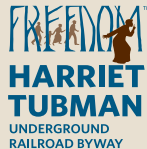




Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway

Driving Tour Guide



Content

Harriet Tubman Underground
Railroad Byway
2 Rose Hill Place
Cambridge, MD 21613
410-228-1000
www.HarrietTubmanByway.com

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The Underground Railroad was a secret network of people, places, and routes that assisted escaping slaves reach freedom. It was named after the steam locomotive, an early 19th century invention. The network adopted code words – conductor, agent, and passenger – to avoid discovery and harsh punishment. Because Maryland bordered the free state of Pennsylvania, it was a hotbed of Underground Railroad activity.

Harriet Tubman was born a slave in Dorchester County in 1822. She escaped to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1849. Wanted by law enforcement and slave catchers, Tubman returned here repeatedly to rescue family and friends.

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway takes you to places that Harriet Tubman knew well. Some of these historically significant landscapes are part of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument. Along the way you will find interpretive markers, audio stops, exhibits, and structures to help make their journeys come to life. As you encounter these stories, allow yourself to be transported back to another time and reflect on the lives of these ordinary people who did extraordinary things in the face of great personal danger.



1 Dorchester County Visitor Center

2 Rose Hill Place, Cambridge, MD 21613

410-228-1000

www.TourDorchester.org

Overlooking the Choptank River, the Dorchester County Visitor Center is the perfect place to begin your byway adventure. An exhibit provides background information on Harriet Tubman and Underground Railroad activity in the area. Knowledgeable staff can assist you in planning your tour and provide information on events, accommodations, dining opportunities, shopping, and outdoor experiences.

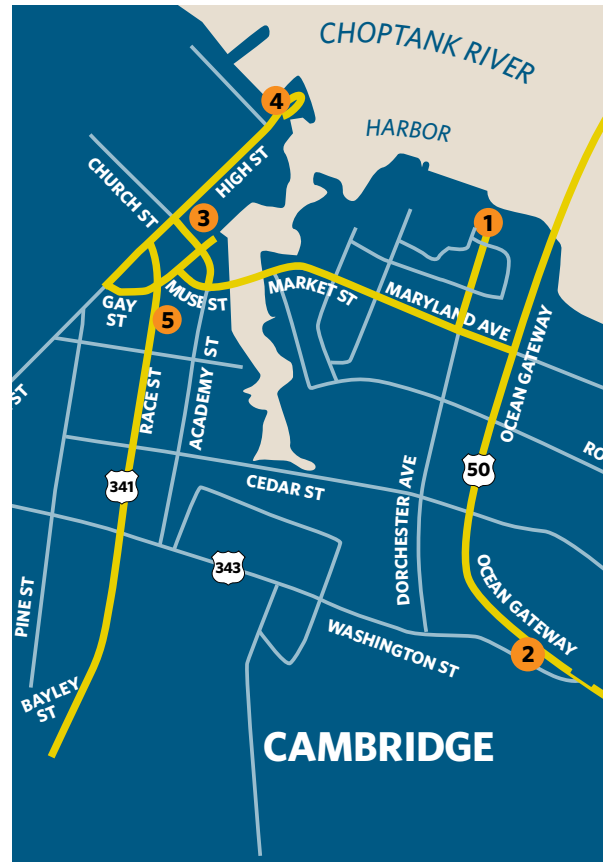
The waterfront park offers a sandy beach, playground, picnic tables, a riverfront walkway and a fishing pier. The visitor center is open daily 8:30 – 5:00. Contact us to learn more about visiting Dorchester County.



Dorchester County Visitor Center at Sailwinds Park East is designed to recall the heyday of sail, when schooners, clippers, and fleets of oyster boats plied the Chesapeake Bay.

★ DORCHESTER'S ROOTS

In 1608, English Captain John Smith met Native Americans here when he explored the Chesapeake Bay. As the colony flourished, so did demand for cheap labor. In 1664 the General Assembly codified a system of slavery that for 200 years supported a plantation society on the backs of enslaved workers. In time, Dorchester's proximity to free states made it a hotbed of Underground Railroad activity, until emancipation came to Maryland slaves at the end of the Civil War in 1864.



Historic Cambridge
Established in 1684, the City of Cambridge embraces its Colonial and maritime heritage. Step back in time while strolling brick-paved streets in the historic district. Enjoy a guided walking tour or find a variety of restaurants, galleries, boutiques, and museums nearby. You can also visit the waterfront park, public marina and boat launch, and the Choptank River Lighthouse. To learn more, visit: www.TourDorchester.org.

The **Memorial Garden** is located adjacent to Route 50 East, near a variety of accommodations and services.

2 Harriet Tubman Memorial Garden

US 50 at Washington Street, Cambridge, MD 21613

Relatives of Harriet Ross Tubman still live in Dorchester County, as do descendents of slave holders. Members of the local community chose to honor Tubman at this quiet, roadside garden. People across the country can join them in paying their respects to this American hero. Tubman's story, that of a young slave who freed herself, then returned to rescue family and friends, inspires emotional and artistic expression in works of literature, music, sculpture, paint, and performance. One of Tubman's relatives painted the murals here.



Site

3 **Dorchester County Courthouse**

206 High Street, Cambridge, MD 21613

In 1850, Harriet Tubman’s niece, Kessiah, and her two children escaped from the auction block at the front of the courthouse. On the day of the auction, Kessiah and her children stood before buyers when the bidding started. Kessiah’s husband, John Bowley, a freeman and a sailor, outbid everyone. When an official appeared to collect payment, no one came forward. Kessiah and her children were missing. John had secretly whisked them away and moved them by boat to Baltimore. There, they met Tubman who led them to Philadelphia.

Long Wharf and Dorchester County Courthouse are located in historic downtown Cambridge, just steps from restaurants, shops, galleries, and museums.



History

★ **CHALLENGING SLAVERY**

This Italianate courthouse was built in 1854, two years after the original was destroyed by fire. In 1857, Samuel Green, a free black preacher and Underground Railroad agent, was tried here and sentenced to 10 years in prison for owning a copy of the anti-slavery booklet, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. A year later, another Underground Railroad conductor, Hugh Hazlett, was sentenced to 44 years for assisting fugitive slaves.

History

★ **FAR FROM HOME**

“We had a little slave boy whom we had hired from someone, there in Hannibal. He was from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and had been brought away from his family and his friends, half way across the American continent, and sold.” —Mark Twain, *Autobiography of Mark Twain : The Complete and Authoritative Edition Volume 1*

Site

4 **Long Wharf**

High Street at Choptank River, Cambridge, MD 21613

Ships from Africa and the West Indies brought kidnapped Africans and sold them along this waterfront until the trans-Atlantic slave trade was outlawed in 1808. Soon, southern states began cultivating cotton, increasing their need for slave labor. About the same time, wheat prices plummeted causing a sell-off of slaves from the Eastern Shore. Thousands of enslaved workers were eventually shipped from this wharf to plantations in the Deep South, never to see their homes or families again.



