AFRICAN AMERICAN
MUSEUM OF BUCKS COUNTY



Happy October!

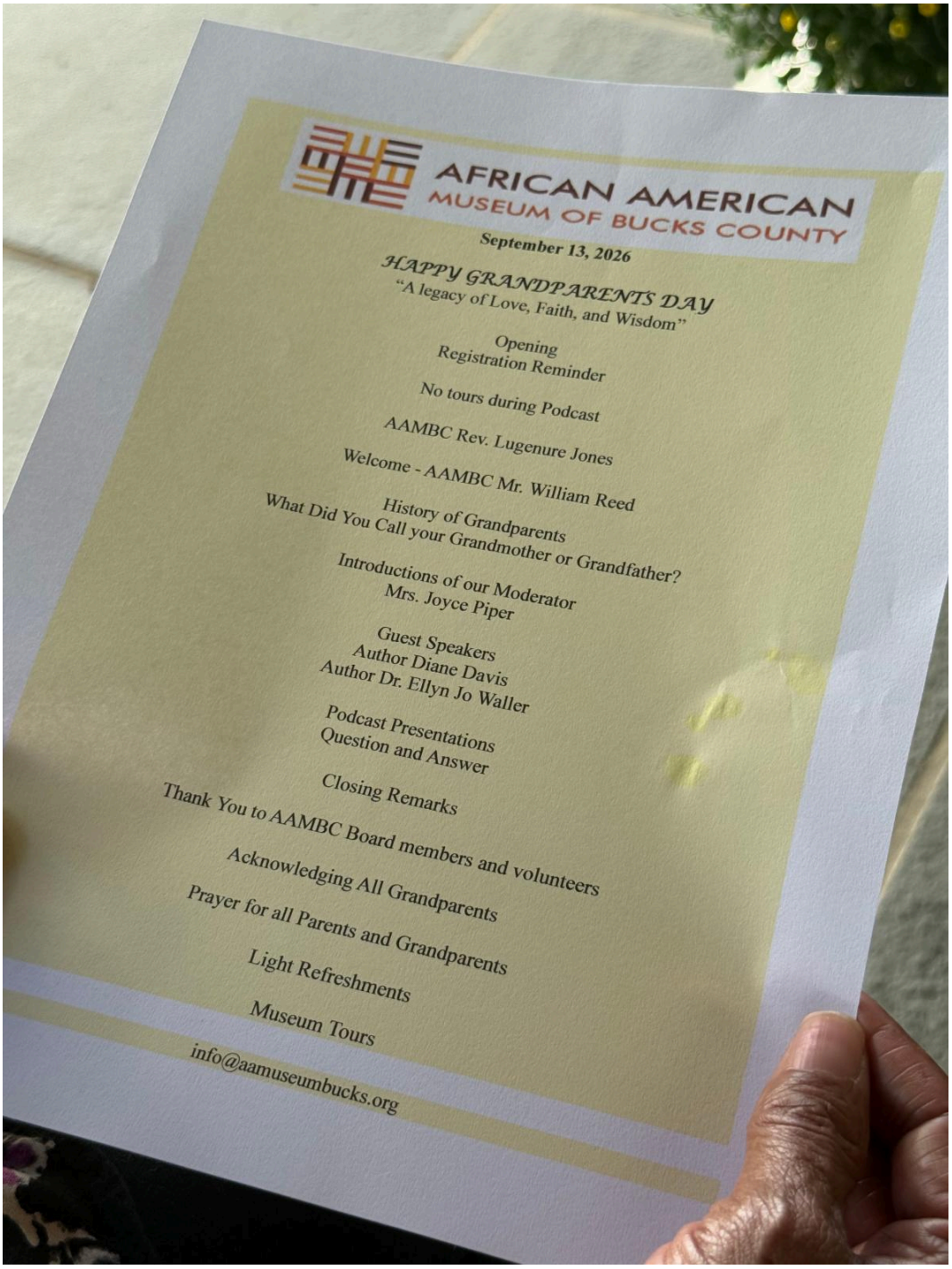
Many upcoming events!

Please see the info below

Save the Date - 2026 Gala
Friday, Dec. 11th
Tickets link is up!

In this newsletter:

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2. The Return of Benjamin Lay - upcoming event
3. Finding Our Voice: Guideposts on Our Journey of Reinvention
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Grandparents Day was great! The top photo and the photo above are from Grandparents Day. Thanks to everyone who came.



Tickets

The Return of Benjamin Lay: A Live Performance

AAMBC and the Quakers of Langhorne invite you to a very exciting event at Middletown Friends Meetinghouse on Thursday, October 15, at 7 PM.

