

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1996
The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

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Dan Lincoln, President	Chris Volz
Richard Macksoud, Treasurer	Martine White, Program

The Board meets twelve times a year in addition to meetings for special events.

As always, the past year has been a very interesting and challenging one for all of us. Some of the highlights are as follows:

Community Outreach and Fund Raisers

- 1) In conjunction with Charter Day II on May 18th we had an "Heirloom discovery day" at the Brick Academy. For a small fee Martine White, a certified appraiser, identified items that people brought in. We also had a sidewalk booth where we sold our gift shop items and Basking Ridge T-shirts.
- 2) One of the highlights of our year was the summer history camp. June Kennedy ran two one week sessions and this year raised \$1200 earmarked for the Brick Academy restoration. It is a very popular event.
- 3) We took a booth at the Lord Stirling Festival in October. In spite of flooding problems there was a surprisingly good turn out. This event is always a good opportunity to introduce The Historical Society to new residents. We had our usual items for sale as well as many local historical photos and handouts available.

Education

- 1) The Academy is open Sundays in the spring and fall from two to four. We have museum exhibits and a self guided tour of Basking Ridge available. There are a number of handouts also available on local history. We find that every year we attract more visitors and have lately attracted a number of college and graduate students.

2) Throughout the year lectures are given at the Academy to school groups and scout troops. June Kennedy, the township historian and also our education chairman, has spoken to the Newcomers' Club, American Association of University Women, and Fellowship Village to name a few. The Historical Society provides much of the information and props for these talks.

3) People from all over the country contact us for genealogical information. The demand for this service is growing and brings in a modest income in donations.

Membership Celebration

There were two this year.

1) A July 4th picnic in Southard Park. It was very well attended by people from three to eighty-five - fun, games, and lots of good food.

2) Dec. 19th we had a Christmas party at the Academy. There was live music performed by Martine White, and Norman Nelsen, a "what is it?" table to stump the experts and several other games with a historical theme.

Meetings and Programs

These are advertised and the general public is welcome.

January - "An Overview of Antique American Shelf Clocks" - Betty Morgan

March - "Deep Sea Antiquities" - Nelson Jecas

May - "Pre-1910 Picture Post Cards With An Emphasis on Local Scenes". - Don and Newly Preziosi.

September - "Antiques Are My Game" - Lucile Hann

October - "Archeological Investigation of the Artillery Encampment at Pluckemin" - Matt Koppinger, pres. Chester Historical Society. This meeting was covered by the Newark Star Ledger.

November - "Meet Mr. Lincoln" - Dr. Gordon Vincent, a professional Lincoln impersonator.

Restoration Work

1) Dan Lincoln has been in touch with the developer who owns the land in Peapack - Gladstone where the 18th century lime kilns are located. We are hoping to

get help from this developer to restore the kilns. This is an ongoing effort for 1997. The kilns are in a marvelous state of repair and of great historical significance to this area.

2) Academy - The one area of disappointment for us in 1996 is that we were turned down on two grants applications. One was to the Somerset County Community Development Office for \$10,000 to be used chiefly to modernize the bathroom facilities in the Brick Academy and to make them "Handicapped Accessible".

The other was to the New Jersey Historic Preservation Bond Program. We worked long and hard on this application only to find last summer that we had been turned down.

We are now seeking alternate sources of funding and hope to be able to begin work on the ground floor using some of our personally raised funds.

This will be a major focus for the coming year.

Acquisitions

<u>Donor</u>	<u>Item</u>
Mr. E. A. Floystad	Grindstone, c. 1880, mounted with treadle and water reservoir. Scythe Corn Sheller Bucksaw
Tim Atkins	Eyeglasses, c. 1880
Elain Stine	Black lady's cape, c. 1858-60
Mrs. Richard C. Marsh	Spinning wheel, linen, c. 1816
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Arnold	Draw knife
Harold and Elizabeth Koechlein	Leather Bibles Photo album Post card scrap book Volume of <u>Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey</u> by Barker and Howe, 1844 Miscellaneous local post cards
R. S. Reeves Jr.	Two American flags Staffordshire Pottery mug, c. 1835 (damaged) Chinese Export bowl, c. 1790, (damaged)

Membership

We published a new directory this year and each member was mailed a copy. Our total membership is up to 308, a new record.

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

Outlook for 1997

- 1) Work toward restoration of Lime Kilns in Peapack
- 2) Continued outreach in many areas of education
- 3) Fund raisers - money to be applied to Brick Academy restoration. Some of these will be
 - a) printing and sale of 1998 calender with local scenes
 - b) raffle of wonderful locally made quilt with Basking Ridge designs
 - c) another Bargain Bazaar.

We are looking forward to further growth in 1997.

Respectfully submitted,

June S. Campbell
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, restoration efforts, and the 1997 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,

June Campbell
Chairman - Board of Trustees

Encs.