

# Black History Month

Allen Allensworth was born into slavery in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1842. He was the son of Levi and Phyllis Allensworth. He escaped and became a nurse during the Civil War and later joined the Navy and became a chief petty officer.

At the age of 12, he was “sold down river” for trying to learn to read and write. After some trading by slave dealers, he was taken to New Orleans, and bought by a slaveholder to become a jockey. Allensworth was the youngest of thirteen children of Phyllis (c. 1782 — 1878) and Levi Allensworth. Over the years, their family was scattered: his sister Lila escaped with her intended husband to Canada via the Underground Railroad; and the older boys William, George, Frank, Levi and Major were sold downriver to plantations in the Deep South, which continued to buy enslaved workers from the Upper South to develop the cotton industry. Mary Jane was his only sibling who grew up in Kentucky and married there; she purchased her freedom in 1849, gaining stability.

A.P. and Bett Starbird enslaved his mother. The mistress assigned Allen as a young slave to her son Thomas. When the Starbird boy started school, Allen began to learn from him, although it was illegal. After his father died when Allen was young, his mother chose to be sold as a cook to a neighbor, the attorney Nat Wolfe. When the Starbirds found Allen was learning to read, they separated him from their son and placed him with another family, the Talbots. Mrs. Talbot, a Quaker, was kind to Allen and continued to teach him to read and write; she also took him to a Sunday school for slave children. When Bett Starbird discovered this, she took Allen back. In 1854, she arranged with her husband’s partner John Smith to send the boy downriver to a plantation owned by John’s brother Pat, in Henderson, Kentucky, to put an end to his learning. On the steamboat, the boy was

placed in the care of a slave steward rather than being chained with other slaves below deck, who were being transported for sale to downriver markets.

Hebe Smith, Allen’s new enslaver, assigned him to be a houseboy; she prohibited him from continuing his studies and

whipped him for trying to do so. Also working in the household was a white orphan boy Eddie; the two boys became friends and helped each other. Suffering on the farm from a cruel overseer, in 1855 at age 13, Allen planned to escape to Canada. He spent two weeks hiding at a neighboring farm before returning to the Smiths for punishment. Later he ran away again. The Smiths and Starbirds agreed to sell him on the auction block in Henderson. Allensworth was sold again in Memphis, Tennessee and shipped to New Orleans. There he was bought by Fred Scruggs, who taught him to work as an exercise boy and jockey in Jefferson, Louisiana. Unlike others, his new enslaver was pleased to learn that the boy could read; he assigned him to race his best horse.

He was an American chaplain, colonel, city founder, and theologian. Allensworth gained his freedom in the Civil War when the Forty-fourth Illinois Volunteer Infantry was camped in Louisville, Kentucky. Young Allensworth dressed in an old uniform, plastered mud over his face and marched boldly up Main Street with the Union soldiers. After escaping, he served as a civilian nursing aide with the Forty-fourth Illinois. He later served a two-year enlistment in the U.S. Navy and was Captain’s steward and clerk on the civil war gunboat U.S.S. Tawah when it was destroyed in an engagement with Confederate batteries at Johnsonville, Tennessee. In 1877, he married American musician and activist Josephine Leavell (1855-1938), whom also born in Kentucky. They met while studying



ALLEN ALLENSWORTH

at Roger Williams University in Nashville, Tennessee. Leavell was an accomplished pianist, organist and music teacher.

The year of his marriage, Allensworth invited his mother to live with him and Josephine. They had several months together before she died in 1878, at the age of 96. Allensworth and Josephine had two daughters, Eva B., born about 1880, and Nella K., born about 1882. In 1900, they lived in San Francisco, California. After being honorably discharged from the Navy, Allensworth operated two restaurants with his brother William, taught in Freedman’s Bureau schools in Kentucky, was ordained as a minister, and served as Kentucky’s only black delegate to the Republican National conventions of 1880 and 1884.

After a two-year campaign in which he solicited the support of Congressmen John R. Lynch of Mississippi and Senator Joseph E. Brown of Georgia, President Grover Cleveland signed his appointment as Chaplain of the 24th Infantry Regiment. While serving at Fort Bayard, New Mexico Territory, Allensworth wrote Outline of Course of Study, and the Rules Governing Post Schools of Ft. Bayard, N.M., which became the standard Army manual on the education of enlisted personnel.

On April 7, 1906, after twenty years of service, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, making him the first black officer to receive this rank. In 1908, retired Chaplain Allensworth and four other black men formed the all-black town of Allensworth, California. Six years later, in 1914, Allensworth was crossing a Los Angeles street when he was killed by a motorcycle. Allensworth was buried with military honors.



