


PRINCE GEORGE'S ANNE ARUNDEL
IT'S  ALL
LAUREL MONTGOMERY HOWARD
City Limits and Beyond

**LAUREL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DOCENT BOOK
2023-24 EXHIBIT**

A Note from the Executive Director

I am particularly excited about this new exhibit because it reminds me of when I first moved to Laurel and settled in Russett in Anne Arundel County. Our very first night in town, we took a drive up Main Street and found ourselves having dinner at Olive on Main. It took a few more attempts to find the Museum, but it was exciting to explore a new area!

It is that same sense of wonder, excitement, and lifelong learning that I hope this exhibit conveys to our visitors. This exhibit is meant to highlight the **growth and diversity of Laurel** - all the ways that it has changed, but also show the many things that are still the same. For example, we have original homeowners in Montpelier, West Laurel, and Maryland City who have lived in the same house since the 1960s. But we also have new neighbors living at Patuxent Greens or Paddock Pointe.

This exhibit is for everyone - Laurelites who have lived here for generations, newcomers to the area, or people who are commuting to other places. It's also for visitors from near and far because we all are connected by the **power of place**. This place we call Laurel is what is bringing us together today and in the future. We are following in the footsteps of dinosaurs from 115 million years ago and indigenous peoples 2,000 years ago.

Along the way, we will all discover things that we never knew about Laurel - and we will continue to collect the stories and objects of the past to continue to tell the most complete story of Laurel that we can.

I hope you enjoy this exhibit and join me in celebrating Laurel's history, culture, and geography. Never stop exploring ALL of Laurel!

Yours respectfully
Ann Bennett
Executive Director
February 2023

Things to know about the new exhibit

- This exhibit is scheduled to run from February 2023 - August 2024. After that time, we will have a traveling exhibit from “Awkward Family Photos” to showcase families and history in the weirdest way possible! (Check it out [here](#) if you haven't seen it!)
- We knew from the beginning that we couldn't include every neighborhood and development in Laurel, so this is just the start of the display! We will have rotating displays and switch out objects or sections in the future.
 - PLEASE encourage visitors to submit information, stories, and materials about their neighborhoods. They can email info@laurelhistoricalsociety.org or fill out the forms online/on-site.
 - We worked with Community Curators - people living in the different sections who contributed stories, memories, and artifacts to the exhibit. They are the local experts and we are glad for their contributions!
- The exhibit logo is available as a collectible ornament in our Museum Shop and online store. \$20/\$18 members.

North, South, East, West—Where is Laurel?

You're standing in the very heart of historic Laurel in a c. 1840 millworkers' house in the City of Laurel. You're in Prince George's County on the ancestral lands of the Piscataway peoples. But drive up Route 216 across the Patuxent River and you're in Howard County. Take Route 198 east to Maryland City and Russett in Anne Arundel County. Going the opposite direction will send you to West Laurel and a little further, to Montgomery County. Or head south on Route 197 to South Laurel and Montpelier. All have distinctive characteristics, and all are part of Laurel. Along the way in this exhibit you'll pass landmarks and natural features that define neighborhoods and give identity to communities. Discover a 1790s log cabin in Montgomery County, or Maryland's largest naturally-occurring freshwater lake in Russett. You'll follow in the footsteps of dinosaurs in South Laurel and racehorses in Howard County. You'll meet people who are committed to their churches, neighbors, and communities.

So where is Laurel? As you can see it's ALL Laurel.

Historical Summary

The M-NCPPC Dinosaur Park is a historically and scientifically important location in northern Prince Georges County, Maryland for paleontology and public science education. The approximately 47-acre park is one of the few places on the east coast of the United States with preserved remains of plants and animals dating back approximately 115 million years ago.

Before the discovery of fossils, the geological resources were used to bolster the economies of the local communities of Muirkirk, Contee, and Laurel, and particularly to the Snowden Family who mined siderite ironstone and clay using enslaved labor during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Kranz 1996). In 1859, Dr. Christopher Johnston published on two reptilian teeth in the American Journal of Dental Science, which he named *Astrodon* (Johnson 1859). These fossils were given to him by Philip Thomas Tyson who collected them the previous year. These fossils were originally listed as coming from near Bladensburg, however Kranz (2004) presented correspondence that suggests the original *Astrodon* fossils came from the farm of J.D. Latchford, which is adjacent to modern-day Dinosaur Park. Philadelphia's Academy of Natural Sciences naturalist Joseph Leidy (1865) designated the species name to *Astrodon johnstoni* in honor of Johnson. In the winter of 1887, Yale professor Othniel Charles Marsh sent field paleontologist John Bell Hatcher, under United State Geologic Survey funding, to Prince George's County. Hatcher collected a number of younger fossils from southern Prince George's County and from the region where the first *Astrodon* fossils were discovered and sent his specimens back to Marsh at the Yale Peabody Museum. Hatcher hired local miners to help with field work through the Christmas and New Year's holidays and

collected a variety of different reptile fossils (Dingus 2018). These fossils were later described by Marsh (1888) which included large bones he described as *Pleurocoelus nanus* and *Pleurocoelus altus*. Later, Marsh (1896) used these fossils from Prince George's County as part of a major monograph on North American dinosaur fossils known at the time.

