

This Drive-it-Yourself Tour was originally created for the Bethlehem Historical Association by Lois Dillon and Charles Crangle in 1993.

Street numbers and slight updates have been added by Town Historian Susan E. Leath, July 2010.

Note: Please add the Pieter Winne House to your tour. Built in 1720, it is the oldest house in Bethlehem. Since this tour was published, much work has been done to restore its unique Dutch characteristics.

At the note below, turn left onto Rt 9W, then right onto Creble Road. The Pieter Winne house is just on your left in the hollow.

1003 River Road
Cedar Hill
Schoolhouse

STARTING FROM THE BETHLEHEM HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION the building across the road on the left, the former Bethlehem Elks Club, was a summer house built in 1907 for Martin H. Glynn who was then the Lt. Governor of N.Y. State. The house was designed by Marcus Reynolds. Later it was the home of the criminal lawyer Daniel Pryor. The home was built on a tract of land owned by, J.B. Lyon Printer for the State. The Lyon home burned, but as you drive down left on Barent Winne Road you can still see the stone lions that marked the property.

1016 River Road
Glynn Mansion,
former Elks Club

85 Barent Winne Rd.
George Best House

DOWN BARENT WINNE ROAD on the right the large white Victorian style house was built in 1870 for George Best who started a large ice business here at the river. At the bottom of the road you can see the area where the ice house once stood. Looking left from there you can glimpse the home of Barent Winne built in 1885. Winnie established a barge and freight business where local farmers brought him their vegetables, apples, hay and other farm products for shipment to New York City and other markets.

Henry Hudson Town
Park

74 Lyons Road,
Elizabeth Nicoll –Sill
House

AS YOU PASS THROUGH THE TOWN PARK the playing field on the right was once an ice pond. When it was no longer feasible to take ice from the river it was harvested here. Going up the hill, back in the trees on the right side is one of our oldest houses. Built in 1785 it was a wedding present for Elizabeth Nicoll given by her parents, the Francis Nicolls on her marriage to Capt. Richard Sill.

41 Lyons Road

UP THE HILL ON THE LEFT SIDE, this home was an early farm house with a grist mill at the falls on the Vlaumanskill, built in the early 1800's, covered later with stucco when owned by J.B. Lyon.

70 Dinmore Road
Bethlehem or
Nicoll-Sill House

TURNING LEFT ON RT. 144 and then left again on Dinmore Road continue down the road to our oldest house which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Known as Bethlehem House it was built in 1735 for Rensselaer Nicoll. nephew of the Patroon. A Dutch Colonial, the home entertained famous people such as Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr. It was later a station on the Underground Railroad. It was inherited by Francis Nicoll and later by his daughter and is called the Nicoll - Sill house. Down on the right you may see the old graveyard.

145 Clapper Road,
Clapper farm

BACK OUT TO RT 144 turn to the right and then to the left on Clapper Road at B.H.A. Continue on up to the top of the hill where you will see a large yellow barn on the right. and a brick house on the left that was built in 1840 by Abraham Westervelt and later owned by his granddaughter Meredith Clapper.

298 Clapper Road
Schoonmaker-
Hillman House

TURN LEFT OVER THE BRIDGE Around the curve, the house on the left is the Hillman brothers' house. This house is the same architecture as the Abraham Westervelt house because they used to pass the house plans around to each other. There is another one of the same design on Wemple Road.

30 Church Road
First Reformed
Church of Bethlehem

CONTINUE ON straight until you come to Church Road on the right, turn right here where you will find the Town's oldest congregation - First Reformed Church and its Rectory.

This Dutch barn has
since been removed.

(see note above about the Pieter Winne House) LEAVING THE CHURCH going out on Rt. 9W, first note the old Dutch Barn across the road. Turn right going past

Corner of 9W &
Jericho Road, Meyers
Farm

the cemetery and then seeing the Jericho outdoor theater ahead. Turn left onto Jericho Road. The house on the left side here was the home of Lewis Meyers, a date in the big red barn is 1840.

548 Elm Avenue
Farmhouse with
Dutch barn

TURN IMMEDIATELY RIGHT ON ELM EAST and continue to Elm. turn right on Elm. Up the road on the right side see a farmhouse dating back to the early 1800s. There is a Dutch barn on this property. Continue on until you come to Houk's Corners at the intersection of the Feura Bush Road. The white building was on a large tract of Haswell property along this road and this building is said to have once been a tavern.

