The McGee Cabin

The replica cabin sits on the George Rogers Clark Home Site. The original cabin was occupied by Ben and Venus McGee. The cabin is said to have been 12’by14’ and had a dirt floor. The exact location of the original cabin is not known at this time.

First African Community

One of the first freed-slave communities in the Northwest Territory, named Guinea Bottoms, was situated on this property. The community was established ca. 1802 and was occupied until the 1920s. Villagers included: York, Robert Loyd/Loy, Old Henry, Kitt, Daphne, Caesar, and Cupid. Unfortunately, not a lot is known about this community or its occupants.

For more information about George Rogers Clark go to http://www.fallsoftheohiostatepark.org/events.html.

Directions to the Falls of the Ohio State Park

Clark Bridge north:
Take a left at the traffic light at the end of the bridge. Immediately turn left onto Missouri Avenue. Turn right at the next stop sign onto Market St. Veer right onto Riverside Drive, go to the Interpretive Center. Do not go over the levee!

I-65 heading south:
Take Exit 0 (Jeffersonville). Veer right at second stop sign. Follow Riverside Drive to the Interpretive Center. Do not go over the levee!

Directions to the Clark Home Site

It is marked with directional signs from the Interpretive Center and from the intersection of Stansifer Ave. and Clark Blvd.

I-65 (North or South):
Take Stansifer Avenue exit. Head west to Clark Blvd. and turn right at stop sign. Go to next stop sign and turn left onto Harrison Avenue. Go ~1 mile, when you go down the hill, the parking lot for the home site is on your left.

The McGee and Clark cabins sit on a 7 acre tract that is part of the Falls Of The Ohio State Park and also lies within the boundaries of the 1404 acre National Wildlife Conservation Area giving this historic site, and its flora and fauna, additional federal protection.
Northwest Territory and Slavery

In 1779, George Rogers Clark's victories over the British in the NW Territory helped pave the way for the NW Territory to be given to the United States at the end of the American Revolution.

In 1787, President Thomas Jefferson signed the NW Ordinance that included a decree that the new states of Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan, would not allow slavery and everyone would be equal. All former slaves were freed. However, many did not have enough money to buy land and if they left the territory, they might be enslaved again. Whether through necessity or from being coerced by their former masters, many African slaves signed indenture servant contracts. After working for up to 30 years, they would receive a cow, a plow, and a plot of land. With their new freedoms, some of the former slaves made their own communities. One such community, called Guinea Bottoms, was established on the George Rogers Clark Home Site in 1802-1803.

An Inside Look: Living Quarters

A typical servants cabin had a loft for sleeping, a dirt floor with a fireplace, a stick/mud chimney, and crude seating. Bedding consisted of cornhusk pillows and mattresses, a plank table attached to the wall, nails to hang clothing on, and sometimes a hole was dug in the floor to act as a secure place to hide personal items or store food.