



My Drift

Title: New Jersey

Written by: Jerry D. Petersen

Date: 21 Jan 2022

Article Number: 381-2022-2

In my ongoing effort to write something about all 50 states, this article will finish all the states that start with “New”. These include New York, New Mexico, New Hampshire, and New Jersey. I have also written an article about the six New England states.

New Jersey has a special place in my heart since I spend almost two years there while serving in the Navy. Lakehurst Naval Air Station was the home to the Aerographer’s Mate (Weatherman) School from 1922 to 1977. Since then, the school has moved to Chanute AFB, Illinois (1977-1993) and to its current location in Biloxi, Mississippi. I was originally scheduled to take the 3-month basic Aerographer’s Mate course. This was a good school and I ended up coming out 2nd highest in our class so they decided to keep me for another three months for advanced weatherman training. This was okay with me because by then I was playing basketball on the Weather School Team and on the Lakehurst Base Team. After the advanced school, the Navy decided to keep me at Lakehurst for another year just to play basketball. Well, I did have a “token” job in the school’s administrative office, but everybody knew why I was there.

I played my best basketball ever while at Lakehurst. I averaged over 30 points a game for the weather school team and around 20 points a game for the base team for the two seasons I played there. I scored 60 points in one game for my all-time best game. The base team played in the All-Navy tournament both years. I had a box full of sports trophies, which I mailed back home to Pleasant Grove, Utah. We kept these on the dresser in my room until my mother moved to Orem in 1993. In addition to playing basketball, I played touch football, softball, and a lot of ping pong. I played ping pong almost every day with a tall black guy whose last name was Butler. He was a friend of mine who was also on the basketball team.

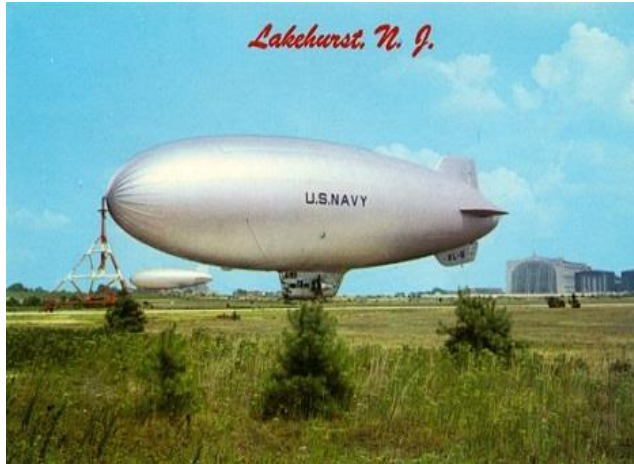


**Some of the Trophies I won playing sports in the Navy
(This picture was taken in my upstairs bedroom in Pleasant Grove, Utah)**

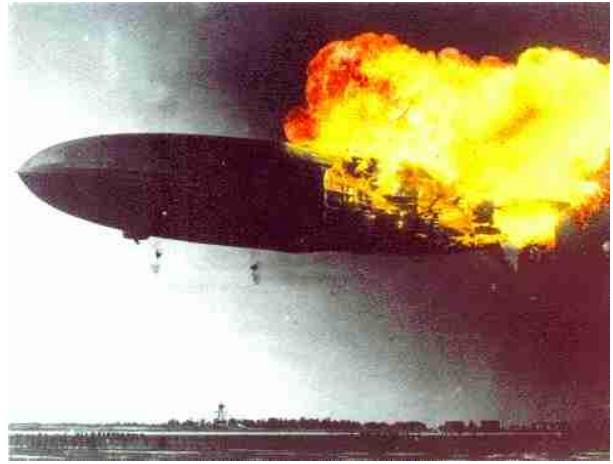


Lakehurst Base Basketball Team

Lakehurst is a Borough (Town) in Ocean County with a population of about 2,700. It is centrally located between Trenton (35 miles), Philadelphia (51 miles), and New York City (74 miles). It was also about 25 miles to Asbury Park and the famous New Jersey beaches. Lakehurst had five bars – one by the main gate, one on the other side of town close to Fort Dix, and three on the main street in Lakehurst. My favorite place was a bar in town where my boss Chief Whitworth was the bartender. Yes, the bar had a pool table and they played a lot of country and western music. The bar also had two dart boards and a shuffleboard. It was my kind of place.



Lakehurst, NJ



Hindenburg Disaster at Lakehurst

Lakehurst is famous for the Hindenburg disaster that took place on Thursday, May 6, 1937. The German passenger airship LZ 129 Hindenburg caught fire and was destroyed during its attempt to dock with its mooring mast at the Lakehurst Naval Air Station. Of the 97 people on board (36 passengers, 61 crew), there were 35 fatalities; there was also one death among the ground crew. The Hindenburg was the pride of the Nazi airship fleet, the biggest aircraft ever built: 804 feet long, filled with over seven million cubic feet of combustible hydrogen. They realized later that it was one big flying bomb.

Today, Lakehurst Maxfield Field, formerly known as Naval Air Engineering Station and Lakehurst Naval Air Station, is the naval component of Joint Base McGuire–Dix–Lakehurst, a United States Air Force–managed joint base.



10 Largest Cities in New Jersey

Newark (282,529)
Jersey City (258,523)
Paterson (144,511)
Elizabeth (130,450)
Toms River (89,254)
Clifton (84,654)
Trenton (82,401)
Camden (73,236)
Passaic (69,245)
Union City (67,698)



Newark



Jersey City (bottom) – New York City (top) across the Hudson River



Paterson



Toms River



Trenton

Trenton is the capital of New Jersey and the county seat of Mercer County. It briefly served as the capital of the United States in 1784. The city's metropolitan area directly borders the Philadelphia metropolitan area and was from 1990 until 2000 part of the Philadelphia Combined Statistical Area. Trenton is 40 miles away from Philadelphia.



List of all 44 New Jersey Beaches (from worst to best)

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 44. Wildwood | 30. Atlantic City | 16. Avalon |
| 43. Seaside Park | 29. Sea Girt | 15. Strathmere |
| 42. Long Beach | 28. Longport | 14. Barnegat Light |
| 41. Bay Head | 27. Sea Isle City | 13. Wildwood Crest |
| 40. Mantoloking | 26. Ocean Grove | 12. Long Branch |
| 39. North Wildwood | 25. Avon-by-the-Sea | 11. Sandy Hook |
| 38. Deal | 24. Belmar | 10. Stone Harbor |
| 37. Allenhurst | 23. Spring Lake | 9. Harvey Cedars |
| 36. Monmouth Beach | 22. Sea Bright | 8. Bradley Beach |
| 35. Margate City | 21. Point Pleasant Beach | 7. Cape May Point |
| 34. Brigantine | 20. Surf City | 6. Manasquan |
| 33. Ventnor City | 19. Asbury Park | 5. Ship Bottom |
| 32. Loch Arbour | 18. Ortley Beach | 4. Lavallette |
| 31. Seaside Heights | 17. Island Beach Park | 3. Ocean City |

And the Top Two Beaches

2. Beach Haven

1. Cape May



Asbury Park



Ocean City



Sandy Hook



Beach Haven



Cape May



Atlantic City

Brief History of Atlantic City

Atlantic City is a resort town near the southern tip of New Jersey best known for its casinos, boardwalk, and beaches. They legalized casino gambling in 1978. Gambling in Atlantic City is a \$3 billion industry, second only to Las Vegas as an American gambling destination.

Unlike Vegas, Atlantic City is a small town. The population at the last census was about 40,000. But its reputation as a resort city is mostly based on its historic boardwalk (where the casinos are) that stretches along five miles of the Jersey shore. About 26 million people visit Atlantic City each year, travelling mostly by car from nearby Pennsylvania and New York, though routes via plane and rail are also available.

Did you know that Atlantic City inspired the U.S. version of the board game Monopoly, especially the street names? All of the street names on the Monopoly board game are named after actual streets in Atlantic City. Since 1921, Atlantic City has been the home of the Miss America pageant.

The two New Jersey beaches I have been to are Asbury Park (while in the Navy stationed at Lakehurst) and Atlantic City (while visiting my daughter Tracy when she was living in Philadelphia).



**Miss America 2022
Miss Alaska – Emma Broyles**

General Information and History

New Jersey is a state in the Mid-Atlantic region of the US. It is bordered on the north and east by the state of New York; on the east, southeast, and south by the Atlantic Ocean; on the west by the Delaware River and Pennsylvania; on the southwest by Delaware Bay and the state of Delaware. At 7,354 square miles, New Jersey is the fifth-smallest state based on land area, but with 9.3 million residents, is the 11th-most populous and the most densely populated state. New Jersey's state capital is Trenton, while the state's most populous city is Newark. With the sole exception of Warren County, all counties in the state lie within the combined statistical areas of New York City or Philadelphia; consequently, the state's largest metropolitan area falls within Greater New York.

New Jersey was first inhabited by Native Americans for at least 2,800 years, with the Lenape being the dominant group when Europeans arrived in the early 17th century. Dutch and Swedish colonists founded the first European settlements in the state. The English later seized control of the region and established the Province of New Jersey, named after the largest of the Channel Islands, Jersey. The colony's fertile lands and relative religious tolerance drew a large and diverse population. New Jersey was among the Thirteen Colonies that opposed Great Britain, hosting numerous pivotal battles and military commands in the American Revolutionary War. The state remained in the Union during the U.S. Civil War, and thereafter became a major center of manufacturing and immigration; it helped drive the nation's Industrial Revolution and became the site of numerous technological and commercial innovations into the mid-20th century.

New Jersey's central location in the Northeast megalopolis fueled its rapid growth and suburbanization in the second half of the 20th century. At the turn of the 21st century, its economy increasingly diversified, with major sectors including biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, specialized agriculture, and informational technology. New Jersey remains a major destination for immigrants, with one of the most multicultural populations in the U.S. Echoing historic trends, the state has increasingly re-urbanized, with growth in the cities outpacing the suburbs since 2008. New Jersey is one of the wealthiest states in the U.S., with the second highest median household income. Almost one-tenth of all households, or over 323,000 of 3.3 million, are millionaires, the highest rate per capita in the country. New Jersey's public school system consistently ranks at or among the top of all U.S. states.

Rivers, Lakes, and Mountains

The Delaware River has a total length of about 405 miles and drains an area of 11,440 square miles. The river starts in upper New York and constitutes in part the boundary between Pennsylvania and New York, the boundary between New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and, for a few miles, the boundary between Delaware and New Jersey. The river's course is basically north to south and drains into Delaware Bay.

The Delaware River is the major river that runs through Trenton. During the American Revolution, on Christmas night in 1776, George Washington and about 2,400 of his soldiers crossed the Delaware from Pennsylvania to New Jersey 9 miles above Trenton and successfully surprised British Hessian troops in their winter quarters at Trenton.



Delaware River

The largest river that is in New Jersey is the Hudson River. It has a total length of 315 miles of which only 21 miles is in New Jersey. The Hudson River is basically a New York state river with a section of it separating New York City from New Jersey (See picture of Jersey City above).

The Raritan River is the longest river (121 miles) lying wholly within New Jersey. It is formed by the confluence of the North Branch Raritan and the South Branch Raritan rivers in western Somerset County. Its watershed drains much of the mountainous area of the central part of the state, emptying into the

Raritan Bay on the Atlantic Ocean. It is also one of the most scenic rivers in the state of New Jersey.



Raritan River

Lake Hopatcong is the largest freshwater body in New Jersey with about 4 square miles in area. Located 30 miles from the Delaware River and 40 miles from Manhattan, New York City, the lake forms part of the border between Sussex and Morris counties in the state's northern highlands region. Lake Hopatcong was produced by damming and flooding of two ponds, known as the Great Pond and Little Pond, and the Musconetcong River, its natural outlet. Historically known as a resort lake for vacationing New Yorkers, it is now a mostly suburban residential lake offering residents and visitors outstanding boating, sailing, kayaking, swimming, fishing, and water sports year-round.



Lake Hopatcong

High Point is a mountain peak within High Point State Park on the border of Wantage Township and Montague Township, Sussex County, New Jersey. It is the tallest mountain in New Jersey with an elevation of 1,804 feet.



High Point Mountain

New Jersey Symbols

- **State Animal is the Horse**
- **State Saltwater Fish is the Striped Bass**
- **State Freshwater Fish is the Brook Trout**
- **State Bird is The Eastern Goldfinch**
- **State Flower is the Violet**
- **State Tree is the Red Oak**
- **State Bug is the Honeybee**
- **State Reptile is the Bog Turtle**
- **State Folk Dance is the Square Dance**
- **State Fruit is the Blueberry**
- **State Motto is “Liberty and Prosperity”**

New Jersey Interesting Facts

#1 The Passaic River in Paterson was the site of the first submarine ride in 1878 by its inventor John P. Holland.

#2 Saltwater taffy's origins can be traced back to Atlantic City in 1883.

#3 The first professional baseball game was played at Elysian Fields in Hoboken, New Jersey on June 19, 1846. The New York Gotham Club humbled the New York Knickerbockers by a score of 23 to 1.

#4 New Jersey has the most diners in the world and is often referred to as the "Diner Capital of the World."



#5 Thomas Edison State University is a public university in Trenton. The phonograph, light bulb, and motion picture projector were all invented in Thomas Edison's Menlo Park laboratory.

#6 The longest boardwalk (60 feet wide and 5 miles long) in the world is located in Atlantic City.

#7 90% of all people who live in New Jersey live in what is considered an urban area. Most of these people live in Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Elizabeth, and other big cities across the Hudson River from New York City.

#8 Cheerleading was started at Princeton University in 1869. The cheerleading squad was all men!

#9 New Jersey has more Race Horses than Kentucky.



#10 New Jersey is home to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island – Not New York. Well, that's not what New York says! Here is the true story.



As the above map shows, both Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty are in New Jersey waters.



The Statue of Liberty is on Liberty Island – Not Ellis Island.

Part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument is located on Ellis Island. Although the monument and the Statue of Liberty are within New Jersey waters, Liberty Island and that portion of Ellis Island are within the territorial jurisdiction of New York state. So, the bottom line is “The Statue of Liberty is on Liberty Island, which is part of the borough of Manhattan, New York.”

Our government decided that it would be better if the Statue of Liberty was in New York instead of New Jersey.

Final Comment

Except for those crowded cities across the river from New York City, the rest of New Jersey is very scenic and a good place to live or visit. New Jersey has some of the best beaches on the east coast. I enjoyed the time I spent in this state.

Bigdrifter44@gmail.com

Bigdrifter.com