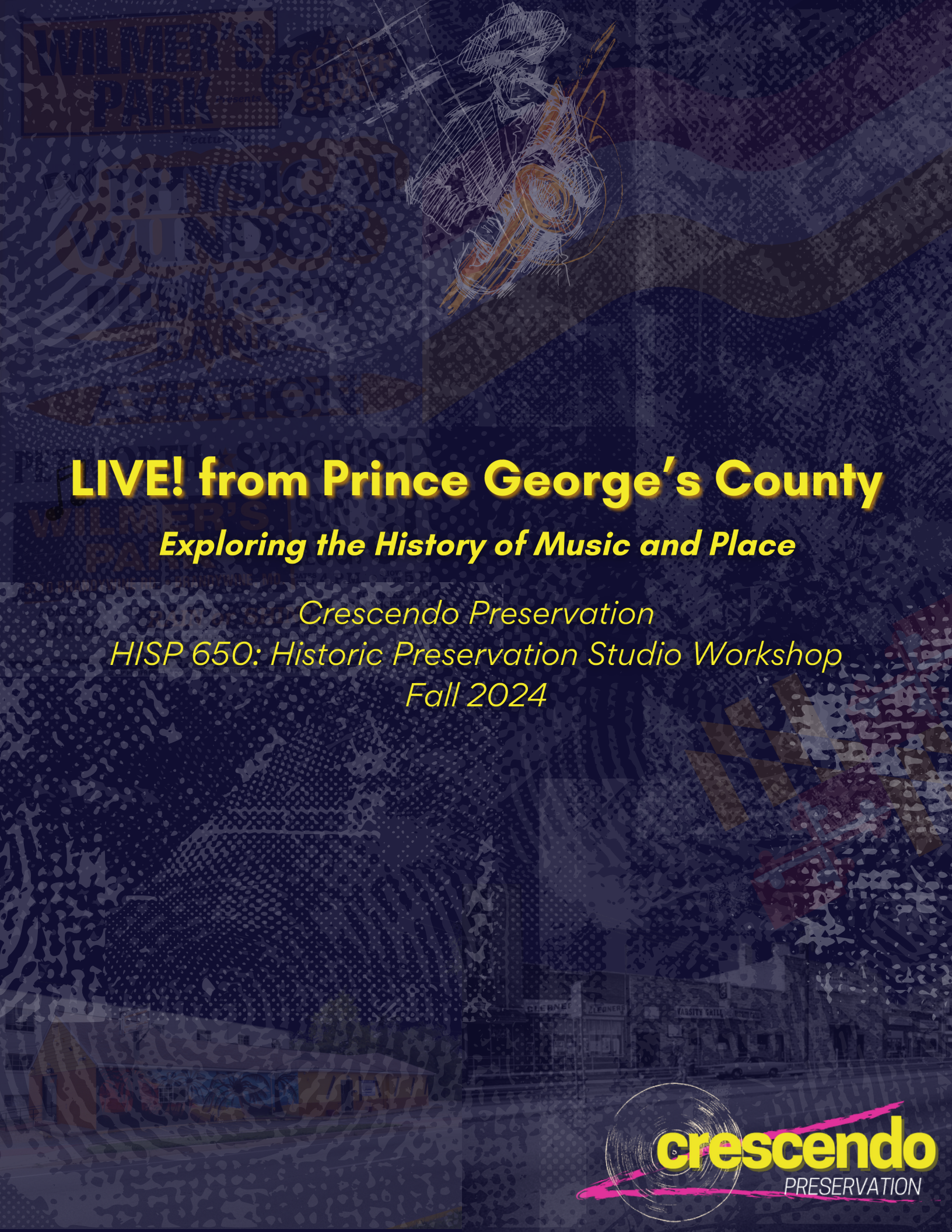


LIVE! from Prince George's County

Exploring the History of Music and Place

Crescendo Preservation
HISP 650: Historic Preservation Studio Workshop
Fall 2024

crescendo
PRESERVATION

FALL 2024

Live! From Prince George's County: Exploring the History of Music and Place

COURSE HISP 650: Historic Preservation Studio Workshop

PALS
An initiative of the National Center for Smart Growth
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ABOUT PALS

The Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) is administered by the National Center for Smart Growth at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD). It is a campus-wide initiative that harnesses the expertise of UMD faculty and the energy and ingenuity of UMD students to help Maryland communities become more environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. PALS is designed to provide innovative, low-cost assistance to local governments while creating real-world problem-solving experiences for University of Maryland graduate and undergraduate students.

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Abstract

The history of live music in Prince George's County is inextricably linked to place—landscapes, communities, and structures have all influenced, and been influenced by, music. Crescendo Preservation, a team of nine graduate students in the University of Maryland, College Park, Historic Preservation program enrolled in the Historic Preservation Studio Workshop (HISP650), completed this project in response to a Request for Proposals from the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC). The Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) hosted and funded the project as part of the M-NCPPC series, "The Sounds of Prince George's County." The team researched live music venue history from 1910-2010 in Prince George's County, identifying over one hundred sites that encapsulate the county's rich history of live music. A multitude of famous musicians, varied genres, and clientele made each venue unique. Twenty-seven key sites were determined to be particularly significant to the history and development of live music in the county. Some of these sites require further evaluation for historic designation in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP). The compilation of this research revealed additional contextual information on larger themes, such as cultural history and contributions to live music, strong emphasis on craft through activities like entrepreneurship and grassroots efforts, as well as a complicated history of the relationship between live music and the law.

Purpose & Scope

The primary goal of this project is to provide a contextual historical analysis of live music venues in Prince George's County and to expand upon research completed through prior "The Sounds of Prince George's County" projects. This study focuses on known and lesser-known venues, both extant and non-extant, to provide a comprehensive history. Our primary period of focus for structural resources is between 1910-2010. While this work will include surveyed sites of significance, it is not intended to be an exhaustive list, given the existence of musical expression within both formal and informal settings. We have also contextualized major music genres and identified themes.

Technical Approach

The Crescendo Preservation team, a group of nine graduate students enrolled in the HISP650 course at the University of Maryland, completed this project as a response to a Request for Proposals from the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC). The Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) hosted and funded the project. This project is the third installment of M-NCPCC's "The Sounds of Prince George's County" series. The prior two reports, completed by Julia Kuhlman and Amanda Henderson, focused on musicians who performed in Prince George's County and created music playlists based on this information.[1] The third iteration diverges from the prior reports by focusing on the spatial context of live music in Prince George's County.

The team utilized several different research methodologies for this study. We reviewed public records, archival materials, and databases. This consultation included, but was not limited to, newspaper articles, historic and modern maps, property records, photographs, and music publications. We visited the University of Maryland's Punk Archive, The People's Archive in the DC Public Library, Special Collections at the Johns Hopkins University Archives, and the Anacostia Community Museum to view specific music-related collections.

Community engagement played an essential role in our research. Subject matter experts gave presentations to our class to aid in our research process and deliverables, including Brianna Rhodes, Content Writer and Social Media Strategist, University of Maryland; Dr. Allie Martin, Assistant Professor, Dartmouth University; Dr. Rami Stucky, Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellow, National Park Service; John Davis, Curator, Special Collections in Performing Arts (Librarian II), Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library; Maggie Haslam, Director of Communications, School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation; and Zeta Atoigue, Program Coordinator, Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation. Mark Opsasnick, local historian and author, was an especially important connection, as his research was the basis for the prior two "The Sounds of Prince George's County" reports. He graciously presented a portion of his research to our class, led an in-person tour of several key sites in the county, and provided the team with all of his prior research notes and photographs. Crescendo

[1]Julia Kuhlman, "The Sounds of Prince George's County: An Introduction to Creative Placemaking," (Digital Repository at the University of Maryland, 2021), https://doi.org/10.13016/FFVD-IAFF.; Amanda Henderson, "The Sounds of Prince George's County Pt. 2" (Digital Repository at the University of Maryland, 2023), https://doi.org/10.13016/DSPACE/BU6S-VVF6.

Preservation engaged other people and groups separately (*Figure 1*). Prince George's County residents, authors, historians, musicians, and Facebook groups were additional sources of valuable information. The team also created an Instagram account @crescendo_preservation to update the public on our research process.

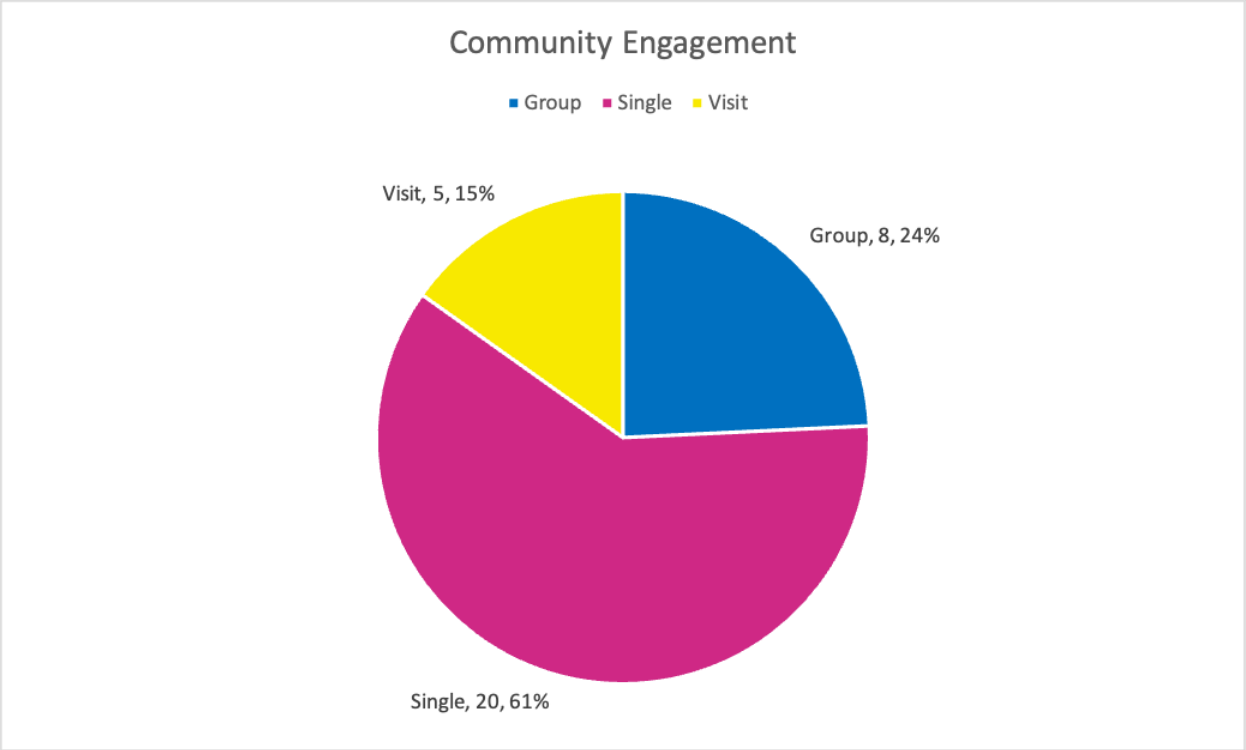


Figure 1. Pie chart demonstrating community engagement efforts undertaken during the course.

Our research went through several phases: venue identification, genre research, theme exploration, and finalizing the report. Phase I of our research was venue identification. Our original list consisted of locations in the first two, "The Sounds of Prince George's County" reports and Mark Opsasnick's *Capitol Rock*. Once added to the list, the team worked on filling out generic information for each site, such as opening and closing dates, to document as much known information as possible. The team found additional sites by reviewing newspaper articles and archival materials, like zines and posters. To make the research load more manageable, the team split the county into three regional sections: Northern, Central, and Southern. Each team leader and two group members researched known sites in their assigned regional sections and added additional sites to the list.

During this phase, we also established research boundaries. Since the first two "The Sounds of Prince George's County" reports focused on the twentieth through early-twenty-first centuries, the team chose the cutoff timeframe as 1910-2010 for research in this project.

We concluded the identification phase at the beginning of October and moved on to Phase II, genre research. We continued to add new sites as we discovered them, but this was no longer the focus. Based on our original site research and stakeholder meetings, we created a list of twelve significant genres in Prince George's County's music history. Each team member chose at least one genre to research; three team members researched two. The genre research provided context

into the genre's origin and history in Prince George's County, including significant venues and acts.

Research up to this point allowed team members to highlight several key sites to explore further in the report. Due to time constraints, each team member chose a maximum of three key sites to explore in a dedicated section to cover its history, architectural style, and integrity. This list includes extant and non-extant sites; non-extant sites were not evaluated for integrity and included as much physical descriptive information as possible.

Phase III of our research switched from genres and key sites to exploring themes across the county, including culture, craft, and governance. The first two research phases revealed these themes as necessary to the larger context of the county, covering multiple sites, genres, and regions. Up to this point, research was a primarily independent process; although team members shared relevant notes, the research focused on separate sites and genres. Phase III required researchers to come together and work through the contextual stories of each complex theme.

Phase IV involved combining all prior research into the report and other deliverables. Each team member filmed one Instagram Reel on a topic of their choosing; the zine, StoryMap, posters, and presentations required contributions from the entire group.

"Live! From Prince George's County: Exploring the History of Music and Place" provides the M-NCPPC with a new contextual analysis of history, space, and themes of live music venues in the county. Although this study is not all-encompassing, the information provided below gives new insights into county history and can be a reference for future researchers to expand upon.

Historical Background

Prince George's County, located primarily in the Coastal Plain of Maryland, is characterized by its proximity to the Chesapeake Bay, flat or gently rolling landscape, and tidal waterways fed by the Chesapeake or Potomac and Patuxent Rivers. Prior to settler colonialism, Prince George's County was forested by hardwoods and the sages, grasses, and rushes of tidal estuaries.[2] The Piscataway, a state-recognized tribe whose partial ancestral homeland resides in present-day Prince George's County, utilized these natural resources as a part of their lifeways.

Before the colonizers established political boundaries defining the state and counties in Maryland, and before colonizers performed music on land they believed belonged to no one, the Piscataway performed their own songs and dances. Piscataway music existed and continues to exist on three different planes– social, spiritual (as both medicine and for healing), and personal. Music is performed for dances, social gatherings, honoring life events, healing, and coming home.[3] In addition to these roles, music also serves as a vehicle for cultural education in the Piscataway community, as dancers and singers learn the arts by building their own regalia, which involves skills such as leatherwork, and occasionally by building their own instruments.[4]

Most significant in the production of Piscataway music is the drum, which is a part of most social and ceremonial events. Drum types include group drums, handheld drums, and water drums. Piscataway citizen and leader Mario Harley of the Wild Turkey Clan described the importance of the drum as being the heartbeat of the Piscataway, where those drumming are one person performing one song.[5] Drums used to be made by the tribes themselves out of red cedar and buffalo skin, materials known for their quality in producing long-lasting instruments. However, with changing access to materials, drums are now produced by companies that source the rare, large pieces of red cedar necessary for making drums and cow skins, which are now used instead of buffalo skin.[6] Another important instrument used in Piscataway music is the rattle. Rattles are created by the performers themselves, both singers and dancers, and are used in ceremonial and social music. Rattles can be made of bison horns, tortoise shells, or even tomato paste cans. Some rattles are made of deer toes that are subsequently attached to the legs of the dancers, producing a unique sound that helps the dancers maintain the beat of the drum.[7]

Officially established in 1696 as a part of the early Maryland Colony, Prince George's County has historically been a mix of urban and rural, as well as farming and manufacturing. The county's proximity to the nation's capital, Chesapeake Bay, and significant coastal cities like Baltimore and Annapolis have each impacted the economy and practices within Prince George's County. Like the rest of Maryland, Prince George's County's early economy was entirely reliant

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[2] Prince George's County Planning Department. 2010. "Postbellum Archeological Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland A Historic Context and Research Guide." Research Study. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. https://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/publications/BookDetail.cfm?item_id=217&Category_id=3.

[3] Mario Harley. Hall and Gill Interview with Mario Harley, Piscataway Tribe, Wild Turkey Clan. Personal Communication, November 13, 2024.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

on chattel slavery on tobacco plantations. The establishment and growth of shipping port towns, including Upper Marlboro in 1706 and Bladensburg in 1742, supported the growth of the economy for the region.[8]

In the 1800s, the first few cities in Prince George's County were incorporated, including Bladensburg, Laurel, Upper Marlboro, Bowie, Hyattsville, and Berwyn Heights.[9] The Battle of Bladensburg took place in 1814, a notable point in the War of 1812 when the British army arrived in the city intending to attack the capital. The battle resulted in an American defeat, allowing the British to burn buildings in Washington, D.C., including the White House, U.S. Capitol, and Library of Congress.[10] The Maryland Agricultural College, now the University of Maryland, was chartered in 1856, establishing itself as the first college in the nation intended for an agricultural focus.[11] While Maryland maintained its position in the Union during the Civil War, confederate sympathizers were not uncommon in the county.

The growth and settlement of the county introduced new music to the area. In 1752, Upper Marlboro staged what may be the earliest American opera and orchestral accompaniment.[12] Formal music in early Prince George's County did not have specific structures; music was performed in multipurpose spaces such as converted barns, warehouses, and churches.[13] Due to enslavement, records of early Black Marylander music are limited; however, runaway slave ads provide information about the kinds of instruments the enslaved played, such as violins and fiddles.[14] The ability of enslaved persons to pursue entertainment and socialization varied by plantation, however, according to historian D. Wiggins, most enslavers "found it to their advantage to grant a few periods of leisure time to their slaves."[15] Some gatherings were strategically organized and overseen by enslavers to maximize profitability and minimize the "spirit of insurrection."[16] However, surrounding environments rarely utilized by enslavers offered an opportunity for enslaved people to participate in forms of amusement. In these spaces, music and dance played a central role. Nancy Williams, who was formerly enslaved in Virginia, frequently "slip[ed] away" to an "ole cabin" in the woods where enslaved people danced, performed music, drank alcohol, and courted "away from slaveholding eyes."[17] "Congo Square"

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[8] Susan G. Pearl. 1996. "Prince George's County African American Heritage Survey, 1996." The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission.

[9]Maryland Manual On-Line, "Prince George's County, Maryland: Historical Chronology," Maryland Manual On-Line: A Guide to Maryland & Its Government, September 22, 2022, https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/36loc/pg/chron/html/pgchron.html.

[10] "Summer 1814: American Troops Flee in Humiliation, Leaving Washington Exposed (U.S. National Park Service)." n.d. Accessed December 15, 2024. https://www.nps.gov/articles/bladensburg-races.htm.

[11] Ibid.

David K Hildebrand and Elizabeth M Schaaf, *Musical Maryland: A History of Song and Performance from the Colonial Period to the Age of Radio* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017). 15.

David K Hildebrand and Elizabeth M Schaaf, *Musical Maryland: A History of Song and Performance from the Colonial Period to the Age of Radio* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017). 18.

David Hildebrand, E. Kauffman with David Hildebrand, Personal Communication, October 23, 2024.

[15] Andrew W. Kahrl, Malcolm Cammeron, and Brian Katen. "African American Outdoor Recreation: A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study." National Park Service, US.S. Department of the Interior, 2022. p. 17.

[16] Ibid., 18.

[17] Ibid., 17.

in New Orleans became a symbol of African cultural resilience through the gathering of enslaved people to perform songs and dances for nearly half a century.[18]

The period of focus of this context statement, 1910-2010, demonstrates 100 years of music history that goes beyond this early period of music and the county's establishment. During the research period, a wealth of music genres were performed in the United States and Prince George's County; in the county, we identified multiple important genres including, but not limited to, gospel, country, bluegrass and folk, blues, soul, rhythm and blues, jazz, big band, Latin, heavy metal and rock, Caribbean, disco, go-go, punk, rap and hip-hop.

Throughout the early 1910s, Capitol Heights and Mount Rainier were incorporated, and a few identified key sites sprung up in Prince George's County.[19] Significantly, Sis's Tavern, in what would become North Brentwood, was likely built around 1912. During this time, World War I quickly entrenched the county and the nation until its conclusion in 1918. Post-World War I saw even more growth in Prince George's County. Throughout the 1920s, the county incorporated seven more regions, including Riverdale Park, Brentwood, Cottage City, Edmonston, North Brentwood, Colmar Manor, and Eagle Harbor.[20] The M-NCPPC was formed in 1927 to serve Prince George's and Montgomery counties. Throughout this first turn of the century, larger forces of segregation and Jim Crow laws influenced the development of both Prince George's County and the nation.



Figure 2. Hail Prince George's Official Song of Prince George's County Maryland, sheet music, Spellman 1967.

In the 1930s, six more regions were incorporated: Cheverly, Seat Pleasant, Fairmont Heights, District Heights, University Park, and Glenarden.[21] While the United States struggled through the Great Depression, Prince George's County experienced a growth in music venue development. The Ritchie Coliseum was built in 1931, and Strick's Restaurant opened a few years later in 1934. By the end of the decade, two significant events occurred. The Hilltop Restaurant opened in 1939; the same year, C. Fredrick Orton and William Moore wrote the Prince George's County Song for the dedication of the County Service Building in Hyattsville (*Figure 2*). The creation of a county song, perhaps unintentionally, introduced a period of musical growth in Prince George's County in the 1940s.

The music growth of Prince George's County in the 1940s took form in the construction of numerous music venues. Crossroads, then known as the Cross Roads Cafe, opened in 1941, along with the Melody Ballroom. Compared to previous decades, the county population

[18] Gerhard Kubik. *Jazz Transatlantic, Volume I: The African Undercurrent in Twentieth-Century Jazz Culture*. American Made Music Series. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2017. Pp. 43-44.
[19] "Prince George's County, Maryland - Historical Chronology." n.d. Accessed December 2, 2024. https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/36loc/pg/chron/html/pgchron.html.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.

significantly increased during this time, which supported the economic growth of these venues. Two more venues opened in 1942, Club La Conga and Waldrop's Restaurant (later Jimmy Comber's Supper Club). At the same time, public radio was popularized alongside professional recording. From 1942 to 1944, spanning nearly the whole of World War II, a recording ban took place. The American Federation of Musicians (AFM), a union for professional musicians, organized the ban.[22] This recording ban is credited with shaping the face of American wartime music, as it essentially banned professional recordings, but not on radio or live performances (*Figure 3*).



Figure 3. Are Our Performers Wrecking Our Civil Rights Fight? Afro-American (1893-?); Dec 17, 1949.

The county's vicinity near Washington, D.C., influenced its engagement with the war effort during World War II. Andrews Airforce Base, Suitland Parkway, and Camp #132 (a conscientious objector camp) are three sites in the county that were part of the war's home front landscape. These large projects increased the county's population and contributed to the suburbanization of the county.[23] Prince George's County, despite its proximity to Washington, D.C., was also host to two Prisoner of War (POW) camps at Camp Springs and Fort Washington. The sites housed about 700 POWs total at their peak.[24] The POW camps in Maryland operated from 1943-1946.

[22] "WWII Recording Ban | Modern Songs of War and Conflict." n.d. Accessed December 2, 2024. https://exhibitions.lib.umd.edu/songsofwar/wwii/currents/recording-ban.
[23] Prince George's County Planning Department. "Postbellum Archeological Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland A Historic Context and Research Guide." Research Study. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, March 2010. https://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/publications/BookDetail.cfm?item_id=217&Category_id=3.
[24] Richard E Holl. "Axis Prisoners of War in the Free State, 1943-1946." *Maryland Historical Magazine* 100, no. 4 (2005). https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5800/sc5881/000001/000000/000401/pdf/msa_sc_5881_1_401.pdf.

In 1944, the Quonset Inn opened; thematic, considering the structure's Quonset hut form. The United States used Quonset huts, an easily transportable, semi-circular prefabricated structure in World War II. After the end of war in 1945 and through 1949, more music venue construction and the opening of multiple key venues occurred, including the 4400 Club, Evan's Grill, Wilmer's Park, Club Hillbilly, Wheel Bar, and WMUC. Many of the music venues in this period remained segregated. During the same period, the county incorporated College Park, Forest Heights, Landover Hills, and Morningside.[25]

Growth in Prince George's County only increased after the 1940s, largely in response to the construction of the Capital Beltway, the growth of the federal government and Washington, D.C., the enlargement of the University of Maryland System, and the Civil Rights Movement. In 1953, New Carrollton was incorporated, and in 1955, the ever-expanding University of Maryland built Cole Field House.[26] Predating the Beltway, the building that would become the Paragon opened in 1962. On August 16th, 1964, the new Capital Beltway (I-495) opened, encircling Washington, D.C., by passing through Prince George's and Montgomery counties in Maryland and through Virginia, bringing with it new audiences, musicians, and genres to the growing music scene in Prince George's County.[27]

Other key sites were constructed away from the Beltway in Prince George's County. In 1965, Bowie High School was built, and by 1969, the University of Maryland invested in the interests of African American students by building the Nyumburu Cultural Center. By the 1970s, go-go emerged in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area and in 1973, the Capital Centre was constructed.

The 1980s, 1990s, and 2010s saw similar developments, both musically and within Prince George's County's built environment, with continued influence from the development of genres in Washington, D.C., such as punk, hip-hop, and rap. Today, musical traditions continue to be practiced, and both artists and scholars alike continue to reflect on the development of music in Prince George's County. For example, Piscataway music continues to be practiced. Piscataway youth are introduced to the drum around ages seven or eight, first learning social songs and then progressing to learn music performed at powwows. Historically, Indigenous people typically held powwows from April through September; now, powwows are held all twelve months out of the year. Music at powwows is considered both social and cultural in nature.[28] Music venues continue to open and close around the county; although the Prince George's County music scene continues to evolve, live music remains an important cultural phenomenon.

Music Memorialization

Preservation of music-related sites on a national scale takes a few forms. Some cultural regions, states, or cities have created music trails, honoring history and artists who created important

[25] "Prince George's County, Maryland - Historical Chronology." n.d. Accessed December 2, 2024. https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/36loc/pg/chron/html/pgchron.html.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Mario Harley. Hall and Gill Interview with Mario Harley, Piscataway Tribe, Wild Turkey Clan. Personal Communication, November 13, 2024.

genres. The Roots of American Music Trail, in Alabama, the Mississippi Blues Trail, and the Crooked Trail, in Virginia, are three that honor musical traditions and artists of the region.[29]

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) has slowly accumulated structures related to the history and performance of music. Four NRHP sites are included to represent precedents for the variety of structure "types" seen in the total site list identified in this project. WSVS Radio Station in Crewe, Virginia, began its broadcasting in 1947 and is significant for both local broadcasts as well as national or international news. This site is recognized because of its important role in the history of this rural community.[30] The Jim Pepper house, recently listed in 2023, honors the childhood home of Jim Pepper, a Kaw and Muscogee Creek jazz saxophonist. Pepper is known for melding Indigenous musical traditions with jazz and rock.[31] Casa Amadeo, located in New York City, was listed in recognition of its age and role in embodying the development of Latin music in New York City. Music stores like this one are often integral to a region's development of music.[32] Finally, the site of the three-day 1969 music festival, Woodstock, was listed in 2017 as "one of the most important cultural and social events of the second half of the twentieth century."[33]

Music is memorialized in Prince George's County through sculptures, murals, and art (*Figure 4*). Selected from a competition in 2002, the Hyattsville Horn Section is an interactive sculpture composed of five independent horn instrument forms. When the hand plates on the sculpture are touched, a sound or group of sounds will play.[34] Another sculptural homage to Prince George's music is the Blues Bird. The Blues Bird, symbolic of the county bird and the important role of music in the county, particularly blues, is located on the University of Maryland campus near the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center.[35] Two murals honor music in Prince George's County. These murals are located in Bladensburg and Hyattsville.[36] The mural in Bladensburg depicts notable venues and figures in Bladensburg's music history, including one of the key sites of this study, Crossroads. The second mural depicts Link Wray, a notable rock musician.

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[29] "Roots of American Music Trail." n.d. Accessed December 13, 2024. https://musictrail.una.edu/.; Mississippi Blues Commission. n.d. "Missisippi Blues Trail." The Mississippi Blues Trail. Accessed December 13, 2024. https://msbluestrail.org/.; "The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail." n.d. The Crooked Road. Accessed December 13, 2024. https://thecrookedroadva.com/.

[30] "WSVS Radio Station (U.S. National Park Service)." n.d. Accessed December 13, 2024. https://www.nps.gov/places/wsvs-radio-station.htm.

[31] "Jim Pepper House (U.S. National Park Service)." n.d. Accessed December 13, 2024. https://www.nps.gov/places/jim-pepper-house.htm.

[32]"Casa Amadeo, NY (U.S. National Park Service)." n.d. Accessed December 13, 2024. https://www.nps.gov/places/casa-amadeo.htm.

[33] "Woodstock Music Festival Site (U.S. National Park Service)." n.d. Accessed December 13, 2024. https://www.nps.gov/places/woodstock-music-festival-site.htm.

[34] "'Hyattsville Horn Section: An Urban Musical Instrument' by Christopher Janney at Hyattsville Justice." n.d. *Hyattsville* (blog). Accessed December 1, 2024. https://hycdc.org/the-arts/public-art/qhyattsville-horn-section-an-urban-musical-instrumentq-by-christopher-janney-at-hyattsville-justice/.

[35] "Blues Bird." 2003. Arboretum Outreach Center. Accessed December 1, 2024. https://arboretum.umd.edu/blues-bird, https://arboretum.umd.edu/.

[36] Alison Beckwith. 2023. "New Mural Celebrates Link Wray, Who Rocked Route 1 Corridor." June 6, 2023. https://www.hyattsvillewire.com/2023/06/06/link-wray-mural/.





a. Blues Bird, University of Maryland Campus, Courtesy UMD Arboretum 2003 and UMD Archives 2014



b. Hyattsville Horn Section, Courtesy Hyattsville CDC Public Art Locator, n.d.



c. Link Wray mural, Courtesy Beckwith, 2023



d. Music History, Bladensburg, Melissa Glasser Bruzera, Courtesy Katie Gill, 2024

Figure 4. An Ode to Music, public art dedicated to music in Prince George's County.

Findings

The following three sections will describe Crescendo Preservation's findings through our triadic approach to studying the history of music and place in Prince George's County. These sections will describe music genres performed, themes identified, and both the extant and non-extant key sites representative of those genres and themes within the county.

Music Genre Context

Through our research, we identified twelve different genres commonly performed throughout the county. For each of these genres, we have included an overview of the genre, how it is heard and performed within Prince George's County, and any significant artists or associated key site.

Gospel

Gospel music is a genre rooted in tradition, with origins in Africa. The genre made its way into the Americas at the beginning of the slave trade in 1619, when a Dutch ship exchanged people for supplies in Jamestown.[37] Described as rhythmically driving and complex, African music utilized improvisation and a unique music scale completely different from what people heard in Western Europe and the colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[38] Scholars describe how African music "was in a sense preadapted to the slaves' life of forced labor and limited leisure time on New World plantations. African call-and-response-style singing provided both rhythm and welcome distraction that lightened work, as the caller improvised creative, and at times humorous verses."[39]

Gospel music officially took root in songs produced during the Great Awakening revival movement in the 1800s.[40] For many Northerners, the Civil War was their first exposure to spiritual and plantation work songs due to the presence of African Americans in camps and amongst the ranks of soldiers.[41] This prompted the first publication of African American music, a book of spirituals called *Slave Songs of the United States,* in 1867.[42] These roots grew into a genre dubbed the "jubilee spiritual," popular in the decade before the Emancipation Proclamation.[43] After the Civil War, gospel music gained ground as "church songs," and was popularized originally by the first Black Holiness church just before the turn of the twentieth century.

It was not until the 1950s, due to the influence of Thomas Dorsey, Mahalia Jackson, and Sister Rosetta Tharpe, that gospel music took off as a recorded genre. The commercialization of gospel music through concerts and recordings helped gospel performers reach a wider, multiracial

[37] Bob Darden, *People Get Ready!: A New History of Black Gospel Music* (New York: Continuum, 2004). 35.
[38] David K. Hildebrand and Elizabeth M. Schaaf, *Musical Maryland: A History of Song and Performance from the Colonial Period to the Age of Radio* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017). 13.
[39] Ibid., 13-14.
[40] Horace Clarence Boyer, "Gospel Music," *Music Educators Journal* 64, no. 9 (1978): 36.
[41] David K. Hildebrand and Elizabeth M. Schaaf, *Musical Maryland: A History of Song and Performance from the Colonial Period to the Age of Radio* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017). 85.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.

audience.[44] Thomas Dorsey, originally from Georgia, was particularly influential in making gospel music mainstream; his blues background helped him create a very soulful sound, channeling spirit into what he wrote and performed.[45] Dorsey's penchant for showmanship and his savvy business mindset enabled him to be elected as the first president of the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses in 1932 (*Figure 5*).[46]



Figure 5. Photo of Thomas Dorsey playing the piano, Margo Mckenzie, Thomas Dorsey Biography.

Defined by syncopation, a driving beat, individuality, and, most importantly, improvisation, gospel music is still very much defined by oral tradition and audience participation, or "talking back," added to highly embellished performances.[47] Throughout Prince George's County history, artists have performed gospel music in secular venues as well, including African American students in choirs at Bowie State University and the University of Maryland. In 1957, the gospel group, The Golden Gate Quartet, of Richmond, Virginia, performed at Jimmy Comber's Supper Club in Brentwood, Maryland.[48] Later, in April 1979, the Capital Centre hosted what was then dubbed "The World's Largest Indoor Gospel Music Concert," where different quartets and family groups performed, including Teddy Huffman and the Gems.[49] Professor LaTonya Wrenn, Director of the Bowie State University Gospel Choir, describes gospel music in Prince George's County as educational, informative, inspirational, and as a beacon of hope that has become a

[44] Ibid., 40.
[45] LaTonya Wrenn, Hall Interview with Professor LaTonya Wrenn, Gospel Choir Director, Bowie State University, Personal Communication, November 8, 2024.
[46] Bob Darden, *People Get Ready!: A New History of Black Gospel Music* (New York: Continuum, 2004). 170.
[47] Ibid., 34.
[48] Mark Opsasnick. 2024. "The Live Music Night Clubs of Prince George's County, Maryland: From Their Origins to the Rock and Roll Era". Presentation for University of Maryland's Historic Preservation Program and HISP650 Studio Class, College Park, Maryland.
[49] University of Maryland, "Capital Centre Collection," *General Files, 1974-1996 and Undated; Publications, 1971-1996 and Undated* Box 1, 2, 4, 6 (n.d.).

universal language, accessible to everyone and not just those in the Black community.[50] In Prince George's County, gospel music remains prevalent, especially in African American churches.

Country, Bluegrass, and Folk

Country music, originally known as 'old time' or 'hillbilly' music, is a large genre of music with many subgenres including bluegrass, honkytonk, and rockabilly. Country music typically includes the use of fiddles, banjos, steel guitars, drums, harmonicas, and keyboards. The origin of country music is an amalgamation of musical cultures of the South.[51] Associated with rural environments, country music was essentially regionalized folk music prior to the 1920s, influenced by African American, Native American, and European folk traditions and instrumentation. The banjo, for example, stems from a West African lute made of gourds and brought to the Americas by enslaved Africans.[52]

The popularity of minstrel shows also influenced country music. Beginning as early as the 1840s, minstrel shows were musical variety shows featuring offensive caricatures of African Americans.[53] Music featured in these shows was often misappropriated from Black musicians, presenting a false sense of authenticity and a romanticized version of the South.[54] Traveling shows spread minstrelsy nationwide, encouraging its popularity in the nineteenth century.

In the early twentieth century, country and folk musicians were not likely to be professionally trained. Options for venues were limited to community dances, fiddling contests, and informal gatherings. When paid, musicians' wages were often low, and these folk musicians could rarely wholly support themselves financially through music.[55] The rise in popularity of recorded country music began in the 1920s, although the exact first recordings vary depending on sources. Some credit Fiddlin' John Carson, recorded by the Okeh Radio Company in Atlanta, Georgia, as the first recorded country artist, while others credit Texas fiddler Eck Robertson, recorded by the Victor Talking Machine Company.[56] Either way, Carson's successful record sales are thought to have encouraged the genre's growth.

Polk Brockman, manager of the Okeh recording company, was interested in recording local folk artists to diversify record options in his furniture store. Brockman had noticed that the clientele was largely dissatisfied with the popular music for sale and sought to record music that was more

[50] LaTonya Wrenn, Hall Interview with Professor LaTonya Wrenn, Gospel Choir Director, Bowie State University, Personal Communication, November 8, 2024.
[51] George O. Carney, "Country Music and the South: A Cultural Geography Perspective," *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 1980.
[52] Jay Scott Odell and Robert B. Winans, "Banjo," *Oxford Music Online*, 2013, https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2256043.
[53] Yuval Taylor and Jake Austen, *Darkest America: Black Minstrelsy from Slavery to Hip-Hop* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2012).
[54] Jennifer Bloomquist, "The Minstrel Legacy: African American English and the Historical Construction of 'Black' Identities in Entertainment," *Journal of African American Studies* 19, no. 4 (2015): 410–25; Bill C. Malone, *Singing Cowboys and Musical Mountaineers: Southern Culture and the Roots of Country Music* (University of Georgia Press, 2003).
[55] Richard A. Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity* (University of Chicago Press, 1997), 14, https://www.google.com/books/edition/Creating_Country_Music/J3zWpIOLB-MC?hl=en&gbpv=0.
[56] Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity*; Kip Lornell and Charles C. Stephenson, Jr., *The Beat Gogo Music From Washington, D.C.*, American Made Music Series (University Press of Mississippi, 2009).

familiar to them.[57] Although Brockman's interest in recording country music was strictly financial, his efforts contributed to both the preservation and commercialization of country music. To reach their often-remote musicians, Okeh Recording Company began a model of transporting their talent to record remotely.

The earliest radio broadcast of country music varies by source, although it was clearly in the early 1920s. WSB in Atlanta broadcast the "Old-fashioned Concert" in November 1922, making it potentially the earliest all-country program.[58] The first regular "Barn Dance" program aired on WBAP in Dallas in 1923.[59] The Sears radio station in Chicago began airing the WLS National Barn Dance in 1924, and the Grand Ole Opry was established in Nashville in 1926. Broadcasts often featured a diverse range of old-timey, folksy music, reflecting the regional differences in the early genre.[60]

The success of country music record sales throughout the nation came as a surprise to some. At the time, jazz was becoming a dominant music genre, representing cosmopolitan ideals of urbanity and modernity. In contrast, early iterations of country were associated with the "rural poverty and small-town morality that so many in the rapidly urbanizing American society were trying to escape."[61] In the late 1920s, country music was largely relegated to small, independent radio stations, and it rarely received its own programs.[62] While most recorded artists at the time were white, there were occasional opportunities for Black artists to record. At least 22 racially integrated recording sessions occurred between 1927 and 1932.[63]



Figure 6. Photo of Jimmie Rodgers, Country Music Hall of Fame 2024.

Locally, the first country music broadcasts were from the Washington, D.C., based WRC radio station during the 1920s. In 1927, the Victor Talking Machine Company first recorded Jimmie Rodgers, a native of Wisconsin, in Tennessee (*Figure 6*). Rodgers recorded a variety of subgenres, including blues, folk, and popular music, and is thought to have been one of the most influential artists of the 1920s.[64] He moved to

[57] Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity*, 17.
[58] Ibid., 20.
[59] Diane Pecknold, *The Selling Sound: The Rise of the Country Music Industry* (Duke University Press, 2007), 15, https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Selling_Sound/g00_jMAdK-YC?hl=en&gbpv=0.
[60] Ibid., 17.
[61] Peterson, 6.
[62] Diane Pecknold, *The Selling Sound: The Rise of the Country Music Industry* (Duke University Press, 2007), 18, https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Selling_Sound/g00_jMAdK-YC?hl=en&gbpv=0.
[63] Diane Pecknold, *Hidden in the Mix: The African American Presence in Country Music* (Duke University Press, 2013), 8, https://www.google.com/books/edition/Hidden_in_the_Mix/mj22AgAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0.
[64] Kip Lornell, "1 Before Bluegrass (1920s–1946)," in *Capital Bluegrass: Hillbilly Music Meets Washington, DC*, ed. Kip Lornell (Oxford University Press, 2020), 0, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199863112.003.0001.

Washington, D.C., in 1927 and began broadcasting over the WTFF radio station, becoming one of the most prominent country artists in the region.

During the Great Depression and World War II, a large influx of southern migrants, largely from Virginia and North Carolina, moved to Washington, D.C. These immigrants brought their southern musical traditions with them, helping to further encourage the growth of the genre. After World War II, the commercialization of country music continued and solidified with the changing of the name from "hillbilly" to "country." Connie B. Gay, a local DJ and music promoter, is credited for changing the name to market the genre. Gay began broadcasting a country music show in 1946 at WARL in Arlington, Virginia, after noticing a rise in audience interest when country music was played.

Influenced by his success at the radio station, Gay opened Club Hillbilly in Prince George's County in 1947. Prince George's County was a desirable seat for business at the time due to "fewer restrictive laws than Washington."[65] Like Washington, D.C., much of the Prince George's County population was also made up of migrants from the South. Other bars playing country and western-themed music in Prince George's County included the Horseshoe Inn, the Wheel Bar, the Dixie Pig, Surf Club, the Dixie Tavern, Chubby's, Armstrong's, the Campus Club, Mike Young's Café, the Las Vegas Club, The Senate Inn, Detta's Musical Bar, the Homestretch Tavern, and Strick's Restaurant.

Bluegrass started to form in the late 1940s as a combination of country, blues, jazz, and gospel; the genre has strong ties to Appalachia and the Upland South.[66] At the time, it was lumped in with the rest of the country and western genres until it acquired its own designation in the late 1950s. The 1970s and 1980s saw the highest local support for bluegrass. In 1974, a Washington Post article was published entitled, "DC Is Also the Nation's Bluegrass Capital."[67]

Archie Edwards, a Black migrant from Virginia, was a bluegrass player in the mid-to-late twentieth century. Edwards had been raised around pre-blues ballads and began playing the guitar in the 1930s.[68] After World War II, he moved to the Washington, D.C., area, settling in Seat Pleasant in Prince George's County.[69] Edwards opened a barbershop in Northeast Washington, D.C., where he hosted weekly jam sessions, primarily playing bluegrass music. In an interview with Dr. Barry Lee Pearson in the 1980s, he listed John Hurt, Roy Clark, Buster Brown, Sonny Terry, and Roy Buchanan as musicians who lived in Prince George's County.[70]

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[65] Kip Lornell, "Back Then It Was Called Hillbilly Music (1946–1957)," in *Capital Bluegrass: Hillbilly Music Meets Washington, DC*, ed. Kip Lornell (Oxford University Press, 2020), 0, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199863112.003.0002.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Barbara Bright-Sanger, "DC Is Also the Nation's Bluegrass Capital," *Washington Post*, March 11, 1974.
[68] Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation, "ARCHIE EDWARDS | Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation," Archie Edwards, accessed November 17, 2024, https://www.acousticblues.com/archie-edwards.
[69] Frank Matheis, "Archie Edwards," *The Country Blues* (blog), February 21, 2020, https://www.thecountryblues.com/dr-barry-lee-pearson/archie-edwards-barbershop-blues/.
[70] Ibid.

Rhythm and Blues

Rhythm and blues as a genre replaced "race music" in the 1940s as a catch-all marketing category for most African American music, encompassing the blues, jazz, and modern blends of these sounds.[71] In 1948, RCA Victor Records labeled secular African American "blues and rhythm"— one of the first commercial uses of the term.[72] Jerry Wexler, a writer for *Billboard* and later vice-president of Atlantic Records, suggested the term "rhythm and blues" to replace "race music" for the magazine's Black music chart in 1949.[73] The Great Migration of African Americans to major northern cities in the early twentieth century saw the confluence of regional African American music styles as well as the creation of new markets for these sounds.[74] Generally, rhythm and blues is understood as a genre developed after World War II that "combines elements of pop, gospel, blues and jazz" with an emphasized rhythmic drive.[75] While music critics and anthologists alike have differentiated rhythm and blues and soul music, music producers and singers did not make such distinctions. Wexler, who recorded countless rhythm and blues and soul artists in the 1950s and 1960s, recounts the formation of soul as "a semantic fabrication… It was rhythm and blues."[76] While rhythm and blues was often disparaged as "low-class… wild… 'dirty' music," it nevertheless inspired generations of singers, musicians, and listeners in much the same way that it was inspired by blues traditions.[77]

The blues is a form of music widely regarded as a secular expression of the Black experience, with influence from spirituals, work songs, and folk music.[78] Traditional blues consists of call-and-response lyrics of an emotional subject, such as sorrow or longing, often accompanied by guitar to achieve expressive "blues notes" in the pentatonic scale uncommon in European music during the time.[79] The blues originated in the South during the Reconstruction Era on plantations, then worked by sharecroppers who used these oral traditions to set the pace of work and lament about their own labor, love, and loss.[80] As tenant farmers moved between plantations for work, so too did the folk tunes that would become the foundation of blues as a genre.[81] These songs were also used as a means of communication– news would spread through the placement of new lyrics into popular melodies.[82] The Piedmont Blues, a folk guitar style of intricate fingerpicking distinct to Appalachia, has its most famed ties to Prince George's County through Archie

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[71] Library of Congress. "Rhythm and Blues." Web page. Accessed December 14, 2024. https://www.loc.gov/collections/songs-of-america/articles-and-essays/musical-styles/popular-songs-of-the-day/rhythm-and-blues/.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Portia K. Maultsby, "Rhythm & Blues." A History of African American Music, 2021. https://timeline.carnegiehall.org/genres/rhythm-blues.
[74] Preston Lauterbach, *The Chitlin' Circuit: And the Road to Rock "n" Roll*. 1st ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2011.; Library of Congress. "Rhythm and Blues." Web page.
[75] Library of Congress. "Rhythm and Blues." Web page.
[76] Peter Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music: Rhythm and Blues and the Southern Dream of Freedom*. 1st ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1986. p. 4.
[77] Ibid., 5.
[78] Southern, Eileen. *Readings in Black American Music*. [1st ed.]. New York: W. W. Norton, 1972. pp. 202-216.
[79] Southern, Eileen. *Readings in Black American Music*. ; Hall, Stephanie. "The Painful Birth of Blues and Jazz | Folklife Today." Webpage. The Library of Congress, February 24, 2017. https://blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2017/02/birth-of-blues-and-jazz.
[80] Southern, Eileen. *Readings in Black American Music*. [1st ed.]. New York: W. W. Norton, 1972. pp. 202-216.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid., 203.

Edwards.[83] Edwards owned a barbershop in Washington, D.C., known for informal blues jams, during which time he lived in and played music in Seat Pleasant and throughout the county with other local and famous blues artists.[84] Early blues sounds were also adopted by those on the vaudeville circuit, in minstrel shows, as well as circuses.[85] William Christopher Henry, dubbed "Father of the Blues" for his efforts in popularizing the genre, explains that such structural characteristics of the blues, namely the tonal "blue note" and its natural improvisations between lines that "fill the breaks," as the foundations of jazz.[86] These elements have been carried far beyond jazz into genres like rhythm and blues, rock n' roll, go-go, rap, and more.

In 1941, Library of Congress folk-song collectors Alan Lomax and John Work traveled to Mississippi in search of Robert Johnson, an infamous blues singer and guitarist well-known throughout the Delta for his music and rolling stone lifestyle.[87] While this was a futile mission- Johnson had died under fairly mysterious circumstances years prior– they did find a bluesman to record.[88] McKinley Morganfield, known as Muddy Waters, played his version of popular Delta blues for Lomax and Work. He'd been inspired to record by other musicians of his time, like Robert Johnson and Son House, but his sound remained heavily influenced by Delta bluesmen of earlier generations, such as Charlie Patton and Henry Sloan.[89] In this recording, Waters is seen using the neck of a glass bottle to create a wailing, vocal-like pattern on the guitar.[90] This trick has remained a popular guitar technique to this day, truly underscoring his influence on the broader musical landscape.

Soul became the popular term for music based on the rhythm and blues sound in the 1960s.[91] While regarded as distinct from rhythm and blues largely for marketing purposes, soul music is still viewed by many as a secularized form of gospel that touches on matters such as love.[92] Motown, a play on Detroit's nickname "Motor City," was a record label and cultural phenomenon that marketed to and achieved great success with white American teenagers.[93] Another "less controlled, gospel-based, emotion-baring" type of soul music grew in tandem with the Civil Rights Movement and was popular among almost exclusively Black audiences that had "grown up on the uninhibited emotionalism of the church."[94] While it is often positioned as "a music of uninhibited emotional release," music historian Peter Guralnick offers a different

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[83] Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation. "Piedmont Blues," 2019. https://www.acousticblues.com/piedmont-blues.
[84] Barry Lee Pearson, "Archie Edwards: Barbershop Blues." *Contemporary Acoustic Roots & Country Blues* (blog), February 21, 2020. https://www.thecountryblues.com/dr-barry-lee-pearson/archie-edwards-barbershop-blues/.
[85] Gerhard Kubik, *Jazz Transatlantic, Volume I: The African Undercurrent in Twentieth-Century Jazz Culture*. American Made Music Series. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2017. P. 187.
[86] Eileen Southern *Readings in Black American Music*. [1st ed.]. New York: W. W. Norton, 1972. p. 204-205.
[87] Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England ; Penguin Books, 1982. pp. 2-3.
[88] Ibid., 3-4.
[89] Ibid., 4.
[90] Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England ; Penguin Books, 1982. p. 4. ; Gerhard Kubik, *Jazz Transatlantic, Volume I: The African Undercurrent in Twentieth-Century Jazz Culture*. American Made Music Series. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2017. p. 193
[91] Peter Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music: Rhythm and Blues and the Southern Dream of Freedom*. 1st ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1986. p. 4.
[92] Ibid., 5.
[93] Ibid., 2.
[94] Ibid., 2.

interpretation of soul as having a "knowledgeable apprehension," defined by Alfred Hitchcock as the suspense preceding the actual climax.[95] Guralnick continues, "Soul music is a music that keeps hinting at a conclusion, keeps straining at the boundaries– of melody and convention, that it has imposed upon itself."[96] Ray Charles's success is heavily credited with the growth of this style, which was "developing in tandem with rock 'n' roll and country music."[97]

Though rhythm and blues was popular at venues like Sis's Tavern, Evans Grill, and Wilmer's Park, it was also popular in venues known or likely to be segregated, like the Quonset Inn and Jimmy Comber's Supper Club.[98] Blues continues to find its place in Prince George's County. In 2019, Prince George's Community College hosted its 24th Annual Bluebird Blues Festival in Largo, and in Hyattsville, and The Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation regularly hosts concerts and jam sessions for local musicians.[99] Both groups have a long history of supporting both blues and music education within the county.

In the 1990s, the term R&B (rhythm and blues) was reintroduced by *Billboard* to "categorize all styles of Black popular music other than hip-hop."[100] R&B continues to be the primary label for any combination of styles, including soulful, mid-tempo ballads, up-tempo funk, pop vocalization, or group harmonies.[101] This array captures just how many directions Black popular music was moving toward in the 1970s and 1980s, coinciding with the popularity of such legends as Michael Jackson and Prince.[102]

Jazz

Jazz is a form of distinctly American music marked by expressive improvisation, polyrhythm, and the so-called "blues note."[103] According to Gerhard Kubik, "the music we call jazz has been a transatlantic phenomenon from its start, and it was the result of a constant flux and reflux of ideas embedded in contemporaneous late nineteenth-century musical events in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere."[104] Nevertheless, jazz remains intrinsically American with a "'historically afrological' character" poorly understood by most Western musicians and composers during its development.[105] While record labels attempted to popularize the genre with white bands, jazz was formed and continues to be creatively driven by Black artistic

[95] Ibid., 7.
[96] Ibid., 7.
[97] Ibid., 6.
[98] Al Sweeney, "Stars' Pacts Cause Furor; Bow to Restrictions in D.C. White Spots." *Afro-American*, December 17, 1949.
[99] Prince George's Community College. "The 24th Annual Bluebird Blues Festival," September 28, 2019. https://www.pgcc.edu/about-pgcc/events/event-details/the-24th-annual-bluebird-blues-festival.php.; Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation. "CONCERTS & WORKSHOPS." Accessed December 14, 2024. https://www.acousticblues.com/concerts-workshops.
[100] Portia Maultsby, "History of R&B Music 1990s-2000s." Timeline of African American Music, 2008. https://timeline.carnegiehall.org/genres/rb.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Gerhard Kubik, *Jazz Transatlantic, Volume I: The African Undercurrent in Twentieth-Century Jazz Culture*. American Made Music Series. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2017. pp. xiii-xiv.
[104] Ibid., xiii.
[105] Ibid., xiii-xiv.

expression.[106]

Jazz is a complex amalgamation of musical influence, ever-changing in its sound. It is a complex and subjective genre that continues to evade succinct description and critique. Like the blues, jazz is often characterized by the *blues note*- a misinterpretation of "the hidden legacy of another, non-Western tonal system" that simplifies the influence of rich musical traditions as an accentuation of the "so-called weak parts" of a 4/4 meter.[107] The blues tonal system is related to African tonal systems that explore non-harmonic overtones known as "partials" over a single "fundamental," which is the lowest pitch perceived in a harmonic series.[108] The timing of jazz music operates at three simultaneous reference levels– the "fastest pulse" (rhythmic structure), a dance beat, and the length of a cycle– which, combined, create intriguing audio-psychological effects for listeners.[109] All of these elements contribute to the complexity of the jazz sound and the misunderstanding of its structure as syncopation.[110]

While Kubik regards the blues traditions as somewhat separate from jazz history, he believes that in New Orleans, at least, "blues was the major catalyst leading to jazz expression."[111] He posits that jazz was not a new type of music but rather a new expressive form of a variety of genres, including blues and ragtime, with a basis in the tonality of rural blues.[112] In ragtime– a late nineteenth-century African American piano style so-named for the interpretation of African rhythms as "off-beat" and thus "ragged"– and in jazz, there is a "speech-like handling of intonation and melodic phrasing on instruments" that Kubik describes as having a basis in the tone and melodies of field hollers.[113] Ragtime's novelty and marketing during the early twentieth century as popular sheet music was paramount in the formal groundwork of early jazz.[114]



Figure 7. Poster for the Jazz at Laurel Jazz Festival, Laurel History Boys 2021.

The Prohibition era of the 1920s catapulted jazz into national consciousness. Dubbed the "Jazz Age," musicians out of New Orleans like Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet, as well as early jazz composer Jelly Roll Morton, would cement their creative contributions to the genre in both recording and live performance.[115] By the end of this era, larger ensembles began to incorporate a looser and more sophisticated style of jazz that

[106] Sandke, Randy. *Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet: Race and the Mythology, Politics, and Business of Jazz*. Studies in Jazz 60. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2010.
[107] Kubik. *Jazz Transatlantic, Volume I*. pp. xiii-xiv
[108] Ibid., xiv.
[109] Ibid., xiii-xiv.
[110] Ibid., xiv-xv.
[111] Ibid., 193.
[112] Ibid., 193.
[113] Ibid., 139, 193.
[114] Ibid., 141-142, 193.
[115] John Edward Hasse and Bob Blumenthal, "Jazz." *Smithsonian Folkways Magazine*, March 2016. https://folkways.si.edu/magazine-winter-2011-jazz-cover-story/ragtime/music/article/smithsonian.

would, for a time, essentially rename the genre.[116] Swing was at once a metric of critique– Miles Davis insisted that "jazz has to swing," and Count Basie used the term to judge whether jazz could be danced to– the defining characteristic of a new jazz form during the Swing Era.[117] Following World War II, bebop, led by such musicians as Charlie Parker and Thelonious Monk, began to take hold in nightclubs as a fast-paced, rhythmically complex form of improvisational jazz with an emphasis on listening rather than dancing.[118] Later jazz variations include the influence of Afro-Cuban music, as well as Miles Davis's innovations of both a more subtle "cool jazz" in the '40s and his later emphasis on the blues traditions in the '50s, known as "hard bop" or "soul jazz."[119]

Jazz's national influence was felt in Prince George's County. Venues such as Crossroads, 4400 Club, Melody Ballroom, Evans Grill, Sis's Tavern, and more featured such acts as D.C. natives Duke Ellington and Buck Hill, as well as other local big band orchestras and small ensembles. In 1967, the first of three Annual Washington/Baltimore Jazz Festivals was held at the Laurel Race Course and featured performances from such jazz legends as Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Etta Jones, Nina Simone, and Thelonius Monk (*Figure 7*).[120] In more recent years, the Lake Arbor Jazz Festival has been running since 2005 and includes live music, jam sessions, and meet and greets with artists.[121]

Big Band

Big band is a form of jazz music that, as the name implies, is made up of a large number of orchestral musicians. Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, big band music had catapulted jazz from a niche genre of music created by and associated with African Americans, to the widespread popular music of the country. The popularity of big band jazz and swing represents one of the first times that African American music dominated popular culture. The racial associations and social implications are decidedly complicated and cannot be dissected to their full extent within this report, but general themes and trends will be outlined below.

