

*Report to the Governor and the General Assembly*

**2014 Annual Report**  
on the  
**African American Heritage  
Preservation Program**



*St. James M.E. Church, Oriole, Somerset County*

**Maryland Commission on  
African American History and Culture**  
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**Martin O'Malley, Governor**  
**Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor**

## THE MARYLAND COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE MISSION STATEMENT



*The mission of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) is to interpret, document, preserve, and promote Maryland's African American heritage; to provide technical assistance to institutions and groups with similar objectives; and to educate Maryland's citizens and visitors about the significance of the African American experience in Maryland and the nation.*



*MCAAHC is housed within the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives.*



## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST MISSION STATEMENT

*The Maryland Historical Trust is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the legacy of Maryland's past. Through research, conservation and education, the Maryland Historical Trust assists the people of Maryland in understanding their historical and cultural heritage.*



*The Maryland Historical Trust is a unit of the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP).*

## Background

The African American Heritage Preservation Grant Program was created during the 2010 session of the Maryland General Assembly. The Program is administered as a joint partnership of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC), a unit of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI), and the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), an agency of the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP). The purpose of this Program is to encourage the identification and preservation of buildings, sites, and communities of historical and cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland.

Eligible applicants for Program funding include non-profit organizations and local jurisdictions. Business entities and individuals may also apply for Program grants when seeking funds for a preservation or development project that serves a high public purpose. Eligible activities include acquisition, construction, and capital improvement of buildings, sites, or communities of historical or cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland as well as pre-development costs directly associated with an acquisition or construction project. Such pre-development costs may cover historic structures reports and studies, the preparation of plans and specifications, necessary archeological investigations, and reasonable fees for architectural, design, engineering and other special services.

## Activity of the African American Heritage Preservation Program in 2012

### *Fiscal Year 2015 Grants*

Based on recommendations from MCAAHC and MHT, the following projects were forwarded to the Department of Budget and Management in late 2013 and were included in the Governor's Capital Budget for fiscal year 2015:

| County     | Project & Sponsor  | Description  | Grant Award | Total AAHPP Project Costs |
|------------|--|--|-------------|---------------------------|
| Washington | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Tolson's Chapel</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>111 E. High Street<br/>Sharpsburg, MD<br/>21782</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Friends of Tolson's<br/>Chapel</p>   | <p>Built in 1866, Tolson's Chapel served as a place of worship for newly freed black families and also served as Freedmen's Bureau school until 1899. It was an active Methodist church for many years. Its cemetery includes graves of slaves, notable local residents, and USCT soldiers, telling the story of the community. The chapel is a museum, and the adjacent cemetery is open to the public.</p> <p><i>Project work includes interior and exterior rehabilitation, including masonry repairs, painting, replacement of blackboards, repair and replication of shutters and shutter hardware, and architectural and engineering services.</i></p> | \$18,000    | \$18,000                  |
| Calvert    | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Kings Landing Park /<br/>Camp Mohawk</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>3255 Kings Landing<br/>Road<br/>Huntingtown MD<br/>20639</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Calvert County<br/>Division of Natural<br/>Resources</p> | <p>Kings Landing Park was the home of the Baltimore YMCA's Camp Mohawk summer camp facility for African American city youth from circa 1950-1980. The property was purchased by the State of Maryland in 1984 and is leased by Calvert County and operated as a park. The surviving camp cabins will be rehabilitated for day and overnight use, classrooms, and interpretive spaces.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior rehabilitation of the cabins, including roof repair, carpentry repair, and painting.</i></p>  | \$15,000    | \$30,000                  |