After the passing of Marsh, a number of scientists worked to revise the reptile fauna from the Arundel Clays. Hatcher (1903) and Lull (1911) would argue that Marsh's *Pleurocoelus* species were in fact the previously described *Astrodon*. Smithsonian's curator of fossil reptiles Charles Gilmore (1921) would revise the age of the fossils collected by Hatcher and subsequent collections from Jurassic to Early Cretaceous, after identifying Maryland's first ornithomimid dinosaur fossils. Recently, new additions of fossil fish, crocodiles, and mammals, along with new taxonomic reviews of the dinosaurs were made from collections by amateur paleontologists at what is now the M-NCPPC Dinosaur Park (Kranz, 1998a, b; Lipka, 1998; Lipka et al. 2006; Cifelli et al. 1999 and 2013; Brownstein 2017; Frederickson et al. 2016 and 2018). Fortunately, most of the material described in the recent literature was conserved in the Paleobiology collections of the National Museum of Natural History, Washington D.C.

On Display:

LAUREL PRE-HISTORY: INDIGENOUS TRIBES OF LAUREL AND MARYLAND

We acknowledge that the land we are standing on today is the homeland of the Piscataway peoples, with the greater Laurel area also the ancestral lands of the Nacotchtank (Anacostian) and Susquehannock nations. There are no federally recognized tribes in Maryland, although in 2012, Maryland recognized the Piscataway-Conoy Tribe and Piscataway Indian Nation.

We acknowledge the terrible history that removed these nations from their lands and honor their culture and heritage that is still connected to this place and remains part of the story of Laurel to this day.

AXE HEADS, PESTLE, AND PROJECTILE POINTS

Constructed of various materials including quartz and quartzite, these Native American lithics were found by Frank Hance in the 1930s on his farm near the Patuxent River

Gift of Diane Plackett

THE ENVIRONMENT

115 million years ago, much of what is now Laurel was a warm coastal wetland. Conifer trees were the dominant vegetation in this ecosystem but also included gingko, ferns, cycads, and a variety of early flowering plants.

The Laurel Historical Society has several fossils in its collection, including the fossil cypress wood and the fossil cycad trunk (*Cycadeoidea marylandica*) below, which were found in North Laurel near the intersection of All Saints and Whiskey Bottom roads.

Laurel Historical Society Collection, Gift of Alice King. Mural courtesy of Dinosaur Park, M-NCPPC

DINOSAUR PARK (PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY)

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On Display:

ASTRODON JOHNSTONI

Estimated between 60 to 70 feet in length, *Astrodon johnstoni* is the largest dinosaur found in eastern North America and was made the Maryland state dinosaur in 1998. This herbivorous giraffe-like dinosaur used its spade-like teeth to rake leaves from high branches of trees.

Courtesy of Dinosaur Park, M-NCPPC

ACROCANTHOSAURUS

At 38 feet in length, *Acrocanthosaurus* was the largest predator of Early Cretaceous Maryland. Fossil tracks from Texas suggested that *Acrocanthosaurus* hunted large dinosaurs like *Astrodon*.

Courtesy of Dinosaur Park, M-NCPPC

DEINONYCHUS

An 11-foot-long predatory dinosaur, *Deinonychus* was the larger and older cousin to *Velociraptor*.

Courtesy of Dinosaur Park, M-NCPPC

RICHARDOESTESIA

A rare small predatory dinosaur, *Richardoestesia* may have preferred to live in coastal wetlands and specialized in eating fish.

Courtesy of Dinosaur Park, M-NCPPC

PRICONODON CRASSUS

Estimated to have reached 25-30 feet in length, teeth of this large armored herbivore are one of the more common dinosaur fossils found at Dinosaur Park.

Courtesy of Dinosaur Park, M-NCPPC

ORNITHOMIMOID

Bones of these large, 20 foot long, ostrich-like dinosaurs have been found spread out through the fossil site at Dinosaur Park. These dinosaurs were most likely toothless, using a bird-like beak to capture fish or eat plants in the ancient marshlands.

Courtesy of Dinosaur Park, M-NCPCC

From Factory & Farm

Laurel The Mill Town

Laurel as a Mill Town, with a cotton mill at one end of Main Street is a well-known story. From its origins as a grist mill in 1811, the Mill grew, prospered, struggled and ultimately closed by 1914. Its workers lived in many of what are today some of Laurel's oldest and most historic homes. Their labors and the businesses they supported defined Laurel's early years.

Boom Town To Declining Center

For the next 100 years, downtown Laurel remained a center of commerce for the surrounding farms and communities in Anne Arundel and Howard Counties. WWII saw many of the stately Victorian homes divided into apartments and rooming houses. Businesses boomed. Main Street, however, struggled during the post-war period. The focus of commerce expanded to large malls. New neighborhoods and communities moved further outside Old Town.

Carved From a Famous Farm

Most of today's Old Town Laurel is actually carved out of what was once one of the area's largest and most famous farms. Laurel Mill President Horace Capron operated a more than 1,000-acre farm that stretched from one block off today's Main Street west to Cherry Lane. After Capron's 1850s bankruptcy, the farm was divided and ultimately bought by Thomas J. Talbott. In 1877 his estate sold off 687 acres. With the sale the primary streets and lots of today's Old Town were set. Soon traditional Victorian homes populated the former farmland.

Old Town Laurel Today

Preservation Restores Old Town Charm

In the 70s as people focused on the nation's 200th, new young families moved into many of Laurel's historic homes. Many of the new owners meticulously restored their homes to their former glory. Epiphany Parties – a neighborhood tradition of weekly Saturday night gatherings from January to Lent – have contributed to a sense of community for more than 40 years.

Riverfront Park: Old Town's Hidden Jewel

Riverfront Park opened in the 1980s and was expanded to its current length from the dam ruins to Route 1 in 1995. The park draws joggers, bikers, strollers and families from Old Town and throughout Laurel along its 1.5 miles next to the Patuxent River.

