

Hunterdon Historical Record



HUNTERDON
COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

hunterdonhistory.org

Tour Frenchtown with Author Rick Epstein

A walking tour of downtown Frenchtown on Saturday, July 13, at 10 a.m. will benefit the Hunterdon County Historical Society. It will be conducted by borough historian and HCHS trustee Rick Epstein, author of "Frenchtown; Fires, Floods, Fads & Felonies."

The tour costs \$20, but is free for teens. No dogs, please. Email Rick at rickepstein@yahoo.com to sign up and learn where the tour starts.

The tour will cover the Great Fire of 1878, Inky the Wonder Dog, Senator Martin's alligators, secret societies, how Fred Sipes created buzz for his silent-movie theater, how the guillotine inspired Frenchtown's founder to come here and do some founding, and why Aaron Burr wanted to visit Frenchtown (but didn't).

If the tour creates a demand for Rick's book, you can buy at the Frenchtown Bookshop, Frenchtown Home & Hardware, Sublime, Perfect Day Café, Country Chic, ArtYard, or Heart of the Home.

Milford's Railroad Disaster

By Rick Epstein



The Milford train wreck of 1877. Photo courtesy of the author.

A terrible wreck occurred just south of Milford on Oct. 4, 1877. On that day it rained cats and dogs, and then more cats and dogs, washing out the Quequacomissicong Creek railroad bridge just south of town.

The Frenchtown Press met the occasion with a raging torrent of words, telling of the prolonged storm that "was transformed into a roaring tornado that caused stout hearts to quail..."

"Amid all this storm, the Oswego Express train pushed its way, the iron monster doing noble battle with the elements. The train ran into Milford just thirty minutes late, and after receiving an addition to its living freight, proceeded on its way – to death!

"About one quarter of a mile below the station was a double culvert running under the track; the creek that flowed under it had grown in a few moments to a roaring, seething abyss. The ordinary pure, placid, harmless little stream had assumed giant proportions... carrying before it the culverts that sought to stay its progress. Above, remained the rails and sleepers [ties], inviting on to sudden death the train and its unconscious occupants... Amid the inky darkness, and the fury of the elements, down, down, fifty feet below, into the fearful chasm, plunged the train and its occupants."

At 8:16 p.m., according to a stopped watch found in the engineer's pocket, the locomotive fell like a rock, followed by a combination smoking and baggage car and a passenger coach. The remaining car, containing 17 passengers, stopped partly over the brink. The plunge was shared by the seven-man crew and 10 of the passengers. The baggage/smoking car, was washed out into the river, while the passenger car remained in the creek, just short of the river.

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The Hiram Deats Memorial Library is
 accessible to all. If you need any assistance,
 please contact us at 908-782-1091 a minimum
 of two days prior to the event.

Acquisitions

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

Archives:

- Dalley, Robert. Two separate small collections of genealogical notes and research on the Dalley family of Hunterdon County, including correspondence and other material concerning the Legge family of Three Bridges and Anne Storr of Somerville, ca. 1912-1985.
- Dilts, Thomas. A multipart donation that includes two pages from the Day Books of a Blacksmith, Rollings Mill, Hunterdon County, 1850 – 1853, a booklet Membership List of Flemington Baptist Church, 1888, a report card for Helen Mundy, Flemington H.S., 1914-1915, a folder of genealogical notes, correspondence, and records of the Biggs/Ewing Family of Pleasant Run, ca. 1790 – 1885, 4 Civil War Soldier Letters of David Biggs, 1863-1864, a collection of news clippings of various subjects, and a book, Griffith, William: "A Treatise on the Jurisdiction and Proceedings of Justices of the Peace, in Civil Suits." 1816.
- Fisher, Charles and Elizabeth. A handmade coverlet from the 19th century; also, a folder containing a collection of papers related to the Holcombe and Fisher families, including deeds, notes, receipts, financial documents, news clippings, bible records, and genealogical notes, ca. 1841-1941.
- Langley, Catherine. A collection of manuscripts and letters of Henry Seely Thomas ca. 1940-1949; also, 31 reels of movie film documenting home life, vacations, and other events in the life of the Thomas family of Flemington, ca. 1930-1974.
- Matsen, John. A collection of historical material from the Clinton Township area and beyond, including a Day Book of the Oldwick General Store, 1871-1872; Tax Records, 1981; Zoning Ordinances, Reports, and Master Plans, 1973-1998; Land Use Plans, 1976; Township newsletters; and news clippings.
- O'Brien, John. Day Book, 1856-1858, of Jesse Baylor, Blacksmith of Little York, Alexandria, NJ., with inclusions.
- Pickell, Rosanne. A collection of papers relating to the property history of a parcel of land in Whitehouse Station, NJ, including deeds, wills, agreements, maps, and surveys from the Pickell, Grandin, and Yurowski families, ca. 1816-1956.
- Richard Grubb and Associates. 1 DVD: Informational Webpage and Documentation for the Woodbridge Developmental Center and New Jersey State Residential Facilities for the Developmentally Disabled. HABS-Like Report, 01/10/2024.
- Rickershauser, John. 1 Topographic Map. NJ Geological Survey: High Bridge Quadrangle. 1898 reprint of 1884 map.
- Richards, Tice (Watts, Tice, and Skowronek). A Certificate of Appointment of George H. Large as Tax Collector for the 5th District of New Jersey by President Benjamin Harrison, 10/10/1889.
- Skow, Chris. A donation of ledgers and documents of NJ Congressman John Dawes Jr., of Dawestown, including 7 folders (approximately 400 items) of receipts ca. 1876 – 1933, 4 diaries 1856 – 1927, 2 Bank Books n.d., 2 insurance policies 1889-1992, 1 folder of insurance claims and assessments 1886 – 1925, and 4 ledgers, 1869 – 1896.
- Stewart, Lois. A multipart donation that includes a folder of photographs of the Kitchin family, ca. 1930-1990; a certificate of Kathryn Kitchin, Palmer School of Business Writing, 06/12/1924; the Flemington H.S. Diploma of Emma Kathryn Kitchin, 1927; and a Lambertville High School class of 1931 Panoramic Photograph, class trip to Washington, D.C.

Continued on next page

Milford's Railroad Disaster — Continued

Frenchtown harness-maker and carriage-trimmer William Roberson (1841-1899) had been in Milford on business, and was headed home in that first passenger coach. According to the Press, "while thinking of the few minutes that would terminate his journey, suddenly he felt the awful shock and was thrown out the front end of the car into the water. Being no stranger to the locality, and possessed of excellent courage, he swam to the right of the embankment and gained the shore in safety. He was considerably stunned by the fall and is now suffering from what we hope may prove to be slight internal injury."

In Clarence Fargo's "History of Frenchtown," Roberson was "washed along the aisle of the car and out into the river," and the Hunterdon Independent agrees, adding that once out of the car, "Being unable to touch bottom he swam around toward the upper shore, and after a hard struggle succeeded in reaching land on the Jersey side."

Most significantly to Roberson, he survived in all versions and was able to return to his Cemetery Street home and enjoy another 22 years among the living, including wife Sarah and his lodge brethren in the Red Men, Odd Fellows, and Patriarchs Militant.

A 13-year-old railroad newsboy, William Lewis of Kensington, Pa., was plunged into the river, but clung to his buoyant "trunk of periodicals" until he was taken aboard a boat some distance downstream. Not so fortunate were four passengers, plus engineer Jonathan Thornton of

Lambertville, and conductor Thomas C. Reading of Trenton.

Whether it was the bounties offered for finding bodies, or just a helpful impulse, at least two Frenchtown residents were out searching the next day.

Charles A. Slack saw something in the river just south of the Frenchtown bridge. He rowed out to it, saw that it was indeed a body, put a chain around it, and towed it back to shore. He'd found the remains of postal clerk Thomas E. Hamilton of Philadelphia, earning a reward of \$150.

Farther uptown, H. Clayton Roberson of Frenchtown climbed a tree for a better view, and saw a body in mid-river. He rowed out and towed in the body of attorney William J. McElroy, also of Philadelphia. The recovery was made at the foot of Sixth Street, according to Fargo. This find was worth \$200.