"The Return of Benjamin Lay" explores the irrepressible prophetic witness of an 18th-century Philadelphia Quaker. One of the earliest revolutionary abolitionists, Lay stood for values that continue to need our voices in 2026. Benjamin Lay, an Englishman with dwarfism, dedicated his life to abolishing slavery. His passions exploded in outrageous guerilla-theater-like tactics that resulted in him being physically removed from nearly every Meetinghouse he entered and eventually caused him to be banished from the Society of Friends. Yet, he never gave up the fight against slavery.

Actor Mark Povinelli, as Benjamin, will do a dramatic reading of the original play "The Return of Benjamin Lay." Following the performance, the audience will engage in a discussion with the actor and historian/playwright Marcus Rediker. Light refreshments will be served.

This event is supported by Middletown Friends Meeting and the African American Museum of Bucks County. There is no charge to attend, but a freewill donation online or at the door will be appreciated to help fund the actor's travel expenses from California. Please register to aid us in planning!

Tickets





Finding Our Voice: Guideposts on Our Journey of Reinvention

In 2012, Harvey Spencer and other members of First Baptist Church of Langhorne began discussing the creation of a museum to preserve and share the rich history of African Americans in Bucks County. Yardley

historian Millard Mitchell and other community members joined the effort. The group believed in the importance of preserving these stories of courage, resilience, and achievement for future generations.

For many years, AAMBC operated as a mobile museum, presenting more than 100 programs at schools, libraries, colleges, corporations, senior centers, faith communities, and civic events. As support grew, the organization, under the leadership of Linda Salley, began pursuing a permanent home.
How could a small, grassroots team achieve such a huge goal? The story of that reinvention was the topic of a round table discussion at Philadelphia's historic Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church on Saturday, September 19, during their Colored Conventions weekend.

The panel was comprised of Pastor Lugenure Jones, AAMBC Board Member; Patricia Mervine, AAMBC historian and Capital Campaign Chair; Troy Leonard, President of Kelly Maiello Architects; and Ian Goldberg, Design Principle and Partner of Cloud Gehshan Design. Together, the panel shared their experience in creating the new African American Museum of Bucks County. They discussed the process of building foundational elements of trust, respect, communication, and cultural sensitivity among the AAMBC Board and the architects, designers, and contractors. When that strong foundation was established, their combined passion and creativity made the magic happen. A groundswell of support from the community carried the project forward. The result is the transformation of an abandoned 1716 farmhouse into a beautiful 7-room museum that educates, inspires, and builds community.

We at AAMBC are grateful to all partners in this project, and to the committee at Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church for welcoming our panel to their convention and for their kind hospitality. It was a blessed experience to visit that historic church and to provide encouragement to others

who are considering renovations and/or historical storytelling in their churches and communities.



AAMBC on the Road!

The African American Museum of Bucks County has strong ties to the community. We will be participating in two local street fairs this fall: **Historic Bristol Day on Radcliffe Street on October 17** and **Olde Langhorne Harvest Day on E. Maple Avenue on October 24**.

Books, t-shirts, tote bags, and other AAMBC swag will be on sale. We will have information about our Underground Railroad Tours, groups tours of the museum, and educational visits for students. Stop by and say hello! Find out about AAMBC membership and all the ways you can get involved with this wonderful new museum. NOTE: the Museum will be open on those days, so stop and see us there, too!





Bucks County Choral Society

Board member, Pastor Jones, and volunteers at the African American Museum of Bucks County, welcomed three members of the esteemed Bucks County Choral Society to the Museum on Friday morning. BCCS, based in Doylestown, is an auditioned choir of up to 100 voices. Members Christopher Whitney and Frank Levy had recently taken a guided tour of AAMBC. What they experienced in the Museum led to a strong desire to link BCCS with AAMBC. The theme of their upcoming concert provided the perfect connection.

On Sunday, October 25, at 4 PM, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Doylestown, the Bucks County Choral Society will perform a program of sacred jazz and gospel music, accompanied by the Jay Fluellen Jazz Quartet. The concert, entitled “Igniting Light,” includes songs “Of Journeys and Refuge,” followed by “Gospel Mass,” by St. Louis composer Robert Ray in 1979. For Claire Ma, BCCS board member and alto, the performance of “Gospel Mass” is deeply personal. She shared that her mother had performed “Gospel Mass” in St. Louis years ago with Robert Ray and still treasures the autographed score she has saved all these years.

Sacred jazz and gospel music are familiar to Pastor Jones, who comes from a family blessed with generations of musical talent. As for the volunteers who gathered to greet our guests, even if we can’t play an instrument or carry a tune, we all appreciate the engaging harmonies, driving rhythms, and spirituality of sacred jazz. And lucky us! Our visitors graciously provided us with ten free tickets to the upcoming concert!

Thank you, Christopher Whitney, Frank Levy, and Claire Ma, for brightening our morning and forging a new bond with AAMBC! We look forward to seeing – and hearing – you at Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

For more information about Bucks County Choral Society and for tickets to their Oct 25 performance, visit

https://www.buckschoral.org/current-season#fallconcert.

