

Vol 4  
87

An Act to change the name of Head of Broadkill to Milton

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met, that the village situate in Broadkill hundred, in Sussex County, now called and known by the name of Head of Broadkill, shall from and after the passing of this act be called <sup>and</sup> known <sup>taken</sup> by the name of Milton Milton, and that all acts of the General Assembly of this State, and all other instruments of writing in which Head of Broadkill aforesaid is named shall be construed and taken to relate to the said village hereby called Milton; and that in all legal proceedings, which may have relation to the said Village, in which it may hereafter be necessary to use the name of the same, it shall be called Milton instead of Head of Broadkill, any law usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

James Lyles Speaker of  
the Senate  
William Warner Speaker  
of the House of Representatives

Passed at Dover }  
Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> 1807 }  
J

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Volume \_\_\_\_\_ Page 328

Rg 1111

Enrolled Bills

1805-1807

Petition of sundry inha-  
bitants at Head of Broadkin  
Creek to alter the name of  
that place to Milton —

In the Senate

Jan'y. 29. 1867. read

I refer to:

Messrs. Cayser

Tamm

Parkins

Report by Hill or otherwise

2/3/1867

Petition of sundry inha-  
bitants at Head of Broadwin  
Creek to alter the name of  
that place to Milton —

In the Senate

Jan'y. 29. 1887. read

I refer to:

Messrs. Cayton

Truitt

Parkins

Resolved by Bill or otherwise

To The Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met.

The Petition of Sundry of the Inhabitants of the Village, at the head of Broadkill in the County of Sussex in the State of Delaware; doth humbly present that your Petitioners having met at the head of Broadkill as aforesaid; for the purpose of giving to it some other name; at the meeting aforesaid a Majority were in favor of calling it Milton. your Petitioners therefore pray your Honors to take the same into consideration; and pass a Law for calling the Village aforesaid by the name of Milton. and your Petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray &c.

Samuel Wright  
H. Hall

William Robbins  
Cornelius Couter

Thos. Fisher

Henry Little

David Conwell

Benj. Stephenson

Dennis Morris

Wm. Binson

David Starr

Stephen Coster

Samuel Paynter (Carpenter)

Ubenza Johnson

David Hazard

James Martin

Cornelius Cary

Joseph Cary

Shepard Conwell

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DELAWARE PUBLIC ARCHIVES

# *It Began With a River*

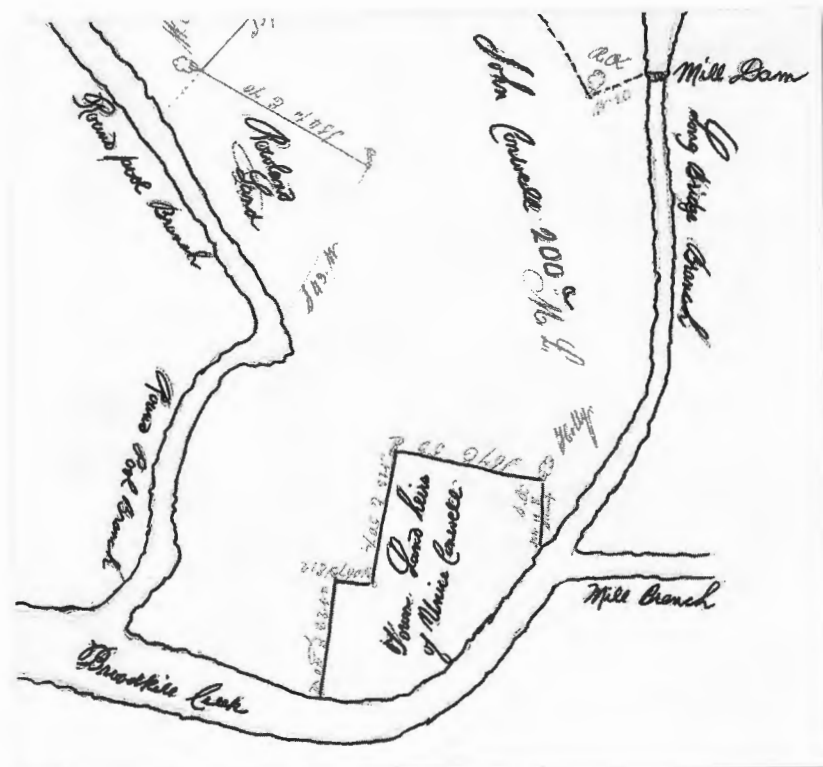
An Illustrated History of Milton and the Broadkill

by  
Joana S. Donovan

*European settlers sailed up the Broadkill past the marshy shoreline searching for land on which to begin a new life. (2006 photo by Joana Donovan)*

  
THE  
DONNING COMPANY  
PUBLISHERS

**The south side of the creek.** The ownership of the land at the headwaters of the Broadkill River began with a 1680 warrant for one thousand acres to Richard Dawson of "Transquaking River, MD." Dawson's warrant reverted to the Penn Proprietors when he failed to take up residence upon the land. In 1686, James Gray received a warrant for the same one thousand



Map showing location of future settlement (Milton) on Broadkill River, ca. 1798. (DPA)

acres of land, now patented under the name "Milford." Between 1686 and 1710, the land passed through a number of hands, but it is likely that no colonists actually lived in the area. By 1710, William Clark held title to the entire "Milford" tract. His widow, Honor, and her new husband, Thomas Bedwell, sold "to Mathew Osborne . . . five hundred acres of land being part of a one thousand-acre tract situated near the Great Kill and called Milford." That same year, Osborne sold his land and plantation on the Cool Spring Branch of the Broadkill and moved to the "Milford" tract, where he built a home and established a plantation with a landing on the creek. This was probably the first permanent European settlement at the head of the Broadkill and became known as Osborne's Landing. Mathew

Osborne willed the land to his sons, Thomas and Henry Osborne, in 1733. To his son Henry, he left one hundred acres of land that was located "southeast of Long Bridge Branch and bounded by the county road and the ford of Long Bridge Branch."

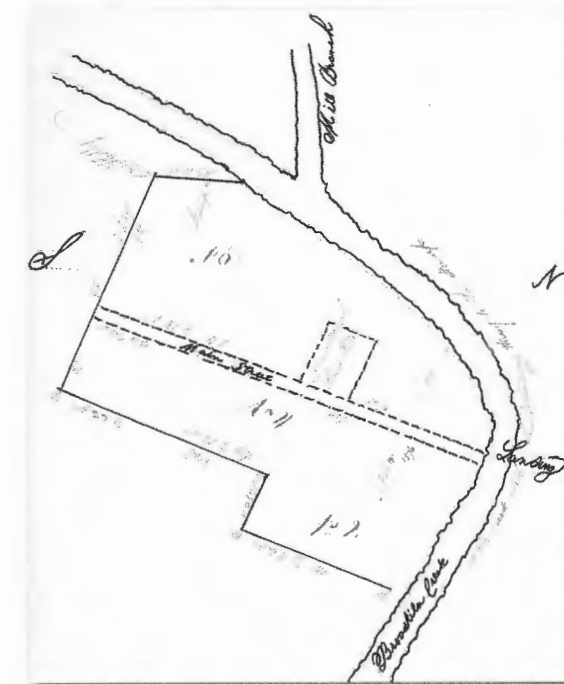
By 1741 the original one thousand-acre tract was held by the Osborne, Rowland, and Hepburn families. The tract was resurveyed in January 1756 and laid out for 1,500 acres . . . northeast side of Round Pole Branch. Henry Osborne and Samuel Rowland Jr. sold 117 acres to Dr. John Spencer in 1758. When Spencer died, the land was devised to his son, John Spencer Jr., who had married Sarah Draper, widow of Isaac Draper Sr. Sarah came to the marriage with two children: a daughter, Mary, and a son, Isaac. John and Sarah added a third child to the family, a daughter, Eunice Spencer. Eunice Spencer married John Waller, and her half-sister, Mary Draper, married John Clowes. After the death of John Spencer Jr., Eunice Spencer Waller, Mary Draper Clowes, and Isaac Draper inherited the 117 acres.

The acreage that was devised to Eunice and John Waller included Osborne's Landing. It was during this time [about 1771] that the village became known as Waller's Landing. John Waller, who was a shipwright,

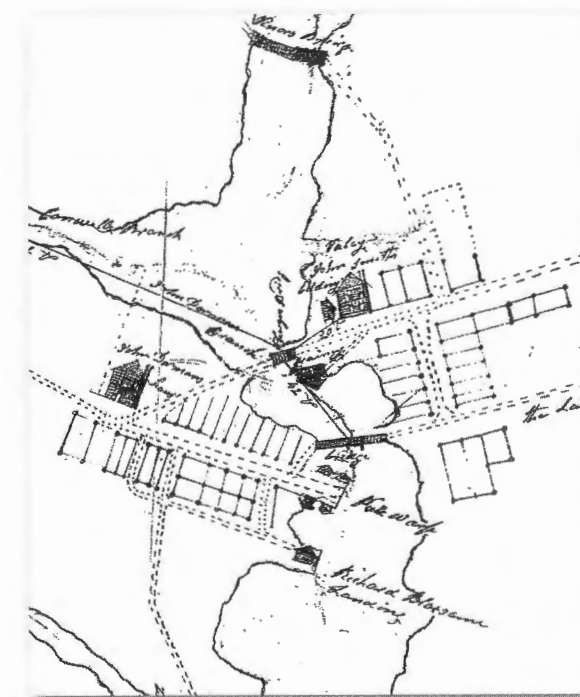
died in 1773, and his widow, Eunice, married George Conwell. It was Conwell who divided the settlement into lots and began renting them. The village continued to develop and became known as Conwell's Landing. Research of Sussex County deeds for the late 1790s and early 1800s reveals that Eunice Conwell and her daughter, Mary Waller, were renting town lots on the south side of the Broadkill Creek, some for an annual rent of only four dollars and thirty cents. The rent included free use of the wharf, roads, and alleys.

**The north side of the creek.** By a patent dated 1688, a tract of four hundred acres, called Swan Point, was laid out for Bryant Rowles. By 1719, through inheritance and purchase, the heirs of Captain Thomas Pemberton owned some 450 acres, and the heirs of Matthew Downing owned 200 acres, on the Cypress Branch, north of the Broadkill River.

In May of 1788, William Perry came into possession of 235 acres tract in Broadkill Hundred on the northwest side, and on the head, of Broadkill Creek, which had been owned by the Conwell family. The land was described as "beginning at the boundry of a tract formerly owned by Bryant Rolls [sic], . . . to Cypress Swamp, some 235 acres for 100 pounds to be paid by Isaac Draper in behalf of William Perry." Six years later, Perry requested a warrant for vacant land that bordered the river on the northern side, and a warrant was granted to him from the recorder of Sussex County. It was laid out for thirty-four acres of vacant land called "Upper Landing." The land extended along the north bank of the Broadkill Creek and included land where the Perry Bridge crossed the creek, land west of the bridge bordering up Cypress Branch, and land east of the bridge extending to a new wharf on the south side of the creek. Perry, who had no children of his own, gave part of his land to a niece, Mary Perry. The land was situated west of Mulberry Street up to Lavinia Street. Mary, who married Jacob Fergus, sold various lots north along Mulberry Street. ◀



An 1801 survey of the Conwell family lands showing Main (now Federal) Street, the landing, and Mill Branch of the Broadkill River. (DPA)



Town map showing several streets (top to bottom: Lavinia, Mulberry, Broad, Union, Federal, Front, and Chestnut); road leading to Cave Neck; Lavinia, Fergus (Mulberry Street), and Union Street Bridges; and the Public Wharf on the Broadkill. (DPA)





Federal Street showing stores with sidewalks covered by shed roofs. Handy Prettyman's horse and ice cart are on left, and Samuel Wilson's store is in left background. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)

The growth of Milton is told through census information, articles printed in local newspapers, and information in books.

### 1721

The settlement at the head of the Broadkill has grown to twenty and one-half lots with thirteen houses, four stores, seven granaries, one grain shipping station and a tanning yard. Current owners of the lots are Benjamin Benson, Richard Blockson, Peter Coulter, Edward Evins, Mary Furgus, Burton Hall, David Hazzard, James Hood, Elizabeth Jones, Nemiah Lofland, Joseph Maull, Bevens Morris, Samuel Paynter, Thomas Rogers, Abel Vent, and Samuel Wright. (Atkins, History of Milton)

### 1809

Town has four stores, a church, seven granaries, a tannery, and wharves for shipping grain.

### 1826

"In 1826, there were twelve licensed retailers in and around Milton. They were viz; Milby and Ponder, Cornelius Coulter, Asa Haines, David

Hazzard, Peter S. Parker, Aaron Marshall, Somerset Costen, James Barrett, Gideon Waples, John Starr, Samuel R. Paynter and Co. (of Drawbridge), and Abel Vent (of rural Broadkill Hundred)."

### 1850

The 1850 Federal Census for Milton records information for 121 dwellings, with 727 residents; 594 identified as white, twenty identified as mulattoes, and 113 identified as colored. Besides the sixty-three laborers enumerated, occupations listed were:

- Two blacksmiths: David Oliver, John Miller
- One brick maker: Robert Lacey
- One bricklayer: Joseph Oliver
- Six carpenters: Lorenzo Pane, William H. Collins, George W. Baynum, Jacob White, Thomas J. Atkins, and David H. Mustard
- One carriage maker: George H. Oliver
- Five clerks: Thomas H. Dorman, Henry Marshall, Aaron M. Marshall, John Benton, James H. Davis
- One coach maker: Robert C. White
- Twenty farmers: Cornelius Coulter, Cornelius R. Coulter, Peter C. Parker, John M. Spicer, James Spicer, Absolom Dodd, Woodman Rust, George Greenly, Abner Willey, David Hazzard, Nathan Clifton, James McColley, Thomas Morris, Alfred Morris, Thomas Morris, Charles Norwood, David Coffin, William Milby, James Carey, and Rouse Young
- One house carpenter: Jacob M. White
- Two innkeepers: Elizabeth Terry, John H. Terry
- One mail contractor: William Davis
- Twelve merchants: Nehemiah D. Welch, Peter Burker [Parker?], David Dorman, William A. Hazzard, Robert H. Carey, John Tilney, Thomas A. Moore, Samuel Parkeal, David Lofland, Aaron Marshall, John Ponder, and James Ponder
- Two millers: David H. Conwell, Nathaniel Johnson
- Three physicians: Joseph A. McFeran, William W. Wolfe, Peter Jackson
- One public officeholder: John H. Fisher
- Ten ship carpenters: John B. Mustard, George H. Mustard, Henry Skidmore, William C. Prettyman, Samuel L. Goslee, John West, Erasmus Lofland, Isaac White, William Jeffers, Jacob Jeffers
- Two shipwrights: Samuel Martin, Noah McGee
- Eight shoemakers: James Draper, Thomas Draper, William Ponder, John M. Roop, James Hall, William Warren, George H. Warren, William E. Reynolds



Federal Street showing Prettyman house on left and Draper-Adkins house on right. (MHS)



Wagamon's Pond with the early mill and Goshen Church steeple in the background. (MHS)

- Thirty-six sailors: Wesley Coverdale, Elias Coverdale, Nehemiah Dorman, Peter Jeffers, Jackson Vent, Noble Ellensworth [Ellingsworth?], Henry Ellensworth, Miers J. Darby, Captain Joseph Adkins, Theodore Parker, Charles Manship, Thomas W. Hudson, James C. Beyman, James Cooper, Richard J. Dickerson, John Short, Return Hazzard, William E. Spicer, Henry Hudson, John Hudson, Moses Dodd, Joseph Vaughn, Lot Purnell, Robert Mason, Richard M. Hall, David Oney, John Lank, Miers Darby, James Cooper, Levi Morris, William A. Smithers, James Beynum, Zachariah Scott, Purnell Scott, William Scott, Captain George Atkins
- Two students: Joseph H. Carey, David C. Wolfe
- One tailor: Cornelius Vent
- Three teachers: Houston Hall, Peter Jackson, Jr., Salathiel Baker
- Two wheelwrights: John Fassett, Joseph M. Messick



Carey and Darby Store and Black and Lingo Store on Union Street. Gentleman is identified as Charlie Vent. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)

For the same year, 1850, in Broadkill Hundred, there was a total of 2,922 residents identified as white and 547 residents identified as colored.

### 1860

When the Federal Census of Milton was taken ten years later, the number of dwellings had increased to 171, with 780 residents identified as white, thirty-eight identified as mulattoes, and 129 identified as colored. Occupations listed: one bank keeper, five blacksmiths, one blacksmith apprentice, one brick maker, one butcher, three captains, fourteen carpenters, four clergymen, two clerks, one cooper, three coach makers, twenty domestics, ten farmers, one hotel keeper, four house carpenters, two house carpenter apprentices, one housekeeper, one huckster, twenty-five laborers, two masons, two milliners, twenty-two merchants, one merchant apprentice, one miller, one pilot, five physicians, one physician apprentice, sixty sailors, two sawyers, two schoolteachers, three seamstresses, nine servants, thirteen ship carpenters, two shipbuilders, seven shoemakers, three tailors, one tanner, two teachers, one tutor, two undertakers, three washerwomen, one well digger, and four wheelwrights. In the same census (1860), for all of Broadkill Hundred, the count was 4,223 free persons and 142 slaves.

### 1868

"Milton is pleasantly located in the Northeastern part of Sussex County. It is built on both sides of Broadkilk [sic] Creek, and is laid out with great regularity and taste. It is some seven miles in a Northeasterly direction from Milton to the nearest point on the Delaware Bay, not far from where it opens into the Atlantic Ocean. The town is built on the dry land, just West of the swamp region that borders the Creek and Bay."

"Milton is one of the large, substantial places of Sussex County—has good schools, and a population that for intelligence and literary taste, it is said, is hardly excelled by any town of equal size in the County or State. It is residence of the Honorable James Ponder, late Speaker of the State. The principal business of Milton is mercantile. It has also two or three shipyards, some fishing and commerce—the landing on the creek being just below the town—quite a trade in lumber in the village and vicinity, and a flourishing Academy. The



Black and Lingo Store on Union Street. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)



Federal Street with good view of Federal Street stores, Jones House on left, and Mears Barber Shop on right. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)

latter constitutes a leading feature of the place, and serves to raise the standard of History of Sussex County.” (Hancock, History of Sussex County, Delaware).

### 1868

The Milton Business Directory on the 1868 Beers Map of Milton lists:

#### Hotels

- Hart’s Hotel—C. C. Hart, Proprietor
- Union Hotel—B. B. Wharton, Proprietor

#### Merchants

- J. W. Fox and Brother, dealers in general merchandise
- Samuel Martin and Son, dealers in general merchandise
- L. B. Chandler, dealer in drugs, medicines, paints, oils, glass, varnish, dye-stuff; also hardware, cutlery, carriage trimmings, etc
- N.B. Walls, dealer in general merchandise
- C. S. Morris, dealer in general merchandise
- W. R. Wilson dealer in general merchandise



A 1903 view of downtown Union Street, looking north. On right side of street are seven buildings, with the closest building being the post office. On the left side of the street, the old firehouse is situated on the far side of the bridge (across from the present library). (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)

- James Ponder, dealer in grain, bark, lumber, lime and fertilizers
- Capt. William. S. Mason, dealer in general merchandise
- Physicians—James A. Hopkins; William. J. Hearn; Joseph M. Houston; and D. H. Houston
- Miscellaneous—George W. Atkins, shipbuilder, A. H. Manship, wheelwright, W. T. Kellum, blacksmith

### 1870

According to the 1870 U.S. Census, the town of Milton had four store clerks, seven blacksmiths, two brick masons, one butcher, two carpenters, two coopers, two dressmakers, one harness maker, thirteen house carpenters, two milliners, two millwrights, one painter, four shoemakers, two tailors, one tinsmith, two wheelwrights, three farming apprentices, thirteen farmhands, nine farmers, one hotel keeper, two waiters, two millers, two steam mill workers, one grain merchant, one liquor merchant, one lumber merchant, seventeen retail merchants, one trimming store merchant, one druggist, four physicians, four undertakers, one justice of the peace, one postmaster, three preachers, seven schoolteachers, one surveyor, one railroad conductor, sixty sailors, twenty-eight ship carpenters, one shipmaster, one hack driver, one hostler, and twenty-nine common laborers. For Broadkill Hundred, the tally of residents was 4,282. (Henderson)

### 1876

The town “covers an area of one mile, and numbers 900 inhabitants. It contains three churches, five schools, twelve stores, one mill, one hotel, three ship builders, three carriage makers, blacksmiths, and other businesses of minor importance.” (*Delawarean*, author unknown)

### 1880

Among the occupations listed in the 1880 U.S. Census of Milton were: one bookkeeper, two drugstore clerks, five store clerks, one store saleswoman, five blacksmiths, three brick masons, three butchers, two carriage makers, one carriage painter, one coach builder, four dressmakers, two harness makers, twenty-one house carpenters, four milliners, one millwright, two painters, four shoemakers, one sign painter, one tailor, one tinsmith, one upholsterer, one watchmaker, one well digger, one wheelwright, two house workers, twenty-nine house servants, seven at domestic service, thirteen farmers, three fishermen, two truck farmers, twelve farm workers, one truck farm worker, one hotel keeper, one hotel cook, one brick maker, one engineer, one miller, one lumber mill worker, one grain merchant, two hucksters, nineteen merchants, one merchant tailor, one merchant miller, one peddler, two trimming store owners, one barber, one druggist, three nurses,



Union Street from Iron Bridge, early 1900s. (Courtesy MHS)



Early photo of Milton business section, showing location of pool hall and real estate broker. The gentlemen are identified as H. L. Robinson and Captain H. Hudson. (Courtesy of Martha Jane Donovan-Burke)

four physicians, three undertakers, one justice of the peace, one postmaster, three preachers, eight schoolteachers, one surveyor, one teacher, one diver, sixty-three sailors, seventeen ship captains, five shipbuilders, forty-four ship carpenters, five steamboat captains, one shipyard worker, one mail driver, one coachman, forty-five laborers, and nine day laborers. (Henderson)

### 1900

Twenty years later, the 1900 U.S. Milton Census lists, by occupation: twenty store clerks, one baker, five blacksmiths, one blacksmith apprentice, one butcher, one carriage builder, one contractor-builder, thirteen dress-makers, one hat maker, twenty-two house carpenters, four house painters, two masons, three milliners, one painter/decorator, two paper hangers, one plasterer/bricklayer, three cobblers, one tinsmith, one typewriter, two housekeepers, one laundry man, eleven servants, eight day servants, three washerwomen, four wood choppers, three farm laborers, twelve day laborers, one farm overseer, four farmers, five fishermen, one bartender, two boardinghouse keepers, two lodging cooks, one hotel cook, two hotel proprietors, one landlord, one waiter, one hotel waiter, one basket maker, one brick maker, one charcoal burner, three shirt factory cutters, one shirt factory fire-lady, one sawmill fireman, one stationary engine fireman, one canning factory laborer, one fish factory day laborer, one flour miller, one

grist miller, one overall maker in shirt factory, one packer canner, one lumber mill sawyer, one sawmill sawyer, one shirt folder, one shirt inspector, thirty-one shirt makers, two shirt manufacturers, one canning factory watchman, one carriage dealer, one fish peddler, one general merchant, one hardware merchant, one ice cream shop owner, one livestock dealer, one lumber dealer, three merchants, one piling dealer, one provision dealer, one purchasing agent, two barbers, two druggists, one druggist apprentice, one insurance agent, two music teachers, one nurse, three physicians, three undertakers, one justice of the peace, one lamplighter, one state librarian, one news dealer, one editor, one notary public, one postmaster, one postmaster assistant, three preachers, one public school principal, seven schoolteachers, one surveyor, one telegraph operator, one town collector, one railroad foreman, one railroad section boss, one railroad section hand, one railroad section laborer, one dredging machine operator, two steamboat firemen, one tugboat fireman, one oysterman, two pump drivers, twenty-two sailors, thirteen sea captains, thirteen ship carpenters, one produce shipper, two steamboat captains, one steamboat chief engineer, one steamboat cook, two steamboat deckhands, one steamboat mate, one steamboat pilot, one vessel steward, one tugboat captain, two coachmen, one cart driver, one hack driver, three team drivers, one wagon driver, one day laborer hauler, two hod carriers, one hostler, one livery stable keeper, seven teamsters, one trolley car conductor, one general laborer, thirty-two day laborers, and one capitalist. (Henderson)

### 1901

A Milton Board of Trade was organized in March for the purpose of advertising “the adaptability of Milton and its vicinity to the location of manufactories; its facilities and transportation; its natural advantages for obtaining crude materials for supplies and its splendid resources for the raising of truck and vegetables of all kinds. Years ago our chief industry for labor was in vessel building. Now there are few wooden vessels being built in the county and few in Milton. We must turn to something else. We have water power enough around Milton, if properly utilized, to run all the mills in Broadkill Hundred.” (Hancock and McCabe)

### 1924

Milton is described as “bustling with many businesses. Thackery and White



This view of Front Street in 1903 shows the Starkey's store sign to the left, and the Big Store of Markel and Hartman in the middle of the photo. (DPA)

had a crate and box factory. A general store flourished. Eva Smith had a millinery. There was a drug store, a shoe repair and shoemaker shop. A blacksmith and wheelwrights practiced their arts. Saw mills and flour mills abound. Two passenger trains rumbled through Milton daily. Freight trains delivered goods, and Milton products were loaded onto the same trains bound for nearby city stores. Of course, there was a freight station and a station agent. Milton even had a telephone office and a movie theater. . . . Almost every family has a garden plot in the backyard. . . . The ice man came daily. . . . As late as the 1940s horse and carriages still came to town, not many but a few.” (Wagamon and King)

### 1938

“Milton (altitude 30 feet, population 1,135), only 7 miles from Delaware bay in a direct line but many more by the convoluted Broadkill, is one of the little old Delaware towns that prospered through ship building and ship-



Another view of Union Street stores with the store of C.A. Conner, and the Central Cigar and Tobacco shop on the right. (Courtesy of Donald Carey)

ping in the 19th century. The shipyards have long ago disappeared from the foot of Union and Federal Sts., and the town dozes except for some industrial activity at the edges: a cannery, several factories making cheap cotton garments, small button factories, and other more-or-less steady employers of local labor. The business section displays a rare lot of permanent store awnings, wood or metal roofed, that used to shade the sidewalk in front of nearly every store in lower Delaware, but have disappeared from many main streets. The old part of the town contains many old cypress-shingled houses characteristic of eastern Sussex County. Some of the newest houses are on the shores of Milton Pond, which still furnishes water-power for one of the largest grist and flour mills in the county. Milton was on the now-defunct Queen Anne’s R. R. (later called the Maryland & Delaware Coast Ry.), and still receives freight service from the Pennsylvania R.R. at Ellendale, 6 miles west, over the only piece of Queen Anne’s trackage that has not been torn up. . . . At present the only boats calling Milton their home port are several party-boats (cabin cruisers) that take out salt-water fishing parties on the bay. . . .” (Federal Writer’s Project, “Delaware: A Guide to the First State”)

### 1939

“No Depression in Milton. Never before in the history of Milton has there been more employment of labor or weekly payrolls been larger in volume. Every available mechanic is employed as well as ordinary labor. The four button factories are running with a full force of operators and on full time. The two silk hosiery mills are operating three 8-hour shifts per day in an effort to provide for the increased demand for their product. All other industries are sharing in like proportions the revival of local businesses. All of which means that the merchants of Milton are enjoying increased trade from the rural citizens. Milton is on its way to becoming one of the most prosperous towns in lower Delaware, thanks to a live Chamber of Commerce.” (Article, unidentified newspaper, published September, 1939)



Brick buildings on each side of bridge on Union Street. Present-day library is on left. (DPA)

### 1951

An editorial by Thomas Hughes in the February 9 *Town Crier* presents a look at the growing needs of Milton and urges the populace to vote in favor of a bond issue. “Did you know that in the event of a power breakdown in this area that Milton’s water supply would be cut off? Did you know that when the water is shut off for repairs that the entire system is cut off and when someone hits a fire plug, the same thing happens? Did you know that taxpayers out in the new development, besides not having paved streets, have a 2” water line for the entire section? Did you know that approximately 50 new homes are to be constructed and that the town doesn’t have the money to lay water lines to them? Did you know that the bulkhead at the parking lot is in very bad condition, with a possibility of the bridge going down? Now if we sound like an alarmist, we hope we do, because the situation is alarming! The Town, like any successful business, needs money



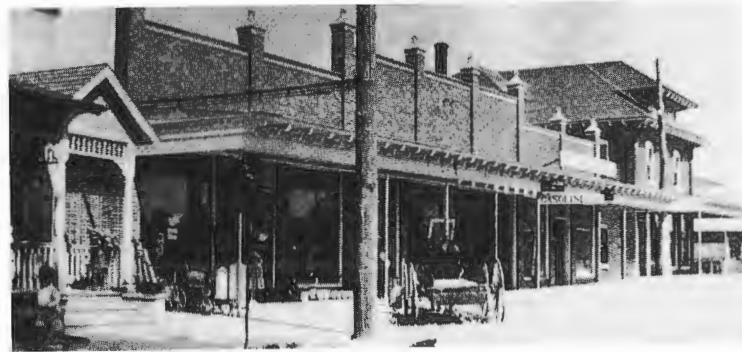
Later view of brick buildings on each side of Union Street bridge. (Courtesy of Martha Jane Donovan-Burke)

to operate—we need an auxiliary Diesel-operated water pump, we must purchase the needed water pipes and cut-off valves, and make the necessary repairs to the bulkhead and water system. All these things we can not have or do—unless we vote in favor of the Bond issue.” (The bond issue was approved by a three-one majority.)

**1960**

“The Statistical Report of Milton,” circulated by Milton Chamber of Commerce and Milton Development Company, gives the following information about the town:

- Mayor—Graham Dill
- Town employees—8
- Area—570 acres
- Population—1651
- Families—615
- Housing—570
- Municipal taxes—\$1.10 per \$100 of assessed valuation
- New sewer system now in operation
- Garbage collected weekly in winter and twice weekly in summer
- Water supply—municipally owned and obtained from deep wells
- Electricity provided by Delaware Power and Light
- Telephone service supplied by the Diamond State Telephone Company
- Bottled gas supplied by six private companies
- Volunteer fire department with one ambulance, one rescue truck and five pumper and tank trucks
- Police force consisting of three men and one patrol car, on twenty-four hour duty
- School—Milton Consolidated with thirty-four teachers and 700 students; latest addition is the gymnasium
- Libraries—School: 3,400 volumes; public: 4,800 volumes
- Post Office—two years old; postmaster, W. Howard Carey, assistant, G. M. Mustard; nine employees; two rural routes; city delivery
- Clubs and Social Organizations: Veterans of Foreign Wars, Veteran of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, Lions Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Parents and



Left side of Union Street looking south. The Conwell building, now renovated as part of the Milton Public Library, is to the right. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)



Federal Street from Front Street, and, looking up the hill, the Goshen Church on the right. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)

Teachers Association, I.O.O.F. Golden Rule Lodge, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Milton of Chamber of Commerce, and Jaycees

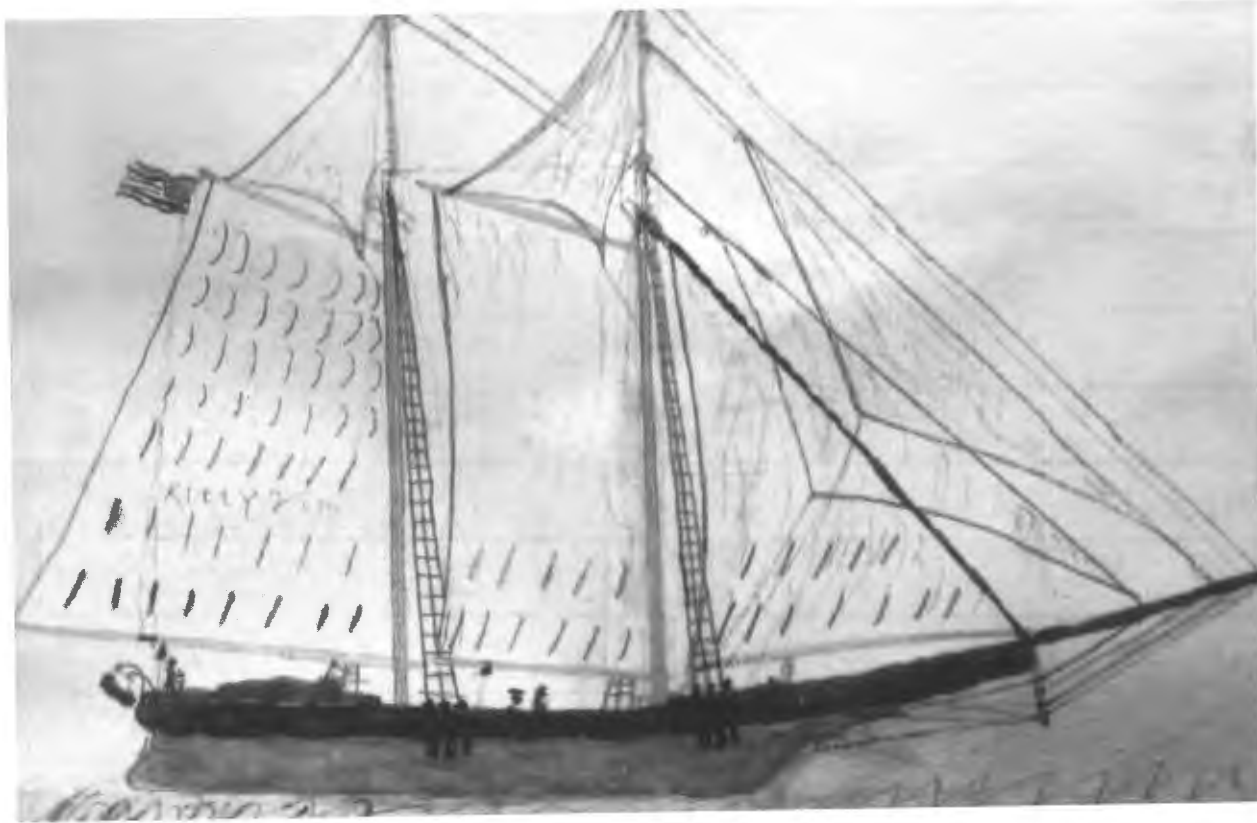
- Physicians—Dr. Thomas J. Tobin
- Churches—Bethel AME, thirty members; First Congregational, twenty-five members; Grace, 225 members; Goshen Church, 386 members; Pilgrim Holiness, 200 members; and St. John Protestant Episcopal, 124 members
- Railroad—Pennsylvania Railroad, no passenger service, freight three times weekly
- Bus Service—Trailway and Short Line, daily service
- Theatre—550 seating capacity, showing first-run movies; operated by Milton Development Co.
- Parks—Lake with fishing and boating facilities; public beach within six miles
- Industries—Atlantic Ice Manufacturing Co. (three employees); Carlton Clifton Cannery (sixty employees); Draper Canning (350 employees year-around average); Graves Manufacturing Co. (thirty-five); Hopkins Granary (four); Jennings Piling Co. (ten); Jensen’s Piling Co. (fifteen); Milton Sausage and Scrapple Co. (eight); Reed Trucking Co. (twenty-five); Diamond State Horse Farm (fifteen); Milton Mfg. Co. (forty to sixty); Richards and Tyndall Button Co.; Select Fashion (twenty-five to forty-five); Siegfried Hosiery Mill (ninety-six); Foley Inc. (thirty to forty); Southern States (ten); Lawson Machine Shop (two); Howard Hood, Paint and Body (two); Kramer Iron Works (two); Dulany Foods Inc. (thirty-five); Jones, The Holly Wreath Man (ten); John S. Isaacs and Sons (twenty); Milton Cleaners and Dyers; James C. Clendaniel’s Coin Operated Laundry; Clyde Betts and Son; Donovan and Black Farm Equipment; William M. Short Funeral home; Webb’s Restaurant; Marcums’ Sub Shop; Milton Development Co. Restaurant; Douglas C. Hudson General Contractors; John P. Argo, Contractor; John R. Warrington Building Co.; Clifton Brothers Building Co.; W. Paynter Sharp, Bulldozing and Grading; Masten’s Lumber Co.; Waples Lumbering Co.; Milton Service Center; Chesser’s Radio and TV Sales & Service; Ed’s Radio and TV; Collins’ Young Men’s Shop; Samuel’s Department Store; Owens New and Used Furniture; Milton Hardware and Furniture; Silco Store; Welch’s Drug Store; Rees’ Barber Shop; Starr’s Barber Shop; Clifton’s Barber Shop; Gladys’ Flower Shop; Betts Flower Shop; Tuck’s Market; Clover Farm Store (Davidson and Roach); Clover Farm Store (Ray’s Market) and Jones Market. There are four electricians, five licensed plumbers, nine insurance agents, and ten interior and exterior paint contractors. (Copy of report in the possession of Mrs. Pauline Stuchlik) +



Looking north on south Federal Street, St. John the Baptist Church is in center. (DPA)



Federal Street showing Goshen Church on left, and, looking down hill, the Jones house and stores on right. (DPA)



A drawing by J. L. Black of the *Kitty Anne*, a two-mast schooner built in 1815. (Courtesy of Honorable John R. Hudson)

As the early settlers began their life on the banks of the Broadkill River, they cut the timber to clear the land. The native oak, pine, and cypress were used to build their homes and barns, and the cleared land became gardens and fields. Landings were established along the river; landings with family names such as Heaveloe, Hazzard, Carey, Jones, Reynolds, Vaughn, Short, Wiltbank, and Black. As it had been for the Native Americans, the river was the main form of transportation for the early settlers.

While some boats were built at Broadkill landings, most were constructed at the shipyards in Milton and at Drawbridge. The shallop *Broad Kill* is believed to have been the first vessel built in Milton. It was registered in the Custom House at Philadelphia in April of 1737.

The years 1862 to 1892 were the golden years of shipbuilding on the Broadkill. During that time, more than two hundred ships were built at Milton



The *James M. Carey* was a two-mast schooner built in 1874. It had a length of 68.5 feet and a depth of twelve feet. (MHS)

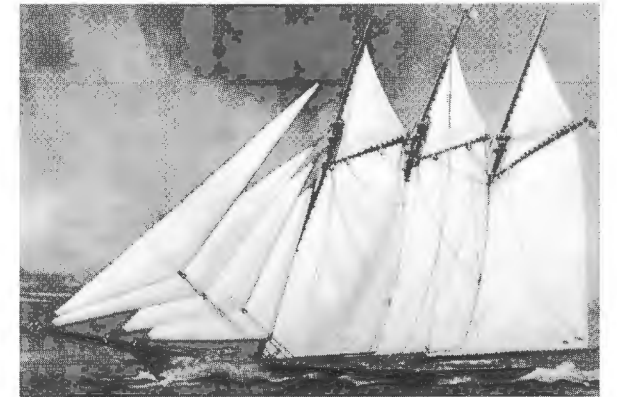
or at Drawbridge, and shipyards were turning out three and four schooners a year. While the shallops were used locally to transport people and goods from landing to landing, larger oceangoing schooners and sloops were carrying cargoes of local grain, timber, iron ore, piling, and fruit to Philadelphia and New York. Three-masted ships built on the Broadkill sailed up and down the Atlantic Coast, into the Gulf of Mexico, and even to Europe and South America.

Shipyard owners were: James Ponder, whose shipyard was located on the south bank of the Broadkill from Round Pole Branch to Walnut Street; Samuel Martin, with his shipyard located on the Broadkill between Federal and Chestnut Streets; and the Black Brothers, Jack and Thomas, with their shipyard first located at Drawbridge and then in Milton east of Ponder's yard on the Broadkill.

Among the prominent Milton shipbuilders were: David H. Atkins, George W. Atkins, Joseph L. Black, Thomas Black, Joseph Conwell, Cornelius Coulter, William Coulter, Andrew Davidson, Cornelius C. Davidson, James P. Davidson, John Dutton, Samuel Dutton, David Lank, John Lank, Levin Lank, Nathaniel Lank, Samuel Martin, Noah Wiltbank Megee, John Mustard, Elisha Prettyman, William C. Prettyman, James Robbins, George Russell, Robert Russell, Jacob White, and Isaac White.

The importance of the shipbuilding industry to the Milton area is best summed up by George Henderson in his thesis, "Continuity and Change in a Delaware Shipbuilding Town: Milton, Delaware, 1870-1910":

"By far the most important effect of shipbuilding was felt through the nature of shipbuilding trades and the men who worked in them. Much of the industry was steeped in local circumstances. The adjacent waterway, the harvest of surrounding oak-pine forest growth, the resident skilled labor, the highly visible ship yards, and even vessel names commemorative of local families—all contributed to making shipbuilding an intensely local affair. It was a source of pride, identity and self-reliance, not to mention revenue." (p 49) +



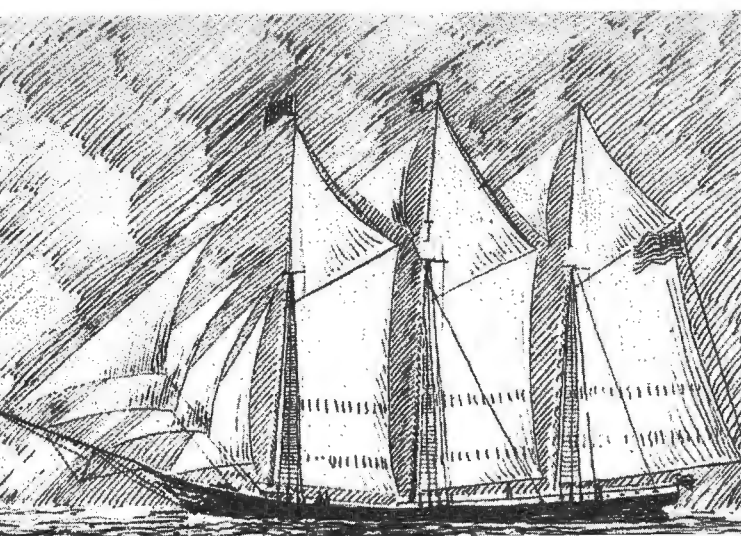
The *Fannie Kimmey* was a three-mast schooner, built in 1879. It had a width of almost thirty-three feet, a length of 129 feet, and a depth of twelve feet. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)



The *Florence Creadick* was a four-mast schooner built in Milton in 1890. She had a length of 164 feet, a depth of thirteen feet, and a width of thirty-six feet. She was torpedoed in July of 1915 off the coast of France and ended her career under the French flag. (MHS)



*The Thomas Wismore was a three-mast schooner built in 1891 in Milton for Captain James Carey Conwell. It had a width of twenty-four feet, a length of almost seventy-nine feet, and a depth of six feet. (MHS)*



*An illustration of the Henry Waddington, a three-mast schooner, built of Broadkill white oak in 1881 by David H. Atkins. Captain William H. Megee was the ship's master. It had a length of about 140 feet, a depth of twelve feet, a width of thirty-five feet, and sported masts of one hundred feet in length. Ports of call for the Waddington were Texas, Jamaica, Cuba, and other West Indies islands. The Waddington became waterlogged while on a voyage in 1892 and was abandoned at sea. (MHS)*



*The masts of several tall ships are visible in the foreground and background in this early scene of the Milton harbor. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)*



*The Marie Thomas was the last local vessel built for local trading. Built in 1904 by James P. Davidson for Captain George E. Megee, it was a three-mast schooner and had an internal combustion engine. It was ninety feet long, about twenty-four feet in width, and had a depth of six and one-half feet. The Marie Thomas burned while docked at the Milton wharf in December of 1910. (Courtesy of Herman F. and Emily C. Black)*



*After the demise of the shipbuilding industry, canning factories and other businesses flourished near the old harbor. (Courtesy of Donald Carey)*





## *Its fabled but faded homes attract an energetic family*

By CAROL TRASATTO  
Staff Writer

MILTON—Fine tall clipper ships used to grace its inlet. A shipyard produced vessels that sailed the world over. Sea captains built elegant, graceful homes on its bustling streets.

A diamond merchant is said to have made his fortune selling his wares to town residents. Four boys grew up there who later became governors of Delaware.

Their dedication is so intense that they are investing both their time and a great deal of their money to restore their homes to the condition they knew during Milton's glory.

The family—parents, sons and their wives—do not share the commonly-held American belief that progress means razing the old and building the new

A large, raised plaster medallion, characteristic of the Victorian age, highlights the "parlor" ceiling. Richly dark exposed woodwork outlines doorways and staircase.

Wide-plank wooden floors have been coated with polyurethane for protection.

Eighteen-year-old Donnie said he spends most of his spare time working on the house. He has with stencilled

Sails once bloomed with the town, but now both are reefed in quietness.





Signe Post leaves her home in Milton. Wives of ship captains would stand in the peaked part of the house during the 19th century waiting to catch a glimpse of their returning husbands.



An ornate wood-burning stove, wood table and wash stand are some of the an-

Staff Photos by Fernando Ruiz



SIGNE POST...

Ostentatious memorial stones in one of the town cemeteries indicate the wealth of some of the captains, lawyers and doctors whose burial spots they mark.

Ladies of the evening entertained sailors in well-kept houses on what is known as Puddin' Hill.

A sawmill on one of the town's three ponds transformed sturdy oak trees into boards for ships and houses. Water from another pond powered an electricity-generating plant.

Today, like the wares of the long since dead diamond merchant, the town of Milton has lost its luster.

Gone are the shipyards, lawyers and sea captains; weathered and beaten are the once grand memorial stones and fine big homes.

With 1,500 residents, Milton has been called a town in decline.

But some residents like the Post family have unwavering faith in the future of Milton and fierce love for its present.

upon the rubble.

These seven people believe in keeping the past alive and part of the present, as a gift to the future.

The three families have bought old houses in poor condition and are helping each other restore them to the homes they once were.

Guy and Ruth Post Sr. and their son Donnie live in a 14-room house built about 1760, with an addition made in 1850. Donnie said it is thought to have originally been a tavern.

When they moved in 18 months ago, "it looked like brown paper bag all over the walls," Donnie said. Now they are covered with tasteful print wallpaper.

What the family has done he terms "mild restoration." They have put \$2,000 to \$3,000 into improvements and "mostly elbow grease," papering, painting, insulating, and refinishing floors, Ruth said.

The wiring system has been replaced, and Guy is installing a modern kitchen himself.

floral patterns, another Victorian touch.

His brother Guy Jr., 23, and wife Signe live across the street, in a house that needed quite a bit more repair.

They were the first of the family to buy in Milton. "I fell in love with it. We had seen it when we lived on the other side of town. I couldn't resist," said 21-year-old Signe.

The couple bought their home two years ago for \$20,000 and have invested an additional \$25,000. They also have redone from floor to ceiling, furnishing with handmade quilts, antique marble-topped bedroom suites, and a wood stove which Signe said "makes very good bread."

Both have full-time jobs and devote their weekends to renovation.

The most historic of the three homes is that owned by Bill and Diane Post. Partly built in 1790 by John Hazzard, it was the home of David Hazzard, gover-

Continued on Page 34



Oak-framed bay window, marble-topped dresser, and handmade quilt give the guest bedroom in the Posts' house

# Milton's revival

• Continued from Page 1 •

nor of Delaware from 1829 to 1833.

The building is on the national register, "a listing of historic places in the United States that the federal government sees as valuable because they add to the culture of the country," said Bill, 28.

They have received matching grants from the government for exterior renovation with the requirement that they stipulate in the deed that all succeeding owners not let the house return to its rundown condition.

When they moved in, there was no roof, no water, no plumbing, missing floors and walls, and the electricity was not turned on.

"All of our friends thought we had gone out of our minds and last winter we thought so too," said Diane, 26.

"It was so cold, dishes froze in the

sink. We had to chip them out," Bill said,

The house, which cost the Posts \$25,000, was built in three different sections, from the 18th to the 20th centuries, Bill said.

"This is going to be our home. We'll stay here and raise Nicholas" who is four months old, Diane said.

"I'm prejudiced, of course, but Milton has the most to offer in terms of architecture, in comparison with its history, than any other town in Sussex County," Bill said.

Such loyalty is the life breath of Milton. It may reawaken old glories.

"It's going to take time (to restore parts of Milton) but you can see the improvements already," Signe said. "You couldn't move me out of Milton with a mountain."

...Or a Puddin' Hill.

## Nutrition sites offer hot meals

Over 60 and in the market for a good hot meal?

Satisfy the craving through the Modern Maturity Center, which offers

parslied potatoes, string beans and applesauce.

Tuesday—Hamburger-macaroni cheese goulash, buttered beets and

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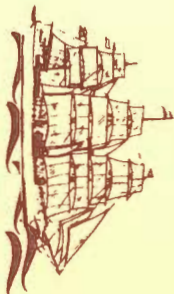
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**DELAWARE'S  
SMALLEST WONDER**

**DELAWARE'S  
SMALLEST WONDER**



**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF MILTON, DELAWARE, INC.  
101 FEDERAL STREET  
MILTON, DELAWARE 19968  
1-302-684-1101**



**House Tour  
Art Show  
Community Breakfast  
Luncheon**

*The Third Saturday  
in September Annually*

*Coordinated By  
Chamber of Commerce of Milton, Del., Inc.*

*This Brochure is Sponsored By  
Sussex County Convention and  
Tourism Commission*

**DELAWARE  
SMALL WONDER**



*Governors' Day is held yearly to honor the five Milton men who became leaders of the State. Samuel Paynter, David Hazzard, Joseph Maull, James Ponder were Milton sons that become Governors of Delaware. Joseph Carey of Milton moved west and become the Governor of Wyoming.*

*Milton Residents are very proud of these men, their contributions to our heritage and the community they called home.*

*The celebration had been recognized statewide with proclamations by Delaware Governor Michael Castle and a House of Representatives resolution. The Town Council and Mayor also have proclaimed the Third Saturday in September as Governors' Day.*

*Governors' Day events begin with a community breakfast at Milton Fire Department. Early risers enjoy a Sussex County style menu and a program with well known keynote speakers.*

*After breakfast it's off to view some of Milton's finest homes. Once a year proud owners open their homes to visitors. A sidewalk art show is a pleasant stop on the tour. Local artists line the sidewalk of downtown Milton. Touring homes is hungry work and luncheon is served at St. John's Church Hall. Another chance to taste cooking Sussex style.*

*Tour-goers will enjoy a trip through the Lydia B. Cannon Museum. The Museum is operated by the Milton Historical Society and is filled with artifacts and mementoes of Milton's history.*

*Milton, Delaware is proud of its native sons, our history of ship-building, seafaring ways and this heritage continues to enhance our town today. Colonial and Victorian homes built by our forefathers still line our streets. Wagamon's Pond entices water lovers to fish and relax on its shores. The Broadkill River so important to our past will continue to be important to our future.*

*Milton is known for its friendly people and hospitality and Governors' Day brings out the best in all of us. For a day full of activity blended with good food, house touring, "Great Way of Getting Decorating Ideas" a taste of culture with the art show. History mixed with politics past and current - Visit Historic Milton, Delaware on the Third Saturday in September for Governors' Day.*

**M**ilton's Holly Festival celebrates the Christmas season by featuring makers of hand-made natural Christmas decorations for inside and outside of your home. There will be wreaths, roping and centerpieces. Crafts folks will be offering the finest in their specialty for giving or keeping. Join us in downtown Milton each year on the second Saturday in December to begin your Christmas with the old fashioned flavor of Holly. Contact the Chamber of Commerce of Milton for information on the Holly Festival at 101 Federal Street, Milton, Delaware 19968 or call 302-684-1101.



## The Holly Festival

**A celebration of  
Christmas  
Natural Holiday  
Trim & Decorations  
in  
Milton, Delaware**



DELAWARE'S  
SMALLEST WONDER



## Holly Festival

**A celebration of  
Christmas  
The Second Saturday in  
December annually  
Natural Christmas  
decorations and crafts**

**Sponsored by Chamber of Commerce of  
Milton, Delaware, Inc.  
This brochure is funded by**



# When Holly Was King!

In 1906, Charles G. Jones, Sr., a Milton fertilizer salesman, started The Burton Evergreen Company. The company supplied only the finest of wreaths, roping, evergreen, holly, boxwood, Running Cedar, Princess Pine, mistletoe, crows foot, and pine cones. These were gathered in the Sussex countryside. As the business grew, the company name changed to Jones, The Holly Wreath Man. The company began having more holly shipped from North Carolina. The holly business was not without competition, but Mr. Jones' products were considered one of the finest. The company motto was: "Quality is Remembered When Price is Forgotten".

Milton area people would make the wreaths and roping at home. Whole families would spend the early winter months working on the wreaths. Mr. Jones paid top money for wreath-making, but insisted on top-quality products. Times could be pretty hard in the area and many families depended on wreath-making to make it through a long winter. A family could make up to \$300.00 a season from making up to 1,000 wreaths

a week. In 1940, a family could make \$500.00 for 10,000 wreaths. Doesn't sound like much now, but the \$500.00 to a farmer in an off-harvest season was a real nice nest egg.

The first wreaths were bound to limber tree switches and trimmed with natural holly berries. Mr. Jones' customers wanted a perfect circle wreath, and he became the first to use wire wreath frames in Delaware. Artificial berries imported from Germany were always available when natural berries did not produce and the artificial ones did not shrivel. The artificial berries quickly replaced all the natural berries on the wreaths.

The holly business grew, and soon Milton became known as the "Land of Holly". Shipments left here bound to the Northeast, Midwest, and as far away as Hawaii. Wholesale florists, department stores, government offices, and whole towns depended on Milton to make their Christmas more decorative. One of the largest wreaths made was hung in Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

The growth in business caused some problems, too. People caught gathering greenery on private grounds were sometimes arrested and fined. Delaware's Forestry Department became con-

cerned about the loss of holly. In 1935, State Forester W. S. Taber wrote, "Delaware supplies the greatest portion of holly wreaths marketed in the United States." The holly became so important to Delaware that in 1939 the holly was named Delaware State Tree by the General Assembly.

Sailing vessels put Milton on the map during the 1800's and the holly wreaths helped to keep us there in the 1900's. Milton was famous for quality vessels and became the Land of Holy because of quality wreaths and evergreens. The ships sailed to cities all around the world and holly brightened Christmas for many of the same cities.

Both industries helped to make our community famous. The holly business even made the movies. Twentieth Century Fox made a newsreel on holly wreath making in Milton in the 1930's. Remember newsreels? They came on the screen before the main feature. The two industries had great impact on Milton, Delaware, and the economy of many local families. The holly business is recent history, and many local folks remember it well. History is always more interesting when spoken; perhaps someone will record his "memories" in writing before they are gone.

1

*Governor James Ponder Mansion*, 416 Federal St., circa mid-19th century. High Victorian architecture.

2

*Captain Lacey House*, 412 Federal St., early 19th century.

3

*Draper-Atkins House*, 204 Federal St., circa 1830. Late Federal style.

4

*W.C. Prettyman House*, 203 Federal St., circa 1845 (rear wing earlier). Classic Greek Revival structure.

5

*Chestnut St. Cemetery*, stones date to the 18th century. Many historic Milton figures are buried here.

6

*Lank-Shivelhood House*, 301 Walnut St., early 19th century.

7

*Jones House (Holly House)*, 111 Federal St. Queen Anne Victorian style.

8

*N.W. McGee House*, 102 Union St. Original house 1750, with large Victorian front added.

9

*F. Holland House-Milton Methodist Protestant Church*, 210-212 Union St. Built in 1845, it is now the Lydia B. Cannon Museum.

10

*Welch Home and Drug Store*, 205 Union St. Victorian Gothic structure, circa 1885.

11

*Robert Carey Mansion*, 301 Union St., mid-19th century Victorian house and fine carriage house.

12

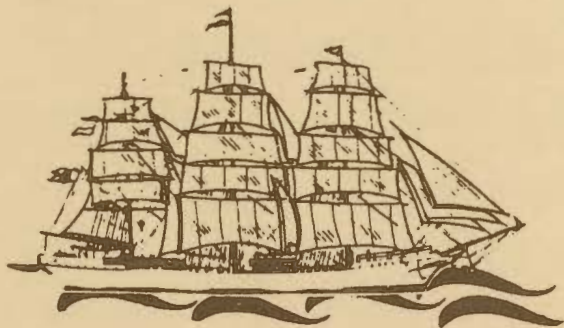
*Broad Street*, four examples of historic restoration.

13

*J.H. Wiltbank House*, 325 Union St., circa 1840. Wedding present from Governor Hazzard to his daughter.

14

*Governor Hazzard Mansion*, 327 Union St., circa 1770. Extensively restored.



**DELAWARE**  
SMALL WONDER

# Tour Historic Milton



Gov. Hazzard Mansion - Circa 1780, Milton, Delaware



*A walking tour of  
the homes in  
historic Milton.*



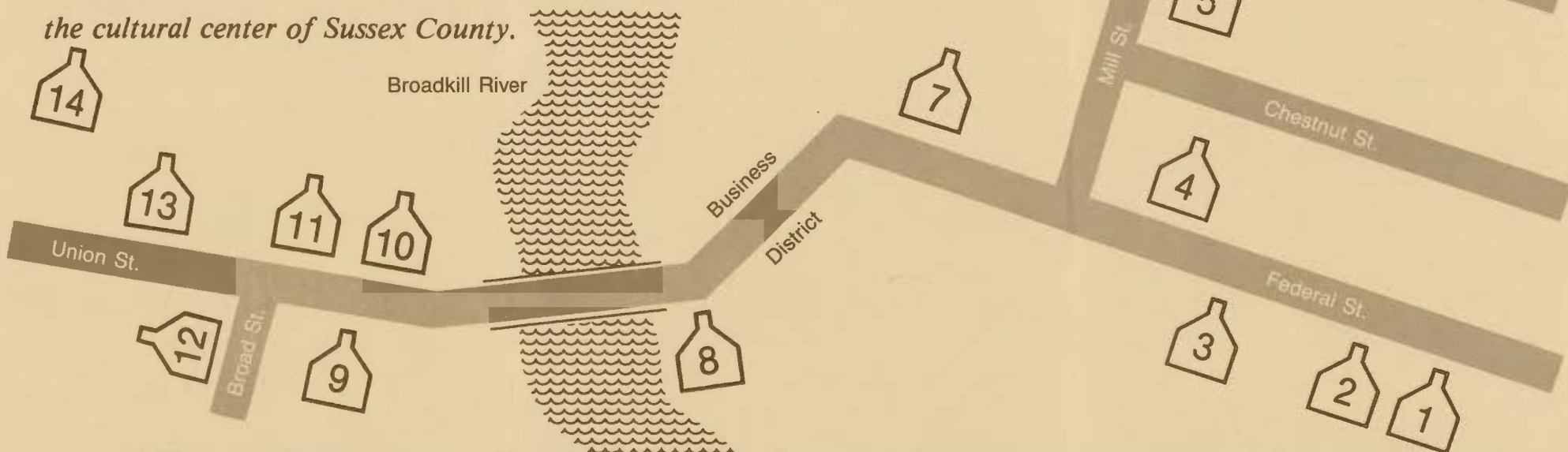
*Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce of  
Milton, Delaware.*

ALL HOMES ARE PRIVATE  
NOT OPEN FOR INSIDE TOURING



**N**amed after the English poet, the town of Milton offers a panoramic history of people and places. While settlement dates from the mid-17th century, it was not known as Milton until 1807, when an act of the General Assembly made it official.

Located at the head of the Broadkill river, Milton was the main center for eastern Sussex County from the early 18th to the late 19th century. It was primarily a shipbuilding community with related agricultural businesses. Grainmills, sawmills, and even an early cottonmill depended on the ebb and flow of the Broadkill. With the demand for more ships, the economy boomed and Milton became the cultural center of Sussex County.



Milton produced numerous historic figures, including Revolutionary war heroes and five state governors. Samuel Paynter (1824–1827), David Hazzard (1829–1833), Dr. Joseph Maull (1846—died in office), and James Ponder (1871–1875) served as Governors of Delaware. James Carey went West to become Governor of Wyoming. Local legend and historic accounts relate that John Hazzard, David's father, piloted General Washington across the Delaware.

A large variety of architecture can be seen on the tour. It has been said that Milton has the finest surviving concentration of 19th century architecture in the county. Milton's National Register Historic District includes 198 homes. Enjoy your visit as you take a walk back in history.

# Welcome to Milton's 200th anniversary celebration

On behalf of the Mayor of Milton, the Town Council, and the citizens of Milton, the 200 Anniversary Committee would like to welcome you to Milton's Bicentennial Celebration weekend. The 200th Anniversary Committee was appointed several years ago to coordinate the many special events scheduled throughout the weekend that we hope you will find enjoyable and educational.

I wish to thank the Committee members who have worked so hard to make this celebration Milton's biggest party in 200 years! They are: Emory West our "souvenir king," who worked so patiently with various suppliers to select the anniversary collectibles you would like, and who attended many, many functions around town with his traveling storehouse of T-shirts, coffee mugs and more; David



C. FLEETWOOD

Dodd, who is Emory's right hand man; Janet Lank, who did a wonderful job as our Committee secretary, keeping accurate meeting minutes and keeping me on track; and Mary C. Hopkins-Hudson (director of the Milton Library,) who has worked tirelessly in the community on behalf of the Bicentennial, and her staff, who sold so many of the collectibles for our fundraising efforts.

Also, Jim Jefferson, our group's historian, for his diligent efforts to collect so many articles of Milton memorabilia, and his wonderful recall of past celebrations; Dennis Hughes, who serves as Milton Historical Society President and is a Milton volunteer fire fighter, for planning the fireworks extravaganza, the historic parade and coordinating area street closings; Donald Carey, our resident Civil War expert, who brought the re-enactment actors who will camp out and "do battle" on the Mariner Middle School's fields; Karen Duffield (director of the Milton Development Corporation), who con-



ANGIE MOON PHOTO

Milton's quiet elegance, illustrated here in this photograph taken at twilight along Governor's Walk, is what attracts thousands of year-round visitors to the town.

tributed greatly to our brochure designs and copy, and headed the effort to print this publication; Russell McCabe (State Archivist,) the best history buff I know, and someone who is always willing to share his in-depth knowledge of Delaware history; and Councilwoman Leah Betts, who did a great job as our liaison with the Milton Town Council and presented our plans and concerns to her fellow Council members for their consideration and approval.

Finally, I want to thank my wife, Barbara, who has worked with me on this event - behind the scenes - all these years. Barbara has always been a source of inspiration to me, and a great sounding board for my ideas.

Also, huge thanks go to Beverly White and Tom Arkinson, our volunteer coordinators, for recruiting and scheduling the many volunteers needed to host this celebration; and Patti Millman, who volunteered to be our public relations person. Patti worked closely with the Chamber of Commerce and the Milton Development Corporation, and coordinated all the pre-event advertising and publicity for the Bicentennial weekend.

When you read through this booklet,

you will see that many of Milton's civic and fraternal organizations have joined in the bicentennial spirit and are hosting very special events for the celebration. These groups have always been, and always will be, an integral part of our town, and without them, this celebration would not have been possible. Milton is a community of friends and neighbors that works together as a family, which makes it a hometown that is a very special place to visit and to live.

We all believe that your visit to Milton's 200th Anniversary Celebration will be memorable, and we hope you decide to spend this special weekend with us. Come learn as much as you can about our history; tour our lovely homes and gardens; taste our great food; listen to lively music; watch a historic parade; and revel in an explosion of fireworks. But most importantly, get to know what has made Milton so special for 200 years, and what still makes Milton so special: the people of Milton.

**Charlie Fleetwood, chairman  
Milton's 200th Anniversary  
Committee**

**Read a letter from Milton  
Mayor Don Post on page 12**

# Experience Milton's history at Lydia B. Cannon Museum

The Lydia Black Cannon Museum is the home of the Milton Historical Society. The historical society was founded in 1970 and opened to the public in its present location in 1972.

Built in 1857 as Grace Methodist Protestant Church, the building was renovated in 2006. Step inside and experience the magnificent space, including the recently restored stained glass windows. The museum features an exhibition on the town's history from its Native American beginnings to its heyday as a shipbuilding village.

The museum also offers a scavenger hunt for kids and a fascinating self-guided walking tour of the town. The museum shop sells unique, locally made gifts and fine art by local artists.

The museum will be open for free from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 4, and from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 5.

The museum and historical society will host a book signing with author and Milton native, Joana Stuchlik Donovan, at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 4.

The Milton Historical Society and Donning Company Publishers have announced their partnership in the publication of a new volume on the history of Milton. "It Began With a River: An Illustrated History of Milton and the Broadkill" is a limited edition book hot off the press. The volume features the rich and colorful past of the town once known as Head of Broadkill. The book takes readers through Milton's history beginning in the late 17th Century through its identity as a center of shipbuilding in the 19th Century, and as a center of the canning industry in the 20th Century. The book is \$35 a copy and only 1,000 are available.

Proceeds benefit the Milton Historical Society with special thanks to County Bank for underwriting this project. The Historical Society and the museum are located at 210 Union St.

For more information, call 684-1010 or visit [www.historicmilton.org](http://www.historicmilton.org).



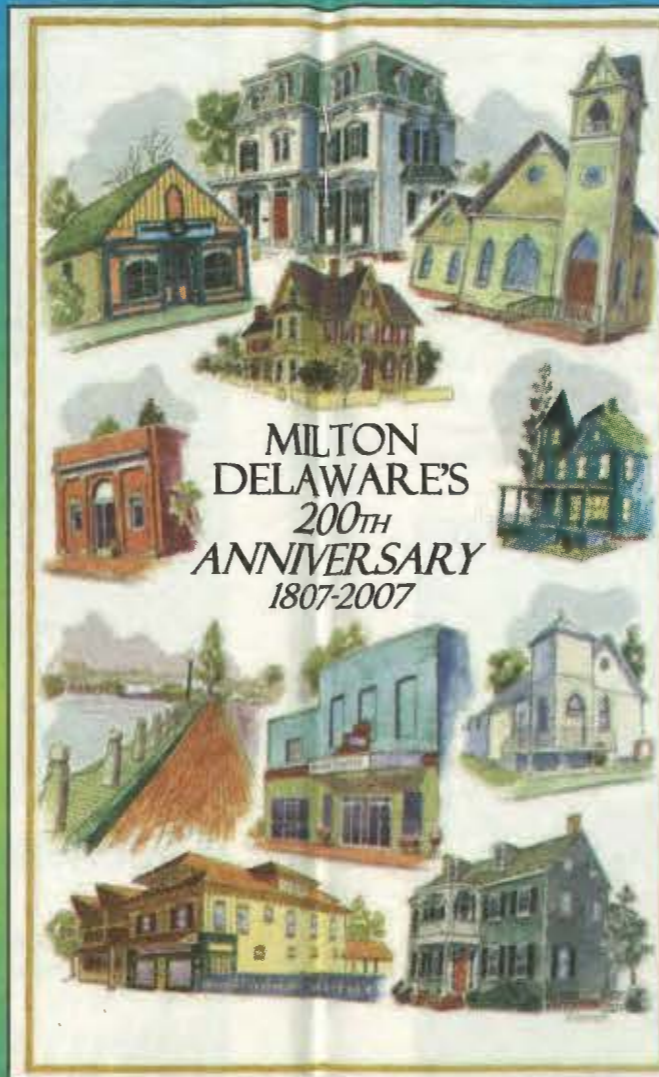
The Lydia Black Cannon Museum at 210 Union St. in Milton was built in 1857 as the Methodist Protestant Church and renovated in 1906 and in 2006. The stained glass windows and bell tower date from 1906. The museum is open from 1-5 p.m. Thursday to Sunday, with special hours for the town's bicentennial celebration. For information, call 684-1010 or visit [www.historicmilton.org](http://www.historicmilton.org).



Historic photographs, such as this image of boats on the Broadkill, are featured in the book, "It Began With a River: An Illustrated History of Milton and the Broadkill."

# Celebrating 200 Years of Historic Events in Milton

**Begin Here**



1807: By an Act of the Delaware Assembly, the name of the community, known variously as Osburn's Landing, Upper Landing, Conwell's Landing and Head of the Broadkill, is changed to Milton, to honor the English Poet, John Milton.

2007: Milton celebrates 200th anniversary!

2006: After 16 months of extensive renovation, Milton Historical Society holds rededication ceremony of Lydia B. Cannon Museum.

2004: First Annual Horseshoe Crab & Shorebird Festival

2003: Completion of remodeling of the Milton Public Library.



2000/2003: Milton Development Corporation begins its Milton Theatre renovation project. Theatre reopens with first public program in three decades.

1998: 1st Annual John Milton Poetry Festival  
2000: 1st Annual Broadkill River Canoe & Kayak Race



1986: Small rail train donated to Milton, and Milton Lions Club begins operation of the "Clipper Express" in Municipal Park.

1990: First Delmarva Hot Air Balloon & Craft Festival is organized by local physician, Dr. Charles Wagner

1998/2000: Draper-King Cole Cannery stops operation. Property sold to Thomas H. Draper who plans to develop it as a "neo-classical village."

1962: A Nor'easter hits the coastal region and floods downtown Milton - becomes known as the Great Storm

1970/1971: Milton Historical Society incorporates/former Grace Methodist Church on Union St. is donated to the MHS by Lydia Black Cannon to be used as a museum

1812: Broadkill Creek is blockaded by the British, and Milton stores and private dwellings are used as arsenals.

1820-1880: Milton shipbuilding enjoys its heyday. The town becomes well known for its thriving shipbuilding industry.



1887: Sussex County Court House in Georgetown constructed using bricks manufactured from Milton Brick Company.

1933/1934: Union organizers "chased from the town by police" when they try to organize Milton button cutters. Three button-cutting factories operating in Milton.

1947: Thomas and Mary Hughes begin publication of "The Towncrier"

1824: Samuel Paynter elected Governor of Delaware, the first of five men from Milton to be elected Governor.

1828: David Hazzard elected Governor of Delaware.

1846: Joseph Maull elected Governor of Delaware

1865: Milton incorporates as a town

1871: James Ponder sworn in as Governor of Delaware

1874: Waples Lumber Company, owned by Charles G. Waples, operates at Waples Mill Pond.

1901: Milton Volunteer Fire Company organizes and purchases its first piece of equipment.

1904: Telephone lines are installed

1909: Great Fire devastates downtown Milton and destroys 18 buildings.

1909: John S. Isaacs Farm Co. is founded and by the 1940s has become world's largest producer of canned lima beans.



1911: Joseph Maull Carey, Milton native, elected Governor of Wyoming.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANKLIN BRITTINGHAM AND JIM BRITTINGHAM  
 This photograph from around 1900 shows a bustling Front Street in downtown Milton - across from the present fire hall - before most of the area was leveled by the devastating fire of 1909.

# Front Street once connected Milton with the wharves and the world

BY CHARLES G. JONES III

Front Street noted in the picture shown above runs in front of the current day fire hall, crossing Federal Street beside the Wilmington Trust Bank and "PJ's" garage, and then continues straight on to the river behind the theater. This picture is taken standing in front of current day "PJ's" garage, and looking toward the fire hall.

At the time, the place where this picture was taken was at the original corner where Union Street connected with Front Street - in front of PJ's garage. Subsequently the original corner of Union and Front Streets was made into a curve, thus removing the corner, and making it appear as though Union Street continues on around the curve and connects directly into Federal Street rather than connecting to Front.

Although the street signs for this location now indicate Union and Federal Streets, the post office still recognizes the

address of this site as Front Street. The address of PJ's is 105 Front Street even though it is marked by street signs as being on the corner of Union and Federal - somewhat confusing.

The building in the foreground is where current day "PJ's" is located (105 Front Street) and was the original hotel in Milton until 1858 when the Ponder House opened on the opposing corner (i.e. catty-corner.) The Ponder House hotel (where the current day police station is located) had a wrap-around double deck porch, which is seen protruding into the right side of the picture. When the Ponder House opened it boasted a "table supplied with all the delicacies of the season" as well as "livery, pool room, and best accommodations," and the old hotel in the picture was converted into three storefronts. My family had placed a store next door (i.e. to the left and out of the current picture) in 1880, bought the

adjoining/pictured old hotel storefronts in 1891, and I continue to own this location to the current day.

As noted by the overwhelming number of buggies in the picture, Front Street was once a very busy, bustling business district. The picture depicts buggies on both sides of the road, and storefronts which continue on out of sight.

Ships could come up the river with products not made locally, unload directly into the back of stores, which would then sell within the port town business district which supplied the whole eastern half of Sussex County. At one time this was the main street in Milton and obviously business was brisk! Stores known to have existed on this street included a pharmacy, general store, furniture store, casket show room, restaurant, livery stable, tobacco store, pool hall and realty agency.

The picture shows the old hotel store-

The picture shows the old hotel storefronts being: "The Big Store" run by "Markel & Hartman" on the corner, Wm. T. "Starkey's Pharmacy" in the middle, flanked by the "Mason & Davidson" store to the left. In the middle of the picture, on the other corner of Federal and Front Street, the store with the wrap-around porch was the establishment of Colonel Samuel J. Wilson (i.e. later known locally as "Pop-Sam").

On the corner, "The Big Store" was a large general store, and the Wilson's store sold furniture as well as caskets of all things. Samuel Wilson had acquired the funeral business from John H. Davison (a cabinetmaker/builder/contractor). Mr. Wilson was a Democratic leader in Sussex County, appointed a Colonel on the staff of Milton Governor James Ponder, and also the Coroner of Sussex County. It was the Wilson family who sold the funeral business to the Shorts, who continue in the funeral business to this day.

Advertisements of this period indicate that Wm. T. Starkey's apothecary "in South Milton is headquarters for pure drugs, toilet articles, stationery, and fine confections. The headache power manufactured by him is highly endorsed as a cure for head

aches." Samuel J. Wilson was "the leading funeral director of Sussex County, has been engaged in the undertaking business for years, and by his long experience he is able to give satisfaction. In connection with his business he has a furniture department well stocked with everything necessary to furnish a home in this line."

All of the hustle and bustle shown in this picture came to a sudden end when the scenery in the picture changed dramatically - on the lucky night of Friday the 13th in August of 1909. Shortly after 1 o'clock in the morning, fire broke out in the rear of "The Big Store." According to various newspapers accounts: "The fire was discovered by the night watchman of the Royal Packing Company. When passing the building he saw only electric lights burning but a large pile of paper had notably been placed along the side of the building. Fifteen minutes later he saw flames.

Fire had eaten its way through the ceiling, so he ran to the Ponder House and rang the fire bell. As the building was of frame, it took only a few minutes for the flames to spread. By that time fire had spread to the adjoining store of W.T. Starkey, the Mason & Davidson general

merchandise store, and the post office to the west. Sparks were flying across the street and incipient fires were constantly breaking out in every direction. With little apparatus except an old-fashioned hand pump, fire had full sweep soon after it started. It spread to the bridge which crosses the Broadkill River, and this made it impossible to pump water from that source. The pump had to be filled with water from private dwellings. When flames reached out to the telephone office, men hurried to the switchboard and sent calls for aide to Lewes and Georgetown, while the flames licked around them.

Unable to connect with telephones any further, with the building on fire, William M. Foord, who was stopping at the Ponder House, managed to get his automobile out and made a record run to Georgetown where he telephoned for help. Practically the entire population was at the scene in a short time. The fire could be seen for many miles, and hundreds of people from the surrounding country flocked to Milton."

Verbal accounts by people who were there said that the men ran to the Schooner "Marie Thomas" (tied to the wharf on the back side of Front Street) and manned the bilge pumps in an attempt to produce



PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANKLIN BRITTINGHAM AND JIM BRITTINGHAM  
 Wilson's Store, at Front Street and Federal, featured items brought into Milton by ships from all over the world. In 1900, Milton's Front Street businesses, which backed up to the Broadkill River wharves, supplied much of the material needs of Eastern Sussex County



By 1954, most of Milton's downtown businesses - including the Post Office, had moved to Union Street. The building at the far left now houses the Milton Public Library. DELAWARE PUBLIC ARCHIVES PHOTO

Federal and Front Street, down Union Street to the river, took out all of Front Street down to the river, and swept up Federal Street to Strawberry Alley. When it was all said and done, most agreed that it was actually the women who stopped the fire from spreading further and contained it. The fire was contained by nailing blankets onto the side of buildings and keeping them wet with a bucket brigade.

Newspaper accounts confirm that "the women of the town took the lead in fighting the fire. They carried buckets and tubs of water. In many homes the women climbed on the roofs and kept the roofs wet with water, and it was through their work that the fire was kept from spreading.

There were only two accidents: one man broke his arm in helping to move the safe out of the Ponder House, and another was slightly burned. Although it was long after the fire was discovered that the fire engines from Lewes and Georgetown arrived, they did good work. Water was drawn from Milton creek, and the fire was gotten under control by 6 a.m.

Heroic efforts by these two volunteer companies combined with the aid of hundreds of willing workers, including women, saved (the remainder of) the town. The burned section covers several blocks."

History records "The Great Fire" resulted in "losses estimated as follows: Burton's

store occupied by Markel & Hartman (general store), W.T. Starkey (drugstore), Mason & Davidson (store); Carey & Darby (store), Charles Conner (two stores), Joseph Walls (blacksmith), William Mears (barber shop and dwelling), S. J. Wilson & Son (undertaking), James H. Palmer (Ponder House hotel and two stores), Goodman Conwell & Co. (offices), W.H. Stevens (wheelwright), William Maull (blacksmith), Mrs. H.E. Fields (two stores and dwelling), and Joshua Gray (residence)."

Some of these owners had "small insurance" coverage, while other had "partial insurance," though many had "no insurance."

Although "the fire only lasted about four hours," it "destroyed the entire business section of Milton."

After the "The Great Fire," Front Street never regained its former prominence. Whatever main street businesses that were rebuilt seemed to be placed over on Union Street rather than Front Street. Products began to be transported by automobiles rather than brought in by ships, and this diminished the importance/need for a waterfront business area.

The final blow to Front Street came when Milton decided to "put its toilet in the parlor."

That is, Milton decided to situate its sewage treatment plant on its prime

wharfage/waterfront real estate. Upon visiting this vicinity, particularly when the wind is in the right direction, one can't help but to leave the area.

However in more recent times there have been efforts to reverse this downfall of Front Street and return it to its former potential.

Approximately 15 years ago a wharf was constructed on the back side of Front Street where a sailing vessel continuously sits, as if to remind Miltonians of their reason for existence.

Since that time a Town Park across the river has been the focal point of improvement: Brush has been cleared from the waterfront, a park gazebo has been installed, along with playground equipment, cook-out facilities, and a train for children to ride.

A new restaurant - Irish Eyes - has been constructed in this area with a nice dining deck and patio overlooking the river. In fact the new Mayor, Don Post, is now working to move the sewer plant (remove the toilet from the parlor), and has notably voiced intentions to recreate Front Street back to its former potential - prime commercial real estate area.

Only time will tell if Front Street will ever return to its former prominence shown in the pictures as a bustling commercial district; but the pictures clearly show that the potential is there.



## PARADISE LOST? THE BROADKILL'S FORESTS

*Magnificent trees around the eastern Sussex County town of Milton proved attractive to the commerce of a developing nation. Now, an urge to preserve.*

BY LYNN L. REMLY

*Poems are made by fools like me  
But only God can make a tree*

—JOYCE KILMER

Twisting its way over 13 miles from Milton to the Delaware Bay, the Broadkill is a reminder that a river is part of a system, as it flows through terrain in eastern Sussex County varying from upland forest to the wetlands and salt marshes of Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. Yet the Broadkill watershed, with its astonishing wealth and variety of trees, is seriously threatened by human encroachment, in danger of becoming yet another paradise lost to the planet.

While everyone laments the steady loss of the Amazon Rain Forest, the problem of deforestation is much closer to home, and

has just as significant an impact. According to Andy Manus, director of conservation programs for the Delaware Nature Conservancy, "The forests are nature's lungs. We can't afford to lose them."

Rivers and trees are mutually dependent. "The forests along the Broadkill and its tributaries are crucial to protecting water quality," Manus points out. "They reduce urban and agricultural runoff, remove contaminants, and decrease erosion and sedimentation." In addition, their shade near a stream optimizes light and temperature conditions for its aquatic plants and animals, providing them with the right habitat.

Yet destruction of the forests, starting from the earliest human habitation, has increased geometrically with the decades. According to Rick McCorkle, Fish and Wildlife Biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Native Americans did have an impact, by

burning the forest understory to improve browsing for animals. Their disturbance, however, was relatively mild."

In fact, early European settlers were amazed by the one million acres of forest that they found in today's Delaware. In 1616, a Dutch sea captain remarked on the seemingly endless miles of oak, hickory, and pine, and in 1633, Leonard Calvert, brother of the Second Lord Baltimore, described the variety of trees that nearly covered the state:

"There are many hickory trees and oaks so straight and tall that beams 60 feet long and two-and-a-half-feet wide can be made of them. The cypress trees also grow to a height of 80 feet before they have any branches, and three men with arms extended can barely reach round their trunks. Pine, laurel, fir, sassafras and walnuts are plentiful. There are plenty of mulberry trees,



DELAWARE PUBLIC ARCHIVES PHOTOGRAPH

**In 1908, townspeople of Milton, Del. gathered on the banks of the Broadkill River for the launching of the sailing schooner Naul Thomas. The surrounding forests provided ideal timber for the shipbuilding industry.**

alder, ash and chestnut trees, as large as those which grow in Spain, Italy and France; and cedars equalling those which Libanus [Lebanon] boasts of."

In addition, yellow poplar, beech, hickory, maple, gum, and sycamore filled the forest, and white cedar flourished in the swamps. This plenitude results from Delaware's location midway between the north and south zones of eastern forest growth, meaning that wooded lands hold species representing both zones.

But admiration gave way to destruction as European settlement began to steamroll the area. The forests must have seemed infinite, and the trees were exploited for shelter, a fuel source and a cash crop. "Unlike the piedmont or swamps, the coastal plain offered easy conversion to farming," McCorkle notes. "Unfortunately."

The American icon - the log cabin - was first built by Swedish colonists in Delaware and later adapted by other pioneers as they began to clear the land. It might have been a symbol for the losses to come.

English planters, settling in the area along the Broadkill, not only cleared trees for homes and farmland but also developed industries that devastated the forests. Many timber tracts with black oak, for example, were cut solely for bark to be used in the tanning and dyeing trades.

With its easy access to both forest and farm products, the river drew permanent settlement, and the town of Milton, located at the head of the Broadkill, became a transportation hub as early as 1672. The settlement was first called "Head of the Broadkill," but its few dozen early inhabitants had pretensions. In 1807, they had the Delaware Legislature change the settlement's name to Milton, for the 17th-century English poet John Milton, author of the epics *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*.

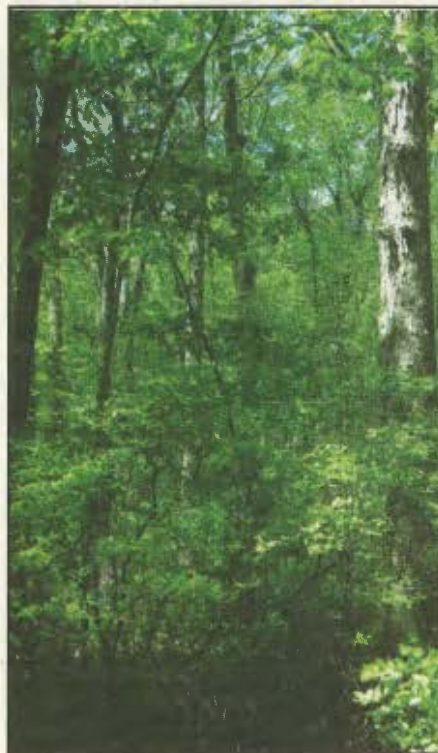
Their pretensions were justified, and in the 19th century, the town and its river became the center of a regional shipbuilding industry. Shipbuilding requires wood, however, and like farming, the profitable industry required pillaging more forest, as acres of white oak fell to produce high-quality hulls.

Locally-built schooners carried agricultural products and lumber up Delaware Bay to Philadelphia and up the East Coast to points beyond, according to Ellen Passman, member of the Milton Chamber of Commerce board of directors. "We were part of the whole system of moving the goods in the 19th century."

In addition to shipbuilding, local holly trees gave rise to a thriving industry,

Passman adds. Growing to a height of 60 feet with dark green leaves and bright red berries, holly made Delaware into the leading U.S. producer of its products. Milton became "The Holly Capital of the World," Passman says, and the surrounding area was "The Land of Holly." In 1939, the General Assembly of Delaware even named the American holly the official State Tree of Delaware.

As the Broadkill forests were swept away, they graced the inhabitants' lives, and the simple log cabin was replaced by some of the finest Victorian and Colonial architecture in Delaware, most constructed in wood. Many shipbuilders and sea captains lived and worked in Milton, and their prosperity is apparent in the town's historic homes.



Even the street names were changed to Broad, Spruce and Chestnut, to imitate the stature of Philadelphia, but also to underscore the source of the town's wealth: water and trees.

Inevitably, wooden ships disappeared with the advent of steam. By the 20th century, the golden age of shipbuilding was a memory, and "The holly trade went plastic and moved to China," Passman adds.

But the inconvenient truth is that the forests, like the industrial past, were also a memory. Between shipbuilding and wood exports, the forests had been destroyed; of a total 1,251,200 acres of land in the state, only 350,000 were forest and woodland by the beginning of the 20th century. Over

time, McCorkle summarizes, "About 70-75 percent of Delaware's forest cover was lost."

Just as bad as clear-cutting, McCorkle emphasizes, has been the problem of fragmentation, in which forest tracts become separated and offer more edges, or frontage against open areas. Part of the Broadkill watershed, Redden State Forest, for example, is a patchwork of tracts separated by towns and fields.

As McCorkle explains, unbroken expanses of forest are necessary for biodiversity. "A natural forest contains several age classes of tree, and each class supports associated species," he says. "Some species prefer old-growth forest, huge trees with cavities, peeled back bark, or just the size to support a raptor nest. The cerulean warbler and Delmarva fox squirrel require a wide expanse of forest. Second growth or younger trees and bushes support other species, like bobwhite tail and woodcock."

Without wide habitat corridors, species fail to find food, water, shelter, and breeding sites, and to escape droughts or fires. In addition, he says, "Fragmentation results in more tracts with sharp edges, which allow in predators and exotic species."

The forest is arguably Delaware's most threatened natural habitat, in great part because it is unprotected by legal strictures, unlike farmland and wetlands. "This is a sore point: there is no upland forest regulation in Sussex County," McCorkle says. Wetlands are protected, but because upland forests can easily be converted to agricultural use or residential development, they are vulnerable. "Upland forest is the most imperiled habitat in the state."

Ironically, the timber industry that cut the forests in the early days once provided a temporary buffer for forests by managing the cutting. Until recently, the timber industry has been a \$100 million-a-year state industry and has helped conserve the resource on which it depends. Unfortunately, reforestation efforts involved planting loblolly rather than hardwood, but at least there was reforestation. "I'm no proponent of timbering," McCorkle says, "but forestry can be done in a sustainable way. It's much better than growing houses."

But today, trees can be outsourced, just like anything else; lumber companies are investing profits in countries in South America, where trees can be grown more quickly and cheaply. As a result, treed land in the United States is more profitable to sell than to use for re-planting. In addition, companies find it easier to buy timber rights from private landowners in the United States to avoid paying taxes on land they



**Broadkill River watershed and sub-watersheds.**

own. Thus they are increasingly opting to sell land for development, sounding the death knell for still more trees.

Two of the largest companies in Delaware are reducing their holdings. Glatfelter Pulpwood Company has sold all but 9,000 of its acres in Delaware, and International Paper is selling off holdings in the United States generally.

As the principal town along the Broadkill, Milton is a focus of attempts to regain the lost paradise in some measure and to retain what is left. Passman notes that the mills and shipyards are gone, but the homes in the historic district are being purchased and "restored to their former glory," mainly by people moving in from other towns, like Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.

But residential development outside the town center has skyrocketed, further threatening the remaining forests, and the question is whether the flood of newcomers will destroy what they have come to enjoy. Today's growth spurt in Milton, for example, means that the town might well double its current population of 1,300 within 10 years.

As one result of residential growth, the headwater of the Broadkill, Wagoner's Pond, is increasingly threatened by sedimentation, as trees fall to the chainsaw. "The town has 'asphaltitis,'" according to Joannie Martin-Brown, citizen member of the Broadkill Action Team, which was created as part of an effort to bring the river into compliance with federal mandates for fresh water quality. "People, especially new resi-

dents who want to live on the water and chop down trees to improve the view, have no respect for the free water-cleaning services Mother Nature provides."

She points to efforts on the part of some developers to cut down as many trees as possible before the town can enact ordinances that prohibit clearing. "There's a lot of ugliness in town right now, a lot of pressure for development and little enforcement of laws that could help the river."

Passman agrees. "We want no cement city or Levittown." She points to the town's refusal to approve a 4,000-home development - Elizabethtown - (now approved by Sussex County, outside Milton jurisdiction) outside its center but notes that The Preserve on the Broadkill was permitted as a responsible development. "We're trying to rethink our vision of the river, keeping in mind that it flows onward to Prime Hook and the Delaware. We're part of a system, and we take our stewardship seriously."

But as Delaware's population continues to swell - by more than 12 percent through 2020, according to projections - habitat for people is taking priority over habitat for wildlife, and forestland is making way for housing and other human development at a pace of about 2,000 to 3,000 acres a year. Sussex in particular is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation.

"Houses and human disturbance that goes with them - grass, roads, exotic species in the garden - hasten the decline of the forest and the species it shelters," McCorkle says. He would like to see upland forest regulation similar to that which pro-

tecs wetlands, "starting with simply avoiding any impact at all on existing forests." Reducing the human footprint and, as a last resort, reforesting other areas are far less desirable solutions, he feels, but they do provide some protection.

Successful efforts to save the trees and the river from invasion have included purchase of conservation easements and the outright purchase of affected lands. According to Manus, the Nature Conservancy - in partnership with Sussex County Land Trust - bought a conservation easement on 150 acres of land along Beaverdam Creek - a tributary of the Broadkill - from an owner who had promised his grandfather that he would protect the land he inherited. The Conservancy has instituted a management plan to maintain the creek's purity.

In addition, Manus says, the Conservancy created the 7-acre Edward McCabe Preserve in Milton in 1998, in part as a means of raising public awareness. The preserve's 3-mile trail along the Broadkill, forested with 1,750 hardwood seedlings to stabilize soil along the riverbank, is posted with interpretive guides to allow people to see forest and the management practices that help to protect water quality. "Our efforts are necessarily long-term and incremental."

"We try to raise public awareness of the issues, then wait for the opportunity to act to preserve affected lands."

Manus also points to the 904-acre Ponders Tract, formerly a Glatfelter company loblolly plantation, as another focus of the Conservancy's efforts. Adjacent to the Conservancy's Pemberton Branch Preserve and the Redden State Forest, the Ponders area is a critical resting and feeding site for migratory birds and serves as an important groundwater recharge area.

In addition, it protects the integrity of streams that flow into both the Chesapeake Bay and the Delaware Bay. Named for Governor James Ponder, a native of Milton, the tract is "a demonstration area of sorts, to show how reforestation works," Manus says. "In 30 to 40 years, we hope to get the tract back to coastal hardwood forest."

Protecting paradise needs to be a top priority, on the Broadkill and everywhere. "We're at least at 'code orange,'" McCorkle feels. "We have to stop allowing out-of-control development, which means just handing over our natural areas to special interests. They get a short-term financial gain at the expense of our long-term goals, such as promoting human health." After all, what's lost may not always be regained. **DQ**





# MILTON CONCERTS IN THE PARK 2018

**7 PM** at the  
*Memorial Park*  
**BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIRS**

**ADMISSION: FREE**

## May

30 . . . . . **SMOOTH SOUND** BIG BAND  
The Mercantile at Milton  
Pediatric & Adolescent Center

## June

6 . . . **Kathie Martin & the Hot Rods** OLDIES ROCK  
**FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION NIGHT!** I.G. Burton  
Milford • Seaford • Lewes

13 . **Sky Brady & The Lost Northern Tribe** ROCK N ROLL  
Avery Hall Insurance  
County Bank

20 . . **1st STATE SYMPHONIC BAND** SUMMER POP  
Quillen Signs  
Short Funeral Services

27 . . . . . **FUNSTERS** VARIETY  
Irish Eyes Pub & Restaurant  
Pro Exteriors

## July

4 . . . . . **TYDEWATER** COUNTRY  
**FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION NIGHT!** Wyoming Millwork  
Charlie's Waste Services

11 . . . . **THE GIRLFRIENDS** CLASSIC ROCK  
Yeager Family Law Firm  
The Butcher Block

18 . . **U.S. NAVY COMMODORES** BIG BAND  
Milton Lions Club  
Technogoober

25 . . . . . **VINYL SHOCKLEY** VARIETY  
Milton Chamber of Commerce • Womens Club of Milton  
Lavender Fields at Warrington Manor

## August

1 . . **HONEYCOMBS** VARIETY  
Dog Fish Head Craft Brewery  
Milton Police Department  
**FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION NIGHT!**  
  
POLICE • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

8 . . **33 1/3** CLASSIC ROCK  
ErinAnn Martin Beebe - Remax Realty  
King's Homemade Ice Cream

15 . . . **OVERTIME** CLASSIC ROCK N ROLL  
M & T Bank

22 . . . . **U.S. NAVY CRUISERS** ROCK  
Salon Milton • Hot Dogs @ the Beach  
Milton Liquors • The Ice Cream Man

29 . **BIG HAT NO CATTLE** WESTERN SWING  
Rep. Steve Smyk  
Senator Ernie Lopez

This program is supported in part by a grant from the

Delaware Division of the **Arts**

A State Agency in partnership with the National Endowment of the Arts. The Division also promotes Delaware arts events on DelawareScene.com

**MILTON**  
  
**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**