

by ALBERTA Y. HAUGHT
with photos by LINDA A. CUTSHALL

There was a doctor in the house...

Throughout much of the twentieth century two doctors, Thomas H. Smith and later, James R. McNabb, lived in the house at 117 Fourth Avenue in Burnham. They ministered to the patients who came to the office that adjoined—was actually part of—that house.

Thomas H. Smith was the son of James and Harriett Smith of McAlevy's Fort, and grew up on their farm in Jackson Township, Huntingdon County. Upon graduating from Baltimore Medical College in 1897, he practiced medicine at Milroy before coming to Burnham. The 1900 census shows him as 28 years old and single, boarding in a private home, with three other young men, in Armagh Township.

Later that year, he married Mary Josephine Mann, a daughter of dry goods merchant Edward P. Mann and his wife Elizabeth, of Derry Township. The 1910 census states that the Smiths, residents of Burnham, had been married for ten years. We detect a note of sadness in the notation that Josephine—she apparently went by her middle name—lost the only child she had ever borne.

In 1910 the Smiths' neighbors were Seth and Louisa Jane Ham, and their 29-year-old daughter, Bessie May. This family had already played an important part in the story of the house at 117 Fourth Street.

From research done by Eric Weaver, current owner of the house, we know that the Hams (sometimes seen as "Hamm" in the records) had purchased lot No. 415, from Burnham developer A. A. Stevenson on May 28, 1903. Records show that Dr. Smith then bought the property (117 Fourth Street) from the Hams on March 2, 1906. Although we cannot pin down the precise age of the house, sources suggest that the Hams may have erected it as early as 1903.

A 1976 article in the *Lewistown Sentinel* states: "The rooms of Logan House have been used as a doctor's office



Still Open for Business

Rooms where doctors treated patients for over 70 years
became the Logan House gift shop in 1976

for the past 73 years." Smith conducted his general medical practice here until his death on March 20, 1934.

In Smith's obituary the *Sentinel* states that he had served patients "for the past 32 years, 30 of which he has lived at his present home where he conducted his office." Then was the house built in 1903? In 1904? The jury is still out on this one, but we do know that the house was standing by 1905. Weaver reports having identified it on a pen and ink drawing—a bird's eye view of Burnham—dated that year. He adds that general contractor, William D. Steinbach, built it. A 1912 article in *The Daily Sentinel* states that the firm operated by Steinbach and his sons, Charles and Wilbur, "is widely known...for the high quality and good workmanship of all contracts handled by them." This house seems to live up to those standards.

Since he and his wife had no children, Smith made a will leaving the house in trust to a young girl, Mary Josephine Stewart. The doctor's widow, Josephine Smith, lived in the house until her death on March 5, 1942. By that time Mary was married, living in York and did not want the house.

By the terms of the trust, she could not sell the property until 1951, so she decided to rent it.

Enter the second doctor and his family. Dr. James R. McNabb had gone off to serve in World War II, and Pauline McNabb and their children needed a home. So Mary (Stewart) Malick rented the house to them in 1943. The family moved in, made it their home, and finally purchased it in 1951. Dr. McNabb practiced medicine in Dr. Smith's former office until 1973. His son, Thomas McNabb, and his wife, Ann, eventually bought the property. On April 2, 1976 Ann McNabb opened a gift shop—the Logan House—in the rooms where the two doctors had their medical practices.

When Ann and Tom retired in August 2004, they sold both the business and the house to Eric and Lynne Weaver. Having worked in the shop for 15 years, Lynne eagerly took over its management. This April the Logan House will mark 31 years in its existence as a well-known, popular stopping place for shoppers.

Special thanks to Eric Weaver, who provided much of the research material.



Meet the current owners: The Weaver family relaxes on the front porch steps before taking us on a tour of their home. Eric teaches business courses in Penns Valley High School, at Spring Mills, and Lynne manages the Logan House gift shop. Their son, Ryan, who works at Skills, Inc., enjoys watching professional wrestling. He tells us that his entire family cheered him on during his recent participation in Special Olympics. His sister, five-year-old Erica, enrolled in kindergarten last fall. Sadie, a black Labrador retriever *cum* Border collie, is ten years old.

A House Tour in Burnham

Even from the sidewalk we can see that this house is *big*. Together, Lynne and Eric count the rooms and decide that there are twelve—five on the first floor, seven on the second—plus an enclosed back porch. We did not ask about the basement and the third floor! As we start across the porch, they point out the columns marching around two sides of the house. “He liked columns!” they exclaim of Dr. Smith. Both the front door and the leaded glass on either side of it are original features of the house.

