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UPDATED Mother Nature is once again making her presence known to air travelers. Airlines canceled nearly 5,900 flights on Tuesday due to a massive winter storm moving through the Midwest.

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Destinations



Courtesy Munro House B&B

Relive the Underground Railroad at these B&Bs

History buffs can relive slavery times — especially during Black History month — by staying at these lodges once thought to have been "stations" or safe houses on the Underground Railroad.

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More than a bed: B&Bs have ties to Underground Railroad

Relive history by staying at places thought to have been 'stations' or safe houses

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By Tanya Mohn

msnbc.com contributor
updated 2/1/2011 9:43:27 AM ET

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Secret rooms. Hidden passageways. Trap doors. An underground escape route through a network of caves, surfacing at a nearby spring. Sounds like a James Bond movie, but these clandestine places actually exist in (or under) dozens of America's oldest homes.

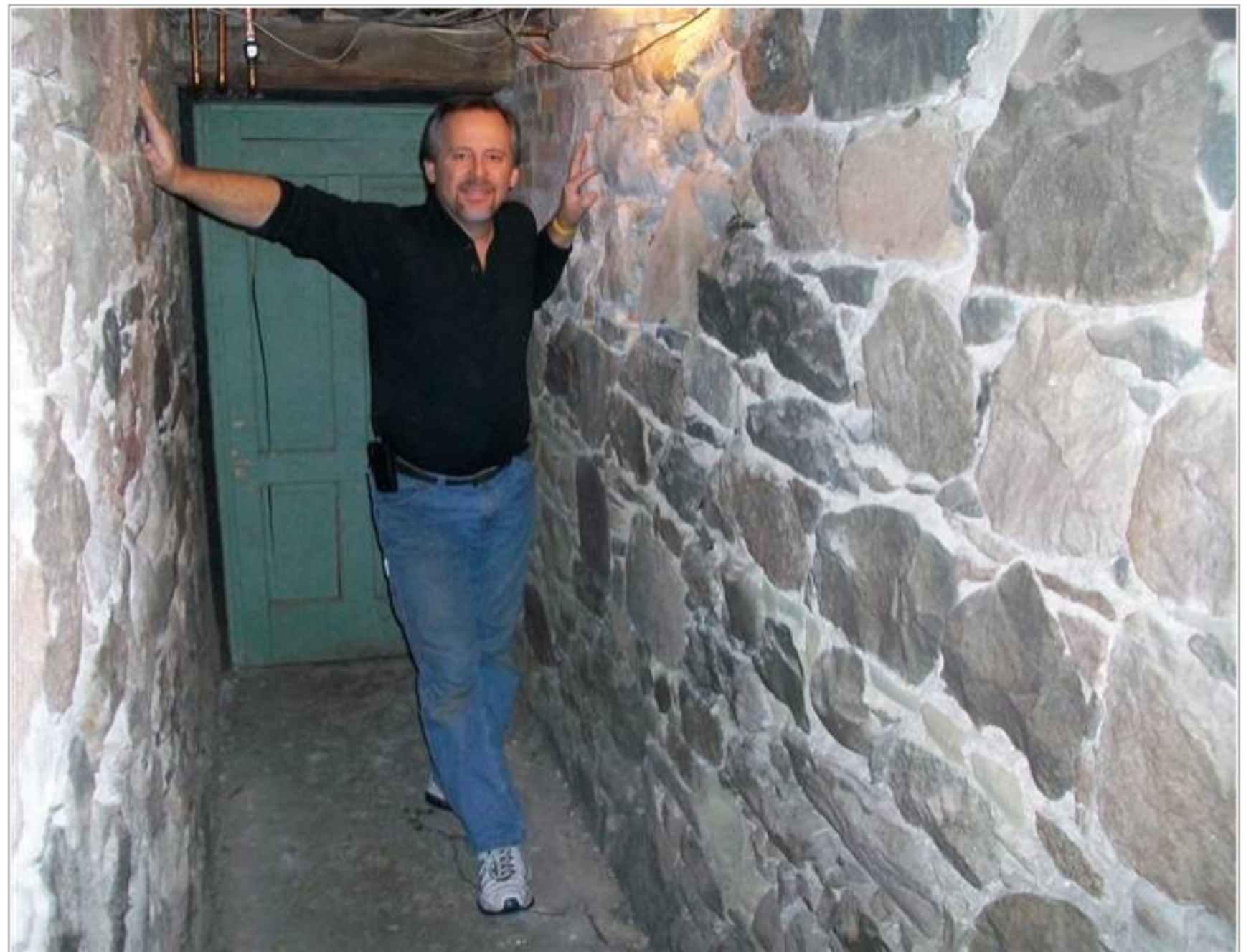
Today, many are bed & breakfasts and everyone from history buffs to school children can relive history — especially during Black History month, which begins Feb. 1 — by staying at places thought to have been “stations” or safe houses on the Underground Railroad, an informal network that helped slaves escape to freedom.

Bringing it home

“It is kind of special to be so close to history,” said Vince Toreno, innkeeper at Ashley Manor Bed and Breakfast, in Barnstable, Mass., built in 1699, where a secret passageway connects the first and second floors to the attic. “Staying in a room so close to where a runaway slave might have been hiding and thinking ‘Am I going to live through until tomorrow? What’s going to happen to me?’” Toreno said, “personalizes it, it brings it home.”

Visitors can see a ladder behind a secret panel in the Queen Charlotte Suite where the passageway begins, and a bookcase that swings open to reveal it in the King George Suite, on the second floor.

The Munro House, in Jonesville, Mich., has the remains of a 100-foot-long tunnel and a trap door from the basement to a secret room between the first and second floors. “If you didn’t know it was there, you could never find it,” said Mike Venturini, innkeeper, who regales guests with stories of how more than 400 runaway slaves allegedly hid in the secret room during a 15-year period on their way to Canada.



Courtesy Munro House B&B

The Munro House bed and breakfast in Jonesville, Mich., has a 100-foot tunnel that was used as part of the Underground Railroad during slavery times and a trap door from the basement to a secret room between the first and second floors. “If you didn’t know it was there, you could never find it,” said innkeeper Mike Venturini.

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Courtesy of Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau

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