



A family history tells about a freed slave from Maryland called “old Black George” who would travel in a Phaeton Buggy with his white horse through the Miami Valley.



The escaping slaves would travel at night so that they could follow the North Star.



Once the slaves got to Lake Erie they would get onto a ship to travel across. Once across they would be FREE at last.



Harriet Tubman assisted thousands of runaway slaves on their way to freedom. World renowned artist *Paul Collins* allowed ICU to use this likeness of his Harriet Tubman’s Underground Railroad.

The Miami Valley Underground Railroad Quilt was created by ICU...Inspire, Create, Unite, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of Appalachian Heritage through interactive projects.

Master Quilter Edie Erzen created the Drunkard’s Path square and Master Quilter Catherine Kennedy Barnes assisted ICU in creating, laying out and assembling the quilt. World- renowned artist Paul Collins gave his permission to use his print of Harriet Tubman assisting slaves escape on the Underground Railroad.

This story quilt is used to tell how the Underground Railroad might have operated, especially through the Miami Valley. The quilt has been used in schools to study the Underground Railroad throughout the Miami Valley in Ohio.

If you would like more information about presentations of the Miami Valley Underground Railroad Story Quilt and interactive learning projects, you may contact ICU...*Inspire, Create, Unite.*



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Miami Valley Underground Railroad Story Quilt



This story quilt was created with traditional Underground Railroad secret signs and symbols. These symbols were used to assist runaway slaves escape by showing them the way to freedom. Tales of their travels through the Miami Valley on their way to Canada are told here.

Secret Codes ... The Meaning Of The Quilt Squares



The Log Cabin Square has been found on many quilts that were once owned by slaves. The exact meaning is unknown. This square has been used to represent plantation life and cotton fields from which the slaves were escaping.



The Monkey Wrench was displayed as a signal that told the slaves to begin the escape preparation by collecting the tools that they would need for their journey North.



The Courthouse Steps represents running to Canada by way of the Ohio River. Ohio represented freedom and justice since outlawing the owning of slaves. The 1803 -2003 is representative of Ohio's bicentennial.



The Shoofly Square refers to an actual person who aided the escaping slaves, by buzzing back and forth with information.



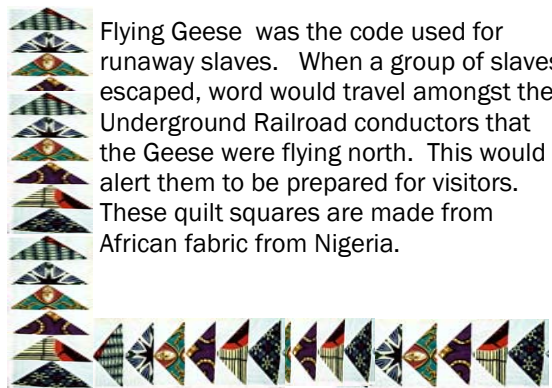
The log cabin with a candle in the window is representative of an Underground Railroad Safehouse. The operator of the safehouse would place a candle in the window at night to act as a beacon to runaway slaves.



The Bear's Paw Square reminded the runaways to follow the trail of a bear's footprints which would lead them to water. Their trails served as road maps for the runaway slaves. This square has a Native American motif that has been used to represent the Native Americans who would also assist the slaves in their journey. Many escaped slaves would eventually settle with the Native American people.



Fleeing slaves would travel at night and take refuge during the day. They would rest in safe houses or businesses owned by conductors, such as grist mills. Here the slaves would receive clothing and food. They could escape in false-bottomed wagons or in crates and taken to the next safe house.



Flying Geese was the code used for runaway slaves. When a group of slaves escaped, word would travel amongst the Underground Railroad conductors that the Geese were flying north. This would alert them to be prepared for visitors. These quilt squares are made from African fabric from Nigeria.



Because of their proximity to rivers and their locations outside of town, cemeteries were frequently the hiding place for escaping slaves. This square represents the Drill and Kerr Cemeteries which are located in North Dayton. Many of the families buried in these once abandoned cemeteries were Abolitionist. Their religious beliefs were Quaker, Presbyterian and Methodist. All three religions were heavily involved in the Underground Railroad.



The Drunkard's Path Square would remind escaping slaves to travel in a staggering fashion to elude the slave hunters. Frederick Pike, which runs in a zig-zag fashion from North Dayton to Miami County was part of the Drunkard's Path in this area.



An Underground Railroad Safehouse is depicted here. Maplegrove, as it is known, is located north of Dayton on Frederick Pike. The house was built by Joseph Kennedy, whose family settled in Montgomery County in 1803. Family legend tells that the escaping slaves stayed in a hidden room located under the wooden front porch.



The Maple Leaf Square represents Canada in the fall, where escaped slaves would take up their new residence to start over and raise their families.