

Pine Street Walking Tour

A STORY OF COMMUNITY, FAITH,
HOPE, AND CHANGE

CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND





The Pine Street area of Cambridge was a self-sustaining African-American community during segregation.

Pine Street

Known as the “Black Wall Street” on Maryland’s Eastern Shore

For more than half of the 20th century, the city of Cambridge supported two bustling downtowns, two hearts beating in the same body, pumping the lifeblood of commerce and culture through two distinct communities. One downtown was and remains today centered along Race Street (named after a mill race), a traditional “Main Street” business corridor once so busy with foot and motor traffic that, more than any other place on the Eastern Shore, it resembled the commercial districts found in bigger cities such as Baltimore and Philadelphia. The other downtown, a mix of shops, churches, and houses defined by Pine Street, was only a block away and ran parallel to Race Street. It was just as vibrant as Race Street and, in many cases, livelier.

Race Street was predominantly white. Pine Street was a long-standing African-American community, with its

THANK YOU: Thank you to David “Nicky” Henry for supplying many of the photos used in this brochure. Mr. Henry wrote the two-book series, *Up Pine Street*. Thanks also to Bill Jarmon for his help and guidance.

Cambridge, Maryland

first black residents moving to that part of Cambridge in the early 1800s.

The Pine-Washington-High streets community was a vibrant center of black enterprise and culture from the 1920s into the 1960s. Most of the buildings—houses, barber shops, grocery stores, funeral homes, nightclubs, and music halls—were Black-owned and long-time residents recall how neighbors looked after one another and viewed their part of Cambridge with pride.

Pine Street’s successes went well beyond everyday commerce. Because the community embraced music, Pine Street became a favorite stopover on the “Chitlin’ Circuit” for many of the country’s best-known African-American musicians spanning the ages of jazz, big band, blues, and soul.

For Dorchester County African-Americans over the age of 60, the expression “up Pine Street” conjures memories of shopping and socializing along the city blocks from Washington to High streets.

“There were grocery stores, confectionary stores, restaurants, beauty salons, barber shops, pool halls, funeral homes, a drug store, an opera house, night clubs, antique shops, cleaners,” wrote Pine Street



Arvel Jenkins at the Community Lunch Room, located on the corner of Pine Street and Dunns Lane in 1939.

native David “Nicky” Henry, who compiled and published two important volumes in the *Up Pine Street* series about the community. “Tailors, seamstresses, boarding houses, shoe repair shops, and a vault-making business.” This workday bustle with its entrepreneurial energy wasn’t the only factor making Pine Street a key center of African-American life and culture on the Eastern Shore. Churches, too, played a central role on Pine Street—and had since they were first established in the community during slavery times, in the mid-1800s.

Civil rights movement

The Pine Street downtown and its nearby residential neighborhoods, so full of energy that it was nicknamed “little New York,” fell upon hard times in the 1950s with the decline of local industry. Many Cambridge Blacks were dependent upon Phillips Packing Company, one of the biggest tomato canning outfits in the country, for jobs and, in some cases, housing.

When the company was sold in 1957, the economic ill effects contributed directly to the decline of Pine Street and ultimately fed the development of “The Cambridge Movement,” a nationally significant chapter in the civil rights struggle. It was here in the Pine Street community, and in demonstrations on neighboring Race Street, that community activists sought to expand the goals for the civil rights movement from the public accommodations and voting rights that dominated in the Deep South into the areas of housing, jobs, and economic justice.

During the turbulent 1960s, Pine Street thrust Cambridge before a worldwide audience when it emerged as one of the most important battlegrounds in the civil rights movement. Gloria Richardson, the daughter of a Cambridge pharmacist, was but one of the home-grown leaders who helped define the movement’s goals, first for integration of public accommodations and later for equal treatment in housing, employment, education, and health care.

After protests turned violent in June 1963, the National Guard came in—and imposed martial law for more than a year.

On the night of July 24, 1967, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee chairman H. Rap Brown appeared in Cambridge at the invitation of local black leaders. He climbed atop a car that night

The Charles Cornish Garage in 1927, then located in the 500 block of Pine Street. Pictured is Charles Cornish, his two daughters, and a friend.





Pine Street after the fire destroyed two blocks of the community in July 1967.

and exhorted Blacks to be more aggressive in their struggle for equality. Several hours later, a fire broke out at Pine Street Elementary School, but firefighters were kept away from the blaze by city officials who feared for their safety after Brown's speech. The fire spread across two square blocks, reducing much of Pine Street's famous downtown to ashes. The cause of the fire has never been firmly established. This single event, however, in many ways came to define Cambridge and its Pine Street community in the national media.

