
OLNEY, MARYLAND



LOCAL BUILDING TRADITIONS HISTORY AND ANALYSIS

November 10, 2006

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208 Market Street
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SSM

View east at Olney crossroads

circa 1900



MBA

View east at Olney crossroads

circa 2000

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Project Description

The following pages of building documentation and analysis are an exploration into the particular architecture, both formal and vernacular, of Olney, Maryland and its surrounding areas. It is hoped that through this effort, we can distill a regional and historic context that is identifiably local. Though most of the styles and typologies cataloged are common throughout the Middle Atlantic States and beyond, their specific uses in the Olney-area distinguish them as “local”.

The area of analysis is shown in a map describing a six mile radius around Olney. This takes in other local agricultural communities whose architecture contributes to the local themes including Sandy Spring, Ashton, Laytonsville, Brighton, and Brinklow. The timeline that follows chronicles the growth of the area and the occurrence of architectural styles. Most of the dates are sourced from the Sandy Spring Museum’s website.

The first section is a local inventory representing Olney’s building tradition in seven roughly chronologically-ordered groups, with analysis of each group’s predominant characteristics. While the documentation is broad, it is not meant to be comprehensive. For more information, one may also consult Old Homes and History of Montgomery County, Maryland by Roger Brooke Farquhar; Olney: Echoes of the Past by Healan Barrow and Kristine Stevens; Images of America: Montgomery County by Michael Dwyer; Annals of Sandy Spring and other documents at the Sandy Spring Museum.

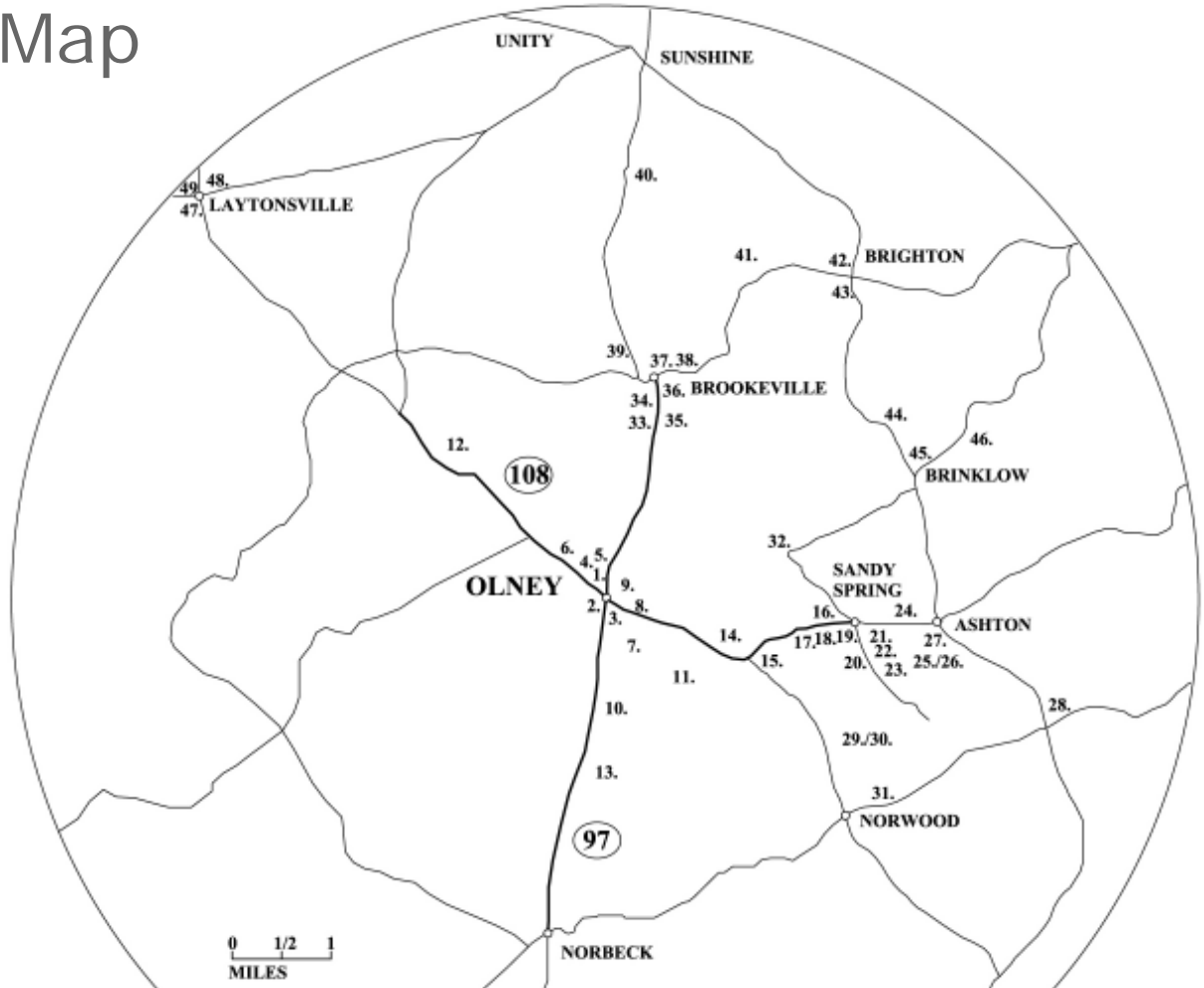
The second segment includes individual building analysis, with diagrams depicting solid-void ratios, material callouts, massing isometrics, and eave details. Part C, on typical patterns of growth, records the material, formal, and stylistic evolution of local buildings. Finally the research moves from the specific to the general, with documentation of the area’s public spaces, past and present.

Most of the buildings surveyed are still standing, but all too many have been lost to development such as new construction and street widening. The term “demo” is listed beside the buildings that have been demolished, and “relo” refers to the buildings that have been relocated to another site. “MBA” beside an image refers to those from the collection of Miche Booz, Architect; “Dwyer” refers to images from Michael Dwyer’s collection; likewise “SSM” are images that have been reproduced with gracious permission from the photo archives at the Sandy Spring Museum, curated by Betsy Shimkus. All drawings are by Miche Booz, Architect unless otherwise noted.

BACKGROUND



Map










1. Hoyle's Tourist Home, Olney (demo)
2. Murphy's Tin Shop, Olney (demo)
3. Old D.G.S. Grocery Store, SE corner
4. Olney one-room schoolhouse (demo)
5. St. John's Episcopal, Olney and St. John's Episcopal Expansion, Olney
6. B'nai Shalom Synagogue, Olney
7. St. Peter's Catholic, Olney
8. Montgo. General Hospital, Olney (demo)
9. Fair Hill, Olney (demo)
10. Olney Inn, Olney (demo)
11. Rockland, Olney
12. Falling Green, Olney
13. Oakdale Emory United Meth. Church, Olney
14. Olney Theater Expansion, Olney
15. Olney Ale House, Olney
16. Sandy Spring Store (demo)
17. Sandy Spring Bank, Sandy Spring
18. Women's Exchange, Sandy Spring (demo)
19. Old Montgo. Mutual Insur., Sandy Spring
20. Montgo. Mutual Insurance, Sandy Spring
21. Old Vol. Fire Department, Sandy Spring
22. The Lyceum, Sandy Spring
23. Meetinghouse, Sandy Spring
24. Sandy Spring Museum, Sandy Spring
- 25/26. Old Sherwood School, Sandy Spring (demo)
Sherwood High School, Sandy Spring
27. Wyndcrest, Ashton
28. Clifton, Ashton
- 29/30. SSFS Meetinghouse, Sandy Spring
Old Sherwood Friends School (relo)
31. Woodlawn Barn, Sandy Spring
32. Sharon, Olney
33. 6 High Street, Brookeville
34. Old Salem Methodist, Brookeville (demo)
35. Salem United Methodist, Brookeville
36. The Academy, Brookeville
37. 211 Market Street, Brookeville
38. Madison House, Brookeville
39. Valley House, Brookeville
40. Greenwood, Brookeville
41. Woolen Mill, Brookeville
42. St. Luke's Church, Brighton
43. General Store, Brighton (demo)
44. Walnut Hill, Brinklow
45. Wrenwood, Dr. Bird's home/office (demo)
46. Riverside, Brinklow
47. Stone St. Store, Laytonsville (demo)
48. Higgins/Bell General Store, Laytonsville (demo)
49. Victorian house, Laytonsville

BACKGROUND



Timeline

			1634	Maryland colony founded	
		GEORGIAN-FEDERAL	1724	Greenwood log home core built Oldest still-standing home in Montgomery County	
			1745	Sandy Spring Friends Meeting begins	
			1765	Fair Hill, Falling Green, Brooke Grove, and Brooke Meadow settled	
	EARLY FOLK/AGRARIAN & MILLS		1801	Earliest records of Oakdale Emory Methodist Church	
			1816	Quaker Friends erect Sandy Spring Meeting House (Bricks fired on the site)	
			1825	Mechanicsville (Olney) Post Office opens	
		ROMANTIC REVIVALS	CARPENTER GOTHIC	1848	Mutual Fire Insurance Co. opens
				1863	Confederate troops led by J.E.B. Stuart rode through Olney on their way to Gettysburg
	NEO-GEORGIAN/-CLASSICAL		1870	St. Luke's Church established in Brighton	
			1906	Sherwood Public School opens	
			1920	Montgomery General Hospital opens	
	CONTEMPORARY	VERNACULAR FARMHOUSES	1926	Olney Inn opens	
			1971	New Montgo. General Hospital facility	
			1977	Fair Hill destroyed by fire. Village Mart, first shopping center built on its site	
			1978	Widening of Olney crossroads	
			1997	Sandy Spring Museum opens	

LOCAL INVENTORY



- 1 Early Folk/Agrarian *1740-1900*
- 2 Mills/Industrial Buildings *1740-1940*
- 3 Georgian/Federal Styles *1740-1830*
- 4 Carpenter Gothic *1820-1900*
- 5 Romantic Revivals *1840-1920*
- 6 Vernacular Farmhouses *1865-1920*
- 7 Neo-Georgian/-Classical *1890-present*
- 8 Contemporary Public Buildings

Early Folk/Agrarian 1740-1900



St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Brighton MBA



Oakley Cabin, Brookeville MBA



Old Salem Methodist, Brookeville (demo) SSM



The Academy, Brookeville MBA

Predominant Characteristics:

General Information:

- Simple form, minimal adornment
- Functional buildings
- Typically one story
- Central chimney

Wall Materials:

- Rough-cut fieldstone
- Wood clapboard or log

Windows and Doors:

- Double-hung sashes
- Paneled wood doors w/ glass transoms

Roofs and Eaves:

- Often side-gabled
- Cornice returns
- Wood shingle roof
- Simple boxed eaves, under 12" of projection
- Approx. 10:12 pitches

Local Notes:

- Often built by farmers or church congregations for their own use, the simple forms expressed their utilitarian function.



Woodlawn Barn (1832), Sandy Spring

Mills/Industrial Buildings 1740-1940



Muncaster Mill, Derwood M-NCPPC Archives



Woolen Mill, Brookeville MBA



Finneyrock's Blacksmith, Olney (demo) SSM



Murphy's Tin Shop, Olney (demo) Dwyer

Predominant Characteristics:

General Information:

- Simple forms, minimal adornment
- Functional buildings

Wall Materials:

- Rough-cut fieldstone
- Wood clapboard

Windows and Doors:

- Double-hung sashes
- Paneled wood doors w/ glass transoms

Roofs and Eaves:

- Gables, gambrels, and sheds
- Wood shingle roof
- Simple boxed eaves, under 12" of projection
- Approx. 10:12 pitches

Local Notes:

- Often built by farmers or laborers for their own use, like other folk buildings, the simple forms expressed their utilitarian function.



Millers House, Brookeville (historical estimation)

Georgian/Federal Styles 1740-1830



Falling Green, Olney

MBA



Madison House, Brookeville

MBA



Meetinghouse, Sandy Spring

MBA



Valley House, Brookeville

MBA

Predominant Characteristics:

General Information:

- Two stories w/ one story additions
- Paired end wall chimneys
- Modest adornment

Wall Materials:

- Brick
- Rough-cut fieldstone w/ stone quoins

Windows and Doors:

- Three- or five-bay ranks
- Double hung w/ 6 lites per sash
- Wood shutters (operable)

Roofs and Eaves:

- Front gable or gambrel
- Simple boxed eaves, under 12" of projection
- Unadorned cornices w/ shallow moldings
- Cedar shingles, (later: standing seam metal roofs)

Local Notes:

- Often manifested in large manor houses such as Clifton, Norwood, Woodlawn, or Sunny Side (Needwood).



Clifton (1742), Ashton

Carpenter Gothic 1820-1900



Sandy Spring Store (demo)

SSM



Oakdale Emory United Methodist, Olney MBA



Women's Exchange, Sandy Spring (demo) SSM



Salem United Methodist, Brookeville

SSM

Predominant Characteristics:

General Information:

- Central building mass with lower wings
- Articulated carpentry detailing
- Typically public- or civic-use
- Square towers

Wall Materials:

- Wood clapboard
- Board and Batten
- Prominent trim and banding

Windows and Doors:

- Eclectic window styles, often with Gothic detailing
- Bracketed roof at main entry door

Roofs and Eaves:

- Steep gables with decorative trusses and cross-ties, or extended gables
- Open cornices, exposed rafter tails

Local Notes:

-A stripped-down Stick Style and early Gothic revival predominated, both in simplified manifestations of these styles. Railroad stations and churches were commonly built in this style.



SSFS Meetinghouse (1883), Sandy Spring

Romantic Revivals 1840-1920



211 Market Street, Brookeville MBA



Montgo. General Hospital, Olney (demo) SSM



St. John's Episcopal, Olney MBA



General Store, Laytonsville (demo) SSM

Predominant Characteristics:

General Information:

- Cross gables with small shaped windows for attic light
- Entry on full length front porches

Wall Materials:

- Wood clapboard
- Wood brackets and parapets

Windows and Doors:

- Window crown molding
- Doors with transoms and narrow sidelites

Roofs and Eaves:

- Wood shingles or standing seam metal roofs
- Cornices emphasized
- Extended gables and rakes
- Wood parapets

Local Notes:

-Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, and Italianate were most common. Often these styles were used to express respect for the intellectual or cultural ideals of the revival.



The Lyceum (1859), Sandy Spring

Vernacular Farmhouses 1865-1920



Hoyle's Tourist Home, Olney (demo) SSM



Riverside, Brinklow SSM



Victorian house, Laytonsville SSM



Murphy's Tin Shop, Olney (demo) SSM

Predominant Characteristics:

General Information:

- Two stories with attic
- Cross gables
- Entry on full length front porches

Wall Materials:

- Wood clapboard
- Wood columns, railings, and brackets

Windows and Doors:

- Double hung sash with fewer lite divisions
- Operable wood shutters
- Wood paneled doors with glass transoms

Roofs and Eaves:

- Standing seam metal roofs
- Exposed rafter extensions
- Extended open rakes

Local Notes:

- Any number of variations on the 2-story rectangular box, including the "Tidewater" style, often with center gable and long front porch.



Vernacular farmhouse

Neo-Georgian/-Classical 1890-present



Old Mutual Fire Insur., Sandy Spring SSM



Old Vol. Fire Department, Sandy Spring SSM



Montgo. Mutual Insurance, Sandy Spring MBA



Sherwood School, Sandy Spring (demo) SSM

Predominant Characteristics:

General Information:

- Center gables with pediments
- Full height entry porch with columns
- Ridge or interior end chimneys
- Cupolas

Wall Materials:

- Red brick
- Wood-clad gables and dormers

Windows and Doors:

- Double-hung sashes with many small panes
- Arched or semi-circular windows
- Decorative door surrounds

Roofs and Eaves:

- Gabled or hipped roofs
- Small gabled dormers
- Decorative wood cornice with wide wood banding
- Roof balustrades

Local Notes:

- Two phases of this style are common in the Olney area: the first in the early 20th-century; the second began in the 1960's and is ongoing.



Sandy Spring Bank (1895), Sandy Spring

BUILDING ANALYSIS



- 1 Falling Green, Olney
- 2 The Lyceum, Sandy Spring
- 3 Woodlawn Barn, Sandy Spring
- 4 Museum, Sandy Spring

Falling Green, Olney (1764)

General Notes

Falling Green, said to have been built by English indentured artisans in the colonial days, is one of the oldest houses in Montgomery County. It represents a simplified Georgian style often referred to as "Federal," though it was built before the federal period. Like many of the manor houses built at this time, it is characterized by thick load bearing masonry walls and simple geometric ordering. Its most recognizable architectural feature is its two end wall chimneys, though the quality of the brickwork is also admirable.

Massing



5-Bay Elevation



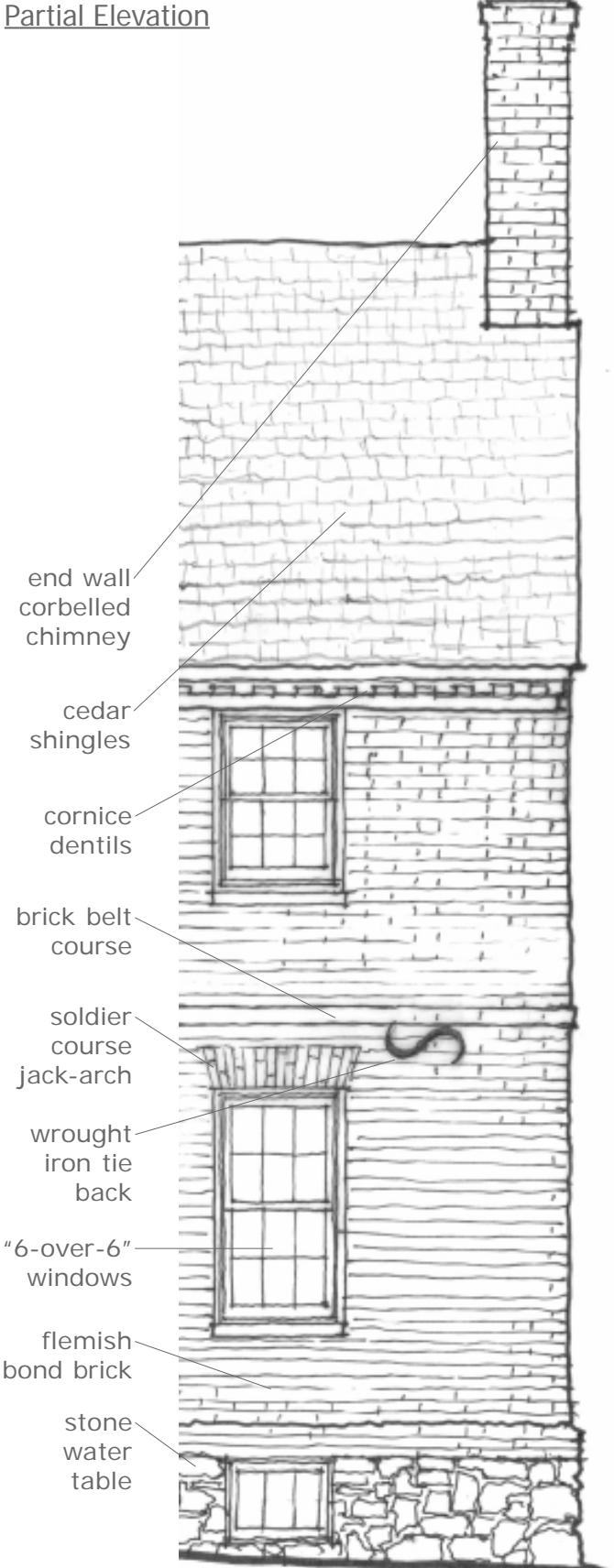
Solid-Void Diagram



Front View with porch intact

SSM

Partial Elevation



end wall corbelled chimney

cedar shingles

cornice dentils

brick belt course

soldier course jack-arch

wrought iron tie back

"6-over-6" windows

flemish bond brick

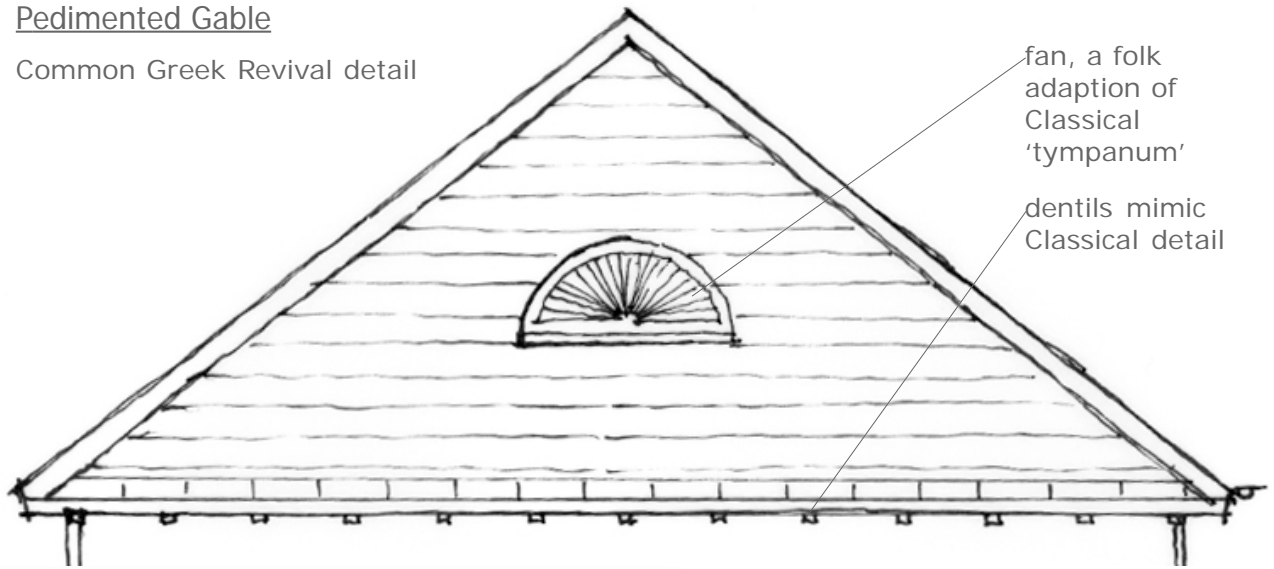
stone water table

Partial Elevation diagram

The Lyceum, Sandy Spring (1859)

Pedimented Gable

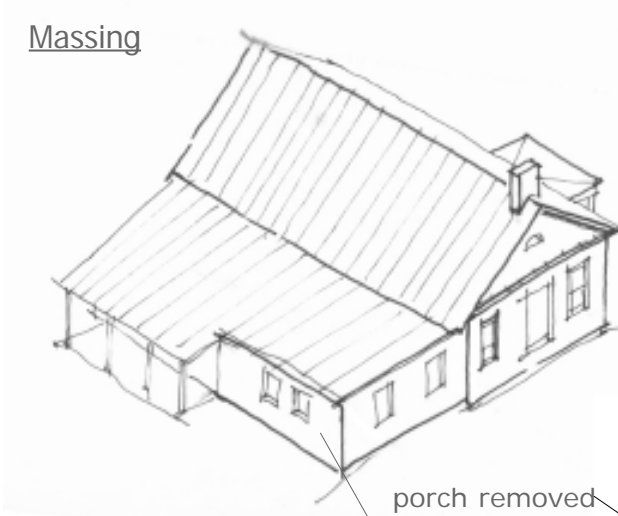
Common Greek Revival detail



fan, a folk adaptation of Classical 'tympanum'

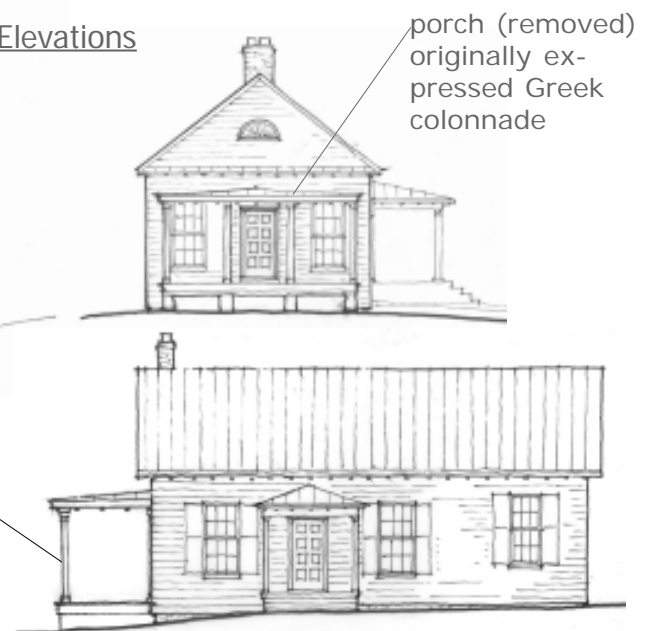
dentils mimic Classical detail

Massing



porch removed
later additions

Elevations



porch (removed)
originally expressed Greek colonnade

General Notes

The Greek Revival, represented by one of the area's more understated public buildings, was a romantic return to the ancient ideals expressed by the early Greeks. The original 'Lyceum' was a gymnasium near Athens as well as the site of a philosophical school founded by Aristotle. During the 19th-century, many Americans attempted to recreate this Greek ideal with the *Chautauqua* movement and similar such philosophical revivals. The Lyceum was used to host guest lecturers and public discussions of intellectual, scientific, and spiritual matters. It is currently used as the Meeting's Community House and Library.



The Lyceum (1859), Sandy Spring

SSM

Woodlawn Barn, Sandy Spring (1832)

General Notes

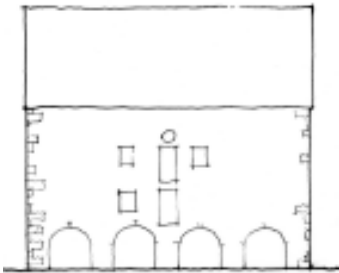
This unique three-story stone-arch and heavy timber frame 'bank' barn was constructed by master stonemason Isaac Holland. It possesses high artistic value and was selected for the elite Historic American Building Survey in the 1930s.

