

The images above: on left, Eliza Dawkins Gross Reynolds with two of her daughters (photo courtesy Lillian Gordon Ross, Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum photo collection); People on steamboat wharf with tobacco hogsheads, courtesy Special Collections Department, University of Maryland Libraries; bottom center, the James T. Gray House, photo by K. Uunila, courtesy JPPM; lower right, Elizabeth Dare Parran grave stone, St. Edmond's UMC cemetery, photo by K. Uunila, courtesy Planning and Zoning

Notes by Kirsti Uunila, RPA, Historic Preservation Planner, Calvert County Department of Planning and Zoning, Prince Frederick, Maryland.

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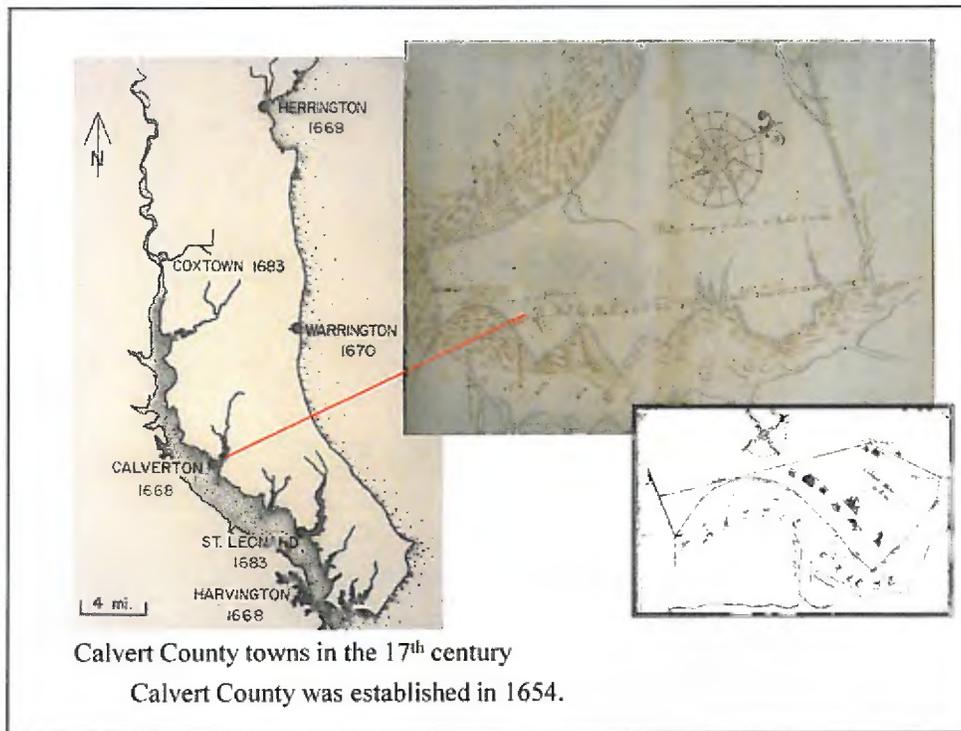
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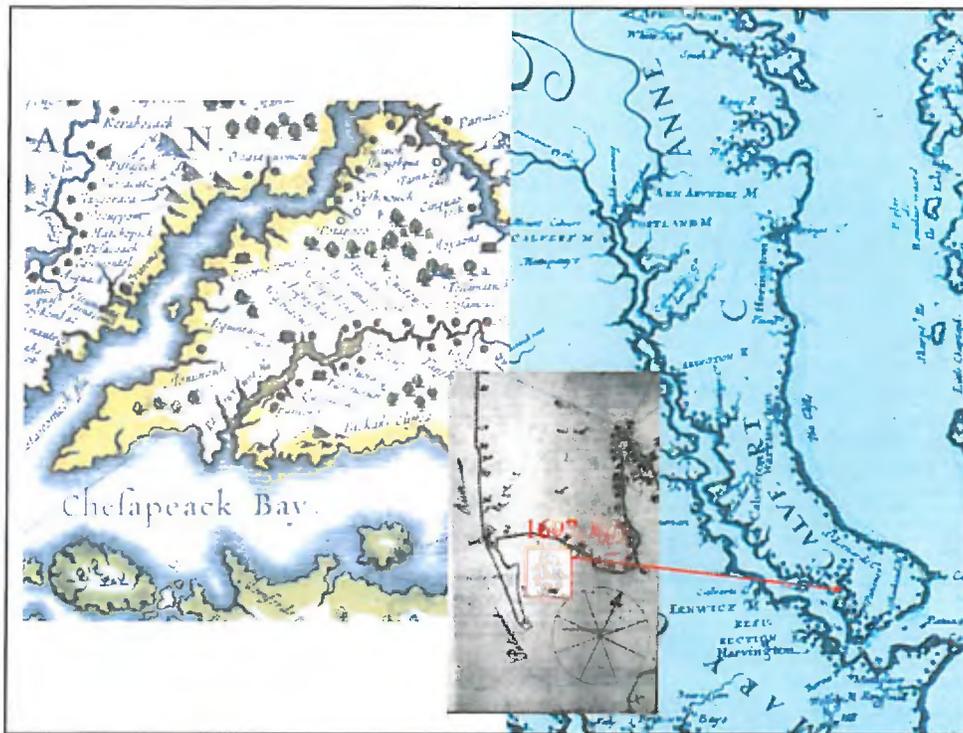
Review of early Southern Maryland history in one minute or less:

The Maryland colony was founded in 1634. The portrait on the left shows Cecilius Calvert, Lord Baltimore, with a young, presumably African servant in the shadows behind him. People of color were reported on the first ship that sailed to settle the colony: Mathias de Sousa sailed on the Ark in 1634. De Sousa was an indentured servant of the Jesuits, (Father Andrew White, de Sousa's Jesuit "master" is circled in red in the Mayer painting) and served a period of four years, before he was freed. He voted in the legislative body after that. De Sousa is an ambiguous historical character in that his identity, other than his name and social status, is unknown. His name is Portuguese, he may have been African by birth.

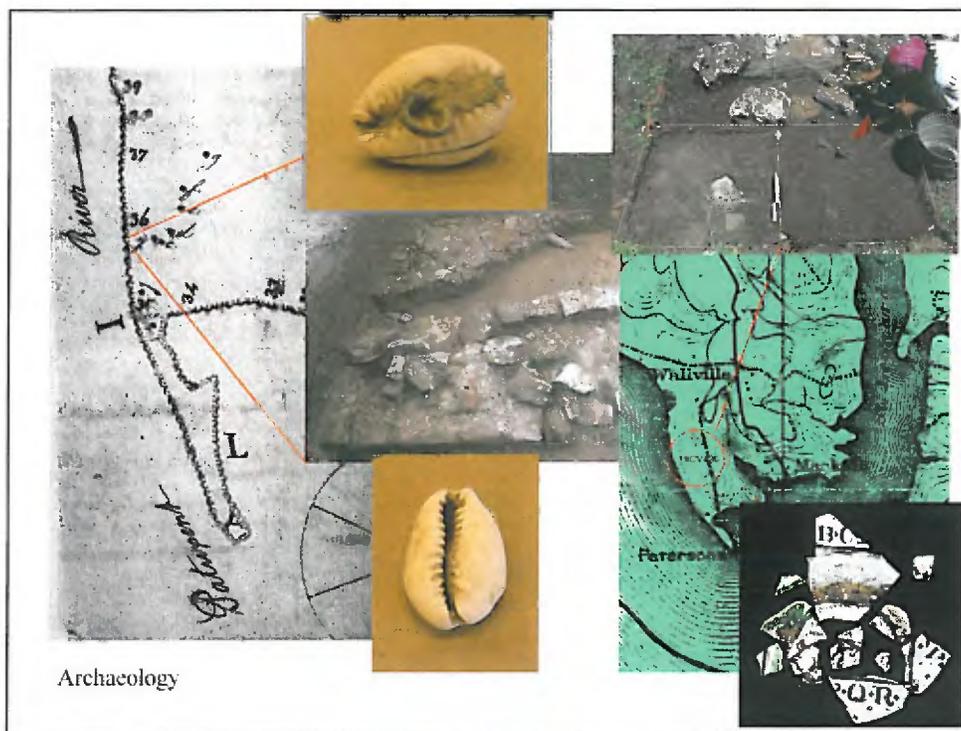
The first people described as slaves arrived in 1644, according to Roland McConnell in 350 years, a Chronology of the Afro-Americans in Maryland.