Five decades after the fire, the Pine Street community remains an important center for African-American life and culture in Cambridge. It's home to influential religious institutions, such as Bethel AME, Waugh United Methodist, and Mount Olive Baptist churches; it's home to vibrant fraternal organizations, most notably the Dorchester Elks Lodge 223. Pine Street may no longer be the downtown it once was, but it is no less important. Historically and culturally, it is a unique part of the fabric of Cambridge.

TAKE A WALK: This walking tour highlights some of the important places in the history of the Pine Street community, as well as sites related to local African-American heritage. We welcome you to walk through history.

Gloria Richardson, civil rights leader

Charismatic and outspoken, Gloria Richardson was the first woman in the country to lead a grass-roots civil rights campaign outside the deep South. She grew up in Cambridge, but didn't get involved with civil rights until after her daughter Donna joined the SNCC in the early 1960s. Richardson helped form the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee (CNAC), the only affiliate of the SNCC that was not student-led. As the head of the CNAC, Richardson changed the focus of the protests to demand not only desegregation, but also good jobs, housing, schools, and health care.

She was an early advocate for the use of violence in self-defense when necessary, a position that helped push parts of the national civil rights movement toward militancy.

U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy summoned her to Washington for face-to-face negotiations in July 1963. The following month, Richardson went to the March on Washington, where she was one of six "Negro Women Fighters for Freedom" on the program.

Richardson resigned from the CNAC in the summer of 1964 and moved to New York City, where she continued to be involved in civil rights organizations.

On February 11, 2017, the state of Maryland honored her legacy by dedicating the day as "Gloria Richardson Day."



Walking Tour Map

The Pine Street Walking Tour brochure was created in partnership with the Dorchester County Health Department. To encourage walking, we have included the mileage between stops on the map. The entire route is about 1.3 miles.



1 Long Wharf

High & Water Streets

As a deep-water tributary of the Chesapeake Bay, the Choptank River was a commercial artery of the Eastern Shore since colonial times. Cargoes of timber, tobacco, and farm harvests were hoisted by dockworkers to waiting ships.



During the early years of the slave trade, captive Africans were unloaded here too. Later, thousands of enslaved people were shipped from Long Wharf to plantations in the South.

As part of the Underground Railroad, the Choptank River also served as a route to freedom. Slaves fleeing on foot knew to follow the river's course north to its headwaters in Delaware. Some escapees hid aboard vessels, aided by captains or crewmen willing to take the risk. Penalties for assisting runaways were steep.

2 Bayly House

207 High Street

The Bayly House was built in Annapolis and moved to Cambridge on a barge. It was placed on the site of the present courthouse. The house was moved from the courthouse property to its present site in 1750. Enslaved Benjamin "Ben" Jennifer was the property of Josiah Bayly. Mr. Jennifer moved about as a freeman. He used his skills as an independent entrepreneur. He supported himself and assisted free people of color. The rear of this home is a slave house designated by the National Preservation Scholars. (Note: this is a private residence.)

3 Josiah Bayly Law Office

211 High Street

Cambridge's earliest surviving office building was built in 1797 by the Maryland State Attorney General Josiah Bayly. He represented the infamous Patty Cannon, who was involved in stealing and selling slaves and charged with several murders.



4 Dorchester County Court House

206 High Street

The current building dates to 1854, but there was an earlier courthouse here destroyed by fire. African-American records of enslavement, auctions, transfer of human property, and related materials were lost in that fire. This was also the site of the first escape that Harriet Tubman engineered: Her niece Kessiah Bowley and her two children escaped from the slave auction block in 1850, meeting up with Tubman in Baltimore and later reaching freedom in Philadelphia. This courthouse is also where Samuel Green, a free Black preacher from nearby East New Market, was tried and

sentenced to 10 years in prison in 1857 for owning a copy of the anti-slavery booklet *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In 1970, the building was damaged by a bomb shortly before the trial of H. Rap Brown, who had been indicted on arson and inciting to riot charges in Cambridge in 1967.



SIDELIGHT

Harriet Tubman

More than a century before the civil rights movement, Harriet Tubman was leading her own resistance movement on the Eastern Shore. Born into slavery in Dorchester County, just a few miles from Pine Street, Tubman escaped to freedom in 1849. She returned more than a dozen times—

each time risking her life—to lead friends and family out of slavery. For the last few decades, local residents worked on a grassroots level to preserve and promote her legacy. Today her story is shared at the Harriet Tubman Museum and Educational Center at 424 Race Street in Cambridge, as well as at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in nearby Church Creek, which opened in 2017.



SIDELIGHT

Christ Episcopal Church

Although this church at 601 Church Street has not played a significant role in the lives of local African-Americans, it is a historic treasure. The parish dates back to 1692; the current structure was completed in 1883. Five governors of Maryland were communicants of the church; four of them are buried in the cemetery and a monument stands to the fifth. Graves of some Revolutionary War patriots are here as well.