Interior columns, too

Inside we immediately see some fine examples of the beautiful chestnut woodwork, also original to the house. The chestnut pillars in the hallway are burnished to a deep, warm glow, inviting us into

The leaded glass of the Weavers' front door reflects the light of a late afternoon in Burnham.

the family room on the right. Lynne and Eric insist that Dr. Smith must have favored pillars, for they are also in the master bedroom and even on his grave. He is buried at nearby Mount Rock Cemetery.

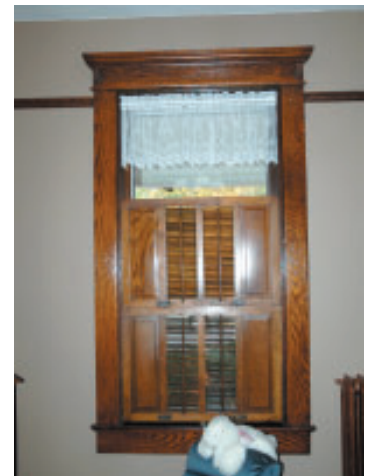
The louvered shutters in the TV room and the dining room are original. Wooden shutters like these used to hang all over the house, but Pauline McNabb removed them to allow more natural light into the rooms. The Weavers were excited when they found the shutters stored in the attic. “We decided to hang some because they add character and privacy,” Lynne explains.

The house retains its original horsehair plaster walls throughout. The Weavers have torn off the wallpaper and painted all the rooms on the first floor, but they have more work to do upstairs. All of the windows and the oak floors are original and remain in excellent condition. In an attempt to brighten up the house still more, the Weavers have laid down colorful area rugs.

Personal touches

From the family room we turn to the left and enter the more formal living room, or parlor. Erica calls it “the company room” and “the Christmas tree room,” for this is where the family has its holiday celebrations. Silk wallpaper gives a rich look to this room. Above the spinet piano hangs a crewel picture embroidered by Pauline “Mimi” McNabb, who gave it to Lynne as a gift. “She was a very dear friend,” Lynne says, noting that the elder Mrs. McNabb died in August, 2006. (She was always “Mimi” to the Weavers.)

The fireplace has a gas insert. The small wooden chair beside it once sat in the Burnham Presbyterian Church; Pauline McNabb gave it to



The windows and floors are original and remain in excellent condition.



Erica as a birth present.

Both the upholstered rocking chair on the other side of the fireplace and the corner cupboard in this room came from Lynne's great-aunt, Marian Wertz, of Lewistown. "I was born on her birthday!" Lynne says. We admire the antique chandelier sporting a painted flower design; its twin gives light to the dining room next door.

Cozy dining room

Leaving the living room for the dining room, we get a chance to admire the pocket doors. Like the rest of the woodwork in this house, they are original and in fine condition. A second set of pocket doors leads from the dining room into the hallway just outside.

Colorful walls, combined with daylight from the three windows, make the dining room a cheerful spot. The plain but polished wood of the simple furnishings—cupboard, table and chairs—stands out against the vivid hue of the walls. For extra charm and warmth, a long window seat covers a radiator.

Tale of a corner cupboard

Next we come to the kitchen, where the Weavers have chosen more than one type of wood, all placed side by side to create another comfortable-feeling room.

The work area just beyond remains as it was after the elder McNabbs completely redid the kitchen in the 1960s.

When we admire the corner cupboard, Eric and Lynne share a private smile before telling us the story behind it. Originally, there was another corner cupboard in this spot. "It was built-in," Eric explains, and when the McNabbs were moving to their new home, they wanted to take the old corner cupboard with them. Unfortunately, removing



Beautiful chestnut woodwork and antique lighting provide a warm and cozy atmosphere in the downstairs rooms. The wooden shutters on the windows are original.



it left some holes in the wall. On the hunt for another cupboard to put there, the Weavers ended up in a used furniture store in Lancaster. They found this one, took one look at the tag and immediately bought it. With another smile, Eric leans over and shows us the tag that was on their purchase: “Handmade by Albert Gingrich, Boalsburg, Penna. Hinges handmade in his blacksmith shop. Cherry wood. Made in 1950.” It fits perfectly, covering up the holes, looking like it’s always been there in that spot. Better yet, it’s back home in Central Pennsylvania!

Grand entranceway

As we follow Lynne and Eric through yet another door, we find ourselves in the hallway. We gaze toward the front door, once again appreciating the fine woodwork. An oak deacon’s bench came from an Amish farm that used to be behind Peight’s Store in Belleville. Nearby sit a rocker that Lynne found at a flea market and an end table that her great-aunt, Marian Wertz, gave her.

