

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

Carroll's Yesteryears
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Flag Day 1992
By Jay Graybeal

Today is Flag Day. Although the Stars and Stripes flag was adopted in 1777 it was not until 1861 that the first Flag Day observances were held. Patriotic citizens of Hartford, Connecticut organized the event during the opening days of the Civil War. National acceptance of a day to honor the flag was slow to come and it was not until 1949 that Congress and President Harry S. Truman designated June 14 as Flag Day.

The Historical Society of Carroll County is fortunate to own an important collection of American flags. Nearly all were acquired by local people or organizations and several were made for special occasions or associated with notable events. These factors account for the high survival rate of these flags and for their donation to the historical society. Each of these flags helps in documenting changing flag styles, construction techniques, and customs, observed by Carroll Countians.

Photo credit: David Tillman

Photo caption: Thirty-four star printed cotton flag found on the Gettysburg Battlefield by Frances Birnie of Taneytown. The flag is inscribed "Gettysburg 1863." 22x24 inches. Gift of Amelia and Elizabeth Annan.

Photo credit: Historical Society of Carroll County

Photo caption: Capt. Hugh L. Elderdice Jr. and the Color Guard of Co. H., 1st Regiment, Maryland National Guard presenting the thirty-five star "Shellman Flag" to Sen. J. David Baile, president of the Historical Society's Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House, 206 E. Main St., Westminster. The flag was first flown by Eleanor Fisher Reese in June 1863 after the departure of Confederate calvarymen.

Photo credit: David Tillman

Photo caption: Forty-eight star printed silk flag carried by Mrs. Ada Croft in the first Armistice Day Parade, Los Angeles California, November 11, 1918. 10" x 14 1/2." Gift of Mrs. Croft.

Photo credit: Historical Society of Carroll County

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Photo caption: The late Lillian Shipley, curator of the Historical Society of Carroll County poses with the thirteen-star flag made by the Shriver family of Union Mills in c. 1800 in honor of Thomas Jefferson. The flag was given to the historical society by Elizabeth Shriver Kemp.

Photo credit: David Tillman

Photo caption: Thirty-two star printed silk flag with the stars forming a five-point star. Thomas Gorsuch carried the flag in an 1861 patriotic parade in Frederick. 9 ½ x 14 ½ Inches. Estate of H. Peyton Gorsuch, Gift of Mrs. Arleigh Burke.