Hunterdon Historical Newsletter

Volume 46 No. 3 Fall 2010



Hunterdon County Historical Society

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 12-21 Quilt Exhibitition
"Stitches in Time:
Quilts of Our Past"
Bouman-Stickney Farmstead,

Stanton includes many HCHS quilts

Nov 13 - "Native Peoples" Presentation by Jim Wade Washington Crossing State Park

Nov 14 - HCHS General Meeting

"Battles of Trenton" by Richard Patterson Flemington Presbyterian Church

Nov 15 - Slide Show

"A Tribute to NJ Veterans" by Michael R. Horgan The Red Mill, Clinton

Nov 17 - Evening Film Series Delaware River Mill Society Prallsville Mills, Stockton

Nov 20 - Oldtime Auction Howell Living History Farm, Lambertville

> Nov 25 - HCHS Closed for Thanksgiving

Nov 26 - 28 Dickens Days Clinton

Dec 5 - Open House
HCHS Doric House

Dec 18 - Lecture
"The Christmas Night Crossing"
by Clay Craighead
Washington Crossing State Park

<u>Dec 25 - HCHS Closed</u> for Christmas

Society's Fall General Meeting, November 14, 2010 Richard Patterson Speaks on "Battles of Trenton"

ichard Patterson, Executive Director of the Old Barracks Museum in Trenton, speaks on "Battles of Trenton" at the Society's Fall Meeting on Sunday, November 14th at the Flemington Presbyterian Church, 10 East Main Street,

at 2 p.m. The public is invited to attend and refreshments will be served.

Mr. Patterson, popular and witty speaker, is a recognized expert on the American Revolution, particular on the military campaigns of the Battles of Trenton, Princeton and Saratoga. The BBC, History Channel, Discovery Channel and New Jersev Network (PBS) have all consulted with him for a number of productions about the American Revolution.

Using maps, portraits, and other visual aids during his address, he will

examine the events that led up to General George Washington's first great victory of the Revolutionary War on December 25, 1776, one of the more famous battles in US history. His presentation will include the plans for attack, the combatants, the strategies, and the outcome, as well as the human side of the war.

For 16 years, Mr. Patterson has directed the Old Barracks, a National Historic Landmark built in 1758-60 and the only survivor of five such structures erected in New Jersey at that time. Under his guidance, the Museum has grown to attract over 30,000 visitors annually, particularly for battle re-enactments. In

2001, its 225th anniversary celebration alone attracted national attention and drew some 1,000 living historians from across North America and Europe, as well as 20,000 spectators.

Mr. Patterson earned both Masters

Bachelor of and Degrees in Arts American History from the State University of New York at Albany, Hunter and College of the City University of New York, respectively. He draws on 35 vears' experience historical in scholarship through service at Van Cortlandt Manor, Crotonon-Hudson, NY; Plantation, Sully Fairfax County Park Authority, Fairfax, VA; The Conference House, Staten Island, NY; Staten Island Historical Society Richmondtown Restoration, Staten Island,



Richard Patterson, Executive Director of the Old Barracks Museum in Trenton

NY; Saratoga National Historical Park, Stillwater, N Y; Federal Hall National Memorial, New York, NY; and American Museum of Immigration, Liberty Island, New York, NY.

Heisa Past Commander of the Brigade of the American Revolution, an international volunteer organization of some 2,000 living historians, craftspeople, musicians, and military and civilian re-enactors from America, Canada and Europe. As evidence of his multi-faceted approach to history, he produced, arranged and performed an album of 18th century Anglo-American folk music, *The Good Old Colony Days*, which featured vocalist Linda Russell.

Hunterdon Historical Newsletter Vol. 46, No. 3 Fall 2010 1090 **Hunterdon Historical Newsletter**

HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER

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> Terry A. McNealy, Editor Beth Rice, Layout

Library Hours

Thursday, Noon to 4 p.m. 2nd and 4th Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and by appointment

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Notes and Queries

Mary Ellen Soldavin (2013)

Apgar: Anyone interested in their 1710-1776 Palatine immigration history or genealogy can contact the Apgars at www.ApgarFamily.org or by calling George Apgar at (732) 297-6686.

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

Sanborn Map Company, Fire Insurance Maps of Flemington, May 1880; July 1885; Jan. 1896. Gift of Alice Petree, Vienna, VA.

Movie posters (2) from Hunterdon County theaters, ca. 1946-47. Gift of Barbara Tucker Hand, Lake Wales, FL, brought in by Karen Hand

Sanborn Map Company, Fire Insurance Map of Flemington, 1921, updated 1938; other insurance maps, ca. 1947-1952; Flemington. Children's Choir School programs, 1940-1945, and other publications. Gift of Doug Rockafellow.

Architectural drawings of the Reading-Large House, Flemington made by the Historical American Buildings Survey, 1937, 22 sheets; architectural drawings (blueprints), New Archives Buildings for the Hunterdon County Historical Society, by Tylman R. Moon (2006). Gift of Richard Stothoff.

