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Wall Township, incorporated March 7, 1851 by an Act of the New Jersey Legislature, embraces approximately thirty-two square miles in southern Monmouth County. Wall's ancestors settled first in East Jersey's Shrewsbury Township.

This land was already inhabited by the Lenni Lenape, an Algonquian group of Indians (Native Americans) who lived in loosely - knit family groups in the greater Delaware area. Clans managed decisions on marriage and descent, leaving the people to their individual governance. Current research on Lenape life includes books, excavations such as the one at Turkey Swamp and "Pow Wows" presented by the Delaware people themselves.

King Charles II of England in 1664 decided to colonize the land he owned between the Hudson and the Delaware Rivers. He dispatched Colonel Robert Nicolls to subdue the Dutch and establish settlements. Nicolls was remarkably successful and named the land "Albania." But before he could return to England, the King granted his brother, James Duke of York, these same lands. The Duke named the tract "Novo Cesarea" or "New Jersey," then gave the territory to court favorites Sir John Carteret and John Lord Berkeley. The result was that two different patent claims were made for the same land, causing title problems which persist to today. New Jersey was divided into East and West Jersey. Upon the death of Berkeley, the land was leased in 1682 by The General Board of Proprietors of the Eastern Division of New Jersey. In 1688, Berkeley's lands were organized as The Council of Proprietors of the Western Division.

Earliest patents granted in the Wall area were for land near the Manasquan River. By 1801, what was to be the Wall area became a part of Howell Township. Towards the mid-18th century, certain inhabitants petitioned the New Jersey Legislature to set aside a new township from Howell - from Shark River and its streams to the Atlantic Ocean, then from the Manasquan River over to the Howell border.

Petitioners for the successful establishment of a new township included the first Township Committee members James Allgor, Robert Laird, M.D, Samuel Allen and Benjamin Pearce. They chose to name the township "Wall" after United States Senator Garret Dorset Wall who had died in 1850 during the time of legal separation from Howell Township.

Garret Dorset Wall served in the War of 1812 at Sandy Hook and then became Quartermaster General for the State of New Jersey. He carried the title of "General" throughout his life. A lawyer by practice, Wall was a member of the New Jersey Legislature. He was selected by his peers to be governor, but refused the honor. He did, however, serve as United States District Attorney for the State of New Jersey. Wall's next position was that of United States Senator under Presidents Jackson and Van Buren. Senator Wall was a noted orator and was compared favorably to Henry Clay. Ellis' "History of Monmouth County" recounts that Senator Wall's contemporaries considered him to be "one of the best known men of his time". Garret Dorset Wall's likeness, his official Senate engraving, belongs to the Old Wall Historical Society Museum collection.

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Scholars trace this area's heritage to the Paleo-Indian era 12,000 to 10,000 B.C. Shark River is considered by some researchers to derive its name from prehistoric sharks whose teeth have been found there. Dr. Herbert Kraft of Seton Hall University has written widely on the Paleo-Indians as well as on the "modern" Lenni Lenape Indians. Reminders of this original people's culture and customs, along with their artifacts, are found in museums, archeological excavations and writings. Lenape contributions to today's society are seen in their paths across the state which formed the basis for many modern roads.

Wall's resources of salt and grist mills were critical during the Revolutionary War. British spy maps focused on these "landmarks". Both the Union Salt Works on the Manasquan River and the Shark River Salt Works provided salt for the colonials to preserve food and game. Their strategic product needed by all combatants was saltpeter to make gunpowder. The British bombarded both salt works, temporarily devastating the Union Works and damaging the Shark River installations. Area grist mills were necessary to the British in order to provide grain as food for their troops on Staten Island. It was one local hero who fought to thwart many of these shipments of foodstuffs.

Captain Sam Allen of the Allenwood Militia brought the war to the backwaters of the Manasquan River. Captain Sam, a cousin of Ethan Allen, took his band of Minute Men to maraud British shipping. He specialized in guarding the coast from Toms River to Sandy Hook. His successful forays against the British and the Tories did however bring him personal disaster. The British forced Allen to watch his own home burned during each of the three times the Captain was captured. Allen's nemesis, the Tory Captain Tighe, was finally captured by Allen, judged by him and hung. A stone marker erected near this noteworthy hanging spot by the Daughter of the American Revolution is located on today's Highway 70.

