

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY IN ANNAPOLIS AND ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

- 1651 Colonists first settle at the site of Annapolis
- 1663 Maryland enacts its first law that includes the word "slave" in the title and assumes all Africans served for life
- 1664 A new Maryland law states that a white woman who marries an African slave serves the slave's master for life as a slave herself (violating English common law tradition); children born of such relationships are slaves as are children of enslaved mothers
- 1681 Indians kill one of Major Welch's "Negroes" at his plantation at the head of the South River
- 1681 Maryland law changes: children born to white mothers and African-American fathers as well as children born to free African-American women are considered free but are often bound out as laborers
- 1690 Before 1690 the average local farmer owning bond labor had 1.41 slaves or less; after 1690 that figure increased to nearly six slaves per farm
- 1692 Servants and slaves are released from doing chores on Sundays
- 1695 Slaves are required to carry passes signed by their master or overseer whenever they leave their plantation
- 1738 Sites of St. John's College and Annapolis State House become the target of an alleged revolt by approximately 200 slaves from Prince George's County who intended to take over the colony; the plan fails
- 1756-75 Forty-eight ships carrying nearly 2000 slaves clear customs in Annapolis
- 1760 Fifty captured African Angolans aboard the slave ship *Jenny* successfully assist the captain in fighting off a French privateer sloop. When the ship reaches its destination at London Town on the South River, they are sold as slaves
- 1767 Kunta Kinte (of *Roots* fame) arrives in Annapolis as part of a cargo of slaves aboard the slave ship *Lord Ligonier*
- 1775 Census figures show a County African American population (slave and free) of 5,502 versus 7,648 whites
- 1777 Quakers in Maryland outlaw slavery among their members
- 1783 Slaves in the County outnumber the free white population
- 1831 The Nat Turner Rebellion causes Maryland to tighten its manumission laws: free slaves are to leave the State or risk becoming re-enslaved, however, a loophole enables free blacks to remain in Maryland with annual permits
- 1840s Free African Americans begin to buy property and settle in "Freetown" in North County – the largest free black community prior to the Civil War
- 1845 Fair Haven resort is opened by the Weems family to attract passengers to the Weems' steamships which are manned and operated almost entirely by Weems' slaves
- 1845 The U.S. Naval Academy is founded at the site of Fort Severn in Annapolis; free and enslaved African Americans play a role in its history
- 1850 Forty-five percent of the black population in Annapolis is free; 55 percent slave
- 1850s Ben Boardley, born a slave around 1830, invents a steam engine to drive the first cutter of a sloop of war at the U.S. Naval Academy
- 1851 William Parker, an escaped slave from the Roedown plantation in south County, becomes a hero of the Christiana Resistance in Pennsylvania

- 1857 The Dred Scott decision of the U. S. Supreme Court, written by Chief Justice Roger Taney, a Marylander, denies citizenship to African Americans, whether slave or free
- 1860 The Maryland Assembly prohibits manumission of slaves by will or deed, following the hysteria over John Brown's raid on the federal arsenal in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia
- 1861 Federal troops occupy Annapolis during the Civil War
- 1864 122 slaves from the County enlist with the U.S. Colored Troops camped at St. John's College in Annapolis; 8,718 Maryland African Americans fight in the Civil War
- 1864 Maryland abolishes slavery with a new State constitution, one year before the U.S. 13th Amendment abolishes slavery
- 1865 The first County school for blacks supported with federal funds – the Freedman's Bureau School – is sited in Edgewater in South County (gone today)
- 1873 William H. Butler becomes the first African American and the first former slave in Maryland to be elected to public office, serving on the Annapolis City Council, three years after the Fifteenth Amendment gave African Americans the right to vote
- 1893 "Highland Beach" is founded as a summer resort by Col. Charles Douglass and other African Americans after being refused food at a nearby resort for whites. Soon after, his father Frederick Douglass designs his summer home, "Twin Oaks," there, but dies in 1895 before its completion
- 1893 Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, an African American who once resided in Annapolis, performs the first successful surgery on the heart; his achievement is honored with a permanent exhibit at the Smithsonian
- 1902 William Bishop, MD, son of a former slave, helped found the Annapolis Emergency Hospital in Annapolis for "white and colored patients." A long-time advocate for free clinics for the sick and needy, he died in 1904
- 1908 Annapolis enacts a law depriving most African Americans the right to vote
- 1915 The Supreme Court declares unconstitutional the law that disenfranchised Annapolis's African Americans and it reinstates the voting rights of John Anderson, a black Civil War veteran from Annapolis
- 1919 John Snowden, an African American, is last man hanged for a crime in Annapolis. Snowden was pardoned posthumously by Governor Glendening in 2001
- 1922 Highland Beach is incorporated, becoming the only incorporated town in Anne Arundel County other than Annapolis
- 1920s-30s Fifteen Rosenwald schools were built in the County for African American children with help from the Julius Rosenwald Fund; six buildings survive today
- 1949 Wesley A. Brown becomes the first African American graduate of the Naval Academy; rises to rank of Commander
- 1951 The predominantly black community of Parole, settled after the Civil War and named after Camp Parole, is annexed to the City of Annapolis
- 1960 Five Annapolitans lead a sit-in to desegregate the restaurant of the Annapolis bus station
- 1967 Thurgood Marshall, a Maryland native, becomes the first African American to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court
- 1977 Dr. Aris T. Allen, prominent Annapolitan physician, is the first African American to chair the state Republican Party
- 2003 Michael Steele becomes the first African American to serve as Lieutenant Governor when sworn in at the State House in Annapolis