

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

"Historical of the Forest and Stream Club, Part I"
Carroll County Times article for 22 October 1995
By Jay A. Graybeal

It was on a Monday evening May 11th 1874 that a number of gentlemen met at the office of Dr. Geo. S. Yingling, in the building now occupied by the Westminster Savings Bank, for the purpose of organizing a Club for the better protection of Fish and game in Carroll County.

The above mentioned meeting resulted in the formation of the Forest and Stream Club of Westminster. A now anonymous writer left a colorful description of the formation and early years of the club entitled, "A Short Biographical Sketch of the Forest and Stream Club of Westminster." The original handwritten document is in the manuscript collection of the Historical Society of Carroll County. The writer continued:

The meeting organized by calling Mr. Geo. W. Mathias to the chair and Dr. Geo. S. Yingling Secretary, quite a number of addresses were made in the interest of Fish and game protection & Culture. To further the interest of the meeting it was decided to appoint a committee of two to enquire into the feasibility of purchasing a tent looking forward to an encampment on the Monocacy River at a point to be determined later.

The Chairman appointed as such committee Drs. Geo. S. Yingling and Wm. H. Rippard, who during the week went to Baltimore and purchased the large tent, which is still in use and named Blue Mountain House. Another meeting was called May 18th 1874, a subscription taken and the tent paid for, \$15.00. It was then decided to form a Club and elect permanent officers. Dr. Wm. H. Rippard was nominated and elected President, which position he filled to the day of his death January 18th 1883. Dr. Geo. S. Yingling was nominated and elected Secretary and Treasurer, which position he continued to fill until his removal to Ohio in 1879. Mr. Chas. H. Baughman was elected his successor and continued to fill the position until Aug. 1st 1891. Mr. J. Q. H. Smith was elected his successor and filled the office in 1892 when Mr. C. H. Baughman was again elected Secretary and Mr. J. Q. H. Smith Treasurer for 1873.

In 1874 John J. Reese was elected Secretary and Treasurer which position he held until 1902. At the meeting of May 18th 1874 it was decided to give the Club a name and at that meeting was christened The Forest and Stream Club of Westminster, Md. On motion it was decided to hold the first encampment July 8th on the farm of Mr. Joshua Dutterer along the banks of the Monocacy River in Carroll County just a little east of W. Md. R.R. The weather during that first week of camp was perfect and all enjoyed themselves, we slept in the one tent, "as many as twenty at a time", rails was placed on the ground, straw thrown over them and blankets over that, we slept in a single row like sardines in a box and when one turned the others have to also. I will remember one, instance, Mr. F. I. Wheeler who laid at the extreme end of the tent was rolled off the straw and out of the tent by one of those turns. Our cooking was done on a spider or grate, and we ate from tin plates, drank coffee from tin cups and our table was a barn boor set on pegs driven in the ground.

It continued this for two years when we erected a board shanty to cook in, we made tables from boards and ate in the tent, moving the tables at night to enable us to sleep more comfortably. In the summer of 1879 the Club built a one story frame house 12 x 20 feet with bunks built on the inside for sleeping purposes. In this house we stored all our paraphernalia where not in camp. This continued until June 27th 1884 when the house was washed away by a flood and everything lost, news was sent to us at

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once and fourteen members went to the scene of the wreck, each one contributed \$5.00 toward the erection of a new and larger building and on the 14th day of July, "just 17 days after," we went into camp and slept in our new building which was 12 x 30 feet. The last nail was driven in the roof at 9 o'clock P.M. after which we sat down to an elegant supper prepared by our cook, David Ireland. We again encamped on the Monocacy beginning July 5th 1885. This year dissensions arose in the club and to preserve harmony it was decided that in 1886 we would encamp on the Potomac River at the Cumberland Valley Bridge below Williamsport. This year the club purchased two additional tents having sold the building to Mr. John Dutterer.

In 1883 Mr. Elias Yingling was elected president of the Club and continued as such to the day of his death which occurred May 30th 1887. Uncle Dick as he was familiarly known by the boys, was a genial whole souled old gentleman and the one best calculated to keep order in camp. He was always on hand in camping season and ever ready to administer to the wants of the members, resolutions of respect were voted to his memory.

