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To: Cherie Butler, Superintendent, HATU; Aiden Smith, OAH
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RE: HATU National Monument Scholars Roundtable White Paper Response

In November 2013, the National Park Service invited five scholars to Dorchester County, Maryland to participate in a roundtable discussion about interpretation of Harriet Tubman's life and legacy for the newly established Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument.¹ Joining the scholars and NPS professionals, were representatives from Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (BNWR), Maryland Department of Economic Development, the Organization of American Historians, local residents, and Haley Sharpe Design, the exhibit design firm. Initially guided by a set of questions framed by four themes - *Building Communities, Anchoring the Spirit, Paths Toward Freedom and Resistance, and Sharing Knowledge* - the discussion drew from the specialties and skill sets of each scholar, complimenting and enhancing each other's ideas and perspectives while examining the core elements of Tubman's life and legacy. One of the goals of the roundtable was to enhance NPS partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders and historians to ensure the incorporation of varied perspectives and views into innovative and challenging interpretation at NPS sites, particularly sites associated with controversial and emotionally charged subjects such as slavery and freedom at the Tubman National Monument.

NPS, Maryland State Parks, and the Maryland Department of Economic Development are partnering in the development of exhibits at the soon-to-be built Harriet Tubman Underground State Park and Visitor Center. An extensive resource packet that includes a significant body of research, artifacts, images, primary sources, and oral histories and interviews, has been created by the state to support interpretive exhibits and programming at the State Park and the newly established 125-mile Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway and All-American Road, and has been made available to NPS. With those resources in place, the scholars were encouraged to reflect on several issues relating to interpretation, drawing on the contexts suggested by the four NPS identified themes. Discussions spanned a variety of topics, including the complex interplay of history and memory, the "landscapes" of Tubman's life, differing interpretations of "literacy" and "illiteracy," the contours of Tubman's faith, African cultural heritage and retentions, modes of communication, and the particular nature of slavery on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Not all of the issues covered during the roundtable will be covered in this white paper, but a few warrant further attention.

Interpretation of Tubman's life and the context of her times have been influenced by a web of cultural, historical, and social dynamics and points of view. To a great extent, historical analysis and storytelling are shaped by competing notions and interpretations of the past. On the Eastern Shore of Maryland, history and the stories told by communities there are rooted in real and imagined memories about a time, a place, and people. Here, the geography of memory, (or the "genealogy of memory," as was mentioned during the roundtable discussions), can be complex and varied, and is sculpted by many factors, including race and ethnicity, community location, faith traditions, social, economic, and political dynamics, and the movement or migration of people.²

Much of the discussion during the roundtable was framed by the dynamic of the landscapes of Harriet Tubman's life. The core of the Tubman interpretive experience is rooted in the physical geography and topography of the fields, forests, paths, and waterways of the Eastern Shore of Maryland. These landscapes are physical and material, on the one hand, and intangible and nonphysical on the other. Harriet Tubman's community building, for instance, can be observed through the physical and human traces of those communities on the ground, and through the racial, familial, social, economic, and master-slave relationships that shaped and influenced her life. This might be called the geographies of her life: the geography of place, the geography of family, the geography of slavery and freedom, the geography of faith, of communication, of skills, of memory, of communities, and so on.

The geography of place has deep meaning for Tubman's life experience as well as for those communities within which she was raised and endured in slavery. Today's descendants of those historic communities still cherish and revere what many call their "home place." Rooting visitors in these places, such as her birth site at the Thompson plantation at Harrisville, the fields and woods of the Brodess farm and Bucktown, the forests, fields, wharves and creeks of Madison, the rivers and streams of Blackwater and the Choptank River estuary, and the Underground Railroad routes through Caroline County, can help visitors visualize the breadth and scope of the physical and social landscapes of Tubman's life. How did Tubman travel between these places? What paths (by water or land) would have been available to her and her family? How did the nature of the topography influence and shape physical and social interactions? How did social and familial relationships, within the context of slavery drive the manipulation of the environment, for instance? These are just a few of the questions that visitors may ask as they begin to explore the context and meaning of Tubman's life.