Before the Bay Bridge opened in 1955, commerce to and from the Eastern Shore was conducted by water. Cambridge was a hub of maritime industries.

Nearby

At **Long Wharf** you will find free parking, the Choptank River Lighthouse, a public marina, seasonal farmers market, and educational tours aboard the skipjack, *Nathan of Dorchester*.

Nearby

The **Harriet Tubman Museum** operates in a storefront in Historic Downtown Cambridge, amid restaurants, shops, and galleries. Free parking is available in lots behind the center and on the street.

Site

5 Harriet Tubman Museum

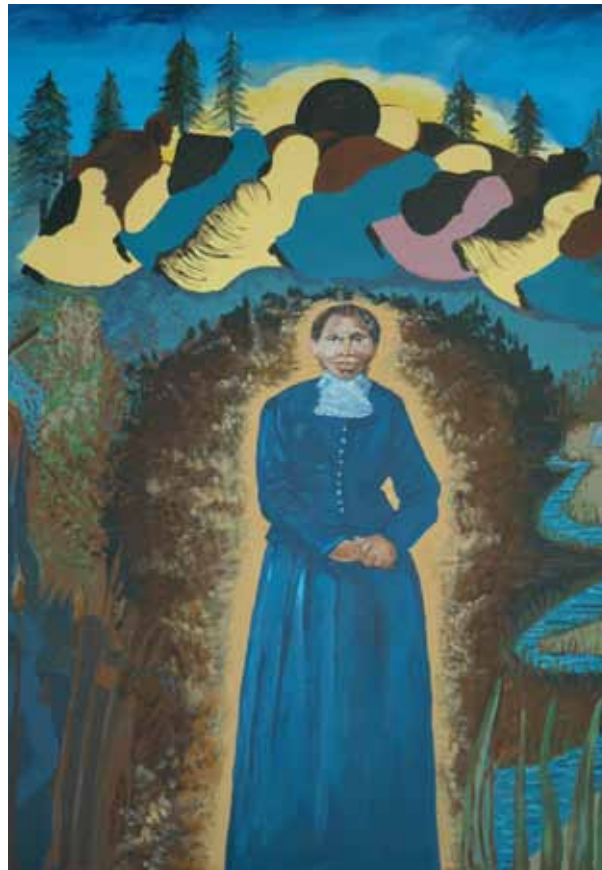
424 Race Street, Cambridge, MD 21613

(410) 228-0401

www.harriettubmanorganization.org

The Harriet Tubman Museum is the oldest community organization dedicated to Dorchester County's heroic native daughter. Founded in the 1980s by local residents, the organization celebrates Tubman's legacy to serve as a role model for young people. The museum offers exhibits, programs, and information about Tubman's life in the area.

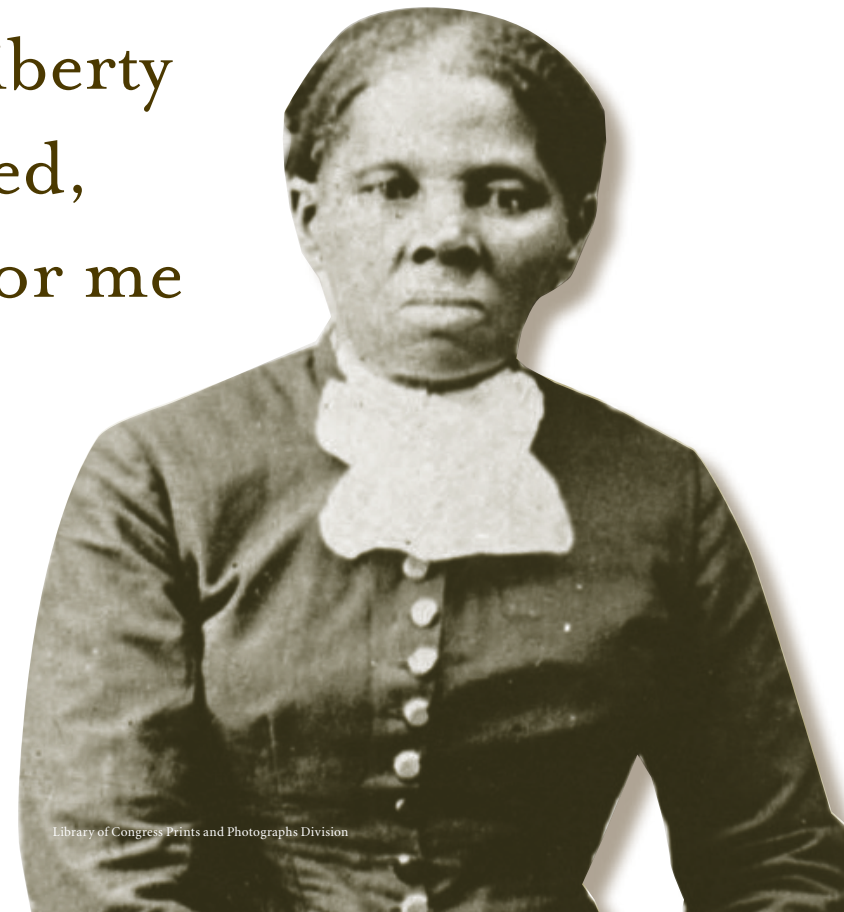
A large, hand painted mural is the centerpiece of the Harriet Tubman Museum.



History

"...I should fight for my liberty as long as my strength lasted, and when the time came for me to go, the Lord would let them take me."

—Harriet Tubman to Sarah Bradford in *Harriet, The Moses of Her People*, 1886



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

6 Stanley Institute

MD Route 16, Cambridge, MD 21613

(410) 228-6657

Before the Civil War, it was a crime to teach a slave to read, and there were few opportunities to learn. In 1867, this one-room schoolhouse was moved here. Called the Stanley Institute, after Rev. Ezekiel Stanley, the school stands as a testament to the black community's determination to educate their children. The school was used until the 1960s.



★ FREEDOM TO LEARN

In October 1857, four enslaved families, totaling 28 people including women and children, successfully fled from their quarters nearby. Heavily armed, the freedom seekers were determined to avoid capture by bounty hunters or angry mobs as they headed north. They received help from people on the Underground Railroad, and they eventually made their way to freedom in Canada. National newspapers called the escape a “Stampede of Slaves.”

