

Petty's Island

Wayside Exhibits and Photographs of
Some Existing Structures

Fabulous Forests

Healthy forests have a tall canopy of trees with an understory of shrubs and small trees and a ground layer of herbs and tree seedlings. The diversity of plant size and structure creates a variety of food and shelter sources for wildlife. In healthy forests you will also see dead wood and standing dead trees, which provide habitat for wildlife and return nutrients to the soil.



The forest on the southern end of Petty's Island is relatively young as this part of the island was created by dredge spoils. Over time, this area experienced a natural process of plant succession, resulting in a mature shrub-scrub plant community followed by forest. Although you see many invasive plants in this forest, such as Asiatic bittersweet, it also includes native trees such as sweet gum, oak, birch and aspen. Many native plants and wildlife thrive in this forest, such as the great horned owl, red-eyed vireo, Fowler's toad as well as butterflies and dragonflies such as the common buckeye and common green darner.



Common Buckeye



Fowler's Toad



Great Horned Owl



Red-eyed Vireo



Common Green Darner

Land Ownership

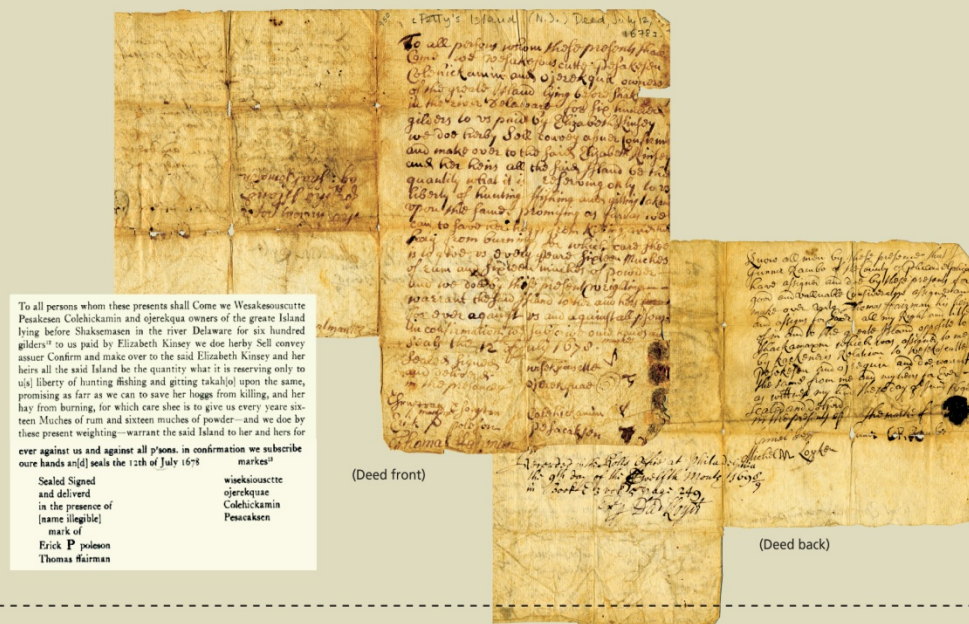
The Lenape Perspective

Native Americans living in the Delaware River region called themselves the Lenape meaning "Pure or Original People" and their region Lenapehoking meaning "Land of the Lenape." Lenapehoking included Petty's Island, or Aequikonaska, which was just one of several places the Lenape used for hunting and fishing.

The Lenape believed that land was not owned, but provided by "The Creator." Common practice was to respect the "use right" of an area of land by another family until it was abandoned. As European settlements expanded throughout the Delaware River region, the landscape was altered and local natural

resources were quickly depleted. With less available local natural resources, the Lenape were more willing to sell "their" land.

Four Lenape sold the island to Elizabeth Kinsey in 1678 but in keeping with their views on "use rights" they retained the rights to hunt and fish on the island and dig for edible roots called tuckahoes. The Lenape, in exchange for rum and gun powder, also promised to try to protect Elizabeth Kinsey's hogs from being killed and her hayfields from being burned.