Calvert County was established in 1654. The first county seat was called Calverton, sometimes Battle Town, and was located on the north shore of Battle Creek near where it flows into the Patuxent River. The image on the upper right shows a survey of the William Berry Plantation made by Robert Jones in 1683, including the portion of the plantation carved out for Calverton. The inset below shows the town of Calverton. The business of the county was transacted here until Prince Frederick was named the County seat in 1724.



The Europeans moved onto lands that had been occupied by Native peoples. The map drawn by John Smith early in the 17th century shows Indian settlements along the rivers and the bay. The map on the right, drawn decades later by Bohemian mapmaker Augustine Hermann, shows that the settlements have been replaced by tobacco farms, or plantations, most of which depended upon bound labor. By the end of the 17th century, enslavement for life was the expectation for African people brought to the Maryland Colony. The first slave ship documented in Calvert County was the Ffly, recorded in St Leonard Creek in 1697. We may certainly assume that there were others earlier than that. We conjecture an association of the Ffly with Capt Richard Smith, whose property is associated with the plat in the center of the screen. Capt. Richard Smith, who built here on his father's plantation in 1711, was a merchant, a legal representative of the Royal African Company (English slave traders), a captain in the Calvert County militia, and a founding member of the vestry of Christ Church. Evidence of African people have been found at the site of his plantation.

