

The Cross Estate

This charming home recalls the days of summer retreats in the popular “Mountain Colony” of Bernardsville. Originally constructed by John Bensel in 1904, the home was part of his “Queen Anne Farm” which included a large stone residence of 20 rooms, carriage house, five-story stone water tower and gatekeeper’s house.



In 1929, New York City resident W. Redmond Cross purchased the property, renamed it “Hardscrabble House” and enjoyed summers there with his family. A new wing was added that included a large living room/ ballroom, porch, bedrooms and sleeping porch. Also constructed were a rifle and skeet range, tennis court, forge and extensive gardens, greenhouses and gardener’s cottage. After her husband’s death in 1940, Mrs. Cross reduced the home’s size, removing the entire east wing among other elements. After her death, the 162-acre property was added in 1975 to the Morristown National Historical Park, providing protection for the adjacent 18th century New Jersey Brigade Revolutionary War encampment area. New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation volunteers work to preserve the English country gardens. In 2003, the Cross Estate became the 12th Mansion in May.