Stanley Institute is located on the edge of the City of Cambridge. From here, the byway loops through historic, rural landscapes associated with Harriet Tubman.



★ HIGHWAY TO FREEDOM

Church Creek sits along MD Route 16, which follows an ancient Indian trail used for seasonal migrations and trade between the Chesapeake and Delaware bays. The great majority of enslaved people who fled this area before the Civil War came from places along this road, securing the route's reputation as a "Highway to Freedom."

7 Church Creek / Whitehaven

MD Route 16 and Golden Hill Road, Church Creek, MD 21622

Church Creek was a thriving shipbuilding center in the 1830s. Workers in the maritime trades - shipwrights, caulkers, sail makers and blacksmiths – labored and mingled at the wharves with highly mobile, free black sailors. These “Black Jacks” were part of a secret communication network that spanned not only coastal American towns, but also across the Atlantic. They brought news, ideas, and information to enslaved communities, spreading notions of liberty, as well as gossip. In the early 19th century, a large community of enslaved and free black families lived and worked between here, Harrisville and White Marsh Roads.



Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway Driving Tour Guide

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway Driving Tour Guide

Site

8 Malone's Church

White Marsh Road, Madison, MD 21648

For decades before the Civil War, four nearby communities, connected by footpaths through the woods, provided a strong social network among free and enslaved blacks. As soon as the war ended, these communities established their own African American churches. Founded in 1864, Malone's Methodist Episcopal Church was the first. The immediate formation after emancipation indicates that strong, well established, faith communities existed long before freedom came.

Some oral tradition suggests that Harriet Tubman lived and worked with her husband, John Tubman, near Malone's Methodist Episcopal Church.

History

★ FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Araminta Ross, later known as Harriet Tubman, was probably born in 1822 at Anthony Thompson's farm on nearby Harrisville Road. Although they were moved to a plantation in Bucktown for some time, Harriet, her mother, and several siblings were back in the area living on Thompson's plantation by 1840. A large community of enslaved and free black families lived and worked between Harrisville and White Marsh roads, creating an important social world for Harriet and her family.



Nearby

The probable birthplace of Harriet Tubman is private property. Nearly 200 years after her birth, there is no structural evidence of slave quarters.

Site

9 Madison

MD Route 16 and Madison Canning House Road, Madison, MD 21648

Harriet Tubman successfully led from here Winnebar Johnson, the slave of Samuel Harrington, in early June 1854. Johnson passed through Underground Railroad agent William Still's office in Philadelphia, where Still noted that Johnson had been "brought away by his sister Harriet two weeks ago." Johnson was passed along to the bustling port of New Bedford in Massachusetts, where he lived and worked with other runaways, some from Dorchester County.



History

★ LEARNING NATURE'S WAYS

Harriet Tubman spent her formative years around Madison. She worked for Joseph Stewart, in his home and fields, until she joined her father Ben Ross in Stewart's lumbering operation. Harriet learned important outdoor skills when she worked with her father in the woods. Understanding the tides, knowing how to find food and fresh water, and following the North Star were all skills that later proved vital as she confidently guided passengers north along the Underground Railroad to freedom.

Nearby

The sleepy village of Madison belies its bustling maritime past. Here you will find parking, picnic facilities, camping, and water access, as well as a restaurant.

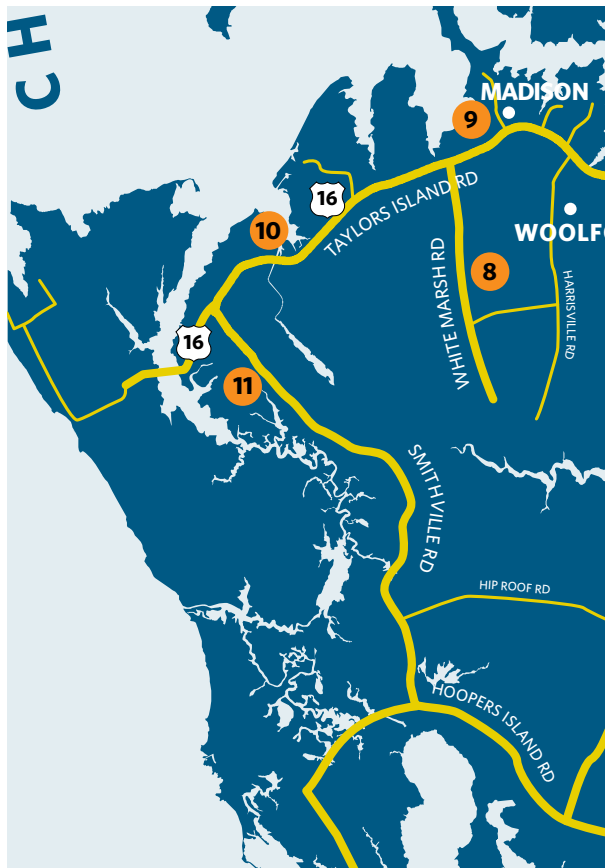
10 Joseph Stewart's Canal / Parsons Creek

MD Route 16 and Parsons Creek, Taylors Island, MD 21669

Over a period of 20 years, 1810–1832, enslaved and free blacks dug this seven-mile canal through the marsh. The wealthy, powerful, and slave holding Stewart family owned shipyards, a store, and a mill near here. They also owned vast tracts of timber in this area. Joseph Stewart and nearby landowners designed this canal to float their logs and agricultural products to the ships at nearby wharves.



Stewart's Canal is part of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument. A few miles down the byway, just past Smithville Road, you will find restaurants, a marina, and camping.



★ A FAMILY DIVIDED

John Trevelian Stewart employed the enslaved Harriet Tubman and her father, Ben Ross, after he was freed in 1840. Stewart's brother James A. Stewart was a U.S. Congressman in the 1850s and a strong supporter of slavery. An uncle, Levin Stewart, freed his slaves in 1817, and his son John T. Stewart was a Union sympathizer. When Harriet Tubman's three brothers made it to freedom in Philadelphia in 1854, they chose as their aliases: James Stewart, John Stewart, and William Henry Stewart.

