The End of the NJ Historic Trust

You are reading correctly. NJHT is struggling for survival.

If the courses charted by the Governor and Legislature are not changed within the next two months, the NJ Historic Trust will cease to exist as we know it. Crippling cuts will see to it that there will be no future opportunities to obtain NJHT funds for your project.

New Jersey voters went to the polls last November and overwhelmingly approved The New Jersey Open Space Preservation Funding Amendment (Public Question No. 2) to provide a stable source of funding for open space, farmland, and historic preservation through a dedicated portion of the Corporate Business Tax (CBT).

Legislation to implement funding under consideration will drive the New Jersey Historic Trust out of business. The NJHT has been a source for funding capital needs for the historic buildings around the state since 1990. The proposed legislation to disperse the CBT would allocate only $2.1 million to fund all preservation projects in the state for the coming fiscal year. Because of a 5% cap in the proposed bill, only $106,000 may be used for administrative purposes (including staff salaries) – those who oversee the NJHT programs. This amount cannot support the work of an office and current staff of six who currently oversee 137 grant projects in progress, much less to take on new projects.

Worse still, the Governor’s budget for the coming fiscal year would reduce the NJHT allocation even further to just $1.4 million per year.

Are our elected officials telling us that they cannot find $10 million for this program in a $33.8 billion budget (0.03%!!!)?

WHAT TO DO
1. CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS

Nothing will take the place of a sustained campaign for this cause between now and the end of June, when the budget must be in place. As your first salvo, please reach out to your state representatives and tell them how (continued on page four)
The Slate of Officers and Directors of the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey

President (2016)
Jane McNeill
Victorian Society

First Vice President (2016)
Timothy Hart
Ocean County Cultural & Heritage Commission

Vice-President, Northern (2016)
Kate Malcolm
Madison Historical Society

Vice-President, Central (2016)
Jeffrey McVey
Lambertville Historical Society

Vice-President, Southern (2016)
Peter Hill
Haddon Heights Historical Society

Secretary (2016)
Judy M. Aley
Haddon Heights Historical Society

Treasurer (2016)
Pary Tell
Cape May County Cultural and Heritage Commission

Trustee, Northern (2018)
Alice Gibson
Victorian Society

Trustee, Northern (2016)
Catherine Sullivan
Victorian Society

Trustee, Central (2016)
Mary Swarbrick
Fellowship for Metlar House

Trustee, Central (2018)
Donald Peck
Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance

Trustee, Southern (2018)
Ronald Janesko
Ocean County Historical Society

Trustee, Southern (2016) open
Trustee-at-Large (2016)
Brian Armstrong
South River Historical and Preservation Society

Trustee-at-Large (2018)
Laura Poll
Monmouth County Historian (2014)
James Lewis
Morristown and Morris Township Library

Membership Chairman
Dorothy Pietrowski
Madison Historical Society

Publications Awards Committee Chairman
J. B. Vogt
Fellowship for Metlar House

Trustee Emeritus
Bernard Bush

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Our state parks and our Historic Trust office are in serious trouble, as a result of the approval of November’s ballot question #2.

In recent years, budget priorities have shifted away from preserving and enhancing open space, state parks, and historic sites. But the cost has been high. Our parks and historic sites have seen their staffs and maintenance budgets cut to dangerous levels, near zero in some cases. Many historic structures have been largely ignored and left to deteriorate.

There is currently a $400 million-plus backlog of repairs, new construction, and improvements to existing facilities in state parks and historic sites, but the ballot question did not address this need. Thus, the passage of Question 2 could have serious financial impact on state parks and historic sites, severely limiting their ability to fund capital projects, such as building or repairing restrooms, roads, and bridges, since past dedicated funding through the Corporation Business Tax (CBT) has been virtually eliminated.

In addition, unless the enabling legislation changes it, all state park lease and concession revenue would leave the parks. For some, like Liberty State Park, that is approximately $800,000 a year, about 25% of LSP’s annual budget for operations and maintenance.

In 2013, heritage tourism generated $2.8 billion. It contributed $335 million directly to the state’s coffers in sales taxes. Ecotourism, which includes visits to state parks and wildlife management areas, had similar numbers. The final numbers for 2014 are not in yet, but the mid-year numbers are trending to a 3% increase in heritage tourism. The impact of neglecting our historic sites, which draw significant numbers of visitors annually, would be staggering. If historic sites are neglected, or worse, closed, there is no reason to visit. State parks with limited hours will not attract visitors. The majority of heritage and ecotourism visitors stay more than (continued on page three)

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DEADLINE: Submissions for the April issue of League News must be on the editor’s desk no later than July 15, 2015. Please send all items to: Linda Barth, 214 North Bridge Street, Somerville, New Jersey 08876; barthlinda123@aol.com.

Material submitted electronically should be in WORD format. Photographs will be scanned and returned. Digital photographs should be submitted in .jpeg or .tif.
Dear Governor Christie:
The League of Historical Societies of New Jersey is writing to protest in the strongest tone the continued destruction of the main building of the Greystone Asylum Building in Morris County, New Jersey. The League board of trustees voted unanimously at our April 11th meeting to write this letter to you and copy to our legislators and other concerned parties.

