

## **Historic East Berlin Plays Host to Christmas House Tour Sunday, December 9, 2018 from Noon to 5 PM**

East Berliners will open their doors to the public on Sunday, December 9 between Noon and 5 p.m. for the Historic East Berlin Christmas House Tour, which is sponsored by the East Berlin Historical Preservation Society (EBHPS). Six privately owned homes will be open to the public, as well as three Society Buildings—the Church Schoolhouse, Swigart’s Mill, Red Men’s--Hall and 2 local churches--Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church and Zwingli United Church of Christ. Refreshments will be provided by Trinity and Zwingli Churches and at Red Men’s Hall for tour-goers. Visitors to the Society's Church School House will see where students of many ages all learned in one room. What a wonderful way to start the Holiday Season!

Five of the six homes on the tour are a fairly easy walk along the sidewalks of King Street (State Rt. 234) in East Berlin. One home on our tour, the Weist House, is located on Beaver St. on the east side of East Berlin and not within walking distance. Parking will be available on both sides of the street near that home. Swigart’s Mill, one of the EBHPS buildings open on the Tour, is located near the Weist House at the intersection of Beaver Creek and Rt. 234, also on the east side of town. Starting on the west end of town, the walk along East Berlin’s King Street will take the visitor from the Andrew Brunner House in the 500 block of West King St., then on to the William Leas Mansion in the 400 block of West King St. Next house on the tour would be the Studebaker House, in the 200 block of West King St.; next on to the 100 block of West King St to the Youker House and then on to the 100 block of East King Street to the Meixner House and finally the short drive to the Weist House on Beaver St. All six houses reflect significant examples of local architecture from the late 18<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Along the walk on King Street in East Berlin, the Trinity and Zwingli Churches invite tour-goers for refreshments and have available restroom facilities. Red Men’s Hall, the EBHPS headquarters, and the place to start your tour, also will have refreshments and rest rooms for tour-goers.

*All drawings (except Swigart’s Mill) in this article are by Erma Barnhart,  
Board Member of EBHPS*

The **Andrew Brunner House** reflects a Federal style and that of its builder, a gentleman from Baltimore, MD. The lot is part of a 7 ½ acre parcel of



**Andrew Brunner House**

land purchased by Andrew Brunner in 1813. The 1817 brick house features of note include reeded columns in the hall, reed carving around the front doorway and parlor mantle, paneled doors on the 2nd floor and spoon slots in several of the chimney cupboards. The original nine over six sashes throughout the house have been replicated using antique glass panes. At the rear of the property is a three-story stone carriage house built first and completed by 1814.

**The Leas Mansion**, a Queen Anne Victorian home, was built for the family of William Leas in 1897. It served as a bed and breakfast for 35 years and is once again a family home. It is the largest home on King Street and features oak, cherry, and chestnut woodwork throughout, as seen in the pocket doors and built-in cupboards and wardrobes. All the rooms are decorated in a country Victorian style with period wallpapers and delicate stenciling. Victorian picture rails and ceiling medallions were added. Handmade quilts and cross stitch are examples of Carol's handiwork. The rooms are all decorated for Christmas with several trees, handmade stockings, Santa Figurines, Christmas cross stitch and dolls and bears.



**The Leas Mansion**



### **Studebaker House**

In 1790 David Studebaker built this house of log and frame construction.

The repurposed wooden clapboard siding and old rose head nails are still visible today. By 1820 the home included a brick two-story addition. In the early to mid-1800's the large, open-hearth fireplace was moved to the rear shed. Doorways connecting the 2 sides of the home were rediscovered in 2007 during the home's restoration. In 2014, the current owners connected the 2nd floor sides of the home with a doorway, when concealed shoes of past owners were found, intended to ward away evil spirits and bring peace to the home.

Built circa 1800 using Flemish bond pattern for its exterior, this structure has always been used as a single-family home. It features 2 hand-dug wells on the property, and one was in use up until the 1970s. The home was lovingly restored in the 2000s by local craftsman Luke Miller. The current occupants were drawn to the house because of period details like wide-plank floors & open hearth. It also fulfills their long-time dream of owning an old home.