Photo by Frank Levy.

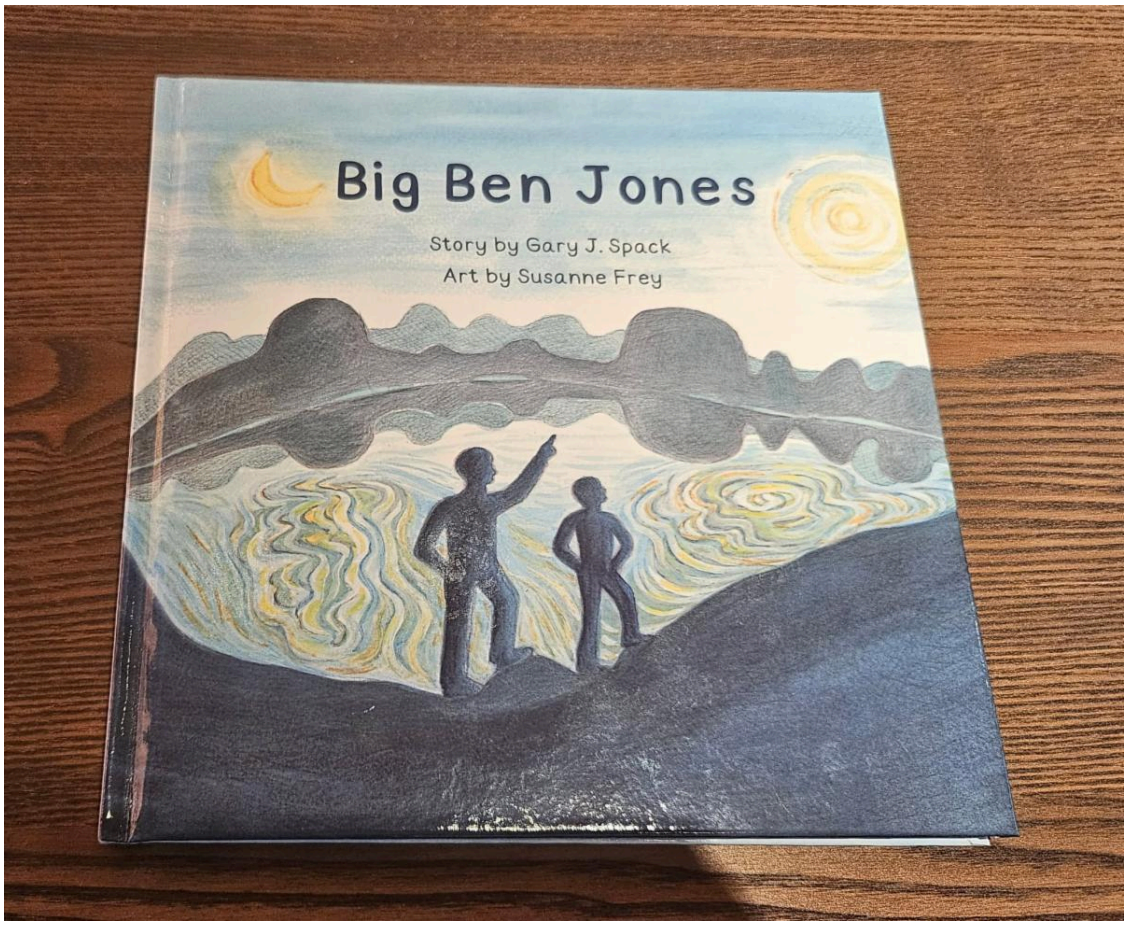


"**Big Ben Jones**" - **new children's book**

Author Gary Spack and illustrator Susanne Frey recently stopped by to present us with an autographed copy of their **new children's book**, "**Big Ben Jones**."

If you've been to AAMBC, you know that Big Ben looms large in our exhibit and in local history, so we are delighted that a children's book is now available that tells his story.

Gary and Susanne told our volunteers and Board member, Pastor Jones, about the motivations and collaborative process involved in writing and illustrating the book. Susanne described featured elements in her watercolor illustrations, then donated the original illustrations to the Museum! Commonplace Reader Yardley will order a supply of books for our new gift shop. Once available, we will host a book signing for these two local talents. What a nice gift that book will be for kids and grandkids! Congratulations to Gary Spack and Susanne Frey on their new book about Big Ben Jones!





Join us for an evening of music, dancing, delicious hors d'oeuvres, and plenty of good cheer as we celebrate all that has been accomplished and look with excitement toward the future. The theme of the evening—and our continuing commitment—is: KEEPING THE LEGACY ALIVE! Tickets are $100 per person and may be purchased online at **https://tinyurl.com/yspkc7h9**

Please also consider sponsorship, see link below.

