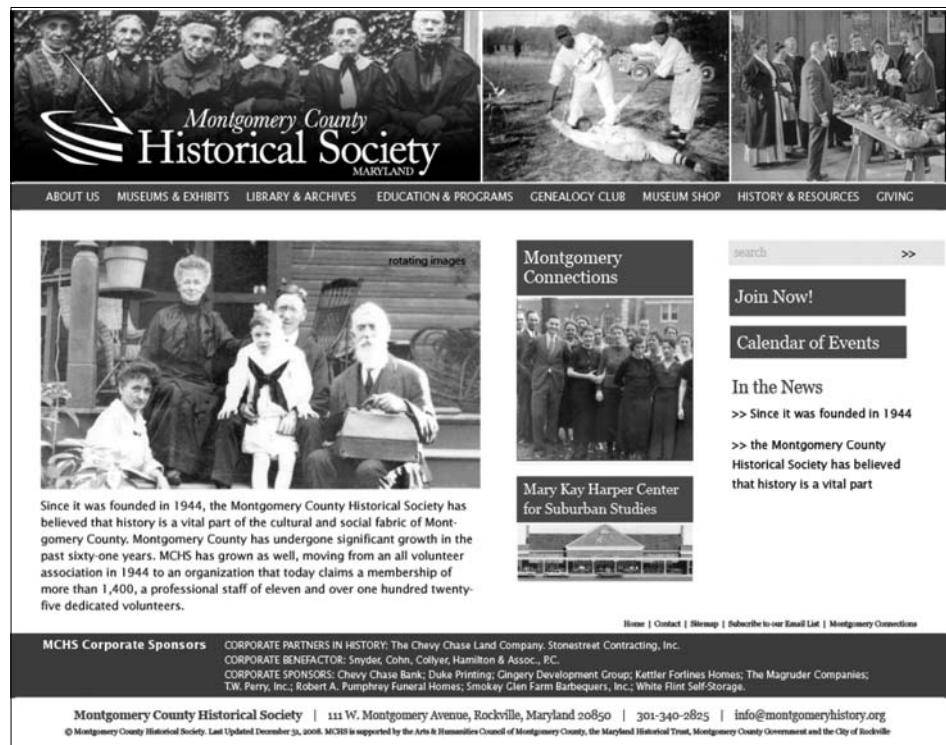


February/March 2009

Montgomery County Historical Society Unveils Improved Web Site in April!



Prototype of the home page for the new website.

MCHS is delighted to announce the launch of its improved website in April. The staff has been undergoing the painful process of reviewing all the site content for the new version of our currently antiquated website. The process is almost as difficult as its original creation in 1994, when all new content had to be envisioned, organized and written. What once seemed amazingly forward-thinking of MCHS now appears part of the past as does the content management system which is very cumbersome to keep updated. The new site will be visually more exciting and will have pages for the new *Mary Kay Harper Center for Suburban Studies* as well as the *Montgomery Connections* program. The website redesign is partially funded through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant for *Montgomery Connections* and through a generous donation from **Ernst & Young LLP** and **Gary Correll**. The new website allows MCHS to move forward technologically and maintain relevance. We have created places for more history features; and will have the ability to process on-line memberships and donations. We anticipate it will be easier to maneuver, both for the visitor and for the staff who have to keep it updated. Not everything will be in place immediately as the site launches, but look for continuing updates and improvements as all aspects come on line.

From Spring to Snow: A 19th Century Heirloom Garden at the Beall-Dawson House

Curator Michael Twitty and the MCHS staff are very excited about the upcoming outdoor exhibit at the Beall-Dawson Historical Park. This is a new endeavor for the current staff, although it harkens back to a time when the Historical Society hosted a garden club. The garden will feature vegetables and herbs that typically were grown in kitchen gardens in 19th century Montgomery County. We need volunteers who are willing to work once a month preparing, planting, maintaining and harvesting the garden through the year. We also need donations or loans of gardening tools for the project. The **Volunteer Training** session on **Wednesday, February 18 at 7:00** at the Beall-Dawson House will give the garden crew some basics on maintaining the garden as well as a little history on 19th century gardening and plants. The first **Workday** is **Sunday, March 1 from 1:00 to 5:00**. This first session will involve building the raised beds and preparing the soil. As the project develops we will have more workdays scheduled, as we will need people regularly weeding the garden and caring for the plants. Also, in an effort to make the project more child and rabbit friendly, an auxiliary children's/bunny garden will be planted on top of the archaeology pit. If you think your children enjoyed digging at *Happy Birthday*, wait until this September when they get to pull out all the plants before they can start archaeology! Can you imagine the fun?! If you are interested in volunteering or have tools to contribute, please contact Karen Lottes at 301-340-2825 or kylottes@montgomeryhistory.org.

