



News Release

Release Date:

Contact: Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site

Phone: 314-842-1867

Contact: Nick Sacco, Park Historian/Curator

Phone: 314-842-1867 ext. 229

Learn about the History of Slavery in St. Louis through a New Exhibit at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site

ST. LOUIS—The institution of slavery existed in St. Louis for more than 100 years. Famous African American civil rights leaders such as William Wells Brown, Dred and Harriet Scott, and James Milton Turner were once enslaved in St. Louis. When the Civil War broke out, nearly 4,500 African Americans were enslaved within the city’s limits. Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site is proud to help bring this history to life through a new exhibit now on display through Labor Day (September 4, 2023).

Using primary sources, historical artifacts, and individual stories of enslavement, this exhibit aims to connect the growth of slavery with the political, economic, and social history of the Gateway to the West during the 18th and 19th centuries. The park will also offer special programming throughout the spring and summer in conjunction with the exhibit. This series will begin with a presentation by Historian and Museum Curator Nick Sacco on Saturday, March 18 at 10:00AM inside the park’s visitor center theater. Check the [park’s calendar](#) for updates.

“While many people are familiar with the story of Dred and Harriet Scott, the history of slavery’s broader operation in St. Louis is less well-known,” said Nathan Wilson, Superintendent of Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. “This exhibit introduces visitors to our city’s complicated relationship with slavery and asks us to consider how we should remember this history in the present. We hope the community joins us in using this exhibit to have an extended conversation about the history and memory of slavery in St. Louis.”

The park extends a special invitation to area K-12 schools. Funding is available to pay transportation costs for schools that would like to schedule a field trip to see the exhibit. To learn more about the exhibit and schedule a school reservation, contact Historian and Museum Curator Nick Sacco at 314-842-1867 ext. 229 or email at nick_sacco@nps.gov.

“The History of Slavery in St. Louis” was developed by park staff in consultation with an advisory panel of area historians and educators. A summer teacher workshop and additional educational resources to accompany the exhibit are forthcoming.

Entrance to Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site is always free. For more information on the park, visit nps.gov/ulsg or call 314 842-1867.

ABOUT ULYSSES S. GRANT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE: Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site is located in St. Louis County. The park interprets the life and family of Ulysses S. Grant and the enslaved African-American workforce who lived on the property known as White Haven. The park and Visitor Center are open daily from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm with the exception of Thanksgiving Day, December 25 and January 1. Admission and programs are free of charge. For more information visit nps.gov/ulsg.

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