

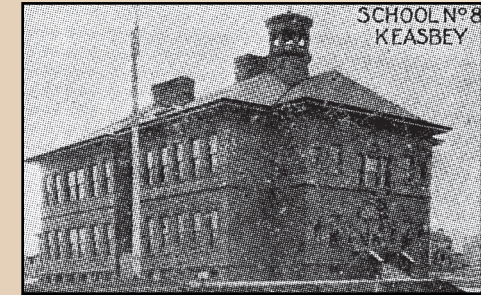
come the damage to his arm. Hardy Peterson took his baseball know-how to the front office and, until his retirement in 1995, was a scout, consultant and General Manager for several teams including the Pirates and the Yankees.

Keasbey

The section of Woodbridge Township along the Raritan River, between Edison and Perth Amboy, was sometimes locally known as Florida Grove because of its picnic areas and beaches. Circa 1883, after several years of mining clay along the river banks, Edward M. Keasbey and his brother, Anthony Q. Keasbey of Newark, erected a factory, the Raritan Hollow and Porous Brick Company, to manufacture first brick, then clay fire-proofing materials. The locale became known as "Keasbey's Landing" and, eventually, Keasbey.

Factories continued to take advantage of Keasbey's prime riverfront location and the convenience of freight stations of both the Central Railroad of New Jersey and the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Trolley lines also connected Keasbey to the surrounding communities. By 1918, over 100 Polish and 1,400 Hungarian immigrants had come to Keasbey to live and work at the Didier-March Company (refractory products); General Ceramics Company (stoneware and porcelain); National Fire Proofing Company (structural clay products); Ostrander Fire Brick Company (brick); and Raritan River Clay Company (hollow tile.) In 1920 Carborundum took over Didier-March and manufacturing and clay mining continued to define Keasbey's economy.

After the Great Depression however highway construction destroyed dozens of homes and severed the once close-knit immigrant community. In 1939 Route 9 was built to link North Jersey to the Jersey Shore. Nineteen fifty (1950) brought the Garden State Parkway through the district and in 1969 the damage was complete when Route 440 was expanded and two enormous bridges were constructed to connect Interstate 287 and the Outerbridge Crossing. Now Keasbey is sometimes referred to as "Spaghetti Junction" for its complicated traverse of highways and byways. Keasbey's ever-evolving demographics have been invigorated by Latin and African American neighbors. And the once-dominant clay industries have been replaced by FedEx, Wakefern and Bayshore Recycling, among others. But with continuing rail service, waterfront barge availability and immediate access to the highway transportation network, Keasbey continues to draw businesses to its shores and provide employment for the area.



10 Keasbey School No.8

In 1894, Keasbey's school children were to attend Fairfield School No. 7 in Fords but the Board of Education heard complaints that over 100 Keasbey children would not be able to attend because of the distance. Raritan Hollow and Porous Brick Company offered the use of a building and Keasbey School No. 8 opened Monday morning, October 7, 1895. By 1897, expanding enrollment put a toll on the tempo-

rary facilities and Raritan H & P Co. offered to donate a site and building supplies for a two-story brick schoolhouse at the corner of Crows Mill Road and Smith Street. School enrollment continued to expand as industrial growth attracted more and more workers and their families to Keasbey. In 1906, construction for a new School No. 8 began at the same location. The school was finished in 1907 and opened in 1908. The school had fifteen classrooms with a capacity of 390. By 1920, some classes were being held in the nearby Keasbey firehouse and in 1926, eight more classrooms were added. In the 1930s, School No. 8 was at the height of enrollment and it was "bursting at the seams" as every seat was filled. The dedicated teachers of School No. 8 educated Keasbey's children for decades. Demographic changes combined with aging and deteriorating school facilities necessitated the closing of Keasbey No. 8 in 1969 for classroom use. The Township continued to utilize the structure as an Adult Education center until 1975 when maintenance costs and safety concerns closed its doors for good.



