

Hunterdon Historical Record



HUNTERDON
COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

hunterdonhistory.org

A Call for Volunteers

Can you spare some time to join other members and trustees at the Society's display table at the Hunterdon County 4H Agricultural Fair to raise awareness of what the Society offers? No experience is necessary; your colleagues will show you what to do. The Fair Committee would be grateful for your help.

The Fair runs from Wed. Aug. 21—Sun. Aug. 25. Four-hour "work shifts" run 10-2, 2-6, and 6-10.

If interested please contact John Allen at (724) 814-9721, or by e-mail at johninretirement@gmail.com.

**Join us at the
County 4-H Fair
August 21-25
Route 179 Fairgrounds.**

Kingwood Farm: WWII Orphan's Sanctuary

By Dave Harding



The 1889 two-story frame house where journalist William Lyndsay White and his wife Kathrine provided love and sanctuary to a four-year-old WWII British orphan.

The four-year-old girl arrived at the Kingwood farm for the first time in early 1941 with her only two possessions in the world: a teddy bear and a 2-lb. magnesium incendiary bomb case.

The girl, Barbara, suspiciously eyed the grass—which she rarely saw in her native London—fearing it too soft to walk upon. The wind whistled through the nearby woods, and down the gentle slope from her new home, the Copper Creek burred softly as it meandered toward the Delaware River.

The farm must have felt like heaven. Especially when considering that the girl had just escaped hell.

Barbara's young life had known intimately the angry buzz of German Luftwaffe bombers droning over London during the Blitz. The groans of buildings collapsing from the plummeting bombs. The screams of the dead and the dying.

One bomb whistled harmlessly from the inky black sky, and failed to detonate. An air warden carefully unscrewed its cap and dumped thermite into the ground. Barbara came in possession of the bomb case, and it rarely left her side. She often slept with it at night.

But another bomb, prior to this one, landed with devastating consequences: It blew her world to pieces, killing her parents and reducing her home to rubble.

As the Battle of Britain raged, renowned journalist William Lyndsay White stood in the wardroom of a destroyer watching through the porthole as the Canadian coastline faded from view. White was headed across the dangerous waters of the Atlantic Ocean to cover the battle for CBS News and a consortium of newspapers. (White was the son of William Allen White, editor of the

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www.hunterdonhistory.org/membership**Acquisitions**

Artifacts and documents on the history of Hunterdon County and the families who resided here are welcome additions to the Society's Collections. Donations may not be available for research until they have been processed, a continuing activity. The Society thanks the donors for these recent acquisitions.

Anonymous. 4 Photographs: Dilley Bus Service buses (ca. 1971) and an image of "Fred Dilley's first Ford Car" (ca. 1940). [Below]

Christoph, Florence A., compiler. *The Van Voorhees family in America: the seventh and eight generations* (2003). HCHS Purchase.

Davidson, Jim. A Program (1971); Hunterdon Central High School Class of 1961 Tenth Reunion.

Dilts, Wayne. Bible records of the COX, BUSH, and DILTS families. John T. Cox (1847-1918) m. 1867 Rachel Elizabeth Bush (1850-1916). Bible in possession of Wayne Dilts. HCHS Bible Record CS595.

Eichholz, Alice, ed. *Red book: American state, county, and town sources* (2004). Donated by Patti Christie.Falzini, Mark W. *Their fifteen minutes of fame: biographical sketches of the Lindbergh Case* (2014). HCHS Purchase.*Flemington Streetview October 2018: Images of Main Street by 14 photographers* (2018). Gift of Bill Brokaw and other photographers.Sciarello, Kathleen Phillips, compiler. *Early life and traditions of Holland, N.J. 1916-1923: a collection of newspaper articles, historical information and pictures* (2019). Gift of the author.

Sliker, Roberta. An original deed, 171 Acres in Bethlehem Township from Henry Kaese, son of William Kaese, decd., to Peter Kaese, 11 August 1772. Given in Memory of Roger I. Sliker.

Somerset County Historical Society. A Playbill (1960), St. John Terrell's Music Circus; Lambertville, and a map of Flemington by the Opdyke Map Company (1941).

