

**Timberlane Middle School**  
*Remembers the Enslaved of Hopewell Valley*

**Witness Stones**  
**Installation Ceremony**  
**Honoring Frost Blackwell**



**Thursday, May 18, 2023**

**Installation Ceremony**

*Gathering*

Ms. Nicole Gianfredi - Principal, Timberlane Middle School

*Pledge of Allegiance*

“Lift Every Voice and Sing” (please remain standing)  
Sung by TL Singers & members of the Timberlane 8th Grade Choir

*Invocation*

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*Hopewell Valley Regional School District*

Ms. Anita Williams Galiano, President of the Board of Education  
Dr. Rosetta Treece, Superintendent of Schools

*8th Grade Student Presentations*

Introduced by Mr. Darren Lewan, Supervisor K-12 Social Studies HVRSD  
Gwyneth Denham - Biography of Frost Blackwell  
Artists' Reflection - TL 8th Grade Artists on Display  
Personal Reflection -Gerise Kelly & Rebekkah Siegelheim

*Song Selection*

“Make Them Hear You” by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, arranged by Jeff Funk  
“Lovely Day” by Bill Withers and Skip Scarborough, arranged by Robert T. Gibson  
Introduced by 8th grader- Aditi Rapaka  
TL Singers & Members of the Timberlane 8th Grade Choir

*Keynote Address*

Beverly Mills, Co-Founder of SSAAM & Co-Author *If These Stones Could Talk*

*Civic Leaders*

Jordan Lewis, Director of Constituent Services from the Office of  
Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ-12)  
Jacqueline Fay, Chief of Staff for Anthony Verrilli, NJ Assemblyman (NJ-15)  
Hopewell Valley Mayors  
Mr. Paul Anzano, Mayor of Hopewell Borough  
Mr. James Davy, Mayor of Pennington Borough  
Mr. Michael Ruger, Mayor of Hopewell Township

*Presentation of Stone to Honor Frost Blackwell & Closing Remarks*

Mr. Dennis Culliton, Founder and Executive Director of the Witness Stones Project  
Mrs. Beverly Mills, Founder Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum  
Mrs. Elaine Buck, Founder Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum  
Dr. Rosetta Treece, Superintendent of Hopewell Valley Regional Schools

1. Lift ev - cry voice and sing, till earth and heav - en ring,  
 2. Ston - y the road we trod, bit - ter the chas - tening rod,  
 3. God of our wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears,



ring with the har - mo - nies of lib - er - ty;  
 felt in the days when hope un - born had died;  
 thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;



let our re - joic - ing rise high as the lis - tening skies,  
 yet with a stead - y beat, have not our wea - ry feet  
 thou who hast by thy might led us in - to the light,



let it re - sound loud as the roll - ing sea.  
 come to the place for which our fa - thers sighed?  
 keep us for - ev - er in the path, we pray.



WORDS: James Weldon Johnson, ca. 1900  
 MUSIC: J. Rosamond Johnson, ca. 1905

LIFT EVERY VOICE  
 Irr.

## STRENGTH IN TRIBULATION

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;  
We have come o - ver a way that with tears have been wa - tered;  
Lest our feet stray from the plac - es, our God, where we met thee;

sing a song full of the hope that the pres - ent has brought us;  
we have come, tread - ing our path thru the blood of the slaugh - tered,  
lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we for - get thee;

fac - ing the ris - ing sun of our new day be - gun,  
out from the gloom - y past, till now we stand at last  
shad - owed be - neath thy hand, may we for - ev - er stand,

let us march on till vic - tor - y is won.  
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.  
true to our God, true to our na - tive land.

*Opening Remarks*

Ms. Donnetta Bishop-Johnson, Executive Director of  
SSAAM

Good Morning Timberlane Middle School!

I am Donnetta Johnson, the executive director of the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum in Skillman. We call our Museum SSAAM. I am so honored to be here for this 2nd Witness Stone ceremony.

We gather to honor Frost Blackwell with the simple dignity of remembrance—to bear witness to the life of a man who lived in Hopewell, NJ in the 1800s. It is not known if he was kidnapped and transported from Africa to America, born into slavery elsewhere in the 13 colonies or the Caribbean, or born into the inhumane system of slavery in New Jersey. We do know that he was enslaved by the Blackwell family, had a wife and children, and at least for himself, gained a measure of freedom within this cruel system.

