

BRINGING OUR COMMUNITIES' HISTORY ALIVE

Celebrating our communities' history is what the new North Star Underground Railroad Museum is all about. And now the Museum is holding a party to celebrate its extraordinary first year and to build support for next year and beyond.

The celebration benefit dinner will be held Sunday, Nov. 20 at the Keeseville Knights of Columbus, Rt. 9 Keeseville. Festivities begin at 5 p.m., with an all-you-can-eat buffet and cash bar. Tickets are \$22 in advance, and \$25 at the door.

The North Star Museum had an amazing first year, opening just before Memorial Day and attracting **over** 3500 people. Sitting right next door to the popular Ausable Chasm, and sharing space with the Town of Chesterfield Heritage Center, the Museum drew hundreds of families and groups from all over the world, and down the block.

Exhibits in the Museum demonstrate how families and churches in the North Country struggled over the slavery issue back in the pre-Civil War days. Some were determined to do anything to help slaves escape up the Champlain Corridor of the Underground Railroad, risking fines, imprisonment and death for their cause. Others felt that militant abolitionists were going too far.

While most people know about the famous John Brown, who lived for a time outside Lake Placid and was dedicated to helping escaping slaves, the North Country abounds with other, lesser known heroes.

Wendell Lansing, publisher of the Essex Country Republican newspaper and a dedicated anti-slavery activist, will get a share of the spotlight at the Nov. 20 dinner. Noted local historian Don Papson, president of the North Country Underground Railroad Historical Association, has just finished new research on Lansing's work, and plans to reveal details about where the publisher hid slaves and helped them to freedom.

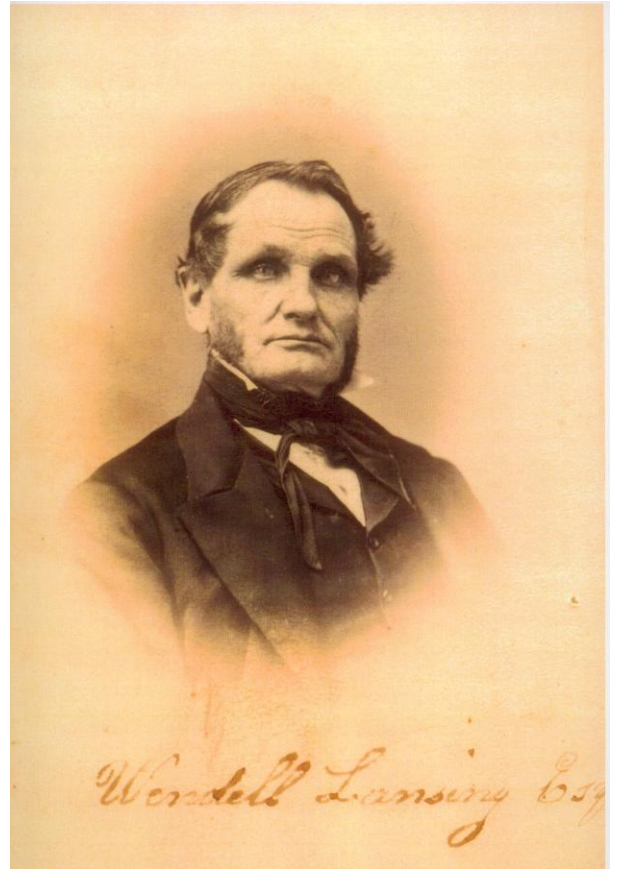
Also at the dinner, singer Jim Mandracchia will perform a selection of historic anti-slavery songs and abolitionist music.

Earlier this fall, the Town of Chesterfield and the North Country Underground Railroad Historical Association won a joint award for their cooperative effort in establishing the museum and heritage center in Ausable Chasm from the Lakes to Locks Passage cultural/historic tourism promotion agency.

To reserve seats at the dinner and for further information on the Museum, please call 518-834-5180 or email ugr@frontier.com .



Jim Mandracchia



Wendell Lansing

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