



walk Bloomsburg

SELF-GUIDED TOURS OF
THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

Welcome to Bloomsburg's Walking Tour

Bloomsburg's Historic District offers a wealth of visual delights to sharp-eyed observers. This booklet outlines two Self-Guided Walking Tours to highlight some of the outstanding features of Main Street and the adjacent residential areas.

Bloomsburg's original town streets were laid out in 1802 by Ludwig and John Adam Eyer, confident that the location at a regional crossroads would guarantee growth. After a slow start the village grew rapidly in the latter half of the 19th century. A majority of the buildings in the Historic District date from that era, with a few earlier (1830-1850) and a number of 20th-century buildings. Architectural styles are varied, from austere Federal to highly decorative Second Empire and Romanesque.

The "character" of the downtown is evoked chiefly by two- and three-story brick commercial buildings erected along Main Street before 1900. These buildings evidence a variety of 19th-century styles, but many of them have common features: narrow sash windows, ornamental brickwork, wrought-iron details, and prominent cornices (roof-line projections). The focal point of the downtown is the Market Square with its Civil War monument and Stroup Fountain. Important landmark buildings are Bloomsburg University's Carver Hall, Bloomsburg Town Hall, and the Columbia County Courthouse.

The adjoining residential districts, particularly on Market Street and Fifth Street, display numerous attractive homes from the same era. Some of these are fairly grand but all were built as "liveable" single-family homes. Several homes retain hitching-posts in front and/or small stables at the back, relics of the pre-automobile age when the homes were built.

In the 1980s the Town of Bloomsburg began a concerted effort to maintain and enhance its architectural heritage. The Town Council established a Historic District, roughly five blocks long and four wide. The Town also created a Historic Architectural Review Board to assess building-permit applications to ensure that the historic qualities of the District are preserved even in details such as the style of windows.

Two Walking Tours

This guide presents two walking tours which take about 1 hour each at a leisurely pace. Both tours begin and end at Market Square (intersection of Main and Market Streets). Either tour can be shortened simply by turning back before the designated turning places. The Map, inside the foldout back cover, has numbers keyed to the descriptive summaries in the Guide.

TOUR ONE focuses on Main Street and the downtown, from Carver Hall on the Bloomsburg University campus in the east to the western edge of the commercial district at West Street.

TOUR TWO (begins at the center fold) includes many of Bloomsburg's finest residences, reminders of the days when Bloomsburg's major industries (lumber, iron-making, railcars, textiles) provided the managers and owners with the wealth to erect showcase homes.

*"Please respect the privacy
of the property owners. Residences
are not open to the public."*



Self-Guided Walking -Tour One- North Market and Main Street

*Starting behind the Town Fountain and walking north
on the right side of North Market Street*



1. Town Fountain, Market Square, 1892

The town acquired the fountain from the J. L. Mott Company in New York City, and had it installed in the fall of 1892. The Bloomsburg Water Company informed Town Council it would supply free water for a fountain, and Town Council used money from the David Stroup estate to purchase the fountain. In the late 1960s the fountain was replaced; some twenty years later it was re-installed and then in 2002 refurbished to its original appearance.

2. St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 123 North Market Street, 1925

20th Century Cathedral Style exterior with random coursed rockface and ashlar masonry (dressed stone). Ritter & Shay, Philadelphia, Architects. St. Matthew's originated in St. Paul's Lutheran Church, founded in 1807; for fifty years it shared a building on First Street with the German Reformed congregation. In 1857 the Lutherans erected a church at this site and changed its name to St. Matthew. The current church opened in 1925, and the education wing in the rear in 1957.

3. Waller House, 1 North Market Street, c. 1830s

Italianate Style. Note the cupola and the encircling verandah with its fan-like brackets. Rev. David J. Waller, a Presbyterian minister, purchased the property in 1847 and lived here until he built a grander home at Market and Fifth Streets (where Memorial Elementary School now stands). Retiring from the pulpit in 1871, Waller devoted his time to public affairs in Bloomsburg, including development of industries, a railroad, and extensive housing tracts. A later owner was Dr. William M. Reber, whose surname is engraved on the carriage stepping stone at the front of the property.



