

Warren County, New Jersey

HISTORICAL & SCENIC LANDMARKS



Warren County History Tour –

within 30 minutes of the Warren County Farmers' Fair

Sunday, July 27 – Saturday August 2 2008

Warren County is rich with unique historical museums and learning centers, several focused on the contributions of Warren County to the nation. Many of these museums are operated by volunteers with a passion for History. **Normal operating hours have been listed below, so please plan your visit accordingly or call in advance to make special arrangements.** If you are unable to visit on this day, you are invited back to visit the things of our past in the future.

1

Hope – A Moravian Village settled in 1769

Hope Historical Society Museum

323 High Street (Route 519), Hope, NJ 07844

Open June through October, Sundays from 1–3 p.m.

Memorabilia, photographs and deeds dating to the Moravian era (1769-1808), slide show on the founding of Hope by the Moravians, in a circa 1830 building thought to have been used as a toll collector's house.

Come back and take a Walking Tour of Historic Hope Village, conducted by Help Our Preservation Effort (H.O.P.E.) June through October, 1st and 2nd Saturday of the month, Approximately 90-minute guided walking tours of historical village founded in 1769 by Moravians as one of the first planned communities in the nation. The tours start promptly at 9:30 a.m. from The Inn at Millrace Pond and an \$8 donation is asked. For more information contact 908-459-9177 or email hope_preservation@msn.com.

2

Garden State Heirloom Seed Society Museum

82 Delaware Road, Columbia, NJ

908-475-2730

Open first and last weekends of the month from April through October from 1–5 p.m.

The GSHSS Seed & Farm Museum is dedicated to the preservation and use of heirloom seeds and works with farmers and gardeners. Housed in a circa-1880 farmhouse, it includes an exhibition area demonstrating early 19th-century farm life, period farm tools, two acres to grow heirloom seed varieties, and a period kitchen garden. The museum features seed catalogs from the 1870's to 1940's and also 1880's seed trade cards.

The museum also features a large selection of NJ milk bottles and caps and many other items related to the dairy industry. For more information visit them online at www.gshss.com.

Photos courtesy GSHSS



Cover from a seed catalog

3

Historic Belvidere

Warren County Historical Society Museum

313 Mansfield Street, Belvidere, NJ 07823

908-475-4246 www.rootsweb.com/~njwahs

Open for tours and research Sundays 2–4 p.m. except on major holidays.

The Warren County Historical Society has been preserving Warren County history for the last 76 years. The museum, housed in a brick townhouse (c. 1848) holds an eclectic collection of Warren County artifacts, antiques and furnishings, and genealogical library. Display items include Cornish music makers from Washington Borough, once known as the organ capital of the world; made in Warren County textiles and folk art; and Native American artifacts.

A short walking tour of Belvidere

courtesy Belvidere Victorian Days, www.victorianbelvidere.com

202 Greenwich Street

Strolling up Greenwich Street from town, you can't help but notice this landmark Victorian home. Set squarely on a white-picketed corner lot, overhung by a grand old sycamore, the blue sided house with its elaborate white and pink spindle and gingerbread trim embodies the Victorians' yen for the fanciful.

The Titman House was designed by Victorian architect George F. Barber. It is a fine example of Barber's penchant for softening the angular with touches of roundness, such as his signature "horseshoe" window. In this case inset with a rectangular window and formed by a weblike spindle work built into the veranda trim... and the unusual hipped turret, which, like the slate roof, is crested with decorative wrought iron.

Corner of Hardwick and Third Streets

Erected circa 1870 by Daniel Kleinhans, a prominent landowner of the time, this Victorian directly faces the Courthouse Square (Garrett D. Wall Park). The front porch with its square posts has recessed paneled front doors with transom above. The exterior is original clapboard siding with a double bracket cornice, 2/2 window sash, molded window hoods, and a two story bay window. This 2 1/2 story center hall structure has a cupola atop the main roof with double, round arched windows.

402 Third Street

This 2-story brick house was built in the mid-19th century and is typical of the 2/3 Georgian style which has been widely used in this area since the 18th Century. The influence of the Italianate style of the mid-19th century can also be seen in the decorative detailing of the house.