Gala Sponsorship information



Tour and Explore on your own or with a group!

The seven rooms and four niche display areas of the African American Museum of Bucks County are filled with amazing local history spanning five centuries. Visitors who opt for a self-guided tour are aided by knowledgeable docents in every room.

AAMBC also offers historian-led guided tours for groups from 5-20. (Groups larger than 20 are divided into two groups, starting 15 minutes apart). Since opening in June, guided tours have been given to groups from churches and Quaker meetings, retirement communities and neighborhoods, and social groups, including Questers, AAUW, Rotaries, clubs, historical societies, and groups of family and friends. Tours last about an hour, with stories told in each area. At the conclusion, guests are invited to go back and explore areas of particular interest.

At present, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9 AM – 1 PM are reserved for tour groups, although special arrangements may be made for other times on request.

Reservations are required for guided tours. To schedule a tour for your group, call 215-752-1909 or email info@aamusueumbucks.org.

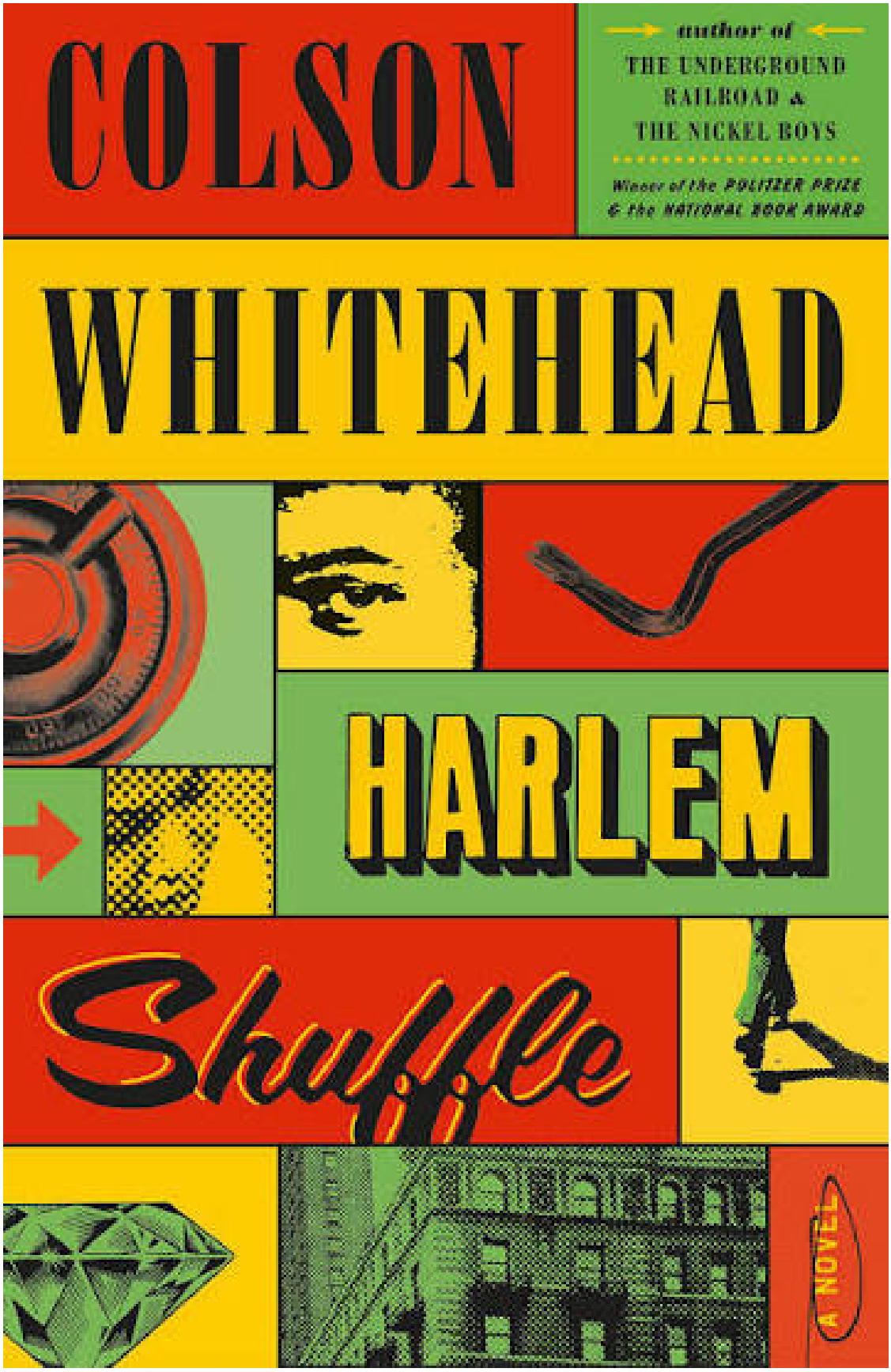


Exciting news!

