

Historic

Trappe & Collegeville

Main Street Walking Tour



HISTORIC TRAPPE

Founded in 1717 by Jacob Schrack Sr., Trappe is named after a tavern that Schrack operated that was nicknamed “the Trap.” The spelling was later changed to Trapp and, finally, Trappe. Located half-way between Philadelphia and Reading along a major thoroughfare once known as the Manatawny Great Road, Trappe was a frequent stopping place for travelers and home to numerous inns and taverns. It was formally incorporated as a borough in 1896. Four historic sites are open to the public: Augustus Lutheran Church, Dewees Tavern, Henry Muhlenberg House, and The Speaker’s House. Trappe is also home to Northern Star Farm, a 230-acre family-owned and -operated farm located at 96 E. Third Avenue (Route 113).

Lamb Tavern 724 W. Main Street

Located across from Augustus Lutheran Church, the Lamb Tavern was built about 1800. One of the first proprietors was Cornelius Tyson Sr. In 1836, the building was bought by schoolmaster and future U.S. congressman Jacob Fry Jr. (known as Honest Jacob) and described in the deed as a “certain Tavern stand, Sign of the Golden Lamb.” *Private*

Augustus Lutheran Church 717 W. Main Street

Built between 1743 and 1745, Augustus Lutheran Church is known as the shrine of American Lutheranism. It was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1967. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg served as its pastor from 1742 until his death in 1787. The wrought-iron weathervanes atop the roof are exact replicas of the originals. During the Revolutionary War, the church was used by the Continental Army as a field hospital. Many members of the Muhlenberg family and other prominent local residents, including Governor Francis Shunk, are buried in the graveyard. The parsonage was constructed in the late 1830s and the brick church in 1852. Tours are available by appointment. *Open to the public*

Joseph Royer House 702 and 704 W. Main Street

The three-story stone house was built for Judge Joseph Royer and his family in the early 1800s; the two-story wing served as a general store and post office. *Private*

Trappe Hotel 595 W. Main Street

Built on land once owned by John Nicholas Cressman, a German immigrant and early Trappe settler, the Trappe Hotel was an active tavern, polling place, and stagecoach stop during the 1800s. For many years it was run by Jacob Heebner. *Private*

Washington Hall 550 W. Main Street

Built about 1854, this three-story brick building was the second location of the Washington Hall Collegiate Institute (est. 1830 as the Trappe Boarding School). Henry Prizer taught the original school (see 360 W. Main). *Private*

Brownback Store 538 W. Main Street

Born and educated in Trappe, E. G. Brownback married Mary Beaver in 1895. He took over his father-in-law John Beaver’s mercantile business and operated it in this building. *Private*

John Beaver House 532 W. Main Street

Home of John K. Beaver, a tailor by trade, who later established the Beaver & Shellenberger mercantile firm, which operated in Skippack and later Trappe. In 1895, the Trappe store at 538 W. Main was taken over by Beaver’s son-in-law, E. G. Brownback. *Private*

Borough Hall 525 W. Main Street

Built in 1922 as a school, this building now serves as the borough hall. Paintings of local historic sites by artist Julie Longacre are displayed in the council room. Behind the building is a tot-lot, picnic pavilion, and multipurpose play area. *Open to the public*

Abraham Treichler House 504 W. Main Street

Built for Abraham Treichler, a blacksmith, about 1852. *Private*

Streeper-Gordon House 439 W. Main Street

Built in the mid-1800s, this brick house stands on a property acquired by Widow Sarah Gordon in 1829. She was the daughter of Bernard Streeper and Sarah Dewees; after her death in 1839, the property passed to her son William Gordon, a stonemason. *Private*



Thomas Davis House**438 W. Main Street**

This two-story brick house was built about 1848 for Dr. Thomas Davis, a prominent physician in Montgomery County. It was the first house lot subdivided from the Fountain Inn tract (now the Trappe Tavern). Later owners include Dr. Charles Dickensheid and Mrs. Philip Bechtel. The exterior of the house remains in nearly original condition and is a fine example of mid-1800s architecture. *Private*

