

the Preservationist

Spring 2005

Montgomery County and 1755: A War, a Tavern and a Park



Dowden's Ordinary was built in 1753 and demolished in 1924; however, a new park will commemorate the historic events associated with the site.

This year marks the 250th commemoration of the French and Indian War. Known in Europe as the Seven Years War, it began in the New World over Great Britain's struggle for control of the Ohio lands west of the Alleghenies. Becoming the first truly global conflict, it ended with the surrender of French Canada to the British in

1763 and the defeat of France's Indian allies.

Colonial American wars may seem far removed from Montgomery County, but there was a time in April of 1755 when local inhabitants of, then, Frederick County, were caught up in the struggle. Georgetown became the staging area for the army of British Major General Edward Braddock of the Coldstream Guards. On April 14th, the Irish-recruited 48th Regiment of Foot under Colonel Thomas Dunbar set out for Frederick City, marching up what is today modern Route 355. A second expeditionary force, accompanied by George Washington, set out along present-day Braddock Road in Virginia, eventually meeting up with Dunbar and Braddock in Winchester. By way of Wills Creek (Fort Cumberland), Maryland, the British regulars ultimately hacked out a road across the Allegheny Mountains to surprise the French at the Forks of the Ohio, where they had built Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania).

Colonel Dunbar's troops spent the night of April 14th at Owens Tavern in Rockville. There is a plaque on the courthouse wall that commemorates the stay. The next day, April 15th, tired and dusty, they encamped 15 miles up the road in Clarksburg at Dowden's Ordinary, "...upon very bad ground on the side of a hill. We got our tents pitched by dark, when...from a sultry hot day it became excessively cold, and rained with thunder and lightning till about 5 in the morning, when in 10 minutes it changed to snow, which in 2 hours covered the ground a

foot and a half" (seaman). "The following day being Wednesday, April 16, the snow being so Valient that we were oblig'd to Beat it of(f) the Tents several times for fear it should Breck the Tent Pools" (batman). They finally arrived in Frederick on the 18th.

Dowden's Ordinary in Clarksburg was a tavern or "public house of entertainment". It was a log building, L-shaped with a shingled roof, which had been built in 1753 and opened for business in July of 1754. Michael Ashford Dowden operated the tavern, with stagecoaches stopping at the site twice weekly and with private carriages and travelers on horseback stopping more frequently. Dowden's Ordinary was also important in Revolutionary War history as the meeting place for Maryland officials who initiated the Repudiation Act of 1765. The tavern was demolished circa 1924.

General Braddock left Alexandria, Virginia, on April 19th in a six-horse "chariot" bought from Governor Sharpe of Maryland. Following the same overnight stays as Colonel Dunbar – including Owens Tavern and Dowden's Ordinary, he found that none of the provisions promised from Maryland had arrived at Frederick. Wagons for the expedition were eventually obtained through negotiations with Benjamin Franklin. Franklin had come down to Frederick to pacify General Braddock over Pennsylvania's lack of support from its pacifist Quakers.

Most people are familiar with the rest of the Braddock debacle. On July 9, 1755, ten miles from Fort Duquesne, the British were surprised and annihilated by a small force of French and Indians. George Washington's bravery and Braddock's death are well recorded.

In 1915, the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicated a marker at Dowden's Ordinary to commemorate Braddock's March.

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Historic Preservation News and Notes



Children display rag dolls they made at last year's Heritage Days at Oakley Cabin.

Montgomery Preservation, Inc. 2005 Preservation Awards

The Montgomery County Preservation Awards honor individuals and groups that have made significant contributions to the preservation or restoration of historic resources in the county during the past year. Anyone can nominate an individual or group for an award. Selection of the winners is made by a panel of expert judges. All efforts to preserve our historic buildings and to educate the general public in the value of our local heritage are worthwhile, but sometimes a group or individual deserves special recognition for extraordinary efforts. The 2005 Historic Preservation Awards are supported by a grant from the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission, however, program operation, judges, and selection of the recipients are entirely the responsibility of Montgomery Preservation, Inc. The awards will be presented at a reception in the renovated Thomas Cannery, Diamond Avenue and Chestnut Street in Gaithersburg on Friday, June 3 from 6-9 PM.

