CAPSULE SUMMARY
BA-3087
Piney Grove African American Survey District
Boring
Baltimore County, MD
1850ca-1950s

The Piney Grove African American Survey District is located near the historic village of Boring in the Fourth District of Baltimore County. The African American residents in the area did not refer to their community as Boring but rather as Piney Grove. Today, the only remains of an African American community in Piney Grove are the United Methodist Church and the associated schoolhouse (BA-1177). The people that made up the African American community during the 19th century and early 20th century resided on Longnecker Road or Frye Road, north of Piney Grove Church. The Sidney Atlas of 1850 denotes the Piney Grove Church calling it the Colored Methodist Meeting House. The Piney Grove Schoolhouse also dates to circa 1850. In 1872, the Piney Grove Schoolhouse was one of the first schools recognized as a public school for African Americans by the Schools Commissioners of Baltimore County.

The Piney Grove United Methodist Church is one story high, two bays wide, and of wood-frame construction. The original church has a rectangular footprint and measures three bays deep and features a gable vestibule. Surrounding the Piney Grove U.M. Church is a cemetery most of which is sited to the south and southeast of the church. The cemetery contains approximately 125 marked graves. Of similar form as the neighboring church, the Piney Grove School, circa 1850, has a rectangular footprint and a gable addition on the southwest elevation. Two bays wide this single-pile schoolhouse rises one story in height and is capped with a side-gable roof.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-3087

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Piney Grove African American Survey District
other	

2. Location

street and number	Piney Grove Road, Frye Road	___	not for publication
city, town	Boring	___	vicinity
county	Baltimore County		

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	Multiple Ownership		
street and number		telephone	Not Available
city, town	state	zip code	

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Baltimore County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	tax map 31
city, town	Towson	liber	folio

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

___ Contributing Resource in National Register District
___ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
___ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Recorded by HABS/HAER
___ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
___ Other _____

6. Classification

Category
X district
___ building(s)
___ structure
___ site
___ object

Ownership
___ public
X private
___ both

Current Function
___ agriculture
___ commerce/trade
___ defense
X domestic
___ education
___ funerary
___ government
___ health care
___ industry
___ landscape
___ recreation/culture
X religion
___ social
___ transportation
___ work in progress
___ unknown
___ vacant/not in use
___ other: _____

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	9	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	9	Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
2

7. Description

Inventory No. BA-3087

Condition

___	excellent	___	deteriorated
___	good	___	ruins
X	fair	___	altered

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

The rural area of Piney Grove is located four miles north of Reisterstown in Baltimore County. The Piney Grove African American Survey District contains two historic properties; Piney Grove United Methodist Church and Piney Grove School (listed together as BA-1177). According to interviews conducted by Louis Diggs some of the African American residents historically resided along Frye Road. Today, no African Americans reside in Piney Grove. The historic dwellings along Frye Road have been replaced with houses from the late 1940's and the 1950's. The replacement dwellings suggest the African American residents moved out of the community during the mid-20th century.

Facing southwest, the Piney Grove United Methodist Church, built in 1850, is one story high, two bays wide, and of wood-frame construction. The original church has a rectangular footprint and measures three bays deep and features a gable vestibule. Standing on a random-rubble stone foundation, this building is capped with a front-gable roof sheathed with standing-seam metal. Features of the church include 6/6 wood-sash windows, two interior brick chimneys, and weatherboard siding with cornerboards. The recent addition located on the southwest elevation (façade) is two bays wide and two bays deep. This section rests on a poured concrete foundation, covered with a front-gable roof, and is clad with weatherboard siding. Each of the two double-leaf paneled wood doors is illuminated with a 4-light transom.

Surrounding the Piney Grove U.M. Church is a cemetery most of which is sited to the south and southeast of the church. The cemetery contains approximately 125 marked graves. Various types of markers include upright rounded markers and obelisks made out of marble, granite, and limestone. The earliest markers are sited close to the church on the northwest side. Many of the headstones are in fair or poor condition, several having been broken. The earliest headstone marks the grave of Diggs who died in 1860. Other internments include Hester A. Painter (1886), Samuel Lee Tobithn (1893) and Margaret Tobithn (1923). The cemetery predominantly dates from the late 1890s and early 1900s. The most recent marker has a date of 1995. On the southwest side of the church is a family lot enclosed by a low concrete enclosure. The cemetery is not organized according to strict adherence to symmetry with rows and columns of interments. Many of the markers are placed haphazardly around the church.