Cross over to the head of North Market Street.

4. Woodward House, 75 North Market Street, c. 1840s

Federal/Greek Revival Style. Home of Judge Warren Woodward, who was the first elected judge (1856-1861) of the 26th judicial district and later became a Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Greek Revival details in the porch, the cornice, and pilasters distinguish this structure that commands the vista down Market Street.

*Continue back down North Market Street towards
Market Square.*

5. Thornton House, 102 North Market Street, c. 1830

Federal Style. James Thornton, a blacksmith, owned this property at the time of the 1830 census. This post-and-beam house is one of the oldest standing frame structures in Bloomsburg.

6. Caldwell Consistory, [S.P.R.S. 32^o], 150 North Market Street, 1907

Victorian Eclectic/Modified Colonial Revival Style. Trumen P. Reitmyer, Williamsport, Architect. Caldwell Consistory, Valley of Bloomsburg, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of

Freemasonry, is a fraternal organization for master Masons founded in 1867 and named for John Caldwell, a prominent Philadelphia Mason. One million terra cotta bricks were used in constructing the building. The double-headed eagle above the front door is the symbol for a consistory.



As you arrive back at the Fountain, go to the right along West Main Street.

7. Former Morning Press Building, 111 West Main Street, 1908

Decorative Art Nouveau elements. Verus T. Ritter, Philadelphia, Architect. The building was designed to house the *Morning Press* newspaper, established in 1902 by Paul Eyerley and Charles Vanderslice. Indiana limestone and gray pressed brick with matching mortar provide a striking exterior contrast with the cast-iron trim. Needing more space, the newspaper, renamed the *Press Enterprise*, built a new plant in Scott Township in 1972.



8. Former Moose Lodge, 203 West Main Street, 1950

Art Deco in the Miami Style. John Schell, Bloomsburg, Architect. The Bloomsburg Lodge, No. 623, Royal Order of Moose, was founded on January 18, 1920. Membership steadily increased over the years and the lodge decided to build its own home at this site. The Moose sold the building in June 1999 and moved to Scott Township.

As you continue along West Main Street towards #9, please observe the excellent example of Second Empire/Victorian architecture at 227 West Main with original fret work, mansard roof and a cupola.

9. Iddings Barkley House, 259 West Main Street, c. 1810-1815

One of the oldest standing structures on Main Street and an excellent example of pure, early Federal style. Traditional Flemish bond solid brickwork.



Cross the street and continue back to Market Square.

10. 246 West Main Street (Lutz Agency), c. 1878

Second Empire Style with mansard roof and twin pedimented dormers accented by semi-circular windows. The front entrance is not original. Built as a family home for Lloyd T. Sharpless, a grocer; later the Baker and then the Kriner Funeral Home.



11. Former Kleim's Drug Store, 128 West Main Street, c. 1894

Queen Anne Style. Bruglar, Danville, Architect. Roof with cross gable and turret. Interesting interplay of polychromatic brick and shingle surfaces on the second floor façade. Purchased in 1895 by Christopher A. Kleim; he raised his family and operated a drug store here until 1944.

12. Peacock and Moyer Building, 102-106 West Main Street, 1894

Georgian Revival with Neo-Classical Elements. This building with its cast-iron façade was built for entrepreneur Clinton C. Peacock and Lucas N. Moyer, President, Bloomsburg Silk Mills, to provide retail, office and residential space.

Look over to the Civil War Monument before crossing the street in front of it.

13. Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Market Square, 1908

Constructed from seventeen blocks of granite, weighing 100 tons and rising sixty feet tall. Purchased by the County Commissioners from Worden Brothers, Batavia, NY. On the shaft are the names of some Civil War battles in which Columbia County soldiers fought. Statues on the four corners represent the infantry, cavalry, artillery, and navy.



