

F R E D E R I C K C O U N T Y

African American Heritage

in the City of Frederick
and Frederick County, Maryland





Welcome to the City of Frederick and Frederick County! This guide provides glimpses of more than two centuries of African American heritage in our area and presents a new opportunity to experience the past. Feel the heat of smelters at Catoctin Furnace, where expert African metalworkers helped build our nation by forging an array of ironworks, including cannonballs used to win American independence. Marvel at the skill, dedication and compassion of those slaves, free persons, and “contraband” who helped heal the thousands of Civil War wounded in Frederick after the conflicts at South Mountain, Monocacy, Antietam and Gettysburg. Imagine the daily bustle of segregated businesses on All Saints Street. Hear the strains of jazz tunes and harmonies of gospel hymns rising from churches and social halls all over the county, and be inspired by the faith and fortitude of our African American forebears.



A brief respite at Braddock's Spring (c. 1903) Braddock Heights, Maryland

City of Frederick



A view looking east on All Saints Street (c. 1903).

ALL SAINTS STREET NEIGHBORHOOD _____

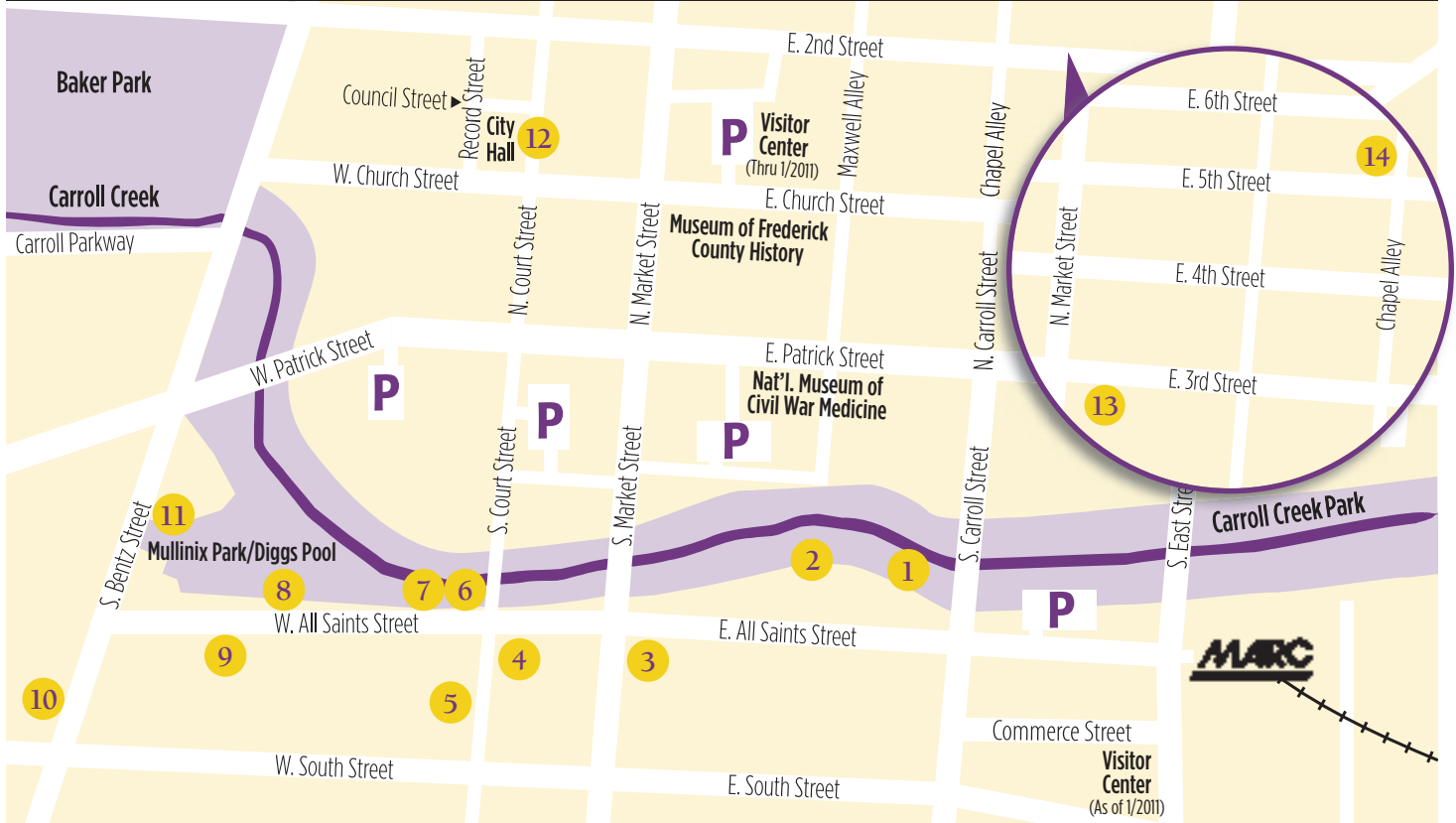
A thoroughfare at the edge of town in late 18th-century Frederick, All Saints Street took on a different flavor over the next 100 years. By the early 1900s, its modest length had become a center of commerce and entertainment not only for Frederick City's "colored" population, but also for those in the county. Far into the evenings on Fridays and Saturdays in particular, the street assumed a vibrant and festive appearance. Those who could not easily be accommodated elsewhere found virtually all that they needed right here. Services from banking and medical care to grocery stores and beauty parlors operated out of people's homes, and restaurants featuring home cooking fanned out onto the sidewalks. Many of the old buildings remain, such as the studio of noted portraitist/photographer William Grinage (22 W. All Saints Street) and the site of Albert V. Dixon's undertaking business (22 S. Bentz Street). Many other structures have received new life through renovation efforts of another generation of owners.

