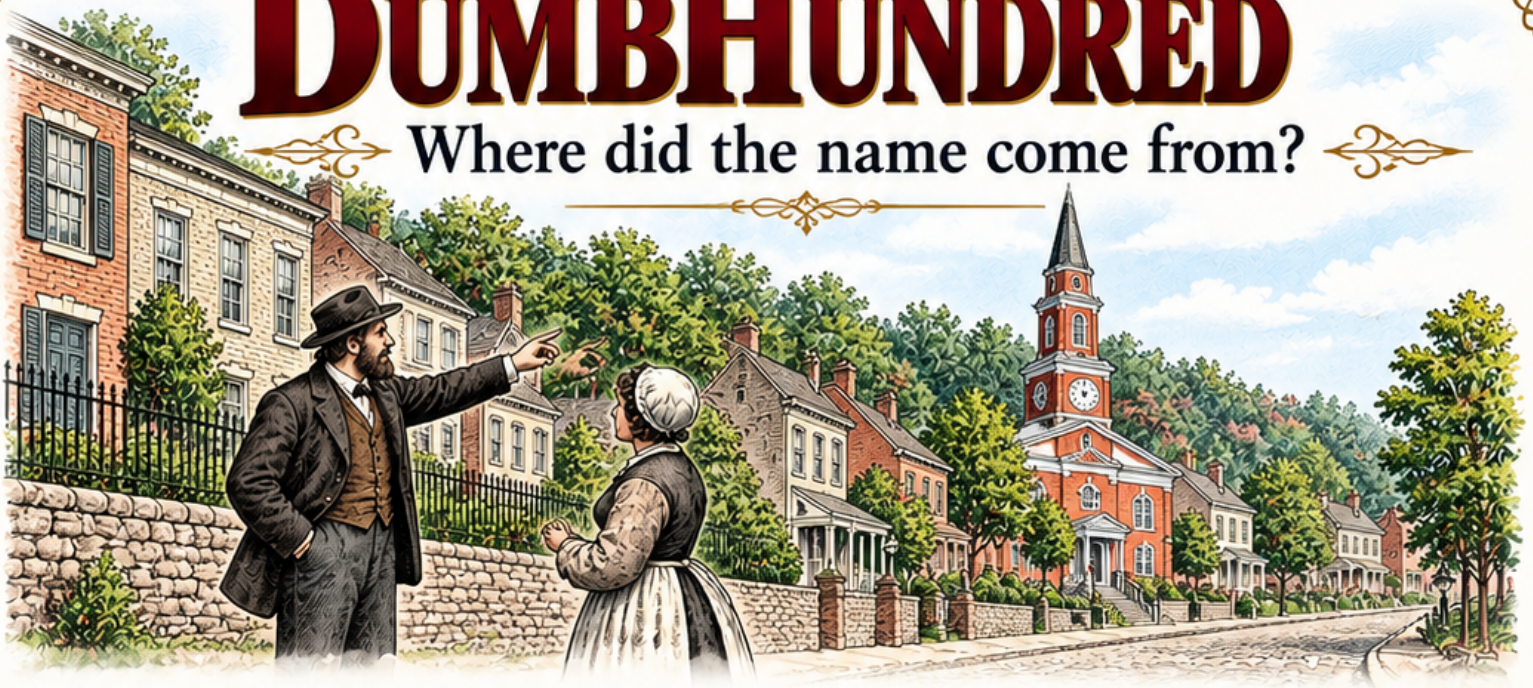
DumbHundred

Where did the name come from?



A Neighborhood Legend: One Story Behind the Name

The origin of the unusual name “Dumbhundred” has never been conclusively established, but an enduring neighborhood legend offers one colorful explanation.

According to the story, the district was originally known simply as “the Hundred,” perhaps because it encompassed approximately one hundred acres. As German and other immigrant families settled in the neighborhood during the nineteenth century, many initially spoke little English. Outsiders supposedly began calling the area the “Dumb Hundred,” using the word “dumb” in its older sense of being unable to speak.

Another version, recorded in a Cumberland newspaper column in 1985, attributes the name to Welsh coal miners who lived in Cumberland’s North End. Their unfamiliar speech or accents may likewise have inspired the nickname.

Neither explanation has been definitively proven, but the different versions preserve an intriguing piece of Cumberland’s immigrant and working-class folklore. The German version is especially plausible within the neighborhood’s broader history. The area had a strong German cultural presence, including breweries, and the German Lutheran congregation that built Cumberland’s Town Clock Church in 1848.

Whether the name arose from German immigrants, Welsh miners, the neighborhood’s approximate acreage, or some combination of these circumstances, “Dumbhundred” remains one of Cumberland’s most distinctive and memorable neighborhood names.

HDAC

Historic Dumbhundred Action Committee

DUMBHUNDRED HISTORIC DISTRICT

Sources and Further Reading:

- Cumberland News, November 3, 1985
- Maryland Historical Trust’s Medusa cultural-resources database

Learn More About the Historic Dumbhundred Action Committee

https://www.danmullininsurance.com/hdac