The new gift shop at the **African American Museum of Bucks County** is now open!

Thanks to our partnership with **Commonplace Reader Yardley**, our visitors can now purchase books for adults and children, adorable dolls of famous Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and others, a whole array of snazzy finger puppets of your African American heroes (wait 'til you see James Baldwin, Josephine Baker, and Ketanji Brown Jackson!), stuffed animals made in Ghana, lovely quilt-themed towels and patterns, and more! Not to mention AAMBC-branded clothing and other merchandise. And we are just getting started!

AAMBC will be your favorite go-to place for special gifts that you can't find anywhere else. And don't forget: membership to AAMBC makes a great gift, too!



AAMBC Book Club

The AAMBC's Book Club meets monthly on Zoom to discuss a different book each month. The next meeting is **Thursday, October 8, 2026 at 7:00 pm via Zoom**.

The next book is **Harlem Shuffle**, the 2021 novel by American novelist **Colson Whitehead**. It is the follow-up to Whitehead's 2019 novel The Nickel Boys, which earned him his second Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. The first book in Whitehead's "Harlem Trilogy," it is a work of crime fiction and a family saga that takes place in Harlem between 1959 and 1964.

The book club is led by Liz Young, owner and operator of Commonplace Reader. Liz and Commonplace Reader have been strong supporters of our Museum, and are sponsoring the upcoming Gala. We love independent bookstores and we are so appreciative of Liz and Commonplace Reader!!

This independent bookstore is located at 49 S Main Street, Yardley, PA. If you are interested in joining the book club, please email Liz at liz@commonplace-reader.com.

All are welcome!

Email Liz Young to join the AAMBC's Book Club



The Museum is Open!!

We are so excited to announce that the Musuem is open as of June 2026.

The Museum's hours are:

Monday: Closed
Tuesday: Closed
Wednesday: Reserved for group tours 9 am - 1 pm
Open to the public 1:30 - 4 pm
Thursday: Reserved for group tours 9 am - 1 pm
Open to the public 1:30 - 4 pm
Friday: Open to the public 10 am – 4 pm
Saturday: Open to the public 10 am – 4 pm
Sunday: Periodically open for special events

We are so so thankful for the support of everyone who helped the Museum on so many ways over so many years. It's your support that has allowed the AAMBC to grow and reach this new milestone.

Admission will be:
Adults $12
Seniors & Military $10
Students (ages 6-18) $7
Children ages 5-under free
AAMBC Members – Free

The Board of AAMBC invites you to visit our beautiful museum this fall and watch our emails and social media channels for coming events! Bring your family and friends. Become a member. And watch for news about special events and new exhibits. Your support of AAMBC is much appreciated!

Location: 867 Langhorne-Newtown Road Langhorne, Pennsylvania 19047



William H. 'Bill' Reed, Interim President



Membership Program update

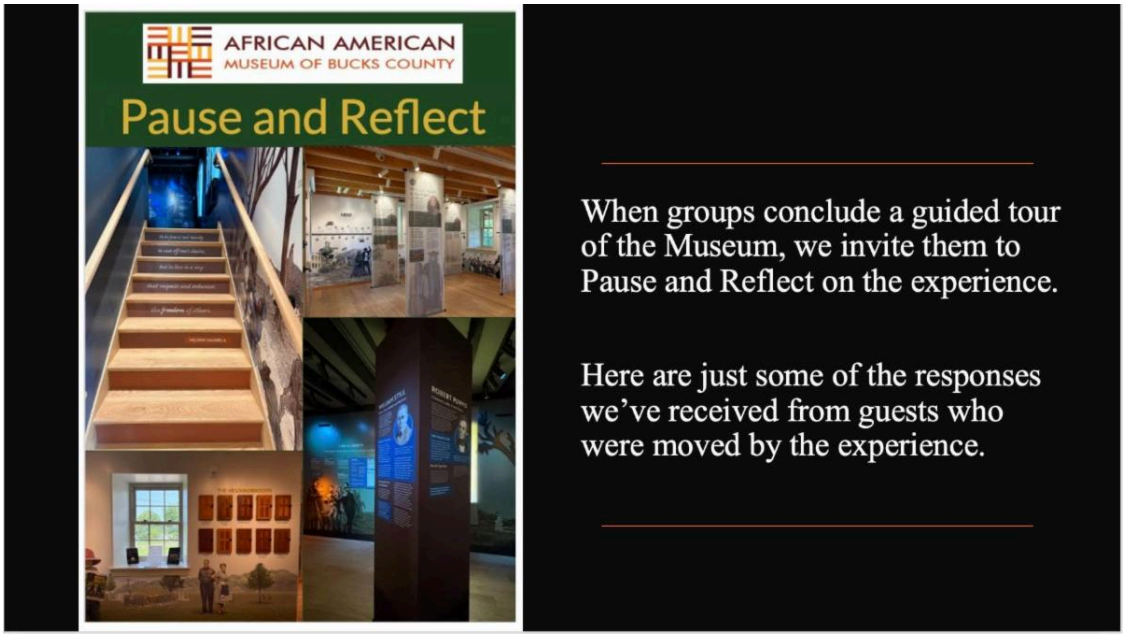
All new members this year will receive a Museum logo tote bag!! Plus a sticker, a membership card good for free entry (cards from 2025 will also be honored), and a thank-you letter from the Museum.

