

# Monmouth County Park System

# Historic Walnford



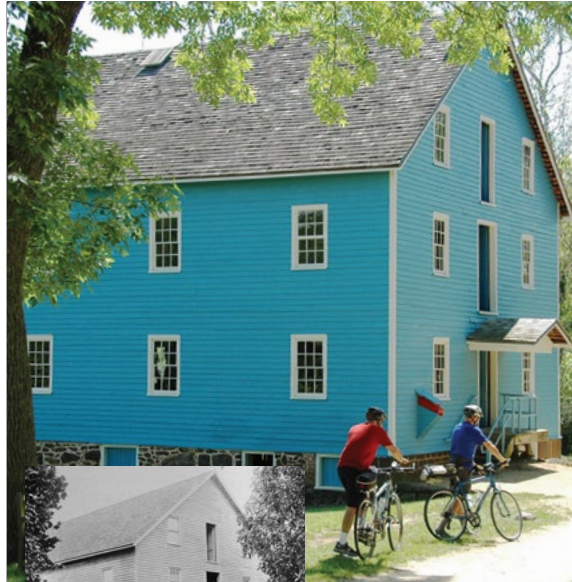
at Crosswicks Creek Park,  
Upper Freehold, NJ



[www.MonmouthCountyParks.com](http://www.MonmouthCountyParks.com)

## Welcome to Historic Walnford

*This 36-acre site is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Beginning in the 18th century, Walnford's evolving structures and landscape reveal much about the changing culture and economy of this region during the last three centuries.*



Waln's Mill, 1890s

### Mill Village & Country Estate (18th C)

The commercial village that grew on this site began in 1734 with a gristmill. A 1772 newspaper ad caught the eye of prosperous merchant trader and Philadelphia Quaker, Richard Waln. It offered three mills, blacksmith and cooper's shops, a large 2-family brick house, five tenant houses, farm buildings, 100 plowed acres and two orchards. He purchased the site, renamed it Walnford, and built a home for his family in 1773.

### Room Rentals/Weddings

This elegant site has facilities available for meetings, programs & ceremonies. Please call 609-259-6275.

### Federal Merchant Farmer (early 19th C)

Son Nicholas Waln and bride Sarah Ridgeway Waln took charge of Walnford in 1799. Reaching its height of activity, the property grew to 1,300 acres and the village expanded to house about 50 people.



Waln House, 1890s

### Shifting Focus, Declining Fortunes (late 19th C)

After Nicholas died, Sarah Waln and her daughter Sarah, maintained Walnford. As agriculture, milling and railroads moved west, commercial interest shifted to local concerns. A post office was added to Walnford during this period and with fewer acres to manage Sarah (the daughter) updated the home, built a new carriage house and cow barn, and rebuilt the grist mill in 1873 after a fire.

### Rural Retreat (20th C)

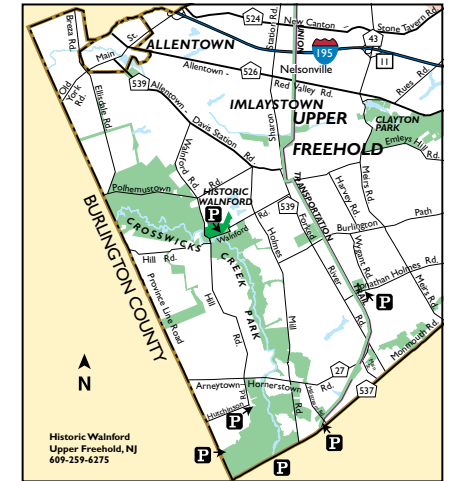
After the death of his great aunt Sarah Waln Hendrickson in 1907, Richard Waln Meirs and wife Ann Weightman Meirs transformed the property into the quiet Colonial Revival estate you see today. In 1973, after 200 years of occupancy by the Waln family, Edward and Joanne Mullen purchased the property as their home. They generously donated this historic site to the Park System in 1985.

## Park Hours

Open every day of the year 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (later in the summer), free of charge. The mill operates weekends, April – November.

## Avoiding Tick Bites

Ticks that may cause illness can be active year-round. Take precautions: use insect repellent; wear light-colored clothes, long sleeve shirt tucked into pants/pants tucked into socks; check yourself for ticks during and after park visits; shower soon after being outdoors. To minimize contact keep to formal trails, walk in the center; stay away from tall grasses, brush/shrubs, leaf litter, and branches; avoid woodland edges next to lawns and athletic fields. Protect your pets. Read more at [www.cdc.gov/ticks](http://www.cdc.gov/ticks).



**From the North:** Take Rt. 9, 79 or 34 South to 537 West. Turn right onto Rt. 539, (Forked River Rd.), left on Walnford Rd. which leads into the park.

**From the East Via 195:** Take Exit 11 (Imlaystown/Cox's Corner) and turn left onto Rt. 43 (Imlaystown/Hightstown Rd.). At the first intersection turn right onto Rt. 526/Red Valley Rd. At the first light, turn left onto Sharon Station Rd. Follow for 2 miles, turn right onto Rt. 539 North. Travel for only a short distance and turn left onto Holmes Mill Rd. then right onto Walnford Rd.

**From NJ Turnpike or West:** Follow I-195 to Exit 8, Allentown, Rt. 524/539. Turn right and follow Rt. 539 through Allentown, (turn left to stay on Rt. 539 in town). Then turn right onto Holmes Mill Rd., then right onto Walnford Rd.

