

# the Preservationist

Spring 2001

## **Waters House Partnership and Heritage Tourism Initiative**

## **Preservation Milestones Celebrated**



*The Montgomery County Historical Society will operate an up-county history museum at Waters House, the oldest building in Germantown.*

The Historic Preservation Section hosted an April 11 celebration of two long-awaited milestones: approval of Montgomery County as a "Recognized Heritage Area" by the State of Maryland and transfer of the keys to the historic Waters House in Germantown from M-NCPPC to the Montgomery

County Historical Society, which has entered into a long-term lease to occupy the site.

Embarking on a comprehensive Heritage Preservation and Tourism Initiative, Montgomery County applied last summer to be a Recognized Heritage Area. The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority approved this request last fall. The next phase, development of a Heritage Area Management Plan, is now underway.

Created to promote appropriate economic development through tourism, the Heritage Tourism Initiative showcases the County's significant historical and natural resources. In addition, the initiative will build awareness of the County's heritage to preserve and protect important historic resources. Three heritage themes have been identified focusing on Underground Railroad and Quaker History, Farming History, and Industrial Heritage. Clusters of historic, recreational and natural resources related to these themes will be used for tours and events that promote heritage tourism and economic development.

Included in the Farming History cluster, the Waters House, or "Pleasant Fields," is the oldest building in Germantown. Built in the 1790s by William Waters it was the heart of a large plantation, and later the center of a standardbred horse farm as well as the home and office of a country doctor. The house was partially renovated by South Charles Realty in the mid-1990s as part of the "community amenities" required in exchange for nearby development and was turned over to M-NCPPC in 1997.

Since the Waters House is an important heritage resource that will be open to the public, it is with great anticipation that a public-private partnership for the use of this significant historic site is under way between the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Montgomery County Historical Society. M-NCPPC has entered into a five-year lease and memorandum of understanding with the Historic Society that will allow the Society to occupy and operate the site as an up-county history museum.

This spring and summer, the Montgomery County Historical Society will undertake necessary renovations to the building to ensure that it meets the County's code standards for public use. They plan to have the work completed and move into the building this fall, with it open to the public by next winter.

The Waters House will serve as a historical resource center and a museum on the County's history with both permanent and revolving exhibits. Downstairs rooms in the house will be available for rent to the local community for public programs and meetings. Eventually the barn and outbuildings will also be renovated, and the sheds and barnyard behind the barn may be used for outdoor fairs and exhibits.

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### **Our Apologies**

The Winter 2001 *Preservationist* incorrectly reported that you can call the Maryland Historical Trust for information on insurance for historic houses. Please do *not* call the Maryland Historic Trust for this information.

Instead, you should call 1-800-899-1399 to reach Mims, International, which is working in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Chubb Insurance to provide insurance programs for historic houses. Bob Bounelis, a Mims representative, will be happy to explain the program. He is also available to speak to groups.

# Historic Preservation News and Notes



*This three-part sign and a pavilion rest stop on the Capital Crescent Trail were dedicated April 28.*

## Preservation Month Activities

Awards and tours highlight activities focused on historic preservation for the month of May. The annual Takoma Park House and Garden Tour will feature the "Treasures of Takoma, D.C." on Sunday, May 6 from 1 to 5 p.m. (call 301-270-2831). Peerless Rockville's annual Progressive Dinner will be on Saturday, May 19, preceded on May 14 by their annual Awards Ceremony (call 301-762-0096). The annual county-wide Preservation Awards Ceremony held each year by Montgomery Preservation, Inc. will miss May by one day this year, being held on Friday, June 1 at 7 p.m. at the Brookeville Academy. There is a fee to attend, so call 301-774-5900 to register.

Montgomery Preservation, Inc. has just published "Heritage 2001," a directory of organizations and museums that celebrate the heritage of Montgomery County. If you are interested in receiving a copy please e-mail Maria Hoey, president, [pescipub@aol.com](mailto:pescipub@aol.com), or call Nancy Urban at 301-589-6362.

## Marker at Capital Crescent Trail

A pavilion rest stop and a three-part sign were dedicated April 28 at the embarkation point for the Capital Crescent Trail at Bethesda and Woodmont Avenues in Bethesda, west of the tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue. The sign includes a map of the trail, a bulletin board, and a history of the Georgetown Branch Railroad.

Completion of the 12-mile trail to Silver Spring and its connection with the Metropolitan

Branch bike trail is awaiting the reconstruction of the trestle over Rock Creek. This connection will provide a 20-mile "bicycle beltway" giving lower Montgomery County bicyclists clear paths to Capitol Hill (Metropolitan Branch Trail) and Georgetown. [www.cctrail.org](http://www.cctrail.org).

## Jane Sween to Be Honored

Many readers may have had the occasion to do research at the Montgomery County Historical Society library in Rockville and been impressed by the collection and the orderly fashion in which it is kept. On Tuesday, May 15, at 7 p.m. the recently retired librarian of that library, Jane Sween will be honored. Considered to be the absolute authority on the history of Montgomery County, Jane has been with Society since 1968 and is the author of *Montgomery County: Two Centuries of Change*. In Jane's honor the library will be named the Jane C. Sween Library, and there will also be a library fund established in her name. The event will take place on the grounds of the Beall-Dawson House, 111 West Montgomery Avenue, Rockville, beginning with a panel of historians who will discuss the history of the library, followed by other speakers, and ending with a reception.

## Opening of Seneca Creek Greenway

Many additional hiking and biking trails are opening in Montgomery County and many of these connect with existing trails, some even in other jurisdictions. Historic sites along these trails are being marked and interpreted. The Seneca Creek Greenway Trail is a cooperative effort between Montgomery County Parks and Maryland State Parks to establish a trail along the entire length of Seneca Creek from the Potomac River to its headwaters. The Montgomery County Parks portion of the Trail from Rt. 355 (Frederick Road) to Watkins Mill Road will open at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 2 (National Trails Day). Historic sites along this trail include the bridge abutments and portions of the original Frederick Road (1740), the site of Middlebrook Mills (1794), once owned by James MacCubbin Lingan, and the site of Watkins Mill (1780).

## Local Students win Archaeology Month Poster Contest

The Montgomery County Archaeology staff helped to sponsor the fifth annual Archaeology Month Poster Contest for the state of Maryland

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## 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

Steven Spurlock AIA, Chair Susan Velasquez, Vice Chair  
Steven Breslin Marilyn Boyd DeReggi Douglas A. Harbit Nancy Lesser  
Julia O'Malley Lynne B. Watkins Kimberly Prothro Williams  
Historic Preservation Coordinator Gwen Wright

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

## Meet Our New Commissioners

In March, the Historic Preservation Commission welcomed two new members, Kimberly Prothro Williams and Julia O'Malley. To help you get to know them a little better, *The Preservationist* interviewed them and prepared these short profiles.

Julia O'Malley is well known to the veteran Commissioners, having testified many times over the past several years on preservation matters involving Kensington. Julie was infected by the "history bug" while growing up in the historic town of Haddonfield, New Jersey. It was there that she met her future husband, T. J. O'Malley, in high school. Since college, she has spent 27 years in full time community service while renovating two houses and raising their three sons, Sean, Matthew and Liam. The youngest, Liam, is now attending UMBC. She has been involved for many years with her community of Kensington, helping with the restoration of the train station, planning and laying out the *Kensington Walking Tour* brochure, working on several Town committees, and being occupied with the activities of the Kensington Historical Society.

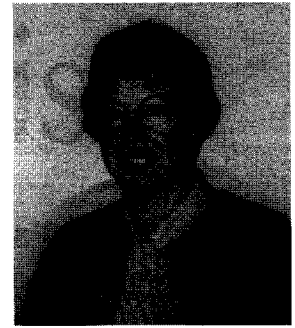
In her new role Julie would like to concentrate on "improving the consistency of decisions" of the HPC. In her spare time, Julie likes to do family genealogical research, gardening, and playing the electric bass guitar.

Julie, it's nice to have you on the "other side of the table."

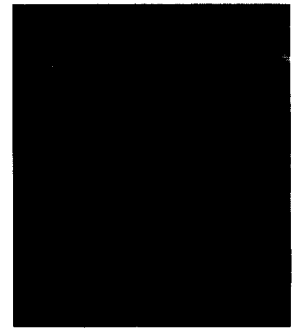
Kimberly Prothro Williams is also familiar to the HPC staff and Commissioners as she co-authored *Chevy Chase: A Home Suburb for the Nation's Capital*, a book published by the HPC, M-NCPPC, and the Maryland Historical Trust in 1998. Kim has worked as an architectural historian since she received her Masters degree in Architectural History from the University of Virginia in 1988. Kim grew up in Chevy Chase, but then lived and worked in Washington, D.C. for 12 years, followed by a stint of working all over the Metropolitan D.C. area. She is very excited to now be returning to Chevy Chase with her husband, architect Richard Williams, and their daughter, seven year-old Katie, and son, five year-old Jamie. They are currently living in the house where Kim grew up as they build a new house nearby.

