



Hunterdon Historical Newsletter

VOL. 41, NO. 2

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SPRING 2005

Delaware River Floods

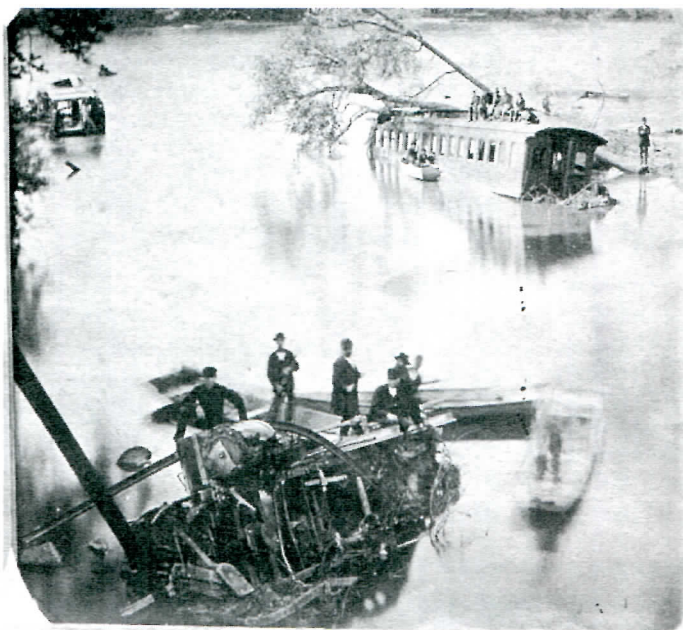
As we put this Newsletter together towns along the Delaware River in Hunterdon are cleaning up from a devastating flood, the second "fifty-year flood" in less than a year. Some people are laying blame on up-river development for the flooding. True, there has been increasing development, but there has been periodic flooding along the Delaware River for centuries.

Trenton Times [May 1, 2005] staff writer Karen Ayres writes "American Indians warned early settlers that great floods occurred on the Delaware River. Few people, apparently, listened to them." Early on the River was a ready transportation route for many and thus towns sprang up along it. If flooding is inevitable, one way to reduce damage, now in the millions of dollars, is to reduce the number who should be living in the flood plain.

Some of us who were in the Hunterdon area remember the 1955 flood, which came after back-to-back hurricanes hit the area. *The Great Flood Disaster of 1955: Picture Story of Greatest Catastrophe in the History of Hunterdon and Bucks Counties*, published and sold by the Democrat Press records the scenes all too graphically. The 1955 flood was the last major flood until September 2004 and then another flood in April 2005, the highest crest since 1955!

The 1903 flood hit Hunterdon hard and we published a photograph of how it looked in Lambertville in "Images from the Past," in Volume 35, No. 2 of *North Union Street*.

The Milford Leader published on 19 October 1903 provides details of the eight covered bridges lost to the raging waters. The same paper in March 1936 reports the twin floods of 12



HCHS Collection PX462

Oswego Express train wrecked below Milford on the Belvidere division. Heavy rains caused flooding washing out the track. October 1877

March and 18 March which went within two feet of the 1903 flood, both recent floods caused by ice.

2005 Calendar

26 June — HOLCOMBE-JIMISON FARMSTEAD
Annual Meeting 1-4 p.m. at the Farmstead,
Route 29, just south of the Route 202 bridge.

24-28 August — Hunterdon County 4-H and Agricultural
Fair 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. South County Park
Route 179, South of Route 202, Ringoes
Visit the Historical Society booth in the
Community Services tent

10-11 September — Celebration of Farming
Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead Museum
10 a.m.- 4 p.m. museum and house tours, craft
demonstrations, food

11 September — Hunterdon County Historical Society
formed 120 years ago —1885

24 September — RESTORE HUNTERDON:
Historic Preservation Seminar
9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the newly restored