Montgomery Connections

The first phase of this multi-lingual project is underway. Through the help of a series of focus groups representing many different constituencies—Hispanic, Chinese, Teenage, MCHS Members and African American—we will launch the first themes in July. We are beginning to write the text for the posters, cell tours and web pages and will have a second round of focus groups in April to make sure we are doing it right. So far the process has been a fascinating and also validating one. We've found that every group we spoke with felt the project was worthwhile and important. Interestingly, both the adult and teenage groups felt it would give them opportunities to positively interact with their teenager or parent, respectively. Many felt that the topics—which include the Depression, the Civil War and segregation—speak to our world today as much as the past. We'll update you regularly in the newsletter, but come July look for the posters and banners on buses, in malls, banks, schools—wherever we can place them.

Carousel of Memories

Sunday, March 1 at 4:00, Beall-Dawson House

Enjoy a screening of this documentary about Glen Echo Park's Dentzel Carousel. Producer Cintia Cabib will lead a discussion of the film following the screening. Come early to have an opportunity to see the exhibit *Amusement Parks of Montgomery County*. Program included with museum admission, but reservations are required, 301-762-1492. Beall-Dawson House.

New Acquisitions:

MCHS thanks the following people for their wonderful donations to the collections in 2008.

- Antique horse shoe, found during construction of the new Richard Montgomery High School, from **James Miller**
- Toddler's denim jacket, Gaithersburg, late 1990s, from **Alison Dineen**
- Infant and toddler clothing, baby care accessories, and Girl Scout camping equipment, Rockville, 1960s-1970s, from **Pat Laine**
- Civil War musket, from the estate of **Charles T. Jacobs**
- Books, and a pair of late 19th century opera glasses, the Waters family of Germantown, from **Mary Beth Fleming**
- Two prom dresses, Wheaton, 1960s, from **Elizabeth Scanlon**
- Wedding accessories, a political poster, and children's toys, Rockville, 1920s-1930s, from **Churchill Ward**
- WWII US Army Medical Department first aid kit, from **Mary E. Lennon**
- A raccoon coat, worn by a Montgomery County resident while at college in the 1920s, and a tin kitchen scoop, from **Jane C. Sween**
- Wedding gown and accessories (1967), a baptismal outfit (1969), and a bassinette set (1941), Bethesda, from **Elizabeth M. Spano**
- Glass bottle, mid 20th century, from **Pat Douglas**
- Pair of mid 19th century oil portraits: Edward T. B. Offutt and his wife Ann Williams Offutt, from **Richard and Hilda Offutt**
- Two 1917 Montgomery County dog tax tags, and a set of household linens, Rockville, 1920s, from **Peerless Rockville**
- Wooden ironing board, Montgomery County, early 20th century, from **Pat Seek**
- Ladderback chair, originally owned by one of the Beall-Dawson House's resident curators, from **William S.**



Ann Williams Offutt

Dawson House's resident curators, from **William S.**

Stabler

- Metal stamp used to create Montgomery County dog tax tags, from **Janice Schiavone**
- Home haircutting set, Aspen Hill, 1950s, from **Mary Lou Luff**

Montgomery County History Day

The *Montgomery County History Day* competition (the local competition for National History Day) will be held at Richard Montgomery High School on March 21, with some early judging of research papers on March 15 at the MCHS headquarters in Rockville. High school and middle school students will compete in the categories of exhibits, research papers, documentaries, performances or websites with topics relating to this year's theme, *The Individual in History*. Winners go on to the Maryland History Day and then National History Day, which is held in June in College Park. Montgomery County students have done very well at the state level in past years. MCHS is grateful to **Ernst & Young LLP and Gary Correll** for sponsoring MCHD. If you would like to judge, please contact Emily Correll, 301-340-2825 or ecorrell@montgomeryhistory.org.

