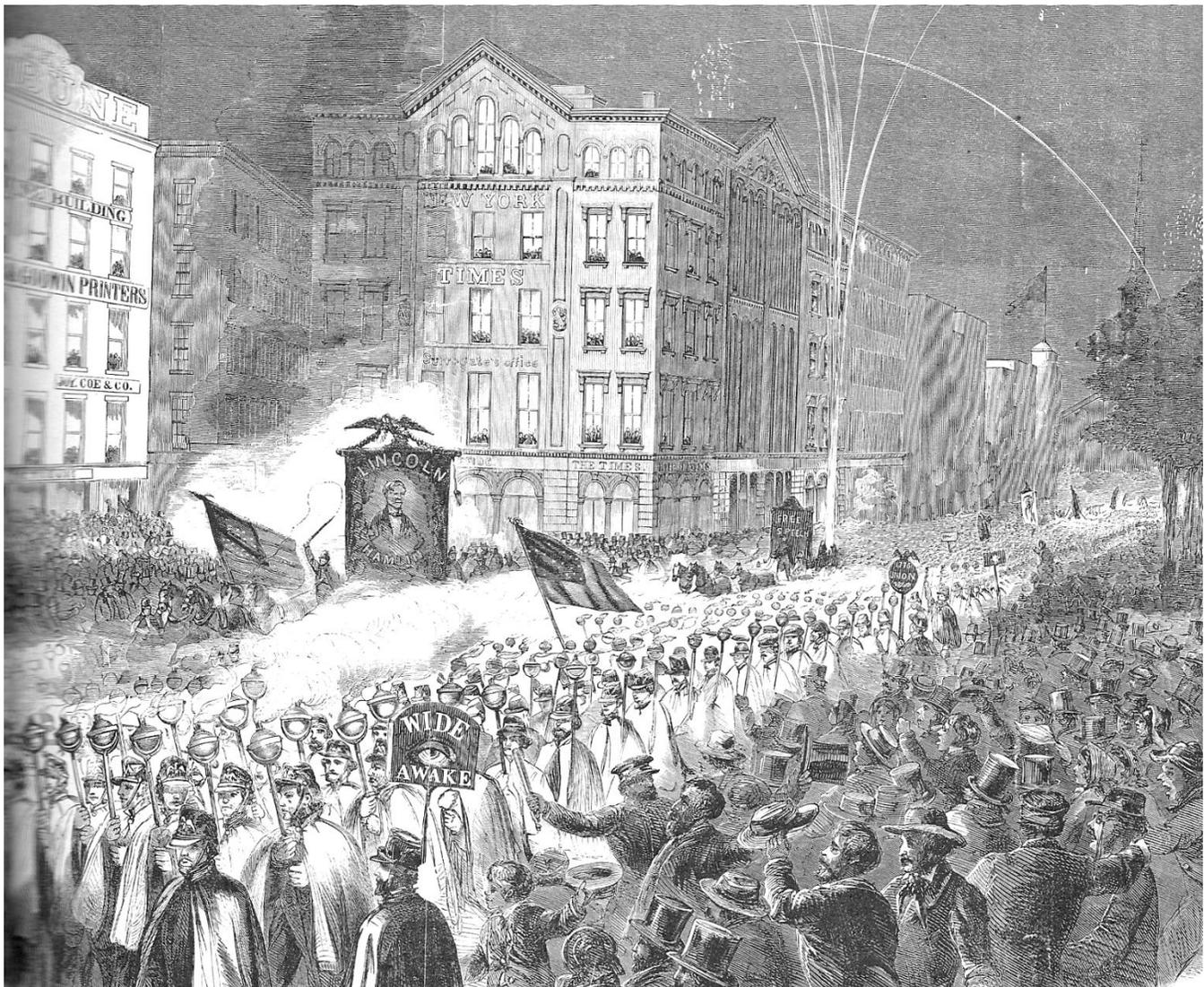


The Bugle



Quarterly Journal of the
Camp Curtin Historical Society
and Civil War Round Table, Inc.

