

**BA-3047**  
**Halethorpe African American Survey District**  
**Arbutus, Baltimore County**  
**1900-1950**

The historic village of Halethorpe is located in the Thirteenth District in Baltimore County. The African-American community in Halethorpe extends along North East Avenue, Spencer Street, and Washington Street. This land was once owned by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad prior to residential construction in the late 19th century. Many of the African-Americans that came to the area previously resided in Baltimore City. The area consists of 20th-century dwellings, in addition to one educational building, which was an African-American School.

The African-American community in Halethorpe was bounded by Washington Boulevard to the north, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to the south, Baltimore and Washington Railroad to the west, and Sulphur Spring Road to the east. Today, North East Avenue is the main north/south street with Douglas Street, Washington Street, and Spencer Street extending to the west off North East Avenue. This area has become a mixed race community rather than a strictly African-American neighborhood. The area considered for this survey district encompasses the three main streets historically considered African-American. Thirty-six contributing and twenty-six non-contributing buildings are located within the Halethorpe African American Survey District. This includes single-family residences and one school. Ranging in date from the turn of the 20th century to the present, the dwellings vary in size ranging from one story to two-and-a-half stories in height. The houses are predominantly wood frame construction and several are clad with brick. The dwellings are all modest vernacular houses with their forms categorizing them into styles such as Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Tudor Revival, and Spanish Revival. Many of the properties feature detached one-story wood-frame garages ranging in date from the 1930s to present.



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## 7. Description

Inventory No. BA-3047

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The African-American community in Halethorpe was bounded by Washington Boulevard to the north, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to the south, Baltimore and Washington Railroad to the west, and Sulphur Spring Road to the east. Today, North East Avenue is the main north/south street with Douglas Street, Washington Street, and Spencer Street extending to the west off North East Avenue. This area has become a mixed race community rather than a strictly African-American neighborhood. The area considered for this survey district encompasses the three main streets historically considered African-American.

Surrounding the Halethorpe Survey District are commercial buildings along Washington Boulevard, and industrial and packing companies on the east, south, and west. The area is made up of many new dwellings approximating 72% of the building stock. The oldest section remains on North East Avenue and its side streets.

The street pattern used in this entire neighborhood is important to understanding the demographics of Halethorpe. Typical of this African-American community and others are long streets with side streets that dead end. There is a lack of traverse streets between the north south streets. The reason for this stems from the concept of maintaining a dichotomous neighborhood--blacks separated from whites. Dead end streets and long avenues with very few side streets kept a neighborhood isolated and contained. By looking at a current map, the area north of Washington Boulevard maintains a grid pattern with side streets connecting the avenues. This is quite unlike the African American community of Halethorpe.

Thirty-six contributing and twenty-six non-contributing buildings are located within the Halethorpe African American Survey District. This includes single-family residences and one school. Ranging in date from the turn of the 20th century to the present, the dwellings vary in size ranging from one story to two-and-a-half stories in height. The houses are predominantly wood frame construction and several are clad with brick. The dwellings are all modest vernacular houses with their forms categorizing them into styles such as Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Tudor Revival, and Spanish Revival. Many of the properties feature detached one-story wood-frame garages ranging in date from the 1930s to present.

One Queen Anne-style dwelling, 2061 Northeast Avenue, stands at the northeast corner of Northeast and Spring Avenues. Dating to circa 1900, this house rises two-and-a-half stories in height, measures three bays wide, and features an L-shaped footprint. It is wood-frame construction reclad with aluminum siding and sits on a solid parged foundation. Features include an interior corbeled-brick chimney, diamond shaped window in the upper half story, and molded cornice returns. Additions include a half-hipped roof screened porch has been in the angle of the ell on the façade, and a shed roof one-story section on the rear elevation.

Older dwellings in the area date primarily from the 1920s and 1930s comprising the American Revival styles. Each of these houses maintain a straight line of set backs. The more recent construction tends to create more space between the public right of way and the dwelling. Most of the houses have been reclad with aluminum or vinyl siding. One dwelling on Spencer Street is a modest example of a one-story Spanish Revival dwelling clad with stucco. The foundations are a mix between random-rubble stone, rock-faced concrete block, and poured concrete for the newer houses. Many of the dwellings feature one-story full-width porches on the façade.