1828 Historic Courthouse featuring speakers,
work shops, walking tour and book signing
www.restorehunterdon.com

October weekends — History Comes Alive in
Flemington

October 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23 — Historic sites
open include the Flemington Choir School,
Fleming Castle, and the Doric House,
Trial of the Century reenactment of the
Hauptmann Trial at the historic 1828 Hunterdon
County Courthouse, Saturdays 2 p.m. & 8 p.m.,
Sundays 2 p.m. www.famoustrials.com

8-9, 22-23 October — Doric House open 1 - 4 p.m.
Saturday 8 October, Sunday 9 October, and
Saturday 22 October and Sunday 23 October
during History Comes Alive in Flemington

13 November — Historical Society FALL MEETING

HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER

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PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

Roxanne K. Carkhuff, Editor

— Library Hours —

Thursday, 1-3, 7-9 p.m. and by appointment

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2005 Dues Are Payable

Membership dues for 2005 are payable immediately. If you haven't paid up, take a few minutes to write a check and mail it to HCHS, 114 Main Street, Flemington, NJ 08822.

Form of Bequest

(This form is recommended for use in making a bequest of real property, in a Will or otherwise, naming your society as beneficiary)

ITEM: I bequeath the sum of \$_____ to the Hunterdon Historical Society, Flemington, NJ.

ITEM: I bequeath to the Hunterdon County Historical Society, Flemington, NJ, without restrictions title to and full possession of historical materials and objects, (real estate, account books, diaries, Family Bibles, documents, papers, photographs, programs, newspapers, clippings, books, records), etc.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

NOTES AND QUERIES

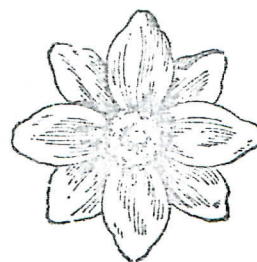
Address correspondence to Genealogical Committee. One query listing of ten lines free to members, 25 cents per line over ten; non-member rate is 25 cents per line. Remember to enclose a SASE (self-addressed, stamped envelope) with genealogical correspondence if you expect a reply.

AGIN/AGINS/AGEN/AGENS/AGGAIN and related spellings. Seeking info re par/o, sib/o James Agin, b. 1759 SomersetCo, NJ, liv most of life in Amwell Twp. HuntCo., d. ca. 1 Dec 1836. Chil: John, Wilson, Joseph, Charles, Hannah, Eliza and Patty, all b. 1784-1805. Would like to corres/w anyone with info on James' par, sibs, aunts or uncles or who may have a link to his family. ADD: Kathy Agins, 7704 Ashdale Rd., Capitol Heights, MD 20743 [e-mail at kathyagins@juno.com]

MYER, PETERS: Des info re fam/o Peter Myer, b. 1755, prob. in Hunt Co., Amwell Twp. who m. Anna Peters, dau/o Henry and Sarah Peters. Peter and Anna Myer had sev chil before mov to Allegany Co. MD about 1790. When did Peter Myer's fam come to Hunt Co.? Were they part of Palatine immigration to NY? ADD: Eva Walker Myer, 7359 Peterson Lane, Pensacola, FL (850) 457-9775 [e-mail at emyer@cox.net]

FLEMING, HAUGHAWOUT, HENDERSHOT, SCHUYLER, WAGNER: Seeking desc/o Carrie [Schuyler] Wagner, born ca. 1874, w/o Matthias Wagner and dau/o Augustus Schuyler and Sarah C. [Hendershot] Fleming Schuyler. Want to obtain any/all info on Carrie's mother, Sarah C. who m. ca. 1890 for her 3rd husband Charles B. Haughawout. Sarah C. and Charles Haughawout were enumerated in 1900 at 47 Cherry St., Phillipsburg, NJ. My grandmother, Mary Ella Fleming was Carrie's older half-sister, b. ca. 1870. Cannot find Sarah C. after 1900 census. ADD: Bradford L. Walton, 13506 Oak Ivy Lane, Fairfax, VA 22033-1230.