EXHIBIT: *Something Old: Wedding Traditions in Montgomery County*

April 1 to June 28, Waters House History Center

The exhibit *Something Old: Wedding Traditions in Montgomery County* will examine the material culture related to the 19th and 20th century American wedding, with a focus on the choices made by brides, grooms and families from Montgomery County. We'll go beyond the wedding dress itself to take a look at the many other aspects of a wedding, from the engagement through to the Golden Anniversary. Portraits (both painted and photographic), invitations and announcements, undergarments, trousseau pieces, gifts, and many other items that help make up the wedding experience will all be included. The heart of the exhibit will be the display of ten wedding gowns, one from each decade from 1870 to 1960, all worn by local brides. Other highlights from our collections include a wedding present given in 1747, a bride's ring from 1860, a cake top decoration from 1929, and a 1972 father-of-the-bride suit. All of these remnants and reminders of past weddings can tell us about the cultural and religious traditions of our parents and grandparents, and



Mary England Ward at 409 W. Montgomery Avenue, Rockville, 1928.

help us think about the origins and meanings of modern wedding culture, whether we embrace it or not. This exhibit will appeal to lovers of costume, decorative arts, social history, and anyone with an interest in the wedding traditions of the past and the present.

We are in the process of planning some lunchtime programs to go with the exhibit. Look for a talk on wedding fashion and on wedding dress preservation in future newsletters.

EXHIBIT: *The Other Member of the Family: Montgomery County Pets*

April 28 to September 13, Beall-Dawson House

This exhibit will look at pet owning and pet keeping from the 19th century through the present. In some ways our relationship with our pets has changed greatly over time, but other aspects of pet ownership remain constant. Montgomery County is home to more animal-related history than you might think, from award-winning race horses to the second oldest pet cemetery in the country. From the historian's viewpoint, how we feed, nurture, interact with and mourn our animal companions can tell us about our society as a whole. And from the animal lover's viewpoint, it's fun to see lots of pictures of pets!

In addition to historic images from our collections, the exhibit will feature many wonderful photographs, paintings and mementos of beloved pets provided by Montgomery County residents. Be sure to visit this informative and, if we do say so ourselves, highly entertaining exhibit!

We are busily trying to plan special programs to go with the exhibit. For this year's Heritage Days, we will have a Pet Expo on Sunday, June 28 on the grounds of the Beall-Dawson House. We are still in the planning stage, but thanks to **Tom Meeks - Dogs, Cats & Kids Photography**, a professional pet photographer, will take a picture of your pet for a donation to MCHS.

It isn't too late to contribute to the exhibit! We're still looking for photos and artifacts. You can send us your favorite pet photo, and a brief description or story. Whenever possible, images will be scanned so that originals can be returned immediately. If you think you have an artifact to lend—an old dog leash, water dish, cat sweater, birdcage or hamster ball (to name a few possibilities)—please make sure it's clean, and that you won't need it for your current pet for the duration of the exhibit. To offer something, contact Joanna Church at 301-340-2825 or jchurch@montgomeryhistory.org.

Note: Unfortunately, while animals are the subject of the exhibit, we cannot accommodate the pets themselves in the museum.

Backyard History Camp

MCHS is again partnering with Montgomery County

Antoinette, a 20th century model of the Arc de Triomphe, and a folk carving from the Brittany region. As of now, these four items are the only pieces from the Maryland Merc Train boxcar whose whereabouts are known; the boxcar itself was given to the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore.

In January, the B&O Museum invited MCHS Collections Manager Joanna Church to bring our four Merc Train pieces to Baltimore for the filming of a promotional video. Our artifacts were reunited with the boxcar for the first time in fifty years, rather like the old "This is Your Life" segments on "Sesame Street," although no one (human or inanimate) shed any tears. Instead, Joanna was interviewed about the artifacts by the B&O Museum's celebrity spokesman, Michael Gross (yes, the dad from "Family Ties"). The video will be shown in the B&O Museum, and on their website.

Maryland's Mockingbird Case—A Panel Discussion
Monday, February 23 from 5-7:00 at the Red Brick Courthouse

The Giles-Johnson case involved three African-American men who were convicted of raping a white girl in Spencerville. After many years of appeals, they were freed. Listen to first hand accounts of the case as well as learn the historical context and the lessons learned. This program is being held by the Juvenile Section of the Montgomery County Bar Association and MCHS is one of the sponsors. Reservations are not required, but for more information contact Stephanie Joseph at sljoseph14@aol.com or 240-777-9369.

