

Illustrated Inventory of Historic Sites and Districts Prince George's County, Maryland



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

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ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT: This book presents the historic sites, historic districts, and archeological sites that are protected by the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Ordinance, Subtitle 29 of the Prince George's County Code. Each entry includes a photograph, description, and brief statement of historic significance.

The book is divided into six sections: Introduction and Explanation of Symbols, History of Prince George's County, Heritage Themes, Historic Sites, Lost Buildings, and Archeological Sites. The history of the county is related from prehistoric times through the twentieth century, and examples are given of historic sites that illustrate a variety of historical themes. The major section provides a description, short history, and photograph of the historic site; sites are arranged by planning area. The Lost Buildings section includes information about properties within which historic buildings no longer stand. Archeological sites are included without photographs or indication of location to ensure their integrity.

Following these major sections is a glossary of terms, a selected bibliography, and an alphabetical index. The publication closes with six maps showing the number and location of each of the historic sites. The reverse of these maps has color photographs of selected historic sites.

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The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

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The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is a bicounty agency, created by the General Assembly of Maryland in 1927. The Commission's geographic authority extends to the great majority of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties: the Maryland-Washington Regional District (M-NCPPC planning jurisdiction) comprises 1,001 square miles, while the Metropolitan District (parks) comprises 919 square miles, in the two counties.

The Commission has three major functions:

- The preparation, adoption, and, from time to time, amendment or extension of the General Plan for the physical development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District.
- The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system.
- In Prince George's County only, the operation of the entire county public recreation program.

The Commission operates in each county through a Planning Board appointed by and responsible to the county government. All local plans, recommendations on zoning amendments, administration of subdivision regulations, and general administration of parks are responsibilities of the Planning Boards.

The Prince George's County Department of Planning (M-NCPPC):

- Our mission is to help preserve, protect, and manage the county's resources by providing the highest quality planning services and growth management guidance and by facilitating effective intergovernmental and citizen involvement through education and technical assistance.
- Our vision is to be a model planning department of responsive and respected staff who provide superior planning and technical services and work cooperatively with decision-makers, citizens, and other agencies to continuously improve development quality and the environment and act as a catalyst for positive change.

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Introduction

INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS

This volume is a revised and updated version of the *Illustrated Inventory of Historic Sites*, published by the Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) in July 2006. It provides a brief description and photograph of each of Prince George's County's designated historic sites, as well as of the Broad Creek Historic District, the Old Town College Park Historic District, and the Saint Thomas' Episcopal Parish Historic District. The historic sites exemplify Prince George's County's architectural and cultural heritage, serving as the tangible evidence of our ties to the past. These properties have been determined to meet the architectural and historical criteria of Prince George's County's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Subtitle 29 of the County Code) and are protected by the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Because the City of Laurel has its own planning and zoning authority and its own historic preservation ordinance, designated properties in Laurel are not included here.

The county's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is charged with the protection of historic sites and historic districts listed in the Inventory of Historic Resources associated with the county's *Historic Sites and Districts Plan*. The HPC reviews applications for building permits, comments on development

applications, and assists historic property owners with information and contacts.

A synopsis of Prince George's County history opens this publication. Following the history summary, various subject areas, or themes, are highlighted; representative examples of historic sites are listed, illustrating each theme, and examples of various architectural styles follow. Following these themes is the principal section of the publication, consisting of photographs and descriptions of the historic sites. The sites are listed in the order of the planning areas, from 60 to 87B, and at the beginning of each planning area, a map shows its location in the county. The first two digits of the identifying number for each historic site reflect the planning area in which the property is located; for example, 72-021 means site number 21 in Planning Area 72. A series of three numbers indicates that the site is located in an identified historic community; the second number indicates the community, and the third number identifies the site within that community. For example, 68-010-02 is site number 2 within historic community number 10, located in Planning Area 68. If the property is publicly owned, this is shown in parentheses.

At the end of this section is a list of those historic sites where buildings have been lost through demolition,

relocation, or destruction by fire or other casualty. This “Lost Buildings” section is followed by a listing of archeological sites (without photographs) that are protected by the county’s Historic Preservation Ordinance. Following that is a glossary of terms, and a bibliography of reference sources provides suggestions for further reading. Finally, six maps of the county show the location of the historic sites and districts by subregion. On the reverse of each map are color photographs of selected historic sites located within that subregion.

The county’s historic sites that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places are indicated by “(NR)” following the name of the historic property. In the case of National Historic Landmarks, “(NHL)” follows the property name.

HISTORY OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

The land that we know today as Prince George's County was occupied for thousands of years before the first Europeans sailed to these shores. There is considerable evidence of Native American settlements along both the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers; hundreds of prehistoric sites indicate the presence of many villages and temporary camps in the centuries before the arrival of European colonists. The first recorded visit to Prince George's County by a European was in the summer of 1608, when Captain John Smith sailed up the Potomac River, probably as far as Great Falls. Two peoples inhabited the county in Smith's time. The peaceable Piscataways, whose villages ranged from the Anacostia River southward into present-day Charles and St. Mary's Counties, were acknowledged to form the dominant tribe of the Western Shore. Also present were the bellicose Susquehannocks, who roamed and hunted in the northern part of present-day Prince George's County, constantly pressing the Piscataways for more land.

John Smith's visit in 1608 was an exploratory expedition only; no settlement was intended. Over the next 25 years, English traders paid frequent calls upon the natives here, sometimes to trade, sometimes to do battle. The most significant early contact came in 1634, just days after the first Maryland colonists landed near the mouth of the Potomac River. Advised by an English trader to meet with the Piscataways before establishing

a settlement there, Governor Leonard Calvert sailed up the Potomac to the tribe's principal town, located on Piscataway Creek in the southern part of what was to become Prince George's County. Governor Calvert established good relations with the Piscataways and after consultation, he returned down river to found St. Mary's City, Maryland's first settlement.

