

ON THE TRAILS
RECYCLE, REUSE & DECAY

The ART on the Trails program recycles, reuses and repurposes materials found in nature such as downed trees and other natural materials and changes them into sculptures, park benches or other artistic elements that reflect native wildlife and the local environment of the various trail systems.

By using these natural materials in the field for art installations, they will not be sent to landfills. Visitors will be able to see how the sculpture changes as it decays over the years.

Working as a team with an artist, tree crews, naturalists, and park rangers, young people learned the importance of maintaining and protecting the environment by creating art from found materials.

Additional Locations: Old Mill Recreation Park, Millersville Park, Williamsport Park, Williamsport Park, Williamsport Park.

Facebook.com/pgparks, Twitter.com/pgparks, Instagram.com/pgparksandrec, #ArtontheTrails

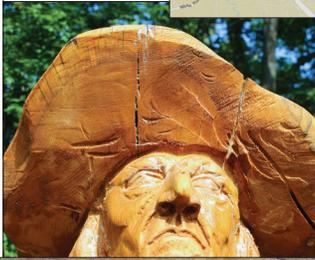
arts.pgparks.com

A PROGRAM OF Parks and Recreation live more, play more

MARYLAND STATE ARTS COUNCIL

Witch of Watkins

Sculpted by lead artist Joe Stebbings with apprentices by Ellis Alston, Xavier Fuller, Jasmine Hamilton, Rachel Hithon, Alleah Murky, Watta Nyallay, Amelia Pinn, Marissa Reynolds, Bunni Shabi, Darnell Terry, Christopher Vargas, Ashley Vauss, Ameerah Westfield, and Jason Williams.



CLIENT
Prince George's County Parks and Recreation
Creation of logo and signage for Art on the Trails program

Childhood and Slavery in Maryland

What was enslavement like for a young child of African descent? Only the men and women who endured slavery and lived to share their experiences either in published autobiographies or in recorded oral histories could answer that painful question. The following narratives are the recollections of formerly enslaved people who grew up in the State of Maryland.

"Pick up that book," he [Isaac Riley, his master] cried, using an awful oath. At last I was obliged to do it, when he beat me across the head and back till my eyes were swollen and I became insensible. My poor mother found me in this state, and it was some time before I was able to be about my work again. When my master saw me after I recovered, he said, sneeringly, "So you want to be a gentleman? Remember if you meddle with a book again I'll knock your brains out." The wonder to me is, why I have any brains left. I shall carry to my grave a scar my master made that day on my head. I did not open a book again till after I was forty-two years of age and out of the land of slavery."

JOSEPH HENSON (1840) Montgomery County, MD

"Another evil of slavery that I felt severely about this time, was the tyranny and abuse of the overseers... they seem to take pleasure in torturing the children of slaves, long before they are large enough to be put at the hoe, and consequently under the whip."

JAMES PENNINGTON (1840) Eastern Shore, MD

"I slept on a home-made bed or bunk while my mother and sister slept in a bed made by father on which they had a mattress made by themselves and lined with straw; the bed and part he used in the day as a work bench, reminding ones for the slaves and others. I have seen mother going to the fields each day like other slaves go to her part of the farm."

RICHARD MACA (1837) Charles County, MD

"I should like a spotted vest or something of the sort, having no stripes on it... everywhere I saw a white man's stripes of being carried away."

HARPER T. LUBIAN (1850) Montgomery County, MD

"The fact remains, in all its glaring odiousness, that, by the laws of slavery, children, in all cases, are reduced to the condition of their mothers. My mother and I were separated when I was but an infant—before I knew her as my mother. It is a common custom, in the part of Maryland from which I ran away, to part children from their mothers at a very early age."

FREDERICK DOUGLASS (1845) Talbot County, MD

"The children unable to work in the field had neither shoes, stockings, jackets, nor trousers, given to them; their clothing consisted of two coarse linen shirts per year. When these failed them, they went naked until the next slave-lease day. Children from seven to ten years old, of both sexes, almost naked, might be seen at all seasons of the year..."

1856 Census of Magruder Plantation

ParksCulturalResources.org

CLIENT
Montgomery Parks
Design of on-site interpretive signage, placed though out the county to educate residents about the history of the local area

"Meet Me at the Oak"
The Layhill Phoenix

FOR OVER 225 YEARS, THE LAYHILL OAK stood at the corner of Layhill Road and Bee Pie Drive in Silver Spring. Its life began in 1763 when Maryland was still an English colony. Over time, as its canopy reached a 68-foot limb span, the tree provided shade to customers who frequented the nearby Layhill Store and Post Office. When Layhill Road was scheduled to be widened in the 1930s, the tree's towering presence was threatened. Following a three-year battle to prevent the removal of this 67-foot tall white oak, the Layhill Oak came down in 1938 for the creation of the road. It was, as reported, "a victim of progress."

Three years later, Chevy Chase resident Stefan Saal was tasked by Montgomery County's "Art in the Parks" program with transforming the 11,000 pound log into a 16-foot monumental carving. His design for the wooden sculpture consisted of the phoenix rising up from a column of flames. The phoenix symbolizes renewal, and by recycling the Layhill Oak, Saal gave this timber a new purpose. Exposure to the elements, including rain, insects and microbial growth, eventually compromised the appearance and stability of this piece of art. Due to concerns for public safety, it was removed in 2017.

"Wood is definitely a living thing...I'm helping, I think, its continuing as a life form..."
STEFAN SAAL, 1991

Speak for the Trees

The removal of the Layhill Oak occurred before the creation of the Montgomery County Register of Champion Trees and the Maryland Forest Conservation Act. Since its enactment, live as many forested areas have been protected or planted as were cleared statewide. Such a feat is worth celebrating! Mark your calendar, the first Wednesday in April is always Arbor Day in Maryland.

As of 2020, there are 212 Champion Trees in Montgomery County, including the following eight specimens in Western Regional Park, Brookside Gardens and the Brookside Nature Center: Bald Cypress, Himalayan Pine, Nuttall Oak, Osage Orange (seen below), Paperbark Maple, Red Buckeye, Sweetbay Magnolia, and Whitebarked.

Can you find them?

Can you find the Champion Osage tree near by?

THE LAYHILL OAK, REMOVED BY THE LOG CUTTING AND TRUCK TRAILING PROCESS, WAS STORED IN THE PARKS DEPARTMENT'S WOOD STORAGE YARD IN SILVER SPRING. THE TREE WAS STORED FOR SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE BEING RECYCLED INTO THIS SCULPTURE.

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CONSIDERING A SCULPTURE IS A PERMANENT INSTALLATION, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT IT BE PLACED IN AN OPEN AREA OF THE PARK, OUTSIDE OF THE TRAIL, OUTSIDE OF THE TRAIL.

SIGNAGE