In the most densely populated state of our union, the loss of this Second Empire building is a needless loss of stunning, 19th-century, public architecture, the heritage of care for individuals with mental illness, including world renowned song writer Woody Guthrie, and the immense opportunity to create a sustainable environmental demonstration project.

Founded in 1966, the League is a coalition of about 250 nonprofit organizations in New Jersey with a combined membership of nearly 50,000 individual members from throughout the state. The League operates a widely circulated, electronic calendar of historic events to over 1,000 key decision makers on a regular basis. The League works in the present to protect our cultural heritage for the future. Three public meetings are held each year in three regions of the state: the South, Central and North.

Even as this clock has begun to strike midnight, the destruction must be stopped to preserve this 139-year-old historic icon of architecture. The loss of this Kirkbride public structure for the care of individuals with mental illness creates a dangerous precedent for state-owned historic resources. If state-owned historic properties of this grandeur are not safe from the wrecking ball, then what hope is there for privately held historic properties?

The Christie administration has a reputation for “thinking outside the box” and finding innovative solutions to apparently intractable problems. Demonstrating an adaptive reuse of the Greystone Asylum would save the taxpayers nearly $50 million in demolition costs, act as a model of public-private partnership and illustrate the notion that the most environmentally responsible structure is the structure that already exists. The carbon footprint of any new structure on this site or on any other site to provide this scale for housing, retail or public space would surpass the savings gained by repurposing this immense structure.

The last-minute exploration in more depth of existing and possible new concepts for redevelopment without the investment of public money would require bold, decisive action from the Christie administration that would be a legacy to thinking outside the simplistic options of the past and creating new possibilities for adaptive reuse of our shared cultural and artistic heritage.

Please feel free to have your staff contact us for further input.

Sincerely,
Jane McNeill, president
732-832-1878
jnmcneill@aol.com

FROM THE DIRECTOR (continued from page two):

2 nights. The domino effect of a decrease in heritage and ecotourism will seriously affect the income generated from the state occupancy tax, which pours about $8 billion into the state treasury every year. To cut or eliminate funding for state parks and historic sites is short-sighted and potentially devastating to the citizens of NJ. In the absence of tourism and the dollars it generates, each household in the state would have to contribute an additional $1440 to simply maintain current state revenue. We ask the legislature to give serious consideration to the impact of the distribution of funding under the new referendum.

Please contact your legislators and the governor and ask that the Historic Trust and our historic sites be adequately funded.
SPIRIT of the JERSEYS State History Fair
Saturday May 9, 2015 — 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Monmouth Battlefield State Park
Manalapan, NJ 07726; 732-462-9616
www.njhistoryfair.org; historyfair@dep.nj.gov
Free Admission—Parking/$10 per vehicle — Rain or Shine
The SPIRIT of the JERSEYS Marks New Location!

Experience five centuries of New Jersey’s history all in one place at the annual SPIRIT of the JERSEYS State History Fair—a historical festival for all ages on Saturday, May 9th at its new location at Monmouth Battlefield State Park in Manalapan, NJ.

This free, award-winning event, which runs from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine, annually draws more than 5,000 visitors. The fair is a fun-filled adventure into New Jersey’s past with living history demonstrations, military reenactors, tours, exhibits, period music and dance, and historical organizations and museums from around the state.

There are plenty of hands-on activities for kids and adults, from playing historical games to plowing a furrow or taking part in a military drill. Don’t miss the opportunity to meet such historical figures as British General Sir Henry Clinton, Clara Barton, Walt Whitman, Molly Pitcher, and General George Washington.

One of the largest battles of the American Revolution took place in the fields and forests that now make up Monmouth Battlefield State Park. The park preserves a splendid, rural, 18th-century landscape of hilly farmland and hedgerows that encompasses miles of hiking and horseback riding trails, picnic areas, a restored Revolutionary War farmhouse, and a new visitor center that opened to the public on Flag Day 2013. The park is easily accessible from Routes 9 and 33.

For more information and a complete list of activities about the fair, visit www.njhistoryfair.org or call 732-462-9616. Address: 16 NJ 33 Business, Manalapan Township 07726. The Fair is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection’s Office of Historic Sites, Division of Parks and Forestry, and its partners.

SAVE THE HISTORIC TRUST (continued from paged one)

your local historic site has benefitted. Tell them how the money received from the NJ Historic Trust made the difference and enabled preservation of an important site in your community. Tell them how the “match” required for a NJ Historic Trust grant stimulated other funding sources, including private monies. Tell them how your restored building is supporting tourism, education, local economic investment and/or maintaining a high quality of life for the citizens of your community.

Contact your state senator and assembly representatives and urge their support for more preservation funding by telephone, email and/or letter. Tell them that cuts down to $1.4 or $2.1 million (a cut of 2/3rds to more than 3/4ths) are too drastic. Explain that the norm since 1990 has been an average of $6 million per year. Advocate for an increase—The Trust needs an annual allocation of $10 million minimum, as the there is a $751 million backlog of preservation work at public and nonprofit historic sites. To learn more, visit http://njht.org/dca/njht/programs/1772/index.html

Explain how your community historic building resources are suffering because no capital preservation grants have been available since 2010.

