Day Tripping - November 2022

This month we will travel to Milford, Pennsylvania for a house tour of Grey Towers, that is located off US 6 west of Milford. Grey Towers was the home of Gifford Pinchot, founder and first Chief of the US Forest Service and twice elected governor of Pennsylvania. The house was completed in 1886 by Gifford's father, James Pinchot, a successful businessman and philanthropist. At Grey Towers, James, disturbed by destructive logging practices then prevalent in the country, encouraged his eldest son Gifford Pinchot, to pursue a career in the field of forestry.

Grey Towers Sitting Room

Grey Towers Staircase

The mansion that is built in the style of a French chateau is a three-story L-shaped fieldstone building. Conical roofed towers at three corners give the property its name. The home features 43 rooms and a number of out buildings. These include cottages known as the Letter and Bait Boxes, a unique outdoor dining facility called the Finger Bowl, a Forester's Cottage, an open-air theatre, and a white pine plantation.

The house can be toured on Sundays only at 11am, 1pm, and 3pm. One reason why I have included this for our day trip in November is that the house is beautifully decorated for Christmas. Be sure to check first at 570-296-9630 for the tour times because they do change in November and December. There is a cost to the guided tour of the mansion. The website did not give that price at this time. But they do say it is best to call for reservations at this time of the year.

The grounds of the mansion are open year round and are especially beautiful in the spring and summer. You are able to tour them free of charge during the year. So it is always somewhere you can return to later in the year. But touring the house in late November and December when it is decorated for the holidays is well worth it.

Milford, itself offers some unique spots to visit while in the area. The cemetery with many monuments and headstone that span hundreds of years and evidently has a cemetery sign which includes some information not seen on many other cemetery signs. You can lunch with a visit to an old grain mill that boasts a large, working, waterwheel at Water Wheel Cafe, located on Water Street on the outskirts of town. There are a few shops here as well, including Water Wheel Guitars, where some of the areas finest musicians often gather to talk shop.

A trip to the Columns Museum on Broad Street is interesting. Their claim to fame is a large 36 star American Flag stained with the blood of President Lincoln. Other interesting exhibits are a noose used in the only public hanging in Milford, some preserved birds that John Audubon sketched, and a permanent wave machine used by Helene Curtis. Ann Street park in the center of town is a nice place to relax. There is a 1850's "little red schoolhouse" located at Apple Valley Village. It contains original desks, bell, and black boards. The school house is open only in July and August for tours.

Other interesting dining options are the Milford Diner (the only place in Milford that I actually have eaten in - it is great), and several charming restaurants inside some of the town's historic inns. The Dimmick Inn & Steakhouse has a cozy, quiet atmosphere in the back room with a large stone fireplace and Bar Louis is found in the Hotel Fauchere. The most unique

place is the Varsity Room Speakeasy in the alley behind Tom Quick Inn. It is open 6-12 on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Diners and drinkers gather around a horseshoe bar for unbelievable cocktails and modern fare. There is also the Yeti-themed Log Tavern Brewing and a Soaked Winery in town.

While in the area, there are also are several waterfalls to visit. I wrote about Dingman's in the June 2022 Day Tripper article.