Did you know?

- Starting in the 17th century, European slave traders who forcibly brought enslaved Africans to this continent stole not just their lives and labor but also their considerable agricultural knowledge that was critical to the development of agriculture and commerce in the United States.
- The forced labor, skills and talents of Black men, women, and children who were used to carve the stones, hew the wood, build the farms, and grow the produce was indispensable in giving New Jersey its nickname The Garden State and creating its wealth.
- As demand increased for New Jersey's produce and other goods, the number of enslaved people increased.
- By 1800, New Jersey had over thirteen thousand enslaved people, more than all of New England combined.
- New Jersey was the last northern state to fully abolish slavery in 1846, however slavery in New Jersey did not really end until the ratification of the 13th Amendment in 1865.

So, while creating wealth with the labor of the enslaved was of great importance to the development of NJ and the nation, the recording of the details about individual enslaved persons sadly was not important at all.

There are details that we take for granted, you and I, for ourselves. These details like our names and dates of birth recorded on birth certificates—we all know how old we are and we track important milestones and accomplishments according to our age. It is routine

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people in order to justify a racist, violent and inhumane system of bondage, and to reinforce the unequal status of being Black versus White in America.

We know much about the white slave-owning family that enslaved Mr. Frost—the Blackwell’s. They were very successful and their history is well recorded. And many structures around our town bear the name of this wealthy family.

Still, through the research of Elaine Buck and Frost Blackwell’s 4th generation great-granddaughter, Beverly Mills, we have some clues about the life of Frost Blackwell. He was among the luckier enslaved persons in some respects. While it is true that we don’t know who his parents were, we do know his name and that he was enslaved in Hopewell by a wealthy farmer, Andrew Blackwell. We know that he gained his freedom. We know that although he was free, his wife along with his children remained in bondage, because if the mother was enslaved, so were her children. Also, even if the enslaved child was fathered by a white enslaver, which was often the case, the child was still enslaved.

Here we are today, May 18th, 2023. It is a curious thing – If you are walking through the Sourland Mountains and the surrounding valleys today, most likely you have no idea that Frost Blackwell and hundreds of other people of color were laboring, living, loving their families, and trying to create a better life for their children right here. They fought for this country’s independence, they fought during the Civil War, but until the end of that war, remained enslaved right here.

I did not come to understand these facts about my immediate surroundings until fairly recently. Because I was taught in the NYC city school system that Slavery was a southern thing. How about you?

Today, it might be difficult, if not impossible, to understand the scope and impact of the African American presence in this community dating back nearly four hundred years. Although our studies of American history should have given us a more accurate picture of what took place in our own communities, they most often did not, and do not. This information was simply left out. These people and their stories, erased from the official history books.

In their book, *If These Stones Could Talk*, SSAAM’s founders Elaine Buck and Beverly Mills boldly reclaim the stories of their ancestors. Their research shows us that if you scratch beneath the surface and listen carefully, the stones – located at the Stoutsburg Cemetery – do indeed talk and have stories to tell us. These stones tell us that hidden within the pristine natural beauty of the Sourland Mountains and surrounding valleys, lies a history dating back to the early formation of the United States, where a network of African American communities grew out of enslavement and thrived. The Stones tell us that in the Sourland region, African Americans were driven into the less desirable and inhospitable rocky hills of the Sourland Mountains where the acidic, uneven terrain and lack of groundwater made farming and sustenance extremely difficult. Life was hard on the Mountain. But these African Americans worked hard to cultivate a healthy and respectful relationship with the environment and the land. They also worked hard to cultivate and build successful, interdependent family relationships with the indigenous people and poor Whites that found themselves too on the mountain.

Despite these incredible odds, the African American communities of the Sourlands

You might wonder, why do they want us to know about slavery?  
That was so long ago. What does slavery have to do with us today?  
Do they want to make us sad? Ashamed? Are they angry and bitter?  
These are good questions.

