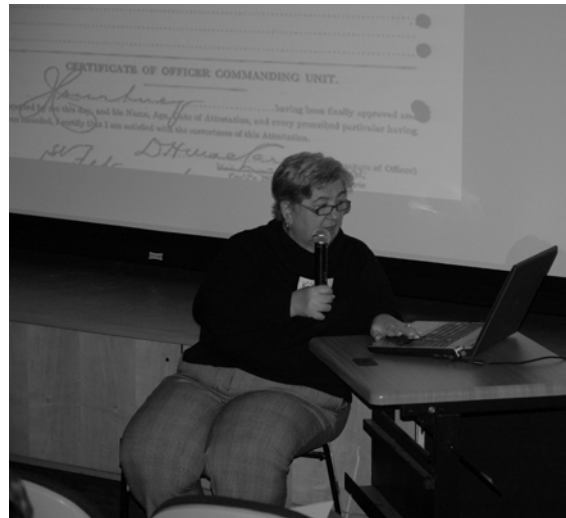


# 11<sup>th</sup> Grey County Black History Event and Celebrating *Northern Terminus*, Vol. 10

Karin Noble<sup>1</sup>

Proudly presented by the Emancipation Festival, the 11<sup>th</sup> Grey County Black History Event was held at Grey Roots Museum & Archives on Saturday February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013. After the day began with formal greetings, Kathleen Szakall, professional genealogist and past Chair of the Bruce and Grey Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, shared research tips in “Genealogy 102.” There are some special intricacies and challenges when searching for slaves and former slaves, such as name changes, unknown dates of birth and separated families. Also, some professions, such as train porters and work aboard shipping vessels were more open to Blacks in certain time periods than working in other fields, which may be avenues to learning more.



**Kathleen LaBudie-Szakall**



**Judith Plaxton**

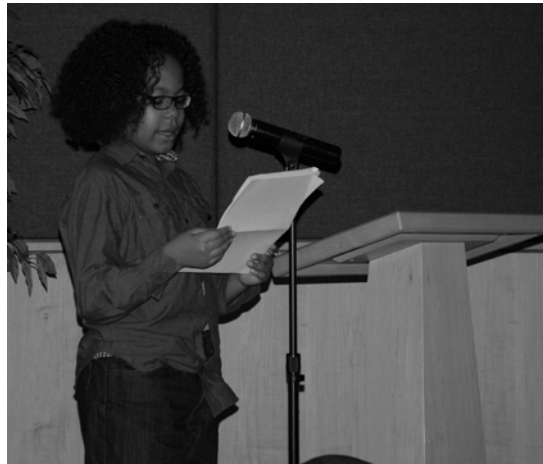
Judith Plaxton, author of a historical fiction novel for youth entitled *Morning Star*, read excerpts and talked about how living in the Village of Clarksburg and visiting Carolynn Wilson at the Sheffield Park Black History and Culture Museum inspired her to do further research about the Underground Railroad, and to ultimately write the book.

After a satisfying lunch of sandwiches and Mulligatawny soup, which is quickly becoming a Black History Event staple, Terri Jackson, Black History Event Committee Chair, shared her research about Ned Patterson, an early Grey County settler in both Artemesia Township and Owen Sound, a British Methodist Episcopal Church lay preacher and stage-coach driver. The focus of the talk was on Owen Sound area research in particular.

As a tie-in with the launch of the *Northern Terminus* Journal, Volume 10, Naomi Norquay, *Northern Terminus* Co-Editor and current resident at Ned Patterson’s property in the former Artemesia Township,

<sup>1</sup> All article photos also taken by author Karin Noble.

gave an update on her Old Durham Road research. Her presentation tied in with the talk before, since Ned Patterson lived both in Owen Sound and on the Old Durham Road in Artemesia Township. Having organized an educator's tour since the last Black History Event was held, Naomi Norquay was also pleased to welcome tour participant Raeon George-Robinson, who was in Gr. 5 at the time, and his mom, Rhonda George, a graduate student at York. The mother and son team wrote a review of the tour and Raeon shared his contribution with the audience, reflecting that Barack Obama's election as the first Black President of the United States and subsequent racist reactions by some, such as likening Michelle Obama to a monkey, sparked his interest, first in learning more about American Black History and then more locally, in Ontario's connection to the Underground Railroad as well. He commented that he wished he could learn more about Black History at school.



**Raeon George-Robinson**

The day of the Event also marked the launch of the Volume 10 of the *Northern Terminus* Journal. The impetus for the first Journal, published in 2002, was the Grey County Black History Event. The organizing committee, formed by representation from the Bruce and Grey Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, the Durham and District Chamber of Commerce and the Grey County Archives, was pleased with the learning and sharing energy of the Black History Event, but desired a project that would provide more long-standing documentation. Since that beginning, the purpose of the Journal has broadened:

*The goal of this annual Journal is to provide readers with information about the historical Black community of Grey County. Although the focus is on historical events and people within Grey County, the wider regional, provincial, national and international contexts that shaped Black history and presence in Grey County are also of interest to the Journal. Through essays, interviews and reviews, the Journal highlights the work of organizations, historians and published authors. The Journal is launched annually.*

The Journal relies on the support of volunteer submissions and we sincerely appreciate the contributions that we have received over the years in the areas of writing, photography and editing. Naomi Norquay, a professor of Education at York University inspired by the property

she owns on the historical Old Durham Road, and I form the Journal Committee. Greta Kennedy, Art Harvey and Ruth Cathcart are past Journal Committee members.

The Black History Event organizing committee struggled with competing desires to keep the Event in Black History Month, but also have a great day for travel. Although the day ultimately had good weather, there were snowsqualls outside the area impacting some who otherwise were planning to attend and it led to a decision to hold the 2014 Event in April.



**Vol. 10 celebration cake!**