



(1) SEPTA Railroad Depot



(2) Moyer Building



(3) E.K. Bean Building



(4) Reporter Building



(5) Slifer's General Store



(6) Feldt's Furniture Store

MAIN STREET SURVIVORS



(7) Lansdale National Bank



(8) 300 Block, Warner & Keen Grocers



(9) Old St. John's Reformed Church and Parsonage



(10) Mayfair Apartments



(11) Hager & Schultz Building (Hager's Men's Clothes, Woolworth's)



(12) Drescher Motors (Arcade)



(13) Neiburg's Ladies and Gents Store



(14) Shiloh Lodge Masonic Temple

**A Walk Through
Downtown Lansdale**
Sponsored by
Lansdale Historical Society



(15) Geller's Grand Emporium

THE MAIN STREET SURVIVORS

Welcome to the Lansdale Historical Society's walking tour of significant downtown buildings that have survived for more than 100 years. We recommend you follow the route listed below which starts and concludes at the SEPTA railroad depot.

While many of Lansdale's historically-important buildings have been razed for a number of reasons, others remain and are the subject of this tour.

We urge you to take the tour at your own pace. If you want additional information on any of these buildings, we invite you to visit the Lansdale Historical Society's Research Center (open Wednesdays and Thursdays 11 am to 3 pm, and Saturdays 9:30 am to noon).

START OF TOUR (SEPTA STATION)

(1) SEPTA Passenger Station: The present station was built in 1902 and opened to the public the following year. It is the third railroad depot that has served Lansdale since the North Penn Rail Road constructed a route from Philadelphia to Bethlehem in 1856.

To make room for construction of the new depot, the 1868 station was placed on rollers and moved closer to Main Street where it remained in service until its successor was completed. The old building was disassembled and removed the following day.

The present depot has served a countless number of commuters during its 120 years of service and was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2021.

(2) Moyer Building (Main and Walnut Sts.): This Victorian structure is probably the best surviving example of what downtown Lansdale looked like during the pre-20th century era. Generations of Lansdale residents have referred to it as the Moyer Building, but before that it was called the Koffel Building. Tobias D. Koffel built the corner commercial property in 1885. He operated a general store and rented out stores, offices, and a meeting room for lodges and other groups.

Menno and Harvey Moyer, brothers from Chalfont jointly purchased the building from Koffel in 1904, and henceforth the building has been known as the Moyer Building. In 1909, the brothers expanded the building to include stores along Walnut Street.

Over the years scores of businesses operated out of the Moyer Building including an Acme market, Neiburg's clothing store, Bitner's Pharmacy and The Camera Shop.

(3) E.K. Bean Jewelry Store, 17-19 W. Main St.: Elwood K. Bean was the longest-serving Burgess (Mayor) in Lansdale history. His jewelry store occupied the first floor. Other occupants over the years included Florex Flowers, Strauss Clothing and Henning's Scale Models. Of special note: Early in the 20th century, silent movies were shown in a small auditorium on the third floor.

(4) Lansdale Reporter Building 7 W. Main St.: This structure, which now houses Nostalgic Collectibles, was the second home of the Lansdale Reporter, which was operated by Frederick Wagner, beginning in 1870. Dr. Andrews was publisher of the weekly paper in the 1880s when this building was erected. Look carefully at the stuccoed banner near the peak; at one time the name "Reporter" was etched in it.

(5) Slifer's General Store, 1-5 W. Main St.: This structure at the busy Main and Broad intersection was built by Tobias D. Koffel in 1877. Koffel left after only a few years before it was taken over by Nathan S. Beidler. In later years, Harvey & Menno Moyer and then James M. Slifer ran a combination general merchandise and dry goods store there into the 1920s.

The store went through numerous owners and tenants over the years, among them a number of millinery shops on the second floor, while an A&P, Doc's Market, Daub's Hardware (from 1925 to 1981) and McQuilian's Photography (since 1981) have operated there. Among the businesses in the expanded section of the building to the west was Sallie Ann's Sweet Shop, a popular lunch spot for many years.

**Cross Main Street to the north side,
look for buildings on the south side beginning at Green Street:**

(6) Kaufman/Feldi's Building: The large building on the southwest corner of Main St. and Susquehanna Ave. is best known as Kaufman Furniture in the 1940s and Feldi's Furniture from the 1950s through the 1970s. Many long-time Lansdale residents remember Feldi's "Going Out of Business" newspaper advertisements that ran for many years.

