

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NETWORK TO FREEDOM**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Type (pick one): ☒ Site ☐ Facility ☐ Program

Name (of what you are nominating): **The Stone Academy**

Address: **115 Jefferson Street**

City, State, Zip: **Zanesville, Ohio 43701**

County: **Muskingum**

Congressional District: **18th**

Physical Location of Site/facility (if different):

☐ Address not for publication?

Date Submitted: **January 12, 2011**

Summary: Tell us in 200 words or less what is being nominated and how it is connected to the Underground Railroad.

The Stone Academy, the only public building in Ohio from the early 1800s still standing, was constructed in 1808 to serve as Ohio's statehouse. Even more significant, is that the building served as the center of the abolitionist movement (formerly Springfield), which in Putnam was heavily intertwined with the Underground Railroad.¹ Putnam was settled primarily by anti-slavery New Englanders while most who settled across the river in Zanesville were pro-slavery Virginians. In 1840 the building was converted to a private residence and, according to oral tradition, was used as a station on the Underground Railroad.

In the 1830s, the Stone Academy hosted a series of anti-slavery lectures given by noted orator Theodore Weld. The Ohio Abolitionist Society state conventions were held in the Academy in 1835 and 1839. Speakers at the 1835 event included John Rankin, Weld and Henry B. Stanton. Pro-slavery mobs from Zanesville often tried to disrupt these meetings, often resorting to violence.

The Stone Academy, part of the Putnam Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places, is recognized as an Underground Railroad site by the Friends of Freedom Society and operated as a museum by the Pioneer and Historical Society of Muskingum County.

FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE USE ONLY

I hereby certify that this ☐ site ☐ facility ☐ program is included in the Network to Freedom.

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

¹ Putnam was originally called Springfield, but the village's name was changed to Putnam in 1814.



Owner/Manager (Share contact information - YES)**Name:** Pioneer and Historical Society of Muskingum County**Address:** 115 Jefferson Street**City, State, Zip:** Zanesville, Ohio 43701**Phone:** 740-454-9500**Fax:** 740-454-9500**E-mail:** phscomc@sbcglobal.net**Owner/Manager (Share contact information ___Y ___ N)****Name:****Address:****City, State, Zip:****Phone:****Fax:****E-mail:****Owner/Manager (Share contact information ___Y ___ N)****Name:****Address:****City, State, Zip:****Phone:****Fax:****E-mail:****Application Preparer (Enter only if different from contact above.) (Share contact information- YES)****Name:** Jim Geyer**Address:** 115 Jefferson Street**City, State, Zip:** Zanesville, Ohio 43701**Phone:** 740-454-9500**Fax:** 740-454-9500**E-mail:** phscomc@sbcglobal.net

Privacy Information: The Network to Freedom was established, in part, to facilitate sharing of information among those interested in the Underground Railroad. Putting people in contact with others who are researching related topics, historic events, or individuals or who may have technical expertise or resources to assist with projects is one of the most effective means of advancing Underground Railroad commemoration and preservation. Privacy laws designed to protect individual contact information (i.e., home or personal addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers, or e-mail addresses), may prevent NPS from making these connections. If you are willing to be contacted by others working on Underground Railroad activities and to receive mailings about Underground Railroad-related events, please add a statement to your letter of consent indicating what information you are willing to share.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom to nominate properties, facilities, and programs to the Network to Freedom. A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Response to this request is required for inclusion in the Network to Freedom in accordance with the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act (P.L. 105-203).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 25 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Coordinator, National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, NPS, 601 Riverfront Drive, Omaha, Nebraska 68102.



SITES:

In addition to the responses to each question, applications must also include the following attachments:

- 1) Letters of consent from all property owners for inclusion in the Network to Freedom (see sample in instructions)
- 2) Text and photographs of all site markers
- 3) Original photographs illustrating the current appearance and condition of the site being nominated
- 4) Maps showing the location of the site

S1. Type:

☒ Building ___ Object ___ District (neighborhood)
___ Structure ___ Landscape/natural feature ___ Archeological site
___ Other (describe):

S2. Is the site listed in the National Register of Historic Places? YES

What is the listing name: part of Putnam Historic District of Zanesville

S3. Ownership of site:

___ Private ☒ Private, non-profit (501c3) ___ Multiple ownership
___ Public, local government ___ Public, state government ___ Public, federal government

S4a. Type(s) of Underground Railroad Association (select the one(s) that fit best)

___ Station ___ Assoc. w/ prominent person ___ Rebellion site ___ Legal challenge
___ Escape ___ Rescue ___ Kidnapping ___ Maroon community
___ Destination ___ Church w/active congregation ___ Cemetery ___ Transportation route
___ Military site ___ Commemorative site/monument ___ historic district/neighborhood
___ Archeological site ☒ Other: Public Building

S4. Describe the site's association and significance to the Underground Railroad. Provide citations. Timelines are encouraged.