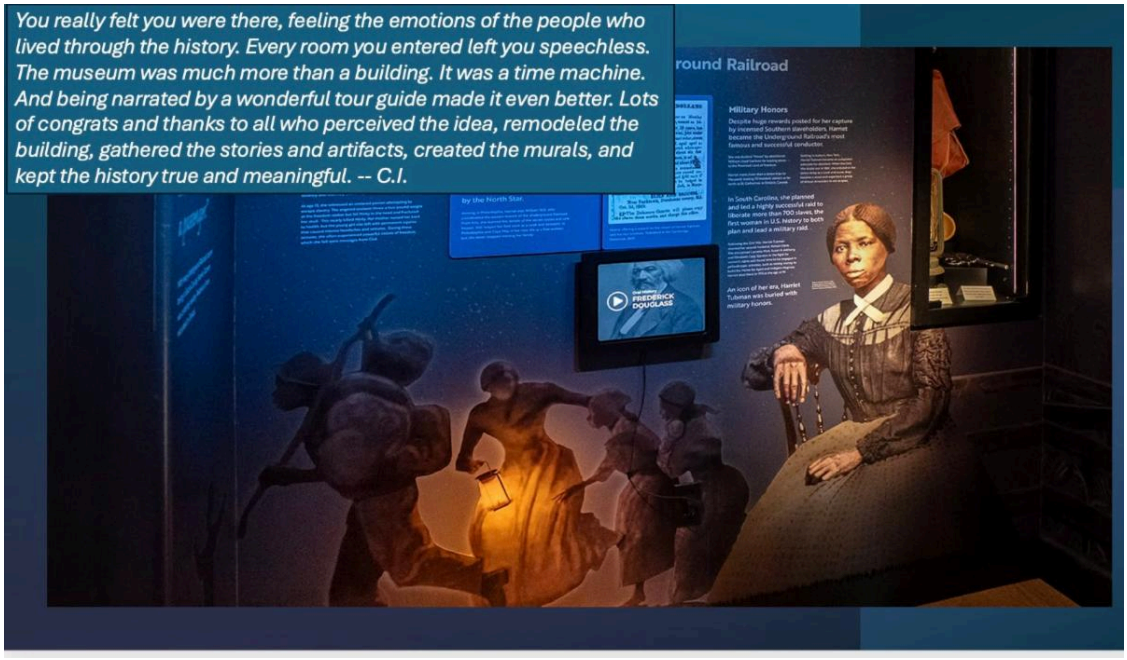
We ran out of tote bags!!
We ordered more.

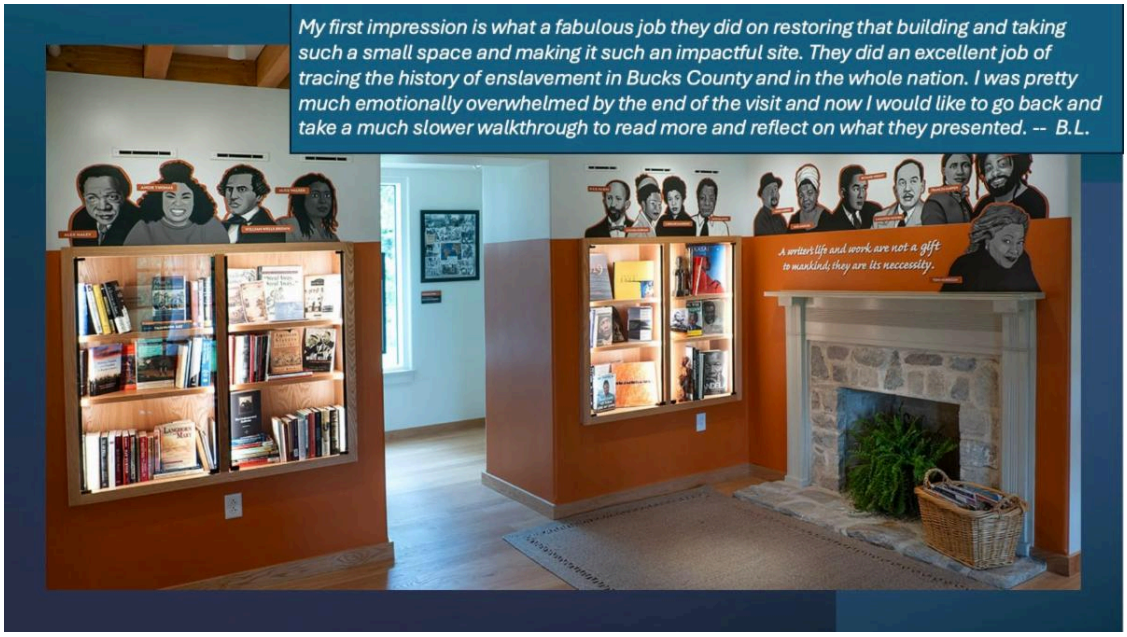
If you paid for a membership and didn't pick up the membership gifts at the Museum, we will be sending them to you.

