

Good Morning:

On behalf of the Ohio Historical Society and the Ohio National Road Association, welcome to the dedication of this Ohio Historical Marker acknowledging the history of the National Road and the death of Christopher Baldwin, Librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, as the first recorded traffic fatality in Ohio. You will hear more about Mr. Baldwin and the history of this site in a few minutes. However I would first like to recognize:

- Public officials present
- Representatives of the Masonic Lodge
- Mary Ellen Weingartner, new Director of the National Road Zane Grey Museum

Ohio Historical Markers

Ohio Historical Markers identify, commemorate and honor the significant people, places and events that have contribute to our state's rich history. They are a vital tool and an important resource in informing residents and visitors about our past.

The Ohio Historical Marker program began in 1953, during the Sesquicentennial celebration of Ohio statehood, when blue Ohio-shaped corporate markers began to be erected at the corporate limits of towns and villages. However, it was soon clear that the limited text these markers could accommodate did not do justice to Ohio history. In 1957, the marker program we know today was established, with the program administered by the Ohio Historical Society. Nearly fifty years later, over 1000 markers are located throughout the state.

The Ohio Historic Marker program is grassroots driven. All states have marker programs, usually administered by a state historical society or commission. However, staff generally decides what is significant and which sites, events or people should be recognized with markers.

In Ohio local communities decide what is significant, submit the application, research the marker topic and suggest the marker text. The Society helps identify historic significance and context, validate historical facts and edits the text for grammar and format, preparing it for manufacture by the foundry. The markers belong to all of the citizens of Ohio.

The Ohio Historical Marker we dedicate here today is one of three markers installed along the National Road as a result of the Road's bicentennial celebrated in 2006. The other two are at Tadmor, the ruin of an early 19th century National Road community in southwest Ohio and at Springfield's Pennsylvania House, an early National Road inn and tavern. All three markers were fully funded with funds left over from Ohio's bicentennial celebration in 2003 and all three markers were designed to include a brief history of the National Road as well site specific information and as you will see this is a particularly special marker.

Ohio Historical Markers are now accessible to everyone even if you can't visit them in your car. Through the aid of a new web site known as Remarkable Ohio, you can see photographs and read the text of hundreds of Ohio Historical Markers across the state. The web address is www.remarkableohio.org

Of course, the tragic event we acknowledge here today would likely not have happened were it not for the National Road. Authorized by Congress in 1806, the National Road was the nation's first federally funded interstate highway. The construction of the National Road began in Cumberland Maryland, in 1811 and was completed across Ohio during the 1820's and 1830's. The Road opened the state and much of the Old Northwest Territory to settlement, provided access for Ohio products to the burgeoning eastern markets and enabled Ohio citizens to play an increasingly important role in the affairs of the new nation. A single year in 1833 recorded thousands of wagons, coaches and carriages, riders on horseback and immense droves of livestock. After a long period of decline the car and truck traveling public sparked a revitalization of the Road. Reflecting its new found significance, the National Road was reborn as U.S 40 in the 1920's and by the eve of World War II, was a busy twenty-four-hour-a-day artery lined with truck stops, motor courts and diners with a reputation for hearty food and endless cups of coffee, before once again being overshadowed by the construction of Interstate 70. Today there is a new and growing interest in the National Road.

Designated an All-American Road National Scenic Byway in 2002, the National Road is a destination and a favorite route for everyone interested in authentic American history.

And now I would like to introduce Alan King, former Director of the National Road/Zane Grey Museum, who researched Mr. Baldwin and wrote **the** text for the marker.

Before we unveil the marker I especially want to recognize and thank Ellen Dunlap, President of the American Antiquarian Society, who provided us with a copy of Baldwin's portrait and additional funding, enabling us to enhance the marker with a likeness of Baldwin. The Society regrets that it could not send a representative to today's events.

At this time I would like to invite Alan, Mary Ellen and? to assist me in unveiling the marker.