Silas LaRue borrowed the Frenchtown Cornet Band's wagon and used it to bring people to see the wreck. His son Holmes, age 12, came along. Holmes recalled that on the return trip, freshly instructed on the unreliability of creek bridges, he was afraid the loaded wagon might fall through the Harihokake bridge. So he jumped out to cross the span separately. Then "amid the laughter and jeers of those in the crowded bus," Silas taunted the boy by driving the horses so he couldn't catch up with the wagon until Twelfth Street.

Coincidentally, Holmes would grow up to marry Hannah Reading, daughter of the conductor who'd died in the wreck.

Acquisitions continued

For the library: a folder of photographs and print material concerning Blanche (Park) LeMonn, a Flemington Baptist Church Booklet, and a Lambertville H.S. 1931 commencement announcement. For the Museum: One trunk of clothing, two Campaign Political Buttons, and one Christmas Ornament.

Veerhusen, Dale. A photograph of the home of Dr. and Mrs. John M. Frace, Clinton, New Jersey, 1879, and an inventory of a mill in Clinton, NJ, n.d.

Library:

CS-671 -- Family Bible of **Christopher PIATT** (1799-1856) and **Elisabeth MYERS JONES** (1803-1899). Pub. Date 1829. Donated by the Estate of Richard O. Piatt.

Field, Ron. *The Union Army 1861-65 (1): series The Regular army and the territories. Osprey Men-at Arms* (2024). Donated by Russ Lockwood.



The 1938 Lambertville baseball team, donated by Lois Stewart.

Fleming, Philip Somers. *Colonists, Coins & Currencies in America's New World* (2024). Gift from the author. Hallenbeck, Elsie Overbaugh. *Our Van Horne Kindred*. Reprint of 1959 publication. Donated by Kathy and Scott Rivers.

Hodges, Graham Russell Gao. *Black New Jersey: 1664 to the Present Day* (2019).

Howell, Janel Marie and Jeanette Phethean. *The Descendants of Hugh Howell* (2006).

Lacovara, Robert R. *Regimen-*

tal Flags and History of the New Jersey volunteers during the Civil War (1993).

Lane, Francie. *Martin Family History, Vol. II* (2015).

--Purchased by Society.

Huhn, Erich Morgan. *New Jersey's Masonic Lodges* (2019).

Koehler, Albert F. *The Huguenots or The Early French in New Jersey* (2007).

Siegel, Alan A. *Beneath the Starry Flag: New Jersey's Civil War Experience* (2001). Donated by Pam Robinson.

Pompeo, Joe. *Blood and Ink: The Scandalous Jazz Age Double Murder that Hooked America on True Crime* [Hall-Mills Murder] (2022). Donated by Ramona Hiller-O'Hara.

The Big Screen Comes — and Goes — in Hunterdon

By John Kuhl

Part 1 of 2

The large curtains swished shut for the last time on March 27, 2011, at the Cinema Plaza off Route 202/31 in Raritan Township, just south of Flemington. It had been Hunterdon's last full-scale movie house, a distinction it still holds. The building began as a dairy barn in the 1920s. In the 1950s, it was operated by horse-and-cow dealer Leon Switt. In 1965, it was converted into a Chevrolet dealership, which ran until purchased by Dick Nathan of Nathan Theaters, who in 1981 was looking to replace the nearby outdated, single-screen Hunterdon Theater on Church Street. He incorporated shops and a restaurant into his new complex and opened a five-screen theater to meet the new trend in the movie business. A sixth screen was added in 1992 in what was an old haymow.

Facing declining attendance over the years, the limiting small size of its lot and the increasing expense of keeping the digital and 3D equipment up to date, the Cinema Plaza closed, and the building demolished in May 2011. A CVS pharmacy now occupies the site. A then-promised replacement never materialized and since, Hunterdon has had no movie theater.

