

ANNUAL REPORT

of

The Historical Society of The Somerset Hills - 1995

Board of Trustees

Bataille, Lawrence	Lincoln, Daniel, Pres.
Blacklidge, Robert, Bldg.Mgr.	Macksoud, Richard, Tres.
Booth, Jonathon	McPherson, Kenneth
Campbell, June, Curator	Menagh, Charles
Chamberlain, Michael	O'Connor, Diane, Chair.
Chamberlain, Barbara	O'Connor, Donald, 1st.VP
Dragunas, Peter	Schwenk, Larry, Grants
Dreesen, Bea ex Officia	Terricone, Lawrence
Giordano, Sal III	Volz, Chris
Gursky, Kenneth	White, Martine, Sect.
Kollmar, Douglas	

Executive Committee

Jonathon Booth	Richard Macksoud
Michael Chamberlain	Diane O'Connor
Bea Dreesen	Donald O'Connor
Daniel Lincoln	

Trustees met fourteen times in 1995. Additional meetings took place to plan fund raisers and write grants.

Association Memberships

- (1) National Trust for Historic Preservation
- (2) Preservation New Jersey
- (3) League of Historical Societies of New Jersey
- (4) Somerset County Historical Society

Membership - 285

Trustee News

Bob Blacklidge has written new building usage rules and distributed two keys, (one for each lock) to all trustees.

Resignations

Alice Moulton Ely
Pam Hirsch
Audrey Noodson
Terry Blanc
Bea Dreesen, ex-officia

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Millie Van Dyke is our new Historical Consultant.

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Peter Dragunas, Larry Terricone and Ken Gursky are the Newsletter editors/publishers.

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Ron and Bea Dreesen donated a copy machine, and Dan and Kate Lincoln donated a printer.

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Bea Dreesen and Larry Terricone were named volunteers of the year at the Y.M.C.A. Annual Awards Dinner in November at the Old Mill Inn.

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Meetings and Programs

for

Guests and Members

The General Public is welcome

- February "In Search of the Morris Canal" - Phil Jaeger
- April "Architecture Styles in the Somerset Hills" -
Daniel Lincoln
- June "Early Lighting" - Wilma Sagurton
- September "Progress in Medicine Over the Years" -
Dr. Wm. Anderson
- October "History and Progress of Halloween" -
Mr. & Mrs. K. Gursky
- November "Rugs and Carpets" - Rug and Kilim

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Within the Society

Grants - the committee headed by Larry Schwenk and Donald O'Connor met and assigned various research projects to committee persons in line with applying once again for a Grant from New Jersey Historic Trust. We will apply by Jan. 26, 1996, for a \$60,000 (3/2Grant) for restoration of the Brick Academy. Notification will be in mid-summer 1996.

Dennis Bertland, an Architectural Historian, has been hired to help with the application, along with Anthony Horishney, Mechanical Engineer, and Jon Wurst, Contractor and the Academy's architects, Jonathon Booth and Daniel Lincoln.

Expenses for the Academy in 1995 included two wall fixtures on either side of the front door, three street lights designed by M. Bertola in the parking lot, and 50% share of costs with the Basking Ridge Garden Club on landscaping the lot. Both groups worked with the Township Engineer, Peter Messina, to finalize these projects.

The landscaping is suffering bad-weather, as it was done in late fall during drought conditions and then early snow - lots - fell.

Society Civic Undertakings/Participation

Many citizens joined our membership in attending County Sponsored meetings regarding the reconstruction of No. Finley Avenue in Basking Ridge. Worries were not realized as Dan Ciesla, County Engineer, bent over backwards to work with every property owner. Completion was in early fall, and looks grand. Chairman Daniel O'Connor wrote a letter of thanks to the County and Mr. Ciesla for their prompt and authentic renovations - curbs, stonewalls, as well as with the road bed.

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The township, with urging from us, as well as others, refused to offer space for the County to use as their area Public Works Department.

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The Vail Cemetary on Stone House Road is now listed in the County's "Tour of Cemeteries" brochure.

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The myriad newspaper stands have been removed from in front of the First Fidelity Bank.

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Diane O'Connor helped Peter Messina put together ideas for a contest open to landscapers to beautify the dozen area "triangles", with winners to maintain that project, in exchange for free signage. (Not a great success).

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Thanked the Township Committee for standing strong against the gigantic project that the N.J. DOT wants at Lyons train depot.

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The North Maple, 202 intersection bobs up and down, but appears dormant at the moment.

