

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

Carroll's Yesteryears
15 November 1992

Society gathering a legacy for Carroll countians
By Joe Getty

Last week the county's Historical Society launched an endowment drive called the Legacy Campaign. The objective of this effort is to lay the foundation for preserving elements of our heritage for Carroll's future generations.

You might ask, "What is the legacy?" In Carroll County our cultural legacy consists of many elements. First, there is the physical place, the rolling Piedmont landscape interspersed with farmsteads, churches, villages and small towns. Next, there are objects produced by our local culture that represent this legacy. Many objects have been passed down within a family for generations.

There are many intangibles of our local history: the sense of place, oral traditions and customs. When you combine these three factors, you have a portrait of everyday life in Carroll County throughout our history.

Before the Historical Society was created in 1939, there was no advocacy organization in Carroll County to preserve elements of this culture. Today the Historical Society takes an active role in preserving, documenting, teaching and promoting the heritage of Carroll County.

We are the stewards of this heritage as many of the objects passed down for generations are donated to us to insure their safekeeping and provide for their enjoyment by future generations. All of our activities are focused on the mission: To preserve significant artifacts of the past and to undertake educational programs for the interpretation of Carroll County's heritage.

An early steward of Carroll County's heritage was Louis H. Dielman of New Windsor. He became known state-side for documenting church and family burial grounds and for serving as editor of the *Maryland Historical Magazine* from 1910 to 1937.

He once wrote a "Last Page Editorial" to the *Carroll County Times* about his work in locating the original boundary stones between Frederick and Baltimore counties in what is now Carroll County. Under the pen-name of "Old Mortality," he touches upon the themes of preserving our heritage:

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“‘Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set.’ Proverbs, XXII, 28. On our journeys over the old boundary line we found but two of the six stones originally placed, though we located all of the original sites and strangely found three of the men who had removed three of the other stones, the sixth, that at Westminster, has been preserved but not in its place. So far as restoration is concerned our mission was a dismal failure, and it is painful to record that the most important of all, that standing in Parr’s Spring, has since been intentionally covered over with earth thus obliterating the interesting place of beginning for four counties! ... We can not write First Page editorials but despite our ‘ossified conscience,’ physical decay and approaching senility, we shall continue while the last lights lasts to watch ‘the land marks that our fathers have set.’ Old Mortality”

With similar dedication, the Legacy Campaign is about the stewardship of our cultural heritage. In Carroll County today, the pressures of development and change are everywhere. We all are familiar with the significant losses of our cultural heritage: local buildings are demolished, business and public records are destroyed, and family heirlooms are neglected or sold to the highest bidder and moved from the county.

We are fortunate to have had superb leadership during the course of the history of our organization. Stewardship of Carroll County’s historic resources has taken the time, dedication and support of many people. In the coming weeks, we will profile the former leaders who have achieved goals of building a legacy for the future at the Historical Society.

Photo credit: Courtesy of the Historical Society of Carroll County

Photo caption: This stone designated the Frederick-Baltimore county line at 295 E. Main St. in Westminster.