A Publication For the Citizens Of Somerset County To Honor The

SOMERSET COUNTY TERCENTENARY

1688-1988

presented by
the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders
and the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission
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SUMMER 1988

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BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
AND THE
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CULTURAL & HERITAGE COMMISSION

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With great pleasure the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission presents this publication to our citizens in honor of Somerset County’s Tercentenary Year.

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Wherever possible, the Commission has followed the format used in the booklet printed in 1938. We have taken pictures of some of the same sites used in 1938, as well as new and developing areas of the country. Much of the information, including the histories of each municipality, has been updated.

County government has been given an increasingly large role in providing services to its residents. A significant amount of tax dollars goes toward providing these services. It is important that we understand the role of County government, the least understood of all units of government.

The Board of Freeholders takes great pride in Somerset County and invites its citizens to learn more about their County, to explore it, to become involved in it and to participate in county government as informed citizens.
Dear Friends:

This year, Somerset County celebrates 300 years of history, growth and progress.

On May 22, 1688, the Assembly of the Proprietary Governments of the Province of New Jersey passed an act dividing Middlesex County into two entities, Middlesex and Somerset Counties. Differences in farming techniques used by the inhabitants of the two regions had prompted the split. Somerset County in 1688 was much smaller than it is today. In the ensuing years, many more boundary changes and additions were to take place before Somerset County would grow to its present 305 square miles.

Somerset has remained a thriving agricultural region to the present day. It is also a center of commerce that is home to corporate headquarters as well as to small and medium-sized businesses and industries. Our residential neighborhoods are as diverse as the small towns and sprawling townships where they’re found.

Our county’s history has been shaped by many people, both the famous and the everyday men and women who have lived, worked, and raised their families here over the centuries. Somerset County played a key role in the American Revolution, when the Watchung Mountains served as a strategic lookout and campground for Gen. George Washington and his troops. In this century, the Borough of Raritan was the place where President Warren Harding signed the treaty ending U.S. involvement in World War I.

Somerset County has hosted myriad other achievements and events that have had an impact on both its own citizens and, in some cases, the world. In 1988, we’re celebrating the community that Somerset has been, the county it is today and the leader that it will continue to be in the next hundred years and beyond.

Sincerely,

Michael Pappas, Freeholder Director

Michael Pappas, Freeholder Director
During the 1980's, Somerset County, like the State, has experienced a reversal in trends from the “no growth” years of the 1970's. The County’s inclusion in the State’s primary growth corridor (Interstate Route 287) has resulted in a surge in employment opportunities in Somerset County, as well as its neighboring central New Jersey counties.

This has made Somerset and its neighboring counties attractive to persons in their prime work and household forming years (ages 25-44) as a place of residence. Simultaneously, the largest population cohort, comprised of the baby boom generation, has matured and entered this age group during the 1970's and 1980's. A tremendous surge in demand for housing, infrastructure, and services has resulted.

Rate of Growth
Somerset County’s population increased from 198,372 in 1970 to 203,129 by 1980 as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Census. This represented an increase of only 2.4 percent. The January 1, 1987 population estimate for the County prepared by the Somerset County Planning Board was 224,939, an increase of 10.7 percent. The turnaround in population growth that has occurred in Somerset County during the 1980's when compared to the “no growth” situation of the 1970's, has been propelled by a dramatic increase in net in-migration.

Household Characteristics
The number of households increased 18.2 percent from 57,013 in 1970 to 67,368 in 1980. Somerset County’s household size declined from 3.40 persons/household in 1970 to 2.95 persons/household by 1980. By 1987, it is estimated that the County’s household size further declined to 2.79 persons/household. Somerset County has reflected State and National trends of declining household size, and rising rates of household formation. These trends are directly tied to the demographic characteristics of the population, fluctuations in the economy and housing market, and social changes such as the postponement of marriage and child rearing, and rising divorce rates. The increasing number of households comprised of single persons, single parents, the elderly, and young professional couples with fewer children have created new demands for housing. Housing types have begun to take new forms as exemplified by the increasing proportion of multi-family housing construction that has taken place in Somerset County during the mid 1980's.

Areas of Growth
Only about half of the County’s municipalities experienced population increases during the 1980's, other experienced stabilized populations or slight declines. For the most part, the County’s older, more developed and densely populated boroughs experienced minimal growth, while the County’s largely rural, undeveloped townships experienced the greatest population increases.

Labor Force
In accordance with state and national trends, the growth in the County’s labor force from 1970 to 1980 was due to an increase in labor force participation, as well as growth in the working age population. Approximately one-third more females participated in the County’s labor force in 1980 than 1970. The entry of the “Baby Boom” cohorts into the labor force, coupled with migration trends, was also a significant factor.

Employment & Income
Somerset County has experienced a substantial increase in employment opportunities during the past 17 years (1970-1987). The clear shift from manufacturing to services that has occurred nationally and statewide, has also been reflected in Somerset County. Although the number of employment opportunities have increased greatly (from 46,498 jobs in 1970 to 79,324 jobs in 1980), household income levels have not risen to keep pace with escalating housing costs and inflation. For example, average housing costs rose by approximately 30 percent from 1986 to 1987, however, median income rose by only 10 percent.
Looking North. Showing the new Somerset County Courthouse, center, and Parking Garage, right center.
RARITAN Looking North. New shopping center, lower right, "Somerville Circle" at top right.

Photo by JEFF TARENTINO
The Somerset County Office of Transportation (SCOOT) provides free bus service in rural areas of the County.

Highways & Roads

The economic well-being of an area is related to an adequate smooth functioning transportation system and the desirability to live in an area is influenced by the ease of access to the work place, shopping and recreation. Somerset County has developed a vast network of over 1,330 miles of roadways to serve the businesses and residents of the County.

The primary road system in Somerset County consists of 112 miles of interstate and state highways. This includes Interstate 287 as well as Interstate 78. I-287 provides access to the New Jersey Turnpike and the Garden State Parkway as well as the Outerbridge Crossing to Staten Island in New York. To the east, I-78 provides direct access to Newark and the Holland Tunnel to Manhattan. To the west, it provides access to Hunterdon County and Easton, Pennsylvania.

Primary arterial roads include U.S. Routes 202, 206, and 22. U.S. Route 202 provides access to Lambertville and New Hope to the east. It parallels I-287 to the north, eventually leading to Upstate New York. U.S. Route 206, to the south, provides access to Princeton and Trenton and to the north it provides access to Chester, and Netcong, eventually leading to Milford, Pa. U.S. Route 22 provides access to the Newark area to the east and it connects to I-78 near Clinton.

The County road system is composed of 240 miles of roadway. The County also has jurisdiction over 685 bridges and culverts throughout the County. There are approximately 983 miles of municipal streets.

This network of highways has provided the County with excellent access to the rapidly growing central New Jersey region and the New York Metropolitan area. This in turn has led to a rapidly growing office, commercial, light industrial and housing market. In fact, in the period from 1982-1987, over 32 million square feet of nonresidential building space was proposed. Much of this proposed development is located near interchanges of the interstate system and along the state highway network.

Public Bus Routes

New Jersey Transit has two bus routes that serve the County: Route 65/66 and Route 114. Both routes serve the central portion of the County and North Plainfield area. Route 114 provides service directly to New York as well as serving the recently completed Bridgewater Commons Mall, a new regional shopping center in the County.

The Somerset County Office of Transportation (SCOOT) provides free bus service in rural areas of the County. SCOOT I runs along Route 206 in Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships and to the County Library in Bridgewater. SCOOT II provides service in Franklin Township and Manville Borough. Both routes serve Somerville and the Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg Township.

Private Bus Routes

A number of private bus companies serve the County. Lakeland Bus Lines, Inc. has stops at the Bridgewater Commons and in Bedminster, Far Hills, Bernardsville, Bernards and Warren. The line also provides service to New York City.

West Hunterdon Transit Inc. has stops in Somerville, Bridgewater Commons and Branchburg. It provides service to points in Hunterdon County and eastern Pennsylvania. The line also has service to Atlantic City with stops in Somerville, Branchburg and Hillsborough.
Suburban Transit Corporation provides bus service to New Brunswick and New York City from Manville, Somerville, Bound Brook, South Bound Brook and Franklin Township. Martz Trailways has service between Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania and New York with stops in North Plainfield and Somerville.

**Passenger Railroad**

There are two passenger commuter rail lines operated by NJ TRANSIT that serve Somerset County. The Raritan Valley Line, which has stations in Raritan, Somerville, Calco-Finderne and Bound Brook, runs between Penn Station, Newark and Highbridge, Hunterdon County. The Gladstone Branch of the Morris and Essex Lines has stations in Gladstone, Peapack, Fan Hills, Bernardsville, Basking Ridge and Lyons. This electrified line runs from its terminus at Gladstone to Broad Street Station, Newark.

Many of the active train stations have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of their historic and architectural significance.

**Freight Service**

Freight Service is provided to industries along rail lines operated by Conrail. This includes the former Lehigh Valley and Reading Lines as well as the Raritan Valley Line and Gladstone Branch.

**Airports**

There are three general aviation airports in the County; Princeton Airport in Montgomery, Kupper Airport in Hillsborough, and Somerset Airport in Bedminster. There are also numerous heliports located throughout the County.

**Delaware and Raritan Canal**

Although the D & R Canal was closed to freight traffic in 1933, it still serves as a recreational resource and potable water supply. In 1973 the Canal was listed on the National Register of Historic Places while in 1974, the D & R Canal State Park and the D & R Canal Commission, which regulates development along the canal, were established.

**Radio and Television**

Somerset County is served by a wide variety of radio and television stations located in Central New Jersey and New York City. Also, cable television is becoming increasingly available to homeowners in the County.

**Radio Stations**

There are four radio stations that are located in Somerset County. Based in Franklin Township are WCTC-1450 am (young adult), WMGQ-98.3 fm (soft rock) and WAWZ-99.1 fm (religion format). WBRW-1170 am (adult contemporary) is based in Bridgewater Township. All of these stations provide local as well as national news service.

**Television**

There are currently no television stations that broadcast from Somerset County. There are four cable stations located in the County that serve over 40,000 subscribers. Each of them provides a local community service channel.

**Telephone Service**

The County is provided telephone service by New Jersey Bell (part of the Bell Atlantic System) and the United Telephone Service which covers areas of Hillsborough, Montgomery and Franklin Townships.

**Newspapers**

The Courier News is the only daily paper located in Somerset County. It covers the entire County from its offices in Bridgewater.

There are weekly papers that serve Somerset County: the Messenger-Gazette (central portion of the County), The Green Brook North Plainfield Journal, the Bernardsville News, the Bound Brook Chronicle, The Franklin News-Record, the Hillsborough Beacon, the Manville News, The Somerset Spectator (Franklin), the Echoes-Sentinel (Warren, Watchung, North Plainfield). The biweekly Community Voice covers a wide area of the County.

Other newspapers that cover Somerset County include the Courier News, Newark Star Ledger, The Home News from New Brunswick, The Trenton Times and the Morristown Daily Record.
AGRICULTURE

Somerset County has enjoyed a long and rich history of farming. As development progressed, farmland was consumed so that by 1985 the remaining agricultural areas of the County were concentrated in Franklin, Montgomery, Hillsborough and Bedminster.

There are, however, nearly 400 farms in Somerset County with an average acreage of 137 acres; a few farmers farm 1,000 to 1,500 acres. Land in farming, including woodlands, totals 73,521 acres. Dairying, beef cattle, horse and sheep farming, field crops, nursery and Christmas trees are the primary agriculture enterprises. Grain, horse farming and nurseries have expanded greatly in recent years. Mechanization makes grain production easier; the nearness to race tracks and hunting country attracts thoroughbred, standardbred and hunter horseowners, trainers and breeders. Residential, commercial and industrial development increases the demand for landscaping and landscape maintenance. Farm income in the county exceeds 20 million dollars annually.

A recent Somerset County program has been developed in cooperation with the State Agriculture Development Committee. In 1983 the County Board of Chosen Freeholders established the Somerset County Agriculture Development Board, under the guidance of Chapter 32 & 33 of the Public Laws of 1983.

The Board is charged with developing programs for the retention and enhancement of agriculture in Somerset County. Programs established allow for those farms which qualify to take part in either of two eight-year preservation programs that require a development restriction for a period of eight years. These programs offer applicants various “right-to-farm” benefits in addition to a 50% cost share of dollars for significant soil and water conservation projects which assist the farmers in making the most of their land’s productivity.

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension provides assistance to agriculture in the area of pest management as well as the sound management and husbandry in the production of hogs, sheep, beef cattle, and horse production. The Extension provides information to keep producers on the cutting edge of new technology and cultural methods in the production of field crops and livestock. Assistance is also provided to farmers on local planning and zoning regulations and to homeowners on the maintenance of gardens and landscapes.

The Somerset County 4-H provides young people with assistance in learning about the raising of small animals and it operates the annual 4-H Fair which highlights the County’s agricultural industry.
The Commission was established by public referendum in November of 1956 under the statutes of the State of New Jersey.

In December of 1956, the Board of Chosen Freeholders appointed the first commissioners who, in turn, organized in January 1957. During the first two years considerable planning and organizational programs were undertaken by the Commission. The first facilities to be purchased and developed were Duke Island Park, a general purpose passive recreation area, and the Green Knoll Golf Course. Both were dedicated and opened to the public in the summer of 1960.

Since that time, other parklands have been acquired bringing the present total holdings to 4,500 acres. The role of the Park Commission is to provide specialized park areas and facilities of regional interest which supplement municipal park and recreation programs without duplication. The park system is designed to serve more as a resource management agency rather than one of recreation program leadership. Park Rangers are available to assist visitors with first aid, safety precautions and information.

**Duke Island Park**
Located in the heart of the Raritan River area of Somerset County, this facility is within easy access of all county residents. The portion of the park presently developed contains 272 acres and lies south of Old York Road, west of Raritan. An additional 109 acres of undeveloped parkland is situated along the North Branch of the Raritan River on the north side of Old York Road.

The park has extensive family and group picnic facilities with ample park drives and parking areas. A building equipped for Ranger services and sanitary facilities is provided for the visitor’s comfort. Provisions have also been made for fishing and supervised ice skating. There are two fully equipped children’s playground areas and a large roofed picnic pavilion.

Each summer special concerts are held in the park. The bandshell-amphitheater has inspired increased activity in the performing arts with a wide variety of performances offered free to the public.

For softball players and fans, a complete field is provided which is available for league play and special bookings.

**Green Knoll Golf Course**
Located off Garretson Road, Bridgewater Township, this regulation, 18-hole championship layout is a challenge to the experienced, as well as, the beginning golfer. This popular course is the scene of many tournaments and industrial league activity. The course has a pro shop featuring popular golf items. There is also a complete luncheonette. During the winter, Green Knoll is a favorite spot for sledding and skiing.

A lighted, nine-hole par-three Pitch and Putt course at Green Knoll provides the casual golfer with an opportunity to sharpen up his short game and is excellent for family recreation and beginning golfers.

**Green Knoll Tennis Center**
Located at the same site as the Green Knoll Golf Course, a ten court tennis center is open for public use. The all-weather composition courts are lighted for night play. This area also contains a small pro shop, parking area and sanitary facilities.
A program of instruction and tournaments for youth and adults is offered.

**North Branch Park**  
(County Fairgrounds)

The park and fairgrounds are located off Milltown Road between Routes 202 and 22. It contains 162 acres with a mile of frontage along the North Branch of the Raritan River. The river at this location is a favorite spot for fishermen. Several picnic groves are established near the river. Also available are a lighted and unlighted softball field for league play and special bookings, and two horse show rings. The administrative offices of the Somerset County Park Commission are located at this site.

The fairgrounds are used extensively by county organizations for major exhibits, shows, fairs and expositions.

**Colonial Park**

Acquired in 1965, this 467 acre park is located in Franklin Township on Mettlers Road, with access from Amwell Road and Elizabeth Avenue. The western boundary includes frontage on the Delaware and Raritan Canal and the Millstone River. Facilities include family and group picnic sites, children's playgrounds, ponds for fishing, open playfields and a fitness exercise course. Paddle boat rentals are available during the summer months for modest fees and a canoe launching ramp on the canal is provided for public use. Recent improvements include a 1.4 mile paved bike path and eight lighted tennis courts.

The Rudolf van der Goot Rose Garden and 5½ acre arboretum are
THE PARK COMMISSION

CONTINUED...

Golf on one of the County’s four courses.

Horse-back riding at the County Riding Stable in Basking Ridge.

featured in the western portion of the park. The Garden contains over 4,000 individual rose plants and has a sensory and fragrance section for handicapped persons.

Spooky Brook Golf Course
Located at Colonial Park with an entrance off Elizabeth Avenue, this championship 18 hole golf course with its spacious greens, tees and fairways offers a different challenge to the player familiar with the other county operated courses.

The clubhouse contains a pro shop featuring the sale of popular golf items as well as a fully equipped food service area.

Lord Stirling Park
Situated on 897 acres in the Basking Ridge section of Bernards Township, the park contains many natural features. A large portion of this site is within the westerly boundary of the Great Swamp basin and abounds with wildlife. The Park Commission has set aside the park for two purposes only; Environmental Education Center and Riding Stable.

The riding stable conducts a full program of public riding and group instructional classes in English horsemanship for youth and adults. Seasonally, the stable offers reserved hay rides and sleigh rides. An extensive trail system for horse and rider has been established and an indoor riding arena is available during inclement weather. The stable is entered off South Maple Avenue.

The Environmental Education Center located off Lord Stirling Road offers visitors a stimulating
experience in natural resource interpretation which begins with the solar heated and cooled education-visitor center building. Classes, courses and special programs are available year-round to schools, youth groups and adults at this nationally recognized facility. General visitors are also accommodated on the 8½ mile trail system which winds through a 400 mile outdoor teaching laboratory.

**Leonard J. Buck**

This unusual 33 acre garden of rock formations covered with rare and magnificent plant specimens from Europe, Asia and North America is located off Layton Road, Par Hills. The new visitor center accommodates both casual and group visitors to the garden area and contains display areas, a meeting room and horticultural library. Groups planning to visit the garden must call to make reservations.

**Sourland Mountain Preserve**

A large 1,530 acre tract located between East Mountain and Neshanic-Zion Roads in Hillsborough and Montgomery Townships, this unique mountainous area contains the locally famous Roaring Rocks. Development of facilities will be limited, as the intent is to keep much of this ecologically sensitive area in its natural state. Currently, the Preserve is not open for public visitation.

**Warrenbrook Park**

This dual use facility is located on Warrenville Road, Warren Township and features a championship 18 hole golf course with modern pro shop and food services. The park also contains an outdoor swimming pool which is open during the summer months. Additionally, Warrenbrook houses a fully programmed Senior Citizens Center operated by the County Office on Aging.

**Quail Brook Golf Course**

The County’s newest 18-hole course is located off New Brunswick Road, Franklin Township with easy access via Easton Avenue or Amwell Road. The gently rolling front nine and tight back nine offer unlimited playing challenges to the golfer. The clubhouse contains a pro shop with a full stock of popular golf items and a spacious snack bar. Additionally, the clubhouse serves as a complete Senior Service Center operated by the County Office on Aging.

Also available is a mini-park area with several picnic tables, playground, fishing pier, off-street parking and a paved path that connects with the clubhouse.

**Ralph T. Reeve Cultural Center**

This 35 acre gift property in Branchburg Township has been dedicated to promoting the cultural arts. The site is located adjacent to Station and River Roads and presently houses the Printmaking Council of N.J. Other visual and performing art forms will be accommodated as future development occurs.

**Natural Areas**

Three natural areas are presently included in the park system. Two of these are located in the Watchung Mountains and are heavily wooded. They are being held for future use by the Commission as further acquisitions occur in these regions. The other area, Little Brook Sanctuary, is located in Bernardsville.

**Therapeutic Recreation Services**

Therapeutic Recreation Services is a cooperative effort with participating county municipalities. Programs are planned for all ages and disabilities. In addition to seasonal programs, Therapeutic Recreation Services administers S.H.A.R.P., a program for post-stroke and physically disabled adults; Camp Okee Sunokee, a summer day camp for learning disabled youth, and the nationally-acclaimed “Kids on the Block” puppet troupe used in shows to promote awareness and acceptance of the disabled.
The Somerset County Library system, with over 450,000 books, is connected to the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), an international and national database that originates from Ohio. The County library can obtain books for their patrons by requesting them through OCLA.

On August 12, 1952, the Somerset County Library became the first county unit to relocate to the new administration building where it remained until the spring of 1981. In 1962, Dorothy Van Gorder retired from her duties as director of the library after more than three decades of service. Her assistant, Germaine L. Gibian, was appointed the new director of the library.

In 1968, Germaine Gibian resigned as director of the library and Mildred Adams was named as the new director in the same year. At this time the library was becoming cramped in its current headquarters in the county administration building. Somerset County decided to purchase 130 acres in Bridgewater known as the Vogel tract for a vocational school site and other county purposes which included a future county library site.

Mildred Adams retired as director of the Somerset County Library in December of 1975 and June Adams was appointed as the new director. Between 1975 and 1980, the Somerset County Library system developed into a branch system. Some towns chose to establish independent libraries and other towns established branch libraries in conjunction with the Library Commission and the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Currently, there are eight independent libraries, which are not part of the Somerset County Library system, and there are 11 member municipalities of the county library system. The member municipalities are Branchburg, Bridgewater, Green Brook, Hillsborough, Millstone, Montgomery, North Plainfield, Peapack-Gladstone, Rocky Hill, Warren and Watchung. Citizens, who are not from one of the member municipalities, must pay an annual fee of $35.00 since their municipality does not pay a dedicated library tax as part of their county tax bill.

Overcome by space problems at the county administration building, construction began in October of 1979 for a new library facility located on the corner of North Bridge Street and Vogt Drive in Bridgewater. It was decided to locate the county library in Bridgewater because the town had no branch library and Bridgewater’s population was growing. The new county headquarters also serves as the branch library for Bridgewater. As a major link in
the New Jersey Library Network, it is also a regional reference center for Somerset County and adjoining counties.