Continue along West Main Street.

14. McKinney/Wirt Building (Remit Corporation), 36 West Main Street, 1880

Italianate Style. The columns and entrance arches in Classical Revival Style were added later. Paul E. Wirt purchased the building from the William McKinney estate in 1887. He used it as the office for the Wirt Fountain Pen Company and as a rental property; the post office was on the ground floor. When the Bloomsburg National Bank was established in 1899, it leased office space on the ground floor, replacing the post office. Wirt served as the bank's vice president. The bank was the predecessor of today's First Columbia Bank and Trust Company.

15. Former Exchange & Magee Hotels, 20-24 West Main Street, 1874

Casper Chrisman built the original log and frame Exchange Hotel in 1810 which was replaced c. 1858 by a three-story brick Federalist Style building. Destroyed by fire in 1870 it was replaced in 1874 by an impressive four-story brick Second Empire building with mansard roof. Bought in 1912 by James Magee II, the founder of the Magee Carpet Company, and renamed the Magee Hotel. Following fire damage in 1933, the present Neo-Classical façade was constructed. The hotel ceased operation in 2003.



Before you cross Center Street, look to your right to see Property #16.

16. Alvina Krause Theatre, 226 Center Street, 1940

Art Deco. The Grand Opera House (1874) formerly located on this site was demolished in 1938 to make way for the Columbia Theatre, which opened in 1940. The Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble (BTE) purchased the building in 1980, gutted it, and renovated the interior to make it suitable for live performance. Original Art Deco decorations were re-installed inside the theatre.

17. Crescent Building, 56-64 East Main Street, 1890



Romanesque and Queen Anne elements. Note the distinctive crescent of bricks, the floral terra cotta embellishments, and the curved wrought-iron balconies.

18. Sneidman's Jewelers Clock, 130 East Main Street, c. 1914

This clock was erected by the A.B. Hess Jewelry Store and was relettered when the business was bought by Sneidman c. 1924. A similar clock stood near Market Square at the former Roy's Jewelers, 40 West Main St.

*Continue down the street.
Cross straight ahead at the
intersection.*



19. Former Housenick Ford Dealership [Husky Korner], 300 East Main Street, 1919

Early Modern Industrial Style. Housenick Motors Company on the ground floor was the second oldest Ford dealership in the country. Notable amongst second floor tenants was a dance hall known as the "Casino" and a training area for George Keller's circus animals. Keller, a former Bloomsburg University professor, had a successful career with a variety of shows including Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus.

Continue up College Hill towards Carver Hall

20. Robbins House, 352 College Hill, 1889

Queen Anne Style. Built for Cortez B. Robbins, a wholesale liquor dealer and a lifelong bachelor who lived here until he died in 1937. Interior stained-glass window includes a hand painted robin (a Robbins family crest?). Note that there are several Queen Anne houses on this block.

21. Carver Hall, Bloomsburg University, 1867

Georgian Revival Style with Italianate Revival Elements. The center cupola was replaced by a projecting domed bell tower in 1900. Lights were added to the tower in 1954 as a memorial to students who died serving in World War II. Originally called Institute Hall, it was the first building erected on the present campus. Later renamed in honor of Henry Carver, the Principal from 1866 to 1871.



Return down College Hill to the intersection.

22. Bloomsburg Town Hall, 1890



Romanesque Style. Notice that the exterior walls incorporated molded terra cotta bricks (now painted). Bloomsburg is the only “incorporated town” in the state. Originally, this building accommodated the municipal government, a lock-up, public meeting rooms, and also the Friendship Fire Company station.

