Historic Sites at Fort Hunter

1. The Federal-style Mansion, on the site of the old French and Indian War Fort Hunter, was built in three sections. The two front sections were built by Archibald McAllister – the front mansion in 1814 and the middle “cabin” in 1786. The rear wooden portion was built by Daniel Dick Boas in 1870.

2. Margaret Wister Meigs was a niece of Helen and John Reily and the founder of Fort Hunter Museum. The Margaret Wister Meigs Memorial honors her vision to preserve Fort Hunter. The tiles were created by Henry Varnum Poor.

3. Butter was produced in the McAllister Dairy. This process required exacting standards in temperature as well as hygiene and was often housed in a specialized structure such as this.

4. Plants found in the Flower Garden represent the garden that was kept at Fort Hunter in the late 1800’s. Conceived around 1885, the nearby Boxwood Alley is an example of Victorian landscaping.

5. Built around 1810, the Ice House was accessible to both the creek on the lower level and the back yard on the upper level. Blocks of ice were cut from the river and packed in sawdust. This type of “refrigeration” served the mansion throughout the summer months.

6. Listed in the book Penn’s Woods, these two Buttonwood Trees are estimated to be over 300 years old. Also called sycamore trees, they are thought to be among the oldest in the state.

7. Incorporated into the present bridge which takes Front Street over Fishing Creek is the original single lane Stone Arch Bridge of the 19th century.

8. Elevated on stilts to avoid hungry rodents, the Corncrib was built around 1880. The slatted sides allow for ventilation of the corn.

9. The 1876 Centennial Barn housed John Reily’s budding milk business. Constructed with Gothic Revival details in typical German bank barn form, the structure graciously housed the business. Constructed with Gothic Revival details in typical German bank barn form, the structure graciously housed the business.

10. The mound-shaped area accessible to the barn and road was built as a Loading Platform to ease the loading of dairy products onto market wagons.

11. The Fort Hunter Station was built in 1929 by the W. F. Martin Company in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Railroad. It is built in an unusual drive-through English form.

12. The Spring House, built around 1800, may have housed a distillery but later was used to cool milk from the Dairy.

13. Called “The Practical Farmer”, the Tavern House was built around 1800 to sell Captain McAllister’s brandies and whiskies, to accommodate overnight travelers, and to serve as a community center for surrounding farmers.

14. The Smokehouse contained smoke that would permeate meats such as ham and bacon, hanging within, thus preserving them. This smokehouse has a strong iron bar on the door to deter would-be thieves.

15. The Stone Stable was built around 1810 in conjunction with the tavern to shelter travelers’ horses. It is built in an unusual drive-through English form.

16. The Everhart Covered Bridge was built around 1881 to span Little Buffalo Creek in Olver Township, Perry County. Mrs. Margaret Wister Meigs moved it to the Mansion’s front lawn in 1941. By 1980 the bridge had deteriorated. It was dismantled and placed in storage where the original elements were used to recreate the current bridge.

17. The Eastern Division of the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Canal was begun in 1826 and completed in 1833. This 43-mile stretch linked Columbia to the mouth of the Juniata River at Dunlaps Island. It was an integral link on the canal system that spanned the state and was used through the early 1900s. It is now the site of the Park’s Natural Swamp Area that nurtures plants and wildlife indigenous to the area.

18. Heckton Church was built in 1885 on land donated by Henrietta P. McAllister, widow of a grandson of the builder of Fort Hunter Mansion, and served as a Methodist church until the 1990’s. Damaged by fire in 1927 the interior reflects some alteration from that time. The building was moved to its current location in 2009 to avoid further flood damage.

Fort Hunter Mansion and Park is owned and operated by Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department. County Commissioners: Jeffrey Haste, Mike Pries, and George Hartwick, III
Please use crosswalk to cross Front Street. Traffic is fast on North Front Street, look both ways before crossing.

KEY
1. Mansion
2. Margaret Wister Meigs Memorial
3. McAllister Dairy
4. Flower Garden
5. Icehouse
6. Buttonwood Trees
7. Stone Arch Bridge
8. Corncrib and Corncrib Stage
9. Centennial Barn
10. Loading Platform
11. Fort Hunter Station
12. Springhouse
13. Tavern House
14. Smokehouse
15. Stone Stable
16. Everhart Covered Bridge
17. Farmhouse (private)
18. Pennsylvania Canal
19. Heckton Church

Interpretive Signs
Restrooms
Pavilions
Wheelchair Accessible