

Cousin Emma's Bed & Breakfast

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Winter 2020/2021

Have a sit down and relax in Mayberry.

What a challenging and strange year 2020 has given all of us. I grew up in the midst of the polio epidemic but aside from closing the swimming pool, I don't remember much about it. Of course I was a young child and our parents made a group effort to keep those of us who were friends from diaper days through high school entertained at our different homes. My mother, a talented artist, planned creative activities at two long picnic tables in our backyard. She also encouraged 'Sprinkler Dances' with the garden hose. We kids had something to look forward to several times a week and the anticipation was thrilling.

In comparison, today's children are more sophisticated with technology, lessons, and numerous activities at school, church, and assorted clubs. My thirteen year old 'social bee' granddaughter was so booked into daily activities, that she was devastated when the schools closed and she couldn't see friends. I shutter to think what parents have to juggle if working from home and still trying to entertain their kids of various ages? Most of my friends are retired and some are literally locked down in their retirement villages. Humans are social animals and need interactions with others, even if strangers in the grocery store line.



During tough times like these, it is good to recall pleasant memories. Let me turn back the clock a year...this time last December, 501 S. Main was gloriously decorated

outside and inside -even my car had a wreath on the hood – **Cousin Emma's B&B** hosted a holiday house tour to benefit the Kids To Camp program sponsored by the Salvation Army. For a first-time event in Mayberry, it was a big success. Ticket sales raised 2,500.00 over two-days. Several of my friends joined me and dressed in 'our' versions of yesteryear: long skirts, lacy blouses with high necklines, and crochet lace hats. Three local merchants donated the beautiful holiday cookies and fudge offered to departing guests (thus no crumbs to vacuum...grin). Old Mill Music Company, a family-owned music store in downtown Mount Airy (I was in school and friend of the father of one of the owners)

provided Christmas carols by members of the family. The mother played violin out on the front porch, and a son also fiddled in the front parlor. The daughter pointed out the original uses of various antiques through the house. The older son set up and decorated the magnificent twelve foot Christmas tree between the formal dining room and sun room. He also plays trumpet with the high school marching band. Their entire family, Grandma on the keyboard, the three kids and their parents have a popular band that plays for churches and for tourists at the historic theater venue on Saturday morning. I played clarinet and flute but too many years now separate me from my mediocre musical talent of the past.

If you have viewed the website and photos of the remaining slave cabin you have seen the giant, stately Lacy Elm tree estimated by arborist to be in excess of 300 years old. I've had it trimmed twice since I bought the property and yet it continues to try to reach the sky. In a big wind and rain storm, one of its high limbs visited the side of the cabin and has been stuck there for six weeks with garbage bags stuck into the space around it to keep water out of the cabin. Finding a tree person was not hard but one with provable insurance was....I had to wait in line but it has been worth it. It took them two days to take down forty percent of the tree's height. They had to stop for rain and wind and snow. It won't grow massively during my lifetime but hopefully this pruning will help it last longer. I remember playing around this tree as a child. I just couldn't let it come down.

Visit Mayberry!

**For Mt. Airy happenings,
check us out and plan a visit!
[http://www.visitmayberry.com/
calendar/](http://www.visitmayberry.com/calendar/)**

As children, me and my friends built a three-tiered tree house we built (and our fathers secretly reinforced for more stability). If the girls got up top first, we'd pull up the rope ladder and play dolls and house, but if the boys got up there first, one or more of them would pee down on us and we'd run screaming into the house! The mama here also made super oatmeal raisin cookies and didn't always make us wash our hands before our snack.

Another story: the spooky big basement where the run-away slaves of the underground railroad stayed for a month (full moon to full moon to find their safest path) was also annually converted into a haunted house at Halloween. The parents blindfolded us and took us inside to scream and shiver over Monster eyeballs (peeled grapes), and mummy heads (coconuts).

So, now you better understand why I just HAD to buy this great old historic home and save it from possible demise. *It was truly in pitiful condition and I bought it as is, where is, and if is. I understood all of it but the if is...the attorney said if it burned down before I could saw the doors open to get inside then I owned every one of the ashes! Too late, and I've never regretted it and opening my last big bucket list wish of a bed and breakfast.* How many people get to live their dream for their senior years? Covid beware! I am blessed and with lots of following instructions of the skilled medical people this difficult year will be a conversational piece but not an ongoing nightmare of heartache, death, and challenges of holding on. I believe God has a plan and I know more people are awakened to the reality of Him now.

Meantime, keep Cousin Emma's and Mount Airy on your bucket list....small weddings, High Tea at the Tea, Tales, and Tours by reservations, and Reiki-shares, Drumming circle, and Women of Courage (W.O.C) monthly groups will happily resume when it is safe. I also hope to hold outdoor art shows by local artist and front porch music by many of the very talented local musicians and their groups. We are the ideal location...three doors up from the courthouse, Wally's service station, and the 'jail' and only two short blocks to the center of downtown. Truly we are in the middle of almost everything Andy Griffith fans come here to see.

Check out <http://www.mountairydowntown.org/monthly-calendar.html> for local events and then book your stay at Cousin Emma's. Find me at <https://cousinemmas.weebly.com/>.

Wounded Warriors and their mates or caregivers get the second night free as my personal thanks for their service and sacrifice. Due to a vast amount of heirloom antiques which little hands can't resist, most of our events are not small child friendly. Almost all the furnishings here are family heirlooms, inherited and long cherished items with interesting and sometimes amusing stories. Both sides of my family were 'characters' and as the youngest grandchild, I luckily got to know so many of them....we had our childhoods together: my first and their second, and I was a captive audience who urged them to tell their stories. What an amazing thrill for me and when I look at or use many of these inherited gems I often laugh or at least smile at the triggered memories.



Stay safe and well and remember Cousin Emma's Bed and Breakfast at 501 South Main Street in Mount Airy of "Mayberry"

fame.....conversation and stories are big here and many come over and over to enjoy it again. It is a suburb of Heaven!

Opie's Corner

My older cat went to kitty Heaven and the remaining "full-of- himself" and famous orange tabby, Opie has been clinging to me like velcro. He is also bored and has digressed to kitten mischief again. I finally figured out a plan...With a latch on the storm door to keep him from bolting, I move an antique chair on rollers (popular in early 1900) over to the door each morning and he sits in it and watches the joggers and walkers go past. He is entertained long enough for me to do a load of laundry or bake something or even just sit and read without a lap full of purring cat that wants petting. I'm sort of looking for a calm, pre-loved, friendly dog for both of us....I am told animal adoptions are at an all time high now with people being isolated and lonely. If we're meant to have a dog, then the fates will have to help out. Pets are so in-tuned to human moods and needs and provide unconditional love.



Thanks for reading Cousin Emma's Newsletter. See you soon in Mayberry!
<https://cousinemmas.weebly.com>