





2021 ANNUAL REPORT

What is Freedom's Frontier?

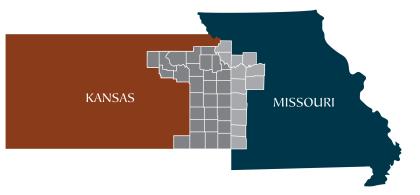
If you live along the Missouri-Kansas border, how you tell the story of freedom often depends on where you call home.

Along this border, a new nation set out in a long trek across the ancestral lands of Native Americans to settle the frontier and, in the process, hoped to find economic and religious freedom.

Along this border, the nation violently collided in skirmishes that helped instigate the Civil War.

Along this border, millions of Americans fought—over school segregation, over Native-American rights, over suffrage, over the right to choose how to live and love—in the enduring struggle for freedom.

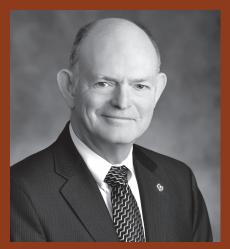
Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area brings together the histories that started here but grew to change the course of history for the entire country, whether it is the history of the settlement of the frontier, the Border War and Civil War along the western frontier, or the enduring struggle for freedom.



Freedom's Frontier knits together the histories of the settlement of the frontier, the Border War and Civil War, and the enduring struggle for freedom into one American fabric. Its threads contain the remarkable histories from its partners: historical sites, museums, convention and visitor bureaus, educators, and support societies. Each is deeply invested in telling these stories.

More than three million people call Freedom's Frontier home. More than 30,000 square miles fall in the 41 counties that define Freedom's Frontier in both Missouri and Kansas. As we end our fifteenth year of operation, over 350 organizations have partnered with us.

On our cover: Youth Camp students at Dole Institute of Politics in Lawrence, Kansas. This partner and others in the heritage area tell the history of our struggle for freedom.



A Message from Grant Glenn, 2021 Trustee Chair

Outgoing board chair, Grant Glenn, led FFNHA with a steady hand as we emerged from COVID-19 in 2021. During his time as chair, Grant pushed FFNHA to new levels that will serve the heritage area for years to come.

One of his biggest accomplishments was the creation of the Project Success Committee, which oversaw development and implementation of the Freedom's Frontier software application for smartphones and tablets that allows partners and the public an additional resource for touring the heritage area and partner sites. In the wake of COVID-19 Grant helped FFNHA adapt to the sudden changes by using technology for virtual meetings and presentations to increase attendance/participation. Additionally, Grant established continuous resources by developing a discussion grant which encourages partners to provide learning opportunities and discussions on equal justice issues within their communities as well as establishing an Equal Justice Learning Project for trustees. Not only did Grant ensure FFNHA was serving its partners but that the organization is also providing financial support to KC Race Project, which funds programming for children on equal justice issues. Last, but not least, Grant was passionate about ensuring ongoing substantial efforts by trustees and staff towards achieving reauthorization and educating legislators and others about National Heritage Areas.

Upon the end of his term, FFNHA welcomes Kevin Wood as his successor. "Serving with Grant has been a wonderful experience. His steady leadership during COVID-19 made serving our partners not only possible but enriching for all of our stakeholders. Grant has the ability to envision the best for our communities which has continued to inspire our work today," said Wood.

The Road Ahead

As an organization that fosters history, we understand the past's effect on the present. The stories that define this region — the settlement of the frontier, the Border War, and the Civil Rights Era — are difficult, painful chapters in history. Now we find ourselves living through another trying chapter.

Over the last year, we've weathered a prolonged global pandemic, battled an insurgent misinformation campaign, and lost a beloved executive director. We were forced to scale back programming and adapt to challenging circumstances. Looming throughout was our congressionally mandated date for reauthorization.

But our history teaches us that struggle often leads to triumph. Facing those extreme challenges, Freedom's Frontier fought on. We discovered creative programming solutions that allowed our partners to safely engage with their visitors. We mobilized to inform the public at large of the law that governs the heritage area and restricts us from infringing on private property rights.

