

Onondaga Historical Association & Smithsonian partner on African American history exhibit

BY ALEXANDER DUNBAR FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CNYCentralNews/videos> for video
Onondaga Historical Association Exhibit

A national museum recognizing African American history and culture has been in the works since 1929. Now that a museum is set to open in Washington D.C., the Smithsonian Institute has partnered with a handful of museums around the country including the Onondaga Historical Association to share some of the exhibits. The OHA will be adding to the Smithsonian's traveling materials with its own materials on African American history in the Syracuse area.

"We were very involved in the underground railroad, you had African Americans moving up here from the south, the rich history of the 15th Ward," said OHA curator of history Dennis Connors.

Exhibits take guests through experiences of generations of African Americans in the United States. Exhibits portray those who lived through slavery, those who fought and continue to fight against discrimination, prejudice and racism and those who gained national respect as artists, leaders and innovators.

"Sometimes people think all the history happens somewhere else but in fact all American history are reflected in stories here Syracuse and Onondaga County," said Connors.

The OHA has a special piece it will add to the exhibit. The OHA will include what is believed to be the first photograph of famed abolitionist Frederick Douglass as a young man.

"That will be exhibited here in October. It is out of town right now being conserved," said Connors.

The exhibit opens Saturday September 23rd at the OHA. It is expected to run until sometime in spring 2017.