



Do You Remember This Sign?

Silver Tree Inn, As It Was and How It Started

Written by: Dan Whetzel

New Photography by: Lance C. Bell, PPA

Nemacolin Lodge was one of Deep Creek Lake's first commercial structures having been built in the late 1930's. The log style lodge contained three massive native stone fireplaces and towering walls constructed from trees cut on the property. The Main Lodge of Camp Nemacolin, as it was called by 1948, was the creative endeavor of Dr. Thomas G. Bennett, Ph. D., who opened the camp along the Glendale Road as a service facility for troubled youth. The original structure constructed by Dr. Bennett measured 97 feet x 63 feet and was located on 18 acres of land. Its name was derived from a Delaware Chief who spent considerable time in Western Maryland during the mid 18th Century.



This old log cabin, found on the original property, is believed to be part of the Nemacolin camp.

We would like to thank Elaine McDonald for her help with the history and old family photos on these two pages.

Dr. Bennett's original intention of hosting approximately 100 troubled youth at Nemaocolin proved to be unsuccessful and a decision was made to convert the building into a hunting lodge. A few years later, Nemaocolin operated as an inn with only two entrees on the menu and customers had to provide a two day notice before dining at the facility. Dr. Bennett decided to sell Nemaocolin Lodge to Charles Wheatley and an associate in 1970. Nemaocolin subsequently saw service as a restaurant during the next four years. In 1974, Ted and Celeste Lascaris, who developed the adjacent Alpine Village property near Route 219 in the early 1960's, purchased Nemaocolin and closed it for extensive renovations that would last for two years. It was important to Ted and Celeste to maintain as much of the original lodge as possible. They spent many hours searching for a craftsman to clean and restore the logs while protecting their naturally aged patina. The Lascaris family provided the creative energy that transformed Nemaocolin Lodge into a first class dining facility.

Ted Lascaris decided several structural changes to the lodge were in order. First, the expansive, centrally located porch was enclosed to create a dining room. More difficult changes were required at the bottom of the lodge when dirt and rock were blasted to create space for two additional dining rooms. A bar, featuring a circa 1880 marble, wood, and glass back that was acquired from an Oakland barbershop, added excitement to the project.

Certain rustic features of the lodge, including the three fireplaces, were kept for ambiance but needed monitoring and maintenance. The towering stone flues required that fires be started by 2:00 pm so that a sufficient draft could be created by the time chefs arrived and activated kitchen fans. If the flues were not drafting properly by

cooking time, the kitchen fans would draw smoke from the flues into the building. Stained glass fixtures were used throughout the lodge and provided an aesthetic consistency. Upon completion of renovations in May 1976, the building opened as Silver Tree Inn.

After completing the restoration, the creative culinary process began by collecting family recipes and modifying them for restaurant-size quantities. Final preparations included training staff, designing menus, and initiating advertising programs for Deep Creek Lake visitors.

Ted and Celeste Lascaris operated the business until 1980 when they sold it to their four children. While Silver Tree ownership formally changed, the parents remained available by providing assistance and business advice to their children. Ownership of Silver Tree remained in the Lascaris family until 2000 when a decision was made to sell that business and related lakefront property.



The original Silver Tree Inn before any renovations or updates, prior to 1980.

Silver Tree Enterprises purchased approximately five acres of property that contained Silver Tree Inn. The new owners carried out limited renovations to the existing building but no major changes occurred on the property at that time. In the Fall of 2003, the owner of Silver Tree Enterprises sold his lakefront business to DCL Properties.

Silver Tree Inn Today and Silver Tree Suites

The current property owners retained the Silver Tree Enterprises business name but came prepared with a new vision for further development at the historic site. DCL's business plan featured the Silver Tree Inn by preserving many of its rustic qualities including the log walls and stone fireplaces. Nemaocolin Lodge also inspired DCL developers to incorporate features of the original log structure into new buildings constructed adjacent to it.

Silver Tree Suites, as the new accommodations came to be called, was the dream of an original DCL partner who always admired the Deep Creek Lake area and believed that a first class hotel or condominium there would be successful. While the partner's passing did not allow his dream to be realized, the suites that he and his partners envisioned came to fruition in May, 2006, when 51 units were offered for sale. According to DCL partner Sam Housley, the architects were influenced by the original Nemaocolin building as they designed the site. A relaxing atmosphere was created for guests to enjoy by incorporating exposed timbers and natural stone throughout the suites. Sam Housley comments that, "Silver Tree Suites offers vacationers a destination. We offer comfortable lodging, restaurant facilities, an outside bar, and along the front of the suites a large deck that overlooks the Silver Tree Marina."

While recent amenities have increased the possible number of experiences for guests, the historic Silver Tree Inn continues to offer a first class dining experience that includes a full menu with entrees available after 4:30 pm. Reservations are accepted.



*Newly updated restaurant, inside and outside —
much the same look as it has had for years.*



The new grand lobby and entrance area, overlooking Deep Creek Lake, are situated between the Silver Tree Inn and the Silver Tree Suites. High ceilings, wood and slate floors, and the use of finely crafted woods and stone give a solid lodge atmosphere.

Interior design is by Elements of Design, located at Deep Creek Lake, 301-245-4589. The designers are Ellen Housley, ASID and Michelle Geis, ASID. The "Mission Style" decor is rich in texture, design, and color, but not overpowering. It makes a very simple statement compared to the massive structure and stone of the grand lobby.



Above: Ground view of grand lobby showing one of three stone fireplaces, and stone floor with Deep Creek Lake inlaid in stone.

Left: Grand lobby overhead showing detail of Lake in stone.

Right top: Rear view of Silver Tree Suites before completion of construction. The side faces Deep Creek Lake with a gorgeous view from the ground level and the many balconies.

Right center: Front view of Silver Tree Inn (far right) and Silver Tree Suites. These photos were taken before construction was complete. By the time of the printing of this book construction should be near completion.

Bottom: A peaceful sunrise at Silver Tree Marina. Little has changed at the marina; still offering rentals, as well as docking.

*For more information visit
www.silvertreecenter.com*

*For the restaurant, call 301-387-4040,
booking parties, receptions and reservations.*

*Accepting bookings for Silver Tree Suites in
early May.*

