



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

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Introduction

Roadside historical markers are windows to our past. They educate us, they make us curious, and they provide an excuse to take a break during our travels to stretch our legs while we read what happened here.

History of New York State Historical Markers

Source: New York State Museum

The State Historic Marker Program began in 1926 as a program of the State Education Department to commemorate the Sesquicentennial of the American Revolution. Over 2,800 of the small, cast iron site markers were erected statewide during the duration of this program (1926-1939).

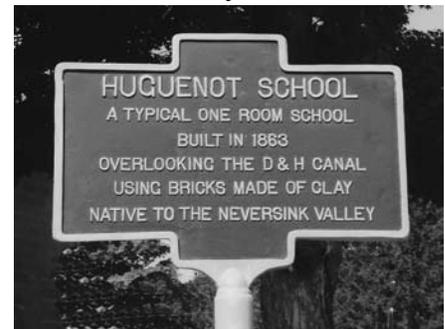
In spite of loss of public funding, this initiative to identify and interpret local historic sites, including many that survive only in archeological form, has continued to be an important aspect of local historic preservation efforts to this day.

In 1966, a new State Historic Marker Program was established and public funding was restored. However it was decided that funding would only be applied to larger, more detailed signs placed in various types of rest areas where motorists could pull off the highway, park, and read the signs safely at their leisure. By placing these large signs only in available rest areas and roadside pull-offs, historians in the Education Department could not identify particular sites the way the smaller roadside markers had decades before. They had to present broadly written descriptions of regional history; often referring to places and events many miles away from the location where the visitor stood reading the sign.

In concert with the smaller, site specific roadside markers, these regional descriptions provide a unique educational experience for the traveler stopping to read them. Towns, local historical societies and individuals are still placing the smaller markers throughout communities in New York State.

Deerpark Historical Markers

There are a total of fifty-three historical markers listed in the Town of Deerpark Historian Office inventory. Unfortunately some of the original markers have been destroyed either by cars or vandals. Of the fifty-three markers, thirty-eight are standing. Twenty-three markers date their installation back to the original 1926-1939 New York State Historic Marker project. Twelve of the missing markers have been repaired or replaced by the town. Three new markers, dealing with current happenings that are important to the town, have been installed since the year 2000.



Historical Marker — Town of Deerpark Museum, 25 Grange Road, Huguenot

Replacing an old established sign can be completed by simply purchasing a duplicate of the missing sign. Most of the newly installed markers are replicas that replace the old originals. However if the town wishes to install a new sign to designate a

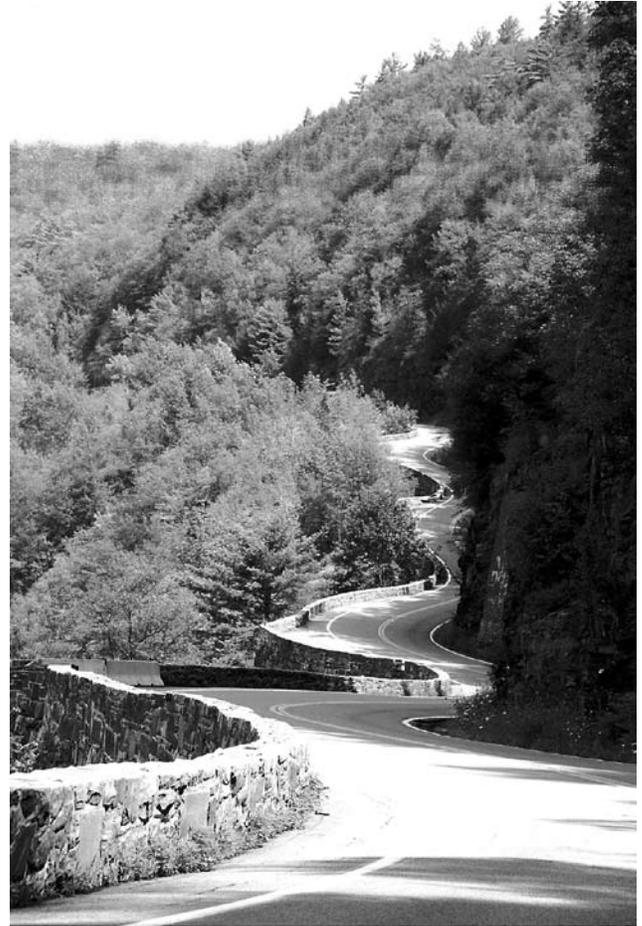
special event, it must be approved by the Orange County Historian's Office. The Hawk's Nest marker is an example of a new sign. Thousands visit the Hawk's Nest every year because of the lovely winding road and scenic overlooks of the Delaware River. On September 21, 2002, all of the towns along the Byway had special dedication ceremonies. As part of the dedication ceremonies, the Town of Deerpark dedicated a sign for the Hawk's Nest.

