



THE LANDMARK

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Newsletter of the Friends of Old Annville
P.O. Box 99, Annville, PA 17003

Slavery & Race in Annville • Welcome to Our Newest Board Members

President's Message, by Michael Schroeder

For our summer vacation this year, my wife Karen and I went on an eight-day, five-state, 1,300-mile driving tour of the Civil Rights Movement in the South. We were graciously welcomed to a spirited Sunday service at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, headquarters for Movement mass meetings and rallies in the early 1960s, where four black girls were killed by a white supremacist's bomb on September 15, 1963. We were struck dumb by the sheer moral power of the Legacy Museum and nearby National Memorial for Peace & Justice in Montgomery, Alabama, which commemorates the violent deaths of the more than 4,400 documented victims of racial terror lynchings in the USA from 1877 to 1950, and the thousands of other victims of racial terror whose names and deaths were never recorded.

At the foot of the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, we were greeted by an enthusiastic young man named Columbus who's spending his summer braving the hot Alabama sun to welcome visitors to this historic spot



Our self-employed & deeply knowledgeable tour guide Andrew, posing before the historic plaque designating the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama as a National Historic Landmark, July 2019.

marking "Bloody Sunday" on 7 March 1965 and the starting point of the famed 54-mile march from Selma to Montgomery demanding that the right to vote be extended to black citizens. At the ultra-modern and immensely moving Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in Jackson, Mississippi, we had a long and enlightening conversation with Mr. Hezekiah Watkins, who in 1961 at age 13 became one of the youngest Freedom Riders challenging Jim Crow on public transportation. And to wrap it all up, at the totally packed National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, the former site of the Lorraine Motel where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on 4 April 1968 during a strike by sanitation workers, we were once again compelled to grapple with our country's long history of racial violence and injustice.

What does any of this have to do with Annville, PA, you ask? Well, our trip got me thinking of research undertaken earlier this year, when we learned that in the late 18th century, the Adam Ulrich homestead (current site of LVC's Facilities Services on the north side of the railroad tracks) reportedly housed a slave named Pompeii, said to be buried somewhere on the grounds. Learning about Pompeii got me wondering about the history of slavery and race here in Annville and in Lebanon County. The topic also seems especially apt given all the controversy surrounding the upcoming 2020 census and the issues of race, citizenship, and national identity that are so much in the news these days. So, I did a little digging through our country's earliest census data and other sources. Here's some of what I found:

In 1780, during the Revolutionary War, Pennsylvania passed a law (the Gradual Abolition Act) that led to the gradual abolition of slavery in the state. In the decades to follow, the number of slaves in the Commonwealth slowly declined; in 1840, 64 remained. Pennsylvania's last slaves were emancipated in 1847.

Our country's first census in 1790 enumerated four categories of inhabitants: Free White Males, Free White Females, All Other Free Persons, and Slaves. The very categories offer a stark reminder of the extent to which racial categories have been inscribed in our country's legal

system since our foundation as a republic. Dauphin County, which in 1790 included Annville & Lebanon, listed 213 slaves in a total population of 18,129. Lebanon Town listed two slaves (owned by one Samuel Morse) and two “Free Negroes,” Robert Clinch and Frank Loret.

According to evidence compiled in the early 2000s by Adam Ulrich’s descendent Bill Matz, the Ulrichs once owned a slave named Pompeii. Matz cites no source, but his claim is supported by the census data cited below.

The 1790 federal census shows no slaves or “Other Free Persons” listed with the family headed by “Christopher Uhler” (the given name of one of Adam Ulrich’s sons and the closest thing to Ulrich in the listings). It does show 11 “Free White” persons – a big family!

The 1800 federal census for “Anvil Township” (still in Dauphin County) shows no slaves but one tick in the category “All Other Free Persons Except Indians Not Taxed” – the only free black person in the township – with the Martin Ulrich family. (First generation immigrant and family patriarch Adam Ulrich died in 1781, after which the family was headed by son Christopher until his death on 6 Aug. 1790, and then by sons Martin and Adam Jr.).

Curiously, and contradicting the federal data, the 1800 Pennsylvania Septennial Census shows the Ulrichs with two male slaves: “Pompy,” age 20, and Frank, age 30.

Thus, in 1790 the Ulrich listing included no slaves or free persons of color. The 1800 *federal* census shows the Ulrichs living with Anvil Township’s only free person of color, while the 1800 *Pennsylvania* census shows the Ulrichs owning the township’s only two slaves. Weird!

