Some buildings and sites are also listed in the Maryland Historical Trust's Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP). Each MIHP-listed resource included in this brochure contains a corresponding MIHP number in the description. More information about each property may be found by entering its MIHP number or searching by name online at https://mhs.maryland.gov/digitallibrary.shtml.

Additional information about the Sykesville Colored Schoolhouse can be found at www.townofsykesville.org/2153/Historic-Colored-Schoolhouse.

To learn more about the African American experience in Carroll County, please visit www.carrollmediacenter.org/carroll-county-history-project/

For artifacts and information related to African American Heritage and Carroll County, please visit the Historical Society of Carroll County at 210 E. Main St., Westminster, MD 21157 or at www.hscmd.org.

PHOTO CREDITS
6, 7, 10, 12, 16, 17: MIHP
62: Henryton Museum/Photo Collection
63: Henryton Postcard: Carroll County Times
On the cover: schoolchildren Emerson, Maie, and Warren Dorrance stand in front of the Sykesville Colored Schoolhouse in 1927. Photograph courtesy Carroll County Times
Color photographs by Skelly and Loy, Inc. 2014

AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES

2. Yost Greenwood Farm
3. Pipe Creek Friends Meeting House
4. Bowen Chapel
5. East Uniontown
6. Mt. Joy Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery
7. Simon Murdock House
8. Strawbridge United Methodist Church
9. Fairview Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery
10. Elizabeth Lowry House
11. Thomas Jones Log House
12. Union Street District
13. Union Street Methodist Episcopal Church
14. Ellsworth Cemetery
15. Western Chapel and Cemetery
16. White Rock Church and Cemetery
17. Reuben and Laura Thomas House (Private residence, Eldersburg vicinity)
18. Sykesville Colored Schoolhouse
19. Robert Moton School
20. Henryton State Hospital

Ellsworth Cemetery, established in the mid-19th century, provided burial grounds for congregations without land for a cemetery and for burials unassociated with a local church, such as those in “Strangers Row,” a line of about 100 unmarked graves at the north end. The cemetery also includes many African American Civil War veterans, who could not be buried within the city limits. Nicholas Paroway, who died in 1876 at the age of 110, is among those interred. The Ellsworth Cemetery is located to the north and west of the building.

Western Chapel and Cemetery (Western Chapel Road, New Windsor vicinity)
MIHP: CARR-516 Condition: Demolished church) Related Site # 8

Western Chapel was established in 1866, and its church building was erected by 1873. Like the White Rock Church near Eldersburg, Western Chapel was founded by emancipated worshippers following the Civil War. The church burned down in the 1950s, but the outline of its foundation is still visible in the center of the cemetery. The cemetery contains the burials of Civil War veterans such as Francis J. Squillaci, who served in Company G of the United States Colored Troops 28th Regiment.

White Rock Church and Cemetery (White Rock Road, Eldersburg)
MIHP: CARR-1011 Condition: Altered Related Site # 17

The White Rock Church was organized as a Methodist Episcopal church in 1868 and had a strong mission of outreach to its local African American community. A log school building (demolished) was constructed before work started on the church, and in 1883, church members formed the White Rock Building Association No. 1 of Carroll County. Reuben and Laura Thomas, who had been married in 1898, purchased the land and constructed the current building in 1903. The church now functions as a museum and is open for tours and educational field trips.

Reuben and Laura Thomas House (Private residence, Eldersburg vicinity)
MIHP: CARR-616 Condition: Altered Related Site # 16

The Reuben and Laura Thomas House was constructed between 1894 and 1898 by the White Rock Building Association No. 1 of Carroll County. Organized through the White Rock Methodist Episcopal Church and incorporated in 1893, the association purchased land, constructed houses, and offered mortgages to the local African American community. Similar benevolent associations were formed in many communities to assist freed peoples to purchase residences and burial sites or provide for health, education, and general welfare. Reuben Thomas was a trustee of the church and the president of the building association from at least 1894 to 1919. Thomas lived in the house with his wife, Laura, and four of their children.

Sykesville Colored Schoolhouse (518 Schoolhouse Road, Sykesville)
MIHP: CARR-1481 Condition: Restored

The Sykesville Colored Schoolhouse was built in late 1903 for $530.50. By 1916, 32 students were enrolled there. The school operated until 1938, when Carroll County consolidated its African American schools. In 1939, the building was sold and converted into a residence. Since 2000, the schoolhouse has been restored and furnished to its 1904 appearance. The one-story frame building has an exposed fieldstone foundation and clapboard walls. Students and their families valued education: alumni recall walking for miles each day to get to school, where students used outhouses and drank from a shared dipper. The school now functions as a museum and is open for tours and educational field trips.

