



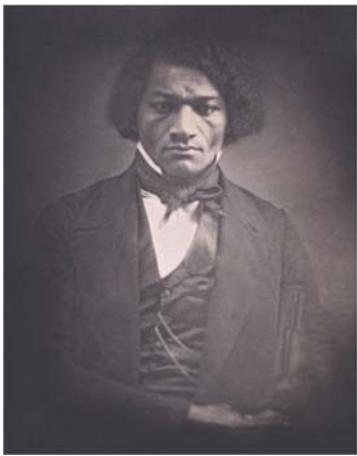
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE COUNTY

NEWSLETTER



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2017

FEBRUARY IS AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH



*Frederick Douglass, around 29 years old.
Unidentified artist, National Portrait
Gallery (Wikipedia Commons).*

With African American History Month, or Black History Month, arriving in February, we at HSBC thought we'd celebrate by sharing some local resources and programs on African American history. But first, do you know how Black History Month started? In 1926, Carter G. Woodson, an historian who helped found the field of African American historical studies, and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History designated the second week of February "Negro History Week." The week was chosen because it coincided with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, dates that had been celebrated in African American communities since the late nineteenth century. The first week-long celebration caught the attention of many educators and inspired the founding of history clubs. Over time, the idea of acknowledging and celebrating the contributions of Americans of African descent grew. By the 1950s,

mayors nationwide issued proclamations recognizing Negro History Week. By the 1960s, a month-long celebration of African American history was taking place on college campuses across the country. African American History Month achieved national standing in 1976, when President Gerald Ford officially called upon the public to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." Since then, every U.S. president has declared February African American History Month.

For anyone interested in exploring African American history in Baltimore County, the work of local historian Louis S. Diggs is the essential starting point. Mr. Diggs, a name no doubt already familiar to HSBC members, has written extensively about the county's historic African American communities, from Catonsville, to Turner Station, to Towson, to the North County and beyond. In addition to publishing ten books, he has given innumerable lectures, organized tours and established the Diggs-Johnson Museum in Granite. He has received a number of honors for his work and the County government last year created the Louis S. Diggs Award to be given each February to honor contributions to African American heritage. We at HSBC are proud to include all of Mr. Diggs's works in our library and have him serve on our Honorary Board.

The Baltimore County website offers some information on local African American history resources.

(Continued page 6)

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- *Black History Month*
- *Upcoming Events*
- *You May Have Missed*
- *Volunteer Corner*
- *Just for Fun*
- *Sponsor Appreciation*
- *Welcome New Members*
- *"We Are Maryland"*



THE CITIZENS OF
BALTIMORE COUNTY

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesdays and Saturdays: by appointment only @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters ALMSHOUSE TOURS (\$8.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Find out the interesting history of our Almshouse and learn about some of the people who lived there. Tours last approximately one hour, and are offered on Wednesdays and Saturdays, by appointment only. Please contact Pat Routson at HSBC headquarters at 410-666-1878 to schedule your tour.

First Thursdays each month: January 5, February 2, March 2, April 6, 2017, 10:00am-2:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters

GENEALOGY INSTRUCTION (Free to all)

FREE MONTHLY GENEALOGY INSTRUCTION at the Historical Society of Baltimore County with local genealogist Noreen Goodson and professional genealogist Angela Walton-Raji, BA, M.Ed. Walton-Raji is the author of *Black Indian Genealogy Research: African American Ancestors Among the Five Civilized Tribes*. The instructors have a wealth of general and niche genealogy knowledge, experience, and resources to share.

Sun., Feb. 12, 2017, 2:00-4:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters SPARROWS POINT (\$5.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Speaker: Bill Barry

From its opening in 1887 to becoming the largest steel mill in the world, with 31,000 workers, to its closure in 2012, the Sparrows Point plant, and its incorporated town, has been a landmark of industrial and post-industrial America and Baltimore County. Bill Barry, retired Director of Labor Studies at CCBC-Dundalk, has prepared a history of this epic civilization. He is publishing a new book, *We Always Told Steel Stories*, with oral histories of the workers at the Point.

