

Introduction

Hopewell Junction: A Railroader's Town narrates a history of the east-west, short-line railroads that ran throughout Dutchess County, New York, from 1869 to 1984. The narration centers on the connection of many of these short lines, the hamlet of Hopewell Junction in the town of East Fishkill, within Dutchess County; on the train depot built there by the Dutchess and Columbia Railroad circa 1873; and on the hamlet that grew up around the depot from circa 1873 to 1963.

The narrative focuses on four interrelated topics. The first topic is the rise, prosperity, and fall of the railroads that ran in Dutchess County and especially through Hopewell Junction. The second topic is the flourishing of the Hopewell Junction depot from circa 1873 to 1933, its gradual decline in importance, and its abandonment in 1986 by the last railroad to own it. The third topic is the appearance, growth, and departure of the hamlet surrounding the depot starting in about 1873 and ending in 1963 with the building of the large International Business Machine plant southwest of Hopewell Junction. The fourth topic is the successful restoration of the depot from 1996 to 2021 as a designated museum of the Education Department of the State of New York and as a historic and architectural resource on the New York State Register of Historical Places by the New York State Historic Preservation Office and on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service.

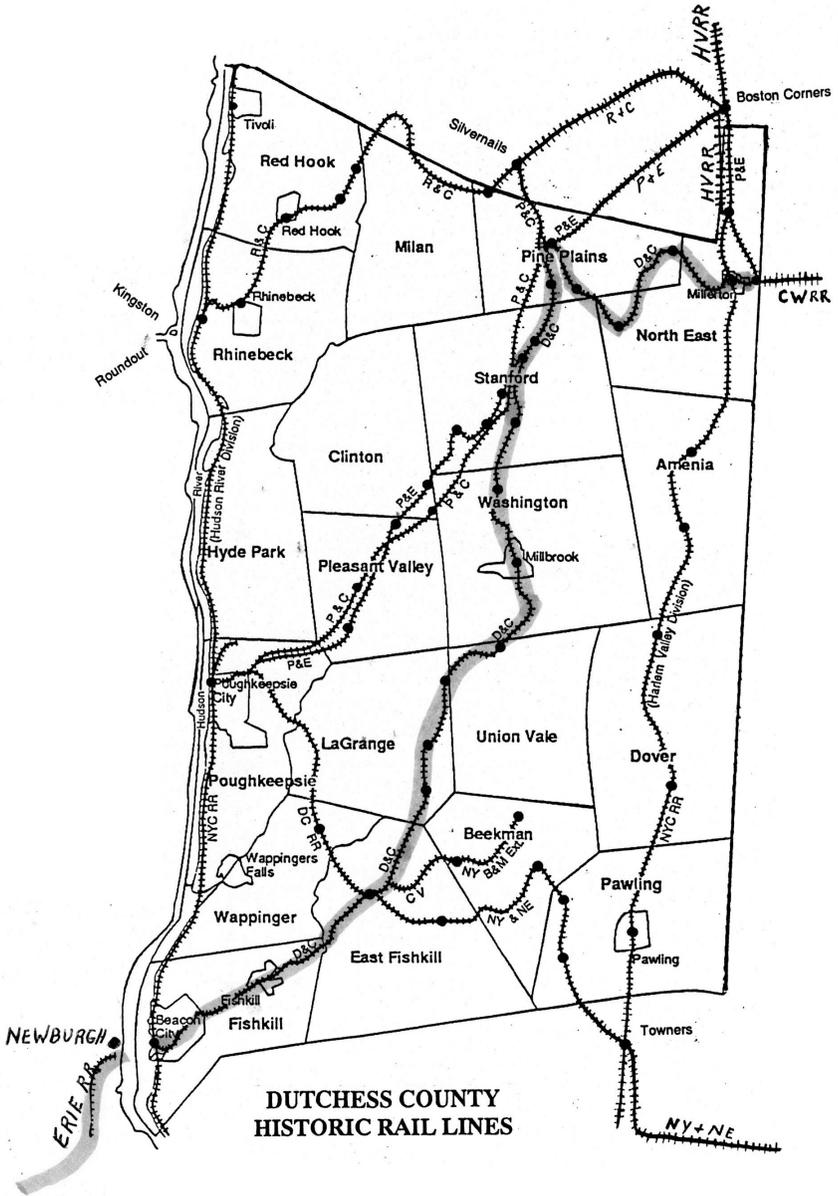
In general, *Hopewell Junction: A Railroader's Town* informs the reader who may not be aware of the abandoned bridge abutments and rutted rail beds hidden in the trees and tucked away in private backyards of the extent of the east-west, short-line railroads that crisscrossed Dutchess County

and ran through Hopewell Junction. The book explains the transforming albeit relatively brief presence of these railroads on the rural countryside and on the agricultural and small-mill communities of Dutchess County, including Hopewell Junction, during the last half of the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries. It chronicles the destruction and abandonment by the failing railroads of their unproductive assets, such as the rails that ran past the Hopewell Junction depot and the building itself. It illustrates the arrival and departure of Hopewell Junction as the hamlet surrounding the depot and the center of a railroad hub until that hub was terminated and the IBM plant was built. It recounts the resolve of volunteers in the last decade of the twentieth and first decades of the twenty-first century to reverse that abandonment by restoring and repurposing not only the few remaining assets of the failed and often forgotten railroads but also preserving the history and artifacts of these railroads and the railroader towns they created.

Railroad Names and Their Abbreviations

The following lists the railroad lines and their abbreviations mentioned in the book.

Boston, Hartford, and Erie Railroad (BH&ERR)
Central New England and Western Railroad (CNE&WRR)
Central New England Railroad (CNERR)
Clove Branch Railroad (CBRR)
Connecticut and Western Railroad (C&WRR)
Conrail Railroad (Conrail)
Dutchess and Columbia Railroad (D&CRR)
Dutchess County Railroad (DCRR)
Dutchess County Railroad Company (DCRRC)
East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad (ET&VRR)
Erie Railroad (ERR)*
Freehold & NY (F&NY) Railroad
Hampshire and Hamden Railroad (H&HRR)
Hartford and Connecticut Western Railroad (H&CWRR)



Historic Railroad Lines in Dutchess County, New York. Courtesy of the Poughkeepsie Dutchess Transportation Council.

Hartford, Providence, and Fishkill Railroad (HP&FRR)
Housatonic Railroad (HRR)
Hudson River Railroad (HRRR)*
Metro-North Railroad (MNR or Metro-North)
New England Railroad (NERR)
New York and Harlem Railroad (NY&HRR)*
New York and Massachusetts Railroad (NY&MRR)
New York and New England Railroad (NY&NERR)
New York Central Railroad (NYCRR)
New York City and Hudson River Railroad (NYC&HRRR)
New York, Boston, and Montreal Railroad (NYB&MRR)
New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad (NYNH&HRR)
Newburgh, Dutchess, and Connecticut Railroad (ND&CRR)
Penn Central Railroad (PCRR)
Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR)
Philadelphia and Reading Railroad (P&RRR)
Philadelphia, Reading, and New England Railroad Company
(PR&NERRC)
Poughkeepsie and Connecticut Railroad (P&CRR)
Poughkeepsie and Eastern Railroad (P&ERR)
Poughkeepsie and Eastern Railroad Company (P&ERRC)
Poughkeepsie and South Eastern Railroad (P&SERR)
Poughkeepsie, Hartford, and Boston Railroad (PH&BRR)
Rhinebeck and Connecticut Railroad (R&CRR)