



**Belmont: Recovering the Plan for a Black Chevy Chase**  
**Presented by Kimberly Bender and Neil Flanagan**

Why are the western suburbs of DC white and the eastern ones Black? Believe it or not, Clues can be found in the parking lot of a strip mall next to Chevy Chase Village. In 1906, when streetcar suburbs were a novel luxury and the ambition of Reconstruction had not been fully extinguished, four Black businessmen secretly acquired land amid DC's most exclusive developments. They too sought to build an elite suburb—but unlike their neighbors, it would be open to DC's distinct African American middle class. What followed was one of the most astonishing stories in the history of American cities.

**An Exploration of Historic Ag Reserve Homes from the 1936 Historic American Buildings Survey**  
**Presented by Kenny Sholes**

In 1933, as part of the New Deal, the National Park Service launched the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). "Guided by field instructions from Washington, D.C., the first HABS recorders were tasked with documenting a representative sampling of America's architectural heritage." Luckily for us, many of the historic Ag Reserve homes were documented. In most cases, these are the oldest pictures we have of these structures. Join Kenny Sholes as we explore some of these amazing structures.

**The Montgomery County Poor Farm and Almshouse: Its History and People**  
**Presented by Julianne Mangin & Katherine Rogers**

For nearly 160 years, the Almshouse at the Montgomery County Poor Farm was the last resort for poor people who were unable to take care of themselves due to physical, mental, and developmental disabilities. A look at some of their stories, including how they lived and died, sheds a light on conditions there. Despite the oversight of county officials and the efforts of reformers, the Almshouse was a place where the poor were neglected, abused, and exposed to unsafe conditions until it closed in 1948.

**Negative Space: Rebecca G. Fields, Owner and Proprietor of the *Montgomery County Sentinel*, 1871-1930**  
**Presented by Sarah Hedlund**

Any history of Montgomery County's oldest newspaper of record will contain the following information: "The *Sentinel* was founded in 1855 by Matthew Fields, a Confederate sympathizer who was arrested during the Civil War for his opinions. After his death in 1871, his widow took over the publication." The story almost always ends there...but the full story of "his widow" has barely begun. Rebecca Fields was a rare woman business owner in a male-dominated business, and she ran that business for almost 60 years after her husband's death. She was a complicated and unconventional woman whose true thoughts, opinions, attitudes, and politics are simultaneously known and unknowable, hidden in the white space between lines of type and glimpsed in the thinnest threads of her descendants' memories. Archivist and researcher Sarah Hedlund uncovers the life and career of one of Montgomery County's most overlooked historical figures, in search of the woman behind the press.

**A Shadow on Our Schools? Enslavers as Namesakes**  
**Presented by Ralph Buglass**

Seven Montgomery County Public Schools are named for important historical figures who also were enslavers. This presentation seeks to contextualize the issue, presenting a broad overview of slavery in antebellum Montgomery County and providing sketches of the lives of the seven school namesakes—Richard Montgomery, Thomas Wooten, Zadek Magruder, Francis Scott Key, Montgomery Blair, John Poole and Julius West—and examining each's connection to slavery.

**Living on the "Edge": Using Remote Sensing to Explore Landscapes of Indigenous and Colonial Interaction at the English Periphery**  
**Presented by Matthew D. McKnight**

Archaeologists tend to divide into two camps: prehistoric archaeologists who study the cultures that didn't leave a written record, and historical archaeologists studying those that came after. Frontier archaeology is concerned with the liminal space between the two. In Maryland, that translates not to the study of those who lived during a particular time period, but instead to those living at the edge of the advancing English Colony. This presentation will explore how the Maryland Historical Trust, home to the State Office of Archaeology, is using remote sensing to identify and document the dynamic landscapes at the English periphery.

**Revisiting the Du-Drop Inn: When Emory Grove was the Center of Black Culture in Montgomery County**  
**Panel of Emory Grove Residents, moderated by Paul Tukey**

Visited by the likes of Aretha Franklin, Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, Tina Turner and dozens of other iconic entertainers, the legendary Du-Drop Inn of Emory Grove was the place to be in Montgomery County from the 1940s to the 1970s. This roundtable will feature people who grew up in Emory Grove sharing their first-hand stories of both the good, and bad, of this bygone era.

**To Say Their Names: Researching the Hidden Slavery History of Home**  
**Presented by Robert Engelman**

How much do we know about the enslavement of African Americans that occurred in our own neighborhoods? This project aims to chronicle the history of a three-square-mile area between Kensington and Wheaton. The unifying objective is to bring to light the experience—and ideally the names—of individuals enslaved there. Resources will be offered for neighborhood slavery research.

**A Tough Row to Hoe**  
**Presented by Deirdre Harris**

The Agricultural History Farm Park is home to 275 years of farming history that includes the lives of the Magruder family, patriots of the American Revolution; the Newman family, African Americans who left enslavement in Virginia and purchased land after the failed promise of Reconstruction, and the Bussard family, dairy farmers from Frederick County. The intricacies of this complex Maryland history runs deep into the soil of the Agricultural Reserve and is made as clear as the Rock Creek that flows along its borders through fact finding, archeological digs, and the oral histories of the farm family descendants. Literally and figuratively, life at the farm in Derwood was hard. Crops failed, social, political, and legal constraints over the years were challenging, and the road to historic discovery was sometimes painful. Learn about the people, the place, and the process of uncovering the past at the Agricultural History Farm Park.

***A Rockville Journal***  
**Presented by Steve LaRocque**

In this session, Steve LaRocque, in costume and accompanied by sound effects, portrays a Rockville attorney who recounts the day-to-day events of Montgomery County life from June 1856 through December 1865, making entries in his personal journal as he narrates. Although his character is fictional, the persons and events in his narrative are historically accurate. The script was adapted from two articles that appeared in *The Montgomery County Story*: “A Rockville Journal Part I – Years of Controversy, 1856-1860” (May 1985) and “A Rockville Journal Part II – Years of Conflict, 1861–1865” (July/August 1985).