5 Old Jail

High Street (no longer standing)

Designed by Baltimore architect Charles L. Carson, the stone Romanesque-Revival jail was built in 1882. Sit-ins and boycotts were organized at this location in the 1960s when protesters were jailed during many "freedom walks" in the city of Cambridge to protest segregation. The building was torn down in 1994 to make way for an expansion of the Dorchester County Circuit Courthouse at 206 High Street.



6 Waugh Chapel United Methodist Church

425 High Street

Waugh Church is the site of the oldest Black Methodist congregation in Cambridge. It was founded by free Blacks in 1826—long before the Civil War. Because colored people were not permitted legally to purchase, own or hold property (including church property) at that time, White trustees were authorized to be the legal owners of Waugh Chapel. Churches were built on this site in 1826, 1838, 1872, and 1901. The present church was built in 2007.

The first church building was a plain wooden structure and named in honor of Beverly Waugh, who was a



popular preacher of Peninsula Methodism and who later became one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Nearly two centuries later, Waugh Chapel United Methodist Church is still a thriving church in the heart of the African-American community.

7 Elks Lodge

618 Pine Street



The Improved Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the World (IBPOE of W) Dorchester Lodge #223, also known as the Elks Lodge, has been an anchor in the African-American community for nearly a century. The lodge was a part of the "Chitlin'

Circuit," a set of venues identified throughout the country where it was considered safe for African-American entertainers to perform. During civil unrest and the historic fires that destroyed several blocks of the African-American community in 1967, the original Elks Lodge was lost. They were one of very few who rebuilt shortly after the fire.

SIDELIGHT

Music on Pine Street



ELLA FITZGERALD

In the first half of the 20th century, Pine Street in Cambridge pulsed to the music of the world's greatest jazz and blues musicians. The neighborhood was then a stop on the "Chitlin' Circuit," the network of nightclubs and theaters traveled by African-American performers during the days of segregation.

Fans from all over the Eastern Shore flocked to Pine Street to see concerts at Green's Opera House, Greene's Savoy and the Elks Home. There, they danced to the sounds of Ella Fitzgerald, Ray Charles, Count Basie, Cab Calloway and Billy Eckstine. William C. Handy, considered "Father of the Blues," performed here. So did bandleaders Duke Ellington and Noble Sissle and clarinetist Sidney Bechet. Later, Cambridge rocked to the rhythms of Lloyd Price, Little Richard, Fats Domino, Larry Williams, Bill Doggett and James Brown, among others.



8 Pine Street School

615 Pine Street (no longer standing)

The Pine Street School built here about 1918 was the pride of the African-American community in Cambridge. The segregated school building was used for classes from first through seventh grade.

The school was destroyed by fire on July 24, 1967 during civil unrest. However, many of its alumni, ablaze with positivism, determination and goodwill, have made historical, professional and educational achievements throughout the country.

Pine Street Elementary School will always have a treasured place in the hearts of not only students, but also the parents, relatives, and members of the community it so graciously served.

The Empowerment Center opened on this site in 2003 and continues to serve the community.

SIDELIGHT

Phillips Packing Company

Phillips Packing Company was formed in Cambridge in 1902 and quickly grew to become the world's largest packer of tomato products. It was Cambridge's largest employer for years, employing thousands. Phillips was a source of employment for Black workers who generally had lower paying and less desirable jobs than White workers until the company's decline in the mid to late 1950s. In 1937, a massive strike brought together both Black and White workers on the picket line—a brief show of interracial unity. Phillips closed its doors in the early 1960s, devastating the local economy and leading to widespread unemployment in the African-American community.



9 Bethel A.M.E. Church

623 Pine Street



The parish formed in 1847 when a group of free Black residents purchased this land for \$125. It is the oldest African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church in Cambridge.

The current structure, the third to house the congregation, was built in 1903 to replace a wooden structure from the 1870s.

During the time of civil unrest in Cambridge in the 1960s, Bethel was considered the headquarters of the civil

rights movement. Many rallies and meetings were held at Bethel to help with the fight for equality.

10 Simmons Center Market

600 Race Street

A family-owned landmark, Simmons is one of the oldest grocery stores still in business on the Eastern Shore. Opened in 1937 by Jimmy and Elizabeth Simmons, it became the first self-service grocery store on the Eastern Shore in 1945.



COURTESY SIMMONS CENTER MKT

Simmons was one of the few businesses on the predominantly White Race Street that served the African-American community during the time of segregation. The market is still run by the same family today.

11 Arcade/Dorset Theater

504 Race Street

The Arcade was open from the 1920s through 1961, when it reopened as the Dorset Theater. During the time of segregation, African-Americans were forced to sit in the balcony of the theater. It was the site of many demonstrations in the 1960s. It was integrated in the 1970s.



12 Grace United Methodist Church

501 Race Street

The church opened for services in August 1883, with Bishop John G. Granberry preaching the dedication sermon. Grace Church was called a "model of architectural beauty and symmetry." The original gray stone exterior of the church has not changed, although several additions over the years have brought the church to its present design.

Grace Church was borne of strife. In the mid-1800s, the Methodist Episcopal Church was split nationally over the issue of slavery. In Cambridge, the dissenters split from Zion M.E. Church a few blocks over and formed Grace M.E. Church (South) in 1865. The name was changed to Grace United Methodist Church in 1968.



13 Harriet Tubman Museum & Educational Center

424 Race Street



The Harriet Tubman Museum and Educational Center is one of the oldest community organizations dedicated to the memory of Harriet Tubman. Over the past three decades, their efforts have included memorials to Tubman, tours to significant sites associated with her life, museum exhibits, educational programming, celebrations and community outreach.

Founded in the 1980s, the Harriet Tubman Organization is dedicated to preserving Tubman's connection to the local community and to helping young people see Tubman as a role model.

14 Dizzyland

400 Race Street

In response to continued segregation in the 1960s, African-Americans in Cambridge waged a sit-in at the Dizzyland Restaurant. Race Street marked one of the dividing points between African-Americans and others in

Cambridge, and the Dizzyland Restaurant continued its policy of refusing service to African-Americans even as other establishments abandoned segregation. 1963 saw some increased tensions as counter-protesters became increasingly violent towards White and Black progressives who favored racial integration. In addition, the Cambridge police became increasingly forceful in the way they interacted with protesters.



On July 10, 1963, a brutal dispute took place as protesters and counter-protesters and police clashed outside the Dizzyland restaurant. These demonstrations and the violent response of White counter-protesters led to the deployment of the Maryland National Guard. During one of the sit-ins outside the restaurant, the police dragged three demonstrators from the restaurant before assaulting and arresting them.



Prominent people of the Pine Street community

City Commissioner Charles E. Cornish

Charles E. Cornish was the City Commissioner for the Second Ward in Cambridge. He began in that position in 1935 and remained there until 1969. While in office, he was appointed President of the City Commissioners. In addition, he seconded the motion of Dwight D. Eisenhower to be nominated as candidate for the President of the United States under the Republican National Party.



Commissioner H. Maynadier St. Clair

Lighting a cigar is H. Maynadier St. Clair, City Commissioner for the (then) Second Ward of Cambridge, who held that position for 34 years. He was the father of Herbert M. St. Clair, Jr., grandfather to Herbert M. St. Clair, III and uncle to Gloria Richardson Dandridge.



First African American Self-Made Attorney

Stephen Edward Wesley Camper was the first attorney of his own making who also taught himself to use shorthand to take notes. Among other talents, he was an outstanding teacher, farmer, musician, stenographer, and father. He practiced law in Cambridge around 1897.



Gloria Richardson's Lieutenant Frederick Douglass Jackson Jr.

A leader in the Cambridge Movement, he was considered Gloria Richardson's lieutenant. He got involved because of his commitment to get a better education for his children—and for all children. He attended protest organization meetings, protest marches, and stood with Ms. Richardson as often as needed.



Because he was so visible in his involvement, he was fired from several jobs. In 1968 he began his career with the Dorchester County Board of Education and became a truant officer and a tireless advocate to ensure children attended school regularly. One of his daughters, Victoria

Jackson-Stanley, became mayor of Cambridge.

Cambridge Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley

Victoria L. Jackson-Stanley is the first African-American and the first woman elected as Mayor of Cambridge. She is the daughter of Fred Jackson (see above). She is the recipient of the 2015 William Donald Schaefer Award from the Comptroller of Maryland and numerous citations, recognitions and awards.



Born and raised in Cambridge, Jackson-Stanley is a graduate of Cambridge High School. She earned a bachelor's degree from Salisbury State College and a master's from Howard University (both in social work). She retired after more than 40 years with the State of Maryland where she spent her career working with various Departments of Social Services on the Eastern Shore. She was elected mayor of Cambridge in 2008. She was sworn in for a third term in 2016.

SIDELIGHT

The Harriet Tubman Ambulance

The Harriet Tubman Ambulance, named in honor of the Underground Railroad hero, was the only one designated to transport African-Americans to the local hospital. People in the community pooled their money together and purchased this carrier in the 1940s.





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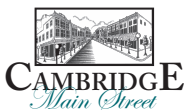
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