

Blairsville's Passport to Freedom

Underground Railroad Driving Tour of Indiana County, PA



*Funded in part by a grant from the
Indiana County Endowment*

A historical map of Indiana County, Pennsylvania, with the title "MAP OF INDIANA COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA" in a decorative, ornate font. The map shows a grid of land parcels and some geographical features.

MAP OF INDIANA COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA

**WELCOME to the Indiana county
UGRR Driving Tour!**

**Come explore freedom's path as you
leisurely drive through lush countrysides
and quaint small towns.**

Indiana County and the Underground Railroad

In the early 19th century, Indiana County, Pennsylvania, was known for its strong anti-slavery sentiment and willingness to aid fugitive slaves. The first anti-slavery societies were organized in the 1830's, and in the decades before the Civil War, men, women and children of Indiana County, Black and White, of various religious beliefs and social stations, gave a helping hand to the freedom-seekers traveling on the Underground Railroad. On this driving tour you, too, will travel the roads, see the places and hear the stories of people who loved liberty enough to risk everything to ensure it to all Americans.



Thank you for your interest in the Underground Railroad history of Indiana County, PA. Our tour begins in Blairsville at the UGRR History Center, travels the county and ends in White Twp.

At the conclusion of this tour, you will :

- ★ Be able to identify Indiana County stops on the Underground Railroad
- ★ Understand the movement of freedom-seeking slaves through Indiana County
- ★ Learn the stories of the brave men, women, and children who sought freedom from oppression and the Indiana Countians who helped them along the way



Look for the special stars that indicate attractions!



Underground Railroad activity was found throughout most of Indiana County. However, our tour visits only those stops with existing structures or historic markers. The tour route takes, without stopping for attractions, approximately 3 hours.

Blairsville Borough

Our tour begins at the Blairsville Area

- ① UGRR History Center, 214 East Lane, Blairsville.



Enjoy the Indiana County "Freedom in the Air" exhibit. (Travel North on S. East Lane 1.5 blocks, making a left onto East Brown St. Follow to S. Liberty St. and make a left. Site is on left)

- ② & ③ John and Alexander Graff Houses, 195 & 216 S. Liberty St.



John Graff was a prominent businessman and underground railroad conductor. A safe room was constructed in the floor of John's carriage house to shelter escaping slaves. The room accessed an underground passage leading from the carriage

house to the river. The John and Alexander Graff homes were constructed in 1835 and 1820, respectively. (Continue south on Liberty, making a right at the stop sign. Loop around to next stop sign and make a left, heading north on S. Liberty to the bandstand and PHMC marker at Liberty and W. Market St.)



- ④ PHMC Fugitive Slave Marker

In the early 1850's, an enslaved Virginian named Richard Newman struck a dangerous and courageous path north to freedom. He began a new life in Blairsville with the help of UGRR conductor and African American community leader Lewis Johnston. In 1858, a deputy United States Marshall and a Uniontown bounty hunter came to Blairsville with a warrant for Richard Newman. Led by Blairsville's African American community, a howling mob chased them out of town. (Turn right and travel East on Market St. Turn left onto N. Spring St., then left onto W. Campbell St.)



5 Site of former AME Zion Church, first African church organized in Indiana County. (Turn around in lot on right and head back on W. Campbell St. to N. Spring St. Make a right onto N. Spring St.)

6 Lewis Johnston Home (reconstructed) Southwest corner of N. Spring and W. Campbell St.

Lewis was an active UGRR conductor. His mother died enslaved in Derry Twp, Westmoreland County. Lewis Johnston harbored escaped slave Richard Newman while he resided in Blairsville nearly 6 years. Lewis Johnston was a leader of the community.

7 McCune Store, Northeast corner of N. Spring St. and W. Market St.



Pre-Civil War era building with reported ties to the UGRR. "Safe room" in basement was used to harbor escaping slaves, according to oral tradition. (Turn left on W. Market St., up hill to Blairsville Cemetery on the left)

8 Blairsville Cemetery, Old Wm. Penn Hwy, Blairsville (E. Market St.) Home to UGRR figures, Civil and Revolutionary War soldiers.

