



# THE LEGACY

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Spring 2014, Volume 51, Number 1*

## HCHS ACCEPTED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NETWORK TO FREEDOM PROGRAM

BY PAULETTE LUTZ

We are very excited to announce that the Howard County Historical Society (HCHS) has been approved and is nationally registered as a historic "stop" on the Underground Railroad. HCHS will be listed on the Network to Freedom web site at the National and State levels. The Network to Freedom program extols the historical significance of the Underground Railroad in the eradication of slavery and the evolution of our national civil rights movement, and its relevance in fostering the spirit of racial harmony and national recognition.

The National Park Service (NPS), through shared leadership with local, state and federal entities, as well as interested individuals and organizations, will:

- Promote programs and partnerships to commemorate
- Preserve sites and other resources associated with, and
- Educate the public about the historical significance of the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad (the resistance to enslavement through escape and flight, through the end of the Civil War) refers to the efforts of enslaved African Americans to gain their freedom.

While most began and completed their journeys unassisted, each subsequent decade in which slavery was legal in the United States saw an increase in active efforts to assist escape. After the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, the Underground Railroad was deliberate and organized.

NPS will direct researchers to our location to obtain copies of original manumission documents, slave ledgers, court records, marriage certificates, historic plantation information and photographs. The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom logo will be prominently displayed on our website and a link to our web site will be displayed on theirs.

HCHS will be listed in Maryland's



African American Heritage Travel Guide which is part of the VisitMaryland.org web site and brochures at the national level.

We would like to thank volunteers Cathy Eshmont and Paulette Lutz for their research and diligence in the documentation and application for the program. This major accomplishment is a stepping stone for building the African American Studies program for HCHS.

For more information on the Underground Railroad in Howard County, please be sure to stop by our booth at the Howard County Fair in August.

### HCHS MUSEUM

8328 Court Ave., Ellicott City, Maryland 21043  
(Formerly First Presbyterian Church)  
(410) 480-3250

Hours: Friday and Saturday:  
1:00 – 5:00 P.M.

[www.hchsmid.org](http://www.hchsmid.org)

### HCHS LIBRARY

New location: The Charles Miller Branch Library and Historical Center  
9421 Frederick Rd., Ellicott City, Maryland 21042  
(410) 480-3250 (voice & fax)

Hours: Tuesday, 1:00-8:00 P.M.  
Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, 1:00- 5:00 P.M.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

PAULETTE LUTZ

A depiction of Andrew Ellicott's compass is the symbol for the Howard County Historical Society (HCHS). Just as his compass provided direction and helped Andrew to chart a course for many projects, I hope to do the same for the Historical Society.

Having been involved in most aspects of the Society, I hope to bring ideas and energy to our operations that will help us maintain our high level of historical and educational programs, document historical findings and developments for the community, increase and improve our archives and museum artifacts, provide quality customer service and recruit more talented and dedicated volunteers.

My personal goal for 2014 is to make this the "year of making money." The projects listed above require funding to produce the level of quality that we strive to maintain for our community. It also necessitates the need to seek new funding sources and engage local businesses in our goals. If you know of a company or person who is willing to help, please contact us at 410-480-3250.

I have lived in Howard County for 55 years and have always loved living here because of its rich history, excellent education system and quality of living. I want to support this through the Society. I enthusiastically encourage our members to become involved in the Society. We have an inspiring variety of activities and I'm sure we can find a project that will interest you! ♣

## EDITOR'S NOTE

JANET KUSTERER

This edition of The Legacy features several new contributors, which is always nice to see. I am particularly interested in the search for Camp Johnson, and hope that a definitive answer

is forthcoming. The bootleggers party showed everyone that history can be fun, and the trunk program for kids gets them on board at an early age. Check our website often to see what's going on at the Library and the Museum. It's more fun to participate than to watch from the sidelines. We look forward to seeing you. ♣

## HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

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## SEND US YOUR ARTICLES

Anyone interested in contributing articles or photographs or anything of interest to the Society, please call the Library at 410-480-3250 or email Janet Kusterer at [janetkusterer@verizon.net](mailto:janetkusterer@verizon.net)



THE "BOOTLEGGERS PARADISE" PARTY HELD AT THE MUSEUM WAS FUN FOR ALL.