10 Protection Fire Company No.1 of Keasbey

The oldest fire company in this three-town section of Woodbridge was formed in response to a fire at the Ostrander Fire Brick Company. Residents determined that a local fire department might have been able to save some of the buildings and on June 1, 1908 a meeting was held at Harry Schoenbrun's general store to discuss forming a volunteer company. Shortly thereafter, Protection Fire Company No.1 was chartered. Donations enabled the new company to purchase a ladder, a few pails and other equipment. The company continued to grow and soon purchased a horse-drawn truck from the Stapleton Fire Company for \$75. In 1919, an \$8000 firehouse was constructed on Smith Street and Crows Mill Road next to School No.8 and the National Fire Proofing Company agreed to blow its steam whistle as an alarm. An American La France motor-driven fire engine was purchased for \$10,000 in 1922 eliminating the practice of sometimes stopping and asking passing vehicles to unhitch their horses to pull the fire wagon. In 1923 the Ladies Auxiliary was formed to provide support and fundraising assistance to Protection Company No.1. In 1983, School No. 8 was purchased for \$1 and the school was torn down to make way for a modern \$600,000 fire house. Dedicated on June 15, 1985, the new building boasts three bays, a meeting room with kitchen facilities and a day room for fire department members, along with other amenities. Today the Protection Fire Company No.1, 420 Smith Street, Fire District No. 4, with their Ladies Auxiliary, continues to protect the citizens of Keasbey.