Today, we find ourselves on the other side of that struggle. Our smartphone app is thriving. And, thanks to Senator Roy Blunt of Missouri, we have been congressionally reauthorized to operate.

Our region's difficult past shows that adversity is a vital component of our heritage – it drives us, shapes us, and makes us better. At Freedom's Frontier, the future has never looked brighter.

- Kevin Wood, 2022 Board Chair



Preserving History & Protecting Property

Each region's history is unique. When President George W. Bush signed into law the act creating Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area in 2006, it capped a years-long, grassroots effort from Kansas and Missouri volunteers to nationally memorialize this region's history. In the years since, similar efforts have gained traction across the country. In 2019, President Donald Trump created six new national heritage areas that now sit alongside FFNHA as part of the National Heritage Area program.

Established under President Ronald Reagan, the program was envisioned as an alternative to the National Park Service, one that would preserve history and private property rights at the same time. There are now 55 heritage areas from coast to coast, and just as each region's history is unique, the laws that establish and govern each heritage area are distinct.

The law that created Freedom's Frontier is black and white. It states that *no land or organization is automatically "opted in" as a part of Freedom's Frontier*. By law, *no private property owner is required to participate* in or be associated with Freedom's Frontier, nor can Freedom's Frontier own real estate or property. We have *no influence over zoning or land-use regulations and no authority over mineral or water rights*. Any entity or organization who partners with Freedom's Frontier must be within our congressionally designated borders; even then, *we cannot require any entity or organization to partner with us*.

Over the last 15 years, more than 350 museums, historic sites, and organizations across eastern Kansas and western Missouri have voluntarily partnered with us. Together, they help fulfill *our mandate to spur tourism and economic development* by raising awareness of the exceptional, foundational stories that define this region and everyone who calls it home: the settlement of the frontier, the Border and Civil War, and the enduring struggle for freedom.

Those core themes of triumph and struggle reveal the 41 counties that form Freedom's Frontier to be singular, vital components of the American saga. Our mission is to help tell their stories, simultaneously preserving our past and fostering our future.

2021 Grants Report

FFNHA awarded nearly \$20,000 through Interpretive and Discussion Grants to partners in 2021. Eight organizations received grants in various amounts on the basis of community enrichment and local historical education.

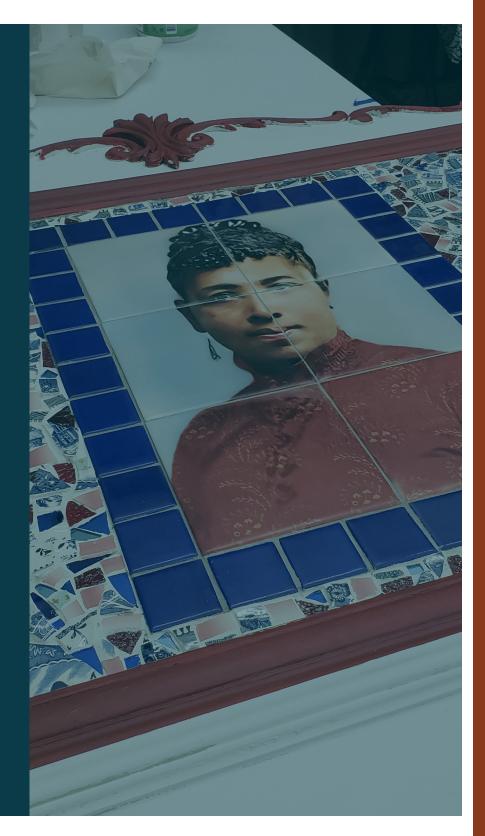
Interpretive Grants assist partners with telling the nationally significant stories of the heritage area's main themes of shaping the frontier, Missouri-Kansas Border War and the enduring struggle for freedom. There were four Interpretive Grants awarded in 2021.