New Businesses, New Families

In the 80s and 90s the influx of new families taking on preservation was also reflected in efforts to revitalize Main Street. New streetscapes spruced up the sidewalk areas. Patuxent Place at the upper end created new office, residential, and restaurant spaces that evoked the traditional Laurel Victorian style but with a modern touch.

Main Street businesses began to reflect the changing demographics of the community and changing community interests. A Spanish bakery, Tex-Mex restaurants, and coffee shops became the new Main Street fixtures.

The Old Town residents, too, reflected the changes as new young African American and Hispanic families moved in. A vibrant LGBTQ community also emerged.

On Display:

Wall:

OLD TOWN IN 1876.

This map outlines the Laurel farm property of Thomas J. Talbott's estate. Note the subdivision of land into lots just off Main Street "To satisfy the growing demands of the town..." These lots became the core of the Old Town Laurel we know today.

Gift of Stuart Hurtt

Wall case:

BASEBALL JERSEY

1950s jersey for a local Laurel baseball team sponsored by J. Gilbert White. White owned the Yellow Cab Company, located at 307 Main Street.

Gift of Bobby Thomas

Flat case:

OLD TOWN BUSINESSES THEN AND NOW

SOMETHING SPECIAL

COFFEE CAN. In the 1990s Something Special Coffee shop occupied 504 Main Street, the previous Cordelia Bakery storefront. Olive on Main can be found there today.

Gift of Ken Skrivseth

H.J POIST 1951 CALENDAR

Hohmnan J. Poist distributed this calendar at a time Main Street was the primary commercial area of Laurel. The H.J. Poist Gas Company, founded in 1937 is still at 360 Main Street.

Donated by Joan Goudy

PAL JACK MENU

Pal Jack's at a310 Main Street was a long-time Old Town pizza favorite. Today Wings N' Things Pizza serves equally appealing pies.

Gift of Amy Graver

EL BUEN GUSTO BAKERY, ALADDIN MARKET, ACAPULCO RESTAURANT AND GRILL.

Main Street today offers a diversity of cultural foods, reflecting changes in the community's demographics.

Laurel Museum Collection

VISIT HISTORIC OLD TOWN LAUREL—2002

Promoting Old Town has been a business focus over the years,

Laurel Museum Collection

NEW ACQUISITION! RED WING THEATER AD

The Red Wing Theater was located where the Tastee Diner sits today. This fragile 1923 full page ad promotes its upcoming silent movie offerings. The theater burned in 1927.

CITIZENS NATIONAL BANK

PIGGY BANKS

These cute promotional piggy banks were distributed by Citizens National Bank.

Founded in 1890 and acquired in 2007 by PNC, the bank is still located at the corner of Main & 4th Streets.

Donated by Citizens National Bank

COOK'S HARDWARE THERMOMETERS

Cook's Laurel Hardware at Fifth & Main was an Old Town institution until its closing in 1997. It was vital resource for Old Town's homeowners renovating their residences.

Thermometers were a frequent promotional item.

Gift of Charles Higgs

LAUREL FURNITURE THERMOMETER

Located at 398 Main Street, the store furnished many a Laurel home.

Gift of Marlene Frazier

Object and photo:

KNAPPS NEWS AGENCY HERSHEY SIGN

Originally opened in 1947 at the northeast corner of Main and B Streets and called Keller's Laurel News Agency, the store offered out-of-town newspapers, racing forms, groceries and more. Charlie Keller ran it until his death in 1974, after which his son-in-law Fred Knapp continued operating it until his 1994 retirement. The photo below shows both names. The 1897 building was demolished in 2005. Sandy Spring Bank currently occupies the site.

Sign gift of Rhonda Disbrow. Photo: Laurel Museum Collection

The Grove

Our Unique Historic Community

The Grove, or Laurel Grove, was a distinct African American neighborhood by at least the middle of the 19th C. A grove of gigantic oak trees, some more than 200 years old, grew there, hence the name. At a time when "Old Town" Laurel was primarily White, African Americans were restricted to the Grove area. By 1884 there were enough residents in the Grove to establish a school for its children: Colored School No. 2. One teacher taught all grades. In 1890 the community was solidified and strengthened with the founding of St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church, which, along with the school, became the community's anchors. Laurel's 1894 City Directory lists 57 families living in the Grove.

During the late 19th and well into the 20th Century the Grove community thrived, even if its residents were still denied many of Laurel's educational, economic, recreational, civic, community, leisure and retail opportunities. Three benevolent lodges assisted in times of need, and along with St. Mark's, helped celebrate grand occasions. Primary among those occasions was Laurel's Emancipation Day celebration, which from early after St. Mark's founding centered around the oak grove. A parade started at St. Mark's and wove its way around town. The tradition continues to this day – more than 120 years later.

Laurel's Emancipation Day Parade has been a community tradition for more than 120 years. But the mode of transportation has changed! These images are from 1909 and 2022.

The Laurel Stars baseball team epitomized the Grove community spirit. The Laurel Stars, and other local African American teams, had their own sandlot league from the 1920s to the early 1960s. The team played on a field located where the Laurel Library and Rt. 198 are located today. About 200 or 300 fans would come to games during the summer, and the crowd would increase to 1,000 for the annual Emancipation Day game.

By the late 1950s and 1960s, the Grove community residents had become strong advocates for Civil Rights, nationally, and in the town of Laurel. They pushed to desegregate schools, and for reforms in the town. In 1967 tensions erupted, as KKK groups tried to burn buildings in the Grove. Frustrated local Grove residents defended their community, and pushed the City of Laurel for action, including desegregating the local then privately owned pool only 3 blocks away. The latter was purchased by the City and opened to all.

In 1991 the community's key role in Laurel was finally recognized with the establishment of Emancipation Park, where the Laurel Grove School, successor to Colored School #2, once stood.

