



# THE COTTAGE COURIER

Vol. 22

www.lincolncottage.org

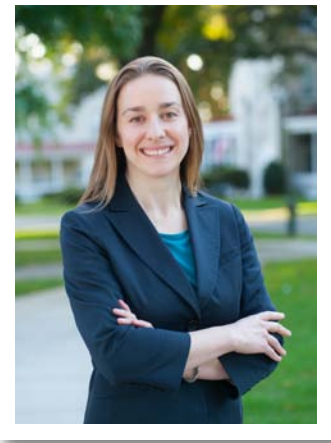
Winter 2014



## From the Director

Dear Friends,

If you had visited our offices in the past few weeks, you might wonder why everyone was sporting a perpetual grin. It was hard not to be happy. This month, we landed the cover of *Washingtonian* magazine with our iconic sculpture of Lincoln. The eye-catching cover showcases the life-like detail achieved by the artists at StudioEIS. It's hard to believe the sculpture was dedicated five years ago this week, just one year after we opened to the public. So much has changed since then, and the cover was one in a recent string of events that demonstrated that all the hard work and determination of the past few years is paying off. Thank you for helping us spread the word.



Did you see us on the cover of *Washingtonian* magazine? The life-size statue of Lincoln standing in front of the Cottage is a top pick for local "hidden gems." Pick up your copy of the February issue on newstands!

*Washingtonian's* brief write-up took the opportunity to contrast our sculpture with one that is far more familiar to most Americans — the Lincoln Memorial. Events that tie the Cottage to the Lincoln Memorial form the outline of our [featured article in this issue](#). Dr. Allida Black explores Lincoln's legacy in her piece that reflects on the importance of the Marian Anderson concert, 75 years later.

### IN THIS ISSUE

Restoring the Roof.....	2
An Engagement to Remember.....	3
Giving the Gift of Big Ideas.....	4
A New Look at the Cemetery.....	5
Upcoming Cottage Conversations.....	6
SOS 2014 International Summit.....	7
Lincoln's Briefcase and Tad's Photo Album Return to the Cottage.....	8
Marian Anderson and the Concert that Lifted a Nation.....	10

I hope you enjoy this issue of our newsletter. There is something for everyone, from details on our new [roof restoration project](#) to a great new [research find](#) to a [variety of educational opportunities](#). Let us know what you think by joining our conversation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), or drop me a line by email. I would be delighted to hear from you.

Best wishes in 2014.

Erin Mast  
[EMast@savingplaces.org](mailto:EMast@savingplaces.org)

*A Lincoln*

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S COTTAGE  
AT THE SOLDIERS' HOME



A Site of the  
National Trust for  
Historic Preservation



*An early 20th century postcard featuring the Soldiers' Home Administration Building, now known as the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center.*



*New roof tiles heading to the dryer.*



*Construction workers from Wagner Roofing place the first new tiles on the roof.*

## *Restoring the Roof:*

*Updates to the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center will reflect its original design.*

We are currently restoring the original Spanish-style tile roof and first floor awnings of the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center.

The building, constructed in 1905 as the Administration Building for the Armed Forces Retirement Home, was designed by architect William Poindexter in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. According to the original plans for the building and numerous photographs, the hipped roof of the building was covered with clay tiles. At some point, perhaps 20-40 years ago, the tiles were removed and replaced with asphalt shingles which are nearing the end of their lifespan. Recently, a discovery of green clay tile fragments found adjacent to the storm drain on the northwest corner of the building, confirmed that the color of the clay roof material was green.

Thank you to the Robert H. Smith Family Foundation for funding this exciting, impactful project.

Contact John Davison, Associate Director for Development, at [JDavison@savingplaces.org](mailto:JDavison@savingplaces.org) for more information about how you, too, can support preservation at President Lincoln's Cottage.



# An Engagement to Remember



Nick and Sedia toured President Lincoln's Cottage in December 2013 and, while on the tour, Nick decided the Emancipation Room would be the perfect location for a surprise wedding proposal. Working closely with Events Coordinator Sahand Miraminy, Nick orchestrated a ruse that would place them "alone" in the Emancipation Room. The proposal went off without a hitch in January, and Nick and Sedia are now preparing for a summer wedding... at the Cottage. Congratulations!

