

Thank you
2019-2020 Farmington Town Council
Sally Foxwell –Farmington Day Committee
Rep. Shannon Morris,
Rep. Bobby Outten (Retired)
Sen. Dave Wilson,
Commissioner Eric Buckson
Commissioner Terry Pepper, Commissioner
Glen Howell, Mike Pettit Demanage Kent
County Admin,
John Passwaters – Passwaters Landscaping
Bridgeville, DE
Ivins Florist – Farmington, DE
Bonnie Hughes, Sandy Vincent
Outten & Teetsie Collins
Tony Favata – Keller Williams Realty
Central Delaware
K.L. Vincent, Angie Hicks
Butler Fuel, Clarence Foxwell, Jr. Foxwell,
Smitty's Auto Repair
DSWA, Republic, Peninsula
Anthony's Collision, Tractor Supply
Hillary Welliver –Kent County Public Library
Barry Baker- Farmington Asphalt Plant

1st Annual Farmington Day
Saturday September 7, 2019



“Small Town Big History”
Farmington, Delaware 19942

In Loving Memory of RuthAnn (Vincent) Messick who preserved and collected the history of Farmington, DE during her lifetime.

“Visit the Farmington Historical Society display in front of the FVFC Annex Building.”

2019-2020 Farmington Town Council & 1st Annual Farmington Day Committee

Richie Smith - Mayor

Jimmy Anthony – Council

Cindy Bolin – Vice Mayor

Chuck Ivins – Council - Historian

Madonna Holt –Council

Krystal Rust -Council

History:

Farmington, founded at the time of the coming of the railroad in 1855, was originally called Flatiron, but the name was changed in 1858 to Farmington. Farmington was incorporated in 1909. Located in the middle of a fine fruit and grain growing agriculture area, the village prospered.

Enterprise included a flourmill, two canneries and a fruit evaporator. Residents attended two churches Salem Methodist and Bethany church of the Brethren.

In 1835 children attended school near Farmington. Later a schoolhouse was built in the village. In 1928, a brick schoolhouse was erected.

On May 27, 1914, the village had a disaster when sparks from a locomotive landed on the roof of a basket factory. The fire spread to other buildings.

Even though Farmington today is smaller than it was in the 1880s, residents are still proud of their community. Farmington Volunteer Fire Company was organized in 1951 and the Farmington Ladies Auxiliary in 1954.

Notable Residents:

- Governor William Tharp – Governor of Delaware 1847-1851
- Hon. Charles Murphy – 1st President Kent-Sussex Fair 1919 (Delaware State Fair) & State Senator
- Dr. William Waples Day – Farmington Doctor
- Willis Fleming Harrington – Vice President of DuPont Company
- Hon. William Watson Harrington – Register of Wills, Deputy Attorney General, Attorney General, Judge

Farmington Day Ceremony and Ribbon Cutting Agenda

11:00 AM (Farmington Park)

- Welcome- Mayor Richie Smith
- Prayer – Rev. Jody Gunn – Pastor Bethany Church of Brethren Farmington, DE
- Presentation of Colors & Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag – Harrington American Legion Post 7
- Nation Anthem – Former Miss Delaware Heather Contant
- History of Farmington – Town Historian Chuck Ivins
- Dedication of the Farmington Historical Marker – Chuck Ivins & Katie Hall Delaware Public archives
- Farmington Park Dedication & Ribbon Cutting – Richie Smith & Town Council
- Farmington Tree Dedication in honor of Bob & Ruth Ann (Vincent) Messick and Ronald & Beverly Vincent. Life Long residents of Farmington that gave countless hours to our community.
- Sen. Dave Wilson will Auction off Delaware Tag (3784)

12:30 AM (Farmington School)

- Farmington Basket Ball Court Dedication – Richie Smith & Town Council
- Farmington Play Ground Dedication – Krystal Rust & Town Council

“Please visit our silent auction fundraiser in front of the Farmington School.”

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Attention Researchers: The Research Room will be closed on Thursday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day. More Info →
(<https://archives.delaware.gov/2019/06/20/research-room-notice/>)

Archives Menu

(<https://delaware.gov>)



Farmington



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RG #6035

The 1800s

In 1855, Governor William Tharp, a Treasurer of the Delaware Railroad, was instrumental in having a railroad station built near his home to serve the southern Kent County farming community. A town formed here which was initially called Flat Iron, but within ten years, the name was changed to Farmington. To assist in preserving the agricultural products prior to shipping, canning and fruit evaporating plants were built, and the presence of these factories caused the population to increase to its high of 500 just before the end of the nineteenth century. When these plants closed, the number of Town residents decreased to just over 100 where it remains today.