The 1810 census shows no slaves and five “Free Negroes” in Annville Township, none with the Ulrichs. The 1820 census shows no slaves in Annville Township and 18 “Free Colored Persons,” two in the Martin and Adam Ulrich, Jr. families. In the Adam Ulrich, Jr. family lived one “Free Colored Male” age 26-45. In the Martin Ulrich family lived one “Free Colored Female” age 14-26.

It thus appears that Pompeii, one of the two African American slaves who once lived in Annville Township, was purchased sometime after 1790 and freed sometime ca. 1800–1820. Was Pompeii the unnamed “Free Colored Male” shown living with Adam Ulrich, Jr.’s family in 1820? If so, did he have any kind of relationship with the younger “Free Colored Female” living with Martin Ulrich’s family? Both seem likely. I suspect this young “Free Colored Female” was Pompeii’s wife.

Why would Pompeii stay with the Ulrichs after he’d been their slave? Outright coercion seems implausible, given the overall context. Indeed, the religious piety of the Ulrichs as leading members of the German Reformed Church means it’s possible that they bought Pompeii with the intention of freeing him. My own best guess is that Pompeii purchased his own freedom and chose to stay on.

And that’s about as far as the evidence at hand takes us; we’re still puzzling it out. I didn’t keep going with the census data after 1820, though interested readers are welcome to do so (all these census forms can be accessed free online, at www.familysearch.org).

Today, of Annville Township’s 4,850 residents, only 1.2 percent (56 persons) identify as black or African American; only 1.1 percent are foreign-born; and 100 percent are citizens, compared to 93 percent for the country as a whole. In short, our town and township remain overwhelmingly white and native-born – which I’m sure doesn’t surprise anyone. But it does seem important to underscore that white people in the United States have a centuries-long history of racial privilege inscribed in law, and that “race” as a social category is not confined to people of color. And, that the only way to transcend the ugly history of racism in our country as a whole is to engage in honest, candid, and perhaps uncomfortable conversations about its past, present, and future.

Township Commissioner Joann Zimmerman suggests that a historic plaque be erected at the Ulrich homestead to publicly acknowledge the historical reality that slavery once existed in Annville – as far as we know for two slaves, Pompeii and Frank, for an unknown span of time in the years ca. 1790-1820. What do you think?

* * *

Switching gears, I’m happy to announce two new additions to the FOOA Board of Directors: Megan Ball, whose work on our new book, *Preserving History, Building Community* (2019) was crucial to the project’s completion, who’ll be replacing Kathy Moe as Treasurer (thank you, Kathy!); and Melissa Barlow, longtime Annville resident who served as this year’s fundraising coordinator for Historic Old Annville Day. We’ll provide more complete biographical information and our slate of candidates for the Board for 2020-2022 in the next issue of *The Landmark*.



Screenshot of the four categories of the 1800 federal census for Anvil Township, Dauphin County, PA: “Free White Males,” “Free White Females,” “All Other Free Persons Except Indians Not Taxed,” and “Slaves”.

31st Annual Historic Old Annville Day a Rousing Success!

We're happy to report that our 31st annual Historic Old Annville Day this past Saturday, June 8 was a grand success, drawing an estimated 6,000 people to Annville for a day of celebrating our town's past and present and looking forward to our future. In addition to our many sponsors, listed in the event's program, we thank Annville Township Public Works for its exemplary work in setting up the main stage and porta-potties, removing trash, and all the other things Les & his crew do to make sure the day goes off without a hitch.



We're also looking for volunteers to lend a hand organizing HOAD 2020. It's a fun event to make happen.

One donation to HOAD 2019, made through PayPal, was not acknowledged in the official program, an oversight we'd like to rectify here. We gratefully acknowledge a donation of \$150 by Steven C. Yeakel of Glen Allen, Virginia, "*In Memory of Chub and Erma.*" Thank you, Steven, for your generous donation!

Save the Date! Annual Dinner Sat. Nov. 8

The Friends of Old Annville Annual Dinner Meeting will be held on Saturday, November 8 at the Connor-Streicher American Legion on South Manheim Street in Annville. Join us! More details will be forthcoming in the next issue of *The Landmark*.

Please consider remembering the Friends of Old Annville in your will. No matter how big or small, your bequest to the non-profit, 501(c)(3) Friends of Old Annville will go toward one or more of our many ongoing community projects to preserve, protect, and honor the history of our town. Thank you.



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Please note that your MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DATE can be found on the mailing label of this issue of *The Landmark*. Please send your dues and address change to Rachel Noll, 1673 Louser Road, Annville, PA, 17003-8856. Questions? Call Rachel at (717) 867-2137.

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