A contract was devised between the County Freeholders, the Bridgewater Township Council, and the Library Commission. Bridgewater and Somerset County jointly provide the building and its maintenance while staff, services, and books are paid for by the Library Commission by way of a dedicated library tax. The new Somerset County/Bridgewater Library opened its doors to the public on April 13, 1981.

Services

The Somerset County Library system provides a variety of services for the surrounding communities. The system has over 450,000 books which can be borrowed. Records, cassettes, and compact discs can also be borrowed or patrons can listen to the music at the library with headphones.

The library is connected to the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), an international and national library database that originates from Ohio. The County Library can obtain books for their patrons by requesting them through OCLC.

The Somerset County Library headquarters and the branches have a video department from which patrons can borrow video cassettes. The headquarters’ video department also lends 16 mm children’s films as well as a film projector. This department is the service center for the New Jersey Library for the Blind and Handicapped and offers a braille typewriter, record player, and cassettes at no charge.

The Somerset County Library Video Department is service center for the New Jersey Library for the Blind and Handicapped and offers a braille typewriter, record player, and cassettes at no charge. Many other programs, open to the community are designed to promote intellectual development.

The County Library headquarters has a children’s department which offers storytimes twice a week for children ages 2 to 5. On Saturdays, additional programming, such as arts, crafts and films is offered. During the summer months, story hours are extended and the Summer Reading Club begins. The branches also have children’s departments which offer special programming.

The reference department of the headquarters library helps patrons find information for school papers, business use, and general information. Infocenter, a centralized source of information regarding public and private resources in the county, is located in this department and was organized by the Somerset County Library in cooperation with the Board of Chosen Freeholders. The New Jersey Collection, which contains books on New Jersey and local history, New Jersey laws and regulations, as well as local and state maps is also located in this department.

The Friends of the Somerset County Library, a non-profit organization, helps to raise money for programs and equipment. This group coordinates an ongoing book sale, two larger three day book sales and sponsors a Music Concert Series which runs from September to June. Once a month, the County Library offers a musical program for which there is no charge. Monthly art exhibits allow local artists and students to display their works. In addition, a Slide Registry program established by the Cultural & Heritage Commission, and available to Somerset County artists, is housed here as well. A five session book discussion, “Let’s Talk About It”, co-sponsored with the Raritan Valley Community College, is another program offered by the County Library. The Somerset County Library also co-sponsors a program with the Somerset County Office on Aging and Raritan Valley Community College entitled “Older and Wiser.” This educational program is designed to promote the intellectual development and stimulation of older adults by offering lectures on current issues and topics.

1721: DERRICK VAN VEghtEN BUILDS A BRICK HOUSE NEAR THE RIVER, ABOUT 300 YARDS WEST OF PRESENT FINDERNVILLE MANVILLE ROAD AND FINDERNVILLE BRIDGE, THE ROAJ, THEN IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE, IS NO LONGER USED HERE, IN 1778, GENERAL AND MRS. GREENE GIVE A PARTY IN HONOR OF GENERAL AND MRS. WASHINGTON.
In 1987 nearly one-half of the County’s land area still consists of acreage that has not been committed to urbanization, e.g. agriculture, wooded areas, and vacant parcels. Yet during the 16-year period of 1969-1985, about one-fifth of the County’s total land area, and almost one-third of its “agriculture, wooded and vacant” land area, was developed. This averaged over 2,400 acres of land being developed a year. Over 1,000 of these acres a year went to residential uses and another 500 went to commercial/industrial uses. The remaining 850 acres a year went into a variety of public, quasi-public, streets and similar uses serving the employment and population growth.

The overall changes in the County’s land use pattern indicate a high concentration of development in a few towns. For example, large blocks of industrial land have been developed in Franklin, Branchburg, and Bridgewater. On the other hand, the bulk of the residential development has been concentrated in a few townships while a smaller portion has been developed in a sprawl pattern scattered across much of the countryside.

The County’s original Master Plan of Land Use was adopted in 1971. The basic tenets of sound planning underlying that document are still valid for the 1980’s. The updated Master Plan adopted in 1987, continues to reflect the same comprehensive goal — to guide the development of Somerset County so as to provide the optimum living environment for all its residents and make the wisest use of our resources, while protecting the environment and preserving the County’s rich history and natural beauty.

The intent of this goal, and the plan itself, is to provide a frame of reference for all County and local planning activities so that Somerset County develops in an economically, aesthetically and environmentally sensitive manner.

In the broadest sense, the Plan uses the existing settlements and major highway corridors as the focal points for future development in recognition of the development pattern that exists and the concentration of transportation, utility, retail and public services in these areas.

Theoretically, this recommended County land use pattern is based on a hierarchy of land use dependent upon the availability of essential public services, access limitations, natural resource constraints and compatibility of uses. The five categories are not intended as rigid zoning boundaries, but have been put forth to underscore the need for a variety of interrelated land uses in proper proportion and the orderly timing of development. At the same time, the plan seeks to preserve the natural environment and to hold land in reserve for growth in the next century and beyond.

Consistent with this pattern, the Plan has established a hierarchy of the more intensive residential uses in and around the Regional Center, followed by lower intensities of development outward along the highway corridors, and then lower intensities moving away from the highway corridor itself. The higher the density, the more one would expect to find forms of multi-family housing. As the density decreases, more detached single-family homes can be expected to emerge. However, as indicated later, with a fixed density, the more multi-family housing designed in a plan, the more open space that can be generated. Even in agriculture areas, if the density is low, and townhouses are permitted, as an example, as much as 85-90 percent of the farm can be preserved with the housing clustered into a remote corner out of the way of the farming operations.

The intended development pattern of higher intensities of development toward the Regional Center, decreasing as one moves farther from the Center, also applies to nonresidential development. Therefore, another goal of this Plan is to encourage a balance between housing, jobs and servi-
BRIDGEWATER  Looking Southeast at the Bridgewater Commons, the newest regional shopping center on the East Coast.
ces. It is recognized that as the intensity of one use increases or decreases, the intensity of the others is likely to follow. Therefore, it is the intent of this Plan that high intensity job centers and retail outlets are anticipated to be oriented in and around the Regional Center, with less frequent and/or smaller facilities as one moves farther from the Center and farther from the major highway corridors and interchanges.

The plan provides the cornerstone of the County planning process and the framework for both long-range and day-to-day policy decision making.

The plan has been revised to reflect the increased development pressure experienced within the County, which raises new issues and challenges, as well as to reflect changing conditions at the state and federal levels of government. Federal and State funding for expanded and upgraded public improvements and services, in particular, have been increasingly difficult to obtain because of public spending reductions. These changes have made it necessary for the County Planning Board to reemphasize important planning concepts, like natural resource protection, balanced housing and employment, and downtown revitalization, and to advocate increased coordination among various agencies, interest groups and the private sector involved in the development process.

Prepared by
Patricia S. Clark, AICP/PP
Deputy Director
Somerset County Planning Board

Washington Camp Ground, Heights of Middlebrook, Bound Brook, where Washington’s army was encamped during May and June, 1777 and from November 28, 1778 to June 3, 1779. It was here that the newly adopted American Flag was first officially flown.
In New Jersey, there is no constitutional right of local self-government, the extent to which counties and municipalities can function is entirely within the control of the State Legislature. The powers of counties include not only those expressly granted by statute, but those implied from the powers expressly granted.

Looking up at the stained glass dome in the Historic Court House.

Somerset County is governed and managed by a Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Sheriff, a County Clerk and a Surrogate. Each is elected by the people of the County and administers the business of his respective office in accordance with state regulations:

Somerset County is regulated by state legislation and has representation in the New Jersey Legislature through two senators and four assemblymen:

Senators:

16th District
John H. Ewing, Bedminster

14th District
Francis J. McManimon, Trenton

Assemblymen:

16th District
Walter J. Kavanaugh, Somerville
John S. Penn, Far Hills

14th District
Joseph D. Patero, Manville
Anthony J. Cimino, Hamilton

At the Federal level, Somerset County has two state senators and two members of the house of representatives:

United States Senate:
William Bradley
Frank Lautenberg

House of Representatives:
12th District
James A. Courter

7th District
Matthew J. Rinaldo

The members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders are elected at large. The Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders has five elected members, one or two elected each year for a three year term. There are no qualifications required to be a Freeholder candidate. Freeholders spend a substantial amount of time on county business but are not required to be full time elected officials. However, because of the complexity of county government an increasing amount of time is spent by Freeholders on county business.

Each year the Board elects one of its own members to be "Director" to preside at all meetings and act as spokesman for the Board. As per statute the first meeting of the year is organizational and referred to as the "Annual Meeting" at which officers of the Board are elected and meetings for the balance of the year are set. Freeholder salaries are set by a procedure established by state statute. Committees of the Board are designated by Board action with the Director appointing members of all committees. Each Freeholder chairs a standing committee: Finance and Personnel, Public Works, Courts
and Criminal Justice, Human Services and Facilities and Services.

The property, finances and affairs of every county are by statute to be managed, controlled and governed by the Board of Freeholders. The courts of this state has so addressed this. The Board of Chosen Freeholders is the legislative control of county property and its financial interests. It has exclusive jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to county affairs. The Board, is however, is primarily an administrative body. It enacts very little law controlling the conduct of individuals. This is in contrast to the governing bodies of municipalities. However, the Board of Freeholders plays a very vital role in the area providing the efficient management of important county services. These services include human services, roads and bridges, parks and recreational facilities, county court system, law enforcement agencies, welfare and, most recently, solid waste management. It is the responsibility of the Board to see that these services are managed efficiently.

Administration of county government is carried out by the Board of Freeholders either acting as a body through its standing committees, through the administrator, or by its various department heads, Boards and Commissions. Department Heads are appointed in accordance with statute and/or by Resolution of the Board.

**Officers of the Board:**

_Clerk of the Board_ — is appointed for a three year term. The position is both authorized and required by statute. Responsible for the administrative and supervisory functions of the Board of Freeholders, handles

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*Photo by JEFF TARENTINO*

Looking up towards the dome in the Historic Court House Rotunda.

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_In 1938, some obvious facts were left out. Since most people were unaware of Somerset County's distinguished past, there is one fact, among many, that requires special attention. World War I officially ended in Raritan, New Jersey at the estate of Senator Joseph Frelinghuysen in 1921. For an in-depth look at the history of Somerset County, read the histories of the municipalities found in the back of this booklet._
Somerset County's Historic Courthouse, built in 1907, and dedicated in 1909, was designed by James R. Gorden and is a fine example of Beaux-Arts Classicism.

all official correspondence, advertises legal notices, prepares and distributes agendas, contracts, minutes, etc. Ensures compliance of laws governing the county, represents county at meetings and acts as liaison between the Board, department heads, the media and the public. Clerk of the Board — Margaret A. Maccini, Hillsborough Township. Deputy Clerk — Barbara A. Lucas, Branchburg Township.

County Administrator — is appointed for a three year term but not compulsory by state statute. Responsible for the day to day operation and supervision of county departments and projects, and also responsible for the implementation of Board policies. Acts as the Freeholders’ representative in many internal and external matters. Serves as Director of the County Transportation Office. County Administrator — Bjorn E. Firing, Branchburg Township. Deputy Administrator — Richard E. Williams, Somerville.

County Counsel — is appointed for a three year term. Acts as legal counsel and advisor to the Board and other County bodies. Represents County in litigation, reviews contracts, legal transactions, etc. County Counsel — William E. Ozzard, Bridgewater Township. Deputies — William B. Savo, George A. Mauro, Jr., Michael V. Camerino and Cheryl P. Oberdorf. ▷
**Committees of the Board**

**Finance and Personnel:**
John K. Kitchen, Chairman, Freeholder
William B. Wahl, Freeholder Deputy Director

The Board of Freeholders has the authority and jurisdiction over the County budget, tax levy and expenditures. One of the most important, if not the most important responsibility of the Board is the adoption of the County budget on an annual basis.

In this budget, the Board must provide adequate funds for the efficient operation of county government and the provision of county services. Budget must be approved by the State Division of Local Government Services and it is the responsibility of the Board to see that funds needed for taxation become part of the property tax levy throughout the county.

**Finance Department** — supervises the County's financial operations, including the offices of the Treasurer, Purchasing and Data Processing. Prepares the county budget annually for submission to the Board. Director of Financial Services — John Lazo, Bridgewater Township.


**Purchasing** — handles purchasing for all county departments and recommends awards of contracts for Freeholder action on a bi-monthly basis. Supervises the operation of the County Print Shop, which performs in house printing services. Supervises the office supply storeroom and distribution to departments. Purchasing Agent — Arthur J. Regan, Bridgewater Township.

**Data Processing** — processes payrolls and provides online services to various departments that access the computer via terminals in their own offices. Unique programs are written by county programmers. Director — Joseph M. Pallay, Hillsborough Township.

**Personnel** — assists departments in the recruitment, interviewing and selection of qualified applicants for County positions. Conducts employee relations and benefits counseling. Maintains personnel records, formulates and recommends personnel policies and procedures. Director — Susan E. Dobrinsky, Green Brook Borough.

Other Departments under the Finance and Personnel Committee: Economic Development, Tourism, Public Information, Veterans Services, Solid Waste Management. Also acts as liaison to Board of Taxation, Inheritance Tax, Park Commission.

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### Public Works:
William B. Wahl, Chairman, Freeholder Deputy Director
Patrick J. Fittipaldi, Freeholder

The Public Works Department is responsible for design, construction, maintenance and repair of County roads, bridges and storm water drainage systems. Supervises operations of the the County Garage and satellite repair facilities.

**Engineer/Director of Public Works** — appointed according to Statute for a five year term, must be a licensed professional engineer. Responsible for overall operations of Department of Public Works.

**Supervisor of Roads** — appointed for a five year term. Responsible for maintenance and repair of County roads and road equipment.

Other departments under the Public Works Committee: Bridges, Transportation, Emergency Management. Also acts as liaison to Mosquito Extermination Commission and Library Commission.

### Human Services:
Michael Pappas, Chairman, Freeholder Director
Christopher S. Bateman, Freeholder

There are numerous human services programs offered in Somerset County and are provided by both public and private agencies. These services are frequently financed through a complex blend of voluntary contributions, fees and Federal, State and Municipal funds. Coordinates planning and delivery of human services, mental health and alcohol programs. Oversees the Richard Hall Community Mental Health Center in Bridgewater Township and the Intoxicated Driver Resource Center.
Human Services Director —
Coordinates planning and delivery of human services, mental health and alcohol programs provided by County government. Administrator/Director — Patricia K. McNally, Bridgewater Township.

Richard Hall Community Mental Health Center Administrator —
Comprehensive Mental Health Center dedicated to the prevention, early detection and treatment of emotional illness for county residents. Services offered are outpatient, partial care, 24-hour emergency services, after school adolescent program and family crisis intervention. Administrator Thomas McNally, Bridgewater Township.

Office on Aging —
Assesses the needs of older persons and plans programs and services to meet those needs. Offers information and referrals, outreach, congregate and home delivered meals, in home services, Senior Shopper, RSVP (volunteer services), legal counseling, respite care, health promotion and emergency services. Works with communities.

Executive Director — Ruth M. Reader, Hillsborough Township.

Other departments in the Human Services Committee:
Adjuster, Veterans Intermittent.
Acts as Liaison to Board of Social Services, Medical Examiner, County Funded Agencies, Private Industry Council and the Planning Board.

CIRCA 1735: JUDGE JOHN BERRETT BUILDS HIS HOME AT ROCKY HILL, ROCKINGHAM, WHERE GENERAL WASHINGTON WILL WRITE HIS FAREWELL TO THE CONTINENTAL TROOPS IN 1783.

Somerset County Complex as seen from the air features the James Gordon beaux-arts Court House built in 1907 (right hand side), the former First Reformed Church built in 1897, designed by Potter and serving as the jury waiting room (center), and the new Court House opened in 1986 (directly behind the Church). The County Jail is located behind the old Court House and directly behind the new Court House is the Administration building.

Photo by JEFF TARENTINO
1988 COUNTY GOVERNMENT

CONTINUED...

Courts and Criminal Justice:
Christopher Bateman, Chairman, Freeholder
Michael Pappas, Freeholder Director

Administration of justice is a primary function of the County. The law enforcement officers, the courts, the corrections system seek to enforce state laws and protect the peace.


Prosecutor — serves as the County's chief law enforcement officer. Investigates and prosecutes criminal law violations and coordinates uniform law enforcement policy with local police departments. Prosecutor — Nicholas L. Bissell, Jr., Montgomery Township.

Probation — Supervises all individuals (adult and juvenile) placed under the care of the Probation Department by the Courts in the County. Collects, disburses and enforces court orders for alimony, child support, fines, restitutions and penalties. Provides staff for criminal and family casework. Vicinage Chief Probation Officer — Michael A. Stabile, Somerville Borough.

Other departments in the Courts and Criminal Justice Department: Youth Receiving, Criminal Justice Planning. Acts as liaison to Courts, Sheriff, Surrogate, Jury Commission, Youth Services Coordinating Commission, Agriculture Development Board, Cultural & Heritage Commission, Commission on Women.

Facilities and Services:
Patrick J. Fittipaldi, Chairman, Freeholder
John K. Kitchen, Freeholder

Facilities and Services are responsible for the construction and maintenance of all County buildings. Provides in house services such as materials handling, mail delivery and general repairs. Director — Stephen J. Krachun, Somerville Borough.

Other departments in the Facilities and Services Committee: Weights and Measures, Consumer Affairs, Telephone Services, Records Retention. Acts as liaison to Audio Visual Aids, County Clerk, Board of Elections, Extension Services, Superintendent of Schools, Vocational-Technical Institute, County College.

Elected Constitutional Officers


Surrogate — Elected by the people for a five year term. Processes estates for deceased and minor children (i.e. probates wills, grants letters of administration, letters of trusteeship and letters of guardianship). As Deputy Clerk of the Superior Court, audits accountings, handles adoptions, incompetencies and all other court pleadings finalized in Superior Court. Surrogate — Vernon A. Noble, Green Brook Borough. Deputy — Arthur Maccini, Hillsborough Township. Special Deputy — Geraldine Stabile, Somerville Borough.
MANVILLE Looking West with the high school at top and Rustic Mall, center right.
THE COUNTY'S LARGEST PARADE...

A crowd estimated at 20,000 await the start of the County's largest parade.

Masters of Ceremonies: Assemblyman Walter J. Kavanaugh, Park Commissioner Frank J. Torpey and Leroy Gunzelman, Jr. (standing) Parade Chairman, on the Reviewing Stand.

County Freeholders are the lead car. Freeholders, William B. Wahl, Christopher S. Bateman, Patrick J. Fittipaldi & Clerk, Margaret A. MacCinni.

Hunterdon County: our neighbor since 1714.

Somerset County's Cultural & Heritage Commission ride in Malcolm Forbes' 1932 Packard.

One of the many floats entered by the County's 4-H Club.
... CELEBRATES THE TERCENTENARY!

Immaculata High School Band, Somerville — one of 13 bands that marched in the parade.

The Philadelphia Mummers String Band. A big hit with the crowd.

New Jersey's Oldest Band from Blawenburg, participating in the parade festivities.

North Plainfield Exempt Firemen pull their antique fire apparatus along the parade route.
At two o'clock pm, on May 22nd, 1988, Church Bells throughout the County rang for three minutes while the bells of St. Mary's Parish Church echoed our Tercentenary in Bridgewater, Somerset County, England.

Donald Esposito, President of the Cultural & Heritage Commission, and son, Mark, ring the bell in the County Court House.

The bell in the historic courthouse was cast in bronze in 1799 and has hung in every courthouse after millstone and was rung at the end of the Civil War, the War of 1812, World War I and for the Tercentenary of Somerset County.
May 22, 1688
Chap. III.

An ACT for dividing the County of Middlesex, into two Counties.

FORASMUCH as the uppermost Part of Raritan River, is settled by People whom in their Husbandry and managing their Land, forced upon quite different ways and methods from the other Farmers and Inhabitants of the County of Middlesex, because of the frequent Floods that carry away their Fences on their Meadows, the only arable Land they have, and so by Consequences their Interest is divided from the other Inhabitants of the said County, BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED by the Governor, Council and Deputies now met in General Assembly... That the same County be called 'County of Somerset.'

GOVERNOR ANDREW HAMILTON'S FIRST ASSEMBLY
MAY 22, 1688

Guests of Honor at the Rededication

Freeholder Director, Michael Pappas with county and municipal officials.

CARVING COUNTIES OUT OF A WILDERNESS WHICH HAD NOT BEEN SURVEYED WAS A HAZARD. BUSINESS, EVEN THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE TWO JERSEYS, EAST AND WEST, HAD STILL NOT BEEN SATISFACMyorLY DETERMINED WHEN EAST JERSEY DECIDED, IN MAY OF 1688, TO CREATE A FIFTH COUNTY, SOMERSET, BY SETTING OFF THE INTERIOR OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY.

'America The Beautiful' — Suzanne Hammer. Russell Reynolds, Mayor, South Bound Brook; Don Esposito, Commissioner; Former Freeholder Warren Nevins and Freeholders Christopher Bateman and Patrick J. Fittipaldi.
A REDEDICATION OF THE COUNTY’S CHARTER

A reenactment of the rededication . . .

Local Officials as Members of Hamilton’s First Assembly (1688).

And after the ceremonies . . .

The “Dutch Dancers” sponsored by the Meadows Foundation, Franklin, under the direction of Ellen Hamilton.

The Principal String Quartette of the Youth Symphony Orchestra, NJ Philharmonic.

When Arian Becker was born . . .

1888: The railroad spur from Bernardsville to Gladstone was just recently completed. Flamboyant Bernardsville “mountain” life reaches its peak with polo matches, private race tracks, balls, butler’s balls, commuters coaches and four rail racing to the station. The town grows as large numbers of Italian and Hungarian artisans and gardeners and English servants are brought in to build and serve the great estates.

When Arian is five . . .

1993: Electric power is brought to Bound Brook by the Bound Brook Electric Company and to Somerville by the Somerset Lighting Company.