Sun., March. 12, 2017, 2:00-4:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters B&O RAILROAD DURING THE CIVIL WAR (\$5.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Speaker: Dan Toomey

When the Civil War began, the Baltimore & Ohio quickly became the most important railroad in the nation. Located entirely within Maryland and the present state of West Virginia, it provided the only direct rail link between Washington, DC, and the loyal states. Its destruction was a constant Confederate objective throughout the war. Dan Toomey will explore this “First Front” idea based on his book, *The War Came by Train: The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad During the Civil War*.



Bethlehem Steel interior, no date,
from William Lynch Collection.
HSBC Collections P004815.01

HSBC GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

HSBC is pleased to offer a new gift subscription available individually or for groups. The \$10 subscription includes:

- A one-year subscription to our public history journal, *History Trails*, delivered by post
- A one-year subscription to our newsletter delivered via email
- One free admission to either our research center or a Sunday Speakers Series event (normally a \$5 value)

Purchasers will receive a professionally designed certificate to present to the gift recipient. For more information, please contact HSBC at info@hsobc.org or call us at 410-666-1878.

YOU MAY HAVE MISSED...

AN EVENING OF CHEER AT SILO HILL

On Saturday, December 10, approximately 150 guests enjoyed music and holiday cheer at the barn at Silo Hill, Sotir Farm, in Phoenix. Although it was a chilly night, hearts and spirits were warmed by performances by the Gilman Travelling Men from the Gilman School, vocalist Carolyn Black-Sotir (our host with her husband Michael Sotir), and the Towson University Festival Singers, as well as the large fireplace in the barn. Guests were also treated to a demonstration of the amazing capabilities of the Spirio, Steinway & Son's state-of-the-art

player piano, which was shown off by pianist Dr. Matthew Bachman. Gourmet hors d'oeuvres and desserts with wine and craft beer rounded out the delightful evening. All proceeds will support HSBC's collections and programs.



Photo by Jim Long



Photo by Robert Levine

SUNDAY SPEAKER SERIES: UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Speaker: Scott Mingus, Sr.

The parking lot at HSBC was overflowing on Sunday, January 22, due to visitors and members who came to see Scott Mingus,



Photo by Robert Levine

Sr. present his research on the Underground Railroad. His lecture and PowerPoint presentation began with the start of slavery in Maryland and Pennsylvania in the 1600's and how economic and social factors led to conflicting slavery laws in those states. He showed how these conflicts resulted in national fugitive slave acts and the eventual sparks for the Civil War. In a very detailed account of how the Underground Railroad developed in York County, we were shown human stories, conflicts, heroism, and the freedom routes that ran from Maryland to Pennsylvania with a hub centered around York. Mingus's talk is based on his book, *The Ground Swallowed Them Up: Slavery and the Underground Railroad in York County, Pa.* (York County History Center, 2016). The lecture was fol-

lowed by a book signing and sales. All proceeds from book sales will go to the preservation of buildings and places related to the Underground Railroad that are in danger.



*Pat Routson presenting gift to
Scott Mingus on behalf of HSBC.
Photo by Jim Long*



Pat Routson giving a tour of the Almshouse to a group from Senior Box Office. Photo by Jim Long

SENIOR BOX OFFICE EVENT

On Sunday, January 22, HSBC was delighted to welcome a group from Senior Box Office for a special tour-and-talk program. The group took a guided, hour-long tour of the Almshouse with docent Pat Routson and, after a break with refreshments, attended Scott Mingus's talk on the Underground Railroad. Senior Box Office was formed to entertain, inform,

and enrich the lives of seniors age 60 and older. It started 30 years ago when cultural and entertainment organizations began offering the Baltimore County Department of Aging last-minute complimentary tickets. Eventually the volume became overwhelming, so with the help of five volunteers, Senior Box Office was formed and now offers a wide range of programs and events. HSBC is working with Senior Box Office to plan more such events in the future.

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Volunteer Appreciation Holiday Party

HSBC held a Volunteer Appreciation Holiday Party on Sunday, December 11, to celebrate our hard-working volunteers and board members. A sprawling spread of snack and treats and a white elephant gift exchange were featured. Board president Tom Graf gave a small gift and appreciation certificate to every volunteer. Tom also awarded special plaques to the following people: Bud Cornell, for his long and continued service on the board and in the Library Research Center; Phyllis Bailey, for her past service as president and long service as a board member; Pat Routson, for her initiation and running of the popular Sunday Speakers Series and service as a Legacy Bus Tour leader; and Charlie Clifton, for his service in the Library Research Center and for arranging for the financial support of his former employer. Cheers to Bud, Phyllis, Pat, Charlie and all of our volunteers for all you do for HSBC!