The Stone Academy's association and significance to the Underground Railroad is reflected in its importance to Putnam's anti-slavery residents as a public building and later its recognition as part of the Putnam Historic District. The Putnam Historic District is listed on the National Historic Register for "... the significant role that Putnam residents and institutions played in the Ohio debate about the abolition of slavery and the activity of sheltering fugitive slaves in the years prior to the Civil War."² Harriet Beecher Stowe who visited in 1837, in a letter to her husband, reported that half of Putnam's residents were abolitionists.³ Putnam had been established by anti-slavery New Englanders. The village's founders, General Rufus Putnam (after whom the village was later named), Levi Whipple, and Dr. Increase Matthews were all anti-slavery supporters.⁴

In 1808, the inhabitants of Putnam began building the Stone Academy. At the time, the Stone Academy was built "the Putnam settlers still lived in crude homes."⁵ Money to build the Academy was raised through subscriptions from the community. However, it is generally agreed that Increase Matthews, Ebenezer Buckingham, and A.A. Guthrie are responsible for its construction, the latter two of which were heavily involved in the Underground Railroad. They had hoped the building would serve as the home of the state capitol, but their hopes were dashed when Zanesville was chosen instead. Although the building was not able to carry out its initial purpose, the building became the center of the community, serving as a place of education and meeting place, as well as a symbol of the strength of the abolitionist and Underground Railroad movements in Muskingum County.

The Underground Railroad activity of Putnam's residents is well documented in the Siebert Collection, county histories, and personal reminiscences. Underground Railroad participants in Putnam included A.A. Guthrie, Alvah Buckingham, Levi Whipple, Major Horace Nye, and his wife Lucinda Belknap Nye, all except Lucinda were listed by Siebert as Underground Railroad "operators" in Muskingum County.⁶ However, Siebert rarely mentions the wives as conductors. Lucinda was very involved in abolitionist activities. She served as the president of the county's Female Anti-Slavery Association, organized in 1836. So there is little doubt that if her husband and her home were involved, she too, would have been. Mrs. Nye was also connected to the Putnam Stone Academy, having taught there before marrying.

In the postscript of a letter Siebert received from Dr. H.S. Nye of Putnam dated June 24, 1893, Nye wrote, "Maj. Horace Nye, A.A. Guthrie, Mathew Gillespie, Levi Whipple were among the bravest and most fearless conductors. All honor them and their like and may the written testimony to their memory never be effaced!" Dr. Nye had his own connection to the Underground Railroad. In the same correspondence, he recounts an incident that occurred when he was practicing medicine in Bloomingburgh, Fayette County, in which he was called upon to give medical attention to a freedom seeker who had been "poisoned by the wild vine on his way through the woods."⁷

² NHR Nomination Form, Section number 8, page 3. The National Historic Register form was amended in 2003 to include Abolition and Underground Railroad.

³ Charles Stowe, *The Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1890), 87. Also see, Norris F. Schneider, *Y Bridge City: The Story of Zanesville and Muskingum County, Ohio* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co, 1950), 202

⁴ The three men were also related. J.F. Everhart, *History of Muskingum County* (Columbus, OH: J.F. Everhart, 1882), 72-73.

⁵ Elijah H. Church, *Zanesville Daily Courier*, 17 May 1877. See also Norris F. Schneider, "The Famous Stone House" *Zanesville Times Signal*, 7 October 1945.

⁶ Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom* (London: Macmillan, 1898), 427-428.

⁷ Dr. H. S. Nye, "Letter to Wilbur Siebert," *Wilbur H. Siebert Collection* [microform] (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society), reel 11. In correspondence dated August 22, 1892, Rev. Stevenson of Marietta, Ohio, also mentions the involvement of the Buckingham's and Guthrie's. He writes, "The Buckingham's and Guthrie's were the principal U.G.R.R. rich folks they were, they were new school Presbyterians."



A.A. Guthrie, who Siebert referred to as “the most fearless station agent and conductor,”⁸ was a vocal opponent of the fugitive slave law. In 1859, Zanesville was the site of a fugitive slave case. William Jackson, a freedom seeker, was arrested by U.S. Marshal Cox and after going before the courts was sent back into slavery.⁹ After which, Guthrie proposed to donate to the Bible Society, Bibles “to be by them distributed as Mr. Cox can obtain signatures of respectable citizens to the following declaration, viz: ‘The Undersigned citizens of Muskingum Co, hereby declare their readiness to aid Marshall Cox in catching runaway negroes according to the provisions of the fugitive slave law.’”¹⁰ Guthrie knew all too well when he made the proposition that Cox would have little success if he undertook such an endeavor because it had been reported that “the only practical result of the proceeding aside from sending a human being into life-long bondage, was the disgust it inspired in the bosom of all intelligent and well-disposed people for an institution that required such disgraceful proceedings to sustain it ...”¹¹ When A.A Guthrie died in 1874, the *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* reported that he was “one of the original anti-Slavery agitators of Ohio.”¹² While only A.A. Guthrie is listed in Siebert as a conductor, his brothers Stephen and George were also involved. The Underground Railroad activities of the Guthrie’s were further documented in George Guthrie’s wife unpublished autobiography and Stephen Guthrie’s “A Pioneer Sketch.”¹³ George Guthrie’s wife wrote, “I well remember hiding three children in our attic over one Sabbath while their owners were riding through the street in pursuit.”¹⁴ According to Stephen, the Guthrie’s often worked with the county’s African American residents, including William Harris who also resided in Putnam.¹⁵

The participation of Putnam’s residents in the Underground Railroad was an outgrowth of their abolitionism. In 1833, support for abolition gained momentum in the area when the Muskingum County Emancipation Society to Promote the Abolition of Slavery and Oppressive Laws was organized under the leadership of Putnam resident, Levi Whipple.¹⁶ The society was quite adamant in its beliefs and as proof of their resolve signed petitions which were then “forwarded to the Legislature of the State, praying for the amelioration of the condition of its colored population, particularly that they might be permitted to give testimony in the courts, and allowed to participate in the benefits of the school fund—and to Congress asking for the immediate abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the slave trade between the United States.”¹⁷ The Stone Academy was often at the center of the society’s activities, it is there that they gathered regularly to pray for the abolition of slavery. The society also organized a Bible Class and Sunday School for African Americans at the Stone Academy.¹⁸ Members of the society in accordance with the resolutions that were adopted by the Ohio State Abolition Society believed that “the intellectual, moral, and

⁸ Siebert, *Mysteries of Ohio’s Underground Railroads*, 217.