2. SEND YOUR COMMENTS — Most of the public hearings were held in March, but you can still make the case before the state legislators in writing. If you were unable to (continued on page six)
OUR FIRST PRESIDENT DESERVES HIS OWN HOLIDAY
By Betsy Holdsworth
Vice Regent for New Jersey of the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association

On Monday, February 16, Americans celebrated Presidents Day, a national holiday of little significance. The day intended to honor our commanders in chief, past and present, has been reduced to a three-day weekend best known for its car and mattress sales.

The holiday that inspired Presidents Day—George Washington’s birthday—was once a national holiday of far greater importance. Each year, Americans honored their first and finest president on his actual birthday, February 22. We sent George Washington’s Birthday greeting cards, held parades, and participated in events and ceremonies to show respect and gratitude to the man whose courage and fortitude were critical to our nation’s founding.

In 1968, this tradition changed as Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act. This piece of legislation moved the observances of certain holidays, including Washington’s Birthday, along with Columbus Day and Memorial Day, from meaningful dates to specific Mondays, creating more three-day weekends for federal workers.

As a result, we no longer dedicate a day to honor the memory of our most important founding father. Instead we mark the third Monday in February as “Presidents Day.” We lump Washington together with the likes of James K. Polk, Millard Fillmore, Chester A. Arthur, and other men who have held the office, but fail to hold the same place of crucial importance in our American narrative.

Surely George Washington deserves better.

In light of this, the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association—the nonprofit organization that owns and operates Washington’s northern Virginia estate—urges communities around the country to bring back the tradition of remembering and reflecting upon the contributions of the “Father of Our Country.”

And those contributions are many. It was Washington who spent two winters in Morristown and one in Middlebrook and led a zealous army to victory in a revolution that seemed unwinnable. Instead of using his glory on the battlefield to advance his personal power, he resigned his commission to return to farm life at Mount Vernon.

When unanimously elected president, he again answered his country’s call, leaving loved ones and his cherished home behind. As president, he acted with careful intent, recognizing that his decisions would establish precedents. Perhaps most significantly, he showed the unparalleled wisdom to step away from seizing absolute power, ever mindful of protecting the Constitution and ensuring the success of this great democratic experiment.

When his birthday was celebrated as a national holiday, Americans were reminded that this great nation did not just “happen” by chance. They paid homage to a man who risked everything in order to create the United States of America.

This appreciation of the past is essential to the formation of our future. The Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association passionately believes in the importance of educating our citizens, particularly our children, so that they understand and appreciate our nation’s remarkable founding. In the past year, we have taken significant steps to counter the decline of history education in the classroom by rapidly expanding our
digital presence.

In 2014, we launched the newly redesigned mountvernon.org, loaded with interactive features, including an immersive new virtual tour of Mount Vernon that allows visitors to explore George Washington’s home from any location in the world. We also introduced a high-quality digital presentation documenting Washington’s heroics at the Battle of Yorktown.

To accomplish each of these endeavors and to maintain and operate the historic estate itself—as we have for more than 150 years—we rely exclusively on private funds. We are grateful to patriotic Americans in New Jersey who provide generous support. Thank you and we hope others will join us.

We hope that families, teachers, community leaders, and concerned citizens in New Jersey will grasp the opportunity to honor George Washington by learning and sharing more about this great man on his actual birthday. Many people will never know that Washington was a deeply textured individual; an entrepreneur who operated the most successful whiskey distillery of his day; and a family man who raised step-children and grandchildren, loved dogs, and was a gracious host known for dancing all night.

If you can’t travel to Washington’s beautiful Virginia estate in person, we invite you to visit mountvernon.org and discover something new and surprising about the man we call our greatest founding father.

George Washington is no mere president, to be jumbled together with Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan. He is the standard bearer, the precedent setter. He is, to use the words of historian James Flexner, the “indispensable man.” Let’s look for a better way to celebrate our most important hero than by scheduling his birthday over a three-day weekend.

If you share our belief in the importance of Washington’s legacy, we urge you to contact your Congressional representatives, state, and community leaders to identify ways in which we Americans can better honor his memory. He deserves to remain first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.

Betsy Holdsworth is a resident of Harding Township, New Jersey.

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attend a public hearing in March, you may send your comments as an attachment to be included in other submitted testimony for this budget year. Send it to Diane Hansen at dhansen@njleg.org. To see comments from a previous year, visit: http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/legislativepub/budget_2013/Other_Submitted_Testimony/Other_Submitted_Testimony.pdf

It is possible, but far from definite, that there may be other public hearings this spring.

3. CONTACT THE GOVERNOR’S OFFICE
Contact his office and let him know that the funding should be increased, not just restored!
Office of the Governor, PO Box 001, Trenton, NJ 08625; 609-292-6000; Chris.christie@gov.state.nj.us

The League thanks Michael Calafati for the basic content of this article.
League Offers Workshops for Members

The League is now offering its members an opportunity to host workshops designed to strengthen your organization and make it a sustainable society for the future. Each of the workshops is two hours long. Participants will pay a small fee to cover League costs. The workshops being offered are:

1. **Your Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Developing Your Long Range Plan** Your mission statement is the heart of your organization. Is it clear and concise? Do your board and your members know exactly what you are all about? Do you know where you are headed? This workshop will cover these basic documents that are critical for the success of any organization.

