

Introduction to the 1803 House

A long, long time ago, the Lenni Lenape Indians mined jasper in an area near Vera Cruz called Maguntsche", or "feeding place of the bears.

In 1680 William Penn, a Quaker, was granted land by England's King. He hoped to make this area ["Penn Woods"] a haven for religious sects being persecuted in Europe. Settlers, mostly German, arrived in early 1700's, probably coming up the South Mountain Trail where the Shelter House in Emmaus is located. The Moravians, who came from Bohemia, came to settle in "Penn Woods".

In 1742, William Penn's sons granted Jacob Ehrenhardt and Sebastian Knauss land which they in turn donated to a Bethlehem Moravian church. In 1759, a settlement was established as a closed community with strict rules governing all. Two years later, this small village named Emmaus after a biblical town mentioned in Luke. It was written in German with one "m" and a dash above that "m" ...E^{ma}us. This dash signified that there were two "m's" in the name. It was eventually written in Pennsylvania German as Emaus. In 1938, the second "m" was restored to it as Emmaus.

Jacob, Jr., son of Jacob Ehrenhardt Sr., one of the founders of Emmaus, was born in 1760 and the youngest of 10 children. Jacob married Susanna Saeger in 1785. In 1803 Jacob Jr., age 43, and Susanna Saeger Ehrenhardt decided to construct a Federal style house. At that time his girls were Barbara age 18, Anna Marie age 15, Anna Eleonora age 9 and Susanna age 6. **This house is what we now call the "1803 House".**



Imagine you are standing at the 1803 House at the turn of the 18th century. Image life without electricity, railroads or modern transportation.

What would you have seen looking around?



To the **West**
cleared fields...



To the **South** a forest
[South Mountain]...



To the **North**
a stream...



To the **East** a Gemeinhaus".
[a building for worship,
students and village visitors.]



Rodale Press had purchased the property in the mid-1960's. Robert Rodale did some research first before deciding what to do with the house. As a result, he and Mayor Pierce Randall agreed that Rodale would donate the house to the borough, along with \$10,000 in "seed money". Plus a committee would be established to research the history of the house, and raise an additional \$10,000 from the community. Robert and Ardath Rodale [left] then donated the house and property to the borough in 1974. Restoration began after the 1976 Bicentennial celebration, managed by the new committee called "**The Friends of the 1803 House**".

Come on in!



Step inside and go back in time to the early 1800's after the Moravians had settled in Emmaus. The house preserves the architecture of Moravian culture of Colonial Pennsylvania and illustrates the lifestyle of Colonial



America. This beautiful renovated "time capsule" of the past is a vital link to our heritage and one of the oldest structures in the borough of Emmaus.

The Kitchen:

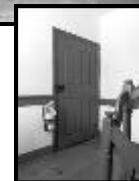
Take a stroll down our new brick walk, step on the porch and come on in. Close the door behind you and look around the kitchen. The canned foods, the utensils and other items displayed are similar to those used by the family of Jacob Ehrenhardt, Jr. You can almost feel the warmth of the burning fire.



The walk-in fireplace was large enough to accommodate several things being prepared at one time, and multiple fires were possible. Niches in the left wall were for warming or dough raising. The section of bricks on the back wall was the opening into the bread cover, or "beehive" oven with a cast iron door covering this opening.



Note the danger of fire to women, due to their long skirts and the considerable time spent near the fire.



Jacob built the kitchen and main house at one time, as one structure. As shown to the left, if you proceed up the stairs to the first landing there is a red entry door to the kitchen attic. This was used for smoking and preserving meats, thus the blackened rafters and door. The original hole in the kitchen fireplace chimney could be opened or closed to allow smoke to fill the attic and is evident with white splotch marks. It actually smells smoky...

The Dining Room:

The hallway leads into both the dining room and parlor. First, walk into the dining room.



The dining room was the principle eating, social and working room in the house, where the family gathered for meals. The girls would have practiced their knitting and embroidery here. A spinning wheel would have been there, as well as a "kas", or storage closet like the one in the upstairs back bedroom.



The Parlor:

From the dining room you can walk directly into the parlor. And then back into the hallway...

It was originally thought that this room was the parents' bedroom or the "kammer", a custom brought along with the early settlers. But Jacob designed his home along more "modern" lines, and not the traditional three-room plan. We now believe this room to be the parlor.



The fireplace was for warmth. The idea of "central heat" didn't come along till the mid 1800's. Thus the patched cut-out in the floor, an earlier cast iron grate allowing heat from a stove in the basement to rise up through the first floor. Another strong feature marking the house as a Federal style is the carving style on the fireplace in the downstairs parlor and the upstairs front bedroom.

Entry Hallway:

As you leave the parlor, you walk into this formal entry hallway.

The entry hallway was designed fairly large to accommodate the width of the stairway. For the times the ceilings were a little higher than you'd expect, but the doors were lower than the standard. A very spacious hallway designed for large clothes chests, as there were no closets, leads to the parlor and dining room.



Upstairs Hall:

From the entry hallway on the first floor we can make our way up the two levels of stairs to the second floor bedrooms ...



First, go up the stairs in the entry hallway.



At the first stair landing is the entry door to the kitchen attic. Plus, notice the window which brightens the stairs.



This hallway might have looked the way we have it furnished. Note, the hallway leads into both bedrooms. Then head up the next level of stairs to the upstairs hallway.



The Back Bedroom:

From the hallway, let's take a peek at the roomy bedrooms shared by Jacob, Susanna and their four daughters, Barbara, Anna Marie, Anna Eleonora and Susanna.

Let's first take a look at the back bedroom decorated as a child's room.



"Sleep tight, don't let the bedbugs bite"; rope beds, with ropes in place of more modern box springs, need to be kept tightened and the bugs were probably a constant occurrence, whether the mattresses were filled with straw [rear bedroom] or the feathers [front canopy bed].



The Front Bedroom:



From the girls' bedroom walk through the door above and go directly into what we assume to be Jacob and Susanna's bedroom.



There were no closets in homes during this time period so there were many storage chests like the one to the right and throughout the house.



The canopy bed was designed for warmth in the winter and the "bed curtains" to hold in the heat.



The fireplace to the left, in the front bedroom, is almost in its original condition and is what the downstairs parlor fireplace should look like with interior plaster and not exposed brick or stone masonry.



New addition...A trundle bed is small bed placed under the parent's bed. The bed rails have wood pegs for supporting a sail cloth (canvas) sacking. The sacking supported with hemp rope would have supported a ticking filled with straw (mattress).

The Attic:

From the second floor hallway you can enter the main attic. Let's go on up...



The attic was most likely used for drying herbs, which we do also, or for storage. We thought that the attic was not likely used as a bedroom, but the patched-up stovepipe hole in the east chimney is curious...was there a stove for a bedroom? Was the bedroom for a house servant?



At the first landing of the attic you'll see a tiny child's handprint [right] pressed into the plaster. Yes, it was one of the daughter's, but why 6 fingers?



From a window [right], you can almost see Jacob's father's farm in the southwest, towards Gottesacker, or God's Acre, where Jacob, his parents and many other early settlers were buried, near the site of the original Moravian Church.



There are Roman numerals stamped into the timbers. This allowed for rafters and beams to be cut and "dressed" on the ground outside with all of the mortises and tenons matching up, and then raised up to the attic for installation, similar to an Amish barn raising.