Robert Moton School (300 South Center Street, Westminster)
Condition: Altered

Three schools in Westminster have been named for Robert Moton, a leading African American educator at the Hampton Institute in Virginia and the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. The first, at the corner of Charles and Church streets, was constructed in 1930 to serve 60 high school students from across the county. The local community furnished the five classroom school, established a library, and organized a parent-teacher association. In 1948, a concrete block school with gymnasium (now the Art Gallery of Carroll County) was constructed at Charles and South Center streets. It served as the African American high school until schools were integrated in 1955. The school operated until 1976, when the third and current Robert Moton School was constructed on Washington Road, and is now home to the county health department.

Henryton State Hospital (Former Henryton Road, Marriottsville vicinity)
MIHP: CARR-1616 Condition: Demolished

Henryton State Hospital was founded in 1923 as the Colored Branch of the Maryland Tuberculosis Sanatorium. Tuberculosis, a leading cause of death in the early 20th century, was prevalent among African Americans due in part to poor living conditions. At the time, treatment relied on clean air, good food, and a healthful environment. On a south-facing hillside, the campus took advantage of the sun and western breezes. Two hospital wings with broad porches on each level flanked a central administration building, and the children’s hospital stood among cottages that housed doctors, nurses, ordniers, attendants, cooks, maids, and chauffeurs. The sanatorium operated until 1962, when medical advancements made the facility obsolete. All but one of the former buildings, a brick power house far from the complex, were demolished in 2013.
The Quaker meeting house outside Union Bridge was the center of an active abolition movement in the early 1800s. At an 1826 meeting, local residents drafted the constitution for a new antislavery society, writing that slavery was “injust and oppressive on its subjects” and “contrary to the principles of universal right as exhibited in the Declaration of Independence.” Another local group, the Pipe Creek Protection Society, was organized for “the protection of the free colored people against wrongs of any kind practiced by unprincipled whites.” Although little is known regarding these groups’ activities, their formation demonstrated a significant antislavery sentiment in Carroll County, where free men, women, and children of African American descent made up nearly half the total African American population by the mid-1800s.

This building served as both a church and a school for the African American community known as Muttontown. Although the building’s cornerstone was dated 1892, the congregation was established in 1867, and a school was open at this location by 1877. As sources of organization and leadership, and church members were of vital importance to local populations. Today the church is a member of the African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church.

Mt. Joy Methodist Episcopal Church (Middleburg Road, Uniontown) MIHP: CARR-352 Condition: Demolished (church) Related Sites: 5, 8

Mt. Joy Methodist Episcopal Church was one of the earliest African American congregations established in Carroll County. In 1858, a frame church was built using materials salvaged from a demolished church. Although the Mt. Joy Church was on Uniontown’s west side, it mainly served the African American community on the east side of town. The church was used until 1962 and was demolished in 1975. The Mt. Joy Cemetery remains, and a marker shows the former site of the church.

Simon Murdock House (Private residence, New Windsor vicinity) MIHP: CARR-1716 Condition: Altered Related Sites: 8, 9

The ca. 1830 two-story log house owned by Civil War veteran Simon Murdock is still visible in this enlarged dwelling. Murdock was born in 1838 to a former slave. In 1864, he enlisted in the Fourth Regiment Infantry, Company F of the Union Army’s Colored Troops. He was injured at the battle of Deep Bottom, Virginia, and was discharged in 1865. After the war, Murdock lived in the house with his wife Sarah and their five children. Murdock became a leading member of the local African American veterans’ organization and was active in the neighboring Strawbridge United Methodist Church. Murdock died in 1933 at age 95 and is buried in the cemetery at Fairview Methodist Episcopal Church.

Strawbridge United Methodist Church (1401 New Windsor Road, New Windsor) MIHP: CARR-1050 Condition: Altered Related Sites: 6, 7, 15

The Strawbridge United Methodist Church was established ca. 1916, and the current church building was completed in 1918 under the leadership of Reverend J. R. Berry. Simon Murdock, an African American Civil War veteran who lived in Washington, may have donated land for the church and established its first Sunday school. Over time, it became the home congregation for four small churches that no longer exist, including the former Mt. Joy Church in Uniontown and Western Chapel south of Westminster. The church has been altered with front and rear additions and is accompanied by a small cemetery.

Fairview Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery (3325 Old Liberty Road, Taylorville vicinity) MIHP: CARR-57 Condition: Altered Related Sites: 1, 7

The Fairview Methodist Episcopal Church may have been the first African American church built in Carroll County. The church was destroyed by a fire in 1898, and the current building was increased in 1904.

Elizabeth Lowery House (Private residence, Westminster vicinity) MIHP: CARR-464 Condition: Demolished

In 1839, Elizabeth Lowery, a free African American woman, purchased a small property near Westminster. She lived with her daughter, son-in-law, and six grandchildren in a ca. 1830 two-story log house with two rooms on each floor. The original house was enlarged over time, starting with a frame addition in 1852. Later expansions followed Elizabeth Lowery’s death in 1868. Archaeological testing undertaken prior to the demolition of the house revealed a stone-lined privy, the brick foundation of a well house, a fieldstone path, and hundreds of discarded household articles.

