

## **GEHR Watershed Minute #15**

### **Shipbuilding: (196 words)**

Shipbuilding and seafaring are a rich part of our local river history. From the early 1700s to the late 1800s, hundreds of small wooden flatboats and large wooden sloops and schooners were built on the Great Egg Harbor River and its tributaries.

Shipbuilding emerged as an important river industry very early in local history because access to timber, iron, and navigable waters made it both practical and profitable.

These locally built ships carried local commodities such as lumber, cordwood, charcoal, iron, fish, clams, oysters, grain, salt hay, ice, and other products to local and distant destinations from Mays Landing and Somers Point to New York, Philadelphia, Virginia, the West Indies and South America.

Ships were built and repaired on the Great Egg Harbor River in Mays Landing, on Babcock Creek, at Clarkstown, at Scull Landing, on Gibson Creek, on English Creek, on Patcong Creek, on the Tuckahoe River, and in Somers Point.

George May, Samuel Gaskill, George Wheaton, James and John Clark, Israel Smith, Joseph Scull, Samuel Risley, John VanSant, and Richard Somers are names of some of the early shipbuilders that are now woven into the fabric of our local history.