



# Hunterdon Historical Newsletter

125 YEARS OF COLLECTING, PRESERVING, SHARING

Vol. 46, No. 1

Published by Hunterdon County Historical Society

Winter 2010

## Society's Winter Annual Meeting March 21, 2010 "The Lenape-Delaware Indian Heritage"

The Society's annual meeting will be held Sunday, March 21, 2010, at 2 p.m. at the Flemington Presbyterian Church, 10 East Main Street, Flemington, New Jersey. Society business includes election of five trustees followed by a presentation on the Lenape by John Kraft. Light refreshments will be served.

Mr. Kraft, director of *Lenape Lifeways Educational Programs, Inc.*, is an archaeologist/educator who has presented thousands of programs on the Lenape or Delaware Indians of New Jersey and the surrounding region. He has helped discover and excavate Lenape villages and artifacts, and through his research has added much new information about their family life, dwellings, diet, spiritual beliefs and technology. His engaging and substantive slide-illustrated program is an attempt to reconstruct the culture and history of the indigenous people who once populated New Jersey and the surrounding area. The program covers the region's 12,000 years of Native American history with a focus on the formation of the Lenape culture, including later European contact and Native displacement. By examining Lenape legends, art, religious beliefs, customs and traditions, describing the daily life, economy and system of government and recounting the interaction of new settlers, this program will help audiences develop an historical comprehension of these people and separate misinformation from historical fact. Participants also will have an opportunity to handle authentic and recreated objects such as masks,



John Kraft

clothing, musical instruments and tools. Selected artifacts from the Society's Lenape collection also will be exhibited.

Creator and former director of the Lenape Village at Waterloo, Mr. Kraft has collaborated with New Jersey Network on various films and Internet projects to promote distance learning. He also has published *The Indians of Lenapehoking*, an educational unit on the Indians of New Jersey, and has illustrated *The Lenape or Delaware Indians* and other books. Mr. Kraft has been creating museum exhibits and lecturing for over 20 years. Currently, he is a speaker for the New Jersey Council for the Humanities' Horizons Speakers Bureau program. His goal is to share with others his enthusiasm and appreciation for the remarkable people called the Lenape.

### CALENDAR

<b>March 21</b>	<b>Society Meeting</b> , 2 pm, Flemington Presbyterian Church
<b>thru March 31</b>	<i>NJ Blacks in the Revolutionary War</i> exhibit, County Library, Rt 12
<b>Apr 3,10,17,24</b>	<b>Society's Doric House</b> open for tours
<b>April 22</b>	Red Mill Museum Village 200 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala, Clinton
<b>April 28</b>	Prallsville Mill's Brown Bag History Lunch series begins
<b>May 2</b>	Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead Museum Opening Day

**HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER**

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Terry A. McNealy, Editor

**Library Hours**

Thursday, Noon to 4 p.m.  
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and by appointment

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**OFFICERS & TRUSTEES**

President: Richard H. Stothoff (2010)

Vice President: Charles H. Fisher (2012)

Recording Secretary: John Matsen (2010)

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Douglas D. Martin (2010)	Lora W. Jones (2012)
Clifford L. Hoffman (2011)	Edna Pedrick (2012)
Stephanie Stevens (2011)	Beth Rice (2012)
Harold O. Van Fleet (2011)	Donald F. Scholl (2012)

**Acquisitions**

Materials representative of Hunterdon County's history and the families who resided here are always welcome additions to the Historical Society's collections. *To the donors of recent acquisitions, the Society expresses its sincere appreciation.* Large collections may not be available for research until they have been processed.

Bible (Philadelphia, 1827) with Vliet family records; transcription and other notes. Gift of Rita Chesterton.

Bible records of Jacob Carkhuff, 1774-1893 (photocopies). Gift of Michael Gesner.

Burd, Frank E., "A Brief History of the Amwell Church" (1 p. typescript); "The Amwell Church of the Brethren" (2 pp. typescript); photograph of Charles Burkett house, opposite Flemington Choir School, now demolished; advertising card, Iorio Glass Shop, Flemington; and other local memorabilia. Gift of Lois Stewart.

Campanelli, Dan and Marty, "All Sewn Up": Research & Restoration of Needlework in the Collection of the Hunterdon County Historical Society (2009). Gift of authors *(cont'd page 1075)*

*(Acquisitions cont'd from page 1074)*

*Directory of Archival & Manuscript Repositories in the Delaware Valley*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (2009). Gift of Don Cornelius.

Documents relating to history of a property at Block 1, Lot 8, 447 County Road 614, Pattenburg (CD-ROM). Gift of Ed Tezlaf.

Flemington Children's Choir School: Large collection of archival materials, including programs, music, photographs, etc., as well as artifacts such as costumes, medals, a Victrola, a music stand, etc. Gift of the Alumni Association.

Flemington School: 3 photographs with construction crew, ca. 1908, including Thomas Langan. Gift of Olive Cleary, daughter of Thomas Langan.

Graflex Camera and attachments used by D.Howard Moreau, editor of the *Hunterdon County Democrat*. Gift of Ann Thomas.

Grow, Judith K., *Creating Historic Samplers* (1974). Gift of author.

Historic American Building Survey, documentation of house at 23 Trenton Avenue, Frenchtown. 7 pp. and 11 photographs. Gift of Martin Abbot.

"Layout Plan, Civilian Conservation Corps Camp, NJ SP 5, Company 1258;" "Lloyd Wescott and his Farms;" "History of the Kuster Farm/ Heron Glen County Golf Course;" photographs, including several

**HOW TO JOIN**

Hunterdon County Historical Society  
114 Main Street  
Flemington, NJ 08822

Please enroll me as a member of your Society.

Annual	\$15 per year
Family	\$18 per year
Contributing	\$25 per year
Sustaining	\$50 per year
Institutional	\$50 and up per year
Life	\$250
Patron	\$1000 or more
Student	\$3 per year (up to 18 yrs old)

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

ph # \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

I want to volunteer!  Yes  No Thanks

**Membership Report**

A warm welcome is extended to those members who have recently joined the Hunterdon County Historical Society.

Erma R. Bodine, Flemington, NJ  
Rita Chesterton, Lambertville, NJ  
Beverly Clancy, Toms River, NJ  
Jerry Carihfield, Halls, TN  
Michael R. Demarco, New Providence, NJ  
Nancy Heath Deschu, Anchorage, AK  
Mr. and Mrs. Ken Fiedler, Lebanon, NJ  
Paul Foeldvari, Flemington, NJ  
Judy Grow, Flemington, NJ  
Louis and Lydia Hamilton, Flemington, NJ  
John M. Henderson, Warner, NH  
Mary M. Herreshoff, Westampton, NJ  
Roberta Hewitt, Annandale, NJ  
Shirley Hooper, Pittstown, NJ  
William W. Hunnell, Williamsburg, VA  
Andrew R. Huston, Glen Gardner, NJ

Michael I. Kelly, Evanston, IL  
Diane Kinney, Clinton, NJ  
Peter Kinsella, Flemington, NJ  
Mary Mathews Kiser, Piqua, OH  
Nancy Lindgren, Flemington, NJ  
Mr. and Mrs. Edward N. Livingston, New Hope, PA  
Thomas Lyon, Philadelphia, PA  
Douglas and Jennifer Mechan, Frenchtown, NJ  
Dale Potts, Veazie, ME  
Geoffrey Raike, Perkasio, PA  
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Rinker, Ringoes, NJ  
Kathleen Vinglas, South Plainfield, NJ  
Valerie Vroom, Portland, OR  
Frances W. Waite, Doylestown, PA  
Elaine E. Walters, Waretown, NJ  
Patricia Wright, Flemington, NJ

Harold O. Van Fleet  
Membership Chair



of Camp Echo Hill; and other documents. Gift of Douglas Kiovsy.

Marriage certificate of Charles S. Eick and Carrie E. Thompson, Oct. 4, 1905. Gift of John Eick.

Model of Kugler Corn Plow, patented and originally manufactured by O. Kugler & Co. of Three Bridges. Gift of Doris Pierce Snyder.

Quig, Helen Louise, *Urban Kerkuff, Immigrant Ancestor, and Some of his Descendants: Kerkuff, Carkhuff, Kirkhuff Lines* (1971). Gift of Fred Sisser III.

Weller, Elsie Severs, Collection (mostly photographs) and costumes made and used in Hunterdon County. Gift of Sharon Semanovich.

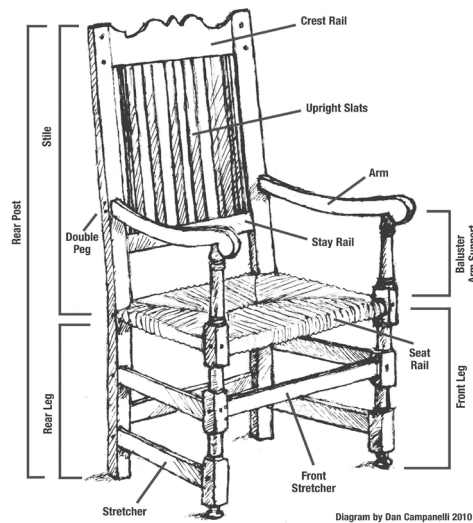
**CORRECTION**

The location of the Landsdown Railroad Station on page 1072 of the previous issue, Fall 2009, was misidentified. The location should have been listed as Franklin Township.

## The Hunterdon County Historical Society's Great Armchair

By Dan & Marty Campanelli

The authors made a scholarly study of chairs similar to the oak "Gov. Reading chair" in the Doric House. This is an abbreviated version of their report, which can be viewed in full in the Society's library.



Hunterdon County Historical Society  
Great Armchair ca. 1725

an evolved style of wainscot chair similar to the Society's that he states was made in the 1600s in New Jersey. Of all the chair forms we surveyed, a "joined great chair" in the 1988 book, *American Seating Furniture 1630-1730* by Benno Forman, has the strongest similarity to the Society's chair. This ca.1700-1735 walnut chair in the collection at Winterthur, is thought to have been made in southeastern Pennsylvania and may have derived its style of turnings from Philadelphia.

Much of Forman's description of the chair can be said of the Society's chair, except that the balusters of the arm supports are not as well defined in their turnings and that one is walnut and one is oak. We compared the two chairs from the top down. The cut-outs of the crest rails are nearly identical and are mortise-and-tenoned with double pegs to secure them to the rear posts (stiles). The canted tilt of the back stile of both chairs is reminiscent of earlier joined chairs of Europe and England, especially the 17th century wainscot, leather, and caned chairs.

The Society's chair has five upright slats evenly spaced between the crest rail and stay rail that are nearly plain at first glance; however the two larger outer rails are deeply molded and give the appearance of becoming seven rails overall. The chair at Winterthur retains the same even allotment of five upright slats with the two larger outer rails having only rudimentary moldings. The upright slats are a departure from the joined panel-back and wainscot chairs of an earlier period. It is probable that this new style was an offshoot of the solid panel and that they continued to be made side-by-side in the Delaware Valley during the first quarter of the 1700s.

The arms of both chairs are virtually identical in their slant, curvature and joining to the rear post and front leg. Instead of having pegs at both ends of the arms, the Society's chair has two square pegs where the stile intersects the arm, which may have accounted for an extra tight, secure fit. The seat is of twisted rush, well-woven and in excellent condition, just as photographed in 1900, but close inspection reveals square seat rails under the rush, most likely the base for a wood plank bottom, which the Winterthur chair has. The front leg and arm supports on both chairs are nearly identical. Where intersecting seat rails and stretchers meet the front legs, a square block is used and pegging is employed; remaining areas of the front legs have simple turnings and bun feet.

(cont'd page 1077)

This arm chair, believed to date from ca.1725, was donated to the Society by an heir of H.E. Deats around 1965. It was said to have belonged to Gov. John Reading, Jr. (1686-1767), the son of Col. John Reading who is believed to have been one of Hunterdon's earliest settlers. The younger Reading was a surveyor, and in 1712 acquired 600 acres along the South Branch of the Raritan River. In 1747 he became acting governor for a short period. (By law, only an Englishman could officially hold the position of governor.) In 1757 he was named Chief Magistrate of the Colony of New Jersey.