CASE, MOORE: All are invited to attend the annual Tunis Case [1797-1859] Family Reunion on Sunday, 28 August 2005. The location is Dilts Park, Buchanan Road, Delaware Township 11:30 a.m. - ? Bring a covered dish to share. Meat and beverage is supplied. Tunis Case married Rhoda Moore 13 April 1820, lived on Hardscrabble Hill, west of Flemington, where he was a farmer and store keeper. ADD: Mary Elizabeth Case Sheppard, 123 N. Franklin Street, Lambertville, NJ 08530 or call (609) 397-3868 or e-mail: thomassheppard@rcn.com



Catalpa Farm —An Epic

By Charles Jurgensen

Story of a family, a farm, a country village and a catalpa tree each confronting life changes and the passing of time.

Part I: In the beginning:

Born in 1878 in Denmark, Christian Jurgensen emigrated to the United States in 1893 at the age of nineteen. His future wife, Maria Stahlgren, was born in Sweden in 1872 and came to America alone in the 1890's. They met in Goshen, New York where Christian had purchased a farm and Maria was working as a cook for a wealthy family who had a summer home in Goshen. They were married at the home of Maria's friend Edla Anderson in Brooklyn, NY in 1906. Between the year of their marriage and 1914 their four children were born.

To Christian and Maria Jurgensen, Midland Farm in Goshen, New York, where they had been living, was not a suitable farm or location to put down their young family's roots. Its northern location meant a shorter growing season for the crops they wished to plant. In addition, the school was a distance from the farm and there was a racetrack nearby.

Christian's brother, Emanuel alerted him to a farm in Sergeantsville, New Jersey that was for sale. Christian subsequently visited his brother and decided to buy the farm which he would later name Catalpa after a tree that stood at the farm entrance. It was located in Delaware Township adjacent to Kingwood where Emanuel had settled his family and blacksmith shop. The year was 1913.

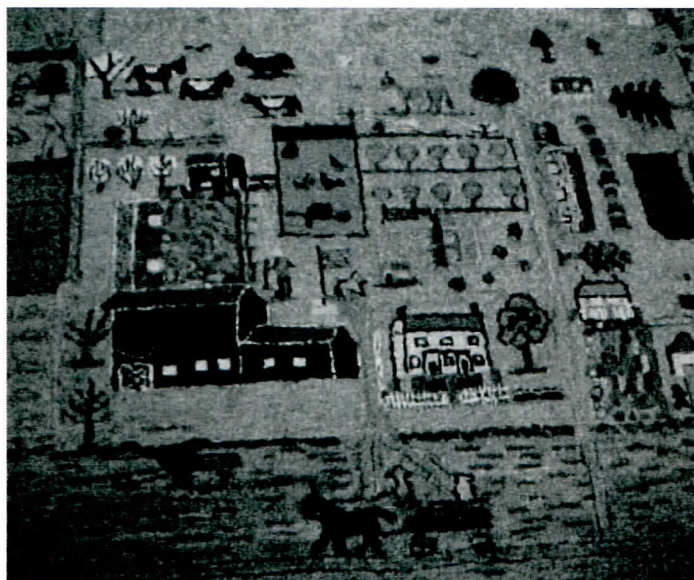
All aspects of Catalpa were ideal, particularly location, size, fertility and above all, the proximity of the farm to supporting facilities and services. Catalpa Farm was a level tract of tillable land totaling approximately sixty acres. There were four acres of mature woodland which provided the wood necessary for cooking and heating. Most of the acreage was divided into five fields of approximately ten acres each. An internal lane separated the east and west fields. The five fields permitted the rotation of crops—corn, wheat and oats. One field was in grass which produced hay. Another was pasture for the milk cows. To protect the fertility of the soil my father felt that crop rotation was necessary.

Corn, the principal crop for animal feed, was stored in corn cribs. Hay was stored in the hay loft in the main barn. The grain crops were stored on the second floor of the granary and straw in a building attached to the barn.