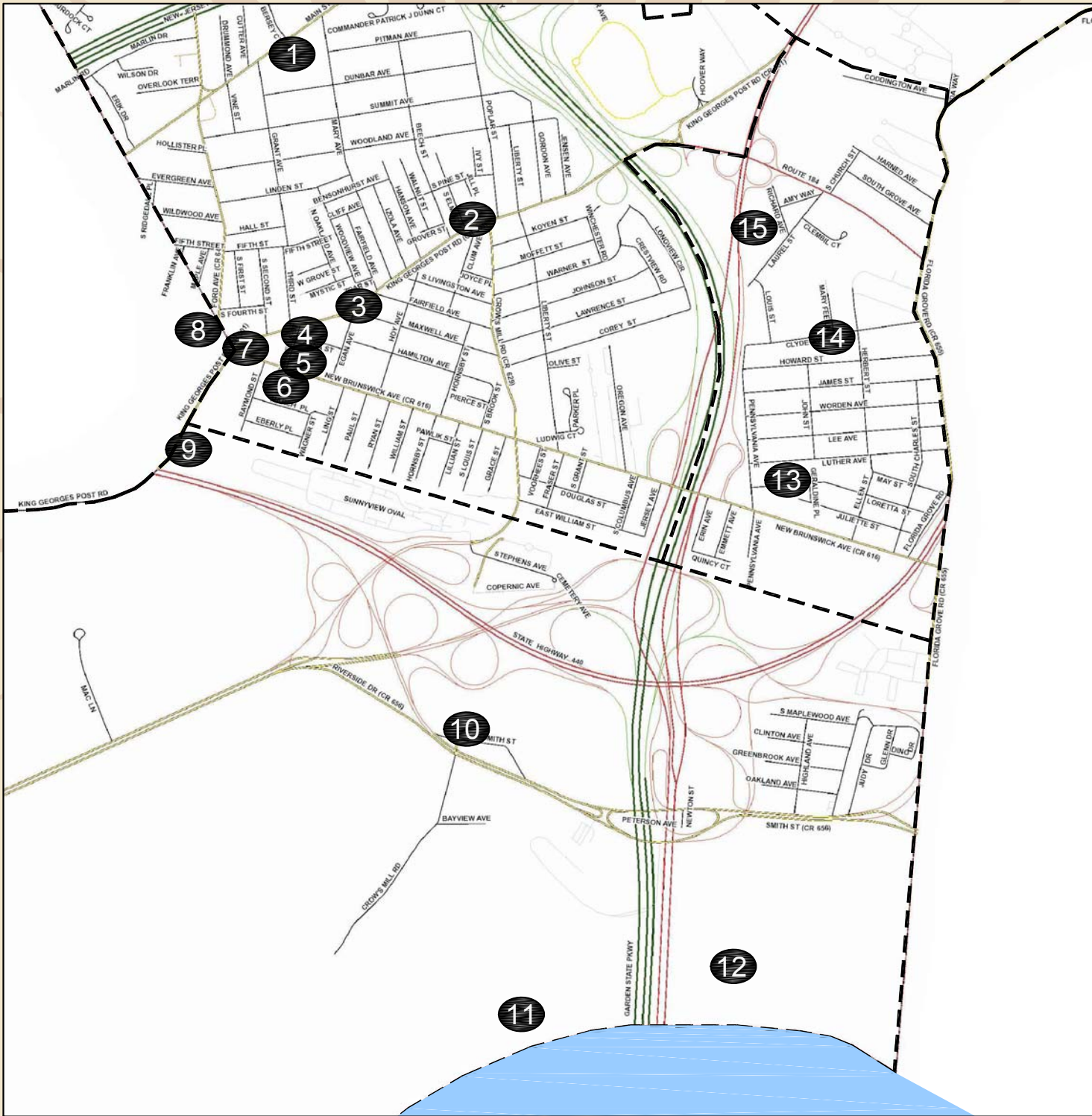
11 Carborundum Company

Founded in 1891 in Pennsylvania, Carborundum evolved into a global company creating silicon carbide crystals and aluminum oxide and using them to manufacture a variety of industrial products. In 1920, the company paid \$420,000 at a public sale for the Keasbey land, buildings and machinery of the Didier-March company, a kiln manufacturer whose U.S. holdings were seized by the Alien Property Custodian during World War I. Carborundum was active in the local community. They donated to charities, supported civic initiatives and sponsored a company baseball team that played in a very competitive league against teams such as the Perth Amboy Hat Workers, Keasbey's Firemen, Raritan Copper Works and National Fire Proofing among others. The baseball team's successes and failures, along with those of the company bowling team, were regularly reported in the sport section of the local newspapers. Carborundum often provided lifetime employment for many area residents. In 1996, the plant was acquired by Saint-Gobain Industrial Ceramics who closed the factory for good in 1999. Today a dirt recycling facility occupies the spot but the Carborundum sign is still visible from the Garden State Parkway and Route 9 bridges.



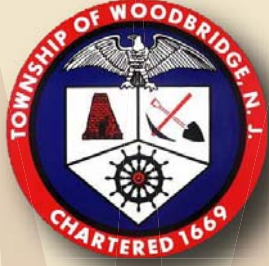
12 National Fire Proofing Company (NATCO)

In 1901 National Fire Proofing Company of Pittsburgh, PA acquired part of Edward M. Keasbey's Raritan Hollow and Porous Brick Company holdings. The company, located on what is now known as Smith Street, manufactured hollow tile and other clay products. NATCO drew national attention in November 1908, when 1500 workers at the Keasbey plant went on strike. Low wages were the principle issue but the laborers also accused Management of bringing in Slavs to work the three factory plants and of abuses relating to company housing and company stores. The strike soon became riotous and New Jersey Governor John Franklin Fort called in the National Guard. Seven strikers were killed and martial law was declared. Local Polish and Hungarian priests preached peace and urged the men to return to work by telling them that the company promised to raise their wages further when "times warranted it." The strike was eventually settled and by the early 1920s National Fire Proofing was considered the largest manufacturer of structural clay products in the world. Crippled by the stock market crash of 1929, the publi-



Woodbridge Township Historic Preservation Commission

Tour Map of Historic Sites



cally traded company closed their Raritan and Amboy works in 1930 and operated the Standard plant only sporadically. In 1936, NATCO made a deal with the Woodbridge Town Council in exchange for delinquent tax forgiveness to reopen the Raritan plant and hire back at least 100 men. Although NATCO never fully regained its previous industry dominance, the company continued to flourish and provide employment into the 1960s

Hopelawn

Hopelawn, the smallest of all of Woodbridge Township's sections, only occupies 0.4 square miles. Hopelawn evolved from Hope's Lawn, for Luther Hope, a gentleman who farmed the grassy meadows in the 1800s. Prior to Mr. Hope's tenancy, the area between Fords, Woodbridge Proper and Perth Amboy was called Allendale/Ellendale Terrace. Streets are named for each of Luther Hope's 16 children. Many early residents of Hopelawn were European immigrants. Since Hopelawn was so small and so close to Perth Amboy, many of the immigrants looked to the neighboring towns for churches and social activities for their respective ethnic groups. That tradition continues today. Many Hopelawn residents were employed in the clay mines and factories in Keasbey and Fords.