The Grove community recruited a doctor, Dr. William Hudson, to serve residents who struggled to find healthcare. Dr. Hudson practiced at 513 8th Street.

Community support is part of the Grove Community. Since 2013 the Emancipation Day Celebration has included a 5K in support of diabetes.

As Prince George's County changed, so too has the Grove community. Many St. Mark's parishioners have moved away, and new residents, representing Laurel's changing demographics, occupy the homes in which long-time Laurel African Americans once lived. They too come and help keep the community. The oak trees are gone, replaced by a new Emancipation Park and library. St. Mark's remains the anchor, drawing former residents back for services. Emancipation Day celebrations continue, and new community gatherings celebrate Laurel's unique historic community.

On Display:

PORTRAIT OF MARGARET EDMONSTON

Margaret Edmonston (1861-1952), was a teacher in Laurel grade and high schools for 53 years. This portrait was unveiled at the May 1963 opening of Margaret A. Edmonston Elementary School. The building is now incorporated into the Laurel High School on

Cherry Lane.

Laurel Museum Collection

Fairlawn

Laurel Hills

As the post-WWII baby boom gathered strength, Laurel was bursting at the housing seams. It expanded by annexing its first new land in 1950, called the Fairlawn District. This was the first tract subdivision built in Laurel.

Established/Opened 1951

Located behind what is now the Laurel Shopping Center, plans called for hundreds of modest new homes, not to exceed \$11,000. The Fairlawn development was planned to bring many new homes to Laurel. It was never as big as originally planned, but the community nonetheless thrived.

By 1955 the developer was in serious financial trouble, with only 256 homes built and 174 unsold. A foreclosure led to the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) stepping in. But development continued. Shortly thereafter Metropolitan Homes purchased 50 acres west and adjacent to the original Fairlawn Development. Located on the rolling hills above, the project was called Laurel Hills and featured both ranch and Cape Cod designs. Laurel residents such as Jean and Leo Wilson moved in with their growing family. Youngsters attended the newly built Margaret Edmonston Elementary School, which was located on Cherry Lane.

Discovery Park

A 1.5 acre park with a multitude of child-safe equipment, has become a family-gathering centerpiece of the community.

Homes Today

Many have had additions over the years, attesting to their appeal. When first built, Fairlawn and Laurel Hills were primarily White communities.

Today, they reflect the diversity of the neighborhood, with many young African American and Hispanic families taking the place of now grown original families.

Jean and Leo Wilson purchased their home in Laurel Hills in 1959. This photo is of Jean Wilson with daughter Margaret and Celia. Helen would be born just before the family moved in. Jean Wilson still lives there. The second photo is at the same spot in

December, 2022. L-R: Margaret Wilson Hubbard, Celia Wilson Craze, Jean Wilson.
Seated: Helen Wilson Webster.

West Laurel

Counties: Prince George's and Montgomery

West Laurel is a census-designated area in the northern part of Prince George's County and eastern Montgomery County, comprising more than 1600 homes with a population of 4,428 (2020 census) in a total area of 1,700 acres or 2.4 square miles.

West Laurel retains large lots and recreational green space along the Patuxent River and Rocky Gorge Reservoir. The history of the area dates to the first half of the 19th century, when members of the Bond family established a grist mill, the location of which is now under water in the Reservoir. Housing developments began in the early 1950s with the creation of Rocky Gorge Estates by G.G. Barr, but the area ran into problems with poor drainage and septic tanks. The West Laurel Civic Association was founded several years later and by the early 1960s, had successfully advocated for sewer lines to be installed. Walker Hill Estates began in 1965 and the Hillsborough subdivision began in 1968. Fairland Regional Park is the only bi-county park of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and the West Laurel Swim Club is the largest private pool in Prince George's County. In more recent decades, West Laurel has seen the construction of 1-95 and the Inter-County Connector, which increased access to Washington, D.C., and Montgomery County. The ICC/Route 200 opened at the Laurel exit in 2011.

Elizabeth Gilligan is an original West Laurel home owner. She moved into the Walker Hill Subdivision in 1966 with her husband Joe, now deceased.

The construction and sale of the homes in the area began in 1965, under contractor Cafritz. Three popular floor plans were available: the Rambler, the Split Foyer, and the Four Level Split. Cafritz originally named the development "Laurel Grove" due to the abundance of wild laurel trees in the area. This name was later changed due to the confusion with the existing African American Community known as "The Grove" in the City of Laurel.

Laurel/Montgomery County

The Montgomery County section of Laurel in the 20707 zip code is located near Burtonsville. It is comprised of most streets connected to Riding Stable Road including Aitcheson Lane, named after the Aitcheson family. Much of the land at the County line was farmland owned by Dr. James and was later passed on to his sons. In the 1970s,

the north end of the County line was realigned placing areas previously designated as Prince George's County into Montgomery County.

Aitcheson Lane

In Montgomery County is a public road narrowing to one lane, and is the site of Maiden's Fancy, a well-preserved Federal-style brick home built in 1807 by James Ray and Lucretia Waters Ray. In the 19th century, the property was home to enslaved people held by a series of landowners. The road is named for the Aitcheson family, who immigrated from Scotland and settled in the area by 1847. Later generations of Aitchesons operated a dairy farm and then a riding stable along today's Riding Stable Road.

Bethany Community Church

Started with a team led by Kevin and Ann McGhee who had been sent out from Bethany Church of Long Beach, California, with the goal of impacting the National Capitol Region for Christ. On December 14, 1986, Bethany Community Church held its first worship service at Laurel High School and then moved to a leased space in an office park at Laurel Lakes. In 1996, the family of Dr. James Smith donated 24 acres of farmland to the growing Bethany Community Church.

