

Newspaper Editors, the National Editorial Association, the National Press Club, the American Newspaper Women's Club, the Sigma Delta Chi and Theta Sigma Phi national journalism societies and other newspaper people who are here for these ceremonies. Your presence is reassuring to those of us who are resolved to build upon this site a suitable memorial to the journalists of our country.

Ben Franklin ranked a good newspaper with the Bible, the church and the school as "the chief support of virtue, morality, civil liberty and religion" And, of course, good newspapers are impossible without good newspaper men and newspaper women to produce them. And so, it is altogether fitting, I think, that we erect this National Newspaper Hall of Fame in appreciation of the contribution newspaper people have made to our society and our civilization.

One of the first of my official acts as Governor of Maryland was to issue a proclamation designating Gathland State Park as the site of a National Hall of Fame. In that proclamation, issued on June 16, 1959, I stated that the institution would "serve the whole American press to perpetuate the memory of its great members, servants of human freedom and democratic institutions."

Since that time, your State government, through the Department of Forests and Parks, the Board of Public Works, the tourist division of the Department of Economic Development and other agencies, has moved along steadily to bring these plans to fruition.

And here I wish to express my gratitude and the gratitude of the people of Maryland, to the press of our State for the time, the energy and the talent it has expended on this project. The Maryland-Delaware Press Association promptly accepted the responsibility and shouldered the burden of bringing into being this Hall of Fame for American journalists. The plans which we are unveiling here today are largely its handiwork. Without the generous assistance of this Association—its officers and its membership—the advancement we have made to date on the project would have been impossible. All Marylanders, and eventually all Americans, will I know, remember them for the excellent work they have done in promoting this ambitious undertaking.

The State of Maryland contends that history and reason entitles it to a National Hall of Fame for distinguished American journalists. It bases this claim on three main points:

First, it has, here at Gathland, the oldest monument dedicated to men of the newspaper profession.