Trappe Tavern**418 W. Main Street**

Originally known as the Fountain Inn, this building has served as a tavern since it was built in the late 1700s. A “Big Spring” nearby provided water via underground wooden pipes to a distillery and the inn, which had three fountain pumps in the yard for watering thirsty horses. Traces of the spring remain in the pond located at Rambo Park. By 1823, the inn’s barn, sheds, and stables could accommodate up to 75 wagons and 150 horses. The Mingo Express Horse Company was founded here in 1836 and continues to meet annually. Since 1989, the tavern has served as a restaurant and bar. *Open to the public*

George Hagey House**417 W. Main Street**

Built about 1830, this house was the residence of George Hagey, a renowned clockmaker, from 1832 to 1844. A native of nearby Lower Salford Township, George Hagey was the second generation of his family to make clocks. *Private*

Henry Kratz House**378 W. Main Street**

Built for Henry Kratz in the mid-1800s, this house is flanked by a smaller building to the east that once served as a post office. *Private*

Henry Prizer House**360 W. Main Street**

Built in the mid-1700s and used as a tavern known as the Duke of Cumberland, this building was acquired in 1829 by schoolmaster Henry Prizer, remodeled, and used as a school prior to the construction of Washington Hall about 1854 (see 550 W. Main). A detached stone bake house stands behind the main building. *Private*

John Fry House**314 W. Main Street**

Several generations of the Fry family were carpenters and cabinetmakers, beginning with Jacob Fry Sr. He was succeeded in the trade by his son John, who built this house about 1832 on the site of Jacob’s house. *Private*

Dewees Tavern**301 W. Main Street**

Built in several sections from the mid-1700s to early 1800s, the east end of this building was the home of Andrew Miller, a joiner and bellows maker. In 1827 it was acquired by Dr. Jacob Dewees; his mother Mary Catharine Dewees ran it as a tavern and boarding house until 1855. The building also served as a polling place and stagecoach stop. It is now the headquarters of the Historical Society of Trappe, Colledgeville, Perkiomen Valley, Inc. and houses a museum, research library, and changing exhibitions. *Open to the public*

Enos Lewis House**224 W. Main Street**

Built in the mid-1800s for Enos Lewis and his wife, Margaret Dewees. *Private*

Daniel Fry House and Store**219 W. Main Street**

Built in 1845 by Daniel Fry, this structure served as a general store and dwelling house. The stone threshold for the store entrance is inscribed “DRY GOODS.” *Private*

Philip Williard House**212 W. Main Street**

This elegant two-story brick home was built in the mid-1800s. During the 1870s, it was owned by Philip Williard, a noted civic leader who was trained as a Reformed Church minister. He married Anna Prizer, daughter of Catharine Dewees and Henry Prizer (founder of Washington Hall; see 550 W. Main). *Private*

St. Luke’s Church**202 W. Main Street**

Founded in 1742, St. Luke’s congregation initially worshipped in a log church located across the street in the present-day cemetery. A stone building replaced it on the same site in 1835. The present church was erected in 1874 under the leadership of Rev. John H. A. Bomberger, founder of Ursinus College and a Reformed Church minister. *Open to the public*

Henry Muhlenberg House**201 W. Main Street**

Built about 1750 for Jacob Schrack Jr., a blacksmith, this large stone house was purchased by Henry and Anna Maria Muhlenberg in 1776. The Muhlenbergs added a rear wing, now missing, as a summer kitchen complete with a bake oven. Restored to its c. 1776 appearance and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000, the house is owned and operated by the Historical Society of Trappe, Colledgeville, Perkiomen Valley, Inc. *Open to the public*

Grange Hall**192 W. Main Street**

Built in 1849 by the Providence Masonic Lodge, this building was sold in 1865 to Warren Lodge. In 1913, it became the headquarters of Keystone Grange #2, organized in 1873 and the second oldest grange in Pennsylvania. Monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday at 7 p.m. *Open to the public*