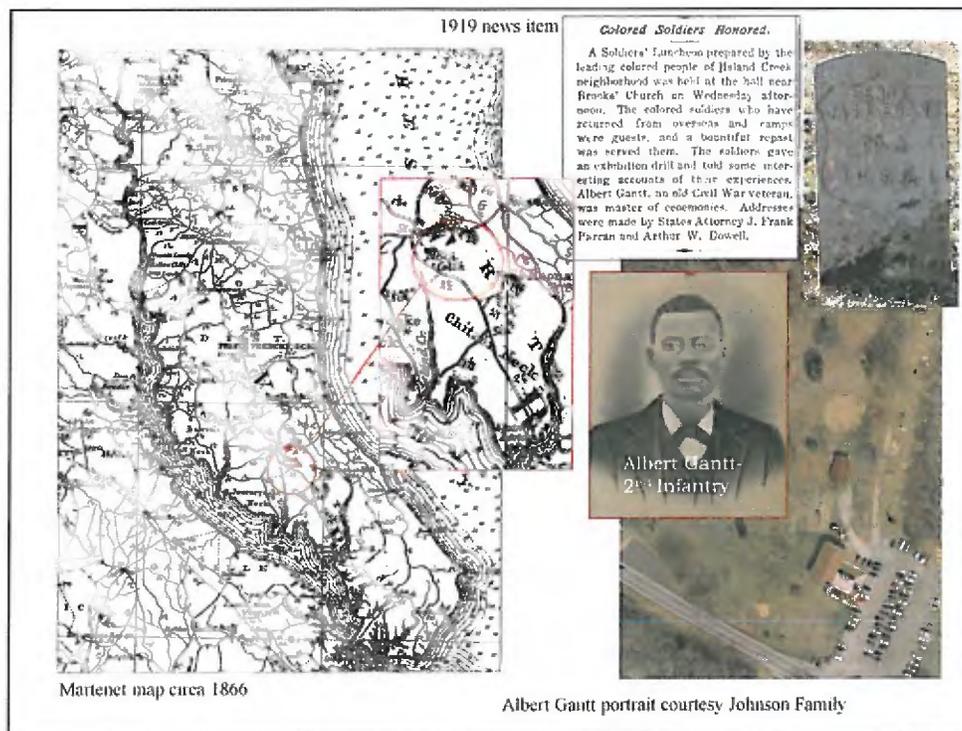


Archaeology

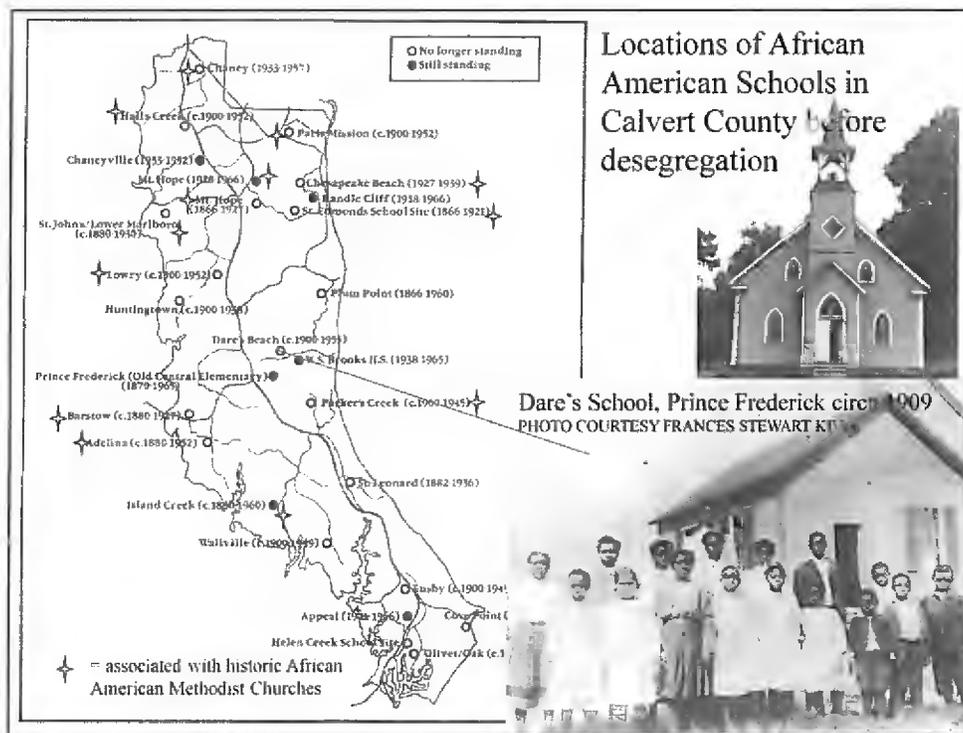
Archaeology is an important tool in researching African American sites, in part because the documentary record in Calvert County is so sparse, narrow, or non-existent. It is also important because it may be used to challenge written histories and common assumptions about the past. Recent evidence uncovered at the Smith's St. Leonard Site, the 18th century home of Richard Smith, is intriguing. Cowry shells are strongly associated with people arriving directly from Africa—the shell on the top is filled with lead and affixed with a loop so that it might have been worn as a pendant. It was found not far from an area where someone was melting lead to make shot.

After the end of slavery, some families made their first homes as free people on the land where they'd formerly been enslaved—though on different parts of it. Archaeology on one of these late 19th century home sites, Sukeek's Cabin Site, showed evidence of home schooling: slate pencil and writing slate fragments, and an alphabet plate, for example. The site was occupied during a period when Calvert County did not support the public education of African Americans.

Both of these sites are located at Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum and have been excavated during Public Archaeology Sessions at the park. For more information, go to www.jefpat.org and click on 'Archaeology'



Education is a useful thread to illustrate the self-determination of African Americans in the 19th century. As we will see shortly, churches became the community centers for African Americans and served as schools and more. By the end of the Civil War, the landscape in Calvert County was formally segregated, as indicated on the Martenet map. Note the circled area on the inset: 'MECh' stands for 'Methodist Episcopal Church' and 'ColCh' stands for 'Colored Church'. These were both Methodist churches, which had participated in the same episcopal administration until the eve of the Emancipation Proclamation, when the Washington Conference (African American) of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed and the African American Methodists thus had self-determination in the region. Many members of the congregation enlisted to serve in the US Colored Troops in the Civil War, and returned to build up their community. They were laid to rest in Brooks United Methodist Church Cemetery. The African American church was the primary public arena where African Americans could exercise full civic responsibility and privilege. The two churches, though the episcopal conferences (Baltimore and Washington) have been reunited since the 1960s, are still separate.



