

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

Carroll's Yesteryears  
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Pennsylvania German culture evident in county  
by Joe Getty

Pennsylvania German culture influenced many elements of our local heritage. Carroll County's architecture, decorative arts, foodways, customs, folklore as well as our economic, political and social history reflect the ethnic traditions of the Pennsylvania Germans.

A search for these Pennsylvania German roots will be the theme of a bus tour sponsored by the Historical Society. This guided tour will explore the Pennsylvania German everyday life through visits to two historically significant sites in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

The early history of the northern and western sections of Carroll County was dominated by the settlement of the Pennsylvania Germans.

The typical German migration pattern into central Maryland began with immigrants landing by ship at Philadelphia. The Germans moved west into Lancaster and York counties and then south into Maryland.

Generally, the Germans who moved into Carroll County lived for a time in Pennsylvania before moving south. While there were some new arrivals from Europe who moved quickly along this migration route into Maryland, most settlers first worked in Pennsylvania or were sons and daughters of earlier settlers. They migrated south looking for better opportunities.

While immigrants to America came from all sections of Germany, a large percentage of those who settled in this area were from the Rhineland Palatinate. This is a region along the Rhine River encompassing much of southwestern Germany and northern Switzerland.

The Palatinate region was contested territory between France and the Germanic states. It suffered from extensive warfare throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The devastation of this region made the promise of the new World particularly attractive to the Palatinate Germans.

William Penn sent agents armed with propaganda leaflets into the Palatinate with offers of land and religious freedom for those who would settle in his colony.

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By the 1740s, the movement of Pennsylvania Germans into Carroll County had begun. It remained a strong and steady migration pattern into the first decade of the 19th century.

With these settlers came many Germanic traditions of their homeland. Most of the settlers established self-sufficient family farms.

Genealogies of families that settled Carroll County indicate most of the German settlers followed these migrations patterns.

The bus tour will be guided by Joe Getty, executive director, and Jay Graybeal, curator of the Historical Society. Throughout the tour, they will explain the influences of the Pennsylvania German cultural traditions on the early history of Carroll County. Particular attention will be given to the Pennsylvania German decorative arts and its interpretation of the Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House in Westminster.

The daily customs of a Pennsylvania German family household will be studied at the Hans Herr House. Built in 1719, this is the oldest structure in Lancaster County and was used as both a family residence and a Mennonite meetinghouse. It contains early Germanic architectural features including a centrally-located kitchen fireplace and a bedroom on the first floor. The Herr House is relevant to understanding Pennsylvania German designs in Carroll County such as the Christian Bauer House in Bachman's Valley.

A special museum study tour will be provided at the Pennsylvania Farm Museum of Landis Valley. The focus of this visit will be a broad range of Pennsylvania German craftsmanship and decorative arts including architecture, tools, textiles, ceramics, furniture and other household furnishings.

The bus tour will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> and will include a family style Pennsylvania German luncheon at the Good and Plenty Restaurant. Cost is \$32 for historical society members and \$36 for nonmembers. For additional information, contact the Historical Society at 848-6494.

*Photo credit: Courtesy of the Historical Society of Carroll County*

*Photo caption: The Christian Bauer House in Bachman's Valley shows distinctive details of Pennsylvania German architecture in Carroll County.*