William Griscom, Chemist and Manager of the Standard Paint Company in South Bound Brook, conceives the idea of impregnating paper with asphalt for a roofing material. This operation later became the Ruberoid Company, now a part of GAF.
SOMERSET COUNTY HONORS IT'S ELDEST CITIZENS

CONTINUED...

Mr. Duncan Campbell, Montgomery and Wife with Margaret Maccini, Commissioner. ▶

Mary Nevius, Hillsborough, with Grace Connor, Rededication Committee Member. ▼

Arian Becker, 100 years young... with daughter Elizabeth, watching Somerset County's Tercentenary Parade. ▼
The 300 year history of Somerset County has produced a rich heritage of historic and architecturally significant sites and districts. Many of these sites are associated with great persons, important events and historic trends of our nation’s past, while others illustrate how the common person lived in days gone by. All of these historic sites can foster a greater understanding and awareness of the history of our County, State and Nation.

The numerous architectural styles of these historic structures provide an interesting and diverse landscape. These sites represent an era of craftsmanship that is not achieved by modern architecture. Once these sites are lost, the craftsmanship and architecture they represent cannot be replaced.

In order to be aware of the numerous undocumented historic sites in the County, the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission is developing a comprehensive survey which will list all sites of historic interest and determine which sites and districts would be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition to the County commission, eleven communities in the County have municipal historic commissions, historians or cultural and heritage commissions. There are also twenty private, non-profit heritage groups, many of which are involved in preservation. This includes Preservation New Jersey, the only state-wide group devoted to historic preservation with its office in Belle Mead.

**National and New Jersey Register of Historic Places**

The county currently has 25 sites and 19 districts listed or proposed for the National and New Jersey Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation’s cultural resources worthy of preservation. A National Register was first established in 1935 by the Historic Sites Act which directed the Secretary of the Interior to define those properties of national importance as National Historic Landmarks. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (80 Stat. 915, as amended) expanded the nature of the National Register to include not only properties of national significance, but to also include districts, sites, structures, buildings and objects of state and local importance as well.

To implement the 1966 Act, the Governor of each state was asked to designate a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), to work in partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior’s National Register Office. For New Jersey, the SHPO is the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection.

The New Jersey Register of Historic Places is the official list of New Jersey’s cultural resources. Created by the New Jersey Register of Historic Places Act of 1570-N.J.S.A. 13:1B-15.128 et. seq.), the State Register is closely modeled after the National Register program. Both Registers have the same criteria for eligibility, nomination form, and review process. In New Jersey, these programs are administered by the Office of New Jersey Heritage. Virtually every municipality in New Jersey has properties significant in architecture, history, archeology, engineering and/or culture eligible for the State and National Register.

Being listed on the Historic Registers provides several types of benefits. First, it ensures a degree of review and protection with regard to encroachment by public bodies (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Section 105: N.J.S.A. 13:1B-15.128). Second, it provides eligibility for federal tax benefits for the rehabilitation of income producing (depreciable) properties (Tax Reform Act of 1986). Third, designation defines documents and gives official recognition to the unique historic character of an area or structure. Finally, aesthetic and social benefits are derived by preserving representatives of our Nation’s past.
HISTORIC DISTRICTS & SITES

Listed in the National & New Jersey Register of Historic Places.

Legend
- ■ Historic Districts
- ○ Registered Operating Railroad Stations
- ▲ △ Historic Sites

Scale In Miles

1" = 2 Miles

NEW JERSEY REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Sites & Districts in Somerset County

Historic Sites
A. The Academy, Bernards Twp.
   SHR 11/12/75  NHR 7/21/76
B. The Alward Homestead, Bernards Twp.
   SHR 2/5/86  NHR 3/13/86
C. Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church, Bernards Twp.
   SHR 10/24/74  NHR 12/31/74
D. Coffee House, Bernards Twp.
   SHR 3/28/77  NHR 11/7/77
E. Lord Stirling Manor Site, Bernards Twp.
   SHR 12/1/76  NHR 5/22/78
F. John Parker Tavern, Bernardsville Boro.
   SHR 4/15/78  NHR 12/14/78
G. Middlebrook Encampment, Bridgewater Twp.
   SHR 5/8/75  NHR 7/5/75
H. Van Vechten House, Bridgewater Twp.
   SHR 7/21/79  NHR 10/10/79
I. Jacob Voseller/Castner/Allen Tavern, Bridgewater Twp.
   SHR 11/26/85  NHR 1/23/86
J. Rockingham, Franklin Twp.
   SHR 9/11/70  NHR 12/18/70
K. Symen Van Wickle House, Franklin Twp.
   SHR 9/18/73  NHR 12/14/73
L. Cat Tail Brook Bridge, Hillsborough Twp.
   SHR 11/27/78  NHR 8/1/79
M. Huff House & Farmstead, Hillsborough Twp.
   SHR 3/15/76  NHR 11/7/76
N. Blaunenough Reformed Church, Montgomery Twp.
   SHR 7/22/85  NHR 9/5/85
O. General John Frelinghuysen House, Raritan Boro.
   SHR 2/1/71  NHR 3/4/71
P. Old Dutch Parsonage, Somerville Boro.
   SHR 9/11/70  NHR 1/25/71
Q. Wallace House, Somerville Boro.
   SHR 9/11/70  NHR 12/2/70
R. Mount Bethel Baptist Meeting House, Warren Twp.
   SHR 12/22/75  NHR 6/3/76
S. Smalley/Wormser House, Warren Twp.
   SHR 4/27/78  NHR 10/19/78
   SHR 6/24/86
U. McDonald’s/Kline’s Mill, Bedminster Twp.
   SHR 11/10/86
V. W. Redmond Cross Estate, Bernardsville Boro.
   (Pending Approval)

Historic Districts
1. Franklin Corners Historic District, Bernards Twp.
   SHR 12/1/74  NHR 5/12/75
2. Pluckemin Historic District, Bedminster Twp.
   SHR 2/22/82  NHR 7/26/82
   SHR 7/6/76  NHR 12/13/77
   SHR 6/13/77  NHR 1/9/78
   SHR 10/10/78  NHR 8/1/79
   SHR 10/16/79  NHR 9/29/80
7. Millstone Historic District, Millstone Boro.
   SHR 10/4/74  NHR 9/13/76
8. Millstone Valley Agricultural District, Hillsborough Twp.
   SHR 2/7/77  NHR 8/10/77
   SHR 5/8/75  NHR 6/10/75
    SHR 1/14/82  NHR 7/8/82
11. Delaware and Raritan Canal
    SHR 11/30/72  NHR 5/11/73
18. Lamington Historic District, Bedminster Twp.
    SHR 5/7/84  NHR 6/21/84
    SHR 6/21/84  NHR 8/2/84
20. East Millstone Historic District, Millstone Boro.
    SHR 2/3/83  NHR 3/17/83
    SHR 5/5/86  NHR 4/10/86
22. Morristown National Historical Park, Bernardsville Boro
    (National Historic Landmark)
    SHR 8/16/79  NHL 10/15/66
    SHR 3/4/87
24. Blaunenough Historic District, Montgomery Twp.
    (Pending approval)

Operating Train Stations
(throughout New Jersey)
    SHR 3/17/84  NHR 6/22/84
12. Lyons Train Station
13. Bernardsville Train Station
14. Bound Brook Train Station
15. Far Hills Train Station
16. Gladstone Train Station
17. Raritan Train Station

SHR — State Historical Register
NHR — National Historic Register
NHL — National Historic Landmark
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>A</strong> The Academy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>15 West Oak St., Basking Ridge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Academy, (sometimes called the Basking Ridge Classical School or Brick Academy) was constructed by Reverend Robert Finley, a pastor at Basking Ridge, in 1809, in the Federal Style of architecture. It is representative of the numerous classical seminaries created in New Jersey during the 19th century for educating the male children of wealthy citizens of the State. The exterior has never been altered and appears the same as it did in 1809. Theodore Frelinghuysen, William L. Danon, a native of Basking Ridge and the first vice-presidential candidate of the Republican party (1856), and Samuel Southard, Governor of New Jersey and Secretary of the Navy were alumni.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It currently serves as the headquarters of the Basking Ridge Historical Society. For further information call (201) 766-0263.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>B</strong> The Alward Farm House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>40 Mount Airy Rd., Basking Ridge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Alward House is one of the few colonial era farmhouses in Bernards Township. It represents the primitive and simple lifestyle of many of New Jersey's interene early settlers. The lines of the building are essentially unchanged since the mid 18th century when it was constructed. It continues today as a private residence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>C</strong> The Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 West Oak St., Basking Ridge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church is a fine example of the Greek Revival Style whose exterior has been altered very little since its construction in 1839. The church replaces two earlier structures on the site. Thirty-five revolutionary soldiers have been buried in the church yard. Also within the church yard is the famous Basking Ridge Oak which is believed to be over 500 years old. For further information call (201) 766-1616.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>D</strong> The Coffee House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>214 N. Maple Ave., Basking Ridge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The House constructed in 1804, is a typical example of a New Jersey frame farm house that served as a farm house and later on as a cross roads tavern. The Coffee House was the center of activity and entertainment for the farms and other small communities within several miles in the early 19th century. It is now a private residence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>E</strong> Lord Stirling Manor Site*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lord Stirling Rd., Basking Ridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Stirling led the New Jersey Militia and was a Brigadier General in the Continental Army. He led troops in battle on Long Island, in the battles of Trenton, Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. All that remains of the estate are some small out buildings. Archeological investigations are currently taking place on the site which is owned by Somerset County Park Commission. For further information call (201) 766-2489.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>F</strong> John Parker Tavern*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Morristown Rd., Bernardsville</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tavern is a fine example of a cross road tavern constructed in the mid 18th century. During the revolution it was owned and operated by Captain John Parker of the 1st Battalion of Somerset County. The Tavern was frequently used by Continental Troops including General Anthony Wayne. A Tory spy, Aaron Wilde was captured there. The building has been in use as the Bernardsville Library since 1903. Hours: Monday-Thursday 10-5, 7-9, Friday 10-5, Saturday 10-5, Sunday 2-4. For further information call (201) 766-0118.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **G** Middle Brook Encampment |
| Mountain Ave., Bridgewater |
| This site was the scene of two encampments of major portions of Washington's Continental Army. First, during the early summer of 1777 and second, during the winter of 1778-1779. The first encampment was of strategic importance since it compelled British General Howe to alter his campaign for the summer of 1777. When the 13-star flag was officially adopted by Congress, the first place it was flown was over Washington Troops at Middlebrook. The site is operated by the Washington Park Association. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>I</strong> Jacob Vosseler House (Indian Trail Inn/Castner Tavern)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>664 Foothill Rd., Bridgewater</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This structure, which served as a general store and tavern in the 18th and 19th centuries, is one of the best preserved pre-revolutionary commercial buildings in the Somerville area. The exterior still retains the original hand split clapboard. It is now a private residence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>J</strong> Rockingham*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rt. 518, Franklin Township</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockingham was the headquarters of General Washington in 1793 while he attended sessions of the Continental Congress which was meeting in Princeton. Washington wrote his “Farewell Orders To The Armies of the United States” from this House.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1737: First Somerset County Courthouse in Franklin Park is destroyed by accidental fire, with all records lost.
HISTORIC SITES

CONTINUED...

K  Symen Van Wickle House (The Meadows)
1289 Easton Ave., Franklin Twp.
Built in 1722 an excellent example of 18th century colonial architecture influenced by the Dutch, Flemish and English. It is owned by Franklin Township and maintained by the Meadows Foundation. Open daily to public. For further information call (201) 828-7418.

L  Cattail Brook Bridge
Montgomery Rd., Hillsborough Twp.
This simple stone arch bridge was built in 1825 of local field stone. It is one of the two remaining stone arch bridges in Hillsborough Township.

M  Huff House and Farmstead
River Rd., Hillsborough Twp.
The Huff House is a Greek Revival farm house which has remained wholly intact since its construction in 1842. Tunis Huff, who constructed this house, was a member of the New Jersey Assembly and County Surrogate. It is now a private residence.

N  Blawenburg Reformed Church
424 Georgetown/Franklin Tpke., (Blawenburg) Montgomery Twp.
The Blawenburg Reformed Church is a well preserved example of late Georgian architecture which has been in continuous use as a church since its construction in 1831.

O  General John Frelinghuysen House*
54 E. Somerset St., Raritan
The house constructed in 1750 is the homestead of the Frelinghuysen family which has long been significant in New Jersey History. The house which has had a number of additions and alterations, exhibits colonial, federal and Greek revival features. It is now the Raritan Public Library. Hours Monday — Thursday 12-8, Friday 12-5, Saturday 10-3. No fee.

H  Van Veghten House*
Industrial Park Rd., (near Findyne Ave.) Bridgewater
Built in the early 1700’s, this brick house served as headquarters for Quartermaster General Nathaniel Green during the winter of 1778-1779. It was known, at that time, as one of the finest farmsteads in the area. During the Middlebrook encampment, Derrick Van Veghten quartered an entire division of American troops here. The site is now owned by the Somerset County Historical Society. Hours: Tuesday 10-2 or by appointment. For further information call (201) 722-0018.

T  Alexander and James Linn Homestead
Minebrook Rd., Far Hills
Alexander Linn constructed this colonial home, with both Dutch and English influence, in the 1750’s. Alexander Linn was Justice of the Peace and Common Pleas Court Judge. His son, James, was a revolutionary war veteran and was Vice President of the State Senate and member of the U.S. Congress.

W  W. Redmond Cross Estate*
Old Jockey Hollow Rd., Bernardsville
The estate consists of a main house constructed in the early 20th century, with elements of the picturesque and neoclassical styles. Also a number of outbuildings, well-maintained formal gardens, a stone water tower, and a chalet-style structure have survived to this day. W. Redmond Cross, a banker, was President of the New York Zoological Society and American Geographical Society. The house is on the grounds of the Morristown National Historical Park. For further information call (201) 539-2016.

R  Kirch Ford House*
1 Reinman Rd., Warren
The House, constructed in the early 18th century, is a fine example of an 18th century vernacular dwelling. In the 1830’s it was owned by the First Clerk of Warren Township, Thomas Terell. The house is maintained by the Warren Township Historic Sites Committee and is open to the public. For information please call (201) 356-3730.

R  Mount Bethel Baptist Meeting House
Mount Bethel & Mountainview Rds., Warren
This meeting house, constructed in 1761 was the County's
First Baptist congregation and is one of the oldest Baptist Churches in New Jersey. It is a representative example of the simple church structures erected throughout the British Colonies in the 18th Century. It reflects the austerity and frugality practiced by the congregations at that time.

S Smalley/Wormser House
84 Mountain Ave., Warren
This house is a charming example of a colonial farm house whose exterior has changed little in 200 years. It was thought to have been built in 1765 by David Smalley, a Captain in the Continental Army, Justice of the Peace and Judge of the Interior Courts of Common Pleas. The house has a working original Bee Hive Oven. It continues today as a private residence.

U McDonalds/Klines Mill
Klines Mill Rd., Bedminster
The Mill is significant as a rare surviving up and down sawmill which has the mill drive virtually intact. The mill site is the sole vestige of a 19th Century rural industrial and trading center. It is in private ownership.

V Somerset Court House Green*
Main St., Somerville
Designed by James Reilly Gorden and constructed in 1809, the Somerset County Court House is a fine example of Beaux-Arts Classicism. The gilded dome is surmounted by a Figure of Justice. The contractor, William H. Fissel, built one wing of the U.S. Capitol. The adjacent First Reformed Dutch Church is a free interpretation of an English parish Gothic Church. Constructed in 1897, it is distinguished by the broad and generous handling of interior spaces. The Church is now used by the County as a juror’s waiting room. The Lord Memorial Fountain was erected in 1910 and was designed by John Russell Pope, who also designed the Jefferson Memorial and National Archives, and sculpted by John Boyde and Thomas C. Post Troilearen. For further information call (201) 231-7110.

P Old Dutch Parsonage*
65 Washington Place, Somerville
Built in 1751 for the Rev. John Frelinghuysen by the congregation of the First Dutch Reformed Church. The Rev. Jacob Hardenbergh began theological classes here which were the beginning of Queens College, later Rutgers—The State University. It is owned by the State and is open to the public. Hours: Wednesday, Saturday 10-12, 1-5, Sunday 1-5. For further information call (201) 725-1015.

Q Wallace House*
38 Washington Place, Somerville
The House was constructed in 1778 and was General Washington’s Headquarters from December 1778 to June 1779, when the Continental Army was stationed at Camp Middlebrook. Visitors to the home included General LaFayette, General Knox, Benedict Arnold, Alexander Hamilton, Baron Von Steuben, and Lady Stirling. The house is owned by the State and is opened to the public. Hours: Wednesday — Saturday 10-12, 1-5, Sunday 1-5. For further information call (201) 725-1015.

X The James B. Duke Estates
Hillsborough
The James B. Duke Estate is the 2,000 acre country residence established by the tobacco magnate in the early 20th Century.

The estate, with its landscaped gardens, was considered one of the most outstanding in America. The one-mile-long boulder fence along the front of the estate is visible from Route 206. The estate is not open to the public except for the Duke Gardens which are open by reservation only. For further information call 722-3700.

Reynolds Scherman House
Hardscraple Rd., Bernardsville
This picturesque stone house was originally constructed as a barn in the 18th Century or early 19th Century. It represents the areas regional vernacular architecture with its rubble stone walls segmentally arched doorways, brick fireplace and simple interior woodwork. A 1928 remodeling shows the influence of the Colonial Revival style. Remnants of an old textile mill still exists on the site.

The house was the summer home of Harry Scherman, principal founder of the Book of the Month Club (1924). It is now a private residence.

1759: Neshanic Reformed Church Congregation begins construction of stone sanctuary, which is still in use.

1766: Queen’s College (Rutgers) is chartered, is rechartered in 1770 and begins operation at New Brunswick, then partly in Somerset County. The Rev. Jacob R. Hardenbergh is instrumental in founding the College and becomes President in 1785.

Historic Districts

1 Franklin Corners Historic District
Bernards Township
Franklin Corners is a small farming and milling hamlet which dates from approximately 1770 to 1850. The Van Dorn’s Mill within
the district is an outstanding example of mid-19th century stone masonry. It has been successfully converted to an architect's office.

2 Pluckemin Historic District
Bedminster Township
Pluckemin was once a small village which developed in the mid-19th century. The Greek Revival Pluckemin Presbyterian Church constructed in 1851-52 is the most important landmark in the Village.

3 South Branch Historic District
Hillsborough Township
South Branch is representative of the numerous small river villages which dotted New Jersey landscape in the 19th Century. The Vroom House, a Federal-style house constructed in 1792, was the home of Peter D. Vroom, two-term governor of New Jersey (1829-31 and 1833-35) and member of the U.S. Congress. The Greek Revival Dutch Reformed Church (1850) is typical of the rural church as constructed by moderately well-to-do congregations in the mid 19th century.

4 Nesanic Mills Historic District
Hillsborough Township
Nesanic Mills is the last remaining mill complex in the region and one of the few existing grist mills on the South Branch of the Raritan River. Today the grist mill, carriage sheds and two residences opposite the mill look as they might have in the late 1970's.

5 Nesanic Historic District
Hillsborough Township
Nesanic is a well-preserved 19th Century agrarian village. The district contains thirty structures, including the Robinson Homestead constructed in the mid-19th century and the Dutch Reformed Church (1759).

6 Clover Hill Historic District
Hillsborough Township
A well-preserved, small, cross roads village composed of 23 structures on the Somerset/Hunterdon County border, developed in the 19th Century. The Gothic Revival Dutch Reformed Church (1834) is sided with fish scale clapboard.

7 Millstone Historic District
Millstone Borough
Millstone was the scene of dramatic events in the revolutionary war including the burning of the County Court House in 1779 by the Queens' Rangers under Colonel John Simcoe. Architecture in the district includes Dutch Colonial, Federal, Greek and Gothic Revival, Second Empire and modern. Important structures include the Hillsborough Reformed Church (1828), the Blacksmith Shop (1639) and the Wilson House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright (1956).

8 Millstone Valley Agricultural District
Hillsborough Township
The Millstone Valley Agricultural District represents an 18th and 19th Century prosperous farming region along the Millstone River. Early and mid-19th century farm houses and barns are spread throughout the 122-acre district.

9 Bridgeport Historic District
Montgomery Township
The Bridgeport District is a modest typical New Jersey farm community of the period 1750-1850. Significant structures are an old Grist Mill built in early 19th Century, the Millers Cottage (1730) and triple arch stone bridge built in the 1820's.

10 Rocky Hill Historic District
Rocky Hill Borough
The village which developed in the 18th and 19th centuries, contains 145 historic structures. These include the Dutch Reformed Church (1855), an outstanding example of Carpenter Gothic Style, the Clark House (1840's) and Vanderveer House (1850's).

11 Delaware and Raritan Canal
The D & R Canal stretches from Trenton to New Brunswick, paralleling the Millstone and Raritan Rivers. Completed in 1834, it was one of America's greatest inland waterways. During its peak years of 1866-1871, the canal carried more freight than any other canal in America.

18 Lamington Historic District
Bedminster Township
This small community which was settled in the 18th and 19th Century includes the Greek Revival Style, Lamington Presbyterian Church (constructed in 1826) and Anthony's Store (now the historically restored Lamington General Store) constructed in 1895.

19 Griggstown Historic District
Franklin Township
This rural community developed along the Millstone River and D & R Canal. The First Reformed Dutch Church built in the Greek Revival Style (1842) and the Veghte House built in the Italianate Style (1888) are outstanding structures in the district. In 1873 the brigetender station housed a wireless telegraph used to notify the tender of approaching ships. It was believed to have been the first commercial use of the telegraph in America. ❱
20 East Millstone Historic District
Franklin Township
East Millstone, a 19th Century transportation center along the D & R Canal, still retains its village character. A number of 19th Century architectural styles including Greek Revival, Italianate, Second Empire and Eastlake are represented in the district.

21 Kingston Mill Historic District
Franklin Township
This hamlet, mostly in Mercer County, has a grist mill and 18th century stone arch bridge. The hamlet is the home of the First Somerset County Sheriff "Barefoot" Brinon.