Stephens, Stephanie. South Readington (Readington Township) Register of Voters, election of 1898. [Detail below]

REGISTER OF VOTERS.				
No.	NAME.	Check.	Street No.	RESIDENCE.
133	Shaffer James N.			Pleasant Run
257	Landus Arthur W.			" "
258	Shields Lewis C.			" "
240	Shields John C.			" "
241	Shields John C.			" "
242	Shields John C.			" "

Acquisitions continued

Stonington Historical Society (CT). Family bible of John Rittenhouse (1800-1853); m. 1821 Huldah Seal; m. 1834 Elizabeth Laning. HCHS Bible Record CS594.
 Stothoff, Richard. 1898 framed marriage certificate from the Stothoff family signed by witness Hiram Deats. [Below]



Walters, Elaine. Photographs and news clippings concerning children attending Frenchtown elementary schools, 1927-1928. [Above: Kindergarten No. 1, Frenchtown Elementary School, 1928.]

AS GENERATIONS PASS, Society members are encouraged to let our environmentally-controlled facilities preserve your family documents, receipts, maps, letters, diaries, photographs, and artifacts that help tell the story of Hunterdon's history.

President Charles Fisher Reports

New and Old Ways to Support the Society

YOU SHOP; AMAZON PAYS—It's easy to donate to the Society when you shop online with Amazon. Just go to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), sign in with your Amazon password, and indicate that the charity you want to support is the Hunterdon County Historical Society. After that, all of your eligible purchases at Amazon will earn 0.5% of the total for the Society. It's not a big number, but if we all shop this way, the funds will add up.

AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY— Leaving a gift to the Hunterdon County Historical Society in your will or trust, by beneficiary designation, or another form of planned gift can make a lasting difference in preserving Hunterdon's history. For more information please contact our Executive Director Patricia Millen, at (908) 782-1091. Or you can email her at hunterdonhistorypatricia@gmail.com—

A CHECK WORKS, TOO—We are grateful for the 35 members who added a check above and beyond their membership renewal dues. Their collective sum of \$3,135 allowed us to meet almost half of our \$6,785 matching requirement for a \$20,625 grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust for a historic site management project.

When history is preserved, we all are beneficiaries.

Welcome, New Members

Susan Attix, E. Windsor, NJ
 Katherine Chan, Sunnyvale, CA
 Carrie Croton, Flemington, NJ
 Mary DeSapio, Baptistown, NJ
 Rick Epstein, Frenchtown, NJ
 Darla & James Eschbach, Hampton, NJ
 Colleen Forshey, Rincon, GA
 Lisa Fritts, Bridgewater, NJ
 Doreen Grieve, Montgomery, TX
 Joe Hauck, Lebanon, NJ
 Corinne Kosar, Three Bridges, NJ
 Debbie Manners Lentine, Ringoes, NJ
 Cynthia Ostergaard, Rosemont, NJ
 Verna Stothoff, Flemington, NJ

Research Requests by Mail or Phone

\$25 per query for two hours of research by our volunteers using library and archival resources. For forms and more info: hunterdonhistory.org.

Kingwood Farm Sanctuary continued from front page

Emporia Gazette of Kansas and an intimate of President Theodore Roosevelt.) Tucked into his life-belt was a note in cablese English that read “UPLOOK KIDS”, a reminder from his wife Kathrine, to adopt a child if one needed a good home.

White arrived safely and contacted Anna Freud, daughter of the famed psychoanalyst, who had organized the Hampstead War Nursery for children made homeless by the war.

In his book *Journey for Margaret**, White recalled first meeting the girl. “Very tiny and fragile. In a little red coat, red leggings and a small peaked pixie hood. . . [T]hat small face pinched tight with grief and those big black eyes filled with hopeless despair. Yet she isn’t broken.”

White visited the nursery multiple times before the long trip that ended at the 100-acre Kingwood farm.

Barbara adjusted to her new life on the farm, growing tense only when hearing planes buzzing overhead. At the farm, she tasted her first egg and loved fresh fruit. She particularly enjoyed playing on the backyard swing set, and washing and ironing her doll’s clothes, according to a *Life Magazine* article about her journey.