2. **Preparing a Good Budget, Filling Out Your Financial Reports** Are you applying for or considering applying for grants? Do you want to attract generous supporters? It's not enough to say how much you want. You have to say why you want it. And your financial information must be in “good order.” This workshop will cover preparing your annual budget and required financial reports as well as the various financial forms required for grants or support requests.

3. **Writing a Good Narrative, Using Boilerplate Documents** Are you applying for grants? Are you asking for corporate support? The narrative is the heart of any grant application. This workshop will give you the tools you need to write successful grant narratives, as well as shortcuts to make the grant writing process less time-consuming.

4. **Board Composition, Leadership, Developing Volunteers** The success or failure of your organization depends on having the right board and good people in leadership roles. Many of your board members will come from the ranks of volunteers. This workshop will cover how to insure that you have a dedicated and effective board, including board roles and responsibilities, and how to recruit volunteers and develop them into board candidates.

There are a few conditions that the host organization(s) will need to meet: **all workshops will be on Saturdays; there must be a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 50 participants in order to facilitate interaction among participants;** the workshop venue would ideally have tables so participants have a place for papers and to write notes; you must offer 2 workshops on the designated day, with session 1 at 10 a.m., a 12 to 1 p.m. lunch break, and session 2 from 1 to 3 p.m.; you can mix and match the two workshops. If you have too many participants for one session, the morning workshop can be repeated in the afternoon instead of two different workshops.

The League will handle all registrations and provide coffee, tea and pastries in the morning and lunch for the participants. **We suggest that any interested group should work with other organizations in your area to encourage attendance, find an appropriate venue, etc.** For more information or to schedule workshops, please email Pary Tell at ptell@co.cape-may.nj.us or pary.bruce@earthlink.net or call 609-425-8480.
Tuckerton Seaport & Baymen’s Museum Named National Medal for Museum and Library Service Finalist

The National Medal for Museum and Library Service is the nation's highest honor given to museums and libraries by the Institute of Museum and Library Services in recognition of exceptional service to the community and for making a difference in the lives of individuals, families, and communities. We are honored to share that Tuckerton Seaport has been named as a finalist for the 2015 National Medal award.

This year's finalists include individual public libraries, special and research libraries, a zoo, science museums, botanical gardens, and many other types of institutions that exemplify the great diversity of libraries and museums across the country.

This honor recognizes the contributions of our programs such as the Community Gathering and Art Helps to Tuckerton. We are grateful for your support and are honored to be recognized as a 2015 finalist.

“Museums and libraries are the lifeblood of our communities, serving as trusted providers of critical resources, educational training, skills development, and civic and cultural enrichment,” said Maura Marx, acting director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. “We salute Tuckerton Seaport & Baymen’s Museum for exemplary leadership in promoting lifelong learning while engaging and inspiring the public.”

Deputy Director Brooke Salvanto added: “As a community museum we can think of no greater honor than this recognition as a National Medal finalist for service to our community.”

The National Medal winners will be named later this spring, and representatives from winning institutions will travel to Washington, D.C., to be honored at the National Medal award ceremony. Winning institutions also receive a visit from StoryCorps, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to recording, preserving, and sharing the stories of Americans of all backgrounds and beliefs.

In acknowledgement of the National Medal’s celebration of institutions that are committed to community service, IMLS will feature the finalists on social media platforms and provide an opportunity for you to Share Your Story.

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services
The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 35,000 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant-making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit www.imls.gov and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

“HISTORY OF NEW JERSEY DINERS” EXHIBIT OPENS IN PISCATAWAY

When was the last time you ate at a diner? If you are like millions of New Jerseyans, the answer is not too long ago. Dubbed “the land of diners,” New Jersey has forged a unique relationship with these casual eateries. Stainless steel, neon and menus that go on for days are part of the Garden State landscape.

Come explore their rich history with us! The exhibit runs from April 12, 2015 - June 26, 2016 and is free of charge. Middlesex County Museum, Cornelius Low House, 1225 River Road, Piscataway, New Jersey 08854; 732-745-4177.
GUINNESS WORLD RECORD BELONGS TO CHATHAM, NJ

At the February 23 Chatham Borough Council meeting, the Chatham Historical Society, represented by Christine Grobert, presented the Guinness World Record Certification to Mayor Bruce Harris. The handmade shadow box contained the official certification, the commemorative wooden train whistle, and wooden coins celebrating the 1,127 men, women, and children who joined together to be “The most people blowing wooden whistles simultaneously”! As the photo was taken, a small contingency of whistle blowers made themselves known. Even the mayor BLEW once more!

During the society’s planning for the Centennial of the Chatham Train Station, Christine Grobert, treasury chair of the society, wanted to make the day truly memorable. After doing some research, she came up with a plan to break the current Guinness world record of 396 people blowing wooden whistles.