The Speaker’s House**151 W. Main Street**

Built in 1763 for John and Silence Schrack, this elegant stone house was owned by Frederick and Catharine Muhlenberg from 1781 to 1791. During this time, Frederick served as a member of the Continental Congress; Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly; first president judge, recorder of deeds, and register of wills for Montgomery County; and first Speaker of the U.S. House. From 1791 to 1803, the house was owned by Francis and Mary (Muhlenberg) Swaine; it later served as an Ursinus dormitory, from 1924 to 1944, known as Highland Hall. Tours are available by appointment. *Open to the public*

Toll Gate House**12 and 14 W. Main Street**

Built in the early 1800s, this stone dwelling was the first toll gate house in Trappe. Toll gates were permitted every five miles along the Philadelphia and Reading Turnpike. In the 1820s, John Todd was the local toll gate keeper. *Private*

HISTORIC COLLEGEVILLE

Known initially as Freeland, Collegeville developed primarily in the 1800s and was officially incorporated as a borough in 1896. A small area at the eastern end was first known as Perkiomen Bridge. The town is named after several early colleges, including Freeland Seminary, founded in 1848 by Rev. Abraham Hunsicker, and the Pennsylvania Female College, founded in 1851 as Montgomery Female Seminary and chartered in 1853. The successor to these institutions was Ursinus College, founded in 1868 by Dr. John H. A. Bomberger (1817–1890), who also served as its first president. Ursinus was named after the German Reformed theologian Zacharias Baer (“Ursinus” in Latin). In 1869, Ursinus College acquired the former Freeland Seminary buildings. The Pennsylvania Female College closed in 1880, and Ursinus became coeducational the following year; Freeland Seminary continued to operate under the aegis of Ursinus until 1910. The Ursinus campus is home to several dozen outdoor sculptures, including works by Lynn Chadwick, J. Seward Johnson Jr., and Steve Tobin.

Fircroft **930 E. Main Street**

Built about 1835 for Rev. Abraham Hunsicker, a Mennonite bishop and the founder of Freeland Seminary, this dwelling contains elements of an earlier stone house built for Christian Schrack, son of Trappe’s founder and a tanner by trade. *Private*

Andrew Todd House/Isenberg Hall **801 E. Main Street**

Owned by Andrew Todd, who in 1832 donated land on which a one-room stone schoolhouse—known as Todd’s School—was built (not extant) in place of an earlier log schoolhouse. From 1844 to 1874, it was the Freeland Public School. One of the oldest houses in Collegeville, this dwelling was later owned by Dr. James Hamer. It is now known as Isenberg Hall, after Rev. J.M.S. Isenberg, who graduated from Ursinus in 1893 and was vice-president of the college until 1930. A nearby carved stone mile marker notes the distance as 24 miles to Philadelphia and 28 miles to Reading. *Private*

Lynnewood Hall **702 E. Main Street**

Former home of Ursinus professor Franklin I. Sheeder Jr., who served as registrar of the college from 1932 to 1946, and his wife, Josephine Xander (both Ursinus graduates). Lynnewood was acquired by the college in 1926 for women’s housing. *Private*

Omwake Hall **701 E. Main Street**

Acquired by Ursinus in 1964 and named after George Leslie Omwake (class of 1898), president of the college from 1912 to 1936. *Private*

Schaff Hall **646 E. Main Street**

This three-story brick house was built in the mid-1800s as a private residence; it was acquired by Ursinus in 1967 and named after Dr. Philip Schaff, a celebrated German Reformed theologian and church historian in the 1800s. *Private*

Olevian Hall **640 E. Main Street**

Acquired by Ursinus in 1967, this building was named after a previous Olevian Hall that was razed to make way for the construction of Pfahler Hall in 1931. Both were named after Caspar Olevian, a German Reformed theologian. *Private*

Zwingli Hall **620 E. Main Street**

Built during the mid-1800s as a private residence, Zwingli Hall retains much of its original charm, including a large front porch. It is named after Ulrich Zwingli, a Swiss theologian and Reformation leader. *Private*

Duryea Hall **612 E. Main Street**

Purchased in 1937 from A. D. Fetterolf by the Ursinus Women’s Club, Duryea Hall was named ten years later in honor of Rhea Duryea Johnson, who graduated from Ursinus in 1908 and later became the college’s first female board member. *Private*

