History & Overview

Monterey is located in Highland County, nestled in the Allegheny Mountains midway between the eastern border of West Virginia and western border of the famed Shenandoah Valley. This quaint town is home to over 2000 residents and is known for its pristine scenic beauty and rustic rural charm. The county, often called “Virginia's Switzerland,” is graced by the headwaters of the James and Potomac Rivers and celebrates its high, narrow ridges forested in hardwoods and broad, open valleys. The county seat was set at Bell’s Tavern, which was immediately referred to as the Highland Court House. In 1847, 416 square miles of spectacular mountain terrain were formed into Highland County out of portions of Bath and Pendleton counties. The town was renamed Monterey in 1847, commemorating Zachery Taylor’s notable victory at Monterrey, Mexico the previous September. The Town of Monterey is located 45 miles west of the intersection of Interstates 81 and 64 in Staunton. The county has one of the highest mean elevations of any county east of the Mississippi River and was named to reflect its prevailing high altitude. The county has a rich history. During the Civil War, the Battle of McDowell, a significant battle in Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign, was waged in Highland County.