Come back to Belvidere Victorian Days – a celebration of the town's Victorian heritage, held on Saturday, September 6 and Sunday,

September 7. With over 200 historical sites, spend the day realizing the ambiance of yesteryear. You will get a taste of the Victorian heritage when you visit. Then plan a visit back to join the festivities which include house tours, porch or garden parties, live entertainment, antique, craft and food vendors, antique/vintage car show, vintage fashion shows, Victorian era demonstrations, a baseball game played under 1800s rules, and much more.

4 **White Township Museum**

555A County Route 519, (Bridgeville) Belvidere, NJ 07823

Open June through October, 2nd & 4th Sunday of each month, 2–4 p.m.

A collection of local artifacts dealing with Native Americans and other local history, and pictures of “things that used to be” around the township, displayed in a 1775 farmhouse that later was converted into a general store.

5 **Shippen Manor Museum & Oxford Furnace**

Shippen Manor, 8 Belvidere Avenue, Oxford, NJ 07863
Oxford Furnace, Cinder Street
908-453-4381

Open 1st and 2nd Sunday of each month, 1-4 p.m., except major holiday weekends.

Open from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on July 29

Colonial and Victorian rooms, costumed docents, open hearth cooking and period music in a circa 1754 iron master’s home associated with adjacent Oxford Furnace. The Shippen Manor was built in 1754, by William Shippen II and his brother Joseph Shippen II. In the early 1760’s Joseph W. Shippen was installed by his father, William II, to manage the property. The site of the house emphasizes the position of the Shippens in the local society. They were “masters of all they surveyed”. The estate contained over four thousand acres including land on the Delaware River and a grant from the King of England to operate a ferry. The estate was basically self-sufficient, surrounded by tenant farms, various mills, a store as well as the iron furnace. The Manor is Georgian in style, constructed from local stone, with two foot thick walls and three immense chimneys. The ground floor consisted of six rooms. Upstairs there were two bed chambers and four garret rooms (currently unrestored and used for storage). When the Manor was built in 1754, it was designed to be functional rather than luxurious. Three colors dominated the interior of that portion of the house restored to the colonial period: white, blue-gray and red.



About the Oxford Furnace

Construction of this National Register site began in 1741 and the Furnace went into blast on March 9, 1743. The Oxford Furnace was the third furnace built in the colony of New Jersey. When it was blown out for the last time, in 1884, it had the distinction of operating longer than any other colonial iron furnace. Oxford’s longevity was due to the successful conversion from the burning of charcoal for fuel to the use of anthracite coal.



This county treasure was the site of an important “first” in iron history and technology: on May 24, 1835, William Henry achieved America’s first successful “hot blast.” Early uses of steam-heated blasts and turbo-power were developed by later owners of Oxford’s iron and mining businesses.

For more information on Shippen Manor and Furnace visit www.wcchc.org.

Photos courtesy Warren County Cultural & Heritage Commission

6 **New Village, Route 57 – The Concrete Mile**

Between Morris Canal Bread Lock Park and Richline Road Prior to Thomas Edison’s venture in Portland Cement, he spent 10 years making advances but no money in the iron-ore industry. With leftover equipment he quickly changed gears and founded the **Edison Portland Cement Company**. As was most projects he took initiative on, Edison helped launch the industry. Edison generated much publicity and excitement with his new venture. One way to capture the attention of the media was to donate the concrete to pave a road for one mile. Today the portion of what is now Route 57 from Bread Lock Park to Richline Road is referred to as **The Concrete Mile**. While most of the sections have since been replaced there are two sections that remain original and have stood the test of time. Remnants of the Edison Portland Cement Plant can be viewed from Richline Road if one looks closely enough.

7 **Valley View – Edison Homes of Distinction**

In 1919 the Phillipsburg Development Company was formed by Ingersoll-Rand to implement a program that would provide inexpensive housing for its employees. Having been introduced by Thomas Edison to the idea of concrete housing, Charles H. Ingersoll decided to initiate a development of concrete construction homes for laborers at his plant. A reusable mold or form would be build for each house and concrete poured into the preset form. All window and door frames, plumbing and electric conduits would already be in place. The exterior of the house was enhanced by spraying stucco on the exteriors, which entailed the use of an Ingersoll-Rand portable air compressor.

