

## Nearby Points of Interest



### A. 163 West Main St. (The Croll House)

This Federal-style home was owned by the Croll family for approximately 200 years. The original owner of the home was probably John Croll (1767-1825) who moved to Middletown from

York County and established a tannery business on the site of what is now Verizon Telephone. The original stone portion of the house is thought to have been built in the late 1700s. The main frame portion of the house was built in the early 1800s by one of John Croll's sons. In the early 1900s the Reverend John Croll, a descendent of the original owner, made improvements to the house including the addition of the cellar in 1912, a side porch in 1918, and electricity in 1922. Attached to the rear of the house by a breezeway is a Sweitzer-style bank barn, now converted to living quarters.



### B. 277 West Main St. (Bradley Mansion)

Built in 1889 by British industrialist J.T. Bradley, this Stick-Eastlake mansion features a cold storage and underground wine cellar, 17 original stained-glass windows, fine woodwork, and a 5-mile view from the tower. The

home was a funeral parlor in the mid-20th century and was most recently used as a tea-room, gift shop, and Bed and Breakfast business.



### C. Penn State Harrisburg

Penn State University opened this branch campus in 1966 on a portion of the former Olmsted Air Force Base. Previously an upperclassman and graduate school, the campus opened to freshmen students in 2004 and

now has approximately 3,800 students. Many of the older buildings on campus are surviving Air Force base buildings. Olmsted Field opened in 1917 on land now part of Harrisburg International Airport and Penn State. Named after Army Air Corps aviation pioneer Lt. Robert Olmsted, the base employed 11,400 civilians at the time it closed in 1966. Before the establishment of the air base, much the land in this area was part of a H. J. Heinz pickle farm and before then, a U.S. Army base named Camp Meade.

# MIDDLETOWN HISTORIC WALKING TOUR

## Center Square - Main Street Area



*Above-* The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's historical marker for Middletown, located in Center Square, was dedicated on April 17, 1952.

*Front cover-* One of Middletown's most historic buildings, this Lutheran church (tour site # 7) was constructed on land deeded in 1764 by George Fisher to Peter Woltz, George Frey, and Deterick Schob for 7 shillings, six pence, plus one grain of wheat rental per year. (To this day the church still pays the one grain of wheat rental to Fisher descendants as a tradition). The cornerstone was laid on July 13, 1767 and the prominent Pennsylvania clergyman Reverend Henry Melchior Muhlenberg dedicated and performed the first service here on September 12, 1769. The bell tower was constructed 1813.

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# MIDDLETOWN HISTORIC WALKING TOUR

## Center Square - Main Street Area



Middletown was founded in 1755 by Quaker settler George Fisher. Fisher laid out the town west of his home, Pine Ford, which was located along Main St. near Swatara Creek. The town became known as Middletown due to its location halfway between Lancaster and Carlisle. Incorporated as a borough in 1826, Middletown was an important 19<sup>th</sup>- century manufacturing and transportation center located along the Union and Pennsylvania Canals and the Pennsylvania Railroad. In 1857, Middletown merged with the nearby town of Portsmouth (Portsmouth, founded in 1809, was located south of Middletown in the area of today's Union Street business district).

The original 1755 section of town (the focus of this tour) encompassed the area centered along Main Street between present-day Union and Vine Streets and High and Water Streets. A large portion of this area will soon be designated as a state *Elm Street District* whereby grants will be available for restoration of historic facades.

*Tour begins at the intersection of Union and Main Streets (Center Square) and proceeds north on Union Street. Approximate tour time is one hour. Note: all homes on this tour are private and are not open to the public. One exception is the Annual Candlelight Tour of Historic Homes, sponsored by GMEDC, where select homes are open for public tours during a weekend in early December (Specific tour sites, dates and times to be announced).*



### 1. Center Square

Originally the intersection of Main Street and "Main Cross Street" (later Union St.), this public square was the site of many market days, town fairs, and celebrations in the past

(including the 1905 Sesquicentennial celebration). A raised center island was removed in the 1950s by the PA Department of Transportation. In recent years, borough landscaping has improved the look of the square.