Wearing their distinctive maroon and grey uniforms, the semi-pro football team, The Greyhounds, were the pride of Hopelawn in the 1930s and 1940s. Although the community could not support the amenities available to other area teams (the Greyhounds changed at the fire house and traveled to games on the back of a coal truck), their fierce play resulted in epic clashes with Woodbridge's Golden Bears. World War II and the draft ended the Greyhounds' run and after the war some of the returning players ended up joining the rival, but better funded, Golden Bears. This hotbed of competition produced some of the Township's most notable athletes including NFL Hall-of-Famer Lou Creekmur who was born in Hopelawn.

In the summer of 1941, on August 24, a funnel twister swept through the town, destroying fifty-seven houses. The path of destruction was four miles long and a quarter mile wide. Thankfully, no one was killed.

Despite its small size, Hopelawn residents have long had a strong community identity. The neighborhood, first anchored by School No. 10 and Hopelawn Library and now by the Hopelawn Volunteer Engine Co, the VFW and the First Aid Squad, still retains a distinct character.



13 Hopelawn Volunteer Engine Company No.1

Hopelawn Engine Company No.1 was established December, 1914 and its current building at 127 Loretta Street was constructed in 1921. The first headquarters was in a barber shop on Florida Grove Road. Until 1916, buckets were used as part of the firefighting equipment. A manually operated bell on the side of the Hope House on Florida Grove Road was part of the local alarm system. In addi-

tion to the Engine Co., Hopelawn is also served by the Hopelawn First Aid Squad, 25 May Street, established in 1937. The squad eventually merged with the Woodbridge Township Ambulance and Rescue Squad. Today, both organizations continue to ably serve the residents of Hopelawn.



14 Hopelawn School No. 10

A 1912 appeal from the parents of Ellendale Terrace (Hopelawn) for a local school resulted in the Board of Education leasing a building and opening a school in 1913. Within a year the location proved unsuitable because the building was impossible to heat and school enrollment had outgrown the facilities. In 1914 a new building, at 52 Clyde Avenue, opened to great fanfare. And in 1914, Miss Mary Fee, a native of Keasbey, graduate of Woodbridge High School and New Jersey State Normal School (now The College of New Jersey), was hired as a helper at the Hopelawn School at a salary of \$2.00/day. In 1919, Miss Fee was made Principal – and her salary was raised to \$1,200/year. Mary Fee helmed School No. 10 for 50 years until her retirement in 1969. Hundreds of Hopelawn children were educated, motivated and counseled by Miss Fee and her teachers. The school closed in the early 1970s as a result of decreasing enrollment. The educational and cultural experience for Hopelawn residents was further advanced when the Hopelawn Library was incorporated in 1943. Located in the lower level of School No. 10, and initially stocked by donations from residents and other Township libraries, the Hopelawn reading room became a branch of the Woodbridge Public Library system in 1964. Mrs. Mary Stankewicz headed the Branch and encouraged Hopelawn readers from before the library's inclusion in the system through its closure in 1992.

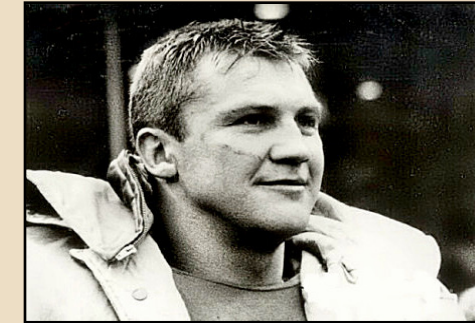
In the mid 1990s the building was sold and today provides worship and instructional space for the Full Gospel Galilee Assembly Church, supporting the Korean Christian community.