The first grant of \$3,000 was awarded in October to assist in support of an updated website design allowing Missouri's Cass County Historical Society to archive and share its history on a digital platform. The grant funding allowed CCHS to start a new feature on FFNHA's website - a history blog that features a variety of historical information about Cass County.

The second Interpretive Grant awarded \$3,000 to Marla's Quilts Inc., an African-American Quilt Museum and Textile Academy to fund a portable mural on the life and times of an enslaved person named Maria Rogers Martin. The program involved students using research and developing personas and characters for performances open to the partners of FFNHA. The grant assisted in the creation of three 19th century dress costumes, three historical quilts related to the Civil War, and a mosaic mural of Maria Rogers Martin.

The third Interpretive Grant was for \$3,000 to help finance the completion of a permanent broom making exhibit at the Poplar Heights Living History Museum. The exhibit, "Broom Corn: The Plant that Swept America," teaches museum visitors about the struggles against terrible hardships and dangers the settlers endured and conquered on the road to prosperity and freedom.

(Continued on next page.)



The last Interpretive Grant of \$1,000 was awarded to the Independence Historical Museum for the climate and energy exhibit, Environmental History of Montgomery County.

Other grants given in 2021 were awarded through FFNHA's Discussion Grant Program. This program encourages applicants to create community opportunities for discussions about civil rights. This year's recipients presented a variety of creative digital and in-person programs tailored to their community needs.

The first Discussion Grant for \$1,500 was awarded to the Johnson County (KS) Performing Arts Department in collaboration with the Johnson County Museum. This grant was able to fund a virtual field trip program for Shawnee Mission North High School Students. Over the course of three weeks, students were able to engage in content facilitated by the Johnson County Museum exploring the topic of residential segregation through the practice of redlining in Kansas City. Students also worked with a team of Performing Artists to do scene study work from the play *A Raisin in the Sun*. Finally, students worked with the Fine Arts Department and created their own mixed media art piece synthesizing the themes they engaged with.

The second Discussion Grant of \$2,500 was awarded to University of Missouri – Kansas City (UMKC) Educate-Organize-Advocate (EOA) Conference. This grant helped fund speaker and student panels for the annual social justice conference which focused on telling the stories and experiences of marginalized people and communities in the fight for freedom. The keynote speaker was author Adrienne Maree Brown who discussed ways to build collective power towards greater freedom in part through collective storytelling. Participants were also able to engage in intimate settings for discussion, collaboration, and power building.

Humanities Kansas Speakers Bureau (HKSB) was awarded the third Discussion Grant of \$2,500 which assisted in funding over 50 presentations. HKSB presentations engage audiences with in-person and online humanities-based presentations designed to share stories that inspire, spark conversations that inform and generate insights that strengthen civic engagement. A few topics in this year's group included: "A History of the American Indian Boarding Schools" by Eric Anderson, "Petroglyphs of the Kansas Smoky Hills" by Rex Buchanan and "You've Got Mail: Exploring Letter-Writing Through Time" by Celia Daniels.

The last Discussion Grant awarded \$1,500 to the Curators of the University of Missouri - Kansas City (UMKC) in February to sponsor a presentation by Ibram X. Kendi as a part of the 13th Annual MLK Lecture Series.

FFNHA's Smartphone App: Guiding Users Across the Frontier

2021 marked the true emergence of FFNHA's smartphone app, when it cohered its form and functions into the heritage area's primary medium for public engagement. Launched the year prior, FFNHA staff spent much of the initial pandemic months testing the app's functionality, discovering what worked with users and why. As the pandemic entered its second year, the app was positioned to harness the platform and leverage its capabilities.