## Host Your Special Event at the Cottage



"We love events at President Lincoln's Cottage because there are so many creative options for beautiful and picturesque events on the cottage grounds. The venue staff are mindful, offering patrons spectacular perks... Whether you are interested in a small intimate wedding, or a large bar or bat mitzvah, this is a fantastic historic site, right in the heart of the city."

-Catering by Seasons, January Venue Spotlight

Click [here](#) to learn more about our site rental offerings.

To schedule your site visit, contact Events Coordinator Sahand Miraminy at 202-829-0436 x31232 or at [SMiraminy@savingplaces.org](mailto:SMiraminy@savingplaces.org).

# Civil War Washington Teacher Fellows Program



President Lincoln’s Cottage, Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, and Ford’s Theatre Society invite teachers to learn about the city of Washington during the Civil War in this dynamic, week-long program.

SESSION I (3rd – 12th Grade, DC area teachers) Evening of June 22 – June 27, 2014

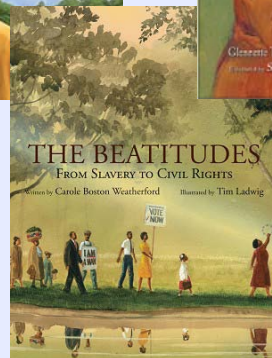
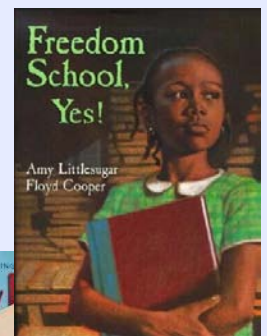
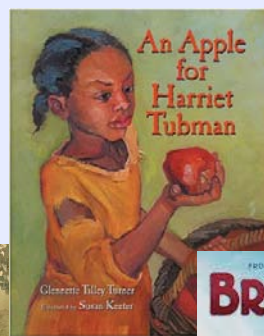
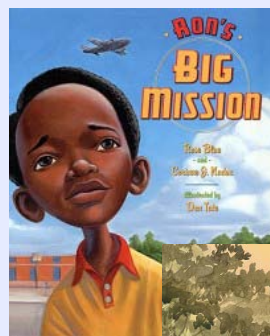
SESSION II (all grades, national) Evening of July 13 – July 18, 2014

For more information on this program, visit [www.lincolncottage.org/cwwtf-2014](http://www.lincolncottage.org/cwwtf-2014). Applications available online. Session I applications due April 11, 2014. Session II applications due April 4, 2014.

## Give the Gift of Big Ideas



This Black History Month, inspire young minds with the stories of courage and triumph found within the pages of children’s books. “Ron’s Big Mission,” “An Apple for Harriet Tubman,” and “The Beatitudes” are among the award-winning works that we carry in our store. Ask about our Black History Month “Heritage Set” for kids!



Purchase in the store or shop online today: [www.shop.lincolncottage.org](http://www.shop.lincolncottage.org).  
Store hours: Mon-Sat 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, Sundayes 10:30 am - 4:30 pm



# A New Look at the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery

By Curtis Harris

One of the unique, but often overlooked, aspects of President Lincoln's Cottage is the presence of the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery. With the onset of the Civil War in 1861, the Soldiers' Home Cemetery served as the burial ground for soldiers killed in the theater of war surrounding Washington. Recently, staff member Sahand Miraminy uncovered a digitized photograph at the New York Public Library of the Soldiers' Home Cemetery most likely taken during Lincoln's presidency.

The photograph captures a verdant cemetery with untamed grass sweeping across neatly arranged graves. Youthful tree saplings poignantly grow beside the final resting places of young men. The somber photo was taken and developed by the tandem of Titian Peale and Andrew Gardner for Mathew Brady's photo studio. Photos like this one and others of battlefields, dead soldiers, and hospitals comprised Brady's "Incidents of the War" an exhibition displayed in 1862 in New York City. *The New York Times* in October of that year described the electrifying effect the photos had on the American public:

"Mr. Brady has done something to bring home to us the terrible reality and earnestness of war. If he has not brought bodies and laid them in our

door-yards and along streets, he has done something very like it."