CD: Williamson Data Files. Gift of Richard Williamson, Tucson, AZ. Cowells of Knowlton, by Russell S. Cowell. Gift of author.

Creveling Family History and Genealogy, 2d ed., by Louis G. Creveling. Gift of author.

Dalrymple family Bible record (photocopies). Gift of Margaret Rowland, Bethlehem, PA.

Fargo family Bible and other books. Gift of the estate of Marion, Margerie and Edith Fargo.

Hand-crocheted textile with eagle design and Liberty Bell made by Hilda Kohl of Raritan Township. Gift of Russ Lamendola.

Hunterdon County Democrat, Audit Reports, 1939-1990, and other records. Gift of Anne Moreau Thomas.

The Natural Areas System: A Planning Update 1978; 12 photographs of Mountain Farm and related materials. Gift of Douglas Kiovsky.

Parent, Keith, The Everitt Family of Hunterdon County (2010); Elliott, Mary Gene. The Family of Richard Mills Everitt of Georgia (1979); loose-leaf binders. Gift of Keith Parent.

(cont'd page 1091)

Membership Report

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

Reported by Harold O. Van Fleet, Membership Chair

Elizabeth Bernhard, Ringoes, NJ, Life Member Lynn Burtis, Flemington, NJ Judith R. Bushnell, Princeton, NJ Joan Miller Case, Philadelphia, PA Gail Connor, Durham, NC Deborah A. Dawson, Three Bridges, NJ Lisa Gawkowski, Whitehouse Station, NJ Michelle R. Gill, Bloomsbury, NJ Margot J. Hilson, Milford, NJ Deborah Hoskins, Ringoes, NJ David W. Johnston, Flemington, NJ Ray Jones, Frenchtown, NJ Laura Kardos, Mechanicsburg, PA

Margaret F. MacQueen, Lansdale, PA Gayle Maher, High Bridge, NJ Patricia and Andrew W. Makuch, Flemington, NJ Pat Benthin and Jim McDonough, Hampton, NJ Leslie C. Moore, Flemington, NJ Frances Powell, Jacksonville, FL William Race, Belvidere, NJ David T. Ralston, Stockton, NJ Evelyn M. Sherry Sakiey, Mercerville, NJ Bette and Donald M. Scandrol, Milford, NJ Karol L. Vella, Newnan, GA Robert A. Wurst, Spring City, PA

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

Janet A. Alpert

Ed Large, Art and Cathie Wetstein, In memory of Pat Strouse

Benefactors, \$500-\$999

Lois K. Stewart

Patrons, \$100-\$499

Margaret Gritzmacher. In memory of Pat Strouse

F. Paul Cook and Susan Harrell. In memory of our cousin Patrick D. Strouse

> Richard Stothoff, In memory of Patrick Strouse

Supporters, up to \$99

James Deloge, In memory of Pat Strouse

A. Wayne Fisher, In memory of George Hoff

Bill and Claire Hoff, In memory of our uncle George Hoff

> Carol Meyers, In memory of George Hoff

In memoriam: Ralph Lomerson **by Don Cornelius**

or those who did not know, the Hunterdon County Historical Society lost a very special member of our volunteer family this past summer. Ralph Lomerson, whom many of our members and patrons knew from his work as a library volunteer, passed away in July at the age of 85.

Ralph, of course, was a well known figure throughout Hunterdon County. He graduated from High Bridge High School in 1943, and served in WWII in the European Theater. years, but the loss of such an esteemed friend makes one truly Throughout his working life, Ralph was at various times a dairy farmer, stone mason for the Getty Pipeline, and an employee at Taylor-Wharton. He was also the President and gravedigger for the Spruce Run Cemetery Association.

Lebanon Township Historical Society, and was the historian bit emptier, and things don't feel quite the same around the of Glen Gardner. He frequently presented original displays of historical material, and he assisted in writing a historical volume of Lebanon Township.

But for those of us at the Hunterdon County Historical Society, we will always remember him as one of the rocks of our corps of volunteers. For well over a decade, Ralph donated countless hours to our Society. He was a wonderful library reference assistant, a seriously productive and helpful archival assistant, and could always be counted on to assist in

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 Life \$250 Patron \$1000 or more Student \$3 per year (u	·
Name	
Address	
ph #	
email	
I want to volunteer! Yes	

special projects such as the County Fair. His warm and open demeanor, deep understanding of local history, and dogged pursuit of a fact or project helped countless numbers of our members, patrons, and staff over the years. Ralph's friendly and engaging smile and gentle sense of humor helped pass the time through many crowded sessions of open library hours or long nights in the Archives. Ralph could always be counted upon to handle any request he was given, and finish any project he started.

