



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1616 McCormick Drive, Largo, Maryland 20774 • 301-952-3680 • <http://www.pgplanning.org/469/Historic-Preservation-Commission>

January 2, 2024

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION ON THE GEORGE HENRY AND AGNES GROSS HOUSE (DOCUMENTED PROPERTY 66-000-03) AND ITS ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING FOR CLASSIFICATION AS A HISTORIC SITE

Procedural Background

August 31, 2023	The owner submitted an application for Historic Site Evaluation in compliance with Section 29-120.01. The property is not listed in the Inventory of Historic Resources.
October 20, 2023	The property owner and the adjacent property owners were mailed 60-day written notice of the time, date, and location of the public hearing.
December 5, 2023	The property was posted “at least 14 days in advance,” according to the provisions of the Prince George’s County Historic Preservation Ordinance (Subtitle 29-118) and the Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance (Subtitle 27-125.03). Evidence of sign posting, and 14-day written notice are attached.
December 5, 2023	The survey and documentation of the property were completed by Kacy Rohn.
December 19, 2023	Date of Historic Preservation Commission public hearing.

Findings

Summary Architectural Description

The home at 8002 54th Avenue was built for George Henry Gross, Jr. and Agnes Gross in 1970. The home is a one-story, ranch style dwelling on a raised basement. It is a block building clad in brick veneer and sheltered by a side-gabled, architectural asphalt-shingled roof, which projects to cover a partial porch extending across the southern half of the home’s façade. Fenestration consists primarily of six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash windows, shielded by aluminum storm windows, and paneled wooden doors. Most materials appear unaltered from the time of the house’s construction.

Setting

The George Henry and Agnes Gross House is located at 8002 54th Avenue in the Lakeland area of College Park. The house retains its historic function as a single-family residence. The 0.186-acre trapezoidal parcel includes the house and a flat, open lawn. The property is bounded by 54th Avenue to the east, and single-family dwellings to the north, south, and west.

The home’s façade is oriented to the east, facing 54th Avenue, and is set back approximately 35 feet from the public sidewalk. The parcel is fenced on the north, west, and south sides, and a concrete path and driveway provide access to the lot from the street.

Historical Overview

In 1890, Edwin A. Newman subdivided approximately 200 acres of land just north of the Maryland Agricultural College (now the University of Maryland, College Park) and platted the new subdivision of Lakeland. Newman envisioned a resort community anchored by the nearby manmade lake, which he named Lake Artemesia. Despite initial enthusiasm, it quickly became apparent that the low-lying land was highly flood-prone and poorly suited for development.

Beginning in 1900, the demographics of Lakeland began to shift as Black families, previously segregated on the east side of the B&O Railroad tracks, began to move to the west side of Lakeland. As African Americans increasingly settled in western Lakeland, white families departed. By the first quarter of the twentieth century, Lakeland was well established as a thriving Black community with schools, churches, and social and commercial facilities.

Among the early Black residents to settle in the central part of Lakeland were George H. Gross and Rosa Gross, who lived in the community by 1900. The Grosses built a family home at 5100 Pierce Avenue, which still stands today. They raised five children in Lakeland while George Sr. was employed by the railroad and Rosa managed the household and worked as a laundress, both in her home and at the university.

George Henry Gross, Jr., was born in Lakeland to George Henry and Rosa Gross on July 3, 1904. He grew up in Lakeland and in 1923, at age 19, began a career with the Maryland Agricultural College, a major employer for the Lakeland community. In 1925, he married Agnes Harrison, who had grown up in nearby Muirkirk.

George Henry and Agnes Gross purchased their first home on Cloud Avenue, in Lakeland, in 1929. They resided there for over forty years and established themselves as parents, employees, and active citizens of the Lakeland community. Their son, Elwood Gross, was born in the home on December 4, 1933. George Henry Gross, Jr. had a 48-year career with the Maryland Agricultural College's Dining Services Department. He walked, or in the times he had a car, drove to work in the dining hall on campus. The work was steady but not very well paid – George Henry worked at the university for many years before Black employees were fairly compensated with pay and benefits equivalent to their white co-workers.

Agnes Gross was employed in a series of jobs as a cook, including as a cafeteria manager at the all-white Riverdale Elementary School and as a cook in a university sorority house. Lakelanders' employment with the university offered stability and insulated the community from the worst of the Great Depression. In the summer, Agnes sometimes traveled with her son Elwood to upstate New York to work as a cook for the family with whom George Henry's sister Margaret Gray lived as a companion and housekeeper. In addition to the extra income, these trips provided both Agnes and Elwood the opportunity for summer recreation and to spend time in a less rigidly segregated environment. Agnes Gross played a prominent role in the Lakeland community through her leadership in the Embry A.M.E. Church, and was active in the women's social and neighborhood clubs which led community decision-making.

George Henry and Agnes Gross's long-term home on Cloud Avenue was demolished c. 1970 after the Prince George's County Board of Education selected their block as the site for the new, integrated Paint Branch Elementary School, although abundant vacant land existed nearby. The Grosses acquiesced to the relocation, despite the financial and emotional loss, in order to keep an elementary school within the community. The poor compensation offered for their property left limited resources with which to build a new home. The modest dwelling at 8002 54th Avenue, built in 1970, nevertheless allowed them the ability to remain in their community through the widescale demolitions and displacement brought about by the Lakeland Urban Renewal project of the late 1960s to early 1980s.

George and Agnes Gross's lives spanned the vast transformations in Lakeland in the twentieth century, from the first African Americans to start families in the community to the irreversible demolition caused by urban renewal. In a changed landscape, they lived the remainder of their lives at their home at 8002 54th Avenue. George Henry Gross, Jr. died in 1989, and Agnes Gross in 1992. The property remains in family ownership.

A detailed architectural description and historic context, including photos and figures, is provided in the attached draft Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form.

Significance

The George Henry and Agnes Gross House is significant as a reflection of the resilience of the African American community of Lakeland in the face of discriminatory public policy. George Henry and Agnes Gross were early Lakeland residents who supported the community's growth and prosperity and advocated for Lakeland residents on key issues facing the community, notably school desegregation and urban renewal. The dwelling's small scale and modest appearance reflect the limited compensation historically offered to Black residents displaced by public infrastructure projects.

Integrity/Degree of Alteration

The George Henry and Agnes Gross House retains sufficient physical integrity to convey its architectural and historical significance. The property remains in its original location on a single-family residential lot in Lakeland, and therefore retains its integrity of location and setting. The exterior of the dwelling is essentially unaltered since the time of its construction in 1970, with the exception of the replacement of several basement-level windows. It reflects a high degree of integrity of materials, workmanship, and design. The property remains in Gross family ownership, and adjacent houses built by family relations are extant, granting the property integrity of feeling and association.

Historic Preservation Commission Policy #1-87, "Evaluating Integrity, Degree of Alteration, and Scarcity and Frequency," states that a property's integrity should be considered in the context of the scarcity of the resource type it represents, with a less restrictive standard of integrity applied when few or no other similar properties exist in the Inventory of Historic Resources. The George Henry and Agnes Gross House conveys historical themes related to family and community history of

Lakeland and the African American experience of urban renewal, which are underrepresented in Prince George's County's Inventory of Historic Resources. Within Lakeland, only the Lakeland High School, an institutional resource, has been designated as a Historic Site.