Caleb Carr House

The log cabin dates back to 1790 and was named after its original owner. Dr. James Smith, a dentist with a practice in College Park, purchased the property in the 1940s as his country home. Smith and his family spent time in the country rather than live near his practice downtown. In the 1990s, the sons of the late James Smith donated the property to Bethany Community Church, requiring that the church restore the cabin. Funded by the Maryland Historical Trust, volunteers from the church helped with the restoration of the cabin by cleaning, painting and landscaping the grounds. The Carr House is one of the only log cabins remaining in the area.

Tubby's Diner

Tubby's Diner was located on Sandy Spring Road for the past quarter century. Prior to that, it was The Hitching Post, and dated back to at least the mid-1950s. A couple owned the property for over 40 years and lived in the semi-detached house. The house was considered Montgomery County and the shop held a Prince George's County liquor license.

In the 1990s, the couple wanted to sell but could not due to the split jurisdiction. The two counties worked out a deal and The Hitching Post's entire property was placed in Prince George's County and sold to become Tubby's Diner. The building has been modified

significantly over the years, though hidden within the stucco façade is a log cabin structure. Much to the dismay of its dedicated patrons, Tubby's Diner closed in 2020. Only the liquor store remains.

On Display:

ROCKY GORGE DAM

This 1953 cover of Constructioner Magazine featured construction of the Rocky Gorge Dam. Completed in 1954, Rocky Gorge Dam controls the Patuxent River to form a 9-mile-long reservoir covering portions of Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties. In 1967 the dam was renamed after T. Howard Duckett, a founder of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. While the sole purpose of the dam is water storage rather than flood control, flooding due to water releases have been a frequent source of controversy between WSSC, downstream businesses and the City of Laurel. The dam's command center, located in West Laurel, is responsible for maintaining the region's drinking water supply at adequate levels and preparing for the impact of large storms. *Gift of Wayne Dzwonchy*

IRON BRIDGE HUNT PROGRAM

This 1947 program is from a Horse Show and Timber Race conducted nearly 80 years ago on a farm located off Riding Stable Road. The farm was located in the small portion of Montgomery County that is within one of Laurel's Zip codes. The program booklet features many Laurel Advertisers. *Gift of Charles Hessler*

Scaggsville

Located in southernmost Howard County just north of the Laurel city limits, Scaggsville has been a crossroads between Washington and Baltimore since the area was first settled.

Subdivisions

CHELSEA ESTATES

CHERRY CREEK

EMERSON

HAMMOND VILLAGE

JAMESTOWN LANDING

LEISHEAR KNOLLS

SETTLERS LANDING

SNOWDEN'S BIRMINGHAM MANOR

TOWER ACRES

TWIN OAKS

WELLINGTON FARMS

WILLOWS AT ROCKY GORGE WINCOPIA FARMS

U.S. Route 29 follows the western edge of the CDP, leading north 5 miles to Columbia and south 19 miles to downtown Washington, D.C. Interstate 95 forms the eastern edge of the CDP, leading northeast 18 miles to downtown Baltimore and southwest 9 miles to Washington's Beltway. Maryland Rt. 216 runs east–west through the center of Scaggsville, connecting US 29 and I-95, and leads 4 miles southeast to Laurel.

Warfield's Range

Warfield's Range was developed starting in the early 1980s. It features tree lined streets and a quiet atmosphere. Among the several subdivisions in today's Scaggsville is Warfield's Range. This area was once a slave plantation first acquired by the Warfield family in 1696. The graves of Seth W. Warfield (1805-1885) and one of his sons who served as a doctor in the Confederate Army are located in the tiny family cemetery in the adjoining Leisure Village subdivision.

Mansions and Mobile Homes

Laurel's northern neighborhoods have had a wide variety of housing stock over the decades. For example, Scaggsville still contains a few of the elegant homes from yesteryear. These include Fairview (rst built before 1848), Overlook (built about 1905), and Locust Hill (built in 1911).

Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

Laurel's portion of Howard County hosts the expansive 460-acre main campus of Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory. Beginning in 1942 the laboratory was located in Silver Spring, MD. A signature accomplishment of the lab in the early days of World War II was the development of the radio proximity fuse—a critical technology that enabled an anti-aircraft shell to detonate near an approaching aircraft, without a direct hit. APL began constructing its current campus near Laurel in 1954.

The lab has performed research in a wide array of disciplines. Aside from critical weapons development projects and space explorations, the lab has performed vital research in areas as varied as disease monitoring, cybersecurity, and lithium battery development just to name a few. For example, over the years APL research has been at the forefront in developing robotics and prosthetics to help both wounded soldiers and civilians improve their daily lives.

Today APL occupies more than 20 major buildings on its main campus. It also has an adjoining satellite campus. APL's diversified portfolio of more than 600 programs,

primarily serves its Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, NASA, and National Security Agency sponsors, as well as research and development. APL remains positioned to solve complex research, engineering, and analytical problems that present critical challenges to our nation. For over eight decades APL has provided a variety of federal government agencies with deep expertise in highly specialized fields to support national priorities and technology development programs.

On Display in East gallery case:

TOP SHELF

PROXIMITY FUZES

An early accomplishment of the Applied Physics Laboratory was the proximity fuze. Such fuzes detonate an explosive device automatically when the distance to the target becomes smaller than a predetermined value.

The proximity fuze was one of the most important technological innovations of World War II. It was reportedly so important that it was a secret guarded to a similar level as the atom bomb project or the D-Day invasion. During the war, over 100 American companies were mobilized to build some 20 million fuzes.