The HCHS will continue on as it has for the past 125 understand that the Society is more than its library, museum, books, artifacts, and furniture. It is essentially a group of people, like Ralph, who come together to enjoy and celebrate the history of Hunterdon County in the company of other Ralph was a true lover of history. He was a member of the good people. But for right now, the Doric House seems a little library. We shall all miss him very much.

(Acquisitions cont'd from page 1090)

Podayko, Irene, Collection of passports, immigration papers, photographs and artifacts of her father Frank Podayko. Gift of Janice Armstrong, Milford, NJ

Quitclaim deed, Mar. 18, 1765, John and Thomas Cole to executors of Tunis Cole in trust for Benjamin Cole (framed). Gift of Benn Cole, Flemington, NJ

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Flemington Children's Choir School by Jay Langley

he story of The Flemington Children's Choir School has been a proud chapter in Hunterdon County's history. Sadly, its song ended in May, when the surviving alumni of the Choir School donated its artifacts, photos, books and records to the Hunterdon County Historical Society for preservation. To help defray the costs of preserving and displaying these items, the Choir School alumni also donated the funds remaining in their treasury – some \$22,404.

The Choir School's 1890 Chickering piano, a gift originally from Louella Alleger, was given to the Flemington Baptist Church.

And as to the Choir School building itself, on tiny Chorister Place, just around the corner from the Historical Society's headquarters in the Doric House at 114 Main Street, Flemington – at this writing the next use for that structure remains undecided. The county owns the little building and on its first floor it still houses the office of the Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission. But there is talk that the freeholders may sell it. Its status in Flemington's historic district will help protect it – but its fate is up to the Hunterdon County Freeholders.

The Choir School building and the Doric House are near neighbors in the back, separated by just a few feet. They are so close that years ago a small bridge was built at the second floor level to span the alley between them. The bridge crossed from an upstairs bedroom in the Doric House to the Choir School's second floor practice loft, or studio. That bridge allowed Miss Bessie Vosseller to commute from her home in the Doric House to her labor-of-love as

Photo caption: "Solemn-faced, Probationer Alan Bullock kneels to receive the surplice, the symbol of admission to the Choir School, from Peggy Dietz, an honor graduate." Hunterdon County Historical Society, Photographic Collection PX2116.

co-director of the Choir School, with no stairs to descend or climb, and with minimal exposure to the weather.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Let's start at the beginning. Here's how the Choir School's story was related by J. Jay Smith, who is the director of music and organist at the Flemington Presbyterian Church, in a 1996 article in these pages (Vol. 32, No. 2, Spring 1996). Mr. Smith wrote to highlight the Choir School's 100th anniversary concert, on May 18 of that year, which he helped members of the alumni chorus to arrange and stage at the Presbyterian Church.

FLEMINGTON CHOIR SCHOOL CENTENNIAL

By J. Jay Smith

The famed Flemington Children's Choir School had its beginning in the Presbyterian Church in 1895 when Miss Elizabeth Van Fleet Vosseller gathered a group of children and had them sing during the Christmas season. Miss Vosseller and Miss Elizabeth Richardson Hopewell, affectionately



Photo caption: "Dec. 24th, 1939 in B. Vosseller's den. Seated behind her typewriter, Miss Elizabeth Van Fleet Vosseller enjoys a joke with her co-founder, Miss Bessie R. Hopewell. From Miss Vosseller's infectious smile, you'd never know her left side was paralyzed and she was unable to rise from her chair." Hunterdon County Historical Society Photo Collection PX2281, PX2076.

known as the two Miss Bessies, were pioneers in developing techniques for training children's voices for church choir work....

....The training of young singers was so successful that by 1920 all five churches in the village – Baptist, Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian – were involved with the school. The children entered the school at age nine and attended for seven years.

The first graduation in 1907 honored a quartet of four girls. In time these graduation ceremonies would become an important musical event attracting musicians from all parts of the country. They were held in the Presbyterian Church the third Friday of May each year until 1958. The graduation ceremony was a festive and impressive occasion in which 200 choristers and 150 alumni participated. The choristers would enter the sanctuary in two lines singing the processional "Brightly Gleams Our Banner," which was written by Grace Leeds Darnell, organist of St. Mary's Episcopal Church of New York City, and who for many years was at the console. Anthems were sung by the probationers of the school, by the members of the school, and also by the alumni. Selections were also played by guest organists. Awards were presented for attendance and initiative. Gold hoods were given to the members of the graduating class. In addition, the Fidelitas Prize for outstanding work was awarded to one of the graduates. Over the years, this award was presented to sixtyfour people. The recipients' names have been inscribed on stone tablets affixed to the front of the choir studio. The exercises concluded with the recessional "Children Are All Dear to Thee," by Norman Landis, organist of the Presbyterian Church for sixty years (1897-1956).

