

The Carroll

Courier

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From 1813's *Engine of Liberty and Uniontown Advertiser* newspaper to the nation's first Rural Free Delivery to Quantum's and Ting's Internet services, communication has played an essential role in Carroll County history. It is what unites us, weaving together our economic, cultural, civic, and social fabric. The 2021 Legacy Gala team acknowledged this role by choosing "communication in history" as this year's theme and coining *Getting the Message* as the gala's title. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the *Getting the Message Legacy Gala* must again be an online and Comcast Channel HD1086, just like our successful 2020 *Breaking Barriers Legacy Gala*. Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 26 from 7 to 8 p.m.



The Society will celebrate all the media that have played such key roles in our history: newspapers, mail, telephones, film, radio, TV, and the Internet. Interviews and mini documentaries are being planned to salute the movers and shakers instrumental in our local media, past and present. There will also be music and dance to enjoy, as well as opportunities to bid on exciting trips, baskets, and other items in an online silent auction. This year the Gift for the Cause is devoted to repairing the deteriorating masonry on our three historic buildings.

The annual Legacy Gala is the Historical Society's largest annual fundraiser, and this year, more than ever, the Society is relying on member and community support as it navigates through especially difficult financial times.

"COVID-19 has made life challenging for all of us and has taken an especially heavy toll on non-profits like ours," offers Kristen McMasters, acting executive director and HSCC Board of Trustees chair. "We're counting on the

financial support of our members, community, and generous sponsors to support the Legacy Gala which provides 25% of our operating funds. We hope everyone will join us on June 26 to learn more about the Historical Society and our county's history with communication."

While the virtual gala is free, donations via the Historical Society's website are welcomed and encouraged. The event will be broadcast on Comcast Channel HD 1086, on the Society's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/hsccmd, and on its YouTube channel. Watch for mailings and social media messages about how to join in this year's fun.



A Message from the Interim Director /Chair



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No your eyes are not stuttering – Yours Truly is wearing both hats for the HSCC. We have started the New Year out with a bang or a sputter, depending on how you look at it. We are holding our own in fund raising. Our Annual Appeal is performing pretty well considering the general economic outlook of the community. Our members have come through, supporting us with some very generous gifts that we appreciate. In case giving had slipped your mind, we have enclosed a giving envelope for the Annual Fund Appeal. We have Doug Velnoskey and Terry Smack to thank for leading that effort of gaining our financial footing. We are truly grateful for Krista Seifert, our accountant, and Tyler Codd, HSCC Treasurer, for keeping track of all of our nickels and dimes. Overall, we are doing well and coming through this pandemic better than we expected.

We have had a few disappointments in the last two months. We have had heating failures at both the Shellman House and Cockey's that have cost us dearly. We also now have a leak in Kimmey House roof. We just had our elevator lift repaired at Cockey's. These unexpected breaks, damage and headaches are all a part of the territory of dealing with the old and creaky. (I think I, myself, might fall into that description!) We all share a love of things and places that have beaten the odds to simply survive and even thrive. It takes a dedicated team to care for these old properties, both inside and out.

Saddest of all however is the loss of some of our greatest assets, our people. Bill Brown has been forced to step down from the lead of the Property Committee. Bill's business requires more of his time, but he will remain with us on the HSCC Board. Catherine Lusher, our Assistant to the Executive Director, has left for a new position. We will be looking for a new person to manage the office function, shop, and social media. Sadly, because we have been closed for so long, there has been a slow drift of volunteers to other more engaging pursuits. When we get back to full throttle, we will be needing many new volunteers to fill their shoes. Prepare for the call, because we have plans of a new exhibit to go with the Gala in June and another big surprise at Shellman in October!

HSCC continues to participate in the virtual sphere of local history. This year's Carroll County Birthday Celebration and all our Box Lunch Talks have been held online. We have just launched a very successful partnership with Bernie Vogel and Jeanie Bird Bakery to offer online wine tastings. We are in the middle of finishing a Marketing and Media Grant to redesign our website so that it looks more like the working engine that it has become rather than a digital corkboard it used to be. I would be very interested in your impressions of our digital footprint today. We have redesigned our newsletter, the Courier, and our website. Feel free to contact me directly as to your thoughts about our new virtual look at ExecDirector@hsccmd.org.

I am ever thankful for all that you do as members.

Kristen McMasters

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MD, Inc., 2021
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Info@HSCCmd.org
www.HSCCmd.org
Office hours: T-S, 10:00 - 4:00
Shop hours: Open for curbside pick-up
Library: Ready to help by phone or email

Developing More for HSCC

The Development Committee has been working very hard on a number of solid financial initiatives for HSCC. If you haven't had a chance to make your Annual Fund gift, now is the chance as we swing to the end of our fiscal year. Thus far we are on target to reach our FY2021 goal. But we still really need you to help us with our bottom line! Enclosed is an envelope for your contribution.