During the roundtable meeting, the scholars visited several significant sites in Dorchester County. These included Tubman's birth site at the former Anthony Thompson plantation at Harrisville, the historic Malone's AME Church at White Marsh, Madison, the Jacob Jackson/Harriet Tubman National Monument site, Stewart's Canal, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, the Tubman State Park site, and Bucktown, her childhood home. Though these are but a few of the sites throughout Dorchester and Caroline counties associated with Tubman and the Underground Railroad, they offered a foundation for discussions about the varied landscapes that shaped life in the antebellum period. A discussion in front of a large wall map of the Blackwater Refuge region in the Blackwater NWR Visitor Center helped demonstrate from a birds-eye view the breadth of the physical geography that Tubman and her family traversed in pursuit of work, family, and freedom. Significant free and enslaved communities central to Tubman's life were identified on this map, highlighting the spatial relationships between free, enslaved and blended communities in this upper south slavery-based society. Historic roads and paths, some only accessible by foot today, and water routes, which would have been utilized by Tubman and her family, were pointed out or conceptualized on the map.

The ideas about using maps to help interpret Tubman have been discussed frequently over the years while the Tubman Byway, State Park, and National Park projects evolved, and in fact the Tubman Byway is one interpretive mapping tool that leads visitors to various locations related to Tubman, the Underground Railroad, and other significant cultural sites. During the roundtable, discussions with exhibit designers from Haley Sharpe helped flesh out concepts for

an interactive mapping surface, where information and the histories associated with these significant sites (among others) can be enhanced to orient the visitor to a visually manageable landscape. Social and cultural contexts can be overlaid, revealing communities as they formed and how Tubman interacted with them, how she participated in their creation, revealing the history and nature of slavery and freedom in the process. Through this technique, and other interpretive elements, visitors can begin to understand and visualize the connections and vibrancy of Tubman's story through the lenses of *Family* relationships and dynamics, the nature and complexities of *Freedom* (both within and beyond this region), the physical and social dynamics of *Community* (both free and enslaved, black and white), and the contours of *Faith*.

For instance, highlighting the following communities reveals a lot of information about Tubman's home place: White Marsh Road in Madison around historic Malone's Church, including Jacob Jackson's home site and Stewart's canal to the west; the Anthony Thompson plantation south of Madison and Woolford on Harrisville Road; the Staplefort and Pattison plantations on the Little Blackwater River; and the Brodess farm and Bucktown Store in Bucktown.

Following the Civil War, a pre-existing African-American community established Malone's Methodist Episcopal Church (still extant today), formalizing community and faith ties that existed long before. This community's roots can be found in the Revolutionary War era, when white landowners began shifting more human and financial resources to this area to harvest the highly coveted timber and clearing land for agriculture. In addition to enslaved labor, white landowners also hired free black labor – a phenomenon that was occurring more commonly on the Eastern Shore as more slaveholders embraced the rhetoric of the American Revolution and were influenced by religious sentiment, began freeing some of their enslaved people. Several freed individuals established homes here starting in the 1790s, and both free and enslaved people worked and lived side-by-side in these forests and fields. Over time, additional manumissions and births of free children expanded a blended community of enslaved and free black families that permanently established itself here. Their struggles for freedom, faith, economic independence, and family safety were repeatedly challenged, but they persevered. Freedmen were able to provide more economic stability to families. Black land ownership in this area escalated throughout the early to mid 1800s, forming a permanent foundation for a community. Though barely visible on the landscape today, the place has significance to the descendants of these community builders seeking to preserve its heritage.

Beginning in the 1790's, a small but growing free black community established itself on lands near this church. Over the decades leading up to the Civil War, manumissions and free born people expanded this community. Much of this area became known as "Peter's Neck", and by the 1830s approximately 40 free families lived in this immediate area, the great majority having intermarried with dozens more enslaved families held in bondage by the local white landowners. Jacob Jackson and his family were also part of this free community as well. By the 1850s, nearly two dozen free families *owned* land here, including Jackson.³ This dense community grew and thrived into the 20th century.⁴

The significance of this community also lies within its connection to Harriet Tubman and her family. Tubman was born nearby on the Anthony Thompson plantation. Her father, Ben Ross, was enslaved by Thompson, whose 1000 acres plantation sat on the Blackwater River

south of Woolford and Madison, and included lands between White Marsh Road, Harrisville Road, and Thompson Creek. Set free in 1840, Ben lived here with his wife and several of his children on 10 acres he inherited here from Thompson.