To all persons whom these presents shall Come we Wesakescutte Pesackeen Colechickamin and ojerequase owners of the greates Island lying before Shakesmen in the river Delaware for six hundred gilders to us paid by Elizabeth Kinsey we doe hereby Sell convey assure Confirm and make over to the said Elizabeth Kinsey and her heirs all the said Island be the quantity what it is reserving only to us Liberty of hunting fishing and getting takah[o] upon the same, promising as farr as we can to save her hoggs from killing, and her hay from burning, for which care she is to give us every year sixteen Muches of rum and sixteen muches of powder—and we doe by these present weighting—warrant the said Island to her and hers for ever against us and against all p[er]sons. in confirmation we subscribe our hands and seals the 12th of July 1678

Sealed Signed and delivered in the presence of [name illegible] mark of Erick P polemon Thomas fairman

wesakescutte ojerequase Colechickamin Pesackeen

(Deed front)

(Deed back)



Lenape Chief - The Library Company of Philadelphia



Mudflats

Important Habitat for Animals and Plants

Twice daily tidal water pushes far up the Delaware River to reach Petty's Island. Sediment in these waters, as well as what comes from upstream tributaries, mixes and settles out along the fringe of the land and creates mudflats. During high tide, the mudflats are covered with water, and at low tide mudflats are exposed. Look out across the river channel--what tidal cycle seems to be occurring?

Petty's Island is surrounded by almost 140 acres of ecologically important tidal mudflats. These mudflats are vegetated with plants such as spatterdock. Many animals depend on these mudflats for food and habitat. Shorebirds such as the least sandpiper, semipalmated sandpiper and laughing gull feed on invertebrates in the mud, ducks forage on aquatic vegetation, and herons and hawks prey on animals using the mudflats. Do you see any of the species below out on the mudflats now?



Semipalmated Sandpiper



Laughing Gull



Spatterdock



Green Heron



Least Sandpiper



Delaware River Watershed



Ben Franklin Slept Here!

In his autobiography, Benjamin Franklin wrote of a brief visit to the Cooper River in 1723 as a run-away apprentice from Boston on his way to Philadelphia:

"However, walking in the evening by the side of the river, a boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several people in her. They took me in, and, as there was no wind, we row'd all the way; and about midnight, not having yet seen the city, some of the company were confident we must have passed it, and would row no farther; the others knew not where we were; so we put toward the shore, got into a creek, landed near an old fence, with the rails of which we made a fire, the night being cold, in October, and there we remained till daylight. Then one of the company knew the place to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the creek, and arriv'd there about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market-street wharf."

A watershed is an area of land where water drains into an individual stream, lake or other body of surface water. It includes all of the land, soil, rocks, plants, and animals as well as people and everything built by people. Just like you have a home address where you receive mail, you also have a watershed address - although what leaves your watershed address is perhaps more important than what arrives at it! When water leaves your yard, street or sidewalk it travels somewhere—perhaps into the soil, but surface water flows downhill into a storm drain, stream, river or lake. So remember to keep storm drains clear of trash and debris and never pour anything down the storm drain!

Petty's Island is in the Delaware River Watershed which contains 13,539 square miles, draining parts of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Delaware. Look across the channel, what you see is the Cooper River and it is just one of over 40 tributaries that drain into the Delaware River Watershed.



Market Street Ferry Boat and Landing at Camden, New Jersey in 1779 - Camden County Historical Society



Wetlands

Wetlands provide the link between land and water for plants and animals

Rivers, lakes, ponds, streams, marshes, bogs and swamps are all types of wetlands. While these water bodies look very different, they share common characteristics: water is present during all or part of the year; water-loving plants grow in and around the area; soils are water-logged with low amounts of oxygen.

The wetlands you see were formed when impoundments were created to host oil storage tanks. Although the oil tanks are gone, the wetlands continue to provide important habitat for plant and animal species.

Did you know that wetlands...

- contain some of the most diverse wildlife?
- act as sponges, holding rain and flood water?
- can neutralize toxic substances?
- keep the water supply clean by acting as a filter?
- are a resting place for migratory birds?
- act as a nursery to shelter, protect and feed young wildlife?