The back stairway leads directly to the back bedroom and a storage area. “I rarely use it,” Lynne admits. “I fell down it twice.” We quickly decline to use it either!

Farther down the hallway there is a powder room. There’s enough space left for a chair and stand, near the foot of the front stairway leading up to the master bedroom. Throughout the house the woodwork—including the baseboards and corner trims—is of the same design and quality. As we begin our climb to the second floor, we pause to admire the carvings on the newel post and the beauty of the leaded glass window on the landing.

Master bedroom

The soft pastel walls of the master bedroom create a restful



The main stairway is lit by a window on its landing and both stairways have identical newel posts





An intercom was used to summon the doctor at night.



The late Pauline McNabb, who once lived in the house, created the needlepoint hanging over the sofa in the master bedroom.

environment. Kudos to Eric, who did all the painting and papering. We are delighted to find that the intercom for the doctor is still installed on the wall, just above the right-hand side of the bed where the doctor slept. If a person came to the office in the middle of the night, he or she could call the doctor from a second intercom at the door of the doctor's office, without disturbing the others sleeping in the house. This bedroom has a border ceiling, a built-in closet and a very comfortable-looking couch.

Reading room

The library has windows like those in the dining room. What a great place to sit and read! While we continue on our tour, Erica takes time out to flop down onto the floor and play with her new paper dolls; Eric informs us, "They're made of



Erica Weaver plays with paper dolls in the upstairs library.



The upstairs bathroom features original wainscoting and claw-foot bathtub (not shown). The Weavers added personal touches which add to its charm.

magnets now.”

In the spare room we see a handsome rolltop desk that Eric bought at Bohn Furniture, in Reedsville, as a Christmas gift for Lynne one year. The recent addition looks very much at home. Lynne and Eric are planning still more work upstairs and are busy picking out colors to bring new life to the old rooms.

Antique bath

At the end of the hall we look into the large bathroom and see that it still has the old tub with its claw feet. The wallpaper is old as well, and our guides point out that the McNabbs used some of it to decorate the outside of the tub. Once used as a storage room, the room next door is entirely separate from the bathroom. but, that’s where we find the shower. At one time the McNabbs’ nanny lived in this room. Ryan’s room, once Tom



Erica Weaver shows us the guest bedroom.



The gift shop's counter stood in the company store owned by Logan Iron and Steel in Burnham, which later became Freedom Iron and Steel, and is now the Standard Steel Company. According to the 1978 *Historic Sites Survey of Mifflin County*, "This iron center has been in operation since 1795. It is the site of the early Bessemer Converter and the first open hearth furnace in the United States (1895)."

McNabb's room, is across the hall. In another of its previous incarnations it served as a utility room, complete with washer and dryer.

Former doctor's office became the Logan House

The last stop on our tour is the Logan House Gift Shop. There's a convenient entrance through what once was a coat closet in the downstairs hallway. Like so many other pieces of furniture in this building, the store's front counter has a story. For many years, it served as the counter in the butcher shop in the old Logan Iron and Steel's company store. According to

an April 1976 article in the *Lewistown Sentinel*, the Burnham store existed in 1862.

"I owe my soul to the company store!" is not just a line of an old song made popular by Tennessee Ernie Ford. It was harsh reality for the employees, in this instance the steelworkers, who purchased groceries and other goods there. They frequently found that most of their earnings went to pay their store bills on payday.

The doctors who saw patients in these two rooms treated people much differently.

"Dr. McNabb would take a loaf of bread if you didn't have the money to pay him," we learn as we explore the former doctor's office. He had one waiting room and seven smaller rooms. In one he mixed his medicines and kept their

ingredients in roomy wooden drawers (*shown in photo at bottom left*). Another room served as an examination room. Each area had its particular purpose, and their names and uses remained consistent through the years. Even now, customers who wander about the rooms, exclaim when they suddenly recognize where they are: "Oh, this is where I always got my shots!" The back door of the office still has its original doorbell intact. As we leave the

gift shop, we notice again how the porch still wraps around part of the house and try to picture how it must have looked before Dr. McNabb enclosed part of the porch in order to enlarge his waiting room.

Back to the porch

A door from the kitchen leads onto one part of the porch enclosed by the McNabbs.

We spot a cheery mural of five dogs on the wall and begin



Ann and Tom McNabb founded the Logan House gift shop in 1976. Lynne and Eric Weaver bought both the business and house in 2004.