In light of the minor changes that have occurred to the exterior materials and appearance, the subject property retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as reflection of the resilience of the African American community of Lakeland in the face of discriminatory public policy and the influence of George Henry and Agnes Gross on key issues facing the community in the mid-to-late twentieth century.

Conclusions and Recommendation

1. Staff concluded that the George Henry and Agnes Gross House meets four of the nine historic site designation criteria of Subtitle 29-104(a):

Historic and Cultural Significance

- (1)(A)(i) has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the County, State or Nation
- (1)(A)(ii) is the site of a significant historic event
- (1)(A)(iii) **X** is identified with a person or a group of persons who influenced society
- (1)(A)(iv) **X** exemplifies the cultural, economic, industrial, social, political or historical heritage of the County and its urban and rural communities

Architectural and Design Significance

- (2)(A)(i) **X** embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction
- (2)(A)(ii) represents the work of a master craftsman, architect or builder
- (2)(A)(iii) possesses high artistic values
- (2)(A)(iv) represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction
- (2)(A)(v) **X** represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or County due to its singular physical characteristics or landscape

2. Staff further concluded that, in weighing both the alterations that have been made to the house and the current representation of the resource type within the Inventory of Historic Resources, the George Henry and Agnes Gross House can be found to possess sufficient integrity to convey, represent, or contain the values and qualities for which it is judged significant.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission recommend to the Planning Board and District Council that the George Henry and Agnes Gross House, Documented Property 66-000-03, and its 0.186-acre Environmental Setting (Lot 2 of Block 3, “Lakeland”), be designated a Prince George’s County Historic Site as meeting the following criteria in Subtitle 29-104(a): (1)(A)(iii); (1)(A)(iv); (2)(A)(i); and (2)(A)(v).

Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation

Commissioner **Carpenter-Rock** moved that the Historic Preservation Commission recommend to the Planning Board and the District Council that the **George Henry and Agnes Gross House, Documented Property 66-000-03, and its 0.186-acre Environmental Setting (Lot 2 of Block 3, “Lakeland”)**, be designated a Prince George’s County Historic Site as meeting the following criteria in Subtitle 29-104(a): (1)(A)(iii); (1)(A)(iv); (2)(A)(i), and (2)(A)(v). The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Jenkins**. The motion was approved 7-0-0.



John Peter Thompson, Chairman

Attachments:

MIHP Form for 66-000-03 (including maps and photographs)

c:

Owner:

Estate of Wilmer S. Gross
5110 Pierce Avenue
College Park MD 20740

Municipality:

The Honorable S.M. Fazlul Kabir, Mayor
City of College Park
7401 Baltimore Avenue
College Park MD 20740

Prince George’s County Council:

The Honorable Eric Olson, District 3
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building, 2nd Fl.
1301 McCormick Drive
Largo MD 20774

The Honorable Mel Franklin, At-Large
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building, 2nd Fl.
1301 McCormick Drive
Largo MD 20774

The Honorable Calvin Hawkins II, At-Large
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building, 2nd Fl.
1301 McCormick Drive
Largo MD 20774

Donna J. Brown, Clerk
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building, 2nd Fl.
1301 McCormick Drive
Largo MD 20774

Interested Parties:

Douglas McElrath, Chairman
Prince George’s Heritage
4703 Annapolis Road
Bladensburg MD 20710

Alfonso Narvaez, Chairman
Prince George’s Historical & Cultural Trust
PO Box 85
Upper Marlboro MD 20773

Donna Schneider, President
Prince George's County Historical Society
PO Box 1513
Upper Marlboro MD 20773

Elizabeth Hughes, Director
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place, 3rd Floor
Crownsville MD 21032-2023

Meagan Baco, Executive Director
Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, Inc.
4318 Gallatin Street
Hyattsville MD 20781



Figure 1: East elevation (façade), 8002 54th Avenue, October 2023.



Figure 2: Southeast corner, 8002 54th Avenue, October 2023.



Figure 3: West (rear) elevation, 8002 54th Avenue, October 2023.



Figure 4: Northwest corner, 8002 54th Avenue, October 2023.



Figure 5: George Henry and Agnes Gross House, oblique aerial from east, April 2023.
Source: Pictometry via PGAtlas.com

Capsule Summary**PG 66-000-3****George Henry and Agnes Gross House****8002 54th Avenue, College Park, MD 20740****1970****Private**

The George H. and Agnes Gross House is a one-story, raised ranch style dwelling constructed in 1970. It is a block building clad in brick veneer and sheltered by a side-gabled, architectural asphalt-shingled roof, which projects to cover a partial porch extending across the southern half of the home's façade. Fenestration consists primarily of six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash windows, shielded by aluminum storm windows, and paneled wooden doors. The house is located in the Lakeland area of College Park and retains its historic function as a single-family residence. The 0.186-acre trapezoidal parcel includes the house and a flat, open lawn. The property is bounded by Paint Branch Elementary School to the south, 54th Avenue to the east, and single-family dwellings to the north, south, and west.

The George H. and Agnes Gross House is significant as a reflection of the resilience of the African American community of Lakeland in the face of discriminatory public policy. George Henry and Agnes Gross were early Lakeland residents who supported the community's growth and advocated for Lakeland residents on key issues, notably school desegregation and urban renewal. The dwelling's small scale and modest appearance reflect the limited compensation historically offered to Black residents displaced by public infrastructure projects. After living in a house on Cloud Avenue for over forty years, in which time they formed a central part of this close-knit African American community, George Henry and Agnes Gross were displaced from their long-time family home in 1970 as the Prince George's County Board of Education selected the block on which it was located as the site of the new, racially integrated Paint Branch Elementary School.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG:66-000-3

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic George Henry and Agnes Gross House

other _____

2. Location

street and number 8002 54th Avenue not for publication

city, town College Park vicinity

county Prince George's County

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

name Delmax LLC

street and number 5011 Navahoe St telephone _____

city, town College Park state MD zip code 20740

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County liber 37064 folio 188

city, town Upper Marlboro tax map 33 tax parcel 0000 tax ID number 21-2340321

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- Other: Historic Preservation Section, Prince George's County Planning Department, M-NCPPC

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
				<u> </u>	

7. Description

Inventory No. PG:66-000-3

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

Site Description

The George H. and Agnes Gross House is located at 8002 54th Avenue in the Lakeland area of College Park, Maryland (Figure 1). The house retains its historic function as a single-family residence. The 0.186-acre trapezoidal parcel includes the house and a flat, open lawn. The property is bounded by 54th Avenue to the east, and single-family dwellings to the north, south, and west.

The home's façade is oriented to the east, facing 54th Avenue, and is set back approximately 35 feet from the public sidewalk. The parcel is fenced on the north, west, and south sides, and a concrete path and driveway provide access to the lot from the street.

Architectural Description

Summary

The home at 8002 54th Avenue was built for George H. and Agnes Gross in 1970. The home is a one-story, ranch style dwelling on a raised basement. It is a block building clad in brick veneer and sheltered by a side-gabled, architectural asphalt-shingled roof, which projects to cover a partial porch extending across the southern half of the home's façade. Fenestration consists primarily of six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash windows, shielded by aluminum storm windows, and paneled wooden doors. Most materials appear unaltered from the time of the house's construction.

East Elevation (Façade)

The façade (east elevation) features a partial porch, on the southern portion, and two typical windows evenly spaced in the northern portion (Figures 1-2). Five concrete steps ascend from the front walk to reach the concrete-floored porch, where there are three grouped typical windows and a wood paneled, partially glazed door with four sidelights within a decorative wooden panel to the right. The porch is sheltered by a projecting section of the gabled roof of the main structure, which is supported by decorative rolled metal columns, connected by a handrail.

