

# THE GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER



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*Germantown Station with our building to the right*

### MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan

This plan is an amendment to the Germantown Master Plan, which is a proposal for the future development around the Germantown MARC rail station. The purpose of this plan is to offer recommendations that support and better utilize existing transit assets, improve transportation connections and traffic safety... and to revitalize the built environment around the station in a manner that appropriately complements the surrounding residential neighborhood and historic resources.

This directly affects our Historic 1922 Germantown Bank building, so GHS Board members (Susan Soderberg, Karen Mason, Karen Adjei) have been heavily involved with the staff of the Department of Planning, attending local planning sessions, and staff presentations to the Planning Board.

GHS President Susan Soderberg testified before the Planning Board on this plan on February 1, before the County Council on February 12, and the Historic Preservation Commission on February 27. As directed by the GHS Board she signified approval of the plan in

general, being particularly pleased that this plan protects the unique Germantown Historic District and supports the scale and low density of the entire neighborhood on the west side of the tracks. The vision of the Plan is "to foster distinctive community identity and a strong sense of place by sensitively adapting and enhancing existing historic structures for continued use." This greatly supports our own mission and our current application for a County Community grant and a Maryland Heritage Area grant to rehabilitate our building and make it into a Museum of Banking History.

For these reasons we endorse –

- Burying the utility lines in the historic area
- Not building a vehicular bridge over the railroad to connect with Mateny Hill Road (this was taken out of the plan, but is still being threatened by developers).
- Keeping the building height limit on the east side of the railroad to Wisteria Dr. to 4 stories
- Saving the Walter Johnson oak trees and horse-pull weight stones (across Crystal Rock Dr. from Seneca Valley High School).

In addition, we are adamantly opposed to the building of any parking garage higher than two levels on the east side of the tracks. This could be built on the sloping lot behind the Pumphrey/Mateny House. Since, according to the WMATA, the commuter trains are at capacity because of the lack of storage space at the Union Station rail yard for the trains between the morning and evening commutes. Any larger parking facility would be more for commercial development and increased residential development, not for rail commuters. Our monthly Flea Markets, which are our major fund raisers and a large Germantown community event, would be adversely affected, and may even have to cease, if such a large garage is built; especially if it would be a multi-story garage surrounded by apartments as at the Gaithersburg rail station, which is being proposed by one developer.

## Cemeteries Update

Along with the Coalition To Protect Maryland Burial Sites, we received a certificate of commendation from the Maryland Historical Trust for our work surveying two sectors (24 cemeteries) for the Montgomery County Cemetery Inventory Revisited project. Thanks to GHS members Lisa and Carlos Gonzales, Cay Savel, Susan Soderberg and Cheryl Afflerbach.



## Germantown Community Day

On Saturday, March 30, 2019, from 12-4 p.m., the Germantown Campus will host Germantown Community Day, an event to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Germantown Campus and showcase the many aspects of Montgomery College. The theme will be the 1970s, and the Germantown Historical Society will have a booth to show off our community's history.

Activities for the day include:

- \* 50 tables of engaging, hands-on activities
- \* Live entertainment provided by Black Rock Center for the Arts
- \* Mini skills clinics run by MC's athletic teams
- \* A Petting Zoo
- \* A Nature Play area by the Maryland Zoo
- \* Competitive sports inflatables
- \* Face painting, balloon twisting, and a photo booth
- \* Giveaways, games, random drawings throughout the day
- \* Grand prize drawing: Notebook Computer

## Save the Date

The Germantown Alliance is planning a Germantown Oktoberfest Parade for Saturday October 6. This is also a Flea Market Day, so we will need extra help. If you would like to volunteer for either, call Susan, 301-814-5048.

