

Carroll Yesteryears
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Time to Check Out Taneytown History Museum By Mary Ann Ashcraft

A bit of advice for history lovers—don't wait any longer before visiting the Taneytown History Museum on East Baltimore Street on a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. You will be in for a treat. The Museum, which recently celebrated its 13th birthday, offers an opportunity to see fascinating objects from its regular collection in addition to this year's spectacular exhibit of nearly 50 quilts loaned by Taneytown area residents.

The exhibit was curated by Le Rowell, a descendant of two early Taneytown families, who has promoted quilting while traveling the world from Bolivia to Portugal to Kyrgyzstan in central Asia. Ms. Rowell's visually stunning display introduces visitors "to the beauty, craftsmanship and enduring attraction of quilting..." People familiar with Taneytown history will recognize names associated with many of the quilts—Koons, Dudderar, Barnes, Wantz, Crouse, Hoover, Sell, and others.

One of those names is associated with another featured object. This year the museum was extremely fortunate to receive two clocks made by Eli Bentley, probably Taneytown's most celebrated craftsman. He lived and worked there during the late 18th and early 19th centuries and left a legacy of timepieces treasured by many area families. One clock, made for local Revolutionary War soldier Michael Waggoner, was donated by Kenneth and Doris Crouse in memory of George W. and Pauline Crouse who purchased it in Frederick. The second clock came from New Jersey businessman Richard R. Bradley who bought it from a well-known antiques dealer. Rather than move his clock to Florida, far from its origin, Mr. Bradley felt it should come "home," so delivered it personally to the museum, set it up in the front gallery, and promised it would keep perfect time as it had for over twenty years in his office.

Outright gifts of such significance as these are rare and they definitely lend excitement to the lives of the volunteers who keep the Museum open for about eight months each year according to Curator Nancy Eyler. The quilts, which have been on exhibit since early April, will be returned to their owners when the museum closes November 19. Most of the other items on exhibit are on long-term loan from local residents. During the coming winter months, Museum Chairman Carroll Hahn and his volunteers will plan next year's featured exhibit.

The Museum operates as half of the Taneytown Heritage and Museum Association, Inc., a union of "two local groups dedicated to preserving, sharing and learning more about the history of Taneytown and the surrounding area. The Taneytown Heritage Committee was established in 1986 and the Taneytown History Museum in 2004." The Heritage Committee sponsors lectures on local topics five times each year at Grace United Church of Christ on West Baltimore Street, while the Museum's goal is to preserve and display artifacts and ephemera from the Taneytown area. Sandy Crouse currently serves as president of the association, a 501(c)3 non-profit.

Anyone interested in quilts should put September 22 on their calendar. The Museum is sponsoring a Quilt “Tea ‘n Talk”—an open house from 1-4 p.m. with refreshments and lectures by Le Rowell, the quilt curator.

Mary Ann Ashcraft is a library volunteer at the Historical Society of Carroll County.

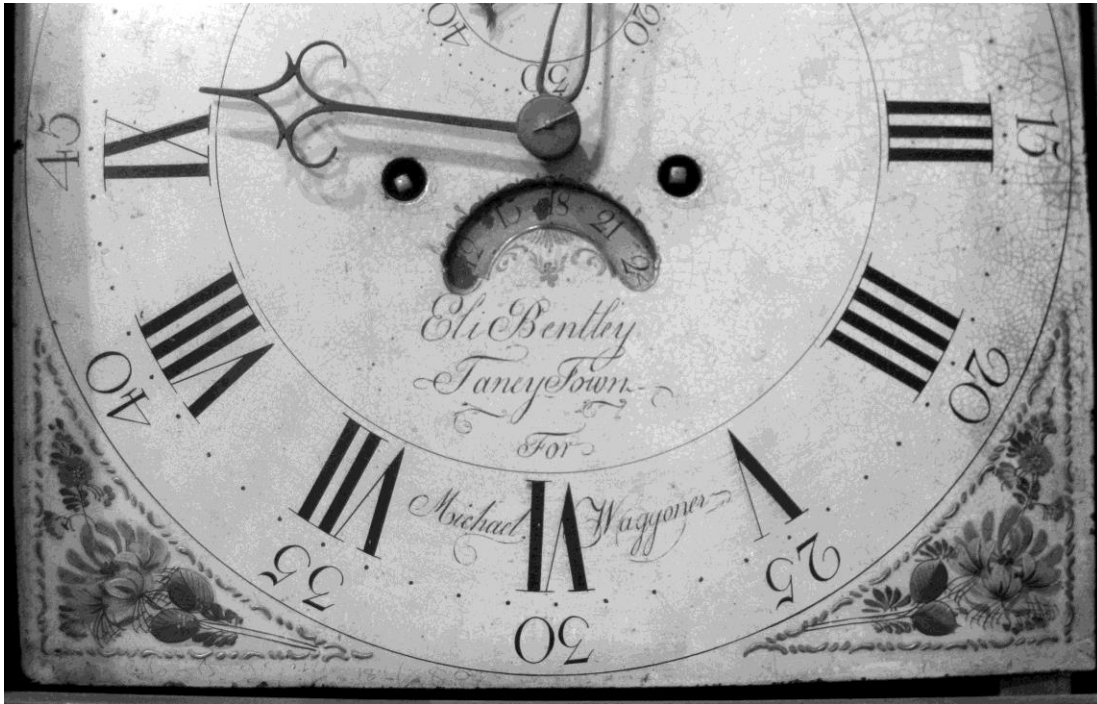


Image source: Submitted photo

Image caption: Seen here is a portion of a tall-case clock made by Taneytown's famous clockmaker, Eli Bentley, for Michael Waggoner, a Revolutionary War soldier who lived near Taneytown.