

*This article is provided by Harrison's Catering, a State College caterer with more than 12 years of experience catering weddings and related festivities in the Centre Region. Here they offer ideas and recommendations for some popular reception venues in Centre County. Harrison's caters weddings in many creative locations as well as within the Hilton Garden Inn where Harrison's is the exclusive caterer. Harrison's Catering has been voted "Best Caterer" for six years running by the readers of State College Magazine (2005-10) and named Best of the Knot 2010 & 2011.*

## Distinctive Event Venues in Happy Valley

There are plenty of unique places in our region to consider for your upcoming wedding and countless locales away from the more traditional hotel settings. Harrison's has had the pleasure of creating delicious menus and unique catering ideas at each of the following locations that have resulted in wonderful memories for many, satisfied bridal couples and their guests. Choosing any of these will mean a successful and memorable event for all involved.

**Earlstown Manor** is a favorite Penn State bed and breakfast located on 10 private acres just off of Route 45, 8 short miles from Penn State University. Beautiful gardens, inviting patios and rolling lawn make for a wonderful event setting. There is plenty of room for a tent to be erected to provide shade from the sun or shelter in the event of inclement weather. The owners are extremely accommodating and would welcome discussing options and ideas with you. They can comfortably accommodate up to 200 people. During your wedding weekend, you have the luxury of having the entire Manor to yourselves. Each Bridal party reserves all of the guest rooms and Carriage House for a minimum of two nights. This allows your group to comfortably share in the entire weekend together and take advantage of the location just miles from State College, PA and Penn State University.

<http://www.earlstownmanor.com>

**The Bed & Breakfast at the Rock Garden** is located on beautiful property located between the village of Lemont and historic Boalsburg. The house was constructed in 2005 and still presents new because of the meticulously maintained Inn and surrounding gardens. The Innkeepers also own and operate the Rock Garden Perennial Nursery. The farmhouse style home sits on 17 acres nestled between Tussey Mountain and Mt. Nittany. Outside your guests can gather under the tents in the backyard or visit on the courtyard. In the front you can surround yourself with the sweet scent of the flowers among the beauty of the Rock Garden. Mt. Nittany provides a memorable setting for your event and pictures. The Rock Garden can provide a private setting for up to 150 guests outdoors or 50 guests indoors.

<http://www.bedandbreakfastattherockgarden.com>

**The Arboretum at Penn State** has been a long awaited venue on Penn State's University Park campus. The first phase of H. O. Smith Botanic Gardens has been completed and sits on approximately 35 acres fronting Park Avenue with 17,000 individual plants representing over 700 species planted in 2009. Planting continued last spring and both annuals and perennials were integrated in the beds flanking the Joan Milius Smith Esplanade. There are several options for weddings and events, such as the terrace of the Overlook Pavilion, the Event Lawn

or the Oasis Garden area. This is a stunning wedding location with many guest-count options. This venue is booking quickly call early to get your preferred date.

<http://www.arboretum.psu.edu/index.html>

**General Potter Farm** is a beautifully restored, 1830's bank barn in Potters Mills, PA. The upstairs of this spacious barn has exposed beams, an open loft, original wide-plank floors and whitewashed walls. The downstairs features meticulously reappointed stone walls for a cozy "pub" atmosphere. The layout of the facility is perfect for events of all sizes and has plenty of parking surrounding it. Many couples are incorporating local sourcing into their wedding themes and this unique barn is a wonderful setting for a locally-styled Pennsylvania wedding.

<http://www.generaltpotterfarm.com/index.html>

**Centre Furnace Mansion** is a restored and furnished ironmaster's home listed on the National Register of Historic Places and maintained by the local Historical Society. Facilities available for use at the Mansion include the Hearth Room (the lowest level), the gardens and grounds, a small modern kitchen, and two wheelchair-accessible restrooms. The Hearth Room can accommodate approximately 40 people for a sit down lunch or dinner, and no more than 70 people for a standing reception. For larger affairs, the Mansion staff recommends tent rental to hold the function outside on the grounds, typically in the flat area by the sycamore tree, the gazebo and Margery & Rae's garden or over the parking lot. Like all of the other venues mentioned, an event here means using a caterer and arranging to have dishes and utensils brought in for the affair. Tents, chairs and tables will also need to be arranged for any large event at the Mansion.