Early iterations of big bands stem from African American jazz bands in cities like New York City and Chicago. Duke Ellington is credited as one of the pioneering band leaders in Harlem (*Figure 8*). Influenced by his middle-class upbringing in Washington, D.C., Ellington moved to Harlem and began performing in jazz bands in the mid-1920s.[122] His influential work combined African American vernacular jazz stylings with European instrumentation, creating an innovative "interracial musical vocabulary."[123] Call-and-response, improvisation, and polyrhythms were combined with familiar European instruments.

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[116] Hasse, John Edward, and Bob Blumenthal. "Jazz."; Kubik. *Jazz Transatlantic, Volume I*. p. 290
[117] Kubik. *Jazz Transatlantic, Volume I*. p. 289-290
[118] Hasse, John Edward, and Bob Blumenthal. "Jazz."
[119] Ibid.
[120] Laurel History Boys. "The Saturday Photo of the Week. The Laurel Jazz Festivals." Facebook, February 20, 2021. https://www.facebook.com/laurelhistoryboys/posts/the-saturday-photo-of-the-week-the-laurel-jazz-festivalsthe-1969-laurel-pop-fest/4222613531102115/.
[121] Lake Arbor Jazz. "Lake Arbor Jazz Festival." Accessed November 18, 2024. https://lakearborjazz.com/events/.
[122] Gloster B. Current, "Duke Ellington," *The Black Perspective in Music* 2, no. 2 (1974): 173–78, https://doi.org/10.2307/1214233.
[123] Lewis A. Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream: Big Band Jazz and the Rebirth of American Culture* (University of Chicago Press, 1998), 54.



Figure 8. Duke Ellington and his band, Brook 1955.

Initially, at the start of the Great Depression, jazz suffered along with the rest of the music industry. Without access to expendable income, Americans cut back from spending on entertainment, resulting in the closure of nightclubs and music venues across the country.[124] As a result, many musicians found themselves unemployed. White artists were most likely to remain employed at venues such as hotels and society halls. Jazz had been associated with the decadence of the 1920s, and many felt that it had led to the collapse of the economy.[125] Within these reserved white spaces, traditional musical styles were favored, and musicians relying on these jobs had no freedom to experiment.[126] However, larger and more popular bands like Ellington's were able to maintain a degree of freedom at the time. At this time, record sales had also plummeted, and most companies had stopped selling "race records," such as jazz music.[127] It was the radio that allowed jazz artists to reach broader audiences.

Black bands were able to continue through this era in the form of traveling bands. The expenses of hiring an in-house band were too high, so clubs resorted to hiring national traveling bands. These bands were organized through talent agencies in New York, allowing national bands to travel and perform on the radio.[128] Men like Duke Ellington and Fletcher Henderson became the face of the new national sound, laying the groundwork for swing music.

[124] Ibid., 14.
[125] Ibid., 23.
[126] David Ware Stowe, *Swing Changes: Big Band Jazz in New Deal America* (United Kingdom: Harvard University Press, 1994), 125.
[127] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*, 14.
[128] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*; Current, "Duke Ellington."

The radio became the most popular form of entertainment in this era and democratized jazz music by giving Black musicians a space to perform for broader audiences in a medium that was not visual. The jukebox, invented in 1870, gained widespread popularity in the early 1930s and became a staple for popular music.[129] The jukebox was an affordable alternative to live music, bringing patrons to restaurants and creating spaces for young Americans to mingle and dance.

With the 1932 repeal of Prohibition, nightclubs flourished throughout the country. This gave musicians the opportunity to reenter the live music scene en masse and return to experimentation.[130] Ballrooms became an important fixture of nightlife. Influenced by the radio stars of earlier years, a number of bands were formed. By 1935, swing music had begun overtaking the radio as the popular American music. With its focus on improvisation and flowing rhythms, swing's upbeat sound mirrored optimistic attitudes among the youth as Roosevelt's New Deal programs inspired hope.[131]

Benny Goodman, a Jewish American bandleader known as the "King of Swing," is credited with popularizing swing amongst American youth.[132] As expected, his identity as a white man at the head of a Black genre of music was complicated at the time, and his legacy remains complicated. Like many white Americans, Goodman found jazz as a source of self-expression outside of traditional white values. Urban Jews had been some of the earliest white adopters of jazz, relating to themes of oppression and finding a source of American assimilation.[133] Goodman is thought to have legitimized swing to commercial audiences. His fame surpassed other Black musicians at the time, although he retained a close professional relationship with Black musicians such as Fletcher Henderson. Henderson and Goodman are known for having created early interracial music played on radios, and Goodman's bands were some of the first to integrate.[134]

At the start of World War II, swing maintained its dominance. In the face of fascism and Nazism, the interracial genre became a source of American pride and identity.[135] During a period of national propaganda, swing was pushed by the government as representative of American culture. Initially, soldiers overseas clung to jazz as a reminder of home and dreamed of returning to start a band or open a nightclub.[136] However, as the war waged on and optimism waned, music trends followed with the rise of crooners and mellow string bands, ultimately ending swing's dominance in popularity.[137]

The end of the swing age also coincided with the rise of bebop. Black Americans continuously found themselves disillusioned with the American Dream of the 1930s as they fought a war

[129] Kerry Segrave, *Jukeboxes: An American Social History* (McFarland, 2015).
[130] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*, 31.
[131] Ibid., 29.
[132] Edward Pessen, "The Kingdom of Swing: New York City in the Late 1930s," *New York History* 70, no. 3 (1989): 276–308.
[133] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*, 11.
[134] 240.
[135] Philip Gleason, "Americans All: World War II and the Shaping of American Identity," *The Review of Politics* 43, no. 4 (1981): 483–518.
[136] Stowe, *Swing Changes: Big Band Jazz in New Deal America*, 154.
[137] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*, 216.

against white supremacy while remaining in segregation.[138] A new attitude of militancy began to rise amongst Black Americans and a new genre with it. Played at a frenetic pace, bebop relied on improvisation more than any jazz form prior.[139] Created as an underground expression of Black angst with smaller bands, bebop further contributed to the end of the swing era.

In Prince George's County, the Melody Ballroom in Mount Rainier was a youth club that primarily hosted orchestras, likely playing the dominant swing music of the time. The club was open between 1941 and 1951. During the war, the club hosted Victory Dances twice a week.[140] The club was often mentioned in the Teen Topics section of the Times Herald, demonstrating both the genre's popularity and the influence of teens in further expanding that popularity. In 1946, the New Melody Ballroom was reopened by Bert Reifkind and Harold Gans after they left the Army.[141] By 1947, the club had been taken over by Frances and Henry Hier, and they continued offering orchestras for a teen audience.[142] The club had primarily turned into a rental space for private parties by 1951, coinciding with the downfall of swing.

Latin

As the name suggests, Latin music originates from Latin America, including influences from Mexico, Cuba, Panama, Nicaragua, Salvador, Costa Rica, Cuba, Haiti, and South America, and is sung in either Spanish or Portuguese. The sounds grew out of Afro-Caribbean culture and later contributed to the growth of other music genres. For instance, the conga drums, created by Afro-Cubans, are essential in Latin music, as well as funk, go-go, and disco.[143] In the United States, Latin music surfaced in the 1930s on the East Coast and has grown in popularity ever since.[144] Salsa, rhumba, and the cha-cha-cha are a few examples of genres that fall under the larger category of Latin music.

The epicenter of early Latin music in the United States was New York City and gradually spread across the East Coast and beyond.[145] Club La Conga was one of the earliest Latin American music venues in Prince George's County, located on 9410 Baltimore Avenue in College Park (formerly Berwyn). Club La Conga operated from September 1942 through June 1959 and featured a plethora of musicians with a focus on Latin American sounds. Bands and orchestras commonly played at the club, such as Herbert Curbelos and his Latin Rumba Orchestra, Parrish and his Cuban American Orchestra, Chico Cortez, and his Authentic Rumba Band, and Al Dunn

[138] Neil A. Wynn, "The 'Good War': The Second World War and Postwar American Society," *Journal of Contemporary History* 31, no. 3 (1996): 463–82.
[139] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*, 228.
[140] "Victory Dances Every Tuesday and Friday," *Times Herald*, November 10, 1942, Newspapers.com.
[141] Arnold Fine, "Tips on Tables by Arnold Fine," *The Washington Daily News*, August 13, 1946, Newspapers.com.
[142] Arnold Fine, "Tips on Tables 'If He Doesn't Make You Laugh, Don't Pay Your Check,'" *The Washington Daily News*, February 21, 1947, Newspapers.com.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ronald Woodaman, "Exhibiting Music History: U.S. Exhibits on Latin American and Latino Musicians and Their Traditions," *Smithsonian Music*, November 2016. https://music.si.edu/story/exhibiting-music-history-us-exhibits-latin-american-and-latino-musicians-and-their-traditions.
[145] Ibid.

and his Combo.[146] Several female musicians performed multiple times at Club La Conga, including Eleena/Elena Emee, a singer from either Mexico or Cuba based on newspaper articles.[147] Unfortunately, the apartments above the club caught fire in 1959, which critically damaged the building, and Club La Conga never reopened.

Although Club La Conga was demolished after the 1959 fire, Latin music clubs never left Prince George's County; in fact, the Hispanic population in the county continues to grow. Almost 20% of Prince George's County residents are Hispanic in 2024.[148] The Galaxy Night Club, Coco Cabana, and El Puente de Oro are a few examples of current open venues featuring Latin music on a regular basis in the county. In support of the Hispanic community and Hispanic Heritage Month, the county's Department of Parks and Recreation recently celebrated its 40th anniversary of the county's Hispanic Festival, which features Latin music. These spaces and events demonstrate the lasting legacy and continued importance of Latin music in Prince George's County.

Heavy Metal and Rock

Rock music, which is sometimes referred to as rock and roll, dates to the early 1950s in the United States. "Rocket 88," recorded in (1951) by Jackie Brenston and his Delta Cats, is considered the first rock and roll song, but it is important to note that the genre was built upon the style, sound, and music of many musicians who performed between the 1920s and 1940s.[149] Pop music, R&B, country, and western-style music directly informed rock and roll. Independent labels and artists like Fats Domino, Elvis Presley, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, and Bill Haley created music that combined elements of popular, R&B, country, and western music. Bill Haley and the Saddlemen, later known as Bill Haley and the Comets, were the first popular act to advertise themselves as rock and roll.[150] Haley's group released "Rock the Joint" and "Icy Heart" in 1952 and "(We're Gonna) Rock Around the Clock" in 1955; all three serve as examples of popular early rock and roll songs.[151]

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[146] The Spectator,"'Grand' Opening," *Evening Star*, September 8, 1942. Newspapers.com https://www.newspapers.com/article/evening-star-la-conga-other-opening/154740123/.; *The Washington Daily News*, "Milt Barrett Guarantees You the Time of Your Life," March 26, 1948. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-la-conga-eleen/154738188/.; *The Washington Daily News*, "La Conga," July 11, 1949. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-la-conga-acts/154740333/.

[147] Arnold Fine, "Tips on Tables: La Conga Calypso Singer Has Met a Genuine Prince Charming," *The Washington Daily News*, December 22, 1947. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-la-conga-elena/154740311/.; *The Washington Daily News*, "Milt Barrett Guarantees You the Time of Your Life," March 26, 1948. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-la-conga-eleen/154738188/.

[148] The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, "Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County Hispanic Festival Celebrates Its 40th Anniversary," September 12, 2024. https://www.pgparks.com/department-of-parks-and-recreation-in-prince-georges-county-hispanic-festival-celebrates-its-40th-anniversary.

[149] Stacey Hall, "History of Rock and Roll Music," Fairfax County, Virginia, accessed November 17, 2024, https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branch-out/history-rock-roll-music.

[150] "The World Before Rock and Roll (Roots-1955)," in *What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History*, by John Covach, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006), 16–53.

[151] "The 1950s: Rock and Roll Emerges in the Nation's Capital," in *Capitol Rock: Revised and Remastered Edition*, by Mark Opsasnick, [Rev. ed.] (Philadelphia, Pa.: BookLocker, 2021), 9–29.

Technology also played a part in the development of rock and roll music. After World War II, the proliferation of recorded music bolstered the popularity of rock and roll. The solid-body electric guitar and multi-track sound machine, developed in the 1950s by musician and inventor Les Paul, transformed the way music was performed and differentiated rock music from its predecessors. The Gibson-Les Paul guitars became one of the most popular guitar brands used by rock musicians, along with the Fender Stratocaster.[152]

Early rock and roll music is associated with themes of rebellion, non-conformity, and youth culture. Because of the connections between rock music and Black culture, many white adults viewed rock and roll music as dangerous, which increased its appeal amongst white teenagers.[153] Partnered with a resistance to the conservative trends of the 1950s (exemplified by films like *Rebel Without a Cause* and *Blackboard Jungle*, both released in 1955), rock music catapulted to the top of the charts. In the 1960s, many of the biggest rock artists of the previous decade were no longer on the scene for a variety of reasons, and several other genres, like soul and folk music, were on the rise.[154] By the mid-1960s, the British Invasion had begun with the explosive popularity of the Beatles in America and was soon followed by the Rolling Stones, the Animals, the Yardbirds, the Who, and more.[155]

In Prince George's County and surrounding areas, several factors contributed to the popularity of rock and roll music. DJs created space for rock musicians. DJs and promoters in the Prince George's County and the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, such as Jack Alix and Barry Richards, booked local musicians and nationally famous acts such as Led Zeppelin, Little Richard, the Beatles, and others at these venues.[156] Just as rock and roll music was immensely popular with teenagers and young adults nationwide, teens in Prince George's County created teen clubs at schools, armories, and fire departments to listen to live music and dance; these clubs were so ubiquitous that the *Evening Star* newspaper had a dedicated Teen section for events.

Heavy metal grew out of the rock and roll genre, with roots in the late 1960s and the 1970s with groups like Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, and Black Sabbath. The first time the term 'heavy metal' was used to describe music was in Steppenwolf's "Born to be Wild," recorded in 1967. By the 1980s, the heavy metal genre was fully established, with numerous world-famous acts such as Slayer, Bon Jovi, Metallica, and Megadeth. Aside from rock and roll music, heavy metal has also been influenced by blues and classical music.[157]

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[152] "The World Before Rock and Roll (Roots-1955).", 18–30.
[153] "The Birth and First Flourishing of Rock and Roll (1955-1960)," in *What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History*, by John Covach, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006), 54–103.
[154] "The Demise of Rock and the Promise of Soul (1959-1963)," in *What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History*, by John Covach, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006), 104–47.
[155] "The Beatles and the British Invasion (1964-1966)," in *What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History*, by John Covach, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006), 152–85.
[156] "The 1960s: The Rock Revolution." In *Capitol Rock*, [Rev. ed.]., 9–29. Trenton, GA: BookLocker.com, Inc., 2021.
[157] Hall, "History of Rock and Roll Music.".; Richard Havers, "Heavy Metal Thunder: The Origins Of Heavy Metal," *uDiscover Music* (blog), March 29, 2024, https://www.udiscovermusic.com/in-depth-features/metal-music-heavy-thunder/.; Mark Opsasnick, *Capitol Rock*. [Rev. ed.]. Philadelphia, Pa.: Xlibris Corp., 2002.

Stylistically, heavy metal music is characterized by its loud volume, bold lyrics, screaming vocals, electric guitar solos, and powerful rhythms. While the lyrics are frequently characterized as aggressive, a wide range of themes, from rebellion to social issues, the occult, and mythology, have been explored through the music. Bands usually have a lineup of a bass guitarist, rhythm guitarist, lead guitarist, vocalist, and drummer.[158] Early heavy metal acts in the United States and the United Kingdom include Cream, Blue Cheer, Iron Butterfly, Deep Purple, Steppenwolf, Black Sabbath, Bon Jovi, Iron Maiden, KISS, and Mötley Crüe.[159] Heavy metal music has many subgenres, including doom metal, speed metal, thrash metal, death metal, black metal, extreme metal, glam metal (also known as hair metal), and others that developed as the genre aged.[160]

The aesthetics of heavy metal have varied over time. The glam metal, or hair bands, of the 1970s and 1980s used elaborate costumes, makeup, and hairstyling as a signature look (*Figure 9*). Metal bands and performers like Kiss, Skid Row, Winger, and Poison, as well as rock artists like Alice Cooper, Genesis, and David Bowie, successfully popularized this aesthetic and attracted more female fans to the genre. Bands like Metallica and Motörhead pulled inspiration from biker culture.[161]

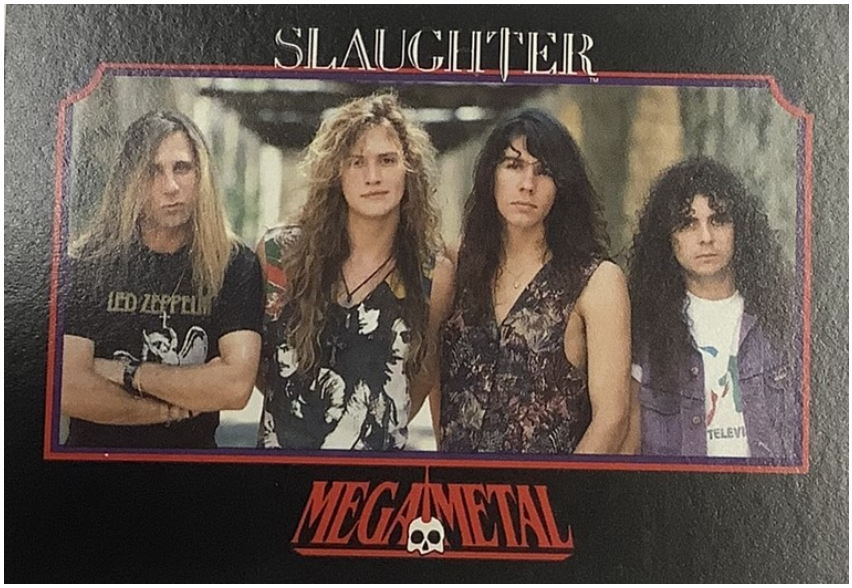


Figure 9. Slaughter Mega Metal Trading Card, 1991.

The culture of heavy metal has been associated with white working-class men and a rejection of the mainstream and status quo. Early on, teenage fans and musicians were known as "headbangers," and often faced a storm of negative stereotypes. Headbangers were considered lazy, vulgar, violent, rebellious, and ignorant by many; members of the subculture were targeted

[158] John Covach, "Heavy Metal, Rap, and the Rise of Alternative Rock," in *What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006), 479–507. Grammy Go, "The Ultimate Guide to Heavy Metal Music: A Genre That Rocks," GRAMMY GO, February 14, 2024, https://go.grammy.com/music-genres/the-ultimate-guide-to-heavy-metal-music-a-genre-that-rocks/.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Covach, "Heavy Metal, Rap, and the Rise of Alternative Rock."; "Introduction," in *Connecting Metal to Culture: Unity in Desparity*, by Mika Elovaara and Bryan Bardine (Bristol, UK and Chicago, USA: intellect, 2017), 3–12.
[161] Covach, "Heavy Metal, Rap, and the Rise of Alternative Rock." 479-507

by the societal fear that arose during the era of the Satanic Panic and was stoked by groups such as the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC).

The Satanic Panic was a widespread fear of the occult and perceived Satanic rituals, bolstered by a growing Christian fundamentalist movement in the United States and elsewhere during the 1980s and 1990s. The Panic stemmed from a growing interest in the occult in the 1960s and 1970s, with themes of demons, possessions, and other paranormal phenomena growing in popularity, especially in rock and early heavy metal music. PMRC was a powerful group created by Tipper Gore and Susan Baker, who were powerful and well-connected women in Washington, D.C., and able to bring the issue of music they perceived to be inappropriate, violent, vulgar, and dangerous to children and teenagers to the attention of lawmakers.[162]

The rock and heavy metal genres were most heavily targeted by the PMRC and other religious organizations. Their infamous "Filthy Fifteen" list of songs included those created by nine heavy metal and rock bands, which were judged as having content that was profane, sexually explicit, occult, violent, or promoting drugs and alcohol (*Figure 10*).[163] The efforts of these organizations culminated in a slew of legislation, widespread media attention, and a series of U.S. Senate hearings held in 1985.[164]



The Filthy Fifteen

ARTIST	SONG	RATING
JUDAS PRIEST	"Eat Me Alive"	X
MÖTLEY CRÜE	"Bastard"	V
PRINCE	"Darling Nikki"	X
SHEENA EASTON	"Sugar Walls"	X
W.A.S.P.	"(Animal) Fuck Like a Beast"	X
MERCYFUL FATE	"Into the Coven"	O
VANITY	"Strap On Robby Baby"	X
DEF LEPPARD	"High 'n' Dry"	D/A
TWISTED SISTER	"We're Not Gonna Take It"	V
MADONNA	"Dress You Up"	X
CYNDI LAUPER	"She Bop"	X
AC/DC	"Let Me Put My Love into You"	X
BLACK SABBATH	"Trashed"	D/A
MARY JANE GIRLS	"My House"	X

Figure 10. Filthy Fifteen list created by the Parents Music Resource Center, Janice Headley, The Dark Lord's Rise and Fall in 1980s Heavy Metal, 2020.

Musicians who testified at the hearings, like Dee Snider of the heavy metal band Twisted Sister, refuted claims that their music carried subliminal messages or promoted unhealthy or suicidal behavior amongst teenage fans, and they opposed the censorship of music.[165] While heavy metal music was not outlawed, one of the most consequential outcomes of the hearings was the introduction of the Parental Advisory label. Though the label was not mandatory, the pressure on record companies led to the widespread adaptation of the label. As musician Frank Zappa, who testified at the PMRC congressional hearings, predicted, the introduction of the label system led to a surge in popularity for bands and musicians whose music

[162] Covach, "Heavy Metal, Rap, and the Rise of Alternative Rock." 479-507; *How Heavy Metal and Satan Gave Us This Sticker*, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9gLmBgUTV4.; Aja Romano, "Demonic Rituals, False Confessions, Ruined Lives: Satanic Panic Is Still Alive and Well," Vox, October 30, 2016, https://www.vox.com/culture/22358153/satanic-panic-ritual-abuse-history-conspiracy-theories-explained.; Kim Kelly, "Revisiting America's Satanic Panic: When Heavy Metal and the Devil Himself Stalked the Earth." *VICE* (blog), July 3, 2015. https://www.vice.com/en/article/satanic-panic-interviews/.

[163] Kelly, "Revisiting America's Satanic Panic."

[164] *How Heavy Metal and Satan Gave Us This Sticker*.; Grammy Go, "The Ultimate Guide to Heavy Metal Music: A Genre That Rocks."; Covach, "Heavy Metal, Rap, and the Rise of Alternative Rock.", 479-507.

[165] Covach, "Heavy Metal, Rap, and the Rise of Alternative Rock.", 498-500.; Romano, "Demonic Rituals, False Confessions, Ruined Lives."

was considered inappropriate amongst young fans.[166]

Prince George's County had a thriving heavy metal scene. A number of Maryland and Washington, D.C., metropolitan area bands, including Frankie & the Actions, Tension (also known as Deuce), Pentagram, Arsen, Kix, Dying Fetus, Clutch, Obsessed, Iron Man, Saint Vitus, Unorthodox (which has also been known as Asylum), Internal Void, Wretched, Revelation, and Blue Rockers, have performed at nightclubs, parks, and other venues in Prince George's County.[167]

Popular venues in the county include the Paragon, Michelle's Night Club, Wilmer's Park, Bambino's Italian Restaurant, the Barn, and the Capital Centre. In addition to hosting Maryland and Washington, D.C., metropolitan area acts, many of these venues hosted internationally famous musicians and bands. The Capital Centre arena in Laurel frequently booked artists like Judas Priest, whose May 1986 concert tailgate was the subject of the *Heavy Metal Parking Lot* documentary, as well as Deep Purple, Black Sabbath, Kiss, Led Zeppelin and others.[168] Tension (formerly known as Deuce), the Maryland heavy metal band, regularly attracted large crowds at The Barn between 1979 and 1981.[169] The Barn was a barn on the property of Mary Lindsey, the mother of lead vocalist Tom Gattis, and was equipped with a stage.[170] Up to one hundred heavy metal fans would come to listen to the band perform on a regular basis, and the Barn



Figure 11. Deuce, later known as Tension, outside of The Barn, Tension, The Life and Times of Tension.

[166] Covach, "Heavy Metal, Rap, and the Rise of Alternative Rock."; *How Heavy Metal and Satan Gave Us This Sticker*.; Kelly, "Revisiting America's Satanic Panic."; Romano, "Demonic Rituals, False Confessions, Ruined Lives."; Janice Headley, "The Dark Lord's Rise and Fall in 1980s Heavy Metal." KEXP-FM, October 30, 2020. https://www.kexp.org/read/2020/10/30/dark-lords-rise-and-fall-1980s-heavy-metal/.

[167] David Dunlap Jr. et al., "Doomed From the Start," Washington City Paper, May 6, 2005, http://washingtoncitypaper.com/article/244930/doomed-from-the-start/.; Klaus Kleinowski, "October 2012-RON KALIMON," October 2012, https://www.cosmiclava.com/articles-and-more/interviews/2012/ron-kalimon.; Shawn SixX, "CLUTCH Drummer On Band's Musical 'Freedom': 'We Can Do Whatever We Want At This Point,'" Blabbermouth.net, accessed December 1, 2024, https://blabbermouth.net/news/clutch-drummer-on-bands-musical-freedom-we-can-do-whatever-we-want-at-this-point.; Encyclopaedia Metallum: The Metal Archives. "Ron Kalimon." Accessed December 1, 2024. https://www.metal-archives.com/artists/Ron_Kalimon/4330.; *Heavy Metal Picnic*, 2010. https://vimeo.com/780867105?autoplay=1&muted=1&stream_id=Y2xpcHN8NDY1NjUwNjB8aWQ6ZGVzY3xbXQ%3D%3D.; "Tension - History." Accessed October 16, 2024. https://tensionmetal.com/history..; "Tension - History." Accessed October 16, 2024. https://tensionmetal.com/history.

[168] Centre Spotlight, 1974-1976, 2.1.7, Box: 1, Folder: 7. Capital Centre collection, 0509-MDHC. Special Collections and University Archives. https://archives.lib.umd.edu//repositories/2/archival_objects/524374 Accessed October 22, 2024.

[169] "THE LIFE AND TIMES OF TENSION: A BRIEF HISTORY," TENSION, accessed October 16, 2024, https://tensionmetal.com/history.

[170] "THE LIFE AND TIMES OF TENSION: A BRIEF HISTORY."; *Tension: 25 Years Underground*, 2011, https://vimeo.com/776694181.

was heavily associated with the early development of the band (*Figure 11*).[171]

The Paragon, also known as the Paragon and the Cellar, was a popular spot for heavy metal performances as well, with performances by artists such as Frankie & the Actions, Pentagram, Painted Lady, Deceased, Unworld, Snydly Crunch, and others.[172]

Wilmer's Park was another important location for heavy metal music in Prince George's County, as Arthur Wilmer hosted heavy metal bands like Arson, Violent Night, Nasty Habits, Desecration, Metallica, Jello and the Immigrants, and others.[173]

Caribbean

Caribbean music includes a variety of sub-genres and styles originating in the 26 countries comprising islands between North America and South America. The European colonization of these islands led to a mix of cultures voluntarily and involuntarily coming together, which would later influence music in the area. Caribbean music combines African, Indigenous, Asian, and European styles into one genre. Reggae, ska, salsa, and bachata music are a few examples. Caribbean music encompasses a variety of sub-genres, with each island adding its own flair to music styles. Common stylistic features include a bass guitar, steel pans, percussion instruments, and call-and-response.

Caribbean music, especially reggae, rose in popularity in the mid-to-late twentieth century as more Caribbean immigrants came to the United States. Caribbean immigrants came to Prince George's County in search of educational and career opportunities.[174] The proximity to both Baltimore and Washington, D.C., and the availability of public transportation creates access to a wide geographic area of such desired opportunities. Doctor Dread, also known as Gary Himelfarb, was one of the major contributors to the spread of reggae in Prince George's County and the greater Washington, D.C., area. Gary Himelfarb, a Washington, D.C., born Jew, highly regarded Jamaican culture after listening to music for years and visiting the country in the

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[171] *Tension: 25 Years Underground*.; Marty Friedman and Jon Wiederhorn, "5," in *Dreaming Japanese*, 1st ed. (New York: Permuted Press, 2024), 39–44.

[172] *Pentagram - Live @ The Paragon 11th Dec 1993*, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jIhsMtni_I.; "Unorthodox/Iron Man/Pentagram." Accessed November 23, 2024. https://www.setlist.fm/venue/paragon-college-park-md-usa-43d71bf7.html.; King Fowley. "DECEASED 1-17-98 'THE PARAGON' COLLEGE PARK MARYLAND - YouTube," February 25, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ryp4ovgbt4w&t=62s.; stevtoth. "Snydly Crunch 'The Forgotten One,'" April 26, 2010. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibuiX03ICrU.; *Painted Lady - 1990, the Paragon Nightclub in College Park, Maryland*, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_64ndhgdVQ..; King Fowley. "DECEASED 1-17-98 'THE PARAGON' COLLEGE PARK MARYLAND - YouTube," February 25, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ryp4ovgbt4w&t=62s.; stevtoth. "Snydly Crunch 'The Forgotten One,'" April 26, 2010. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibuiX03ICrU.; *Painted Lady - 1990, the Paragon Nightclub in College Park, Maryland*, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_64ndhgdVQ.

[173] Natalie Hopkinson, "Music, Memories at Wilmer's," *Washington Post*, August 18, 1999, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1999/08/18/music-memories-at-wilmers/ec5bdc29-3925-4eb4-99d8-acf1f90c966b/.

[174] Mark Miller, "A Hot Spot in Bladensburg: Caribbean Crowd Warms up to Club," *The Washington Post*, January 27, 1999. Newspapers.com. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1999/01/27/a-hot-spot-in-bladensburg/80e36a0d-c707-49da-8600-8e1617afa303/.

1970s.[175] He took up the stage name of Doctor Dread and founded the record label Real Authentic Sound (RAS) Records, which signed a multitude of reggae musicians like Sizzla, Freddie McGregor, and Israel Vibration.

Sites in the county that featured reggae music include Crossroads, Wilmer's Park, and the Capital Centre. Immensely popular reggae acts like Bob Marley & The Wailers performed at the Capital Centre in 1978, and Jah Works, a regionally popular reggae band, played at Wilmer's Park in 1998. Smaller venues like Crossroads became regular community gathering spaces for Caribbean immigrants to bring their music, food, and culture to Maryland (*Figure 12*). Alton Gayle, a Jamaican immigrant, moved to Hyattsville in 1979 at the age of 15 and opened Crossroads in 1996 after noticing a lack of Caribbean spaces in the area.[176] In a 1999 interview for *The Washington Post* on Crossroads, Jamaican immigrant Barry Hillocks referred to the nightclub as "the closest thing to home" and "the nucleus of Caribbean activity in the area."[177] One of the most notable performances at Crossroads was Stephen Marley in the mid-2000s, which Doctor Dread arranged.[178] After serving the greater Washington, D.C., area with Caribbean music for nearly 20 years, the venue closed in 2012.

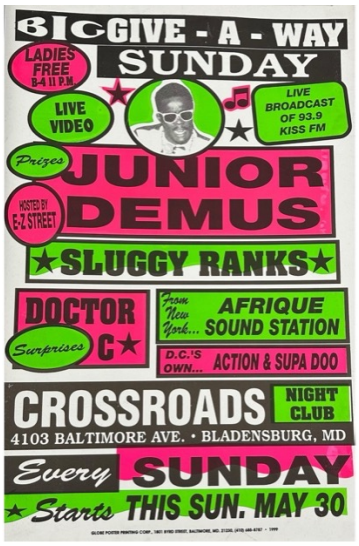


Figure 12. Crossroads Globe Poster, 1999.

Caribbean music venues in Maryland created community spaces and joined together people transcending geographic, racial, and cultural differences. As immigration increased in the mid-to-late twentieth century, so did the popularity of various sub-genres, especially reggae. Prince George's County hosted various musicians, from local acts to international stars. Although large venues, like the Capital Centre, featured Caribbean music, local venues like Crossroads created community and cultural spaces for people to get a taste of home and share their culture with new audiences.

[175] Doctor Dread, *The Half That's Never Been Told: The Real-Life Reggae Adventures of Doctor Dread* (Akashic Books 2015), 29.
[176] Mark Miller, "A Hot Spot in Bladensburg: Caribbean Crowd Warms up to Club," *The Washington Post*, January 27, 1999. Newspapers.com. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1999/01/27/a-hot-spot-in-bladensburg/80e36a0d-c707-49da-8600-8e1617afa303/.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Doctor Dread, *The Half That's Never Been Told: The Real-Life Reggae Adventures of Doctor Dread* (Akashic Books 2015), 137.

Disco

Discothèque, or disco, was created from a rise in recorded music and disc jockeys. Later on, it became more common for disc jockeys to simply be referred to as DJs. The genre's roots began in the late 1960s, and popularity rose throughout the 1970s, although disco sound has continued today.[179] Disco is defined by the style of music, its sound, and its dancing – but almost more important to disco is the technology that enabled the existence of the genre and DJs. Like many other genres, disco became known worldwide through the advent of recording and radio. With its popularity came some concerns about disco's impact on the live music industry. A few Maryland newspapers wrote about the topic in the 1970s (**Error! Reference source not found.**). One Fredrick newspaper covered the topic by interviewing local bands in 1975, arguing that "people still like live entertainment best."[180] Carr's Beach, in Anne Arundel County, hosted WANN Radio station's Hoppy Adams in the 1950s, drawing a large crowd to the live show based around the DJ.[181]



Figure 13. Illustration Excerpt from "Will they survive?" The Frederick News- Post, Friday, November 7, 1975.

Larger venues in Prince George's County, like Cole Field House, Ritchie Coliseum, and the Capital Centre, were able to host well-known disco bands like the Jackson 5 and Earth, Wind and Fire. Smaller venues like restaurants, bars, and dance halls may have had smaller disco bands play live. Still, disco would have been primarily represented in these venues by DJs. Evan's Grill, the Washington Racquet & Fitness Club, and Classics were all smaller venues that hosted disco performers and DJs. Like other performers, it was common for DJs to have stage names; for example, D.J. EZ-C and D.J. Celo performed at the Washington Racquet & Fitness Club. Unfortunately, this style of stage name makes tracing many of these local performers more difficult. Sometimes, venues like Wilmer's Park would advertise specific disco DJs, like P. Funk. Other times, the venue would often just advertise disco as a genre that would be played that night.

Go-go

Go-go is a subgenre of funk that blends the influences of many other styles like soul, R&B, and jazz; it combines sounds and beats reminiscent of African and Latin music. Its creation is intertwined with socio-political factors specific to Washington, D.C., but at the same time,

[179] Portia Maultsby,"History of Disco," Timeline of African American Music. 2021. https://timeline.carnegiehall.org/genres/disco.
[180] Linda Gregory, "Will They Survive in Frederick?," *The Frederick News- Post*, November 7, 1975, Newspapers.com.
[181] Elena Razlogova. *The Listener's Voice: Early Radio and the American Public*. Philadelphia, [Pennsylvania]: University of Pennsylvania press, 2011.

representative of African American communities across the United States. Political disenfranchisement in Washington, D.C., and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 set the scene for the emergence of go-go.[182] Riots following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 caused the destruction of many Black-owned businesses in the city, which also contributed to the early soundscapes of go-go. The Young Senators developed the prototype for go-go, but it was perfected by musician Chuck Brown of Chuck Brown and the Soul Searchers. Brown began experimenting with funk and soul during the 1960s and is credited with creating the distinctive go-go sound during the mid-1970s. He incorporated a polyrhythmic beat based on his experience with R&B and Latin music while slowing down the tempo characteristic of the funk and disco genres. The result is go-go's all-important "groove," also known as the pocket.

An adept go-go band will keep the audience on the dance floor for as long as possible by eliminating breaks between sets. Carrying the beat throughout the performance was also a technique employed by disco DJs with whom live bands in the 1970s were competing for bookings. Go-go evolved to include sounds of hip-hop and rap but always maintained the "groove" that is intuitive to the artists and audience. The groove has changed as sub-genres of go-go have emerged, so it is sometimes easier to feel and recognize the go-go groove than it is to pinpoint an exact description.

Soon after Chuck Brown established the Soul Searchers, other bands like Rare Essence, Trouble Funk, and Experience Unlimited hit the entertainment scene in Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County to form the cornerstones of the genre. Brass instruments featured heavily in the earlier years of go-go, with vocals becoming more prominent as hip-hop gained popularity. The call-and-response interaction between performers and their audience solidified the social importance of place and neighborhood recognition for residents of Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County.[183] Lead talkers recognized people in the audience and incorporated their names, or where they lived, into the performance. Band names, like Junk Yard Band and Northeast Groovers, also emphasized the link between identity and place, proudly calling out the significance of their neighborhoods and hangout spaces.

Michael Neal, or Funky Ned, of Rare Essence, notes that essentials to go-go performances were live drums, congas, jazz chords, grooving, and call-and-response. Neal was young when he started playing local gigs at cabarets and attending Chuck Brown's rehearsals. He was unaware of the impact his band would eventually have and remarked, "All the other bands that were playing funk and rock, like Experience Unlimited and Trouble Funk. They all changed their style and started playing that style of music because we were drawing a crowd."[184] He mentions not really realizing that he was part of the creation of a new genre, and the first time the term go-go really "stuck out and kind of stung" was when something would happen in the news and there were arrests tied to the genre. Ethnomusicologist Dr. Allie Martin identified the sub-genres of

[182] Kip Lornell and Charles C. Stephenson. 2009. *The Beat: Go-Go Music from Washington, D.C*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Michael Neal and Monique Wingarn. Michael "Funky Ned" Neal Interview, November 2, 2021. Oral Histories: Go-Go Preservation Week 2021. DC Public Library. http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:346817. [86] Lornell, Kip and Charles C. Stephenson. 2009. *The Beat: Go-Go Music from Washington, D.C*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.

go-go as old school, crank, grown and sexy, and bounce beat.[185] These sub-genres highlight the importance of go-go, as it has evolved for over four decades, remarkably managing to remain relevant across generations of residents in Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County.

Many of the themes discussed in go-go lyricism stem from the spatial and political messaging relevant to the African American communities living with an intense level of disenfranchisement unique to Washington, D.C., and its surrounding suburbs.[186] Rampant gentrification in Washington, D.C., also led to the migration patterns of African Americans to Prince George's County. As a result, the official music of Washington, D.C., has equally strong roots in the surrounding counties. Demographic shifts from 1970 to 2022 reflect an increase in the total population of Prince George's County by 42%. The African American population experienced the most dramatic growth during this period, with an increase of 49.5%. By contrast, the white population decreased by 30.4% within the same time frame.[187]

As Black Washingtonians moved into the county with the promise of more affordable housing and access to better schools, the funky sounds of go-go began to leave a mark on this suburban soundscape. The limited ability of young people to move across county boundaries contributed to the spatial organization of sites of go-go in Prince George's County. Many teenagers did not have access to vehicles or money for public transportation to Washington, D.C., but they still wanted an outlet for musical expression in the county. As a result, go-go could be heard at skating rinks, in schools, and in backyards or basements. Go-go performers often got their start practicing in high school bands and at home before making their debuts in clubs, metro stations, parks, and large venues like the Capital Centre and Wilmer's Park. Club LeBaron, Gee's Place, and the Walker Mill Shopping Center were other notable locations that hosted go-go performances.[188]

Punk

Punk is generally considered a sub-genre of rock. However, in almost all the literature about punk rock, it is described as more than just music. Punk is fashion, it is a feeling, it is a culture. As with rock before it, punk was perceived as being played by and for white males. However, the truth of who is a punk is more nuanced.[189] There is no singular definition of what or who a punk is. To some, an attempt to define punk is a fool's errand, as trying to put punk in a box would cut off the essential margins that define the subculture. Chris Terry, in his contribution to *Black Punk Now: Fiction, Nonfiction, and Comics* says, "The debate of what does or doesn't make one 'punk' is the least interesting debate that can be had. It flattens the wide range of experiences and containers that many of us – especially any of us on the margins – came into

[185] Allie Martin. 2020. "Go-Go 101." American Musical Instrument Society. https://www.amis.org/post/go-go-101.
[186] Lornell, Kip and Charles C. Stephenson. 2009. *The Beat: Go-Go Music from Washington, D.C.* Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
[187] "Our Changing Population: Prince George's County, Maryland." USA Facts. July 2022. https://usafacts.org/data/topics/people-society/population-and-demographics/our-changing-population/state/maryland/county/prince-georges-county/?endDate=2022-01-01&startDate=1970-01-01.
[188] Kato Hammond. 2015. *Take Me Out To The Go-Go.* Otakcity Publishing.
[189] "History of Punk & Alt-Rock," Timeline of African American Music, accessed October 9, 2024, https://timeline.carnegiehall.org/genres/punk-alt-rock.

punk, what we got out of it, and how we defined our lives beyond the record."[190] Cities like Washington, D.C., boasted bands that challenged the mainstream perception of punk and developed an enduring sound.[191]

In the late 1960s, a subgenre of rock and roll called "garage rock" emerged, which is characterized by stripped-down chords and a failure to follow traditional musical structure or rules. The experimental nature of this sound allowed for innovation that would become the punk of the late 1970s and 1980s, which is largely described as being stripped down, fast, and loud. The 1960s and 1970s were characterized by larger-than-life rock and roll musicians and sounds.[192] From the Beatles creating their own mania to the exacerbated solos of bands like Led Zeppelin, opulence and fame were the defining features of the musical productions. Buried in the twisted chords and melodies of rock were the seeds from which punk rock would grow, but first it would shed the grandiose complexities of rock.

As bands moved toward simple chords and fast tempo, the recognizable sound of punk emerged. In the 1970s, bands like the Ramones, the Sex Pistols, and Blondie were honing their sound in metropolitan areas like London and New York City, eventually spearheading the spread of punk to a more global audience and beginning the genre's rise in popularity.[193]

At the forefront of the Washington, D.C., region's contribution to punk and subversion of expectations is Bad Brains. Their legacy is encapsulated by Chris Terry in his book *Black Punk Now* when he says, "Even today, when I talk about Black punk, Bad Brains are the first name that people mention. They deserve it. They are the first and best hardcore punk band."[194] One of the few entirely African American punk bands, the quartet of HR (singer), Gary "Dr. Know" Miller (guitarist), Darryl Jenifer (bassist), and Earl Hudson (drummer) changed the music scene forever. Their sound was electric, fast, and energetic, and their shows were even more charged.[195] They have more than once been described as the best live performers in history. The band pioneered a sound that is synonymous with American hardcore punk and inspired legions of contemporary and future artists.[196] After the band was unofficially banned in Washington, D.C., they left for New York City in 1981.[197]

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[190] Hanif Abdurraqib, *Black Punk Now: Fiction, Nonfiction, and Comics*, ed. James Spooner and Chris L. Terry (New York: First Soft Skull, 2023).
[191] "History of Punk & Alt-Rock."
[192] Michael Grecco, "Punk Rock History: The Origins of Punk," Days of Punk, August 3, 2021, https://daysofpunk.com/03/2021/fashion/blog/punk-rock-history-the-origins-of-punk.
[193] Ibid.
[194] James Spooner and Chris L. Terry, *Black Punk Now: Fiction, Nonfiction, and Comics* (First Soft Skull, 2023), page 6.
[195] Chris Richards, "The world is fast. bad brains is faster. ," *The Washington Post*, Apr 11, 2021. https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/world-is-fast-bad-brains-faster/docview/2510643633/se-2 (accessed November 14, 2024).
[196] Nina Renata Aron, "It's Been Nearly 40 Years since Bad Brains Shattered Stereotypes about Punk Rock — and Black Music," *Timeline* (blog), February 28, 2018, https://medium.com/timeline/bad-brains-shattered-stereotypes-about-punk-rock-and-black-music-3659aafcc9cc.
[197] "The World Is Fast. Bad Brains Is Faster. - ProQuest," accessed November 14, 2024, https://www.proquest.com/docview/2510643633/1ED0CC8743204C68PQ/1?accountid=14696&sourcetype=Newspapers.

Prince George's County's proximity to Washington, D.C., and the presence of multiple universities and colleges meant a constant flow of people and ideas. This created an eclectic audience to experience and cultivate the punk movement. From Bad Brains house shows to the Ramones at the Ritchie Coliseum, Prince George's County was not sidelined to the Washington, D.C., punk scene; rather, it was a vital extension and proving ground. Bands like Minor Threat, Government Issue, the Slickee Boys, and Root Boy Slim and the Sex Change Band were fixtures at bars like the Varsity Grill and King Kong, as well as major venues at the University of Maryland.

Rap and Hip-hop

Hip-hop culture in Prince George's County, Maryland, has grown into a distinctive sound and movement. Hip-hop artists from the county draw from the area's musical roots, including go-go, a genre that was birthed and nurtured in Washington, D.C., and heavily emphasizes live instrumentation and call-and-response elements. This local influence helped develop a regional hip-hop style that blends urban narratives, rhythmic diversity, and the community-centric spirit of go-go. The embrace of go-go created space for rap and hip-hop to thrive within Prince George's County.[198] This blend has distinguished Prince George's County and its surrounding areas from other major hip-hop centers.

Artists such as Rico Nasty and YBN Cordae have helped bring the county's rap scene to national attention, each infusing their unique approaches—Rico Nasty with a punk-influenced, high-energy sound and YBN Cordae with thoughtful, introspective lyrics.[199] These artists reflect the breadth of Prince George's County's hip-hop, which navigates personal storytelling, social commentary, and innovation. Other local artists, including XanMan and Q Da Fool, embody the diverse expressions within the county's hip-hop culture, often blending humorous, lyrical content with experimental beats.

Maryland rapper Q Da Fool, born George Hundall in 1997, grew up in Prince George's County. He began his music career with the Pakk Boyz Gang before going solo, releasing frequent mixtapes on platforms like Spinrilla, including *Trap Fever*, *Trap Flu*, and *Trap Gospel* in 2015. Despite legal troubles and jail time, he continued creating music, with notable projects like *100 Round Goon* in 2017, featuring tracks like "Gun N Bells" and "Right There," which gained significant exposure through accompanying videos. After leaving Pakk Boyz, he launched his Rich Shootah project, cementing his place in the local rap scene.[200]

The hip-hop scene in Prince George's County continues to evolve, shaped by a new generation of artists who experiment with genre and sound. The county's artists often fuse traditional hip-hop with elements from other genres, reflecting both the county's diversity and the DIY spirit of

[198] Kip Lornell and Charles C. Stephenson, *The Beat: Go-Go Music from Washington, D.C.* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2009).
[199] Jasim Leigh and Talib Kweli, "Rico Nasty On The DMV Rap Scene, PG County, Go-Go, And IDK's Mentorship." UpRoxx, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klB9b1AKdhw.
[200] "Q Da Fool Bibliography." AllMusic. Accessed December 14, 2024. https://www.allmusic.com/artist/q-da-fool-mn0003688281#biography.

the broader DMV area.[201] Many local performers use social media and online platforms to reach wider audiences, helping the county's unique hip-hop style gain traction beyond the region.[202]

Beyond individual success stories, the community's support network has been vital. Events and showcases at local venues and collaborations with regional radio stations, such as WPGC and WKYS, provide critical exposure for emerging artists, amplifying the voices of Prince George's County's rap scene on a national stage. Prince George's County's hip-hop history also intertwines with social movements, drawing on a long tradition of using music for advocacy and cultural pride.[203] This has allowed hip-hop from the region to serve not only as a musical form but as a voice for local and national issues, from advocating for social change to amplifying the experiences of young people across the county. This tradition continues today as new artists and collectives emerge, helping shape and redefine the unique soundscape of Prince George's County hip-hop.

Themes Context

Cultural

African American Culture

There is a long history of African American music in Prince George's County across a wide variety of genres, and this history is intertwined with the history of enslavement, segregation, and discrimination. This marginalization occurred in all avenues of life for African Americans in the county, from education and employment to the enjoyment of public spaces.

Before the Civil War, Prince George's County had the greatest number of enslaved African Americans in Maryland.[204] After the Civil War, many formerly enslaved people moved to Washington, D.C. Remaining African American communities in Prince George's County were spread out in the then-rural county, and the numerous all-white towns like Brentwood, Greenbelt, and Mount Rainier were sundown towns.[205] Sundown towns were those where African Americans faced violence or legal trouble if they were present after sundown. Arthur Dock, former mayor of North Brentwood, described his experiences in Mount Rainier: "My brother,

[201] "2000s: Hip-Hop Harnesses Political Power and the World Wide Web." Howard Magazine, 2023. https://magazine.howard.edu/stories/2000s-hip-hop-harnesses-political-power-and-the-world-wide-web.
[202] Rico Nasty. "Nasty Zine." Rico Nasty. Accessed December 14, 2024. https://www.riconastymusic.com/#nasty-zine.
[203] Sean Quigley, "A Glimpse at the Future: The D.C. Rap Scene," *The Georgetown Voice*, November 5, 2009. https://georgetownvoice.com/2009/11/05/a-glimpse-at-the-future-the-dc-rap-scene/.
[204] John Henry, "How Prince George's Co. Went from the Highest Number of Slaves in the State to a Destination for African Americans," WUSA9, March 15, 2019. https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/maryland/prince-georges-county-how-a-community-grappled-with-racism-to-become-a-destination-for-african-americans/65-3a70f85d-9216-4283-9ac7-668b51398b6f.
[205] Henry, "How Prince George's Co. Went from the Highest Number of Slaves in the State to a Destination for African Americans."; Loewen, James W., and Nick Loewen. "Greenbelt." History and Social Justice. Accessed December 11, 2024. https://justice.tougaloo.edu/sundowntown/greenbelt-md/.; "Mount Rainier." History and Social Justice. Accessed December 11, 2024. https://justice.tougaloo.edu/sundowntown/mount-rainier-md/.; Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, "History," Prince George's County Civil Rights Trail, accessed December 10, 2024, https://www.pgccivilrights.org/history/.

and their friends, set pins at the bowling alley in Mt. Rainier [sic]...But, after that place closed, they had a certain time they had to leave the limits of Mt. Rainier. And, they all lived in North Brentwood." [206] After the growth of the railroads and the development of the streetcar system, more African Americans moved from Washington, D.C., to Prince George's County. However, redlining and other discriminatory practices, like the National Housing Act of 1934's exclusion of African Americans from receiving federally backed home loans and restrictive covenants in deeds, directly contributed to segregation in Prince George's County and elsewhere in the country, especially when African Americans from Washington, D.C., began to move into the suburbs.[207]

In Prince George's County, the public school system was segregated, and schools for African Americans received less funding and support than schools for white students. By 1895, no high schools in Prince George's County admitted Black students. The existing primary and secondary schools for African Americans were funded and maintained by community fundraising and philanthropy through programs such as the Rosenwald Fund, which established 27 schools for Black children. Educational discrimination persisted for decades; the first high school for African American students, Marlboro High School, did not open until 1923.[208] After *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), Prince George's County was slow to desegregate schools. Initially, a program to allow Black students to apply to formerly all-white schools was unevenly applied, and it was not until a 1965 federal investigation and the removal of federal funding (after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) that more deliberate desegregation measures were taken. Schools in Prince George's County then relied on geographic zoning to integrate schools. However, segregation persisted until a 1972 lawsuit, *Vaughns v. Board of Education of Prince George's County*, led to the creation of a busing program to quickly integrate the schools.[209]

This discrimination existed in higher education as well. Bowie State University, which was established in 1864 as the Baltimore Normal School for Teachers, was the first historically Black college in the state, and it was followed by the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Coppin, and Morgan State Universities; however, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were generally underfunded. Predominantly white institutions, like the University of Maryland and Towson University, deliberately excluded Black students until after the 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision.[210]

Many other avenues of life were also divided. Community centers, pools, motels, restaurants, taverns, dance halls, and most other types of businesses and public spaces were segregated.

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[206] Henry, "How Prince George's Co. Went from the Highest Number of Slaves in the State to a Destination for African Americans."
[207] Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, "History."
[208] Ibid.
[209] Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, "History."; Lawrence Feinberg, "Prince George's 'White Flight' Seen Linked to Busing Order," *Washington Post*, September 25, 1978. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1978/09/25/prince-georges-white-flight-seen-linked-to-busing-order/13a8381f-9173-4ad9-9a24-4ffbf66b24b2/.
[210] Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, "History."; Mateo Arango et al., "Pre-1968 Timeline · Claiming Their Space: Black Student Activism at the University of Maryland," Claiming Their Space: Black Student Activism at the University of Maryland, 2020, http://bsuatumd.artinterp.org/omeka/pre1968timeline.; Towson University. "Celebrating Black History & Culture." Towson University. Accessed December 11, 2024. https://www.towson.edu/history-culture/black/index.html.

However, African American entrepreneurs established their own businesses, such as Notley Hall Amusement Park, a theme park founded in 1890.[211]

African American musical tradition has deep roots in Prince George's County. African Americans in Prince George's County were critical in the development of jazz, big band, go-go, gospel, rock, R&B, hip-hop, and several other genres of music. Famous musicians from Prince George's County include Mýa, Ginuwine, Rico Nasty, Oddisee, and Cordae.[212]

During slavery and the Jim Crow era, segregation meant that music created and enjoyed by African Americans was almost always separated and distinct from white Americans. On some occasions, African American musicians could perform in white venues, but these spaces typically did not allow African Americans to attend these shows as members of the audience. The Dixie Pig and Club La Conga are examples of venues that deliberately excluded African American clientele.[213] In some cases, riots broke out during the introduction of non-segregated venues. Chickland Club, which opened as a desegregated nightclub in 1950, only existed for 18 months due to the two race riots, three fires, and the revocation of the owner's liquor license after the second riot.[214]

Because of the desire for community and lack of non-segregated spaces, African Americans created inclusive spaces for their communities. In Prince George's County, there were three venues that are considered to have been a part of the Chitlin' Circuit: Evans Grill, Sis's Tavern, and Wilmer's Park.[215] The Chitlin' Circuit refers to a series of music venues in the South, Midwest, and East Coast regions where African American performers and audiences could perform, listen to music, and celebrate. Wilmer's Park, which is located in Brandywine and opened in the 1950s, was converted from a tobacco farm to a musical hot spot by Arthur Wilmer, a promoter and businessman who also owned the Little Harlem Supper Club in Washington, D.C.[216] Wilmer's Park had a dancehall, accommodations for on-site staff, a motel, bar, and a restaurant, as well as outdoor amenities such as a picnic area and ball field. The Park was able to host up to 5,000 attendees and had several well-known African American musicians perform, such as Otis Redding, James Brown, Gladys Knight and the Pips, Count Basie, Ike and Tina Turner, the Chi Lights, Patti LaBelle, Stevie Wonder, Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, Ray Charles,

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[211] Jay Roberts, "Black History Month: Notley Hall," *Jaybird's Jottings* (blog), February 17, 2015, https://jay.typepad.com/william_jay/2015/02/black-history-month-notley-hall.html.
[212] Jasim Leigh and Talib Kweli. "Rico Nasty On The DMV Rap Scene, PG County, Go-Go, And IDK's Mentorship." UpRoxx, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klB9b1AKdhw.
[213] "Help Women," *Evening Star*, June 4, 1947, Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/evening-star-dixie-pig-job-postings/155020877/.; Al Sweeney, "Stars' Pacts Cause Furor; Bow to Restrictions in D.C. White Spots," *Afro-American*, December 17, 1949.
[214] "Club, Scene of Race Riot, Has License Revoked," *The Daily Mail*, July 20, 1951, Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-daily-mail-chickland-license-revoked/160843706/.
[215] Experience Prince George's. "The Chitlin' Circuit: Follow the Path of Historic African American Musicians," February 6, 2023. https://www.experienceprincegeorges.com/blog/post/historic-african-american-musicians/.
[216] "The Chitlin' Circuit: Follow the Path of Historic African American Musicians." ; Thibert, Keshler. "The Legacy of Arthur Wilmer Park." Greater Greater Washington, December 8, 2022. https://ggwash.org/view/87026/the-legacy-of-arthur-wilmer-park.