|                |  |   |          |           |
|----------------|--|---|----------|-----------|
| Baltimore City | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Prince Hall Grand Lodge</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>1301 Eutaw Place<br/>Baltimore MD 21217</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of Maryland and its Jurisdiction, Inc.</p> | <p>The structure that has housed the Prince Hall Grand Lodge since 1960 was built in 1892 as a Renaissance-style synagogue. Among the members of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge are Baltimore-born Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and James Hubert "Eubie" Blake, one of the most significant figures in early-20th-century African-American music. In 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. visited the lodge to campaign on behalf of President Lyndon B. Johnson. The building will continue to host meetings, events, concerts, and weddings.</p> <p><i>Project work includes interior and exterior rehabilitation, including scaffolding, carpentry repairs, flooring repairs, plaster repairs, painting, and repairs / upgrades to electrical and HVAC systems.</i></p> | \$95,000 | \$95,000  |
| Kent           | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Janes U.M. Church</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>120 South Cross Street<br/>Chestertown MD 21620</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Janes United Methodist Church</p>  | <p>Janes UM Church is the most prominent representation of African American heritage within Chestertown's National Historic Landmark District. Standing as a beacon of African American success, the church's congregation dates from around 1830; the current structure, built of hand-made fireproof concrete brick, replaces an earlier 1860s church nearby which burned in 1914. The building will continue to be used as a church.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior rehabilitation, including roof replacement, scaffolding, carpentry repairs, and architectural, engineering, and project management services.</i></p>   | \$95,000 | \$125,000 |
| Dorchester     | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Christ Rock M.E. Church</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>2403 Rock Drive<br/>Cambridge, MD 21613</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>The Friends of Stanley Institute, Inc.</p>   | <p>Christ Rock Church, along with the Stanley Institute school, is the focus of the African-American community that arose at Christ Rock, outside of Cambridge, just after the Civil War. The church was constructed in 1875 and altered in 1889 and 1911; the present structure is gable-ended with a square entrance tower. The church will be rehabilitated as a cultural center and museum focusing on the African-American experience in Dorchester County.</p> <p><i>Project work includes reconstruction of outbuildings, including foundations, framing, carpentry, windows, doors, fixtures, painting, utilities, commercial kitchen, and HVAC, electrical, fire protection, and plumbing systems.</i></p>   | \$95,000 | \$95,000  |

|                 |   |   |          |          |
|-----------------|---|---|----------|----------|
| Anne Arundel    | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Highland Beach Town Hall Museum Annex</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>3243 Walnut Drive<br/>Highland Beach MD 21403</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Town of Highland Beach</p>                | <p>Highland Beach was established in 1893 by Major Charles Douglass, a Civil War veteran and son of Frederick Douglass; it became a summer gathering place for prominent African-Americans, particularly from Washington, D.C. Early residents included Paul Lawrence Dunbar, the poet; and Robert Terrell, the first African-American municipal judge in Washington, D.C., and his wife, Mary Church Terrell, educator and civil libertarian. Frequent visitors included Booker T. Washington, Paul Robeson, and Langston Hughes. This project will fund the fit-out of upper floors of the 2006 Highland Beach Town Hall as an annex to the nearby Douglass Museum and Cultural Center.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior and interior modifications and improvements, including installation of stairs and elevator; insulation; installation of or upgrades to electrical, plumbing, fire protection, fire suppression, security, and HVAC systems; modifications to walls, floors, ceilings, woodwork, and doors; and architectural and engineering services.</i></p> | \$46,000 | \$92,000 |
| Baltimore City  | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Union Baptist Church of Baltimore</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>1219 Druid Hill Avenue<br/>Baltimore, MD 21217</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Union Baptist Church of Baltimore</p>        | <p>The founding congregation of Union Baptist Church, the fifth oldest African-American congregation of any denomination in Baltimore City and the second oldest Baptist church in Baltimore with an African-American pastor, began on May 10, 1852. The Gothic Revival church building was designed by architect William J. Beardsley of New York. The project is for roof replacement and associated repairs.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior rehabilitation, including roof repairs, masonry repairs, carpentry repairs, and repairs to gutters and downspouts.</i></p>   | \$95,000 | \$95,000 |
| Prince George's | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Mount Nebo A.M.E. Church</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>Queen Anne Road<br/>Mitchellville MD 20716</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Friends of Historic Mt. Nebo Preservation Corporation</p> | <p>A rare survival of a rural AME church in Prince George's County, the current structure was constructed in 1925, replacing an earlier building from 1877. This one-story frame gable-roofed structure is entered through a pyramidal-roofed tower on the south gable end. The congregation moved into a new building in 1984 but still owns the property, which will be used as a community center.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior rehabilitation, including repairs to roof, structure, foundation, masonry, siding, doors, and windows.</i></p>   | \$84,000 | \$94,000 |

|                  |   |   |          |           |
|------------------|---|---|----------|-----------|
| Kent             | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Asbury U.M. Church</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>8760 Georgetown Road<br/>Chestertown MD 21620</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Asbury United Methodist Church</p>                                 | <p>The original section of this church, a single-story frame structure with projecting chancel at the rear, was built in 1879 to serve a congregation that began holding services in 1863. A three-story bell tower and side wing were added around 1920. The Georgetown community and the congregation still include direct descendants of the founding families. The building will continue to be used as a church.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior rehabilitation, including structural repairs; repairs / replacement of foundation, ramp, roof, siding, and trim; masonry and carpentry repairs; site work; and architectural, engineering, and project management services.</i></p>  | \$95,000 | \$100,000 |
| Baltimore County | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>St. Luke's Methodist Church Fellowship Hall</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>58 Bond Avenue<br/>Reisterstown MD 21136</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>St. Luke's United Methodist Church</p>         | <p>The fellowship hall at St. Luke's United Methodist Church was originally built in 1898 as Grand United Order of Odd Fellows Lodge #1489. The Odd Fellows is a mutual aid and benefit organization founded by Peter Ogden, an African American sailor, in 1842. The building will be used as a community center and fellowship hall, ultimately containing an exhibit on the history of the church and African Americans in the community.</p> <p><i>Project work includes interior and exterior rehabilitation, including repairs to masonry, siding, woodwork, windows, doors, and roof; painting; insulation; creation of accessible restroom; upgrades to plumbing, electrical, and HVAC systems; installation of ramp; and architectural and engineering services.</i></p> | \$95,000 | \$100,000 |
| Baltimore City   | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>The Church of St. Katherine of Alexandria</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>2001 Division Street<br/>Baltimore MD 21217</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>The Church of St. Katherine of Alexandria</p> | <p>Built in 1882 by Charles Cassell as St. George's Episcopal Church, this Gothic Revival church captures the country feel of the neighborhood in the 1880s. Organized in 1891 by black parishoners as a mission of Mount Cavalry Church, St. Katherine's parish moved into the building in 1911. Thurgood Marshall and the Mitchell family have links to St. Katherine's. The building will continue to be used as a church.</p> <p><i>Project work includes structural repairs, shoring, masonry repairs, and repairs to window lintels.</i></p>  | \$92,000 | \$104,000 |

|                     |  |  |                    |          |
|---------------------|--|--|--------------------|----------|
| Somerset            | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>St. James Methodist Episcopal Church</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>Oriole Road and Champ Road<br/>Princess Anne MD 21853</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Oriole Historical Society, Incorporated</p>                     | <p>St. James M.E. Church, constructed in 1885 by African American carpenters and shipbuilders, is a landmark in the small community of Oriole. The church has been little altered since the beginning of the 20th century, when the front towers and tripartite window were added, lending the building a Gothic Revival appearance. No longer in use as a church, St. James will be a meeting place and community center.</p> <p><i>Project work includes interior and exterior rehabilitation, including repairs to masonry, plaster, flooring, windows, and woodwork, installation of HVAC, fire suppression, and electrical systems, construction of bathroom, and architectural, engineering, and consulting services.</i></p>  | \$75,000           | \$75,000 |
| Anne Arundel        | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Wilson Farmstead</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>862 Galesville Rd.<br/>Galesville, MD 20756</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>West River Improvement Association, Inc.</p>  | <p>The Wilson Farmstead was constructed in the 1870's by manumitted slave Henry Wilson. The house and associated lands provide a tangible link to slavery, manumission, tenant farming, and to the semi-professional Negro League ballfield that survives adjacent to the house. The building will ultimately support the County Parks and Recreation Department's development and use of the site.</p> <p><i>Project work includes interior and exterior rehabilitation, including repair / replacement of roof, siding, windows, doors, woodwork, and stairs; masonry repairs; structural repairs; pest control measures; installation of ventilation system; installation of gutters and downspouts; abatement of hazardous materials; site work; and architectural, engineering, and preservation consulting services.</i></p> | \$50,000           | \$56,900 |
| Montgomery          | <p><b>Project Name:</b><br/>Sandy Spring Odd Fellows Lodge</p> <p><b>Project Address:</b><br/>1310 Olney-Sandy Spring Road<br/>Sandy Spring, MD 20860</p> <p><b>Project Sponsor:</b><br/>Grand United Order of Oddfellows Sandy Spring Lodge #6430, Inc.</p> | <p>The Odd Fellows Lodge was built during the early 1900's as a health, burial, and life insurance agency for African Americans, and it served in this capacity for over 60 years. For decades, the Lodge played a significant societal role as African Americans pushed for civil rights and equal treatment under the law. The Lodge also became the social hub for African Americans, as a popular site for picnics and dances. The current structure was built by local African American artisans and remains the oldest surviving structure of its kind. The building will be used as an educational and cultural center.</p> <p><i>Project work includes interior rehabilitation, including installation of electrical and HVAC systems and carpentry work.</i></p>  | \$50,000           | \$50,000 |
| <b>TOTAL GRANTS</b> |  |  | <b>\$1,000,000</b> |          |

