

ONTARIO

Owen Sound, Ontario, Canada Grey County

Located at the mouth of the Sydenham River, Owen Sound is located in the south-western section of Ontario and serves as a gateway to Bruce Peninsula. This area was named "Owen's Sound" after William Fitzwilliam Owen who, with Lieutenant Henry W. Bayfield, first surveyed this area in 1815. The city of Owen Sound was first settled in 1841 by Charles Rankin and was originally known as 'Sydenham.'

The city of Owen Sound was also known as "Little Liverpool," known by this name by sailors who frequented the once rowdy town, and the "Chicago of the North," because of its port access to the upper Great Lakes.

Slavery was outlawed in Ontario, Canada in 1793 through the Upper Canada Abolition Act. All slaves entering Ontario were freed, and any child born to a slave mother within Ontario, would be free at the age of 25.

Relative Narratives/Texts/Links (bulleted)



Black History Cairn Project:



Owen Sound: photo of slaves/freedmen who settled in the region:



Local Owen Sound man, John Hall (born 1783) who was captured and sold into slavery to Kentucky plantation owners. He escaped and settled in Owen Sound (Sydenham) in the 1850s.

Links to songs related to Owen Sound:

<http://www.osblackhistory.com/songs.php>

Points of Interest

- The last northern terminal for the Underground Railroad was in Owen Sound.
- Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library, 824 First Avenue West, Owen Sound, Ontario, Canada N4K 4K4, (519) 376-6623. This library houses the research collection of the Bruce-Grey Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society (BGOGS) within the A. Hawken Memorial Local History Collection.
- Black History Cairn, Harrison Park, 2nd Avenue East. Owen Sound's Harrison Park, a cairn placed on July 31, 2004, commemorates escaped slaves from the Underground Railroad.
- Grey Roots: Your Heritage & Visitor Centre, 102599 Grey Road 18, R.R. #4 (west of Rockford), Owen Sound ON Canada N4K

π5N6, (519) 376-3690 or 1-800-567-4739. Open in Summer: Daily 9 am to 5 pm; Labour Day to Victoria Day weekend: Monday to Friday, 10 am to 4 pm. Weekends 11 am to 4 pm. Admission Fee. Exhibits include the award winning "From Slavery to Freedom."

- Billy Bishop Heritage Museum, 948 3rd Ave. West, Owen Sound, ON, N4K 4P6, (519) 372-0031. This is the boyhood home of WWI and WWI flying ace William Avery Bishop. The museum presents accounts of Bishop's daring fights with the Red Baron.
- Aug 3, 2007 - Aug 5, 2007 _Emancipation Celebration Festival: "It is with pleasure that we welcome you to celebrate our 145th Emancipation Festival in Owen Sound, Ontario. Join us in celebrating the journey of our ancestors within the Underground Railroads most northerly safe haven. This is a special ceremony, as we celebrate family, fellowship, oral history, documented history, community, culture and roots of our amazing integrated community."

Ontario References:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Owen_Sound,_Ontario
Wikipedia "Own Sound, Ontario"

<http://www.osblackhistory.com/underground.php>
"Own Sound's Black History"
2004 by City of Owen Sound

<http://www.owensound.library.on.ca/page.php?PageID=29>
Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library
2004 by City of Owen Sound

<http://www.mysteriesofcanada.com/Canada/undergroundrailway.htm>
"Mysteries of Canada," by Paul McManus, 19989-2006

<http://www.foundlocally.com/Barrie/Travel/Near-OwenSound.htm>
Owen Sound history information

<http://www.osblackhistory.com/cairn.php>
Photo of Cairn

<http://www.greyroots.com/exhibitions/virtual-exhibits/>
Photo of John Hall

Other song links (not from Owen Sound)

- <http://www.ket.org/underground/resources/music.htm>
- <http://education.ucdavis.edu/NEW/STC/lesson/socstud/railroad/music.htm>