

This Green Oasis



**AN INTRODUCTION TO BAKER PARK
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE**



About the Friends of Baker Park



- Friends of Baker Park, Inc., is a non-profit, volunteer-staffed community service organization dedicated to fostering community involvement with Frederick City Government in the preservation, restoration, use, and maintenance of Baker Park.

What We've Done Lately



- Installed new playground equipment in Fleming Avenue playground (\$28,000)
- Installed 57 benches and 7 trash receptacles (\$119,250) and contributed funds for 3 benches and 6 receptacles
- Planted 6 trees and coordinated planting of 20 trees
- Installed 4 picnic pavilions (\$12,100) and contributed funds for 3 of these
- Sponsored 8 replant / clean-up planting bed projects
- Purchased \$1,780 of shrubs, perennials, and bulbs
- Contributed \$3,500 to the Band Shell renovation
- Coordinated Goose Control on Culler Lake (Goose Vamoose)
- Decorated Baker Park for the holidays

Baker Park



- Called a “green oasis,” Baker Park is adjacent to Waterford Park on the west and the Carroll Creek Linear Park on the East, creating a open space through the City of Frederick.
- Baker Park is a focal point for Frederick, serving as:
 - Site for the City’ s 4th of July celebration and fireworks
 - Host to free summer Sunday concerts in the band shell
 - Home to one the City’ s two swimming pools, two sets of tennis courts, and several baseball, soccer, and flag frisbee fields
 - Location for numerous family reunions, weddings, picnics, and community and charitable events

Baker Park



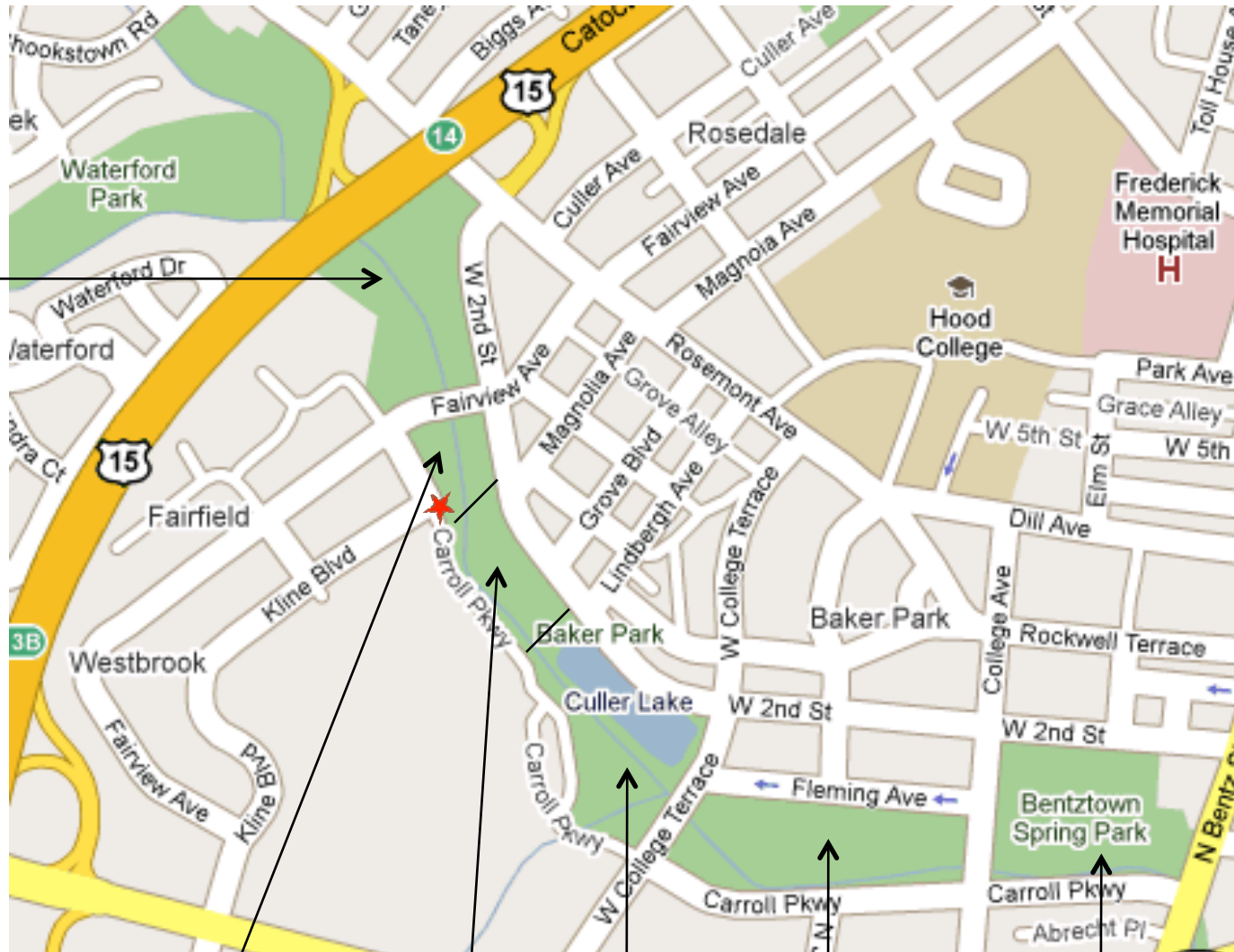
- Baker Park is a 58 acre linear park running through the heart of downtown Frederick. Founded over 75 years ago through the generosity of one of Frederick's leading citizens, it is one of the city's greatest assets and encompasses playgrounds, walking paths, ball parks, tennis courts, a concert pavilion, lake, and gardens.
- Baker Park is bounded by Route 15 on the west; West 2nd Street and Fleming Avenue on the North; Carroll Parkway on the South, and North Bentz Street on the East.