Establishment of the County

The Maryland colony flourished at St. Mary's City and enjoyed peaceful relations with the neighboring tribes. Settlers soon left the confines of the original settlement. New counties were created, and within 30 years, farms and plantations lined both the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers well into the land that is called Prince George's County today. In the mid-seventeenth century, all of this land was included in Calvert and Charles Counties, established in 1654 and 1658, respectively; the land along the Patuxent was part of Calvert, while that along the Potomac was part of Charles. By 1695, sixteen or seventeen hundred people lived in this area, a number sufficient in the opinion of Governor Francis Nicholson to deserve the right of self-government. The General Assembly agreed, and on St. George's Day, April 23, 1696, a new county was established, named for Prince George of Denmark, husband of Princess Anne, heir to the throne of England. The first county seat was at

Charles Town on the Patuxent, one of the port towns established in 1683 by the General Assembly. The new Prince George's County extended from the Charles County line in the south all the way north to the Pennsylvania border, and marked Maryland's western frontier. It remained the frontier county until 1748, when the westernmost regions were granted their own government, and Prince George's County's northern boundary became basically the line it is today.

In 1692, four years before the establishment of Prince George's County, the Church of England became the established church of the Maryland colony through an Act of the General Assembly. By this time, ten counties had been established in the colony, and those counties were divided into 30 parishes. When Prince George's County came into being in 1696, two parishes had already been established within its boundaries: St. Paul's Parish in the area that had been part of Calvert County, and Piscataway (or King George's) Parish in the area that had been part of Charles County. By this time, there was already a church at Charles Town; this small church building was used as a meeting place for the new County Court until a new courthouse was completed in 1698. St. Paul's Parish also had a rural chapel for residents of the more remote regions, about 12 miles south of Charles Town. In Piscataway Parish, the first church was built in 1694, at the site of the present-day St. John's Church, Broad Creek.

The political divisions of the new county, known as "hundreds," were totally distinct from the parish

divisions, and were used for the purposes of taxation as well as for judicial, legal, and military administration. In 1696, the new county comprised six hundreds, and over the years, as the population increased, the six original hundreds were divided to create geographically smaller administrative units. (A century after its establishment, Prince George's County was made up of 21 hundreds, superseded in the nineteenth century by election districts.)

Eighteenth Century

During the 1700s, the land of Prince George's County was gradually settled. Men and women from all parts of the British Isles, as well as other countries of Europe, came to find homes here. Some came as free men, others as indentured servants. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, landowners had turned to slave labor for the operation of their plantations, and large numbers of Africans were brought here to work as slaves. In 1706, the General Assembly of the Maryland colony passed an Act for the Advancement of Trade. This act reestablished Charles Town, and also established five more port towns: Queen Anne, Nottingham, and Mill Town on the Patuxent, Marlborough on the Western Branch of the Patuxent, and Aire at Broad Creek on the Potomac. A year later, a supplementary act established the Town of Piscataway at the head of the Piscataway Creek. These trading centers grew; merchants built stores and sold everything from yard goods and shoe buckles to grubbing hoes, sugar and salt; lawyers and doctors established practices;

innkeepers acquired licenses to sell liquor and opened their doors to travelers and residents alike.

The town that had been established on the Western Branch (soon called “Upper” Marlborough in order to distinguish it from “Lower” Marlborough in Calvert County) developed more rapidly than the other towns established in 1706 and 1707. By 1718, Upper Marlborough had become such an active center that its inhabitants petitioned to have the court proceedings moved there from Charles Town. The General Assembly consented to the move, and the County Court met for the first time in Upper Marlborough in 1721. From this time until early in the twentieth century, Upper Marlboro (as it is now spelled) was the commercial, political and social center of Prince George’s County, and it has remained the county seat to this day.

In 1742, Bladensburg was established on the Eastern Branch of the Potomac, supplanting an earlier settlement known as Beall Town one-half mile upstream on the Northwest Branch. Bladensburg, together with Upper Marlborough, Nottingham, Aire at Broad Creek, Queen Anne, and Piscataway, became an official tobacco inspection station in 1747 by act of the General Assembly.

Some iron was mined and worked in the Upper Patuxent region, and water-powered mills were constructed on the abundant water courses. Despite this growth, Prince George’s County remained predominantly agricultural. Agriculture was the basis

of the economy and directly or indirectly provided the livelihood for every resident. The crop that was the heart of this agricultural economy was tobacco.

Tobacco created wealth for Prince George’s County, wealth that built fine plantation homes like Belair and Compton Bassett, educated the children of the leading families, supported the work of religious institutions, and fostered arts such as theater, dance, and music that flourished in Upper Marlborough and other places. That wealth also provided the means to enjoy leisure time in activities such as fox hunting and horse racing, and enabled planters to devote such care to their horses and their breeding that Prince George’s County became the cradle of American thoroughbred racing, a sport still very much a part of the county today. Tobacco provided modest livelihoods for small farmers and even served as legal tender for debts. Tobacco also created a prosperous, sophisticated society that traded its staple with English and Scottish merchants for goods from all over the world.

The earliest arteries of transportation had been the waterways, and they remained important avenues of commerce between port towns. But a network of roads had developed by the beginning of the eighteenth century, establishing overland connections between the several port towns and between the towns and the parish churches. As the population increased and the political hundreds and church parishes were divided for more efficient management, and as new plantations were established, more roads were cleared to allow

easier communication between the population centers. Land and court records show the construction of new roadways. In 1739 a survey ordered by the justices of the County Court described a network of more than 50 roads connecting the towns of Upper Marlborough, Piscataway, Queen Anne, Nottingham, Mill Town, Aire, and Beall town, as well as the parish churches and their several rural chapels. Road building increased during the middle years of the eighteenth century. In 1762 another road survey indicated a significant increase in roadways. At strategic points along the major roads, and especially in the principal towns and river crossings, taverns were established; they catered to the needs of travelers and provided gathering places for the exchange of news and opinions.