Pfahler Hall **601 E. Main Street**

Initially known as the Science Building, Pfahler Hall was renamed in 1942 after Dr. George E. Pfahler, a pioneer in the field of radiology. Here Dr. John W. Mauchly, professor of physics from 1933 to 1941, began research that would lead him to co-invent the ENIAC, the first electronic general-purpose computer. The observatory atop the building was constructed in the 1950s, using scrap and war surplus material, to house a telescope loaned by the Franklin Institute. *Private*

Myrin Library **601 E. Main Street**

Opened in 1971, Myrin Library houses more than 420,000 books and offers onsite and remote access to numerous print, microform, and electronic periodical titles. It is also home to the Ursinusiana collection, the Pennsylvania Folklife Society archives, and many works of art made by Ursinus students. *Open to the public*

Eger Gateway **601 E. Main Street**

Erected at the main entrance to Ursinus in 1925 through the generosity of George P. Eger, this iron and stone gateway has inset tablets telling the history of education on the campus since 1832. *Open to the public*

Bomberger Hall **601 E. Main Street**

Designed by architect Frank R. Watson of Philadelphia, the cornerstone of Bomberger Memorial Hall was laid on June 25, 1891. Built in the Romanesque style, much of the stone was quarried nearby in King of Prussia. Opened in 1892, the building provided the college with modern classrooms, offices, a library, and a chapel. The auditorium houses the Heefner Memorial Organ, a three-manual 62-rank organ dedicated in 1986. *Open to the public for special events*

Berman Museum of Art **601 E. Main Street**

Opened in 1923 as the Alumni Memorial Library to commemorate the 271 Ursinus students and alumni who served in World War I, this elegant stone building is now home to the Philip and Muriel Berman Museum of Art. The museum hosts changing exhibitions and educational programs throughout the year. *Open to the public*

Shreiner Hall **600 E. Main Street**

Built in 1876 for Dr. John H. A. Bomberger, founder and first president of Ursinus College, this structure was originally known as Zwinglihof after the Swiss theologian and Reformation leader Ulrich Zwingli. Dr. Bomberger lived here until his death in 1890, after which it became Ursinus property. In 1909, it became a women’s dormitory. *Private*

Hobson Hall
568 E. Main Street

Built in the late 1800s as a private residence, Hobson Hall's three-story tower, asymmetrical façade, and multiple porches exemplify the Queen Anne revival style that was popular in America from about 1880 to 1910. It was acquired by Ursinus from Edward and Mabel (Hobson) Fretz in 1944. *Private*

Fetterolf House
554 E. Main Street

This three-story stone farmhouse was built during the 1800s by William Tennent Todd, a spinning wheel maker; it was the first residence of Rev. John H. A. Bomberger, founding president of Ursinus College. From 1867 to 1872, it was the home of Captain Henry H. Fetterolf, who served in the Civil War. The house was later donated to the college by Henry's daughter, Harriet "Hattie" Fetterolf. *Private*

Trinity Church
532 E. Main Street

Founded in 1854 and incorporated the following year, Trinity Reformed U.C.C. has a long history of welcoming members of the community for worship. The church played a prominent role in the abolition movement, and 27 Civil War veterans are buried in the cemetery. Every pastor to this day has been an Ursinus graduate. Until Bomberger Hall was completed in 1892, Trinity hosted the college's assemblies, commencement, and religion classes. In 1922, an addition was built and named after the church's first pastor, Dr. Joseph Hendricks. Known as the Hendricks Building, it houses community gatherings and served as the town's first movie theater. *Open to the public*

Keigwin Hall
513 E. Main Street

Keigwin Hall was purchased by Ursinus in 1963 and named after Rev. Albert Edwin Keigwin, who served as president of the college from 1907 to 1912. *Private*

Maples Hall
512 E. Main Street

Acquired by Ursinus in 1923, Maples was first used as a women's dormitory. It was the birthplace and childhood home of Dr. Calvin D. Yost Jr., who wrote the first history of the college. *Private*

