

# BEERSHEBA SPRINGS WALKING TOUR

BEERSHEBA SPRINGS ~ SETTLED IN 1833

In 1854, a few months after the chairbedie spring was discovered. In 1854, John Armfield bought the tavern and built a hotel with a two-story front, columns and side wings. By 1858, other cabins had been added, and the Hotel could accommodate 400 guests. Billiards and a bowling alley were available for guests, and a New Orleans band often played for dancing. The Hotel was raided several times during the Civil War and was also set on fire, but it survived. After several owners, in 1941, the Hotel was sold to the United Methodist Church to be used as assembly grounds for Methodist groups. (8)

**2** Lookout (Observatory) - When the Hotel was in its heyday, there was a large wooden, roofed observatory here with wooden steps leading down to the springs.

**3** United Methodist Chapel.

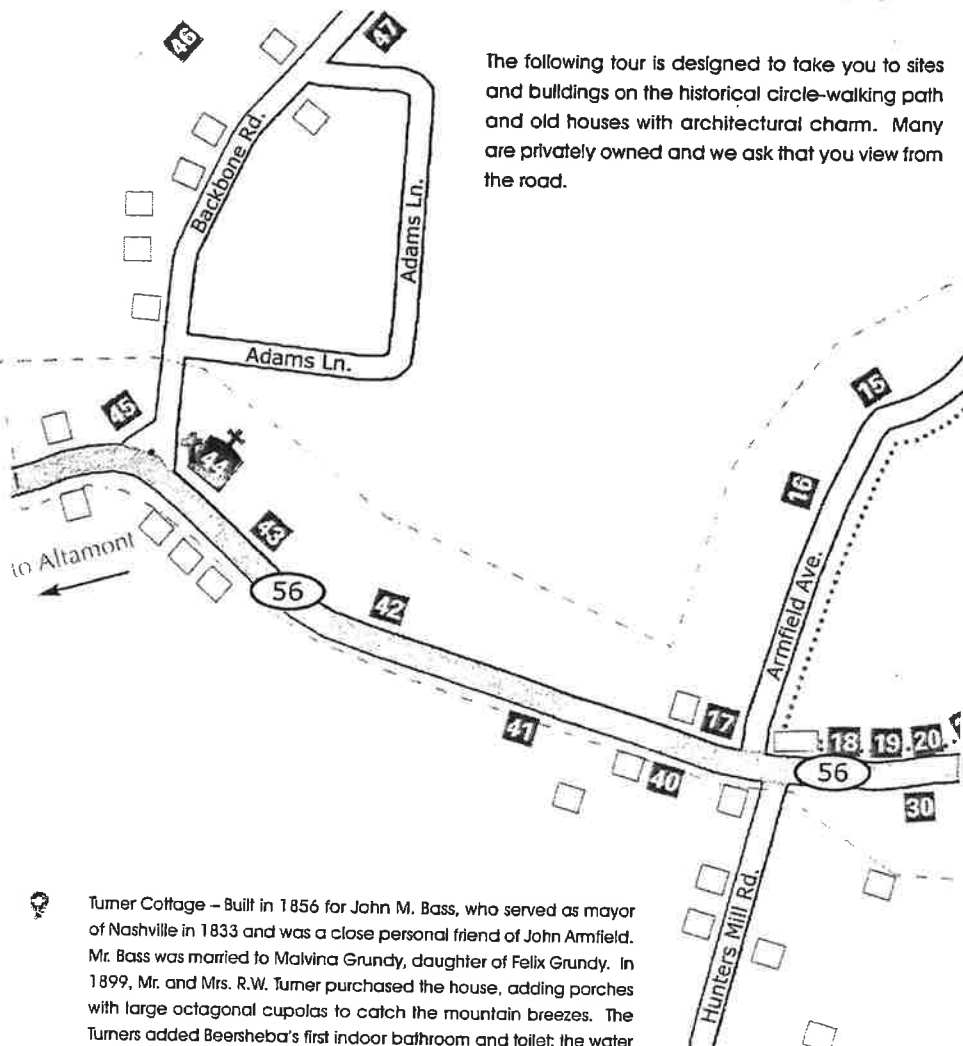
**4** The Burch Cottage - Referred to as the Northcut general store and post office for Beersheba, it was originally operated by Tommy Northcut and then Marvin Brown. The store was closed in 1929, and in 1932, Dr. & Mrs. Lucius Burch purchased the old store and converted it into a mountain home. In 1975, Mr. & Mrs. William Earthman bought the house. (51)

**5** A small stone structure where some of the water from one of the original Beersheba springs shifted with the blasting for TN 56.