South Elevation

The south elevation sits close to the property line and is accessed by a concrete walk leading back from the parking pad (Figures 2-4). Behind a brick staircase wall, a set of six concrete steps with a concrete landing provide access to a paneled wooden half-glass door, protected by an aluminum storm door. A six-over-six, wood frame, double-hung window, protected by an aluminum storm window, is centered under the gable, to the left of the door.

West Elevation

The three-bay rear (west) elevation features a large wood frame, three-part picture window in the rightmost bay, comprised of a fixed central divided-light window flanked by six-over-six double-hung sash windows (Figures 4-5). The middle bay includes a smaller, six-over-six double-hung sash window, and the leftmost bay includes larger, paired six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows, protected by aluminum storm windows. Three corresponding bays in the basement story include non-historic, horizontal sliding windows. Aluminum downspouts convey water from the roof at both corners.

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Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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George Henry and Agnes Gross House
Continuation Sheet

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North Elevation

The north elevation features a brick exterior chimney, set slightly to the west of the gable, where it pierces the overhanging eave (Figures 7-9). To the east of the chimney there are two six-over-six, frame, double hung wood sash windows. Under the leftmost of these, there is a modern horizontal sliding basement egress window, which appears to have replaced an earlier window of the same width.

Integrity

The George Henry and Agnes Gross House retains sufficient physical integrity to convey its historical significance. The property remains in its original location on a single-family residential lot in Lakeland, and therefore retains its integrity of location and setting. The exterior of the dwelling is essentially unaltered since the time of its construction in 1970, with the exception of the replacement of several basement-level windows. It reflects a high degree of integrity of materials, workmanship, and design. The property remains in the Gross family's possession, and the adjacent homes built by family relations are extant, granting the property integrity of feeling and association.

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Figure 1: East elevation (façade), 8002 54th Avenue.



Figure 2: Southeast corner, 8002 54th Avenue.

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George Henry and Agnes Gross House
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Figure 3: South elevation, 8002 54th Avenue.



Figure 4: Southwest corner, 8002 54th Avenue.

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Figure 5: West (rear) elevation, 8002 54th Avenue.



Figure 6: Backyard abutting neighboring residential properties, 8002 54th Avenue.

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Figure 7: Northwest corner, 8002 54th Avenue.



Figure 8: Northeast corner, 8002 54th Avenue.

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George Henry and Agnes Gross House
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Figure 9: Basement egress window, northwest corner, 8002 54th Avenue.

8. Significance

Inventory No. PG:66-000-3

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

Specific dates	1970-1992	Architect/Builder	Builder: Elwood H. Gross
Construction dates	1970		

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Summary

The George Henry and Agnes Gross House at 8002 54th Avenue was built in 1970 by Elwood Gross. The property is significant as a reflection of the resilience of the African American community of Lakeland in the face of discriminatory public policy. George Henry and Agnes Gross were early Lakeland residents who supported the community’s growth and prosperity and advocated for Lakeland residents on key issues facing the community, notably school desegregation and urban renewal. The dwelling’s small scale and modest appearance reflect the limited compensation historically offered to Black residents displaced by public infrastructure projects.

Narrative¹

Early Settlement of Lakeland

The land that became the Lakeland community remained rural through the mid-1870s (Figure 10). Northeast of the growing Maryland Agricultural College, established in 1856, most land was in large, family holdings.² Beginning in the 1870s, suburbanization of Prince George’s County began along the Washington Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and accelerated with the completion of the electric streetcar line through the area in 1902.³ This era saw intense real estate speculation and construction along the railroad right-of-way, as speculators planned and marketed suburban havens and recreational destinations easily accessible by rail from Washington, D.C.⁴

In 1890, Edwin A. Newman subdivided approximately 200 acres of land along the rail line, just north of the Maryland Agricultural College, and platted the new subdivision of Lakeland (Figure 11).⁵ Newman envisioned a resort community anchored by the nearby manmade lake, which he named Lake Artemesia, and promised to install sidewalks and electric lights, and to implement newspaper and grocery delivery. By 1891, over 70 individuals had bought property or settled in

¹ This summary is intended to provide a brief historic context for the subject property and not a comprehensive history of the Lakeland community.

² G.M. Hopkins Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, Including the County of Prince George, Maryland,” Vansville District, 1878.

³ EHT Traceries, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Calvert Hills Historic District. Section 8, page 67. <https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/PDF/PrinceGeorges/PG;66-37.pdf>

⁴ KCI Technologies, Inc., “Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology: I-495/I-95 Capital Beltway Corridor Transportation Study – Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties, Maryland, Volume 1,” 1999, D-7.

⁵ Prince George’s County Circuit Court, “Map of Lakeland,” Subdivided and Surveyed by Edwin A. Newman, 1890, Plat Book BB 5, P. 51, Maryland State Archives, <https://plats.msa.maryland.gov/>.

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George Henry and Agnes Gross House
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Lakeland.⁶ Despite the initial enthusiasm, it quickly became apparent that the low-lying land was highly flood-prone and poorly suited for development.⁷ Property owners arrived in Lakeland to find that lots they had purchased were “partly occupied by a creek and lying in a hollow,” rather than the high ground that had been advertised.⁸

In the subdivision’s earliest years, the community was racially segregated with white families living to the west of the railroad tracks and Black families to the east. By 1900, Lakeland’s demographic makeup began to shift as African American families moved from the east to the west side of the B&O Railroad tracks, expanding the footprint of the existing Black community and challenging entrenched residential racial segregation. Early Black residents who settled on Lakeland’s west side included the Brooks, Johnson, and Dory families, who were locally employed as railroad laborers or at the Maryland Agricultural College (Figures 12-13).⁹

Census records from the early twentieth century show a gradual shift in the racial balance of the community between 1900 and 1930.¹⁰ As more Black families settled in Lakeland, friends and relations from other parts of Maryland and Prince George’s County were drawn to the area, while white residents left.¹¹ As in many historically Black communities established amid racial segregation, residents built and improved community institutions such as churches, schools, and social halls to serve broad community needs that otherwise would have been unmet. In Lakeland, these included two churches, Embry African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church (PG:66-12)(est. 1903) and the First Baptist Church of Lakeland (est. 1891) and two schools, Lakeland Elementary (PG:66-13) (1926) and Lakeland High School (PG:66-14)(1928).¹² Community stores, social halls, and the neighborhood ballfield provided additional social anchors.

Among the early Black residents to settle in the central part of Lakeland were George H. Gross and Rosa Gross, who lived in the community by 1900.¹³ The Grosses built a family home at 5100 Pierce Avenue, which still stands today. They raised five children in Lakeland while George Sr. was employed by the railroad and Rosa managed the household and worked as a laundress, both in her home and at the university.¹⁴

George Henry Gross, Jr. and Agnes Harrison Gross - Youth and Young Adulthood (1904-1935)

George Henry Gross, Jr., was born in Lakeland to George Henry and Rosa Gross on July 3, 1904.¹⁵ He grew up in Lakeland and in 1923, at age 19, began a career with the Maryland Agricultural College, a major employer for the Lakeland community.¹⁶ In 1925, he married Agnes Harrison (Figure 14).¹⁷

⁶ “Outside of the City Limits: Millions Have Been Invested,” *The Washington Post*, April 19, 1891.

