

Monroe County Historical Society

Historical Society Endowment

Almost six years ago, The Monroe County Historic Society established an endowment account with the Greenbrier Valley Community Foundation. The foundation supports non-profit organizations like ours in Greenbrier, Pocahontas, and Monroe Counties. The Greenbrier Valley Community Foundation is a collection of funds, each with its own fund agreement, donors, and philanthropic purpose. The usual nature of an endowment fund is that the principle is kept in place and only the interest income off the account is spent. By combining monies from over 170 funds throughout the valley, the GVCF assets currently approach \$20 million. The MCHS account was opened with \$9500.00 from donations and a bequest. Since then, the market value of our endowment has grown to almost a quarter of a million dollars.

Our goal, upon opening the account, was to professionalize the society. The society has struggled over the years to have enough monies to grow and to continue preserving Monroe County's history while restoring and preserving its historic structures. Since the endowment began to generate distributions to our society, we have used the money to add a land line, internet connection, scanner, and heat pump to the museum. And we have upgraded our accounting services. As the endowment grows – we have an ambitious goal of half a million dollars – we will have monies for our routine expenses and, we hope, money to accomplish some of our dreams.

Your historical society is pleased to announce a record-breaking season for donations in 2021. We received \$24,782.75 from the Ed Patterson bequest and gifts of \$43,727.15 from Linda Anderson Weiss and \$8,000 from Peggy Murdock Garner. So, the total for last year alone would be \$76,509.90. When added to the 2020 balance, we reach our end of the year 2021 balance (as listed above) of almost a quarter of a million dollars. As this investment grows each year, we can expect to receive a yearly distribution, which at present would be a yearly income approaching \$10,000.

This distribution, along with donations to the general fund, membership dues, grants, and fundraising, keeps us afloat.

The society owns five properties in Union which need constant maintenance, and in some cases major repairs. These are the Caperton Building, the Clarke-Wiseman and Neel Log Houses, the Carriage House, and two churches: Ames Clair and the Old First Baptist Church. Recently we received a \$50,000.00 grant from the Seneca Trail Foundation to replace some insect-damaged logs and repair the chinking on the log houses, so this work will proceed shortly. In the coming years, with use of the Ed Patterson bequest, we hope to make major repairs to the interior and exterior of Old First Baptist Church.

For several years we have been able to secure AmeriCorps funding through the Preservation Alliance of West Virginia to hire a part-time person to manage our museums. Again in 2022, Vernessa Pontius will fill this role. In addition to recruiting volunteers to welcome visitors to the museums, she will work on cataloging and developing exhibits.

In summary, we would like to thank our recent donors and to urge any others who would like to help build our endowment through a current, deferred, or life income gift to contact the Monroe County Historical Society at PO Box 465, Union, WV 24983 or by calling (304) 772-4449 and leaving a message.



The Historical Geology of Monroe County

At the next quarterly membership meeting of the Monroe County Historical Society, geologists Fred Ziegler and Rocky Parsons will give a presentation of the historical geology of Monroe County. **The meeting will be held on February 13th at the Ames Clair Hall beginning at 2:00 P.M. The public is invited to this presentation.**

Discussions will include: how the rocks of Monroe County formed, how the mountain and valley topography of the County developed as a result of the underlying geology, what caused the rocks to be folded and faulted, how caves have formed and where does the water that sinks into those caves resurge as springs.

Also to be discussed is the ongoing effort of the United States Geological Survey to study the hydrogeology of the County and to produce a current geological map. The use of LIDAR remote imagery to “read the rocks” will be explained. Fred Ziegler is a retired professor of geology at the University of Chicago. He and his wife, Barbara, own Cooks Mill in Greenville. Rocky Parsons is retired from the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, has degrees in geology and forest technology and is an avid caver and fossil collector.

2nd Reading of Changes to MCHS Constitution

The proposed changes are as follows:

- 1) To increase the possible number of members at large on the Executive Board by adding 2 members.
Article IV, Section 3 would then read (in part) “The Executive Board shall consist of the officers, the immediate Past President, and up to 9 members at large..”
- 2) To correct the month that the Executive Board is elected and delete installation of officers.
Article IV, Section 4 would then read: The Executive Board members shall be elected at the October membership meeting of odd-numbered years. The board shall serve a term of two years with term of office beginning January 1st of even-numbered years.
Members will vote to ratify these changes at the **February 13th, 2022 meeting.**