Sam Cooke, and the Temptations.[217] After desegregation, Wilmer's Park and other similar venues faced more competition from locations that had previously been segregated. Wilmer's Park approached this change by welcoming go-go artists like Little Benny and the Masters and the Junkyard Band, reggae artists like Jah Works and Black Sheep, and performers from other genres, including rock and heavy metal.[218]

Evans Grill, which was located in Forestville, is another Chitlin' Circuit venue. Created by Clarence Evans, the Grill operated from 1946 to 1991 and provided a place in the then-rural areas for musicians like Ray Charles, Little Richard, Fats Domino, Diana Ross, the Four Tops, Ruth Brown, Ike and Tina Turner and B.B. King. One of the unique characteristics of Evans Grill is that it featured Wednesday night shows. Mid-week shows did not interfere with major weekend events in Washington, D.C., and Evans Grill was able to draw big-name performers who were on their way to other venues, providing a big draw to African Americans in Washington, D.C., and other parts of Prince George's County.[219]

Evans Grill, Wilmer's Park, and Sis's Tavern serve as examples of innovation, placemaking, and entrepreneurship in the African American community in the face of segregation and discrimination. Though these places are best known for their music, all of them fulfilled a variety of needs for the community. Evans Grill got its start after Clarence Evans noticed that hundreds of African Americans had no feasible places to socialize in large groups because of segregation. Wilmer's Park ball fields were critical for youth sports and provided employment opportunities. Sis's Tavern once had a grocery store and barber shop and was the first commercial space in North Brentwood.[220] After desegregation, there were other popular music venues for African Americans in Prince George's County, including the Legend, Crossroads, and Classics.[221]

During the Civil Rights Movement, there was a robust push for desegregation and equal rights. Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) coordinated several sit-in protests in 1962 in Prince George's County, Baltimore, and other areas of the state. In 1963, Maryland passed a public accommodations law that aimed to desegregate hotels and restaurants. However, this law did not include bars, taverns, cocktail lounges, and other establishments, and it only mandated integration in eleven counties.[222] The Civil Rights Act of 1964 fully integrated all public spaces.

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[217] Natalie Hopkinson, "Music, Memories at Wilmer's," *Washington Post*, August 18, 1999, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1999/08/18/music-memories-at-wilmers/ec5bdc29-3925-4eb4-99d8-acf1f90c966b/.; Charlotte Lake, "Announcing FY2021 African American Historic Preservation Program Grant Recipients!," Our History, Our Heritage, February 2, 2021, https://mdhistoricaltrust.wordpress.com/category/regional/prince-georges-county/.; Thibert, "The Legacy of Arthur Wilmer Park."; *Washington Post*. "ARTHUR WILMER DIES AT 85." February 17, 1999. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1999/02/17/arthur-wilmer-dies-at-85/fa85d3cf-adff-4c1e-9d7e-d3d773487c00/.

[218] "ARTHUR WILMER DIES AT 85."; Thibert, "The Legacy of Arthur Wilmer Park."

[219] Richard Harrington, "THE GRILL THAT REALLY COOKED," *Washington Post*, August 6, 1994, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1994/08/06/the-grill-that-really-cooked/2bd93dd3-9dee-4015-a8b4-934156cc7365/.

[220] Alison Beckwith, "New Sign Goes Up at Historic Sis' Tavern in North Brentwood."

[221] Sandra R. Gregg, "Prince George's Dances Into the Black Disco Scene," *Washington Post*, November 12, 1981, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1981/11/12/prince-georges-dances-into-the-black-disco-scene/2ebd0f8e-e889-42ed-b6ad-e0e8c1aefd64/.;

[222] Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, "History."

After the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the 1968 riots after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the 1972 *Vaughns v. Board of Education Prince George's County* case, which demanded stricter desegregation efforts in Prince George's County, nearly 300,000 white residents left the county between 1970 and 2000.[223] Before that, most African American and other minority communities were located in eastern Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County was predominately white.

Women

Women have always had some role in music history, even though they often received less recognition than their male colleagues. Female performers had their own struggles and triumphs within the gendered expectations of their audiences, but women took on a multitude of other roles in the music business. The beginning of the twentieth century brought female trailblazers in the jazz, gospel, and R&B genres. Mahalia Jackson, born in 1911 in Louisiana, traveled nationally and sometimes performed with Duke Ellington.[224] "God Gonna Separate the Wheat from the Tares." During the 1950s and 1960s, Jackson participated in the Civil Rights Movement; she sang "I Been 'Buked and I Been Scorned" at the March on Washington in 1963.[225] She was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1997. A contemporary of Mahalia Jackson was Rosetta Nubin, known as Sister Rosetta Tharpe. Born in 1915 in Arkansas, Tharpe defied gender norms by playing guitar and singing gospel songs in nightclubs across America. Despite the spiritual nature of her music, she performed alongside adult entertainers at establishments of which some in the gospel community did not approve. During her career, Tharpe also performed with Duke Ellington. In 1952, she released the country's first interracial duet, "Have a Little Talk with Jesus," with country musician Red Foley.[226] Marybelle Luraine Ellison (Lorraine Ellison) arrived on the gospel scene in the 1960s, working with the Ellison Singers and the Golden Chords.[227] She moved on to a solo career in R&B and is known for her songs "Stay With Me," "Just A Little Bit Harder," and "I Dig You Baby." In 1963, Ellison performed at Wilmer's Park.[228]

Virginia Patterson Hensley, known as Patsy Cline, was born in 1932 and died in a plane crash in 1963. Though her life was short, she had a fruitful career after gaining attention at the young age of 15.[229] Cline was a prominent female vocalist in the country genre who also dabbled in gospel, rockabilly, and pop. She traveled to many venues throughout Maryland and Washington, D.C., during the 1950s. In 1954, Cline was scheduled to perform every Sunday at Strick's Roadhouse

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[223] Julia Duin, "The Secret History of Prince George's County," Streetcar Suburbs News: Hyattsville Life & Times, February 9, 2012, https://streetcarsuburbs.news/the-secret-history-of-prince-georges-county/.; DW Rowlands, "These Maps Show How Racial Demographics Have Changed in the Region since 1970," Greater Greater Washington, January 13, 2020, https://ggwash.org/view/75607/these-maps-show-how-racial-demographics-have-changed-in-the-region-since-1970.; James Wright Jr., "Prince George's Place in the Black Migration," The Washington Informer, February 20, 2019, http://www.washingtoninformer.com/prince-georges-place-in-the-black-migration/.
[224] Britannica, "Mahalia Jackson."
[225] Ibid.
[226] Bernard, "The United States' First Interracial Love Song."
[227] *All Music Guide to Soul: The Definitive Guide to R&B and Soul*.
[228] *Wilmer's Park Poster- Lorraine Ellison*.
[229] Hewitt and McBride, "Patsy Cline Discography."

in Prince George's County.[230] Strick's was a popular spot in the lively music scene of Prince George's County along with Sis's Tavern, which was owned and operated by Marie Alice Walls, known as Ms. Sis. Walls leased the space in 1933 and purchased it in 1966.[231] The tradition of female entrepreneurship continued through to 1978, when Deloris R. Sprigs purchased the tavern, calling it Baby Dee's Guest Club.[232] Sprigs operated the venue until its closure in 1996. Notable guest performers at Sis's included jazz and blues singer Pearl Bailey. Born in Virginia in 1918, Bailey enjoyed success in the U.S. as well as overseas. She also performed with Duke Ellington. One review of their collaboration in a 1948 show in London credited Bailey with saving the evening, claiming Ellington was not at his best without his American band, and Bailey "succeeded in injecting a little enthusiasm in a tired audience."[233] No doubt Bailey's striking appearance and powerful yet sultry tones were captivating.

Female entertainers in early pop culture tended to be exceptional beauties, sometimes even plucked from their hometowns while still youthful teenagers, as in Patsy Cline's case. Fannie Belle Fleming, also known as Blaze Starr, was no exception to this ploy. Starr was approached by her manager when she was only 15 and hired to play guitar and perform a strip tease.[234] Burlesque may not spring to mind initially when considering music genres, but as a form of entertainment, it thrived in cabarets, taverns, and nightclubs and formed an early soundscape in Prince George's County. Blaze Starr was as famous for her comedic charisma and beauty as she was for her high-profile love affairs with Governor Earl K. Long and John F. Kennedy.[235] She was also a savvy businesswoman and opened her own club in 1968 called The Two-O-Clock Club.[236] Though her home club was in Baltimore, Starr got her start performing around Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County at nightclubs like the Quonset Inn.[237]

Female entrepreneurship continued to shape the music scene in Prince George's County into the latter half of the 20th century and beyond. During the 1970s, go-go group Rare Essence was an all-male ensemble, but they owe a significant portion of their success to three women: Margarine Neal, Mattie Lee Mack, also known as Ms. Sis, and Annie Mack Thomas, or Ms. Mack. Margarine Neal was the mother of the band's bassist, Michael Neal, or Funky Ned. Ms. Sis was the grandmother to James Thomas, or James Funk, and Ms. Mack was his mother. Ms. Neal designed the coordinated red and white outfits for the group, kept the young bandmates focused, and orchestrated many of the business aspects for them. In an oral history, Ms. Neal recalled driving a 24-foot truck with Ms. Mack and telling all the gawking male bystanders "to stay in their lane 'cause I got this" as they maneuvered the Rare Essence tour bus.[238] These two maternal figures acted as security outside Club LeBaron and other venues. They posted signs that prohibited recording devices and encouraged young people to enjoy the show and act

[230] Hewitt and McBride, "Patsy Cline Discography."
[231] Dayton and Weishar, "Sis' Tavern."
[232] Ibid.
[233] Rea, "Encores and Echoes."
[234] Blaze and Perry, *Blaze Starr: My Life As Told To Huey Perry*.
[235] Olesker, "Blaze's Block Has Been Stripped of Its Glory Days."
[236] Lott, "Blaze Won't Star in Glen Burnie."
[237] Dean, "Last Dance at the Quonset."
[238] Cabassa, Margarine Neal- Go-Go Oral History.

responsibly.[239] Since they knew the community well, they were able to act as liaisons with the police if there was any trouble.

The music scene in Prince George's County still held room for jazz and rhythm and blues vocalists, but the rise in popularity of rap, hip-hop, and punk also played a significant role in popular culture and counterculture. Eva Cassidy was born in Prince George's County and sadly passed away in 1996 at the age of 33. This alumnus of Bowie High School gained notoriety as a jazz singer, though she collaborated with artists from a variety of other genres like pop, rhythm and blues, folk, Appalachian country, go-go, and blues.[240] She lost an opportunity to sign on with Blue Note Records because her "repertoire was too unfocused."[241] Like many young artists, Cassidy started her career by self-promoting and selling CDs out of the trunk of her car. Another artist from Prince George's County is Kimberly Michelle Graham, or Ms. Kim**.** She is styled as the "Leading Lady of Go-Go" and has worked with many artists in the go-go community since 1995. She has performed at La Fontaine Bleue and Marygolds Family Event Center in Lanham.[242] In Temple Hills, Ms. Kim sang her famous cover of "Pieces of Me" at Noochie's Front Porch.[243] Maria-Cecilia Simone Kelly, or Rico Nasty, was born in Largo in 1997. While in Prince George's County, she attended Charles Herbert Flowers High School and created and promoted her own songs. Her style blends rap, punk, and hip-hop. Growing up close to Washington, D.C.'s punk scene, she was no doubt influenced by the sounds. In an interview with NME Magazine, Rico Nasty reflected on the contrast between the rap scene of the 1990s to the current day. Female rappers were often hostile toward one another, and while that still happens sometimes, there is more emphasis on female empowerment now and less "worrying about what men think of them."[244]

Another prominent female artist in the male-dominated go-go scene is Cherie Mitchel-Agurs, or Sweet Cherie. She founded the all-female go-go group Be'la Dona in 2007 and has experience singing R&B, gospel, and jazz.[245] Currently, Sweet Cherie spends some of her time mentoring for an organization called Teaching for Change. They run the program Teach the Beat in collaboration with the District of Columbia Public Schools Mary Nusser was an activist with a strong connection to Bowie.[246] She was an alumnus of Bowie High School and helped establish the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts. After her passing in 2016, a scholarship was established in her honor.[247] Educators and activists encourage musicians to hone their craft and learn about their history. Women in these roles continue to inspire the soundscapes of Prince George's County.

LGBTQ+

[239] Wingam, Michael "Funky Ned" Neal Interview.
[240] Buckley, "New Release Is Another Chance to Hear Eva Cassidy."
[241] Ibid.
[242] Py, *Ms. Kim Performing with Familiar Faces at La Fontaine Bleue*.; Py, *Ms. Kim, Go-Go Mickey, and Bojack Perform with Rare Essence at Marygolds Family Event Center*.
[243] Noochie, *Noochie's Live From The Front Porch Presents: Ms. KIM*.
[244] Williams, "Rico Nasty Cover Interview."
[245] Redds, Sweet Cherie.
[246] "Teach the Beat."
[247] "Nusser Memorial Service."

"LGBTQ+" and "queer" are the umbrella terms we have chosen to use in this context statement to represent individuals who identify outside of the dominant sociocultural constructions of gender and sexuality. Today's ever-evolving understanding of experiences and terminology related to the LGBTQ+ community presents challenges when discussing LGBTQ+ history since much of this language did not exist until recent decades. Uncovering queer stories is also difficult due to the often deliberately hidden existence of people belonging to this community. For these reasons, there are certainly more sites and musicians in Prince George's County that are tied to LGBTQ+ experiences than are listed in this research, and efforts to highlight this history should continue in the future. There is documented evidence that the LGBTQ+ presence contributed to developing soundscapes in the county. The 2020 *LGBTQ Historic Context Study* by Susan Ferentinos and Benjamin Egerman listed some sites associated with organizations and individuals in the community like Mckeldin Library and Greenbelt Park.[248] Sometimes queer soundscapes took the form of drag shows, often referred to as female impersonators during the twentieth century. Sometimes, it took the form of vocalizing in political protests or venturing to live performances at gay bars in Washington, D.C.

Known locations associated with LGBTQ+ performances in Prince George's County are Sis's Tavern, the Wheel Bar, and Gee's Place, also known as the 4400 Club. Gibby Thomas was born in Beltsville in 1957 and identifies as a transgender woman.[249] In an oral history conducted by Darby Hickey, she spoke about her experiences growing up in the county with transgender friends and how different families reacted to the existence of these individuals. Members of the queer community were often dismissed, suppressed, and targeted with violence. Regardless, the presence of these individuals persisted, and in the 1990s, Gibby Thomas brought drag shows to the 4400 Club, which was owned by Geneva Curry. Gibby Thomas and her friend, Earline Budd, drew in large crowds and made regular appearances at the club in a neighborhood that did not openly acknowledge the LGBTQ+ community. Other evidence that the queer community diversified Prince George's County comes from local newspapers like *The Washington Blade* and *The Diamondback*. *The Washington Blade* is the oldest LGBTQ+ newspaper in the country, with its first publication date occurring in 1969. It highlights news, as well as events and sites associated with the LGBTQ+ community in Washington, D.C., and surrounding suburbs. The University of Maryland's student newspaper, *The Diamondback*, advertised bus trips to the popular gay bar Tracks in Washington, D.C. The queer community in College Park could ride together to the nearby city and look forward to live acts like Gloria Gaynor, the Village People, Thelma Houston, Crystal Waters, Robin Ess, Martha Washington, CeCe Peniston, Willie Tyson, and the Miranda Rock Band.[250]

The punk genre was an outlet for LGBTQ+ musicians and a source of activism for LGBTQ+ causes, though the genre was not unilaterally supportive of the community. Positive Force is a pro-LGBTQ+ organization that was formed in the 1980s with the goal of empowering young people to "seek radical social change."[251] The Punk Percussion Protest was part of the 1993 March on Washington for gay and lesbian rights, and a poster for the event, donated to the University of Maryland archives by Positive Force D.C., encouraged protestors to "bring

[248] Ferentinos and Egerman, "Maryland LGBTQ Historic Context Study."
[249] Hickey, Gibby Thomas Interview.
[250] Chibbaro, Jr., "Glory Days."
[251] "Positive Force DC."

something to make noise with."[252] Due to the proximity of Washington, D.C., to Prince George's County, it is likely that LGBTQ+ activists from the county were present, although it is recommended that oral histories be conducted in the future to formally document the connection between the county punk scene and the Washington, D.C., punk scene.

Religion and Spirituality

There is a strong religious and spiritual presence in the landscape and built environment of Prince George's County. At places such as Moyaone, the Piscataway community continues to hold ceremonies where music plays a large role in facilitating spirituality, building community, and teaching traditions amongst performers and members. Piscataway music facilitates different dances that are performed seasonally or for different purposes. For example, the Snake Dance is typically performed in the late spring and in the fall; like the game "follow-the-leader," the Snake Dance engages kids and helps them to begin to build music and craft-related cultural skills.[253] Similarly, the Robin Dance, performed also in the spring, engages youth in both the drum and in the dance (*Figure 14*).[254] Alternatively, some dances are more spiritual in nature, such as round dances that feature the Seven Grandfathers. In this dance, dancers enter the dance circle as a form of self-assessment, with each Grandfather representing a different aspect of being a good person, as a symbol of renewal, and physical representation of being a good "two-legged."[255] An example of such a circle is on display at Yahentamitsi Dining Hall at the University of Maryland, College Park. These dances bring together and reinforce a multi-generational community where participants, if they are unable to dance, can support the production of music by cheering on performers or by sharing stories and memories of their experiences with music.[256]

[252] *Punk Percussion Concert Flier*.
[253] Mario Harley, Hall and Gill Interview with Mario Harley, Piscataway Tribe, Wild Turkey Clan, Personal Communication, November 13, 2024.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Ibid.
[256] Ibid.



Figure 14. Photo of a Piscataway dance, photo courtesy of Sarah Kleb, American Indian Heritage Day at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, St. Leonard, MD November 6th, 2021.



Figure 15. Photo of the Pamoja Ebony Choir. William Allen, "Voices Raised: All-Black Choir Scheduled for Television Performance," The Diamondback, April 18, 1972, 1 edition, sec. Page 8.

While the Piscataway musical tradition has and continues to exist in Prince George's County, other places of worship in the built environment developed within the county and continue to use music to embrace spirituality and create community. At the time of this report, there are 115 churches in Prince George's County on MEDUSA, Maryland's cultural resource information system; twelve of those churches are listed on or are eligible for the NRHP. While churches were not specifically investigated for the purpose of identifying lesser-known or understood live music venues in this report, it is still important to acknowledge the influence of churches because it was oftentimes in these venues where gospel singers found their voice and sense of community that transferred to performances in secular spaces, such as Bowie State University, the Nyumburu Cultural Center, the Capital Centre, and even Jimmy Comber's Supper Club. In a 1972 article written in the *Diamondback,* Black student gospel singers noted their connection between church, gospel, and their decisions to join the gospel choir at the University of Maryland, saying, "The choir is my roots, the foundation of my life. I'm from the ghetto and singing with my people in gospel music is like bringing home to me at the University...[the choir] gave her a means to relate to Christianity... an outlet by which black students can express their religious beliefs and feelings (*Figure 15*)."[257] While religious institutions consistently provide avenues for musical expression, exploring musical expression through gospel performed in secular spaces has been an important component of this project.

Youth Culture

Throughout the last one hundred years, teenagers and young adults have largely been responsible for shaping popular culture. Through active audience engagement and the manipulation of

[257] William Allen, "Voices Raised: All-Black Choir Scheduled for Television Performance," *The Diamondback*, April 18, 1972, 1 edition, sec. Page 8.

media, youth audiences have been active participants in the spread of music genres across the country. With each new change to the status quo, youth audiences were often under attack by mature audiences and mainstream media and viewed as a threat to traditional values.

Mass culture coincided with youth culture in the 1930s with the popularity of swing music. The Great Depression had a democratizing effect on American culture. As opportunities for social mobility were limited, social differences were reduced, and young adults were "increasingly part of the crowd."[258] Anxious teenagers and young adults sought avenues of self-expression and found an outlet in the upbeat sound of swing. Lively and raucous audiences engaged directly with the bands to express their musical preferences. Fans shared opinions on musicians and bands in journals, magazines, and newspapers. Locally, the Teen Topics section of the *Times Herald* allowed young Washingtonians the opportunity to discuss trends and local activities. During the 1940s, The Melody Ballroom was a teen nightclub offering live jazz and swing music to young audiences. The Melody Ballroom was periodically advertised by local teen sections.

Critiques of swing during this era suggested a fear of mass hysteria. Throughout the 1930s, a global fear of fascism created an environment that was particularly cynical. Swing audiences were described as contagions, riots, and orgies.[259] One commentator even feared the spread of "Musical Hitlerism."[260] Swing's association with African Americans added to the discourse, with critics referring to the "sexual barbarism" corrupting the youth.[261]

Go-go is another genre associated with the musical talents of young people. Though less often focused on defying societal norms, the genre was nonetheless scrutinized and targeted by the media and the police. Like the young punk activists, go-go musicians sometimes incorporated political messages into their lyrics, but these messages tended to highlight the concerns of the African American community. Lyrics from Junk Yard Band's "The Word" rebuke policies of President Reagan that weakened social welfare programs and displaced residents: "Now they took our land, and they took our home, we gotta find another place, the government is moving in to build an air force base...Reagan gave the Pentagon the money and the land!"[262] Generally, the genre of go-go attracted young people and was a positive force for close-knit communities that embraced the artistic expression of their youth. Go-go helped pave the way for young hip-hop and rap artists in the county, like Rico Nasty and Cordae. Like many young artists, they began creating music while still in school, playing at informal venues like metro stations, parking lots, and backyards before gaining national recognition.

The scope of this project found evidence of diverse soundscapes in Prince George's County. The research presented includes the histories of women, Black and African American, Latinx and Hispanic Native American, and LGBTQ+ communities from 1910-2010. Further research should consider groups that have only recently had a presence in the county or that have represented small percentages of the population with little recorded history in the area. Current census records indicate that the county is also home to Asian Americans, representing 4.3% of the

[258] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*, 36.
[259] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*; Stowe, *Swing Changes: Big Band Jazz in New Deal America*.
[260] Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream*, 37.
[261] Ibid., 37.
[262] Junk Yard Band, "The Word- Lyrics."

population, and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, representing 0.2% of the population.[263] Seven percent of the residents in the county live with a disability, and this is often an underrepresented faction in historical research.[264]

Craft

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is generally defined as the creation of an original business venture and often necessitates a level of financial risk and innovation.[265] Throughout history, entrepreneurs have pursued new markets with a range of impacts on both their own communities and society as a whole.[266] Such pursuits in Prince George's County have invigorated communities excluded from traditional business ownership during Jim Crow-era segregation, but they have also participated in and caused such exclusion. Black entrepreneurs during this time were essential in the creation of a "separate, parallel Black recreational landscape," including live music and entertainment venues critical in "the production and dissemination of Black popular culture."[267] Sis's Tavern, Evans Grill, and Wilmer's Park all represent sites that acted as places of leisure and respite for Black musicians and patrons alike, echoing broader themes of placemaking and economy within Black communities.[268] Following desegregation, many entrepreneurs worked to expand their clientele by following music trends and regularly booking popular rock, disco, and go-go acts.

White entrepreneurs of this time had the capacity to deny service to Black patrons despite regularly hiring Black entertainers. Jimmy Comber was a businessman active in the late 1940s and owned two music venues, Jimmy Comber's Supper Club and the 4400 Club, and a restaurant in Adelphi, Jimmy Comber's Restaurant. While there is no explicit evidence that these spaces were segregated under his ownership, oral histories from the neighboring town of North Brentwood recall that "white" Brentwood was not a safe place to even walk through for Black residents during this time.[269] Additionally, a restaurant he owned in Adelphi was the site of an anti-segregation sit-in and demonstrates that Mr. Comber was likely only interested in serving a white clientele.[270]

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[263] United States Census Bureau, "Quick Facts: Prince George's County, Maryland."
[264] Ibid.
[265] Stanford Online. "What Is Entrepreneurship?," January 10, 2022. https://online.stanford.edu/what-is-entrepreneurship.
[266] Joe Carlen. *A brief history of entrepreneurship: the pioneers, profiteers, and racketeers who shaped our world*. Columbia Business School Publishing. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016. https://doi.org/10.7312/carl17304.
[267] Andrew W. Kahrl, Malcolm Cammeron, and Brian Katen, "African American Outdoor Recreation: A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study," National Park Service, US.S. Department of the Interior, 2022. pp. 7-8
[268] Peggy Fox and Alison Kahn, *Minding Our Own Business: An Oral History of North Brentwood's Entrepreneurs*. North Brentwood, Md.: North Brentwood Historical Society, 2004.; Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. African-American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland, 2012. https://issuu.com/mncppc/docs/aapgc.
[269] Peggy Fox, and Alison Kahn. *Minding Our Own Business: An Oral History of North Brentwood's Entrepreneurs*. North Brentwood, Md.: North Brentwood Historical Society, 2004.
[270] *The Baltimore Sun*. "13 Arrested In Protests." April 1, 1962. Newspapers.com.

More recently, entrepreneurs are working to expand the musical presence of certain genres in the county. Alton Gayle, originally from Jamaica, reopened Crossroads in 1996 to create a space for Caribbean music and culture.[271] Additionally, Professor LaTonya Wrenn, current director of the Bowie State University Gospel Choir, has worked tirelessly to expand their musical presence with the sale of CDs, radio performances, and a 2019 appearance on the Steve Harvey Show.[272] While many business ventures are primarily motivated by financial incentives, passionate entrepreneurs throughout Prince George's County's history have fostered musical innovation and creativity.

Technology

Technological advances have been critical in the advancement and development of music over time. Devices such as the microphone, radio, gramophone, amplifier, jukebox, electric guitar, cassette, turn table, CD, and others have been instrumental to the evolution of music. Other technologies have indirectly contributed to the development of music, namely television, computers, the Internet, MP3s, motion pictures, and others. TV channels such as MTV were instrumental to the growth of genres like heavy metal and rap through music videos.[273]

Prior to the development of the radio, music was mostly restricted to live performances. The radio was invented at the end of the nineteenth century but was largely used for military purposes at first. In 1920, two radio stations launched in the United States: KDKA in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and WWJ in Detroit, Michigan. KDKA and WWJ broadcast local news, variety shows, and live music performances. By 1928, NBC had begun to establish a national radio network. One of the major impacts of this development was the dissemination of music across a greater geographic area and the diffusion of musical styles nationwide. However, mainstream pop music, driven by artists like Frank Sinatra, the Andrews Sisters, and Bing Crosby, benefited the most from the radio. According to rock historian John Covach, mainstream pop was "directed at a white, middle-class listening audience."[274] Genres such as rhythm and blues, country, and western, which were popular among low-income Black and white audiences, were often excluded from radio programming by music executives. The impact of radio grew with the development of the radio transmitter, which expanded the reach of a given radio station to several hundred miles. Additionally, companies like NBC used expansive telephone line networks for radio.

Prior to 1925, phonograph recording horns were used to amplify and record voices for radio and records. The microphone came into use in 1925, simplifying the recording process. The microphone also transformed singing styles, bringing in the crooner era. Without a microphone, live singers relied on their vocal range and the acoustics of a venue to be heard over the band. The microphone allowed for a softer style of singing, introducing new methods and vocal ranges.

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[271] Mark Miller, "A Hot Spot in Bladensburg: Caribbean Crowd Warms up to Club." *The Washington Post*, January 27, 1999. Newspapers.com. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1999/01/27/a-hot-spot-in-bladensburg/80e36a0d-c707-49da-8600-8e1617afa303/.
[272] LaTonya Wrenn, Hall Interview with Professor LaTonya Wrenn, Gospel Choir Director, Bowie State University, Personal Communication, November 8, 2024.
[273] Covach, "Heavy Metal, Rap, and the Rise of Alternative Rock."
[274] "The World Before Rock and Roll (Roots-1955)."

Rudy Vallee is thought to have been the first singer to use a microphone during a live performance in 1930.[275]

Although invented in the late nineteenth century, the popularity of the jukebox expanded in the 1930s as an inexpensive alternative to live music. During the Great Depression, live music briefly fell out of favor due to its expense to both the venue and patrons. Venues could not afford to hire musicians, and many Americans have less expendable income for nightlife. Jukeboxes were installed in venues across the country as an inexpensive way to supply music for their patrons.[276]

By the late 1940s, television began to overtake radio in popularity. Companies like Radio Corporation of American (RCA) started to invest in television, converting popular radio shows like *Superman* and *The Lone Ranger* into television shows. The growth in automobile usage, introduction of car radios, and the development of the transistor, which allowed for the creation of affordable portable radios, were an important element of the listening experience. However, television continued to dominate, with musicians such as the Beatles, Elvis Presley, and others appearing on popular shows such as *Toast of the Town* and *American Bandstand*. With the advent of music videos decades later, channels like MTV were integral to the success of many artists.[277]

Aside from the various mediums used to share music with broad audiences, developments in the equipment used to perform and record music were also essential to its development. As an example, the valve amplifier and the Orange amps, invented in 1962 and 1968, respectively, were important to the development of heavy metal music, as they allowed musicians to play at louder volumes than standard amplifiers would allow at the time. The loud volume of heavy metal and hard rock music is a signature of the genre.[278] Disco music provides another example, as the development of records and turntables were integral to creating that style of music.[279]

Dance

The function and challenge for many music venues was to provide a space for dancing. Ballrooms, dance halls, religious spaces, teen clubs, and nightclubs all provided this opportunity for patrons. In much the same way that Black culture directly influences American popular culture, many dances popular within live music venues of the twentieth century were invented by Black dancers.[280] In the 1920s, dances like the Lindy Hop, a playful two-step partner dance, and the Charleston, a fast-paced dance with leg kicks and arm swings, evolved out of dances created within Black music and dance venues.[281] While Black teenagers were not allowed to patronize many music venues throughout the 1950s and 1960s, white teens were intentionally looking to

[275] Dan Warner, *Live Wires: A History of Electronic Music* (Reaktion Books, 2017), 112.
[276] Segrave, *Jukeboxes*.
[277] "The Birth and First Flourishing of Rock and Roll (1955-1960)."
[278] Havers, Richard. "Heavy Metal Thunder: The Origins of Heavy Metal." *uDiscover Music* (blog), March 29, 2024. https://www.udiscovermusic.com/in-depth-features/metal-music-heavy-thunder/.
[279] Echols, Alice. *Hot Stuff: Disco and the Remaking of American Culture*. 1st ed. New York: W. W. Norton, 2010.
[280] Roberts, Charise. "How Black Culture Has Shaped American Dance History." Steezy, January 23, 2024. https://www.steezy.co/posts/how-black-culture-has-shaped-american-dance-history.
[281] Ibid.

them to learn dances like the Twist.[282] The copying of these dancers was likely occurring in Prince George's County as well– especially in venues like the Melody Ballroom, which are representative of the domination of African American music in pop and youth culture of the time.[283]

In the punk subculture, "punks don't dance much. They mosh."[284] Moshing is also known as slam dancing, but contrary to popular belief, it is not about violence or hurting others.[285] It is a way to enjoy and experience the music in a physical and subversive way, but it is not about looking pretty or impressive like choreographed partner dances. "Pogoing" is another form of punk dance in which the dancer jumps up and down, and it may have been invented to mock people who came to punk gigs without being part of the punk movement.[286]

Go-go as a genre was developed in part to keep the audience on the dance floor for as long as possible. Dancing is generally the way audiences interact with the music, and this is especially true for go-go– the longer people are on the dance floor, the better.[287] Evan's Grill, a former stop on the Chitlin' Circuit with a large dance pavilion, is a great example of a venue set up to host go-go dancing, but this type of dance is common in smaller clubs as well.[288]

Dance is also a method of spiritual connection. Indigenous dancers use their bodies as a means of expression and as "the literal vessel of their ancestral genealogy."[289] Indigenous forms of dance are used to tell stories, express gratitude, and carry out rituals.[290] In this way, dance is essential to the survival of cultures. Moyaone is a significant landscape upon which Indigenous dancers have performed and continue to use as a vehicle for such cultural education.[291]

DIY/grassroots

Prince George's County has a rich history of grassroots and DIY movements that have significantly shaped its music scene. These movements, driven by passion and community involvement, played a critical role in fostering diverse musical genres, particularly go-go, hip-hop, and punk rock while creating spaces for artists who mainstream industries might have overlooked.

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[282] Ibid.
[283] Erenberg, Swingin' the Dream; David Ware Stowe, Swing Changes: Big Band Jazz in New Deal America (United Kingdom: Harvard University Press, 1994).
[284] Antigone. "How to Dance Punk." Gothpunk.com. Accessed December 15, 2024. https://www.gothpunk.com/howtos/how-to-dance-punk.html.
[285] Ibid.
[286] Punktuation! "The History of Pogoing," January 24, 2021. https://www.punktuationmag.com/the-history-of-pogoing/.
[287] Portia Maultsby, "History of Go-Go," Timeline of African American Music. Accessed December 15, 2024. https://timeline.carnegiehall.org/genres/go-go.
[288] Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. *African-American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland*, 2012. https://issuu.com/mncppc/docs/aapgc.
[289] Arquette, Lulani. "Native Dance Now: Body and Spirit." Dance/USA, October 20, 2020. https://www.danceusa.org/ejournal/2020/10/20/native-dance-now-body-and-spirit.
[290] Ibid.
[291] Mario Harley, Hall and Gill Interview with Mario Harley, Piscataway Tribe, Wild Turkey Clan, Personal Communication, November 13, 2024.

One of the most significant contributions of the DIY movement in Prince George's County is the birth and popularization of go-go music. Local artists and bands relied on grassroots networks to organize performances, promote music, and build a dedicated fan base. House parties, community centers, and makeshift venues became the stages for go-go's rise, as mainstream media largely ignored the genre. This DIY ethic not only solidified go-go's place in the cultural identity of the area but also fostered a strong sense of community, with call-and-response interaction between artists and audiences being central to the experience.

In addition to go-go, the punk rock scene in Prince George's County emerged as part of a broader regional movement in the Washington, D.C., area. The 1980s saw the growth of DIY venues, zines, and labels that supported the punk ethos of independence and rebellion against corporate control of the music industry. Bands like Minor Threat and Bad Brains, though primarily associated with Washington, D.C., inspired a network of local artists in Prince George's County who embraced similar ideals. Garage shows and small-scale concerts became hubs for creativity and activism, uniting youth who sought both musical and social change.

The hip-hop scene in Prince George's County also thrived through grassroots efforts. Local artists and producers, often overlooked by major record labels, used home studios, independent labels, and mixtape distribution to share their work throughout the country. Open mic nights and talent showcases provided platforms for emerging rappers and producers, creating a pipeline for artists to gain recognition and connect with broader audiences. This DIY approach not only democratized music production and distribution but also gave voice to the unique experiences and stories of the community.

The impact of these grassroots and DIY movements extends beyond music itself. They have created a legacy of cultural resilience, self-expression, and community solidarity. By empowering artists and audiences to define their own musical narratives, these movements have ensured that the diverse sounds of Prince George's County continue to influence and inspire generations to come.

Governance

Throughout history, governments have sought means to control the population, using laws and regulations to impress upon their citizenry the morals and accepted behaviors of society. Despite the United States' emphasis on freedom of speech and expression, laws have been passed at all levels of government to control the flow of information, interactions of people, and behaviors of individuals. Very often, these rules seek to control people's access to vices; other times, they seek to control the mingling and movement of people. From the numerous Jim Crow laws enforcing segregation, to the passage of the eighteenth amendment, ratified January 16, 1919, which prohibited the use of alcohol, to Prince George's County's attempt to ban punk rock 60 years later in 1979, there are numerous examples of governments seeking to control the actions of their citizenry. [292] As places of congregation, music halls and venues tend to be a center of vice. As a result, these establishments are often the targets of increased scrutiny and regulation.

[292] "Constitutional Amendments – Amendment 18 – 'The Beginning of Prohibition' | Ronald Reagan," accessed November 25, 2024, https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/constitutional-amendments-amendment-18-beginning-

Musicians and venues are also targeted because of their prominence in the lives of everyday people and their ability to influence ideas. According to Eric Kasper, "State power over musical expression restricts the creative autonomy of, and political critiques by, musical artists, and it deprives listeners of the intellectual and emotional experiences that songs provide." Kasper notes that music censorship is not a new idea; in fact, he draws a line through history from ancient Greece to Charlemagne to the present-day United States.[293]

In many instances, the censorship of music is not obvious on its face. In most cases, an outright ban on a song, musician, or genre will come from the private sector; for instance, radio stations have often censored songs or entire musical performances.[294] It is rare for a government act to specifically ban a song, musician, or genre. However, it has been attempted.

In the summer of 1979, the Prince George's County liquor licensing board attempted to ban the performance of punk rock in the county. The Board passed a resolution that it would revoke liquor licenses of venues hosting punk bands and would not issue licenses for events that were for the performance of punk. This was prompted by reports of violence and destruction during and after punk bands visited the area, particularly when punk bands played the Varsity Grill in College Park. The Board defined punk as "any music played at a high decibel level (or) played in a frenzied or hard rock manner." The Board further found that "bands with offensive names such as 'Sex Change Band'" were punk rock.[295] This ban was short-lived, and by September of 1979, a local Judge had overturned the prohibition, finding that the ban was "arbitrary and beyond constitutional limits."[296] This did not stop attempts to regulate punk music in the county, as continued coverage linked violence and punk rock, and legislators at the state level considered legislation that would broaden the powers of the local Liquor Boards to restrict punk rock performances.[297]

Punk rock is not the only music genre to be targeted by the government of Prince George's County. Go-go, the polyrhythmic music born in Washington, D.C., has frequently found itself in the crosshairs of government scrutiny. In the 1980s and 1990s, both Prince George's County and neighboring Washington, D.C., worked to close go-go clubs in their jurisdictions for what they termed to be public safety concerns. While fans of go-go maintain it is not inherently dangerous, and go-go events are advertised as having security and rules for admittance, it is the frequent

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prohibition; "P.G. Liquor Board Bans Punk Rock," *The Evening Sun*, August 25, 1979; Prince George's County Planning Department, "Postbellum Archeological Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland A Historic Context and Research Guide," Research Study (The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, March 2010), https://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/publications/BookDetail.cfm?item_id=217&Category_id=3.

[293] Eric T Kasper, "Explicit Lyrics: The First Amendment Free Speech Rulings That Have Protected Against Music Censorship In The United States" 43 (n.d.).

[294] "Music Censorship In America," *National Coalition Against Censorship* (blog), accessed November 25, 2024, https://ncac.org/resource/music-censorship-in-america-an-interactive-timeline.

[295] "P.G. Liquor Board Bans Punk Rock."

[296] "Judge Voids Prohibition of Punk Rock," *The Evening Sun*, September 14, 1979.

[297] Gloria Ohland, "New Wave Hits Scene: Punk Rock Violence Growing," *Los Angeles Associated Press*, July 13, 1980; Jackson Diehl, "Legislators Turn Attention to College Park's Noise Bars," *The Washington Post*, February 18, 1980.

scapegoat for any violence in the vicinity of an operating club.[298] These are just a few examples of targeted regulation, but no musical genre was immune to scrutiny, and even genres like disco were targets of restriction.[299]

Other legislation led to reduced revenue for venues but did not specifically target music. For instance, prohibition targeted alcohol consumption but indirectly impacted music venues. Without the ability to sell alcohol, venue owners had to change their business models, and many pushed alcohol consumption and entertainment underground. Before go-go, disco felt the impacts of regulation in Prince George's County. There have been prohibitions on dancing during certain hours. As a result, clubs like the Bastille, a local bar in Prince George's County, would continue to play music after 1:00 a.m. but would announce that no one could dance due to local laws. The club owners felt the regulations negatively impacted business because if there is music, people want to dance, and if they cannot dance, then they will likely leave.

In their role as centers of congregation, restaurants, and venues provided the public space to challenge societal norms and legislation. One of the notable examples of this involves the sit-ins of the 1960s challenging segregation practices. In April 1962, Jimmy Comber's Restaurant became a stage for a county-wide sit-in protest. Before the sit-ins of the 1960s, restaurants and bars were the locations of limited integration. As Black artists gained popularity with the entire public, "white only" establishments began to book them for shows. This began to break some of the strict Jim Crow practices by exposing the white audience to the artistry of African American musicians. This was controversial for both sides, as it challenged the established mores of Jim Crow. Still, many who fought for integration believed African American artists performing in "white only" establishments undermined the movement.[300]

Music, musicians, and the venues that host them reflect the mores of their society but also tend to be agents of change. In addition to a government's legitimate role as a protector of public safety, it can, at times, act to slow the pace of change and reinforce current social values. Prince George's County boasts a history of rich musical diversity, which has, at times, come into direct conflict with the government. Telling these musical stories, the at times defiant nature of Prince George's County's citizenry, and the struggles of those involved connect us to our place in history by transporting us to other times the way only music can.

Field Survey

Introduction to Field Survey

This research identified 129 music venue sites in Prince George's County (*Figure 16*), both extant and non-extant music venue sites built or with an active period between 1910-2010. While likely not an exhaustive list, this project has identified a substantial number of music venues that provide physical markers on the landscape for music in Prince George's County. The 27 key sites

[298] Perry Bacon Jr., "Police Want to See Some Go-Gos Gone; Violence Investigated at Pr. George's County Clubs," *The Washington Post*, August 3, 2002, sec. METRO.
[299] Sharon Conway, "Dance Hall Music Lingers Long After Patrons," *The Washington Post*, February 16, 1978.
[300] Al Sweeney, "Stars' Pacts Cause Furor; Bow to Restrictions in D.C. White Spots," *Afro-American*, December 17, 1949.

identified with a purple music note (*Figure 16*) are researched in greater detail in the following sections. These key sites represent structures that played or continue to play an important role in the music of Prince George's County, these sites have been evaluated and given recommendations based on their structural integrity and historical significance (Table 1). The total list of sites identified (Appendix II) includes a variety of "types" or uses when in operation. Nightclubs are perhaps the most prevalent structure use identified in this research. Dancing and food are central to other common music venue uses; restaurants, taverns, juke joints, or bars were identified. Dance halls are examples of spaces with an explicit focus on large-group performance experiences. Many music venues were multipurpose, as performances occurred in schools, music stores, and public spaces like parks and public transportation.

Table 1. Key Sites and Recommendations, Extant Sites Only

Site Name	Address	Genres	NRHP Recommendation*	MIHP Recommendation
Bowie High School	15200 Annapolis Rd. Bowie, MD 20715		Y	Y
Bowie State University	14000 Jericho Park Rd, Bowie, MD 20715		N	Amendment needed, PG:71A-21
Cole Field House	Cole Student Activities Bldg., 4095 Union Ln, College Park, MD 20742		N	Amendment needed PG:66-35-13
Crossroads	4103 Baltimore Avenue, Bladensburg, MD		N	Amendment needed, PG:69-5
Dixie Pig	3804 Bladensburg Road, Cottage City, MD 20722 ; 4500 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD (old)		Y	Y
King Kong Restaurant	2350 University Blvd. E., Adelphi, MD		Y	Y
Largo High School	505 Largo Rd, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774		N	Y
Melody Ballroom	3806 34th St, Mt Rainier, MD 20712		N	Amendment needed, PG:68-13
Moyaone	3400 Bryan Point Rd, Accokeek, MD 20607		Already Listed	Already listed, PG:83-12
Nyumburu Cultural Center	4018 Campus Dr, College Park, MD 20742		Y	Amendment needed, PG:66-35
Paragon	7416 Baltimore Avenue, College Park, Maryland, 20740		Y	Y
Quonset Inn	3225 Naylor Road, Silver Hill, MD 20748		N	Amendment needed, PG:76A-55
Ritchie Coliseum	7675 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20742		Y	Amendment needed, PG:66-35

The Showplace Arena	14900 Pennsylvania Ave., Upper Marlboro, MD 20772		N	Amendment needed, PG:82A-1
Sis's Tavern	4516 41st Ave, North Brentwood, MD 20722		Y	Amendment needed, PG:68-61-21
Strick's Restaurant	3211 Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748		N	Amendment needed, PG:76A-55
Waldrop's Restaurant/ Jimmy Comber's Supper Club	4318 Rhode Island Ave, Brentwood, MD 20722		Y	Y
Wilmer's Park	15710 Brandywine Road Brandywine, MD 20613		Y	Already listed, PG:86B-37
WMUC	3130 Campus Dr, College Park, MD 20742		N	Amendment needed, PG:66-35
The 4400 Club	4400 Rhode Island Ave, Brentwood, MD 20722		Y	Y
*All NRHP Recommendations should be revisited after MIHP amendments				

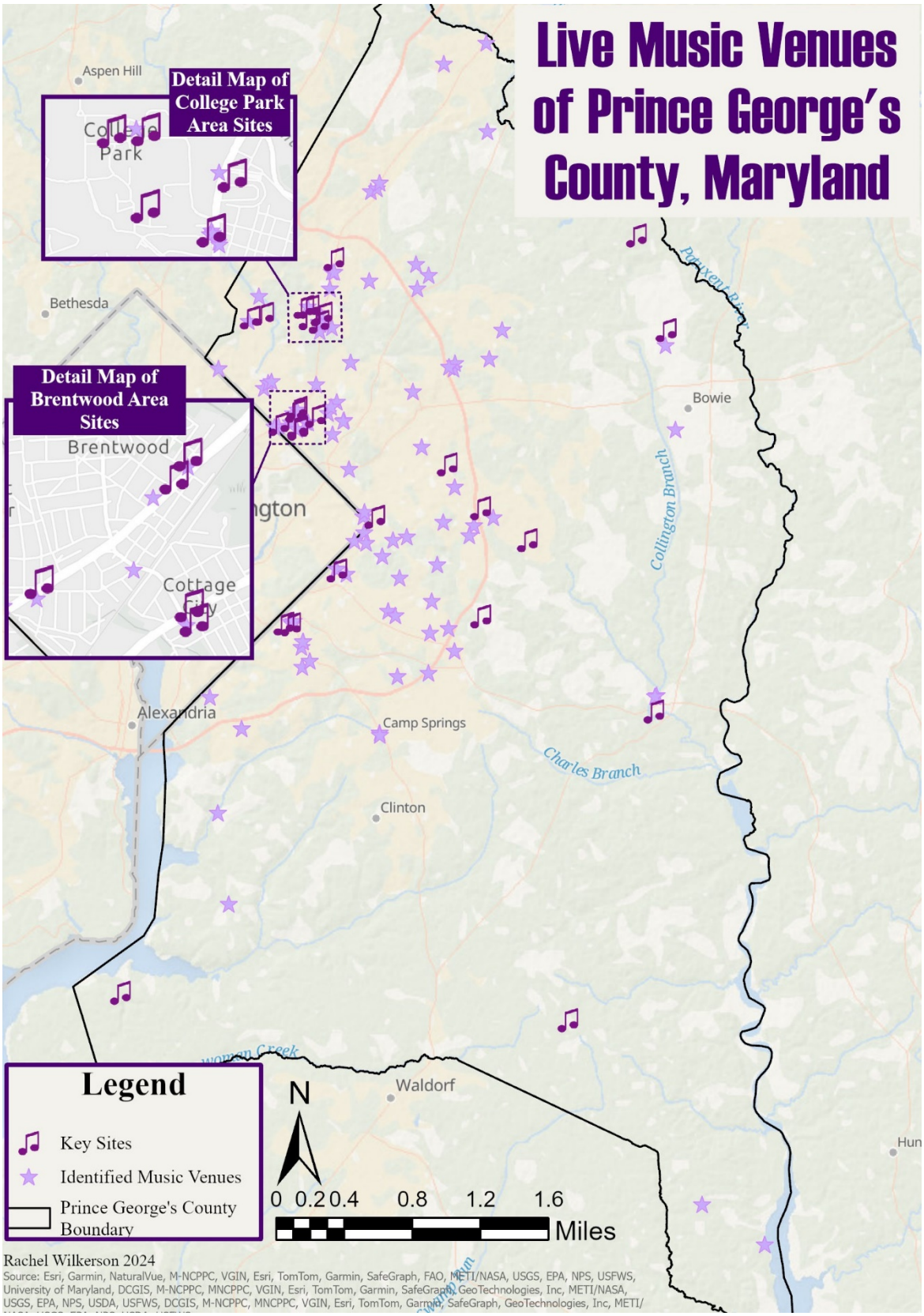


Figure 16. Music Venue Sites Identified in Prince George's County by the Crescendo Preservation Team, Courtesy Rachel Wilkerson 2024. Sites identified with a music note are key sites discussed in the context statement.

Extant Key Sites

The following nineteen sites represent the extant key sites researched in depth for this study (Table 1). A brief history of each site is included, followed by an architectural description. We recommend that each of these extant key sites be added to the MIHP or added to an amendment of a preexisting MIHP form. A select few extant sites should be considered for the NRHP with future research.

Bowie High School
15200 Annapolis Road, Bowie, MD 20715

Bowie High School is a significant site of music history in Prince George's County (*Figure 17*). The original 1965 structure has been altered but retains its integrity consistent with education and community planning in the mid-twentieth century. Buildings within the Belair Development have only recently hit the 50-year threshold for historical significance and ought to be added to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP).

In 1743, "Belair" was the colonial dwelling of Maryland Governors Benjamin Tasker, Samuel Ogle, and Benjamin Ogle.[301] The grounds were used for horse breeding from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, producing two Triple Crown winners. The land went up for auction after the death of William Woodward, Jr. in 1954 and was purchased by Levitt and Sons in 1957.[302] Construction on this development began in 1960, and the first residents moved in in 1961.[303]

The Belair development was constructed as a bedroom community with the intention that homes would attract residents, but most amenities would come later at the direction of local agencies and private authorities.[304] This meant the most successful communities were dependent on access to resources and the impetus of residents and stakeholders. The mature landscaping and beautification of the Belair development is attributed to prideful homeowners rather than to the original design of Levitt and Sons. Many communities planned by Levitt and Sons are historically significant examples of their work, but the Belair development and

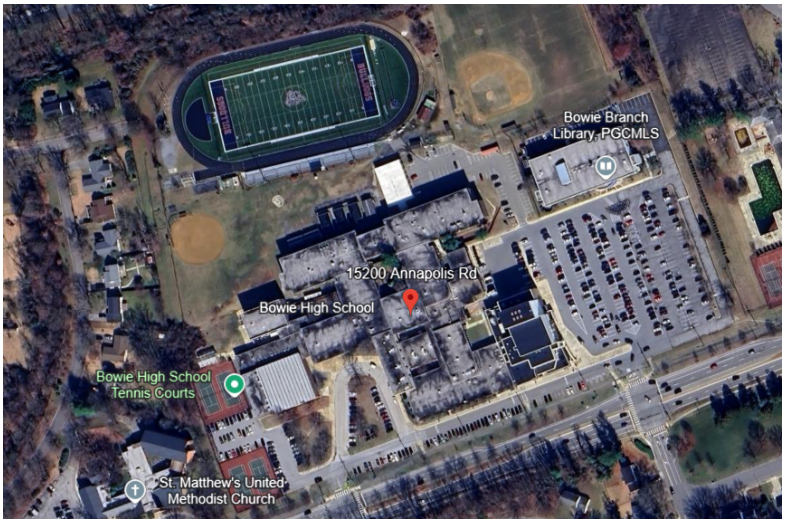


Figure 17. Google Maps. Aerial photograph of Bowie High School. 2024.

[301] Harris, "Historic Sites Inventory Form: Belair Development."
[302] "Deed: William Woodward, Jr."; "Deed: Levitt and Sons."
[303] Harris, "Historic Sites Inventory Form: Belair Development."
[304] Ibid.

Bowie High School should be considered for historic designation based on the efforts of its residents and notable figures.

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 (FHA) prohibited housing discrimination based on race, religion, sex, disability, and familial status. Gentrification of Washington, D.C., in the 1970s led to the displacement of many African American families, who then turned to the suburbs in Prince George's County for affordable housing options.[305] The FHA and gentrification simultaneously contributed to a change in demographics in the Belair development. The migration of African Americans to the suburbs brought a change in soundscapes as well.[306]

Youth culture tends to drive progress in the artistic and musical realms, and educational facilities are at the heart of this progress. The long list of notable alumni from Bowie High School justifies this site for historic designation. Kato Hammond changed schools a few times; he also attended the Duke Ellington School of the Arts but ultimately graduated from Bowie High.[307] In his autobiography, Hammond recalls jam sessions in backyards with fellow students, in talent shows, and at school sporting events in the late 1970s. Music lessons were expensive, so Hammond taught himself guitar, which set him on the path to play in the bands Benny and the Masters and Proper Utensils.[308] Many go-go artists were self-taught or learned through school music programs.

Chris Volz is the singer and lyricist for the nu-metal band Flaw, which gained popularity in 1996. He did not graduate from Bowie High but attended prior to the traumatic suicide of his mother, Helga. His mother sang opera and jazz, and classical music influenced his harder rock sound.[309] Eva Cassidy was a jazz musician who also attended Bowie High in the 1980s. She kickstarted her career by self-promoting and selling CDs from her car.[310] Cassidy's vocal talents crossed genres, and she worked with many well-known and local artists, including the go-go legend Chuck Brown. In 1989, a *Washington Post* advertisement for the Mickey Mouse Club prompted JC Chasez's successful audition.[311] Chasez attended Bowie High School and gained success as a pop artist in the 1990s and 2000s with the popular boy band NSYNC.

The 800-seat auditorium was added to the school's list of projects, although funding for its construction was not made available until 1996.[312] In 1995, the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA) was established as a partnership between Prince George's County Public Schools, the M-NCPPC, the City of Bowie, and the Bowie Regional Arts Vision Association, Inc.[313] A few highlight performances at BCPA include the Tribute Xperience Band, Nu Era, Go-Go

[305] Virta, *Prince George's County: A Pictorial History*.
[306] Martin, "Plainly Audible: Listening Intersectionally to the Amplified Noise Act in Washington, DC."
[307] Hammond, *Take Me Out To The Go-Go: The Autobiography of Kato Hammond*.
[308] Ibid.
[309] Volz, "Flaw-Some: Rock Music as Artistic Expression and Therapy."
[310] Buckley, "New Release Is Another Chance to Hear Eva Cassidy."
[311] Wikipedia, "JC Chasez."
[312] Frazier, "Bowie Auditorium Wins Approval."
[313] George, "BCPA History and Current Status Report."

