

**From:** [no-reply@web-response.com](mailto:no-reply@web-response.com) on behalf of [Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake](#)  
**To:** [Clerks](#)  
**Subject:** Webform submission from: Delegation Request Form  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 18, 2023 9:18:04 PM

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Submitted on Tue, 07/18/2023 - 21:17

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

## Information

**Name**

Rochelle Bush

**Organization Name**

Salem Chapel, BME Church NHS

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## Presentation

**Agenda Delegation**

Non Agenda Delegation

**Topic**

I have never spoken on this issue before

**The key points of my presentation are as follows:**

I wish to address a proposed memorial that includes Barbados that may be installed in the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground, formerly known as the Negro Burial Ground.

## Terms

**I have read and understand the Delegation Protocol and acknowledge the information contained on this form, including any attachments, will become public documents and listed on Town Meeting Agendas. I also understand presentation materials including speaking notes and electronic presentations must be submitted by email to clerks@notl.com no later than 12:00 p.m. on the Monday prior the scheduled meeting.**  
Yes

## Meeting Time

**I wish to appear before:**  
Council

**Date**  
Tue, 07/25/2023 - 00:00

## Presentation Requirements

**Do you have a presentation?**  
No

**I agree**  
Yes

## Delegation

**I will be appearing:**  
In person

**I also understand presentation materials including speaking notes and electronic presentations must be submitted by email to clerks@notl.com no later than 12:00 p.m. on the Monday prior to the scheduled meeting.**  
Yes

**I acknowledge I have 10 minutes to delegate**  
Yes

**I give permission to be audio and video recorded on the Town of Niagara on the Lake's livestream**  
Yes

**In point form, provide an overview of what points you will be speaking to:**  
Letter attached

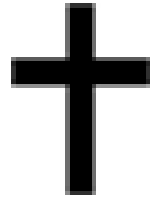
**Do you require accessible accommodation to participate:**

No

## **Privacy Disclaimer**

**I have read and understand the above Privacy Disclaimer.**

Yes



*Salem Chapel*

**Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historic Sites**

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Lord Mayor and Council  
Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake  
1593 Four Mile Creek Road  
PO Box 100  
Virgil, ON L0S 1T0

***RE: Delegation Summary of Remarks***

July 24, 2023

Dear Lord Mayor and Council:

As we all know, a great deal of media attention has been thrust upon the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground, formerly known as Negro Burial Ground in Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) due to discrepancies regarding the number of burial sites in the cemetery and the disappearance of gravestones over the years.

As many individuals, groups and organizations focus on research related to the burial site, others work towards fundraising goals for archeological studies, and a few plan to erect a memorial sculpture.

I am here today to discuss the forthcoming memorial sculpture that may be placed in the cemetery. One proposed memorial is entitled "Memorializing the people of the fugitive slave ads: Barbados and Niagara."

This group did reach out to me in the fall of 2021 to request my research material for their Barbados/NOTL project. Their request was denied.

The proposed Barbados – NOTL memorial has generated a lot of media attention and discussion.

The ideas behind this memorial reimagine the history and the facts by:

- 1) Falsely connecting the history of enslaved people of African descent who resided in Barbados to the history of enslaved people who resided in NOTL under the guise of the African diaspora.

Descendants of West Africans were forced into slavery and dispersed throughout the Americas. Their lived experiences were very different. A person, who was enslaved in Brazil, had a different experience than someone who was enslaved in Jamaica, the United States (US) or British Canada.

The strong majority of early Black residents in NOTL were from the US. There are rare exceptions (Richard Pierpoint), however, many were brought as slaves from the US by White Loyalists and others were Black Loyalists who were once enslaved in the US.

A memorial that re-writes the narrative by connecting the history of enslaved people in Barbados to the history of enslaved people in Niagara-on-the-Lake is historically inaccurate.

2) Reducing the importance of NOTL's early Black history and the history of notable residents such as Herbert Holmes and Jacob Green.

NOTL's early Black history is the only Black history that should be included in a memorial.

3) The inclusion of the St. Catharines fugitive slave testimonials in the NOTL memorial.

A Boston abolitionist and journalist named Benjamin Drew interviewed several St. Catharines freedom seekers in 1855. The narratives were published in 1856 in a book entitled, "The Refugee or a North-Side View of Slavery." Several of the people who were interviewed include Harriet Tubman, who has no documented connection to NOTL or the cemetery and John W. Lindsay who has no documented connection to NOTL or the cemetery and is buried in Victoria Lawn Cemetery in St. Catharines.

Harriet Tubman as you may know was a member of the Salem Chapel and John Lindsay was a long-standing Trustee of the said church. The majority of the people Benjamin Drew interviewed were members of the church. More importantly, they were all residents of St. Catharines, not NOTL.

The deliberate transfer of St. Catharine's fugitive slave narratives to a NOTL memorial is historically inaccurate and not acceptable.

NOTL has a wealth of early Black history and several fugitive slave ads that can be commemorated in the cemetery without using the St. Catharines narratives or narratives from elsewhere in the region or province.

4) Using elements from Barbados in the proposed design that are not connected to NOTL or Niagara as a whole.

NOTL does not appear to take centre stage in the memorial sculpture. The imagery including the people, flowers and symbols appear to represent Barbados.

Will there a joint memorial sculpture in Barbados to represent the people of the African diaspora from NOTL/Niagara?

A Black history memorial in NOTL should reflect the early Black settlers of NOTL.

Sculpture image:



5) Using the slave trade and the African diaspora to insert Caribbean people into the 18th and 19th-century NOTL history.

Will it stop at Barbados? Will there be additional memorials to include other Caribbean countries? What about Brazil, Mexico, the United States and all the other countries where African peoples were dispersed due to the slave trade? Will the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the cemetery become a memorial or commemorative point for the slave trade and the African diaspora?

If a partnered memorial with another country such as Barbados is permitted in NOTL, then all the other African diaspora countries should be recognized with a memorial as well.

I would like to urge Council to limit the memorial to NOTL history and to deny any and all requests to commemorate any history that is not NOTL-specific.

I thank you kindly for your time.

Best regards,



Rochelle Bush  
Salem Chapel Trustee, Clerk & Historian

cc: Salem Chapel BME Church Official Board

#### Sources

Webpage:

<https://memorialstopeopleinfugitiveads.ca/>

News article:

April 18, 2023

[https://www.niagarathisweek.com/news/brock-project-to-remember-historic-black-community-in-niagara-on-the-lake/article\\_978e21b0-1f2a-5bc5-ab7b-881534e7c6a0.html](https://www.niagarathisweek.com/news/brock-project-to-remember-historic-black-community-in-niagara-on-the-lake/article_978e21b0-1f2a-5bc5-ab7b-881534e7c6a0.html)