This standing cutaway display model is from the archives of the Applied Physics Laboratory. On the right is a presentation model from the collection of the Laurel Historical Society.

Left: Loan of Applied Physics Laboratory Right: Gift of: John Adams

NEWS COVERAGE OF APL

In 1973 the Laurel Leader ran a front-page story to commemorate the first 70 years of John Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory.

Laurel Historical Society Collection

HISTORY OF APL

In 1993 Johns Hopkins University published a book to tell the story of the first 50 years of its Applied Physics Laboratory. The history includes the building of APL's current campus in Laurel, Maryland, which started in 1952.

Loan of Shirley Bockstahler-Brandt

BOTTOM SHELF

WELLINGTON FARMS

Acres of former cornfield are today being transformed into Wellington Farms,

Scaggsville's newest subdivision.

Loan of Charles Hessler

HONEY JAR

For years bee hives in nearby Scaggsville were harvested to produce delicious honey that was sold at neighborhood events.

Gift of Charles Hessler

VIEWS OF FAIRVIEW FARM

This panel was presented to Mrs. Arthur Gorman. The panel contains images of Fairview House mansion in Scaggsville from about 1907.

Image courtesy: Howard County Historical Society, Maryland

Arbory

County: Prince George's

Established/Opened: 1978 (broke ground 1977)

Affordable even in the 1970s, the homes started at \$37,996.

Like many original residents, for single mother Barbara Rhodes, Arbory was not only "cute", but as a condo structure it offered a virtually maintenance free exterior, a yard, pool, and tennis courts. Young white couples and families were the majority of Arbory's original residents.

Today the community is as diverse as Laurel, with many African American, Asian, and Hispanic families. The vigorous original community activities of flea markets, pool parties, etc. that had diminished for some years, are now being revived.

Wellington

Established/Opened: 1995

County: Prince George's

"The city of Laurel is the winner as the Villages at Wellington progress... The development is creating an attractive desirable neighborhood that offers homebuyers an upscale alternative within the city that has largely been missing."- Laurel Leader January 1997 editorial

Finding that upscale housing was a long-desired goal of city officials. In 1994, Laurel annexed 269 acres to set the stage for the new property originally owned by Kingdon Gould (think Konterra) that was to form the basis of the new community. Developed in 1995 by Steven Koren of Koren Development Corporation of Columbia, it features

expansive one and two-story single-family homes designed by Grayson Homes and Talles Homes.

Framed by Cherry Lane and Van Dusen Road, the development of the Villages at Wellington includes a community clubhouse that has been the center of many programs and activities. Wellington is near to the construction site of the University of Maryland Laurel Medical Center, the Laurel-Beltsville Senior Activity Center, and Oseh Shalom Synagogue.

The Laurel Charge

Uniting Three African American Methodist Churches

After emancipation following the Civil War, formerly enslaved workers and free Blacks formed close communities centered around new places of worship, including Queen's Chapel at Rossville, St. Mark's in the Grove, Laurel, and Mt. Zion in Bacontown.

Families were closely connected and many continued to work at the Patuxent or Muirkirk Ironworks, where they had been enslaved. In 1890, under the supervision of Reverend McHenry Jeremiah Naylor, the Laurel Charge (an organizational unit and governing body) was formed, officially uniting Queen's Chapel and St. Mark's in Laurel. Mt. Zion, previously known as Bacon's Chapel, joined the Laurel Charge in 1895. In 1969, Mt. Zion separated from the Laurel Charge to become its own station church with its own pastor. The year 1976 marked the dissolution of the Laurel Charge.

Queen's Chapel United Methodist Church

Queen's Chapel Methodist Church was established in 1868 when Trustees Thomas Queen, Thomas Matthews, Ferdinand Key, James Powell, Knotley Johnson, and Henry Edwards purchased less than one acre of land from white landowners William and Henrietta Minnix. The land, which is located on Old Muirkirk Road in Prince George's County, already contained an African American burying ground. By 1870, when the congregation was part of the Bladensburg Circuit, a log cabin was constructed to house the early church. The cabin was destroyed by fire in 1899 and a frame building was constructed in 1901 to replace it. Over time the congregation struggled for space and in 1953 the cornerstone was laid for a new building. Queen's Chapel United Methodist Church re-opened in 2011 after a multi-year, multi-million dollar campaign. It overlooks the cemetery where the original log cabin had been built.

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, originally called Bacon's Chapel, is located in Bacontown, a community established by free and enslaved Blacks prior to the Civil War on property owned by the Dorsey family. The church is located along Whiskey Bottom Road in Anne Arundel County. While a church was located on the property by at least

1890, the current structure dates to 1909-1913 and is the second or third church on the property. A cemetery and St. Jacob Benevolent Lodge building adjoin the church.

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

St. Mark's Methodist Church on Eighth Street in the Grove began as a home mission organized in 1890 by Frank and Sarah Hebron Carter. A few years later, the congregation moved into a hall across the street from its present location. In 1921, the cornerstone was laid for the current structure. In 1968, the church officially became St. Mark's United Methodist Church and construction of Fellowship Hall was completed 11 years later. Since 1890, St. Mark's has been served by 29 pastors and 7 assistant pastors.

Laurel Lakes and Oak Crest

Located on the west side of Route 1 and just south of Cherry Lane, these historic neighborhoods pre-date the incorporation of the City in 1870. Like all of Laurel, this area was once Snowden property before being purchased in 1855 by the Tyson sisters for use as the second site of the Alnwick Female Seminary School. The first site was opened in Washington, D.C. but Laurel was deemed a safer location because of the impending war. The building at Oak Crest burned in 1920. The Oak Crest train station of the B&O line allowed travel to this area of Laurel and the Seminary School.

The present Gude Mansion, a significant example of Greek Revival architecture built in brick, was constructed in 1856 on 50 acres purchased from the sisters by John D. McPherson.

In 1875, French horticulturalist Armand Jardin purchased the house, and it remained in the family until 1904. William Gude purchased the house and former Seminary property in 1926 and extensively renovated the mansion. It was the Gude family home until 1980. Once threatened by the development of Laurel Lakes, the mansion and 1.3 acres of surrounding property is now occupied by the City of Laurel Parks and Recreation Department.

The residential housing at Oak Crest was constructed starting in 1970 and now has a population of close to 4,000 residents. Laurel Lakes was established in 1987 as commercial properties and residences including Laurel Lakes Centre.

The city-owned Granville Gude Park is the site of many community gatherings including the Fourth of July fireworks, the Black Lives Matter protest, and the city's first Pride Fest in 2022.

North Laurel

North Laurel is located in Howard County, just north of the border with the City of Laurel, and is a census-designated place on 6.3 acres with more than 7,500 housing units.

1860: North Laurel becomes part of the newly divided Howard County

1901: Maryland Industrial and Agricultural Institute for Colored Youths founded by Rev. Ernest Lyon

1911: Laurel Park race course opened

1911: Overlook, home to land developer Kingdon Gould, Jr. was constructed

1948: Freestate Raceway (originally Laurel Raceway) opened as a harness racing track

1965: Whiskey Bottom Road Elementary School, now Laurel Woods Elementary School, opened

2011: North Laurel Community Center opened

The Maryland Industrial and Agricultural Institute for Colored Youths was founded in 1901 by Rev. Ernest Lyons, who was inspired by Booker T. Washington's advocacy for industrial schooling for African American children. The 87-acre estate was located across the Patuxent River from the Laurel Historical Society near where Settlers Landing is today.

Horse racing has been an important part of the Howard County and Anne Arundel sections of Laurel. In 1911, Laurel Park opened and continues to attract large crowds on race days, including the Jim McKay Maryland Million held each October since 1986. Triple Crown winners including War Admiral, Secretariat, and Affirmed all raced at Laurel. From 1948 – 1990, the Freestate Raceway was a harness racing track located on Route 1 southbound near the intersection with Gorman Road.

Laurel Raceway Program August 1, 1978 Opening in 1948 to record-breaking attendance, the harness racing track was renamed Freestate Raceway in 1980, following allegations of arson and embezzlement by former owners and officers. It closed in 1990 and the industrial park and shopping center south of Gorman Road is now situated on the property.

An infamous gambling establishment and restaurant first built in the 1920s to bring casinos north from Washington, Rockway Towers was located on the eastside of Route 1 northbound. Celebrities such as Bing Crosby and Doris Day were said to have stopped here but it was raided by the police in 1948 and 21 people were put on trial. It is said to have been the location of a gangland-style murder and prostitution.

On Display:**LAUREL PARK RACETRACK**

Newspaper Section about 1976 International Week at the Racetrack

Gift of Glenn Faegin

Photograph of General Manager George Martin, left
Laurel Museum Collection

International Race Program, 1923

Gift of Frank Casula

Leather Brassard armband made by A.M Kroop and sons

Gift of Pat Bentley Fisher

Silk Racing Program, 1912

Gift of Anna Allison

Maryland State Fair Admission Ticket, 1925

Gift of Pat Bentley Fisher

Club House Pass, 1958

Gift of Karl Roesle

100th Anniversary Program, October 15, 2011

Laurel Museum Collection

Winner Photograph, 1975

Gift of Robert Cook

Kroop Racing Goggles

Gift of Charles Hessler

Pin, 1981

Gift of Pat Bentley Fisher

State Fair Secretary Ribbon, 1912

Gift of Pat Bentley Fisher

On Display:

East gallery - Tall case

Top shelf:

RUBY CREAM PITCHER

Marked "O.M. O'Donnell, Laurel Fair 1910"

Gift of Charles Hessler

ULYSSES S. GRANT

COMMEMORATIVE PLATE

Ulysses Grant visited Laurel in 1869 looking to

possibly purchase the Talbott Farm. He is also said to have visited the Mill and Laurel School #1.

Gift of John Brennan

EGG CUP FROM OSBON HOTEL

The Osbon Hotel was located in the 200 block of Main Street. This egg cup, one of a set, was

originally given to Eva Whitehead when the hotel closed.

Gift of Mary Quinn Mallonee

Middle shelf:

TAPIOCA JAR FROM SADLER'S PHARMACY

Gift of Richard Kluckhuhn

FOOTED FRUIT BOWL

Purchased from Beall's Department Store, which stood on part of the property now occupied by the Laurel Post Office. The bowl was a gift from Albin F.

Fairall, Laurel's first volunteer fire chief, to his wife.

Gift of Dora Fairall America

Bottom shelf:

PHARMACY BOTTLE

This pharmacy bottle sat in the window at Dougherty's Pharmacy, located in the 300 block of Main Street.

Gift of John (Jack) Dougherty

South Laurel Montpelier

County: Prince George's County

South Laurel is a suburban residential area comprised of several neighborhoods, including the planned urban development of Montpelier, Snow Hill, apartment complexes, single family homes, three parks, and a variety of commercial and retail

buildings. It is estimated to span 8.07 square miles with a population of approximately 29,602 and is bordered by Patuxent Research Refuge, Maryland City, and Konterra.