### 2. 3 East Main St.

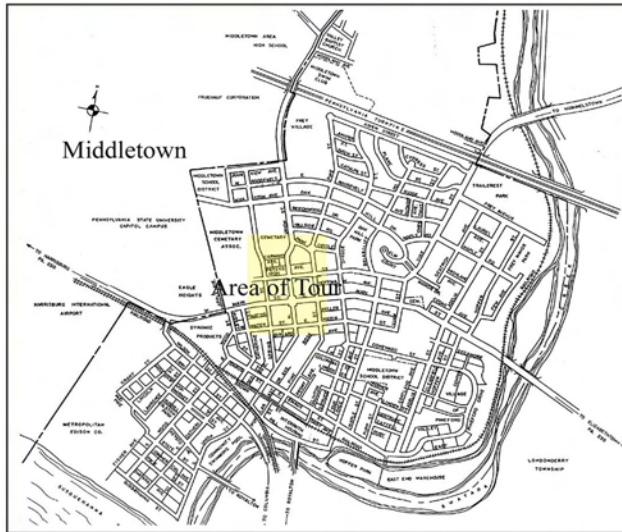
Built prior to 1835, this three-story home was owned by the Laverty family for almost 150 years. The home was purchased in 1853 by Dr. T.C. Laverty who practiced medicine and dentistry and operated a drugstore here.

Laverty was a graduate of Jefferson Medical College, a member of the Dauphin County Medical Society and stockholder in the Middletown Car Works. His son Eugene operated the drugstore from 1881 until his death in 1960. The sloped mansard-style roof was added in the 1870s/1880s. Original shelving and woodwork from the pharmacy still exists in the home.



### 3. 415 North Union St.

One of Middletown's oldest surviving homes, this log structure sits on a lot purchased in 1761 from George and Hannah Fisher. The house is thought to have been constructed between 1761 and 1775 and has passed through many owners since.



### 4. 429 North Union St.

Constructed before 1745, this home is one of the oldest houses in what is now Dauphin County. The home was built on land deeded to George Fisher by the Penn family. Part of the original log and brick construction can be

seen in one of the rooms. Owned by William Lauman in the 1870s, the home was later purchased by Harry Force, a salesman for the Wincroft Stove Works.



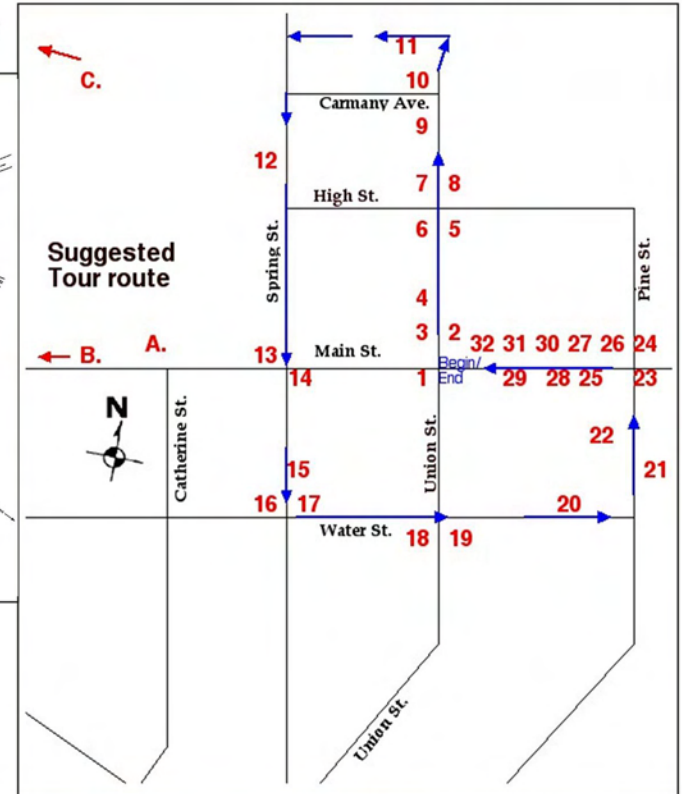
### 5. 460 North Union St.