The Thompson plantation is about a mile and a half through the woods from Malone's Church. Though Anthony Thompson enslaved over 40 people on his plantation, the community forged bonds with the free and enslaved communities nearby. This represents the familial and social world of Tubman and her family. Harriet spent her late teen and early adult years learning survival skills, nurturing strong spiritual faith, and forging valuable connections vital to her success navigating the Underground Railroad here. These close-knit communities – White Marsh, Madison, Harrisville and Peter's Neck – were linked by logging roads and footpaths. Through these connections, Tubman met her husband John Tubman, who had been born and raised free here, in the 1840s.

The landscapes of relationships spans many more miles and directions. The Thompson plantation sat about 6 miles to the west of the Staplefort and Pattison plantations and the Little Blackwater Bridge. A full one third of Thompson's enslaved people carried the surname "Manokey" or "Manoca," while several of the Staplefort enslaved people were named Manoca, too. To further demonstrate the close relationship between these communities of enslaved people, two of Thompson's enslaved men, Bill Banks and Isaac Kiah, for instance, were married to women enslaved by the Staplefort family.⁵ Furthermore, Harriet Tubman's grandmother, Modesty, was enslaved just across the modest Little Blackwater River from Staplefort farm in the late 1700s by tobacco farmer Atthow Pattison. Modesty's daughter, and Tubman's mother, Rit Green, lived here, too. The Pattisons and Stapleforts knew each other well, and given such close proximity of their farms, their enslaved people would have known each other well.

By the time Tubman was born, several people enslaved by the Staplefort family who had intermarried with several people enslaved by Anthony Thompson would become intimately involved with Tubman's family and her pursuit of freedom. Bill Banks's wife, Eliza Manokey would flee with Tubman's help in 1856. Harriet's older sister Linah Ross married Harkless Jolley, who was also enslaved by the Stapleforts. Linah and Harkless's daughter (Tubman's niece) Kessiah Jolley Bowley escaped in 1850 with Tubman's help.⁶

The intimacy between these white and black families reveals social and familial networks facilitated by navigation along the rivers (the distance by water was significantly shorter than traveling by rudimentary roads.) As a child and young adult, Tubman lived in a community that shared histories and memories of Africa, enslavement, freedom, and resistance (like Bob Manokey, who ran away from the Stapleforts in 1828). When she took her own liberty in the fall of 1849, she joined a long tradition of escape and resistance, some of it rooted in the accessibility of information and transportation via the waterways and the waterman who manned the many vessels plying these waters, and the network of familial and social relationships that spanned generations, as well as great and small physical distances.⁷

By interpreting the infrequently illuminated and lesser known story of free black families and communities before the Civil War, Tubman's African American heritage rooted in strong bonds of family, freedom, faith and community life will be shared with local residents and

visitors from afar. This heritage includes the history of seemingly disparate communities' pursuit of economic opportunity and education, and the important stories of the struggles of blended families of free and enslaved people, striving through great odds to make a way within the highly oppressive and segregated eras of slavery.

Highlighting the breadth and scope of the social and familial worlds of Tubman life can reveal the paths and ways she acquired vital skills fortified her and enabled her to survive her years navigating the Underground Railroad. Mapping these communities will also shed light on the possibilities and realities of the extensive communication systems that were required to keep families and communities connected, as well as transferring vital news and information from outside the region. Through her work on the docks in Madison, in the fields, and, on a timber gang, Tubman learned the secret networks of communication that were the provenance of black men, particularly black mariners. Tubman's father and others passed along the virtual map of communication networks of black mariners whose ships carried the timber and other goods to ports up and down the Chesapeake Bay, into Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and New England. Tubman's unique ability to effectively use this complicated network, combined with well-practiced survival skills enabled her to successfully manage her own escape, but the escapes of dozens more. Mapping the world of women who also played an important role in this communication network is another important element. Exploring the less obvious ways that women participated in this network could expand the interpretation of Tubman's particular experiences.

Providing the information and tools to read the physical as well as cultural landscapes will enhance the visitor's experience. Engaging the visitor in the varied landscapes Tubman navigated and how she and her family and friends traversed them can furnish visitors with an appreciation for the struggles the Ross family endured as they sought to maintain family ties over miles of terrain that included fields, woods, and water. Offering this interpretive element in the state park visitor center can set the stage for those visitors who will then move out onto the landscapes and immerse themselves in this history via the Tubman Byway and National Monument.

