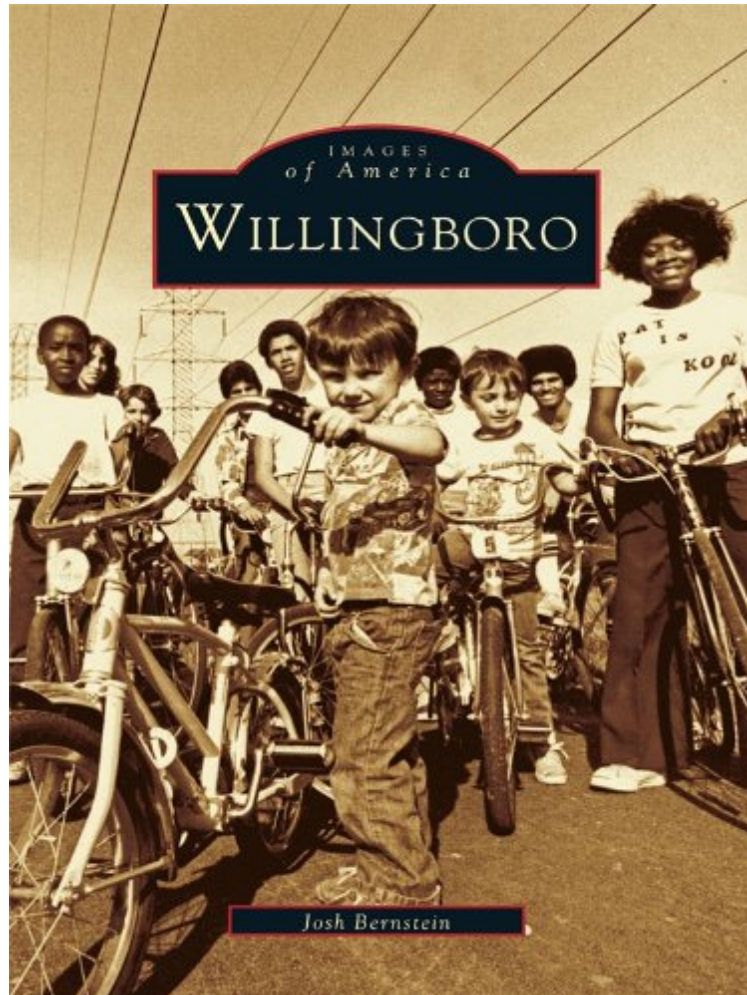


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Willingboro (Images of America)

Josh Bernstein

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Josh Bernstein : Willingboro (Images of America) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Willingboro (Images of America):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Take a good look at my hometown! By J. Hauer Whenever someone asks me the question, "Where did you grow up?" or "What's your hometown?", I'm always taken a bit aback and am not sure how to answer the question. You see, we moved a lot when I was a child. A lot. My dad was in the Navy and then changed jobs often as he worked his way up the corporate ladder. When pressed though, I answer "Willingboro, New Jersey" because we lived there twice along the way. The first time, we moved there in 1970 and left in 1973. Our home was a Regency model in the Twin Hills section. When we returned, it was late in 1979 and we again lived in Twin Hills, but this time in a Framingham model. My parents eventually sold that house in the spring of 2001 after an aborted sale attempt in 1998. In case you are not familiar with Willingboro, back in the 1960's it was known as Levittown, New Jersey. Yes, Levittown, just like the Levitt communities in New York and Pennsylvania. In

Willingboro, the township is divided into various "parks" and each park has streets which start with the same first letter as the name of the park. For example, in Twin Hills, I lived on both Tempest Lane and Tucker Court. Each park (with a couple of exceptions such as Windsor and Rittenhouse) had its own elementary school and its own swimming pool. The suburban community as a whole shared shopping centers, a municipal building, junior high schools and high schools. Josh Bernstein's Willingboro is part of the Images of America series of books. The book is primarily captioned black and white photographs with some text interspersed throughout. The author has divided the book into four sections or chapters: "West Jersey Farmers", "Rancocas Village: The Center of Commerce and Culture", "The Levittown Transformation" and "A Community Matures". The first chapter goes into the early history of Willingboro, back during colonial times. The most famous resident in those days was Benjamin Franklin's son, William, who had a deer hunting estate located where at the current intersection of Beverly-Rancocas Road and John F. Kennedy Parkway. William was a loyalist and ended up fleeing to the Jersey shore and eventually to Great Britain. The most famous historical event in Willingboro never actually happened and this is also documented in this chapter. Most of us learned in elementary school (or by watching *The Amazing Race: Family Edition*) that George Washington crossed the Delaware River during the Revolutionary War on Christmas Eve to surprise the Hessians. There was a second, large scale crossing planned from Dunk's Ferry but that was canceled because of poor weather conditions. Dunk's Ferry used to be part of Willingboro but local politics in the mid-1800's saw the more urban parts of Willingboro separating to become what is now Beverly. That's where Dunk's Ferry is. This chapter is full of pictures of the entire town before Abraham Levitt acquired land and built his version of suburbia. There's no real chronological order here, just reminders of what the area looked like when it was farmland. Today, if you travel south of Willingboro, behind the Navy AEGIS facility, parallel to I-295, you'll see a farm which is much like Willingboro used to look like long ago. I really enjoy the second chapter because it's all about the Village of Rancocas. This tiny area is nestled just outside the Willingboro township limits on Bridge Street today and you can still see many of the buildings pictured on these pages. Houses date back to the 1800's, the speed limit is only 25 mph and it's so quiet and peaceful. I have some major problems with the third chapter of Willingboro, because of factual problems and what I consider to be misrepresentation. For example, the author states that the United States Supreme Court ruled that Levitt had to desegregate Willingboro and sell homes to black people. That is not true. There was a lawsuit against Levitt concerning desegregation but it did not go to the Supreme Court. Instead, Levitt decided to desegregate in order to avoid bad publicity. A very convoluted plan was instituted where blacks could only choose homes in new neighborhoods where no one else had moved in. They were given the first choice of lots and houses but no two black families could live next door to one another. Now, there was a case involving Willingboro that did make it all the way to the Supreme Court in 1977: *Linmark Associates v. Township of Willingboro*. This case concerned the township's rule that real estate agents could not post "For Sale" signs in the community which was put into place to avoid "white flight". Needless to say, you can drive through the town today and see "For Sale" signs planted on front lawns. This chapter is also supposed to be more historical in nature with photos from the 1950's and 1960's. While I liked seeing pictures of Jack Benny playing golf and seeing Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy campaigning in town, I didn't like seeing a picture taken during the 1990's of the boarded up Fox Theater. There's lovely caption about residents having memories of the theater but it would have been so much more appropriate to have had a picture of the place before it was boarded up and ready to be razed. My own memory involves seeing Purple Rain there and there were people banging on the exit doors who were let in for free by their friends. The final chapter is more contemporary in nature. It's my favorite chapter because I love recognizing people I know in the photos. There's a picture of the school board having one of their contentious meetings and I know the student videotaping the session for cable television. My friends and I were such geeks that we loved to watch the school board meetings on television because they were so funny. I know the teachers pictured in the photo concerning the strike of 1977. I'm even in one photo of a high school graduation which was taken from the top of the football stadium. Good luck finding me because I'm merely a dot with the concert band on the side! The biggest problem I have with Willingboro is that I feel the author has missed the true story of the township, the interesting meaty part of the town's history. Willingboro has changed from a 100% white population in 1958 to a 67% black population in 2000. When you look at the pictures in the book, there are hardly any African American faces there. Yet, I know there were black faces in the early 1970's. I see them on the pages of my kindergarten yearbook from Twin Hills Elementary School. I saw them in the mid-1980's in my high school. But they aren't in the pages of this book. Reading Willingboro, you'd never know that the town has a black majority and is well known in New Jersey as an African American community today. The transformation of this suburb is an interesting sociological story and one that I think the author could have told, although I am not sure that the particular format of this series would allow an in-depth observation. This is the real story of Willingboro and one that should be told. While I enjoyed looking at the pictures throughout the book, I don't know how much I would enjoy it had I not lived in Willingboro. I did get a thrill seeing people I know. It was almost like getting another yearbook after the fact. I'm bothered by the mistake concerning the Supreme Court case since the desegregation issue ended up completely transforming the town. I'm bothered by the absence of minority faces throughout the book. I'm not sure that the author understands the heart and soul of what makes Willingboro unique. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Lots to see By James

Paul I've never read an ebook with so many pictures, which makes it very cool. The text at the beginning is minimal but the captions are detailed. I was vaguely aware of the early, pre-Levitt history, and found it interesting. Having moved away many years ago I found the rest very nostalgic, like Fun Day, the '77 teachers strike, the Plaza, advertising about home sale prices only relayed by my parents, the schools pools, etc. It's definitely worth the modest price. 2 of 17 people found the following review helpful. The Hidden History of Willingboro New Jersey By Amen Farel Willingboro New Jersey. This book gets a one star because the author failed to mention a few pertinent facts. To elaborate, before and after 1688, before that area was called Willingboro or Levittown or Wellingsborough, it was Timbuktoo. Timbuktoo was a refuge for kidnapped Africans and red men who managed to escape the torture that europeans inflicted upon the races of beautiful hues in those days. The Africans went into the woods of Willingboro and the surrounding areas and built a Marroon type society of splendid granduer. Timbuktoo was actually according to old maps of a few tribes of red men, an area encompassing a good portion of what is called today Burlington County New Jersey. Africans coming from down south would risk their lives fighting to get along the underground railroad to dwell in the only place in all of america named after a legendary African city, Timbuktoo. The proof of this is in the fact that in Westampton New Jersey, a town that borders Willingboro and a Native American reservation, there is a cemetary where Black soldiers lie, and the signs explain in detail, that these Black men were from Timbuktoo. And if you call the Burlington County Historical society they have pamphlets that explain the history of Timbuktoo, the major rebel "slave" haven on the east coast of america. Timbuktoo became famous because at some point some europeans from down south came to Timbuktoo to once again kidnap more innocent people, to drink the blood of the blameless, and the mighty men of Timbuktoo would have no more of it... so they picked up their guns and gave the kidnapppers a taste of what they were looking for, they gave them a blood-bath, they gave them war. In the end the men of Timbuktoo were forced to relocate from Timbuktoo or die fighting. Some stayed and fought long and hard, some refused to escape along the underground railroad but most simply moved on up to New York or Canada. Today Timbuktoo, called Willingboro by europeans, is once again predominantly Black African. And the warrior spirit is still very much alive. The police in this suburban town have much more technology and funding than most suburban towns, like Sicklerville for example, and the police use this funding to be as brutal as ever to the majority of town. The Willingboro police department in a few years time have beat young men, they have killed young people, they have even shot a young man to death at a Church in that town! Church officials say that the willingboro police murdered the young man at church so they could complete their evil satanic ritual by spilling the blood of the innocent on the house of almighty god! Then they went even more sadistic and shot a young child at school, traumatizing hundreds of children. The racist and corrupt police there lie to send innocent men to prison, racial profiling is law in that town and its only getting worse. They try to blame the poorer minority areas of that town but even in the bourgousie parts of town where the rich people lay beyond the hills, even wealthy non-black people have been shot by other wealthy non black people for who knows why, in one of the rich areas thats happened in the last few years. So theres no easy scapegoat. But its a fact that if some of willingboros funds go back into the community to give the kids something to do so they would be off the streets; as opposed to funding police with more batons to beat the people, or more mace to spray into the eyes of the people, maybe there wouldnt be the influx of gangbangers there now. Streets are filled with gangbangers, muslim gangs, neighborhood gangs, white supremacists groups and now bloods and krips in red or blue cars and trucks, with red or blue bandanas on, 30 at a time fist fighting at the supermarket. Banks have been robbed almost every month in Willingboro in 2008 and there are daily shootings and robberies and house invasions that rarely make it into the paper. Much like how rich people deal with places they dont like, like Haiti for example, Willingboro will always be purposefully ignored and politically corrupt. Until it goes back to its roots...the roots of being a natural agrarian town governed by good humane people. Until then, while Timbuktoo is occupied by the rich and racist, as the violent murder that occured in Willingboro earlier this year proves, it will get more violent and it will stay uncontrollable....as uncontrollable as Timbuktoo always was..Timbuktoo, the first and only city in america to be named after an African city.

Located between Philadelphia and Trenton, Willingboro has a three-hundred-year history of forward thinking. Founded in 1688 by Thomas Olive, a Quaker who left England seeking religious freedom, Willingboro evolved from an agricultural community longing to rid itself of British rule to a suburb unique in the United States. Using many vintage photographs and historical documents, Willingboro chronicles the rich lives and experiences of its residents, including William Franklin, the last royal governor of New Jersey, and track star Carl Lewis. This volume explores Willingboro's beginnings as a quiet farming community, which was a planned Delaware River crossing site for Washington's army during the Revolutionary War. Close to two centuries later, a Long Island developer replaced the farms with eleven thousand affordable homes that became America's third Levittown. Willingboro is the finest example of post-World War II suburban planning, affirmed in 1960 by the Westinghouse Corporation's decision to use the town as the backdrop for its "picture of everyday American life" advertising campaign. Willingboro gained international attention for its groundbreaking design, campaign visits from John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon,

lakefront resort created through the construction of the Philadelphia subway system, and renowned jazz festival.