



## SEE RARE, HISTORICAL THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

BY BRENDA C. MCCASKILL (BRENDA@ABOUTGREATERCINCINNATI.COM)  
IMAGE/GRAPHIC PROVIDED BY THE FREEDOM CENTER

“The proclamation set the stage for freedom.” said Dr. Clarence G. Newsome, president of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. “Today, the document will continue to lead the conversation on defining what freedom is for a new generation.”

On display for a limited exclusive one year engagement at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, you can see firsthand what you talked and learned about in school - this rare, historic document that dramatically altered the lives of African Americans once the Civil War ended.

“It was very exciting to be so close to such an important piece of American History.” Lydia Morgan, Juneteenth Cincinnati, Chairperson, tells AboutGreaterCincinnati.com after viewing the document. “It gives you pause to think about ancestors and life.”

The rare, signed copy of the Emancipation Proclamation — penned and signed by President Abraham Lincoln and issued on January 1, 1863, declaring “that all persons held as slaves” within Confederate states free – went on display to the public at the Freedom Center on Friday, June 19, the 150<sup>th</sup> sesquicentennial anniversary of Juneteenth which celebrates the end of slavery in America.

The Emancipation Proclamation, one page in length, 17 ¼ x 21 ¾



inches, on J. Whatman watermarked paper, and an 1864 “authorized edition” of the document, is on loan from David Rubenstein, managing director of The Carlyle Group.

“David is a dear friend,” said Dr. Newsome, “and to be charged with the care and display of this rare, freedom document is an honor.” Newsome goes on to say “David’s decision to share the Emancipation Proclamation with us is reflective of the value and importance of our institution and its mission, in the City of Cincinnati, the State of Ohio and across the nation.”

Forty-eight copies of the Emancipation Proclamation were produced by abolitionists Charles Leland and George Boker to raise funds for the Union Army at the Philadelphia Great Central Sanitary Fair in June of 1864. Of the 48 printed, 26 copies are known to exist today and only nine Lincoln-signed copies of the Emancipation Proclamation have sold publicly in the last 40 years.

Sure to spark conversation, this special exhibition of the document at the National Underground Railroad can be viewed on the third floor in the Skirball Gallery. Because this is an original copy of the historical document, the Proclamation is subject to strict guidelines to maintain its integrity. To prevent further document damage, a viewing schedule allows the paper to “rest,” or go off display, and into storage for a period of time. During that time, facsimiles will be on display and will be clearly labeled as such.

“Being in the presence of the Proclamation also got us to talking about where we were then, where we are now,” said Morgan, who has seen the document along with her daughter, “and how much work we all still need to do as a country.”

To learn more including admission and museum hours, visit the website [freedomcenter.org](http://freedomcenter.org).

Got a comment on this article, [tell us](#).

Click [here](#) to comment on this article.

Email story ideas/suggestions to [editor@aboutgreatercincinnati.com](mailto:editor@aboutgreatercincinnati.com).

[LIKE On Facebook](#)

[FOLLOW On Twitter](#)