⁹ Siebert, *Mysteries of Ohio’s Underground Railroads*, 218. “Another Fugitive Slave Case in Zanesville,” *Frederick Douglass’ Paper*, 13 May 1859.

¹⁰ “Deacon Cox has the Opportunity to Circulate the Scriptures,” *Ohio Repository*, 6 September 1959. This article was quoted from the *Zanesville Courier*, however this issue of the *Courier* could not be located.

¹¹ “The Fugitive Slave Case in Zanesville,” *New York Herald Tribune*, 10 May 1859. This article quoted from the *Zanesville Courier*, but this issue could not be located.

¹² 17 February 1874.

¹³ The homes of both brothers are listed as part of the Putnam Historic District. A.A. Guthrie House (405 Woodlawn Avenue) and George (521 Woodlawn Avenue).

¹⁴ Norris F. Schneider, “Zanesville Rioters Attacked Putnam Conductors of the Underground Railroad,” *Zanesville News*, 17 October 1943.

¹⁵ Ibid. See also Stephen H. Guthrie, *A Sketch of Stephen Guthrie, Senior, and his Children; A Pioneer Family of the Ohio Land Company of 1787* (Zanesville, OH: n.s., 1891), 27.

¹⁶ J.F. Everhart, *History of Muskingum County*, 146-147. Beginning in 1835, the same year that the first Ohio Anti-Slavery state convention was held, Stone Academy also served as a school for girls. The school was founded by Sarah Sturges Buckingham who was the future wife of Rev. George Beecher, another one of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s brothers.

¹⁷ Everhart, *History of Muskingum County*, 147.

¹⁸ Ibid., 147.



religious improvement of the free people of color in this state and elsewhere would promote the cause of freedom”¹⁹

While in the 1820s the residents of Putnam worshipped and centered their anti-slavery activities in Zanesville, in the 1830s they moved these activities to Putnam’s Stone Academy. It is believed that these meetings eventually led to the founding of the Putnam Presbyterian Church. The church was an outgrowth of Putnam residents adopting a more radical stance in their politics concerning slavery. They soon saw that their new ideas would not be welcome in the pro-slavery town of Zanesville. While Zanesville had supported earlier colonization efforts, “they began to feel alarm when Muskingum County Emancipation Society to Promote the Abolition of Slavery and Oppressive Laws.”²⁰ By 1835, they formed the Putnam Presbyterian Church, the first pastor of which was William Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe. The church often invited those involved in the cause of Abolition to speak. Frederick Douglass spoke at the church in 1850 and 1852.

In 1835, preparations began being made for the Ohio Abolition Society State Convention to be held later that year at the Academy. In preparation for the convention, Theodore Weld, noted abolitionist and Underground Railroad activist came to speak, however his lecture was soon interrupted. Goodsel Buckingham writes:

The first abolition lecture I ever attended was in the old stone house in Putnam in 1835, when T.D. Weld delivered a course of lectures. A mob came over from Zanesville and broke up our meeting... I arose and urged the audience to be calm and remain, but in vain. We were hurried down stairs, and I walked out arm in arm with Weld until we reached the gate, when the mob separated us. We went to A.A. Guthrie’s.²¹

Theodore Weld also recounted the violence in a letter to Lewis Tappan. He writes:

Mob came, broke the windows [and] doors, tore off the gate, attacked me when I came out with stones and clubs, etc. This continued until the trustees of the room shut it up. Then adjourned to private room. In short every kind of outrage was committed upon the Abolitionists and colored people.²²

In the aftermath of Weld’s lecture, “...four hundred Colored people in Zanesville and Putnam were greatly oppressed in continued apprehension and panic” and therefore decided to stay away from the convention fearing violent reprisals and other forms of revenge for attending.²³ When one African American man did show up for the convention, it was decided that he should not attend the proceedings. According to William Culbertson, during the convention “Zanesville men belonging to the lower strata of society, encouraged by the more respectable class, crossed the river, disturbed the meeting, defaced to some extent the Academy, insulted ladies who had been in attendance and dispersed the convention.”²⁴ Threats had also been made to burn the homes of “Major Nye, Mr. Howells, and Mr. A.A. Guthrie, which for some time had to be guarded by their friends.”²⁵ Stephen Guthrie, “slept for weeks with two guns and a good pitchfork at the head of his bed, determined to defend his family and property at the risk of his life.”²⁶

¹⁹ *Proceedings of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Convention: Held at Putnam, On the Twenty Second, Twenty-Third and Twenty-Fourth of April, 1935*(Beaumont and Wallace, 1835), 4.