(cont'd page 1096)

Give A Gift of History

Give a gift with real meaning this holiday season - give a book about local history! We're selling several new titles at bargain prices. Several items were donated by the *Hunterdon County Democrat* weekly newspaper. Stop by our library to pick up your copy! For mail orders: Include \$5 for the first book and \$1 for each additional book (unless otherwise specified); maps and posters add \$10 shipping for up to 4 items. Out-of-country checks, add \$5. **For these items if 2 or more are mailed in one tube, shipping is still \$10.

Address on the Dissolution of Nations

William Paterson (HCHS 1997). Essay on political science written about 1770 by a future Governor of NJ and US Supreme Court Justice. 25 pp., soft cover. \$1

Atlas of Hunterdon

Beers, Comstock and Cline (1873, reprinted by HCHS 1987). Contains maps of 14 townships and 32 towns. 77 pp., 13"X16", hard cover, \$40

Baptists in Kingwood, NJ

Stephen Zdepski (1974). A History of the Kingwood Baptist Church at Baptistown and Locktown and the present Baptistown Baptist Church. 37 pp., illus., soft cover. \$5

Beneath These Waters

Stephanie Stevens (2009). Chronicles the colorful history of Round Valley from its geological formation and Lenape habitat to summer refuge for early Revolutionary Patriots, rich fields farmed by some of Hunterdon's oldest families, and the reservoir that took the land for drinking water and recreation. 70 pp., illus., maps, index, soft cover. \$7

The Centre Bridge

Elmer Roberson (1928). History of the Centre Bridge Company and the covered bridge over the Delaware River that burned in 1923. 10 pp., soft cover. \$3

The Choyce Compendium

Betty Choyce Sheehan (2006). The Choyces were part of an English migration to Flemington in 1785, along with the Capners, Peter Haward, Isaac Passand, and others. 907 pp., indexed, illus., family charts, hard cover. \$85 plus \$10 shipping.

Ye Colonial Kinsmen From Plymouth Rocke to York Towne

Joseph N. Kearney, 1978. Genealogical study documenting about 200 immigrants of Plymouth, MA and New Amsterdam (present day NYC) and tracing their families through 6 generations. Over 3000 names. 8 24"X36" charts. \$30 non-members, \$20 members. Plus \$10 for shipping.

Facts and Fantasies of Franklin Township

J. Edward Stout (1995). Traces Franklin Township's geographic, political and social roots over the 150 years from 1845-1995 when the rural community moved from "the combine to the commuter." The author's account of The Peak in Franklin speaks to the fantasies of the title, offering history with a sense of humor. 448 pp., indexed, illus., maps, soft cover. \$20.

The First 275 Years of Hunterdon County, 1714-1989

Hunterdon Co Cultural and Heritage Commission (1990). Local history by local experts. 125 pp., illus., maps, soft cover. \$3.50

Flemington, NJ Map

O.H. Bailey and Co. Reprint of 1883 bird's-eye view map of Flemington. Approx. 20"X25". \$10. Plus \$10 for shipping**

The Flemington Fair Story

Kenneth V. Myers (1978). 95 pp., illus., soft cover. \$5

Flemington Fair Poster

Russell & Morgan Printing Co. Reprint of 1885 Hunterdon County Fair poster. Approx. 24"X33". \$30. Plus \$10 for shipping**

Flemington Fire Department 140th Anniversary

140th Anniversary Parade Committee (1982). Includes the early history of the department, list of chiefs, photos of men and equipment from 1842 to 1982.118 pp., illus., soft cover. \$5

The Ghosts of Hopewell

Jim Fisher (2006). The professor's back! In his second review of the Lindbergh kidnapping, he examines many of the wild new claims about whodunit, how, and why. 200 pp., illus., hard cover. \$20

History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, NJ

James P. Snell (1881, reprinted by HCHS 2008). The standard classic county history. 2 vol, 864 pp., illus., maps, hard cover. \$89.50 non-members, \$85 members. Plus \$10 for shipping.

Hunterdon County, NJ Map

Lloyd Van Derveer & S.C. Cornell. Reprint of 1851 map. Approx. 24"X31". \$25. Plus \$10 for shipping**

Hunterdon County New Jersey Fisheries 1819-1820

Phyllis B. D'Autrechy (1993). Historical background on shad fishing and the names and locations of fisheries in the county. 44 pp., indexed, illus., maps, soft cover. \$7.50

Hunterdon County New Jersey Militia, 1792

Hiram E. Deats (1936, reprinted by HCHS 1994). Alphabetical listings by township of "free and able-bodied white male citizens" between 18 and 45 yrs. 37 pp., soft cover. \$12

Hunterdon County's Forgotten Lime Industry

Frank A. Curcio (2006). Winner of the NJ Author's Award. History of the lime kiln industry in Hunterdon, including background on the process of quarrying, the uses of lime and the major sites of mining in the county. 132 pp., illus., maps, soft cover. \$5

Hunterdon Gazette Weekly Newspaper

Digital photographic images of the Gazette newspaper pages as well as typed and formatted text of the newspaper items containing people's names and events of Hunterdon County, with an overall name and key word index. Covers 1825-1866. DVD format works on both PCs and Macs. Also contains text of book *Hunterdon Place Names*. \$25 non-members, \$20 members and includes shipping.

