



Mount Washington Tavern Exterior

On the Outside Looking In

If you visit Fort Necessity National Battlefield when the Mount Washington Tavern is closed you should still take the opportunity to see the outside of the building. Many visitors are so interested in seeing the inside of the Tavern that



they miss what is on the outside. This handout will help guide you to the surrounding points of interest at the Tavern.

Whether you walked or drove, take the pathway that goes behind the Tavern. In this area archeologists found the foundation of a smokehouse as well as numerous pottery shards from dishes dating to the mid 1800's. There was also a privy located near where the tree line begins below.

Now continue along the pathway around the side of the Tavern to a stone marker that we call "*Arrowhead Rock*."

Arrowhead Rock



You will be able to notice from this marker's shape why the park staff has always called it "*Arrowhead Rock*." In 1926, this rock was brought to the Tavern from the Ohiopyle area by horse and wagon. It was erected by the Pennsylvania Historical Commission and the Citizens of Fayette County and converted into the "*Fort Necessity Monument*." This monument was one of the earliest efforts to commemorate the battle of Fort

Necessity. When it was placed here, you could see all the way to the Fort area since all the trees were timbered. The arrowhead shaped rock is native sandstone and stands at a height of 7 feet. The girth is 15 feet. After reading the plaque, continue past the stone to the two informational exhibits at the top of the path.

Informational Exhibits

Take the time to read both panels of the informational exhibits. One panel describes the National Road. This is the road you traveled on today and it is now called US Route 40.

The second panel describes the Mount Washington Tavern. Look carefully at this panel and then look at the Tavern. There are some differences between the drawing on the panel and the Tavern today. How many changes can you find? Now let's go visit the Conestoga wagon.

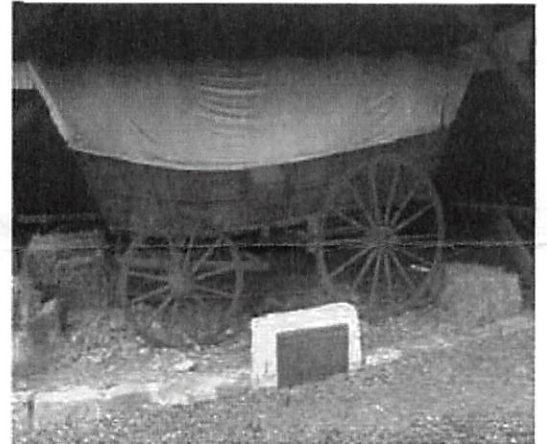


Mount Washington Tavern
along the National Road
circa 1920's.

Conestoga Wagon

This original Conestoga wagon was made sometime before the 1830's. The smaller Conestoga wagons, like the one displayed here, were called "Sharpshooters." They were often used for farming but when freight prices were high the farmers could make extra money by putting the wagon on the road to haul goods. When prices declined it would be back to farming. A sharpshooter wagon would average 20 miles a day. In the mid 1800's you would have seen even larger Conestoga wagons than this sharpshooter. It was not unusual to see 40 or 50 large Conestoga wagons going by everyday. The wagons were pulled by six horse teams and some had bull-dogs tied to the them. The dogs were often seen pulling against the collar about their necks, as if to aid the horses in moving the heavy load.

These large wagons would be similar to the tractor trailer trucks that you can see and hear going by today – still hauling goods along the National Road. After you finish reading the plaque in front of the wagon, walk to the front of the Tavern.



Mount Washington Tavern

Even when you can't go inside the Tavern, the architecture can still tell a story. Standing in front of the Tavern you will notice it is an elegant structure. It was built sometime around 1828 as a stagecoach stop along the National Road. The architecture of the building is considered "Federal style." About 70% of the outside structure is original. The Tavern measures about 50 feet by 40 feet with walls that are between 12-24 inches thick. The roof was made of hand split wood shingles.

The brick was locally hand made. Can you see the differences in the brickwork? The north and east sides of the Tavern are fancier brickwork. Travelers who were more likely to stay at the Tavern were usually coming from the east. This means

they would have seen the fancy side of the building first, giving them a good first impression.

The fan-shaped windows over the door would have been a welcome sight to a weary traveler. Most taverns had two doors, one for the ladies to enter and a separate one for the bar patrons or gentlemen. Can you figure out where the Tavern's second public door was located? If you read the informational exhibits you'll find the answer. As you travel the National Road today, look for old buildings standing close to the road with 2 separate doors. Each of these old buildings were either wagon stands, drovers inns, or stagecoach stops and they all catered to travelers just like you bustling along the National Road.

Please Come Again

We hope you will return to visit the Mount Washington Tavern. Please check at the Visitor Center Desk for when the inside tours begin again.