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

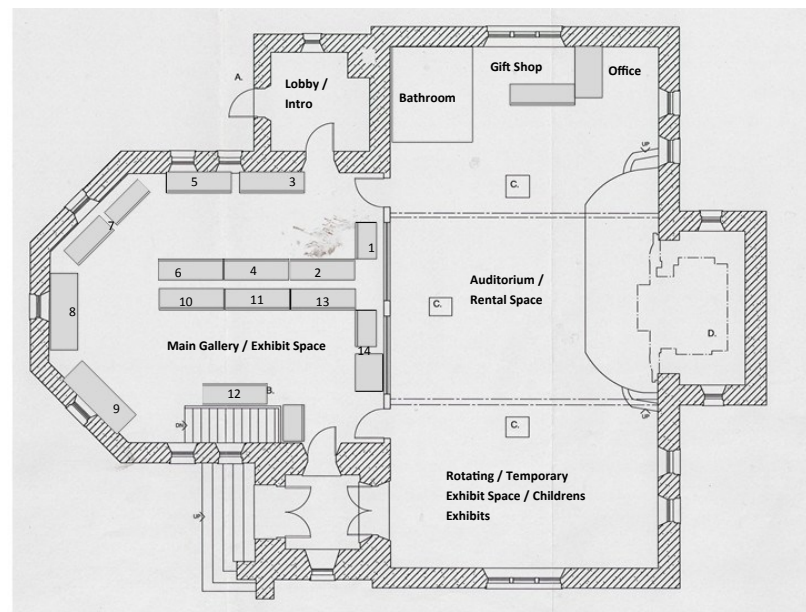
SHAWN GLADDEN

Spring is finally here and the Howard County Historical Society is hopping! It has already been an exciting start to the year with events, exhibit openings, increased membership, and educational programs, but we are just getting started.

The Howard County Historical Society was fortunate to be chosen for a Museum Assessment Program (MAP) evaluation by the American Association of Museums. A site visit was conducted in February by a museum peer named Shawn Herne, who is the chief curator at the Babe Ruth Birthplace and Sports Legends Museum in Baltimore. During his site visit, Mr. Herne and I reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of the Museum's "visitor experience" and came up with a tentative plan for museum improvements and exhibit updates. The proposed plan would allow for the following updates: a new bathroom on the museum main floor, the creation of a rotating exhibit space for seasonal exhibits, aesthetic updates to all the exhibits, and a reorganization of the exhibits into an interpretive design that will tell the history of the county thematically. A preliminary sketch of the new design can be seen above. We are awaiting the final report from Mr. Herne which will help us to plan out the next steps, but in the meantime, we have already begun our improvements.

Friday, April 4th we opened **Bootlegger's Paradise**, an expanded version of the Prohibition exhibit that we featured at last year's Howard County Fair. We kicked off the opening with a very well attended and successful Whiskey Tasting Party which featured a program by Whiskey America, food by The Rumor Mill on Main Street, and 1920's style jazz music performed by The Will Fischer Orchestra. This exhibit is an example of the types of "rotating" shows that we will feature from here on out.

Last year's **Museum Concert Series**,



### Main Gallery Pods

1. Native Americans
2. Land Grants
3. Carrolls
4. Dorseys
5. Revolution
6. Ellicotts
7. Early 19th Cent.
8. Civil War
9. Late 19th Cent.
10. Early 20th Cent.
11. World Wars
12. Rural HoCo
13. Columbia
14. Late 20th Cent.

was a great success as we were able to feature talented groups and performers like Ain't Misbehavin', OCEAN, and Scott Paynter. We are excited for this year's lineup as we welcome back those popular acts and welcome new ones like John Emil and 3 for the Road. Check our website for updates on 2014 shows. As an added benefit to membership with HCHS, all members receive free admission to Museum Concert shows. Space is limited for these shows, so only 10-15 tickets will be reserved for members per show, so pre-registration is required. If you see a show that you would like to attend, email [info@hchsmd.org](mailto:info@hchsmd.org) to reserve your space.

HCHS continues to work with dedicated researchers, archeologists, and historians as we try to solve a Howard County Civil War mystery...where was the Union encampment in Ellicott City during the war otherwise known as Camp Johnson? Working with colleagues like Bobby LaLuna, Lee Preston, Jackie Coats, Vince Zielinski, and Karen Griffith (to name a few) we have identified two potential areas that we will suggest to Howard Community College's Archeology team led by Dr. Laura Cripps. There are compelling arguments for both locations, one on the Howard County side near Patapsco Female Institute and the other on the Baltimore County side near Oella. Both of these arguments are

included in this edition of the Legacy and make for interesting reads. We hope to submit both sites to Dr. Cripps by the middle of the summer to see if we can get one step closer to finding the elusive location of this potentially exciting find.