Another enemy during the Revolution besides the British sympathizers or Tories were the Pine Robbers. While the Tories who had received their land from the King were amiable neighbors during the day and enemies by night, the Pine Robbers were disgruntled British sailors who had jumped ship. They banded together with local outlaws to burn and pillage throughout the area. A local heroine, Hannah Dennis, was attacked by Pine Robbers in her Allenwood area home. They hung her, leaving her for dead. Hannah's daughter Amelia saved her mother. Amelia later recognized the Robbers when they were captured. She confronted and accused Jacob Fagan, a leader. Due to the zeal of Captain Sam and his men, many Pine Robbers were hung near Wreck Pond.

Captain Sam Allen outlived the Revolutionary War's threats, dying peacefully in 1831. His body is thought to be buried off Ramshorn Drive near Highway 70. Allen's direct descendants attest to the validity of his wartime deeds, contradicting those critics who consider Allen just a folk tale invention.

Industry entered the quiet world on the north side of the Manasquan River where bog iron, a source of smelting fuel, lay. James P. Allaire, a New York entrepreneur, was drawn to the site of the Revolutionary War Monmouth Furnace. Allaire was a Renaissance man: inventor,

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brassfounder, utopian industrialist and planner. He designed the first brass air chamber either for Robert Fulton's "Clermont" or one of its prototypes. He also designed first steam frigate and the first apartment house.

James P. Allaire purchased the property in 1822, renovated the old furnace and called it "The Howell Works" after its location. For his enterprises which included iron, hollow ware and brass castings, he fashioned a complete ideal company town with its own row houses, currency, church and one room school. Allaire was the first industrialist to provide education for the children of his employees. Many workers who lived and worked at the Works came from several different countries.

The discovery of oil in Pennsylvania brought an end to the bog iron industry and to the Howell Works. In 1878, Allaire's son Hal became the sole owner of the Works which was to become "The Deserted Village" at his death in 1901. Today, the "Historic Village in Allaire State Park" under the aegis of Allaire Village, Inc. is restored to its early 1800's period; it offers visitors the experience of living history. The Village is listed on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Its brick furnace is represented on Wall Township's official seal in the upper left quadrant.

Nineteenth century Wall settlements were "villages" clustered along stage coach routes. Early maps show the names such as Allenwood, Chapel, New Bedford, Hurleytown, Blansingburg and Bailey's Corner. Each village maintained blacksmith, carriage, wheelwright, and feed and grain shops. The community focused on a general store whose shopkeeper also often served as postmaster. A red brick building on New Bedford Road is one of the earliest brick structures in Monmouth County. This Allgor/Kittell blacksmith/wheelwright shop is depicted on Wall's official seal in the lower right quadrant.

A man of many talents was Robert Laird, M.D., the first Moderator of the Day (Mayor) for Wall's first Township Committee meeting March 11, 1851. He was a leading medical doctor who served six townships as Almshouse Physician for thirty years. During that same March meeting, Laird became Wall's first Superintendent of Schools. He established new schools, formed new districts, furnished schoolhouses with blackboards and maps and visited classes annually to test each teacher as well as each pupil. In his capacity as Moderator, he helped to secure new mail routes and set up new post offices. Dr. Laird took three years "off" from Wall to serve as a New Jersey Senator. His many civic activities in both Monmouth and Ocean counties made him a leading figure of his day.

Meanwhile, men in the various communities carried on farming, woodworking, smithing and the necessary trades. At the turn of the twentieth century, Wall housewrights and carpenters constructed some of the renowned mansions along the coast from Allenhurst and Deal north. To get to work, the craftsmen had carry their tools, bicycling down to the ferry at the base of Shark River (there was no passenger bridge at that time), then riding the trolley from Bradley Beach north to the job site. In contrast, cabinet makers or "Ships' Joiners," stayed in New York to outfit

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the newest ocean vessels with detailed woodwork.

The railroads entered Wall in 1864 with the Philadelphia - based Raritan and Delaware Bay Line which made stops in New Bedford and Shark River. The Freehold and Farmingdale Railroad is marked on the 1873 map by tracks which parallel the Manasquan River before circling north to Shark River. At the northern portion of the Township was located Shark River Station. This first railroad line linking New York to the Shore brought mail and visitors to this station. Travelers then took the stagecoach through the Wall countryside down to the ocean. Such a flow of traffic made Shark River Station into a thriving village with fine homes and a large brick works. Later, the New York-Long Branch Railroad made plans for east-west transportation: road beds were laid parallel to Belmar Boulevard west to Farmingdale. This line was abandoned in favor of continuing tracks along the now popular ocean route. As a result, Shark River Station fell into disuse and most of Wall Township returned to its rural status.

An isolated area near Shark River in Wall, however, brought Wall fame when it drew the attention of the Italian inventor Marchese (Marquis) Guglielmo Marconi in 1913. Following his transoceanic wireless radio successes, Marconi selected a marshy site near the Shark River backwaters to erect his 1914 American Wireless Telegraph Company headquarters . Although designated "Belmar Station", the installation was established in Wall Township. Marconi designed a "farm" of various size towers topped with antennae which were secured to the ground by guy wires attached to large cement block foundations. A brick hotel for Marconi's unmarried employees provided them with a gourmet restaurant and vegetable gardens. Marconi's experimental research flourished in this virtually self-contained wireless area.

The red brick buildings erected by Marconi still stand at the present Evans site. Although he kept a room at the hotel, some contemporaries say that Marconi also lived at a nearby farmhouse. After numerous invitations to dinner by local residents, the Marquis claimed that his favorite American dish was pancakes with chicken gravy. This peaceful company was suddenly changed with the outbreak of World War I : Marconi had to relinquish control of his history - making enterprises to the Navy at the request of President Woodrow Wilson. Following the war, Marconi reassumed control of the Company in association with David Sarnoff, his once "Boy Wonder" telegrapher. Outside interest in the Company eventually led to the organization of RCA, the Radio Corporation of America. By 1924, Marconi left the area for wireless work elsewhere, maintaining an office in New York City.

One last surviving Marconi tower, a "pygmy" tower, was salvaged in 1974 from Shark River near Brighton Avenue by the Wall Public Works with Army assistance. The tower now stands in a mini-park on Marconi Road near its original position. It is depicted in the upper right quadrant of the official Township seal. Amateur or "Ham" radio operators have made transmissions from the forty foot tower to celebrate Marconi's birthday with transatlantic transmissions.

The Ku Klux Klan under pseudonyms such as "The Pleasure Seekers Association" selected the Marconi buildings for their state headquarters in 1924. Klan real estate holdings extending as far

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as Brisbane were divided in various size lots for purchase by their followers. Residents today who purchase property in this once Klan area may find a reference to this group in the title search.. The Klan had to leave in 1928 due to internal problems and external political pressure. By way of contrast, in 1937, an evangelical, co-educational, liberal arts institution was founded on this same site by Rev. Percy Crawford. His rapidly growing "King's College" operated for about three years before business and educational problems caused the group to move to Delaware.

The ninety-plus acre site stood empty until 1941 when the United States Army took over the property. The Signal Corps was engaged there in electronic research and development as an extension of Fort Monmouth in Eatontown. The former gymnasium of King's College was employed as a research laboratory. After Pearl Harbor during World War II, the United States Signal Corps Radar Laboratory was established at the Marconi site. Due to wartime security, "radar" was deleted from the name, the area becoming the Camp Evans Signal Corps Laboratory of Fort Monmouth. Camp Evans was named for Lt. Col. Paul W. Evans, a radio pioneer.

Experimentation with radar and electronic echo techniques achieved its peak on January 10, 1946. From a 100 foot tower equipped with a bedspring antenna, a pioneering group of scientists and engineers bounced the first radar signal off the moon and back in two and a half seconds. This "Project Diana" was named for the moon goddess, and coincidentally, for an engineer's daughter, Diane Webb. On that day, Wall Township was launched into the Space Age. The Diana Radar Tower was later topped with a dish antenna. It is represented in the lower left quadrant of Wall's official seal. The tower was formerly secured on Marconi Road near the North Wall Little League field, but was no longer on view in 1990. Although Camp Evans was officially closed in 1993, its site and original buildings are expected to be transferred to Wall Township. *[Ed. note: please see <http://www.infoage.org>.]*

Establishment of churches in Wall has continued through the 1990's. Religious growth and development in Wall began as early as 1693 with the Quaker Friends Meeting House near the northeastern arc of what is now the Manasquan Circle. Severe storm damage in 1808 and again in 1888 necessitated rebuilding of the Meeting House. The present Quaker site with its Burying Ground is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. In a northwestern location, a group of Seven Day Baptists settled on Hurley's Corner (near Highway 34 and West Hurley Pond Road) about 1728 under the guidance of Peter Knott. In 1776, the church was moved farther east on Hurley Pond Road near today's Garden State Parkway bridges.

After the Baptists went south in 1783, the Independent Methodists moved the church again to the corner of Allenwood Road and Belmar Boulevard. Outstanding ministers such as Matthias Barkalow and Ralph Thompson preached there. The Methodist Protestants next used the small old structure. It was finally abandoned in the early 1960's and demolished. Reverend Ralph Thompson, began his ministry as a circuit riding preacher in 1794. His farm on Allenwood Road near Hurley Pond Road is recorded by the Monmouth County Grange as the oldest working farm in Monmouth County owned and worked continuously by the same family.

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The Allgor/Barkalow Homestead, Old Wall Historical Society Museum stands on New Bedford Road near Belmar Boulevard. Listed on New Jersey State and National Registers of Historic Places, the circa 1843 structure served as the Allgor farmhouse and then additionally in 1844, as a general store with a post office section. James L. Allgor urged the formation of the township and served on its first Committee, continuing in office for a total of thirty-one years. He was designated Salvage Master for ship wrecks along the coastline from Shark River to the Manasquan River. Perhaps coincidentally, Allgor also owned a Ships Chandler's business (boat equipment) across the street from his home. Named Postmaster of the New Bedford area, Allgor served in this capacity for twenty-one years. One of James Allgor's daughters married the Independent Methodist preacher Matthias Barkalow from the Chapel {Glendola} church. When James Allgor died, due to problems with his will his daughter Lavinia Barkalow had to purchase the property. Thereafter, a Barkalow family member lived in the farmhouse until the 1960's. This landmark homestead represents the contributions of a family from the years before Wall was established until today.

Many ministers at the turn of the 20th century were self-proclaimed rather than theologically trained. Louis B. Heller changed his calling from hardware salesman and factory owner to that of a "visionary" with the title of "Bishop." Heller dreamed of reproducing in Wall his version of an Asbury Park or an Ocean Grove religious campground. In 1899, he purchased land along Highway 71 and 18th Avenue which he called "Heller Park", in fact, buying a tent from Ocean Grove in which to hold services. He had houses constructed and a tabernacle which he claimed to be the first structure to have electricity in Wall. Heller chose for his narrow streets names such as "Campground," "People," "World" and "America." Farther south in the Manasquan area, Dwight Moody established another camp meeting site. Moody's evangelistic endeavors merited him a listing in modern dictionaries.

Wall residents did not always stick to their crafts. In the 1920's, Verne Treat who became a daredevil pilot with Ruth Law's Flying Circus also performed "wing walking" on an airplane in flight. Treat later settled down to the "routine" flying of air mail. Relatives confided that he once "crashed" his single engine plane on Remsen Mill's Road, conveniently near his home, intending to visit with his wife. However, he sat in the plane, refusing to move, until a postal official arrived to claim the mail bag he was clutching when he landed.

A young man born in 1935 and raised on a farm at Bailey's Corner and Ocean Roads brought Wall renown with his outer space achievements. Russell Louis Schweickart, astronaut, piloted the Lunar Module in its first test flight in space during the March 1969 Apollo 9 Mission. He became the first man to walk in space without an umbilical cord when he tested the self-contained back pack used by astronauts during ensuing extra-vehicular duties. An all-day hometown celebration greeted "Rusty" when he visited Wall. Schweickart has since "adopted" the Allenwood School which he attended, stopping, in for periodic visits. An official portrait of Russell Schweickart, Wall's own astronaut, hangs in the Municipal building.

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During the turn of the 19th century, first Belmar, then the other seashore communities, seceded from Wall to form their own municipalities. Recent years, however, have transformed the Wall Township that railroads ignored into a rapidly growing township. Today, Wall is crisscrossed by roads: the Garden State Parkway, Highways 71, 35 and 34, as well as Highway 138 connecting to interstate 195. Corporate jets from Allaire Airport fly over tree-edged open spaces dotted with industries, businesses, clusters of homes, tilled farms and stable land. Wall Township is a blend of the best of the old with the vision of the new.

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