Society Civic Undertakings/Participation Continued

Letter sent to Township Committee regarding the possibility of tearing down the old stone fence on South Finley Avenue at the Ridge High School intersection. Saved.

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Diane O'Connor and June Kennedy, town Historian, regularly attend the monthly meetings of the Basking Ridge Merchants Association and are active in it's activities - Charter Day, Sales Days, etc. The Academy is open for these events.

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Millicent Fenwick Statue dedicated on October 15th near Bernardsville train depot.

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Throngs - both members and citizens attended the multitude of hearings of the SMR cable company's attempt to erect a much too tall, non-conforming antenna in a local Basking Ridge - Bernardsville cemetery. The application was denied, but SMR sued and won. The tower is now part of the Town Hall's master-antenna, and rent is received. The Society donated \$250.00 to the Concerned Citizens Group.

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Diane O'Connor attended a meeting in Bedminster pertaining to the possibility that both Indians and Soldiers could be buried atop Parcel "G" of the Hill's project. She spoke, as did others, including three Native American Indians. A company was hired to investigate, found nothing, and the "case was closed." Construction begins.

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We are working with the town of Peapack to reach some decision regarding ownership and/or maintenance of the lime Kilns. Dan Lincoln is our representative.

Academy Happenings Continued

We have applied for a HUD grant, through the township to redo the bathrooms at the Academy and make them handicap accessible.

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The Basking Ridge Garden Club held a Flower Show at the Academy, for which they were awarded a Silver Trophy by the State for the best Standard Flower Show. It was entitled "School Days", and drew people from all over the State.

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June Kennedy, town historian member, once again ran a most successful series of Summer History Camps: 325 children have used the Academy as a learning laboratory through June's guidance. Monies raised, \$750.00, goes towards the restoration of the building.

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Berkeley Circle Homeowners used the building for their annual meeting.

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It was also utilized by the League of Women Voters.

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A cookbook is being "born".

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Our Bargain Bazaar raised almost \$2,000.00

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New T Shirts, depicting Basking Ridge, and designed by Linda Arnold of Liberty Corner, are selling very well. They made their debut at the Millington Quarry's gigantically successful Open House

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Quite a few acquisitions-mostly books from Lorraine and Warren Passmore.

Academy Happenings Continued 2

Our Christmas Tour of Homes - featuring six homes and an "Antique Boutique", and 50-50 raffle, netted \$9,240.00.

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Various monetary donations came in from visitors and those who used records for research.

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The Curator & Historian maintain collections and work several hours a month on the files.

Society Social Activities

Our Christmas Party was great fun. Entertainment included Martine White, guitarist, and Pricilla Bruno and the String Quartet. Guests were invited to bring a "what do you think this is", and stumped quite a few of those present. The 50-50 raffle, gross proceeds \$1,454.00, was won by Mrs. Debbie Carroll, who donated \$227.00 back to the Academy.

The Merchants Association gave us a Christmas tree for the party.

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We took the invitation from the Township Recreation Dept to heart, and had a very successful July 4th picnic. Guests brought friends, food and laughter. Games and barbequing all added. It will be repeated.

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The Society, as usual, placed a wreath commemorating Memorial Day on the town teardrop.

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"Charter Day" was a beautiful and happy day on the closed downtown streets. Many worked to make it a success.

Miscellaneous

Dan Lincoln and June Kennedy conferred with Michael and Barbara Madaio to discuss artifacts they found in their yard on Valley Road. They appear to be unused tombstones. The property was the David Runyon family farm.

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Member Woody English donated a large replica of the Annin Estate which is now on exhibit at the Academy.

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Outlook

If we get the N.J. Historic Trust - WOW!

Charter Day involvement

Torch Day Celebration

20th Anniversary of our listing on the National Historic Register (1976-1996), shall be celebrated at July 4th picnic.

Try to raise monies from area corporations to complete Academy restoration.

Strive to reach out to all our area's people.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane C.O'Connor,
Chairman - Board of Trustees

Ms. Barbara Pence, Administrator
Township of Bernards
1 Collyer Lane
Basking Ridge, N.J. 07920

Re: Annual Report
The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

Dear Barbara:

Included are activities, contributions, resotation
efforts, and the 1996 outlook.

Attached is a check to the amount of \$1.00 payable to
the Township of Bernards as a fee consideration of our lease
agreement.

Please contact me if any additional information is
needed or questions answered.

Very truly yours,



Diane C. O'Connor
Chairman - Board of Trustees

Encs.

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