

Spanning the Gap

A Ride Down Old Mine Road Part II: Millbrook Village and Flatbrookville NJ Revised October 2012



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These directions pick up at Millbrook Village NJ.

After parking, take time to stroll the village. The village is staffed on weekends in summer, but you may walk through at other times between dawn and dusk.

MILLBROOK VILLAGE

Original village established c. 1832
Village currently used for historical demonstrations.

In 1832, Abram Garis built a grist mill along Van Campen brook near the newly completed Columbia and Walpack Turnpike. The farmers who brought their grain to his mill soon attracted other businesses, such as a store, a blacksmith, and a cooper. By the 1870s, Millbrook was a thriving farm village of 19 buildings and about 75 inhabitants. However, competition with western farms and general economic depression caused a decrease in farming population just before the turn of the century. Millbrook and other villages in the valley declined. By 1900, the gristmill had ceased operation. Soon after 1910, the store and hotel closed their doors.

Today, only a handful of original Millbrook buildings remain. Other buildings have been moved from other sites or are newly built to help depict village life in the valley during the late 19th and early 20th century. The layout of Millbrook, however, is still representative of the original village. The mill is being constructed in the same manner as the original using new and old material.



Looking south down Columbia-Walpack Turnpike in 2000. Garis House is at the right. (NPS photo by Ken Sandri)



A fresh batch of cider at

The village comes alive on the first full weekend in October for Millbrook Days, when rangers and volunteers demonstrate skills and crafts of rural living.

Turn to the right leaving the parking area at Millbrook. About 0.6 miles up the hill, you may see a dirt road running parallel to Old Mine Road in the forest to the left. This is an earlier roadbed of Old Mine Road, before the road was realigned to its current paved route. The old roadbed is now a hiking trail called Hamilton Ridge Trail.

About 1.0 miles later, as Blue Mt. Lakes Road enters on the right, you will come to a view of Walpack Bend. Here the Delaware River makes an S-curve into the Kittatinny Ridge (You can easily find the spot on your park map). Pull off the road carefully to the left to enjoy the view, which is especially dramatic at sunset.

Millbrook Days.



A Millbrook interior. NPS
Photo by Warren Bielenberg

DELAWARE VIEW HOUSE (SALAMOVKA)

Built prior to 1836

In the early 20th century, many old area farmsteads were used as country homes. The re-use often involved a transformation in the landscape as well. More elaborate landscape materials were employed and water-flow was manipulated on the site. Here, the landscape still has the feel of a summer home.

Samuel Garris purchased this property in 1904, enlarged the house, and operated it as a hunting lodge. Later he leased it to a family that operated it as a boarding house and later as the Flatbrookville Hotel. During the hotel years, the owners no doubt benefited from the vitality of nearby Flatbrookville.

In 1926, Andrew and Nelda Salama, Belo-russians who had fled from the Russian Revolution, purchased the property and remodeled the house for use as a communal summer house for their artistic and theatrical friends from New York. Note the rear two-story wing that is the original portion, which has half-story swivel windows. The roof of an original structure that was probably built prior to 1836 is still visible in the attic. The original portion is Greek



Delaware View House (Salamovka) in an old postcard.



Delaware View House today.
(NPS photo by Ken Sandri)

Revival style, while the later front addition is Victorian vernacular.

Continuing 0.5 miles beyond Delaware View house, you will come to a bridge over Flat Brook. (An older disused bridge still stands to the right.) To your LEFT at the bridge is Flatbrookville, a village of which only two homes remain. To your RIGHT is Route NPS 615, the suggested route.

For a quick look at Flatbrookville, however, turn left. At 1.0 miles from the bridge look for a marker for Old Mine Road, near a trail to river at Walpack Bend. This trail passes Deckers Ferry House. Deckers Ferry operated out of Flatbrookville from 1744 to 1898. Continue 1.7 miles north to a small house on the right.

VAN SCODER-KNIGHT HOUSE

Built 1800

Later Victorian remodeling

Van Scoder-Knight House displays both the Dutch influence of early valley architecture and, in its painting scheme, the Victorian influence of the 19th century resort era.

(About 3.8 miles north of Van Scoder-Knight House Old Mine Road becomes a dirt road which leads to Van Campen Inn. However, this is a rough roadway and a better route to Van Campen Inn is via NPS 615 and Peters Valley up ahead.)

At this point it is suggested that you turn south and return to the bridge over Flat Brook, continuing straight ahead at the bridge onto Rt. NPS 615.

The tour of Old Mine Road continues with A Ride down Old Mine Road Part III: Walpack.



Van Scoder-Knight House, built 1800. (NPS photo by Ken Sandri)



Decker Ferry House looking northwest from the river.