⁷ “Suburbanization Historic Context,” 204.

⁸ “Think They Have Been Cheated,” *The Washington Post*, December 22, 1892.

⁹ 1900 United States Federal Census, Prince George’s County, Vansville District, via Ancestry.

¹⁰ EHT Traceries, Lakeland (66-000), 3.

¹¹ Oral History of Elwood Gross, 2007.

¹² These schools were built with money from the Rosenwald Fund, which assisted in the construction of schools for Black students in Southern states in the early 20th century.

¹³ 1900 U.S. Federal Census. There have historically been several branches of the Gross family living in Lakeland and the surrounding area. References to the family refer to the direct ancestors of the current property owners unless otherwise noted.

¹⁴ 1920 United States Federal Census; 1930 United States Federal Census.

¹⁵ World War II, United States Draft Registration Card for George Henry Gross, 1942, via Ancestry.

¹⁶ Lakeland Community Heritage Project, Inc., *Lakeland: African Americans in College Park*, 2009, 57.

¹⁷ Agnes Gross’ maiden name is given in different sources as Harris and Harrison. District of Columbia Marriage Records, 1810-1953, via Ancestry.

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Agnes Harrison was born c. 1907 and raised on her father's farm in the nearby community of Muirkirk.¹⁸ Muirkirk, a rural community established for Black iron furnace laborers, shared social and familial ties with Lakeland and Prince George's County's other African American hamlets.¹⁹ Her upbringing there instilled a strong foundation in the church and a belief in the value of education.²⁰ As a child, Agnes attained some schooling, but formal educational opportunities for Black children in the county were limited, with no secondary education provided.²¹ Agnes Harrison took the streetcar to Lakeland to sing in the Embury A.M.E. Church choir.²² She met George Henry Gross, Jr., and the young couple were married in a modest ceremony in 1925 (Figure 15).

They lived for a time with George Henry's parents on Pierce Avenue, before purchasing their own home on Cloud Avenue in Lakeland in 1929.²³ The property was sold by Joseph Brooks, one of the first African Americans to move from the eastern to western section of Lakeland. Brooks formally purchased the lot in 1903 and was recorded as a homeowner in the 1910 Census.²⁴ Alongside Gross family history indicating that George Henry and Agnes purchased an already-existing home, this suggests that their Cloud Avenue house was Joseph Brooks' residence – one of the first to be occupied by a Black family in western Lakeland.²⁵

Family and Life at 5102 Cloud Avenue (1929 – 1970)

George Henry and Agnes Gross resided on Cloud Avenue for over forty years. There, they spent the majority of their adult lives as parents, employees, and active citizens of the Lakeland community. Their only child, Elwood Gross, was born in the home on December 4, 1933.

Home

The Cloud Avenue house was one of only a few houses in Block 2 of the Lakeland subdivision, and the Grosses became close to their near neighbors, the Gray and the Green families (Figure 16). The abundant undeveloped land surrounding the house provided space for a vegetable garden and outdoor gatherings, and family photos show friends and family enjoying the natural surroundings (Figure 17).

Careers

George Henry Gross, Jr. had a 48-year career with the Maryland Agricultural College's Dining Services Department (Figure 18).²⁶ He walked, or in the times he had a car, drove to work in the dining hall on campus. The university provided many Lakelanders with employment through decades in which African Americans were not admitted as

¹⁸ Oral History of Elwood Gross, 2007.

¹⁹ "Suburbanization Historic Context," B-27.

²⁰ Oral History of Mrs. Wilmer Gross and Ms. Delphine Gross, by Rachel Brown and Nateara Gaston, Lakeland Community Heritage Project/UMCP Partnership, 2011. <https://lakeland.umd.edu/items/show/615>

²¹ Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, Addendum, Lakeland High School, MIHP PG: 66-14. <https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/Medusa/PDF/PrinceGeorges/PG:66-14.pdf>

²² Oral History of Elwood Gross, 2007.

²³ Oral history of Elwood Gross, 2007.; Prince George's County Land Records, Liber 334, Folio 49.; This home is no longer extant and was on the site of the present-day Paint Branch Elementary School.

²⁴ Joseph Brooks and his family were recorded in Lakeland in the 1900 and 1910 U.S. Federal Census, by which time they owned their home on Lakeland Avenue (now named 54th Avenue), which intersected Cloud Avenue.

²⁵ Interview with Maxine Gross and Delphine Gross, by Kacy Rohn and Janet Adesina, November 14, 2023.

²⁶ *Lakeland: African Americans in College Park*, 57.

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students. The work was steady but not very well paid – George Henry worked at the university for many years before Black employees were fairly compensated with pay and benefits equivalent to their white co-workers.²⁷

Agnes Gross was employed in a series of jobs as a cook, including as a cafeteria manager at the all-white Riverdale Elementary School and as a cook in a university sorority house. Lakelanders' employment with the university offered stability and insulated the community from the worst of the Great Depression.²⁸ In the summer, Agnes sometimes traveled with her son Elwood to upstate New York to work as a cook for the family with whom George Henry's sister Margaret Gray lived as a companion and housekeeper.²⁹ In addition to the extra income, these trips provided both Agnes and Elwood the opportunity for summer recreation and to spend time in a less rigidly segregated environment (Figure 19).

Community

Agnes Gross played a prominent role in the Lakeland community through her leadership in the Embry A.M.E. Church. She sang in the church choir and served on the Stewardess Board, which assisted in church preparation and communion.³⁰ She attained Life Member honorary status in the church through her years of leadership in the church's missionary service.³¹

In addition to her church commitments, Agnes Gross was active in the women's social and neighborhood clubs which led community decision-making, especially in the years of self-sufficiency required by Jim Crow.³² She hosted club meetings in her home, game nights for the popular Pokeno card game, and ladies' teas, a favorite activity for Lakeland women and an opportunity to host elegant gatherings.³³ For a time, she served as a den mother for her son Elwood's Cub Scout pack.³⁴

Family photos also document the Cloud Avenue home as a place of gathering for friends and family at Sunday dinners, holidays, and special occasions, including the celebration of George Henry and Agnes' 25th wedding anniversary in 1950. To make up for the small ceremony held for their marriage in 1925, the couple hosted a festive formal reception at their home and celebrated with an elaborate wedding cake baked by a fellow Lakelander employed in dining services at the university.³⁵

Other Lakeland Property

Over their years in the Cloud Avenue home, the Grosses bought additional property in the adjacent block. They acquired Lot 1 in Block 3 (present day 5110 Pierce Avenue) in 1935, and Lots 2 and 3 (present day 8002 and 8004 54th Avenue) in 1958. The Grosses were generous with the property. They gifted Lot 3 to their relations, the Braxtons in 1959, in

²⁷ Oral History of Elwood Gross, 2007.

²⁸ Oral History of Elwood Gross, 2007; Oral History of Maxine Gross, Pousson, 2007.

²⁹ Interview with Maxine Gross and Delphine Gross, by Kacy Rohn and Janet Adesina.

³⁰ "Reverend Jessie Williams and Choir," [Photograph], 1948, Lakeland Digital Archive, <https://archive.lakelandchp.com/collection/item/1399>; "Members of Stewardess Board of Embry AME Church," [Photograph], Lakeland Digital Archive, <https://archive.lakelandchp.com/collection/item/998>.

³¹ Interview with Maxine Gross and Delphine Gross, by Kacy Rohn and Janet Adesina, November 14, 2023.

³² Ibid.