Baker Park



- Community members sometimes refer to sections of the park as “rooms” to assist in locating park areas:
 - Room 1: Bentz Street to College Avenue
 - Room 2: College Avenue to West College Terrace
 - Room 3: West College Terrace to the edge of the baseball field
 - Room 4: Eastern edge of the baseball field to the Covered Bridge
 - Room 5: Covered Bridge to Fairview Avenue
 - Room 6: Fairview Avenue to Route 15
- Baker Park has over 600 trees – and growing!

Room 6



Room 5

Room 4

Room 3

Room 2

Room 1

Covered Bridge ★

Baker Park's History



- 1916: Frederick purchases the initial property to be used for a Memorial Park, with the remainder of the tract envisioned for a municipal park and the extension of West 2nd Street.
- 1926: Upon learning in June that Frederick intends to purchase land between Bentz Street and West College Terrace for a park, Joseph Dill Baker offers to contribute \$13,825 to the city to buy the land.
- 1926: Frederick commissions Baltimore landscape architect R. Brooke Maxwell in the fall to prepare a landscape plan for the park.

Baker Park's History



- 1926 - 1927: Park facilities are constructed in the late fall and winter, including:
 - Boating lake on part of Carroll Creek
 - Bath house and swimming pool
 - A gazebo
 - Widening of Carroll Creek
- 1927: Extending from Bentz Street west to West College Terrace, Frederick dedicates the park in June in honor of Joseph Baker.

Baker Park' s History



- 1928: Bentz Street bridge is built, and Frederick relocates the Swinging Bridge from its original Bentz Street location crossing Carroll Creek westward to a spot crossing the creek behind the swimming pool.
- 1928: The Culler Memorial Fountain is installed by the main entry into the Park from Bentz Street.
- 1931: Frederick builds tennis courts at the corner of West 2nd Street and College Avenue and west of the swimming pool near the corner of Fleming and West College Terrace.

Baker Park's History



- 1938: Frederick expands Baker Park with the purchase of 6 acres of land from the Board of Education across from the new Frederick High School. Kidwiler Pond is on this property.
- 1940: Frederick renames Kidwiler Pond as Culler Lake in honor of Mayor Lloyd Culler.
- 1941: Following Joseph Baker's death in 1938, funds are raised to build a bell tower in his memory. Frederick dedicates the Joseph D. Baker Bell Tower and Carillon in November.

Baker Park's History



- 1964: Asa Watkins donates additional land to Frederick for use as park, enabling the park to extend west of Culler Lake. A little league baseball field is installed on this site.
- 1977 and 1986: Evelyn Krantz – whose family owns the house now called Schifferstadt – donates land along Carroll Creek west of the little league field, extending Baker Park to Route 15.
- 1990: The original band shell (date unknown) is demolished and an entirely new structure built.
- 1991: Friends of Baker Park is founded by Victoria Seward.

Close up: Culler Memorial Fountain



- The Culler Memorial Fountain is installed in 1928 by the main entry into the Park from Bentz Street.
- It was built as a memorial to Mayor Lloyd Culler's daughter, who died in 1923.



