

Heisey Hall and Treichler Masonic Lodge No. 682: 256 South Market Street; Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania



Abstract:

The Heisey Hall and Treichler Masonic Lodge No. 682 most distinguishing features include a Victorian inspired Queen Anne French turret, Georgian style windows, and Renaissance detail. Abraham Redsecker originally had possession of a larger plot of land that included this property. Eventually the property passed to A.G. Heisey, who built the building that stands today. In 1900, Simon Engle operated a grocery store on the first floor while the third acted as a public meeting hall. That same third floor was used as the Treichler Masonic Lodge, where a group of Masonic Brothers met until 1958. Since then, multiple generations of Heisey's owned the building until it was sold to the Young family in 1969. The Vekios Family currently uses the building to operate the restaurant Brothers Pizza.

Property Details:

Heisey Hall and Treichler Masonic Lodge, currently known as Brothers Pizza lies on the corner of South Market and Union Streets. The address for the property is located at 256 South Market Street, Elizabethtown PA, 17022 Lancaster County. The Lancaster County Property Tax Inquiry reports the lot having the dimensions 157 ft. x 67.4 ft. x 157 ft. x 81.9 ft.; total area of approximately 11,326 ft.¹

Deed Search:

The current community of Elizabethtown is situated between the Conoy Creek and the Conwego Creek along the Susquehanna River. In 1534 French King Francis, I (1494-1547) colonized North America establishing New France with Jacques Cartier (1491-1557) as Viceroy in Quebec.² As early as 1615 Étienne Brûlé (1592-1633) explored the Susquehanna River and its tributaries in Lancaster County.³ Pennsylvania was claimed by Sweden in 1638 and then by the Dutch in 1655. The British claimed the former Dutch holdings in

¹ Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Public Records, Property ID: 250-82931-0-0000, accessed April 25, 2017, <http://lancasterpa.devnetwedge.com/parcel/view/2508293100000/2017>.

² Robert Jean Knecht, *Francis I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 333-343.

³ Consul Willshire Butterfield, *History of Brulé's Discoveries and Explorations, 1610-1626 Being a Narrative of the Discovery by Stephen Brulé of Lakes Huron, Ontario and Superior, and of his Explorations of Pennsylvania and western New York: Also of the Province of Ontario* (Cleveland, OH: Herman-Taylor, 1898), 49-51.

1674.⁴ British King Charles, II (1630-1685) granted William Penn (1644-1718) the Province of Pennsylvania in 1681.⁵ The French and British disputed control of Pennsylvania between 1688-1763.⁶ During this time in 1707 French fur trader Peter Bezaillon (1662-1742) established a settlement between the Conoy and Conwego Creeks along the Susquehanna River.⁷ In 1719 Peter Bezaillon invited the Piscataway Indians to move from Maryland and settle with him along the Cony Creek and Susquehanna River.⁸ Captain Thomas Harris (1695-1801) settled in Pennsylvania in 1726. In 1730 he builds a log cabin along the Conoy Creek. In 1741, he legally owns the land, and he builds a stone house in 1745.⁹ Then, in 1745, he builds the Sign of the Bear Tavern, which is the first permanent structure in Elizabethtown.¹⁰

Online deed searches have confirmed that on 30 December, 1740, Thomas Harris sold multiple lots in Elizabethtown to Abraham Redsecker. Redsecker subsequently divided up the plots and distributed them to his heirs. It is plausible that the land connected to Heisey Hall was one of the plots distributed to Abraham Breneman and Mary Redsecker Breneman, son-in-law and daughter of Abraham Redsecker.¹¹ It is possible that sometime between 1840 to 1867 Abraham Breneman sold the property to James Marshall. Online deed searches have confirmed that James Marshall had possession of the property until March 1867.¹² Marshall sold the property to Abram Collins, who had possession of the property until he died on 14 December 1885.¹³ Abram Collins passed the property onto his descendants, the list of which is A.G. Heisey (14 December 1885 – 16 June 1938),¹⁴ Oliver N. Heisey (16 June 1938 – 26 October 1939),¹⁵ Ada R. Heisey Martin and Roy C. Martin (26 October 1939 – 3 October 1944),¹⁶ A Lewis Heisey and Ada R. Heisey (3 October 1944 – 15 February 1969),¹⁷ Anna S. and Mahlon E Young (15 February 1969 – 5 December 1972),¹⁸ Jay R and Irvin H Peifer (5 December 1972 – 30 December 1983),¹⁹ George N. and Nancy L. Vekios (30 December 1983 – Present).²⁰

Architectural Style Report:

The current Queen Anne style building on 256 South Market Street is composed of red brick with two rows of Georgian style multiple-pane windows on each side of the building.²¹ The current building was erected by Abraham (A.G.) Heisey shortly after another of Heisey's properties, the bank, became the office of the Exchange Bank in 1887.²² The structure itself emphasizes repetition and, uniformity, and symmetry.²³ The building possesses a focal point in the form of a cream colored Victorian inspired Queen Anne French turret located in the top right corner of the front of the building.²⁴ However it was not completely uncommon for a

⁴ Randall M. Miller, ed., Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2002), 50-60.

⁵ Jean R. Soderlund, William Penn and the Founding of Pennsylvania, 1680-1684: A Documentary History (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1983), 39-50.

⁶ Henry Meclchior Muhlenberg Richards, The Pennsylvania-Germans in the French and Indian War: A Historical Sketch Prepared at the Request of the Pennsylvania-German Society (Lancaster: The Pennsylvania German Society, 1905), 16-22.

