

ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2023 ANNUAL AWARDS PROGRAM



1

PEORIA ILLINOIS

SPECIAL PROJECTS CATEGORY

Prepared By: Bob Hoffer, Team Contact

Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project

November 2023

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ISHS Annual Award Nomination

Nominee: Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project Team **Phone:** (309) 251-1953

Address: 5310 N Weaverridge Blvd.

Fax:

City: Peoria

State: Illinois

E-Mail: hoffers@mtco.com

Zip Code: 61615-8913

Nominator: Colleen Otto Johnson, Past Exec Dir Peoria Historical Society

Phone: (843) 371-0373

Address: 1609 W Moss Ave

Fax:

City: Peoria

State: IL

E-Mail: Cojohnson425@gmail.com

Zip Code: 61606

List the title of the specific publication or activity being nominated for an award:

FREEDOM & REMEMBRANCE MEMORIAL PROJECT - PEORIA IL

Project Team Member contact information attached.

Project Team Contact: Bob Hoffer Email: hoffers@mtco.com Cell Phone: 309-251-1953

Category

PUBLICATIONS

- Scholarly
- Other
- Russell P. Strange Memorial Book of the Year

NON-BOOK MATERIALS

- Ongoing/Periodicals
- Meritorious Periodicals
- Non-book Special
- Projects Best Website

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

- Multimedia
- Production Exhibitions
- Educational Programs

Collection Preservation

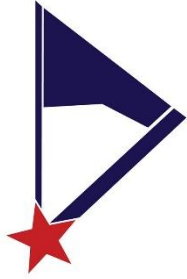
Special Projects

Lifetime Achievement

Russell Lewis Award for a Young Museum Professional

Complete and mail four (4) copies of the nomination form with four (4) copies of your supporting materials to: ISHS Awards, Illinois State Historical Society, 411 E. Monroe Street, PO Box 1800, Springfield, IL, 62705-1800. Nominations must be postmarked by November 30 of every year. **Please include a \$50 entry fee, made payable to the Illinois State Historical Society.** For more information, please call 217-525-2781 or email OfficeManager@HistoryIllinois.org.

If you are submitting a publication for an award and would like it returned, please include a statement in writing to that effect.



FREEDOM & REMEMBRANCE

M E M O R I A L

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR AWARD NOMINEES THE MEMORIAL PROJECT TEAM

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Journalist, Lincoln Historian, Author: *Nance: Trials of the First Slave Freed by Abraham Lincoln*, Member: Peoria Historical Society, Illinois State Historical Society, Abraham Lincoln Association, Lincoln Group of DC, Civil War Roundtable of DC, Buffalo Soldiers Washington DC Chapter 10th Regt., Peoria Chapter NAACP.

Bob Hoffer – 5310 North Weaverridge Blvd., Peoria IL 61615-8913 hoffers@mtco.com
Local history enthusiast, amateur genealogist, Member: Peoria Historical Society, Illinois State Historical Society, Abraham Lincoln Association, Abraham Lincoln Museum, several genealogical societies, National Society and Capt. Zeally Moss Chapter Sons of the American Revolution.

Joe Hutchinson – 117 Highview Terrace, East Peoria IL 61611 jhutch63@yahoo.com
Genealogist, Member: Peoria County Genealogical Society, Officer: Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Jared Olar -- 1203 S Capitol Street, Pekin IL 61554 jolar@pekinpubliclibrary.org
Local History Program Coordinator at Pekin Public Library, author of their *From the History Room* newsletter, library's collaborating member with Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical Society, and member of Pekin Bicentennial Planning Committee.

David Pittman – 2422 W Moss Avenue, West Peoria IL 61604 dvdgpittman@gmail.com
Peoria-area community activist, Peoria Park District advocate, Member: Peoria Branch NAACP Executive Committee.

Bill Poorman -- 5507 W Timber Oak Court, Peoria IL 61615 Poorman.Bill@gmail.com
Educator, Writer, Multi-media creator and producer, Lincoln enthusiast.



309.674.1921 | 611 SW Washington Street, Peoria, Illinois 61602 | peoriahistoricalsociety.org

TO PRESERVE, SHARE, AND CELEBRATE THE STORIES OF THE PEORIA AREA

Date: November 24, 2023
To: Illinois State Historical Society Awards Committee
Regarding: 2023 ISHS Annual Award -- Special Projects category
Endorsement: Freedom and Remembrance Memorial Project

On behalf of the Peoria Historical Society, I express my whole-hearted endorsement of the Freedom and Remembrance Memorial Project. This effort has had an exceptional impact in preserving the history of a particular Illinois site, Peoria's lost Moffatt Cemetery, and the 2,725 people known associated with it. Their stories were in danger of being erased from history but are now celebrated as a testament to their lives. This project has added substantially to knowledge of local, Illinois, and even national history, documenting our settlers, many veterans, and a woman whose court case first connected the early legal career of young Illinois attorney Abraham Lincoln with the abolitionist cause.

Thanks to extraordinary efforts by the Project Team, the memorial commemorates the life and stories of the long-ago individuals, some 2,600 in all who still remain buried at an unlikely spot in central Illinois. With connections to Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War as well as the Spanish-American War, the War of 1812, the 1792 Virginia Militia, the Revolutionary War, and Daniel Boone, whose great-grandson is buried there, the newfound history of this small Peoria location elevates its importance to a national level.

Onsite plaques recognized on Flag Day this year now recall and share the history of the cemetery, the many veterans buried there, and the remarkable legacy of Nance Legins-Costley. The project preserves a forgotten time and place in Illinois history and ensures that the voices of those once silent will now be heard. It is a remarkable achievement. I cannot imagine a more fitting recipient of an Illinois State Historical Society award.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Klise, Executive Director
Peoria Historical Society

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTORY MATERIALS	
Award Application Cover Page	1
Award Nomination Form	3
Contact Information for Award Nominees	4
Letter of Transmittal	5
Table of Contents	6
PROJECT MISSION & ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
The Memorial	7
The ISHS Markers	8
Celebration Program – Flag Day 2023	13
AWARD GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS	
General Award Eligibility	14
Special Project Criteria	14
Evidence of Recognition	15
Media Coverage Summary	16
INFORMED OPINIONS	17
PROJECT and PARTICIPANTS	
Backstory	21
Project Team & Associates	22
Major Partners -- Community and State	23
Significant Donors – Community, State and National	24
PROJECT JOURNEY	25
CELEBRATION EVENT	31
MEDIA COVERAGE DETAIL	57
CITY COUNCIL BRIEFING MATERIALS	65

(SPECIAL NOTE: If viewing this on a computer connected to the internet, clicking on any of the highlighted links in this entire document should take you directly to the related materials.)

PROJECT MISSION: THE MEMORIAL

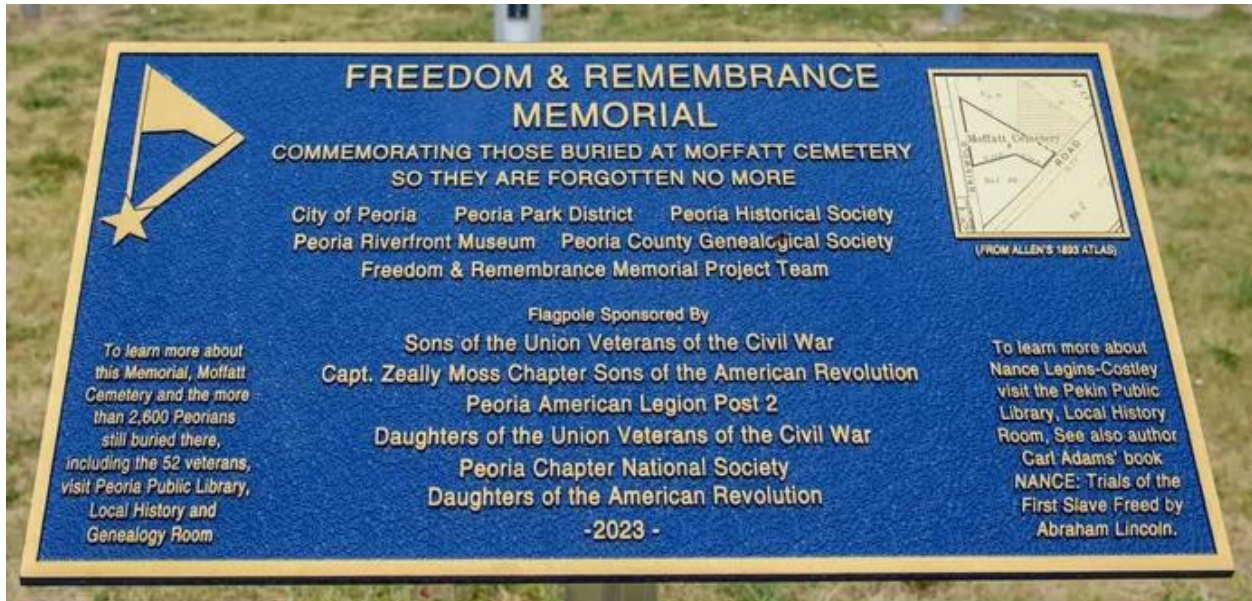


**Commemorating those buried at Peoria's Moffatt Cemetery so
"They Are Forgotten No More"**



FREEDOM & REMEMBRANCE

M E M O R I A L



The Freedom & Remembrance Memorial is composed of five key elements:

The **Commemoration Storyboard**, shown above, provides general information, including the location of the lost cemetery (upper right) also represented by the memorial logo (upper left); recognition of community partners and flagpole sponsors; and where to find out more about those who remain buried there.

One ISHS marker tells the story of **Peoria's Moffatt Cemetery**, its founder Aquilla Moffatt, and highlights of some of those buried who are of particular interest.

Another marker identifies the **52 Veterans** known buried there, including their names, ranks, companies, and regiments. Some veterans of note are highlighted.

The third marker tells the story of **Nance Legins-Costley** who is known to history as the first enslaved person young lawyer Abraham Lincoln helped free in a landmark Illinois State Supreme Court case in 1841 which ended indentured servitude.

The **solar-lighted flagpole** is purposely centered to highlight and call attention to our Nation, the veterans, and all of our citizens who remain there yet today.



FREEDOM & REMEMBRANCE

M E M O R I A L



PEORIA'S MOFFATT CEMETERY

AQUILLA MOFFATT ARRIVED HERE IN 1822 AND BEGAN MINING AND MILLING VENTURES. ON RETURN FROM THE BLACK HAWK WAR, HE BUILT HIS HOME ON SOUTH ADAMS STREET AND SET ASIDE A SMALL BURYING GROUND FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. AFTER THE CIVIL WAR HE NAMED AN ADJACENT PARCEL "UNION CEMETERY" FOR THOSE VETERANS. IN THE 1870s HE SOLD THESE PARCELS ALONG WITH THE LAND BORDERING ADAMS AND GRISWOLD STREETS TO INVESTORS WHO FORMED THE MOFFATT CEMETERY ASSOCIATION. BURIALS INCREASED RAPIDLY UNTIL IT WAS ORDERED CLOSED IN 1905. THE CEMETERY WAS ABANDONED AND EFFORTS TO SAVE IT OVER FIVE DECADES WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. COURT ACTIONS IN THE 1950s GATHERED SHARE RIGHTS, THE PROPERTY WAS REZONED, GRAVESTONES AND TREES WERE CLEARED, AND PARCELS WERE SOLD TO BUSINESSES. CEMETERY RECORDS WERE THOUGHT LOST AND THOSE BURIED THERE RELOCATED, BUT ONLY ABOUT 100 TRANSFERS ARE KNOWN. UNDERTAKER REPORTS STORED FOR A CENTURY WERE FOUND, WHICH DOCUMENT BURIALS OF ABOUT 2,500 INDIVIDUALS. RECENT RESEARCH HAS FOUND MORE THAN 200 ADDITIONAL BURIALS. TODAY, 2,600 INDIVIDUALS KNOWN BY NAME STILL LIE BURIED THERE. ONE IS NANCE LEGINS-COSTLEY, THE FIRST ENSLAVED PERSON ABRAHAM LINCOLN HELPED FREE IN AN 1841 ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT CASE. FIFTY-TWO VETERANS WERE INTERRED: 49 UNION CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS, INCLUDING AN AFRICAN AMERICAN WHO WAS AT JUNETEENTH IN GALVESTON TEXAS, AND ONE EACH FROM THE 1792 VIRGINIA MILITIA, THE WAR OF 1812, AND THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR. ALSO INTERRED ARE REMAINS OF UNKNOWN BURIED IN A MASS GRAVE THAT WERE REMOVED IN 46 CRATES FROM PEORIA'S FIRST PUBLIC CEMETERY DURING WORK ALONG LINCOLN AVENUE. THOSE BURIED AT MOFFATT CEMETERY ARE A CROSS SECTION OF OUR COMMUNITY. MANY ARE INFANTS AND CHILDREN, MOST ARE HARD-WORKING IMMIGRANTS, AFRICAN AMERICANS AND OTHERS, WHO DESERVE TO BE "FORGOTTEN NO MORE."

SPONSORED BY
UNITED UNION OF ROOFERS LOCAL #69, CITY OF PEORIA, PEORIA PARK DISTRICT,
THE WILLIAM G. POMEROY FOUNDATION, ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

2022



FREEDOM & REMEMBRANCE

M E M O R I A L



THIS PLAQUE DEDICATED BY
 COLONEL JOHN C. BRYNER, CAMP 67
 SONS OF THE UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
 IN MEMORY OF VETERANS INTERRED IN MOFFATT CEMETERY

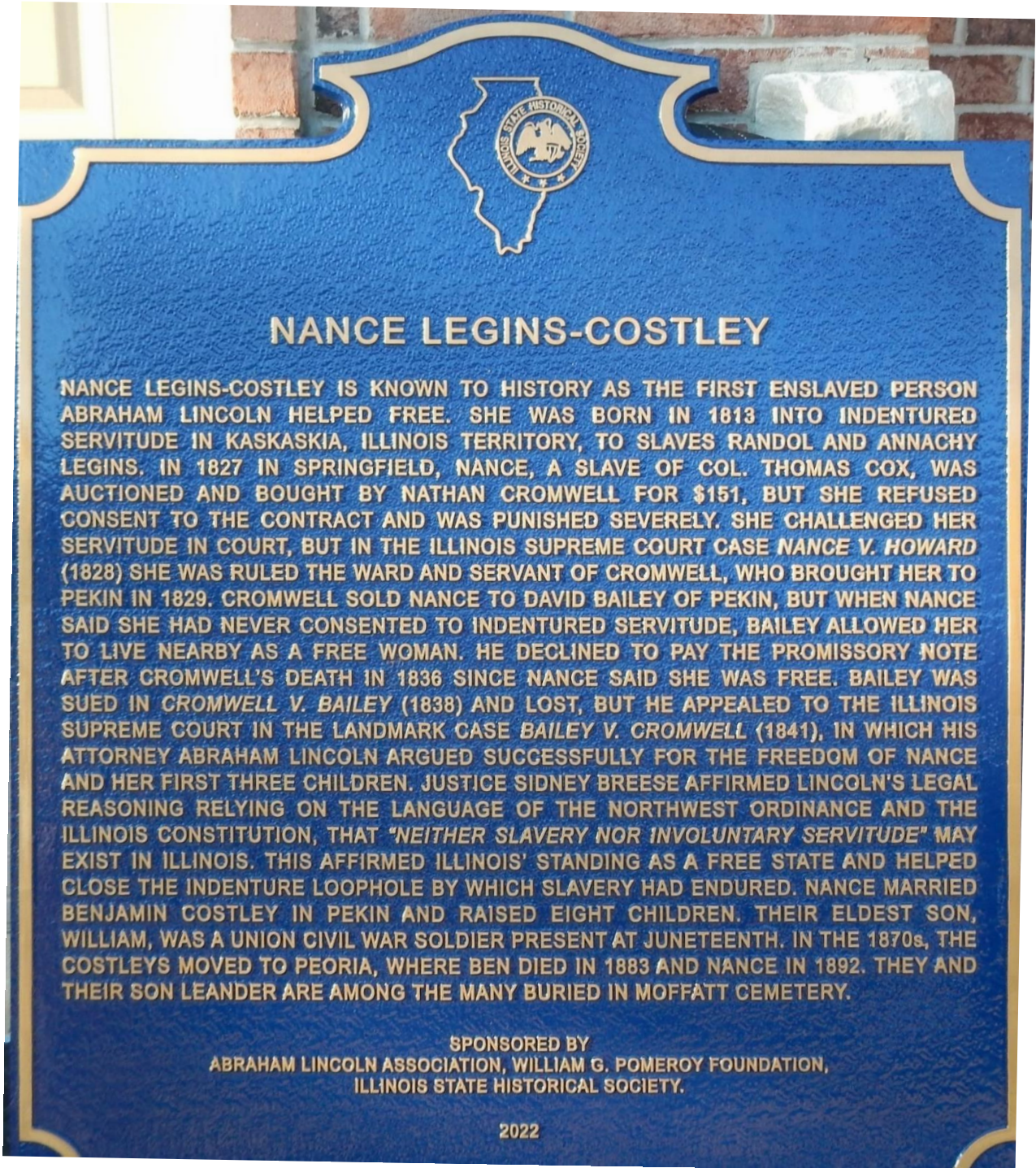
VETERAN	RANK	CO.	REGIMENT	VETERAN	RANK	CO.	REGIMENT
AMSLER, HENRY	PVT	G	14 IL INF CONS	JENKS, WM. H.	TMST		
ANDERSON, SIMEON	PVT	A	151 IL INF	KEELEY, WM.	PVT	G	26 IA INF
ASHBY, NATHAN ★★	PVT	G	29 USCT	LAWLESS, THOS. W.	PVT	C,E	139 IL INF
BAYLES, DANIEL	PVT		OH MILITIA, 1812	LOCK, HANSON	PVT	K	12 IN CAV
BOOTON, LABON			VA MILITIA, 1792	LONG THOMAS	PVT	I	146 IL INF
BOXLEY, NED/JOHN	PVT	E,B	3 IL CAV	MAIN/MAINE, WM. B.	PVT	I	17 IL INF
BRACKLEY, ALBERT				McCRESTAL, JAMES	PVT	D	17 IL INF
BRADSHAW, THOS. H.	PVT	E	51 IL INF	MILLER, ANTON	PVT	E	37 IL INF
CARROLL, JOHN	PVT		108 IL INF	MOFFATT, THOS. ★ SpAm	PVT	L	5 IL INF
DAGNAN, JOHN	PVT	F	47 IL INF	MOND, AUGUST	PVT	E,I	8 IL INF
DAVIS, WM. E.	PVT	B	125 OH INF	PITCHER, JAMES	WAG	M	14 IL CAV
DELBRATT, JAMES				REED, ANGUS	PVT	H	86 IL INF
DERBY, JOSEPH W.	PVT	G	14 IL INF CONS	SHAW, JABEZ	PVT	A	2 IL LART
DEWITT, JAMES				SMITH, AUSTIN	REV		
EDGAR, WM. S.	SURG	HQ	32 IL INF	SMITH, JOHN N.	PVT	K	14 IL CAV
ELLINGTON, GEO. ★	PVT	E	139 IL INF	STARK, GEO.			
ELLINGTON, JOSHUA	PVT	B	73 OH INF	SUMNER, LEVI	CPL	D	79 IL INF
ERB, DANIEL L.	CPL	E	79 PA INF	SWARTWOOD, WM.	PVT	F,D	47 IL INF
FOLKERS, GEO. W.	PVT	A	48 IL INF	TAYLOR, WM. F.	PVT	C	148 IL INF
FREED, JOSEPH D.	2LT	B	31 PA INF	THOMAS, HARRY			
GARBER, NOAH	PVT	G	108 IL INF	UPHOLD, HENRY	PVT	E	139 IL INF
GILSTRAP, LEVI	PVT	F	146 IL INF	VENTERS, WM.	PVT	A	2 IL LART
GLASS, WM. M.	CPL	A	55 IL INF	WEBSTER, WM. H.	PVT	F	47 IL INF
HALEY, GEO. W.	PVT	H	8 IL INF	WEIMER, JOHN M.	PVT	C	1 IL LART
HEDRICK, HIRAM	PVT	D	11 IL CAV	WILLIS, JACKSON	PVT	F	47 IL INF
HOLLEY, GRANVILLE V.	PVT	C	155 IN INF	WORMUTH, GEO. L.	PVT	B	115 NY INF

★ MOVED TO SPRINGDALE CEMETERY ★★ PRESENT AT ORIGINAL JUNETEENTH



FREEDOM & REMEMBRANCE

M E M O R I A L



NANCE LEGINS-COSTLEY

NANCE LEGINS-COSTLEY IS KNOWN TO HISTORY AS THE FIRST ENSLAVED PERSON ABRAHAM LINCOLN HELPED FREE. SHE WAS BORN IN 1813 INTO INDENTURED SERVITUDE IN KASKASKIA, ILLINOIS TERRITORY, TO SLAVES RANDOL AND ANNACHY LEGINS. IN 1827 IN SPRINGFIELD, NANCE, A SLAVE OF COL. THOMAS COX, WAS AUCTIONED AND BOUGHT BY NATHAN CROMWELL FOR \$151, BUT SHE REFUSED CONSENT TO THE CONTRACT AND WAS PUNISHED SEVERELY. SHE CHALLENGED HER SERVITUDE IN COURT, BUT IN THE ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT CASE *NANCE V. HOWARD* (1828) SHE WAS RULED THE WARD AND SERVANT OF CROMWELL, WHO BROUGHT HER TO PEKIN IN 1829. CROMWELL SOLD NANCE TO DAVID BAILEY OF PEKIN, BUT WHEN NANCE SAID SHE HAD NEVER CONSENTED TO INDENTURED SERVITUDE, BAILEY ALLOWED HER TO LIVE NEARBY AS A FREE WOMAN. HE DECLINED TO PAY THE PROMISSORY NOTE AFTER CROMWELL'S DEATH IN 1836 SINCE NANCE SAID SHE WAS FREE. BAILEY WAS SUED IN *CROMWELL V. BAILEY* (1838) AND LOST, BUT HE APPEALED TO THE ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT IN THE LANDMARK CASE *BAILEY V. CROMWELL* (1841), IN WHICH HIS ATTORNEY ABRAHAM LINCOLN ARGUED SUCCESSFULLY FOR THE FREEDOM OF NANCE AND HER FIRST THREE CHILDREN. JUSTICE SIDNEY BREESE AFFIRMED LINCOLN'S LEGAL REASONING RELYING ON THE LANGUAGE OF THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE AND THE ILLINOIS CONSTITUTION, THAT "NEITHER SLAVERY NOR INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE" MAY EXIST IN ILLINOIS. THIS AFFIRMED ILLINOIS' STANDING AS A FREE STATE AND HELPED CLOSE THE INDENTURE LOOPHOLE BY WHICH SLAVERY HAD ENDURED. NANCE MARRIED BENJAMIN COSTLEY IN PEKIN AND RAISED EIGHT CHILDREN. THEIR ELDEST SON, WILLIAM, WAS A UNION CIVIL WAR SOLDIER PRESENT AT JUNETEENTH. IN THE 1870s, THE COSTLEYS MOVED TO PEORIA, WHERE BEN DIED IN 1883 AND NANCE IN 1892. THEY AND THEIR SON LEANDER ARE AMONG THE MANY BURIED IN MOFFATT CEMETERY.

SPONSORED BY
ABRAHAM LINCOLN ASSOCIATION, WILLIAM G. POMEROY FOUNDATION,
ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

2022

CELEBRATION PROGRAM – AS PRESENTED

Flag Day, June 14, 2023, was the obvious date to hold this historic event to honor and commemorate more than 2,600 Peorians still buried at the old Moffatt Cemetery. It was a beautiful late-spring day, the program was filled with very meaningful speakers and patriotic expressions, and the large gathering was very encouraging and appreciative
(Photos and transcriptions of speaker remarks are included later in this package.)

Call to Order	Colleen Johnson - MC
Posting of the Colors	City of Peoria Firefighters Color Guard
Pledge of Allegiance	Mayor Rita Ali, City of Peoria
Welcome, Opening Remarks	Mayor Rita Ali, City of Peoria
Keynote Remarks	Juliana Stratton, Illinois Lt. Governor
Acknowledge Special Guests, Sponsors, & Project Team	MC
Recognitions:	
Peoria and Community	Denise Jackson, 1 st Dist. Council Member
State and National	Charles Stanley, ISHS Board Member and Markers Committee Chairman
Commemorations:	
Forgotten Peorians	Bob Hoffer, Local History Enthusiast
Nance Legins-Costley	Carl Adams, Lincoln Historian, Author
The 52 Veterans	Joe Hutchinson, SUVCW Officer and Genealogist
Closing Comments, Introduce	
Moment of Silent Reflection	Rev. Marvin Hightower, Pres. Peoria NAACP
Battle Hymn of the Republic	Sherry Carter-Allen, Vocal Artist
Amazing Grace	Kevin Nickerson, Bagpipes Artist
Retiring of the Colors	Peoria American Legion Post 2 Color Guard
Attended by:	Historical Honor Guard, Sons of the American Revolution
Note of Thanks and Invitation to Visit the Memorial	MC

PROJECT RESULT: COMPLETED MEMORIAL



Sunset -- Flag Day -- June 14, 2023

AWARD GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

GENERAL AWARD ELIGIBILITY

The Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project has definitely and significantly “furthered collection, preservation, and interpretation of several aspects of Illinois History” centered around Peoria’s abandoned, forgotten, but now found and documented Moffatt Cemetery which was extremely active in the Nineteenth Century. Accounts that all buried there had been moved and that all burial records were lost proved to be untrue.

Key to this project was discovery then transcription, documentation, and preservation by members of Peoria County Genealogical Society of Peoria Undertaker Reports not referenced for over a century. These old books contained more than 32,000 death and burial records, at least 2,500 of which were for Moffatt Cemetery. They are also the only death and burial records for as many as 3,500 other area individuals as records were lost at several cemeteries. These records are now preserved in digitized photographs, verified transcriptions, computer-accessible files, and hard-bound books.

Other aspects of and relationship to Illinois history highlighted by this project include: Fifty-two veterans documented as buried at Moffatt Cemetery, including 49 Union Civil War soldiers, one of whom was in the United States Colored Troops and was at the original Juneteenth with General Granger in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865. One soldier buried there served in the Spanish-American War, another in the War of 1812, and one in the 1792 Virginia Militia; Daniel Boone was provisioner to this unit.

Several resting there have links to the American Revolution, including the last three mentioned immediately above and Jesse Boone Holliday, Daniel Boone’s great-grandson. Most notably, the first enslaved person Abraham Lincoln helped free in an 1841 Illinois State Supreme Court case, Nance Legins-Costley, was discovered to still be resting there with her husband Benjamin and one son Leander.

SPECIAL PROJECT CRITERIA

Definition: This project was initiated in 2017 and completed in 2023 as a one-time specific effort developed, implemented, and also documented with Illinois State Historical Society cast metal markers and storyboard to achieve the specific purpose of “Commemorating those buried at Moffatt Cemetery so they are “Forgotten No More.”

Expectation: The Project Team believes these efforts and the resulting memorial have, without doubt, significantly increased awareness of local, Illinois and National history.

EVIDENCE OF RECOGNITION

Extensive evidence of recognition for Peoria's Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project is provided by the very large number of Community, State and National Partners, Donors, and Media organizations listed here which are detailed later in this package:

PARTNERS:

- City of Peoria
- Peoria Park District
- Peoria Historical Society
- Peoria Riverfront Museum
- Peoria Housing Authority
- Peoria County Genealogical Society
- Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical Society
- Illinois State Historical Society

DONORS:

- Peoria United Union of Roofers Local #69
- Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War:
 - o Col. John C. Bryner Camp #67, Peoria
 - o Illinois Department
 - o National Organization
- Peoria Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution
- Capt. Zeally Moss Chapter, National Society Sons of the American Revolution
- Peoria American Legion Post 2
- Peoria Flag & Decorating Co.
- Illinois State Historical Society
- The Abraham Lincoln Association
- William G. Pomeroy Foundation of New York

MEDIA:

- WEEK-TV - NBC Network Affiliate
- WMBD-TV - CBS Network Affiliate & WMBD-FM
- Peoria Journal Star
- City of Peoria – Facebook pages
- Peoria Magazine
- Peoria County Chronicle
- Traveler Weekly – Peoria's Longest Running Black Newspaper
- WCBU-FM - NPR Network Affiliate & WCBU.org
- Mixcloud.com
- ISHS *Illinois Heritage* Magazine
- USA Today & Gannet Brands media outlets

MEDIA COVERAGE - SUMMARY

(Number of Known Coverage Instances)

PROJECT TEAM COVERAGE

- Website (Extensive – Life of Project)
- Facebook Pages (Extensive – Life of Project)
- Promotional Project Video

COMMUNITY COVERAGE

- WEEK-TV – NBC Network Affiliate (6)
- WMBD-TV – CBS Network Affiliate & WMBD-FM (4)
- Peoria Journal Star (1)
- City of Peoria (1)
- Peoria Magazine (1)
- Peoria County Chronicle (1)
- Traveler Weekly – Peoria’s Black Newspaper (2)
- WCBU-FM -- NPR Network Affiliate & WCBU.org (3)
- MIXCLOUD.COM (1)
- Peoria Riverfront Museum – Social Media (4)

16

STATE COVERAGE

- Illinois State Historical Society (5)

NATIONAL COVERAGE

- USA Today (1)
- Gannet Brands – Other media outlets (many; exact # unknown)

(Note: Detailed information about media coverage is included later in this package.)