*Hawk's Nest
Town of
Deerpark*

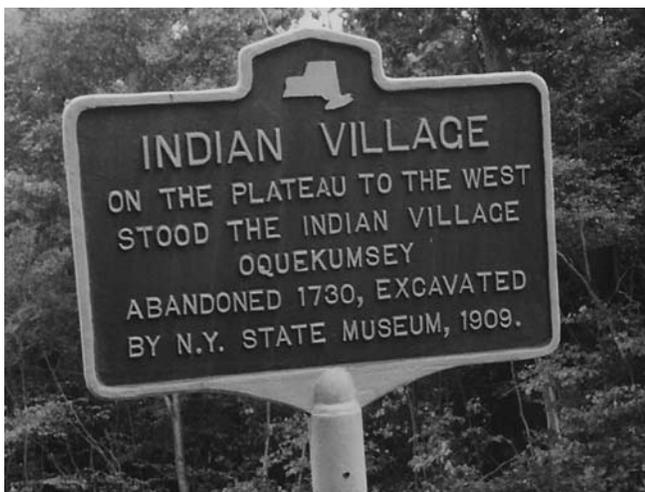
*Route 97
Upper Delaware
Scenic Byway*



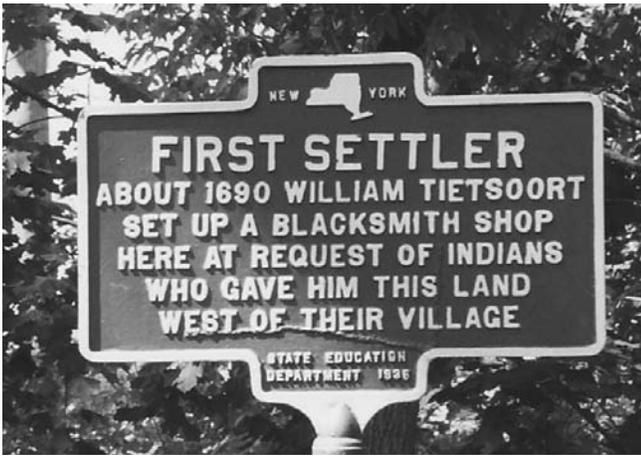
This sign is probably the most photographed historical marker in Deerpark. It can be seen on a number of tourist websites.



Much of Deerpark's history has been preserved on the Town's historical markers to be read by residents and visitors. The following is a sample of Town of Deerpark historical markers:



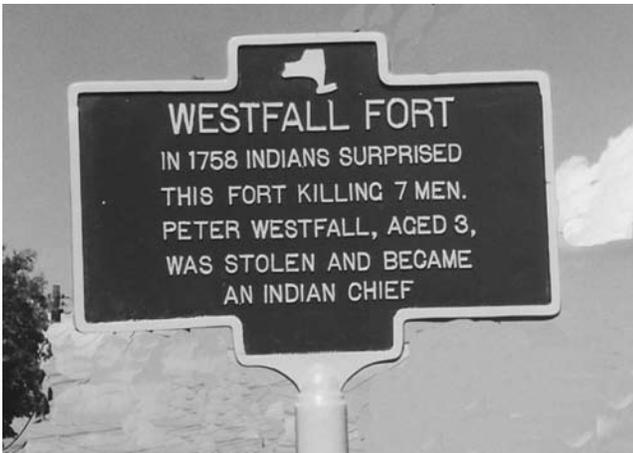
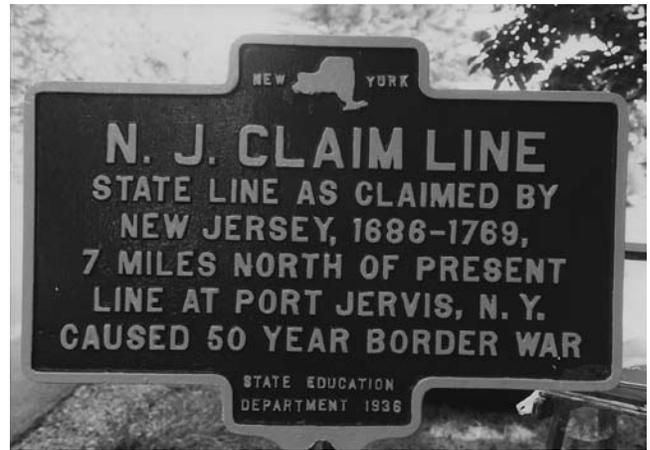
*Lenni Lenape Indians
Natives of present-day Deerpark
Location—Neversink Drive*



*First Dutch Settler
Location—Route 209
Across from Orchard Lane*



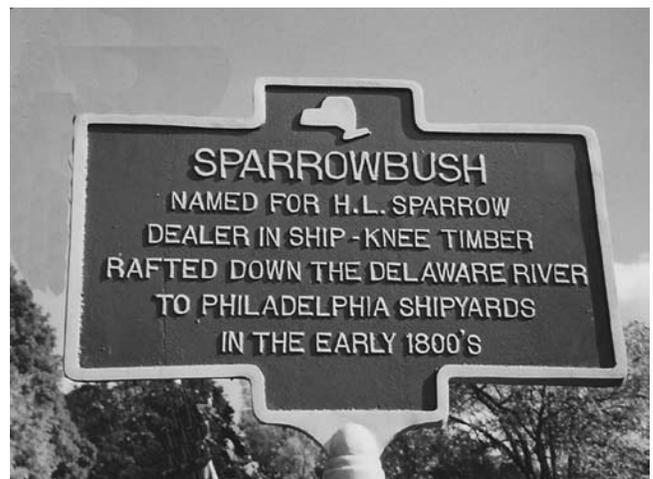
*Border War between
New York and New Jersey →
New Jersey claimed half of Deerpark
Location—Route 209, Godeffroy*



*French and Indian War
1754-1760
← Location—Route 209 just south of
Peenpack Trail*



*Rafting Industry →
Delaware River
Location—Sparrowbush Fire House
Main Street, Sparrowbush*





*Delaware and Hudson Canal History
(1828-1898)
Location— Rt. 97, Sparrowbush*

Eagle Scout Project

The New York State Historian's Office began a pilot program to restore, catalogue, map, and classify the historical markers in the Hudson Valley region. The Town of Deerpark is part of this program. All of the historical markers in town have been catalogued, however most of them need restoration and mapping.

Deerpark is fortunate that Michael Murphy, Troop 68, Cuddebackville will be earning his Eagle Scout by completing a historical marker project for the town.

Since its introduction in 1911, the Eagle Scout rank has been earned by more than two million young men. Eagle Scout is the highest rank attainable in the Boy Scouting program of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). Requirements include earning at least 21 merit badges and demonstrating Scout Spirit through the Boy Scout Oath and Law, service and leadership. The Eagle Scout Service Project is the opportunity for a Scout to demonstrate leadership of others while performing a

project for the benefit of a religious institution, a school, or his community. The Scout plans, organizes, leads, and manages this project which demonstrates both leadership and a commitment to duty. After all the requirements are met, he must complete an Eagle Scout board of review. Eagle Scouts are then presented with a medal and a badge that visibly recognizes the accomplishments of the Scout.

Michael has chosen to help our community by painting and repairing all of the markers along Route 209. He will photograph each sign, and using GPS will note the coordinates of the location of each sign so they can be marked on a topographical map. The Town Historian's Office will provide the necessary resource information for Michael to complete this project.

Upon the completion of the project, documentation will be sent to the New York State Historian's Office, Albany, NY to become part of its pilot program.

§ Brant's Raid Bus Tour

The Town of Deerpark Museum is planning a bus tour on the morning of Saturday, July 21, 2012. The route will follow the path taken by Joseph Brant and the Tories during their second raid on the Neversink Valley. It was this raid which led to the Battle of Minisink at Minisink Ford on July 22, 1779.

Every year there is a Battle of Minisink commem-

orative weekend at Minisink Ford beginning at noon on the Saturday closest to the July 22nd date. This year's memorial will take place on the actual anniversary dates July 21 and July 22. Many do not realize that Brant's destruction in the Neversink Valley led to the battle. In conjunction with the Minisink annual event, the Deerpark Museum is organizing a bus tour to provide the background events which led to the battle.

The trip will follow Brant's route beginning on Route 42 and Peenpack Trail, through Huguenot, along Neversink Drive, through Port Jervis, along the Delaware River and ending in Sparrowbush. A box lunch will be available at the end of the tour for those who wish to continue the route and take part in the Minisink Ford commemorative activities.

The bus tour includes stops at all of the historical markers along the way with reenactors providing historical information at each point. More details about this trip will be available in the June newsletter and on the website www.1863schoolhouse.org. If you are interested, please call (845) 754-8070 or (845) 856-2702



*Revolutionary War
Brant's Second Raid on the Neversink Valley
Location—Black Rock School, Neversink Drive
South of Shin Hollow Rd.*