**6** Balancing Rock.

**7** Papel Cottage - Built by Dr. Thomas Jefferson Harding of Nashville, whose wife was the daughter of John M. Bass and Malvina Grundy Bass. Dr. Harding was a first cousin of John Harding of Belle Meade Plantation in Nashville. Though the Hotel has a row of brick cottages, this is the only home made from handmade bricks. Dr. Harding sold it to the Mitchell family of Nashville in 1892, who owned it until 1961. Mr. Charles Mitchell, a well-known Nashville confectioner and baker added the side porches and the cupola on the hotel side of the house. The legend is that the cupola was built by a one-armed carpenter. The Ewing Drumright family of Nashville became the owners of the cottage in 1964, and it is currently owned by one of the Drumrights' granddaughters and her family. (49)

**8** The Cliffs - The Armfield-Glasgow Cottage - In the early 1830s, the first house on this site was built with red cedar logs for William White of McMinnville. This house was purchased by John Armfield in 1854, when he bought the hotel. He enlarged the house and added several rooms, including a bedroom wing, porches on three sides, a number of outhouses, several slave quarters, a smoke-house, henhouse, corn crib, a wash house and a stable. It is said that Mrs. Armfield had a fireplace built in one of the privies when the couple lived on the mountain year round during the Civil War. Col. Armfield died in 1871, and Mrs. Armfield held on to the house until 1892, when she sold it to Frank Porterfield of Nashville. Mr. Porterfield sold it to the former U.S. General Gates P. Thurston of Nashville, who died in 1912. The cottage was later sold to the Claude P. Street family of Nashville and again in 1943 to the Glasgow family of Nashville, who continue to enjoy it today. (39)



The following tour is designed to take you to sites and buildings on the historical circle-walking path and old houses with architectural charm. Many are privately owned and we ask that you view from the road.

**9** Turner Cottage - Built in 1856 for John M. Bass, who served as mayor of Nashville in 1833 and was a close personal friend of John Armfield. Mr. Bass was married to Malvina Grundy, daughter of Felix Grundy. In 1899, Mr. and Mrs. R.W. Turner purchased the house, adding porches with large octagonal cupolas to catch the mountain breezes. The Turners added Beersheba's first indoor bathroom and toilet; the water was supplied by three 55-gallon drums hung from the side of the house to catch rain water. In 1946, Sue Turner renovated the Victorian house and ran it as an inn until 1951. Her daughter and son-in-law, Suzanne and John Fassnacht, ran it as a guest house for several years, and it is still owned by the Fassnacht family. (44)

**10** Peach Blossom Cabin - Originally built by Bob and Mary Trabue Meyer, it is made of hand-hewn yellow poplar logs that are 150 years old. Many of the windows and doors came from Peach Blossom on Craighead Avenue in Nashville. Theresa (Mary's cousin) and Norm Carl and their daughter Sarah have owned and loved the cabin since 1986.

**11** Picnic Rock - Built by Charles and Mary Trabue after the Trabue family's Beersheba home, Roundtop, burned in the early 1960s. Roundtop was built by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Trabue Sr., in the early 20s and was the sight of many wonderful Beersheba gatherings. The driveway to Roundtop can be seen just across from Benhame. Legend says that the cabin adjacent to Picnic Rock was used by the previous owner for nightly séances and such. The Trabue children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren continue to enjoy its stunning view and rich history.

