

The History of Our Town

In 1677 the Esopus Indians sold 39,683 acres of land to a dozen Huguenots. The patent for the land ran from the Shawangunks to the Hudson River and included what is now the Town of Lloyd. The Huguenots got a great deal and the Indians were happy with the trade.

The oldest frame house in Lloyd still stands near the river at 39 Maple Avenue, Highland. The house was built in 1754 by Anthony Yelverton, one of Lloyd's first businessmen. Yelverton ferried lumber across the river from Poughkeepsie and used it to build his house which contained a one room store and an adjacent sawmill. Other settlers bought his lumber to build their own homes and from that point on the Town continued to grow. By 1790 there were one hundred families in the new settlement.

In the early days of the township people had to fish and farm for the food they ate and the clothes they wore. To fill this need a strong fishing trade developed up and down the Hudson. Fortunately the soil of Lloyd was readily cultivated and had rich crop yields. Apples and grapes were grown and shipped out from the river landing. Ice was harvested from the frozen winter to aid in shipping and preserving food. Soon stores, businesses and new roads sprang up. Creative and daring Philip Elting took a risk and started a group of businesses in what was called Philip's Folly but soon became known as the Hamlet of Highland. By the 1800's an active ice harvesting industry developed along the river and several grist mills were built for the grinding of grain. In 1831 the first steamship came to our river landing and a flourishing ferry business developed. Doctors came and schools and banks became more numerous.

In 1845 Lloyd separated from New Paltz and developed its own township. However the communities still had a bond. In 1893 a trolley line was built running from the railroad station in Highland to connect with New Paltz. The Hudson River Railroad Bridge had been completed in 1888 and the Mid Hudson vehicle bridge opened years later in 1930. Though the trolley line and railroad bridge became outmoded due to the developing reliance on automobiles, Lloyd remained well connected to major areas by the New York state Thruway, route 9W and other fine roads.

Today the Town of Lloyd continues to grow and thrive due to its fine location, rolling hills beautiful vistas and like Philip Elting before them, a leadership which looks toward development while protecting our past.

Terry Scott
Town of Lloyd Historian