

GEHR Watershed Minute #36

Mays Landing: (217 words)

While the Absegami Indians were the first settlers along the Great Egg Harbor River in Mays Landing, the first European settlers began to arrive in 1695. By the time the London Company's Captain George May sailed up the river to the area of Mays Landing in 1740, there was already a sawmill on Babcock Creek and a village of houses.

In 1756 Captain May bought land near Babcock Creek and later established a trading post and shipyard. The same year John Hamilton purchased land about a half mile above May's property on the south side of the Great Egg Harbor River, and a village there became known as Hamilton.

But by about 1778 the center of town became recognized as "Mays Landing." The Township of Hamilton was incorporated on February 5, 1813, and in 1837, the Atlantic County Seat was established in Mays Landing, and the village of Hamilton became part of Mays Landing.

From 1830 to 1880, more than one hundred sailing vessels were built at Mays Landing with lumber from native forests and iron from Weymouth foundries. The May family, along with families with names such as Steelman, Iliff, Wescoat, Pennington, Gaskill, Wheaton, Clark and others developed industry and commerce along the river, encouraging settlement and eventually developing a historic town.