

Charles County, Maryland



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS NEWSLETTER

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From a Census Perspective: Growth of Charles County

Originally created by the Second Lord Baltimore, Cecil Calvert, and then established in honor of the Third Lord Baltimore, Charles Calvert, the boundary of what we know today as Charles County was established in 1658.

With its new European colonists settling in the area around Port Tobacco, the county emerged as an important agricultural community and one of the busiest seaports in the New World. By the time of the first census, taken in 1790, the population of the county had reached 20,613 persons.

From that very first census in 1790 all the way through to the year 1940, the population of the county remained stable with no major increases or decreases in total population reflected in the decennial counts. The highest count during this 150 year period was reflected in the 1790 census, while the lowest one was in 1890 with a count of 15,191 persons.

Research into historical Census counts reveals some interesting facts about the county. The 1820 census divided the county into four numbered election districts and reflects the total population of the county at 16,500 persons. People were categorized as either Free White Males, Free White Females, Slaves or Free Colored Persons. Of the total Free White population (6,514 persons, comprising 40% of the total county population), over sixty-eight percent were involved in agricultural production. The only two other areas of employment listed were "Manufactures", accounting for about 5% of the Free White population and "Commerce", representing only 0.7% of the Free Whites.

**CURRENT
POPULATION
ESTIMATE**
116,266

**CHANGE IN
POPULATION
SINCE 6/30/96**
+ 2.8%

**Based on Use & Occupancy Permits Issued*

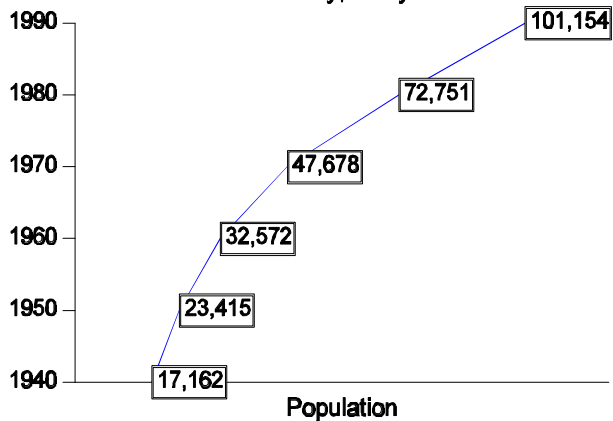
The group comprising the largest portion of the total population, Slaves, numbered 9,419 and accounted for 57% of total population. The remaining 3% of the population (567) was listed as Free Colored Persons. The shorter life expectancy at that time was reflected by the uppermost age category listed as "forty-five and upwards". The Census Bureau's current upper category for age reporting is 85 years and over.

Records from the 1870 census include the names of the four election districts (Hilltop, Allen's Fresh, Duffield and Bryantown) and indicate that the population of 15,738 was fairly evenly distributed among those four districts.

By the year 1930, the ten election districts that we are familiar with today had been created by legislative action. Interestingly, the seventh election district (Pomomkey) had the largest population with 2,671 total persons, while the eighth district (Bryantown) had the largest "Rural Farm Population", showing 1,764 persons involved in agriculture. Since that 1930 census, the decennial counts have shown a pattern of growth which continues today. One significant event that spurred this growth was the construction and opening of the Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge, along with the opening of U.S. Route 301, in 1940. This opened a major north-south transportation corridor, and ended many years of isolation for the county.

The chart on page 2 shows the county's population in each of the census years since 1940:

DECENNIAL CENSUS COUNTS Charles County, Maryland



Update on Census 2000

With the goal of counting all 274,000,000 people estimated to be residing in the U. S. on April 1, 2000, the Census Bureau recently submitted to Congress its proposal on the subjects to be included in the 2000 Census. According to the June issue of the *Census and You*, the bureau recommended taking five questions off the short form (children ever born, year last worked, source of water, sewage disposal and condominium status). If approved, respondents will answer only seven questions on name, sex, age, race, relationship, Hispanic origin and whether you rent or own your home. The long form, mailed on average to one in every six households, would contain 27 additional subject areas, for a total of 34 in all. These issues are now in the process of congressional review, with the requirement that the actual questions asked be submitted to Congress no later than April 1, 1998.

When the final counts were tallied from the 1990 census, the figures indicated that 4.5 million people were omitted, representing a total of 1.8% of the population at that time. In an effort to count 100% of the population in the year 2000, the Census Bureau is striving to find a less costly and better way to count the population. The Census Bureau plans to design a more user-friendly form, provide more ways for people to respond via Internet and an 800-number, placement forms in public places, use available technology intelligently, form partnerships with state and local governments and the community, and establish an integrated marketing campaign promoting the benefits of the census, among others. These are all ideas to make Census 2000 less costly, more efficient, and as close to a 100% count of the population as possible.

At the county level, staff members are continuing in the cooperative effort to supply the preliminary data necessary for an accurate and effective census. New address listings, as well as updated maps with new street names and addresses, are being provided to the Census Bureau through several partnership programs.

For more information or questions on Census 2000, please

contact Ms. Mary Grant on (301) 645-0684.

1997 Building Permit Issuances

Commercial: For the period April 1, 1997 through June 30, 1997, the county approved 160,068 new square feet of commercial space, all located within the county's development district. This total includes new commercial buildings, as well as additions to existing commercial space.

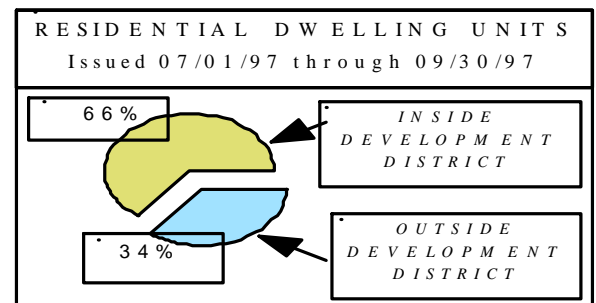
Residential: During the second quarter of 1997, the Town of La Plata issued permits for 3 attached and 10 detached new residential structures, while the Town of Indian Head reported issuing one permit for a detached dwelling.

The Charles County Permits Office issued the following building permits for the period April 1, 1997 thru June 30, 1997:

Detached residential dwellings	178
Attached residential dwellings	76
Total New Residential	254

Residential building permit issuances are down 15% when compared with the same period last year.

Development District:



Did You Know???????

Racial Composition of County: Of the 101,154 Charles countians enumerated in the 1990 census, 79% (80,252) were white, 18% (18,425) were listed as black, 1.3% were Asian/Pacific Islander (1,208), just under 1% were listed as American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut (869), and 400 were listed as other race.

Corresponding percentages for the 4,781,468 persons counted in the State during 1990 were: 71% white, 24.8% black, 3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.3% American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut, and 0.9% as other race.

This information is provided by the Charles County Government, Department of Planning and Growth Management, Planning Division, Post Office Box 'B', La Plata, Maryland 20646.