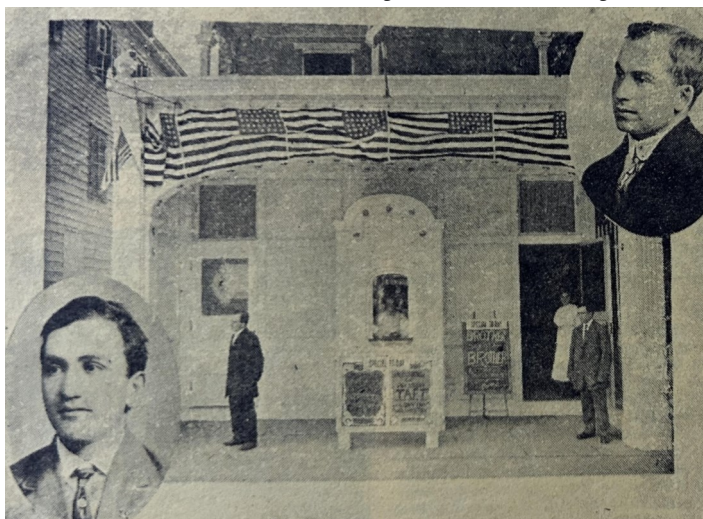
Several small-scale special niche groups such as the nonprofit Acme Screening Room in Lambertville (the site of the former Acme Food Market) tried heroically to fill the gap, but it just does not appear that the county, for whatever reason, has enough patronage to support today's full scale, high-cost movie business.

Ironically, Hunterdon did achieve a sort of movie par with surrounding counties in the early 2020s when the Covid-19 epidemic closed theaters statewide. Nobody had movies, except on TV — often through streaming services such as Netflix. So, the above chronicles the end of the Hunterdon movie experience to date.

But the story of its beginning is something else! Silent films appeared in Europe in the 1890s, and a decade later movie theaters were multiplying in the U.S. Local theater musicians — usually a lone pianist — provided the dramatic effects. As early as the mid-1890s, Thomas Edison and many others were tinkering with ways to incorporate sound with the film track, but practical and pleasing sound films (talkies) did not appear until about

1927. Early U.S. movie production centered in New York and New Jersey, and several were filmed in Hunterdon County. By about 1910, production began to shift to California.

This two-part article (part 2 will appear in our next newsletter) is created from more than 150 local newspaper clippings concerning local theaters — including photographs — on file at our historical society. Be advised that my clipping search runs back more than 50 years and started with the smaller newspaper towns first. I cataloged the Hunterdon County Democrat last and unfortunately, it was not till then that I made movies a focus. So, Flemington received extra coverage. If interested in learning more, you can consult my indexed files of some 18,000 historical



The front of the Iorio Brothers theater shortly after opening in Flemington with owners John in the upper corner and Louis on the bottom.

news clippings kept at the Hiram Deats Memorial Library. These newspapers tell of some 20 movie theaters in nine Hunterdon towns: Milford, Frenchtown, Glen Gardner, Ringoes, High Bridge, Whitehouse Station, Clinton and, of course, Flemington and Lambertville. We will highlight several main theaters of these towns.

Flemington's story is a bit more complex than most. The name Iorio dominated early movie clippings here. Brothers Louis, Dean and John worked together in making their names known in Flemington for fine cut glass, fireworks shows and movies. The brothers had entered

the movie business in Flemington by 1907 and soon branched out to Clinton where they showed movies in the town's old playhouse. John managed the Lambertville theater from 1910 to 1913 when it was sold. The Iorios were putting on shows in Flemington as early as 1907.

Just when movies began in the town's Kilgore building is not clear but in 1914 they bought the building from Kilgore's estate on Main Street and quickly began enlarging and adapting it. They incorporated a thousand seat open-air theater in the rear but their closed-in theater of about 500 seats out front would prevail, especially in inclement weather.

Improvements in ventilation and air conditioning soon ended the outdoor theater. Indoors, they offered vaudeville and movies until selling it in 1917. We remember it as the Palace Theatre on 31 Main St. operated by Benjamin Abel, albeit under a bit of a cloud. Abel was later arrested in Ellenville, New York for jumping bail on a fraud charge.

