

Dred Scott Commemorative Weekend at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial

The year 2007 marks the 150th anniversary of the Dred Scott Decision, which began in St. Louis' Old Courthouse and was set in motion by two St. Louis slaves, Dred and Harriet Scott. Throughout 2007, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JNEM) will host a series of educational events based around the anniversary of the Dred Scott Decision, with a major four-day event March 3-6. A special exhibit at the Old Courthouse on the case and its impacts and connections to the civil rights movement in this country will open on March 3 and run for one year. The exhibit will include original Dred Scott court papers from the lower St. Louis courts, the state Supreme Court, and the U.S. Supreme Court, courtesy of the National Archives. A major academic symposium, March 1-3, will be co-sponsored by Washington University in St. Louis and JNEM and will discuss a variety of themes related to the trials of the Scotts, slavery and civil rights. An on-line educational event will commemorate the trial's significance from the site where it happened, the Old Courthouse, on the 150th anniversary of the decision, March 6, 2007. A new video on Dred Scott, created especially for JNEM by the History Channel, will be premiered on March 3 and will be shown to visitors for many years thereafter in the Old Courthouse as an introduction to the resource. The commemoration, which will be carried forward by smaller weekend programs and events between January and October of 2007, will be community-wide in scope. JNEM has been a lead player in a local committee, headed by Lynne Jackson, a direct descendant of Dred Scott, in coordinating efforts stretching from the local Black Repertory Theater to St. Louis universities, local history groups, black tourism groups, public libraries, historical societies, church organizations, groups that provide aid to at-risk youth, and many other unique partnerships.

St. Louis' Historic Old Courthouse, 11 North 4th Street

Draft –Subject to Change

Friday, March 2:

Special evening preview of the Dred Scott Exhibit

Saturday, March 3:

8:30 Premiere of the new Dred Scott video produced by the History Channel

9:00 Official opening and ribbon-cutting of the new Dred Scott Exhibit.

10:00 Keynote Speaker

11:00 Special hearing of the 1852 Missouri Supreme Court arguments in the Dred Scott Case presented by Grace Hill Settlement House, with the participation of Justice Ronnie White of the Missouri Supreme Court

Noon: Announcement of winners of the student writing contest

12:30 Launch of special cancellation limited production Dred Scott stamp, cachet and day of issuance

1:00 Special Dred Scott Trial Program performed by a school group

2:00 Choir Performance

3:00 Program on the preservation of African American Heritage Court Records

Sunday, March 4:

10:00 Presentation on the Eugene Field House – Wendy Dyer

Noon: Performance by Fred Morsell as Frederick Douglass

1:00 Special Dred Scott Trial Program performed by a school group

2:00 Central Baptist Choir performance

3:00 Program on African-American women in pre-Civil War St. Louis – Kris Zapalac

4:00 Presentation on the Scott Joplin House

Monday, March 5:

10:00 Program on African American Historical Sites in the downtown area

11:00 Special Dred Scott Trial Program

Noon: Performance by Fred Morsell as Frederick Douglass

1:00 Special Dred Scott Trial Program

2:00 Performance by Fred Morsell as Frederick Douglass

3:00 Special Dred Scott Trial Program performed by a school group

Tuesday, March 6:

10:00 On-line educational event commemorating the trial's significance

Noon: Performance by Fred Morsell as Frederick Douglass

2:00 On-line educational event commemorating the trial's significance