These grantees were notified of their awards in May 2014, after the approval of the FY2015 Governor's Capital Budget. A press release describing the program and detailing the grant awards was distributed on June 19, 2014.

## ***Fiscal Year 2016 Grant Applications***

Applications, instructions, and program guidelines for FY2016 funding were made available in February 2014 via MHT's website. For the first time, AAHPP applications were accepted through MHT's new online application, powered by MicroEdge's GIFTS system. A press release on March 5, 2014 announced the availability of the applications and also announced a series of six workshops (one was subsequently cancelled) for potential applicants in locations across the state:

| <b>Date</b>    | <b>Partner Institution</b>                      | <b>Location</b>    |
|----------------|---|--------------------|
| March 10, 2014 | Union Baptist Church                            | Turner Station, MD |
| March 12, 2014 | Carroll Nonprofit Center / Carroll County NAACP | Westminster, MD    |
| March 17, 2014 | Maryland Historical Trust                       | Crownsville, MD    |
| March 20, 2014 | Baltimore County Public Library                 | Lansdowne, MD      |
| March 28, 2014 | Harriet Tubman Museum                           | Cambridge, MD      |

These workshops, which were specific to this grant program, reached and informed at least 90 interested individuals. Throughout the spring and summer, MHT and MCAAHC staff responded to specific inquiries from potential applicants and provided guidance about the application process.



Left: Workshop attendees with representatives of MCAAHC and MHT at the workshop at Union Baptist Church in Turner Station in Baltimore County.

Thirty-four eligible applications for FY2016 funding were received by the online deadline of July 15, 2014. The total funding request was approximately \$2,959,000; the majority of the funding requested was for rehabilitation, with the remainder for predevelopment or new construction costs. Applications represented 15 counties and the City of Baltimore.

After a threshold review of the applications by MHT staff, MCAAHC evaluated eligible applicants in accordance with the project selection criteria during September of 2014. On September 25 and 30, 2014, MCAAHC met to rank and develop recommended funding levels for FY2014 and will transmit recommendations to the MHT Board on October 2, 2014.

On or before November 1, MCAAHC and MHT will forward the list of projects and grantees recommended by MCAAHC and the MHT as a recommendation to the Department of Budget and Management for inclusion in the Governor's Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2016.



### ***Ongoing Program Activity***

Under the current statute, the AAHPP will sunset on May 31, 2015 unless it is reauthorized. MCAAHC and MHT will be requesting reauthorization of the program in the upcoming legislative session. Announcement of future grant rounds is, therefore, pending.