During the winter months we restocked the wood house which stood directly behind the farmhouse. When not in use, the farm machinery was kept in a two-story shed which connected the barn to the granary. The farm buildings had been placed to form a farm yard and a barnyard.

Water for the house and animals was carried in buckets from a thirty-foot deep well that was lined with fieldstone. The well had been placed half way between the barn and the house. Pumping was done by all members of the family until a pipe was laid and a one horsepower gasoline engine was installed in the pump house. In dry seasons water had to be hauled from the creamery spring for watering the animals.

The farm animals numbered eleven milk cows, one bull, three pigs raised from shoats, one hundred Rhode Island Red



Sergeantsville portrayed on this hooked rug made by Mr. Jurgensen's sister, Boleta Morris, as she remembered it. The rug donated to the Historical Society in 1999.

chickens, a team of handsome Pershing horses, a stray dog named Prince and the usual number of cats for control of the mice and rat population.

Milk was brought to the creamery in forty quart milk cans. All members of the family milked the cows twice daily, before and after school. We drank unpasteurized milk that was kept cool and fresh in the pump house.

Vegetables were raised in a garden, canned in quart jars and stored in the basement. Potatoes were kept in burlap sacks, also stored in the basement. After slaughtering, hams were put in brine barrels in the basement of the house until ready for smoking.

The farmhouse was a two-story clapboard building that had been constructed in two stages. The first stage was believed to have been built in the late 1700's or early 1800's and the second stage in the mid 1800's. The style was typical for rural America. The two bedrooms which were located over the living room were accessed by a closed staircase. A walk-in fireplace serviced both the living room and the lean-to kitchen that had been built on the east side of the house. No heat was available to the second floor bedrooms except that from a grill in the ceiling of the living room.

About 1850 the second section was built. It duplicated the first section with two bedrooms located over the living room. The second floor was accessed by the closed stairway in the original section of the house. The lean-to kitchen was located on the back of the house this time. The basement was of fieldstone. This arrangement had allowed for joint occupancy of the farmhouse over many years.

After a chimney fire damaged the original part of the large house, my father removed four feet of the living room's east

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Catalpa Farm — An Epic (continued from page 961)

wall. He found the wall of the living room was insulated with a mix of wet clay and straw. This helped verify that the construction of the original part of the house dated back to the turn of the century or earlier.

A new kitchen was constructed on the back of the house and a new fireplace was built on the addition to supply heat. The front porch was extended and new porches were added to the east and south sides of the house. The new construction resulted in a comfortable home for Christian and Maria and their four children.

Part II: Village Services

My father was not only pleased with the farm, but also appreciated the number and proximity of services the village of Sergeantsville had to offer.

The one room schoolhouse that stood on the hill about a thousand yards from the farmhouse was in the process of becoming a two-room school. It would be the first in the township to separate grades 1-4 from 5-8. The converted school building was ready for the 1914 school year, Ebba's first year of schooling. During the next several years Ebba, Boletta, Edla and I would complete our elementary education in this school with Miss Dora Hoppock and Mr. Vorhees Myers, its two teachers.

A blacksmith shop stood at the intersection of two main roads that marked the development of Sergeantsville as a town. Dory Green, the blacksmith, was a journeyman blacksmith. He could forge metal to make tools and repairs for farm machinery including wrought iron tires for wagon wheels. With horses being the main source of power, the blacksmith shop was a very essential service. James Harned was the farrier. Each of the satellite villages to Sergeantsville — Rosemont, Sand Brook, Stockton and Headquarters — also supported a blacksmith.

Sergeantsville had two general stores which were located at the crossroad. To a degree, they co-operated on the merchandise they carried. They both carried penny candy and canned and packaged foods. Only at Polt Sheppard's store, however, could you buy salt or mackerel from a wooden pail of brine. At Jacob Stryker/Wilson you could have coffee beans ground and buy bolts of cloth for making a dress. Stryker/Wilson had a wide line of hardware that was more complete. It included nails, wire, chain, chicken wire and bales of barbed wire which were stored on the porch. Oddities such as buckshot traps and bamboo fishing poles could also be found at Stryker/Wilson. Around the pot belly stove in the store were chairs and benches where farmers, with their lanterns, spent the evenings discussing the events of the day and solving the country's problems.

