



*The Westfield Fire House on North Avenue maintains much of its original character.*



*Broad Street, Westfield was a route for trolley lines and carriages in the early 1900's.*

The coming of the railroad marked the end of the stagecoach days and among other things, the end of a unique system of delivering the mail in Westfield. As early as 1793 letters and packages had been sent from Elizabeth port to Westfield by the stagecoach "Speedwell" whose driver for more than fifty years was George Tingley of Westfield. The mail was delivered to Samuel Downer's store and Mr. Downer took the letters to the Presbyterian Church on Sunday morning and distributed them after the service to the addressees.

In 1851 a one-way passage to New York from Westfield cost .37 cents and a year's commutation ticket, fifty dollars. The twenty-one mile trip took one hour and twenty three minutes.

With growth came demands from the increasing population. Utilities came about in the late 19th century. Suburban Electric and Light Company was the first to supply electricity hooking up their first customers in 1893. The Westfield bicentennial celebration in 1894 coincided with the installation of water and sewer systems in the township.

A drug store located on the corner of Prospect and Broad Streets served as the switchboard for Westfield's first telephone service. From 1895 to 1900 eighty subscribers enjoyed the newest community format. There was even a racetrack in Westfield at the turn of the century, called "Fair Acres Racetrack", and the sport of kings was enjoyed by the local residents.

A seven-hundred percent rise in population occurred over the next sixty years. Westfield today stands as a proud community, a fine educator of its youth and a wonderful neighbor to the residents of Fanwood.