In a 2016 interview, Barbara White Walker wrote me from her Arizona home: “My parents were living in Washington, D.C. when they bought the farm, and spent weekends there restoring it, and cleaning out chicken manure from the big chicken house. They planted the 100 acres with pine trees.”

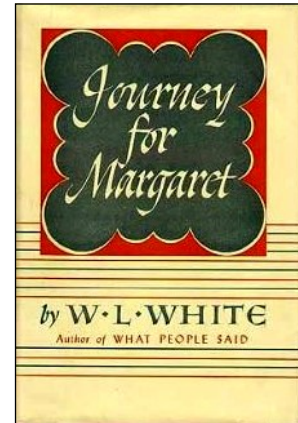
“My father wrote several of his books at the farm, and when he was writing *Report on the Russians*, the house was broken into, and several things were destroyed,” she noted. The 1945 bestseller detailed the Katyn Forest Massacres, slave labor, and the Russian retreat from Moscow. “They think the culprits were American communists,” she added.

Barbara grew up in New York City, on the Kingwood Farm, and in Emporia Kansas (in 1944 when her father became editor of the family newspaper, the *Emporia Gazette*). She later attended Stanford University and married a classmate, David Walker. William L. White died in July, 1973. When her mother passed away in 1988, Barbara became the fourth editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, which her family has now owned for more than 120 years.

In February 1964, the Whites sold the property to the First Reformed Church of Somerville (now called the United Reformed Church) for \$1. The church used the farm as a retreat, hosting pot lucks, picnics, and other church events. In 2016, Hunterdon Land Trust spearheaded an effort to preserve the farm. The property, now known as Horseshoe Bend East, became part of a park system totaling roughly 700 acres of preserved land and is owned by Kingwood Township.

On any given day, one can drive across the rustic bridge uphill to the two-story farmhouse. Through the living-room window you can still discern the Jersey winder staircase and stone fireplace besides which the girl often took her meals. Out back, the soft grass, like waves on a dark green sea, bend toward the sentinel pines planted by W.L. White so many years ago. Only the twittering birds disrupt the silence of this sanctuary.

Pines planted by White on his 100 acres still survive.



* Cover of White’s book about Barbara’s journey from war-torn England into his family. He changed her name to Margaret for the book, which was later made into a movie starring Robert Young and Laraine Day.

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY!

A report from Patricia Millen, Executive Director

SOMETIMES, IT'S FUN to brag a bit.

Historians document what we know through primary source information and artifacts created at a point in time. These treasured collections are stored and preserved in places like the archives here at the Society. We are small, but today's technology allows us to digitize and share these collections online. With no dedicated exhibit space, the Internet has become our public gallery. And last year over 60,000 people from around the world visited our website at www.hunterdonhistory.org.

MUCH OF THIS has been made possible by the Astle-Alpaugh Family Foundation through three generous grants starting in 2016. This Spring, we reached the astounding milestone of having 3,600 collection records online showcasing artifacts, rare books, and over 1,200 photographs. Our processed

and indexed manuscript collections now numbers over 225.

In addition, the *Hiram Deats & Thatcher Archeological Collection* has been curated and cataloged with a photographic inventory of artifacts numbering into the thousands.

THESE AMAZING ACCOMPLISHMENTS are from a historical society with a staff of only four parttime professionals. So how did we do it? It's all possible because of the efforts of our 24 dedicated volunteers. After procedural training, these highly motivated volunteers work tirelessly hundreds of hours each year, mostly behind the scenes, to help us meet our mission to *Collect, Preserve and Share* Hunterdon County history.

To each volunteer and to my fellow staffers, **THANK YOU!**



1. Commemorative plate honoring Charles Lindbergh (1927-1977).
2. Powder horn carved by Peter Haward of Flemington, 1805. Presented by his grandson, Peter Haward Hill of Philadelphia, 1905.
3. Ribbon from the Annual Fireman's Parade and Carnival, Flemington, July 29-31, 1911.
4. Blackwell Sheep, oil painting by Thomas Heywood, 1837.
5. Nineteenth century apothecary scale of James Pyatt, MD, (1784-1864).