Fresh and processed meats could be purchased at a butcher shop. The store's slaughter house stood at the southeast corner of our farm, with the lane to the slaughter house forming the eastern border of the farm.

Sergeantsville was large enough to rate a post office which was located in the front corner of the Stryker/Wilson store. There was a space set aside for mail boxes and other postal functions.

The population of Sergeantsville was large enough to support three churches, the Bretheren, Methodist and Dunkard. Each of these churches maintained a clergyman and a parsonage. There were also churches in Rosemont, Stockton and Sandy Ridge. All of the churches had adjacent covered wagon sheds for the horses. The Methodist church had a cemetery. The cemeteries most frequently used, however, were in Sandy Ridge and Rosemont. They are in use to this day.

The Sergeantsville Hotel was still in operation when our family moved to town in 1913. It functioned as a rest stop for travelers, offering lodging and meals. Its horse sheds and livery stable provided for the needs of the travelers' horses. The hotel was the meeting place for the township and all the business of the township took place within its walls.

Undoubtedly the presence of a creamery was an important factor in Christian and Maria's decision to settle in Sergeantsville. The invention of the cream separator by Gustav DeLaval had given birth to the dairy industry and in 1881 the first creamery in Hunterdon County was opened in Sergeantsville. The second followed two years later in Locktown.

The grange provided a meeting hall over a store from which farmers bought seeds and fertilizer. The availability of two grist mills in Headquarters and Prallsville Mills was essential in providing animal feed. Because of the number and proximity of services in Sergeantsville, family trips to Flemington and Lambertville were infrequent.

There were also a few services that no longer required a full time journeyman. The shoemaker, the harness maker and the wheelwright were among them. Of note was the one-horse, eight-can milk wagon that was made in Sergeantsville's wheelwright shop. There were the usual tradesmen such as carpenters and masons. Most could do any type of work the job required. Hiram Hippock began with a Sears Roebuck prefabricated house for himself and his brother-in-law Henry Hyde. Their houses stood directly across the road from our farmhouse. They were the first to be heated with a new innovation, the pipeless heater.

One critical service that would not be available for many years was a fire department. A barn that was struck by lightning would almost certainly burn to the ground. When an approaching thunderstorm threatened at night, all members of our family would get dressed and be ready with buckets of water should lightning start a fire. The effort was directed toward saving the animals and other valuables, acknowledging that the barn could not be saved.

The grange, the school and the churches became the social centers of the community. It was in them that Christian and Maria ceased to be "foreigners". My father spoke fluent English and, although my mother understood English, she preferred to speak Swedish. And so an interesting pattern evolved whereby the children spoke to their mother in English and she responded in Swedish.

(Continued on page 963)

Catalpa Farm — An Epic (continued from page 962)

Part III: land For Sale by Owner:

Ebba and I had passed the state examination to enter Flemington High School's class of 1927 following our graduation from Kendall School in June of 1923, two in a class of eight. The high school administration requested we choose our program of study by August. The majority of students chose Agriculture and Commercial studies. Both prepared the student for work immediately upon graduation from high school. The remainder chose college preparatory programs.

It became obvious to Christian and Maria during our high school years that their children showed no desire to take over the farm after completing high school. Ebba chose Teacher Education and I chose the Science program. We had no plans to enter colleges, but felt the programs we chose would prepare us should advanced education become possible. In 1927, as Ebba and I were finishing high school, opportunities opened up for both of us. Ebba became the teacher at Moores one-room school in Headquarters. I entered the Rutgers University School of Engineering with a small loan from the Flemington Rotary Club and received a BS degree in Mechanical Engineering in the class of 1931.

