

# *A Strolling Tour of Strasburg's Historic District*

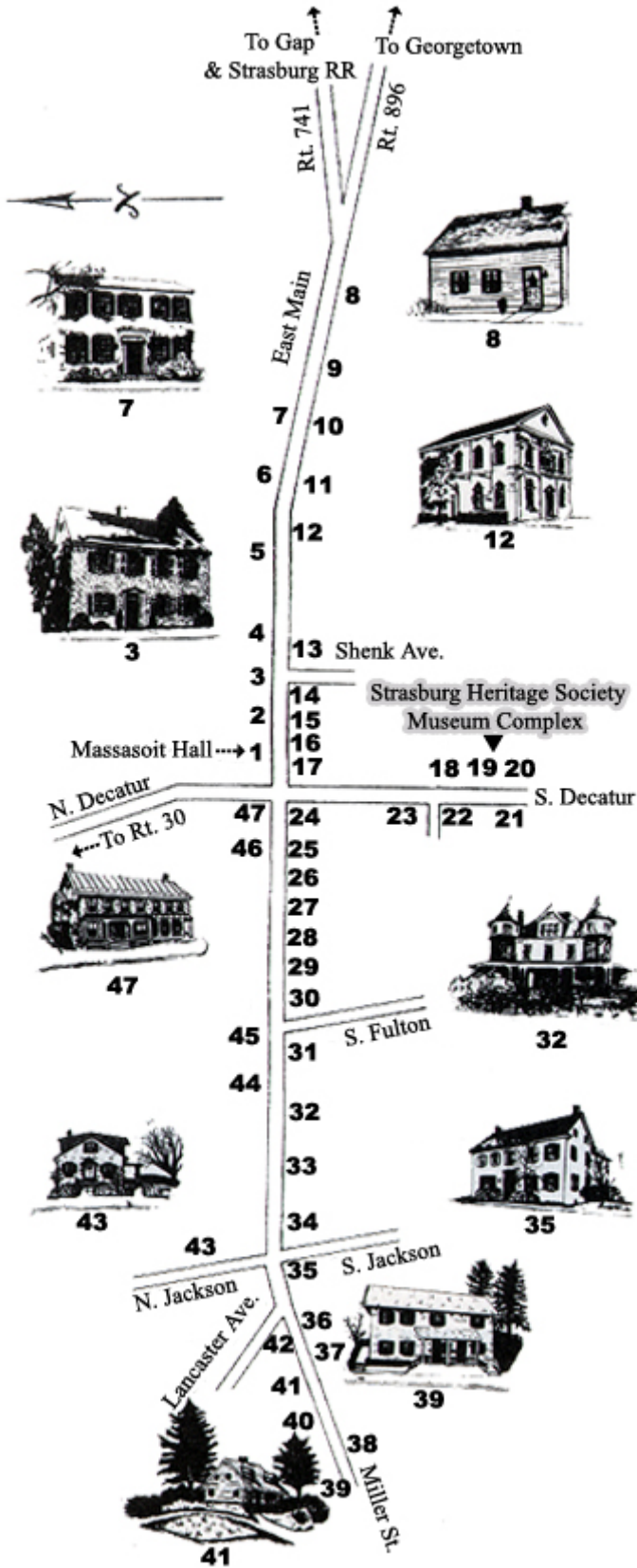
Although there are many charming homes in Strasburg, not all could be included in this walking tour. As you stroll along, please take notice to the other homes you pass and respect the privacy of the residents.

The walking tour was conceived by Mrs. T. Reed Ferguson, Sr. in 1966. Extensive research and compilation of the data herein has been achieved, in large part, by SHS members Harriet Miller and Gail Anderson. Many thanks to all those who have empowered the walking tour with educational merit.

The walking tour can commence at any numbered point on the map. Hence, it is not required that you park in the center of town.

The accumulated length of the walking tour in its entirety is approximately 1.5 miles. There are many business establishments in the center of town that can provide food and drink- *and a bit of respite-* to your journey.

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**#1** *Massasoit Hall, 7 E. Main* – Erected in 1856 by the Massasoit Hall Assoc., and used as a community center throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This building is one of the most intact fraternal/town hall buildings in Lancaster County. This structure features some exquisite brickwork and it is believed that the bricks were produced from a brickyard that was located near the east end of the present day *Strasburg Rail Road* property. The second story had a large auditorium and stage, and was the center of Strasburg’s cultural activities. School plays, musicals, basketball games, socials and lectures were held here. A garment factory later rented the facilities and regrettably tore out the stage. The building was originally to have included a clock in the tower, but it never came to fruition.