INFORMED OPINIONS

Juliana Stratton, Lt. Governor - State of Illinois

Ancestors, like those buried in the old Moffatt Cemetery, who spent their lives working for, fighting for, and praying for a better future for all of us, deserve to be laid to rest with dignity and respect and memorialized in a way that demonstrates that they are not just the forgotten citizens of Peoria. They were mothers and fathers and grandmothers and grandfathers. They were somebody's sons and daughters, and they were veterans. And they were fully human. And their humanity is what we are honoring today. Today is not just about preserving history. Today is an act of justice. In some respects, it is a way of reclaiming the land, placing markers in the ground to say that these souls will no longer be ignored or overlooked or diminished. And as a community, you have come together here in Peoria to make it abundantly clear. We will tell their stories. We will commemorate this history. And they are forgotten no more.

Dr. Rita Ali, Mayor - City of Peoria

Freedom and Remembrance Park will be a site that will provide education to our community, while acknowledging our local history, but it will also be a long-awaited memorial for these individuals and their families.

Denise Jackson, 1st District Council Member - City of Peoria

Well, this is an exciting day. And I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge God and thank him for the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful event. I must say, I was so excited when I heard about this story, sometime about a year ago.

This memorial is a testament to how cities and communities across this country are linked forever in history. We want residents all around the city and the state of Illinois to come and visit this site to learn about the contributions of the veterans and all of the other individuals who are buried here. And the contributions they made on behalf of this great country. We will never forget them.

Rev. Marvin Hightower, President – Peoria Branch NAACP

I, like many others, believe that history is our greatest teacher. I also believe that history shouldn't be covered up; it shouldn't be hidden away. It definitely shouldn't be banned, but it needs to be recognized so that we learn from history so that we won't be doomed to repeat history. And I believe that this day is a date marked out in history from the foundations of this world. And I also believe as the Bible says that the truth will make us free, and that's why I believe that history is important.

Robert Johnson Sr., Board of Trustees President, Emily Cahill, Executive Director, Matt Freeman, Superintendent of Parks - Peoria Park District

The Peoria Park District is honored to have been a part of this effort. Parks Service Staff is particularly proud to have helped install the historic memorial markers. Our organization is in awe of the commitment of the Project Team of local volunteers who were focused on bringing this important piece of Peoria history to the forefront. Our community is a diverse one with a rich history; this memorial helps showcase this and honor the impact of strong Peorians in the course of local, state, and national history.

The volunteer Team's work to engage and encourage participation of both public and private partners to not only make this a reality, but to also ensure its long-term stewardship and care is remarkable. We enjoyed working with the Project Team; their passion for history and service to commemorate forgotten Peorians is a blessing to us all.

Angie Sneeringer, Vice-President - Peoria County Genealogical Society

The Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project provided an exceptional resource for genealogists in Peoria. Thanks to the early efforts of Bob Hoffer in uncovering Peoria County Undertaker Records dating back to 1872, our Society was able to assist this project by transcribing these early records. Because death registrations were not required until 1916, the names and records of 32,124 individuals are now available to researchers.

18

Documentation of burials in Moffatt Cemetery did not exist before those Undertaker Records were located. Not only did this committee identify the Civil War veterans, but they went above and beyond in introducing them to us. The Memorial Project has given us the opportunity to finally honor those who were nameless a few short years ago. We are grateful to the Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project Team for their efforts and dedication in making sure these veterans and others are "*forgotten no more*" by Peorians.

Keith Bonnett, President - Capt. Zeally Moss Chapter, National Society Sons of the American Revolution

We are honored that Peoria's Freedom & Remembrance Memorial is being nominated for the Illinois State Historical Society's 2023 Annual Award in the Special Projects category and take great pride in the results of this work done for our community which is connected to patriots the American Revolution. June 14, 2023, was a day I will not forget, not only for the ceremony but also for Project Team's skills to make this historical commemoration happen. It was a great ceremony to officially share the Freedom and Remembrance Memorial with the Peoria community and the State of Illinois. Including our SAR Chapter as the Historical Honor Guard was very appreciated.

Elizabeth Klise, Executive Director - Peoria Historical Society

On behalf of the Peoria Historical Society, I express my whole-hearted endorsement of the Freedom and Remembrance Memorial Project. This effort has had an exceptional impact in preserving the history of a particular Illinois site, Peoria's lost Moffatt Cemetery, and the 2,725 people known associated with it. Their stories were in danger of being erased from history but are now celebrated as a testament to their lives. This project has added substantially to knowledge of local, Illinois, and even national history, documenting our settlers, many veterans, and a woman whose court case first connected the early legal career of young Illinois attorney Abraham Lincoln with the abolitionist cause.

Thanks to extraordinary efforts of the Project Team, the memorial commemorates the life and stories of the long-ago individuals, some 2,600 in all who still remain buried at an unlikely spot in central Illinois. With connections to Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War as well as the Spanish-American War, the War of 1812, the 1792 Virginia Militia, the Revolutionary War, and Daniel Boone, whose great-grandson is buried there, the newfound history of this small Peoria location elevates its importance to a national level.

Onsite plaques recognized on Flag Day this year now recall and share the history of the cemetery, the many veterans buried there, and the remarkable legacy of Nance Legins-Costley. The project preserves a forgotten time and place in Illinois history and ensures that the voices of those once silent will now be heard. It is a remarkable achievement. I cannot imagine a more fitting recipient of an Illinois State Historical Society award.

Charles Stanley, Board Member & Markers Committee Chairman - ISHS

To all those who have contributed to this effort in any way, including your attendance here, the Illinois State Historical Society expresses its sincere appreciation. Thank you.

Ms. Deryn Pomeroy, Trustee - William G. Pomeroy Foundation

On behalf of the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, we send our greetings from Syracuse, New York. The Illinois Historical markers you dedicate today for Peoria's forgotten Moffatt Cemetery and the legacy of Nance Legins-Costley, whose freedom was defended by Abraham Lincoln in a landmark State Supreme Court case that paved the way toward ending slavery, commemorate important moments in your community. We wish we could be there with you today for this important occasion in Peoria.

From all of our dedicated staff and trustees at the Pomeroy Foundation, we extend our congratulations to the Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project Team, Peoria Historical Society, City of Peoria, United Union of Roofers Local #69, and the Illinois State Historical Society on your Illinois markers commemorating Moffatt Cemetery and Nance Legins-Costley.

***Susan Rynerson, President Elect –
Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical Society***

RE: Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project.

Words cannot express the appreciation all of Central Illinois, including those of us in Tazewell County, had when the Undertaker's books were discovered which in turn led to Bob's uncovering so many of the stories buried therein. The extra work to have the books published, the Moffatt site preserved, and the markers erected so that everyone would know that the Central Illinois history that had been buried there was now unearthed such that those folks would be forgotten no more.

We were especially delighted to find Nance as we had been trying for years to determine what had become of her but there were also many of our lesser-known Tazewell friends and families found in Moffatt too. Finally, no soldier of any war should ever be paved over and forgotten so it was very important to recognize them with their own plaque.

I know how much work and worry went into every phase of the years-long project and no one is more deserving of state level recognition than Bob and his team. It was icing on the cake when the Peoria and Tazewell marker projects dovetailed such that they were erected and celebrated just days apart. All history is local until it is woven together with other stories to become part of the Nation's fabric. 2600 threads are now entwined with the rest of the Illinois story.

Susan Rynerson

Facebook Pages - Peoria Riverfront Museum

We were so lucky to welcome Carl Adams, author of: "Nance: Trials of the First Slave Freed by Abraham Lincoln" a book that is THE authority on Nance Legins-Costley, a Pekin woman who fought for her liberty with the aid of our 16th president, who acted as her lawyer. Carl was joined by Colleen Johnson, Executive Director of the Peoria Historical Society, Bob Hoffer, and Jordan Miller! Legins-Costley is memorialized in the newest hallway exhibition at the Peoria Riverfront Museum: "Forgotten No More, Moffatt Cemetery". Her story, and many others had been paved over, but with the help of curatorial intern Jordan Miller and Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project representative Bob Hoffer, we are rediscovering her legacy, and that of the 2,600 other souls buried at Moffatt Cemetery.

On Veteran's Day, we honor those who have honorably served our country. One of our hallway exhibitions, curated in partnership with the Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project, honors the 2,600 lives, and 2,600 life stories of those buried at the Moffatt Cemetery. 52 of the names inscribed on this plaque belong to veterans. This veteran's day, come to see this memorial at the Peoria Riverfront Museum, and pay homage to veterans still living, and well as those whose memory we commemorate.

THE PROJECT

BACKSTORY

By: Bob Hoffer, Project Team. In 2015 my wife Evelyn asked me where her great-grandfather, Mons Nelson, was buried in Peoria. Having immigrated in 1879, family lore held that he died on Christmas Day 1885, on the way to or at Peoria's Swedish Lutheran Church. Peoria had a few newspapers then so it should not have been hard to find him. However, that proved very optimistic. And what I found went far beyond the answer to her simple question resulting in the creation of the Freedom & Remembrance Memorial.

The first clue emerged in a line from coroner files which said, "Wife had him buried at Moffatt." Next found at the Peoria library were WPA pages from the 1930s about our local cemeteries which said Moffatt Cemetery had been located at 3900 SW Adams but was closed in 1905. I went to that address only to find it covered with buildings and storage yards. Further research said it was originally a family burial plot for Aquilla Moffatt who came here in 1822. That site eventually became a business in the 1870s, but owners abandoned it after it was ordered closed. The grounds were cleared and sold in the 1950s. All records were said to be lost and all those buried there were said to have been moved.

A search did not find Mons was moved, but one cemetery manager said that 1800s Health Department records might list him. These big old books were given to Peoria County but were not in inventories. A search discovered them, and they spanned the entire commercial life of Moffatt Cemetery. Closer review indicated these would be valuable for genealogists since they included perhaps 3,500 unknown death and burial records. A Peoria County Genealogical Society project spanning several years transcribed over 32,000 records from these books into data bases to produce bound volumes now in public locations. Over 2,500 burials were for Moffatt, including Mons. More than 200 others were also documented at Moffatt and about 100 had been moved. In total, about 2,725 persons were buried there; more than 2,600 still remain under buildings and work yards.

In 2017, 48 Union Civil War veterans were identified buried on the site. A celebration of their lives and service was held near the grounds and a temporary memorial placed with their names. More research identified a total of 52 veterans -- 49 Union Civil War and one each from the Spanish American War, the War of 1812, and the 1792 Virginia militia. Next discovered was Nance Legins-Costley who is known to history as the first enslaved person Abraham Lincoln helped free in a landmark 1841 Illinois State Supreme Court case. This discovery began efforts in Pekin to honor her and her son William who was at Juneteenth.

The core team was formed in 2019 and began a project to commemorate those buried at the lost Moffatt Cemetery. This document tells of their work and creation of a small city park on Peoria's South Side, now hosting Peoria's Freedom & Remembrance Memorial.

THE PROJECT CORE TEAM

Carl Adams (Silver Spring MD) – Journalist, Lincoln Historian, Author: *Nance: Trials of the First Slave Freed by Abraham Lincoln*, Member: Peoria Historical Society, Illinois State Historical Society, Abraham Lincoln Association, Lincoln Group of DC, Civil War Roundtable of DC, Buffalo Soldiers Washington DC Chapter 10th Regt., Peoria Chapter NAACP.

Bob Hoffer (Peoria IL) -- Local history enthusiast, amateur genealogist, Member: Peoria Historical Society, Peoria County Genealogical Society, Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical Society, Illinois State Historical Society, Abraham Lincoln Association, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, and Capt. Zeally Moss Chapter National Society Sons of the American Revolution.

Joe Hutchinson (East Peoria IL) – Genealogist, Member: Peoria County Genealogical Society, Officer: Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Jared Olar (Pekin IL) – Local History Program Coordinator at Pekin Public Library, author of their *From the History Room* newsletter, library's collaborating member with Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical Society, and member of Pekin Bicentennial Planning Committee.

David Pittman (West Peoria IL) – Peoria-area community activist, Peoria Park District advocate, Member: Peoria Branch NAACP Executive Committee.

Bill Poorman (Peoria IL) – Educator, Writer, Multi-media creator and producer, Lincoln enthusiast.

22

PROJECT TEAM ASSOCIATES

'Chip' Joyce (Dunlap IL) – Graphics designer.

'Hank' Stolz (Peoria IL) – Landscape Architect, rendering designer.

Cathie Butler (Peoria IL) – Genealogist, demographics analyst.

MAJOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Peoria Historical Society – being with us from ‘day one’ and serving as our ‘local banker’ to receive and receipt tax-advantaged donations and pay project bills.

The City of Peoria (Mayor, City Council, City Manager, Public Works, key staff) –agreeing to own the memorial site and the Memorial, and officially naming the site Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park.

Peoria Park District – displaying two markers at their major recreation complex for over six months, installing the historical markers on the site, and working with the City of Peoria to maintain the Park and Memorial.

Peoria Riverfront Museum – displaying for eleven months the very large veterans’ marker as part of a prominent special exhibit for the project, hosting a large public announcement event for the other two very large markers, and ongoing support and encouragement in so many ways.

Peoria County Genealogical Society – transcribing 32,124 death and burial records from the discovered Peoria Undertaker Reports over a six-year period which documented more than 2,500 of those buried at the lost Moffatt Cemetery.

Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical Society – availing from their files important related Moffatt Cemetery burial information useful for supplementing and cross-checking some of the Peoria Undertaker Reports and supporting the project in many ways.

Peoria Housing Authority – providing the large open nearby site for the official public City Naming Event for the Park and ‘dedicating’ the Memorial on Flag Day, June 14th 2023.

23

STRATEGIC STATE PARTNER

Illinois State Historical Society – making the ISHS marker program available and working with the marker foundry, accommodating needs of a major donor for the veterans’ marker, serving as our strategic connection to secure major grants, serving as our ‘state banker’ to receive and receipt tax-advantaged donations and pay project bills, and encouraging and coordinating so well with the efforts of the Project Team.

SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY DONORS

Peoria United Union of Roofers Local #69 – donating the parcel of land near the lost cemetery for the small City Park and Memorial.

The City of Peoria – covering costs of land survey and title transfer for the donated site, covering costs for the public event on Flag Day, June 14th, 2023.

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Col. John C. Bryner Camp #67, Peoria Illinois – funding for the Veterans Marker, the flagpole system, and commemoration storyboard.

Peoria Chapter, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution – funding for the flagpole system and commemoration storyboard.

Capt. Zeally Moss Chapter, National Society, Sons of the American Revolution – funding for the flagpole system and commemoration storyboard, providing a Historical Honor Guard at the public event on Flag Day, June 14th, 2023.

Peoria American Legion Post 2 – funding for the flagpole system and commemoration storyboard, providing a Color Guard at the public event on Flag Day, June 14th, 2023.

Peoria Flag & Decorating – installing and providing in-kind funding for flagpole system.

24

SIGNIFICANT STATE DONORS

Illinois State Historical Society – sponsoring and in-kind funding for both *Peoria's Moffatt Cemetery* marker and *Nance Legins-Costley* marker.

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Illinois Dept. – funding for the Veterans marker.

SIGNIFICANT NATIONAL DONORS

The Abraham Lincoln Association – sponsoring and funding for *Nance Legins-Costley* historical marker.

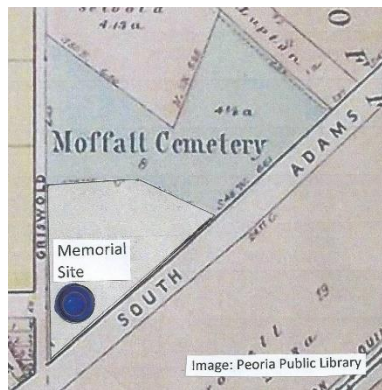
William G. Pomeroy Foundation of New York – sponsoring and funding for *Peoria's Moffatt Cemetery* marker and *Nance Legins Costley* marker.

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, National Organization -- funding for the Veterans marker and flagpole system.

THE PROJECT JOURNEY

The Project Team began work with the key subjects foremost in mind – the veterans, the former slave lady Nance Legins-Costley, all 2,725 documented buried there, and the uncountable unknowns also buried in one mass grave in 1903 when disturbed during construction along Peoria’s first public cemetery which had then been closed for years.

Considering the historical value of this effort, the first partner the Team brought alongside was Peoria Historical Society to serve as our local ‘banker’ to receive and receipt donations and pay local bills. Alternative locations for the memorial were considered with the requirement that it not actually be on the old cemetery parcels to avoid having the memorial possibly placed on and disrespecting the graves any further.



25

Preferred location was the inside corner at the intersection of SW Adams and Griswold streets which was near but not on the old cemetery grounds. Discussions continued with the local Roofers Union, which owned the land on the corner and had offered to sell the property when the owner of the future memorial was determined. The Union eventually, and very generously, made the valuable corner site available at no cost to the Project.

Next came professional assistance with landscaping and memorial designs which provided an appropriate and significant hardscape, maintenance-free memorial plan.



The name Freedom & Remembrance Memorial was selected to recognize the veterans and the former slave lady who fought for freedoms and to also remember and commemorate the more than 2,600 Peorians still known to remain at the cemetery site.



The memorial name was followed by design of the project logo of red and blue on a white background. The colors are a 'nod' to the veterans and the design symbolizes the south Peoria local streets, the extents of the cemetery parcels used for burials, with a 'star' to indicate the actual memorial location.

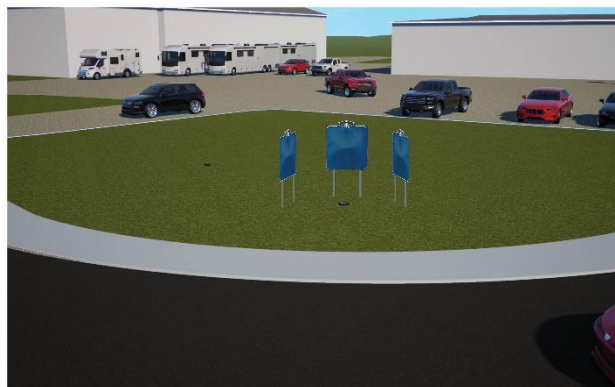
This Memorial plan was included in a video produced to tell the story of the Moffatt Cemetery, its historical origins, business operations, closure in 1905, abandonment, destruction, rezoning, and sale for commercial purposes. This video and other materials were widely presented to many community organizations and individuals to build interest and partnerships. Link to Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEqrnqhzhc>

Soon, Social Media presence for the Project was started. A Website and Facebook pages were established to provide ongoing documentation of the Project steps and accomplishments along the way. Relationships were also cultivated with both public and private media outlets of various types at many levels.

Link to Website: <https://peoriafreedommemorial.org/>

Link to Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/peoriafreedommemorial/>

The conceptual plan was costed out and determined to be unattainable at that time (Covid, post-Covid). A Phase One plan was outlined to use cast metal markers which could be featured in a possible later and larger design, if warranted and afforded. This approach aligned well with the Illinois State Historical Society's "Markers Program" and ISHS then became our strategic partner for Phase One.



While we had already connected with the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War as a major sponsor for a veterans' marker, ISHS came alongside the Project to help with that marker as well as one to tell the Moffatt Cemetery story and one for Nance Legins-Costley. This affiliation also provided visibility of the project to major grantors who quickly responded: The Abraham Lincoln Association and the William G. Pomeroy Foundation of New York – both were very interested in the Project topics for commemoration.

Potential grants were rightly dependent on the Project securing commitments from community organizations to own the site and the markers and be responsible for ongoing maintenance. The Team secured agreement from the City of Peoria to own the site and memorial and from the Peoria Park District to install the markers and work with the city to maintain the site. These developments encouraged the Roofers Union to agree to transfer title to the site to the city at token cost once that decision was taken by the city.

While the veteran's marker was in process, a partnership was reached with Peoria Riverfront Museum, this time to feature that marker in a more general display about the cemetery and plans for the Memorial.



The beautiful display was announced and presented to the public at an event well covered by local TV and social media. This raised community awareness and interest to new levels and plans moved ahead with ISHS and the foundry to cast the other two markers.

When the two new markers were available from the foundry, for the Moffatt story and the Nance story, Peoria Riverfront Museum again graciously stepped forward to host a major public announcement and unveiling of them in the beautiful setting of their Grand Lobby. This was very well attended with wide media exposure. A featured speaker addressed the State and National significance of the Memorial including recognition by ISHS, Abraham Lincoln Association, and the William G. Pomeroy Foundation of New York.



Soon after, Peoria Park District extended their level of partnership with the Project by agreeing to display the Moffatt and Nance markers and information panels in the lobby of their huge public recreation complex along the Illinois River near downtown. This display was there for six months until the markers were taken to be installed at the Memorial site.

28



A count of Park District *RecPlex* member check-ins combined with their Arena visitor numbers show an average of 750 people a day went through the lobby where this display was located over the six-month period ahead of installation at the site.

A presentation was made to the Peoria City Council on February 28, 2023, which approved both 'purchasing' the site from the Roofers Union and establishing it as a City Park called Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park. A small ceremony was held for the official transfer of the land title by the Union Manager. Plans then began for a major City event to officially 'name' the Park and recognize the Memorial.



The Team considered that the importance of the Veterans warranted adding a flagpole system along with a 'storyboard' plaque to recognize those sponsors as well as key Project partners not already recognized on the markers themselves. Donations came in weeks and this 16" x 33" dedication plaque and the flag pole system were soon funded.

29



In May 2023, a Peoria Park District crew installed the poles, the three markers, and commemoration 'storyboard' and Peoria Flag & Decorating installed the flagpole.



Flag Day – June 14, 2023, was the obvious date to hold this historic event to honor and commemorate more than 2,600 Peorians still buried at the lost Moffatt Cemetery. It was a beautiful late-spring day, the program was filled with very meaningful speakers and patriotic expressions, and the large gathering was encouraging and appreciative.

(Photos and transcriptions of speaker remarks are included later in this application.)

THE PROGRAM

(As Presented)

Call to Order	Colleen Johnson - MC
Posting of the Colors	City of Peoria Firefighters Color Guard
Pledge of Allegiance	Mayor Rita Ali, City of Peoria
Welcome, Opening Remarks	Mayor Rita Ali, City of Peoria
Keynote Remarks	Juliana Stratton, Illinois Lt. Governor
Acknowledge Special Guests, Sponsors, & Project Team	MC
Recognitions:	
Peoria and Community	Denise Jackson, 1 st Dist. Council Member
State and National	Charles Stanley, ISHS Board Member and Markers Committee Chairman
Commemorations:	
Forgotten Peorians	Bob Hoffer, Local History Enthusiast
Nance Legins-Costley	Carl Adams, Lincoln Historian, Author
The 52 Veterans	Joe Hutchinson, SUVCW Officer and Genealogist
Closing Comments, Introduce Moment of Silent Reflection	Rev. Marvin Hightower, Pres. Peoria NAACP
Battle Hymn of the Republic	Sherry Carter-Allen, Vocal Artist
Amazing Grace	Kevin Nickerson, Bagpipes Artist
Retiring of the Colors	Peoria American Legion Post 2 Color Guard
Attended by:	Historical Honor Guard, Sons of the American Revolution
Note of Thanks and Invitation to Visit the Memorial	MC

CELEBRATION EVENT

Flag Day – 2023

On June 14, 2023, the City of Peoria officially named **Peoria Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park** and recognized **Freedom & Remembrance Memorial**, concluding many years of effort to ensure that those who still rest at the Old Moffatt Cemetery are “Forgotten No More.” Many thanks to [WCBU-FM 89.9](#) for audio and transcriptions; photos are compliments of the City of Peoria.

(Note: If reading this on a computer connected to the internet, click on program sections below to hear audio of speaker remarks and read the transcriptions. Otherwise, please read on.)

Call to Order	Colleen Johnson – MC
Posting of the Colors	City of Peoria Firefighters Color Guard
Pledge of Allegiance, Welcome, and Opening Remarks	City of Peoria Mayor Rita Ali
Keynote Remarks	Illinois Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton
Acknowledge Special Guests, Sponsors, & Project Team	Colleen Johnson, MC
Recognitions:	
Peoria and Community	Denise Jackson, 1 st Dist. Council Member
State and National	Charles Stanley, ISHS Board Member and Markers Committee Chairman
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Retiring of the Colors	Peoria American Legion Post 2 Color Guard
Historical Honor Guard	Capt. Zeally Moss Chapter National Society Sons of the American Revolution
Note of Thanks and Invitation to Visit the Memorial	Colleen Johnson, MC

Program Summary as Presented (Details immediately follow).

Call to Order

Colleen Johnson, MC



32

Everyone knows there's always a woman behind the scenes that's in charge. And today that is Stacy Peterson who's keeping us straight. So, we thank her for all of her work, tirelessly working for our beautiful city. She's one of my heroes. People don't even know how much she does.

I'm Colleen Johnson, and I'm welcoming you all today. And the reason I'm welcoming you is because I was the former Executive Director of the Peoria Historical Society. I've just moved to a development position in the private sector. But I have to tell you that after only living here for a few years, I had this unique opportunity to come to the Historical Society. And I had this unique opportunity to meet within my first couple of weeks one of my other heroes, Bob Hoffer. Bob, he gave me a full five minutes to get settled in and unpack my pictures and my cell phone before he came in my office and told me all about the Moffatt Cemetery. So, my hair, I think, is finally not completely blown back. Once you meet this force of nature, you'll understand. If you haven't already met him, the zeal and the passion with which he takes on every project. Fortunately, most of those projects are for the city. And I want to tell you, they're also for his family. And the reason that we're really here today is because he took on an endeavor to find one of his wife's family members. Working through genealogy, he uncovered the Moffatt Cemetery, and that's really why we're here today and able to acknowledge what was a travesty in history. But we're turning that around with the help of the city of Peoria and making this into a beautiful monument, a place that we can be proud of.

So, I welcome you all today. Thank you for being here. We have wonderful guests with us, and we'll get to this beautiful program right after we have the posting of the colors I invite you to enjoy.

Posting of the Colors City of Peoria Firefighters Color Guard



Pledge of Allegiance, Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dr. Rita Ali, City of Peoria Mayor



34

Everyone, please join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

You may be seated. Good morning, everyone. Good morning. I want to thank all of you for attending this naming program on such a beautiful day. Special thank you to Peoria Housing Authority under the direction of CEO Armeca Crawford for allowing the use of their property for our program. Thank you also to the Peoria Park District, our community partner for the Freedom and Remembrance Park. And thank you to the members of the mayor’s Summer Youth Program, who under the guidance of Public Works did a fantastic job getting the park ready for today. Special thanks to all of our speakers, who will provide remarks on the importance of the Freedom and Remembrance Park and provide musical tributes. We have the special honor of hosting Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton at today’s event. We thank you for making time once again to visit Peoria for this important day in Peoria’s history. Thank you to the many elected officials in our attendance, and I

would ask that you please stand, our elected officials. Please give them a hand. Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton loves Peoria so much she comes back even on unofficial occasions because she and her husband love this area. So we may end up adopting you as a Peoria daughter.

What we have learned about this space is astonishing. But thanks to the inspiring leadership of Mr. Bob Hoffer and his team, our earliest neighbors will now be memorialized. The evolution of the closure of Moffatt Cemetery in 1905 to today's naming of Freedom and Remembrance Park is quite unbelievable. From a family plot for Aquila Moffatt to a parcel he then dedicated to Civil War soldiers to the expanded Moffatt Cemetery Association to the closure in 1905, the abandonment of this site, and the eventual development of the parcels, led to many of our earliest Peorians left to be forgotten as part of Peoria City history.