Four or six rooms, they rented for \$17 or \$19 a month. To purchase the home would be an investment of \$3,550. Most that lived there did not. The development was located on a 59-acre site within walking distance from the plant. A total of eighty-four houses were initially built on lots with approximately 40-foot frontage. By 1928 there were a total of 125. In 1922 a substantial brick building was erected to accommodate a grocery store on the first floor and an apartment above it. Today it is a convenience store and deli known as **Gino's** and on your visit you will see old pictures of historical events in and around Phillipsburg. Gino's is located on Congress Street across from the entrance to Valley View.

It was thought by Edison that concrete houses would solve the housing shortage. As the homes were built Edison began to see how difficult and costly the process would be as opposed to efficient and economic. While they could pour a house a week, erection of the larger house required 2,037 man-hours of labor. Excavation took 193 hours; erecting the form, 443 hours; removing forms, 221 hours; placing concrete, 304 hours; plastering, 112 hours; applying external stucco finish; 162 hours; plumbing, 124 hours.

When visiting, please keep in mind these are private residences.

8, 9, 10, 11

The Transportation Hub – the canal and railroads in and around Phillipsburg

Phillipsburg New Jersey's role in history has been as a great transportation hub with 5 railroads and 3 canals all coming together in or near this rivertown on the Delaware. These modes of transportation, first the canal and then the railroads were instrumental in the growth of the nation. Transporting coal, raw materials and other resources from Pennsylvania to urban cities like Newark, Jersey City and New York City literally helping to fuel the industrial revolution. Prior to these advances items were transported via highways, not as we know them today, but described by some as "rut ridden and mud-mired" using horses or ox carts.

The canals were: the **Morris Canal**, which ran from Phillipsburg to Jersey City; the **Delaware Canal**, which ran from Easton to Bristol; and the **Lehigh Canal**, which ran from Easton to Stoddardsville, PA.

The railroads were: the **Lehigh & Hudson River, Central RR of New Jersey, Lehigh Valley, Delaware Lackawanna & Western and Pennsylvania.**

First came the canals in the early 1800's. The Morris Canal took over \$2,000,000 and 6 years to build. What made the Morris Canal unique was that it climbed mountains through the use of the inclined plane and water powered turbines. Total elevation change from the lowest point to the highest was 1,674 feet. This was accomplished though the use of 23 lift locks and 23 inclined planes – 7 of which were in Warren County.

The Morris Canal opened in 1831 and went from Phillipsburg to Newark. By 1836 it would reach Jersey City and be

102 miles in length – 33 of these miles running through scenic Warren County.

Parts of the canal can be viewed at the following locations (8, 9 & 10).

Photo credits: *The Morris Canal, A Photographic History* by James Lee.

8

Warren County Historical Learning Center

Morris Canal Bread Lock Park, Route 57, New Village
908-689-6350

www.morriscanal.org

Open 1st Sunday of each month 1-4 p.m. Park is open to the public daily during daylight hours.

The Learning Center is a small museum located at the site of Morris Canal Lock 7 West (The Bread Lock). Visitors will be able to see the remains of the lock, see models and displays of the Morris Canal and other aspects of Warren County history including the Shippen Manor, Oxford Furnace, charcoal making and Lenni-Lenape culture and the Easton-Washington Traction Company trolley line.



Lock 7 West near New Village. The store at the far end of the lock sold goods to boatmen including homemade pies & bread. It was known for many years as "Gardner's" Lock and also as "Fresh Bread" Lock. The sign on the store reads "Homemade Potato Bread."

9

Jim and Mary Lee Museum

477 County Road 519, Stewartsville NJ 08886

www.morriscanal.org

Open April through October, 1st Sunday of each month 1-4 p.m. (except major holidays).

On Sunday, July 27 - open 1-4 p.m.

This small museum is located at the site of the Morris Canal Plane 9 West, the longest of the inclined planes. This site is the former home of the late James S. Lee, Sr., Morris Canal author and historian. Visitors will be able to walk the incline plane, tour the remains of the powerhouse, tailrace, turbine chamber as well as the museum.



Plane 9 West, the longest and highest plane on the Morris Canal, was 510 feet long to its summit and 1,788 feet long from end to end. It was one of three planes with a double set of tracks.

10

Canal Entrance and Archway

The canal archway can be viewed from Scott's Park in Easton, Pa, just across the bridge from Phillipsburg. You may also view the archway from a trip down the river with Lazy River Outpost, a tubing, raft, kayak and canoe rental shop in Union Square, Phillipsburg. www.lazyriveroutpost.com.