So, imagine you have already given to the Annual Fund and you are looking for other options for assisting the HSCC. Tax time gives us all pause to consider how we have invested in our community. The HSCC has other ways of helping us continue to protect our past. Here is a quick and easy way for you to join us in preserving the past for the future:

Bequest Program – Designate HSCC as a beneficiary of your will, trust, or on any payee designation form for a retirement plan, 401(k), pension, or life insurance policy.

IRA Distribution – Avoid income taxes on annual IRA distributions up to \$100K. Benefit from this annual commitment now and save into the future.

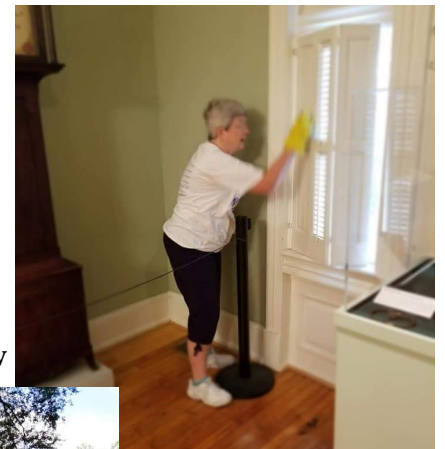
Donor-Advised Fund – Establish a DAF with an approved entity such as a financial service company or community foundation. This fund is flexible and can easily be designated differently each year. Even future generations can continue to support your alma mater or favorite civic organization. The National Philanthropic Trust (NPT) is a public charity dedicated to providing philanthropic expertise to donors, foundations, and financial institutions, enabling them to realize their philanthropic aspirations. Go to <https://www.nptrust.org/> to learn more.

Be sure to discuss these options with your tax preparer and financial advisor before making any decisions that could help us as a legacy.

Campus Clean-up Day!

We need to scrub up the window sills and clean up the grounds to get ready for a new summer. Join us on Saturday, May 15, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (or until we get pooped out). Free doughnuts, pizza, and beverages provided. To volunteer, leave a message for Bill Palm at 410-227-3857 or his email at billgpalmiii@gmail.com. We are requesting you bring work gloves, pail, and your favorite tools for the assigned tasks. Bill will know what chores inside and outside to prep for.

Last year's volunteers dusted and vacuumed, cleaned windows, and raked garden beds. And a special crew even used a front-end loader to move stones and lay a new sidewalk!



Upcoming Events

Normally the *Courier* includes an insert with our full Calendar of Events. But, recently we've had to make significant changes to the schedule. Below is an updated calendar for the next few months. There may be additional changes, so, please check our website (hsccmd.org) and Facebook for updates. **When registering for a virtual program, please watch your email for the link that will let you join the program. We've had reports of the confirmation going to members' junk/spam folder, so please check there if you do not find it in your in-box.**

- April 17** **Past Times for Children** ~ *Mary Shellman: A Westminster Icon*, 10-11:15 a.m., Cockey's.
- April 20** **Box Lunch Talk** ~ *Carroll County Almshouse Beginning to End: 112 Years of Caring*, 12-1 p.m. The facility that is now the Carroll County Farm Museum served originally as the county Almshouse. Beverly Humbert, a volunteer at the Farm Museum, has been researching the almshouse and will reveal what she has learned about how it functioned as a farm, the people that lived there, and how it served the community for 112 years. This program will be live via Zoom. Registration is required to access the program. Registration will be available at www.hsccmd.org/events.
- May 15** **Past Times for Children** ~ *Native Americans*, 10-11:15 a.m., Cockey's.
- May 18** **Box Lunch Talk** ~ *An Introduction to the Westminster Historic District Commission and Local Tax Credits for Historic Structures*, 12-1 p.m. Westminster has some very unusual public assistance to preserve and protect historical structures within the local historic district. Local, state, and Federal tax credits are available to taxpayers. Kristen McMasters, Chair of the Westminster Historic District Commission, will explain standards and eligibility of this financial incentive program. This talk will offer assistance and guidance as to how to apply and what to expect during the rehabilitation of our neighborhood's older structures. This program will be live via Zoom. Registration is required to access the program. Registration will be available at www.hsccmd.org/events.
- May 15** **Spring Campus Clean-up** ~ come help HSCC get our buildings and gardens ready for summer. **See p. ?**
- May 22** **Westminster Cemetery Walking tour** ~ a repeat of last fall's popular tour, 2-3:30 p.m. **See p. ?**
- June 15** **Box Lunch Talk** ~ *Carroll County and Rural Free Delivery*, 12-1 p.m. On April 3, 1899, Westminster Postmaster Edwin Shriver set out in his "post office on wheels" to deliver mail to the homes of rural families. This marked the beginning of the Rural Free Delivery of mail to all customers around the county. Jim Shriver takes a look at Carroll County's role in the development of this controversial project and delves into first-person accounts of the early deliveries and their impact on local communities. This program will be live via Zoom. Registration is required to access the program. Registration will be available at www.hsccmd.org/events.
- June 26** **Virtual Gala** ~ HSCC's annual event goes virtual for the second time. See p. 1.
- July 17** **Past Times for Children** ~ *Toys of the Past*, 10-11:15 a.m., Cockey's.
- Aug 21** **Past Times for Children** ~ *Mills*, 10-11:15 a.m., Cockey's.
- Sep 10** **Bluegrass, Bourbon & Bocce** ~ Bluegrass concert by **Sideline**. Includes concert, gourmet burgers, free bourbon tastings, wine and beer available for purchase. Enjoy a game of bocce on a lighted court. 6-9 p.m. At Rob's Bluegrass Barn. Watch for pricing and details.
- Oct 16** **Past Times for Children** ~ *Doctors and Medicine*, 10-11:15 a.m., Cockey's.

