Ringwood Manor State Park

Ringwood Manor State Park lies in upper Passaic County and is reached by State Route 31 and the road from Pompton, New Jersey to Hackettstown, New York. From 1756 the two Dickinson heirs divided the Manor House and 35 acres of land to the State of New Jersey to preserve for posterity. Heirs, Morris H. Green, has given additional property bringing the total to 570 acres.

Development of the iron industry started at Ringwood in 1790 with the formation of the Ringwood Company. The products of its forge and furnaces were of great importance to the Colonies during the American Revolution. During this war, troops were stationed here and Ringwood Manor saw many military parades. General Washington made many visits to the Manor and his troops were quartered in the old blacksmith shop. Robert Dickinson, manager of the Ringwood Mines and Governor General for the American Army, prepared many maps here which aided Washington in his military campaigns. Following Dickinson’s death, October 2, 1790, his remains were buried at the country on the property overlooking the lake. Washington and his wife planned a tree at his grave in 1792, thus closing a chapter in the history of Ringwood.

Despite 1867 the Railroad family came into possession of the property. In 1875 it was purchased by Peter Cooper, New York philanthropist, best known as founder of the Cooper Union Institute. The property passed to Abram S. Hewitt, American industrialist, son of James, in the 19th century.

Formal Garden Scene

The Manor House

This elegant, rambling, old mansion represents the living conditions of the Herbiers, Cooper and Hewitts, from about 1810 to 1956. Sentimental, this magnificent mansion is now open to the public from May 1 to October 31.

The following publications are on sale at the Manor House:

- "The Story of Ringwood Manor" 40-page brochure by Alida S. Kuhn (local history)
- "Ringwood Manor - The Home of the Hewitts" 51-page brochure by Edward Ringwood Hewitt (local history)

Relics and Gardens

Among the interesting relics of the iron-making days will be found an arched and trip hammer from the Hewitt forge, a dock from the harbor, a cannon from the "Old Ironside," and a Civil War cannon. The remains of which was made here under a "muck order" issued by President Lincoln. A house of the house has a large chimney, purchased by Abram Hewitt, repaired so as to be a portion of the chimney stretched across the Hudson River during the Revolution to prevent passage of British vessels.

The formal gardens were developed by Mrs. Abram S. Hewitt and her daughter, Eleanor Hewitt. They contain many plants and trees with unique historical background.

Water Wheel

On the site once occupied by an iron forge is a replica of a water wheel which is currently used to pump water to a fish.splice reservoir. The low but easily visible site of the 12-foot wheel pumps 20,000 gallons a day to serve irrigation, ornamental basins and other needs.

Wildlife Sanctuary

The park has been dedicated as a wildlife sanctuary. Hunt- ing, trapping, and the carrying of firearms or bows and arrows are prohibited.

Fishing

The waters of the park provide excellent opportunities for fishing. The Ringwood River is annually stocked with trout by the Rock and Game Division, and Sally’s Pond, open to fishing only on specific dates, is well stocked with large-mouth bass and pickerel. The small ponds directly in front of the Manor House are not open. Other than these restrictions, fishing is subject to the New Jersey fishing laws.