With the end of another school year approaching, we at HSBC have education history very much in mind. We were delighted to publish a new issue of History Trails in March on the history of Baltimore County’s schools, co-authored by County Historian Teri Dorsey Rising and HSBC volunteer Ann Royston Blouse. The issue traces the changing ideals, concerns, and architectural styles that together shaped school facilities from the 1800s to recent times.

We were also pleased to co-sponsor, with the Education Foundation of Baltimore County Public Schools, a special schools history event held on May 7th. The panel of speakers featured Dr. Robert Dubel, retired BCPS Superintendent and HSBC Honorary Board member; Dr. S. Dallas Dance, the current but soon departing BCPS Superintendent; and E. Farrell Maddox, retired BCPS educator and author of Building the Future, a commemorative history of the Baltimore County public school system. BCPS teacher Sean McComb, who was National Teacher of the Year in 2014, served as master of ceremonies. Mr. Maddox did a good deal of his research for Building the Future in HSBC’s collections. Proceeds from sales of the book fund scholarships and school programs for BCPS students. Held at the Sheraton North Baltimore in Towson to accommodate a larger crowd, the event proved a memorable occasion filled with anecdotes and historical reflections on the history of our schools, as well as thoughts about the present and future of BCPS.

The last months of the school year also bring the local, state, and national rounds of the National History Day competition. For those who are not familiar with History Day, it is a science fair-style competition for middle and high school students who prepare papers, exhibits, performances, documentary films, or websites, as individuals or small groups. We want to congratulate all Baltimore County students who participated and to acknowledge their hard work, as well as that of their teachers. Anyone who has ever judged or attended these competitions knows just how impressive these young historians’ projects can be. The students who participate in History Day are our future in the field of history, and we think they make the future look very bright.

—Kathleen Barry
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: June 1, July 6, August 3, 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.

Sunday, June 11, 2017, 1:00-4:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters

HSBC ANNUAL MEETING (1:00-2:00pm), for members only, with refreshments to follow

Members will receive a separate mailing on board elections in the coming weeks.

LANDSDOWNE (2:00-4:00pm, $5.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Speaker: James Klima and Dan Cosgrove

If you want to preserve the history of your church, organization or community, Mr. Klima and Mr. Cosgrove will teach you how to do it with pictures, videos and other digital media. They will be using Lansdowne as an example, showing the videos they used to tell the story of Lansdowne.

Sunday, July 9, 2017, 2:00-4:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS ($5.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Speaker: Jerry Kahan

For God, for gold, for spices. These dreams motivated the man we call Christopher Columbus to sail across the Atlantic Ocean four times. In search of a sea route to Asia, he discovered a New World - a discovery far more important. Five hundred years have now passed and still the details of his story are as varied and unclear as ever. Join us to learn more about the historical and cultural significance of these voyages.

Sunday, August 13th, 2017, 2:00-4:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters

MA & PA RAILROAD ($5.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Speaker: Rudy Fischer

Mr. Fischer will take us on a virtual ride (via slides) along the path of the old Maryland and Pennsylvania (Ma & Pa) Railroad through Baltimore County.

Sunday, September 10th, 2017, 2:00-4:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters

Greetings from Gettysburg ($5.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Speakers: David R. Craig and Mary L. Martin

The Battle of Gettysburg was fought from July 1 - 3, 1863, with over 51,000 American casualties, making this battle the single-most costly conflict fought on U.S. soil. The Gettysburg National Military Park is arguably the most famous and most visited of Civil War battlefield sites. Mr. Craig and Ms. Martin’s book, Greetings from Gettysburg, is as much about visitors to Gettysburg as it is about the soldiers and the battle itself. The authors will discuss how the book, featuring historic postcards and quotations, offers a unique visitor’s guide to Gettysburg battlefields and vicinity. Greetings from Gettysburg will be available for purchase (cash or checks only) and signing after the talk.
YOU MAY HAVE MISSED...

B&O RAILROAD DURING THE CIVIL WAR

**Speaker: Dan Toomey - March 12**

A capacity crowd enjoyed Dan Toomey’s illustrated presentation on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad’s vital role in the early months of the Civil War. Drawing on research from his book, *The War Came by Train: The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad During the Civil War* (2013), Mr. Toomey highlighted the many ways in which the B&O—as transporter of troops and, perhaps even more important, coal and as a vital link between the North and Washington D.C.—was the critical line in the first major conflict of the railroad age.

MARYLAND VOICES OF THE CIVIL WAR: UNDERSTANDING THE CIVILIAN EXPERIENCE

**Speaker: Charles Mitchell - April 2**

*Co-sponsored with the Preservation Alliance of Baltimore County*

HSBC was happy to partner with the Preservation Alliance for a presentation by author Charles Mitchell on his research on Marylanders’ experience of the Civil War. Highlighting events like the Baltimore Riot of April 1861, Mr. Mitchell offered a panoramic view of how civilians and soldiers lived through wartime in a deeply divided border area. The talk inspired many lively contributions from the audience, which included some Civil War experts.

