



Deerpark Diary

Town of Deerpark 1863 School House Museum
Town of Deerpark Historian, P. O. Box 621, Huguenot, New York 12746
(845) 856-2702 website 1863schoolhouse.org

March, 2023

Vol. 20

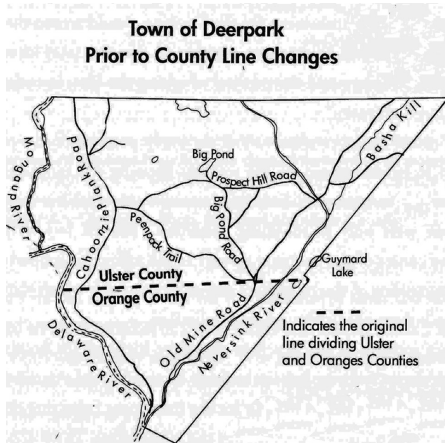
No. 1

Town of Deerpark 225th Anniversary—1798-2023

- **Deerpark Established**
- **Deerpark Time Line
1000-Present**
- **Book Talk in Memory
of Johnny Dudko**

Deerpark Established

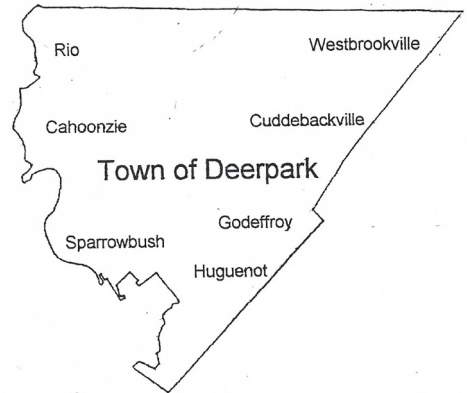
March 16, 1798, the New York State legislature created Rockland County from Orange County. In order to maintain the size of Orange County, five towns from Ulster County were incorporated into Orange. The Town of Deerpark was formed from the town of Mamakating in Ulster County.



According to *History of Orange County* by Samuel W. Eager, 1856-1857, there was an early settler named McDaniel, who owned a small tract of land somewhere within this area. He fenced in his land with brush to enclose deer. Some of his neighbors called it McDaniel's "deerpark". The name became so familiar that the whole vicinity soon went by this name.

The first town meeting took place on April 3, 1798 in the home of Elisha Reeves. It was at this meeting that town officers and other officials were elected. Nineteen highway districts were created. Commissioners of Highways were elected in order to maintain the roads. Laws and financial assessments were established. At that time there were many neighborhoods: such as Paradise; Roses Point; Port Clinton; Port Orange; Quarry Hill; and Shin Hollow to name just a few. Over the years these areas became consolidated into the seven hamlets that exist today.

The seven hamlets are:
Cahoonzie—where the Cahoonzie Indians lived;



Cuddebackville—named for Col. William Cuddeback, who owned the site;

Godeffroy—named for Adolphus E. Godeffroy;

Huguenot—named after the persecuted Huguenot immigrants who first settled this area;

Rio—supposedly named after Benjamin Ryal (The letter "l" in his name was silent.);

Sparrowbush—named for H. L. Sparrow who owned a great deal of timber land in the area;

Westbrookville—named for an early settler named Dirck Van Keuren Westbrook.

The town is blessed with three swift flowing rivers: the Delaware; Neversink; and Mongaup Rivers. There is also the Basha Kill, an extensive wetland preserve. The Delaware was

named for Thomas West, Baron De La Warr, governor of the Virginia colony. The Neversink River is an Indian idea which implies "A continual running stream". The Mongaup comes from the Indian meaning "A branch with three feathers." The Basha Kill received its name from an Indian princess named Bashee who lived near Westbrookville.

The fertile land in the Neversink valley brought the early settlers to this region. The rivers and mountains brought visitors in the summer (19th century). Then more people moved into town as permanent residents, increasing the population (20th century). Presently, Deerpark has kept its rural atmosphere.

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Town of Deerpark Early History Time Line

1000-1750s—The original inhabitants were the Lenni Lenape Indians. This name translates roughly into "we, the original people" (later called Delaware Indians by English settlers).



Lenape Indians

Seven hundred eighty-three acres of fine natural meadow land on the east side of the Neversink River belonged to Chief Penhorn and his tribe. They sold this land to Davis, Cole and Van Auken in 1730.

1690-1713—When Deerpark was first settled there were two neighborhoods. The "Peenpack" or "Upper Neighborhood" extended from the line between Orange and Ulster to Cuddebackville. "Peenpack is an Indian name. Some of the early settlers said it meant knoll or small hill. Other said it meant knoll or hill by the brook. The "Over the River" or "Lower Neighborhood" extended from the Neversink River to the Delaware River.



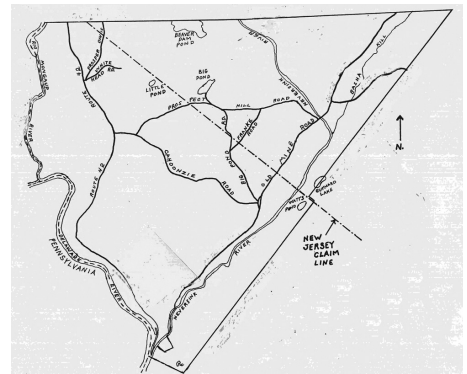
The first settler, William Tietsoort, a blacksmith, made friends with the Indians and obtained land outside of present-day Port Jervis. He called his property the Kaatsbaan, (Dutch for tennis court). In 1713 Jan and Hendrick Decker purchased the entire Tietsoort land. In 1697, a patent was granted to Jacob Codebeck, Thomas Swartwout, Anthony Swartwout, Bernardus Swartwout, Jan Tyse, Peter Germar and David Jamison. It contained no particular boundaries, but appeared to be 1200 acres to be divided among the principals. It is

believed that these families had settled here around 1690. Tyse and Jamison did not stay in the area. Their interest in the patent was purchased by Hermanus Van Inwegen.

1699—Jesinje Swartwout, first settler's child born in either neighborhood, was baptized.



1701—Land disputes leading to the "Border War" began. New Jersey and New York both claimed the same land comprising almost two thirds of present day Town of Deerpark. A boundary line between New York and New Jersey was approved by England's King George in 1767, however there were still some disputes until 1833 when the United States Congress approved today's boundaries.



1778—Brant's First Raid. On October 13th, Joseph Brant (1742-1807) approached by way

of the old Indian trail from Mongaup River to Huguenot. The order of attack went from south to north beginning in Huguenot, where Peenpack Trail meets Route 209 and ending at Fort DeWitt, along the Neversink River, Cuddebackville.



Joseph Brant

1779—Brant's Second Raid. On July 21st Joseph Brant's raiders again came down along Peenpack Trail. The order of attack went from north to south, following Neversink Drive through Port Jervis. Brant headed north along the Delaware River. A local militia was formed, followed Brant's trail and attacked at Minisink Ford (Battle of Minisink).

1823—Delaware & Hudson Canal Company became the first long-distance transportation route chartered by two states, New York and Pennsylvania. Ground breaking took place in 1825. On April 1, 1828 the Canal was considered functional.

On October 16th the "Orange Packet" was the first boat to



Child leading mules along the canal

complete the entire length from Rondout to Honesdale. The Canal was built to carry coal from Pennsylvania, lumber, and quarried stones for the sidewalks of New York City at the cost of \$1,208,632.95. In Orange County, the Town of Deerpark is the only town where the canal was located.

1868—June 27th, the Monticello & Port Jervis Railroad Company was organized. The Town of Deerpark was a principal stockholder owning 4,000 shares of stock at \$50.00 paying 7% maturing in fifty years. It is difficult to understand why Deerpark could justify assuming such a large liability for a very small amount of direct benefit.

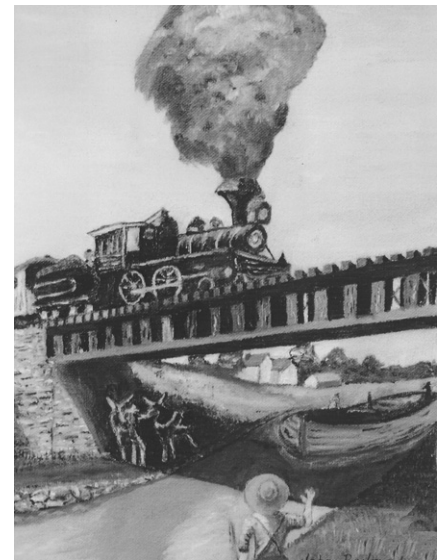


Huguenot RR Station at Swartwouts

The route of the railroad traveled from Monticello through Hartwood descending to the Neversink River valley at Oakland and along the west side of the val-

ley to Huguenot, across the D & H Canal and then to a junction with the Erie Railway near Port Jervis.

The railroad never made any money and was sold at auction on July 7, 1875. Deerpark was not relieved of its debt even though the old common stock was declared worthless. The name of the new railroad was the Port Jervis & Monticello RR. With many changes the railroad made a profit in three years. An additional spur to Summitville was added making it the PJM&S. Stations in Deerpark included Roses Point, Huguenot, and Port Clinton.



D & H Canal and PJMRR Painting

1898—November 5th the last boat left Honesdale to Rondout on the D & H Canal. On April 28, 1899 the New York State Legislature formally approved abandonment of the canal. Rail transportation was cheaper and more efficient. Some canal boats still carried freight in the Rondout area until 1904.

1905—The PJM Rail Road became the New York, Ontario & Western Railway extend-

ing its service from Carbondale, Scranton and Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania to Kingston, New York. The last train to Monticello ran in March 1941. In 1954 the railroad was bankrupt and all operations ceased on March 29, 1957.



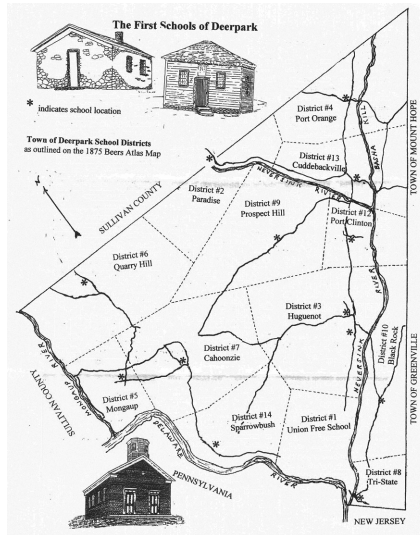
D. W. Griffith

1909-1911—D.W. Griffith, the first movie maker to make feature films, made twenty-one of his early films in the Cuddebackville and Godeffroy area. *Griffith recalled: "I discovered Cuddebackville, the most beautiful altogether the loveliest spot in America... There is a quality about the light there, particularly at twilight that I have never found elsewhere; it is transcendently illuminative for moving pictures."* His actors, actresses and technicians stayed at the Caudebec Inn, in Oakland Valley.

1812-Present The history of public education in Deerpark began when New York State established a permanent system of public schools in 1812.

The original Black Rock School was built by residents in the Lower Neighborhood in the mid 1770s and rebuilt after Joseph Brant's raiders burned it down in 1779. Prior to this time

children in other parts of this area were educated at home.



Deerpark School Districts

A school was built in Cuddebackville in 1813, a year after New York set up the permanent system for Public Education. The school still stands on Route 211. By the mid 1800s, fourteen School Districts were organized in the Town.

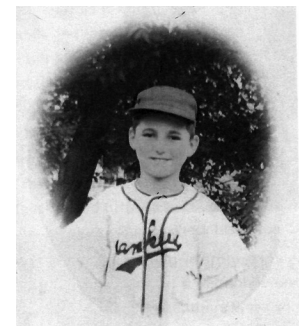
This system was in place until 1955 when school centralization was implemented. However it was not until 1961 that a centralized school was built and the one-room schools were closed.

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Book Talk in Memory of Johnny Dudko

The 1958 brutal murder of Johnny Dudko rocked the Deerpark/Port Jervis area. Over time this event was relegated to a historical footnote. However, a permanent memorial exists because shortly after Johnny's death, Reverend Vernon Shive of the West

End Reformed Church led the effort to create a commemorative plaque to be placed in the church. A few years later when the church was sold, the plaque was moved to the Deerpark Reformed Church and remained there until 2022. The Deerpark Reformed Church is now for sale which leads to another permanent location for the plaque, which will be the Town of Deerpark Museum, Huguenot, NY. This will be a memorial for the heartbreaking loss of a young life that ended too soon.



Johnny Dudko

The plaque will be rededicated at 3:00pm on Sunday, May 7, 2023 during a book talk by Dave Shive, who lived through the ordeal and experienced its impact. His book *Madness at The Horn* (2021) introduces readers to the cast of characters that produced a fascinating tale of misfortune.

Dave Shive, class of 1964, Port Jervis High School, has a seminary degree in New Testament Studies and a graduate degree from the Baltimore Hebrew University.

Save the Date Book Talk

Sunday 3:00pm, May 7, 2023
1863 Huguenot Schoolhouse
25 Grange Road, Huguenot, NY

For additional information call 845-856-2702.