

Let's Go for a Historic Walk

EVERY STREET HAS A STORY!

Did you ever wonder how a street or ally got its name? Or, wonder about the historical connotations of that name?

Let's take a short journey through the streets and alleys of Lock Haven, while taking a moment to conceptualize about the names of the locations, and how the streets were named. Some of the names, such as Water and Main, are common American street names. Others were named after historic American figures: Washington Street was named after George Washington, and Jay Street was named after John Jay. But others were named for the important people in the area, or some of the people who were vital to the founding of Lock Haven.

\$ We begin our walk on Church Street. If you would guess that Church Street was named because there was a church on it, you'd be wrong. The only church originally on this street was Jerry Church, the founder of Lock Haven. His home, office, and tree-house were on this street, about where Robb Elementary School now stands. Church Street was named after him, and the alley to the north was named after Jerry's brother: Willard's Alley. To the south, the alley was named Mary's Alley, after Willard's wife, Mary Montgomery.

\$ As you walk down Church Street, you pass Grove Street. This is named after Peter Grove, the Indian hunter from the colonial days. His name is also on Peter's Steps, a mountain peak that can be seen across the river. An old story tells of Grove, cornered by Indians, leaping with his horse from this peak and swimming to safety in the river.

\$ Running from north to south on the east end of town is Henderson Street, which was named after Doctor John Henderson. Henderson lived in Huntingdon County, and owned two hundred acres of farmland in Clinton County. He sold this property to Jerry Church for twenty thousand dollars in 1833. Jerry raised the money from himself, his brother, and an anonymous partner from Williamsport, and founded Lock Haven.

\$ A block and a half from Henderson Street is Sarah's Alley. This was most likely named after Sarah Spear, who was initially the only single female of marrying age within the new city limits. The men complained that Sarah was the only choice, and Jerry Church named the alley after her.

\$ Crossing Sarah's Alley, and running east to west between Water and Main Streets, is Jordan's Alley. The name of Jordan's Alley is a mystery, but it is possible that it was named after Judge Alexander Jordan of Williamsport. Jordan may have been the anonymous partner who lent Jerry Church the money to found Lock Haven, and that may be why Jerry would have named an alley after him.

We hoped you enjoyed this short stroll down history's alley. If you would like further information on these or any other streets, or just general research regarding our haunt Clinton County, you can e-mail us at curator@clintoncountychistory.com. Print this, take it with you, and enjoy your walk through the city!

Still not tired yet, how about a walk down Water Street to view our historic buildings, [click here](#) for coordinates!