Located at the southern tip of Sandy Spring, it helps create a gateway to the historic area. Its prominent facade faces a long green along one of the access roads to the property, presenting a picturesque and iconic view from Ednor Road.



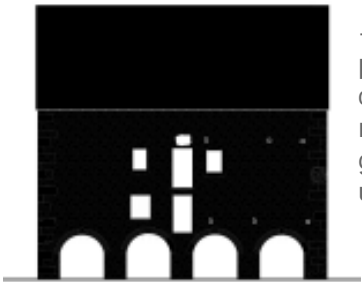
MBA

Front Elevation



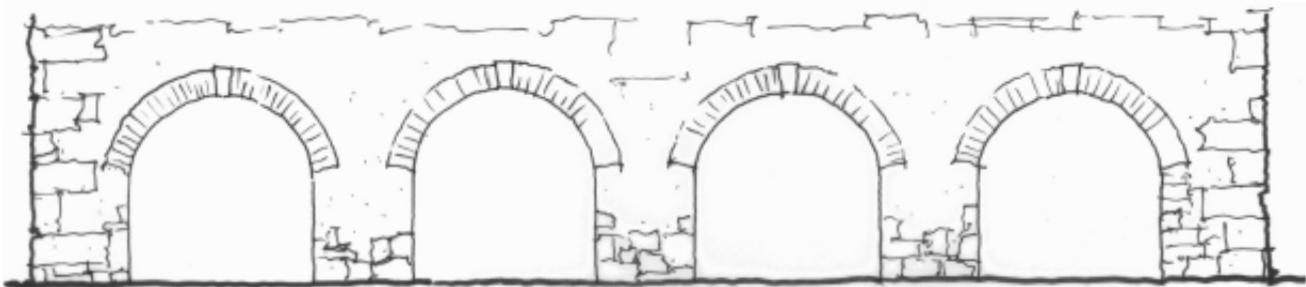
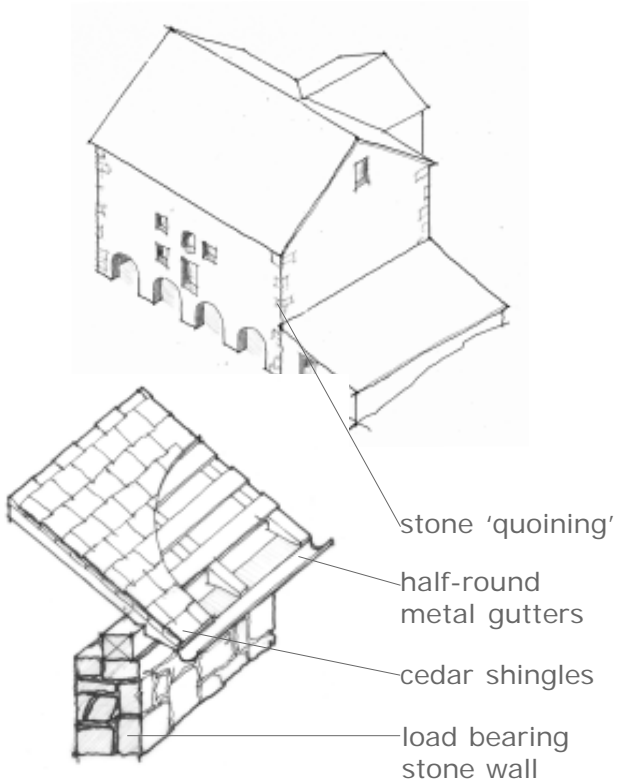
- prominent
- simple materials
- 4-bay arcade
- heavy stone contrasts with lightness of 'roman' arch