ANOTHER SUNDAY

**Speaker: Cynthia Strauff - April 23, 2017**

In her engaging presentation, novelist Cynthia Strauff walked us through the many joys and challenges of researching and writing a historical novel that gets the historical details right. Ms. Strauff talked about her research and creative process for *Another Sunday*, her novel from 2015 about a Baltimore woman’s journey through the 20th century, and her just-released second book, *Echoes from the Alum Chine*, which follows the reverberations for a group of families of the explosion of the steamer Alum Chine in Baltimore harbor on March 7, 1913.

SENIOR BOX RETURNS FOR TALK-AND-TOUR

On Sunday, March 12, HSBC was delighted to welcome another group from Senior Box Office for a special tour-and-talk program. The group took an hour-long tour of the Almshouse with docent Pat Routson and, after refreshments, attended Dan Toomey’s talk on the B&O Railroad in the Civil War. Senior Box Office was formed to entertain, inform, and enrich the lives of seniors age 60 and older. HSBC is looking forward to working with Senior Box Office to plan more events in the future.
LUTHERVILLE COLORED SCHOOL #24

By Martha Hendrickson

Lutherville Colored School #24 has the distinction of being the only surviving building in Baltimore County that was built as a public primary school for the sole purpose of educating African American students (a “colored” school in the historical sense). It was built in approximately 1908. It is located on 1426 School Lane in Lutherville. Public schools were not integrated until 1954.

Lutherville was started in 1852 as a planned community around the Lutherville Female Seminary. It was built on land purchased from the Ridgley Estate associated with Hampton Mansion. Lutherville was also a summer community for prominent citizens wanting to escape the city heat and public schools were slow to get started. The area was surrounded by farms.

Early public schools in Baltimore County were located wherever there was space, including in churches, houses and public buildings. The county and state struggled for years to adequately fund schools, which were usually paid for by organizations and individuals. Authority was finally granted to use taxes for schools in 1848, but an effort to standardize buildings and classes was not effective for many years.

Following the civil war (1872), state law in Maryland required that black students be educated and also specified separate but equal. With the struggle for funding for schools in general, the arrangement was that counties would provide funds for teachers, but space for schools would be provided by parents or school boards on donated property. Money for schools depended on the wealth of the community.

In the Lutherville area, the first African American school was started in 1880 for grades 1-7 in a room in the Colored Odd Fellows’ Hall located on Bellona Avenue. The building of the hall was most likely started in 1876, as indicated by the following newspaper listing: “LAYING OF A CORNER STONE — The Towsontown and Lutherville Midlanite Societies, colored, participated, on Monday last, in the exercise of laying the corner stone of an Odd Fellows’ Hall for the colored people at Lutherville.” —Maryland Journal, June 10, 1876.

A room in the hall was rented by the Baltimore County School Commissioner, who paid $2.00 a month for the space. In 1881 (the year of the first graduating class) there were approximately 31 students enrolled. The Odd Fellows’ Hall no longer exists, but estimating from a comparison of current and old maps and land records, it is likely to have been on what is now an empty lot between 1419 Bellona Ave (built 1886) and the current Orchard Hills Community Park basketball court.

The first public school building in Lutherville constructed for whites was on Bellona Avenue (then County Road), north of Seminary, in about 1887 or 1889. The building survives today and is now a house at 1508 Bellona Ave. (BA-291). It was a simple one-level structure on a standardized plan most likely devised by architects Dixon and Dixon for the county school building program.

In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Plessy v. Ferguson upheld the legality of states’ segregation laws nationwide as long as facilities were “separate but equal.” There was an increase in general population and
the county started on a building program to build new but modest school buildings.

In about 1901, the white public school was moved into a larger two-story building constructed for this purpose on Melanchthon and Division Streets (BA-309). It survives today as an apartment building.

In about 1908, Lutherville Colored School #24 (District 8) was built. The Supreme Court’s “separate but equal” requirements may have prompted the construction of new school buildings for African Americans. Within each district, when schools were given a number in the 20’s, it indicated that it was a colored school.