Others, such as the first high school for colored students are gone, although a monument marks that site. The school's creation can be credited to John W. Bruner, the first superintendent of Frederick County's colored school system. The first enrollment was 35 students and by 1923, a new, larger space was needed, leading to Lincoln High School being opened on Madison Street.



Pictured left, the first high school for colored students. Pictured right, students and faculty of Lincoln High School with superintendent John W. Bruner front and center.

DOWNTOWN FREDERICK - SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR



1 Community Bridge Mural (Carroll Creek Park) Carroll Street, between East Patrick/All Saints Streets

This enormous trompe l'oeil mural features symbols representing the “spirit of community,” with several (such as the drinking gourd and Big Dipper constellation) derived from African American sources. Trompe l'oeil is French for “fool the eye” and perfectly describes this masterpiece of optical illusion.

2 William O. Lee Unity Bridge (Carroll Creek Park)

This suspension bridge symbolically represents the end of Frederick’s segregated past. Many hardworking individuals helped eradicate the color barrier here—such as the bridge’s namesake, William O. Lee, Jr. who held many roles during his 75 years, including school administrator, mentor, historian and alderman for the City of Frederick.



3 Old Baltimore & Ohio Train Station Corner of All Saints Street and South Market Street

The “Great Emancipator” himself, Abraham Lincoln was on All Saints Street on October 4, 1862, following an inspection of nearby battlefields at both Antietam and South Mountain.

As he readied to depart for Washington, Lincoln addressed a crowd comprised of soldiers and citizens, both black and white, and gave brief thanks for those supporting the cause of preserving the Union. (See nearby Civil War Trails marker on Market Street.)

4 Residence and Office of Frederick’s First Black Doctor 30 West All Saints Street

Ulysses Grant Bourne (1873-1956) grew up in Calvert County, Maryland. He came to Frederick in 1903 and would practice medicine here until 1953. In addition to being the founder of the Maryland Negro Medical Society and the first Black doctor on the staff of Frederick Memorial Hospital, he was a co-founder of the Frederick branch of the NAACP in 1931.



5 Site of the Free Colored Men’s Library 113 Ice Street

Opened in the home of Rev. Ignatius Snowden, the library loaned books until 1932, when the property was sold. The facility was an outgrowth of the Young Men’s Colored Reading Club of Frederick City, Inc., founded in 1913 by Clifford Holland and several other men in response to Frederick’s public library being segregated at the time.

6 | Asbury United Methodist Church
101 West All Saints Street • 301-663-9380

Its predecessor was Old Hill Church, East All Saints Street, turned over to the black congregants in 1864. In 1868, the church officially became Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church of Frederick City, Maryland. In 1921, the present church was dedicated. The structure boasts a historic Moller pipe organ and a sizeable gymnasium in the basement.



7 | Pythian Castle
111-113 West All Saints Street

Originally Nazarite Hall in 1891, the building became known in 1921 as the Pythian Castle. Entertainment of all kinds—banquets, dances, movies, live music—took place here. The building also provided the location in 1937 for the first black kindergarten, eventually named for community leader Esther Grinage.