The Big Screen Comes — and Goes in Hunterdon County — *Continued*

We need here to step back in time temporarily to perhaps Flemington's oldest theater, its Opera House on Bloomfield Avenue. The building had opened in 1879 as some said, the Sunday School for the Presbyterian Church. Town bigwig Major Edward Allen bought it in 1889 whereupon it became "Allen's Opera House." In 1912, it was sold to M.B. Overlack and in 1918 to Abraham Rosen who operated movie shows there. A bad fire nearly destroyed it in June of 1921, but Rosen restored it and was showing movies in less than a year. Following his opportunities, Rosen sold the Opera House a year later and bought the Palace Theater in 1923.

The Opera House thereafter served several purposes but was showing its age by 1958 when razed by the Flemington National Bank to make room for its parking lot which still exists just east of Matt's Red Rooster Grill on Bloomfield Avenue.

As owner of the Palace, Rosen soon began improving the front and interior of the theater. He introduced nightly shows and talking movies by 1929. A bad fire in October of 1931 gutted the stage portion of the theater but it was back in business a month later. New active management replaced Rosen who was now having health problems and in July of 1936 they opened the New Palace Theatre with 525 seats in a brand-new interior within the old walls. Air conditioning was added in 1940. In that same year, new regional control in the name of the St. Cloud Theatre Corporation leased the Palace as well as the Gem Theatre in Frenchtown and the Strand in Lambertville. They also embraced the barn in Frenchtown, the Hunterdon in Flemington and the Clinton Point Theater as these new theaters came online. (In 1954 the St. Cloud chain was bought out by Brandt Theaters.) Once the new Hunterdon Theater opened in 1942 on Church Street in Flemington, the Palace was relegated to showing Class B films in double feature format. Declining attendance and the ever-increasing cost of movie technology took its toll and the Palace closed on December 10, 1952.

When St. Cloud came to Flemington in 1940, it built a modern 750-seat theater on Church Street and State Route 30 (now 31). John (Jack) Van Lieu was a foreman for his father's construction firm, Van Lieu & Van Horn, the builder. He once told me the reason they utilized the distinctive high barn roof (on Frenchtown's Barn also) was that the steel crisis of the coming WWII made it very difficult to get normal steel girders. Later, Jack went off to serve in the China-Burma-India theater of WWII where he flew the "Hump" (the Himalayas) to help supply China for the rest of the war.

This new Hunterdon Theatre immediately became the county's "movie queen." The first Cinemascope (wide screen) in Hunterdon was shown there in March of 1954 with the movie "The Robe." The theater continued in operation but its single screen ultimately did not earn enough revenue to continue. It eventually closed its movie operations, sat vacant for a while, then served as a retail outlet for Coat World. Once again vacant and with no economic use surfacing, it was demolished in the summer of 2006. Today a Walgreen Pharmacy occupies the site.

The story of Flemington's next and last movie house is told in the opening paragraph. When it closed in 2011 the county's movie history was done at least for the present. But the story is not nearly over. We still have the past movie houses in eight other county towns to explore.

The first and foremost of these is, of course, Lambertville. *The Hunterdon County Democrat* on Jan. 16, 1906, reported that



The Strand Theater in Lambertville in 1915.

Lambertville's Holcombe Hall had been leased for a theater offering vaudeville and local entertainment. Movies were not mentioned but in 1909 the same paper related the purchase of "the moving picture house known as the Union Street Amusement Palace." In May of 1901 the Iorio Brothers began showing movies in this Union Street Theater, touting the same quality movies they had been presenting in Flemington. With brother John Iorio as manager, they operated there until selling the business in 1913. An agent for United Theaters Inc. was reportedly in town in June of 1923 to arrange for the building of a new theater on Bridge Street but I found no further

mention to tie to this prospective theater.

Lambertville's premier movie house was the Strand at 12 Coryell Street. For about 50 years, it was one of the county's flagstaff theaters. The Strand opened in June of 1915 featuring America's sweetheart Mary Pickford in *Hearts Adrift* (a film now considered lost), *The Hazards of Helen*, and *The Strength of Samson*. It was enlarged a decade later to seat 700. In 1962, after operating at a loss for years, new management took over the theater. It was gutted by fire on March 25, 1969. The building was partially restored and utilized for storing the Finkles hardware inventory. Strand management leased the Ringoes Drive-In Theater for the 1969 summer after the fire to show the movies already booked for its summer schedule.