This Federal-style mansion was built in 1835 by George and Catherine Smuller on land formerly owned by the Moravian church. Smuller acquired the property in 1834 for \$800 and razed an existing two-story log

cabin to construct the house. George Smuller was a toll collector for the Union Canal until 1857 when he became president of the National Bank of Middletown. In the late-19<sup>th</sup> century the house was "Victorianized" through the installation

of a decorative front entrance canopy, etched glass in the vestibule, and a garden gazebo. George Smuller Mish (grandson of George Smuller) restored the house in 1925 in a Colonial revival fashion.

## Map of Tour Area



### 6. 463 North Union St.

This covered log home is thought to have been constructed around 1770 and once housed a gun repair shop operated by Joseph Campbell. Brick sidewalks evoke the home's colonial past.



### 7. 31 West High St. ("Sant Peter's Kierch")

This Lutheran church was constructed in 1767 and actively used until 1879 when the congregation outgrew this building and moved to a new location at Spring and Union Streets. The old Kierch is still used for special events.



**8. 500 North Union (Hetrick Center)**

This Second Empire-style structure may represent an 1870s remodeling of an older building. According to an 1852 map of Middletown, a building existed on this site and was one of very few structures located on this part of Union Street at that time. In the early 1900s the

home was owned by Stewart McDonald who operated a pool hall and restaurant downtown. Note the painted woodwork and etched glass in this nicely restored building.



**9. North Union St. Houses**

Several handsome 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century houses line North Union Street. The Italianate style home at 569 North Union was constructed in the 1840s. The house was reputed to have had the first automatic furnace in

Middletown. The property at 568 N. Union has been occupied since 1886 as a monument works. Founded as A.H. Luckenbill Monuments, Gingrich Memorials has owned the site since 1951.



**10. "Cemetery House"**

The "cemetery house", located at the intersection of Union Street and Carmany Avenue, was built in the 1850s by Abraham Landis. The home was later purchased by the Middletown Cemetery Association to replace an earlier caretaker's house once located at the main entrance to the cemetery.

*Proceed on Union Street past the "Cemetery House" to the main entrance of the Cemetery. Use caution if crossing Union Street in this area. Turn left into the Cemetery and follow the main drive westward to Spring Street.*



**11. Middletown Cemetery**

The Middletown Cemetery was dedicated October 21, 1855 and was laid out in a park-like fashion. Organized by a group of prominent citizens including Daniel Kendig, James Young, and John Croll, the cemetery

originally consisted of eight acres. As the town grew, several old churchyard and family graves were relocated here. In addition to generations of Middletown families, the cemetery is the last resting place of prominent colonial leader Colonel James

Burd (1726-1798), Civil War veterans, and 1930s Hollywood actress Helen Twelvetrees. Note the many ornate and unique monuments.

*Turn left onto Spring Street and continue south.*



**12. 535 North Spring St.**

This frame townhouse was originally located on West Main St. (near the present Verizon building) and was constructed about 1822 by John and Abner Croll near the family tannery. The house was moved to its present location in 1973 and

has been extensively restored.



**13. 101 West Main St.**

Built between 1910 and 1919, this Arts and Crafts-style home is often referred to as the Clouser Home after a former owner. At one time there was a law office on the lower level with a separate entrance on Main Street. Features

include a doorway with leaded glass fan light and window which opens to a wide maple stairway. The living room features a fireplace, two sets of French doors, hardwood floors, and custom woodwork.



