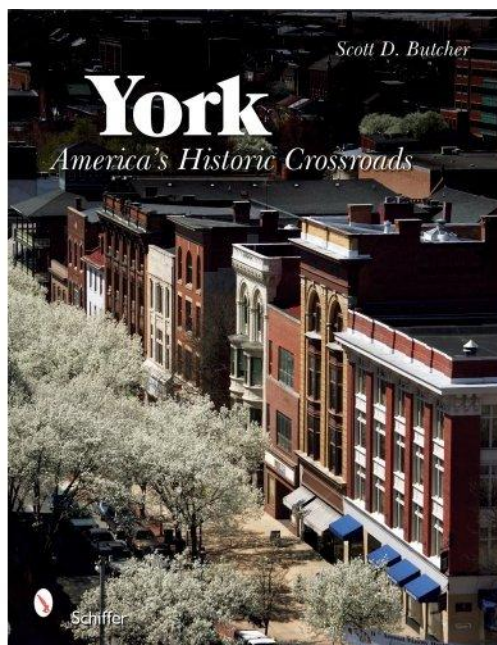




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## York-area picture book not your typical coffee table publication

By Jim McClure on November 7, 2008 6:38 AM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)



Scott Butcher has produced a coffee table book filled with photos about York. He will speak on York's architecture at the York County Heritage Trust's Second Saturday program, set for 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 8, at the Agricultural and Industrial Museum. His \$29.99 book is available via the [York County Heritage Trust](#). Background posts: [On Second Saturdays: 'It's really cool that the Heritage Trust started this program'](#), [Windows into York blog offers Springettsbury's Schultz House datestone update](#) and [Author: 'York's streetscape features almost every style and era of American architecture'](#).

York County author and [fellow blogger](#) Scott Butcher has produced a hard-cover photo book that stands out among such works in two ways.

First, drawing on his [wide knowledge of local architecture](#), he gives detailed descriptions in his "York, America's Historic Crossroads" about the 300 color photos in this recently released book.

For example, he starts in with a description of the house of the owner of King's Mill:

"Phillip King opened a small paper mill south of town in 1798, and constructed this striking Federal home in 1812. He used linen rags to create pulp, then made sheets of paper one at a time."

So, not only are the photos compelling, but you learn as you go.

Secondly, Butcher explores myths and sacred traditions on more than one occasion, unusual for such a book that tends to be promotional in nature.

The best example comes when he takes on the slogan that York is the first capital of the United States. This is a 50-year-old marketing promotion that has worked its way into the names of businesses and adorns the City of York's Web site.

Here's how Butcher handles this in one photo caption:

"Proponents of this believe that since the Articles of Confederation were adopted in



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York by the Second Continental Congress, marking the first time the thirteen colonies came together under a national government. York is therefore the first capital. Opponents counter that the Articles didn't take effect until all thirteen state governments had ratified them, and this didn't occur until 1781, long after Congress had left York. Most historians agree that Philadelphia was the first capital, and many note that York was the fourth capital, after Philadelphia, Baltimore and Lancaster, which all hosted the Continental Congress before York."

Butcher's work does so much to promote York's architecture that he is able to probe such notions without appreciable pause from those who market the city's image, even in a work like this that will be proudly displayed in homes around York.

(I similarly probed this first capital contention in my "Nine Months in York Town," which appears on this blog as: [York: "The first capital of the United States?"](#))

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