## **Notable Accomplishments & Project Updates**

### **Charles Sumner Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Post #25, Chestertown, Kent County:**

*Charles Sumner Post #25 is the only remaining African American Grand Army of the Republic lodge in Maryland (of 28 originally constructed), and one of only two African American GAR lodges remaining today in the United States. The GAR was the principal fraternal association of Civil War veterans and America's only integrated 19th century social organization. Most of the men who founded the post were former slaves. The Post served as a hub for Chestertown's African American community until 1985. Restoration of the building was funded through private fundraising as well as grants from the AAHPP, the MHT Capital Grant program, the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), DHCD, Preservation Maryland, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The GAR reopened in June of 2014 and now welcomes the community for jazz, blues, gospel and classical concerts, youth programs, poetry readings, a lecture series, and a theater and film series.*

Right: The GAR post in 2014, after a decade-long restoration effort.

Below left: The GAR prior to restoration in May 2004.  
Below right: The first floor of the Charles Sumner GAR Post now houses exhibits on the significance of the structure and of the GAR.



## San Domingo Rosenwald School, Wicomico County:



San Domingo School on dedication day in 2014 (left) and in 2011, before restoration (above).

*The grand opening and dedication of the San Domingo Rosenwald School was held on August 23, 2014. The school has been under rehabilitation since 2010, with major funding provided by the AAHPP and MHT Capital Grant programs. Former classrooms are once again illuminated by banks of windows, dark paneling has been removed, and all new systems have been installed. One of three surviving Rosenwald schools in Wicomico County, the restored building will resume its role as a community center. Alumni, neighbors, former teachers, and supporters enjoyed the festivities, joined by Stephanie Deutsch, author of the 2011 book *You Need a Schoolhouse: Booker T. Washington, Julius Rosenwald and the Building of Schools for the Segregated South*, and Aviva Kempner, a filmmaker working on the upcoming documentary “*The Rosenwald Schools*”. The Washington Post featured the San Domingo School (or Sharptown School, as it is also known) in an article on September 1.*



## Hosanna School, Harford County:

Constructed in 1867, Hosanna School stands as a rare, early instance of black-initiated and black-run educational efforts. The school, also known as the Berkley School after its crossroads community, is a simple rectangular building on a rubblestone foundation. This is one of four structures erected in Harford County in the years immediately following the Civil War for educating freed slaves. Of the four structures, two were built by a public source, the Freedmen's Bureau: the McComas Institute and the Green Spring School. Two, however, were built by private sources: Hosanna School and Anderson Institute in Havre de Grace. Only McComas Institute and the Hosanna School still stand. The Hosanna School was built by five black Trustees in 1868. The men erected a two-story building; the first floor was used as a school, while the second story was for the just-established Hosanna Church and also for meetings of black fraternal orders and lodges. The school was a school for African Americans until it closed in 1945. A hurricane destroyed the second story in the 20th century; MHT Capital Grant funds aided the nonprofit owners in rebuilding it in the 1990s. Currently Hosanna School serves as a one-room school museum on first floor and meeting space and library on second floor. AAHPP funds assisted in funding a chair lift to provide physical accessibility to the upper floor.



Above: The school stands in a rural crossroads community.



