



3 Marvelous, Must-See Museums in Morris County, New Jersey

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SYNOPSIS

Morris County, New Jersey is home to some of the most distinguished heritage attractions in the northeast and perhaps the entire USA. Such as the birthplace of the telegraph, a force in the American Arts and Crafts movement, home to Thomas Nast and host to General George Washington's Continental Army during the two winter encampments, Morris County boasts sites important to American history in three centuries.

Here are 3 museums to visit that are seeping with heritage and will provide an educational, inspirational and fun experience for all.

STORY

Looking for an educational, economical and fun adventure? Then it's time to experience all that Morris County has to offer, such as its incredible museums. At Morris County's museums, you can step back in time, experience the wonders of a historic past, and learn something new. Here are three must-see museums in Morris County, N.J.:

1. Morris Plains Museum features permanent and changing exhibits – so there's always something new to experience. It preserves Morris Plains' history by keeping a collection of artifacts, records and documents and connects the past to the present.

The Museum was first located in a room on the second floor of the Morris Plains Library where Miss Rennie and her staff started recording and displaying items of local history. Through their efforts, the Museum acquired a wonderful collection of pictures, maps, documents, and artifacts that in 2005 were relocated to the Museum's new facility. Since then, the collection has grown, making Morris Plains' vibrant history tangible and meaningful for today's community – and for generations to come.

2. Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms is the only house Gustav Stickley, the foremost spokesman for the American Arts and Crafts Movement, designed and built for himself. Stickley, known for his Mission furniture, revolutionized American decorative arts.

The log house, built in 1911, is one of the most significant landmarks of the American Arts and Crafts movement, and the site, which consists of 30 acres of the original 650-acre tract, has been designated a National Historic Landmark. The focal point of Stickley's "Garden of Eden" was a large log house constructed of round, hewn chestnut logs that were cut from the property's woods and local stone also found on the property.

Stickley designed Craftsman Farms to be self-sufficient, with gardens for vegetables and flowers, orchards, and dairy cows and chickens. In its huge kitchen, meals could be prepared for 100 people. The living and dining rooms, reaching fully 50 feet and warmed by copper-hooded fireplaces, made ideal meeting rooms. The porch opened to a vista of the farm and brought in light and air.

Gustav Stickley's stylistic movement has made a lasting impression on American decorative arts. Considering the highly embellished interiors of the Victorian age that had preceded him, his functional approach to design and his unornamented, clean-lined furniture introduced Americans to the modern decorative arts to come.



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3. Whippany Railway Museum features full-size historical railroad equipment and rolling stock. Over the years, the Museum has acquired several unique pieces of railroad equipment with historic ties to New Jersey.

Railroad enthusiasts will be thrilled with the museum's offerings: coal loaders and historic Anthracite coal advertising signs, representative models, historic photographs, and rare paperwork. The Large O scale layout captures the feel of local New Jersey railroads, most notably the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western, and this interactive display allows visitors to control a streetcar and several animated displays. Other displays highlight a variety of railroad china, tools, and appliances such as bells, whistles and headlights.

The history of New Jersey's railroads truly comes alive within the walls of the Museum's freight house.

From Morris Plains' rich history, to the stylistic movement of Mission Furniture started by Gustav Stickley, to the historic N.J. railroads, there is so much to experience in Morris County. And, these are just a few of Morris County's historic attractions! Visitors to New Jersey's Morris County will find plenty of exciting ways to spend the day all overflowing with the area's vibrant history.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carol Barkin is the research and product development coordinator for the Morris County Tourism Bureau as well as a tour docent for the Bureau's Summer and Fall walking tour programs. For more information on historic New Jersey Getaways, visit www.morristourism.org



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