In 1905, the Peoria City Council ordered the closure of Moffatt Cemetery. Over time, it became a trash dump, an eyesore, and ultimately, a parking lot. This was a disgrace to the approximately 2,600 people buried in Moffatt Cemetery. As mayor of Peoria today, I want to publicly apologize, apologize for the city's actions many years ago. I'm sorry for the disrespect and dishonor that was shown to both individuals and their loved ones. And I'm grateful for those that have championed this worthy Memorial. The city is honored to play a part in this effort.

The name itself, Freedom and Remembrance Park, reminds us that we are here to remember those who remain but also celebrate the freedom that some achieved or fought for. 52 veterans are known to be interred at Moffatt Cemetery. 49 were Union Civil War soldiers, including Nathan Ashby, who was present at Juneteenth. To commemorate his bravery, the Juneteenth flag can be seen at the park today. Also interred at Moffatt were veterans of the 1792 militia, the War of 1812, and the Spanish-American War. And then there was Nance Legins-Costley. Mr. Adams will speak more at length about Nance. But we all know that she was smart. She was brave. She was a mother of eight children, and she fought for her freedom since she was a teenager. Nance made her own history as the first enslaved person whom Abraham Lincoln helped free in the Illinois State Supreme Court in 1841.

Today, Freedom and Remembrance Park will be a site that will provide education to our community, while acknowledging our local history, but it will also be a long-awaited memorial for these individuals and their families. The American poet and genealogist Laurence Overmire stated, "History remembers only the celebrated, genealogy remembers them all." We have Mr. Bob Hoffer to thank for today because this all started from a request from his wife, Ev; she tasked him with finding her great-grandfather's grave. And while searching the papers at the Peoria Public Library, he found an old

transcript that stated, “Wife had him buried at Moffatt.” Little did Mr. Hoffer know, from that one transcript, he would soon be on the path of unearthing documents that were over 100 years old. And that search would result in bringing recognition to some of Peoria’s first residents. Thomas Bradshaw, Silas Kitt, Maria Henriette Lindiz, DeMorris Nancy Merwin, Anton Schaffer – just a few names of those buried at Moffatt Cemetery – mothers, fathers, children, families, soldiers. Thank you, Mr. Hoffer. Thanks for your hard work. Our earliest neighbors will be forgotten no more.

I encourage you all to visit the park and pause. Think about them. Imagine their stories. I would now like to welcome Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton.

Keynote Remarks

Juliana Stratton, Illinois Lt. Governor



Good morning, everyone. And thank you, Mayor, for that introduction. And I will say in front of everyone, I will gladly be adopted as a Peorian. I am Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, she/her pronouns, and I want to thank you, Mayor Ali, for that warm introduction. And I also want to thank Colleen, thank you so much for your steadfast leadership at the Peoria Historical Society.

As the Lieutenant Governor and as chair of the Military Economic Development Committee, it is indeed an honor to join you in Peoria to honor our past, to imagine our future, and pause in this present moment to reflect on what brings us here today and realize the significance of this occasion.

Again, I want to just say to the City of Peoria's highly qualified mayor, Rita Ali, and the entire city council, thank you for making today possible. And I do want to say we have some incredible partners in the Illinois General Assembly, including Leader Dave Koehler, who I think I saw in the audience. Thank you for serving and representing your district so well, and our state so well.

The Freedom and Remembrance Memorial is not only about honoring our ancestors as they have been laid to rest. It's also about honoring the lives they lived, the families they loved, and the doors they opened for all of us to live as our freest and truest selves. It's not lost on me that we gathered just days away from celebrating Juneteenth, or as some refer to it as Freedom Day. And while today is about all of the diverse Peorians that are buried, that were buried in Moffatt Cemetery, I do want to talk just a little bit if that's okay about Juneteenth because history is important.

See, there's not a day that goes by that I don't recollect that I am the descendent of enslaved people, only four generations removed. There's not a day that goes by in my work to advance justice, equity and opportunity for all Illinoisians that I don't reflect on the fact that those in my bloodline worked in the fields of Mississippi from sun up to sundown, brutalized, being separated from their children, forbidden from being able to learn how to read or write, and who spent all day, every day, working to build wealth for those who owned them as personal property. And I think about how they must have prayed for our freedom. There may have been days that they never imagined it for themselves, but they prayed for their children and their grandchildren and their great-grandchildren. And so many of us standing here today that we would one day be free, that we would no longer be viewed as property but as human beings who deserved safety and equality and prosperity and yes, freedom. Ancestors, like those buried in the old Moffatt Cemetery, who spent their lives working for, fighting for, and praying for a better future for all of us, deserve to be laid to rest with dignity and respect and memorialized in a way that demonstrates that they are not just the forgotten citizens of Peoria. They were mothers and fathers and grandmothers and grandfathers. They were somebody's sons and daughters, and they were veterans. And they were fully human. And their humanity is what we are honoring today.

Whether it was Nance Legins-Costley, a formerly enslaved woman and abolitionist, that lawyer Abraham Lincoln helped free in 1841, we will remember. Or the patriots who bravely served our country, like the Union soldiers who fought for our freedom in the Civil

War, including those who delivered the news of emancipation in Galveston, Texas for that first Juneteenth. And other veterans who fought for all of us to be free, we will remember. Or the almost 2,600 everyday Peorians, some with unmarked graves whose names we may never know, well, my faith tells me that God knows who they are and knows them by name. And today, we will remember.

To everyone who organized and funded, volunteered, and supported the creation of the Freedom and Remembrance Memorial, thank you. Today is not just about preserving history. Today is an act of justice. In some respects, it is a way of reclaiming the land, placing markers in the ground to say that these souls will no longer be ignored or overlooked or diminished. And as a community, you have come together here in Peoria to make it abundantly clear. We will tell their stories. We will commemorate this history. And they are forgotten no more. Thank you again for having me.

Special Guests, Sponsors, & Project Team

Colleen Johnson, MC



Well, it's embarrassing that I have to get the tears out of my eyes before I continue. But I'm not sure how you follow that. I've been a big fan of yours. And now that you're a sister here in the city of Peoria with me, I love you all the more. Thank you.

So many of my heroes are here today. And one of the things that I love about Peoria. And you're supporting the Peoria Historical Society and why we're relevant and important. And I thank you for that. We have some wonderful guests today. And some people that need to be acknowledged.

First of all, Lieutenant Governor for making the time for us. It does not go unnoticed how busy you are and all the demands that are on your time and places that you need to be, and that she would take the time to support us in this. Your words are going to stay with us for a very long time. Thank you. And for our mayor, who is one of my favorite people that I have gotten to know in Peoria. I am such a big fan. Thank you for all of your support. I remember when Bob and I were first able to talk to you about this story, and we said we're going to reframe this, and this is going to be a shining star as you enter the City of Peoria. You are a champion that we knew that we needed. Thank you so much for that. Of course, we think we're going to thank Bob over and over again, for as long as we can. I would like to thank Charles Stanley, the ISHS board member and Markers Committee Chairman. I'd like to thank our project partners and contributors.

By the way, there's still time if you'd like to contribute to this project, because Bob has wonderful plans for us to continue to develop this. He has storyboards and you know, who knows we'll have a sculpture of Nance one day, but we do thank the city of Peoria for working with us and for making this all happen.

The Peoria Park District, we wouldn't be here without you. The Peoria Historical Society, my heart, the Peoria Riverfront Museum, the Peoria County Genealogical Society, the Illinois State Historical Society, donors and grantors, the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the United Union of Roofers, local number 69, who donated the site. Thank you so much. William G. Pomeroy Foundation of New York, the Abraham Lincoln Association, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Peoria chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, Captain Zeally Moss chapter, National Society Sons of American Revolution, Peoria American Legion Post number two, many generous individuals, and firms too numerous to count.

The project team, Carl Adams, Lincoln, historian, journalist, author, national Juneteenth organization, and good friend of mine. I'm thankful to say Bob Hoffer, local history enthusiast, Sons of the American Revolution. All around best man in Peoria, Joe Hutchinson, officer Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. And genealogist Jared Olar, curator, Pekin Public Library history room, genealogist. David Pittman, local activist, which is putting it mildly, Peoria Park District advocate, Executive Committee of the Peoria NAACP. And Bill Poorman, local educator, writer, media producer and Lincoln enthusiast. We are in the Land of Lincoln. We are the heart of this great state. And we have so many to thank. I appreciate all of you.

Peoria & Community Recognitions

Denise Jackson, City of Peoria 1st District Council Member



40

Thank you very much. Well, this is an exciting day. And I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge God and thank him for the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful event. I must say, I was so excited when I heard about this story, sometime about a year ago. But let me just back up again.

Thank you, Lieutenant Governor Stratton for being here today. Thank you, all elected officials. Blessings to each and every one of you. And most importantly, thank you to Mr. Bob Hoffer and his wife, who were responsible for this project.

This memorial is a testament to how cities and communities across this country are linked forever in history. We want residents all around the city and the state of Illinois to come and visit this site to learn about the contributions of the veterans and all of the other individuals who are buried here. And the contributions they made on behalf of this great country. We will never forget them.

And once again, I'd like to thank Robert and his wife, Mrs. Evelyn Hoffer, and your tremendous team for all of your work on this wonderful project. And today as we celebrate the rebirth of Moffatt Cemetery, God bless you. Thank you all very much for coming today.

State & National Recognitions

Charles Stanley,

ISHS Board Member and Markers Committee Chairman

41



Hello, everybody. My name's Chuck Stanley. I'm here from the Illinois State Historical Society to talk to you just for a few minutes about our marker program. The marker program is designed to recognize state sites of national and statewide significance. Our goal is to increase public awareness and appreciation of our state's historical legacy. Since 1934, the society has commemorated over 400 sites describing persons, events, and other subjects important to Illinois cultural history or heritage. The Society relies on individuals who are passionate about their local history and are willing to help in the placement of markers, often covering historically significant subjects that might otherwise remain obscure. And certainly, that is the case here.

Toward that goal, the Historical Society has worked with the Pomeroy Foundation of Syracuse, New York. In 2006, the Pomeroy Foundation established its first marker program to help educate the public, encourage pride of place, and promote historic tourism. Since then, it has awarded more than 2,000 grants for roadside markers and plaques nationwide. Two years ago, the Pomeroy Foundation partnered with the Illinois State Historical Society to fund 25 new historical markers here in Illinois. The grant offers matching funds to communities and historical organizations that have identified a historical event, a person, or location of significance to Illinois' narrative that has been previously overlooked, overshadowed, marginalized, or simply lost. The program recognizes there are many heroes to get recognized for their enduring contributions to society, for their work towards civil rights, equality, and to a more just and perfect Union. But there are some who get less recognition, despite having put their indelible mark on our state's history.

Such an unsung hero of black history, of course, is Nancy Legins-Costley, the Illinois woman who is known as the first slave freed by Abraham Lincoln. But her story goes far beyond that narrative. She is not just part of Lincoln's story, but instead fought a brave fight of her own, having her case heard by the Illinois Supreme Court three times before finally winning her freedom in 1841, 20 years before the outbreak of the Civil War.

To all those who have contributed to this effort in any way, including your attendance here, the Illinois State Historical Society expresses its sincere appreciation. Thank you.

Forgotten Peorians

Bob Hoffer, Local History Enthusiast



43

Thank you, Chuck, and all of the preceding speakers. I want to make one thing really clear. And that is that accomplishments like this are not done by one. These kinds of things are made to happen by many. And the team that we had was outstanding. The participation that we've had from all the sponsors and supporters has been just amazing. It would not

have happened without them. And today, we officially name Freedom and Remembrance Memorial Park, and we thereby highlight the Memorial of that name to commemorate so many Peorians, most who were forgotten, some over 170 years.

The actual cemetery borders both Adams Street and Griswold, and it did not include this corner. Who were these 2,725 individuals, and as was said, more than 2,600 are still there yet today? In a few moments, Carl Adams will share with you about Nance Legins-Costley. And Joe Hutchinson will then tell us more about the 52 veterans. As was said before, one of them was at Juneteenth, and his gravesite on an actual, old 1874 plat map is determinable, and that came from the Illinois Roll of Honor of the veterans when they did a survey in 1956, I think it was. And they documented the location of burials, and those locations of a few of the veterans here at Moffatt we're known. His is just off of Adams Street on that lot down there that used for storing phone poles. At one time, there was an old Mr. Quick restaurant there in the 1950s. And I'm not going to ask anybody here to remember that.

So, there are many there, too, that were linked in one way or another to our actual revolution, the Revolutionary War. But I want to first talk in general about those that are there. Most of them were born in the United States, but nearly 400 were immigrants from a dozen Northern European nations. Most came from Germany, the British Isles and Sweden. One such immigrant was my wife Ev's great-grandfather, Mons Nelson. He immigrated directly to Peoria from Sweden, and he worked in the rail yards down near where the current Cedar Street Bridge lands on this side of the river. He was able to soon pay for his family to join him in America.

Sadly, when he was just in his 40s, he died suddenly while he was driving his farm wagon, taking the family to church at the Swedish Lutheran Church on Christmas morning, 1885. It was a sad day, a sad Christmas for that family. Most of that family is buried at Fond du Lac Cemetery in East Peoria. Ev asked me "Where in the world is my great grandfather buried? Family lore says it's Peoria, but nobody knows". And that is what brought us all here today.

Well, I used to say that I'm luckier at this than I am good. But I have found out that it's not luck. It's Divine Providence that leads you from one thing to another. And if it's the Lord's will, that something's going to be known, it will be known. And if you're going to be fortunate enough to be the agent of doing that, that's fine, do it and get on with it.

So, there was one discovery after another. As was mentioned, there were coroner records. There were the old records at the health department that hadn't been looked at in a century. We found them in the basement of the courthouse. One thing after another. A lot of the US-born people that are buried there were from Illinois, but over 300 were

from 25 other states. Ohio, New York, Indiana, Missouri, and Pennsylvania were the most common. More than 50 were African Americans. So, these demographics say much about Peoria's attraction and its growth in the 19th century. Sadly, about six out of every 10 buried there were under the age of seven at the time they died. Child mortality in the 19th century was terrific. Most of the causes were stillbirths, premature births, tuberculosis, cholera, and pneumonia.

