

# Thistle



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## “The Short Hills Windmill”



In the July 12, 1884 edition of The American Architect and Building News we find the first reference to a little-known and quite unique piece of early Short Hills architecture:

*“Our train, being an express, does its business quickly, and we are soon whizzing past an old wind-mill which lazily revolves, and brings to memory the valiant Don Quixote. Not unlike the thousands of wind-mills in Holland, too, is this one, since its mission is fulfilled in constantly pumping, pumping, pumping and storing water for the little park beyond. Just behind it, and surrounded by extensive grounds, is a large brick mansion, the home of the gentleman to whose indefatigable interest the park owes all its improvements”*

In that same source we have also found the only known picture (left, above) of the Short Hills windmill, which Stewart Hartshorn apparently erected for the purpose of getting water to all of his “little park beyond”. That “little park” was Short Hills park, the early residential area above Hobart Avenue, and much of which is now our Short Hills Park historic district. According to his daughter, Cora Hartshorn, “water and sewage were primary needs” for Stewart Hartshorn for his developing “ideal village”.

The windmill stood on Stewart Hartshorn’s property, near the train tracks by the intersection of Pine Terrace East and Great Oak Drive in Short Hills. That proximity to the train tracks may have been picturesque when riders “whizzed past”, but apparently not always so to the engineer, as we see from an article in the March 3, 1886 Budget: “During the prevalence of the high wind on Friday and Saturday last, grave fears were expressed as to the stability of the wind mill, at Short Hills and the engineer of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad received orders to exercise unusual caution in the immediate vicinity of it, as it was feared it would fall upon the track.” It was eventually no longer used as a windmill and later photos and postcards show the “Old Tower”

## Recent Acquisitions



*(In the 1947 book The Development of a Community, the photo above is identified as "The Old Tower, once a rotary windmill, which stood on the grounds of the late Stewart Hartshorn, near the Short Hills Station. Its original purpose was aiding in the local water supply.")*

looking somewhat like an observation tower (see above), for what later purpose it is not known. It is also not known exactly when the tower came down, but by about 1928-29 long-time resident Tom Collins remembers only a few boards left on the ground where the tower stood. The "valiant" old wind mill was just a memory a mere forty years after it was apparently erected.

The society is very grateful to receive artifacts from generous residents and/or members. We are happy to be able to preserve, share and use for reference, these relics of Millburn-Short Hills history.

Our sincerest thanks to the following people for enriching the lives of all residents by their donations:

- *From Van Reintjes*, several pages of historical photos from a 1971 local calendar
- *From Elaine Becker*, St Rose of Lima's "Add a Little Love" cookbook
- *From Fred Koval*, Delaware, Lackawanna & Western freight bills, large oil can and shovel
- *From the Wyoming Civic Association, courtesy of James Suell*, historical records of the Wyoming Civic Association
- *From James Horn*, "O' New Jersey" book and the loan of several family photos (taken at Parsonage Hill Rd home), to copy
- *From Douglas and Angela Parker*, two Hartshorn-labeled roller window shades
- *From David Siegfried*, three volume set of "The Municipalities of Essex County"
- *From Betty Faddis Cunliffe*, two 1933 envelopes commemorating the Irvington-Millburn road race (bicycles) that started in 1889
- *From Daniel A Pariso, Animal Control Officer*, sixteen 1930s police department accident-scene photos, 1976 Item, and the LWV publication "This is Millburn"
- *From Charles M Hayes, in memory of his grandparents, M/M Charles H Hayes and M/M Anthony Meyerstein*, 1970 "May Fair" calendar, 1957 Millburn Centennial book, and 77 negatives of "historical and important homes, gardens and street scenes from old Short Hills"
- *From Robert Reed*, book (with early sketches of the former Racquets Club building - the Casino), and three volumes of American Heritage
- *From the Summit Historical Society, courtesy of president Patricia Meola*, several press photos, including photos of construction at South Mountain School, the Hilton Hotel, and local politicians. Also, a Mike Loynd Texas Rangers baseball card, and a circa 1907 South Mountain Reservation postcard

