

A Dream Come True

The New Garrett County Transportation Museum

Written by **Dan Whetzel**



Architect's rendering of the new Transportation Museum.

“This is a dream come true for the Garrett County Historical Society and for our entire mountain top community,” stated Robert Boal, president of the organization. Mr. Boal’s excitement referred to the construction of the Garrett County Transportation Museum that will showcase modes of transportation of the area used by residents from late 1800s through the mid 20th century.

A generous donation from the Howard and Audrey Naylor Foundation Trust through the Community Trust Foundation enabled the Garrett County Historical Society to begin construction of the facility along Liberty Street in May 2010. According to Mr. Boal, “The Naylor family has deep roots to Garrett County; A.D. Naylor’s blacksmith shop was one of the early businesses in Oakland and A.D. remained a prominent businessman until his passing at age 103. From a blacksmith shop, to a carriage shop, to a Model-T dealership, to the present Naylor’s Hardware, to Rolyan’s Furniture store, the family has been involved in local businesses for more than 100 years.”

Howard Naylor, one of several grandsons of A.D. Naylor, grew up working in the family’s businesses and later taught for one year at Oakland High School. Howard then entered West Virginia Wesleyan College where he met “the love of his life,” Audrey Holden of New York. Marrying Audrey in 1939, working in family businesses, serving community organizations, and raising of five children continued the traditions established by A.D. Naylor. Howard and Audrey, however, later changed course and moved the family to Boise, Idaho in the early 1960’s, where they became well known educators and community leaders. The couples’ dedication to education enabled them to provide financial support to worthy programs over the years, but no one expected such a generous donation on behalf of the transportation museum in Oakland.

According to Mr. Boal, “The Garrett County Historical Society had discussed plans for a transportation museum for a number of years but didn’t have the funds to move forward. We invited one of Howard’s sons, Lonnie, to a



Architectural elements of the three photos above, along with a fire station, will be featured as façades inside the new Transportation Museum.

Garrett County Historical Society meeting. I introduced Lonnie to the museum board members, many of whom he already knew through his Oakland childhood, and he announced that his family would like to fund our new museum. The board members were almost in a state of shock. What a generous donation! It really was a dream come true.” Serving with Boal on the new museum committee are Clifford DeWitt, Junior Ferguson, Steve Gnegy, Ernie Gregg, Terry Helbig, and Troy Gnegy.

The new 10,000 square foot facility will be located along Liberty Street between Saint Matthew’s Episcopal Church and Success Floor Covering. A fascinating aspect of the architectural design is the influence that history had on committee members as they discussed the project. “We studied postcard albums and historical photographs

and eventually chose three different architectural eras of Oakland’s past from the 1890s to the 1920s.” The exterior of the museum will reflect architectural elements of three downtown businesses and a fire station from those time periods. A.D. Naylor’s original 1898 blacksmith shop will be represented on the east end, facing Saint Matthew’s Church. The east end of the front along Liberty Street will have the façade of Martin’s Livery stable, the center front façade will recall the 1920s Lawton’s Garage, one of the first automobile dealerships in town, and the west end of the front wall will represent Oakland’s early fire station.

Once entering the museum visitors will view a representation of Naylor Blacksmith shop as well as antique wagons and vehicles, including a 1927 American LaFrance fire engine from Oakland, a horse drawn taxi that served the Deer Park Hotel, a 1916 Model-T, plus a sleigh and surrey owned by the Naylor family. Additional antique automobiles and carriages will be displayed as arranged by owners and museum officials. Access to the museum for automobiles and other large exhibits will be facilitated by garage doors located at both the front and rear of the building.



This is the first Flying Scot produced by the Gordon Douglass Company, Inc. and donated by Clark Ashby to be displayed at the Garrett County Transportation Museum.

The Flying Scot's original designer was Gordon "Sandy" Douglass. The Flying Scot prototype was built in 1956 and Sandy launched the Gordon Douglass Company, Inc. in 1957. In 1958 an empty car lot in Oakland, Maryland provided for the company's headquarters. The sailboat's name was derived from references to the Flying Scot express train that links London to Edinburgh and a famous yacht from the 1890s. The name also seemed to augment the names of previous sailboat names that he designed. A major break occurred in 1957 when the Detroit River Yachting Association adopted The Flying Scot. Five years later seventeen clubs of the Gulf Yachting Association also picked the Scot. Today the company's president is Harry Carpenter and the company is located in Deer Park, just south of Deep Creek Lake.

The second floor will feature a Deep Creek Gallery showcasing a "Flying Scot" sailboat, an original Garrett County vessel that has gained nationwide recognition. Another important feature of the second floor will be the educational/media room equipped for PowerPoint programs, film showings, lectures, and meetings. Bart Naylor, son of Howard and Aubrey, stated, "My parents were both educators who loved history, travel, the outdoors, and Garrett County. They were also fortunate from a financial perspective and very much wanted to establish a foundation that would provide and enhance educational opportunities."

The museum project will enhance the economic vitality of Oakland and complement the beautiful Baltimore & Ohio Railroad station directly across the street. Visitors will experience an expansive view of the station, Deer Park gazebo, and related railroad features from the second floor of the museum. The original museum on Second Street hosts over 6,000 visitors each year and about half of them are vacationing at Deep Creek Lake. Historical society members expect that completion of the new museum will draw additional visitors to the town. According to Boal, "The new museum will be a win-win situation for the whole region. It will make Oakland and all of Garrett County even more of a tourist destination than they already are and will add so much to what we already have in the center of town. The Garrett County Historical Society will dedicate this wonderful new Museum of Transportation to the memory of Howard and Audrey Naylor and to the honor of their children who have so graciously worked with

the historical society to make a dream become a reality. The Naylor family truly sought to carry out the desires of their parents to promote history and education in Garrett County and surrounding areas. Obviously the Appalachian region of Maryland and West Virginia held a very special place in the hearts of Howard and Audrey Naylor."

The Garrett County Historical Society will continue to maintain its present facility at 107 South Second Street, now supplementing it with Dailey's Park plus the new Museum of Transportation designed by Deep Creek Lake architect Robert Pernel and being built by Gnegy Construction of Oakland. Hours of operation for the new Museum of Transportation will coincide with those of the present museum and a Grand Opening is being planned for the fall or winter of 2010.