Revolutionary Period—Prince George’s County was not untouched by the great tide of national events at the end of the eighteenth century. When the Revolution came, Prince Georgians organized county committees to assist the revolutionary effort here at home, and they sent many of their sons to fight gallantly for the cause of independence. One of their citizens, John Rogers of Upper Marlborough, sat in the Continental Congress, which in July 1776 voted to make the colonies free and independent states. In September 1787, Daniel Carroll, also of Upper Marlborough, was one of the 39 men who signed the newly framed United States Constitution. In April 1788 four distinguished Prince Georgians attended the Ratification Convention in Annapolis and voted unanimously in favor of the Constitution. In 1790, when the Congress in Philadelphia decided

to locate the new federal capital somewhere along the Potomac River, Prince George’s County ceded most of the land necessary to establish the District of Columbia. The ten-mile-square area was surveyed in 1791, and stone markers were erected during the following year at the four corners and at one-mile intervals along the lines. Five of these markers are located within the boundaries of Prince George’s County and have been designated as historic sites. Today, each of the great symbols of our three branches of government, the Capitol, the White House, and the Supreme Court building, stands on land that was once part of Prince George’s County. The development of the Federal City was aided immeasurably by Benjamin Stoddert of Bladensburg, who acquired much of the land needed by the federal government from local landowners and later served as first Secretary of the Navy. After the Declaration of Rights in 1776, as American religion began an independent life of its own in the new nation, two Prince Georgians were chosen to assume roles of leadership. In 1783, the Roman Catholic Church in America formulated its first constitution, meeting at White Marsh, one of the oldest Catholic establishments in Maryland; and in 1789 John Carroll of Upper Marlborough became the first Roman Catholic bishop in the United States. In 1792 Thomas John Claggett, who had guided the formation of the Episcopal Church from its Anglican beginnings, became the first Episcopal bishop consecrated in this country.

Nineteenth Century

Prince George's County had been spared extensive military action during the Revolutionary War, but such was not to be the case during the War of 1812. In August 1814, the British sailed up the Patuxent to Benedict and began a march through the county, through Nottingham, Upper Marlborough, and Long Old Fields (now Forestville), all the way to Bladensburg, where they defeated an ill-prepared army of American defenders and marched on into Washington to burn the capital city. On their way back to their ships, they seized a Prince Georgian, Dr. William Beanes of Upper Marlborough, and imprisoned him in Baltimore. Francis Scott Key was on a mission to plead for Dr. Beanes' release when he witnessed the bombardment of Fort McHenry and wrote the poem which became our national anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner."

Those early years of the nineteenth century brought changes to the county. Although tobacco remained predominant, farmers throughout the county began to experiment with new crops on land worn out by continuous cultivation of tobacco. In 1817, the first county agricultural society in Maryland was founded in Prince George's County, and agriculturalists such as Horace Capron, Dr. John Bayne, and Charles B. Calvert attracted national attention with their agricultural experimentation. The efforts of Charles Calvert brought about the establishment of the nation's first agricultural research college (now the University of Maryland

at College Park) in 1858, further indication of the leadership of Prince George's County in that field.

New developments were not limited to agriculture. A new way of working, which involved great machines, mass production, and hundreds of workers, had evolved in England and New England during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Industrial Revolution had advanced into Prince George's County across its northern border with the establishment of cotton mills at Laurel in the 1820s and the establishment of the Muirkirk Iron Furnace near Beltsville in the 1840s. In the early years of the century, the first turnpike was constructed, linking Washington and Baltimore; about 14 miles of convenient, nearly straight roadway ran through Prince George's County. The prominence of the turnpike was short-lived; in 1835 the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad line was completed between Baltimore and Washington. The railroad brought momentous change to the area, altering traditional methods of travel, transforming small crossroad communities into population centers and, eventually, potential sites for suburban expansion. The railroad provided the right-of-way on which Samuel F. B. Morse strung the country's first telegraph line in 1844. The success of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad also stimulated the planters of Southern Maryland to seek construction of another railroad through rural southeastern Prince George's County to provide easy access to the Baltimore market. However, this goal was not realized until after the Civil War.

In politics, two sons of Prince George's County achieved national distinction in those early years of the nineteenth century. Gabriel Duvall of Marietta was an associate justice on the United States Supreme Court, and William Wirt, a Bladensburg native, served for 12 years as Attorney General of the United States. In the course of the nineteenth century, five distinguished Prince Georgians served as governor of Maryland: Robert Bowie of Nottingham, Samuel Sprigg of Northampton, Joseph Kent of Rose Mount, Thomas G. Pratt of Upper Marlborough, and Oden Bowie of Fairview.

As the nineteenth century passed its midpoint, Prince George's County prospered. Its agriculture was diversifying, some industry was developing, the fisheries of the Patuxent and Potomac yielded rich harvests, steamboats plied the Patuxent linking the county to Baltimore, trains ran regularly on the line between Baltimore and Washington, and above all, the growth of the staple crop, tobacco, remained its most profitable enterprise. In fact, more tobacco was grown here than in any other county in Maryland, and more slaves tilled the fields here than in any other place in the state. The labor of the county's black community, 90 percent of it enslaved in 1860, helped guarantee this prosperity. But the old tobacco society was to end, because forces beyond the control of any Prince Georgian would soon plunge the nation into bitter civil war.

Prince George's County, like the State of Maryland, was divided during the monumental struggle from

1861 to 1865. Although Maryland made no move to secede from the Union, there was great sympathy in the county for those states that did. In 1860 the county had a plantation economy and a population of enslaved laborers. The prominent families of Prince George's County were slaveholders, and a significant number of their sons went south to fight for the Confederacy. When the institution of slavery was abolished in the District of Columbia in 1862, many of the enslaved laborers of Prince George's County fled to freedom there. Emancipation took effect in Maryland in January 1865 and brought an end to the old plantation system. When the war ended three months later, the old Prince George's County was gone, and the county began a second life.