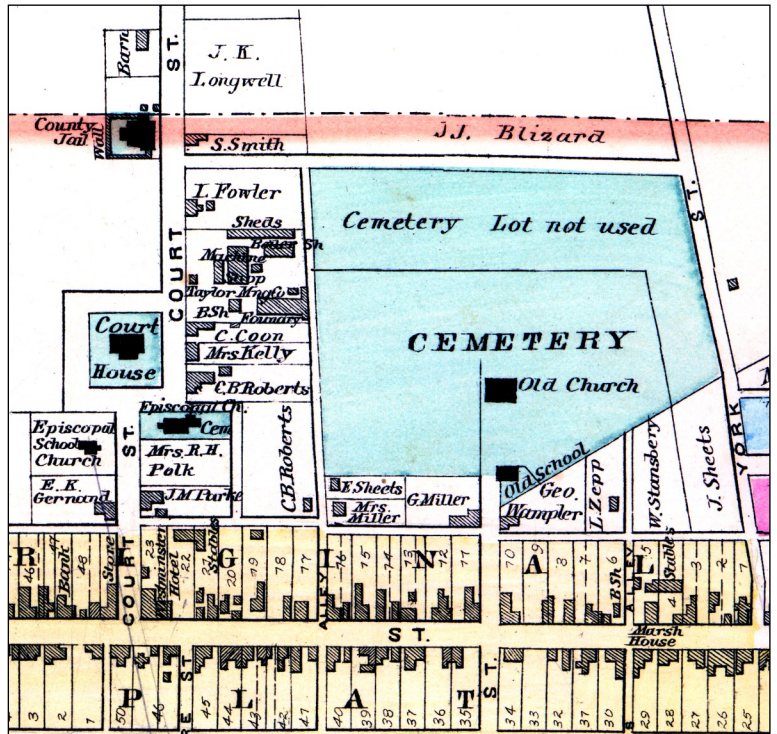
Walking Tour of Westminster Cemetery

Last fall, HSCC partnered with Westminster Cemetery to present a walking tour of the historic graveyard. The event was a sold-out success. So, by popular demand, we're doing it again. On Saturday, May 22, Mimi Ashcraft, co-author of *Historic Westminster Cemetery & Union Meeting House*, will lead a repeat of the tour.

The Union Meeting House was a place of worship for local Protestants before the individual denominations constructed their own church buildings. It also a site for Westminster's public meetings in the early 1800s and during the Civil War it served as a hospital.

Over 7,000 individuals from all walks of life rest in the cemetery. Their stories are sometimes humorous, sometimes tragic, and they make a fascinating introduction to local history you probably never knew.

The tour is suitable for ages 10 and up. **The tour requires standing for 1.5 hours and walking on uneven ground as well as paved roadways.** Please wear comfortable shoes and dress appropriately for the weather.



Detail showing the Westminster Cemetery from the 1877

Illustrated Atlas of Carroll County.



The Union Meeting House that stood in the Westminster Cemetery served as a hospital during the Gettysburg campaign in 1863.

The cemetery is located at 17 N. Church Street in Westminster. The tour begins at 10:00 a.m. Please arrive at the cemetery gate 15 minutes before the tour for check-in.

