

Route 1's Intangible Heritage: The Lost Motels of College Park



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Abstract

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From the 1920s to the 1950s, tourist camps and motels were established along Route 1 in College Park, Maryland, to take advantage of the tourist traffic heading to and from Washington, D.C. Fifteen tourist camps and motels were identified within the project area, none of which survive in their original location or condition. They constitute the earliest stages in the development of roadside lodging and represent a variety of architectural styles which reflect their eras of construction, although most took the form of cabin camps. A variety of factors, some of which occurred on a national level, contributed to their decline, such as the construction of the Capital Beltway, the growth of the University of Maryland, the rise of referral, franchise, and company-owned hotels, and self-redevelopment to meet new demands. College Park's roadside is an ever-changing environment that reflects the needs of each passing generation. These camps and motels, although no longer standing, are an important part of the story of America's growing dependence on the automobile, which is evidenced by suburban development, as well as landscape and architectural design. Due to the intangible nature of these sites, creative methods of interpretation must be used to present their stories to the public, such as interpretive signage, a website, an iPhone app, historypin, driving tours, or a brochure.

ROUTE 1'S INTANGIBLE HERITAGE: THE LOST MOTELS OF COLLEGE PARK

By

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Master Final Project submitted to the Faculty of the
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Dedication

This project is dedicated to all the hardworking, entrepreneurial families that established and ran the businesses discussed in this project, to the residents of College Park, and to all those family-run businesses that struggle to keep up.

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A Toast to the Old Stage Coach

“Long ago, at the end of the route,
The stage pulled up, and the folks stepped out.
They have all passed under the tavern door—
The youth and his bride and the gray three-score.
Their eyes were weary with dust and gleam,
The day had gone like an empty dream.
Soft may they slumber, and trouble no more
For their eager journey, its jolt and roar,
In the old coach over the mountain.”
(*From Stage-coach and Tavern Days, 1930*)

Chapter 1: Introduction

The tourist camps and motels that were established along Route 1 in College Park from around 1920 to the 1950s reflect both national trends in roadside commercial architecture as well as local business trends in the Baltimore-Washington area. Entrepreneurs opened these establishments along Route 1 in an attempt to capture the business of tourists heading to and from the Capital. Even though most of the structures have been demolished, there are remnants along the present-day roadway which can be used to piece together this story, including Follin Guest Home at the southern end, Cherry Hill Park at the northern end, and the Royal Pine’s main house in the center of the project area. The original group of roadside lodging establishments, united by their relationship to the road, is a significant part of the history of the City of College Park. Because the physical remnants are mostly invisible, the story must be told through the use of creative methods of interpretation, such as interpretive signage, driving tours, an iPhone app, a website, brochures, and public presentations.

The project area extends from the border between College Park and Beltsville to just south of the University of Maryland, College Park campus. Many tourist camps and motels were erected along the length of Route 1, and those that existed in College Park

alone provided a rich sample on which to base this investigation. Figure 1 provides an aerial view of the project area and depicts the distribution and clustering of roadside lodging establishments in early-mid-20th century College Park.

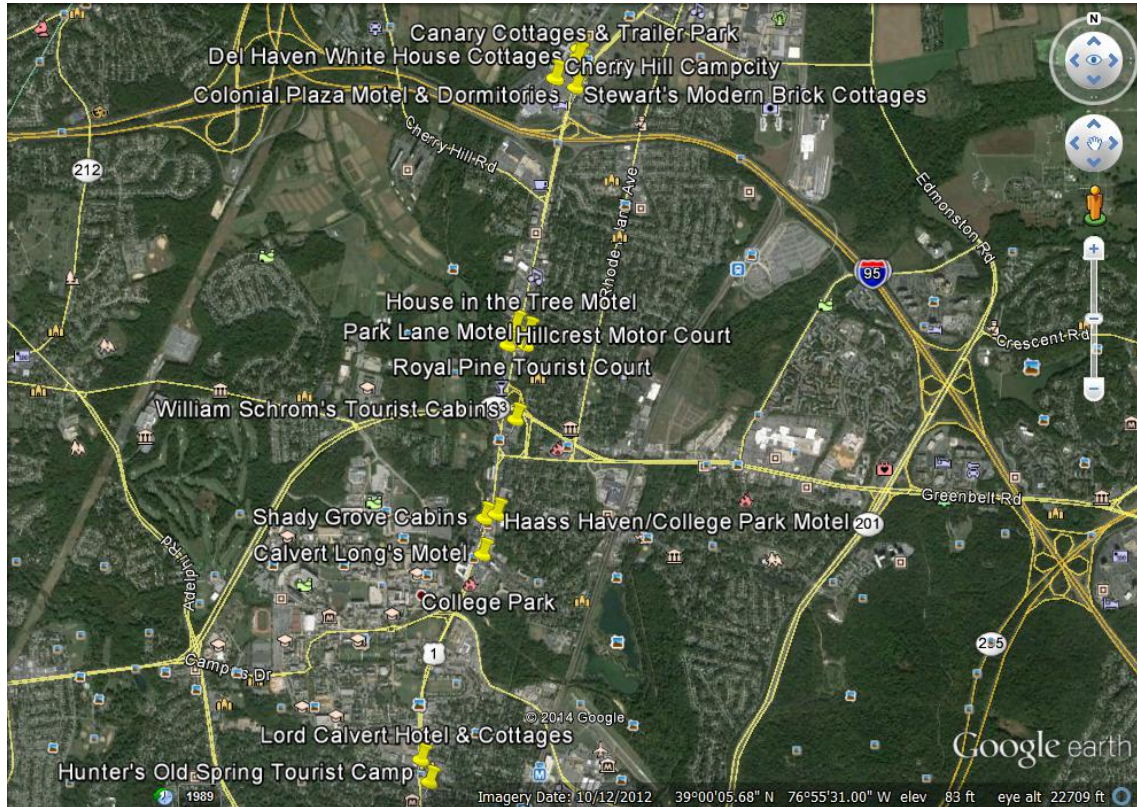


Figure 1: Google Earth map of the study area, Route 1 through College Park, Maryland.

The initial attempt of this study was to determine the number of tourist camps and motels that once operated along Route 1 in College Park. Historic newspapers, vintage postcards, oral interviews, city directories, and historic maps were all essential in compiling the list of establishments examined over the course of this project.

My research was guided by several questions: What was the historical timeline of each of the tourist camps and motels? Since they are no longer standing, an approximate time frame for their appearance as well as for their disappearance had to be determined. This led to hypothesizing about what may have contributed to their disappearance. While the

reasons were obvious for some, uncertainty remains as to what brought about the decline of the others. Several factors were examined as to the effect they had on the motels: the construction of the Capital Beltway in the 1950s and 1960s, the growth of the University of Maryland, the rise of referral, franchise, and company-owned hotels, and self-redevelopment to keep up with the ever-changing demands of the tourism industry. The question this led to was how the owners of the motels adapted or failed to adapt to the changing needs of tourists throughout the 20th century. A few have managed to survive into the 21st century, while the rest have succumbed to the changing tides of tourism and roadside redevelopment. So why should the memory of these places be preserved?

College Park's motels and tourist camps were part of a larger trend of roadside architecture constructed to serve highly-mobile Americans. Preserving their memory reminds the public of how things used to be, how far we have come, and informs what can or should be done in the future. If they deserve to be remembered and studied, how should the information about them be presented to the public? Several interpretation options, mentioned earlier, will be discussed in greater detail toward the end of the paper.

The fact that these camps and motels no longer exist in their original condition or location places them within the realm of intangible heritage. What is no longer standing and why says at least as much about College Park as what is there today. Just because a building has been removed and replaced does not mean that it is unimportant or unworthy of study. Extant structures, in combination with the city's intangible heritage, provide a complete image of how the city developed into what it is today. In looking back through College Park's history and development, certain trends and trajectories can be identified that not only show how College Park got to where it is today, but also show the direction

in which it continues to go. Knowledge of the city's history, including the development of its roadside lodging, can and should inform decisions made by the city's residents and officials in the years to come.

Motels that have stood the test of time, as well as those that have not, are part of a local and national story of growing dependence on the automobile, which is visible in suburban development, as well as in landscape and architectural design. Their appearance along the roadside represents a major transition in transportation patterns, as they catered to tourists traveling long distances by automobile rather than by train. Just as taverns and stage stops were placed along the Baltimore-Washington Boulevard in the 19th century to accommodate travelers heading to and from Washington, D.C., so camps and motels were operated along what was a major automobile route between Baltimore and the Capital during the 20th century. Camps and motels are also representations of 20th century vernacular architecture, as they catered to the general public and were normally operated by middle-class families.

Motels and other forms of roadside architecture have been the focus of attention by both academics and amateur scholars in recent years. Books published on the topic of motels range from photo-oriented coffee table books to more scholarly works that are more concerned with a deeper analysis of this specific form of roadside architecture. The foremost work on motels, however, remains John Jakle, Keith Sculle, and Jefferson Rogers' *The Motel in America*, although Chester Liebs' *Main Street to Miracle Mile* is a highly important resource for students of roadside architecture.

This project is concerned with three general themes: roadside architecture, intangible heritage, and the recent past. This paper begins with a discussion of the importance of

intangible heritage and the recent past. A description of the development of roadside lodging follows, and contributes to a contextual understanding of College Park's motels. An overview of each of the motels and tourist camps along Route 1 in College Park will be followed by an analysis that places them within larger trends, discusses why their memory should be preserved, and provides examples of similar projects. The paper wraps up with a conclusion, which includes a summary of the paper's main points and a discussion of several options for interpretation.

Chapter 2: The Importance of Intangible Heritage and the Recent Past

College Park's Motels as Intangible Heritage

Intangible heritage, or “traditional cultural places” according to the National Park Service, applies to a broad range of topics. In 2003, UNESCO adopted the “Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.” This document defined “intangible cultural heritage” as the “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.”¹ Cultural practices, religious rituals, locations where historical events took place, and sites where structures are no longer standing all fall under this broad heading. This particular project focuses on the latter component of intangible heritage and demonstrates why College Park's tourist camps and motels, which represent both intangible heritage and the recent past, are important not only to the city's history, but also to the developmental and cultural history of America.

It is not very often that 20th century landscapes from which all structures have been removed are considered and studied as intangible cultural heritage. This could be a result of the lack of desire among many preservationists and historians to consider buildings constructed during their lifetime as worthy of focused research. Thus there is a dearth of published, scholarly articles that focus on this subcomponent of intangible cultural heritage.

¹ “Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage,” UNESCO, 2003, <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00006>.

The closest known example that examines lost 20th century architecture is the ongoing collaboration between members of the historically African American Lakeland community of College Park and students and professors from the University of Maryland. The projects that have resulted from this collaboration provide ready examples of how the concept of intangible cultural heritage can be applied to the vernacular architecture of the recent past. Many of the buildings that made up this community were demolished as a result of College Park's Urban Renewal project in the 1970s, and their respective sites have either been redeveloped or submerged under an expanded Lake Artemesia. Property histories have been prepared for many of the now-absent structures to help recreate what Lakeland looked like in its heyday.² The importance of the Lakeland project rests on its research of a little-known community and its role in informing the public about the role that Lakeland played in College Park's development. This project has made a similar endeavor, in that it seeks to inform the public about the role that College Park's tourist camps and motels played throughout the history of the city.

The Importance of the Recent Past

Most 21st century observers view 20th century buildings as part of the current world. Many people live, work, and shop in buildings that were constructed within the last 50 years. Structures from the recent past are often seen as expendable, whether they are manifestations of still-admired or newly-scorned architectural practices. Little interest is taken in their future as documents of their respective eras.³

² Urban Renewal Timeline for Lakeland in College Park, MD (Report prepared by students in AMST 498X/AMST 629D/HISP 635 Social and Ethnic Issues in Preservation, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, Spring 2013); "Lakeland East of the Railroad Tracks, 1890-1970" (Social and Ethnic Issues in Historic Preservation class report, University of Maryland, College Park, June 2010).

³ Richard Longstreth, "The Significance of the Recent Past," *APT Bulletin* 23, no. 2, Preserving What's New, (1991): 14.

Yet there are many people who have taken great interest in the recent past. Over the last few decades, the demand for knowledge about our environment and the things we experience on a daily basis, not just relics from a distant past, has grown rapidly. This demand is credited as one of the underlying causes of preservation's great success. At the grassroots level, there is a significant movement to protect environments which are components of peoples' everyday lives.⁴ Saving once unappreciated components of the built environment helps to increase the public's interest in preservation and can help preservation organizations to appeal to and connect with the general public. Herbert Gans, an urban sociologist, stated that "when preservation becomes a public act, supported with public funds, it must attend to everyone's past."⁵ Preservationists who have firsthand experience at the local level know how positively people respond to the idea of heritage and of passing on to future generations that which was handed down by previous generations. This sentiment embodies a growing desire for continuity as a balancing force rather than a lack of change. Allowing people to live and work in an environment that provides continual reminders of what has been accomplished in the past, along with what is being accomplished today, is likely the greatest cultural value of preservation.⁶ According to the Burra Charter, "Places of cultural significance enrich peoples' lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences."⁷

The past, as well as the present, is comprised of fortunate and unfortunate circumstances. However, reminding ourselves of negative historical events, movements,

⁴ Ibid, 14-15.

⁵ Kelli Shapiro, "From Modernism to McDonald's: Ideology, Controversy, and the Movement to Preserve the Recent Past," *Journal of Architectural Education* (2007): 8.

⁶ Longstreth, 15.

⁷ "The Burra Charter," *Australia ICOMOS, Inc.* (1999): 1.

and trends can help to prevent their occurrence in the present and the future. If and when we exclude the 20th century from consideration, we are creating an artificial separation between modern day life and that of our ancestors.⁸ According to Diane Wray, believing that modern architecture and planning has no value degrades a whole generation of people.⁹ The greater the artificial separation, the less continuity there will be, as the older material will seem foreign to us.¹⁰ If the average person sees history as foreign to them, he or she will see no reason to study the past or support the preservation of historic structures.

Coming up with subjective reasons for considering remnants of the past as lacking value is not difficult. However, age on its own should not carry much weight in determining significance.¹¹ Sites possess inherent values other than age. These values can be broken down into two broad categories: heritage values and contemporary values. Broken down further, heritage values include artistic, historical, and scientific or archaeological values. Contemporary values include such values as recreational use, public health, profit, and ecological integrity. These different values often conflict, however. Traditional preservation dealt with this issue by giving preference to historical and aesthetic values and using professional judgment when conflict occurred. Values-centered preservation views and manages a site's values holistically and any conflicts that occur are handled rationally and politically.¹²

⁸ Longstreth, 15.

⁹ Shapiro, 8.

¹⁰ Longstreth, 15.

¹¹ Ibid, 17.

¹² Randall Mason, "Theoretical and Practical Arguments for Values-Centered Preservation," *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* 3, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 34.

Age and rarity may be intrinsically linked, but works from the recent past that are deemed insignificant and unworthy of saving are being erased from the landscape in much larger numbers than are those from the distant past, especially in areas where development pressures are the most intense.¹³ Ordinary structures are at greater risk of being demolished because landowners think nothing of tearing them down. Because of this, however, common types of buildings may become relatively rare survivals.¹⁴ In addition, commercial buildings are likely more endangered than any other form of architecture.¹⁵

Certain roadside buildings were never meant to last for very long. Nevertheless, nostalgia and scholarship concerning some of these structures has soared in recent years. Scholarship has brought with it the recognition that the automobile strip has been one of the significant forces in shaping the 20th century landscape, no less than Main Street. Because the roadside is considered prime real estate by developers, its buildings sometimes last only a few decades, or even a few years. They have been saved and restored on rare occasions by their owners, who received little if any assistance from the preservation community.¹⁶ This could be due in part to an unfortunate phenomenon that Diane Wray has pointed out: that many people have become historic preservationists out of their hatred for modern architecture.¹⁷ This could be because they hold modern architecture responsible for destroying and replacing buildings that they consider to be of greater architectural merit.¹⁸

¹³ Longstreth, 17.

¹⁴ Shapiro, 9.

¹⁵ Longstreth, 18.

¹⁶ Ibid, 20.

¹⁷ Shapiro, 8.

¹⁸ Shapiro, 10.

Considering the recent past worthy of preservation involves the use of broader definitions of history and significance. Sociocultural context is emphasized over simply aesthetics, age, type, style, use, location, or pedigree.¹⁹ To some preservationists, age holds central importance in the assessment of significance. According to Dr. Richard Striner, however, “history is a continuum that flows without interruption into the present instant and the future.”²⁰ Almost everything could be viewed in historical terms if looked at from that perspective.²¹

Modern architecture supporter Diane Wray counteracted the age argument by claiming that the threat of destruction determines the need to preserve a building rather than its age. In terms of threat of destruction, modern buildings are in greater danger due to the lack of attention and respect that is shown to them. Another factor working against recent past preservation is the age requirement of federal, state, and local preservation laws. As a result, preservationists who focus on the recent past frequently work without receiving any benefit from these laws. Many advocates of modern architecture, including Dr. Striner, have argued that preservationists should move beyond traditional ways of determining whether or not a building is worth saving and begin to focus on its cultural, social, and historical context.²² Motels, for instance, were important locations for social interaction, causing them to become sites of significant 20th century events, such as Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis.²³

¹⁹ Ibid, 6.

²⁰ Ibid, 7.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 82.

While it may be difficult for proponents of modern architecture to prove its importance, some opponents agree that certain buildings are historically important in terms of the damage they caused. The debate within the preservation community over what can be called “preserving the enemy” concerns such places as suburbia, automobile-related structures, the landscape of mass consumption, and modern architecture and planning. Modern architecture is held responsible for massive destruction due to urban renewal. Very often, the arrival of the types of places listed above caused the endangerment or destruction of the types of buildings that have traditionally been the focus of the preservation movement. Buildings such as chain restaurants and gas stations are considered to be representative of much larger societal problems. People left historic inner cities for the suburbs in droves, leaving the former to decline and decay.²⁴

One specific movement fighting the preservation of automobile-related sites is known as New Urbanism. This urban design movement has at its core the desire to move away from automobile dependence and its resultant landscape. However, Longstreth claims that “the physical impetus for huge societal changes (whether positive or negative) should be preserved for posterity.”²⁵ In addition, modernism represents a new and inventive style of planning and architecture.²⁶

As a result of this tension, it is extremely difficult to advocate for the preservation of buildings that are seen as the destroyers of history rather than as part of history themselves. Some more traditional preservationists are of the mind that preserving the recent past prevents the mending of urban fabric. Rather than seeing the recent past as an important part of history and worthy of preservation, it is viewed by some

²⁴ Shapiro, 10-11.

²⁵ Ibid, 11.

²⁶ Ibid.

preservationists as damage that needs to be repaired.²⁷ In addition, historic preservation in some ways reflects the society in which it is practiced in the decisions that are made about what gets preserved, how it is preserved and interpreted, and who makes those decisions.²⁸

What constitutes the recent past is constantly in flux due to the march of time, which has the potential of working in favor of architecture from the recent past. Earlier generations held now-beloved Victorian houses in disdain. For this reason, examples of architectural styles currently not in vogue which possess a high degree of integrity should be preserved for posterity because some day, those styles may achieve the same level of mainstream acceptability within the preservation community as Victorian houses and Art Deco buildings.²⁹ David Lowenthal explains the effect of the passage of time in this way:

“No one has ever experienced as ‘the present’ what we now view as ‘the past,’ for hindsight cannot verify today as it does yesterday; the past as reconstructed is always more coherent than when it happened. We have to interpret the ongoing present as we live through it, whereas we stand outside the past to view its more finished forms, including its now known consequences for what was then the unknown future... the past thus looks more definitive and magisterial than the present.”³⁰

Not everything from the recent past can be saved any more than from any other historical period.³¹ There is much we can learn from the recent past, however, and we have to learn to see its resources as non-renewable. We run the risk of wasting far more than we preserve if we continue to disregard so many aspects of our environment.³² If recent structures are not given any value and protected to some degree, there will not be

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Mason, 21.

²⁹ Shapiro, 12.

³⁰ David Lowenthal, “Nostalgia Tells It Like It Wasn’t,” in Christopher Shaw and Malcolm Chase, eds., *The Imagined Past: History and Nostalgia* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1989), 30.

³¹ Longstreth, 21.

³² Ibid, 23.

any remnants from this chapter of their distant past for future generations to enjoy, learn from, and understand us by.³³ The purpose of this project is to show that the architecture of College Park's recent past, both extant and intangible, is worthy of examination.

³³ Ibid, 17.

Chapter 3: College Park's Route 1

Ever since the advent of the automobile, College Park's roadside has been considered prime real estate by developers and business owners. Tourist camps and motels were established along the Baltimore-Washington Boulevard (Route 1) for the purpose of capturing the business of tourists on their way to and from Washington, D.C. This section discusses the history of College Park's section of Route 1 and looks at the strip through two opposing lenses.

The Baltimore-Washington Boulevard was the first turnpike to be constructed in the United States.³⁴ In 1812, by an Act of the General Assembly, a company was incorporated to build a turnpike between Washington and Baltimore, using much of the older roadway. Tourist camps and motels were not the first forms of roadside lodging to locate along the Boulevard so as to be visible to tourists heading to and from the Capital. The 60-foot-wide road passed a tavern in Vansville, the White House tavern two miles to the south, and Ross' tavern three miles farther south.³⁵ Ross' tavern, or Rossborough Inn, which became a part of the University of Maryland in 1858, was built circa 1803 to serve the boulevard's travelers (Figure 2).³⁶ The turnpike continued through Bladensburg and into the Capital. Tolls, which were levied according to the number of animals and vehicles, were collected every ten miles. Carved milestones were placed along the right-

³⁴ Jack E. Boucher, *Landmarks of Prince George's County* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 18.

³⁵ Susan G. Pearl, "History of the Route 1 Corridor, 1740-1990" in Susan G. Pearl, Marina King, and Howard S. Berger, *Historic Contexts in Prince George's County: Short Papers on Settlement Patterns, Transportation and Cultural History* (Upper Marlboro, MD: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1991), 30.

³⁶ Alan Virta, *Prince George's County: A Pictorial History* (Virginia Beach: The Donning Company, 1984), 89.

of-way.³⁷ It took five hours to travel from Baltimore to Washington via stagecoach, however. When the B&O railroad extended its line from Baltimore to Washington in 1835, the stagecoach line was eventually put out of business.³⁸



Figure 2: Rossborough Inn after being acquired by the University of Maryland (Courtesy of Gary Burton).

In 1897, a streetcar line created a third north-south route through College Park (in addition to the turnpike and the railroad line), which accelerated the growth of the community as a Washington, D.C. “streetcar suburb.” Before the introduction of the automobile, the D.C. railroad suburbs extended north into Laurel, Maryland.³⁹ Route 1 did not become the main street of the Washington, D.C. suburban corridor until the invention of the automobile, however (Figure 3).⁴⁰ Once it became a suburban main street, tourist camps and motels flocked to its roadsides to take advantage of the tourist traffic that utilized it. By 1932, there were so many tourist camps already in business

³⁷ Pearl, “History of the Route 1 Corridor, 1740-1990,” 30.

³⁸ Virta, 89; Stephanie Stullich and Katherine D. Bryant, *Images of America: College Park* (Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 7.

³⁹ Virta, 191.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 201.

along Route 1 that Prince George's County announced that no more tourist cabins could be built along the Baltimore Boulevard, and refused M. H. Fearnow's application for permission to build six tourist cabins in Beltsville.⁴¹



Figure 3: Route 1 College Park, looking north, 1943. The house visible to the right of the gas pumps sat on the site of the former Maryland Book Exchange. The Little Tavern, still standing to this day, can be seen in the center of the photo (Courtesy of Gary Burton).

In the 1970s, a commercial archaeologist named Peter Smith sifted through the manifestations of suburban American culture along Route 1 between Washington and Baltimore. According to Smith, "this stuff is a legitimate expression of today's culture; it's just as worthy of studying and preserving as 18th-century taverns."⁴² By "today's culture," Smith was referring to 20 or 30 years prior to what he considered the onslaught of "corporate sameness." He defined commercial archaeology as "the study of the tangible aspects of the influence of the automobile on the land."⁴³ The best place to do that study in the 1970s was Los Angeles, but since that was too far away for Smith, he found Route 1 a suitable replacement, referring to it as a time capsule and a ghost town.

⁴¹ "Beltsville Tourist Cabins Refused: Prince George's Officials Deny Permits to M. H. Fearnow," *Washington Post*, June 22, 1932.

⁴² Anne H. Oman, "Tacky Treasures: An Archaeologist Uncovers Relics Along Route 1," *Washington Post*, January 12, 1979.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

Route 1 had lost its economic base due to the construction of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and Interstate 95.⁴⁴

While touring Route 1 with a reporter, Smith had them stop at Canary Cottages in College Park, noting that each unit had a connecting garage. Smith also observed that many other motor courts along Route 1 were abandoned, however, and went on to say that the tourist court was considered the poor cousin of the hotel and a place which catered to the highly profitable couple trade, or the “hot pillow trade” as worded by J. Edgar Hoover, until after World War II. Tourist courts sprang out of the mom-and-pop state of merchandising and into the big business arena once the potential of roadside overnight accommodations was fully realized. Smith pointed out the Holiday Inn at the intersection of Route 1 and the Beltway and how it faces the Beltway; in contrast, he noted that Del Haven White House Cottages faced Route 1.⁴⁵ The establishments were built to face the road from which they intended to draw customers.

Smith was ahead of his time in finding Route 1 and motels worthy of study. His was not an opinion that was shared by many observers at the time, however. Just ten years before Smith made his rose-colored observations of Route 1, a *Washington Post* journalist named Douglas Watson made some not-so-favorable observations of his own. Although he called Route 1 dangerous, lively, “uninhibitedly ugly,” and the kind of road that a planner would design and that most long-distance drivers would avoid, he did not

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

give expressways a very favorable review either, calling them empty and monotonous.⁴⁶

Unlike expressways, however, Route 1 certainly was not boring.⁴⁷

Route 1 was not paved until 1906, despite being the first colonial turnpike. Before the Baltimore-Washington Parkway opened in 1953, the peak average daily flow through Hyattsville on Route 1 numbered 46,920 cars (Figure 4).⁴⁸ The parkway's average daily traffic in 1969 varied from 37,800 in Jessup to 76,000 at the District line. Although the parkway provided considerable relief of the traffic congestion on Route 1, volume on the highway increased to 28,100 cars per day in Laurel, 26,000 at the Capital Beltway, and 28,600 in Hyattsville. Continuing north to Beltsville, Watson pointed out that accident figures were the highest along the Beltsville-Laurel section of Route 1. In the 1940s, Route 1 was known as "Old Bloody" and "Death Highway" due to the number of crashes that resulted from unlimited access, the lack of a dividing strip between oncoming cars, driver carelessness, and heavy traffic. As of 1969, many drivers still perished annually in automobile crashes along Route 1.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Douglas Watson, "Route 1: Slice of Americana: Something Ugly for Everyone," *Washington Post*, August 7, 1969.

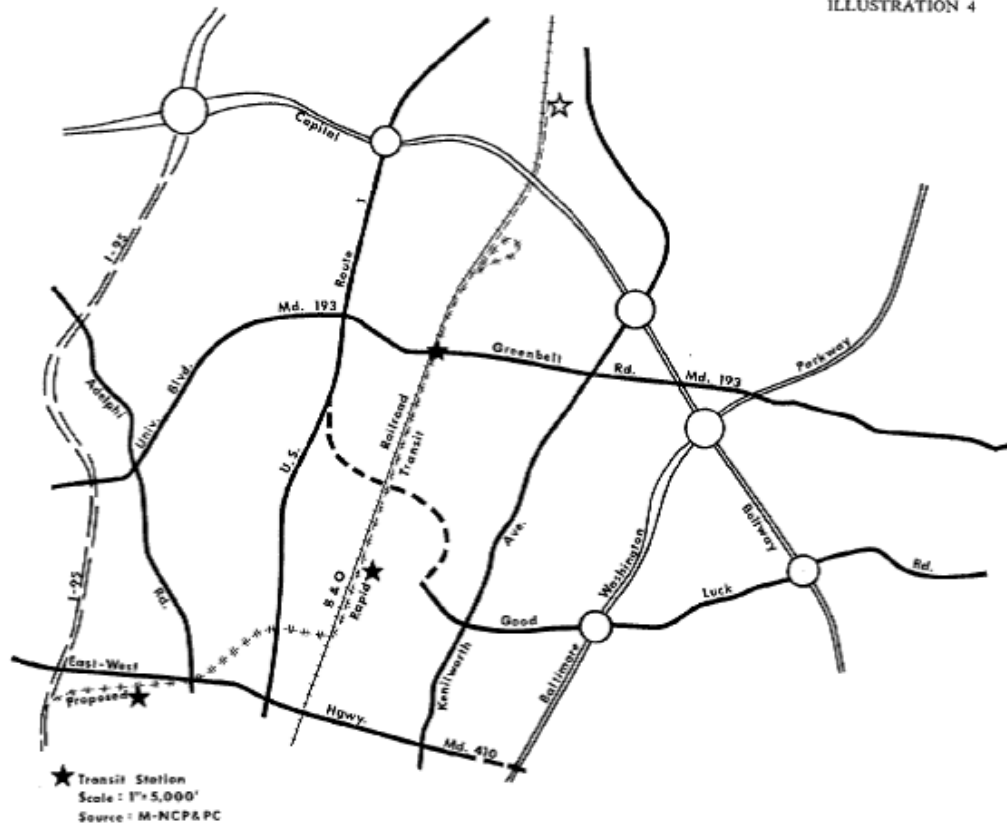
⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ U.S. Route 1 Alternate extends 3.3 miles from Route 1 in Hyattsville, Maryland to U.S. 50 in Washington, D.C. It consists of the old alignment of Route 1 in Washington, D.C. and the inner section of Prince George's County, Maryland, and follows the old alignment of U.S. 50 south of MD-450 in Bladensburg. "U.S. Route 1 Alternate (Washington, D.C.)," *Wikipedia*, accessed March 29, 2014, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Viridiscalculus/U.S._Route_1_Alternate_\(Washington,_D.C.\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Viridiscalculus/U.S._Route_1_Alternate_(Washington,_D.C.)).