Close up: The Joseph D. Baker Tower and Carillon



- After Joseph Baker's death in 1938, Frederick raises \$45,000 to construct a bell tower as a memorial to him.
- John B. Hamme of York, Pennsylvania, designs the tower.
- Frederick dedicates the Joseph D. Baker Bell Tower and Carillon to him in November, 1941.
- The tower is 70 feet high, 16 feet square at its base, and is built of Baltimore County granite.
- The Carillon is initially set up with 14 bells manufactured in Holland. Each bell bears the inscription "The Joseph Dill Baker Memorial."
- The largest bell reads, "This tower and carillon have been erected by his friends in loving memory of Joseph Dill Baker 1854 – 1938, whose life was benediction to this community, 1941."

Close up: The Joseph D. Baker Tower and Carillon



- The original bells are stationary; only the clappers – weighing 15,000 pounds – move.
- Clapper weights range from 3,500 pounds to 185 pounds.
- Nine new bells are purchased in 1966, bringing the total to 23 bells.
- In September, 1995, Friends of Baker Park dedicate a \$300,000 renovation to the Carillon that includes restoration of the bell tower and the addition of 35 bells, bringing the total to 58 bells.
- Residents sometimes refer to the carillon as the “Jewel in the Crown” of Baker Park.



Baker Park Carillon

Close up: The Gazebo



- Originally built as part of the initial park design in 1926-1927.
- New wood shingle roof and railings area installed in 2009; aging bushes removed in anticipation of new landscaping.

