

Through the efforts of the Restorers the monastery was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 1, 1973. Three weeks later, a group of Carmelites did arrive in Maryland, at Great Mills, and with the support of the Archdiocese of Washington, the wish to move the nuns to Port Tobacco became a reality in 1976. After 145 years since their departure in 1831, the Discalced Carmelite nuns came Home.



Current Port Tobacco Community of Nuns

For more than 75 years the Restorers have continued their dedication to Mount Carmel and the Carmelite nuns by their spiritual, physical and financial support. We invite you to join the Restorers of Mount Carmel of Maryland, Inc., by completing the membership form and assisting us in our efforts to create awareness of this important site of religious freedom in the State of Maryland.



Mary's Prayer Garden

Membership Form

Type of Membership

(Please Check One)

- Annual \$50.00
 Perpetual. \$300.00
 Donation only

Please Print

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone No.: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please make checks payable to:
 The Restorers of Mount Carmel

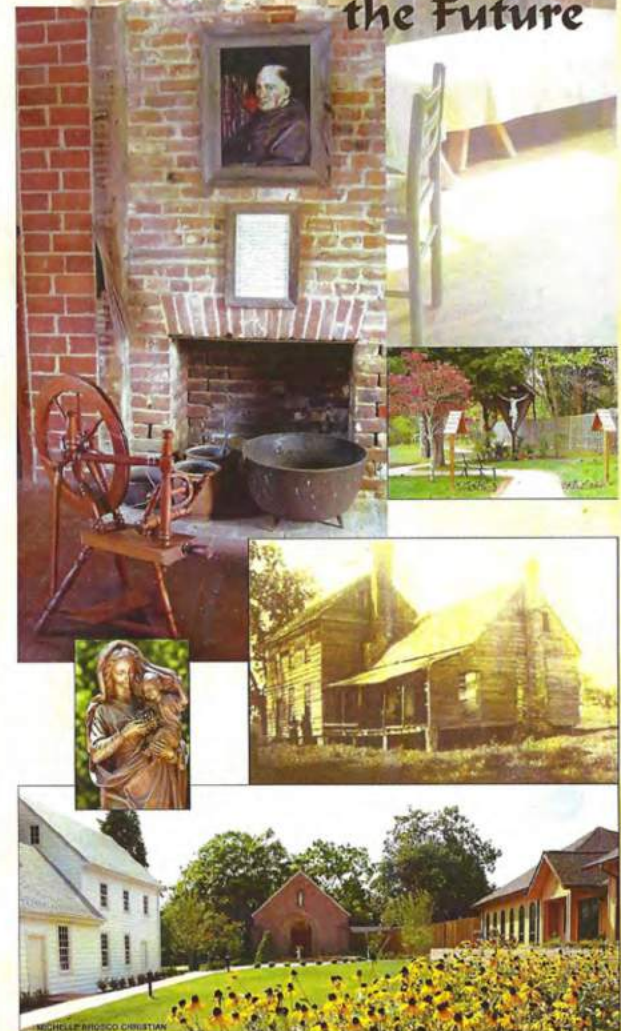
Return to:

The Restorers of Mount Carmel in Maryland, Inc.
 P.O. Box 1795
 La Plata, MD 20646



The Restorers of Mount Carmel in Maryland, Inc.

Preserving the Past,
 Protecting the Present,
 Preparing for
 the Future



High on a hill in the Port Tobacco Valley lies a lifestyle set apart from the world by prayer, work and a continuous desire to give glory to God. Mount Carmel Monastery of Port Tobacco is the home of the cloistered Discalced Carmelite nuns who originally settled on this land in 1790. The monastery was founded after the American Revolution by Carmelite nuns from Belgium, three of whom were originally from Southern Maryland. After almost 41 years of labor and prayer on this site, the eight or more buildings on the property fell into disrepair and the nuns were living under conditions of extreme hardship. To provide better financial support, Archbishop James Whitfield transferred the 24 Carmelites to the City of Baltimore in 1831.



1890 sketch of original buildings from Bishop C.W. Currier's "Carmel in America"

After 100 years the original Mount Carmel Monastery had almost disappeared. However, through God's goodness, the site and two surviving buildings known as "The Old Monastery" were visited in 1933 by descendants of the Maryland Colonists, who realized that quick action was needed to save the remnants of America's first Carmel.

Through the efforts of Mrs. Benjamin Talbott of Washington (born Mary Cecelia Hamilton) and her daughter, Mrs. John Hagerty, a restoration campaign began. In 1935 The Restorers of Mount Carmel was established for the purpose of restoring and preserving the site of the first convent of religious women in the Thirteen Original Colonies. With the help of the Archbishop of Baltimore seven acres of the property were purchased that included the two buildings of the original group and the cemetery.



Mary Cecilia Hamilton Talbott (left)



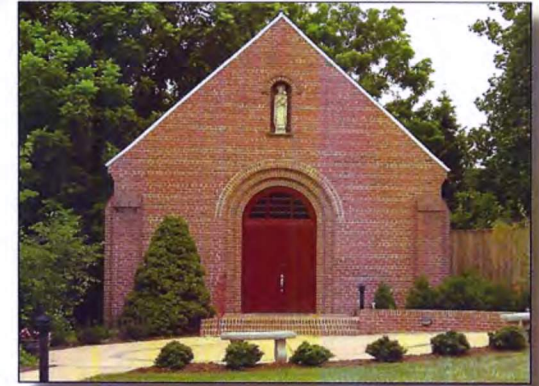
Isabelle Jenkins Talbott Hagerty (right)

The first pilgrimage to the Shrine was in 1936 and the first Mass was celebrated in June 1937. Chapters of the Restorers were established in Washington, DC, Boston, Charles County, MD, Saint Mary's County, MD, and New York City to permanently maintain Mount Carmel as a priceless relic of Catholic religious life.



The Old Carmel 1935

In 1954 the Chapel of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was built of rose colored brick on the site of the original chapel to accommodate the hundreds of pilgrims who journey to this holy mount to glorify God, honor Mary, attend Mass, and find inner peace.



Chapel of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Pilgrim Hall was built in 1968 and enlarged in 2006. It includes a gift shop and meeting rooms. Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle of Washington, in his remarks at the first dedication in 1968, stated, "How nice it would be to have a monastery of contemplative nuns here praying for the spiritual welfare of the Archdiocese." This was the prayer of both laity and nuns from the day the Carmelites left in 1831. This became one of the goals of the Restorers of Mount Carmel: to see nuns return to Port Tobacco.



Carmel Restored