Since the arrival of settlers and enslaved people to Maryland in 1634, African Americans have played an essential role in shaping the state’s culture and economy. While some Quakers opposed slavery privately, others openly questioned the practice of “owning” another person. Despite these efforts, free-black populations took root. The Quakers openly embraced black settlements, and in some cases, relocated to areas with large black populations.

Skillful laborers worked as hunters, farmers, and stone cutters, while others worked in the mills and factories. As farming changed from labor-intensive to capital-intensive agriculture, the use of enslaved labor continued, but while the demand for labor subsided, the plantation economy of the South increased. In the 19th century, Montgomery County slaves were shipped to Alabama, Mississippi, and New Orleans. In 1860, 95% of the population were enslaved, and 93% of the population were Black. As the mid-19th century approached, Montgomery County served as a border that the enslaved were either sold or passed off to from one county to another.

Living in small cabins and camps was a reality for enslaved people. Days of enslavement varied, and on foot through marshes, by canoe or by land, outbuildings, people worked long hours. On Sundays, and other days, year-round, enslaved people were often had the latitude to hunt, visit with neighbors or family. Many people also held the latitude to hunt, and often had the latitude to hunt, visit with neighbors or family. Many people also

The Underground Railroad (UGRR) emerged in the county to help enslaved people find their way to freedom in Pennsylvania, Canada, and beyond. Escape was made by what some believe was the odyssey of the Underground Railroad network. The “Conductors” worked in teams and at mid-night guiding people north. Here, the G5 Carlin, B&O Railroad, developed north west, and they were well to the major cities and states.

In 1940, Blacks were sequestered by housing covenants which kept them from living in white-only areas. Yet, discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations were present, and founded the opportunities for advancement for many African Americans. In the 1960s, a wave of legal challenges, including Brown v. Board of Education, paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement. The Civil Rights Movement was a pivotal moment in the struggle for equality and justice. Montgomery County has been a leader in the fight for civil rights, with the establishment of a new charter government in the 1940s, followed by urban renewal and fair housing policies. Today, several historic sites are open for tours, among them the Boh's Negro School and Smithfield Rosenwald School.

While much of the history of African American communities is recorded, most records are silent. In an effort to bring these stories to light, the Montgomery County’s History Center, in coordination with several small community organizations, has sponsored a series of walking tours in the community, sharing historical values and preserving the community’s schools, developed residential areas and landmarks to mean that could provide better public education.

Children have been the among the organizers who would defend King against arrest and even death. These children became the Civil Rights Movement---efforts that were traced back to the beliefs and values of each of these historic African American communities.

With the establishment of a new charter government in the 1940s, followed by urban renewal and fair housing policies, Montgomery County has been a leader in the fight for equality and justice. The Civil Rights Movement was a pivotal moment in the struggle for equality and justice. Montgomery County has been a leader in the fight for civil rights, with the establishment of a new charter government in the 1940s, followed by urban renewal and fair housing policies. Today, several historic sites are open for tours, among them the Boh's Negro School and Smithfield Rosenwald School.

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HERITAGE AREA THEMES

Over 160 parks, sites, and museums are represented by Heritage Montgomery and tell the county’s stories using the following themes:

CROSSROADS & CULTURES
African American & Black History Sites

AGRICULTURAL RESERVE

AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE TRAILS

CROSSROADS & CULTURES: African American & Quaker Heritage represents Montgomery County’s many rich and diverse cultural histories. These include the long-standing Quaker community of Sandy Spring and Brookesville and the many early free Black communities represented by local churches and preservation groups, community buildings, and cemeteries.

The Agricultural Reserve–Farm, Markets & Sonic Byways encompasses 5,000 acres protected from development. Most of the area participates in the Maryland Farmer’s Market Network. Many markets feature local foods and products.

The Blue Line–Williams Road, and Quaker Heritage Sites include the Sandy Spring Slave Museum, the Sandy Spring Museum, and the Sandy Spring Religious Education Center.

Agriculture Reserve–Farm, Markets & Sonic Byways encompasses 5,000 acres protected from development. Most of the area participates in the Maryland Farmer’s Market Network. Many markets feature local foods and products.

Heritage Sites: Montgomery County’s Past Features also scattered throughout the Heritage Area represent the unique status of history, culture, and tourism found in Montgomery County, from historic homes to Civil War sites to parks, theater, and historical societies.

RIVERS, ROADS AND RAILS

EXPLORE DISCOVER ENJOY

The Sandy Spring Slave Museum is located on an historic site that was home to enslaved African Americans from the 18th to 19th centuries. The museum features exhibits and programs related to African American history and culture.

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