After the Civil War—The Civil War brought significant changes to Prince George's County. Some were immediately noticeable, such as the freeing of the slaves. Small communities of blacks began to develop soon after the cessation of hostilities, such as Rossville near the Muirkirk Furnace, Chapel Hill near Fort Washington, as well as the black communities near the towns of Woodville, Queen Anne, and Upper Marlborough. Each of these communities was centered around a place of worship, predominantly congregations of the Methodist denomination. The newly emancipated people proceeded to build their homes while laboring in the iron furnaces or in railroad construction, and principally in farming. With the assistance of the Freedmen's Bureau, these communities

soon had schoolhouses and teachers, beginning the significant movement toward black education. A substantial number of blacks moved out of Prince George's County during the generation after the Civil War, especially into the District of Columbia.

There were also changes in the county's economy. Agriculture remained the predominant way of life, tobacco continued to be the most important crop, and the large plantations by no means vanished. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, small farms growing tobacco and other crops began to play a larger role in the county's economic life. Between the end of the Civil War and the turn of the twentieth century, the number of farms in Prince George's County doubled, while the average farm size decreased dramatically. Many of these new smaller farms were operated by freed blacks, and many others were owned by newcomers to the county. As the agricultural population grew, so did commercial life and the importance of local commerce in the overall economic picture. But this second life of Prince George's County, of small farms and local commerce, soon gave way to a force that would affect this county as profoundly as tobacco had in the old days. That force was the growing federal government and its expanding Capital City.

As Washington grew from a small town to a major capital, it began to spill over into the adjoining communities. A new phenomenon, the residential suburb, began to develop in order to accommodate

the increasing number of federal employees and city workers. The new branch line of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad had opened in 1872. It joined with the main line to Southern Maryland at the Bowie junction and created a second rail link between Washington and Baltimore. Speculators were quick to see opportunities for new residential development. In the 1880s and 1890s, more and more residential communities were developed north of Washington along both railroad lines, offering federal employees the opportunity to live away from the city in healthful surroundings easily accessible by rail. In towns like Hyattsville, Riverdale Park, Berwyn Heights, College Park, Glenn Dale, and Bowie, fine Victorian dwellings of the 1880s and 1890s reflect this booming period of suburban expansion. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the county's population was 30,000, 30 percent higher than it had been in 1860.

Twentieth Century

As the twentieth century began, the national capital continued to spread into Prince George's County. New types of transportation, like the streetcar and the Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis electric railroad, offered additional opportunities for residential development along the borders of the Federal City. Towns like Mount Rainier, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, Brentwood, Capitol Heights, and Seat Pleasant began to develop during the first decade of the new century. Several black communities—North Brentwood,

Fairmount Heights, and Lincoln—were established and attracted members of a growing group of black professionals from Washington.

The new science of aviation made history in Prince George's County with the establishment of College Park Airport in 1909 and with military flight instruction there by Wilbur Wright. In 1941, John Greene established the Columbia Air Center, the first black-owned airport in Maryland, on a field near Croom. The county's prominence in the science of aviation was reinforced by the construction in 1942 of the new military airfield known today as Joint Base Andrews. Other large federal installations had moved into Prince George's County during the first half of the century: Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, the huge (over 10,000 acres) agricultural area purchased by the U.S. Government between 1910 and 1940; Patuxent Wildlife Research Center established in 1936; and the Suitland Federal Center complex established in 1942. Then in the late 1950s, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration established its primary science center (Goddard Space Flight Center) in Greenbelt. These important government installations exerted a significant influence on the employment patterns of county residents and became a major factor in the more than tenfold population growth of the county between 1930 and 1970.

Farming remained the way of life for many in the vast rural areas beyond these new towns, but year by

year, the percentage of the population earning their livelihood through agriculture declined as the denser suburban population close to Washington grew. New communities also began to appear as the increasing use of the automobile allowed for further residential development, in some cases at a distance from railroad and trolley lines; Cheverly, Greenbelt, District Heights, New Carrollton, and Glenarden are examples of this trend. Prince George's had been a county of 30,000 persons in 1900; it became a county of 60,000 in 1930, and by 1950 the population had increased to almost 200,000. In the mid-1960s, the construction of the Capital Beltway defined the boundary between urban and suburban/rural Prince George's County, and the suburbs continued to expand and spread. By 1970 the county's population had reached 660,000, and less than a third of its population lived outside the Beltway. A sewer moratorium and a large drop in average household size combined to slow the population explosion during the 1970s, so that the population increased only to 665,000 in 1980. The pace of residential development, particularly an increase in the number of single-family homes, rose after 1980 and continued through 2000; most of these new single-family houses were built outside the Beltway. By the year 2000, when the population reached 800,000, more than half the county's population lived outside the Beltway.

In the last decades of the twentieth century, development in the county expanded, bringing in many new

government and business establishments, as well as a large number of residential subdivisions. In the 1990s, a former county executive, Parris Glendening, was elected to serve as Maryland governor. The demographics of the county also changed; the population is now well over 50 percent black. In the generation between 1970 and 2000, a number of factors (such as the success of fair housing laws, the existence of established and stable black communities, and the phenomenon of “white flight” provoked by the beginning of school busing) caused a rise in the African-American percentage of the county’s population from 14 percent to more than 60 percent. In 1994, the county’s first African-American county executive, Wayne Curry, was elected, and in 1996 Prince George’s County celebrated the tricentennial of its establishment with exhibits, parades, publications, and many other observances.