³³ "Tea," [Photograph], Lakeland Digital Archive, <https://archive.lakelandchp.com/collection/item/1009>; Interview with Maxine Gross and Delphine Gross, November 2023.

³⁴ Oral History of Elwood Gross, 2007.

³⁵ "Anniversary Cake," [Photograph], 1950, Lakeland Digital Archive, <https://archive.lakelandchp.com/collection/item/47>.

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exchange for work done to install a bathroom at the Cloud Avenue home, and gifted Lot 1 to their son Elwood and his wife, Wilmer, in 1962.³⁶

Elwood and Wilmer Gross had recently returned to Lakeland with their two young daughters, and the gift of property allowed them to settle close to his parents and build their own home in 1962 (PG:66-000-2, 5110 Pierce Avenue). George Henry and Agnes Gross' decision to retain Lot 2 offered them a tether to their lives in Lakeland when massive change disrupted the fabric of the community beginning in the 1960s.

Construction of Paint Branch Elementary School (1968-1970)

The Lakeland community experienced a series of upheavals that dramatically altered the community's social and physical landscape and personally impacted the lives of George Henry and Agnes Gross. Significant social and political changes resulting from the Civil Rights movement began to be felt in Prince George's County. One of the most locally impactful shifts was the gradual process of school desegregation, and the eventual closure of the Lakeland High School, which had served generations of residents at various grade levels since its construction in 1928.³⁷

By the mid-1960s, the Lakeland High School (PG:66-14) was technically integrated, but functionally remained a segregated school for Black youth, serving not only Lakeland students but those from surrounding communities, including Takoma Park, Muirkirk, Beltsville, and Cherry Hill.³⁸ Although the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education* had declared racial segregation in public education to be unconstitutional, most students in Prince George's County continued to attend racially segregated schools into the 1970s.³⁹ The Board of Education pursued various tactics through the 1950s and 1960s to avoid desegregation, including a "freedom of choice" policy which largely preserved existing racial segregation. As the federal Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare paid increasing attention to the county's non-compliance by the late 1960s, the Board of Education took preliminary actions that significantly impacted Lakeland.

By the 1968-1969 school year, the Board had determined that the substandard Lakeland school should be closed.⁴⁰ There were several options considered, including that Lakeland students be bussed elsewhere, or that school boundaries be redrawn to bring in students from nearby white neighborhoods. The Board heard from neighborhood parents with a range of perspectives, including many who sought improvements to the existing school. As the decision was made to build a larger elementary school to serve a mix of communities, parents and advocates in Lakeland fought to have the new, integrated elementary school built in the neighborhood, where it could continue to serve as a community hub.⁴¹ Among these advocates was Agnes Gross. She was adamant that any new elementary school should remain in Lakeland, which

³⁶ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber 2329, Folio 504 and Liber 2737, Folio 189; Oral History with Maxine Gross, 2007.

³⁷ Bullock, James A. "Lakeland High School," PG:66-14, MIHP Addendum, The Ottery Group, Inc., 2009.

<https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/PDF/PrinceGeorges/PG:66-14.pdf>

³⁸ United States Commission on Civil Rights, Clearinghouse Publication 52, "A Long Day's Journey into Light: School Desegregation in Prince George's County," March 1976, 22.

³⁹ "A Long Day's Journey into Light: School Desegregation in Prince George's County", 3.

⁴⁰ "A Long Day's Journey into Light," 207.

⁴¹ "Mrs. Wilmer Gross and Ms. Delphine Gross Interview," Rachel Brown and Nateara Gaston, Lakeland Community Heritage Project/UMCP Partnership, <https://lakeland.umd.edu/items/show/615>.

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had always played a role in the education of the broader community by providing school facilities for Black children throughout the area.⁴²

On March 25, 1969, the Board of Education authorized their representative, Elliott Robertson, to begin negotiations for the purchase of 8.5 acres in Blocks 1 and 2 of “the Newman property” in Lakeland, at a price of \$7000 per acre.⁴³ Although a significant amount of undeveloped land remained in Lakeland, the selection of this site resulted in the displacement of the Greens, the Grays, and the Grosses from their family homes in Block 2.

On January 23, 1970, George Henry and Agnes Gross sold their Cloud Avenue property, their home for four decades, to the Board of Education. At \$7000 per acre, their approximately 0.2-acre property would have brought a price of around \$1,400. At a time when Maryland’s median home price was \$18,700, this was not nearly enough to build or buy an equivalent, modern home.⁴⁴ The amount paid to the Grosses barely covered the cost of building a new home on land that they already owned.⁴⁵ Despite feeling that the exchange was unfair, the family placed a premium on bringing the integrated elementary school to Lakeland, and so agreed to the deal. Elwood Gross reflected that the loss of the family home was one of many sacrifices made by the community to see improvements brought to the neighborhood.⁴⁶ Agnes Gross would later say that she had fought to have her own house torn down.⁴⁷

Robert R. Gray, whose family was also displaced by the new school, wrote to Elliott Robertson, the Board of Education representative, in March 1970 as the transfer of these properties was finalized: “My sincere hope is that you, nor any of those involved, nor your families, will ever become victims of such a transaction.”⁴⁸

Displacement and Relocation (1970)

George Henry and Agnes Gross built their new home nearby, at 8002 54th Avenue. This property, Lot 2 of Block 3, was the central of the three lots that the couple had acquired on the street. It placed them between their son and his family at 5100 Pierce Avenue and the Braxtons at 8004 54th Avenue.⁴⁹ Without much money from the sale of their previous home, the Grosses relied on their son, Elwood Gross, to do the bulk of the work to construct the modest home. He did so by building the house at night, after his day job working at the University of Maryland, often working until 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning.⁵⁰ Much as Elwood had for his home next door, built 1962, the family relied on the donated labor of community members skilled in the building trades, a tradition common throughout Lakeland.⁵¹

⁴² “Oral History with Maxine Gross,” Eli Pousson, Lakeland Community Heritage Project/UMCP Partnership, <https://lakeland.umd.edu/items/show/48>.

⁴³ Minutes of the Prince George’s County Board of Education, March 25, 1969, Box 7, Folder 1, Ruth S. Wolf Papers, University of Maryland Archival Collections.

⁴⁴ United States Census Bureau, “Historical Census of Housing Tables: Home Values.” Median Home Values, Unadjusted, 1970. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/dec/coh-values.html>

⁴⁵ “Oral History with Elwood Gross 2013,” Angela Forest, Lakeland Community Heritage Project/UMCP Partnership, <https://lakeland.umd.edu/items/show/890>.

⁴⁶ “Oral History with Elwood Gross,” Forest.

⁴⁷ “Oral History with Maxine Gross,” Pousson.

⁴⁸ “Memorandum from Robert R. Gray to Elliott B. Robertson” (March 4, 1970), Gray Family Collection, Prince George’s County, Maryland, shared by Jean Gray Matthews, July 2017, quoted in Avis Danette Matthews, “For The Benefit Of These Children: Affirming Racial Identity In The Era Of School Desegregation, Prince George’s County, Maryland, 1954-1974,” UMD DRUM, Theses and Dissertations, <https://api.drum.lib.umd.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/6444a0d9-60d2-4540-ad0b-b3e8d5572b3c/content>.

⁵⁰ Oral History of Elwood Gross, <https://lakeland.umd.edu/items/show/50>.

⁵¹ Ibid.