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Hunterdon's Role in the Revolution

Hunterdon County Democrat (1976). This large format booklet describes scores of brave local men and women who fought to found a free nation. Many rare old illustrations. 88 pp., illus., maps, soft cover. \$3

I Remember

Gloria Sipes Paleveda (1997). What if Tom Sawyer had been a girl? A Frenchtown matron tells 14 more tales of life along the Delaware early in the 20th century, 78 pp., illus, \$8

In Defence of Her Honor

By Dennis Sullivan (2000) - The New York press went wild in 1886 at the lurid rape and murder of Tillie Smith. An innocent man was set to hang. This real-life mystery occurred in Hackettstown, on the Centenary College campus. 169 pp., illus., soft cover. \$10 for non-members, \$8 for members.

In the Grip of the Expert

Egbert T. Bush (1904). Novel by noted Hunterdon County newspaper writer. 277 pp., hard cover. \$7 non-members, \$5 members.

The Jerseyman: A Quarterly Magazine of Local History

Hiram E. Deats, ed. (1893-1905). Local history and genealogy, primarily of Hunterdon County. Vols 2-11, 376+ unbound pages, with added table of contents compiled by Roxanne K. Carkhuff. Some early issues may be supplied through photocopies. \$100

Lindbergh Kidnapping

Lost for 65 years! Found in a NJ barn! Original cartoon drama traces the "The Crime of the Century." Fully colorized computerrepaired panels with footnotes. 36 pp., soft cover. \$5 nonmembers, \$4 members.

Lindbergh Newspapers

Time travel in a box! This set of 11 reprinted local newspapers covers the "Trial of the Century." Rare photos. Depression-era ads are priceless! Great gift for students, history buffs, senior citizens and legal eagles. \$25 non-members, \$20 members.

Marriage Records of Hunterdon Co, NJ, 1795-1875

Hiram E. Deats (1918, reprinted with additions and corrections, 1986) 348 pp., hard cover. \$25.

More Records of Old Hunterdon County, Volume I

Compiled by Phyllis B. D'Autrechy (HCHS 1998). Includes division of lands1795-1876; Orphans Court Minutes 1785-1797; Naturalizations 1803-1876, and much more. 276 pp., full index, illus., maps, hard cover. \$25

More Records of Old Hunterdon County, Volume II

Compiled by Phyllis B. D'Autrechy, edited by Roxanne K. Carkhuff (HCHS 2000). Includes abstracts of wills, letters of administration and inventories, 1818-1825, bastardy cases, 1761-1890, and more. 331 pp., full index, maps, hard cover. \$25

Old Stones at Oak Summit

Kenneth V. Myers (1985). Kingwood Presbyterian Church at Oak Summit, Kingwood Township. 20 pp., index, soft cover. \$3

A Precious Place

By Don Freiday (1997) – A local naturalist spins his favorite tales. An engaging flock of stories, whether you're home by the hearth or out on the trail. 161 pp., illus., soft cover. \$10 for nonmembers, \$8 for members.

Raritan Township, NJ Map

J.C. Sidney. Reprint of 1850 map. Approx. 24"X33". \$25

Records of the Kingwood Monthly Meeting of Friends

James W. Moore (1900). 42 pp., soft cover. \$12.50 nonmembers, \$10 members.

The Ride to Pleasant Grove

By Sal Vuocolo (1999) - A modern couple, repairing their Lebanon Township home, Hance Farm, follow clues to find the early-1800s family that worked this same land. 160 pp., illus., soft cover. \$8 for non-members, \$6 for members.

When Leaves Grow Old and Other Poems

Egbert T. Bush (1916). 32 pp., hard cover. \$6 non-members, \$4

The Vought Family, Loyalists in the American Revolution

Donald E. Sherblom (2009). Explores the background of the historic Vought House in Clinton Township that contains rare plaster ceilings and was saved at the last moment from demolition. Also delves into the prominent family that built it, planned raids against neighbors and plotted disruptions of Revolutionary activities. 63 pp., illus, maps, soft cover. \$5

SMALL PAMPHLETS Postage Only \$1 Per Item

General Washington at Coryell's Ferry

Hannah Corvell Anderson (1928, reprinted 1969). 24 pp., illus. \$2.50 non-members, \$2 members.

Historical and Genealogical Sketch of James Sterling

Edward Boker Sterling (1893). Hunterdon Historical Series, no. 3. 27 pp., illus., soft cover. \$2.50 non-members, \$2 members

History of the Readington School, Formerly Called Holland Brook, 1804-1897

John Fleming (1898). Hunterdon Historical Series, no. 4, 15 pp., soft cover, \$2.50 non-members, \$2 members.