My father began selling the farm in pieces. The first sale was the lower two fields to Castanea Dairy who operated the creamery. They also bought half of our Holstein herd. The next sale was to a Mr. Höcher who bought the remainder of the east fields. Two building lots in the peach orchard were sold to John Emory and Howard Johnson. These sales left only the farmhouse and ten acres and the wood lot remaining.

My mother and father began traveling and living with their children. Christian died of cancer in 1939 at the age of 61 while living with Ebba. Maria died of a stroke in 1943 while living in the home of Ann and Charles Jurgensen. She was 70 years old.

The farmhouse and remaining land were sold in 1942 by Christian's estate following his death, to Willam E. Rittenhouse. The sale of Catalpa farm had now been completed. It had remained the Jurgensen homestead for thirty years.

Part IV: Epilogue

Over time Christian and Maria's four children all married and among them had twelve children of their own.

Ebba remained an elementary school teacher in Delaware Township. Boletta entered the Mercer Hospital School of Nursing, but married before completing her training. Edla graduated from the Mercer Hospital School of Nursing and worked a few years as a registered nurse before marrying. I became a mechanical engineer. I spent my entire working career with the DeLaval and Alfa Laval companies and retired as the Executive Vice-President of USA operations.

Ebba died at the age of 90 after heart surgery. Boletta, Edla and I live in retirement homes. We are all over 90 years old. I am 95 at this writing.

Over the years the farmland and the wood lot have been turned into building lots and streets. Refrigerated trucks now

pick up milk from the farmer, replacing the creameries. School buses and consolidated schools have evolved from the one-room schools. Garages and gas stations have replaced the blacksmith shop and tractors have replaced the horses on the farms. Cars, of course, made the buggy obsolete many years ago. Supermarkets have taken over the role of the general store. The function of some of the early buildings has changed including the Sergeantsville Hotel which is now the municipal building for Delaware Township.

The Catalpa tree, now long past its 100th birthday, still stands alone with its crown badly damaged by telephone and utility lines passing through its branches. Year after year, however, its remaining branches put forth a spectacular show of giant leaves, white flowers and foot-long beans. The tree, however, goes unappreciated for its age, rarity and former beauty.

Acknowledgements:

Boletta Jurgensen Morris for her encyclopedic memories

Joan E. Jurgensen for editorial assistance



The Catalpa Tree, in bloom, which gave Mr. Jurgensen's farm its name

Documenting Pine Hill Cemetery

For his Eagle Scout project Jim McGee, East Amwell student, proposed restoring an historic cemetery, with graves dating back to the 1700s, in Delaware Township where no burials had occurred in over one hundred years and which had received no maintenance for decades. It was completely overgrown with weeds, poison ivy, brush, etc. and groundhogs and other pests had taken up residence therein. Many of the gravestones were cracked and/or toppled.

Jim proposed removing unwanted overgrowth and pests, restoring the gravestones and documenting the burial sites for posterity. An ambitious undertaking which he very successfully completed and provided the Hunterdon County Historical Society with an illustrated report of his project.



These pictures show the cemetery site before and after the cleanup. The site was initially completely overgrown to where it was hardly recognizable as a graveyard and moving through the brush was almost impossible.

The burial ground was also known as the Williamson cemetery and the inscriptions therein were copied in 1909 by Miss Anna S. La Rue and provided to Hiram E. Deats, Historical Society Librarian. He included them in a Tombstone Inscription file he maintained and was known to copy inscriptions himself and with friends, family, and whomever he could enlist to help. The list of inscriptions was printed in the *Historical Society Newsletter*, Volume 3, No. 2 [Fall 1967] and provided to Jim before he began his project. Congratulations, Jim, on a job well-done. He was awarded Eagle Scout designation.



In this view, the brush and many trees have been removed. The graves are visible and ready to be restored and documented.