Solid-Void Diagram



- solid-void percentage changes dramatically from ground to upper floors

Massing and Eave Detail



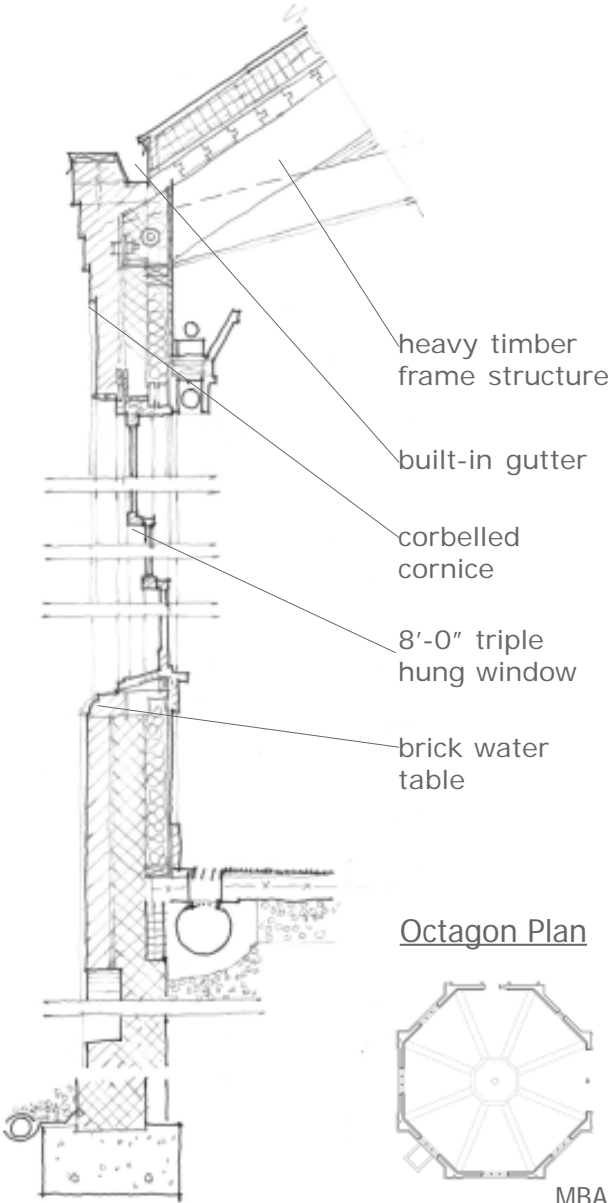
Arcade at Woodlawn

Museum, Sandy Spring

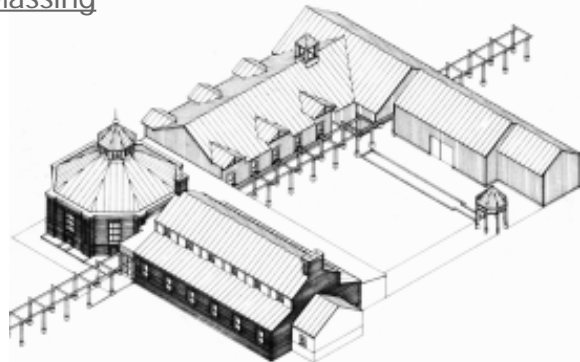
General Notes

The Sandy Spring Museum was envisioned not just as a museum but as a center for community and cultural events, research and living history. The design intent was to compose a collection of buildings both civic and vernacular, to house a complex program of uses. The building wraps a courtyard which is used for outdoor events. A continuous trellis engages the street with the museum, ultimately acting as the main thoroughfare for the building and courtyard.

Brick Wall Section



Massing



Disparate objects/materials arranged around a simple formal hierarchy. Repetitive trellis lends consistency.

Elevations



Formal front elevation with brick octagon & 'basilica'



Informal side elevation with frame agricultural forms



PATTERNS OF GROWTH



- 1 Adaptive Reuse
- 2 Folk Transformation *Porches*
- 3 Folk Transformation *"Telescoping"*
- 4 Evolution of Form
- 5 Scale Evolution *Georgian*
- 6 Scale Evolution *Classical Revival*

Adaptive Reuse

“Adaptive reuse” is a folk building tradition common in this area. Rather than building anew with each successive generation, locals reuse the buildings passed down to them in often unique and clever ways. As each of the examples below illustrate, the particular form of a structure seldom restricts its function. This is a testament to the local tradition of building both simply and solidly. If a building becomes too small for a new use, additions are added as required, but the essential nature of the building remains unchanged. This creates a sense of cultural connectivity among the generations of people who live and have lived here, and reinforces a dynamic building tradition.



Hoyle's Tourist Home, Olney (demo) SSM



Berlin's Drug Store, Olney (demo) SSM



Old Vol. Fire Department, Sandy Spring SSM



Current Retail/Commercial, Sandy Spring MBA



Orig. House at Olney Crossroads (demo) SSM



Murphy's Tin Shop and Toll Booth (demo) SSM

Folk Transformation *Porches*

Folk transformations are informal changes that occur to buildings once the initial construction phase is finished. Porches, porticos, and attached sheds are common forms of local folk transformation. These changes are applied to all scales and types of buildings, from the most formal or sacred structure to more modest homes. Frequently these changes occur for purely functional reasons, such as a growing family's need for more space; often they are made to keep the building's appearance current with the stylistic mode of the day. It is difficult to survey the built environment of the Olney-area without noticing such transformations, which are particularly common in rural areas (as Olney once was).



Stone St. Store, Laytonsville (demo) SSM



General Store, Brighton (demo) SSM



Olney Inn, Olney (demo) SSM



Woolen Mill, Brookeville MBA



Greenwood, Brookeville MBA



Olney Ale House, Olney

Folk Transformation *“Telescoping”*

“Telescoping” is a common form of building growth in the greater Olney area. It refers to the lateral or backwards expansion of a building, often in continuation of the original structure’s scale and materiality. Typically these additive forms consciously follow the pattern set by the original house. Porches and roofs are commonly used as architectural liners to stitch together the old and new buildings; likewise dormers are often placed atop the house to reorganize the overall composition. Telescoping is a transformation technique that might suggest how local styles and vernacular may be expanded into larger scales of development in the future, as the population density grows and parallel needs expand.



Walnut Hill, Brinklow SSM



Fair Hill, Olney (demo) SSM



Sharon, Olney SSM



Rockland, Olney SSM



Madison House, Brookeville MBA



Olney House, Olney

Evolution of Form



Olney one-room schoolhouse (demo) SSM



Old Sherwood Friends School (relo) SSM



Old Sherwood Public School (demo) SSM



Sherwood High School, Current MBA

“Formal evolution” refers to the process institutions such as schools, hospitals, etc. use to rebuild or evolve as their needs for space grow. Note below how both the local school and hospital forms changed with both functional demands and the stylistic whims of the day (*schools at left, hospitals below*).