The narrative of Harriet Tubman is one of the most famous, and most repeated, liberation stories of our national history. Partially documented during the nineteenth century, Tubman's life story has been passed down through oral and printed (mostly juvenile) sources with little acknowledgement for historical accuracy. Interpretation of Tubman's life within the context of her times can be challenging when facing a variety of social, cultural, historic, and economic influences that have shaped and reshaped the interpretation of her history.

Challenges to Consider

NPS and Maryland State Parks face many challenges interpreting the story of enslavement on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, on landscapes where the descendants of the enslaved and the enslavers still live. Their interpretive approaches must be rooted in accurate, documented history and conveyed through respectful dialogue.

Dorchester County, the birthplace and childhood home of Harriet Tubman, has long maintained a rather awkward relationship to its most famous resident. Until the late 20th century, Annie Oakley, a brief resident who spent only a couple of years living in the county shooting wildlife in what is now the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, and the fictionalized novel *Chesapeake* by James Michener, received more attention than Tubman did. While that imbalanced attention has changed significantly in the past two decades due to the persistent efforts of the local black communities, tourism officials, and the State of Maryland, it remains a struggle. A deeply rooted and collective denial of the history of slavery, lingering racial tensions from the county's bitter Civil Rights era, significant social and economic issues facing the county (one of the poorest in the state), and a notable conservative anti-government attitude hampers preservation of the region's African American heritage and the development of tourism opportunities and heritage education featuring the history of slavery, the Underground Railroad, and Harriet Tubman. The creation of the Tubman Byway and the Tubman State Park, and the now the National Monument, however, have opened up the potential for significant inroads in sharing this extraordinary history and expanding opportunities for local residents to exploit the growing interest in heritage tourism.

Oral traditions and folk tales concerning Tubman's life remain strong in the area. Many of these beliefs have been heavily influenced by numerous fictionalized versions of Tubman's life story, including *A Woman Called Moses*, a novel written in the 1970s by Marci Heidish. In combination with flawed and inaccurate Tubman biographies written in the 19th and mid 20th centuries, and scores of fictionalized children's biographies that have flourished since the 1950s, these sources have served to suppress, to some degree, many memories rooted in the antebellum period. In fact, some of the wayside signs at a small Harriet Tubman Park along Route 50 in Cambridge include fictionalized characters, situations, and events drawn from Heidish's novel and the 1978 movie of the same name starring Cicely Tyson. Until the 1940s, local tradition recalled that Tubman and her family were from the Madison area. However, those memories were supplanted when Earl Conrad's 1943 biography, *Harriet Tubman* was published. Conrad, who never visited Dorchester County or Maryland, suffered from lack of access to numerous archival sources available to historians today. Based on his limited research, Conrad believed that Tubman was born and raised in Bucktown (among other things). Though he did uncover fascinating new details about Tubman's life, his inaccuracies helped re-imagine and reframe Tubman's story. Within a relatively short period of time, Tubman's story became synonymous with Bucktown, and the other sites of her life became obscured. Vestiges of the original historical memories remained with elders, but with their deaths those stories and memories are lost.

Conflicting and rival oral histories and traditions reveal a local struggle between different communities competing to tell their version of Tubman's story. Though stories about Tubman abound, there are no memories or oral traditions on the Eastern Shore relating to neither the scores of escapes from the region, nor memories of some of the most famous African American residents from the pre and post Civil War era. Most of the Choptank River region's Underground Railroad and escape stories, for instance, have been uncovered and reclaimed by historians, not through local oral traditions. Those memories of escape and freedom, if they exist at all, reside in the families and communities where the freedom seekers settled. Many of these freedom seekers established themselves in places like St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, and Central New

York cities and towns. They worked, owned homes, raised families, built churches, schools, and other organizations. They remained near each other, maintaining the close ties of family and friendship they shared under slavery in Maryland. Those are the places where memories may reside, though even in those communities today, without the historic fabric of the ancestral landscapes, many memories have been erased or distorted as well.

Using the latest research, and sharing with the visitor the familial and social communities within which Tubman grew up, worked, and ran away will serve to engage local residents as well as visitors. Engaging local communities is an important aspect of interpretive efforts.