President Lincoln didn't need a photograph to lay the grisly war at his doorstep. When the Lincolns took up residence at the Cottage in June of 1862, more than 1200 interments had already been made at the Soldiers' Home Cemetery. Three of those interments are clearly visible in this 1860s photo:

- Private Elisha Luker, Co. F, 1st New Jersey, died October 15, 1861
- Bugler John W. Somers, Co. D, 1st New Jersey Cavalry, died October 22, 1861
- Private John H. Reynolds, Co. D, 1st California, died October 29, 1861

Like the majority of Civil War deaths, all three of these men died of disease. Indeed, Somers was felled by the same illness (typhoid fever) which ended the life of Willie Lincoln in February 1862.

The cemetery served as a constant reminder of war and perhaps kept President Lincoln grounded in the reality and cost of the conflict. Moreover, this moving presence may have helped Lincoln conceive and construct the meaning of sacrifice he eloquently stated at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery in November 1863.



*Lincoln-era photograph of the USSAH National Cemetery. Courtesy New York Public Library.*

One hundred fifty years later, it is at times difficult for us to truly comprehend the experience that Abraham Lincoln had at the Soldiers' Home. We will never see the weary president striding the earthen walkways or kneeling down in the blades of grass surrounding the gravestones. We will not witness the commander-in-chief whose heart was surely wracked with guilt on these terrible losses, but nonetheless filled with admiration for the sacrifices. What we can do is appreciate photos like this one, which bring us that much closer to moments relegated forever to the past.

*Mr. Harris is a graduate student in the American University Public History program and a historical interpreter at President Lincoln's Cottage.*

Mark your calendars for  
**Memorial Day 2014**  
 Monday May 26

President Lincoln's Cottage and the Armed Forces Retirement Home partner to offer guided tours of the USSAH National Cemetery. Details to come!



# COTTAGE CONVERSATIONS

Get to know the latest scholarship from authors while enjoying a glass of wine in Lincoln's home.



April 24: John Taliaferro, *All the Great Prizes: The Life of John Hay, from Lincoln to Roosevelt*

May 15: Stephen Mansfield, *Lincoln's Battle with God: A President's Struggle with Faith and What it Meant for America*



Reception \$10, lecture \$10.

Free for \$250+ members. **JOIN NOW.**

Reception: 6:00pm. Lecture: 6:30 pm

For reservations, contact Sahand Miraminy at 202-829-0436 x31232 or [SMiraminy@savingplaces.org](mailto:SMiraminy@savingplaces.org).

We are grateful for our sponsors for their generous support of the 2013-2014 Cottage Conversation Season: Northern Trust Corporation,

David Bruce Smith and F. James Tennes.



**Northern Trust**

## "12 Years a Slave" Screening and Program

President Lincoln's Cottage and the Armed Forces Retirement Home are proud to commemorate Black History Month with a screening of "12 Years a Slave," the critically-acclaimed film adaptation of Solomon Northup's harrowing odyssey, and a public program featuring Vera Williams, Clayton Adams, and Justin Gilliam, three of Northup's direct living descendents. Response to the program has been far-reaching, and we are thrilled by the enthusiasm! Although the program is booked to capacity, stay tuned for updates on potential program broadcasts.





## Inspire your students at the Cradle of the Emancipation Proclamation



*“Our guide did an amazing job of keeping the students engaged in various activities that appealed to a variety of learners. You have exceptional guides who know how to make the subject matter accessible to students. Thanks for helping my class see the power of their big ideas and for making this trip so meaningful. Even the teachers learned something new!”*

*-10th Grade Teacher, Portland OR*

Contact the Education Department and schedule your class field trip to President Lincoln’s Cottage today! Call 202-829-0436 x31232 or email [LincolnEd@savingplaces.org](mailto:LincolnEd@savingplaces.org).



# STUDENTS OPPOSING SLAVERY

raising awareness of human trafficking

**Registration for the 2014  
SOS Summit is Open!**

Students who attended the inaugural Students Opposing Slavery (SOS) International Summit at President Lincoln’s Cottage in 2013 learned about modern slavery from leaders in the anti-trafficking field, developed trafficking awareness campaigns, and launched SOS chapters in their own communities. Support the next generation of abolitionists and register a teenager for the 2014 summit today! Visit [www.studentsopposingslavery.org](http://www.studentsopposingslavery.org) for registration information.