842 Feura Bush Road,
Haswell-Houk Tavern

Elm Avenue Town
Park

TURN LEFT ON FEURA BUSH ROAD out to Elm and turn right passing by the Town Park on the left. Follow road out to Delaware Ave. Left on Delaware Avenue, past the High School. Continue on until you come to Game Farm Road on the right side where you will turn in. Doing so, look back at the house set back in the field on the left side of the Delaware Turnpike. This home was that of the first Bethlehem Town Clerk, John Van Derheyden. Additions have been added but there is an original part dating back to the 1700s. Soon turn right on Orchard.

1010 Delaware Ave.,
Van Der Heyden
House

421 Orchard Street
Fisher House

CONTINUING ON ORCHARD about a half mile on the left side going down a small hill you will see a buff-colored house. This is a pre-Revolutionary house built by Malcolm Fisher. On the right side back in the fields is the Fisher cemetery. Shortly on, look up a hill on the right side to see an early farmhouse dated 1790.

24 Fisher Blvd.

FOLLOW ORCHARD TO FISHER BLVD and turn left on Fisher. Down the road the old house on the left was built in the 1700s and bought by the Fisher family in the 1800's. Catherine Fisher Carrington still owns the property.

1719 New Scotland
Wands House

CONTINUE OUT TO NEW SCOTLAND ROAD The big white house in front of you was the Wands house built in 1841 on a large dairy farm operated by the Fishers. James Burnside Wand's daughter married an Albany businessman Col. James Hendrick who had purchased land from Wands. Hendrick later brought a railroad stop to this estate which for 100 years was known as "Font Grove".

1620 New Scotland
William H.
Slingerland House
(white brick Greek
Revival)

TURN RIGHT ON NEW SCOTLAND ROAD BEING CAREFUL OF THE TRAFFIC further down the road note the white brick Greek revival house built around 1850. Later on the left side see a big white house with a red tower. This house was an early farm house built by Charles Bender in the early 1800's later bought by W.H.S. Miner who enlarged the house and developed the grounds. For many years it was the home of his daughter Ruth Miner, lawyer and former Deputy Sec. of State under Governor Dewey.

1599 New Scotland
Ave, Miner House

1565 New Scotland
Slingerlands House

THE HOUSE TWO DOORS DOWN this side of the Tollgate restaurant, white with black shutters is the oldest house in Slingerlands. This road used to be a wooden plank road and the Tollgate for it was as you pass through the underpass. Down the road, the brown Victorian house on the left, now being repaired, was the home of Charles Hammond who was the Gen. Superintendent of the D & H Railroad. He brought a railroad stop and station to Slingerlands

1511 New Scotland
Hammond House

1497 New Scotland Ave,
Slingerlands United
Methodist Church

Corners and made it possible for people to move from Albany. Isaac Slingerland built many of the lovely Victorian style houses.

RED BRICK HOUSE on the left originally owned by the then manager of the American Express Company. The Slingerlands Methodist Church on the left was built in 1859. The Rectory is on the right.

1458 New Scotland Ave

UP THE HILL AND TURN RIGHT ON MAPLE This house built by John Hay in 1865 of Dutch brick from Holland was on 97 acres. It had many owners such as Leonard Wall and Albert Slingerlands and in its time was a cattle farm and also an onion farm.

72 McCormack Road.

27 Cherry Ave, Blessing
House

TURN LEFT ON MCCORMACK ROAD noting the old house on the left corner. Turn right onto the By-Pass go straight through the signal light on to Cherry. To the right on the corner of Orchard is the Blessing House. There used to-be apple orchards all around here. Down the street on the left a house near the road with blue siding must be very old because in 1976 interviewing Mr. Matthew Halsdorf who was then 101 years old, he told us he was born there.

Not clear which house this is.

527 Delaware Ave.,
Manzer House

TURN LEFT ON DELAWARE AVENUE Look for the white house set back from the road after you pass the Presbyterian Church and the pond. This house was built by a Mr. Manzer. It is of brick and board and batten – dated 1804. The wings were added later. It is on the left side.

