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Volunteer Maintains Historical Markers

By Jim Hamill

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If you have traveled around our area you may have noticed historical marking signs marking creeks and communities.

In central Pennsylvania there is one man who has been giving the signs a makeover.

Jim Carn grabbed his tools and went to work scraping years of paint off this historical sign just outside Turbotville.

"I scrape them down, sand them, give them two coats of blue, two coats of yellow," Carn said.

For three summers now, he has been transforming the Keystone markers which date back to the early 1900s back to their vibrant blue and yellow form.

"They're basically the first impression you get when you go into a town. You drive by and if the sign's all faded and rusted, it's not a very good impression," Carn added.

The signs are owned by PennDOT, but a spokesman said there is no money dedicated for their repair so on his own time and with his own money, Carn carries out the painstaking job of restoring the historical markers, one at a time.

"I buy all my own paint and supplies. I had a retired city fireman donated a gallon of paint and a few neighbors gave me some dollars," said Carn.

"This gentleman has taken time out of his schedule, so precious the time, and going around to do the best he can in repair and maintenance," said Wayne Appleman of Turbotville.

There is a marker next to his farm. Appleman was impressed to see the work of one man who has painted and straightened nearly three dozen signs across five counties and is still

going.

"I'll keep going as long as my hand's steady and my eyesight's alright," Carn vowed.

Jim Carn recently put the yellow lettering on to finish a sign just outside Turbotville, and when he's finished with the sign he's working on now, he will move onto the next one, then the next one. Continuing to give back to these signs which have stood the test of time.

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