

## Lower Manhattan Slavery in New York Walking Tour, May 23, 2008

**Interested teachers are invited to bring their classes for the FREE two hour Lower Manhattan Slavery in New York Walking Tour that starts at 1 Police Plaza at 11 AM on May 23, 2008. At each site along the tour route, students from Law, Government, and Community Service High School will be performing and presenting historical information. Classes are encouraged to make posters and banners about slavery in New York to carry and display along the tour route.**

- Distributed by African American History and United States History students from Law, Government and Community Service Magnet High School, Cambria Heights, Queens.
- Based on the “New York and Slavery: Complicity and Resistance” curriculum guide (<http://www.nyscss.org>).
- Other than at the colonial era African American Burial Ground, which was uncovered during excavations for a federal office building in 1991, these sites, and slavery in New York in general, have been erased from historical memory. There is not even an historical marker at the South Street Seaport in the financial district of Manhattan where enslaved Africans were traded in the 17th century and where illegal slaving expeditions were planned and financed up until the time of the American Civil War.
- For more information, contact Dr. Alan Singer, Department of Curriculum and Teaching, Hofstra University, at 516-463-5853 or [catajs@hofstra.edu](mailto:catajs@hofstra.edu) or Michael Pezone at [zenmap@aol.com](mailto:zenmap@aol.com).

Directions:

At 11 AM the tour begins at 1 Police Place at the red sculpture. It ends at South Street Seaport at 1 PM.

Leave 20 minutes by subway from Penn Station. Take the R or W south to City Hall. Walk north on Broadway to Duane and go right on Duane to the Burial Ground. To 1 Police Plaza, take the R or W to the same stop, walk north to Chambers and go right on Chambers to 1 Police Plaza. You will see the red sculpture in front of you.

From Brooklyn, Queens, or the Bronx. The 4, 5, 6, J, M, and Z all go to the Brooklyn Bridge City Hall stop. 1 Police Plaza is directly outside.

Bathrooms along the route are a problem. Look for a Starbucks or a Mac Donald's. There is a Wendy's at stop seven at South Street Seaport and public restrooms in the seaport if you want to take students there for lunch.

### **New York and Slavery African American Heritage Trail Markers**

**1. 1741 Execution of Enslaved Africans (Foley Square).** The site where enslaved Africans, free Blacks and White supporters accused of plotting the 1741 Slave Conspiracy were executed. White New Yorkers, afraid of another slave revolt, responded to rumors and unexplained fires with the arrest of 146 enslaved Africans, the execution of 35 Blacks and four Whites, and the transport to other colonies of 70 enslaved people. Historians continue to doubt whether a slave conspiracy ever existed.

**2. African Burial Ground (Duane Street between Center and Broadway).** The African Burial Ground is a 5 or 6-acre cemetery that was used between the late 1600s and 1796 and originally contained between ten and twenty thousand burials. Despite the harsh treatment that these African people experienced in colonial America received, the 427 bodies recovered from the site were buried with great care and love. They were wrapped in linen shrouds and methodically positioned in cedar or pine coffins that sometimes contained beads or other treasured objects.

**3. New York City Hall.** William Havemeyer, elected mayor of New York City in 1845, 1848 and 1872, launched his political career from the family's sugar refining business. The sugar was produced in the south and Cuba by enslaved African labor. Fernando Wood, as Mayor of New York City in 1861, called on the city to secede from the union along with the South. As a Congressman, he opposed the 13th amendment to the United States Constitution.

**4A/B. St. Paul's Chapel** (Broadway between Vesey and Fulton). The oldest church building in New York City. Built between 1764 and 1794. Enslaved Africans helped build the church but had to pray in a separate section and could not be buried in the cemetery. **Hughson's Tavern** (Liberty and Trinity Streets). The location of the tavern where enslaved Africans, free Blacks and White supporters are supposed to have plotted the 1741 Slave Conspiracy. White New Yorkers, afraid of another slave revolt, responded to rumors and unexplained fires with the arrest of 146 enslaved Africans, the execution of 35 Blacks and four Whites, and the transport to other colonies of 70 enslaved people. Historians continue to doubt whether a slave conspiracy ever existed.

**5. 1712 Slave Rebellion** (Maiden Lane near Williams). In 1712, a group of over twenty enslaved Africans set fire to a building on Maiden Lane in Manhattan and ambushed Whites who tried to put out the blaze. Eight White men were killed in this abortive rebellion. In response, thirteen Black men were hanged, one was starved to death, four were burned alive at the stake, and another broken on the wheel.

**6A/B/C. Amistad Defense Committee** (122 Pearl Street near Hanover Street). Offices of silk merchants Lewis and Arthur Tappan, abolitionists who organized the defense committee to free enslaved Africans on the Amistad. The Tappans were among the founders of the American Anti-Slavery Society in December 1833. In 1834, it was attacked by a pro-slavery mob. **Wall Street Slave Market** (Wall and Water Streets). A market for the sale and hire of enslaved Africans and Indians was established here at the Meal (Grain) Market in 1711 by the New York Common Council. **Financier of the Slave Trade** (55 South Street). Moses Taylor was a sugar merchant and banker with offices at 55 South Street. Taylor became a member of the board of the City Bank in 1837, and served as its president from 1855 until his death in 1882. Taylor's personal resources and role as business agent for the leading exporter of Cuban sugar to the United States was invaluable to grow of the institution now known as Citibank.

**7. Slave Traders' Meeting Place** (Fulton and South Streets). The men who smuggled enslaved Africans referred to themselves as "blackbirders" and their illegal human cargo as "black ivory." Their favorite New York City meeting place was Sweet's Restaurant at the corner of Fulton and South streets.

**8A/B. Abolitionist Meeting House** (118 Williams Street between Fulton and John). Site of a boarding house operated by Asenath Hatch Nicholson, an ardent abolitionist. Starting in 1835, abolitionists met here to plan campaigns to end slavery. **African Free School** (William and Beekman Streets). The first African Free School was established at 245 Williams Street in 1787 by the New York Manumission Society. Forty boys and girls were taught in a single room. It was destroyed in 1814 and replaced by a new building on William Street near Duane.

### **Other Important Manhattan Sites**

In 1838, **David Ruggles** (36 Lispendard Street, one block south of Canal Street at the corner of Church Street) harbored a fugitive slave here named Frederick Washington Bailey who later became known as Frederick Douglass. In 1644, eleven enslaved African men petitioned the local government and obtained their freedom in exchange for the promise to pay an annual tax in produce. They each received the title to land on the outskirts of the colony where they would be a buffer against attack from native forces. Black farmers soon owned a two-mile long strip of land known as the **Land of the Blacks** (Washington Square Park) from what is now Canal Street to 34th Street in Manhattan. **Seneca Village** was Manhattan's first prominent community of African American property owners. From 1825 to 1857, it was located between 82nd and 89th Streets at Seventh and Eighth Avenues in what is now a section of Central Park.