**12** Armfield Cemetery - Col. Armfield, along with his old slave, Nathan Bracken, are buried here. Olga Plumacher and her son Hermann are also among those buried here. Take time to see the lovely sculpture of hands created by Joe Fassnacht to commemorate the members of the family who have lived in the Turner Cottage.

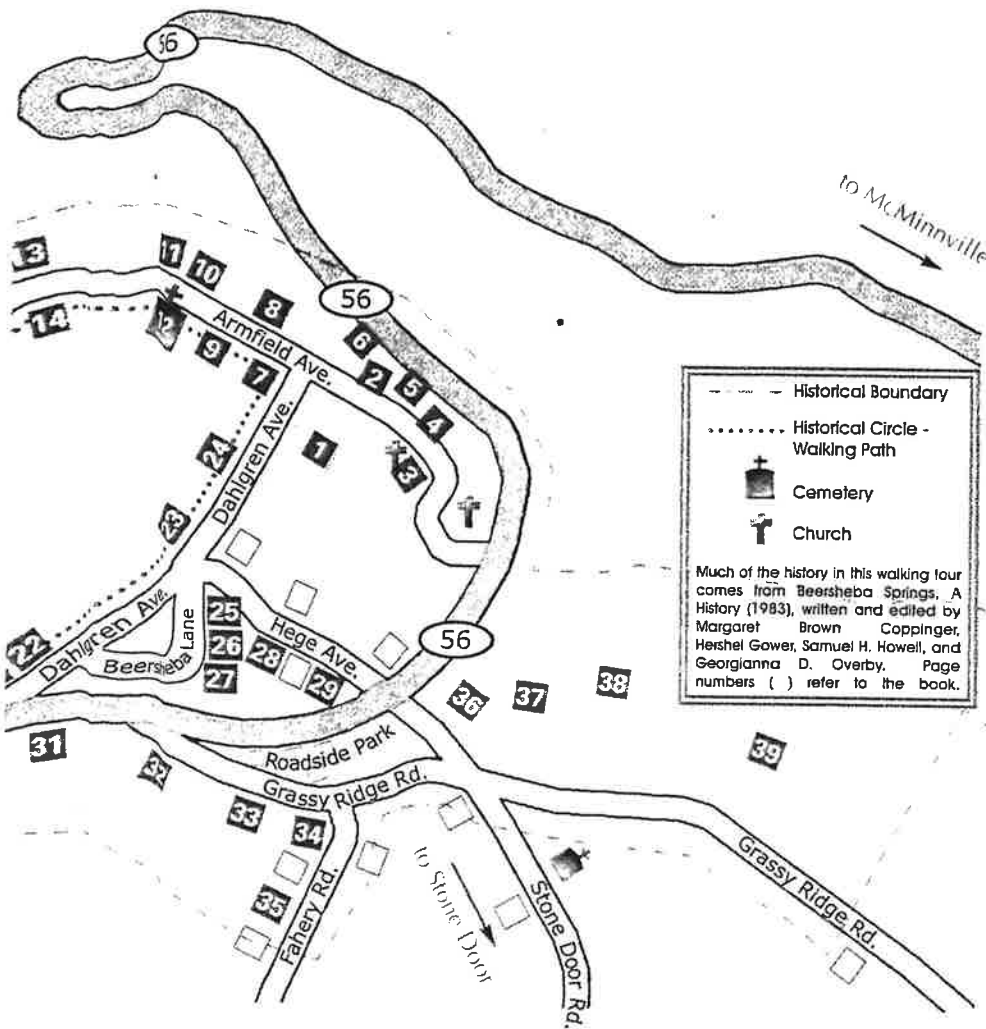
**13** Indian Rock - Originally built hotel with her parents from named because many around the house was owned by a to the Dr. Garrett Adams far

**14** Benhame (translates from the Edna Davenport of McMinn was built with very old logs Mill. Dr. & Mrs. Ben Caldwell a guest wing. The Emanuel home in 2006. (96)

**15** Leonard Tate Cottage - Le poems, was considered the history of Grundy County. T M. Tate and his second wife in Beersheba Springs. He w on November 30, 1989. Th