As we look toward the future, we are excited about some of the other exciting events and exhibits coming to HCHS. We have booked the date for this year's Antique Appraisal Fair at Howard Community College (Saturday, October 4th) and the always popular Holiday House Tour (Sunday December 14th). We are currently looking for houses to include in this year's tour but should have a sneak peek by the next legacy. Mark your calendars now for these events as they are usually the two most well attended of the year.

Lastly, our membership committee is hard at work trying to develop additional benefits and events for you. We have set a date for a Members Event at Clarks Elioak Farm, Saturday June 21st 6:00-8:00. There will be family entertainment, food, and activities and we invite you to join us for free! A formal invite will be sent out within the next few weeks, but in the meantime mark your calendars!

On behalf of the volunteers and the board, we can say that the Society is moving in an exciting direction. Our events and exhibits are the talk of the town and we have only just begun. ♣



# THE SEARCH FOR CAMP JOHNSON: A NEW THEORY

BY JACKIE COATS

In the early evening of September 8th, 1862, the Twelfth New Jersey Volunteers arrived in Ellicott's Mills, were ordered off the filthy cattle cars that they travelled in, and marched up a high hill. Confusion ran high among the soldiers as they had expected to travel to Washington or Virginia, straight to the front of the line during the war. The soldiers settled in to rest for the evening and when they awoke the next morning, were ordered to set up camp, which was immediately dubbed Camp Johnson, after the regiment's own Colonel Robert C. Johnson. The troops later learned they had been detoured to this place by the War Department to protect the B&O Railroad against Captain Robert E Lee's advances. They quickly set up seven guard posts along the railroad and manned them night and day.

What the men found in Ellicott's Mills was quite different than what they had expected of "war times." Their days were filled with drills, cleaning, and being sent out on guard duty. Although drinking alcohol was prohibited, many men found a way to drink on a daily basis. Dances were held down in the town

and men were invited in for visits with locals while out on picket duty at the guard posts. It was quite a peaceful stay for them at Ellicott's Mills and only six soldiers died during their four months encamped high upon the hill, all of simple diseases.

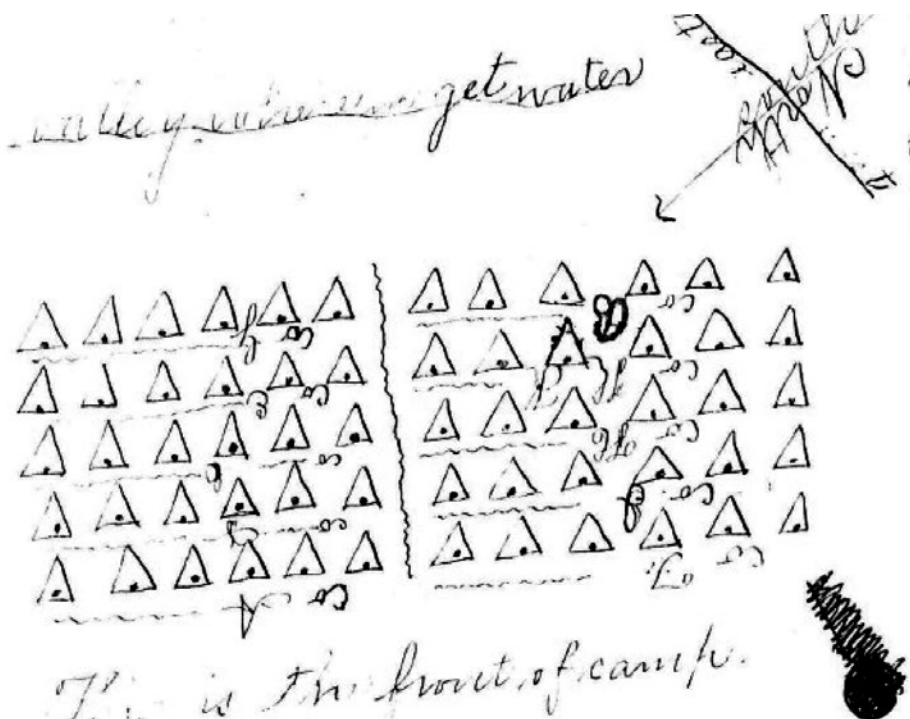
Since the beginning of the search for Camp Johnson in 2011, the camp has been thought to be located in Howard County, near the courthouse or above the Patapsco Female Institute. Many soldiers wrote of their arrival that they were ordered off the train and marched straight up a hill, with no mention of crossing the Patapsco River into Baltimore County. They also wrote of attending church, usually Emory United Methodist, and of being able to see the Patapsco Female Institute clearly, which is where the current marker for the camp is located.