Montgomery County Heritage Days

This year's county-wide celebration of its history will take place on Saturday and Sunday, June 25 & 26 from 12 noon to 4 p.m. Thirty historic sites around the county will be open with special demonstrations, exhibits and tours. Explore the county's agricultural past, learn more about African American culture, or see what it was like to live in the county in the early 20th century. Oakley Cabin, 3610 Brookeville Road in Brookeville, will be open both days with

demonstrations of Blues music and crafts. The Agricultural History Farm Park, 18400 Muncaster Road in Derwood, will also be open both days with demonstrations of the use of horses in farming. For more information log onto www.heritagemontgomery.org, call 301-515-0753, or pick up a brochure at your local library.

Traveling Exhibit on Segregation and Integration in Rockville

May 17, 2004 marked the 50th Anniversary of the Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education decision, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case ruling that racial segregation in public educational facilities was unconstitutional. To commemorate this event Peerless Rockville created a traveling exhibit which will be at the Board of Education Building, the former Carver High School, 850 Hungerford Drive, during the month of May.

Rockville citizens and places played important roles in the movement that led to the decision that separation is inherently unequal. This exhibit is based on oral histories conducted in 2004 with citizens who experienced this chapter of our history and witnessed firsthand the impact the landmark decision had on our community. It travels to schools, libraries, and other public places around Rockville. For more information you can contact Peerless Rockville at 301-762-0096.

Archaeology Summer Workshops

Did you ever want to know what archaeologists do? M-NCPPC Archaeology Summer Workshops participants find out. You will be introduced to archaeology as you work side-by-side with Park Archaeologists on an archaeological site. Participants learn in a small group, hands-on setting. Activities include excavation, lab projects and a field trip. The advanced group experience will be more in-depth and intense. For more information call the Office of History & Archaeology: 301-840-5848.

Where: Needwood Mansion; Derwood, Maryland
Hours: 9 AM – 3 PM

Children's Sessions (Ages 10 - 15 years)

Beginner

Session I..... July 5 – 8, 2005

Beginner/Intermediate

Session II..... July 11 – 15, 2004

Session III..... August 1 – 5, 2004

Advanced Field School

Participants must have archaeological experience

Session IV August 8 – 12, 2004

Fees

Session I: \$175; Sessions II, III, IV: \$220.00

Extended session 3- 5 PM: \$55.00

the Preservationist

The Preservationist is the official publication of the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Phone: 301-563-3400. Statements herein do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Commission. Created by the Historic Resources Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 24A, Montgomery County Code) the Commission is responsible for identification, designation, and regulation for purposes of protection, preservation, continued use, and enhancement of sites and structures of historical, archeological, architectural, or cultural value. Commission members are appointed by the Montgomery County Executive and confirmed by the Montgomery County Council.

Commission

Julia O'Malley, Chair Jef Fuller, AIA, Vice Chair

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Requests to be on the mailing list and content information should be directed to the Commission.

Two Districts in Montgomery County Listed in National Historic Register

In December 2004, two neighborhoods in Silver Spring and one block in Takoma Park were listed on the National Register of Historic Places as historic districts. The project began with a grant from the Maryland Historical Trust to the Historic Preservation Section to study contemporary architecture. The county sponsored a symposium in 2003 at which architects, preservationists, community residents, and the builders of modern communities were invited to discuss how best to preserve buildings from the recent past. At this meeting, residents of houses by architect Charles M. Goodman were recruited to assist the Historic Preservation Section in surveying their neighborhoods. Enthusiasm for these modest yet remarkable homes was abundant.

Goodman, a nationally regarded architect, is best known for Hollin Hills in Virginia, but his Montgomery County work is extensive, including neighborhoods in Wheaton, Potomac, Silver Spring, and Hillandale. Two “merchant-builder” neighborhoods that received National Register historic district designation are Hammond Wood, built in 1951, and Rock Creek Woods, in 1958. Hammond Wood comprises over 55 homes bounded by Connecticut Avenue, Veirs Mill Road, and University Boulevard. The community was featured in the May 1952 issue of *Progressive Architecture*. Rock Creek Woods is comprised of over 75 homes more generous

in size than those in Hammond Wood. These homes are identified by their extremely large chimneys, which often pierce the eave line of the house and their large corner window walls. Additionally, five houses on Takoma Avenue also by Mr. Goodman were listed on the National Register as a third historic district.