**16** Wholemeal - Built by the family in 1881. Later Madeline Adams, and it is cousins. In the gulch below tanning vats from the 1800s

**17** Museum - Beersheba Spring pm, May through October.



or Clarksville. In 1924, Mrs. Adam G. Adams, Jr. bought the White House for her seven sons and their children. Mrs. Adams died in 1935, and her descendants still own and love the house. (63)

**23** Nanhaven - The Dahlgren Cottage was built by Armfield for Brigadier General Charles G. Dahlgren of "Dunleith" Natchez, MS, who was the son of the first Swedish Consul to the United States and descendant of King Gustavus Adolphus. He fought in the war but disagreed with the policies of Jefferson Davis. At the end of the war when he found his fortune swept away, he resorted to bankruptcy and moved to New York City to make a fresh start. The house, now known as "Nanhaven," was bought in 1887 by Miss Fannie Thompson and is occupied by the heirs of her sister, Mrs. Alfred E. Howell. (55)

**24** Cagle-Taylor Cottage - This house was built in 1857 by Armfield for Dr. & Mrs. John Waters and was situated on a six acre lot known as "Orchard Tract." The property contained a tannery and a lumber mill in addition to the orchard. The original house, attached for \$1,000 after the war, was used for the post office for a short time. In 1948, the house burned, leaving only the kitchen, breezeway and chimneys, and was rebuilt by Mrs. Davenport of McMinnville. Old logs from two mountain structures were used to complete the house as it is today. (53)

**25** Old Hege Store - This original four-room cottage was used by Mr. and Mrs. John Hege as a residence and store. It has been stated that wagons would pull up to side doors and be loaded with supplies. This property was rented out for many years to various families, including the Henry Brown family. It was bought at auction in 1956 by Robert and Lillian Daniel of McMinnville as part of the Fannie Moffitt estate. It is currently owned by their daughter and son-in-law, Melody and Mike Green.

**26** Beersheba Lane Inn - For many years the house was known as the "Middle Hege Cottage," owned by Ernest Hege. Margaret Coppinger's (local historian, deceased) research revealed that the Sterling Cockrill family built the house c. 1850 to occupy while their summer home was built next door (now Beersheba Porcelain). The cottage is one of the earliest Armfield structures, with hand hewn logs and the typical Armfield front entryway. In 1971, the cottage passed to Ralph Baugh of Nashville, who operated a Bed and Breakfast and restaurant until Spring, 2010. The Inn is now owned by the Howell Adams family. (93)

**27** Beersheba Porcelain - Built in the early 1850s for Confederate aristocrat Sterling Cockrill. Because the Armfield sawmill was not built until 1855, this home's logs are hand-hewn. Phil and Terri Mayhew, along with their son Brad, purchased the house in 1985 and opened their business, Beersheba Porcelain, in 1986. Beersheba Porcelain, a home business, produces and sells beautiful porcelain pottery and jewelry on the front porch.

- continued on back cover -

1912 by Miss Mary Means who ran the property from 1909 through 1901. The property was so named because of the many old logs found there. After her death, the property was sold to Ammie Sikes, whose widow sold it to the Adams family. (95)

Beersheba Lane Inn - Begun by Ernest Hege as "Mountain Home" - Begun by Ernest Hege in 1951. The central two-story section of the house was built with chimney stones from Greeter's Longs. The property was bought in 1973 and added to the family of Oak Ridge, TN purchased the property.

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**18** The Kings - Squared Log House - The logs were brought up the mountain on the Backbone Road.

**19** The Beersheba Springs Library - The Library was built in 1923 for \$650 on the condition that the logs be donated and that the citizens of Beersheba Springs provide free labor. Mrs. Charles N. Burch started collecting books for the library in 1917, but the building was not constructed until 1923 when the land was donated.