Constructed circa 1930, the single-family dwelling at 2038 Northeast Avenue is one example of a Colonial Revival-style house, particularly a Four Square form. Rising two-and-a-half stories high this dwelling measures two bays wide and is a double-pile form. Resting on a rock-faced concrete block foundation this wood-frame dwelling is capped with a low-pitched hipped roof. Aluminum siding covers the original weatherboard siding and the one-story porch across the full width of the house is screened. The porch is supported with a solid balustrade and rock-faced concrete block piers. Rising above the roof is one interior-end brick chimney.

The Dutch Colonial Revival style is exhibited at 2017 Northeast Avenue and dates to circa 1925. This dwelling is a one-and-a-half

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story wood-frame dwelling resting on a rock-faced concrete block foundation. This house measures three bays wide and is covered with a side-gambrel roof. Full-width shed dormers have been constructed on both the front and rear elevations. Features of the house include an inset enclosed porch on the façade and a replacement interior-end concrete-block chimney.

One historic icon of the neighborhood is the African-American school built in 1924 on North East Avenue near Washington Boulevard. The brick school stands one story high, measures two bays wide and rests on a solid random-rubble stone foundation. Capped with a hipped roof, the school is constructed of five-course American bond. The east and west elevations are illuminated with five large continuous 9/9 wood-sash windows on the side elevations. Both the front and rear elevations are two bays wide with one doorway on the south elevation filled in with brick. Rising above the asphalt-shingle roof is one brick interior chimney.

## 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

<b>Specific dates</b>	1900-1950	<b>Architect/Builder</b>	Unknown
<b>Construction dates</b>	1900-1950		

Evaluation for:

National Register                       Maryland Register                       not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The historic village of Halethorpe is located in the Thirteenth District in Baltimore County. The African-American community in Halethorpe extends along North East Avenue, Spencer Street, and Washington Street. This land was once owned by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad prior to residential construction in the late 19th century. Many of the African-Americans that came to the area previously resided in Baltimore City. The area consists of 20th-century dwellings, in addition to one educational building, which was an African-American School.

At the beginning of its development, the residents retained close ties with Baltimore City. The close proximity to the City allowed these residents to keep their prior church affiliation instead of establishing a church in Halethorpe.(1) To this day, there is no African-American church in the community.

According to the Sidney Atlas of 1850, the area was serviced by Washington Road to the north, Sulphur Spring Road to the east, Hammonds Ferry Road to the southeast, and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) to the south. Located south of Washington Road within the survey district were the farms owned by William Dunn and John Guff.(2)

Between 1850 and 1877, Halethorpe was impacted by the arrival of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad and the development of Washington Road as a turnpike. The area was predominantly, if not entirely, comprised of farmland owned by several owners maintaining small farmsteads. Winans Station was constructed at the intersection of the B&O and B&P Railroads. Thus, the area became an important transportation route with the railroads as well as the development of Washington Turnpike.

The area south of the Washington Turnpike, north of the B&O Railroad, with east and west boundaries of Sulphur Spring Road and Winans Station had a total of nine dwellings by 1877. The owners of the land included the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, George Krabb (with 12 acres), J. Duffern, F. Habenkorn, A. and C. Brandan, and the Canton Estate. Four of the nine dwellings in the area were located adjacent Washington Turnpike. A. and C. Brandan maintained 90 acres, with four dwellings in close proximity to one another on the property. The only public schoolhouse in the area noted on the Hopkins Atlas of 1877 is shown along Washington Turnpike east of Sulphur Spring Road.(3)

The majority of the houses in the African-American community of Halethorpe were constructed after 1915 suggested by the Bromley Atlas. By 1915, the African-American residents began to plat the area for development. Halethorpe Avenue, Spring Avenue, and North East Avenue were in place by this time. Residents along the east side of Halethorpe Avenue included P. Helman, H. Layner, W. Daren, and H. P. Grahd. South of Spring Avenue were R. Tyler and Elizabeth Kline with G. Spittle and G. Airley on the north side of Spring Avenue. Along the east side of North East Avenue was L.W. Jones, H. Bunting (with two lots), and V. Huber (with ownership of four lots). On the south side of Washington Road was J.A. Snyder and W. Daren.(4)