Many changes have come to Prince George’s County during the 300 years since it was established. Once a rough and challenging frontier land with small groups of settlers pursuing commerce and agriculture, the county developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries into a prosperous, sophisticated tobacco society. When that society met its end in war, small farms growing tobacco and other crops and local commerce became the dominant ways of life, until Prince George’s County finally became part of the expanding Washington metropolitan area, and now is a place where men and women of all creeds, religions, races, national origins, and economic positions live and work. But despite these great changes, reminders of the

past are all around us, sometimes hidden from sight and sometimes unrecognizable to the newcomer. Although a majority of its citizens live in an urban setting today, much of the land still retains its rural character, and agriculture is still the way of life for some. If Prince Georgians of today head out of the city, beyond the Beltway and suburban developments into the large areas that are still country, they can walk into the woods or along the creeks and rivers and see, if just for a moment, a Prince George’s County that the first settlers might have seen more than 300 years ago.

HERITAGE THEMES

The *Historic Sites and Districts Plan* (HSDP) presents a number of important themes in the county's history, culture, and heritage. These themes provide a framework for evaluating the significance of properties. Each theme is illustrated with representative examples of designated historic sites or contributing buildings in county-designated historic districts; properties may be used to illustrate multiple themes. It is important to note that many themes are interrelated and overlapping and extend through time to tell the story of the county's history.

Prehistoric and Seventeenth Century Period

Native Americans—The land that became Prince George's County was occupied for thousands of years before the first Europeans arrived. There is considerable archeological evidence of Native American settlement along both the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers and their tributaries. Examples of notable archeological sites include: **Accokeek Creek Site, Nottingham Archeological Site, Mount Calvert Archeological Site, Piscataway Park Archeological Site,** and **National Archives Archeological Site.**

The Eighteenth Century and the Antebellum Period

Early Towns—Charles Town on the Patuxent was first established in 1683 and became the seat of government when Prince George's County was established in 1696. Five more port towns (Marlborough, Queen Anne, Mill Town, Nottingham, and Aire) were established in 1706, and Piscataway in 1707. Although little remains from the original settlements of the seven port towns, a number of older structures and sites of structures represent them: **Piscataway Tavern, Content,** and **Darnall's Chance House Museum** in Upper Marlboro, **Mount Calvert** at the site of Charles Town, and **Harmony Hall** near the site of Aire.

Agricultural Heritage—From the earliest settlement and establishment of Prince George's County in the late seventeenth century until well into the twentieth century, agriculture was the basis of the county's economy and directly or indirectly provided the livelihood of its residents. Tobacco was the principal crop and created wealth for the leading families of the county. The tobacco heritage is exemplified by the barns of early plantations like **Concord, Wyoming,** and **The Cottage.** Other agricultural efforts are represented by the **Ashland Hay Barn,** associated historically with the **Compton Bassett** plantation.

Earliest Plantation Establishments—Earliest settlements were along the waterways, near the seven early port towns, and near the parish churches. Large tracts of land were developed into plantations; these plantation landscapes, architectural characteristics, and culture are based on and linked to the institution of slavery. Some surviving plantation houses from this early period are **Mount Airy, Billingsley, Bellefields, Mullikin’s Delight, Harmony Hall, Melwood Park, Belair, Wyoming,** and **Compton Bassett.**

Colonial Churches—When Prince George’s County was established in 1696, two parishes of the Church of England were already in existence: St. Paul’s Parish on the Patuxent River, and Piscataway Parish on the Potomac. Early churches survive in both of the original parishes: **St. Paul’s** at Baden and **St. John’s** at Broad Creek. Rural chapels for these two churches also survive; **Christ Church** at Accokeek, which was the “lower” chapel of Piscataway Parish; **Addison Chapel** at Seat Pleasant, which was the “upper” chapel of the same parish; and **St. Thomas’** at Croom, which was the chapel of St. Paul’s at Baden. A new parish, Queen Anne, was created in 1704 out of St. Paul’s; the church built for that parish in 1774 survives as **St. Barnabas’** at Leeland. One Roman Catholic church survives from the Colonial period: **Sacred Heart Church** at White Marsh.

Later Churches—As the population of the county increased, the Church of England parishes were divided and more places of worship were built. Public places

of worship were built for Roman Catholics after 1776, and the nineteenth century saw the rise of the Methodist Episcopal Church. There are fine examples of these nineteenth-century churches across the county: **St. John’s** at Beltsville, **St. Barnabas** at Oxon Hill, **Trinity Church** in Upper Marlboro, **Holy Trinity** at Collington, **St. George’s** in Glenn Dale, **Chapel of the Incarnation** at Brandywine, **St. Ignatius** at Oxon Hill, **St. Joseph’s** at Ammendale, **Cheltenham Methodist Church, Holy Family Roman Catholic Church** in Woodmore, and **Perkins Chapel** in Glenn Dale. New churches were built in the early twentieth century, often to replace older churches on the same site: **St. Thomas Methodist Church** near Baden, **Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church** at Rosaryville, **Ridgely Church** in the Landover area, **Union Methodist Church** in Upper Marlboro, **Old St. Margaret’s Roman Catholic Church** in Seat Pleasant, and **Old Bells Methodist Church** in Camp Springs.

The Revolutionary Period—Reminders of the American Revolution are represented in the archeological site of the munitions and uniform manufactory operated by Stephen West at **The Woodyard**, and by **St. Barnabas’ Church at Leeland**, the scene of pre-Revolutionary confrontations during the tenure of outspoken Tory rector, Jonathan Boucher, who was connected to **Mount Lubentia.**

Planters’ and Farmers’ Dwellings—These types of dwellings are represented by **Riversdale, Bowieville, Weston, Solitude, Rosemount, Brookefield** of the

Berrys, Brookewood, Woodstock, Hamilton House, The Cottage, Oakland, Villa de Sales, and Sunnyside.

