In honor of a servant

Public voices opposition to name change

NEGRO MOUNTAIN

ELEVATION 3075 FT.

support for identity prompts board to retain name change

By Geoffrey W. Fielding

Drive west on U.S. Route 40 and travel through Hagerstown, Hancock, Cumberland and Frostburg, and you're sure to see, near Keysers Ridge, a large roadside sign that might surprise you. It reads: NEGRO MOUNTAIN ELEVATION 3075 FT.

The wording of the sign has surprised so many motorists and travelers that the U.S. Board on Geographic Names held a hearing last summer to change the name to Black Hero Mountain. A Pennsylvania man who objected to the name Negro proposed changing it. But enough people testified in support of Negro Mountain, including officials from Maryland and Pennsylvania, private citizens and historians such as Marguerite Doloremke, of Hagerstown, that the board refused to act and the old name was retained.

As Edward Papenfuse, Maryland's state archivist, has pointed out, the name Negro Mountain "reflects an 18th century sensitivity to the important contribution African Americans made that is rarely so publicly demonstrated." The mountain is part of a 30-mile ridge that runs diagonally from northeast to southwest through Somerset County, Pennsylvania, into Maryland's Garrett County. It includes Backbone Mountain, which, at 3,213 feet, is the highest peak in Pennsylvania. Maryland's highest spot is Backbone Mountain, which, at 3,361 feet, is the southern tip of Garrett County.

The essential facts are the same. America was still subject to Britain's King George III, but along the edges of the Middle Colonies, America formed under pressures from the French and the Iroquois. The name Black Hero Mountain would have been a derogatory name, similar to Negro Mountain.

The mountain got its name more than 200 years ago. Margaretta Duncannon, of Hagerstown, a collector of black memorabilia, has said: "Why then this name? Where was the Black Hero Mountain?" As the mountain was called Negro Mountain, it was a name for the mountain itself. As the mountain was called Black Hero Mountain, it was a name for the mountain itself. The mountain got its name from the Delaware, who called it Nemesis after the Greek goddess of retribution.

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Nemesia was the servant of Col. Ibilius John Th.ii!p, who was well known on the pre-revolutionary frontier, which separated the Old Line State from the wilderness to the west. Although the Maryland guide gives the year as 1774, Will H. Lowdermilk's "Cumberland" sets the date at 1784. But the essential facts are the same. America was still subject to Britain's King George III, but along the edges of the Middle Colonies, America formed under pressures from the French and the Iroquois. The name Black Hero Mountain would have been a derogatory name, similar to Negro Mountain.

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Negro Mountain was a 30-mile ridge in Garrett County, Md., and Somerset County, Pa. It runs through Garrett County, Md., and Somerset County, Pa., and was named after a black servant who was killed on the mountain more than 200 years ago.

Keyser's Ridge, named after Keyser, Maryland, was a 30-mile ridge in Garrett County, Md., and Somerset County, Pa. It runs through Garrett County, Md., and Somerset County, Pa., and was named after a black servant who was killed on the mountain more than 200 years ago.