And as was mentioned, in 1905 the city health director and the City Council ordered the cemetery closed, and you've heard that story. It was said that the records of the cemetery association were lost and that everyone that had been buried there had been moved. I have been able to document about 100 removals out of all 2,725. The old Health Department records reports that were found and transcribed by Peoria County Genealogical Society, they are now in bound volumes at the Peoria Public Library, and there's also a set of them at the Pekin Library, and others are also acquiring them, and all of the records from those old health department books are now transcribed and available and online for members of the Society, and you can get access to them.

Because of the national significance of the links to Abraham Lincoln, the end of slavery, and now the links to Juneteenth – you can see the Juneteenth flag over there where it is proudly flying between the marker for the veterans and Nancy's marker, connecting the two at this point in history.

Freedom and Remembrance Memorial is now in a growing number now of state and national databases, along with GPS coordinates, so it's going to be easier for people, visitors to find this memorial. The project team, as I mentioned, this is their effort as a whole. And we are hopeful that this memorial will be sufficiently recognized and cause a continuing commemoration of our long-forgotten family and community members that are buried near here, such that they are forgotten no more.

Thank you very much. And I now introduce to you, Joe Hutchinson, who will speak about the veterans.

The 52 Veterans

Joe Hutchinson, SUVCW Officer and Genealogist



46

Thank you, Bob. And thank you all for coming this morning, as we remember the former soldiers buried here with one of these new historical plaques. I also want to express our gratitude for allowing Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War to participate in this project.

Monuments. What is a monument? Webster's Dictionary defines a monument as anything by which the memory of a person, place, or event is perpetuated. Be it a small tombstone erected to the memory of a loved one in a small rural cemetery, something at a large scale in the public square, or even a mountain on tribal land. A monument, a memorial, is a cause for thought and introspection, leading us to ask the following questions: Who is this? What is it all about? Why should I remember? Sometimes the person is well-known, and the cause is obvious and just. Sometimes it is less obvious. Is a monument a memorial; Is a memorial a monument? You decide.

We come here today to commemorate ordinary individuals who did extraordinary things. They left home and family to march to an unknown future filled with deprivation and danger, not knowing if they would ever return again. There are no famous generals, public officials, or captains of industry here, but citizens who answered the call of our country. 52 veterans are known to have been buried at Moffatt Cemetery. 49 are Civil War Union soldiers. The oldest veteran buried here, Labon Booton, served in 1792 Virginia militia in the New River Rangers on the Western Front of our new nation. The provisioner for his unit was THE Daniel Boone. Booton's father and his father-in-law both fought in the American Revolution. Upon coming to Peoria, he probably lived within 300 feet of where we are today and was buried in the 1850s in the little graveyard on Aquilla Moffatt's homestead. Daniel Bayless served in the Mounted Battalion of the Ohio Militia in the War of 1812. He died here in 1876 to 1881. And it was buried at Moffatt Cemetery, which by then was a commercial enterprise. Thomas Moffatt, a nephew of Aquilla Moffatt, a soldier serving during the time of the Spanish-American War, died of disease in Virginia, and was returned to Peoria and buried in Moffatt Cemetery. He was later removed to Springdale Cemetery where he rests today.

The majority of the veterans interred here were Civil War veterans from Central Illinois, although a few were originally from other parts who settled here later. They were common folk. They came from farms and small towns. None died in service. Many lived their lives after the war in anonymity, known only to their neighbors and family. Many were buried in what was called Union Cemetery, along Griswold which was later incorporated into Moffatt Cemetery. Their exact burial locations were noted in the 1956 Illinois Veterans Commission Honor Roll.

One soldier of special note was Nathan Ashby, a man of color, who was a private in Company G at the 29th United States Colored Troops during the Civil War. He was born in 1839 in Fulton County and enlisted on September 21, 1864. Private Ashby was present at Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, when word finally reached them that the war was finally over and the last of the slaves were finally free. This day is commemorated as Juneteenth.

The Grand Army of the Republic – an organization founded in Decatur, Illinois, in 1866, by former Civil War surgeon Dr. Benjamin Stevenson – was begun to make sure that the Civil War veterans had an advocate for them and their families with the government and ensure that their sacrifices were not forgotten. This was the most powerful of all veterans' organizations at the time. Their auxiliaries were formed to assist when the last Civil War veteran passed away. Moffatt Cemetery, although closed almost two decades, was still on people's minds. And one of the GAR auxiliaries, the Bryner Women's Relief Corps, had a modest marker placed in 1920 at the edge of the abandoned cemetery, so the veterans would not be forgotten. That marker stood for many decades until it was finally removed to storage, where it was forgotten until rediscovered and placed next to the GAR Hall on Hamilton some 30 years ago.

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War has a duty as a successor to the GAR to make sure that no Civil War veteran is forgotten. This is why we helped sponsor this plaque and flagpole to remember and honor these veterans. We could not have done it ourselves and thank all the other organizations and individuals who donated time and resources to make this happen.

President Abraham Lincoln delivered a few words almost 160 years ago at a little place called Gettysburg. His words are as appropriate today as when he first spoke them. A few excerpts are noteworthy: "We have come to dedicate a final resting place for those here who gave their lives that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here, have, thus far, so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." These words were never truer.

And I'd like to take a short moment to honor our committee chair that was the spearhead for this event and for these plaques. Bob is a low-key kind of guy, does not want to take the credit. But there is credit that is due because without him deciding to take on this seven-year-long project, we would not be here today. So, I would like to present Mr. Hoffer on behalf of Colonel Bryner Camp Number 67, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, this certificate of recognition and appreciation.

Nance Legins-Costley

Carl Adams, Lincoln Historian and Author



49

Good morning and thank you all for coming. A slave girl named Nance stood on a dirt floor log cabin court. And the only thing she asked for was - my personal liberty. The Founding Fathers couldn't have said it any better. She was the only known African American who managed to get to any state Supreme Court three times. And when Lincoln took her case

in July of 1841, he used the phrase, “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall exist” three times – once for the Northwest Territory, second for the Illinois territory, third for the state of Illinois.

“Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall exist.” He went on to use that phrase at least three more times. His precedent was passed on to the second Illinois constitutional convention; it became part of the Constitution in 1848. Then Lincoln once again used that same phrase, coincidentally enough on June 19th, 1862, when he signed the legislation abolishing slavery in all remaining US territories during the Civil War. And the third time he used it again, “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall exist” were the first words to his lasting legacy to the United States Constitution, the 13th Amendment, February 1, 1865.

And it all began with a slave girl named Nance Legins-Costley, buried in Peoria, Illinois. Thank you, and may God bless America.

Closing Comments, Moment of Silent Reflection

Rev. Marvin Hightower, Peoria NAACP President



51

I, like many others, believe that history is our greatest teacher. I also believe that history shouldn't be covered up; it shouldn't be hidden away. It definitely shouldn't be banned, but it needs to be recognized so that we learn from history so that we won't be doomed to repeat history.

And this is one of those steps in uncovering some very important history. And I believe that there are many other stories besides Nance Legins-Costley that have been hidden, so once we start to dig in this, we must keep on digging. We can't stop here. We must continue on to uncover those very important and powerful stories.

And I believe that this day is a date marked out in history from the foundations of this world. And I also believe as the Bible says that the truth will make us free, and that's why I believe that history is important.

Now before we go into our moment of silence, "The Battle Hymn" will be sung, "Amazing Grace", and return of the colors will take place without interruption, and our own First Vice President Sherry Carter-Allen will be doing some singing. Thank you. We will do it for 30 seconds.

Battle Hymn of the Republic

Sherry Carter-Allen, Vocal Artist



Amazing Grace

Kevin Nickerson, Bagpipes Artist



Retiring of the Colors
Peoria American Legion Post 2 Color Guard



Historical Honor Guard

Captain Zeally Moss Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution.



Note of Thanks, Invitation to Visit the Memorial Colleen Johnson, MC



What a day, what a beautiful morning, that God has given us today. I want to thank TV News 25 for continuing to support this story. Our newscaster has repeatedly covered the story of Nance. It's pronounced either Nance or Nancy. Neither are incorrect, our authority Mr. Adams has told me. We want to continue to get this story out.

And we want to continue to get the story of the Moffatt Cemetery out. So thank you all for being here with us today.

It is my hope and prayer that you will come over and view not just the beautiful Freedom and Remembrance Memorial, but that you will talk to people that you didn't come here with today, that you will talk perhaps to someone who doesn't look like you. That would make my heart sing, just like today has.

And I also invite you to participate in some form and some ceremony for June 19th, and if you're in Peoria, perhaps the Contemporary Art Center, where you will have the opportunity hear Mr. Adams again. Thank you all for coming. And thank you for being a part of our celebration.



MEDIA COVERAGE SUMMARY

(Number of Known Coverage Instances)

PROJECT TEAM COVERAGE

- Website (Extensive – Life of Project)
- Facebook Pages (Extensive – Life of Project)
- Promotional Project Video

COMMUNITY COVERAGE

- WEEK-TV – NBC Network Affiliate (6)
- WMBD-TV – CBS Network Affiliate & WMBD-FM (4)
- Peoria Journal Star (1)
- City of Peoria (1)
- Peoria Magazine (1)
- Peoria County Chronicle (1)
- Traveler Weekly – Peoria’s Black Newspaper (2)
- WCBU-FM -- NPR Network Affiliate & WCBU.org (3)
- MIXCLOUD.COM (1)
- Peoria Riverfront Museum – Social Media (4)

STATE COVERAGE

- Illinois State Historical Society (5)

NATIONAL COVERAGE

- USA Today (1)
- Gannet Brands – Other media outlets (many; exact # unknown)

MEDIA COVERAGE DETAIL

PROJECT TEAM COVERAGE – WEBSITE and FACEBOOK

Immediately after efforts began, the Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Project (FRMP) Team professionally initiated and maintained Internet Social Media presence using both a Website and Facebook pages. These media outlets provided public coverage of all significant events and documentation across the entire lifespan of this multiyear project.

Archiving and curating this media will provide ongoing availability of the efforts and results of this project for local, State, and National history. Reviewers of this Application for Award are encouraged to visit these Social Media publications to fully appreciate the breadth and depth of coverage they provide for these efforts.

(FRMP WebSite) - <https://peoriafreedommemorial.org/>

(FRMP FaceBook) - <https://www.facebook.com/peoriafreedommemorial/>

(Promo Video - YouTube) <https://youtu.be/YEqxrnhzhc>

58

COMMUNITY MEDIA COVERAGE

WEEK-TV - NBC Network Affiliate

PEORIA (25 News Now) By: Brett Brooks. References: Moffatt Cemetery and Nathan Ashby of US Colored Troops who was at Juneteenth in 1865 and lies buried there.

Published: Jun. 17, 2022 at 6:24 PM CDT | Updated: Jun. 17, 2022 at 11:37 PM CDT

<https://www.25newsnow.com/2022/06/17/5-men-pekin-were-present-during-original-juneteenth-texas/?fbclid=IwAR08LTtoS5gZ9OKGJS3hAkMEe5DpM6pRaBDh6QvuG-SIKbMaEtzIjiQPgGY>

PEORIA (25 News Now) By: Brett Brooks. References: First public showing of Veterans marker and tells more of Nance Legins-Costley story.

Published: Jun. 19, 2022 at 5:51 PM CDT | Updated: Jun. 19, 2022 at 6:02 PM CDT

<https://www.25newsnow.com/2022/06/19/plans-progress-freedom-remembrance-memorial-commemorating-those-buried-now-defunct-moffatt-cemetery/?fbclid=IwAR08LTtoS5gZ9OKGJS3hAkMEe5DpM6pRaBDh6QvuG-SIKbMaEtzIjiQPgGY>

PEORIA (25News Now) By: Brett Brooks. References: Juneteenth and Nance Legins-Costley. *Published: Jun. 20, 2022 at 8:24 PM CDT*
https://www.25newsnow.com/2022/06/21/nancy-legins-costley-ignited-emancipation-movement/?fbclid=IwAR27uOgqCJDhMzKY_GCnTOO5Hd427KRS9d4-Rzz7ka80E7GH20lbCLGXJgg

PEORIA (25 News Now) By: Brett Brooks. References: Nance Legins-Costley's & Moffatt Cemetery Markers Unveiled. The three markers will be placed on the memorial site on the intersection on SW Adams and Griswold Street. *Published: Nov. 16, 2022 at 9:29 AM CST*
<https://www.25newsnow.com/2022/11/16/nance-legins-costleys-moffatt-cemetery-markers-unveiled/>

PEORIA (25 News Now) By: Brett Brooks. References: City Council approves land transfer to officially buy land for Freedom and Remembrance Memorial site. *Published: Mar. 1, 2023 at 6:21 PM CST*
<https://www.25newsnow.com/2023/03/02/city-council-approves-land-transfer-officially-buy-land-freedom-remembrance-memorial-site/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUX8QbkHweQ&t=9828s>

PEORIA (25 News Now) By: Brett Brooks. References: Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park officially dedicated to those buried at Moffatt Cemetery. *Published: Jun. 14, 2023 at 7:37 PM CDT|Updated: Jun. 14, 2023 at 7:45 PM CDT*
<https://www.25newsnow.com/2023/06/15/freemdom-remembrance-memorial-park-officially-dedicated-those-buried-moffatt-cemetery/>

59

WMBD-TV - CBS Network Affiliate & WMBD-FM

PEORIA (WMBD) By: Annie Kate. References: Juneteenth, Nance Legins-Costley the Moffatt Cemetery story, prior recognition for the Veterans, and plans for the Memorial. *Posted: June 19, 2022 04:02 PM*
<https://www.centralillinoisproud.com/digital-originals/what-does-juneteenth-have-to-do-with-central-illinois-history-tells-the-story/?fbclid=IwAR19pxZmTe58d7PDbW4YMWyyEMATT0PzUnLn1U53KCP2tvuhFHSpzLTzCg>

PEORIA (WMBD) By: Shabnam Danesh. References: historical markers commemorating forgotten Peoria cemetery unveiled at Peoria Riverfront Museum.

Posted: Nov 15, 2022 at 4:10 PM CST

<https://www.centralillinoisproud.com/news/local-news/historical-markers-commemorating-forgotten-peoria-cemetery-unveiled-at-peoria-riverfront-museum/>

PEORIA (WMBD) By: Benjamine Fries. References: Memorial Park established for those buried in closed Peoria cemetery.

Posted: June 14, 2023 05:44 PM CDT

<https://www.centralillinoisproud.com/news/local-news/a-memorial-park-established-for-those-buried-in-closed-peoria-cemetery/>

PEORIA (WMBD-FM) By: Greg and Dan. References: Interview May 30, 2023 with Bob Hoffer discussing the Moffatt Cemetery story and that of the veterans, Nance Legins-Costley, and the 2,600 still buried there. Also discussed Event planned for Flag Day June 14, 2023 to name the Park and commemorate all buried there with the Freedom & Remembrance Memorial.