Going forward, we would appreciate if any new membership packages could be picked up at the Museum, because shipping costs a lot! Give us your address if you can't get to the Museum and we can still mail them if really needed.

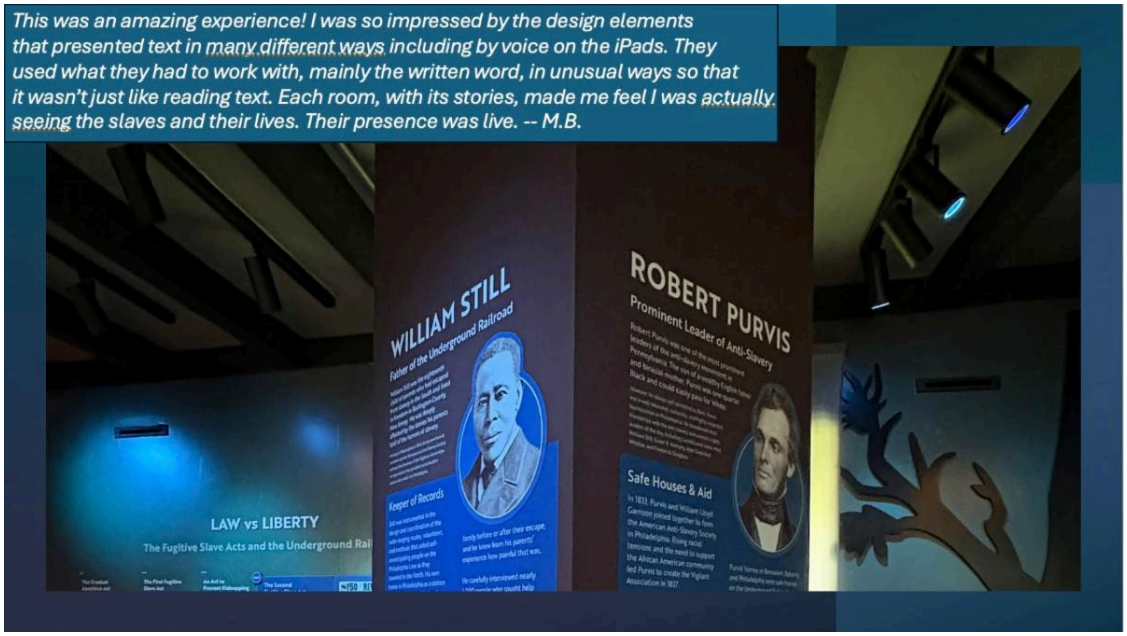
We appreciate you bearing with us, as we're almost entirely volunteer run.