Tucca-Ramma-Hacking

E. Vosseller (1901). Hunterdon Historical Series, no. 5. Tales and traditions from the area where the branches of the Raritan River meet. 21 pp., soft cover. \$2.50 non-members, \$2 members.

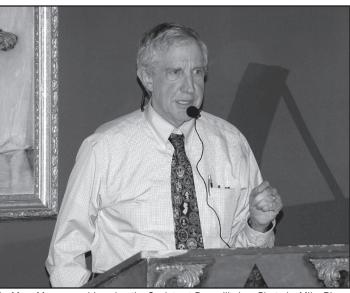
THE JOHN W. KUHL MARRIAGE and OBITUARY FILE

Marriages and obituaries published in **Hunterdon County newspapers from 1908 to 1949** added to the Society's collections

hrough the kindness and generosity of Trustee John W. Kuhl, a quantity of Hunterdon County newspapers published in the last century were periodically passed on to Volunteer Fred Sisser III. Over the past several years Mr. Sisser has clipped every engagement, marriage and obituary, as well as wedding anniversaries, notable birthdays, divorces and other biographical articles from these periodicals. While this is still an ongoing project, Mr. Sisser recently gave the Dr. Marc Mappen, addressing the Society at Perryville Inn. Photo by Mike Rice Society twenty 4x5x11 card tray boxes in which there are arranged in alphabetical order, on 3x5 index cards, over 16,000 newspaper clippings concerning Hunterdon County residents.

While there are a fair number of clippings dating from the late 1800s, a majority of the articles come from newspapers published from 1908 until 1949, and most of these are from the Hunterdon County Democrat. Some of the more interesting accounts concern the passing of soldiers who fought in the Civil War, for example, Charles F. Nixon, Peter Morgan and unfortunate C. J. Botsford, who died in jail; the marriages and deaths of notable persons who were natives of Hunterdon County, such articles on New Jersey history. as Edgar Bloom, Jacob Bunn and Frances Peterman, a famous aviatrix; the remains of soldiers sent home from France after World War I, including Abram Philhower and Frank Eick; and persons who had attained a great age, like Margaret Carkhuff, who celebrated her 100th birthday in November 1921. It is interesting to note that, aside for those by the last name of Smith, the next most numerous family represented are those by the surname of Apgar: two hundred and twenty-seven individuals, ranging from Aaron Apgar who celebrated his 85th birthday in 1923 to Zelpha Jane Apgar who died in 1931.

joins several other death files already in the Society's collections, mainly the Frank E. Burd obituary file (c.1900 to 1985); the John W. Lequear obituary file (c.1880-1900); and the Society's on-going obituary file, as clipped from the Hunterdon County Democrat each week. The Kuhl File does eclipse those which were maintained by Messrs. Lequear and Bird in that they are the actual newspaper article; the Kuhl files also covers marriages, and other notable milestones which these gentlemen did not include in their collection.



Celebrating Our 125th Anniversary by Mary Elizabeth Sheppard

he 125th Anniversary of the Hunterdon County Historical Society was celebrated on Saturday, September 18th at the Perryville Inn. Sixty-four trustees and friends feasted on salad, moist chicken breast with rice pilaf, grilled tilapia with polenta or pasta primavera and decadent desserts.

Dr. Marc Mappen was the speaker. He has a PhD. in American History. A retired associate dean of Rutgers University and renowned historian, he was the co-editor of the Encyclopedia of New Jersey and author of several

He prefaced his remarks by noting important New Jersey citizens Governor Livingston, Revolutionary hero Molly Pitcher, Bridge Engineer John Roebling, President Woodrow Wilson and Inventor Thomas Edison. Among the items conceived in New Jersey are decaffeinated coffee, transistors and bubble wrap. He suggested that New Jersey should adopt Frank Sinatra's song My Way as the State song. He enthralled us by reading three chapters of his new book There's More To New Jersey Than The Sopranos.

He told of female ghosts that walk the beaches of Long Beach Island, and details of how the Orson Wells Mercury Theater radio broadcast on Halloween eve resulted in the War of the Worlds invasion and panic throughout the nation. We The John W. Kuhl Marriage and Obituary File heard of the fascinating adventures of Alice Huyler Ramsey -- the 22 year old spunky wife of a Hackensack attorney -who drove a Maxwell automobile for 41 days from New York to San Francisco. These were the days before paved roads, maps and AAA.

> This book should be required reading for all students studying New Jersey history and will be enjoyed by all who believe that New Jersey is more than the industrial buildings along the turnpike.

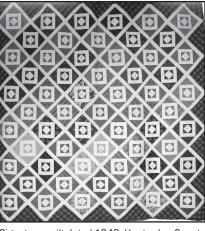
> The lesson in historical New Jersey personalities was a good way to start the Society's 126th year. So thanks to Dr. Marc Mappen for that.

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Making History: HCHS QUILT PROJECT by Judy Grow

ne of the brightest jewels in the Society's very colorful quilt collection might have been made to mark the first wedding anniversary of Myra and Martin Coryell of Lambertville. The quilt is dated June 5, 1843, one year after their wedding, in a block signed, dated, and placed in Lambertville by Eugenia E. Corvell. The quilt is signed by 27 people, many from the influential Coryell, Lambert, and Melick families. The quilt is large, almost 100 inches square,

and consists of 61 blocks in a Square in a Square, or Framed Square pattern. It uses 35 different early printed dress cottons, and cotton chintzes that were often used as furnishing fabrics. The fact that the chintzes retain their shiny glaze means that the quilt was never laundered and its excellent condition means that it was rarely used. I have found images of



Signature quilt dated 1843. Hunterdon County Historical Society Quilt Collection.

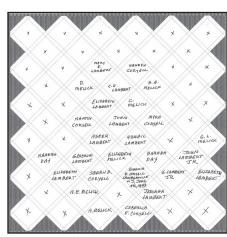
a bodice from a dress of the period that uses the very same large "plaid" fabric used in the border triangles. These were expensive fabrics and could have been bought specifically for the quilt, or were cut-offs from dressmaking projects.

Coincidentally, there is an almost identical quilt at the Lambertville Historical Society. That quilt uses the identical fabrics, though they are arranged differently, and has the same 27 signatures, also arranged differently.

Members of the Mid-Atlantic Quilt Study Group, led

by Judy Grow of Flemington and Mary DeSloovere from Yardley, PA, are making a "reproduction" of this quilt to celebrate the 125 year history of the Society, and the 167 years of this beautiful quilt. We would like to fill all the blocks with Society member names. The blocks are all made, each one of a unique reproduction fabric, and already 27 blocks are signed (another coincidence). All funds raised by this project will go toward the continued conservation of the Society's remarkable quilt, coverlet and costume/clothing collection.

Your check for \$25.00 will guarantee your immortality on the quilt. Don't worry -- you won't have to sign the



Layout of signatures

fabric yourself. All signatures will be done in the same very legible handwriting with fade and water resistant archival ink. When finished. the quilt will be raffled off to raise even more money to preserve the collection.

Please make your check for \$25.00 out to the Hunterdon County Historic Society and address

your envelope to "The Quilt Project." Please indicate very legibly the name vou want written on your block -- your own, your children, or even in memory of someone special to you. If you have a preference for color please note that as well. We will try to put your name in a block of the color of your choice. However, if everyone chooses red (for example) I reserve the right to choose an alternate color! The blues, browns, greens, and pinks are wonderful as well. Sorry -- a light and water fast purple dye for cotton fabrics hadn't yet been discovered in 1843.

(Choir School cont'd from page 1092)

Rehearsals took place at the studio. In 1927, under the supervision of Flemington architect Arthur A. Aalholm, an old chapel building was remodeled into a colonial-style building with a music studio on the second floor and a common Georgian-style room on the first floor. Today the second floor stands virtually untouched as a landmark to the work of the two Miss Bessies. On display are graduation pictures from 1907-1958, awards, pins, music, and other memorabilia. The first floor houses the office of the Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission.

Upon the death of Miss Vosseller in 1938, Miss Hopewell directed the school until 1945 when Miss Sarah Alvater took over this responsibility. She was succeeded by Mrs. Frank Lott, who served until the school's closing in 1958. The factors responsible for the school's demise were lack of support by participating churches, which were developing their own junior choirs, and the increased music programs in local

Two programs started by the school are still carried on today. On Christmas 1909, Mrs. Arthur Foran summoned

fifteen members of local church choirs to sing for Miss Vosseller, who was ill. The following year caroling through the streets early on Christmas morning at homes lit by candles was begun and remains a tradition today. Second, the erection of a Christmas tree at the Civil War monument followed by a tree lighting and carol singing continues as an annual event. In recent years, the Cub Scout Pack 61 has been responsible for this community activity. (Editor's note: both these activities were organized and led in recent decades by Choir School graduate Douglas H. Niece.)

The founders of the Flemington Children's Choir School were decades ahead of their time in discovering techniques for training children's voices and developing children's choir programs in the church. The Flemington Children's Choir School plan was a model for churches and communities throughout the United States. The names Elizabeth Van Fleet Vosseller, Elizabeth Hopewell, and Norman Landis were synonymous with musical excellence in Flemington for the first half of the 20th century. The work of the school can best be summarized by an excerpt from the creed of the alumni, "we believe music to be God's gift to his children."

FROM THE DESK OF DONALD CORNELIUS, HCHS MANUSCRIPT CURATOR

in Hunterdon County. Fall, I think, is happy to begin working on my own. my favorite time of year. It is a time to appreciate the ending of the hectic organize, arrange, and describe the beginnings and new projects.

dreamed of just a couple of years ago.

finished, your curator has finally us at the HCHS. been able to turn at least part of my productive summer, and we are really instituted presence in the late 20th few new collections.