Of similar form as the neighboring church, the Piney Grove School, circa 1850, has a rectangular footprint and a gable addition on the southwest elevation. Two bays wide this single-pile schoolhouse rises one story in height and is capped with a side-gable roof. The main section of the building rests on random-rubble stone piers and the foundation to the side section has been replaced with poured concrete. Asphalt shingles cover the original weatherboard siding and the two single-leaf entries contain wood-paneled doors. Other features include a wood soffit, slightly overhanging eaves, and replacement 1/1 windows.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-3087

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

Specific dates	1850 ca.	**Architect/Builder**	Unknown
Construction dates	1850 ca		

Evaluation for:

_____ National Register _____ Maryland Register X 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 Piney Grove African American Survey District is located near the historic village of Boring in the Fourth District of Baltimore County. The Fourth District is bounded to the north by the Fifth District, to the east by the Eighth District, to the south by the Second and Third Districts and to the west by Carroll County. The Western Maryland Railroad runs from Owing's Mill northwest to Finksburg.(1)

The African American residents in the area did not refer to their community as Boring but rather as Piney Grove. Today, the only remains of an African American community in Piney Grove are the United Methodist Church and the associated schoolhouse (BA-1177). The people that made up the African American community during the 19th century and early 20th century resided on Longnecker Road or Frye Road, north of Piney Grove Church.

Piney Grove Church had its beginnings on July 8, 1848 when Henry Bushey and his wife Ruth deeded one acre of land to three trustees of the previously established Piney Grove congregation. The three trustees given the deed were Stephen Brooks, Joshua Derricks, and John B. Diggs.(2) The church was to be named Africans Pine Grove Chapel. Within two years of gaining the property the Piney Grove Church was built The Sidney Atlas of 1850 denotes the Piney Grove Church calling it the Colored Methodist Meeting House. (3) The Piney Grove Schoolhouse also dates to circa 1850. In 1872, the Piney Grove Schoolhouse was one of the first schools recognized as a public school for African Americans by the Schools Commissioners of Baltimore County. (4)

According to the 1850 census some of the African American residents of Piney Grove included Berry, Smith, Williams, Dett, Diggs, Jefferson, and Derricks. Many of the men worked as laborers, mostly on farms, while the women were employed as domestic servants to the white families.

Situated between Piney Grove Road and Old Hanover Road, the African American church is shown on the Hopkins Atlas of 1877. This map also denotes the colored school adjacent to the church. South of the church on Old Hanover Road is the residence of C. Derricks, a descendent of one of the church founders. To the north of the church G. Melkin resides.

According to the 1920 census one of the Piney Grove residents was Burton Diggs. Diggs, originally from Maryland, rented his property and was employed as a laborer. Another resident in the area in 1920 was Jacob G. Beckett. Originally from Virginia, Beckett also rented his property. With nine people in the Beckett family, several worked as servants to local white families. While the church continued to be a focal point for the community the school at Piney Grove was consolidated with Reisterstown's Black school in 1929. (5)

According to the church history of 1938, donations were made to the Piney Grove Church by Beard, Thompson, Berry, Diggs,

Keet, Migal, Dam, and Mack. The families of Berry and Diggs have remained in the area since at least 1850 according to the census. In 1946, donations to the church were given by Williams, Harris, Diggs, Mack, Berry, Milligan, Battle, Adams, Keets, Jefferson, Garrett, Baltimore, Beard, Holley, and Sugars. Six years later, donations were given by Harris, Berry, Williams, Jefferson, Wright, Thompson, Beard, and Garrett. Although the African-American community, which established Piney Grove is no longer in the area the church building and cemetery remain in use.(6)

ENDNOTES

1. J. Thomas Scharf, 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), 854
2. Louis S. Diggs, Holding On To Their Heritage (Baltimore County: Louis S. Diggs, 1997), 87.
3. J.C. Sidney, Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys (Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850).
4. Louis S. Diggs, History of Piney Grove found at www.louisdiggs.com/heritage/communitybldg.html, March 11, 2002.
5. Diggs, Holding On To Their Heritage, 93.
6. Diggs, 93.

