

# Local School Bus Tragedy Remembered

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This custom fabricated, eight panel display at the Garrett County Museum of Transportation documents the tragic events of September 10, 1959, when the collision of a train and a school bus occurred. Two more panels will soon be added featuring remembrances of local doctors and nurses associated with the treatment and recovery of the children at that time.

The Garrett County Museum of Transportation recently unveiled an exhibit that commemorates one of the region's worst tragedies, a school bus accident that took the lives of seven Garrett County students on September 10, 1959. The tragedy has never been forgotten by survivors and long time Garrett County residents. Through the generosity of former county resident Michael Naylor, the new display will ensure the school bus story is remembered for future generations in a comprehensive and appropriate manner.

Mr. Naylor was not directly involved on that fateful day but was familiar with classmates who experienced the disaster. In recent years, he decided that a display would be an appropriate way to explain and commemorate the event that devastated the local community. To initiate the plan, he researched archival resources, contacted survivors,

met with survivor's family members, and assembled related materials. More recent conversations with Bob Boal, president of the Garrett County Museum of Transportation, generated the idea to create an exhibit on the second floor of the Oakland facility. Advertising Art Design, Inc. (AAD-INC.) of Cumberland was contacted to design and produce the display for exhibition at the Deep Creek Gallery of the museum.

The exhibit, titled *A Garrett County School Bus Tragedy*, is organized on eight large panels that explain different aspects of the story. First is a historical narrative that provides the sequence of events that occurred when the school bus stalled on the Loch Lynn-Mountain Lake Park railroad crossing, a route used by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's Diplomat passenger train. Survivor's accounts

of the approaching train, attempts to evacuate the bus, and the devastating impact of the speeding locomotive's collision with the vehicle, are displayed. Subsequent panels include eye witness reports, photographs, and newspaper articles; each creates a vivid summary of the story that generated nationwide press coverage. Two additional panels featuring local physician medical accounts and bus safety are planned.

Six fatally injured students attended Dennett Road Elementary School while the oldest victim attended Southern High School. In addition to the seven fatalities, eleven

students suffered serious injuries. Survivors and their families continued to struggle with memories of the accident decades after it occurred.

The exhibit opened in July and may be viewed during regular hours at the museum. Summer hours (May – December): Monday – Saturday, 10 am to 3 pm. Winter hours (January – April): Friday & Saturday, 10 am to 3 pm. The Garrett County Museum of Transportation is located at 107 S. Second Street, Oakland, Maryland.

[www.garrettcountymuseums.com](http://www.garrettcountymuseums.com).



## Red Cross Christmas Tour



The Christmas decorations at the Garrett County Museum of Transportation are part of the Red Cross Christmas Tour, along with several local homes. Rob Hinebaugh directed and helped with the decorations, assisted by his wife, Ruth. Terri Shaffer, assistant curator of the Museum and Mae Carlino, Museum volunteer also assisted with the decorations. Plan to visit during this annual event over the Christmas holidays.