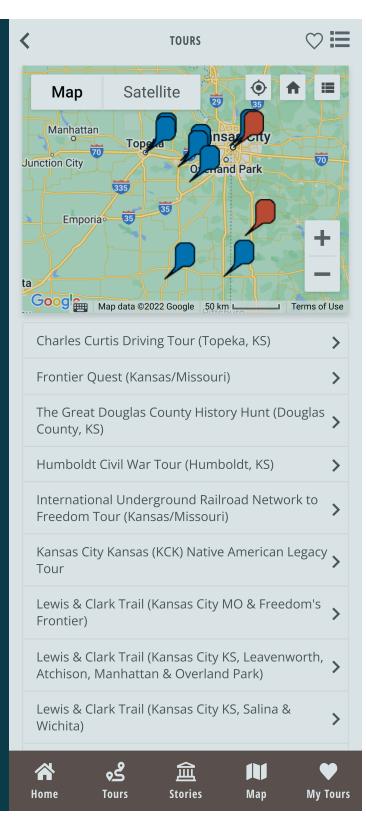
In January, Freedom's Frontier partnered with the Middle Missouri River Lewis and Clark Network to build and release a series of four driving tours spanning the length of the heritage area. Adapted from material initially developed by the National Park Service in conjunction with CVBs throughout Missouri and Kansas, the tours led users from the center of FFNHA to its outermost borders.

That same month, FFNHA partnered with the National Park Service and Brown v. Board National Historic Site to create "Topeka, Kansas: From Brown to Brown." Tracing the city's history from John Brown to the *Brown v. Board* decision, the tour stretched the app's structure, allowing users to create their own path through the city's space and time. The African American experience was further chronicled in the "Kansas City Kansas African American Legacy Tour," a collaboration between FFNHA and Visit Kansas City Kansas.

With the "Charles Curtis Driving Tour" and the "Kansas City Kansas Native American Legacy Tour," the app expanded its scope to the history of the area's native peoples. Both tours synthesized the presentation of text and images with the software's GPS functions, offering users a new degree of interactivity.

FFNHA's second cooperative effort with Douglas County Heritage Conservation Council, the "Santa Fe Trail Landmark Tour," topped its 2020 predecessor and proved to be the app's most successful and ambitious project to date. Combining audio, images, text, and gamification features, the tour led users to 13 stops along the trail, each with audio descriptions and images that brought the trail's history to life like never before.

With its expanding library of interactive tours and exhibits, the FFNHA app has emerged as one of the heritage area's most valuable resources for partners and the public alike. The platform continues to grow at an exponential clip, bringing with it new audiences and opportunities. FFNHA looks forward to harnessing that potential, forging new connections with new audiences in the years ahead.



In Memoriam

Jim Ogle led FFNHA from 2016 to 2021 as the organization's Executive Director. He worked tirelessly to steer the organization through the COVID-19 pandemic. Jim passed away on March 13, 2022, after a hard-fought battle with cancer.

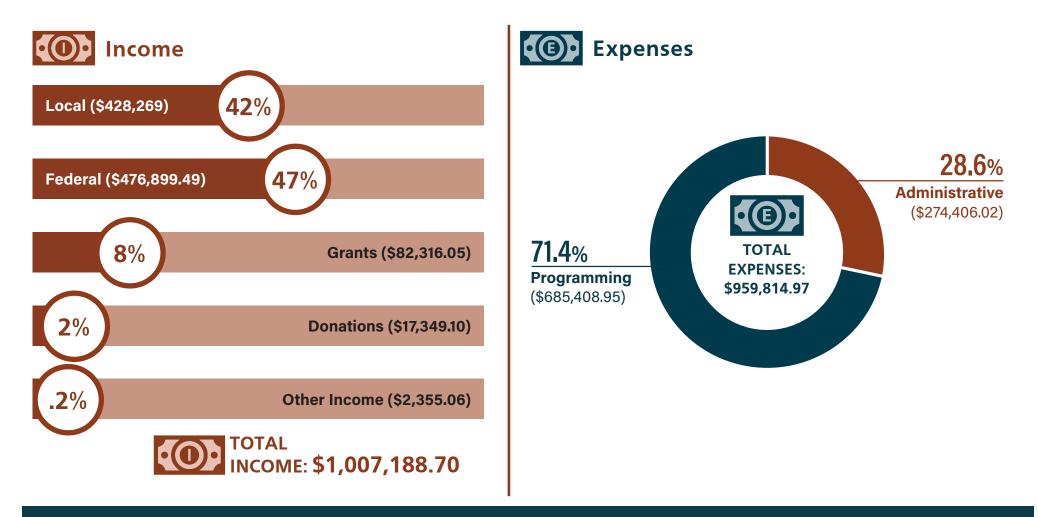
Jim was an extraordinary gift to Freedom's Frontier and its partners in promoting and talking about (and assisting partners in talking about) the important events in the National Heritage Area that forever changed America.