Tasty food for the volunteers



Tom Graf presenting award to Pat Routson. Photo by Robert Levine



Tom Graf presenting award to Charlie Clifton. Photo by Robert Levine



Tom Graf presenting award to Bud Cornell. Photo by Robert Levine



Tom Graf presenting award to Phyllis Bailey. Photo by Robert Levine

JUST FOR FUN

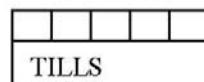
Try your luck with this jumble. Answers on page 6.

JUMBLE

Prior to the Emancipation Proclamation, Maryland played its part in the fight for freedom. Many risked all in order to provide compassion, charity, and humanity to those whom Justice ignored.

Unscramble these jumbles- one letter to each square to unravel the names of a few we have chosen from the meritorious many. (One you may recognize from a previous Jumble)

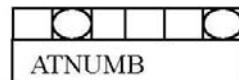
Clue #1- From his home in Philadelphia, he helped hundreds to achieve
 Escape from those indignities that evil had conceived
 He later published these accounts which helped to bring to light
 The whereabouts of young and old, helping families reunite



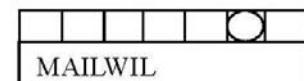
Clue #2 -“The people, they must rise up and retrieve the mighty sword
 From injustice which has barred them from their mandated reward”
 Said the man who tried and died to end those days of sad discord
 His name lives on and on



Clue #3- Some – they called me Moses for the hundreds that I saved
 After gaining my own freedom from the life of one enslaved
 Yet going back for others, Lord, dry these tears of mine
 That I weep for untold millions for whom freedom left behind



Clue #4- I was born a slave in Maryland, though later was I freed
 And as a builder of fine railway cars in life did I succeed
 Though my genius and my daring was my path to Heaven paved
 Through my hiding and transporting of so many poor enslaved



Now arrange the circled letters plus two bonus letters (U, D) to form answer suggested by the final clue. Final Clue:

The wheels they keep on turnin', keep them turnin' Lord
 Turnin' day 'n' night until they reach Thy freedom's shore
 Straight and true along these tracks Thy mercy shall endure
 Deliver safe this cargo, Lord, and turn around for more



Jumble by Allen Hendrickson

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH (CON'T)

Historic Preservation Planner Teri Rising has written about local sites, including the Lutherville Colored School House, the Worthington Slave Barracks in Granite and others. You can find her article at: www.baltimorecountymd.gov/news/baltimorecountynow/Discover_Baltimore_Countys_African_American_historic_sites.

You may be familiar with the National History Day program that encourages student historians. But did you know that some Baltimore County students in grades four to eight are digging deep into African American history through the Black Saga competition? Black Saga is a statewide program in which students meet after school and study more than 700 questions about African American history from the early 1600s to the present. Small teams compete at the local level and winners move on to a state contest at the University of Maryland, College Park. The questions these young historians are studying are quite challenging and reflect the latest scholarly trends in the field.

Finally, we at HSBC are proud to offer a range of resources on African American history in our library and archives and in our programs, throughout the year. We have a particular gem for those interested in African American history and especially genealogy, the William S. Adams Collection. Mr. Adams did extensive research on several African American communities in Baltimore County and also prepared his own census of African American residents, using the U.S. census, for the decades from 1860 to 1940. We have his unpublished manuscripts and other papers. As for programs, our most recent Sunday Speakers event was a lively and informative presentation on the Underground Railroad by author Scott Mingus, Sr. (see “You May Have Missed...” for more details). If you are interested in learning more about these or other resources, please drop by during our public hours or contact us at 410-666-1878 or info@hsobc.org. —Kathleen Barry

Sources: Library of Congress, “February is African American History Month,” www.africanamericanhistorymonth.gov/about.html; Black Saga website, www.blacksaganews.com.

