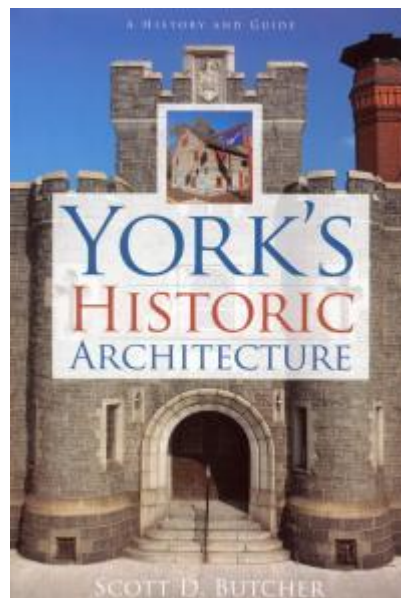




Architecture as history lesson

The buildings tell York County's story in Scott Butcher's book

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Scott Butcher first wrote about York architecture for a college paper and finally expanded on it for his new book. Gethsemane Hall on Beaver Street in York is on the cover.

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It shouldn't surprise anyone that York County's architecture is as varied as the people who have made up its population over the years.

After all, York Town, as the city was known in 1741, predates this country's Declaration of Independence in 1776 by almost 35 years.

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And yet, the 160 pages that fill Scott Butcher's new book, "York's Historical Architecture," are exactly that -- a surprise.

Not only does the book serve to edify readers on the many architectural treasures of the area, it is also a tribute to structures that, for one reason or another, have vanished.

And it's not just homes and offices that receive attention. The Springettsbury Township man also gives many history lessons on the people and events that took place at each location.

Butcher also catalogs several area landmarks such as the Farquhar Park Bandstand, the Howard Tunnel and the Columbia-Wrightsville Bridge.

"It's been a longstanding goal of mine to write this book," said Butcher, whose interest in architecture is much more than literary.

The author works in marketing for the architectural/engineering firm Nutec and serves on the board of Historic York, which is a local non-profit preservation organization.

When Butcher says the book's been a longstanding goal, he's not kidding. The first pseudo-draft of the book was actually a paper he wrote as a student attending Penn State.

"It was 85 percent of my grade for my Architectural Appreciation class," said Butcher. "Long after the paper was finished, I kept coming back to it thinking I should expand and publish

it."

But other books came first on a variety of subjects including marketing, the Civil War and local ghost stories.

Still, this latest book is exceptionally close to the author's heart.

Butcher, who is also an accomplished photographer, took many of the book's pictures. And he said he had the pleasure of working with several local people who care about York's history and architecture with the same depth as his own.

One of those people was Karen Arnold, a former Historic York board member and current grant manager for Keystone Historic Preservation.

"This will be an important book," Arnold said. "The preservation of our history is always an issue. To appreciate how architecture evolves, we have to have the relics of the past to compare it to."

Butcher said no one has to be involved in architecture or have a deep level of interest in history to appreciate what the county has to offer. The structures he writes about are aesthetically pleasing even to the casual observer.

"York is such a wonderful microcosm of architectural styles ranging from the eighteenth century right up to today," he said. "There are so many influences from Georgian, to English

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Colonial to German that it's no wonder so many people come to York just to look at our buildings."

Butcher said there are many places people can visit in America to see the types of architecture in his book. However, there are very few places where they can see so many different examples inside one set of county lines.

"York is a very special place in that sense," Butcher said.

As full as the book is, Butcher is a little remorseful he couldn't include more.

"The funny thing is, we had to take out almost 100 photos during the editing process," Butcher said. "Many buildings were in the same style or by the same architect. The abundance just goes to prove York's growth and wealth over the years."

TO BUY

Scott Butcher's book, "York's Historic Architecture," published by History Press of Charleston, S.C., is available locally for \$19.99 at Borders Books & Music, 3000 Whiteford Road in Springettsbury Township.

The book can also be ordered online at www.historypress.net , www.amazon.com or www.borders.com .

Book signing: 2 p.m. Aug. 17 at The York Emporium, 343 W. Market St., York.

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