Plans are currently underway to create a river walk in Phillipsburg to the Canal archway.

11

Friends of the NJ Transportation Heritage Center

178 South Main St.

Phillipsburg, NJ 08865

908-217-3553 or 908-246-6554

Open Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Information center and museum in Phillipsburg Union Station with displays, dioramas, models, artifacts, exhibits and gifts of New Jersey railroad, trolley, truck, bus, canal, and ferry transport.

More on the Railroads *(from Wikipedia)*

Five (5) railroads that have historically served the Phillipsburg area; the **Central Railroad of New Jersey** (CNJ,) the **Lehigh & Hudson River** (L&HR,) the **Lehigh Valley** (LV,) the **Delaware, Lackawanna & Western** (DL&W.) and the **Pennsylvania Railroad** (PRR.)

The **Central Railroad of New Jersey**, more commonly known as the Jersey Central Lines or CNJ, was a regional railroad with origins in the 1830s, lasting until 1976 when it was absorbed into Conrail with the other bankrupt railroads of the Northeastern United States. Its main line ran from a terminal at Jersey City west through New Jersey to Phillipsburg and across the Delaware River to Easton and Scranton in Pennsylvania. Branches also stretched into southern New Jersey to Delaware Bay.

The CNJ was acquired by the Philadelphia and Reading Railway in 1883. Though that was later canceled, the Reading continued to exert a major influence over the CNJ, and used it for its New York City-area terminal.

Liberty State Park in Jersey City, New Jersey includes the site of the CNJ's terminal.

The rest of the line to Phillipsburg opened in 1852, and on September 8, 1855 the upper level of the Lehigh Valley Railroad's Easton Bridge over the Delaware River, taking the CNJ to Easton. At that time, Lehigh Valley coal trains began running over the CNJ to Elizabeth. A similar operation with the **Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad**, joining at

Hampton, began May 27, 1856. This required the addition of a third rail to join the broad gauge DL&W onto the standard gauge CNJ.

The **Lehigh and Hudson River Railway** (L&HR) was the smallest of the six railroads that were merged into Conrail in 1976. It was a bridge line running northeast-southwest across northwestern New Jersey, connecting the line to the Poughkeepsie Bridge at Maybrook, New York with Easton, Pennsylvania, where it interchanged with various other companies. Its status was diminished as the Interstate Highway system was developed, and as its connecting railroads entered bankruptcy. The final straw came with the burning of the decking of the Poughkeepsie Bridge in 1974.

The **Lehigh Valley Railroad** (LVRR) began running in 1855, and by 1880 it was one of the four great railroad lines in New Jersey. The railroad took its name from the beds of anthracite coal on Pennsylvania's Lehigh River. LVRR trains transported most of this cleaner, "smoke-free" soft coal to the New York harbor markets. This coal became the new railroad fuel as well as the fuel for New Jersey's growing industries in Paterson and Newark.

Originally the railroad terminated in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, where the trains would connect to Central Railroad of New Jersey tracks to get to Jersey City. Starting in the 1871, the LVRR leased property along the Morris Canal's border and built its own terminal and freight yard on the Jersey City waterfront. They later purchased the land, thereby increasing its profits because it no longer had to pay the CRRNJ for the use of its lines.

With the eventual decline in the New York coal traffic in the early 1900's, the LVRR began to convert to more passenger service. When the CRRNJ terminal and ferry closed in 1967, LVRR tracks remained essential to commuters, bringing them from Cranford's Aldene Junction to Newark's Penn Station for the Manhattan ferry. However, by 1968, the LVRR was forced into bankruptcy. The Rail Reorganization Act allocated the LVRR tracks to the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) in 1973.

The **Belvidere Delaware Railroad** (Bel Del) was a railroad running along the eastern shore of the Delaware River from Trenton, New Jersey north via Phillipsburg, New Jersey to Belvidere, New Jersey. It served as part of the Pennsylvania Railroad system, carrying mainly anthracite coal from northeastern Pennsylvania to population centers along the coast.

