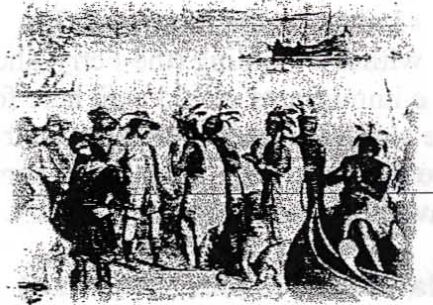


# HISTORIC OVERVIEW

## LIBERTY STATE PARK, JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

### Prehistory (10,000 BC - AD 1609)

For nearly 9,000 years, the area now known as Liberty State Park was a quiet cove. Communipaw Cove, as the natives and early settlers called this site, was known for its oyster beds and good fishing. When Henry Hudson first explored this area in 1609, he described the location as offering safe harborage.



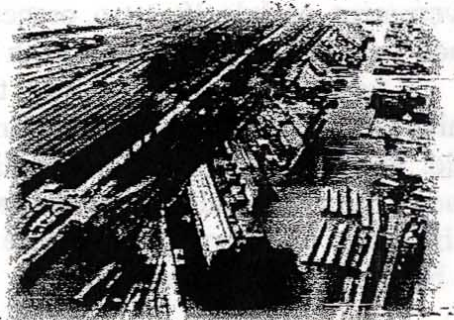
### Colonial (1609 - 1776)

Throughout the Colonial Period and into the 19th century, little changed in the area. The cove was surrounded by settlements of various sizes – to the north was Bergen (now Jersey City), to the west Communipaw (now a section of Jersey City), and to the south was Caven Point. In 1661, the first chartered ferry was established near the current location of the Liberty Science Center, connecting these settlements with the larger one at the tip of Manhattan.



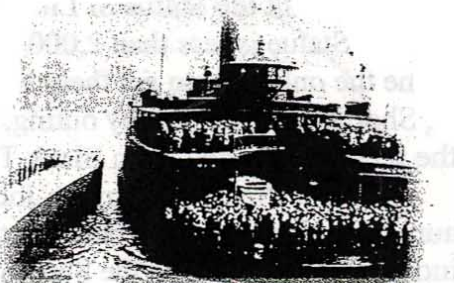
### Morris Canal (1836 - 1924)

The 19th century witnessed a second American Revolution – the Industrial Revolution. New Jersey once again played a major role in this movement. Transportation was the key to this period. Raw materials had to get to the factories and finished products had to get to markets. The once quiet Communipaw Cove soon evolved into a major transportation hub to fulfill this need. First to arrive in this area was the Morris Canal in 1836. The canal connected the Delaware River at Phillipsburg, NJ to the New York Harbor.



### CRRNJ (1860 - 1967)

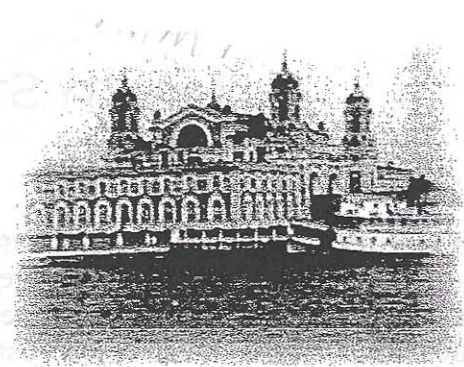
Soon the railroads saw the need to reach the markets offered via the Jersey City Waterfront. After getting permission, the Central Railroad of New Jersey (CRRNJ) purchased and began filling Communipaw Cove. Between 1860 and 1928, as the need to expand their facility grew, they continued filling the cove. At its peak, the area of the park was crisscrossed by nearly 100 miles of railroad tracks and surrounded by a web of docks and piers. The site was a virtual beehive of activity with hundreds of trains, ferries, barges and tugboats, and a variety of other water and land crafts arriving and departing daily.



The end of “The Age of the Railroad” was in sight, however, and the industry, which had peaked by 1929, rapidly declined. Better highways, competition from the trucking industry, and the shift from coal to oil and gas led to the demise of the railroads. Finally in 1967, the Aldene Plan called for the rerouting of all train traffic to Pennsylvania Station in Newark. The CRRNJ declared bankruptcy and the Terminal ceased passenger operations in April 1967.

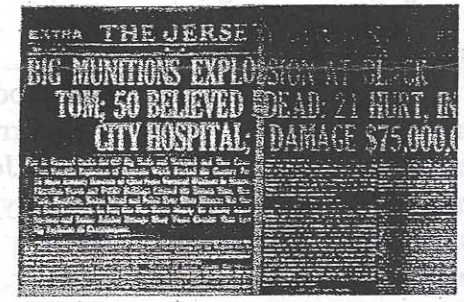
## Immigration (1892 - 1954)

The CRRNJ Terminal stands with the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island as a *Historic Trilogy*. Together they offer a wondrous three-part story of the immigrant's first glimpses of, and experiences in, the New World. Of the 12-17 million immigrants that passed through Ellis Island's Great Hall between 1892 and 1954, approximately two-thirds of these courageous newcomers started their new lives via the CRRNJ Terminal. The immigrants would purchase their train tickets at Ellis Island, then board a ferry to the CRRNJ Terminal. Historically, the location where visitors now wait to board ferries to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, was known as the Immigrant/Emigrant Waiting Room. This area used to be within a building (the Ferry Shed) that was attached to the terminal. The immigrants would wait here for their trains, and then proceed through the North Baggage Tunnel to their trains. Thus, the immigrants would avoid contact with the mass of commuters that used the terminal daily traveling to and from New York City.



## Black Tom Explosion (1916)

Now a section of Liberty State Park (along Morris Pesin road including the park office and Flag Plaza), Black Tom was originally a small island in New York Harbor not far from Liberty Island. Between 1860 and 1880, Black Tom was connected to the mainland by a causeway and rail lines terminating at a freight facility with docks. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Black Tom was serving as a major munitions depot. Before the United States entered the First World War, American businessmen would sell their supplies to any buyer. However, by 1915, the British Navy had established a blockade effectively keeping the Germans from being able to buy from the American merchants. The German government, on July 30, 1916, orchestrated the sabotage of freight cars at Black Tom, which were loaded with munitions for the Allies in Europe.



According to a recent study, the resulting explosion was the equivalent of an earthquake measuring between 5.0 and 5.5 on the Richter scale. Windows within a 25-mile radius were broken, the outside wall of Jersey City's City Hall was cracked and pieces of metal damaged the skirt of the Statue of Liberty (it is because of this explosion that the Lady's torch has been closed off to visitors).