I believe that they would tell you that since Black people were enslaved in this country longer than we have been free, there are devastating consequences of this system that are still with us. I know that Bev and Elaine would say that the truth gives you the tools you need to construct and build a better future. A better world. And that this is the responsibility of each of us. And that this is the reason that you must understand our full American History. Slavery is not African American History. Slavery is American History. African American History is American history. It is a history of hardship, but also of great perseverance, bravery, faith, and triumph.

Frost Blackwell and Friday Truehart, are you proud of your great, great, granddaughter Beverly Mills and her history detective partner Elaine Buck – two truly phenomenal women – who had the courage to tell your story, and the stories of women, men and children which lead to our story?

I believe that Frost and Friday would be proud of each of you here today and of the important, life-affirming, and healing work that you are doing to repair our community and indeed our country.

Gwyneth Denham  
Grade 8

### **Frost Blackwell's Biography**

Slavery was brought into America in the founding stages and thrived for almost 200 years. Throughout the early years of America, generations of people were treated with brutality and constant oppression. Slavery in the United States was very different from other countries since it was a country that enslaved people solely based on race. At the time, slavery was the main production of cash crops like cotton, tobacco, and sugar cane. Since enslaved people were not paid, it made it easy to maintain a low price on manufactured goods, making it essential to the economy. Since slavery contributed to the extreme growth and wealth of the United States, it also became a very controversial topic separating the nation and leading to the Civil War. Slavery may have been a huge factor in the success of the early United States, but the horrors of slavery were detrimental. Slavery forced thousands of enslaved

of Hopewell. Frost Blackwell contributed to this community throughout his time, both enslaved and free, while also showing resistance against the system.

### **Early Life**

Frost Blackwell was born in 1786 in Hunterdon County, NJ. There is no document stating his birth, but we can infer this because of his age in future censuses ("U.S. Census of Hunterdon, NJ for 1850"). His enslaver Andrew Blackwell was also not unfamiliar with owning enslaved people. Information from past escaped slave advertisements shows he owned enslaved people prior to Frost ("Ad for Runaway Slave"). For the most part, none of Frost's childhood or early life is recorded, but it is generally believed that Frost was born into slavery. That is believed since him being kidnapped is unlikely and at the time chattel slavery was common. Chattel slavery is the inheritance of becoming enslaved from the mother, as well as requiring them to have to serve for their mother's enslaver. Frost was not educated, as the 1850 census marks him as illiterate. This is an example of the treatment of the enslaved since they weren't allowed to have any sort of education because of the laws formed in fear of enslaved people revolting. Frost was married to Nancy Vanvactor on December 8, 1816. ("New Jersey, County Marriages, 1682-1956"). However, the laws of slavery were very strict, and they prevented the gathering of enslaved people which was made alongside the prevention of education. The fact that Andrew permitted this marriage could possibly suggest that Frost had a positive relationship with Andrew. About a year after his marriage in 1817, his first son, Sam Blackwell, was born. Sam was born after the Gradual Emancipation Law, so he was technically free, but it required him to continue to work for Andrew until he turned 25. Sometime around 1816, Andrew Blackwell wrote his will, and within it states that Frost is to be freed and granted one hundred dollars (A. Blackwell). Even though Andrew gave Frost the one hundred dollars without it being required, he left the others in his will currency in pounds. At the time, pounds were a more stable and valuable form of currency than dollars because the weaker economy in America was more prone to collapse. This could illustrate themes of paternalism because Andrew may have believed that Frost was incapable of dealing with a more valuable form of currency.

### **Frost's Freedom**

In 1819, Frost was freed by Benjamin Blackwell and Issac Dunn. Andrew's exact date of death is unknown, but it is inferred to be in 1819, as that is the year Frost was freed. Since Nancy nor Sam was mentioned in Andrew's will, they were likely passed down to be enslaved by one of Andrew's children. After the New Jersey Manumission Law was passed in 1786, it excused enslavers from having to prevent freed enslaved people from becoming



assumed he bought it with the one hundred dollars that he was endowed through the will. In 1827, Enoch's will stated that the land that Frost currently worked at would be left in the hands of his son, William Drake. (Drake). It is probable that the Drakes saw Frost working on this land as a possible advantage, as Enoch had labeled Frost's farm worth fifteen hundred dollars. Considering future documents where Frost has no possessed land, Frost was most likely able to create an agreement with William to remain living on the land. Since there have been no other events dated between the time span of 1819-1827, Frost was assumed to be saving up money to free his wife.