Peoria Journal Star

PEORIA (PJStar - USA Today Network) By: Phil Luciano. References: Headline - "Lincoln-freed slave's paved-over grave. Future president helped emancipate Nance Legins-Costley of Pekin. Peoria buried her final resting place under asphalt." Extensive article with input from Team Members Carl Adams and Bob Hoffer.

Published: Monday, February 1, 2021

City of Peoria

(City FaceBook) June 14, 2023 | References: Heading – "Peoria Freedom & Remembrance Naming Program." On June 14, 2023, the City of Peoria formally named the parcel located at 3917 S.W. Adams Street as Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park. Speakers included Mayor Ali, Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, Council Member Jackson, Illinois State Historical Society Board member Charles Stanley, Bob Hoffer, Carl Adams, Joe Hutchinson and Reverend Marvin Hightower. Musical selections were provided by Sherry Carter-Allen and Kevin Nickerson. Special thanks to the Local 40 Fire Department Color Guard and the Peoria American Legion Post 2 Color Guard.

Posted: June 14, 2023

(Note: a Historical Honor Guard was also provided by Capt. Zeally Moss Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution.)

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set?vanity=peoriail&set=a.643134774524454>

Peoria Magazine

(Peoria Magazine) By: Phil Luciano. References: *Headline - The First Slave That Abraham Lincoln Helped Free Rests In An Unmarked, Asphalted-Over Grave In South Peoria, But No Longer Forgotten.*

Published February 2023.

<https://www.peoriamagazine.com/article/final-respects-can-wait-no-more/>

Peoria County Chronicle

PEORIA (Peoria County Chronicle) By: Chronicle Media. Referenced: *Headline – “Forgotten no more as Peoria dedicates freedom memorial.”*

Published: Volume 99, Number 26 – June 28-July 4, 2023

Traveler Weekly – Peoria’s Longest Running Black Newspaper

PEORIA (Traveler Weekly) By: Denise Jackson – 1st Dist. City Council. References: *Moffatt Cemetery Dedication – June 14, 2023. IL Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton, Mayor Rita Ali, etc. at the Freedom & Remembrance Memorial.*

Published: Vol. 58, No. 7 - July 2023.

PEORIA (Traveler Weekly) By: Robert Hoffer. Referenced: *“Yet another mystery of Peoria History.” Listing of African Americans buried at the site of the former Moffatt Cemetery, Peoria Illinois.”*

Published: Vol. 58, No. 7 - July 2023.

WCBU-FM - NPR Network Affiliate & WCBU.org

(WCBU Local News) By: Joe Deacon. References *Peoria Park District Executive Director Emily Cahill discussing their planned participation for the Memorial. Published June 1, 2022 at 2:19 PM CDT*

<https://www.wcbu.org/local-news/2022-06-01/q-a-emily-cahill-discusses-peoria-park-districts-summer-plans-programs-and-projects?fbclid=IwAR1H3E35iZukvPeXB83Cti-iBgIFZ1tT002rCuvbic62L7SDJBTevm7-ZJU>

(WCBU Local News) By: Tim Shelley. References *extensive coverage of Moffatt Cemetery, the Veterans, Nance Legins-Costley, WIDE Community support and Memorial plans.*

Published June 30, 2022 at 2:41 PM CDT

<https://www.wcbu.org/local-news/2022-11-15/memorial-to-peorias-former-moffatt-cemetery-set-for-spring-2023-installation>

(WCBU Local News) By: Tim Shelley. References: Memorial planned for Spring 2023 installation. *Published November 15, 2022 at 3:40 PM CST*
https://www.wcbu.org/local-news/2022-06-30/forgotten-no-more-remembering-the-2-600-stories-still-buried-under-south-peorias-razed-moffatt-cemetery?fbclid=IwAR047bmGh8LhAFXyxxVO80PpsCO6VtjRCpZC3Myl9dDrvcve_GUrN8ZbWM

MIXCLOUD.COM

(Breakfast with Roger and Friends) By: Roger Monroe. References: Interview held June 6, 2023 with Bob Hoffer discussing the Moffatt Cemetery story and that of the veterans, Nance Legins-Costley, and the 2,600 still buried there. Also discussed Event planned for Flag Day June 14, 2023 to name the Park and commemorate all buried there.

PEORIA RIVERFRONT MUSEUM – FACEBOOK

(July 28, 2022 – 14 min PRM Video) References: Public unveiling of the large PRM display for the project featuring the Veterans Marker highlighting the 52 veterans buried at the lost cemetery. Also in the display, developed by PRM Intern Jordan Miller, is information about the cemetery and the project to commemorate the 2,600 Peorians still there.

<https://www.facebook.com/riverfrontmuseum/videos/1199931060855277>

(August 14, 2022 – PRM Photos) References: Public event at the PRM display featuring Nance Legins-Costley, the first enslaved person Abraham Lincoln helped free, who is buried at the lost cemetery. Carl Adams, author of the book about Nance's life, and Colleen Johnson, Executive Director of Peoria Historical Society, are joined by Bob Hoffer and Jordan

Miller. <https://www.facebook.com/riverfrontmuseum/posts/pfbid03uSrELn1bQ3JHZJooRyH92aioGzGResPGvTX6YsNx8iE1ZQELKVVJxMw7L3QqmeQl>

November 11, 2022 – PRM Photo) References PRM Intern Jordan Miller adjusting the Veterans marker in the large display the morning of Veterans Day public exhibits.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=486469163514601&set=a.399764382185080>

(November 15, 2022 – 35 min PRM Video) References Public unveiling of the other two of three Illinois State Historical Society markers for the project – telling the story of Peoria's Moffatt Cemetery and that of Nance Legins-Costley.

<https://www.facebook.com/riverfrontmuseum/videos/860972438679279>

STATE MEDIA COVERAGE

Illinois State Historical Society

(Illinois Heritage Magazine) By: Robert Hoffer. Reference: Heading - "Peoria's lost and forgotten to be remembered with historical markers." Tells the story of the lost Moffatt Cemetery and the veterans and over 2,600 others still buried there.
Published March-April 2022 Issue, Features Section, Pages 21 & 22.

(Illinois Heritage Magazine) By: Bob Hoffer. Reference: Heading – "Memorial markers nearly finished." Highlighted completed Veterans marker; funding for Moffatt Cemetery marker and Nance Legins-Costley marker nearly complete. Site donated; Peoria City to own and Park District to help maintain the park and markers.
Published July-August 2022 Issue, Letters to the Editor Section, Page 7.

(Illinois Heritage Magazine) By: Bob Hoffer. Reference: Heading – "New Peoria markers." All markers are completed and described; installation and dedication planning underway.
Published November-December 2022 Issue, Letters to the Editor section, Page 7.

(Illinois Heritage Magazine) Reference: Heading – "New Peoria markers celebrate lost history." All three ISHS markers were presented to the public at Peoria Riverfront Museum. Recognitions were presented from three major grantors: Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War by Joe Hutchinson, Officer of SUVCW and Team Member; from The Abraham Lincoln Association by David Joens, Director of the Illinois State Archives; and from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation of New York by Deryn Pomeroy, Trustee.
Published January-February 2023 Issue, News Section, Page 9.

(Illinois Heritage Magazine) Reference: Heading – "Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park dedicated in Peoria." City of Peoria hosted public event on Flag Day, Wednesday, June 14 to officially name Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park and dedicate the Memorial of that name, present the Community, State and National recognitions. The article tells the story in brief of the lost cemetery, the 52 veterans there, and Nance - Legins-Costley. Dignitaries included Mayor of Peoria Dr. Rita Ali, Keynote speaker Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton, and Former ISHS Director Charles Stanley. A copy of the program is included elsewhere in this material.
Published July-August 2023 Issue, News Section, Page 8.

NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE

(USA Today) By: Phil Luciano, Journal Star. References: Headline – “She was the first Black person freed by Lincoln, long before his presidency. Her grave was paved over and her story hardly known.”

Published 6:00 am ET Feb. 6, 2021 Updated 9:32 am ET Feb.8, 2021

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/02/06/nance-legins-costley-of-pekinthe-first-slave-lincoln-freed/4373306001/>

(Gannet Brands – Other media outlets) By: Phil Luciano, Journal Star.

The above article, which appeared in USA Today, was also *published in many Gannet Brands news outlets across the country during Black History Month 2021.*

PEORIA CITY COUNCIL BRIEFING MATERIALS

The following briefing materials were provided to the Peoria City Council and Mayor of Peoria ahead of their February 28th, 2023, meeting to approve purchase of the memorial site, officially name the site Freedom & Remembrance Memorial Park, and recognize the Freedom & Remembrance Memorial.

Some of the points in this piece, originally produced and slightly updated during 2023, may now be somewhat dated or incomplete.

Much of this material is also included in the [Project Promotional Video](#) which can be found in the “Home” section on the Project Website at:

<https://peoriafreedommemorial.org/>

or simply clicking here for just the video:

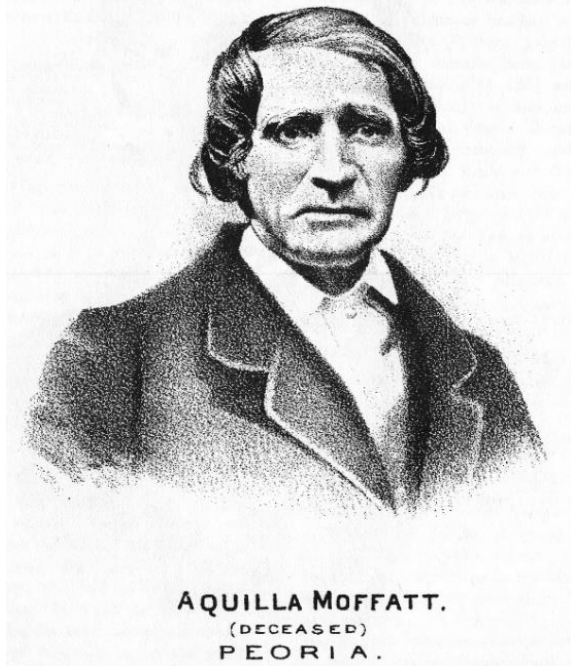
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEgxrngzhc>

THE MOFFATT CEMETERY STORY

Peoria's centuries-long history has international and patriotic roots as well as ties to national social justice and equity movements being revisited today. Our City's story also includes forgotten mysteries, some of which are tied to a nineteenth-century South Side cemetery now used for storage and light industry. Who started it; who is buried there; how did it disappear and how is it tied to Abraham Lincoln? The surprising answers span two centuries.

This all started when my wife asked me to find her Great-Grandfather's grave. He was an immigrant who worked in the rail yards and later a tenant-farmer. Family lore said he died on the steps of the Swedish Lutheran Church on Christmas morning 1885 which turned out to be mostly true. However, what seemed like a simple quest became something much more. The first clue was in old transcripts of coroner notes at Peoria Public Library where one said, "Wife had him buried at Moffatt." From this one line unfolded a much larger, and amazing story.

When Aquilla Moffatt came to Peoria in 1822 with his father and brother there were four cabins; they built the fifth near the river at the current State St.



AQUILLA MOFFATT.
(DECEASED)
PEORIA.

Pen and Ink Drawing – Peoria Public Library

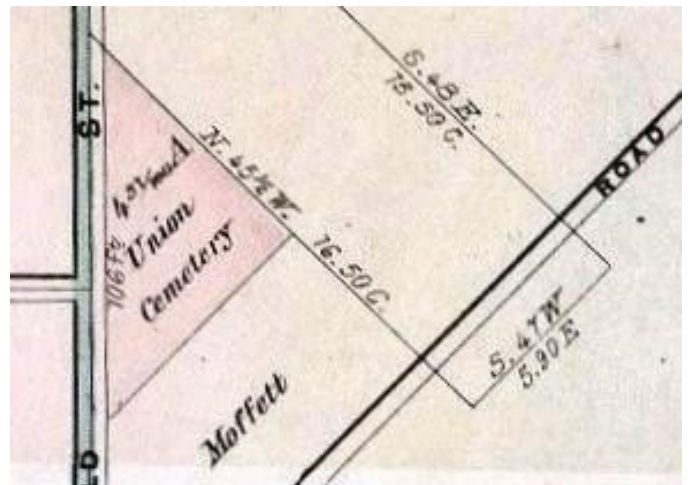
He immediately started several mining and milling businesses and after the 1832 Black Hawk War he built a stately home on South Adams and set aside a small burying ground nearby for family and friends.



3917 S Adams St. (1832-1949) -- Peoria Public Library

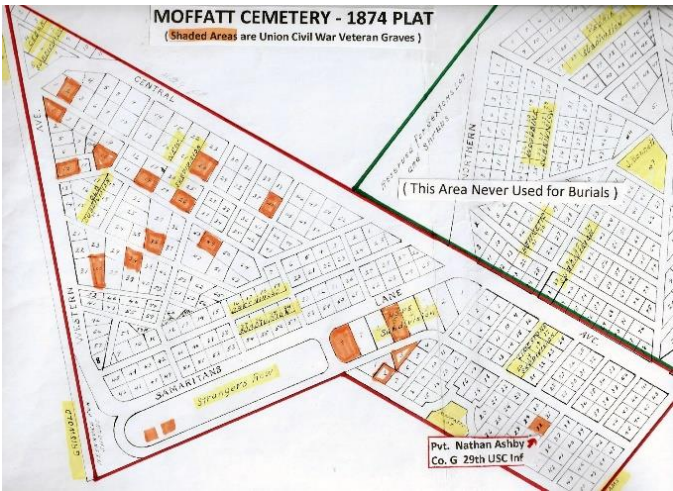
In 1836 he received a large land grant and began to develop South Peoria. After the Civil War he named a parcel near his home 'Union Cemetery' intending it for later use by returning veterans.

66



1869 Peoria Atlas – Peoria Public Library

In the 1870s he sold this parcel and the rectangular shaped land bordering Adams Street to investors who issued shares forming the Moffatt Cemetery Association. (*Shaded areas: known veteran graves.*)



1874 Plat – Peoria County Recorder of Deeds
Large Area to the Right was never used for burials.

Investors used his name out of respect and recognition though he had no connection with the cemetery association. Burials increased rapidly until the City ordered it to close in 1905. It was soon abandoned and became a dumping ground and community eyesore. Various efforts over five decades to clean it up and save it ultimately failed.