In 1887 the Club decided to go into camp at Oxford, Md, about twelve of the members attended the encampment and enjoyed a very pleasant time. This year John J. Reese was elected President and served as such until 1890.

In 1888 the Club decided to encamp at Falling Waters on the Potomac River, a committee was appointed, a site selected and on the 18th day of August we put up tents on top of a hill at Falling Waters. We stored our equipage in the village until the following year 1889 when we again encamped at the same place July 27th. The weather was so disagreeable and the waters so muddy that we broke camp on Wednesday and decided to move. Mr. Van Holtz of Williamsport very kindly consented to store our goods at this place which was done and we returned home.

In 1890 John J. Reese declining to serve longer as President, Mr. Geo. A. Miller was elected. The Club decided March 19th 1890 to return to its old place on the Monocacy River and on Monday July 28th went into camp. On Monday July 30th 1891 we again encamped on the Monocacy River, a party of gentlemen from Gettysburg encamped about a mile below our camp and a jolly set of fellows they were, we organized a band our instruments being Brooms, small pieces of wood, tin pans, buckets, etc. and paid them a visit about 9 P.M. We were royally received and entertained, about 12 o'clock the same night they returned our visit and another good time was had, they brought their band along, big drum included and gave us a jolly serenade. The camp was quiet at one o'clock and all asleep when about 2:30 a.m. we were awakened by the fearful rush of water, we had to move everything to higher ground the waters have gotten into the cooks tent and was three feet deep before we could get the tent away, all the tent and board floors had to be moved to higher ground.

On the 4th day of July 1892 we again encamped on the Monocacy, had fire works, Balloon accessions and a jolly good time. In 1893 July 30 we again encamped on the Monocacy at a point about 3 hundred yards above the old encampment the first week of camp was a very pleasant one but the waters were so muddy that we caught but few fish, the second week, we had fearful thunder storms the river rose and fishing was spoiled this was a disappointment to many and the members were very much dissatisfied. After a great deal of persuasion the club voted to go to Monocacy again in 1894 and on the 30th of July pitched our tents at the same place, we had a very pleasant time through the waters were so very low and clear that we were unable to catch anything this first week and the rains from above, the second week, made the river too muddy to catch any. This almost caused a dissipation in fact the sentiment of

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the members was for moving and at the meeting of the club July 17th 1895 it was decided to encamp at Pinesburg on the Potomac River beginning Aug. 10th at a point about two miles above Williamsport and opposite the Hagerstown Bicycle Club House. This was one of the most enjoyable camps ever held by the club, the encampment lasting one week, the members caught great many fish, some fine ones and the scenery around and above camp being very picturesque. The officers for the year were Mr. Geo. A. Miller, President; John J. Reese, Secretary & Treasurer; S. Carr. Wikert, Commissary; Dr. Geo. E. Baughman, Quartermaster.

List of Members 1896: Baughman, Chas. H.; Baughman, Dr. Geo. E.; Bond, Jas. A. C.; Brundige, Ed. P.; Brown, W. L.; Crouse, Benj. G.; Fouke, Dr. Geo. D.; Fink, Chas. E.; Goodwin, Chas. E.; Gorsuch, Harry P.; Hering, Chas. E.; Huber, Winter; Hoppe, Elmer; Koons, John C.; Miller, George A.; Moore, Chas. W.; Reese, John J.; Roberts, John W.; Roberts, Chas. B. Jr.; Sharrer, George E.; Sharrer, Jesse C.; Shunk, John G.; Shaeffer, Milton; Shaeffer, Howard; Smith, J. Q. H.; Shipley, F. F.; Stevenson, Joshua; Smith, Joseph W.; Thomas, Wm. B.; Wickert, S. Carr.

Part II of this history will appear in next week's column.

Photo Caption: Members of the Forest and Stream Club of Westminster posed outside their cabin on the Monocacy River near Detour in c. 1920. Historical Society of Carroll County Collection, gift of Mrs. Betty Smith Yingling, 1992.