In documenting the chair, we believed its design could be traced to earlier European origins. Strong, joined and carved armchairs with raised-panel backs were often called wainscot (meaning wagon oak) chairs from the mid-1600s, especially in Britain. We found the chair shared characteristics with Welsh chairs as shown in *Oak Furniture, the British Tradition* by Victor Chinnery.

American furniture makers were copying the old British and European furniture and elaborated on the designs to suit the tastes of the new colony. An oak wainscot chair in *Country Furniture of Early America* by H. Lionel Williams shows that the style was evolving through the 1600s in the Delaware Valley between Philadelphia and New Jersey. The once solid, raised, panel-back chair was becoming a more open-back style. Pennsylvanians began to prefer walnut for their furniture. Wallace Nutting's *Furniture Treasury* shows

## A Year of Events – History Rocks!

Please join the society as we celebrate 125 years of collecting, preserving and sharing the social and material culture of Hunterdon.

From **February 23 to March 31** the County Library on Route 12, in partnership with the Historical Society, will present an exhibition on NJ Blacks in the U.S. Revolution, and a companion exhibit on slaves in New Jersey.

The Annual Meeting will be held **March 21** at 2 p.m. at the Flemington Presbyterian Church to elect five Trustees and to hear John T. Kraft, noted speaker on the Lenape. Selected artifacts from the Society's Lenape collection will be exhibited. The public is invited to attend. Refreshments will be served.

On **Saturdays in April**, the Doric House will be open for tours, 12 noon to 4 p.m.

On **May 1**, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., the Society will exhibit contrasting historic and current artifacts at the Spirit of the Jerseys State History Fair in Washington Crossing State Park.

In **June** it will host *Visions of Hunterdon History*, an invitational cocktail reception, exhibition and sale of original printings and prints of historical Hunterdon sites by renowned watercolorist Dan Campanelli.

**June 17** is the date for a free rock concert in Deer Path Park in partnership with the Hunterdon County Parks Department. RockRoots, musicians who tell the history of rock and roll, will perform a program of interest to both young people and adults.

Plans are underway to enter a float in the Lebanon **Fourth of July** parade, highlighting the importance of both yesterday and tomorrow.

The Society's Hunterdon County Fair exhibit **August 25-29** will feature highlights of our 125 years.

On **September 18**, in the actual month of the Society's founding, all members are invited to a celebratory lunch at the Perryville Inn to hear speaker Marc Mappan, Ph.D, Executive Director of the New Jersey Historical Commission and author of numerous books on state history, including the *Encyclopedia of New Jersey* and his latest, *There's More to New Jersey than the Sopranos*.

Save **October 9** for a Tavern Crawl of selected historic Hunterdon inns complete with refreshments. **In the same month**, fourth-grade and older students are invited to participate in a Passport to History Scavenger Hunt based on selected county historic sites.



This great armchair, ca. 1725, resides in the Society's Doric House. Hunterdon County Historical Society.



Southeastern Pennsylvania great armchair, ca. 1700-1735. Winterthur Museum, Delaware.

(Armchair cont'd from page 1076)

The rear legs are square from top to bottom and pegged as well. The front stretcher of Winterthur's chair is well turned and reminiscent to the turnings of its arm supports. The Society's chair has no turning on the front stretcher and both chairs show little or no wear there. Both chairs have the same arrangement of plain rectangular double side stretchers, and a single lower back one.

It seems reasonable to say that given the similarities between the two chairs, they may have been made in the same workshop or been influenced by an apprentice who could have migrated to start his own shop in the Delaware Valley. Furniture of this type and from this period is rarely attributed to a particular chair maker, and it is also reasonable to assume that furniture styles made in the Philadelphia area crossed the Delaware River and also were made in New Jersey. It will probably never be known by whom or exactly where in the Delaware Valley the Society's armchair was made. It is good enough to know that this rare and important historic chair survives in fine condition for all to enjoy at the Doric House.

## FROM THE CURATOR'S DESK

It is truly my pleasure to announce the release of two newly available collections of manuscripts that illustrate two different aspects of Hunterdon County history.

Thanks to the processing work of Erin Brennan, the membership and public at large now has access to manuscript collection No. 79, The Marjorie Ladd Saxe Papers. According to the Finding Guide Erin prepared, "This collection comprises published works, Mrs. Saxe's notes and papers on Centerville history, and photographs of houses and other landmarks in Centerville and people having a connection to the village.... The collection provides information on Centerville and Readington Township history, the families who lived there and the types of lives they led."

The second newly released work is manuscript collection #80, Records of the Leslie Mike Dairy Farm. This collection was processed by Diane Kinney. In describing the records, Diane states, "This collection primarily comprises financial ledger books from the Leslie Mike Dairy Farm. Other items of note consist of a detailed herd record book, dairy-related documents, and two group photographs including Leslie Mike's daughter. These records give insight into the functioning of a typical Hunterdon County dairy in the early to mid-twentieth century." This collection was donated to the Historical Society in 2001 by Dennis Bertland, the grandson of Leslie Mike.

In addition to the above released materials, other collections are also in the works and will be released to the public in the coming months. Diane is finishing a second group of materials from the Bartels family, a project that had been started over the previous summer by our archival intern. Erin is processing the diaries and papers of Egbert Bush. Shirley Wydner, another one of our dedicated volunteers, is processing the Returns of the Hunterdon County Collector for the year 1830.

New collections are not the only "goings on" around here, either. Ralph Lomerson has, as of this writing, catalogued over 140 historical scrapbooks and wrapped them in acid-free paper for conservation purposes. These materials will be organized in a finding guide and made available to the public when Ralph has finished handling all of the rest of the scrapbooks that can be processed.

Jane Otto, our photographic image specialist, has

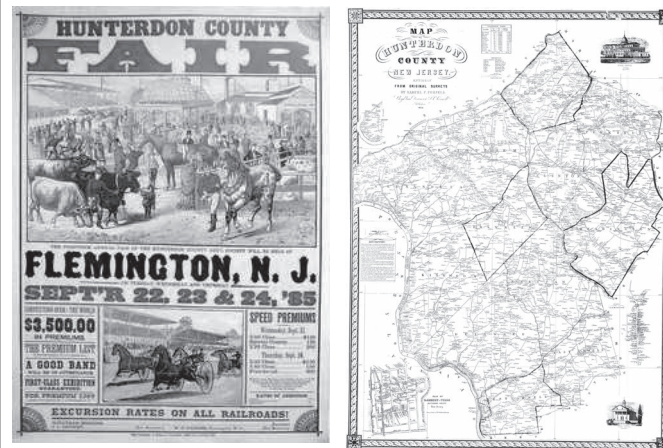
added over 150 new photographs to the collections of the Society that are open for research by the public. Jane's work is very time consuming and intense, but will eventually result in a researcher's dream: a searchable index of all of our photographs according to generally used subject keywords and search terms.

As always, I invite all of our members and interested researchers to attend open hours in the Hiram E. Deats Memorial Library so that they may acquaint themselves with the rich history contained within the Society's archives.

Best wishes,

*Donald Cornelius, Curator of Manuscripts*

## Hot Off the Press



*Hunterdon County Fair Poster from 1885, in full color on heavy paper, approx 33"x24", \$30*

*Map of Hunterdon County from 1851, in full color on heavy paper, approx 31"x24", \$25*

The society is excited to offer two new items for sale. Printed in full color on heavy paper, these gorgeous posters are flying out the door.

In addition, we also have the following reproductions for sale:

- Flemington Birds-Eye-View map from 1883, 20"x25", \$10
- Plan of the Township of Raritan from 1850, 33"x24", \$25
- Restore Hunterdon poster, 24"x18", \$2

Mail orders add \$10 for one to four items for postage and materials cost.

## Treasurer's Report for 2009

It is time once more to submit to the membership, our operating statement for the calendar year 2009. Besides the expenses listed, we paid out of our reserves \$75,592.27 as the last net installment due on our new archives building. Building fund donations from 2006 through the end of 2009 have totaled \$359,203. All these donations have been put towards the final cost of the building which has totaled out to \$906,772.88 counting legal work, site work, and equipment/construction costs. As the statement shows, we ended the year with a net operating cash outflow of nearly \$44,000. Fortunately this was offset by over \$7,000 in stock sales and 2009 building fund donations of over \$15,000. And, a nice paper gain in the value of our reserve stocks and bonds nearly balanced our books for the year once we had capitalized our brand new

three-station computer system equipped with software to properly administer our archives. It has been a year of exciting progress for our Society and we look forward to 2010 and the events and promise of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary schedule with equal anticipation.

Our challenging 2010 budget as adopted shows similar figures and we hope that your continued support will allow us to once again approach a financial balance. We were initially in the position to construct our new archives building thanks to many generous bequests over the years from motivated members. We urge all to consider us in their future estate planning so that we may continue to be a real force in Hunterdon history.

*John W. Kuhl, Treasurer*

INCOME	
Bank Interest	\$ 3,131
CD Interest	\$12,858
Stock Interest/Dividends	\$10,106
Grants Received	\$ 4,785
Membership Dues	\$ 9,898
Sale of Maps, Books, Etc.	\$11,077
Photocopy Fees	\$ 892
Library/Museum Donations	\$ 389
<b>TOTAL OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>\$53,136</b>
OTHER INCOME	
Archives Building Donations	\$15,695
Stock Sale	\$ 7,365

EXPENSES	
Building Utilities, Maintenance, Insurance, Security	\$31,070
Accounting (major audit req'd 2009)	\$ 7,750
Books, Posters, Maps, Printing, Purchases	\$ 5,525
Equipment Repairs	\$ 102
Fees and Dues	\$ 515
Moving Expenses	\$ 855
Newsletter	\$ 1,091
Office Expenses, Postage	\$ 3,610
Payroll/withholding/taxes	\$43,800
Preservation Materials	\$ 676
Seminars and Training	\$ 350
Volunteer Recognition/Donor Reception	\$ 1,652
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$96,996</b>

### OTHER EXPENSES

Final Archives Building Installment	\$75,593
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## Archives Building Campaign Donors

*The following gifts have been received since the last Newsletter was published, and are gratefully acknowledged.*

### Trustee's Club, \$1000 - \$4999

John M. Matsen  
Exxon/Mobil matching grant

### Patrons, \$100-\$499

R.C. Ehling  
Marion O. Harris  
Lorraine Palmer  
Harriet M. Parks  
Norm and Stephanie Stevens  
Steven D. VanCamp

## Notes and Queries

Searching for whereabouts of the silver-hilted sword made 1775 for Philemon Dickinson (1739-1809) of Trenton by John Fitch (1743-1798), silversmith of Trenton. For comparison to an unmarked silver-hilted sword dated 1775 that descended in the Morgan family of Hopewell, also clients of Fitch.

J. Lawrence Brasher  
1261 Greensboro Rd.,  
Birmingham, AL 35208  
lbrasher@bsc.edu

## Images from the Past

Flemington's Union Hotel on Main Street has been a landmark for locals as well as tourists for nearly 200 years. The original wooden structure, built in 1814 by Neal Hart, was one of three taverns/hotels in Flemington in the early 1800s. Known as the Hart House, it was



*Detail from 1850 Raritan Township map.*

run by Neal Hart until his death in 1838, when it was auctioned to his son, Mahlon Hart. He then sold the hotel to Charles Bartles, Alexander Bonnell, and Judiah Higgins in 1850, who renamed it the Union Hotel. In 1857, the hotel was sold again to George and Catherine Crater. Crater's Union House served the town well during the Civil War; Mrs. Crater nearly ran it herself while her husband was away serving with the Union Army. Another sale in 1875 to Lambert and William Humphrey of Philadelphia resulted in the replacement of the old wooden structure with the four-story brick structure with mansard roof

and two-story gingerbread porches that we recognize today.

Fame and fortune then came to Flemington and the Union Hotel in 1935

during the famous Lindbergh "Trial of the Century." Jurors were sequestered on the upper floors while visitors, celebrities and reporters crowded the bar and restaurant day and night.

After changing hands many times, the hotel stopped serving overnight guests in the 1970s. The restaurant remained open off and on over the years and is currently closed. Today, the property is for sale.



*Postcard from Hunterdon County Historical Society.*