

<https://thefnp.com/tncms/asset/editorial/dd2cf6bb-49d9-43d0-9bdb-15b25cc56c9e/>

CENTERPIECE HOT

Piccadilly's Pub: From vacant warehouse to community fixture

By BRIAN BREHM The Winchester Star

Apr 27, 2026

1 of 3



Piccadilly's Public House and Restaurant co-owners Carol, left, and Dale Massey pose for a photo in their with Events Coordinator Nannette Boden, center. The cooler in the background was salvaged by Dale Massey during a convenience store demolition in 2005, and he designed the entire bar around it.

BRIAN BREHM/The

Some establishments become so popular and engrained in their communities that it feels like they've always been there. Such is the case with [Piccadilly's Public House and Restaurant](#), which seems like it has been around for much longer than its 20 years.

Co-owners Carol and Dale Massey sat down recently to talk about how they were able to take a former grocery warehouse built in 1900 and weave it into a highly successful establishment that has become part of the fabric of downtown Winchester.

"A lot of hard work, honestly," Carol Massey said, "and a lot of good people."

The story of Piccadilly's Pub, as it is more commonly known, begins in 1996, when Carol Massey was single and working as a bartender at the since-closed Hotel Strasburg in Shenandoah County.

"I have been in the restaurant business for most of my life," said the native of Nashville who was raised in Northern Virginia and moved to Strasburg.

One of the Hotel Strasburg's guests back then was Dale Massey, a general contractor who had been building restaurants in the southeastern United States for years, including franchises for [Burger King](#), [Wendy's](#) and [Houlihan's](#).

"He was doing a remodel of one of the truck stops in Toms Brook," Carol Massey recalled.

The pair became friends, then a couple. They lived together in Strasburg for more than a decade and, in 2012, became husband and wife.

Twelve years before their wedding, Dale Massey came to Winchester to attend a [Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival](#) event. During that visit, he got to tour the interior of the former grocery warehouse at 125 E. Piccadilly St., which at that time was vacant.

"I loved this building when I first walked into it," Dale Massey said, and he saw the possibilities of what the property could become.

But at that time, he didn't think the location could draw customers. The [George Washington Hotel](#) that's down the block from the warehouse had not yet been renovated, the George Washington Autopark behind the building had not been constructed and downtown Winchester had not become the hot spot for diners and shoppers that it is today.

Fast forward to 2005. Dale and Carol Massey saw a newspaper article about Glen and Kim Burke of Winchester buying the George Washington Hotel with plans to bring it back to the first-class destination that it was when it first opened in 1924.

Dale Massey realized the hotel's reopening would bring life back to Piccadilly Street, so he tracked down the former grocery warehouse's owner, Dave Holliday, and on June 30, 2005, bought the building for \$570,000.

"Well, you know, everybody makes a mistake in life," Dale Massey joked.

The building needed work — lots of it — so before the Masseys could start considering layouts and decor and menus, Dale Massey's skills as a general contractor were needed. Using subcontractors he had worked with for years, he and his crews spent four months transforming an aged, damaged and neglected building into the Piccadilly's Pub that patrons know today.

"I enjoyed putting this place back together because that's what I did for 40 years," he said.

Dale Massey loved many of the original materials used to construct 125 E. Piccadilly, especially the hardwood floors and interior brick walls, and he was determined to preserve the building's history. But after decades of use as a warehouse, some people questioned if the amount of restoration he envisioned was possible.

The hardwood floors, for example, had numerous weak spots, were encrusted with a century's worth of grime and bore the track marks from forklifts that carried and stacked pallets.

"So I called [Mark's Hardwood](#) over in Front Royal and I said, 'I don't give a damn what it costs, I want these floors refinished,'" Dale Massey recalled.

It was a massive amount of work but the floorboards were saved. Today, if you're sitting in the main bar and restaurant area next to Piccadilly Pub's outdoor deck, you can see square and rectangular areas in the floor where damaged wood had to be replaced, as well as the faint trail left behind by forklifts.

Behind the bar in that same portion of Piccadilly's Pub is a large cooler with glass doors. Dale Massey said the cooler came into his possession as the result of a friendship he forged while doing general contracting work.

He explained that he had an excellent relationship with WilcoHess, a now-defunct corporation that owned and managed Wilco gas stations and convenience stores in the United States. Dale Massey was contracted to tear down one of those convenience stores and build another at the same location. When he saw the cooler in the original building, he asked his friend, WilcoHess President Steve Williams, if he could have it. Williams agreed.

"And I designed this whole place around that cooler," Dale Massey said.

Down in the basement, which was carved out of the stone beneath the soil, there was an old freight elevator that was in such bad shape, several repair companies said it wasn't salvageable. But Dale Massey needed an elevator to carry cases of beer and other stored items from the basement to the first and second floors, so he fixed it himself. He did a good job, too, because the elevator is still in use today.

But perhaps the coolest story to emerge from the building's renovation involves the northeast corner of the structure, which is a seating area for the restaurant.

Across the street from the former grocery warehouse on East Piccadilly Street is a line of railroad tracks. In the early 1900s, food deliveries via train were picked up there and carried back across the street to the warehouse. In 1943, someone at the warehouse realized it would save workers a lot of time if a rail spur was built right next to the eastern side of the building, where a forklift could lift pallets right out of the train cars.

About 10 years later, a train delivering groceries to the warehouse derailed. One of the rail cars tipped over into the eastern wall of the building, knocking a large hole in the brick.

"You see this new brick?" Dale Massey asked while pointing to a portion of Piccadilly Pub's northeastern interior wall where the bricks are a slightly different color than all the others in the building. "That's where the train came through."

Dale Massey decided to honor that bit of history by hanging photographs of the derailment in the formerly damaged section of the restaurant.

Piccadilly's Pub opened on February 16, 2006, and has been attracting customers ever since. In addition to the people who come in for the bar and restaurant, the business also welcomes numerous corporate and nonprofit events, as well as the occasional wedding. On weekends, there's a good chance a band or DJ will be playing music on the patio or a piano player will be entertaining guests near the main entrance.

Events Coordinator Nannette Boden said the No. 1 reason why Piccadilly's Pub has prospered for 20 years is the Masseys.

"When these nonprofit organizations need to do an event, they're the first to say, 'We're gonna cut the cost on this, that and the other,'" Boden said. "They do these things for the community — a community that they have put everything into. It's commendable."

Carol Massey said she would like to retire eventually, preferably sooner rather than later. Her husband, however, isn't too keen on kicking up his feet just yet.

"I need something to do," Dale Massey said, "and right now, I kind of do what I want and I enjoy it."

While that's not necessarily what his wife wants to hear, there are countless patrons of Piccadilly's Pub who are thrilled to know the Masseys are still at the helm of one of Winchester's most popular establishments.

To learn more about Piccadilly's Public House and Restaurant, visit piccadillypublichouse.com.

— Contact Brian Brehm at bbrehm@winchesterstar.com

Brian Brehm
Reporter