Winter 2010
Volume 20, Number 4



1860 – Election and Secession

"The field upon which we now stand will be known as classic ground, for here has been the great central point of the organization of our military forces. When my administration of public affairs will have been forgotten and the good and evil will be only known to the investigation of the antiquarian, Camp Curtin, with its memories and associations, will be immortal."

- Governor Andrew Curtin, 1865

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John Fenstermacher 1954-2010

John R. Fenstermacher passed away on September 30. He was a long-time member of Camp Curtin and supporter of its efforts to preserve local history. John was born June 17, 1954 in Bloomsburg, and grew up in Wellsboro. He graduated from Bucknell University and Dickinson School of Law. He began his legal career at Wix, Wenger & Weidner in Harrisburg. John opened his own firm in 1989, and throughout his career, he enjoyed the respect of his peers for his expertise in business and real estate law.

In 1997, he purchased and restored the 200 year old Jonas Rupp House in Mechanicsburg which became home to his law practice. In June 1863, Confederate General Albert Jenkins used the house as his headquarters. John (left in picture) not only saved the house but generously allowed the Camp Curtin to use the grounds for living history programs and to erect a monument commemorating the house's Civil War history.



John was active in the community and served as a member of various Boards of Directors, including First National Bank of Tuckahoe, Susquehanna Choral, United Cerebral Palsy of the Capital Area, Pennsylvania Agricultural and Farm Workers' Organization and the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association.

He shared his knowledge with others as an instructor for Continuing Legal Education Seminars and the Pennsylvania Land Title Institute, Pennsylvania Land Title Association and the Pennsylvania Bar Association and was an adjunct professor of real estate and business law at Harrisburg Area Community College.

John was a true gentleman and will be greatly missed by all of the members of Camp Curtin and his many other friends.

Cover: *Torchlight parades, such as this one for Lincoln down Broadway in New York, were one of the most common campaigning techniques of the 19th century. During the 1860 election, the Republican marchers were known as "Wide Awakes" because they were fully informed about the issues of the day and were keeping an "eye" on the course of the nation.*

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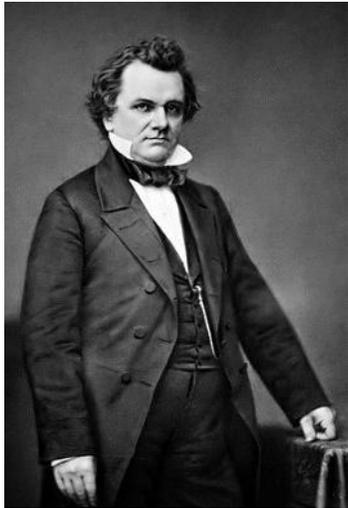
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1860 - Election and Secession

In April 1860, the Democratic Party met in Charleston, South Carolina, to nominate its candidate for president. President James Buchanan from Pennsylvania had decided not to seek reelection. Illinois Senator Stephen Douglas (below) was the front runner but his stand on “popular sovereignty,” which could limit the



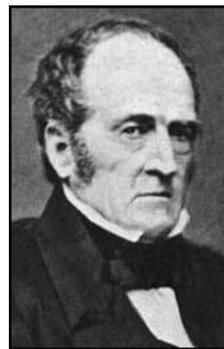
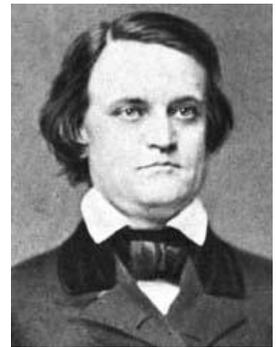
expansion of slavery into the new western territories, made him unacceptable to many Southern delegates. When the convention failed to adopt a pro-slavery platform, delegates from seven Southern states and parts of two others walked out of the convention. Under the convention rules,

a candidate needed two-thirds of the votes of all the delegates to the convention to be nominated. Douglas won every vote but could not muster the required two-thirds majority. After 57 ballots, the convention adjourned.