For more information, contact Callie Hawkins, Associate Director for Programs, at 202-829-0436 x31223 or at [CHawkins@savingplaces.org](mailto:CHawkins@savingplaces.org).



Don’t miss updates on the SOS blog!  
[www.studentsopposingslavery.org/blog](http://www.studentsopposingslavery.org/blog)

# Back at the Cottage: President Lincoln's Briefcase and Tad Lincoln's Photo Album Return to Washington, D.C. for the First Time in Nearly 150 Years

The briefcase that held Abraham Lincoln's handwritten notes during the Civil War returns to Washington, DC, for a six month exhibit at President Lincoln's Cottage. While living at the Cottage with his family during the summers of 1862, 1863, and 1864, President Lincoln carried papers in the briefcase on his daily commute to the White House. A photo album made for Tad Lincoln by the 150th Pennsylvania Volunteers, a company stationed at the Cottage during the Civil War to guard the Lincoln family, is also on view in the exhibit. The briefcase and photo album are on loan from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, IL, and will be on display at President Lincoln's Cottage through the end of June 2014.



*Both objects are on display at President Lincoln's Cottage as part of "originALS," a series of exhibitions highlighting objects that speak to the importance and complexity of Lincoln's time here at the Soldiers' Home.*

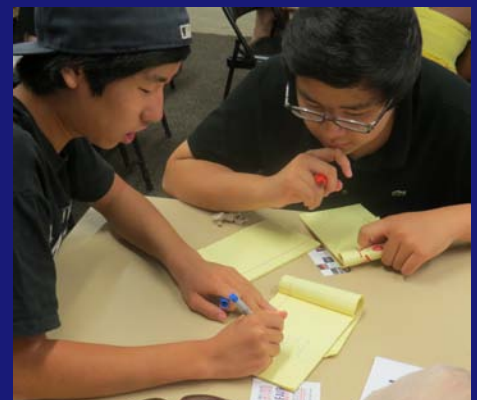
## Double Your Impact

If you donate to President Lincoln's Cottage, the Robert H. Smith Family Foundation will generously match your contribution. For example, a gift of \$250 would become \$500.

Your support is critical because President Lincoln's Cottage:

- *is the only National Monument in the country that receives no government operating support;*
- *has no endowment (but budgets responsibly and has no debt either); and*
- *is making a substantial difference through original, transformative programs such as our international Students Opposing Slavery initiative, Emancipation Anthology, and effort to bring every DC public school student to Lincoln's beloved home free of charge.*

Click here to  
**DONATE**



Help us build a sustainable future for this historic treasure by making a gift today!



# What will be your *legacy*?

As a private non-profit, President Lincoln's Cottage depends on donations and bequests. You can help ensure this powerful place is here for generations to come by leaving a bequest in your will.

For more information about using your will to protect President Lincoln's Cottage and the big ideas of freedom and equality that live here, please contact John Davison, Associate Director for Development, by calling 202-829-0436 x31225 or emailing [JDavison@savingplaces.org](mailto:JDavison@savingplaces.org).

# 32,000!

*That's how many unique visitors we welcomed to President Lincoln's Cottage in 2013 - and we turned people away. Why?*

*We focus on quality, and that means preserving a small group format. We think it leads to a better experience and based on visitor feedback, you agree! Thanks!*

## Stay Connected

Jan 11

We enjoyed a wonderful visit to and tour of @LincolnsCottage today! A lot of history at that place! #gem #DC  
pic.twitter.com/k9SbKunbig

Retweeted by Lincoln's Cottage



Expand Reply Retweeted Favorite More



Follow @LincolnsCottage on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube for photos, updates, and more!

## Ride free with UBER



New users who create an UBER account with the code HONESTABE will receive \$20 off their first UberX, UberBLACK, or UberSUV ride. Sign up today at: [www.uber.com/go/honestabe](http://www.uber.com/go/honestabe).

**What is Uber?** Uber is a company that allows users to request a ride via mobile app, text message, or the web. Drivers arrive curbside in just minutes, you can track the arrival of your ride, you'll receive a text message when your driver arrives, the credit card on file is charged after your ride, and you will receive an email receipt.