**20** Ten Pin Cottage - This cottage was built with lumber from the first bowling alley at the hotel. When a new, larger bowling alley was built at the hotel, the original bowling alley was cut in two and rolled on logs to its present site by Tom Northcut, who added interior walls to convert the structure into a rental cottage. Marvin Brown, who ran the store after Tommy Northcut, probably lived here with his family until they moved to the Hotel in the 1920s. Various families rented Ten Pin until it sold in the early 1960s. In 1980, Mrs. A.G. Adams III and her daughter Faith Young bought Ten Pin. (102)

**21** Tolter House - Built for John Armfield's nephew, Captain Albert Hanner in 1854. Mr. Tom Northcut bought the house in 1879 and used it as a rental house for summer residents. Mr. & Mrs. A.G. Adams, Jr. took a twenty-year lease on the cottage and continued to use it until Mrs. Adams bought the White House next door. The Northcut heirs owned Tolter House until 1956, when it sold to Katherine Chenoweth and Comfort Adams Randolph. It is currently owned by Katherine Chenoweth. (70)

- 28** Hege Avenue Log House – According to the late Margaret Coppinger, the Hege Avenue log house (now owned by Howell Adams) was originally located in a small community located half-way down the mountain on Backbone Road. It was apparently moved to Hege Avenue, perhaps a century or more ago. Its logs are hand-hewn, which places its origin before the Armfield sawmill was built in August 1855. Unfortunately, its builder remains unknown, and it has been uninhabited for over 50 years.
- 29** The Mayhew Cottage – This cottage was built in 1942 by George Thompson for the Reverend and Mrs. T.W. Mayhew. Rev. Mayhew was a participant in the 1941 purchase of the Beersheba Springs Hotel by the United Methodist Church. The cottage is currently owned by Wilbur & Gail Mayhew Cate. Ms. Cate is the sister of Phil Mayhew, owner of the Sterling Cockrill cottage, also known as Beersheba Porcelain.
- 30** Howell Cottage – Given by John Armfield to Bishop Leonidas Polk of Louisiana. Bishop Polk, known as “the fighting Bishop” of the Civil War, was responsible for the defense of Tennessee. This was one of Armfield’s largest cottages. Polk was looking for a site for a new Episcopal University, but Sewanee was chosen as the site rather than Beersheba. After the war, the house was unoccupied until it was acquired by Bettie Curd Howell and her sister Lucy Curd Wilkin in 1873, and it is owned by descendants of Morton and Bettie Howell. (73)
- 31** Argo Cottage – Mountain Home Gifts – This cottage was built for Bishop James H. Otey of Tennessee who was known as the “Good Bishop.” Bishop Otey was a classicist and a scholar who acquired a considerable library. He died in 1863, and after the Civil War, school was held here for the children of Beersheba. In 1898, the house was a boarding house for those who could not afford the Hotel. In the 1950s, the house was purchased by the three Argo sisters, Maggie, Flossie and Sarah. The cottage belongs to the Argo heirs and houses a gift shop called Mountain Home Gift, Crafts & Antiques. (78)
- 32** Hemlock Hall – Built around 1858, Hemlock Hall is an excellent example of Victorian Gothic architecture. Large hemlock trees shade the H-shaped cottage. Virginia Perkins Freeland of Mississippi was the first owner and was able to reclaim it after the Civil War even though it had been occupied and ransacked. Dr. Thomas Black and his family owned the house from 1894 to 1949. Dr. Black was a prominent physician and Mayor of McMinnville. Stories of Mississippi gamblers, blood stained floors, and ghosts are all part of the mystique of the property now owned by the Brockman family of Franklin, TN. (79)
- 33** Eve Cottage – This is one of the original houses and was owned by the family of Dr. Paul Eve, who was one of the greatest and most successful surgeons in the South during the late 1880s to 1940s. It is currently owned by the Stansburys of Nashville. (81)
- 34** Nathan’s Cottage – Nathan Bracken was the faithful slave of John Armfield and was well respected by all. Uncle Nathan purchased the house in 1876 and lived there with his family until he died around 1916. He deeded the house and property to his sons in 1911. Claude Coppinger purchased it in 1922. Mitchell Hobbs owned it until he sold it to Mrs. Davenport of McMinnville. The Carothers of Murfreesboro currently own it. (88)
