

The dedication of the park was on June 6, 1926. There was ^{replica of an} Indian Village, ^{men dressed as} American and Hessian troops, tents, teepees.

Just after 12 noon the rains came down. Running makeup on Indians.

Celebration and activities moved to The Old Log Cabin - a dance hall ~~near~~ route #29. Winklers Band played. *Dedication was held indoors*

The original gateway ^f was across from Perrones. The plaque ^{cost \$750} was from Tiffany in New York as were the eagles over the gateway.

Donations to the Park throughout the years are as follows:

Colonial Garden	Daughters of the American Revolution (Ferry House rear)	- 1926
Flag Pole	N.J. Sons of the Revolution	1926
Thirteen Elm Trees	Thirteen Original Colonies (between Ferry House and Church)	1926
Monument --N.J.	Society of D.A.R. -between Nelson House and River Bridge)	1926
Native Stone Monument	N.J. Society of Cincinnati - #109 (?) (main road along)	
Pump	(Sons of the American Revolution (just northeast of the Plaza)	1927
Honeyman Memorial	Mountain -N.J. P.O.S. OF A West of Ferry House along canal	1930
Elm Trees	George Washington Chapter of D.A.R. Opposite Ferry House west	1932
Elm(9)-Oak(1)	N.J. Garden Clubs	1932
George Washington Memorial Arboretum	, Charles Mathrop Peck & Arthur Newton Peck	1932
Gateway to Canal	Ramble & Tablets - N.J. Society of Colonial War	1932
" " " "	" & Eagles - N.J. Society of Colonial Dames of America	1932
Maple Tree (from Mt. Vernon)	Bicentennial Commission Large triangle plot in formal park)	1932
Trees along Sullivan Drive	to Sulliaven Grove	1932

- Trees along Sullivan Drive to Sullivan Grove 1932
 Daughters of American Colonists (elm)
 2. Mercer County 4 H clubs (oak)
 3. Jenny Jackson Society (oak)
 4. N.J. Daughters of the Revolution (oak)
 5. O.U. Americans, Trenton District (Oak)
 6. Mercer County Pamona Grange (elm)
 7. Jr. O.U.A.M., Centmy Council (elm)
 8., 9, 10, 11. Dept. set out (oak)
 12. Burlington Council P.O.S. of A (elm)
- Scudder Oak Large Triangle formal park Sullivan Dr. 1932
 Julia Scudder in memory of Amos Scudder
- Sund Dial McKonkey Gardens
 General society Daughter of the
 Revolution
- Stone Gateways(2) Nursery
- Cherry tree Mercer Furrier 4-H Club 1964
 (between McKondy Ferry House &
 Flagpole)

Arb.- one third of the at had to be relevelled and reseeded. Took
 about three months. Spaded, roll, rake and seed. Found arrow
 heads, spearheads and a hatchet.

Memorial Arboretum

The area for the arboretum was cleared by hand. Two men pulled a handmower while the one steered. Donated by Charles Lathrop Pack, ^{Princeton} *Lakewood* and his son Arthur Newton Pack, to the citizens of New Jersey. the Arboretum containing about 1,000 trees and 1,500 small bushes and shrubs, all of which are native to New Jersey or so commonly found within the borders of the state as to be considered as typical New Jersey species. The trees were planted, ^{on over 8 acres of land} to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the birth of George Washington and to stand as a living, grouping monument to him who fought for the life and growth of a new nation. At one time there were paths through the Arboretum, but they continuously washed away after rain. *Designed by H.B. Fiske, Passaic, N.J.*

WASHINGTON CROSSING STATE PARK, N.J
HISTORY

The area now known as Washington Crossing State Park was once the campground of the Leni Lenapi and the Delaware Indians. Later it was settled by farmers from England and the European mainland.

*Location
N. of Trent
along Del
Titusville*

The idea for a park on the site where Washington crossed the Delaware seems to have originated with Mr. ^{William} Doyle of the Knights of Columbus of Trenton. It may also be that the donation of a marker by the Society of Cincinnati aroused interest in establishing a park at the site. A Committee of the Knights of Columbus held a public meeting at the Taylor Opera House in Trenton, N.J. on October 12, 1909. At that time the resolution recommending to the governor of New Jersey that a commission be appointed for the purpose of properly marking the point where Washington crossed the Delaware River preceding the Battle of Trenton.

General ~~reaction~~ reaction was favorable and in 1909 Gov. Wilson appointed a commission to plan the park. *Gov. Fort*

It appears that the Washington's Crossing project was inaugurated by "An act creating the Washington's Crossing Commission and defining its powers and duties." (Chapter 33 P.L. 1910) By this act the Governor was authorized to appoint 50 persons to constitute "A Board of Commissioners by the name and style of 'Washington's Crossing Commission' This commission had power to select such lands at Washington's Crossing as in their opinion were suitable for the purpose of a State Park and was authorized "to expend such sums of money as may be included in any appropriation bill", Apparently no appropriation was made. Several meetings were held but no minutes are available. Col. Libbey was the secretary was sent all records. *It may be that this group was too*

large to conduct business. *the original commission called*
for fifty members. That may be the reason why the work went so slowly.
The first of the purchases was the Blackwell ~~farm~~ farm which is presently
the Park Superintendent's residence.

Several options received by the commission were allowed to lapse. In 1912 Mr. Strittmatter who had ^{held} ~~waited for several years to sell~~ his property ~~to the state~~ hoping to sell it to the state, arranged to give most of it to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Trenton. ~~At~~ St. George R.C. Church now stands on that ground. The state did, however purchase the McKonkey Ferry House and the present Flag Barn. In 1930's the original roof of the barn was removed and the present one built.

The original plans for the park included the erection of a substantial memorial bridge for both vehicular and foot traffic. The Park itself would be on both the Pennsylvania and New Jersey side - not less than half a mile inland along the Delaware River and extending at least a quarter mile/along the ~~Delaware River~~ and restoration from the river on the New Jersey side. The purchase of the farm house ~~building~~ in which General Washinton breakfasted while en route to Trenton and the acquiring of Scudder's Falls, the ~~er~~ erection of a monument in the park, landscaping, road construction and purchase as a national camp grounds.

A second commission was organized under Senate Bill No. 52, and the first meeting was held on June 14, 1912. (2) This act
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~~In~~ This act was superseded by "An act to authorize the acquisition, by purchase or condemnation, of lands for a park and the erection of a monument commemorative of Washinton Crossing the river Delaware and for the appointment of a commission to acquire said lands and erect such monument. (Chapter 32, P.L. ¹⁹¹² ~~1911~~) By this act the Governor, the Comptroller, the Treasurer and five citizens of the State, to be named by the Governor, were constituted a commission with power to acquire not exceeding 100 acres of land at or near Washington's Crossing and to erect a suitable monument on said lands when acquired at a total cost for land and monument not exceeding 25,000. This sum was regularly appropriated.

The act provided that the lands acquired "shall be kept and maintained as a public park and shall be known as Washington Crossing Park and that the commission hereby appointed shall have the power to fence, grade and improve said lands." It contains no repealer of the former act.

The commission was composed

of the Governor (Wilson) State Treasurer, State Comptroller, L. V. Silver of Trenton, William L. Doyle of Trenton, Col. William N. Libbey of Princeton, Charles Blackman of Atlantic City and the Rev. Jesse Jaroloman of Jersey City. Commissioner Silver was elected Secretary, Commissioner Doyle

was elected Chairman. The commission agreed to procure surveys and other information gathered by the former Commission in trying to procure land at Washington's Crossing. The commission agreed to procure surveys and other information gathered by the former Commission in trying to procure land at Washington's Crossing.

~~SECRET~~

A map prepared by the first commission is referred to in minutes July 15, 1912 but not found.

Charles Leavitt, Jr. was engaged as landscapist (Minutes Dec. 3, 1912) his plans accepted and \$2500 paid him (Minutes Jan. 13, 1913.) Mr. Leavitt "retained" (minutes Feb. 3, 1913). In a letter from Mr. Doyle to Col. Libbey is a note "Outline of Our understanding as to employment of Mr. Chas W. Leavitt, Engineer of Park Plans". This memorandum is not found.

On June 16, 1921 Charles Leavitt, the architect, wrote Alfred Gaskill, Director of the Department of Conservation and Development informing him that he had ^{of the} prepared a landscape Plan ^{that he had prepared} ~~was found in the~~ records.

Mr. Leavitt gave the following account of the original plans:

When the original plan~~s~~ was drawn by me in 1913 for the development of the park, land had been acquired east of the canal running along Pennington Road to Bear Tavern. The ferry house, the land immediately around it, the two adjoining houses~~s~~ lots, the land between the high road and the canal, and between the canal and the river's edge had not been obtained. All these, however, were indicated in my first design.

Now, however, that an area so much smaller is contemplated for the park, it is essential that the ten acres authorized for development be carefully chosen. My map shows the ground I recommend. This land extends north from the Pennington Road about twelve hundred and sixty feet on both sides of the State Highway and paralleling it, in a strip approximately three hundred and fifty feet wide. The whole plot, as it should has the effect of bordering the river bank. It commands the land to the east, over which the troops started their Trenton march after landing, but more important, it commands the river and the river banks on both sides, and the McKonkey Ferry house.

I can see no objection to disposing of the property the State owns lying to the east of this acreage. It is superfluous from the historic standpoint of the actual crossing and the cost of upkeep would necessarily be high for so great an area. If this land, when sold, is subdivided, the house lots on the east end could have access to the indicated park road through rights-of-way and bring high valuations.

My design provides an entrance to the park at the intersection of the Pennington Road with the State Highway, which is the first warning coming up from Trenton of the crossing, and here I propose a treatment of Colonial gates and walls with a commemorative tablet. There is a dangerous curve, as the Mercer County Highway Engineer has already noted, in the Pennington Road, and this should be straightened. In fact, I show the Pennington Road brought in at right angles with the river road, not only for practical purposes, but to obtain a balanced design. The park road of eighteen feet of pavement curves up the meadow in a graceful line, following the ground closely so as to avoid as much change

change in the original topography as possible.

About two hundred and sixty-five feet south of the McKonkey Ferry House, the road widens out to an overlook, which point is the natural crest in the topography and would provide with a termination and approach, well up on the hillside, the possible memorial bridge. Should the bridge cross the river parallel to the existing old bridge, it would reach the Pennsylvania side somewhere between the old Pennsylvania tavern and the old Pennsylvania Ferry House to the north. I cannot urge too strongly, in the development of Washington Crossing Park, the cooperation of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. With the overlook at elevation ninety-nine, the bridge would cross the railroad, the canal and the highway with sufficient head room.

A little Colonial garden is shown opposite the McKonkey ferry house and to the north, the Lambertville gate, which is not accented as much as the Trenton gate to the south. The State Highway, to my mind, needs particular treatment to establish an old-time feeling. Bordering the pavement, strips of grass ten feet wide are shown, with rows of large shade trees and low walls, which in some places would retain of the very beautiful native sandstone.

To me, it seems most essential, from an historic and sentimental standpoint, that the park, as a memorial, in addition to the ten acres just described, should include intact the land down to the water's edge for the whole park frontage, for as far as New Jersey was concerned, the water's edge and the ferry house were the stage on which this most important drama was enacted. Already bungalows and other undesirable buildings are creeping down the river bank, Yet it is the very essence of the memorial that the shore should be kept as in Washington's day. To date the State has not acquired the shore. That should be the next legislative action."

Gaskill
The Secretary filed with the Comptroller a schedule for an appropriation of \$125,000 (Minutes Jan. 13, 1913)

A tablet, presumable to meet the statutory requirement that a "monument" be erected on the property, was authorized (Min. Jan. 13, 1913) ordered (Min. May 6, 1913) and the order revoked (Min. June 4, 1913)

Several reproductions of the landscapist's plan appear to have been prepared and an electrotype of the plan was ordered (Min. Feb. 3) No record of the whereabouts of any of this property.

The buildings on the Blackwell farm and the landscapist's plan were insured. (Min. Feb. 3, 1913)

The Commission had a conference with Pennsylvania interests relative to a park on the other side of the river, and to a bridge proposed to be built by the federal Government connecting the New Jersey park with the Pennsylvania park. (Min. Feb. 3, 1913)

Minutes April 7, 1913 record approval of a bill of \$226.80 for photographs. No record of them or the negative.

The minutes show that governor Fiedler and Comptroller Edwards frequently attended the meetings of the Commission and that they approved the plans for the park. (6/4/13)

The minutes of Jan. 22, 1914 refer to an annual report but no copy has been found.

The bill to enlarge the powers of the Commission referred to above was approved for enactment Jan. 22, 1914 and introduced as Senate No. 108 (Min. Nov. 24, 1914) This bill was reported out by a Committee substitute. It gives the Adjutant General the place of the

It gives the Adjutant General the place of the Governor on the Commission but appears to be otherwise as noted above.

Reported that the house had been rented and Mr. Doyle directed to rent the farm if possible (Min. Nov. 24, 1914) This was accomplished by the agreement with George E. Anderson.

Plans - 1921 - Gaskill