

## **Port Mercer Canal House**

Owner: Division of Parks and Forestry

Location: Lawrence Township at Province Line and Quaker Roads at the D&R Canal

Leased by: Lawrence Historical Society.

Income: Sublease to upstairs tenant (rental income stays with house)

Current Uses: Museum on first floor, tenant on second floor, House is frequently open for public tours and local events

History: The Port Mercer Canal House was built in the 1830's next to a swing bridge over the Delaware and Raritan Canal to house the bridgetender and his family. The D&R Canal provided a safe and short waterway from Philadelphia to New York City from its opening in 1834 until 1932. From approximately 1900 to 1934, the bridgetender was John Arrowsmith, who lived there with his wife and eight children. The D&R Canal and the canal houses on its banks are now a New Jersey State Park. The Lawrence Historical Society has restored the Port Mercer Canal House to the 1890-1920-time period. The downstairs kitchen addition was made circa 1900. The beautiful gardens, which include a pre-Civil War outhouse, are a particular highlight of the June open house event. The house now serves as headquarters for the Society. The Canal House and the Port Mercer area are listed on the National Register of Historic Places

## **Cape May Light**

Location: Cape May Point

Owner: Division of Parks and Forestry

Leased by: Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts since 1986. (609) 884-5404

Current Uses: Open to the Public as a Museum & Viewing Platform

Income: Entrance fee, Grants (approximately \$2 million to date)

History: The present tower, which is the third documented lighthouse at the southern tip of New Jersey, has always been an attention-getting landmark as well as an aid-to-navigation for mariners. Because it is adjacent to the community of Cape May Point and just two miles from the city of Cape May, it has drawn visitors throughout its history. In 1882, the Cape May Ocean Wave reported that "the gentleman superintendent in charge [of the lighthouse], Mr. Samuel Stillwell, takes pleasure in showing visitors who have the nerve and strength of limb to the top, the interior of the lantern, and explaining the interesting operations of the light. A very picturesque view of the sea, bay, and country may also be obtained from the giddy heights of the edifice." In 1897, the newspaper made it clear that a visit to the lighthouse was a requisite part of one's vacation: "One of the interesting features to Cape May summer visitors is a journey to the top of the light house."

## **Prallsville Mills**

Owner: Division of Parks and Forestry

Leased by: Delaware River Mill Society since 1976

Contact: Edie Sharp (609) 397-3586

Current Uses: Cultural and environmental events attracting wide spread participation  
Concerts, art exhibitions, antique shows, holiday parties, school fund-raiser auctions, meetings, as well as private parties. (Mills also provide public bathrooms for canal path users)

Income: Fees for use of the site are used for maintenance and repair. The Delaware River Mill Society has received grants from the New Jersey Historic Trust in amounts of \$146,426, \$49,129, and \$343,650 for restoration work at the site.

History: The Prallsville Mills represent a village industrial complex as it changed and developed from the early 19th through the early 20th centuries. Ideally located adjacent to the Delaware River and the Delaware and Raritan Canal, Prallsville is one of the last sites of its kind remaining in the state

## **Whitesbog**

Owner: Division of Parks and Forestry

Leased by: Whitesbog Preservation Trust since 1990. The Whitesbog Preservation Trust handles subleasing of the residential buildings (609) 893-4646 [Whitesbog@hotmail.com](mailto:Whitesbog@hotmail.com)

Current Uses: Residential The Whitesbog Preservation Trust offers an information kiosk within the village commons and self- guided tours including a nature trail, a driving tour, and a tree trail. The Trust's Seasonal Series interpretive events include regularly scheduled tours, walks, hikes, and a canoe trip. Annual Trust events include the Blueberry Festival, two cross-country runs, Halloween in the Pines, a candlelight house tour, and Whistling Swan tours. The Trust also provides volunteer opportunities for groups or individuals and offers specially-scheduled group educational, recreational, and informative programs for youths or adults.

The Pinelands Institute for Natural and Environmental Studies (P.I.N.E.S.), a program of Rowan University in cooperation with Lebanon State Forest, offers science and social studies field trips to students.

P.I.N.E.S. is dedicated to offering students of all ages a better understanding of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. Courses offered include The New Jersey Cranberry Industry, Life in a Company Town, Water Quality, Fire Ecology, Pine Barrens Ecology, Carnivorous Plants, and the Ecology of a Freshwater Wetland

Income: Rent from residential properties stays with Whitesbog for repairs/upkeep. The Whitesbog Historic Trust has just been notified of a \$379,784 grant award from the New Jersey Historic Trust

History: The resources in Whitesbog village, dating from 1882 to 1915, are all frame structures associated with the cranberry and blueberry industries. The business, originally founded in 1857, expanded to 3,000 acres and 30 structures by the turn of the century. Elizabeth White developed the cultivated blueberry that is grown and eaten today.

## **Vass Farm**

- Owner: Division of Fish and Wildlife
- Location: Route 521 Hardwick Township at White Lake Wildlife Management Area
- Leased by: Hardwick Township Historical Society in 2004. Lease (less than one acre of property) acquired by Green Acres, required State House Commission Approval. Historical Society had to demonstrate viability of project to obtain lease from Fish and Wildlife. Contact Roberta Dodd, (908) 479-1964.
- Income: Grants – Warren County and NJHT <http://www.njht.org/profiles/vass-farmstead.html> Site Management Grant from NJHT Currently Recipient of a \$266,437 Capital Grant from NJHT
- Current Uses: Restoration of House and Barn in progress.
- History: John Vass, a German immigrant with an expansive family, erected this limestone farmhouse in 1812. Members of the Vass family were extensive landowners and involved in local politics, ice production and mining enterprises, in addition to farming. The farm remained in family ownership until 1922. Subsequent owners used the property for recreational uses. The land on which the farmstead now sits was purchased through the Green Acres program and is now part of the county's 665-acre White Lake Wildlife Management Area, a popular fishing and recreational destination.