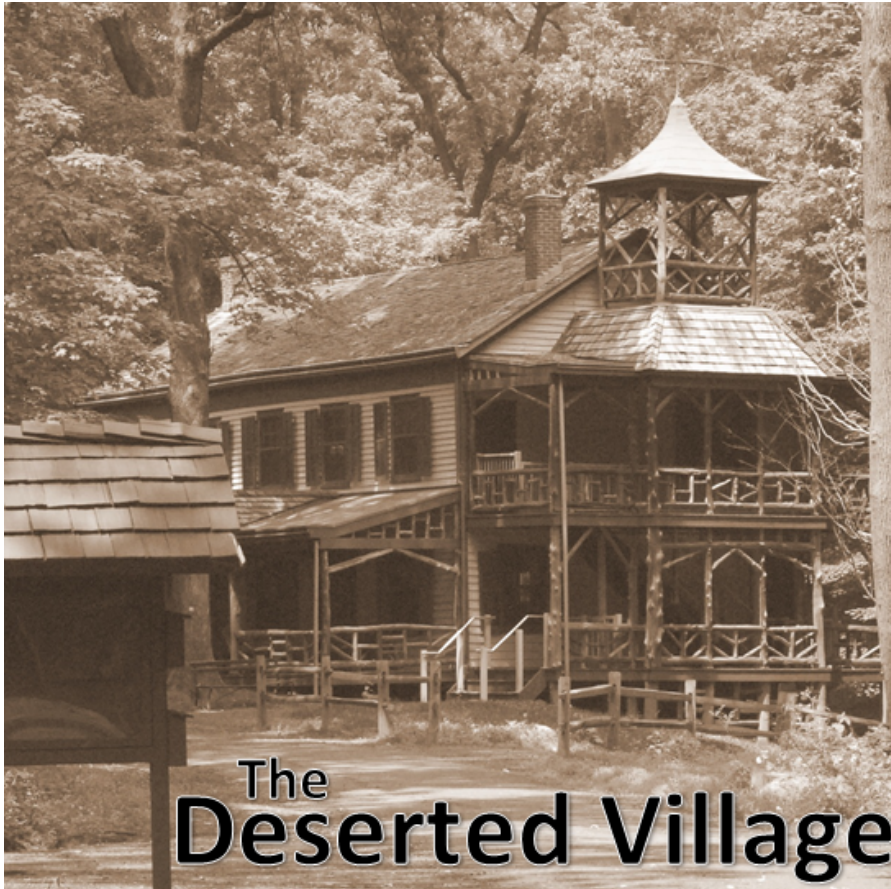


# Deserted Village



About 1736, Peter Willcocks built a sawmill along the Blue Brook to produce lumber, which would be needed by farmers as they settled this frontier area. The sawmill operation cleared hundreds of acres of forest.

In 1845, David Felt bought 760 acres of land and built a printing factory along the brook. He built an entire town on the bluff above the brook to support the mill operation, and by 1850, 175 people were living in Feltville. After Felt retired in 1860, other business ventures were tried but failed, and the town became deserted for a short time.

But in 1882, Warren Ackerman bought the property and converted the former mill town into a summer resort, called Glenside Park. When the popularity of mountain resorts was displaced by the advent of the Jersey Shore, Glenside Park closed in 1916.

Soon after the Union County Park System was formed in 1921, this area was incorporated into the Watchung Reservation, one of America's first county parks.

The grounds of the Deserted Village are open every day, dawn to dusk. The Visitor Center is open Saturdays and Sundays (and most holidays) from noon to 5pm.

There is a pamphlet available for a walking tour that explains the ten surviving historic buildings, some of which are still inhabited. The pamphlets outlining the walking tour through the Deserted Village, with some additional history, are usually available at the brown kiosks, one in the parking lot just off Glenside Avenue, and the other just past the General Store/Church. [The pamphlet is also available online.](#)