Monmouth County  
Board of Chosen Freeholders  
Board of Recreation Commissioners

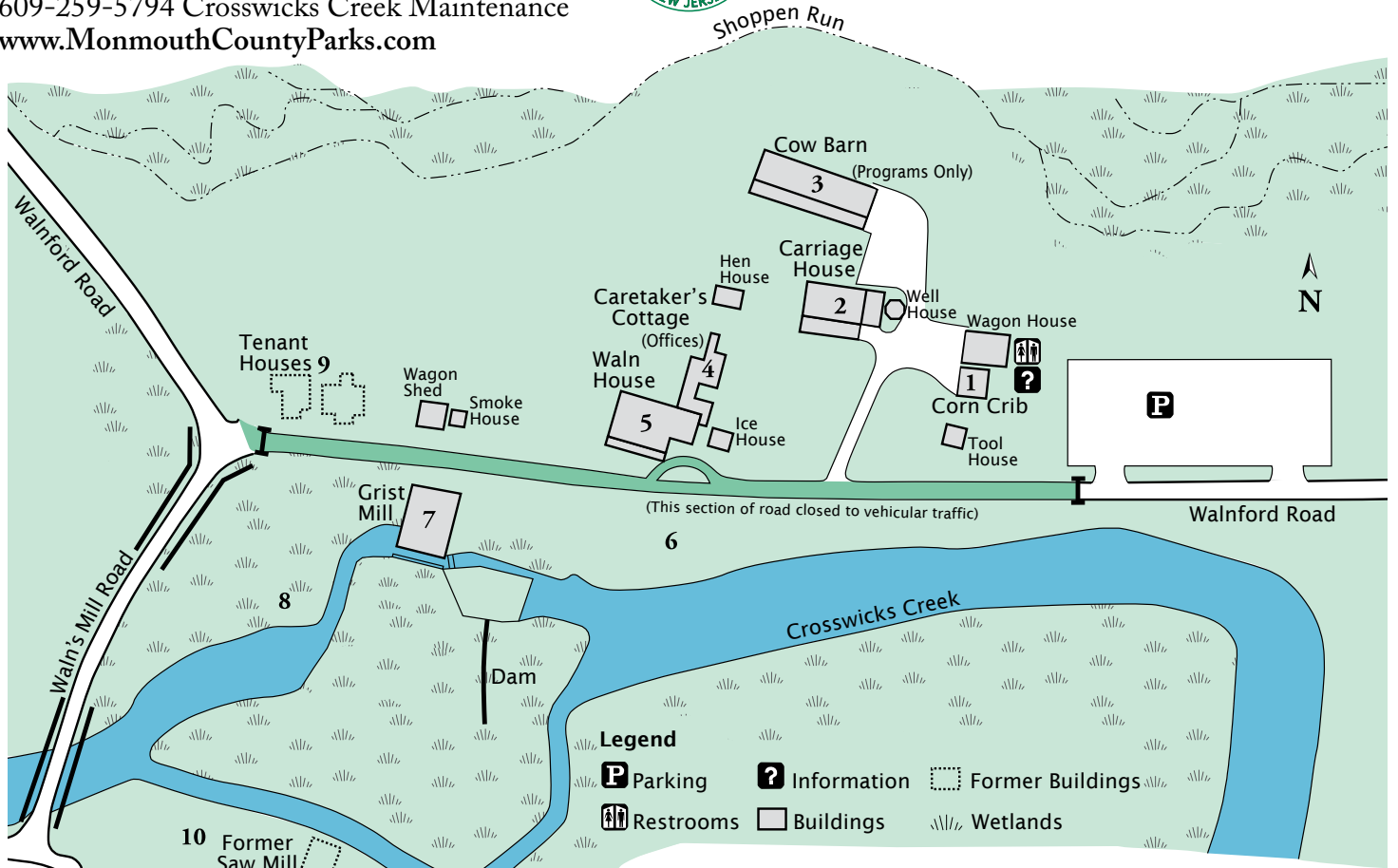


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# HISTORIC WALNFORD

GPS: Use 62 Walnford Road, Upper Freehold, NJ  
 609-259-6275 Walnford Office  
 609-259-5794 Crosswicks Creek Maintenance  
[www.MonmouthCountyParks.com](http://www.MonmouthCountyParks.com)



**1** Entering through the *Corn Crib* serves as a reminder that Walnford was a working farm until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**2** The 1879 *Carriage House* was built for the Walns' carriages and the horses that pulled them. Look up to see the running stag weathervane.



*Carriage House, Today*

**3** In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, dairy farming was popular in this area. Forty-eight Guernseys were milked here in the *Cow Barn*. Today the barn provides program space.

**4** The *Caretaker's Cottage* was added to the rear of the house in 1910-12. The White Pine trees separating the house and farm were planted around the same time. Now the building serves as offices for park staff.



*Mill Pond, 1890s*

**5** The elegant *Waln House* built in 1773, is the largest existing pre-revolutionary home in Monmouth County.

**6** *Remnants of a Formal Garden* are seen along the stream bank in front of the house. A horticultural enthusiast, Ann Weightman Meirs planted the landscape that gives Walnford its picturesque character today.

**7** *Waln's Mill*, powered by a turbine rather than an external water wheel, represented the peak of stone grinding gristmill design when it was rebuilt in 1872 after a disastrous fire.

**8** *Crosswicks Creek and the surrounding wetlands*, once a source of power for the mill and a scenic feature, are today an important resource and flood plain protected by state and federal law. The creek travels through four counties before it joins the Delaware River.

**9** Two 18<sup>th</sup> Century *Tenant Houses* were located here until 1969 when they were destroyed by arson.



*Tenant Houses, 1960s*

**10** Another important water-powered industry at Walnford was the *Saw Mill*, in operation on the opposite bank from Waln's Mill through the 1870s.

*We interpret this site spanning the 200 years of Waln Family ownership to acknowledge Walnford as an evolving story. Changing exhibits, demonstrations and programs are designed to encourage you to visit often, experiencing both the old and new at this important site.*