22 Morristown National Historical Park
New Jersey Brigade
Bernardsville Borough

In the winter of 1779-80, the New Jersey Brigade of 1,300 men camped a few miles south of General Washington's main army camped at Jockey Hollow. This area was selected by Washington because of its strategic location and friendly New Jersey populace.

23 Washington Park Historic District
North Plainfield Borough
This 19th Century planned neighborhood has one of the county's finest collections of Victorian Era architecture including Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Dowingsque, Shingle, and American Four-Square styles among others. Inventor of the ball bearing, Fredrick O. Ball, lived in the district.

24 Blawenburg Historic District
Montgomery Township
The proposed Blawenburg District is representative of a small rural agricultural hamlet which developed in the 19th Century. Important sites include the Reformed Church, the Federal style James Van Zandt Homestead (1809, a private residence) and the William Griggs House (1815, a private residence).

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Operating Train Stations

12 Lyons Station
Bernards Township
This one-story tudor revival style structure was built in 1931. It was designed by Delaware Lackawanna and Western (DL&W) architect, D.T. Mack or one of his staffs and is now owned by Bernards Township.

13 Bernardsville Station
U.S. Route 202
Bernardsville, NJ
This one-story hipped roof structure includes Corinthian pilasters carved in oak. It was designed by Bradford Gilbert, constructed in 1901-1902, and paid for by Grant B. Schley founder of Far Hills Borough. It is now owned by NJ Transit.

14 Bound Brook
Main Street
Bound Brook, NJ
This Flemish-bond brick structure with brick balustrade was constructed in 1913 by the Reading Railroad. It was designed by William I. Houghton, Assistant Chief Engineer of the line. It is now leased from NJ Transit by George's Train Station Restaurant.

15 Far Hills Station
U.S. Route 202
Far Hills, NJ
This Renaissance-revival style structure, with a central eyelid dormer and Spanish tile roof was constructed in 1914. It was designed by L.R. Simpson an in-house architect with the DL&W. It is owned by NJ Transit and sub-leased to Butlers Pantry Trackside Restaurant.

16 Gladstone Station
Main Street
Gladstone, NJ
This fine example of the Queen Anne style was constructed in 1890. The dormers with square pane windows and the cylindrical corner projections are of particular note. Scenes for the Helen Keller Story were filmed here in 1967. The station is owned by NJ Transit.

17 Raritan Station
Thompson Street
Raritan, NJ
This fine example of the Richardson Romanesque style with Gothic elements was constructed by the Central New Jersey Railroad in the 1890's. The station is owned by NJ Transit.

Somerville Station
Urban Drive
Somerville, NJ
This station was constructed in 1890 by the Central New Jersey Railroad and was designed by Frank V. Bodine of Asbury Park, New Jersey. It is a fine example of the Richardsonian Romanesque and Queen Anne Styles. The two-story stone building with its steeply pitched roof, has a cylindrical tower with a bell cast conical roof. The Station is now privately owned.
Bedminster

The Township of Bedminster, located in the Somerset Hills of New Jersey, was chartered in 1749 by King George II and settled by Dutch, German and Scotch-Irish immigrants.

Before the Europeans arrived, the Lenni-Lenape (Original People) passed through the township in their migrations between the Delaware River and the shore. They and other sub-tribes of the Delaware Indians found their way through the First and Second Watchung (the high hills) Mountains, then north along the Alametunck (Lamington) River to its falls. Another trail followed the Peapack River through the rift valley of the Ramapo fault.

Seventeenth-century Dutch and Germans tracked the Indian paths. They cleared the fields for their crops and built their mills by the streams. Footpaths became country lanes. After 1800, the English Colonial government laid out proper roads. Where two roads crossed, a village formed. These included Pluckemin, Lamington and Greater Crossroads.

Brook. Several hundred captured British soldiers were quartered in the Pluckemin Church, which had been damaged by British raids in 1776. A British officer, Captain William Leslie, is buried in the Pluckemin churchyard.

During the winter of 1778-1779, General Henry Knox and the Continental Artillery encamped for six months on the slope of the Second Watchung Mountain northeast of Pluckemin village. Here, Knox constructed what was intended to be a permanent installation for the training of artillersists.

On February 8, 1779, Knox and his officers played host at a gala ball and fireworks display celebrating the first anniversary of the alliance between the French government and the American colonies. More than 300 persons attended, including General and Mrs. Washington.

The focus of the war after 1779 shifted away from New Jersey but local militia continued to train at Pluckemin. The Knox camp became a military hospital and was in use through 1780. The Continental Army marched near Pluckemin again in 1781 enroute to the Battle of Yorktown.

Nineteenth-century Bedminster was an agrarian community, beyond the pale of the metropolitan area. The fertile land yielded wheat, oats, corn and hay. Beef and dairy cattle, hogs and sheep grazed the fields. Orchards were everywhere — this was peach country.

Events near the turn of the century were the

Mondello House (1875). Pluckeman Village Historic District

During the Revolutionary war, Somerset County was corridor and crossroads for Washington's army. After the Battle of Princeton in 1777, the Continental Army marched to Pluckemin and camped overnight. A British spy map shows the rebels close by Chamber's seeds of future growth and change, The Rockaway Valley Railroad, providing freight and passenger service from Whitehouse to Pottersville, began operating in 1889. The Passaic and Delaware line from Hoboken to Bernardsville was extended to Gladstone in 1890.
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

BEDMINSTER CONTINUED...

The Kenilworth Inn in Pluckemin invited city people out to take the country air. The “hotels” at the crossroads in Pottersville, Gladstone, Peapack and Lesser Crossroads were simple inns offering a respite from the heat and hurry of the city.

Bedminster was becoming accessible. The sprawling green Township with its farmland and pasture, trout streams, and villages with ascending church spires lured new people with money generated from utilities, railroads, pharmaceuticals, finance and manufacturing.

In the decades between 1890 and ‘Black Friday’ in 1929, the township donned a new mantle. Wealthy men purchased thousands of acres of land in Bedminster. Grant B. Schley was the first. In 1889 he bought 1,500 acres which he intended to divide and sell as country estates for his friends. He died before the plan was realized. Today, his second Watchung Mountain is owned by The Hills Development Company.

The super-imposition of the rich and powerful transformed the township. The farmer became the tenant on his own land. There was an immeasurable boost to the local economy. Employment was provided for all in constructing palatial homes or working on the estates. Local merchants prospered through endless orders for materials and supplies.

The coming of the automobile precipitated improvements to the ancient road system. The dirt track from Somerville to Morristown was paved during the 1920’s. A new hard surface highway, now Route 206, was constructed in 1930, linking Andover on the north to Princeton. The new artery merged with Route 206 below Bedminster village.

The township’s own roads remained unpaved: a deterrent to through traffic on country lanes leading only to a scattering of houses and easier on horses’ hooves. Today in Bedminster, where there are blacktop private drives a mile or more in length, 20 of the 40 miles of public roads are still stone and dirt.

The township population in 1940 was 1,600 — a gain of 11 persons in 100 years. The township had shrunk by six square miles when the Borough of Peapack and Gladstone seceded in 1912. Village dwellers had objected to paying the high taxes required to maintain and patrol the long miles of rural roads.

During World War II, a new term appeared in the local lexicon — “sub-division.” A farm west of Pluckemin was sliced up and sold off in 50-foot lots. It was rumored that one of the estates would be subdivided too. Time for a local zoning ordinance, decided the town fathers.

The first ordinance, adopted in 1946, mirrored the existing land use. Large lot zoning in most of the township — a five-acre minimum. Half-acre zoning in the corridor from Bedminster to Pluckemin Villages and a business district in each village. No industry; no apartments.

Within three years, the township was taken to court over the ordinance. From litigation that was appealed to the New Jersey Supreme Court for a final ruling, the Fischer v. Township of Bedminster case emerged as the benchmark ruling on the validity of five-acre zoning. The high court heard the Fischer case in 1952, and found in favor of the township.

The decision was written by Chief Justice Arthur T. Vanderbilt and issued December 22, 1952. His concluding statement was “it must, of course, be borne in mind that an ordinance which is reasonable today may at some future time and by reason of changed conditions provide to be unreasonable. If so, it may then be set aside.”

Even as Vanderbilt wrote, the changed conditions to which he referred were taking shape. The Federal Highway Act of 1960 launched a modern interstate highway system, and paved a new future for the Somerset Hills.

Rights-of-way were acquired for construction of Interstate 287 and 78, with a monster interchange at Pluckemin. The alignment was the crossbow that would catapult Bedminster into the metropolitan region. I-287 opened through the township in 1966 and I-78 in 1970. The interchange lured development. AT&T Long Lines built its corporate headquarters along the North Branch, bringing 3,000 daytime residents to Bedminster.

Currently, the Township of Bedminster is facing a new era of development — the suburbanization of the Route 202-206 corridor dictated by the Superior Court of New Jersey in its decision in Allan-Deane v. Township of Bedminster, involving construction of multi-unit housing. However, the rich historical legacy of Bedminster remains, and can be seen throughout the municipality.

Bibliography

The “Historical Background” section of this report is taken directly from a monograph entitled ‘From
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

BEDMINSTER CONTINUED...

Primitive Man to Planning Master — A Tale Of the Township Bedminster, authored by Anne O’Brien, Bedminster Township Committee woman and Local Historian, dated September 1981.

Historic Site
McDonald’s/Kline Mill

Bernards

At the time of the American Revolution, Basking Ridge was a very small village of only a few houses around the Presbyterian Church, surrounded by farms scattered throughout the township.

The territory of Bernards Township had been part of about 3,000 acres purchased for $50 by John Harrison from Lenni-Lenape Chief Nowenock in 1717. Another 7,000 acres were bought by William Penn later that year and eventually became a part of Bernards Township. By 1729, most of the settlers had obtained their land and the squatters were dispossessed. Around 1740, approximately 30 families had settled in the vicinity. The settlers were immigrants, mostly from Scotland and Northern Ireland. Many of the original names, such as Alward, Conkling, Cross and Dayton, are still part of the community, appearing in names of streets, roads and schools.

Actually, the name Basking Ridge was used soon after settlement began. The earliest knowledge of it was in the 1733 ecclesiastical records of the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church and is recorded as being derived from the fact that “the wild animals of the adjacent lowlands were accustomed to bask in the warm sun of this beautiful ridge.”

The focal point of Basking Ridge is the historic Presbyterian Church. The exact date of origin is not known, but it definitely began before 1720, possibly as early as 1710. The early settlers were Scotch Presbyterians who supposedly erected a log church about 1700. The original deed is dated February 8, 1731, and was for one-and-a-half acres, on which stood an old log meeting house. In 1749, the structure was replaced by a larger frame building. Dr. Robert Finley became pastor in 1795 and also founded the boys’ school, which was housed in the Academy. The famous oak tree in the Presbyterian churchyard, now more than 500 years old, still spreads its branches next to the church.

The Academy, built in 1809, operated until 1840. Dr. Finley first taught his students at home, later moving to a larger building erected by friends. This was later replaced by the large brick school house. Notable students included Samuel Southard, governor of New Jersey, also Secretary of the Navy, vice-president under President Tyler; William L. Dayton, U.S. Senator, minister to France; Theodore Freylinghausen, U.S. Senator; and Robert F. Stockton, commander of Mexican War fame. Contributions were donated by several wealthy men of New York City. Pupils also came from as far away as Virginia and Philadelphia. (In later years, the Academy was used as a public school, municipal building, and is the home of the Basking Ridge Historical Society.)

Bernardston Township was chartered in 1760 by George II, and named in honor of Sir Francis Bernard, governor-in-chief of the Province of New Jersey, 1758-1760. Possibly because of Bernard’s diplomacy in land purchases, settling any wrongs toward the Indians and release of prisoners, the last Indian war in New Jersey was settled in 1758.

One hundred Bernard Township men responded to the call to join the army and fight for freedom during the American Revolution. There are 35 veterans buried in the Presbyterian churchyard. In the small village of Basking Ridge stood Widow White’s Tavern, on a hill along what is now known as South Finley Avenue. Continental Army General Charles Lee went there to share Widow White’s hospitality, resulting in his capture by the British army on December 13, 1776. Lee was second in command to General George Washington.

Because of the abundance of water supplied by springs and brooks for cooking and washing, General Washington established a smallpox hospital in Basking Ridge. This hospital stood slightly east of the village.

Historic Districts
Pluckemin Historic District
Lamington Historic District

1777: ON JANUARY 20, GENERAL PHILEMON DICKINSON, WITH 450 AMERICANS, ATTACKS A BRITISH FORAGING PARTY OF 600 AT THE WESTON BRIDGE. THE BRITISH HOLD OFF THE AMERICANS AT THE BRIDGE BUT ARE BLANKET WHEN THE AMERICANS WADE THE RIVER BELOW THEIR POSITION. THE AMERICANS LOSE FIVE MEN WHILE ENGLISH LOSSES ARE 30.
 Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

BERNARDS CONTINUED...

**The Academy (1809).**

and although nothing of it remains today, many artifacts, such as coins, uniform buttons and musket flints have been unearthed over the years by farmers’ plows.

William Alexander, a founder of King’s College (Columbia University) and later third in command of troops under Washington, established an elegant residence, Stirling Manor, at Basking Ridge, prior to the war. The house was located along the Elizabethtown Road, which followed somewhat the present Collyer Lane. Well known in America as Lord Stirling, this prominent man was one of the first to champion the cause of American independence. His estate fell into disrepair; an architectural dig is an ongoing project at the site of The Buildings, so named by his country neighbors at the time.

Slavery, with black as well as white slaves, was practiced throughout Bernards Township in colonial times, as noted in Pennsylvania newspaper ads from the 1700s. Slave quarters on Lord Stirling’s estate have lasted many generations and been extensively studied.

A local heroine was Mary Lewis Kinnan, born in Basking Ridge in 1763, widow of Joseph, who was attacked by Indians in Virginia and sold to a Delaware tribe. She wrote to her Basking Ridge brother, who with funds collected at church, rescued her in Detroit. She lived out her final years to 84 in her birthplace. Known affectionately as Aunt Polly, she is buried in the local churchyard.

By 1830, there were many more villages, hamlets and crossroads surrounding Basking Ridge. Bernards Township was made up of two villages: Basking Ridge, the larger, had four stores, several mechanics, a church, the Academy and 40 homes. Liberty Corner, the other village, consisted of a tavern, two stores, a gristmill and sawmill, a church, and about 20 homes. Township population was listed as 2,032 in 1834; in 1868, there were 2,170.

Basking Ridge did not have its own post office until 1802. Prior to that, traveling mailmen and stage-lines were the means of communications to be delivered and sent. These went through town about twice weekly.

In the mid-1800s, interest grew to have the railroad connect Basking Ridge. In spite of many financial difficulties, it was completed in 1872 and led to residential development. The local peach-growing industry also benefited from the railroad expansion.

In 1861, Bernards mustered a company of volunteers for the Civil War.

Bernards, a God-loving community, grew with many churches established. They include: Liberty Corner Presbyterian, 1837; St. Mark’s Episcopal, 1850; Millington Baptist, 1851; Bishop Janes United Methodist, 1854; St. James Roman Catholic, 1864; Somerset Hills Church of Christ, 1936; Somerset Hills Lutheran, 1957; Somerset Hills Baptist, 1964; Covenant Chapel, 1966; Evangelical Chapel, 1975.

Bernards Township is approximately nine miles long, three miles wide, with an area of about 23.2 square miles. Towns which were formed from Bernards are: Warren, 1806; Far Hills, 1921; Bernardsville, 1924.

Bernards Township is the headquarters of the United States Golf Association, and the American Telephone and Telegraph Corporation. Large parcels of land are occupied by the Veterans Medical Center at Lyons; and the Fellowship Deaconry, a non-denominational conference center at Liberty Corner.

**Historic Sites**

The Academy
The Alward Homestead
Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church
Coffee House
Lord Stirling Manor
Lyons Train Station

**Historic District**

Franklin Corners

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1777: On June 14, Congress adopts the Stars and Stripes as the nation’s flag. Historians agree that the original 13-star Betsy Ross flag probably was raised first over Washington’s headquarters at Middlebrook.
Bernardsville

The earliest authentic date of activity in the Bernardsville region is 1717. The first official evidence of actual settlement is in deeds of subsequent years and in letters exchanged between James Alexander and John Parker. Alexander, surveyor-general of East Jersey, and his assistant, John Parker, played a major role in bringing order into the difficult business of establishing legal claims to the lands of Bernards.

In the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church is another helpful document — a copy of a deed transferring title of an acre and a half of land to seven trustees of the church in the year 1731. By this year, there were enough settlers here who were well enough established for them to build a meeting house and organize a church.

The real founding father of the Bernards community has never been surely identified. However, tradition leans heavily in favor of James Pitney being the first to become a permanent settler. Pitney was a resident of Woodbridge, N.J., when he came to establish a home in Bernards. Records indicate that by 1730, Pitney owned and sold land, a tract of 123 acres beginning at a point apparently about a mile southwest of the present Borough of Bernardsville and stretching northwest. At some time he left the Bernards community and moved up over the hills to Mendham.

Bernardsville was a part of Bernards Township and was formerly called "Vealtown," although the name "Bernardinon" has been mentioned in the trustees' records of the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church in 1763.

Vealtown was changed to its present name in 1840; it was named for Sir Francis Bernard, colonial governor of New Jersey.

Discussions about ways and means of proceeding with the separation of Bernardsville under the township government began in the latter part of 1900. On October 8, 1908, at a meeting of the Road and Improvement Society of Mine Mount, the question of the formation of a separate Bernardsville Borough was brought up. However, after the election of 1920, there was a determined effort made to form a Borough. A special election of the township was held on June 9, 1921 and a referendum placed on the ballot to vote on the question was defeated by a majority vote. The community finally separated from Bernards Township in 1924.

Soon after the Civil War, there appeared in Bernardsville the first of several harbingers of change that would exert important influences on the community in the years to come. The first of these was a movement of New Yorkers of wealth and prominence into the area, first as summer visitors, then as permanent residents. Bernardsville soon achieved widespread reputation as a fashionable summer resort. By the end of the century, some of the summer visitors had become so attached to the area that they built summer homes here. The "Mountain" soon became a region of spacious estates.

In 1872, a major innovation took place in the town in the form of a railroad spur line connecting Bernardsville with Summit, Newark and Hoboken, built by the wealthy "Mountain Colony."

Bernardsville boasts several historical buildings. Frederick P. Ocott, a large land holder in the period 1915-1920, presented a gift of land making possible the construction of what is now the Ocott Building. That initial step was carried further, so that by 1920, there was at least a belief that Bernards High School was one of

The John Parker Tavern (mid 18th century)
the most highly rated in the state because of the financial support it received.

Bunn's Mill, circa 1800, now the location of the Bernardsville Borough Hall, was operated in 1844 as a grist mill and sawmill, cider mill and distillery.

On December 27, 1902, a certificate of incorporation was filed at the County Clerk's Office in Somerville by the Bernards' Library Association. Twelve thousand dollars was donated by the "Mountain Colony," and this enabled the association to purchase and renovate the present location. In keeping with its age, the library has the reputation of being haunted. The library was once a tavern owned by Captain John Parker. His daughter, Phyllis, reportedly went insane after the man she loved, a British spy, was executed. Some villagers declared that Phyllis Parker's ghost returns to haunt the parlor from time to time.

One of the earliest mills in Bernardsville was the Vealtown Mill, built during the late 1770s. It stood on Mill Lane on the site of the parking lot next to the Old Stone Hotel (now "The Station.")

The local paper, the Bernardsville News, was established in February 1892 by John Welles. In 1907, it was bought by Levi Roats Trumbull, who ran the paper until his death in 1916. His son, Carl, agreed to move to Bernardsville to run the paper for a few months until a suitable replacement could be found; instead he made the Bernardsville News his lifetime career. At the time of his death, the paper continued under Charles J. McDermott. Cortlandt Parker is the present owner of the paper.

Historic Sites
John Parker Tavern
Bernardsville Train Station
W. Raymond Cross Estate

Historic District
Morristown National Park Historic District

Bound Brook

The site of Bound Brook today is where several Indian trails crossed long ago; it was the first settlement in Somerset County. It was founded between the Middlebrook and the Bound Brook (now called the Green Brook), both of which converged with the Raritan River. They were small streams much of the year, but in time of spring floods and during rainy seasons, they became small torrents.

In the 1600s, the road from New Brunswick up the Raritan River was used, so notice was taken of the fertile plain of Bound Brook. In 1681, Governor Philip Carteret and a delegation bought the land from the Lenni-Lenape Indians. The Council Oak, under whose boughs the deal took place, still stands on Maple Avenue, near Mountain Avenue, until this day.

Main Street in Bound Brook today follows part of the old Indian Naraticon Trail that came from the Delaware to the Raritan River. There was a crossing at Bound Brook which was first a ford; later, the Stone Bridge was begun in 1727, and completed in 1731. The trail became the King's Highway, and later became part of the Old York Road.

At first the settlers used the road with horses, then widened it for wagons. Along it went stage coaches, and the stage coach stop in Bound Brook was the Middlebrook Tavern, at the intersection of Vos- seller Avenue and West Main Street. This building stood there until 1920, when it was razed by the Central Railroad of New Jersey, who needed the land for extra tracks. General Washington and his men used the Middlebrook Tavern as the meeting place for their Masonic Lodge meetings.

Several very fertile farms were established in the region. The settlers worked very hard, as all frontier farmers did. There were Dutch and British families, as well as other nationalities.

During the Revolutionary War, Lord Cornwallis and his British troops marched up the Raritan River, sacked Bound Brook, and plundered the stores and farms on their way to attack Washington's troops at Morristown. This made General Washington realize the importance of Bound Brook as a strategic spot, so he billeted Major Benjamin Lincoln here, and made the village a quartermaster's store. Everyone in the village did their utmost to provide food and other necessities for Washington's troops, who were encamped at the Middlebrook Camp Ground, just on the heights of Bound Brook. Eight thousand Continental soldiers were billeted there at that time.
When the Declaration of Independence was read in the town square, the bells pealed from the Presbyterian Church. At that time there was a lumber mill, a feed mill, a tannery and at least one general store in Bound Brook.