⁴⁹ Watson, "Route 1: Slice of Americana: Something Ugly for Everyone."

BASIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

ILLUSTRATION 4



13

Figure 4: Major roads in the DC metro area (From “Adopted and Approved Master Plan for College Park-Greenbelt and Vicinity: Planning Areas 66 and 67,” Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, November 1970).

Watson wrapped up his critique by referring to Route 1 as a historic highway that has seen better days, but remains the unofficial, well-used dividing line between Maryland’s Tidewater and Piedmont regions. To Washingtonians, the road is known as Baltimore Avenue, but among Baltimoreans, the road is referred to as Washington Boulevard. It is all the same road, however, which has a continuously changing story to tell (Figure 5).⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Ibid.



Figure 5: Route 1 going through College Park, looking north, 2011 (From “Route 1 Redevelopment in North College Park – How Long Do We Need to Wait?,” *KabirCares.org*, accessed March 26, 2014, <http://www.kabircares.org/route-1-redevelopment-in-north-college-park-how-long-do-we-need-to-wait/>).

Chapter 4: Origin and Development of Roadside Lodging

College Park's motels and camps did not exist in a vacuum, but were part of a larger roadside lodging industry. As a result, they had much in common with many camps and motels across the country. While most were not known for their stylistic embellishments and although not all of them evolved through every stage of roadside lodging, their connection to larger trends is evident throughout their lifespan.

Auto-camping started out as a vacation alternative for relatively comfortable middle class families. Fewer than 500,000 people owned an automobile in 1910. Even with more than 8 million automobiles registered in 1920, most Americans relied on the railroad whenever they left home for long-distance travel. Auto-camping originally appealed to well-to-do individualists who were attracted by its lack of an established infrastructure.⁵¹ Rail travelers alighting from a train in a particular city would spend the night at an urban hotel (Figure 6). On the other hand, automobile owners could stop wherever they wished rather than relying on the train to take them to pre-determined stops. When traveling across the countryside in their automobile, drivers needed a place to spend the night. Travelers had to make sure they ended their day in a community large enough to support a hotel. If they happened to do so, there were often not enough parking spaces. In addition, travelers were often intimidated by unsavory or pretentious hotel owners, managers, and patrons. As a result, automobile travelers set up camps on the side of the road wherever it was convenient. This solution worked well until after World War I, when a previously small number of tourists hit critical mass due to their desire to see the countryside and the mass production and affordability of automobiles. Landowners

⁵¹ Warren J. Belasco, *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1979), 7.

complained about the pollution, litter, invasion of privacy, and the destruction of crops, fences, and foliage. Some went as far as erecting barbed wire fences and “no trespassing” signs to keep out unwanted guests who were often known as “tin-can tourists.”⁵²



Figure 6: Empire State Express, 1905 (From *Shorpy*, accessed March 26, 2014, <http://www.shorpy.com/node/9011>).

Local business interests saw a potential benefit in motorist camps, however. If tourists could be provided a place to stay they were likely to eat at nearby restaurants and shop at the stores along Main Street. Communities began setting up municipal tourist camps on vacant land or in city parks near downtown business districts (Figure 7). Campsites normally were free and provided parking and sanitary facilities to their guests. These camps became exceedingly popular among tourists, and they became a source of pride for their respective communities. Tourist camps joined the railroad depot in a tourist’s first impression of a town, and these impressions spread rapidly throughout the auto-camping circuit. Neighboring towns competed against each other to build the most popular motor

⁵² Chester Lies, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 169-170.

camp. Conveniences such as picnic tables, flushing toilets, fire pits, showers, electrical hookups, and sheltered eating and recreation areas were added by communities and then advertised on signs along the roads leading into town. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimated in 1922 that more than 1,000 of these camps had been set up from one side of the country to the other.⁵³

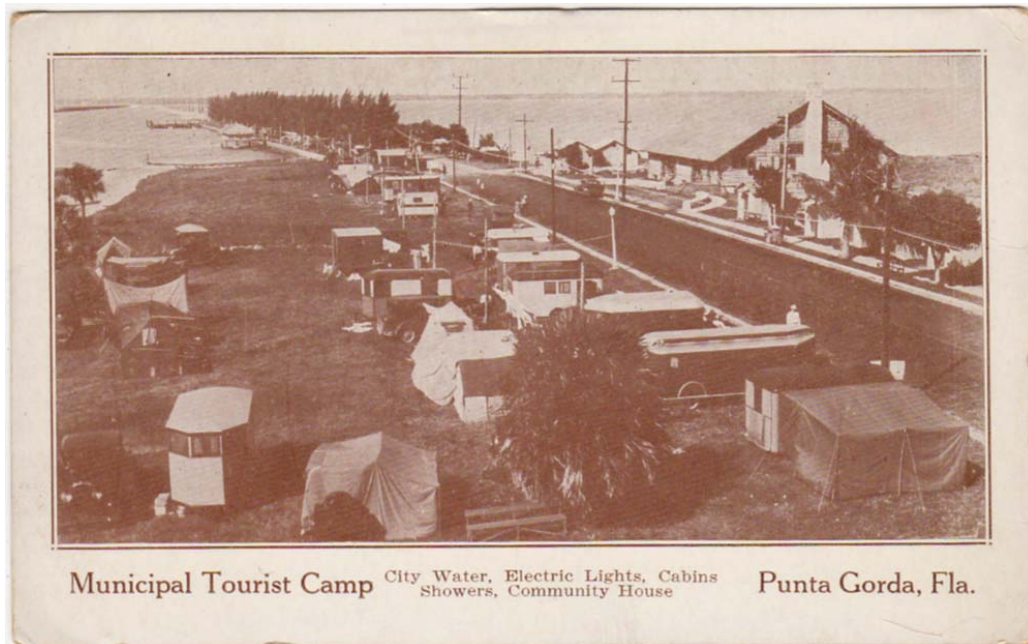


Figure 7: Municipal tourist camp, Punta Gorda, FL (From *eBay*, accessed March 26, 2014, <http://www.ebay.com/itm/Postcard-of-Municipal-Tourist-Camp-in-Punta-Gorda-Florida-/330897910941>).

More affluent travelers began to be concerned about who they might be spending the night with at one of these municipal tourist camps. A higher standard of living and relative affluence led to widespread car ownership. Most working people could afford to buy one and travel across the country in it. The majority of camp guests were law-abiding, but class prejudices drove these fears. These apprehensions were partially justified, however, by the appearance of an underclass of motorized transients. They were referred to by Frank Brimmer (an author of books on autocamping) in a 1927 issue of *The*

⁵³ Liebs, 171-172.

Magazine of Business as “white gypsies.” He accused them of foraging in farmers’ crops and “stealing like real gypsies.”⁵⁴ Brimmer had in mind a particular category of travelers that was made up of the unemployed, the pay-as-you-go type, “gasoline bums” (most likely referring to those who bummed gasoline off of fellow tourists), and “hard-luck kids.”⁵⁵ Only a small (but troublesome) proportion of that group was made up of hardened criminals. Some camps were ruined by this unsavory element, which led to the practice by some of requiring visitor registration to weed out undesirables. In many instances, the revenues brought in through registration fees were used to maintain the facilities. But the fees brought about an unintended consequence, sparking investors to build competing camps and leading to the downfall of municipal camps.⁵⁶

The success of the forerunners of the family-run motel led homeowners to convert extra bedrooms into guest rooms, and farmers and landowners to set up their own camps. Soon, thousands of private campgrounds had sprouted up across the country. Just as competition had heated up between municipal tourist camps, so it also began to flare up in the up-and-coming private motor camp industry. Operators were always looking for ways to attract motorists to their camp, and they soon realized that tourists were willing to pay more money for private accommodations. Cabins were constructed as an alternative to tent sites (Figure 8). They began as simple wooden enclosures with screened openings without furniture, and campers usually brought their own bedding with them. Campers greatly preferred the convenience of private, storm-resistant, watertight cabins over the annoyance of having to carry tents around and erect them every night. Because of this, many operators gave up offering tent sites altogether and provided only

⁵⁴ Ibid, 172.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

cabins. This allowed them to operate year-round. These places came to be known as “cabin camps,” a relatively short-lived term reminiscent of the earlier municipal campgrounds. The word “camp” was soon dropped in favor of the word “court,” a term that denoted safety and respectability and better defined the small cabin enclaves. A variety of prefixes for the word “court” began to appear on signs across the country: cabin court, cottage court, tourist court, and apartment court are just a few examples. Court owners came to be known as “courters” within the trade.⁵⁷



Figure 8: Chapmans Modern Camp, Fort Wayne, IN (From Jan Shupert-Arick, “Cabin Camp Project: Seeking Lost Tourist Cabins,” *Indiana Lincoln Highway Association*, accessed March 26, 2014, http://indianalincolnhighway.org/?page_id=667).

Proprietors realized early on that tourists valued one-stop shopping, and so they began to offer a variety of products and services. Some camps, such as Cherry Hill, Stewart’s, and Del Haven, operated on-site grocery stores, boarding houses, roadside food stands, or gas stations in addition to a camp, which was originally a sideline for those types of establishments. Doing so was also a protection against variables that the tourist business

⁵⁷ Ibid, 172-175.

was extremely vulnerable to, such as seasonal fluctuations and bad weather. Cabins first sprouted up in California as a way of making auto-camping a year-round business and to shelter tourists during rainy winter months. Since all regions of the country could experience inclement weather at the height of the touring season, the idea spread rapidly. Cabin camps became options for those who would otherwise head to a hotel during a thunderstorm.⁵⁸

Some roadside vendors attempted to compete with downtown merchants by encouraging free camping near their main business during the days of free camping. However, those free camps remained primitive because they were not self-supporting. Campsites became profitable in and of themselves when fees began to be charged. Many other entrepreneurial Americans became interested in the opportunity to become independent operators in what seemed to be a promising industry. There was something romantic in the idea of the small innkeeper and something desirable about serving the public. Farmers' wives, daughters, and widows who longed for outside contact and income but were not ready to leave home found the prospect of meeting all kinds of travelers quite appealing. Other proprietors were auto-camping migrants who saw the opportunity as a way to settle down while keeping in touch with the freedom of life on the road.⁵⁹

Before long, changes occurred in how camps were laid out. Those that had not done so previously began to thoughtfully plan and arrange their cabins on the landscape (Figure 9). Cabins were placed close enough to the road for travelers to see them, but they also had to be far enough away from the road so as to appear private and quiet. Cabins set up

⁵⁸ Belasco, 130-131.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

on rural plots with broad road frontage were often stretched out in long U-shaped, crescent-shaped, or in-line rows parallel to the road in order to provide maximum visual impact when seen from the windshield of a fast-moving automobile. In more populous areas with higher land values, tourist courts owners had to make do with narrower road frontages, and tighter versions of U- and L-shaped plans and in-line rows were preferred.⁶⁰ An example of the U-shaped plan is visible in the layout of College Park's Park Lane Cabins. As a category of motels, cabin camps tended to be arranged in crescent, L, row, row-on-row, and clustered patterns.⁶¹ Along with the location of the cabins, internal roads and parking spaces had to be carefully considered. A pathway leading from the highway to the office and on to a cabin-side parking space was considered to be an essential visual cue for guiding motorists into the court.⁶²



Figure 9: Swiss Village cabin court, Bennington, VT (From "IN THIS STATE: WHEN CABIN COURTS WERE KINGS OF THE ROADS," *VTDIGGER.ORG*, accessed March 26, 2014, <http://vtdigger.org/2013/09/29/state-cabin-courts-kings-roads/>).

⁶⁰ Liebs, 175.

⁶¹ Jakle, 38.

⁶² Liebs, 175.

In addition to the layout, court owners also had to consider exterior imagery as a factor in attracting guests. They relied on much of the same superficial costumery as other roadside businesses, domestic architecture being the most common theme. Thus many motor courts, such as the Haass Haven/College Park Motel, took on the appearance of tidy villages of miniature cottages. Names and abnormal spellings of words that carried with them a sense of informality, safety, and comfort were often used by court owners (such as “Kozy Kourt”). Many courts even took on a regional appearance in an attempt to conform to the postcard image of a particular area. Examples include tepees, log cabins, adobe huts, and Spanish missions. Plantings such as cacti and palm trees further added to the illusion. The most visual attention was paid to the focal point of the court: the office. This building usually also contained the owner’s living quarters. It was normally located near the road in front of the cabins to serve as a sort of gateway. Out of all the buildings on the property, this building was usually thematically embellished to the highest degree. For example, out of all the teepees or windmills, it would be the largest (Figure 10). Farmhouses were often reused as offices and covered in all manner of sales gimmicks.⁶³



Figure 10: Wigwam Village, Cave City, KY (From “Home,” *Wigwam Village Inn #2*, accessed March 26, 2014, <http://www.wigwamvillage.com/>).

⁶³ Ibid, 175-177.

The most important selling point of every court, however, was the interior of its cabins. This aspect would determine the long-term reputation of the business.⁶⁴ In the 1920s camp owners feared that tourists would steal anything that was not tied down. Some of them even hesitated at first to add such simple amenities as beds and tables.⁶⁵ By the early 1930s, however, cabin furnishings came to include dressers, beds, desks, pictures, lamps, and rugs. Even if these items were second-hand, they likely still made the tourist feel more at home.⁶⁶

Still more entrepreneurs entered the roadside lodging business between 1928 and 1931. They were impressed by the number of customers who would normally have patronized hotels that flocked to tourist camps instead. Hard-pressed farmers with highway frontage found tourists a better summer crop than corn or wheat during a time of agricultural depression.⁶⁷ The American Automobile Association (AAA) estimated that by 1933, there were nearly 30,000 tourist cottage and camp operations lining the nation's highways. By 1935, they were drawing national attention.⁶⁸ Even as early as 1933, John J. McCarthy and Robert Litell prophesied in *Harper's* that the motor court was worthy of serious study as a form of highway folk craft: "Before it is too late, someone with a camera and a passion for Americana should motor about the country collecting material for a monograph on the architecture of the tourist camps, courts, cottages of the early 1930s."⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Ibid, 177.

⁶⁵ Belasco, 134.

⁶⁶ Liebs, 177.

⁶⁷ Belasco, 140.

⁶⁸ Liebs, 177.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 178.

The survival of the motor court industry during the years of the Great Depression intrigued contemporary observers. Its ability to survive during hard times was enabled by the millions of Americans who discovered that cruising the highways could be a low-cost diversion. In addition, the industry also received help from the Federal Housing Administration in the mid-1930s, as it loosened up its regulations to permit the financing of cabins under \$2,000 without a down-payment.⁷⁰ Although autocamping was an already-established movement that was accelerated by the Depression, many people viewed the camps as a depression-built business. One report observed that the tourist camp business was “one of the few oases of the depression” and that it “thrived on hard times and limited purchasing power.”⁷¹

With the advent of modernism, motor court owners were pressured from many different angles into keeping up with the times. During the Depression, many architects were searching for work, and magazines began to encourage out-of-work architects to consider motor courts in their search for new commissions. Not all the pressure came from outside the roadside lodging industry, however. The *Tourist Court Journal* encouraged courtiers to think modern and to throw away the sales gimmicks. Even though courtiers continued to build quaint cabin villages in large numbers up until the early 1950s, regional, domestic, and fantastic imagery gave way to more modern, high-style motifs. By the late 1930s motor courts across the country began to feature the Streamline Moderne and the International Style as a result of pressure from architects and roadside lodging industry journals (Figure 11).⁷²

⁷⁰ Ibid, 178-179.

⁷¹ Belasco, 144.

⁷² Liebs, 179.



Figure 11: The Streamline Moderne Branding Iron Motel (From “Motels,” *University of Vermont*, accessed March 26, 2014, http://www.uvm.edu/landscape/dating/roadside_architecture/motels.php).

Not only did the exterior face of motor courts undergo a change during the Depression years, but cabin interiors also received a face-lift, this time mostly due to desperate manufacturers who began to see an opportunity to showcase their wares. Companies that manufactured blankets, chairs, beds, and bathtubs offered discounts to motor court owners so their goods could be put on display. Modernism was not only marketed by the World’s Fair, but by motor courts as well. Travelers who experienced what life was like in an updated, modern roadside cabin began to imagine what their homes could be like. Old metal bedsprings were replaced by innerspring mattresses, and claw-foot bathtubs were superseded by sunk-in, sleeker models. Whereas motor courts had competed with tourist camps by providing all the comforts of home, they now began to offer “more than the comforts of home.”⁷³

Camp owners who had not improved their cabins since 1925 applied a new coat of paint, installed running water, and landscaped their driveways. A community building with flushing toilets and separate compartments for men and women became minimum

⁷³ Ibid, 180.

requirements. Some camps that were unable to afford the investment went out of business or survived by renting tent plots to the lessening flow of autocampers. More prosperous and ambitious camp owners added linoleum flooring, innerspring mattresses, hot and cold running water, colonial-style furniture, and throw rugs. Some camps even constructed new units with private showers and garages in order to attract more hotel customers. They reasoned that well-paying patrons would not want to stand in line at a hotel or leave their shiny cars unprotected from thieves and bad weather.⁷⁴

Due to this constant upgrading, cabin courts not only pried business away from tourist camps, but they also began to compete with hotels. Tourists preferred to drive right up to their cabin rather than traversing a lobby to reach their room. Cabins also provided much better cross ventilation than hotel rooms, which usually only had a single window. Camps located far enough away from the road to remain quiet and private were much preferred to urban hotels surrounded by the noise of traffic. Hotel fires were another concern, and individual cabins provided for a quicker escape. Additionally, cabin courts were generally cheaper than hotels and offered everything hotels offered, with the added benefits of privacy, affordability, safety, and convenience, all of which contributed to the growth of the cabin court industry. In the minds of Depression-era city dwellers, cabins also offered the opportunity to rent a freestanding dream cottage surrounded by grass for the weekend. The mini-suburbs that cabin courts became may have contributed quite substantially to the “American Dream” of individual home ownership.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Belasco, 141.

⁷⁵ Liebs, 180-181.

Hotels did not go quietly, however; instead, they fought back.⁷⁶ Small hotels, where many successful hotel executives began their careers, far outnumbered the larger urban facilities. These small hotels had considerable clout with state hotel associations, which aggressively lobbied in state legislatures. Numerous states drafted hostile camp licensing laws starting in 1929. Advocates of these laws hoped that costly sanitary requirements would put most camps out of business and force the few that remained to increase their prices. Hotel owners had underestimated their competition, however. Camp owners, as farmers and rising small businessmen, had political leverage, and enjoyed good press due to providing cheap lodging for budget-minded travelers. Most state codes even worked in favor of the better camps, as laws drove away the cheapest competition and allowed the better camps to charge higher rates. Best of all, they provided the business with legitimacy. Camps that abided by the law were often required to post a state certificate, reassuring new tourists who had previously feared inadequate sanitation. States certified that any camp that had an “Approved” emblem posted was a good place to stay. The appearance of camps was improved by beautification laws, and camps were sanctioned by zoning ordinances.⁷⁷

With little chance of legislative redress, the hotel industry shifted its attack into the field of marketing. They provided guest parking in nearby garages and posted signs that read “motor hotel” on their roofs. Less innocuous were their attempts to portray the motor courts as illegitimate businesses and love-nests rather than appropriate and respectable places to bring the family.⁷⁸ They attempted to link cabin camps with the discredited municipal auto-camps, and state hotel associations attempted to recall the

⁷⁶ Ibid, 181.

⁷⁷ Belasco, 148.

⁷⁸ Liebs, 181.

image of dangerous public campsites in the minds of travelers by sponsoring billboards and magazine advertisements with the theme “Wayside or Safeside?”⁷⁹ Despite these efforts, many smaller, older, and shabbier hotels were put out of business by competition with the motor courts, although large hotels located in large cities continued to thrive. By this time, certain small hotels were seen as the seedy and dreary places to avoid in favor of second-rate tourist cabins.⁸⁰

In the late 1930s, numerous articles and movies continued to portray camps as dangerous and riddled with vice, however. Hotel men led the campaign, but the most famous attack came from J. Edgar Hoover. His 1940 “Camps of Crime” article in *American Magazine* received national attention. FBI Director at the time, Hoover had little evidence, yet he charged that all but a few hundred camps were “dens of vice and corruption” that were haunted by nomadic prostitutes, white slavers, hardened criminals, and promiscuous college students. His accusations were quite familiar to camp owners, but there was little they could do besides tighten registration and screening. The *Tourist Court Journal* noted that all public accommodations, from medieval inns to skyscraper hotels, had problems with undesired types, and it advised owners to maintain a respectable public front and be patient.⁸¹

World War II did not have as beneficial an effect on the motor court industry as the Great Depression had only ten years earlier. Gas rationing and the cessation of automobile production forced many to return to riding trains and mass transit. Some more isolated motor courts had to close their doors during the war, along with service stations and restaurants. Establishments near military installations and defense plants fared much

⁷⁹ Belasco, 148.

⁸⁰ Liebs, 181.

⁸¹ Belasco, 168.

better. When the war ended, however, the lodging industry quickly revived. The gradual gains motor courts had made on hotels before the war now became a substantial boom.⁸²

The tourism industry entered a phase of rapid standardization of development as a result of the increased post-war mobility of the middle class. The focus changed from service and offering a quick and affordable room to standardized design and turning a profit.⁸³

After the war, the respectability of tourist camps continued to increase. However, the “no-tell motel” image remained, mainly due to the profitability of the couple trade. It did not hinder other trade as long as it was handled discreetly. The best defense against critics remained the emphasis on modern comforts and gracious hospitality.⁸⁴

Continued success also brought about a change in terminology. A combination of the “motorist hostel” or “motor hotel,” the term “motel” gained in popularity over “court.” Credit for the word is generally given to West Coast architect Arthur S. Heineman, who designed the Milestone Mo-tel which opened in California in 1925 (Figure 12). The term had been used occasionally during the 1930s motor court era, but after the war, the industry rallied around the more modern-sounding term. By the late 1940s, the word “motel” spelled out in neon lights became an increasingly common site along the roadside.⁸⁵

⁸² Liebs, 181-182.

⁸³ Aaron A. Marcavitch, “OUR UNWITTING AUTOBIOGRAPHY:” PLACE-PRODUCT-PACKAGING AND THE AMERICAN ROADSIDE 1930-2005” (master’s thesis, Middle Tennessee State University, 2005), 88, 97.

⁸⁴ Belasco, 168.

⁸⁵ Liebs, 182.



Figure 12: Milestone Mo-tel, c.1925 (From “Milestone Mo-tel, home away from home at California’s first roadside lodging,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), July 1, 2011, accessed March 26, 2014, http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/home_blog/2011/07/milestone-mo-tel-home-away-from-home-at-californias-first-roadside-lodging.html).

In addition to a name change, the structural layout of the motel also received an update during the postwar years. Rather than individual cabins with their own furnaces and plumbing, long, single-story, cost-effective strings of rooms integrated under a single roofline came into fashion (Figure 13).⁸⁶ Room arrangements took the form of rows, like Colonial Plaza Motel and Dormitories, and L’s, like the Hillcrest Motor Court.⁸⁷ If the lots were wide enough, they were often laid out parallel to the highway in straight lines to attract as much attention as possible. Owners who purchased narrow lots on which to build their motels built their structures perpendicular to the road, which made them less visible. To compensate, bright, bold, and inviting signs were relied upon to draw in customers. By this point, Streamline Moderne and thematic styles began to fade in popularity. Postwar motels, such as College Park’s Colonial Plaza Motel and Dormitories, began to present a stripped-down, barebones, utilitarian appearance due to building material shortages and the growth of Modernism. As a result of pent-up war-

⁸⁶ Liebs, 182-183; Jakle, 43.

⁸⁷ Jakle, 47.

time demands, consumers no longer needed gimmicks and theatrics; a light-up sign with the word “motel” was enough to draw most people in.⁸⁸



Figure 13: Motel at Four Oaks Lodging, Four Oaks, NC (From “Home,” *Four Oaks Lodging*, accessed March 26, 2014, <http://www.fouroakslodging.com/>).

Despite the lack of exterior embellishment, motel owners continued to spend a considerable amount of money furnishing the rooms. A comfortable stay brought repeat business and a good reputation. Hotel management guides provided lists of recommended features that should appear in a motel room, covering a range of items such as office supplies, furniture, lighting, wall décor, temperature controls, technology, and personal hygiene products. The combination of plain exterior and comfortable interior seemed to work well for the industry.⁸⁹ In the late 1950s and 1960s, motel construction boomed. By 1964, at least 61,000 motels were operating across the country. This success can largely be credited to increased automobile ownership that brought about the general decentralization of cities and towns.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Liebs, 182-183.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 183.

⁹⁰ Jakle, 45.

Even though the motel was a considerable upgrade from the 1920s auto camp, both sets of operators preferred higher-class tourists as opposed to the less affluent. Thus, they raised industry standards in order to pursue this higher class of tourist. In making their establishments more respectable, however, they also attracted a new group of investors. These investors engaged in large-scale motel building after World War II that eventually put most remaining tourist camp operators out of business.⁹¹

Family-run courts gave way to larger “motor hotels” which benefitted from economies of scale: a motel that contained at least 50 units could break even at 50% occupancy, while the average court of 20 units required 70% or more to turn a profit. *Hotel Management* estimated in 1953 that even though only 10% of the country’s tourist courts had at least 25 rooms, they did 40% of the business, especially along lucrative main routes. In resort areas, business remained seasonal and small-scale, much like the old, turn-of-the-century country hotels, but larger chain hotels would come to dominate the motel trade.⁹²

By the early 1950s the physical structures of many motor courts had begun to deteriorate. Operating a motor court was a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week business, causing the family-run business form to begin to lose popularity. To make matters worse, these families lacked financial resources and management skills to continue to make improvements in the now highly-competitive industry. Road realignments and superhighways often bypassed motels and proved to be the greatest threat of all. Some motels were still visible, which allowed creative owners to come up with ways to keep their business going. Fewer alternatives existed for those that were completely cut off.

⁹¹ Belasco, 129.

⁹² Ibid, 170.

Sometimes the only alternatives to closing were off-loading the property onto an unsuspecting buyer, or re-using the property as low-cost housing for transients, which became the fate of the College Park Motel. In more isolated areas, the only option was abandonment.⁹³

Some motel businesses migrated to the new superhighways in updated forms to keep up with the times. An opportunity had presented itself to corporate chains as well, as new investors formed motel corporations that normally took one of three forms: referral, franchise, or company-owned chains. Referral chains originated fairly early in the late 1930s when groups of motor courts began banding together under common family names and logos, publishing their own membership directories and establishing common minimum standards. This was a logical outgrowth of state and regional tourist-court associations and motor-court recommendation services, such as AAA. Best Western, founded by California motel owner M. K. Guertin in 1946 with only 50 membership motels, has become the most successful referral chain.⁹⁴ Among the early pioneers of the referral chain, Best Western is the only one that has stood the test of time. Other referral chains that were popular in the late 1940s and early 1950s have either failed or converted to franchise operations. Superior Motels is an example of a referral chain that was not so lucky. The chain stopped renewing memberships in 1979, and six years later, 44 Superior Motels, 38 Best Value motels, and 240 Magic Key motels combined to form USA Inns.⁹⁵

About 20 years after the advent of referral chains, franchised chain motels burst onto the scene. In this system, a local investor provided the funds necessary to construct a motel according to the design, accommodations, services, and maintenance standards of

⁹³ Liebs, 183-184.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 184-185; Jakle, 142.