The Republican Convention met in May in Chicago, Illinois. New York Senator William H. Seward of New York was considered the front runner and thought he had the nomination wrapped up as the convention began. Edward Bates of Missouri, Salmon P. Chase of Ohio and Abraham Lincoln of Illinois were in the running but considered long shots. As the convention progressed Seward was seen as too closely identified with radical abolitionists. Bates’ views on the expansion of slavery and his earlier association with the anti-immigration “Know Nothings” made him unacceptable to various delegates. Chase was opposed by industrial state delegations, including Pennsylvania, because of his low tariff policies. Lincoln, somewhat unknown and considered a moderate, became the

compromise candidate and was nominated on the third ballot.

The Democrats met again in June in Baltimore, Maryland. Again, the Southern delegates walked out of the convention because the party platform and the rules concerning the seating delegates. After two ballots Douglas secured the nomination of what was now the Northern wing of the fracturing Democratic Party. The Southerners regrouped and nominated the current Vice President, John Breckenridge (right) of Kentucky, who became the standard bearer for the Southern Democratic Party.

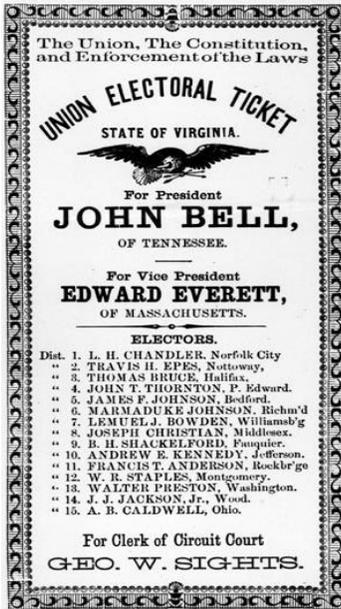


A fourth party was created by former Whigs (many from the border states), the American Party (Know Nothings), and others who could not support the Republican or Democratic nominees. They nominated former Senator John Bell of Tennessee to run under the banner of the short-lived

Constitutional Union Party.

In the 19th century, candidates rarely got out among the people to campaign. They stayed home, often said to be on their front porches, receiving visitors and press, and letting their party machines do the campaigning. Local politicians in every county would campaign, giving speeches, shaking hands and buying drinks to encourage a vote for their candidate. Pamphlets, posters, badges, banners, and torchlight parades were hallmarks of political advertising.

The voting procedure was also very different during most of the 18th and 19th centuries. Since the founding fathers believed that voters should



vote in the best interest of the community or nation rather than their own self interest, there was no secret ballot. The parties supplied “tickets,” listing the candidates and, in the case of a presidential election, the electors for whom you actually voted (left). Voters then went into the polling place and announced out loud who they were

voting for and it was recorded by the election clerk. Everyone – your employer, co-workers, pastor, family, friends and enemies – knew your vote! The secret ballot did not become common until the late 1800s as part of the reforms of the progressive era.

Although viewed as a moderate by Republicans, most Southerners saw Lincoln as a radical who would fundamentally change the status quo of slavery. His famous “House Divided” speech did little to reassure them:

I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

Lincoln was opposed to the spread of slavery into the new territories but adamantly maintained that he would not touch slavery where it already existed. Even so, Southerners threatened to secede from the Union if Lincoln was elected.

Pennsylvanians flocked to the polls on October 9, 1860, to elect a new governor. Unlike today, the state and national elections were held on two different days. Republican Andrew Curtin from Centre County opposed Democratic candidate Henry Foster from Westmoreland County in a hotly contested race. It was considered a test election for the presidential ballot in November. If the Republicans carried the Keystone State, it was likely that Lincoln would win the state and, thereby, the nation. When the votes were counted, Curtin won the state by about 30,000 or 53 percent of the votes and became Pennsylvania’s first Republican governor.