According to one Dorchester County resident, Rev. Linda Wheatley, “the black community harbors suspicions from the past that they will be denied the economic benefits of tourism dollars generated by Tubman’s legacy.”⁸ While she believes this fear is unfounded, and that “the opportunity is here now for everyone to seize on it... There should be no winners or losers in this county because we have lost enough.” Sharing accurate, inclusive history will help relieve some of the tensions over the retelling of these stories. Ownership issues - who should tell Tubman’s story and who decides what gets told and where – can be mitigated through outreach to many different communities and people – both black and white. The Jacob Jackson site at the National Monument, the Tubman State Park at Blackwater, and other locations on and near the Harriet Tubman Byway are poised to share these stories. This, however, must be balanced against a countervailing reality that many residents in the region are not eager to share their roads, history (or folklore) with tourists. The presence of tourists driving and stopping on narrow back roads interrupts farm work and disturbs hunting excursions. The interpretation of Tubman’s life within this landscape requires sharing the places with people who live and work there, too.

A discussion amongst the scholars pondered the importance of language in the exhibits. While this discussion ranged from the historical use of the word “slave” versus the more contemporary use of the word “enslaved,” there are other elements of language that were examined. For instance, interpreting the stories of the Underground Railroad and the pursuit of freedom should be interpreted without assigning extraordinary skills or status to those who fled. Freedom seekers often left loved ones behind who could not, or would not, leave. Those perspectives should convey to the visitor a non-judgmental view of the realities of choosing, or being able to flee. Highlighting the difficulties of fleeing, including the obstacles (both personal and physical), and the opportunities, can help inform visitors of the human emotional costs to escaping slavery. The issue of Tubman’s “illiteracy” fostered a long discussion about the meaning of literacy. While Tubman could not read or write letters and words, she did possess “literacy.” Tubman’s “literacy” is located in her abilities to “read” the physical landscapes, to read cultural markers, to convey messages within her environment. These “literacies” are important elements of Tubman’s ability to control and manipulate her environment, to communicate, and survive. Conveying this concept to the visitor will broaden preconceived notions of literacy, and offer interpretive opportunities to engage visitors in the various ways to learn and communicate, other than by reading and writing words.

Another area of discussion focused on Tubman’s African roots. In response to questions about Tubman’s African ancestry, the group recommended that interpretation of African ancestral roots be approached cautiously. Though Tubman believed that she was descended from Asante peoples in West Africa, we have no direct documentation nor intangible evidence to

suggest this is true. Interpretation of the cultural influences in Tubman's life is a matter of conjecture and subjective analysis. Probably a second generation African American, Tubman was a Christian whose faith was derived from a spirituality that was nurtured through a blending of a variety of African cultural traditions and powerful evangelical Christian thought. But which ones were most important or relevant at any moment in her life? Deconstructing Tubman and assessing the influence of each factor in her personality and life choices and experiences is an approach beyond the scope of this paper, and perhaps could be explored more fully through academic symposia and conferences. But the questions are worth asking: To what extent does her life and personality reflect European, African, or blended cultural values, and how specific can we be about those values? There has been a significant body of new research in the past two decades about African cultural retentions and African ancestry. Research and conclusions gleaned from the ongoing *Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* have generated a reassessment of not only the volume of the trade, but offers more nuanced and sophisticated documentation and analysis of the origins and final landing sites of captive Africans in North, Central and South America, and Europe, and would be an important tool for NPS to explore as it begins to reflect on these questions.⁹

Where the white families who enslaved Tubman's family acquired their slaves in the first place is not known, but historical records reveal an active slave trade from Africa to the Chesapeake during the early to mid 18th century, disembarking over 18,000 slaves directly onto Maryland soil.¹⁰ In 1863, Bostonian Franklin Sanborn published the first known biography of Harriet Tubman, in the antislavery newspaper, *The Commonwealth*. According to Sanborn, Harriet was "the grand-daughter of a slave imported from Africa, and has not a drop of white blood in her veins."¹¹ In a later interview, reporter Frank Drake wrote that "the old mammies to whom she told [her] dreams were wont to nod knowingly and say, 'I reckon youse one o' dem 'Shantees', chile.' For they knew the tradition of the unconquerable Ashantee blood, which in a slave made him a thorn in the side of the planter or cane grower whose property he became, so that few of that race were in bondage."¹² Though little has come to light about any of Tubman's grandparents, it has been generally assumed at least one if not more came directly from Africa. Rit was known as Harriet "Rit" or "Rittia" Green, and so has usually been assumed that her father's surname was Green, though we cannot be sure.¹³ One interviewer wrote in that Tubman "knows that her mother's mother was brought in a slave ship from Africa, that her mother was the daughter of a white man, an American, and her father, a full blooded Negro."¹⁴ Rit's mother, Modesty, is the only person noted in the historical record as being one of Tubman's grandparents.¹⁵ Ben Ross's parentage remains unknown, though there is evidence of possible siblings and other relatives living in the county, both free and enslaved, which may provide avenues for further research.¹⁶ The "creolization" of this family and the larger Eastern Shore community perhaps more accurately reflects the combination of influences from Africa, Northern Europe, and North America (with some vestiges of Native America). As historian Mechal Sobel puts it, this was a "world they made together."¹⁷ African cultural influences, just like Northern European, are not monolithic. Cultural patterns of people in Central Africa are significantly different than patterns in West Africa, for instance.