Tour costs **\$5 for HSCC members** and **\$10 for non-members**. Or, you can purchase a combination ticket which includes the tour plus an autographed copy of the book for \$20 members or \$25 for non-members. **Tickets must be purchased in advance. Space is limited. Reservations are requested by May 15.** No refunds can be made after the reservation deadline. Please call 410-848-6494, ext. 200, to reserve your spot.

Tales from the Library

- Austin Hewitt, Library Volunteer

About a year ago I volunteered to be the docent for the Historical Society's World War II trunk which is designed to teach Middle and High School students about Carroll County's contributions in the war. There are a lot of interesting materials and stories in the trunk. I wanted to add a story about local African American contributions during the war.

Already included in the trunk was a list from the War Department of all 88 Carroll Countians who were killed in the war. But the list does not indicate race, and I became interested in knowing how many were African Americans. But the only way I could think to find out was to look each one up in Fold3 and Ancestry.com, both of which are available among library research resources. Fold3 is a database of 585 million military records from the Revolutionary War to the Persian Gulf War. Types of records you may find include enlistment records, draft registration cards, hospital admission cards, Battle Monument records etc. Ancestry is a genealogical database containing census records, grave records, marriage records, death records etc. My search paid off! Three of the 88 were African American and I was able to piece together part of their military stories.

Private John T Crowdy, US Army, 92nd Engineer General Service Regiment

Enlisted: June 3, 1941 Died: February 2, 1943 (England)

The 92nd was a supply unit in England from July 13, 1942 - February 16, 1943.

Private William R Riddick, US Army, 3903rd

Quartermaster Truck Company

Enlisted: July 28, 1942 Died: May 22, 1945

(Belgium)

The 3903rd Truck Company was part of the Red Ball Express, which played the vital role of expeditiously moving food, ammunition, gasoline etc. from the northern ports to combat units advancing through Europe. About 75% of the truck drivers were African American.

Private Ernest M Warfield, US Army, 839th

Engineer Aviation Battalion

Enlisted: October 1, 1942 Died: September 10, 1945 (Philippines)

Many African Americans served in Engineering units in the Pacific Theater. The 839th was one of dozens of Engineering units responsible for building airfields, roads, bridges etc. on every island where the military landed. They were frequently under fire from Japanese soldiers who had not been cleared from the area.



African American drivers of the Red Ball Express.
National Archives.

All three died of non-battle injuries. We must appreciate that life in a combat zone is often hazardous, involving exhausting and highly stressful conditions. Eighteen of the 88 Carroll County fatalities resulted from non-battle injuries.

Two died after the war ended: Private Riddick in Belgium, 14 days after VE Day and Private Warfield in the Philippines, 32 days after VJ Day. It is sad to think of a soldier who survived the duration of the war, with thoughts of returning home, finding a final resting place in a cemetery in some distant land.

We would love to know more about Carroll County African Americans who served in World War II. If anybody has information about family members of those who served, please contact the Historical Society. We would especially like photos. Also, if you have questions about family members that served, you can put in a research request and we will see what we can find.

The Curator's Corner

- Cathy Baty, Curator

The U.S. Postal Service traces its roots to 1775 when the Second Continental Congress appointed Benjamin Franklin as the first postmaster general. But, despite the service's long history, the delivery of mail to the recipient's door is a relatively recent innovation. Usually, the sender had to take a letter to the post office to mail it, and the recipient had to pick up the letter at their post office, unless they lived in one of a few large cities where a carrier would deliver it to the home address for an extra penny or two.

Although postage stamps became available in 1847, mailers had the option of sending their letters and having the recipients pay the postage until 1855, when prepayment became compulsory. Previously, if the addressees refused to accept the letter, the Post Office's labor and delivery costs were never recovered.

Street boxes for mail collection began to appear in large cities by 1858. In 1863, free city delivery was instituted in 49 of the country's largest cities. By 1890, 454 post offices were delivering mail to city residents. It was not until the turn of the century, however, that free delivery came to farmers and other rural residents.

In 1893, Congress appropriated funds to experiment with delivery of mail to rural residents. In October 1896, test routes were launched. When these proved successful, in 1899, the Post Office decided to test delivery across an entire county.



This group gathered in front of the Manchester post office at 9:30 a.m. on December 20, 1899, to greet the first arrival of Postal Wagon C from Westminster.



Edwin Shriver delivers mail to the Schaeffer family at their farm near Westminster.

proved efficient and rural residents appreciated the convenience of home delivery. Judged a success, Rural Free Delivery became a permanent service in 1902.

Rural Free Delivery mailbox, c.1900. When R.F.D. began, postal patrons used a variety of boxes for receiving their mail. Preston B. Englar of Taneytown, designed this version. Englar sold the patent to the Marengo Manufacturing Co. which made this example.



The Historical Society of Carroll County
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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