



“Becoming Americans: 1774”

Spring Lecture: Sunday, March 15, 2026, 3:00 pm

Chevy Chase Village Hall, 5906 Connecticut Avenue



“The Destruction of Tea at Boston Harbor,” by N. Currier, 1846.

On June 11, 1774, ten local residents gathered at Hungerford’s Tavern in the rural crossroads that would later become Rockville, Maryland. They adopted the Hungerford Resolves, a bold set of resolutions calling for a boycott of British trade, and, more significantly, formally aligning their emerging community with the widening movement of colonial resistance. A direct response to the British Parliament’s severe retaliation against Boston in the wake of the December 1773 Tea Party, this pledge reflected a growing determination among Americans to act in concert against what they viewed as unconstitutional overreach by the British government.

In commemoration of the 250th anniversary of Montgomery County and the United States, historian Sandra Heiler examines these local actions within the sweeping political and cultural transformation that signaled the approach of the American Revolution. As indicated by the title of her talk, drawn from Patrick Henry’s September 1774, “I

a Virginian, but an American,” Heiler explores how agreements such as the Hungerford Resolves embodied a profound shift in identity, as colonists began to see themselves not simply as British subjects but as Americans. Heiler’s thoughtful research and lecture offer attendees a chance to reflect on the early choices and commitments that helped pave the complex path toward the creation of the United States.

Sandra Heiler is an early American historian specializing in the years leading up to the American Revolution through the early Federal period. She currently serves as Treasurer of Montgomery Preservation, Inc., sits on the county’s Rustic Roads Advisory Committee. Heiler also served for 13 years on Montgomery County’s Historic Preservation Commission, including three years as chair. She holds a B.A. in Mathematics and an M.A. in American Studies and Historic Preservation from Boston University.

A reception will follow the lecture with light refreshments served. No reservation is necessary. For questions, please contact CCHS at (301) 656-6141 or info@chevyCHASEhistory.org.



“The Colonies Reduced,” by Benjamin Franklin, 1767.



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Open 10 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 to 3 p.m.,
 on Tuesday, and other days by appointment.

The Chevy Chase Historical Society collects, records, interprets, and shares materials relating to the history of Chevy Chase, Maryland, one of America's first streetcar suburbs. The organization provides resources for historical research and sponsors a variety of programs and activities to foster knowledge and appreciation of the community's history.

Chevy Chase Historical Society is supported in part by funding from the Montgomery County Government and the Arts &

Recent Acquisitions

"Recent Acquisitions" is a regular feature in the Newsletter, describing documents and other items acquired for the CCHS Archive and Research Center.



Students of Chevy Chase College and Seminary, circa 1915.

Upon the institution's opening in 1903, Chevy Chase College and Seminary operated as a senior high school with an additional two years of post-secondary coursework. Though it was often described as a finishing school, the institution evolved significantly over time. By the time the school closed in 1950, it had become a fully accredited junior college granting terminal associate degrees, and many of its graduates continued on to four-year colleges.

In December 2025, Kathy Ellis generously donated a 1915 promotional brochure for Chevy Chase College and Seminary consisting of 17 photogravure plates. We are deeply grateful to her for this valuable addition to the CCHS archival collection.

To learn more about the Chevy Chase College and Seminary, explore our virtual exhibit: chevychasehistory.org/chevy-chase-junior-college.



Chevy Chase College and Seminary promotional brochure, circa 1915.

Joyeux Anniversaire, La Ferme!

By Katie Howard

For 40 years, diners from near and far have enjoyed a taste of the French countryside in a charming restaurant nestled along Brookville Road in the Section 5 neighborhood of Chevy Chase. La Ferme, meaning “the farm” à la française, first opened its doors on November 15, 1985. It has since specialized in offering French provincial cuisine in a rustic ambiance centered around its hearth and warm fire-place glow.

Alain Roussel, La Ferme’s owner, has been behind the scenes of the establishment since its beginning. In an interview with the Chevy Chase Historical Society, he reflected on the destination restaurant’s recent ruby anniversary. “I have been involved with every single thing we have done here for the last 40 years,” Roussel said.



Exterior view of La Ferme, 2025. Courtesy of Alain Roussel.

Roussel explained that the building itself was constructed in the 1920s as a school for girls that closed during the Great Depression. In the early 1930s the site was turned into a restaurant called “Brook Farm,” where First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt dined in April 1934. A photo of Mrs. Roosevelt among a large group of diners at an onsite event remains on display on the wall of La Ferme today.



Brook Farm Inn of Magic advertisement. Courtesy of Little Egypt Magic.

For four years before it became La Ferme, the site was a restaurant called “Brook Farm Inn of Magic” where diners were entertained with magic shows. It closed its doors in 1984 and relocated to Wheaton, Maryland.