⁷ David L. Martin, A Clash of Cultures: Native Americans and Colonialism in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Morgantown, PA: Masthof Press, 2010), 21-23.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Richard K. MacMaster, Elizabethtown: The First Three Centuries (Elizabethtown, PA: Elizabethtown Historical Society, 1999), 5.

¹⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹¹ Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Public Records, Online E-Film Reader, Document, Book: T6 , Page Number: 42-43, accessed April 25, 2017, <http://www.lancasterdeeds.com/onlineefilmreader/>.

¹² Book: K, Volume 71 , Page Number: 205.

¹³ Book: O, Volume 12 , Page Number: 551.

¹⁴ Book: Y, Volume 36 , Page Number: 00328

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Book: Q, Volume 58, Page Number: 392

¹⁹ Book: H, Volume 88, Page Number: 00557.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Will Jones, How to Read Houses: A crash course in domestic architecture (Brighton, U.K.: The Ivy Press Limited, 2008), 125.

²² MacMaster, 147.

²³ Jones, 35.

²⁴ Ibid., 61.

Georgian style home to have a turret as ornamentation, so the architect may have drawn inspiration from either.²⁵ The building sports a layered brick cornice that runs the along the building just below the roof.²⁶ In between the two rows of windows there is some renaissance detail in the form of a diamond pattern of brick.²⁷

Historical Context and Purpose:

Abram Collins was a wealthy mill owner who also owned real estate in Conoy Township. In 1869, Collins, a later resident of Elizabethtown, helped Mennonite Samuel Eby start the Farmers' Bank of Elizabethtown at 244 South Market Street.²⁸ The bank started with Collins as its president, who backed its first monetary ventures. Collins' daughter Elizabeth married Eby, for whom Collins acted as assignee on the deed to the Heisey building. On 14 December, 1885 Collins sold the property to A.G. Heisey after Eby failed in business and ruined the Farmer's Bank.²⁹ A.G. Heisey was also known to others as both Abram G. Heisey and Abraham G. Heisey. Heisey owned a tobacco warehouse on Bainbridge Street which was destroyed in one of multiple fires that led to the creation of the Friendship Fire Company.³⁰ In 1890, Heisey also operated the Elizabethtown Creamery with his business partner Isaac W. Hoffman.³¹ A short time after the property was sold to him, he built the three-story brick structure that stands there today.³² On 16 June, 1938 A.G. Heisey passed away and his heir inherited the property. On 6 April, 1937, Abram published his will and left the Heisey Building to his son Oliver N. Heisey who died shortly thereafter.³³ On 19 March, 1915 a group of Masonic Brothers gathered at the home of Harry Miller to discuss the possibility of forming a lodge at Elizabethtown as the previous one was moved to Marietta, Pennsylvania not four years after its opening. This group elected Richard H. Lawry, President and Henry T. Horst as Secretary. They agreed to pay a \$10.00 membership fee and if a warrant is obtained a membership fee for new Masons would be \$50.00. This Hall Association would be composed of all charter members and they then elected Henry U. Coble as treasurer. A second meeting of this group numbering twenty assembled at the Miller home. They agreed that if a Lodge is warranted they should then rent Heisey Hall at East Bainbridge and South Market Streets. With light, heat and water included, the building rent was \$180.00 per annum.³⁴ In 1926, the officers and members of Lodge No. 682 finally acted to name the Lodge in honor of the man whose name had been such an honored one at the time of constitution. Because of his longing and working for the warranting of a Lodge in Elizabethtown, a resolution was adopted to petition Grand Lodge to name Lodge No. 682 the "Abraham C. Treichler" Lodge. The petition was later approved and the Lodge named.³⁵ Until 1958, the Abraham C. Treichler Lodge continued to meet in the same Hall where it had been constituted. In that year the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania completed and dedicated the Masonic Temple of the Masonic Homes, where Lodge No. 682 was allowed to meet regularly.³⁶ On 6 April 1937, Abram published his will and left the Heisey Building to his son Oliver N. Heisey who died shortly thereafter.³⁷ In 1909, before he died, Oliver Heisey operated a grocery store in the same building at the corner of Bainbridge and South Market Streets.³⁸ On 25 October, 1939 Oliver died and willed the house to his widow and son, Ada R. Heisey and A. Lewis Heisey. Ada Heisey later remarried a man named Roy C. Martin and became Ada R. Martin. In 1963 Ada and her son A. Lewis Heisey served on the Elizabethtown Water Company board.³⁹

²⁵ Jones, 133.

²⁶ Ibid., 69.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ MacMaster, 121.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 141.

³¹ Ibid., 145.

³² Ibid., 147.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Abraham C. Treichler Lodge No 682. "Lodge History." Free and Accepted Masons. Accessed April 25, 2017.

<http://www.ETOWNMasons.org/our-lodge/lodge-history/>

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ MacMaster, 147.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 254.

In October, 1984 the borough of Elizabethtown bought the Elizabethtown Water Company, a venture it had been trying to accomplish for 20 years. Ownership of the company was transferred by Paul O. Shirk, President of the company and A. Lewis Heisey, the secretary-treasurer, for \$1,237,000.⁴⁰ The building was originally used as a residence but early on became a commercial retail space for Engle's grocery store and the Treichler Masonic, and is currently being used as Brothers Pizza.

⁴⁰ MacMaster, 283.

Appendix Historical and Current Photos:



