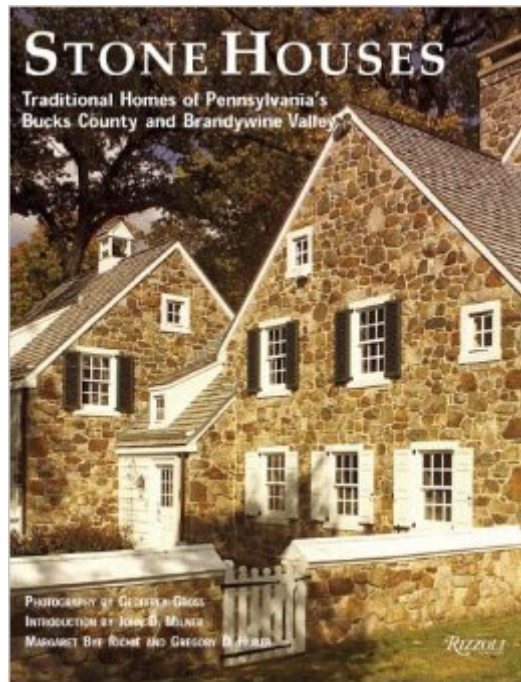


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Stone Houses: Traditional Homes Of Pennsylvania's Bucks County And Brandywine Valley



Synopsis

Stone Houses: Traditional Homes of Pennsylvania's Bucks County and Brandywine Valley is a unique presentation of beloved building traditions in one of the most charming and historically significant regions in the nation. Houses, barns, and outbuildings dating from the colonial and Federal periods, built with local stone predominantly in an English Cotswold vernacular style, represent a form that has become popular across the nation. Geoffrey Gross's stunning photographs document a remarkable collection of early buildings, including the John Chad House (circa 1720), Peter Wentz Farmstead (circa 1758), and Buckingham Friends Meeting House (1768), as well as more recent designs, in part inspired by such traditional homes, by architects R. Brognard Okie, G. Edwin Brumbaugh, and John D. Milner. Part of the original Pennsylvania Colony founded in March of 1681 by William Penn, the region encompassing Bucks County and the Brandywine Valley is important not only for its history as an early English settlement in the New World, but also for its role as a crucial site in the struggle for American independence. The evidence for this is obvious in the story of its houses. Some notable examples include the Thompson-Neely House at Washington Crossing, in which, it is said, Washington's officers were billeted during the famous night of his crossing of the Delaware, and Pennsbury Manor, the reconstructed home of William Penn. With its authoritative text and exquisite full-color photography, Stone Houses is a beautiful record of a historically rich regional building tradition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book contains a wonderful pictorial view of stone houses, better than I've ever seen. It includes all forms of construction and gives very informative descriptions of each style. The history related here is invaluable to the reader, as it takes you back in time. The pictures are full color and very articulately done. I found the colors presented in the homes helpful to me in restoring our stone house, built in the 1830's. This book is more than a "coffee table" book, it's a history lesson.

Stone Houses: Traditional Homes of Pennsylvania's Bucks County and Brandywine Valley. Authors: Margaret Bye Richie, Geoffrey Gross, Gregory Huber. 208 pages. 2005. I picked up this book from the library. At the library I thumbed through the book and was very impressed with the photography. I knew from previous readings that stone house construction was more common in the Keystone State than any other of the original colonies. Stone construction was used in the construction of Georgian designs which in other colonies were constructed of wood or brick. This extensive use of stone makes Pennsylvania somewhat unique. This book did little expand my knowledge on the how or the why of stone construction. Surprisingly only about 70 of the houses in this book are actually constructed of stone, others are built of brick. Not every building in this book is a house and several of these buildings were constructed in the 20th Century. Not exactly what I was looking for when I checked the book out of the library. While the book was not exactly what I hoped it would be I will say that the photographs are beautiful, especially the interiors. The accompanying text tends to focus on provenance and therefore who and when. The text provides little as to the why or the distinctive features. A good book as a pretty coffee table book.

I have always thought the stone used on houses in the Philadelphia area was beautiful; it's warm and elegant. This book has crisp images and well researched, interesting text on these wonderful homes. If you have any interest in this subject then I highly recommend this book, you won't be disappointed.

This is a very pretty book and very well photographed. The choice of houses, however, left something to be desired and the writeups on the houses themselves were thin and more akin to a puffy decorator magazine than any kind of detailed study. The book also had utterly no floorplan sketches for any of the homes, which is really almost mandatory for an architecture book. Some of the houses selected were not of any particular merit nor were they even old. Most of the write-ups on the various houses had almost nothing to say about the architectural detail and history nor any kind of regional or sub-regional analysis. Some photos were selected obviously because they were

"pretty" but had utterly nothing to do with Pennsylvania -- the New England chest on the back cover is a good example. It's a nice book to flip through but don't expect great depth.

As I was working in the Brandywine region for six months, I found this book to be helpful as a guide to some of the nicer historic houses in Chester County. I essentially used it as a travel guide. What I believe is the unifying factor of many, if not all of the houses described is that they were restoration projects connected with at least one of the authors, who is an architect. They are very fine projects, but none-the-less are self-referential.

Wonderful photos and very interesting and informative text. Exceptional detail photos of insides of dwellings. Nice to see my family homes done so well, ie The Pusey house and Primitive Hall.

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