African cultural practices surely persisted on the Eastern Shore, as evidenced by such African names as Ibo, Mingo, Winnebar, Sinta, Suke, and Binah in the census records, and descriptions in manumission records that include such identifying characteristics as "has holes in

his ears for bobs,” and “pattern on jaws.” As late as the 1830s and 1840, names such as Winnebar, Sinta, and Mingo, persist. One Eastern Shore man recalled that his grandfather enslaved an African by the name of Suck, and that his grandfather had purchased her from a “slave ship which had come up the Chesapeake Bay.” When he was a young boy, Suck told him that she had been a member of an African tribe that “was defeated in battle with another tribe and numbers of her people were captured” and sold to slave traders plying the African coast.¹⁸

Tubman and her family probably integrated a number of religious practices and ideas into their daily lives, such as Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, and even Quaker teachings, all religious denominations supported by local white masters intimately involved with Tubman’s family. Many slaves were required, like Tubman’s family, to attend the churches of their owners and temporary masters. Tubman’s religiosity, however, was a deeply personal spiritual experience, unquestionably rooted in powerful evangelical teachings, but also reinforced and nurtured by her experiences on the landscape, which may have been reinforced through certain African cultural traditions. Whatever her place of worship or the roots of her spirituality, there can be no doubt Tubman’s faith was deep and rooted in strong religious teachings. Thomas Garrett, a famous Underground Railroad agent, later wrote of Tubman that he “never met with any person, of any color, who had more confidence in the voice of God, as spoken direct to her soul and her faith in a Supreme Power truly was great.”¹⁹ Regardless of the exact nature of Tubman’s religious instructions, daily survival remained her biggest challenge.

Where might researchers look for influences on Tubman? This may require the assistance of trained folklorists, ethnographers and cultural historians, and specific experts like culinary historian Michael Twitty. Additional research in the following areas may reveal more about Tubman’s roots: language, music, food and foodways, architecture, agricultural practices, religious practices, death and burial customs, family, social, and gender conventions, medicinal and healing practices, and naming patterns.

Some additional thoughts and suggestions:

The National Park Service should consider hosting workshops or information sessions for individual historic communities in the region. With the help and resources of the Maryland State Archives, the Dorchester County Historical Society, and the Dorchester County Public Library, NPS could offer Saturday or evening sessions on how to research the roots of specific communities and families with professional educators and interpreters. Some historic communities have been abandoned, or their physical presence is now obscured or reconfigured by modern roads and buildings. Others have been lost or reconstituted by newer memories because of the physical movement of its residents to new places. The old memories of place and people have lost their context. By helping local people rediscover their historic communities, trust can be built and new ways of thinking about the past may emerge.

For instance, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, an agricultural recession forced many traditional farm families to abandon their farms and farm jobs in favor of steady employment in the canning factories in Cambridge, or industrial jobs in Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, and New Jersey. The memories and even physical vestiges of those historic communities left with the migration of people. To restore those memories, which may still exist

in scattered families or in transplanted faith communities, providing historical documentation and interpretation offers paths back to those memories, hopefully yielding exciting and tangible engagement in historical legacies and the Tubman National Monument.

Bibliography and Endnotes:

¹ Dann J. Broyle, Cheryl J. LaRoche, Kate Clifford Larson, Amy Murrell Taylor, and Margaret Washington.

² The shared and competitive dimension of memory between and among various communities has been a fast growing field in the social sciences for over two decades. The *Journal of Historical Geography*, British publication, explores questions and methodologies related to historical landscape, memory, and the environment, among its many other interdisciplinary articles related to historical geography. For our purposes here, the journal offers many articles regarding memory, history and geography, both physical and non-physical, such as the geographies of places and environments in the past and the dynamics of place, space and landscape. See, also, for instance, Steven Hoelscher and Derek H. Alderman, "Memory and place: geographies of a critical relationship," *Social & Cultural Geography*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2004; and seminal works by Pierre Nora, Michael Kammen, John Seeley, Bruce Brundage, James and Lois Horton, David Blight, and James McPherson, are just a few of the scholars who have influenced the field history and memory and its interpretive power in communities.

