

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

Volunteer Opportunities



The Brick Academy
15 West Oak Street, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
908-221-1770 ♥ www.thssh.org

Raise Your Hand.... Volunteer!

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy.

When you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.

Volunteering is easy!

The only requirements are compassion, an open mind, a positive attitude, and a willingness to do whatever is needed.

Volunteering is beneficial!

Studies show that volunteering:

- Helps you stay physically and mentally **HEALTHY**
- Provides a rewarding **ESCAPE** from your day-to-day routine
- **CONNECTS** you with the local community
- Enables you to **LEARN** new skills and achieve personal growth
- Offers unique **OPPORTUNITIES** regardless of previous experience or education
- Provides a fulfilling sense of **ACHIEVEMENT**

Volunteering is fun!

One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing personal relationships is to commit to a shared enjoyable activity together. Many volunteers make lifelong friendships.

***To learn more about how you can join
The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills
as a volunteer...***

Please call: 908-221-1770 or eMail: info@thssh.org

Volunteer Opportunities!

Affiliate Memberships

- Identify and maintain memberships with affiliate organizations
- Maintain relationships with affiliate organizations
- Compose correspondences related to affiliate organizations

THSSH is a current member of The Somerset County Historical Society; League of Historical Societies of New Jersey; National Trust for Historic Preservation; and Preservation New Jersey

Archives & Research

- Provide telephone and face-to-face consultation on local history subjects
- Setup and maintain library of general research, as well as rare and local books
- Manage archival files
- Review and catalogue archival acquisitions
- Photograph and digitize documents
- Maintain digital catalogue of archival materials
- Compose correspondence related to research

Bookstore

- Locate and acquire books of local interest
- Price and display books on shelves
- Maintain inventory of books

Building Maintenance

- Supervise the operation and maintenance of the Brick Academy
- Contact Bernards Township for lease-included building repairs (e.g. heat, electricity)
- Report major projects (e.g. new roof) to Board of Trustees
- Obtain cost estimates from professional contracts and oversee completion of projects
- Schedule commercial cleaning of the Brick Academy
- Administer building keys to trustees and approved volunteers

Clerical

- Schedule trustee and committee, as well as non-profit organization meetings on the monthly Event Calendar
- Collect and record contributions and bookstore sales
- Maintain THSSH membership mailing list
- Update Membership Directory
- Schedule museum docents
- Maintain administrative files
- Compose general correspondence to members

Community Outreach

In order for the community to gain an understanding of our mission and to raise consciousness of the historical heritage of the Somerset Hills, THSSH participates in Somerset County and Somerset Hills history-related events. Major community events include:

Charter Day	<i>May</i>
Lord Stirling 1770s Festival	<i>October</i>
Weekend Journey through the Past	<i>October</i>

Additionally, joint partnerships are formed with local organizations (e.g. Mansion in May, Farmstead Arts, Basking Ridge Business Alliance, Bernards Charter Day Committee) for special community events.

Education

The mission of the Education Committee is to carry out youth and adult educational programming; to share information on matters of local historic interest; and to cultivate interest in local history in support of the Historical Society's mission.

- **Elementary School Programs** - Currently offered to the five Bernards Township elementary schools and local scout troops. The Education Committee hopes to extend these programs to Bedminster, Bernardsville, Far Hills, and Peapack-Gladstone.
 - Basking Ridge History & Flag
 - Brick Academy & Walking Tour
 - How Children Played!
 - Early American Schoolhouse (*sponsored by The Museum of Early Trades and Crafts*)

Education (continued)

- **Craft Sundays** - A hands-on education program to engage young children in learning about history through early American crafts
- **Scout Troops** - Somerset Hills scouts visit the Brick Academy to fulfill the American Heritage Badge requirement
- **Walking Tours** - Guided tours of historic Basking Ridge village are scheduled for school groups, local residents and visitors

Fund Raisers

THSSH's premiere fundraiser is the biennial *Holiday House Tour in the Somerset Hills*. Traditionally attended by 500 visitors, the fundraiser features 4-5 private residences of historic significance and/or architectural distinction within the Somerset Hills. The Brick Academy serves as the hospitality center with refreshments.

Gardens & Grounds

- Supervise the landscape design and seasonal maintenance of the Brick Academy gardens and grounds
- Collaborate with the Basking Ridge Garden Club and local florist shops for special holiday and/or event decorations

Hospitality

Plan, purchase, setup, and cleanup for THSSH programs or functions with refreshments. Essentials include food, beverages, paper and plastic products, tablecloths, flower arrangements, and decorations.

Membership

An important objective for the Historical Society is to constantly grow and maintain membership. Developing membership recruitment drives and initiatives is a top goal for THSSH. Current membership initiatives are through the organization's website, at community events and at the Brick Academy.