The Goodman homes are noted for their simplicity yet elegance of design and can be identified by open planning, the use of window wall framing as structure, and large brick façades containing chimneys. Goodman’s land-planning goals were considered avant-garde at the time and included: 1) retention of existing topography, 2) preservation of trees, 3) construction of roads to fit existing grades, 4) multiple house types to give community differentiation, and 5) atypical orientation of buildings on the lots to provide privacy.

After contributing countless hours to surveying houses and writing up National Register nominations, neighbors in the designated districts are continuing to strengthen community pride. Residents of the remaining Goodman communities are encouraged to submit historic district nominations to the Maryland Historical Trust under the Charles M. Goodman multiple property nomination, making them eligible for state income tax credits.



One-story Goodman-designed house in Hammond Wood.

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Today, the Montgomery County Park and Planning Commission is preparing for the 250th anniversary of this important historic event.

Through an agreement with a Clarksburg developer, US Homes, the ordinary (tavern) site is being made into a local park. The company is donating the land to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and will help interpret the site, including construction of a ghost outline of the historic tavern, which is no longer standing. Partnering with developers such as US Homes has brought to the Commission new possibilities for public land use and recreation. US Homes is truly making a long-term contribution to our County’s awareness of, and involvement in, its historic past.

For Archaeology Month 2005, Park and Planning archaeologists are sponsoring a Family Dig Day at the Dowden’s Ordinary site on May 14th from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. The public is invited to visit the site and join militia reenactors and volunteers in commemorating Braddock’s March and helping to excavate at the tavern.

For more information, visit websites at: www.mncppc.org (click on Montgomery County); www.mid-potomacarchaeology.org; www.frenchandindianwar250.com; www.braddocksmarch.org. During the summer, archaeological field sessions are offered for both children and adults. For information, visit the MNCPPC website or contact the Commission’s archaeologists at: 301-840-5848.

Calendar

April

Through July Exhibit: *Among My Souvenirs: Keepsakes and Mementos*. Beall-Dawson House, 111 West Montgomery Ave., Rockville. Tuesdays through Sundays, 12:30-4:30 PM. Call 301-762-1492. www.montgomeryhistory.org

Through April 30 Exhibit: *The Story of Harness Racing by Currier and Ives*. Waters House, 12535 Milestone Manor Lane, Germantown. Wednesdays and Saturdays 10 AM-4 PM. 301-515-2887. www.montgomeryhistory.org

13 HPC Meeting, 7:30 PM, MRO Auditorium, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. Call 301-563-3400. www.mc-mncppc.org

16 *The Lincoln Assassination: 140th Anniversary*, with Professor Bernie Siler, Montgomery College. 7 PM. Waters House, 12535 Milestone Manor Lane, Germantown. Germantown Historical Society. Free. 301-972-0795. www.germantownmdhistory.org.

19 *Underground Railroad in Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia*, with Dr. William Switala of Duquesne University, followed by a book-signing. Beall-Dawson House, 111 West Montgomery Ave., Rockville. Free, reservations required: 301-762-1492. www.montgomeryhistory.org.

27 HPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., MRO Auditorium, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. Call 301-563-3400. www.mc-mncppc.org

May

9 & 10 2005 Annual Preservation & Revitalization Conference, Baltimore. www.preservation-maryland.org. 410-685-2886, ext. 302.

11 HPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., MRO Auditorium, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. Call 301-563-3400. www.mc-mncppc.org

21 Homes and Hospitality Tour, Rockville, 4-8 PM. *A Progression Through Time* tour of historic homes with gourmet hors d'oeuvres from Rockville's finest restaurants. For ticket information contact Peerless Rockville, 301-762-0096, manager@peerlessrockville.org.

25 HPC Meeting, 7:30 PM, MRO Auditorium, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. Call 301-563-3400. www.mc-mncppc.org

June

3 2005 Annual Montgomery County Preservation Awards. 6 PM., Thomas Cannery, Diamond Avenue, Gaithersburg. www.montgomerypreservation.org, Judy Christensen, 240-314-8232.

Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission
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