In August 2013, new light was brought into the search for Camp Johnson by Jackie Coats, a dog trainer turned researcher by a simple trip to the Howard County Historical Society Museum. Coats was drawn to the museum to learn more about her town of Ellicott

City, but after two hours of chatting with a volunteer there, she knew she had to learn more about the camp. Her first steps were uncovering the location of the drill area that the troops walked roughly three miles to everyday, then known as the plantation of John W. Dorsey and now known as Papillon Drive in Ellicott City. Coats is currently working with the Howard County government to search the property for physical evidence that the troops were there.

Since joining the team of researchers for Camp Johnson, Coats has uncovered close to 400 pages of new letters, diaries, and journal entries. This new evidence heavily suggests that the camp is across the Patapsco River, in Oella, Baltimore County.

In a book titled "Letters Home from Civil War Soldier Charles Gamble," obtained from the Salem County Historical Society, Gamble writes of the camps close proximity to the Union Manufacturing Company, now known as Oella Mills. "We expect to stay here all winter but not in our tents. We have got the cotton factory to move in. It is about 300 yards from our camp so we shall not have far to move. The building is not in operation now and it is five stories high and built of stone." The troops never moved into the Union Manufacturing Company building and stayed at their camp until they left Ellicott's Mills on December 10, 1862. A diary of Alfred H Buck, obtained from Rutgers University – New Brunswick Special Collections/University Archives, also mentions the Union Manufacturing Company in his quest to help a camp cook, Andrew Hann. "I then went out to look for a stove for the kitchen. I found one in a house belonging to the Union Factory. It was a 9 plate stove and cost \$1.50. In the afternoon I bargained with a wagoner to bring it to camp." Although neither soldier's writings can solidify the theory of the camp being in Baltimore



County, many soldiers wrote home that loved ones letters should be directed to Ellicott's Mills, Baltimore County. In letters acquired from Civil War author Dr. Edward G. Longacre, soldier Christopher Mead wrote to his wife that "we are encamped in Baltimore County, MD, but the river runs between us and the post office here at the mills, the post office being in Howard County." This piece of evidence has been the defining factor in Coats' theory.

Mead also drew a rough sketch of the camp, shown on page 4, which fits Coats' theory that the camp was located

in Oella, between Westchester Avenue and Cooper Branch, noted on the map as the "valley where we get water."

In Buck's diary, he writes of many trips to visit townspeople, most of whom were located at "the bottom of the hill," which is now the location of Wilkins-Rogers Inc., a flour and corn meal milling company. One of the townspeople mentioned is Mrs. Triggs, whose home was set up as a make shift army hospital and quite a few men were transported down the hill to be treated by her instead of the feared camp doctor. Mead visited Triggs almost daily while Lieutenant Charles

Lippincott was being treated there.

Working with the metal detecting team Finders Seekers, Coats has scoured the hills of Oella and spread the word about the camp. Many Civil War artifacts have been uncovered, but nothing that links directly to the Twelfth New Jersey Regiment or Camp Johnson.

Although countless hours of research have been conducted, Coats is confident that there is still more evidence to be found and equally confident that we shall soon see the true location of Ellicott City's mysterious lost Civil War camp. ♣

## CAMP JOHNSON – ELLICOTT MILLS UNION ARMY CAMP – WHERE WERE YOU?

BY VINCE ZIELINSKI

On 8 September, 1862, the 12th New Jersey Infantry Regiment was ordered to Ellicott Mills, Maryland, to establish a camp (this was after the 34th Massachusetts Infantry was ordered there – that order was rescinded). Four days later, on 12 September, the 13th Pennsylvania Cavalry was ordered to provide a mounted patrol to the 12th NJ to help with the Regiment's provost duties (aka police duties). On 14 September, the camp at Ellicott Mills was officially named Camp Johnson, after the commander of the 12th NJ. These "flatlander" Yankee troops stayed in Ellicott Mills until December, 1862, when they were ordered to join the Army of the Potomac. A company of the 138th PA Infantry then moved into Ellicott Mills to protect the railroad.

