



THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL

Trails Stewardship Committee

Spotlight on Garrett County: Herrington Manor State Park

by Katherine O. Rizzo

The Herrington Manor State Park, which lies within Garrett State Forest in Garrett County, was designated a state park in 1964 and is thought to be named for the manor house on the property built by real estate investor Abijah Herrington in the mid-1800s.

According to DNR, “Abijah Herrington and the mystery that surround him leave in question the origins of the manor house. . . . It is commonly held that he was a wealthy land owner living in the area in the 1750’s and a sergeant in the Sandy Creek Rangers during the Revolutionary War, and that the park, manor house and nearby creek were named for him. However it seems that most of what is known of Abijah is sheer myth. The facts do not seem to support the opinion that he held vast amounts of land in southwestern Garrett County, and there is no actual record of him ever serving in the Sandy Creek Rangers. It is not clear if he ever lived in the manor house or owned the land that is currently Herrington Manor State Park. Abijah’s name cannot be found on any local deeds, surveys or military rosters. So just who was he and how did his legend result in the naming of a park, creek and homestead after him? As with Abijah Herrington, the park itself is also Garrett County’s best-kept secret.” *source: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/centennial/Pages/Centennial-Notes/TreasuresofWest...>*

The 365-acre property was purchased by the state in 1935 as part of state forest development. Shortly after the state purchased the property, the Civilian Conservation Corps built a dam on Herrington Creek to create the park’s 53-acre lake. The manor house itself was demolished in 1964 when the park was officially established.

The park offers swimming, fishing, boating, rental cabins and 12 miles of multi-use trails. There is also a 5.5-mile trail that connects Herrington Manor to Swallow Falls State Park. That trail is restricted to hiking and mountain biking only. Swallow Falls State Park contains the Muddy Creek Falls, which is Maryland’s highest waterfall.

During winter months, Herrington Manor also offers cross-country ski and snowshoe rentals.

Managed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Herrington Manor is open from 8 a.m. to sunset from March to October and then 10 a.m. to sunset in November through February.

Park users should note that from April 1, 2023 to July 30, 2023, contractors will be working in the cabin area replacing walkway lights and resurfacing driveways and roads. All cabins will be closed during this time.



Many Hands Make Light Work!

Despite a drop in temperature and blustery winds, the Carroll County Equestrian Council wrapped up the last Morgan Run Natural Environment Area trail workday of the season on November 12, 2022 with 22 workers (including PVSP Staff and MCC crew members.) Downed trees that blocked trails were removed so the trails could be mowed, and overhanging branches and vines were removed to maintain safe accessible trails for all. A light lunch with a “Thank You CCEC Morgan Run Volunteers” cake was enjoyed by all who attended.

In 2022, the Carroll County Equestrian Council volunteers donated a total of 300 hours to Morgan Run NEA on organized trail workdays.
- Carolyn A. Garber, Secretary Carroll County Equestrian Council