

## MUNICIPAL OVERVIEW: THE BOROUGH OF BUTLER



**MOTTO: "PORTA AD LACUS"  
(GATEWAY TO THE LAKES)**

**TOTAL SQUARE MILES: 2.1    TOTAL POPULATION: 7,420 (2000 Census)  
TOTAL SURVEYED HISTORIC RESOURCES: 37**

### **SITES LOST SINCE 1986<sup>1</sup>:**

- 1403-0006, Pequannoc Rubber Company, Main Street. Burned 1957; razed 7/27/2005 for redevelopment.

**RESOURCES DOCUMENTED BY HABS/HAER/HALS: None**

**RESOURCES LISTED IN OR DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER BY NJHPO<sup>2</sup>: 3**

American Hard Rubber Works Factory, Main Street. SHPO ID# 3378

New York Susquehanna and Western Railroad Station, Main Street. SHPO ID#2093, NR ID# 01001492

Morris Canal, existing and former bed. SHPO ID# 2784, NR ID# 74002228

### **RESOURCES NOTED IN THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT MORRIS COUNTY (HPEMC):**

The Town of Butler is in Region "A", with 0 sites.

**MUNICIPAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION: Yes, Butler Historic Committee**

**LOCALLY DESIGNATED/REGULATED RESOURCES: Unknown**

**HISTORIC ELEMENT IN MUNICIPAL MASTER PLAN? No**

**HISTORICAL SUMMARY:** The Borough of Butler was originally known as the Bloomingdale section of Pequannock Township. Dutch farmers first sparsely settled the area in the late 1690s, though a cohesive community did not begin to appear until the mid-1800s. Early industries were built along the Pequannock River, ensuring access to waterpower, and included a gristmill, a tannery, a sawmill, and a paper mill. By the 1850s, rubber factories had become the most prominent industry in Butler, specifically firms such as the American Hard Rubber Company, which produced goods under the "Ace" trademark. The success of local industries led to the development of a "company town" atmosphere, with company and developer sponsored neighborhood construction. In 1901, the Borough of Butler officially separated from Pequannock Township. In the historic central downtown, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century development focused around the massive American Hard Rubber Factory. More recent development has centered on major roads, including State Route 23, now a major commercial thoroughfare.

In the post-World War I period, new residential neighborhoods were developed, including Lake Edenwold, originally a resort community. The Pequannoc Rubber Company, a significant employer in the borough, burned to the ground in 1957. While some employees were able to stay in the area in a new

<sup>1</sup> Documentation gathered, including completed investigative memorandum, can be found in the "Lost Sites Documentation" file, located at the Morris County Planning Office, Morristown, New Jersey.

<sup>2</sup> Resources with National Park Service and/or NJ Historic Preservation Office determination.

office, the majority of workers were sent to a new facility in Georgia. The factory area is currently being redeveloped as a mixed-use area called River Place. Despite the loss of local employers, the population of Butler more than doubled in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**ADDITIONAL FACTS:**

- As of 2004, the American Hard Rubber Works was home to the “High Point Wheat Beer Company,” reportedly the first wheat beer brewery in America, producing the “Ramstein” brand. The brewery conducts tours of its site.
- Richard Butler, head of the American Hard Rubber Company, served as secretary under Joseph Pulitzer on the American Committee for erecting the Statue of Liberty. While serving, he befriended Auguste Bartholdi, the Statue of Liberty’s sculptor.

**MUNICIPAL WEBSITE:** [www.butlerborough.com](http://www.butlerborough.com).

**LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** No.

**SOURCES** – Acroterion Survey, Butler’s website ([www.butlerborough.com](http://www.butlerborough.com)), NJ Historic Preservation Office website ([www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/1identify/lists/morris.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/1identify/lists/morris.pdf)), Morris County Department of Planning, Development, & Technology, KSK Survey.