

# HATBORO'S ELM STREET DISTRICT- HISTORY/FUNFACTS MAP

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**BOLD LINES INDICATE STREETS IN THE ELM STREET DISTRICT**

**1 The Battle of Crooked Billet** was fought here on May 1, 1778. General John Lacey's militia was surprised and overwhelmed by British and Tory (Americans fighting for the British) forces before it could escape into the woods of Warminster. Some of Lacey's wounded troops left behind were burned alive by the enemy. Although Lacey suffered heavy losses in the battle, he survived and continued to disrupt and harass the enemy in our area.



A famous member of our Union Library was **John Fitch** – the true inventor of the steamboat. He experimented with his craft on local waterways with his friends from Hatboro. Robert Fulton dishonestly obtained Fitch's plans and drawings then falsely took credit for conceiving the steamboat. After being robbed of his invention, Fitch died a penniless and broken man.



**16** The first of three **Movie Theaters** in Hatboro was here on East Montgomery Avenue. The theater had enough wooden benches to seat 100 people and an upright piano to play the accompaniment for silent movies.

**15** In the later part of the 1800's, there was a **Catholic Church** INSIDE the borough. It was at the corner of Penn Street (formally Depot Street) and Montgomery Avenue. It didn't last long and became part of St. David's in Willow Grove.

Further reading about **William Penn, the Lenni Lenape Indians** or any of these topics is available at the second oldest library in the state- **The Union Library of Hatboro**

**2 Crooked Billet Elementary School** is the only school ever built on an American battlefield and is distinguished as a declared Pennsylvania historic site.

**3 The Crooked Billet Monument** was moved here from its former home on York Road and rededicated in the spring of 1967. It was placed on a new foundation containing a time capsule. Unfortunately many other items have disappeared from the Monument over the years.

**4** Hatboro was once part of the Manor of Moreland. In 1684 when Dr. Nicholas More bought his Manor from **William Penn** it was still part of Philadelphia. In those days our part of **County Line Road** was the boundary between Philadelphia and Bucks County.

**5** What kind of traffic has **Jacksonville Road** (formally Northhampton Street) seen over the years? From horse and buggy to the Model "T" to today's stretch Hummer Limo.

**6** Do you remember Hatboro Lanes? **Hatboro Bowling Center** was located here on Jacksonville Road. It featured 10 Brunswick Lanes, a large luncheonette and soda fountain. The building was originally the home of Wonder Rollers Southern Skating Rink.



**7 The Village Players** began in 1947 as a fundraiser for the Junior Neighbors Club. The plays were quite successful inspiring the players to form an organized group.

**8** Roberts and Mander **Stove Works** was located in Philadelphia since the Civil War. It moved to Hatboro in 1918 and their stoves were advertised as the best gas ranges in the country. (Look for big changes here in the coming months)

**9** In 1938 violent labor riots at the **Oscar Nebel Hosiery Mill** caused a fatality. It is the only incident of this type in Hatboro's long history.



Long before the American Revolution there was another war in our area. It was a brutal war between the Shawnee and Lenni Lenape Indians. The war was started over an argument. The two tribes argued over using grasshoppers as fishing bait. It was called **The Great Grasshopper War**.



**10 W.K Bray lodge** (Wilgus Hall) has been home to many different businesses and organizations and held dances (featuring a small orchestra) once a month in the 1920's and 30's.



**11** Hatboro has always been *THE* center of commerce in the area. When **Train Service** was introduced in 1872 it brought Hatboro bustling into the industrial age.

**12** **Byberry Road** was originally the route that Quakers traveled from the Byberry Meetinghouse in northeast Philadelphia (the oldest in the area) to the first Horsham Meetinghouse. (across Easton Road from its present location)

**13** Because of destructive fires in Ambler and Perkasio, Hatboro decided to form **Enterprise Fire Company** in 1890. Within a year, the company had 34 men, a horse drawn fire truck and occupied part of town hall. In 1972, it moved to its present location here on Byberry Road.

**14** **Moreland Towers** Opened in April 1977 for senior housing. They are eight stories tall making them a prominent landmark in our district.



Have you ever noticed the variety of small animals in your yard? It's one of the things that put us on the map. Hatboro got its name from the original hatter- John Dawson. He used our natural abundance of small game to make felt for his hats.

**THE HISTORY/FUNFACTS MAP WILL FEATURE- GHOSTS IN THE DISTRICT IN ELM STREET'S FALL NEWSLETTER. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS PLEASE CONTACT US AT: PO Box 773 Hatboro, PA. 19040-0773 or elmstephenb@yahoo.com**

