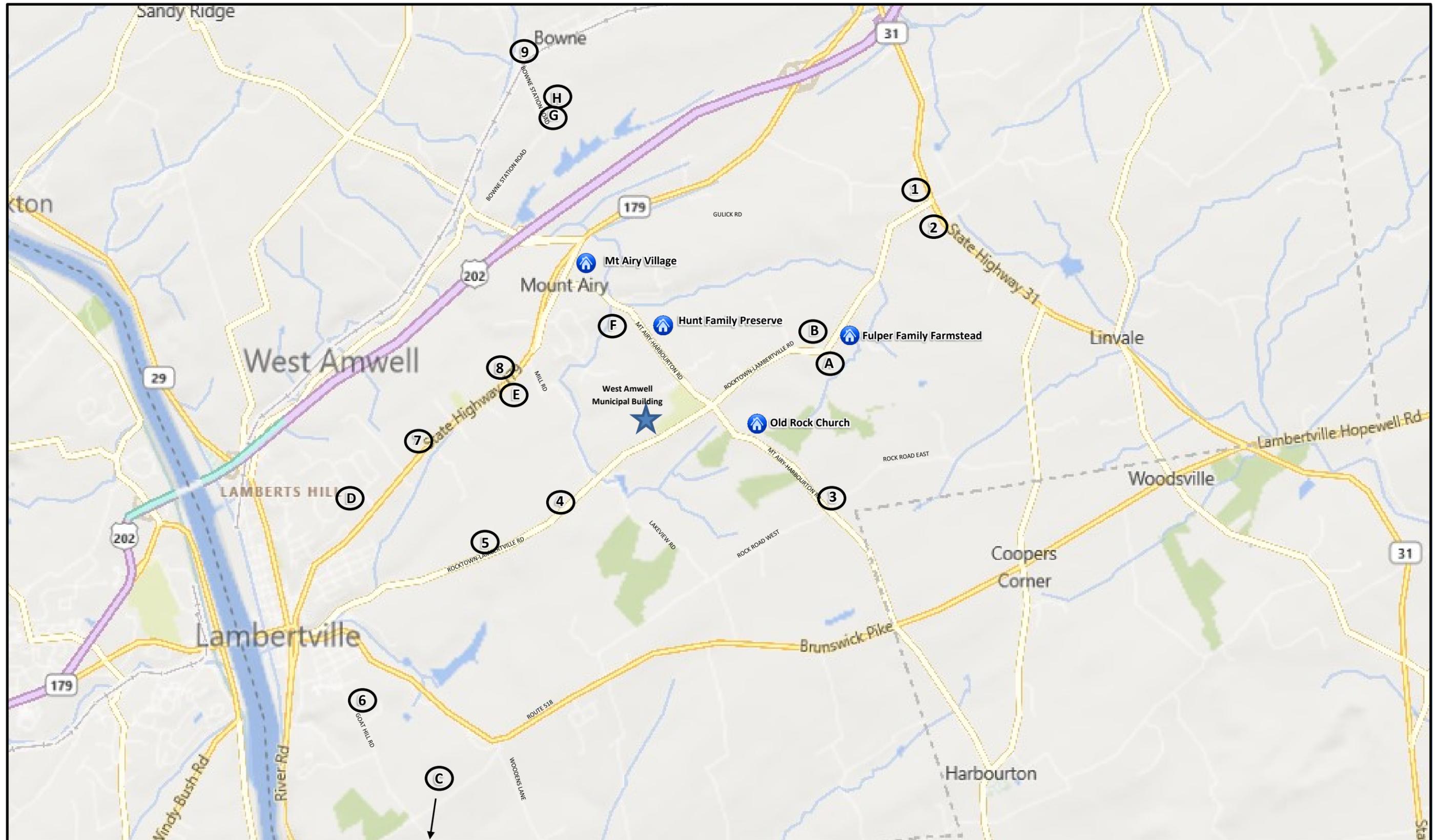


West Amwell Historic Self-Guided Tour Map

(see reverse side for exact locations and property descriptions)



West Amwell Historic Self-Guided Tour

This self-guided tour was created in 2021 to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the Township. Come and enjoy a drive through our historic community.

Note: Please respect the privacy of the property owners and do not enter driveways or trespass on the property. Guided tours are offered below only on September 25, 2021 and only *at the times* listed.

Historic Sites

Stopping Points on September 25, 2021 only

Mt. Airy Village – Mt Airy Village Road

Tours: 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. (meet at church)

Mt Airy village grew up around Holcombe’s Storehouse, built in 1743. The village was an important stop on the route from Philadelphia to New York. Washington and his troops passed through as did many stagecoaches in the years that followed. Mt Airy had a hotel and tavern that also served as a post office. Current notable features include the Holcombe’s Storehouse (a former municipal building) now owned by the Runkle family, a 19th century Second Presbyterian Church, the adjacent one-room school house and a cemetery for enslaved people next to the church. Mt. Airy served as the site of the Township municipal building for over a century and a half.

Fulper Family Farmstead – 281 Rocktown Lambertville Road

Tours: 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Fulper Family Farmstead dates back to 1909 and is now being farmed by the 5th generation of the Fulper Family. They have gone from 1 cow to milking 200 cows twice a day and from raising vegetables and tomatoes for Campbell Soup Co. to agritourism and producing 8,000 lbs. of milk per day as well as their own varieties of cheese and yogurt.

Hunt Family Preserve – 342 Mt Airy Harbourton Road

Tours: 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Hunt Family Preserve has been in the Hunt Family for 5 generations. It has gone from a family farm with a few cows and chickens, to beef and crops after the dairy barn was destroyed by a fire in 1989. Since 2001 it is a hunting preserve currently raising 2500 pheasants and 2,000 chuckars per year and holding an annual fund raiser to help Township residents in need.

Old Rock Church – 260 Mt Airy Harbourton Road

Tours: 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

This simple, stone country church has seen steady use and devotion for over 180 years. Non-denominational, it has been here on Mt. Airy-Harbourton Road since 1843 for all members of the community in celebration and sorrow.

Drive-by Historic Sites

(Private property – no trespassing)

1. Rocktown School – 28 Rocktown Hill Road

The Rocktown School was one of the four one-room school houses in West Amwell before the consolidated school opened in 1952. Dick Gulick, a former student, bought the school and renovated it as a house in 1953 for his bride Elsie. Dick passed away, but Elsie still lives there.

2. Carkhuff House – 7 Rocktown Hill Road

The original part of this house has a date stone that reads HHW1739. The HHW stands for Henry & Hannah Woolever who were German immigrants that settled in the Amwell Valley. George and Roxanne Carkhuff bought the property in 1968 and completely restored the house where Roxanne claimed to have a ghost living with them.

3. High Valley School – 300 East Rock Road

At the corner of Rock Road and Mt. Airy-Harbourton Road is the High Valley School, originally a one-room schoolhouse that served several generations of students in the first half of the 20th century.

4. Phillips House – 98 Rocktown-Lambertville Road

Several generations of the Phillips family lived on this farm. One of the earliest residents was Jonathan Phillips who donated land for the West Amwell Cemetery and Old Rock Church. A later generation included three of the original ten members of the Mt. Airy 4-H Dairy Club, currently 98 years old and the oldest on-going 4-H Club in NJ. When the farm was sold, it is reported that numerous Indian relics were found on the property and sold.

5. Drake Farmstead – 70 Rocktown-Lambertville Road

This Federal style brick home was built in 1859 by John Stout Drake (1817-1884). In addition to the main house, the property includes an old smokehouse, carriage house and corn crib. The existing barn is newly built, replacing a c.1900s derelict dairy barn. Mr. Drake was a farmer who served as the Township's first clerk.

6. Hunt Estate (Chimney Hill) – 207 Goat Hill Road

The Hunt Estate, also known as Chimney Hill Inn, was built in 1820 as a two-story farmhouse. The farmhouse was expanded in 1927 by Lambertville attorney, Edgar Hunt, as a summer retreat. The two stone wings were designed by Margaret Spencer, one of the first female practicing architects in the United States.

7. Larason/Magill farm - 1451 Route 179

The Larason/Magill farm is one of several farms along Route 179 that stayed in the same families for generations. Orville and Lena Larason farmed the land while Mildred (Orville’s sister) worked as the County Clerk for 55 years. In 1983 Cindy and Randy Magill bought the house and farm buildings which they have renovated and maintained the past 38 years.

8. Holcombe Farm – 1385 Route 179

Tom and Sharon Holcombe live on this farm along Route 179. The land was originally granted by the King of England to a family by the name of Allen. Tom’s great-great grandfather bought it from the Allens and have the original deed on sheepskin. This was a dairy farm but the cows are now gone and the 6th generation of Holcombe’s grow vegetables and hay.

9. Bowne Station – 101 Bowne Station Road

Originally built around 1830 by the Barber family, the small shed-like building was used as a post office and railroad station. The building was purchased by the family of Dr. John Bowne in 1870 which still bears the family name.

Drive-by Former Historic & Cultural Sites

(No longer in existence or not visible from road. No trespassing)

A. Rockefeller Estate – 259 Rocktown-Lambertville Road

Johann Peter Rockefeller is oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller’s oldest ancestor in the United States. Johann lived with his family in Rocktown in the mid-18th century in what is believed to be this farmstead. The Rockefellers had immigrated from the same town in Germany as the Woolovers of Rocktown Hill Road. A family cemetery plot still remains in a cluster of trees in the middle of a farm field.

B. Claude Rains Home – 242 Rocktown Lambertville Road

Actor Claude Rains bought a farm on Rocktown-Lambertville Road in 1933 – the same year as his film debut in *The Invisible Man*. Rains started his career on Broadway when he was 11. He went on to win a Broadway Tony Award in 1951 for best actor and received Academy Award nominations for his roles in films like Casablanca. Mr. Rains sold the farm after the house was destroyed by a fire on Christmas Eve (year unknown).

C. Mountford Farm (Amity Farm) – 314 Goat Hill Road

Peter Funk wrote “It Pays to Increase Your Word Power” in the Readers Digest for many years, plus more than a half dozen books. One of those books was called “high Spirits” which told about life on their West Amwell farm on Goat Hill Road. Peter and his wife Mary moved here with their seven children from suburbia to, as Peter is reported to have said, “improve the quality of their family life.” The house dates back to c. 1727 and was built by the Pidcock family.

D. Music Circus - 11 Music Mountain Boulevard

In 1962, St. John Terrell moved his renowned Music Circus from Lambertville to West Amwell on Route 179. For the next eight years, this innovative theater-in-the-round presented summer stock and musical concerts featuring some of the biggest entertainers and musicians in the country.

E. DVHA Horse Show Grounds – 1384 Route 179

Organized by a group of area kids, the field on Route 179 across from the Holcombe Farm was used for horse shows for nearly 20 years. It was a monthly attraction along the

highway in the 1950’s and 60’s with a refreshment stand and loudspeaker. It later organized as the Delaware Valley Horsemen’s Association and in 1969 moved to its current location in Delaware Township.

F. Mt. Airy Zoo – 371 Mt Airy Harbourton Road

Jessamine Goddard owned and operated the Mt Airy Zoo from 1957 to 1965 on this historic 21 acre farmstead. For 50 cents (25 cents for children), visitors could enjoy seeing over 100 animals, birds and reptiles. The property is now a private residence.

G. Hoppock House - 127 Bowne Station Road

Built in the 1760’s, the Cornelius Hoppock House is located at 127 Bowne Station Road. Now named “Upland,” the property was home to C. Lloyd Fisher from 1943 to 1983. Fisher gained notoriety as defense co-counsel for Bruno Hauptmann during the Lindbergh trial and appeal.

H. Governor Moore Summer Home – 105 Bowne Station Road

Built in 1928, 105 Bowne Station Road served as Governor Moore’s summer getaway during his three non-consecutive terms as NJ governor in the 20’s and 30’s. The home included a second floor bowling alley.

Other sites of interest

Railroad Stations in/near West Amwell

Three railroad stations were in or adjacent to West Amwell were active in the 19th and early 20th century: Bowne, Mt Airy and Alexauken Stations. The Bowne Station once served farmers in the area and according to one legend provided a place from which hunters could shoot deer from the comfort of a railway car. The Mt Airy Station was on Queen Road. The exact location of the Alexauken Station remains a mystery although there are archival pictures of the station.

Goat Hill Overlook and Washington Rock - 20 George Washington Rd

The Goat Hill Overlook and several nearby vantage points offers dramatic views of the Delaware River and surrounding lands. The 213 park commemorates Washington's visit to the site to survey preparations for the attack on Trenton.

The *West Amwell Historic Self-Guided Tour* was written and prepared by the West Amwell 175th Anniversary Committee: Betty Jane Hunt (Chair), Peter Buchsbaum, Sally Conyne, Linda Cook, Paul Cronce, Ellen Ramberg, Martha Shea, John Thompson, Linda Weber, Brenda Wood, and Jeanne Yarrow. (Map by Dave Beaumont)