

THE GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

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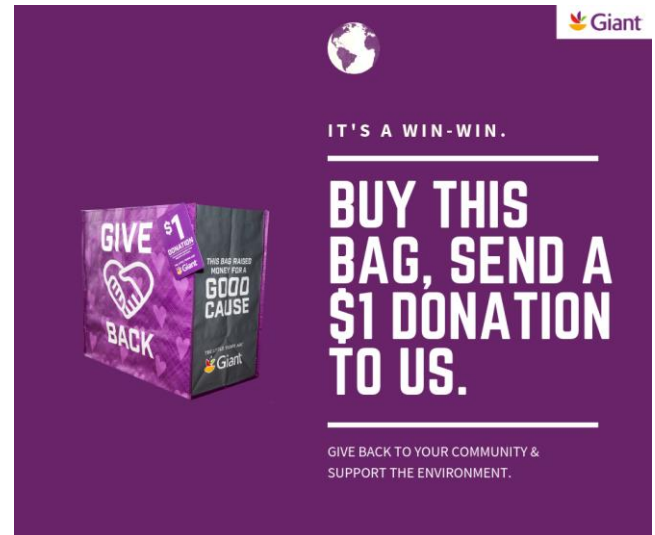
Summer 2019

WALKING TOURS OF OLD GERMANTOWN

Saturday, June 29
noon to 4pm

The Germantown Historical Society will be participating in the annual **Montgomery County Heritage Days** with *Walking Tours of Old Germantown* starting from the Historic Germantown Bank, **19330 Mateny Hill Road, Germantown.**

Discover the colorful past of Germantown and how the hearty people of this railroad town survived the Great Depression. There will be walking tours of the old neighborhood, viewing of the interior of the 1922 Germantown Bank with its walk-in vault, exhibits on Germantown History and entertainment by a hobo street musician.



GHS has been chosen for the Giant Food Bag Donation Program for the month of July

Purchase a reusable grocery bag for \$2.50 from the Giant Food store at:

13060 Middlebrook Rd., Germantown

anytime in July, and \$1 will be donated to the Germantown Historical Society.

The bags are located near the registers at the front of the store. If you are having trouble finding the bags, ask the store manager where the **“Giant Food Community Bags”** are located.

Please spread the word to all of your family members, friends, acquaintances, old high school classmates, or anyone who shops in the Germantown area. This is an easy way to give back to the community.

The Murder of Horace Waters

The peace of the little village of Germantown was broken by the sound of gunshots on January 20, 1932.

Robbers had entered Horace Waters' store at around 7pm. They shot and killed Mr. Waters, a prominent citizen of Montgomery County, and wounded his clerk, Richard Bennett.



Horace Waters was known to carry a large amount of cash, and often loaned money to local people in need, both white and black. He had operated a general store in Germantown at the corner of Germantown Road and Clopper Road for more than 50 years. A grandson of one of the first settlers of the area, William Waters, Horace was a director of the Farmer's Banking and Trust Company of Rockville and well respected in the community.

At around 7pm on the evening of January 20, 1932, Mr. Waters was sitting behind his desk at the rear of the store, and his clerk, Richard Bennett, was at the counter in the front. Three local men, Herman Moore, Milton Warren, and Quaint Perry were sitting around the stove near the back. Three men entered the front door of the store and went directly to the rear where the leading man pointed a gun at Mr. Waters and demanded money. Waters resisted when the robber started to go through his pockets and the robber shot him in the chest just under the heart. He died almost immediately. On seeing the scuffle, Mr. Bennett had rushed to the aid of his employer, only to be shot in the wrist by the assailant, which bullet also hit Mr. Waters in the hip.

Just then there was the sound of a vehicle pulling up to the front door and, frightened of being caught, the three intruders hurriedly left. The vehicle was a bread truck pulling up to get gas. J.M. Siever and W.C. Hershberger got out of the truck and entered the store. When they came upon the scene Hershberger immediately telephoned the police. It was found later that Mr. Waters still had his wallet pinned inside his coat with more than \$100 in it.

The police combed the area but found no trace of the three bandits. The three men who were inside the store during the incident, and Bud Praither who an informant said was a person that the robbers were looking for, were jailed and questioned, but released after a few days. State's Attorney Stedman Prescott assigned the case to Gen. Gaither, Police Commissioner for Baltimore City, but they got no further than the local police in solving the case, even with Montgomery County offering a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the killers.