11 New Revived Church

4350 Smithville Road, Taylors Island, MD 21669

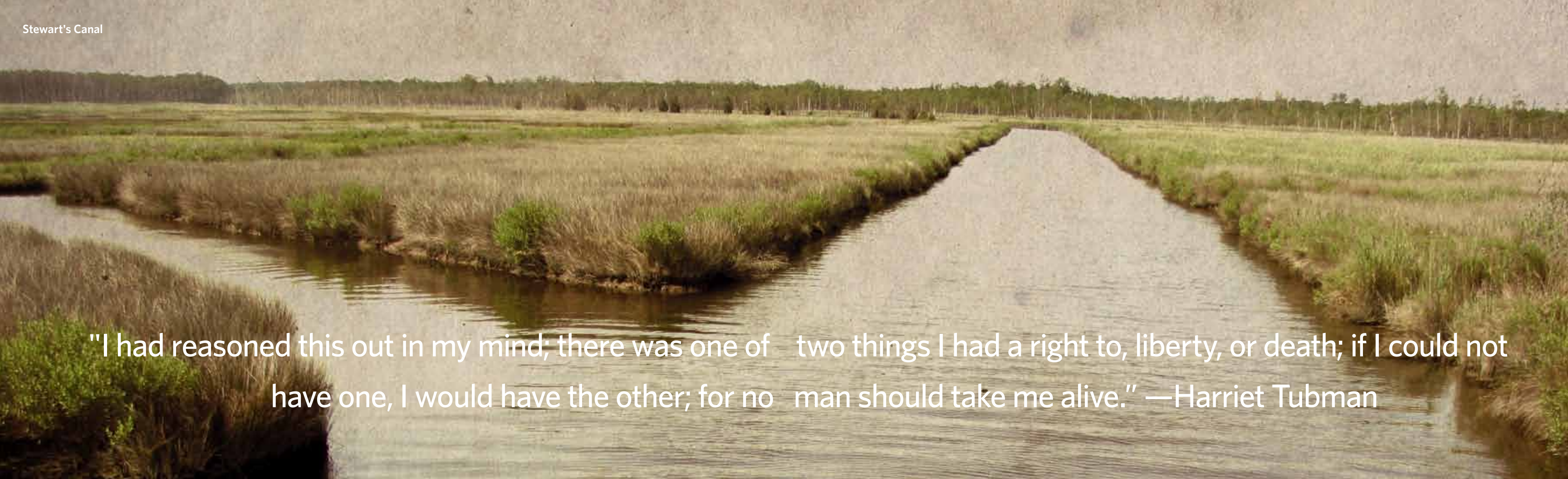
The New Revived United Methodist Church, once known as Jefferson Methodist Episcopal Church, was established in Smithville in 1876. Before the Civil War, Methodist Camp Meetings were popular in the area.

Harriet Tubman's brother, William Henry Ross Stewart, married Harriet Parker, a free woman from Smithville, around 1850. In late 1854, Harriet Tubman helped three of her brothers escape to Canada, where William Henry's wife joined him with their two small children in 1855. Marriages between members of these neighboring communities also illustrate the degree of social interaction between free and enslaved people before the end of the Civil War and emancipation.



New Revived Church is one of four traditionally black churches in the area that were founded immediately following the Civil War and emancipation.

The church has a picnic area, and it is in close proximity to public water access. These waterways are very popular for kayaking. Underground Railroad guided kayak and bicycle tours (official National Park Service Network to Freedom programs) are available at Bucktown Store.



"I had reasoned this out in my mind; there was one of two things I had a right to, liberty, or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other; for no man should take me alive." —Harriet Tubman

12 Buttons Creek

*MD Route 335 and Little Blackwater River,
Church Creek, MD 21622*

Jane Kane was enslaved by Horatio Jones, whom she described as “the worst man in the country.” Jones’ plantation sat along Buttons Creek and the Blackwater River, west of this landing.

Harriet Tubman’s brother, Ben Ross, had hoped to marry Jane, but Jones refused to allow them to do so. Ben arranged for Jane to join him when he and his brothers planned to flee during the Christmas holidays in 1854.



★ A CLEVER DISGUISE

The fiancée of Harriet Tubman’s brother, Ben Ross, Jane Kane cleverly disguised herself in men’s clothing, successfully executing a daring plan to flee her master. Her escape on Christmas Eve 1854 occurred along Buttons Creek on land that now is part of the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.



13 Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park and Visitor Center

*Golden Hill Road at Key Wallace Drive
Church Creek, MD 21622*

The Maryland Park Service is constructing the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park in her honor. The landscapes near here have changed little since Harriet’s childhood, when she lived, worked, and traveled these environs. When completed, the Visitor Center will include a meditation garden, exhibits, a theater, and outdoor interpretation that will tell the stories of the life and times of Harriet Tubman and of slavery in Dorchester County. Harriet’s activities during the Civil War and her later years as a suffragist, civil rights worker, and humanitarian will also be highlighted.



An architect’s rendering
of the Harriet Tubman
Underground Railroad State
Park Visitor Center.

14 Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

2145 Key Wallace Drive, Cambridge, MD 21613

410-228-2677

The forests, marshes, and waterways that characterize the refuge are largely unchanged from the time that Harriet Tubman lived and worked in Dorchester County. It is situated halfway between where she spent portions of her childhood on Edward Brodess' plantation and the plantation where her father labored and where she likely was born.

Knowledge of the terrain was vital to survival while hiding and trying to flee. Harriet and others had to successfully navigate the land and waterways, trap and forage for food, and hide from their pursuers. Fleeing slaves often lacked proper clothing to protect them from the elements and they suffered from weather extremes and insects, in addition to the terror of drowning or being caught.

Located on the Atlantic Flyway, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge hosts many thousands of migrating birds and waterfowl, such as these Canada geese, during the year.



★ THE MARSH

This 28,000-acre refuge contains wetlands and forests similar to those of the mid-19th century. The trails and waterways at Blackwater offer a place to see birds, wildlife and environs that were a part of Harriet's life. Though Harriet is not known to have liberated others from this area, several escapes did occur within the refuge boundaries. For more information, visit: www.fws.gov/blackwater.

15 Little Blackwater River Bridge

Key Wallace Drive and Little Blackwater River

Church Creek, MD 21622

A bridge has crossed the Little Blackwater near here since the late 1700s, when Harriet Tubman's grandmother, Modesty, was enslaved on Atthow Pattison's nearby tobacco farm. Modesty gave birth to Harriet's mother Rit Green there. When Pattison died in January 1797, he gave an enslaved girl named "Rittia" to his granddaughter, Mary Pattison, with the stipulation that Rit and all of her future children be set free when "she and they arrive to forty-five years of age."

Rit later was moved to Madison when her owner, the widow Mary Pattison Brodess, married Anthony Thompson in 1803. Rit met and eventually married Ben Ross and they started their own family. Atthow Pattison's wish that Rit and her children eventually be set free was never honored.



Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge welcomes visitors to explore its Wildlife Drive, walking paths, and bookstore. Stop in the Visitor Center where you will find exhibits and restrooms.

16 Brodess Farm

Greenbrier Road, Bucktown, MD 21613

Edward Brodess, Harriet Tubman's enslaver, lived at this site. He move Tubman's mother Rit and her children to his farm in Bucktown after 1823 or 1824. Harriet spent her early years here and on nearby farms. No trace remains of Brodess' original home that once sat near the existing house at the end of the lane.