Volunteer Luncheon at Clinton House

The 16th annual Volunteer luncheon honoring the wonderful group of volunteers who share their time in helping the Society carry out its' mission was held on Wednesday 4 May at the Clinton House. Thanks to everyone who staffs the Deats Memorial Library and Doric House during open hours, greets visitors to the Society's Agricultural Fair booth, and helps with other duties to keep the Society operating.

Volunteers

Shirley V. Favier, Membership Secretary
William H. Hartman, newspaper extracts/CD sales
Clifford L. Hoffman, Holcombe-Jimison Museum liaison
John W. Kuhl, Recording Secretary
Helen S. LaRue, Treasurer
Douglas D. Martin, Chair, Museum Committee
Beth Rice, obituary file

Doric House Hosts and Hostesses

Margaret Houck
Douglas Martin, Chair
Edna Pedrick
Richard H. Stothoff
Harold O. Van Fleet
Margery C. Van Fleet
Lewis Sanders

Library Research Assistants

Roxanne K. Carkhuff
John W. Kuhl
Ralph Lomerson
Edna McIntyre
Stephanie Stevens
Kathleen J. Schreiner
Ron Schultzel
Mary Elizabeth Sheppard
Fred Sisser III
Shirley Wydner
Beth Rice

Buildings and Grounds

Harold O. Van Fleet, Chair
John W. Kuhl
George E. Carkhuff
Richard H. Stothoff

Traditionally the luncheon has been held in an historic building and so it continued in 2005. The Clinton House was built in 1831 to accommodate coach travelers on the Easton-Brunswick Turnpike and has been serving travelers and the "locals" since then.

Membership Report

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

Kathy Agins, Capitol Heights, MD
 Ai S. Bloom, Curwensville, PA
 Clarence and Mary Edmonds, Moravia, NY
 Jack F. Fallin, Walnut Creek, CA
 Candace Fant, Wilsonville, OR
 Richard L. Godown, Caledonia, NY
 Joann Grigg, Colorado Springs, CO
 Anthony R. Kaney, King of Prussia, PA
 Virginia T. Kichline, Aiken, SC
 Donna and Peter D. Lamerson, Stone Ridge, NY
 Anna R. LeBlanc, Scottsdale, AZ
 David R. Reading, Alexandria, VA
 Brendan C. Van Ormer, Pittsburgh, PA

PATRON

We thank the following members for their continued and upgraded support.

Pamelyn P. Bush, Milford, NJ	LIFE
Jack Cullen, Hartford, CT	Contributing
Elizabeth and Charles H. Fisher, Flemington, NJ	LIFE
Robert R. Kugler, Haddonfield, NJ	Contributing
Kay H. Larsen, Easton, PA	Sustaining
Susan G. Leigh, Fairfax, VA	Contributing
Gaar T. Lund, Flemington, NJ	Contributing
Robert W. Pegg, Bethlehem, PA	Sustaining
Beth Rice, Annandale, NJ	Sustaining
Duke Thatcher, Belfast, ME	Contributing
Adam Wengren/ Restoration Technologies, Ringoes, NJ	Contributing

Mrs. Shirley V. Favier
 Membership Chair

HOW TO JOIN

Hunterdon County Historical Society
 114 Main Street
 Flemington, NJ 08822

Please enroll me as a member of your Society

Annual	\$15.00 per year
Family	\$18.00 per year
Contributing	\$25.00 per year
Sustaining	\$50.00 per year
Institutional	\$50 and up per year
Life	\$250.00
Patron	\$1,000.00 or more
Student	\$3.00 per year (18 years of age or less)
Century Club	\$100.00

