



## **African American History: *Past Montgomery County History Conference Topics***

### 2007

#### **Josiah Henson and the Riley Plantation**

Susan Soderberg

*Who was Josiah Henson and what connection did he have to Uncle Tom's Cabin? Find out about the fascinating life of this Montgomery Countian and how he became part of the national consciousness.*

### 2008

#### **Montgomery County's African American Schools**

Nina Clarke

*Before integration, Montgomery County had two separate school systems, one for white students and one for African Americans. Learn how the African American schools developed, their importance in the black community and how integration came about.*

#### **Escape on the Pearl**

Mary Kay Ricks

*The story of the Pearl is one of the most famous and exciting of the Underground Railroad. In 1848, 77 escaping freedom seekers were captured aboard the ship The Pearl. The story of their escape and subsequent capture is riveting.*

### 2009

#### **African American School System in Montgomery County**

Nina Clarke

*Mrs. Clarke examines the development and realities of the segregated school system in Montgomery County. As a student and later a teacher in the segregated system, Mrs. Clarke brings first-hand knowledge.*

### 2010

#### **Doing Historical Research: The Story of Yarrow Mamout**

Jim Johnston

*Johnston shares his enthusiasm for doing historical research as he discusses his three years uncovering the history of Yarrow Mamout, a freed slave who lived in Georgetown.*

#### **Archaeology of the Josiah Henson Site**

Don Housley

*Josiah Henson, whose autobiography inspired the novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin, lived in Bethesda as a slave*

*from 1795 to 1825. Learn about recent archaeological finds from this season's excavation of the Josiah Henson site.*

### **Slavery in Maryland**

Ira Berlin

*Dr. Berlin's 1999 study of African American life between 1619-1819, *Many Thousands Gone*, was awarded the Bancroft Prize for the best book in American History by Columbia University, Frederick Douglass Prize by the Gilder-Lehrman Institute and many others. In 2002 he repeated the distinction with *Generations of Captivity: A History of Slaves in the United States*.*

2011

### **Researching Runaway Slaves in Montgomery County**

Rachel Frazier

*Discover the State Archives website *Beneath the Underground Railroad: Flight to Freedom* ([www.mdslavery.net](http://www.mdslavery.net)). Learn about new Montgomery County resources available online, including a large number of biographies, database records, and runaway ads.*

2012

### **The Sugarland Story**

Gwen Hebron Reese and Suzanne Johnson

*Located near Poolesville, this community was established in 1871 when freed slaves began to purchase land for their homes, school, church, store, and post office. Two members of the original families will introduce the people and places of Sugarland, including Nettie Branison Johnson.*

2013

### **Desegregating Montgomery County Public Schools**

Gloria Slayton, Sharyn Duffin, Connie Morella

*Three individuals provide first-hand experiences of desegregation in Montgomery County in the 1950s – a former kindergarten student whose older siblings attended segregated schools, a teenager who interacted daily with white students for the first time, and a high school teacher who dealt with the challenges of that period. Bring your own stories, questions, and comments.*

### **A Tangled Web: Researching the Enslaved in Montgomery County**

Robyn Smith

*Researching the enslaved population is a challenging and difficult task. However, Maryland in general and Montgomery County in particular have some unique resources that can help. Ms. Smith will discuss slave research and include case studies using Maryland resources.*

2015

### **[Emancipation in Maryland](#)**

Susan Soderberg, Eileen McGuckian, Ben Hawley

*Slaves in Maryland were freed by popular vote on November 1, 1864, with the ratification of a new state constitution. How emancipation came about, how it was received by the people of Montgomery County, the aftermath of this momentous change in Maryland history, and the political process of achieving official recognition of Emancipation Day are covered in this presentation.*

### [Josiah Henson Revisited](#)

Jamie Kuhns

*The story of Josiah Henson, former slave, Reverend, UGRR conductor, and model for Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom" is revisited through recent research by Montgomery Parks. Ongoing historical and archaeological work at the Riley plantation near Rockville, where Henson and others were enslaved, offers an opportunity to explore early 19th century plantation life in Montgomery County, as well as how the property has changed over the last 200 years.*

2016

### [The Search for Yarrow Mamout: Public Archaeology in Washington, D.C.](#)

Dr. Ruth Tricoli, Mia Carey, Charde' Reid, and Charles LeeDecker

*The DC Historic Preservation Office conducted pro bono archaeological investigations in Upper Georgetown at the former property and possible burial site of Yarrow Mamout, a freed Muslim slave. This survey may be the first US attempt to study an African Muslim individual through archaeology. Ruth Tricoli, District Archaeologist of Washington, DC and Charde Reid, Assistant District Archaeologist, will highlight details about the fascinating life of Yarrow Mamout and the preliminary results of the archaeological survey conducted on his former lot.*

2017

### **Keys to the Heart of a Community: The Enduring Legacy of the Warren Historic Site**

Shelley Stokes Hammond

*This session details Montgomery County's Warren Historic Site, the only post-Civil War African American enclave in the state of Maryland with all three main community structures—the one-room schoolhouse, church, and meeting house—still extant. It is the story of a group of families who from the eras of slavery, Reconstruction, Jim Crow and Civil Rights kept alive the spirit of community and the dream of what it means to be an American citizen with full rights and privileges. Preservation and sustainability efforts underway will also be discussed.*

### **Oakley Cabin: Revisited**

Heather Bouslog

*This presentation will give an overview of the past and present investigations of this African American archaeological site in the heart of Montgomery County, Maryland. Particular attention will be given to Oakley Cabin's historical context as a "geography of resistance."*

2018

### **Thurgood Marshall's Early Civil Rights Victory in Montgomery County**

Ralph Buglass

*Civil rights icon Thurgood Marshall delivered an early blow to school segregation right here in Montgomery County—gaining equal pay for the county's African American teachers in 1937. This little-known legal case is often seen as the first step in Marshall's successful drive to have separate schools for white and black children declared unconstitutional, as the Supreme Court did 17 years later in a landmark decision. This illustrated talk details this remarkable local story and its national significance. Spoiler alert: the victory came at a tremendous cost to the teacher bringing the case.*

**The Geography of Resistance: Free Black Communities in the Underground Railroad**

Cheryl LaRoche, Ph.D

*This enlightening study employs the tools of archaeology to uncover a new historical perspective on the Underground Railroad. Unlike previous histories of the Underground Railroad, which have focused on frightened fugitive slaves and their benevolent abolitionist accomplices, Cheryl LaRoche focuses instead on free African American communities, the crucial help they provided to individuals fleeing slavery, and the terrain where those flights to freedom occurred.*