

Driving Tour Map & Guide

Yuscht Fer Schee

Somerset County's rich rural history is expressed in many different ways, one of the most beautiful being its abundance of barn stars and barn decorations. These unique works of art are exclusive to Somerset, Bedford and Washington counties with the largest number appearing in Somerset County. They are linked to the Pennsylvania Germans (Dutch), who brought with them a deep love of the land and barn building, aesthetically pleasing traditions that live on today.

Through these gorgeous wooden stars, shutters, brackets and columns, we get a glimpse into the lives of early Somerset County farmers and the deep pride and passion they felt for their work. These decorations began to appear on Somerset County barns during the Victorian Era (late 1800s-early 1900s) with the last known barn star appearing in 1917. Unlike the "Hex" signs native to Pennsylvania Dutch Country in eastern Pennsylvania, these decorations were not painted. Instead, they were cut out of wood and then applied directly to a barn's siding. Some decorations were even used as ventilators to prevent the formation of condensation inside the barn.

The reason why these decorations only stayed within a small geographical boundary is still a mystery. One theory is that a local craftsman had a store in which he made and sold these beautiful wood cutouts, but his creations did not expand into further regions before his store closed. It is known that some Somerset County barn builders used barn star designs and decorations as their signature trademarks on barns they built. However, only three local barn builders are known to have done this: Josiah Werner, Ezra Scott and Homer Schrock. But no matter where these beautiful decorations originated from, or if they had any special meaning behind them, they were, as the Pennsylvania Dutch said, "Yuscht Fer Schee" or "just for pretty/just for nice" and continue to be so today.

Please note that these barns are located on private properties. Respectful behavior toward the property and its owners is advised during your visit to these farmsteads. Also, no assurances can be made as to the conditions of these roads. Exercise caution, drive safely, and obey all traffic laws.

9. 403 Monument Road (Central City 15926)



Metal-sided barn with a metal star that is an exact replica of the original wooden star and ventilated shutters.

10. 542 Marts Road (Friedens 15541)



White barn with light blue shutters and medallion star. Three cupolas also feature light blue shutterwork.

11. 588 Brownstown Hill (Stoystown 15563)



Red barn with wooden applied five-point star similar to the pattern made and used by Ezra Scott.

12. 1717 Causeway Drive (Friedens 15541)



White barn with five-point star pattern made and used by barn builders Ezra Scott and Homer Schrock.

1. The Somerset Historical Center 10649 Somerset Pike (Somerset 15501)



Largest known five-point star, on display inside Somerset Historical Center.

2. 538 Trolls Lake Road (Somerset 15501)



Red barn with three gabled dormer and applied decorative shutter work.

3. 409 Briar Patch Road (Somerset 15501)



Barn featuring applied shutter work and a medallion star with little star cutouts.

4. 566 Airesman Road (Boswell 15531)



A red barn with a medallion star with ventilation behind it and little star cutouts.

13. 180 Pike School Road (Berlin 15530)



White barn built on a bank with overhang typical of a Pennsylvania Barn and a black five-point star.

14. 1531 Salco Road (Berlin 15530)



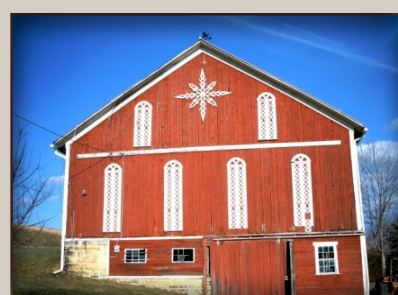
A red barn with a large intricate applied five-point star (on the front cover of this brochure).

15. 1416 Pine Hill Road (Garrett 15542)



Red barn with a wagon wheel star pattern made and used by barn builder Josiah Werner and ventilated shutters.

16. 1338 Glen Savage Road (Fairhope 15533)



Red barn with intricate snowflake star and applied shutterwork with interchangeable panels.

5. 313 Clay Hill Road (Boswell 15531)



Red barn with stars on both the barn and the shed next to it and ventilated shutters.

6. 845 Speigle Road (Hollsopple 15935)



Patriotic red, white and blue barn with ventilated shutters, a cupola, applied columns, and a star.

7. 539 Sugar Maple Road (Hollsopple 15935)



Louvered ventilated shutters and a ventilated star with a red star in middle.

8. 2198 Ridge Road (Hollsopple 15935)



A red barn with a medallion star and ventilated shutterwork.