No text provided



Spotted Sandpiper
Shorebird that lives on edge of freshwater ponds and rivers



Eastern Pondhawk Dragonfly
Aggressive dragonfly that preys on insects even larger than itself



Wood Duck
Stunningly pretty waterfowl



American Bullfrog
Call of the bullfrog is deep and resonant



Duckweed
Small flowering aquatic plant the floats on or just beneath the surface



No text provided



Fiddleheads
Furled fronds of a young fern

CITGO and the Natural Lands Trust

A Partnership for the Ages

In June 2002, CITGO employees spotted an American bald eagles' nest at Petty's Island. Thus began a story of community, collaboration and conservation. Sparked by the eagles and other unique ecological discoveries on the property, CITGO decided to preserve the island for wildlife and contacted the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust (Trust) for ideas. The Trust suggested that CITGO immediately grant a conservation easement and later, after the island was fully remediated (cleaned up) and restored, transfer ownership of the Island to the Trust. As CITGO and the Trust were making their plans, a developer

proposed to develop Petty's Island with luxury housing and a hotel, golf course and marina. In response, a coalition of environmental, cultural and community organizations banded together to "Save Petty's Island." As a result of the concerns raised by the coalition, the development plan was abandoned, thus paving the way for a preservation partnership between CITGO and the Trust. A conservation easement ensuring the perpetual preservation of Petty's Island was recorded in 2009.



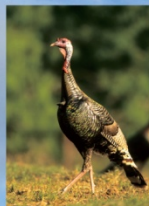
Reversing the Impacts of Industry

Grassland Habitat Restoration

Did you know that Petty's Island was once home to 33 oil storage tanks totaling over 42 billion gallons of oil? A landscape once dominated by large, white, cylindrical tanks is being restored to approximately 100 acres of warm season grassland habitat!



American Goldfinch



Wild Turkey



Eastern Meadowlark



Monarch Butterfly



Eastern Bluebird

Grasslands aren't just for the birds! Native pollinators like butterflies and bees, important to our environment and food supply, are drawn to the grassland wildflowers. Reptiles like the eastern box turtle bask in sunny fields and may use them for nesting. Mice, snakes, insects and bats are just a handful of other animals that benefit from grassland habitats.

New Jersey's agricultural landscape is gradually disappearing and so is a group of birds that depends on early successional grassland habitat associated with agriculture. These birds include the eastern meadowlark, wild turkey, American kestrel, bobolink, American goldfinch and bluebird, some of whose numbers in New Jersey have been cut in half in just the last few decades. Warm-season grasses provide birds with excellent nesting cover and provide a safe place to forage for food.



Bobolink



Kestrel



Philadelphia in Plain View

You are looking at the Philadelphia skyline. In its early history, Petty's Island was closely tied to Philadelphia. It is rumored that Philadelphia Quakers would row to Petty's Island to drink and gamble in secret. Petty's Island also served as a landmark for boats headed to Philadelphia.

For most of the 20th century a "gentlemen's agreement" prevented any building in Philadelphia from being higher than the bronze statue of William Penn atop Philadelphia City Hall. The agreement ended in 1987 with the completion of One Liberty Place. Now many Philadelphia skyscrapers eclipse City Hall in height, although City Hall is still one of the top ten highest buildings in Philadelphia. The tallest building in the Philadelphia

skyline is the 975-foot Comcast Center with its modern steel and glass exterior. The Comcast Center is also the tallest building in Pennsylvania and the fifteenth-tallest in the United States. The second- and third-tallest Philadelphia skyscrapers are the 945-foot One Liberty Place and the 848-foot Two Liberty Place, both in complementary Art Deco style. Other iconic buildings in the Philadelphia skyline include the 792-foot Mellon Bank Center capped with a pyramid and the 739-foot Three Logan Square with a glass and red granite exterior.



