

Brownie – Citizen Celebrating Community

Please print out this tour and take it with you during the walk. The walking tour does not flow chronologically; begin at the Mifflinburg Buggy Museum, at the cupola at the corner of 6th and Green Street. Inside the cupola is a written history and photo of the Mifflinburg Academy.

When Mifflinburg was founded, it was actually two villages: Youngman's town and Greenville. Very early on, the town was referred to as Mifflingsburg. In 1827, the villages were officially merged, incorporated, and renamed Mifflinburg in honor of Governor Thomas Mifflin, the first governor of Pennsylvania after the constitution of 1790. The town originally served as a support center for the farms that surrounded it. As the town grew, new businesses started. One of the most well-known industries in the town was buggy making. The buildings of the Buggy Museum preserve that history.

Walk east on Green Street to 5th, turn south and walk straight into the cemetery.

Youngmanstown was founded by Elias and Catharina Youngman. Elias was a hatter and surveyor, who received the 1000 acres from his father-in-law (Catharina's father). Elias divided the town into 60' × 120' plots to sell to others. He donated land for a church and cemetery. The Youngmans are buried here in Mifflinburg cemetery, try to find their graves.

The church built on Youngman's land was the German Lutheran Reformed Church, known more recently as the Elias Church or the Elias Center for Performing Arts. It was two Christian denominations sharing the building (and the expenses). In 1858, the Lutheran Church was required to separate and both groups built separate churches on Market Street. The Lutheran Church is the brick building with the clock tower, while the Reformed Church became the United Church of Christ, the white church with the steeple. The original building was used by the school system, became a buggy factory, a barn and a double house. It is a performing arts center now.

Move to the corner of 5th and Green Streets

The white double house on Fifth Street (on the southwest corner) was the German School. Classes were held on one side and the teacher lived on the other. It was a subscription school, which meant parents paid the teacher for his services. This particular school held all classes in German. There was a second subscription school where classes were held in English.

Helping to start and maintain the German School was the Gutelius family. Frederick and Anna Gutelius moved to Youngmanstown in 1806, building a log house on the corner of 5th and Green Street. Frederick and Anna eventually had 15 children, although only 13 lived to adulthood. Frederick was a blacksmith and a surveyor, his son John Frederick was a weaver and three of John Frederick's sons became buggy makers. Their house is now a museum owned by Preservation Mifflinburg, Inc.

Travel east on Green Street, stop at 406 Green Street (has plaque as 1st courthouse)

Union County was originally part of Northumberland County. It was separated in 1813, and briefly, Mifflinburg was the county seat. The county seat, where the county government offices and courts were located, met briefly in the German School, until this building was built as a courthouse in 1813. The county seat was then moved to New Berlin, where another courthouse was built. Finally, when Snyder County was formed out of Union County in 1855, the county seat moved to Lewisburg because it more centrally located in the county.

Continue to travel east on Green Street, stop at the corner of 4th and Green, after discussing the house, travel east to 3rd Street.

The house on the corner on 4th and Green Streets (front door faces 4th), was the home of Raymond B. Winter, a forester who worked at Bald Eagle State Forest. He worked on cleaning out dead wood left from a fire in 1909, helped to replace the original dam and when he retired after 45 years, the park was renamed in his honor.

The Y in the road was “border” between Youngmanstown to the west and Greenville to the east.

At Third Street, turn north and travel to Chestnut Street. We will be discussing the Mifflinburg Hotel and the purple house on the corner.

Two hundred (200) years ago, towns were spaced 10 miles apart because that was as far as large wagons could travel in one day. Many towns would have inns that served as both a gathering place for male citizens of the town, but also allowed travelers to sleep, sometimes on the floor of the bar, and sometimes crowded in beds above stairs (on a second floor). Women did not travel as much because of the accommodations, but women would also share a room and a bed (yes, even with strangers). During the 19th century, Mifflinburg had four inns or hotels, the earliest was the Stitzer Inn, built along the turnpike from Lewisburg to Mifflinburg. The Stitzer Inn building was replaced in 1858 with the building that now houses the Mifflinburg Hotel.

Mifflinburg had a number of businessmen. One was Enoch Miller, who was a builder. Enoch lived on Market Street (southeast corner of 6th and Market) and was responsible for building the current Thrift Store building, the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, the United Church of Christ Parsonage (500 block Market Street) and this house at the corner of 3rd and Chestnut. Enoch Miller built this house for his daughter, Virginia “Bessie” Ritter. Bessie was married to James Ritter, a local buggy salesman who was involved with a number of other businesses.

As you walk back to the Buggy Museum, travel west on Market Street. Notice the sign on the wall at the county parking lot in the 300 block. That was the location of the English School, the subscription school where classes were taught in English. The building was torn down in the 1970s.