All of the above information is fact – the order to establish the camp was issued by the Union Military Command in Baltimore (at first called the Middle Department, and then the 8th Corp). What we don't know, and this is the big question, is where the camp was physically located. A crew of volunteers have been searching for the location of the camp for years – it should be easy to

find, right? I mean, this was a camp of about 1000 Yankees, dropped in a town with Secessionist leanings, guarding a railroad which was a vital link of the Union war effort.

The problem has been the lack of evidence as to exactly where the camp was. Thanks to the tireless work of folks like Karen Griffith, Jackie Coats, Bobby LaLuna, Lee Preston, Dan Toomey, and others, letters have been found from the soldiers of the 12th NJ describing their camp life, some of the local attractions (and ladies, I mean what else do soldiers write home about?) and vague references to local landmarks. Put these all together, and the camp could be, well, anywhere. There are suggestions the camp could have been across the river in the Oella area since at the time Ellicott Mills was on both sides of the Patapsco. Additionally, some evidence suggests the camp may have been near the Patapsco Female Institute which has always been the traditionally held location. There is some evidence that the camp was in neither of these locations, but closer to the railroad station. But nothing (so far) that confirms any of these possible locations.

There is a school of Camp Johnson

thought that looks at the Howard County side of the river as the best possible site. If the 12th NJ was sent to guard the railroad, and patrol the town and its environs, putting it in Oella would allow the unit to be virtually cut off in the event of trouble in Ellicott Mills. There is only one real bridge on the old maps of Ellicott Mills across the river. Cut that bridge, and you keep anybody from the Baltimore County side from reaching the tracks and the town. And if your job was to police the town, why put the policemen across a bridge on the other side of the river?

Let us say the camp was on the Howard County side. Traditionally, the PFI has been the suggested location. But, finding a flat spot on the PFI grounds can be a problem – also, the site is heavily wooded, now and as then, and you don't drop a 1000 troopers in a forest. However, there are soldier's letters that mention a farm nearby and other spots up the PFI hill, so it is possible. But – and this is another big but, being up at the PFI puts the unit some distance from the town and that precious railroad. If there was trouble, the troops would have to form up and run down the hill to Main Street. For someone who was been a Union reenactor, my

*Continued on page 7*

## 2014 EVENTS

## MAY



TUES. 5/6

**History and Foods of the Early Chesapeake**

Local author Katie Moose examines the history, food, and herbs of the Chesapeake up to the War of 1812. Enjoy a cooking demonstration with foods of the period. Call 410-313-1950 to Register.

SAT. 5/17

**Museum Concert Series – Three Is A Crowd**

Eclectic mix of Rock & Pop from the 1960's to present day. \$15, free for members. Call 410-480-3250 to Register

## JUNE

SAT. &amp; SUN. 6/14 &amp; 6/15

**Colonial Craftsmen Weekend**

Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum. All ages, open to the public. Free, donations appreciated. Call 410-887-1081 for details.

SAT. 6/14

**Museum Concert Series—John Emil**

Roots and Blues performed by acclaimed slide guitarist. \$15, free for members. Call 410-480-3250 to Register.

SAT. 6/21

**Member Event at Clark's Elloak Farm, 6:00-8:00**

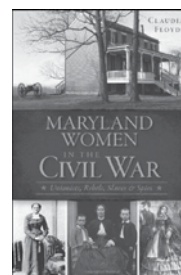
Free admission for members and a guest.

## JULY

SAT. &amp; SUN. 7/12 &amp; 7/13

**Howard County Monocacy Weekend**

Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Monocacy and Ellicott City's role in the Civil War. Activities TBD



TUES. 7/15

**Book Signing & Lecture –****Claudia Floyd**

Maryland Women in the Civil War.

Call 410-480-3250 to Register

## AUGUST

8/2 TO 8/9

**Howard County Fair: Howard County Fairgrounds**

www.howardcountyfair.com for details

SAT. 10/4

**The Antique Appraisal Fair and Book Sale, Howard Community College**

SUN. 12/14

**Howard County Historical Society's Holiday House Tour**

## HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

☐ YES, I would like to join the HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND ENJOY MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS THAT INCLUDE A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE LEGACY, INVITATIONS TO EXCLUSIVE EVENTS, A 10% DISCOUNT ON PUBLICATIONS, PLUS A HANDSOME HCHS CAR MAGNET EMBLEM IF I JOIN AT THE CHARTER MEMBER LEVEL OR HIGHER.