Exhibit Preparation Workshop
Monday, March 8 from 10-2:00, Waters House History Center

Learn the basics of exhibit development—from how to write a label to the proper cutting of foam core. Collections Manager Joanna Church and Education Director Karen Yaffe Lottes will share their experience in developing and fabricating low-cost exhibits. Registration includes an exhibit making kit, the basic tools for making exhibits. The workshop goes over lunch; bring a sandwich; beverage and dessert will be provided. Cost is \$32 and pre-paid registration is required. Call 301-340-2825 to register.

Exhibit: Washington Shopping
through March 18, Water House

It can be hard to believe today, but the center of Washington DC was once a bustling shopping district, patronized by both city residents and customers from the surrounding area. Most Montgomery County communities had their own general store, and larger towns like Rockville, Silver Spring and Gaithersburg had their share of specialty shops, but if you were looking for something a little extra, Washington

was the place to go. Only in the mid-20th century did the big department stores like Woodward & Lothrop, Garfinckel's and Hecht's open branches in the suburbs, following the population growth; gradually, the downtown shops closed their doors, and 'destination shopping' became a trip to a suburban mall. *Department Stores* examines the history of the big stores, the growth, decline and recent resurgence of the downtown DC commercial district, and the shopping experience; and of course, showcasing some of the clothes, accessories and other fine goods from our collections.

***Plan Now to Be a Part of
Our County's Future***

When planning your financial future, consider making gifts to the endowment funds of the Montgomery County Historical Society to help preserve and share our county's rich heritage as envisioned in our mission. The MCHS Endowment Fund supports general operations of the Society. The MCHS Collections Fund maintains the library and museum collections. Your legacy could come in many ways:

- a gift of cash;
- appreciated securities (stocks or bonds);
- making MCHS the beneficiary of a bequest or trust;
- naming MCHS as a beneficiary or owner of a life insurance policy;
- giving real estate with or without a retained life estate; and
- a charitable remainder trust.

Contact Debbie Rankin, 301-340-2825 or drankin@montgomeryhistory.org. We suggest you also consult your own financial planner.

MCHS is a 501(c)(3) organization. All gifts are fully tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Upcoming Events:

Save the dates for these upcoming programs:

- ***Donor Reception:*** Monday, May 11.
- ***Annual Meeting:*** Tuesday, June 2; Tony Pitch will be talking about Lincoln's assassination, from his new book *They Shot Papa Dead*.
- ***Heritage Days:*** June 27-June 28; Saturday the Beall-Dawson House and Waters House will be open with activities at the Waters House; Sunday only the Beall-Dawson House will be open with special activities related to the pet exhibit.
- ***Happy Birthday Montgomery County!:*** Sunday, September 6—the actual county birthday!

GENEALOGY CLUB B-E-T-W-E-E-N T-H-E L-I-N-E-S

President's Message: As you can see from the meeting schedule, we are offering a wide variety of programs at the next few monthly meetings. I'm hoping we can have a good turnout for our speakers, so come and bring a friend. The 2009 officers are listed below. Please contact one of us if you have ideas, questions or comments about the club. Planning is proceeding on a 30th Anniversary Dinner in June and we should have complete details by the next newsletter.

– Lorraine Minor

2009 Genealogy Club Officers

President: Lorraine Minor; 301-229-3515
flminor@patriot.net

Vice President: Carol Cummings; 301-294-9230
cumincl@erols.com

Secretary: Linda Kennedy; 301-947-3367
lmkennedy70@comcast.net

Membership Chair: John Herman; 301-657-2851
jherman148@aol.com

Program Chair: Pam Loos-Noji; 202-829-3560
pamloos@mac.com

Newletter Coordinator: Pat Andersen; 301-340-2974
She would like us to send messages to both home and work addresses: genlaw@comcast.net or pandersen@montgomeryhistory.org

Genealogy Club Monthly Meetings:

Genealogy Club meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held at the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Dr., Rockville, MD. Call 240-314-5019 for directions. There is ample free parking. Meetings are always held on Wednesdays at 7:30, with refreshments following.

February 25 *Research in Land and Probate Records*

Librarian Pat Andersen will present research techniques used to find out genealogical information about "Elizabeth Pritchett (1792-1858) and her Electrifying Machine" in land and probate records, while highlighting some new resources at the Montgomery County Historical Society Library.