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The small area within Halethorpe known as the Oak Park development existed along Brady Avenue and Hill Avenue. This area was divided into small lots, three of which have houses by 1915. The owners of these properties include C.H. Bowersox, and C.W. and J.S. Hull with two lots. Other owners within the African-American community of Halethorpe included Thomas Flannery, W. Patterson, E.J. Baetjaer (with 97 acres), and the B&O Railroad. A Jewish Cemetery was located east of Oak Park and south of what is now called Old Washington Road. The African American schoolhouse is denoted on the atlas on the south side of Washington Road west of Halthorpe Avenue.(5)

Several of the African-American families listed in the 1930 census, all located along Northeast Avenue, include William Robinson, William Johnson, James Chambers, and Samuel Johnson. Interestingly, there were six white families listed in the census living on Northeast Avenue. The African Americans listed came from a variety of places in addition to Maryland such as South Carolina, Virginia, District of Columbia, New Jersey, and Canada. The majority of the families owned their property which ranged in value from \$2,500 to \$4,000. The properties that were rented were valued at \$40 a month. Interestingly, the 1930 census created a category for radio ownership and several of the families in Halethorpe did own radios. Male occupations of the African-American residents included laborer, carpenter, gardener, waiter, deliveryman, and chauffeur. The female residents who did work were maids or laundresses.(6)

Educating the children of Halethorpe in the late 19th century was accomplished at a one-room schoolhouse located on Washington Boulevard and Selma Road in Arbutus. In 1924, Halethorpe built a two-room schoolhouse on North East Avenue. The Halethorpe Colored School functioned for almost twenty years until 1943 when it was closed. Beginning in 1959, the two-room school on North East Avenue functions as a recreation building for the Halethorpe Civic League. Prior to 1959, the Halethorpe Colored School served as a nursing home.(7)

One important resident in the development of Halethorpe during the early 20th century was James T. Harris, who owned a moving business on Washington Boulevard. He is responsible for building eleven houses in Halethorpe.(8) The location of these eleven houses has not been identified.

In the late 1970s, Halethorpe contained approximately 280 residents according to an article written in *The Evening Sun* in Baltimore, Maryland.(9) According to the 1990 census provided by Baltimore County a total of 307 African Americans resided in Halethorpe. This includes the survey district and immediate surrounding areas.

### ENDNOTES

1. Louis S. Diggs, *Surviving in America: Histories of 7 Black Communities in Baltimore County Maryland*, (Uptown Press, 1998), p. 100.
2. J.C. Sidney, *Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland*, from *Original Surveys* (Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850).
3. *Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland* (Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877).
4. *Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland* (Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915).
5. *Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland* (Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915).
6. U.S. Census Bureau, 1930 U.S. Census, (National Archives).
7. Diggs, p. 102.
8. Diggs, p. 118.
9. Ellen L. James, *Enclave Residents Facing Problems of Long Neglect, Housing and Survival*. *The Evening Sun*. (Baltimore: October 24, 1977).
10. Baltimore County Census, 1990, (Baltimore County Planning Office).

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### OWNERSHIP AS OF NOVEMBER 7, 2002

Douglas Street            Baltimore County, MD -- tax id # 1312200640  
Map 109 Parcel 380      Court House, E. Halethorpe Rec Site  
                                 Baltimore, MD  
                                 Liber 5448 Folio 10

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 20 acres  
Acreage of historical setting unknown  
Quadrangle name Relay, MD Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Halethorpe is located near the historic village of Arbutus in the Thirteenth District of Baltimore County. The Halethorpe Survey District is comprised of dwellings along Northeast Avenue, Washington Street, Douglas Street, and Spencer Street. The area is associated with tax map 109.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title	Kristie Baynard, Architectural Historian		
organization	E.H.T. Tracerics	dat	11/8/2002
street and number	1121 Fifth Street, NW	telephone	202/393-1199
city or town	Washington	state DC	zip code 20001

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville MD 21032  
410-514-7600

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Baltimore County Census, 1990, Baltimore County Planning Commission.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. A History of Baltimore County. Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

Diggs, Louis S. Surviving in America: Histories of 7 Black Communities in Baltimore County Maryland. Uptown Press, 1998.

James, Ellen L. Enclave Residents Facing Problems of Long Neglect, Housing and Survival. The Evening Sun: Baltimore, October 24, 1977.

Map of Baltimore County. Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men. Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys. Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. The Census of 1930, Baltimore County, Maryland. National Archives.