Commerce, Industry, and Scientific Advancements

Commerce—Most of the early commerce in the county was associated with tobacco and the crop even served as legal tender for debts. This commerce in the colonial period is best represented by the **Market Master's House** and the **George Washington House**, which served as a store, both in Bladensburg, and **Kingston** in Upper Marlboro. Later commerce is represented by the rural general store, e.g., the **Coffren Store** in Croom, the **Crandell-Rothstein House** in Upper Marlboro, the **Marlow-Huntt Store** in Brandywine, and the **Cochrane Store** in Aquasco. Later structures reflect the range of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial activity such as the **Prince George's Bank** buildings in Hyattsville and Mount Rainier, and the **Bank of Brandywine**.

Industry—The earliest industry in the county is represented by water-powered mills such as the **Adelphi Mill** constructed northwest of Hyattsville for the grinding of grain at the end of the eighteenth century. Iron was mined in the upper Patuxent region, and in the 1840s, the **Muirkirk Ironworks** was established in the Beltsville area. During the Revolution, munitions and uniforms were manufactured at Stephen West's Woodyard establishment, represented by **The Woodyard Archeological Site**. Nineteenth-century

industry is exemplified by the blacksmith/wheelwright shop at the **H.B.B. Trueman Farm**. The impact of twentieth-century industry requires further evaluation, but numerous building types associated with this time period are currently being identified and documented.

Agricultural Science—Early examples of agricultural science are represented by **Salubria Site**, the plantation home of agricultural innovator Dr. John Bayne, as well as **Riversdale**, the plantation of Charles B. Calvert, founder of county and state agricultural societies and of the Maryland Agricultural College. A later example is **Mount Calvert**, the home of David E. Brown, who worked as a field agent for the Department of Agriculture's experiment station near Upper Marlboro from 1908 through the 1940s, and who was instrumental in the development of Maryland Mamouth variety of tobacco. Local scientific interest in agriculture is also represented by the **Rosborough Inn** on the campus of the University of Maryland at College Park, a building that served as an agricultural experimentation station during the late nineteenth century.

Medicine—There are a number of historic sites in Prince George's County with strong ties to the field of medicine. For example, Dr. Adam Thomson, a prominent eighteenth-century physician, lived at **Darnall's Chance** in Upper Marlboro and invented the American method of smallpox inoculation that reduced the disease's mortality by half and became the standard procedure in the colonies until the development of

smallpox vaccine. Many local doctors in the nineteenth century practiced their profession from home offices. These are represented by the **Dr. Edgar Hurtt House** in Piscataway, the **Dr. William H. Gibbons House** in Croom, the **Dr. Charles Fox House** in Beltsville, and the **Adams-Bowen House** in Aquasco.

Horse Breeding and Racing—Prince George’s County has played a leading role in Maryland’s horse breeding and racing pursuits since the early eighteenth century. By the middle of the century, there were regular races at Upper Marlboro, and in the 1780s and 1790s, the noted Virginia sire Obscurity stood at **Harmony Hall** in Broad Creek. The 250-year history of breeding and racing at **Belair** is documented at the early-twentieth-century stone **Belair Stable** in Bowie. Several other historic sites illustrate this storied tradition including **Kildare**, **Fairview**, and **Weston**.

Transportation

Waterways, Landings, and River Crossings—The earliest arteries of transportation were local waterways, and the first settlements and subsequent towns were established on major waterways. Landings were established at the tobacco inspection stations, and at other locations on the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers. During the nineteenth century, steamboats traveled along these watercourses, stopping at old landings such as **Trueman Point**. Bridges were built across the Patuxent River near the Duvall sawmill, the town of Queen Anne, and Hill’s Landing among others. These

traditional landings and crossings are represented in the twentieth-century truss bridges, **Duvall Bridge** and **Governors Bridge**, which replaced earlier spans.

Taverns—At strategic points along major roads, and especially in principal towns and river crossings, taverns were established. These businesses catered to the needs of travelers and provided gathering places for the exchange of news and opinion. Several early taverns still stand: **George Washington House**, **Rosborough Inn**, **Piscataway Tavern**, **Hardy’s Tavern**, **Horsehead Tavern**, and **Mary Surratt House**.

Railroads—The way of life in Prince George’s County was significantly changed with the construction of two major railroad lines: the Baltimore and Ohio line in 1835, and the Baltimore and Potomac line in 1872. Reminders of the importance of these rail lines survive and are represented by the **Bowie Railroad Buildings** and the **Wilson Station Railroad Tower**.

Aviation—The history of aviation in Prince George’s County dates to the late eighteenth century when pioneering ascents of tethered balloons were conducted by local innkeeper and attorney Peter Carnes in Bladensburg in June 1784. Prince George’s County can boast the oldest continually operating airfield in the world at the **College Park Airport**, where Wilbur Wright conducted military flight instruction in 1909. In addition, **Columbia Air Center** in Upper Marlboro, opened in 1941 and operated until 1956 by John Greene, was primarily used by former Tuskegee Airmen

and was the first licensed black-owned and -operated airport in the state. Another significant aviation resource is the **ERCO** plant in Riverdale which operated from 1938 until the 1960s and produced the Ercoupe, initially developed for military purposes and later adapted for civilian aviation.

Political and Social History, Religion, Recreation, and the Arts

War of 1812—Prince George’s County was directly affected during the War of 1812 by the British invasion of Washington. As the British marched north and west through the county, their impact was felt at several important sites: **Mount Calvert** on the Patuxent near Upper Marlboro, **Bellefields**, and **St. Thomas’ Church** in Croom, **Trinity Church** and **Darnall’s Chance** in Upper Marlboro, **Melwood Park**, **The Woodyard**, **Mount Lubentia**, **Addison Chapel**, **Bostwick**, **Market Master’s House** and the **Hilleary-Magruder House** in Bladensburg, **Riversdale**, **Magruder Spring**, **Crawford’s Adventure Spring**, and **Fort Washington** (Warburton Manor).

Civil War—Several historic sites represent the Civil War period in Prince George’s County, including **Fort Foote**, used in the defense of the nation’s capital, as well as the **Mary Surratt House**, to which John Wilkes Booth escaped after his assassination of President Lincoln at Ford’s Theater in Washington.