On June 14, 2014 the lure of being part of history attracted over 1,200 residents, area friends, train enthusiasts, and even out-of-state participants to gather together to break the Guinness World Record. With the Train Centennial coinciding with Chatham’s annual Fishawack Day, a large number of attendees were ensured!

At the field opposite the train station, people checked in, retrieved an envelope with a wooden whistle, a certificate of participation, and a wrist band and tracking sticker. As the scheduled time, 11:15 a.m., grew near, the excited crowd was escorted into the “Guinness Corral.”

In an orderly fashion, families, young and old, babies in strollers, grandparents, residents, and non-residents entered the fenced-in area. All precautions were taken to insure the strict adherence to World Record guidelines.

After two practice 10-second-long blows, Christine began the countdown. When she said this one is official and instructed the crowd to BLOW, everyone in the corral blew and blew. When Bruce Harris, Chatham Borough’s mayor, announced he was sure that the record had been broken, there was an uproarious cheer. As people filtered out, many remarked, “How great it is to live in a small town and enjoy such a fun event,” and “Where else except a small town can everyone come together like this!”

“It was such an amazing day! We couldn’t believe the turn-out,” said Christine Grobert, chair of the Guinness World Record event. “The historical society was hoping to make some new history in town, so we were thrilled to have so many residents and neighbors come out to create such a memorable Chatham event.”

The Guinness rules include paperwork involving lawyers, notarizing, testimonials, and several kinds of proof. Once completed, paperwork, photos, and documentation of the number of purchased wristbands and wooden whistles was mailed. Finally, almost five months later on December 22, Christine received confirmation via a link to the Guinness website stating that Chatham, New Jersey was the new record holder.

Mayor Bruce Harris and Christine Grobert
KEAN UNIVERSITY NOMINATED FOR EMMY FOR NJ 350TH VIDEOS


Launched in conjunction with the yearlong celebration of New Jersey's 350th anniversary, “It Happened Here: New Jersey” explores notable figures in New Jersey’s history. The series was produced by Kean University’s Jonathan Mercantini, history department chair; Terry Golway, director of the Center for History, Politics, and Policy; and Audrey Kelly, executive director. NBC Anchor Willie Geist narrated the series.

“It was a privilege to be associated with a terrific team of storytellers. Our mission was to highlight some of New Jersey’s great history, and it is gratifying to see the project recognized by the television industry’s best and brightest,” said Golway.

“It Happened Here: New Jersey” focuses on the themes of innovation, diversity and liberty. The series features stories about the telegraph, the light bulb and the transistor and also highlights the achievements of such noteworthy figures as Alexander Hamilton, Paul Robeson, Alice Paul and Woodrow Wilson.


The winners will be announced on May 2.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON, THE MUSICAL, HEADED TO BROADWAY

At the end of February, it was announced that the "Hamilton" musical is moving to Broadway at the Richard Rogers Theater on July 13th. Ticket sales began in March through Ticketmaster. For more information, please visit: http://www.playbill.com/Hamilton Musical Heads to Broadway

For those who want to know more: From the feedback we have been getting, the following short review in the New York Times is one of the favorites. Excerpt:

“The Public Theater seems hell-bent on putting drama back in the center of the national conversation, and Miranda’s “Hamilton” is one of the most exhilarating experiences I’ve had in a theater. Each element in the show is a jewel, and the whole is bold, rousing, sexy, tear-jerking and historically respectful—the sort of production that strips things down and asks you to think afresh about your country and your life.”

To read David Brook’s complete review, please visit: www.nytimes.com/2015/02/24/David Brooks Hamilton Experience

For a convenient collection of reviews and “Hamilton” musical perspective: http://theAHAsociety/Hamilton Musical Reviews

For those who wish to follow the daily “Hamilton” tweets, on your command line, enter: #HamiltonPublic for the current run at the Public Theater (sold out through its run until May 3rd) and #HamiltonBroadway for the transitioning and latest on the move and run at the Richard Rogers Theater.

Yours in Hamilton and history (YIH),

Rand Scholet | President
The Alexander Hamilton Awareness Society
FORBIDDEN ARTIFACTS: HORRID OR HISTORY?

Opening in October 2015: The Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society is curating a new exhibit, “Forbidden Artifacts: Horrid or History?” The idea began with a conversation among historical society colleagues—a particular society had received the donation of an embroidered lady’s KKK robe, perplexing the group as to what to do with the artifact. Some of their board members were appalled that the object was accepted at all; other members felt that the object was profoundly horrific, but a valid marker of history just the same.

When a representative from the receiving historical society (they have asked not to be identified) mentioned the dilemma, it got Sheila McCloy-Nuss, curator of the Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society, thinking about artifacts maintained in storage due to their controversial natures and origins.

McCloy-Nuss began to consider that if we as museums and historical societies are ethically obligated to hold our collections in the public trust, do we have a responsibility to share all of the collections with the public for their consideration and reflection? It also inspired her to wonder if we are holding particular objects out of public view, other small museums must have similar objects in their collections as well.

