



COMMUNITY

# WHITEMORE CCC



## A Celebration of Community, Culture and Conservation in Hunterdon County

Article by Sara Catherine Lichon

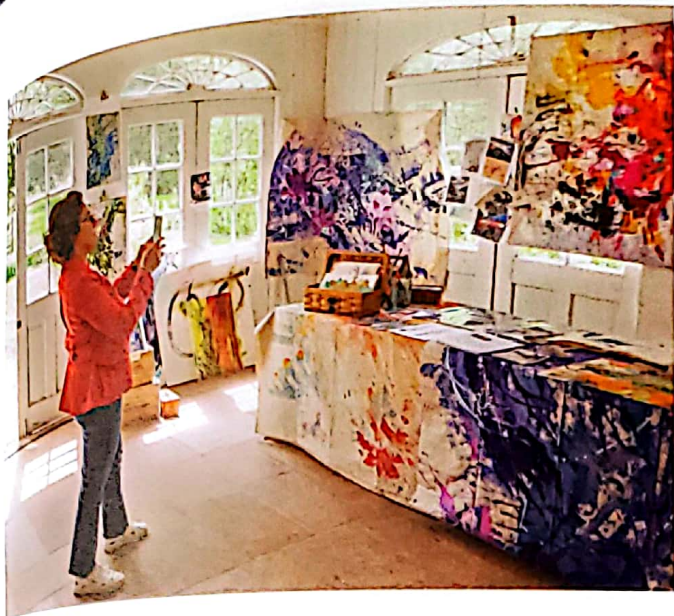
Photography by Sandra Ross, Courtesy of WCCC



Oracle by David Horowitz

Art, music, nature, and food all have a place in the “symphony” at Whittemore CCC, where Community, Culture and Conservation share center stage. Hidden in the trees of an unassuming road just off I-78 in Oldwick, Whittemore is a buzzing hub of creativity, and there’s a little something for everyone. In the height of summer, gardeners tend to vegetables in raised beds, painters recreate flowers on canvas, musicians fill the air with song, hikers traverse the trails, and patrons practice yoga in the field. These seemingly different ventures are bound together by a common thread: Whittemore’s dedication to community.

The BRJ last visited Whittemore when it “was in its infancy” in the words of Whittemore’s Director, Carolyn Thow, and much has changed since then. Whittemore has grown exponentially in five quick years, and there is no slowing down as it enters its sixth. Once the home of diarist Helen Whittemore, the nature preserve’s 180 acres was bequeathed to Tewksbury when Helen passed, with the conditions that the deer are fed (despite this being controver-



sial from an ecological standpoint), the gardens are maintained, and the property is available to the public. Just over five years ago, Whittemore changed its name to include the three C's, which are the root of its diverse programming.

Conservation, the first of the C's, is evident in every corner. Birds flit between the trees, ferns poke out from beneath the leaves, and frogs croak from the pond and the Rockaway Creek. You can ponder on all the life within these woods along the newly installed meditation circuit, designed by Carl Klemme, or on a bench by the

SERVING THE EQUESTRIAN COMMUNITY FOR 45 YEARS!



OFFERING THE FULL EQUESTRIAN LIFESTYLE & LEATHER REPAIR  
2400 LAMINGTON ROAD BEDMINSTER, NJ • 908-234-2640

pond. In the summer, children play in the woods while simultaneously learning about the environment. "We need to educate people about the importance of the environment and sustaining our communities," Carolyn explained as we walked through Whittemore's gardens, home to flowers, vegetables, herbs, and even twenty different mushroom varieties on logs. These gardens serve to teach both children and adults about how food and our local environment intertwine, while also acting as a community garden and a source of donations for the Clinton Food Pantry.

It wasn't long before Carolyn saw the potential for Culture to become a Whittemore staple: "I saw immediately, this could be an incredible backdrop for artists and concerts." In the warmer

**EVENING SHADE LANDSCAPING**

**TEWKSBURY NJ**  
**(908) 832-7513**  
**EVENINGSHADELANDSCAPING.COM**



## LAURA CLARE

FLORAL DESIGN & EVENT DECOR

908-221-0007  
[www.lauraclaredesign.com](http://www.lauraclaredesign.com)  
 @lauraclaredesign  
 weddings\* events\* everyday\*

## S. Garfield

Fine Furniture



[www.arbolfurniture.com](http://www.arbolfurniture.com)  
 908.287.1116

months, Whittemore holds several outdoor Garden Concerts, which have welcomed both local and internationally-acclaimed artists. Nature is a powerful muse that brings together visual artists as well. "The shows that we have, the artists we show, speak to nature, whether it's abstract or specific," Carolyn remarked. One such exhibit is Whittemore's Sculpture Garden, containing Earthworks sculptures, which use the natural landscape to create unique structures.

Oracle by David Horowitz was the first sculpture to be unveiled, during the height of the pandemic over a livestream that's earned 6,000+ views. Two logs resting on a bed of river stones hold up a ball of garbage, evoking the image of someone reaching for the sky. In around twenty-five years, the sculpture will have disintegrated, with only the garbage remaining. "It speaks to what our mission is, being green, recyclable, sustainable," said Carolyn.

Another sculpture, No-Body Knows by Horowitz and George Contrino, features a log cradling a face made of chicken wire, with a ball of rusty wrenches suspended above. Truly intertwined with nature, fungi began growing on this living, breathing sculpture shortly after installation. Whittemore also hosts several other artists in its indoor gallery as part of the Hunterdon Art Tour: Eleanor Eick, Ahni Kruger, Jeff Mase and Elie Porter Trubert's works are currently on display, alongside pieces by Whittemore's artist-in-residence, Alison Scherr, who creates vivid, bold, abstract paintings inspired by Whittemore's serene landscape.

While this established trifecta of programs - nature, music, and art - has been expanding, Whittemore recently added a fourth pillar to its offerings: food. Specifically, Food Makes Friends. This new initiative ties everything about Whittemore together, celebrating Whittemore's ethos of sustainability and connection by uniting everyone over a plate of food.

The idea was born during Whittemore's Five-Year Anniversary fundraising dinner/concert in 2021. Though the event was socially-distant, with attendees sitting at separate tables, the camaraderie blossomed. A three-course meal from both locally-sourced and foraged ingredients was cooked on Whittemore's giant fire rig, designed and built by Ben Walmer of the Highlands Dinner Club and Dan Lipow of The Foraged Feast. With live jazz courtesy of Dario Chiazollino, guests watched their meals be prepared in real time over the open flame.

On the menu: delectable greens foraged straight from the wild earth, like fiddleheads with butter and kimcheese, made from the rare delicacy, ramps; fish, fowl and game such as quail, yak ribeye, and trout en Papillote; and for dessert, a semolina cake with locust blossoms. Coffee from Black River Roasters and cocktails from Ironbound Farms completed the local roundup.

Highlighting local and in-season food was an important component of the evening, which fueled the idea to continue similar food events at Whittemore. Food Makes Friends is about "educating people about the importance of food, where you shop, how you shop, what you cook, how you're cooking," Carolyn explained.



The communal feeling of these dinners is equally as important, inspired by high-profile dinner parties hosted by Carolyn's mother when Carolyn was a child: "Listening to the conversations that would go on for hours, I wanted to do a modern-day version of that." Whittemore plans to continue these community-building meals through several food pop-ups at their upcoming concerts, where a Food Makes Friends chef will cook dinner for audiences.

The enduring theme beneath all these programs is a celebration of Community, embodied in the first of the three Cs in Whittemore's name. "We combine so many things that bring so many people together, whether it's food, art, music," said Carolyn. "That is the culmination of our five years. It's not just concerts, it's not just arts. They're not separate; they're a symphony." And this symphony opens Whittemore's doors to everyone from all walks of life: "Community is just anybody that wants to come here and be part of what Whittemore is."

Whittemore CCC is located at 7 Rockaway Road in Oldwick, NJ 08858. Please visit [whittemoreccc.org](http://whittemoreccc.org) or call 908-439-1201.

**Morris Animal Inn  
at Montville  
is now open!**



**Dog & Cat Lodging  
Training • Grooming • Daycare**

[www.MorrisAnimalInn.com](http://www.MorrisAnimalInn.com)

973-263-9060  
117 Boonton Avenue  
Montville, NJ 07045

## OLDWICK ANIMAL HOSPITAL



Janisse M. Cailles, VMD  
Anna Owren Fayne, VMD  
Isabela Marmolejo, DVM  
Kerry Scholz, DVM

908.439.2470

130 Oldwick Road, Whitehouse Station,  
New Jersey 08889

For your safety and ours, we are a client-free  
building during this pandemic.

Protocols: [www.oldwickanimalhospital.com](http://www.oldwickanimalhospital.com)