Lincoln, still beardless, appeared on a campaign poster with his running mate, Hannibal Hamlin from Maine.

On November 6, 1860, Lincoln won less than 40 percent of the popular vote but won sufficient electoral votes to become president. He carried every Northern state except New Jersey and he did not even appear on the ballot in most Southern states.

1860 Presidential Election Results

Candidate	Party	Popular Vote	Popular Percentage	Electoral Vote
Abraham Lincoln	Republican	1,865,908	39.8%	180
Stephen Douglas	Northern Democrat	1,380,202	29.5%	9
John Breckenridge	Southern Democrat	848,019	18.1%	72
John Bell	Constitutional Union	590,941	12.6%	39

Throughout the election, Southerners had warned that if the “Black” Republicans won the election, the South would secede from the Union. This just seemed to be the usual threatening rhetoric that had begun with John C. Calhoun in 1828 and had continued over the years. Despite their differences, North and South had always reached a compromise.

On November 10, 1860, however, just four days after the election, the South Carolina legislature called for a convention to consider secession. The convention convened on December 17 in Columbia but adjourned the meeting to Charleston because of an outbreak of small pox in the state capital. On December 20, without debate and on a 169 to 0 vote, the delegates approved an Ordinance of Secession. The Charleston Mercury trumpeted the news in a special broadside.

CHARLESTON
MERCURY
EXTRA:

Passed unanimously at 1.15 o'clock, P. M., December 20th, 1860.

AN ORDINANCE

To dissolve the Union between the State of South Carolina and other States united with her under the compact entitled "The Constitution of the United States of America."

We, the People of the State of South Carolina, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained,

That the Ordinance adopted by us in Convention, on the twenty-third day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, whereby the Constitution of the United States of America was ratified, and also, all Acts and parts of Acts of the General Assembly of this State, ratifying amendments of the said Constitution, are hereby repealed; and that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of "The United States of America," is hereby dissolved.

THE
UNION
IS
DISSOLVED!

On December 24, 1860, the convention issued a “Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina from the Federal Union.” It began by reviewing the history of the American colonies leading to the United States Declaration of Independence, which “*established the two great principles asserted by the Colonies, namely: the right of a State to govern itself; and the right of a people to abolish a Government when it becomes destructive of the ends for which it was instituted.*”

After winning the Revolutionary War, the states ultimately adopted the United States Constitution which added “*a third fundamental principle, namely: the law of compact. We maintain that in every compact between two or more parties, the obligation is mutual; that the failure of one of the contracting parties to perform a material part of the agreement, entirely releases the obligation of the other; and that where no arbiter is provided, each party is remitted to his own judgment to determine the fact of failure, with all its consequences.*” It would appear South Carolina did not recognize that courts were the arbiters of contract disputes and never considered taking their case to the Supreme Court for adjudication. Perhaps the secession leaders realized the Supreme Court would not agree with their interpretation of the Constitution and rule unilateral secession was illegal as it ultimately did in *Texas v. White* in 1868.

The South Carolina declaration noted that the U.S. Constitution provided for the return of run-away slaves and “*This stipulation was so material to the compact, that without it that compact would not have been made . . . For many years these laws were executed. But an increasing hostility on the part of the non-slaveholding States to the institution of slavery, has led to a disregard of their obligations . . . Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin and Iowa, have enacted laws which either nullify the Acts of Congress or render useless any attempt to execute them.*”

Additionally, the declaration added *“that these ends for which this Government was instituted have been defeated, and the Government itself has been made destructive of them by the action of the non-slaveholding States. Those States have assumed the right of deciding upon the propriety of our domestic institutions; and have denied the rights of property established in fifteen of the States and recognized by the Constitution; they have denounced as sinful the institution of slavery; they have permitted open establishment among them of societies, whose avowed object is to disturb the peace and to eloign the property of the citizens of other States. They have encouraged and assisted thousands of our slaves to leave their homes; and those who remain, have been incited by emissaries, books and pictures to servile insurrection.”* Slave revolts were a great fear in South Carolina since 58% of the population were slaves.

