

## Long Bridge Park History

Thousands of people visit Long Bridge Park each year to enjoy its picturesque landscape, well-maintained trails, and playground area with pavilions where families and children gather and play. However, many do not realize how the park ultimately got its name.

Originally, the land located at the fork of the Rancocas Creek belonged to the Lenni-Lenape Indians. They chose this location because the fertile land permitted subsistence farming, the woods provided game, and the creek offered fishing and a transportation route for trading. They called this area Sandhickney. In future years, this area would be known by several different names, including Long Bridge.

The area was known as Long Bridge because of the long wooden toll bridge that crossed the south branch of the Rancocas Creek on the road that led from Mount Holly to Moorestown. In 1778 during the Revolutionary War, local American patriots partially dismantled this bridge to delay the British march across New Jersey after Commander-in-chief of the British Army Sir Henry Clinton and his men evacuated Philadelphia. Clinton's secretary recorded the incident in this manner: "At a small distance from . . . [Mt. Holly] a bridge was broken down by the rebels which, when our people were repairing, were fired upon by those villains from a house, two of which were taken prisoners, three killed and the other two ran into the cellar and fastened it so we were obliged to burn the house and consume them in it."

In the 1840s, a bricklayer and mason named Barclay Haines ran his steamboat downstream from Haines's port to Philadelphia and back delivering lumber and coal. In 1847, Haines purchased 50 acres of land and created a small settlement near the Long Bridge over the Rancocas. By early 1852, this community had generally become known, and remains today, as Hainesport.