Grant Glenn, former Chair and Vice Chair of the Freedom's Frontier Board of Trustees, commented:

"Jim was a huge personality and a very humble person who loved people of all kinds. His dynamic leadership and communication skills were a perfect match when we interviewed and hired him to be Executive Director of Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area. He took an organization with a limited identity and identified ways it could become large and important. He was always finding ways to grow it and increase the number of our partners. He uplifted our partners, board members, and everyone he met. He believed that telling the stories of the enduring struggle for freedom was the most important mission of FFNHA. Mostly, he was our friend, always making the extra effort to be there when he possibly could. Jim, You are greatly missed!"



Financials





GuideStar is the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations. Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area was awarded the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency, achieved by less than one tenth of 1% of nonprofits.

Board of Trustees

Honorary Co-Chairs Mike Parson, Missouri Governor Laura Kelly, Kansas Governor **Ex-Officio Members** Gary Kremer, Missouri State Historical Society Jennie Chinn, Kansas State Historical Society

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Partners

1855 Harris-Kearney House Museum & Westport Historial Society 1859 Jail, Marshal's Home and Museum 1st Kansas Colored Infantry Civil War Monument Afircan-American Quilt Museum and Textile Academy Alexander Majors House and Barn Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum American Flight Museum American Jazz Museum Anita B. Gorman Conservation Discovery Center Appleton City Landmark Restorations, Inc. Arabia Steamboat Museum Arts And Recreation Foundation of Overland Park Atchison County Historical Society Museum Atkins-Johnson Farm & Museum Banner Creek Science Center and Observatory **Basehor Historical Museum Society Bates County Museum** Battle of Carthage State Historic Site Battle of Island Mound State Historic Site Battle of Lexington State Historic Site Battle of Westport Museum Battle of Westport Visitor Center and Museum Battles of Newtonia Baxter Springs Heritage Center and Museum Beecher Bible and Rifle Church **Bingham-Waggoner Estate** Black Archives of Mid America Black Jack Battlefield and Nature Park Blackpast.org Bridging the Gap Brown V. Board of Education Burlingame Historical Preservation Society Burning of Osceola Monument Burnt District Museum and Sharp-Hopper Log Cabin and Monument Burr Oak Woods Nature Center **Carnegie Building Carroll Mansion Museum** Carthage Civil War Museum Cass County Historic Sites

Cass County Historical Society Center for Midwestern Studies City of Lee's Summit City of Lowry City, Missouri City of Osceola, Missouri Civil War Roundtable of Western Missouri Clay County Historic Sites Clay County Museum Clearfield County Historical Society Coffey County Economic Development Coffey County Historical Society Museum Concordia Area Museum and Historical Society Confederate Memorial State Historic Site **Connecting For Good** Constitution Hall State Historic Site Constitution Hall Topeka Corps of Discovery Statue Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art Curtis House Museum Day Log Cabin at the Green Deaf Cultural Center Democratic Headquarters of Kansas Territory in Lecompton **Dietrich Cabin Dole Institute of Politics** Douglas County Heritage Are Conservation Council Douglas County Santa Fe Trail Assc. **Edgerton Community Museum** Ernie Miller Nature Center Eudora Area Historical Society Eudora Community Museum Excelsior Springs Museum and Archives Far West First Territorial Capitol State Historic Site Fishburn Archives, Park University McAfee Library Flint Hills Discovery Center Forest Hill and Calvary Cemeteries Fort Larned National Historic Site Fort Leavenworth Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery

Fort Osage National Historic Landmark Fort Riley Museums Fort Scott National Historic Site Fort Scott, KS Convention and Visitors Bureau Fractured Atlas Frank James Bank Museum Franklin County Convention and Visitors Bureau Franklin County Historical Society Franklin County Records and Research Center Fredonia Area Chamber of Commerce Freedom Fountain Front Porch Alliance Frontier Army Museum Frontier Military Historic Byway Gardner Historical Museum Gardner Junction Park Garrison School Cultural Center Gay and Lesbian Archive of Mid-America Geary County Historical Society General Jo Shelby Park and Statue George Historic Cemetery Association, Inc. George Washington Carver National Monument Glacial Hillls Scenic Byway Glore Psychiatric Museum Goodnow House State Historic Site Gordon Parks Museum Greenbush Education Resource Center Grinter Place State Historic Site Guardians of Grover Barn Harry S. Truman Birthplace State Historic Site Harry S. Truman Library and Museum Harry S. Truman National Historic Site Harry S. Truman National Historic Site Farm Home in Grandview Harry S. Truman National Historic Site Visitor Center and Home Haskell Cultural Center and Museum Haskell Indian Nations University Heartland Conservation Alliance Hicklin Hearthstone Historic Mt. Gilead Church Historic Mt. Gilead School

Historic Topeka Cemetery Historical Society of New Santa Fe and the Trailside Center Humboldt Civil War Tour Humboldt Historical Museum Humboldt's Orcutt Living Hisotry Backyard Museum, Humboldt Historical Preservation Alliance Huron Indian Cemetery Jackson County Historical Society Jackson County Parks and Recreation Historic Sites Jasper County Courthouse Jefferson County Genealogical Society Jefferson County Historical Society Jesse James Bank Museum **Jesse James Farm and Museum** Jesse James Home Museum/Patee House Museum John and Mary Ritchie House John Brown Museum John Brown Speaks Johnson County Historic Courthouse Museum Johnson County Library Johnson County Museum Johnson County, KS Arts and Heritage Center Johnson County, MO Historical Society Juneteenth, KC Kansas Byways/KS Dept of Transportation Kansas City Museum Kansas City, KS Public Library Kansas City Public Library and Missouri Valley Room Kansas State Capital Kansas State Historical Society Katy Trail State Park Kaw Point Park Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art Konza Prairie Research Natural Area KU Natural History Museum LaBudde Special Collections, Miller Nichols Library, UMKC LaCygne Historical Society

Lakeside Nature Center Lanesfield School Historic Site Lansing Historical Museum Lawrence Public Library Lawrence Visitor Information Center and Convention and Visitors Bureau Leavenworth Convention and Visitors Bureau Leavenworth Historical Society and Carroll Mansion Museum Lecompton Historical Society And Territorial Capital Museum Lee's Summit Historical Society and Historic Cemterv Leila's Hair Museum Leonard H. Axe Library at Pittsburg State University Lexington Historical Association Liberty Jail Historic Site Linn County Historical Society and Museum Little House on the Praire Museum Lone Jack Historical Society Loud Light Louisburg Historical Society Lowell Milken Center Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm Manhattan Convention and Visitors Bureau Marais de Cygnes Society Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art Marla Ouilts, and African Ouilts Museum, Inc. Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary Mclure Archives and University Museum Merriam Historic Plaza Merriam Visitors Bureau Miami County Historical Museum Mid-America Regional Council Mid-Coast Radio Project (KKFI) Mid-Continent Public Library Midland Railway Depot Mine Creek Battlefield State Historic Site Missouri State Capitol Missouri Town 1855 Monticello Community Historical Society

