

Mission accomplished



IDENTITY RESTORED — Mike Caldwell, left, and Jack Lingenfelter complete installation of the restored historic roadside marker on Route 36 in Sigel. Boy Scout Zac Veis, who was one of the Boy Scouts in Troop 68 involved in the project, observes. For more on the statewide effort in restore the vanishing markers, see next week's Images section. (Photo by Randy Bartley)

Sigel restores historic sign

By Randy Bartley

BROOKVILLE — Jack Lingenfelter believes many smaller Pennsylvania communities are losing their identity and he is on a mission to restore that identity before it is lost forever.

He believes that by restoring Pennsylvania's traditional roadside markers, communities such as Sigel and Summerville may recapture pride in their communities. Summerville recently replaced one its traditional orange on blue markers and Monday, Sigel replaced its own sign.

"Like most other Pennsylvania towns, Sigel lost their historic village signs to heavy snow and ice that was plowed against them by the snow plows," said Lingenfelter. "Who knew in 1920 that Pennsylvania roads would get wider? When that happened, the Eldred Township supervisors gathered up the pieces and stored them at the township building.

"Fast forward to 2008 and John T. Graham, one of the founders of the Keystone Village Marker Trust, called me and asked if I would like to get involved with his retirement project," said Lingenfelter.

"After lots of asking and searching, the signs were located at the township," said Lingenfelter. "Supervisor Mike Caldwell did the necessary repairs, welding, fabricating and painting of the two signs to a like-new condition.

Lingenfelter said "the real fun" started when he and Graham went on a road trip to Potter County to locate two discarded historic sign posts that had been spotted by an observant PennDOT employee.

"After hours of chipping off large blobs of concrete, the posts were reunited with the signs and we had a project," said Lingenfelter.

Lingenfelter asked for help from Boy Scout Troop 68 in Sigel and the Sigel Sportsmens Club. The scouts dug holes and placed concrete around the posts and the Sportsmens Club helped with the blue painting.

"On Monday, Sept. 10, the second sign was placed and properly re-dedicated to the Village of Sigel," said Lingenfelter.

Lingenfelter has been given a list of "missing" signs in the area and, in time, he hopes to discover the fate of these historic markers and, with luck, restore them to their proper place;