The buildings visible from the road are not related to the historic **Brodess** farm and were built much later. Please respect the owners' privacy.



For decades, visitors have visited the place that was historically linked to Harriet Tubman's birth.

17 Bucktown Village Store

4303 Bucktown Road, Bucktown, MD 21613

410-901-9255

At this crossroads around 1835, Bucktown was a busy community with two stores, a shopkeeper's home, blacksmith shop, farms, and shipyards on the nearby Transquaking River.

One night, Harriet and the farm's cook went to a store at this crossroads to purchase some goods for the house. At the same time, another slave belonging to a local farmer left his work without permission. His overseer pursued him to the store and ordered Harriet to help him tie up the man, but she did not. Suddenly, the slave broke free and ran. The overseer grabbed a two-pound weight off the counter and hurled it toward him. It struck young Harriet in the head, causing a severe injury that changed her life. "My hair had never been combed and it stood out like a bushel basket," Tubman recalled, "...I expect that thar hair saved my life."

★ A CRUEL BLOW

Tubman remembered the overseer "raising up his arm to throw an iron weight at one of the slaves and that was the last I knew." She recalled, "They carried me to the house all bleeding an' fainting. I had no bed, no place to lie down on at all, and they lay me on the seat of the loom, and I stayed there all that day and next." She was forced "to work again and there I worked with the blood and sweat rolling down my face till I couldn't see."



Bucktown Store welcomes visitors to explore the Underground Railroad. They offer bike and kayak rentals, as well as guided tours by kayak or bicycle.

Today, Bucktown Store has been lovingly re-stored. The proprietors offer educational tours via kayak or bicycle that are authorized by the National Park Service Network to Freedom.



18 Pritchett Meredith Farm

Bestpitch Ferry Road, Bucktown, MD 21613

There is no public access.

The flight of the “Dover Eight” made national headlines on March 8, 1857 when eight slaves escaped from Dorchester County. The group first sought help from Rev. Samuel Green in East New Market. Then they found assistance from Harriet Tubman’s father, Ben Ross. They soon found their way to Thomas Otwell, a black Underground Railroad conductor in Delaware. Tubman trusted Otwell with the group’s safety. Instead, he lured them to the Dover jail so he could collect the \$3,000 reward for their capture. With quick thinking and a show of force, the group successfully broke out of the jail and fled to Wilmington, then Philadelphia, and finally to Canada.

Harriet Tubman provided Underground Railroad instructions to the Dover Eight, one of the few successful escapes by slaves from the Bucktown area.

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway Driving Tour Guide



Stephens, H. L. (Henry Louis), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

★ HARSH JUSTICE

Local slaveholders sought swift and stern justice for anyone who assisted the flight of the “Dover Eight.” The Rev. Samuel Green was arrested and jailed on suspicion of aiding the group’s escape. Ben Ross, Harriet Tubman’s father, nearly experienced the same fate. Two of the eight escapees temporarily joined John Brown’s small army in Canada before the raid on Harper’s Ferry.

19 Bestpitch Ferry Bridge

Bestpitch Ferry Road and Transquaking River

Bucktown, MD 21613

This historic bridge over the Transquaking River provides a view of Dorchester County marshes. In this environment, knowledgeable slaves could hide for weeks and follow the waterways north to freedom.

Many free and enslaved African American watermen operated ferry crossings throughout the region. They transported agricultural and timber products along the region’s many rivers on rafts. This provided opportunities for self-emancipators to hitch an occasional ride or stow away in the holds and sail away to freedom.

***Note:** No buses on the bridge! Buses should enter the Department of Natural Resources lot on the right, approaching the bridge to park and turn around.*

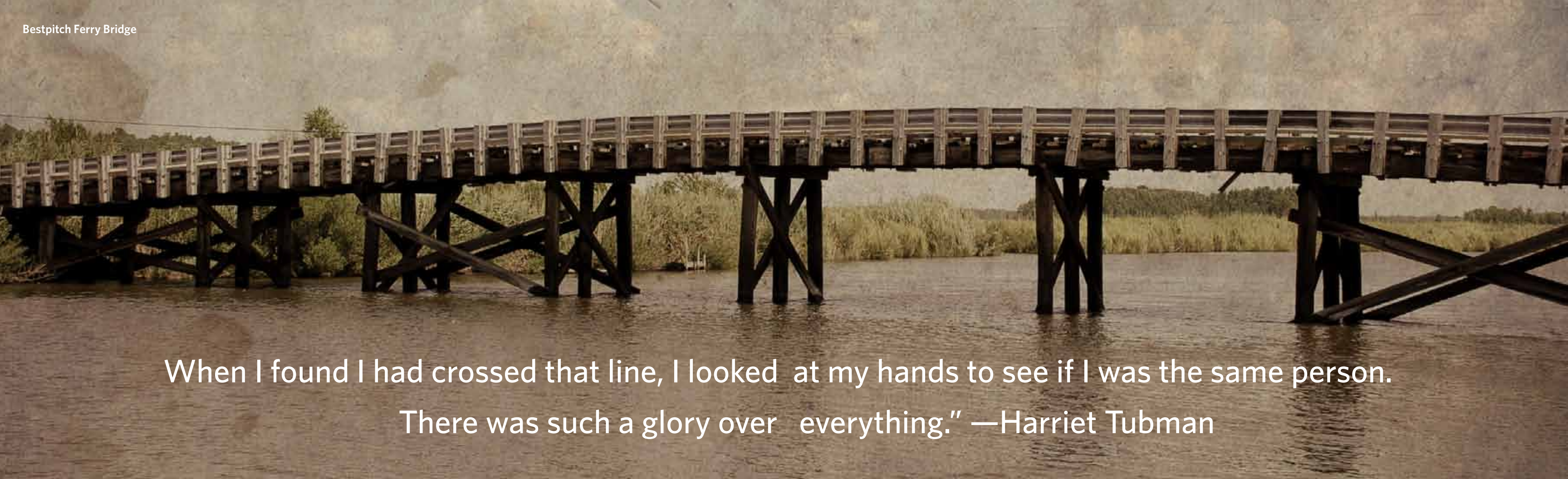
This is an active community church. Please respect the sanctity of the grounds and services.

20 Scott’s Chapel

Bucktown Road, Bucktown, MD 21613

Harriet Tubman’s master, Edward Brodess, was a member of the congregation here. Tubman, her mother, and siblings may have worshipped here with other enslaved families and their owners. The current building was constructed in 1891. The church has separate graveyards with blacks and whites buried on opposite sides of the road.