Symphony, Bowie High School Choir, Bowie Senior Chorale, and Prince George's Philharmonic.[314]

Bowie High School Architectural Description



Figure 18. Lanza, Becki. "Photograph of Bowie High School." 2024.

Bowie High's south façade is situated along Annapolis Road in Bowie, MD (*Figure 18* & *Figure 19*). The Bowie Center for the Performing Arts is attached to the main block along the eastern elevation. The main block opens to a small courtyard which is surrounded by L-shaped wings. The west elevation faces a tennis court, and the south elevation faces a football field. Connected parking lots line all but the northwest end of the school.

Typical of suburban schools, Bowie High is a low-rise brick and concrete building. The wing facades are all brick with a one to five common bond and the flat roof projects with a slight overhang to provide some shade to the two-story windows below. The windows feature a vertical pilaster of stretcher bond brick that protrudes from the wall and bisects each two-story paired window. The sidewalk in front of the wings connects them to the main block, with access points to the central courtyard. The main block consists of a small square structure on the first story. It sits under an oversized concrete second story with windows that match the fenestration pattern on the wings. Instead of brick pilasters, these paired windows are bisected by steel I-beams that also support the massive overhang. This architectural detail gives the appearance of a floating second story. The windows on the main block are built into a white, vertical element that is distinguished from the unfinished concrete slabs on this facade. Bowie High School is recommended for NRHP designation based on criteria A, B, and C.


Figure 19 Lanza, Becki. "Photograph of Bowie High School." 2024.

[314] "BCPA Events."; "Symphony Concert."

Bowie State University
14000 Jericho Park Road, Bowie, MD 20715

Bowie State University, the oldest historically Black college or university in Maryland, first began in Baltimore in 1866 under the title "School No. 1".[315] It was not until 1910 that the state of Maryland purchased land in Bowie to relocate the school, opening in 1911 to students and renaming it the Maryland Normal and Industrial School at Bowie in 1914. In 1963, the school transitioned to Bowie State College and by 1988, transitioned a final time to Bowie State University.[316] A nucleus for the development of music educators and gospel performers, Bowie State University is home to the Bowie State University Gospel Choir. Professor Levenis Smith founded the Bowie State Gospel Choir in 1975.[317] Dr. Joan Hillsman took control of the choir in 1996, and upon her retirement in 2009, Dr. Latonya Wrenn took over directorship of the choir. Since its founding, the Bowie State University Gospel Choir has been known for their impressive performances and award-winning musical talents, performing all over the country at different events and on various gospel radio stations, notably performing in 2019 on the *Steve Harvey Show*.[318]

Bowie State University Architectural Description

Bowie State University is comprised of approximately 24 different buildings built between 1916 and 2007, with different renovation projects being completed in the period since 2007.[319] Seven buildings constructed between 1938 and 1960 are particularly significant and representative of the general architectural style of Bowie State University. These buildings are primarily constructed of concrete block and brick, with asphalt shingles.[320] As mentioned in the Addendum, the Dwight Holmes Residence Hall, Lucretia Kennard Residence Hall, Theodore R. McKeldin Gymnasium, and the Goodloe Apartments are in the Colonial Revival style, and the Charlotte Robinson Hall is the first building done in the International style.[321] The Maryland Historical Trust deemed the Bowie State University campus not eligible for the NRHP in 1998 due to its lack of integrity architecturally from the original 1920s campus, although a recent 2009 addendum notes that the campus should be considered significant not only architecturally, but also historically and culturally significant for the University's association with the history of education for African Americans in Maryland.[322]

[315] Andre Cutair, "Bowie State University: A Historical Timeline," Explore Bowie State University's History Since 1865, accessed November 14, 2024, https://bowiestate.edu/about/history/timeline.php.
[316] Ibid.
[317] LaTonya Wrenn, Hall Interview with Professor LaTonya Wrenn, Gospel Choir Director, Bowie State University, Personal Communication, November 8, 2024.
[318] Ibid.
[319] Rosemary F. Prola, "Addendum: Individual Property/District Maryland Historical Trust Internal NR-Eligibility Review Form," National Register Eligibility Review Form (Crownsville, MD: The Ottery Group, March 18, 2009). 12.
[320] Ibid. 21.
[321] Ibid. 11.
[322] Ibid.

Cole Field House
Cole Student Activities Bldg., 4095 Union Ln, College Park, MD 20742

The William P. Cole, Jr., Student Activities Building, colloquially known as Cole Field House or simply Cole, was dedicated in December 1956. It was named after Judge William P. Cole, Jr. for his years of service on the University's Board of Regents. At the time of its opening, the arena held 12,000 people and was the second largest indoor arena on the eastern seaboard, only Madison Square Garden in New York City was larger.[323] It became the new home for Maryland basketball for nearly 50 years.[324]

As a sports arena, Cole Field House was beloved. It bore witness to history, like in 1975 when Cole hosted the first televised women's basketball game, or in 1966 when Cole Field House hosted the NCAA Championship featuring Texas Western, who started an all-African American player lineup (the first time this had been done in the NCAA) against the all-white, number one-seeded University of Kentucky. Texas Western would win the game and assist Cole Field in earning a reputation as a house of horrors for number one-seeded teams. There were more upsets of number one-seeded teams at Cole Field House than in any other arena.[325]

In addition to bearing witness to sports history, Cole Field House hosted several impressive musical guests. In 1961, the Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC) brought Ella Fitzgerald to Cole's stage. Her performance was part of their effort to bring A-list entertainers to campus.[326] In February 1977, Queen and Thin Lizzy played a concert at Cole Field House, which was alleged to be the heaviest drug use at a campus event. *Diamondback* articles reported that police found liquor bottles on the arena floor, and there were fourteen reported drug overdoses. These claims were refuted by the Student Entertainment Enterprises (SEE), who said the drug usage was consistent with other concerts.[327] When the campus hosted the Grateful Dead in Cole, students lined up for a week prior to tickets going on sale. Still, more traveled to Cole without a ticket in the hopes of securing one before concert time or bribing their way into the venue. The Grateful Dead played to a sold-out crowd, with possibly additional attendees present.[328]

In 2002, Maryland basketball moved to the Comcast Center. Cole Field House sat mostly unused for more than a decade until plans for an extensive renovation were approved in 2014.[329] The

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[323] "U.M. To Dedicate Cole Indoor Stadium Friday," *The Evening Sun*, December 12, 1956, Newspapers.com.
[324] "Cole Field House," Terrapin Tales, December 2, 2018, https://umdarchives.wordpress.com/tag/cole-field-house/.
[325] "1966. It Was a Landmark Night.," accessed December 8, 2024, https://www.utep.edu/glory-road/the-year/; "Cole Field House."
[326] "Style Gets Ella Here," *The Diamondback*, October 3, 1961, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.
[327]Larry Gross, "Concert Board Denies Drug Problem During Show," *The Diamondback*, February 11, 1977, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.
[328] Larry Williams, "Reflections on Shattered Expectations," *The Diamondback*, March 9, 1981, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; Steve Gosset, "The Night the Dead Were Live at Cole," *The Diamondback*, March 9, 1981, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; Sally Hauffman, "'Dead' Seats to Cole Show up to Sale," *The Diamondback*, February 12, 1981, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.
[329] "Featured Project: Cole Field House | Cochran & Mann," accessed December 9, 2024, https://www.cochranandmann.com/projects/cole-field-house-renovation.

building was completely gutted and refashioned into an indoor practice field for the football team, research facility, cultural resource center, classrooms, and office space. By and large, the building is unrecognizable inside, but the original facade was preserved as much as possible as a tribute to the history of the building.

Cole Field House Architectural Description

This architectural description is of the primary façade that faces Union Drive. Cole Field House is a twenty-five bay, three-story, three-block building, clad in red brick. The center block is broken up by a protruding center, full-height entryway. This mimics a full-height porch on a residential building. The protruding entry is five bays, divided by four square pilasters of concrete. Between each pilaster is a double door with a gridded transom of fifteen panes. Above each doorway is a plaque representing a sport–swimming, wrestling, boxing, and basketball – and the center plaque representing the University of Maryland. A concrete string course runs along the entire face of the building, below the top windows, which are double-hung six over six windows. Above the windows is a metal sign reading: Wm. P. Cole Jr. Student Activities Building. The remainder of the center block symmetrically flanks either side of the protruding entry. The first-story windows are double-hung, nine over six. The remaining windows are large single panes of glass. On each end of the building are two-story, one-bay wings. Each wing has two square, concrete pilasters that match those of the center block.

The Cole Field House has already been included on the University of Maryland MIHP form (PG:66-35-13). However, this form should be amended to include this site's music history.

Crossroads
4103 Baltimore Avenue, Bladensburg, MD

The Cross Roads Cafe opened in November 1941 under the ownership of Edgar Baum and Edward Smith on the site of Del Rio, a restaurant and nightclub that was destroyed by a fire in January 1941. Upon its grand opening, *The Washington Daily News* reported that the club "features the latest in streamlined motif, best of which is its huge diamond shaped stand-up bar, largest south of New York."[330] Ralph Hawkins and the Cross Roads Band regularly played live music at the venue for several years after its grand opening.

Cross Roads drew quite a crowd and eventually nationally recognized musicians. Tony Bennett, a legendary jazz and pop musician, played at Cross Roads for a one-week special event in 1953.[331] As a part of this performance, he played "King of Broken Hearts," "Because of You," "Cold, Cold Heart," "Boulevard of Broken Dreams," and "I Won't Cry Anymore."[332]

[330] Paul Ream, "Tips on Tables," *The Washington Daily News*, November 18, 1941. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-crossroads-gra/159316893/.
[331] *The Washington Daily News*, "Tony Bennett," May 22, 1953. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-crossroads-ton/159330820/.
[332] Ray Keziah, "Tips on Tables," *The Washington Daily News*, May 26, 1953. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-crossroads-ton/159331446/.

The nightclub went through different phases. At some point, the name of the nightclub changed to one word: Crossroads. Crossroads featured a variety of genres, from boogie-woogie to rock, throughout the mid to late 20th century. Then, in 1995, Alton Gayle, a Jamaican immigrant, bought the nightclub. He kept the name of the venue but changed the live performances to primarily reggae musicians.



Figure 20. Crossroads For Sale Sign, 2024. Photo Courtesy of Ericka Kauffman.

This decision led to Crossroads becoming a premiere reggae nightclub in the greater Washington, D.C., area. An influx of Caribbean immigrants to the greater Washington, D.C., area aided in Crossroads' popularity. In a 1999 interview with the *Washington Post*, John Blake, a Trinidadian immigrant, spoke highly of the music venue as a community space for Caribbean immigrants.[333] Famous artists, like Stephen Marley and Sizzla, as well as lesser-known acts, performed at the venue. In fact, the founder of RAS Records, Doctor Dread, set up a performance at Crossroads for Stephen Marley to promote his first album, featuring Mad Professor as the opener.[334] Although Crossroads closed in 2012 and has remained vacant ever since the legacy of the nightclub lives on. Even in 2024, twelve years after its closure, the realty company attempting to sell the property advertises the building's past as the legendary nightclub (*Figure 20*).

Crossroads Architectural Description

Although the building still stands, the structure is rapidly deteriorating (*Figure 21*). The former Crossroads building is a 16,130 square foot, single-story commercial building consisting of one large rectangular main block. The southern façade is clad in polychrome brick veneer, while the rest of the structure is cement block. The roof is flat; a faux gable overhang clad in wooden shingles, emulating a hut, runs along the roofline of the façade. The main entrance was once located in an attached brick tower at the southwestern corner of the building.



Figure 21. Photo Comparison of Crossroads. Image to the left courtesy of Mark Opsasnick, 1994. Image to the right courtesy of Ericka Kauffman, 2024.

Since its closure, the main entrance has been replaced with bricks, and the rear addition is

[333] Mark Miller, "A Hot Spot in Bladensburg: Caribbean Crowd Warms up to Club," *The Washington Post*, January 27, 1999. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1999/01/27/a-hot-spot-in-bladensburg/80e36a0d-c707-49da-8600-8e1617afa303/.
[334] Doctor Dread, *The Half That's Never Been Told: The Real-Life Reggae Adventures of Doctor Dread* (Akashic Books, 2015) 137.

partially torn down. Crossroads is not recommended for listing on the NRHP due to its intentional partial demolition, leading to a lack of integrity. This site should, however, be included on the MIHP.

Dixie Pig
3804 Bladensburg Road, Cottage City, MD 20722



Figure 22. Former Dixie Pig, present day Universal Dialysis Center, 2024. Photo courtesy of Ericka Kauffman.

The Dixie Pig, a well-known nightclub with a focus on hillbilly and rock music, had two different locations in Prince George's County. The original Dixie Pig opened in 1927 and stood near the Peace Cross in Bladensburg at 4500 Annapolis Road. The original building operated as a saloon and dated back to the 19th century.[335] Unfortunately, the building caught fire in 1952 during a flood, most likely due to a fallen neon sign that short-circuited the wiring connected to the building.[336] The flood waters caused additional difficulties in putting out the blaze, and the structure could not be salvaged.

The club reopened in 1953 in a nearby location at 3804 Bladensburg Road in Cottage City. Similar to other nightclubs in the area, Dixie Pig hosted a variety of musicians throughout the years. Jimmy Dean, Patsy Cline, Roy Clark, and Charlie Daniels all played at the nightclub.[337] One band, High Hopes, recorded a live studio album at Dixie Pig in 1961.[338]

Dixie Pig Architectural Description

The second Dixie Pig structure still stands along Bladensburg Road. The building has switched uses and is now a medical office, the Universal Dialysis Center (*Figure 22*). Although the internal activity of the building has changed, the exterior is relatively unchanged. The former Dixie Pig is a single-story, rear ell commercial structure, clad in brick veneer. Three bays face Bladensburg Road, and the main entrance faces the northern parking lot. The Dixie Pig is recommended for future NRHP eligibility and as an addition to the MIHP, as the exterior is relatively unchanged from its era as a famous country nightclub in Prince George's County.

[335] Alison Beckwith, "How Country Music Legend Charlie Daniels Got His Start Playing in Bladensburg," *The Hyattsville Wire*, January 30, 2024. https://www.hyattsvillewire.com/2024/01/30/charlie-daniels-dixie-pig/.
[336] *The Washington Daily News*, "Club Completely Destroyed: Dixie Pig Burns While Marooned," November 22, 1952. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-dixie-pig-fire/155019862/.
[337] Alison Beckwith, "How Country Music Legend Charlie Daniels Got His Start Playing in Bladensburg," *The Hyattsville Wire*, January 30, 2024. https://www.hyattsvillewire.com/2024/01/30/charlie-daniels-dixie-pig/.
[338] *The Washington Daily News*, "See and Hear a Live Recording," January 31, 1961. Newspapers.com. https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-washington-daily-news-dixie-pig-high/155021755/.

King Kong Restaurant
2350 University Boulevard E., Adelphi, MD

The building that currently houses King Kong Restaurant was built around 1970. Advertisements for the first restaurant, the Rathskeller, appeared in April 1971, and several restaurants operated in the space from 1971 to the present. Advertisements through the years show that music and dancing have been a staple of every business in the space.[339] King Kong Chinese Restaurant opened in 1983 and continues to operate today. In the 1980s, it was a crucial venue for live punk music in Prince George's County. The promoters and bookers sought to compete with Washington, D.C.'s premier live music venues like D.C. Space and the 9:30 Club.[340] King Kong hosted top-tier local acts, like Government Issue, and touring bands, like Zeitgeist. [341]

In 1985, a band set to perform at King Kong put up offensive promotional posters around College Park and Prince George's County. The posters were so offensive that the police took them all down the same day, and the Liquor Board threatened to revoke King Kong's liquor license if the band played and the venue continued to host punk rock shows. The restaurant acquiesced, and King Kong ceased to be the punk powerhouse in the county as it had. [342]

King Kong Architectural Description

King Kong is a rectangular building clad in brown brick in a common bond pattern, and around the top is a band of vertical boards. It is a twelve-bay, one-story building. The roof overhangs all the way around and mimics a gable shape, but the roof is flat and is covered in brown asphalt shingles.

The front façade faces a parking lot. Eleven brick pilasters divide up the façade. Between the pilasters are openings for picture windows of single-pane glass, what appear to be blocked doorways, a vent, and a center doorway that serves as the entrance; it is covered with a red awning. The building retains a high level of integrity on its exterior and should be considered for the NRHP and the MIHP as the destination for small venue live punk rock shows in the 1980s.

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[339] "Do You Have an Italian Friend?," *The Diamondback*, March 19, 1973, 5, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; "Coming Lu's Gay 90's Grand Opening Feb. 15th," *The Diamondback*, February 16, 1972, 10, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; "Want A Wild Place for the Weekend?," *The Diamondback*, April 6, 1971, sec. classified ads, 6, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; "New Opening King Kong Restaurant and Lounge," *The Diamondback*, June 2, 1983, 3, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.

[340] "Outrage Breaks Out of Funk Mold Contest Winners Break Into the Big Time," *The Diamondback*, February 20, 1984, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.

[341] *Replacements Concert Flier, King Kong Club, Adelphi, Maryland, September 23, 1984*, September 23, 1984, drawing, September 23, 1984, Adelphi, MD, Paul Bushmiller Collection on Punk, https://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/44016; *Government Issue Concert Flier, King Kong Restaurant, Adelphi, Maryland - July 16, 1984*, July 16, 1984, July 16, 1984, Series 1: Flyers, 1979-1991, Box 1, Folder 7, Item 5, Sharon Cheslow Punk Flyers collection, https://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/40480.

[342] Erik Nelson and Eric Weidner, "Obscene Posters Draw Criticisms, Probe by County," *The Diamondback*, April 19, 1985, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; "The End of the Story," *The Diamondback*, April 22, 1985, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.

Largo High School
505 Largo Road, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Largo, Maryland has been the hometown of several iconic musical artists who have left a lasting mark on the industry. R&B singer Mýa, known for hits like "Case of the Ex" and her Grammy-winning collaborations, hails from Largo and has achieved international success. Oddisee, a celebrated rapper and producer, blends thoughtful lyricism with innovative beats, earning acclaim in the underground hip-hop scene. Rico Nasty, a bold and genre-defying rapper, has brought her energetic style and punk-inspired sound to global audiences, further cementing Largo's influence in modern music.[343] These artists, along with others, reflect the creative spirit and diverse cultural heritage of the Largo community.

Largo High School has a rich musical history deeply intertwined with the county's unique musical culture. Established in 1972, the school has been a formative space for many young musicians, especially in the genres of go-go and R&B. Over the years, the school's music programs have cultivated students' talents through both traditional band and choir classes and community-focused events, celebrating local music styles and influences.[344] Notably, Largo High has nurtured a love for go-go, with local bands sometimes performing at school functions, exposing students to the infectious, percussive rhythms of the region.[345] Alumni from Largo High School have gone on to contribute to the local and national music scenes, keeping alive the sounds and spirit of Prince George's County's unique music culture.

Largo High School's choir is a notable part of the Largo community and music legacy. Established to provide students with opportunities for vocal performance and artistic growth, the choir has become a cornerstone of the school's performing arts program.[346] Over the years, the group has performed at school events, regional competitions, and community gatherings, earning recognition for their talent and dedication. The choir continues to foster a sense of teamwork, discipline, and passion for music, leaving a lasting legacy on Largo's cultural fabric.

Largo Highschool Architectural Description

The school was built in 1957 and reflects the institutional architectural style common in the mid-twentieth century. The structure is simple and rectilinear, and it prioritizes functionality over ornamentation. Box-like shapes are the predominant trait for the shape of the building. The roof is made of corrugated metal that is sloped. The brick facade is made entirely of stretcher bricks, indicating the structure most likely has a concrete cast behind it. The covered walkway, supported by simplistic cylindrical metal posts, was a later addition to the school; its design remains in congruence with the rest of the structure. Windows across the building are horizontal and span from the first floor to the second without a break; the bays are recessed. The building's

[343] Georgette. "Rico Nasty Battles Life's Pitfalls with Creative Optimism." XXL Mag, July 11, 2019. https://www.xxlmag.com/rico-nasty-interview-2019-xxl-freshman/.
[344] "Choir." Prince George's County Public Schools. Accessed November 1, 2024. https://www.pgcps.org/schools/largo-high/students/clubs/choir.
[345] Penn II, Michael. "Rico Nasty as She Wants to Be." Vinyl Me, Please, October 2018. https://www.vinylmeplease.com/blogs/magazine/rico-nasty-vinyl.
[346] "Largo High School Choir." Prince George's County Public Schools. Accessed November 5, 2024. https://www.pgcps.org/schools/largo-high/students/clubs/choir.

colors are neutral, predominantly earth tones like grey and beige. The building has several additions that match its original style. This architecture prioritizes cost efficiency and durability, reflecting the practical considerations of school design in the mid-to-late twentieth century. This property should be listed on the Maryland Register of Historic Properties.

Melody Ballroom
3806 34th Street, Mt Rainier, MD 20712

The Melody Ballroom was a 1940s-era teen nightclub offering big band jazz and swing music. During the 1930s and early 1940s, swing's widespread popularity among American youth represents one of the first times that African American music dominated pop culture. As a nightclub catering to a white audience, the Melody Ballroom is indicative of this cultural trend. The history of the ballroom can be tracked through newspaper articles and advertisements, demonstrating that its success and eventual downfall mirrored broader cultural trends around swing.

The ownership of the club prior to 1946 is unknown. The earliest mention of the club is a 1941 advertisement, boasting a dancefloor accommodating 300 couples.[347] At the time, the Melody School of Dancing was also operated on the premises, offering lessons in ballroom, tango, rumba, exhibition, and stage. Entertainment between 1941 and 1943 included the Bob Garber Orchestra, Bob Garber and his Melody makers, Bill Harwood and his Orchestra, Buzzy Ellis' Music, Buddy Wilson's Orchestra, and Jimmy Lartz and his Orchestra (*Figure 23*).[348] In 1942, Victory Dances were held twice a week.[349] Little information is given on the Victory Dances, but they likely provided opportunities for fundraising and morale-boosting during World War II.

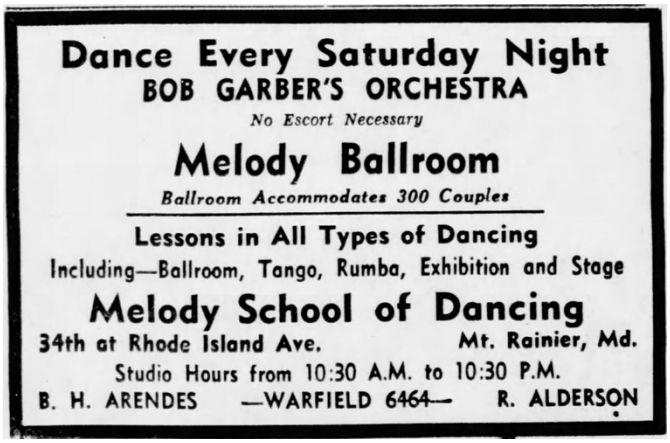


Figure 23. Advertisement for the Melody Ballroom, The Evening Star. "Dance Every Saturday Night." October 3, 1941, sec. Amusements.

There are no newspaper references to the Melody Ballroom between 1943 and 1946, suggesting a possible closure. The New Melody Ballroom was opened by Bert Reifkind and Harold Gans on Friday, August 9, 1946.[350] The opening featured a live broadcast from the venue on the WWDC radio station. Al Massey and his Orchestra were hired as the local band, although the owners detailed their desire to hire "name" bands in the future.[351] Al Massey and

[347] "Dance Every Saturday Night," *The Evening Star*, October 3, 1941, sec. Amusements.
[348] "Dance Every Saturday Night"; "Dancing Every Saturday," *Times Herald*, October 11, 1941, Newspapers.com; "Let's Go Dancing with Lee," *Times Herald*, December 20, 1942, Newspapers.com; "Let's Go Dancing with Lee," *Times Herald*, January 17, 1943, Newspapers.com; "Let's Go Dancing with Eva," *Times Herald*, April 18, 1943.
[349] "Victory Dances Every Tuesday and Friday."
[350] Fine, "Tips on Tables by Arnold Fine"; "Opening Tomorrow Night," *Times Herald*, August 9, 1946.
[351] Harry MacArthur, "After Dark News and Comment of the Night Clubs.," *Evening Star*, September 10, 1946, Newspapers.com.

his Orchestra performed until October 1946, when they were replaced by Charlie Frankhauser and his All-Star Orchestra.[352] It appears that the venture was unsuccessful for Reifkind and Gans, with dances dropping from four to one night a week by early November.[353] By November 30, the "Re-Opening of Washington's Largest Ballroom" was advertised in the *Washington Daily News* under new management.[354] At this point, dances were held every Friday and Saturday. This venture also appears to have been short-lived.

By February 1947, it was announced that the role of manager, host, and performer had been taken over by Henry Hier, Army veteran and former member of the Borrah Minnevitch Harmonica Rascals.[355] In the "Tips on Tables" section of the *Washington Daily News*, Hier discussed how music carried him through his time in the Army, explaining that he "passed some ominous moments playing Monti's Czardas for his buddies. To his surprise there was applause from the enemy, who were dug in less than a hundred yards away."[356] During Henry and his sister Frances' tenure at the club, performers included the Harry Hier Band, Don Daunit and his Orchestra, Bill Plunket, and Washington's Famous Decker Brothers.[357]

The Melody Ballroom represents some of the complications of operating a teen nightclub. The teens appear to have been excited about the club, writing to the Teen Topics section of the *Times Herald,* discussing the musicians and encouraging other teens to visit (*Figure 24*).[358] While the teens provided free publicity for The Melody Ballroom, the Hiers expressed the trials of catering to an underage crowd. In August 1947, it was reported that the Hiers had previously owned a teen club but were forced to close due to the teenagers bringing alcohol onto the premises.[359] Speaking directly to the teen audience, the article implored them to engage in "good, clean American entertainment" as the fate of the club was in their hands.[360]

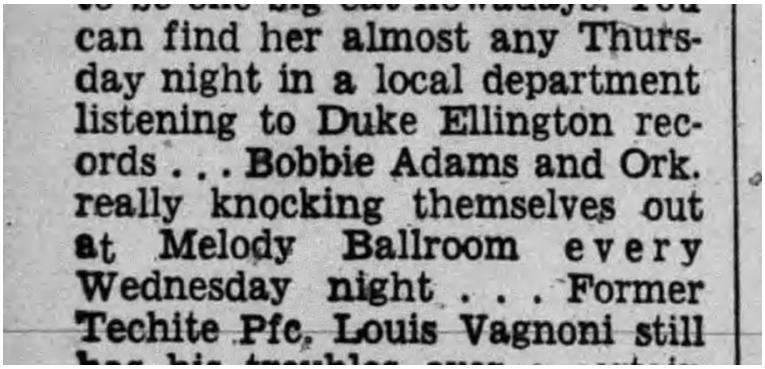

can find her almost any Thurs-
day night in a local department
listening to Duke Ellington rec-
ords . . . Bobbie Adams and Ork.
really knocking themselves out
at Melody Ballroom every
Wednesday night . . . Former
Techite Pfc. Louis Vagnoni still

Figure 24. Excerpt from the Teen Topics, advertising The Melody Ballroom. Kokalis, Eva. "Teen Topics." Times Herald, October 31, 1943.

[352] "Dancing Tonite at the New Melody Ballroom," *Times Herald*, October 5, 1946, Newspapers.com.
[353] "Tips on Tables by Arnold Fine," *The Washington Daily News*, November 8, 1946, Newspapers.com.
[354] "Re-Opening of Washington's Largest Ballroom," *The Washington Daily News*, November 30, 1946, Newspapers.com.
[355] Fine, "Tips on Tables 'If He Doesn't Make You Laugh, Don't Pay Your Check.'"
[356] Ibid.
[357] "Announcement Dancing Every Friday, Saturday, Sunday," *Evening Star*, February 14, 1947, Newspapers.com; Fine, "Tips on Tables 'If He Doesn't Make You Laugh, Don't Pay Your Check'"; Joe Awad, "Ballroom Opens Series of Teen-Age Dances," *Times Herald*, August 10, 1947, Newspapers.com; "Dance Sunday, 4 to 7:30," *The Washington Daily News*, March 20, 1948, Newspapers.com.
[358] Eva Kokalis, "Teen Topics," *Times Herald*, October 31, 1943; Beverly McLeod, "Teen Topics," *Times Herald*, n.d., Newspapers.com; Johnnie Reed and Kitty Adams, "Teen Topics," *Times Herald*, October 1, 1944, Newspapers.com; Jane Peters, "Teen Topics," *Times Herald*, August 22, 1943, Newspapers.com.
[359] Awad, "Ballroom Opens Series of Teen-Age Dances."
[360] Ibid.

Confusingly, the Hiers applied for an on-sale beer permit in April of that year and been denied due to the large number of minors that frequented the venue.[361] By September of 1947, the Hier siblings had hired two Georgetown University students, Joe Aywad and Mel Clark, to manage the nightclub, while Frances remained to provide adult supervision.[362] The club appears to have stopped offering live music in March of 1948.[363]

Melody Ballroom Architectural Description

All descriptions of The Melody Ballroom from the era detail the interior only. An article from August 1946 details the "acoustically ideal" cathedral ceilings.[364] In 1941, the club was described as being large enough to accommodate 300 couples or 600 people, and by 1947 the number grew to 800.[365] After the $5,000 renovations in 1947, the club boasted having "all the features of a genuine night-club…including checkroom, modern chairs and tables, which encircle the dance floor; …an extra long soda fountain…a fresh paint job, shiny new mirrors, indirect lighting, and a canopied bandstand."[366]



Figure 25. Photo of 306 34th Street. Photo courtesy of Celia Engel.

Although the address is listed at 3806 34th Street, it appears that the original venue has been replaced. There have been no photographs or maps identified depicting the original venue. Based on an aerial photograph, the current structure appears to have been constructed by 1957.[367] This structure appears to be mid-century infill between the buildings at 3800 and 3808 (*Figure 25*). This one-story building contains four storefronts, all featuring large picture windows and clad in Formstone.

Moyaone
3400 Bryan Point Rd, Accokeek, MD 20607

Moyaone is historically the capital of the Piscataway chiefdom, containing important ossuaries and space where Piscataway musical traditions took root; today, Moyaone, located in present-day

[361] "County Refuses 2 Beer Permits," *Times Herald*, April 25, 1947, Newspapers.com.
[362] "Aywad and Clark to Run New Melody," *Times Herald*, September 14, 1947, Newspapers.com.
[363] "Dance Sunday, 4 to 7:30."
[364] Fine, "Tips on Tables by Arnold Fine."
[365] "Dance Every Saturday Night"; "Tea Dance Every Sunday," *Times Herald*, December 7, 1947, Newspapers.com.
[366] "Aywad and Clark to Run New Melody."
[367] "Historic Aerials: Viewer," 1957, https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer.

Piscataway Park, still acts as a spiritual ceremony space for the Piscataway people.[368] There is evidence of settlement at Moyaone from the Late Archaic period through the Late Woodland period, attesting to the location's significance.[369] Moyaone is situated in close proximity to the Potomac River, with the opportunity for enhanced visibility up and down the landscape, providing advantages both defensively and ceremoniously.[370] From the earliest beginnings in the Chesapeake through the present day, Moyaone is a significant location for the preservation of a space where Piscataway music developed and continues to be practiced. Music is performed for dances, social gatherings, honoring of life events, healing, and coming home. It also serves as a vehicle for cultural education in the Piscataway community, as dancers and singers learn the arts by building their own regalia and occasionally by building their own instruments.[371]

Excavations by avocational archaeologist Alice L. Ferguson from 1935 to 1939 revealed a site substantially eroded into the Potomac River. In a plan view redrawn by Scott Strickland, what remained of the site in the early twentieth century included an approximately 450 by 600-foot area marked by a series of concentric post holes representing a series of palisade lines. Within the palisades, there are multiple ossuaries, dog burials, refuse pits, unidentified feature fill, post molds, and fire pits. Other architectural features identified include "pawcorances," or stacked stone features with important ritual significance.[372] When visiting today, one sees a predominately grassy field bordered on one side by the Potomac River and on the other side by Piscataway Creek, with occasional groves of trees and dense underbrush. Moyaone, known by archaeologists as the Accokeek Creek Site (18PR8) is already listed on the MIHP (PG:83-12) and protected on the NRHP.

Nyumburu Cultural Center at the University of Maryland
4018 Campus Drive, College Park, MD 20742

The Nyumburu Cultural Center at the University of Maryland, established in 1971, acts as a community space to facilitate the scholarly exchange and artistic engagement of African diaspora culture and history. The Nyumburu Cultural Center is significant for acting as a community space and venue for the expression of jazz, blues, and gospel. Significantly, the Nyumburu Cultural Center is the home of the University of Maryland Gospel Choir. The Pamoja Ebony Choir preceded the current University of Maryland Gospel Choir, established by student and music major David Hamm in 1972 as a space for Black students on campus to perform gospel music and Black spirituals with the "feeling and meaning Blacks can give it."[373] The Pamoja Ebony Choir was entirely led by enthusiastic students and received little support or funding from

[368] Mario Harley, Hall and Gill Interview with Mario Harley, Piscataway Tribe, Wild Turkey Clan, Personal Communication, November 13, 2024.
[369] Scott M. Strickland, "Native Settlements and Colonization: AD 900-1712," in *The Archaeology of Colonial Maryland : Five Essays by Scholars of the Early Province*, ed. Matthew D. McKnight (Crownsville, MD: The Maryland Historical Trust Press, 2019). p.150
[370] Ibid., 142.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Scott M. Strickland, "Native Settlements and Colonization: AD 900-1712," in *The Archaeology of Colonial Maryland : Five Essays by Scholars of the Early Province*, ed. Matthew D. McKnight (Crownsville, MD: The Maryland Historical Trust Press, 2019). 152.
[373] William Allen, "Voices Raised: All-Black Choir Scheduled for Television Performance," *The Diamondback*, April 18, 1972, 1 edition, sec. Page 8.



Figure 26. Photo of the Nyumburu Cultural Center. Photo courtesy of Katie Gill.

the University, SGA, or the Fine Arts department. Originally composed of 29 members, the Pamoja Gospel Choir helped students feel at home on campus, offered a sense of community, and assisted members in finding a sense of peace.[374]

In 1975, the Pamoja Gospel Choir reorganized as the University of Maryland Gospel Choir under the directorship of students and Edward Duffy.[375] In 1976, Richard Smallwood became the first professional director of the choir until October of 1981, when Valeria Foster took over. During Smallwood's leadership, the Maryland Gospel Choir officially located to the Nyumburu Cultural Center in 1975. Subsequent directors of the Maryland Gospel Choir included Dewayne R. Gregory (1996-2005, 2008-2016), Jarrett Baker (2005-2008), and Mitchell D. Fleming (2016- present).[376] Each director worked diligently to showcase the Maryland Gospel Choir through the production of CDs and by sharing the stage with other popular gospel recording artists.

Nyumburu Cultural Center Architectural Description

Constructed in 1969 and renovated in 1982, the Nyumburu Cultural Center remains a one-of-a-kind example of African-influenced architecture in an academic setting in the United States (*Figure 26*). A three-story structure, the building includes informative plaques on the exterior facade describing the African influences present in the architecture. The following text is transcribed from these uncredited plaques so that the reader may understand completely the structure and influences present in it:

> "Nyumburu is a Swahili word which means "freedomhouse." Nyumburu's mission is to enhance the knowledge and appreciation of African American culture and heritage through creative programs and activities. This facility is the first of its kind in the United States. Its special design was inspired by the traditional art and architecture of West Africa. The West African Coast is the region from which the descendants of most present-day African Americans came. Architectural treatments reflect a wealth of West African traditions. Cultures from the Sahel to the forest are represented. Each decorative brick and paving pattern on the facility has a

[374] Ibid.
[375] Maryland Gospel Choir, "Our History," The Gospel @ UMD, accessed November 30, 2024, https://umdgospelchoir.wixsite.com/umdgospelchoir/home-1.
[376] Ibid.

distinctive meaning. These patterns are based on motifs from traditional Ghanian Kente and Andinkra cloths."[377]

"The steps winding through the complex are reminiscent of those found in the Dogon villages of Mali built along the Bandiagara escarpment."

"The exterior wall of the multipurpose room is an interpretive compilation of architectural traditions found in West Africa. The Turons, represented by the black protruding bricks, are found on structures in the dry Sahel region. Turons were used as permanent scaffoldings to facilitate maintenance and were arranged in a decorative fashion to complement the architecture. The horizontal banding represents the layering process used to construct high walled compounds with sunbaked earth. The decorative patterns along the top is a subtle version of the colorful patterns painted on the exterior of buildings throughout West Africa."

"In West African villages, the Nsaka marks the entrance to a family compound. It provides an obvious focal point, a communal gathering place, and a way station for travelers in which knowledge and comfort can be shared."

"[Funtunmireku-Denkyemmireku] The paving pattern on the sidewalk represents a mythical two headed crocodile with a common stomach. It symbolizes unity in diversity, two who share a common destiny. It is the central theme of this complex which includes the Nyumburu Cultural Center and the Adele Stamp Student Union Tower."

"[Fahia Kowere Agyman] The black brick pattern on the exterior wall above the openings symbolizes hope, faith, sharing, and generosity."

"The Puduo is a brass receptable used to hold family ritual substances and precious ornaments. This colorful brick pattern above symbolizes heritage, family unity, and continuity."

"The paving pattern on the floor of the Nsaka is derived from a combination of three symbols: Adan which represents strength, authority and majesty; Mmramuda which represents a crossroad in life situations and cooperation; and Nkatoase which represents spiritual sanctity and wholeness."

The Nyumburu Cultural Center is a part of the University of Maryland Campus, which has already been included on the MIHP (PG:66-35). Currently, the Nyumburu Cultural Center is listed as a non-contributing structure because it was built after the period of significance for the

[377] In a conversation between an author and native speaker of Swahili, it is important to note that the Nyumburu Cultural Center likely created their name by combining the Swahili words for freedom and house (*uhuru* and *nyumba,* respectively) to create a portmanteau. This is also alluded to in "Freedom House," Nyumburu Cultural Center, accessed December 14, 2024, https://nyumburu.umd.edu/.

University (1856-1961). An amendment should be added to this Inventory listing incorporating this structure for its architecture and contribution to the arts.

Paragon
7416 Baltimore Avenue, College Park, Maryland, 20740

The Paragon was a popular venue for disco, rock and roll, and heavy metal music in Prince George's County. [378] 7416 Baltimore Avenue is a two-story building, and for many years, the first floor was reserved for the restaurant and bar, and live music was performed on the second floor.



Figure 27. The bowling alley at 7416 Baltimore Avenue during 1960 Fire. Source: Gary Burton, College Park.

The Paragon has also been known as "The Paragon and the Cellar," "The Cellar and the Attic," "The Italian Gardens and The Paragon," and the "Paragon Disco," as well as a variety of other names.[379] 7416 Baltimore Avenue was built in 1920, and prior to its history as a live music venue, the building was home to a two-story bowling alley for decades before a 1960 fire destroyed much of the building's interior (*Figure* 27).[380] The business reopened as a restaurant known as Di Gennaro's Italian Gardens in 1962, with the second floor known as the "Other Room," and by the mid-1970s, the owners,

[378] "Live Entertainment," *The Diamondback*, September 29, 1979, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/aea89ea1-7970-4c27-839e-fb0055a68ec9?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon
[379] Todd Rhoads, "Time to Pull Your Train into Terrapin Station," *The Diamondback*, September 17, 1996, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/cb73f7f7-5874-4238-a2c8-2f6a3e48a995?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon; Diamondback Admin. "If Those Walls Could Talk." *The Diamondback*, November 26, 2010. https://dbknews.com/2010/11/26/article_103c2e74-f124-55c5-b45c-bfd7073511e2-html/.; Lisa Gallant, "Paragon Too Rocks with Young Crowd, Dancing." *The Diamondback*, October 5, 1978, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/8a339d46-a841-4396-aeec-2837ce6ff0e1?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon; Lucille Craft, "Discos Become Respectable 'hustling' Nightspots." *The Diamondback*, April 8, 1976, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/a94a4027-20be-4d7a-a3b2-1aaaee9545e1?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon.; Greg Wilkovich, "Bring a Concert Hall to Frat Row." *The Diamondback*, June 20, 1996, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/a36fd006-bb16-43d0-a299-d2ab9a5c6f2d?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon.
[380] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHTCLUBS FILE" (unpublished), 148-149.; Diamondback Admin, "If Those Walls Could Talk."; Sara Scaletti, "The Bad Luck Block?," *The Diamondback*, September 1, 1994, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/9db90910-c69f-4f9e-8589-5e03df521b68?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon.; 4. Stephanie Stullich and Katherine D. Bryant, "Roads and Rails" in *College Park* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 78.

Masoud and Nasser Zolfaghari had fully established the second floor as a space for live music.[381] The Paragon was so successful that the Zolfagharis opened a second bar, The Paragon II (sometimes called the Paragon Too) in Washington, D.C.[382] By 1978, it was commonly referred to as the Paragon.



Figure 29. Dirty Work poster for concert. Source: DirtyWorkdc.com, date unknown.

Bands like Frankie & the Actions, Pentagram, Painted Lady, Deceased, Unworld, Snydly Crunch, Deuce, Dirty Work, Arsen, Sorry About Your Daughter, Mystic-Force, Iron Man, Unorthodox, and many others played at the venue (*Figure 29, 30 & 32*). According to Rich Davis, whose band Mystic Force performed at the Paragon, the Paragon was a large venue, with no parking and unpleasant stairs to navigate (*Figures 28)*.[383] While the Paragon was best known for heavy metal music, other types of music were performed, as indicated by an advertisement for a live reggae show in January 1995.[384] The Paragon and the Cellar frequently had trouble with underage drinking and vetting patrons. By February 1995, the name was changed to Terrapin Station and University Concert Hall, and the building was renovated with the goal of being a better and



Figure 30. Poster for Frankie & the Actions and The Slickee Boys at the Paragon. Source: University of Maryland Special Collections, date unknown.


Figure 28. Crowd at the Paragon. Source: Dirtyworkdc.com, 1/1/1979

[381] "Now Open: Di Gennaro's Italian Gardens," *The Diamondback*, March 7, 1962, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/1a47aacd-5b9a-4ce0-b9f9-59cc31bb8db3?relpath=pcdm&query=%22italian%20gardens%22; "'Everyone's Going to the Other Room' at Di Gennaro's Italian Gardens," *The Diamondback*, December 6, 1963, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/25b8537d-af71-4945-8f37-9edfaa14a0ee?relpath=pcdm&query=%22italian%20gardens%22; Lisa Gallant, "Paragon Too Rocks with Young Crowd, Dancing," *The Diamondback*, October 5, 1978, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/8a339d46-a841-4396-aeec-2837ce6ff0e1?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon

[382] "Live Entertainment."

[383] Michael Spedden, "Season 5 Episode 8 Rich Davis- Guitarist- 'Shift', 'Mystic-Force', Now Working as a Solo Artist," April 11, 2020, in *Fowl Players Radio*, Rich Davis, podcast, MP3 audio, 1:07:11, https://www.buzzsprout.com/175423/episodes/3327226.

[384] "Upcoming Events of Interest," *Black Explosion*, January 26, 1995, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/1ea067d4-8b96-49e3-9fa7-bf1840626933?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon

cleaner venue than its predecessor.[385] The new owners introduced bands from other genres, such as reggae, and booked fewer heavy metal and hard rock bands.[386] However, Terrapin Station lost its liquor license in 1999 due to "failing to maintain the correct food-to-alcohol ratio, forgetting to submit quarterly sales reports and violating the fire code."[387]

Afterwards, a variety of restaurants and bars were located there, including Lupo's Italian Chophouse, the Thirsty Turtle, the Barking Dog, and MilkBoy ArtHouse, which closed in 2019.[388] Currently, the Paragon's former home is vacant.

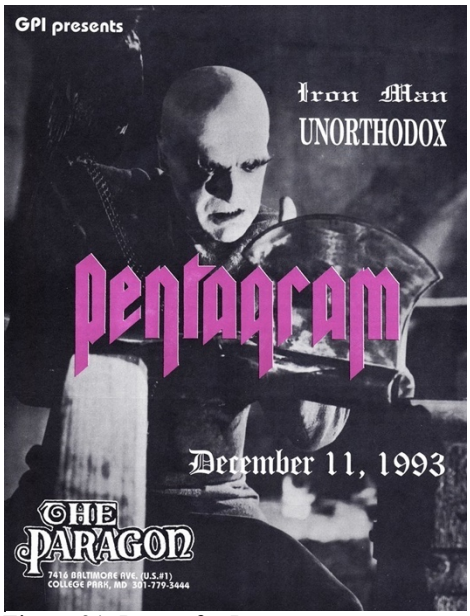


Figure 31. Poster for Pentagram concert at the Paragon. Source: Concert Archives

The Paragon Architectural Description

The Paragon is a two-story, flat-roofed 14,000 ft^2 building with four irregular bays and a brick interior chimney. The building, which is slightly obscured by a tree, faces onto a concrete sidewalk, and a brick fence provides some distance from the road (*Figure 31*). The building has been extensively altered from its original appearance. The original portion on the left side of the front (west) elevation is clad in painted rock face concrete, while the right side of the facade was replaced with thirty-light garage doors on each story, and its entablature is composed of painted concrete (*Figure 33*). On the far-left side of the building, a thin, boarded-up window opening stretches across both stories and is capped with a rock-faced concrete flat arch. To the right of this opening is a 1/1 sash window in the second bay. A deeply inset glass double door occupies the third bay with a transom above. This opening is capped with a wide, flat arch; unlike the other openings, this arch is adorned with unfinished concrete instead of rock-face concrete. Four evenly spaced metal brackets stretch from the second window


Figure 32. 7416 Baltimore Avenue. Source: Google, August 2024

[385] Dave J. Iannone, "Terrapin Station Replaces Cellar in Name and Format," *The Diamondback*, February 9, 1995, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/9a9edee9-4019-436f-b37d-5c4ce32b3740?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon; "University Concert Hall AKA The Paragon," *The Diamondback*, September 21, 1995, https://digital.lib.umd.edu/student-newspapers-old/id/a5789c52-a9b7-4a39-8ee1-35f569b3de12?relpath=pcdm&query=the%20Paragon.
[386] Iannone, "Terrapin Station Replaces Cellar in Name and Format."
[387] Diamondback Admin, "If Those Walls Could Talk."
[388] Alison Beckwith, "College Park's MilkBoy ArtHouse Closes, But Shows Will Go On," December 30, 2019, https://www.hyattsvillewire.com/2019/12/29/milkboy-arthouse-closes/.

to the right of the entryway. On the second-story, there is a ribbon with three 1/1 sash windows separated by equally sized glass block partitions, which are capped by a continuous rock-face concrete flat arch. Slightly above the window opening are two commercial sconces mounted onto the side of the building.

As mentioned previously, the Paragon has been extensively altered from its heavy metal heyday. One-third of the facade has been dramatically altered; these modifications begin at a noticeable seam located to the immediate right of the second-story windows. The two thirty-light glass garage doors take up most of this area of the facade, with a small strip of the original rock face concrete at the extreme right end of the façade (*Figure 34*).

The southern facade is clad with whitewashed brick and is only visible above the roofline of the adjacent building. The roof is flat, with several pieces of mechanical equipment installed.



Figure 33. Garage doors on 7416 Baltimore Avenue. Source: Wanjiru Duncan, October 2024.



Figure 34. Paragon & the Cellar. Source: University of Maryland Digital Collections, 1988.

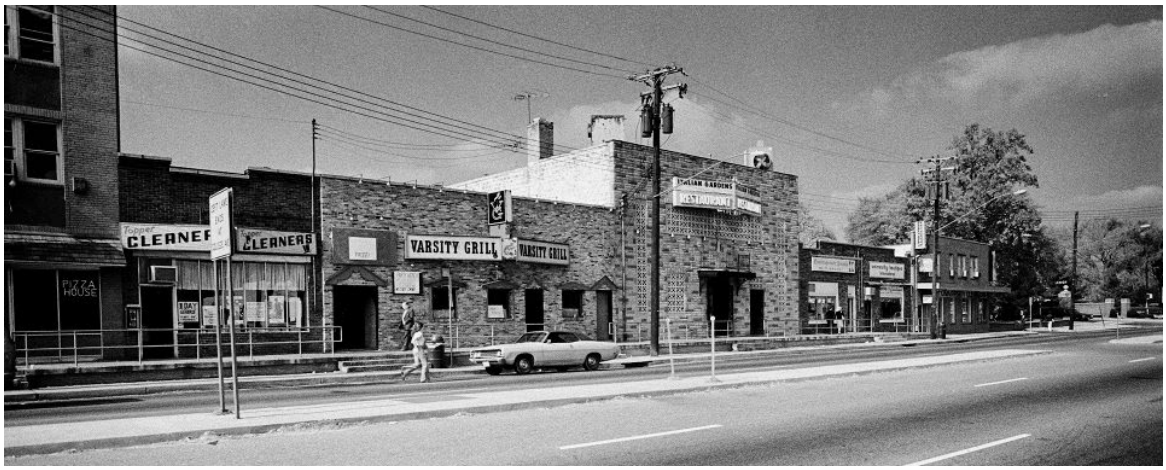


Figure 35. The Italian Gardens. Source: Alan Kresse, date unknown.



Figure 36. The Thirsty Turtle. Source: Mark Opsasnick, 2009

Historically, the Paragon had a nearly symmetrical facade, with tan, red, and gray-colored rock face concrete cladding. In 1988, at the Paragon's peak, its window openings were covered by breezeblocks, with the exception of a squat rectangular window on the right side of the front facade, which was located directly beneath a thin, two-story window opening. Additionally, there was a second door to the right of the main entrance and a balcony on the second story. The balcony was located beneath the wide, centered rectangular window opening. This opening was also shaded by a large sign adorned with the name of the restaurant and angled to face two directions. The brick fence in front of the building had an opening and two steps that were aligned with the main entrance, as well as two decorative metal fences embedded into the brick on either side, perpendicular to the extreme ends of the front facade. However, the undated Alan Kresse photograph (*Figure 35*) seemingly taken during the Italian Gardens era shows that the two narrow vertical openings on the front facade were once symmetrical. Additionally, the brick fence is absent in the Kresse photograph, suggesting that the brick fence and first floor window were later additions.

After the end of the Paragon era, few changes were made to the facade prior to the drastic 2016 alterations of the MilkBoy ArtHouse era. By 2009, the rock face concrete cladding had been painted red, the breezeblock had either been boarded over or replaced with sash windows, and a wide awning emblazoned with the Thirsty Turtle logo covered much of the space between the two vertical openings (*Figure 36*). On the second floor, the breezeblock of the center opening had been replaced with four evenly spaced 1/1 sash windows separated by glass block partitions.



Figure 37. The Barking Dog. Source: Mark Opsasnick, 2013

By 2013, the facade was largely unchanged, though it had been repainted green, and the signage on the awning had been replaced with that of the Barking Dog (*Figure 37*). The 2016-17 alterations, visible in Figures 36 and 37, represent some of the most drastic changes to the building.

Very little imagery of the Paragon's historic interior is available, but images from the 2016-17 renovations show a variety of finishes, materials, and structures for the first and second floors.



Figure 38. Front Room of the Paragon. Source: Warren Rojas/Eater, 2017.

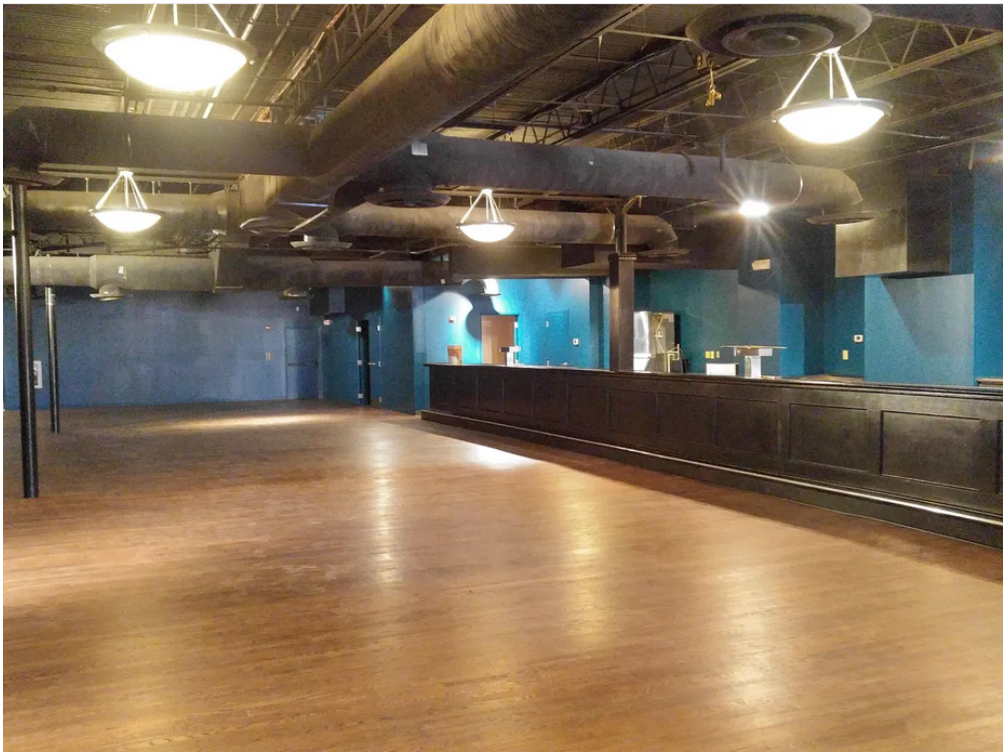


Figure 39. Second Floor Bar. Source: Warren Rojas/Eater, 2017.



Figure 40. Second Floor Gallery, facing west. Source: Warren Rojas/Eater, 2017.

On the first floor, brick and concrete flooring are visible in the front bar room of the Paragon (*Figure 38*). The bar and the lower half of the walls in the front room are clad with decorated wood paneling, though the bar has two types of brick trim. The western wall is made of exposed stretcher bond brick masonry, while the painted back wall is largely occupied by a wooden shelving unit. The front bar room also has thick square columns with wooden bases. The ceiling in the front room is clad with decorated ceiling tiles, with a few small pendant lights suspended from the ceiling.

On the second floor, the music hall and bar have light brown hardwood floors, blue and teal painted sheetrock walls, and a wood-paneled bar that occupies most of the room's length. Four exit doors are visible in Figure 39, each painted to match the surrounding walls. On this floor, ductwork and trusses are visible, with evenly spaced inverted bowl pendant lights. Additionally, two round columns are visible in Figure 39. In the gallery space which opens west towards Baltimore Avenue, the hardwood flooring is darker, and the walls closest to the garage door are clad in black-colored painted brick (*Figure 40*). This structure should be included on the MIHP.

Quonset Inn
3225 Naylor Road, Silver Hill, MD 20748

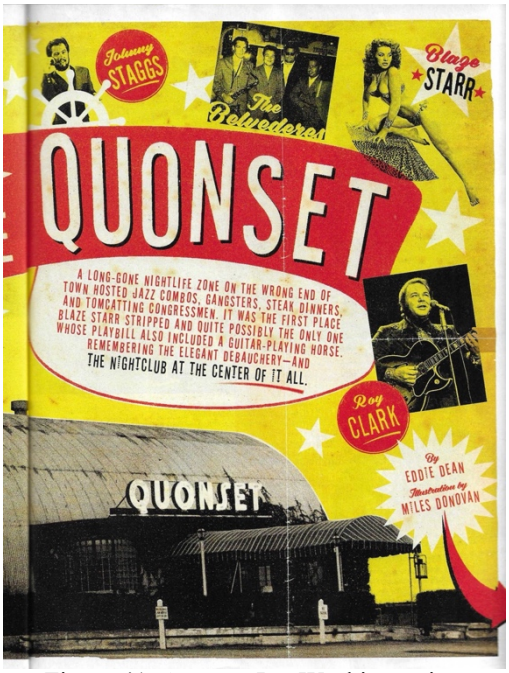


Figure 41. Quonset Inn Washingtonian Magazine Cover. Source: The Washingtonian, 2015.