The South Carolinians also complained that in some of the Northern states Negroes had been granted citizenship - *“persons who, by the supreme law of the land, are incapable of becoming citizens; and their votes have been used to inaugurate a new policy, hostile to the South, and destructive of its beliefs and safety.”*

The declaration concluded, *“A geographical line has been drawn across the Union, and all the States north of that line have united in the election of a man to the high office of President of the United States, whose opinions and purposes are hostile to slavery. He is to be entrusted with the administration of the common Government, because he has declared that that ‘Government cannot endure permanently half slave, half free,’ and that the public mind must rest in the belief that slavery is in the course of ultimate extinction.”*

The convention also sent a message to the other slave-holding states declaring the experiment of the Constitution to be a failure. *“All fraternity of feeling between the North and South is lost, or has been converted into hate . . . We ask that you join us in forming a Confederacy of Slave-holding States.”* The deed was done! South Carolina had unilaterally dissolved the Union. North and

South opinions varied. Some thought the move was just another attempt by the South to gain concession from the North and the Union would be restored based on a new legislative compromise or even a constitutional amendment.

The Patriot & Union newspaper in Harrisburg on December 22 suggested, *“As yet, South Carolina has committed no overt act against the General Government, and as long as she does not attempt to interfere with the collection of revenue, or the transmission of the mails, or to take possession of Government defences, her ordinance of secession amounts to nothing more than a protest against connection with the Union. Of course she cannot continue to remain for any great length of time in this anomalous position, but while she does there is reason to hope that circumstances may induce her to retrace the precipitate and alarming step she has taken . . . Now is the time for the North to speak out and strengthen the hands of the Union men of the South, that they may be enabled to restrain the madness of the secessionists. The North has the power and the opportunity of rallying the conservatives of the South to the standard of the Union by making proper concessions, without which they must be utterly powerless, and at the mercy of those who see no other remedy than immediate secession. The fate of the Union is hanging in the balance. Is it not worth an effort to preserve?”*

As 1860 came to an end, no one knew the future course of the nation. Efforts would be made to preserve the Union. Kentucky Senator John Crittenden offered Constitutional amendments that would have essentially restored the Missouri Compromise line at the 30° 30” parallel and guaranteed the existence of slavery by prohibiting any future amendments on the subject. Early in the new year, Congress would reject the Crittenden Compromise.

By February 1, 1861 six more states - Mississippi Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas - had left the Union. On March 4, Abraham Lincoln took the presidential oath to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. In his mind, that meant preserving the Union. How would he do it?

8th Preservation Ball

The 8th Annual Civil War Preservation Ball will be held in the rotunda of the Pennsylvania Capitol Building in Harrisburg, 7:00-10:00PM, Saturday, March 19, 2011. The ball supports the Gettysburg Monuments Project Endowment Trust Fund. Music will be provided by the Philadelphia Brigade Band and dance instruction will be conducted by the Victorian Dance Ensemble.



The monuments at Gettysburg were placed by the men who faced the “fiery trial” of the Civil War as a remembrance of their service and their lost comrades. Over the years, neglect took its toll on these monuments. State Representative Harry Readshaw from Allegheny County decided to do something about this tragic situation. He formed the Gettysburg Monuments Project and with the help of numerous individuals and organizations (collectively known as “Readshaw’s Raiders”) began raising money to restore the monuments.

The Project met its initial goal by raising money for monument restoration. It is now in the process of raising funds to create a permanent endowment fund that will maintain the monuments in the future. Participation in this Civil War Preservation Ball as a guest or sponsor will help us move toward that goal.

The cost of the ball is \$35 per person or \$60 per couple. Period attire is not required or is dance experience. All dances will be taught that evening.

To prepare guests for the ball, free dance classes will be offered 2-4PM on Sundays, January 16, February 13, and March 6 at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pa.

