



The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

Post Office Box 136, Basking Ridge, New Jersey 07920

www.historicalsocietyofsomerset hills.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Date: March 29, 2009

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Historic Schoolhouse Operators Gather for Inaugural New Jersey Historic Schoolhouse Summit & Symposium

Symposium to Discuss Economic Conditions, Program Survival,
Preservation, and exhibit design.



BERNARDS TWP/ NEW JERSEY - Friday, March 29, 2009— Historic schoolhouse operators from across New Jersey will gather at the historic Brick Academy in the Basking Ridge section of Bernards Twp on Saturday, April 4, 2009 for the inaugural New Jersey Historic Schoolhouse Summit & Symposium. The symposium, the first of its kind in New Jersey, is part of a year-long series of events to celebrate the bicentennial of the Brick Academy, a beautifully restored classical school built in 1809.

"The New Jersey Historic Schoolhouse Summit and Symposium offers an opportunity for preservationists, curators, and program leaders who represent one-room schoolhouses across New Jersey to attend program sessions that deal with today's tough economic climate and work in a collaborative and networked environment," says Brooks Betz, coordinator of the Historic Schoolhouse Summit & Symposium.

"In tough economic times, historic preservation and community service programs are the first to be scrutinized," says Betz, who serves on boards of Somerset County's Jacobus Vanderveer House and The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills. "A number of us realized last year that the next few years are going to be critical to the survival of historic preservation and educational programs, and we have to work together to consider our options."

Fourteen historic schoolhouses in and around New Jersey have registered to attend the Summit representing nine of the thirteen New Jersey counties along with an additional participant from Philadelphia, PA. Twenty-nine program leaders will attend the sessions that are scheduled throughout the day at the historic Brick Academy.

Why schedule such an event?

With a difficult economic climate, shrinking municipal budgets, and limited volunteer support, the survival of historic schoolhouse programs and restoration efforts must be conducted with the best possible insight available today, stated Betz. "The Historic Schoolhouse Summit & Symposium offers the opportunity to exchange ideas, expand networks, and share practices concerned with preservation of historic schoolhouses."

The symposium will include three distinct breakout sessions created based on a questionnaire that was initially sent out to schoolhouse operators across the state.

Based on the feedback, the three most important topics to be covered at the symposium will be: **Museum Layouts & Exhibits; Program Creation & Marketing;** and **Financial Grants & Fundraising.**

Each session will have a host from the Brick Academy, as well as a co-host coordinator from a partnering guest schoolhouse operator. "Each host from the Brick Academy has been meeting with his or her co-coordinator from a partnering historic schoolhouse, so to broaden the discussion and engage everyone in the process," noted Marcella Miccolis, Chair of the Historical Society of the Somerset Hills and co-coordinator for the **Museum Layouts and Exhibits** session. "We're all very excited to have representatives from all of these great schoolhouses here in Basking Ridge for the summit."

The event will commence with a guided tour of the three floors of the Brick Academy and a discussion on the history of the structure and the recently completed restoration efforts of the third floor school room. The tour will begin promptly at 9:30am.

For additional information visit www.brickacademy.org



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About The Brick Academy



The Brick Academy (also known as the Basking Ridge Classical Schoolhouse) is a 1809 Federal-style architectural structure located in the center of Basking Ridge in Bernards Township. The Brick Academy has been a boys' private preparatory school, a public school, a meeting hall for several fraternal and benevolent organizations, and the Bernards Township municipal building. It currently serves as the headquarters of The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills, as well as a schoolhouse and

museum to local history. The Brick Academy also celebrates its bicentennial throughout 2009.



About the Historical Society of the Somerset Hills (THSSH)

Founded in 1928 originally as the Historical Society of Basking Ridge, the mission and name of the society was later changed to The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization including all five communities of the Somerset Hills region: Bedminster Township, Bernards Township, Bernardsville, Far Hills, Peapack-Gladstone which are all located in Somerset County, New Jersey.

The mission of The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills (THSSH) is to acquire, conserve and share local artifacts and information on matters of local historic interest; cultivate interest in local history; encourage the preservation of local historic resources; facilitate historic research; and preserve, operate, and interpret the Brick Academy.

To further this mission, THSSH sponsors events and activities that promote community awareness and appreciation of the history and architecture of the Somerset Hills. THSSH headquarters is at the Brick Academy in the Basking Ridge section of Bernards Township, where our collections of items of local historic interest are available to the public.

Attending:

Schoolhouse	City	County
1873 - Ridgewood Schoolhouse Museum	Ridgewood, New Jersey 07450	Bergen
1830 - Stone German Valley School	Long Valley, New Jersey 07853	Morris
1869 - Washington Valley Schoolhouse	Morristown, New Jersey 07960	Morris
1867 - Montville Schoolhouse	Montville, New Jersey 07045	Morris
1820 - Long Hill Twp Schoolhouse	Long Hill Twp, New Jersey 07933	Morris
1784 - Newark One Room Schoolhouse	Newark, New Jersey 07102	Essex
1809 - Brick Academy	Bernards Twp, New Jersey 07920	Somerset
1889 - Pleasant Valley Schoolhouse	Lambertville, New Jersey 08530	Mercer
1840- Cold Brook School	Readington, New Jersey 08870	Hunterdon
1807 - Old Franklin School	Metuchen, New Jersey 08840	Middlesex
1809 - Little Red Schoolhouse	Mickleton, New Jersey 08056	Burlington
1759 - Old School House	Mt Holly, New Jersey 08060	Burlington
1897 - Risley Schoolhouse	Estel Manor, New Jersey 08319	Atlantic
1775 - Concord School House	Germantown, PA 19144	Philadelphia
*Museum of Early Crafts & Trades	Madison, New Jersey	Morris
*Non-Schoolhouse Attending		



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Inaugural New Jersey

Historic Schoolhouse Summit & Symposium

Saturday, April 4, 2009 – Basking Ridge, New Jersey