From these enduring questions came the response—“Forbidden Artifacts: Horrid or History?” an exhibit giving context to museum objects that would not ordinarily be shown due to their intrinsically controversial natures. While the objects may be provocative with respect to sensitive issues inclusive of race, religion, sexuality and gender, politics, etc., their commonality is that they exist. Although the thinking that produced the artifacts may have been deeply flawed, the objects are all socio-cultural reflections that have outlasted their offensive origins. The exhibit will invite the public to consider the forbidden artifacts’ place—whether the contentious objects are legitimate markers of the historic socio-cultural mores of their times; or, whether they are they simply icons of shame that should remain obscured forever.

Some of these banished objects have a great deal to communicate to the viewers if they are presented in the light of day—for example, the Cape May County Historical and Genealogical Society will present artifact No. 2006.74, a cast-iron mechanical bank from 1882 depicting a stereotyped caricature of a “jolly” black man in a jacket and bowtie. This object offers profound opportunity for reflection as it has been mounted atop a voting ballot box. In this 50th anniversary year of Dr. Martin Luther King’s civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, this juxtaposition creates an ironically poignant object that is deeply engaging and thought-provoking. This object facilitates connections for a modern audience with respect to the struggle of minorities striving to assert their guaranteed civil rights.

The society offers an open invitation to all New Jersey historical societies that wish to contribute a forbidden object for consideration. Societies interested in being considered for inclusion in the exhibit may contact Sheila McCloy-Nuss at 609-465-3535, or sheilacmchgs@gmail.com
Sometime in the middle of the night, somewhere in the middle of Tennessee, just a week ago, I pulled into a welcome center on Interstate 40.

The place was open, well-lit and had brochures from every region of the state—from Memphis to Nashville to the Smokies. There was a gas fireplace, with three rocking chairs, to give it the feel of a country cabin and a three-panel information case about the Tennessee Civil War Trail and the Buffalo Valley Region. The place was a miniature museum; it even had battle diorama built in an artillery case.

Welcome to Tennessee, the open-all-night Music, Mountains and Battlefield State.

And I thought, why don't we have this in New Jersey?

A few days before, I had pulled into a Mississippi welcome center on Interstate 20 in Toomsuba just after dawn. A nice lady named Fay Alexander offered me coffee.

The place was decorated as if it were the parlor of an antebellum mansion. There were maps and literature about the state’s Civil War Trail and Civil Rights Trail and booklets on the historic cities of Jackson, Vicksburg, and Natchez. Not brochures. Booklets.

“We take a great pride in our history,” Alexander said. “We want to tell the world we have a beautiful state.”

Welcome to Mississippi, the History and Hospitality State.

And again I thought, why not New Jersey?

A few days later, I was home. I pulled into the rest stop off Route 287 in Harding Township. No brochures, no coffee, no regional furnishings, no souvenirs, no nice ladies. No nothing, except high chain-link fences, topped with barbed wire, closing the place off since 2006.

Welcome to New Jersey, the Maximum Security Prison State.

Only trucks are allowed so that truckers can use the outdoor porta-potties. The area that used to be for cars carrying commuters—and tourists—is now a Department of Transportation maintenance yard and only DOT workers have access to the building.

The place is dirty, and feels unsafe and isolated—in the daytime. At night, when a few dozen trucks idle in the parking lot, it is dark and feels industrial, like some port loading area.

What could be worse?

This: The rest stop is in one of the most scenic and historic parts of the state.

♦ It is about two miles west of the pristine Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.

♦ It is two miles east of the Jockey Hollow area of the Morristown National Historic Park.

♦ Morristown is called the military capital of the American Revolution for good reason. Washington had two extensive winter headquarters there: the first, to regroup after the history-changing battles of Trenton and Princeton; the second, at Jockey Hollow, where the Continental Army staggered and suffered through the worst winter of the time two years later. Yes, worse than Valley Forge.

♦ Four miles north is the Washington’s headquarters area of the park, where the general stayed and hammered out deals for ammunition from New Jersey iron foundries and got word that the French would
send 6,000 troops to backup his army.

- The rest stop is five miles from Speedwell Village, where Alfred Vail and Samuel Morse perfected the electromagnetic telegraph, a world-changing invention.

Who knew? Not anybody traveling on Route 287. Millions of people a year, and all that history is left undiscovered.

“We just don’t do a good job of welcoming people to the state, or help them discover our wonderful historic sites nearby,” said Noreen Bodman, the executive director of the Crossroads of the Revolution National Heritage Area in Trenton.

Leslie Bensley, who runs the Morris County Tourism Bureau, has developed an impressive wayfinding program for drivers and pedestrians to show off the local history.

“But we have to get people in off the interstate,” she said.

But we don’t. Not just in Morris County. Everywhere.

There is no welcome center on Route 78. The two new buildings in West Jersey, along the interstate, are a weigh station and a state police office. The only sign for a welcome center along the highway is in Phillipsburg, and that’s for Pennsylvania. Really.

On Route 80, just a few miles east of the Delaware Water Gap, and in the middle of the Highlands that the state worked so hard to preserve, there is a welcome center, but it has regular business hours and—get this—it is closed on state holidays. You know, those three-day weekends when tourists are traveling.

