



Jacobus Vanderveer House & Museum

Vanderveer House Through the Years

The oldest part of the Jacobus Vanderveer House was built in the early 1760s. It is typical of the Dutch frame houses that dotted the countryside before the American Revolution. Much of the original fabric of the house remains intact. Important is a wall in the west parlor that features raised wood paneling above the fireplace with a barrel-back cabinet to the side. Original flooring is of wide pine boards.

The house gained a Federal style addition in the early 1800s.

Later 19th and 20th century alterations imposed "bungaloid" features such as exterior stucco, a north porch and roof dormers. These modern elements were removed when the restoration returned the exterior of the house to its circa 1813 appearance. The interior of the house will interpret both the west Georgian section when Knox may have been in residence and the more spacious east Federal addition with its higher ceilings.

The Vanderveer family house was later enlarged with two additions in the nineteenth century, remodeled in the twentieth century, and subsequently abandoned. The Township of Bedminster purchased the home and the surrounding area as part of River Road Park in 1989. The home has been restored by The Friends of the Jacobus Vanderveer House, a non-profit group of inspired volunteers dedicated to use the home as a museum and educational center.

ca. 1772

Sometime between the fall of 1772 when Jacobus Sr. wrote his will, and the spring of 1778 when Jacobus (James) Jr. is assessed £3738 for 575 acres of improved land, the Jacobus Vanderveer Jr. House was constructed.⁶ The original 1770s house is a 1½ story, three bay, frame structure with a kitchen wing attached to the west end. Paneling, hardware, nails, saw marks and construction methods confirm a pre-Revolutionary War date. Original configuration was 1-1/2 story; 7 structural bents; four rooms at ground floor plus kitchen wing; entry at south. Stair location and configuration of kitchen wing remain a puzzle.

ca. 1813

East rooms added by Henry Vanderveer's daughter Mary Hardenburg. Style of mantel and molding profiles, windows, nails, lath and saw marks indicate pre-1820 date.

Changes include:

- two windows on east wall of ground floor removed.
- south porch (no longer extant) may have been added at this time.

1833-1868

House owned by Dr. Henry VDV (Elias' son), but not occupied by him.

Changes include:

- south porch (no longer extant) may have been added at this time.

The Friends of the Jacobus Vanderveer House

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1875-1909

House bought by Henry Ludlow at auction. Plans for development of the property at this time. Used as rental.

Changes include:

- gas installed
- kitchen wing remodeled
- Parlor cabinet altered to become doorway to kitchen wing
- west wall of house re-framed and re-sided
- Room 1 dividing partition removed and ceiling plastered

1909-1916

House owned by Frank Ballentine. He claimed to have "repaired, stuccoed and added porches".

Changes include:

- main entry relocated to north side
- new doors and paired 1/1 windows on north elevation
- hall stair relocated and widened
- doors to Rooms 1 and 4 relocated
- center hall opened and ceiling raised
- new flooring installed (much of which has been removed)
- dormers added
- 2nd floor east rooms constructed
- steam heat added
- plumbing installed

1917-1989

Owned by Schley family that owned the entire Schley (pronounced Schl – 'eye'). Used by the local polo club as well.

1989

Township buys property with Green Acres funds.

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