The Flow of History along Crum Creek

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Crum Creek flows for 24 miles from the southern flank of the South Valley Hills in Malvern Borough in Chester County, Pennsylvania, through Willistown Township and into Delaware County, where it joins the Delaware River between Eddystone Borough and Ridley Township. The watershed includes 15 municipalities within its 38 square mile area. The name Crum Creek is derived from the one conferred by the early Dutch settlers in the area, Krumkyll, meaning “crooked creek.” The western topographic boundary of the Crum Creek watershed corresponds to the Providence Great Road, an early colonial road that was built on the high ground of the divide between it and the neighboring Ridley Creek watersheds. It is now just known as Providence Road. Its lower portions correspond to PA Route 252. North of PA Route 3, the eastern boundary of the Crum Creek watershed corresponds to another old colonial road, Newtown Street Road, which is part of PA Route 252 at this point. South of the intersection of PA Route 252 and PA Route 3, the eastern boundary of the Crum Creek watershed is very
roughly contained within the PA Route 320 about U.S. Route 1, and PA Route 420 below U.S. Route 1.

Ben Aller’s watershed map shows the main roads mentioned above. On the western margin of the watershed, Providence Road continues along the watershed boundary well into Willistown Township, where it meets Sugartown Road. Sugartown Road then roughly corresponds to the watershed boundary until just west of Malvern Borough.
The Crum Creek watershed is the catchment area for all the precipitation which falls within its topographic boundaries and drains into the Delaware River through Crum Creek and its tributaries. Watersheds can be studied as ecosystems within which water, energy, and nutrients flow. Plants capture energy from sunlight and convert water and carbon dioxide from the air into the sugar molecules which make up their structures. They draw further nutrients up through the soil, which consists of decaying organisms and crumbling rock. Animals eat plants and nutrients are further pumped up the food chain as animals are eaten by other animals. When they die, they return to the soil. Gravity forces the downhill flow of nutrients and takes them out of the watershed ecosystem to the sea. More nutrients are added by the further decay of bedrock beneath the soil. At least, this is the picture of the Crum Creek watershed ecosystem without humans in the equation. The natural operation of the eastern deciduous forest which is native to the Crum Creek watershed has changed drastically in the last few centuries. The Lenape burned the forest to open up areas for hunting and small-scale agriculture. When the Europeans arrived, they cleared land for farming and altered the flow of the streams to tap its energy for their watermills. With scientific farming and the industrial revolution, more and more energy and nutrient inputs came from further and further outside of what the watershed ecosystem produced itself. Now, in the early part of the twenty-first century, the connections that the Crum Creek watershed has beyond its boundaries are truly global.

The story that follows highlights many of the natural and cultural features of the Crum Creek watershed, from its sources to where the creek finally meets the waters of the Delaware River. Some of the treatments are shallow, and some of them go deep. This is an ongoing project to promote the engagement of people with the landscape within which they live.

Paoli Memorial Grounds

Crum Creek emerges from the southern flank of the South Valley Hills in Malvern Borough, in the vicinity of the Paoli Memorial Grounds. On September 20, 1777, soldiers from the Continental Army on retreat from their defeat at the Battle of Brandywine were ambushed by the British as they slept at an encampment here. The British used bayonets to kill or wound around 150 Continental soldiers. Fifty-three of them are buried in a common grave which is surrounded by a stone wall and capped by a marble monument erected in 1817. The American soldiers were under the command of Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, whose home was nearby. His troops were under orders to harass the British army from behind enemy lines as it approached the ford at the Schuylkill River in pursuit of the rest of the retreating Continental Army. The Battle of Brandywine on September 11, 1777 was a failed attempt by General George Washington to stop Lt. General Sir William Howe and the British army from capturing Philadelphia. The battle was followed by another skirmish nearby on September 15th, known as The Battle of the Clouds. Following this inconclusive encounter, which was washed out by a heavy rainstorm, the British encamped in nearby Tredyffrin Township for a few days. Upon learning of Wayne’s rearguard action, Howe dispatched Major General Charles Gray to dispose of Wayne’s forces. The midnight raid was effective in completely routing Wayne’s command. Afterwards, vicious rumors circulated about Wayne’s competence, but he demanded and received a court-martial the following November during which his vigilance and bravery were unanimously vindicated. The so-called Paoli Massacre was a low point in the War for Independence, but “Remember Paoli” became a rallying cry throughout the struggle.
The park memorializing the event is surrounded by the neighborhoods and commercial and civic institutions of Malvern, a town along the historic road and rail corridors of Lancaster Pike and the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad. After having its name changed from West Chester Intersection to Malvern in 1873 when the Pennsylvania Railroad straightened its tracks through the small village, it grew large enough by 1889 to be incorporated as a borough carved out from a northern portion of Willistown Township.

Brampton Chase

After its groundwater sources are mixed with the remains of those who died during our nation’s birth struggles, Crum Creek leaves the Borough of Malvern and collects in a pond in the Brampton Chase subdivision. It has entered a part of Willistown Township that is indistinguishable from Malvern itself, in that they both have the same density of residential development. Brampton Chase is a Toll Brothers development that was built in 1988.
Phelps School

The creek is a narrow rivulet as it enters a pond in Brampton Chase, and not much more than that as it leaves the pond and flows past the grounds of the Phelps School, a boarding school for boys founded in 1946 by Dr. Norman T. Phelps, who invoked the motto, “Dedication to the individual boy”.

![Headwaters area of Crum Creek, including the Phelps School Image: Google Maps, 2016](image-url)
Willistown Acres

South of Paoli Pike, Crum Creek bends towards the northeast roughly parallel to this road, which forms the southern boundary of Malvern Borough. While most of Willistown Township is characterized by large open spaces, estates, and horse farms, the Willistown neighborhoods around Malvern have a more suburban residential character. Crum Creek flows through one such neighborhood along the southern edge of Malvern called Willistown Acres. After it flows under Long Lane, Crum Creek runs parallel to a couple of streets named after Republican presidents, McKinley Avenue and Eisenhower Drive. In fact, the Willistown Acres subdivision is a neighborhood of single-family detached homes built in the late 1950s during the Eisenhower administration.

Crum Creek in the Willistown Acres subdivision; at Long Lane (left) & Eisenhower Drive (right)
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012 (left) & Google Maps, 2012 (right)

Massacre Run
Malvern Preparatory School

In Willistown Acres, Crum Creek is joined by Massacre Run, a tributary named for the Paoli Massacre. It flows out of the north from the grounds of the Malvern Preparatory School. When Malvern Prep moved to its current location in 1922 it was called the Villanova Preparatory School. It dates its founding to 1842, when the Augustinian Order simultaneously established a monastery and an academy program to go along with the new Augustinian College of Villanova in Radnor Township, which is now Villanova University. Shortly after the academy moved to Malvern, it changed its name to Malvern Preparatory School in order to form its own identity. It graduated its first students at the new location in 1927.
Ruth Run

A short distance downstream below its confluence with Massacre Run, Crum Creek is joined by Ruth Run, another headwater tributary that flows out of Malvern. It is named for Isaac Ruth, a local landowner whose land was sold in 1871 to eventually form part of the Borough of Malvern.

Randolph Woods

Ruth Run originates in the Randolph Woods and Ruthland Avenue Preserves, which is forested land preserved through the cooperation of Malvern Borough and the Willistown Conservation Trust. The Duffryn Trail winds through the woods between its two trailheads at Duffryn & 2nd Avenues and at Ruthland Avenue. In between, a footbridge crosses Ruth Run. These woods provide valuable protection to this headwater stream of Crum Creek. However, the tree species in Randolph Woods reflect a history of human disturbance. The non-native species Norway Spruce and Norway Maple predominate, in the company of interspersed stands of White Pines and Red Maples. Julian Onderdonk, a professor of Music History at West Chester University, grew up nearby and routinely fell into Ruth Run during his childhood.
These woodland preserves are continuous with the 125 acres of forested grounds around the Malvern Retreat House. Owned and operated by the Catholic Lay Leadership since 1912, it is the largest and oldest Catholic retreat house in the country and can accommodate up to 400 overnight guests. It had its start when investment banker John J. Ferreck met with the rector of St. Charles Seminary and planned the first weekend retreats for laymen. Since then, thousands of Catholics from all over have come each year seeking a spiritual getaway at the headwaters of Crum Creek. At the southeast corner of the retreat property, Ruth Run enters a small pond.

After Ruth Run leaves the pond and flows under Paoli Pike, it passes from the Borough of Malvern and enters Willistown Township and soon joins up with Crum Creek.

At its confluence with Ruth Run just south of Malvern Township, Crum Creek bends towards the southeast where it and several tributaries drain the eastern half of Willistown Township.
East Branch Crum Creek

About three-quarters of a mile downstream, East Branch Crum Creek enters from the northeast. This small tributary originates in the extreme southwestern corner of Tredyffrin Township in the woods between the Royer-Greaves School for Blind and its surrounding neighborhood. The school was founded in 1921 by Dr. Jesse Royer Greaves and moved to its present location in 1941. She was a pioneering educator who recognized that many blind children were denied an adequate level of education at the time. She named the school in memory of her father Dr. Joseph Warren Royer and her husband Harry R. Greaves. The school began at her home in Stafford, moved to King of Prussia, and then finally opened on a small estate in Paoli where it is presently located. As more children with disabilities have been mainstreamed into public schools, the student population has shifted to those who are profoundly disabled in addition to having visual impairments and who require more intensive individualized attention. To provide a continuum of services for these students at they enter adulthood, the Royer-Greaves School for Blind obtained a license for an adult residential program in 1990.
Its neighbor just south of the Royer-Greaves School for Blind is the Paoli United Methodist Church. Both institutions sit above the east bank of the East Branch Crum Creek valley. The Paoli United Methodist Church building was consecrated in 1962, and represents a contemporary design in keeping with the congregation’s desire to keep their faith up-to-date with the modern spirit of the time. The population of the area had been increasing in the years following World War II, and the new church building was a response to that growth. Their previous building, also on South Valley Road, was dedicated in 1911, a year after the Methodists of Paoli had received their charter as the Methodist Episcopal Church of Paoli. They had been assisted in their early organizing efforts by friends and neighbors of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Malvern. In 1919, the name of the church was changed to the Emma L. Simpson Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church in honor of a major donor. When, in 1939, the three major branches of Methodism united (Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal South, and Methodist Protestant), the “Episcopal” part of the name was dropped. When union with the Evangelical United Brethren occurred in 1968, the “United” part of the name was added.

In 2013, the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association partnered with the church to protect the East Branch Crum Creek headwaters on its grounds. They installed an infiltration bed, a rain garden, and a cross vane to reduce flooding and erosion.
Daylesford Abbey

Immediately after East Branch Crum Creek leaves the vicinity of the Royer-Greaves School for Blind, it enters Willistown Township. After it flows under Devon Avenue, it waters the grounds of the Daylesford Abbey. Daylesford Abbey is a Roman Catholic religious community of the Norbertine order that moved to its 130 acre site in the Crum Creek watershed in 1963, on what once had been a farm called Pinebrook. The Norbertines were founded by St. Norbert in the northern French village of Prémontré in 1121. They are also known as the Order of Canons Regular of Prémontré or Premonstratensians. Norbert and his followers were committed to ongoing conversion as well as renewal of the larger Christian community. Norbertine houses proliferated, including the Abbey of Berne in the Netherlands which was founded after St. Norbert’s death in 1134. It was from this abbey that Norbertines left to bring their message to the United States. Among them was Father Bernard Pennings, who along with two others went to northern Wisconsin to minister to Belgian immigrants in 1893. There, he became abbot of the first Norbertine Abbey in the New World. In 1932, he sent some Norbertines from there to found Archmere Academy, a college preparatory school for boys in Claymont, Delaware. Two years later, the Norbertines were asked to open an archdiocesan high school for boys in South Philadelphia, the Southeast Catholic High School, which became the Saint John Neumann High School. The Norbertine community then responded to those seeking priestly vocations, particularly from these two schools, by starting a novitiate-seminary at the J. Gardner Cassatt Estate which they bought in nearby Daylesford in 1954. In 1963, they moved from the Cassatt Estate (now the Upper Main Line YMCA at the source waters of neighboring Darby Creek) to the Pinebrook Farm, retaining the name of Daylesford. Incidentally, J. Gardner Cassatt was an investment banker and youngest brother of Pennsylvania Railroad president Alexander Cassatt and Impressionist painter Mary Cassatt. Meanwhile, in 1956, the Norbertines had also been invited to open and staff the newly founded St. Norbert Parish in Paoli.

The East Branch Crum Creek leaves the abbey grounds as it flows under Grubb Road. Almost immediately upon flowing out from under Grubb Road, East Branch Crum Creek enters a large pond at the private estate of Willow Lake Farm.
Green Tree Run

The waters of this pond are also fed by Green Tree Run, which flows out of the north from the residential neighborhoods of Greentree, Paoli Manor, and Paoli Gardens in Willistown Township. It is the left branch of a narrow Y that it forms with East Branch Crum Creek. The pond lies at the junction of the Y. Greentree is a subdivision of town homes built around 1982. Paoli Manor consists of single-family detached homes built between the late 1920s and 1950. Paoli Gardens is a neighborhood of split-level homes built in the late 1950s. Its name was registered by real estate developer Stanley F. Malin in 1955 and chosen because the thirty-seven building lots faced Paoli Pike.

General Wayne Elementary School

Before it ends at the pond, however, Green Tree Run flows behind General Wayne Elementary School, which sits along Grubb Road. The neighborhoods of Paoli Manor and Paoli Gardens are among the sources of public school children who stream into the school. The General Wayne Elementary School is one of four elementary schools within the Great Valley School District, which encompasses the Borough of Malvern, and the Townships of Willistown, Charlestown, and East Whiteland. Until the year 2001, the building housed the Great Valley Middle School. As a result of district growth in the early 21st century, a new middle school was opened on the same campus as the Great Valley High School in East Whiteland Township, and a fourth elementary school was added. Green Tree Run flows through a wooded corridor behind General Wayne Elementary School, forming a boundary between it and the grounds of the Daylesford Abbey. Greentree Run then flows through the Colonial Way subdivision adjacent to the school before it passes under Grubb Road. True to its name, Colonial Way is a neighborhood of neocolonial style houses.
Willow Lake Farm

Shortly after it flows under Grubb Road, Green Tree Run merges with East Branch Crum Creek at the Willow Lake Farm pond. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the pond has been associated with a large private estate. An 1847 map of Chester County shows the pond as an impoundment of these two streams above the Maris grist mill. Apparently there was also a dam on Crum Creek and mill races from both impoundments combined to power the Maris grist mill. The same 1847 map gives some idea of the origin of the Green Tree name. It is likely that it was first applied to the Green Tree Hotel along Lancaster Pike and the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad. There was also a Green Tree School House in the vicinity during these early days of public education.
Mill Park

East Branch Crum Creek continues as the outfall of the Willow Lake Farm pond. (Supposedly some actually refer to as Willow Lake.) Near where East Branch Crum Creek merges with Crum Creek itself, a quiet residential street called Mill Road ends in a cul-de-sac. Along with the Willow Farm Pond, the road’s name is one of the few reminders of the Maris milling operation that was once a key feature of the local agricultural economy. Along Mill Road is Mill Park, a Willistown Township public park. Its baseball fields resound to the crack of the bats of the Chester Valley Little League, which got its start in 1955 as the surrounding countryside was rapidly changing from having a rural to a suburban character.

As it continues to flow towards the southeast through Willistown Township, Crum Creek passes through wooded neighborhoods of larger and larger parcel size.

Waynesborough Run

Shortly after Crum Creek meanders under Whitehorse Road, it is joined by Waynesborough Run from the north about a mile and a quarter downstream from its confluence with East Branch Crum Creek.

St. Norbert Church

Waynesborough Run has its start in Paoli just within the Tredyffrin Township border, within close proximity of the St. Norbert Church. This is the seat of the parish that was entrusted to the Norbertines in 1956. That year, Cardinal O’Hara, the Archbishop of Philadelphia, formed the St. Norbert Parish out of portions of the St. Monica Parish in Berwyn and the St. Patrick Parish in Malvern. The pastor of the St. Norbert Parish is nominated by the Abbot of Daylesford Abbey and approved by the Archbishop of Philadelphia.
In 2015, the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association partnered with the St. Norbert community to plant trees and shrubs in a stormwater basin on the church grounds. This “best management practice” protects the headwaters of Waynesborough Run.

Newly naturalized stormwater basin, St. Norbert Church
Image: CRC Watersheds Association, 2015

Historic Waynesborough

Waynesborough Run flows out of Tredyffrin Township and through the historic northwest corner of Easttown Township past the site of Waynesborough, the birthplace of General Anthony Wayne (1745-1796).

Historic Waynesborough Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Anthony Wayne was born in this Georgian-style house on January 1, 1745. A historic marker outside the house installed by the Chester County Historical Society in 1914 highlights his achievements as “a leader of the American Revolution in Pennsylvania and a soldier distinguished for his services at Brandywine, Germantown, Valley Forge, Monmouth, Stony
Point, and Yorktown.” There is no mention of the Paoli Massacre. The marker goes on to say that he “subdued the Indians of Ohio” in 1794 and was “Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army” from 1792-1796. This overlooks the fact that the U.S. president is designated the Commander-in-Chief according to Article II of the Constitution. Anthony Wayne was in fact General-in-Chief of the Army during George Washington’s second term of office. He died from the complications of gout in Erie, Pennsylvania upon his return from the Indian campaigns in 1796.

![Portrait of Anthony Wayne by James Sarples, Sr., 1796](image1)

Gallery of the Second Bank of the United States
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2016

![Anthony Wayne’s telescope in West Chester University Library’s Special Collections](image2)

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2016
Waynesborough Country Club

Across Waynesborough Road from Anthony Wayne’s birthplace spreads the vista of the Waynesborough Country Club’s golf course. Waynesborough Run flows south through a portion of the course where it traverses the fairways of the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fifteenth holes. The Waynesborough Country Club opened in the spring of 1965. It was the brainchild of a group of local professional and business men who desired such a private, family-oriented social and recreational facility in the Paoli area. They seized the opportunity to lease 200 acres belonging to the estate of the Ligget family and subsequently hired George Fazio to design the course. The country club also has a pool and paddle and tennis courts.

Waynesborough Run as water trap at the Waynesborough Country Club
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Upon exiting the golf course, Waynesborough Run crosses the boundary between Easttown Township and Willistown Township. It then flows south through a wooded corridor in Willistown Township for the second half of its mile-and-three-quarter length before it enters Crum Creek.

For the next half mile, Crum Creek flows in a southeasterly direction, roughly parallel to White Horse Road. Crum Creek is protected by a wide wooded corridor, but nestled among the trees across the road towards the southwest are the houses of the Whitehorse Farms subdivision.

Grubb Mill Run

After that half-mile length of stream following the confluence of Waynesborough Run with Crum Creek, Grubb Mill Run enters Crum Creek, also from the northeast. These northeast tributaries originate along the western flank of the high ground along which runs PA Route 252, which is called Darby-Paoli Road through Easttown. Here, this road marks the divide between the Crum Creek watershed to its southwest and the Darby Creek watershed to the northeast. PA Route 252 marks the divide between the two watersheds all the way down to West Chester Pike,
PA Route 3. The twin forks of Grubb Mill Run’s two headwater streams originate north of Twinbrook Road in Easttown Township.

**Grubb’s Mill**

After flowing into Willistown Township, Grubb Mill Run enters Crum Creek near where Whitehorse Road converges with Buttonwood Road to form Grubbs Mill Road. This is the site where Nathaniel Grubb built a mill in the 18th century. He had settled in Chester County in 1729 and was a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly.

Right after it is joined by Grubb Mill Run, Crum Creek bends under Whitehorse Road. It then flows roughly parallel to the west side of Grubbs Mill Road as both the road and the stream continue to head in a southeasterly direction.

**West Branch Crum Creek**

A little over a half mile downstream from Whitehorse Road, Crum Creek is joined by the West Branch Crum Creek - from the west. The West Branch drains a large portion of rural northwestern Willistown Township and has been designated an Exceptional Value stream by the U.S. EPA due to its excellent water quality. It has its origins in the more densely settled portion of Willistown Township just west of the Borough of Malvern, though. Its source is just a quarter mile from the source of the main branch of Crum Creek.

**Stonehenge**

West Branch Crum Creek originates in the Stonehenge subdivision, a residential neighborhood of detached, single-family homes built around 1963. The subdivision is entered from Monument Avenue, which, in the other direction, leads east across Sugartown Avenue towards the Paoli Memorial Grounds and the source area of the main branch of Crum Creek. As the West Branch winds its way through the neighborhood, it flows under Salisbury Lane, named
for the plain in England where Stonehenge is located. It then flows under Stonehenge Lane itself. Perhaps the Neolithic monument theme for the subdivision was inspired by Paoli’s monument to the fitful beginnings of the United States.

The Main Line Landscape Industry

South of the Stonehenge subdivision, the West Branch Crum Creek is piped under Paoli Pike, where it flows amidst a couple of large horticultural operations. On the north side of the pike is one of the outlets of the Woodlawn Garden Center, which has been in business since 1975. On the south side is Sam Brown’s Wholesale Nursery, established in 1983. Also nearby on Paoli Pike is Main Line Gardens, rounding out this intense concentration of horticultural and landscaping establishments. Main Line Gardens has been operating under that name since 1981, when the Harding family bought a hut from which plants had been sold at this location since 1950.

Sugartown Elementary School

As the West Branch Crum Creek curves gently towards the southeast and passes under Sugartown Road, it then sweeps past Sugartown Elementary School. Sugartown Elementary is one of the four elementary schools in the Great Valley School District. It draws public elementary school students from such nearby neighborhoods as the Stonehenge subdivision.

Dovecote Subdivision

Just downstream from the Sugartown Elementary School, the West Branch Crum Creek passes through a wooded corridor that is touched upon by the cul-de-sacs of the Dovecote subdivision on its west side. These are detached, single-family homes that were built between 1999 and 2006. On the east side of this wooded corridor is the Willistown Acres subdivision. The West Branch Crum Creek passes through its southwest corner, while the main branch of Crum Creek makes its course through a large part of this neighborhood just to the northeast.
The West Branch Crum Creek flows past the northern edge of the Devereux Mapleton School campus. This is also the location for the main offices of Devereux Children’s Behavioral Health Services, an organization that provides intensive support for at-risk children and adolescents with mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders. Its services include approved private schools, an acute care hospital, outpatient services, foster care, and residential treatment centers. The Devereux Mapleton School is one of their approved private schools, which offers an education curriculum to children at all grade levels. The acute care hospital is also located here. The Devereux Children’s Behavioral Health Center is the only free standing children’s psychiatric hospital in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

The organization traces its roots to the efforts of Helena Trafford Devereux, a Philadelphia teacher who got discouraged by the inadequate education that students with special needs were receiving in the public school system. In 1912, she began teaching some of these children in her own home. In 1919, she purchased an estate in Devon, where she and some of her students had taken up residence as renters the year before. In a few short years, the organization grew and the number of schools increased. By 1938 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania granted the Devereux Schools a non-profit charter. The expansion continued in the following decades, to include centers around the country and professional training and research partnerships with several universities.
West Branch Crum Creek passes to the east of the Devereux campus and wends its way through the heavily wooded Laurel Ridge subdivision. South of Spring Road, the stream enters an extensive area of horse farms and estates interspersed with patches of forest. An unnamed tributary enters the West Branch from the southwest in the midst of one of these forest patches. The tributary is about three-fifths of a mile long and originates at a pond next to the Sugartown Preserve.

Sugartown Preserve

The Sugartown Preserve is a Willistown Township park that consists of 16.2 acres of woodland and meadow. It is protected by a conservation easement with the Willistown Conservation Trust. Located within it is the Sugartown Preserve Community Garden, a volunteer community garden where residents grow organic fruit, vegetables, and herbs. They donate a portion of their harvest to the Chester County Food Bank, a non-profit organization based in Exton that provides food to the hungry of Chester County.

Historic Sugartown

Just to the west of the Sugartown Preserve, at the spot where Spring Road and Boot Road converge onto Sugartown Road, is the center of the historic crossroads village of Sugartown. Established around 1790 after the turmoil of the American Revolution ended, the village provided goods and services to the surrounding farming community and was a stopover for wagons carrying goods to market in Philadelphia and elsewhere. Its original name was Shugart’s Town, after the local tavern keeper Eli Shugart. It remained a vital center of social and commercial life throughout the 19th century. The historic nature of Sugartown is preserved through the efforts of the non-profit organization Historic Sugartown, Inc. The historic district is on the National Register of Historic Places. In the 21st century, group and school tours are conducted, spaces are rented for meetings and events, and art shows and bookbinding workshops take place on a regular basis within the historic district.
The Saddler’s Shop & House and the building that became The General Store were built around 1805 by Joseph Waterman after he had purchased the land from his father Phineas. Joseph worked as a saddler and harness maker and lived in the stone cottage adjoining the shop. The store next door wasn’t advertised as such until 1822 when the building was rented by John Moore. His varied inventory included “dry goods, groceries, liquors, glass, china and Liverpool ware, oils, paints, drugs, iron monger, etc.” In 1847, Sharpless Worrall acquired the entire property, set himself up as store keeper and was appointed Sugartown post master. He added a third story to the store in 1850 to provide a meeting place for the Ivanhoe Lodge #432 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Both he and his son-in-law were active in this organization, which was dedicated to the social welfare of its members. It provided a safety net during time of need, provided death benefits, and took care of the widows and orphans of members. The meeting space was used by other organizations, also. These included the Willistown Union Association of the Detection of Horse Thieves founded as a local police force in 1854, and a Washington Camp of the Patriotic Order Sons of America, founded in 1847 to instill patriotism, support the public school system, and restrict immigration. Sharpless Worrall clearly did quite well in his business and social endeavors. He and his wife Abigail built a grand Italianate home next to the store in 1860. Their daughter Hannah and her husband Hillery John took over proprietorship of the store in 1874. At the time, they moved into what had been the cottage and saddle shop. By 1885, the year that Sharpless Worrall died, they moved into the larger house. Abigail lived with her daughter and son-in-law until her own death in 1896. Meanwhile, Hannah and Hillery John had built an addition that connected the house to the store. It had a kitchen and a bathroom. The Victorian-era fixtures are still intact. The Johns passed the property on to their daughter Beatrice, the only one of their four children to marry. She in turn had a daughter Beatrice who inherited the property. Her husband Frank Huber ran John’s Antique Shop in the store complex. Finally, Beatrice Huber sold the entire property to Historic Sugartown, Inc. in 1982 when it was formed for that purpose as part of the preservation vision of John and Margaret Nagy and Penelope P. Wilson.
Diagonally across Sugartown Road from the store complex and the Worrall house is a cluster of buildings that are also part of Historic Sugartown. These buildings are best approached from Spring Road. Among them is included the white stucco Federal-style house built in 1835 by Hannah Cheever. Her husband Samuel was the owner of the Sign of the Spread Eagle Inn, where Eli Shugart had earlier been the proprietor. When Samuel died in 1830, Hannah ran the tavern until she married again, to Isaac Ringwalt. The Ringwalts sold the house to Gideon Taylor in 1845. He was actually a tailor and ran his business from the house. The house was then sold in 1861 to Nathan and Susannah Williams. In the same year, their son Granville married Elizabeth S. Worrall, the daughter of Sharpless and Abigail Worrall. The house and the neighboring bank barn were purchased by Historic Sugartown, Inc. in the year 2000. The house is rented out for events, and the barn has an agricultural tool exhibit on the upper floor.

Adjacent to the Hannah Cheever House is the William Garrett House, a fieldstone modified Quaker Plan house built in 1805 along Providence Road by William and Anne Garrett. It was purchased by Historic Sugartown, Inc. to be used as its headquarters in 2001 and moved to its current location. That was the same year that the red clapboard Book Bindery was constructed in order to house the book-binding tools and equipment of the late master bookbinder Fred Shihadeh. He had apprenticed with a German bookbinder in Bremerhaven after serving in World War II. He returned to the United States in 1961 and started a bookbindery in Ardmore with his German wife Elka. They gained an international reputation for quality conservation work on valuable materials such as *The Federalist Papers*, broadsides announcing the Declaration of Independence, and the original prints of John James Audubon.

Another collection that is on view for visitors to Historic Sugartown is housed in the Carriage Museum. Highlights include a Conestoga wagon that hauled freight between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and a nineteenth-century hearse. The Carriage Museum was created in 2010 in partnership with the Chester County Historical Society on the stone ruins of a workshop used by the John family, located along Boot Road behind their house and store that face Sugartown Road.
The unnamed tributary that flows in an easterly direction from its origin near Historic Sugartown and Sugartown Preserve converges with West Branch Crum Creek just west of South Warren Avenue, a major connecting road through the middle of Willistown Township. West Branch Crum Creek continues from that point through a heavily wooded landscape for a mile and three-quarters until it reaches an entirely different ecological community dominated by turf grass. At this point it courses among the fairways of the White Manor Country Club.

White Manor Country Club

The White Manor Country Club consists of 170 acres that includes a large club house and dining facility, tennis courts, swimming pool, fitness center, two-mile jogging trail, and a golf course bisected by the West Branch Crum Creek. The golf course was completely redesigned and renovated in 2003, following the specifications of golf course architects from Bobby Weed Design of Pointe Vedra Beach, Florida.
Within the property boundaries of the country club, the West Branch is joined by two tributaries which flow entirely within the grounds of the golf course and immediately surrounding woodlands. The first is an unnamed tributary that enters from the north, joining the West Branch on the western margin of the golf course between holes 11 and 17.
Evans Run

The second tributary is Evans Run, named for the dairy farming family from whom the land for the White Manor Country Club was purchased in 1962. The property had been in the Evans family for five generations since it was first purchased by them in the second decade of the 18th century. The date was 1711 according to the White Manor Country Club web site, when the family was granted 500 acres by William Penn. However, according to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, the family’s presence began with William Evans of Wales, who first settled the land in 1719 (a year after William Penn’s death). Members of the Evans family were influential in persuading the Pennsylvania Railroad to build a line through nearby Paoli in 1854. The last major enterprise of the Evans family had been dairying, which is symbolized through the milk can iconography adopted by the country club on their signs and correspondence, and by the two miniature milk cans that mark every tee. Evans Run flows into the West Branch from the south and joins the larger stream between the first and second holes.

The White Manor Country Club has worked with the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association to plant riparian buffers to protect the stream as it flows through its golf course. The White Manor Country Club has also been the location of many awards banquets held by the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association during the first week in November each year in order to honor individuals and groups for their good stewardship of the environment.

Confluence of Evans Run and West Branch Crum Creek

Note: Trees planted along streams in partnership with CRC Watersheds Association

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
After leaving the White Manor Country Club, West Branch Crum Creek continues to flow in an east-southeasterly direction through another mile-and-a-half of Willistown Township woodlands to its confluence with the main branch of Crum Creek.

**Barr Run**

Less than a thousand feet downstream from its confluence with the West Branch, the main stem of Crum Creek is joined by Barr Run. Barr Run is a small, half-mile long tributary that flows out of the south and passes under Barr Road just before entering Crum Creek. Both the run and the road are named after Crawford Barr, a local landowner of the 19th century.

![A glimpse of Barr Run from Barr Road](image1.png)

![Kirkwood Preserve](image2.png)

After passing under the intersection of Barr, Grubbs Mill, and Whitehorse Roads, Crum Creek flows into the Kirkwood Preserve, one of several open spaces owned and managed by the Willistown Conservation Trust. Its 83 acres are mostly grassland. The preserve provides valuable habitat for grassland birds, whose local populations are declining due to suburban sprawl. Kirkwood Preserve is a haven for grassland bird species such as Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Field Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, American Kestrel, Northern Harrier, and Barn Owl. The Willistown Conservation Trust works hard to protect these birds. They use strategies such as mowing only twice a year in April and September, which are outside the
nesting season. They also aggressively remove invasive plants that degrade the grassland habitat. The preserve also includes 21 acres of wetland and 1.5 acres of woodland in the upland and riparian areas, as well as pedestrian and equestrian trails. The Kirkwood Preserve was made possible by partnerships between the Willistown Conservation Trust and Natural Lands Trust, Chester County, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the taxpayers of Willistown Township through their Open Space Funds.
Massey Run

Within the Kirkwood Preserve, Massey Run trickles north alongside Grubbs Mill Road to join Crum Creek at the northern edge of the preserve. It is named for James Massey (born 1697) and Thomas Massey (1701-1784), two brothers who were the first English settlers along this stream in the early 18th century. They were the younger sons of Thomas and Phebe Massey and were raised in the house that their parents built in Marple Township in 1696. Their eldest brother Mordecai inherited what is now known as the 1696 Thomas Massey House, located in the neighboring Darby Creek watershed to the east. It is on the National Register of Historical Places and is open for tours.
James Run

Soon after it exits the Kirkwood Preserve, Crum Creek is joined from the north by a very short tributary called James Run, named for the owner of a 19th century farm that was located nearby. It has its origins near White Horse Road and flows through a narrow riparian corridor surrounded by cultivated fields.

Rawson Run

Buttonwood Farms

Just a short distance further downstream, Rawson Run enters Crum Creek from the northeast. It flows out of Easttown Township, where it originates in the Buttonwood Farms subdivision. The 19th century Buttonwood Farm is located along Buttonwood Road, amidst a neighborhood of late 20th and early 21st century Millennial Mansions. Rawson Run is named for William and Olle Rawson. They settled in the vicinity during the early 18th century after having been members of the jury of the first court in Chester County, which was held in Chester in 1692.
Fox Run is a small tributary of Rawson Run in Easttown Township. It flows in a southwesterly direction and joins Rawson Run shortly after they both pass under Whitehorse Road. Curiously, one of the streets in the Buttonwood Farms subdivision is called Fox Creek Road. The road does intersect with Rawson Run, but doesn’t come close to Fox Run. Fox Run is named for a nearby historical farm.
Just less than a half mile from its confluence with Rawson Run, Crum Creek bends toward the east and forms the border between Willistown Township, Chester County and Newtown Township, Delaware County. It flows through a wooded corridor between the Old Covered Bridge Estates subdivision in Willistown Township to the south, and Hunt Valley Circle in Newtown Township to the north.

Melmark

On the east shore of Crum Creek right inside the Delaware County border along Wayland Road is Melmark. Melmark is one of the leading providers in the country that offers multiple services for children and adults with autism, intellectual disabilities, and brain injuries. It was founded by Paul and Mildred Krentel, whose daughter Melissa was born in 1963 with Down syndrome. They were dissatisfied with the institutional situations that were recommended to them, so they decided to create a homelike setting that included peers as playmates for Melissa. In 1966, the Krentels purchased the Thoroughgood estate for this purpose, a 35-room French chateau-style mansion on Wayland road. Over the years, the services and resources of Melmark grew considerably. It became licensed as a private school and added residential homes and cottages, as well as swimming pools, tennis courts, a gymnasium, and riding stables to its 80-acre campus. By 2015, Melmark served 1,000 children and adults at its Pennsylvania and Andover, Massachusetts locations, supported by 905 staff members.

Crum Creek heads east past the Melmark School, and splits into multiple channels as it makes a sharp meander bend and twists through a wooded area just west of the Echo Valley subdivision. From there, Crum Creek turns towards a more southerly direction and flows under Goshen Road. A saw mill and grist mill once occupied a site along Crum Creek just upstream from Goshen Road.
Goshen Road

Goshen Road was the main east-west road in the area during most of the eighteenth-century. The portion of the road that intersects with Crum Creek was first laid out in 1710. It connected Newtown Township with Willistown and Goshen Townships to the west, which had both recently been established in 1704. The portion of the road that was then extended west beyond the village of Goshenville and into the rich farmland of Lancaster County, was called Strasburg Road. The portion of Goshen Road to the east of Newtown had been laid out earlier, in 1687. It was originally called Haverford Road. The east end of the road was at a ford over Darby Creek in Radnor Township where travelers could then pick up Darby-Paoli Road and reach points in the earlier settled portions of the countryside around Philadelphia. Goshen Road was superseded as the main east-west route in the late eighteenth century when West Chester Pike was built to connect West Chester, the newly established seat of Chester County, with Philadelphia.

Bartram Covered Bridge

During its early days, travelers on Goshen Road had to ford Crum Creek in order to get across it. By the second half of the nineteenth century, many people decided it was time to build a bridge. In 1859, petitions were drawn up, signed, and presented to the Court of Quarter Sessions of both Chester and Delaware Counties. Among the petitioners were local landowners Israel Bartram, Isaac Thomas, and Eli Lewis. A committee was appointed to look into the request. A favorable report was submitted to the court, so the two sets of County Commissioners wrote up the construction specifications and advertised for bids. The bridge was then built in 1860 by Ferdinand Wood. He used the innovative arch and truss bridge design of Theodore Burr. Wood from the Israel Bartram property was used in its construction, whose saw mill was just upstream. Wood was a less expensive material option for bridge construction, and covering
wooden bridges protected their superstructure and decking from weathering. The bridge was made to be 60 feet long, 13 feet high and 18 feet wide. These dimensions met the specifications of being “hi and wide as a load of hay,” which was critical to the agrarian economy of the day. The design of the Bartram Covered Bridge is unusual in that the sheathing over the portals follows the pitch of the roof. It is the only covered bridge in Pennsylvania with that feature.

In the nation’s turbulent years following the construction of the bridge, someone had painted the plea, “Lincoln – Save Union and Congress” across one of the arches inside the bridge. The covered bridge was in service until 1941. At that point, Goshen Road was straightened and a new concrete and steel bridge was built parallel to the covered bridge. The Bartram Covered Bridge still accommodated pedestrian traffic until the 1960s. Iron gates were added by the Marple-Newtown Historical Society to each end of the bridge in an attempt to preserve it from wear and vandalism. Nonetheless, the bridge went through a period of neglect. The state Water & Power Resources Board moved towards having the bridge torn down because they were concerned about the hindrance of stream flow. This proposal stirred a local outcry. Delaware County sent its engineer A.C. Thorne and his assistant G.D. Houtman to conduct an independent investigation. They agreed that the bridge caused no stream interference and local preservation groups asked the state to grant the bridge an “indefinite reprieve.” The state board agreed to do so if the county would repair and maintain the bridge. In 1993, a Bartram Bridge Joint Preservation Board was formed by ordinances in both Willistown and Newtown Townships for the preservation and long-term maintenance of the bridge. In 1996, restoration was completed. The Bartram Covered Bridge is the last surviving covered bridge in Delaware County and one of few surviving covered bridges in Chester County.

Lewis Run

Just a few dozen feet downstream from the covered bridge, Crum Creek is joined by Lewis Run, which enters from a culvert under Boot Road.
Lewis Run flows out of the northwest, after its two branches originate on the grounds of The Episcopal Academy, a pre-K-12 co-ed private day school. As an institution, The Episcopal Academy dates from 1785, but its “new campus” has been in operation at the headwaters of Lewis Run in Newtown Township since the 2008-2009 school year. It was originally founded in Philadelphia by the Rt. Rev. William White, who had been the chaplain of the Continental Congress and went on to become the first and fourth Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the United States. The school’s original mission was to teach the sons of Philadelphia’s Episcopalians using a curriculum consisting of classical languages, religion, and mathematics. Noah Webster, Jr. of dictionary fame was an early faculty member. After a period of financial instability, The Episcopal Academy was reconstituted in 1846 and became firmly established at a new home at Juniper and Locust Streets in 1850. The school outgrew its location in Philadelphia and made its first move to the suburbs in Lower Merion in 1921. In 1974, further expansion involved the opening of a lower school in Devon, which coincided with the admittance of the first girls to the kindergarten class. By 1984, the first fully coeducational class graduated. When the school outgrew its Lower Merion and Devon campuses mainly because of the desire for more playing fields, 123 acres of land was purchased in Newtown Township to create a new state-of-the-art campus.

The Episcopal Academy community views environmental sustainability as a natural extension of its motto, *Esse Quam Videri* – To Be, Rather Than To Seem To Be. All their new construction meets LEED green building standards, the Lower School has an array of photovoltaic panels, they practice single-stream recycling, they have installed low-flow water fixtures, the academic buildings are crowned with a half-dozen green roofs, and irrigation of the grounds is undertaken with storm water and well water. The recharge of the detention basins is computer controlled and the outflow is used to water the fields. Starting in 2010, The Episcopal Academy has worked in conjunction with the Natural Lands Trust on a landscape program to remove invasive species and plant native vegetation.

Newtown Meadow Preserve

Lewis Run and its main headwater tributary flow south to southwest from The Episcopal Academy, and through the Newtown Meadow Preserve. The preserve is a 50-acre open space
tract within the Liseter Estate subdivision. The Newtown Township Environmental Advisory Council initiated steps to establish it as a bird sanctuary.

The landscape comprising the headwaters of both Lewis Run and Reeses Run, the Crum Creek tributary to the south, has had a colorful and fraught history. This large tract of around a thousand acres or so was once owned by Jean Austin du Pont and her son John E. du Pont, the wealthy heir of the chemical company and benefactor of sports, science, and education, whose philanthropic contributions have been overshadowed by his descent into mental illness and murder of champion wrestler Dave Schultz.

In 1988, Jean Austin du Pont willed the northern tract of 232 acres of the Newtown Township property to the Delaware Museum of Natural History, an institution her son John founded to build upon his extensive collection of mollusk shells and birds eggs. It had opened in Winterthur, Delaware in 1972. The museum couldn’t maintain the taxes on this Delaware County property, and sold it in 1998 to the G & W Land Company, a partnership between the Gambone Brothers Development Company and Wilkinson Builders. G & W dubbed their proposed development “The Preserve,” but the density of their proposal and the open space that they were not in fact going to preserve led to resistance by the township supervisors under pressure from a citizens group calling itself S.O.S – Save Open Space. The situation was at a legal impasse when the situation suddenly changed in the year 2000. The Gambone brothers, John, Sr. and Anthony, along with other relatives and two employees, were convicted of engaging in a twenty-five year tax fraud scheme in which they failed to report $5 million to the IRS. Subsequently, in 2001, the township supervisors approved the sale of 123 acres to The Episcopal Academy and the remaining 109 acres to developer James A. Nolen, 3rd. The two parties settled the sale jointly, having had made more favorable land use and preservation proposals to the township than the Gambone brothers had done.

Echo Valley Subdivision

Lewis Run in the Echo Valley subdivision  Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Lewis Run flows to the southwest out of the Newtown Meadow Preserve and into the Echo Valley subdivision. The subdivision is named for Echo Valley Farm, which dates back to 1719, and was surrounded by residential development starting in 1957 when Sam Kirk bought the acreage. Most of the houses, on one-acre lots, date from the late 1950s and the 1960s, but the houses along Crum Creek Lane were added in the 1970s. It is one of the older post-war
subdivisions in the Crum Creek watershed, and its large trees and extensive canopy cover reflects that fact. The members of the Echo Valley Homeowner’s Association are keenly aware of the Lewis Run watershed and the effects that surrounding new development has on it. There is extensive signage identifying Lewis Run where the streets pass over it. The Echo Valley subdivision also includes some historic houses built in the early eighteenth century by members of the Lewis family, including the original Echo Valley Farm now at 330 Echo Valley Lane. They were Welsh Quakers after whom the stream was named.

Evan Lewis house, ca. 1719
330 Echo Valley Lane

Lewis Lewis house, ca. 1750
307 Earles Lane

Photos: Google Maps, 2012

William Lewis House

William Lewis House on Goshen Road

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
The William Lewis House at 4111 Goshen Road was built around 1708, but is most noteworthy in its role three generations later when it served as a surveillance outpost during the Revolutionary War. Lewis Run flows right in front of it. William Lewis was born in 1636. He, his wife Ann and their children arrived in Haverford from Egwysillan, Glamorgan, Wales in 1686. In 1698 they purchased 300 acres in Newtown Township. They led the initial organization of the Newtown Friends Meeting. On their farm they raised sheep and flax and spun and wove wool and linen. In 1701, their son Lewis Lewis was a member of the committee that planned and surveyed Goshen Road through the township, and which was conveniently laid out right in front of the house. During the tense period from 1777-78, the house was owned by Nathan Lewis of the next generation. He sheltered Continental soldiers there during the occupation of Philadelphia following the Battle of Brandywine. It was used as headquarters by General James Potter. Under his command, Major John Clark, Jr. and his men watched for troop movements along Goshen Road. They also had spies, operating under the pretext of delivering goods between Philadelphia and the port of Chester, who reported on movements of troops, foraging parties, ship arrivals and departures, and any other useful information. For is efforts, Nathan Lewis was disowned by the Friends Meeting for “exercising in a military manner.” The house stayed in the family until 1865, when it was sold by Eli Lewis.

The barn associated with the farmhouse was built around 1710 and sits just to the east of the William Lewis House at 4109 Goshen Road. A big red sign that reads “Echo Valley Farm” greets travelers at the end of the driveway, even though this barn was not part of the original Echo Valley Farm. Across Goshen Road is the springhouse which also dates from around 1710.
The driveway to Echo Valley Farm became Echo Valley Lane. Curiously, all old maps such as this one show Lewis Run meeting Crum Creek well above the bridge at Goshen Road, and not just below it as it does now. At some point the course was changed.

It is just a distance of one eighth of a mile from the point just downstream from the Bartram Covered Bridge where Lewis Run enters Crum Creek from the east to the point where Bartram Run enters Crum Creek from the west.
Bartram Run

Only an eighth of a mile downstream another small tributary enters Crum Creek from the west side in Willistown Township. This is Bartram Run, named for Israel Bartram, the local 19th century landowner for whom the covered bridge is also named. He was one of the local landowners who petitioned to have it built.

Bartram Run originates near Marlborough Road. It bends first towards the northeast and then to the southeast so that it passes under Goshen Road twice. After coming back under Goshen Road it flows through the Summerhill Preserve where it makes its confluence with Crum Creek.

Summerhill Preserve

In 1987, 27 acres of land on the west shore of Crum Creek was donated to the Natural Lands Trust by Martha Stengel Miller, assisted by her son Henry “Rusty” Miller, Jr. The Natural Lands Trust donated an additional sliver of land adjacent to the Bartram Covered Bridge, thus preserving the sylvan setting of the creek and the bridge. The former Miller family farm and the additional land are managed by the Natural Lands Trust as the Summerhill Preserve, where successive broods of American Kestrels have fledged from the nest box maintained there.
Mill Hollow

About another eighth of a mile downstream from its confluence with Bartram Run, Crum Creek leaves Chester County behind and entirely enters Delaware County, where it forms the boundary between Edgmont Township to the west and Newtown Township to the east. This stream corridor is called Mill Hollow, and was the site of two cotton lap factories that were active in the late nineteenth century from 1855 until the mid-1880s. Albert N. Hatch had a mill for the production of cotton lap upstream from the one that belonged to John Shimer, but old maps seem to indicate that the Shimer family eventually took over the Hatch property, or that Hatch was a tenant of Shimer.
At the end of Mill Hollow Lane (formerly Shimer Lane) are houses and other structures that were formerly part of the Hatch Cotton Lap Factory complex. There are two generations of dams and mill races in evidence. The earlier dam is constructed of field stones and the later dam is of concrete and has a terra cotta pipe that leads to its mill race. The mill pond has long been filled with silt and is now a meadow.

In the early twenty-first century the property is the site of Mill Hollow Farm. It is owned by Jeff Warden, yachtsman and sustainable agriculture entrepreneur.
Remains of old dam at Mill Hollow on west and east sides of Crum Creek
Photo on left also shows berm built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1972 around the time of Hurricane Agnes. It’s roughly perpendicular to the dam

Remains of “new” dam at Mill Hollow on west bank of Crum Creek

Views of pipe from “new” dam to mill race, where it is overgrown by a tree

The old mill race (left) and the “new” mill race (right), running parallel through the woods at Mill Hollow Photos: Walt Cressler, 2013
On Mill Hollow Farm is a small quarry used in former times to provide building stone for the surrounding structures. The stone from the quarry is darker than the surrounding rock, and originates from an intrusion of magma rich in magnesium and iron. Because of enrichment by these elements, dark rock of that nature is referred to as “mafic,” (Magnesium + Fe, Iron). The type of mafic rock present here is probably an especially magnesium-rich form of pyroxenite called enstatite, similar to Castle Rock, just downstream on Crum Creek. The two outcrops may in fact be connected underground. The magma intrusion took place sometime between 500 and 400 million years ago when the edge of the ancestral North American continent collided with a chain of volcanic islands, and melted portions of the Earth’s mantle came closer to the surface. The surrounding light-colored rock is known as Baltimore Gneiss, named for the city in Maryland where the rock from this formation was first described. It represents the core of the ancestral North American continent, known to geologists as Laurentia, and is a billion years old. Light rocks derived from magma such as this are referred to as “felsic,” (Fe-Iron + Silicon), after their main elemental constituents.

Quarry of dark mafic rock at Mill Hollow; pyroxenite boulder from the quarry

Light felsic rock on the banks of Crum Creek at Mill Hollow

Baltimore Gneiss - it’s at least twice as old as the dark rock from the quarry

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2013
Reeses Run

About half-way down Mill Hollow Lane was located John Shimer’s original cotton lap factory. This is near the site where Reeses Run flows out of the northeast and into Crum Creek.

Liseter Farm Estates Subdivision
Foxcatcher Farm

Reeses Run originates at a pond within the Liseter Farm Estates Subdivision, a Toll Brothers development of single and carriage-style luxury homes built on the site of John E. DuPont’s Foxcatcher Farm. DuPont drove his black Lincoln Town Car into this pond (twice) during the period of his deteriorating mental condition.

![Surreptitious view of pond at source of Reeses Run](Image)

Photograph: Walt Cressler, 2012

The name chosen for this subdivision hearkens back to an era that has more positive associations. These are the kind that real estate developers prefer. In the eighteenth century, part of the property belonged to William Lewis III and his wife Ruth, who built a house there in 1766. Jean Liseter Austin received this and the 200 acre core of the estate as a wedding gift in 1919 from her father William Liseter Austin, a Baldwin Locomotive Works executive. She married William DuPont, Jr. in Rosemont, Pennsylvania in a grand society wedding. They named their new estate “Liseter Hall Farm.” William’s father built Liseter Hall on the property for them. It was completed in 1922. It was a three-story Georgian-style mansion that replicated Montpelier, President James Madison’s plantation house in Virginia. William DuPont, Jr. and his sister Marion were raised in the original Montpelier, which stayed in the DuPont family until Marion willed it to the National Trust for Historic Preservation on her death in 1983. On Liseter Hall Farm, William and Jean DuPont raised and trained champion racehorses, including Rosemont, one of the few to defeat the legendary Seabiscuit as well as the triple-crown winner Omaha. During the 1920s and 1930s, the thoroughbred training facility at Liseter Hall Farm was considered the best in the Mid-Atlantic region. The couple eventually expanded the acreage to
include nearly a thousand acres. When William DuPont, Jr. established his stable in the 1920s, he raced his horses under the name Foxcatcher Farm.

The idyll was over by 1941, when William and Jean DuPont were divorced. Jean DuPont began raising Welsh ponies and maintained a herd of Guernsey cattle at Liseter Hall Farm after the divorce. John E. DuPont was the youngest of their four children together and two-years old at the time. By all accounts, John E. DuPont experienced a lonely childhood on the estate, but as an heir to a couple of large fortunes, he had the resources to pursue his interests in a big way. He did indeed have a variety of passionate interests. Early in his life, his attention turned towards bird eggs and seashells. He began collecting shells on Rehoboth Beach, Delaware as a youth, and eventually accumulated a large collection with a world-wide scope. He also purchased around 200,000 bird eggs from the British Museum of Natural History. These items became the core of the Delaware Museum of Natural History, founded by John E. DuPont in 1957 and opened to the public at Winterthur in 1972. He received a doctorate from Villanova in 1973 and was a practicing ornithologist for a while. During his doctoral work he went on several expeditions to the western and southern Pacific which resulted in the discovery and description of several new bird species. Later, his interests turned to sports. After his mother’s death in 1988, he built elaborate facilities for the Olympic training of athletes in the pentathlon, triathlon, and wrestling. He revived the name Foxcatcher Farm for the entire sports training facility on the estate. He became the chief sponsor for USA Wrestling. His behavior became increasingly erratic, but the insular world created by his wealth and his mutual dependence with the athletes cushioned him from any consequences and any effective help for his mental illness. Finally, one of his paranoid episodes tragically culminated in his shooting of his friend, the Olympic gold medalist Dave Schultz in 1996.

After he was arrested, John E. DuPont sold off the Guernsey herd and had all the buildings on the estate painted black. In 1998, the dairy farm that was held in trust by the Delaware Museum of Natural History was sold, a portion of which became the new campus of The Episcopal Academy. John E. DuPont died in prison in 2010. Toll Brothers had purchased the rest of the estate and began developing it under the less fraught name of Liseter Farm Estates. Liseter Hall was demolished in 2013.

![Destruction of Foxcatcher Farm and the birth of Liseter by Toll Brothers](Images/WC.jpg)

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012
Situated across Goshen Road from Liseter Farm Estates is Square Tavern. It has occupied this location on the southeast corner of Goshen and Newtown Street Roads since 1742. This intersection was initially conceived as Centre Square, which marked the crossing of the original main thoroughfares in Newtown Township. This Newtown in what was once Chester County has its symmetric counterpart in another Newtown in the middle of Bucks County to the east of Philadelphia. William Penn had instructed his surveyor Thomas Holme to lay out these two “townsteads” as new market centers in each of the two counties west and east of Philadelphia County. Initially, the entire colony of Pennsylvania only consisted of the three counties. It took longer to cover distances in those days, so they must not have been concerned about confusing two places with the same name.

When the tavern was built by Francis Elliot and his apprentices in 1742, the bricks were of poor quality and their masonry was shoddy. Francis Elliot was apparently out of his depth, because he was really a wheelright, carpenter, and joiner. Nonetheless, the tavern has kept standing all these years. During the eighteenth century, it was an important Conestoga wagon stop between Lancaster and Philadelphia when Goshen Road was the main route.

John West was the host of the tavern intermittently from 1744 to 1758. It served as the childhood home of his son Benjamin West, the painter. Benjamin West was born in 1738 in a house that is currently on the campus of Swarthmore College campus. Prior to moving into that house that year, his father John West had kept an inn in Chester on the green near the courthouse since 1733. During his boyhood in Square Tavern, Benjamin West skillfully and precociously painted a variety of subjects on its interior walls. His talent was discovered by an impressed guest who was well-positioned and so inclined to serve as a benefactor. Benjamin West got the requisite training in London, and then went on to become a co-founder of the Royal Academy of Painting there, as well as the official painter for King George III. He trained a generation of artists, including many Americans for whom the founders of the nation sat for their portraits. Among West’s students were Charles Willson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, John Singleton Copley, John Turnbull, Samuel Morse, Washington Allston, Ralph Earl, and Matthew Pratt.
Goshen Trail

Goshen Trail parallels Goshen Road from the parking lot of Square Tavern westward for about a mile. The trail traverses the low ridge that divides the Reeses Run valley from Echo Valley formed by Lewis Run on the other side. The trail was the brainchild of Dick Carpenter, who applied for grants and received the cooperation of the ARCO Chemical Company, which owned the property at the time. The trail preserves a number of mature trees, many of which are labelled as to their species. Among them are attractive specimens of Tulip Poplar, American Beech, Mockernut and Shagbark Hickories, Northern Red and Scarlet Oaks, Flowering Dogwood, Black Gum, Red Maple, Black Walnut, and Black Cherry. All these, and the European Larch notwithstanding, the Goshen Trail passes through a very representative eastern American broadleaf deciduous forest.

Reeses Run along the Goshen Trail

American Beech trees along the Goshen Trail

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

The ridge that divides the Reeses Run sub-watershed from the Lewis Run sub-watershed is formed by Baltimore Gneiss, and by another type of rock known as diabase. The Baltimore Gneiss was formed around a billion years ago when it was part of a supercontinent that assembled more than twice as long ago as the assembly of the better known supercontinent Pangea. The older supercontinent is called Rodinia by geologists. About 700 million years ago Rodinia started rifting apart. Beneath the thinning crust of the rifts, magma came closer to the
surface of the Earth and solidified to form diabase. It is a dark igneous rock with small, barely visible crystals of plagioclase feldspar and pyroxene. When Rodinia rifted, the Iapetus Ocean was formed. Mythologically, Iapetus was the father of Atlas, after whom the Atlantic Ocean was named, and which was formed in roughly the same place when Pangea rifted hundreds of millions of years later.
Ellis Preserve at Newtown Square
Charles E. Ellis School for Girls

Ellis Hall – administration and classroom building for the Charles E. Ellis School for Girls
Partially burned in 1950 and subsequently rebuilt
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

After Reeses Run flows under Goshen Road and the Goshen Trail, it passes through a wooded area behind the corporate park known as the Ellis Preserve at Newtown Square. This property was once the site of the Charles E. Ellis School for Fatherless Girls. Charles E. Ellis was trolley magnate from the same era as William L. Elkins and Peter A.B. Widener. Through his Citizens Railway Company begun with his father in 1856, they built the 10th & 11th Street and the 15th & 16th Street lines in Philadelphia. In 1888, Charles E. Ellis succeeded to the presidency of the company following his father’s death. He subsequently took control of the 5th & 6th Street lines. Even though he carved out a smaller territory of the Philadelphia market than Elkins and Widener, he made a sufficient fortune to have ambitions as a philanthropist. He lived in a mansion on North Broad Street in Philadelphia near his more successful rivals. Inspired by Stephen Girard’s 1848 founding of the Girard College for Fatherless Boys in Philadelphia, he made provision in his 1909 will for a corresponding girls’ school. He died that year from a head wound when a gun he was examining discharged. The $3.5 million trust he established through the Commonwealth Title Insurance Company was for the creation and operation of a school for “educating and maintaining white, fatherless girls.” It was originally called the Charles E. Ellis College for Fatherless Girls to correspond with the name of Girard’s institutional legacy, founded in a similar spirit. After starting out in Whitemarsh, Montgomery County in 1919, the school moved to Newtown Square in 1923 after two farms were purchased. By then, the student enrollment comprised 60 girls between the ages of 5 and 13. The students lived in stone cottages with house mothers. At the core of the curriculum was the standard three Rs as well as religious
instruction based on the King James Bible. The first senior class graduated in 1932. The students also had available to them a sports program, music lessons, theater productions, afternoon teas with the president, trips to the Academy of Music to hear the Philadelphia Orchestra, and horticulture lessons. The grounds of the school became a registered arboretum in 1936 through the efforts of its horticulturalist Mendelson Meehan. He was the son of Thomas Meehan, the author of *Native Flowers and Ferns of the United States*, published in 1880. In 1949, the school began accepting tuition paying students whose fathers were still alive, and later accepted commuting day students. The school expanded its enrollment during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1968, the school finally accepted its first African American student. This occurred within months after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that struck down the whites-only restriction at its brother school Girard College. Declining enrollment, rising costs, and a $694,203 deficit prompted the trustee of the school, Provident National Bank, to petition the Philadelphia Orphans Court to close the school. (The Commonwealth Title Insurance Company had merged with Provident Trust Company in 1928, which later became Provident National Bank). The petition was made in 1974, and after three years of emotional hearings the school was ordered closed on January 20, 1977 by the president judge of the Orphans Court, Charles Klein. Following the closure of the school, the Charles Ellis Fund continued to provide scholarships to Philadelphia girls in grades 8 through 12.

In 1978, the property was purchased by Atlantic Richfield to use as their research and engineering center. The company morphed into the ARCO Chemical Company and the Newtown Square site became their world headquarters. They preserved the Ellis School buildings and restored the Square Tavern. In 1998, the ARCO Chemical Company was bought out by the Lyondell Chemical Company of Houston, Texas.
In 1997, the German business software firm SAP established its North American headquarters at the western end of the Ellis Preserve at Newtown Square corporate complex.
SAP’s courtyard with pervious pavement; 1999 building on left, 2009 building on right
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2013

SAP’s geothermal well field
SAP’s green roof
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2013

Two views of SAP’s American chestnut grove
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2013
Jonas Preston House

Reeses Run was probably named for the Reece family. Mary Lewis Reece sold what eventually became the Claude de Botton property to Dr. Jonas Preston in 1804. Dr. Preston’s Federal-style mansion at 6 Boot Road was completed in 1805. Dr. Preston had the reputation for being the person who brought fine taste to rural Newtown Township. His house has carved arches in the hallways and high-ceilinged rooms with high wide windows, and carved mantels over marble facings. He married a local girl - Orpha, the daughter of Mary and William Reece. He had studied medicine with Dr. Thomas Bond, the founder of Pennsylvania Hospital, as well as in Edinburgh and Paris. He graduated around 1785 and started a practice in Chester and the surrounding area. He specialized in obstetrics. He funded the Preston Retreat in Philadelphia, where indigent married women could receive quality obstetric care. During his active life, Dr. Preston also represented Delaware County in the Pennsylvania house and senate and accompanied troops to quell the Whiskey Rebellion.
Claude de Botton Development

Reeses Run then flows through the partially developed Claude de Botton property before entering Crum Creek. The land that had belonged to Dr. Jonas Preston during the 19th century was held by Thomas Wood from 1912-1925, who maintained a gentleman farm he called Aliquippa. During Prohibition, the main house was run as a roadhouse and speakeasy, and was raided by the police a few times. For a time, the property served as the Bar X Dude Ranch. Later, the property was owned by a bachelor attorney named Frank F. Truscott, who called it Fox Trail Farms and raised thoroughbred horses and Black Angus cattle. He had been thinking of leaving the property to his alma mater Lafayette College after his death, but when he died in 1969 he had not prepared a will. In 1970, Claude de Botton bought the property through his development company Joyfor, Inc. His ambitions plans included a shopping mall, a medical building, a 250-unit motel with restaurant, a drive-in bank, a car dealership, senior citizen housing, and townhouses. In 1979 the township supervisors voted against the Joyfor plan, but in 1980 it was approved. The Concerned Citizens of Newtown filed a civil action suit charging violation of the Sunshine Law. The back and forth of litigation kept the property in a state of partial development. The struggle to limit development was kept alive mainly through the actions of the Springton and Crum Creek Conservancy and newly elected sympathetic township supervisors such as Harvey Eliason. They based their arguments on COWAMP 208, a planning document from 1978 by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission called “Water Quality Management Plan from Southeastern Pennsylvania.”
Delaware County Veterans Memorial

Claude de Botton donated land for the Delaware County Veterans Memorial, which is at the southwest corner of the property along West Chester Pike. The memorial was dedicated in May 2013.
Construction phase of the Delaware County Veteran’s Memorial
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Delaware County Veteran’s Memorial
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2017
At the confluence of Reeses Run and Crum Creek was the site of John Shimer’s cotton lap factory. On the opposite bank of Crum Creek at this location is the Edgmont Square Shopping Center.

West Chester Pike

From Mill Hollow Lane, Crum Creek flows under West Chester Pike, PA Route 3. The road was originally laid out between 1770 and 1773.

Castle Rock

On the south side of West Chester Pike, Crum Creek enters the Castle Rock residential community. Castle Rock is named for an outcrop of dark enstatite rock that was the former hideout of notorious Revolutionary War era highwayman James “Sandy Flash” Fitzpatrick. The outcrop can be seen along Rockridge Road between Chestnut and Locust Streets. He terrorized the vicinity for several months in 1778 after deserting the Continental Army until he was caught and hanged in Chester. Between 1899 and 1905, Castle Rock was the site of an amusement park. John Shimer hoped it would attract ridership on the trolleys of his Philadelphia and West Chester Traction Company that had tracks along West Chester Pike. Other amusement parks were more conveniently located for residents of Philadelphia, so the one in Castle Rock was short-lived. In 1936 the trolley line merged with the Red Arrow Line and provided service between 69th Street and West Chester.
Two more views of Castle Rock

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2017

Runnymead Farms
Just downstream, the west bank of Crum Creek is clustered with the houses of the Runnymeade Farms subdivision in Edgmont Township. Spectacular outcrops of Baltimore Gneiss can be found along Runnymeade Drive in the heart of the subdivision, particularly near Muirfield Court. These outcrops are an attractive feature along the margins of a large, central park-like area.
Down a steep bank at the edge of the Runnymeade Farms subdivision is a red maple woodland in the floodplain along Crum Creek. Boulders of Baltimore Gneiss are visible along the slopes toward in this woodland, too. In the early twenty-first century, at least one mature American or Slippery elm could still be found growing on this floodplain. On the opposite bank, Preston Run has its confluence with Crum Creek.
**Preston Run**

Preston Run is a small tributary of the Crum Creek flows out of the northeast entirely within Newtown Township. It is probably named for Dr. Jonas Preston, who in the 19th century owned the land just to the north.

**Drexel Lodge Park**

Preston Run originates from a twin series of ponds in Drexel Lodge Park. During the warmer months, a belted kingfisher has been known to patrol the stretch of stream between the two ponds.

Twenty-one acres were donated in 1931 to make Drexel Lodge Park a country retreat for the students and faculty of what was then the Drexel Institute of Technology in West Philadelphia. Many dances, club meetings, and faculty picnics were held there over the years. In
1954 the widening of West Chester Pike took out a row of maples and reduced the park to 19 acres. Class reunions were still held in the manor house into the 1980s, but by 1995 the building was badly in need of costly repairs. The building was sold to Newtown Township and demolished in 2000. The grounds were converted into a township park.

Drexel Lodge Park facilities, including picnic pavilion and boardwalk trail over upper pond
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

The park has a picnic pavilion and a gazebo, a playground and soccer field, restrooms, benches, and a boardwalk overlooking one of the ponds. The drive through the park is lined along its inner edge with small boulders of honeycomb rock, a type of weathered serpentinite bearing a network of fractures filled in by veins of resistant silica.

“Honeycomb Rock,” Drexel Lodge Park
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Drexel Lodge Park is the home of the Newtown Square Railroad Museum. The museum was co-founded in 1999 by the former president of G & H Steel Service, Inc., John H. Grant. He was co-chair of the museum until his death at the end of 2016. The museum began as an effort to preserve an abandoned freight station. The museum’s collection includes a 1920 steam engine, a boxcar from the early 1900s, and a 1902 passenger coach built in the West Philadelphia railroad shops of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Newtown Square Railroad Museum, Drexel Lodge Park

Boxcar and passenger coach  1920 steam engine

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Newtown Square Corporate Campus

Preston Run leaves Drexel Lodge Park as it flows under Campus Boulevard and enters the Newtown Square Corporate Campus. Tenants of the corporate campus include Apple Vacations, an office of the U.S. Forest Service, Bolvon Inc. Pharmaceuticals, National Elevator, Society of FSP, the mortgage firm GMH Associates, Executive Health Resources, Jobson
Florida Park

Preston Run flows along the southern edge of the Florida Park neighborhood. It is one of the oldest suburban subdivisions in the watersheds. The West Chester and Philadelphia Traction Company promoted the idea of establishing a summer cottage community next to its Castle Rock Amusement Park, both of which were plans to boost ridership on their trolleys. In 1904 the property was purchased by Mary Gehring, who developed the plan for Florida Park. There were no paved roads nor utilities until the 1920s when enough year-round residents had finally moved in. They formed the Florida Park Improvement Association to bring about these changes. The FPIA was also known to its members as the Funniest People in America. The community has enjoyed its unique character. It its early days, one of its residents was Dan Hogan, the bugler for the regiment that attempted to relieve Custer at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Olde Masters Golf Course and Driving Range

Views of Preston Run in Olde Masters Golf Course

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Preston Run enters the Olde Masters Golf Course and then flows into Crum Creek opposite the Runnymead Farms development. As is common in golf courses, Preston Run is not protected by a riparian buffer of trees as it meanders through the fairways. Downstream a lot of golf balls accumulate where they’ve settled in the slack water pools. Here beyond the edge of the golf course, Preston Run winds through a tangle of multiflora rose and Japanese stilt grass before it meets Crum Creek.
Views of Preston Run in Olde Masters Golf Course

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012
Garrett Williamson Foundation

Downstream its confluence with Preston Run, on the east side of Crum Creek are the woods and fields surrounding the Garrett Williamson Foundation. Daniel Williamson was an early settler at this location who came to Pennsylvania aboard the Endeavor in 1683. His original home was Stretton, in Cheshire, which is now the sister town to Newtown Square. He had been an indentured servant of Robert Taylor. Incidentally, Robert Taylor’s daughter Phebe married Thomas Massey, whose younger sons are honored in the name of the Crum Creek tributary Massey Run. The Taylors and the Masseys came over on the same ship as Daniel Williamson. At the end of his indenture, Williamson received 50 acres for his services in addition to 50 acres that he purchased from William Penn. His 1692 house is at 395 Bishop Hollow Road and is the oldest house in Newtown Township. It has a 1794 addition built with timber from his saw mill, and an 1801 addition. In 1700, his saw mill was the first mill built in Newtown Township. During the latter period of his life, he was a member of the provincial assembly of Pennsylvania representing Chester County until his death in 1727. A subsequent generation of Williamson made an agreement with George and Joseph Bishop to build another saw mill. After the property had been out of the family’s hands for many years, his descendent Elizabeth Williamson purchased it in 1877 with the help of her husband Casper S. Garrett who owned the Union Paper Mill on Darby Creek. She bought additional contiguous acreage until she had accumulated a total property of 262 acres. In her 1910 will, Elizabeth Williamson Garrett stipulated that the property be used as a vacation home for poor children and “single deserving women” during the warmer months. In the early 21st century the mission continues in the same spirit. The Garrett Williamson Foundation property is the location of Camp Garrett, a summer day camp for
underprivileged children at the farm, and Garrett’s Way, a year-round day care and learning center housed in the main lodge. The farm also hosts the Delaware County 4-H program.
Along the southwestern edge of the property, the waters of the Crum flowing out of the northwest then begin to slow and widen to form the northwestern lobe of Springton Reservoir as they pass under Gradyville Road.

Just south of Gradyville Road, this narrow upper end of Springton Reservoir forms the boundary between Upper Providence Township and Newtown Township.
Hunter Run

Hunter Run is a tributary of Crum Creek within Newtown Township that enters Crum Creek as the northeastern lobe of Springton Reservoir. The stream is named for the Hunter family, early landowners in the area. Their local progenitor John Hunter came to Newtown Township in 1722 with Anthony Wayne’s grandfather. His house is still standing at 405 College Avenue. A descendent was George Hunter, who owned a saw mill along Hunter Run in 1826, perhaps near Gradyville Road. Another descendent was Reese Hunter, Jr., whose name not only combines two tributaries of Crum Creek, but he also operated a feed outlet beginning in 1917 that later became the Newtown Square Home Supply. The feed outlet was located in the middle of Newtown Square near the freight station that was moved to Drexel Lodge Park and became the railroad museum. Another member of the Hunter family was Edward Hunter, who served as justice of the peace until 1817 when he was murdered by John Craig. John Craig was disappointed with the terms of his father-in-law Isaiah Yarnall’s will. He made the tragically mistaken assumption that murdering the witnesses to the will would nullify its terms.

The son of the murdered Edward Hunter, who was also named Edward Hunter, was an early convert to Mormonism. He eventually went west and became the President Bishop of the Church of the Latter Day Saints succeeding Brigham Young. Edward Hunter the younger was a commissioner of the Delaware County militia and was one of the escorts for the Marquis de Lafayette during his reunion tour of the United States in 1824. He bought a farm in West Nantmeal Township in Chester County. After a near fatal bout of typhoid fever, his spiritual outlook changed. When the township proposed to rebuild a burnt schoolhouse on the corner of his property and reconstruct it of stone, he agreed to the proposal with the stipulation that the schoolhouse also serve as a community gathering place and house of worship for “all persons or persuasions.” In 1839, Mormons arrived in the area having learned of a chapel open to all and took the opportunity to spread their message. Joseph Smith himself came and preached there. Afterwards Edward Hunter drove him to the train in Downingtown. Hunter soon converted to Mormonism and moved to the Mormon base of operations in Nauvoo, Illinois two years later, eventually ending up in Salt Lake City and head of the church.
Sign of continuing influence of Hunter family in the Hunter Run valley
Along Newtown Street Road, PA Route 252, Newtown Square
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2017
Hunter Run flows towards the southeast from Dunwoody Retirement Village where it originates in a pond on the grounds. There is a wooded trail along the edge of the retirement village that has wooden bridges over the stream. Dunwoody has been a continuing care retirement community since 1974 and is one of the oldest in the area. Its approximately 400 residents have the opportunity to enjoy 83 acres of the “picturesque rolling hills of southeastern Pennsylvania’s ‘Wyeth Country’” according to its online publicity, even though the Wyeths’ Brandywine valley is actually three watersheds to the southwest. The facility had its origins in the former Dunwoody home for the recuperation of injured workers which opened in 1924.
William Hood Dunwoody was a successful businessman who left a bequest in gratitude for his good fortune. His will of 1914 put one million dollars in trust for a home for “needy convalescents.” A survey of hospitals was made to find who was in greatest need. At first this applied mainly to elderly men. William Hood Dunwoody’s fortune derived from a fateful decision he made as a young man. After going into Philadelphia in 1863 to apprentice with a Quaker family in the flour trade, he and his wife Kate L. Patton went to Minneapolis. Before long he became a silent partner and one of the directors of the Washburn Crosby Company, the makers of Gold Medal Flour. In 1905 he was able to obtain title and deed of the family’s 125 acres in Newtown Township from his three brothers. The land had previously been sold in 1777 by Richard Fawkes to his son-in-law Joseph Hood, who passed it in turn to his son William Hood. In 1838, William Hood’s son-in-law James Dunwoody obtained the land from him. James Dunwoody was the father of William Hood Dunwoody.
On the property of the Dunwoody Retirement Village are a couple historic buildings associated with the Fawkes-Hood-Dunwoody families. The Hood Octagonal Schoolhouse, the symbol of the Newtown Square Historical Society, was built around 1798 by Joseph Hood, William Hood Dunwoody’s great-grandfather. He had made a testament with Richard Fawkes, John Hunter, and Edward Hunter to build a school for the benefit of the neighbor children. The school had a stove in the center and high windows. The schoolmaster’s small desk faced the young children gathered around the stove, and the older children sat at desk-like shelves on the surrounding walls below the windows. In 2006 it was put on the National Register of Historic Places. The Hood-Fawkes House of around 1770 was the birthplace and childhood home of William Hood Dunwoody. There is also a barn and other farm outbuildings on the property. Farming was discontinued here in 1957.
Hood-Fawkes House, 1770

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Farm buildings, Dunwoody Retirement Village

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
La Terrazza

Hunter Run flows past La Terrazza condominiums. They resemble massive clusters of Italianate villas. They were developed by Cornerstone Communities, an organization founded in 1996 by David Della Porta. Their motto is “Lifestyles for the 21st Century.” Cornerstone Communities claims leadership in “smart growth” and “green design.” As such, they promote infill construction, building next to major transportation arteries, open space preservation, historic preservation, energy conservation, and universal design. La Terrazza appears to meet those criteria. A trail leads up from the condominiums to an oak-beech woodland.

La Terrazza condominiums

Woodland trail on ridge above La Terraza condominiums; schist bedrock outcrop on right

Teca - Newtown Square Restaurant

Hunter Run flows between the Teca - Newtown Square Restaurant and units of La Terrazza condominiums. The restaurant conspicuously faces traffic moving along PA Route 252, Newtown Street Road. The restaurant at this location has operated under several previous owners and names. Carl Friedel opened the Newtown Squire Inn in 1961. In 1972, the inn expanded and
incorporated into its structure the 1798 fieldstone farmhouse built by Robert Mendenhall. Robert Mendenhall was a blacksmith, innkeeper, and owner of the Newtown Square Hotel from 1783-1796. In 1994 the restaurant was sold by the Friedel family to Alberto Guadagnini and it became Alberto’s Country Squire. Later, his junior partners supposedly bought him out and changed the name to Alberto’s Italian Steakhouse, followed by the Newtown Grille in 2007. Starting in 2012 it was called the Casale Italian Farmhouse Restaurant. This incarnation lasted for less than a year before it closed. When it next opened it was called the Teca - Newtown Square Restaurant. According to one of the bartenders at the Teca – West Chester Restaurant, Alberto Guadagnini owned the building in Newtown Square all along, but the restaurant operators couldn’t pay the rent, so he finally opened his own again as Teca – Newtown Square. In addition to the restaurants in Newtown Square and West Chester, Alberto and his son Roberto own and operate Salute! in Sarasota, Florida. Their restaurants keep ample supplies of wine produced at Casali di Bibbiano, the 18th century estate in the hills of Tuscany that Alberto Guadagnini purchased in 1995.

Two views of 1798 stone farmhouse embedded in 1972 restaurant structure; delapidated barn on right

The barn was once used as an antique store Old stone house with modern pool

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012
Hunter Run as small stream behind restaurant and condos
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Detail of 1848 Ash map showing Hunter Run
Image: Delaware County Institute of Science

The 1848 Ash map shows the 1798 Mendenhall farmhouse along Newtown Street Road and associated property purchased by Samuel Hoopes in 1835. Also shown are parcels owned by the Hood and Fawkes families in the headwaters of Hunter Run, and a parcel still owned at
the time by a member of the Mendenhall family and two parcels owned by members of the Hunter family.

Shops at Springton Pointe

On the west side of PA Route 252, Hunter Run flows past the Shops at Springton Pointe. The shops are a small strip shopping center built of local stone in a colonial revival style around the year 2005.

Shops at Springton Pointe

Springton Pointe Woods

Springton Pointe Woods subdivision

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Hunter Run passes under PA Route 252, Newtown Street Road, to where it flows through the Springton Pointe Woods subdivision. It’s a stucco and brick town home development by Pulte Homes. The developer apparently wanted to suggest that the buyers had arrived in Camelot. Some of the street names along Troop Farm Road are Arthur Court, Excalibur Drive, Merlin Road, Lancelot Lane, and Guinevere Drive. In fact, there is also a Camelot Lane on the other side of Hunter Run next to Spruce Street Baptist Church that is a small cul-de-sac off of Newtown Street Road separate from the rest of the subdivision.

Stormwater detention basin in the Springton Pointe Woods subdivision
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Spruce Street Baptist Church

Spruce Street Baptist Church
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Hunter Run flows along the grounds of the Spruce Street Baptist Church, and then through other private parcels before passing under Gradyville Road. Members of the Spruce
Street Baptist Church believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the supreme and final authority in faith and life. They believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and that His return is imminent. The cornerstone of the present church was laid in 1962. It might be a source of curiosity that a church called the Spruce Street Baptist would be located at the corner of Gradyville and Newtown Street Roads. Spruce Street Baptist Church has a long history, having originated from the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia. From 1908 until 1963 the congregation met at 50th and Spruce Streets in that city, and for about 70 years prior to that, they met at 418 Spruce Street. That was the location when they incorporated as the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia in 1829. The building was designed by Thomas U. Walters. His father Joseph Walters was deacon and superintendent of the Sunday school. The congregation later split into two groups. The fundamentalists called themselves the Spruce Street Baptist Church and moved to the 11-acre tract Christiansen tract in 1963.

Hunter Run flows under Gradyville Road. The bridge was closed for several years.
On the south side of Gradyville Road, Hunter Run flows through wooded property belonging to the Aqua Pennsylvania water company before widening as part of the Springton Reservoir. Where Hunter Run flows into the lake can be found banded gray and white outcrops of Baltimore Gneiss and pink boulders of pegmatite rich in potassium feldspar.
Raccoon tracks on bank of Hunter Run

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Boulder strewn views of Hunter Run
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Gneiss outcrop (left) and pegmatite outcrop (right) at mouth of Hunter Run
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012
Osprey and Canada geese at confluence of Hunter Run with Springton Reservoir
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

George Rhoads owned a bark mill for processing tannic acid along Hunter Run, perhaps where Media Line Road once crossed it before the construction of Springton Reservoir.
The peninsula in between the main lobe of the reservoir formed by Crum Creek and the Hunter Run lobe contains a subdivision called Springton Pointe Estates that was developed by Toll Brothers from around 1997 to 2001. The development consists of large single-family homes of stucco with false fronts of either stone or brick.
The southern tip of Springton Pointe is actually in Marple Township. Starting halfway down the Springton Pointe peninsula, the centerline of Springton Reservoir representing the old Crum Creek channel marks the boundary between Upper Providence Township and Marple Township. This boundary continues along Crum Creek below the outfall of the reservoir’s dam.

Springton Lake, or Geist Reservoir

![Dam and intake tower with suspension bridge, Springton Reservoir](Photo: Walt Cressler, 2015)

The dam for Springton Reservoir was designed by engineer Barclay T. Kenyon, under the supervision of chief engineer Carleton Davis. Constructed of rock and earth, it is 70 feet above grade and is 2000 feet across. During its construction between 1930 and 1932, crews of laborers and pipe men worked nine hours a day, six days a week, until new labor laws cut their hours back to forty a week. The dam consists of an earthen embankment with a concrete core wall and a masonry spillway. They moved the area roads in order to accommodate construction, and built new bridges on Bishop Hollow and Gradyville Roads. The construction of the bridges was awarded to the American Pipe and Construction Company after having gone out for bid. Around 40,000 six-inch high tree seedlings were planted around the new Springton Reservoir to protect the water supply. The reservoir and dam were named for Clarence Henry Geist, who was president of the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company from 1925 until 1938. The 391-acre reservoir is better known as Springton Reservoir or Springton Lake, named for the flooded Springton Farm owned by the Pratt family. At a certain point the Pratt family also had a tannery. The oak bark from the Sycamore Mills saw mill on Ridley Creek were used as a source of tannin. In addition to the Springton Farm, the 18th century Hipple farmhouse is at the bottom of the lake. The reservoir has a capacity of 3.5 billion gallons and drains an area of the Crum Creek watershed that is over 21 square miles. Water drops over the spillway for forty feet when the reservoir is full. When the reservoir isn’t full, water flows out through the intake tower which is
connected to the dam by a small suspension bridge. The water flows 2 ½ miles downstream to a filter station and pumping plant on Beatty Road.

Spillway at Springton Reservoir  Photos: Walt Cressler, 2015

Downstream side of dam from Palmers Mill Road  Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

View of the dam under construction in the early 1930s  Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania
Digging the outfall tunnel through the dam, early 1930s
Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania

The water intake and suspension bridge before the water rose, early 1930s
Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania
View of future roadway across dam from east side, early 1930s
Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania

View up the Crum Creek valley towards the soon to be flooded Springton Farm, early 1930s
Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania

View towards the nearly completed dam from the upstream side, early 1930s
Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania

View of the dam and spillway construction from the west side, early 1930s
Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania
Palmers Mill

The dam is crossed by PA Route 252, where it is known as Palmers Mill Road. At the northern end of the dam, Palmers Mill Road turns right and runs parallel to Crum Creek downstream from the dam. PA Route 252 continues north as Newtown Street Road. The Palmers are a family of Quakers descended from a Pennsylvania progenitor named John Palmer, who first settled in Concord Township in 1688 and married Mary Southery. Palmer’s Mills on Crum Creek are associated with Thomas Chalkley Palmer (1804-1883). He was the third child of John and Mary’s great-great grandson Benjamin Palmer and Ann (Pennell) Palmer. In the intervening generations, the Palmer men had also married women from other prominent local mill families, namely the Yearsleys and the Newlins. Thomas Chalkley Palmer got his own start as a miller at Beatty’s Mills on Crum Creek. He married Sarah Sharpless at Chester Meeting in 1828. In 1834, he bought mills from Abraham Jones farther up the Crum at the site that then became known as Palmer’s Mills. A grist mill was on the west bank in Upper Providence Township and a saw mill was on the east bank in Marple Township. During the Flood of 1843 his grist mill was damaged and a stone wagon house was completely lost. He recovered from his losses, and in 1866 he bought the original Sharpless homestead in Nether Providence from his father-in-law and lived there with Sarah until she died in 1872. Afterwards he lived in nearby Waterville along Ridley Creek and then in Media, where he came to the end of his days. His son Lewis Palmer inherited the mills. The last owner of the mills was Isaiah Worrell II, before they passed from the Worrell family to the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company to build the reservoir. The last significant trace of Palmer’s Mills on the landscape is in the name of Palmers Mill Road, which traverses the reservoir dam and turns off into Marple Township at its northeastern end.
Martins Run

Just below the dam, Crum Creek is joined by Martins Run from the north, which originates on the campus of the Delaware County Community College. As of 2013, Martins Run is not an official stream name recognized by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Delaware County Community College

Martins Run has its source on the campus of the Delaware County Community College, where it flows between the parking lots to a pond on the grounds of the main building. Martins Run winds its way among greenish boulders of serpentinite that are strewn about the campus. The location of Delaware County Community College was once the site of Battles Greenhouses.
Detail of 1909 Mueller atlas showing Martins Run headwaters at the Mrs. Harry H. Battles property

The Mueller map from 1909 shows the route of Martins Run through the large undivided parcels that existed at the time prior to the damming of Crum Creek and the creation of Springton Reservoir. The eponymous and doomed Springton Farm owned by Nathan L. Pratt is also visible. At the mouth of Martins Run at the site of the future dam, the map indicates that the Springfield Consolidated Water Company already had a facility. Just east of the headwaters of Martins Run, south of the property of Grace Battles, is a small reservoir that had just been built by the water company. This is the Newtown Square Reservoir, which has that name despite being located in Marple Township.
Erin Rose

Martins Run flows roughly parallel to Martins Run Road, which joins Cedar Grove Road on the southern edge of Delaware County Community College, and Palmers Mill Road on the northern edge of Hildacy Farm. Martins Run passes through the Erin Rose subdivision of Marple Township along this stretch of stream.
Martins Run enters Crum Creek near the outflow of the dam on the property of Hildacy Farm, a nature preserve and the headquarters of the Natural Lands Trust, the region’s foremost land conservation organization.

To encourage the preservation of open space, local land conservancies such as the Natural Lands Trust and Willistown Conservation Trust help landowners with conservation easements and municipalities with the stewardship of their critical plant and animal habitats. Conservation easements are voluntary restrictions placed on a property for the purpose of protecting certain resources. Easements are sold or donated to another party, such as a conservation organization or a government agency. Otherwise, the owner retains all rights to a property besides those which are sold or donated. These rights can be the right to subdivide a property, or to clear trees along a stream, or to exceed a certain percentage of paved area. The owner retains the right to live on the property and to sell it to someone else, but the conservation organization has the right and obligation to enforce the terms of the easement into perpetuity. An easement can lower the value of a property and thus lower the estate taxes, and donating an easement is considered a charitable contribution under the federal income tax code.
Glimpse of dam outfall through woods

Crum Creek flowing through woodland on Hildacy Farm
Serpentine Hill Trail (left); trail between meadows (right), Hildacy Farm
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Crum Creek Meadow, with plantings along creek

Eagle View, looking towards north

Hilda’s Meadow, looking towards south
Just to the south of the dam, northbound Palmers Mill Road splits off from Providence Road. Providence Road continues to the northwest, and forms the boundary between the Crum and Ridley watersheds, as it does to the south as well. Between Providence Road and the shores of the reservoir are residential neighborhoods within Upper Providence Township. There are newer housing developments on the opposite shore in Marple Township.

“Pumphouse Run”

Ruins of a pump house along “Pumphouse Run” Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Crum Creek continues to flow towards the southeast after it leaves the reservoir and is joined from the south about a half mile downstream by a tributary known locally as Pumphouse Run. This is not an official name registered with the U.S. Geological Survey. Pumphouse Run is a tributary of Crum Creek within Upper Providence Township that originates in Rose Tree Park and flows parallel to Dog Kennel Run before entering Crum Creek. It is named for a pump house in Rose Tree Park. All that remains is a rusted pump house apparatus in the wooded corridor behind the park’s amphitheater. The source waters of Pumphouse Run trickle along a concrete sluice that runs along the amphitheater restrooms.

Rose Valley resident Andy Saul is the information source about the stream’s name. He also related that his stepfather and Monsignor Kelly of the Nativity B.V.M. Church in Media used to place bets on the steeplechase races that were held on the grounds of what later became Rose Tree Park. The woods through which Pumphouse Run flows consists mainly of tulip poplar, American beech, and red maple. The stream is underlain by Wissahickon Schist bedrock dipping towards the southeast, with a few conspicuous boulders of bull quartz. In the warmer months, the stream is inhabited by green frogs, dusky salamanders, and crayfish. Some ruins are visible in its lower reaches. They include a small structure built of fieldstone, a small dam, and another defunct pump housed in concrete.
Trail along “Pumphouse Run,” Rose Tree Park

Quartz boulder (left) and Wissahickon Schist bedrock (right) in “Pumphouse Run”

Stone ruin in lower reaches of “Pumphouse Run”
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012
Rose Tree Park opened in 1975. That year, a Bicentennial wagon train on its way to Independence Mall in Philadelphia came to the park and participated in its opening celebration. Rose Tree Park is a treasured part of the Delaware County public park system. In 1966, a Wallingford attorney named Henry Gouley persuaded Delaware County to purchase the land that was up for sale by the Rose Tree Hunt Club. The following year he persuaded the county to include the adjacent Leedom Farm as part of the purchase. This parcel included the Rose Tree Tavern. In 1967, the county purchased the properties with a combination of Project 70 funds and a bond issue approved by voters. The stipulation of the purchase was the preservation of open space and protection from commercial development. In 1986, though, HB 2120 was passed that removed the Rose Tree Tavern, the Hunt Club buildings, and the surrounding three-and-a-half acres from some of these restrictions. The Rose Tree Tavern houses Destination Delco, a visitor’s information bureau for the county. The Hunt Club building contains the offices of the Delaware County Soil Conservation District and the Solid Waste Authority. The Leedom House contains the offices of the Delaware County Parks & Recreation Department and the Labor Relations board. A long red Maintenance Barn serves as an equipment storage facility, but was once where the Penn State Extension service administered the county 4-H Club from 1981 until it moved to the Garrett-Williamson Foundation farm. There is a community garden with over 200 small plots that was established the year the park opened. An amphitheater used for popular summer programs and several monuments and memorials are also features of the park. These include a law enforcement memorial and a firefighter and EMS memorial for first responders who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty in Delaware County. There is also a
monument to Philip Jaisohn, a Korean patriot and physician who lived for many years in Delaware County.

Two views of the Leedom House, Rose Tree Park

The Hunt Club, Rose Tree Park

Maintenance Barn, Rose Tree Park

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012
The spring house is the source of a small tributary of “Pumphouse Run.”
Delaware County Law Enforcement Memorial, Rose Tree Park

Delaware County Fire Fighter and EMS Memorial, Rose Tree Park
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012
Every fall the Delaware County Birding Club runs a daily hawk watch in Rose Tree Park. The hawk sighting data they collect goes to the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) and to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Broad-winged hawks in large numbers can be seen in September as they migrate south. They form slowly spinning “kettles” of hundreds of birds as they ride the thermals.

Moses Palmer obtained a license to operate the Rose Tree Tavern in 1805. He named it for the Rose-of-Sharon shrub. Between 1805 and 1809 a large portion of the previous red frame
building was torn down and replaced with a section made of stone. A public house had been at this location along Providence Road since 1739, when David Calvert applied to the court for an inn license. Beer and cider was served, along with rum from the West Indies which was believed to prevent “dumb agues and fevers.” By 1770 the inn was called “The Three Tuns.” It was run by local farmers. In 1802, the name was changed briefly to “Red Lion.” Items on the menu consisted of pork & dumplings and rabbit stew. Sometime after Moses Palmer changed the name to the Rose Tree Tavern, it was owned by Isaac Cochran. He in turn sold the inn to George Cummins in 1833. The Rose Tree Tavern remained in the Cummins’ family for the next 25 years. George Cummins was the mill manager at Ronalson’s Banks on Ridley Creek, owned by the Scotsmen James and Richard Ronalson. (Ronalson’s Banks later became the site of Samuel Bancroft’s Woolen Mills and later still, the site of the Upper Bank Nursery.) In 1836, George Cummins replaced the rest of the tavern with stone, to form the structure that exists today. George Cummins died in 1847. His widow Matilda Cummins took over as landlady, and was also postmistress from 1849 to 1857. George and Matilda had four children. Joseph fought in the Civil War. John homesteaded in Minnesota. James started the Media Cemetery around 1855. Lydia Ann married Edward Baker and moved to Edgmont Township. The tavern passed out of the Cummins family hands in 1858. From 1866 until 1872, the Rose Tree Tavern was owned by the Velott family. Their ancestor was Felix Vellott, who settled in Marple Township in the early 1800s. He claimed to be the Dauphin. He had been placed with the Worrells, a local Quaker family, and lived in a house called The Sycamores, east of Crum Creek. In 1872 the tavern was bought by the Rose Tree Hunt Club, which used it for their meetings until they built a new clubhouse next to the tavern in 1881. In 1906 the tavern was bought by Benjamin Rogers. With the Volstead Act of 1919 and the beginning of Prohibition in 1920, the Rose Tree Tavern never served as an actual tavern again. Charles Leedom became owner in 1922. Until it was sold to Delaware County in 1967, the tavern building served as a residence for various people, including Judge John M. Broomall, 3rd, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Leedom, Jr. The Rose Tree Tavern was moved from its original location right next to the crossroads and is now set back a few hundred feet from the intersection of Providence and Rose Tree Roads. After a brief incarnation as the site of the Brandywine Conference and Visitors Bureau, its operators wised up that they didn’t need the false pretense that they were in the Brandywine Creek watershed. It is now Destination Delco, a visitor’s bureau name with a more appropriate and distinctively local punch.

Rose Tree Hunt Club

Site of former steeple chase races, Rose Tree Park

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012
The Rose Tree Hunt Club was organized in 1859. J. Howard Lewis was its first president. He was a prominent citizen who owned a large paper mill on Crum Creek further downstream in what is now Smedley Park. George E. Darlington was the first secretary, and J. Morgan Baker was the first treasurer. The hunt club includes among its predecessors some earlier recreational organizations in the history of Philadelphia area society. Oddly enough, the earliest was a fishing club. The Schuylkill Fishing Company was formed in 1732 by dedicated anglers. They organized their outings along the once pristine Schuylkill River near what is now the Philadelphia Zoo. In 1766, Samuel Morris of the fishing club called a meeting at the London Coffeehouse at Front & Market Streets in Philadelphia. The purpose was to organize the Gloucester Fox Hunting Club, which once formed, hunted on both the New Jersey and Pennsylvanion sides of the Delaware River. Its early members included Benjamin Chew, Thomas Mifflin, and Thomas Leiper. Samuel Morris was an energetic organizer. He also was instrumental in forming the First Troop, Philadelphia City Calvary. He was known for his dedication to both the American patriot cause and the pleasures of the hunt. He was a deducing habit at the Battle of Princeton in 1777. The Gloucester Fox Hunting Club dissolved in 1818 due to the death of its members and the difficulties following the War of 1812. But, when the Rose Tree Hunt Club was formed, many sons of the members of the Gloucester club and the First City Troop joined. Among this next generation were J. Edward Farnum, and George Powell of Springfield. Another prominent member of the Rose Tree Hunt Club was Dr. Rush Shippen Huidkoper, Dean of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. His prize horse was the legendary mare Pandora. Born and bred in West Virginia, Pandora was sold locally at the Black Horse Tavern cattle mart in Middletown Township. Ownership of the horse passed from George W. Hill to J. Howard Lewis, who couldn’t get this high-spirited horse to do menial team work at the paper mill, and then to Dr. Huidkoper. Pandora was photographed by the pioneering proto-cinematographer Eadweard Muybridge. After death, Pandora was honored in a most unusual way. Dr. Huidkoper served her to guests at a Philadelphia Club dinner and didn’t disclose the nature of the steaks they had eaten until dessert was served.

From its formation until 1872, the Rose Tree Hunt Club met variously at the Black Horse Tavern and at the Lamb Tavern in Springfield Township. When they bought the Rose Tree Tavern in 1872 they began to meet there regularly. George Darlington was the trustee of the property. Other prominent members on the transaction were J. Howard Lewis, Samuel Lewis, Fairman Rogers, and J. Edward Farnum. With its new permanent headquarters in place, the club was formally incorporated in 1873. The articles of incorporation were addressed to President Judge of Delaware County Thomas J. Clayton. The signers of the articles included A.J. Cassatt, Fairman Rogers, George W. Hill, George E. Darlington, Dr. Huidkoper, George Lewis, J. Howard Lewis, and Moncure Robinson. Even though Rose Tree Park consists of a large open parcel of land spreading beyond the Rose Tree Tavern that once largely belonged to the Rose Tree Hunt Club, it represents a tiny portion of the former hunt club territory. During the days when much of the surrounding countryside was open and dedicated to farming, the hunt roamed up to West Chester Pike and eastward and southwest towards Brandywine Summit, skirting the cities of Philadelphia and Chester. Sometimes they came in conflict with the Radnor Hunt where their territories abutted. The club maintained a trotting track across Providence Road from the tavern in a field where the Delaware County Institute of Science had held its annual agricultural exhibitions. In the late 1800s, more and more Philadelphians joined the popular Rose Tree Hunt Club. Steeple chase races also became popular. The Bullock farm was purchased by the club and
they were able to build a large dumbbell shaped track with a judge’s box and a grandstand for such events. In 1881 a new dedicated clubhouse was built behind the Rose Tree Tavern. And, around 1922 the club’s headquarters was moved to yet another new building just east of the tavern. Large crowds were drawn to events that took place at the Rose Tree Hunt Club in the early twentieth century. Samuel Riddle showed off the great Thoroughbred race horse Man o’War in 1920. Jack Dempsey the boxer visited in the same year. After World War II, the club suffered some serious setbacks. In 1952 there was a terrible barn fire and many horses were lost. The Philadelphia countryside was getting increasingly suburbanized, and the landscape was incompatible with fox hunting. The Rose Tree Hunt Club moved to more rural York County in 1960, and still goes by the same name there. Finally, the club sold its land in Delaware County to the county itself in 1967, creating the foundation for Rose Tree Park.

Paxon Hollow

Crum Creek in Paxon Hollow, above and below the bridge
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Crum Creek then passes under Paxon Hollow Road. The stone bridge dates from 1937 and is built from local stone.

Metal keystone plaques on Paxon Hollow Road bridge
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Crum Creek flows for slightly more than half a mile past the Paxon Chase subdivision and then passes under Crum Creek Road. The Paxon Chase subdivision was built on the divide
between Crum Creek and its tributary Trout Run. Trout Run Drive runs along the crest of the divide. Side streets named for the local wildlife extend down the slope on each side. Shortly after passing under Crum Creek Road, the creek is joined by Trout Run, which drains a large portion of western Marple Township to the north.

**Trout Run**

Trout Run originates behind the Broomall Plaza Shopping Center. It is impaired by serious impacts due to road and parking lot runoff and storm sewers. During its annual streams clean-up, the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association volunteers always find a lot of trash at the Trout Run headwaters next to the shopping center parking lot. The clean-up is always a very rewarding experience in terms of good fellowship while doing a good deed. But one year, a volunteer even found a one-hundred-dollar bill among the trash at this site. It was promptly donated to the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association to further their mission of stream stewardship.

Result of Trout Run headwaters stream clean-up, Broomall Plaza Shopping Center parking lot
Former CRC Watersheds Association executive director Anne Murphy is on far right
Streams Clean-up organizer Chris Townend in beige baseball cap leaning on post
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2013
Trout Run emerging from beneath Broomall Plaza Shopping Center and entering reinforced channel
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2013

Trout Run flows through the Broomall neighborhood of Marple Township, named for the first President Judge of Delaware County, John M. Broomall. It flows under Cedar Grove Road before entering Kent Park.

Bridge over Trout Run at Cedar Grove Road, Marple Township
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Kent Park
Trout Run flows through Kent Park, which is part of the Delaware County public park system. An old quarry in a cliff face consisting of Wissahickon Schist is visible at the entrance to the park. The rock layers dip to the southeast. Trout Run ripples over a coarse bed of schist and quartz cobbles here. Many salamanders live under the rocks.
Active recreation facilities in the park include a tennis court and a playground. A small tributary enters Trout Run from the east at the south end of the park.

As Trout Run leaves the park, it continues to flow through an American beech and tulip poplar woodland. White-tailed deer and red fox can be startled from their hiding places, and raccoon tracks are often readily visible in the sand bars along the stream. The course of Trout Run alternates between a gravelly bottom and schist bedrock, forming a natural system of chutes
and falls. Abundant minnows can be seen. Is it possible that there are actually trout in Trout Run? The natural appearance of the stream ecosystem is offset by the sewer right-of-way that parallels it. Its presence is apparent from the row of manhole inlets.

View of Trout Run, Kent Park, with adjacent sewer right-of-way
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Trout Run over schist bedrock (left); stones on a Trout Run gravel bar
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Fish of Trout Run – creek chubs, black-nosed dace, and white suckers

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Trout Run emerging from woods at Paxon Hollow Golf Course
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Paxon Hollow Golf Course

Trout Run in the Paxon Hollow Golf Course
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Trout Run flows through the Paxon Hollow Golf Course. The course is surrounded by beech and tulip poplar on most sides, but its southern edge is along Palmers Mill Road. Trout Run passes under the road near where it joins Paxon Hollow Road. Near this point along the fairway for the 11th hole is the Amos-Bond House. It is a four-room house that was built around the year 1700 on the land originally deeded to first purchaser John Worrall.

Amos-Bond House

Trout Run from Paxon Hollow Road
The local historian Jane Levis Carter believed there was probably a mill along Trout Run established by Henry and Sarah Miller for the manufacturing of serge and “camelot,” a fine, light-weight wool and other similar specialty textiles. They had a prosperous store and provided credit their neighbors. The Millers were ancestors of George Miller, one of the founders of the Delaware County Institute of Science.

After its confluence with Trout Run, Crum Creek flows alongside Crum Creek Road for a short distance before both the road and the creek intersect with State Road.
Holland Bridge

State Road was once carried over Crum Creek by a covered bridge called the Holland Bridge. It was known as Holland Bridge until it was replaced by a concrete structure in 1923. This area marks a large confluence of highways. Running parallel to State Road immediately south of it is the U.S. Route 1 Media Bypass. The two are traversed by north-and-southbound Interstate 476, the Mid-County Expressway – also known as the Blue Route.

Hotland Run

In the small distance between State Road and the U.S. Route 1 Media Bypass to its south is the confluence of Hotland Run, which comes into Crum Creek from the east. Hotland Run is the stream’s officially registered name with the U.S. Geological Survey, but it’s a misprint of Holland Run.

Saints Peter and Paul Cemetery

Chapel and mausoleums at the Saints Peter and Paul Cemetery

The officially misnamed Hotland Run originates to the northeast in the Saints Peter and Paul Cemetery. Behind the mausoleum section of the cemetery, Hotland Run flows through a forest consisting primarily of American beech, tulip poplar, and red maple. The forest floor was covered in New York ferns during a late fall visit. White-tailed deer flourish at the edge of the woods and the cemetery grounds.
Hotland Run flows past the Marple Woods Condominiums. The condos are built on a steep hill, and the street names make reference to San Francisco, perhaps for that reason. The condos were reportedly built on the site of a notorious Prohibition-era speak-easy, which was finally torn down in 1970.
Hotland Run then flows along the edge of a subdivision called Ravenscliff at Media. The site was originally proposed for development by Pulte Homes, but a grassroots community effort caused them to pull their proposal. Benson developed the site. A historic house on the property was called “The Sycamores.” It was the home of Felix Vellott, who claimed to be the Dauphin of France. On the other side of State Road is reportedly a Civil War cemetery for black soldiers, but this needs to be confirmed.

To the west on State Road is a spectacular outcrop of Wissahickon Schist at the bottom of the circular ramp exiting the U.S. Route 1 Media Bypass. Its schistosity and mica-content are similar to that of the stone in the nearby Media Quarry.

Before entering Crum Creek, Hotland Run flows past the large interchange between U.S. Route 1 and Interstate 476, the Cross-County Expressway, otherwise known as the Blue Route.
Hotland Run’s confluence with Crum Creek is in the narrow space between State Road and the U.S. Route 1 Media Bypass. Hotland Run is impaired by flow alterations and siltation.

Crum Creek and Crum Creek Road continue south after passing beneath the overpass for U.S. Route 1.
Eastern garter snake observed between Crum Creek and Crum Creek Road near Hotland Run  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Martin Park

About a quarter of a mile downstream from Route 1, Crum Creek slows to a standstill to form the Lower Crum Reservoir. This impoundment supplies the drinking water for Aqua PA’s Crum Creek Treatment Plant on Beatty Road. On the north side of Farnum Road at its intersection with Crum Creek Road in Upper Providence Township is a small plot of woodland set aside by Delaware County as Martin Park. It is not easily accessible to the public, and is essentially a wooded stream corridor along an unnamed tributary of the Crum. The woods consist mainly of American beech and a variety of oaks. Incidentally, Farnum Road is named for J. Edward Farnum. He was one of the founders of the Rose Tree Hunt Club and was the principle property owner during the 19th century along what is now Farnum Road.
At the turn of the twentieth century, Dr. Edward Martin owned the land along the creek to either side of Farnum Road. He was a prominent surgeon at Jefferson Hospital. He called his estate Valley Farm, which was referred to by some as the “garden spot of Delaware County.” He had riding stables, tennis courts, elaborate gardens, grape arbors, and apple orchards. The water company later purchased his estate and used it for company housing.
Crum Creek Reservoir

Just downstream from Farnum Road, both Crum Creek Road and Crum Creek bend towards the southwest at what marks the northern border of Nether Providence Township. The center of Crum Creek from this point forms the boundary between Nether Providence Township on the west and Springfield Township on the east. Here the creek continues in its wider, slower form as the 90-million-gallon Crum Creek Reservoir. There are prominent outcrops of Wissahickon Schist along Crum Creek Road as it skirts the reservoir.

During a visit to the reservoir, a fisherman reported having caught a seventeen-inch largemouth bass earlier in the day. The other fish species that he reported seeing in the reservoir were sunnies, yellow perch, carp, and muskies. When questioned further, he was certain there were muskies present.
Aqua Pennsylvania has its Crum Creek drinking water uptake and treatment plant located here, at the site of the former Beatty Axe Works or Edge Tool Factory. Previous saw mills and grist mills at this site were owned by the Fell and Pancoast families. Before that, the property was part of the original land grant from William Penn to Bartholomew Coppock. When William Beatty arrived in 1825 and built his forge and blade mill, he became the first in the United States to manufacture edge tools from cast steel. His sons William and John Beatty continued the business after their father’s death in 1842. Soon, the sons were faced with the biggest disaster to ever hit Crum Creek. Only one of their original buildings survived the “Great Freshet of August 5, 1843.” Here is how one of the Beatty brothers described it:

“The water, in the space of ten minutes, rose, I think, seven or eight feet. The bridge was the first that went, then my wood-house with about ten cords of wood and a lot of chestnut rails, next the head gates were bursted out. Then the edge tool factory went down with a tremendous crash, and in an instant there was nothing, to be sure, but water in the places where it stood. The front walls of the plaster and finishing mill fell out, leaving the back walls in such a wrecked condition that they fell in a few days after. About half of the race bank and eight yards of the
breast dam were completely swept out. All the hammers, anvils, unfinished tools, coal, etc., were swept away or covered with stones and dirt below."

The mill was rebuilt, and by 1860 there were thirty employees that produced 200 tools a day.

The only Beatty Edge Tool Factory building to survive the 1843 flood, with high water mark
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Beatty Edge Tool Factory building as Springfield Water Company Station #1
Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania
In 1892, the site of the Beatty Edge Tool Factory was acquired by the Springfield Water Company. The watersheds west of Philadelphia had a largely rural character until the 1880s. Beginning in that decade, rail and electric trolley service promoted the early growth of suburbs that spread out from Philadelphia and Chester. Towns with railroad stations grew larger. As population density increased, the reliance on cisterns and wells for drinking water began to be inadequate in some areas. The Springfield Water Company, founded by Swarthmore College engineering professors on January 4, 1886, was among the first in the area to pipe a water supply directly into homes. They had received a charter to supply drinking water to residents of Springfield Township. They began their operations by piping water from a spring to houses that formerly relied on wells, cisterns, and hand pumps for their water. Piped water proved popular. To accommodate increasing demand, the Springfield Water Company obtained capital and expertise through a partnership contract with the American Pipe Manufacturing Company. At first, in 1889 they constructed a waterworks on Whiskey Run, a small tributary of Crum Creek. As this source also proved inadequate to the increasing demand, the company purchased the site of the Beatty Axe Works along Crum Creek in 1892 and installed their first small pumping station. The only building of the Beatty Edge Tool Factory to survive the flood of 1843 was converted into Pumping Station No. 1 in 1892. It was operated by water power, but had an auxiliary steam pumping plant. The waterworks included two pressure filters for water purification. They were among the earliest filtration systems in the nation.
Springfield Water Company facilities and Crum Creek Reservoir
Image: Detail of 1902 Baist atlas map
Another view of Pumping Station No. 1 on left; Pumping Station No. 2 on right (gray stone building)
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

A pipeline approximately a mile long and 12 inches in diameter was run from the pumping station to the two-million gallon Springfield Reservoir on Marple Hill. After the Clean Water Act, this open reservoir at the intersection of Beatty and Sproul Roads was replaced by the closed 10-million gallon Sproul Tank at the intersection of Old Marple and Sproul Roads.

Springfield Reservoir on Marple Hill, early 20th century
Photo: Aqua PA
The year 1892 was also when the American Pipe Manufacturing Company initiated an aggressive expansion policy for the Springfield Water Company. It created and consolidated numerous water companies in the counties west and north of Philadelphia and beyond. This expansion is reflected in the company’s changes of name throughout the years, from the Springfield Water Company, to the Springfield Consolidated Water Company (1907), to the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company (1925), to Aqua America and its local subsidiary, Aqua Pennsylvania (2004). The expansion began when they established six small companies in the Darby Creek watershed in March of 1892. In June they purchased the independent Ridley Park Cold Spring Water Company. It had been established in 1889 when the American Pipe Manufacturing Company was contracted to build a waterworks and sink shallow wells along the banks of Crum Creek and lay a distribution pipe to the town. The water supply proved to be inadequate and other sources were ruled out due to contamination or financial impracticality. So, they sold out to the Springfield Water Company. The purchase secured the water rights to Crum Creek for the company and was the foundation for their further expansion.

As the water company expanded across Delaware and Montgomery Counties, they modernized the water works on Crum Creek and enlarged their rights to its water supply. They appropriated the entire flow of Crum Creek in 1901, which set the precedent for their claim to supply the ever growing demand for water. A new coagulating basin and pumping station had been built in 1899, increasing the pumping capacity to 3 million gallons a day.
Pumping Station No. 2, built in 1899

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Crum Creek Pumping Station No. 2 under construction
Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania
In 1901 they began to build reservoir capacity, since the prior low dam had only served to divert water into the plant. A masonry dam was built in 1918 to form a 90 million gallon intake reservoir, the Crum Creek Reservoir. A 4 million gallon per day pump was installed. In 1923, the pressure filters were removed and up-to-date rapid sand filters were installed. The first steam driven turbine and centrifugal pump were installed in 1926. Additional filters were added in 1931, increasing the filtration capacity to 20 million gallons a day.
Close-up views of 1918 Crum Creek Reservoir dam at different seasons
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012 (left) and 2013 (right)

Boilers (left) and Filters (right) in Pumping Station No. 2, early 20th century
Photos: Aqua Pennsylvania

Crum Creek Pumping Stations No. 3 (left) and No. 4 (right)
Photos: Aqua Pennsylvania
As they expanded their operations and purchased other facilities, the Springfield Water Company had changed its name to the Springfield Consolidated Water Company in 1907. Then, after having secured the rights to water from the Pickering, Perkiomen, and Neshaminy Creeks in addition to the Crum, it became the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company in 1925. That was
the year that Clarence Henry Geist became president of the water company, a position he held until his death in 1938. He purchased Springfield Consolidated Water Company by acquiring a controlling interest in the American Pipe and Construction Company. He was an enterprising farm boy from Indiana, whose drive and charm caught the attention of Charles Dawes, a banker and financier who later became vice president under Calvin Coolidge and won the Nobel Peace Prize for his part in the reparation plans following the First World War. Charles Dawes and his brother Rufus had interests in a number of gas and electric ventures in the Midwest, and the young Clarence Geist was chosen as operator of the South Shore Gas Company in Indiana. He soon became partner, and then bought out the Dawes brothers. He sold the company two years later and used the proceeds to purchase the Atlantic City Gas and Electric Company and the Indianapolis Water Company. What drew him to expand his operations in the Philadelphia area was increased regulation in Indiana and the love of Florence Hewitt. He met her in Chicago when she was there from Philadelphia to visit her sister who was married to the president of the Rock Island Railroad. When Clarence Geist arrived in 1925, the company began to expand immediately. He brought with him as his chief engineer Carleton E. Davis. Davis had prior experience helping to eliminate yellow fever in Panama during construction of the canal; he addressed water pollution in the New York City water supply by having the Ashoken Reservoir built; and with Clarence Geist, supplied Indianapolis with fresh water by installing a reservoir and modern waterworks.

Not long after Geist’s arrival, the Newtown Water Company in Newtown Township was leased to the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company for 99 years. It was purchased outright in 1939, after Pennsylvania Public Law 842 was enacted. The law’s goal was to regulate rapidly growing water companies, but it also helped to remove obstacles to growth created by prior laws. Despite the Great Depression, utilities did well. The ability to supply water greatly expanded in 1931, when the Geist Dam was built on Crum Creek to create Geist Reservoir, or Springton Lake. Additional pumps were installed at the Crum Creek intake station at Beatty Road to increase its filter capacity to 20 million gallons.

During rapid expansion of housing in the suburbs after World War II, new 16 and 24 inch transmission mains were added to deliver water from pumping stations, including the one on Crum Creek. The company’s advertising campaigns featured “Pure Springfield Water.” In 1951, three motor-driven centrifugal pumps that together could pump 21 million gallons a day were added to the Crum Creek Station. They were able to run on coal, oil, or electricity. If the old steam plant failed, they could serve as a fallback. The following year, 1.1 miles of 30-inch transmission main was installed from the station to the reservoir on Marple Hill, where an additional booster-pump capacity of 5-million-gallons-per-day was also installed. In 1954, Crum Creek Station saw the introduction of a wash water tank and two storage tanks with a combined capacity of eight million gallons. A new chemical treatment building went into operation in 1959, and included a modern, well-equipped laboratory for conducting controlled water tests. New vertical low-lift pumps were installed in 1960 and in 1961 the station received two six-million-gallon-per day high-head pumps. In 1962, a filter was constructed to improve effluent quality through the use of Dual Media and newly developed coagulant aids. Better water quality was produced at a lower cost by coagulating fine turbidity with alum following a chemical aid. Also, a new storage reservoir permitted a more flexible supply system and a stable pump operating system. That was the year when tours of the facility began in order to show school groups, scouts, service clubs and other groups the operation. In 1967, construction began on waste treatment facilities to keep the Crum Creek Pumping Station within compliance of the
regulations of Pennsylvania’s new clean streams program. This involved the installation of a reinforced concrete transfer pumping station, two 86-foot diameter, open-top, steel settling tanks and all the requisite collection and discharge piping. In 1969, sludge tanks were installed as part of a filter backwash waste disposal system to remove suspended matter and contain the sediment. Upgrades occurred in 1974. The 1899 settling basin was relined and repaired. The two open clear-water storage facilities were replaced with enclosed steel low-profile reservoirs as required by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Meanwhile, on the business side of things, back in 1958 the company’s outstanding common stock held by the trustees and heirs of the Geist estate was purchased by an investment firm led by two brothers from Texas, Clint and John Murchison. In 1959, Harold Schutt, who was Geist’s close associate and successor, stepped down as president. He was replaced by Thomas W. Moses, whose father and grandfather were both presidents of US Steel’s H.C. Frick Coke Company. Moses introduced modern business practices to the water company, but management decisions were made in Texas. He was succeeded as president by James Ballengee in 1962, who had moved to Bryn Mawr and restored the family feeling to the company. In 1968 the water company board voted to create a holding company called the Philadelphia Suburban Corporation (PSC). This would allow the company to diversify within the utility industry and to invest in other companies. By 1971 it was listed on the New York Stock Exchange. This occurred under the presidency of George Dann (1970-1972), who, in fifty years, had risen up through the ranks from having been a meter reader. After James Ballengee served another two years as president from 1972 to 1974, he was replaced by Earl Graham. Graham instituted modern business practices such as job descriptions, competitive salary structures, performance evaluations, labor-management meetings, health and pension plans, and safety programs. In 1978, 10,000 feet of 10-inch main was laid along West Chester Pike from Newtown Square to Edgmont Township, bringing public water service to many areas for the first time. In 1979, the company secured the rights to supply water to most of Edgmont Township, the only municipality that includes all three watersheds of the Chester, Ridley, and Crum Creeks. The collective financial success of Philadelphia Suburban Corporation’s diverse holdings made it difficult for the water company to get rate increases passed by the Public Utility Commission. In 1981, the holding company was split into two independent parts, so that the water company could have its needs assessed like any other Pennsylvania utility. In 1984, as a result of company reorganization, a new Springfield Operations Center was opened at the corner of Sproul and Beatty Roads at the former location of the Springfield Reservoir on Marple Hill. It consolidated construction and maintenance activities of the Western and Southern Divisions and housed the
transportation repair center. In 1985, the Great Valley Water Company was acquired, adding portions of Chester County to the customer base, including those in the headwaters of Chester Creek in East Goshen, West Goshen, and Westtown Townships. By the time of their centennial in 1986, the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company was supplying water to fifty-eight municipalities in the three counties of Delaware, Chester, and Montgomery. Water was supplied from Crum Creek, Pickering Creek, Perkiomen Creek’s Green Lane Reservoir, and Neshaminy Creek. The company greatly accelerated its acquisition strategy starting in 1992 when Nicholas DeBenedictis became chairman and CEO. The company bought twenty-nine other water systems and entered the waste-water industry by purchasing three such systems in 1996. By 2003, the company’s operations had expanded to thirteen states. Because of its national presence, the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company changed its name to Aqua America, Inc. in 2004, with the local subsidiary acquiring the name of Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc. At the company’s birthplace, Springton Reservoir and Crum Creek Reservoir are the largest drinking water supply sources in Delaware County, providing water to over 200,000 households as of the first decade of the 21st century.

Aqua PA headquarters in Bryn Mawr, PA (Darby Creek watershed)
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2015

Media Quarry
Just downstream along Crum Creek and nearby along Beatty Road is the Media Quarry, which has historically supplied a lot of glittering gray building stone for local houses and other structures, particularly in Media and on the Main Line. It is the source of a particularly micaceous form of Wissahickon Schist, which has the trade name “Mica”. According to quarry manager Brian Scala, the quarry was started in the year 1900 by his grandfather’s grandfather who came from Italy. His grandfather decided not to get into the profitable “thin stone” business, which supplies masonry veneer to home builders. He thought it was a fad. Brian is able to take some advantage of this ongoing lucrative market by selling stone to Pinnacle in Parkesburg. They have a thin-stone cutting machine. But as of 2012 when this conversation took place, it would have taken around $200,000 in capital investment to purchase his own machine. At the time, he was also supplying stone to Cheyney University for dormitories and stone for a house with an eleven-car garage in Mullica Hill, New Jersey. The house was being built for owner of the Porsche dealership on West Chester Pike.
Rock pile, Media Quarry  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Stone cutting machine, Media Quarry  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Downstream from the Media Quarry, Crum Creek meanders back and forth beneath the shadows of the Interstate 476 viaduct as it flows past the Martin Forest, a small pocket of the last remaining primordial forest in Delaware County, paradoxically located next to one of the more dramatically human engineered landscapes in the area.
Martin Forest

The Martin Forest is a 30 acre parcel owned by Swarthmore College, situated in a ravine along the west bank of Crum Creek. The forest hugs a tight meander loop of Crum Creek that turns abruptly to the northeast and bends back towards the southwest. The tract was donated to the college in 1926 by Dr. Edward and Anna Martin. Since 1941 it has been leased to Delaware County to serve as a nature reserve within Smedley Park. Along the floodplain are immense tulip poplars. Large white and red oak trees grow on the slopes over the creek. The Martin Forest is continuous with the woodlands of Smedley Park to its south where the trees are much smaller.
As the trail through the Martin Forest hugs the slope above Crum Creek, there are several spring seeps along the way that can make walking a little bit tricky. At the right time of the year, two-lined salamanders can be found under the rocks in these seeps.
Along the northern end of the trail through the Martin Forest where it passes through the floodplain, some dramatic rock outcrops of Wissahickon Schist become visible.
At the apex of the sharp bend in Crum Creek, a tributary enters from the northeast. This tributary is known locally as Jane Lownes Run.

“Jane Lownes Run”

Jane Lownes Run is named for a Quaker widow who was the first to settle in Springfield Township. She and her three sons actually lived along Whiskey Run, and more details can be found about the in the account of that stream.

Hancock Methodist Church

The source of Jane Lownes Run is behind the Hancock Methodist Church on West Sproul Road.

Jane Lownes Park

Jane Lownes Run flows through Jane Lownes Park. This township park is a 23.4 acre parcel nestled among the residential streets of a Springfield Township neighborhood. It has picnic tables, playground equipment, basketball courts, and baseball diamonds.

Jane Lownes Run flows from the park into the northern end of the Martin Forest. There is a walking trail along its entire length, which takes travelers past an old quarry in the Wissahickon Schist bedrock. The original heat and pressure of schist formation in this part of its occurrence led to the crystallization of garnets within the layers of mica. The denser, more resistant garnet crystals can be found by panning along Jane Lownes Run.
Smedley Park

Smedley Park was formed in 1937 and named for the first chairman of the Delaware County Park Board, Samuel L. Smedley. He had founded the Park Board just five years earlier in 1932. The park was at first called the Hemlocks and consisted of just 10.5 acres. It was expanded over the years and now comprises 141 acres. The park property on the west side of Crum Creek was originally part of 380 acres granted to Thomas Minshall by William Penn in 1681. Smedley Park was formed from properties once belonging to two unrelated families who both had the surname Lewis. Mordecai Lewis and sons operated the Wallingford Mills, south of Baltimore Pike, which was later called Victoria Plush Mills. Their tract was called the Woodside Farm. Their house is now the Penn State Extension office within the park. The northern portion of what became Smedley Park was known as Pine Ridge. J. Howard Lewis owned this property. He was one of the organizers of the Rose Tree Hunt Club in 1859 and became its first president. Somewhere in or near the park grounds was the grave of his favorite hunting dog, Slasher, who died in 1865. J. Howard Lewis bought the Franklin Paper Mill in 1868. At its peak, it manufactured about 20 tons of paper each week as its five engines cranked away.

Playground and ball fields at north end of Smedley Park - site of the paper mill
Note the pine and spruce covered rocky ridge in the background
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2017

J. Howard Lewis lived in a mansion on top of the steep ravine above Crum Creek and overlooking the paper mill. His estate was known as Castle Dangerous. The paper mill burned down twice, in 1882 and then again in 1883. Each time J. Howard Lewis rebuilt the mill, but the second time he built it of stone. The paper mill still stood in the park until the Blue Route was finished in 1991, and then it was demolished. The Franklin Paper Mill was originally owned and
operated by John Pancoast from 1826 to 1833. The mills operated until the 1960s, but weren’t demolished until after the contractors for the Blue Route were finished using them for storage. The site of the mill has been converted to baseball fields on the Nether Providence side of Smedley Park. The Blue Route completion in 1991 split the park in half. In the mid-1990s, right-of-way funds were used to refurbish the park, including a restoration of the Lewis House for offices, and the building of an environmental center constructed of redwood.

At the northern end of the park is a rocky ridge of Wissahickon Schist that forms the resistant rock around which Crum Creek makes its sharp bend. On the north side of the ridge facing away from the ball fields, there is an old quarry that reveals some interesting geological features, such as dramatic folding and faulting in the schist.

![Faulting and folding in the schist at Smedley Park](https://example.com/faulting-folding-schist.jpg)

This quarry and the one in the Martin Forest could have been the source of stone for the buildings and other structures on the property of J. Howard Lewis. There are just a few traces of them left, such as the remains of a dam and some bridge abutments.
An old access road runs along the west bank of Crum Creek and is visible in the photo above, just beyond the bridge abutment on the far shore. The access road leads from the site of the old paper mill which was behind and to the right of the photographer. Paper mill tenant worker houses once clustered around the paper mill. George Gallagher, a daily visitor to the park, was born in one of the tenant worker houses in 1947. His father worked in the mill. There
was also a company store. According to Mr. Gallagher, the stone bridge abutments supported logs that formed the span of a pedestrian bridge. Circular holes can still be seen for the insertion of the logs. There was a ramp that provided access to the bridge and a switchback trail that led to the access road on the other side of the creek. In the other direction, the access road heads towards Baltimore Pike.

A narrow trail extends up the steep slope from the access road along a boulder-strewn tributary bed that is dry for most of the year. Many of the boulders are large chunks of quartz. At the top, close to the edge of the Pine Ridge subdivision, is another pair of smaller bridge abutments that once connected to another narrow path along the ridge line.
The narrower trail along the upper ridge also runs along the edge of the Crum Creek valley, parallel to the wider access road below. Towards the southern end of the park in the vicinity of the Blue Route, the narrower trail is connected to the access road along an old set of stone steps. As a boy, George Gallagher says he ascended the steps to a driveway on top of Pine Ridge where he would catch a taxi to take him to school.
Just to the left along the access road at the bottom of the old steps is a spectacular outcrop of Wissahickon Schist. At the top edge of the outcrop is a curious configuration of stone that was clearly built into the natural outcrop. George Gallagher says that during the early days of the park, there was a maintenance shed at this location that was built right into the outcrop.

Schist outcrop with mysterious structure along the top edge – the roofline of a shed  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2017

Paper Mill Road with Blue Route in the distance, northern portion of Smedley Park  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2017
Another point of geological interest within Smedley Park is the outcrop of amphibolite along Paper Mill Road. It is a striking black mass of rock that derives from a lava flow from the time when a chain of volcanic islands collided with the edge of the ancestral North American continent. This process began happening about 430 million years ago during what is called the Acadian Orogeny. The Wissahickon Schist that is the main bedrock in the area was derived from sediment that eroded off of the volcanic islands into the surrounding Iapetus Ocean.
The 101 Trolley Line of the South East Pennsylvania Transportation Authority bisects Smedley Park along the southern edge of the main picnic and playground area.
In 2017, Kevin Dion formed a volunteer group called the Friends of Smedley Park to work in partnership with the Delaware County Department of Parks and Recreation to support and promote the park. Kevin’s grandfather worked in the paper mill that once occupied park land.
Delaware County Penn State Extension Office, Smedley Park
Former manor of Mordecai Lewis
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Environmental Center, Smedley Park
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Playing fields at southern end of Smedley Park; Baltimore Pike in distance
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

1870 Hopkins atlas map details of Upper Providence (left) and Springfield (right);
Note the properties of J. Howard Lewis and Mordecai Lewis which comprise large portion of
today’s Smedley Park
Pine Ridge Run

Just upstream from the trolley tracks, Crum Creek is joined by Pine Ridge Run from the west where it flows out of the Pine Ridge neighborhood.

Pine Ridge

Pine Ridge is a subdivision in Nether Providence Township that dates from the 1930s and was built up around earlier structures. At 728 Hemlock Road is a home with a date stone that reads “M & JHL – 1882.” It was likely a part of the J. Howard Lewis property. In the twentieth century, it was the home of Orville Morrison, who with his father Samuel, founded the Sunroc Corporation and operated it from this address before moving to larger quarters in Glen Riddle along Chester Creek. At first they bottled water from a spring in The Hemlocks starting in 1926 and eventually became a large manufacturer of water coolers.

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Whiskey Run

Just downstream of the trolley tracks within Smedley Park, Crum Creek is joined by Whiskey Run. Whiskey Run is a tributary of Crum Creek entirely within Springfield Township. It flows from the north and northeast after originating in a neighborhood north of PA Route 420, Woodland Avenue and south of the Springfield Shopping Center along PA Route 320, Sproul Road. Whiskey Run passes under Woodland Avenue near the Kovacs Funeral Home. Also along the southwest side of Woodland Avenue at the edge of the Whiskey Run valley are other local landmarks, including the Springfield Masonic Lodge, the Dairy Cottage, and the True Jesus Church.

Woodland Park

Whiskey Run in Woodland Park

Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Whiskey Run flows through a long wooded corridor that comprises the Springfield Township’s Woodland Park. A trail parallels the stream, and passes under a canopy of mature tulip poplars. There is an understory of spicebush. Whiskey Run flows over a bed of schist cobbles. They glitter brightly in the sun due to their high mica content. Despite its name, Whiskey Run appears to be more popular among beer drinkers as evidenced by the aluminum can middens which can be found there. The trail through the park ends at the 101 SEPTA Trolley tracks.
Evidence of a symposium taking place along Whiskey Run
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

E.T. Richardson Middle School

Woodland Park is located behind the E.T. Richardson Middle School and the Springfield Literacy Center. They are part of the Springfield School District.

Thomson Park

After Whiskey Run passes under the 101 Trolley Line and Thomson Avenue, it enters Thomson Park. Both are named after Pennsylvania Railroad engineer and President J. Edgar Thomson, who was born in Springfield Township at the intersection of what are now Thomson Avenue and Baltimore Pike. The woods in the park are dominated by American beech, tulip poplar, and red maple, but a large red oak can also been seen. In the understory are American beech saplings, witch hazel, spicebush, and a small patch of mountain laurel by the footbridge over the stream.
Jane Lownes

The widow Jane Lownes and her three sons James, George, and Joseph were among the earliest settlers in Springfield Township. In 1682, they settled on 150 acres after leaving England at the urging of William Penn. They were being persecuted for being Quakers. Before building a small stone house they lived for the first winter in a “cave”, essentially a shelter dug into the hillside, near an Indian wigwam on Winiskee Run. The name of the stream was later corrupted to “Whiskey” Run. The house they later built became part of the priest’s house at St. Kevin’s Roman Catholic Church at the end of Thomson Avenue. A probable grandson named George would later build a blade and tilt mill on the stream.

Springfield Hospital

Just to the north of where Whiskey Run passes under PA Route 320, Sproul Road, is located the Springfield Hospital.

St. Kevin’s Roman Catholic Church

North of the Springfield Hospital on Sproul Road is where the St. Kevin’s Roman Catholic Church is located.
Holt’s Mill

Holt’s Mill was located along Whiskey Run at the place near where the 101 Trolley Line and Sproul Road now meet.

Springfield Water Company

Between 1889 and 1892, the Springfield Water Company had a small waterworks on Whiskey Run. Their operations moved to the site of the Beatty Edge Tool Factory on Crum Creek in 1892 when the Whiskey Run waterworks proved inadequate to meet the water demands of the expanding population.

Springfield Mall

After flowing through Thomson Park, Whiskey Run passes behind the Springfield Mall on its way to Smedley Park and its confluence with Crum Creek.

Whiskey Run near where it flows into Crum Creek in Smedley Park
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

According to George Gallagher, there were paper mill tenant worker houses near the confluence of Whiskey Run and Crum Creek, in addition to the ones clustered around the paper mill itself.

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Crum Creek passes under Baltimore Pike past the county war memorial at the entrance to Smedley Park. The war memorial includes two bronze tablets that once were placed on the inner walls of a 71 foot concrete arch over Baltimore Pike on a bridge built over Crum Creek in 1926. On the top of the arch were the words “Erected to Those from Delaware County Who Served in the Great War” The arch bridge replaced an earlier covered bridge that collapsed under the weight of a truck in 1920. The arch bridge itself was replaced in 1958 when Baltimore Pike was widened from two lanes to four. The tablets were mounted on a large slab-shaped memorial which was erected at the entrance to Smedley Park. When the entrance to Smedley Park was moved from the west side of the creek to the east side to make room for Interstate 476, the memorial was moved also. Baltimore Pike itself was laid out between 1770 and 1773. From 1894 until 1930 a trolley ran along Baltimore Pike between Media and 58th Street in Philadelphia at the Angora station.
The Smedley-Leiper Trail is a bicycle and pedestrian trail that skirts the Crum Creek valley from the Penn State Extension office in Smedley Park towards the south to near the 18th century estate of Thomas Leiper. On the way, it crosses the Plush Mill Road viaduct over the Blue Route, from where it traces the edges of the Community Art Center and Pendle Hill on its way further south. After the trail comes back over the Blue Route via Rogers Lane, it continues through the Crum Woods along the east side of the Blue Route. The trail then goes under the Blue Route to Avondale Road, where it runs alongside Dicks Run, a tributary of Crum Creek. One of the stations of the Sunoco gas pipeline can be seen along the trail. The Smedley-Leiper Trail’s other end is at the mouth of Dicks Run, just upstream from the Thomas Leiper house.
Smedley-Leiper Trail (on right) next to off-ramp of Blue Route

View of Blue Route from Smedley-Leiper Trail

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
The Community Art Center in Wallingford has classrooms, galleries, and a wood-fired kiln.
Water Tower behind Community Art Center  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Classrooms and studios, Community Art Center  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Pendle Hill
Pendle Hill is a Quaker study center and retreat along Plush Mill Road in Nether Providence Township.

Victoria Plush Mills

Leaving Smedley Park, to the west on the Nether Providence Township side is the interchange between Baltimore Pike and Interstate 476 and to the east in Springfield Township are the Springfield Mall and the site of Victoria Plush Mills, which was located south of Baltimore Pike between Plush Mill Road and Wallingford Road. The mills at this location were known as the Wallingford Mills beginning about 1850, named for the ancestral home of the Lewis family who owned them. The Wallingford Mill on Crum Creek was operated as a paper mill from 1811 until about 1840 by John Lewis, Jr. The Lewis family had owned mills at this site since 1779, but in 1897 Samuel C. Lewis sold them to the English brothers John and Arthur Turner. The brothers replaced the old mills with the Victoria Plush Mills, named in honor of the queen of their home country. They also installed the 100-foot high smoke stack with yellow brick letters that spell out “VICTORIA”, providing a distinctive landmark in the Crum Creek valley at this location. Another landmark associated with this mill community is the former Victoria Union Chapel, built on land donated by John Turner in 1913. In 1958 it became the Victoria Baptist Church.
The plush mills produced a heavy fabric that was used for the heavy drapes popular at the time, as well as theatre seats and coffin linings. When the teddy bear became popular at the beginning of the 20th century they produced stuffing for these plush toys. There were no pollution controls, so Crum Creek flowed with garish colors depending on what dye batch was being used during any given shift. The Turner brothers already had a plush mill along Chester Creek at Lenni. The one on Crum Creek operated until 1946.
The Plush Mills Senior Living Community occupies part of the former mill complex in the 21st century.

Swarthmore

Just downstream from the former Wallingford or Victoria Mills and the 1922 bridge that carries Wallingford Road over Crum Creek, the creek forms the boundary between Nether Providence Township to the west and the Borough of Swarthmore to the east. Before obtaining its current name, Swarthmore was known as West Dale, named for the West family. Its most famous member was Benjamin West, the painter and president of the British Royal Academy who was born in 1738 in a house now on the campus of Swarthmore College. The industrialist John P. Crozer was born in the same house in the 19th century. Currently, the Benjamin West house contains the Visitor Information and Public Safety offices of Swarthmore College.
Benjamin West House

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2013

Swarthmore Train Station

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2014
Swarthmore College

Swarthmore is home to Swarthmore College, whose property includes one of the largest remaining mature woodlands in Delaware County, the Crum Woods. Many of Swarthmore College’s academic and residential buildings and the college amphitheater have views down into the valley of the Crum Woods, which are a valued natural and educational resource for the college. Swarthmore College was chartered in 1864 as an institution for the education of Hicksite Quakers and is now a well-regarded liberal arts college whose entire campus is maintained as the Scott Arboretum.
Swarthmore College is home to the Sproul Observatory. In 1906, Swarthmore’s first Professor of Astronomy, Susan Cunningham, persuaded alumnus and trustee William Cameron Sproul to donate money to purchase research quality astronomical equipment for the college. At the time, Sproul was a Pennsylvania state senator. The former journalist had made a fortune in railroad and manufacturing investments. He later became the 27th governor of Pennsylvania. His home was nearby in Nether Providence, within the Ridley Creek watershed. Sproul’s donation included a 24-inch telescope and other equipment which was housed within what had been the college president’s residence. When the observation dome was built on top of the rectangular structure, the building was renamed the Sproul Observatory. In the 1960s, a computer science wing was added. Sproul’s donation also was used to purchase a photographic telescope which was installed in the Cunningham Observatory in 1908. Susan Cunningham had built this observatory within a house she had constructed for herself on campus, after receiving permission to do so from the college’s Board of Managers in 1888. That was the year she became chair of the Mathematics Department. She had been teaching mathematics at the college since 1871 and was involved with its founding in 1864. The Cunningham Observatory had a 6-inch equatorial refracting telescope, a sidereal clock, a meantime clock, and a chronometer. The telescope was of instructional quality only. The Sproul Observatory allowed for astronomical research to take place on campus for the first time. The Cunningham Observatory has been the headquarters for the Scott Arboretum since 1972. The six-inch telescope was hoisted onto the Sproul Observatory, and the photographic telescope was donated to the Lowell Observatory in Arizona as a historic display in their lobby. It had been lent to the Lowell Observatory when Carl Lampland was looking for evidence of a ninth planet. The first image of Pluto was taken with the Swarthmore photographic telescope, but was not recognized until Clyde Tombaugh found the
photo in the Lowell archives in the 1930s and used it as further evidence for the motion of the significant Kuiper Belt object he discovered, which was then considered a planet.

When Susan Cunningham retired in 1906, the new Chair of Mathematics and Astronomy, John A. Miller, took up residence there, and Cunningham received rent until she died in 1921. John A. Miller became the first director of the Sproul Observatory. He was followed by Peter van de Kamp, who was director from 1937 until 1972. Starting in 1938, he spent many decades regularly taking photographs of Barnard’s star, a faint red dwarf located six light-years away. Every 180 years, Barnard’s star shifts its position in the celestial sky by a degree arc that is equivalent to the width of the Moon, which is faster than any other star. In the 1960s, van de Kamp created a stir when he announced that he had found evidence for the first known extrasolar planet through a wobble he detected in Barnard’s star. Subsequently, more sensitive photographic surveys failed to detect the wobble. Van de Kamp’s successor as director of the Sproul Observatory, Wulff-Dieter Heintz, published criticisms of his conclusions in the 1970s and contributed to the refutation of his claims. The two friends became estranged. A new observatory at Swarthmore College was named for Peter van de Kamp in 2009.

Crum Woods

Swarthmore College’s property includes one of the largest remaining mature woodlands in Delaware County, the Crum Woods. The woods consist of many American beech, tulip poplar, and oaks. Witch hazel is common in the understory. Large rock outcrops are visible along the banks of the creek. Some consist of schist, some of gneiss, and there is an occasional pegmatite outcrop.
Towering ninety-seven feet above the creek in the Crum Woods is the Swarthmore Trestle, which carries SEPTA’s Media-Elwyn Commuter line. Originally built of wood in 1854 to carry the Philadelphia and West Chester Railroad, towards the end of the 19th century it was rebuilt of iron and steel atop tall stone pylons.
The Crum Woods has also been impacted by other aspects of infrastructure. The sewer trunk line that runs down the Crum Creek valley was widened here in 2012. There is also a natural gas pipeline.
Just south of the trestle is an open floodplain area referred to as the Crum Meadow. On the flat area is a stone circle known as Crumhenge. On the slopes above is the extensive holly collection of the Scott Arboretum.
On the west side of Crum Creek the Crum Woods extend up to the edge of Interstate 476. Also known as the Blue Route due to its color on the early planning maps, this highway opened in 1991 after decades of litigation to minimize the impact of its construction. The picturesque ruins of the elaborate entrance garden to the J.H. Ward Hinkson estate can be seen close to where the Crum Woods was encroached upon by Blue Route construction.

Crum Woods was the site of the Crum Creek Forge, built about 1742 by Peter Dicks and John Crosby. Pehr Kalm, the Swedish-Finnish explorer naturalist and follower of Carl Linnaeus, visited the forge in 1749. In his *Travels in North America*, he says,

*About two miles behind Chester I passed by an iron forge. The ore however is not dug here but 30 miles hence where it is first melted in the oven and carried to this place. The bellows are made of leather and both they and the hammers and even the hearth were but small in proportion to ours. All the machines were worked by water, the iron was wrought into bars.*

Peter Dicks’ youngest son Job inherited 15 acres of his father’s land along Crum Creek when he died in 1760. The son built a grist mill and a saw mill along the creek. After Thomas Leiper purchased land downstream in 1776 to build snuff mills, he paid Job Dicks more than what he paid for the land in order to have periodic water rights at the time he began operating the mills three years later.
As Crum Creek flows out of the college campus it passes the Strath Haven Condominiums, site of the former Strath Haven Inn, which was an industrial era summer resort hotel built by Frederick M. Simons in 1894. A dam still persists that can be viewed along Yale Avenue which once provided a recreational lake for hotel guests. Swarthmore College received its electric power from the dam in the 1920s.
Numerous turtles live in the impoundment on Crum Creek behind the Yale Avenue dam. One day in the early fall of 2012 three species were observed basking on a downed tree trunk floating in the water. There was the typical Eastern painted turtle present, a juvenile musk turtle with a sharply arched shell, and a couple of large turtles that were probably red-bellied turtles. They are typically a coastal plain species, but can also be found in the local creeks and ponds.

Harris Gunpowder Mills
On the other side of Crum Creek from the Strath Haven Condominiums, nearly half of the gunpowder supply for the Revolutionary War campaigns of 1776 and 1777 were supplied by a gunpowder mill operated by Robert Harris. By the time of the second war of independence against Great Britain, the War of 1812, gunpowder production had shifted to the neighboring watersheds at both du Pont’s Eleutherian Mills on the Brandywine, and at the Nitre Hall Powder Mills along Cobbs Creek in Haverford Township. Thomas Leiper built a tilt mill at this site in 1824. Nathum Keys was the operator. By 1826, the tilt mill’s yearly output was two-hundred dozen scythes and straw knives. George G. Leiper operated the tilt mill until 1830. Sometime after an 1865 fire, a paper mill was built at this site that made Strathmore art paper.

Mary Lyon

Along Yale Avenue opposite the Crum Creek dam is an extended cliff of Wissahickon Schist that was a quarry until 1922. Above the cliff is a college dormitory that was the former Mary Lyon School for Girls, named for the founder of Mt. Holyoke College. The girls’ school was founded in 1913 as a counterpart for the all-boys Swarthmore Preparatory Academy at the corner of Harvard Avenue and Chester Road.

Dicks Run

Below the dam and shortly after Crum Creek passes under Yale Avenue near its convergence with Avondale and Rose Valley Roads, Dicks Run joins Crum Creek. It flows from the north out of the Wallingford neighborhood of Nether Providence Township. Dicks Run is a tributary of Crum Creek within Nether Providence Township that flows from north to south.
through the community of Wallingford. Dicks Run originates in a detention basin next to a parking lot behind Weichert Realty on the south side of Baltimore Pike.

![Source of Dicks Run](image1.jpg)  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Dick Clark

Where it passes under Plush Mill Road at Dogwood Lane, Dicks Run flows through the back yard of a house formerly owned by American Bandstand and New Year’s Rockin’ Eve host Dick Clark.

![Dicks Run at the former house of Dick Clark](image2.jpg)  
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2012

Peter Dicks

The stream is not actually named for Dick Clark, but rather the early Quaker settler of Nether Providence Township, Peter Dicks. Peter Dicks (1696-1760) was a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly who had substantial land-holdings in what then was Chester County as well as in York County. Due to his work with the Assembly, he made several trips between Pennsylvania and England. He had to vacate his seat on the Assembly in 1757 along with other Quakers at the request of the Council in London, who did not want these pacifists serving during a time of war. He was an elder in the Chester Monthly Meeting. He was part of a group of large land holders in that meeting who supported slavery. After his death and that of other influential slaveholders, the Chester Monthly Meeting joined other meetings in taking a more abolitionist role. Peter Dicks owned and operated an iron forge of Crum Creek along with John Crosby.
Furness Park

Dicks Run enters Furness Park, which is preserved open land on the former property of Horace Howard and Helen Kate Furness. Horace Howard Furness was a renowned Shakespeare scholar associated with the University of Pennsylvania. To the west of the park is the end of Furness Lane where Horace and Kate Furness actually lived. The eastern boundary of the park is formed by Turner Road and the southern boundary is SEPTA’s Media-Elwyn Commuter Rail Line. During a 2012 visit to Furness Park, a profusion of invasive plants was observed. The ground was covered with English Ivy and *Pachysandra*, and there was a large patch of kudzu. There were stands of bamboo. On the other hand, most of the trees were young tulip poplar and red maple, and there are some larger trees perhaps surviving from the time of Horace and Kate Furness, such as a mature sycamore, tulip poplar, and American beech.
Steps to the Furness estate, Furness Park  

Kudzu in Furness Park  

Mudpuppy Run
In Furness Park, Dicks Run is joined by the tiny tributary of Mudpuppy Run. Mudpuppy Run is supposedly named for the salamanders found in the stream, but it would be very surprising to find actual Mudpuppies (*Necturus maculosus*) there. Mudpuppy Run flows out of the northeast from the direction of the Quaker study center Pendle Hill.
After Dicks Run flows out of Furness Park, it passes under Turner Road near the Wallingford train station. Shortly afterwards it flows under Rogers Lane next to the Wilson Oil Company and then under the railroad tracks. Dicks Run then flows alongside Avondale Road for its remaining length, meandering beneath it at certain points, such as near Copples Lane.

Copples Lane

Copples Lane was laid out in 1750 as a stipulation in the will of Peter Dicks to provide his son Joseph access to the Providence Great Road from his property on Crum Creek. The street is named for John Copple, whose farm was at the corner. The Dicks dairy farm was built in 1802. The main farmhouse is at 303 Copples Lane.

Dicks Run along Avondale Road  Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Dicks Run continues to flow alongside Avondale Road. At the point where it flows under the viaduct of Interstate 476 it also runs alongside the Smedley-Leiper Trail on its way to its confluence with Crum Creek.
The Strath Haven Mills on Crum Creek was established by Thomas Leiper as two snuff mills in 1776. The two snuff mills, along with eight mulls and two cutting machines were in operation until 1845. After Thomas Leiper’s death in 1825, his sons built a two-vat paper mill
the following year. It was managed by John Holmes at first, followed by George Leiper from 1829 until it burned in 1836.

Cleft Rock Springs Company

Yale Avenue had a series of bridges over Crum Creek, including a trolley bridge that once ran parallel to the bridge for cars. From 1901 until 1938 the trolley travelled between Media and Swarthmore and Morton along Rose Valley Road and Yale Avenues. Just to the south along Avondale Road are the remains of the Cleft Rock Springs Company buildings where water was bottled from a spring between 1945 and the 1960s.

Ruins of the Cleft Rock Springs Company
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Downstream along Crum Creek from the ruins of the Cleft Rock Springs Company are the former summer home and industrial seat of Thomas Leiper (1745-1825), a colonial era mill and quarry owner and railway pioneer. He called his mill seat “Strathaven” after his birthplace in Lanark, Scotland. He was educated in Glasgow and Edinburgh. He entered the tobacco business shortly after he arrived in Virginia in 1763 where his brother was already established. A few years later he opened a tobacco shop in Philadelphia and became the principal tobacco provider there during the Revolutionary War. In 1776, Leiper established snuff mills along Crum Creek using tobacco he procured from the Virginia Piedmont plantations of such friends and business associates as Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. The tobacco was packed into barrels on the plantations and shipped to a Richmond warehouse where Leiper had an agent. Prior to establishing the mills along Crum Creek, from 1765 until 1776 Thomas Leiper ground his tobacco at a mill at Market Street along the Delaware River in Philadelphia.

Thomas Leiper’s regular residence was on Water Street in Philadelphia, between Market and Arch Streets. He was a neighbor of Stephen Girard’s. His tobacco shop was on the first floor of his house. Leiper built a bigger house at 8th and Market Streets starting around 1790. Thomas Jefferson came to the capital of the new nation as Secretary of State and leased Thomas Leiper’s new house. Jefferson wanted to influence its construction and have the library and garden house built to his specifications. Thomas Leiper agreed, but charged more rent. Jefferson refused to pay the additional rent and moved out after two years. Thomas Leiper then made it his own home. He owned a pew at the Arch Street Presbyterian Church.

When he first came to the Crum Creek valley in 1776, Thomas Leiper bought land with a mill next to a waterfall. He purchased the mill where Robert Harris had produced gunpowder and added one on Crum Creek near the mouth of Dicks Run where the dam was located. These were his first two snuff mills on Crum Creek. Leiper’s holdings increased to include many mill buildings over the years. Perhaps as early as 1805 he owned land all the way to the Delaware
River. By the time of his death in 1825, he had added paper mills, quarries, a stone cutting operation, oyster crushing mills to create mortar, and textile mills. In 1847, his son George C. Leiper was the first to convert a mill from water power to coal generated steam in Delaware County.

Thomas Leiper also had considerable investments in western land. He was a member of the Ohio Land Company and supposedly owned the land that became Marietta, Ohio. He donated one acre for the location of the courthouse. With three partners he co-owned 20,000 acres of Kentucky. He also owned land near Pittsburgh which might have been associated with the religious community of New Economy. He corresponded with a representative of George Rapp, the community’s founder.

Thomas Leiper was one of the founding members of the First Troop Philadelphia City Calvary. During the Revolutionary War he saw action at Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth, and York. He and his troop acted as body guard for George Washington. They also defended the home of James Wilson during the “Fort Wilson Riot.” Thomas Leiper also served as a presidential elector and was the President of Philadelphia City Council from 1802 to 1805 and President of the Common Council of Philadelphia in 1813.

In 1778, Thomas Leiper married Elizabeth Gray. She was a daughter of the Speaker of the House of the Pennsylvania legislature. Of their thirteen children, ten survived until adulthood. Their daughter Jane married a fashionable lawyer named John J. Kane, Jr. She led the ball in Philadelphia that was held to honor the return of the Marquis de Lafayette in 1824.

Avondale, the Thomas Leiper House, was built in 1785. It still stands along Avondale Road in Nether Providence Township overlooking Crum Creek and is open for tours. Two mill foreman’s houses also survive, as well as Thomas Leiper’s “necessary” and his bank building behind the main mansion. The latter is supposedly where the federal treasury was hidden following the sack of Washington, D.C. by the British during the War of 1812.

The “Necessary,” Thomas Leiper estate  Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
The “necessary” was an eight-seater outhouse that also served as a trash dump. The front half was for the Leiper family and the back half was for the employees to use.

The Safety or bank building, Thomas Leiper estate

The Safety was probably the office of the payroll clerk. Thomas Leiper had over 200 employees in the county. He did his own personal banking in the city of Philadelphia where he had his permanent residence.

Carriage House, Thomas Leiper estate
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Thomas Leiper’s carriage house was a three-story structure that housed the carriages and wagons of the Leiper family and their visitors. Farm equipment and other material was also stored there.

Along Crum Creek where Leiper had some of his enterprises
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Modern infrastructure in the Leiper industrial district
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Thomas Leiper excavated quarries along Crum Creek that supplied much of the curbstone to line the streets of the expanding city of Philadelphia, as well as the city’s doorsteps, and various buildings such as Parrish Hall at Swarthmore College, the First National Bank of Media,
the St. Rose of Lima Church in Eddystone, the Philadelphia Exchange, and the Leiper Presbyterian Church in Ridley. The arches at Chester Park are made of Leiper stone. One of the quarries can be seen surrounding the parking lot behind the Crum Creek Valley Condominiums. Another of the quarries is along Crum Creek behind the Swiss Farms store on PA Route 320.
For the first several decades, the Leiper quarry stone was solely delivered by wagon. To transport his quarried stone to ships docked at Chester, Thomas Leiper had the first railway in North America built. It was designed in 1809 by the engineer John Thomson, the father of future Pennsylvania Railroad president J. Edgar Thomson. This early railway was an animal-drawn tramway that hauled stone to barges along Ridley Creek which then hauled the cargo up the Delaware River to Philadelphia. The southern terminus of the railway was at Ridley Creek of 25th Street in Chester near the Irvington and Crosby Mills. Thomas Leiper paid rent to Crosby for the railway’s terminus. His son George didn’t want to pay the rent, so he built a canal.

Thomas Leiper had proposed a canal for carrying his quarry stone in 1790, but it wasn’t until 1829 that his son George Gray Leiper managed to build one. It was designed by the neo-classical architect William Strickland. Barges took stone from the quarries down Crum Creek to a channel dug along the west bank starting a thousand feet upstream from Bullens Lane. A lock at the southern end of the channel lowered barges into Crum Creek again where they crossed over to a channel dug on the east bank that took the barges to another lock at tidewater on Crum Creek almost to where it flows under the Post Road (U.S. Route 13). The canal went the way of most canals when the canal era was over. George Leiper deemed it unprofitable, filled it in, and built a steam railroad over it in 1852. The railroad was taken over by the Baltimore & Ohio in 1887. It was linked at its southern end with the main tracks of the Baltimore & Ohio, as well as the Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia & Reading Railroads. In the third generation, John Leiper opened quarries along Ridley Creek south of the Post Road (U.S. Route 13) and off Bullens Lane behind the present location of Widener University and next to the Deshong quarry. John was a son of George. George Leiper had two other brothers who were involved in the family businesses, William and Samuel. Samuel directed the snuff operation and tobacco business after his father’s death. One of the sons of Samuel was Callender I. Leiper. He appears to have operated the quarries at Avondale after the death of his father in 1854. The Thomas Leiper and Sons business operated mills until the Great Depression and the quarries operated until 1944 when they were closed due to World War II rationing. Margaret Leiper tried to run the quarries while teaching Latin at Girls High School in Philadelphia.

George Leiper was instrumental in the early start of two other major industrialists in the area. George had bought the farm in the Crum Creek valley that included the house in which Benjamin West was born. John P. Crozer was subsequently also born in the same house. George Leiper went into a short-lived partnership with John P. Crozer on a grist and saw mill enterprise on Crum Creek just above Bullen’s Landing. Crozer then rented a cotton mill from George Leiper, and was able to make enough of a profit to invest in a cotton mill on the West Branch of Chester Creek. From there, his enterprises and influence grew. George Leiper helped Crozer get elected to the board of the Delaware County National Bank. Samuel and James Riddle also rented a cotton mill from George Leiper on Crum Creek when they first started out. It might have been the same cotton mill Leiper rented to Crozer.
The Leiper Presbyterian Church is less than a mile southeast of Avondale in Ridley Township along Fairview Road. Many members of the Leiper family are buried there. Thomas Leiper bought the property in 1818 and built a Sunday school house there. The following year the first church was erected at the site, built of Leiper quarry stone. The original name of the church was the Second Branch of the United Presbyterian Congregation of Aston, Providence, and Springfield. In 1849, the church was destroyed by fire. The cornerstone of the second church was laid in 1850. It was also built of Leiper quarry stone. The congregation was called the Ridley Presbyterian Church at that time. During the 19th century, three U.S. presidents worshiped here: Andrew Jackson, William Henry Harrison, and James Buchanan. The church was renamed the Leiper Presbyterian Church in 1901.
Springfield Oblast

As Crum Creek continues to flow south alongside Avondale Road, for a short distance it forms the boundary with a disjoint part of Springfield Township on the east bank. This part of Springfield was not incorporated into Swarthmore Borough in the nineteenth century and forms an outlying territory on the other end of Swarthmore from the rest of Springfield. Supposedly, it was a powerful tavern owner in this part of Springfield that prevented it from becoming incorporated into the dry Borough of Swarthmore.

Chester Road

Crum Creek flows under a couple major raised highways that cross here, namely Interstate 476 and PA Route 320. The latter is the old Chester to Springfield Road, first laid out in 1683. Prior to the building of a high concrete bridge in 1922, traffic on this road crossed Crum Creek at ground level, curving sharply into the valley and out the other side. Horses managed this feat safely, but when cars were introduced, several of them fell into a quarry as they came down the curving hill from the north. Governor William Sproul dedicated the 1922 bridge that was built to carry traffic straight across the valley. The quarry was eventually filled with debris, including material that was once the old Upper Darby High School.

Where Interstate 476 and PA Route 320 converge over Crum Creek is the point where the creek begins to form the boundary between Nether Providence Township on the west and Ridley Township on the east. The creek flows under Interstate 476 once more and then past the baseball fields of Blackrock Park on the edge of the densely developed Leiper neighborhood of Ridley.
Township. Between Blackrock Park and Bullens Lane, Crum Creek flows through a densely wooded corridor referred to as ‘The Big Woods’ by children who grew up in the neighborhood, such as Widener law professor Fran Catania. The creek then flows entirely into Ridley Township where, shortly after flowing under Bullens Lane, it disappears under the many ramps of the interchange between Interstate 476 and MacDade Boulevard.

Bullen’s Landing

Bullen’s Landing was named for James Bullen. He had a boat landing on Crum Creek and in 1716 a portion of the road named for him was laid out from his landing to Providence Road. Just upstream from Bullen’s landing was Lloyd’s grist mill on the west side of the creek, with a dam a bit farther upstream from it. When the British took Philadelphia in 1777 following the Battle of the Brandywine, George Washington ordered the grinding stones of the local mills to be removed in order to deprive the British of flour supplies. Lloyd’s grist mill was particularly singled out by this order. George Leiper owned a grist mill at this site in the 1820s. A major figure in the industrial and philanthropic history of the Chester Creek valley, John P. Crozer, got his start at this mill seat in partnership with George Leiper. At first they partnered on a saw mill, and afterwards Crozer rented the upper floor of the mill to spin cotton.

MacDade Boulevard

MacDade Boulevard was named after Albert D. MacDade and dedicated in 1931. MacDade was a Chester lawyer whose career included stints as Delaware County district attorney, state senator, and judge on the Court of Common Pleas. As senator, he channeled lots of state funds to build roads in Delaware County.
Jefferson Avenue Trolley Line

Just south of MacDade Boulevard, in the days before its destruction to make way for the interstate highway exchange, Jefferson Avenue once crossed over Crum Creek on a bridge which also once carried a trolley line. The trolley traveled from Chester over 17th Street, north on Bullens Lane and east over Jefferson Avenue to Belmont Avenue and on to Folsom at Kedron Avenue. It lasted from the early 20th century until 1938. Below Jefferson Avenue, Crum Creek flows alongside the western edge of the many ramps of Interstate 476 between McDade Boulevard and Interstate 95.

Conrail

Just before passing under Interstate 95, Crum Creek also flows under the Conrail railroad bridge. This rail line was originally laid down by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in 1886 after they lost their bidding war with the Pennsylvania Railroad to acquire the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad. Its Philadelphia terminal was at 24th and Chestnut Streets. This major convergence of rail and road transportation with Crum Creek takes place within the Woodlyn neighborhood of Ridley Township.

Chester Pike

Right after the emerging from under the ramps of the massive highway interchange between Interstate 476 and Interstate 95, Crum Creek passes under yet another highway, U.S. Route 13, Chester Pike. This road was surveyed in 1706 during the reign of Queen Anne, so it was called the Queen’s Highway. The subsequent monarchs that ruled the English colonies were all men named George, so during their reigns the road was called the King’s Highway. In September 1777, George Washington and his troops marched to and from the Battle of Brandywine along the King’s Highway. When they finally won the Revolutionary War, the road became known as the Southern Post Road. From 1851 until 1921 it was a plank road that charged tolls as a maintenance fee. It was one of the last roads in the area to do so. Residents celebrated when the tolls were abolished during a ceremony presided over by Governor William C. Sproul.
The road was then paved in 1926, and the trolley tracks that had run parallel to the road were moved so that they ran down its center.

Crosby Forge

On the east side of Crum Creek just south of Chester Pike was a tilt mill for shaping pig iron known as Crosby Forge, built by John Crosby and Peter Dicks sometime by 1740. It had a long mill race, which began at a dam built across the creek about 3000 feet upstream opposite Jefferson Avenue just south of MacDade Boulevard.

Baldwin Locomotive Works

From where it flows beneath Chester Pike until its confluence with the Delaware River, Crum Creek forms the boundary between Eddystone Borough on the west and Ridley Township on the east. On the Eddystone side is the former site of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, whose former seven-story headquarters has been repurposed as the Baldwin Office Associates building. A Walmart and other retail stores are located on site of the former locomotive works. Baldwin Locomotive Works was the world’s largest builder of steam locomotives in the late 19th and the first part of the 20th century, supplying most of the world’s railroads. The company was founded in 1831 by Matthias Baldwin (1795-1866). It expanded from its original Broad and Spring Garden Streets site in Philadelphia to Eddystone in 1911. There was a streetcar strike in Philadelphia in 1910 that targeted the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company, and the Baldwin employees walked out in sympathy. President Samuel Vaclain (1856-1940) moved operations to Eddystone to break the strike and take advantage of the cheaper land to expand the business. One of the pre-existing facilities he purchased was the Gusen Iron Company plant which was a failed venture of the Simpson family, founders of Eddystone Borough. Baldwin Locomotive Works was at its peak during World War I, employing 22,000 people and making 50 steam engines a week. It moved its entire operations to Eddystone in 1928. It actually had begun to lose business as early as the 1920s and didn’t attempt to diversify until 1950 when it merged with the Lima-Hamilton Company of Ohio, a manufacturer of heavy equipment. They built their last steam engine in 1954 for shipment to China. Baldwin Locomotive had gone completely out of business by 1972 due to competition from trucking and from other companies such as General Motors that had gone into diesel engine production. The property was purchased by Adwin Realty, a subsidiary of PECO.
The Executive Office Building was designed by Simon & Simon and built in 1928.
Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor and SEPTA’s Commuter Rail Line

Crum Creek then flows under a set of railroad tracks that are part of Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor and SEPTA’s commuter rail lines. This rail line was originally built in 1872 as the Darby Improvement project of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad.

Detail of 1909 Mueller atlas showing Baldwin Locomotive Works and part of Leiperville

Leiperville

On the Ridley Township side of Crum Creek at this point is the site of the former village of Leiperville. Thomas Leiper's son George Leiper owned the land upon which this community was built. It started as a row of worker houses, a tavern, and a post office along Chester Pike and grew south to occupy the triangular area between Chester Pike, the creek and the railroad. It was the location of steel companies in the 19th century and the homes of Baldwin Locomotive Works employees in the 20th century. Much of Leiperville is now an abandoned brownfield, but the portion along Chester Pike is part of the Ridley Township neighborhood of Crum Lynne. Little Crum Creek joins from the northwest, having originated in the Borough of Swarthmore and flowing through Ridley Township and Ridley Park Borough on its way to the Crum. A saw mill and then a grist mill were located where the Little Crum Creek enters Crum Creek, but by 1870 they had been replaced by the Philadelphia Press Brick Company.
Little Crum Creek

Little Crum Creek is a tributary of Crum Creek that flows in a southerly direction from its source in the northeastern portion of the Borough of Swarthmore. It flows under a succession of streets, namely Swarthmore Avenue, College Avenue, Benjamin West Avenue, the Media-Elwyn Commuter Rail Line, Dartmouth Avenue, and Amherst Avenue before flowing under Harvard Avenue and entering Little Crum Creek Park.

Ironic street sign in Swarthmore near source of Little Crum Creek
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Little Crum Creek at College Avenue, Swarthmore
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
Little Crum Creek Park is situated between Harvard and Yale Avenues at the edge of Swarthmore Borough. A small unnamed tributary joins Little Crum Creek within the park. The trees within the park consist of sycamores, black walnut, and dawn redwood.
Stone benches, gazebo, and sycamores in Little Crum Creek Park
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Little Crum Creek has friends
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012
After leaving Little Crum Creek Park, Little Crum Creek enters the Milmont Park neighborhood of Ridley Township. At Michigan Avenue can be seen a small pond behind a house on the north side of the street. It appears to be an impoundment of the Little Crum Creek.

Ridley High School

Little Crum Creek passes behind the Ridley High School.
Ridley High School and Little Crum Creek bridge at 7th Avenue, behind school
Photos: Walt Cressler, 2016 (left) and 2012 (right)

Bottle and Ball debris dam on Little Crum Creek  
Photo: Walt Cressler, 2016
After a slight meander bend towards the east, the Little Crum Creek passes underneath McDade Boulevard near its intersection with Morton and Swarthmore Avenues where the Ridley Township Building is located.
Ridley Park Borough

A quarter of a mile downstream from this point, Little Crum Creek enters the Borough of Ridley Park. It passes under the Conrail tracks and approaches a lake where the stream is dammed in the vicinity of Lakeview Elementary School and Ridley Middle School. The lake forms the focus of East Lake Park. Just south of the lake are the railroad tracks for Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor and SEPTA’s commuter line between Philadelphia and Wilmington. The Borough of Ridley Park originated as part of the Philadelphia, Washington, and Baltimore Railroad’s Darby Improvement project in 1872 to connect Philadelphia and Chester. It was the developers of this planned community who dammed the Little Crum Creek to provide lakeside views for the new properties. The railroad president Isaac Hinckley and his investors envisioned a high-end community as an alternative to the Main Line. They hired landscape architect Robert Morris Copeland of Boston to locate a site and design the new town. Many of the street names in Ridley Park are named for the families whose farms were bought to create the planned town.
View from East Lake Park, Ridley Park

Ridley Park Station and pond, about a hundred years earlier

Photo: Walt Cressler, 2012

Photo: Aqua Pennsylvania
Ridley Park Pumping Station, then and now
Photos: Aqua Pennsylvania (top); Walt Cressler, 2012 (bottom)
Catania Park

The Little Crum Creek passes under U.S. Route 13 and enters the Crum Lynne neighborhood of Ridley Park. On the south side of U.S. Route 13 is Catania Park. The Ridley Park Police Station is at the entrance to the park. The park mainly consists of soccer fields that run alongside the barrier wall next to Interstate 95.
Little Crum Creek flows under Interstate 95 and through the remains of Leiperville before its confluence with the main branch of the Crum Creek. At this point, Crum Creek reaches the coastal plain where it is subject to tidal flows and is inhabited by estuarine aquatic life.

Industrial Highway

Crum Creek then passes under PA Route 291, the aptly named Industrial Highway, built around the turn of the 20th century.

CSX Freight Line

The Industrial Highway is paralleled by the CSX freight railroad tracks. This CSX rail line was originally built in 1837 by the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, which originated at Broad Street and Washington Avenue in Philadelphia. Its route was surveyed by the neo-classical architect William Strickland. In 1860, Abraham Lincoln secretly rode on this rail line to Baltimore and evaded secessionist assassins on his way to Washington, D.C. to begin his first administration. By 1872 the instability of these tracks so close the river were deemed unsatisfactory, and the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad built its Darby Improvement, which crossed the creek a half mile upstream. The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad bought the line and used it for freight. In 1917 the Pennsylvania Railroad built a competing line next to it to provide passenger service for workers along the river. Between the Industrial Highway and the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad line, the Chester Short Line of
Philadelphia Rapid Transit ran an electric trolley between the years 1913 until 1939. Its route was between Darby and Third Street in Chester, and had a stop on Crum Creek.

**PECO Eddystone Power Generating Station**

On the western bank of Crum Creek south of the railroad tracks is the Eddystone Generating Station of PECO. The site of the power station was formerly occupied by a couple of munitions plants built in 1915 by the Baldwin Locomotive Works. Baldwin leased a plant to the Remington Arms Company that made Enfield rifles for the British, and supplied two-thirds of the rifles used by the Americans when they entered the war. In addition, the Eddystone Ammunition Company at 9th and Simpson Streets supplied European allies with artillery shells in their war against Germany. Young women were hired to put fuses into the shells. One of the company’s customers was the Russian revolutionary Provisional Government under Georgy Lvov and Alexander Kerensky, who held power for a brief period between the downfall of Czar Nicholas II and the take-over by the Bolsheviks. On April 10, 1917 an explosion ripped through the factory causing 132 deaths and many injuries, mainly of the young immigrant women workers. Some people blamed sabotage by either Leon Trotsky or the Germans, but the actual cause of the explosion was never established. In 1953 the Baldwin Locomotive Works sold the 43 acre site to PECO.

During the War of 1812, this area along the Delaware River between Crum and Ridley Creeks was the site of earthworks surmounted by cannon. Four companies from Delaware County, two consisting of volunteers and two consisting of draftees, were deployed from the Marcus Hook Encampment to build the earthworks and monitor any movements of the British up the river.

**Boeing Rotorcraft Systems**

The Eddystone Ammunition Company had stopped production with World War I, but military armaments continue to be produced along the lower reaches of Crum Creek. On the eastern bank of Crum Creek in Ridley Township is the Boeing Rotorcraft Systems helicopter factory. Helicopter production began at Boeing in 1960, just in time to produce Chinook double-rotor troop carrier and cargo helicopters for the Vietnam conflict. Chinook helicopters are still built there, as well as parts for the V-22 Osprey vertical-takeoff-and-landing craft that first saw service in Afghanistan. When Boeing bought the site, the land included the Hendrickson House, built around 1690 by the son of a Swedish settler. The Hendrickson House was moved to Delaware and is one of several structures related to the legacy of New Sweden that can be viewed at Fort Christina State Park.
During part of the 19th century, the Boeing side of the banks of Crum Creek belonged to the Schuylkill Navigation Company. Among other things, they probably unloaded anthracite coal here after it was transported down the Schuylkill Canal by barge from Pottsville to Philadelphia and then down the Delaware River to Crum Creek. Anthracite coal was used to heat homes and power the steam engines in factories along the river, especially after 1850. The Schuylkill Navigation Company was put out of business by the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad in 1869. Their site on Crum Creek was purchased in 1879 by the U.S. government for the installation of the Schooner Ledge Front Range Lighthouse, which operated from 1880 to 1909. Also known as the Eddystone Lighthouse in reference to the famous structure off the southwestern tip of England, this square tower in Ridley Township was the counterpart to the Schooner Ledge Rear
Range Lighthouse in Tincum. Pilots found the 100 foot channel through the river wide “Schooner Ledge” reef by lining up the lights from the two lighthouses. In 1909 the lighthouse was moved farther up the river to mark a newly dredged channel. The Baldwin Locomotive Works also owned land on the Ridley Township side of Crum Creek. In the early 1950s they sold or leased land now occupied by Boeing to the General Casting Company, a manufacturer of manhole covers, locomotive wheel assemblies, and the like.

In the early 21st century, the two industrial behemoths of the power station and the helicopter factory bestride the mouth of the Crum Creek as its waters enter the Delaware River through vertical stone walled banks. These stone banks and the concrete creek bed are probably a legacy of the Baldwin Locomotive Works era of Crum Creek. The pre-industrial riverfront looked quite different. It had low, marshy banks and an island offshore from where Crum Creek enters the river.


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