My new collection project is to financial documents. With that massive chore finally these valuable historical materials to

fter an unusually warm and close to the release of at least three new century, and the Alumni Choir. These dry summer, a beautifully collections of importance. But while records include minutes, membership breezy fall has finally arrived they finish up their projects, I am very lists, programs, awards, music collections, school curriculums, and

Also included is a fabulous summer time while preserving its papers of the Flemington Children's collection of photographs. Many of memories, and a time to turn to new Choir and Choir of the Alumni. This the photographs are of individual group of records is material that was students, groups of students, class That is true here at the HCHS stored and used at the Choir's location years, or performances. Even better, Archives as well. At long last, we have on Chorister Place, Flemington. As the this cache of photographs is of moved the last of the really big amounts County begun the process of divesting particular value because an unusually of manuscripts from our main location itself of the Choir School building, it large percentage of the images are at the Doric House to our storage was found that there were many boxes tagged with name and location building on River Road. That material of records from the Choir School. identifiers. When this collection is has now all been shelved, inventoried. Fortunately, the School, with the finished and released to the public, and located, and is fortunately in a more assistance of the Hunterdon County there is a good chance that those with organized state that we could ever have Cultural and Heritage Commission, Flemington ancestors might be able to was able to donate a large portion of find some relatives in this collection!

So, although the falling of leaves may signal the end of barbecues, beach After finishing a preliminary trips, and summer fun, the action here attention back to the duties I like the inventory of the collection, I must say at our Archives has never been more best: processing donated archival I am very excited. This collection is exciting. I am looking forward to a material and making it available to a very rich source of history of one of highly productive fall and winter, and I our membership and other interested Flemington's more famous institutions. can hardly wait to write the next edition researchers. My wonderful group of The collection contains organic records of this column, at which I fully expect volunteer assistants has had a very from the original Choir School, its re- to be able to announce the release of a

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Film Preservation Grant Awarded to HCHS

that the HCHS has been awarded a 2010 Basic Preservation Preservation Foundation.

The grant, awarded for the amount of approximately \$4,300.00, will fund the preservation and production of duplicate copies for the original short film *Money at Work*. *Money at* Work (1933) is a depression-era short sponsored by the American Bankers Association to restore confidence in small-town banks. The film was produced shortly after the banking holiday of 1933 and shot on location in Flemington, NJ, featuring one of the county's leading banking institutions.

The film demonstrates the mechanics of banking in a small town,

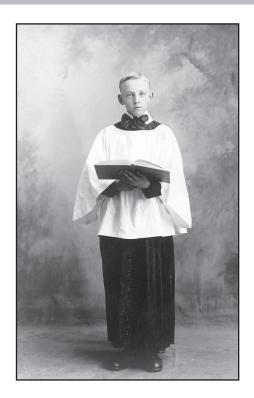
he Hunterdon County Historical local economy, and the link between the public institutions for laboratory work Society is pleased to announce local bank and the larger national scene. to preserve culturally and historically In addition to its original importance, significant film materials. Grants the film also contributes to local history Grant from the National Film through its interviews with Hunterdon institutions in the United States County citizens and in the appearance of other citizens in the background. Also, the film has scenic shots of Flemington, showing the character of The grants target orphan films (1) made the town before its appearance and atmosphere were irrevocably changed by the Richard Bruno Hauptmann Trial (the Lindbergh kidnapping case). The film, still in its original container, was donated to the Society in 2009 by Anne Moreau Thomas.

The grant awarded, from the National Film Preservation Foundation, program. As stated on their website www.filmpreservation.org, "these cash the importance of the local bank to the grants are awarded to nonprofit and

are available to public and nonprofit that provide public access to their collections, including those that are part of federal, state or local government. in the United States or by American citizens abroad and (2) not protected by commercial interests."

Upon completion of the grant project, the Society plans to screen the film at its next regularly scheduled membership meeting, followed by a public screening at an organized history fair, open house, or other similar event is part of their Basic Preservation Grant to be determined. In addition, the film will eventually be posted for public access through the Society's web page, which is currently under development.

Images from the Past



Flemington Children's Choir School

Not for girls only! Photo caption: "To Miss Bessie Vosseller, Merry Christmas is the Wish of Harold Kinney." *ca.* 1919. Hunterdon County Historical Society Photo Collection PX2287.

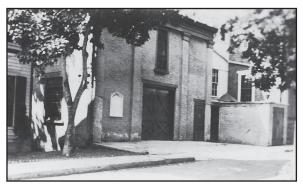


Photo caption: "Studio of Flemington Choir School. Chorister's Place looking up toward Main Street." Date unknown. Hunterdon County Historical Society Photo Collection PX2120.

