

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
HISTORY
CONFERENCE
2023

JANUARY 21-28

Presented by



Session Descriptions

[Saturday, January 21, 2023](#)

10:00-11:30 a.m. | Morning Keynote

Immigration Stories: The Journey to Montgomery County

Presented by Maria Sprehn, PhD, Sarah Hedlund, and Marina Martins

In 1850 less than 2% of Montgomery County's population was foreign born and by 1960 it was almost 5%. Today, more than 35% of the county's residents are foreign born and even more speak at least one language besides English. How has Montgomery County become one of the most diverse counties in the United States? The answer lies in more than 200 years of immigration stories, soon to be featured in a new online exhibit hosted by Montgomery History. In this presentation, panelists will discuss general findings regarding the immigration history of the county as well as highlight specific immigration stories from the exhibit, based on oral history interviews, archival documents, U.S. census data, and other historical resources. The common themes behind these experiences include stories of love, war, political upheaval, and the pursuit of higher education and career opportunities, as told by immigrants from Ukraine, Latvia, El Salvador, India, Palestine, China, Congo, and many more.

12:00-1:15 | Breakout Session I

Option 1:

Montgomery County in the 1980s: Addressing County Challenges with Progressive Programs

Presented by Bob Bachman

This session will discuss major challenges facing Montgomery County in the 1980s and describe the progressive policies and programs adopted to address them. These challenges included down-county school closings, rapid population diversity, racial imbalances and achievement gaps in public schools, growth along I-270 and US 29, loss of agricultural land, attracting biotech businesses, responding to homelessness, hunger, hate crimes and much more.

Option 2:

Listening to the Echoes of the Enslaved in Prince George's County

Presented by Stephanie Sperling

The Department of Parks and Recreation and the Prince George's County Archaeology Office organize an annual event called "Echoes of the Enslaved" that moves to a different historic site each year. This yearly commemoration encourages conversation about the legacies of chattel slavery while highlighting current research, initiatives for inclusive interpretation, and archaeological findings.

Option 3:

100 Years of Tradition and Progress of The Montgomery County Police Department (July 4, 1922, to July 4, 2022)

Presented by Officer Steve Smugersky

This presentation will be an overview of the creation and development of the Montgomery County Police Department through its 100 years of service. Highlighting major milestones, achievements, advancements, and traditions.

1:45-3:00 | Breakout Session II

Option 1:

Her Home, Our Landmark: Designating the Cottage Home of Dr. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann

Presented by Nancy Pickard

On January 13, 2021, the Secretary of the Interior designated a small cottage in Rockville, Maryland, locally known as Frieda's Cottage, as a National Historic Landmark. It earned this remarkable national recognition for its association with Dr. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann and her significant contributions to the field of medicine as a psychoanalyst. National Historic Landmarks are historic properties that illustrate the heritage of the United States - each landmark represents an outstanding aspect of American history and culture.

Dr. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann was a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany who found a new life at Rockville's Chestnut Lodge. She became internationally renowned for her pioneering contributions to the treatment of schizophrenia and her dynamic understanding of her patients. Dr. Fromm-Reichmann was a gifted and compassionate therapist whose work is significant in medical history and remains relevant in the field today. Learn about the doctor and how Peerless Rockville acquired and restored her cottage and advocated for National Historic Landmark recognition.

Option 2:

The Full Spectrum: Uncovering LGBTQ+ Heritage in Montgomery County

Presented by Emma Satterfield

With Washington, D.C. and Baltimore nearby, the history of Montgomery County's LGBTQ+ community has often been overshadowed. Building on Emma Satterfield's recent online exhibit with Montgomery History, this presentation seeks to shed light on the struggles and achievements of the county's LGBTQ+ residents during the late twentieth century. Satterfield also will delve into the exhibit development process and discuss the importance of preserving local LGBTQ+ history and sharing it with the public.

Option 3:

Montgomery County Agriculture: From Tobacco to Today

Presented by Tom Farquhar

The rich soil of Montgomery County has supported a wide variety of agricultural enterprises, ranging from millennia of crop cultivation by indigenous communities, to tobacco plantations of the first colonial settlers of European descent, progressing to market farming serving growing populations in Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Today the agriculture of Montgomery County has diversified to include commodity grain production, landscaping, and horse-riding operations, as well as a small but growing table-food and pick-your-own sector. The Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, a land-planning treasure, grants the assurance that farming will remain part of the story of the county forever.

[Wednesday, January 25, 2023](#)

7:00-8:30 p.m. | Keynote

The History of Teaching History

Presented by Alana Murray, PhD

Beginning with Washington, D.C. teacher Leila Amos Pendleton's 1912 publication *A Narrative of the Negro*, this address will focus on examining the history of how textbooks developed as a source of teaching a very particular narrative of history to American students. In addition, the talk will explore how African American educators begin to challenge these narratives with the formation of Black History Week in 1926.

Saturday, January 28, 2023

10:00-11:30 | Morning Keynote

Historic Preservation: Why Does it Matter?

