

Green Link

Monmouth County
Park System



An Employee &
Volunteer Newsletter
of the Monmouth County
Park System



Thompson Park

March/April 2010

Now, That's the Spirit!

A&D STAFF RETURN TO "NEW" OFFICES IN TIME FOR HALLOWEEN



Beautifully Restored: The A&D building, after its make-over. Note Thompson Park's signature white siding with green shutters.

There was nothing spooky about the new and improved A&D building this past October, except for the costumes that staff wore soon after they moved back in. The A&D staff returned to their offices in one of the oldest buildings in the Park System at Thompson Park, which underwent a much-needed structural renovation in 2008/2009. Prior to that, they were temporarily housed in the former Central Supply buildings for about 16 months.

A Long, Distinguished Past-But No Ghosts!

Originally built by Thomas Lloyd in 1786 as a residence for his farm, this building became part of Brookdale Farm (a horse-training facility) in 1870, and was used as a residence for the head horse trainer. When horse operations wound down after WWII, Geraldine Thompson rented it out as apartments. The Park System also used it as staff apartments after acquiring the property in the late 1960s, finally converting it to offices

for the A&D staff in the late 1970s. Today, the building houses park planners, land acquisition and information specialists, architects, historians, engineers, ecologists and support staff.

According to Park System Historian Gail Hunton (who also works here), it is interesting to note that even after all its different former uses and this renovation, the building still has much of its original floor plan. And, Gail adds, we know this was one of the largest houses in Middletown when it was first built. How do we know this? Because the first Federal Land taxes for Middletown date back to 1798, and the records list the size of the houses.



Festive A&D staffers outside their newly renovated digs on Halloween (l to r) Chief Landscape Architect Andy North, Senior Landscape Architects Robin Ostrowski and Laura Lieneck, Assistant Civil Engineer Heng Chin, and Architect Gloria Cohen.



A scary Snape heads back inside to cast a spell on Harry Potter...check out the historic door features, finish work on the entry area, and new siding.

When you compare A&D's original 4,631 sq. ft. building, a former residence built in 1786, to the 17,500 sq. ft. original Thompson estate across the way built in 1896, you can see how much house dimensions (for the wealthier classes, at least) changed over the 100 years. They got much bigger, of course.



Inside, more historic features were preserved, such as the carved glass door knobs and the old fireplace and mantle.



DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Our Second 10 Years

As we take a few moments to look back and reflect on the past, it is worth noting what we have been able to accomplish. During the park system's second decade,

1970 through 1979, eleven new park areas were added with land acquisitions adding an additional 2,409 acres.

- In 1973, Shark River Golf Course (the former Asbury Park Golf Course) was preserved preventing its' development for housing; the donation of land from Mrs. Genevieve Tatum that led to the creation of Tatum Park, the purchase of Hartshorne Woods, the assignment of county lands to create East Freehold Showgrounds, and the purchase of Mt. Mitchill Scenic Overlook.
- In 1974, Huber Woods was donated by the Huber Family and the former Highlands Army Air Defense Site (HAADS) was transferred as an addition to Hartshorne Woods.



Former HAADS military site becomes part of newly established Hartshorne Woods Park. Center, all the white buildings/structures have since been removed, except the two gun emplacements (Battery Lewis). Back right, the former radio towers have been removed, that area is now the park's Command Loop.

- During 1977, the Park System continued to grow with acquisition of Hominy Hill Golf Course, the donation and purchase of Deep Cut Gardens, and the creation of Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park with the transfer of lands from the city of Long Branch.
- In 1979, Clayton Park and Wertz Park were acquired and by the end of that year, a total of 18 county parks and recreation sites had been permanently preserved.

Funding to acquire these areas was made possible by the Board of Chosen Freeholders, New Jersey Green Acres Program, the Federal Housing and Urban Development Open Space Program, the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, as well as through the generous donations of land from Mrs. Genevieve Tatum, the Huber Family, Mrs. Marjorie Witol (Deep Cut Gardens), and Mr. Paul and Miss Thelma Clayton.

Events & Activities of the 1970s

In 1972, Howell Park Golf Course opened to the public as the first county-owned golf course. In 1975, the Park System and the 4-H co-sponsored our first County Fair at the East Freehold Showgrounds.



Howell Park Golf Course Grand Opening in August of 1972; check out the square Park System logo on the banner!

The park system's annual income from facilities and programs had risen from \$62.21 in 1964 to \$1,551,739 dollars in 1979. Private donations had risen to \$6,500 dollars for the year 1979.

The "can do" attitude of Visitor Services staff brought on a variety of new programs, many focused on introducing and developing lifetime recreational activities and skills for participants. By 1970, our programs included nature walks, recreation clinics, outdoor study groups, hikes and biking, camp fire programs at Turkey Swamp, seminars, workshops, courses, and films, as well as contests, shows and concerts. These programs were held at each of the then-established parks: Thompson, Holmdel, Shark River and Turkey Swamp Parks and Howell Park Golf Course. The Park System had also established a Botany Club for adults, canoe trips, and the annual Manasquan River Canoe Race.

By 1979, annual Park System attendance had reached more than 1,927,606 visits.

We are indeed fortunate to live in a county with outstanding natural and historic resources, and where our fellow residents have over the years given their time, money and land. We have been entrusted to maintain and protect these assets as part of the public's estate - Monmouth County's Best Idea.

"It is difficult to make a prediction, especially if it's into the future."

- Yogi Berra

A MEANINGFUL LEGACY

Meet the Busers, a local family with one member who has participated in our Annual Manasquan River Canoe Race more than 30 times since its inception.



Waltraut Buser started competing with her husband Rudolph during the race's third year in the early 1970s, and has missed only a few races since. She is shown here in 2007 (far right), with

her family in one of her rare years off. All four of her children and some of her grandchildren have participated in this race.



Mrs. Buser returned to the race in 2008 and competed with her eldest daughter. They won the women's tandem category!

In this anniversary year for the Park System, we celebrate Mrs. Buser's decades of dedication and wish her luck in this year's race (Sat, May 8 starting at Howell Park Golf Course, 8am.)

AROUND THE PARKS...

Craft Exhibit "Sells" Despite Thompson Park Day Cancellation

Just in time for the holidays, the Creative Arts Center staff at Thompson Park helped organize a display and sale of crafts made by students and instructors. More than 50 artists participated, and sales exceeded \$1,700—a very impressive showing since attendance was meant to coincide with Thompson Park Day, which was cancelled due to weather.



Just a sample of the many beautiful items for sale.

Visitors peruse the items on display and mingle/converse with the artists.

Walnford Hosts First Cornbread Contest, Lincroft Resident Wins

Always looking for unique ways to attract visitors, the staff at Historic Walnford hosted the site's first ever Cornbread Contest this past September. It was a great success; "lots of fun and tasty!" according to Site Supervisor, Sarah Bent.



Cornbread judges and peers take time to taste and talk.



Sarah Bent with cornbread cook and ribbon winner Nancy Tynan of Howell.



Walnford Site Supervisor Sarah Bent often adds an extra flourish to her events, and this contest was no exception. On the far right at this cornbread display table is a historic Cast Iron "Pig Pan," which Sarah used as a mold to bake her own cornbread recipe. This unique piece of kitchen-ware was purchased by Sarah's mother at a farm auction in Ohio in late 1960s early 1970s. While she wasn't sure of its intended use, she eventually found a cornbread recipe that was the correct size, and now makes it for special occasions. Sarah once saw this same pan on the Antiques Roadshow, but it stumped the show's host—so the pan's intended use still remains a mystery!

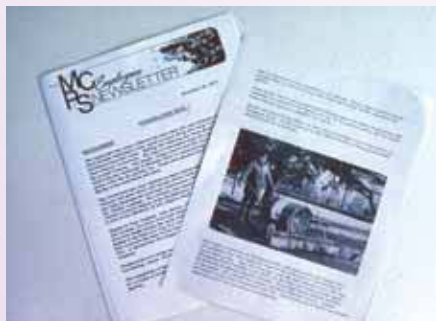
The entrant recipes were taste-tested by two categories of people—judges and peers—and the winners were (drum roll please)...

- First Place Blue Ribbon (Judge and Peer Category): Alex Ferrar of Lincroft for her Sour Cream Cornbread
- Judge's Second Place/Peer's Third Place Ribbon: Joanne Walker of Eatontown for her Sweet Breakfast Cornbread
- Peer's Second Place Ribbon went to Nancy Tynan of Howell for her Nancy's Incredible Cornbread
- Judge's Third Place Ribbon went to Joanne Walker for her Corn-Jalapeno Cornbread

'Tis the Walnford Mill Season! The gristmill re-opens for demonstrations (grinding corn into corn meal) beginning weekends, Saturday, April 2.

THEN & NOW: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

The Green Link Remember When...



In this 1973 employee newsletter, Thompson Park Foreman Jim Giglio was featured for building his own ice resurfacer for our ponds, based on a device he saw at a hockey game. Other items in the news? Trees being moved at Holmdel, fire's being put out...the ins and

outs of park operations featured prominently in the early days of this newsletter.

The Park System first began publishing its employee newsletter in the early 1970s, though it wasn't called the Green Link until 1977. Here are a few, choice excerpts of what made the "news" in years gone by, for your entertainment...

- While breaking up a fight in the main parking lot at Hartshorne Woods, a Park System Ranger had his vehicle stolen by a 15-year old boy who then flipped the truck onto its side in the woods. (Green Link, Sep/Oct 1977) *This story is unusual in that the Green Link reported on it, police-blotter style and named the Ranger. Something like this probably wouldn't get covered today.*
- The Sep/Oct 1977 Green Link ran an advertisement for the Park System Christmas Party-- a catered, semi-formal dinner (with wine, though you could bring your own liquor too!) and dance, with a band at Hominy Hill Clubhouse, all for just \$10 per person. (Note: By 1985, the price had gone up to \$18.50.)
- Under the headline, "Watches Now Tell More Than the Time," a Mar/Apr 1978 Green Link article reports on a new digital wristwatch that performs five other duties: stopwatch, alarm system, calendar, calculator and memory system. And, it costs just \$650 (stainless) or \$750 (gold-plated)!



- That same issue featured an article on "trouble-shooting" noise to maximize enjoyment of your CB radio. Remember those? A few months later, the May/June 1978 Green Link printed a list of employee CB "handles"...10-4, good buddy!



- The May/June 1978 Green Link ran a story about a string of bad weather that apparently caused a lot of trouble in 1977. Spring 1977 was "one of the driest springs on record and one of the worst fire seasons in a good 40-60 years." It was so bad the parks had to close because of fire hazard. That summer saw a record heat wave (5 days in July over 100°), followed by the wettest fall on record. Then winter 1977/78 hit! Snow started falling New Years Day and didn't let up until March; over 60 inches. Obviously, that kind of snowfall impacts plowing efforts and it was reported that a few staffers worked 37 straight hours in order to get things under control.



This pond was frozen with so much ice (an estimated 16-20"), a ranger actually drove a truck onto the pond to plow the snow off for skaters.



The weather was such a big story in winter 1977/1978, there were plenty of archival photos documenting it. Here the Rangers at Turkey Swamp (left) and Shark River (right) clean up after another snowfall.



- Here's a poem from the May/June 1979 issue by Ranger Mike McCann, who had a running feature in the early days of this newsletter.

A RANGER WHO'S WHO

You can tell a Holmdel ranger
by the gleaming of his brass;
You can tell a Thompson ranger
by his clippings of hedge and grass.
A ranger from Seven Presidents
by his gritty, sandy walk;
Or a Shark River ranger
by his "ol man river" talk.
You can tell a Hartshorne ranger
by his grizzly woodsman look,
And a Howell Golf Course ranger
'cause he does things by the book.
You can tell a ranger from Hominy
by his stature and his pride;
Or a ranger from East Freehold
by his weather-toughened hide.
You can tell a Tatum ranger
'cause he's always in a rush;
And you can tell a ranger from the "Swamp"
but you cannot tell him much!

- In November 1982, a Seven Presidents Ranger found a white balloon on a fence with note inside. As it turns out, two days prior it was launched from a student in Oklahoma City to celebrate that state's 75th anniversary. (Green Link, Jan/Feb 1983)
- Finally! Did you know that Thompson Park officially opened on New Year's Eve in 1968? (Green Link Sep/Oct 1983)

You Oughta Be in Pictures

A handful of park staffers dug into their own photo archives to come up with these snapshot blasts from the past.



Barbara Urbinato, Receptionist at Thompson Park Headquarters, says she wishes she had a nickel for every time a person told her that husband Joe (pictured with their son at Longstreet Farm in 1978) looked like Tony Orlando.



Senior Landscape Architect Robin Ostrowski of A&D (standing right), ice skating at Holmdel Park with her sister and brother in 1977. You can confirm that it truly is the 1970s by looking closely at Robin's attire, she is wearing a Led Zeppelin t-shirt.

Asst. Civil Engineer at A&D, Heng Chin had photos to share for a few different park areas. Looking at this first photo (right), does it make you wonder what the connection is between ice skating at a MCPS park in your youth and working at A&D?



Heng at Turkey Swamp Park, 1981.



These photos featuring Heng's children, are interesting because they show features that have since been removed from the parks.

Pamela, Heng's daughter, models her beautiful pink dress in 1991 on the walking bridge that used to be just behind the Visitor Center Parking Lot #1. This bridge was removed in 2006 to make way for the new paved road at Thompson Park.

Heng's son Brandon and a friend play on the "rolling log" in 1992 the playground at Seven Presidents. As you will see on page 6 of this newsletter, that playground was recently replaced with a larger, universal access playground, Tony's Place, this past November.



Uniforms & Logos

Take a look at some of our earliest Park System uniforms, and meet the former staffers who wore them...



One of the Park System's earliest ranger uniforms, worn by Turkey Swamp Manager Bruce Egeland in 1968.



You can't mistake Gerry Savitz for anything other than a Naturalist in this 1971 photo, since his title is stitched onto his shirtsleeve.



At first, the Park System simply used the county's agriculturally-based plow and cross logo on our trucks, which were likely borrowed or secondhand from the County anyway.



Our first "official" Park System logo "evergreen trees and a pond" was placed on signs and ranger uniforms (see above).



The logo later changed to the "trees and stream" design we all know today, spending a brief period in the early 1970s as a square before arriving at its final circular shape by the 1980s.

Oyster “Gardening” at Monmouth Cove Marina

Since August 2009, park naturalists and volunteers have been caring for over 500 small 3/4 inch “seed” oysters in floating cages. This effort is part of the NY-NJ Baykeeper’s Oyster Restoration Program. Along with local scout groups and business, civic and environmental organizations, our staff and volunteers are doing their part to help bring back this “keystone” species to local estuarine waters.

Oyster reefs, according to the NY/NJ Baykeeper website (www.nynjbaykeeper.org), once covered 350 square miles of estuary from Sandy Hook north to Ossining on the Hudson, to Raritan Bay, the Navesink and Shrewsbury Rivers, the Arthur Kill and Newark Bay. These reefs provided



A mature oyster shell.



Naturalists Karen Jarmusz and Shannon Evans count oysters.

oysters for local residents to eat and provided habitat for important fish species, such as striped bass and flounder. Oysters also clean their ecosystem, acting as a natural water filter.

Oyster populations fell dramatically after 1900 due to overharvesting, pollution, disease, and siltation.

Once a month, staff clean, count, and measure the oysters to make sure they are growing properly (monitoring slows in winter when the oyster closes its shell to keep warm). When the oysters reach 1 1/2 inches, they are collected by Baykeeper volunteers and released onto reefs in local estuaries, where it is hoped they will begin to reproduce naturally.



IN THE NEWS...

Tony’s Place Playground Opens at Seven Presidents

The Park System’s second universal access playground, named in honor of Former Recreation Commissioner and tireless advocate for children with disabilities, Tony Musella, opened in early November. Like the Challenger Place Playground at Dorbrook, this playground was paid for, in part, with a grant from Challenged Youth Sports, Inc., an organization supported by Tony that provides recreational opportunities for children of all abilities. The Friends of the Parks also funded some of the features.

Located right off the ocean, park staffers had a fun time designing the site and selecting play elements with a seaside motif; there’s a large ship-shaped play element, a fisherman’s village, and dolphins. And of course, all the features were selected with accessibility in mind.



A playground view from atop of the “ship.”

How We Did Things “Way Back When”

Here’s a photo of some of our early “mod” recycling bins, circa 1989, from one of the golf courses. Did you know? Before we actually had separate bins for recycled items, we just stuck “Recycling” stickers onto regular garbage cans.



Welcome, New Hires!

Benjamin Friedman, Clerk, Operations and Maintenance

Farewell, Retirees!

William Schoenleber, Sr. Stock Clerk, Construction and Repair, January 1, 2010

Terry Normand, County Park Manager, Shark River Park, February 1, 2010



March

- 1 Ed Dobrosky
- 2 Erika Bozza • Andy Nunes-Vais
- 3 Ralph Apicelli • Chris Brawley
- Susan Walsh • Ruth Ann Zobel
- 4 Philip Andras
- 5 Bob Laauser
- 6 Christina Carlson
- 7 Ann Reinhardt
- 8 Jeff Faiistl • Bruce Gollnick
- Theresa Secks
- 9 Maryann Goodwin
- 10 Matt Bezahler
- 12 Steve Matthews
- 13 Karen Jarmusz • Brad Rogers
- Scott Simpson
- 18 Peter Kucker
- 21 Ben Friedman • Diane Hughes
- Ryan Kimble • Debbie Tamburello
- 24 Sandy Byard
- 25 Barbara DeLorenzo • Maryann Elwood
- 26 Sharay Parkinson
- 28 Chet Scalzo
- 31 Tim Mariner

April

- 1 Greg Hyland
- 2 John Gubernat • Chris Lanza
- 4 Barbara Urbinato
- 6 Mike Bennett
- 7 Wayne Ossner
- 8 Jacques DiPane • Cindy Ross
- 9 Lisa Bonelli
- 10 Allen Boyce • Al Weaver
- 11 Susan Provost
- 12 Gloria Cohen • Al Picerno
- 13 Tom Fobes
- 16 Bill Stevenson
- 17 Dan Bisti • Jim Chase
- 18 Sam Skinner
- 19 Ed Luzzi • Sean Ramsey
- 20 Sue Madden
- 23 Scott Schaauf
- 24 Sean O’Herron • Tom Toon
- 26 Jean Kline
- 28 Jeff Willever
- 29 Patty Burke
- 30 Ryan Abbott

May

- 1 John Carey • Drew D’Apolito
- 2 Steve Clayton • Denise Dockweiler
- Vincent Maresca
- 3 Laura Lieneck
- 4 Leigh Schneider
- 6 Tim LaVance
- 7 Heng Chin • Craig Fraser
- Brian Sullivan
- 8 Patti Conroy • John Eisemann
- 9 Ken Thoman • Bob Ward
- 10 Ann Sage
- 11 Cathy Barfield • Marijane Bruncati
- Rob Kolczynski • Janet Ryan
- 12 Dave Compton • Peter D’Angelo
- 14 Laurie Marswillo
- 15 Chris Davidson
- 18 Helen Fiore • Karen Livingstone
- 20 Tom Noordzy
- 21 Shawn Allen
- 25 Hank Schreiber
- 26 Michelle Scolletta Gosha
- 27 Jeff Szalc
- 30 Gary Stedman



Monmouth County Park System
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March/April 2010

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HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE BIRDS OF LATE FALL & WINTER?

Can you match the birds shown below with their correct name? Visit our website if you need a little help, all the answers are available somewhere in the Natural Resources section.

Answers are also listed below.



1



2



3



4



5

AND WELCOME SPRING!



The bluebird is known as a harbinger of spring, even though it is seen in this area all through winter. This bluebird, a male identified by his bright blue coat (the female colors are more subdued), was captured mid-song by the capable

lens of Naturalist Bob Henschel.