MY CHECK, MADE PAYABLE TO THE HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, IS FOR THE FOLLOWING CATEGORY:

## MEMBERSHIPS

|                                     |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT    | \$10  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE     | \$35  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY     | \$50  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SUSTAINING | \$125 |

## CORPORATE MEMBERSHIPS

|                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BRONZE | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SILVER | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOLD   | \$500 |

☐ PLEASE UPGRADE MY CURRENT MEMBERSHIP TO CHARTER MEMBERSHIP LEVEL WITH THE ENCLOSED \$30 DONATION AND SEND ME AN HCHS CAR MAGNET. INCLUDES ALL BENEFITS PLUS RECOGNITION IN THE LEGACY.



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_



PLEASE MAIL THIS COMPLETED FORM AND CHECK TO:  
HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P.O. Box 109, ELlicott City, MD 21041



*Continued from page 5*

experience tells me that forming up a large unit and running with all your equipment is not easy. And while no army ever makes anything easy, armies do try to make things workable (OK, any other veteran out there knows that what the military considers “workable” and what really is are not the same thing).

If Oella is on the wrong side of the river and the PFI is too far and too high above the town, what are we left with? There was a sheep pasture right above College Avenue during the 1860’s. If you look on old maps, it looks relatively flat and open. And there are some references to being “150 feet” from the rail line and along the Patapsco, and there was stream running through that area from a spring. Now, are there any letters, maps, or any documentary evidence that points to the College Avenue site? Not really – some references are so vague that they may be to Oella, College Avenue, or PFI references but nothing strong enough to “nail down” that location. And speaking of nails, we know from Talbot’s Lumber ledgers that the 12th NJ starting buying firewood by the cord every week after they arrived. So wherever they were, they either didn’t cut down local trees (or were told not to by their command) or there were no local trees such as in a sheep pasture. And in October/November, they

started buying large amounts of cut wood, in board feet, and nails and hardware for construction of winter quarters.

The bottom line here is that this Camp Johnson crew needs your help. We have official orders, we have soldier’s letters, but we don’t have any “third party” references. By third party, I mean the inhabitants of Ellicott Mills. It seems incredible to me that we have been unable to locate a single letter, a journal, a note, a newspaper article from this time period that talks about the camp. One thousand Yankees suddenly appear in the middle of secessionist Ellicott Mills and nobody mentions it? Yes, I realize that numerous records from the war were destroyed after the Yankees won (which they did, in spite of what some of my Southern brothers and sisters might say). I found blanks in records in the Historical Society files that end in 1859 and don’t start again until 1865. But somewhere out there, hopefully within this readership, there is something which tells us where the Yankees (or whatever your relatives might have called them) were. Any help will be appreciated.

For now, the search continues. This is important for us because, as I’ve mentioned above, two of the three possible locations are in Howard County. So, Howard Countians, this is OUR camp and we need to find it – on our side! ♣

## UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS DOCUMENTATION BEGINS!



ABOVE: FRONT L TO R; CENTENNIAL STUDENTS SARA DEMING, NINA LEE, HUA ZHOU, HYUN AN (BY COMPUTER). NOT SHOWN BEN SMITH. BACK L TO R; DR. PHILIP MERRILL, CATHY ESHMONT, MICHELLE BROWN AND STEPHANIE DAIRSOW, KEITH COLEMAN (SEATED) – HCHS VOLUNTEERS. BELOW: FOURTH REGIMENT USCT INFANTRY, ORGANIZED IN BALTIMORE IN 1863

Dr. Philip Merrill, Chairman of the African American Studies Program for Howard County Historical Society and Cathy Eshmont Project Lead and Volunteer Coordinator for HCHS are working with National Honor Society students from Centennial High School to identify and document Howard County soldiers who served with the various United States Colored Troops (USCT) during the Civil War.

The USCT were regiments in the United States Army composed of African American soldiers who were first recruited or drafted during the Civil War. By the end of the war in April 1865, the 175 USCT Regiments constituted about one-tenth of the manpower of the Union Army.

Hyan An organized the Centennial Honor Society students, providing training and researching advice to identify the soldiers that were born and/or lived in Howard County. All data will be housed in the HCHS Archives to enhance the genealogical and historical information on the African American community. ♣



THE CIVIL WAR TRUNK PROGRAM AT THE MILLER LIBRARY ATTRACTED SOME VERY YOUNG RE-ENACTORS.





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