

A New Deal for Allegany & Garrett Counties in Maryland: *The Legacy Lives On*

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When President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in 1933, he was faced with the daunting tasks of rebuilding the economy and lifting the deflated spirits of Americans in the aftermath of the Great Depression. To meet this enormous and complex challenge, he launched the New Deal, which was a series of programs that included public work projects, new regulations and financial reforms. The New Deal ended in 1942 when the United States became embroiled in World War II. In less than a decade, the New Deal created a legacy of transformation both physical and intangible that helped to improve Americans' standard of living and restore their faith in government.

In Allegany and Garrett Counties, five New Deal programs made possible a variety of projects that have improved the quality of life for area residents and visitors. The **Citizens Conservation Corps (CCC)** put unemployed young men, many without skills, to work on rural and park improvements. The **Public Works Administration (PWA)**, an economic recovery program, paid private contractors to support large-scale infrastructure projects such as highways, buildings, housing and natural resource conservation. The **Work Projects Administration (WPA)** hired the unemployed to support arts and services such as historic preservation, libraries and social science research. The **Federal Works Agency (FWA)**, which oversaw the PWA and WPA, sought to increase efficiency and reduce costs. And the **Treasury Section of Fine Arts (TSFA)** supported



Top: The Frostburg Retaining Wall has stood the test of time for over 80 years.

Inset: Frostburg Retaining Wall WPA workers in 1938.

the purchase of artworks to decorate federally owned structures and post offices through a competitive process. The following is a listing and description of New Deal projects supported by these programs in both counties.

Allegany County:

Frostburg Retaining Wall: Built as a WPA project in 1938 when Horace G. Evans served as mayor, the Frostburg Retaining Wall features attractive stonework while it stabilizes residents' front yards along Main Street.



Fort Hill High School in Cumberland: Fort Hill was a beneficiary of a collaboration between the PWA and WPA. The PWA was involved with construction of the main school structure while the WPA's efforts supported the football stadium, tennis courts and surrounding grounds. A WPA funding package of \$60,000 was a catalyst for construction of the stadium.

Green Ridge State Forest in Flintstone: Maryland's second largest state forest offers visitors a wide range of outdoor recreational activities. The CCC supported Green Ridge's first forest management activities, with a primary focus on fire control. Other projects supported roads, trails and recreation. Today the state manages the forest to enhance its future timber and wildlife potential.

Garrett County:

Oakland Post Office and Mural: An FWA project, the post office features a green metal roof and a yellow brick exterior. Inside, a mural above the Postmaster's door depicts a scene of rural life by artist Robert F. Gates. Funding for the artwork, completed in 1942, came through the competitive TSFA program.



Top: Fort Hill High School today with Greenway Avenue Stadium. The stadium, with recently remodeled home side bleachers, concession stands and artificial turf, is shared by both Fort Hill and Allegany High Schools.

Inset: Fort Hill High School under construction. WPA workmen grading the areas in and around the future football stadium, December 1935. The PWA main building is in the background.

Oakland Golf Course: This 9-hole golf course was constructed by WPA workers in 1937 in response to a petition from more than 100 Oakland citizens to the town's mayor and town council. In 1939, the WPA made a number of improvements and in 1941, constructed a club house and substantially improved the course with updated infrastructure and shrubbery.



Above: The Oakland Post Office mural is located inside above the Postmaster's door. It depicts a scene of rural life by artist Robert F. Gates.



Left: The Oakland Post Office was an FWA project completed in 1940.

Below left: The Oakland Golf Course was constructed by WPA workers beginning in 1937 with improvements made in 1939 and 1941.

Below right: New Germany State Park is a popular spot for swimming, fishing, camping, hiking and more. In the 1930s the CCC built a recreational building, cabins and picnic shelters.





Left: Herrington Manor State Park — In 1933 CCC workers constructed the lake by damming the Herrington Creek. Structures include rental cabins, pavilion and concession building.

Below: Swallow Falls State Park — Muddy Creek Falls at 53 feet is the largest of three falls in the park (top). The pavilion and other structures were built in 1933 (middle and bottom). The large pavilion has massive stone fireplaces at each end and is still in use today.

Herrington Manor State Park: By constructing a dam on Herrington Creek, the CCC created a lake that serves as the central focus of the Park. Other structures include rental cabins, pavilion and concession building. Completed in 1942, the park offers a wide range of year-round recreational activities.

Savage River State Forest: In the 1930s, the CCC assisted the forest service with suppressing fires, planting trees, building trails, and constructing facilities for recreational activities. The CCC also assisted with early snow skiing activities in an area that eventually became New Germany State Park.

New Germany State Park: Soon after the state of Maryland acquired the park's property in the 1930s, the CCC built a recreation building, cabins and picnic shelters that are still in use today.

Swallow Falls State Park: In 1906, brothers Robert and John Work Garrett donated the land that became this popular park to the citizens of Maryland. In 1933, the CCC constructed an administrative building, pavilion and restroom that are still in use. Many consider Swallow Falls to be one of the most beautiful parks in the country.

After more than 75 years, these New Deal projects endure in Western Maryland.

