

119 ~ Blawenburg Potpourri

[Post Blog](#)

I accumulate many bits of information from readers, newspaper searches, and the internet. Some of them evolve into blogs, but many just stand as isolated, unpublished facts. In this blog, I publish some of these facts and stories about random topics. Don't look for a consistent theme. After all, this is Blawenburg Potpourri, a mixture of things.

Former Gas Station

In blog 118, we told the stories of the former tenants of New World Pizza. Also included were various owners of the service station north of the pizzeria. There were gaps in our information about the previous ownership of the service station shown below. Thanks to several people who responded to our request for information, we have been able to determine several other owners.



This Texaco station was just north of the old Blawenburg Fire Department (now New World Pizza). Among other things, it had a dance hall on the second floor for a while, and an antique dealer sold his wares there for several years.

Here is a chronology of the station's ownership, as best we know:

The station was built in the 1920s, perhaps by the Higgins Family, or maybe by Alfred Weart, who built other businesses north of the Georgetown Franklin Turnpike in the 1920s.

1920s to 1927 – Higgins Family

1928 – 1940s – Ownership unknown

1940s to 1963 – John Ficken

1963 to 1967 – Peter Atkinson

1968 to early 1970s – Nassau Oil Co.

1970s - B & V Auto, Bernie Evanko and Vince "Vinnie" Muller

1980s - Seitz brothers

Post 1980s – owners unknown

If you know other owners or can correct this timeline, please let me know.

Garret Van Zandt Farm

Follow up to Blog 115

The Garret Van Zandt farm was one of the six farms that were joined together to form the State Village for Epileptics. The Princeton Whig newspaper published the ad for this and other properties on November 12, 1839. It was to settle Van Zandt estate.

**COMMISSIONERS' SALE OF
REAL ESTATE.**

IN pursuance of a decree of the Orphans Court of the county of Somerset, the subscribers will offer for sale, at public vendue, on **TUESDAY THE 12th of NOVEMBER** next, the **HOMESTEAD FARM**, late the property of Garret Van Zandt, deceased, situate in the township of Montgomery, in the county of Somerset, adjacent to the pleasant village of Blawenburgh; containing 72 acres.— The land is easy of culture and in a high state of improvement. There is on the farm a good dwelling house, and commodious out buildings; an orchard of good fruit, a never failing well of water at the door, and Rock brook runs near the buildings, affording ample watering all seasons of the year. It lies within half a mile of the church, 4 miles from the Delaware and Raritan Canal, 5 from the New Jersey Rail Road, and at a convenient distance from the best markets in the state.

The terms will be easy, as a moiety of the purchase money is not wanted, and may remain secured in the property. Persons desirous of viewing the property may call on the widow, residing on the premises, or on either of the subscribers.

Date to open at 12 A. M. on the premises.

C. S. STRYKER,
CORNELIUS KERSHOW,
JACOB VOORHEES,
Commissioners.

September 2, 1839. 361.6w

Adjourned sale.

The sale of the above property stands adjourned to *Monday the 23d of December*, to open at 12 o'clock, noon' and will be positive. 377-3t.

September, 1839, source unknown

Look Before You Leap

In 1881, trains were the main means of long distance travel. This incident occurred near the Skillman train station just north of Blawenburg. There's a lesson to be learned here if you ever decide to jump from a train.

At Skillman's Station, Blawenburg, Wednesday evening, John Henry Voorhees, a well to do farmer in that vicinity, was struck by a fast train and instantly killed. He was assisting in loading pork on a freight car, and jumped from the car in front of a passing train.

Princeton Press, January 15, 1881

As a result of John's fatal leap...



Photo added by Wayne Irons

John H. Voorhees

BIRTH	unknown
DEATH	12 Jan 1881
BURIAL	Blawenburg Cemetery Blawenburg, Somerset County, New Jersey, USA Add to Map
PLOT	44
MEMORIAL ID	21590709 · View Source

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<https://www.findagrave.com/>

A Sign of the Times

Over time, everything gets old and frayed. Weather has taken its toll on the Blawenburg sign below. The pictures of the same sign were taken just 16 years later. Perhaps someone will take pity on the unreadable sign and replace it.