Cross at the intersection and continue back along East Main Street

23. St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 105 East Main Street, 1868



Victorian Gothic. St. Paul’s, dating back to 1790, is the oldest continuous congregation in Columbia County. The one-acre site for the church was the original town burial ground (later moved to Rosemont Cemetery). The present church was preceded by three structures which stood to the right where the Rectory (built in 1876 in the Gothic Style) now stands. The current bell tower was completed in 1891 and the attached parish house (up Iron Street) in 1892. The first pipe organ in Bloomsburg was installed here in 1874; Tiffany stained-glass windows can be found on either side of the nave, near the chancel.

24. Columbia County Courthouse, 35 West Main Street, 1846



Romanesque Revival style (front section). When the county seat was moved from Danville to Bloomsburg in 1846, the town’s citizens raised private funds to erect the courthouse and jail. The original small brick courthouse had a front portico with six Ionic columns, and a tower reaching eighty feet above the ground. The building has been enlarged three times: rear extension in 1868, expansion to the front in 1891 (with a new entrance and clock tower), and a second addition to the rear in 1938.



Courthouse, 1891 facade

25. FNB Bank, 37 West Main Street, 1941



Art Deco with Egyptian Revival Motifs. Originally the Farmer's National Bank which opened for business in 1891 in an earlier building at this location. In 1909, the bank purchased and remodeled the building but demolished it in 1941 in order to erect the present FNB Bank.

Self-Guided Walking -Tour Two- South Market and Fifth Street

Starting at the Post Office and walking south on South Market Street

26. United States Post Office, 1935

High Georgian Style. Flemish bond veneer brickwork; of note in the lobby are low-relief sculptures depicting agricultural scenes. Built as a project of the Depression-era Works Progress Administration. From 1840 to 1847 J. R. Moyer, postmaster, operated the Post Office in his store on this site.

27. Tustin Mansion, 240 South Market Street, 1906

Neo-Classical Style. Benjamin W. Jury, Architect. Built for Edward B. Tustin a local entrepreneur who lost his fortune shortly after occupying the house and so resided here only briefly. The cost totalled \$200,000 (\$100,000 for the building and \$100,000 for the furnishings). The porch with its Ionic columns was constructed of ashlar masonry. Outstanding interior features include nine fireplaces and a Georgian Revival staircase, of wooden pinned construction, purchased at the 1904 St. Louis Exposition. Purchased by the Bloomsburg Elks in 1923 and expanded in 1942, it served as a lodge for almost eighty years. The Elks and the current owner, the Columbia Alliance for Economic Growth, both undertook significant restoration of the mansion.



**28. Wesley United Methodist Church,
300 South Market Street, 1896**

Victorian Gothic Revival Style. Thomas P. Lonsdale, Philadelphia, Architect. Built by B.W. Jury for \$55,000 including furnishings. Elk Grove Graystone trimmed with Indiana limestone. Slate roof was recently restored. An education wing and gymnasium were added in 1927. Two previous Methodist churches (1837 frame, 1857 brick) occupied the back of the present lot.

**29. Gunton House, 414 South Market Street,
c. 1898**

Queen Anne Style with ashlar foundation and second-story recessed porch with Ionic columns. Known as the “Monument Man,” T.L. Gunton was the proprietor of the Marble and Granite Works. Note the dragon gargoyles on the roof and the griffins guarding the front steps.



**30. Law House, 434 South Market Street, c.
1870**

Georgian Revival Style. Current structure was built circa 1907 around the original narrow Victorian house, circa 1870. Note the side windows which differ from the front. Previous home of Mr. and Mrs. James Law, President, Magee Carpet Company.

**31. Gunter/Housenick House, 450 South
Market Street, c. 1925**



Prairie Style, reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright designs. Cubistic shapes and earthy organic colors were a rebellion against late Victorian grandeur. Built for William F. Gunter, operator of Bloomsburg Silk Mills. Purchased in 1929 by the Housenick family; the sisters Elizabeth and Helen resided here for their entire lives.