In April, however, the case was revived when Mary Burns, wife of the local postman Harry Burns found a gun under the hedge in front of her house at 19311 Germantown Road (now Liberty Mill Road), the probable escape route of the robbers. The gun was a 45 caliber pistol, the same that shot Horace Waters, but no fingerprints were found on it.

The murder was not solved until four years later. According to an article written by Jack Toomey for the Monocacy Chronicle in 2007, the murderer, Donald Parker, was overheard telling a fellow inmate at the penitentiary in Baltimore about the killing in 1936. He was tried and convicted of the murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. According to police files, Parker, Gordon Dent and James Gross made up a gang who held up filling stations, taverns and stores all around the mid-Atlantic area. Dent and Gross had already been hanged for another murder by that time. According to Toomey, Parker was released on parole in 1953, re-arrested in 1958, paroled again in 1962 and died in Washington, D.C. in 1973.

The funeral of Horace D. Waters was attended by about 500 people. Canon Arthur B. Rudd of the Washington Cathedral officiated. He is buried at the Neelsville Presbyterian Church Cemetery. He was 79 years old when he was killed and left a widow, Valeria Dorsey Waters, and five adult children.

The store clerk who was wounded, Richard Allen Bennett, age 68 at the time, went on to live another 14 years. He is also buried at the Neelsville Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

A Sunoco gas station now occupies the site of the Waters General Store at the NE corner of Clopper Road and Liberty Mill Road.

LOCAL HISTORY CALENDAR

Ongoing Exhibit *“The Tucky Woodfield Collection”* – many artifacts of the past from the Clarksburg & Damascus area -- at the Damascus Heritage Museum, located behind the Damascus Library. Open Wed. & Sat. 12-4pm. 301-253-6150.

June 29 & 30 **Annual Montgomery County Heritage Days, noon-4pm.** Open in the Germantown area: Germantown Historical Society, King Barn Dairy Mooseum, Button Farm Living History Center, Boyds Negro School, Damascus Heritage Museum and much, much more around the County. See the full schedule at www.heritagemontgomery.org.

July 4 – Germantown Glory – 7pm -- Live music, 9pm – fireworks. Soccerplex on Schaeffer Road.

July 12 & 13 **“Celebrate Damascus” – Friday 7pm** – parade from High school to fire department, followed by fireworks. **Sat. 10am-3pm.** Booths, exhibits, prizes, children’s games, music, food.

July 27 & 28 – Montgomery County Farm Tour – 19 farms around the county open for touring, pick-your-own, wine & beer sampling. Find the brochure at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ag/services/agfarmtour.html>

Aug. 9-17 **Montgomery County Agricultural Fair.** Gaithersburg Fairgrounds. Farm animals, exhibits, games, entertainment, food, carnival. www.mcagfair.com

Sept. 21 **Poolesville Day.** Parade at 10am. More than 160 booths. Every variety of food you could imagine. Music on two stages.

NEWS AND NOTES

Michael Dwyer

The historic preservation community will sorely miss Mike Dwyer, who passed away May 5. Mike was the Historian for Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning from 1971 until he retired in 2006. He was responsible for the surveying of over 4,000 historic sites in the County. The results of this initial work on discovering the important historic resources of the County was published in the “Locational Atlas and Index of Historical Sites in Montgomery County,” the basis for the preservation of historic buildings in the County. There will be a “Celebration of the Life of Mike Dwyer” on July 14, 5-7:30pm, Needwood Mansion, Derwood.

Cider Barrel Update

Laura Richman has signed a contract for use of the building with the owner, Elm Street Development, and is busy renovating the interior of the Cider Barrel for use as a fruit and vegetable stand selling only local and organic. She hopes to open by this fall.

Germantown Oktoberfest Parade and Festivities

The Germantown Alliance is sponsoring a Parade and Festivities on October 5th from 11am to 1pm. The route will be from the UpCounty Services Building along Main Street east to just past the Movie Theatre. There will be booths, live music, DJs, food and drink along the way. The Germantown Historical Society will participate with an antique car and people in period dress from the 1930s. Contact Info@germantownmdhistory.org if you would like to participate on the GHS team. For more information go to: www.peaceofhearts.org.

Germantown Community Flea Markets 2019 SEASON

First Saturdays, 8am-1pm

The Flea Markets take place, weather permitting, at the MARC commuter parking lot, Rt. 118 and Bowman Mill Drive. Both adult and teen volunteers are needed. SSL hours apply. Hours to volunteer are 5:30-9:30am, or 9:30am-1:30pm. If you would like to help out with this fundraiser and fun event call 301-972-2707.