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COWS ONCE GRAZED IN INDUSTRIAL PARK

Seventy years ago, the land on the west side of Harristown Road now known as the borough's Industrial Park was known primarily for its cows.

The Frank DeBoer family had settled there back in April of 1899, had bought a few dairy cows and started a prosperous dairy business. They kept the cows and grew feed for the cattle on about 15 acres on the one side of the narrow dirt lane that was Harristown Road, and farmed the land on the other side for the Outwater family.

A zoning ordinance was passed by the borough in 1929 that designated the land as industrial and further spelled out just what sort of industry was not to be allowed on the land – no boiler works, no blast furnaces, no soap manufacturers or stockyards or sugar refining or lamp black manufacture. But such specifications were actually unnecessary because the DeBoer family was not about to give up its dairy business and the rest of the industrial park land – a total of almost 40 acres – was also privately owned.

The borough continued growing, though, and with its growth came a demand for more ratables to take some of the sting out of property taxes of the homeowners.

In 1951, Pacquin, a division of Ming, Inc., moved into the first plant built on the industrial tract. They built on a 4.8 acre parcel bounded on one side by the DeBoer family on the other side by the Erie tracks and fronting on Harristown Road. Taxes proved too high for the company, however, and they moved out in the late '50s. The building sat empty for a couple of years and then was taken over by the Paulist Fathers, a move that started a dispute between the town and the Paulist Fathers over taxes and whether they should be paid.

Paulist maintained that it should receive tax exemption and was upheld by the Bergen County Board of Taxation. The borough appealed the

decision to the state, however, and in the early '60s the dispute was settled out of court; Paulist has paid full taxes since 1964.

The big plant will again be vacated in the near future, however, Paulist will move to Paramus and Microfilming Corp. of America will move into the building.

Soon after Pacquin came into the industrial designated land, J. Fischer and Brother built a plant on 2.45 acres of land at the other end of the park. The Fischer company has been settled since 1955, dealing in sheet music, pianos, organs, and so forth.

The major development was not to come until very recently, though. The McBride Agency began buying up land in the area in the early '50s but for a decade nothing was done with the McBride purchases – the opportunities of the Glen Rock Industrial Park were overshadowed by the low taxes and many acres of the Fair Lawn Industrial Park that started just a few yards south on Route 208.

Acreage Landlocked

In 1967, McBride turned its interest from Fair Lawn to Glen Rock and developed the Manhattan Shirt plant on 12.6 acres of land; the development is assessed at \$2 Million, the highest assessed value of any venture to go up in the park to date. The addition of Manhattan Shirt did not come without a battle, however. Unlike the Paulist Fathers and Fischer, which both front on Harristown Road, the 12.6 acres designated for the shirt company were landlocked.

A road had to be built, and the fight was over who should pay for that road and where should it go. Still unfinished, DeBoer Drive comes off of Harristown Road, runs in front of Manhattan Shirt and, ultimately will hook up with the west bound lane of Route 208. Cost to the borough will come to about \$65,000 and the state will pay the cost of the ramp connecting it to the highway.

Next development was by McEntegart and Melehan, Inc., on a 1.37 plot of land next to Fischer and fronting on Harristown. M & M is still unfinished and partially vacant; one of its biggest renters now is Metropolitan Life Insurance.

Now in the works is a relocation of the Eastern Area Communications Headquarters of Motorola on a 4.7 acre tract also fronting on Harristown Road. The plant is making the move to Glen Rock from the Fair Lawn Park and is scheduled for completion next spring.

What had happened to the DeBoer family and its dairy business during all this recent development?

It is still there, but it is no longer surrounded by farmland. Harristown Road, a dirt lane when it came, is now a busy street with police directing the traffic during rush hours and a widening project is contemplated.

To the west is the Paulist Fathers, to the rear (north) is the sprawling, modern Manhattan Shirt and to the east will soon be Motorola.

Farm Sold

The DeBoer family sold all its land a couple of years ago to the McBride Enterprises. "There's a time and a place for everything, and this was the time to sell," says young Frank DeBoer Jr. who has been running the dairy farm for the last few years. They have bought a 100-acre farm up in Orange County – just if and when they will permanently leave Glen Rock is still undecided.

In the meantime, the family has an agreement with McBride under which it keeps the house and the remaining cows for as long as Frank DeBoer Sr. lives.

McBride benefits also from the arrangement with the DeBoers. Motorola, which will go up in part of the original DeBoer land, will be taxed at the regular rate of \$4.00 per \$100 assessed value (the 1969 rate), but the rest of the old DeBoer property now owned by the developers has farmland exemption and probably will until it too become developed, or the DeBoers stop farming.

To give an example of what this means: a 2.5 acre-tract of DeBoer land now owned by McBride has an assessed value of only \$26,600, thanks to the farmland exemption; the 2.4 acre plot of land and building owned by Fischer has an assessed value of \$220,600.

All told, the Industrial Park has 39.281 acres of land with a total assessed value of \$3,292,500 and yielding taxes of \$134,334. And out of that almost 40 acres of land, some 13.575 acres still are undeveloped.