#### **Nancy is Freed**

In 1827, Frost was able to purchase his wife, Nancy when he was forty-one and she was thirty-one. After he purchased his wife, this gave him the ability to free her. This event shows major forms of resistance against the expectations of slavery because most of the time it was wealthy white men who purchased enslaved people. The purchase of the enslaved was dehumanizing since they were being sold off as if they were objects. The purchase of enslaved people was also extremely costly and the prices could rise to one thousand dollars, an estimated twenty-three thousand dollars today. This is mainly why it was specifically wealthy people who owned enslaved people. The purchase of Nancy must have provoked strong amounts of emotion since Frost had to purchase his wife, but was also required to refer to his wife as a slave in the manumission document by saying, "...set free my female slave Nancy" (F. Blackwell). Along with the already stressful events taking place, Sam who at the time was around ten or eleven, is presumed to have remained with whoever he was enslaved by at the time. Considering he was separated from his parents at such a young age, it must have added more mournfulness to an already depressing situation.

The Gradual Emancipation Law, which was passed in 1804, would have required Sam to serve his enslaver until he was twenty-five. The Gradual Emancipation Law declared anyone born into slavery after July 4, 1804 to be free, but they had to work for their owner until age twenty-five if they were a man, or age twenty-one, if they were a woman. New Jersey was the last Northern State to end slavery and created this law as an attempt to end slavery without abolishing it all at once. This law took advantage of enslaved people while also benefiting the enslavers. Themes of paternalism are evident within this law since enslaved people were declared "free" while still required to work for their owners until the age presumed by their gender. This law supported thoughts that the enslaved were working for their own good because of the desperation for enslaved people to continue to work after being proclaimed free.

birthdate of Benjamin and the names and ages of the two daughters are unknown. Around the year 1842, Sam Blackwell is thought to have turned 25, releasing him from having to work for his enslaver. Sam married a woman by the name of Maximilla whose last name is unknown as well as the date of the marriage. Noah married a woman named Letta whose last name is also unknown. On May 24, 1864, Noah married another spouse by the name of Hannah Gray ("New Jersey, County Marriages, 1682-1956"). In the same document, Noah's occupation is stated as a "laborer," meaning that he may have worked in a factory since they were most common in the North. During the same year, Frost would have been about fifty-six and Nancy forty-six. In the Mt. Rose Map and Pennington Map of 1875, it shows that Frost is not a land owner, and because of this, it is inferred that he remained on William Drake's land and made some sort of compromise with him (Everts & Stewart, and Thomas Hunter). It is assumed that freeing Nancy would have cost a lot of money and must have prevented him from being able to purchase land of his own. Sometime before 1875, Sam was able to co-own a church in Pennington and buy his own land with Noah (Everts & Stewart, and Thomas Hunter). The documentation of Frost's death is unidentified, but it is estimated he passed away sometime around 1860, at the approximate age of 74 years old. Nancy lived until 1882 and passed around the age of 86. Frost Blackwell's life goes on to be remembered as an important part of Hopewell history as he is one of the many brave people who paved the way for the foundation of our communities.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout Frost Blackwell's life, he managed to challenge the social boundaries created by slavery that separated black from white, while also paving the way for the expansion of the black population within Hopewell. Frost resisted the system by purchasing and freeing his wife and owning a farm. Throughout his life, he was constantly faced with the hardships of slavery while also having to deal with the discrimination of being one of the very few black, landowners in Hopewell. Frost had kids that grew up to possess their own land and after Frost passed, Sam and Noah Blackwell continued to work even further to increase the black population. Frost Blackwell's story is one of many that were documented within Hopewell and his accomplishments will be remembered as being significant to the growth and expansion of Hopewell, New Jersey.