One Liberty Place



Two Liberty Place



Philadelphia City Hall



Mellon Bank



Comcast Center



Three Logan Square



Petty's Island

A Strategic Location for Industry and Commerce

Some of the largest shipyards in the country were located in Philadelphia, and as more cargo was transported in and out of the Port of Philadelphia, ship builders like William Cramp, expanded business to the western shore of Petty's Island. After World War I, Petty's was viewed as an ideal site for international commerce. Its location in the heart of the Port of Philadelphia, and its access to over sixty steamship lines with direct trade routes to nearly every county on earth, made Petty's Island a gateway to the world's markets. Crew Levick Company,

a subsidiary of Cities Service Company, later becoming CITGO Petroleum Company, was one of the first oil export stations to process oil shipments in bulk with the ability to pump 3,000 barrels a day and store 100,000 barrels on site.



Oil Refiners May Now Ship in Bulk to Petty Island Where Crew Levick Will Barrel, Lighter and Load for Export

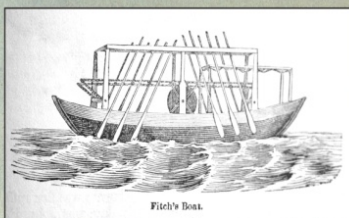


The 10,000-ton Campoamor loading 83,000 gallons of gasoline and oil at Petty's Island in 1937.