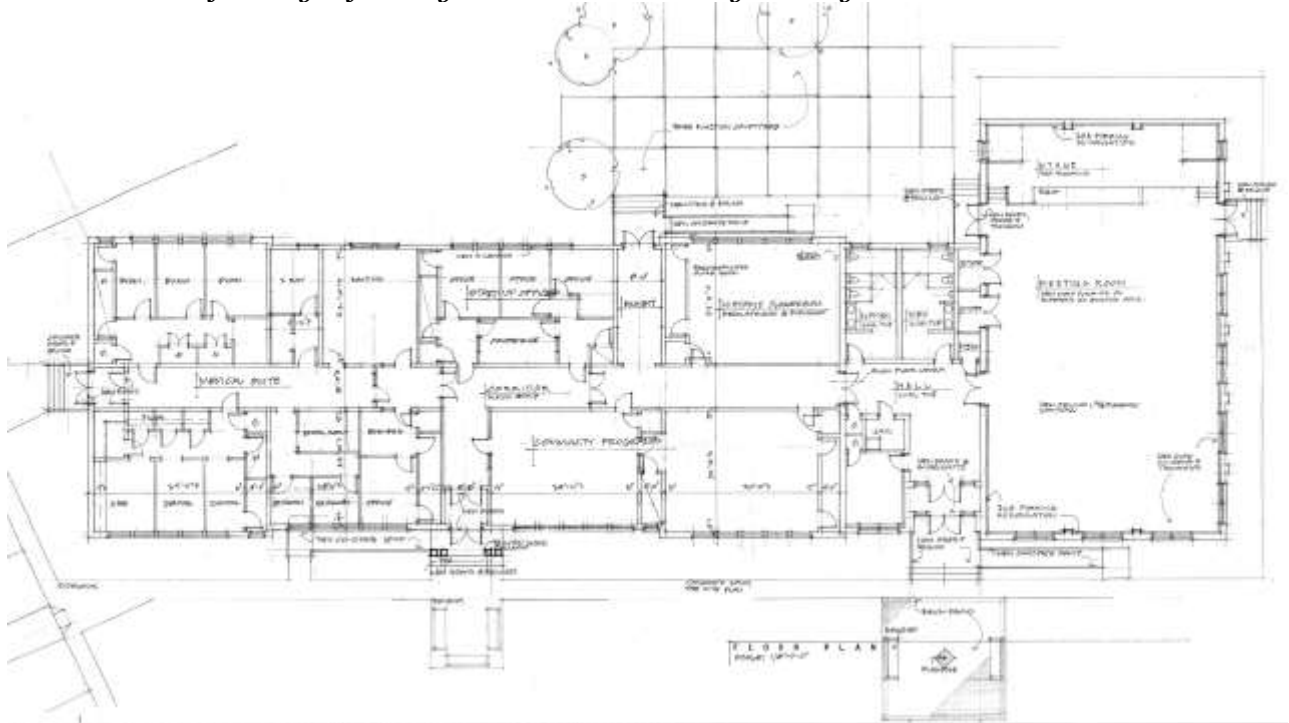
Right: The one-room schoolhouse museum on the first floor.



Left: Accessibility to upper floors was provided by installing a chair lift on the non-historic exterior stair at the rear of the building (near left), allowing character-defining features of the interior to remain intact (far left).

## Old Pomonkey High School, Charles County:

*Old Pomonkey High School served as the first African-American public high school in Charles County. Established in 1922, the original frame building was replaced in the 1930s by a one-story structure with high ceilings, large windows, and Colonial Revival styling. A gymnasium wing was added in the 1950s; this is the only portion of the building that remains today, after the 1930s portion was destroyed by fire in the 1980s. The Pomonkey High School Alumni Association plans to restore the 1950s wing and ultimately rebuild the 1930s building, which will be used as a community center and museum. AAHPP funding is funding architectural and engineering services.*



Plans (above) and model (below left) for the reconstruction of the 1930s building and the rehabilitation of the 1950s wing. Courtesy of Michael J. Dowling, AIA.

Below right: The existing 1950s wing.



**Tolson’s Chapel and Cemetery, Sharpsburg, Washington County:**

*A stone’s throw from the site of the Battle of Antietam, in Sharpsburg, a small congregation of African Americans joined hands in 1867 to build a house of worship they called Tolson’s Chapel. The one-room log structure also served as a school. The teacher was provided first by the Freedmen’s Bureau and later by Washington County; around 1900 a dedicated school for African American children was constructed nearby. The cemetery, which was active since at least the 1880s, contains the graves of approximately 80 individuals. From the cemetery and local records a compelling portrait of the African American community emerges: men who were enslaved on farms that bore the brunt of the Battle of Antietam; an original trustee of the church who was born in slavery in Virginia and served in the U.S. Colored Infantry; a woman, already free before Emancipation, who donated a Bible to Tolson’s Chapel.*

*The AAHPP grant covered the costs of a preservation needs assessment, which included the use of ground-penetrating radar to map possible unmarked graves. The grant also funded the restoration of each individual grave marker, which entailed re-setting markers, piecing broken stones together, patching spalls and cracks, and gently cleaning the stones.*



Above: Grave markers before (left) and after (right) restoration, including the grave of US Colored Troops soldier Wilson Middleton.

Immediate right: Restoration of the markers often revealed beautiful details that were obscured for decades.

Left: Tolson’s Chapel.