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# THE WITNESS STONE PROJECT

## Frost Blackwell Fact Sheet

<b>Early Life</b>	
<b>Name:</b> Frost Blackwell	
<b>Date of Birth:</b> c. 1786	<b>Place of Birth:</b> Unknown
<b>Personal Life</b>	
<b>Spouse:</b> Nancy Varnace (1796-1882) and Froze were married December 8, 1816. She was an enslaved woman from Somerset County. She is reported to be the oldest person in Hopewell at the time of her death. Frost later purchased Nancy in order to free her on April 9th, 1837.	
<b>Children</b>	
Samuel Blackwell (1817-1907, married Maximilla Light January 24, 1837. Samuel was a farmer and landowner who went on to found the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Farmington.	
Noah Blackwell married his second wife Hannah Gray on June 9, 1864. Noah later purchases a house and lot from the nephew of Andrew Blackwell with his brother Samuel in 1847. He is listed as a laborer.	
Benjamin Blackwell	
Frost and Nancy also have 2 daughters whose names are not confirmed.	
<b>Enslavement</b>	
<b>Place Enslaved:</b> Hopewell, New Jersey	
<b>Enslaver:</b> Andrew Blackwell was a single farmer and tavern owner from Hopewell who enslaved more than 1 individual.	
Frost is freed through Andrew Blackwell's will dated April 12, 1819 and given \$100.	
<b>Occupation:</b> Frost is living on Centerville Farm as of 1822. Frost is listed as a laborer according to Noah's 1864 marriage record.	
<b>Later Life/ Death</b>	
<b>Date of Death:</b> Unknown but possibly before 1860 as he is not listed on the 1860 census.	



It data and information in, state, or country. We race, ethnicity, gender, and employment. We of Frost is likely 1786 s old on this census. We s owned real estate is \$150.



A legal document that ty when someone dies, gives his son William rest is living in 1822 used at \$1,500.



Maps can be used for locations and directions and also important landmarks. We were able to see the African Methodist Episcopal Church founded by Samuel Blackwell.



Marriage records provide legal evidence of a marriage. This record shows us Noah's second marriage to Hannah Gray. Frost was listed as a laborer meaning he was likely doing physical labor.

**Timberlane Middle School  
Mercury Team Researchers**

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Mercury Team Researchers**

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Alexis Bernstein	Daisy Jack	Jake Rollins
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Avery Bovenizer	Maya Magette	Maxwell Scalice
Olivia Branham	Leo Maldonado	Bianca Schiavon
Jaden Brown	Yaseen Mansour	Kaede Scholtz
Jack Brynildsen	Dominick Matticoli	Amelia Scupari
Julianna Burd	Lacey Mauldin	Aliyah Scupari
Gavin Catlett	Logan McIntosh	Grace Senior
Rajinder Chawla	Christopher Miliarexis	Analaina Smith
Finnegan Curley	Isyss Missouri	Sebastian Soto
Jeet Davda	Julia Moller	Brook Sullivan
Brady DeCore	Eli Moyer	Jack Sunderland
Gwyneth Denham	Lirit Newman-Achee	Amari Tobler
Peter DiDonato	Noemi Novas	Ethan Torres
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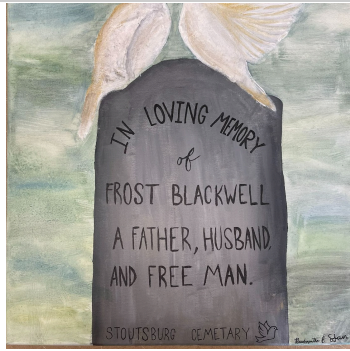
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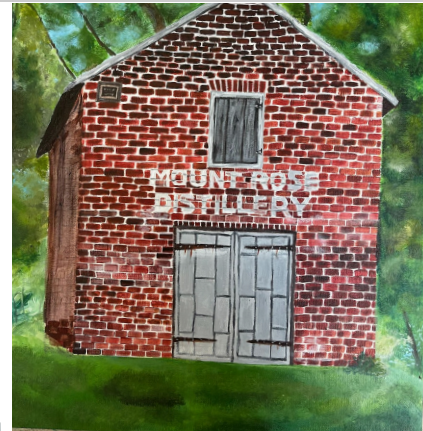
Vicky Dafnopoulou	Liam Lenihan	Rebekkah Siegelheim
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Samuel Dede	Alexandra Mains	Owen Thedinga
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Chayton Black	David Johnson	Cara Petura
Benjamin Boyarsky	Jiya Joshi	Lakshmi Puthenpurayil
Cooper Briehler	Nandana Kamath	Anusankar
Niall Brogan	Dylan Kawalek	Samuel Reese
Elizabeth Buchert	Kathryn Kennedy	Danyal Rizavi
Joseph Castadot	Arya Khare	Elia Ryan
Donald Chen	Elizabeth Kim	Gabriella Seligman
Daniel Corriero	Erin Krakovski	Nicole Silberberger
Ariel Croner	Elle Krakovski	Charlton Smit
Thomas Davila	Baani Kumar	Alyvia Smith
Jaxson DeRossett	Carter Lake	Skylar Spivey
Maeve Dominique	Zoe Lawler	Blake Thornton
Lielle Eines	Luke Lebson	Mason Tramontana
Nabila Elsharabasi	Payton Loveland	Arthur Voronkov
Kellen Fenneberg	Kevin Mac	Lewis Wasden
Ryan Fornal	Ellie Mahan	Ainsley Weed
Charlotte Friedrich	Natalie Maldonado	Daniel Wegner
Juan Geller	David Milinowicz	Katherine Williams
Benjamin Gerstacker	Rohan Mishra	Anna Wilson
Nikita Ghandour	Emma Moore	Dylan Wyckoff
Matthew Golian	Janelle Muenzen	Piper Wysocki



