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## The Continental Tavern

Frank Lyons and his family purchased their restaurant in 2007, and while renovating it, a contractor working under the kitchen found a stone tunnel that went deep into the earth. Local Underground Railroad historians concluded it was connected to a series of tunnels which came up from the Delaware Canal and connected the tavern with 2 other Yardley buildings. These structures were all way stations of the Underground Railroad, in operation from the early 1800s through the Civil War.

### The Story of “Big Ben”

The most famous resident of that era was an escaped slave named Benjamin “Big Ben” Jones, a man of massive stature and gentle disposition. After fleeing from his master, William Anderson of York, Maryland, Big Ben lived on Buckingham Mountain for eleven years, sometimes working on the local farms. He was out chopping wood in the spring of 1844, when his former master and four other men spotted him. They attacked Big Ben and despite his frenzied struggles, he was badly injured, bound up and transported to a slave prison in Baltimore to await sale to the Gulf. His price was \$700, but he proved unmarketable because of his injuries. Having heard what occurred, the local Quakers convened a meeting and raised the funds to buy Big Ben’s freedom and brought him back to Buckingham.

## Get in Touch

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Boone Farm is the future home of the African American Museum of Bucks County. The property sits along Langhorne–Newtown Road (Route 413) near the intersection with Bridgetown Pike in Middletown Township abutting Core Creek Park.

The AAMBC is a 501c3 nonprofit corporation. All contributions to the AAMBC are tax-deductible.

**VISIT BUCKS COUNTY**  
*Pennsylvania*



AFRICAN AMERICAN  
MUSEUM OF BUCKS COUNTY

The Central Bucks County

## UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

### Bus Tour



### Tour Stops:

Mount Gilead AME Church  
Buckingham Friends  
Meeting House  
Parry Mansion  
Continental Tavern



## 1 Mount Gilead AME Church

Mount Gilead is among the first all African American churches in Bucks County. Built in 1834, it measures only thirty-two feet by fifty-two feet, with one room at ground level and a partial basement. It sits on less than an acre of land at an elevation of five hundred feet on rocky, heavily timbered land unsuitable for farming.

Encouraged by the abolitionist sentiments of the local Quakers, freed blacks and runaway slaves built log and stone cabins on Buckingham Mountain in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Served by traveling ministers of the AME Church, by 1822, the congregation had 15 families, but no church building, so they likely met in their homes.

Given the location of the congregation on Buckingham Mountain, the earliest AME histories referred to the congregation simply as the "Mountain."

## 2 Buckingham Friends Meeting House

Built in 1768, Buckingham Friends Meeting House is one of the oldest stone buildings in Bucks County. Since its construction, the building has been used and remains as meeting place for Quakers. Lifetime Quaker and Bucks County local, Matthew Hughes, is largely credited with being the first person to move a law in assembly for the abolition of slavery in Pennsylvania. Hughes is buried in the graveyard at the meeting house. Another member, Isaiah Quinby, is noted to have

been disciplined for purchasing a slave in 1766 (after the abolition of slavery). Quinby later became the grandfather of Underground Railroad operator, John Blackfan. The meeting house is also a National Historic Landmark.

## 3 Parry Mansion

Located in New Hope, the Parry Mansion was often used as a meeting place for town halls and discussions after its construction in the late 1700's. New Hope served as the end of the Underground Railroad in Bucks County. It was here that former slaves seeking asylum would cross the Delaware River, into New Jersey to continue their journey for freedom. The Parry Mansion currently operates as a museum, run by the New Hope Historical Society.