

BROADSIDE

FALL 1998

THE VILLAGE OF PRINCETON JUNCTION: PART II

The photo at the bottom of this page shows Princeton Junction at the corner of Rt. 571 and Cranbury Road. As you can see, there are no buildings between Schafer's service station and the farm of Lawrence and Lolly Dey.

We are grateful to Mrs. C. Lawrence (Lolly) Dey for writing the following for us:

The Dey Farm

In 1934 the original farmhouse at 61 Hightstown Rd. (Rt. 571) burned. The 120 acre farm was rented to a farmer. The Watlington family lived in the rebuilt house. Bonnie Watlington Taft recalls helping her father raise produce and chickens when she was

12 years old. The chickens were sold to Walker Gordon's restaurant, The Gate House, at the corner of Rt. 1 and Plainsboro Rd.

In 1938, C. Lawrence Dey bought the 120 acres and the house from Mrs. Alice Wyckoff Russell. This included land from Cranbury Rd. to Clarksville Rd, east of Rt. 571, and a parcel on the west side of 571 and Clarksville Rd. to Kmenta's property (323 Clarksville Rd.) to Alexander Rd. Potatoes and wheat were the primary crops raised on the farm.

Two lots were sold. One to Fred Hall at the corner of Alexander Rd. and Rt. 571; the other to Henry Schafer at the corner of Cranbury Rd. and Rt. 571. Both built service stations.



Photo c1940 showing Princeton Jct. at the corner of Rt.571 and Cranbury Rd.



Aerial photo c1940 showing the Dey Farm. Courtesy of Lolly Dey.

Lawrence and Mabel (Lolly) MacKenzie from Plainsboro were married in 1940 two weeks after she graduated from Princeton High School. Farm help was hard to find so for the first two years of their marriage, Lolly worked with Lawrence in the fields and drove all kinds of machinery. She also took truck loads of alfalfa to the Walker Gordon Farms in Plainsboro and picked up fertilizer in Englishtown.

*Larry Dey and his first airplane, c1947.
Photo courtesy of Lolly Dey.*

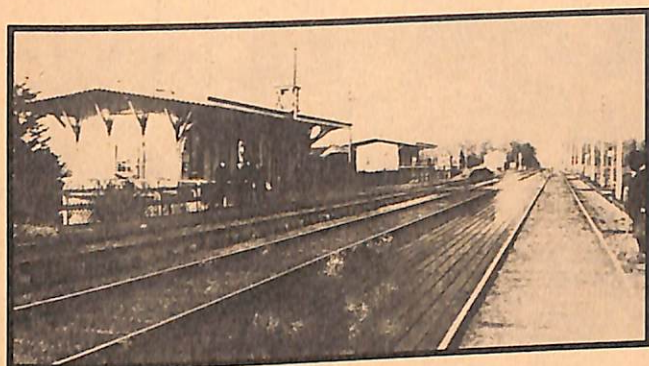


In the 1950s Lawrence bought an airplane and built a hanger for it in front of their barn. The runway is now Sherbrooke Drive.

The Dey farm was within walking distance of the train station. Lawrence thought the land would be ideal for building a development for commuters. He hired Robert Hillier, a recently graduated architect working for Raymond Bowers (Lawrence's cousin), to draw up the plans. The concept Hillier planned was unusual: cluster homes with a large open area in the middle. The West Windsor Township Board turned the project down, twice. Therefore, the Deys decided to sell to a realtor. In 1963 Sherbrooke was developed.

The Princeton Junction Railroad Station

The area which became Princeton Junction had been considered quite low ground, part of it known as Bear Swamp. Despite this, in 1865, The Camden and Amboy Railroad ran tracks through the swamp land as part of its route through New Jersey. A spur was built at the same time into Princeton, which has become known as "The Dinky" or the PJ&B (Princeton Junction and Back).



Princeton Junction train station, c1870s.

With the railroad came the name Princeton Junction, since the station was built mainly for the use of Princeton residents and Princeton University students.

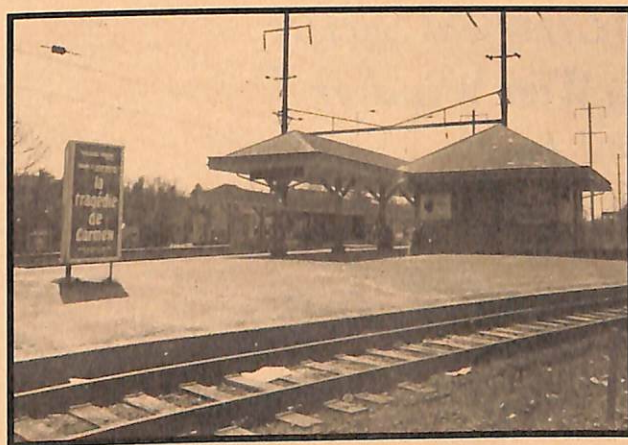
There have been several train station buildings at Princeton Junction since the first pair of tracks were laid. The most interesting was built in the 1890s on the north side of the tracks. The building contained waiting room, ticket office, express office and a six-room apartment on the second floor for the ticket master.

Fitzgerald's "Trenton & Mercer County Directory" lists a few Princeton Junction ticket agents: 1897-Thomas Perrine; 1902-W. H. Smith; 1906-Thomas Carlon.



1890s train station - photo courtesy Tanis Cox.

From 1913 to 1915 Walter Conover, Sr. was ticket master and lived in the apartment. Nellie L. Cox (known as "Mom" Cox) ran the newsstand and lived in the station building from 1935 until her death in 1944. The building burned in 1953 and was replaced by a more practical waiting room with covered areas along the platforms. In the 1980s, the station was redone to its present appearance.



Princeton Junction train station c1970s.
Photo courtesy Rossmoor News.



1999 DUES: A REMINDER

It seems as if we just asked for Dues and it's time again! Some members have not yet paid for 1998 so please check your mailing label.

If the date after your name is 1997 (or, horrors, earlier), please send your check to Kay Reed, HsofWW, P.O. Box 38, Princeton Jct., NJ 08550.

We are still only asking:

Family - \$12

Individual - \$8

Senior Citizens-\$5

Over 80 - Free. (*Let Joan Parry know so dues will not be requested.*)

Your dues help pay for producing and mailing the newsletter and help restore the Schenck House. Thanks!

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Historical Society of West Windsor

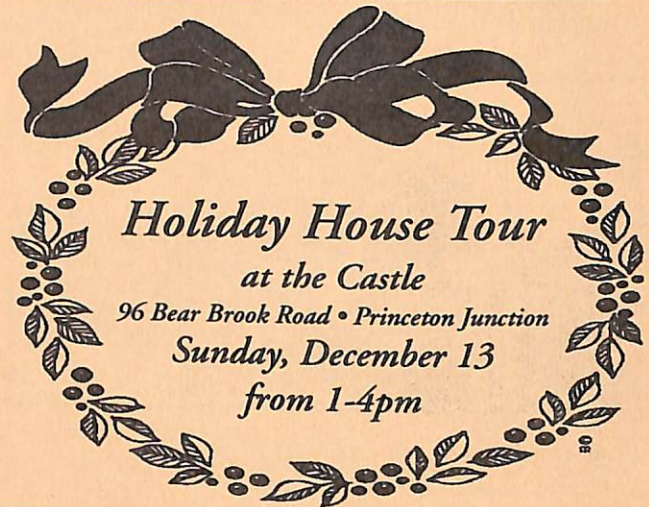
P.O. Box 38

Princeton Jct., NJ 08550

1999 MEETINGS

January 4; March 1; May 3;
September 13; November 1.

HsofWW meetings are held at the Schenck House, 50 Southfield Road (across from the Cranbury golf course) on Monday evenings as listed above. We begin at 7:30 p.m. and rarely go beyond 9 p.m. *Everyone is welcome!*



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