

History

Last Updated Thursday, 13 August 2009

A Brief History of The Grey Swan Inn Bed and Breakfast

The Grey Swan

Inn was built in 1902 by prominent Blackstonian Douglas Longstreet Tuggle of R. W. Tuggle & Son Tobacco Company of Blackstone, Virginia, for his bride, Sue Armstrong, and was in the Tuggle family home for eighty-five years.

R. W. Tuggle, father of Douglas Longstreet, was a prominent and respected tobacconist and was instrumental in forming one of the first(if not the first) tobacco co-operatives in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In 'its day' the Tuggle home was a frequent setting for festive gatherings and local social events - drawing prominent guests not only from Blackstone and throughout Virginia, but including visitors from New York, Boston, Atlanta, and the capitals of Europe. We know that R.W. Tuggle and his wife would be pleased that guests continue to grace this home.

Renovation began in the late 1980's on the Tuggle house bringing it up to comfortable 20th century living. It retains the original features that make the house distinctive - original Southern 'yellow pine' and maple hardwood floors, French doors with side lights, and English wainscoting. After renovation was completed, the Tuggle house became The Grey Swan Inn Bed and Breakfast which has served travelers for over 14 years.

Jim and Christine Hasbrouck

Your Innkeepers

Jim and I have been fans of bed and breakfast inns for long time…. Every chance we get, we like to stay in them.

A few years before Jim's retirement in June 2007, we started asking each other: wouldn't it be fun to be innkeepers? So we did the research, attended a couple of aspiring innkeeper workshops, and read all we could about this new endeavor. By the spring of 2007, our vision of being innkeepers began to take form.

We found The Grey Swan Inn Bed and Breakfast on an internet website. Jim took a Saturday and drove down to check things out. Driving into Blackstone, Virginia, Jim thought that this was the kind of town we might like to settle in. When he saw the inn, he gave me a call; "Honey, I think we found our new home!"

The following weekend, we both came back to see The Grey Swan Inn. With the 12 foot ceilings, hardwood floors, large rooms, and wrap-around front porch, I could see just why Jim wanted this place! Well, long story short, we made an offer; we sold our Baltimore home; Jim retired from the Forest Service; I gave notice at my job, and we moved in on August 24th. On September 1st, we opened our doors and welcomed our first guests.

What about us? Jim graduated from Washington State University and joined the Peace Corps. After 2 years in the Marshall Islands, he worked briefly at a lumber mill in Oregon before getting a position at a Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center. That transitioned into a Human Resource position with the USDA Forest Service which Jim made into a 34 year career. The Forest Service took Jim from Oregon to West Virginia (where he met his bride — me!), then to Arkansas, Georgia, and finally Washington, DC.

I was born in L.A. (lower Alabama) but raised in West Virginia. My mother was a fabulous cook and homemaker who passed on her skills of cooking and hosting to me. By the time I was 8 years old, I had already prepared a meal for our family. I still have the Mary Alden's cookbook that I received as a child.

Not knowing what I wanted to be when I grew up, I have had a variety of positions, mostly in the health care field as supportive staff. I have enjoyed helping others resource, organize, and problem solve.

Entertaining and hosting has been our strong suit. We enjoy meeting the new guests and greeting our returning friends!

"Thank you for your hospitality. We had such a wonderful time here. We are looking forward to our next stay." K., Virginia Beach, VA

[Back to Top](#)