St. Luke’s (Winters) Lutheran Church Gravestones (701 Green Valley Road, New Windsor) MIHP: CARR-92 Condition: Intact Related Sites: 9

The Lutheran Church at Fairview is the oldest African American church in the county and was established in 1866. It was located within the fairground at the northern end of town. In 1870, the church purchased a lot on Green Valley Road, and the current church building was completed in 1877. The church has been altered with front and rear additions and is accompanied by a small cemetery.

West Uniontown (Private Residences, Uniontown) MIHP: CARR-221 and CARR-226 thru 230 Condition: Altered Related Site: 6

During the late 1800s, the houses at the east end of Uniontown Road were predominantly inhabited by African American residents. Anna Hays, a free African American woman, bought a two-story log house (pictured) in 1859 for $350. In 1896, the town doctor purchased the house as a home for his housekeeper and caretaker, a married couple named Elizabeth and Edward Lewis. Other East Uniontown residents included Dennis and Eliza Chase and their seven children, Penny and Harriet Jones, who constructed a log house within brick additions, and Samuel Brown. Many of the families worshipped in the Mt. Joy Methodist Episcopal Church (now demolished) west of town. The houses have been altered, but many retain a log core.

Bowen Chapel (4670 Bark Hill Road, Union Bridge vicinity) MIHP: CARR-1092 Condition: Intact

The Bowen Chapel was established in 1885, and a small frame church was built on the existing property. The church was an active center of the African American community. The church has been altered with front and rear additions and is accompanied by a small cemetery.

Mt. Joy Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery (Middleburg Road, Uniontown) MIHP: CARR-352 Condition: Demolished (church) Related Sites: 5, 8

The church was built in 1880, and a frame church was built using materials salvaged from a demolished church. Although the Mt. Joy Church was on Uniontown’s west side, it mainly served the African American community on the east side of town. The church was used until 1962 and was demolished in 1975. The Mt. Joy Cemetery remains, and a marker shows the former site of the church.

Simon Murdock House (Private residence, New Windsor vicinity) MIHP: CARR-1716 Condition: Altered Related Sites: 8, 9

The ca. 1830 two-story log house owned by Civil War veteran Simon Murdock is still visible in this enlarged dwelling. Murdock was born in 1838 to a former slave. In 1864, he enlisted in the Fourth Regiment Infantry, Company F of the Union Army’s Colored Troops. He was injured at the battle of Deep Bottom, Virginia, and was discharged in 1865. After the war, Murdock lived in the house with his wife Sarah and their five children. Murdock became a leading member of the local African American veterans’ organization and was active in the neighboring Strawbridge United Methodist Church. Murdock died in 1933 at age 95 and is buried in the cemetery at Fairview Methodist Episcopal Church.

James Thomas Log House (Private residence, Westminster vicinity) MIHP: CARR-393 Condition: Restored

This 1½-story log house was home to Thomas Jones in the mid- to late 19th century. Thomas, a free African American laborer and farmhand, lived in the house with his wife Sarah and their eight children. The house was built into a sloping hillside with an uncoursed stone foundation. The single-room structure features hewn logs with V-notch corners. The house has an interior brick chimney at the east end near a tight corner staircase. At one time, the house had weatherboard wall cladding, two dormers, and front and rear additions, but these changes have been removed to reveal the historic structure and stabilize it for the future.

Union Street District (Union Street, Westminster) MIHP: CARR-501, -502, and -506 Condition: Altered Related Sites: 13, 14

Laid out ca. 1834, Union Street was a predominantly African American neighborhood by the late 19th century. The community focal point, Union Street Methodist Episcopal Church, is still located at the midpoint of the street. The West End African School (demolished), a one-room schoolhouse constructed by state mandate in 1872, was nearly the only African American school in the county. In the mid-20th century, African American science teachers, truck drivers, waiters, hairdressers, and housekeepers lived in the neighborhood, as did residents employed at Western Maryland (now McDaniel) College as cooks or maids. The buildings lining Union Street were constructed of fieldstone or frame double houses on the northwest side and two-story log houses on the southeast side. Renovations and apartment construction have since changed the community’s appearance.

Strawbridge United Methodist Church (22 Union Street, Westminster) MIHP: CARR-363 Condition: Intact Related Sites: 12, 14

The Strawbridge United Methodist Church was established ca. 1916, and the current church building was completed in 1918 under the leadership of Reverend J. R. Berry. Simon Murdock, an African American Civil War veteran who lived in Washington, may have donated land for the church and established its first Sunday school. Over time, it became the home congregation for four small churches that no longer exist, including the former Mt. Joy Church in Uniontown and Western Chapel south of Westminster. The church has been altered with front and rear additions and is accompanied by a small cemetery.