There is no welcome center on Route 287 South as you enter from New York. The Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike rest stops have kiosks with commercial brochures, but that's all.

There is nothing on Route 80 near Paterson to laud America’s first industrial city. Nothing on Route 95 or 195 offering information about historic Trenton. Nothing about the Pinelands on the South Jersey interstates. I could go on, but you get the idea.

New Jersey has a dismal history of promoting its history and we haven’t figured out what places down South figured out long ago.

History sells.

In Tennessee, with the 150-year anniversary of the Civil War approaching, the state tourism division put together a Sesquicentennial Civil War Trail, which has drawn visitors from 25 states, giving tourists who visit Nashville and the Smokies reason to spend more time in the state.

“We have found that sweet spot where history and tourism come together and create economic impact, but also lead to historic preservation,” said Patricia Gray, of the state’s office of tourist development.

Gray said a series of battlefield events begun in 2010 have 25,000 Civil War enthusiasts who donate to preservation and have helped grow Tennessee’s $27 billion tourism industry.
industry.

Malcolm White, the director of Visit Mississippi, said heritage tourism in his state is growing exponentially, significantly adding to the $6 billion tourists spend there each year.

“Ten years ago, it was 5 percent; five years ago, it was 15 percent; now, it might be as high as 40 percent,” he said. “It’s the largest and fastest growing segment of our trade.”

This is largely due to the Civil War and Civil Rights trails.

“These are two great American stories, and our story—the good parts and the bad—is one of our greatest exports,” he said.

Part of the success is due to visibility. Mississippi has 13 state-run visitor centers and another dozen run by counties or towns. It leads the nation in welcome center visits for several years running.

“We’re a state with 3 million people visited every year by 21 million people,” White said. “We must be doing something right.”

New Jersey once tried to do something right. A master plan was developed during the Corzine administration to finally promote our history to the 50 million people who live four hours or less by car, but it died with the economy.

Still, a recent New Jersey Historic Trust study indicated that heritage tourism makes up 8 percent of the state’s $60 billion tourism trade and draws 11 million visitors year who spend $2.8 billion.

“And all we hear is that there’s no money, there’s never any money to invest in our history,” said a state-employed history advocate who asked not to be identified.

“That’s without even trying. Can you imagine if we tried?”

*Mark Di Ionno may be reached at mdiionno@starledger.com. Follow The Star-Ledger on Twitter @StarLedger and find us on Facebook.*

Editor’s note: One of our most attractive welcome centers can be found in the State House; it’s titled “Just in Jersey.”
Criteria for the Kevin M. Hale Publication Awards

The following criteria will be used to judge the various categories of materials submitted by our member societies for the Hale Publication Awards for 2015.

NEWSLETTERS
Front Page:
  Is it eye catching?
  Does it clearly identify the name of the group, the site, the date, the location?
  Is there a web address given?
Contents:
  **Does it contain articles that add to our historic knowledge or understanding of a topic?**
  Does it encourage participation in the organization’s activities? Does it encourage membership?
  Does it contain articles about events that are current (or were at the time it was published)?
  Does it review previous activities and successes?
  **Does it promote other heritage tourism?** Does it promote other sites? Does the group partner with other sites?
  **Can it be viewed online?**
Pictures:
  Do they have historic or cultural value?
  Are they clearly labeled and credited to the photographer?
  Graphic quality—Are they eye-catching?
Editing:
  Are there misspellings, typographical errors, wrong page numbers, etc?
Contact Info:
  Is it easy to contact the group or editor for more information? Is there an address, phone number, and/or email to contact?
  Does the reader feel encouraged or welcomed to do so?

POSTERS
1) Quality of graphics
2) Uniqueness of subject
3) **Historic or cultural value**
4) Likelihood of long-term retention
5) Likelihood it will be framed/hung

CALENDARS
1) Eye-catching cover
2) **Historic pictures**
3) User friendly (enough space to jot a note each day)
4) Records significant holidays or historic dates
5) **Records society events**

BOOKS, BOOKLETS and JOURNALS
(3 separate categories)
  Significance of research (how much time/effort went into the research)
  Quality of sources
  **How much does it add to our knowledge of the subject?**
  Clarity of presentation
  Quality of illustrations
  Editing

PAMPHLETS AND BROCHURES
(separate categories)
  Includes handouts describing timed exhibits, walking tours, etc.
  Clarity of presentation
  Graphic appeal
  Likelihood of long term retention
  Significance of research
  Quality of sources

DVDs
  Same as books, except more emphasis placed on graphics and eye appeal.

Please send your submissions by March 1, 2016 in one or two categories to J.B. Vogt, 6 Forty Oaks Road, White House Station, NJ 08889. If you have questions, please contact her at 908-534-4600 or jnvgt6@gmail.com before February 15, 2016.
CRAFTSMAN FARMS
By Heather Stivison

One of the newest pictorial histories published by Arcadia Publishing and authored by Heather E. Stivison is *Craftsman Farms*. Released in 2014, the book has over 200 images depicting scenes of days gone by.