**14. 60 West Main St.**

This Federal-style brick town house was built in 1851 by John Watson, owner of a boatyard and co-owner of a local sawmill. The frame addition in back was added in the 1880s. Tradition holds that the house was called "Watson's Folly" for the owner's pretentiousness in showing off his wealth, despite the home's relative simplicity.

*Proceed with caution across West Main Street and continue on Spring St.*



**15. 318 North Spring St.**

This Craftsman-style bungalow is reputed to be one of the most well-built homes in Middletown due to its heavy interior timber construction and overall craftsmanship. It was constructed in 1926 for a Mr. Cressler, a superintendent at the Middletown Car Works. The home was subse-

quently owned by John Landis, an executive at Bethlehem Steel Co.



**16. 301 North Spring St.**

This Federal-style house, later remodeled with Victorian features, was constructed ca. 1824 by Jacob Rife who operated the Keystone Tannery on South Union St. In 1871 the business was

moved to a location behind the house and renamed J. Rife & Brother, after Rife's sons took over the business. Despite numerous destructive fires in 1885, 1887, and 1892 the tannery remained in operation as late as 1907. In 1940, the home was purchased by Dr. Oliver H. Swartz, Sr. who used a portion of it as his office. On September 22, 1942, a P-38 airplane en route to Olmsted Army Air Field crashed into the curb, taking five panels off the fence and setting fire to the porch.

*Turn left at the corner of Spring and Water Streets and proceed east on Water Street.*



**17. 55 West Water St. (Middletown School Dist.)**

This school district administration building was constructed in 1972 on the site of an earlier church building. The adjacent parking lot was once the site of the Middletown High School,

constructed in 1910 at a cost of \$44,947. Occupied in September 1911, the school had a capacity of 360 students and was used until 1963. The nearby Main Street Gym was constructed as an addition to the High School in 1936. Saved from demolition, the gym became the property of the borough in 1966.



**18. 273 North Union St.**

This frame house was built in 1833 by shoemaker John Pricer. A later owner, David McKibben, who operated a planing mill in town, is credited as being the first person in Middletown to use a steam engine for power.

Additional rooms were added at the rear and side of the house in 1886 and 1891. Many Middletown residents born in the 1920s and '30s took piano lessons in the home from owner Haddie Fisher.



**19. Presbyterian Church**

The current church was built in 1889 of Hummelstown brownstone and replaced an earlier Greek Revival-style church. The addition along Water Street was constructed in 1955 from brownstone specially excavated from the closed quarries.



**20. 51 East Water St. (Union Hose Co.)**

The Union Hose Company was founded on August 19, 1827 as Middletown's first fire company. Reorganized in 1886 as the North Ward Hose Company, the company was renamed Union Hose Co. in 1889. In 1893 the fire company relocated here from the corner of High and Pine Streets. Construction of the current brick structure began on July 15, 1904 and the building was dedicated on May 6, 1905.

Turn left onto Pine Street and proceed northward to Main Street.



**21. Pine Street Houses**

Many of the Federal-style homes on this block (including 304, 322 and 342 ) were constructed in the 1830s by Joseph Brestle. Number 304 is said to have been constructed on the site of an 18<sup>th</sup> century cooper shop owned by Scotsman William Wandlass. The house features a prominent threshold date-stone bearing the inscription "18 Brestle 35".

Turn left onto Pine Street and proceed northward to Main Street.



**22. 327-329 North Pine St. (North Ward Schoolhouse)**

This Greek revival-style school was constructed in 1858 at a cost of \$526.49. The building housed high school students until 1869 and grade school until 1911. The house next door (333 Pine

St.) was once the home of teacher John Hay.



**23. 104 East Main St.**

This Federal-style home was built around 1835 by Joseph Brestle. According to an 1852 map of Middletown, the lower floor housed Albert's Dry Goods store. For most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century various other stores were located here.

Turn left on Main Street and proceed west back toward Center Square.