Cross over the intersection to the Elementary School and then cross over again to walk along West Fifth Street

**32. Funston House, 503 South Market
Street, 1868**

Colonial Revival Style with Federal and Georgian elements. John A. Funston built this home when he moved from Jerseytown to Bloomsburg in 1867. He was actively involved in civic and business affairs, founded the Bloomsburg Banking Company, was president of the Bloomsburg Water Company, and served on the Bloomsburg State Normal School Board of Trustees.



**33. Peacock House, 4 West Fifth Street,
c. 1890**

Colonial Revival Style with ashlar foundation. Thomas Gorrey, Architect. Property originally had a balustraded deck above the porch. Former home of Isabella and C.C. Peacock (see #12), Town Councilman (1892-1893), Secretary of the Magee Carpet Company and Director of the Bloomsburg Industrial Building and Loan Association, organized in 1892.

**34. Koons House, 2 East Fifth Street,
c. 1869**

Gothic Revival Style. Built by B.W. Jury. William B. Koons, one of the proprietors of the Exchange Hotel (#15), purchased a lot here in 1868 and erected a two-story frame house by 1870.

**35. Ikeler House, 42 East Fifth Street,
c. 1895**

Victorian Eclectic Style with ashlar foundation. Onion dome, with radially skewed slate roof, shows Byzantine influence. Note the giant owls placed on the gables to deter birds. Built for Fred T. Ikeler, attorney; later owned by his brother Frank Ikeler, attorney and Mayor of Bloomsburg.



36. Wirt House, 60 East Fifth Street, c. 1890



Queen Anne Style. Louis Bernhard, Architect. Note the heavily corbelled chimney situated at the rear corner of the building. Porch is a later addition. Paul Wirt married Sara Funston on January 1, 1878; her parents, John and Elmira Funston, provided the home as a wedding gift. Although Wirt was an attorney, his dominant interest was to develop a reliable and workable fountain pen. He began manufacturing pens in 1884 and by 1900 had sold two million fountain pens, making him a leader in this industry. Later the home of Samuel Clifton Creasy, owner of the Creasy and Wells Lumber Company.

37. Ratti House, 106 East Fifth Street, c.

1890 Colonial Revival Style. Built by B.W. Jury. Former home of Joseph Ratti, founder of Bloomsburg Silk Mills in 1888 and benefactor of what is now the Bloomsburg Hospital. Mr. Ratti, a first cousin of Pope Pius XI, died while visiting Italy in 1906. The present porch with Corinthian columns replaced an earlier porch.

Cross East Fifth Street and look to the right for #38, then walk back towards Market Street.

38. Lockard House, 123 East Fifth Street,

1884 Queen Anne-Victorian Eclectic Style. Original home of early industrialist John Lockard, who manufactured railroad cars. The G.M. and J.K. Lockard Car Works (est.1872) was later known as the Bloomsburg Car Co., and finally the American Car & Foundry Co. Interior contains the same type of lumber used in railroad cars. Porch added by Dr. Miller who bought the house in 1906.

**39. Neal/Mears House, 49 East Fifth Street,
c. 1870**

Italianate Style. Robert Neal was former owner of Bloomsburg Furnace Company and Treasurer and Secretary of the Tyrone Iron Co. Purchased in 1919 by H. Reber Mears, General Manager of Bloomsburg Brick Company, the home continues to remain in that family.

**40. Bernhard House, 37 East Fifth Street,
1868**

Italianate-Victorian Style. Louis Bernhard, a watchmaker and jeweller, was born in Bavaria, apprenticed to a jeweller in Wilkes-Barre, and moved to Bloomsburg in 1858. Also an artist and architect, he designed commercial buildings on Main Street, the Episcopal Rectory, this residence, and others.

**41. Van Tassel House, 3 East Fifth Street,
c. 1880**



Queen Anne Style. Thomas Gorrey, Architect. Home of attorney Levi E. Waller. The building was dynamited on September 11, 1896, destroying windows and the front porch, in an attempt to do mortal harm to the Waller family. Former residence of Miss Sarah (Sadie) Van Tassel. She was a board member and benefactor of the Bloomsburg Public Library (where her portrait is installed) and owner of the first electric car in Bloomsburg. It is rumoured that Sadie's ghost still resides here.