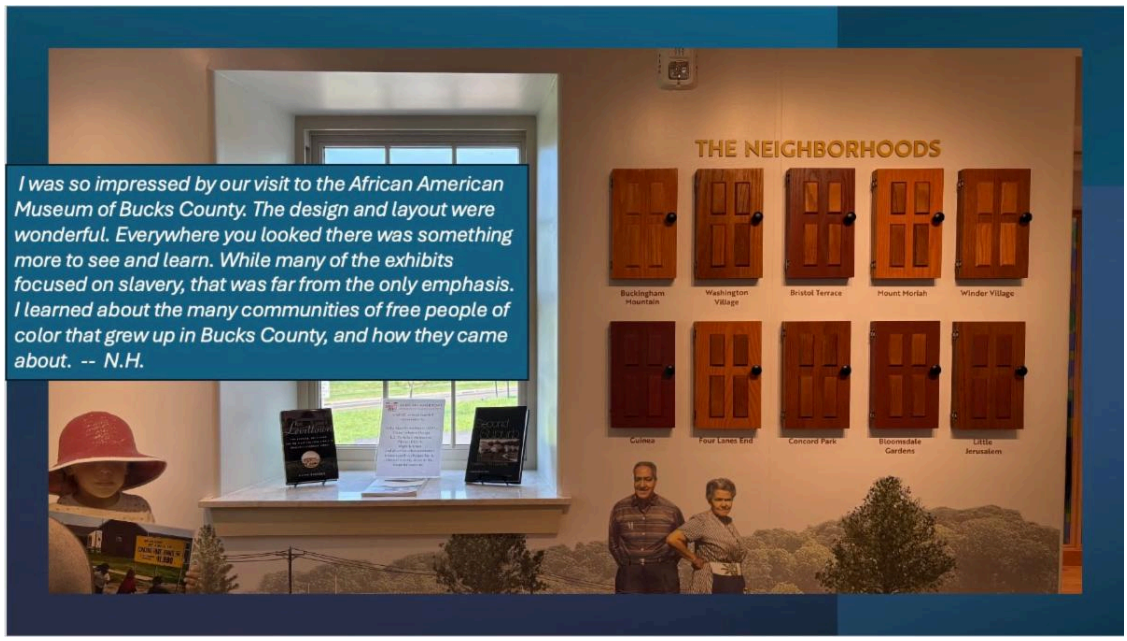




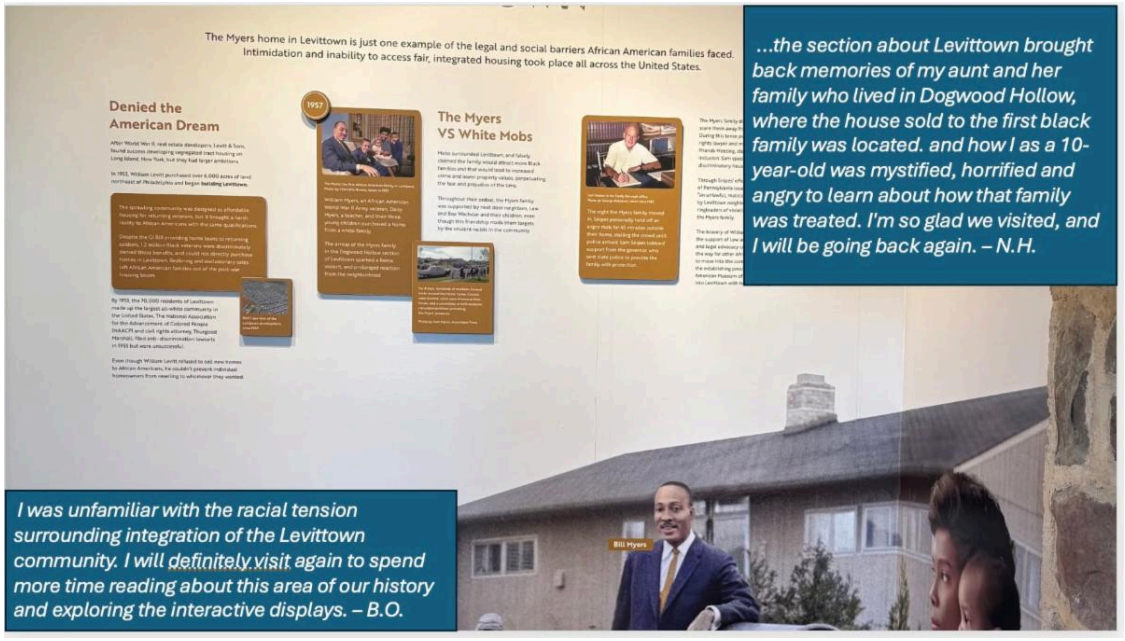
My first impression is what a fabulous job they did on restoring that building and taking such a small space and making it such an impactful site. They did an excellent job of tracing the history of enslavement in Bucks County and in the whole nation. I was pretty much emotionally overwhelmed by the end of the visit and now I would like to go back and take a much slower walkthrough to read more and reflect on what they presented. -- B.L.



This was an amazing experience! I was so impressed by the design elements that presented text in many different ways including by voice on the iPads. They used what they had to work with, mainly the written word, in unusual ways so that it wasn't just like reading text. Each room, with its stories, made me feel I was actually seeing the slaves and their lives. Their presence was live. -- M.B.



I was so impressed by our visit to the African American Museum of Bucks County. The design and layout were wonderful. Everywhere you looked there was something more to see and learn. While many of the exhibits focused on slavery, that was far from the only emphasis. I learned about the many communities of free people of color that grew up in Bucks County, and how they came about. -- N.H.





Our T-shirts are available on our website now!! (They will also be available at the Museum)

These are super-high quality shirts that we only got recently. And until now, they were only available at events.

If you've wanted one, or want one now, they are on the website! Click here



We also now have kids shirts!! There are two different styles and they are each available in natural or black! They are available in kids sizes S, M, and L. They are $15 plus $5 for shipping.

They are on the website! Click here


AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM
OF BUCKS COUNTY


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African American Museum of Bucks County

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Physical Location:

867 Langhorne-Newtown Road
Langhorne, Pennsylvania 19047

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