Political History—Because of Prince George’s County’s proximity to the national capital, it has been much involved with political movements and events. Several historic sites represent this political history: one is **Grigsby Station Log Cabin**, which stood on the farm where Belva Lockwood was nominated for the U.S. Presidency in 1884; others were the residences of prominent statesmen and politicians, such as **Riversdale** (home of George Calvert and Charles Benedict Calvert); the **Site of Rose Mount** (the home of Governor Joseph Kent); **Mattaponi** in Croom (the home of Governor Robert Bowie); **St. James Hill** in Piscataway (home of Benedict Semmes); **Marietta** (the home of Gabriel Duvall), **Belair** (home of Samuel Ogle and Benjamin Ogle); **Fairview** (the home of Governor Oden Bowie); the **Digges-Sasscer House** (the home of Lansdale G. Sasscer); **The Cottage** (the home of Charles Clagett); and **Oxon Hill Manor** (the home of Sumner Welles).

Social History—The theme of social history is represented in its many facets in Prince George’s County historic sites. The late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century practice of dueling is represented in the **Dueling Grounds** at **Bladensburg**. The sport of the hunt is represented in the **Marlboro Hunt Club**.

African-American Religious Practices—After the Civil War, the African-American population in Prince George’s County was subjected to segregation and institutionalized discrimination sometimes referred to as “Jim Crow” laws. Newly freed slaves created communities centered on churches, schools, and

benevolent societies that fulfilled religious, educational and recreational needs. The rise of the African-American beneficial societies is represented in **St. Mary's Beneficial Society Hall** and **Abraham Hall**. Examples of early African-American churches and cemeteries in the county include **Holy Family Roman Catholic Church** in Woodmore, **Queen's Chapel and Cemetery**, **Union Chapel and Cemetery**, **Carroll Chapel**, **John Wesley Methodist Church and Cemetery**, and **Brooks Methodist Church**.

African-American Resorts and Recreation—Although African Americans existed within a segregated society through the middle of the twentieth century, by the early years of the century a number of communities developed to serve the housing and recreational needs of the local population, such as Eagle Harbor and Cedar Haven. In the twentieth century, recreation is best represented at **Wilmer's Park** in Brandywine.

Civil Society

African-American History—African-Americans have played a large part in the history of Prince George's County, as illustrated in numerous historic sites and broad settlement patterns; **St. Paul's (Free Hope Baptist) Church**, **Butler House**, **Abraham Hall**, **St. Mary's Beneficial Society Hall**, **Mt. Nebo Church**, **the D.S.S. Goodloe House**, **St. Thomas Methodist Church**, **Union Methodist Church**, **Dorsey Chapel** and the **Northhampton Slave Quarter Site** and **Archaeological Park**. There are a number of important

early twentieth-century African-American suburban communities including North Brentwood, Fairmount Heights, and Glenarden, as well as the retreat communities of Ardwick, and Cedar Haven and Eagle Harbor on the Patuxent River. Free black families living in the county prior to the Civil War were not able to acquire titles to land until the 1870s or later. Examples of early settlements by free black families are the **John Henry Quander House** outside Upper Marlboro and the **Colbert Family Farm Site** near Bowie. Later dwellings include the **Thomas Hunster House** and **William Stanton Wormley House** in Ardwick, and the **William and Mildred Ridgley Gray House** in Landover.

Education—The field of education is represented by many historic sites in Prince George's County, from the one-room schoolhouse to the main campus of the University of Maryland. Examples include **Friendly School**, **Seabrook School**, **Berwyn Heights Schoolhouse**, **Briarley Military Academy**, **Rossborough Inn**, **Greenbelt Center School**, and **Black Swamp School**. Other examples include the nine surviving Rosenwald schools built for African-American students in rural areas in the 1920s and 1930s such as **Ridgeley School**, and the **D.S.S. Goodloe House**, home of the first principal of the African-American Maryland Normal and Industrial School (now Bowie State University). Many of the Freedmen's Bureau schools, built shortly after the Civil War for African-American students, are no longer standing but may represent opportunities for archeological investigation.

An important twentieth century landmark in the history of African-American education in the county is the **Fairmont Heights High School**.

Law—Many important Prince Georgians achieved renown in the legal profession. Their houses and offices survive as reminders of these endeavors, and of the prominence of the Upper Marlboro bar. These include **Marietta and Law Office** (the home of Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Gabriel Duvall), **Trelawn** (home of Joseph K. Roberts, Jr.), the **Digges-Sasscer House** (home of prominent attorneys Daniel C. Digges, William A. Jarboe, and Lansdale G. Sasscer), the **Magruder's Law Office** in Upper Marlboro, the **Thomas J. Calloway House** in Lincoln, and **Trammell-Taylor House** in Fairmount Heights.

Civil Rights—In the middle of the twentieth century, local citizens actively participated in the struggle for civil rights that gripped the nation at large, and their activism resulted in substantial local changes in education, fair housing efforts, and access to public buildings. A number of local properties in Fairmount Heights such as the **Fairmont Heights High School** and the **Trammell-Taylor House** are significant for the roles that these buildings and their occupants played in these efforts. Tommie Broadwater, the first African-American elected to the Maryland State Senate in a district outside the City of Baltimore, attended high school at the Fairmont Heights High School. G. James Gholson, another prominent African-American in the county was principal at that time. Gholson, who

was the school's chief administrator from 1950–1969, later became the chief architect of the Prince George's County plan to desegregate schools. The **Trammell-Taylor House** recalls the activities of Judge Taylor, who became the first African-American to serve as Assistant State Attorney and later won a judgeship in a countywide elective office. In Deanwood, another community close to the District line, Benjamin and Clara Mitchell lived in the **Van Horn-Mitchell House**. The Mitchells were devout Muslims and frequently entertained Elijah Muhammed, Muhammad Ali, Malcolm X, and Anwar Sadat at their home.

The Twentieth Century

Suburban Growth—In the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, numerous residential suburbs were developed to the north and east of Washington, D.C., along the two railroad lines. Examples of this initial phase of suburbanization include the **O'Dea House**, the **Kleiner-Dillon House**, the **Pickett House**, the **Wetherald House**, the **E. J. Taylor House**, the **Berwyn Heights Schoolhouse** and the **Kleiner-Davidson-White House** in Berwyn Heights; the **Welsh House**, the **Holden House**, the **Holden-Sweeting House**, the **Shepherd-Sibley House**, and the **McEwen House** in Hyattsville; the **Cory House** and the **McDonnell House** in College Park; **Kelly Cottage**, **Seabrook Cottage**, and **Seabrook School** in Seabrook; the **Straining House** in Bowie; the **Warren House** in Riverdale Park; the **Baker-Holliday**

House, the **LaValle House**, and the **Bowers-Sargent House** in Daniels Park; and the **Bellamy House** in Cheverly.

Industry—Commercial and industrial areas developed along major road arteries, such as Baltimore Avenue (US 1), Annapolis Road, Kenilworth Avenue, and along the railroad lines in areas such as Hyattsville, Riverdale Park, Edmonston, and College Park. **The Muirkirk Iron Furnace Site**, located about three miles south of Laurel, was in operation from 1847 to the early 1900s.

The Federal Presence—Before World War II, the United States Government initiated a substantial program aimed at decentralizing the federal presence in the District of Columbia. As part of this effort, numerous federal installations were developed in the Maryland and Virginia jurisdictions adjacent to Washington, D.C., Before and after World War II, Prince George’s County became the location of facilities such as the U.S. Census Bureau, which includes **Suitland House**.

Ecclesiastical and Residential Architecture

Ecclesiastical Architectural Styles—Although none of the earliest churches and chapels, which were most commonly of wood-frame construction, have survived, there are notable examples of a range of architectural styles used for religious buildings throughout the county.

Colonial/Georgian: **St. Paul’s** at Baden, **St. Barnabas’ Episcopal Church** at Leeland, **St. Thomas’ Episcopal Church** in Croom, and **Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church** at White Marsh.

Late Georgian/Federal: **St. John’s** at Broad Creek, and **Addison Chapel** in Seat Pleasant.

Tudor Revival: **St. Mary’s Episcopal Church** in Aquasco, and **Forest Grove Methodist Church (Chapel 2)** at Joint Base Andrews.

Victorian Gothic: **Trinity Episcopal Church** in Upper Marlboro, **Christ Episcopal Church** in Accokeek, **St. Thomas Methodist Church** in Horsehead, **St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church** in Piscataway, **Cheltenham Methodist Church**, **Holy Family Roman Catholic Church** in Mitchellville, and **Dorsey Chapel** in Glenn Dale.

Queen Anne/Stick Style: **St. Ignatius Roman Catholic Church** in Oxon Hill, **St. John’s Episcopal Church** and **St. Joseph Roman Catholic Chapel** in Beltsville.

Romanesque Revival: **St. James Roman Catholic Church** in Mount Rainier.

Spanish Mission: **Chapel of the Incarnation** in Brandywine, **Old Marlboro High School**, Upper Marlboro.

Rural Vernacular: **Ridgely Methodist Episcopal Church** in Landover, **Holy Rosary Roman Catholic**

Church in Rosaryville, **Mount Nebo A.M.E. Church** in Queen Anne, and **Carroll Methodist Chapel** in Mitchellville.

Residential Architectural Styles—Fine examples of historic domestic architecture survive in Prince George’s County, from the turn of the eighteenth century through the first half of the twentieth century. Important examples of each architectural style are listed below.

Colonial/Georgian: **Belair, Hilleary-Magruder House, Mount Airy, Mount Pleasant, Piscataway House, Admirathoria, Bellefields, Harmony Hall, Bostwick, and Melwood Park.**

Late Georgian/Federal: **Montpelier, Compton Bassett, and Poplar Hill on His Lordship’s Kindness.**

Federal: **Oaklands, Snow Hill, Marietta, Riversdale, Wyoming, Goodwood, Beall’s Pleasure, Mount Lubentia, Pleasant Prospect, Concord, and Mount Calvert.**

Transitional Federal/Greek Revival: **Bowieville, Williams Plains, Pleasant Hills, Brookefield of the Berrys, Pleasant Prospect, Sasscer’s Green, Fairview, and Weston.**

Greek Revival: **Hitching Post Hill, Melford, The Cottage, West End Farm, Holy Trinity Rectory, Coffren House, Bellevue, Oakland, Charles Hill, Belvidere, Trumps Hill, Woodstock, and Gwynn Park.**

Italianate: **Waverly, Straining House, Ashland, Bleak Hill, and Mount Clare.**

Gothic Cottage: **Kingston, Waring’s Grove, and Kelly Cottage.**

Victorian Vernacular: **Hamilton House, McLeod-Forrester House, McDonnell House, Webb-Brown House, Wyvill House, Furgang Farmhouse, Augusta DuVal House, Locust Grove, Van Horn House, and LaValle House.**

Victorian Gothic: **Bowling Heights and Villa de Sales.**

Queen Anne: **O’Dea House, McEwen House, Holden House, Adams-Bowen House, Cissel House, Traband House, Harry Smith House, and William W. Early House.**

American Foursquare: **Baker-Holliday House, Arthur G. Bowie House, and Terrett House.**

Colonial Revival: **Boyden House, Boxlee, Beechwood, D.S.S. Goodloe House, and Marché House.**

Spanish Mission: **Bellamy House and Holbrook House.**

Twentieth-Century Estate Mansions: **McCormick-Goodhart Mansion, Oxon Hill Manor, Newton White Mansion.**

Modern Movement: **Rizzo House.**

