

Carroll Yesteryears
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Homes Tell Tales of New Windsor's Rich History
By David Buie

As we pull out of the pandemic, many people are finding socially-distanced, outdoor activities to celebrate the fall season. On October 16th, the New Windsor Heritage Committee offered the opportunity for families to enjoy a leisurely walk, learn the history of the town, and engage in a spooky story or two. The event, "Spirited Tales Tour," featured seven homes, highlighting their history and owners.

New Windsor Museum (207 Main Street): The building that houses the New Windsor Heritage Museum was built in 1812 and is one of the original log houses shown on founder Isaac Atlee's town plan. Since being built, the house has served as a private home, apartments, a dress shop, and now houses a two-story apartment and the New Windsor Heritage Committee's Museum and Fountain Shoppe.

Dielman Inn (141 Main Street): The original log-and-frame building dates to the 1790s. By the 1870s, the Dielman Inn was a popular gathering place for vacationers until closing in 1927. The inn consisted of 42 rooms during its heyday. It became a regional cultural magnet because proprietor Louis William Dielman, a professor of music at nearby Calvert College, sponsored concerts, musicals, and skits featuring his guests. Some of these guests were among society's elite. As a result, their names regularly appeared on the social calendar in Carroll County newspapers. Medal of Honor and Silver Star recipient Brigadier General Marion Perry Maus passed away at the inn; his presence may still be felt.

Gift House (127 Church Street): Built in the mid-1870s by a local jeweler named Gift. He sold the house to Charles Baile who died in 1903. The residence has had various owners, serving even as apartments for a time.

The current owner's goal has been to restore the house to its original beauty while adding modern amenities. The house's lively purple paint is just one of this Victorian's unusual features; the curved glass windows in the master bedroom and living room are rare.

Although the owner has never noticed any unwanted guests peering at her through the curved glass, she does have an exciting neighbor—Roberts Bartholow (1831-1904) who is buried in the nearby New Windsor Presbyterian Church cemetery. Many have credited Dr. Bartholow with being the first medical researcher to perform experiments by applying electrical stimulation to the human brain to see the effects on motor functions of the body.

Buckey-Bixler House (302 High Street): Built by Henry Getty for John Buckey in 1897, it remained in the Buckey-Bixler family until 1994; the current owners are only the second in 116 years.

The house is constructed of brick and slate in the Queen Anne style. The walls are three bricks thick with the inner-most bricks (wythes) having an exciting history. In 1896, St. Thomas

Catholic Church (once on the campus of Calvert College which became the Brethren Service Center) was sold to Mr. Buckey for \$100. He had it dismantled and used the materials in his new home and outbuildings. The bricks in the house walls, the flooring in the attic, the altar rail at the top of the kitchen stairs, and the windows in the outbuildings are all recycled from the church.

No spirits here (unless you count an occasional spotting of former cat-in-residence, Martha), but locals are well aware of the cautionary and sad tale of former owner Mary Elizabeth “Lib” Bixler (1912-1989).

The New Windsor Reformed Presbyterian Church, originally known as the Greenwood Congregation (200 Church Street): One of the oldest Presbyterian congregations in Carroll County, the group was organized sometime in the 1830s. The cemetery had its first recorded burial in 1833.

The old stagecoach and wagon roads that ran through New Windsor connected Baltimore, Gettysburg, Annapolis, and Philadelphia. This easy access also brought armies of both the Union and Confederacy through town during the Civil War. In June 1863 five thousand Union cavalry rode by the church on their way to Gettysburg. Two of their dead are buried in this cemetery.

New Windsor also has links to the Revolutionary War. The brother of the town’s founder, Isaac Atlee, was William Richardson Atlee. He married the daughter of the famous Revolutionary War General “Mad Anthony” Wayne. William came to New Windsor to live after her death and is buried in the Presbyterian cemetery.

According to legend, Wayne’s body was originally buried in Erie, PA, but his son decided to move his remains years later. Unfortunately, not all of his bones made it back for reburial on the outskirts of Philadelphia. This gave rise to one of the best ghost stories about a Revolutionary War hero. Every year on January 1, the General’s birthday, Anthony Wayne’s ghost goes searching for his lost bones along U.S. Route 322 in Pennsylvania, a road that follows the path the bones traveled. Understandably, the General’s ghost is mad that he is buried in Erie, Radnor, and several other Pennsylvania locations.

Could it be that his daughter has joined the General in his search?

Clifton G. Devilbiss House (314 Church Street): Built around 1910 by A. Grant Kauffman who died in 1936. This home has a wrap-around porch which was popular at the turn of the century, and inside there are several curved walls which probably reflect a desire by the first owner to have a design that was a bit unusual.

The current owner reports no unusual or spirited activity in her home. Still, the same can’t be said for the nearby home of Adam Bloom, the father of New Windsor’s scandalous Bloom sisters!

Baile House (212 Main Street): For many years the home of Sarah Baile Getty (1849-1928). During the Civil War, Daniel and Nettie Stouffer owned the house, and it was briefly the headquarters of Confederate General Bradley T. Johnson and his contingent of rebel raiders.

After arriving in 1864, they began looting the town's stores, but Nettie, an old friend of the General, asked him to keep the men out of her husband's store across the street, and he honored her request. Little did the General know that the Stouffers were Union sympathizers.

The current owners often wonder if the noises they hear at night are those of Daniel Stouffer or past resident and New Windsor State Bank President Nathan Baile, or maybe even Drendy, the maid who worked for the Stouffers?

Thank you to the members of the New Windsor Heritage Museum for providing the information for this article.

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Photo Caption: A recent photo of the New Windsor Heritage Museum located at 207 Main Street in New Windsor. (Courtesy of the New Windsor Heritage Museum)