Local artist Kelly Sullivan bought the Strand Building in early 2022 to create a performing arts center but a legal suit with a neighbor compelled her to sell in 2023. We had mentioned the Acme Screening Room earlier. This theater is comprised of a dedicated group of volunteers which offers quality, special niche films on weekends at 25 South Union Street. Seats are few, only 55 or so, but they have been doing it for years now and can truly brag of being Hunterdon's last movie venue.

From WWII Flight Survivor to Flemington HS Principal

By Rick Epstein

Adapted from an article Rick Epstein wrote in 2013 for NJ Advance Media, which has given permission for using it.

The navigator of a World War II bomber who went on to become Flemington High School's principal took part in a famous flight, according to Don Blair, FHS Class of 1951.

Accounts abound on the Internet of the amazing Feb. 1, 1943, flight of a B-17 Flying Fortress named All American, with navigator Harry C. Nuessle in the 10-man crew. Don Blair died in 2018, but in '13, he distilled the Harry Nuessle story for presentation at an FHS reunion. He also shared it with the Hunterdon County Democrat.

The All American dropped its bombs in North Africa and was heading back to its base in Algeria when a German fighter plane, a Messerschmitt, came at it head-on over Tunis. The German plane struck the fuselage of the big four-engine bomber just in front of the tail section. Parts of the German fighter remained lodged in the B-17.

The back part of the bomber's fuselage was connected at only two small parts of the frame and, according to the pilot, Capt. Kendrick R. Bragg, "the whole tail was wobbling as if it was made of rubber." To avoid stress on the tail, the pilot banked so gently that he took 70 miles to make the turn back to its base.

Both right-wing engines were dead, a third engine was leaking oil and there was damage to the vertical fin and rudder. A hole had been ripped in the top of the fuselage that was more than 16 feet long and as wide as 4 feet. All but one control cable to the tail had been severed. Radios and electrical and oxygen systems were damaged, too.

The tail gunner had to remain in the precarious tail section because his weight was helping to stabilize it. Bragg decided to fly the plane two and a half hours back to base, while his gunners fended off another fighter attack.

Bragg made a perfect landing, and then the tail section fell off on the runway. Even though B-17s were famous for surviving damage, witnesses were astounded that the plane had flown in.

Blair garnered his information from several websites, including fold3.com, freerepublic.com, democraticunderground.com, and the Pacific Aviation Museum's website.

They differ on a couple of details; some accounts have the plane damaged before the bombs were dropped and one



Captain Harry C. Nuessle

improbable account has the plane flying all the way back to England. But the account given above seems the most likely.

Nuessle became principal of Flemington High School on Bonnell Street in the 1940s. Blair remembered, "He never, to my knowledge, went around bragging" about his war experiences. "He was a regular guy and very well-liked by all of us."

Blair remembered the day in 1951 when Nuessle, in full uniform, walked out of the school to go fight in the Korean War. He was wearing an olive-drab Eisenhower jacket and tan slacks. With the teachers' permission, "we jammed the front school windows, two floors," yelling and cheering, Blair recalled. Nuessle turned toward the school, saluted, and then "strode down the street."

The 1951 yearbook was dedicated to Nuessle, and it contains a photo of him in uniform, adorned with captain's insignia and the Army Air Corps wings.

Nuessle survived the Korean and Vietnam wars, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel. He later appeared at FHS reunions in Ringoes — "decent, approachable and still a darn good-looking guy," Blair said.

Nuessle died in 1991 and was buried in Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in Texas.



The All American, a B-17 Flying Fortress, almost lost its tail when a German fighter plane smashed into it over Africa.

Curator Cornelius Calls for Archival Volunteers

By Don Cornelius

Looking back over the past 20 years of the HCHS Archival Program, I can't help but think that it has been a wonderful ride. In 2004 the society had 72 manuscript collections and about 1,000 other items cataloged in the archives. None of this was available on the internet; it was only usable if you visited the Deats Memorial Library and looked through our paper-based finding guides.