(<https://cdm16397.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15323coll6/id/24652/r>)
RG 8005-000-015-228P: The Farmington School

1900 – 1949

The Town of Farmington was first incorporated in 1909 as the "Commissioners of the Town of Farmington." The Town's boundaries were specified in the Incorporating Act and formed a parallelogram around the intersection of the railroad line with a public road which led to the community of Vernon. Five Commissioners, who had resided in the Town for at least a year, were to be elected to serve two-year, staggered terms. Voters were males over 21 who had paid their taxes. The Commission was to meet four times yearly, presided over by one of their members who was elected President. The President was also to oversee the streets of the Town and serve as the supervisor of any Town employees as well as receive complaints of nuisances and violations of Town ordinances. Town officials included a Tax Collector and Treasurer, who could be the same person, an Alderman, an Assessor, a Clerk, and a Constable. The powers vested in the Town's Commissioners included passing ordinances for the good government of the Town, improving the streets, paving the sidewalks, protecting ornamental trees, repairing and making public pumps, and attending to all other matters related to the welfare of the Town. Kent County was to provide \$200 yearly to assist with street maintenance and owners of property were to pay the costs of laying sidewalks on the property adjacent to the street. The Commissioners were given full control of the ditches and gutters and all ditch companies were prohibited from taxing individual residents of the Town. Among the duties of the Alderman and Constable were suppressing riotous, turbulent, disorderly or noisy assemblages or gatherings of persons in or at any building used for any fair, festival, concert or any social, literary or religious meeting, or in the streets or lanes of the Town at any time, and to prevent all gatherings which may obstruct or interfere with the free use of the streets or sidewalks. The amount of taxes to be levied yearly was to be not more than \$300; this included the tax on real and personal property and the per capita tax which was to be not more than fifty cents imposed on all males over the age of 21. Vacant lots of over one acre were exempt from taxation unless they had a

house in which case they would be taxed as one lot. Machinery in a factory was not to be taxed although the real estate and buildings were taxable. The Commissioners did not have the authority to incur debt on the Town greater than the amount it was to receive in taxes.¹

Ten years after its incorporation, the first amendment to the 1909 Incorporating Act was actually just a technical clarification.² In 1923, a law revised the 1909 Act to indicate that the per capita tax was to be at least \$1 but less than \$2; it also indicated that the tax was to be levied on all citizens.³ In 1931, the time of elections for Commissioner was changed from day to evening.⁴

1950 – Present Day

In 1955, the maximum annual amount of taxation was increased from \$300 to \$3,000, and that only male citizens were to be charged the per capita tax suggesting the 1923 law may have contained an error, omitting the word “male.”⁵ In 1998, the Town of Farmington was re-incorporated and a Charter was vested in the name of the “Town of Harrington.” The territorial limits of the Town had not changed since 1909, but the Town is now empowered to annex land if so petitioned by property owners or resolved by the Town Council; specific procedures for annexation are outlined in the 1998 Act. The government of the Town was vested in a Town Council consisting of five members who were to serve two-year, staggered terms, and which the Charter indicated were to meet regularly but did not specify how often. The presiding member of the Town Council was to have the title of Mayor but remained able to vote on all matters before the Council. Other Town officials drawn from the Council included a Vice-Mayor and a Secretary-Treasurer. Other Town officials were a Tax Collector and a Solicitor, and at their discretion, the Town Council could also appoint a Town Manager. This Charter indicated that the Town of Farmington was to have all powers which are possible for a municipal corporation but it enumerated forty-eight specific powers. The Charter contained more specific procedures for laying out streets and their paving and guttering, for drainage and water systems, and for the review of land development. The Charter provided the Town of Farmington with the option of accepting the tax assessment of Kent County, or of appointing a three-member Board of Assessment. The amount to be raised annually in all taxes, including property taxes, taxes on utility fixes and special taxes imposed in connection with municipal bonds, was to be no more than 3% of the total assessed value of all taxable real estate and improvements; the capitation tax was not to exceed \$10. The Town was now authorized to borrow money. Short-term borrowing, without voter approval was not to exceed \$5,000 in aggregate and must be repaid in five years. Long term borrowing for a specific public purpose required referendum approval and was not to exceed, in aggregate, 10% of the assessed value of real property within the Town.⁶

For the fully amended text of the current Charter, see <http://www.charters.delaware.gov/farmington.shtml> (<http://www.charters.delaware.gov/farmington.shtml>)

CITATIONS in *Del. Laws*

¹ 25 *Del. Laws*, c. 194 (1909) [pp. 375-82]

² 30 *Del. Laws*, c. 140 (1919) [p. 318]

³ 33 *Del. Laws*, c. 140 (1923) [pp. 403-404]

⁴ 37 *Del. Laws*, c. 153 (1931) [pp. 527]

⁵ 50 *Del. Laws*, c. 6 (1955) [pp. 13-14]

⁶ 71 *Del. Laws*, c. 433 (1998) [pp. 1289-1323]

Delaware Laws from 1935 to present can be found online at <http://delcode.delaware.gov/sessionlaws/> (<http://delcode.delaware.gov/sessionlaws/>)

jnl / April 5, 2019

Related Topics: Delaware History (<https://archives.delaware.gov/tag/delaware-history/>), Farmington (<https://archives.delaware.gov/tag/farmington/>), Town and City Histories (<https://archives.delaware.gov/tag/town-and-city-histories/>)

Delaware's Government

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State Agencies (<https://delaware.gov/toppage/stateagencies/>) Locations Directory (<https://delaware.gov/toppage/locations/>)

Farmington, Delaware

Farmington was originally settled as Flatiron in 1851. The railroad built the Farmington Railroad Station at a crossroads at this location in 1855. The Farmington Post Office was established in 1858. The town's name officially changed to Farmington.* The town of Farmington was incorporated in 1909. The town survived a historic fire in May 27, 1914 just after the Northbound Express had passed through Farmington. The roof on the old Simmons Basket Factory was seen to be burning. No ladders or firefighting apparatus were available. Places destroyed were the basket factory of Simmons Manufacturing Company, Methodist Episcopal Church and many family dwellings. The community gathered with buckets to build a bucket brigade to put the horrific fire out. The Farmington Volunteer Fire Department was organized in 1951 to provide common ground for the community volunteer fire fighters. The Farmington Ladies auxiliary was established in 1954. The town was the location for much academic success. The Farmington Academy started in 1835 just a few miles outside of town and then moved to town in 1880. The Farmington Public School was then built in 1928 in town and closed in 1963. Farmington was also the home to higher education, Powell Law School. Farmington once known as bustling commerce in the 1880s.* Farmington was home to fruit canning and evaporator factories. Farmington was a well-known fruit shipping town.* Farmington had a bustling commerce with general stores, blacksmith shop, basket factory, barber shop, butcher shop, drugstore, and doctor's office. Farmington religious history included Salem Methodist Episcopal Church being built outside of town in 1873 and being moved and rebuilt after the fire in 1916. Farmington Presbyterian Church built in 1840 a few miles from town and moved to the town in 1863. In early 1900's it was purchased by the Church of the Brethren. Farmington played a significant part in Delaware political history. William Tharp the 36th Governor and Senator of Delaware was born in Farmington. His grandson William Tharp Watson was also elected the 49th Governor of Delaware. The Tharp House located in Farmington was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. Rev. Lyman Pierson Powell was born in 1866 in Farmington, DE, He became an Episcopalian priest, Hobart College President in 1913, historian and author. Honorable Charles D. Murphy Sr. State Senator, lumber and flour mill owner, banker, railroad director, was born on March 18, 1880 in Farmington. Co- founded Kent Sussex Fair and served as the first President, which is known today as the Delaware State Fair. Dr. William Day was born in Farmington June 11, 1865. He opened a general practice in Farmington, and married the granddaughter of Governor William Tharp. Willis Fleming Harrington was born in Farmington July 24, 1882 he became Vice President of DuPont Company. William Watson Harrington was born June 30, 1874 in Farmington. He attended public school in Farmington, attended Harvard Law School. He was admitted to the Delaware Bar in 1898. He became Register of Wills, Judge Harrington became Deputy Attorney General, later he served as Attorney General, and in 1921 he was appointed resident Associate Judge of Kent County. Farmington is a small town with a big history.

*incorporation