HSBC APPRECIATES OUR SPONSORS

We are grateful to the many sponsors of our fundraiser “An Evening of Holiday Cheer at Silo Hill” on December 10, and we were pleased to be able to list them all on the cover of our last newsletter—except one, whose sponsorship came in after we went to print. So we offer a belated but big thanks to **Husky Heating Oil** for becoming our final Bronze (\$100) sponsor. And thanks again to all our sponsors and attendees for making the event a big success.

<p>#1. WILLIAM STILL (1821-1902) was an abolitionist from Philadelphia. Considered by many as the Father of the Underground Railroad, Still was chairman of the Vigilance Committee of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, creating many of the secret signs, language and terms for the Underground Railroad, and helped lead hundreds to freedom, keeping correspondence with many throughout the Civil War. His correspondence and meticulous records helped hundreds of scattered family members reunite.</p>
<p>#2. JOHN BROWN (1800-1859) was considered by many a martyr and one of the first great abolitionists to give his life for the cause. The song, John Brown's Body, written about him soon became the abolitionist anthem. The tune was borrowed by Julia Ward Howe for a poem she wrote, and published in 1862. That song became known as The Battle Hymn of the Republic and was – and continues to be – one of the most beloved patriotic songs of America.</p>
<p>#3. HARRIET TUBMAN (1820?-1913) was born a slave in Dorchester County, Maryland, but escaped to freedom when she was 25.</p>
<p>#4. WILLIAM GOODRIDGE (born 1805) was born into slavery but given his freedom at 16. He became a property owner and developer, and began the Reliance Line of railcars. He soon became prominent in the Underground Railroad, with his properties serving as stations. Freedom seekers were often hidden in his railcars and transported to freedom.</p>

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

HSBC extends a warm welcome to the following new members who joined under our new 2017 Membership Options:

Barbara Costello

Steven & Tenby Ihde

Betty Dickinson

Louisa Lavelle & Eleanore Hofstetter

Ed Ellis

Dr. Michael L. Levin

Maura Godinez

Michael Merrill

Melinda Hawkins

Patrick Riley

Francis Holland

Teri Vetter

And to all our current members renewing for 2017, thank you!

HSBC & THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY: “WE ARE MARYLAND”

As we announced in the last newsletter, we have entered into a joint membership program where HSBC members can join or renew with HSBC and at the same time join or renew with the Maryland Historical Society at a discount of \$15. We are delighted to offer this discounted membership package and hope many of you will take advantage of it.

If you don't know much about the Maryland Historical Society, this spring is a great time to pay them a visit—for free. MdHS is about to begin its “We Are Maryland” Program, reaching out to all of Maryland's counties and residents from March through June of 2017. Each month, MdHS has designated a region of several counties to highlight. That month, Marylanders from those counties can enjoy free weekend admission and see a special display of objects from their region to illuminate its role in shaping the state's history. Discounted memberships will also be offered as well as a free genealogy workshop. To learn more, please visit www.mdhs.org/WeAreMD.

Central Maryland, including Baltimore, Harford, Howard, and Montgomery Counties, will be featured in March. Throughout March, Baltimore County residents can avail themselves of the free weekend admission and other offers and, on Saturday, March 18, attend the genealogy workshop. The workshop will take place in the Society's H. Furlong Baldwin Library starting at 9 am. Experienced staff will provide an approximately 45-minute presentation on the resources housed in the MdHS library and how researchers can use them. After the presentation, participants are invited to stay and dive in to family research or related topics. If you come to the workshop, please stop by the HSBC table that will be in the lobby and say hello.

NEW GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE FOR GIVING A YEAR'S MEMBERSHIP IN HSBC TO THE HISTORY LOVERS YOU KNOW

Our new graphic design team* has come up with an eye-catching certificate to present a year's membership in HSBC as a gift. Please consider giving your friends and family who care about history a gift that keeps giving all year—an HSBC membership! For more information, please contact HSBC at info@hsobc.org or call us at 410-666-1878. *Our thanks especially to graphic designer and HSBC board member Sarah Koch of SK Creative Solutions for her work on this.



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PRESENT AND FUTURE

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Allen Hendrickson,
Just for Fun

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Research Library Hours:

Fridays - noon to 4 p.m.

Saturdays - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

To ensure uninterrupted delivery of HSBC mailings, please let us know of address changes.



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