

The Museum's History

Located at 1477 Union Valley Road, West Milford, N.J., the West Milford Museum building was constructed just prior to the Civil War (1861) in the Gothic Revival style. Originally a Methodist Episcopal-(M.E.) Church, the property and church building were purchased in 1906 by the Deghuee's, Egbert's, and Voorhees families, all residents of West Milford.

In 1910, the church and property were deeded to the Township of West Milford for municipal use. The building continued its service to the community when it became West Milford's first Town Hall in 1912. In 1958, when the present municipal building was constructed on vacant farmland across the road at 1480 Union Valley Road, the museum building served as the Town Hall Annex, housing the Tax and Building Depts., as well as various other departments within the municipal government. It also was used as civil defense headquarters, as a storage facility for recreation and athletic equipment, and as a repository for various Township records.

During the 1980's, the Township Council chose the building to be the site of the future Township of West Milford Museum, and in 1992, it received designation as a local historic landmark. The West Milford Museum opened in 2000 following extensive renovations to the building site.

The West Milford Museum is staffed by volunteer members of the Township of West Milford Heritage Committee

For questions about the
West Milford Museum
or the Heritage Committee
you may contact us via e-mail at
Museum@WestMilford.org.

Visit our website at
www.westmilfordmuseum.org.

Mailing address:
West Milford Museum
c/o Township of West Milford
1480 Union Valley Road
West Milford, New Jersey 07480

The West Milford Museum is open
on Saturdays from 1 to 4 pm

**For large group or special appointments,
please e-mail us to make arrangements at
Museum@WestMilford.org.**



THE WEST MILFORD MUSEUM

**West Milford Museum
1477 Union Valley Road
West Milford, NJ 07480
(973) 728-1823**

**Museum@WestMilford.org
www.westmilfordmuseum.org**

Open Saturdays 1 to 4 pm

The West Milford Museum Project

Following our country's Bicentennial in 1976 and the resurgence of interest in history, the Township of West Milford designated the Town Hall Annex (formerly the West Milford Town Hall) as the site for a the future West Milford Museum. The West Milford Heritage Committee was established by resolution in 1985 to plan and implement the museum's restoration, archive collections, and oversee the museum operations. The museum, opened in 2000 following extensive renovations, is located in the center of West Milford at 1477 Union Valley Road.

For over 2 decades, the Heritage Committee worked with architects and other professionals to devise and implement plans for the building's interior and exterior renovation. During that time, the Committee continued to collect, archive, and display historic artifacts, highlighting West Milford's unique history.

The Heritage Committee has coordinated numerous fundraising events, the largest and most successful is the annual benefit tennis tournament. Lakeland Bank, Eastern Propane, and many other local businesses, organizations, and individuals have sponsored the tournaments. Coordinated and directed each year by former Township Mayor Carl Richko, the tournaments are hosted by the Heritage Committee.

With most of the renovations nearly completed, including the recent tin ceiling renovation project, the Heritage Committee looks forward to providing new exhibits and programs, sharing collections with other museums and institutions, and providing a comprehensive display of local history.



Former M.E. Church on Union Valley Road. Photo taken in 1906. Currently the site of the West Milford Museum.

The West Milford Museum Website:

<http://www.westmilfordmuseum.org>

Visitors to the museum's website may find updates on the renovation project, special exhibit information, fundraising events, and other items of local interest. You may contact the Heritage Committee by e-mailing us at Museum@WestMilford.org. Requests for special group tours and school class trips may be made through this address as well.

Yesterday's Past for Today's Children

The West Milford Museum provides an enjoyable learning experience for children. Many of West Milford's unique structures and most notable historical events and sites exist only in memory and through a few remaining artifacts. By use of photographs, displays and documentation, the museum can provide children with a sense of daily life in the past centuries. One of the goals of the museum is to offer children a better understanding of the past, while fostering a greater appreciation of the present. The museum staff is always available to assist students and scouts with individual achievement and/or local history research projects.

The Museum in the New Millennium

The Heritage Committee seeks to provide a multifaceted experience for visitors to the museum, incorporating history and education into its exhibits and programs, presented in a relaxed and inviting setting. The surrounding regions share a rich and diverse history that the museum demonstrates through permanent and changing exhibits of artifacts, documents and photographs.

Theme exhibits are featured on topics such as farming, local industry including iron making, ice production and lake tourism, culture and lifestyles, historic or prominent sites such as Jungle Habitat, military history, notable artists, and Native American and natural history objects. Demonstrations and lectures are held depicting skills and techniques from the past, including pottery making, gardening, and quilting exhibits. Additionally, the West Milford Museum's "Reminisce Series" offers oral recitations by local residents who provide personal stories and share memories and photographs about life in the "good old days." Informal recitals of various music styles, highlighting local musicians, are provided at special events.

A video viewing area is available at the museum to provide local historians and educators a location to present customized lectures on varying historical topics, designed for appropriate age groups. Contact museum staff to discuss scheduling an event.

West Milford Museum Archives

The museum has various books, documents and photographs on local and regional history available for research projects. Please contact the museum for further information.