- 35** Mason-Fahery-Rogers Cottage – Built in 1861 by James Fahery, whose family lived there until 1901. Mrs. Fahery’s brother lived there until 1924, when it was sold to Arnold Kissling. He and his wife lived there until 1928, when Kissling cut down a tree that his wife loved; in her anger, she made him sell the house. Victor and Carrie Coppinger Tate owned it until 1951. According to legend, the house is haunted. (104)
- 36** Nelson-Hopper Cottage – Originally located at the back corner of the Hotel property facing Dahlgren Avenue, this cottage was one of the earliest houses built by Armfield. Rev. S.A. Hopper bought the house in the 1930s. Howell Adams purchased the house in the 1990s and moved it to its current location.
- 37** Hege-Hunerwadel House – Charles Phillips of New Orleans purchased lot #8 from Armfield in 1859. In 1868, Richard Clark of Cleveland, OH (and a partner of J.D. Rockefeller) bought the house. Clark sold the house to John Hege in 1872. The House burned in 1911 and was rebuilt a year later by Hege’s daughter Mina Hunerwadel and her family. Howell Adams currently owns the house and property. (85)
- 38** Lovers’ Leap and Lovers’ Leap Lodge – According to legend, a soldier fell in love with an Indian princess soon after the Revolutionary War. When the Indian chief forbade their marriage, they jumped to their deaths. The oldest settler in the valley verified this story by taking one of the owners to the gravesite, which was marked by two bee hives. (83)
- 39** Kenner-Ferris Cottage – This house was built for Minor Kenner, who was the grandson of the last governor of the Natchez Territory (now Louisiana) when it was under Spanish rule. His brother, Representative Duncan Kenner, a Louisiana planter and amateur racing man who bred fast horses, was sent to France by President Jefferson Davis of the Confederacy to try to get help in ending the Civil War. (89)
- 40** Beersheba Springs Market
- 41** Post Office – Beersheba Springs, TN 37305
- 42** Cagle-Tate Cottage – Built by Sterling Cagle, the grandson of Ben Cagle. One of Sterling’s sons, Charles Cagle, was considered one of the most distinguished artists in the South. He was born in this house in 1907 and attended Beersheba Springs School until moving to Nashville. He attended art classes at Watkins and later Peabody College and later taught at both schools. The house was also occupied by Elsie Tate, a retired schoolteacher for the area. (103)
- 43** Douglas Brown Cottage – Built in 1905 by Thomas Cagle, son of Canova Cagle and grandson of Ben Cagle. Thomas and his wife Gertrude Cagle had 3 children, one of whom was Toby Cagle, inventor of the Cagle brake, which is used now on racing cars and aircraft. Eddie Brown, a Grundy County Justice of the Peace for many years, purchased the house in the early 1920s and lived there until his death in 1946. The Brown family still owns this cottage. (94)
- 44** Grace Chapel – Built and given to the community by Miss Grace McCage of Clarksville in 1897. She became interested in Beersheba after spending several summers here with her parents at the Northcut Cottage, now The White House.
- 45** Dan – Built by Captain Eugen Herman Plumacher, who was responsible for the settlement of the Swiss at Gruetli. He served as United States Consul in Maracaibo, Venezuela, from 1877 until he gave it up because of increasing blindness and deafness in 1910. The house burned under mysterious circumstances one Sunday morning. He rebuilt the house and planned it much like the Hotel, around a square court yard. Still owned by Plumacher descendants. (91)
- 46** Indian Spring.
- 47** Brown Bean Cottage – (Bean Home) – This house was built of old logs brought from the lower Backbone by Reverend J.M. Bean, great grandson of Captain William Bean, the first permanent settler in Tennessee. Dr. Bean studied to be a medical missionary with the intention of going to Africa but decided to remain in the mountains of Tennessee. One of the first funerals he conducted after coming to Beersheba was for Nathan, Armfield’s former slave. The Beans lived here until his death in 1960. Since then the house has been owned by James F. Brown, a nephew of Agnes Bean, and now by his widow Odessa (94)