

Report to the Governor and the General Assembly

2015 Annual Report
on the
**African American Heritage
Preservation Program**



Wilson Farmstead, Galesville, Anne Arundel County

**Maryland Commission on
African American History and Culture**
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Larry Hogan, Governor
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THE MARYLAND COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE MISSION STATEMENT



The mission of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture 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.



The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture 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.

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, a unit of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, and the Maryland Historical Trust, an agency of the Maryland Department of Planning. 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 2015

Fiscal Year 2016 Grants

Based on recommendations from the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture and the Maryland Historical Trust, the following projects were forwarded to the Department of Budget and Management in late 2014 and were included in the Governor's Capital Budget for fiscal year 2016:

County	Project & Sponsor	Description	Grant Award	Total AAHPP Project Costs
Frederick	<p>Project Name: Catoctin Furnace African American Cemetery</p> <p>Project Address: 12442 Catoctin Furnace Road, Thurmont MD 21788</p> <p>Project Sponsor: CATOCTIN FURNACE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.</p>	<p>First established in 1774, Catoctin Furnace played a crucial role in American history. For more than 125 years it manufactured iron used to produce household tools, stoves, and arms and ammunition. The Catoctin Furnace African American Cemetery represents what is thought to be the most complete African American cemetery connected with early industry in the United States. More than 100 individuals, both enslaved and free, who labored at the iron-working furnace and its surrounding community from the 1770s to the 1840s were buried there: skilled artisans such as forge workers, colliers, masons, and carpenters. The project will increase public awareness of the role of African Americans in the iron industry at Catoctin Furnace and across the United States. An easement will be required on the cemetery. <i>Project work includes preservation assessment and planning; site work and erosion control measures; installation of fencing; construction of trail and bridge; fabrication and installation of signage; and associated archeological and consulting services.</i></p>	\$87,000	\$114,688
Carroll	<p>Project Name: Sykesville Colored Schoolhouse</p> <p>Project Address: 518 Schoolhouse Road, Sykesville, MD 21784</p> <p>Project Sponsor: COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF CARROLL COUNTY, INCORPORATED</p>	<p>The Sykesville Colored Schoolhouse is an excellent surviving example of a rural one-room school built by and for African Americans. Pupils resided uphill from Sykesville, in an area known as The Bottoms, a community into which newly emancipated African Americans came to carve out their lives. The school opened on January 3, 1904. The building was set on a steep hillside, land that had no agricultural potential. The Sykesville Colored School instructed pupils from grades one through seven until it was shuttered in 1939. MHT holds an easement on this property. <i>Project work includes exterior and interior rehabilitation, including carpentry repairs and painting.</i></p>	\$15,000	\$15,000

Dorchester	<p>Project Name: Christ Rock M.E. Church</p> <p>Project Address: 2403 Rock Drive, Cambridge, MD 21613</p> <p>Project Sponsor: 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. MHT currently holds an easement on the property.</p> <p><i>Project work includes construction of two outbuildings, including foundations; framing; interior and exterior finishes; mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and sprinkler systems; painting; and site work.</i></p>	\$100,000	\$100,000
Calvert	<p>Project Name: Kings Landing Park / Camp Mohawk</p> <p>Project Address: 3255 Kings Landing Road, Huntingtown MD 20639</p> <p>Project Sponsor: CALVERT NATURE SOCIETY, INC.</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 interior and exterior rehabilitation of cabins, including repair / replacement of roof, shutters, windows, and doors; repainting; and repairs to fireplaces.</i></p>	\$73,000	\$73,000
Prince George's	<p>Project Name: Frederick Douglass Square at the University of Maryland</p> <p>Project Address: Hornbake Plaza, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742</p> <p>Project Sponsor: THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE PARK FOUNDATION, INC.</p>	<p>The University of Maryland will transform part of Hornbake Plaza, a major campus thoroughfare, into Frederick Douglass Square. Honoring Douglass's legacy as well as telling the story of his impact on the state and country, Frederick Douglass Square will serve as a place of reflection and inspiration at Maryland's flagship institution of higher education.</p> <p><i>Project work includes reconstruction of a portion of Hornbake Plaza as Frederick Douglass Square, including site work and installation of pavers.</i></p>	\$100,000	\$100,000