(If you are interested in touring Historic Saltsburg ★, take Rt. 22 West to Rt. 981 S. or continue west to Pittsburgh and enjoy the Heinz History Center's UGRR exhibit ★.)



Blairsville to Center Township

Continue your drive through history as you proceed north on Old Wm. Penn Highway. Two miles from the Blairsville Cemetery, Old Wm. Penn becomes Rt. 119 North. Follow 119 North 6.3 miles, get into left turning lane and make a left turn onto Main St., Homer City to continue our UGRR tour. Travel 1.5 miles on Main St., immediately past the Homer-Center Historical Society Caboose Museum ★ on your right, go straight at the sharp curve onto Jacksonville Rd. Follow Jacksonville Rd. to its intersection with Rt. 56 and make a right. At Smith Rd., .4 miles along Rt. 56, make a left. The first UGRR site is .4 miles on your right, and the second an additional .4 miles also on the right.

*If 18th Century Native American history piques your interest, take a quick detour to Naeskahonitown, ★ right at the first light on Rt. 119 North.
724-248-0114
Open daily 10:00 am to 4:00 pm*

9 Simpson Farms, Smith Rd.

Two 19th century farm houses were part of the large Simpson farms. Brothers Thomas and James Simpson worked the farm with their father, John. It was in this location in 1845 that Anthony Hollingsworth, a fugitive slave from Virginia was captured while working, bound, and taken to the county seat by agents of slave owner Garret Van Meter. (Continue along Smith Rd. .6 miles, turning right onto Goral Rd. Follow Goral Rd. 1.5 miles)



Simpson farms. Brothers Thomas and James Simpson worked the farm with their father, John. It was in this location in 1845 that Anthony Hollingsworth, a fugitive slave from Virginia was captured while working,

If you are interested in 18th century cemeteries, make a left and follow to Bethel Church. ★

If not, continue an additional .9 miles on Goral/Hilltop Rd. to the next UGRR site.



Indiana County and Nearby Attractions

Historic Saltsburg: Founded in 1817 and located on the Kiski River. Visit the Rebecca Hadden Stone House Museum, 105 Point St., Saltsburg. Owned and operated by the Saltsburg Historical Society, the museum illustrates the history of the area, its exploration, settlement, development, activities in peace and in war, and progress in population, wealth and transportation. Dine downtown at The Olde Salt, PJ Brown's, Fox's Pizza, Sorelli's Pizz, The Saltsburg Inn, or on Rt. 981 at Marchitellis. Explore the West Penn Trail in Saltsburg or walk through canal park along the remnants of the Pennsylvania Main Line

Naeskahonitown, 715 Marshall Heights Rd, Black Lick, PA 724-248-0114 : Open daily 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Naeskahonitown is an actual-size living village of the French and Indian War Era, nestled on Chestnut Ridge near Black Lick, PA, and is located five miles from Blairsville. The purpose of this village is to educate children and adults about Eastern Woodland .

Homer-Center Historical Society Caboose Museum, North Main St., Homer City: Open weekends only, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm Memorial Day through Labor Day. Contained within an historic caboose, view local artifacts and remnants of a vast industrial history. Call 724-479-9894 to schedule a visit.

Bethel Presbyterian Church, founded 1788, 1470 Bethel Church Rd. Oldest church in Indiana County. Interesting cemetery with 18th century headstones.

Historic Smicksburg: Home to a large Amish community and founded in 1827. Taste locally produced wines at the Windgate Vinyard, 1998 Hemlock Acres Rd. Shop downtown at the many specialty, antique, and pottery shops. Dine downtown at Thee Village Eatinghouse. Explore local history at the Smicksburg Historical Society Museum.

When in the Smicksburg area, continue north to Dayton and view the **Robert Marshall House,** est. 1839. This house was a stop on the UGRR.

Historic Gilgal Presbyterian Church, Marion Center, PA: Organized 1808

Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County Museum: 621 Wayne Ave., Indiana, PA. Museum is open Tues-Fri 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Sat. 10:00 am to 3:00pm. Housed in the former National Guard Armory, this museum holds revolving exhibits, library, and genealogical resources.