⁹⁵ Jakle, 147.

the franchise-granting corporation.⁹⁶ Franchised chain motels were pushed by their companies to use standard designs, resulting in larger, sprawling buildings which were commonly referred to as motor inns and later, highway hotels. These were essentially stacked motels which were designed to maximize the use of a small lot. Larger, cheaper, and faster construction was encouraged by the major chains. The highway hotel offered many of the amenities of a downtown hotel along with cheap rooms and services.⁹⁷ The owner received rights to use the franchise logo and benefited from large-scale advertising and a national reservations system in return.⁹⁸

Holiday Inn is an early example of a franchised chain motel. It was founded in the early 1950s by Kemmons Wilson, who was inspired after a road trip where he experienced the unpleasantries of privately-run motels, to start a chain of comfortable, consistent, and reasonably-priced motor inns. He teamed up with Wallace E. Johnson, a builder of prefabricated homes, to construct the first Holiday Inn on the outskirts of Memphis in 1952 (Figure 14). Local investors across the country became interested in this model, and Holiday Inn quickly grew to become one of the largest franchised motel chains nationwide. The next year, roadside restaurant magnate Howard Johnson joined in. His company began to sell franchises for motor inns along with his family restaurants. What prompted him to move in this direction were the local investors who had been constructing motels next to his restaurants and reaping the rewards of the visual association and proximity without any financial benefit to the Howard Johnson chain.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Liebs, 185.

⁹⁷ Marcavitch, 101.

⁹⁸ Liebs, 185.

⁹⁹ Ibid.



Figure 14: The original Holiday Inn in Memphis, TN (From “Holiday Inn Has Played an Important Role in Americans’ Lives Since 1952,” *Hotel Online*, accessed March 26, 2014, http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2002_1st/Feb02_HI50.html).

As early as 1931, the idea of direct ownership was proposed. In this model, all motels within a chain are completely owned by one company. That year, National Auto Haven in Chicago announced plans to build more than 100, 21-bedroom motor inns in the Midwest. However, those plans failed because at the time, the prevailing opinion within the industry was that motor courts required the full-time attention and the personalization that a husband-and-wife team could provide. By the mid-1950s, however, the idea of direct ownership had returned. Hotel corporations like Sheraton saw how successful the franchises and referral chains were and entered the business. Some corporations had sufficient funds to own all of their properties outright, whereas some franchised out part of their operation. Other franchises, such as Holiday Inn, began developing their own company-owned properties as they became stronger financially.¹⁰⁰

The lodging industry was revolutionized by the new systems of ownership. Chains quickly assembled engineering, design, financial, management, and marketing expertise.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 185-186.

They were able to overcome many of the problems that smaller husband-and-wife operations struggled with. Due to their greater financial resources, they could afford trained professional management and could compete with oil companies and fast-food chains for choice locations around interstate highway interchanges.¹⁰¹

Exterior design was no longer as important as it was for early motor courts. Interchange sites were narrow and expensive, and thus motels could not be sprawled across the property. Large highway signs were erected in front of the motel to catch the eyes of passing motorists. Seeing the name on the sign was all that was necessary to remind tourists of the chain's standardized guest rooms, which was now the most important selling point.¹⁰² Upper-middle-class tastes and fashions influenced both owner supply and lodger demand. Even though upper-middle-class taste was revered for its distinctiveness, motel rooms came to look more and more alike as the motel was transformed into a generic type of place.¹⁰³ Hotel-like lobbies were added so guests could still pass from the registration desk to the room relatively unobserved, preserving a cherished motel tradition. Restaurants, meeting rooms, indoor swimming pools, saunas, and display rooms also joined the list of features. As a result, the line between motels and hotels had become quite blurred by the late 1950s.¹⁰⁴

The profit incentives for new, albeit flimsy and impermanent, motel construction that came with the 1954 revised tax code caused a motel boom until the 1980s, when the Tax Reform Act of 1986 decreased the attractiveness of motel investment by eliminating the

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 186-188.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Jakle, 259-260.

¹⁰⁴ Liebs, 186-188.

investment tax credit. As a result, the motel industry took a considerable plunge in the 1990s.¹⁰⁵

There are now hotels for every budget: Ramada and Hilton provide more luxurious accommodations, budget hotels, such as Econo Lodge, Days Inn, and Motel 6, provide more economical options. However, more adventurous tourists can still find campgrounds and privately-owned motels if they look hard enough.¹⁰⁶

Motels along Route 1

Motels still exist in relatively large numbers along certain sections of Route 1 between Maine and Florida. Due to its location at the northern terminus of Route 1, its distrust of large corporations, its support for local businesses, and because it is not high on the list for development, Maine has a large number of privately-owned motels.¹⁰⁷ In Saugus, Massachusetts, staff of the local Saugus Historical Society have been working to add classic roadside lodging establishments, such as the 1920s Ferns “air conditioned” motel and the nearby Chisholm Motel to the National Register of Historic Places.¹⁰⁸ There are still motels in operation along Route 1 in Maryland, such as the White Elk Motel, the Terrace Motel, the Hillside Motel, the Boulevard Motel, and the Exec Motel in Elkridge, and the Valencia Motel and Turf Motel in Laurel.¹⁰⁹ A fairly sizeable number also exist along Route 1 in Florida.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Marcavitch, 100, 102.

¹⁰⁶ Liebs, 188-191.

¹⁰⁷ “Motels/Hotels,” *Explore Route 1: Maine Edition*, accessed March 29, 2014, <http://www.explorerroute1.com/businesses.asp?category=19&submit=Go>.

¹⁰⁸ Andrew and Jenny L. Wood, *Motel America: A State-by-State Tour Guide to Nostalgic Stopovers* (Portland, OR: Collectors Press, Inc., 2004), 50.

¹⁰⁹ “Nostalgic Maryland - “No Tell Motels,”” *Foursquare*, accessed April 7, 2014, <https://foursquare.com/larryholt/list/nostalgic-maryland--no-tell-motels>.

¹¹⁰ Wood, 26.

Chapter 5: Overview of Motels

This chapter provides a short description of each of the motels within the study area. About half of them featured cabins throughout the entirety of their existence, while the other half was composed of strings of connected rooms. Haass Haven/College Park, Park Lane, Schrom's, Hunter's, Shady Grove, Long's, and Cherry Hill never made the evolutionary jump to connected rooms while still in business. Colonial Plaza, Lord Calvert, and Hillcrest contained connected rooms, while the structures at Del Haven, Stewart's, the Royal Pine, and Canary Cottages took on a more intermediary form, a series of rooms or cabins connected by garages or carports. House in the Tree was a unique case altogether, with the cabins having been removed and the main building converted into a guest home.

Hunter's Old Spring Tourist Camp

In operation since around 1920, this particular tourist camp was one of the earliest enterprises of its kind in College Park. The tourist camp and service station were located near the south gate of campus, across the street from the Lord Calvert Hotel.¹¹¹ Herman and Elizabeth Follin moved to College Park from Virginia in 1920 and bought the already-existing tourist camp operation from a man named Hunter.¹¹² The camp featured about 40 heated cabins and offered hot and cold showers in a separate building (Figures 15-18).¹¹³ The Follin's charged \$1 per night per cabin, and the tourist camp was AAA-approved.¹¹⁴ A service station was operated in conjunction with the tourist camp (Figure 19). Initially, the service station went by the name Hunter's Service Station, but the name

¹¹¹ University of Maryland M Book, 1932-33.

¹¹² Follin family interview, March 2, 2014.

¹¹³ Stullich and Bryant, 70.

¹¹⁴ Follin family interview, March 2, 2014.

was later changed to Follin's Service Station. The property itself was owned by Elmore Power, who had bought up a large quantity of land to the southeast of campus to create his own subdivision, known as College Park Homes. In 1939, he defaulted on the mortgage.¹¹⁵ To ensure that Mrs. Follin would continue to have a source of income, the developer built Follin Guest Home at the top of the hill at 6801 Baltimore Avenue (Figure 20).¹¹⁶ The guest home is still in operation as a continuation of Hunter's Old Spring Tourist Camp and is one of the longest-running businesses of its kind in College Park that is still owned by the same family.



Figure 15: View of the office, cabins, and old spring. The roads of the tourist camp were lined in white rocks (Courtesy of the Prince George's County Historical Society).

¹¹⁵ Prince George's County Land Records liber 532, folio 253.

¹¹⁶ Follin family interview, March 2, 2014.



Figure 16: View down a row of cabins (Courtesy of the Prince George's County Historical Society).



Figure 17: The camp's swings and picnic area. It is likely that the building in the background was the restroom/shower facility (Courtesy of the Prince George's County Historical Society).



Figure 18: Looking northwest towards the Maryland Inn. The white at the base of the trees was the result of insecticide being applied to them (Courtesy of the Prince George's County Historical Society).



Figure 19: Looking southeast at Hunter's Service Station in the late 1930s, just before the camp closed. Note the sign advertising the tourist camp on the roof of the building that sat just to the north of the service station (Courtesy of Gary Burton).



Figure 20: Follin Guest Home, c.1940s (Courtesy of Kim Follin).

Lord Calvert Hotel and Cottages

Lord Calvert Inn was a rather unique establishment in relation to when and how it was constructed. While other College Park motels relied on cabins, Lord Calvert, from its earliest days, featured a large central building where a restaurant and the offices were located (see Appendix B). To create a symmetrical landscape, two strips of rooms containing 10 units each were oriented diagonally on either side of the main building. The driveway circled around the rear of the main building and returned to meet the highway. Parking was located to the front of the main building, rather than in front of the units (Figure 21).



Figure 21: A c.1950s postcard providing an aerial view of Lord Calvert Hotel and Cottages (Author's personal postcard collection).

Lord Calvert Inn was constructed at 7200 Baltimore Avenue (adjacent to the University of Maryland) around 1930 by Claude and Augusta Gilbert of College Park and became a corporation the following year.¹¹⁷ The Gilberts lost the property in 1942 after they defaulted on their mortgage.¹¹⁸ In 1949, a 143-unit apartment complex was built adjacent to the motel;¹¹⁹ known as Lord Calvert Apartments, four-room (one-bedroom) and five-room (two-bedroom) apartments were offered for rent. The four-room units cost \$81 per month, and the five-room units cost \$95 per month, both including utilities.¹²⁰

In 1950, Howard Dayton Hotels Corporation bought the property and planned to add up to 55 new rooms, a banquet hall, ballroom, tap room, dining room, bar, and kitchen.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Stullich and Bryant, 72; "Trend in Local Market Is Mostly Downward," *Baltimore Sun*, July 24, 1931.

¹¹⁸ Prince George's County Land Records, liber 654, folio 266.

¹¹⁹ Conrad P. Harness, "Apartments Draw D.C. Investors; 10,000 New Rental Units Planned," *Washington Post*, August 31, 1947; Conrad P. Harness, "University Lane Area Attracts Apartments, Stores," *Washington Post*, December 4, 1949.

¹²⁰ "Display Ad 3 -- No Title," *Washington Post*, May 7, 1949.

¹²¹ "Dayton Corp. Buys College Park Hotel," *Washington Post*, February 12, 1950; "33 Houses Slated In Northeast D.C.," *Washington Post*, June 4, 1950.

Around this time, the establishment was advertised as Lord Calvert Hotel and Apartments, the hotel portion containing 40 rooms and baths for commercial and tourist patronage. Around the 1950s, it was also known as Lord Calvert Hotel and Cottages. At this point, it featured air-cooled cottages and hotel rooms, free television, easily accessible dining facilities, garages, and free parking and was open 24 hours a day. These apparently were the last cottage accommodations available before reaching Washington D.C.¹²² One and two-bedroom apartments were advertised in 1955, each containing a living room, dinette, kitchen, and bath. The apartments were promoted as having excellent transportation and being conveniently located near the University of Maryland, a shopping center, and schools.¹²³ The complex was razed in 1960,¹²⁴ and two years later, the Park University Motel opened on the site (Figure 24).¹²⁵ Owned by Quality Courts, this was eventually transformed into a Quality Inn, which is currently what sits at 7200 Baltimore Avenue.

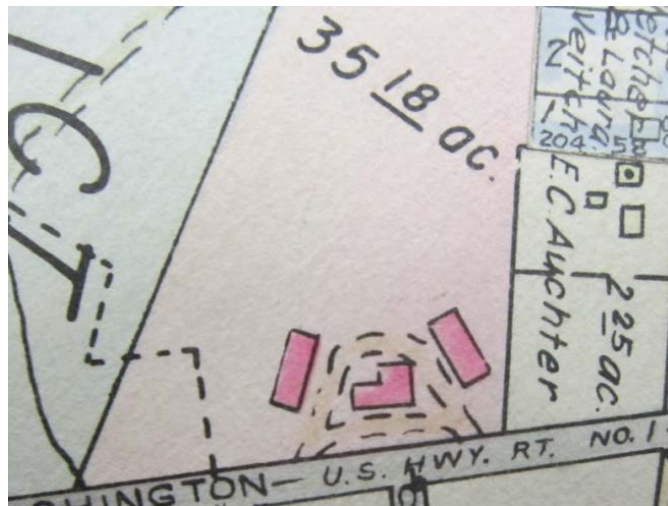


Figure 22: The 1940 Franklin Atlas, which depicts the location of the access road and three buildings on the property.

¹²² Author's personal postcard collection.

¹²³ "Classified Ad 5 -- No Title," *Washington Post*, July 22, 1955.

¹²⁴ Stullich and Bryant, 72.

¹²⁵ "Motel to Open in College Park," *Washington Post*, September 29, 1962.

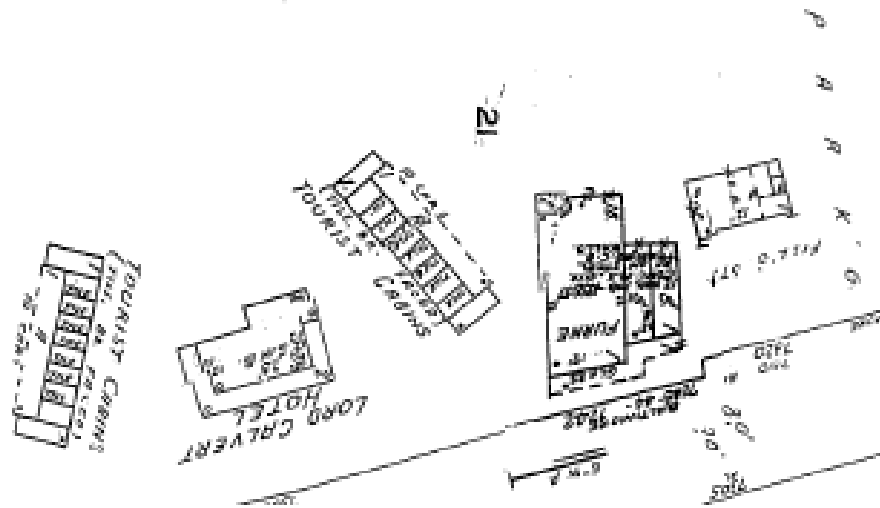


Figure 23: 1927-1959 Washington-Suburban Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the layout of the Lord Calvert Hotel buildings.



Figure 24: Triple-view postcard showing the Park University Motel (Author's personal postcard collection).

Long's Motel

While college students today would recognize 8141 Baltimore Avenue as Campus Village Shopping Center, the Long family operated a multi-faceted commercial operation on the site between 1936 and 1977. Calvert Francis Long and Mary Alberta Long

acquired the property in two separate deed transactions in 1936.¹²⁶ According to an appraisal during Lakeland's Urban Renewal period by Fredric Lauterbach around 1969, the property featured a service station, motel, and liquor store (Figures 25-28).

Lauterbach suggested that the service station be retained, but that the balance of the improvements (or structures) did not represent the highest and best use of the property.

He did state, however, that it was an ideal location for a motel.¹²⁷ The property was sold by the Long family in 1977 to SFS Corporation.¹²⁸ In 1985, SFS sold the property to Campus Village Associates, which developed the property into its current form.¹²⁹



Figure 25: Cabins at Long's Motel (Courtesy of Rick Long).

¹²⁶ Prince George's County Land Records liber 453, folio 76 and liber 447, folio 401.

¹²⁷ Fredric Lauterbach appraisal.

¹²⁸ Prince George's County Land Records liber 4867, folio 268.

¹²⁹ Prince George's County Land Records liber 6205, folio 44.



Figure 26: Long's Amoco Service Station (Courtesy of Rick Long).



Figure 27: Long's Liquor Store (Courtesy of Rick Long).



Figure 28: 1927-1959 Washington-Suburban Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Calvert Long’s motel liquor store, and service station operation.

Shady Grove Cabins

This cabin camp is not well-remembered, which caused some difficulty in finding information about the establishment. The camp was discovered in a 1950 Prince George’s County metropolitan directory.¹³⁰ The 1940 Franklin Atlas shows that on the west side of Route 1, across from Pontiac Street (at that time, Monacan Avenue), John W. Bennett owned land on which a six-cabin tourist camp was operated sometime between 1924 and 1939, when he passed away (Figure 29). The property left the Bennett family’s hands in 1944.¹³¹ There is no sign of a larger main house on the site, but one of the small structures shown on the map may have been utilized as an office. Bennett may or may not have actually run the business, since he had a full-time job and lived in Washington D.C.

¹³⁰ Clare Erly Wooten, *Prince George's County Metropolitan Directory of the Mt. Rainier, Hyattsville, College Park Area: Including Bladensburg, Brentwood, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, Edmonston, Riverdale, University Park, North Brentwood*, 1950.

¹³¹ Prince George’s County Land Records liber 230, folio 193, and liber 773, folio 186.

and Baltimore during the course of his ownership.¹³² The formal name of the business under his ownership is also unknown.

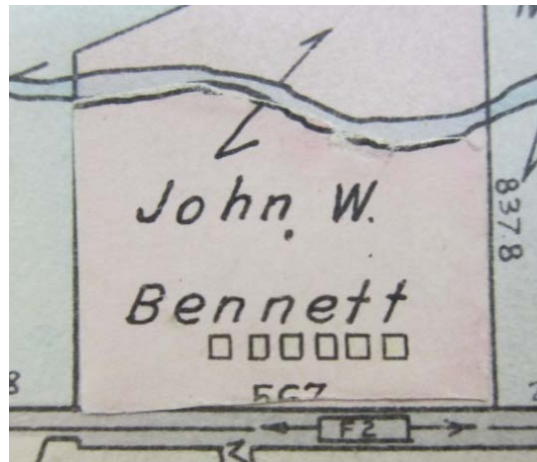


Figure 29: John W. Bennett’s tourist cabin enterprise as depicted on the 1940 Franklin Atlas.

Between 1947 and 1965, the establishment was run by the Leslie family as Shady Grove Cabins.¹³³ Georgia H. Leslie purchased the property in 1947, and Alvah and Mary Leslie sold it in 1965, not long after College Park was connected to the Capital Beltway (Figure 31).¹³⁴ Today, the property is the site of the University of Maryland’s Route 1 Annex office building, which a branch of the Maryland National Bank owned from 1984-1988.¹³⁵



Figure 30: The 1927-1959 Washington-Suburban Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows 2 cabins across the street from the service station that sat just south of Haass Haven Motel.

¹³² “Funeral Today in Baltimore for John W. Bennett,” *Washington Post*, June 8, 1939.

¹³³ Wooten, *Prince George’s County Metropolitan Directory of the Mt. Rainier, Hyattsville, College Park Area: Including Bladensburg, Brentwood, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, Edmonston, Riverdale, University Park, North Brentwood*.

¹³⁴ Prince George’s County Land Records liber 934, folio 232, and liber 3225, folio 133.

¹³⁵ Prince George’s County Land Records liber 6034, folio 516, and liber 6957, folio 566.

MOTEL EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES
— Gas Furnace, 2 oil furnaces.
SHADY GROVE MOTEL, 8400
Baltimore blvd., 474-3939.

Figure 31: A classified ad from 1965 in which the motel's owners advertised motel equipment for sale. ("Classified Ad 10 -- No Title," *Washington Post*, November 26, 1965).

Haass Haven/College Park Motel

This motel was located at 8419 Baltimore Avenue. Its main house was constructed as a residence in 1923 by the Beckwith's.¹³⁶ The Price's purchased the property in 1927 and added the front and rear porches, along with some cabins to cater to tourists coming to Washington.¹³⁷ The establishment was named Haass Haven after Carl and Emily Haass who operated a motel there between 1948 and 1952 (Figure 32).¹³⁸ Between 1953 and 1960, it was run under the same name by Charles and Elizabeth Ribar.¹³⁹ They advertised modern cabins with tile baths or showers.¹⁴⁰ In 1975, it was bought by an Indian national living in Manassas and working for IBM who would come around on weekends.¹⁴¹ In late 1977, the motel was sold to another Indian national.¹⁴² By this point, there were 16 cabins and four apartments in the main building. Rooms were moderately-priced and were rented to students and professors from the University of Maryland who occasionally paid by the week, a variety of transients, and those in need of emergency housing who were placed there by the county social services agency. Some of the units had kitchens

¹³⁶ Stullich and Bryant, 73; Eugene L. Meyer, "Bad Luck a Frequent Guest at Md. Motel: Motel a Magnet for Troubled Persons," *Washington Post*, February 25, 1978.

¹³⁷ Prince George's County Land Records liber 291, folio 93; Meyer, "Bad Luck a Frequent Guest at Md. Motel: Motel a Magnet for Troubled Persons."

¹³⁸ Prince George's County Land Records liber 1026, folio 381, and liber 1458, folio 38.

¹³⁹ Prince George's County Land Records liber 1624, folio 435, and liber 2503, folio 593 and author's personal postcard collection.

¹⁴⁰ Author's personal postcard collection.

¹⁴¹ Prince George's County Land Records liber 4497, folio 642; Meyer, "Bad Luck a Frequent Guest at Md. Motel: Motel a Magnet for Troubled Persons."

¹⁴² Prince George's County Land Records liber 4869, folio 533.

and more than one room. Even though the county did not allow housekeeping units in new motels as of 1978, older ones could still operate under a grandfather clause.¹⁴³ It was more recently known as the College Park Motel, sold to the current owner in 2006, and demolished in October 2011.¹⁴⁴ The brick four-story Best Western College Park Hotel, built at the end of 2013, now sits at 8419 Baltimore Avenue.



Figure 32: A postcard of Haass Haven Motel, which provides evidence of the owners' attempts to make the cabins look like homey little cottages (Author's personal postcard collection).

¹⁴³ Meyer, "Bad Luck a Frequent Guest at Md. Motel: Motel a Magnet for Troubled Persons."

¹⁴⁴ Prince George's County Land Records liber 26603, folio 615; "College Park Development Update," *City of College Park, MD*, January 2013, accessed April 11, 2014, http://www.collegeparkmd.gov/document_center/College_Park_Development_Update___January_2013.pdf.

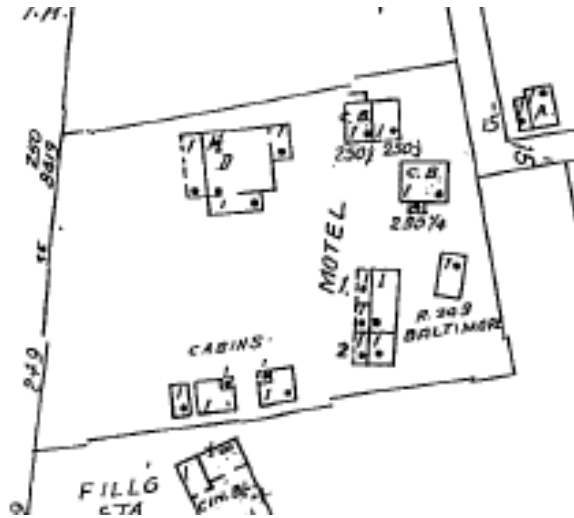


Figure 33: Layout of Haass Haven as shown on the 1927-1959 Washington-Suburban Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

William Schrom's Tourist Cabins

Although the precise name and exact address of this rather modest enterprise remains unknown, the 1940 Franklin Atlas provides the name of the landowner, William H. Schrom, who purchased the four-acre property in the Branchville subdivision in 1925 (Figure 34).¹⁴⁵ The Sanborn map below shows a main house, three small cabins, a single-story building of unknown use to the northwest, and a small single-story structure located between the main house and the three cabins (Figure 35). There were two small buildings located to the north of the main house that disappeared between 1940 and 1959. The property was leased to Fair Lanes Bowling Properties, Inc. in 1960.¹⁴⁶ A relative of William Schrom is still in possession of the property. The property at 9021 Baltimore Avenue, currently the site of AMF College Park Lanes, currently occupies just over three acres.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Prince George's County Land Records liber 257, folio 359.

¹⁴⁶ Prince George's County Land Records liber 2521, folio 10.

¹⁴⁷ Prince George's County Land Records liber 34032, folio 44.

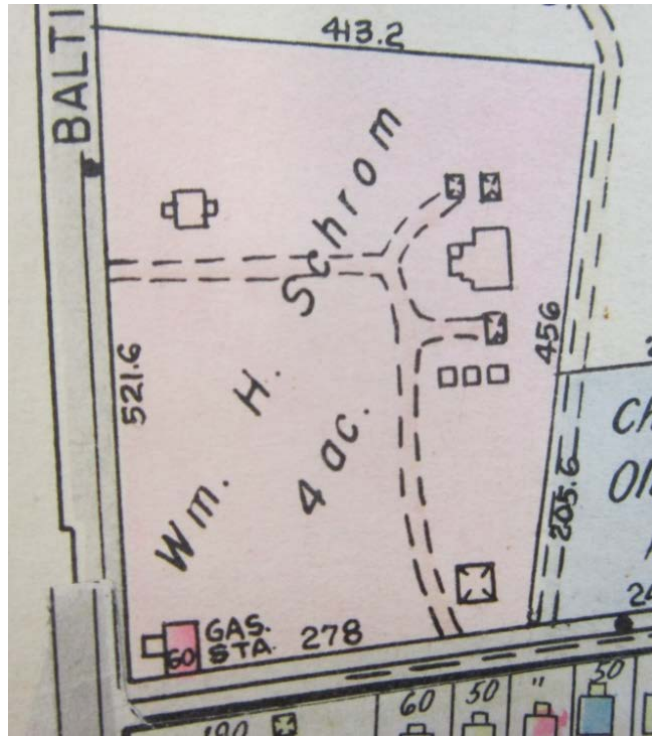


Figure 34: The 1940 Franklin Atlas provides the landowner's name.

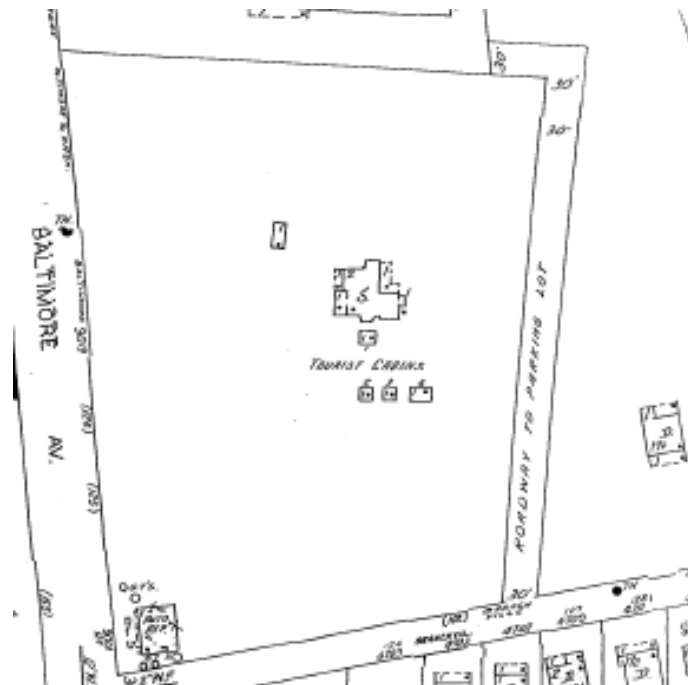


Figure 35: The 1927-1959 Washington-Suburban Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, which depicts the layout of Schrom's rather modest tourist cabin operation.

Royal Pine Tourist Court

George Siebens purchased the property at 9113 Baltimore Avenue in pieces from 1939-1947 (Figure 36).¹⁴⁸ In the early 1940s, he built the 10-unit Royal Pine Tourist Court on the property.¹⁴⁹ Like many entrepreneurs who established and operated motels and tourist camps along Route 1 during the 20th century, Siebens catered to tourists on their way to the Capital via Route 1. A linen postcard from the time advertised all-modern cottages, steam heat, and hot water. On the front is an image of the ten units, which were connected by garages.¹⁵⁰ The fact that garages were incorporated into the fabric of many motels during this period shows the level of importance that was placed on the automobile. The image also shows the characteristic southwestern appearance of the Royal Pine, which made it the most thematically-embellished motel in College Park. The owners' belief that the automobile roadside was an unsettled frontier that needed to be tamed and civilized is indicated by the beautiful landscaping. Many early motels were thoughtfully laid out with greens, trees, and gardens.¹⁵¹ In order to make his establishment even more desirable to tourists, Siebens advertised that the establishment was AAA approved and recommended (Figure 37).¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Prince George's County Land Records liber 949, folio 470; liber 560, folio 26; liber 519, folio 473; and liber 519, folio 471.

¹⁴⁹ Eugene L. Meyer, "Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years," *Washington Post*, January 19, 1978.

¹⁵⁰ Author's personal postcard collection.

¹⁵¹ Jakle, 58-59.

¹⁵² Author's personal postcard collection.



Figure 36: 1940 Franklin Atlas, when George Sieben still owned the 1-acre property.



Figure 37: A postcard providing separate views of the main house and a portion of the C-shaped motel structure (Author's personal postcard collection).

Siebens ran the Royal Pine until 1952, when he sold the now $2 \frac{2}{3}$ -acre property to J. Allen & Emma Abernathy.¹⁵³ The Abernathy's sold it to the Simmons four years later.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Prince George's County Land Records liber 1509, folio 245.

¹⁵⁴ Prince George's County Land Records liber 2042, folio 49.

The known history of the property became much more detailed the following year, when the Simmons' put the property up for sale.¹⁵⁵

Jeanette, the youngest daughter of Felix Irwin, the owner of Del Haven White House Cottages, had just married a man named Edgar Sims, Jr. from Alexandria, VA. He had plans to take his law degree and his new wife to California. In order to keep them here, Felix gave the newlyweds a down payment on the 2 2/3-acre Royal Pine in 1957.¹⁵⁶ Bud Irwin, Felix's son, brokered the motel as one of his first real estate jobs. Due to the transaction taking place within the family, Bud made practically no commission.¹⁵⁷ When the Sims' acquired the property, the motel contained 12 rooms and was worth \$150,000. The couple lived in the house with their children for ten years. A small room on the south façade of the house was used as the office. In the summertime, the Sims' rented out the upstairs rooms. The Royal Pine brought in \$32,000 during their first year there. Ed Sims served as the plumber, electrician, and handyman, which saved the family a substantial amount of money.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Prince George's County Land Records liber 2166, folio 474.

¹⁵⁶ Meyer, "Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years"; Prince George's County Land Records liber 2166, folio 474.

¹⁵⁷ Meyer, "Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years."

¹⁵⁸ Kris Antonelli, "\$15 million chain began as tiny, family-run motel," *Journal*, 1982.

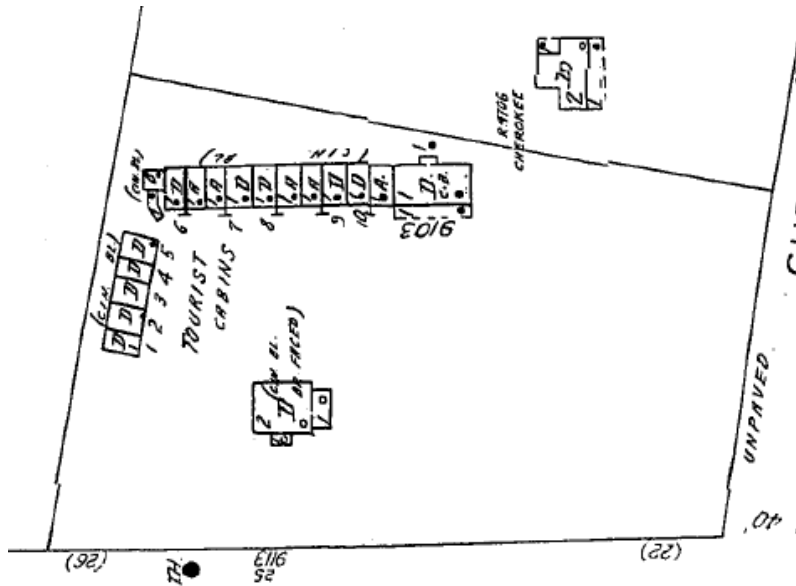


Figure 38: The main house acting as a gateway to the motel units, the string of five garage-less units on the left, and the series of five units with garages interspersed among them, as well as a larger unit at its southern end, along the top, as seen on the 1927-1959 Washington-Suburban Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

According to “Bud” Irwin, Ed Sims was “really a good operator.”¹⁵⁹ The trail of newspaper articles Sims left behind shows his brother-in-law’s statement to be quite accurate, if not an understatement. In 1964, Ed Sims was named to Hospitality Magazine’s Hall of Fame for his work in the lodging industry and in civic affairs. At the time, he was also the director of the American Motor Hotel Association and a former president and vice president of the Maryland Motel Association. On the civic level, he was also the chairman of the College Park Heart Fund drive.¹⁶⁰ The next year, he was elected president of the American Motor Hotel Association (AMHA) during its annual convention and trade show in Chicago. At the time, the AMHA consisted of 7,000 motel operators from 42 affiliated state organizations. Sims was also a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Tourism to the Maryland State Department of Economic Development. In addition, he was active in the Maryland Motel-Motor Hotel Association

¹⁵⁹ Meyer, “Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years.”

¹⁶⁰ “College Park Motel Man Is Honored,” *Washington Post*, April 19, 1964.

and the Maryland Travel Council, of which he was the regional vice president.¹⁶¹ By marrying into the Irwin motel dynasty, he appears to have truly become one of the family.

In the 1960s, Ed Sims began to work on expanding the Royal Pine into what would eventually become a 115-unit Best Western motel (Figure 39).¹⁶² The first, 12-room addition was constructed in 1963.¹⁶³ Along with that addition, the garages, which had become too small for modern automobiles, were converted into adjoining rooms to create family units.¹⁶⁴ The second constructed, along with a pool, in 1964, the third was constructed in 1968, and the final, 90-room, three-story addition, which required the \$10,000 relocation of the main house, was constructed in 1977.¹⁶⁵ As a result of the final expansion, the main house was relocated to the rear of the adjacent lot to the north (Figure 39). It is the only motel main house still standing in College Park (see Appendix E). In 1981, the Sims' bought the Interstate Inn a couple blocks south and converted it to the Best Western Maryland Inn. The Interstate Inn had been built in the style of a Holiday Inn, but it had lost its designation as a result of its bad reputation (Figure 40). The Royal Pine Best Western had reached about 96% capacity, and so overflow space was needed to accommodate more visitors.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ "College Park Motel Owner Elected Association Head," *Washington Post*, June 20, 1965.

¹⁶² Meyer, "Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years."

¹⁶³ Sims family interview, April 15, 2014; Antonelli, "\$15 million chain began as tiny, family-run motel."

¹⁶⁴ Antonelli, "\$15 million chain began as tiny, family-run motel."

¹⁶⁵ Sims family interview, April 15, 2014.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

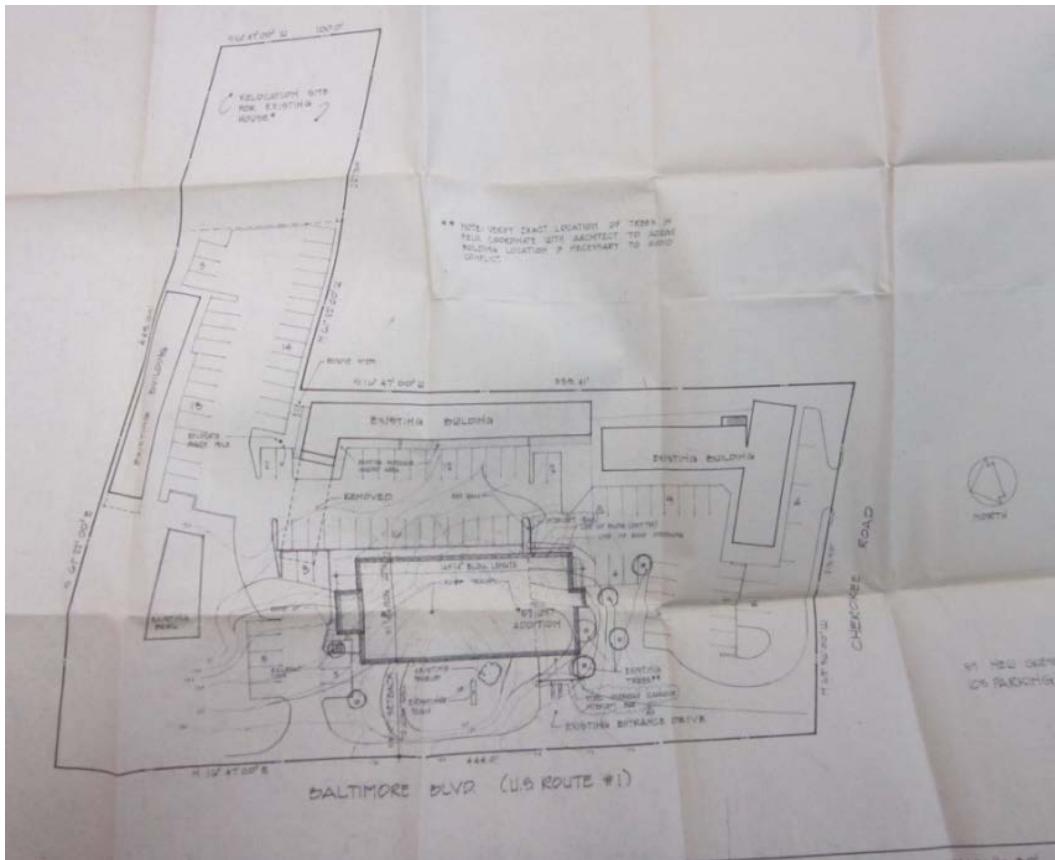


Figure 39: 1977 site plan showing the changes Ed Sims planned to make to the property, including the relocation of the main house to the rear of the property to make room for a 59-unit addition (Courtesy of College Park Code Enforcement).



Figure 40: Pre-1980 postcard image of the Interstate Inn (Author's personal postcard collection).

On his postcards, Ed Sims advertised the Royal Pine Motel as “[a]n attractively decorated motel, on spacious shaded grounds,” with room telephones, G.E. electric blankets, air conditioning, wall-to-wall carpeting, a TV in every room, family units, cribs, a playground, sight-seeing tours, and a restaurant across the street.¹⁶⁷ Perhaps his brother-in-law was right; he really was a good operator. It appears he thought of everything. In fact, the Sims’ still take pride in the fact that the Royal Pine was the only Duncan Hines-approved motel in the area.¹⁶⁸ Until the Sims family was sued in 1991 for not allowing a couple to stay at the Best Western Maryland Inn three years earlier, no locals were allowed to stay at any of the Irwin’s or Sims’ motels to discourage prostitution.¹⁶⁹ This had been the families’ policy since 1938 to keep their motels reputable and family-friendly.¹⁷⁰

By the early 1980s, the University of Maryland had grown from about 10,000 students in 1957 to around 40,000, bringing more parents into College Park. The area had become more congested due to the 1960s construction of the Capital Beltway and University Boulevard, resulting in more traffic along Route 1 and thus more visibility. The area’s economic growth also contributed to the motel’s business. The Royal Pine catered to business-people year-round and tourists during the summer. Families visiting Washington, D.C. often stayed at certain College Park motels, such as the Royal Pine, because of their family atmosphere.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ Author’s personal postcard collection.

¹⁶⁸ Sims family interview, April 15, 2014.

¹⁶⁹ “‘No Locals’ Rule Fuels Motel Suits,” *New York Times*, November 29, 1992, accessed April 29, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/11/29/us/no-locals-rule-fuels-motel-suits.html>.

¹⁷⁰ Sims family interview, April 15, 2014.

¹⁷¹ Antonelli, “\$15 million chain began as tiny, family-run motel.”

As of 1987, the motel catered mostly to university students and university-generated traffic.¹⁷² The Sims' owned the property until 1988, when they sold it to the Galaxy Corporation for \$3,900,000.¹⁷³ At this point, the motel became a Ramada.¹⁷⁴ The property changed hands twice before the current owners, Royal Hospitality, Inc., took possession of it. The property has been steadily decreasing in value since 1988.¹⁷⁵

The success of the Royal Pine can be attributed to several factors, some of which negatively affected many motels nationwide. The failure of many motels was due to the fact that the children of motel operators were simply not interested in dedicating seven days a week to running a motel. The advantage that the Royal Pine had was that Ed Sims was essentially handed a motel by his father-in-law to keep his daughter and son-in-law in the area. The Irwin's were professional motel operators, and the tradition continued on into the Sims family. Even to this day, the Sims' are involved in the hospitality business. The second factor was the University of Maryland, the growth of which brought more parents and conference attendees to the area. A third factor was the construction of the Capital Beltway and University Boulevard, which meant more traffic and higher visibility. Thus the new highway system was actually advantageous to the Royal Pine. In addition, the area's economic growth increased the amount of business the motel received. Finally, its proximity to the Capital also contributed to its success.

¹⁷² Keith Harriston, "Gasoline Attack In P.G. Burns Motel Employees: Motel Employees Burned," *Washington Post*, September 30, 1987.

¹⁷³ Prince George's County Land Records liber 7090, folio 694.

¹⁷⁴ Sims family interview, April 15, 2014.

¹⁷⁵ Prince George's County Land Records liber 11547, folio 415; liber 11487, folio 396; and liber 10807, folio 211.

Hillcrest Motor Court

Across the street from the Royal Pine sat the Hillcrest Motor Court, which was built around the first residence constructed in the Autoville subdivision. A grand Victorian residence featuring a corner tower, the house was historically known as “Daniels’ House at Autoville,” but has been more commonly referred to as “Hillcrest.” The large size of the house enabled it to be easily converted into a rooming house, and subsequently a motel grew up behind the house around 1940 (Figure 41).¹⁷⁶ In 1951, the establishment was known as the Hillcrest Motel, which prided itself on its modern heated cabins, each having a bathroom, and a large shaded grove. As of 1957, the motel was referred to as the Hillcrest Motor Court, which featured 14 modern brick cottages, each with a bath and tile shower, a restaurant, and a hotel with 12 rooms and 10 baths. The owners claimed that large family units were their specialty. To keep up with the times, television and air conditioning were also advertised (Figure 42).¹⁷⁷ The property was sold in 2005 to the current owner, University House at Hillcrest, who removed all the structures from the property that same year due to their poor condition and the presence of squatters.¹⁷⁸ 9122 Baltimore Avenue is currently a vacant lot awaiting redevelopment.

¹⁷⁶ Susan G. Pearl, “Hillcrest,” Maryland Historical Trust National Register Eligibility Review Form, September 1987.

¹⁷⁷ Author’s personal postcard collection.

¹⁷⁸ Prince George’s County Land Records liber 22233, folio 664.

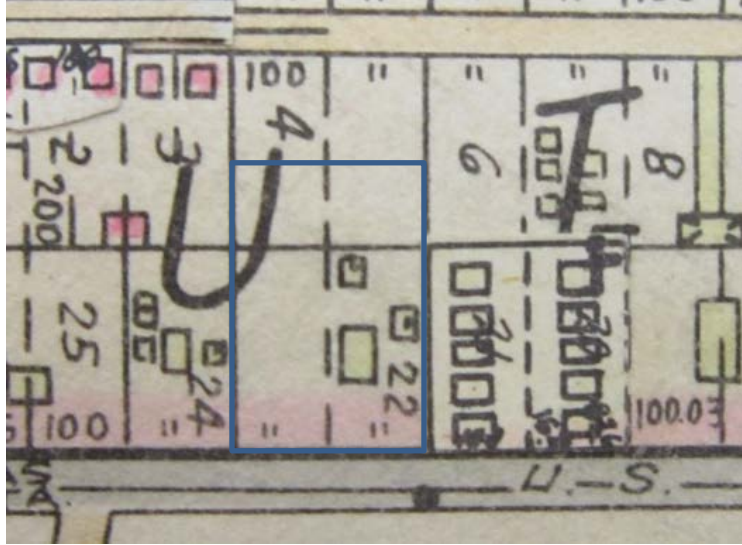


Figure 41: 1940 Franklin Atlas, just prior to the motel structure being built to the rear of the property.



Figure 42: 1957 postcard showing the grand Hillcrest main house, the rather simple motel structure, and the fairly sparse interior of one of the motel rooms. The room, although it lacks carpet and nightstands, both staples of today's modern hotel room, does contain such modern conveniences as television and air conditioning. Including a picture of one of its better-looking rooms on the front of one of its postcards implies that the motel apparently prided itself on the appearance of its rooms (Author's personal postcard collection).

Park Lane Cabins/Motel

Just north of the Royal Pine Tourist Court was the Park Lane Motel. As was typical of motels with limited street frontage, the layout of this cabin camp formed a U-shape.

According to the maps below, the camp was comprised of a two-story main house, a store with a front porch, about 16 cabins of varying sizes, a single-story public/institutional building (most likely a community center, restroom facility, or restaurant), and a single-story structure of unknown use at the rear of the property, all of non-masonry construction (most likely wood-framed) (Figures 43-44). In the 1960s and 70s, a Holiday Inn was operated on the site.¹⁷⁹ The currently-existing building complex was constructed in 1966.¹⁸⁰ A Days Inn currently sits on just over 1.5 acres at 9137 Baltimore Avenue, at the corner of Route 1 and Delaware Street.¹⁸¹

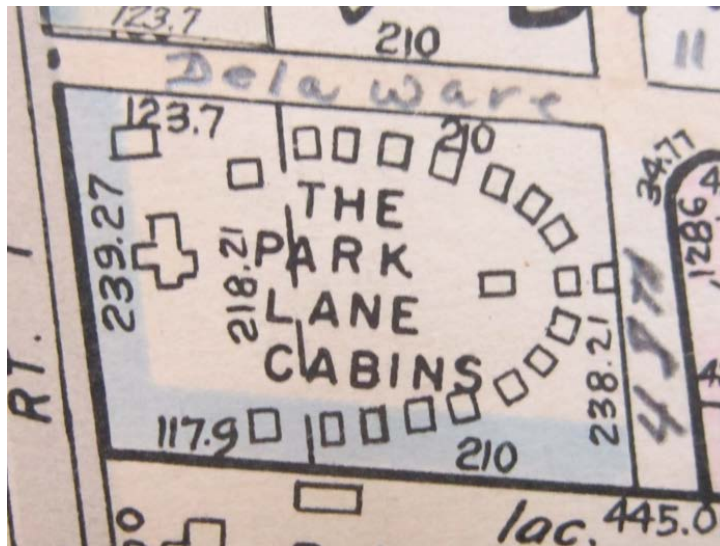


Figure 43: Park Lane Cabins, 1940 Franklin Atlas.

¹⁷⁹ “College Park Motel Is Robbed of \$400,” *Washington Post*, August 3, 1967; “Adelphi Woman Killed at Motel,” *The Washington Post*, July 7, 1974.

¹⁸⁰ Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation information for 9137 Baltimore Ave.

¹⁸¹ Prince George’s County Land Records liber 12449, folio 388.

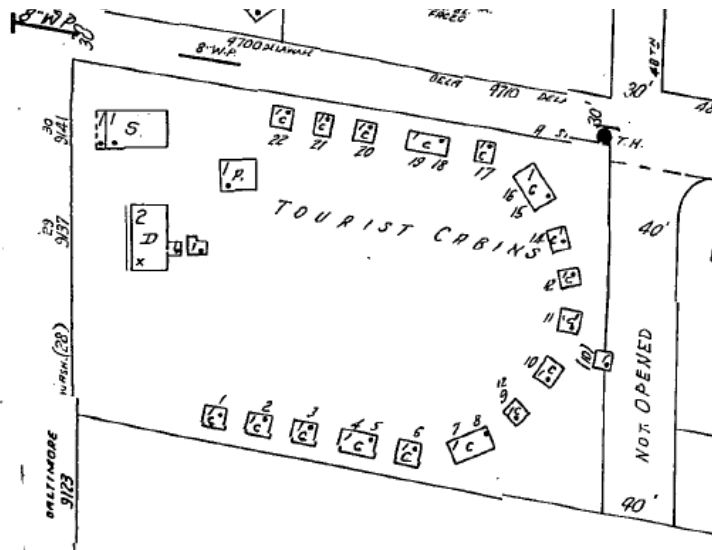


Figure 44: 1927-1959 Washington-Suburban Sanborn Fire Insurance Map also showing the U-shaped layout of the Park Lane Motel, one of the most typical motel layouts of the time for establishments dealing with long, narrow lots.

House in the Tree Motel

This motel is one of the least-known and least-documented motels along Route 1 in College Park. Deeds, maps, and oral histories provided all the information discovered about this operation. Caroline G. Shoemaker owned the property at 9150 Baltimore Avenue at the time the 1940 Franklin Atlas was completed (Figure 45). She purchased two large parcels of land towards the end of 1932 from a woman named Frederica Leverone. Not only did she purchase ten lots fronting on Route 1 and Autoville to the west, but she also purchased a large piece of land to the west across Autoville Road.¹⁸² How she utilized that particular parcel of land is unknown. Along Route 1, there were about nine white wood frame cabins and a restaurant that sat far back off the road.¹⁸³ Whether or not the cabins were already constructed when Shoemaker purchased the land from Leverone is unknown. The cabins were removed in the 1950s, probably just after

¹⁸² Prince George's County Land Records liber 390, folio 354.

¹⁸³ Jerry Anzulovic, phone interview, March 4, 2014.

Ernest and Jane Eckenrode purchased the property.¹⁸⁴ The couple acquired the land in pieces throughout the 1950s, so the exact year the cabins were removed is difficult to determine. They acquired the main house property in 1958 due to being the devisees of Caroline Shoemaker's will.¹⁸⁵ The main house was subsequently operated as a guest home.¹⁸⁶ Evidence that the guest home was referred to as a motel even after the cabins had been removed is provided by a 1962 issue of the *Analytical Chemistry* journal. The motel and its distance from campus are included in a list of accommodations located near the University of Maryland in association with an article advertising a conference being held at the University.¹⁸⁷

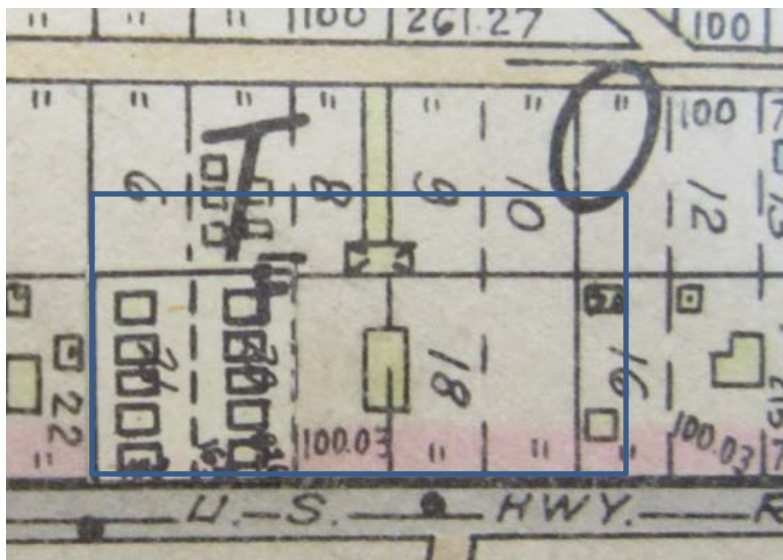


Figure 45: 1940 Franklin Atlas showing House in the Tree occupying 10 lots in Autoville.

The Eckenrodes owned the property the house sat on until 1967, when they sold the land to the Briggs family.¹⁸⁸ The Briggs rented the property between 1967 and 1987 to a

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Prince George's County Land Records liber 3507, folio 283.

¹⁸⁶ Jerry Anzulovic, phone interview, March 4, 2014.

¹⁸⁷ *Analytical Chemistry* 34, no. 4 (April 1962): 40A,
<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/ac60184a730?journalCode=ancham>.

¹⁸⁸ Prince George's County Land Records liber 3507, folio 283.

Justa Tourist Camp/Stewart's Modern Brick Cottages

This property was purchased in 1923 by John Chester Stewart and his first wife Irene Stewart from Jose and Elizabeth Sirvent.¹⁹² According to a 1932 newspaper article, the tourist camp was established by Stewart.¹⁹³ Originally known as Justa Tourist Camp, this establishment offered cabins, rooms, breakfasts, and lunches, as well as a Standard service station (Figure 47).¹⁹⁴ The name of the camp was later changed to Stewart's Modern Brick Cottages, which featured cabins, rooms, good food, and an Esso service station (Figure 48). The owners promoted their establishment by claiming that the camp was cool during the summer and heated in the winter. The camp also had private baths, heated garages (which indicates the importance of the automobile at the time), and a restaurant on the premises that served home-cooked food. To catch high-speed passers-by, a sign that read "Cottages" was mounted on the roof of the diner/service station.¹⁹⁵ In 1946, the restaurant's liquor license was transferred from J. C. Stewart to Lester A. Wells.¹⁹⁶ This could be an indicator that Stewart sold the motel's restaurant that year. The next year, Stewart was remarried to Anna L. Stewart.¹⁹⁷

The couple sold the entire property (totaling just over 18 acres) to the State Roads Commission of Maryland in 1963.¹⁹⁸ The Beltway was supposed to have exited onto Route 1 at the location of University Boulevard, but the ramps were pushed north to their current location.¹⁹⁹ Construction began on the Capital Beltway, a 64-mile section of

¹⁹² Prince George's County Land Records liber 190, folio 423.

¹⁹³ "NEIGHBOR CRITICIZES CAMP FOR TOURISTS: Moral Conditions in Prince Georges Site Told to County Officials," *Washington Post*, August 24, 1932.

¹⁹⁴ Author's personal postcard collection.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ "Hearings Set For 11 Liquor Applications," *Washington Post*, February 10, 1946.

¹⁹⁷ Prince George's County Land Records liber 915, folio 201, and liber 915, folio 203.

¹⁹⁸ Prince George's County Land Records liber 2823, folio 343.

¹⁹⁹ Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

Interstate 495 that encircles Washington, D.C., in 1955 and was completed in 1964.²⁰⁰

Today, 10133 Baltimore Avenue is the location of the entrance and exit ramps to and from the Beltway. The story of this motel embodies the eventual negative impact that the interstate highway system had on motels all across the country.

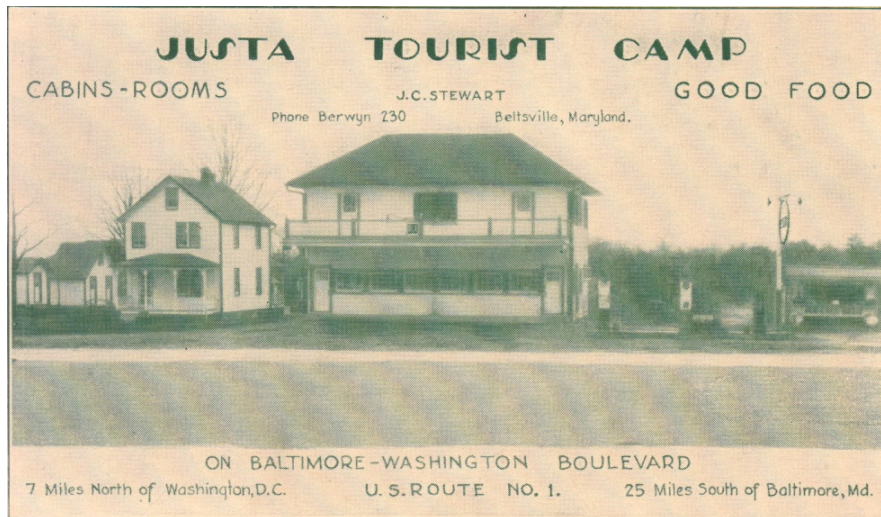


Figure 47: Justa Tourist Camp postcard (Author's personal postcard collection).

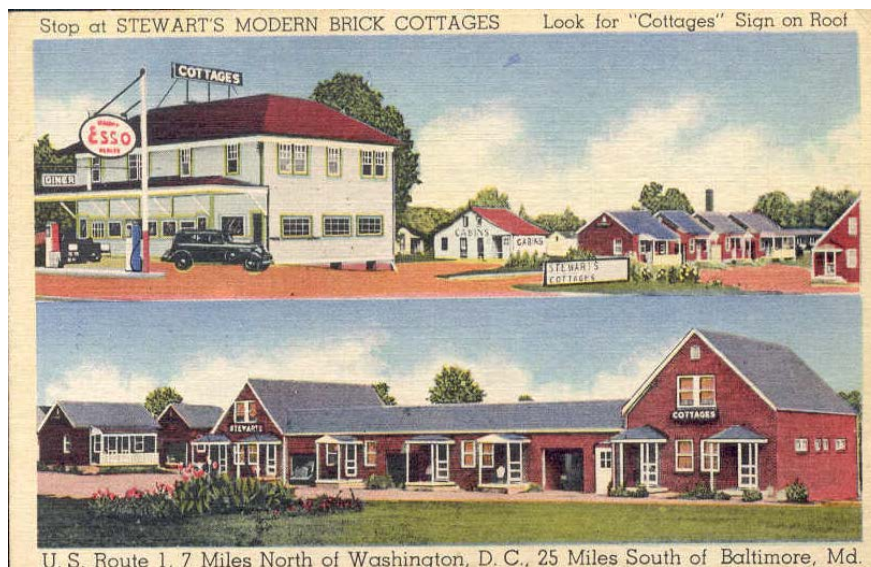


Figure 48: Linen postcard depicting Stewart's Modern Brick Cottages and its associated service station (Author's personal postcard collection).