- From *The Item*, courtesy of board member Lois Eppinger, bound volumes of *The Item* from 1930-1955
- From Peter Vrahnos, two packages of pencils used at the Hobart Ave school, from the estate of Hattie Lufkin Collict ( a teacher at that school in the early 1900s), a brass token from the Millburn Hotel, loan of a picture of the Millburn Hotel- to copy, small red ration token from the OPA, school bell, two passports for Ethel M Dodge, small glass milk bottle, a wooden nickel, and a blue, glass inkwell dug up at Millburn & Bodwell Aves
- From Renee and John Esposito, ephemera from their former home at 90 Myrtle Ave, including numerous early photos of the house and turn-of-the-century invoices from stores in Millburn
- From Lynne Ranieri, early Harvey Tiger thermometer
- From Jean and Richard Brayton, in memory of Mary Swanston Richardson and Ruth Richardson Rose, Jean's grandmother and mother, nineteen pieces of vintage clothing from the late 1800s-1930s, including several "Titanic"era dresses, a hat from the same era, "flapper" dresses, shoes and early capes
- From Dr and Mrs Robert Lauber, courtesy of board member David Siegfried, two copies of the Millburn centennial book, a brick from the original Racquets Club, editions of the 1968 and 1976 *Item*, Crossroads of the Revolution booklet, Development of a Community booklet, historical pictures from the 1971 "Mayfair" calendar, 1982 ephemera from the Papermill Playhouse, a signed copy of Cora Hartshorn's A Little History of Short Hills and related correspondence, correspondence related to Robert McKim, 1864 Frank Leslie's Lady's Magazine, 1914 WWI battle map, seven Currier and Ives reprints, and 1926 print of the signing of the Declaration of Independence

In the excitement of receiving and savoring donations, we may forget to record them here. If your gift was not acknowledged here, PLEASE contact us at 564-9519.

Please stop in to see these wonderful donations - or ask to see them if they are not displayed at the time.

## **Thirty-Two and a Half Years in Short Hills**

*(The following excerpts are taken from the 1966 autobiographies of Dr. Thayer and Dorothy Smith, who lived at the corner of Forest Drive and Park Place in Short Hills. At the time of the publication of the reminiscences, the Smith's had lived in Short Hills for over thirty-two years, having moved there in about 1924. Excerpts reprinted courtesy of the Smith's daughter, Betsy Morrison)*

"So we started house hunting in Short Hills and found a fairly good-sized house with more than an acre of land. It was at the corner of Forest Drive and Park Place, quite centrally located for a doctor. The house was not modernized in any way. The kitchen had an old coal and gas stove combination, a copper boiler for hot water with a gas burner under it and, in addition to the sink, two laundry tubs. There was much painting and renovating needed, but the house, heated by hot air from a coal furnace in the cellar was basically sound.

...Life moved on serenely until the night of December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1924. This was just a few days after our guest room, which was directly over the kitchen, had been occupied by two sets of guests. We were awakened by a terrific noise, followed by things falling. At first we thought a bomb had been thrown at our house, though all of our neighbors had been very friendly and helpful and we knew no enemies. I first checked our baby Thayer's room and found the door had been blown open, but he was sleeping peacefully in his crib. We then crept down the stairs seeing fallen plaster everywhere. There was no sign of smoke or fire, but we called the Fire Department anyway. We looked into the kitchen - it was a shambles. Our little poodle, Topsy, slept in the kitchen in her basket with her baby puppies. We feared for them, but found they were all miraculously safe, though they had been blown out of the basket and Topsy was temporarily stunned. On the third floor we had a...young girl, whom we had recently engaged to help with cleaning. Mother called to her to put on some clothes and come down, for we began to feel it would be safer if we all got out of the house. She sleepily replied, "It's all right, just my mirror fell down."