The Quonset Inn, a legendary venue in Prince George's County, Maryland, holds a unique place in the region's music history. Named after the iconic prefab military architecture, Quonset huts, the venue became a recognizable landmark. The Quonset Inn became a cultural hub for live music and mingling with the social elite, from its start in the 1940s through the 1950s. The Quonset Inn offered a bamboo room, jazz acts and meals at pre-war prices and eventually came to host burlesque dancers in the early 1950s.[389] Though it was sometimes marred by scandal, such as the arrest of owner Sam Wong in 1950 for tax evasion and the arrest of burlesque performers for stripping in 1951, the Quonset served as a foil to the neighboring Strick's Restaurant, which had a reputation for parking lot fistfights and raucousness.[390]

In the late 1950s and early 60s, the Quonset Inn hosted a more diverse range of bands and genres and was renamed "The Quonset Supper Club" to help redefine its image.[391] The late 1960s marked a period of significant social and cultural upheaval in the county,

[389] "The Untold History of Postwar Washington's Nightlife." The Washingtonian , 2015. https://www.washingtonian.com/2015/01/29/the-untold-history-of-postwar-washingtons-nightlife
[390] Dean and Donovan, "The Untold History of Postwar Washington's Nightlife."; "Prince Georges Begins Drive on 'Strip Joints,'" *The Baltimore Sun*, June 27, 1951.; "Restaurant Operator Convicted as Evader," *The Daily Times*, March 3, 1950.
[391] Ibid.

which was reflected in the evolving music performed at the Quonset Inn. Rock, pop, and soul were equally and more commonly played at the Quonset Inn than the jazz and dance orchestra of previous decades (*Figure 41*). Burlesque also became a fixture at the Quonset; the famous burlesque performer Blaze Starr debuted at the Quonset in September 1951.[392] However, the Quonset may have been segregated in this period, as it appears in a list of white nightclubs that would book Black performers yet exclude Black patrons.[393]

In the 1970s, the Quonset began to experience decline, and by the 1990s, it was converted into an R&B club called the Legend, which remained open until 2013 and had exotic dancers.[394] A few years before its closure, the owners of the Legend won a lengthy legal battle against Prince George's County's Licensing Board. In 2005, the Legend became a target of a law that allowed the county to revoke the liquor licenses of venues that had exotic dancers.[395]

As a gathering space for music lovers, it nurtured local talent and introduced audiences to emerging trends in American music. Many regional musicians cite the venue as a formative influence, helping to launch careers and connect artists with broader audiences.

The venue also contributed to the rich musical tapestry of Prince George's County, reflecting the area's evolving cultural identity. It provided a space for people to come together and celebrate music, creating memories that linger long after its doors closed. Today, the Quonset Inn is remembered as more than a music venue—it's a symbol of community, creativity, and the power of live performance in shaping cultural history.

The Quonset Inn Architectural Description

The Quonset Inn is a one-story structure, oriented west towards Oxon Run Drive. On the north elevation, the Quonset is a one-story, flat roofed structure on a concrete foundation with brick-clad walls in a running bond pattern.[396] There is one double-door entrance to the building on this facade, though the opening has been boarded over since the venue's 2013 closure (*Figure 42*). There was once a barrel awning leading



Figure 42. North Elevation of the Quonset Inn in 2022. Source: Google, 2022.

[392] Dean and Donovan, "The Untold History of Postwar Washington's Nightlife."
[393] Al Sweeney, "Stars' Pacts Cause Furor; Bow to Restrictions in D.C. White Spots," *Afro-American*, December 17, 1949.
[394] Dean and Donovan, "The Untold History of Postwar Washington's Nightlife."
[395] Ben Mook, "Judge Grants $89K to Legend Night Club's Lawyer," Maryland Daily Record, December 26, 2011, https://thedailyrecord.com/2011/12/26/judge-grants-89k-to-legend-night-clubs-lawyer/.
[396] Anne E. Bruder and Ryan DeSmith, "Silver Hill Commercial Survey Area DOE Form PG:76A-55" (Maryland Historical Trust, October 23, 2012), https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/PDF/PrinceGeorges/PG;76A-55.pdf.

from the northern entrance to the parking lot. Additionally, a gabled awning was perpendicular to the barrel awning, but this awning disappeared by 2014 (*Figure 43*). The barrel awning was supported by four pairs of columns and a pair of rectangular brick buttresses, while the northwest gabled awning was supported by seven pairs of thin columns. However, both awnings are no longer extant. Two sets of concrete stairs lead from the entrance to the downward sloping parking lot, where the remnants of a free-standing sign near a Naylor Road entrance are located.



Figure 43. North Elevation of the Quonset Inn in 2009. Source: Google, 2009.



Figure 44. North and West Elevations of the Quonset Inn in 2012. Source: Google, 2012.



Figure 45. Northwest elevation of the Quonset Inn in 2017. Source: Google, 2017.



Figure 46. Northeast Elevation of the Quonset Inn, 2022. Source: Google, 2022.

The southern portion of the Quonset Inn is a one-story barrel-vaulted structure. This section is clad with vertical aluminum siding on the western and eastern elevations. On the west elevation, the entrance juts out from a gable-roofed brick addition (*Figure 44*). Previously, this entrance

was connected to a gabled awning supported by six pairs of columns and led to the northern parking lot, but this awning is also no longer extant. There are three six-light windows above the entrance, and there is a set of concrete stairs that lead downhill towards what once was a parking lot near Oxon Run Drive. The east façade of the Quonset Inn is nearly uniform, except for a door opening near the seam of the two sections (*Figures 45 & 46*). This site is included on the MIHP, a part of the Silver Hill Commercial Survey Area (PG:76A-55). This resource should be amended to include more detail about this venue.

Ritchie Coliseum
7675 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20742

The Ritchie Coliseum at the University of Maryland is a multi-use arena which opened in 1932. It is named after the then-Governor of Maryland, Albert Ritchie. The Coliseum was designed to be state of the art, and at the time of its opening, it was believed to be one of the largest, and most advanced in the South. The design allowed for 4282 spectators for basketball games, and 6000 for boxing matches.[397] While the building was primarily constructed to host University athletic events, including basketball games, volleyball games, and boxing matches, it was also an arena for musical acts and other large events.

Most of the building's early musical acts were instrumental, choral, or student productions, including a production of "Messiah" and concerts by the National Symphony Orchestra.[398] Ritchie Coliseum also served as a stage for the local community to put on productions. In 1941, the Montgomery County Rural Women's Short Course Club presented a "Shawl Pageant," which regaled the audience with the history of the shawl from biblical times to the present.[399] In addition to local acts, the Coliseum hosted some big-name artists as well. In March 1941, the Coliseum hosted John Charles Thomas, an opera composer and one of the most prominent artists of the era.[400]

The trajectory of the building's use began to change in 1955 when a new indoor sports arena was constructed on campus, and many of the athletics moved to Cole Field House.[401] After much of the athletics moved, the Ritchie Coliseum underwent an extensive renovation in 1962 to add a concert stage and powder blue shell.[402] The renovation allowed for better acoustics in the arena and more prominent names in music to tour the campus. In December 1971, Chuck Berry played

[397] "Ritchie Coliseum Will Be Opened Wednesday Night With Maryland-Navy Game -- Two Other Contests of Interest On Card Saturday," *The Baltimore Sun*, January 17, 1932.
[398] "National To Present Concerts At U. of Md.," *The Baltimore Sun*, n.d.; "U. of M. To Present Handel's Messiah," *The Evening Sun*, December 11, 1950.
[399] "Shawl Pageant Presented by Rural Women," *Montgomery County Sentinel*, June 26, 1941, Newspapers.com.
[400] "John Charles Thomas In Concert," *The Star-Democrat*, March 7, 1941.
[401] "Cole Field House Timeline – Baltimore Sun," accessed December 3, 2024, https://www.baltimoresun.com/2017/12/29/cole-field-house-timeline/.
[402] "Powder Blue Shell Is Slated at the Maryland Fieldhouse," *The Evening Sun*, October 19, 1962; "Convert Ritchie Coliseum Into Concert Stage," *The Daily Mail*, September 27, 1962.

a cold but well attended show.[403] 1983 was a year of big names passing through Ritchie, including the Turtles, Ozzy Osbourne, and NRBQ.[404]

The Ritchie Coliseum hosted some of the most controversial events on the University of Maryland Campus. In 1989, Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan was scheduled to speak at Ritchie. In response, a four-foot riot fence was erected around the arena and forty-two security officers were hired to work the event. The event was organized by the Black Student Union and the campus chapter of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People; it was protested by Jewish student organizations, including ETZEL, HILLEL, and the Jewish Student Organization.[405] It was not just political speeches that drew protests. In November 1992, Ice-T and Public Enemy were contracted to perform. The Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) protested the event because of the controversial song "Cop Killer." An anti-violence protest and candlelight vigil for slain police officers was held outside the concert, organized by the local FOP Lodge 23. Despite the controversy surrounding the song and a contractual obligation to not perform it, Ice-T broke his contract and performed "Cop Killer" live in Ritchie Coliseum.[406]

Ritchie Coliseum Architectural Description

The Ritchie Coliseum is a nine-bay, two-story, multi-purpose gymnasium built in the early colonial revival style with heavy Greek revival influences. The front façade faces Baltimore Avenue and is dominated by red brick and concrete. The center block of the building is seven bays across and is separated from the rest of the building by protruding slightly. It has what looks like cement quoins on the corners; they are cement pillars that are ribbed to appear like large stones. These also appear and the actual corners of the building.

The very center of the center block sits slightly protruding from the rest of the center block. It is five bays and is accentuated by a full-height, unbroken, pedimented portico. In the center of the pediment is a carved cement shield bearing an "M" and surrounded by ribbons. On the frieze below are the words "Ritchie Coliseum" in metal letters. The pediment is supported by six square pilasters in the Doric style.

Each bay on the first story contains a brick circle arch with a cement keystone and a cement stone at the point where the arch begins to curve. The center three bays contain double doors with a fanned transom window. On either side of the outer doorways, windows are set in the archways. It appears the windows are single panes of glass, covered in an intricate metal grating

[403] Bob Allen, "Rock 'N' Roll's Aged Old Man," *The Diamondback*, December 10, 1971, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.
[404] Mike Oberman, "Turtles Perform at Ritchie Coliseum," *The Diamondback*, March 18, 1983, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; Phil Hosmer and Regina Guay, "Ritchie's Own Little Blizzards," *The Diamondback*, February 16, 1983, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.
[405] Lan Nguyen, "Heavy Security Is Planned for Farrakhan's UM Speech," *The Evening Sun*, March 29, 1989, Newspapers.com.
[406] Daniel M. Amdur and Lizbeth McManus, "Police Protest Upcoming Ice-T Show," *The Diamondback*, November 12, 1992, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; Shawna Kenney, "Ice-T Break Contract on Song," *The Diamondback*, November 25, 1992, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections; Lizbeth McManus, "FOP Rallies Outside Rap Concert," *The Diamondback*, November 25, 1992, Student Newspapers, University of Maryland Digital Collections.

with an “M” in the center. Each of the remaining windows on this story are similarly centered in the archways and have the same metal grating, but these windows are wider than the two nearest doorways. The archways on the ends of the building are filled with cement, and the window is set in the cement rather than the others, which are filled with bricks. Above each of the arches in the center five bays sit a lantern light. Above each of the arches in the center block is a rectangular cement block set into the bricks.

The second story of windows in the center block sit on a long cement sill that almost resembles a belt course, except it is broken up by the pilasters. The windows are framed with thick cement pieces, the side pieces flare out at the bottom and curl up on themselves, and the top tapers in and curls down on itself. The top of the frame is a thick cement band.

There is a two-story, single bay on either side of the center block that makes up the rest of the building’s façade. There is a belt course along the top of the second-story windows that ends when it reaches the first protruding part of the center block. There are two narrow windows grouped together on each of the end wings; each has a small cement sill.

The Ritchie Coliseum is a part of the University of Maryland Campus, which has already been included on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Places (PG:66-35). However, this inventory form should be updated to include more detail about the role this site has played in the music history of the county.

The Showplace Arena
14900 Pennsylvania Ave., Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Genres: Funk, R&B, Soul, Country, Punk, Rock, New Wave
The Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, has long been a versatile venue for live music and events in Prince George's County. Originally built in 1993, the arena has hosted a range of concerts, from local and regional bands to national touring acts, making it an essential part of the area’s cultural landscape. The venue has seen genres spanning rock, country, go-go, and R&B, contributing to Maryland's rich live music heritage. With a capacity of around 5,800, the Show Place Arena has also hosted community events, rodeos, and other performances, establishing itself as a cornerstone of entertainment and live music in Southern Maryland.

The Showplace Arena Architectural Description

The Showplace Area has already been included on the MIHP as the Marlboro Racetrack and Fairgrounds (PG:82A-1). However, this inventory form should be amended to include the history of music at this site.

Sis's Tavern
4516 41st Ave, North Brentwood, MD 20722

Sis's Tavern is a historic juke joint located in the National Historic District of North Brentwood, the first historically African American community incorporated in Prince George's County in 1924 (*Figure 47*).[407] Constructed circa 1912 as a grocery, Sis's has a vibrant history as a store, nightclub, and barbershop.[408] Originally owned by Samuel J. Mills, Arthur B. Adams, and



Figure 47. Sis's Tavern, Source: Devry Becker Jones, July 21, 2023. The Historical Marker Database.

Cornelius D. Mecutcheon, the property was likely leased by Thomas F. Randall before his purchase of it in 1911.[409] Thomas Randall was the son of Henry and Isabella Randall, who were the first residents of North Brentwood in 1891.[410] The 1911 sale of this lot contained a covenant banning "the sale of "intoxicating liquors" as long as the original principals of the sale and their descendants lived within a one-half mile radius of the property, suggesting that a commercial structure was expected to be built.[411] Thomas and his wife Anna B. Randall sold the property to Jeremiah Hawkins and his wife Emma F. Quander Hawkins in 1919.[412]

The Hawkins moved to "Randalltown" in 1905, and Jeremiah became the first mayor of the newly incorporated town of North Brentwood in 1924.[413] The property is indicated as operating as a grocery in 1922, and a store in 1939 based on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.[414] The Hawkins likely leased the building during their ownership, as Jeremiah is never listed as a store owner in census records. In 1939, Jeremiah transferred sole ownership of the property to his wife.

[407] Betty Bird, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: African-American Historic Resources of Prince George's County, Maryland," October 2003. p. 25
[408] Dayton, Maria, and Paul Weishar. "Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form: Sis' Tavern PG-68-61-21." Maryland Historical Trust, January 2010.
[409] Maria Dayton and Paul Weishar, "Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form: Sis' Tavern PG-68-61-21," Maryland Historical Trust, January 2010.
[410] Ibid.
[411] Ibid.
[412] Ibid.
[413] Ibid.
[414] Ibid.

Marie Alice Daily Walls, known to many as Ms. Sis, leased the space from Jeremiah Hawkins in 1933 (*Figure 48*).[415]



Figure 48. Marie Alice Walls, Source: Prince George's County Civil Rights Trail. "Black Entertainment & Community at Sis's Tavern."

The space became known as Sis's Tavern in the 1950s, hosting famous musicians like Duke Ellington and Pearl Bailey, as well as performances by burlesque dancers and "female-impersonators."[416] Ms. Sis was also known to hire local musicians to play at Sis's, including a band that she managed known as the DC Tornados.[417] The early years of the venue seem to have produced some of its most notorious tales. In 1957, Ms. Sis was arrested for operating a gambling ring, and in 1959, the North Brentwood Police Chief shot his own deputy in the groin while being "backed into a corner" by patrons.[418] In 1960, a man shot and killed his wife through the bathroom door.[419] In the 1960s and 70s, Ms. Sis began developing her real estate empire through the purchase of eleven individual lots in North Brentwood alone, including the official purchase of Sis's Tavern from Emma Hawkins in 1966.[420] Despite Sis's illicit reputation, it remained a central hub of social life and entertainment for the town and surrounding communities until its closure in 1969-1970.[421] In 1978, Deloris R. Sprigs purchased and reopened the space as Baby Dee's Guest Club until 1996 (*Figure 49*).[422]

[415] Peggy Fox and Alison Kahn, *Minding Our Own Business: An Oral History of North Brentwood's Entrepreneurs*. North Brentwood, Md.: North Brentwood Historical Society, 2004. p. 7
[416] Ibid., 7.
[417] Ibid., 7.
[418] Justin Mohammadi, "National Register Nomination for Sis's Tavern, a Historic Juke Joint in the National Historic District of North Brentwood, Prince George's County, Maryland," Unpublished Final Paper, Social and Ethnic Issues in Historic Preservation Practice. University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland., May 2023.
[419] *THE NEWS*. "Man Shoots Wife." November 12, 1960. newspapers.com.
[420] Tabitha Gold, "Sis's Tavern Tour Stop Write-Up." Unpublished Walking Tour of North Brentwood's Entrepreneurial History. University of Maryland, College Park, April 2023. ; Dayton, Maria, and Paul Weishar. "Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form: Sis' Tavern PG-68-61-21." Maryland Historical Trust, January 2010.
[421] Justin Mohammadi, "National Register Nomination for Sis's Tavern, a Historic Juke Joint in the National Historic District of North Brentwood, Prince George's County, Maryland." Unpublished Final Paper, Social and Ethnic Issues in Historic Preservation Practice. University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland., May 2023.
[422] Tabitha Gold, "Sis's Tavern Tour Stop Write-Up," Unpublished Walking Tour of North Brentwood's Entrepreneurial History. University of Maryland, College Park, April 2023.



Figure 49. Baby Dee's (formerly Sis's Tavern), Source: Dayton, Maria, and Paul Weishar. "Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form: Sis' Tavern PG-68-61-21." Maryland Historical Trust, January 2010.

Sis's Tavern was nominated to the MIHP in 2010.[423] In 2014, the Town of North Brentwood purchased the property from Ms. Sprigs.[424] Efforts to restore Sis's as a community center began with grant funding from the Maryland African American Heritage Preservation Program (AAHPP) in 2016.[425] Interior renovations were completed with these funds, and along with the Neighborhood Design Center, over $300,000 has been raised to repair and renovate the property into a community center.

Sis's Tavern Architectural Description

Sis's Tavern as it was in 2010, prior to ownership by the Town of North Brentwood and subsequent rehabilitation, is described at length in its MIHP form.[426] A door has been added to the three-bay, one-story main block, placed next to the northeast (side) addition.[427] The wood-frame building, previously covered in aluminum siding, has been reclad in vinyl siding and painted its iconic baby blue.[428] A shed roof still "caps the building [with] overhanging eaves and a boxed cornice."[429] Larger, 1/1 sash windows have replaced the previous 2/2 wood-sash windows. The one-story, one-bay circa 1920 addition on the northeast (side) elevation of the

[423] Maria Dayton and Paul Weishar, "Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form: Sis' Tavern PG-68-61-21." Maryland Historical Trust, January 2010.
[424] Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation. "4516 41ST AVE BRENTWOOD 20722-0000, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY," n.d. Accessed November 23, 2024.
[425] John Coleman, "Press Release: African American Commission and Maryland Historical Trust Awards $1 Million to Assist African American Heritage Preservation," Maryland Department of Planning, December 16, 2016.
[426] Maria Dayton and Paul Weishar, "Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form: Sis' Tavern PG-68-61-21." Maryland Historical Trust, January 2010.
[427] Ibid.
[428] Ibid.
[429] Ibid.

main block has been reclad in vertical beaded vinyl siding and painted the same baby blue as the main block.[430] Both doors, one in the front and one in the rear, and the fenestration on all sides of this addition have been replaced. The asphalt shingle has been replaced with a red, standing seam metal roof. The circa 1940 and 1950 northwest (rear) additions have been removed.[431] The circa 1970 southwest elevation may have been removed or expanded into a two-bay, one-story, set back from the main block and capped with a similar shed roof.[432]

Sis's Tavern is listed on the MIHP (PG:68-61-21) and is a contributing resource in the North Brentwood NRHP District (PG: 68-061).[433] However, this site should be considered for individual eligibility on the NRHP. It has retained a moderate level of integrity, and the careful rehabilitation of the property has extended its lifespan. Sis's Tavern remains significant to the community of North Brentwood and to the broader history of the U.S. as a site of African American heritage, musical development as a stop on the Chitlin Circuit, female entrepreneurship, and potentially as an LGBTQ+ site of recreation.

Strick's Restaurant
3211 Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748

Strick's Restaurant offered live country and rock and roll music between the 1950s and 1970s. Established by Julius H. Strickland in 1934, the restaurant began offering live music in 1953 with the Mello Rhythms, a light jazz band.[434] In 1954, Giles E. Fletcher, Sr. assumed ownership of the restaurant and expanded the musical opportunities.[435] During Fletcher's ownership, country artists included Patsy Cline, The Pirateers, Sunset Ramblers, Bill Peer and his Melody Boys, Miss Dale Turner, and the TNT Tribble and Roy Clark (Figure *50*).[436] Fletcher owned the restaurant until his death in 1973, when ownership was transferred to his son Giles E. Fletcher, Jr. Live music was short lived under Fletcher, Jr.'s ownership, and the establishment was eventually transitioned into a liquor store (*Figure 51).*



Figure 50. Advertisement for Strick's Restaurant. The Washington Daily News. "Big Jam Session Sunday Afternoon." March 4, 1955. Newspapers.com.

Like most restaurants and bars in the area, Strick's was often embroiled in controversy, ranging from liquor and gambling violations to fights and murders. In 1951, during Strickland's

[430] Ibid.
[431] Ibid.
[432] Ibid.
[433] Maria Dayton and Paul Weishar, "Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form: Sis' Tavern PG-68-61-21," Maryland Historical Trust, January 2010.; Susan Pearl, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination: North Brentwood Historic District, Prince George's County, Maryland," M-NCPPC, February 2003.
[434] "Strick's Restaurant," *The Washington Daily News*, June 12, 1953, Newspapers.com.
[435] Mark Opsasnick, *Rock the Potomac: Popular Music and Early-Era Rock and Roll in the Washington, D.C. Area*, First edition (St. Petersburg, Florida: BookLocker, 2019), 145.
[436]"Big Jam Session Sunday Afternoon," *The Washington Daily News*, March 4, 1955, Newspapers.com; "Strick's Restaurant," *The Washington Daily News*, December 6, 1963, Newspapers.com; "Special Sunday Attraction!," *The Washington Daily News*, January 8, 1960, Newspapers.com.

ownership, the operator of Strick's, Lula E. Kutolas, was fined $150 for selling liquor on Sunday.[437] A bartender, Billy Joe Frazier, was arrested in 1957, during Fletcher's ownership, for operating an illegal gambling table on the premises.[438] In 1950, Louis J. Cain died after engaging in a fight at Strick's. The fight with Timothy J. Barrett began over a shuffle-board game. After being shoved by Barrett, Cain fell, hit his head, and later died due to a brain hemorrhage.[439] A shooting occurred at Strick's in 1954 after the watchman allegedly forgot to adjust his watch for daylight savings time.[440] Although a customer, salesmen, and waitress arrived at the proper opening time, the drunk watchman, Joseph L. Hamel, alleged they were intruders. The shooting victim, customer Raymond O. Barnes, was in critical condition and it is unclear if he survived. According to Mark Opsasnick's personal communication with members of the Fletcher family, Giles E. Fletcher, Sr. was killed during an armed robbery at Strick's. The assailant shot both Fletcher, Sr., and a bartender before being shot and killed by the security guard. Archival research could not corroborate these events.



Figure 51. Postcard of Strick's Restaurant. "Historic Restaurants of Washington, D.C."

Strick's Restaurant Architectural Description



Figure 52. Detail of an 1899 USGS topographic map of Patuxent, MD.

Strick's Restaurant is a contributing resource to the Silver Hill Commercial Survey Area, which was determined to be ineligible for NRHP listing in 2012.[441] According to tax records, Strick's Restaurant was constructed by Julius H. Strickland in 1934, although it is possible that the building predates the Strickland ownership. As early as 1899, a building is depicted in the vicinity of the restaurant on a USGS topographic quadrangle (*Figure 52*).[442] The unusual building is symmetrical and made up of an imposing central block flanked on either side by a wing (*Figure 53*). There is a possible rear addition. The central

[437] "Liquor Fines Total $550 in Prince Georges Cases," *Evening Star*, May 12, 1951, Newspapers.com.
[438] "Delay Is Granted in Silver Hill Pinball Case," *Evening Star*, February 14, 1957, Newspapers.com.
[439] "Louis J Cain Fight," *Evening Star*, July 15, 1950.
[440] "Watchman Charged As Early Customer Is Shot at Restaurant," *Evening Star*, April 26, 1954, Newspapers.com.
[441] Anne E. Bruder and Ryan DeSmith, "Silver Hill Commercial Survey Area DOE Form PG:76A-55" (Maryland Historical Trust, October 23, 2012), https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/PDF/PrinceGeorges/PG;76A-55.pdf.
[442] United States Geological Survey, *Patuxent, MD*, 30-minute Quadrangle Series (Denver, Colorado: United States Geological Survey, 1899), https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/viewer/#15/38.8490/-76.9542.

block is one story with a hipped roof clad in asphalt shingles. The rear of the central block contains a two-story, flat-roofed portion with a large brick fireplace. The building has been parged with stucco, disguising the original building material, although it is likely constructed of brick. The front façade, facing southeast, consists of seven bays that are all windows with segmental arches. All of the windows on the central block have been boarded up. Original casement windows pierce the rear of the building, although one of the second-story windows has been replaced. The one-story polygonal wings contain the entrances to the establishment on their southeast facades. The western wing contains original casement windows, matching the rear of the building. The windows on the eastern wing have been replaced with large picture windows. A faux mansard roof has been applied to the east wing.



Figure 53. Photo of Strick's Liquor Store. Google Street View 2021.

Waldrop's Restaurant/Jimmy Comber's Supper Club
4318 Rhode Island Ave, Brentwood, MD 20722

Waldrop's Restaurant, named for original owner Hugh Morgan Waldrop, opened in 1942 and offered live music, comedy shows, and burlesque performances (*Figure 54*).[443] Hugh and his wife Marie R. Waldrop offered mainly live orchestra music in the 40s. During those years, acts like "Van Camp's Orchestra, Phil Genther and his Band, Bob Lawrenson and his Orchestra, Charlie Mosher and his Orchestra, and Paul Kline and his Quartet" all played at Waldrop's.[444] In the early 50s, Waldrop's expanded its entertainment selection to include comedians and exotic dancers, including the "now-legendary



Figure 54. Photo of Waldrop's Restaurant. Photo courtesy of Mark Opsasnick.

[443] Mark Opsasnick, "The Live Music Night Clubs of Prince George's County, Maryland: From Their Origins to the Rock and Roll Era (Supplemental Information)," October 2024.
[444] Ibid.

Blaze Starr."[445] These years also introduced a broader range of musical acts, including country bands like Jimmy Dean and the Texas Wildcats (featuring guitarist Roy Clark) and pop singers such as Gloria Gall, Peggy Stevens, Marita Morrell, and Johnny Vann.[446] The Waldrop's were also owners of the Dixie Pig Restaurant & Barbeque from 1925 until it burned down in 1952.[447]



MURDER DEFENDANT WALKS OUT FREE

Arm-in-arm with his smiling wife, James Comber, 31-year-old bartender, leaves courtroom in City Hall. An all-woman jury found him not guilty last night of the murder of Hubert E. Madden, sales executive, in a drunken brawl near 15th and Walnut sts. last March.

Figure 55. The Philadelphia Inquirer. "Jurors Free Bartender in Madden Case: All-Woman Panel In Tears as Judge Denounces Verdict." December 2, 1949.

In 1953, James "Jimmy" Comber and his wife Irene purchased Waldrop's from Hugh and Marie.[448] The couple moved to Hyattsville from Pennsylvania in the late 1940s amidst James's legal battles regarding a drunken brawl that resulted in the death of business executive Hubert E. Madden (*Figure 55*).[449] Jimmy was acquitted of murder charges on December 1, 1949, and by February 1950 was working in a Hyattsville nightclub.[450] This nightclub may have been the Cross Roads Cafe, where Comber is said to have worked as a bartender.[451] Waldrop's was not Comber's first foray into the music business. In January 1951, Comber purchased and introduced live music, including pop and jazz groups from his native Philadelphia, to the 4400 Club.[452]

Waldrop's was renamed Jimmy Comber's Supper Club around 1953-1955. It was originally believed that ownership transferred to the Combers in 1955, but deed records show that it was actually the 6th of November, 1953.[453] However, it is still possible that the Combers held off on rebranding the venue during their early years of ownership. The Combers continued to offer similar entertainment as the Waldrops– comedians, big bands, pop singers, and burlesque acts remained staple performances at the supper club. The large, one-story building could hold 150 occupants in the dining room.[454] This area is where

[445] Ibid.
[446] Ibid.
[447] Mark Opsasnick, "Lecture on Rock n Roll History in Prince George's County." University of Maryland, October 22, 2024.
[448] Jeanne M. Pearson, "Deed between Grantor Waldrop and Grantee Comber, Book 1673 Page 10," State of Maryland, County of Prince Georges, November 6, 1953. mdlandrec.net.
[449] *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Madden Killing Spurs Probe Of All One-Man Clubs Here." March 28, 1949. Newspapers.com.
[450] *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Extradition Fight Ends, Comber Yields Monday: Suspect Freed In Death Faces Assault Trial." February 23, 1950. Newspapers.com.
[451] Mark Opsasnick, *Capitol Rock*. [Rev. ed.]. Philadelphia, Pa.: Xlibris Corp., 2002. p. 42.
[452] Ibid., 42.
[453] Mark Opsasnick, *Capitol Rock*, [Rev. ed.]. Philadelphia, Pa.: Xlibris Corp., 2002. p. 118 ; Pearson, Jeanne M. "Deed between Grantor Waldrop and Grantee Comber, Book 1673 Page 10." State of Maryland, County of Prince Georges, November 6, 1953. mdlandrec.net.
[454] Mark Opsasnick, "The Live Music Night Clubs of Prince George's County, Maryland: From Their Origins to the Rock and Roll Era (Supplemental Information)," October 2024.

entertainment was offered until the "Submarine Room" opened in the basement on January 29, 1958.[455] The Submarine Room may have been a marketing attempt to draw more patrons to the supper club, or possibly an opportunity to keep the ground-floor dining area family friendly while simultaneously offering risqué entertainment downstairs. During these years, all entertainment was moved to the basement, and in the summer of 1958, the Submarine Room switched to offering burlesque acts full-time.[456] The Submarine Room lasted almost exactly a year until Jimmy Comber's Supper Club closed for good in 1959.[457] A year after its closing, the supper club and Jimmy Comber himself appeared in the April 1960 "Defaulters List of the A.F. of M." alongside Clarence Evans (owner of Evan's Grill), Walter Crutchfield and Harold Macon (owners of the Rustic Cabin).[458] AFM would publish this list of venues and showrunners defaulting on payment to members of the American Federation of Musicians.

After 1955, the Combers broadened the club's musical offerings to include such genres as rock n' roll, R&B, and gospel artists. Rock n' roll acts including Dave Appell & his Applejacks, Billy Ford and the Thunderbirds, Bobby Boyd and the Jazz Bombers, Frank Mayo, The Tyrones, and Murray Schaff and his Aristocrats were featured at the club.[459] R&B artists such as Steve Gibson & the Red Caps and Lee Allen and his Orchestra performed in both 1957 and 1958.[460] The Golden Gate Quartet, a gospel group formed in Norfolk, Virginia, performed at Comber's in 1957.[461] Many pianists were hired at the club under the Combers' proprietorship, including Bob Petty, Herb George, and Larry Girard.[462]

Famous female singers and pop groups of the time were also well-represented entertainment at Comber's. There were two popular groups known as the Rhythmettes at this time– one three-member group from the Detroit area known for their charitable work and USO performances were advertised as "a great new rock and roll trio" in a 1955 advertisement for their single "Only You"; the other Rhythmettes were a Los Angeles-based trio featured in Hollywood film soundtracks such as *The Wizard of Oz*.[463] One of these groups performed at Comber's in 1956, but given their activity on the East Coast and 1950s popularity, it is more likely that the Detroit-based trio composed of Donna Watkins, Nadine Small, and Jo Craig came to the supper club. Other featured female groups included The Charmonaires in 1956, known for their barbershop harmonies, and The DeMarco Sisters in 1957, a pop group of five sisters seen in short films and

[455] Mark. Opsasnick, "The Live Music Night Clubs of Prince George's County, Maryland: From Their Origins to the Rock and Roll Era (Supplemental Information)," October 2024.
[456] Mark Opsasnick, *Capitol Rock*. [Rev. ed.]. Philadelphia, Pa.: Xlibris Corp., 2002. p. 81
[457] Mark Opsasnick, "The Live Music Night Clubs of Prince George's County, Maryland: From Their Origins to the Rock and Roll Era (Supplemental Information)," October 2024.
[458] "Defaulters List of the A.F. of M." International Musician LVIII, no. No. 10 (April 1960). p. 40
[459] Mark Opsasnick, "The Live Music Night Clubs of Prince George's County, Maryland: From Their Origins to the Rock and Roll Era (Supplemental Information)," October 2024.
[460] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHT CLUBS FILE: Night Clubs and Venues of the Wash DC Area (Notes and General Information)." unpublished, n.d.
[461] Gospel Music Association. "Golden Gate Quartet," April 17, 2024. https://gospelmusichalloffame.org/hall-of-fame-inductees-and-honorees/golden-gate-quartet.
[462] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHT CLUBS FILE: Night Clubs and Venues of the Wash DC Area (Notes and General Information)." unpublished, n.d.
[463] Women in Rock & Roll's First Wave. "Rhythmettes, The," January 7, 2019. https://www.womeninrockproject.org/reference/rhythmettes/. ; Discogs. "The Rhythmettes." Accessed December 8, 2024. https://www.discogs.com/artist/1214834-The-Rhythmettes.

heard regularly on local and national radio of the time.[464] The Baker Sisters, Thelma and Bobbi, were a pop duo from New York known for their comedy-singing routine and appeared at Comber's in 1956.[465] Female soloists like Meg Myles, a pin-up model, singer, and actress popular in the 1950s, and Vicki Young, who was advertised in a 1956 news article as the current headliner for "floor shows seven nights a week" as "the Capital Records' singing star," were also featured at Comber's.[466]

Comber's connection to Philadelphia seems to have influenced the acts he hired at his Supper Club much like it influenced the music at 4400 Club. Philadelphians such as Cozy Morley, Pat Kirby, Charlie Ventura and his All Stars, Murray Schaff and his Aristocrats, and the Tyrones played at Comber's between 1956-1959.[467] Cozy Morley was the owner of Wildwood, New Jersey's Club Avalon– a popular vacation destination for Philadelphians– and was a local star known for his comedy and musical performances.[468] Pat Kirby enjoyed a short career in the late 1950s with regular appearances on Steve Allen's "Tonight" show and the production of one record before her abrupt retirement.[469] Charlie Ventura and his All Stars were a jazz group led by saxophonist Charlie Ventura, best known for his attempts to popularize bebop.[470] Rock n' roll groups Murray Schaff and his Aristocrats were a rock n' roll group who were popular in Prince George's County, performing at the Hilltop Restaurant/Las Vegas Club, The 4400 Club, the Rustic Cabin Restaurant, and the Senate Inn.[471] Additionally, Bobby Boyd and the Jazz Bombers performed at Comber's in 1956 and may have hailed from Jimmy's native city given their participation in a 1957 "Battle of the Bands" that took place in Philadelphia.[472]

Jimmy's Supper Club was the site of an anti-segregation sit-in. As part of a wider movement throughout Maryland along major roadways, protestors would attempt to get service at restaurants and picket the places that wouldn't serve them.[473] While Comber insisted that he had

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[464] Southeast Iowa Union. "Down Memory Lane," September 30, 2018. https://www.southeastiowaunion.com/news/down-memory-lane-102/.; Discogs. "DeMarco Sisters." Accessed December 8, 2024. https://www.discogs.com/artist/1616707-DeMarco-Sisters?srsltid=AfmBOopkrKndGc4WJd-QdtTwYW8nl2yGwl6biQBg7U5AsFLOmeqw9tqa.; Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHT CLUBS FILE: Night Clubs and Venues of the Wash DC Area (Notes and General Information)." unpublished, n.d.

[465] little green man. "The Baker Sisters - Little Monster." Video Platform. Youtube, February 24, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhl9V6vK1kc.

[466] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHT CLUBS FILE: Night Clubs and Venues of the Wash DC Area (Notes and General Information)," unpublished, n.d. ; Herron, Paul. "On The Town." *The Washington Post*, August 27, 1956. newspapers.com.

[467] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHT CLUBS FILE: Night Clubs and Venues of the Wash DC Area (Notes and General Information)," unpublished, n.d.

[468] Kirsten Larvick, "On the Road with the Winged Victory Singers," John Hemmer Archive. Accessed December 8, 2024. https://www.johnhemmerarchive.org/on-the-road-with-the-winged-victory-singers/. ; WHYY. "Warm Memories of Shore Legend Cozy Morley," August 26, 2013. https://whyy.org/articles/warm-memories-of-shore-legend-cozy-morley/.

[469] Michael Steinman, "MY SEARCH FOR PAT KIRBY." *JAZZ LIVES* (blog), June 20, 2017. https://jazzlives.wordpress.com/2017/06/20/my-search-for-pat-kirby/.

[470] Chris Kelsey, "Charlie Ventura Biography." AllMusic. Accessed December 8, 2024. https://www.allmusic.com/artist/charlie-ventura-mn0000101628.

[471] Mark Opsasnick, *Capitol Rock*, [Rev. ed.]. Philadelphia, Pa.: Xlibris Corp., 2002.

[472] Discogs. "Bobby Boyd's Jazz Bombers." Accessed December 8, 2024. https://www.discogs.com/artist/4356715-Bobby-Boyds-Jazz-Bombers.

[473] *The Baltimore Sun*. "13 Arrested In Protests." April 1, 1962. Newspapers.com.

recited the trespassing law to the protestors before demanding their arrest, Patrolman James Ross was not actually present for this and rather took Comber's word for it despite protestors insisting they were off property belonging to Comber.[474] While Sgt. J.B. Hass was quoted as saying that "the policy of the Prince George's force is for the law to be read in front of a policeman before any arrests are made," the Chief of Police made it clear that reciting the law was not necessary and rather "a courtesy being extended to freedom riders."[475] Mr. Comber's position as a white restaurateur certainly gave him the leverage to take control of this situation and highlights the very injustice that protestors were fighting against. While this event did not occur at his supper club, it does demonstrate that Mr. Comber was likely only interested in serving a white clientele and echoes similar patterns of other segregated venues in the county that were willing to hire Black entertainment but unwilling to serve Black clientele.[476]

Despite James being the namesake of two of their businesses, his wife, Irene, was clearly very enterprising and took an active role in the operation of these venues. She is listed as part-owner in every deed and inexplicably given sole ownership of the 4400 Club in September 1955, roughly a year before it was sold to Herbert Hertz and John Frostbutter.[477] And, like James, Irene had a background working in the restaurant business as a waitress.[478] Additionally, she owned, sold, bought, and bred quite a few racing horses throughout the 1960s, appearing very active in the business of their training and racing.[479] She was a business partner to James as much as she was a partner throughout his contentious legal matters. The couple had many real estate holdings throughout the county until James's death in 1976, at which point Irene returned to her native Ellwood City in Lawrence County, Pennsylvania.[480]

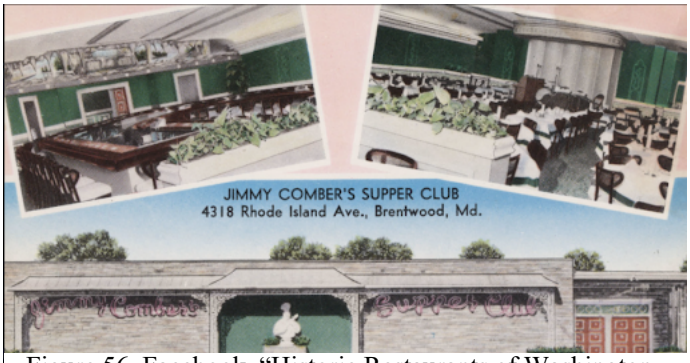


Figure 56. Facebook. "Historic Restaurants of Washington, D.C.," July 10, 2020.

Waldrop's Restaurant / Jimmy Comber's Supper Club Architectural Description

Waldrop's Restaurant / Jimmy Comber's Supper Club is still an extant structure and has served many purposes since 1959. It has been a seafood restaurant, the Welfare Board of Prince George's County, and a furniture store.[481] Since 1993, it has operated as the

[474] Ibid.
[475] Ibid.
[476] Al Sweeney. "Stars' Pacts Cause Furor; Bow to Restrictions in D.C. White Spots." *Afro-American*, December 17, 1949.
[477] Mark Opsasnick, "The Live Music Night Clubs of Prince George's County, Maryland: From Their Origins to the Rock and Roll Era (Supplemental Information)," October 2024.
[478] *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Wife of Comber Reports Theft." December 11, 1949. Newspapers.com.
[479] *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "The Charts of Races at Bowie." March 4, 1965. Newspapers.com. ; *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Charts of Races at Garden State Park." April 28, 1965. Newspapers.com. ; Klessel, Steve. "Rose Trader Put to Test." *Philadelphia Daily News*, July 14, 1965. Newspapers.com. ; *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "The Charts of Races at Pimlico." March 12, 1967. Newspapers.com. ; *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "The Charts of Races at Pimlico." March 24, 1967. Newspapers.com.
[480] *New Castle News*. "Mrs. Irene E. Comber (Obituary)." February 6, 1978, sec. Deaths of the day. Newspapers.com.
[481] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHT CLUBS FILE: Night Clubs and Venues of the Wash DC Area (Notes and General Information)." unpublished, n.d.

Faith Outreach Center. During its heyday, Waldrop's/Comber's was capable of hosting 150 guests in the dining room, which was lined with dining tables and a u-shaped bar toward the back of the room facing a small bandstand.[482] Based on the drawn representation of the building from a Jimmy Comber's Supper Club postcard, the exterior has remained largely unchanged (*Figure* 56). The four bay, one-story central block of this Formstone commercial structure is defined by a Second Empire-style awning with intricate cast-iron detailing that spans almost the entire block. This part of the building contains a centralizing glass display window, extended forward to the end of the awning under a central, differentiated portion of the awning. These features are still in place on the building today. The main entrance is set back from the main block and has a slightly lower roofline, extending out in line with the rest of the building to create a covered entryway. A pair of paneled doors with a decorative transom window take up most of this section but have since been replaced by steel and glass. Based on the vast differences in the current building and the structure in the 1939 Sanborn map of Brentwood, it is likely that the structure was built between 1939 and Waldrop's 1942 opening.[483]

This building has not been included in any historic inventory, nomination, or had a determination of eligibility done. It appears to be within the Brentwood Survey District PG:68-12 based on mapping in MEDUSA; however, there is no documentation on this specific property.[484] Because the exterior of the property appears relatively unchanged since the period of significance (1942-1959), we would recommend that this site has a high level of integrity. While this property certainly hosted a wide array of entertainers, including incubators of early rock n' roll among other genres, further research would need to be conducted to determine whether the property fits under NRHP Criteria of significance. It is most likely to fit under Criteria A, in regard to the music and entertainment business of the 1940s-1950s.[485] However, this property is more likely locally significant to Maryland and Prince George's County's music and entertainment business development in the 1940s and 1950s and may fit better in the MIHP.

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[482] Mark Opsasnick, "The Live Music Night Clubs of Prince George's County, Maryland: From Their Origins to the Rock and Roll Era (Supplemental Information)," October 2024. ; Facebook. "Historic Restaurants of Washington, D.C.," July 10, 2020. https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1501778436661789&id=147480962091550&set=a.147492112090435&locale=ml_IN.

[483] Image 15 of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Washington Suburban, District of Columbia, District of Columbia. Library of Congress. 1939, Sheet 210. https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3851gm.g3851gm_g01228193902/?sp=15.

[484] M. Dwyer, "Brentwood Survey District." Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP). Maryland: Maryland Historical Trust, November 1, 1974. MEDUSA. https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/mapintermediate.aspx?ID=18478&ID1=18478&ID2=undefined&Section=archInv&PropertyID=18478&selRec=archInv.

[485] "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form." U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, 1997.

Wilmer's Park
15710 Brandywine Road Brandywine, MD 20613

Wilmer's Park Site History

Wilmer's Park, located in Brandywine, Maryland, is an 80-acre property purchased by Arthur Wilmer in 1947 (*Figure 57*).[486] Formerly a tobacco farm, the property became host to a complex of buildings beginning with the dance hall, apartments, restaurant, outdoor stage, and baseball field.

Arthur Wilmer developed Wilmer's Park as a direct response to Jim Crow segregation in the United States. Using his knowledge and experience from running other clubs, Wilmer's Park served as a thriving music venue and family-friendly community space for Black families and more as its use continued. Early in its history, Wilmer's Park functioned as a music and sports venue; baseball and softball games were often played on Sundays in the early years of this site's history.[487] The site's built-in housing provided a space for musical acts to stay in when they performed, no doubt making it easier to bring so many performers to the site even before establishing itself as a major stop on the Chitlin' Circuit. Hundreds of artists performed at Wilmer's Park over the course of its history, although the genre and the atmosphere of the site experienced much change.

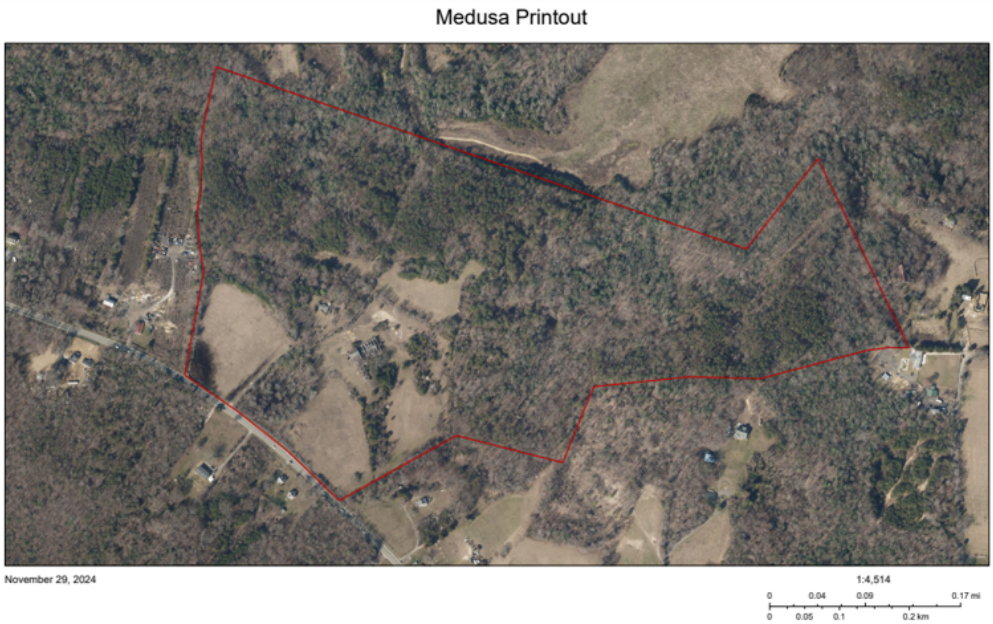


Figure 57. Wilmer's Park Property (red outline). Courtesy of Maryland's Cultural Resources Information System 2024.

From its beginning as a fairly family-friendly space to the last few decades of the 1900s, Wilmer's Park was known to have wild concerts on the indoor and outdoor stages. Arthur Wilmer owned Wilmer's Park from the 1940s up until 2003 when it was transferred to the Arthur W. Wilmer Foundation, LLC (Deed 17586/00139). At the time of this report, this property is owned by the M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation. Wilmer's Park has been the focus of or included in multiple other projects from University of Maryland, College Park students.

[486] Patsy Mose Fletcher, author. n.d. "Historically African American Leisure Destinations around Washington, D.C. /," no. 922455930, 115–19.
[487] Ibid.

Student and class projects for Wilmer's Park have recently included the 2022 Reimagining Wilmer's Park project, 2023 Pop-Up at Wilmer's Park Project, and Henderson's Sounds of Prince George's County pt. II 2023 report.[488] These projects have focused on both the past and potential futures of the Wilmer's Park property.

The July 25th, 1965, concert titled *Summer Parade Of Stars* advertised a lineup of R&B, Soul, and blues artists like Otis Redding, Gladys Knight and the Pips, and Carol Fran (*Figure 58*).[489] On January 23rd of 1970, a newspaper article refers to Wilmer's Park as a motel, bar, and "counting house" according to police for a "highly organized" lottery network across multiple Maryland counties. In total, nineteen locations were raided in relation to the network. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Wilmer's Park hosted go-go festivals, rock festivals, Autumn equinox concerts, and the *All Good Festival*. Hosting a wide range of genres, including rock, country, go-go, heavy metal, country, bluegrass, and more. Posters for these events highlighted different amenities the venue offered. Go-go festivals often advertised the carnival and a playground while rock festivals advertised the restaurant and pool tables. Some festivals included camping, and events in the 1990s alongside ticket stubs were likely to have venue maps. These hand drawn and photocopied maps outline where activities were happening and spaces open to visitors.



Figure 58. Two Wilmer's Park Event Posters, Sunday July 25th, 1965(L) and Sun May 27th, 1994 (R). Courtesy of Concerts Wiki and Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University (Box 229)

[488] Thomas Adams, Bryce Akers, Edenilson Contreras, Isiah Dashiell, Abby Erwin, Carlos Gonzalez, Cierra Hargrove, et al. "Reimagining Wilmer's Park," 2022. https://doi.org/10.13016/WHIK-JBON.; Snikitha Chelluri, Daniel Ding, Leinyuy Dzekewong, William Edwards, Eric Gaman, Adam Gradess, Julia Lunsford, et al. "Wilmer's Park Inspiration Pop-Up," 2023. https://doi.org/10.13016/DSPACE/5R2Y-RELP. ; Henderson, Amanda. "The Sounds of Prince George's County Pt. 2." Digital Repository at the University of Maryland, 2023. https://doi.org/10.13016/DSPACE/BU6S-VVF6.

[489] Wilmer's Park. *Summer Parade of Stars - in Person*. Concert Poster. July 25, 1965. https://concerts.fandom.com/wiki/July_25,_1965_Wilmer%27s_Park,_Brandywine,_MD.

On May 27th, 1994, Wilmer's Park hosted *A Go-go Festival of Stars* with big names in go-go, including Rare Essence, Junk Yard Band, Pleasure, Hot, Cold, Sweat, Northeast Groovers, Pure Elegance, Mighty Groovers, and Delicious Band & Show. As the first outdoor show of the year, Baltimore Globe posters advertising a concert like this one drew large crowds with performances on two separate stages.[490] Concerts centered around the school calendar were common at many venues including Wilmer's Park. Many of the performers at the *Go-go Festival of Stars* in 1994 performed at these back-to-school concerts, occasionally accompanied by DJs in the 1980s and 1990s. In the 1990s, Wilmer's Park also hosted Rock Fest with the Road Ducks, Linwood Taylor Band, Snakebite, Archer, and Bob Gainer Band advertised alongside the venue's accommodations, a restaurant, pool tables, and bar. There is a thriving community that remembers Wilmer's Park— because of this there is a wealth of concert recordings in personal collections, on YouTube, and the internet archive of the venue. Several of these recordings can be matched up to the posters printed for them by Baltimore Globe Printing.[491] One such recording uploaded to YouTube includes a Wilmer's Park personalized cover of Devil Went Down to Georgia performed by Smokin Grass.[492] Wilmer's Park largely closed its doors in the early 2000s, and in 2013 M-NCPPC acquired the property.



Figure 59. 1996, 2nd Annual Full Moon Music Festival, Venue Map. Courtesy Anthi Karamalakos.

Wilmer's Park Architectural Description

The 1996 paper map (*Figure 59*), handed out to concert-goers, created by Junipa creates a visual narrative for which structures were still being used and a part of the site memory. Permanent structures visible on this map are the front gate, Wilmer's House, Bar and Restaurant, Main Stage, Stage, and Barn. This property has benefited from large open spaces, allowing for flexibility in use and visitor size, temporary structures for camping, first aid, food vendors, and security tents, which would have varied depending on the event.[493]

[490] *Globe Poster Printing Corporation Collection, Box 229*. n.d. MS.0755 Box 229. Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
[491] *Little Benny - Wilmer's Park July 3, 1988*, 2010. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqXfk9Cff-g.
[492] *Smokin Grass Featuring Jason Crosby "The Devil Went Down To Wilmer's,"* 2016.
[493] Anthi Karamalakos, "Wilmer's Park 2nd Full Moon Music Festival. Art By Junipa '96." *"I Loved Wilmer's Park" Group on Facebook*, January 22, 2023.

In 2009, at the time of the survey for M-NCPPC. the tobacco barn from the former owners remained standing on the property (*Figure 60*). This is a wooden, two-story, multi-bay tobacco barn with what may be a painted tin roof. The Wilmer's Park Tobacco Barn and all other site structures were in deteriorating condition. The dance hall, apartments, restaurant, and baseball diamond are some of the earliest landmarks at Wilmer's Park. The baseball field was regularly maintained in the 1940s and 1950s, however, by the 1970s aerials, the baseball field appeared neglected, which has remained true to the present day. The backstop is the only remaining part of the baseball diamond.

