

Carroll Yesteryears
24 February 2019
Historical Society of Carroll County Celebrating 80th Anniversary
By Mary Ann Ashcraft

Please save this date—Sunday, March 10th from 2 until 5 p.m.—for the Historical Society of Carroll County’s Open House. All three historic buildings at 206, 210, and 216 East Main Street in Westminster will be open to visitors of all ages with no admission fee.

The year 2019 marks the 80th anniversary of this important institution that preserves and interprets local history for young and old. The Society began in 1939 with the acquisition of the 1807 Sherman-Fisher-Shellman house which was its only building for approximately 30 years until the Kimmey House was added. That became the location of offices, a library, and exhibit space. A third historic building, Cockey’s, was added, creating a small campus in the part of Westminster dating to 1764. Visitor parking is located along Sycamore Street or in a lot behind 216 reached via South Alley between Green Street and East Main Street. All buildings are handicapped-accessible.

What is in store for visitors on March 10th? Guides will answer questions about the Shellman House that is decorated to represent the period 1807-1842 when Jacob Sherman and his wife lived there. Sherman’s house was one of the grandest in Westminster when built across from the tavern Jacob operated. Although he died in 1822, his wife lived there another 20 years. If you return several months after the open house, the garden behind Shellman will be in full bloom and a team of Master Gardeners will be planting herbs and heirloom vegetables. The house is visited each year by many third-grade students from Carroll’s public schools as well as students from private schools or home-schooled children.

Cross Sycamore Street to the Kimmey House at 210, site of the Society’s research library, but also home to the Museum Shop featuring books covering Carroll County history, a wide variety of children’s books, children’s toys, plus lovely items produced by local artists and craftspeople. The library will be open as well as the shop. You are welcome to do research on your family, your old Carroll County home, or brush up on local history during normal library hours, but not during the Open House.

If your young children are looking for a place to touch objects, continue on to Cockey’s at 216. There is a “Please Touch Room” where youngsters can handle genuine Native American artifacts or check out the traveling history trunks that teachers use in their classrooms.

Cockey’s currently houses three exhibits aimed at adults: “Time on Our Hands,” a display of locally made tall-case clocks and other time pieces from the Society’s collection, “Carroll County Treasures,” and “Carroll County and the Great War,” a look at local residents who served in that war plus World War I artifacts. Older children should also find these exhibits enjoyable. A special event that day will be the unveiling of a restored wedding dress worn by Mary Hare when she married Jacob Hoffacker in the 1820s. It is one of the Society’s oldest clothing items.

Before leaving, you are invited to take the elevator or steps to Cockey's second floor for light refreshments.

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



Image source: Historical Society of Carroll County

Image caption: These three buildings at 206, 210, and 216 East Main Street, Westminster, form the historic campus of the Historical Society of Carroll County.