When Roussel and his two partners visited the site in 1985, they weren’t quite sure what they had walked into. “It was in bad shape with the look of abandonment. Several other prospects had also visited the site, but they came and left,” Roussel said. However, Roussel and his partners saw the potential and recognized a diamond in the rough. The trio pooled their money, borrowed a bit from the bank, and collected enough to make the down payment to then-owner Jack Davis, who had once operated Brook Farm. Roussel explained that “there were the three of us: Robert Grabina the bartender; Marcel Montagnier the maître d’; and me, the chef. We had equal shares in the venture.”

Roussel would often work 12 hours a day, seven days a week, with the primary goal of staying in business. No one was looking decades into the future at that time. Eventually, however, he became the sole owner, while working through periods of booms and busts with the support of his wife Marinette and his two sons Camille and Louis.

According to Roussel, business was most challenging in October 2002 during the Washington sniper attacks and in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ups and downs of the financial markets and major weather events have also thrown their share of curveballs.

“During the sniper saga, there was one week with no business, and of course during



Brook Farm, interior, circa 1950s.

COVID we were closed for three months—that was the most difficult one.” Financial recessions throughout the past four decades resulted in people not dining out as much, causing La Ferme’s business to be down by 40 percent at times. “The market affects [our] business, and inclement weather,” he added, “A storm once closed Brookville Road due to several downed trees, and no one could access the restaurant for five days.”

In 2015, Roussel brought on his friend and fellow Rollingwood resident, Guillaume de Decker, in the role of general manager. Together, they oversaw renovations of the covered outdoor dining deck and the opening of Cognac Le Bar in 2016.

“We work well together. I like tradition and I like places like this that endure through time but go through changes. We’re a steady place with value and I think a lot of people still like and appreciate that.” de Decker said, adding, “The good thing about La Ferme is that the regulars know Alain and the waiters. It’s like a family and it works like a family.” Many members of La Ferme’s wait staff have worked at the restaurant almost as long as it has operated. “We have little turnover here. Most of the employees have worked here 15-35 years,” Roussel said.

Speaking of families, La Ferme has provided the perfect backdrop to many of life’s milestones by playing host to myriad significant events including weddings and receptions, birthday parties, memorial services, bar and bat mitzvahs, and community celebrations over the last 40 years. It has even been known to host a Bastille Day celebration with a New Orleans-style jazz band. That said, Mother’s Day continues to take the cake as La Ferme’s busiest day, followed by Thanksgiving and Easter Sunday, with the dining room booked to its capacity of 600 people. “One Mother’s Day, there was a one-hour wait at the door with a line going all the way out down the street to Brookville Pharmacy,” Roussel recounted.

Most of La Ferme’s clientele are local but some faithful diners make day trips from Maryland’s Eastern Shore, West Virginia or further locales. “We have some clientele who moved away from the area, but when they return, they choose to only come here or they remind us that they got married here 20 years ago and they always come back for their anniversary,” he said.

Over time, La Ferme has been the recipient of glowing reviews in *The Washington Post* and *Bethesda Magazine* as well as social media platforms. According to Roussel, however, the best reviews continue to come from the customers themselves: “For me, the thing is when a customer who has come here for 40 years tells me, ‘Don’t change a thing.’ That’s the best review. What more can I ask for?”



Alain Roussel in earlier days. Courtesy of Alain Roussel.

Merci, La Ferme, for the last 40 years, and warm wishes for many more!

Celebrating 100 years at B-CC High School

By Deborah Scheck and Alison Mandell



Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, circa 1956.

Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School is approaching a remarkable milestone, its 100th anniversary! During the 2026-2027 school year, B-CC will celebrate a century of excellence in academics, creativity, and innovation by bringing together students, educators, alumni, business leaders, and community members. Reflecting on the school's rich history, this celebration will also look forward, emphasizing the importance of sustaining B-CC's innovative programs and ensuring that future generations continue to enjoy outstanding educational opportunities.

THE SCHOOL BUILDING

The original B-CC building opened on Wilson Lane before moving to its current location on East-West Highway in 1935. The Board of Education hired Howard Wright Cutler, a prominent architect at the time, to design the building in a colonial revival style, modeling the structure after the Wren building at the College of William & Mary. The original building, which still exists today, featured a symmetrical façade and central cupola. Between the 1950's and 1970's, as the number of students grew significantly with the baby boom, piece-meal renovations added

over 180,000 square feet of space in buildings, resembling a small campus. From 1999-2002, a \$41 million modernization effort occurred, demolishing the earlier expansions, but preserving the original 1935 building and the 1954 addition. From 2016-2018 there was another major renovation that produced an additional wing, elevated tennis courts, and a parking lot.

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING

Montgomery College

In 1946, B-CC played a pivotal role in the early days of Montgomery College, then known as Montgomery Junior College. Following World War II, millions of returning veterans were eager to pursue higher education through the GI Bill, but existing universities were unable to accommodate the surge in enrollment. In response, the Montgomery County Board of Education established Montgomery Junior College as a local option for these veterans. Because the college had no building, however, B-CC generously opened its doors in the evenings and on weekends, providing space for the first classes and supporting veterans as they pursued their education.