A SOMETIMES FRUSTRATING PASSION

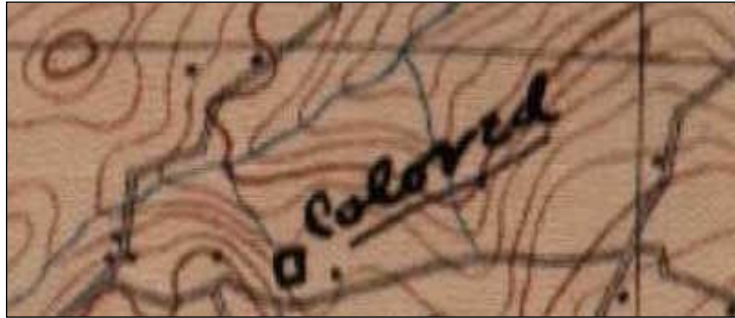
By John F. Allen, Jr., HCHS Cemetery Committee

The Society formed a Cemetery Committee, chaired by Trustee Bob Leith, in 2015, with the intent to locate and protect former residents' resting places at the municipality and county level. The agrarian character of Hunterdon County for much of its history suggests many burial places may be small, unprotected, and unknown, once located on farmland but now perhaps lost in forests, or the location of tract housing. Locating these is not a simple exercise in reading maps and driving around to record their location. Sometimes these efforts become an exercise in futility. A recent search for a "missing" burial ground was exactly that.

The Society's Map Collection contains a 1900 topographic map on which "Colored" is written (Figure 1). Publicly available tax maps were overlaid in GoogleMap to identify the block and lot of the location, and the tract researched in the County's Hall of Records. The earliest recorded property deed clearly reserved "one quarter acre at and around the Black graveyard in the north end of the orchard" and this was retained in subsequent deeds. Then we learned the tract was put in a family trust and sent a letter to the owner of record seeking permission to explore the tract. Permission was obtained, but unfortunately, the owner had no knowledge of a burial ground.

The topographic map was compared with an April 11, 2011 survey accompanying the trust paperwork, and a 2011 satellite image. Previously cultivated areas were identified on publicly available vintage aerial photographs on HistoricAerials.com, establishing fields that are now overgrown, but were under cultivation as recently as 1931.

Assuming previously plowed fields would leave no trace of a burial ground, they were excluded from the search, significantly limiting the search area from 62 to about 15 acres. The 1900 map suggested the location was at or near the headwaters of the westernmost rill on the prop-



Above: Fig. 1-Annotated section of 1900 topographic map with location of "Colored" burial ground. Below: Fig. 2- Photo looking north-northeast at possible wagon road depression to the left of existing stone wall.



erty, further focusing the search. The aforementioned orchard has long since disappeared. The most likely location was judged to be in the woods near these headwaters, in areas that were uncultivated in the 1931 aerial photograph.

Three members of the Society's Cemetery Committee visited the area in March seeking evidence of the "Colored" cemetery, but nothing was found. Potential evidence included areas of significant plant growth and abundant animal burrowing, both suggestive of soil rather than rock. One stone wall was found on the western bank of a small rill, but the area was heavily covered in boulders and ultimately ruled unlikely to be excavate-able.

The area was revisited a week later and, while failing to positively iden-

tify any remaining headstones, a possible wagon road was located adjacent to the wall (Figure 2) that suggested a path to the burial ground location. A final exploration took place before foliage became too dense but this visit also failed to turn up solid evidence of the location.

In short, we know there was a "Black graveyard" in this area as early as the start of the 19th century, but no headstones were found. Assuming the departed would be transported by wagon and the loved one's remains interred where a tomb could be excavated, we identified a likely "candidate" for the graveyard, though the frustration of not knowing an exact location remains.

Curator Cornelius Debuts Round Valley Collection

Readers of this newsletter know that I often use this space to update our members on the work of the HCHS archives program. Our archives team has released many new collections this spring, but this time I will feature one of particular note: Collection No. 166: Round Valley Reservoir. It consists of slides, photographs, negatives, and notes related to the planning, construction, and completion of the Round Valley Reservoir Project in Hunterdon County, NJ, 1945-1981.