Presented by Eileen McGuckian

If we can read history in books, do we need to see historic buildings in person? Many people think so, and this session will feature how local preservation has been accomplished over the past century. The significance of places like cemeteries, the Silver Theatre, the Red Brick Courthouse, the Dickerson Railroad Station, and the Bethesda Meeting House along with towns and communities such as Brookeville and Sugarland will be explored. This session will delve into places worth preserving, local experiences, and current practices in Montgomery County.

12:00-1:15 | Breakout Session I

Option 1:

Mapping Segregation: Racial Restrictive Covenants in Montgomery County

Presented by John Liebertz

For the majority of the twentieth century, private and public sectors channeled and influenced development of the county based on race and ethnicity. Montgomery Planning built a mapping tool that illustrated historic patterns of segregation inside the Capital Beltway (I-495) by recording racial restrictive covenants in the land records. This presentation discusses the conclusions of our analysis, how de facto and de jure segregation limited opportunities for people of color, and the efforts by the Black community, local activists, and organizations to open the suburbs to all.

Option 2:

Montgomery County and the War of 1812

Presented by Sandy Heiler

The War of 1812 was one of the most contentious conflicts in American history, and Montgomery countians were nearly universally opposed to it. Nevertheless, although their properties were spared the war's horrors, Montgomery's citizens were not. A sense of honor and proximity to Washington and Baltimore led them to take an active part in a war they deplored: defending freedom of the press against a murderous pro-war mob in Baltimore; joining the ranks of raw Maryland militia at Bladensburg to face the world's strongest army; and sheltering the flood of terrified Washingtonians and the US President in Brookeville as the enemy burned the capital. This talk describes the role Montgomery County residents played in

the War of 1812, between its beginning in June 1812, and the Battle for Baltimore in September 1814. Despite the odds or their personal beliefs, they did their duty—and more.

Option 3:

The Montgomery County Detention Center: Modernizing the Carceral State

Presented by Terry Lachin

Built in 1961 “with the most modern concepts,” the Montgomery County Detention Center was enlarged and modernized several times during three successive decades. It currently awaits demolition for county redevelopment. The Detention Center is situated historically in mid-century between the 1930s outmoded and segregated Circuit Courthouse Jail in Rockville and the sustainably designed 2003 Montgomery County Correctional Facility in Clarksburg. The Detention Center occupies a key transitional period, documenting transformation of architectural prison design, standards and practices, the realities of public funding, and the experiences of prison life, e.g., chronic overcrowding, mental illness and alcoholism, juvenile detention, and inmate violence, among others.

1:45-3:00 | Breakout Session II

Option 1:

Beyond the Pearl: The Life of Emily Edmonson

Presented by Maria Pinkelton

In 1848 thirteen-year-old Emily Edmonson attempted to escape slavery with 76 other enslaved persons including her fifteen-year-old sister Mary and several of their siblings aboard a schooner called the Pearl. This act began a journey that would take Emily from the docks of New Orleans to Oberlin College and result in a lifelong friendship with Frederick Douglass. Learn the story Emily Edmonson and her indelible impact on the abolitionist movement.

Option 2:

Pirates of the Chesapeake Bay: The Oyster Wars (1882-1959)

Presented by Jamie L.H. Goodall, PhD

From the golden age of piracy to Confederate privateers and oyster pirates, the maritime communities of the Chesapeake Bay are intimately tied to a fascinating history of intrigue, plunder, and illicit commerce raiding. Author Jamie L.H. Goodall will introduce the audience to the key figures of the Chesapeake Bay Oyster Wars including Governor William E. Cameron, the pirates of the Dancing Molly, Captain W. Frank Whitehurst, and Berkeley Muse.

Option 3:

The Biostatistics Center of George Washington University

Presented by Professor Scott Evans

Founded in 1972 and located in proximity of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Biostatistics Center of George Washington University has a 50-year history of leadership in practice-changing clinical trials and biostatistical methodology research. With a vision to improve public health and clinical practice by conducting transformative scientific research, studies conducted by the Center have been recognized in reports to the United States President and Congress; cited in reports from the White House; recognized in Time Magazine's The Year in Medicine; named the #1 advance in medicine by the Harvard Health Letter; received the Society for Clinical Trials (SCT) "Trial of the Year" Award; served as the basis for the National Diabetes Prevention Program adopted by the CDC, and many more significant achievements.

3:30-5:00 | Closing Keynote

Ain't No Back to a Merry-Go-Round: A Sneak Preview of the Upcoming Documentary

Presented by Ilana Tractman

In 1960 protests at Glen Echo Amusement Park confronted Jim Crow in Montgomery County head-on, bringing together previously unaffiliated Black and White groups on different sides of social boundaries. The protest was at the beginning of a groundswell of Civil Rights activity, predicting numerous future alliances united against segregation. Through a sneak preview of clips from the documentary in progress, this talk will break down the factors that created this "perfect storm," viewing it through the prism of a grand social experiment that succeeded in grassroots mobilization, civic engagements, and, ultimately, social change.