Wrenwood, Dr. Bird's home/office (demo) SSM



Old Montgomery General Hospital (demo) SSM



Montgomery General Hospital, Current SSM

Scale Evolution *Georgian*



Falling Green, Olney

MBA

This private home was built in 1764. It shares many characteristics with the buildings below, including materials, proportions, elements (pediments, chimneys, and window shapes).



New Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Dept.

MBA

The Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department building was recently built and is an example of a structure that uses the neo-Georgian style on another scale. Note how the bays have increased from five for the residential-use above to nine for this civic building.



Montgomery Mutual Insurance, Sandy Spring

MBA

This commercial building was built in 1977. It was designed in the neo-Georgian style and reflects many of the elements of the house above but on a much larger scale. Grandeur scale elements include the pediment over the front door, the cupola in the center, four large chimneys, and dormers. The building is essentially two stories (like the other buildings) with the addition of the attic dormers.

Scale Evolution *Classical Revival*



The Lyceum, Sandy Spring

SSM

The Lyceum was built in 1859 as a center for spiritual and intellectual gatherings to house groups up to 50 people maximum. While small in scale, many elements of the Greek Revival style are expressed in the proportions, simple pediment and porch. The Lyceum still exists today but additions have been added.



Old Montgomery General Hospital, Olney

SSM

The hospital was completed in 1919. It shares many of the same features as the Lyceum: cross gable, window proportions, and front porch extruded over a much larger scale.



Old Montgomery County Court House, Rockville

WEB

The Old Montgomery County Court House takes the same proportions and stylistic components one scale larger, covering nearly an old city block.

URBAN MORPHOLOGY



- 1 Old Olney Crossroads *before c.1978*
- 2 Destruction of Old Olney *c.1978*
- 3 Local Public Spaces *past and present*
- 4 Mixed-Use Buildings

Old Olney Crossroads *before c.1978*



View west on 108, circa 1977

SSM



Aerial view of NW corner, circa 1950's

SSM



Old D.G.S. Grocery Store, SE corner

SSM



View west on 108, circa 1900 (SSM)



View north on Georgia Avenue, circa 1977 (SSM)

Destruction of Old Olney *c.1978*



Jerry's Subs, NW corner today MBA



Shopping Center, SW corner today SSM



Stained Glass Pub, NE corner today MBA



Six-and-12 Store, SE corner today MBA

History and Character:

With the destruction of Old Olney in 1978, the crossroads were streamlined for the automobile at the expense of the pedestrian. Quaint farmhouses that lined the intersection were demolished and replaced with vast parking lots and generic commercial buildings with little relationship to the local regional architecture. It may be surprising to today's commuters that this intersection has changed so radically in such a short amount of time. What was once human-scaled, slow-paced, and even attractive is now dreadfully mundane and dangerous for pedestrians. Below is a sequence of pictures of the demolition of Olney Drug Store, at the present day site of Jerry's Subs.

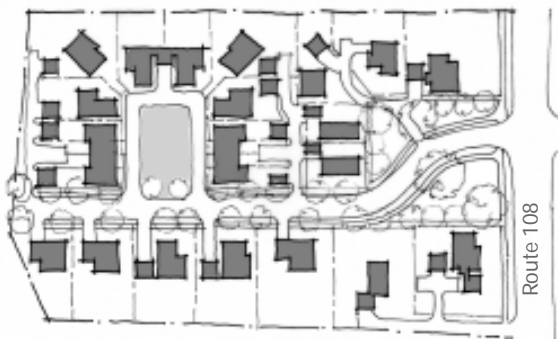


Out with the old... The County Courier 5/10/78

Local Public Spaces *past and present*



Plaza at Coldstone, Olney



Wyndcrest, Ashton (DPZ Architects) MBA



Wyndcrest, Ashton (DPZ Architects) MBA



Old Olney crossroads, view east SSM

About local public spaces:

Olney has a paucity of public gathering spaces, and those that do exist very often are accompanied by signs requesting people not to loiter. This was not always the case. In fact the old Olney crossroads were a *de facto* urban plaza. In *Olney: Echoes of the Past*, the authors depict the crossroads and adjacent buildings as a bustling public meeting spot (*Barrow, Stevens p102*).

DPZ Architects' green at Wyndcrest in Ashton successfully replicates this traditional planning form. The shared space formed by the adjacent townhouses (*see plan and photo, at left*) is well scaled and conducive to shared experiences. Commercial spaces are increasingly popular, as well. However, other places for public gathering in Olney are *ad hoc* at best, leaving its core without the civic heart so important to the day-to-day life of a pleasant and vibrant town.



Starbucks Loggia, Olney

Mixed-Use Buildings



Mixed use buildings at Olney crossroads MBA



Mixed-use building, Sandy Spring MBA



Sandy Spring Store MBA



Mixed-use building, Sandy Spring MBA

About local mixed-use buildings:

“Mixed-use” building is an age-old tradition from as far back as the Greeks and Romans, through the Middle Ages and into the early industrial period. “Mixed-use” buildings are by definition simultaneously utilized for different, often unrelated reasons.

For example, early in Olney’s history it was quite common for the proprietor of a business or small industry to work out of his house. The crossroads of Old Olney were full of this type of development. The first apartments in the area were units added above the Sandy Spring Store by owner Herbert Adams in 1935, continuing the trend in a modern way.

With the beginning of Euclidean zoning practices after World War II, building uses were separated into distinct categories, thus making it difficult, even illegal, for one to work out of his or her home. Currently there is a growing movement to end this practice.



Detail of building at left (MBA)