8 | Former First Missionary Baptist Church and Parsonage
141 West All Saints Street



A mix of architectural styles and details is combined in this eclectic house of worship that has stood since 1773. For years the property of a white congregation, it was given in 1863 to the “colored” people of the community.

9 | The Mountain City Elks Lodge
173 West All Saints Street

From 1919 to 1928 the building was a 15-bed hospital for Blacks. Established by Dr. Ulysses Bourne and Dr. Charles S. Brooks, the facility admitted patients denied care because of race at the Frederick City Hospital until the opening of the Baker wing in 1928.

10 | Roger Brooke Taney House/Slave Quarters
121 South Bentz Street • 301-663-7880

Aspects of slavery in early 19th-century Frederick County are interpreted at this property once owned by Roger Brooke Taney, former Frederick attorney (1801-1823) and Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court (1836-1864). Taney administered the oath of office to seven U.S. presidents including Abraham Lincoln. The site, including the family’s living space, features documented slaves’ quarters located to the rear of the main house. Hours: Apr-Dec Sat 10am-4pm, Sun 1-4pm.



11 | Mullinix Park/Diggs Pool
South Bentz Street (Near Carroll Creek Park)

In 1928, Frederick businessman and former city alderman Lorenzo Mullinix proposed a separate park for black residents. The land was donated by the entrepreneurial Baker family with the stipulation that a swimming pool one day be built and named “Diggs Pool” after the Baker’s trusted chauffeur and assistant, William R. Diggs, an African American.

12 | Dred Scott Plaque
Frederick City Hall Plaza

A bronze plaque explains the infamous Dred Scott decision and is located roughly eight feet from a bust of Roger Brooke Taney, the man who wrote and delivered the 1857 Supreme Court majority ruling that declared slaves and those descended from slaves were not citizens. This controversial decision has been held by historians as a catalyst of the American Civil War. This plaque was dedicated in Fall 2009 and came about as a tool to educate visitors about Dred Scott, the opinion and Taney, the man who wrote it.



13 | Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church
106 East 3rd Street • 301-663-1550

This congregation, originally called Bethel, dates back to the late 1700s. In 1819, a brick building at the present site was acquired. In 1835, the church was named after highly respected Bishop William Paul Quinn. It is said to be the location of Frederick’s first Sabbath school for Black children, where Benjamin Tucker Tanner was principal in 1867 and 1868. Twenty years later, Tanner, a well-known clergyman, scholar, and social activist, was named Bishop. His fame may be surpassed by that of his celebrated son, expatriate artist Henry O. Tanner, who was a young boy when his father served in Frederick.



14 | Laboring Sons Memorial Ground
Chapel Alley and 5th Street

Established in 1851 by the Beneficial Society of the Laboring Sons of Frederick City, this burial ground had been largely neglected when the city acquired it and in 1950 placed a park on the site. Among those buried here are six Civil War veterans who served in colored regiments. Protests, beginning in 1999, focused on the playground use of this land and were responsible for the successful change from park to memorial.



The Museum of Frederick County History
24 East Church Street, Downtown Frederick • 301-663-1188



Experience heritage artifacts such as William Grinage's portrait of Francis Scott Key, author of the "Star Spangled Banner." Kiwanis members commissioned Grinage to render Key's likeness shortly before the noted local painter's death in 1925. The museum also features an 1830 gravestone by Boss Hammond, a slave able to earn money as a stone carver to manumit (free) himself as well as his family. The William O. Lee collection (focused on Frederick County African American history) is available to researchers and select items are on exhibit on a rotating basis. From the Museum's archives comes this photo (left) of George Ambush with his lunch wagon, popular for decades among the workers and customers of local businesses. Museum open daily, all year. No admission charge to enter only to see portrait.