³ One of these freemen, Jeremiah Malone, lived here with his first wife Priscilla, and then his second wife, Rose Ann, and his children, Hester, Lucinda, Jane, and Sylvester. In July 1864 he deeded a portion of his property to a group of local black trustees - David Linthicum, James Keen, Vince Green, Drew Otho, and Murray Keene - to build a church and school. By 1866 a church building stood on this property, which was probably used as a school, community center and church.

⁴ The school closed during desegregation in the 1960s, and has since been demolished. The cemetery, which contains graves from the early 1870s and includes several Civil War veterans, is still in use by local families to bury their loved ones. As jobs lured people to the canning factories in Cambridge and beyond, it dwindled and the church closed in 1987.

⁵ See US Census, Dorchester County, MD, 1830; and see Estate Papers of Dorothy Staplefort, "Last Will and Testament of Dorothy Staplefort." Liber THH 1, Folio 251 (December 22, 1835) *Register of Wills, Dorchester County Court House*. Cambridge, MD. In 1835, Dorothy Staplefort enslaved 35 men, women and children

⁶ See Estate Papers of Dorothy Staplefort, "Last Will and Testament of Dorothy Staplefort." Liber THH 1, Folio 251 (December 22, 1835) *Register of Wills, Dorchester County Court House*; and Estate Papers" List of Anthony Thompson's Negroes, 1839." Levin Richardson Collection, 1758-1865. MS 1405. Maryland Historical Society. Baltimore, MD. See also, "Last Will and Testament of Anthony Thompson." Liber THH 1, Estate No. 0-65-C. *Register of Wills, Dorchester County Court House*. Estate No. 0-65-C. Cambridge, MD. See also "List of Anthony Thompson's Negroes, 1839." Levin Richardson Collection, 1758-1865. MS 1405. Maryland Historical Society. Baltimore, MD. Pattison, Atthow. "Will of Atthow Pattison, Est. #0-35-E." Dorchester County Court House, Registrar of Wills. Cambridge, MD. Bill Banks was a free man when Eliza ran away. He was set free in February, 1846. See "Anthony C. Thompson to John Manoca and William Banks, Negroes." *Dorchester County Court Chattel Records*. C691. 1-4-4-43, MDSA.

⁷ Other enslaved people fled from the Stapleforts as well. A teenage boy named Isaac fled in August, 1831 from John Stachell near Bucktown, the man to whom Isaac had been hired by the Stapleforts. John Staplefort, another of Dorothy Staplefort's sons, posted an advertisement warning people not to harbor or employ the boy, noting in particular the "keeper of the Nanticoke Bridge." See *Easton Gazette*, August 20, 1831. In 1837, another enslaved man, Charles Pinder, fled from Ann Staplefort, John's widow. He was captured in Baltimore. See Maryland State Archives, *Baltimore City and County Jail Runaway Docket*, Docket # 267. See also, Kate Clifford Larson, [Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero](#). New York: Ballantine Books, 2004.

⁸ "Presentation of Tubman Legacy Focus of Hearing. Locating Important Places in her Life Proving Problematic." Gail Dean, editor. *Easton Star Democrat*, December 2, 2004.

⁹ See The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database at Emory University: <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces>. For Maryland Specifically, see Lorena Walsh, "The Chesapeake Slave Trade: Regional Patterns, African Origins, and Some Implications," *The William and Mary Quarterly* LVIII, no. 1(2001): David Elytis, "The Volume and Structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: A Reassessment," *The William and Mary Quarterly* LVIII, no. 1(2001): 148. For Discussions of Africa and African retentions see: Michael A. Gomez, [Exchanging Our Country Marks](#).

The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998). Additional work by John Vlach (though his work is being challenged in some areas), Philip Morgan, Joseph Holloway, Robert Ferris Thompson, among many others.

Ivor Wilks, Forests of Gold: Essays on the Akan and the Kingdom of the Asante. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1993). 41-72. See also, Gomez, Exchanging, (105-113. Gomez expands upon this scholarship, using T.C.