<http://www.centrecountyhistory.org/mansion/mansionuse.html>

**The University Club**, located just off College Avenue and adjacent to campus, is another locale full of Penn State University history. The University Club is both a residence and a lovely venue for banquets and receptions. The resident members consist of men and women who are affiliated with Penn State, either as Graduate Students or as Faculty/Staff members. Recently renovated meeting rooms and elegant banquet facilities make The University Club perfect for upscale wedding receptions, cocktail receptions and other special events. You can contact the manager for further information at [uclubmanager@gmail.com](mailto:uclubmanager@gmail.com)

<http://www.uclubstatecollege.com>

**Pasquerilla Spiritual Center on the Penn State Campus** has been the site of many beautiful ceremonies over the years, typically 70 each year. Services of all sizes, traditions, and faiths are welcome and can be accommodated in the large Worship Hall in the Spiritual Center or in a smaller, more intimate setting in the Eisenhower Chapel or Meditation Chapel. To use this venue there must be some connection with Penn State as a student, alumni, faculty, employee or immediate family of an employee or trustee.

<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/spiritual/weddings>

Although a bit farther from State College, the **Civil Engineering Lodge at Stone Valley Recreation Area** is a wonderful place to consider for a quiet, relaxed wedding reception. Cabins surround the area behind the Lodge and give it a rustic, casual feel. The lodge is well maintained and has a nice kitchen for your caterer to work out of efficiently. For one wedding that Harrison's catered, the bride & groom rented the cabins in back for their families, and had a pancake breakfast the next morning. The view of Lake Perez is dazzling and this wooded setting is peaceful and picturesque. Seating is available for groups up to 80 inside the building, but many other creative options have been done with many more people - from under tent served reception-style to casual picnics there are many options to consider.

[http://www.psu.edu/Stone\\_Valley/sv\\_lodge.shtml](http://www.psu.edu/Stone_Valley/sv_lodge.shtml)

Play ball! The perfect place for wedding festivities for the ultimate sports fan is **Medlar Field at Lubrano Park**. There are several areas of the park available for your special gathering. Event spaces include Porter Gardens, an 8,500 square foot fenced-in grass area located near the front gates of the ballpark. The Ballpark Concourse allows use of the first-level concourse inside the ballpark and offers cover from the weather. The Picnic Area, located in the left-field corner, holds up to 600 people. Both of these settings offer unrivaled views of Mt. Nittany. Up to 50 people can comfortably access the Spikes Home Clubhouse outside of the New York-Penn League season. The space is perfect for small receptions and rehearsal dinners.

[http://web.minorleaguebaseball.com/team1/page.jsp?ymd=20100622&content\\_id=11443362&vkey=team1\\_t1174&fext=.jsp&sid=t1174](http://web.minorleaguebaseball.com/team1/page.jsp?ymd=20100622&content_id=11443362&vkey=team1_t1174&fext=.jsp&sid=t1174)

State College's newest wedding venue is **Key Wedding Centre**. Scheduled to open on North Atherton Street in spring 2011, this facility will offer a modern chapel seating for 190 guests. The setting also provides a flexible reception space if you prefer to keep your guests all on one site without traveling to another destination after the ceremony. This striking stone building formerly housed a local printing company for many years and then most recently was a Not Just Cabinets. This promising event venue is close and convenient with accommodating service.

[http://www.keychurch.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=573&Itemid=174](http://www.keychurch.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=573&Itemid=174)

**Marrara's Mountain Lodge** is a private, family-owned facility conveniently located in the beautiful mountains, between State College and Altoona, in Port Matilda, PA. It's just a short drive off Route 220 or Route 350. This natural setting includes open grassy fields, wooded forests, rolling mountains, and a one-acre spring-fed pond. The Lodge's rustic environment features a large floor space, a commercial kitchen inside, a sun deck, and gazebo outside. The Lodge is handicapped accessible, and has plenty of parking, as well as horseshoe and volleyball areas for more casual occasions.

<http://www.commedge.com/marraras>

**Tussey Mountain's** refurbished pond-side pavilion is a great location for a casual outdoor event. The Pavilion is 95 ft long and has 16 picnic tables suitable for large and small weddings. Keep in mind that there are many outdoor activities on-site that are open to the public including go-karts, golf, driving range, batting cages, volleyball, horseshoes, paddleboats, a skateboard park and a catch-and-release fishing pond. The grounds are lighted

for evening use until 10pm. This could be an ideal place for a relaxed rehearsal dinner that will especially allow the groom and groomsmen to unwind before the big day.

<http://www.tusseymountain.com>

Other great locations include local parks such as Spring Creek Park, Sunset Park, and Tudek Park as well as local farms and the local fire halls like Bellefonte and Boalsburg. If you can picture it, chances are you can create it in the beautiful Centre region!

*Harrison's Catering would welcome the opportunity to assist you in planning your own memorable event. Contact them (e-mail pop-up [chefmade@aol.com](mailto:chefmade@aol.com)) to discuss the countless possibilities. See menus and catering resource information at [www.HarrisonsMenu.com](http://www.HarrisonsMenu.com) Happy Planning!*