The large furniture store was built in 1921-1922 by Aaron M. Kratz and his son, A. Wesley Kratz. The elder Kratz died before the store was ready to open, and his son took over the business. The business was successful, but A. Wesley Kratz died in 1929.

The building is now home to Signarama.

(7) Lansdale National Bank (Wells Fargo): The block between Green St. and Susquehanna Ave. has been dominated by a bank since 1864, eight years before Lansdale became a town. It began as the Lansdale National Bank in a humble building so small it resembled a one-room schoolhouse.

The original bank was replaced by much bigger structure in 1875, which remains part of the present structure. Major expansions took place in 1911 and 1929. The finished product was unveiled to the public with a grand re-opening in 1939.

Lansdale National Bank merged with Philadelphia National Bank in the mid-1950s. Future mergers changed its name to Corestates, Wachovia and finally Wells Fargo, which closed the bank this month, ending 159 consecutive years of banking at that site. The future of the bank building is uncertain.

(8) 310-324 W. Main St.: The commercial buildings along Main Street had many tenants over the years as merchants jockeyed for the best locations. **The 300 block of W. Main St.** includes the Evans Building with its elegant stained glass arches over the doors, and the Lauchmen Building, built by print shop owner Vernon D. Lauchmen in the 1920s. Other businesses on this block have been Bigony Drug Store, Warner & Keen Grocery, The Rec youth club, Stuart & Weingartner Sporting Goods, Llli Gift Shop, East Penn Motor Club, Lauchmen Printing, Town House Restaurant, Moyer's Radio, Ritzi Shoes, Becker's Men's and Teen's Wear, Carl's TV.

(9) St. John's Church: 500 W. Main St.: The congregation dates to 1875. A year later, the first church was built across Richardson Avenue from the present edifice. In the 1930s, the land for

the present church (the former Clemmer farm) was acquired where the basement of the present building was constructed to house the Sunday school and an assembly hall. The present sanctuary was dedicated in 1953.

**Cross to the south side of West Main Street
to observe the buildings on the north side.**

(10) Mayfair Apartments, 421-429 W. Main St.: Once the home to a succession of general stores, whose property extended to Richardson Avenue. During the 1920s, the present building was constructed as the Mayfair Apartments. Upon the death of the owner in the early 1950s, he willed the structure to the borough free of charge with instructions that it must be used for public purposes. It was converted into Lansdale Borough Hall, which it remained until 1985. It has been used for a variety of Montgomery County services since then.

(11) Hager & Schultz Building, 325-329 W. Main St.: Constructed in the late 1920s, this building is best known for two long-time retail stores: Hager's Men's & Boys' Store and Woolworth's 5&10. Both were among Lansdale's most popular businesses for a half-century. Among the current tenants is the Stove & Tap restaurant, which occupies Hager's former storefront.

(12) Dresher Arcade, 317 W. Main St.: Originally built in the 1910s as Dresher Garage and the Dresher Motor Co, a Buick dealership, the building was transformed into a gallery of stores with apartments on the second and floors in 1928. The garage's front door became the gateway to the arcade and an enclosed row of stores leading to the Madison Parking Lot.

(13) Neiburg's Clothing Store, 315 W. Main St.: Believe it or not, there's a very old house buried inside this building. Originally the home of J.C. Godshall, a business leader during the 1800s, it was converted into Sam Neiburg's ladies and gents store with a fancy new storefront. The Neiburg family resided in part of the structure. Through the mid-20th century, Swartley Brothers Engineers completely redid the building for their appliance store. However, the old house's peaked roof remains visible from the air. More recently, it was home to the PEAK senior center.

(14) Masonic Temple, 313 W. Main St.: Built in 1913 as the home of Shiloh Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons, the assembly hall with its impressive façade looks very much today as it did when it was dedicated. After Shiloh merged with another Masonic lodge, the building was acquired by the borough as a performing arts center early this century, a venture that failed. It is now serving mixed uses. Bartholomew's men's store and Jeanne's Ladies Apparel were long-time tenants of the storefronts.

(15) Geller's Grand Emporium, 215-219 W. Main St.: By far, Jacob Geller's store which he called the Grand Emporium was Lansdale's go-to store for anything a resident or business owner might need. Jake sold everything - furniture, animal feed, tools, hardware -even funeral coffins; And if by chance he didn't have it on hand, he'd get it pronto. His building was constructed in sections starting in the 1890s. Originally, the west side was his residence before it was taken over by the store.