March 25 *Getting from Research to Publication and Beyond*

Allen Beatty will discuss how to publish the results of your research including data entry considerations, copyright issues, what software to use, decisions when publishing via a book, marketing and distribution.

April 22 *Introduction to Genealogical Resources in the Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, State Library Resources Center*

Learn about the book and microform resources for Maryland genealogical research at the Enoch Pratt Free Library from Department Head Jeff Korman. The talk will include information about the variety of online information and value-added material that has been created by Maryland Department staff, and discussion of the Library's vast collection of historic newspapers.

May 27 *WWII Records at the National Archives in College Park*

John Bowen is a volunteer at the National Archives in College Park. He will give a general overview of WWII records at College Park with an emphasis on those series of records that relate to people and have genealogical value. He will also lead a tour of Archives II on June 4th.

Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2008: Lorraine Minor opened meeting at 7:30 p.m. Officers present: Lorraine Minor, John Herman, Linda Kennedy, and Patricia Andersen. Lorraine presented the slate for election of the Genealogy Club officers:

President: Lorraine Minor

Vice President: no nomination

Secretary: Linda Kennedy

Program Chair: Pam Loos-Noji

Membership Chair: John Herman

Philip Ordway made a motion to accept the presented slate of officers. Carol Cummings discussed the responsibilities of the vice-president and then accepted the nomination.

Pat Andersen repeated the motion to accept the complete slate of officers for the 2008-2009 Club year. The motion was seconded by Forrest Minor. The membership voted unanimously to accept the slate.

Other business included a reminder that December's meeting is the holiday gathering at the Beall-Dawson House. It will begin at 7:30 pm and everyone is invited to bring a tasty treat. Pat asked that anyone wishing to make a specific donation to the library speak to her first. She also suggested index cards and volunteer hours as excellent ways to support the library. January's meeting will be held at the Rockville Senior Center and it will be a panel discussion and demonstration of genealogy software.

Lorraine thanked Pat Andersen and Pam Loos-Noji for providing refreshments for this month's meeting. She then introduced Char McCargo Bah. Ms. Bah's presentation is *Free or Not: The African American Jackson Family from pre-Revolution to the 20th Century*.

Ms. Bah, a professional genealogist, was hired by a Massachusetts judge to trace his ancestor, Berry Jackson. He thought that Berry Jackson was a woman. However, on the *1822 List of Free Negroes*, Berry Jackson was listed with his 2nd wife, Betsy and six children.

Ms. Bah said that it is unusual to find so much material on free African Americans in court records. She was able to find records dating back to the 18th century. She traveled to various counties in Virginia and found information in Halifax and Charlotte counties as well as online at the Library of Virginia: www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwehave/gene/index.htm. The Federal Census contains valuable information. Ms. Bah learned that it is very important to notice the information provided about neighbors and white families as this can provide clues to ownership. She also found Paul Heinegg's book *Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware* and *Free African Americans of North Carolina, Virginia and South Carolina* to be a wonderful resource during her research. Some of this work can be found at www.freeafricanamericans.com.

Church records are also a valuable source of information. Many churches keep membership lists by year and she was able to find family names at the Childrey Baptist Church in Nathalie, Virginia. This church was founded in 1783 and the membership included both whites and blacks. Since Berry Jackson has been discovered and much information about him and his descendants has been uncovered the search is continuing for Berry's parents. It is possible that Berry's mother has been found as early as 1730 and so the quest goes on. The meeting was adjourned for refreshments at 9:15 p.m.

December 17: Lorraine Minor opened the meeting of the meeting was held at the Beall-Dawson House. Officers present: Lorraine Minor, John Herman, Linda Kennedy, Carol Cummings, Pam Loos-Noji and Patricia Andersen. Debbie Rankin, Executive Director of Montgomery County Historical Society, and her husband Paul were also in attendance.

Lorraine announced that a celebratory dinner is being planned for the June 2009 meeting to mark the 30th anniversary of the Genealogy Club. The dinner will be held instead of a picnic. Ideas for the dinner are welcome. Lorraine introduced Debbie Rankin, Executive Director of MCHS. Debbie said a few words of greeting.

There was a brief discussion about the Genealogy Club webpage on the MCHS website. There are plans to redesign and update the Club's page. The January 28th meeting will be held at the Rockville Senior Center in the Arts and Crafts Room. This meeting will be a panel discussion about various genealogical software packages.