The Delaware and Raritan Canal was opened for transportation in 1836. Heavy barges were drawn up the canal by mules on the towpath. This made it much easier to draw freight to the port city of New Brunswick than in the Conastoga wagons. Five hundred of these heavy wagons had plied their way along the Old York Road every day before the canal was open.

In 1804, Bound Brook had its own post office. Then came the railroad which really opened up the land. The tracks were laid just along the south of the village, and large industries, which needed supplies of water and cheap transportation, sprang up all around the area. This brought in many workers and their families. They built homes in the town and in 1891 Bound Brook was organized into a borough, with Mr. W.H. Whiting as the first mayor. The Bound Brook Water Company had been organized in 1887.

In 1892, Mr. W.H. Bache and Mr. William W. Smalley were granted a patent on a journal lubricator. This became the Bound Brook Oilless Bearing Company. There was also an enterprising baker in Bound Brook who made “hardtack”, the bread that ships took on voyages for seamen to eat. It was shipped down the canal to the sea, to go aboard vessels.

In 1886, the Woman’s Literary Club was founded by some ladies who felt the need of study and literature to improve their minds. The nucleus grew into an active woman’s organization, which has celebrated its hundredth anniversary, and numbers among its achievements the founding of a free library, which it still supports. They also began the town.

nursing service, Family Counselling Service, as well as spurring the town to regular garbage collections and other worthy causes.

The churches were a great force for good in Bound Brook during the early days. In 1688, the same year that Somerset County was founded, the Presbyterian Church was established, and soon a fine church building was erected. After the Presbyterian Church came the Methodists in 1847, St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church in 1873, St. Paul’s Episcopal in 1861, Congregationalists in 1876, St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church in 1914, St. John’s Lutheran in 1916, Jewish Congregation Knesseth Israel in 1920 and two Baptist Churches.

The town had many generous Americans call it home, who worked tirelessly to make it a better place to live. Many names like Lamonte, Hetherington, Smalley, Fisher, Giles, Wood and DeMott have been those of Bound Brook’s benefactors.

Now there are new roads in to New York City, and west to Philadelphia, which make the borough easily accessible to those traveling to and from the city, and which have brought cultural events from the larger centers close to the local people. Consequently, real estate has soared in price, but the borough nonetheless strives to maintain its small-town atmosphere. Over the years, the character of the Main Street has changed and a whole new business district has moved up onto Union Avenue. This is further evidence of progress in a town that has been at the crossroads of history and activity for many, many years.

**Historic Site**
Bound Brook Train Station

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*The Bound Brook Train Station (1913).*
Branchburg

For nearly one hundred years, Branchburg was a part of Bridgewater Township, and not until 1845 did it become a township in its own right. Most of its area of 20 square miles was to the west of Bridgewater and Hillsborough townships, though its entire north, east and south boundaries are provided by the North and South Branches of the Raritan River. It was land that had been purchased from the native inhabitants by the Lords Proprietors of East Jersey. The first purchase was in 1685 and the remainder a few years later.

Any account of Branchburg through the years is characteristic of the county as a whole. On its fertile lands lived and prospered strong men and women. Among the first Dutch settlers were families that have been prominent from their arrival in the area to the present time. In fact, so many of their descendants have remained that one wonders if any of them ever moved away.

In 1700, Mathias Ten Eyck purchased a plot of 500 acres from John Johnson, who had bought it from the Governor of the Province. The property is that on which the well-known Ten Eyck Stone House in North Branch now stands. Ownership has remained with the Ten Eyck and Vander Veer families for nearly two hundred-fifty years.

The hamlet of North Branch was laid out by Joseph Thompson in 1844; but before that, an event of special import had taken place to give it standing and distinction. Once British troops had occupied New Brunswick in 1775, their presence there had gravely interfered with the functioning of Queen’s College. In consequence, the college discontinued its activities in New Brunswick. Sections of it were secluded in localities free from British torment and abuse. One such refuge was at North Branch, with the other sections located in nearby Raritan and Millstone. There, teachers and students roamed and boarded in private homes until the college was re-assembled in New Brunswick about 1781 or 1782.

North Branch did its full share in providing men for the service in the Colonial Wars and those that followed. Jacob Ten Eyck I served in the French and Indian War; his son, Jacob II, organized and commanded a company in the Revolution; James Vander Veer, entering the Civil War as a private, came home as the captain of his company — and all of them were owners of the Stone House in their time.

It seems that the stay of part of Queen’s College in North Branch may have influenced the people living there, for in 1782 they decided to build themselves a school. To defray the expense of that undertaking, the cost of nailing, boards and making of shingles was paid for in grain or money, with most of the labor and cut timber furnished gratis. Today the young people of this and other Branchburg villages attend township schools centered in locations convenient to them all. The township is also home to Raritan Valley Community College, a two-year school serving Somerset and Hunterdon counties.

Branchburg was once entirely an agricultural community; today that is no longer true. As Branchburg — and, indeed, all of Somerset County — becomes mechanized, the original character of the community will be lost.

Branchburg today is a pleasant suburban community with a good school system and fine homes. Some farms remain, but the township is under increasing pressure from developers. It will be up to local government to regulate and plan future growth with an eye toward preserving the open spaces that have attracted people to the township for many years.
Bridgewater

Bridgewater was purchased from the Lenni-Lenape Indians as part of four land titles in 1661. This four-part division and sale ended the history of local Indians.

The General Board of Proprietors of the Eastern Division at Perth Amboy, capital of Eastern New Jersey, recorded the transfers of land in 1682 to early settlers. Inaccurate surveys were established and as a result some of the properties were sold more than once. So began Bridgewater’s history of civil boundaries and disputed land titles.

Those early settlers, a mixture of Dutch, English, Scots and Irish, were a hardy lot who with their families, indentured workers and slaves produced all the products needed for their existence except spices and tea. The wagon trails, maintained and used by the farmers whose land they crossed, were the beginning of the road system of Bridgewater today.

The principal transportation artery in Bridgewater during colonial times was the Old York Road, a part of which now runs through Bradley Gardens. This is a section of the original road that extended from New York to Philadelphia.

As the Revolutionary War approached, area residents were divided in their loyalties. However, on June 1, 1774, a meeting of the Committee of Correspondence and Inquiry was held at New Brunswick and a letter was sent to the Boston patriots stating, “Our committee is well disposed in the cause of American freedom.” Hendrick Fisher, a Bridgewater resident, signed it from Somerset County. He also gave the first reading of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 in Bound Brook (Bridgewater at that time.) For this the British put a price on his head and declared him an “Outlaw and enemy of the Crown.”

On June 3, 1775, the Provincial Congress in Trenton enacted legislation which required two regiments of troops be raised in Somerset County and both

△ The Van Veghten House (early 1700's).
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

BRIDGEWATER CONTINUED...

contained men from Bridgewater, as did the militia formed locally.

Bridgewater was the scene of two American military encampments during the Revolutionary War. The first was in 1777 and lasted 35 days and the second was in 1778-79 when the troops made winter camp at what today is called the Middlebrook Encampment. General George Washington and every officer under his command visited and stayed in Bridgewater during the Middlebrook Encampment.

For most of the nineteenth century, Bridgewater continued in its agricultural character with a slight increase in population. Somerville, North Branch and Bound Brook were villages in the township and the population in 1830 was 3,549 people.

The Civil War again caused divided loyalties. Although local slave owners, by state law, had freed their people earlier in the nineteenth century, in 1863 meetings were held in Bridgewater that sponsored both the Union and Southern cause. John McBride was appointed a draft officer in Bridgewater. His task proved difficult, but by the end of June the enrollment of both white and black men was completed. On the night before the Battle of Gettysburg, July 2, 1863, a mass rally was held at the Somerville Court House protesting the draft.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Bridgewater experienced an increase in population and industrial development due in part to the expansion of roads and railways. The available land appealed to the immigrant settlers who now came from eastern and southern Europe and were experienced farm workers.

The development of automobile transportation and telephone communication early in the twentieth century both aided and splintered Bridgewater’s expansion. Bound Brook, Raritan and Somerville, because of their population growth and a difference of political philosophy, became separate units of government by the vote of its citizens. Bridgewater, because of its agricultural and topographic nature and available lands, became a community of neighborhoods varied in their nature and requirements.

Martinsville, as a neighborhood, predates the Revolution and some of the descendants of the original settlers still reside in the village. The founders of Martinsville were the families named Bartle, Bolmer, Brown, Coddington, Doty, Martin, Sebring, Van Nest and Waldron. In 1827, the village was incorporated and continued as a center with its own schools, churches, stores and mills.

Finderne lies north of the Raritan River on land originally owned by the Van Veghien family of Revolutionary War fame. It was probably named as a railroad stop on the Elizabeth and Somerville Railroad. A large elaborate resort hotel stood near the crossroad of Finderne Avenue and Main Street. The Wilson Military Academy, headed by Captain Joel Wilson, a Civil War veteran, stood where the Eastern Star Home now stands. The Academy was in operation from 1907 to 1912 when it was destroyed by fire.

Bradley Gardens was to be the greatest horse breeding farm for trotters in America when William Bradley, in 1907, purchased the Duval and other farms totaling 3,500 acres. The estate ran along Old York Road. He named it Ardmaer and built a magnificent stable on it. Mr. Bradley, who made his fortune in New York City moving material with dray horses, went bankrupt and died in 1924. The local farmers claimed the stallions and mares he had imported could not tolerate the bites of the local mosquitoes.

Three other neighborhoods were developed during the prosperous times of the 1920s. Green Knoll, the largest in area, lies along Routes 202-206, Woodlawn Avenue, Foothill Road and North Bridge Street. Its first residents were Somerset County residents wanting to live in the country.

In the early 1900’s a section of Green Knoll began to show on the tax maps as Somerville Manor. This tract was offered and sold to city residents as summer home building lots. In 1920, Amos Hobbs, an employee of the BMT subway in New York City and a former Georgia tenant farmer, purchased a part of this land. He completed his house in 1921, moved his family into it, and formed a trucking business. Thus was formed the nucleus of a new community which in 1921 built and dedicated the Macedonia Baptist Church.

Sunset Lake, in the northern section of Bridge- water, became the home for an art colony. The man-made lake was built in 1927 from an abandoned copper mine. The neighborhood was at first privately owned by a corporation headed by Dr. Rudolph Meiner, and it was the corporate occupants who planned its cultural development.
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

Bridgewater Continued...

The growth of neighborhoods escalated after World War II and formed the centers of further housing developments. Industrial and commercial parks and research centers provided employment for the growing population. Bridgewater, with five centuries of history, continues to look ahead. Enterprise is encouraged, newcomers are welcomed and orderly progress is the theme for the future.

Far Hills

As a political entity, the borough of Far Hills is relatively young compared to its neighboring townships of Bernards and Bedminster. Originally part of the 3,000-acre Bernards Township tract, whose charter dates back to 1760, the borough of Far Hills seceded from the township in 1921.

The railroad and a search for development land by a realtor were the factors which led to the creation of a village in what was to become Far Hills.

On January 29, 1872, the first trial trip of the New Jersey West Line Railroad ran from Bernardsville to Summit. In February of that year the New Jersey West Line received authorization to extend its line to give it a full route from Phillipsburg to the Hudson. Failure of the Lehigh Valley Railroad to continue its financial support killed that expansion, leaving the 14-mile railroad with mounting debts and a doubtful future. Residential land development encouraged by the railroad and the peach industry were not enough to support the railroad with its Bernardsville terminus.

In 1878, a foreclosed mortgage and the sales of the franchise brought the West Line under the control of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western. The new owners repaired the existing bridges and roadbeds and extended the line the seven miles to Gladstone through Far Hills. The trains on the new Gladstone branch started running to New York in November of 1892.

Among the individuals responsible for the routing of the extension from Bernardsville to Gladstone was the broker and realtor, E.H. Schley. In the early 1880’s he had come from the metropolitan area searching for purchasable pasture which he could develop into estates for some of his wealthy clients. One of the first newcomers was Mr. Schley’s brother, Grant B. Schley, who arrived in 1887. Mrs. Schley is generally credited with giving the village its name. As she arrived from the Bernardsville terminus, she said the area should be named for its far hills.

A railroad station shed, post office, and blacksmith shop were among the first buildings in the new village. Building lots were laid out on the former Henry M. Demum farm, and the first house was built by William Parks, a blacksmith in the year 1896.

The trains provided service every day but Sunday, and Far Hills became a rural area devoted to farms and estates.

In 1921, the residents of the village voted to create a municipality of their own and secede from Bernards Township. L.V. Ludlow acted as the first mayor.

In 1906, Grant B. Schley constructed what was to become a unique part of the local landscape. He built stables and grandstands and drained, graded, and planted the Far Hills Fair Grounds. Started with the idea of “keeping the boys at home” the Far Hills Athletic Club, with its headquarters at the well-equipped fair grounds, served generations of residents of the village and its surrounding estates.

On the death of Mr. Schley, rumors spread that a large stable was to purchase the Fair Grounds for private use. The governing officials of the borough felt that the Fair Grounds were too good an asset to the town and to the area as a whole to pass out of public use, so the property was acquired by the borough and is administered under the direction of the council. It is used by organizations as diversified as the Little League baseball teams and the circus, the Visiting Nurses Association rummage sale, cow sales and fairs of local organizations. Its buildings serve as headquarters for the Far Hills police and the Upper Raritan Watershed Association, and its fields serve as the playing area for the local public schools.
The Union Hook and Ladder Fire Company has its headquarters in Far Hills, though it draws its members from both Bedminster and Far Hills. Founded in 1901 by 22 residents, the company has been active throughout the history of the borough. Its companion company, the Bedminster-Far Hills First Aid Squad, is quartered in the same building. The youngest among local activities is the Bedminster-Far Hills Library Association, which, though it is located in neighboring Bedminster, is supported privately and municipally by Far Hills.

On the site of what is today the Far Hills Center, a Christian agency was established in 1756 by the Rev. Jacob Rusen Hardenbergh. As a religious center it consisted of a sort of farm of four acres and a log church. Its location, as described later, was "...below the village of Lesser Crossroads ... a meeting house, nothing more, with dirt floor and no heat." A second church and a better one followed in 1818.

There is more to be said of Reverend Hardenbergh, who firmly fixed a Dutch Reformed Church at the Lesser Crossroads — one of the five United Congregations of Raritan, the mother church over all. This was a wide and important field of responsibility to which this young man suddenly succeeded on the death of the Reverend John Frelinghuysen in May 1756. Hardenbergh came from an aristocratic Dutch family of New York State, where he had received some education, though not the equal of his professional contemporaries. Nevertheless, he seemed destined to become a distinguished light in that field, for he was licensed to preach at twenty years of age.

After serving its original purpose over a period of many years, a relative of its first purchaser inherited the church property and made of it a farmstead of considerable acreage. After 1864 the farm went through several hands until 1926, when the main buildings were assembled and converted into a preparatory school under Headmaster James H.S. Fair. In 1941, when all America joined in the effort that culminated in the ending of World War II, what had been a private school came to be an Army Air Corps technical school, where fliers prepared for their part in the war.

Again, after a lapse of time, the building was put to use as the Matheny Home of the Milton Berry Foundation School, a home for children suffering from cerebral palsy. Finally, proving insufficient for that purpose, it again fell into a state of neglect, to become little more than a weather-beaten shell of wood — just another old, abandoned building.

At last someone who passed it daily on his way to work worried about what would become of it and finally he decided it should be restored. In 1955 a corporation was formed to purchase the property. William B.K. Bassett of Pottersville was the president. Now the structure attracts the attention of passersby. Its wide halls, several entrances, separate stairways and an abundance of sunlight give one the impression of wise planning, apparent care and comfort.

A variety of tenants occupy its three floors; a lawyer, realtor, public bookkeeper, engineers, public secretary, insurance broker and a dentist. The fourteen stores, offices and shops include a country store, ladies’ dress shop, beauty salon, an antique shop and a pharmacy. Thus was a historical relic rescued and restored for modern-day use.

**Historic Sites**
Far Hills Train Station
Alexander & James Lynn Homestead

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**Franklin**

Originally known as the Eastern Precinct in Somerset County, Franklin Township was incorporated in 1798 and named for the great Patriot Benjamin Franklin.

The township’s southeast boundary became a King’s Highway, and the fact that it lays to the south of the usually traveled routes — New York to Philadelphia — seems one reason that the area’s development was slower than some of the townships to the north.

This King’s Highway ran from New Brunswick to Kingston, to Prince-Town; then to Trenton and on to Philadelphia, from which there was ample access to the southern part of the township and in time it became an important route. Now it is the Lincoln Highway, or State Highway No. 27.

Points along its course were designated as Three-Mile Run, Six-Mile Run, etc. At each of these there was a stream of minor consequence. These points along the
stage route indicated the respective distances from them to the New Brunswick waterfront, where passage to New York would be by boat. Also, these designations gave names to the localities, some of which have been retained to the present day.

Local writers on the area have well-preserved accounts of its past, extending over a period of more than one hundred fifty years. These illustrate the living conditions and seemingly simple problems of the people and their way of life, as compared to the present. In large part they were the sturdy Dutch, who helped build a structure hardy, like themselves. It was young America, growing up.

Franklin Park, first known as Six-Mile Run, is located on the western end of the Harrison Tract, which was allocated in 1701. The village location borders on an old Indian trail, which became the Franklin-Georgetown Turnpike, a toll road chartered by the New Jersey Assembly, that extended from New Brunswick to Lambertville. Today it lies along Route 27 between New Brunswick and Kingston.

Franklin Park was the location of the first Somerset County Courthouse and jail. That building burned in 1738, at which time the county seat was moved to what became Somerset Court House, and later on, Millstone. Then there were three taverns in the village — Tilford’s, Waldron’s and Wood’s.

Standing in the village at this time is the fourth Dutch Reformed Church to be erected in Franklin Township. The first was built in 1710 on the site of the Elmridge Cemetery, halfway between Middlebush and New Brunswick. There it served for several decades, its congregation coming in from miles about.

The Van Wickle House (18th century).

When in 1745 it was destroyed, its successor was erected here in the village of Six-Mile Run on the site where the third and now the fourth Dutch Reformed Church stands. Its record of 1,880 baptisms from 1743 to 1805 is evidence of its use.

During the 1890’s, the village was served by a number of shops: the blacksmith, the wheelwright, a butcher, a hay scales, an icehouse and a post office. During its early history, three band organizations and two debating societies were formed. Also, vigilant societies, known as “Pursuers” were established here and elsewhere in the county by horse owners for the protection of their stock.

In an area where, to be respected, a town must have in its history some connections, near or remote, with the Father of our Country or with some industrial patriarch, Zarephath stands alone. The community of this name in Franklin Township was born too late for the former distinction — the spring of 1906, to be exact. As to the latter distinction, it may have been considered as an ideal location for industry, but God had other plans for this community.

For at least two generations prior to the date aforementioned, the environs of Zarephath were known as the Garretson Farm and before that the Workman (Wortman) Farm. If the community itself does not date back to the Revolution, the vision for such a community does. This vision was held by one Peter Workman, born in 1766. The year his first grandson was born — 1830 — was the same year the Delaware and Raritan Canal Company was incorporated. Then followed four years of rapid construction of a cross-state waterway that cut his farm in two. In due time the southern section was given to the eldest grandson, Jacob Janeway Garretson, and the northern section along with the homestead and barns, to the next eldest grandson, Peter Workman Garretson. One of his cherished dreams was that from his farm the waters of salvation would flow throughout the land.

If the second grandson, his namesake Peter, thought much about this dream as he grew older, we do not know; but the girl whom he eventually married...
FRANKLIN CONTINUED...

must have. Caroline Van Nest Field Garretson, converted at the age of twelve, had been spiritually minded from youth.

In the fall of 1905, after four years of widowhood, she greeted at the door of her farmhouse Alma White with her husband and several other missionaries from the West. Here were the editors of a religious journal called the Pillar of Fire that had been coming to her home. Here, too, were the founders of the Pillar of Fire Bible School in Denver to which her daughter Carrie had written for admission. Having come east to hold a meeting in New York, Alma White took this opportunity to meet the prospective student from New Jersey.

It did not take long for Mrs. Garretson to place her confidence in these people; she felt that God was using them to help carry out His plan for her. She had been praying for wisdom in the matter of her farm, which had been mortgaged and was becoming an increasing burden since her husband’s death. In the Widow of Zarephath, a volume of Pillar of Fire Church History, the author, Gertrude Metlan Wolfram, one of the visiting missionaries, records:

“At Mrs. Garretson’s request and the unanimous consent of the whole family, the Pillar of Fire agreed to take over the farm for use in their religious, educational and charitable endeavor. The Pillar of Fire assumed the indebtedness, and legal papers were drawn. A new day dawned for the farm.”

By the following spring of 1906, the farm was given the Biblical name of Zarephath, meaning a “melting pot.” Here it was to be a place where people could not only find the waters of salvation, but also experience the refining fires of practical Christian living. Here was to be a training center for young preachers and missionaries, a publishing plant for Christian literature and eventually a gospel radio station.

The Griggstown section of Franklin Township was home to John Honeyman, born in Ireland of Scottish parentage in 1729, who moved his family to Somerset County from Philadelphia in early 1776. His familiarity with British Army customs, gained during service in General Wolfe's expedition against Quebec in 1759, made him a fine choice as a spy for George Washington in the War for Independence. Masquerading as a British sympathizer, Honeyman gathered valuable information for the American cause. It was not until after the war’s end that Washington himself revealed the truth about Honeyman’s role. John Honeyman then returned home a great hero.

The final chapter of the American Revolution was written in Franklin Township. Washington delivered his farewell address to his troops on November 2, 1783, at Rockingham, located today on Route 518 in the township.