The most notable historic structures are Montpelier Mansion, built between 1781 and 1785 (See inset for more information about Montpelier) and Snow Hill Manor, built between 1799 and 1801. Snow Hill Manor was built by the Snowden family, one of Maryland's early colonial families, who also built the Montpelier Mansion. This beautiful Georgian home is rumored to have hosted President George Washington and his wife, Martha. The Manor is now used as an event venue. Other notable sites in South Laurel include Capitol Technology University, the James J. Rowley Training Center and the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge. Capitol Technology University, the only independent university in Maryland dedicated to engineering, computer science, information technology and management of technology. Founded in 1927, the University moved to South Laurel in 1990. The James J. Rowley Training Center, located near the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge, is the law enforcement training center exclusively operated by the United States Secret Service. It was developed in 1969 and built in 1972. The Patuxent Wildlife Refuge was established by executive order of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936. It is the only refuge established to support conservation research and habitat management.

European settlement of the Montpelier area dates back to 1685. It was part of a land grant given to Richard Snowden, Sr. by Lord Baltimore. Richard Snowden arrived in Maryland as an indentured servant and eventually became one of the largest landowners. The Snowden family built the Montpelier Mansion between 1781 and 1785 as a plantation for agriculture and iron production. Four generations of the Snowden family and enslaved individuals resided in the mansion. Montpelier Mansion now serves as a popular historic site for visitors to Laurel.

The Montpelier Arts Center is on the grounds of the Montpelier Mansion and was built on the footprint of the original 1925 cattle barn. The three galleries housed at the Arts Center introduce changing exhibitions by local and national visual artists and serves as an incubator for emerging artists and artisans with several studios. Montpelier is a community of 695 homes. The first houses of the community were built beginning in 1966. The models were developed by William Levitt, the developer of the famed Levittown, the first mass-produced housing development in America. The neighborhood is known for its tree-lined sidewalks, nature inspired street names and split level style homes. While many residents have lived in the neighborhood their entire lives, some move away and return.

On Display:

MONTPELIER - SOUTH LAUREL - RUSSETT - MARYLAND CITY

Laurel Leader August 2, 2018

Starting Gate Bar and Restaurant, an iconic neighborhood establishment closed its doors in 2018.

Montpelier Community Plans

Gift of Craig Moe

Photo of a family in the new Montpelier community

Loan from Sean Beaver

Pheasant Run Townhome Brochure, 1960

Gift of Craig Moe

Maryland City United Methodist Church

25th-anniversary booklet, celebrating the Maryland City United Methodist Church: 1963-1988

Loan from Mary Alice Hessler

Maryland City Community Directory, 1985

Directory and advertising for the Maryland City Community.

Gift of Ann Bennett

Russett Reed Magazine and Coffee Mug, 2020

Lifestyle Magazine of the Russett Community Association and "I love Russett" Coffee Mug

Gift of Ann Bennett

'Starting Gate' Baseball Uniform, 1960

Baseball uniform from the 'Starting Gate' baseball team from Maryland City.

Shirt and glove in the case; jacket and pants on the mannequin.

Loan from Charles Hessler

Maryland City

County: Anne Arundel

Maryland City was developed by the Maryland City Corp, owned by developer Harvey Kayne. The 1,200 acres of eastern Laurel, Maryland, were purchased in 1960 for \$3 million from a developer planning "Meade City". The concept was to build low-cost houses with ground-rent rather than ownership.

The original Maryland City residents were resourceful. Methodists had been waiting for years for the developers to build promised churches to no avail. Around 1966, when plans for Meade High School were announced, someone in the congregation knew that an Army chapel, built circa 1940, sat on the location for the school. The church bought the chapel from Fort Meade for \$100 and had it moved to Brock Bridge Road, where it sits today as the Community United Methodist Church. The first service was held on Mother's Day in May 1967.

The partially built "White House Swim Club" was originally planned as the community pool for Maryland City. After the bankruptcy, several members of the community contributed funds to purchase the club, created a Board of Directors, and renamed it the West Arundel Swim Club (WASC). The Swim Club opened on August 4, 1964, and has been operating as a private swim club ever since. The ownership of the club is under those members that contributed the original shares. It is a very active community club including two annual events that are very popular, the WASC 4th of July Celebration, which has been held annually at the Swim Club on July 4th for the past 57 years; and the Annual Crab Feast, which is normally held in July or August. The Swim Club recently had its 23rd Annual Crab Feast and the event was a sell-out with over 300 participants.

1950: Early 1950s Harry Boswell purchased 1,200 acres of woodland in Anne Arundel County.

1960: In 1960 the land was sold to E. Harvey Kayne, for \$3 million and renamed Maryland City.

1961: Groundbreaking ceremonies for the model homes took place on April 27, 1961.

1962: In October 1962, the first family moved to Old Line Avenue.

1964: In May 1964, Kayne applied to the FHA for a conditional commitment to finish houses under contract, which was denied. On Oct. 1, 1964, with 640 homes occupied, Harvey Kayne resigned as president of the Maryland City Corp., and the company filed for bankruptcy, claiming debts of \$1.4 million.

1965: In January 1965, the Weaver Bros. mortgage firm filed suit against Maryland City Corp., claiming it was owed \$3.5 million. Completion of the homes came about the end of 1965.

Russett

County: Anne Arundel

Established/Opened: 1992

Officially opened in 1991, Russett is a large wooded community located in the 20724 zip code, which it shares with Maryland City. Russett is known for its natural landscaping,

close proximity to the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, and convenience to major stores and restaurants. The connection to nature and history attracted many early homeowners, and amenities like the walking trails, library, shops, and swimming pools are keeping residents in the development. Russett brings nature - and history - home to Laurel in Anne Arundel County.

Construction for the Russett Community Center took place after the Bathhouse had already been built. Developer's Representative Marshall Zinn, Board members Eva Hill and David Leight participated in the ground breaking for the Russett Community Center.