**#2** *Gruber-Sample House, 21-23 E. Main* – The home of Dr. Everard Gruber, and later, Rev. Nathaniel W. Sample (1752-1834), two of the most important figures in colonial Strasburg’s history. The eastern half was built by Dr. Gruber in c1766, from land purchased from John Ferree, Innkeeper. The 1769 tax list includes Dr. Gruber who was taxed for 1 house and lot, 1 horse, and 1 cow. Dr. Gruber was prominent in politics and served as one of the delegates from Strasburg to the *Committee of Observation & Inspection* during the crucial years of our country in 1774-1776. Dr. Gruber sold the house to George Richmond in 1775 and Mr. Richmond sold the house to Rev. Nathaniel W. Sample in 1783. Rev. Sample built the western portion of the house in the early 1790’s where he opened a theological school, the *Strasburg Seminary*. Rev. Sample was also the founder of the *Strasburg Philosophical Society*. It is documented that Ben Franklin expressed interest in Rev. Sample’s society, but there is no proof that he actively took part in the society. Mr. Sample’s academic enterprise near the close of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was followed by a flood of schools in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**#3** *The Sandstone House, 27 E. Main* – c1759. The oldest documented building within the borough. The facade is cut red sandstone, with the other walls constructed of the less expensive “rubble” stone (random, uncut stone). Documentation of the land on which this house sits can be traced back to a Christopher Taylor. In October of 1681, Mr. Taylor purchased 5,000 acres from William Penn. Sam Taylor, his grandson, received title to 1,300 acres and in 1729 sold 100 acres to Edward Dougharty. Mr. Dougharty built a tavern on this land as early as 1729. What became of *Dougharty’s Tavern* is unknown and this structure is not believed to be the original tavern structure, but a structure built by Jacob Pfoutz, an elder at St. Michael’s church who purchased 10 acres of land from Mr. Dougharty in 1754 and died at age 86 in November of 1800.

**#4** *31-33 E. Main* – About 30 years after building the Sandstone House, Jacob Pfoutz built this house next door for his son Martin. Germanic elements draw similarities to the Sandstone house and both houses represent Georgian style. Note the central entry and the pedimented (A wide, low-pitched gable surmounting the facade of a building in the Grecian style) dormers with reeded pilasters (ridged, flat columns). Martin Pfoutz operated a store here in the 1790’s.

The house passed to James Whitehall, the first Chief Burgess of Strasburg when the borough was organized in 1816. During his ownership, the building became home to the first post office in Strasburg, in 1804. In May of 1839, the Rev. David McCarter opened the *Strasburg Academy* in this house, one of the first schools of its kind. In 1842, a three story annex building was erected to house students- about 100 feet from the house- and the house became a dormitory and the principal's domicile. The annex building was demolished in 1873 and the house at 37 East Main was erected using the bricks from the razed annex.

**#5** 43- E. Main – c1800, this is a two-story log house.

**#6** Cross Keys Tavern, 101 E. Main – Built in the late 1700's, this structure was once a tavern. Perhaps an early use of the drive-through concept, the *Cross Keys* tavern allegedly allowed a person to ride his horse into the building and right up to the bar.

**#7** 109 E. Main – This is a Federal style brick house built c1830 which has the original shutters intact. Federal style architecture emerged in the decades after the Revolution, which was a more delicate, refined continuation of the Georgian style. Popular architectural features of this style are the fanlights with delicate tracery. Note the Grecian and Roman classical designs/motifs that were a part of this style which embodied the American allure of a new nation that thought the Greek and Roman republics were exactly the sort of society that Americans aimed to emulate.

**#8** 126 E. Main – c1750, this building is a traditional 1 ½ story Germanic log structure, one of the oldest buildings in Strasburg.

**#9** 110 E. Main – Built c1783, this is an early Germanic log house.

**#10** Christopher Speck House, 106 E. Main – c1764.

**#11** 48 E. Main – c1769, this two-story log house once served as a tavern and was known as the *Wine and Cake*. While most log homes were 1 ½ stories, this log house is two, which may have been a sign that the original owners were wealthy. The house is of English Colonial design and the original features include the three windows on the second floor, the doors on the right and left, and the shutters.

**#12** St. Michael's Luthern Church, 44 E. Main – Built in 1806, the congregation has been traced back to the 1750's. The graveyard has many graves of Revolutionary War veterans.

**#13** *Thomas Ferree House, 28 E. Main* – c1793, this is a wonderfully preserved Georgian brick house and was built by Thomas Ferree, an early French merchant.

**#14** *George Duffield House, 20 E. Main* – c1793, this house has the original door, shutters, and shutter hardware. Likely that Dr. George Duffield conducted his school here in the early 1800's.