# “To Thee We Sing”

## Marian Anderson, Abraham Lincoln, and the Concert that Lifted a Nation

By Dr. Allida Black

Almost seventy-five years ago, on April 9, 1939, more than 75,000 Americans crowded the National Mall. They stood shoulder to shoulder, jamming the path to the Lincoln Memorial, surrounding the Reflecting Pool, and fanning up the hill to the Washington Monument. The nation's capital had never seen such a crowd. Even the cold, damp, and dreary weather did not keep them away. They flocked, wearing their finest Easter attire, to hear Marian Anderson sing. The struggle to stage this concert – to find an appropriate venue for the black contralto that critics extolled as the “voice one hears once in a century” – had captivated the nation and awakened a complacent city.

All in the crowd knew that the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) refused to rent Constitution Hall to her because she was black and that Eleanor Roosevelt had resigned from DAR to protest its decision. Most knew that the District of Columbia Board of Education (who previously allowed her to use one of its auditoriums) followed DAR's lead and that it took the combined efforts of the First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored

People (NAACP), and a wide coalition of Washingtonians to arrange this performance.

The intense, highly public three-month struggle left Anderson “saddened and ashamed.” She was an artist, not an activist. She bristled at discrimination but hated the notoriety it thrust upon her. Suddenly, she later recalled, she “had become, whether [she] liked it or not, a symbol representing [her] people.” Grave doubts shadowed her usual confidence. She almost backed out, but she “knew she could not run away from the situation.” Her mother Anna, her agent Sol Hurok, and Eleanor Roosevelt comforted her and boosted her courage.

As Anderson walked to the center of the Memorial's chamber and descended its first row of marble steps, the crowd surged forward, jostling all around, and pushing up the stairs to touch her. NAACP Executive Secretary Walter White seized a microphone, pleading for people to step back. The crowd complied. It was as though thousands suddenly realized the significance of what they were there to experience. Anderson did too. She “had a feeling that a great wave of good will poured out from these people, almost



*Marian Anderson greeting Secretary Ickes on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Courtesy Library of Congress.*

engulfing” her. Yet for a moment, she feared she had forgotten her lyrics.

Ickes understood. He linked Anderson's remarkable talents to Lincoln's remarkable leadership. God had sent Lincoln, he told the crowd “that he might restore freedom to those from whom we had disregardedly taken it. In carrying out his task, Abraham Lincoln laid down his life, and so it is appropriate as it is fortunate that today we stand reverently and humbly at the base of this memorial to the Great Emancipator while glorious tribute is rendered to his memory by a daughter of the race from which he stuck the chains of slavery.” “Genius draws no color line,” he continued. “She has endowed Miss Anderson with such a voice as lifts any individual above



his fellows....And so it is fitting that Marian Anderson should raise her voice in tribute to the noble Lincoln, whom mankind will forever honor.”

Now a nervous Marian Anderson walked to the array of eight radio microphones jammed in front of her. With Daniel Chester French’s statue of Abraham Lincoln looming behind her, dozens of dignitaries seated beside her, and millions leaning into their radios at home, she took a deep breath, smiled and waved demurely to the multitude sprawled out before her. She then nodded to her pianist, clasped her hands, and closed her eyes. The crowd stood at a rapt attention.

“My country tis of thee, sweet land of liberty,” she sang, “to thee we sing, Land where my fathers died. Land of our children’s pride. Let freedom ring.”

Not many of her audience caught the slight change of words from “I” to “we.” But she had thought long and hard about them. She sang for her nation, not its assassinated leader. Mixing arias with spirituals, she planned a recital true to her roots, to her training, and to her history. She sang for herself and with the

memories of what sufferings had long occurred and for the vision of what a truly emancipated America would be.

Her mostly black audience felt that. By the time she sang “No One Knows the Trouble I’ve Seen,” many of those clutching the barricades had tears streaming down their cheeks and once again tried to rush the stage. A young girl clad in “somewhat too garishly Easter hued finery” caught Walter White’s eye. “Hers was not the face,” he recalled, “of one who had been the beneficiary of much education or opportunity.” Her hands displayed a history of “dreary manual labor. ...Tears streamed down her face...but in her eyes blazed hope bordering on ecstasy.

... Life which had been none too easy for her held out greater hope because one who was also colored and who, like herself, had known poverty, privation, and prejudice, had, by her genius, gone a long way toward conquering bigotry. If Marian Anderson could do it, the girl’s eyes seemed to say, then I can too.”