Charles	<p>Project Name: Old Pomonkey High School</p> <p>Project Address: 3395 Metropolitan Church Road, Indian Head MD 20640</p> <p>Project Sponsor: POMONKEY HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC.</p>	<p>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. In the 1950s a one-story gymnasium wing was added; this is currently the only portion of the building that remains after a fire in the 1980s destroyed the 1930s portion. The building will become a cultural center and museum, with the 1950s wing rehabilitated and the 1930s portion ultimately rebuilt.</p> <p><i>Project work includes interior and exterior rehabilitation, including demolition; structural repairs; repair / replacement of roof, windows, doors, stucco, steps, walls, floors, ceilings, and walkways; repair/replacement of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; installation of accessible ramp; and painting.</i></p>	\$95,000	\$95,000
Baltimore City	<p>Project Name: Ebenezer AME Church and Parish House</p> <p>Project Address: 18-20 West Montgomery Street, Baltimore, MD 21230</p> <p>Project Sponsor: EBENEZER KINGDOM BUILDERS INC.</p>	<p>Built in 1865 for a congregation organized in 1836, Ebenezer A.M.E. Church is thought to be the oldest standing church in Baltimore that was erected by African Americans and continuously occupied by the descendants of the same congregation. This brick Gothic Revival church has a prominent bell tower; the parish house is located in an adjoining rowhouse. MHT holds an easement on the property.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior rehabilitation of the church and parish house, including repair / replacement of roof, gutters, downspouts, windows, and doors; carpentry, masonry, and stucco repairs; and associated architectural and engineering services.</i></p>	\$100,000	\$100,000
Caroline	<p>Project Name: Community Civic League of Federalsburg / Laurel Grove Road School</p> <p>Project Address: 3439 Laurel Grove Road, Federalsburg MD 21632</p> <p>Project Sponsor: COMMUNITY CIVIC LEAGUE OF FEDERALSBURG, INC.</p>	<p>Constructed as a school for African Americans in 1918 as part of the Rosenwald School initiative, this building was in use until desegregation in 1964. Additions were constructed in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s; fires in 1968 and 1993 compromised the historic integrity of the structure but it is still used today as a multipurpose community resource center.</p> <p><i>Project work includes interior and exterior rehabilitation, including structural repairs, repairs to foundation, walls, floors, and masonry; installation of insulation and finishes; repair / replacement of mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems; site work, including ramp and parking; pest and termite control; and associated architectural and engineering services.</i></p>	\$98,000	\$98,000

Wicomico	<p>Project Name: Charles H. Chipman Cultural Center</p> <p>Project Address: 325 Broad Street, Salisbury MD 21801</p> <p>Project Sponsor: THE CHIPMAN FOUNDATION, INC.</p>	<p>The Charles H. Chipman Center is the oldest African American congregation site in the region and the first site for religious services in the region during and after slavery, the first school for children of freed slaves in the region, and the first Delmarva high school for African American children after the Civil War. The building is currently used as a cultural center and small museum focusing on African American heritage in Delmarva. MHT holds an easement on this property. <i>Project work includes interior and exterior rehabilitation, including repair / replacement of siding, trim, windows, ceilings, and roof; painting; installation of gutters and downspouts; and associated architectural and engineering services.</i></p>	\$78,000	\$78,000
Talbot	<p>Project Name: Asbury M.E. Church</p> <p>Project Address: 18 South Higgins Street, Easton, MD 21601</p> <p>Project Sponsor: HISTORIC EASTON, INCORPORATED</p>	<p>The church is the oldest African American church structure in Easton, and the second oldest African American church structure in Talbot County. The church was dedicated by Frederick Douglass in 1878. Asbury was a temporary high school for colored students in the 1930's and is now a community center for a historically African American enclave known as the "Hill." The lower-level "fellowship hall" will become an education and research center for the public. The upper-level sanctuary is still used for worship. MHT holds an easement on the exterior of the property. <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>	\$100,000	\$100,000
Somerset	<p>Project Name: John Wesley M.E. Church</p> <p>Project Address: 9571 Deal Island Road, Deal Island, MD 21821</p> <p>Project Sponsor: JOHN WESLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.</p>	<p>This late Victorian tee-plan Gothic Revival church, dating from 1914, is a prominent landmark in the low, marshy landscape between the settlements of Deal Island and Wenona. A black congregation has continuously worshipped on this site since at least the third quarter of the 19th century. The building will be used as a heritage-focused cultural and interpretive center. <i>Project work includes repair / replacement of windows.</i></p>	\$40,000	\$40,000