Pennsylvania Female College Monument
Glenwood Avenue

This monument marks the site of the Pennsylvania Female College, founded in 1851 by J. Warren Sunderland as the Montgomery Female Seminary and chartered by the state legislature in 1853. A four-year liberal arts college, it closed in 1880. During its 30-year tenure, more than 1,000 young women were educated there. The seminary building once stood at the end of Glenwood Avenue on a bluff overlooking the Perkiomen Creek. *Open to the public*

Collegeville Borough Hall
491 E. Main Street

Home to borough offices and the Collegeville Municipal Building. *Open to the public*

Collegeville Economic Development Corporation
476 E. Main Street

A nonprofit organization, the Collegeville Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) is striving to make Collegeville a great place to live and do business. Many special events and programs are organized by the CEDC throughout the year. *Open to the public*

Clamer Hall
409 E. Main Street

Built by Francis J. Clamer, a German immigrant and metallurgist, in 1903, Clamer Hall was given to Ursinus by Dr. Guillam H. Clamer in 1953. *Private*

Perkiomen Valley Chamber of Commerce
351 E. Main Street

Serving Perkiomen Valley businesses and the community since 1957. *Open to the public*

Warren Lodge
324 E. Main Street

Warren Lodge #310 is home to the Collegeville-area Free and Accepted Masons, founded in 1857. Meetings have been held in this building since it was erected in 1913. *Private*

Perkiomen Bridge Hotel
1 E. Main Street

According to local tradition, the oldest portion of this building was erected in 1701 for Edward Lane. By 1798, the inn consisted of a two-story stone building measuring 33 x 25 feet and a one-story stone kitchen of 30 x 20 feet. It was further expanded in the 1800s and became a fashionable hotel and summer resort due to its location along the Perkiomen Creek. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985, until recently it was the oldest hotel in continuous operation in the country. The nearby Perkiomen Bridge was completed in 1799 and is one of the oldest stone arch bridges still in use in the United States. *Private*

PARKS

In addition to the many historic buildings along Trappe and Collegeville's two-mile-long Main Street, the boroughs maintain four parks that are open daily from dawn to dusk.

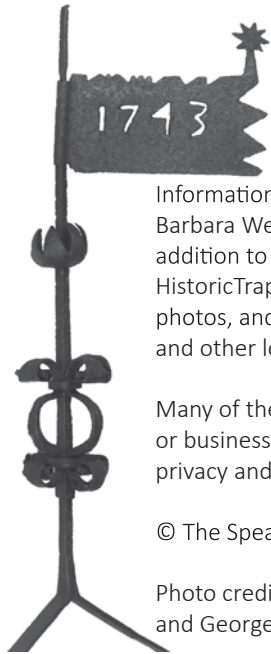
Rambo Park, located on W. Fifth Avenue, boasts a mile-long pedestrian trail, natural meadows, a multipurpose playing field, tot-lot, pavilion, butterfly garden, and pond (originally known as the Big Spring, the pond once provided water to the nearby Fountain Inn, now the Trappe Tavern).

Waterworks Park, a 17-acre tract located on W. First Avenue, is jointly owned and maintained by the Boroughs of Trappe and Collegeville. The park includes baseball and soccer fields, pedestrian trails, a large pavilion area, a tot-lot, and many other amenities.

Hunsberger Woods, located on E. Ninth Avenue, is a 27-acre open space and passive recreation area. It has two small ponds, a stream, and multiple pedestrian trails.

Collegeville Community Park, located on Park Avenue between E. Third and Fourth Avenues, is a 3-acre facility with an extensive playground, basketball and roller hockey courts, and a baseball field.

Restrooms: Facilities are available at all parks and both borough halls during regular business hours.



Information based on original research by Barbara Wentz, Kate Minardi, and Lisa Minardi in addition to many secondary sources. Visit HistoricTrappe.org for a complete bibliography, photos, and additional information about these and other local historic structures.

Many of these buildings are private residences or businesses. Please respect their owners' privacy and do not trespass or otherwise disturb.

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pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES