

10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition

# PLACES *from the* PAST:

*The Tradition of Gardez Bien  
in  
Montgomery County, Maryland*

Clare Lise Kelly  
M-NCPPC

*Gardez Bien*  
*To Take Good Care or Guard Well*  
Montgomery County motto,  
Adopted 1976

Montgomery County, a border county in a border state, has an architectural heritage with a dual nature. It is metropolitan and rural; northern and southern; British and German. Award-winning **Places from the Past** illustrates the historic buildings, communities and sites in Montgomery County, Maryland, with over 650 historic and current photographs, maps, and floor plans. The narrative history is followed by an inventory of 389 historic sites and 25 districts. The properties are designated on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation and/or listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Early European settlers were tobacco planters from the Chesapeake and wheat farmers from Pennsylvania. During the Civil War, residents were divided in their loyalties, with those in the western county with Virginia family ties sympathizing with the South, while Sandy Spring Quakers and northern-born residents aligned with the North. After the Civil War, African Americans, comprising over a third of the county population, lived in over 40 settlements established throughout the county. The nation's capital, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and the B&O Railroad's Metropolitan Branch have had tremendous influence on the county's growth and development.

The county has innovative preservation programs for historic structures and open space. An average of 3,500 housing units per year are built, while an average of 11 historic resources are designated each year. The county motto of *Gardez Bien* is to take good care or guard well. Through the preservation and interpretation of historic sites, we may remember and learn from the past and gain inspiration for years to come.





*Auth.*  
GOVERNOR  
OF THE

SENATE and HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EXPLANATION



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2011

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*Strathmore Hall*



The territory now embraced by Montgomery County...was destined eventually...to comprise much of the most valuable territory in Maryland, and to contain a population which, for industry, enterprise, and all the elements which constitute the worth and importance of a community, is unsurpassed in America.

*J. Thomas Scharf, History of Western Maryland, 1882*



*Joseph C. White House*



*England-Crown House, detail*



*Takoma Park Historic District*

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I owe my appreciation of historic places in part to my parents, Arthur C. M. Kelly and Nancy Vogel Kelly, and it is to them that I dedicate this 10th anniversary edition. Their tireless work to connect people with family heritage, to preserve historical records of New York State, and interpret historic sites of Rhinebeck — home of Richard Montgomery — have been an inspiration.

Clare Lise Kelly, M-NCPPC

## INTRODUCTION TO THE 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

It's been 10 years since *Places from the Past* was originally published. When I wrote it, it contained all of Montgomery County's historic sites and districts that had been listed on the National Register of Historic Places or designated on Montgomery County's *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*. Since that time, the County has designated a number of additional resources on the Master Plan — including Gilbert Grosvenor's Wild Acres and Greenwich Forest Historic District — and more resources have been added to the National Register — including contemporary developments of Charles Goodman and Edmund Bennett. These are not included in this edition. As we continue to research and evaluate Montgomery County's historic treasures, we keep our website updated with information about all designated resources: [montgomeryplanning.org/historic](http://montgomeryplanning.org/historic).

## INTRODUCTION

FOR MANY, MONTGOMERY COUNTY IS SYNONYMOUS WITH HIGH-TECH office complexes, attractive suburban neighborhoods replete with townhouses and split levels, and busy commercial centers like Bethesda and Friendship Heights. It is not as widely known that there is a rich history in this county and that an extraordinary number of structures that reflect that history have been beautifully and authentically preserved. Thus, the purpose of this book is not only to recognize and celebrate Montgomery County's architectural heritage for the property owners and historians who are already familiar with it, but also to introduce a broader audience to the diverse and wonderful inventory of historic sites and structures that exist today all across the county.

A growing heritage tourism industry has brought increased visitations to historic and archeological sites. In a recent survey, county residents rated protection of historic sites as a high priority. Public interest in historic sites and recognition of threat has led to new programs in the past decade. Many historic communities are easily accessible to workplaces, within walking distance of railroad stations, Metro subway stations, shops and restaurants. Historic sites in and near neighborhoods, communities, and parks are an essential part of community identity.

There have been a number of factors that have contributed to the successful preservation of Montgomery County's historic structures. First, the quality of Montgomery County's historic structures has induced private conservation efforts. Second, there has been broad governmental support for the creation of a countywide historic preservation program. There has been



*Glen Echo Carousel*

*Below: Bethesda Community Store*

*Facing page: White's Ferry*







a Master Plan for Historic Preservation and a historic preservation ordinance in the county since 1979. This ordinance created the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission and a legislative structure that made historic preservation an important part of all governmental processes.

The celebration of the county's 200th birthday focused attention for the first time on local historic sites. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission published the *Locational Atlas and Inventory of Historic Sites* in 1976. Sugarloaf Regional Trails, established in 1974, conducted research on historic sites in Western Montgomery County and published their findings.

In the 1980s, the county expanded its preservation program to include the protection of open space and archeological sites. The County adopted an innovative farmland protection program in 1980, called the Agriculture and Rural Open Space Preservation Program, which employs a transfer of development rights system. In 1989, M-NCPPC began an archeology program. Some 300 archeological sites have been identified in the county, located primarily on or near stream valley parkland.

In the past decade several new programs aim to preserve historic sites and open space. In 1997 Montgomery County enacted a Rustic Roads program to protect historic and scenic roadways. Legacy Open Space is a new 10-year initiative to preserve land and historic buildings of exceptional value by acquiring thousands of acres of additional land. The proposal will connect new and existing parks to form a 100-mile ribbon of green space from the Potomac River via the Patuxent River to the Northwest Branch. It has the potential to create a national model for heritage protection that embraces historic preservation.

On a state level, the Maryland Greenways Initiative, established in 1990, has identified twenty-seven greenway corridors in Montgomery County. Greenways are networks of interconnected parks and trails. Under the Rural Legacy Program, which Maryland enacted as part of its Smart Growth legislation, the State approved the Potomac River Rural Legacy Area in June 1998 to protect land along the river. The State established the Maryland Heritage Preservation and Tourism program to protect historic sites and promote cultural tourism. State and county easement programs preserve 25 historic sites in the county.

Above all, the efforts of individual property owners and citizens have been essential to protecting Montgomery County's historic sites. From the hardworking volunteers at the Montgomery County Historical Society, who maintain the beautiful Beall-Dawson House for the enjoyment of visitors, to families in Takoma Park who lovingly care for and live in their early 20th century bungalows, this county would not have maintained any of its historic structures without the commitment of the people who own, use, and love these old buildings. Each of these people is a hero and it is to them that this book is truly dedicated.

Gwen Marcus Wright  
*Historic Preservation Coordinator,*  
*Former*

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*Historic Preservation Planner*