**24. 101 East Main St. (Lamp Post Inn)**

This building has been a hotel and/or restaurant throughout its history and is said to be the site of the first polling place in Middletown. It was constructed ca.

1852 and was known at that time as the Black Horse Tavern. Around 1900 the building was known as the Farmer's Hotel, operated by Martin Snyder. In 1938 it was known as the Middletowner Hotel and has been a restaurant since 1994.



**25. 54-58 East Main St.**

This Federal-style home was built in 1852 by lumber businessman William Lauman. His son Frederick later operated a dry goods store in the house. Subsequent owners included Dr. Benjamin Weistling and cattle businessman Edward Keiper. The adjacent tenant house was constructed 1878 by William Lauman.



**26. 63 East Main St. (Jorich Funeral Home)**

This brick structure is thought to be located on the site of the log home of one of the first settlers in the area, Jeremiah Job. Built by a Mr. Nissley around 1886, the current house was owned in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Dan Keiffer, a horse and cattle dealer, who operated the Middletown Livery Sale

and Exchange Co. in stables located behind the house. Later owners included Dr Peter Zemo and wife Dr. Ruby Lehman who lived here from the 1930s to the 1990s.



**27. 51 East Main St.**

This Queen Anne-style home was built in the late 1800s for H.K. Alwine, a prominent cattle dealer. Other owners have included Byard Brandt, a cashier at Citizen's Bank, Enos Geberich, general manager of A.S. Kreider Shoe Co., Harry McKinley, a foundryman at Win-croft Stove Works, and Mr. and Mrs. Dale Etele. Stained glass decorates the entry foyer.



**28. 44-46 East Main St.**

This property was owned by the Fisher family for over 100 years. Dr. Charles Fisher purchased the property around 1800. The current frame home was most likely constructed by lumber merchant

Adolphus Fisher between 1832 and 1845 and expanded in the 1870s. After his death in 1883, Fisher's widow Elizabeth (1817-1906) and son George lived in the house until George died in 1917. At the time of her death in 1906, Elizabeth was noted as Middletown's oldest native-born resident.



**29. 28-30 East Main St. (Simon Cameron Home)**

The stone portion of this building was constructed prior to 1832 when it became the headquarters of the Bank of Middletown. The brick portion was

constructed by Simon Cameron in 1833 as living quarters while he served as cashier of the Bank. Simon later served as President Abraham Lincoln's first Secretary of War. These properties were owned by Cameron from 1832-1885, by Isaac O. Nissley from 1885-1888, by Charles W. Raymond from 1888-1901, and by Theodore Laverty Jr. from 1901-1955. The Cameron house and bank are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



**30. 43 East Main St. (George Frey Home)**

This Georgian-style stone home was built by German pioneer George Everhard (Frey) (1732-1806) sometime before 1768. Everhard came to America as an

indentured servant, arriving in Philadelphia October 2, 1749. After coming to Middletown, Everhard began traveling as a trader and became known as Frey when he exclaimed "Ich bin Frei (I am free)" after being arrested as a runaway indentured servant. Later, Frey operated a general store and tavern here and also owned a flour mill located along Swatara Creek. At his death in 1806, Frey left his large estate to found an orphan's home. (The Emaus Orphan's Home was established from Frey's estate in 1837.) Christian Spayd, the first trustee of the Frey estate, lived here from 1814-1835.



**31. 27-29 East Main St.**

Originally constructed of logs in late 1750s, the left-hand portion of this house was once the home of the Swatara Bank. The bank is reputed to have been robbed of \$40,000 at one time by a man named Rennock. Additions were

constructed in the 1840s and 1860s. C.F. Beard ran a grocery store here in the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. During restoration in 1983, colorful wall paintings emulating wallpaper were uncovered.



**32. 11 East Main St. (Guido McNeal's)**

This Federal-style structure was built in 1866 and housed John Benner's Grocery store. In the early-20<sup>th</sup> century the Colonial Inn was located here.