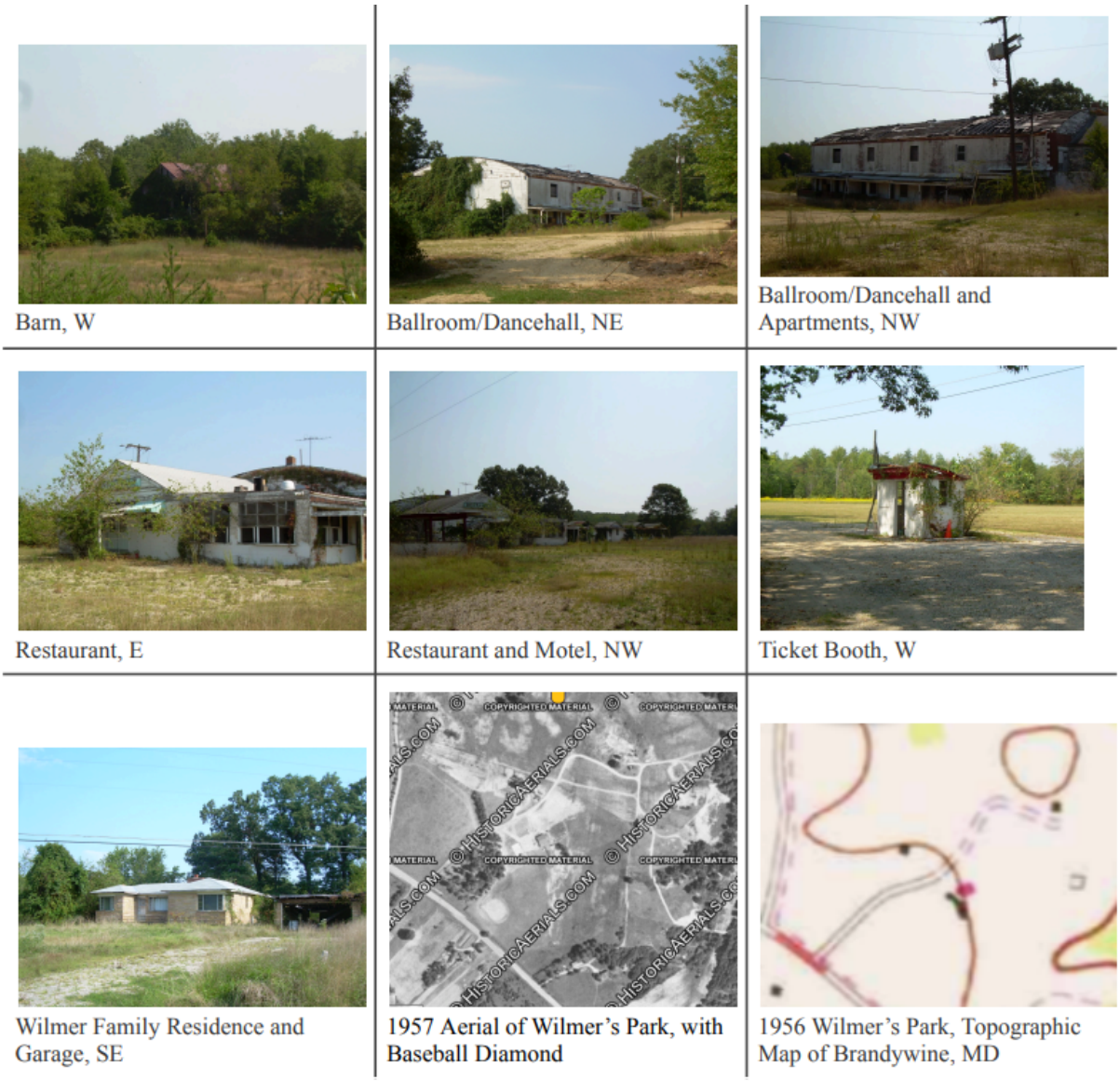


Figure 60. Wilmer's Park Select Structures, 2009, courtesy M-NCPPC and Patterson 2009.

The two-story dance hall is 3x5 bay and 6,000 square feet with five apartments below the space. The dance hall is a concrete block construction with a half cylindrical roof, originally clad with asphalt shingles, and interior end chimney on the southwest end. The interior of the dance hall

includes a stage and murals covering the wall designed by Eddie Henderson.[494] The restaurant is attached to the southwest end of the dance hall. The restaurant building was also utilized as a performance space. The restaurant is a one-story building, 3 x 1 bay, concrete block construction with wood siding, a gable roof, originally clad in asphalt shingles. The motel, constructed later in the venue's history, is a one-story, eight-bay wood-framed structure with alternating flat and gable roofs. The Main performance stage is wooden with wooden supports for a covering over the stage where sound systems or lights could be run. The smaller stage is made of concrete with several small steps to reach the stage platform. The Wilmer family residence on the Wilmer's Park property is a one-story U-shaped ranch structure with an attached garage. The house is a wood frame construction with a stone veneer, interior chimney, and hip and valley roof. On the edge of the property is a ticket booth located on the road leading into the park. The ticket booth is a concrete block construction with a single window on each elevation and shed roof.

The Wilmer's Park site was an important contributor to the music scene of Prince George's County, yet unfortunately, many of the structures may have been lost due to neglect and the elements. This site is significant because of its impact on music in the County and its potential to yield information that will contribute to a better understanding of our past. The site has already been documented in the MIHP (PG:86B-37), this site would benefit from additional field research to better determine structural integrity. Listing this site on the NRHP would be valuable, this property should be interpreted so the public can return to Wilmer's Park, maybe even as a music venue.

WMUC
3130 Campus Drive, College Park, MD 20742

WMUC, began in 1948 and has since evolved into an influential voice in independent and alternative music. Early records indicate that a campus radio station was first imagined as early as 1937.[495] Starting with limited AM broadcasting, WMUC gained FM status in 1979 and became a platform for niche genres and underground music. Early broadcasting was mostly used for news and music for several hours, several days per week. Eventually WMUC operated seven days a week, broadcasting more than music but sports games as well. In 1953, WMUC hosted its first remote broadcast, from a basketball game in Raleigh, NC. In the 1960s, WMUC DJs began compiling an impressive roster of famous musicians for the station's collection of IDs. On February 11, 1964, WMUC staff members Bill Seaby, Paul Palmer, and Alan Batten attended the Beatles' first U.S. concert at the Washington, D.C. Coliseum, participated in the post-concert press conference, and even persuaded John Lennon to record promotional spots for the station. Other notable station IDs featured artists such as Phyllis Diller, Jimmy Dean, Frankie Valli, Frank Zappa, Chubby Checker, Ahmad Jamal, and Fats Domino.[496] In 1965, the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System (IBS) honored WMUC with its prestigious "All American College Radio Station" Award.

The 1970s marked a transformative era for WMUC. In 1974, the station's staff secured University Chancellor Robert Gluckstern's support for an FM license and submitted an

[494] Stacy Patterson, 2009. "86B-37 Wilmer's Park."
[495] WMUC Collection. "WMUC Records." Collection: WMUC records | Archival Collections. Accessed December 14, 2024.
[496] Ibid.

application to the FCC in 1975.[497] After two rejections and a passionate "FM or Bust" student campaign, the FCC granted WMUC its first FM license in 1979, allowing broadcasts on the 88.1 frequency.

Known for live shows like Third Rail Radio, WMUC fostered Washington, D.C., area punk, go-go, and indie scenes while promoting diverse local talent. Today, WMUC remains a vibrant part of College Park's culture, continuing its legacy of student-driven, non-commercial radio.[498] Broadcasting from College Park, WMUC has long offered a platform for emerging and experimental artists, both local and national, to reach diverse audiences. By the 1970s and 1980s, WMUC was known for supporting punk and go-go music, genres that were thriving in nearby Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County. The station hosted live performances and on-air sessions, fostering a loyal following for the alternative music scene. Over the decades, WMUC has adapted with changing musical landscapes but remains committed to broadcasting live sessions, amplifying the voices of underground artists, and supporting Maryland's music culture.[499] As one of the longest-running college radio stations in the nation, WMUC continues to be a vital resource for independent music lovers and a launchpad for local talent.[500]

Third Rail Radio, a flagship live music program at WMUC, has been a beloved staple of the University of Maryland's radio station since the late 1990s. Known for its live, in-studio performances, Third Rail has consistently showcased underground and indie artists from across the Washington, D.C., and Baltimore areas, as well as touring bands looking to connect with local audiences. The program has nurtured a DIY spirit, giving bands an intimate space to perform while reaching WMUC's passionate listener base.[501] Third Rail Radio has been pivotal in highlighting emerging genres and fostering community around live music, making it a defining element of WMUC's legacy in alternative radio.

WMUC Architectural Description

WMUC has operated from several locations since its first broadcast in 1948, moving four times. The initial transmissions took place within the Speech Department of Silvester Hall. The building, now called Baltimore Hall, served as the WMUC station until 1950, when WMUC was moved to a shower stall within Calvert Hall.[502] From 1953 to 1974, WMUC operated out of a room in the former Journalism Building that was located in a low lying area known as "the gulch" until 1974 when WMUC moved to its current location, the South Campus Dining Hall.

The South Campus Dining Hall is a concrete structure built in 1974. The structure has ten bays, each window has a small, inaccessible balcony constructed for aesthetic purposes. Entry to the

[497] "Saving College Radio: WMUC Past, Present and Future." WMUC Online Exhibit. Accessed December 1, 2024.
[498] Adam Hudacek, "WMUC Turns 75: How the Station Keeps Its Story Spinning," *The Diamondback*, May 13, 2023.
[499] Danielle Ohl, "The Hidden Treasures of the WMUC Record Library," *The Diamondback*, April 24, 2019. https://dbknews.com/2016/02/01/wmuc-record-library/.https://dbknews.com/2016/02/01/wmuc-record-library/.
[500] "WMUC's Station History," Station History | WMUC Exhibit. Accessed November 2024. https://exhibitions.lib.umd.edu/wmuc/before-wmuc.
[501] Ibid.
[502] Sala Levin. "Frequent Listening: A Strengthened WMUC Expands Its Reach," Maryland Today, September 2022. https://today.umd.edu/frequent-listening-a-strengthened-wmuc-expands-its-reach.

station is primarily accessed through the right side of the structure. A three-story stairwell, lined in large yellow tiles is the most direct route to the station. The station and its offices are U shaped, with rooms located on the interior and exterior of the U. The interior of WMUC is comprised of several interior rooms including three offices for the program director, finance director and operating director. Wall surfaces are largely concrete brick, they are painted with black chalkboard paint. Some wall space is used for currently hosted radio shows to advertise and chalk-in their names for the term of the show. Other rooms include the record room, which is lined with two floors of shelves that house over 20,000 vinyl records. The station features two radio spaces, one for live broadcasts over 90.5FM and the other for live internet shows. WMUC has a space for music performed live over the air known as "Third Rail" with windows that look into both broadcast rooms. A recording studio is present in the WMUC space as well as storage for instruments used in that same room.

An FM antenna sits atop the South Campus Dining Hall Tower. This antenna was first installed in 1979 and then reinstalled with a newer piece gifted from WAMU in 2022. The new antenna allows for 30 watts, instead of the previous antenna's 10 watts of power.[503]

WMUC is located within the boundaries of the University of Maryland, College Park MIHP form (PG:66-35), there is, however, no mention of the campus radio station in this form. Although the location of this site has changed multiple times over the years, the impact of the radio station on the campus community should be included in a music-focused amendment to the University of Maryland MIHP form. This site should not be considered for the NRHP at this time.

The 4400 Club
4400 Rhode Island Ave, Brentwood, MD 20722



Figure 61. Opsasnick, 4400 Club in Brentwood, MD. 1995.

As a major venue for music and entertainment in Prince George's County, the 4400 Club has set the stage for a multitude of significant performers including Frankie Mayo and His New Yorkers, Conway Twitty, Blaze Starr, Eddie and Denise and the Good Time Band, Gibby Thomas and Earline Budd, and Chuck Brown and the Soul Searchers (*Figure 61*).[504] Jewel Brynner and Little Walkin' Willie performed for the week of April 7th in 1959.[505] She was a swing artist who was known as "the only bald-headed singer (*Figure 62*)."[506] The original 4400 Club was possibly opened around 1945 by

[503] "Saving College Radio: WMUC Past, Present and Future." WMUC Online Exhibit. Accessed December 1, 2024.
[504] Opsasnick, *Capitol Rock.*
[505] Baker, "Star Gazing: Torrid French Flick Raises Critics' Adrenaline Count."
[506] *Jewel Brynner and Her Swing Kings Poster*.

Jimmy Comber, although the current primary structure was built in 1960 according to SDAT. Ownership of the club changed hands many times and in 1957, *The Washington Daily News* reported a liquor raid with Herbert Hertz arrested as the owner of the establishment. This same article announced the firing of Deputy Sheriff Frank Baggett for his patronage at the club while minors were present and drinking. During the same period, a gambling raid took place at the club.Berk Motley was another notable owner of the club. He was known as the triple clarinet playing, head-standing vaudevillian who even made it to Ripley's Believe It or Not. The club on Rhode Island Avenue was instrumental in the evolution of rock and roll and vice in Prince George's County, however, it has not operated continuously since the 1940s.

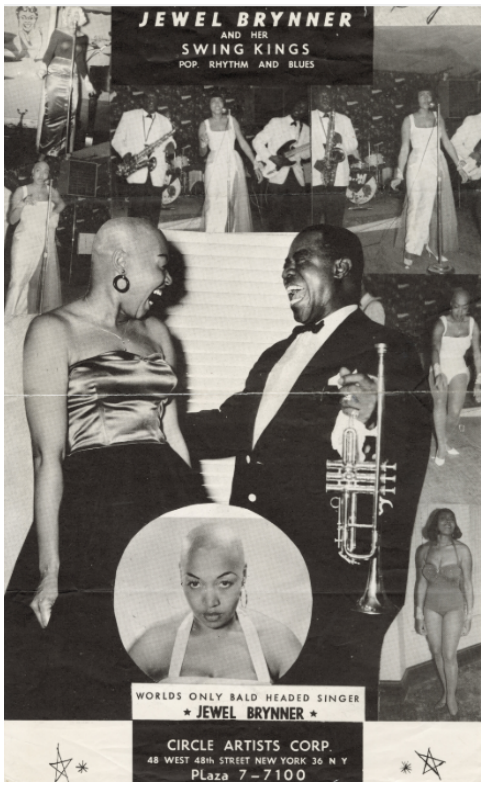


Figure 62. Denver Public Library. "Jewel Brynner and Her Swing Kings Poster." 1960-1970.

Geneva Curry (Gee) owned the club in the 1980s and 1990s when it was a site for R&B and go-go artists as seen on Globe posters referencing Gee's Place.[507] A 1986 ad in *The Baltimore Sun* lists Gee's 4400 Club as a purveyor of Moussy non-alcoholic drinks.[508] An oral history with Gibby Thomas detailed the popularity of drag shows in the 1990s at Gee's Place.[509] She said the first event had such a great turnout that she was called back to emcee the events on multiple occasions. The 4400 Club is currently a Mexican Restaurant. The site has an incredible history that reflects changing musical tastes in the county for nearly the last ninety years.

The 4400 Club Architectural Description

The site of the former 4400 Club is located directly off of Rhode Island Ave. in Brentwood. The building is currently a Latin American restaurant and has evidence of several additions to the main structure. The building is surrounded on three sides by a parking lot, which is separated from the street by a sidewalk and grass. There is no other landscaping around the site. The building is a single story with an irregular, shingled roof. The brick exterior is laid out in stretcher bond and elaborately painted in a celebration of palm trees in a tropical landscape.

[507] Twomey, "IS THIS CASH COW MILKING THE WORKING CLASS?"
[508] "Display Ad 18."
[509] Gibby Thomas Hickey Interview.

The north elevation consists of unbroken masonry with a service door on the northwest end, a chimney pot, and a low-pitched gable just over the door (*Figure 63*). The main roof structure on this side is a hipped roof with a slight overhang. The irregular roof comes into view on the east façade. A low-pitched gable roof connects the hipped roof on the north end and the normal-pitched gable on the south end. A wide concrete step and metal railings lead to a single glass door. Toward the middle of this elevation is an octagonal vent and a horizontal sash window with metal bars covering it. There is also a large digital sign bolted to the roof. The south elevation is one-and-a-half stories and has a sidewalk and ramp leading to an all glass, double door with glass surround. A sign hanging from the first story brick wall reads, "Latin American Cuisine." There are no windows on this side of the building. The half story is created by a normal-pitched gable and is infilled with horizontal siding. There is a square vent centered at the top. A portion of the west elevation is seen from the south, but it is mostly obscured by an industrial building. There is a brick addition on the west that appears to house a walk-in refrigeration unit.

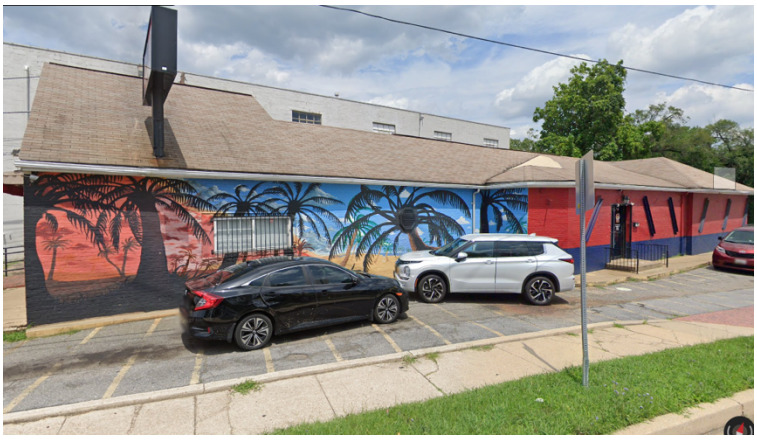


Figure 63. Google Maps. "Photograph of South East Elevation of the former 4400 Club in Brentwood." 2024.

This site shows evidence of alterations; however, it should be included on the Maryland Register of Historic Properties, and it could be eligible for listing on the NRHP for criterion A or B after further review.

Non-Extant Key Sites

The following six sites are no longer extant. They have been included in this context statement because of their valuable contribution to the context of music and music venues in Prince George's County. These sites were located in Upper Marlboro, Capitol Heights, College Park, Hyattsville, and Colmar Manor.

The Capital Centre
1 Harry S Truman Dr, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774



Figure 64. "Capital Centre Reunions: The Official Capital Centre Family Website." Accessed December 15, 2024.

The Capital Centre opened in 1973 as a suburban solution for a Baltimore-Washington area arena.[510] Abe Pollin, local entrepreneur, purchased the Washington Bullets in 1964 with two partners, but the team's home in the Baltimore Civic Center struggled to draw large crowds (*Figure 64*).[511] Pollin, who had made his fortune as a contractor, ended up buying out his partners in 1968.[512] After deciding to submit a new franchise application on the last possible day to the National Hockey League, Pollin began the journey toward an operable home for both teams by the 1974 NHL season.[513]

The Centre, built in just 15 months at a cost of $18 million and financed entirely by Pollin, opened on December 2, 1973 with a sold out Bullets game (Figure *66*).[514] Seventy concerts were hosted in the first year, including two within opening week by the Allman Brothers Band and The Who.[515]



Figure 65. Allen, Scott. "Capital Centre Opened 50 Years Ago with Telscreen, Cold Hot Dogs and a Win." Washington Post, December 1, 2023.

[510] Richard Friend, Kevin Leonard, and Jeff Krulik. Capital Centre: A Retrospective. Laurel, MD: Laurel History Boys, 2023. p. 7
[511] Ibid.
[512] Ibid.
[513] Ibid.
[514]Ibid.
[515] Ibid.



Figure 66. Friend, Richard, Kevin Leonard, and Jeff Krulik. Capital Centre: A Retrospective. Laurel, MD: Laurel History Boys, 2023.

While it was a large-scale operation, the character of the Capital Centre is remembered as being a collaborative, family-oriented work environment that former employees reminisce on in Facebook groups, in-person reunions, and blogs.[516] Because Abe was open to implementing ideas from all members of the "Capital Centre family," innovations such as the first in-arena telescreen, private arena box seating known as "Sky Seats," computerized ticket systems, and a quiet lounge would become standard in the management of arenas (*Figure 65*).[517] At the time it was built, the Capital Centre was truly a masterclass in modern stadium construction, but it still had its quirks. Tom Friend, a journalist who remembers attending events at the Capital Centre, recalls the obstructed view of the private box seating, the dimly lit arena, and the impossible traffic caused by every show.[518] Despite these minor idiosyncrasies, the arena remains a well-loved piece of Prince George's County musical memory.



Figure 67. Hamerman, Don. "Nancy Wilson and Roger Fisher of Heart Performing at the Capital Centre, October 15, 1978." University of Maryland Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library.

[516] Facebook. "Memories of the Capital Centre Arena in the 70s and 80s." Accessed December 15, 2024. ; "Capital Centre Reunions: The Official Capital Centre Family Website." Accessed December 15, 2024.
[517]Richard Friend, Kevin Leonard, and Jeff Krulik. Capital Centre: A Retrospective. Laurel, MD: Laurel History Boys, 2023. p. 8.
[518] Tom Friend. "Facilities: Cap Centre Held Many Firsts. Now It's Only the Memory That Lasts." Sports Business Journal, January 15, 2024.

The Capital Centre hosted some of the greatest musicians and performers of its time, such as Bruce Springsteen, Heart, Frank Sinatra, Stevie Wonder, Elton John, and Rare Essence (*Figure 67*).[519] Many concerts and events from the Capital Centre were recorded and can be viewed on YouTube, purchased online as physical media, and listened to digitally on Spotify. As a venue known to host practically every genre, a variety of fan cultures have tales of the Centre and the alternative activities that were taking place concurrently to the concerts. Heavy Metal Parking Lot, filmed at the Capital Centre by Jeff Krulik and John Heyn, documents the fan culture of heavy metal music outside a Judas Priest concert (*Figure 68*). The culture of the Capital Centre was well documented in several iterations of a monthly newsletter known as the Centre Spotlight from 1974 to 1976, it rebranded as Good Times until the late 1980s (*Figure 69*). An extensive collection of archival material and scrapbooks, donated to the University of Maryland Special Collections and University Archives as a community project, truly encapsulates the fond memories that former employees and patrons alike still hold for the Centre.

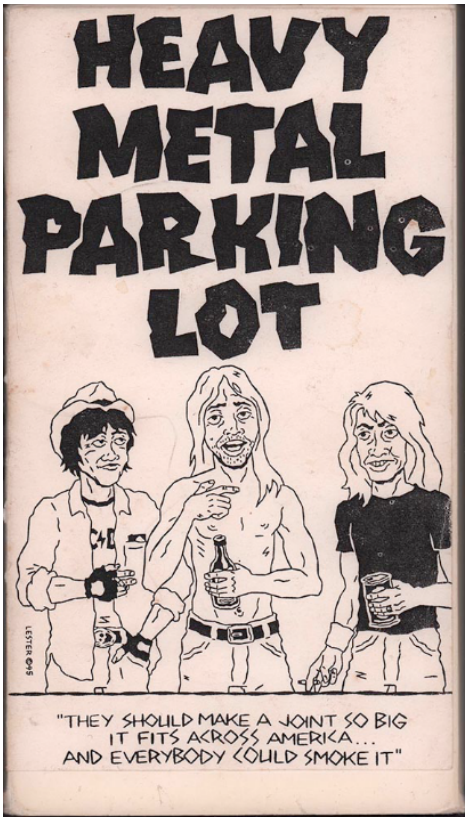


Figure 68. Schnitker, Laura, and Jeff Krulik. "From Tape Trading to Global Fame | Heavy Metal Parking Lot at 30." University of Maryland Libraries.


GOOD TIMES

Vol. 11 No. 9 "What Capital Centre is All About" May 1987

Frank Sinatra

Pro football at Cap Centre

Arena Football League debuts in June

'Ol Blue Eyes set to return May 8

Figure 69. Capital Centre collection, 0509-MDHC. Special Collections and University Archives.

The arena was designed by Shaver Partnership and constructed by George Hyman Construction Company.[520] The saddle-shaped building was framed with structural steel and reinforced concrete, with a cable-suspended, ribbed steel roof.[521] It could seat around 18,000 fans and offered padded seats surrounding the brightly lit

[519] Richard Friend, Kevin Leonard, and Jeff Krulik. Capital Centre: A Retrospective. Laurel, MD: Laurel History Boys, 2023.
[520] Capital Centre collection, 0509-MDHC. Special Collections and University Archives. Accessed December 15, 2024.
[521] Capital Centre collection, 0509-MDHC. Special Collections and University Archives. Accessed December 15, 2024.

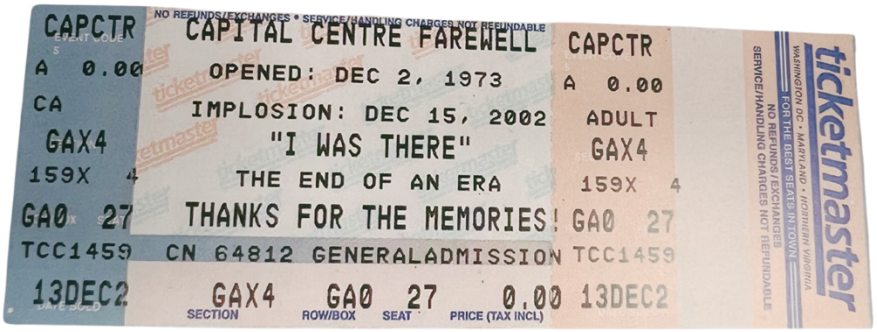


Figure 70. Friend, Richard, Kevin Leonard, and Jeff Krulik. Capital Centre: A Retrospective. Laurel, MD: Laurel History Boys, 2023.

center court in the shape of an oval.[522] There were four entrances on each side of the Capital Centre in an attempt to handle some of the parking lot traffic, but the main issue of traffic had to do with poor road access in the surrounding area. The Capital Centre was renamed the USAir Arena in 1993 following a sponsorship that Pollin hoped would fund significant renovations for the 19-year-old facility, but the arena would close within the decade.[523] The demolition of the Capital Centre in 2002 was a well-attended and heavily documented event, including the distribution of commemorative tickets (*Figure 70*; *Figure 71*). While a strip mall now sits in its place, the effects that the Capital Centre had on the Prince George's County music scene are still being felt to this day.



Figure 71. Capital Centre collection, 0509-MDHC. Special Collections and University Archives.

[522] Scott Allen. "Capital Centre Opened 50 Years Ago with Telscreen, Cold Hot Dogs and a Win." *Washington Post*, December 1, 2023. https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2023/12/01/capital-centre-50th-anniversary/.
[523] Richard Friend, Kevin Leonard, and Jeff Krulik. Capital Centre: A Retrospective. Laurel, MD: Laurel History Boys, 2023. p. 61.

Club Hillbilly
6900 Central Ave Capitol Heights, MD 20743



Figure 72. Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. "Connie B. Gay." Accessed November 21, 2024. https://www.countrymusichalloffame.org/hall-of-fame/connie-b-gay.

Club Hillbilly was established by Connie B. Gay in 1948 as the popularity of country music was growing in the region. Club Hillbilly was established in the former location of the Dixie Tavern.[524] Little information was uncovered about the Dixie Tavern. According to Mark Opsasnick, the Dixie Tavern was opened in 1934 by Hugh Waldrop and was sold to Connie B. Gay in 1948.[525] Gay was a radio personality who is credited with coining the term "country music," allowing for the marketability of the genre (*Figure 72*).[526] Although Gay primarily worked in Washington, D.C., and northern Virginia, he expressed that the loose alcohol and gambling laws contributed to his decision to open an establishment in Prince George's County.[527] During its short tenure, Club Hillbilly offered live music and broadcast live to Gay's WARL radio station. Musicians who performed included Hawkshaw Hawkins, Eddy Arnold, and Dave Denney (*Figure 74*) .[528]

[524] "Prince Georges Bares Teen-Age Tavern Tippling," *Evening Star*, October 4, 1948, Newspapers.com.
[525] Opsasnick, *Rock the Potomac*, 136.
[526] Kip Lornell, "Back Then It Was Called Hillbilly Music (1946–1957)," in *Capital Bluegrass: Hillbilly Music Meets Washington, DC*, ed. Kip Lornell (Oxford University Press, 2020), 0, .
[527] Ibid.
[528] "On the Stage In Person," *The Washington Daily News*, September 27, 1948, Newspapers.com; "Eddy Arnold at Club Hillbilly," *The Washington Daily News*, October 6, 1948; "Sensational!," *The Washington Daily News*, October 26, 1948, Newspapers.com.

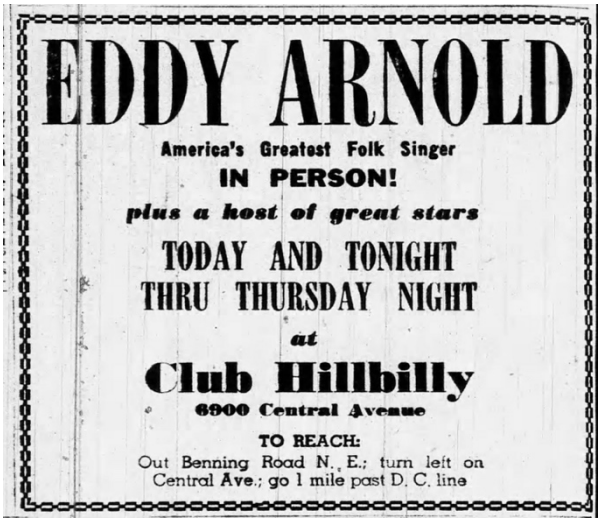


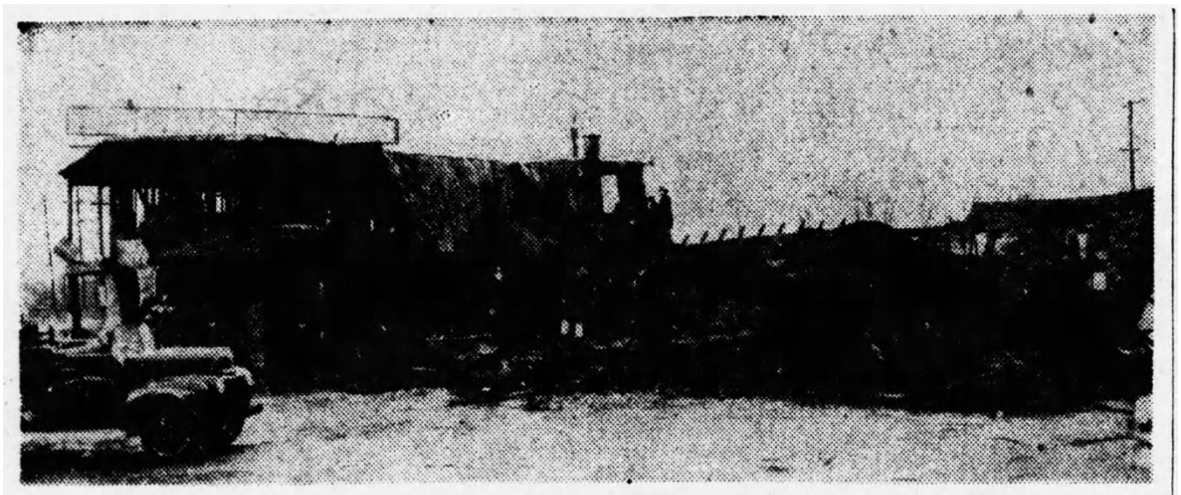
Figure 73. The Washington Daily News. "Eddy Arnold at Club Hillbilly." October 6, 1948.

Although the club was only open for one year, it was constantly embroiled in controversy. According to Gay, the success of the club took business away from nearby venues, causing jealousy and friction between himself and other club owners.[529] In October 1948, a waitress, Anna Varnell, was charged with selling liquor to minors.[530] As the club owner, Gay was fined $500. Gay fought the charges, resulting in a loss of money, loss of his liquor license, and negative publicity.[531] The negative publicity caused WARL Arlington to consider ending broadcasts from Club Hillbilly.[532] Throughout his legal troubles, Gay maintained his innocence, claiming that "'certain people' were trying to drive him out of business."[533] Even in later years, when reflecting on his time at Club Hillbilly, he alleged that he had denied grafts and bribes from local officials, resulting in sabotage.[534] Gay explained that his experience running the club led him to alcoholism, which he later recovered from after joining Alcoholics Anonymous.[535]

Club Hillbilly closed in March 1949 after a fire broke out on the second story.[536] The two-alarm fire caused water damage to Club Hillbilly on the first story. The fire was allegedly caused by an overloaded electrical circuit. Two more fires occurred on the premises on December 1949.[537] Four teenagers had been loitering on the property when the first fire was started. The fire was extinguished, although relit a few hours later. The second fire was disastrous, leaving only the façade standing. Arson was suspected as the cause of the fire. In June 1950, four local firefighters were questioned about their possible involvement in the fire.[538] The four firefighters were accused of intentionally setting thirteen fires throughout the county.

[529] Lornell, "Back Then It Was Called Hillbilly Music (1946–1957)."
[530] "Prince Georges Bares Teen-Age Tavern Tippling."
[531] "License Board Calls 2 Taverns Rendezvous For Crime Plotters," *Evening Star*, December 24, 1948, Newspapers.com.
[532] "Connie B. Gay Faces New Charge of Selling Intoxicants to Minors," *Evening Star*, October 5, 1948, Newspapers.com.
[533] "Bowie Confers With Owner Gay of Hillbilly Club on Charges," *Times Herald*, October 7, 1948, Newspapers.com.
[534] Lornell, "Back Then It Was Called Hillbilly Music (1946–1957)."
[535] Ibid.
[536] "Fire Sweeps Club Hillbilly 20 Patrons Make Orderly Exit," *Times Herald*, March 3, 1949, Newspapers.com.
[537] "2 Mystery Blazes in Dance Hall Give County Firemen Busy Night," *Evening Star*, December 8, 1949, Newspapers.com.
[538] "More 'Firemen' Held as Firebugs," *Times Herald*, June 9, 1950, Newspapers.com.

Very few descriptions of Club Hillbilly were identified. The building is known to have been a "sprawling" two-story frame building, with Club Hillbilly operated from the lower floor.[539] One photo of the burned down club was identified, although the poor quality has obscured any details (*Figure 73*).[540]



CLUB HILLBILLY BURNS—An early morning fire raged through the deserted Club Hillbilly on Central avenue in Seat Pleasant, Md., leaving these charred remains by dawn. (Story on Page A-1.) —Star Staff Photo.

Figure 74. Evening Star. "Club Hillbilly Burns." December 8, 1949. Newspapers.com.

Club La Conga
9410 Baltimore Avenue, College Park, MD 20740

Club La Conga operated from September 1942 through June 1959. An announcement in the *Evening Star* advertised the nightclub's opening on September 18th, 1942, with Herbert Curbelos and his band as the featured live music act.[541] Club La Conga does not appear to be Latinx-owned at any point. Milt Barrett, a white ex-lawyer and Washington, D.C., native, owned the club from at least 1947 until 1959; current research does not indicate that Barrett was of Latinx descent.[542] Although the club's ownership does not seem to reflect Latinx history, featured music acts, such as Herbert Curbelos, Eleena/Elena Emee, and others were Latinx performers.

The club featured non-music acts, including comics, mimes, dancers, a stuntman, and adult dancers. Shipwreck Kelly, referred to as the "World's Most Famous Flag Pole Stuntman," performed at Club La Conga on multiple occasions; as the reference implies, Shipwreck Kelly's signature act at the nightclub was scaling the flag pole outside of the club.[543] An article in the

[539] "Fire Sweeps Club Hillbilly 20 Patrons Make Orderly Exit"; "Arson Suspected as County Night Club Burns Down," *The Washington Daily News*, December 8, 1949.
[540] "Club Hillbilly Burns," *Evening Star*, December 8, 1949, Newspapers.com.
[541] The Spectator. 1942. "'Grand' Opening." *Evening Star*, September 8, 1942. Newspapers.com.
[542] For the purposes of this paper, Latinx and Hispanic are used interchangeably, similar to the United States Census survey criteria. "National Archives at Washington, DC; Washington, D.C.; Seventeenth Census of the United States, 1950; Year: 1950; Census Place: College Park, Prince George's, Maryland; Roll: 5864; Page: 35; Enumeration District: 17-237." n.d. Ancestry.com. ; "Year: 1930; Census Place: Washington, District of Columbia, District of Columbia; Page: 3A; Enumeration District: 0075; FHL Microfilm: 2340029." n.d. Ancestry.com.
[543] *The Washington Daily News*. 1942. "Shipwreck Kelly," October 20, 1942. Newspapers.com.

Evening Star declared Shipwreck Kelly's performance as the "long awaited signal for general revolt against conservatism in the night club circuit" because other non-musical acts featured at other clubs, like acrobatics, still felt "orthodox" while Shipwreck Kelly's act "presents many new possibilities reaching the very foundation of night clubs of the future."[544] In line with non-conservative acts, adult entertainers frequented the venue as well. Hillary Dawn's burlesque show in October 1950 is one of the first recorded instances of adult entertainment at Club La Conga. However, these performances could have occurred at the nightclub before this date.[545] In one instance, the sheriff arrested exotic dancer Ginger Lee at Club La Conga for indecent exposure after stripping off too many articles of clothing.[546]

Several apartment units were located in the building above the nightclub. On June 16th, 1959, one of the apartment units caught fire and irreparably damaged the structure. The fire began in Marie Doris Branson's apartment; the newspaper articles allude to potential foul play, as the mortician could not determine if Branson died before or due to the fire, and other tenants attempted to remove her from the burning building but could not do so due to the severity of the fire.[547] The structure was demolished after the blaze. The site where Club La Conga stood is now a car dealership, College Park Hyundai.

Even though Club La Conga is no longer extant, this is still a key site of Latin American music history in Prince George's County and the greater Washington, D.C., area. Minimal information exists regarding the building materials and style of Club La Conga; few pieces of photographic evidence exist and Club La Conga is not included on any Sanborn Maps.

An *Evening Star* staff photo after the fire reveals some visual details of the building (*Figure 75*). At the time of the fire, the club had a large sign displaying "Cafe La Conga" and "Sho-bar" above the entrance. Club La Conga appears to have been a two-story, five-bay, pitched front-gable building with a protruding gable-fronted entryway in front of the door. The building materials are not distinguishable from the photograph, although the material is most likely clapboard siding.



FIGHTING STUBBORN BLAZE — Firemen from seven companies surround the La Conga night club at 9400 Baltimore boulevard to battle a blaze that cost the life of one woman and injured seven other persons. The fire in upstairs apartments had a big start on firemen before the first alarm was sounded at 5:04 a.m.—Star Staff Photo.

Figure 75. Club La Conga fire photographed by the Evening Star, June 1959.

[544] The Spectator. 1942. "After Dark: News and Comment of the Night Clubs." *Evening Star*, October 22, 1942. Newspapers.com.
[545] *The Washington Daily News*. 1950. "Hillary Dawn," October 27, 1950. Newspapers.com.
[546] *Cumberland Evening Times*. 1952. "Exposes Too Much, Stripper Arrested," June 16, 1952. Newspapers.com.
[547] *The Washington Daily News*. 1959. "Fire Hits Night Club; Woman's Body Found," June 16, 1959. Newspapers.com.



Figure 76. Ellis, Thomas Sayers. "Photograph of a woman holding a Globe go-go poster." Date unknown.


Figure 77. Lanza, Becki "Photograph of site of the former Club LeBaron in Hyattsville, MD." 2024.

Club LeBaron
8133 Barlowe Road, Hyattsville, MD 20785

Club LeBaron is no longer extant; Details of its existence remain elusive (*Figure 77*). As such, there is no recommendation for historic designation of the structure, however more research should be conducted to document the site through pictures and oral histories. The site is referenced in the personal accounts of prominent go-go musicians[548] and evidence of its existence and location is documented on posters advertising gatherings (*Figure 76*).[549] Pictures of Heavy Connection playing at Club LeBaron reveal a low, drop ceiling in the background and enough space for large bands to perform on stage (*Figure 78*).[550] The club may have been operating as early as the 1970s with performances by Chuck Brown and the Soul Searchers.[551] An audio recording of Rare Essence at Club LeBaron in 1981 is listed online as the last show and suggests a timeline for the club's closure, however, this cannot be taken as definitive evidence for this date.[552]The site itself is situated along Barlowe Rd., across from Palmer Park. The lot next to it has an easement for drainage (*Figure 79*).[553]

[548] Hammond, *Take Me Out To The Go-Go: The Autobiography of Kato Hammond*.
[549] Ellis, *Photo of Woman Holding a Globe Go-Go Poster*.
[550] Ellis, *Photo of Percussionist of the Band Heavy Connection*.
[551] Lornell and Stephenson, Jr., *The Beat.*
[552] Rare Essence, *Rare Essence Last Show at Club LeBaron '81.*
[553] Bureau of Highway Design, "Capital Beltway Right of Way 33349."

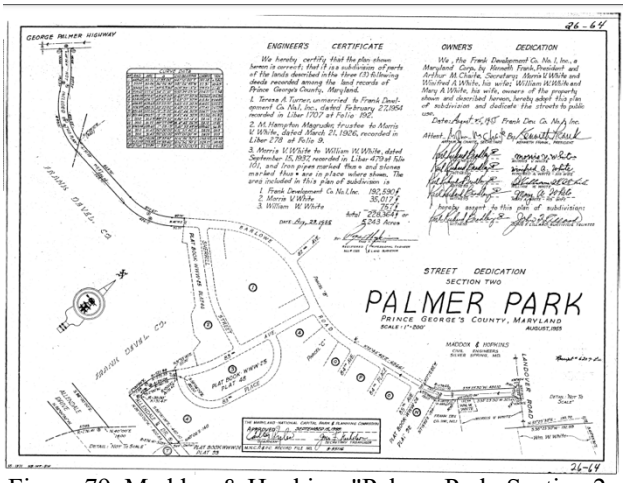


Figure 79. Maddox & Hopkins, "Palmer Park, Section 2. Street Dedication- 1955."


Figure 78. Ellis, Thomas Sayers. "Photograph of Heavy Connection percussionist at Club LeBaron." Date unknown.

The Evans Grill
9206 Darcy Road, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Evans Grill was a restaurant and music venue built in the small, mid-twentieth-century African American community known as Little Washington (*Figure 80*). Clarence and Pearl Evans purchased the lot in February 1946 after Clarence's return from service in World War II, and within the year the frame roadhouse was built (*Figure 81*).[554] Evans and his wife noticed a lack of safe places for their neighbors to congregate and wanted to create that space for people. In a 1994 interview with *The Washington Post*, Evans remembers how segregation impacted his community– "It was all black and all I seen was black and they couldn't stay in the place, just go in and buy what they wanted to, come back out in the yard and sit on logs and trees… That's what made me go build Evans Grill- to get them from outdoors in the

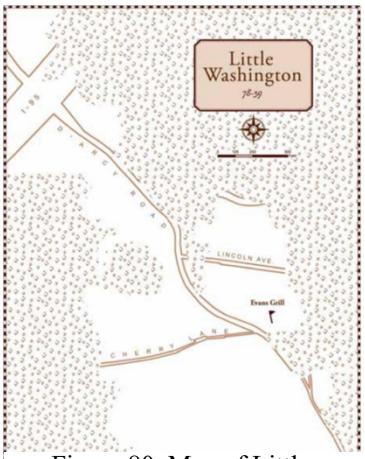


Figure 80. Map of Little Washington, Prince George's County, Source: *African-American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland*, 2012.

[554] Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. *African-American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland*, 2012."Club Hillbilly Burns," *Evening Star*, December 8, 1949, Newspapers.com. p. 162.

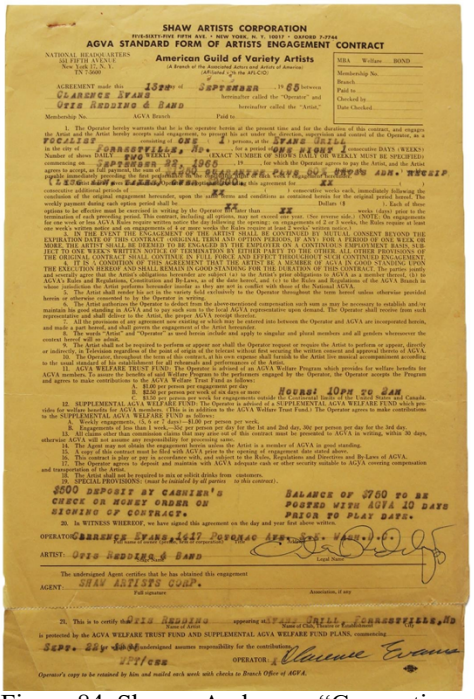


Figure 81. *African-American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland*, 2012, page 162.

hot son or the cold and rain."[555] This was a fruitful business venture for the couple- prior to The Grill's construction, crowds of up to 300 people would gather in the park just for a chance to socialize.[556] Evans received his beer and wine license on June 27, 1946, and would eventually expand the property by constructing a music hall capable of hosting 1,500 people on an adjacent lot.[557] While the venue started as a place to see live, local music, these upgrades allowed Evans Grill to become a "must-stop for performers on the Chitlin' Circuit."[558] Evans himself would attract big stars by speaking to them after performances at the Howard Theater and Turner's Arena.[559]

Shauna Anderson, founder and owner of The Historic Chitlin Market and daughter of singer Geneva Anderson, remembers Evans Grill as her home– "My home was in the room at the back of the stage for several years. My crib was backed up against the wall that was shared with the stage on the other side… As a toddler I would tear through the club, dashing around the tables and chairs, flip across the dance floor, swing on the bars at the steam tables, and beg for half-smoke sausages prepared by Miss Lou. That was my playground. All I knew was how to do business."[560] She is currently raising money to rebuild the structure as The Evans Grill Center for the Performing Arts, dedicated in honor of Clarence Evans.[561] Anderson recalls Clarence's generosity, and provides a photo of the interior as well as a 1965 contract between Evans and Otis Redding (*Figure 83 & Figure 84*).[562]

[555] Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. *African-American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland*, 2012. p. 163.
[556] Ibid., 162.
[557] Ibid., 163.
[558] Ibid.,163.
[559] Ibid., 164.
[560] Shauna Anderson. "Connections to D.C. Music Scene." *The Chitlin Market* (blog). Accessed December 15, 2024.
[561] Ibid.
[562] Ibid.



SHAW ARTISTS CORPORATION
AGVA STANDARD FORM OF ARTISTS ENGAGEMENT CONTRACT
American Guild of Variety Artists

Figure 84. Shauna Anderson. "Connections to D.C. Music Scene." The Chitlin Market.



Figure 82. Shauna Anderson. "Connections to D.C. Music Scene." The Chitlin Market.

A staple of Evans Grill was Wednesday-night showcases, which allowed locals to see performances from the likes of "Duke Ellington, B.B. King, Ray Charles, James Brown, Bill Doggert, Sam Cooke, and the Drifters" while helping to sustain entertainers on the road.[563] These harmonious relationships between city venues and smaller clubs truly fostered Black entertainers during this time. Eddie Daye, who performed at Evans Grill with the Four Bars, remembers the state of the venue- "[it was] just a down-home, country place, even had the appearance of just a country building."[564] As more Washington, D.C., venues began accepting African American audiences, the primary audience of Evans Grill began to drift. However, Evans adapted with the times and began offering disco parties in the 1970s, and became a popular go-go club in the 1980s (*Figure 82*).[565] While the structures of Evans Grill are no longer standing, the venue's influence survives in memory and in such memorabilia as posters from Baltimore's Globe Poster Printing Corporation.[566]



Figure 83. Globe Poster Printing Corporation Collection, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.

Hilltop Restaurant/The Las Vegas Club
5211 Marlboro Pike, Capitol Heights, MD 20743

The Hilltop Restaurant was opened in 1939 by Richard Dolph and was located at what is now 4857 Marlboro Pike in Capitol Heights, Maryland.[567] The Hilltop Restaurant was owned by Lucy M. Gentile in the 1950s and hosted a wide variety of genres, including orchestral music, jazz,

[563] Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. *African-American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland*, 2012. p. 164.
[564] Ibid., 164.
[565] Ibid., 165.
[566] Ibid., 165.
[567] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHTCLUBS FILE" (unpublished), 235-236.

and popular music.[568] Additionally, the Hilltop Restaurant had exotic dancers and comedians perform there.[569] The restaurant was one of the first places in Prince George's County where people could go and listen to rock and roll musicians. Murray Schaff and the Aristocrats played there regularly between 1951 and 1953 and were the first rock and roll act to perform in Prince George's County.[570]

In 1953, the restaurant shut down and reopened as the Lyre Club, which was a bottle club (bottle clubs were those where members had to bring their own liquor due to strict liquor laws).[571] The Lyre Club was run by Vince and Mildred Grillo, and was popular with musicians, "hatcheck gals, government swing-shift people," and other night-shift workers.[572] The Lyre Club and other bottle clubs faced frequent scrutiny from police; in 1954, the Lyre Club was raided by police soon after the passage of an ordinance, and in 1956, Vince and Mildred Grillo were convicted of serving liquor between 2 am and 6 am, in violation of Prince George's County laws.[573] These laws prohibited the consumption of alcohol in restaurants between 2 am and 6 am and in the meeting places of organizations between 2 am and 4 am.[574] In *Washington Confidential*, the Lyre Club was described as having a main floor bar and lounge as well as a dining room and dance floor in the basement.[575] The Lyre Club closed down in 1956, and Bernadette Fletcher reopened the venue as the Las Vegas Club a few months later.[576]

During the Las Vegas Club years, most of the performers were pop, rock, or country musicians like Al Dunn and Roy Clark and the Stardusters.[577] Other well-known musicians who performed there include Duke Ellington, Peggy Stevens, and the Ink Spots.[578] The Las Vegas Club closed in 1961 after a robbery, and the original building burned down in the mid-1960s, perhaps in a 1963 fire.[579] A McDonald's restaurant was built in its place. Today, a 7/11 convenience store is located on this site.

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[568] "Chapter II: Sound Check," in *Capitol Rock*, by Mark Opsasnick, 1st ed. (Philadelphia, Pa.: Xlibris Corp., 2002), 24-34.
[569] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHTCLUBS FILE" (unpublished), 235-236.
[570] "Chapter II: Sound Check," 34.
[571] "Chapter II: Sound Check," 40; Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, "Booze and Bottles," in *Washington Confidential*, 2010.
[572] Lait and Mortimer, "Booze and Bottles."; Washington Confidential names the operators as Vince and Mildred Carr, but the operators of the Lyre Club are named as Vince (or Vincent) and Mildred Grillo in the *Baltimore Sun* and the *Evening Star*.
[573] "Bottle Club Granted Injunction Against New Raids by Police," *The Evening Star*, October 6, 1954, Chronicling America.; "Court Upholds Conviction of Owners of Lyre Club," *The Baltimore Sun*, February 16, 1956.
[574] "2 In After-Hours-Club Case Lose as Court Upholds Laws," *The Baltimore Sun*, August 18, 1955.
[575] Lait and Mortimer, "Booze and Bottles."
[576] "Chapter IV: Pulse," in *Capitol Rock*, by Mark Opsasnick, 1st ed. (Philadelphia, Pa.: Xlibris Corp., 2002), 120.; Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHTCLUBS FILE" (unpublished), 236.
[577] "Chapter III: Show Time," in *Capitol Rock*, by Mark Opsasnick, 1st ed. (Philadelphia, Pa.: Xlibris Corp., 2002), 81.
[578] Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHTCLUBS FILE" (unpublished), 108.
[579] "Chapter IV: Pulse," 95-120; "Rob Club of $3,150," *The News*, September 19, 1961; Mark Opsasnick, "NIGHTCLUBS FILE" (unpublished), 236; Rita Humanities, "Reporter Gives Eye Witness Account of Tragic Cave-In," *Greenbelt News Review*, January 3, 1963, Vol. 27 No.5 edition, Chronicling America, ; Chapter IV: Pulse mentions that the Las Vegas Club closed in September 1961, "NIGHTCLUBS FILE" (unpublished) further specifies that the Las Vegas Club closed on September 21st, 1961, which was less than four days after the robbery described in "Rob Club of $3,150." The fire at the Las Vegas Club described in "Reporter Gives Eye Witness Account of Tragic Cave-In," appears to be consistent with the information of the building burning down in "Chapter IV: Pulse."

The Wheel Bar
3817 Bladensburg Road, Colmar Manor, MD 20722



Figure 85. The Wheel Bar advertisement for Al Dunn, VeRonnee, and others in *The Washington Daily News*, 1954.

The Wheel Bar, a nightclub and restaurant, operated from roughly 1947 to 1961 at 3817 Bladensburg Road in Colmar Manor. One of the known owners of the Wheel Bar is Solomon Alex Stern. In a 1954 interview with The Washington Daily News on recently naturalized American citizens, Czechoslovakian immigrant Robert Mayer Stern spoke of his past experience that he spent in a concentration camp where his parents and three sisters died; in this interview, he also references his brother Solomon Stern, owner of the Wheel Bar.[580] Solomon Stern appears to have arrived in the United States before World War II and was naturalized as an American citizen in 1939.[581]

The nightclub had live music multiple times a week. A few of the regular musical performers include Al Dunn, VeRonee, and the Three Jacks, composed of Bill Abernathy on the piano, Jim Caolmeris on the saxophone, and Joe Burch on the drums (*Figure 85*).

Along with live music the club hosted, and heavily advertised, adult entertainment and female impersonators (*Figure 86*). In 1958, the Wheel Bar hosted a revue show fourteen times a week featuring four men, three of whom were female impersonators.[582] The Washington Daily News stated that, "It's the kind of show even your Aunt Esmeralda might get a kick out of. I'm certain Auntie Mame would.[583]" This comment most likely references the character Auntie Mame, a free-spirited and eccentric woman, of the 1955 novel of the same name by Patrick Dennis, which had a film adaptation released in late 1958. With the phrasing "the kind of show even your Aunt Esmeralda might get a kick out of," Don Hearn, author of the newspaper article, insinuates that shows of this nature may feel gauche to some audiences, but the performers at the Wheel Bar are suitable for



Figure 86.The Wheel Bar's advertisements for adult dancers (left), 1957, and female impersonators (right), 1958.

[580] *The Washington Daily News*. 1954. "Robert Stern Looked Different: Now That I'm American Citizen, Put in an Applaud," July 14, 1954. Newspapers.com.
[581] "New York, U.S., Index to Petitions for Naturalization Filed in New York City, 1792-1989." 2007. Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. Ancestry.com [database on-line].
[582] Don Hearn. 1958. "Tips on Tables." *The Washington Daily News*, April 17, 1958. Newspapers.com.
[583] Ibid.

more conservative viewers. Similar to other nightclubs in the area, the Wheel Bar pushed against cultural norms to feature non-orthodox performances.

The last advertisement found for the Wheel Bar was for the 1960 to 61 New Year's Eve show, featuring Smokey Mac and the Twiliters, as well as exotic dancers.[584] Seven months later, the Wheel Bar was gone and replaced with a bistro, Maxine's Basin Street.[585] At some point, the plot of land the Wheel Bar sat upon and the surrounding parcels were razed and replaced by the Port Towns Shopping Center by 1987. Unfortunately, the research for this context statement did not yield any images of the Wheel Bar.

[584] *The Washington Daily News*. 1960. "Gala New Year's Eve!!," December 30, 1960. Newspapers.com.
[585] Don Hearn. 1961. "Tips on Tables." *The Washington Daily News*, June 30, 1961. Newspapers.com.

Future Research

This county-wide project was under strict time constraints, limited to a single academic semester in the University of Maryland Historic Preservation HISP 650 course. A short turnaround for such a geographically large area required quick research and writing deadlines.

Every single aspect of this context statement could be expanded upon. The nine team members of Crescendo Preservation made a good-faith effort to cover multiple different aspects of live music history in Prince George's County in as much detail as possible. This project encompasses over one hundred sites and over one hundred years of history. To adequately complete this context statement, the team made some judgment calls to finish the project within the time constraints. For instance, the team covered roughly 100 years of history in a spatial context and not the entire detailed history of the county's music history, as much of this information is covered in *Musical Maryland: A History of Song and Performance from the Colonial Period to the Age of Radio* by David K. Hildebrand and Elizabeth M. Schaaf.[586] Much of the information provided in the first two iterations of the "Sounds of Prince George's County" began in the early 20th century and continued through the latter half of the century.

The team made an additional judgment call to restrict the field survey to a limited number of key sites rather than every extant building involved in the county's history. Each team member chose two to three key sites that they deemed essential to Prince George's County history after conducting research through identification and genre context. Although a field survey of every site would be a more comprehensive context, surveying over one hundred sites in an equal amount of detail was not possible within the time allowed and would be a disservice to many sites that would not receive the same level of research.

In addition to time constraints, the team also was limited by the material preserved in archives. Due to various factors, including the personal interests of those who saved materials and the ephemeral nature of band posters, zines, and flyers, not every genre, music venue, or band that performed in Prince George's County is represented in the archival record.

The scope of this project found evidence of diverse soundscapes in Prince George's County. The research presented includes the histories of women, Black and African American, Latinx, Caribbean, Native American, and LGBTQ+ communities from 1910 to 2010. Further research should consider groups that have only recently had a presence in the county, or that have represented small percentages of the population with little recorded history in the area. Current census records indicate that the county is also home to Asian Americans, representing 4.3% of the population, and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, representing 0.2% of the population.[587] Seven percent of the residents in the county live with a disability, which is often an underrepresented faction in historical research.[588]

[586] David K. Hildebrand, and Elizabeth M Schaaf. 2017. *Musical Maryland: A History of Song and Performance from the Colonial Period to the Age of Radio*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
[587] United States Census Bureau, "Quick Facts: Prince George's County, Maryland."
[588] Ibid.

Conclusion

Prince George's County has a long and diverse history of live music, as seen through its related sites and structures. Crescendo Preservation, a team of nine graduate students in the Historic Preservation program and enrolled in the HISP650 course at the University of Maryland, researched live music venue history from 1910-2010 in the county as part of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's (M-NCPPC) series, "The Sounds of Prince George's County." This research identified several important genres including, but are not limited to: Gospel, Country, Bluegrass and Folk, Blues, Soul, R&B, Jazz, Big Band, Latin, Heavy Metal and Rock, Caribbean, Disco, go-go, Punk, Rap and Hip-hop. This research also identified 129 music venue sites, choosing to focus on 27 key sites. By analyzing the intersection of genres with the built environment, three major themes including Cultural, Craft, and Governance, revealed the embedded history of music and musical performance in Prince George's County. The Cultural theme explored the intersection of music in Prince George's County with different groups, including African Americans, women, people in the LGBTQ+ community, religious or spiritual groups, and youth. The Craft theme, on the other hand, explored subthemes of entrepreneurship, technology, dance, and the DIY/grassroots movement experienced at several venues throughout Prince George's County. Lastly, the Governance theme explored how different laws, both at the local, state, and national levels, influenced the experience of music in the county.

It is abundantly clear that music is an integral part of Prince George's County's history. The project identified extant and non-extant sites that deeply contribute to this history. A few of these sites appear eligible for the NRHP. Other sites are more significant locally – all twenty-seven key sites that are not already should be considered for individual listing on the Maryland Register of Historic Properties. Music-based amendments to preexisting reports would be a good way to incorporate the music history of the county into historical documentation. The remaining resources (Appendix II) should be utilized in future research projects to build out their histories better.

Historic preservation typically focuses on the tangible remains of history within the built environment. This is reinforced through national mandates that determine what preservation focuses on, namely the four criteria for significance, the integrity of the space, and the combined worth of these factors in becoming eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This project is unique as it expands the purview of preservation to consider the intangible moments of history, formed (or in this case, performed) in the liminal spaces of the built environment frequently threatened by development in Prince George's County. The role of music is often an intangible part of history that is difficult to preserve given the ephemeral nature of performances. However, it is an essential part of history that shapes the identity of places, communities, and individuals. This report determines that large parts of this history can still be told through the preservation of space where this music has been performed and enjoyed. By expanding and connecting music to broader historical contexts within the collective national memory, live music sites can be permanently marked as worthy of preservation.

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Katherine (Katie) Gill



Co-Project Lead and Researcher

Katie Gill is a dual Applied Anthropology and Historic Preservation Master's student at the University of Maryland. She has a background in Anthropology, Museum Studies, and Art History from St. Mary's College of Maryland. Gill has worked at Archaeological sites primarily in the Middle-Atlantic and Virgin Islands as a researcher and in Cultural Resource Management. Recently Gill has been a coauthor on a chapter with Julia King and Scott Strickland, titled *Colonoware in the Rappahannock River Valley of Virginia*, c. 1665-1780 In Materializing Colonial Identities in Clay. Edited by Chris Rodning. Currently she is a Graduate Research Assistant in the Historic Preservation Archaeology Lab at the University of Maryland.

Favorite Song: John Wallace- The East Pointers

Ericka Kauffman



Co-Project Lead and Researcher

Ericka Kauffman is a Historic Preservation Master's student at the University of Maryland. She has a Bachelor's degree in Corporate Communications from Lycoming College and professional work experience at the Hershey Company and Amazon. Most recently, she has had internships at the Historic Harrisburg Association and the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office. She works now as a Teaching Assistant for the Historic Preservation 200 undergraduate course at the University of Maryland. Her favorite area of research is south central Pennsylvania history, especially concerning underrepresented histories.

Favorite Song: Work Song – Hozier

Rachel Wilkerson



Co-Project Lead and Researcher

Rachel Wilkerson is a graduate student in the Historic Preservation Master's program at the University of Maryland. They have a Bachelor of Science in Anthropology and have previously interned with the D.C. Office of Planning and State Historic Preservation Office as well as the National Park Service, National Capital Area's Regional Archaeology Program. Their work has largely focused on historical archaeology, the curation of archaeological collections, and digital documentation methods. Currently, they hold a Graduate Assistantship in the Historic Preservation Archaeology Lab at the University of Maryland.

Favorite Song: Blue Ridge Mountains - Fleet Foxes

Amanda Arcidiacono



Social Media Specialist and Researcher

Amanda is a graduate student in the Historic Preservation Master's program at the University of Maryland. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in History and Museum Studies from St. Mary's College of Maryland. Prior to starting graduate school at the University of Maryland, Amanda worked as a consultant and business analyst in both higher education and non-profit management. Amanda recently interned with Historic Jamestowne in their artifact conservation and development departments. Currently, she is a graduate assistant for engagement and outreach for the Historic Preservation program at UMD and a content writer and social media specialist for UMD's school of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.

Favorite song: Angelina- Pinegrove or Someday- The Strokes



Wanjiru Duncan

Graphic Designer and Researcher

Wanjiru Duncan is a Historic Preservation and Architecture student at the University of Maryland. Her undergraduate studies in architecture led her to discover historic preservation, and she has a passion for local history. This past summer, she worked as an architectural historian intern with the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) on a local history project that analyzed vernacular architecture in Central Maryland.

Favorite Song: Who's Gonna Save You Now? - Rina Sawayama

Celia Engel



Editor and Researcher

Celia Engel is a graduate student in the Historic Preservation Master's program at the University of Maryland. She has a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology from Towson University. She has been working in Cultural Resources Management at Applied Archaeology and History Associates since 2018, where she began her career as an archaeological field technician and is now Assistant Project Manager. Recently, she completed an internship with Anne Arundel County's historic preservation program, documenting agricultural outbuildings.

Favorite Song: Let's Dance - David Bowie

Caitlin Hall



Media Licensing Specialist and Researcher

Caitlin Hall is a dual Applied Anthropology and Historic Preservation Master's student at the University of Maryland. She has a background in Anthropology and History from St. Mary's College of Maryland where she specialized in Contact Period archaeology in the Chesapeake. Hall has worked as an assistant archaeologist across a multitude of sites, collaborated on the production of National Register nominations, and currently works as an Archaeology Pathways Intern doing Section 106 compliance work for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Maine.

Favorite Song: Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes - Jimmy Buffett

Rebecca (Becki) Lanza

*Media Licensing Specialist and Researche*r

Becki Lanza is a graduate student in the Historic Preservation Master's program at the University of Maryland. Her professional career has centered on small business management and she has a passion for history and architecture.

Favorite Song: All I Wanted Was You- Paramore



Elizabeth (Liz) Rekowski

Editor and Researcher

Liz Rekowski is an attorney with experience in both the private and public sectors, particularly within the federal government. Currently, she is a second-year graduate student in the Historic Preservation Master's Program at the University of Maryland. This past summer, she was an intern with the Historic Preservation Section of the Planning Department at M-NCPPC.

Favorite Song: Satisfied, Reneé Elise Goldsberry, Hamilton: An American Musical



Appendices

Appendix I: Deliverables

Posters


LIVE!
FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
EXPLORING THE HISTORY OF MUSIC AND PLACE
DECEMBER 12, 2024
5:00PM - 7:00PM
HISP
650
AT
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
TAWES HALL, ROOM 0310
7751 ALUMNI DRIVE,
COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742
PARKING IS LOCATED IN LOT 1B, 1C, AND 1D IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING
LEARN MORE:
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M-NCPPC
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
Planning Department
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING & PRESERVATION
PALS
Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability
WANJIRU DUNCAN CELIA ENGEL BECKI LANZA AMANDA ARCIDIACONO ERICKA KAUFFMAN RACHEL WILKERSON CAITLIN HALL KATIE GILL LIZ REKOWSKI

MOYAONE SIS'S TAVERN BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL THE CAPITAL CENTRE CLUB HILLBILLY BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY KING KONG RESTAURANT GEE'S O'BRIEN'S

JIMMY COMBER'S SUPPER CLUB THE LAS VEGAS CLUB THE 4400 CLUB MELODY BALLROOM GREENBELT YOUTH CENTER CROSSROADS THE PARAGON & THE CELLAR WMUC CLASSICS

CLUB LA CONGA CLUB LEBARON LARGO HIGH SCHOOL COLE FIELD HOUSE NYUMBURU CULTURAL CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND THE SHOWPLACE ARENA GEORGE'S TAVERN

LIVE! FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

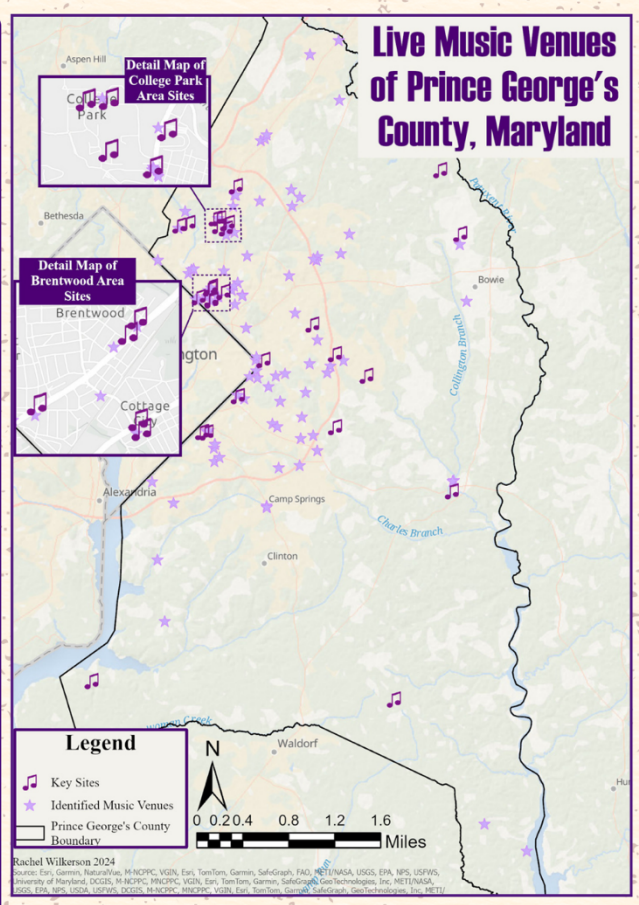
Background

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY IS LOCATED PRIMARILY IN THE COASTAL PLAIN OF MARYLAND, CHARACTERIZED BY ITS PROXIMITY TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND A FLAT OR GENTLY ROLLING LANDSCAPE WITH TIDAL WATERWAYS FED BY THE CHESAPEAKE, POTOMAC AND PATUXENT RIVERS. PRIOR TO SETTLER COLONIALISM, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY WAS FORESTED BY HARDWOODS AND THE RUSHES, SAGES, AND GRASSES OF TIDAL ESTUARIES. THESE NATURAL RESOURCES WERE A PART OF THE LIFEWAYS OF THE PISCATAWAY, A STATE-RECOGNIZED TRIBE WHOSE PARTIAL ANCESTRAL HOMELAND RESIDES IN PRESENT-DAY PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY.

BEFORE COLONIZERS ESTABLISHED POLITICAL BOUNDARIES DEFINING THE STATE AND COUNTIES IN MARYLAND AND BEFORE COLONIZERS PERFORMED MUSIC ON LAND THEY BELIEVED BELONGED TO NO ONE, THE PISCATAWAY PERFORMED THEIR OWN SONGS AND DANCES. PISCATAWAY MUSIC EXISTED, AND CONTINUES TO EXIST, ON THREE DIFFERENT PLANES– SOCIAL, SPIRITUAL (AS BOTH MEDICINE AND FOR HEALING), AND PERSONAL. MUSIC IS PERFORMED FOR DANCES, SOCIAL GATHERINGS, HONORING OF LIFE EVENTS, HEALING, AND COMING HOME.

OFFICIALLY ESTABLISHED IN 1696 AS A PART OF THE EARLY MARYLAND COLONY, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HAS BEEN HISTORICALLY A MIX OF URBAN AND RURAL, FARMING AND MANUFACTURING. THE COUNTY'S PROXIMITY TO THE NATION'S CAPITAL, CHESAPEAKE BAY, AND SIGNIFICANT COASTAL CITIES LIKE BALTIMORE AND ANNAPOLIS HAVE EACH HAD THEIR IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY AND PRACTICES WITHIN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY. AS AN EARLY PORT TOWN, IN 1752 UPPER MARLBORO STAGED WHAT MAY BE THE EARLIEST AMERICAN OPERA AND ORCHESTRAL ACCOMPANIMENT. FORMAL MUSIC IN EARLY PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DID NOT HAVE SPECIFIC STRUCTURES ASSOCIATED WITH IT– MUSIC WAS PERFORMED IN MULTIPURPOSE SPACES SUCH AS CONVERTED BARNS, WAREHOUSES, AND CHURCHES.

FROM THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY THROUGH THE EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, A WEALTH OF MUSIC AND MUSIC GENRES WERE PERFORMED WIDELY IN THE UNITED STATES AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY. GENRES PERFORMED INCLUDED BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO GOSPEL, COUNTRY, BLUEGRASS AND FOLK, RHYTHM AND BLUES, JAZZ, BIG BAND, LATIN, HEAVY METAL AND ROCK, CARIBBEAN, DISCO, GO-GO, PUNK, RAP AND HIP-HOP. THE POPULARITY AND PRESENCE OF THESE GENRES IN THE COUNTY EXPANDED LARGELY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GROWTH OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND FOLKS FLOCKING TO WASHINGTON D.C. AS D.C. EXPANDED, SO DID PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY. THE NUMBER OF INCORPORATED COMMUNITIES, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND CHURCHES GREW THROUGHOUT THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY TO ACCOMMODATE THOSE WORKING IN D.C. AND WITHIN THE BURGEONING UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SYSTEM. SOON, THE CAPITAL BELTWAY PASSED THROUGH PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, AND WITH IT, THE NEED AND DESIRE OF TRAVELERS TO PARTAKE IN THE NIGHTLIFE AND MUSIC SCENE OF THE COUNTY.





THIS PROJECT EXPLORES THE MUSIC VENUES OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY IN ORDER TO TELL ITS UNIQUE HISTORY OF MUSIC, COMMUNITY, AND PLACE. CONTEXTUALIZING THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSIC IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRAFT, GOVERNANCE, AND CULTURE, THIS PROJECT RECOGNIZES THAT MUSIC IN THE COUNTY HAS LONG BEEN ENSHRINED BY LOCAL ARTISTS IN MURAL AND SCULPTURAL WORKS IN THE FORM OF PUBLIC ART. THIS IS ONE FORM OF RECOGNIZING THIS IMPORTANT HISTORY, ADJACENT TO THIS IS THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THESE SPACES ON THE LANDSCAPE.

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IMAGES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AND TOP TO BOTTOM:
WILKERSON, RACHEL. 2024. LIVE MUSIC VENUES IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, SITES IDENTIFIED BY CRESCENDO PRESERVATION TEAM. ; PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE GILL, MUSIC HISTORY, BLADENSBURG, MELISSA GLASSER BRUZERA, 2024.

LEARN MORE

WILMER'S PARK THE WHEEL BAR EVAN'S GRILL THE QUONSET INN STRICK'S RESTAURANT RITCHIE COLISEUM DIXIE PIG ARMSTRONG'S BASTILLE FRIENDLY INN

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LIVE! FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY sites



CROSSROADS

CROSSROADS WAS ONCE A PREMIERE REGGAE NIGHTCLUB IN BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND. BUILT IN 1941, THE SITE OPERATED AS A NIGHTCLUB FROM THE BEGINNING, ORIGINALLY CALLED CROSS ROADS CAFE, FEATURING LIVE MUSIC PERFORMANCES REPRESENTING A VARIETY OF GENRES. NOTABLY, FAMOUS JAZZ AND POP MUSICIAN TONY BENNETT PERFORMED AT THE CLUB FOR ONE WEEK ONLY IN 1953. IN THE MID-1990S, ALTON GAYLE, A JAMAICAN IMMIGRANT, BOUGHT THE NIGHTCLUB AND REFOCUSED THE LIVE MUSIC GENRE TO REGGAE. THE VENUE BECAME A HOTSPOT FOR CARIBBEAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE IN THE GREATER D.C. AREA, DRAWING IN BIG-NAME PERFORMANCES FROM STEPHEN MARLEY AND SIZZLA, AS WELL AS SMALLER MUSICIANS. UNFORTUNATELY, THE NIGHTCLUB CLOSED IN 2012 AND HAS REMAINED VACANT EVER SINCE; HOWEVER, THE LEGACY OF THE NIGHTCLUB LIVES ON. IN 2024, THE SALE SIGN LISTED ON THE BUILDING ADVERTISES THAT THE STRUCTURE WAS ONCE THE FAMOUS NIGHTCLUB.

SIS'S TAVERN

SIS'S TAVERN IS A HISTORIC JUKE JOINT LOCATED IN THE NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT OF NORTH BRENTWOOD, THE FIRST BLACK COMMUNITY INCORPORATED IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY IN 1924. CONSTRUCTED CIRCA 1912 AS A GROCERY, SIS'S HAS A VIBRANT HISTORY AS A STORE, NIGHTCLUB, AND BARBERSHOP. MARIE ALICE WALLS, KNOWN TO MANY AS MS. SIS, TRANSFORMED THE SPACE INTO SIS'S TAVERN IN THE 1950S, HOSTING FAMOUS MUSICIANS LIKE DUKE ELLINGTON AND PEARL BAILEY, AS WELL AS PERFORMANCES BY BURLESQUE DANCERS AND "FEMALE-IMPERSONATORS." MS. SIS WAS ALSO KNOWN TO HIRE LOCAL MUSICIANS TO PLAY AT SIS'S, INCLUDING A BAND KNOWN AS THE D.C. TORNADOS THAT SHE MANAGED. IN THE 1960S AND 70S, MS. SIS BEGAN DEVELOPING HER REAL ESTATE EMPIRE THROUGH THE PURCHASE OF ELEVEN INDIVIDUAL LOTS IN NORTH BRENTWOOD ALONE, INCLUDING THE OFFICIAL PURCHASE OF SIS'S TAVERN FROM EMMA HAWKINS IN 1966. WHILE SIS'S BECAME NOTORIOUS FOR SUCH ILLICIT ACTIVITIES AS GAMBLING RINGS, GUN VIOLENCE, BRAWLS, AND THE ILLEGAL SALE OF ALCOHOL, IT REMAINED A CENTRAL HUB OF SOCIAL LIFE AND ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE TOWN AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES UNTIL ITS CLOSURE IN 1969-1970. IN 1978, DELORIS R. SPRIGS PURCHASED AND REOPENED THE SPACE AS BABY DEE'S GUEST CLUB UNTIL 1996.





BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL

SITES OF GO-GO CAN BE DIFFICULT TO SURVEY BECAUSE MANY ARE INFORMAL, HAVE LOST INTEGRITY, OR ARE NO LONGER EXTANT. PARKING LOTS, METRO STATIONS, BASEMENTS, GARAGES, PARKS, CLUBS, AND LARGE-SCALE VENUES ALL PLAYED IMPORTANT ROLES IN GO-GO SOUNDSCAPES IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY. HIGH SCHOOLS WERE ANOTHER IMPORTANT SETTING FOR GO-GO ARTISTS AS THE GENRE IS INEXTRICABLY TIED TO YOUTH CULTURE. BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL WAS BUILT IN 1965 DURING A PERIOD OF SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT CATERING TO WHITE, MIDDLE-CLASS HOMEOWNERS. THE 1970S SAW GENTRIFICATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C., DISPLACING MANY AFRICAN AMERICANS WHO ESTABLISHED THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES AND SOUNDSCAPES IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY. KATO HAMMOND, A PROMINENT GO-GO ARTIST AND CURATOR OF THE TAKE ME OUT TO THE GO-GO ONLINE ARCHIVE ATTENDED BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL AND STATES IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY THAT MANY GO-GO ARTISTS LEARNED MUSIC THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL BANDS AND WERE ABLE TO HONE THEIR CRAFT AT EVENTS BOTH ON AND OFF SCHOOL GROUNDS. OTHER NOTABLE BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI INCLUDE J.C. CHASEZ OF NSYNC, CHRIS VOLZ OF FLAW, AND EVA CASSIDY. EVA CASSIDY WAS A JAZZ SINGER WHO ALSO WORKED WITH THE GODFATHER OF GO-GO, CHUCK BROWN.

WMUC

WMUC, THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND'S STUDENT-RUN RADIO STATION, HAS A RICH HISTORY IN MUSIC BROADCASTING, LIVE PERFORMANCES AND ALTERNATIVE CULTURE. ESTABLISHED IN 1948, IT HAS LONG SERVED AS AN OUTLET FOR STUDENTS AND LOCAL MUSICIANS TO CONNECT WITH BROADER AUDIENCES. WMUC HAS CHAMPIONED UNDERGROUND AND EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC, PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR VOICES AND GENRES OFTEN UNDERREPRESENTED IN MAINSTREAM MEDIA. ONE OF ITS MOST NOTABLE PROGRAMS, THIRD RAIL, LAUNCHED IN 1996 AND IS DEDICATED TO PROMOTING LIVE PERFORMANCES FROM LOCAL, INDEPENDENT, AND EXPERIMENTAL BANDS, OFTEN FEATURING A MIX OF PUNK, RAP, HIP HOP, INDIE, AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE GENRES. THIS LIVE-PERFORMANCE SHOW HAS HELPED BUILD A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY AROUND REGIONAL MUSIC AND HAS AMPLIFIED LOCAL ACTS THAT REFLECT D.C. AND MARYLAND'S DYNAMIC AND POLITICALLY AWARE MUSIC SCENE. WMUC CONTINUES TO BE A KEY CULTURAL INSTITUTION, ENGAGING THE VOICES OF EMERGING ARTISTS AND SHOWCASING THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLEGE RADIO AS A SPACE FOR MUSICAL DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL COMMENTARY.





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Images from left to right and top to bottom:
IMAGE COURTESY OF MARK OPSASNICK, 1994 ; IMAGE COURTESY OF ERICKA KAUFFMAN, 2024 ; IMAGE COURTESY OF DEVRY BECKER JONES, 2023 ; BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL 2024 (EASTERN FACADE LOOKING WEST) TAKEN BY BECKI LANZA; BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL, 2024 (SOUTHERN FACADE, VIEW LOOKING NORTH) TAKEN BY BECKI LANZA.; PHOTO COURTESY AMANDA ARCIDIACONO, 2024.

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WILMER'S PARK THE WHEEL BAR EVAN'S GRILL THE QUONSET INN STRICK'S RESTAURANT RITCHIE COLISEUM DIXIE PIG ARMSTRONG'S BASTILLE FRIENDLY INN

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LIVE! FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY sites



CAPITAL CENTRE

FROM 1973 TO 2002, LANDOVER, MARYLAND, WAS HOME TO THE CAPITAL CENTRE, A STATE-OF-THE-ART ENTERTAINMENT ARENA THAT HOSTED SPORTS, LIVE MUSIC, AND OTHER NOVELTY EVENTS. THE CAPITAL CENTRE WAS A BELOVED PIECE OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY MUSIC SCENE BROUGHT TO LIFE BY LOCAL ENTREPRENEUR AND OWNER OF THE WASHINGTON BULLETS, ABE POLLIN. POLLIN WANTED A MORE MODERN AND CONVENIENT HOME FOR HIS TEAM, AND INTRODUCED SUCH INNOVATIONS AS THE FIRST IN-ARENA TELESCREEN AND PRIVATE BOX SEATING THAT WOULD BECOME STANDARD IN ARENA CONSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT. THE CULTURE OF THE CAPITAL CENTRE WAS WELL DOCUMENTED IN SEVERAL ITERATIONS OF A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER KNOWN AS *THE CENTRE SPOTLIGHT* FROM 1974 TO 1976 AND REBRANDED AS *GOOD TIMES* UNTIL THE LATE 1980S. THE VENUE HOSTED SOME OF THE GREATEST MUSICIANS AND PERFORMERS OF ITS TIME, SUCH AS BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, HEART, FRANK SINATRA, STEVIE WONDER, ELTON JOHN, AND RARE ESSENCE.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY, THE OLDEST HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY IN MARYLAND, FIRST BEGAN IN BALTIMORE IN 1866 UNDER THE TITLE "SCHOOL NO. 1." IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1910 THAT THE STATE OF MARYLAND PURCHASED LAND IN BOWIE TO RELOCATE THE SCHOOL, OPENING IN 1911 TO STUDENTS. IN 1914 IT WAS RENAMED THE MARYLAND NORMAL AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AT BOWIE. IN 1963, THE SCHOOL TRANSITIONED TO BOWIE STATE COLLEGE AND BY 1988, TRANSITIONED A FINAL TIME TO BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY. A NUCLEUS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSIC EDUCATORS AND GOSPEL PERFORMERS, BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY IS HOME TO THE BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY GOSPEL CHOIR. PROFESSOR LEVENIS SMITH FOUNDED THE BOWIE STATE GOSPEL CHOIR IN 1975. SINCE ITS FOUNDING, THE BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY GOSPEL CHOIR, NOW LED BY PROFESSOR LATONYA WRENN, IS KNOWN FOR THEIR IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCES AND AWARDS, EVEN PERFORMING IN 2019 ON THE STEVE HARVEY SHOW.



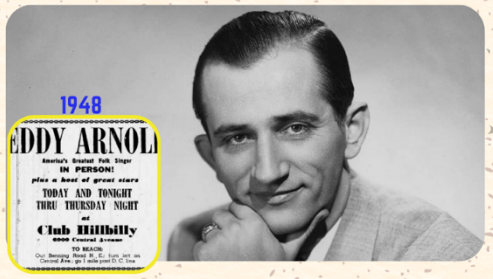


CLUB LA CONGA

CLUB LA CONGA, A LATIN AMERICAN MUSIC VENUE, OPENED IN SEPTEMBER 1942 WITH HERBERT CURBELOS AND HIS BAND AS THE FEATURED LIVE MUSIC ACT. MILT BARRETT OWNED THE NIGHTCLUB FROM AT LEAST 1947 UNTIL THE CLUB PERMANENTLY CLOSED. ALTHOUGH THE OWNERSHIP DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE LATINX OWNED AT ANY POINT, MANY OF THE PERFORMERS WERE LATINX. NOTABLE PERFORMERS INCLUDE AL DUNN AND HIS COMBO, PARRISH AND HIS CUBAN AMERICAN ORCHESTRA, CHICO CORTEZ AND HIS AUTHENTIC RUMBA BAND, AND ELENA EMEE. THE CLUB FEATURED NON-MUSIC ACTS, INCLUDING A STUNTMAN, COMICS, MIMES, BURLESQUE DANCERS, AND ADULT ENTERTAINMENT. ON JUNE 16TH, 1959, ONE OF THE APARTMENT UNITS LOCATED ABOVE THE NIGHTCLUB CAUGHT FIRE AND IRREPARABLY DAMAGED THE STRUCTURE. THE CLUB WAS DEMOLISHED AFTER THE BLAZE AND IS NOW THE SITE OF A CAR DEALERSHIP, COLLEGE PARK HYUNDAI.

CLUB HILLBILLY

MUSIC EXECUTIVE CONNIE B. GAY, WHO IS CONSIDERED TO HAVE COINED THE TERM "COUNTRY MUSIC," OPENED CLUB HILLBILLY IN 1947. BEGINNING IN 1946, GAY BEGAN BROADCASTING A LOCAL COUNTRY MUSIC RADIO STATION. HE WAS DRAWN TO PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DUE TO THE LEGALIZED DRINKING AND GAMBLING. GAY DESCRIBED CLUB HILLBILLY AS A "FANTASTIC SUCCESS", WITH PERFORMANCES BY EDDY ARNOLD, DAVE DENNEY, AND HAWKSHAW HAWKINS AND LIVE RADIO BROADCASTS FROM THE CLUB. THROUGHOUT ITS SHORT RUN, CLUB HILLBILLY SUFFERED MANY CONTROVERSIES, INCLUDING LIQUOR LICENSE LAWSUITS THAT GAY ALLEGED WERE PART OF A LARGER CONSPIRACY AGAINST HIM. THE BAR CLOSED IN DECEMBER 1948 DUE TO A FIRE AND NEVER REOPENED.



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IMAGES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AND TOP TO BOTTOM:
FRIEND, RICHARD, KEVIN LEONARD, AND JEFF KRULIK. "CAPITAL CENTRE: A RETROSPECTIVE." LAUREL, MD: LAUREL HISTORY BOYS, 2023. ; EVENING STAR. 1959. "FIGHTING STUBBORN BLAZE." JUNE 16, 1959. NEWSPAPERS.COM. HTTPS://WWW.NEWSPAPERS.COM/ARTICLE/EVENING-STAR-LA-CONGA-FIRE/154989349/ . ; DUANE LEMPKE, AERIAL VIEW OF BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, FRONT ENTRANCE, MAY 9, 2022, MAY 9, 2022, DUANE LEMPKE PHOTOGRAPHY. HTTPS://COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKI/FILE:BOWIE_STATE_UNIVERSITY_FRONT_ENTRANCE.JPG ; THE WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS. "EDDY ARNOLD AT CLUB HILLBILLY." OCTOBER 6, 1948.; COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM. "CONNIE B. GAY." ACCESSED NOVEMBER 21, 2024. HTTPS://WWW.COUNTRYMUSICHALLOFFAME.ORG/HALL-OF-FAME/CONNIE-B-GAY.

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1968



THE MELODY BALLROOM

THE MELODY BALLROOM WAS A 1940'S-ERA TEEN NIGHTCLUB LOCATED AT 34TH AND RHODE ISLAND AVENUE IN MT. RAINIER. THROUGHOUT THE 1940S THE VENUE HOSTED TRAVELING ORCHESTRAS TO PLAY BIG BAND JAZZ MUSIC, LIKELY SWING, WHICH WAS THE POP MUSIC OF THE TIME. IN THE EARLY 1940S, PERFORMANCES INCLUDED THE BOB GARBER ORCHESTRA, BILL HARWOOD AND HIS ORCHESTRA, BUZZY ELLIS' MUSIC, BUDDY WILSON'S ORCHESTRA, JIMMY LARTZ AND HIS ORCHESTRA, AND THE CHARLEY OVERLEY ORCHESTRA. THE MELODY BALLROOM POSSIBLY CLOSED BETWEEN 1943 AND 1946. IN 1946, IT WAS REOPENED BY BERT REIFKIND AND HAROLD GANS BEFORE BEING TAKEN OVER BY FRANCES AND HENRY HIER. IT WAS DESCRIBED AS "WASHINGTON'S LARGEST BALLROOM" WITH A CAPACITY OF 800 PEOPLE. THE VENUE HAD ALL THE AMENITIES OF A NIGHTCLUB, WITHOUT THE SALE OF ALCOHOL. THE CLUB APPEARS TO HAVE STOPPED HOSTING LIVE MUSICIANS IN 1951, COINCIDING WITH THE END OF THE SWING ERA.



1992

MOYAONE

MOYAONE IS HISTORICALLY THE CAPITAL OF THE PISCATAWAY CHIEFDOM, CONTAINING IMPORTANT OSSUARIES AND SPACE WHERE PISCATAWAY MUSICAL TRADITIONS TOOK ROOT. TODAY, MOYAONE, LOCATED IN PRESENT-DAY PISCATAWAY PARK ALONG THE POTOMAC RIVER, STILL ACTS AS A SPIRITUAL CEREMONY SPACE FOR THE PISCATAWAY PEOPLE. THERE IS EVIDENCE OF SETTLEMENT AT MOYAONE FROM THE LATE ARCHAIC PERIOD THROUGH THE LATE WOODLAND PERIOD. FROM THE EARLIEST BEGINNINGS IN THE CHESAPEAKE THROUGH THE PRESENT DAY, MOYAONE IS A SIGNIFICANT LOCATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF A SPACE WHERE PISCATAWAY MUSIC DEVELOPED AND CONTINUES TO BE PRACTICED. MUSIC IS PERFORMED FOR DANCES, SOCIAL GATHERINGS, HONORING OF LIFE EVENTS, HEALING, AND COMING HOME. IT ALSO SERVES AS A VEHICLE FOR CULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE PISCATAWAY COMMUNITY, AS DANCERS AND SINGERS LEARN THE ARTS BY BUILDING THEIR REGALIA AND OCCASIONALLY BY BUILDING THEIR INSTRUMENTS.

2024



THE PARAGON

THE PARAGON WAS LOCATED AT 7416 BALTIMORE AVENUE, COLLEGE PARK, AND WAS A POPULAR VENUE FOR HEAVY METAL MUSIC. IT WAS ALSO KNOWN AS THE PARAGON AND THE CELLAR RESTAURANT, THE ATTIC, AND MORE. PRIOR TO ITS HISTORY AS A HEAVY METAL MUSIC VENUE, IT WAS HOME TO A TWO-STORY BOWLING ALLEY BEFORE A 1960 FIRE SHUT IT DOWN. THE BUSINESS REOPENED AS THE ITALIAN GARDENS RESTAURANT, AND BY THE EARLY 1980S, THE OWNERS CONVERTED THE SPACE INTO A RESTAURANT WITH A MUSIC VENUE IN THE 'ATTIC'. BY THE LATE 1980S, IT WAS KNOWN AS THE PARAGON AND THE CELLAR. BANDS LIKE FRANKIE AND THE ACTIONS, PENTAGRAM, PAINTED LADY, DECEASED, UNWORLD, AND MANY OTHERS PLAYED AT THE VENUE. AFTER THE 1990S, THE VENUE CHANGED NAMES SEVERAL TIMES, FROM TERRAPIN STATION, LUPO'S ITALIAN CHOPHOUSE, THE THIRSTY TURTLE, THE BARKING DOG, AND MILKBOY ARTHOUSE. CURRENTLY, THE PARAGON'S FORMER HOME IS VACANT.

2009



WILMER'S PARK

WILMER'S PARK, LOCATED IN BRANDYWINE, MARYLAND, IS AN 80-ACRE PROPERTY HOST TO A COMPLEX OF BUILDINGS BEGINNING WITH THE DANCE HALL, APARTMENTS, RESTAURANT, OUTDOOR STAGE, AND BASEBALL FIELD. THE PROPERTY OF WILMER'S PARK WAS PURCHASED BY ARTHUR WILMER IN 1947. ARTHUR WILMER DEVELOPED WILMER'S PARK AS A DIRECT RESPONSE TO JIM CROW SEGREGATION IN THE UNITED STATES; WILMER'S PARK SERVED AS A MUSIC VENUE AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY SPACE FOR BLACK FAMILIES. EARLY IN ITS HISTORY, WILMER'S PARK WAS A MUSIC AND SPORTS VENUE; BASEBALL GAMES WERE OFTEN PLAYED ON SUNDAYS IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THIS SITE'S HISTORY. THIS VENUE HOSTED SIGNIFICANT PERFORMANCES BY OTIS REDDING, RARE ESSENCE, THE JUNK YARD BAND, CHUCK BROWN AND THE SOUL SEARCHERS, LINWOOD TAYLOR BAND, ROAD DUCKS, AND MANY MORE!

KING KONG CHINESE RESTAURANT

THE BUILDING THAT CURRENTLY HOUSES KING KONG RESTAURANT WAS BUILT AROUND 1970. ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THE FIRST RESTAURANT, THE RATHSKELLER, APPEARED IN APRIL 1971. SEVERAL RESTAURANTS OPERATED IN THE SPACE FROM 1971 TO THE PRESENT. ADVERTISEMENTS THROUGH THE YEARS SHOW THAT MUSIC AND DANCING HAVE BEEN A STAPLE OF EVERY BUSINESS IN THE SPACE. KING KONG CHINESE RESTAURANT WAS A CRUCIAL VENUE FOR LIVE PUNK MUSIC IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY. THE PROMOTERS AND BOOKERS SOUGHT TO COMPETE WITH D.C.'S PREMIER LIVE MUSIC VENUES. KING KONG HOSTED TOP TIER LOCAL ACTS, LIKE GOVERNMENT ISSUE, AS WELL AS TOURING BANDS, LIKE ZEITGEIST. IN 1985, AN ACT RAN AFOUL OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY LIQUOR BOARD BECAUSE THEIR PROMOTIONAL POSTERS WERE OFFENSIVE. THIS LARGELY ENDED KING KONG'S REIGN AS A PUNK VENUE IN THE COUNTY.



crescendo PRESERVATION

M-NCPPC PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY Planning Department

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING & PRESERVATION

PALS Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability

IMAGES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AND TOP TO BOTTOM:
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, GROUP PHOTO BY PISCATAWAY SIGN., FEBRUARY 22, 1968, FEBRUARY 22, 1968, NPGALLERY.; PHOTO COURTESY MARK OPSASNICK, 1992 18 (AUG) 7416 BALTIMORE AVENUE, COLLEGE PARK, MD (THE PARAGON AND CELLAR.; PHOTO COURTESY OF CELIA ENGEL, 2024; WILMER'S PARK: "COMPLETED PLANS AND PROJECTS - PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT." PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT, 2009, WWW.MNCPPCAPPS.ORG/PLANNING/HISTORICCOMMUNITIESSURVEY/VIEW_HSDP.CFM?ID=86B-037. ACCESSED 21 NOV. 2024. ; PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIZSBETH REKOWSKI, 2024.

LEARN MORE

WILMER'S PARK THE WHEEL BAR EVAN'S GRILL THE QUONSET INN STRICK'S RESTAURANT RITCHIE COLISEUM DIXIE PIG ARMSTRONG'S BASTILLE FRIENDLY INN

MOYAONE SIS'S TAVERN BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL THE CAPITAL CENTRE CLUB HILLBILLY BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY KING KONG RESTAURANT GEE'S O'BRIEN'S

JIMMY COMBER'S SUPPER CLUB THE LAS VEGAS CLUB THE 4400 CLUB MELODY BALLROOM GREENBELT YOUTH CENTER CROSSROADS THE PARAGON & THE CELLAR WMUC CLASSICS

CLUB LA CONGA CLUB LEBARON LARGO HIGH SCHOOL COLE FIELD HOUSE NYUMBURU CULTURAL CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND THE SHOWPLACE ARENA GEORGE'S TAVERN

LIVE! FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY Legacy

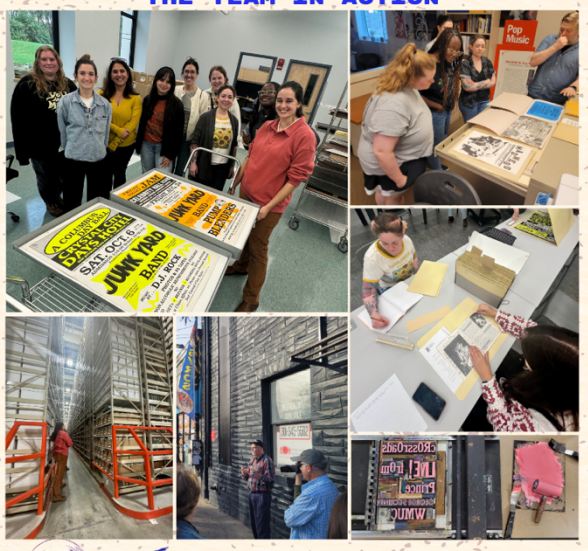
PREVIOUS WORK

"LIVE! FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY: EXPLORING THE HISTORY OF MUSIC AND PLACE" EXPANDS UPON THE PRIOR TWO ITERATIONS OF MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION'S "SOUNDS OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY" SERIES BY JULIA KUHLMAN AND AMANDA HENDERSON, RESPECTIVELY. ADDITIONALLY, THESE PROJECTS ARE HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY MARK OPSASNICK'S WORK IN *CAPITOL ROCK*.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

WHILE WE ATTEMPTED TO BE AS COMPREHENSIVE AS POSSIBLE, THIS PROJECT WAS COMPLETED UNDER MANY CONSTRAINTS, INCLUDING TIME AND AVAILABILITY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES. ALL WORK, INCLUDING RESEARCH, WRITING, AND FINAL DELIVERABLES, HAD TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN ONE SEMESTER. ADDITIONALLY, SITES OF LIVE MUSIC HAVE NOT ALWAYS BEEN CONSIDERED IMPORTANT HISTORIC RESOURCES FOR PRESERVATION AND THUS HISTORIC RESEARCH WAS LIMITED BY A LACK OF DOCUMENTATION AND EXISTENCE OF EXTANT STRUCTURES. WE HOPE OUR WORK PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

THE TEAM IN ACTION



RESEARCH PROCESS

CRESCENDO PRESERVATION VISITED SEVERAL ARCHIVES IN THE FALL OF 2024, INCLUDING THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND PUNK ARCHIVES, THE MARTIN LUTHER KING LIBRARY AT THE DC PUBLIC LIBRARY, AND THE ANACOSTIA COMMUNITY MUSEUM. DURING OUR RESEARCH WE INTERVIEWED SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS IN VARIOUS FIELDS, INCLUDING ARCHIVISTS, FORMER MUSICIANS, AND LOCAL HISTORIANS. OUR PROJECT DELIVERABLES INCLUDED A HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT, SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT, A PHYSICAL ZINE, A DIGITAL ZINE, AND SIX INTERPRETIVE POSTERS.

FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

EVERY ASPECT OF THIS PROJECT PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION. THE TIME CONSTRAINTS OF THE SEMESTER RESTRICTED THE POSSIBILITY OF RESEARCH, EVEN IF MORE COULD BE DOCUMENTED. ADDITIONALLY, WE NARROWED OUR RESEARCH TO THE TIME PERIOD OF 1910-2010, AND BELIEVE THERE ARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESEARCH OUTSIDE OF THIS TIME FRAME.

MUSIC HISTORY PRESENTS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR LEGACY RESEARCH. MANY SITES OF MUSIC ARE ENDANGERED OR NO LONGER EXTANT, AND MANY DO NOT HAVE A STRONG ARCHIVAL PRESENCE, THOUGH INSTITUTIONS LIKE THE DC PUBLIC LIBRARY ARE MAKING EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE MEMORIES OF MUSICIANS AND AUDIENCES. THE CULTURES SURROUNDING LIVE MUSIC ARE INTRINSICALLY LINKED TO THE EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS, AND IT IS CRUCIAL TO REACH OUT TO FOLKS FOR ORAL HISTORIES, RECORDINGS, AND PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION BEFORE THE ABILITY TO ACCESS LIVING MEMORIES IS LOST. LASTLY, SEVERAL SITES RESEARCHED FOR THIS PROJECT ARE ELIGIBLE FOR LOCAL AND OR NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES LISTING.

COMMUNITY EFFECTS

THIS PROJECT BRIDGES THE GAP BETWEEN THE PAST AND PRESENT OF MUSIC. WE HOPE IT SERVES A GREATER PURPOSE IN TELLING STORIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND ENCOURAGING CROSS-GENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION WHILE TOUCHING UPON THE INTANGIBLE ASPECTS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

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M-NCPPC PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY Planning Department

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING & PRESERVATION

PALS Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability

THE CRESCENDO PRESERVATION TEAM WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION, THE PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION LEARNING IN SUSTAINABILITY, AND THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING, AND PRESERVATION FOR THEIR PARTNERSHIP, SUPPORT, AND GUIDANCE.

LEARN MORE

WILMER'S PARK THE WHEEL BAR EVAN'S GRILL THE QUONSET INN STRICK'S RESTAURANT RITCHIE COLISEUM DIXIE PIG ARMSTRONG'S BASTILLE FRIENDLY INN

Zine


12.12.2024
HIP HOP GOGO
turn left on Rhode Island Ave
BIG BAND
DISCO
gospel
LIVE!
frOm Prince
GEORGE'S COUNTY
COUNTRY
Latin
ROCK N ROLL
R&B
Bluegrass
PUNK
SOUL
RAP
Blues

BY: Becki Larra, Caitlin Hall, Liz Rakowski, Ericka Kauffman, Rachel Wilkerson, Katie Gill, Celia Engel, Amanda Accidiacono, Wanjiru Duncan

FEAT.: Rachel Bissett

LIVE! From Prince George's County

From the turn of the twentieth century through the early twenty-first century, a wealth of musicians performed in Prince George's County. Genres performed included but are not limited to Gospel, Country, Bluegrass and Folk, Rhythm and Blues, Jazz, Big Band, Latin, Heavy Metal and Rock, Caribbean, Disco, Go-go, Punk, Rap and Hip-hop. The popularity and presence of these genres in the county expanded mainly in conjunction with the growth of the federal government and people moving to the Washington, D.C., area. As D.C. expanded, so did Prince George's County. The number of incorporated communities, neighborhoods, and churches grew throughout the mid-twentieth century to accommodate those working in D.C. and within the burgeoning University of Maryland system. Once constructed, the Capital Beltway (I-495) passed through Prince George's County, and with it rose the need and desire of travelers to partake in the nightlife and music scene of the county. This project explores the music venues of Prince George's County in order to tell its unique history of music, community, and place.

photo credits, front cover:
Bad Brains: Malco23, English
Jah Works: Jah Works
Archie Edwards: Hodges, Archie Edwards
Mya: Schwars1, English
Capital Centre: Friend, Leonard, and Krulik, Capital Centre.
Tension: Encyclopaedia Metallum, Tension
Ritchie Coliseum: Greenstrat, Ritchie Coliseum at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Partners:

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Planning Department

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2

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Crescendo Preservation
PRESENTS...
LIVE!
FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
EXPLORING THE HISTORY OF MUSIC AND PLACE
FEATURING
BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND
ARTISTS WHO PERFORMED IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
FOUR TUNES
BLAZE STARR
NANCY WILSON & ROGER FISHER
LITTLE BENNY AND THE MASTERS
PATSY CLINE
4

Globe Posters

Globe, founded in 1929, has a rich history tied to the evolution of music culture and the creation of iconic posters. According to the company narrative, the location of their business was chosen by folding a map, with Baltimore marked by the crease. Initially focused on showcards for vaudeville, burlesque, movies, and carnivals, Globe found its rhythm in the 1960s by producing iconic posters for R&B and rock legends like Mavis Staples, Otis Redding, Marvin Gaye, and the Beach Boys. After Norman Shapiro assumed ownership from his brother Harry in 1954, Globe thrived as a major player in the entertainment industry. In 1975, longtime employee Joseph Cicero Sr. purchased the company, later passing the business to his sons, who carried Globe's signature style into the vibrant worlds of rap, hip-hop, and Go-go. At its height, Globe produced over 20 music posters daily, cementing its legacy as a cornerstone of music promotion and cultural history. Today, Globe posters are preserved in numerous archives; most of the company's collection are now a part of the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA).

The Johns Hopkins University Special Collections holds several boxes of Globe posters, which aided in our research collection and inspired formatting for our deliverables, including the artists page in this zine and our posters.





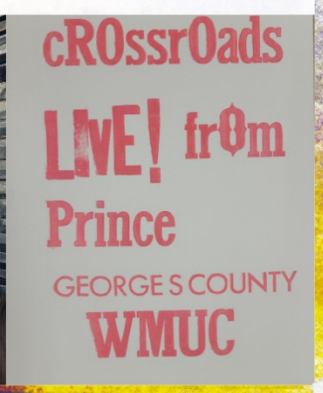




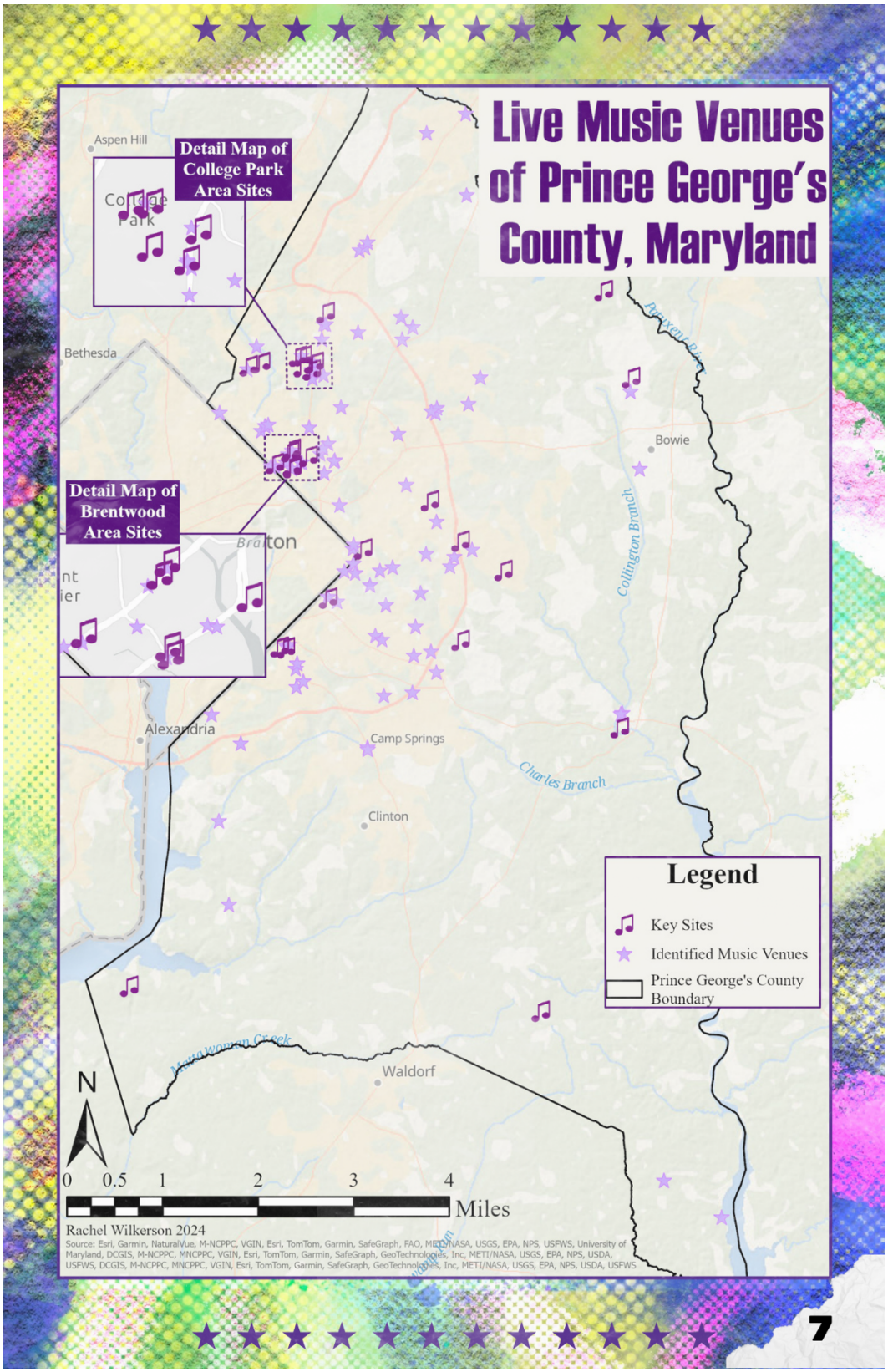
Crescendo Preservation visited several archives in the Fall of 2024, including the University of Maryland Punk Archives, the Martin Luther King Library at the DC Public Library, and the Anacostia Community Museum. During our research we interviewed subject matter experts in various fields, including archivists, former musicians, and local historians. Our project deliverables included a historic context statement, social media content, a physical zine, a digital zine, and six interpretive posters.







6


Live Music Venues of Prince George's County, Maryland
Detail Map of College Park Area Sites
Detail Map of Brentwood Area Sites
Aspen Hill
College Park
Bethesda
Bowie
Collington Branch
Alexandria
Camp Springs
Charles Branch
Clinton
Waldorf
Legend
Key Sites
Identified Music Venues
Prince George's County Boundary
N
0 0.5 1 2 3 4
Miles
Rachel Wilkerson 2024
7

THE CAPITAL CENTRE



Home to sports and live music from 1973 to 2002, the Capital Centre was an innovative entertainment arena brought to life by local entrepreneur Abe Pollin. The venue hosted performances from the likes of Elton John, Stevie Wonder, Judas Priest, and Rare Essence.

Sis's Tavern

Constructed circa 1912 as a grocery, Sis's Tavern has a vibrant history as a store, nightclub, and barbershop. The space became Sis's in the '50s, hosting famous musicians like Duke Ellington and Pearl Bailey as well as performances by burlesque dancers and "female-impersonators."





Bowie State University



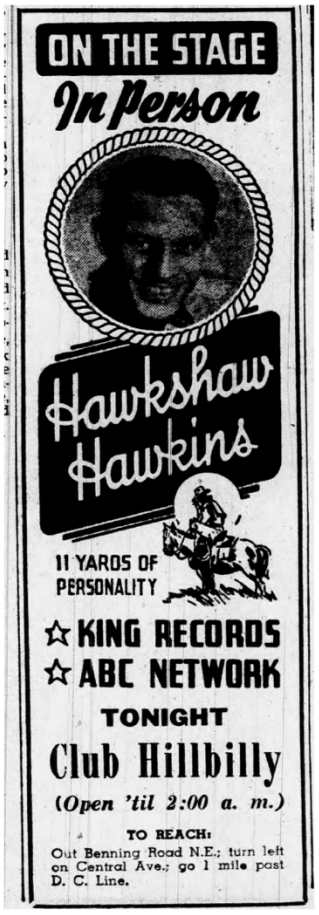
Bowie State University is the oldest historically Black college or university in Maryland. A nucleus for the development of music educators and gospel performers, BSU is home to the Bowie State University Gospel Choir, founded in 1975 by Professor Levenis Smith and now under the leadership of Professor LaTonya Wrenn.

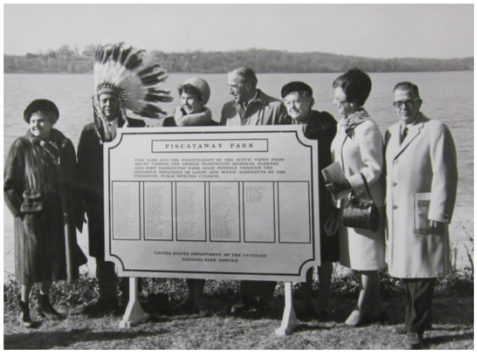


The Quonset Inn is a Quonset hut with a brick foundation repurposed as a nightclub beginning in 1944. The Quonset hosted artists like Patsy Cline, Blaze Starr, Jimmy Dean, and the Four Tunes. By the time this venue closed in 2013, it was known as the Legend.

Club Hillbilly

Connie B. Gay, who is said to have coined the term "country music," established Club Hillbilly in 1947. During its short run, acts included Eddy Arnold, Dave Denney, and Hawkshaw Hawkins. Connie B. Gay's radio station, WARL, was broadcast live from the nightclub. The venue closed in 1948 due to a fire and never reopened.





Moyaone

Moyaone is historically the capital of the Piscataway chiefdom. Located in present-day Piscataway Park along the Potomac River, Moyaone is still a spiritual ceremony space for the Piscataway people where music continues to be practiced. Music also serves as a vehicle for cultural education in the Piscataway community.



cROssrOads

Crossroads, a nightclub in Bladensburg, Maryland, opened in 1941. It became a reggae music club and restaurant in the 1990s under Jamaican owner Alton Gayle and a hotspot for Caribbean and African American culture. Music legends like Stephen Marley performed at Crossroads until its closure in 2012.

Bowie High School

High schools were an important setting for go-go artists as the genre is inextricably tied to youth culture and many musicians learned their craft through school band practice. Bowie High School, built in 1965, boasts notable alumni such as prominent go-go artist Kato Hammond, J.C. Chasez of NSYNC, Chris Volz of Flaw, and jazz singer Eva Cassidy.





Melody Ballroom

Melody Ballroom was a 1940s-era teen club, performing swing music. Swing represents one of the first times African American music dominated the mainstream. The Melody Ballroom was described as "Washington's Largest Ballroom" with a capacity of 800 people. The club appears to have stopped hosting live music in 1951, at the end of the swing era.

Paragon

The Paragon, located in College Park, was a popular venue for heavy metal music. The Paragon and the Cellar operated in the same building as a club and restaurant. Bands like Frankie and the Actions, Pentagram, Unworld, and Snydly Crunch played at the venue until the Paragon ultimately closed after losing its liquor license in 1999.



12

CLUB LA CONGA



BORN BLAZE — Firemen nies surround the La Conga 00 Baltimore boulevard to cost the life of one woman and injured seven other perso upstairs apartments had a big men before the first alarm w 5:04 a.m.—Star Staff Photo.

Club La Conga opened in 1942 and was a Latin American music nightclub. It featured Latinx performers like Chico Cortez, Herbert Curbelos, and Elena Emee, as well as non-music entertainment like stuntmen and burlesque dancers. A fire destroyed the venue in 1959, and the site is now the location of College Park Hyundai.

Wilmer's Park

An 80-acre property host to a complex of buildings beginning with the dance hall, apartments, restaurant, outdoor stages, and a baseball field. Built in the 1940s by Arthur Wilmer, the site was an important stop on the Chitlin Circuit and remained important to local music well into the 1990s and early 2000s.



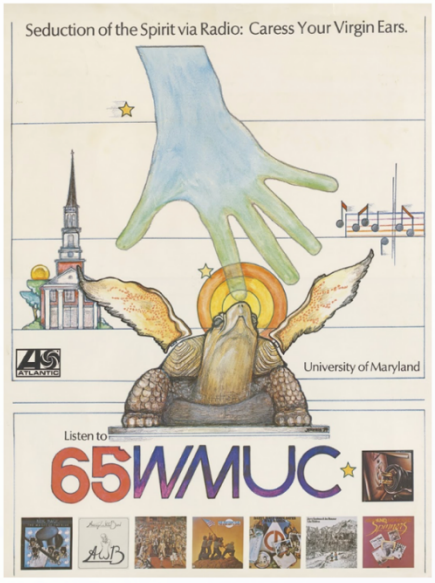


King Kong Chinese Restaurant

Several restaurants operated in this space from 1971 to the present, and all advertised music and dancing. King Kong Chinese Restaurant, circa 1983, was a crucial venue for punk music in Prince George's County, hosting both local and touring bands. The bookers sought to compete with the premier live music venues in Washington, D.C.

WMUC

WMUC, the student-run radio station at the University of Maryland, was founded in 1948. Known for its diverse programming, it became a hub for live music in the 1970s through today, hosting local bands and emerging artists. Today, WMUC remains a vibrant cultural presence at the University of Maryland.



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Photo courtesy of Mark Opsasnick, 1994.

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Photo Courtesy Mark Opsasnick, 1992 18 (Aug) 7416 Baltimore Avenue, College Park, MD (The Paragon and Cellar).

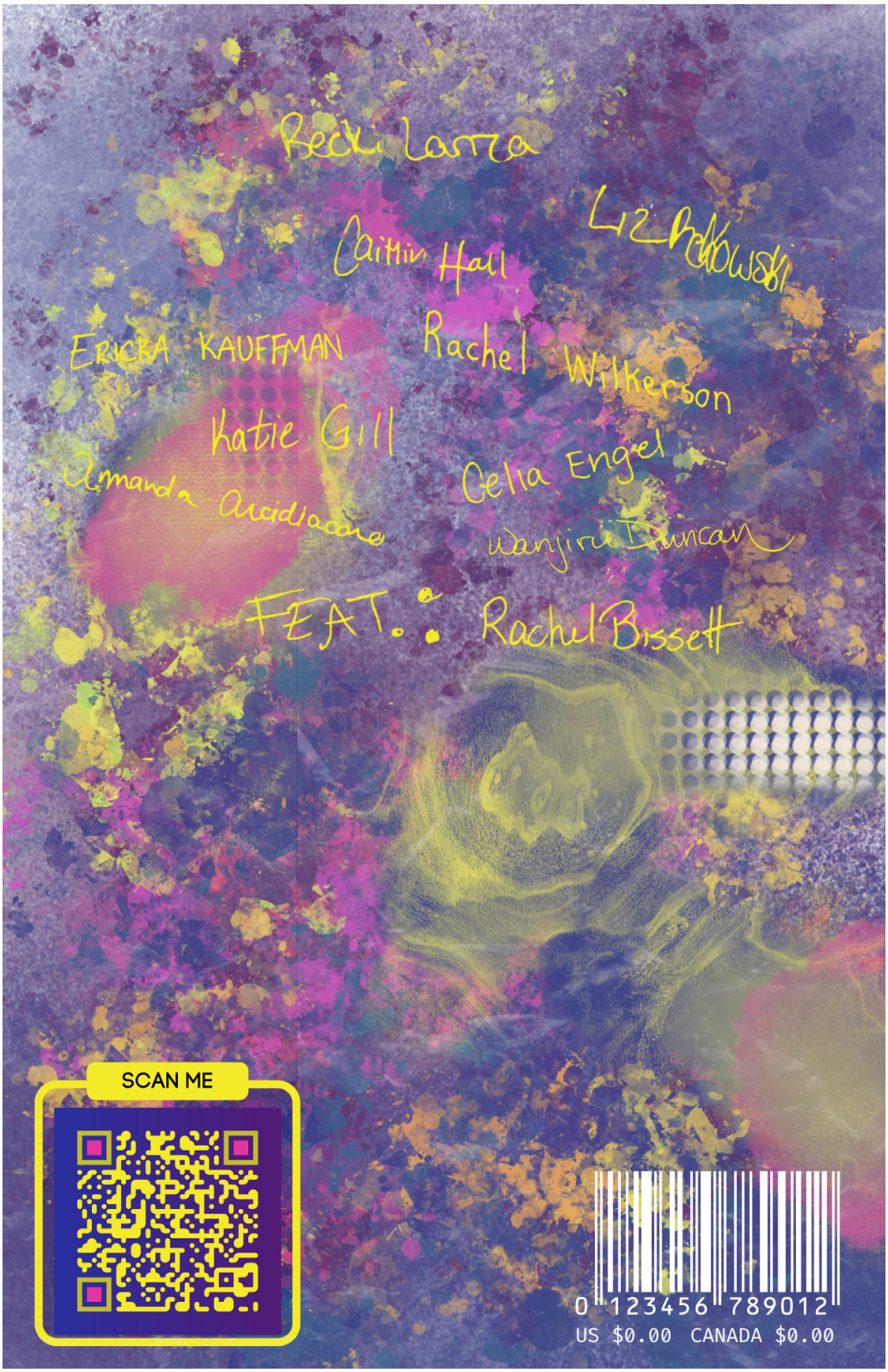
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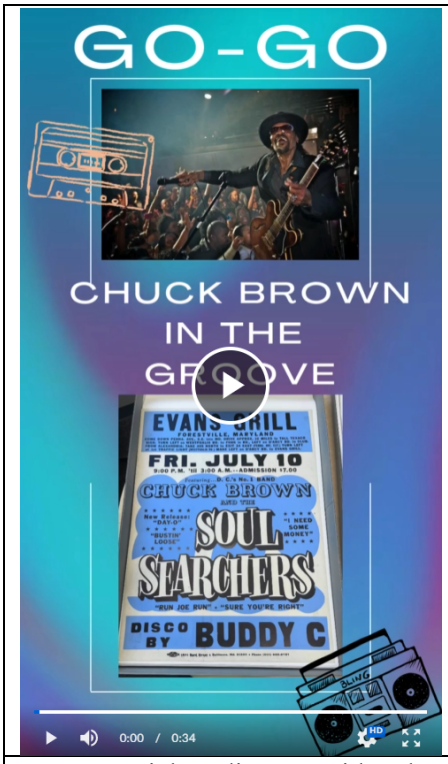
King Kong Chinese Restaurant
Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Rekowski, 2024.

WMUC
Photo Courtesy Amanda Arcidiacono, 2024

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Becki Lastra
Caitlin Hall
Liz Pelkowski
Ericka Kauffman
Rachel Wilkerson
Katie Gill
Celia Engel
Amanda Accidiacone
Wanjiru Duncan
FEAT.: Rachel Bissett
SCAN ME
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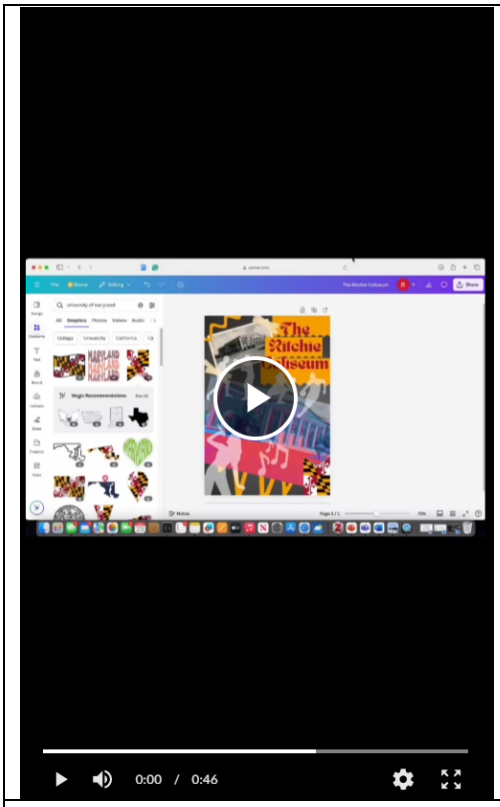
Social Media Content



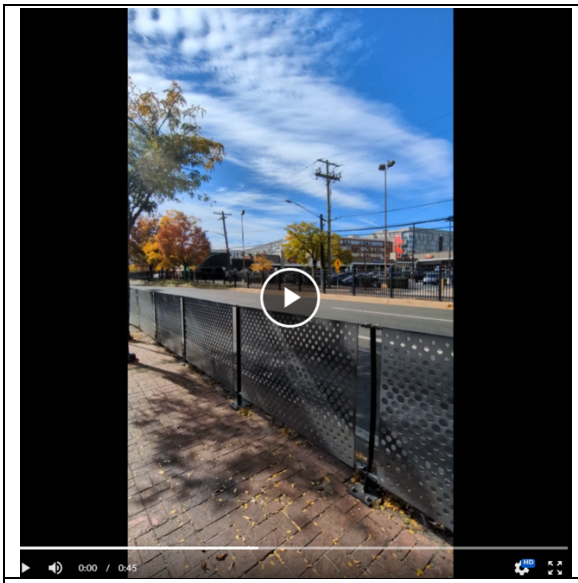
Go-go, social media post, video, length 00:34. Becki Lanza, 2024.



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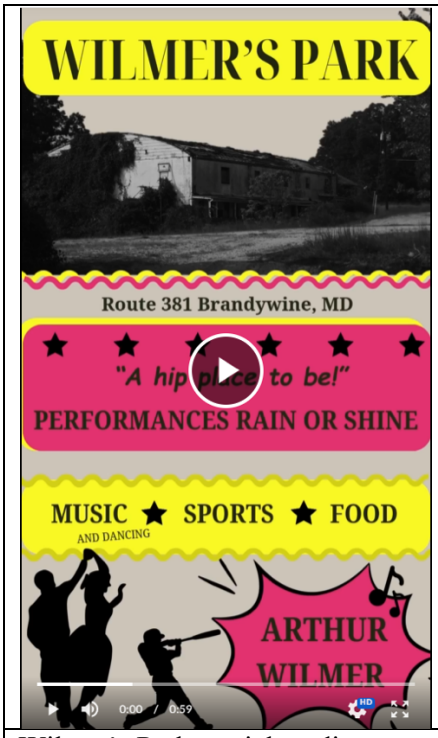
The Ritchie Colosseum, social media post, video, length 00:46. Liz Rekowski, 2024.



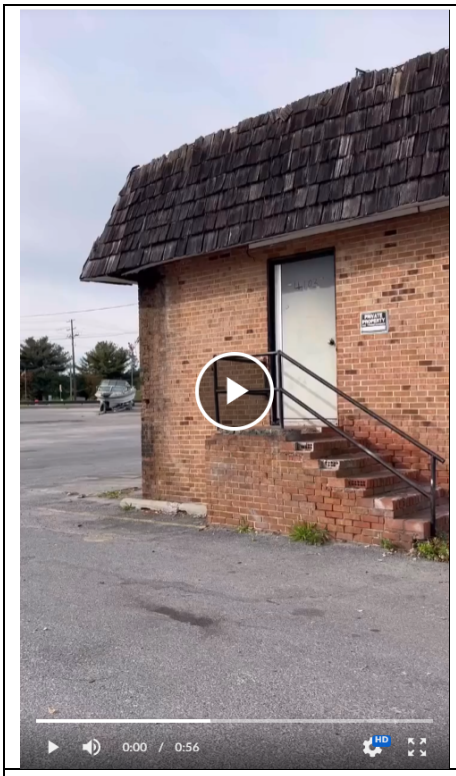
The Paragon, social media post, video, length 00:45. Wanjiru Duncan, 2024.



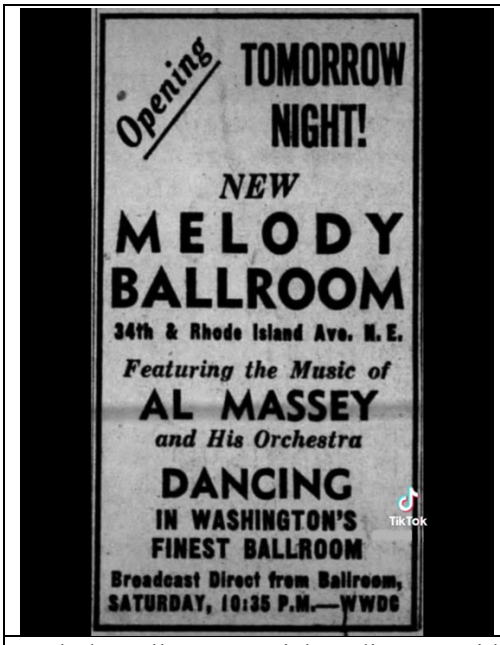
Jimmy Comber's Supper Club, social media post, video, length 00:50. Caitlin Hall, 2024



Wilmer's Park, social media post, video, length 00:59. Katie Gill, 2024.



Crossroads, social media post, video, length 00:56. Ericka Kauffman, 2024.



Melody Ballroom, social media post, video, Celia Engle, 2024.



WMUC, social media post, video, Amanda Arcidiacono, 2024.

Appendix II: Resource List

The following table is a list of all live music venues discovered in Prince George's County. This is by no means a completed and comprehensive list; this table lists all of the information that the team gathered together throughout the semester.

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
4591 Allentown Road, Suitland, MD 20746	(The) Classics	Nightclub	Disco, R&B, Go-go	1971	1981-2007	Yes	Wiseman Funeral Home	Lawrence Hillman, Chad Fentress	Classics (or the Classics) opened in 1981 as a disco, according to the Washington Post. According to the linked article, it was preceded by the Classics III Supper Club, though i need to find more info about that. It seems that the club was one of 9 nightclubs shut down by PG County Government in 2007 due to 'excessive violence.'	Gregg, Sandra R. 1981. “Prince George’s Dances Into the Black Disco Scene.” Washington Post, November 12, 1981. ; Godfrey, arah. 2019. “The History of Go-Go: A 6-Step Guide to the Essentials - Washingtonian.” October 30, 2019.
4400 Rhode Island Ave, Brentwood, MD 20722	4400 Club	Nightclub	Rock	1945	1945-2000s	Yes	Restaurant, Pollo Sabroso	William Ryan (1951), James J. "Jimmy" Comber (1951), Herbert Hertz and Bernie Dicken (1956), Geneva Curry (1986-1990s)	Refer to pg. 27 in Capitol Rock for featured acts.	Capitol Rock: Mark Opsasnick
8205 Cryden Way, Forestville, MD 20747	All Around Racing Club	Nightclub	Go-go							Poster, Nico Hobson Go-Go Collection Folder 2 in DCPL
3330 Northview Dr, Bowie, MD 20716	Allen Pond Park Ampitheatre	Recreactional Park	Rock, Latin, African, German, Indian, Reggae, Estonian	Late 1960s	1965 - present	Yes	Still Allen Pond Park		According to Bowie Blade article, Allen Pond Park hosted rock bands every friday in the summer of 1970 at the Ampitheatre. Called "Five Fridays in July" and was free. Youth bands from surrounding area participated, as well as more well-known acts. "Peat Moss" and "Poor Richard" were opening concerts in June 1970.	Mark Osasnick Bowie, MD files (The Bowie Blade, 6/25/1970)
4502 Hamilton St, Hyattsville, MD 20781	Archie Edwards Blues Foundation	Museum	Blues		2019 - present	Yes	Archie Edwards Blues Foundation - museum, education center, small music venue, jam sessions	Archie Edwards Blues Foundation	Archie Edwards was a Piedmont blues musician. He opened a barbershop in DC in the 1950s where local musicians played. He lived in Seat Pleasant from the 1950s onwards. I found some articles and interviews about him having other local blues musicians over to his house to jam. When he died, the foundation was formed in his honor, as a museum and educational center. In 2008 they moved to Riverdale, and then in 2019 to Hyattsville, their current location.	Amanda Henderson Report
101 Brightseat Rd, Landover, MD 20785	Armstrong's		Bluegrass, Country, Western		1941-1959					Amanda Henderson Report
3311 Rhode Island Avenue, Mt. Rainier, MD, 20712	Artmosphere Cafe	Cafe / Venue				Yes				Williams, Clarence. 2008. “What’s Happening.” Washington Post, August 28, 2008.
9430 Annapolis Rd, Lanham, MD 20706	Attenborough's			1961		Yes				Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
7600 Bay Way, District Heights, MD 20747	Bad Brains House Show	Residential & Punk Venue	Punk, Reggae, Hip Hop, Soul, Heavy Metal	1964		Yes	Residential		Worth pursuing with the amount of other bands that have shared lineups with Bad Brains.	Julia Kuhlman Report

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
6258 Kenilworth Avenue, Riverdale, MD 20737	Bambino's Italian Restaurant	Restaurant /Live Music / Dancing	Rock, Bluegrass, Country, Blues		`1970s	Yes	Restaurant/Other business	Terry	In the ads in the Greenbelt News Review, the address is listed as 6258 Kenilworth Avenue in Riverdale, and is now another restaurant. The band Dirty Work talk about their history on their website and mention Bambino's a lot, and mention the owner (the band played between 1970-82, roughly) was a man named Terry (no last name given)	Greenbelt News Review; Greenbelt News Review. “Bambino’s Italian Restaurant.” July 12, 1979, Volume 42, Number 34 edition. Also referenced in Lornell, “Not Seldom Heard or Scene (1977–1991).” ; p. 214 of online book "Capital Bluegrass: Hillbilly Music Meets Washington D.C."
9098 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	Bastille	Supper and Lunch Club		1940	- April 1984	Yes	"China Buffet" Restaurant	Donald Deneselya	Specifically for UMD students	Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
3021 Belair Dr, Bowie, MD 20715	Belair Jr. Teen Club	School	Jazz, Blues, Psychadelic, Rock, Soul			Yes			Belair Jr. Teen Club hosted a new band "Quality Unlimited". Also featured "The Reactions" a jazz/blues band (The Bowie Blade, 1/22/70)	Mark Opsasnick Bowie, MD Files (The Bowie Blade, 10/9/69)
4911 Prince Georges Ave, Beltsville, MD 20705	Beltsville Firehouse	Public / Municipal	Rock	1947	1947- present	Yes	Firehouse	Beltsville Volunteer Fire Department		1963 Greenbelt News Review
11500 Baltimore Ave, Beltsville, MD 20705	Beltsville Tavern	Tavern	Bluegrass						There is a building at this address, just not sure if it's the same one or new. Other potential location at 11160 Baltimore Ave, Beltsville, MD 20705.	"Bluegrass in Baltimore," pg. 107-108
2501 Olson St, Marlow Heights, MD 20748	Benjamin Stoddert Jr. High Teen Club	Teen Club			~1968-1971	Yes	School	Lois Adams ran the Teen Club but it was put on inside the school	The Marlow Heights blog has a bunch of memories and significant places to Marlow Heights and surrounding areas, idk if the teen club fits with our project but I thought it was interesting and may have more history connected to local bands. The "guestbook" part of the site is searchable and had some anecdotes about Quonset and Link Wray and might have more about the music scene. According to a comment on this blog, there may have been "teen clubs" at other schools, like Suitland high and Mt Calvary.	Chuck Fraley, marlowheights60sand70s.com
11350 Baltimore Ave, Beltsville 20705	Big Dipper	Nightclub	Country, Disco	1964	1968 -1986	No	7/11	Frank Gosman		Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
11906 Livingston Rd, Fort Washington, MD 20749	Billyjack's			2003		No	CVS			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
4213 Edmonston Rd, Bladensburg, MD 20710	Bladensburg Firehall	Public / Municipal	Rock	1954	1954 - present	Yes	Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Department		Held benefit concerts and was a venue for dances.	Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
15200 Annapolis Rd. Bowie, MD 20715	Bowie High School	School	Go-go, Marching Band, Jazz, Nu Metal, Pop	1965	1965 - present	Yes	High School			Hammond, Kato. *Take Me Out To The Go-Go: The Autobiography of Kato Hammond.* Delaware: Otakcity Publishing, 2015.

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
14000 Jericho Park Rd, Bowie, MD 20715	Bowie State University	School	Gospel, Swing	1973	1973 - present	Yes	College	University System of Maryland	Bowie Blade 3/2/1975 - Kathie & Michie Epstein appeared in Starliners' Swing Concert 3/15/1975. Sisters sang in folk group called "Pennsylvania Next Right" while attending Bowie Senior High School. Katie was soloist at 1972 GOP convention and toured in the south as a gospel singer.	Mark Opsasnick Papers: Box 4 General Music Materials." Bowie 1967-1976; Cutair, Andre. “Bowie State University: A Historical Timeline.” Explore Bowie State University’s History Since 1865. Accessed November 14, 2024.
9091 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	Brass Lantern			1939		No				Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
1266 Benning Rd, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Campus Club		Country, Bluegrass	Yes	1936 - December 1961	Yes	Freedom Way Missionary Baptist Church		Used to be located at 1429 52nd Ave, Hyattsville, MD 20781. There is a structure on the lot now, but not sure if this current building is the same one that was used for Campus Club.	Amanda Henderson Report
133 Central Ave, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Capitol Heights Metro Station	Public Transportation	Rap	1980	Present	Yes	Public transit			Julia Kuhlman Report
2430 Chillum Rd, Hyattsville, MD 20782	Carey's Pub			1956		Yes	Area Code Gentlemen's Club			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
Cedar Haven, MD	Cedar Haven Hotel / Cedarhaven Hotel	Hotel			1926 - 1955	No		J.W. Fields	"The hotel was a large bungalow equipped with gas, electricity, a garage, and a dance hall, and quickly became well known for its chicken dinners." Location is guesstimated. Recreational spot for primarily African Americans. Featured in a 6/28/1930 article of "The Afro-American" and advertised that it did not racially discriminate.	87B-039 Cedar Haven Community Description. Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. ; Baum, Sara, et al. “Changing Landscapes: Farmsteads & Resort Towns.” Final Project for HISP650: Historic Preservation Studio Workshop. University of Maryland, College Park, Fall 2019. DRUM.
715 61st Ave, Fairmount Heights, MD 20743	Charity Hall	Social Hall		1908	1908-1960	No	Vacant lot		Constructed in 1908 by the Fairmount Heights Mutual Improvement Company to serve as a hall or religious, charitable and social functions. It had many owners and renovations over the years, but continued to be used as a social hall until a fire damaged the structure in the 1960s.	Pearl, Susan G. “Prince George’s County African American Heritage Survey, 1996.” The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, October 1996. p. 78
3808 38th St, Brentwood, MD 20722	Chatterbar / Johnn'ys Tavern			1913		Yes		Theodore B. McKallon		Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
4908 Old Central Ave, Capitol Heights, Maryland 20743	Chickland Club	Club			1950-1951	No	Lot empty	James M. Harrigan	This club attempted to open as a desegregated venue twice, and was mobbed by angry white patrons the first, and set on fire the second. Said to be located in the Capitol Heights business section "across the street from a lumber yard, next door to a large gasoline station and in front of a warehouse." Unclear if there was or intended to be live music here.	Evening Star. (Washington, DC), Jul. 16 1951. https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1951-07-16/ed-1/.
6715 Central Ave, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Chubby's Restaurant	Restaurant / Bar	Country, Bluegrass		1944 - September 1989	No	Abandoned car garage and metro parking		Frank Shegogue Combo was a local rock act booked at Chubby's in summer of 1953, Frankie Mayo and the New Yorkers, Joe Stanley and His Building Rockers, Mark Ruslander (Mark Russell), Pete Rubino Quintet (Capitol Rock, Opsasnick, p 24, 28). The original structure at this address is no longer standing. Previously located at 7101 Central Avenue, Seat Pleasant, MD.	Amanda Henderson Report

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
6900 Central Ave Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Club Hillbilly	Bar	Bluegrass, Country / Western	1947	1947-1949	No	Addiction Treatment Center	Connie B. Gay		"Capital Bluegrass," pages 54-55
9410 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	Club Laconga / Dude Ranch	Restaurant / Venue	Pop Music, Rock and Roll, Latin Dance		1947 - 1959	No	College Park Hyundai	Milton Barret (1951)	Representative song according to report: Here We Go A Wassailing - the Frankie Condon Orchestra. Burned down in a fire.	Amanda Henderson Report
8133 Barlowe Rd, Hyattsville, MD 20785	Club Le Baron		Go-go, Punk, Metal		1970s-1980s	No	Empty Lot			Hammond, Kato. 2023. *Take Me Out To The Go-Go: The Autobiography of Kato Hammond.* Middletown, Delaware: Otakcity Publishing.
2031 University Blvd E, Adelphi, MD 20783	Coco Cabana	Bar				Yes	Coco Cabana		Structure is visible in the 1963 aerial, unsure of the function at this time.	Currently open.
Cole Student Activities Bldg, 4095 Union Ln, College Park, MD 20742	Cole Field House, UMD	Arena	Bluegrass	1955	1955-2002	Yes	Jones-Hill House	University of Maryland		"Capital Bluegrass," page 153
3972 Campus Dr, College Park, MD 20742	Colony Ballroom	Entertainment / Education	Punk, Rock, Reggae		1976 - present	Yes	Colony Ballroom	University of Maryland	Posters in DIGDC archive for so many bands and events.	DIGDC
4103 Baltimore Ave, Bladensburg, MD 20710	Crossroads	Nightclub / Brunch Club	Country, Rock, Blues, Reggae, Jazz, Burlesque, Carribean	1941	1941-2013	Yes	Vacant	Alton Gayle, George Saslaw	Formerly Del Rio (1937-1940), a restaurant and nightclub owned by Herby/Herbie Sachs.	Kiviat, Steve. 2013. “With Crossroads Closed, Where Will D. C.’s Caribbean Scene Settle?” Washington City Paper. August 8, 2013. ; Miller, Mark R. 1999. “A HOT SPOT IN BLADENSBURG.” Washington Post, January 27, 1999.
3132 Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748	Crystal Skating Rink	Skating Rink	Go-go, Disco	1963		Yes	Skating Rink			Eric El, local resident
6254 Marlboro Pike, Hillside, MD 20747	Detta's Musical Bar / Whitehouse / Billy's Tavern	Bar / Club	Rock	1934	1946 -1962	Yes	Commercial- Liquor store	Ethel Thomas, Henry Meyer, Kenneth Showers ; Jack Maggio ; William Kasulke	Refer to pg. 28 in Capitol Rock for featured acts. Originally 6254 Marlboro Pike, moved in 1967. Other potential location at 5256 Marlboro Pike, Capitol Heights, MD 20743.	Capitol Rock: Mark Opsasnick
3804 Bladensburg Road, Cottage City, MD 20722	Dixie Pig / Oriental House / Chesapeake Cafe	Restaurant / Venue	Country, Hillbilly, Rock	1935	1927-1989	Yes	Innovative Renal Care Universal Dialysis Center	Benjamin Minovitz, William Rubin (1954)	Previously located at 4500 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD from 1927-1952 (fire) - this locations structure is no longer extant.	Capitol Rock: Mark Opsasnick
4308 Rhode Island Ave, Brentwood, MD 20722	Duffy's Tavern / Scotty's Bar & Grill	Tavern / Bar		1930	1949-1962	Yes	Little Miner Taco - Brentwood	John & Iolene Duffy		Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
7603 Marlboro Pike, District Heights, MD 20747	El Rancho			1950		Yes	Eddie Leonard’s Carryout & Laundromat			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
1600 Fedex Way, Greater Landover, MD 20785	FedEx Field Parking Lot	Stadium	Alternative, Rock, Punk	1996	1997 - present	Yes	Northwest Stadium		Hosted HFStival when it wasn't at RFK Stadium.	Julia Kuhlman Report
5723 Tuxedo Rd, Hyattsville, MD 20781	Friendly Inn			1958		Yes	Oasiz Bar & Restaurant			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
3415 52nd Ave, Hyattsville MD 20781	Gee's			1959	? - present	Yes	Gee's Liquor / Jamaica Gee's			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
4811 Edmonston Rd, Hyattsville, MD 20781	George's Tavern			1920		Yes	Taco Rico Restaurant	George Fant	Can't tell if this is the same structure or if it has been rebuilt, but it seems like there's been continuous occupation based on Historic Aerials.	Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
6527 Suitland Rd, Morningside, MD 20746	Get Down Boogie					No	V.F.W Post No. 9619		New building constructed between 1964 and 1980	Punk Archives/Unicorn Times
7100 Greenbelt Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770	Greenbelt Armory	Military / Community Center	Rock	1954		Yes	Vacant	United States of America	There is footage of this group on youtube.	1963 Greenbelt News Review
101 Greenhill Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770	Greenbelt Baptist Church	Religious	Gospel	1958	1958 - present	Yes	Church	Greenbelt Baptist Church	Could potentially find more information about the Pastor which may lead to more information about the congregation and events held there.	1963 Greenbelt News Review
3210 Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748	Half-Shell / Scotty's	Restaurant	Country, Go-go	1948	1953 - 1968	Yes	Restaurant and convenience store			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
6410 Old Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748	Hangar Club	Bar / Restaurant	Go-go	1968	1972 - present	Yes	Hangar Club	Nick Simonetta		Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
9001 Annapolis Rd, Lanham, MD 20706	Hardwicks Eating House	Restaurant			~1978	Yes	Latest function as Peru's Chicken		The advert says there was "live entertainment"; branded matchbooks for sale online show it may have been a small local chain with some in VA too	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 9 from November 1978 (UMD Cap Centre archives Box 3)
3737 Branch Ave, Hillcrest Heights, MD 20748	Harmony Hut (Iverson Mall)	Record Store		1967	~1978	Yes	Shopping mall		Now called "The Shops at Iverson"	Found an ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 15 from June-July 1978 (Cap Centre archives Box 3) ; Mayer, Caroline E. 1983. “American Can Buys Harmony Hut Stores.” Washington Post, December 31, 1983.
6065 Central Ave, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Helen's Tavern			1935		Yes				Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
4857 Marlboro Pike, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Hilltop Restaurant/the Las Vegas Club	Restaurant / Bar	Jazz		1937-1953	No	A 7/11		Closed 1953, refer to pg. 28 of Capitol Rock for featured acts information.	Amanda Henderson Report

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
5439 Annapolis Rd, Bladensburg, MD 20710	Iron Castle Inn			1939		Yes	Restaurant "Pho Tai 63"		Not sure if the current structure is the same, but it has at least been the same since 1963 based on Historic Aerials.	Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
7416 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	Italian Gardens		Bluegrass, Country, Folk	1962		Yes	Vacant			“Mark Opsasnick Papers: Box 4 General Music Materials.” n.d. Box 4. - Unicorn Times pg 10 Feb 1975
4318 Rhode Island Ave, Brentwood, MD 20722	Jimmy Comber's Supper Club / Waldrop's Resturant	Restaurant / Nightclub	Pop Jazz, Swing, Rock			Yes	Church		Refer to pg. 28 Capitol Rock for featured acts	Amanda Henderson Report
4504 Rhode Island Ave, North Brentwood, MD 20722	Jimmy Thomas's Dance Pavilion	Dance Pavilion	Big band, Swing	~ 1920s		No	Vacant lot	Jimmy Thomas	Thomas constructed a dance pavilion in his backyard for dances, during which bands from Washington, DC would come to play like the Bluebirds. There was a bandstand, and Thomas was said to throw down cornstarch every half hour so people could keep dancing. The pavilion is described as a stereotypical pavilion, with a roof and open on all sides.	Fox, Peggy, and Alison Kahn. *Minding Our Own Business: An Oral History of North Brentwood's Entrepreneurs*. North Brentwood, Md.: North Brentwood Historical Society, 2004.
7147 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	Kemp Mill Records	Record Store			~1978	No			Local record store chain	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 9 from August 1978 (Cap Centre archives Box 3)
7728 Old Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772	Kemp Mill Records	Record Store			~1978	No			Local record store chain	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 9 from August 1978 (Cap Centre archives Box 3)
7701 Landover Rd, Landover, MD 20785	Kentland VFD	Fire Station	Go-go			Yes	Kentland VFD			Julia Kuhlman Report
1812 East West Highway, Hyattsville, MD, 20783	Kim's Hideaway	Live Music / Restaurant	Rock, Heavy Metal		~1970s- 1980s	Yes	Mi Puebilito Bakery		Washington Post article from 1985 mentions that Kim's Hideaway was briefly closed in 1985 due to health violations, and a Dirty Work poster lists two shows at Kim's Hideaway with a crude map showing it's location, which is consistent with the address given in the Washington Post article.	Simpson, “FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS CLOSED FOR HEALTH CODE VIOLATIONS.”;https: //dirtyworkdc.com/pictures/
2350 University Blvd E, Adelphi, MD 20783	King Kong Resturant	Bar / Restaurant	Rock, Punk, Disco	between 1965 and 1977	~1983 - present	Yes	Restaurant		The building seems to have always operated as music venue under various names: The Rathskeller (1971), Lu's Gay Nineties Beer Parlor (1972), Vesuvio Restaurant (1973 - 1980s), University Surf and Turf, King Kong (1983 - present). It is not clear yet whether they still operate as a music venue.	Amanda Henderson Report
3202 Rhode Island Ave, Mt Rainier, MD 20712	Kleins Tavern	Bar			1936-1945	No	Vacant Lot	John Klein	Newspaper articles from between 1936 and 1945 do not mention music- about democratic meetings being held there or in reference to the baseball team associated with the tavern. In 1945 the liquor license was revoked and that's the last reference.	Mark Opsasnick
9024 Lanham Severn Rd, Lanham, MD 20706	Lanham Inn			1950		No	Parking Lot			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
505 Largo Rd, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774	Largo High School						High School			elKhalifa, Amir. 2024. Interview with Oddisee, Zoom.
8000 Cherry Ln, Laurel, MD 20707	Laurel High School Gym	School Gym	Go-go			Yes	Laurel High School Gym			Junkyard Band concert flier, Laurel High School Gymnasium, Laurel, Maryland - April 21, 1995
2903 Hamilton St, Hyattsville, MD 20782	Lee's Restaurant	Restaurant			1951-1958	Yes	Vacant			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
9001 Livingston Rd, Fort Washington, MD 20744	Mac's Sunnybrook or Sunnybrook Tavern	Bar / Restaurant / Liquor Store	Country, Rock		1951 - present	Yes	Sunnybrook Tavern	Daisy E. Moreland (1951)		Amanda Henderson Report
3806 34th St, Mt Rainier, MD 20712	Melody Ballroom	Dancing / Private Parties	Big Band, Orchestra		1941-1952			Bert Reifkind and Harold Gans; Frances Hier	Big band and orchestra music in the 1940s. They seem to have catered to teenagers, at least during the late 40s. After 1947 they stopped advertising as a nightclub and were primarily renting the space out for private parties	Mark Opsasnick
6503 Old Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748	Michelle's/Gus & John's Italian Villa	Bar / Disco / Restaurant / Supper Club	Disco, Metal, Rock	1968	1969-1982	Yes	Funeral home		I think the area used to be more broadly known as camp springs; Poster from a metal concert at Michelle's is in the Metal Folder	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 3 from January 1980 (Cap Centre archives Box 3) ; Stevens, Joann. 1980. “Nostalgia Night for Old D.C. Gang.” Washington Post, October 2, 1980.
4856 Marlboro Pike, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Mike Young's Cafe	Nightclub	Country/ Western	1936	1937-1999	No	Middle School / Country Club / Community Center / Playground		Other potential location is 5200 Marlboro Pike, Capitol Heights, MD 20743 based on Evening Star ads. Operated as Ray's Bar & Grill in 1936.	Amanda Henderson Report ; Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
5301 Indian Head Hwy, Oxon Hill, MD 20745	Mike's Place			1954		Yes	Mike's Liquors			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
1442 Addison Rd S, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	MJ's Meeting Place	Teen Club	Go-go, Metal	1991		Yes	Shopping Center			Poster of Mass Extinction performing at Walker Mill Shopping Center DIGDC
9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708	Montpelier Arts Center	Community / Arts Center	Jazz	1929		Yes	Community / Arts Center		Buck Hill was a famous Jazz saxophonist who performed in DC and in PG; 14th street mural was made of him, this mural is one of the tallest in DC	Washington Post 'What's Happening' Listing for Concerts, 2008
300 Garrett A Morgan Blvd, Greater Landover, MD 20785	Morgan Boulevard Metro			2001	Opened 2004	Yes	Metro Station, services Commander Stadium	WMTA		Julia Kuhlman Report
3400 Bryan Point Rd, Accokeek, MD 20607	Moyaone	Piscataway Capital / National Park		1300	1300 - present	Yes	Still in use as a cultural/ceremonial site, National Park	Piscataway Tribe, National Park Service	Signficant cultural/ ceremonial site.	Harley, Mario. Hall and Gill Interview with Mario Harley, Piscataway Tribe, Wild Turkey Clan. Personal Communication, November 13, 2024.; Strickland, Scott M. “Native Settlements and Colonization: AD 900-1712.” In The Archaeology of Colonial Maryland : Five Essays by Scholars of the Early Province, edited by Matthew D. McKnight. Crownsville, MD: The Maryland Historical Trust Press, 2019

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
113 Centerway, Greenbelt, MD 20770	New Deal Cafe	Cafe / Venue				Yes				“Celebrating 25 Years of Fun, Food, Music and Art!” n.d. New Deal Cafe.
4018 Campus Dr, College Park, MD 20742	Nyumburu Cultural Center at University of Maryland	School	Gospel, Jazz, Blues	1969	1969 - present	Yes	Still in use as educational and community space	University of Maryland		Maryland Gospel Choir. “Our History.” The Gospel @ UMD. Accessed November 30, 2024. https://umdgospelchoir.wixsite.com/umdgospelchoir/home-1.
4306 Bladensburg Rd, Brentwood, MD 20722	Old Liner's Restaurant			1936		Yes	Hair Salon / Restaurant "Tamaleria Pupuseria"			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
4711 Knox Rd, College Park, MD 20740	Old Parish House	Youth Music Groups / Community Music Programs				Yes				Maring, Eric. 2020. “The Old Parish House: College Park’s Music Temple.” Streetcar Suburbs News (blog). November 1, 2020.
7416 Baltimore Avenue, College Park, Maryland, 20740	Paragon	Restaurant / Club / Bowling Alley	Heavy Metal	1920	1976-1996	Yes	Vacant	Masoud and Nasser Zolfaghari during the Paragon days; The Gentile family owned it while it was a bowling alley	There was a prior building that was partially burned in an 1960 fire, after which significant renovations occured. The building existed under several different names/owners, but the Paragon specifically operated there between 1976-1996.	The Diamondback. 1995. “University Concert Hall AKA The Paragon,” September 21, 1995, 1 edition, sec. Vol. 88 Issue 13. University of Maryland Digital Collections.
3714 Branch Ave, Hillcrest Heights, MD 20748	Prince George Motor Hotel / Brass Rail Room / Robin Hood's Lair Lounge	Hotel / Restaurant			1963 - 1969	No	CVS			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
5445 Landover Rd, Hyattsville, MD 20784	Publick Playhouse/ Cheverly Theatre	Theater		1947	1947 - present (brief closure in 60s)	Yes	Still in operation as a theater	MNCPPC - (1975 - present)		“Prince George’s Publick Playhouse.” n.d. Park and Recreation - Prince Georges County MD. Accessed December 16, 2024.
11500 Baltimore Ave, Beltsville, MD 20705	Remington's	Restaurant		1947	? - present	Yes	Still in operation as Remington's Restaurant			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
7325 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	Rendezvous Inn			1940		Yes	Cornerstone Grill & Loft		Known as "The Vous" in the 90s, has a dedicated facebook page	Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
7675 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20742	Ritchie Coliseum	Athletic Arena / Entertainment Venue		1931	1932 - present	Yes				Oyefusi, Daniel. “UMD’s Biggest Concerts (According to Us).” Maryland Today, May 3, 2019. https://today.umd.edu/umds-biggest-concerts-according-us-2f666e1b-00ca-4ba2-8d44-9bd27259dab6.

Address	Site Name	Type / Use	Genre	Year Built	Years of Operation	Extant?	Current Site Function	Owner During Years of Operation	Notes	Source
6250 Kenilworth Ave, Riverdale Park, MD 20737	Riverdale Pizza Pub			1963		Yes	Shopping center			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
7323 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	RJ Bentley's Filling Station			1925	? - present	Yes	Still operating			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
711 Rollins Ave, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Rollins Avenue Park					No				Julia Kuhlman Report
3705 Bladensburg Rd, Colmar Manor, MD 20722	Romano Inn	Nightclub	Pop, Boogie-woogie, Rock, Jazz	pre 1957	~1973	No		Joe and Pauline "Frat" Fratantuano	Featured the Three Jacks in the summer of 1954 (Capitol Rock, p. 25). On the Bladensburg Strip. First night club you would pass on the strip when leaving DC. Earlier was a roadhouse owned by Alex Merrill called the Horseshoe Inn. Known for square dance jamborees, pop pianists, boogie-woogie, and jazz. Closed July 1973 and torn down shortly after (Rock the Potomac, p. 130-131).	Capitol Rock: Mark Opsasnick
7682 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20742	Rossborough Inn	Dance Hall							Used as a dance hall by UMD students ; also written about in a former HISP650 studio	“Mark Opsasnick Papers: Box 4 General Music Materials.” n.d. Box 4.
4321 Bladensburg Rd, Brentwood, MD 20722	Rustic Cabin Restaurant/ Berk Motley's Sirloin Room		Vaudeville, Pop, Big Band	1938		No		Berk Motley (1951)	Refer to pg. 29 in Capitol Rock for featured acts. 1954 opening of Berk Motley's Rustic Cabin. 1966 renamed Berk Motley's Sirloin Room. Motley was in Ripleys Believe it or Not in the 40s for playing 3 clarinets at a time while standing on his head. He had a regular band as well. His wife Agnes was a member of the band. He kept his vaudeville style act going until his death in the late 90s (he stopped performing headstands when he was 75). By the 80s or 90s, the Sirloin Room was the only remaining bar from the strip. There's some good information throughout about the other bars and clubs on the strip. He also has an interesting history, with a few articles written about him in the late 20th century giving him mixed reviews.	Amanda Henderson Report ; Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
4410 Knox Rd, College Park, MD 20740	Santa Fe Cafe					Yes	Bar- "Terrapin's Turf"			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
9901 Lanham Severn Rd, Lanham, MD 20706	Seabrook Skating Center	Skate Rink			~1978	Yes	Skate Rink		This ad listed it as one of a few "Wheel A While Roller Skating Centers" in the area, but this is the only one listed in PG	An ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 15 from June-July 1978 (Cap Centre archives Box 3)
5910 Princess Garden Pkwy, Lanham, MD 20706	Seafarer Restaurant & Lounge	Restaurant / Lounge			~1979	Yes	Best Western, "Capital Restaurant & Lounge"		Located in the Ramada Inn ; Ad says "Elegant dining, dancing to live entertainment" and "dance til 2 am"; referenced in the Lakeland archive; old room keys on ebay	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 2 from October 1979 (Cap Centre archives Box 3)
100 Addison Rd S, Walker Mill, MD 20743	Seat Pleasant Metro	Public Transportation	Punk, Trap, Hyperpop	1985	? - present	Yes	Public transit			Julia Kuhlman Report

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5000 Marlboro Pike, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Senate Inn	Nightclub	Country, Bluegrass		1940 to ~ 1990s	No	Liquor Store	J.R. Richardson (1950s)	Refer to pg. 29 in Capitol Rock for featured acts, Box 3 Mark Osasnick Folder WDN 1967 referes to Senate Inn also as the "N Club"	Julia Kuhlman & Amanda Henderson Reports / Capitol Rock: Mark Opsasnick
6494 Marlboro Pike, Forestville, MD 20747	Shady Oak Inn	Bar		1919		Yes	Restaurant- "Bistro64"		Joanne Dickinson remembers the inn as a more upscale, family friendly place to eat, but accounts from the Marlow Heights blog by J.Bell, it may have been sold at some point and became popular for the bar scene. It seems like there might have been live music but it's hard to tell.	Dickinson, Joanne. 2018. “I Grew Up In Forestville, MD.” Our Unbounded Heritage: 12th Century & Beyond (blog). January 1, 2018. ;
4516 41st Ave, North Brentwood, MD 20722	Sis's Tavern	Tavern / Juke Joint	Jazz, Rhythm and Blues	c. 1912	~1950-1996	Yes	Community center	Marie Wall "sis" c.1950- c.1978) and Delores R. Sprigs (Baby Dee's Guest Club c.1978-1996)		Amanda Henderson Report
2781 Hamilton St, Hyattsville, MD 20782	Smitty's Greenwood Inn			1949		Yes	American Mega Laundromat			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
116 Washington Blvd, Laurel, MD 20707	Sportsman's Pub			1940		No	Medical facility			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files
14825 Pratt St, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772	St. Mary's Beneficial Society Hall	Social Hall		1892	1892-1980s	Yes	Law Office	St. Mary's Beneficial Society	Constructed as a center for social, religious, and charitable activities of the Black Catholic community of Upper Marlboro.	Pearl, Susan G. “Prince George’s County African American Heritage Survey, 1996.” The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, October 1996. p. 88
3211 Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748	Strick's Restaurant		Country, Jazz	1934		Yes		Juluis Strickland (1934-54), Giles Fletcher Sr. (1954)	Refer to pg. 27 in Capitol Rock for featured act information	Amanda Henderson Report
4201 Bladensburg Rd, Brentwood, MD 20722	Surf Club	Nightclub	Country / Western, Rock	1975					Refer to pg. 29 in Capitol Rock for featured acts ; other potential location 4211 Kenilworth Ave, Bladensburg, MD 20710	Amanda Henderson Report
Supplee Lane, Laurel, MD 20707	The Barn	Live Music	Heavy Metal	1978 or 1979	1979-1981	No	Unknown	Mary Lindsey	The Barn was the practice area for the Maryland heavy metal band Tension from either 1978-79 to 1981. The band practiced there and hosted concerts for up to 100 fans on a near-nightly basis, according to their documentary, website, and recollections of former band member Marty Friedman in his autobiography *Dreaming Japanese*. According to these sources, Mary Lindsey built the Barn for her son Tom Gattis, the lead vocalist of the band. The Barn burned down in 1981 and was never rebuilt. *The Baltimore Sun* and the Tension documentary mention that the property was on Supplee Lane, which is a one-way road in northern Prince George's Co., but do not give a street number. Therefore, the coordinates are an approximation.	Tension: 25 Years Underground, 2011, https://vimeo.com/776694181.; Marty Friedman and Jon Wiederhorn, “5,” in Dreaming Japanese, 1st ed. (New York: Permuted Press, 2024), 39–44.; “THE LIFE AND TIMES OF TENSION: A BRIEF HISTORY,” TENSION, accessed October 16, 2024, https://tensionmetal.com/history.; Cathy Carter, “Tom Gattis: Ready to Unleash Tension Again at 47,” The Baltimore Sun, October 27, 2011, sec. Arts.
7519 Annapolis Rd, Hyattsville, MD 20784	The Big Apple			1959		No	Vacant			Mark Opsasnick Demog (PG+DC) + Businesses - Box 4 Files

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1 Harry S Truman Dr, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774	The Capital Centre	Arena		1973	1973-2022	No		Abe Pollin		Julia Kuhlman Report
9206 Darcy Road, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774	The Evans Grill	Tavern / Dance Hall	Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, Disco, and Go-go	1946	~1950s-1990s	No	Vacant Lot	Clarence and Pearl Evans	Evan's Grill and Wilmer's Park are both identified in the African American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's, Maryland study, and both transitioned to disco and go-go later on. Evan's Grill included a tavern and separate Dance Hall (expanded to accommodate more people) ; Dance Hall demolished between 1993-1998	Julia Kuhlman Report
3225 Naylor Road, Silver Hill, MD 20748	The Legend or The Quonset Inn (or hut)	Club	Go-go	1944		Yes	Vacant	William V. Meyers (until 2001)	Featured the Three Jacks in the 1950s (Capitol Rock, p. 25) ; in disrepair but looks like the building is still there	PG;76A-55, Silver Hill Commercial Survey Area and Capitol Rock: Mark Opsasnick
8402 Riggs Rd, Adelphi, MD 20783	The Mill		Punk	1796		Yes	Adelphi Mill Recreation Center			UMD Digital Punk Collections "Necros, Meatmen, Iron Cross concert flier, The Mill, Adelphi, Maryland, August 11, 1982"
6192 Oxon Hill Rd., Oxon Hill, MD	The Oak Tree	Nightclub			~1982	No	Office building		The Washington Post article mentions the address, as well as a 1993 Benefit Jam fora popular WPFW-FM host that was supposed to be held there; according to BizJournal, the building was purchased in 2018 to be converted into a hotel, and the plans were approved in 2020, but it doesn't seem like it's been approved yet.	Yorke, Jeffrey. 1993. “SPRING CHANGES AT WHUR-FM.” Washington Post, April 6, 1993.
8608 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	The Record & Tape Exchange	Music Store				No	Mess of demolition		More photos in the diamondback morgue	Mark Anderson Zines, Nomadic Underground #8 1989
Central Ave and Harry S truman Dr, Largo, MD 20774	The Revolutionary (Cafe)	Cafe / Soul Food Restaurant / Strip Club	Soul, Rap, Hip-Hop			No	Assisted living facility		Former strip mall	Oddisee interview
14900 Pennsylvania Ave., Upper Marlboro, MD 20772	The Showplace Arena	Performance Venue			? - present	Yes	Currently operating		"reported that on April 4, 2007, a hundred members of the Go Go Coalition and Peaceaholics, "representing musicians, sound engineers, and club owners and operators marched in Upper Marlboro from the Show Place Arena to the County Administration Building about a mile away to deliver a message to Johnson (D) and his administration: Let us be part of the solution to the violence that has recently plagued the county."	The Beat: Go-Go Music from Washington
7410 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740	The Varsity Grill					Yes	Vacant			Amanda Henderson Report
3817 Bladensburg Road, Colmar Manor, MD 20722	The Wheel Bar	Bar / Strip Club	Rock		1947-1961	No	Port Towns Shopping Center	Solomon (Al) Stern	Featured Marshall Brothers in 1950s, Three Jacks in March 1955 (Capitol Rock, p. 24)	Capitol Rock: Mark Opsasnick
3714 Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748	Triples Nightclub/ Gerald's	Night Club	Go-go, Jazz			No	CVS		Noted as a site "pecifically for "young Black professionals"; recording of Rare Essence at this location available on YouTube.	Eric El, local resident ; Harris, Lyle V. 1985. “P.G. Nightspot Is a 3-Story Triple Threat.” Washington Post, October 3, 1985.

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14804 Pratt St, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772	Upper Marlboro Club and Dance Hall	Club / Dance Hall			~1949-1970s	Yes	Bank		Based on historic aerials, it appears that the club is no longer standing, but that the dance hall may have been renovated into it's current use as a bank.	“Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Upper Marlboro, Prince Georges County, Maryland.” July 1949. Http://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03662_001/. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D. C. 20540-4650 USA. https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844um.g3844um_g036621949/.
505 Eastern Ave., Fairmount Heights	W. Sidney and Portia Washington Pittman House	Dance Pavilion		After 1912		No	Vacant lot		House designed and built by architect William Sidney Pittman in 1907, the year he married Booker T. Washington's daughter Portia. After their move to Dallas, Texas in 1912, the house became a boarding house during which time a dance pavilion was constructed.	Pearl, Susan G. “Prince George’s County African American Heritage Survey, 1996.” The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, October 1996. pp. 67-68
7857 Walker Mill Rd, District Heights, MD 20747	Walker Mill Skate Park					Yes				Julia Kuhlman Report
3134 Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748	Washington Racquet & Fitness Club	Gym / Fitness Club			~1992	Yes	Part of a strip mall			Poster from the Nico Hobson Go-Go Collection Folder 2 in DCPL
6000 Greenbelt Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770	Waxie Maxies (Beltway Plaza Shop Center)	Record Store			~1978	Yes	Beltway Plaza Mall		Local record store chain	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 11 from June-July 1978 (Cap Centre archives Box 3)
75 Hampton Park Blvd, Capitol Heights, MD 20743	Waxie Maxies (Hampton Mall)	Record Store			~1978	Yes	Motel		Local record store chain	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 11 from June-July 1978 (Cap Centre archives Box 3)
3901 Branch Ave, Temple Hills, MD 20748	Waxie Maxies (Marlow Heights Shopping Center)	Record Store			~1978	Yes	Shopping Center		Local record store chain ; The shopping center is still there, but no longer seems to be known as the Marlow Heights Shopping Center. Unsure whether the building that housed the record store is still extant, but it seems like some parts of the center may be older.	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 11 from June-July 1978 (Cap Centre archives Box 3)
Riggs Plaza, 5815 Eastern Ave NE, Hyattsville, MD 20782	Waxie Maxies (Riggs Plaza Shopping Center)	Record Store			~1978	Yes	Shopping Center		Local record store chain	Ad in Cap Centre "Good Times" pg. 11 from June-July 1978 (Cap Centre archives Box 3)
15710 Brandywine Road Brandywine, MD 20613	Wilmer’s Park	Dance Hall	Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, Rock, Heavy Metal, Reggae, Go-go, Bluegrass	early 1950s	1950-1990	Yes		Arthur Wilmer	Originally a tobacco farm, Aruthur Wilmer turned this into a space to host outside concerts with a stage and bleachers. They expanded the concerts being offered in the 80s and 90s to include rock, heavy metal, reggae, and go-go.	Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. 2012. *African-American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George’s County, Maryland.*
3130 Campus Drive, College Park, MD 20742	WMUC	Radio Station				Yes				TERP Magazine

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21500 Aquasco Rd, Aquasco, MD 20608	Woodville School	School / Social Hall		1934	1954 - present	Yes	Knights of St. John's Commandery #373	Knights of St. John's Commandery #373	Originally constructed as the largest schoolhouse for Black children, the building was auctioned after the integration of Prince George's County schools in 1954. The Knights of St. John's Commandery #373 purchased the building for use as a social hall for the Black Catholic population of the Woodville / Aquasco area.	Pearl, Susan G. “Prince George’s County African American Heritage Survey, 1996.” The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, October 1996. p. 108