Court actions in the 1950s gathered association share rights and the cemetery was declared defunct. Gravestones, trees, and overgrowth were cleared; the site was rezoned to light industrial, and parcels were sold to businesses.



Aerial View – 2015 USDA Photo
Actual Cemetery Used Shown in Outlined Area



Peoria Journal Transcript 9/13/1936 – Montage Photo
Peoria Public Library



Current View of old Cemetery Site from Griswold Street



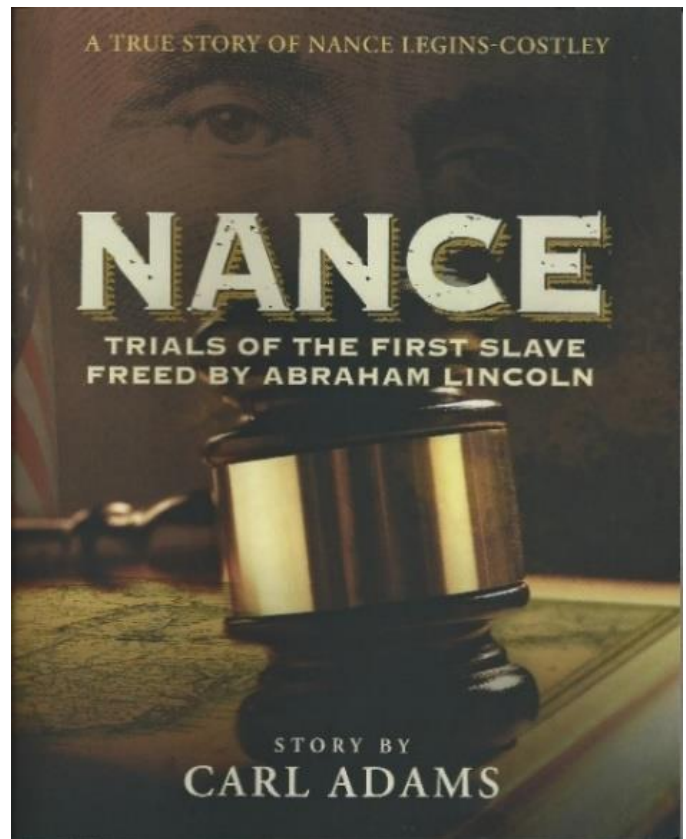
Current View of old Cemetery Site from Adams Street
“Mr. Quick” drive-in was on gravesites here in the 1960s

Cemetery association records were said to be lost and those buried there had been moved, but fewer than 100 transfers have been documented. Fortunately for Peoria's history, Health Department 'Undertaker Report' books (1872-1915), unused and stored for over a century, were found at the Peoria Courthouse. These books record the death and burial of over 32,000 individuals, with over 2,500 at Moffatt Cemetery. About 200 other burials are documented resulting in over 2,600 persons, now known by name, who still lie at Moffatt Cemetery.



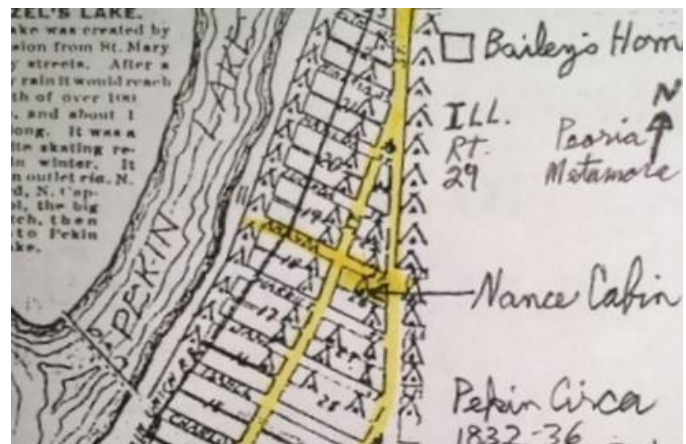
These huge old books were transcribed by Peoria County Genealogical Society members producing a database and bound volumes now available to the public. They are believed to contain the only known such records for as many as 3,500 Peorians, because of those lost at other cemeteries over the decades.

Who are these forgotten Peorians at Moffatt Cemetery? Perhaps the most famous is Nance Legins-Costley, known to history as the first enslaved person Abraham Lincoln helped free. Discovery of her burial location helped complete work by Lincoln historian Carl Adams to document her unrelenting quest for freedom in his book of her life and the efforts of her emancipator.



Nance's story is one of perseverance in pursuit of her freedom. She was born in 1813 into indentured servitude in Kaskaskia and in 1826 when just age 13 auctioned and bought for \$151; she refused consent to the contract and was punished severely. Nance challenged her servitude in court but was ruled a 'ward and servant' and then brought to Pekin in 1829 where she was sold to David Bailey. When Nance said she had never consented to indentured servitude, Bailey allowed her to live nearby as a free woman and declined to pay the promissory note.

68



Wm. H. Bates 1910 Map of Pekin – Pekin Public Library

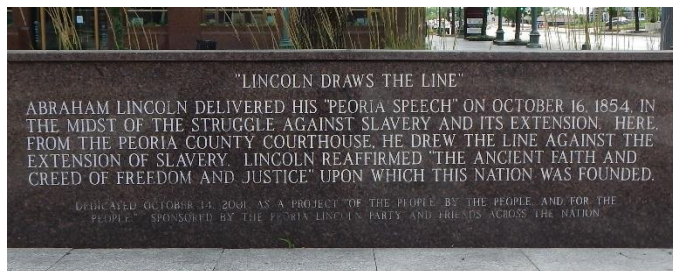
Bailey was sued and lost but appealed to the Illinois Supreme Court in the landmark case *Bailey v. Cromwell* (1841), where his attorney Abraham Lincoln argued successfully for the freedom of Nance and her first three children. Lincoln's legal reasoning relied on the language of the Northwest Ordinance and the Illinois Constitution, that "*neither slavery nor involuntary servitude*" may exist in Illinois. This affirmed Illinois' standing as a free state and helped close the indenture loophole by which slavery had endured. Nance's story has been told in articles published nationwide in the past few years.

This court case had a profound effect on young lawyer Lincoln and his views toward slavery. Thirteen years later in his famous "Peoria Speech" he drew the line against slavery when he said: "There can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another."

Nance married Benjamin Costley in Pekin and raised eight children. Their eldest son, William, was a Union Civil War soldier in the US Colored Troops present at the original Juneteenth in Galveston TX. In the 1870s, the Costleys moved to Peoria where Ben died in 1883 and was buried at Moffatt. When Nance died in 1892, she was living with her daughter Amanda at 226 N Adams.



Photo of 226 N Adams Street – Peoria Public Library



Lincoln Memorial -- Peoria County Courthouse Plaza

Interestingly, from there one can today see the Abraham Lincoln mural on the Peoria Courthouse:



'Lincoln Blue' Mural, Peoria County Courthouse



Charles Overall's Painting of Lincoln in Peoria 1854

Fifty-two veterans are also known to have been interred at Moffatt Cemetery: 49 were Union Civil War soldiers, including Nathan Ashby who was also in the US Colored Troops at Juneteenth; and one each from the 1792 Virginia Militia, the War of 1812, and the Spanish-American War. Several have ancestors who served in the Revolutionary War.

In addition to known persons at Moffatt Cemetery, there are also remains of uncountable unknowns buried in one mass grave. They were removed in 46 'soap boxes' from Peoria's old public cemetery while installing utilities along Lincoln Avenue in 1903.

All remaining at Moffatt Cemetery are a cross section of our community and region. More than half are infants and children; some are indigents; many are immigrants; more than 50 are African Americans; and more than a thousand are just early Peorians. They should all be: "Forgotten No More."



1896 Peoria Atlas – Peoria Public Library

The small parcel for the memorial is being donated by the United Union of Roofers Local #69 whose office and training building is now approximately where Aquilla Moffatt's house stood for 117 years. The South Side memorial site has very high traffic volumes and ideal visibility from all directions.



Memorial Site Viewed from Across Adams Street

The site will be larger than the grassy area below.

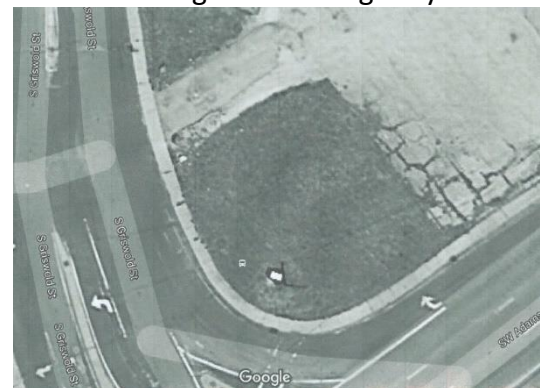


Photo: Google Maps

THE PLANNED MEMORIAL



A small group of local volunteers is working to create a memorial to commemorate those buried at Moffatt Cemetery who helped build and preserve our region, State and Nation. The name of the memorial evokes respect for the veterans and Nance Legins-Costley who fought for freedoms we enjoy today and calls all visitors to remember the more than 2,600 still buried there who have been forgotten for so long, right here in their hometown. The logo in red, white, and blue is shaped to represent the site of the monument, the bordering City streets, and the Moffatt Cemetery parcel itself.

The highly visible memorial site is on the inside corner of SW Adams and Griswold Streets. This location is on the original property of Aquilla Moffatt's house and is near but not on the actual cemetery parcels. *(Note: the large 'squarish' area to the right in the 1896 atlas illustration was never used for burials. It is now a separate parcel of land.)*

The finished markers on display downtown:



The Veterans Marker at Peoria Riverfront Museum

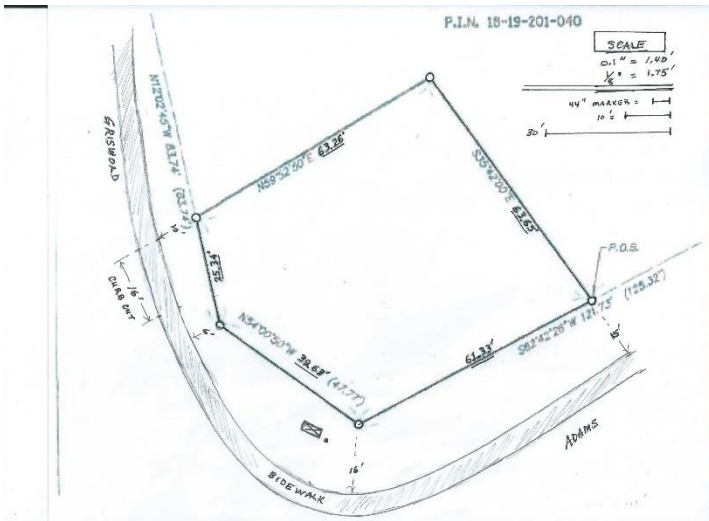


The Moffatt and Nance Legins-Costley Markers at Peoria Park District's RiverPlex Center

The left marker in the memorial tells the story of Peoria's Moffatt Cemetery and is sponsored by the United Union of Roofers Local #69, City of Peoria, Peoria Park District, William G. Pomeroy Foundation (of NY), and the Illinois State Historical Society.

The center marker highlights the Veterans -- names, ranks, companies, units, and service. This marker is sponsored by our local Colonel John C. Bryner Camp 67 of the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War with State and National SUVCW grants and funding.

The right marker tells the story of Nance Legins-Costley and her unrelenting quest for freedom. It is



Sketch of Surveyed Memorial Parcel scaled to the Corner.

The key element of the memorial consists of three large (approximately 4' wide by over 4' tall and 115 lbs. each) cast aluminum Illinois State Historical Society (ISHS) markers set in an arc of a 15' radius.



Illinois State Historical Society Markers
 Rendering of Marker Arrangement on Site
 (Actual mountings will be large single poles)

sponsored by the national Abraham Lincoln Association, the William G. Pomeroy Foundation (of NY), and the Illinois State Historical Society.

In the memorial arc center will be a commercial grade 30' tall solar-lighted flagpole with internal halyard and security mechanisms. Completing the memorial will be a storyboard stand and 16" x 33' information panel located a short distance out from the flagpole opposite the center marker. This element, an example of which is shown below, will recognize sponsors of the flagpole which are at this time the SUVCW, DUVCW, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), American Legion Post 2, and Peoria Chapter National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).



Example of Storyboard – Photo: Peoria Heights

The Storyboard will also tell visitors where they can find additional information about the various subjects and the memorial itself, including Peoria Public Library and Pekin Public Library.

A COMMUNITY PROJECT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Peoria's Freedom & Remembrance Memorial commemorates our forgotten citizens, many of whom were involved in shaping State and National events. This soon became apparent across our community and beyond.

Local partners quickly stepped forward to work together: Peoria Historical Society (PHS) (501c3); Peoria Riverfront Museum (displays, events); City of Peoria (own site and memorial, install flagpole); Peoria Park District (install markers); Peoria County Genealogical Society (PCGS) and Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical Society. Very significantly, the private organization of United Union of Roofers Local #69 generously made a very appropriate South Side neighborhood site available on land first owned by Aquilla Moffatt. Local history enthusiasts and scattered others soon began making contributions.

Illinois organizations soon joined in with Illinois State Historical Society (ISHS) as our strategic partner, both contributing funds and successfully advocating for valuable grants. ISHS sponsorship ensures widespread communication of the memorial, its location, meaning and relationship to other Abraham Lincoln historic sites. National grants came from: Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War honoring 49 fellow soldiers; Abraham Lincoln Association, William G. Pomeroy Foundation, Capt., Zeally Moss Chapter Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), Daughters of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, and Peoria Chapter Natl. Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

Funding of memorial elements will be completed and gifted to the City. Appropriate installation, dedication and celebration events will be planned and announced.

The Project Team thanks all who made this possible: Carl Adams, formerly of Pekin: Lincoln historian, author; Jared Olar, Pekin: genealogist, Pekin Public Library History Room; Joe Hutchinson, East Peoria: SUVCW officer, genealogist; David Pittman, West Peoria: local activist, VP Peoria NAACP Exec. Comm.; Bill Poorman, Peoria: writer, educator, social media consultant; and Bob Hoffer, Peoria: history enthusiast, member PHS, PCGS, ISHS, and SAR..

(Slightly Edited 11/23)



