TOUR GUIDE SPEECH

The Morgan Stone House and its smoke house are the only buildings original to this site. The other buildings were moved here in 1986 by the then Historic Society . As developments were built in the 1970s, the fear was that historic dwellings would be razed – some had already been lost. Charles Quay, President of the Historic Society, moved the Post Office first to his own property, and then moved that, his family’s farm house, the Railroad station and the Bunker Hill church to these 5-+ acres. The Historic Society continued to hold tours and events here at the village until the late 20th century, but some interest was lost and volunteers and money became difficult to come by. In 2007, the mayor formed the Washington Twp Historic Preservation Commission and charged this group with the maintenance and use of the premises. In 2008, the present commission began fund raising in earnest and a new cycle of restoration began.

BLACKWOOD RAILROAD STATlON

The Blackwood Railroad· Station was buiit in 1891 in the town of Blackwood in Gloucester Township, and was never part of Washington Twp. However, this building, which stood on the corner of Church St in Blackwood and the railroad, was the terminal from which our local Grenloch Line was built. Trains ran from Blackwood to Grenloch Terrace at the foot of the S hill, where the Blackwood bike path is at present.

Grenloch’s rail tracks and station were added in the late 1890s when Frank Bateman, then managing the Iron Age Implement Works, bought what he called his “funny farm”, a strip of land 7miles long by 60’ wide from the Reading Railroad. The railroad carried visitors from Camden and Philadelphia to the Grenloch Lake Park amusement park and freighted Iron Age Implements’ goods back to Camden City, as well as product from the gravel pit in the area.

The Blackwood station was brought here in August of 1975 by the Historical Society. It was put up for sale by the Reading Railroad Company . The Historic Society paid $1,000. for the building and then had it moved to then Historic Society President Charles Quay’s land in August of 1975. When the village was formed in 1986, it was again moved to its present location. Artifacts you see displayed here are either from the Bateman Works or from the Grenloch Station. (Grenloch station is pictured on the wall – it was razed in 2012).

This open window is where people purchased their

tickets. If they wanted to go to Philadelphia they took the train to Camden and then got on a ferry boat and sailed across the Delaware· River to a dock in Philadelphia. The Ben Franklin bridge into Philadelphia wasn’t built until 1926 and at that time was known as the Delaware River Bridge. Train trips also ran to Atlantic City or Cape May during the summer.

All of the floor boards and door and window frames are original to the building. The door in the back goes into the office where railroad employees kept their records and printed timetables for the trains. The trap door in the floor is original though we don’t know what it led to originally. In 2016 and 17, the Station underwent extensive renovation costing over $8000. The research information was provided by the Reading Railroad History department and the Camden County Historic Society. The building is painted in its original colors to match all the other Reading Railroad Stations.

**Bunker Hill Presbyterian Church**

Bunker Hill Presbyterian Church was founded in 1849 in the old Bunker Hill Schoolhouse across the road from where the church once stood on Greentree Road near Hurffville Cross-Keys. People met for worship in the school house for twenty years. In 1869, they bought one half acre of land from James McClure and built this building. The idea of building a separate church came about in order to rest the farm horses, which had worked all week. The people of the Bunker Hill area didn’t want to ask these hard working animals to take them to Blackwood or Williamstown for church services.

The Cornerstone was laid and the church officially opened on June 14, 1869. It was built by August Thies who lived in Chapel Heights where Thies Road begins. The church cost $1,800.00 to build and furnish and was fully paid in October when the first service was held. Bunker Hill became the second dedicated church building in Township. Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church, on Delsea Drive in Hurffville, was founded in 1770 and incorporated the 17th day of February, 1819. John Henry, Sr. was the first Elder of the Church and held that position for about 50 years. William Filmore Chew was Superintendent of the Sunday school. Both of these gentlemen are memorialized in the stained glass windows.

The pews are original as are the pulpit and chairs, donated by the Pitman Methodist church, but the wood panels were added in 1924 when the church was remodeled. The original windows were frosted, but during the remodeling, the eight windows were replaced by stained glass. Each is a memorial to original or early members of the church. At that time, they cost $45.00 apiece to make and install.

