4th Annual Mid-Atlantic Early Bronco

Fall Cruise / Turkey Run

Featuring a scenic

Berks County Cruise, from Blue Rocks Family Campground



Haag's Hotel

www.haagshotel.com



Haag's Hotel original building before it burned down in 1914. Picture taken in 1907.





Haag's Hotel rebuilt building. Picture taken after being rebuilt in 1915.

Haag's Hotel and Family Restaurant, on old U.S. Route 22 (Hex Highway) just off I-78 in the center of Shartlesville, PA, 45 miles East of Harrisburg, PA, has been serving Pennsylvania Dutch Food for six generations under the ownership of the same family.

Haag's was originally built in the early 1800's and was rebuilt in 1915 by Albert Jacob Haag after the original hotel was destroyed by a fire. John J. Seitzinger (fourth generation) was born upstairs. John and Helen's eight children grew up working in the business.

Haag's Hotel is truly a family business with 10 members of the family working there. The sixth generation is well on its way with nineteen children. The first member of the 7th generation was born in July 2003.

The Pagoda

At the turn of the century, William Abbott Witman Sr. bought ten acres on the southern tip of Mt. Penn. It was his intention to quarry its stone. However, his stone quarrying operation defaced the look of the mountain side. He suffered public criticism and was finally persuaded to abandon his operation.



Witman was then shown a postcard of the Philippines by his friend Charles C. Matz, who had then just returned from the Spanish-American War. The oriental structure fascinated Witman so much that he hired Charles Matz and his father James Matz to build a similar structure. It was his idea to replace the damage left by the stone quarry. This new pagoda was intended to be a luxury hotel.

In 1908 his "resort" became reality. A red brick and tile pagoda built in the style of a cattle castle of the Shogun Dynasty of Japan stood above the city. The interior had red and yellow tile floors and a majestic oak staircase leading to the upper floors. A shachihoko (dolphin) was poised on the rooftop and a Japanese temple gateway, known as a torii, graces the entrance.



Unfortunately, the ensuing application for a license to serve alcohol was denied. As a result, the luxury inn never materialized and the building went into the hands of a local bank.

In 1910, the land and the seven-storied pagoda were sold to Jonathan Mould, a prominent businessman. After one year, Mould and his wife resold the pagoda and the surrounding ten acres to the City of Reading for the sum of one dollar.

Covered Bridges

Over 45 covered bridges were built in Berks County between the years of 1834 and 1885. Of these, two were built over the Schuylkill Canal by the Schuylkill Navigation Company, seven were built for use by trains and various railroads, eight were built by private bridge companies (Kissinger's, Windsor Haven and Stoudt's Ferry), and the rest were built by the county.

Wertz's (Red) Bridge

From an age long ago, Wertz's Red Bridge stands as the longest single span covered bridge in Pennsylvania. Stretching 204 feet across the Tulpehocken Creek, it serves as a link between Bern and Spring Townships. It was erected in 1867 using the Burr Arch-Truss construction design. In 1979, the bridge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.



- Length: 204 ft.
- Width: 15 ft.
- Built 1867
- Builder: Amandas Knerr
- Truss: Burr
- Stream: Tulpehocken Creek
- Traffic: no
- WGCB Number: 38-06-06
- Alternative Name: Red Bridge
- Parking: Heritage Center lot near bridge

Kutz’s Bridge

Kutz's bridge, with its distinctive portal design, is located in a particularly scenic valley just north of the college town of Kutztown.





- Length: 93 ft.
- Width: 16 ft.
- Built 1854
- Builder: Bitner and Ahrens
- Truss: Burr
- Stream: Sacony Creek
- Traffic: yes
- WGCB Number: 38-06-05
- Alternative Name: Kutz's Mill Bridge, Sacony Bridge
- Parking: Little practical parking, if any, near the bridge

Dreibelbis Station Bridge

This remote Berks County covered bridge, with its showy portal and long, horizontal opening down the sides, seems once to have served a railway station.



- Length: 172 ft.
- Width: 16 ft.
- Built 1869
- Builder: Unknown
- Truss: Burr
- Stream: Maiden Creek
- Traffic: Yes
- WGCB Number: 38-06-07
- Parking: There is little practical parking near the bridge

Things to note: Meet at Blue Rocks Family Campground @ 10:00am on 11/18/06.

We will also be stopping by a restored gas station close to Haags hotel for some pictures, Pictures of this place were unavailable to me at this time so bring your camera and take your own its pretty neat.

On Sunday 11/19/06 there will be wheelin' at Blue Rocks for those interested.