Photo by Victoria Cox

**Lincoln Days committee members, LaRue County Judge Executive Blake Durrett, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park employees and community members gathered for a wreath-laying ceremony on Lincoln Square in Hodgenville in honor of Abraham Lincoln’s 216th birthday on Wednesday, Feb. 12.**

## LINCOLN

FROM **PAGE A3**

The second national monument to Lincoln was built in Washington, D.C.

The ground for the memorial was broken on Feb. 12, 1914, and was completed in 1922. It also holds great symbolism, such as having 36 columns for the 36 states that were a part of the Union at the time of his death and the utilization of a variety of stones from across the United States to symbolically bring the states together and symbolize the importance and

strength of the Union to Lincoln.

“I think it’s important that we remember his legacy; things like freedom, emancipation and the unity of our country meant so much to Abraham Lincoln that he fought for it during his presidency and, ultimately, he himself gave his life for,” Humphreys said. “I think that’s important to remember every day, but especially on this day of his 216th birthday.”

Following the presentation, the 2025 Lincoln Days Celebration Board of Directors was announced. They include Zachary Fairfax, Roxann King, Jeff Massie, Jim B. Phelps, Bryce Shumate,

Kelly Thurman and Diana Walters. A top hat was also passed around during the event to benefit two area food pantries; \$391 was raised on Wednesday, which will be matched by Lincoln Days for a total donation of \$782

Other celebrations of Lincoln’s birthday included LaRue County Judge Executive Blake Durrett and Lincoln Days committee members placing a wreath before the Abraham Lincoln statue on the square in downtown Hodgenville and employees of the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace Park placing a wreath next to the Symbolic Birth Cabin inside the park’s Memorial Building.

## CALENDAR

FROM **PAGE A4**

books will be presenting for Ancestral Trails Historical Monthly meeting. Presentation The conflict between North and South in the Civil War was fought in small communities across the Bluegrass, where armed men were quick to settle differing opinions with the barrel of a gun. FMI contact mgbarnes@hotmail.com or 270-234-4541.

### Celebrate Recovery

Held every Thursday evening from 6-8 p.m. at Ovesen Heights Baptist Church located at 1604 Bardstown Road in Hodgenville. FMI call 270-735-5005.

### Lions Club

The Hodgenville Lions Club meets the second and fourth Thursday evenings at 6 p.m. at Kayla’s Fill Up restaurant. Come out and learn more about the Lions Club or call Linda Henry at 502-888-9256 or email lionlindahenry@yahoo.com for more information.

### PUBLIC LIBRARY — 270-358-3851

Wed. Feb. 19 -Book Page Hearts — 3 p.m. Class limit of 24, teens and adults call to register. Thurs., Feb. 20 -Closed for staff conferences. Fri. Feb. 21 — Snow Globes — 2 p.m. Class limit of 24, teens and adults call to register.

SEE **CALENDAR/PAGE A8**

## On Wednesday, March 12th

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## GRACE

FROM **PAGE A4**

How can we appropriate this saving grace? Paul says, “By grace are you saved through faith.” It is God’s grace and our faith which brings salvation.

True faith consists of belief and trust. We believe all we have heard about Jesus, and we come trusting all we

have to Him. Repentance must be coupled with faith. Paul said it is “Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). Repent of your sin and put your faith in Jesus Christ, and you become a child of God, and no one can sever that relationship.

Salvation comes from God. God’s Spirit convicts us of our sins and points us to Christ. He causes us to repent. We let go

and God does it all. “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). But God’s gift is of no value unless we receive it.

God offers a free gift—the forgiveness of sin and Jesus as Savior. Have you received this gift? Then, thank God and seek to live for Him daily. As Sam Jones said, “There, but for the grace of God, go I.” Amazing Grace!!

## What is my home worth?

Three separate but related values of your house

1. Tax Assessment
2. Market Value
3. Appraisal Value

The **Market Value** is the price that buyer is willing to pay that the seller is willing to accept. It is very important to work with your agent to estimate the market value so that your asking price is realistic. Your agent can assist you by obtaining comps. (Comparable homes that have sold recently thus indicating what buyers are willing to pay). Then they can help you fine tune your asking price with evaluation of external and internal characteristics of your home. These features may place your asking price and ultimately market price different from the reviewed comps. The agent can also help interpret the effect of supply and demand. If there are numerous buyers and few homes available the market value will be higher, the opposite is true as well. Again, the market value always reflects what the buyer is willing to pay and what the seller will accept.



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**Tuesday, March 4th @ 3pm**

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