Mound City Historical Park Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie Mount Mora Cemetery Mueseum of the Kansas National Guard Museum at Prairiefire Nathan Boone Homsetead State Historic Site National Agricultural Center and Hall of Fame National Archives at Kansas City National Frontier Trails Museum National World War I Museum and Memorial Native Stone Scenic Byway Negro Leagues Baseball Museum Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art Neosho National Fish Hatchery New Lancaster General Store Nicodemus National Historic Site Olathe Historical Society **Olathe Memorial Cemetery** Olathe Public Library Old Castle Museum at Baker University Old Depot Museum Old Jefferson Town Old Prarie Town and Warde-Meade Historic Site Old Stone House Along the Oregon Trail Conservancy Old Trails Regional Tourism Opothleyahola Memorial Building Oregon-California Trails Association Osage Mission-Neosho County Historical Society Museum Osage Village State Historic Site **Overland Park Arboretum and Botanical Gardens Overland Park Convention and Visitors Bureau Overland Park Historical Society** Partners of the First Territorial Capitol Patee House Museum Pea Ridge National Military Park Pharis Farm Planting Peace (Equality House) Pony Express National Museum Poplar Heights Living History Museum Praire Park Nature Center

Praire State Park Prairie Center Prairie Trail Scenic Byway **Ouindaro Overlook and Ruins Ouindaro Press LLC** Quindaro Underground Railroad Museum Rader Farm Ray County Historical Society Museum and Genealogical Library Raytown Historical Society And Museum **Remington Nature Center** Richard Allen Cultural Center Riley County Genealogical Society Riley County Historical Society and Museum & Goodnow House State Historic Site Robert I. Dole Federal Courthouse Robidoux Row Museum Santa Fe Trail Association Sauk River Camp Shawnee County Historical Society Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site Shawnee Kansas Convention and Visitors Bureau Shawnee Mission East High School Shawnee Town 1929 Museum Shoal Creek Living History Museum Silver Heart Inn Southeast Kansas Nature Center, Schermerhorn Park and Cave Spirit of Freedom Fountain Springfield National Cemetery St. Clair County Historical Society and Museum St. Clair County, MO St. Joseph Convention and Visitors Bureau St. Joseph Museum And Black Archives Museum St. Joseph Visitors Center St. Philippine Duchesne Shrine and Potawatomi Trail of Death Memorial Park Sternberg Museum of Natural History **Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve** The Abduction of Jacob Roxe: A Civil War Tragedy The Big Divide The Castle Tea Room The Great Overland Station

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art The Rice-Tremonti Home Thomas Hart Benton Home and Studio State Historic Site Thrive Allen County Tonganoxie Community Historical Society Topeka Center for Peace and Justice Topeka Genealogical Society Topeka Rotary Club Town of Kansas Bridge **Trading Post Museum** Union Cemetery Union Prison Collapse Union Station Vaile Victorian Mansion Vernon County Historical Society and Bushwacker Museum Virginia School Visit Topeka Wabaunsee County Museum Wakarusa River Valley Heritage Museum Wakefield Museum Warrensburg Convention and Visitors Bureau Watkins Community Museum of History Watkins Foundation Historical Society Watkins Woolen Mill State Historic Site Weaving the River Wells P. Bailey House Wide Awake Films, LLC Wildcat Glades Conservation and Audubon Center William Klein Park, home of Barnes Enclosure and Cave Spring and 3 Trails Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Wonder Workshop Children's Museum Wornall Majors House Museums Wyandot Nation of Kansas Wyandotte County Historical Museum Wyandotte High School

Staff

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Home 🄊

Tour:

Stories

Map

Military History

Kansas-Missouri Border Wa Kansas African American History Trail Jim Crow & Civil Rights Struggle

Historic Transportation Routes

Equal Rights Struggle

can Civil War

African Americans

exciting sites. FFNHA app will guide you to the region's most story of the enduring struggle for freedom, the that nearly tore our country apart during the they headed west, experience the passions border and civil wars, or share the moving Whether you want to ride with the settlers as

Smartphone App

Tours Audio Games

Freedom's Frontier





Lawrence, KS 66044 200 W 9th Street Freedom's Frontier NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA