

## Town History



Originally home to the Siwanoy and Kitchawong Indians (Mohican tribes, a subgroup of the Algonquians), the town takes its name from a tribal "pound" or enclosure for game that was on one of the area's many "ridges". The Indians led a relatively peaceful life of planting, hunting, and fishing.

Pound Ridge was originally settled in 1640's as part of a tract of land purchased from local Indians by Captain Nathaniel Turner, and it was officially incorporated in 1788. For the last 250 years there has been much controversy over the spelling of "Pound Ridge" or "Poundridge", but finally in 1948 the Town Board declared the name to be the two-worded version.

During the Revolution in 1779, Pound Ridge was the scene of the dramatic raid led by the British Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton (his portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds shown at right). He overwhelmed the local militia commanded by Major Ebenezer Lockwood and the regiment of Continental Light Dragoons (mounted infantry) led by Lt. Col. Elisha Shelton stationed in the Hamlet area. Fortunately, Tarleton got a bit lost finding Pound Ridge, which enabled the Americans more time to prepare. However, with better than a 2 to 1 advantage, Tarleton (a.k.a. "The Butcher") conquered, plundered, and burned much of the town.

By 1920, the population dwindled to 515. Then, during the 1930's things changed. Hiram Halle, an inventor and businessman, came to Pound Ridge from New York City and began renovating and reconstructing houses.

He hoped to enhance the community, and it did attract actors, writers, artists, and musicians. They discovered that Pound Ridge was a charming and convenient getaway and began purchasing homes. Benny Goodman was one of the first of these residents, and he even composed a melody entitled "Pound Ridge". Many creative people and celebrities continue to move to Pound Ridge (sometimes referred to as the 2nd Hollywood).

By the 1940's, Pound Ridge's population rose to almost 800, and it continued to grow slowly and steadily to 4,000 in 1980 and 4,550 in 1990 to 4,700 in 2000.

Interest in the preservation of Pound Ridge's architectural heritage has also been maintained throughout the years. These older landmarks and homes (with wells and barnegats for crushing seashells) are an integral part of the character of the town and provide the community a shared "pride of place".

The current population of the residents of the Town of Pound Ridge, NY includes 4,918 people (2004 US Census) living mostly in single-family dwellings on 2 or 3-acre minimum zoning districts.

In addition there are deer galore, emus, swans, ducks and geese, foxes and coyotes, raccoons, otters, squirrels, chipmunks, frogs, crickets, etc..

And last but not least is the official Town of Pound Ridge Cemetery originally known as "Burial Hill".

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