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Although the Grosses had been displaced from their home, the new house on 54th Avenue allowed them to remain in Lakeland through a period when many residents lost their homes and were unable to return to the community. The new home provided George Henry and Agnes Gross a place to continue their roles in the lives of their family and community.

Agnes Gross remained a leader in the Embry A.M.E. Church community and made her new home a place of familial and community bonding. Family photographs from their time in the home at 8002 54th Avenue show the couple hosting holiday and social gatherings. The house was built with an extra kitchen in the basement to allow Agnes to pursue her passion for cooking even in the hot summer months.⁵²

The home was intentionally built on a raised basement due to the persistent flooding in the community. Despite this, Hurricane Agnes (1972) arrived shortly after the home's construction and flooded the basement (Figure 20).⁵³

Urban Renewal to Present-Day (1970-2023)

Significant change beyond school desegregation was underway at the time George Henry and Agnes Gross built their new home. By the second quarter of the twentieth century, Lakeland was firmly established as an African American enclave within the City of College Park, which incorporated in 1945. Residential segregation persisted in the city, county, and Washington metropolitan area well into the 1960s, a result of public policy and private practice that had severely curtailed housing options for Black residents.⁵⁴ As a result, neighborhoods such as Lakeland were home to Black families who represented a wide range of income levels.⁵⁵ The housing stock in Lakeland reflected this diversity, with a mix of modern and substandard homes (Figure 21).⁵⁶

Some houses had suffered the effects of persistent flooding, which had plagued the Lakeland community since the time of Edwin Newman's original platting of the subdivision (Figure 22). By the 1960s, the Army Corps of Engineers was studying ways to mitigate the recurrent flooding from the Paint Branch and Indian Creek. Hurricane Agnes, in 1972, was an especially dramatic example of the problem, but nuisance flooding was a regular occurrence. The low-lying area between Rhode Island Avenue and U.S. Route 1/Baltimore Avenue was particularly susceptible.

The conditions in Lakeland drew the attention of City and State elected officials. In 1962, the Maryland General Assembly granted urban renewal authority to Prince George's County and the City of College Park.⁵⁷ This authorization allowed the City to access federal urban renewal funding intended to reorganize and redevelop American cities for the post-war era. Once a local urban renewal plan was approved by the federal government, municipalities could purchase and redevelop "blighted" areas at greatly subsidized costs.⁵⁸

⁵² Meeting with Delphine Gross, Kacy Rohn, October 20, 2023.

⁵³ "Clean Up After Storm Agnes," [Photograph], 1972, Lakeland Community Heritage Project: Lakeland Digital Archive, <https://archive.lakelandchp.com/collection/item/1077>.

⁵⁴ A Long Day's Journey Into Light, 57.

⁵⁵ The United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Civil Rights USA: Housing in Washington, D.C.*, 1962, 6. <https://www2.law.umaryland.edu/marshall/usccr/documents/cr12h81.pdf>

⁵⁶ Oral History of Elwood Gross, 2007.

⁵⁷ "On Wedges and Corridors: A General Plan for the Maryland-Washington Regional District," The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1964, 104.

⁵⁸ Mindy Thompson Fullilove, MD, *Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It*, New Village Press: 2016, 57-59.

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The urban renewal process in Lakeland stretched over two decades in a complex interplay of federal and local actions and intervening environmental and economic forces. The approved plan was intended to address issues of flooding, housing quality, access, and land use.⁵⁹

The City's urban renewal plan divided Lakeland into three areas: two clearance areas, where existing homes and businesses would be demolished, and one conservation area, where water and housing quality issues were comparatively minor (Figure 23). George Henry and Agnes Gross, and their son Elwood, lived within the central part of Lakeland designated for conservation. Although their recently built homes were not slated for demolition, many families lived in the areas to be cleared. Between 1973 and 1981, at least 82 families in Lakeland were relocated out of the project area (Figure 24).⁶⁰ Many of them lived in the flood-prone area between Rhode Island Avenue and Baltimore Avenue. These families left their single-family homes with the belief that the urban renewal program would build modern, single-family homes in their place, to which displaced families would have priority access.⁶¹ The reality of the final redevelopment plan was starkly different from initial expectations, with primarily mid-rise apartment buildings, a small number of townhouses, and only six single-family homes. Officials alleged that costs from the flood mitigation had raised the price of the overall project so much that single-family homes were not considered cost-effective.⁶²

Lakelanders vocally protested the proposal. Agnes Gross was among the residents who advocated for the community's wishes and spoke out in opposition. In public meetings, she criticized the redevelopment plan's failure to rebuild the promised single-family homes to bring back displaced residents, and rebuked the assumption that Lakelanders could not afford to pay for the quality housing they sought.⁶³ Over residents' objections, the plans proceeded. Of Lakeland's estimated 150 pre-urban renewal households, an estimated 104 vanished from the community.⁶⁴

The resulting physical and social disruption had long-lasting implications. The improvements to environmental and access issues came at the high cost of the displacement of a significant percentage of the population. Lakeland's history mirrors the national experience of urban renewal, in which disproportionately high numbers of minority residents of "blighted" areas were displaced with promises of returning to their communities, which never materialized.⁶⁵ In implementing the federal urban renewal program, American municipalities collectively displaced, at minimum, 300,000 families nationwide between 1949 and 1974, with devastating consequences for intergenerational wealth and social cohesion.⁶⁶ Lakeland, the only community within College Park to undergo urban renewal, is a significant local example of this pattern.

⁵⁹ "R-213 Urban Renewal Plan: Lakeland Urban Renewal Area, College Park, MD," Approved by City of College Park Mayor & Council, October 10, 1978, via Lakeland Digital Archive. <https://archive.lakelandchp.com/collection/item/4130>

⁶⁰ "Relocated Households from Lakeland Urban Renewal Project Area since 1973," March 20, 1981, Lakeland Digital Archive, <https://archive.lakelandchp.com/collection/item/1879>

⁶¹ Oral History of Elwood Gross, 2013.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Eugene L. Meyer, "Urban Renewal and Lakeland: Black Community Eyes Future With Hope, Fear," *The Washington Post*, December 26, 1976. Via ProQuest; Sharon Conway, "Lakeland Plan Upsets Residents," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 1977. Via ProQuest.

⁶⁴ Leon Wynter, "Lakeland: Urban Renewal Erases College Park Community," *The Washington Post*, February 11, 1982. Via ProQuest.

⁶⁵ *Renewing Inequality: Family Displacements through Urban Renewal, 1950-1966*, Digital Scholarship Lab, University of Richmond, <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/renewal/#view=0/0/1&viz=cartogram>.

⁶⁶ Ibid

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Lakeland residents who lived through urban renewal, and their descendants, experienced this transformation as a deep loss of both community history and future opportunity, with negative impacts on the “physical, emotional, and sociological health of generations of Lakelanders.”⁶⁷

George Henry and Agnes Gross were able to remain in Lakeland but saw their community transformed around them. Their lives spanned the vast transformations in Lakeland in the twentieth century, from the first African Americans to start families in the community to the irreversible demolition caused by urban renewal. In a changed landscape, they lived the remainder of their lives at their home at 8002 54th Avenue. George Henry Gross, Jr. died in 1989, and Agnes Gross in 1992. The property remains in family ownership.

