

# **Catoctin Monte National Touring Rally**

## **Historical Notes**

### **Unofficial Information**

The earliest settlers to enter the Monocacy River Valley at the foot of Catoctin Mountain arrived in the 1730's. They were a mixed breed of second generation English-Americans and first generation immigrants from the German Palatinate seeking religious freedom. Native Indians were few in this particular area, although the mountain was named for a local tribe known as the "Kittoctons." Lord Baltimore's liberal land policy was instrumental in attracting the first settlers. By 1760 large numbers of Swiss and Scotch-Irish joined the English and Germans.

#### **1. Civil War Correspondents Memorial Arch**

Gathland State Park was once the mountain home of George Alfred Townsend, a Civil War journalist. It is the site of a unique collection of buildings and structures that he designed and constructed, some of which have been restored. A large, stone monument dedicated to war correspondents is an outstanding attraction at this park. The Appalachian Trail traverses the park and passes the monument base. The park includes all of Crampton's Gap, which was the southern most gap fought over during the battle of South Mountain. Fought September 14, 1862, it was the first major battle of the Civil War fought in Maryland.

Additional information is available at <http://www.civilwarhome.com/Gathland.htm>.

#### **2. Chesapeake and Ohio Canal**

The depression in the ground on your left is what is left of the C&O Canal. The canal follows the route of the Potomac River for 184.5 miles from Washington, D.C. to Cumberland, MD. The canal operated from 1828-1924 as a transportation route, primarily hauling coal from western Maryland to the port of Georgetown in Washington, D.C. Hundreds of original structures, including locks, lockhouses, and aqueducts, serve as reminders of the canal's role as a transportation system during the Canal Era. In addition, the canal's towpath provides a nearly level, continuous trail through the spectacular scenery of the Potomac River Valley.

Additional information is available at <http://www.nps.gov/choh/>.

#### **3. Reno Monument**

Erected by the survivors of the 9th Army Corps to their Commander and Comrade September 14, 1889, this monument marks the spot where Major Gen. Jesse Lee Reno Commanding 9th Army Corps, U.S. was killed in battle September 14, 1862.

#### **4. Washington Monument**

On the summit of the mountain in front of you stands the rugged stone tower known as The Washington Monument – the first monument dedicated to the memory of George Washington. The tower was built by the citizens of the nearby town of Boonsboro. It has

been said that "As monuments go, none was ever built with purer or more reverent patriotism."

On July 4, 1827, at 7 a.m., most of the 500 inhabitants of the town assembled in the public square. Behind the Stars and Stripes, stepping spiritedly to the music of a fife and drum corps, they marched two miles up the mountain to the site they had chosen for the erection of the monument. This site was selected because of the abundance of "blue rocks," as the outcroppings of granite were called. Construction of the tower was begun in a spirit of fervent cooperation. Since water for mortar was not available at the site, huge stones were carefully selected and accurately cut, and then laid in the dry circular wall.

A dedication service was held at noon. The volunteers gathered for a cold lunch, and then work was resumed and continued until 4 o'clock, when the monument stood 15 feet high on a base 54 feet in circumference. The day's program ended with the reading of the Declaration of Independence, followed by a three-round salute fired from atop the tower by three Revolutionary War veterans. Plans were made to complete the tower to a height of 30 feet "after the busy season," and in the fall of that year this was done.

See <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/washmonhistory.html> for more information.

## **5. Upper Bridge, Antietam**

Originally built in 1830.

## **6. Antietam Battlefield**

More men were killed or wounded at Antietam on September 17, 1862, than on any other single day of the Civil War. Federal losses were 12,410, Confederate losses 10,700. Although neither side gained a decisive victory, Lee's failure to carry the war effort effectively into the North caused Great Britain to postpone recognition of the Confederate government. The battle also gave President Abraham Lincoln the opportunity to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, which, on January 1, 1863, declared free all slaves in States still in rebellion against the United States. Now the war had a dual purpose: to preserve the Union and end slavery.

This site was Established by Act of Congress on August 30, 1890.