Baltimore County	<p>Project Name: Piney Grove United Methodist Church and School House</p> <p>Project Address: 4929 Piney Grove Road, Reisterstown MD 21136</p> <p>Project Sponsor: PINEY GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF REISTERSTOWN, MARYLAND</p>	<p>This modest gable-front frame church was constructed in 1850; the church complex, including the schoolhouse, which predates 1872, and the cemetery, is designated as a Baltimore County landmark. Originally known as the Africans Pine Grove Chapel, the church is still used for worship.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior rehabilitation of the church, including masonry repair / repointing; repair / replacement of siding, trim, roof, windows, doors, and ramp; and painting; interior and exterior rehabilitation of the schoolhouse, including masonry repair / repointing; repair / replacement of siding, trim, roof, windows, doors, and ramp; repair of interior floors, walls, and ceilings; and painting; associated site work; and associated architectural and engineering services.</i></p>	\$100,000	\$107,000
Talbot	<p>Project Name: Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church</p> <p>Project Address: 110 South Hanson Street, Easton MD 21601</p> <p>Project Sponsor: BETHEL A.M.E. CHURCH, INC.</p>	<p>Bethel AME Church, built in 1877, houses a congregation that has been in existence since 1818. The Hill neighborhood, established by freed slaves in Easton, grew up around Bethel and the nearby Asbury AME Church. The church building may be the first structure for public use owned and operated by African Americans on the Eastern Shore. The building is still in use as a church. MHT currently holds an easement on the exterior of the property.</p> <p><i>Project work includes exterior rehabilitation, including repair / replacement of roof, windows, doors, trim, and cornice; repairs to masonry and framing; site work; painting; and associated architectural, engineering, and consulting services.</i></p>	\$14,000	\$14,000
TOTAL GRANTS			\$1,000,000	

These grantees were notified of their awards in May 2015, after the approval of the FY2016 Governor's Capital Budget. A press release describing the Program and detailing the grant awards was distributed in late June 2015.

Program Reauthorization

In the 2015 General Assembly session the African American Heritage Preservation Program was reauthorized (HB130/SB601). The reauthorization of the Program has no sunset date, creates the African American Heritage Preservation Grant Fund at the Maryland Historical Trust, and directs the Governor to include in the annual operating or capital budget an appropriation of \$1,000,000 to the Fund. Additionally, the statute now permits up to 20% of funds available in the Fund to be awarded to eligible emergency African American heritage preservation projects and outlines a process for award of those emergency funds. The new statute also eliminated the requirement that the Trust and Commission forward a list of selected projects to the Department of Budget and Management in advance of the release of the Governor's Capital Budget. This change to the process will allow awards to be made four months after the application deadline rather than ten or eleven months, as under the initial authorization of the Program.

Fiscal Year 2017 Grant Applications

Applications, instructions, and Program guidelines for FY2017 funding will be made available in January 2016 via the Maryland Historical Trust's website. A press release in February or March 2016 will announce the availability of the applications and also announce a series of workshops for potential applicants. Typically the Trust and Commission hold five or six workshops in locations across the state.

Grant applications will be accepted through the Trust's online application, powered by MicroEdge's GIFTS system. The grant application deadline will be July 15, 2016. After a threshold review of the applications by Trust staff, the Commission will evaluate eligible applications and will forward recommendations to the Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees at their October 2016 meeting. After approval by the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Planning, the Trust and Commission will forward the list of recommended projects and grantees to the Department of Budget and Management.

Notable Accomplishments & Project Updates

Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church, Easton, Talbot County:

Asbury M.E. Church is the oldest African American church structure in Easton and the second oldest African American church structure in Talbot County. The church was dedicated by Frederick Douglass in 1878. Asbury was a temporary high school for colored students in the 1930's and is now a community center for a historically African American enclave known as the "Hill." The lower-level "fellowship hall" will become an education and research center for the public. The upper-level sanctuary is still used for worship. The Maryland Historical Trust holds an easement on the exterior of this property.

Grant funds awarded through the Program in FY2013, 2014, and 2016 are assisting in the exterior rehabilitation of this landmark church as well as addressing structural issues with the central tower.

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

Below: The deterioration of the belfry and finial are evident in these photos (Baker, Ingram & Associates)



Wilson Farmstead, Anne Arundel County:



Left: Wilson Farmstead in 2015, after stabilization, with project team members from the West River Improvement Association and Anne Arundel County.

