**Cynthia’s Compass**

**Project Description**:

Clintonville was founded by the sons of pioneer Thomas Bull, Jr. Son Alanson focused on building a business district. Son Thompson focused on education. Son Jason managed the religious elements of the community.

Originating in the State of Vermont, all of these men were abolitionists. Son Jason was a known “conductor” on Ohio’s Underground Railroad. He worked in conjunction with the Black Conductors of Columbus-teamsters Louis Washington and his son Thomas, James Poindexter and others- to route runaway slaves via Clintonville and Bull to points further north. Jason made his living as a circuit riding preacher. He would leave home for several weeks at a time. When he was gone, the Underground Railroad activities would continue, assisted by his brothers and other neighbors.

In the late 1890s, Jason’s daughter, Cynthia (born 1836 died 1907), participated in research conducted by Wilbur Seibert. She recounted a story of her involvement with her father’s abolitionist work. She said she would place food in a large basket and set out to “collect eggs”. In reality, she would deliver this food to slaves hiding in the barns and outbuildings of her father’s farm.

With respect to Jason Bull’s involvement in the railroad, Seibert’s research is supported by other historical records. For instance, Bull was the speaker at the second meeting of the Worthington Abolitionist Society. Bull’s neighbor, Joseph Smith, becomes the President of that organization and he and his wife worked with others to establish the town of Berea, KY-a free town in a slave state.

Children are every generation’s legacy. As parents and neighbors, we know our actions, more than our words, teach our children. Cynthia’s moral compass was set by the actions of her parents and neighbors.

The Clintonville Historical Society would like to memorialize the strength of our pioneers on Memory Lane (aka West North Broadway). We approached Clintonville resident and artist Agnes Burris to see how she might envision a tribute to Clintonville’s involvement in the Underground Railroad, Ms. Burris immediately connected with the story of Cynthia.

She envisions the sculpture to be comprised of granite and marble slabs between 3-4 feet tall, 2-3 feet wide, and 2" thick. Each slab is to be cut into identical silhouettes. The black silhouette is to be engraved front and back with the constellations (see PDF); the white slab is to be engraved front and back with the map. The slabs will then be notched so that they can be intersected vertically and stand erect.

The resulting sculpture will be set on a base of granite and placed in a garden. It will join other monuments on West North Broadway (aka Memory Lane). Presently, three gardens line the north side of the street. Ultimately, twelve gardens are envisioned.

**Organization information:**

Clintonville Historical Society

P.O. 14315

Columbus, OH 43214

**Artist information:**

The contact information for Ms. Burris is:

68 Walhalla Road

Columbus, OH 43202

740-253-9565

agnes.burris@gmail.com

**Materials and Maintenance Plan:**

Tecstone Granite, located here in Columbus, will be responsible for fabrication, assembly and installation of the sculpture. We have purposely chosen to make the sculpture from durable materials (granite and marble). The artist is working closely with Tecstone to insure that the sculpture is for the most part maintenance free.

The sculpture will sit in a garden bed. In order to minimize maintenance, that garden will be planted with native materials. Each garden is sponsored by a homeowner located near the garden. The sponsoring homeowner of this site is a bee keeper and wants to insure that the garden provides excellent food choices for her bees. We will be transplanting materials from the existing gardens and she will be added to those varieties. All of our sponsoring homeowners have done an excellent job of maintaining the garden areas. That said, the Society has also engaged the services of a local high school student to assist the sponsoring homeowners with mowing the grass, mulching and trimming of the garden beds.

Note: West North Broadway is part of the Keep Columbus Clean program and the Clintonville for Change organization does host at least one formal clean-up of the right of way each year.

**Budget:**

Artist fee: $1000

Fabrication of the sculpture: $4000

Fabrication of two (2) samples $800

Creation of garden bed $500

Promotion of project $200

Misc. $300

Total $6,800\*

* These figures do not include in kind donations of concrete foundation and labor to set the garden.

**Civic Process/Timeframe:**

The Society’s Board has reviewed and formally approved the project. We have mailed out newsletters and fundraising materials to over 300 households in the Clintonville area. We presented the project to the Clintonville Area Commissioners on June 4, 2015 and provided an update on July 2. 2015. We have had a newspaper article in the 6/18/2015 TheWeek Booster. We hosted the official launch event on Saturday July 11 at 7:00 at Moxie’s Gifts 3468 North High Street in Clintonville. The following Tuesday, we hosted a program on the Underground Railroad. That program included staff from the Kelton House. Both events had excellent attendance. After those events, we installed a formal display of the project at the Whetstone Library. We have raised about two thirds of the required funds for the project. Our goal would be to have the project approved this evening, place the formal order for the sculpture tomorrow and have this project completed by the end of 2015. If we cannot install the sculpture before mid-November, we will need to wait for spring of 2016. That said, we would work to create the foundation and garden setting in the fall.