Pennsylvania has hundreds of towns large and small, and most of them greet visitors with a simple sign along a main road noting the name of the town. Many of these towns have, until recently, ornate signs made of cast iron, right here in Pennsylvania, and painted the bright blue and gold colors of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The signs themselves have disappeared, but the lonely posts still stand on the roadside, forgotten and forlorn. What is not known is how many original markers are left, or even where they are located. Many markers are in need of repair, or are hidden away indoors someplace.

Markers provide a link from Pennsylvania’s past to its present and future. Of Pennsylvania, they serve as an impressive town entrance, welcoming residents and visitors alike, and giving a sense of place to their communities. The keystone shape promotes pride to Pennsylvanians, and pride in one’s hometown too. These markers and their posts are made of cast iron, and as such are a tribute to the iron and steel industry that for so many generations brought and kept Pennsylvania at the forefront of our nation’s industrial might. Although that era is behind us, an attractive town entrance can promote tourism too.

For more information about the Keystone Marker Trust or to help with markers in towns in Pennsylvania, go online to the website at www.keystonemarkertrust.org. The trust is seeking volunteers and other interested groups as well as good, up-to-date photographs and information about the markers. Jack Graham can be reached at 717-532-2235 or at jatgr@gmail.com.

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