The early schools were established by the communities themselves, usually utilizing church buildings. When the county was forced to extend public education to African American children, the Board of Ed purchased the community school buildings and incorporated them into the public school system. The schools were typically one-room structures and grades 1 through 7 were instructed together in the same room—the older students would assist the younger ones. Teachers played all roles in the schools from instructor to administrator to custodian. The teachers were also advocates for the children, making do with little—the schools were equipped with castoffs from the white schools. The teachers were also resourceful and some were activists.

For more information, see *Persistence, Perseverance and Progress: History of African American Schools in Calvert County, Maryland, 1865-1965* by Richlyn F. Goddard, Calvert County Government, 1996. Also, later in 2007, you will be able to visit the Old Wallville School in Prince Frederick.

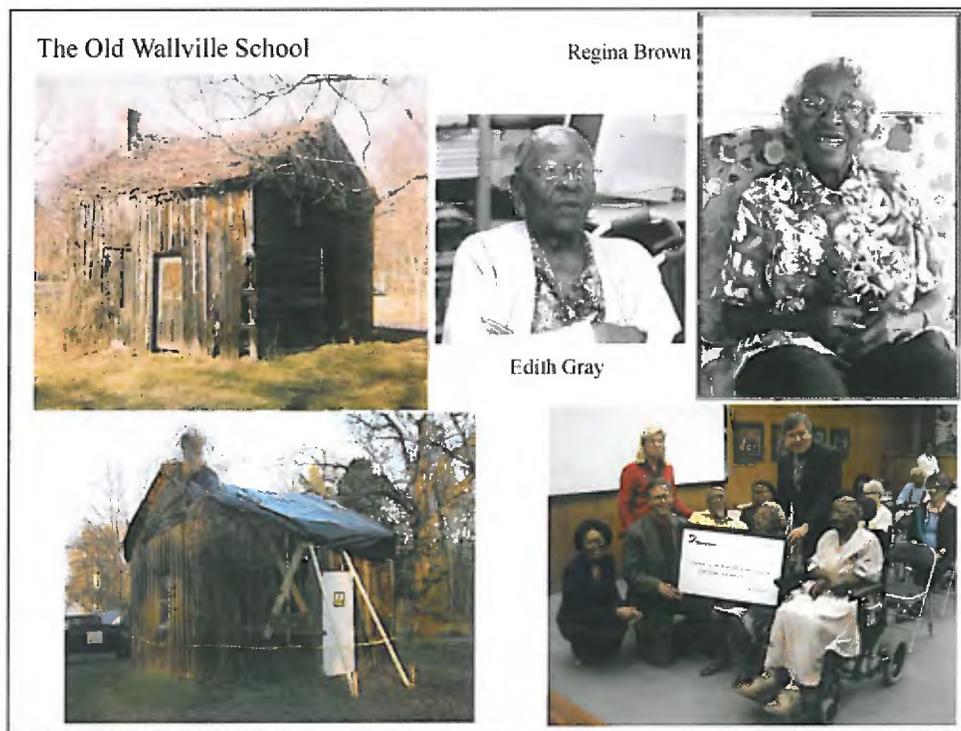


H. Elizabeth Brown successfully sued the Calvert County Board of Education for equal pay for African American teachers in 1937. Salaries were equalized across the state as a result. The case was cited across the nation. Thurgood Marshall was Miss Brown's attorney for this landmark case.