### **Youker House**



**Meixner House**

Built c. 1790s with a war claim on the barn, this two-story, 4 bay brick home features wide wood lintels with corner blocks above openings, original Bible doors and latches. Pottery chards and glass bottles are found every time a new garden is started! We have lovingly maintained the structure & bones of our home while readapting and adding rooms to give it a modernish atmosphere. Have a seat at our log room bar and see our relics or purchase stationery gifts in our art studio.

The Youngs conveyed this 7.5-acre property to their daughter Emma Kate and her husband Chad Diehl. Originally constructed for John Weist in 1849, the Diehls adopted a very eclectic interior style, blending old with new. The cookhouse, adaptively restored in 2012, features a



**Weist House**

recycled barn wood floor and a working Jefferson, York County Noble Cook stove, an identical match to the original cookstove still remaining in the building.

For a more inclusive walking tour of East Berlin and a greater appreciation of the historic nature of the Borough, House Tour ticket holders are encouraged to also visit the three additional historic properties on the Tour, which are maintained by the East Berlin Historical Preservation Society. Each of these buildings has their own histories described in the brochure (ticket) as well as on our website at ebhpspa.org. Red Men's Hall, circa 1840, is located at 332 West King Street and will also be open as part of the Tour and tickets for the Tour can be purchased at Red Men's starting at 11:30 am the day of the Tour. This is a good starting point for tour-goers. Refreshments will be served at Red Men's and restroom facilities are also available here for tour-goers. The Church Schoolhouse, circa 1769 log building, will also be open for this Tour and is located at North Avenue next to Union Cemetery and near the East Berlin Area Community Center. This historic building is owned by the Union Cemetery Association and maintained by the EBHPS. It has been a center for learning for much of its history. A typical early one room school house replica will welcome visitors to the Church School House. Swigart's Mill, built by Abraham Swigart in 1794, is the only original mill on Beaver Creek still standing. Abandoned about 1920, it has had 26 owners over almost 200 years and has belonged to the EBHPS since 1976.

After exploring some of the historic buildings of the Borough of East Berlin, the Tour continues with two of our local churches, which kindly opened their doors for this Tour, also on West King Street. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 117 West King Street, was founded in 1811 and has a rich and diverse history. Many of the members are the 3rd and 4th generations of the same church family. The facilities are a beautiful blend of old and new. The sanctuary was completed in 1875. Throughout the years the facilities have been modified and improved, with major renovations in 1998 and 2009. Trinity Church is happy to offer refreshments for Tour participants. In addition, restrooms are located here for those on the Tour.

Zwingli United Church of Christ, also one of the two churches which kindly opened its doors for this Tour, is located at 403 West King Street. In 1889, members of the Emmanuel Butt Family donated land on West King Street, where the church currently stands. On June 15, 1890, the cornerstone was laid. Material from the old Union Church was used to construct the new church, and on Sept. 25, 1891, Zwingli Reformed Church was dedicated. The church was named after the Swiss reformer, Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531)

who founded the Reformed Church denomination. The members of Zwingle UCC are pleased to welcome Tour guests with refreshments to enjoy! Restrooms are located here for those on the Tour.

Thanks again to all who will be graciously opening their doors for this Christmas House Tour. They are making it possible for you to see the results of their efforts to preserve significant examples of local architecture from the late 18<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Tickets will be available the day of the Tour starting at 11:30 AM at Red Men's Hall, 332 West King St. (Rt 234), East Berlin, PA for \$18. Discounted price advance ticket purchase is available beginning September 8<sup>th</sup> at Cashman's Hardware, 1595 Route 194 North, East Berlin, PA for \$15. In addition, to purchase advance tickets for \$15 per person, send a check (non-refundable) payable to EBHPS to the following address:

**East Berlin Historical Preservation Society  
Red Men's Hall  
Post Office Box 73  
East Berlin, PA 17316**

and we will hold the tickets for you at Red Men's Hall (332 W. King St) at the ticket desk on the day of the Tour. All proceeds from this Tour support the preservation of our five historic buildings and education work of the Society.

For more information, please visit our website at [ebhpspa.org](http://ebhpspa.org) or email us at [ebhps@comcast.net](mailto:ebhps@comcast.net) or call 717-259-0822 and please Like Us on Facebook.

**Church School House**



**Red Men's Hall**



**Swigarts' Mill**