Johnstown Area Heritage Discovery Center, 201 6th Ave., Johnstown
Johnstown Flood Museum, 304 Washington St., Johnstown, The Heritage Discovery Center and Johnstown Flood Museum are open seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. year-round. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, the museums offer extended hours on Fridays and Saturdays, from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m

John Heinz History Center, 1212 Smallman St., Pittsburgh
Devoted to the history and heritage of Western Pennsylvania, the History Center is a 275,000-square-foot museum and research facility that is located in Pittsburgh's historic Strip District. Open daily 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, 412-454-6000

Indiana Borough & White Twp.

(Follow Rt. 286/Oakland Ave. 3.8 miles, making a right onto Philadelphia St. Proceed .2 miles on Philadelphia St. Site is on the north corner of 6th and Philadelphia Sts.)

12 William and Elizabeth Houston House

N. 6th and Phila. St. Elizabeth Houston aided escaping slaves with food, clothing, and temporary shelter without the knowledge of her husband in an attempt to shelter him from fugitive slave laws.



(Next site immediately across Philadelphia St. on south corner of 6th and Philadelphia Sts.)

13 Location of the former Indiana House, proprietor pro-slavery man, sheriff David Ralston.

It was on this spot that a spontaneous mob of Indiana citizens formed with the intent to free the captured Anthony Hollingsworth. Hollingsworth was detained in the hotel overnight and freed the following day by Judge Thomas White citing the lack of constitutional evidence of the legality of slavery in Virginia.



(Turn right onto S. 6th St. Site is >.1 mile on the left)

14 David Ralston House 41 S. 6th St. Residence of Sheriff Ralston, pro-slavery man who led a raid on slave cabins in East Indiana County in 1845. (Travel .1 mile and bear right at the light. Pull into Historical Society of Indiana County lot on left)



10 Alexander McMullen House, Hilltop Rd.

Alexander was the first president of the Center Township Anti-Slavery Society, est. January 30, 1838. Meetings were held in the small school house on this farm. (Turn right onto Rt. 56, bearing right in .3 miles. Campbell homestead is at the bearing point, Allison's .2 miles on the left)



11 John B Allison House

Former Site of Hon. Joseph Campbell Homestead.

The Allison home was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Allison was the second president of the Center Twp. Anti-Slavery Society. At the intersection of Rt. 56 and Rustic Lodge Road was the home of Judge Campbell. "He was an abolitionist when there



was none to stand with him." He was member of the Center Twp. Anti-Slavery Society and an UGRR conductor.

(Continue on Rt. 56 to quick right onto Fitzgerald Rd. Follow Fitzgerald

1.0 miles back to Hilltop Rd. and make a right. At stop sign, go straight on Hilltop Rd. 1.2 miles and make a right onto Rt. 286)

Passport to Freedom

The Blairsville Area Underground Railroad Experience is proud to bring you this tour of Indiana County. Since our inception in 2006, we have endeavored to preserve, protect, and record the stories of Indiana County's Underground Railroad network. This project is dedicated to the operators of this UGRR and to the hundreds of heroic men, women, and children who used this network to escape enslavement.

Passport to Freedom, in addition to operating our UGRR History Center, hosts throughout the year several events in Blairsville and Indiana County. These events include, but are not limited to:

Black History Month Genealogy Workshop

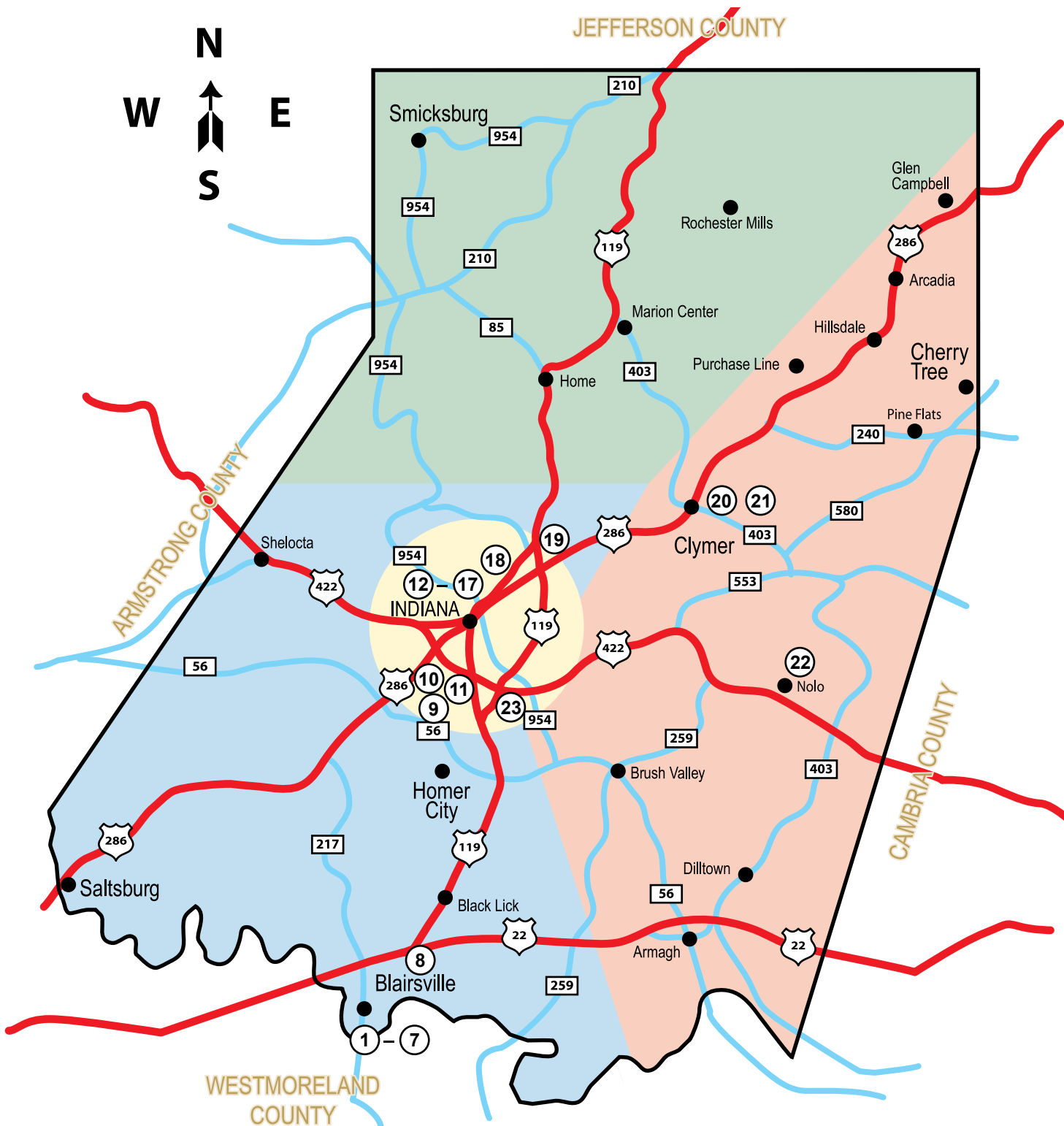
Memorial Day Whisper Cemetery Tour

Mid-July Blairsville Guided Walking Tour

National Parks Service Status Reenactment "The 1858 Rescue: Newman's Escape"

Late October Twilight Cemetery Tour

Please contact us at the Historical Society of the Blairsville Area, 116 E. Campbell St., Blairsville PA, 15717, call 724-459-0580, or visit us online at www.undergroundrailroadblairsvillepa.com



Southwest

Passport to Freedom, The Blairsville UGRR: Pie Cucina Ristorante (in-town); Papa Sal's Restaurant (Rte. 22 w); Chestnut Ridge Golf Course & Goombah's Restaurant (both on Old William Penn Hwy.); Comfort Inn (Rte. 22 E); Hampton Inn (Old William Penn Hwy. next to Chestnut Ridge Golf Course); Historical Society (free); Sheetz gas station (in-town)

Black Lick: Naeskahonitown (Marshall Heights Rd.); Saylor Park w/Ghost Town & Hoodlebug Trailheads (free); Sheetz gas station (in-town)

Homer City: Caboose Visitors' Center & Museum (free); Paisano's Restaurant (in-town); Sheetz gas station (Rte. 119 N)

Saltsburg: Rebecca Hadden Stone House Museum (free)