Pat Andersen mentioned that an older version of Family Tree (#11) will be raffled at the January 28th meeting. Also, she received a phone call from Mary Matson. Mary wants everyone to know that they did not move to Upstate New York as planned and that Charles is in the Potomac Home. They welcome calls and cards. Linda Kennedy asked members to donate any papers or photographs they may have at home that document the activities of the Genealogy Club.

Debbie Rankin mentioned that the Historical Society has acquired a new projector through a grant. She said that the projector is available for the Club's use when needed. The meeting was adjourned for a tour of the house and refreshments at 8:30 p.m.

January 28: The January meeting had to be cancelled due to bad weather. As there was a great interest in Pat talking about MCHS' Jane C. Sween Library holdings, it will be re-scheduled in the fall.

Submitted by Linda M. Kennedy, Secretary

First Friday Notes

DECEMBER: The last few First Fridays have brought delightful surprises for experts and amateurs alike. December's workshop was just as surprising when Jackie Hardy showed everyone the Cole family genealogy that was compiled in 1922. Although not descended from the Cole family, Jackie was given the book by a cousin who is related by marriage. Jackie wanted to discuss options for making the history a viable research tool for others. The Cole family hailed from Mamaroneck, NY but the history ends at the time of the Civil War in Frederick, MD. The book is typewritten and includes plot maps and portraits. It is in a 3-ring binder with a deteriorating leather cover. Archivist Rob Jensen suggested several safe storage solutions. While paging through the binder, a Library of Congress catalog card was found. The Cole history had been given to the Library of Congress many years back. Jackie has also put together binders on four other families. They are full of wonderful primary source materials from the 19th and 20th c. Included are photographs, letters, ration books, pension papers and more. She has organized most of it in plastic sleeves but she was hoping that she could obtain information on not only the best storage solutions to preserve this material but also on how to document and transcribe the items.

Vernon Skinner had helpful suggestions on documenting the clippings and photographs with names, dates and locations. He suggested using a computer or typewriter to transcribe letters and handwritten documents to avoid any difficulty for future interpreters. Be sure that nicknames and abbreviations were explained somewhere in the document, as it's awfully hard to research a nickname! One suggestion was to photocopy the original papers for "use" copies of the genealogies. Then the originals can be stored in a safe environment. Vern also said that it is important to cite all documents obtained from various sources. This helps to document not only the information found but where it was obtained.

Information on Ellis Island Immigrants – Marian Smith, historian at the US Customs and Immigration Service, has started an occasional blog. If you have ancestors that arrived in New York between 1897 and 1903, you should read her comments about missing cabin manifests, www.mariansmith.com.

Swedish Emigrant Genealogical Seminar -April 11, 2009, 9am-4:30pm. Sponsored by Drott Lodge #168, VASA Order of America is sponsoring a research seminar on emigrant ancestors to be held at the Universities at Shady Grove, 9630 Gudelsky Dr., Rockville. Cost for VASA members is \$10; non-members \$20. For Registration questions please contact Janet Johnson, JJohn30254@aol.com or 301-962-3788.

**THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

111 West Montgomery Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850-4212

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Become a Member of the Montgomery County Historical Society

The Montgomery County Historical Society is the only county-wide, private, non-profit organization concerned with the collection, preservation and interpretation of County history and heritage. The Society operates a Library, two museums, the ca. 1815 Beall-Dawson House and Stonestreet Medical Museum and Museum Shop in Rockville. In Germantown, The History Resource Center at the Waters House at Pleasant Fields is a community resource with library, exhibitions, programs and rental space. We also publish *The Montgomery County Story*, a quarterly journal highlighting facets of county history.

Membership in the Society means you support the active preservation of our cultural heritage. All members receive a 10% discount in the Museum Shop, free admission to the museums and library, free or discount admission to events, plus the bi-monthly newsletter and *The Montgomery County Story*. Other membership categories receive additional benefits. To join or for more information, mail the registration form below or call 301-340-2825.

Please send me more information on the Montgomery County Historical Society ____

I would like to join (check the appropriate category):

Basic - \$35. Century Circle- \$100. Genealogy Club (no additional charge)

I would like to donate \$ _____ **Total Amount Enclosed \$** _____

Name _____ Daytime Phone _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Charge your membership by phone by calling 301-340-2825 or

Make checks payable to **MCHS** and mail to: MCHS, 111 West Montgomery Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850