



Historic Hyattsville House Tour

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Settlements were formed along the branches of the Potomac River in the early 1700's. They served as locations to store goods to be sent out by ship. At this time, the Eastern Branch had a channel as deep as 35 feet. Many early land transfers were not recorded and towns were not incorporated. However, there is evidence on record that there was one such settlement on the sight that later became Hyattsville. It was called Beall Town and the location was close to where Marche's Florist now stands. This town was never given official status by act of the Assembly, and in 1742 the inhabitants for some unknown reason petitioned to have a new town laid out a half mile below Beall Town. The Act was passed, Bladensburg came into existence, and Beall Town seems to have disappeared. The River branches filled with silt and soon the Bladensburg port could not be used by deep draft vessels.

On March 19, 1845, Mr. Christopher Clarke Hyatt purchased a parcel of land located between the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Washington-Baltimore Turnpike. This time it was the railroad and telegraph system that caused the location to be ideal for a settlement and the surrounding land began to be subdivided and sold in lots.

The plan to incorporate the village of Hyattsville into a town was a long time coming to reality. It was complicated by the death of Christopher C. Hyatt in 1884, but leading citizens continued to push and the act of incorporation of the town was passed and signed into law on April 7, 1886. Conforming to the wishes of Christopher C. Hyatt, the charter forbade the sale of alcoholic beverages within the corporation limits. The number of homes grew from 20 in 1871 to 172 in 1892, and with further growth and several annexations of new areas, there are now over 17,000 persons living within the corporate limits.

Today you'll find a thriving suburban community, still enjoying the advantages of being a "small town", with a Mayor, City Council, local police force and fire department. The homes cover the spectrum from new to old and big to small. The citizenry is made up of representatives of all age groups and many different backgrounds and ethnic groups.

This year our house tour highlights the section of our town that is in the process of being proposed as an Historic Area. It seems a fitting way to celebrate the 94th anniversary of our incorporation.

Church of the Open Bible - Corner of Gallatin Street and 42nd Avenue

Our thanks to the Church of the Open Bible for allowing their building to be used as a place to pause for refreshments and rest. Refreshments are being sold by the Hyattsville Elementary School Parent-Teachers Association. While visiting the church, you may want to take a quick look at the lovely interior design of the Sanctuary.

HOUSE TOUR COMMITTEE

Jean Kovalakides, Carol Cann, Suzanne Cooper, Bruce Eberwein, Mary Kay Giunta

Brochure and Logo Design - Joe Giunta

(1)

5206 42nd Place - Spence and Anita Hines

A typical Victorian L-plan cottage built in the late 1800's. This home is quaint in its simplicity. The property was originally associated with Ravenswood. It used to stand on a field and at one time had a well that was used by many neighbors. Notice the German and fish scale siding. Items of special interest among the things the Hines have collected are a horse brass collection, a daguerreotype, and some lovely oak pieces.

(2)

5507 42nd Avenue - Ed and Heather Kurent

A lovely small colonial built approximately fifty years ago. The highlight of touring this charming home is the Kurent's Asian collection. Wicker furniture combined with Asian materials and rugs accent their collection of Folk Art and Philippine artifacts.

(3)

4114 Jefferson Street - Ben and Suzanne Cooper

A typical Victorian built near the turn of the century. This property was purchased and the house built by Edward Fuller, Sr., who owned and operated a local newspaper. It remained in the Fuller family until purchased by the Coopers in 1974. The house is furnished in the Victorian period with most of the pieces coming from Suzanne's family. The exterior is pebbly-stone stucco and cedar shake. The kitchen was renovated and a family room was added to the original structure in 1979.

(4)

4108 Jefferson Street - Jim and Penny Welbourne

A beautiful center entry hall colonial built in approximately 1899. The floor plan of this house was substantially changed by a previous owner, Dr. Thomas E. Latimer, when he renovated it for use as a home-doctor's office combination. The Welbournes are in the process of a second renovation and have done an excellent job of decorating and furnishing in the Victorian period.

(5)

4104 Jefferson Street - Mary Riley

A custom-built adaptation of the Hyattsville bungalow built in 1926. This charming home is furnished with many lovely antiques. Don't miss the owners' Victorian glass collection, including many pieces by Nicholas Lutz, and the fine examples of both needle point and petit point that Mary has stitched to upholster her pieces.

(6)

4106 Gallatin Street - Nick and Jean Kovalakides

A classic example of Queen Anne architecture built in the 1870's or 80's. This house was originally built by a widow to house herself, her

servants, and 5 sons. She remarried before construction was complete and sold the property. When it was built the house had gas lighting and no indoor plumbing. Except for a few minor changes made in 1930, most of the house is as it was originally. The wrap porches and small pane stain glass windows are typical of our Hyattsville Victorians.

(7)

4110 Gallatin Street - Paul Schopf and Jane Zigler

A rare example of Carpenter Gothic style architecture built in the last quarter of the 19th century. At one time the house was owned by Smith W. Purdum, Assistant Postmaster General, during the 1930's. Points of interest include magnificent stained glass transomes, curved plaster walls in the upstairs hall, and a corner fireplace with carved Eastlake style cherry mantle, and tiles depicting scenes from Shakespeare's plays. Paul and Jane purchased the house in November 1979 and plan extensive restoration.

(8)

4101 Farragut Street - Mary Kay and Joe Giunta

A two and one-half story house built in 1884. The bay windows on both floors were a later addition. Renovation is "in progress" with significant plaster repair done on the first floor and remodeling on two children's bedrooms upstairs. The furniture in the front bedroom was designed and built by the owner. A collection of photographs of Mrs. Giunta's grandparents and great-grandparents adds a period touch to the otherwise contemporary furnishings.

(9)

4107 Farragut Street - Margaret Hampshire

A fine example of a middle class home built around the turn of the century. The owner has lived in this house since 1933 and only a few alterations have been made over the years. The red velvet sofa, the inlaid humidor and the matching table in the dining room reflect the earlier part of this century. Stained glass panels surround the windows and a beautiful garden compliments the house.

(10)

4200 Decatur Street - Mr. and Mrs. Richard Klank

A beautiful rambling, large home built in the late 1800's. This house is thought to have been built as a summer house. Over the years many people have believed that at one time it was owned by Stephen F. Decatur and thus has been called "Decatur House". There are several fireplaces with one in the kitchen originally used for cooking. Notice the Mexican tiles on the porch floor that were laid by the owner. Mr. Klank is a painter and the climb to the third floor to see his studio is well worth the effort.