²⁰ Norris F. Schneider, “Stone Academy Faced Abolition Rage.” *Zanesville Times Recorder*, 31 July 1983.

²¹ Goodsel Buckingham, *Autobiography of G. Buckingham* (New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1884),

²² Gilbert H Barnes and Dwight L. Dumond, eds., *Letters of Theodore Dwight Weld, Angelina Grimké Weld and Sarah Grimké* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1965), 271.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Schneider, “Stone Academy Faced Abolition Rage.”

²⁵ Everhart, *History of Muskingum County*, 147. See also Schneider, “Stone Academy Faces Abolition Rage.”

²⁶ Guthrie, *A Sketch of Stephen Guthrie*, 26.



Despite the violence, the convention continued. Putnam residents and Underground Railroad operators Matthew Gillespie, A. A. Guthrie, Horace Nye, and Levi Whipple served as delegates from Muskingum. In addition to Theodore Weld, speakers at the convention included James Birney and Henry B. Stanton.

In 1839, even though the building had been purchased by John S. Potwin in 1838, the Academy was again the site of the State's Abolition Society convention and more violence. According to Schneider, "A mob from Zanesville again attacked the Stone Academy. The toughs also set fire to the barns of Abraham France and Levi Whipple where the speakers' horses were stabled."²⁷ The rioters had been incited by propaganda that read, "The county of Muskingum is, unfortunately, infested with a little club of incendiaries and traitors, prowling to and fro, making appointments at churches and school houses... And it is known to be a fact that these ABOLITIONISTS are secretly aiming to bring about amalgamation of Negroes with white people."²⁸

A report of the convention's proceedings, by one of the rioters, further incited violence. The rioters threatened to burn Putnam, however, they were met and stopped by armed men led by Mayor Z. M. Chandler. This thwarted attack on Putnam led to the organizing of the "Putnam Greys" a voluntary military group that was charged with the village's protection "on the ground of self preservation, but also on account of their sympathy with the cause of right."²⁹

In addition to being a meeting place, the Stone Academy is believed to have been a site where fugitive slaves were concealed. Accounts attributing "station" status to the Stone Academy are perhaps best delegated to "oral tradition." One such account appeared in the *Zanesville Signal*, February 8, 1899. In the article, William Lawrence mentioned that "... Putnam was one of the first and most important stations on the underground railway and it was under the old stone house where fugitive slaves were concealed until they could be safely transported to the next place of safety..."³⁰ In a later article written by W.F. Gates, he recounts an incident written by an unidentified informant who was witness to such Underground Railroad events as a young boy. According to the informant, a freedom seeker who had "came up river from Marietta" was assisted by Putnam's African American community who hid him in "an old tenement building at the end of Putnam avenue." In 1850, Muskingum County's African American citizens had publically declared in opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law, "That we will throw the arms of protection around our fugitive brethren and sisters, and that we will feed and clothe them, and assist them in their escape from Negro Hounds, and bloody men, and perform all the deeds of love and mercy toward them that lies in our power, let the consequences be what they may."³¹ Despite their resolve, in this incident the whereabouts of the freedom seeker had been confided to a "white man" who alerted authorities. In the pursuit by the U.S. Marshal, the freedom seeker was injured in the shoulder by a gunshot, but he was able to escape and eventually found refuge in the Potwin (the then owners of the Putnam Stone Academy) cellar where he disappeared "into oblivion."³²

²⁷ Thomas J. Sheppard, "An Abolition Center," *Ohio Archaeology and Historical Society* 19 (July 1910): 267.

²⁸ Schneider, "Stone Academy Faced Abolition Rage."

²⁹ Everhart, *History of Muskingum County*, 235

³⁰ William Lawrence, *Zanesville Signal*, 8 February 1899. This newspaper was contained in a clippings file. There are several newspaper articles that designate Stone Academy as an Underground Railroad site and make reference to earlier articles dating back to the 19th century, however, they could not be located in microfilm or digital holdings of the newspapers. Many of the articles are supposed to be in bound volumes, however, they also could not be located.

³¹ "Committee of the Colored Citizens in Muskingum County." *The North Star*, 5 December 1850.

³² W.F. Gates, "Tales from Old Zanesville: A Runaway Slave Escapes After an Existing Chase in Putnam," 15 October 1939, sec 2, pg. 6. While the informant is unidentified and the newspaper is from the 20th century, there are too many specific details in the story to dismiss it.



S5. Provide a history of the site since its time of significance to the Underground Railroad, including physical changes, changes in ownership or use.

When the Potwin family converted the Stone Academy into a private residence in 1840 an addition was added to the rear of the building. The property was purchased by Sarah Robins in 1858. In the 1870s it was home to noted actress, writer, and activist Elizabeth Robins, Sarah's granddaughter. It was sold to Mr. and Mrs. James McHenry in 1895. Their daughter, Lydia McHenry Taylor, was born in house, was married there, and lived there until her death in 1983. She bequeathed the building to the Pioneer and Historical Society of Muskingum County on the condition that it is operated as a museum. In addition, the estate of Mrs. Taylor provides the Society with an annual subsidy of \$5000.00 to operate the museum.

S6. Describe current educational programs, tours, markers, signs, brochures, site bulletins, or plaques at the site. Include text and photographs of markers.

The Stone Academy is open to the public, during regular hours and by appointment, as a local history museum, library, and archives. Group tours are provided for school and community groups as well as motor coaches. Several brochures describing museum contents and exhibits are available to visitors. Our museum rack cards are widely distributed at other area tourism sites.

Established in 2009, the Dale Moore Curry Local History Library and Archives is housed in the Stone Academy. Researchers have access to the Society's collection of books, articles, and documents about Zanesville and Muskingum County history. The archives features letters and papers of Putnam founder Dr. Increase Mathews. A special section devoted to the Underground Railroad is planned with the hope of acquiring related letters and papers from local private collectors. In 2011 we expect to purchase internet rights to use the Ohio Historical Society's Siebert Collection so that our visitors can access that information.

Two Ohio Historical markers are located on the property. The most recent marker was dedicated in 2009 as part of the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Stone Academy.





Side One

In the early 1800s, opposing attitudes existed in the separate communities of Putnam and Zanesville. Anti-slavery New Englanders settled Putnam while pro-slavery Virginians and Kentuckians settled Zanesville. The Emancipation Society of Putnam formed in June, 1831. The Muskingum County Emancipation Society formed in Zanesville the following month, but only had a few members. In March 1835, noted abolitionist speaker Theodore D. Weld came to Zanesville to lecture but was turned away by pro-slavery sympathizers. When the Stone Academy in Putnam provided a room, the lecture was disrupted by a mob and Weld took refuge in the home of church Elder A.A. Guthrie. After seeking the Sheriff's and County Prosecutor's protection, the Muskingum County Emancipation Society invited the Abolitionist Society of Ohio to hold its convention in Putnam in April 1835. Again, a pro-slavery mob disrupted the proceedings. Eventually, hundreds signed petitions in favor of immediate emancipation. [continued on other side]



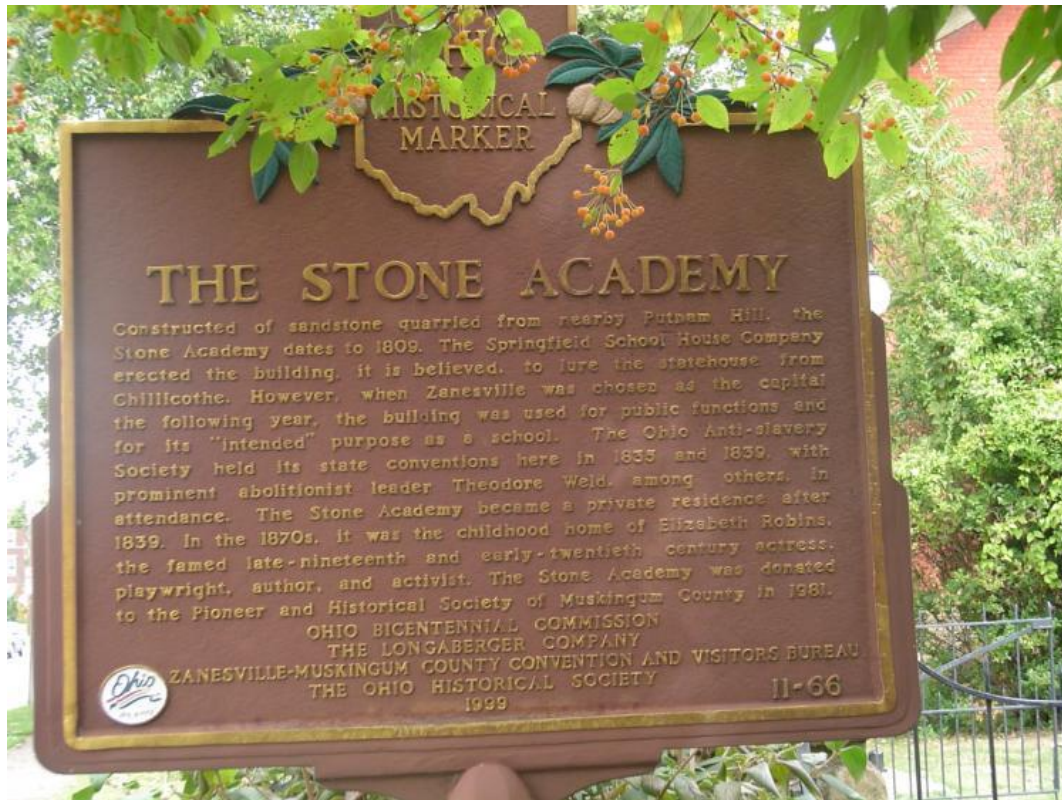
Side Two

[continued from other side] By 1836, the Muskingum County Anti-Slavery Society, Female Anti-Slavery Society, and New Concord Society represented anti-slavery sentiments in Muskingum County, but tensions grew. Pro-slavery forces disrupted conventions and threatened the homes and property of Putnam residents H.C. Howell, Horace Nye, Levi Whipple, and Adam Francis. In response, the "Putnam Grays" formed using weapons from Harpers Ferry. Fugitive slaves traveling from Deavertown were hidden in the hollow abutment of the Third Street Muskingum River Bridge connecting Putnam and Zanesville. Fugitives were sent to the homes of Alexander Brown, Robert Folet, and William Speers at New Concord, and G.W. and Edward Adams at Trinway. Meanwhile Dr. J.M. Simpson, a noted African American abolitionist in Zanesville, wrote songs, essays, and newspaper articles that were circulated nationwide. In 1837, Harriet Beecher Stowe visited her brother Reverend William Beecher, a pastor at the Putnam Presbyterian Church where Frederick Douglass spoke in 1852.

BELPRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PIONEER AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MUSKINGUM COUNTY
OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



1999 Historical Marker



THE STONE ACADEMY

Constructed of sandstone quarried from nearby Putnam Hill, the Stone academy dates to 1809. The Springfield School House Company erected the building, it is believed, to lure the statehouse from Chillicothe. However, when Zanesville was chosen as the capital the following year, the building was used for public functions and for its “intended” purpose as a school. The Ohio Anti-slavery Society held its state conventions here in 1835 and 1839, with prominent abolitionist leader Theodore Weld, among others, in attendance.

The Stone Academy became a private residence after 1839. In the 1870s, it was the childhood home of Elizabeth Robins, the famed late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century actress, playwright, author, and activist. The Stone Academy was donated to the Pioneer and Historical Society of Muskingum County in 1981.

Ohio Bicentennial Commission
The Longaberger Company
Zanesville-Muskingum County Convention and Visitors Bureau



The Ohio Historical Society
1999

S7. Include a bibliography. Discuss historical sources of information and how you used them.

Barnes, G.H. and Dumond, D.L, eds. *Letters of Theodore Weld, Angelina Grimke Weld and Sarah Grimke, 1822-1844*. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1965.

In a letter to abolitionist dated March 9, 1936, Weld is responding to Lewis Tappan's accusation that African Americans had been excluded from the Antislavery Convention in Putnam. In responding to the accusation, which he says is unfounded, he gives an account of the events that occurred during his time in Putnam. According to Weld, the exclusion of African Americans was the result of racial hostilities that existed in Zanesville and not because of racial discrimination by participants in the convention.

Buckingham, Goodsel. *Autobiography of G. Buckingham*. New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1884.

In the 1830s, after experiencing a religious conversion, Goodsel Buckingham became an abolitionist. His autobiography gives an account of the lecture Theodore Weld gave in Putnam in preparation for the Ohio Antislavery State Convention in 1835. According to Buckingham, this was the first abolitionist lecture he ever attended. He gives an account of the violence that erupted between Putnam and Zanesville as a result of the lecture. Buckingham would go on to become an antislavery lecturer throughout Ohio. With Weld's assistance he wrote an antislavery tract arguing that the Bible was not in support of slavery. He also unsuccessfully ran twice for public offices as an antislavery candidate.

Church, Elijah Hart. *Zanesville Daily Courier*. 17 May 1877.

Elijah Church Hart was a longtime resident of Putnam. He wrote over eighty articles for the *Zanesville Courier* in the 1870s that dealt with the early history of Putnam and Zanesville, including abolitionist activity. Some of the history came from the journals he had been keeping for over thirty years. Everhart, Lewis, and Schneider refer to Church in their writings. Issues of the *Zanesville Daily Courier* for this period are not available. A collection of his articles supposedly still exists, but copy could not be located. However, some clippings and transcriptions of the articles, such as this one, exist in the holdings of the Pioneer and Historical Society of Muskingum County. In this article, Church talks about the building of the Stone Academy.

Everhart, J. F. *History of Muskingum County with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Pioneers*. JF. Everhart & Co., 1882

The Everhart work was compilation of earlier material. He specifically mentions relying on articles written by Elijah Hart Church (see above) and Addison Kingsbury's *Retrospection* (see below). He also relied heavily on public records.

Gates, W.F. "Tales from Old Zanesville: A Runaway Slave Escapes After an Existing Chase in Putnam." 15 October 1939.

W.F. Gates was born in Zanesville in 1865. He was a music teacher, but was very interested in preserving Zanesville's history. Using newspapers and oral histories from people alive in the 1840s and 1850s, he wrote articles for the local newspapers. While Gates published the story about the freedom seeker in the 20th century, he was recounting this story from a written account of a man who was a young boy at the time. The account is full of detail giving the location where



the freedom seeker came from and the specific sites involved in the incident. The account also mentions the involvement of the African American community. It is very difficult to corroborate such accounts because the newspapers from the period did not often report on abolitionist and Underground Railroad activity and in some cases the newspapers from the period in question have not survived.

Guthrie, Stephen. H. *A Sketch of Stephen Guthrie, Senior, and his Children: A Pioneer Family of the Ohio Land Company of 1787*. Zanesville, OH: n.s., 1891.

This *Sketch* contains information about abolitionism in Putnam, including the Ohio Antislavery Convention of 1835. Guthrie also provides information on the Underground Railroad activity of the Guthrie family. While Siebert lists only A.A. Guthrie (Stephen's brother) as being involved, Stephen mentions himself and another brother named Erastus who lived in Morgan County, OH.

Kingsbury, Addison. *Retrospection: An Historical Resume of the Putnam Presbyterian Church Zanesville, Ohio*. Zanesville: Sullivan & Parsons, 1877.

Addison Kingsbury was the second pastor of the Putnam Presbyterian Church, serving from 1840 until 1878. The work cited, was a "look back" on his years as the Presbyterian Pastor in Putnam. His *Retrospection* also contains information about abolitionism in Putman, including the founding and activities of the emancipation society.

Lawrence, William. *Zanesville Signal*, 8 February 1899.

William Lawrence wrote columns about local history for Zanesville newspapers. This particular article was located in a clippings file of the Pioneer and Historical Society of Muskingum County. This article could not be located in the holdings of the newspaper. It is not in the microfilmed or digitized versions of the Newspapers.

Lewis, Thomas W. "Zanesville's Famous Stone House." *Zanesville Signal*, 1937 January 1.

Thomas Lewis was a local historian who wrote for Zanesville's local newspapers. In this article he discusses the history of the Stone Academy and makes reference to the Stone Academy as "a refuge for fleeing slaves." In this article, he names W. F. Gates as a source for this history. Lewis also published, *Zanesville and Muskingum County Ohio* (1927), which provides a history of the Stone Academy.

National Register of Historic Places. *Putnam Historic District*. 75001511

The Putnam Historic District was originally listed on the National Register of Historic Places in. In the nomination was amended to include Underground Railroad Activity. The nomination gives an account of Putnam properties involved in abolition and the Underground Railroad. Among the properties listed, is the Putnam Stone Academy.

Schneider, Norris F. *Y Bridge City: The Story of Zanesville and Muskingum County, Ohio*. Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1950.

Norris Schneider was a Zanesville High School English teacher hired by the Zanesville Publishing Company to write columns about local history for the *Signal* and *Times Recorder*. While his columns relied heavily on the works of earlier local historians his passion for his work often produced new insights to previous accounts. *Y Bridge City* was originally to be a compilation of his earlier writing but instead was written as a general survey of Zanesville and Muskingum



County history. He also served as president of the Pioneer and Historical Society of Muskingum County for many years. His papers are currently in the holdings of the Ohio Historical Society. The book contains the history of Putnam, including a discussion of the Stone Academy.

Schneider, Norris F. "Zanesville Rioters Attacked Putnam Conductors of Underground Railroad." *Zanesville News*, 17 October 1943.

This article discusses the attacks from Zanesville on the Antislavery Conventions. He also identifies Putnam residents who participated in the conventions and their connection to the Underground Railroad. In the article, he mentions an unpublished autobiography of Mrs. George Guthrie, which details both her and her husband's involvement in the Underground Railroad. However, this autobiography could not be located.

Schneider, Norris F. "Stone Academy Faced Abolition Rage." *Times Recorder*, 31 July 1983. Gives a history of the Stone Academy's role in the abolitionist movement. Schneider also mentions that Siebert does not list any of the Stone Academy's residents as conductors on the Underground Railroad. However, Siebert's documentation is not conclusive. He also gives the subsequent history of the house up to the time he wrote and published the article.

Sheppard, Thomas J. "An Abolition Center." *Ohio Archaeology and Historical Society* 19 (July 1910): 266-269.

This article includes information the settling of Putnam. According to Sheppard, abolitionism played a central role in Putnam's development. In the article, he relates the violence that surrounded abolitionist activities including the lecture of Theodore Weld and the Ohio Antislavery Conventions of 1835 and 1839. While much of the article focuses on Putnam, he also discusses how even in pro-slavery Zanesville there were abolitionists who participated in the Underground Railroad. Much of the material for the article came from James Buckingham, who he refers to as the "last survivor of those personally acquainted with the events" (269). James Buckingham was the youngest brother of Alvah Buckingham, who was involved in Underground Railroad activity in Putnam.

Siebert, Wilbur. *The Underground Railroad: From Slavery to Freedom*. NY: Macmillan Company, 1898.

In an appendix, Siebert lists those involved in the Underground Railroad organized by county and state. The listings from Muskingum County include the following residents of Putnam: included A.A. Guthrie, Alva Buckingham, Levi Whipple, and Major Horace Nye.

Siebert, Wilbur. *Mysteries of Ohio's Underground Railroad*. Columbus: Long's Bookstore, 1951.

Siebert includes Putnam on his "Ohio's Underground Trails." Section 4, includes "Zanesville vs. Putnam, Muskingum County," which gives information on routes from Deavertown to Putnam, the Ohio State Abolitionist Conventions of 1835 and 1839, Abolitionism in Putnam including Underground Railroad activity, and a Zanesville Fugitive Slave Case.

Siebert, Wilbur. Wilbur Siebert Collection [microfilm]. Columbus, OH: Ohio State Historical Society.

The collection contains correspondence, notes, manuscripts, student papers, maps, and photographs related to the Underground Railroad. Roll 11 of the microfilm collection contains information regarding Putnam's involvement in the Underground Railroad. Contains correspondence from others involved attesting to the participation of the Buckingham's, Guthrie's, and Nye's in the Underground Railroad.



S8. Describe any local, state, or federal historic designation, records, signage, or plaques at the site.

The Stone Academy, recognized as an Underground Railroad site by the Friends of Freedom Society, Ohio Underground Railroad Association, is part of the part of the Putnam Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. Two Ohio Historical Markers are located on the property (see above).

S9. Is the site open to the public? Describe accessibility conditions.

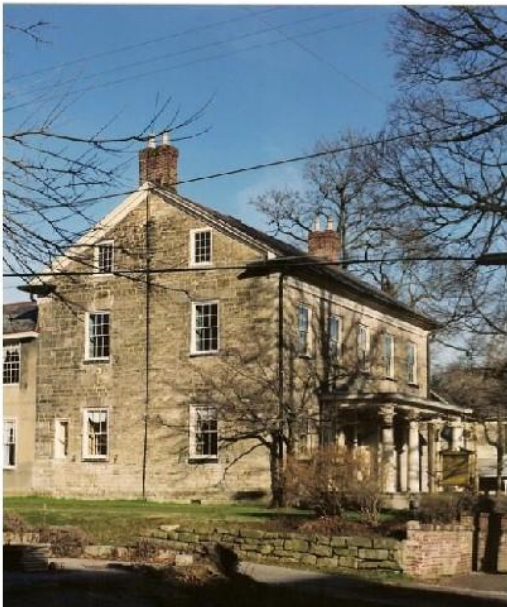
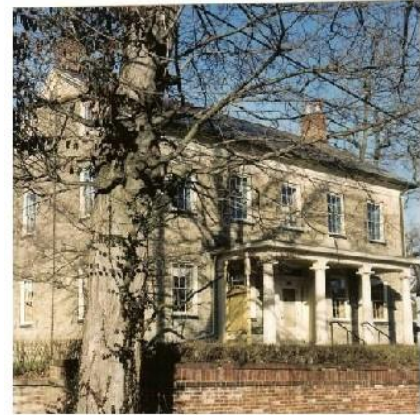
The Stone Academy is open to the public from April through October, Wednesday – Friday, 1:00-4:00, and Saturdays, 10:00-1:00. It is also open by appointment. The first floor of the building is handicap accessible.

S10. Describe the nature and objectives of any partnerships that have contributed to the documentation, preservation, commemoration, or interpretation of the site.

S11. Additional data or comments. (Optional)



Photos Of the Stone Academy





1840 Potwin Addition

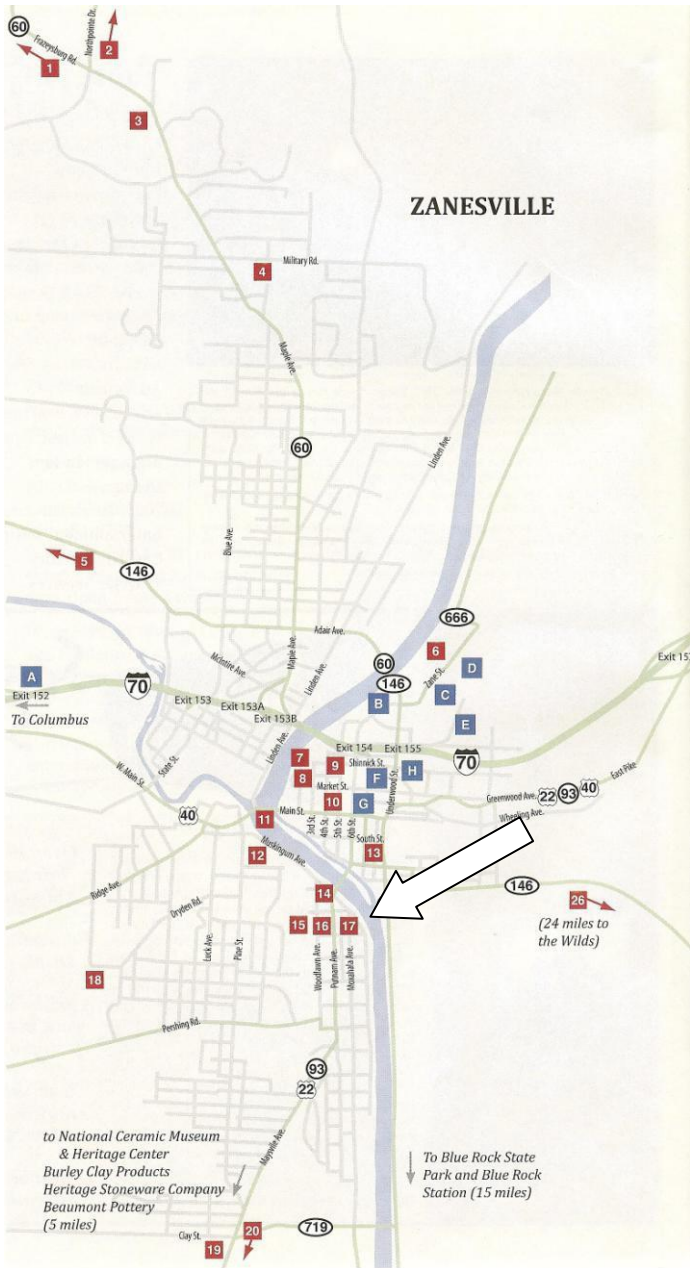


1910 Garage Addition



Side View of the Property





The Stone Academy is #17



**PIONEER AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
of Muskingum County**

115 Jefferson Street Zanesville, Ohio 43701



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DIRECTOR

Jim Geyer

Phone: 740-454-9500

Fax: 740-454-9500

January 3, 2011

Deanda Johnson
National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom
National Park Service
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

Dear Ms. Johnson,

The Board of Trustees of the Pioneer and Historical Society of Muskingum County, owner of the Stone Academy, approved the inclusion of the Stone Academy in the National Park Service National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom at their September 14, 2010, meeting.

The Board also consents to share the mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address with others engaged in Underground Railroad commemoration for purposes such as receiving newsletters or informational mailings, announcements of events, or research queries.

Sincerely,

Jim Geyer

Jim Geyer
Director