**42. Vanderslice House, 27 West Fifth Street,
1929**

Colonial Revival Style. Common Bond brickwork. Built for C.T. Vanderslice, co-owner of the *Morning Press* (see #7). Site of the earlier residence of D.J. Waller, Jr., principal of Bloomsburg Normal School 1877-90.

*Turn right at the intersection with
South Market Street.*

**43. Former Magee Store and Letterman
Bakery, 401 South Market Street, 1893**

Romanesque Style with rusticated masonry. Note the decorative pointing of the masonry with red mortar. Owned by James Magee II, the former Snyder & Magee Co. Ltd. Store was a general store used by employees of the Magee Carpet Co. In 1895 it became the Leader Department Store. Another Leader store was located in the Exchange Hotel (#15). In the 1920s the building housed the Letterman Baking Co. and to the right, on the site of present offices, was a shed used to store the bakery's delivery wagons.



44. First Presbyterian Church, corner South Market and Fourth Streets, 1891



Victorian Gothic Style with Hummelstown brown-stone laid in random courses. C.W. Bolten, Philadelphia, Architect. Walk down Fourth Street and observe the carriage entrance. Note also the Sunday School addition to the right of the carriage entrance built in 1915. To the left of the sanctuary on Market Street is the Christian Education Building designed by the Bloomsburg architect John Schell and built in 1963.

45. Ikeler House, 325 South Market Street, c. 1890

Italianate Revival Style with Moorish influence utilizing cast cement. Large steel carriage porch entry. Note the amphorae with swags on the façade. Built for Judge Elijah R. Ikeler, it was later the residence of his son Fred (see #35). Later additions at the rear accommodated a succession of funeral homes.

46. Christian Science Church and Reading Room, 317 South Market Street, c. 1920

Bungalow Arts & Crafts Style. A Sears Roebuck house, built from a mail order kit sent by train.



47. John Jordon Brown House, 311 South Market Street, c. 1890

Queen Anne Style with interesting fishhook ornamentation. Circular patterned shingles around third story window. Dr. Brown, a physician, began his medical practice in Bloomsburg in the late 1880's; after his death his home was gifted to the Methodist Church and became the church's parsonage.

48. Yorks Mansion, 249 South Market Street, 1903-08



Georgian or Neo-Classical Style. Verus T. Ritter, Architect. Monumental portico with Corinthian

columns. Ornamentation of garlands of fruit incorporates the pineapple, a sign of hospitality. Keystone above all windows. Original home of Frederick G. Yorks, who was a director of the Bloomsburg Silk Mills, founded in 1888 and employing 350 people. Site of the second Presbyterian Church building, a Georgian Style chapel which later became the Cummings & Verdy Co., a chewing gum manufacturer. Walk down Third Street and note the carriage house on the corner of Whiteman Avenue.

49. Bloomsburg Public Library, 225 South Market Street, 1925



High Georgian Revival Style. Verus T. Ritter, Architect. Engaged stone façade and pedimented gable roof. Note the stone relief depicting the shield from the Pennsylvania coat of arms in the triangular pediment. An outcome of Bloomsburg's centennial celebration in 1902 was the establishment of a free public library. It began in rented rooms until this building was erected at a cost of \$100,000; the addition at the right was completed in 1998.

50. Man, Dog, Beast Fountain, in front of Public Library, 1892

Cast Iron. Erected on the southeast corner of Market and Main Streets after 66 citizens petitioned Town Council for a drinking fountain at Market Square; restored and relocated to this site in 1991. The name represents the three basins - for people, horses, and dogs. Purchased from the same company as the town fountain (#1).



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Self-Guided Walking Tour One

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