for which I enclose my remittance in the amount of \$

Name _____

Address _____

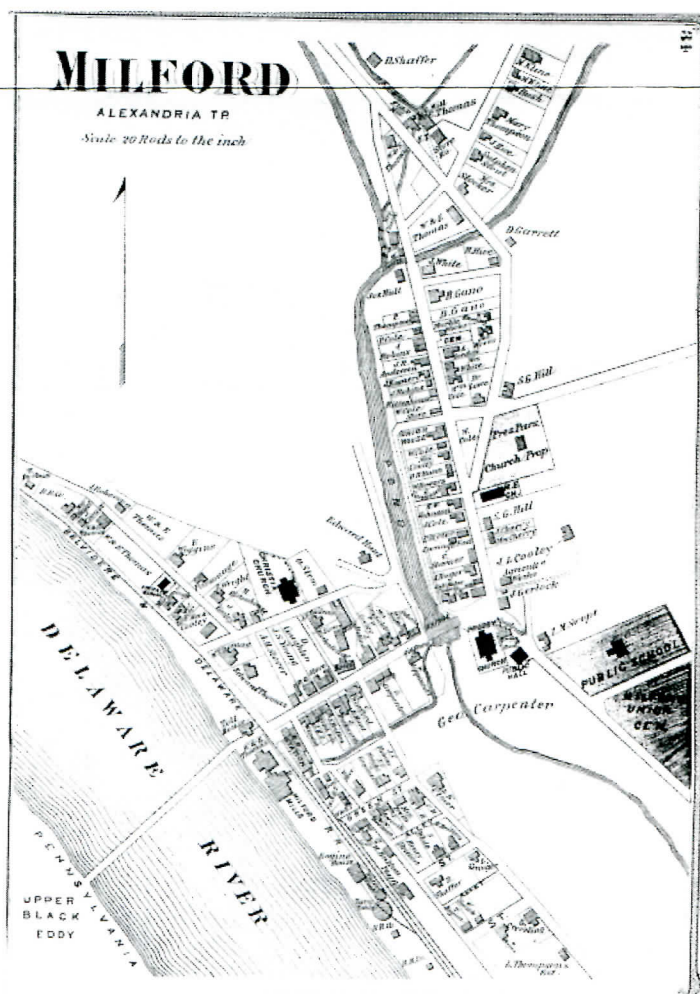
Acquisitions

Artifacts, manuscripts, family Bibles, and other material representative of the history of Hunterdon County and the families who resided here are welcome additions to the Historical Society's collections. To the donors of recent acquisitions the Society expresses its appreciation.

Family Bible of William Taylor and Margaret Stout, married 30 November 1856, published by William W. Harding, 1868, in Philadelphia, PA. Donated by Michael Wood, Hampton, NJ.

Preliminary Documentation Packet for the Voght-Johnson Farm, Clinton Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, by Restoration Technologies of New Jersey/Adam Wengren and Michael J. Margulies, Architect, 2005. Donated by Adam Wengren, Ringoes, NJ.

Mayflower Families Through Five Generations: Family of John Alden, Volume 16, part 3, Fifth Generation Descendants of his sons, John², Joseph², and Jonathan² originally compiled by Esther Littleford Woodworth-Barnes and edited by Alicia Crane Williams, published by General Society of Mayflower Descendants. Donated by Society of Mayflower Descendants in New Jersey, Harry P. Folger, III, Woodbine, NJ.



Milford in 1873, from Beers, Comstock and Kline's *Hunterdon County Atlas*.



Images from the Past

Milford Flood July 3rd 1890



Hunterdon County Historical Society Collections, PX 463

The headlines in the *Milford Leader* read, "Disaster & Death," "a large portion of Milford flooded." "The east side of the town a foaming sea." This could have been April 2005, because similar events were occurring along the Delaware River, but it wasn't 2005! It was over one hundred years ago, 1890, following a 3 July "freshet"* that the flood occurred.

The view here looking south from Captain White's house was permanently recorded by photographer George W. Freeland of Milford and shows the destruction after the waters had receded. The *Milford Leader* reads, "Terrible calamity has befallen Milford, At an unexpected time—on the very eve of a great national holiday ... the rains descended with terrific force and deluged a thickly populated portion of our town, causing the destruction of much valuable property ... coming upon the heels of a similar catastrophe less than a year ago ..." Headlines and story all too familiar to Hunterdon residents in the path of the floods — then and now!

*freshet - flood caused by melting snow or heavy rain