²⁰⁰ The Capital Beltway was part of the Interstate Highway System created by the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956. The first section of the highway opened in 1961. Rachel Cooper, "Interstate 495 (I-495) – Driving on the Capital Beltway," *About.com*, accessed May 14, 2014, <http://dc.about.com/od/transportation/a/Interstate-495-Capital-Beltway.htm>.

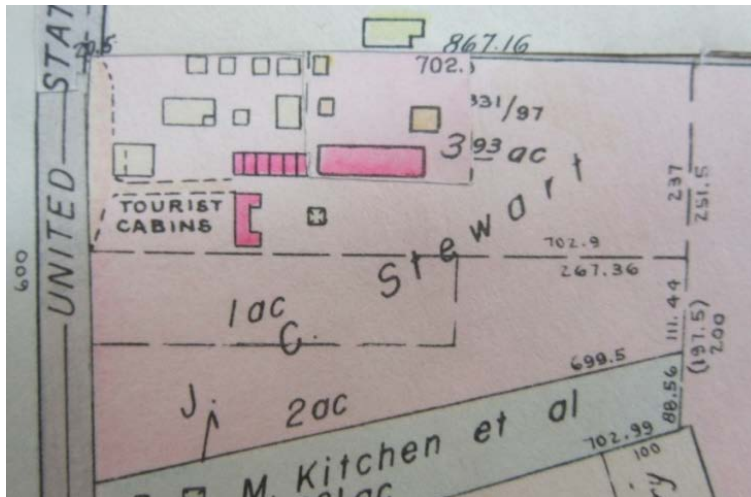


Figure 49: The layout of Stewart's as seen on the 1940 Franklin Atlas.

Colonial Plaza Motel and Dormitories

Colonial Plaza Motel and Dormitories, which also went by the name Colonial Plaza Hotel Court, sat just north of Stewart's on the east side of Route 1. The motel's physical address, which is currently defunct, was 10203 Baltimore Avenue. John and Anna Baltzell purchased the property in 1958.²⁰¹ Around that time, the establishment was referred to as a hotel court, which featured 50 units, each having its own bath, television, air conditioning, a swimming pool, and a sun deck (Figure 50). As was typical of motels and camps up and down Route 1 in the D.C. metro area, the owners promoted the motel based on its proximity to the nation's Capital.²⁰² One ad referred to the establishment as the Colonial Plaza Resort Motel. This ad mentions, in addition to the amenities listed above, a putting green and that the ice skating rink was only open during the winter months and was open to club members.²⁰³ According to Norman Gurevich, the owner of Cherry Hill Campcity across the street from Colonial Plaza, the ice skating rink was

²⁰¹ Prince George's County Land Records liber 2258, folio 342.

²⁰² Author's personal postcard collection.

²⁰³ 1959 University of Maryland student/faculty handbook, *Internet Archive*, http://archive.org/stream/studentfacultyte1959univ/studentfacultyte1959univ_djvu.txt.

covered by a steel pavilion. He also noted that the motel rented by the hour and had a somewhat negative reputation.²⁰⁴

The property was sold by trustees to a title company in 1994.²⁰⁵ Two years later, the land was sold by the title company to Jefferson at College Park, the current owner of the property.²⁰⁶ Wynfield Park Apartments, which were constructed in 1998, currently occupies the site.²⁰⁷



Figure 50: This postcard shows the modern, post-World War II simplicity of the Colonial Plaza Hotel Court, as well as its swimming pool (Author's personal postcard collection).

²⁰⁴ Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

²⁰⁵ Prince George's County Land Records liber 9416, folio 337.

²⁰⁶ Prince George's County Land Records liber 11200, folio 3.

²⁰⁷ "Wynfield Park," *Rent Lingo*, <http://www.rentlingo.com/rentals/wynfield-park-college-park>.

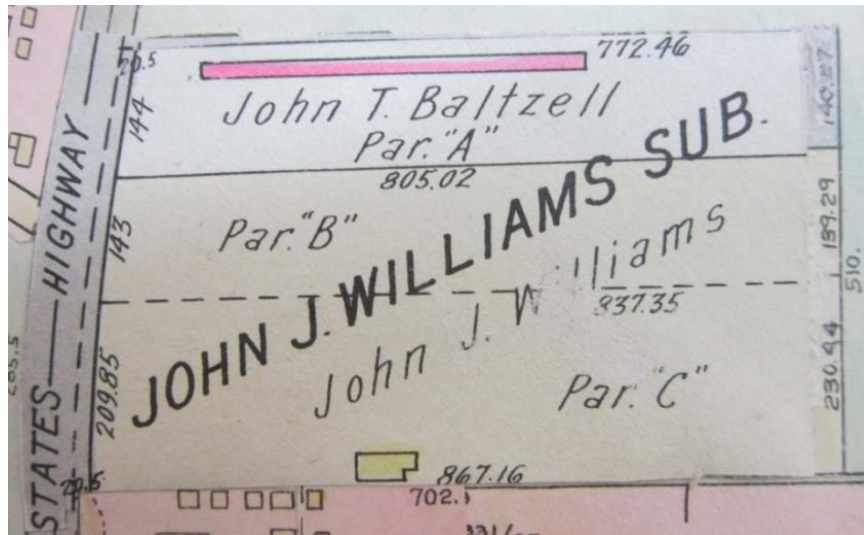


Figure 51: The 1940 Franklin Atlas, which shows a long, brick strip of rooms on the northern edge of the property.

Cherry Hill Campcity

Once located along Route 1, Cherry Hill Campcity survives as Cherry Hill Park on Cherry Hill Road. A family-run business that prides itself on “traditional values and modern amenities,” Cherry Hill Park is the closest RV park and campground to Washington, D.C. For over five generations, the Gurevich family has been serving campers in the Capital area.²⁰⁸

In 1915, a Russian-Jewish immigrant named Jacob Gurevich, who had settled in Washington, D.C. and gone into the grocery business, bought 25 acres along Route 1 on which to raise chickens and grow strawberries (Figure 52). His wife Rose complained that the place was too quiet, so he had a general store and gas station constructed for her to operate.²⁰⁹ The tourist camp was established in the 1920s as the Cherry Hill Poultry

²⁰⁸ “About Cherry Hill Park,” *Cherry Hill Park*, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.cherryhillpark.com/index.cfm/action/home.about>.

²⁰⁹ Eugene L. Meyer, “A Capital Campground: Pull in and park at Cherry Hill,” *Maryland Life* 6, no. 2 (March/April 2010): 32; Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

Farm. Travelers were allowed to set up camp behind the general store.²¹⁰ In the early days, they set up tents or camped out in homemade trailers and pumped their own water from a well. Facilities improved as time went on, as campers eventually got their own individual sites, electricity, and a bathhouse.²¹¹



Figure 52: 1940 Franklin Atlas showing Jacob Gurevich’s large parcel of land just south of Canary Cottages.

At the end of World War II, the farm was converted to Cherry Hill Mobile Home Village for local citizens in response to a housing shortage in the area.²¹² More utilities were added, and mobile homes were introduced. Even though campers were welcome to

²¹⁰ “About Cherry Hill Park,” *Cherry Hill Park*, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.cherryhillpark.com/index.cfm/action/home.about>.

²¹¹ “Eight Decades at Cherry Hill,” welcome newsletter, courtesy of Mike Gurevich.

²¹² “About Cherry Hill Park,” *Cherry Hill Park*, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.cherryhillpark.com/index.cfm/action/home.about>.

stay, it primarily became home to local residents.²¹³ The second generation of Gurevich's bought the park from the first generation in 1946. Each year, a new street (usually named for a type of tree) for mobile homes was laid out.²¹⁴ Cherry Hill Campcity developed in the 1960s out of the recognized need for a great location for tourists to stay as highways improved and more people began to travel for leisure (Figure 53).²¹⁵



Figure 53: 1950s postcard image of Cherry Hill Trailercoach Park (From Meyer, “A Capital Campground: Pull in and park at Cherry Hill,” 32).

In the early 1980s, Norman Gurevich, the third-generation owner, bought 40 acres of what had been a sand and gravel pit from the Walker family on Cherry Hill Road.²¹⁶ After three generations, the RV park was moved to this new location (about a mile away from the original site) to enable the accommodation of larger RV's. On October 7, 1989, Cherry Hill Park opened for business with 60 sites and a temporary office trailer at its

²¹³ “Eight Decades at Cherry Hill,” welcome newsletter, courtesy of Mike Gurevich.

²¹⁴ Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

²¹⁵ “About Cherry Hill Park,” *Cherry Hill Park*, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.cherryhillpark.com/index.cfm/action/home.about>; “Eight Decades at Cherry Hill,” welcome newsletter, courtesy of Mike Gurevich.

²¹⁶ Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

current 60-acre site at 9800 Cherry Hill Road.²¹⁷ Although new campgrounds and RV parks are banned in Prince George's County, Cherry Hill Park was grandfathered in.²¹⁸ Because of this, the independent campground has little competition other than those that operate in Greenbelt (a national park), Lothian (which lost its franchise and is now independent), Millersville (Capitol KOA), and Upper Marlboro. It is the largest tourist accommodation (in Prince George's County) until the National Harbor.²¹⁹

Still active and growing to this day, Cherry Hill Park caters mainly to tourists visiting Washington, D.C. Norman Gurevich estimates that Cherry Hill Park receives about 80-90% of its business from tourists, while the local hotels only capture about 10-15% of tourist traffic. When the campground was moved to its current location, the #83 Metro bus route was extended west from Seven Springs Apartments to the campground for the convenience of tourists who were camping there. The high number of tourists from the campground was clogging the morning Metro buses, so an extra bus was added. A Metro bus stops at the campground about 50 times each day. There is a bus depot near the entrance to the campground where guidance pertaining to the Metro system is provided to tourists.²²⁰

The campground currently contains about 350 RV sites, a small wooded area for tent camping, three cottages (full-size houses), five air-conditioned and heated park-model trailers (which will be converted to RV sites as a part of the ongoing expansion due to the high cost of mobile home upkeep), two air-conditioned cabins, and two air-conditioned

²¹⁷ "About Cherry Hill Park," *Cherry Hill Park*, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.cherryhillpark.com/index.cfm/action/home.about>; Meyer, "A Capital Campground: Pull in and park at Cherry Hill," 32.

³²; "Eight Decades at Cherry Hill," welcome newsletter, courtesy of Mike Gurevich.

²¹⁸ Leslye Howerton, email correspondence, February 6, 2014.

²¹⁹ Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

²²⁰ Ibid.

yurts (round, enclosed tent structures).²²¹ A mini golf course, party pavilion, spray park, and a bathhouse for the golf course are in the process of being constructed. Also planned is the addition of 20-30 camping cabins.²²² This expansion required a Special Exception from Prince George's County.²²³ Ikea and Holiday Inn now occupy the original site of Cherry Hill Campcity along Route 1.

Canary Cottages and Trailer Park

Canary Cottages and Trailer Park, located just north of Cherry Hill Campcity, was owned by John and Mary Nichols. They purchased about 21 acres in 1940 and operated their establishment there throughout the 1940s and 50s.²²⁴ Around 1950, they advertised 15 completely modern steam-heated cottages, some having garages, and beautiful grounds (Figure 54).²²⁵ When Mary Nichols sold the property to A. B. & S. Corporation in 1959, it was provided that she would receive a life estate in the cottage then being occupied by her on the property, known as 10240 Baltimore Avenue. She was to be able to come and go and have the right to use the utilities (such as laundry) located on the property.²²⁶ A couple rental properties sat at the front of the property, which shielded the business from the direct view of Route 1 traffic. The cottage business ceased operations when the trailer park closed in the 1980s. Until the 2001 tornado damaged the buildings on the property, they were used for storage.²²⁷ Buffalo Wild Wings is currently located at 10240 Baltimore Avenue.

²²¹ "Cabin, Trailer, and Cottage Rentals," *Cherry Hill Park*, accessed April 29, 2014, <http://www.cherryhillpark.com/index.cfm/action/home.cabin>; Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

²²² Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

²²³ Howerton, email correspondence, February 6, 2014.

²²⁴ Prince George's County Land Records liber 560, folio 170.

²²⁵ Author's personal postcard collection.

²²⁶ Prince George's County Land Records liber 2338, folio 524.

²²⁷ Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.



Figure 54: A postcard showing the Canary cabins which were designed to look like homey little cottages (Author's personal postcard collection).

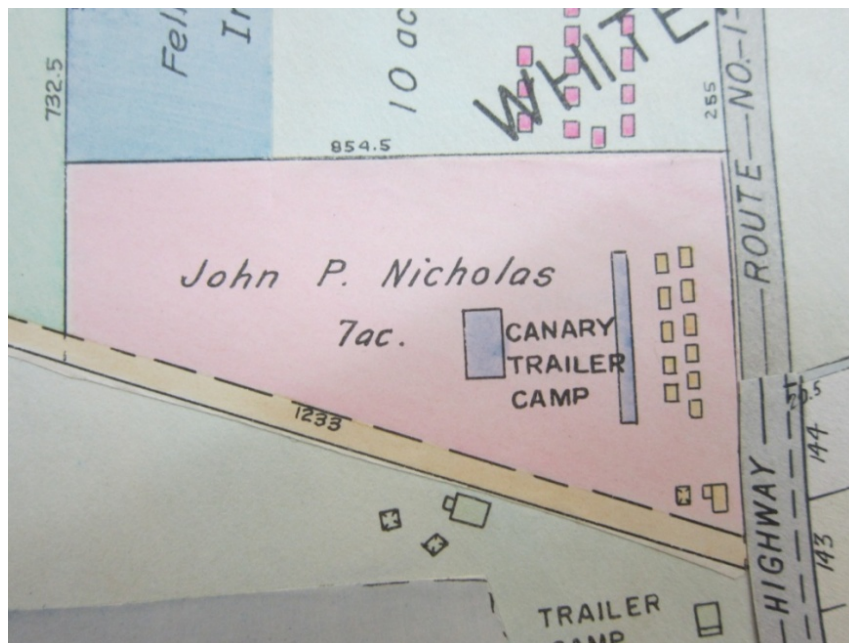


Figure 55: 1940 Franklin Atlas, which makes reference to the trailer camp.

Del Haven White House Cottages

Del Haven White House Cottages was constructed around the oldest main house in College Park. The no-longer-extant White House Tavern stood on a 93-acre tract of land

known as “Chew’s Folly,” which was purchased by William Evans of Baltimore in 1799.²²⁸ The tavern was located on the west side of the road that ran between Bladensburg and Vansville. The building was a two-story frame structure, measuring 30 by 18 feet, with a rear addition of essentially the same size. During Evans’ ownership, the tavern was occupied and operated by a man named Thomas Rodes. Evans died in 1807 in Baltimore, and his real estate was held in trust by two executors, William Lorman and William Gwynn, for his daughter Sarah, the wife of Jacob Giles Smith. Both Lorman and Smith, residents of Baltimore, became involved in building the Washington and Baltimore Turnpike. They were appointed supervisors of the construction of the road near Baltimore. The tavern became one of the principal stops for stagecoaches running along the new turnpike during Smith’s ownership.²²⁹ Lorman and Smith also owned land contiguous to the tavern known as the White House farm.²³⁰ Smith died in the 1820s, and in 1830, the Smith heirs, along with trustee Lorman, sold the 500-acre parcel to Richard Stockton and William Stokes of the Stockton and Stokes stagecoach company.²³¹

The 500-acre farm was purchased five years later by a man named John W. Brown. He was born in New York in 1799 and came to Maryland around 1818 to work as a stagecoach driver on the Baltimore Washington pike. He became the manager of the White House Tavern sometime during this period. According to family tradition, he also temporarily served as the manager of Ross’ Tavern to the south, which was owned after 1821 by George Calvert of Riversdale, one of the directors of the Washington and Baltimore Turnpike, and is currently owned by the University of Maryland. Also

²²⁸ Susan G. Pearl, “Loss of a Landmark,” *Prince George’s County Historical Society News and Notes* 31, no. 1 (January-February 2002): 2; Prince George’s County Land Records liber JRM 7, folio 122.

²²⁹ Pearl, “Loss of a Landmark,” 2.

²³⁰ Prince George’s County Land Records liber AB 6, folio 292.

²³¹ Pearl, “Loss of a Landmark,” 2.

according to family tradition, the first White House tavern was destroyed by fire during Brown's management.²³²

A new structure was built by John W. Brown in 1834 to replace the previous tavern.²³³ The structural members and interior trim supported this date of construction, as did the noticeable increase in the assessment value of the property recorded in 1834. The new tavern was much larger than the original, measuring approximately 45 by 30 feet. However, the rear kitchen wing had dimensions that were similar to those of the rear addition that were recorded in 1798. The new rear wing may have been constructed on the foundation of the previous rear wing.²³⁴ The new tavern was a 2.5-story, side-gabled, wood-frame building.²³⁵ Brown purchased the entire 500-acre farm the next year in 1835. From then until the time of his death in 1862, Brown ran Brown's Tavern at what became the motel's main house.²³⁶ It was one of the first stagecoach stops, providing food and rest for weary travelers. Cattle transported over the Baltimore-Washington Turnpike would be put in special corrals at the tavern. When the annual circus came to town, the tavern was an especially popular gathering place, with room for both the performing animals and the spectators.²³⁷ In more recent years, Cherry Hill Park has accommodated the circus whenever it comes to town.²³⁸

Not long after the construction of the new tavern, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad line began to operate between Baltimore and Washington on a line just half a mile to the

²³² Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 2-3.

²³³ "Brown's Tavern is No More," Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust *Friends of Preservation* 19, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 1; Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 3.

²³⁴ Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 3.

²³⁵ "Brown's Tavern is No More," 1.

²³⁶ Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 3.

²³⁷ Julie Ahn, "Move over Ben Franklin, Ikea's coming to town," *Prince George's Sentinel*, December 6, 2001.

²³⁸ Norman Gurevich, in-person interview, April 17, 2014.

east of the tavern. Thus, traffic on the turnpike began to decrease after 1835. In response, the turnpike directors decreased tolls along the turnpike to compete with the railroad. As a result, maintenance of the road declined, and by the time of the Civil War, the turnpike was in terrible condition.²³⁹

After John W. Brown passed away, his considerable real estate (over 1500 acres) was equally divided between his wife and nine children. His widow continued to operate the tavern for about ten more years. She also served as the trustee for their three youngest children. After the property was divided among the heirs, Almira Brown Mulloy, the youngest surviving daughter, received the portion of land where the tavern stood. She operated it as a rental residence until 1913, after which it changed hands several times before it was purchased by the Irwin family.²⁴⁰

By this time, transportation patterns had undergone another significant change. The advent of the automobile, the growing number of privately-owned automobiles, and the improvement of the old turnpike road into the heavily-traveled Route 1 brought about an increase in traffic in the 1920s and 30s.²⁴¹ This prepared the way for the many roadside lodging establishments that opened along the bustling highway, including Del Haven White House Cottages.

The Irwin family had relocated to Maryland from the mountains of western North Carolina. They had lived in rough-hewn cabins and had not received a very formal education. Felix Irwin had done a little bit of everything, including working in his father's water mill, hauling produce by wagon over the mountains, trying his hand at farming in South Dakota, and logging in British Columbia. He returned from the logging

²³⁹ Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 3.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

camps with the wages he had saved to marry Maye, who at the time was not yet 13 years old, and to buy a store in Sparta, NC. He soon turned this store over to his brother and bought another one in nearby Galax, VA. Felix Irwin joined about 1,000 families in migrating to Harford County, MD, which was purported to feature cheap land, rich soil, and money-making markets. Since Irwin did not like to farm himself, he hired men who were often fellow immigrants from North Carolina to work his land while he invested and traded in real estate. He bought one farm in 1919 that he never sold. The 210-acre farm, located in Bel Air, 23 miles north of Baltimore, was called “Major’s Choice.” Like Del Haven White House Cottages, the farm featured an 1834 farmhouse (Figure 56).²⁴²



Figure 56: Del Haven Guest House, Bel Air, MD (From “Maryland Motels,” *Kilduffs*, accessed April 1, 2014, <http://www.kilduffs.com/MarylandMotels.html>).

At this time, roadside lodging establishments were few and far between along Route 1. Tourists were known to stop at farms and ask the owners if they could pitch a tent on their property. This inspired many farming families, like the Irwin’s, to branch out into the roadside lodging industry. Not long after the Irwin’s purchased “Major’s Choice,” a

²⁴² Meyer, “Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years.”

doctor and his wife who were driving from Boston to Washington, D.C. to see the cherry blossoms stopped by the farm and asked if they could pitch their tent on the property. Maye Irwin could not refuse, as she saw an opportunity to make additional money for the farm. As a result of this event, a family motel dynasty was born. Maye's husband, Felix, had been in Chicago for 2.5 months trying to sell cemetery plots; when he returned, he discovered a field covered with tents and carpenters who were busy constructing a grocery store. Being an entrepreneurial type, he immediately saw the possibilities and began working to establish Del Haven Hotel and Cabins. The initial tent charge was 50 cents per night. Soon there were also corrugated tin cabins for tourists to stay in which cost \$1 a night. 23 wooden cabins were constructed later on. A restaurant was added, which featured 12 hotel rooms above and nine gas pumps out front. The complex also included a recreation building, a stream-fed swimming pool, three outdoor barbeques, a lawn dollhouse, and by the early 1930s, pony rides, a driving range, archery, a small zoo, and miniature golf (Figure 57). Tourists initially shared a central bathroom, but individual bathrooms were added in the 1930s.²⁴³ Del Haven Hotel and Cabins is a prime example of a complex constructed around a motel in order to civilize the automobile roadside.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Jakle, 58-59.



Figure 57: Del Haven Hotel and Cabins, North Side Belair, MD (From “Maryland Motels,” *Kilduffs*, accessed April 1, 2014, <http://www.kilduffs.com/MarylandMotels.html>).

Business at Del Haven Hotel and Cabins boomed despite the Depression. However, an improved U.S. Route 40 east of Route 1 threatened to take away a large amount of the traffic north of Baltimore. The Irwin’s began to look for a new location south of Baltimore, since most of the traffic was headed to Washington. They discovered 10 acres of weeds and briars, and the White House Tavern, seven miles north of Washington, known then as Berwyn.²⁴⁵

The 10-acre White House property first entered the Irwin family’s hands in 1937 when Eva Sue Irwin purchased the land from George and Audrey Hand.²⁴⁶ By 1937, they had transformed the site into the Del Haven White House Cottages, surrounding the tavern with an unprecedented 50 brick cottages separated by carports (Figure 58-59).²⁴⁷ The 100-year-old tavern structure was converted into a motor hotel, the two-story Victorian

²⁴⁵ Meyer, “Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years.”

²⁴⁶ Prince George’s County Land Records liber 475, folio 91.

²⁴⁷ Meyer, “Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years.”

veranda with its jig-sawn balustrades and perforated frieze course was removed, and the veranda was replaced with tall tile columns and a small second-story balcony to frame the central entrance. A porch on the north gable end was enclosed to serve as the office entrance and waiting room. The tavern had once again become a stopping place for travelers on a heavily-used transportation artery.²⁴⁸

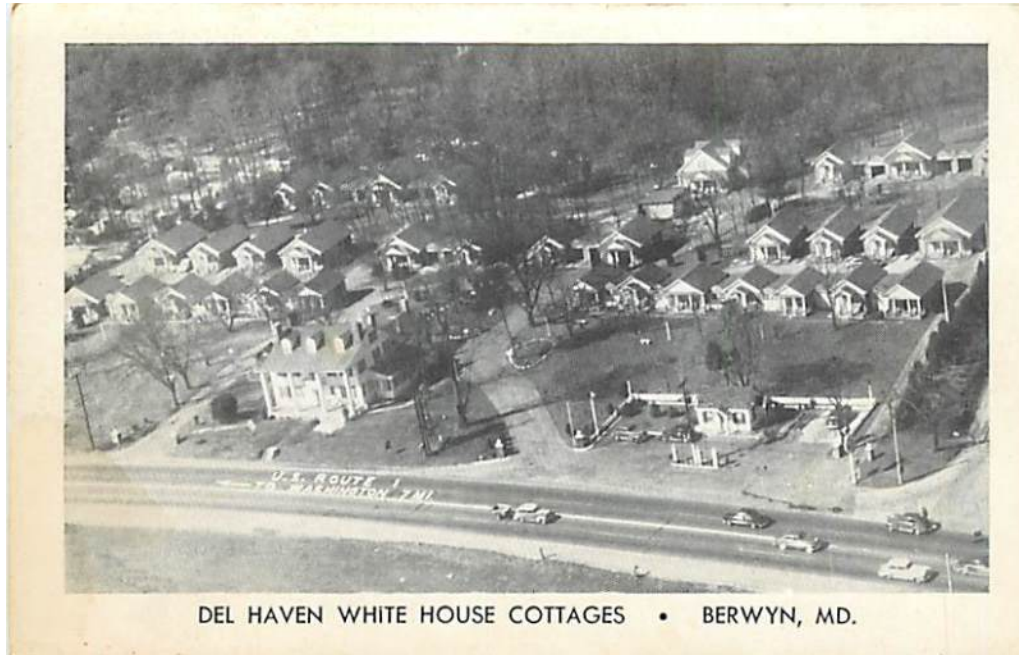


Figure 58: A postcard showing an aerial view of Del Haven, showing the main house on the front left, the gas station on the front right, and 50 small brick cottages strewn throughout the background (Author's personal postcard collection).

²⁴⁸ Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 3-4.

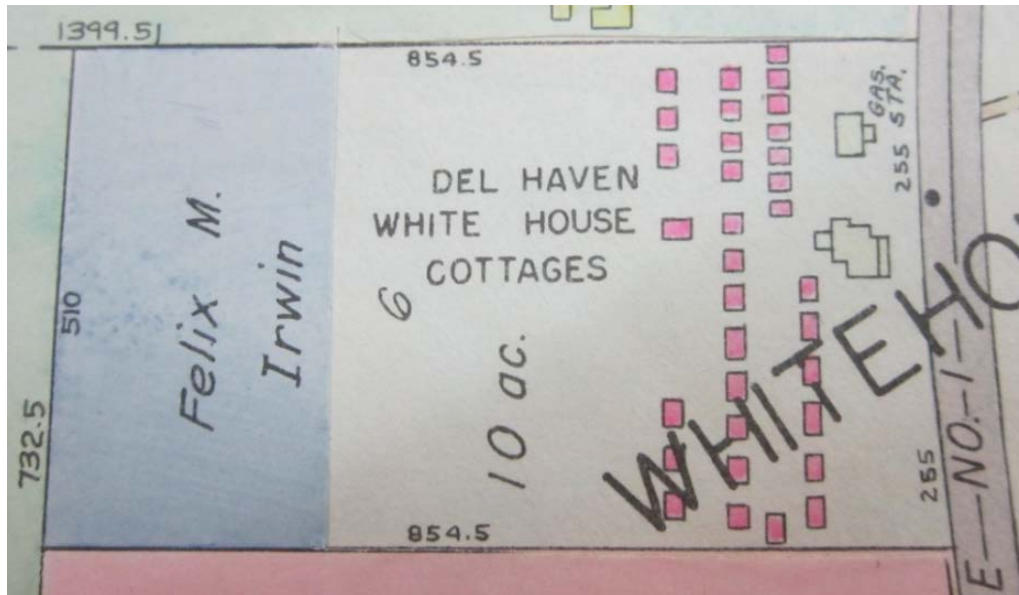


Figure 59: 1940 Franklin Atlas, showing the main house, the gas station, and only 33 brick cottages. This orderly arrangement of cabins on the rather sizable 10-acre property allowed for maximum visibility.

In 1940, Felix Irwin, Sr. formally acquired the property.²⁴⁹ In 1941, the American Automobile Association’s Northeastern Tour Book described the Bel Air Del Haven as “one of the better camps of northeastern U.S.” and the Berywn Del Haven as “among the finest in the northeast.”²⁵⁰ It was by far the largest motor court establishment along Route 1 in College Park. Each cottage had ceramic tile bathrooms, Beautyrest mattresses, and steam heat. Some of them even had radios and sitting rooms. They appealed to potential customers by advertising the large, shady lawn and home-cooked meals in the “Old White House” where George Washington dined.²⁵¹ Between 1947 and 1957, Felix Jr., or “Bud,” managed the Del Haven motel.²⁵² As of 1961, not only had the name changed from “cottages” to “motel,” but the rooms also featured televisions and air conditioning.

²⁴⁹ Prince George’s County Land Records liber 571, folio 337.

²⁵⁰ Meyer, “Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years.”

