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Route 422 travelers see signs of the past

Elderton Keystone Markers refurbished

BY SARAH HEPFL



A Keystone Marker stands on Route 422 introducing east-bound motorists to Elderton Borough. The sign is one of two that were recently repaired. Photo | Anita Bowser

Last summer, Elderton Borough started taking donations to replace the Elderton Borough history marker signs at each end of town.

“We knew the cost to replace the signs would be \$1,500 each, but the borough had a very limited budget,” said borough secretary Jennifer Redick.

But, citizens of Elderton weren’t the only ones noticing the signs needed repaired.

Mike Wintermantel, a member of the Keystone Marker Trust, said he noticed the signs weren’t in the best shape.

The Keystone Marker Trust is a volunteer organization that tries to maintain and keep track of Keystone Markers all over the state.

Wintermantel said Keystone Markers were first installed in Pennsylvania around the 1920’s.

“They’re a piece of Pennsylvania history,” he said. “These are a unique, specific design. They’re solid cast iron.”

Wintermantel said he is from Pittsburgh, but he likes to look around the state for Keystone signs in need of some TLC.

“I called the borough and talked to the secretary and asked if they knew about the damaged signs,” he said.

He offered to repaint the signs and have them refurbished for \$600.

One of the signs was struck by a vehicle and cracked in half and Wintermantel said he knew a welder, also in the Keystone Marker Trust, from Philadelphia, who could put them back together.

Elderton Mayor Larry Prugh said Victor Schall, 98, the oldest living community member, had donated more

than enough to cover the cost to repair both signs.

“It was very important to him to have these signs fixed,” Prugh said.

Prugh said Wintermantel picked up the signs, free of charge, in December and began the project.

“Elderton Borough not only wants to thank Victor Schall for his contribution,” Prugh said. “But, also, Mike Wintermantel for taking on the task of not only repairing our signs to keep history alive, but also to repair signs anywhere in (Pennsylvania) where help is needed.”

The Keystone Markers were back in place last Saturday.

“It’s not as simple as an aluminum sign, these are very solidly built,” Wintermantel said. “They don’t make these style signs anymore.”

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