**In Loving Memory of Frost Blackwell**  
By Siyona Jain & Rajnandini Mohapatra



**Mount Rose Distillery**  
Sophia Pellegrino  
Elsie Rey-de-Castro  
Maggie Milinowicz  
Elizabeth Buchert  
Mariella Santomauro  
Brook Sullivan  
Gerise Kelly



**Bethel AME Church**  
By Alexandra Mains & Kaitlyn Tulli

**TL Pack Singers and Members of the 8th Grade Choir**

Laila Appiah	Maeve	Lizzie Kim	Natalie Stier
	Dominique		
Caden Burns	Phoebe	Priyonka	May Wallace
	Donofrio	Malik	
Vicky	Nora Elliott	Emma Moore	Connor
Dafnopoulou			Walsh
Joseph Damron	Daisy Jack,	Venus Ng	Lewis
			Wasden
Margot Dickow	Aiden Janks	Sarangi	Kaitlyn
		Pareek	Wilmot
		Aditi Rapaka,	Wenyu
			Zhang

Accompanied by Craig Renoe on Piano and Lewis Wasden on Drums

**Keynote Address of Beverly Mills**

In 2008 New Jersey offered an apology for its role in perpetuating slavery. Fifteen years ago, elected officials expressed "profound regret" for our state's role in the practice of slavery; a system so deeply rooted that six months after the end of the Civil War, sixteen enslaved people were still considered enslaved in the New Jersey. When this apology was made, New Jersey became the first state north of the Mason-Dixon line to pass such apologetic legislation. This apology came 222 years after the birth of Frost Blackwell--a man born a mere decade after the birth of our nation in 1776.



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excitement since David gifted me with information about a piece of my family history that had been shrouded in mystery. But I am not alone in representing descendants of the “Black Blackwells” because I am proud to be joined by my cousin Dallas Chester Allen, who had the honor of turning 91 this past Sunday. Chester is the 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandson of Frost which makes him our family’s oldest living male descendant so please join me in applauding Chester for reaching this milestone!

So, where does a person begin to tell the story of an enslaved person--someone like Frost? Like most enslaved individuals, finding information is like trying to mold sand that keeps slipping through your fingers. If lucky, there will be some clues from which to start with such as court records and entries in will by owners of the enslaved. From these clues it’s then when you can begin the process of adding flesh to the bones of a life which has remained a question mark. Throughout our nation, enslaved people, despite their marginalized status, had hopes, dreams and aspirations. They sought joy and solace in an unforgiving world who remained intent on possessing their bodies indefinitely. Take a minute and close your eyes and imagine what life would be like being forced to live in a world where you have no control over yourself or the fate of the people you love. This is why I, along with my research partner, Elaine Buck, have dedicated close to two decades sifting through a myriad of puzzle pieces, scattered pieces of the lives of the enslaved, so we can restore a modicum of humanity. Sadly, time nor experience has made this research any easier.