Originally services were held on Sunday afternoons, once a month. Ministers were students from the Presbyterian Seminary at Princeton, NJ. The congregation didn’t get their own permanent minister until 1980. Services were increased to each Sunday by the end of the 19th century.

Rarely were musical instruments heard in the meeting houses, although in most of them the singing of hymns was an important part of the worship experience. The Quakers, who predominated in the 18th century, shunned the use of any music, vocal or instrumental, in connection with religious services. In Presbyterian meeting houses, psalms from the Geneva or Scottish Psalters, or the hymns of Isaac Watts, were sung without accompaniment.

Among the dominant families in the church were the Richards family, of the Green Tree Inn. He was a relative of Charles Quay, born in the Quay Farmhouse and president of the 20th century Township Historic Society. The McClure family lived in the house that is now Ott’s Tavern and it was this family that sold the church the land. Other families include the Henrys and the Chew family. William Fillmore Chew was Superintendent of the Sunday School.

The church building is used once yearly for services on Founder’s Day. It is also rented out for weddings or baptisms. In 2017, the WTHPC had the windows refurbished and reinstalled due to deterioration at a cost of $1200.00 apiece. Later, storm windows were added to protect the windows from damage at a cost of $8500, and the center window at the top was also rehabilitated in an historically correct manner. Currently, the church is in need of repairs to the soffits and both interior and exterior painting is planned.

**The Turnersville Post Office**

Turnersville in 1700s was a small village at the headwaters of Timber Creek. It consisted of about 20 residents. In the 1800s, a number of businesses were set up– a sawmill was built by Isaac Collins, a grist-mill by Peter Cheeseman, and a charcoal business by Crees. By this time, there were about 150 residents, a school with Israel Furth as teacher, and the Post Office built in 1864 now sited in the Olde Stone House Village. Its original placement was on the Black Horse Pike near County House Road. It is said the building was about eight feet longer in depth, but that a portion was at one point removed by Mr. Craven Turner.

The building sat in that location until 1971. The first Postmaster was

William C. Garwood who served until July of 1866. Successive Postmasters included, Samuel Parks (1866) Andrew Turner (1867) Samuel Godshaw (1872, Daniel Turner in 1886. Benjamin Sickler was appointed in 1887, Joseph Simkins in 1889, and another Joseph (illegible last name) in 1891. William Nickolson (1893, Charles Nicolson (1905, Wilbert Duell (1908) S. Chew in 1909, Merrit Jenkins in 1916, John Williams in 1917, and Herbert Williams in 1920. The Post Office was then closed in April of that year and service centered in the Grenloch office until 1968 when Turnersville reopened in a shopping center.

The original property was purchased by Roseson-Goldberg Realty, who gave the building to the Historic Society in 1971. It was moved to its present location in 1988.

Washington Township itself covered 16 miles by 4 miles but had a population of only 2,000 residents in the mid 1800s. Before the post offices were established, mail relied on neighbors traveling toward a city or postal riders who would collect letters from taverns. Nearby, the Gabriel Davies tavern in Blenheim was used as a postal collection. Schooners carrying lumber and produce navigated the Big Timber Creek up to Camden City, and stopped at the Tavern’s dock. Postage was paid by those receiving the letter.

By the mid 19th century, a post office had been established in an office of the Bateman Iron Age Implements factory in Grenloch, and in 1874, a one room post office was established at the foot of the S hill with August Bradshaw as postmaster.

Mail was not delivered to homes (as continues to be the case in Grenloch Terrace) but only to the Post Office. The postmaster sorted the mail into the cubbyholes according to address, and people picked up their mail when they could. The post boxes currently here are not the originals as these were removed early in the 20th century. The letters you see there now are from the late 19th and early 20th century, two of which have the Turnersville postmark on the envelopes.

The building was partially refurbished in the 1980s by the Historic Society and has again been rehabilitated in recent years. In 2016 the building was completely repainted, inside and out, and the following year, a new cedar shake roof was added. The chimney remains to be repointed.

THE VETERAN’S MEMORIAL

The Veteran’s Memorial was erected by the Clayton and Deptford Elks Clubs in September of 1989. It is a memorial to the servicemen and women of all of Gloucester County who fought in wars involving foreign countries.

HAINES’ MEMORIAL GAZEBO

The Haines Memorial Gazebo was given to the Olde Stone House Village in memory of Lawrence “Dick” and Helen Haines, owners of the former Haines’ Dairy on Hurffville-Cross Keys Road in Bunker Hill.

THE CREES- QUAY HOUSE

The Quay House was built in 1825 by John Turner. The house was constructed in the typical manner of the time, with handmade nails made by a local blacksmith and using wooden pegs to join beams. It was built originally for Thomas Cocks Crees, his wife Catherine and their children. Cress came to the township in 1822 to start a charcoal burning business on Egg Harbor Road. The house was eventually sold to Charles Quay, Sr and his wife, Ella Richards Quay. The family lived in this house until the 1920s. Charles Quay Jr. was born in the house in 1897. He was one of the founders of the Township Historic Society and was influential in the development of the village.

The house has four small fireplaces used for heating in most rooms and for cooking in the kitchen. As the present fireplace is small, it is possible a larger cooking hearth may have been built on the outside of the building. The fireplaces in the bedrooms had built-in box seats on each side to store logs and kindling. Some of the siding on the house is original, though much has been replaced. The upstairs floors are now stripped to the framing.

Construction of the house is with wooden mortise and tenon construction and nails handmade in a local blacksmith shop. Stairs are connected through the tongue and groove method.

In the living room of the Quay House are artifacts from the first residents of Washington Township, the Lenni Lenape natives. These first residents had encampments around many of our township lakes and farmers often found arrow heads, axe heads and the like as the plowed their fields. Those here are from Charles Quay’s collection.

While the Quay house does include many of its original clapboards, other areas of the home have either been stripped, as in the upper stories, or replaced, such as the floors and windows. The future for this house will need to include extensive historic research and replacement with materials and methods suitable to its times.

**The Olde Stone House**

This building is the focus of our historic village, our oldest extant structure, and the icon of our community.

The George (Jr.) and Sarah Morgan House was built about 1765 in Deptford (now Washington) Township, Gloucester County, New Jersey. Though locals have generally dated the house to 1736, no records actually exist prior to the midcentury. George Morgan Sr (1708-1759) and his wife Susannah (nee Davis) were married in 1730 in Philadelphia and settled in Gloucester County sometime after 1732. The exact date is not known. Morgan Sr. died in 1759 and willed 200 acres with the house to his oldest son, George Jr. Built of local ironstone, it has an evenly spaced stone front that adds a sophistication not found in farmhouses constructed before the mid-1700s. The house was probably built between ca. 1760 and 1775. The Egg Harbor Road was cut through in 1793 and the house is referenced in the county Road Book of the time.

What you see is the original size of the house. Originally there were two rooms downstairs and two bedrooms on the second floor. It is probable the attic was also used as a bedroom. The house has four fireplaces connected to two chimneys, one on either end of the house. When the house was restored in 1981, plaster was removed from the kitchen wall and the beehive oven was discovered. It was restored to specifications for such ovens after research by George and Cookie Kaizar of the Restoration Committee. Indoor life for most in the earliest days of South Jersey was a cramped affair. Whole families ate, drank, and slept within the confining four walls of a single, tiny room. During most seasons, the householder, away at work in the fields or the furnaces, could breathe the air of the out-of-doors and stretch his legs in the open spaces. On the other hand, the housewife had only the garden patch alongside the cottage to relieve the tedium of the dark, crowded interior where she sewed, spun, wove, cooked, cleaned, and raised their offspring, some of whom were always underfoot.

Morgan Sr. owned a sizable, 600+-acre farmstead located on the west side of the south branch of Big Timber Creek.

The Plantation stretched from Blackwood Lake to what is now Delsea Drive and from Route 41 to Mount Pleasant Road, covering 1,000 acres. George Morgan Jr. died in 1795 and his will directed that after his youngest son came of age, his property was to be equally divided between his wife and children. His inventory included cash, notes, and book debts totaling £1,192, livestock (horses, cattle, sheep and hogs) valued at £137, boards and farming utensils valued at £70, and “household goods, rye in the ground and wood at the landing” valued at £58.

There have been only 3 families who have lived in this house. After the Morgans, a daughter Sarah married a man named Meriall Turner, an uncle of John Turner who founded Turnersville.

Large wooden additions were added in 1846. The Turner family owned the home at the time. Their son Robert's wife died during the birth of their sixth child and he then returned home. His sister Ann's husband Jacob Park also died, and the house then welcomed Ann and her three children.

The house then passed to Meriall's daughter who married Jeremiah Hobson Paulin. The next owner was his son Robert Turner Paulin, who operated a dairy on the property with a dozen cows. His daughter Rachel told this story: " One day father went out to milk the cows and a grumpy cow named "Bossy" decided she didn't want to give her milk and kicked him in the stomach. He lived only for three days. Dr. Hurff, then the only local doctor, tried to help, but my father died when I was only 3 years old." (Per Joan Michael)

After the Paulins, the property was sold to Frank and Anna Atkinson in November 1912. At this point the property included 144 acres and sold for $10,000. The Atkinson's raised four children there, Franklin, James, Edna, and Louis. Franklin lived on the Morgan Plantation until his death. James and his family lived on County House Road. Mr. James Atkinson was a Gloucester County Freeholder and the Atkinson Memorial Park on Rte 41 is named after him.

There are two front doors in the house. One leads into the kitchen and the other into the parlor. During the Paulin family's residence, the parlor became a country store, selling flour, grain, beans, and vegetables. It also was used as a Methodist church when the Meriall Turners were in residence. Some say there were two front doors so women and men could enter church separately, but as there were a number of homes in the area with such doors, this is only speculation.

In June 1961 the property was rented to Frederick Powell who turned the farm, barn, and stables into the “Starlite Stables.” Powell used the farm to raise, sell, and board horses until the 1970s. The house was used to store feed and other supplies. After Powell moved away, the house was left to demolition by neglect. In 1973 the then 400+ acres were sold to Orleans Co which gifted the Morgan House and 6.2 acres to the Township. Three months later a fire in December destroyed the frame additions to the building. The Wash. Twp Historical Society then spent 5 years restoring the house to its 1765 appearance.

Presently, the Washington Township Historic Commission has obtained grants which have placed the house on the National Registry of Historic Sites, and also paid for the plaque to that effect. A grant is in process to restore the entire foundation system that has been badly impacted by weather over the years. Work will begin in 2021 to replace the beams in the basement area, to regrade the area around the basement to prevent further water damage, and to restore the herb garden side windows. Further work will still be needed to replace mortar, doors, and more.

**The Kitchen Herb Garden**

The kitchen herb garden was once on the side of the house, but was recreated by the Historic Society in the 20th century. The spices and vegetables being grown there at the moment are those which would have been present in an 18th century garden. Spices were needed for cooking, such as sage, thyme, mint, and dill. Other herbs such as soapwort or comfrey were used for household or medicinal purposes. The Certified Gloucester County Gardeners presently keep the garden for the Historic Commission.

**Stone House Smokehouse**

The smokehouse was essential to keeping an 18th century home, and into the 19th century, in order to preserve meats.  Cattle, pigs and chickens could be killed nearly all year, but in the case of the beef or pork, there would be too much meat to be used immediately. Chicken was often a choice for sunday dinner as it could be eaten fresh.

After the cattle and pigs were slaughtered, roasts were hung on large metal hooks hanging from the ceiling of the smokehouse over the fire pit. The meat was roasted over hardwood until a crust formed that sealed the meat inside.  The roasting took at least a full day and meat would then be left there until it cooled. The meat was then wrapped to keep it clean and it was stored in a pit under the floor of the basement to keep it as cool as possible. Some of the meat would inevitably spoil, but most could be used all year round.