COUNTY OF OCEAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BARNEGAT BRANCH TRAIL

DEPARTMENTS OF PLANNING, ENGINEERING AND PARKS & RECREATION

WELCOME TO SOUTH TOMS RIVER (1927)

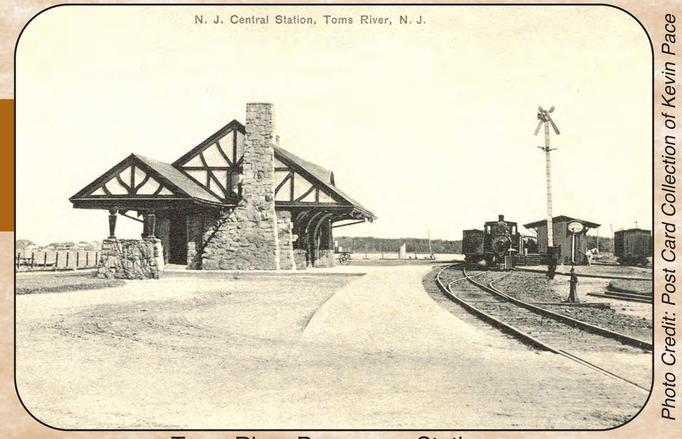


Photo Credit: Post Card Collection of Kevin Pace

Toms River Passenger Station.



Photo Credit: Postcard Collection of Michael T. Mangum

Postcard of South Toms River before the Parkway.

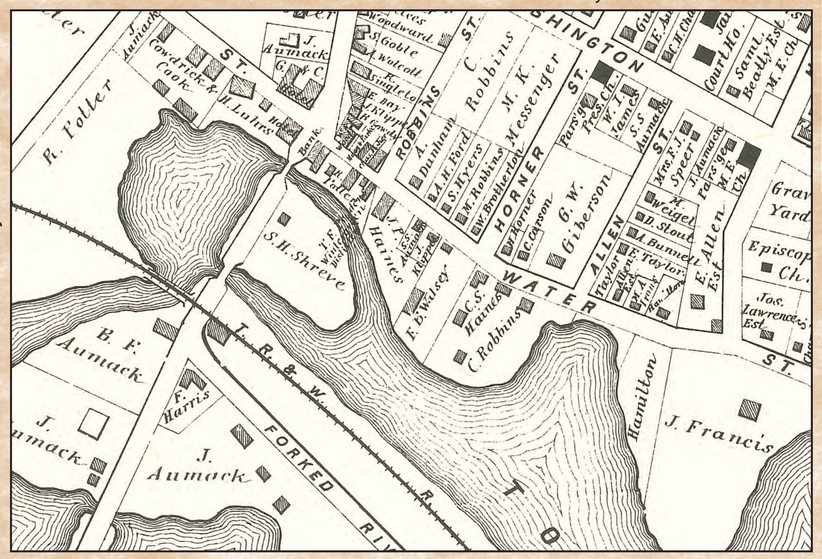


Photo Credit: Ocean County Collection

Woolman and Rose Atlas 1877.

The land that is now South Toms River Borough has been part of four townships and two counties. Under English rule, this area was part of Shrewsbury Township in Monmouth County. In 1767, the area was part of Dover Township in Monmouth County. In 1850, Ocean County was created from the southern part of Monmouth County. In 1875, the area was part of the newly created Berkeley Township. On May 3, 1927 a public referendum created the Borough of South Toms River. The entire municipality is less than 1.5 square miles.

South Toms River was created in response to a conflict over unequal tax issues. The town was a commercial, light industrial and railroad hub.

South Toms River was home to what would become the Central Jersey Railroad (1866-1977). The first railroad station was built west of the river and converted to freight in 1868. The station was destroyed by a gunpowder explosion in 1874. The second station was built east of the river c.1868. Still standing, that station was converted to freight in 1900 and retired in 1973. The third and most aesthetically pleasing stone faced structure was built in 1900, sold in 1955 and burned down in 1976.

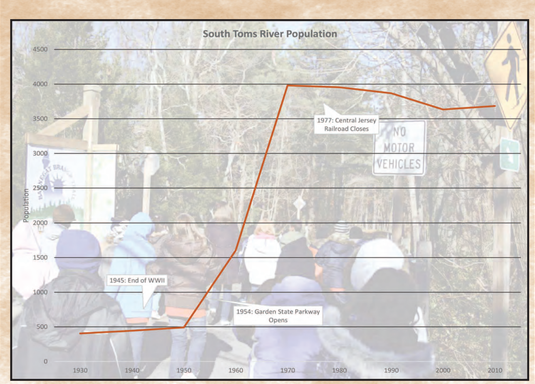
Birdville in South Toms River

In 1914, Albert F. Greim constructed a concrete complex on Mill Street intended as a sanctuary for birds and people. He also built a (no longer standing) concrete factory to manufacture rustic furniture and birdhouses. Unconsecrated in 1940, the complex included a small, domed shape Episcopal chapel that is still standing. Both buildings were covered in ceramic tile. Some of the first borough council meetings were held at Birdville in 1927.



Photo Credit: NJ Historic Sites Inventory 1981

Birdville Chapel.



Latter-Day Saints in South Toms River

Anthony Ivins, a large landowner donated the land (triangle created by South Main Street and Flint Boulevard) for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormon Church). Joseph Smith is said to have preached in what is now South Toms River. In 1854, the congregation grew to 117 members from the Forked River, New Egypt and Toms River area. On April 1, 1853, Mr. Ivins and a large part of the Mormon community embarked on a covered wagon journey to settle in Utah.

Simon Lake grew up in South Toms River, but moved to Toms River when he was 15. His father operated the mill at the end of Mill Street in 1881. He apparently tested his early submarine designs including his ship the Argonaut in 1881 in the Toms River. He patented his invention on May 24, 1887. He would go on to obtain over 200 patents for other submarine designs in the United States and other countries. A submarine memorial was placed along the Toms River in 1997.





Photo Credit: Tim Hart, Cultural and Heritage Staff

The Barnegat Branch Trail logo was explicitly designed with history in mind: Lady Liberty's silhouette is reminiscent of the Central Railroad of NJ (CNJ) logo, adopted by the railroad in 1944 to reflect the close proximity of the CNJ Terminal in Jersey City to the Statue of Liberty. The BBT logo also includes a ghost locomotive, as well as Ocean County's most recognizable environmental features.