When I found I had crossed that line, I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person.
There was such a glory over everything.” —Harriet Tubman

Site

21 Faith Community UMC Church

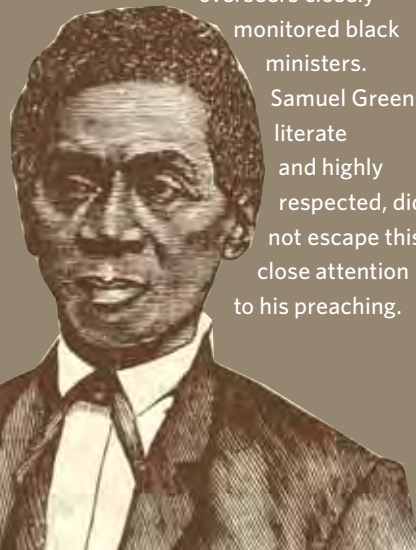
Turn right on Railroad Avenue, continue across tracks to: 509 Railroad Avenue, East New Market, MD 21631

Born into slavery, Samuel Green purchased his freedom from his owner’s estate in 1834. Later he was able to purchase the freedom of his wife, Catherine, but his children remained enslaved and out of his reach. As an Underground Railroad agent, Rev. Green helped Harriet Tubman and many others to freedom, including the group of men called the Dover Eight in March 1857. He was arrested for his role in their escape and brought to trial. Unable to convict Green for his involvement, an all white jury acquitted him. He was soon charged with possession of a copy of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, a violation of Maryland’s law governing possession of abolitionist literature by people of color. He was convicted and sentenced to ten years in prison. Green was pardoned in 1862.

History

★ **FREEDOM TO WORSHIP**

Sarah Young, a free black woman, deeded land near here in 1843 to seven free black trustees, including the Rev. Samuel Green. These original trustees established the Colored People’s Methodist Episcopal Church in August 1844, now called Faith Community



United Methodist Church. The building is the second to house this continuously operating congregation. Free black preachers offered hope and resistance in their sermons, but white overseers closely monitored black ministers. Samuel Green, literate and highly respected, did not escape this close attention to his preaching.

Nearby


You will find a deli in historic East New Market. Down the road in Secretary, you will find waterfront dining and riverboat cruises on the Choptank River.

The **Leverton House** (right page) is authenticated as an Underground Railroad safe house and is recognized as such by the National Park Service Network to Freedom program.

Local Area map



History



★ **ABOLITIONISTS**

Jacob and Hannah Leverton were white, Quaker abolitionists. Their house has been described as “the main stopping place for the Underground Railroad in the region.” Along with the Levertons, free black millwright Daniel Hubbard and Quaker Jonah Kelley provided havens on their properties to help slaves reach freedom.

Site

22 Jacob and Hannah Leverton House

3531 Seaman Road, Preston, MD 21655

Leverton House is owner-occupied, private property.

Refugees from slavery found sanctuary here. One morning in the mid-1840s, a young enslaved woman, covered in bloodstained clothing, walked up to the Leverton farm. Jacob and Hannah took her in, nursed and fed her, and gave her clean clothing. Jacob was seen later that night traveling “northward” in his carriage with an unidentified guest. The young woman’s enslaver inquired about her at the Leverton home the next day. Jacob told the man that he had helped the girl and then “let her pass on.” The infuriated slave owner sued Jacob Leverton. Ordered to pay a large fine, Jacob became ill and soon died. His wife, Hannah may have continued his Underground Railroad efforts.

Site

23 Linchester Mill

Route 331 and Linchester Road, Preston, MD 21655
Daily life around Linchester Mill provided fertile yet dangerous ground for those seeking freedom. Whites and blacks, free and enslaved, would have regular contact here, at the general store or the post office. Free and enslaved African Americans worked side-by-side, providing a constant flow of information and support to freedom seekers. Quakers and free blacks who lived near the mill secretly helped fleeing slaves pass through the area. The mill dam created a spot to cross Hunting Creek. Such crossing points helped freedom seekers avoid unwanted attention.

Linchester Mill was the hub of Underground Railroad activity conducted by Quakers, abolitionists, and free blacks living in the area.



Nearby

There is fuel and food in the town of Preston. **Linchester Mill** has ample parking and seasonal, special events. You will also find a picnic area and restrooms. Tours can be arranged by appointment.

You will find free parking at **Choptank Landing** (right page), as well as a picnic table and restrooms (closed in winter). A small beach and kayak launch, public dock, and a boat ramp make water sports accessible here. A National Park Service Network to Freedom interpretive sign discusses the Choptank River's role in the Underground Railroad.

History

★ **CHRISTMAS JOURNEY**
On Christmas Day 1854, Harriet Tubman led her three brothers to freedom from nearby Poplar Neck. Robert, Ben and Henry, and several others hid in a corncrib until dark, when they could begin their journey north. At nightfall, Harriet safely led them on their journey towards freedom, traveling through Delaware, Pennsylvania and across upstate New York to St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada.

Site

24 Choptank Landing

*Choptank Road at Choptank River
Preston, MD 21655*
Harriet Tubman's parents were active in the Underground Railroad, and she most likely made her first escape from around here. Josiah Bailey, a skilled shipwright, escaped slavery in November 1856 by rowing a boat at night six miles from Jamaica Point in Talbot County up the Choptank River. He passed by here on his way to nearby Poplar Neck. There, he met with Ben Ross, Harriet Tubman's father, to plan his escape the next time she was ready to go. Harriet led Bailey and three others to Canada.



Choptank Landing sits near Poplar Neck, the point of land just to the north, where Harriet Tubman's parents lived and worked on Anthony Thompson's plantation.

25 Mount Pleasant Cemetery

22446 Marsh Creek Road, Preston, MD 21655

This is the site of the original Mount Pleasant Methodist Episcopal Church, an African American church community that began when local Quakers sold land to free blacks in 1849, so they could build their own church. The congregation later moved into the town of Preston where they still meet for services. This cemetery is used by the church and may have served as a meeting place for fugitives on the Underground Railroad. Laws restricted blacks from meeting in groups, and Tubman preferred to meet those who were fleeing with her in secret places away from their homes. She “was never seen on the plantation herself.”

Harriet Tubman was known to have used a cemetery as a rendezvous point for some of her flights north.



★ HARRIET SAVES HER PARENTS

In March 1857, Ben Ross was suspected of aiding the escape of eight slaves, called the Dover Eight. Harriet Tubman rushed to the Eastern Shore to rescue her parents before her father could be arrested. Cobbling together a makeshift, one-axle wagon, she rigged up a horse with a straw collar and drove her parents toward Delaware. They eventually made their way to St. Catharines, Ontario Canada with the help of numerous Underground Railroad agents along the way.

