

the public record.

The story of Leo Jones' life and activities helps fill the gap between the Clayton Stansbury Era (1930-1950) and the local Civil Rights Era of the 1960s. Such a narrative reveals how Jones contributed to George Mitchell's becoming the first African-American to run for office in Havre de Grace, and ultimately to Mildred Stansbury's success in becoming the first person of color to be elected to local public office. This missing gap in the written accounts of Harford County history needs to be researched, written, and disseminated.

In an attempt to begin righting the omission, *Campaign 42* is endeavoring to produce a history of "Mr. Leo". It hopes in time to document the fascinating story of building political power for Harford's African-American people, and trusts it will be useful to students and future leaders of Harford County.

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Keep reading. Next week's pamphlet unveils the intriguing legend of Havre de Grace's "Mr. Leo."

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Everyone is invited to participate in the African-American History (AAH) project, regardless of your level of expertise or time commitment. Let us know how you would like to get involved. Email us today at: [harfordcampaign42@gmail.com](mailto:harfordcampaign42@gmail.com)

There is a tremendous amount of history yet to be told as records of various sorts sit in the attics and basements, and unrecorded recollections of residents across the county. Please consider digging those old pictures, documents and stories out and sharing them with the AAH project.

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## African American History of Harford County, Maryland

A Weekly Publication

### Missing Gap -The 1950's

### Pamphlet 0007

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### Bringing Communities Together Through Sharing History



## Campaign 42



## ***Local History Can be Meaningful***

The use of the county's "local" history helps provide meaning and intimacy when appealing to the passions and compassions of Harford Countians. Of course, the facts of the past *must be known* for the story to be told.

During Negro History Week, on February 15, 1933, Clayton Stansbury Sr., spoke to the students of Havre de Grace Colored High School. During the speech, the Stokes Street resident made the point that Negroes were under and unfairly represented in history and that black peoples' positive achievements should receive proper notice alongside those of white citizens. Mr. Stansbury made particular mention of the sacrifices of the U.S. Colored Troops in the Civil War.

However, Stansbury omitted reference to Medal of Honor recipient, Alfred B. Hilton, or any other local Civil War heroes. Mr. Stansbury, no doubt, was unaware

of these men whose individual contributions had been excluded by writers of history. Consequently, the failure of these authors deprived generations of students a closer connection to the Civil War.

Until recently, Hilton's notoriety has gone unrecognized, as evidenced by the scarcity of local historic artifacts such as newspaper accounts, memorials, or government proclamations. If earlier historians had taken a more universal view of the past, Mr. Stansbury would have been better informed and able to call attention to the contributions of specific African-Americans. In his many public addresses, Clayton Stansbury's call for a fairer "local" society likely would have been more successful had he been able to base his argument on known contributions of "local" black heroes like Alfred B. Hilton.

## ***The Missing Gap***

Fortunately the life and times of Clayton Stansbury Sr. are well

documented. His son, Clayton Stansbury Jr., refers to him as the "Black Moses of Harford County". My research leads me to regard him as the "Martin Luther King of Harford County". In retrospect, this unfortunately overlooked yet talented leader had both the hindsight to be "Moses" and the foresight to be Harford County's "MLK".

Wardell Stansbury, another son, believes the many years of fighting for and leading the Colored Harford County PTA wore his father down mentally and physically. What person arose to replace Clayton Stansbury as a leader in the African-American community? Why did many City residents refer to his close friend and neighbor, John Leo Jones as the "unofficial black mayor of Havre de Grace"? How did "Mr. Leo" achieve his status and how did he use his power? And, most significantly, why is it so difficult to find documentation on such an important man in