OWNERSHIP AS OF MARCH 11, 2003

4929 Piney Grove Road	Piney Grove United Methodist Church -- tax id # 2300004318
map 31 parcel 26	Baltimore County Courthouse
	Liber not available

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-3087

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property	7.4 acres		
Acreage of historical setting	unknown		
Quadrangle name	Hampstead, MD	Quadrangle scale	1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Piney Grove African American Survey District is located near the historic village of Boring in the Fourth District of Baltimore County. The community is associated with tax map 31 since its development.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Kristie Baynard, Architectural Historian		
organization	E.H.T. Traceries	dat	2/24/2003
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

Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Census, 1990. Baltimore County Planning Office, 1990.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

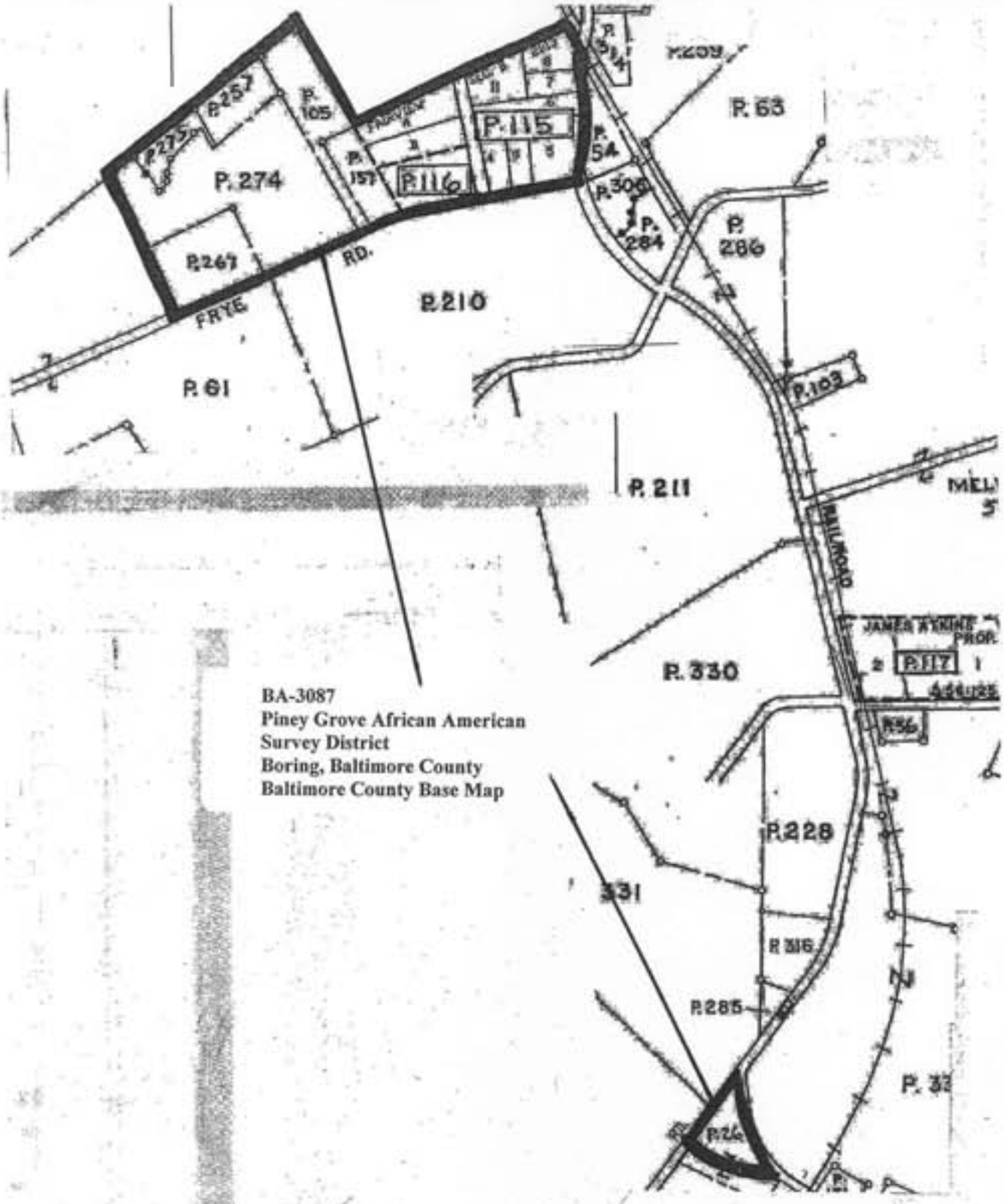
Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. A History of Baltimore County. Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

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.



BA-3087
Piney Grove African American
Survey District
Boring, Baltimore County
Baltimore County Base Map