⁶⁷ “Urban Renewal in Lakeland,” Digital Exhibit, Introduction, Lakeland Digital Archive, <https://archive.lakelandchp.com/exhibits/urban-renewal>

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CHAIN OF TITLE

Liber 37064: 188 November 24, 2012	Deed: Maxine Gross and Delphine Gross to Delmax, LLC Lot numbered two (2) in Block numbered three (3), "Lakeland"
Liber 32892: 4 August 3, 2011	Deed: Elwood Gross to Maxine Gross and Delphine Gross Lots numbered two (2) and three (3) in Block numbered three (3), "Lakeland"
Liber 8274: 997 March 11, 1992	Deed: Estate of Agnes H. Gross to Elwood Gross Lots numbered two (2) and three (3) in Block numbered three (3), "Lakeland"
Liber 2186: 588 February 17, 1958	Deed: Reginald Murray Kleiner and Josephine G. Kleiner to George Henry Gross and Agnes H. Gross Lots numbered two (2) and three (3) in Block numbered three (3), "Lakeland"
Liber WJD 6: 76 February 27, 1940	Deed: Estate of John J. Kleiner to R. Murray Kleiner and John J. Kleiner III
Liber 343: 157 January 16, 1930	Deed: Florence I. Shepard to John J. Kleiner Lots 3 and 4 in Block 2; Lots 2, 3, 4, 7, 17, 18 in Block 3; Lots 2, 8, 10 in Block 34; Lot 10 in Block 35; Lots 2, 3, 5, 14, 15 in Block 44, "Lakeland"
Liber 191: 150 October 30, 1922	Deed: Edwin A. Newman, President, Aquarium Fisheries Company of Prince George's County, Maryland to John J. Kleiner and Charles Shepard Lots 1, 2, 3, 17, and 18 in Block 3, and Lots 8, 9 and 10 in Block 34, "Lakeland," a subdivision of tracts of land known as 'Timber Bottom Enlarged' and 'Riversdale'
Plat Book A: 51 July 15, 1890	Plat: "Lakeland"
Liber JWB 15: 33 April 1, 1890	Deed: David M. Nesbitt to Edwin A. Newman Approximately 109 acres, parts of tracts of land called "Timber Bottom Enlarged" and "Riversdale"
Liber JWB 13: 118 May 4, 1889	Deed: David M. Nesbitt to Edwin A. Newman Approximately 148 acres, parts of a tract of land called "Timber Bottom Enlarged"

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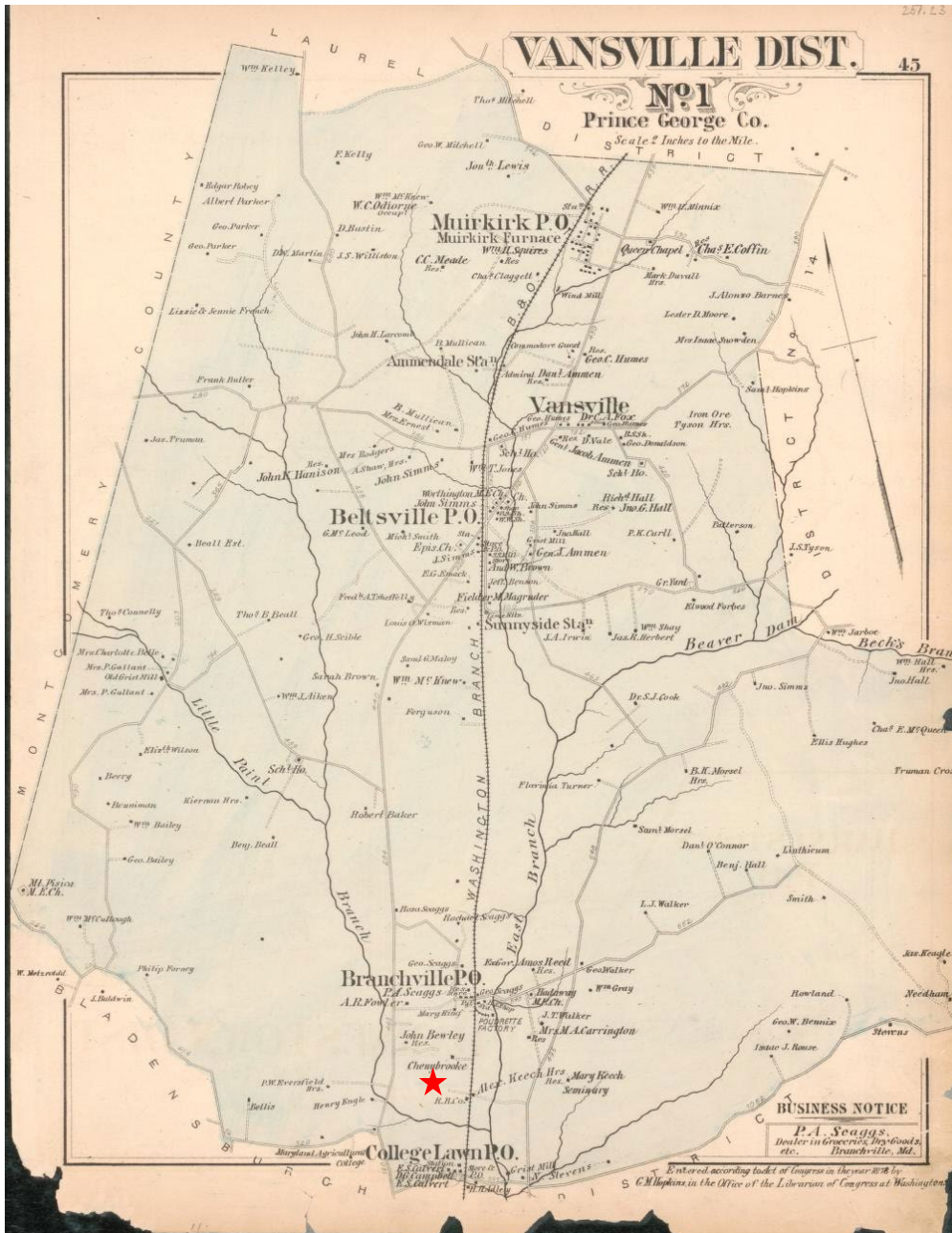


Figure 10: The red star indicates the largely undeveloped land that became the Lakeland subdivision. G.M. Hopkins Atlas of Fifteen Miles around Washington, Including the County of Prince George, Maryland (1878).

<https://www.loc.gov/item/76354156/>

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Figure 12: Joseph G. Brooks, undated. Brooks, born in 1871, was one of the first African Americans to live in central Lakeland. Brooks sold George Henry and Agnes Gross their home on Cloud Avenue. Lakeland Digital Archive.



Figure 13: The Gray family home on Lakeland Avenue (now 54th Avenue) was built by 1910. The Grays and Grosses were close neighbors in Block 2. Their homes were eventually demolished to build Paint Branch Elementary School. Lakeland Digital Archive.

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Figure 14: George Henry Gross, Jr. and Agnes Gross celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary in 1950 at their home on Cloud Avenue in Lakeland. Lakeland Digital Archive.

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Figure 15: Agnes Harrison Gross, c. 1925. Lakeland Digital Archive.