This is the second year that the Hopewell Valley Regional School District has worked with the Witness Stones Project to commemorate the life of an enslaved individual. Last year we honored Friday Truehart which made Hopewell Valley the first school system in the State of New Jersey to do a Witness Stones Project. I am so proud that Timberlane’s 8<sup>th</sup> grade class along with our community has come together to honor Frost Blackwell, a man who spent over thirty years of his life as the property of Andrew Blackwell. I would also like to acknowledge and thank Blackwell descendants, Jack Davis and Joe Klett, who assisted with primary documents and other items. And I would be remiss if I didn’t also thank Amy Pearlmutter who helped translate some of the primary documents for clarity. Amy has been a volunteer with the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum and her expertise is greatly valued. We all approached this with the same goal which was to help our students gain a deeper understanding of how people, both Black and White, are connected to our local history and that African Americans, such as Frost, were instrumental in shaping our region.

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messy, difficult, or complicated it may be. By looking at our history openly and unflinchingly, we are not turning away from the hard work of learning about our past and doing the hard work to heal the open wounds which have plagued our country for the past 400 plus years. I looking forward to who next year's 8<sup>th</sup> grade class will chose to honor!

Frost's Witness Stone will be placed in front of the Bethel AME Church on South Main Street in Pennington—the church his firstborn son, Samuel, worked so hard to steward. In Frost's honor, I will make sure to brush the stone free of any debris, so its luster and sparkle is not diminished. Frost's life, from this moment on, will no longer be a question mark, or a fleeting memory, but one which will shine brightly in Pennington as a testament to the gifts he brought to our community.

Thank you again for this honor.

### **Acknowledgements**

Mr. Dennis Culliton, Witness Stones Project, Inc.  
Mrs. Beverly Mills, Founder of Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum  
Mrs. Elaine Buck, Founder of Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum  
Mr. John Buck, Founding President of Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum  
Mrs. Catherine Fulmer-Hogan, President of Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum  
Ms. Donnetta Bishop-Johnson, Executive Director of Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum  
Ms. Anita Williams Galiano and Members of Hopewell Valley Board of Education  
Dr. Rosetta Treece, Superintendent of HVRSD  
Dr. Vicky Pilitsis, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, HVRSD  
Mr. Darren Lewan, Supervisor of Social Studies & Wellness, HVRSD  
Ms. Nicole Gianfredi, Principal of Timberlane Middle School  
Mrs. Melissa Lauri, Vice Principal of Timberlane Middle School  
Mr. Michael Emmich, Vice Principal of Timberlane Middle School  
Mr. Jamie Garland, 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher, Team Titanium  
Mr. Michael Hammill, 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher, Team Platinum

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Education  
Dr. Lynnell Jenkins, Choir Teacher  
Ms. Gillian Beck, Art Teacher  
Dr. Barbara McCarty, Timberlane Media Specialist  
Ms. Amy Pearlmutter, Chairperson of the SSAAM Education Committee  
The Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum  
Reverend Nancy Mikoski, Pastor of Pennington Presbyterian Church  
Mr. Peyton Dixon, Communications & Office Administrator of Pennington Presbyterian Church  
Mr. John Bruestle, Ms. Cary Bruestle, Mr. Clarke Walker, Tech Team of Pennington Presbyterian Church  
The Pennington Council of Churches  
The Hopewell Valley Education Foundation  
The Pennington Police Department

### Supporting Organizations



**Witness STONES**



**Sankofa Collaborative**  
looking back • moving forward



*Se wo were fi na wosankofa a yenkyi.*

The Sankofa symbol is associated with the proverb, "It is not wrong to go back for that which you have forgotten." The word Sankofa is from the Asante Twi language of the Akan people of Western Africa. This area, which we now know as Ghana and the Ivory Coast, is where many (if not most) of those who were captured and sold into slavery bound for the New World originated. The word itself means, "to return and get it" (san - "to return"; ko - "to go"; fa - "to fetch, to seek and take").



*Witness Stone for Frost Blackwell  
Placed at Bethel AME Church, Pennington, NJ*



*Hopewell Valley Regional School District and Timberlane Middle school are proud partners with The Witness Stones Project and the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum to provide our students with opportunities for research, education, and civic engagement to honor the humanity and contributions of Frost Blackwell who helped build our community.*