**#15** *Miller/Weaver House, 12 E. Main* – In 1771 this brick house was sold to Henry Weaver by John Miller. Facade has been re-surfaced and the windows were altered in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**#16** *John Funk House, 8-10 E. Main* – Built in 1798 by John Funk (1755-1831), a local artist, millwright, and one of the founders of the Strasburg Scientific Society in 1791. Mr. Funk was elected a member of the first borough council of Strasburg in 1816. Mr. Funk was a versatile individual and was a portrait painter who painted a number of famous people. Most notably, Bishop Francis Asbury (the first Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church). The painting of Bishop Asbury now hangs in the Jacob Asbury building on the campus of *American University* in Washington D.C. He also painted a portrait of Rev. Nathaniel W. Sample, a friend and neighbor for more than 40 years. This portrait hangs in the *Presbyterian Historical Society* in Philadelphia. At a later time, Mr. Funk's house became the *Colonial Tavern*. The Victorian storefront was added in the late 1800's. The Strasburg Post Office was originally housed here. The windows have been replaced, and the lower on the west side floor was replaced in 1994. The upper floor on the east side was replaced in the late 1800's.

**#17** *The Old Bank, 2 E. Main* – c1865-1875, this Italianate building housed the first *National Bank of Strasburg* and the *Bachman Furniture Company*. The Bank was organized in 1863, and was the second bank established in Lancaster County. Christian Bachman used one side of the building for his furniture store and residence.

**#18** *102 S. Decatur* – Built in 1870, this was the manse of the *First Presbyterian Church* of Strasburg.

**#19** *The Shroy House, 122 S. Decatur* – c1790, the only 1 ½ story brick house remaining in Strasburg. This was the home of John L. Shroy (1864-1920), poet and educator. This building was purchased by the *Strasburg Heritage Society* in 1977 and is the focal point for the 3 side-by-side buildings that constitute the SHS museum complex. The society is currently soliciting funds to restore and refurbish the interior of this house to match its original colonial criteria.

**#20** 126-128 S. Decatur – Built in 1807 as the first permanent church for Strasburg’s Methodist congregation on land purchased from John Funk. Utilized as a church until 1839 when the congregation built a new building on west main street. The building was known as *Temperance Hall* from 1884 until 1923. Now owned by the *Strasburg Heritage Society* and earmarked for restoration to the pre-1923 configuration.

**#21** 119 S. Decatur – c1790’s log house which as reported to have been the residence- for a short period of time- of Joseph Priestly, a British Unitarian clergyman and chemist, and the discoverer of oxygen. Mr. Priestly was noted as having addressed the *Strasburg Scientific Society* while residing here.

**#22** First Presbyterian Church, 101 S. Decatur – The main sanctuary built by Daniel Holl in 1833 with bricks made by David Wiley of Strasburg. Educational wings were added in 1938, 1957, and 1987.

**#23** 7 S. Decatur – A colonial revival style house built around 1899.

**#24** 2-8 W. Main – This nine-bay Georgian/Federal store and residence was built in at least three stages, probably starting in the late 1700’s. The eastern section is the oldest. The interior woodwork matches that which can be found in houses from this period. Note the carving of the stone steps.

**#25** 10 W. Main – c1850, this house is on or near the site of the earlier residence of Thomas H. Burrowes who was born here in 1805. Burrowes was Mayor of Lancaster City and is known as the father of the Pennsylvania public school system. He was the Pennsylvania’s first Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**#26** 12 W. Main – c1800, this early log and brick house is thought to be the house where a Mrs. Haynes opened a private school for girls in 1812. Tuition for this school was three cents per day, and many girls rode 3-5 miles on horseback to attend. The original windows have been replaced.

**#27** 26 W. Main – Built c1875, this house is in the “Second Empire” style, with the mansard roof being representative of this architectural cousin to the Victorian style, which peaked in popularity in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**#28** 28 W. Main – Built in c1886, this is Strasburg’s finest example of the Italianate style (another style popular in the Victorian era). Italianate refers to the architectural style, not the ethnic origin. Note the wooden blocks on the corners, called quoins; the bulls’ eye, or oculus, windows; and the brackets. The house was home to two local bakers, John Hull, who operated a bakery here from

1875 to 1886, and *Breuninger's Bakery*, a long-time family business operation that lasted for more than 60 years, from 1886 until 1952.

**#29** *Wesley United Methodist Church, 34 W. Main* – Present sanctuary was built in 1893 and designed by the Rev. Gladstone Holm. Features include a large stained glass window, an interior that is highlighted by naturally dark wood beams, arches, and paneling.

**#30** *54 W. Main* – An early 1800's log house. The Victorian porch is one of Strasburg's most elaborate; with spiral turned posts and balusters which are uncommon in Lancaster County.

**#31** *122-124 W. Main* – c1804, the east section (stone) may be the "stone message" sold in 1787 by Jacob Bear, innkeeper.

