

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ARCHIVES

**Guide to the Papers of
HAROLD P. MORRIS
1928-1960**

Record Group 17: Personal Papers

**January 18, 2000
Revised November 10, 2015
Updated 2018**

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Harold P. Morris was born in Salem, Indiana, on May 8, 1900, and obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural biochemistry nutrition in 1925 from the University of Minnesota, where he also received a Ph.D. in 1930. From 1930 to 1931, he conducted research as a National Research Council Fellow in the biological sciences, specializing in nutrition, for the Department of Commerce Bureaus of Fisheries and Animal Industry. When funding was discontinued at the end of 1932, he sought aid from U.S. Congressman C.G. Selvig and U.S. Senator Henrik Shipstead in obtaining a position with the Department of Agriculture Bureau of Home Economics. In 1934 he transferred to the Food and Drug Administration, and then to the National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). As a chemist and biochemist, he continued to conduct research, publish articles, and deliver presentations in the field of animal nutrition, concentrating on the effects of diet and nutrition on the health of animals. He was married to Mary Dey Morris, with whom he had three sons, was active in many professional and civic organizations, and was also an avid gardener.

When Dr. Morris moved his family to the Washington, D.C., area, he took up residence in the Woodside Park area of Silver Spring. He soon joined the Woodside Park Civic Association, and became active in the Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF). Trained to perform careful and thorough research, he investigated and reported on many issues of concern to the MCCF, such as the effect of apartment house development in the County, improved funding for County schools, land use and zoning, greater accountability from bicounty agencies, and increased local control over their activities.

An active member and chairman of many Federation committees, particularly the Social Welfare Committee and the special committees to study the effect of apartment housing and to improve bicounty planning, he also served as president from 1954 to 1956, and received the Evening Star Cup in 1950 for the studies he undertook relating to land development. He was also active in the Charter Movement of the 1940s, the Montgomery County Community Chest and Council, and was an early member of the Montgomery County Citizens Planning Association (MCCPA). He conducted studies for the Community Chest's campaign to improve the care for delinquent, neglected, and needy children by replacing detention with foster care and treatment, and served as vice president of the MCCPA.

EXTENT

1.25 cubic feet: 2 legal-sized Hollinger boxes and 1 slim legal-sized Hollinger box

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Harold P. Morris Papers contains materials amassed or created by Dr. Morris during his civic, personal, and professional life from 1928 to 1960. These records comprise correspondence, reports, notes, lists, clippings, statements, drafts, and research materials relating to issues of significance in the County during the 1940s and 1950s. Some of these topics were the care of delinquent and neglected children, conflicts of interest, and the attempt to abolish the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) and establish a single County

agency to oversee planning and development. The collection also contains some personal and professional material.

These papers are arranged into four series:

Series I: Montgomery County Civic Federation

Series II: Montgomery County Citizens Planning Association

Series III: Other Civic Associations

Series IV: Personal

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I: Montgomery County Civic Federation, 1941-1959 **(0.33 cubic feet)**

This series contains material acquired during Morris's research into issues which the Federation was investigating, or which he received as a member of various Federation committees and as president. These items include correspondence, reports, clippings, and background material relating to such topics as zoning, taxes, public education, care of neglected children, liquor control, and the budget. The series also contains copies of bills and amendments, many of which are accompanied by documents presenting the Federation's position.

The series is arranged in alphabetical order, with the material in each folder in chronological order.

Records in this series found within Flat File 6 are:

- MCCF, 1941-1958, n.d. – Washington Trends: 1947 (a report of the City Planning Committee of the Board of Trade)

Series II: Montgomery County Citizens Planning Association, 1954-1960 **(2 folders)**

Documents in this series articulate the Association's vision and goals for instituting rational planning policies for the County. The series also contains some records from the Citizens Committee for Unified Planning in Montgomery County, a predecessor organization which was concerned primarily with establishing accountability for the MNCPPC and asserting local control over planning functions relating to the County. Records include reports, correspondence, notices, and clippings.

Folders are arranged in alphabetical order, and the materials within are arranged chronologically.

Records in this series located within the Flat Files are:

- Montgomery County Charter Committee, 1941-1954, n.d.—The Record of Bethesda-Chevy Chase, November 5, 1948 Charter Win

Series III: Other Civic Groups, 1941-1958
(0.16 cubic feet)

This series contains correspondence, reports, clippings, tables, statements, newsletters, and notes generated during Morris' active participation in other civic organizations. Some of these materials relate to the Charter movement of the 1940s, and planning and zoning issues, including a 1950 Rural Advisory Committee report on planning in the upper County. The Community Chest and Council folder contains records relating to a social survey, health issues, and the care of neglected, delinquent, and needy children.

The folder containing materials related to the Citizens Committee to Improve Bi-County Planning, of which Morris was chairman, documents the movement to abolish the MNCPPC, whose members were appointed by the governor, and which could levy taxes without citizen oversight. This effort was part of the home rule movement, when Montgomery County citizens successfully struggled over time to exert greater control over and be accorded a greater voice in government agencies. Morris allies included County Attorney David Macdonald, Jerome J. Harris of the Homeowners Tax League Inc. of Maryland, Frederick Gutheim, and the Chevy Chase Gardens Citizens Association.

The series is arranged alphabetically, and then in chronological order within each folder.

Series IV: Personal, 1928-1956
(0.18 cubic feet)

This series consists of personal and professional items which were found with the civic records, and includes correspondence, photographs, clippings, reprints and copies of articles, and certificates. The professional materials primarily relate to Morris' attempts to secure positions, his fellowship in biological sciences awarded by the National Research Council in 1930, his academic record, and research in the field of animal diet and nutrition, particularly a breakthrough in the study of thyroid tumors in mice. Personal items include photographs of Morris and his children, and mementos relating to his sons. The personal correspondence relates primarily to family matters, such as dealing with the declining health and deaths of the fathers of both Morris and his wife, and several car accidents in which Morris and his son were involved.

This series is arranged in alphabetical order, and then chronologically within each folder.

Records in this series found within Flat File 1 are:

- Children's Music Book, 1 brown paper bag—Printed "Droop's Music House" 1300 G St. NW, Washington D.C.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS

This collection is open for research.

LANGUAGE

English.

PROVENANCE

The bulk of the records are from Accession #93-4, originally 4.5 cubic feet.

USING THESE RECORDS

To request records listed in this finding aid, the following information should be given to the archivist:

Record Group 17, **Papers of Harold P. Morris**, Series Number and Name, Box Number and Folder Title(s).

The preferred citation for materials from these records is:

Montgomery County Archives; Gaithersburg, Maryland. Record Group 17: Personal Papers. Records Title: Papers of Harold P. Morris. Series number and series name. Subseries number and subseries name, if applicable. Box number and folder title, if appropriate.

PROCESSING PROCEDURES

General processing procedures consisted of discarding duplicates, unnecessary binders, and routine transmittals. Oversized documents and photographs were removed from the original location in their assigned series and placed in separate containers. Separation sheets were inserted in the original location within the folder to indicate the new location of any records placed elsewhere.

Preservation copying of newspaper clippings was performed whenever feasible. Records in folders were arranged, unless otherwise indicated, in forward chronological order, with undated records appearing at the end of the folder.

MCCF newsletters, clippings, and materials relating to specific committees were transferred to the records of the MCCF in Record Group 18, Civic Associations. Two newsletters, a membership list, and a meeting notice were transferred to the records of the MCCPA in Record Group 18.

Many items unrelated to Dr. Morris' professional and civic activities were deaccessioned in January 2000, including booklets, clippings, pay raise and promotion notices, handwritten music notebooks, clippings, and materials relating to scouting, health, home improvement projects, and gardening. However, family and professional correspondence was retained, along with family photographs, reprints of scholarly articles, certificates, and the baby books of two of Dr. Morris' sons.

PROCESSING STAFF/FINDING AID AUTHOR

MCA staff.

BOX INVENTORY

Series I: Montgomery County Civic Federation

Box 1

MCCF, 1941-1958, n.d.
Legislation, 1945-1957, n.d.
MNCPPC, 1950-1959, n.d.
Montgomery County Budget, 1954-c.1958
Taxes, 1950-1956, n.d.

Series II: Montgomery County Citizens Planning Association

(Box 1, cont.)

MCCPA, 1955-1960
Clippings, 1954-1958

Series III: Other Civic Groups

Box 2

Allied Civic Group, 1955, n.d.
Bills to Reorganize MNCPPC, 1953
Citizens Committee to Improve Bi-County Planning, c.1952-1955, n.d.
Homewood Citizens Association, 1954-1956
MNCPPC Appointment, 1958
Montgomery County Charter Committee, 1941-1954, n.d. (*see Flat File 6*)
Montgomery County Community Chest and Council, 1944-1948, n.d.
Report of the Social Survey for Montgomery County, 1947
Upper Montgomery County Planning District/Rural Advisory Committee, 1950-1956, n.d.
Woodside Park Civic Association, 1938-1950

Series IV: Personal

Box 3

Children's Music Book, c. 1923
Family Correspondence, 1931-1956
Family Records, 1928-1943, n.d.
Photographs, 1943-1951, n.d.
Professional Correspondence, 1929-1952, n.d.
Professional Research, 1931-1935, 1950
Thyroid Tumor Publicity, 1951