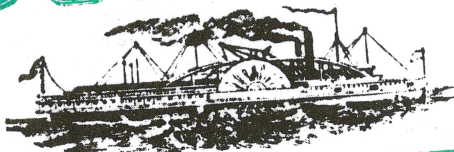


MATAWAN-ABERDEEN HOMETOWN SHOPPER

SATURDAY AFTERNOON AND SUNDAY
EXCURSIONS!

BY THE



STEAMER

"MATTEAWAN."

THE STEAMER MATTEAWAN WILL LEAVE

Pier 34 (North River) foot of Harrison street,
Every Afternoon at 4 o'clock, for Keyport direct,

RETURNING FROM KEYPORT SATURDAY AFTERNOONS AT 7 o'clock. FARE, 30c.

SUNDAYS,

Leave Harrison-st. at 9 A. M. (taking the inside route), landing
at Elizabethport, Rossville, and Perth Amboy.

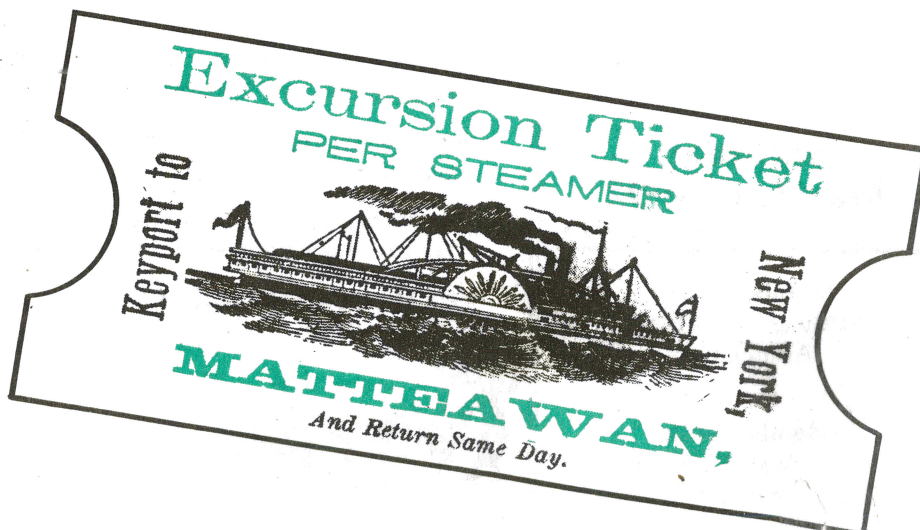
Returning, leave Keyport at 3:30 P. M. Fare to Keyport, 50c; Excursion tickets,
80c.; Elizabethport, Rossville and Perth Amboy, 25c.

Notice for week end excursion of the MATTEAWAN between Keyport and New York via the inside route by way of Arthur and Kill von Kull with calls at Elizabethport, Rossville, Staten Island and Perth Amboy.

Built For The Keyport
and Middletown Point
Steamboat Company
about 1862.

MARCH, 1992
SPRING ISSUE

INSIDE
VALUABLE
COUPONS



**MATAWAN-ABERDEEN
HOMETOWN
SHOPPER™**

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**Spring Issue
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**THE EASTER
BUNNY
Is Coming To
Main Street
MATAWAN!**

**Sat., April 11th
&
Sat., April 18th
(see page 5)**

**Matawan-Aberdeen
Spring Shopping
FESTIVAL
OF VALUES!**

**Saturday
May 2nd, 1992
(see page 41)**

Member of the
Matawan Main Street
Association

Member of the
Matawan-Aberdeen
Chamber of Commerce



MATAWAN MEMORIES



STEAMBOAT SHIPPING IN MATAWAN

The year 1831 was an important one for Middletown Point (now Matawan) and all Monmouth. The age of steam arrived here at the county's port and center of trade. When the first steamboat was steered up MATAWAN CREEK to the landing, residents came from miles around to see the new wonder.

The local storeowners debated its advantages. The more progressive felt that the sailing sloops were not fast enough for the growing demand of the port. The sloop captains, an influential part of the community, naturally opposed the change. In 1834, a meeting was held at a local hotel with the aim of procuring a steamboat for the trade with New York. It was decided that the trade had outgrown the sloops. The progressives had other advanced ideas. They announced a daily stage line to be run in connection with a daily steamer. The stage joined the port with the county seat at Freehold and with Keyport. The new steamboat was named the "MONMOUTH" and was docked at Ravine Drive making only one trip daily to New York with freight and mail. If through fog or accident she did not reach the city that day, the steamer kept on until she did and delivered the mail one day late to the New York Post Office. Farmers for a distance of fifteen miles hauled their products to both the sailing and steam vessels. It was a common sight to see a string of wagons extending from the lower landing to the store of CARTAN & CO. all loaded with produce waiting to unload. During the summer months, the vessels were loaded daily with strawberries, raspberries, early potatoes, etc. When colder weather came, hay, straw, apples and other produce would make up the cargo. When ice would freeze the creek, it was closed for navigation and the steamers were tied up at Keyport and load at that place.

Slowly, the creek's channel was silting due to timber cutting, farming, and building along the creek making navigation by the larger cargo ships increasingly difficult. A navigation company was formed in 1837 and cleared the channel. But the ships found it necessary to sail at high tide. When the work was not completed as low tide approached, it was necessary to move the vessel to Keyport and to transport the remainder of the cargo there in pushcarts. Gradually the filling of the channel took the ocean trade away from Matawan and closed the pages on a rich chapter of Matawan history.

With the growth of passenger traffic, it was the conclusion of many local residents that a combination freight and passenger boat would be a profitable investment. It was decided to build such a vessel and as a majority of the stockholders came from Matawan and other towns toward Freehold, the new steamer was to be known as the "MATAWAN". However, an error was made in the spelling of the word, and the lettering on the boat read "MATTEAWAN" after a town in New York State. This vessel was built in Keyport at Terry's Ship Yard about 1862 and was to have sailed from Matawan, but the boat was too long and wide for the short, sharp turns of the stream unless the tide was full. The "MATTEAWAN" tie-up place was changed to Keyport. It has been said that she was the finest steamer ever to sail in New York Harbor! The boat would leave Keyport daily, except Sunday, at 7:30 am and return from New York City at 4 p.m. One way passenger fare was 25¢. She usually entered the city via the Narrows. When bad weather threatened, the boat would take the route via the Jersey Kills and make stops at Staten Island's west shore. Eventually, there were Sunday excursions to the city sometimes twice daily stopping at Perth Amboy and Elizabethport. On many of the trips the Keyport band entertained. The "MATTEAWAN" was an excellent freight boat sometimes moving all the freight piled up at her dock from all parts of Monmouth including farm produce, live stock and manufactured goods.

In 1875, the New York and Long Branch Railroad extended its tracks to Long Branch and took all the passenger traffic from Matawan and Keyport which formerly patronized the boat because of the faster time and not being halted by fog or weather conditions.

The "MATTEAWAN" was then taken to New York and used on the Staten Island-New York run and then became an excursion steamer.

Material in this article was obtained from:

STEAM VESSELS BUILT IN OLD MONMOUTH 1841-1894 by Leon Reussille
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KNOW YOUR TOWN — MATAWAN BOROUGH AND TOWNSHIP,
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THE MATAWAN JOURNAL — May 20, 27, 1927, article by Charles E. Close.



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