

Charles Carroll: The Program, Patriot, and Painter
Courthouse Centennial Celebration, December 11th, 2017

We are extremely fortunate to have this likeness of the namesake of our county mounted here today due in large part to a program known as the Old Settlers Annual Meeting, at which this work of art was showcased during our Bicentennial as a Legacy Project last year which celebrated not only the two-hundredth anniversary of the founding of our state which became a reality today two-hundred-and one years ago today but the many accomplishments of our county. The purpose of the Old Settlers Annual meeting is to rekindle the fires of the past and to bring them to light in the present and hopefully to preserve them for the future.

Who was the patriot commemorated here? He was Charles Carroll, born September 19th, 1737 at the Annapolis home of his parents, Charles Carroll of Annapolis, and Elizabeth Brooke. He studied at the Jesuit school at Bohemia Manor in Cecil County. Further study involved St. Omers in French Flanders, then English law

at the Inner Temple in London. Upon his return to Maryland in 1765, he was given a 10, 000 acre land tract called “Carrollton”, which name he attached to his own designating him as “Charles Carroll of Carrollton” to distinguish himself from other Carrolls. In 1768 he married Mary “Molly” Darnall.

His involvement in politics involved a series of letters published in the Maryland Gazette, and as a delegate to the Annapolis Committee of Correspondence and Council of Safety, and as delegate to the 2nd Maryland Convention in 1774. This marked a watershed for Maryland politics since Carroll’s Catholicism and a local form of British penal laws had heretofore prevented this. He signed the Declaration of Independence as the only Roman Catholic to do so on August 2, 1776. He was instrumental in writing Maryland’s first State Constitution and Declaration of Rights (adopted in November of 1776) and became a member of the first Maryland Senate. Other political attributes involved serving as Alderman and Councilman in the city of Annapolis. In 1789, he became one of Maryland’s first two U.S. Senators.

He was a well-known founder of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company and invested in the Bank of Maryland, the Bank of Baltimore, and the First and Second Bank of the United States. He also served as the first board member of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which was preceded by holding shares in canal, turnpike, and water companies in the Washington-Baltimore Company. In 1826 he was the final surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, and at the age of 91 laid the cornerstone for the B and O. railroad. His passing was on November 14th of 1832 at 95 years of age.

Now---the painter.(the best for the last) We are extremely fortunate to have the artist here today whose name is Janalie Smith Robeson who painted the portrait of Charles Carroll before us and who is a member of the chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution which assumed Carroll's name upon its founding in 1911. It was Janalie's gratis contribution and blessing to not only the county which bears Carroll's name but the state and nation to have this fitting tribute mounted here for public viewing and patriotism's victory. Thanks Janalie!