

# Looks deceiving <sup>7/5/06</sup> on pre-Civil War house

*The well-kept home was built by a riverboat captain along Lovers Leap Road.*

## GILPIN

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FOR THE VALLEY NEWS DISPATCH

Looking at the red brick house along Lovers Leap Road, about a mile outside of Leechburg, you would never guess its age.

The brick is in good shape, the lawn well kept. The paint looks new and, since last week, it has a brand new roof.

The home looks like many others in the area: not new but not old, either.

Looks can be deceiving. The colonial-style home was built before the Civil War. Robert Fiscus, a member of the Leechburg Historical Society, said that the man who built the house was a captain on a riverboat.

“Captain Henry Truby built the farm and the house right before the Civil War,” Fiscus said. “He was a captain on a packet (passenger) boat on the Pennsylvania Canal that ran through Leechburg and also Tarentum.”

Verle and Mary Bevan own the home, but also live part time in New Kensington. He is a former city mayor.

“My grandfather, James Clark, bought the whole farm when I was

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Crews work to replace the roof on a pre-Civil War era home in Gilpin.



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Verle and Mary Bevan show off their century-old pump piano in their pre-Civil War home in Gilpin.

# Look of pre-Civil War house deceiving

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5 years old," Mary Bevan said, who mentioned that the land was called Steel Farm before he bought it. "I've been living here off and on for the past 75 years."

Mary explained that the farm is a total of 105 acres — she owns the house and three acres, and her brother, Robert Clark,

owns the barn and the other 102 acres.

Mary Bevan also said that there is a half-acre garden behind the house, and that her father once had a 1,000-tree peach orchard on the farm.

The home looks much the same as it did 100 years ago, although the modern roof is a departure from the wooden shin-

gles that would have been used when the home was built.

Inside, the Bevans maintain the period architecture and decor including the century-old pump piano.

"There are eight rooms in the house, with a fireplace in every room," Mary said. "There is an open fireplace in the kitchen — in the old days, people used to cook their meals in it."