Central

Indiana: Lodging, Dining, Shopping, and other recreational options are too numerous to mention. Check with the Indiana County Tourist Bureau office in the Indiana Mall (next to Pearl Vision) or go on-line at www.visitindianacountypa.org

Check out: The Jimmy Stewart Museum, 835 Philadelphia St., Indiana, PA 15701; The University Museum & Galleries on IUP Campus (free)

Northwest

Smicksburg Loop (w/Dayton Extension):

Lodging: Indiana or Punxsutawney (Check the ICTB website for B&B's)

Restaurants: Many in Smicksburg; Home, PA; The Home Made Restaurant (Rte. 119 N)

Shopping: Many specialty shops in Smicksburg; potteries in area, antique shops, etc. Check on-line www.visitindianacountypa.org for descriptions and directions

Northeast

Brush Valley, Nolo, Clymer: Yellow Creek State Park (Rte. 422 East of Indiana): boating, swimming, picnicking, etc.; Marion Center Speedway (Marion Center, PA); Luigi's Restaurant (Clymer)

15 Memorial Park (behind Historical Society)

In 1845, three fugitive slaves came to Indiana and "it must be remembered that they had rested all that day in the old graveyard near the residence of the late Judge Silas M. Clark, among the tombstones, secreted by the brush, without anything to eat." These three fugitives were Charlie Brown, Anthony Hollingsworth and Jared or Garrett Harris. (Out of lot, make right, return to Phila. St. and make a right. Site on left)



16 Dr. Robert Mitchell House

A native of Pennsylvania, Mitchell studied medicine in "Old Virginia" where he witnessed the cruelties of slavery first hand. Dr. Mitchell was an ardent abolitionist and UGRR conductor, believing "every yoke should be broken and the oppressed should be free." Mitchell was fined \$10,000 in federal court for his violation of fugitive slave laws. (Follow Phila. St. .1 mile to the site on your left, corner of N. 4th & Phila. St)



17 Jamison's Eastern Inn

Home of young UGRR conductor Samuel Jamison. At this site, Jamison refused a large bribe from slave catchers hotly pursuing slaves he had just secreted into a nearby barn. (Turn left on N. 4th St. and follow 1.1 miles, making a left. Turn immediately right onto Marion Rd. Site is on the left)



Indiana Borough & White Twp.

18 Mr. & Mrs. David Myers House



David Myers, UGRR conductor, was "an ardent friend of the slaves and brave as a lion in their defense." David figured prominently in many hairsbreadth escapes with slave hunters, including pulling slaves into a hay

mow just ahead of slave catchers and the Jamison incident previously mentioned. Mrs. Myers, also devoted to the cause, once baked bread and prepared a meal for hungry fugitives who had to be driven from her table when it was learned slave catchers were nearby. The men were so hungry that they tossed the hot bread from hand to hand as they fled. (If you are interested in visiting the Amish of Smicksburg ★ or the historic Gilgal Church ★, head North on N. 4th St. to Rt. 119 N. Otherwise, follow Marion Rd. to the end and turn right onto 4th St. Head back and make a left onto Philadelphia St. Follow Philadelphia St. .3 miles through the light and take the Clymer Rt. 286 East exit. After the cloverleaf exit, at the first intersection, down and on your left are ruins of the next site)

19 James Hamilton's Barn

Hamilton, a pioneer of abolition in Indiana County, was involved with many UGRR episodes including the two just mentioned. After the slave catchers' unsuccessful search, the slaves in the hay mow were taken by horseback to Atcheson's in Cherry Tree. Hamilton concealed many slaves in this barn which, on occasion,



was the target of raids by slave catchers. (Follow Rt. 286 E. 2.9 miles to the PHMC marker on your right. Cross bridge and and park in lot on your right. Location of cabins near creek, under bridge)

Glymer and Diamondville

20 PHMC Marker and Slave Cabins



In 1845, eight slave catchers, accompanied by Indiana's sheriff Ralston and three deputies, raided a cabin owned by Dr. Robert Mitchell and occupied by Anthony Hollingsworth, Jared Harris, and Charlie Brown. All were former slaves who had escaped their

bondage and were living freely in Indiana County. They had recently been joined by two additional fugitive slaves. The cabin door was broken down and the men attacked. Jared and Anthony were able to escape to lead lives as free men. Charlie and the two new arrivals were removed and taken south. Their fate is unknown. (Turn left out of the parking lot and follow Rt. 286 .2 miles, making a left onto Rt. 403. Follow Rt. 403 2.3 miles, making a left onto Starford Rd. Site is .8 miles on the right)