Soviet Exchange Program

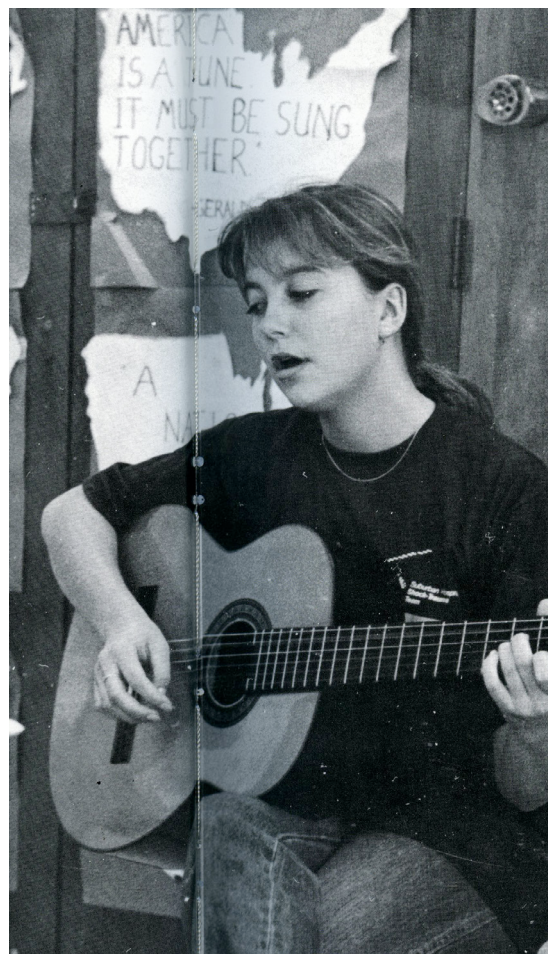
In 1989, B-CC was one of only 30 schools in the United States selected to participate in the first-ever reciprocal student exchange with the Soviet Union. Fifteen students from Moscow School #45 spent three weeks living with B-CC families and attending classes, and a group of B-CC students later traveled to Moscow for a four-week stay. This exchange was part of a presidential initiative launched by Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan at the 1988 Moscow summit. B-CC was chosen to participate because it was one of the few American high schools offering a robust Russian language program, which continued at the school until 2002.

The B-CC HS Educational Foundation

The B-CC HS Educational Foundation, a private non-profit supported by an all-volunteer board, was established in 1995, at a low point in B-CC's enrollment. The Foundation's mission was to support academic excellence at B-CC and bolster the community's confidence in the school. Over the years, the Foundation has invested more than \$3 million to support students and provide professional development for staff. One notable program supported by the Foundation is TAP (Time for Academic Progress), staffed by B-CC teachers after school to allow students to drop in for tutoring. The Foundation was also the incubator for the CollegeTracks program, which provides one-on-one college counseling to under-resourced students. Initiated by parent volunteers at B-CC, CollegeTracks is now in five Montgomery County public schools.

International Baccalaureate Programme

One of the Foundation's early successes at B-CC was helping MCPS establish its first open International Baccalaureate program, allowing any student interested in these challenging courses to participate without an entrance exam. In 1996, B-CC became the first public school in Montgomery County to offer the IB Diploma Programme with this open-access model. With a diverse student body representing more than 50 countries, B-CC was uniquely positioned to support the program. Unlike some magnet IB programs that require testing for admission, B-CC's program remains open to all students willing to take on the challenge.



Elena Tagelina plays a classical Soviet guitar piece to B-CC's AP European History class, 1989-1990.



Home Economics class at B-CC High School, circa 1935.

CONCLUSION

The 100th year celebration will feature

notable alumni as guest speakers and creative projects throughout the year. The centennial celebration kick-off weekend will be September 25-26, 2026, with homecoming weekend events, a party for parents, alumni and community members at the Kid Museum, alumni reunion activities, school tours, and more. In Spring 2027, the B-CC HS Educational Foundation will host an event commemorating the 100th year as well.

For more information on the B-CC centennial, visit <https://www.bccedfoundation.org/100>.



Bethesda Chevy Chase High School, 2025.

SSL Volunteer Opportunities at CCHS

The Chevy Chase Historical Society is proud to be SSL (Student Service Learning) certified, offering high school students the opportunity to volunteer at our Archive and Research Center. Students can gain valuable hands-on experience while contributing to the preservation of local history. Whether assisting with archival projects, helping with research, or supporting events, this is a great way for high schoolers to engage with their community and earn SSL hours. Volunteers will have the chance to develop new skills, work closely with historical materials, and gain a deeper understanding of our local heritage. We welcome passionate volunteers eager to learn, grow, and make a meaningful impact!

For more information, please email info@chevychasehistory.org or call (301) 656 - 6141.



CHEVY CHASE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SAVE THE DATE!
CCHS 2026 Spring Gala

Plan to join your friends and neighbors for our celebrated annual champagne supper. We are thrilled to gather in a premier home in Chevy Chase in support of CCHS and its mission.

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2026
5:00 - 8:00 pm

Invitations will be sent to current CCHS members.

For more information, contact CCHS at
info@chevyCHASEhistory.org or call (301) 656 - 6141.