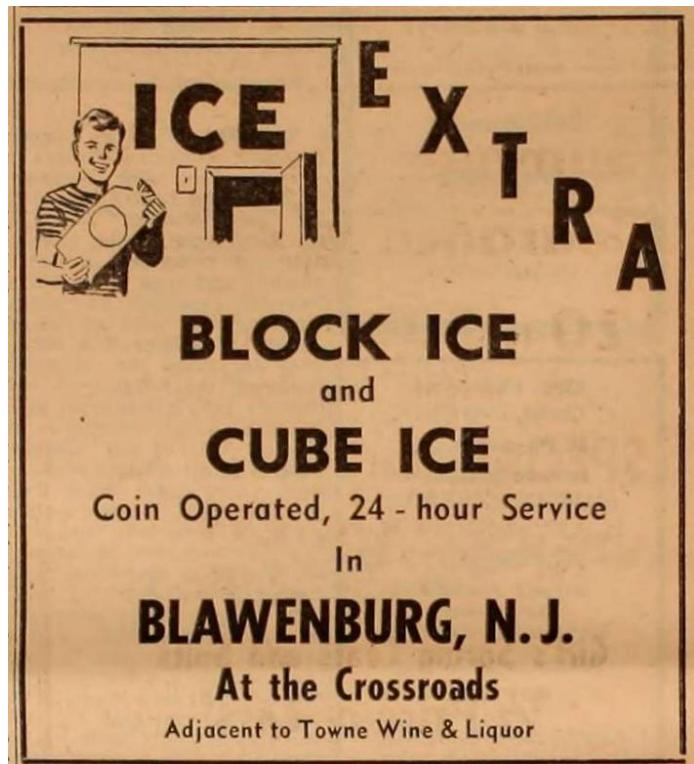
2010



2026

Ken Chrusz

Staying Cool in the Village

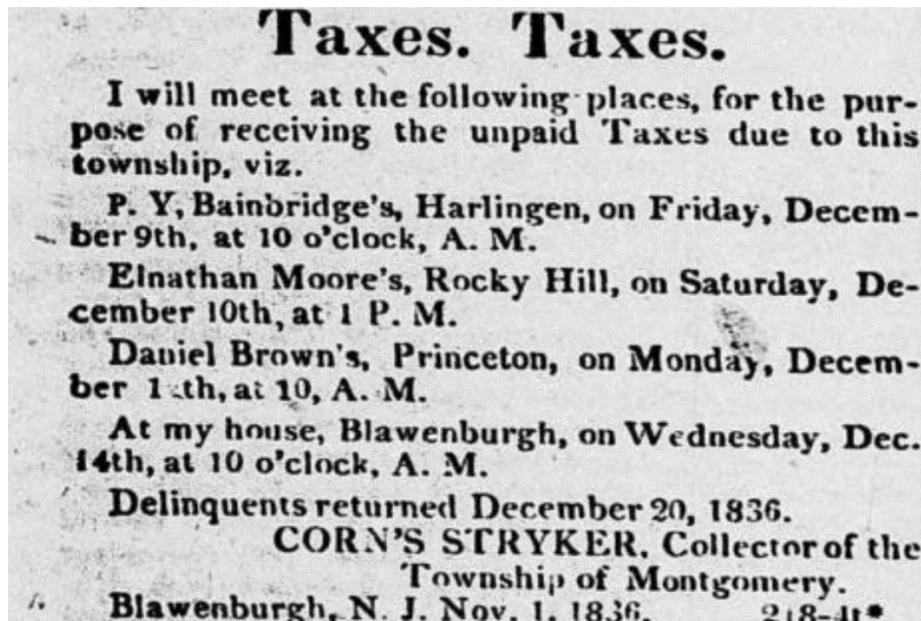


ICE EXTRA
BLOCK ICE
and
CUBE ICE
Coin Operated, 24 - hour Service
In
BLAWENBURG, N.J.
At the Crossroads
Adjacent to Towne Wine & Liquor

The advertisement features a small illustration of a man in a striped shirt holding a large block of ice. The word 'ICE' is written vertically on the left side of the illustration, and 'EXTRA' is written vertically on the right side.

Town Topics July 8, 1962

Making Sure You Paid Your Taxes



Taxes. Taxes.
I will meet at the following places, for the purpose of receiving the unpaid Taxes due to this township, viz.
P. Y. Bainbridge's, Harlingen, on Friday, December 9th, at 10 o'clock, A. M.
Elathan Moore's, Rocky Hill, on Saturday, December 10th, at 1 P. M.
Daniel Brown's, Princeton, on Monday, December 12th, at 10, A. M.
At my house, Blawenburgh, on Wednesday, Dec. 14th, at 10 o'clock, A. M.
Delinquents returned December 20, 1836.
CORN'S STRYKER, Collector of the
Township of Montgomery.
Blawenburgh, N. J. Nov. 1. 1836. 218-4t*

November 1, 1836

Lost? Yes...Found? Maybe

LOST, July 21st, between Princeton, Rocky Hill and Blawenburg, a " Diary," containing memoranda useful only to the owner. A suitable reward will be given upon sending by express or otherwise to Atwood, Ranck & Co., 210 North Wharves, Philadelphia.

The Princetonian, July 27, 1871

Camp at your Own Risk

Camping can have several meanings. It can be a fun experience getting away from it all in nature, or it can be very dangerous if you are "camping" in railroad cars.

Montgomery Citizens to Probe Skillman Camp After Worker Is Shot In Trackside Fracas

The Montgomery Township Committee has directed an investigation of the Reading Railroad worker's camp near Skillman station following the shooting on Monday of one of the workers in a bunk-house melee. John Carter, 27, of Pennington, was reported in a serious condition at Princeton Hospital yesterday after being admitted for a gunshot wound over the week-end.

He was shot in the abdomen following an argument over money, police said. Three other workers are out on \$5,000 bond and a fourth is being held in jail as a result of the shooting. State Police and the Somerset County Preseuctor's office are investigating.

Citizens complained to the Township Committee last week, through

the Montgomery Township Civic Association, that something be done about the railroad camp, which the group charged constituted a violation of the Township building ordinance. The workers are housed in railroad cars near the station. At its meeting this week, the Committee voted to direct Parvin R. Stryker, Building Inspector, to investigate and recommend what action the Committee should take.

Princeton Herald, January 20, 1949

I hope you have enjoyed these bits of history from Blawenburg and Skillman. While the big news captures the attention of many, sometimes the small events in history are just as interesting.

Share Your Thoughts

Do you remember an interesting story or event that took place in or near Blawenburg? Jot me an email. Your story might blossom into a blog or be shared in a future potpourri. No idea is too small to contribute to this archive of Blawenburg history. Send your ideas to: blawenburgtales@gmail.com.

Sources

Information

The news clips and advertisements were provided by Ken Chrusz.

Thanks to several readers for contributed information about the owners of the gas station.

Pictures

Most picture sources are cited below the pictures. The sources of uncited pictures is unknown.

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