15 Majestic Lanes

The popular bowling alley that attracted both avid and casual bowlers from around Central Jersey, laid claim to its place in local history in 1956. On October 17, Majestic Lanes part-owner Morris (Moishe) Shihar greeted Senator John F. Kennedy, his old war buddy, when he dropped by after a political event. The two had first met during extensive training at the PT (Patrol Torpedo) base. Later both

were deployed to the Pacific Ocean Theater of Operations and, on that fateful night in August 1943, Quartermaster First Class Shihar was standing watch on his boat about 20 yards astern of Lieut. Kennedy's ship when PT-109 was sliced through by a Japanese destroyer. Kennedy's heroism in saving his surviving crewmates cemented Shihar's admiration and affection. During the visit to Hopelawn, the two reminisced about their experiences, the friends they had lost and those who had made it home. As the Senator left, Mr. Shihar commented "There goes your next president." Four years later, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was elected the 35th President of the United States. Opened in 1952, Majestic Lanes, 525 Route 9N, Hopelawn, is still a thriving bowling spot.



Lou Creekmur

Born in Hopelawn in 1927, Lou Creekmur was a 1944 graduate of Woodbridge High School where he was a stand-out on the football field. He attended the College of William & Mary in Virginia from 1944-1949. His All-American collegiate career was interrupted by a stint in the U.S. Army from 1945-1946. He was first drafted by the Detroit Lions and the Philadelphia Eagles in 1948 but opted to stay in school, ultimately earning a BS in Physical Education and a MA in Education. Selected by the Lions in 1950, Creekmur played primarily offensive guard and tackle. Creekmur won All-Pro honors seven times and played in eight Pro Bowls. His Lions defeated the Cleveland Browns in 1952, 1953 and 1957 to win three NFL Championships. He retired at the end of the 1959 season. Creekmur was voted into the NFL Hall of Fame in 1996. Lou Creekmur died in 2009 and is remembered as one of the most dominant offensive linemen in the NFL.

Churches and Cemeteries

In addition to Our Lady of Peace Church, Fords is home to many houses of worship that serve a multi-cultural community. First Presbyterian Church of Fords, at 97 Hoy Avenue, was built in 1925 for the Slovak Presbyterian community. Most of the services were conducted in Slovak until 1961. Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 28 S. Fourth Street, began in 1909 and was founded primarily to serve the Danish immigrant community. The current church opened in 1940. Other churches include St. John's Episcopal Church (1920), St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church (1917), and Grace Lutheran Church (1958). Two Fords cemeteries also illustrate the community's eclectic population -- Our Lady of Hungary Cemetery and Hebrew Fraternity Cemetery. In Hopelawn, Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints provide worship spaces for the Catholic and Mormon communities. Hopelawn is also home to the Ukrainian Catholic Cemetery and the Calvary Cemetery of the Magyar Reformed Church. The Saint Stephens cemetery, in Keasbey, provided consecrated burial ground for the Polish parish of St. Stephens, Perth Amboy.

Fords
Crossroads distinguished this section of Woodbridge Township from its earliest history. Native Americans created paths along hunting and trading routes and during fishing season traversed the area on their way to fish and clam at the mouth of the Raritan River. These trails became paths then roads as European colonists arrived and the heavily traveled Woodbridge Turnpike, now Main Street, and the Amboy Turnpike, which split into King Georges Post Road and New Brunswick Avenue at Fords Corner, provided junctions for travelers and economic opportunities for settlers. During the Revolution, British and patriot militias alike made use of roads going from Piscataway and Bonhamtown to Woodbridge and Perth Amboy.

The area was also called Sand Hills, Dreary Sandhills, Fairfield, and Sling Taile, Slingtail Crossing and Slingtaile Brook for the local stream, before Fords, derived from Ford's Corner, became the standard name. Prime farmland and access to markets attracted Fords' initial homesteaders and, as the remunerative potential of rich clay deposits in the area was recognized, clay mining and its manufacture drew immigrants to the area. Irish immigrants were joined by Scandinavians from Denmark, Sweden and Norway. German and European Jewish families put down roots. And political upheaval and economic hardships in their homelands brought Hungarians, Poles, Slavs, Russians and Ukrainians to Fords. Businesses and houses of worship evolved to serve the needs of these ethnic groups who brought their traditions and religions to the area.

Between 1900 and 1930, trolley lines connected Fords, Hopelawn and Keasbey with Woodbridge, Perth Amboy, Sewaren and beyond. Built by Raritan Traction Company, the local trolleys took workers to their factories, students to the High School in Woodbridge Proper, day-trippers to Boynton Beach and enabled customers to patronize businesses out of walking range.

Laboring on the farms and in the factories, clay mines and businesses of Fords was hard work but many residents made time for relaxation as well. Picnicking at Varady's Grove or riding horses along the trails in Fords Park provided opportunities for the more demure but sports fever really defined the town. Residents played on myriad factory and recreation club baseball and bowling teams and rivalries were fierce. Rooting for the local semi-pro football teams was a sport in itself and the local newspapers devoted pages to reporting on the outcomes of events. This hotbed of competition produced some of the Township's most notable athletes including the Pittsburgh Pirates catcher and GM Hardy Peterson who was born in Fords.

Today, the district has grown to include Latin, Indian and Chinese Americans residents, and new businesses and enduring institutions blend to make Fords a diverse and vibrant community.



The Old Stone Cottage



1 The Cutter House

The Cutters were among the first European families to settle in Woodbridge Township and, through their vast land holdings, saw mills and later investments in clay mines and factories, they became one of the most respected. Sometime between 1690 and 1710 the Cutter farmhouse was built on the trail that would become Main Street. It is not certain whether parts of the original structure were included when the home was remodeled and enlarged in the 1840s. A stone barn on the property was later converted for residential use and during the 1840s renovations a second story was added for servant use. Today 893 Main Street is called "The Old Stone Cottage." The farm covered many acres between Ford and Mary Avenues and south to Woodland or Linden Streets. Over the years parcels of the property surrounding the house were sold and acreage subdivided. Later owners, however, continued the farming tradition and older Fords residents still remember buying eggs from the Alberts as late as the 1950s. Other owners included the Van Voorhees, Anderson and Solowski families. Today the Cutter House, at 891 Main Street, remains a private residence.



2 Fords Fire Company No. 1

Fords Fire Company No.1, now located at 667 King Georges Road, was founded in September 1911 by 22 men who gathered in Mel Clum's General Store at Fords Corner. The men talked about the construction of a new factory in the area and the horrors of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in New York City and came to the conclusion that Fords needed a fire company. After pooling their money, the men paid \$125 to the Jensen family for a lot on Corrielle Street. In 1912, the fire department bought a horse-drawn vehicle from the City of Perth Amboy for \$10 and purchased a Stutz fire truck in 1934. By 1967, the Fords Fire Company had expanded into a new firehouse on King Georges Post Road. The new firehouse included two truck bays, sleeping quarters, alarm room, meeting room, offices, and a recreation room. An integral part of the Fords community, the men and Ladies Auxiliary of Fords Fire Company No.1 continue to educate local children about fire prevention and organize events to raise money to support community initiatives.



3 The Veterans of Foreign Wars Memorial

The meridian at the intersection of King Georges Road and Egan Avenue is known as Memorial Triangle. On May 25, 1950, during a moving ceremony for the dedication and unveiling of the Fords Veterans of Foreign Wars monument, Gold Star Mother, Mrs. Helen Rebeck, raised the national flag and a message was read from Chief of Staff General Omar Bradley. In his keynote address, Col. Byron S. Patton expressed the Country's sympathies for those members of "the armed forces who gave their lives for the preservation of freedom for which this country stands and for those loved ones which they left behind, that they may enjoy the freedom for which they consecrated their lives." A project spearheaded by the Fords VFW 6090 to honor the local citizens who gave their lives during World War II, the efforts to raise money to erect the monument ultimately engaged the whole community. The inscription reads *To These Honored Men—Fords Pays Everlasting Tribute*. Near the World War II Memorial is also a memorial for all the men from Fords, Hopelawn and Keasbey who fought in World War I, sponsored by the Lions Club of Fords and dedicated on November 9, 1929.



4 The Woman's Club of Fords

The Woman's Club of Fords, 11 Corrielle Street, was founded October 1920. Originally proposed as a local branch of the Woodbridge Woman's Club, the Fords chapter became independent in 1924, incorporated in 1925, as part of the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs. From the very beginning, the dedicated women strove "to provide an organization through which women from all walks of life, putting aside personal prejudices, may work toward community betterment." A principle focus was to bring a library to the residents of Fords and in January of 1924 they succeeded. For sixteen years the library had no permanent location and was housed at several rented locations and staffed by volunteers. The old chapel of the Our Redeemer Lutheran Church of Fords was donated and moved to Corrielle Street in 1940, to be used by the Woman's Club for a town library and club house. The Club supported and maintained the library until the establishment of a township-wide, professionally staffed, municipal library system in 1964. The new system assumed control

Woodbridge Township Historic Preservation Commission

The mission of the Woodbridge Township Historic Preservation Commission is to inform, educate, advise and unite public officials and the community at large as an advocate for the preservation of the rich history of Woodbridge Township.

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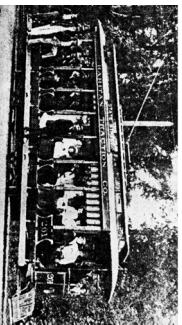
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"All Aboard The Amboy Line"



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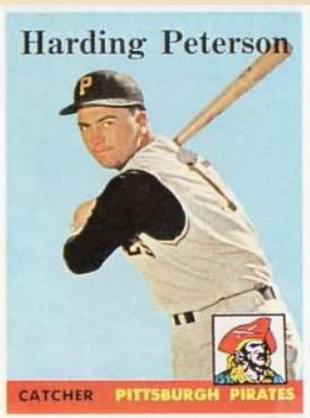
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and more parishioners at mass. An annex building was added in 1941 and expanded in 1951. Construction for a new church began in 1953 next to the original structure and was completed by 1955. The old church is now used as Our Lady of Peace School. In 1962, the convent was built to house the nuns who taught in the school and served the parish. Our Lady of Peace community continues as a religious and educational anchor in Fords.



9 Fords Porcelain Works

Fords Porcelain Works was located at 950 King Georges Post Road, next to the Lehigh Valley railroad tracks. Owner and founder Abel Hansen, born in Denmark in 1863, opened the Fords Porcelain Works in 1906. Fords Porcelain made a full line of sanitary products including single and double laundry trays, slop and kitchen sinks, pantry silks, leg lavatories, drinking fountains, bath tubs, shower receptors and toilets. By 1927, the Fords location occupied four acres, almost 140,000 square feet of floor space and employed 100 skilled workmen. Many Fords school-boys were employed to construct the wooden crates and boxes for shipping the products. Hansen also established and was president of the Fords National Bank, located just a few blocks from the Porcelain Works at Fords Corner. The growing community of Fords centered on the Porcelain Works and other industries. However, by the 1960s, Fords Porcelain Works was no more and its place in the community was supplanted by Heyden Chemical and Catalin Corporation. Today the building is unused.



Harding William Peterson

Born in 1929, Fords native Harding Peterson graduated Woodbridge High School and went on to earn a varsity letter and All-American honors playing baseball at Rutgers University. Sometimes called "Pete" by his teammates, "Hardy" was Peterson's enduring nickname. Drafted as a catcher by the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1950, Peterson spent time in the minors and in the U.S. Army before making the big leagues in 1955. His playing career was cut short after a dramatic collision at home plate in 1956 resulted in a severe fracture of his throwing (right) arm. He retired as a player in 1959 after several attempts to over-

organizations in Fords and Perth Amboy held a benefit performance of the first "Danish Talking Picture in New Jersey," *Sol Overn Danmark*. Unfortunately, the theatre closed in the 1970s. While the building still exists in the heart of Fords, there are no plans for a renovation.



7 Fords Corner

Fords Corner is located at the junction of New Brunswick Avenue (Amboy Turnpike) and King Georges Post Road (King's Highway.) In 1686 John Ford made his home at this locale and over the years his family built homes, farms and at least one inn around and near the central intersection. This crossroads became known as Ford's Corner, Fords Corners and then, simply, Fords. During the Revolutionary War, Fords Corner was a well-known destination since roads from Piscataway, Bonhamtown, Perth Amboy and Woodbridge Proper all converged at this point. Patriots met at the Inn of Samuel Ford at the Corner and the Jersey Blues militia used it as a rendezvous point. Over the years, inns and other gathering places stood at the corner. In 1910, the Clum building, housing a general store and the Fords Post Office, occupied the site. The store was converted to the First National Bank in 1919; and when the bank was remodeled in 1954, the Clum building was incorporated into the new structure. Recently, the First National Bank building was demolished and a strip mall now occupies that space. Fords Corner remains a heavily traveled intersection.



8 Our Lady of Peace Church and School

Although Our Lady of Peace Church and School, 601 Amboy Avenue, lie just over the border in adjoining Edison, Our Lady of Peace has long served the Fords community. In the late nineteenth century, many Catholics moved to the area and needed a place to worship. At first they worshiped at St. James in Woodbridge or St. Mary's in Perth Amboy. Our Lady of Peace was founded in 1919 to provide a local church. The first mass was celebrated at Fairfield School No.7. Until 1927-1928 when a combination church and school was built for the parishioners, church activities were conducted in a Quonset hut owned by the Knight of Columbus. The parish school opened in 1930. In the 1950s, Our Lady of Peace parish outgrew its church and expanded their buildings to accommodate more students at the school

and management of the Fords Library which moved from Corrielle Street to 558 New Brunswick Avenue. In 1971, a new Fords Branch Library opened at 211 Ford Avenue. While for their first 40 years the Fords library was the Club's primary focus, they also supported and coordinated myriad community projects including organizing charity events during the Great Depression and selling war bonds during World War II. Today, the Woman's Club of Fords remains an active part of the community.



5 St. John's First Aid Squad

St. John's First Aid Squad, 17 Corrielle Street, began in 1943 when Reverend George Boyd of St. Peter's Church donated a 1937 model ambulance to St. John's Episcopal Church of Fords. The church membership was not large enough to staff a first aid squad by itself so volunteers from the entire community were sought. Fourteen men responded and formed the St. John's First Aid Squad. Most of the original equipment was donated by the volunteers. The first meetings of the squad were held in St. John's Episcopal Church and thus, when the organization received their charter from the Township, the first aid squad took St. John's for their name. In the early years, meetings took place at St. John's or at the Fire House. St. John's First Aid Squad is still an active organization in Fords and hard-working volunteers continue to serve the Fords area. The current headquarters for St. John's Fire Aid Squad was completed in 1951 and remains the headquarters for the St. John's First Aid Squad today.



6 Fords Playhouse Theatre

Fondly remembered, Fords Playhouse Theatre, at 537 New Brunswick Avenue, was a source of entertainment for residents of Fords and surrounding communities. The theatre was funded by contractor/builder, Mr. Overgaard with plans designed by J.K. Jensen. Opened in the fall of 1928, the theatre brought many of the most popular motion pictures and serials of the day to the local population. A sample lineup from March of 1936 includes such cinematic extravaganzas as: "The Great Impersonation" (a murder mystery), "Captain's Blood" (an Errol Flynn movie), and "Adventures of Rex and Rinty" (a cartoon serial). The Theatre had Ladies' Nights, giveaways, and, as a community institution, hosted fundraisers like the one in June of 1937 when Danish

WOODBRIDGE

Historic Tour of

Volume V

Fords, Hopelawn, Keasbey:
Three Towns -- One Story

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