

The Hyman Hotel, Winfield, Union Township, Union County By Drew Hyman

They called it Hospitality. In 1769 this sixty acre tract in Union Township housed a tavern that was one of the few places where travelers could find some camaraderie and refreshment. Originally called the Union House, the tavern was held by the Hyman family over a century and a half.

According to an indenture made "the eighteenth day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight," Hospitality was originally a part of a tract of land granted to James Shaddon in 1769 and conveyed to James Young the 8th day of June 1774 and afterwards converted by the Youngs unto Isaac Hanna.

"...the said Isaac Hanna [later] conveyed the aforesaid property or lott.(sic)..to Jacob Hassler [on] the Sixteenth day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight together with all the buildings, improvements, water, and woods."

That same year, on the eighteenth day of April (1798), Jacob Hessler and Salomia his wife, conveyed Hospitality and the tavern to Pheobea Jenkins "for the sum of seventy-five pounds lawful money of Pennsylvania."

In 1868 the tavern was expanded to a hotel by Ellis Hyman and his wife Anna. The "Hotel Hyman" played a vital role in the history of Union County. It was a rest stop for settlers enroute to the railroad, providing food and shelter for both travelers and horses. The buildings included the hotel and tavern, a large livery stable, a spring house, ice house, wash house complete with a fireplace for heating water, and an outhouse. The ice house stored ice cakes chopped from the river, which were then covered with layers of sawdust to preserve the ice for summer use in the "ice box." The outhouse was an "eight-holer" with separate sides for men and women. Each side had a low seat for children and was furnished with corncobs, old newspapers, and the ubiquitous Sears catalog. Drew Jr. remembers morning trips to the outhouse with his grandmother, Mrs. Bertha Hyman, until it was removed in the early 1940's.

In the latter part of the 19th century, the property passed to Ellis Hyman's son, Charles Hyman and his wife Bertha. A photo c. 1905 shows owners Charles Walton Hyman and his wife Bertha Hess Hyman and their children Anna, Grace, and Grover (son Drew was born in 1916).

Ever changing to meet the needs of the community, the Hotel Hyman has had several transformations. In 1920 the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the Volstead Act banned the sale of alcohol, and a post office occupied the space formerly housing the tavern. At one time the hotel housed the offices of the area doctor, Dr. D. M. Sampsell, who was married to Charles Hyman's sister Emma. In the 1930's the hotel became a boardinghouse providing room and meals for its residents. As friends needed a place for their families to live and asked for several rooms, the hotel, and later the livery

stable, were transformed into apartments.

In 1939 the Hyman's youngest son, Drew Walton Hyman, converted the "parlor" into a grocery store and added a Beauty Shoppe for his wife June Springer Hyman (which she operated until the house was sold in 2005). A picture c. 1940 shows Drew and June Hyman and son Drew Jr. in the grocery which advertised "Pure Food Properly Kept." Eggs were 19¢ a dozen, butter 28¢ per pound, cheese 23¢/lb., crackers 12¢ a box, and cereal 25¢ a box. The hands of the Hyman children, Drew Jr., Suzanne, and Michael, were often seen reaching into the candy counter or dipping a cone of ice cream.

A few years later the post office relocated and "Drew Hyman Meats and Groceries" moved into the rooms that once housed the tavern. In the 1940's Drew started door-to-door delivery of baked goods from Capitol Bakers in Harrisburg. The livery stable was converted into a garage and at one time housed as many as eight trucks for the men who delivered baked goods to Sunbury, Danville, Selinsgrove, Lewisburg, Dry Valley, Mifflinburg, Milton, and as far as Bloomsburg and Berwick. In 1949, as management of the "bread business" demanded more of his time, Drew sold the grocery to neighbor Guy Dewire. Guy and his wife Katherine operated the store in the hotel until 1952 when they relocated to a larger building near Rt. 15 in Winfield. The tavern/post office/grocery store was converted into an apartment. Elections were held in the hotel until the 1970's

On October 18, 1977, the "Hyman Hotel" was included in the Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places by the Historical and Museum Commission. Drew and June Hyman raised their children, Drew Walton Jr., Suzanne Elizabeth, and Michael William in the house and remained there until it was sold to Amanda Kessler of Lewisburg in 2005. A 2005 picture of the hotel shows the Hymans, their children, and their families in positions similar to the 1905 photograph. The hotel and livery stable remain apartment buildings today.

Photos Following Page



Circa 1905 photo of the Hotel Hyman in Winfield, PA, with owners Bertha and Charles Hyman in the foreground with their daughters Anna and Grace. On the bicycle is their son Grover Hyman.



Circa 1939 photo of Drew Walton Hyman, his wife M. June Springer Hyman, and their son Drew Jr. in their store, Hyman's Meats and Groceries, Winfield, Pa., Union Township, Union County



2005 photo of Drew Walton Hyman and June Springer Hyman (foreground) and their family at the Hotel Hyman in Winfield, Pa. On the sidewalk (left to right) are their son Drew Walton Hyman, Jr. and wife Donna Baker Hyman; Michael William Hyman and wife Rebecca Ann Wagner Hyman; granddaughter Christine O'Connor, daughter of Suzanne Hyman O'Connor (deceased) and husband Tim Brier. On the lower left side of the porch are the children of Drew Jr. and Donna: grandson-in-law Iain Gold, great-granddaughter Emma Gold, and granddaughters Stacy Hyman Gold and Kelly Baker Hyman. Next are granddaughter Suzanne O'Connor and husband Jon; and nephew Thomas Strahan of Reading, PA. On the upper porch are two granddaughters: Michael and Rebecca's daughter Kimberly Hyman Potter and husband C.J. Potter; and Suzanne's daughter Maureen O'Connor and husband Jeff Liszka. (Absent are Michael and Rebecca's son Jeffrey William Hyman and wife Julie.)