The close-knit African American Community in Lutherville was settled in several areas known as “up the hill” (Bellona Avenue and Lincoln Avenue near Edgewood Church), “down the hill” (Railroad Avenue) and “cross the tracks” (Seminary Avenue and School Lane). One third acre of land was bought for $300 from Ellen B. Corkran and her husband in 1907 in the area “cross the tracks” on a road (later named School Lane) that intersected Seminary Avenue. The simple structure that was built was made of good materials and originally held one classroom, later expanded to two classrooms, and a coat closet. The sanitation facilities were outhouses about 100 feet from the building. According to William Adams, who attended the school during the Depression and the war years of WWII, there was one room for the 1st through 3rd grades and another for 4th through 7th. Since it was the only African American school for miles around, pupils came from as far away as Beaver Dam, Cockeysville, Bare Hills, Texas, Ruxton and Lake Roland. The rooms were heated by a potbellied stove. Two teachers, with one serving as principal, were in charge of the students. If students wanted to advance beyond 7th grade, they had to travel to an African American high school in the city, Douglass or Dunbar High. In 1939, Carver High School (BA-1075) was built as the county’s first African American high school in Towson and primary students could advance to that school. The original Carver High School building is at 300 Lennox Avenue in East Towson and now serves as a community center.

Segregation in schools was struck down as unconstitutional in 1954, and integration in the Lutherville Schools started immediately. The Lutherville Colored School #24 was abandoned after 1955 and used for storage by the county. The building was bought by Helen and Arthur Chapman, cousins of former pupil Marie Jackson, and turned into a museum. The Lutherville Colored School holds many memories for those who attended as part of a close-knit community with the experience of being educated in a two-room school. The Lutherville Colored School #24 is an important part of African American history and Baltimore County History.

To learn more about the history of Lutherville Colored School #24, including enrollment, interviews with students who attended and information about the historic African American Community in Lutherville, visit our research library to see the Adams Collection.

Notes:
(2) 1881 Lutherville Student school roll, William S. Adams Collection, Historical Society of Baltimore County.

Additional Sources:
VOLUNTEER CORNER

Interested in helping our youth understand and appreciate our County’s history?

Volunteers are needed to help shape new HSBC education programs. Join us in creating educational outreach programs to help the Scouts and students of Baltimore County learn our county’s agricultural, cultural, community, industrial and other history, and how to conduct age-appropriate research into local and/or family history. Candidates should have some teaching as well as computer experience, be able to meet regularly with HSBC staff or board representatives in shaping these programs, and be able to recruit and train additional educational volunteers. If interested, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Jim Long at jameslong@hsobc.org or by phone 410-666-1878.

SUNDAY PROGRAMS SPONSORSHIPS

Do you have a business or service you would like to advertise?

Do you want to reach an audience that is committed to Baltimore County and appreciates its history? Then please consider sponsoring the refreshments at one of our Sunday talks. Our Sunday Speakers series has been drawing growing audiences – approaching standing room only – and generating enthusiastic responses. Sponsorships start at $75 and are a great way to show your support for HSBC while reaching potential patrons of your business. HSBC staff names and thanks the sponsor during introductory remarks. We place a placard (8”x11”) next to the refreshments to acknowledge the sponsorship, with the business’s logo included and business cards or brochures made available if desired. Please contact us at info@hosbc.org or 410-666-1878 to learn more.

WHAT IS IT? ANSWER

If you guessed chicken catcher, you are correct!

Chickens that roamed around the farm would fly into trees or rafters to roost, especially at night. If you wanted fresh chicken for dinner, you could easily reach up with the chicken catcher, hook the chicken’s leg in the crook of the wire hook and put the chicken in a sack or crate until you made them ready for the table.
COLLECTIONS CORNER

You may have noticed how roadside produce stands are rare now, but they used to be a more common fixture on County roads. One such produce source was the Foster Farm, which sold mushrooms and other products directly to the public. We recently received a donation of ledger books from the former Foster Brothers Farm. The farm was located on Bonita Ave., Glyndon. The set consists of 14 accounts books and 15 time books. Noted in the accounts books from 1940 through 1997 were a variety of products produced on the farm: asparagus, mushrooms, manure, fence, wood, mulch, fish, honey, spinach, alfalfa sprouts, herbs, tomatoes, beans, shitake, and eggs. The time books listed the names and pay for workers beginning in 1933 and ending in 1988. A few generic descriptions suggest the changing demographics of farm laborers. A sample includes: 7/16/1942 “Bean pickers” $395.28, 8/26/1943 “French Men” @11.25 $112.50. Noted without amounts paid were “High School Children” 4/28/1944, “School Children” 5/12/1944, “School Boys” 5/26/1944 and “Jamaicans” 6/23/1944.

The processing of this collection is expected to be completed by summer.

GIFTS FOR HISTORY LOVERS

Tired of giving the same old gift cards? How about an eye-catching certificate for a year’s membership in HSBC, or a subscription to History Trails? Please consider giving your friends and family who care about history a gift that keeps giving. Additional details at www.hsobc.org/membership. For more information or to purchase, please contact us at info@hsobc.org or 410-666-1878.