

Why residents of this N.J. town love this historic home that was just listed for sale



This house in Westville, one of the few remaining historic brick homes in South Jersey, is rich in history and modern comforts.

It sits on River Road, perched above the Delaware River, and has four bedrooms, two full- and two half- bathrooms in 2,500- square-feet. It's listed for sale for \$499,000.

"It's like taking a step back in time, with modern conveniences" said Matt Gayle, who has lived in the home since 2019. "It's the best of both worlds."



The original portion of the home was built in 1746 and a large addition was added in 1819.

The land the home sits on was originally purchased by John Ladd, who was employed by William Penn to survey and layout the city of Philadelphia. Penn offered Ladd one city block for a job well done,

but Ladd asked to be paid in silver, which he used to purchase a plantation that stretched from what is now North Woodbury to Big Timber Creek.

When one of Ladd's daughters married Thomas West they built the West house on River Drive, where they raised three children, including Charles West, who, in 1776, donated 40, 50-foot logs from trees that were on the property to be used for an underwater fortification in the channel between New Jersey and Pennsylvania to impede British shipping on the Delaware and help stop the British from attacking Philadelphia.



The town of Westville was named for Thomas West and the West house is a well-known local landmark. Fourth of July fireworks are set off from across the street.

"The people of Westville hold that house near and dear," said Sheri Klein of Klein Re/Max Community-Williamstown, the listing agent.

The home has been on the market for two weeks and has multiple offers. "Everybody loves the built-ins," she said, "The closet space is unbelievable. And the basement is a big hit."

The basement had a tunnel that, legend has it, that was used for smuggling brandy and other things. The tunnel collapsed when the road was paved and the entrance to it has been bricked over, Gayle said.

The home has been commemorated by the town on Christmas ornaments, coins, plates and mugs, Gayle said, all of which will be conveyed to the new owners.

The home is located 12 minutes from the center city of Philadelphia, "but with breathtaking views of the water from horizon to horizon," he said. "You have all the amenities of the city but you're a complete world apart."

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