

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

"Belle Grove fountain 100 years ago"

Carroll County Times article for 17 October 1993

By Joe Getty

Public improvements within the communities throughout Carroll County were a major issue at the turn-of-the-century. Gas lights, water systems, macadamized roads and concrete sidewalks were important public issues discussed in community and town council meetings.

Local governments undertook capital project to improve health and safety as well as spruced up the appearance of their towns and villages. Civic organizations and committees were also involved with projects for community betterment.

A such committee was formed to obtain a fountain for Belle Grove Square in Westminster. A report about this project was published in the July 8, 1893 edition of the American Sentinel. The committee's report provides insights about the financing of volunteer community betterment projects of 100 years ago:

To the Citizens of Westminster

The undersigned, who have had charge, as a voluntary committee, of the enterprise of procuring and erecting a fountain in Belle Grove Square, Westminster, have the pleasure of reporting the complete consummation of the undertaking, and the placing in the square of a fountain in every respect suitable to the surroundings and beautifully adapted to the location, forming a handsome ornament and adding much to the natural beauty and attractiveness of the grounds. It is not our purpose to give a minute description of the work. It stands open to public inspection and can be seen by all. It is sufficient to say that it has a diameter of fourteen feet and a depth of basin of two feet.

The entire cost of the fountain and its erection was \$398.37, which has been fully provided for by the proceeds of the festival held for the purpose of raising funds in aid of the enterprise, by individual subscriptions, and from other sources.

The festival realized \$252.64, \$60 was donated by the Westminster Progressive Association, the proceeds of an excursion to Bay Ridge amounted to \$40, and contributions to the amount of \$46.25 were received from citizens of Baltimore, making in all \$398.89, leaving a balance in the hands of the committee of 52 cents. There were contributions of material-brick, stone, sand &c., not included in the aggregate cost. The books of the committee, showing receipts and disbursements in detail, are in the hands of the treasurer and open to inspection by any person desiring full information on the subject.

The committee desires to thank all persons who rendered assistance to promote and encourage the enterprise which has given to the city an ornament in which its people have a right to feel a just and laudable pride.

Fred D. Miller, Chairman,
Wm. H. Bell, Jr., Treasurer,
M. Schneeberger,
Chas. E. Bowers, Committee

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Photo caption: The fountain in Belle Grove Square was erected 100 years ago by a volunteer committee whose fundraising efforts obtained the \$400 necessary to construct this public improvement.