

## Historical & Cultural Features of Clinton Township ~

Some important, but non-environmental elements of the Clinton Township NRI, are historic and cultural features. As these features are often protected by federal, state or local regulation, they can serve as a constraint to development. In addition, Historic Sites, historic districts, and historic corridors all contribute to an enhanced environment. The following section of the NRI includes information about the area's earliest inhabitants, as well as narrative and location information noting the historic features of the Township.

### **Much of the history of an area finds expression in the sites and structures of the times, and these sites and structures are elements of the areas quality of life.**

#### ~ Communities of Place, the NJ Development and Redevelopment Plan, 1992 ~

#### **Early Inhabitants**

The Lenape Indians called New Jersey "Scheyechebi" or in the English translation "Land Along the Water". Unfortunately, little remains of the Lenape culture. Nearly 100 Revolutionary War battles were fought in New Jersey as Washington's army crisscrossed New Jersey to intentionally confuse the British in Philadelphia and New York (NJ State Planning Commission, SDRP, 1992).

According to local historic sources, the first known inhabitants of the area were the Lenape ("original people") Indians. Although the settlement pattern was sparse in the area, local documents note some very significant Native American Sites. For instance, Round Valley was a place for hunting and gathering as well as a burial ground for Tribal chiefs. Archeological evidence and local place-names are still in use (e.g., Raritan, Musconetcong, Minisink).

A survey conducted between 1912 and 1915 noted four-hundred and sixty-two Native American camps within Hunterdon County with principal concentrations in the Delaware River Valley, Flemington area, Oldwick area and the High Bridge area (Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission, 1990). The articles found (including arrow and spear points, knives, scrapers, hammers, axes, net sinkers and pottery) tell us much about the daily habits and customs of the Lenape. For instance, many articles have been unearthed along river and tributary corridors.

One can therefore determine the location of several major and minor Lenape travel corridors. An important trail was the *Raritan path* linking the Raritan River to Bound Brook to the forks of the Raritan leading ultimately to the forks of the Delaware at Easton. This important trade route passed right through High Bridge and was used later by early explorers (NJ State Planning Commission, SDRP, 1992).

With regard to local populations, archeological evidence shows a vibrant population before the explorers and colonists arrived, however writings of the time noted a comparatively small population in what is now Hunterdon County. The writings note that much smaller populations of indigenous people existed in East Jersey than in other neighboring Atlantic Coastal colonies. The population figures range from 800 to several thousand depending on the perspective of the writer living in the area in the late sixteen hundreds.

An archeological study in the early nineteen hundreds lists 462 native, prehistoric sites in Hunterdon County. The “Cultural Resources Investigation of Windy Acres Development” (Richard Grubb and Associates, Inc., August 2000) noted a prehistoric camp, procurement camp, and lithic workshop in the vicinity of the Windy Acres Development. The study also states that native sites were plentiful at the base of the Cushtunk Mountain range during the late Archaic Period or approximately 9000 years ago. Currently, approximately eighty-two documented artifacts have been recovered from the Windy Acres site and on the south bank of the South Branch Rockaway Creek. The artifacts include projectile points, stone knives, multipurpose tools, and hammerstones.

### **The Early Explorers and European Colonists**

Some of the earliest written records describing the Hunterdon County area were those of Sir Edmond Ployden, recorded by Beauchamp Plantagenet in the early 1600s. Ployden traveled with the Lenape for seven years, exploring land that is now part of Hunterdon County. He and other explorers from England were looking to colonize the area with people loyal to the Church of England and opposed to the new democratic political philosophies arising in England. Some historians believe that Ployden’s writings describe Round Valley (Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission, 1990).

The West India Company soon followed with local investigations just above the Delaware Water Gap in the Pahaquarry Copper mines. Quakers and additional explorers from England soon followed. The English decided early on to acknowledge that the land was owned by the indigenous inhabitants, therefore purchasing land for very small amounts and “thus extinguishing the Indian title without trouble or hard feelings.” In 1664 the English (King Charles II) seized the area, along with the rest of “New Netherlands” from the Dutch. The land lying between the Delaware River and the Connecticut River was deeded to James, Duke of York. The Duke deeded land that is now New Jersey, to Sir John Berkely and Sir George Cateret. Ten years later in 1674, the land was granted to John Fenwick who eventually gave the land to William Penn and two other Quakers. In 1676, the Province of New Jersey was divided into East Jersey and West Jersey. The Quaker proprietors began governing east and west Jersey in 1680. Most of the land in what is now Hunterdon County was divided into farmsteads, and the wilderness was transformed into an agricultural colony farmed predominantly by Quakers (Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission, 1990).

---

From 1704 to 1724 a large influx of Dutch, and German settlers arrived by way of the Raritan River and from the south. By the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, Germans were in the majority with settlements occurring in Stockton, Lambertville, Hopewell, Amwell, Pleasant Run and Three Bridges. In the early eighteenth century, a group of affluent families formed the West Jersey Society and purchased 4,600 square miles of land. This purchase included what is presently Clinton Township. James Alexander, father of Lord Sterling of Revolutionary War fame, purchased 10,000 acres from the society and made his home at Round Valley. The German settlers purchased parcels of land from the West Jersey Society and established family farms (Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission, 1990).

### **The American Revolution and More Recent History**

Clashes occurred during the American Revolutionary War where some residents (“Tories”), were in agreement with the idea of a United States free from European influence, while others were loyal (“Loyalists”) to the English. For example, *Beaver Brook Farm* in Annandale village was the home of a prominent patriot, Captain Thomas Jones. Folklore sites Captain Jones as one of the local militia officers who gathered and hid the vessels used by General George Washington to cross the Delaware River from Pennsylvania to Trenton in 1776. Captain Jones’ tavern was located on the New Brunswick-Easton Turnpike, (“Jersey Turnpike”) which was the main route across the state in the 1700s. In 1841 local residents met at Jones’ tavern to form Clinton Township and its first government. The population of the Township was 2,000 in 1841 (Marsh, Clinton Township Historical Association, 2001).

In the 1840’s there were numerous mills and hamlets (planned settlements) along the South Branch of the Raritan River and its tributaries. The Jersey Central railroad was completed through the Township to what is now Annandale Station in 1852, bringing growth and new industry. It was on the Jersey Central line that a funeral train carried the body of General George W. Taylor back to the Township in 1862. Taylor, commander of the First Jersey Brigade and Hunterdon’s only Civil War General, was killed by Stonewall Jackson’s troops at the Second Battle of Manassas (Marsh, Clinton Township Historical Association, 2001).



*Annandale Historic District, West Street*

Clinton Township continued as an agrarian community through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and well into the 20<sup>th</sup>. Mid 20<sup>th</sup> century brought major highways and the residential development of farmland. At the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were 170 farms in the Township. One hundred years later there were fewer than 10 operating farms. The Township switched from a three-member Township Committee to a Faulkner Act mayor-council government in 1974, with four elected Council members and a directly elected mayor (Marsh, Clinton Township Historical Association, 2001).

### **Existing Historic Features**

There are numerous Historic Sites, Historic Districts, and Historic Corridors located in Clinton Township (Map 12). The map illustrates the 6 Historic Districts, 72 state registered Historic Places, and over 200 locally significant Historic Sites. The Township's list includes those historic farmsteads, dwellings, and structures over 50 years old that exhibit historic significance. The sites on the Township list reflect information obtained from both the Hunterdon County and the Clinton Township Historic Commissions:

There are six (6) state registered *Historic Districts* in Clinton Township. A Historic District is comprised of one or more Historic Sites that are united historically. A district may also comprise individual elements that are geographically separated. However, historic association must link them. The state registered historic districts in Clinton Township are described below and located on Map 12:

- **Allerton Historic District-** This community is located at the intersection of County Route 623 and Allerton Road. It was named for the Aller family, which maintained mills there as early as 1834. In 1860, the settlement was called Allerville. Eight years later the town constructed a Baptist Church, steam sawmill, store, chair factory, and a few dwellings.
- **Annandale Historic District-** This settlement is located in the center of Clinton Township (State Route 31 and County Roads 633 & 626). This village grew as Clinton Station, a depot of the New Jersey Central Railroad. Named for a town in Scotland, the population reached 380 people by 1880. A fairly dense and well-defined village, it is composed of 12 blocks and approximately 150 structures. The one church in town is the Reformed Church, located on the corner of Beaver Avenue and West Street. The vast majority of the structures are single-family, detached homes dating from 1840-1910.
- **The Cokesbury Historic District-** This district is located on the boundary line between Tewksbury and Clinton Townships on County Route 639. There was an iron furnace constructed in 1754. Local historians claim the town was named after two Methodist bishops, Coke and Ashbury. By 1881, Cokesbury included a hotel, store, blacksmith shop, wheelwright shop, two churches and fourteen dwellings.

- **The Hamden Historic District-** Hamden is located in the southwestern part of Clinton Township along the South Branch Raritan River, just west of Allerton Road. The district was part of the 100 acre Hamden tract purchased by Philip and John Grandin in approximately 1760. The 1873 maps show a store, blacksmith shop, three mills, and five dwellings.
- **Potterstown Historic District-** The Potterstown Historic District is located on the border between Clinton and Readington Townships, off U. S. Route 22. A map dated 1872 indicates over a dozen dwellings and a store existed in this section of Clinton.
- **The Turnpike Historic District-** This district is a small village sandwiched between U.S. Route 22 and Interstate 78 in the center of Clinton Township. It contains an outstanding farm complex including individual structures, a primary dwelling unit, tenant house, out-kitchen, springhouse, frame wagon house and a barn.

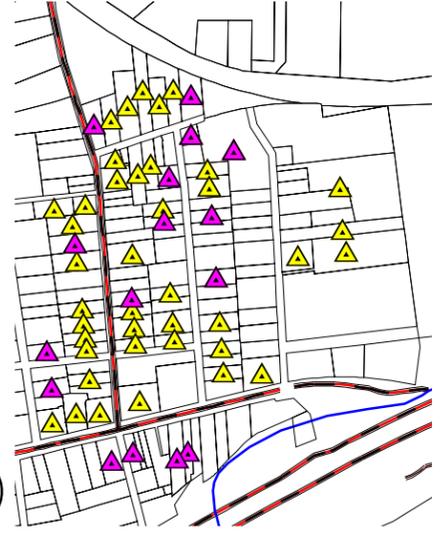
State registered Historic Sites refer to any real property, man-made structure, natural object or configuration or any portion or group of the foregoing formally designated by the state, county or municipality or documented as being of historical, archeological, cultural, scenic or architectural significance (NJ State Planning Commission, 1992).

The state registered and locally significant Historic Sites in Clinton Township include dwellings, farmsteads, and structures throughout the Township. These sites are located on the following map (Map 12) and are listed on an associated Geographic Information System (GIS) database table. Please contact the Clinton Township Planning Office for the associated database and the Clinton Township Historical Commission and the Hunterdon County Historical Commission for more detailed descriptive information.

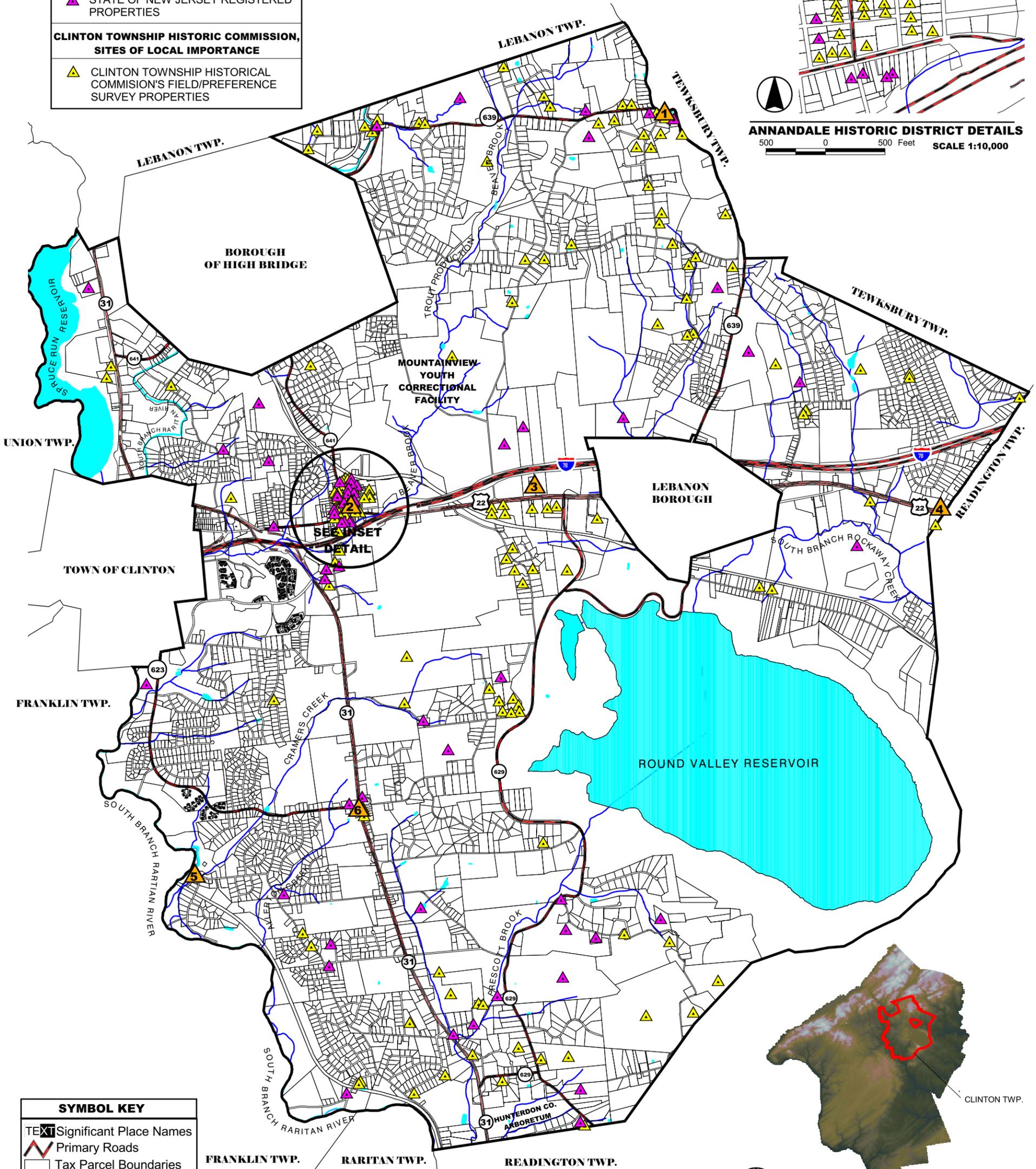


*The Immaculate Conception Church, From Old Allerton Road*

HISTORIC RESOURCES	
<b>STATE REGISTERED HISTORIC DISTRICTS</b>	
	1 - COKESBURY DISTRICT
	2 - ANNANDALE DISTRICT
	3 - TURNPIKE DISTRICT
	4 - POTTERSTOWN DISTRICT
	5 - HAMDEN DISTRICT
	6 - ALLERTON DISTRICT
<b>STATE REGISTERED HISTORIC STRUCTURES</b>	
	STATE OF NEW JERSEY REGISTERED PROPERTIES
<b>CLINTON TOWNSHIP HISTORIC COMMISSION, SITES OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE</b>	
	CLINTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION'S FIELD/PREFERENCE SURVEY PROPERTIES



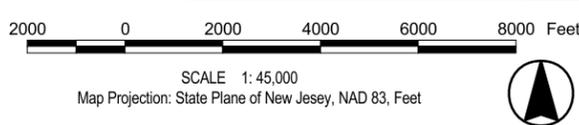
**ANNANDALE HISTORIC DISTRICT DETAILS**  
500 0 500 Feet SCALE 1:10,000



SYMBOL KEY	
	Significant Place Names
	Primary Roads
	Tax Parcel Boundaries
	Lakes
	Networked Streams

**HUNTERDON COUNTY**  
30000 0 30000 Feet SCALE 1:800,000  
Study Area

**CLINTON TOWNSHIP, NRI, 2001**



Historic Locations generated from tabulated information, supplied by Clinton Township Historic Commission and State registers, Hunterdon County, New Jersey.  
Scale: NA  
New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, GIS data Web Site Downloads State Municipalities of New Jersey  
Scale 1:100,000

NOTES:  
1. DATA ACCURACY IS LIMITED TO THE ACCURACY AND SCALE OF THE ORIGINAL DATA SOURCES.  
2. THESE MAPS ARE PART OF A RESOURCE INVENTORY CONDUCTED FOR CLINTON TOWNSHIP AND SHOULD BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE COMPILED TEXT.

**MAP 12: HISTORIC RESOURCES**

DRAWN BY:	KJM
CHECKED BY:	CK, SF
Project No.: 215.01	