²⁵¹ Author’s personal postcard collection.

²⁵² Meyer, “Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years.”

Their slogan was “Eighteenth Century charm with Twentieth Century convenience and comfort.”²⁵³ It still offered a restaurant, but it now also had a coffee shop and cocktail lounge. A postcard from the time specifies 50, one to four bedroom units on spacious shaded grounds. In an attempt to keep up with the times, Irwin advertises telephones, a meeting room, tours, and a playground, in addition to television and air conditioning on his postcards.²⁵⁴

During the heyday of Route 1, the Berwyn motel did quite well. Irwin family members remember the motel being so crowded that the “no vacancy” sign burned constantly from March to October. Seeing the impending obsolescence of the Bel Air motel, Felix Irwin, Sr. sold it to his brother around 1941. His brother turned around and sold it outside the family after World War II. The new owner operated it as a motel into the 1960s, when he tore them down and built a small shopping center, Del Plaza, which still exists on the site.²⁵⁵

Times were changing at the Berwyn Del Haven as well. The opening of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway in 1954 caused a sharp decrease in the amount of traffic on Route 1. Old motels underwent a new era of modernization as a result, in order to compete with the up and coming new generation of motels. Bud Irwin, who at the time was the president of the Maryland Motel Association, was told by AAA that he would have to install room phones and a restaurant or Del Haven would be dropped from the

²⁵³ Author’s personal postcard collection.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Meyer, “Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years.”

guide book. Felix Irwin was none too interested in making these improvements, however, so Bud Irwin replaced the gas station with a new restaurant and subsequently quit.²⁵⁶

In 1981, the White House Tavern was designated as a historic site by the Prince George's County Planning and Preservation Department for its "significance as an example of the transportation and commercial enterprises over a century and a half in Prince George's County."²⁵⁷ By the 1990s, the motel complex had shut down, and the historic tavern building was deteriorating.²⁵⁸ The City of College Park had been experiencing problems keeping out vagrants and drug addicts who used the tavern as a nesting place.²⁵⁹ Various plans for the development of the property began to be considered.²⁶⁰ The tavern sat on a mixed zoning developmental plot and would thus have to be used for both retail and office space.²⁶¹

The property finally left the Irwin family when it was sold in June 2001 to 5757, Inc.²⁶² Years of neglect, vandalism, and the September 2001 tornado had taken their toll on the tavern. County inspectors determined that the building was structurally dangerous due to its deteriorated condition. This determination was confirmed by several structural engineers.²⁶³ It was demolished, with the permission of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission, on November 29, 2001.²⁶⁴ The cabins were destroyed

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Ahn, "Move over Ben Franklin, Ikea's coming to town."

²⁵⁸ Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 4.

²⁵⁹ Ahn, "Move over Ben Franklin, Ikea's coming to town."

²⁶⁰ Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 4.

²⁶¹ Ahn, "Move over Ben Franklin, Ikea's coming to town."

²⁶² Prince George's County Land Records liber 15117, folio 112.

²⁶³ Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 1 and 4.

²⁶⁴ Marcus Moore, "Ikea dedicates park to Brown's Tavern and Historical Mile Marker," *Prince George's Sentinel*, October 30, 2003; Meghan Mullan, "Brown's Tavern site may get new memorial on Route 1," *Prince George's County Gazette*, January 27, 2005; Pearl, "Loss of a Landmark," 1.

as a result of the tornado and were demolished along with the tavern and the accompanying AAA-designated Domino's restaurant.²⁶⁵

Following the demolition, Ikea placed an interactive touch-screen kiosk inside the store that interpreted Brown's Tavern, its significance within the Route 1 Heritage Corridor, and additional general information about other Prince George's County historic sites.²⁶⁶ The kiosk has since been removed. The stones from the original structure were kept and put on display at the site, along with plaques to honor the site's historical significance.²⁶⁷ In 2003, Ikea dedicated Brown's Tavern Commemorative Park. It was established to recognize the old tavern and to educate those that may be unaware of the rumor that George Washington slept there. When he was a Lieutenant General, he apparently dined at the tavern on his way to Mount Vernon from Philadelphia on December 18, 1798.²⁶⁸ It is also thought to have hosted Benjamin Franklin.²⁶⁹ The historic "25 miles to Baltimore" marker was removed during the building of road improvements that were made for the new Ikea store and was intended to be donated to a local museum. Ikea had a replica of the mile marker placed at the commemorative park as a replacement (Figure 60).²⁷⁰ As of 2005, the original mile marker was being kept in a State Highway Administration storage facility.²⁷¹

²⁶⁵ Ahn, "Move over Ben Franklin, Ikea's coming to town."

²⁶⁶ Mullan, "Brown's Tavern site may get new memorial on Route 1"; "Brown's Tavern is No More," 1.

²⁶⁷ Moore, "Ikea dedicates park to Brown's Tavern and Historical Mile Marker."

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ "Brown's Tavern is No More," 1.

²⁷⁰ "Ikea Dedicates Park to Honor Tavern," Business Notes, *Prince George's Extra*, November 13, 2003.

²⁷¹ Mullan, "Brown's Tavern site may get new memorial on Route 1."



Figure 60: “25 miles to Baltimore” replica marker (Photo by author, 2013).

In 2005, after Ikea determined that it would not need the property the Del Haven motel had sat on, the new owner, a Washington-based developer named Roadside, LLC, decided to demolish and rebuild Ikea’s three-year-old memorial. They planned to build retail and office space on the land between Ikea and the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center and proposed a new design for the commemorative park. According to Roadside Ikea’s park was not a creation of a place, and it did not have the quality and environment to encourage people to visit it. According to a city planner, the old memorial had been kept up by the city, but it had seen few visitors. So Roadside came up with a creative solution to the problem: the historic memorial, which was set up to remind visitors of a place of commerce, would be incorporated into the design of the new retail building. They submitted a detailed site plan to the city for a new memorial design. The stones in the walls of the previous memorial, which were from the original tavern, would be used to create a footprint of the historic building’s foundation. The footprint would show the location of the exterior walls, chimneys, the porch area, and the porch columns.

Additional interpretive signage information would be installed, along with a flat path on the ground marking the location of the interior walls (Figure 61). Outdoor seating has been purposefully located between the restaurant and the memorial so as to allow customers to concurrently enjoy the view and learn about the area's history (Figure 62).²⁷²



Figure 61: The outline of the walls and chimneys of the tavern, the Rhodes' Tavern state plaque, and the entrance to Camden College Park (Photo by author, 2013).

²⁷² Mullan, "Brown's Tavern site may get new memorial on Route 1."



Figure 62: The memorial, the adjacent restaurant, and the outdoor seating purposefully located in between the two (Photo by author, 2013).

Something beneficial to the field of preservation did come out of the demolition and redevelopment, however. Bill Shipp, the Chairman of the Historic Preservation Commission at the time of the demolition, was inspired to establish a new effort to raise funds so that this would not happen again in the future. Money would be provided to property owners to prevent severe deterioration of other historic buildings.²⁷³ Ikea was the first contributor to this fund. As a part of mitigation measures, they paid \$100,000 per year into the fund over the course of three years. As of 2002, it was expected that the county's Historic Preservation Commission would administer this fund.²⁷⁴

The 9.5-acre property at 10260 Baltimore Avenue is now home to the Village at College Park Shopping Center and Camden College Park. The replacement "25 miles to Baltimore" marker stands in front of all that is left of the "big white house" - the outline

²⁷³ Moore, "Ikea dedicates park to Brown's Tavern and Historical Mile Marker."

²⁷⁴ "Brown's Tavern is No More," 1.

of its walls (Figure 61-62). The City of College Park currently owns this remaining piece of memorialized, undeveloped property.²⁷⁵

College Park Motels and the Issue of Segregation

The AAA guide book failed to mention a particular characteristic of both the Bel Air and Berwyn Del Haven motels. Like most motels along Route 1 in Maryland, they were both segregated. According to Bud Irwin, there was no restroom for blacks at Bel Air. There was only a sign that read “White Only.” Blacks were only allowed to carry out food. Neither motel accepted blacks. Bud Irwin was quoted as saying, “I’m not saying this with any pride. It’s just the way it was.”²⁷⁶ In fact, the 1949 edition of the *Negro Motorist Green Book* did not list any black-friendly establishments in the College Park area (Figure 63). According to this version of the *Green Book*, Washington, D.C. was the closest city to College Park to offer accommodations.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁵ Lots 16 thru 21 being a resubdivision of Lots 10-15 Ikea Centre, 10/4/2004, Plat Book REP203, 38.

²⁷⁶ Meyer, “Changing Times and Opportunities along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 through the Years.”

²⁷⁷ Victor H. Green, *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, 1949 Edition, Victor H. Green & Co., 1948-1949, 1956-1964, accessed March 31, 2014, http://www.autolife.umd.umich.edu/Race/R_Casestudy/87_135_1736_GreenBk.pdf.

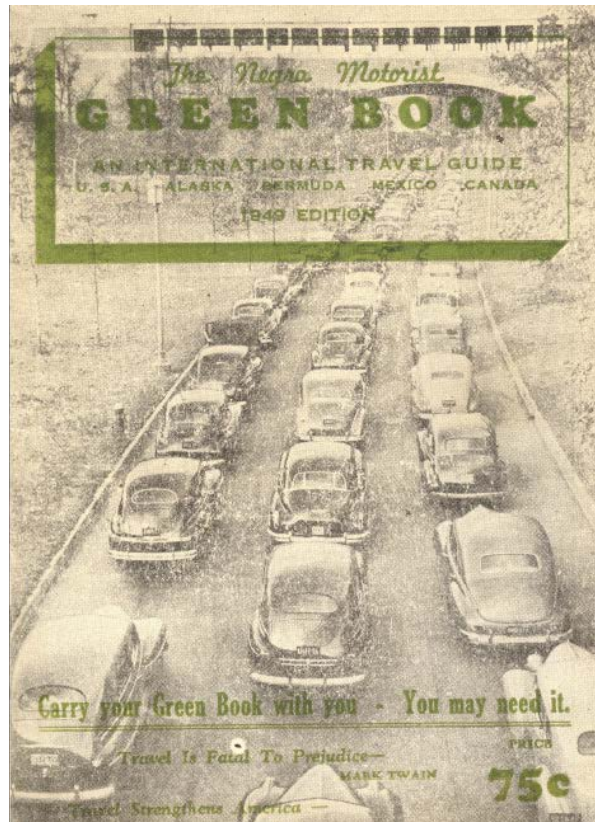
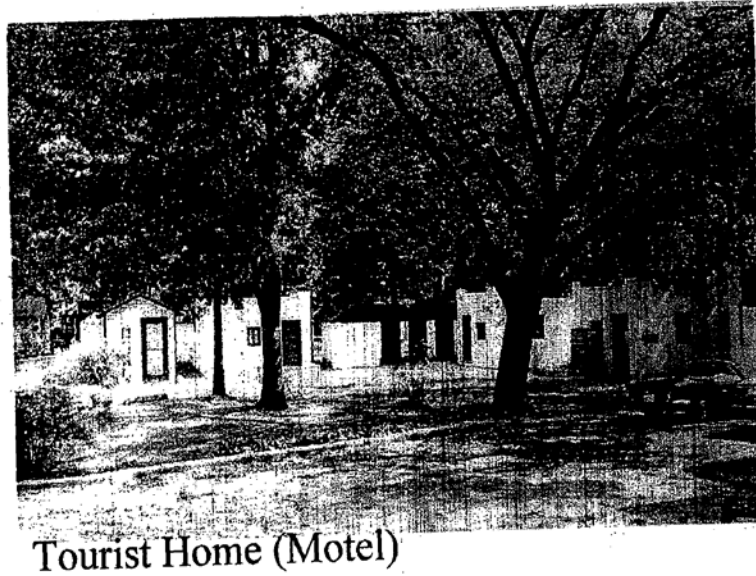


Figure 63: Cover page of 1949 *The Negro Motorist Green Book* (From Victor H. Green, *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, 1949 Edition, Victor H. Green & Co., 1948-1949, 1956-1964, accessed March 31, 2014, http://www.autolife.umd.umich.edu/Race/R_Casestudy/87_135_1736_GreenBk.pdf).

However, there were accommodations in College Park that blacks could take advantage of, even if they were not listed in the *Green Book*. Cottages located in Lakeland, what became an African American community in College Park, were originally set up for white tourists to enjoy the beauty of Lake Artemesia. However, when Lakeland became a majority black community, racism made staying at the cottages a matter of necessity rather than simply enjoyment. One example was a small cabin camp located on the east side of Lakeland, at the corner of 54th and Cleveland Avenue (Figure 64). It was run by Marcelino Cordove, a Cuban-born immigrant who had relocated from Washington, D.C. to Lakeland in 1942. Just south of the cabins, he also operated a tourist home for lodgers which faced Lake Artemesia to the south (Figure 65). In addition to

cottages, residents of Lakeland and the surrounding communities also provided lodging for African American travelers.²⁷⁸



Tourist Home (Motel)

Figure 64: The cabins along 54th Avenue (From the “Lakeland History Project Scholar’s Guide,” 2002).

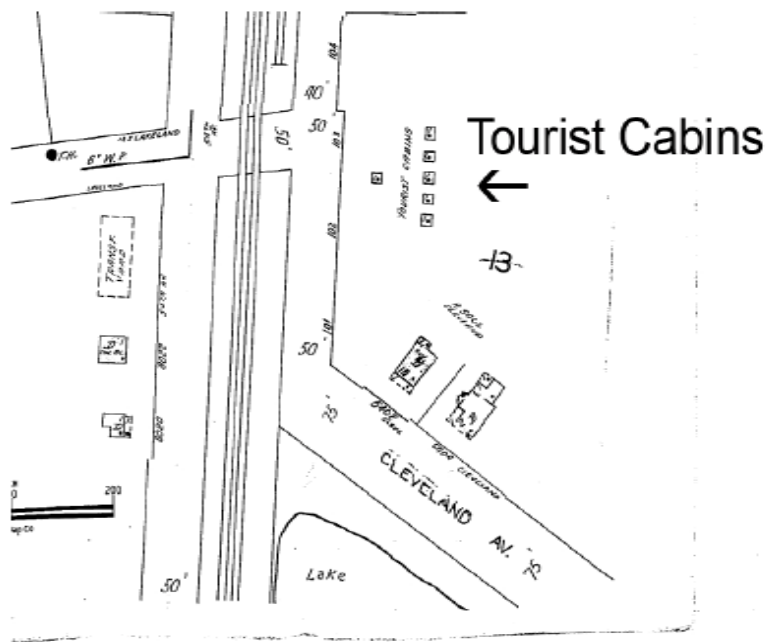


Figure 65: Detail of 1939-1959 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing the tourist home and cabins.

²⁷⁸ “Lakeland East of the Railroad Tracks, 1890-1970” (Social and Ethnic Issues in Historic Preservation class report, University of Maryland, College Park, June 2010), 59.

In the 1950s, the civil rights movement put relentless pressure on motels to provide equal access. This pressure culminated in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Motels were important locations for social interaction, causing them to become sites of significant 20th century events, such as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. The growth of chains was one of the strongest forces in the decline of racial discrimination in roadside lodging.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁹ Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, 82.

Chapter 6: Analysis

College Park's motels existed as a microcosm of motels all across the country. Many of the factors that contributed to the success and decline of motels in College Park had the same effect nationwide. The interstate highway system crisscrossed the United States, bypassing many family-run motels. Some motels, such as the Royal Pine, thrived due to its proximity to the Capital Beltway and the ability of its owners to adapt, even though that adaptation took the form of additions and renovations in order to meet franchise standards. Not all of College Park's motels fared so well in relation to the interstate highway system. If Stewart's had simply been by-passed, it would have survived longer than it did. However, Beltway ramps were planned for its location, causing its immediate closure. Cherry Hill Park relocated for a completely unrelated reason: the evolution of RV's. After moving to its new, larger location, the campground has grown and thrived, mainly due to its proximity to Washington, D.C., as it derives most of its business from tourists. The entire Canary Cottages operation ceased when its location was chosen as the site of a new hotel in the early 1980s.²⁸⁰

Two of the businesses fell victim to mortgage defaults, although they managed to survive in different forms. Hunter's closed due to a mortgage default, but a guest home was built to replace it. The original owner of Lord Calvert Hotel and Cottages lost possession of the property due to defaulting on his mortgage, but it continued on for some time under that name. Its eventual transformation into a Quality Inn, however, has been attributed to its proximity to the University of Maryland.

²⁸⁰ Lisa Swenarski, "Imminent Transformation of Trailer Park Disrupts a 'Quiet' Community of 25 Years," *Washington Post*, August 1, 1983.

Only one Route 1 motel, Long's, fell within College Park's Urban Renewal district. The motel was redeveloped into a shopping center for college students as a result of the redevelopment project.

The reason for the demise of the rest is less certain. Some may have closed because the owners simply became too old to run them. The cabins at House in the Tree Motel were removed in the 1950s, which could indicate that the new owners were not interested in renting cabins, the cabins were in poor condition, the idea of the cabin camp was outdated, or there were too many cabin camps along Route 1 to compete with. The guest home it became had much less competition along Route 1. The motel closed not long after College Park was given a Beltway exit, although its closure may have had something to do with the owners retiring. Colonial Plaza opened in 1958 and was sold in 1994, probably due to the owners becoming too old to run the motel. Schrom's tourist camp may have closed around 1947 when William Schrom passed away. Uncertainty exists as to what was done with the property between 1947 and 1960, the year his relatives leased the property to Fair Lanes. They may have continued to run the tourist camp after his death. The camp may also have been left abandoned at some point due to its unprofitability, which is likely the reason for its redevelopment into a bowling alley.

Some of the motels acquired somewhat seedy associations as they aged, which contributed to their eventual demolition. When exactly Hillcrest closed its doors and why is unknown. The structures on the Hillcrest property served as a haven for squatters beginning sometime after its closure. For that reason, along with the unsafe condition of the buildings, the motel complex was demolished in 2005. The College Park Motel

survived into the early 21st century by renting cabins to welfare recipients. As a result of Route 1 redevelopment, the motel was demolished and replaced with a multi-story hotel.

The closure of two others may have been due to the Beltway. Park Lane had become a Holiday Inn by the 1960s. Although the exact reason for its closure is unknown, the Beltway may have had something to do with its decline. Shady Grove was sold off in 1965, which could implicate the construction of the Beltway as well.

The community of College Park values the history of these motels and considers them to be an aspect of the city's history that is worth studying. Many members of the community have expressed interest in College Park's historically-extant roadside architecture and are pleased that a representative of the University of Maryland has taken an interest in local history.²⁸¹ Those who operate the few family-owned lodging businesses that have managed to survive in College Park have also expressed an interest in the history of the city's roadside lodging establishments, as their family histories are intertwined with the history of these places. Out of all the motels, the Royal Pine and Del Haven are the best documented, not only because the Irwin's and the Sims' quite often made the papers due to their successes, but also because the Sims family has saved many pieces of memorabilia from the motels they operated.

There are known precedents for this type of project. Three years ago, in 2011, the Historical Studies Branch of the Texas Department of Transportation Environmental Affairs Division drew up an annotated guide to selected studies of historic-age motels ranging from the 1950s to the 70s. Sources such as HABS/HAER documentation, materials in local repositories, publications, Texas DOT projects, and National Register nominations were reviewed and critiqued to determine what information on Texas motels

²⁸¹ Members of the Berwyn District Civic Association.

could be gleaned from each type of source.²⁸² Unlike this project, however, the study did not delve into and compile detailed histories of each of the motels.

More related to this particular type of project was a study of tourist courts located along U.S. Route 20 in New York State by Tania G. Werbizky. In 1985, she set out to document the remaining tourist courts in her geographical area of study and completed the project in 1992. To provide some context before describing a sample of the tourist courts, she provided a history of Route 20 in New York State and described how the Thruway impacted businesses along Route 20. She had the opportunity to interview past and present operators and glean information and images from them. What differentiates her project from this one is that all the tourist courts in her study were still extant to some degree, some still being in operation. She included in her study and documented any tourist court with at least one cabin still standing. At the beginning of her project, 96 courts were identified; by the end of her study only 85 remained.²⁸³ She was dealing with a much larger sample size and could actually watch as the tourist courts she had documented were demolished.

²⁸² Ralph Edward Newlan and Laura Caffrey, "Historic-age Motels in Texas from the 1950s to the 1970s: An Annotated Guide to Selected Studies," *Texas Department of Transportation Environmental Affairs Division, Historical Studies Branch*, March 2011.

²⁸³ Tania G. Werbizky, "Accommodating the Traveler: The Development of Tourist Courts on US Route 20 in New York State," *Preserving the Recent Past* (1995): 41-52.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Family-run motels have become a scarce architectural resource as a result of the changing needs of tourists. The origins of tourist camps date back to the invention of the automobile, just prior to World War I. Tourist camps appealed to early automobile owners due to the inconveniences of urban hotels, such as traffic congestion and the lack of adequate parking.²⁸⁴ Seasonal tourists and migratory transients searching for work took to the roads in search of adventure and closeness to nature. Initially, they set up tents wherever was convenient; private property was not out of the question. Eventually, cities and towns along tourist routes set up free municipal campgrounds in order to draw in customers for their businesses. These camps began to require fees in order to keep out undesirables, which did not always work. Middle-class tourists, out of fear for who they might be camping with, sought out private camps, established by those with enough land to do so, like farmers. Over time, tent camps evolved into cabin camps to lure tourists who would otherwise seek out a hotel. Cabins were connected to each other by garages or carports, which were removed when owners came to favor large paved parking areas. During the Great Depression, camps still flourished, as tourists found road trips an affordable vacation option. After World War II, cheap, unembellished strings of rooms were constructed by motel owners, as tourists no longer needed decorative costumery to draw them in.²⁸⁵

Due to evolving middle-class sensibilities, tourists came to expect certain amenities. They came to value predictability and standardization rather than character and pleasant

²⁸⁴ Jakle, 23, 31.

²⁸⁵ Ibid, 33-34, 36-47; Marcavitch, 97.

(or rather unpleasant) surprises.²⁸⁶ Motels were a relative late-comer to the concepts of standardization and brand recognition due to being locally controlled. The petroleum industry, which was dominated by relatively few chains, utilized standardized buildings and signage fairly early on in its development of gas station chains.²⁸⁷ Following the standardization of the tourist lodging industry, motels were expected to look like motels, and all the motels in a specific chain were supposed to look alike.²⁸⁸ Motels, due to the influence of referral chains, franchises, and company-owned chains, evolved into highway hotels. Unlike the 19th century urban hotel, these new hotels located around cities rather than within them and emphasized convenience and informality, a carry-over from motel days.²⁸⁹

College Park's motels are important as a part of the story of the city's development. They show how the city's roadside lodging evolved to what it is today, depicting on a smaller scale the nationwide trend from tourist camps to motels to hotels. Motels on the College Park level did not exist within a vacuum, but rather existed as a microcosm of nationwide trends. What was detrimental to some motels was advantageous to others. Motels that were bypassed by the interstate highway system closed their doors. Those that were proximate to highway exits and major tourist attractions, such as Washington, D.C., had made a reputable name for themselves, and had the resources to expand to meet new demands were able to succeed.

Certain trends, some of which affected private motels on a national level, affected College Park's family-owned roadside lodging establishments. Standardized motels and

²⁸⁶ Jakle, 259-260.

²⁸⁷ Ibid, 49-50.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, 51.

²⁸⁹ Ibid, 23.

hotels (referral chains, franchises, and company-owned hotels) first emerged on College Park's roadside around 1960. These posed a threat to private motels, as families could not afford to keep up with the requirements of standardization.

A second factor in the decline of College Park's family-owned motels was self-redevelopment. Those that were not put out of business by the chains were incorporated into them. The Royal Pine, which was transformed into a Best Western, is a local example of this occurrence. It was repeatedly redeveloped by its owners to meet the ever-changing demands of seasonal tourists and traveling businesspeople.

The advent of the interstate highway system in the 1950s and 1960s affected College Park's motels in the form of the Capital Beltway and Interstate 95. These highways provided a faster route for both locals and tourists traveling between Baltimore and the Capital. While they decreased the amount of traffic on Route 1, they also removed much of the visibility that motels once had. The excellent visibility of Route 1 was, after all, the reason they were built there in the first place. Route 1 became just another local road, but with traffic lights, a large number of pull-offs, and stop-and-go traffic.

The University of Maryland posed a less direct threat to College Park's privately-owned motels. As the university grew, so did the need for more accommodations for the parents of graduating students or conference attendees. College Park's motels, many of them still in the form of cabin camps, simply could not accommodate a high volume of tourists. Secondly, most of the motel sites have been redeveloped to allow for more of the amenities that a college town requires. This redevelopment has been encouraged by the City of College Park to rid the Route 1 strip of vacant, dilapidated, and unsafe structures.

Due to the constant redevelopment of Route 1's roadside within College Park, the recent past, specifically motels and their precursors, has become the city's intangible heritage. This concept lends itself to studying these largely unappreciated elements of the recent past just as well as it does to documenting much older and more highly regarded vestiges of the built environment. The study of College Park's complete history involves not only looking at its current architecture, but also those buildings that were removed to make way for what is there today.

A look at the current usage of the former Route 1 motel sites is indicative of the trend that College Park is following. Six of the 15 sites are currently occupied by a hotel. While a few hotels have been built on other sites, this still represents a decrease in the number of roadside lodging establishments in College Park. One became a bowling alley, likely a more profitable option in a modern-day college town. Another was demolished to make way for highway ramps, which is indicative of the desire of American drivers to get to their destinations as quickly as possible. Two of the sites contain apartments, one of which also contains stores and restaurants. The site adjacent to the latter features a restaurant with other commercial development in the background. One of the motels became a shopping plaza, while another was replaced by an office building, which has recently become University of Maryland's Route 1 Annex. A residential subdivision and a laundromat was the fate of another property. Only one remains undeveloped; the owner is seeking commercial/residential redevelopment.

All of these redevelopments benefit the University of Maryland in some respect, whether they produce student housing, stores and restaurants where students can shop and eat, recreation for students and locals, a University annex, proximity to interstate

highway access, and a laundromat for students to do their laundry. College Park's tourist camps and motels served the needs of tourists traveling through early-mid-20th century College Park, but they are no longer a profitable site use.

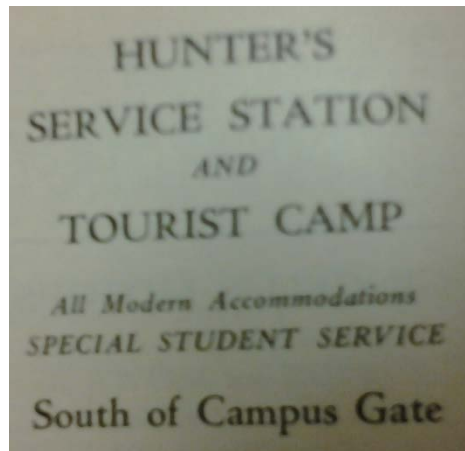
Upon looking at College Park as it is today, it would seem that all connections to the "good old days" of tourist camps and motels had been cut. However, if one digs deep enough, one can still find some of these same businesses still in operation, such as Cherry Hill Park and Follin Guest Home. They may have had to expand or move to a new location, but they have adapted to College Park's constantly-changing roadside environment.

There are several options and opportunities for the interpretation of College Park's intangible roadside architecture, such as a driving tour, brochure, interpretive panel, and/or a website. Making the brochure available on the internet would allow the information to be downloaded and the map on its reverse side to be utilized for the purposes of a driving tour. The sites could be geo-located on historypin, which allows for the creation of a virtual driving tour using those sites. An iPhone app, which would allow users to hold their cell phone up to the current landscape to view historical images, was proposed for the Lakeland project. That concept could also be used for this type of project. The app could also feature a driving tour. In addition, presenting the history of the motels at public meetings could generate interest and discussion among attendees and local residents.

This project builds on and complements past research that has been done on the history of the City of College Park and paves the way for more in-depth research into various aspects of College Park's landscape, such as restaurants and diners, service

stations, general stores, liquor stores, and car dealerships. The information that has been acquired over the course of this project is by no means exhaustive, allowing for the possibility of future investigations into more detailed aspects of each of the tourist camps and motels covered in this paper, or even the discovery of additional roadside lodging establishments. Similar studies could also be done of other municipalities along Route 1 in Maryland to determine if, how many, and why motels survived in those locations as opposed to College Park. Projects such as this contribute to a greater sense of pride amongst members of the community, as they show the importance of even the most insignificant types of structures by placing them within the context of historical trends.

Appendix A: Hunter's Old Spring Tourist Camp



Ad from the 1932-33 University of Maryland M Book (Courtesy of Hornbake Library).



Left: Hunter's (later Follin's) Service Station. Right: The Maryland Inn, which served the tourists staying at Hunter's (Courtesy of the Prince George's County Historical Society).



MORRISON PHOTOGRAPHERS

Follin's Service Station, c.1940s (Courtesy of Kim Follin).