449 Delaware Ave

THE BRICK BUILDING on the corner of Borthwick and Delaware used to be a hotel. Wagon loads of stone from quarries in the Helderbergs used to be transported to Albany. It was necessary for the stone haulers to stay somewhere over night so there were around 5 hotels along the Delaware turnpike.

420 Delaware Ave
VanAllen-Paddock House

DOWN ON THE RIGHT SIDE after the Town Hall a white brick house is set back in the trees. It has a hip roof. This house was built for the local Dr. John Van Allen in 1813. Later the home of George Paddock well-known Real Estate man.

393 Delaware Ave
Adams House Hotel

FURTHER DOWN ON THE LEFT the large red brick pillared building was formerly our Town Hail. It earlier was a hotel owned by the Adams family located here at what used to be known Adam's Corners. Also, the Delmar Reformed Church is on the right, dated 1842.

223 Rt 9W
VanDerrpoel-Haswell House

RIGHT ON KENWOOD noting the lovely block of Victorian-style houses along the way. Then turn right on Elsmere Ave. to the By-Pass. Left on By-Pass down to RIGHT on Rt. 9W. The red brick house on the right used to be called the Haswell Tavern at one time. It was built in the early 1800's. Land around it was used as a training quarters for Union soldiers during the Civil War. Indian arrowheads have been found in the fields. Later on, the Tavern on the right side up the road used to be hotel.

415 Rt 9W
Mobil Gas Station where
tollgate was.

PAST THE INTERSECTION OF RT.32 AND 9W continue south on what used to be another plank road and the Tollgate once stood on the now Shopping Center side. Part of that Tollgate can be seen on the grounds of the Bethlehem Historical Association as a Museum now.

716 Rt 9W
Kelderhouse, former Heath's
Dairy Farm

SOUTH ON 9W you are going to turn left on Wemple Road, but also look at the barns and the house on the left side as you turn. This house was originally built by John Kelderhouse. It had many owners. It is said the organization of the Masons met there 1827 which gives it some date. William Heath bought the property in 1926 and it became Heath's Dairy Farm until 1985,

66 Van Wies Point Rd
Hailes House

STRAIGHT DOWN WEMPLE ROAD TO RT 144 Turn right on 144, and then immediately (watch traffic) left on Mosher Road and follow it to the Hudson River. This area is known as Van Wies Point.

THE WHITE HOUSE on the right with the tower was the summer house of Dr. William Hailes. It was built in 1891.

168 Van Wies Point Road
VanWie House

DOWN THE ROAD ON THE RIGHT an historic marker marks the spot where a Dutch colonist from Albany came down here to build a house. The house you are looking at was built in 1850 but part of the house that Hendrich Gerritse Van Wie built still remains making this one of the oldest buildings in Albany County. This was known as a Hudson River landing. Many Albany people had summer homes here and went back and forth by boat because the roads remained very poor and hazardous to travel.

66 Wheeler Road
The house is now white, set
well back from the road,
hidden by trees.

THE BIG YELLOW HOUSE ON THE RIGHT was built for Albany City Engineer Mr. Melious in 1904. Later it was sold to Chauncey Hakes who brought his bride here 1909. Hakes was a car dealer and aviator. He was responsible for bringing his friend Charles Lindbergh here to make an appearance in Albany after his famous flight.

738 Rt 144, River Road
Alexander-Kimmey House

BACK OUT TO RT 144 turn left and go South past an old Stone house on the left built in the 1700's and once a tavern on what was then called the River Road.

1003 River Road
Cedar Hill Schoolhouse

RETURN TO THE BETHLEHEM HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION and the THE CEDAR HILL SCHOOL - Built in 1859 as a one room schoolhouse. In 1907 it was redesigned and added to, by the then young architect Marcus T. Reynolds who later became famous for his many buildings such as the D& H Bldg, First Trust Co, the Gideon Putnam Hotel, and others. It was used as a school until 1960 when the district became centralized and the building was abandoned. A group of people, including several who had attended the school, searched for a way to save the building. A way was found in applying to the State Education Dept. to organize an Historical Assn. The Assn. received its charter in 1965. A Museum was added to the school, which contains interesting historical displays pertaining to the Town of Bethlehem. When the Assn. was formed the Town, who owned the building, agreed to maintain it as a Headquarters for the Historical Association. JOIN US!