Kim says that by returning home with new knowledge and experience she has, "discovered an architectural richness in Montgomery County that I was never aware of before." For instance, "In doing the research on Chevy Chase I learned about Clean Drinking Manor which was located not far from my house. The spring is still there and the springhouse was built by the National Society of Colonial Dames. I now take my children for walks there and can share with them a history I never knew when I was growing up here."

Besides liking to hike and camp, Kim is an avid fly fisherman, so if you know of any good fishing creeks let her know.



Julia O'Malley



Kimberly Prothro Williams

### Preservation News and Notes

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in April. Winning first place in the state was a team from Rosa Parks Middle School in Olney: Patrick Stinson, Mike Coffman, Tim Widner, and Austin Anderson. Third Place went to Theresa Bouslog of Reznick Elementary School. These posters were placed on the "Freedom Wall" in the Maryland State House in Annapolis. Other posters on this Wall from Montgomery County were posters by Christopher Bouslog and Alex Miller of Gaithersburg Middle School, Paige Miller of Reznick Elementary School, and Jeff Graves of Rosa Parks Middle School.

### Archaeology Summer Workshops

Did you ever want to find out what archaeologists do? Participants in the

M-NCPPC Archaeology Summer Workshops will find out. Work side by side with a Park Archaeologist at a real archaeological dig, and participate in excavation, lab work, and a field trip. Each one-week session is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and costs \$200 with the possibility of an extension to 5 p.m. for an additional \$50 for the children's sessions. Workshop dates:

Children (ages 10-15) Beginner .... July 9 - 13

Children (ages 10-15) Advanced .. July 16 - 20

Adult (ages 16 and up)

(M.S.D.E. 2 credits) ..... Aug. 6-10

For more information or to request an application packet for any of the camps, please call 301-840-5848.

# Calendar

## April

29 Arbor Day Celebration, Agricultural History Farm Park, 18400 Muncaster Road, Derwood; noon to 8 p.m. 301-670-4661. [www.montgomeryparksfnd.org/fg](http://www.montgomeryparksfnd.org/fg)

29 Spring picnic in the John Poole House gardens, Poolesville, 2 - 5 p.m. (Annual meeting, 3 p.m.) Historic Medley District. 301-972-8588; [hismedley@aol.com](mailto:hismedley@aol.com).

## May

6 "Treasures of Takoma D.C." Annual Takoma Park House and Garden Tour. 1-5 p.m. \$10 in advance, \$12 on day. Brochures at local merchants.

8 Opening of an exhibit on "Sports In Montgomery County." Through the end of the year at the Beall-Dawson House, Rockville. Noon to 4 p.m. Tues.-Sun. Montgomery County Historical Society, 301-762-1492. [www.montgomeryhistory.org](http://www.montgomeryhistory.org).

9 & 23 HPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., MRO Auditorium, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. Call 301-563-3400. [www.mc-mncppc.org](http://www.mc-mncppc.org)

11 Ed Bearrs, Civil War Historian Extraordinaire. Civil War in the Poolesville Environs, 4 p.m. start at John Poole House. Historic Medley District. 301-972-8588 or [hismedley@aol.com](mailto:hismedley@aol.com).

14 Peerless Rockville Preservation Awards, 7 p.m., Rockville City Hall. 301-762-0096. [www.peerlessrockville.org](http://www.peerlessrockville.org).

19 Spring Festival at the Agricultural History Farm Park. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Muncaster Road, Derwood. Call 301-670-4661. [www.montgomeryparksfnd.org/fg](http://www.montgomeryparksfnd.org/fg)

19 Peerless Rockville Annual Progressive Dinner, 4:30, 5:30, 6:30, 7:30 p.m., various sites. 301-762-0096. [www.peerlessrockville.org](http://www.peerlessrockville.org).

## June

1 Montgomery Preservation, Inc. Annual Awards Reception, 7 p.m., Brookeville Academy.

1 Opening of art exhibit and sale, "Historic Sites in the Medley District Through the Artist's Eye." Open Sat. - Sun. in June, 12 - 5 p.m. at the John Poole House, Poolesville Historic Medley District. For information or to exhibit call 301-972-8588 or [hismedley@aol.com](mailto:hismedley@aol.com).

13 & 27 HPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., MRO Auditorium, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. Call 301-563-3400. [www.mc-mncppc.org](http://www.mc-mncppc.org)

## July

7 & 8 Montgomery County History Tour, noon to 4 p.m. More than 20 historic sites open to the public with special displays and demonstrations. Pick up a brochure at your local library or call 762-1492.

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

**Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission**  
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