21 Robert Mitchell, Jr. House & Anti-Slavery Picnic Site

Homestead of Dr. Mitchell's son, Robert, who was an active UGRR conductor. Robert guided seven "colored" men who had arrived via Mechanicsburg, directed to him by Williams, "a colored barber from Johnstown." Mitchell housed and fed the men briefly before directing them, just ahead of pursuers, to Atcheson in Cherry Tree. Afterward, the men landed safely in Chautauqua, N.Y. Behind the home in the stand of pines was the site of a large anti-slavery picnic at which Jane Grey Swisshelm, author and abolitionist, spoke. The picnic was attended by 600+. Reportedly, deceased fugitive slaves are buried nearby.



Note & Return to Blairsville

(Return on Starford Rd., making a right onto Rt. 403. Less than .1 miles, turn left toward Penn Run on Spaulding Rd. Travel 2.9 miles into Penn Run, turning right onto Rt. 553. After .3 miles, make a left onto N. Harmony Rd. Follow 1.5 miles to Rt. 422 and make a left. Proceed 2.9 miles on Rt. 422 and make a right at the top of the hill and an immediate left onto Stone House Drive.)

22 "Stone House"

This early nineteenth century home is reportedly an Eastern Indiana County stop on the Underground Railroad.

Those interested in following history's path, continue East on Rt. 422 to Rt. 403 South to Johnstown and enjoy the Johnstown Area Heritage Association Discovery Center or the Johnstown Flood Museum. ★



Otherwise, continue along Stone House Dr. to Rt. 422 and turn left. Follow Rt. 422 West to the Rt. 954/6th St. exit. Make a left onto Rt. 954 and travel .5 miles to site on your left.

23 John B. Allison, Esq. Farm

Across Rt. 954 is the farm of John B. Allison, Esq. John was a supporter of the UGRR. It was on this site that Absalom Hazlet, one of John Brown's raiders, saw the blades of the oats bent over into the shape of a "B." Hazlet said he knew that stood for the "B"lood that would be shed in liberation of the slaves. Hazlet was one of the last raiders executed. (Turn right onto Lucerne Road and into parking lot of Vennard's Convenience Store)

(Follow Lucerne Rd. to Rt. 119, turn left, and head back to Blairsville)

*Where to Locate
Heritage Tourism Information*

Indiana County Tourist Bureau

*Indiana Mall, 2090 Rte. 286 S., Indiana, PA 15701
724-463-7505 or 1-877-7INDIANA
www.visitindianacountypa.org*

Historical & Genealogical Society of Indiana County

*621 Wayne Ave., Indiana, PA 15701-3042
724-463-9600
www.rootsweb.com/~paicgs
E-mail: ichs@ptd.net*

Historical Society of the Blairsville Area

*116 E. Campbell St., Blairsville, PA 15717
724-459-0580
www.blairsvillehistoric.com
E-mail: hsba@verizon.net*

Blairsville Area Underground Railroad Project

c/o HSBA

*116 E. Campbell St., Blairsville, PA 15717
724-459-0580
www.undergroundrailroadblairsvillepa.com
E-mail: hsba@verizon.net*

Saltsburg Area Historical Society

*Rebecca B. Hadden Stone House Museum
105 Point St., P.O. Box 12, Saltsburg, PA 15681
724-639-9003
E-mail: meneff@infionline.net*

Homer-Center Historical Society

*P.O. Box 42, Homer City, PA 15748
724-479-9894*

Cherry Tree Heritage Society

*261 N. Main St., P.O. Box 202, Cherry Tree, PA 15724
E-mail: donr@pennwoods.net
www.cherrytreepa.org*

Smicksburg Area Heritage Society

*59 E. Kittanning St., Smicksburg, PA 16256
814-257-8890*

Strongstown Historical Society

*14729 Rte. 422 E., Strongstown, PA 15957
814-749-9142*

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