National Museum of Civil War Medicine
48 East Patrick Street, Downtown Frederick • 301-695-1864

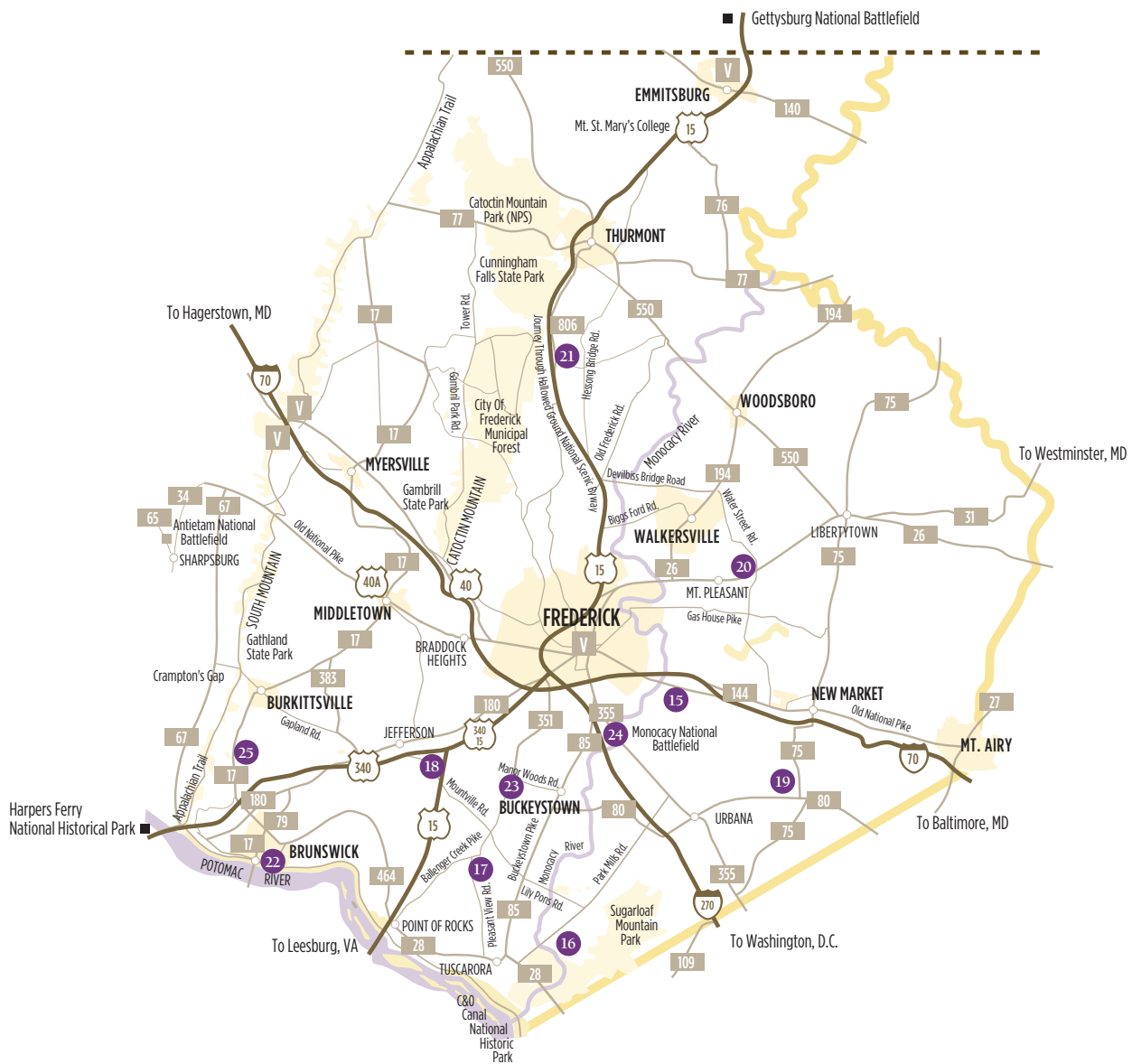


Immersion exhibits include medical evacuation, field dressing station and field hospital as well as other displays illustrating the important role of medical intervention in the Civil War. The rise of Black doctors and nurses is examined, and camp life for Black soldiers—and their fitness for battle—is shown. Exhibit panels identify local Black churches such as Quinn AME that served as hospitals during the conflict. A few artifacts and documents related to the African American experience are in the Museum's collection, including the frock coat of Dr. Louis D. Radzinsky, Assistant Surgeon of the 54th Massachusetts volunteers (pictured). The Museum is open every day except for certain holidays. Admission charge.