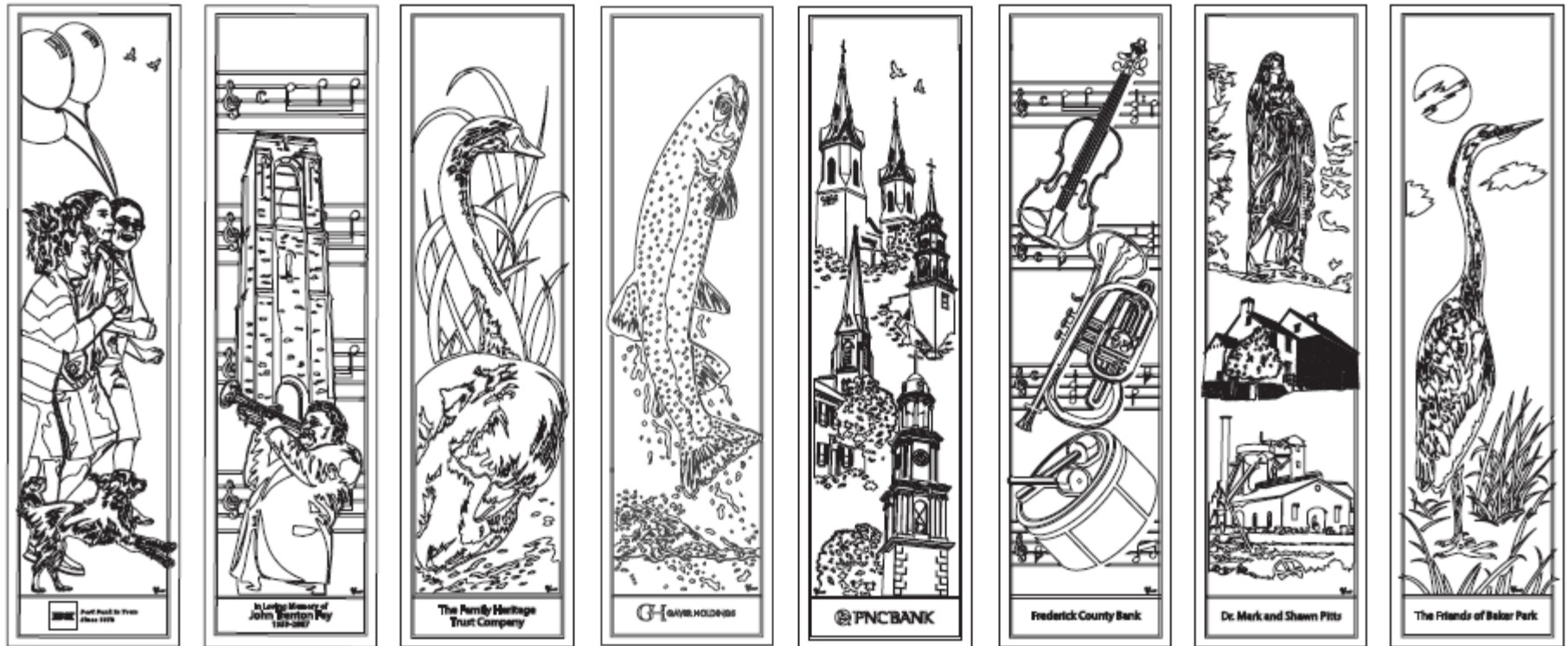


Close up: Band shell



- The original band shell (date unknown) is demolished and an entirely new structure built in 1990.
- Under the leadership of the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek, and drawing on guidance from original architect Gary Baker, the band shell is completely renovated in 2009, including:
 - Fundamental repairs of damage from vandalism and wear and tear.
 - Execution of the original unrealized design for the band shell:
 - ✦ Creation of new wings to provide performers with direct access to changing rooms and toilet facilities.
 - ✦ Enlargement of the stage and improvement of the lighting.
 - ✦ Construction of a sound and lighting control platform behind the seating area to accommodate the control equipment used by performing groups.
 - ✦ Addition of facing stone plus etched glass windows reflecting Baker Park themes.





1. Baker Park is for the kids, so we see kids running with balloons (artist's son and two friends).
2. Baker Park is for music, so we see the iconic image of the park and bell tower over a trumpeter wailing away on his trumpet.
3. Baker Park is about water birds, we see a swan.
4. Frederick County is about fishing for trout, we see a trout jumping out of the water.
5. Frederick city is about the iconic clustered spires, so we see them in a montage.
6. Baker Park is about music, so we see a pattern of music instruments and a sheet of music notes.
7. Frederick County is about The Grotto of Lourdes Emmitsburg, the Shifferstadt House, and the Catocin Furnace in a montage.
8. Baker Park is about the gray herons that regularly visit.

Close up: The Swinging Bridge



- The “Swinging Bridge” is constructed in 1875 for a reported cost of \$400 as a pedestrian crossing over Carroll Creek at Bentz Street; wagons and vehicles ford the creek.
- A new bridge over the creek is constructed in April, 1928, to accommodate both people and vehicles. The Swinging Bridge is relocated to a spot crossing Carroll Creek behind the swimming pool and links foot paths on the two sides of the creek.



Close up: Swimming Pavilion



- Originally built in 1927.
- Named the Edward P. Thomas, Jr. Memorial Pool in memory of Fredericktonian and popular State Senator Edward Thomas.



Playground and Edward P. Thomas Jr. Memorial Swimming Pool

Close up: Culler Lake



- Kidwiler Pond is on 6 acres of land across from the new Frederick High School. Frederick purchases the land from the Board of Education to expand Baker Park.
- The Kidwilers originally use the pond for ice production in the winter and raising gold fish in the summer.

Close up: Culler Lake



- In the late 1930s Frederick contracts with the Work Projects Administration (WPA) to construct improvements:
 - Enlarging and deepening the pond.
 - Stabilizing the embankments.
 - Adding lighting.
 - Constructing the Skater's Shelter (commonly called the boat house).
 - Installing of a lighted fountain in the center of the lake.
 - Installing the landscaping surrounding the lake.
- Frederick renames the pond Culler Lake in 1940 in honor of Mayor Lloyd Culler (Mayor 1922-1931; 1934-1940).