Follin's Service Station in the 1950s (Courtesy of Kim Follin).



Herman Follin driving one of his Packards in a College Park parade in 1951 (Courtesy of Kim Follin).

Appendix B: Lord Calvert Hotel & Cottages



c.1930s photograph of the Lord Calvert Inn (Courtesy of Gary Burton).



Matchbook cover advertising the Lord Calvert Inn and its coffee shop (Author's personal collection).



c.1930s linen postcard image showing the Lord Calvert diner/office building (Author's personal collection).

Chillum Man Held In \$75 Holdup of Hotel Register

Mark E. Scheuch, 21, of Chillum, Md., yesterday, was held under \$2000 bond for grand jury action charged with a \$75 holdup of the Lord Calvert Hotel, College Park. Bond was set by Jude Alan Bowle in Hyattsville Police Court.

Scheuch was arrested by Officers Earl J. Huber and James Burgess of Prince Georges County police on description furnished by the victims, Mrs. Lewbelle McNear, manager, and Chris Gotoiu, night desk clerk.

Gotoiu said Scheuch entered the hotel at 2 a. m. Friday, threatened the pair with a gun and demanded the \$75 in the cash register. Police said the gun was a British weapon allegedly brought home as a war souvenir by Scheuch's brother.

"Chillum Man Held In \$75 Holdup of Hotel Register," *Washington Post*, March 12, 1946.

LORD CALVERT APARTMENTS
Washington-Baltimore Blvd.
Adjoining Lord Calvert Hotel, College Park, Md.

**4-room (1 bedroom) and 5-room (2 bedrooms)
apartments available for immediate occupancy**

4 rooms at \$81	}	(including all utilities)
5 rooms at \$95		

*See Agent at Premises—or Apply
Mr. Gotoiu, Lord Calvert. WA. 8324
Suite 206, Maryland Bldg. Hyattsville, Md., WA. 3100*

"Display Ad 3 -- No Title," *Washington Post*, May 7, 1949.

Dayton Corp. Buys College Park Hotel

Howard Dayton Hotels Corp., formerly of Daytona Beach, Fla., has purchased the 45-room Lord Calvert Hotel at College Park, Md., and plans immediate construction of a 40-room addition to the main building, plus a bar, tap room, dining room and banquet hall.

The corporation plans to maintain offices in College Park. Plans for purchase or lease of additional hotels in and about Maryland are under study.

"Dayton Corp. Buys College Park Hotel,"
Washington Post, February 12, 1950.

55-Room Addition To Hotel Planned

Plans are in progress for addition of 55 rooms to the Lord Calvert Hotel, College Park, Md.

Owner is Howard Dayton Hotels Corp., College Park. A banquet room, ballroom and kitchen also are proposed. General bids will be asked later.

"33 Houses Slated In Northeast D.C."
Washington Post, June 4, 1950.

By Md. Measure

County Beer Monopoly Threatened

By a Post Reporter

ANNAPOLIS, Feb. 22.—A bill effectively killing Montgomery County's beer monopoly and opening the door wide to private wholesalers was given to the General Assembly today.

The measure, introduced by Senator Dewitt S. Hyde (R., Montgomery), includes a provision authorizing the county government to levy taxes on all alcoholic beverages.

Hyde said the provision was inserted to enable the county to offset expected loss of revenue resulting from ending the present monopoly.

Estimates of current beer sale profits—which do into the county coffers—vary, but they are believed to be in excess of \$100,000 annually.

Introduction of the measure was first requested by the State Comptroller's office. A spokesman argued that the present system reduces beer consumption and cuts into State alcoholic beverage tax revenues.

It was also said the monopoly "lends itself to political favoritism."

Since the initial request, Attorney J. Hilland, representing Eugene J. C. Raney, has backed the proposal. He said his client was one of 16 beer wholesalers operating in the county when the monopoly was imposed in 1941.

A public hearing on the Hyde measure has been scheduled for March 10 at 8 p. m. in Bethesda Elementary School. A large crowd is expected.

Introduced today by the Prince George delegation was a measure providing for issuance of special hotel beer, wine and liquor licenses.

Specifically provided for are "bona fide" hotels in the county having at least 40 rooms and having been in continuous operation for five or more years. Delegates said, however, the bill is tailored for the Lord Calvert Hotel, College Park.

A measure introduced by Prince Georges delegates would authorize the mayor and council of Laurel to spend up to \$60,00 for sewage and water system improvements. Another measure would authorize Laurel to borrow for improvements in the Fairlawn section of the town.

"County Beer Monopoly Threatened," *Washington Post*, February 23, 1951.



A c.1950s view of Lord Calvert main building and some of the cottages (Author's personal collection).

LORD CALVERT APTS.
COLLEGE PARK, MD.
1- and 2-bedrm. apts.; liv. rm.,
dinette, kitchen, bath; excel.
trans.; near Md. U., shopping cen-
ter and schools. Apply office.
LORD CALVERT HOTEL
7200 Baltimore Blvd. AP. 7-1544

"Classified Ad 5 -- No Title," *Washington Post*, July 22, 1955.

2 Motels Are Planned For College Park Area

College Park, Md., Oct. 26 (AP)—Two new motels will be built here, it was announced today.

Together they will have 216 rooms and 2 restaurants.

One of them, the Park University Motel, will replace the old Lord Calvert Hotel on Baltimore avenue. Demolition of the hotel and construction of the 114-room motel are scheduled for completion by April 1.

The other motel to serve the University of Maryland area will be built by Holiday Inn. It will have 102 rooms, with 48 additional rooms possible under the building plans. It will be built at the intersection of U.S. 1 and Berwyn road.

“Bowling Center, Motel Plans Set,” *Baltimore Sun*, October 27, 1961.



Looking north along Route 1 in College Park. Quality Courts/Park University Motel is in the upper left (Courtesy of the City of College Park).

Appendix C: Shady Grove Motel

North Carolina Fugitives Seized in Prince Georges

Four convicts who escaped Saturday from a North Carolina prison were arrested yesterday in Prince Georges County after breaking into a College Park auto agency, County police said.

The four broke out of the Nash County workhouse near Raleigh, N. C., with 12 other prisoners, police said after checking with Nash County police.

They were arrested after they broke down the rear door of the Norman Motor Company, 3315 Baltimore blvd.

Police said Joseph Leslie, manager of the nearby Shady Grove Motel, called police

when he saw a car drive away as the motor company's burglar alarm sounded.

Privates E. G. Hursk and William Baxter caught them in Beltsville a few minutes later.

The four were identified as Harry Williams, 35, serving 30 to 40 years for armed robbery; Benjamin L. Clark, 30, serving 4 to 7 years for breaking and entering; George A. Gurley, 27, serving 13 to 17 years for breaking and entering and Dalton T. Walters, 29, serving seven years for forgery.

"North Carolina Fugitives Seized in Prince Georges," *Washington Post*, October 16, 1956.

LESLIE, GEORGIA H. On Friday, January 9, 1959, at Washington Hospital Center. **GEORGIA H. LESLIE** of The Shady Grove Motel, College Park, Md., beloved mother of A. R. Joe Leslie, sister of Mrs. Alvin Epling of Hyattsville, Md.; Robert Hounshell of College Park, Md.; Mrs. C. C. Phillippe of Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. I. E. Warden of Wytheville, Va.; Mrs. Lee Rosenbaum of Charlotte, N. C., and Kelly Hounshell of Palm Bay, Fla. Friends may call at the S. H. Hines Co. Funeral Home, 2901 14th st. nw. (parking facilities), until 10 p.m. Saturday, January 10. Services and interment Roanoke, Va.

"Obituary 7 -- No Title," *Washington Post*, January 10, 1959.

Appendix D: Haass Haven/College Park Motel



Black and white image of Haass Haven Cabins (Courtesy of the City of College Park).



The College Park Motel has had such a run of bad luck and bad-luck clients that it sometimes seems to be a magnet for troubled people and other problems.

Bad Luck a Frequent Guest at Md. Motel

By Eugene L. Meyer
Washington Post Staff Writer

Weeks ago, there was a fire at the College Park Motel in which two small children died. One recent Saturday, at the same motel, a suicidal man had to be taken by police to the hospital. Other times there were domestic disputes, a suspected kidnaping, other fires, broken windows and broken marriages.

To the naked eye, the motel is just an unpretentious looking collection of 16 small cabins and a big main house with four apartments. It is one of several motor courts that dot what was in another era the interstate traveler's main gateway to Washington, U.S. Route 1.

Now, the motel seems sometimes to be a magnet for troubled people. Life there is often punctuated by tragedy, so much so that Peggy Wanzner, who recently left her job as its resident manager, had come to know "every cop in the county. It got to be where I'd walk in the courthouse door and they'd say, 'Hi, what's new this week?'"

She even began to keep a journal of the dramas that went on. Some excerpts:

* "Jan. 20, 1976, 5:30 p.m. Mr. Marhe called rescue squad for a lady in her room. Rescue squad took her

from here at 5:30 p.m. She was drunk out of her mind.

* "March 11, 1977. Found man dead. Truck driven 18 hours on road. Wanted to sleep. Beltsville Rescue Squad said maybe alcohol and pot. . . and he fell and cracked head open . . . Autopsy: death from acute alcoholism.

* "April 7, 1977. No one answered in one cabin TV on curtains down. Man face up, lying on the bed with blood on his hands and shot gun standing on the floor upright next to his bed . . . 1:40 p.m. . . The sheets, bedspread, mattress, bed pad, blankets and pillows were ruined with blood."

The motel's moderately priced rooms rent to students and professors from the nearby University of Maryland who sometimes pay by the week, miscellaneous transients and persons placed there by the county social services agency who need emergency housing. Some of the units have kitchens and more than one room, and sometimes they hold large families.

The county doesn't allow house-keeping units in new motels but, according to College Park code enforcement director Earl Harnest, "under a grandfather clause" old ones can still operate.

"Twenty-four hours a day, if we have room, we take 'em," Peggy

Wanzner said, one day several months ago when she was still running the motel. "To me, it would be an interesting job for a psychiatry major."

Her hair was in curlers as she greeted a visitor. On the front desk was an outdated sign, "Authorized Agent for D.C. Transit Sightseeing Tours." Behind, an old PRX switchboard lit up and rang from time to time.

The main building was first a residence, erected by a man named Beck with more than 50 years ago. A woman named Price bought it in 1924, adding a front and then a rear porch, and finally, some cabins to cater to the tourists coming to Washington.

"There was a huge tree there beside the road," remembered Beulah Kea-fauver, who with her husband Earl built their large brick home on the hill behind the motel in 1924. "Someone hit that tree one night. It killed him. That tree is long gone."

The motel changed owners in the intervening years, winding up by the mid-1970s in the possession of an Indian national living in Manassas and working for IBM. The man, Astil Pravinchandra K. Shah, would come around on weekends, Peggy Wanzner was his manager.

It was her first such job, but she was no stranger to the business: Her

mother is the resident manager of a Connecticut Avenue apartment house.

At first, Peggy Wanzner, who is 44 and the mother of five grown children, had part-time help in her new job from her second husband Walter, a printer and Saturday night singer at a downtown Washington restaurant. After six months, however, he left.

"He felt the motel was taking up too much of my time," said Peggy Wanzner. "He's a great guy. It just didn't work out."

On Dec. 21, 1975, the people in one cabin complained it was too cold. The thermostat was next door but no one inside answered the phone. Peggy Wanzner opened the door with a passkey and found a woman apparently unconscious from what was later deemed a drug overdose.

"Walter couldn't arouse her, so I called the rescue squad," Peggy Wanzner noted in her diary. "She was taken to Leland Memorial Hospital in critical condition, but she will live," she added later. "She spent 10 days in the hospital and then returned here."

Three months ago, there was a letter from the woman who now lives in the Midwest. She has held a job for almost two years now, as a secretary in



See MOTEL, B5, Col. 2

Motel a Magnet for Troubled Persons



PEGGY WANGNER
... kept journal of events

MOTEL, From B1
an insurance office. "It makes me feel independent," she wrote.

The day the woman overdosed, Peggy Wagner had other problems. "Mr. — is in Cabin — with two children and wife. I called social services since he and his wife were continually fighting and children terribly upset. Wife ran off with cab driver and kept coming back and fighting with husband. He owed (the motel) approximately \$80. Social services came and put the children in a foster home and placed him in a state mental health center. Wife disappeared."

Dec. 19, 1975 was another one of those days that filled several pages of Peggy Wagner's journal.

It began around 8:30 a.m. when the man in Cabin — on a weekend pass, it turned out, from St. Elizabeths Hospital, phoned his counselor to say he planned to end his life. When the counselor arrived, the man, Peggy Wagner noted, "was breaking windows, etc. Walter went to the room and the man slashed both his wrists and started throwing things."

Police arrived at 11:40 a.m., the rescue squad 10 minutes later. The man

was taken to Prince George's General Hospital, then transferred to D.C. General.

At 5 p.m., Peggy Wagner listed the damage: bloody mattress pad, bedspread, pillow cases, blanket, towels, broken wall mirror, etc. "No chance of recovering," she wrote. "He had no money."

Two hours later, Peggy Wagner's 16-year-old son "came running up to the office and asked me who was living on the porch . . . because some man is dumping about 25 dogs in crates in a room behind the wall."

It was a woman in her 60s. "It seems she had put these 25 dogs in with different vets and never paid the bill," Peggy Wagner noted, "so this vet dumped them on her doorstep. I telephoned her immediately and told her the animals had to be out by morning."

By noon the next day, the animals were still in her room, uncaged. Peggy Wagner called the police. At 12:15, a Hyattsville policeman talked to the woman and left.

"She proceeded to start taking two or three dogs at a time and walked up and down U.S. 1," the resident manager wrote. "She also took a lot of them in a taxi. She again deposited them with different vets. Last I heard, the Hyattsville Animal Hospital finally had to put six of the dogs to

sleep and she was suing them for this."

Peggy Wagner left the motel late last year when it was sold by Shah to another Indian named Vijay Patel. Patel, 43, is a slight, soft-spoken man from a farming village north of Bombay who immigrated to this country in December, 1976.

He had been helping his sister and brother-in-law run another motel in Annapolis when the College Park opportunity came along. "We all like United States," he said. There is a lot of chance to develop. It is a nice place."

Patel and his family were badly shaken by the fire Feb. 9 that resulted in the deaths of two children. "My wife didn't sleep for three nights," Patel said, "We are very emotional people. We take it very seriously."

The children were alone at the time of the fire. Since then, Patel has posted a new office sign: "To re-emphasize our requirements to the guests with children, we insist that no children shall be left unattended in motel premises."

"God will help us, yes," said Vijay Patel. "That way I pray."

Peggy Wagner has a new job now, as resident manager of an apartment house in Foggy Bottom. She's trying to market her journal as a book and thinks its contents would also make a great television series.

Eugene L. Meyer, "Bad Luck a Frequent Guest at Md. Motel: Motel a Magnet for Troubled Persons,"
Washington Post, February 25, 1978.

Two Small Brothers Killed In College Park Motel Fire

By Elizabeth Becker
Washington Post Staff Writer

Two brothers, aged 2 and 4, were killed in a College Park motel fire yesterday and their mother was injured as she tried to rescue her sons.

Two-year old James Croson and 4 year-old Stony Burt Croson died about noon in an as-yet-unexplained fire that ravaged the family's cottage at the College Park Motel, Prince George's County fire officials reported.

Deborah Croson, the 28-year-old mother, said she had just stepped outside when the fire broke out and smoked billowed out of the cottage. "I don't know how long I stood out there trying to get in. When it's your babies in there it seems like days."

The family had moved to the cottage one year ago when they came to Prince George's from Fairfax County. "It was hard to rent a house here. With three little ones they'd look at us and think we'd wreck the place. At the motel at least we got a break. She was working up front, running the office and she could take the little ones up with her," said her husband Welby Croson.

County firefighters arrived at 12:08 yesternoon afternoon and put out the fire before it spread much beyond the Croson's cottage at 8419 Baltimore Ave. The cottage was destroyed.

Welby Croson was at work in Southeast Washington. Their third and oldest child, 10-year old Welby, was at school. "The place caught on fire in such a hurry, it went up so fast, my wife couldn't do anything," he explained.

The family lost all its possessions and savings in the half-hour blaze.

Both parents said they were disturbed and angry about newly installed smoke detectors that failed to alert them. The motel managers would not comment on the fire.

At Prince George's General Hospital, where Deborah Croson was treated for burns on her face and cuts on her hands, the parents said they would move back to another cottage at the motel that evening since they had no other place to go.

"Everything we had, all our own furniture and what little we had saved up is gone," said Welby Croson, a heavy equipment mechanic for Good-

See FIRE, B3, Col. 6



By Gerald Martineau—The Washington Post
Fireman stands in doorway of motel cottage that was destroyed by fire.

2 Small Brothers Die in Fire

FIRE, From B1
year Tire & Rubber Co. "We didn't have fire insurance."

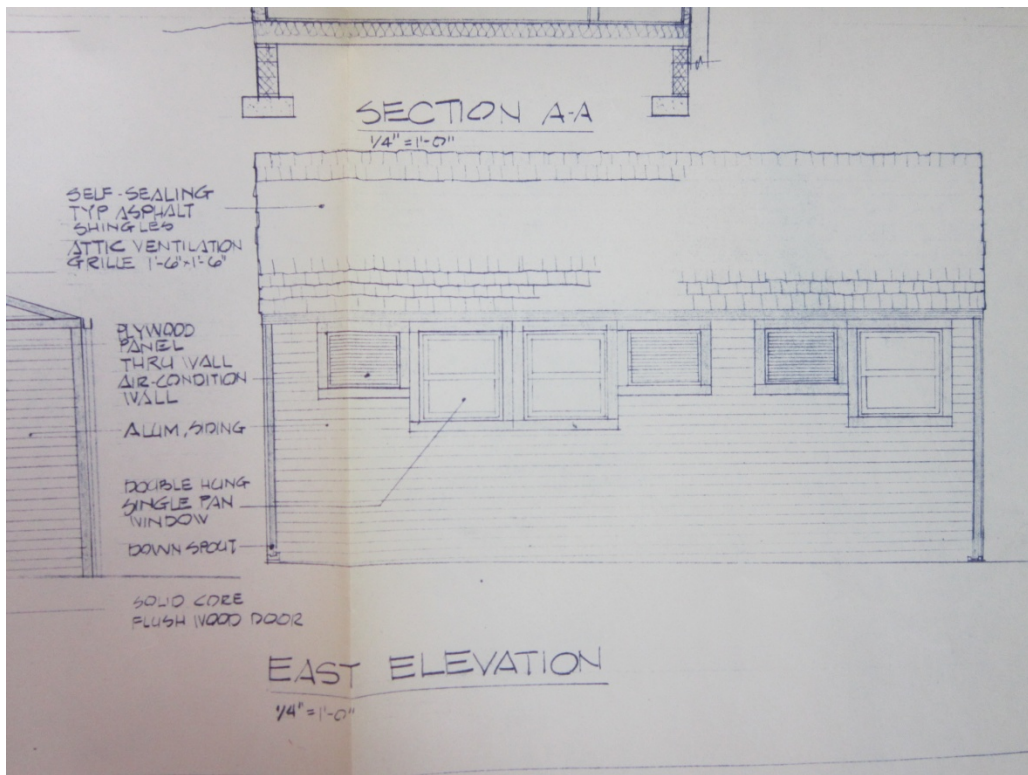
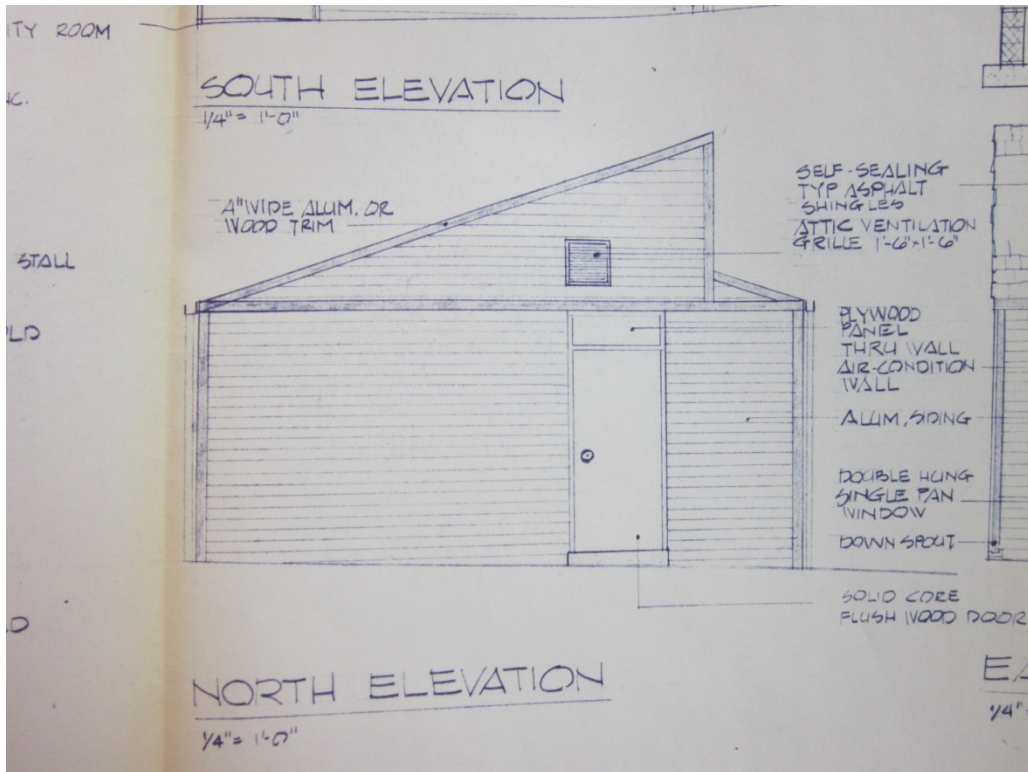
Yesterday Deborah Croson said she had just finished feeding her children when she stepped outside the cottage on the way to the front lobby when the smoke came rushing out.

"I really don't know what happened. I got back as far as the living room but I couldn't get to the bedroom. I

tried to break the windows from the outside but I couldn't get in," she said.

Although they were both born and raised in Fairfax County, the couple said they had no relatives left in the Washington area. A representative of the Prince George's chapter of the Red Cross told them yesterday that they would receive some help from that organization.

Elizabeth Becker, "Two Small Brothers Killed In College Park Motel Fire: 2 Small Brothers Die in Fire,"
Washington Post, February 10, 1978.



Appendix E: Royal Pine Tourist Court



Linen postcard image showing the main house in its original location (Author's personal collection).



Double-view Royal Pine Motel postcard showing off the landscaping (Author's personal collection).



Postcard showing one of Ed Sims' additions to the Royal Pine (Author's personal collection).

College Park Motel Man Is Honored

Ed Sims, owner-operator of the Royal Pine Motel in College Park, has been named to Hospitality Magazine's Hall of Fame for his work in the lodging industry and in civic affairs.

Sims is director of the American Motor Hotel Association and a former president and vice president of the Maryland Motel Associa-

tion. He is also chairman of the College Park Heart Fund drive.

"College Park Motel Man Is Honored," *Washington Post*, April 19, 1964.

College Park Motel Owner Elected Association Head

Edgar Sims Jr., owner of the Royal Pine Motel in College Park, was elected president of the American Motor Hotel Association during its annual convention and trade show in Chicago this month. The Association is the national trade association of the motel industry. It consists of 7000 motel operators from 42 affiliated state organizations.

Sims is a member of the Citizens Advisory Commit-

tee on Tourism to the Maryland State Department of Economic Development. He has been active in the Maryland Motel-Motor Hotel Association and the Maryland Travel Council, of which he is regional vice president.

"College Park Motel Owner Elected Association Head," *Washington Post*, June 20, 1965.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Royal Pine Motel</i></p>  <p>EDGAR SIMS JR., OWNER AND MANAGER HALF MILE SOUTH OF CAPITAL BELTWAY, EXIT 27 ON US 1 COLLEGE PARK, MD. 20740 NEAR THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND (301) 345-4900</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Royal Pine Motel</i></p>  <p>EDGAR SIMS JR., OWNER AND MANAGER HALF MILE SOUTH OF CAPITAL BELTWAY, EXIT 29 ON US 1 COLLEGE PARK, MD. 20740 NEAR THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND (301) 345-4900</p> 
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Left: Ad from the 1975 Guide to the City of College Park, Maryland. Right: New unit which replaced the main house, as seen in an ad in the 1980-81 City of College Park, Maryland Guidebook.

Gasoline Attack In P.G. Burns Motel Employes

By Keith Harriston
Washington Post Staff Writer

A 25-year-old man was charged with assault with intent to murder yesterday after his estranged girlfriend and one of her fellow College Park motel employes were doused with gasoline and set on fire with matches, according to Prince George's County police.

The two victims, Carla Scott, 21, of Northwest Washington and Craig Cronin, 38, of Hyattsville, were taken to the Washington Hospital Center after police and firefighters converged on the Best Western Royal Pine Motel at 9113 Baltimore Blvd. near the University of Maryland, while startled motel guests rushed from their rooms to watch.

Last night, Scott was listed in fair condition at the hospital with second-degree burns over her back and arms. Cronin was listed in serious but stable condition, a spokeswoman said, with second- and third-degree burns over his face, hands and upper body.

County police, acting on information provided by Scott when they arrived at the motel, arrested Thomas Emmitt Williams about 45 minutes after the 8:30 a.m. incident. Williams was driving his Chevy Blazer, in which he apparently has been living, along Good Luck Road in Riverdale when he was picked up, police said.

Williams was charged with two counts of assault with intent to murder, police said.

Robert Law, a police spokesman, said that Scott apparently had

See FIRE, B3, Col. 2

Motel Employes Burned

FIRE, From B1

ended a relationship with Williams a month ago, but Williams did not accept the breakup. Law said the two had been feuding off and on for several weeks, and the dispute came to a head yesterday morning.

Williams went into the lobby of the motel where Scott works about 8:30 a.m. yesterday, carrying a small container, police said. Both Scott and Cronin were working behind the counter of the motel, which caters mostly to university students and university-generated traffic.

Police said Williams confronted Scott as he entered the lobby, yelling at her and throwing what they believe was gasoline on the woman.

When Cronin tried to intervene, police said, Williams poured the flammable liquid on him, too. Then Williams ignited the liquid with matches, police said.

Scott and Cronin ran from the lobby of the motel to a nearby room for help, Law said. Police were uncertain how they extinguished the fire.

A witness, Tim Ware, was quoted in wire service accounts as saying that an alarm sounded and guests heard running inside the motel building.

"And then we got out and that's when everything started going kind of crazy—the fire trucks got here and everyone was outside and we saw the guy who had been burned and it was a real mess," Ware said.

Keith Harriston, "Gasoline Attack In P.G. Burns Motel Employes: Motel Employes Burned," *Washington Post*, September 30, 1987.



The Royal Pine's main house as it appears today. It has the distinction of being the only motel main house to survive from College Park's motel era (Photo by author, 2013).

Appendix F: Hillcrest Motor Court



Hillcrest Motor Court, with Lasick's restaurant in the background, looking northwest (From the Philip Geraci photograph collection, Hornbake Library).



Black and white postcard image of Hillcrest's motel units (Author's personal collection).

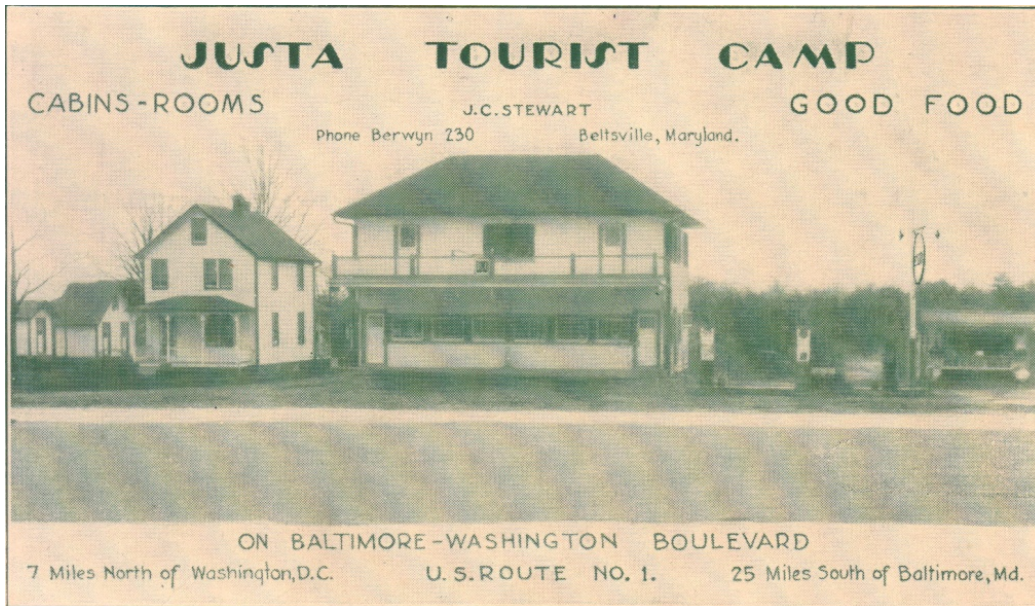


Three-view linen postcard showing the main house on the upper left, the interior of one of the units on the upper right, and the motel units along the bottom (Author's personal collection).