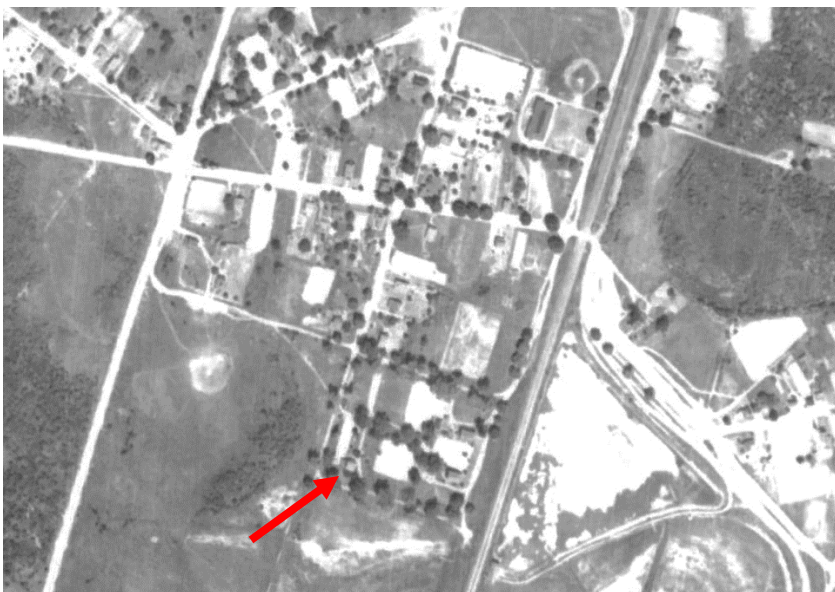


Figure 16: Aerial view of Lakeland, 1938. The red arrow indicates the Gross family home on Cloud Avenue.

www.pgatlas.org

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Figure 17: Wilmer Gross on the grounds of her in-laws' Cloud Avenue property in Lakeland, undated. Lakeland Digital Archive.

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Figure 18: George Henry Gross, Jr., second from left, is recognized for 45 years of service with the University of Maryland's Dining Services Department, 1969. Lakeland Digital Archive.

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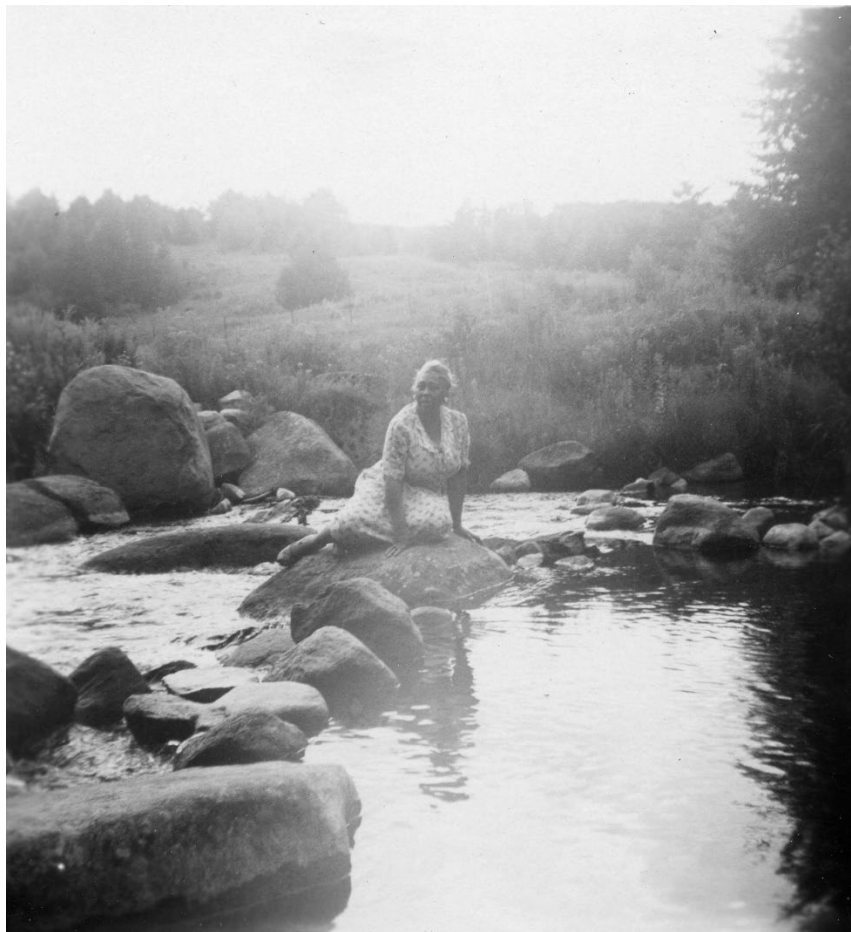


Figure 19: Agnes Gross enjoying time off during her summer employment in upstate New York, 1957. Lakeland Digital Archive.

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Figure 20: In 1972, Hurricane Agnes flooded the basement of the new home at 8002 54th Avenue (in background).
Lakeland Digital Archive.

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Figure 21: Conditions in Lakeland c. 1965. Modern houses, such as Elwood Gross's home at 5110 Pierce Avenue, and older homes in poor condition (at left) were intermingled. Most streets remained unpaved. Lakeland Digital Archive.

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Figure 22: Flooding in Lakeland, 1950. Lakeland Digital Archive.

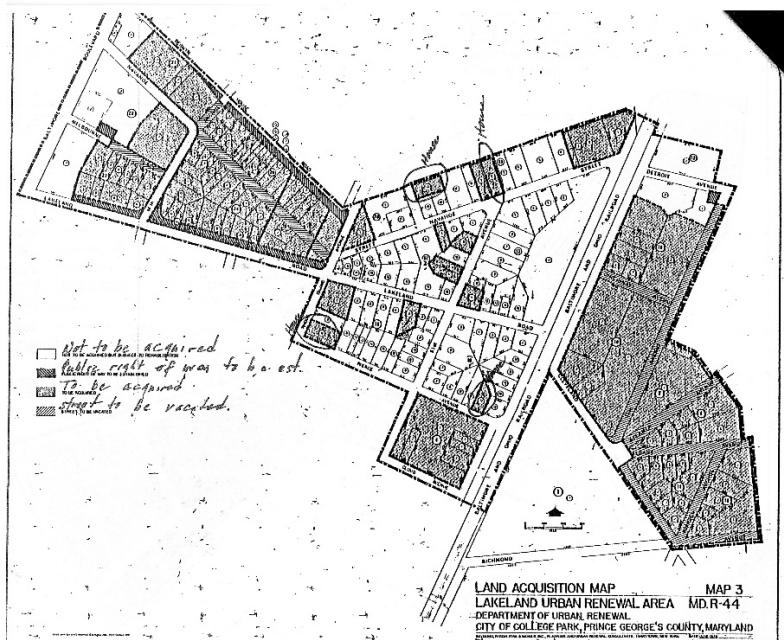


Figure 23: Land Acquisition Map, Lakeland Urban Renewal Plan (1978), p. 213-32. Lakeland Digital Archive.

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Figure 24: The Lakeland Urban Renewal project began demolitions in 1974. Excerpt, Edwards Scrapbook (1969-1979), Lakeland Digital Archive.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. PG:66-000-3

Ancestry.com, Various.

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United States Commission on Civil Rights, "A Long Day's Journey into Light: School Desegregation in Prince George's County," March 1976.

The Washington Post, Various

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 0.1860
Acreage of historical setting 0.1860
Quadrangle name Washington East

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot numbered Two (2) Block numbered Three (3) in the subdivision known as "Lakeland" as per plat thereof recorded in Plat Book A at Plat 51, among the Land Records of Prince George's County, Maryland.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Kacy Rohn, Planner III, Historic Preservation Section		
organization	Prince George's County Planning Department	date	December 1, 2023
street & number	1616 McCormick Drive	telephone	301-952-3680
city or town	Largo	state	MD

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-697-9591