Marian Anderson sang for her and thousands like her, not for Lincoln. But by standing in front of him, in his memorial, she expanded his legacy. Lincoln, the Great Emancipator, had freed the slaves. But he died before all slaves had tasted freedom and thus could not engage in the battle to define or protect their freedom or help the nation understand what emancipation meant. That battle would be fought for and by generations to come.

Anderson understood that. She knew that she was no one’s property, but she also chafed against the

restrictions law and society imposed on her. She had fled to Europe for acceptance and respect. Hotels, restaurants, and trains welcomed her. She could sing what she chose and speak what she wanted to say. She had no intention of confronting American bigotry. She preferred to let her artistry and her professionalism speak for itself. But by standing in front of Lincoln, evoking his memory to defend her right to full citizenship, transforming his memorial into a dignified stage of non-violent protest, Anderson unintentionally redefined his memorial and his legacy. As Scott Sandage and I have argued elsewhere, Anderson transformed Lincoln’s memorial into the nation’s temple of civil rights.

The next day, when photographs of the concert splashed across the front pages of 436 newspapers and newsreels brought Anderson and Lincoln into hundreds of movie houses across the nation, Lincoln’s towering image seemed to underscore her dignity. Suddenly, Lincoln the war leader, Lincoln the Great Emancipator, took on a new persona. He became Anderson’s advocate and protector and emancipation became not only freedom from slavery and deprivation but also the freedom to strive and succeed. That made emancipation all the more threatening.

When Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, he understood that it was, as Ronald White argued, “not so much a fact accomplished as a promise to be realized.” The abolitionist Charles Sumner concurred, telling mourners shortly after Lincoln’s funeral: “Liberty has been won. The battle for Equality is still pending.”

But as time passed, the memory of Lincoln the unorthodox but brilliant leader gave way to the image of Lincoln as healer. The historical record of Lincoln’s Ten Percent Plan, a plan abolitionists decried “would free the



*Anderson performing in front of the crowd from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Courtesy Library of Congress.*



Anderson performing in front of Lincoln's statue- click [HERE](#) to watch her performance.  
Image and video courtesy of YouTube.

slave and ignore the negro” seemed erased from the nation’s memory. As was Lincoln’s conviction that only a constitutional amendment – and not Congress – could free the slaves. Few remembered he contemplated allowing black veterans to vote.

The nation seemed at peace with its conflicting icons. A majority of Southerners may have held him responsible for Reconstruction efforts his inept successors oversaw. But most of the nation immortalized him as the man who won the Civil War, confronted the horrors of slavery, and tried “to bind up the nation’s wounds.”

By the time Marian Anderson claimed his memorial as her stage, the myth of Lincoln overshadowed his legacy. He had become the pensive man in the great marble chair, reflecting whatever values we hoped to see in ourselves and in our nation. Since his death, America had outlawed slavery, fought a world war, survived a catastrophic depression, and watched worriedly as Europe careened toward

another, more horrific war. Yet, as much as America might have wanted to ignore it, it had become increasingly difficult for her citizens to discount American bigotry when European Aryanism drew her closer to war.

Lincoln would have understood that.

Marian Anderson certainly did.

It is one reason why she accepted the responsibility the Lincoln Memorial concert thrust upon her. Like Lincoln, she ultimately could not live with a “house divided.” She could not remain silent when segregationists tried to shuttle her off to a confined space. Instead, with dignity and grace, she challenged our complacency and mobilized our conscience. In the process, she helped the nation see past the color line, sense what emancipation could be, and made Lincoln a full partner in the struggle for racial justice.

////////////////////////////////////  
 Dr. Allida Black is a Research Professor of History and International Affairs at the Elliot School of International Affairs at The George Washington University. Black was founding editor of *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers*, a project designed to preserve, teach and apply Eleanor Roosevelt’s writings and discussions of human rights and democratic politics, and has published several books on Eleanor Roosevelt. She received her B.A. from Emory University in 1974 and her Ph.D. from the George Washington University in 1993.  
 //////////////////////////////////////

## Learn More!

The story of how Marian Anderson’s musical career became intertwined in the nation’s struggle for civil rights comes to life for young readers in Russell Freedman’s “The Voice that Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights.” Recommended for children ages 9-12. Purchase your copy in our [online store](#) today!

