

The Flintstone Inn — *Travelers Hotel Along the National Road in Flintstone, Maryland*

Written by: **Dan Whetzel**



In the mid 19th century dozens of hotels served travelers along the Cumberland and National Roads in western Maryland. The subsequent construction of railroads and new highways reduced traffic along the old turnpikes causing the inns to be unprofitable and isolated—changing times took a toll on the road houses and many closed or were converted to alternative uses.

One of the oldest of the remaining historical buildings is located in Flintstone, Maryland, where travelers and families

slept for more than 170 years. The Flintstone Inn, or Piper Hotel, is said to have been erected in 1807 by John Davis, a large landowner.

Only a few written accounts of the property have been published, including a summary by the Maryland Historical Trust that noted the Flintstone Inn received a National Register designation. A summary provided by the Trust seems to be based on an article written by Helen Hinkle Straw that appeared in *The Heritage Press* in 1972.



PHOTO COURTESY DAVE KYLE

Good morning

FLINTSTONE HOTEL

Flintstone, Md.
Erected - 1807
Route 40
12 Miles East of Cumberland, Md.

Breakfast Suggestions

No Substitutions, Please!

No. 1 — 20c
Choice of Cereal
Toast, Dry or Buttered
Coffee

No. 2 — 30c
Choice of Fruit or Juice
and Choice of Cereal
Toast, Dry or Buttered
Coffee

No. 3 — 30c
Choice of Fruit or Juice
One Egg (any style)
Toast, Dry or Buttered
Coffee

OUR SPECIAL — 35c
Choice of Cereal and
Two Eggs (any style) or
Ham or Bacon with One Egg
Toast, Dry or Buttered
Coffee

No. 4 — 45c
Choice of Cereal, Fruit or Juice
Two Eggs with Ham or Bacon
Toast, Dry or Buttered
Coffee

FRESH CRISP CEREALS

With Milk - 10c	With Cream - 15c
Kellogg's Corn Flakes	Pep 30% Bran Flakes
All-Bran	Wheat Krispies
Rice Krispies	Kellogg's Whole Wheat Biscuit
Kellogg's 40% Bran Flakes	Wheat Krumbles

SLICED BANANA WITH CEREAL 5c EXTRA
(All ready-to-eat cereals served from sanitary individual packages.)

EGGS AND MEATS

(Toast served with these orders)

Two Eggs, Boiled, Fried or Scrambled	20
Two Eggs with Bacon or Ham	30
One Egg with Bacon or Ham	20
Bacon	20
Ham	20

BEVERAGES

Fresh Hot Coffee	05	Ice Cold Milk	05
Hot Tea	05	Buttermilk	05
Hot Chocolate	10		

FRUITS AND JUICES

Fresh Berries (in season)	
Sliced Banana with Cream	15
Melons (in season)	10
Grapefruit (half)	10
Sliced Orange	10
Prunes	10
Orange Juice	10
Pineapple Juice	10
Tomato Juice	10

TOAST AND ROLLS

Bread or Roll	05
Sweet Roll	5-10
Fresh Doughnuts (2)	05
Cinnamon Toast	15
Toast, Dry or Buttered	10
Milk Toast	15

• A HEARTY BREAKFAST STARTS THE DAY RIGHT •

This menu was used at the Flintstone Hotel in the late 1930s. COURTESY DAVE KYLE

According to the article, John Davis erected the original brick building as a family dwelling. Nearby mineral springs added value to the property and became an attraction for visitors to Flintstone. Recognizing the potential commercial value of mineral springs along the Cumberland Road likely convinced Mr. Davis to convert the family dwelling into an inn. The mineral water proved to be of such high quality that the property became known as the “Springs Hotel.”

Ms. Hinkle noted the inn attracted guests from western Maryland, as well as travelers from urban areas. And for those western county residents who wished to enjoy the benefits of spring water without traveling to Flintstone, Haas and Walker of Cumberland, Maryland, bottled and sold the product in 5 gallon containers.

John Piper acquired the property in 1846, and the business became known as Piper’s Hotel. It was during Piper’s ownership the inn gained notoriety as a summer resort—summer



This brick residence with a historical marker on the front porch, was the original Davis Store. The store served the residents of Flintstone, Maryland, and was a complementary business to the Flintstone Inn, situated across the street. PHOTO COURTESY DAN WHETZEL

time guests included those from metropolitan areas that arrived in Cumberland on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to be transported by coach to Flintstone.

The hotel remained in the Piper family until 1901 when it was sold to Dr. Alvin Twigg who apparently discontinued the hospitality business sometime during the late 1930s. Upon Dr. Twigg's death, his daughter, Lena, converted the dwelling into rental units that operated into the 1970s.

The original 2½ story building underwent renovations and additions over the decades, causing the complex to become an eclectic mixture of styles. One impressive feature was the ballroom that encompassed the width of the building and lead to a summer garden. Each of the 22 rooms utilized a fireplace, while a tavern located on the east side quenched the thirst of all who entered. A variety of outbuildings supported hotel services.

The most noteworthy associated structure from the original time period is "Davis' Store," a small brick residence situated across the street from the inn. The store originally served as a complementary business to the inn and a source of goods for Flintstone residents. A historical marker can be noted on the front porch.

Well known visitors to the Flintstone Inn are said to have been Henry Clay, Theodore Roosevelt, the Marquis de Lafayette, and Meshack Browning, author of *Forty-four Years in the Life of a Hunter*. It is likely that other notable personalities lodged at the inn because of the Cumberland Road's importance to westward travel.

Recent decades have not been kind to the old inn. No longer do weary travelers anticipate the mineral waters and hospitality offered by proprietors. Today, only an occasional history buff or curious traveler along the old pike will give pause when passing the Flintstone Inn.

The Flintstone Inn is located in Flintstone, Maryland on Maryland Route 144, commonly called "Old Route 40."

For additional information see:

- Heritage Press, 1972
- Sam Shawyer, Cumberland Times, March 28, 2001
- Matthias Lowry, "Flintstone Hotel" 2020
- The Maryland Historical Trust
- Allegany County: A History, 1976
- Albert Feldstein, Tour Guide to Historic Sites in Allegany County, 1993