Green Brook

Green Brook Township began with the purchase of a tract of land by English settlers from two Raritan Indians on May 4, 1681. In 1683, the province of East Jersey was divided into four counties, Bergen, Essex, Middlesex and Monmouth; on May 14, 1688, the Provincial Assembly created Somerset County by setting off a portion of Middlesex. In 1693, after the province had been divided into counties, they in turn were divided into townships. Green Brook initially was a part of Piscataway in Middlesex County.

Most of the original settlers of Green Brook were Quakers. Over the years, many people of various religious backgrounds have moved into the township. Today, the only church in Green Brook is the Baptist Church.

In the year 1777-78, George Washington and 6,000 of his men were encamped at the Middlebrook near Bound Brook, while the British were in New Brunswick. Washington passed through Green Brook on his way to the top of the Watchung Mountain. He rode into a yard and up to a group of men and asked for guidance to a spot on the mountain where he could view “the plain.” Leaning the horse of his aide-de-camp to Edward Fitz-Randolph of Green Brook, he was led to what is known today as Washington Rock, from which he could survey an area of sixty miles. It is said that Washington often went there alone and sat in deep thought. A memorial was erected on the site by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

A large hotel known as the Washington Rock House once stood at Washington Rock and was fre-
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

Green Brook continued...

quainted by tourists. It was later destroyed by fire, which caused the end of a stage coach run between Dunellen and Washington Rock.

An act of the New Jersey Legislature about the year 1860 changed the boundary lines between Middlesex and Somerset counties so that Green Brook Township, formerly part of Piscataway in Middlesex County, was made part of Warren Township, Somerset County.

On April 2, 1872, the Legislature set off Warren Township as a separate entity; Green Brook now became part of North Plainfield Township. In 1885, North Plainfield split off to become a borough; Watchung did the same in 1926, leaving Green Brook as a part of North Plainfield Township. In November 1932, this remaining section of the township was changed to the Township of Green Brook.

Records show that early Green Brook provided only limited transportation in the form of the Green Brook, which at that time was wider than it is today. Early roads known as “ways” were used to get around by cart or wagon. Warrenville Road is an old road and was the one used by Washington in search of a suitable spot to view the countryside. At the close of the Revolutionary War, regular lines of fast coaches were established. The “Swift-Sure” was one of these and contributed to the hat-making industry in Green Brook, although this mode of travel did not pass directly through the township.

The Green Brook was the center of commerce in the township for many years. Good’s Gristmill was one of the earliest mills in operation in Green Brook; perhaps one of the better known was Sebring’s Gristmill and Sawmill. The gristmill burned and was never replaced, but the sawmill continued and, when no longer in demand, was converted for electricity. A water company was formed and the place was converted into a pumping station to pump water up the mountain.

In the early 1800s, hat-making was a growing industry along the Green Brook. Mills in the area were also used for making cloth, cider, linseed oil and paper. In 1860 there was also a tannery located along the Green Brook. During the Revolutionary War, powder mills provided gun powder used by Washington’s soldiers.

The township’s first school was built of logs about 1765. A small one-room building, it was named “The Little Red School” but was sometimes called the Quaker School because most of the children were Quakers. Fire destroyed the school in the early 1800s. It was replaced by a one-room building known as the Gray School. By 1923 it was overcrowded; in 1924 a new school was built which today serves as the Town Hall. Yet another new school, which opened August 31, 1938, has seen two additions since that time. In 1968, a high school was erected, but due to an existing contract with Dunellen, it was not fully utilized right away. As a result, Somerset County College, in need of a “home” graduated its first class from Green Brook in 1970. Now called Raritan Valley College, the two-year school has a permanent campus in Branchburg.

Green Brook has several historic homes, dating as far back as 1740, that are still standing and in use. One of the township’s better known landmarks was the Blue Hills Plantation restaurant (a converted 1734 home), which featured Mac Irish’s orchestra in the 1920s through the 1940s. The popular spot burned down in December 1949.

Green Brook was also the site of the Raritan Valley Hospital. Opened in 1966, the hospital became a part of the College of Medicine and Dentistry in 1970. However, in the early 1990s, the hospital was converted into the Green Brook Regional Health Center and also houses the Muhlenberg EmergiCenter.

Records of the Proprietors and Reed’s map of 1685 show that large tracts of land were patented to shareholders in the Proprietorship at a very early date. Some of the earliest land transactions found in the records for Hillsborough begin about 1700 and include the names John Royce, Peter DuMont and Hendrick

Hillsborough

Because Clovis-type spear points have been found in Hillsborough, it is believed that early man arrived at least ten or twelve thousand years ago when the mammoth and mastodon still roamed the area. Artifacts of all the archaeological periods are present, indicating continuous occupation.

1834: The Delaware and Raritan Canal is completed from Trenton to New Brunswick; it runs parallel to the Millstone River from Rocky Hill to South Bound Brook and on to New Brunswick along the Raritan River.
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

HILLSBOROUGH CONTINUED...

Beekman. Some of this land lies along what is now South Branch River Road. A short time later, farms were carved out of a tract patented to Thomas Barker, whose land was along the Millstone River.

In 1676 West Jersey, including the area of Neshanic and South Branch, was sold to William Penn. In 1710 a large interior tract, known as the “Harlingen Tract” was sold to Dutch investors by Peter Sonnman. A parcel of this tract was set aside for a parsonage lot but was not used until after the Harlingen Church was organized in 1727.

Grist mills were one of the earliest industries. Records of mills in the Neshanic area go back to 1692 and perhaps earlier. As early as 1746 a mill was recorded along the Millstone River.

Most of the main roads of Hillsborough are those which were laid out by the early settlers. A few have been abandoned or changed in some areas, but the basic network remains nearly original.

The records of Hillsborough Township in Somerset County are complete from their inception in 1746 to the present. There are ten volumes, each of several hundred pages; now kept in the rare-book section of Rutgers University Library.

Hillsborough received its charter on May 29, 1771, and officially became Hillsborough Township. Before that it was known as the “Western Precinct of Somerset County.”

In 1737, when the Somerset Court House was built, Millstone was a part of the Western Precinct.

Several of the town meetings were held in the courthouse, including those in 1775 and 1776. At the meeting of March 12, 1776, nine persons were chosen to make up the first Township Committee.

No further meetings were held in the Court House in Millstone. On October 25, 1779, Lt. Col. Simcoe and his “Queen’s Rangers” burned the courthouse. With the British occupation of New Brunswick in 1780, Rutgers College moved to Millstone. The township records make no mention of Washington and his army marching along River Road after the Battle of Princeton, nor their encampment at Millstone on the night of January 3, 1777, nor of the fact that a revolution was being fought around them.

The Dutch Reformed Church at Neshanic was organized in 1752. It is the oldest church in the state that is continuously in use in its original building.

The first public allowance for education was made in 1825. Until that time, the cost of education had been entirely funded at the expense of the parents of the attending scholars.

By 1825 the township was becoming prosperous, houses were enlarged in the Federal style and many new houses were built. Many of these structures are now preserved in the nationally recognized historic areas of Hillsborough. Also at this time the Dutch church at Millstone was rebuilt and the Delaware-Raritan canal was opened. The Dutch Reformed Church at Clover Hill was organized in 1834 and the one at Branchville (South Branch) in 1850.
Various historical events affecting the township, the state and the fledgling colonies took place in Hillsborough over the years.

In 1758, a treaty was made with the Indians "south of the Raritan" which concerned Hillsborough. It describes the boundaries of an area on which hunting rights were granted to certain Indians including Teedyuscund, who is sometimes called "King of the Delawares."

In 1776, the Somerset Committee of Correspondence met at Hillsborough to encourage trade, commerce and manufacturing, with the Honorable John Witherspoon presiding. In 1778, the Colonial Council of Safety was in session at Hillsborough to decide the fate of Loyalists. In 1779, the New Supreme Court convened at Hillsborough to consider right and proper role of the legal branch: "that the judiciary has the right to pronounce upon the constitutionality of the laws."

In October 1831, the State of New Jersey granted $2000 to the Delaware Indians in exchange for hunting and fishing rights "south of the Raritan" which was overlooked in a treaty of 1801. This was considered by the state to be the last claim the Indians had on New Jersey land. The claim was presented by the Honorable Samuel Southard, a Somerset lawyer who later practiced in Hunterdon.

In 1829, Peter D. Vroom, a Hillsborough resident, became Governor of New Jersey. He served until 1832 and again from 1833 until 1836. He lived at South Branch and is buried there.

On August 25, 1863, Hillsborough passed a resolution which paid $300 to each man who was drafted into military service. Hillsborough's quota was 47 men.

The first Township Committee, chosen in 1776, consisted of nine members. The number was later changed to three and remained so for many years. In November 1961, by referendum, the number of members was increased to five.

As early as 1865, the Township Master Plan stated that a Township Center would be located in the area of Amwell Road and Route 206. That proposal has recently come to fruition with the expansion of the township's commercial development near that intersection.

**Historic Sites**
- Cat Tail Brook Bridge
- Huff House & Farmstead

**Historic Districts**
- South Branch Historic District
- Neshanic Mills Historic District
- Neshanic Historic District
- Clover Hill Historic District
- Millstone Valley Agricultural District

1841: The Elizabethtown & Somerville Railroad is completed to Bound Brook, to Somerville the following year. 1846: Two brothers, Joseph K. and Adrian Olcott, begin a mattress factory in East Millstone. This is converted to a distillery in 1858 and, at one time, is the largest bonded warehouse in the United States. Building burns in 1912.

**Manville**

Manville's two and one-half square miles of fertile fields strongly appealed to the Dutch settlers of the 1600s. After purchasing this and adjoining land from the friendly natives, the newcomers from Europe converted some of it into farms and retained the remainder to sell to those arriving later. The more prominent of these thrifty Dutch farmers-realtors were John Royce, Peter Van Nest, and Michael and Derrick Van Vechten, all names now fixed in the locality.

On the formation of Somerset County in 1688, what was to become Manville found itself in 1692 as a part of Hillsborough Township. Then there were only Indian trails traversing the area. Later, when the water-powered mills came into use, the footpaths beaten to them, with the existing Indian trails, were the beginning of the roads that followed. These, and transport by water were adequate until about 1716 when, with an increasing population, there was a need for open ways for public passage.

A map of 1766 shows a saw mill and several grist mills within a radius of three miles of what would now be the center of Manville. Three bridges then crossed the Millstone River and two the Raritan, with roads or trails following both sides as far as four miles south of their confluence near the Van Vechten Bridge. And yet, of Manville there was then no sign or thought.

From colonial times down to and after the Revolutionary War, Hillsborough Township was an agricultural region and a good one. Woods, alternating with green meadows bordered the scenic rivers, and the rich cultivation extending back from them presented an impressive sight.
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

MANVILLE CONTINUED...

It was back in 1702 that the British Crown Colony of East Jersey assumed control; and under that government for three generations the people carried on, adjusting themselves during periods of progress, friction and protest. And, with their perplexities yet to resolve, they were plunged into that period's climactic eruption — the American Revolution.

That war directly affected this locality on a number of occasions. First came Washington's retreat from Long Island in December of 1776, through New Brunswick, skirting Somerset County and on to and across the Delaware into Pennsylvania. There followed a pause of some weeks before the battle of Trenton, the success there and at Princeton . . . the march of the exhausted army breaking contact with the British by a withdrawal through Montgomery, Hillsborough and Bridgewater Townships; then to rest and winter at Morristown — two long days' march away.

Back to Somerset County the Army came in the early spring of 1777. By June, a British plan for marching on Philadelphia had progressed to where they had reached Somerset County Court House. Here Lord Howe and General Cornwallis pondered the risk they would take were they to continue their march, with Washington's army concealed in the rear of the First Mountain. Under these conditions the British returned to Staten Island via Perth Amboy and proceeded by sea. Eventually they reached Philadelphia late in September of that year.

Freed, it seemed, from further pillage and plunder, the people living in the Manville-Millstone area could, to an extent, relax. But, in those days one never knew when awakened by a caller in the night whether he would greet friend or encounter foe, for British and Tory raiders were at large. This state of affairs lasted a year or more after both armies had moved away.

For many years thereafter the borough site was but a wide place in the road. Then there appeared a small store, selling almost everything then in common use. As the first commercial venture in the neighborhood, it became a favorite meeting place for those who could spare themselves from work. With likely customers gathered around the stove in winter and on the steps in summer, conversation flowed and business prospered.

About that time the settlement's first educational facility, consisting of a one-room schoolhouse, made its appearance; no one can remember when or where it stood, nor are there any records that can tell. But it is related how in the spring when the fish were biting, the teacher often found the building vacant when he arrived. In that case he would go to the river, taking his spelling book, that the students he found there might learn to fish as well as spell.

Though the Delaware and Raritan Canal was building nearby in 1831-32, it added nothing to the goings-on at the Manville site-to-be. Likewise, during the War between the States there was little or no noticeable effect on this quiet neighborhood.

In 1912 came the beginning of the great change that made the Borough of Manville unique in the his-
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

MANVILLE CONTINUED...

istory of New Jersey. From the Johns-Manville Company of New York, business men appeared seeking a place on which to relocate their enlarging plant. The site selected was the ground where this business is now located, and there sufficient land was purchased for the purpose. A few months after its construction began, the new plant opened. It was to become the largest asbestos-producing company in the world.

Immediately there was need for employees. Many came through real estate promoters who offered the opportunity to recently-arrived Europeans, then employed in the mills of New England and in the mines of Pennsylvania. Others who came from towns in New Jersey and adjacent states were transported to and from work in special trains. Soon the neighborhood became a good-sized community, but without a name. However, names come to people and places in many ways, and here is where the Central Railroad of New Jersey provided one. Because of the large and frequent shipments of freight addressed to Johns-Manville, New Jersey, the railroad people dubbed the place “Manville.”

With the population multiplying, activity in house-building promptly followed. In a short space of time the Johns-Manville Corporation got on its feet in a growing village of numerous nationalities, where each individual used his native form of speech. It was said some 20 languages were in daily use up and down the street.

As a small part of Hillsborough Township, this community for some years had been discontented because of differences that could not be reconciled with the governing body. Finally, petitions were circulated for separation from the township. Meetings were held, and in time a bill creating Manville a borough was introduced in the State Legislature and passed on April 1, 1929. On May 14 of that year, the first mayor, Gustav Boesal, and council were elected.

Millstone

The Holland Dutch, first of the Europeans to settle in the Millstone Valley, arrived some time prior to 1700. How the valley, the river, and the borough came by that name, no one knows. Along its course early settlers found numerous huge stones where Indian villages once had been. These, they noted, contained scooped-out depressions where the natives crushed and milled their corn, a feature that may possibly have given the area its several names.

It seems the village of Millstone owes its existence to its having been the junction of important roads. Those from New Brunswick, Princeton and Raritan came together there and in course of time, a fourth from Amwell Township in Hunterdon County joined the intersection. Thus was formed a center where roads radiated in four directions connecting important areas otherwise out of touch.

1848: The First Bank is organized in Somerset County, the Somerset County Bank. Joshua Doughty is President. The Bank goes out of business in 1891.
1864: Somerset Trust Company, starting as the first national bank of Somerset is organized. It is the oldest of the county’s present day banks.

The Blacksmith Shop, Millstone Historic District (1740).
In 1738 this locality came into prominence when it was selected as the county seat and given the singular name of Somerset Court House, which remained its designation until the sturdy courthouse and jail were destroyed by British raiders. The loss of this distinctive asset was a heavy blow, but nonetheless it helped the village retain its charm even to the present day.

During the Revolution, Millstone earned its fame as a strategic locality where events that feature in American history took place. A part of Old Queen’s College, now Rutgers, the State University, took refuge in Millstone to reduce the ever-present chance of British molestation. Here some of the students attended classes while others received their instruction at similar temporary establishments in Raritan and North Branch. This dispersion of educational activities continued until about 1779 when it was expedient for the college to return its several parts to their New Brunswick home.

In later years the several roads entering Millstone helped to put it on the map. First of all, it was the New Brunswick-Millstone Road that was used by Lord Howe and Cornwallis for their intended march on Philadelphia in June of 1777. It was near this road junction where they camped while weighing the question of whether to continue by land, or being unable to entice Washington in combat, to return through New Brunswick and Perth Amboy and go by sea.

The open field south of the Reformed Church which stood its ground against British damage and abuse has been known these many years as “The Old Camp Ground.” It was the area where the Millstone Minute Men, recruited through the influence of Rev. Christian Foering, were trained by young Frederick Frelinghuysen. There both enemies and allies camped from time to time as the war dragged on from year to year. In the Civil War it was again used as a military assembly camp. Thus did John Van Doren’s farm play its part in the nation’s wars.

As time went on and the Revolution passed, the village assumed a status quite its own. In addition to the prosperous farms lying all about, some prominent families found it a desirable place in which to live. First to set the trend was the German-born patriot and first pastor of the church, Christian Frederick Foering, who in this area seems to have sparked resistance to the British Crown.

There was Frederick Frelinghuysen, an eminent soldier, lawyer and teacher, once a member of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey and the Committee of Public Safety, who lived there after the war. His son, Theodore, a legislator, educator, attorney-general of New Jersey, and a member of the U.S. Senate, also was a resident. Then Frederick Theodore Frelinghuysen, a prominent lawyer, attorney-general of New Jersey and a U.S. Senator, was born and lived in Millstone. The homestead of this family was a large and striking structure with a commanding view. Its special feature of two broad wings to a huge center section with wide hall and large rooms was entered by two flights of stairs that came together half-way to its main front entrance. It, like the conspicuous home of the Reverend Hardenburgh (which once housed a section or department of Queen’s College) was destroyed by fire in 1906.

This region of fertile farms also supported a lumber industry and numerous grist and saw mills on the adjoining rivers. When a road broke out of the Amwell Townships to move farm products to tide-water at New Brunswick, traffic through the village was unbelievable. Produce brought in over it included grain from Hunterdon County and Pennsylvania. Some of the latter came in on the Old York Road via Clover Hill, then over the Amwell through Millstone to the New Brunswick flour mills. It is no wonder the Amwell carried more traffic than any of the eight other roads entering that busy town. How the unpaved roads of those days carried such heavy loads is hard to imagine, but they did. Then in 1834 came the Delaware and Raritan Canal which passed through Millstone on its way to Raritan Bay.

Since the site on which the village stands had been for years a focal point where river, roads and canal came together, it seemed to some it could become a local industrial center. This idea must have appealed to those who were interested in a railroad development then in the making. A branch line, constructed in 1854 by a Millstone-New Brunswick company, extended from the Pennsylvania Railroad’s main line in New Brunswick as far as East Millstone, a distance of six miles. However, traffic over the branch from New Brunswick did not justify extending it beyond East Millstone, so there it ended, with its bridge over the Millstone River begun, but never finished. In 1915 the Millstone-New Brunswick Company sold its property to Pennsylvania Railroad interests and then dissolved. Under the Pennsylvania’s control, both freight and passenger service were continued until after 1926; thereafter only freight has been carried.
In this way there ended at Millstone a dream of bigger things that could have come about had the projected railroad development been realized. No doubt its ending was a disappointment to the business-minded residents who had visions of an enlarged and thriving town. Though the village has changed but little through the years, now as a borough it provides what many seek — a good atmosphere in which to live.

**Historic District**

Millstone Historic District

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**Montgomery**

Montgomery Township, along with Franklin and Hillsborough townships, and to some degree Branchburg, all share the same history as Raritan Valley communities primarily settled by the “Dutch”, that is, the conglomerate of people from the Lowland countries of Europe who emigrated from Holland ports and became acculturated in the New World. The Dutch had been in America for most of the 17th century, but it was not until the sale of the Province of East Jersey to a Board of Proprietors in the 1680s that westward migration along the Raritan River from the Long Island area and southward from the Hudson Valley occurred. This resulted from the Proprietors’ sale of large land tracts to investors to induce settlement. Those obtaining “shares” in the province were known as patentees, and those who brought a team of workers with them from Europe to establish a self-sustaining manor plantation were known as planters. Not all investors went this second step. Some merely had land surveyed for them for resale. To make the transactions honorable, deeds to the land were also obtained from the Indians.

One wealthy investor was Arent Sonmans of England. His son Peter inherited from him and added to his holdings, which included a vast tract of some 23,000 acres lying in central Hillsborough and Montgomery, extending from the Raritan River almost to Montgomery’s southern border and over to the Millstone River. South of Sonman’s land was a tract owned by William Penn, which took in most of today’s Princeton Township, which until 1838 was part of Somerset County. There were but two other patentees in the township, London merchants Thomas Hart and his son-in-law Walter Benthall, holding respectively 4,000- and 2,000-acre tracts of the Millstone River.

It is impossible to date the arrival of the first settlers. Much early history remains unknown for lack of contemporary records. The riverway clearly appealed to the first comers, and it is imagined that the Dutch spilled over into Montgomery from earlier settlements in Franklin and Hillsborough townships on the Raritan and from the mill complex on the Millstone (1708) at Rocky Hill. After Dutch churches had been established at Finderne on the Raritan (1699), on the old Indian Trail (Route 27) south of New Brunswick (1710) and at North Branch, near the river confluence (1718), a church was formed “over the Millstone” at Belle Mead in 1727. The present cemetery on Route 206 marks the place. During the early decades there were German tenant farmers in all three townships, but these were served by a Lutheran pastor sent out from New York City.

It is after 1730 that the names of Montgomery’s founding fathers begin to appear in the records, mostly Dutch names but with a sprinkling of English as well, as a result of English settlement occurring in Princeton Township. The Millstone River Road was first laid out in the 1740s, running all the way to the Raritan River and down to Rocky Hill, making it one of the most historic roads within the county, still lined with handsome farmhouses and a few of the unique barns that the Dutch built based on their European traditions. Just behind River Road, and extending to Harlingen, the Van Dike brothers of Franklin Township acquired farms in the 1740s and established two mills on different streams. The mill community of Bridgepoint survives.
Central Montgomery was opened up by roads brought in from Hillsborough (Route 206, Line Road and Route 601) and by a road connecting the Millstone River with Hopewell Township (Dutchtown-Harlingen and Dutchtown-Zion Roads.) An early crossroads Dutchtown developed, where four Dutch houses still survive, two of stone. This community was in existence by 1750.