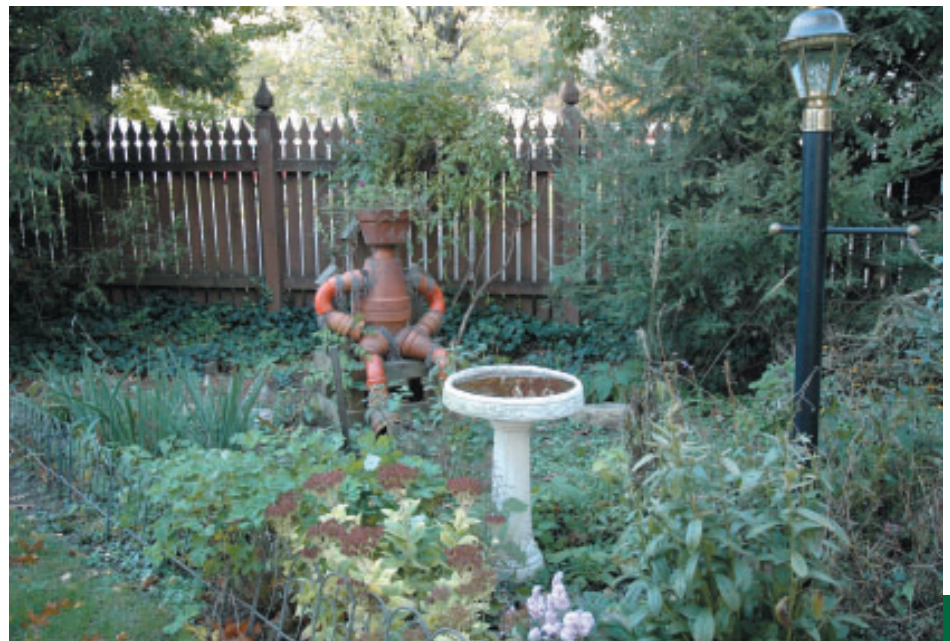
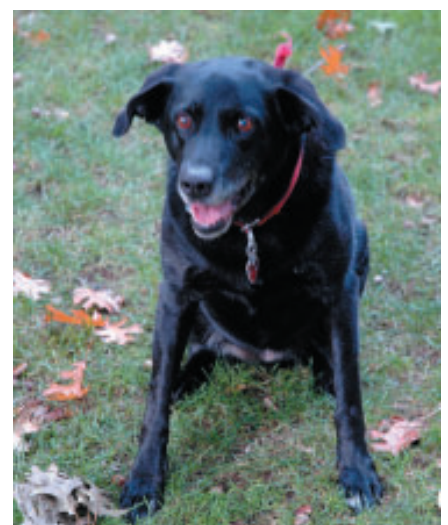
The Dog Hall of Fame features Sadie Weaver (shown in two photos at right) at the top, Megan McNabb at the bottom, with Mac, Charlie, and Sheba McNabb, from left in the middle.

to suspect that dogs rule in this house. Lynne explains that Ann McNabb had painted her four dogs on the wall. Lynne loved the mural and was pleased when local artist Jennifer McCormick agreed to add Sadie's portrait to the group. Now the "Hall of Fame Dogs" remain on permanent display on the Weavers' back porch.

Spacious backyard

The backyard contains remnants of the times when the property belonged to the doctors. At the rear of the lot stands the garage, in former times a stable for the doctor's horse and a place to park his buggy. A huge oak tree shades both the house and the yard, while on the other side of the yard, we feel dwarfed by a majestic cedar of Lebanon. Eric points out that its pinecones grow pointing skyward—instead of downward as those on other types of pines—and are a light greenish-white in color. The cedar of Lebanon tree was a gift to Dr. and Mrs. McNabb from the horticulture department at Penn State, who got it from a visitor from Lebanon. Several were planted through the east coast, this being the only one to survive. Eric shows us that Forest K. Fisher once featured this tree in an issue of Mifflin County Trivia: "The seed from which the Burnham tree grew came from a 2000-year-old Cedar of Lebanon in the Holy Land."

"Mr. Crockers" reigns over the yard. Lynne put him together years ago out of plastic pipe and terracotta pots, held together with wire, nuts and bolts, a dowel rod and a little cement. She had seen one in Lancaster, while visiting her parents. "He usually looks his best in the spring," Lynne says. (Ask to visit him the next time you're at the Logan House!)



The author, Alberta Haught of Huntingdon, is a genealogical researcher. The photographer, Linda Cutshall of McConnellstown, is a retired secretary. Both are longtime regular CG contributors.

For more information on the Logan House gift shop, see their ad on page 19 in this issue.