Above: Wilson Farmstead in 2013.

The Wilson Farmstead, acquired in 2008 by the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks through Program Open Space, is highly significant to African American history in Maryland. 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 house was constructed around 1870 by Henry Wilson, a former slave who was manumitted in 1828 at age 23, on two acres of land purchased from the Tulip Hill plantation, a National Historic Landmark. By the time of his death in the late 1870s, the parcel had grown to 26 ½ acres, and his cross-gabled I-house was a fashionable demonstration of his success and position. Wilson was one of a very few manumitted slaves in Maryland to own both land and a home. The house is typical of contemporaneous housing stock throughout Galesville, comparable in style and appointment to Wilson's white neighbors. Such groundbreaking acquisition and construction of the house post-bellum laid the foundation for the vibrant African American community along West Benning Road that survives today, a legacy that was continued into the twentieth century by Wilson's heirs and other prominent families. Around 1922, Henry's son Richard carved a baseball field from the farm that became home to the Negro League's Galesville Hot Sox for the next 40 years.

Funds from the African American Heritage Preservation Program in FY2013 and FY2015 assisted the stabilization of the Wilson Farmstead for a future community use.



Above: "Hometown Teams", a traveling exhibit of the Smithsonian Institution, came to Galesville to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Galesville Hot Sox (pictured).



Above: Stabilization of the structure involved lifting it to repair the framing and replace the foundation.

Sandy Spring Odd Fellows Lodge, Montgomery County:

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. The building will be used as an educational and cultural center. The Maryland Historical Trust currently holds an easement on the property, which was stabilized in 2008 using the Trust's Capital Grant funds. The project received funds from the African American Heritage Preservation Program each year from FY2012-2015 to complete the rehabilitation, which should conclude in late 2015.



Above and right: The lodge prior to the final phase of rehabilitation.



Above: The lodge in 2007, prior to stabilization.

Sotterley Plantation, St. Mary's County:

Dating to 1703, Sotterley Plantation is a National Historic Landmark and the only tidewater plantation in Maryland that is open to the public. Sotterley has more than twenty original buildings, including a slave dwelling, spanning its 300 year evolution, and political, economic, and technological perspectives are presented in the site's interpretation. The corn crib, which probably dates to the mid to late 18th century, has been rehabilitated using private and African American Preservation Program funds to house a new permanent exhibit, "Land, Lives, and Labor". This exhibit tells the stories of those who labored at Sotterley for over 300 years, both enslaved and freed. Visitors receive a unique view of life at Sotterley from the workers' perspectives. These stories were heavily researched and include primary documents, oral histories and interactive hands-on features, as well as a display of historic tools and equipment used over the years at Sotterley. Sotterley's visitors will be able to experience this exhibit year-round.



Above: The completed "Land, Lives, and Labor" exhibit in the historic corn crib.



Above left and center: The corn crib's shingles before and after restoration.

Above right: The restoration of the corn crib required seamless, in-kind repairs to maintain the structure's historic integrity.



Left: The corn crib before restoration.

Kings Landing Park / “Camp Mohawk”, Calvert County:

Just after the Second World War the Druid Hill YMCA, built as an African American YMCA branch in Baltimore in 1918, purchased 286 acres along the Patuxent River in Calvert County. This rural parcel became “Camp Druid Hill”, a residential summer camp for African American youth from Baltimore and beyond. The utilitarian cabins that stand today – walls lined with bunk beds – are thought to have been built around 1950. Boys and girls aged 8 to 16 could participate in weeklong or multi-week summer stays at the camp; scholarships were available for inner-city students. In 1960 the Druid Hill YMCA became a branch of the newly integrated Baltimore Central YMCA, and in 1963 the now-integrated camp became known as “Camp Mohawk” and later as “Camp Kings Landing”. In 1984, the camp property was sold to the State of Maryland and leased to Calvert County for park and recreational use; today it is open to the public as Kings Landing Park. The 2014 award of an African American Heritage Preservation Program grant to the Calvert County Division of Natural Resources has funded the stabilization of the cabins and replacement of most of the roofs; work will continue under an FY2016 grant to the Calvert Nature Society, a nonprofit. This commitment will ensure that these modest cabins will house future generations of youngsters who are experiencing the great outdoors – and getting away from home – for the first time.



Above and left: The cabins and the “Camp Mohawk” site in Kings Landing Park.

Below: Restoration of the individual cabins is in keeping with their rustic character.