- Courtesy Calvert County Planning and Zoning

<p>NATIONAL OFFICES J. E. Thompson 69 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK 10011 (212) 512-1234 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VICE PRESIDENT SECRETARY TREASURER BOARD OF DIRECTORS</p>	<p>NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE 69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK (Telephone: ALexandria 4-3931) Official Organ: The Crisis</p> 	<p>EXECUTIVE OFFICERS PRESIDENT VICE PRESIDENT SECRETARY TREASURER BOARD OF DIRECTORS</p>
<p>November 1, 1937</p>		
<p>BOARD OF DIRECTORS AMERICA, N. E. ALABAMA ARIZONA CALIFORNIA CONNECTICUT DELAWARE FLORIDA GEORGIA ILLINOIS INDIANA IOWA KANSAS MARYLAND MASSACHUSETTS MICHIGAN MINNESOTA MISSISSIPPI MISSOURI MONTANA NEBRASKA NEVADA NEW YORK NORTH CAROLINA NORTH DAKOTA OHIO OKLAHOMA PENNSYLVANIA RHODE ISLAND SOUTH CAROLINA SOUTH DAKOTA TENNESSEE TEXAS VIRGINIA WASHINGTON WEST VIRGINIA WISCONSIN WYOMING</p>	<p>MISS Elizabeth Brown Mount Hope School Sunderland Maryland</p> <p>Dear Miss Brown:</p> <p>As expected, the Board of Education of Calvert County Feb. 3 our petition to equalize salaries on your behalf. We are now drawing a petition to cover the case to court. There are certain facts which must be made clear before we can file the case. Please let us know immediately your exact salaries for so many years back as you can remember and especially for this year. Let us have your annual salary and also your monthly salary. I must have this information by return mail, special delivery. You will find enclosed an addressed envelope.</p> <p>If everything can be expedited - fill up by your school no later than this date on Thursday afternoon so that you return over the petition before it is filed on Friday morning. Please do not tell anyone that this case is to be filed on Friday.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Thurgood Marshall National Association for the Advancement of Colored People</p>	<p>NATIONAL LEGAL COUNSELORS ALABAMA ARIZONA ARKANSAS CALIFORNIA CONNECTICUT DELAWARE FLORIDA GEORGIA ILLINOIS INDIANA IOWA KANSAS MARYLAND MASSACHUSETTS MICHIGAN MINNESOTA MISSISSIPPI MISSOURI MONTANA NEBRASKA NEVADA NEW YORK NORTH CAROLINA NORTH DAKOTA OHIO OKLAHOMA PENNSYLVANIA RHODE ISLAND SOUTH CAROLINA SOUTH DAKOTA TENNESSEE TEXAS VIRGINIA WASHINGTON WEST VIRGINIA WISCONSIN WYOMING</p>
<p>FINANCED BY THE NATIONAL INFORMATION BOARD, 110 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK Has Your Written Your Senators Urging Support of the Federal Anti-Speaking Bill?</p>		

Harriett Elizabeth Brown is shown here at the age of 97—(2004). Her historic effort earned her a place in the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame, among other honors. She has graciously made her story and documents available to researchers—the amazing letter shown here was produced for an exhibit and was scanned with her permission. A roadside marker honoring Miss Brown stands on MD Route 2 near the last school she served in Sunderland. Her story is a good subject for a History Fair project.



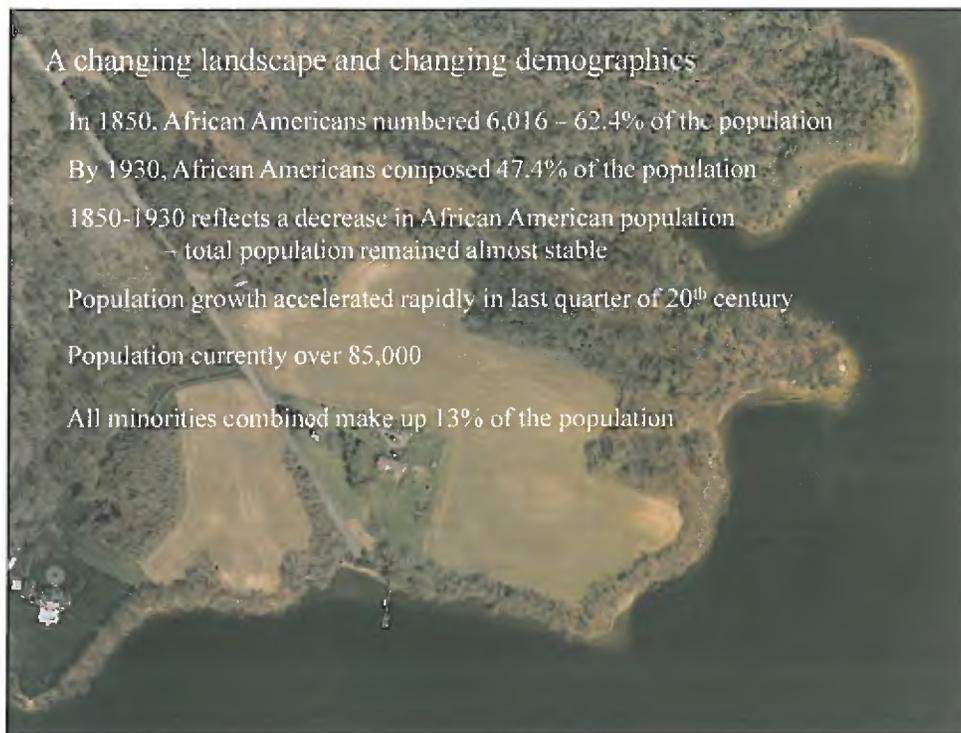
The Old Wallville School is the oldest known standing one room school for African American children in Calvert County. Until 2006, it sat on private property, where it had been since it stopped being a school in 1934. Miss Regina Brown, sister of H Elizabeth Brown, was the last principal/teacher to serve at the building. Edith Gray, pictured at 99 (deceased at age 100, in 2006), is the oldest surviving student who attended school there. She was instrumental in ensuring that the building survived these many years.