17. 671 Ernest Miller Rd. (Meyersdale 15552)



Red barn with ventilated white medallion star and shutterwork associated with the Mognet Brothers barn builders.

18. 1049 Bridge Street (Rockwood 15557)



A stand-alone barn with a white medallion star and ventilated shutters on the original and large left side addition.

19. 803 Barron Church Rd. (Rockwood 15557)



Barn built by the Mognet Brothers with ventilated medallion star and shutters, applied bracketwork and columns.

These nineteen barns are not the only barns in Somerset County that feature these gorgeous Pennsylvania Dutch decorations. Keep your eyes open for the many more barns across the county with these decorations that are waiting to be seen and discovered!

Somerset County Pennsylvania Barn Stars and Decorations

What is a Pennsylvania Barn?

A Pennsylvania Barn is not just a barn that is native to Pennsylvania. It is an architecturally unique type of barn that originated in Pennsylvania and became Somerset County's most preferred barn construction design. All of the barns featured in this pamphlet are Pennsylvania Barns; however, most have been enlarged or modified to better suit today's modern farming practices.

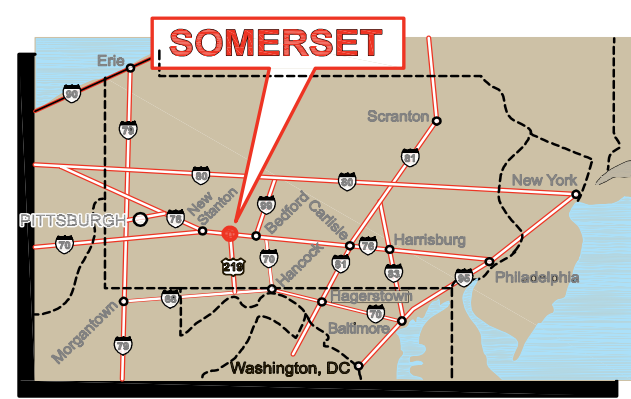
A Pennsylvania Barn consists of two levels – a lower level and an upper level – which allows more room to house animals, hay and farming equipment. Two distinct exterior features also make up the construction of a Pennsylvania Barn. The first is a cantilevered overhang – also called a forebay – that extends overtop of the lower level or "basement" of the barn. Barn #13 shows this forebay going overtop of the barn's stables, which was typical for most Pennsylvania Barns. The second feature is a bank that leads up to the second level of the barn, allowing for easy access to the upper part of the barn. Barns #16 and #17 show banked barns. These two specific features typically make up what constitutes a Pennsylvania Barn.



This beautifully decorated red barn located in Kingwood (Upper Turkeyfoot Township) perfectly models a Pennsylvania Barn on a bank with a forebay that extends unsupported over the lower level of the barn.

Somerset County Barn Decorations Driving Tour

For more information, contact:
Somerset County Chamber of Commerce
(814) 445-6431
www.somersetpa.net