Twenty years later, we have over 250 manuscript collections, and 8,000 other archival items cataloged. The actual size of the archival volume has increased four times over in the past 20 years. All this material is at least minimally cataloged with an accession record.

In addition, we have an active website that features both article content and detailed listings of our archival holdings. We have an electronic catalog that has a searchable portal on the web, and we have a digital library where we are beginning to share images of our collections with the entire world.

All of this is possible because we instituted a volunteer program in 2007. It started serendipitously. Long-time society member Ralph Lomerson asked me if he could come and work on a research project on one of the evenings of the week I was accustomed to work. After he finished, he asked if there was anything else he could do. I gave him another project. A year later, he was coming in every Wednesday evening to help me with whatever I needed. Within the next two years, four more volunteers joined when they heard about Ralph's "special" night. Before I knew it, we had a volunteer program.

For several years, we enjoyed working together and going out for walks to get coffee. That was soon replaced (the coffee shop closed) by our now infamous wine and cheese Wednesdays. For some reason this seemed to help with recruiting new volunteers, and by 2015 to 2020 HCHS had a group of 15 archival volunteers on Monday and Wednesday evenings.

Both the quality and quantity of our volunteers have been amazing! We have had over 50 volunteers in the ranks since 2007, and they come from all walks of life. Some are retirees looking for something meaningful to do. Some are research-oriented folks with a passion for local history who want to contribute to the amount of genealogical and historical information available in our county. There have been many students over the years; recent Library School graduates, students in their Master's and Undergraduate programs, and even a few high school students, all looking for experience to further their careers. And there have been a few younger folks just looking for good volunteer opportunities because they want to give back to their communities.

But then . . . the pandemic. Like the rest of the world, HCHS shut its doors in March of 2020, and did not resume our volunteer program until late 2021. After a long time away many of the crew could not return. We went from 15 volunteers to 8 in late 2021. And attrition has continued – we are now down to five volunteers because of some recent retirements.

So, for the first time in many years, I have to ask – is there anyone out there who would like to work on archival records one night a week? We still meet on Monday and Wednesday evenings. I am more than happy to train people to arrange, describe, and catalog historic manuscripts. You get the satisfaction of working with a dedicated group to increase the amount of historical material available to the world for research, and to learn a few things about history and archives along the way. You get to play with original historic documents, photos, deeds, and other things before anyone else sees them. And every couple of months you still get wine and cheese!

If interested, please contact us and let us know. We still have plenty of work left to do in the HCHS Archives – come join us as we continue this incredible journey!

Thank You Donors and Welcome New Members

In Memory of Richard Stothoff:

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Andrea Bonnette

Maria Edman
Claire Hanson
Lee Lawrence
Kyle White
Len Winter

Sustaining Members:

George & Lana Coutros

In Memoriam:

We extend our deepest sympathies to the family of former HCHS volunteer **Shirley Van Deventer Favier**, who passed on April 23, 2024 at age 100.

In Memoriam: Honoring Richard Stothoff

HCHS, Raritan Twp. Historians Committee, friends and family gathered to celebrate the life of Richard Stothoff on Saturday, June 1 at our Archives Building. Mr. Stothoff, who passed away March 15, 2024, served as an HCHS trustee for over four decades and as our president for many years. Everyone shared fond memories of Mr. Stothoff's life, his contributions to local history, and his many kindnesses through the years.



Above, HCHS Board of Trustees President Janice Armstrong (left) addresses the gathering. To the left are friends and family at the ceremony: Pete Kinsella (of the Raritan Township Historians Committee), Scott Morgan, Kathy Morgan, Benjamin Lyman, Priscilla Stothoff, Kurstin Lyman, Alyssa Lyman, Shelley Lyman and Mila Shebey. An October glory red maple tree was planted at the Archive Building in Mr. Stothoff's honor, and a plaque was placed in his memory.

Made possible with funds from the Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission, a partner of the New Jersey Historical Commission.



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