Although not formally divided, the collection has two main components. The first part contains slides, photographs, and negatives. The images span the time frame of the collection. Some images are of landscapes, roads, and views from the valley prior to dam creation. Others depict parcels of land that were purchased to make way for the reservoir, including houses and other structures. They also depict construction of the reservoir and the pipeline that brought in water to fill it. There also are images of the reservoir and its control buildings and gates post-construction.

The second part of the collection includes presentation notes. Most of the material that comprises this collection was original research. They include plot descriptions detailing many of the parcels purchased, including explanations of the land and buildings. In some cases, the value of each parcel is included. The timeline is an accurate explanation of the events surrounding the creation of the reservoir, from obtaining permits, political maneuvering, and the lives of the prominent figures. The presentation notes help to pull together the story of much of the collection.

This collection was created as the result of a grant-funded project from the New Jersey Historical Com-

mission awarded to the donor, Judith Forbes. Ms. Forbes, the first female ranger in New Jersey, was based at Round Valley Recreation Area. She created this presentation through research at the park administration, the Water Resources Department of the State of New Jersey, and with the assistance of Ed Scheetz, who supplied many of the collection's photographs. She also was assisted by Ranger William Leather, who created many of the later photographs in the collection.

In the donor's words, the presentation "presents the Round Valley Story from the immediate period prior to the making of the Reservoir, the short period after the razing of the valley, the construction period, the pipeline story, and of course the beautiful lake you all come here to enjoy."

I wish we had been able to release this collection sooner. A lot of our members and friends at the HCHS know that there have been at least two major works concerning the creation of the Round Valley Reservoir in recent years. Our own Trustee Stephanie Stephens wrote *Beneath These Waters* in 2009, and there was an acclaimed short documentary film about the subject directed by David Kuznicki and Eric Althoff in 2014. I am sure all of these historians and more would have been very pleased to have this rich source of both images and information available when they created their works. Still, as we say in Archives, better late than never! We hope that many future historians and students who research this subject will be able to draw on this collection and add to the ongoing narrative.

Special thanks should be given to archival volunteer Jenn Morgan, who originally processed this collection.

A bucolic view of Round Valley before construction of the 55 billion gallon reservoir began in 1958.



Construction of the reservoir required moving or razing 26 houses and building two dams and a 3.5-mile gravity pipeline.



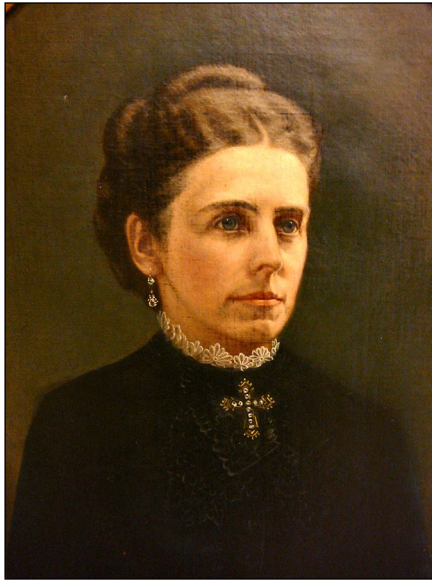
Spotlight on Collections: Who Are They?

Two lovely 19th century ladies dressed in their best with simple but elegant jewelry and sat down to have their portraits painted.

The detached expressions on their faces are typical of artwork by anonymous artists at that time. The detail of the lace, possibly made by their own hands, is beautiful as is the texture of the fabric they wear.

But who are they?

Did they live in Hunterdon County? How old are they? Are their families still here?



As in many museum collections, these, and other questions go unanswered. The Society, as well as other cultural institutions, has numerous unidentified portraits. Working with their limited means, the organizations are unable to pay for the expensive conservation process to preserve them.

Our hope is by featuring these portraits, someone will identify them and step forward to help conserve them. We can dream that the many other precious artifacts in the Society's collection will find preservation benefactors as well.

HCHS received an operating support re-grant from the Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission, with funds from the NJ Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State.

HUNTERDON COUNTY CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION
NEW JERSEY



Hunterdon's History
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