**#32** *The Gonder Mansion, 130 W. Main* – Built in 1905, this Queen Anne/Chateausque house was built for Benjamin B. Gonder. The most elaborate of structures in Strasburg, it remains perfectly intact.

**#33** *136-138 W. Main* – c1795, this home was built as a two family dwelling and represents a very early instance of multiple unit housing outside of Lancaster City. This is an uncommon arrangement for Lancaster County architecture.

**#34** *Strasburg News Office, 140 W. Main* – c1858, built by Dr. Issac Walker, dentist, and secretary of Borough Council for 45 years. John G. Homsher bought it in 1891 for \$823, operated a job printing business here, and started the *Strasburg Weekly News* in 1898. A news office is still maintained here, and the paper continues to be printed following the standards established by its founders. John G. Homsher served in the State House of Representatives from 1900-1908, at which time he was elected to the State Senate, where he served until his death in 1938.

**#35** *George Hoffman House, 202 W. Main* – Built in the late 1700's and the home for many years to George Hoffman. In 1830, when it was a country store and residence, discussion started here that led to the creation of the Pennsylvania public school system. East end was a general store until the early 1900's.

**#36** *Friderich Klingel House, 15 Miller St.* – This half-timber/log home is one of the purest forms of Swiss-German architecture and perhaps the finest 1 ½ story log house in Strasburg. Many other log homes in Strasburg remain hidden under various types of siding materials. The logs on this house had at one time been covered. When uncovered in 1986, the owners discovered Friderich Klingel's name and the date of 1757 carved in the lintel over the door. The half-timber section was most likely built at that time, with the log section having been

added at a later date. This house originally had three dormers. The current dormers were probably added during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**#37** Pequea Works Building, 19-21 Miller St. – Opened in 1907 as the first fishing tackle factory in Pennsylvania. It was the largest factory of its kind east of Chicago. The Pequea Works Company ceased operations in 1986.

**#38** 309 Miller St. – c1814, this log home is representative of a Strasburg dwelling built between the years of 1750 and 1820.

**#39** 326 Miller St. – Built between 1751 and 1753, the western section log structure was provided a stone addition in the late 1700's. This is one of the oldest structures in Strasburg.

**#40** 322 Miller St. – c1800, this is a typical Strasburg log home.

**#41** 8-10 Miller St. – Built in 1790 this log structure was originally the *Swan Tavern* stable. It was converted into a home in the mid-1800's and is an early example of adaptive reuse. A stone smith shop was also part of the *Swan Tavern*.

**#42** Swan Tavern, 2 Miller St. – Built in 1790, this is one of the most important 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings in Strasburg. When the *Strasburg Rail Road* was chartered in 1832, the tavern owner, Jacob Hoover, was one of the biggest promoters and a large subscriber of stock. The early plans for the railroad had the “end of the line” running to the door steps of the structure. It is believed that the earliest line had been graded, but the track was never laid. The *Swan Tavern* has been in continuous use as a tavern to the present day.

**#43** Jackson Street School, 102 N. Jackson St. – Built in 1808 with private contributions, this structure was the first regular schoolhouse in Strasburg. On Feb. 13, 1823, by an act of the legislature of PA, an Academy was established in which “the languages, arts, and sciences will be taught.” Nathaniel W. Sample was listed as the school's first superintendent. In 1852, it was taken over by the Strasburg Borough School Board and used as a public school until 1870.

**#44** 119 W. Main St. – c1860, this structure is representative of an 1840-1860 Lancaster County town house. A barn stood on the site of the present stone garage. During the civil war, important documents from the Lancaster County Courthouse were kept hidden here for safekeeping as many locals were concerned that the Confederate army would win the battle of Gettysburg and move east to capture nearby York, and subsequently, Lancaster.

**#45** 109-111 W. Main St. – c1837, this was originally a grist mill powered by water from a pond across the street. Later, it was used as a tobacco warehouse and cigar factory.

**#46** 15 W. Main St. – Built in the late 1700's as a Germanic log structure.

**#47** Thomas Crawford Tavern, 1 W. Main – NW corner at Center Square, this structure was built in the early 1800's and was a tavern in it's early days, owned by Thomas Crawford. After Strasburg incorporated as a Borough in 1816, the borough council held meetings here. At one time, this building housed the village post office and was the site of a general store, owned by Christian Rowe and later by John J. Messner. Presently, it is the *Strasburg Country Store and Creamery*. Note the water table and keystones, which are Georgian style architectural features.

The Strasburg Heritage Society welcomes feedback on the tour- and/or input- on how we can make it better! You may email us at [email@strasburgheritagepa.org](mailto:email@strasburgheritagepa.org), or call us (717-687-3534) with suggestions. Requests can be made to tour the interior of the Shroy house and the SHS museum complex. Please call or write SHS ahead of time to schedule an appt. for insight into our facilities and operation.

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