Another crossroads had also developed at Blawenburg by this date, taking its name from Michael Blaw, who built a mill on Betens Brook c. 1740. Harlingen, first known as Sourland Meeting House, came into existence in 1751, when the first Dutch congregation decided to build a new church at a crossroads on land provided by Jan Van Dike.

Among the most important purchasers of land in the Benthall Patent were the ten Broecks of Kingston, New York, who obtained some 900 acres in 1734 from an absentee owner. Three brothers came in turn to settle. Cornelius became a leading citizen and erected the township’s one Georgian-style brick mansion about 1761.

Up to that year, Hillsborough and Montgomery were combined as the Western Precinct of the county, but growth of population led to the setting off of the latter as a separate township, and Montgomery reorganized with its own governing body. In 1798, when all townships were re-erected, Montgomery officially assumed its name, believed to be after General Richard Montgomery, who died in the Battle of Quebec.

By mid-18th century, a good road system was in place, making it possible for travelers to connect with New Brunswick and Trenton, Hopewell and Pennington, and the Somerset County Court House at Millstone. It is because of this road network that Montgomery played an important role in the Revolution. American, British and French armies traversed its roads on several occasions, notably after the Battle of Princeton and the march of 1781 of Rochambeau’s army from Rhode Island to Yorktown, Virginia. Army supplies were sent up from Trenton’s barracks to Washington’s winter encampments at Middlebrook and Morristown, and state militiamen regularly patrolled River Road all the while the British held New Brunswick. Washington’s march in June 1778 from Valley Forge to Freehold to confront the British passed along Route 518, with a rest stop at Joost Duryea’s farm. It is said that the soldiers drank his roadside well dry, and the farm has been known ever after as “Washington Well Farm.”

The township’s history in the 19th century is similar to that of other communities which were becoming Americanized. The Dutch language was abandoned in favor of English, and national architectural styles were adopted. Farming continued to be the prime activity. Mills declined, and there was no industry.

In 1816, the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike (Route 518) was begun, giving impetus to the growth of Blawenburg, where a second Dutch Reformed Church was built in 1831. Harlingen also became a village, and its third church on the site was erected in 1851. Crossroad hamlets with tavern and blacksmith shop developed at Plainville (site of Cerrier Clinic today) and Stoutsburg.
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(on Province Line). Rock Mills, (now Zion) atop the Sourlands, a 1770s mill center in the 19th century, served a handful of redware potteries, and at the century’s end became a summer resort where dramatist Eugene O’Neill’s father had a cottage.

In the 1870s, two railroad companies laid lines on parallel routes through Montgomery, providing connections between New York and Philadelphia. The Pennsylvania line lost the competition and its tracks were taken up in 1879. The village of Skillman began as a railroad center from which farmers shipped their peaches and milk to the cities. Belle Mead began as Van Aken’s Station, Van Aken having a scheme to develop the area. This fell through, and he was succeeded by individuals who built country homes for weekend retreats.

Beginning about 1899, New Jersey bought several farms near Blawenburg for its State Farm for Epileptics, which eventually became the Neuro-psychiatric Institute and is now the North Princeton Developmental Center. The Carrier Clinic began as the Belle Mead Sanatorium about 1910, with the purchase of farms at Plainville.

In the 1960s, the population explosion began with the building of housing developments, leading in time to a new consolidated school complex, increase of government services, building of a Town Hall and creation of a police department. The rural character of the township has been under siege ever since, but the Van Harlingen Historical Society, formed over 20 years ago, has actively worked to preserve Montgomery’s heritage.

**Historic Site**
Blawenburg Reformed Church

**Historic Districts**
Bridgeport Historic District
Blawenburg Historic District

**North Plainfield**

Nestled in the northeast corner of Somerset County lies the small borough of North Plainfield. It is bordered on the northwest by the first ridge of the Watchung Mountains, and, on the south and east, the Green Brook provides a natural boundary between Union and Somerset counties. Rock Avenue, on the west, divides the towns of North Plainfield and Green Brook.

Flowing through the town are two main waterways, the Green Brook and the Stony Brook. These two streams now quietly flowing through the borough were once an important source of power and because of the rich, fertile soil along their banks, many early settlers made this area their home.

Originally, Somerset County operated as a single township. In 1769, by Royal Charter, Bernards Township was formed out of the northern precinct of the county.

On March 5, 1806, Warren was created as a separate township composed of the present-day North Plainfield, Warren, Green Brook and Watchung. On April 2, 1872, an Act of the New Jersey Legislature was passed, dividing North Plainfield Township from the Township of Warren. This new township included the towns of North Plainfield, Watchung and Green Brook. North Plainfield was set off from the township in 1885, Watchung in 1925 and Green Brook in 1932.

The history of any community depends upon the people who settle in the area, work the soil and gradually develop the land from vast forests and vacant streams to small towns with thriving industries using water-power from nearby waterways. The early settlers of North Plainfield developed their town much the same way. Many of the early pioneers in this area were Quakers who emigrated from England to escape religious persecution. They traveled inland on the local waterways and settled along their banks. There were no roads, only the narrow Indian trails.

Among this early group of settlers who were in this area before or around 1778 were the Vermeules, Vails, Cadmus, Marselis, Boices, Mannings and Drakes.

The early pioneers who settled into the different regions of the country all had basic needs. Each settlement or village had to be self-supporting and certain necessities had to be provided. In the Blue Hills section of New Jersey, towns were developing along the Green Brook and early mills were set up along its banks. In
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

NORTH PLAINFIELD CONTINUED...

the 1700s, every village had at least one saw mill, grist mill, fulling mill or carding mill.

It is said that the Vails were the first family in the area and that they settled along the Green Brook in the 1600s. Along the brook they built a fulling and carding mill.

The next mills were the saw and grist mills of Frederick and Cornelius Vermeule. The sons of Captain Cornelius Vermeule built their mill in 1750 in the area which is now Rock Avenue. In 1777 another saw mill was built on the property of Eder Vermeule, who lived on the brook. His house is located at 113 Myrtle Avenue. The mill was located between the house and West End Avenue. This saw mill played an important part in the building of the Blue Hills Militia Post. Also on this property, but closer to West End Avenue, was a grist mill. Both of these mills played an important role in the building of the area.

One of the earliest of all the mills in the area was a grist mill built about 1775. The rights to operate this mill were given by the King of England. The mill was originally on the Cedar Creek, but during the year 1782 it was moved to the Green Brook, where it ground grain for many of the settlers in the area. The mill was purchased by P.M. French, who operated it until 1900. Located on Mountain Avenue (Somerset Street) and Front Street, the mill was on a direct route from Watchung and many farmers brought their grain down the mountain to be ground. It was P.M. French who had the Wetumpka Dam built on the Stony Brook in the Watchung Mountains to increase water power.

In the early 1800s another important industry, hat making, was developing along the Green Brook. Around the year 1812, G.W. Randolph established a hat shop on Front Street and twenty-five years later there were fifteen hat shops along the brook.

Seventeen years before North Plainfield became a borough, Washington Park was being established as a planned development. Because of the easy access to the railroads located in nearby Plainfield, Washington Park was being sought after by wealthy businessmen from New York. Many of these wealthy men purchased property, and in 1867 and 1868, these citizens decided to have their section laid out. "The Washington Park North Plainfield development in the Township of Warren was filed with the clerk of Somerset County on May 12, 1868, as a complete real estate development with 'villa' sites for the well-established personages of the New York business world."

J.W. Soper & Co., Civil Engineers, made a map by streets showing the property which described it thus:

"Washington Park takes in the section from Grove Street to Green Brook all the way to West End Avenue along the brook. The tract agreement and covenant restrictions were drawn up by John van Winkle. The development was received in Somerville on May 8, 1868 and recorded on July 3, 1868 by Wm. Ross, Jr., Clerk of Somerset County."
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

NORTH PLAINFIELD CONTINUED...

The history of the North Plainfield public schools is one of the most impressive contributions to the borough's progress. North Plainfield School District No. 10 was adopted in 1856; the following year, a schoolhouse was erected at Harmony, Warren and Race streets and 116 children, ages five to eighteen, were enrolled. The cost of education for each child was $1.70 annually. Overcrowding eventually prompted the construction of a larger, twelve-room brick building, Somerset School, in 1883. A grammar school was instituted ten years later. Also in the late 1890s, a full, four-year high school course and a kindergarten were created. The Watchung Avenue School was opened in 1889.

In June 1904, an eight-room addition to the Somerset School was built. The Harrison Avenue School was completed in 1915. In September 1920, North Plainfield voters approved $300,000 for the purchase of land and to build a high school, which opened in 1925 and enlarged in 1927. In the mid-1930s, two new schools and a gym at the Somerset School were built with the help of a federal grant and loan.

The year was 1885, and a special election was being held to decide whether or not the Township of North Plainfield should become the Borough of North Plainfield. This election was held February 17, and the plan was defeated by seven votes. The supporters of the borough were not discouraged, however, and a second election was set for June 9, 1885. This time the event was celebrated with fireworks when it was announced that the vote was 248 to 219 in favor of changing the township to a borough. The report in the Plainfield Evening News of June 10, 1885, read: "The Boroughites Victorious — North Plainfield Rises One Round in the Ladder of Fame." At the first election of officers held July 7, 1885, John van Winkle was elected mayor along with six councilmen named to staggered terms. A borough clerk and borough attorney also were appointed.

Municipal government in the borough underwent one more change in modern times. In November, 1975, voters approved a report by a citizens' Charter Study Commission recommending the change, which increased the number of council members from six to seven. Following the 1976 general election, Steven Novak was sworn in as mayor under the new form of government on January 1, 1977, along with seven council members.

Historic District
Washington Park Historic District

Peapack-Gladstone

What is now the borough of Peapack-Gladstone was originally part of a large tract of land purchased in 1701 from Dutch proprietors by Dr. John Johnstone and George Willocks. This property was known as the "Peapack Patent" and it bounded the entire township of Bedminster and extended below Pluckemin. Bedminster Township incorporated in 1749 and Peapack was part of that township until 1912.

The "Peapack Path" was a native Indian thoroughfare which ran from east to west through Northern New Jersey, crossing the Lamington River at its falls, and was frequently mentioned as a boundary in early land grants. A village named "Pepock" is mentioned in a deed recording the sale by the Lenni-Lenape Indians of a large tract of land to new settlers.

The name Peapack has several possible derivatives. The word "pe" is the Indian word for water. "Pepock" when translated means pond. A book written by John Burrows referred to "Peapackton" as an Indian name meaning the "marriage of the waters." The fact that the Raritan River and the Peapack Brook form the boundaries of the borough and run together at its east end give credence to this definition. "Pee", "pea", "bi", or "bee" are Lenape words for water; "packy" or "pachy" signified location. There was evidently a small Indian village along an old trail in the region of what is now Peapack. The definition may imply that the village name meant a place where water was located, and any travelers on the trail could stop to rest and drink. Peapack may now be the one native Indian name in Somerset County still continued as a town name.

Settlement evolved gradually, and by 1751 an old map shows development of the area included a grist and saw mill erected by William Allen on the one side of the brook, and across the brook one of the earliest tanneries in America, owned by the Melick family. The Melick farm house still stands on the original site on
Old Dutch Road in Bedminster. The Indians in the Peapack area left between 1750 and 1775.

According to James P. Snell's 1881 history of Somerset County, in 1808 the hamlet consisted of the Joroleman mill and four houses, those of William Logan, Hugh Gaston (stone), Levi Sutton and Nicholas Ditmars. The Van Dorns lived a little west; their mill was built that year. By 1880 the village consisted of "a hotel, two grist mills, post-office, two churches (Reformed and Methodist), four stores, three blacksmith-shops, three wheelwrights, distillery, six perpetual lime-kilns, and nine set kilns."

When the Delaware & Lackawanna Line extended its railroad line from Bernardsville to Peapack in 1890, two post-offices were needed and the upper end of the village was named Gladstone by a Mr. Hillard, who was an admirer of the English Prime Minister Sir William Gladstone.

In that same year the Rockaway Valley Railroad, better known as the "Rockaway Baby Railroad" because of its rolling ride on uneven tracks, extended service from Germantown to Whitehouse, Peapack and Watering, near Morristown. The "Rockabye" history is colorful though short-lived, as it was defunct by 1913.

The expansion of the Delaware & Lackawanna was the great catalyst for changes within the hamlet. Soon the beautiful valley was "discovered" by financial and industrial tycoons in search of suitable property for vast country estates. Grant B. Schley was the first to settle in Far Hills and after him came Charles Pfizer, James Cox Brady, C. Ledyard Blair, G.R. Mosle and Walter G. Ladd to Peapack. The subsequent building of palatial estates created a need for construction workers and new services to meet the property owners' and workers needs. Local merchants and entrepreneurs prospered and the complexion of the once-pastoral village changed forever.

In 1912 Peapack-Gladstone elected to secede from Bedminster Township and form a new borough. The turn of the century had ushered in an era of great change for communities large and small all across the nation. The need for such community services as electric lighting, water hydrants and reservoirs, telephone lines, road building, maintenance and repairs imposed new financial burdens on the taxpayers. They objected to paying high taxes for the many miles of rural roads in Bedminster Township not serving the immediate needs of the twin villages. Incorporation as a separate borough seemed to be the solution to the problems.

Assemblyman A.G. Anderson introduced a bill proposing incorporation to the New Jersey Legislature on March 4 and the citizens of the community voted to approve the measure in April. On June 6, 1987, Peapack-Gladstone held a gala parade and day-long celebration to mark the 75th anniversary of incorporation.

In the heart of the twin borough is Liberty Park, where graceful swans, ducks and geese swim upon a tranquil pond. The park is widely used by residents and visitors seeking a pleasant place for a walk, a picnic or quiet contemplation. The site was formerly Riker's Meadow until, in 1919, some of the townfathers proposed to acquire the property and maintain a public park to honor the men in the vicinity who served the nation during World War I. To many minds the image of this serene park has come to typify the small Somerset County town of Peapack-Gladstone.

**Historic Site**
Gladstone Train Station

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Raritan

There were four great land purchases in Somerset County in 1681. The first was Bound Brook; the second was the Raritan area; the third was at Bedminster; the fourth and largest was the Peapack area. By the year 1702, twenty-eight land grants had been sold, and these grants totaled 30,000 acres. The Dutch, who first explored this land, now returned to clear it and farm. They came back to the Raritan area because they knew the land to be fertile and the Indians peaceful. The Dutch also realized they could establish their church and live in freedom in Raritan.

One of these early settlers was George Middaugh, who bought land in Raritan. Being an industrious man, he set about building a tavern, which stood on the corner of Glaser Avenue and Granetz Place, with...
The General John Frelinghuysen House (1750).

its crude-cut bar and large hearth, served as a meeting place for the colonists of the village of Raritan.

In the years 1778-1779, Washington quartered his troops in the Somerset Valley area. Washington made his own headquarters at the Wallace House in Somerville; while his good friend and comrade in arms, General Lafayette, chose the "Cojemen House" in Raritan.

The village of Raritan progressed very slowly and peacefully after the Revolutionary War. 1840 was the turning point in the town's history, when parishioners of the Dutch Reformed Church built their first house of worship in Raritan. This first church was never destroyed but incorporated into the present Third Reformed Church structure, which was built in 1851, and now serves as its chapel. 1840 also saw a great increase in population, for vast numbers of workers had to be brought in to dig the canal. This canal and the company that built it would change the face of not only the village but the county as well. The Raritan Water Power Canal would sell water and water rights to the companies who built factories along the canal.

Raritan now entered a new "Boom Town" era. Company stores were being built, homes for workers erected, blacksmith shops boomed, bridges were built across the canal and the river. The village was alive with activity and people; an era of prosperity began. Three years after the Civil War ended, the Village of Raritan became the Town of Raritan.

In accordance with law the town held its first election on May 4, 1868, at the hotel of James H. Garney. The town's 32 Freeholders assembled and voted in this election; they voted for a $4,000 bond issue and elected seven men to serve on the first Board of Commissioners. Joseph Frelinghuysen was elected president of the board; and it was under his able leadership that the town government was established.

Between 1880 and 1889, the town fathers launched a three-prong attack against the danger of fire. The first act was to pass a bond issue to raise money for newer fire equipment. Next they devised a "ready" water supply, which was four wells located at various points within the town. The third part of their plan was to keep interest alive in the fire company.

In 1891 the town created the first Raritan Police Department. On February 6, 1893, the Raritan police force was disbanded.

In 1892 a lot was purchased by the town for $475 from Mrs. A.H. Brokaw, the intention being that a fire house be built with provisions for municipal government offices.

Raritan gave its all to the World War I effort; the Raritan Woolen Mills produced blankets for the Army and the town citizenry enlisted in the armed forces. The citizens bought war bonds by the thousands, many people sacrificing half a week's pay check.

The self-sacrifice of the people of Raritan was so widely known and appreciated that it was decided in Washington, D.C., that a ship be built and named after Raritan. The S.S. Natirar, (Raritan spelled backwards) was launched by Miss Katherine Slattery, of Raritan, at Wilmington, Delaware in 1920. This would seem the highest honor a town could receive, but Raritan received a still greater distinction. The Treaty of Raritan, signed at the home of Senator Joseph S. Frelinghuysen in Raritan by President Warren G. Harding on July 2, 1921, officially ended World War I.

The years between World War I and the beginning of the Second World War were times of growth for Raritan. The Dutch, whose ancestors built the town, were forced from political dominance on the Board of Commissioners by the Irish and Slavic people. The Irish in turn were forced from dominance by residents of Slavic and Italian descent.
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

RARITAN CONTINUED...

Once again the town went to war, and a thousand of her citizens served with distinction and honor. Among them was a Marine sergeant named John Basilion. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroic actions on Guadalcanal. Basilion was later killed on the beach-head of Iwo Jima in February of 1945.

In September of 1947, a dispute between Bridgewater Township and Raritan arose concerning the payment of road tax. In that month Bridgewater refused to pay to Raritan road tax monies normally paid to the town. In 1948 a special election was held to decide whether or not the town should become a borough. On May 12, 1948, the Borough of Raritan was officially born, one hundred and ninety years after the first village meeting.

Historic Sites
General John Frelinghuysen House
Raritan Train Station

Rocky Hill

Rocky Hill is an old village, located, as its name implies, on a ledge of stone. It was part of the lands once belonging to the Unami, or “people down the river” — a family group of the Lenni-Lenape Indians.

In 1701, John Harrison was one of those employed by the Governor and Proprietors of East Jersey to take title of certain Indian lands. This land deeded to John Harrison of Rocky Hill was dated June 24, 1717. Harrison owned many acres of land, and it was he who started the first grinding mills on the Millstone River. He also served as a member of the Assembly from Somerset County in 1703 and 1707.

The Revolution was the most heroic time in Rocky Hill’s history. John Hart, a neglected signer of the Declaration of Independence, lived in Hopewell but owned lands around Rocky Hill and several mills on the Millstone River. This once wealthy farmer and landowner was left penniless by his generosity to the cause and the resulting British raids on his holdings. He died in 1779 of privations resulting from hiding in the Sourland Mountains from constant British harassment.

Another celebrity of those times, John Stevens, fared considerably better than Hart. Stevens was a brother-in-law to Lord Stirling, one of George Washington’s most beloved and trusted officers. As a member of governmental bodies, Stevens actively aided the Revolution and although a resident of Rocky Hill, he belonged to the Perth Amboy Group and Council of Proprietors. He was a merchant until he retired in 1761, when he occupied himself with the management of his extensive estates and copper mines at Rocky Hill.

Rocky Hill’s main right to fame lies with the name of the great General George Washington. He and his army passed through Rocky Hill on their way to the bitter winter encampment in Morristown after the battles of Trenton and Princeton. The General had planned to dash on to New Brunswick and capture British supplies there, but at the Millstone River a hurried council decided that the exhausted men would encounter fresh British reinforcements, so they took a side road on through Rocky Hill to Millstone. Later on its way to the decisive Battle of Monmouth in June, 1778, the army again marched through Rocky Hill.

However, Washington is remembered and loved here for his prolonged stay in 1783. As Congress was meeting in Princeton, he was needed nearby to help straighten out the details of the terms of peace. The

THE FLAGTOWN FORGER: ALTHOUGH NEVER MORE THAN A LOCAL STOP ON A BRANCH LINE OF THE JERSEY CENTRAL RAILROAD, FLAGTOWN BECAME INTERNATIONALLY FAMOUS IN 1939 WHEN A NOTORIOUS COUNTERFEITER WAS FOUND TO BE OPERATING OUT OF A QUIET FARMHOUSE ALONG SOUTH BRANCH ROAD.


FOURTEEN YEARS LATER, WHEN NINGER WAS FINALLY CAUGHT AFTER PLACING HIS NOTE ON A WET BAR IN NEW YORK CITY, WHERE THE INK RUN ONTO THE BARTENDERS' FINGERS. HE ATTRACTION MUCH PUBLIC SYMPATHY. SOME PROTESTED HIS BEING PROSECUTED AS A COMMON CRIMINAL, BUT THE LAW MAKES NO ALLOWANCE FOR ARTISTIC ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND HE WAS SENTENCED TO SERVE TIME IN A FEDERAL PENITENTIARY.

EXAMPLES OF HIS WORK ARE HELD BY THE U.S. SECRET SERVICE AND ARE ON DISPLAY IN THE TREASURY BUILDING, WASHINGTON, D.C.
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

ROCKY HILL CONTINUED.

floated off to the New Brunswick markets. It was busiest through 1890. After it was purchased by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1893, it never again showed a profit. The coal traffic was then transferred to the railroad, and thereafter the canal's days were numbered. Though pleasure boats continued to whistle gaily at the bridge gates, it was finally closed in 1932. Now owned by the State of New Jersey, the canal is a joy to canoers and tow-path hikers.

In the spring of 1874 the New Jersey Railroad and Transportation Company ran a spur line along the Millstone River, with its terminal at Rocky Hill. It passed through Kingston, Monmouth Junction, and on to the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad into Jersey City. Those were busy days for the railroad men. On excursions, such as "Salt Water Day," they had to put on seven or eight extra cars for the seashore trip. During the peach season, fruit from the surrounding area was brought to Rocky Hill and packed aboard the train. At times there

A Victorian House, Rocky Hill Historic District (1870's).
were as many as fifteen or sixteen carloads of peaches to a train.