26 Webb Cabin

Grove Road, Preston, MD 21655

James H. Webb, a free African-American farmer, built this hand-hewn log home around 1852 and lived here with his enslaved wife and their four children. The family were members of nearby Mount Pleasant Church. The one-room home, with its “potato hole,” open fireplace, and loft accessed by ladder, was built of materials found nearby. It sits on its original ballast-stone foundation from ships that plied the Chesapeake Bay.

Typical of housing for most African Americans at the time, this cabin is a rare survivor today. The lack of resources and primitive characteristics of such buildings have long precluded preservation of many structures like this one. Webb’s cabin was preserved for generations and utilized for a variety of purposes.

In restoring the Webb family’s cabin, craftsmen used a sensitive approach to re-creating the specially milled weatherboard siding to protect the original logs and flooring.



You will find a picnic area nearby.



★ **LONG AGO**

In the mid-19th century, Gilpin Point was one of the busiest wharves along the Choptank River. It served as a landing for passenger ships and merchant vessels. It sat just upriver from Dr. Anthony C. Thompson's plantation where Harriet Tubman's parents lived and where Harriet herself conducted several of her most famous escapes.

27 Gilpin Point

Holly Park Drive, Harmony, MD 21655

Forty-year-old Joseph Cornish was enslaved by Captain Samuel LeCompte, married to a free black woman, and the father of five children. On December 8, 1855, Cornish most likely knew about the secret network Harriet Tubman relied upon in Philadelphia and New York, when he started out on “foot for Gilpins Point.” He had heard there was a vessel about to sail. He “worked his passage” to Baltimore, and then he made his way to Underground Railroad agent William Still in Philadelphia on Christmas Day. From there, Cornish was forwarded to agent Sydney H. Gay in New York City. He eventually made his way to St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, where Harriet Tubman, her brothers and many others from Maryland's Eastern Shore were settling into their freedom.

28 William Still Family Interpretive Center

4-H Park, Detour Road, Denton, MD 21629

William Still's mother Sidney and four of her children lived in a house similar to this on Alexander “Saunders” Griffith's plantation. Her husband, Levin Still, had purchased his freedom and resettled in New Jersey, hoping to bring his family there. Around 1806, Sidney escaped with her four children, but was soon recaptured.

After being locked away for three months, she was released and promptly fled again. However, she was forced to leave behind two sons, Peter and Levin. Enraged by her actions, Griffith sold the two boys to slave traders from Kentucky. After joining her husband in New Jersey, Sidney renamed herself Charity, and the Stills raised a large family there. William, born in 1821, was the youngest of 18 siblings.

★ **HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER**

William Still, a free black man, ran an office in Philadelphia for an organization that helped slaves who had escaped. Harriet Tubman frequently passed through Still's office, seeking protection and support for her rescues.

In 1850, Still realized that one of the men he was assisting was his own lost brother Peter, who had been sent to Alabama by his Kentucky enslavers years earlier. Peter's later memoir, *The Kidnapped and the Ransomed*, raised enough funds to purchase his family. William Still's records of more than 1,000 freedom seekers were published in 1871 as *The Underground Railroad*.



The **Still Center** is on the grounds of the 4-H Park. There are picnic pavillions, restrooms, exhibits, and a conference center in the complex.

At **Gilpin Point** (left page) you will find parking, a beach, a picnic area, and a place to launch kayaks. There is also a **National Park Service Network to Freedom** marker at this location.

Site

29 Caroline Courthouse

Courthouse Square, Denton, MD 21629

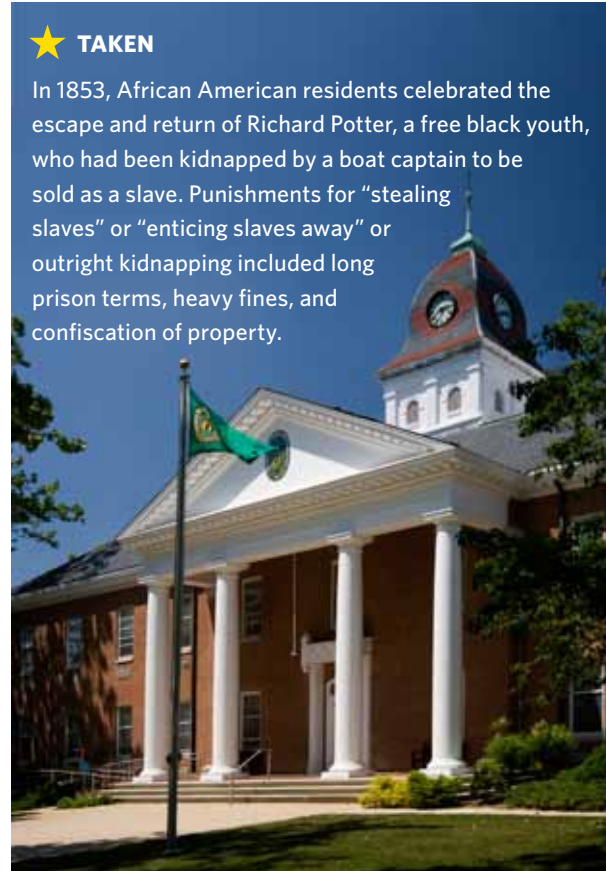
Although reconstructed after the Civil War, the courthouse’s place in the middle of town is symbolic of the central role it played in the past. The courthouse symbolized white legal, political, economic and social power during the antebellum period. A slave market was located here, where slaves were auctioned to buyers and traders. Courthouse Square was also the site of the jail where captured runaways and Underground Railroad conductors were held.

The Museum of Rural Life on Courthouse Square contains an exhibit about the life of Harriet Tubman and the role of the Underground Railroad in African American life in Caroline County.

History

★ TAKEN

In 1853, African American residents celebrated the escape and return of Richard Potter, a free black youth, who had been kidnapped by a boat captain to be sold as a slave. Punishments for “stealing slaves” or “enticing slaves away” or outright kidnapping included long prison terms, heavy fines, and confiscation of property.



Nearby

Historic Denton is the Caroline County seat. You will find food and kiosks with maps and visitor information, street parking, fuel, and restaurants.

The Choptank River Heritage Center (right page) houses exhibits, maps, and the Caroline Office of Tourism.

Local Area Map



History

★ BARRIER OR PASSAGE

The Choptank River played a role in the history of slavery as much as any plantation field. At this point it was still wide and deep enough to serve as a barrier to escape for freedom seekers. The challenges they faced in trying to ford or cross waterways or hide away on vessels is highlighted here.