SOMERSET COUNTY MUSEUMS

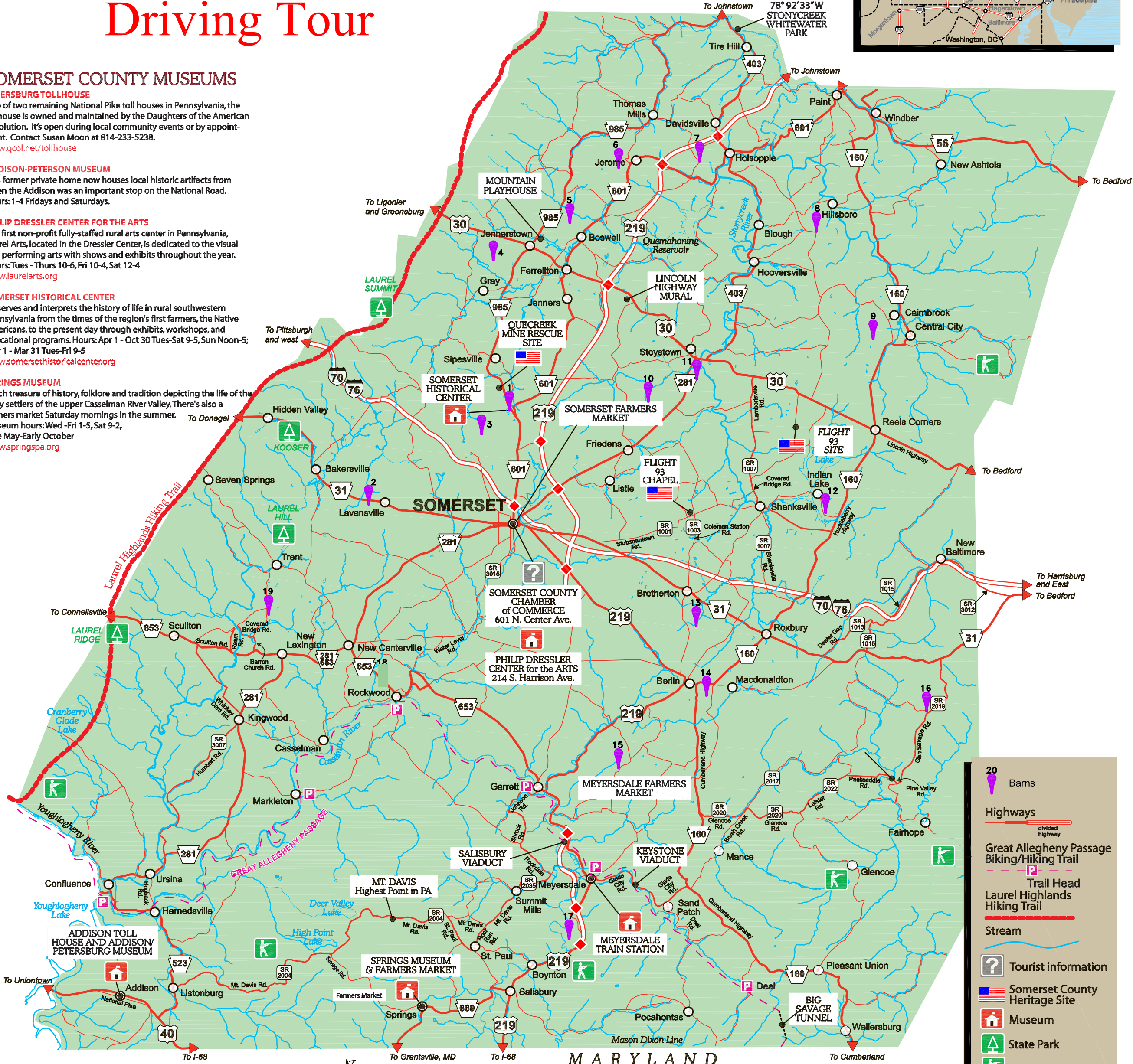
PETERSBURG TOLLHOUSE
One of two remaining National Pike toll houses in Pennsylvania, the tollhouse is owned and maintained by the Daughters of the American Revolution. It's open during local community events or by appointment. Contact Susan Moon at 814-233-5238.
www.qcol.net/tollhouse

ADDISON-PETERSON MUSEUM
This former private home now houses local historic artifacts from when the Addison was an important stop on the National Road. Hours: 1-4 Fridays and Saturdays.

PHILIP DRESSLER CENTER FOR THE ARTS
The first non-profit fully-staffed rural arts center in Pennsylvania, Laurel Arts, located in the Dressler Center, is dedicated to the visual and performing arts with shows and exhibits throughout the year. Hours: Tues - Thurs 10-6, Fri 10-4, Sat 12-4
www.laurelarts.org

SOMERSET HISTORICAL CENTER
Preserves and interprets the history of life in rural southwestern Pennsylvania from the times of the region's first farmers, the Native Americans, to the present day through exhibits, workshops, and educational programs. Hours: Apr 1 - Oct 30 Tues-Sat 9-5, Sun Noon-5; Nov 1 - Mar 31 Tues-Fri 9-5
www.somsethistoricalcenter.org

SPRINGS MUSEUM
A rich treasure of history, folklore and tradition depicting the life of the early settlers of the upper Casselman River Valley. There's also a farmers market Saturday mornings in the summer. Museum hours: Wed - Fri 1-5, Sat 9-2, Late May-Early October
www.springspa.org



20 Barns

Highways
 divided highway

Great Allegheny Passage Biking/Hiking Trail

Trail Head

Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail

Stream

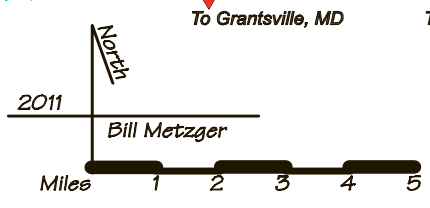
Tourist information

Somerset County Heritage Site

Museum

State Park

State Game Lands



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