

## Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

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Forest and Stream Club

Carroll County Times article for 19 August 1990

By Joe Getty

Carroll County was once a popular tourist destination spot for people wishing to escape the sultry summer heat and ever-present risk of an outbreak of contagious diseases in the city. During the late nineteenth century, our small towns including Westminster, New Windsor, Manchester, Sykesville and Mount Airy, had tourist hotels and summer guests houses that catered to the vacationers from the city.

Sometimes local residents traveled outside of the county for vacations but many times participated in nearby activities as part of their summer entertainments. Camping trips within the county were popular and one of the oldest organizations in the county, the Forest and Stream Club, was established in May 1874 with the purpose of protecting fish and game in Carroll County.

A major activity of the organization was the annual camp on the Monocacy River. The late nineteenth century newspapers carry articles prepared by a correspondent at the camp that described the organization's activities during their July and August encampments. These reports provide an interesting perspective on the outdoors as an emerging leisure time activity during Carroll County's Victorian era.

Fortunately, the Historical Society of Carroll County has an extensive local newspaper collection with which we can document the activities of this summertime tradition. The 1882 encampment is described in the August 19th edition of the Democratic Advocate:

"While the wind is gently sighing  
and Uncle Dick's busy tying  
all of our socks up to dry  
I will write a line or two  
of just such things as we do  
per for chance may lie

We have just finished supper and done it completely having lick the platter clean. The sun declines in glorious splendor, the twilights slowly fades away and everythings looks bully. The water of the Monocacy flows placidly along in muddy splendor. The leaves of the stately trees about the camp scarcely rustle in the gentle breeze.

The boys are engaged in various amusements, some conversing upon the good luck of the day, or perhaps it would be more appropriate to said the bad luck, some in croquet, some are pitching quoits, some desire to know what you play for jack, while others are engaged in those charming aerial evolutions rest- to a successful games of football. Uncle Dick [Elias Yingling] who is always ready to administer to the comfort and looks after the interest of us all, has fastened a long rope from the board tent to a tree, has just finished tying up the 24th pair of socks to dry. Ah how fortunate the wind is from the east, such gents is the situation of affairs as I sat down on my cushion chair, three legged camp stool, with a stub of a one cent pencil borrowed from a tall and lean teller of a Westminster bank, having

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faithfully promised to return without grace, to write you a few lines relative to the lights and shadows of a fishing camp on the banks of the Monocacy.

Quite a jolly crowd had assembled in the large canvas tent representing all the various trades and professions of your city. The rain is gently falling and Joshua, Jessie and William with their choir of cultured voices and rude instruments are treating us to a long meter melody. The little cashier has just ventured the entire bank on a flush and when our district registers announced who rushes in burying a kid nearly drown and startles all by announcing "Just got here! Drove up! Awful wet! and haven't had anything to eat today. Frank get me some supper". A gloom settles upon all as bass after bass, a plate of ham, a loaf of bread, a gallon of coffee etc., etc. disappears to satisfy the cravings of that delicate stomach. He suffers from dyspepsia says one. How fortunate, for our chances of breakfast would be slim.

Our eastern undertaker with a eye to business seems to be the only happy man in the crowd. He is quietly arranging a plan with our East End butcher to utilize the kid for bait and thus replenish the stock of our Florida tobacconist who each morning announces with pleasant mind the loss of his bait. He had 800 catfish, crawl fish, frogs, etc., to his positive knowledge and now they are all gone out of his bucket, but 790.

As the hour of midnight approaches the last of our party slowly finds his way to our sleeping quarters. Doc arrayed in a long night gown has just stepped into his bunk. Uncle Dick is gently snoozing from the depths of that glorious nightcap. Jess has just succeeded in stealing Jim's pillow. Up is tingling hard tack's nose with a straw who occasionally slaps his cheek with a "Sho there" the timbers of the roof reverberate and horse echo to the dreadful melody of snores from 20 sleepers.

When Victor Hugo the obese teller suddenly exclaims "By George there's a mosquito," I hear him sing, "there is another, another, oh my we will get no sleep tonight." The mosquitoes hold a council of war and make a vigorous attack. Covers, pillows, feet, arms fly and Joe yells "You hit me the eye." The mosquitoes retreat. Dazed long and sadly upon that land of famine that trembling bloodless forms sing a sweet mournful lay, spread their wings and are never heard of more.

"Boys get up," yelled Jess. "Who stole my bait," and all awake feeling that they have enjoyed a good rest in spite of Hug's mosquitoes. The ghost that Doc saw, the man in the house vivid in Frank's imagination. Jim's falling out of bed and Joe's flaring up in the charming snoring.

The Forest and Stream Club are certainly enjoying a good time on the Monocacy. During the last week more than 30 different persons enjoyed the luxuries prepare for them by the club. Butter, eggs, milk, cream, bread, pastries, vegetables, ice, etc., are procured daily from Mr. Dutterer. Football, quoits, croquet, cards etc. are among the sports prepared. The fishing this year has only been tolerable good, although some fine bass has been caught. George Share caught one that weighed over four pounds. The camp will continue next week."

Photo Caption:

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The members of the Forest and Stream Club gathered for this photograph on their 50th Anniversary in 1924. Photo courtesy of the Historical Society of Carroll County.