K) where Hercules and other enslaved African Americans toiled. Also found was an underground hallway (F) connecting the main house with the outbuilding complex. This passageway helped configure the segregated social landscape of the property and kept enslaved Africans out of the view of the President's 'office'-area windows.

This archaeological evidence remains on view to the public in the new commemoration under a large glass box built on top of the original house ruins. This historical evidence preserves in stone the contradiction of slavery and freedom at the birth of the American nation.




President's House Commemoration: Freedom and Slavery at the Birth of A Nation, Independence National Historical Park. (Photo by P. Jeppson, 2011).



(Z) Oval Bow Window; (K) kitchen; (F) Underground Passage
(Photo: Independence National Historical Park, 2007)

Cheyney University of Pennsylvania has multiple connections to the history being (re)made at the site of the President's House. Members of the CU family have changed, and are working to change, what Americans learn about the President's House and about slavery at the nation's founding. These actions testify to the importance and success of CU's mission of preparing confident, competent, reflective, visionary leaders and responsible citizens who will apply the knowledge and skills gained from rigorous and challenging academic programs to the advancement of the nation.



Homer Lane, participated in an exhibit on "Explore Philadelphia's Hidden Past: New Archaeological Discoveries in our Town" at the Independence National Historical Park. His project is part of the exhibit, "Archaeology is a Community Resource." A non-traditional student, Lane

HOMER LANE, POLITICAL SCIENCE

worked as a truck driver his whole life. One day, he took his granddaughter to a college fair, where he heard about the Keystone Scholarship at CU, and he enrolled. Lane has a 4.0 GPA and had his first "professional" employment as an intern last semester with The Harrisburg Internship Semester, where he worked in the office of Senator Shirley Kitchen. "I am very proud to represent Cheyney University. It seems that by following the path of higher education, things just keep getting better," Lane said.

Cheyney University Magazine, Spring 2008, page 7.

As part of the 2006 group of interns selected for *The Harrisburg Internship Semester*, CU senior **Homer Lane** (Class of 2008) served as a Staff Member in Pennsylvania State Senator Shirley Kitchen's office (3rd District, Philadelphia). As an intern, Lane produced a research document for the Senator's needs entitled, *A Case Study of Policy Implementation, The President's House in Philadelphia: The Implications of Marking the Slave Quarters*. He later shared the research findings with the public as part of a presentation entitled "Philadelphia Archaeology Is a Community Resource".

CU alums were instrumental in founding *Avenging the Ancestor's Coalition (A.T.A.C)*, a grass-roots community advocacy movement established in 2002, “for the sole purpose of making sure that ‘the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth’ would be told about this (The President’s House) site”³. Along with other interested parties, CU alums working as A.T.A.C., forced change at this U.S. government installation (Independence National Historical Park) and, in doing so, have freed the history of the enslaved people at the President’s House so that now everyone will know this truth.

(³ Unedited Version of Michael Coard, Esquire’s “Slavery Memorial/President’s House” Grand Opening Speech, December 15, 2010 at avengingtheancestors.com, accessed Feb. 16, 2016.)



Dr. Shirley Parham speaking at the President’s House site. (Photo by P. Jeppson, 2007)

The late **Dr. Shirley Parham** -- CU Class of 1962, who long taught African American history at Cheyney University, agitated successfully for recognition of slavery at the President’s House as the first Historian of **Avenging the Ancestors Coalition**. She also brought multiple groups of school and college students to the President’s House excavation to observe the work in progress and to teach how civic engagement can produce results.



M. Coard being photographed at the President's House archaeological site for Philadelphia Magazine. Photo by P. Jeppson, 2007.)

Michael Coard, Esq., – a CU Class of 1982 alumnus, and founding member of the Avenging the Ancestors Coalition, has long served as A.T.A.C.'s leader. Educated at CU, Michael Coard uses all means available to him as an activist, attorney, radio show host, university professor, newspaper colonist and magazine journalist 'to make justice happen' – including ensuring that the truth be told about slavery at the President's House during George Washington's administration.



In 2015, then CU student Fawaaz Fields helped A.T.A.C. inaugurate an annual wreath laying ceremony dedicated to honoring the nine enslaved African Americans who lived at the President's House.



Patrice Jeppson shown covering the President's House foundation wall ruins with plastic sheeting to protect them from rain during the 2007 excavation. (Photo by K. Levin)

Research by CU Faculty contributes to the public understanding of the President's House archaeological discoveries. **Dr. Patrice Jeppson** (Adjunct Assistant Professor, CU Social and Behavioral Sciences Department) provided public archaeology interpretation during the President's House excavation and is lead author on a chapter about public outreach for the site in the final report produced on the project for the City of Philadelphia and the National Park Service. She has also co-created and presented teacher workshops designed to get the President's House archaeological findings into school curriculums.



More than 45 CU students have helped to raise public awareness about the President's House history as part of CU Anthropology course practicums. Students in *Introductory Anthropology* study the site as part of Gen Ed instruction. That information is built upon in the upper level Social and Behavioral Sciences course *Culture, Language, and Society*. Students in these courses, in turn, share their learned insights with the public in presentations at the *Black History and Culture Showcase* (2011-2014, 2016) and at the Germantown Juneteenth Celebration (2015).