

NEW PHILADELPHIA ARTIFACTS ON VIEW AT THE SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Congressman Darin LaHood welcomes McWorter family and constituents as Smithsonian exhibit opens

Washington, D.C.—Congressman Darin LaHood met with constituents from New Philadelphia, IL, and descendants of Frank McWorter who attended a preview of the Smithsonian Museum of American History's *The Nation We Build Together* exhibition, scheduled to open to the public on June 28 in Washington, D.C. Objects loaned by the McWorter family and artifacts recovered from archaeology completed at the New Philadelphia town site and on loan from the Illinois State Museum are included in the "Many Voices, One Nation," exhibition which opens June 28.

"Frank McWorter and the New Philadelphia community hold a special place in American history and including this western Illinois community within this exhibition is an appropriate place to share their story," **stated LaHood.** "This exhibit embodies the true meaning of *E pluribus unum*: out of many, one. The development of New Philadelphia represents the notion that no matter our heritage, race, creed, or ethnic background, we can all come together to live peacefully in one community. It is my honor to celebrate this exhibit with constituents of the 18th District and those who have made this exhibit possible."

Currently, New Philadelphia is a National Historical Landmark. The results of an ongoing study will determine if the site meets the National Park Service's criteria to be designated into the National Park System. Rep. LaHood has been supportive of this effort and toured New Philadelphia last year.

"We are pleased to include so many communities across the United States in this exhibition that explores how we became U.S.," **said Nancy Davis, project director and a curator of "Many Voices, One Nation.** "And to put a spotlight on the stories of the Midwest."

"The Smithsonian Museum, by having the McWorter family and New Philadelphia in its new exhibit, "Many Voices, One Nation" once again shows the importance of preserving and telling the story of New Philadelphia and its founder Free Frank McWorter," **said Phil Bradshaw, President of the New Philadelphia Association.**

"It is pleasing to see objects related to New Philadelphia and the McWorter family displayed in the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History's "Many Voices, One Nation" exhibition, which tells the story of our nation's founding, development and how we became the American people," **stated Charlotte King, Director of the New Philadelphia Association.**

More on Frank McWorter:

Frank McWorter, a formerly enslaved man, founded New Philadelphia in 1836, becoming the first African American in our nation to plat and legally register a town. Through his own enterprises, McWorter purchased freedom first for his wife in 1817, his own in 1819 and later applied profits earned through property sales in New Philadelphia to purchase freedom for other family members. In total, McWorter purchased freedom for himself and at least 15 additional members of his family. McWorter sold lots in his town to African Americans and European Americans, and, for a time, New Philadelphia flourished as a racially diverse community where formerly enslaved and free-born African Americans lived alongside European Americans in one of the most racially strident eras of our country's history.

More on the exhibition:

The Smithsonian's "Many Voices, One Voice" exhibit invites audiences to explore that question in a 500-year chronological and thematic journey that animates the Latin emblem on the country's Great Seal and the national ideal: *E pluribus unum*, Out of many, one.

"Many Voices, One Nation" is one of the signature exhibitions in a newly transformed wing of the museum's second floor. Under the theme, *The Nation We Build Together*, all the exhibitions on this floor tell the story of America's founding and future as a country built and building on the ideals and ideas of freedom and opportunity.

Congressman Darin LaHood proudly serves the constituents of Illinois' 18th Congressional District, consisting of more than 710,000 constituents across 19 counties throughout Central and West-Central Illinois. Darin was born and raised in Central Illinois and currently resides in the Peoria area with his wife, Kristen, and their three children.