For more information about the Preservation Ball, the dance classes, or sponsorships, telephone 717-732-5330 or email: PreservationBall@yahoo.com.

Cooper’s Battery Monument Project

The descendants and reenactors of Cooper’s Battery B, 1st Pennsylvania Light Artillery, have initiated a project to replace the capstone on the unit’s initial monument on Cemetery Hill at Gettysburg National Military Park.

The Battery was raised at Mount Jackson in Lawrence County, northwest of Pittsburgh, and entered state service in June 1861. It saw action throughout the war, including such battles as Malvern Hill, Second Manassas, South Mountain, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Petersburg and Appomattox.

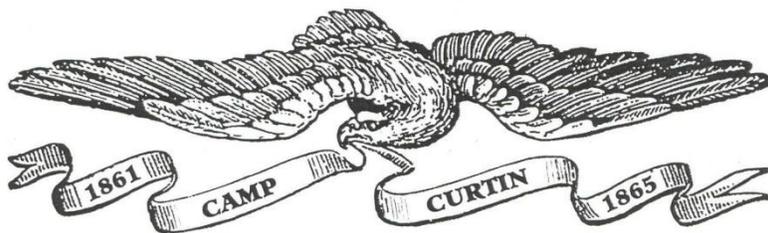
In 1880 by the Battery veterans gathered on Cemetery Hill and dedicated a small monument to mark their service and remember their fallen comrades. The monument had the distinction of being the tenth monument, and first artillery monument, placed on the battlefield. In 1889, with funds appropriated by the Pennsylvania Legislature, the battery placed a larger monument near the original marker.

Unfortunately, weather eroded the inscription on the original monument and the National Park Service removed the capstone and placed it in storage, leaving a nondescript shaft about waist high on the battlefield. The plan is to have a new capstone made and placed on the shaft. Currently, the Park and the Battery are researching the exact inscription of the stone.

The Camp Curtin Historical Society has made a \$250 donation to the project in thanks for all of the Battery’s assistance with our living history programs over the years.

Anyone interested in learning more about the project or to make a contribution should contact Keith Foote, Capstone Project Chairman, at parafeet@hotmail.com.

The Camp Curtin Historical Society and Civil War Round Table, Inc., is a non-profit corporation chartered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Contributions are tax deductible under IRC Section 501c(3). The Society is properly registered with the Pennsylvania Department of State as a charitable organization. A copy of the registration and financial information may be obtained by telephoning toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



Camp Curtin Historical Society

presents

Pursuing a Course Unwise, Fanatical, and Disorganizing: Harrisburg's Anti-Slavery Activists

by

George F. Nagle

2:00PM, Sunday, February 6th

***at the Camp Curtin Memorial-Mitchell United Methodist Church
2221 North Sixth Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania***

George F. Nagle will discuss the development, growth, and attempted suppression of the anti-slavery and abolitionist movements in Harrisburg prior to the Civil War, with an emphasis on the role of Harrisburg's African American community in these multi-racial social movements. He will trace the movements from the tumbledown slave shacks of local plantations, to the humble weather-boarded walls of the Short Street Bethel Church, to the elegantly appointed halls of the Capitol, telling a story filled with heroes, heroines, villains, murderers, kidnappers and their victims, spies, courtroom drama and secret plots.

Nagle, a member of CCHS, is the editor of the Afrolumens Project, a web-based collection of local African American historical data. He is a lifelong Harrisburg area resident, a graduate of Harrisburg High and Penn State, and is employed with the Harrisburg School District. His research has been cited in several recently published history books, and he is frequently invited to participate in regional history conferences and panels. In addition to the website, he recently published a two-volume history of Harrisburg's African American community from the colonial era to the Civil War: *The Year of Jubilee*.

This presentation is free. Bring a friend.

Refreshments and a social hour will follow the presentation.

The program will be preceded by the Camp Curtin Historical Society's annual meeting, including presentation of reports and elections.



Official Event

For information call 717-732-5115 or email genjenkins@aol.com