



Lumberton Farm Heritage

By Jim Alexander

On May 17, 2025, the Lumberton, NJ Civic Association sponsored a tour of historic farms in the Lumberton area, providing a glimpse into the past as well as today.

While once much of Lumberton was forested, the trees had been cut to provide lumber for growing urban areas. But even before that, the Leni Lenape had farmed some parts of our area. In fact, the early settlers learned some of the growing practices from the Lenape, such as crop rotation. Today, most of the farms are gone, as suburban housing developments spread over the area. In fact, in the past 100 years, Burlington County has lost two-thirds of its farms and 70 percent of its farmland.

Thus, much of what remains in Lumberton is not working farms, but scattered old houses that were the center of farms. We were fortunate to have as a tour guide, Joeseeph Jones, an articulate and knowledgeable presenter of Lumberton's

farming past. After the bus left the former fire house on Main Street and passed by one house that had once been the center of a small farm (the Jennings Farm/Cole Mansion), we turned onto Bobby's Run Boulevard, which was previously known as Dimsdale Run; both names honoring early settler Dr. Robert Dimsdale. Shortly the bus maneuvered off of Bobby's Run onto a narrow drive, revealing a historic brick home where Jones had grown up.



While the surrounding land has been sold off for housing, he pointed out where outbuildings had handled everything from potato processing to pig slaughtering. He artfully recounted growing up on the farm, the long days that farmers and their children had worked, and the dangers of working with heavy farm equipment.



Tour guide Joseph Jones

While various farms, generally not being large, specialized in different crops over the decades, the general trend was a shift from truck farming to single crop production, most notably the growing of tomatoes to be used by the growing

Campbell Soup factory in Camden. To assure consistency of taste, Campbell often provided the actual young plants.

More recently, the remaining farms have tended to focus on crops such as corn, hay, and soy beans. Soy beans have the special ability to derive part of their nitrogen needs from the sun, and are sometimes plowed under to enhance the soil. Jones also recounted the thrill of a local crop-duster sailing overhead, with the pilot knowing exactly when to throw the switch so that the cloud of insecticide would stay within the planted area and not hit homes and young children watching up in amazement.



The next stop, on Newbold's Corner Road, just over the line in Southampton Township, was at the Piticote Veterinary Clinic, set back from the road on an impressive open setting, with broad skies overhead and distant vistas across neighboring fields. As originally started by Dr. William H. Pettit, it had featured a cattle farm with specialized embryo transfer services. As technology changed, and with a substantial reduction in local dairy farms, the practice shifted to smaller animal services. His wife Carolyn recounted the story in an attractive new gift shop operated by one of their children, adjacent to a large old barn where the extensive veterinary service now thrives. Several large silos add to the pastoral enjoyment.



Moving on to Eayrestown Road in Lumberton, the bus next navigated one of the narrow entrances to the Gleneayre Equestrian Program. Driving back along a narrow lane, the bus stopped beside a stunning old brick farmhouse, one of the oldest in Lumberton, in the area known as Eayrestown, where settlement first occurred.

There, owner Ellen Healey stepped aboard and recounted how she and her late husband had purchased the farm property, preserved its history, and created a unique equestrian program that provides a safe haven for old program horses, while allowing carefully selected at-risk youth and others to develop skills and maturity by working with the horses. She recounted the challenges of living in a very old home, and explained how Eayrestown had once featured various rural industries and a mill, centered near this branch of the Rancocas Creek. Today, most of the original buildings are gone, except for her property, and the center of Lumberton is now elsewhere.



The final stop was at the Irving Jones Farm (now officially called Linside Farm) at Fostertown Road and Stacy Haines Road. There, our guide explained how the farm had originally featured a large dairy herd, and had held the distinction of producing the highest yield, in pounds of milk per cow, of all the County herds. The farm is now devoted to field crops. We got out to walk around the carefully preserved farm house while we heard stories of its earlier times.

As we then proceeded on Fostertown Rd., enjoying the view of open fields, to turn up Crispin Road at the former Prickett Farm, we learned that most of the remaining farms are actually operated under contract by larger farmers who have available the large, expensive equipment necessary to manage and harvest the fields. Coming up Crispin, we passed several more farm houses, now surrounded by modern developments, including the house of the largest dairy farm in the area, which had been owned by Lester Jones.

After a brief run through Lumberton Leas to recognize its former farm status, the bus headed back on Creek Road, where several other homes were pointed out, including the adjacent Spotts Farm. One other home set considerably back from the road and neither visible nor accessible, includes a feature where once escaped slaves hid on their trek northward. Pictures of other historic Lumberton structures can be viewed on the next page, as well as at <https://westjerseyhistory.org/images/Burlington/lumberton/index.shtml>.

Additional information continues on next page.

Special thanks to Audrey Winzinger, Ken Hutz, and Dave Kahley of the Lumberton Civic Association, who were instrumental in organizing this enlightening event, and Joseph Jones for his tour guide skill, as well as to the amazing bus driver who showed great skill in maneuvering onto narrow, twisted farm lanes.

Other Historic Lumberton Farm Houses



Photos courtesy of Dave Kahley, Jim Alexander, Joseph Jones, and Library of Congress.

[Additional information on Lumberton Leas campus history.](#)

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