The Belvidere Delaware Rail Road was chartered March 2, 1836 to build from Trenton north to Belvidere, where it would connect to a proposed line west to the Susquehanna River through Pennsylvania. The company was organized August 23 of that year. The Camden and Amboy Rail Road was authorized to buy Bel Del stock on February 29, 1838. On August 3 C&A officials were elected to the Bel Del board, but nothing happened until 1848, when on February 28 the C&A was again

authorized to buy stock. The subscription was approved April 28, and the Bel Del's first meeting since 1838 was held July 22.

The first section, from Trenton north to Lambertville, opened February 6, 1851. On April 25 it opened its Warren Street Station in Trenton. Extensions opened to Tumble in April 1852, Milford February 4, 1853 (passenger service to Milford beginning June 1), Riegelsville December 5, Phillipsburg February 3, 1854, and the rest of the way to Belvidere November 5, 1855.

On June 7, 1854 the Bel Del agreed to operate the Flemington Railroad and Transportation Company, a branch from Lambertville northeast to Flemington; this operation began December 1, 1855 (the branch opened December 4, 1854). For a time the Bel Del was known unofficially as the Belvidere Delaware and Flemington Railroad.

Lehigh Valley Railroad coal trains started using the Bel Del on January 17, 1856, joining the Bel Del at the lower level of the Easton Bridge in Phillipsburg. Coalport Basin opened in April to transfer the coal between the railroad and the Delaware and Raritan Canal in Trenton.

Beyond Belvidere: 1856-1995

In July 1856 a stagecoach began running between Belvidere and the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad at Delaware, New Jersey, allowing passengers to continue west into Pennsylvania. On May 16, 1864 an extension of the Bel Del to the DL&W at Manunka Chunk opened, but there was no through service until 1876 due to a difference in track gauge.

On May 29, 1865 all Bel Del passenger trains were extended to Kensington in Philadelphia via the Philadelphia and Trenton Railroad. In March 1871 the track gauge of the Bel Del was decreased from 4 ft 10 in (1473 mm) to 4 ft 8.5 in (1461 mm).

On April 1, 1872 the Pennsylvania Railroad began operating the Bel Del, soon after leasing the United New Jersey Railroad and Canal Companies. The Mercer and Somerset Railroad was opened as a branch of the Bel Del in 1874, but closed soon after 1879.

The Belvidere Delaware Rail Road and Flemington Railroad and Transportation Company merged February 16, 1885 to form the Belvidere Delaware Railroad.

The Enterprise Railroad was chartered in 1884 and opened in 1885, providing a branch from Coalport northeast along the west bank of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. The Martins Creek Railroad was chartered in 1885 and opened later that year as a bridge over the Delaware River from Martins Creek, New Jersey to Martins Creek, Pennsylvania, where it connected with several other companies. On April 14, 1896 both of those railroads were merged into the Bel Del.

In 1889 the Lehigh and Hudson River Railway acquired track-age rights over the Bel Del from Belvidere south to Phillipsburg, where it crossed into Easton, Pennsylvania.

On February 8, 1908 the PRR acquired trackage rights over the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad from Manunka Chunk northwest to East Stroudsburg for trains serving the Pocono resorts.

The Roxburg Branch, including a bridge over the Delaware River, was completed December 26, 1952, giving access to what is now PPL Corporation's Martins Creek Plant.

Hurricane Diane washed out the line north of Belvidere in August 1955, leading to its abandonment. On December 31, 1957 the Bel Del was merged into the United New Jersey Railroad and Canal Company. The Bel Del was merged into Conrail in April 1976, as its bankrupt parent company became part of the federally funded regional railroad known as Conrail. The northern part of the line was operated by Conrail as a branch line, until part of the line was taken over by a shortline rail operator in 1995. The line was abandoned south of Milford to Trenton, New Jersey by Conrail and became part of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park.

Current status: 1995-present

The portion from Milford north to Phillipsburg was taken over in 1995 from Conrail by the newly-formed Belvidere and Delaware River Railway, and the rest north to Belvidere is now owned by Norfolk Southern (which acquired a large portion of Conrail in the late 1990s), and serves as the Roxburg Branch. The former Bel Del right-of-way south of Milford to Trenton is part of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park and serves as a canal rail trail, along the east bank of the D&R canal.

Special thanks to Ron Wynkoop, historian and Mary Ann Kobble, for sparking the interest that led to the creation of this history tour. Thanks to the many others that represent these organizations and made contributions to the content.