

New Jersey

MONTHLY

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Alexander Hamilton Was Here and Here And...

History is happening in New Jersey, and we just happen to be in the greatest state in the world.

By [Mary Ann Castronovo Fusco](#) | May 6, 2016 | Appears in the [May 2016](#) issue



Hamilton, middle, and Washington listen to Lafayette's 1780 vow of support on the Morristown Green. Photo by Maryrose Mullen.

If Lin-Manuel Miranda's masterful Broadway distillation of the extraordinary exploits of Alexander Hamilton has you thinking that "the ten-dollar/founding father/without a father" only ventured to New Jersey to meet his untimely end, think again. Hamilton also studied, dreamed, fought and loved on our side of the Hudson.

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Arriving from the Caribbean in 1772, the young immigrant resided in Elizabethtown and, like his future nemesis, Aaron Burr, attended Elizabethtown Academy on the grounds of the First Presbyterian Church (42 Broad Street, Elizabeth). He also lived at Liberty Hall, William Livingston's Georgian-style home in Union.

In 1776, an ailing Hamilton crossed the Delaware to the First Battle of Trenton (bas-relief of Hamilton, 1 West State Street, Trenton, former site of a Revolutionary-era tavern), and his artillery helped Washington surprise British forces at Princeton on January 3, 1777 (Princeton Battlefield State Park, 500 Mercer Road). At the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse (now Freehold) on June 28, 1778, Hamilton had his horse shot out from under him (Monmouth Battlefield State Park, Route 33, Manalapan). As part of Washington's contingent, Hamilton stayed at the Gothic Revival Hermitage (335 Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus), where Burr later married the widowed Theodosia Prevost. And in the winter of 1778 to 1779, Washington, Hamilton and the rest of the rebels' military brain trust made their beds at the Wallace House in Somerville (71 Somerset Street).

From December 1779 to June 1780, Hamilton bunked with George Washington and his other aides at the Georgian-style Morristown home of the widow Theodosia Ford and her four children (Ford Mansion and Washington's Headquarters Museum). The war room was downstairs; Hamilton slept upstairs. Less than half a mile away, Hamilton courted his future wife, Eliza "Betsey" Schuyler at the Morristown house where she was visiting her Aunt Gertrude and her uncle, Dr. John Cochran (Schuyler-Hamilton House/Jabez Campfield House, 5 Olyphant Place). Last July, the three actresses who play the Schuyler sisters in the Broadway musical toured the circa-1760 house.

You can take a selfie with the smitten patriot by inserting yourself into *The Alliance*, life-size bronze statues on the Morristown Green. It depicts General Lafayette informing Washington and Hamilton in 1780 that the French would send troops to aid the Americans. Facing the Green, a plaque marks the site of the Jacob Arnold Tavern, where Hamilton and his fellow officers were headquartered in 1777. It's now a Charles Schwab office.

Recently renovated and reopened, the Dey (pronounced "dye") Mansion in Wayne housed Washington and his advisers, including Hamilton, who used the four eastern rooms to plot their military strategy and rest in July, October and November 1780 (199 Totowa Road). Hamilton was also a regular visitor to Boxwood Hall (1073 East Jersey Street, Elizabeth), the home from 1772 to 1795 of Elias Boudinot, president of the Continental Congress.

Hamilton saw economic potential in the area around the Great Falls of the Passaic River, where he once picnicked on cold ham, tongue and biscuits with Washington and Lafayette. Post-Revolution, Hamilton founded the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures, a planned industrial community in Paterson. Visitors to Paterson Great Falls National Historical

Park (72 McBride Avenue) can view the falls and learn more about Hamilton's industrial legacy at the Paterson Museum, a short walk away.

With its winding paths and sweeping views of Manhattan, Hamilton Park, high atop the Palisades in Weehawken (J.F. Kennedy Boulevard East at Hudson Place), is a hot spot for bridal-party shoots, but it is not where Hamilton was fatally shot. The deadly encounter took place at the Weehawken Dueling Grounds on a nearby rocky ledge above the Hudson River, roughly across from Manhattan's 42nd Street. To see the reddish boulder that Hamilton is believed to have rested against after being hit, walk south to where Hamilton Avenue meets Boulevard East. It's behind an iron fence, next to a granite pedestal bearing a bust of the ill-fated duelist. Visitors toss pennies onto the rock. Sadly, Hamilton's eldest son, Philip, had died three years earlier (at 19) in a duel at the grounds.

To complete the tour, visit Burr's sorry-looking gravesite in Princeton Cemetery (Witherspoon and Wiggins streets). On your way, take a break at the service area between exits 16E and 15E on the New Jersey Turnpike South in Secaucus—who's it named for? Alexander Hamilton.