McCaskie's work on the Asante. See T.C. McCaskie, State and Society in Pre-Colonial Asante Society, (Cambridge: 1995).

¹⁰ Lorena Walsh, "The Chesapeake Slave Trade: Regional Patterns, African Origins, and Some Implications," *The William and Mary Quarterly* LVIII, no. 1(2001): David Eltis, "The Volume and Structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: A Reassessment," *The William and Mary Quarterly* LVIII, no. 1(2001): 148.

¹¹ Sanborn, "Harriet Tubman, [July 17]." Sanborn would later write that she was "one degree removed from the wolds [sic] of Africa, her grandfather being an imported African of a chieftan family..." "The Late Araminta Davis: Better Known as 'Moses' or 'Harriet Tubman'." Franklin B. Sanborn Papers. Box 1, Folder 5. Box 1, Folder 5, American Antiquarian Society. Worcester, MA.

¹² Frank C. Drake, "The Moses of Her People. Amazing Life Work of Harriet Tubman," *New York Herald*, New York, Sept. 22, 1907.

¹³ Extensive analysis of manumission records, chattel records and court documents support the view that in general slave children carried the surname of the father, when known, in Dorchester County.

¹⁴ Ann Fitzhugh, "Harriet Tubman.," *American Review*, August 1912. 420. Miller is the granddaughter of Gerrit Smith, anti-slavery activist, Underground Railroad stationmaster, John Brown supporter, and a friend of Tubman's from Peterboro, New York. There is no other documentation suggesting that Rit's father was a white man. The identity of the white man remains unknown; Atthow Pattison seems a logical choice, or it could have been a man named Green; however this is indirect contrast to Sanborn's much earlier assertion that Tubman "has not a drop of white blood in her veins." See Sanborn, "Harriet Tubman [July 17]."

¹⁵ "Thompson Deposition, 1853." Interestingly, the name Modesty is very uncommon on the Eastern Shore, either as a name for white or black women. The name Modesty here should not be confused with the much more common "Modeste" found throughout Louisiana as a name for slaves and French white women alike. The name Modesty is found in Puritan records during the 17th and 18th centuries. Only one other "Modesty," a black slave, has been located in the Dorchester County census records, manumission records, or chattel records from 1790 to 1860. See "Pattison, Gourney Crow, to William Henson." Dorchester County Chattel Records. C691. 1-4-4-41, Maryland State Archives. Cambridge, MD.

¹⁶ March Ross, another enslaved man, and possibly Simon Ross, a free man.

¹⁷ See Michel Sobel, The World They Made Together. Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987). The Native American presence on the Eastern Shore of Maryland has been documented, however, that history has not been integrated as well into the histories of the region. This is partially because of the early demise of the local tribes, rapid assimilation with African Americans and European Americans, and forced migration away from the area during the 17th and 18th centuries. See *Maryland's Lower Choptank River and Tuckahoe River Cultural Resource Inventory* by Ralph E. Eshelman and Carl W. Scheffel, Jr. "The Native Americans of the region fished and oystered along the Choptank River long before Europeans arrived. The Choptank tribe was part of the Algonquin Nation. The last Indian Wars in what is now Dorchester County took place in 1677-1678. The Native Americans were placed into three reservations, each of about 4,000 acres - the reservation for the Choptank tribe was located along the Choptank River stretching from Jenkins Creek, west side of Cambridge to Secretary, Warwick River, and running three miles southward into the woods. The Choptank tribe paid a land rent of six beaver skins a year to the Maryland government. Colonel Thomas Ennalls bought 4,660 acres from the Choptanks on August 13, 1704. This land extended along the south bank of the Choptank from Shoal Creek to Ennalls Creek. In 1767 the Choptank Indians were invited by the General Assembly of Maryland to sell their lands; many of the Choptanks remained and assimilated into the population. The Choptank and Delaware Indian Trail once ran across Dorchester County through New Market and on to the Delaware Bay."

¹⁸ Joseph B. Seth, Mary W. Seth, Recollections of a Long Life on the Eastern Shore, (Easton, MD: Press of the Star-Democrat, 1926). 31. Seth had erroneously construed that Suck was not a real name. "She could give no name, except a sound, like suck, so she was known as 'Suck' all her days." Seth may not have recognized her African name as such.

¹⁹ Sarah Bradford, Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman. Auburn, New York: W.J. Moses, 1869. Early biography of Harriet Tubman using first person testimony. 49.