

Buhl Mansion Guesthouse & Spa, Sharon



Buhl Mansion built on romance

FRANK BUHL WAS BORN AND RAISED IN MICHIGAN'S HIGH SOCIETY. A son of Detroit's first Republican mayor, Frank's family tree entwined with those of Henry Ford, Hiram Walker and Sigmund Zeigfeld. After Frank's father sent him to Sharon to manage his steel plant, Frank met and fell in love with Julia Forker. They married in 1888.

Although he wanted to move Julia back to Detroit with him, her fortitude and love of the "hills of Sharon" kept them firmly rooted in the Shenango Valley. Frank's mother insisted that if he must live in Sharon, he should build his beautiful bride a castle for her wedding present. And thus, the legend of romance begins.

Their home – where the Buhl Mansion guesthouse is now located – was completed in 1896. It was designed by famous architect Charles Owsley, who also designed the Mercer County Courthouse, St. John's Episcopal Church in Sharon and many buildings in downtown Youngstown.

The couple were childless and when both passed away, Julia's nephew Henry Forker inherited the home in 1936. It was kept a single family home for decades, then it was converted to upscale apartments.

It was sold in the '70s and went through a revolving door of owners. This majestic Richardsonian Romanesque castle, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, tragically suffered years of abuse and neglect. One hundred years later, in 1996, another prominent Shenango Valley couple, Jim and Donna Winner, stepped in and took on a labor of love to restore the mansion into what is now one of America's most luxurious bed and breakfasts.



Jim and Donna Winner

Recently Buhl Mansion was named Top 10 Most Romantic Inns of America, an honor that pays tribute to Mrs. Winner's talented designing skills and her unparalleled dream of exceeding every guest's expectations of luxury and service.

The luxurious rooms have fireplaces, Jacuzzis, a bottle of champagne, fresh fruit, cheese and crackers. Guests are greeted with champagne, valet parking and bell service, and enjoy afternoon tea, champagne and hors d'oeuvre receptions, turndown service, breakfast in bed and a complimentary limousine shuttle to Tara for dinner.

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The Buhl Mansion Spa is open to the public seven days a week and offers the epitome of indulgence as guests sip champagne and choose from more than 100 pampering services. The most popular package is the Romance Package: Couples massages, facials, nails, lunch and champagne.

Known for its spectacular castle weddings and corporate retreats, the ultimate in royal treatment comes with the inn's Castle for a Day Package, which guarantees uninterrupted seclusion in the mansion and acres of beautiful gardens.

Whether you visit for the day spa, romantic getaway or special event, luxury and pampering are the key elements at Buhl Mansion Guesthouse and Spa, where guests are treated like royalty in a magnificent turn-of-the-century castle. Let the legend of romance continue.

Buhl Mansion Guesthouse & Spa is located at 422 East State St., Sharon

Info: 724-346-3046, 866-345-BUHL (2845) or visit www.BuhlMansion.com

Submitted by General Manager Laura Ackley. Photos contributed.