

Colloquium series – Fall 2011



Western Centre for Research on Migration & Ethnic Relations



Dr. Karolyn Smardz Frost

The Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on the Global Migrations
of African Peoples
York University

Karolyn is an archaeologist and historian with a passion for public education. She holds a PhD in the study of Race, Slavery and Imperialism from the University of Waterloo, and is an award-winning author who specializes in the study of the Underground Railroad.

A long-time associate of York University's Harriet Tubman Institute she teaches part-time in the History Department. She was a 2010 finalist for TVO's Best Lecturer Competition, and in 2011 received the Ian Greene Award for Teaching from York University's student council in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies. Karolyn's next book, *Steal Away Home: Letters to a Fugitive Slave*, is being published early in 2013 by HarperCollins Canada.

Canada, Slavery and Extradition: The Story of Thornton and Lucie Blackburn

In 1985, archaeologists digging in a downtown Toronto schoolyard unearthed the remains of a house, a barn and a mysterious cellar. This was the home of Thornton and Lucie Blackburn, fugitive slaves from Kentucky whose 1831 flight to freedom made history in both Canada and the United States. Their recapture in Detroit resulted in the Blackburn Riots of 1833, and the landmark extradition case that made Canada a safe haven at the end of the Underground Railroad. In fact, the British colonial government established our first refugee reception policies to protect the Blackburns, and these remain foundational to Canadian extradition law to this day.

Karolyn Smardz Frost will describe how she conducted more than 20 years of research to piece together the story of the Blackburns in slavery and freedom. Her biography of the couple, entitled *I've Got a Home in Glory Land: A Lost Tale of the Underground Railroad* (Toronto: Thomas Allen Publishers & New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2007) was the first entirely original biography of a fugitive slave couple since the Civil War, and won Canada's top honor, the Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction, in 2007.

Thursday, November 10, 2011

4:00pm – SSC 5220

Refreshments 3:30pm – SSC 5230

For info: abozheva@uwo.ca

All Welcome!