Wide World Photos



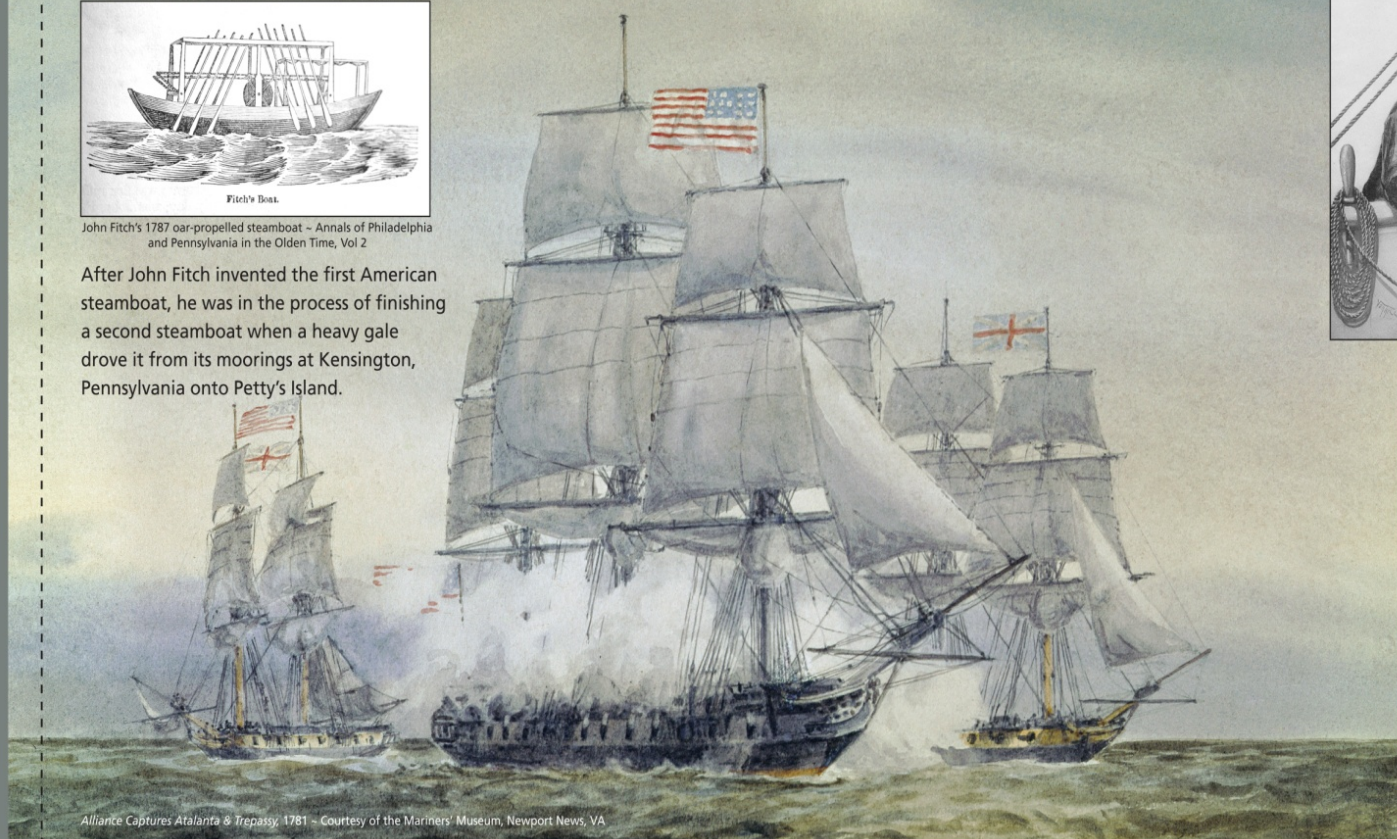
Petty's Island - Legends and Lore



Fitch's Boat.

John Fitch's 1787 oar-propelled steamboat ~ Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania in the Olden Time, Vol 2

After John Fitch invented the first American steamboat, he was in the process of finishing a second steamboat when a heavy gale drove it from its moorings at Kensington, Pennsylvania onto Petty's Island.



Alliance Captures Atalanta & Trepassy, 1781 ~ Courtesy of the Mariners' Museum, Newport News, VA

Petty's Island is surrounded by a "ship graveyard." It is the last resting place of the 36-gun frigate USS Alliance, a star of the US Continental Navy during the American Revolutionary War. After many war battles and trade expeditions, she was purchased by the Smith family in 1790.

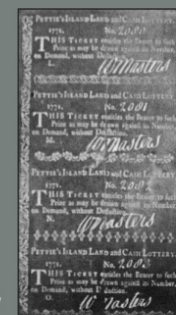
In 1815, the Alliance was sunk just south of Petty's Island. At low tide, some of her timbers could be seen in the sands until her remaining hulk was destroyed during dredging operations in 1901.



Captain Blackbeard ~ Alpheus Hyatt Verrill (1923)

At the turn of the 18th Century, pirates would anchor at Petty's Island to avoid the authorities they may have encountered on the mainland. One of the pirates rumored to have anchored in the coves and shelters of Petty's Island was none other than Edward Teach (Captain Blackbeard himself).

Petty's Island Land and Cash Lottery Ticket (for chances on land in Philadelphia) ~ Camden County Historical Society



18th Century Philadelphians would visit Petty's Island to drink, duel and gamble. In many cases lotteries were not considered gambling as much as a means of raising funds for public purposes, but when British authorities attempted to protect the colonists from such undue speculation, lottery drawings were moved beyond Pennsylvania to places such as Petty's Island.



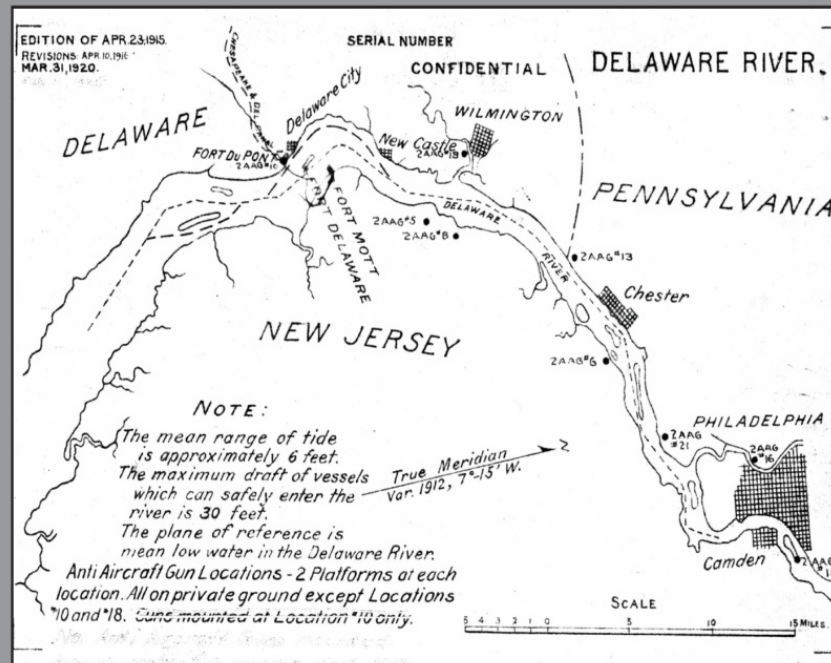
In defense of America's shores during WWI



3 inch anti-aircraft gun on M1917 pedestal mount - Coastal Defense Study Group

3-Inch Anti-aircraft Gun Facts:

Muzzle Velocity: 2,700 feet/second
 Breech: Semi-automatic
 Maximum Rate of Fire: 25 rounds/minute
 Recoil Type: Hydro-spring
 Maximum Effective Slant Range: 9,500 yards
 Maximum Effective Horizontal Range: 10,500 yards
 Maximum Effective Vertical Range: 10,100 yards
 Maximum Effective Fire Control Altitude: 25,000 feet



Map of Coast Defenses of the Delaware - Coastal Defense Study Group

Shortly after America's entry into World War I, the caliber of Army anti-aircraft (AA) guns was set at three inches to take advantage of existing standard cartridges. Both fixed mount guns (M1917) and mobile guns (M1918) were soon developed. Two-gun AA batteries were located at strategic locations along the Delaware River including Marcus Hook, Hog Island and across the Schuylkill River from the Schuylkill Arsenal. A fixed-mount, two-gun AA battery was also to be located on Petty's Island. The concrete battery to house the guns was completed in March of 1918 but there is no documentation that guns were actually mounted here. If guns had been mounted at Petty's Island, they would have been the M1917 guns.



Slavery and Slave Trade

In the Philadelphia and Camden Region



Joseph Mallord William Turner – Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On) (In a horrific act of human indifference, the captain threw sick slaves overboard as storm approached for profit: he would collect insurance proceeds for slaves lost to storm but not for slaves who succumbed to illness).

Camden became the port of entry for enslaved Africans transported to the region during the 18th century. The enslavement of African Americans became well established in New Jersey with shipping, insurance, banking, manufacturing and agriculture profiting from the trade in enslaved people.

No structures or artifacts remain here, but oral tradition points to Petty's Island being a depot for enslaved Africans. It was not until 1865 with the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment that slavery was completely abolished in New Jersey.

Philadelphia, May 21, 1761.
To be SOLD by
STOCKER and FULLER,
And to be seen at Mr. Daniel Cooper's Ferry, West-New-Jersey,
opposite the City of Philadelphia,
A PARCEL of likely NEGROES:
To be sold at Daniel Cooper's Ferry, in the Jerseys, A likely
NEGROE Wench. Any Person inclining to purchase,
may apply to WILLIAM and JOHN HARRIS, at John Jarvis's, in
Second-Street, Philadelphia.
**JUST imported, a Parcel of fine young Negroe Slaves, Men,
Women, Boys and Girls, and to be sold at Daniel Cooper's
Ferry, in the Jerseys, opposite the City of Philadelphia, by
DAVID M^cMURTRIE,**
Merchant in Water-Street. Attendance will be given from Nine to
Twelve in the Forenoon, and from Two to Five in the Afternoon.
To be sold by Daniel Cooper, in the Jerseys,
A Likely Negro fellow, about 26 years of age, well acquainted with
country business, and had had the small pox and measles. Enquire
of William Cooper, in Market-Street, Philadelphia.

Newspaper advertisements for slave sales at Cooper's Ferry
Camden County Historical Society

May 27.
**JUST imported from the River Gambia, in the
Schooner Sally, Barnard Badger, Master, and to
be sold at the Upper-Ferry (called Benjamin Cooper's
Ferry), opposite to this City, a Parcel of likely Men
and Women**
S L A V E S,
with some Boys and Girls of different Ages. Atten-
dance will be given from the Hours of nine to twelve
o'Clock in the Morning, and from three to six in the
Afternoon, by
W. COXE, S. OLDMAN, & Company,
N. B. It is generally allowed, that the Gambia
Slaves are much more robust and tractable, than any
other Slaves from the Coast of Guinea, and more ca-
pable of undergoing the Severity of the Winter Seasons
in the North-American Colonies, which occasions
their being vastly more esteemed and coveted in this
Province and thole to the Northward, than any other
Slaves whatsoever.





































