

SITING AND RELATED STRUCTURES: Situated on the south side of East Water Street the Stewart House is 32 feet long by 24 feet wide. The house is located on approximately a one third acre bounded on the north by East Water Street, on the west by an adjacent contemporary house, on the south and east by the Toms River. Formerly, the outbuildings included a barn, smoke, and carriage houses but they are now gone.

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Open Space Woodland Scattered Buildings
Suburban Urban Residential Agricultural Industrial
Downtown Commercial Highway Commercial Other

To the east of the Stewart House, past Robbins Cove, is a 4.5 acre tract of land known as "Riverview Point". This was the site of an impressive 1869 Italianate mansion owned by Joseph Francis, an internationally famous inventor and boat builder. After a fire in 1966, the mansion was demolished and the site is being developed for condominiums.

SIGNIFICANCE: Col. Samuel C. Dunham, Toms River dockmaster, built the house on lands acquired from his father-in-law, Ebenezer Applegate in 1849. The house was sold to Charles Stewart in 1860 and became known as the Stewart House, a boarding house.

In 1864, sea captains began racing their sloops and schooners in regatta races in Barnegat Bay. This led to the formation of the Toms River Yacht Club. The club, considered to be the second oldest yacht club in America, was organized in and held its first meetings at the Stewart House on July 6, 1871. Charles Stewart became the club's first Commodore. It is here too, that the coin silver Challenge Cup, designed by Tiffany's in New York, was first raced for on July 26, 1871. The Challenge Cup Trophy Race has taken place annually for over 100 years; the oldest perpetual racing trophy in America.

Mr. Stewart lost the house in the panic of 1873 and it was sold at a sheriffs sale to Sheriff Clayton Robbins, step-son of Col. Dunham. The house was renamed the Dover House by which name it has generally been associated. The Toms River Yacht Club bought the building for their clubhouse in 1904 and owned it until 1916, when they built new headquarters. The house was then converted into a private residence.

PHYSICAL CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Poor
REGISTER ELIGIBILITY: Yes Possible No As part of district
THREATS TO STRUCTURE: Roads Development Zoning Deterioration
No Threat Other
COMMENTS:

Same as sites 1, 2, and 3

REFERENCES:

Monmouth County Courthouse. Deed books. Freehold, N.J.
New Jersey Courier (Toms River), May 30, 1860.
Ocean County Courthouse. Deed books, Road books, Toms River, N.J.

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