Welcome packages are sent to new members including a letter from the Chairman, Membership Directory and 'Inside the Brick Academy' newsletter.

Museum

The Brick Academy serves as a museum of local artifacts and information, the only one of its kind in the Somerset Hills. The top floor is a restored 1890s period schoolroom with an authentic pot belly stove, period furniture and early education displays. The museum is open to the general public the first Sunday of each month. Key responsibilities of the Museum Committee include:

- Review and process artifacts for acquisition and de-acquisition in accordance with museum policies, and maintain the acquisition computer database
- Source, identify, photograph, label, and display (or store) artifacts in the Brick Academy
- Design, install and maintain Museum exhibits throughout the Brick Academy
- Provide artifacts from THSSH collections on short-term, long-term or permanent loan, and process relevant documentation in collaboration with other history organizations
- Design, install and maintain exhibits at Somerset Hills libraries, partner museums and other venues upon request (e.g. Somerset County Administration Building)
- Manage various projects to enrich the museum experience

Newsletter

‘Inside the Brick Academy’ newsletter contains special announcements, event calendar and feature articles. The February edition includes the Annual Report of the Historical Society required by Bernards Township. The newsletter is published three times per year (February, May and September) and is distributed to THSSH members, Somerset Hills municipalities, local libraries, and select Historical Societies.

Production

Interact with the local print shop to design and produce newsletters, marketing literature, promotional pieces, and office stationery.

Public Relations & Advertising

Identify local businesses and restaurants that will offer THSSH members discounts in exchange for advertising space in an edition of ‘Inside the Brick Academy’ newsletter.

Publicity

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills utilizes an array of newspapers, magazines, websites, and marketing collateral to promote special events, speaker programs and the Holiday House Tour in the Somerset Hills:

Bernardsville News, Brick Academy Sidewalk Sign, Cultural Connection, Daily Record, Design NJ Magazine, Direct Mail, Inside NJ Magazine, 'Inside the Brick Academy' Newsletter, MyCentralJersey.com, News 12 New Jersey, networkforgood.net, Patch.com, Promotional Flyers, NJ Countryside Magazine, NJ Monthly Magazine, NJ Lifestyle Magazine, The Bernardsville News, The Star-Ledger, www.thssh.org, www.facebook.com/somersethillshistory, and <https://twitter.com/thssh>.

Speaker Programs

Conducted at Historical Society Membership Meetings, presentations include professional lectures on historical subjects, as well as entertainment performances. The programs (5-6 per year) are typically free, held at the Brick Academy and include refreshments. Advertisement to THSSH members and the general public is crucial.

Website/Social Media

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills maintains a high-profile online presence with a dedicated website: www.thssh.org. Key components of the website include Announcements & News, Event Calendar, Historical Research of the Somerset Hills, Historic Districts & Landmarks, Vintage Photographs, Archive Collection, Brick Academy Museum Store, Volunteer Programs, Walking Tour of Basking Ridge Village, Discussion Groups, and THSSH general information.

The Historical Society participates in popular social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, and dedicated history blogs. In addition, the Brick Academy, headquarters of the Historical Society, has an informative entry on Wikipedia online encyclopedia.

In order to generate off-site revenue the Historical Society is a member of *Shop for Museums.com*, a primary source of online fundraising for 1,300 museums and related non-profit organizations.

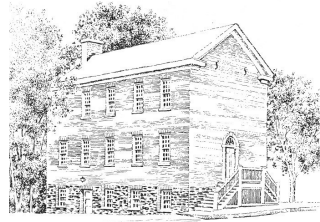
The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

Founded in 1928 originally as the Basking Ridge Historical Society, the name was changed in 1988 to The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills to include the five communities of Bedminster Township, Bernards Township, Bernardsville, Far Hills, and Peapack-Gladstone.

THSSH's mission is to acquire, conserve and share historic artifacts and information; cultivate interest in local history; encourage preservation; facilitate research; interpret the Brick Academy; and operate the local history museum. The By-laws of the non-profit organization calls for a Board of Trustees to govern the operation. The board meets monthly and conducts 4-6 General Membership Meetings annually.

Our committees, including Museum, Education, Publicity, Speaker Programs, Website/Social Media, Publicity, Membership and Clerical, are an excellent opportunity for volunteers to focus on a specific area of the organization that is of personal interest!

The Historical Society is headquartered at the Brick Academy, in Basking Ridge town center. The 1809 Federal-style building was constructed by Reverend Dr. Robert Finley as a classical school that prepared young men for college. Through the years it has served as a public school, union meeting hall, and municipal building. Today, the Brick Academy, listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, comprises a museum of local artifacts, a 1890s schoolroom and a research center.



To learn more about The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills, membership benefits and volunteer opportunities, please call: 908-221-1770 or eMail: info@thssh.org.

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