What had actually happened was that the copper boiler in the kitchen had blown up and taken the whole side of the kitchen and part of the room overhead as well. The cause of the misfortune was a failure to turn off the gas after heating the water in the boiler the night before...Since there had been no fire, we had no insurance to cover the damage, which cost us \$2,800 to repair. We shudder even

*(Thirty-Two and a Half Years in Short Hills, continued)*

now to think what might have happened had guests still been in that room. The wall was ripped open exactly where the heads of the beds were, and parts of the beds were hanging out in space.

...With order restored, life again moved on serenely...The growth of my practice in Short Hills was not dependent on the growth of the community, but rather on the fact that a real need for a new doctor existed at this period. It certainly took no more than two years for me to acquire a considerable portion of the Short Hills families, especially as I was careful to refer my fairly affluent clientele to specialists, when the services of a specialist seemed to be desirable. One exception to this was in the field of Pediatrics, which I felt I could handle as skillfully as the specialist...The result was that, although my field would be classified as Internal Medicine, I had many small children from infancy up under my care.

...The set-up of my practice in Short Hills was decidedly old-fashioned according to the current customs. My office was in our home which, after the annex was built, afforded a waiting room, consulting room, examining room, dressing room, lavatory, and a small laboratory - all on the ground floor. Patients would drive up our semi-circular driveway and leave their cars parked in front of the office entrance. One day a lady drove up and left her six year old girl in the back seat of the car while she came into the office. Our cat, about to burst with kittens, jumped in and established herself beside the little girl and proceeded to give birth to her litter. Thus, as a bonus for her visit, the lady received some practical education for her child in the physiology of childbirth.

...On one occasion, the fluoroscope proved very useful for family purposes...when Donald was about three years old, we noted that his breath had a strong metallic odor like that of a copper smelter. We were at a loss to explain it, as he didn't seem to be in poor health. So we put him back of the fluoroscope and there, obviously in his stomach, was the wheel of a tootsie car, which he had swallowed. We were not disposed to panic; and in due course, it appeared in his stool, apparently without causing any particular discomfort in its passage.

Another feature of my practice which would be considered old-fashioned today was that I preferred making home calls to having my patients come to my office. To be sure, my home call fee was five dollars and my office fee three dollars; but this was not the sole reason for my preference. I was never good at techniques for terminating an office visit. It frequently happened that I would sit helplessly listening to a voluble patient for a full hour in my office; whereas, at a house visit I could pick up my bag and depart when I saw fit.

*(Thirty-Two and a Half Years in Short Hills, continued)*

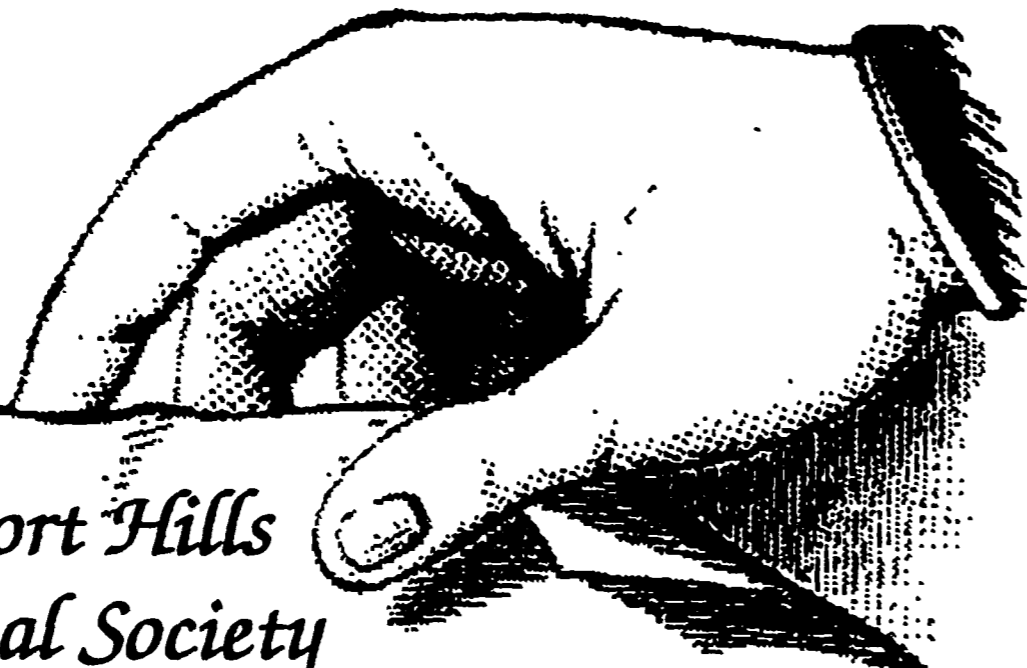
...School connections helped build my practice. I was promptly appointed physician to the Millburn public schools which gave me some prestige and occasional consulting work as to school policies and individual pupil health problems. Later I gave up the public school work and became the physician for both private schools in town; the Short Hills Private School and Buxton School, which Mrs. Danforth Geer started and which was later moved to Williamstown. This involved calls at the schools every Monday morning and, as a precaution against the spread of any contagious disease, frequent inspection of the throats, etc, of the pupils. Children with obvious colds were sent home.

In my capacity as school physician, I was asked to give talks to various P.T.A. groups on such subjects as: "School Health Work", "The Child's Basic Needs: How to Meet Them", ..."Developing Responsibility"...After Mother had started a Nursery School in our house which later became the Wyoming Church Nursery School, she and I started the Wyoming Church Community Clinic. Here we gave health education to young mothers, examined their children, and gave free preventive inoculation against diphtheria, whooping cough, and tetanus and small pox vaccinations...we persisted and got a very substantial number of children protected (who might or might not have sought such protection from private sources). This clinic was later turned over to the Millburn Neighborhood House.

...Mother and I were both engaged in many religious and community activities. While we were...members of the Wyoming Presbyterian Church, I felt that something more inspirational was needed in the Sunday morning church bulletin; and, with the ready consent of Norman Sibley, the minister, I prepared a leaflet entitled, "Finding God Through the Beautiful" to be inserted in the bulletin each week. This contained extracts of beautiful, religiously significant, poetry or prose and, also, short accounts depicting the origins of the more familiar hymns. For this material I traveled to Madison practically every week to consult the library of Drew Theological Seminary.

...My other civic activities included the one-time presidency of the Millburn Community Council. During the war, I served on the Civil Defense Board, attending frequent meetings in the Millburn Town Hall. On July 4, 1932, the Millburn Bicentennial Committee produced a...pageant. I took the part of George Washington, riding first on the grounds of the town park on a white horse, and then dancing the stately minuet with a group of appropriately costumed fellow townsmen and townswomen.

*(If you enjoyed this and might like to help with oral histories, we would love to hear from you! We have more names of people we would love to talk to, than we have interviewers! We also have tapes that have not yet been transcribed, so please call 564-9519 if you would like to help with this fun project)*



*The Millburn-Short Hills  
Historical Society*

*cordially invites you to  
the next event in the Fredrickson Lecture Series, at*

*Dawson's Auction House  
in Morris Plains, NJ*

*Reception, Lecture, and Appraisal  
on Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm*

*After a complimentary wine and cheese reception,  
Linda Dawson will explain the auction process,  
what's hot in the auction market, and 'auctions  
and the Internet'. Join us for a behind-the-  
scenes tour of Dawson's, preview an upcoming  
jewelry auction and bring an item for a free  
appraisal.*

*For reservations, call the society at 564-9519 or  
Valerie Bleier at Dawson's at 984-6900*

## Care, Handling and Storage of Books

*(The following information was taken from the Internet Web site  
[www.rarebooks.org](http://www.rarebooks.org) and is presented in response to inquiries as to the "Care, Handling  
and Storage of Books")*

Damage to a book is cumulative. The repeated incorrect handling and storage of a book can quickly transform a new book into a worn or even an unusable one, while proper handling and storage in a stable, cool, clean, non-humid environment, can prolong its life.

The environment is a major concern because unacceptable levels of temperature and humidity accelerate deterioration. For example, the high humidity in an attic or basement can promote mold growth, cockle pages, and attract insects. Extremely low humidity, radiators, can dry out leather bindings.

Direct sunlight, with a large component, will fade leather and dull green and red leather spine of a book.

Dust, adversely shelve their from brightly lit windows or damp exterior walls.

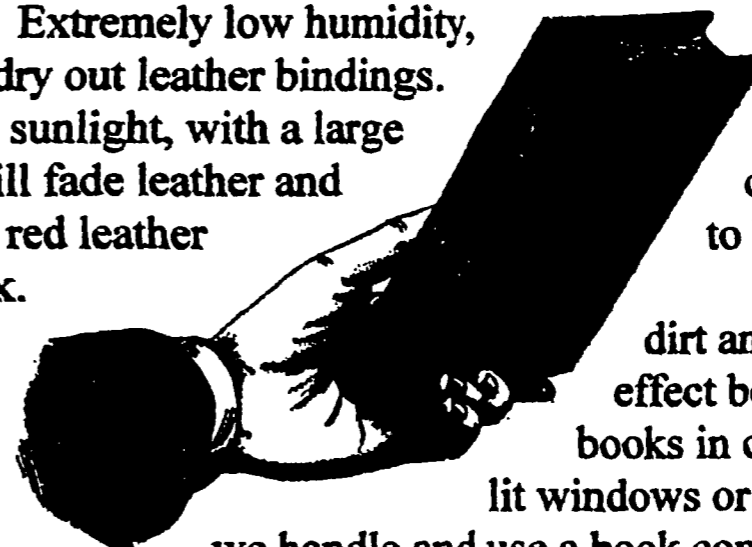
How we handle and use a book contributes to its longevity. If a book will not lay flat, do not use force to open it further. The covers should always be supported when the book is open.

Many books are damaged by the habit of pulling the books off the shelf from the top of the spine. It is a much better practice to push the two adjoining books inward and remove the book by holding the spine.

Place similar-sized books, vertically next to each other on the shelf, packing them neither too loosely or tightly.

The use of paper clips, folding down pages and marking pens to make notations, should be discouraged since clips will rust or crimp the pages and pens often bleed through, obscuring text on adjoining pages.

The practice of using rubber bands or string to tie up a book should be avoided because they often cut into brittle pages and damage fragile covers. An excellent way to protect fragile books is with a box that is custom made to the dimensions of the book. Books with dry flaking leather covers can be wrapped in paper or polyester jackets to keep the fragments from transferring to hands, adjoining books or the rest of the pages.



ultra-violet (UV) cloth; blue leather fades to a to brown, especially along the

dirt and grime from handling can effect books as well. Many people books in closed glass cases away

# The Morris County Traction Company and Millburn

by S.T. Brewer, Jr.

In recounting the history of Taylor Park, the 1938 article reprinted in the April 1996 Thistle mentions the efforts of Morris County Traction Company to acquire rights-of-way in Millburn. As the article notes, Morris County Traction Company ultimately held extensive rights, leading to a widening of Main Street and other physical changes needed to facilitate the company's streetcar operations.

These references call to mind the days when streetcars were a regular part of life in Millburn and New Jersey as a whole. Early in this century, with the automobile age just dawning, it was commonplace for Millburn residents to board a streetcar and ride to Newark for shopping and entertainment. In those days Newark was a vibrant, attractive city whose downtown had several fine department stores fully comparable to stores in New York City, many notable smallshops of all kinds and numerous other cultural attractions and amusements. With Newark's excellent shopping, good restaurants, ice cream parlors, bakeries and the like, that city was a most pleasant place to spend a long afternoon, or even an entire day. As for the ubiquitous trolleys, they could also be ridden to other popular destinations, such as a huge amusement park in Irvington, towns to the West such as Madison and Morristown, and even the resorts at Lake Hopatcong.

The Historical Society is fortunate to own a \$1,000 first mortgage gold bond, interest on which was paid at 5%, issued by Morris County Traction Co. in 1905. A thirty year instrument maturing in 1935, the bond in fact was redeemed before its maturity date, as coupons for the second (December) 1922 interest payment and all later payments remain attached to the certificate. This very interesting bond certificate was donated in February 1993 by Harry Silverstein, Esq. of Millburn. No doubt this bond was issued as part of a major debt financing program undertaken by Morris County Traction Company to fund capital improvements in its operating territory, including Millburn.

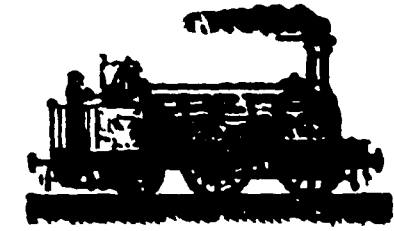
Noted historian John Cunningham devoted the 14th segment of his epic 1951 series on the history of railroads in NJ to the street railways that traversed virtually all of the state in the early 20th century. His article includes a nice undated photograph of a Morris County Traction Co. trolley in Madison, probably around the year 1910. Cunningham reports that Morris County's Traction system "ran from Elizabeth to Lake Hopatcong, with branches shooting off in all directions, like the legs of a centipede." A junction in Maplewood with trolley lines operated by Public Service Company enabled, for example, a Jersey City resident to go by streetcar to the shores of Lake Hopatcong.

The trolley era began to wane in the roaring '20s, resulting in a period of consolidation and abandonment. Absorbing many smaller trolley companies, Public Service became the primary operator. However, Public Service soon embarked on the wholesale substitution of motorbuses for streetcars. Historian Cunningham suggests it was these motorbuses that had, by 1928, "pushed the company (Morris County Traction Company) completely out of the picture."

Be that as it may, for more than three decades the trolleys were a vital and visible part of life in Millburn. For those of us with a nostalgic streak and a special fondness for rail conveyances, it would be sublime indeed to hear a streetcar's "clang" resound in Millburn once more. That, of course, is pure fantasy, but the ornate Morris County Traction Company bond certificate, with its detailed engraved vignette showing two of the company's trolleys, is a marvelous memento of streetcar days in our town. We are grateful to Mr. Silverstein for donating it to the society.

*And we are grateful to former society president, Ted Brewer, for contributing this delightful article on a bygone era in Millburn.*

## We're Still Chugging Along...



In the prior months we have made these improvements and/or additions to our "new" building:

- a new carpet for the museum area, of a style appropriate to the age of the facility
- new folding chairs to accommodate audiences at our programs
- a (used) tabletop copier, for the convenience of researchers
- a phone/fax
- a second, older map case for newspapers and maps, from auction
- a period safe (fire protection for some of our more valuable documents), from auction
- an Apple Macintosh computer and printer (donated)
- a TV and VCR

Member support has been enthusiastic and gratifying, but we still need help to complete the job of restoring and furnishing our new facility. We are not yet able to complete the tiny kitchen facility (enabling the society and other groups to comfortably use the building for meetings). Display cases, book cases, tables and chairs, and video equipment are also needed to make this a functioning educational museum. If you are able to help with any of the upcoming projects:

- ⊠ All contributions will be acknowledged in our upcoming commemorative journal
- ⊠ All contributions are cumulative
- ⊠ All contributions are fully tax-deductible
- ⊠ All contributions are greatly appreciated
- ⊠ **Donations of \$500 and up will be recognized on a permanent plaque at the museum**

If you can help us complete the restoration and make a lasting contribution to the town, please send contributions to (and checks payable to): **The Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society, PO Box 243, Short Hills, NJ 07078**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 Donor

\_\_\_\_\_ \$250.00 Patron

\_\_\_\_\_ \$100.00 Sponsor

\_\_\_\_\_ \$500.00 Benefactor

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

\_\_\_\_\_ I WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF THE PROJECT

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