

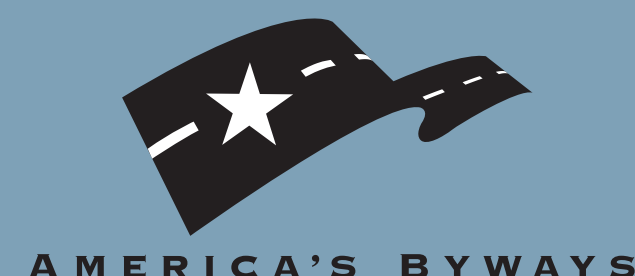
Washington Heritage Trail

The Washington Heritage Trail in West Virginia



The Washington Heritage Trail is a 136-mile national scenic byway inspired by the prominent footsteps of George Washington through the three historic counties of West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle. Compelling history, spectacular scenery, geologic wonders, recreation and year 'round activities and festivals are highlighted by 45 historical sites. The trail meanders across mountains and rivers, through forests, farms and orchards as it connects five 18th century towns that remain the center of life today and offer comfortable lodging, unique shopping and fine dining. More information on attractions and services throughout the area is available at each town's Visitor Center.

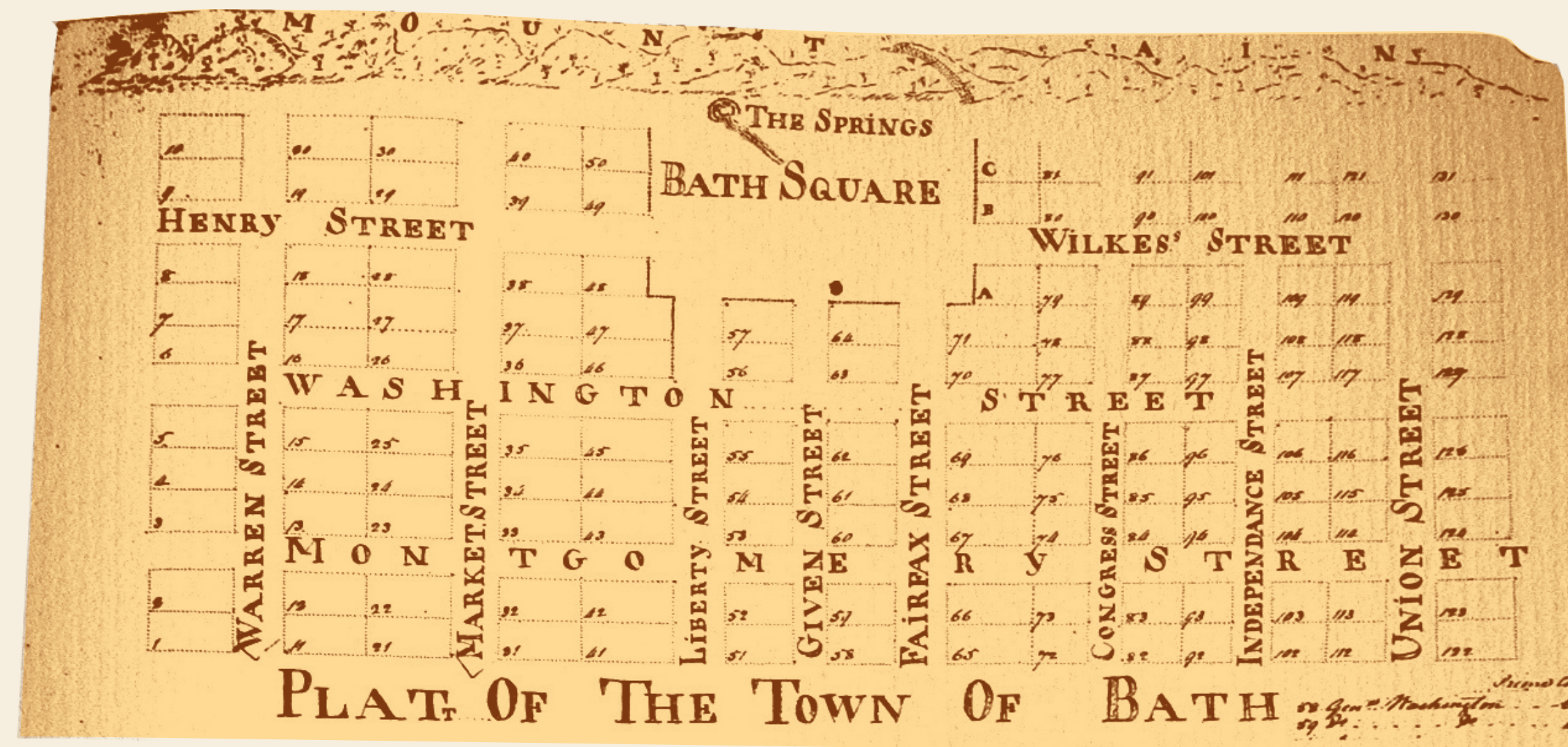
www.washingtonheritagetrail.com



Bath Historic District

Nearly 30 years after colonial travelers, including a teenaged George Washington, pitched tents and "took the waters" in stone-lined pools, the Virginia Legislature in 1776 established a town called Bath on 50 acres around the warm mineral springs. The law establishing a town around the springs was unprecedented. It was the first, and possibly the only, American town set up specifically to be a spa. The official name of the municipality remains Bath although the world knows it by the Post Office name of Berkeley Springs.

A walking tour traces the history of dozens of historic buildings within the 18th-century town limits beginning with the founders and buyers of the first lots sold in 1777 including George and Samuel Washington as well as three signers of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution, two Revolutionary War generals and a half dozen members of the Continental Congress. The colonial elite clearly selected Bath as a fashionable summer escape.



The town's rich and colorful history displays cycles of notoriety and decline. It has enjoyed at least four Golden Ages as a premier resort and spa beginning with the 1760s through 1790s and continuing to antebellum, Victorian and present-day. It even boasts Civil War damage at the hands of Stonewall Jackson.

In 2009, more than 150 historic structures within the town limits and its distinguished nearly-250-year history led to designation of Bath as a National Historic District. Architectural contributions range from Italianate Victorian to Gothic Revival to Queen Anne.

The legislative act establishing Bath called for *building convenient houses for accommodating numbers of infirm person, who frequent those springs yearly, for the recovery of their health.* December 6, 1776