The Friends of the Old Wallville School is a nonprofit organization; the Friends applied for and used small grants to stabilize the building until funds could be raised to relocate and restore it. The MD legislature, under the sponsorship of Del. Sue Kullen, Sen. Roy Dyson and with support of Del. Tony O'Donnell, passed a bond bill in 2004. With a gift from Dominion Energy of \$10,000, the Friends met the match necessary to realize the dream to relocate the school and restore and interpret it for the public. Local churches gave generously to the project, also.

To learn more or to get involved, contact The Friends of the Old Wallville School, PO Box 3527, Prince Frederick MD 20678.



The Old Wallville School, indicated by the star, will allow the interpretation of the landscape in a new way: in 2006 it was re-located and reconstructed between what was to be the “new” African American High School before desegregation (it became Calvert Elementary) and what was the African American elementary school (now the Calvert Country Day School). It is across the road from the “old” African American High School (Brooks High School), which is now the Board of Education.



Modern landscapes reflect changes in uses—and in the ways people value different settings. Until the mid-20th century, this area on St. Leonard Creek supported tens of small African American landholdings where people lived by seasonal economies: working the water, farming tobacco and carpentry, for example. Now there are no African American landowners here. Much of the land in the photo on the screen has been preserved through agricultural preservation programs. The traces of earlier occupations can be seen only in a couple of historic buildings and a cemetery. The rest are archaeological sites.

Review of demographic facts: African American depopulation began after the Civil War, perhaps because greater economic opportunity was to be found outside the county in areas where industry offered jobs.

In-migration, movement into the county has been overwhelmingly white. Since population growth is rapid, Calvert is, in most places, no longer a face-to-face community. Hence the importance of understanding the rootedness of historic communities and offering that history to newcomers as a means to understand the place to which they have come and to learn about and identify with the people who have shaped it.



We are fortunate to have so many elders and others in our county who have kept the history alive so that we may nurture and share it with others before it is too late to learn from it. We must learn from it—some are hard lessons. Those are the ones we never want to have to repeat. All of them will, we believe, help us all to become the kind of caring communities we envision.

(Clockwise beginning with woman in red hat: Thelma Johnson; Harriett Elizabeth Brown; Mervin Parker and his mother, Annie Gross Parker; Regina Brown; Everard Johnson; Phillip Jones; Daniel Brown; Edith Gray in center)

Photo of Edith Gray by Megan Williams, all others by Kirsti Uunila. Photos courtesy Department of Planning and Zoning.

Did you know that there have been many oral history projects that have tapped the memories of African Americans in Calvert County? Some of those projects have resulted in books such as, *Working the Water: The Commercial Fisheries of Maryland's Patuxent River*; Edited by Paula J. Johnson, 1988; *The Money Crop*, Edited by Patricia McGuire and Sally McGrath, 1992; *The Money Crop: Calvert County After the Tobacco Buyout* by Anne Sundermann, 1995. The Calvert County Historical Society at 410-535-1452, the Calvert Marine Museum at 410-326-2042, and Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum are three locations where some of the taped interviews and transcripts may be found.