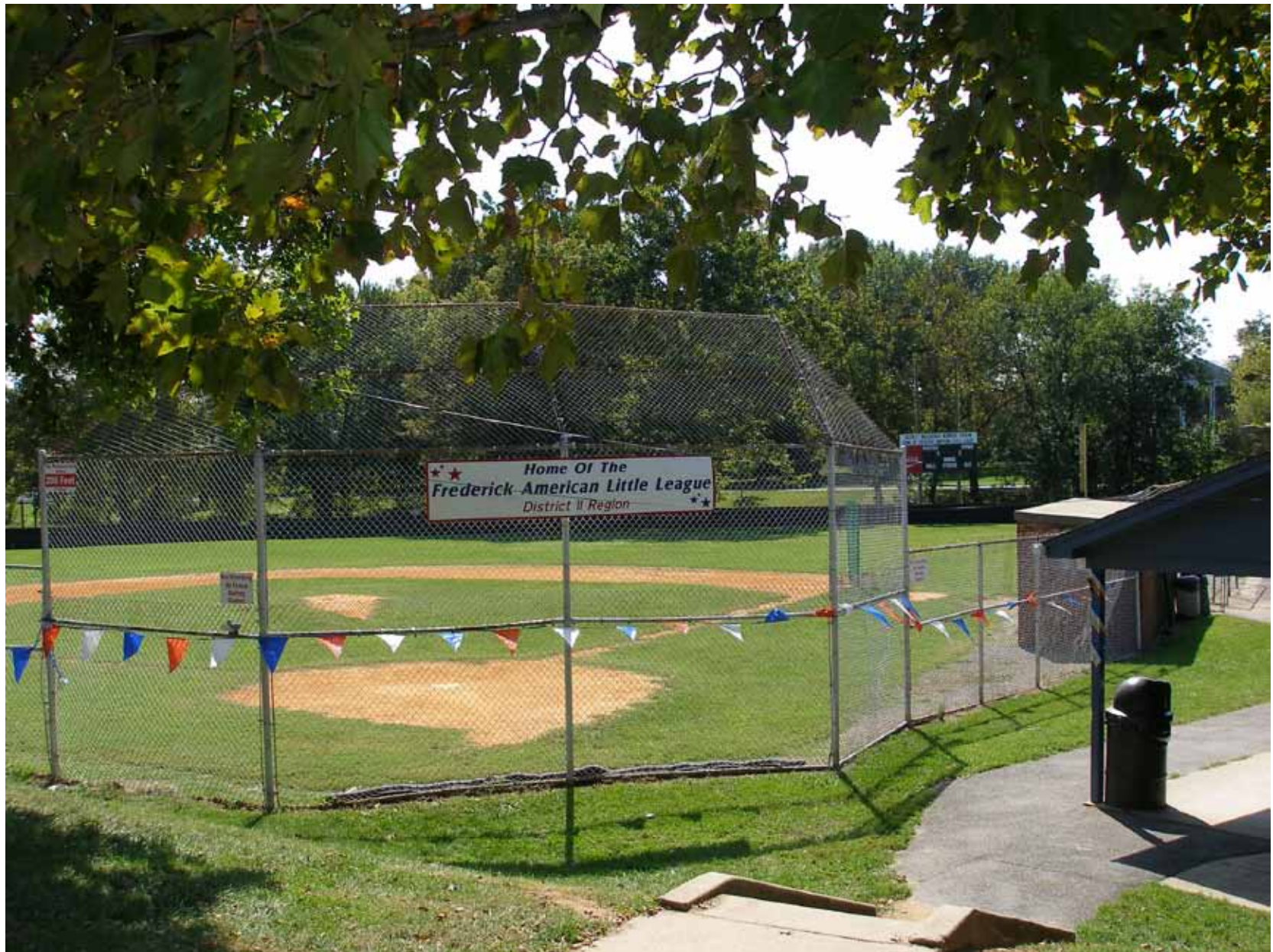


Culler Lake Fountain and the skater's shelter

Close up: Little League Field



- Named for Austin Angleberger, a Frederick County's Orphan's Court Judge who died in June, 1976, and was known especially for being an avid baseball fan.
- An accountant and auditor for 35 years, during his life he served as president of the Lions Club, chairman of the Red Cross, a leader in the Frederick Athletic Association, and manager and player for the Frederick Hustlers baseball team, among other activities.
- When he could no longer play for the Frederick Hustlers team he became an umpire, eventually leading the Frederick County Umpires Association.





Close up: Covered Bridge



- A plank bridge originally connected Kline Boulevard to West 2nd Street.
- This connecting street was ultimately closed and the crossing over Carroll Creek replaced by Fairview Avenue and a new bridge.
- A covered bridge replaced the plank bridge in the 1960s.



We stand on the shoulders of giants, and we are stewards of their vision.

Joseph D. Baker, Asa Watkins, and Evelyn Krantz endowed to us this tree-filled green space that hosts recreational and cultural institutions and helps make Frederick a wonderful place to live.

Now it's our turn to build on these contributions and help assure that Baker Park remains "this green oasis."

Baker Park provides a great vantage point to enjoy the *clustered spires*, a phrase first used in the *Ballad of Barbara Fritchie* by poet John Greenleaf Whittier.



Sources



- Charles Klein, *Baker Park, Its History and Development* 1968
- Richard Lebherz, *This Green Oasis, A History of Baker Park 1928-2003*, 2003
- Timothy L. Cannon, Tom Gorsline, Nancy F. Whitmore, *Pictorial History of Frederick, Maryland: The First 250 Years 1745 – 1995*, 1995