## Our Interns



Since the beginning of the year our interns Karen Yee (left) and Karen Adjei (right) have been working (Karen Adjei from November 2018) very hard on sorting the four large boxes of bank records from the Germantown Bank from 1924-1935. These records include deposit slips, bank-to-bank communications, local business transactions, companies asking for payment of bills by customers, and personal letters to the bank manager, Mr. Stover. There is so much information to be gleaned from this documents. So far we have learned that the Germantown Bank never closed during the Great Depression and absorbed accounts from nearby banks that did, served both blacks and whites, acted as the financial arm of the Liberty Milling Company, and served many area farmers, horse and cattle breeders, milling companies, and even a theatre company in Gaithersburg. Karen Yee is a graduate from the University of Maryland and Karen Adjei is a graduate from Northwestern University. We are so lucky to have them volunteering for us. Thank You!

## Germantown Community Flea Markets 2018 SEASON

First Saturdays starting April 6  
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.

See more at: [www.germantownMDhistory.org](http://www.germantownMDhistory.org)

**Montgomery Preservation, Inc.**  
**31<sup>st</sup> Annual Preservation Awards**  
**Friday, March 22, 6-8:30pm**

This is the first time that the Awards Ceremony will be held in the Up-County – and it will be right here in Germantown/Boys at **the Lodge at Little Seneca Creek**, 14500 Clopper Road. The event is free with a suggested donation of \$15. If you would like to attend please RSVP to: [mpi@montgomerypreservation.org](mailto:mpi@montgomerypreservation.org)

The Germantown Historical Society is co-sponsoring the event with the Boyds Historical Society, so we need your help. If you would like to volunteer, or know of someone who likes to do centerpieces, call Susan at 301-814-5048. Monetary contributions will also be accepted. Of the ten awards being presented, the Germantown Historical Society nominated three, as follows.

**The Rustic Roads Advisory Committee for the MONTGOMERY PRIZE (with the Boyds Historical Soc.)**



Montgomery County recognized that we were losing our historic roads in the late 1980s and created the Rustic Roads Program in 1993. County code defines rustic roads as: *historic and scenic roadways that reflect the agricultural character and rural origins of the County. Preservation of rustic roads must be achieved by retaining certain physical features and by certain right-of-way maintenance procedures.* Today, there are 98 roads in the Rustic Roads Program; 13 more roads have been nominated and are awaiting review, Thanks to this Committee.

**LOCAL HISTORY CALENDAR**

**Ongoing Exhibit**      **“Threads of History”** – the art of sewing at the Damascus Heritage Museum, located behind the Damascus Library. Open Wed. & Sat. 12-4pm. 301-253-6150.

**For a Calendar of History related events go to: [www.heritagemontgomery.org](http://www.heritagemontgomery.org)**

**The Button Farmhouse for RESTORATION OF A HISTORIC RESOURCE FOR PUBLIC USE**



Tony Cohen’s Menare Foundation was able to get grant funds to rehabilitate this 1882 Farmhouse, part of the Button Farm Living History Center. The Center teaches about plantation life in Maryland and the inspirational story of the Underground Railroad. The wiring and plumbing, some floors, walls and ceilings were replaced and the foundation weatherproofed. Steve Gillick restored and re-glazed all of the windows. The house now serves as an office, a research library, and a center for the Foundation’s programs.

**The Boyds Historical Society and the Boyds Civic Association for the WAYNE GOLDSTEIN AWARD FOR ADVOCACY**

For more than 40 years the two groups have worked together to preserve the tiny village of Boyds and its Historic resources from encroachment of development that has engulfed neighboring towns, and the threat of a major quarry. More recently, they have tamed the MARC Rail Communities plan into a manageable enlarged park-like parking area that preserves the Historic Hoyles Mill. They have been able to keep Boyds a comfortable “Home in the Country.”

**The Germantown Historical Society offers a PowerPoint Presentation on “The History of Germantown,” tailored to your group or specific area, to any group for a \$50 donation. Call 301-972-2707 to request a date.**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (1 year)**

Mail to: The Germantown Historical Society, P.O. Box 475, Germantown, MD 20875

- Single: \$20
- Family: \$25
- Supporting: \$100
- Senior: \$10
- Corporate: \$100
- Non-profit organization: \$30

Additional tax-deductible contribution

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**We're on the Web!**  
**[www.germantonMDhistory.org](http://www.germantonMDhistory.org)**

**The Germantown Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 475**  
**Germantown, MD 20875**