Rocky Hill was long a part of Montgomery Township, which had become incorporated in March 1772, at the home of William Jones at “Rockie Hill.” Then in 1890 Rocky Hill withdrew from Montgomery Township and became a borough.

The area was settled mainly by the Dutch. The names on the old maps (Voorbees, Van Dyke, Vreeland, Van Doren, etc.) tell the story of many Dutch land owners. The first organized church in Rocky Hill was the Dutch Reformed Church, built in 1857 at a cost of $4,245. It is American Gothic in design, handsome in its simplicity. With 34 members it was free of debt by June 10 of the following year.

Trinity Church was built in 1864 and the Methodist Episcopal in 1869. The latter no longer exists, though Rocky Hill has three churches still, with a Roman Catholic Church added in 1908.

Although Rocky Hill was formerly a small village dependent upon surrounding farms for its economic life, the turn of the century showed that expanding industrialism had crept into it. The 1909 Industrial Directory listed several of the borough’s industries. The Delaware River Quarry Company prepared stone for roads and employed 300 people. Included in the listing was an itemized list of immigrants, of which 250 were Italian. The quarry continued to grow and today it still affects the life and economy of the community. The Italians who came to the village to work in the quarry have stayed and prospered, and are now among its "old timers."

The Hercules Powder Company came into the town in 1960 and developed a small research plant. It manufactures glass fiber-reinforced plastic.

With the post-World War II sprawl, Rocky Hill has changed from the picturesque self-contained village of white homes and shaded streets into a suburb of a suburb. Rocky Hill is growing like the rest of New Jersey; but in spite of all the changes, those living here are proud of their village and its part in Somerset’s historic past.

**Historic District**

Rocky Hill Historic District

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**Somerville**

Somerville, the county seat of Somerset County for over two hundred years, was actually part of Bridgewater Township until 1909, when it was incorporated as an independent borough.

During the colonial period, Somerville was a small settlement with very few buildings. The Dutch Reformed Church had, in 1751, built a parsonage for the Rev. John Frelinghuysen, who served several churches in the Raritan Valley. The house stood near the end of Doughty Street; it was moved in 1914 to its present site on Washington Place.

The Wallace House, built sometime before 1775, was purchased in that year by John Wallace, a wealthy cloth and dry goods merchant from Philadelphia. During the winter of 1778-1779, George Washington rented the house for use as his headquarters while the troops were camped at nearby Middlebrook.

Two other early structures included Tunison’s Tavern, built around 1770 near the site of the present Somerset Hotel (the county’s oldest commercial insti-
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

Somerville continued...

Somerville's growth really began in 1784 when a new log courthouse was built near Tunison's Tavern to replace the courthouse which had been burned in Millstone by Simcoe's British raiders in 1779. (The county government shared this building for several years with the Dutch Reformed Church, whose Finderne sanctuary had also been destroyed by Simcoe.) As the county seat, Somerville attracted new residents, who built homes and set up shops, hotels and schools. Houses of worship. There are currently thirteen churches and temples within the borough; some were established over one hundred years ago, but the majority were built in this century.

While the schools and churches served the educational and spiritual needs of the citizens, the fire department, rescue squad and hospital met the medical and safety needs of the public. The Somerville Fire Department was organized in 1835. Today four companies serve the borough: Engine Company No 1, Central Hook and Ladder, West End Hose and Lincoln Hose. Currently under construction is the Robert D. Wortman Fire Training Center, which will enable fire fighters to practice latest techniques. The Fire Museum on North Doughty Street displays historic firefighting equipment, photographs and other memorabilia.

The Wallace House, headquarters of General Washington from November 28, 1778 to June 3, 1779 while his army of several thousand was encamped at the Heights of Middlebrook, north of Bound Brook.

From the earliest days, education was important to the people of Somerville. A red schoolhouse stood behind the Reformed Church for many years; it was replaced by the Academy, which served the town until 1865. Many private schools flourished, including the Young Ladies' Seminary and the Grammar School for Boys Only. As the population grew, more schools were built. In 1987 the district moved away from the neighborhood schools to overcome ethnic imbalance. Currently, grades K-2 are housed in Van Derveer School and grades 3-5 in Central School.

Beginning with the First Dutch Reformed Church of Somerville and Raritan, which was built on the courthouse green, Somerville has welcomed many to further provide for the public welfare, Somerville became the first inland town in New Jersey to organize a first aid and rescue squad. Existing for over two years with no truck of its own, the squad finally purchased a truck in 1931. Three years later, the Somerville squad assisted in the rescue and treatment of survivors when the S.S. Morro Castle burned and ran aground near Asbury Park. The squad's headquarters building on Park Avenue was dedicated in 1949.

The Somerset Hospital opened on February 15, 1901 in the Lord home on East Main Street; it had twelve beds, three wards and ten physicians. With overcrowding a constant problem, the hospital opened a 100-bed facility on Rehill Avenue in 1925. Now called
the Somerset Medical Center, the hospital has expanded many times and offers a wide range of services to the public.

Somerville has been a hub of transportation since its early days. Two important roads passed through the town in colonial times: the Old York Road, which ran from Elizabeth to Philadelphia, and the New Jersey Turnpike, which joined New Brunswick and Phillipsburg. Stagecoaches following these two routes stopped in Somerville, affording passengers scheduled (albeit uncomfortable and, at times, uncertain) transportation to Newark, Philadelphia, and New Brunswick.

Modern transportation came to Somerville in 1841 when the railroad was completed from Elizabethtown. In 1852, the Central Railroad of New Jersey built a new Somerville depot, but it was destroyed by fire in 1867. A temporary station served until the present stone structure was completed in 1890. Designed in the Romanesque Revival style, it is built of sandstone from the Old Stockton quarry. The borough, in 1974, purchased the station and offered it for commercial development. In 1987 it was purchased by a local realtor who plans to lease the station for office space.

With the arrival of the railroad came an influx of wealthy businessmen who could work in the cities, but raise their families in suburban Somerville. Many of their lovely Victorian-era homes can still be seen on Altamont, Cliff, High, Middaugh and Prospect streets.

Over the years, Somerville has provided its citizens with many opportunities for recreation and leisure. In the latter part of the 19th century, the town’s principal playground was Somerset Hall, which could be reached by climbing up three rickety flights of stairs to the top of the present Schwartz Building at West Main and Union Streets. While the quality of its accommodations was something less than elegant, old Somerset Hall launched two famous entertainers on their careers. The renowned dancer, Ruth St. Denis, who lived on a farm outside Somerville, made her debut on the Somerset’s stage. Anna Case, of South Branch, a Metropolitan star and concert soloist, also performed on the Somerset stage. Somerville was also the home of Paul Robeson, who achieved fame in the theatre and on the concert stage.

Germania Hall on Somerset Street was the scene of many amateur theatricals, including fundraisers for such civic projects as the hospital building fund. Traveling minstrel shows would also perform there.

The Tour of Somerville Bicycle Classic has been run on Memorial Day since its inception in 1940. Fred “Pop” Kugler, a professional bike racer, originated the tour to promote bicycle racing in his hometown. Furman Kugler, Pop’s son, won the first and second tours in 1940 and 1941. The 1942 race was won by Carl Anderson. Both of these young men lost their lives in World War II. Interrupted for four years by the war, the race was renewed in 1947 and was renamed the Kugler-Anderson Memorial Tour of Somerville.

As Somerville moves into the future, its citizens can look back with pride at its historical past and civic achievements.

**Historic Sites**
Old Dutch Parsonage
Wallace House

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**South Bound Brook**

Little or no definite information appears to be available concerning the early history of South Bound Brook. The Reverend E.T. Corwin, writing in 1881, states that this area was bought from the Indians by John Inian in 1688. Some time later, much of this tract came into the possession of one William Dockwra, a large landowner of that day. Dockwra’s holdings extended back from the Raritan River for about two miles. Subsequently, the area was subdivided into long, narrow farms or plantations, each having a much-coveted river frontage. During the Revolutionary War, one of these plantations was owned by Abraham Staats, in whose home Baron von Steuben spent the winter of 1778-79. Another plantation, one of 1,715 acres, was owned by Hendrick Fisher, a member of the New Jersey Committee of Correspondence and first president of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey in 1775.

The area which is now South Bound Brook was fortunate in having easy access to the village of Bound Brook by means of the bridge connecting them. Much
of the travel from New Brunswick to North Jersey had to pass through what is now South Bound Brook. The only roads back from the bridge were the one "up-river" toward Weston's Mill and the one "down-river" to New Brunswick. It is believed that the road to New Brunswick followed a course much nearer the river than the present Main Street, passing between the Staats House and the river. It may have emerged near the Hendrick Fisher house, now Ukrainian Church property.

When present-day Main Street was laid out is a matter of conjecture, but it was probably early in the last century. Many of the dwellings along its course were and are of a style of architecture common in post-Revolutionary times.

From the close of the Revolutionary War until the opening of the Delaware and Raritan Canal in June 1834, South Bound Brook was just a sleepy little Dutch hamlet abutting the southern approach to the Queen's Bridge. The coming of the canal changed all that almost overnight. A new era began with new people, new business and a great hope for the future. Wharves and warehouses for the storage of grain were built at the foot of Elizabeth Street. Stables for tow-path mules were put up east of the bridge between the river and the canal. Farmers from the surrounding countryside began to haul grain to its warehouses, and Bound Brook merchants received their shipments of new goods at the wharves. New streets were laid out, soon to be lined with neat homes. Many of these were occupied by Irish families brought here to work on the canal. So optimistic were some of the townspeople that they believed that South Bound Brook would soon outstrip her sister town across the river. This might have happened except for the coming of the Elizabethtown and Somerville Railroad to Bound Brook in 1841.

After the first flurry of excitement had subsided on the coming of the canal, the town settled down to a period of rather slow but steady growth. Immediately before and right after the Civil War, many pretentious homes were built by the more well-to-do residents. The town began to spread out in the area south of Main Street and west of Elizabeth Street.

During this time new stores were opened and other businesses established. Among them were Israel Coddington and Company, Jacob Shurtlef, Jeremiah G. Staats, Ephriam Merlett, Jeremiah Gilliard, Cook's Lumber Yard, Somerville Sawmill Co., and Van Dyne's sash and blind factory. There were also numerous carpenter, blacksmith and wheelwright shops as well as the canal company's offices and warehouses. All indicated that South Bound Brook had become a thriving little community.

The canal continued for many years to do a thriving business in transporting coal, grain and lumber. The merry trot of the boatman's horn as he blew for the bridge tender continued to make music in the ears of the good people of South Bound Brook. So heavy was the traffic on the canal that at times long lines of horse-drawn vehicles would be queued up waiting for the bridge to reopen so they might proceed.

By the close of the nineteenth century, canal shipping was beginning to decline, and by the early 1900s traffic was confined to pleasure boats and a few coal barges. Eventually the Pennsylvania Railroad acquired the canal, and in the 1930s it was closed to all traffic, to be taken over later by the State of New Jersey.

It is not possible to tell when the first school was opened, probably about 1830, on Main Street. It was replaced during the Civil War by a brick building later known as the Booker T. Washington School. Then the town was divided into school districts and a second school erected on the corner of High and Elizabeth streets. This in turn was followed by a four-room brick building in 1899, with two later additions. Again in 1954 another school was erected south of the old Robert Morris School. The Booker T. Washington School was finally abandoned in 1924.

The first post office was established in South Bound Brook on February 23, 1886, with Theodore R. Hodge its first postmaster.

The Reformed Church was organized in 1846 and the present edifice erected on Main Street the following year. Though established in 1861, the building of St. Paul's Episcopal Church on the corner of Main and Jackson streets was not completed until February 1, 1863. After destruction by fire in 1886, the church was rebuilt in Bound Brook. In 1949, Our Lady of Mercy Church was erected by the Roman Catholics of the newly formed parish in South Bound Brook. ■
Histories of the Twenty-One Municipalities

SOUTH BOUND BROOK CONTINUED...

At the request of its citizens in 1869, the State Legislature chartered the village as a town under the name of Bloomington. This conferred a sort of quasi-independence from Franklin Township. A board of trustees managed local affairs. In 1891, the residents petitioned to have the name changed back to South Bound Brook. The governmental arrangement apparently worked satisfactorily for nearly forty years, or until 1907, when the Legislature passed a bill incorporating the town as the Borough of South Bound Brook.

The first Queen's Bridge was erected during the early 1760s. It is known that it was repaired in 1772 following flood damages. The Colonial Assembly in Amboy had enacted a law to the effect that a bridge be constructed over the Raritan River connecting Bound Brook and South Bound Brook. It was to cost the inhabitants of Somerset County three hundred fifty-seven pounds sterling. In December of that year the bridge was completed; and it is believed that through William Franklin, Governor of the Province, son of Benjamin Franklin, that it also was named for the King's Consort. Other bridges followed, for flood waters and ice floes prevalent in former years carried some away. One is known to have been built by funds raised by public lottery. Another was built in 1807, but the number of them all is unknown.

Of the older bridges no description has as yet been found concerning their characteristics or construction. Likely they were built of heavy-hewn timbers of chestnut, hard pine and oak, for the craftsmen of those days attainted perfection in the use of various kinds of woods whose qualities best fitted the task at hand. Each structure has been the Queen's Bridge of its day. The present one replaced the previous 1875 model in 1984.

Warren

Before the coming of the colonists, what is now Warren Township was hunting ground for the Lenni-Lenape Indians. Up to the time of the Revolution, this area had existed as a dwelling place for adventurous Europeans who had lived first under the Dutch, then the English government for three to four generations. During that time the settlers on the Passaic River and in Washington Valley were living in a veritable wilderness — truly one of the first New Frontiers.

In the 1700s there were various small hamlets in Warren Township: Mt. Bethel, once called Galis, was one. Also, there were Union Village, Smalleytown and Coontown, with the last-named supporting, back in 1800, a cider mill, a hat shop, two stores and a saw mill. Then Warrenville had but a blacksmith shop, a wheelwright shop and a few homes.

T.F. Garden, in his history of New Jersey dated 1832, described Mt. Bethel as a hamlet on a Stony Hill, containing a Baptist Church, a tavern, a store and four or five dwellings. Even with that it seemed there was insufficient room for all. It is said the Baptist minister wanted the town fathers to close the tavern because of its nearness to the church. Careful consideration of the proposition, pro and con, resulted in the decision that since the tavern had been on the hill longer than the church, it need not move. So the tavern stood fast and years later the church moved further down the hill.

Warren Township was formed out of Bernards Township in 1806. In existing records there is little mention of schools before 1847, though by 1840 there were two; and by 1880 five school districts were defined.

Rather strange it seems that the Civil War was not mentioned in township minutes until 1864 when it was near its end and the draft laws then had to be enforced. At that time the area's population was almost solidly Democratic, so they referred to it as "Mr. Lincoln's War" which may account for the indifference then so evident. In any event, there was a Jacob Seder who in that conflict lost an eye for which he received a pension for compensation.

In 1872 and 1873, North Plainfield and Greenbrook were lost to the township as was Watchung in 1911. Then, early in the 20s came the motor cars and more lately the general exodus of the large manufacturing plants to the country when Warren Township, like much of America, began losing its rural character.

Probably the oldest of the early landmarks now remaining in this area is the tavern known as King George Inn, some parts of which it is said have
watched America grow since 1692. Being on the King’s Highway, it was well suited to serve those traveling between Perth Amboy (for long the seat of government in East Jersey), Basking Ridge, Bernardsville and Morristown. Its course followed the trail of the aborigines in their going and coming through the centuries, from the hunting grounds in the mountains of Pennsylvania to the Jersey shore. In breaking their trails in this wild and wooded country, instinct and a sense of direction guided them in finding the shortest distance and easiest grades between points of travel. So it was that the trail came to be a road. Later it became King George Road — a King’s Highway and still it is the King George Road of today.

The Inn, like others of its kind, was a stage stop, a community center and a Saturday night mecca for square-dancing lovers of early days. What its original name might have been no record is here to tell, but it must have had several since it was customary for an inn or tavern of early days either to go by name of its owner or show a swinging sign with a conspicuous figure painted on it to represent its name for the benefit of those who could not read.

Seemingly this inn was well patronized into the late 1890s. Then, after several years of serving city guests through the summer, it started to decline and in time became unusable. In its most prosperous days it had room accommodations for thirty or more guests, with a ballroom, billiard room, parlors and a famous bar. With the exception of its stables in the rear, nearly all the Inn’s external features have been retained, while its interior is both restored and modernized.

Special mention must be made of the Mt. Bethel Church, whose appellation comes from the famous town among the hills of Judea. From the parent church in Scotch Plains came eight males and ten females who had been living within six to ten miles of that place. They found walking, riding or driving those distances to attend divine worship over hilly, rough and often muddy roads, most trying. In consequence, they requested letters of dismission in order that they might constitute a new center of religious influence. These were granted in the fall of 1767, and it was not long before a quaint little Baptist Church, to be known as the Mt. Bethel Church, nestled on a knoll in the hills of northern Jersey. There it has stood for over two hundred years, faithful to its task until early in 1960, when a much larger one was built nearby to take its place.

Another prominent landmark in Warren Township is the Mt. Horeb Church. The earliest records of this Methodist church state that its work in this immediate area began about 1770. Then a small group of individuals met as a class in a house on the First Mountain, about a mile southeast of Martinsville. In 1820 three local ministers preached in the homes of five of those who then attended service. That year a Reverend Bartholamin Weed of the Philadelphia Conference organized at Mount Horeb a class of eight people in the home of Benjamin Coddington, a mile and a half east of where the church now stands. It was then decided to build on the present site what was to be the first Methodist Church in Warren Township. Completed in 1824, the building cost $1500 and was dedicated that year by a Reverend Joseph Ruseting of New Bruns-
Watchung

Watchung means "high hills" in the Algonquin dialect of the Lenni-Lenape Indians. There were two campsites of the Lenni-Lenape (meaning "original people") in Watchung. The largest was located along Stirling Road above Brookdale Road, the other on the northeast side of Valley Road.

The borough's main roads were originally Indian paths. The Minisink Trail begins in the upper northwestern reaches of the Delaware River, running southeast to Sandy Hook. A portion of this famous Indian trail runs along Somerset Street past Wetumpa Falls following Stony Brook.

A lodge for pow wows ("council meetings") of the totems ("clans" or "communities") was located just off of Johnston Drive close to Bonnie Burn Road. Several times a year the Lenape would be joined by neighboring clans for meetings of the chiefs.

In 1660 the Indians sold all the land between the Raritan and Passaic Rivers including Watchung. A tract of land in Burlington County was set aside for the very first Indian reservation in the U.S.A., and by 1832 the last of New Jersey's Indians, including the Lenni-Lenape from Watchung, had left the state and moved westward.

By 1685 land was bought by Joseph Fraze, which today is located on New Providence Road, and by Dr. Abraham Cole, which was located on Johnston Drive. In the 1700s Watchung was a part of Bernards Township, and the community was known as Browestown because farmers from the Plainfields used the land for pasturing their cows in the summer. On March 5, 1806 Warren Township broke away from Bernards and Watchung was known as Green Valley. In 1825 North Plainfield was formed and Watchung was named Washingtonville. It was not until applying for a post office that it was discovered there was another town of that name, and it was renamed Watchung.

Historic Sites
Mount Bethel Baptist Meeting House
Smalley-Wormser House

In 1723 James Alexander, father of Lord Stirling bought land located on Johnston Drive. James Jennings bought land on upper Somerset Street by the falls in 1727. In 1736 land was purchased by Elisha Smalley, whose tract ran along lower Somerset Street. Joseph Allen was one of the first settlers in Watchung, as were Israel Coons and the Coddington brothers, Benjamin, John and Archibald. The tiny cemetery tucked between the entrance to the Watchung Lake Club and the Lake Edge restaurant has old gravestones; the earliest date, May 31, 1797 denotes the burial of Henry Doty.

During the Revolutionary War winters of 1776-77 and 1778-79, when General Washington's forces were encamped in Morristown, many local families and businesses supplied food and clothing to the troops. The two mills in Watchung at that time, the Hollingsworth fur mill at the foot of Bonnie Burn Road and the powder mill run by John Wilcockie (later shortened to Wilcox) on New Providence Road, supplied munitions for Washington's troops fighting skirmishes in the plains. After the war ended, John Wilcox sold his mill to David Felt, who converted it into a paper mill.

The majority of the early residents were farmers. An 1850 map of Watchung shows a saw mill, grist mill, cider mill (later converted into a distillery) blacksmith shop, a general store and a tavern. A lot purchased for $50 located on Somerset Street was used to build a schoolhouse and on April 1, 1851 the first school began.

By the end of the Civil War, new industries had also cropped up to meet the needs of the ever-growing village. Watchung has two sizable lakes, both of which were used for the cutting of ice to supply area homes and restaurants. Quarrying was another industry and stone from the local quarries was used in the construction of several buildings in the Plainfield area as well as in the laying of Route 22.
Mount Bethel Baptist Meeting House (1761).

Begun as Wacht Unks by the Lenni-Lenape Indians, settled by stout-hearted pioneers, growing and expanding over the years, Watchung had a long childhood and prolonged adolescence, was known by several different names, and has been native home for many people. It was not, however, until May 6, 1926, when the Borough of Watchung was finally established with a mayor and six councilmen governing its administration. The Police Department was begun in December 1926. The Fire Department, however, is older by sixteen years than the town itself. Nestled between the blue hills, Watchung is a beautiful little 2.6 square miles of valley.

Watchung has two churches, St. Mary's Church-Stony Hill, tracing its origin back to 1847, and the Mary E. Wilson Memorial Union Church, which was formed in 1851.

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### 1988 Municipality Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Est. Pop.</th>
<th>Area in Sq. Miles</th>
<th>Preliminary True Value</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Est. Pop.</th>
<th>Area in Sq. Miles</th>
<th>Preliminary True Value</th>
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* Estimated