Late 19th-century street scene in New Market on the Old National Pike

Other traces of Black enclaves exist with structures and cemeteries throughout the county. These can be found in places such as New Market, Mt. Airy and Libertytown in eastern Frederick County, Fountain Mills and Mt. Ephraim in the southeastern reaches of the county, Point of Rocks, Brunswick, Jefferson and Burkittsville to the southwest. Middletown has a Black cemetery and was home to a hamlet named Spoolsville. Black populations were not as prevalent in northern Frederick County which generally had been settled by German immigrants who rarely practiced slavery. Anomalies included Catoctin Furnace, Lewistown and most notably Emmitsburg, due to its settlement by early English and Scotch Irish immigrants.



The census of 1860 listed 4,967 free Blacks in the county, of which 1,254 lived in Frederick City. Most freedmen living in the country stuck with agricultural work, usually farming for plantation owners and working at industry such as rural canning factories and lime kilns. Free Blacks made up one-fifth of Frederick City's population. Many of these residents were laborers in the foundries, brick yards and tanneries, while others worked as skilled craftsman, such as blacksmiths, shoemakers, carpenters, butchers, and barbers. Most women labored as house servants for the wealthier families in town. A few free Blacks were entrepreneurs.

Frederick County

COMMUNITIES AND CHURCHES

During the latter part of the 19th-century, a number of villages founded by Negroes, including some who had been slaves, began to dot the countryside. A few have vanished, leaving behind perhaps only an overgrown burial ground or a row of house foundations—or no trace at all. In most of these little settlements, the residents endeavored to build a church and school as quickly as possible. The proliferation of such churches in Frederick County, particularly of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) and Methodist Episcopal (M.E., now United Methodist) denominations, followed on the heels of a national religious revival and coincided with the dynamic growth of Black churches between 1865 and 1900. Protestant Christianity was clearly the central institution of community life in each of the Negro enclaves that one may still visit in Frederick County.



Many churches found in the country are called vernacular, meaning that they were built not from formal architectural plans but according to traditional means and methods by local builders skilled in design. Most of the country churches are simple rectangular

buildings, usually one or one-and-a-half stories with a gabled roof. This form is the most basic, although sometimes there will be a rear addition or side ell wing. Some of these buildings are raised up on stone or brick foundations with a front stair, depending on the specifics of the property. Many foundations include a marble cornerstone from a previous church or date from the original construction of the building.

15 | Bartonsville

This place was established between Frederick City and New Market near the Old National Pike (MD144) on Bartonsville Road. Bartonsville had its own schoolhouse and two historic churches St. James AME (pictured above) and Jackson United Methodist Chapel. Among Bartonsville's most famous residents was the late Lester Bowie - trumpeter, jazz legend, and 93rd inductee in the Down Beat Hall of Fame.



Bowie found inspiration in the example of many of his older relatives who, around 1915, played and toured with the Bartonsville Cornet Band (pictured).

16 | Della

At the base of Sugarloaf Mountain, Blacks built a haven on the slow-rising eastern banks of the Monocacy River. Early residents included former slaves from Greenfield Mills, a large plantation on the west side of the river, and Licksville (Tuscarora), a former center of slave trade. The community grew with St. Paul's AME Church and a one-room schoolhouse.

17 | Pleasant View

Founded by Richard Harris and Patrick Ambush, this place is located on Pleasant View Road, not far from Doubs and Adamstown. The village, including the United Methodist church that bears its name, was said to have a "pleasant view" all around. Two of Patrick and wife Henrietta Ambush's grandsons would spend their childhoods here and later help break the color barrier in Frederick City. Claude Delauter, Jr. would be the first Black person to be elected to the Frederick City Board of Alderman (1973). In 1928, brother Arnold Delauter began a storied career at Frederick City Hospital at a time when the hospital was for whites only.



18 | Sunnyside



Sitting on the eastern slope of Catoctin Mountain, this hamlet is located at the intersection of US15 and Mountville Road. John Thomas Weedon, a former slave who had escaped his master and drove mules for the Union army during the Civil War, was the first of his family to settle as a freedman here. Weedon family members have in the past made up a large part of the population, here on the "sunny side" of the mountain. Six families of freed slaves are said to have mortgaged their own properties in an effort to build the first Sunnyside United Methodist Church in 1885.



Students from "Ebenezer School No. 2, Colored" in Centerville. Early 20th-century. Private Collection.

19 | Centerville

East of Urbana near the intersection of MD80 and Ijamsville Road marked the former emancipation community also referred to as Ebenezer, after the Methodist Episcopal Church located here. In 1869, records show that land was made available to residents by William Gant, a Black former county resident who was currently living and working as a tanner in Baltimore. Adjacent to the church (founded in 1883), was the Ebenezer one-room log schoolhouse.