Matchbook cover advertising the Hillcrest Motor Court.

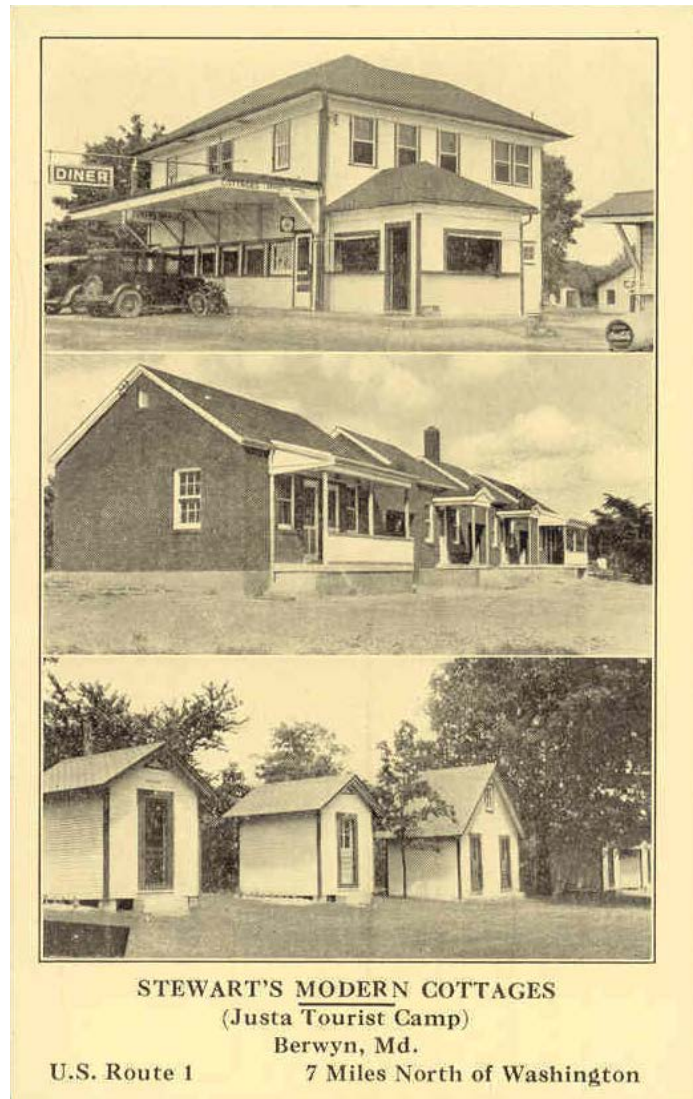
Appendix G: Justa Tourist Camp/Stewart's Modern Brick Cottages



Green-tinted postcard with the original name of the camp. In the center is the diner; to the right is a set of Esso gas pumps (Author's personal collection).



c.1950s view of the Stewart's cottages with interspersed garages (Author's personal collection).



Triple-view postcard showing the diner/service station at the top, a few of the brick cottages in the middle, and a few small white wood-frame facility buildings at the bottom. Note that both the establishment's old and new names are used. This postcard was likely distributed just after the name change, which was most likely due to the introduction of cabins to the property. The cabins in the center image appear to have been newly constructed at the time the picture was taken (Author's personal collection).

NEIGHBOR CRITICIZES CAMP FOR TOURISTS

Moral Conditions in Prince Georges Site Told to County Officials.

Tourist camps in Prince Georges County came under fire from two angles yesterday when complaints about the moral conditions at one of them were made to the county commissioners, while Dr. A. B. Hooton, public health officer, revealed that he was also inspecting the camps from a sanitary standpoint.

J. J. Williamson made the complaint to the commissioners, naming a camp on the Baltimore boulevard between Hollywood and Beltsville, on property owned by J. C. Stewart. Mr. Williamson said some of the cabins were built within 43 feet of his house, and that he was disturbed all night by occupants of the place. The actual tourists, he said, gave no cause for complaint, the noise being made by persons in District cars who spent the night at the place.

He also claimed that the permit for the place was obtained through misrepresentation, the operators stating that adjoining property owners did not object. Mr. Williamson said he was not consulted and had not consented to the camp. He said he had complained also to the Park and Planning Commission. The county commissioners decided to wait until the commission acts on the complaint.

Dr. Hooton's inspection of the camps was made to enforce the State sanitary regulations which were recently put in operation. They require that the camps be inspected by the health officer and that a permit for their operation be obtained from the State Board of Health. Some of the camps in the county, Dr. Hooton said, may be licensed at once, but at others he has suggested improvements which must be made before the license will be issued.

Hearings Set For 11 Liquor Applications

The Prince Georges County Liquor Board will hold hearings on 11 new liquor license applications and 9 requests for transfers February 14 at 10 a. m. in the Upper Marlboro Courthouse.

Jack Bass is seeking a transfer from John Klein, Klein's Tavern, at 3204 Rhode Island ave., Mount Rainier. The tavern is presently closed under a 60-day suspension ordered for alleged violations. The license calls for beer, wine and liquor for sale on the premises.

Other applicants are:

Charles T. Woods and William C. Woods, Town Tavern, formerly occupied by Aaron Hurwitz, opposite Pennsylvania Railroad station at Bowie, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

James D. Coates, Chesapeake Sea Food, 2930 Hamilton st., Hyattsville, beer, on sale.

Ewell H. Mohler, 5200 Tuxedo rd., Bladensburg, beer, wine and liquor, for sale off the premises.

Owen Allen Buck, Main st., next to Shell gasoline station, Upper Marlboro, beer, wine and liquor, off sale.

Morris Yochelson, Clinton, beer, wine and liquor, off sale.

Willard F. Hoteler, Brown's Tavern, 9313 Baltimore Blvd., Berwyn, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

Robert Ben Rocklin, G1 Liquor Store, intersection of New Hampshire and Ethan Allen aves., and East-West hwy., Chillum district, beer, wine and liquor, off sale.

Alexander Matthews, Quonsiet Inn, 3225 Naylor rd., Silver Hill, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

Charles A. Straining, Charley's Tavern, Washington ave., between Maple and Chestnut aves., Bowie district, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

Hugh J. Crawley, 4308 Rhode Island ave., Brentwood, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

Lucille Taylor, Federal Grill, Baltimore Blvd. and Sunnyside rd., Berwyn, beer, on sale.

Frederick Austin Lawhorn, Lawhorn Delicatessen, 4818 Annapolis rd., Bladensburg, transfer from Esther Koppelon, beer, off sale.

Bernard Cantor, Snug Harbor Tavern, Defense hwy., near Seabrook, transfer from Lloyd E. Simmons, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

Jean Freedman, Triangle Service Center, Crain hwy. and Southern Maryland pike, Brandywine, transfer from William Earl Hindle, beer, on sale.

Ernest Rayburn, 9410-12 Baltimore Blvd., Berwyn, transfer from Milton F. Barrett, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

Casimer Frackiewicz, 57th ave. and Central aves., Capitol Heights, transfer from Charles Campbell, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

David A. Boimstein, Maryland Park Market, 502 65th st., Maryland Park, transfer from Jack Shapiro, beer, on sale.

Lester A. Wells, Stewart's Restaurant, Berwyn, transfer from J. C. Stewart, beer, off sale.

Henry Holder, Brandywine Inn, Southern Maryland pike at T. B., transfer from Grace V. Myster, beer, wine and liquor, on sale.

Liquor license for Stewart's Restaurant transferred from J. C. Stewart to Lester A. Wells ("Hearings Set For 11 Liquor Applications," *Washington Post*, February 10, 1946.)

"NEIGHBOR CRITICIZES CAMP FOR TOURISTS: Moral Conditions in Prince Georges Site Told to County Officials," *Washington Post*, August 24, 1932.

Appendix H: Colonial Plaza Motel and Dormitories

Area Ice Skating Rink To Open Saturday

The Colonial Plaza Motel Skating Rink, with a 60 by 20-foot outdoor skating area, will open Saturday at 10203 Baltimore Blvd.

The ice rink has parking for 200 cars, a skate shop and equipment rental department and a combination dressing room, lounge and nursery. Free babysitting is offered.

"Area Ice Skating Rink To Open Saturday,"
Washington Post, November 9, 1959.

Gunman Gets \$165 In Motel Hold-Up

Beltsville, Md., Feb. 15 (AP)—"If you don't want three eyes, hand it over," a gunman told the clerk at the Colonial Plaza Motel as he pointed an automatic pistol at him early today.

The clerk, Andrew Myket, 34, handed over \$165. The hold-up man escaped. He was described as about 18, and white.

"Gunman Gets \$165 In Motel Hold-Up,"
Baltimore Sun, February 16, 1960.

Dormitories Groups to D.C.

Great Place to Put Up the Troops,
Scouts, Churches,
Schools
3 in a Room
\$2.50
Per Person

FREE
PARKING
TV • POOL
MEETING
ROOMS



Colonial Plaza Motel & Dorms
10203 Balt. Blvd. at Beltway (Exit 27)
Send for Brochure
College Park, Md. 474-5678

"Display Ad 70 -- No Title," *Washington Post*,
March 23, 1969.

"Rink Owner Still Battles Officialdom,"
Washington Post, November 27, 1966.

**Anna A. Baltzell, 75,
Georgetown Resident**

Anna A. Baltzell, 75, who for some years oversaw the building of new houses and restoration of old homes in Georgetown, died Sunday at Georgetown University Hospital.

Born and raised in Georgetown, Mrs. Baltzell was the wife of J. Thomas Baltzell, owner of the Colonial Plaza Motel in College Park.

Besides her husband, of the home, 1918 35th St. NW, she is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Andrew J. May and Mrs. T. Raymond Sullivan, also of Georgetown.

"Anna A. Baltzell, 75, Georgetown Resident," *Washington Post*, March 6, 1973.

Rink Owner Still Battles Officialdom

Prince George's County's only ice-skating rink is beginning its fourth winter of disuse while its owner continues an unsuccessful battle with State and Federal highway officials.

The rink, a \$250,000 roofed-over operation at the corner of Rte. 1 and the Capital Beltway, was closed during construction of the Beltway in 1963. The new highway's College Park exit cut off the rink's access road.

"The problem is," says John T. Baltzell, the rink's owner, "that when they built the exit they built a 520-foot fence along the merging area, where cars enter Rte. 1. The last 40 feet of the fence blocked the entrance to the rink."

So the rink sits iceless and unused beside Baltzell's Colonial Plaza Motel. Could cars use the motel's entrance, which is unblocked, and circle back to the rink, Baltzell was asked.

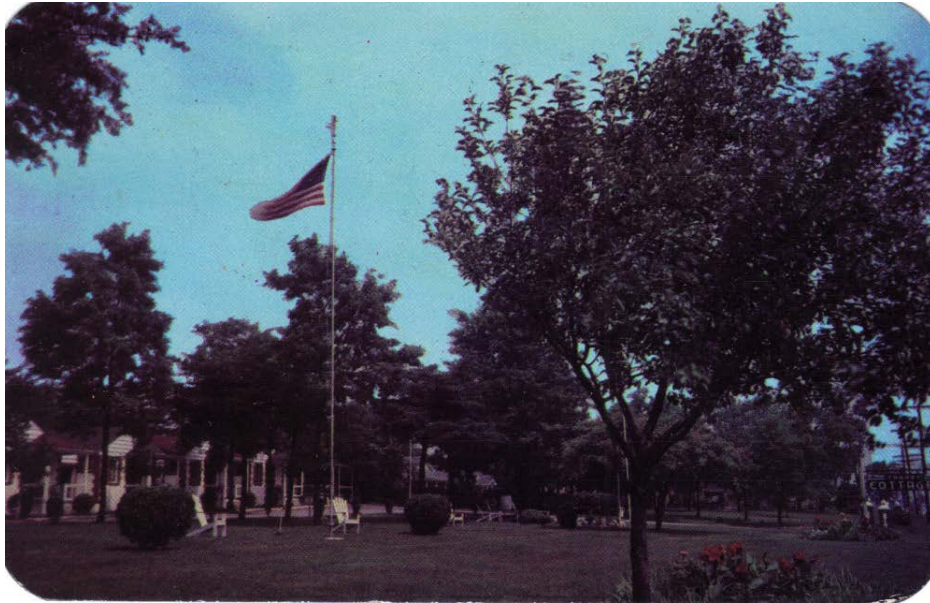
"No," he said. "The motel's the main part of the business, and I can't afford to have kids running through it on their way to the rink."

Officials of the Federal Bureau of Public Roads say access to the rink from the Beltway exit would be hazardous to traffic coming off the Beltway.

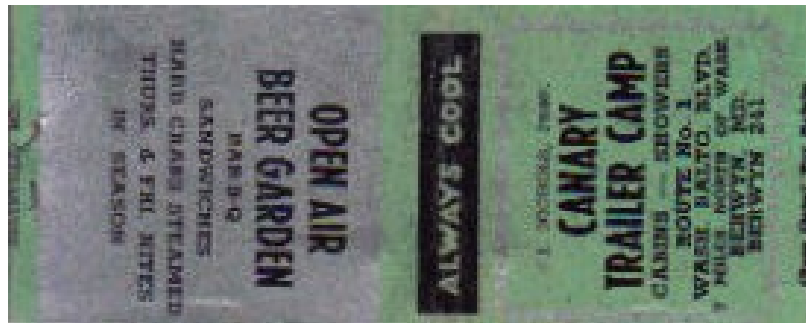
Baltzell counters by saying that the College Park exit doesn't need a 520-foot merging strip. "Other exits have far less," he points out, saying that a shorter merging area would eliminate the problem. He has also requested either an easement to allow the rink's customers to use the exit ramp, or relocation of the ramp.

But his pleas have gone unheeded and his rink continues to gather dust.

Appendix I: Canary Cottages and Trailer Park



Early 1950s view of the court (or green) at Canary Cottages, with cottages visible in the background (Author's personal collection).



Matchbook cover advertising Canary's trailer camp and open air beer garden (Author's personal collection).

**HOUSE TRAILER—'48 30-ft. Continental.
Fully equipped with all modern con-
veniences. Must see to appreciate
Canary Cottages, Lot 50, Berwyn, Md.**

"Classified Ad 16 -- No Title," *Baltimore Sun*, October 8, 1950.

WASHINGTON SUBURBAN
SANITARY COMMISSION

CONTRACT NO. 4867-S
SEWER CONSTRUCTION

Sealed proposals for constructing in Right of Way through Plant Industry Station, to serve the Canary Cottages and Del Haven Motel, Beltsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland, approximately 1,050 feet of 8-inch plain concrete or vitrified pipe sewers, will be received at the office of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, 4017 Hamilton street, Hyattsville Maryland, until Monday, February 14, 1966, at 11:20 A.M., Eastern Standard Time, at which place and time they will be publicly opened and read.

Plans and Specifications for this contract may be obtained from the office of the Chief Engineer of the Commission, Plans and Specifications Section.

MORRIS V. SPICCI,
Chairman.
WILLIAM C. AUSTIN,
V. Chairman.
PETER A. BOZICK,
HAL LACKEY,
JOHN J. McBURNEY,
ANTHONY C. MORELLA,
Commissioners.

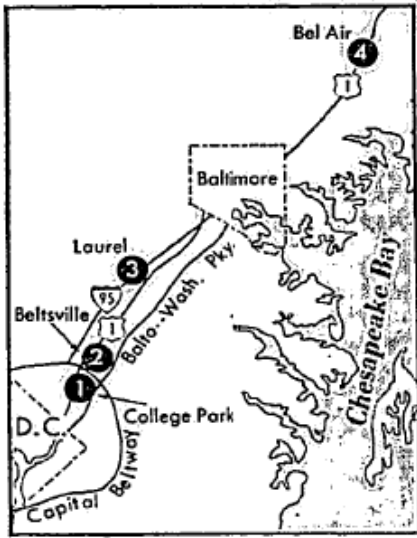
Attest:
JOHN T. BONIFANT,
Secretary.

“Classified Ad 18 -- No Title,” *Baltimore Sun*, February 4, 1966.



Trailers at the Canary Cottages trailer park in 1983 (From Lisa Swenarski, “Imminent Transformation of Trailer Park Disrupts a ‘Quiet’ Community of 25 Years,” *Washington Post*, August 1, 1983.

Appendix J: Del Haven White House and Cottages



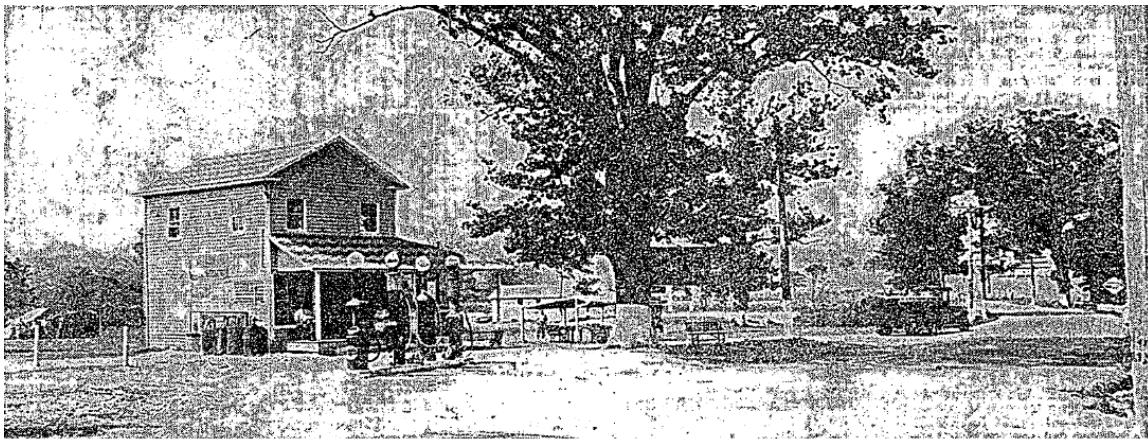
Map of motels owned by the Irwin family (From Eugene L. Meyer, "Changing Times And Opportunities Along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 Through the Years," *Washington Post*, January 19, 1978.)



Matchbook cover advertising the homey-ness of Del Haven Whitehouse Cottages (Author's personal collection).

—The Washington Post.

Motels along Rte. 1 owned by the Irwin family: (1) The Royal Pine Motel; (2) Del Haven Cottages built in the mid-'30s; (3) Site of new motel on I-95; (4) Original Del Haven Hotel and Cabins, a mile north of Bel Air.



An Irwin family photo from the 1920s shows the clan's store along Maryland Rte. 1. In left background some travelers' have pitched their tent, the beginning of the Irwin motel business.

The early days of Felix Irwin, Sr.'s first tourist camp in Bel Air, MD (From Meyer, "Changing Times And Opportunities Along Old Route 1: Pioneering the Motel Business Along Route 1 Through the Years").



Linen postcard depicting the “big white house, the service station, and a shaded green lawn surrounded by brick cottages (Author’s personal collection).



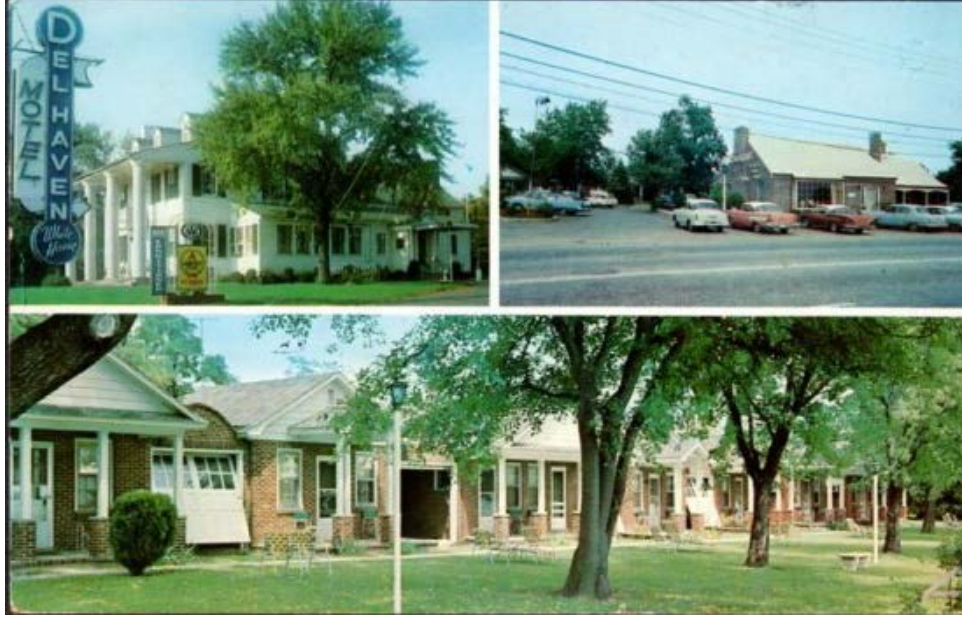
Another linen postcard, with the same view of the cottages around the green, but with an uncommon frontal view of the white house (Author’s personal collection).



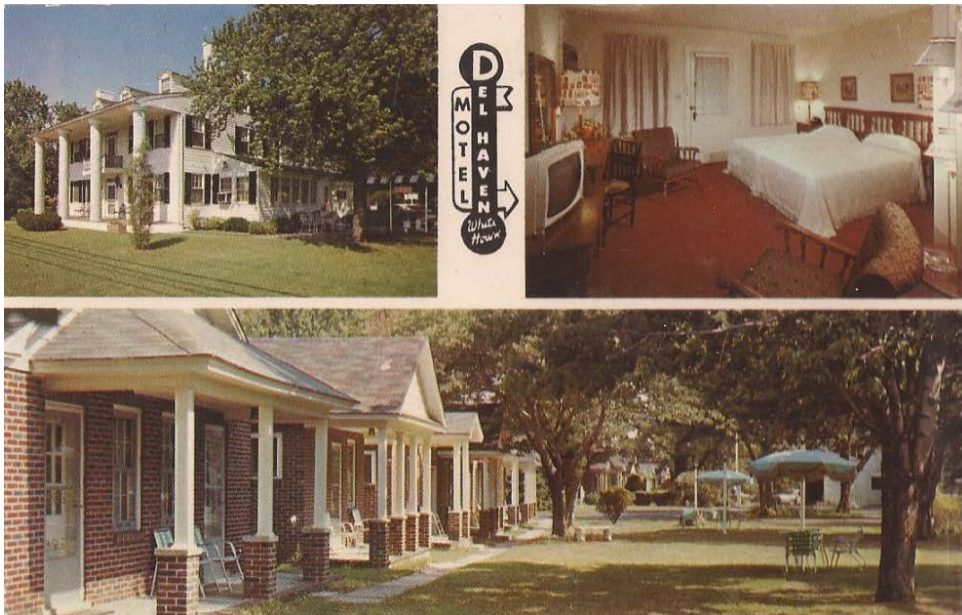
This linen postcard shows the cottages around the green, the white house, and a pair of cottages linked together with their garages (Author's personal collection).



The white house, a pair of cottages, and the cottages around the green (Author's personal collection).



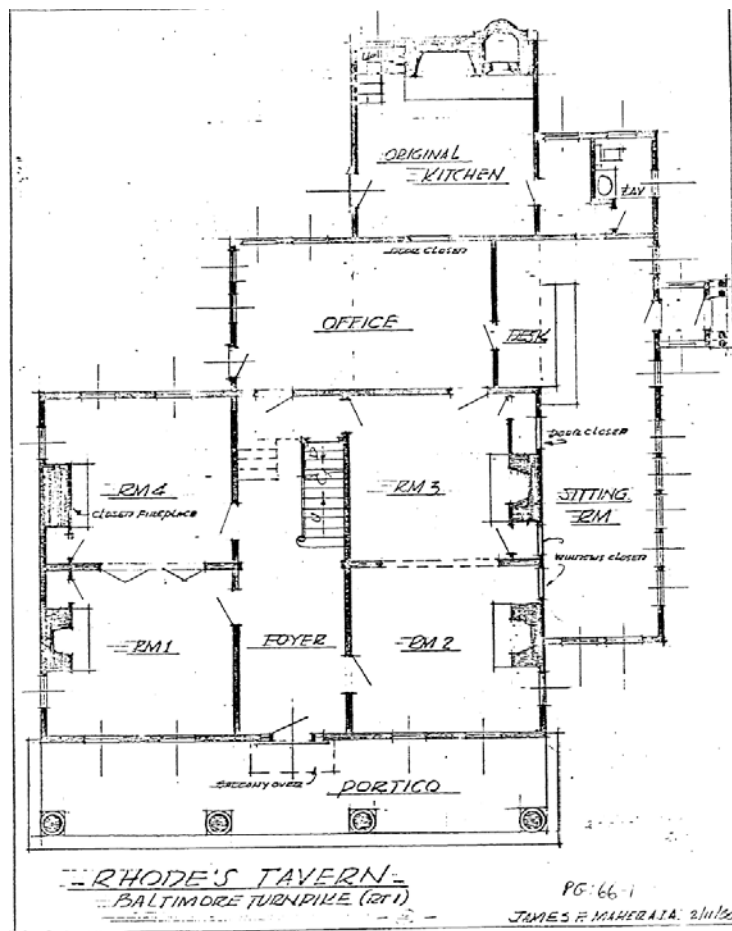
A more modern postcard showing the white house, the restaurant, and several brick cottages (Author's personal collection).



Another modern postcard, this one containing an image of the white house, the rather fancy interior of one of the cottages, and several of the cottages (Author's personal collection).



Front side of a Del Haven White House Cottages business card (Author's personal collection).



Floor plan of Rhode's Tavern (From Christopher Owens, "White House Tavern (Brown's Tavern)," Maryland Historical Trust National Register Eligibility Review Form, January 1973).



FELIX M. IRWIN

MOTEL PIONEER'S FUNERAL TODAY

F. M. Irwin, 84, Of Bel Air,
Built First In The East

Bel Air, Md., Jan. 30 (Special)
—Services for Felix M. Irwin, a pioneer in the motel business, will be held at 2 P.M. Friday at the Mount Carmel Baptist Church here.

Mr. Irwin, who was 84, died Monday at the North Shore Hospital in Miami.

A resident of Majors Choice Farm on Conowingo road, Bel Air, since coming to Maryland in 1919, Mr. Irwin also had a home on Belle Meade Island in Miami.

First Motel In East

After moving to Maryland from Sparta, N.C., Mr. Irwin built the first motel in the East about 1922, according to his son, F. M. Irwin, Jr., of Silver Spring.

The younger Mr. Irwin recalled that in the 1920's some motorists who could not afford to stay in hotels carried tents which they put up alongside the roads. He said his father had the idea that these motorists would be willing to stay in cabins at rates cheaper than regular hotels.

Mr. Irwin built the cabins on Route 1 in Bel Air. The cabins gradually expanded into the Del Haven Motel. After Mr. Irwin moved his operations into the Washington area in 1938, the motel was demolished.

In 1938, Mr. Irwin built the Del Haven White House Motel in College Park which he still owned at the time of his death.

As a hobby, Mr. Irwin raised beef cattle on his farm.

In addition to his son, he is survived by his wife, Mrs. Maye Hoppers Irwin; five daughters, Mrs. Juanita Scarff and Mrs. Felicia Jackson, of Bel Air, Mrs. Sue Cronin and Mrs. Jeanette Sims, of Hyattsville, Md., and Mrs. Rose Hasty, of Coral Gables, Fla.; 22 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren.

“MOTEL PIONEER'S FUNERAL TODAY: F. M. Irwin, 84, Of Bel Air, Built First In The East,”
Baltimore Sun, January 31, 1969.



MAYE H. IRWIN

***Maye H. Irwin, 84,
Built Motels in Area***

Maye Hoppers Irwin, 84, a Maryland resident since 1919, died of pneumonia March 10 at Harford Memorial Hospital in Havre De Grace, Md. She lived in Bel Air.

Mrs. Irwin was a native of North Carolina. She and her husband, Felix M. Irwin Sr. who died in 1969, built several area motels. These included the Del Haven Motel in Bel Air and the Del Haven White House Motel in Beltsville.

Survivors include five daughters, Sue Cronin and Jeanette Sims, both of Hyattsville, Felicia Jackson and Juanita Scarff, both of Bel Air, and Rose Hasty of Coral Gables, Fla.; a son, Felix M. Jr., of Silver Spring; a sister, Amy Joines of Sebring, Fla.; 24 grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

"Maye H. Irwin, 84, Built Motels in Area," *Washington Post*, March 22, 1980.

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