

## Exhibits Committee Report 2017

Continuing their work on the Freedom Bell, for which they constructed a roof last year, this year, Harold Bedoukian and Dick Perez built a base.

Exhibits Committee members Sally Reid, Mitchell Ray, Jackie Madison and Don Papson completed a U.S/Canada/New York/Champlain Valley Timeline handout. Sally designed the pamphlet and did the computer work. Our docents love the pamphlet, and visitors took over 500 copies.

The Quaker Meeting unit, which had been in storage, was converted into a two part display unit with storage underneath. For the right side of the unit, designer Dan Ferguson created an exhibit on the "Chinese UGRR," with artifacts from the Chinese Jail which was in Port Henry in the early 20th century. The Moriah Historical Society has loaned NCUGRHA the artifact's for three years. The left side of the unit features *The Fugitive's Story*, an original work of art by American sculptor John Rogers. The cast clay statuette portrays a woman who has escaped from slavery with her child. She is holding the child in her arms and telling her story to abolitionist poet John Greenleaf Whittier, Brooklyn minister and UGRR agent Henry Ward Beecher, and American Anti-Slavery Society's leader, William Lloyd Garrison. Our new exhibits are enhanced by illustrated story books mounted in the front of the display unit. Museum founders Don and Vivian Papson gifted the Rogers statuette to NCUGRHA and donated \$4,224.44 for the Quaker Meeting display conversion and the two exhibits.

A change was made in the Reception Room to acknowledge Vivian's contribution to the founding of the Museum: Don's photograph was replaced with a photo of Don and Vivian. This change was well received.

The Committee created two albums for the Northward to Freedom room: one with stories on human trafficking; the second with stories of immigrants and refugees who are currently traveling through Clinton County into Canada. WPTZ donated news footage of immigrants crossing at Roxham Road. We did not find a dependable way for visitors to view the footage this year, but we will continue to search for a solution.

We were confronted with our need for more space. The only place an *I Love New York* display which encourages visitors to take photos and promote the Museum could be set up was in front of the bay windows. We had no choice but to move the children's table back into the Northward to Freedom room. However, docents have had parents complain that they do not like their small children being in the room while the story of how Lavinia Bell's torture is being narrated.

We need to address the needs of children. Stewart's \$500 donation for an UGRR computer station will enable us to begin to do this. A suggestion to replace the children's table with a counter under the bay windows is under consideration. The game station and all the children's materials could be on the counter. We have also begun to explore the idea of creating an interactive display for children which will include a miniature train engine and a replica of the box in which Henry "Box" Brown was transported.

Don Papson, Chairperson