Site

30 Choptank River Heritage Center

10219 River Landing Road, Denton, MD 21629

410-479-0655

When Moses Viney learned he might be sold by his master to the Deep South, he and two friends escaped on Easter morning in April 1840. The trio’s greatest natural challenge was crossing the Choptank River. The plantation’s hounds were on their trail, trapping the men on the bank, but Moses relied on a carefully made plan. Months before leaving, he fed those dogs well and treated them kindly. When they charged him, Moses stepped forward and calmly ordered them home. Recognizing their friend, the dogs turned back.



31 Tuckahoe Neck Meeting House

Meeting House Road, Denton, MD 21629

Built in 1803, this was one of five Quaker meeting houses in Caroline County whose members sustained a local Underground Railroad network. Quakers also supported women's equality and the end of slavery. By 1790, Quaker meetings on Maryland's Eastern Shore were free of all slave owners. Quakers then became some of the earliest and most effective activists to end slavery in America and abroad. They quickly began establishing a loose network of like-minded individuals who could be tapped to help escaping slaves find their way north, and to provide support and shelter once they arrived. Abolitionist, Hannah Leverton, from the Linchester Mill area spoke here.

Tuckahoe Neck Meeting House: You will find parking, fuel, accommodations, restrooms and restaurants in the area and in downtown Denton.



★ RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

Quakers were at the forefront of the fledgling Women's Rights Movement in the mid-19th century. Quaker women like Lucretia Mott, her sister, Martha Coffin Wright, and many others participated in the first women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls, New York. Other powerful abolitionists and like-minded men and women supported them. Harriet Tubman would become close to many of these women, and through them, she would become involved with the women's suffrage campaigns of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

32 Adkins Arboretum

12610 Eveland Road, Ridgely, MD 21660

410-634-2847

www.adkinsarboretum.org

Adkins Arboretum is a 440-acre garden and preserve dedicated to promoting the appreciation and conservation of the region's native plants. Walking along streams, over wetlands, and through woodlands allows visitors to experience the kinds of landscapes that freedom seekers on the Underground Railroad passed through on their way north. The arboretum offers programs year round in ecology, horticulture and natural history for all ages, including special programs relating to survival strategies used by fleeing slaves.



The Arboretum offers an audio tour of the Underground Railroad, as well as other family programming.

Site

33 Greensboro

North Main Street and Cedar Lane, Greensboro, MD 21639

In 1797, Greensboro resident Peter Harrington was president of the Choptank Abolition Society, formed to promote the end of slavery in Maryland. Supported by Quakers, some Methodists, and others, regional societies like this worked on the local level. Petitions to the Maryland House of Delegates first focused on the trafficking of slaves and demanded an end to the exportation of slaves and free people of color.

The northernmost bridge over the Choptank River was located here. Produce and timber products were delivered and shipped to ports near and far, along well traveled roads to Delaware and beyond. Through these trade activities, Greensboro residents learned about religious revivalism, democracy, abolition and other new ideas.

History



★ MOVING ON

In 1849, the year Harriet Tubman escaped, scores of freedom seekers fled nearby Talbot County. The slaveholders knew many were moving through Caroline County on their way to Delaware and beyond. Some of them, no doubt, passed near here. In August 1852, two men from Sandtown, Delaware, tried to entice a slave named Tom to escape. Tom informed his master, and an ambush was set to capture the two men in Greensboro. News reports suggested that the men were going to kidnap Tom and sell him to the Deep South.

Nearby

There is roadside parking in **Greensboro**. You will also find fuel, restaurants, and restrooms.

Red Bridges (right page) has a picnic area with places to fish and launch small craft.

Site

34 Red Bridges

Red Bridges Road, Greensboro, MD 21639

While freedom seekers traveling north were tempted to use bridges, they usually avoided them, as the threat of recapture was high. This stream at the headwaters of the Choptank River was possibly near Harriet Tubman’s Underground Railroad route to Sandtown, Delaware. The current at this location is fast, yet the water is shallow.

Freedom seekers who followed the Choptank River to Delaware may have crossed here and at other shallow tributaries near the Choptank’s headwaters. Like Harriet Tubman, fugitives relied heavily on the secret network of safe houses belonging to blacks and whites throughout central and northern Delaware. Harriet Tubman later told historian Wilbur Siebert that her preferred route was by way of her parents’ home in Poplar Neck, to Sandtown across the Maryland border. Quakers and a large free black population helped hide and escort people through Delaware.



Delaware State Line

Sandtown Road, Goldsboro, MD 21636

Freedom seekers reaching Sandtown still risked recapture, but they were well on their way to freedom. Fleeing slaves still had 75 miles before they reached the free state of Pennsylvania. The road through Sandtown would take them through Willow Grove, where Quaker Henry Cowgill and his family lived. Then they would venture to Camden, where free blacks Nathaniel and William Brinkley joined forces with Abraham Gibbs to carry fugitives farther north. Freedom seekers would journey past Dover and Smyrna to Blackbird, where other Underground Railroad operators took charge of them. The fugitives were sent over or around the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal to New Castle and other towns outside of Wilmington, where Harriet Tubman's friend, Quaker Thomas Garrett, lived and who is credited with aiding over 2,500 fugitives reach freedom.



★ MASON-DIXON LINE

The Mason-Dixon Line was surveyed between 1763 and 1767 by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon in the resolution of a border dispute between British colonies in Colonial America. It forms part of the borders of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and West Virginia (then part of Virginia). It was not the demarcation line for the legality of slavery, however, since Delaware, a slave state, falls north and east of the boundary.

The Maryland portion of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway ends here. Visitors can pick up the **Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway** through Delaware, and learn more about the people, places and events that shaped the struggles for freedom in the region.



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

“I was the conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can’t say — I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger.”

—Harriet Tubman at a suffrage convention in Rochester, NY. 1896 – Sarah Bradford, *Harriet, The Moses of Her People*. 1901

Welcome! We're glad that you have chosen to explore the distinctive landscapes where Harriet Tubman was born into slavery, escaped from bondage, and returned repeatedly to guide others to freedom.

Whether touring by motor coach, kayak, bicycle, or family car, you will discover stories of bravery, determination, and resourcefulness. Allow yourself to be transported back in time as you reflect on the lives of these extraordinary people who operated the secret network called the Underground Railroad.

Pick up your copy of the companion **audio guide** for this tour at the Dorchester County Visitor Center, or download it from our website www.HarrietTubmanByway.com. Access our smart phone app! Search "Harriet Tubman Byway" in iTunes and Google Play or go to <http://tubman.toursphere.com> on your phone.

We hope that you enjoy your journey and that you come back again to visit.

www.HarrietTubmanByway.com

