

Chapter 5

The Move To Sand Hill

As the population continued to increase in Monmouth County through the last half of the 19th century, the Richardson-Revey clan found more construction work in the newly developing shore communities of Asbury Park and Ocean Grove, New Jersey. To be nearer their work the Richardson brothers, Isaac, Theodore and Richard, purchased fifteen acres of land in 1877 from James Bradley of Asbury Park. The property was called Richardson Heights at Sand Hill in what was called at the time, West Asbury Park, since the town of Neptune had not been incorporated.

Although the 1880 New Jersey census lists the Richardsons as white, they kept their Indian heritage alive by intermarrying with Lenape-Deleware Indians living in Burlington County and New York. The families tried to maintain a tribal organization with a chief and council and having a summer powwow at the homestead at 1115 Springwood Avenue, now called Lake Avenue, Neptune, New Jersey.

The families cleared the land for farming and built houses near the natural springs, which flowed out of the hill. Older clan members kept Cherokee and Delaware arts and crafts alive by wearing deerskin and native clothing at the reunions.

They continued the customs of their woodland culture by retelling stories and tales from their past. The women and children spent summer days fishing and crabbing at County Neck, now called Shark River Hills.

For ten years the clan worshipped at Trinity Church in Asbury Park. After deciding that a mile was too far to go to attend church in 1890, the Richardson men built

St. Augustine's Episcopal Church on Sylvan Avenue in Asbury Park. They built the altar for the chancel, a bell tower, pews for two hundred people, and two chapels for Christenings. The first floor was used as a fellowship hall and for church school classes.



Richardson-Revey families donated the stained glass windows and brass railings for the church. The clan formed choirs, brass bands and guilds to serve the church and the local community. Theodora Richardson served as the organist for many years. A cross in the chapel was retrieved from a bombed out church in Europe and brought back to the church by Allen Thomas, son of Adeline Richardson Thomas.

The Richardson-Revey grandchildren attended the Whitesville Public School in Neptune throughout the early 1900s and many worked in the local community. During the winters, some of the family moved to the cities for better employment opportunities. Family properties were sold off as the later generations followed new positions and left the family homestead at 1115 Springwood Avenue on Sand Hill in Neptune.

Some of the families assimilated with whites, refusing to be seen with the clan. Libby, the second daughter, married a white man named Theodore (Dory) Vanderveer and moved to New York City. When they visited the Richardson clan, they had the carriage stop blocks away from Sand Hill so they wouldn't be known as relatives of the clan.

Since there were few Cherokee or Lenape remaining in New Jersey, the clan married people of mixed blood and African people who moved into the area. Gradually, the Indian heritage slipped away from the younger generations.