20 | Silver Hill/Wayman

A small Black enclave grew up on the east side of Mt. Pleasant along Old Liberty Road (MD26), and two churches came as a result. Deed references show that Wayman AME Church was built about 1868 and Silver Hill United Methodist about 1875. Of particular interest are some tombs in Malagasy style (from north Madagascar), characterized by a ridge of natural stone arranged in a lateral fashion and protruding vertically from the earth at a slight angle. The oldest of these may be the burial places of free Malagasy immigrants who first came to Frederick County in 1820.

INDUSTRY

21 | Catoclin Furnace US15, south of Thurmont • 301-271-7574

This site, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and NPS National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, has been partially restored. Thomas Johnson, Maryland's first elected governor, and his brothers built this furnace in 1775. West African slaves with the best iron-making skills were sought to work in America's iron furnaces, and state archaeological excavations of the slave cemetery and subsequent testing of remains indicated that the workers buried therein carried only African generic markers. An exhibit on the ironworks may be seen at the Visitor Center at nearby Cunningham Falls State Park. The Visitor Center is open April to October. Admission is free.



22 | Brunswick Railroad Museum and C&O Canal Visitor Center 40 W. Potomac Street, Brunswick • 301-834-7100



African Americans were an integral part of the transportation heritage story of both Frederick County and the nation with the construction and operation of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. Experience their stories with exhibits and displays at these neighboring locations in downtown Brunswick. Limited days of operation. Admission charge to the Railroad Museum. Admission to the Visitor Center is free.

PLANTATION LIFE

23 | Carrollton Manor



The landscape has changed little from what it looked like during the era of slavery and the time of the American Civil War. This 10,000-acre tract was originally surveyed and purchased in 1723 by the grandfather of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and later owner of this property. A manor house (named Tuscarora) and a Catholic church (St. Joseph-on-Carrollton Manor) were built on the property here. At one time, up to 500 slaves and tenant farmers could be found working on or around Carrollton Manor, and these slaves and their descendants participated in the congregation Carroll had established in 1764. A nearby place of interest is the Bishop Claggett Retreat Center, which contains a marked slave cemetery associated with the Buckingham Manor estate. After emancipation, many former slaves started two adjacent communities: Hope Hill and Flint Hill. Residents began their own farms and worked at Buckeystown's tanning yards, canning company and brickyard.

24 | The Best Farm/Monocacy National Battlefield 5201 Urbana Pike, Frederick • 301-662-3515

The Best Farm, a component of Monocacy National Battlefield, is named for the David Best family who occupied it during the Civil War. Previously known as L'Hermitage, it was once part of a 748-acre plantation established by the Vincendieres, a family of French planters from the Caribbean. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, L'Hermitage was home to the second-largest enslaved population in Frederick County and documents indicate that the owners instituted a harsh form of slavery. Even after the Vincendieres sold the property, slavery continued to be practiced there. Despite the inhumanity of slavery, research indicates that freedom seekers at L'Hermitage and the Best Farm exercised personal agency by attempting to escape. This site is on the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. Visitor Center open daily 8:30-5pm with park roads/trails open until dusk.



25 | Needwood

South of Burkittsville, the Needwood estate of Thomas Sim Lee at one time consisted of 200 slaves. Lee served as Maryland's second governor and played pivotal roles in both the fight for American independence and state politics. In addition to typical plantation work, Negroes were involved with family-run distillery operations. A nearby emancipation settlement came about at the foot of South Mountain known as Coatsville, and freedmen and former slaves served as sharecroppers and tenant farmers. In time, large farms in this vicinity were owned by the Black Whalen and Butler families.



1930s era sketch of intersection of All Saints and Ice Streets by John Turner (1907-1992). Private Collection.

The sites included in this brochure represent highlights of a broader African American heritage, selected to provide the user with an enjoyable, self-guided journey through this aspect of our community's history. The brochure does not purport to be a comprehensive catalogue of local African American heritage or cultural resources. Not all of the sites listed are open to the general public, but all are accessible for exterior views.

A variety of terms, including "colored," "Negro," "Black" and "African American," are used throughout the text. In some cases, the choice of term was determined by that which is already employed on markers or in exhibition labels at the sites. Otherwise, the text uses the prevailing term for the period of history highlighted at each location.

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FREDERICK
 HISTORIC
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Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area



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