Craftsman Farms was the country estate of Gustav Stickley, the father of the American Arts and Crafts movement. Though Stickley is credited with creating hundreds of home designs, this property contains the only home he designed and built for his own use. His rustic log house was built upon a rolling hillside surrounded by lawns, stone walls, and working farmland.

In September 1917, the property was purchased by Sylvia and George Farny, who loved it dearly and passed it on to their descendants. Portions of the 650 acres were sold, but the core remained intact until the 1980s, when it was threatened by condominium development. Community activists launched a “Save the Farms” campaign, which led to the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills purchasing Craftsman Farms through eminent domain.

Today, it is a busy historic house museum operated by the nonprofit Craftsman Farms Foundation. *Craftsman Farms* showcases the significant design legacy Gustav Stickley created as well as the architectural and landscape history of this New Jersey National Historic Landmark.

Highlights of *Craftsman Farms* include:

- The book was written in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Craftsman Farms Foundation and includes numerous images from the Craftsman Farms Foundation’s early years.
- Craftsman Farms was the home to generations of the Farny family for about 70 years, but the story of those years has remained relatively unknown until now. The photographs and text offer an insider’s view of the Craftsman Farms Foundation’s 25 years of restoration projects.

Available at area bookstores, independent retailers, and online retailers, or through Arcadia Publishing at 888-313-2665 or at www.arcadiapublishing.com.

MOUNT LAUREL
By Stephanie Marks Sawyer

Settled in 1688 by the Evans family, Mount Laurel, just east of the Delaware River in Burlington County, originally contained small hamlets like Hartford, Masonville, Fellowship, and Springville. During the 19th century, African Americans established the enclaves of Colemantown, Little Texas, and Petersburg, which served as stops along the Underground Railroad. Dr. James Still, the abolitionist known as the black doctor of the pines, is buried in the Colemantown Cemetery. Mount Laurel’s farmers regularly trucked their produce to the Campbell’s Soup Company and shipped it to market either by steamboat on the Rancocas Creek or by the Camden & Burlington County Railroad. Through photographs that illustrate the transformation of the area’s historical roadways into highways and the residential development of its long-standing farms and peach and apple orchards, *Mount Laurel* showcases the rich agricultural and cultural heritage of this Burlington County community.

Available at area bookstores, independent retailers, and online retailers, or through Arcadia Publishing at 888-313-2665 or at www.arcadiapublishing.com.
AROUND THE WORLD IN 1909—
HARRIET WHITE FISHER AND HER LOCOMOBILE
By Lisa Begin-Kruysman

In the summer of 1909, an emotionally and physically exhausted industrialist from Trenton, New Jersey named Harriet White Fisher sought tonic by touring the world in a motorcar. She purchased a state-of-the art Locomobile and embarked on a remarkable journey with her driver, maid, butler and dog, exploring places where no man, woman, or domesticated house pet had ever ventured.

Whether camping in the wild or relaxing at the posh palaces of royal families, this brave band of unlikely travelers met new challenges on each day of their trip. Called the Anvil Queen, Iron Woman, Princess from the Land of Promise, A Lady of Great Consequence, and the Female Napoleon wherever she went, Harriet and her loyal entourage captured the curiosity and imagination of a fascinated public, attracting legions of fans and friends and opening the minds, hearts, and highways on four continents.

Format: 6” x 9” perfect-bound paperback on acid-free natural paper, printed in the USA; 280, pages, 81 illustrations, including period photos, newspaper articles, postcards . ISBN 10: 1-939995-07-8 ISBN 13: 978-1-939995-07-0; LCCN: 2014957369. $18.95 (Bulk order rates are available upon request). This title is available at your favorite local bookstore, on Amazon, at the American History Press website, or directly from the author. Lisa Begin-Kruysman is available for author talks and book signings. Please contact the publisher to arrange for a visit. American History Press, 404 Locust Street, Staunton Virginia; 888-521-1789.
Did you know—
—that a New Jerseyan was the first president of the United States?
—that New Jersey was the site of the first organized college football game?
—that New Jersey was the location of one of the most devastating espionage attacks of World War I?
—that the heroics of a New Jersey woman saved thousands of people from dying of yellow fever?
—that one of the first American folk heroes lived in New Jersey—and jumped off waterfalls?

These and other fascinating stories can be found in the newly updated *Rediscover the Hidden New Jersey*, a treasury of New Jersey stories that celebrate the unique heritage and importance of the Garden State. Russell Roberts has scoured New Jersey, from High Point to Cape May, to bring readers a delightful potpourri of facts, essays, lists, photos, stories, and legends about New Jersey. Readers will learn how New Jersey used to be the center of the motion picture universe, the origin of the Jersey Devil and other popular tall tales, where Norman Mailer and Abbot & Costello were born, where Aaron Burr and Leo, the M-G-M lion, lie buried, and much more. Learn about the geology of New Jersey, find out about the state’s ever-changing weather, and how New Jersey was chosen for the famous (or infamous) War of the Worlds radio broadcast that panicked the nation. All this and more is in *Rediscover the Hidden New Jersey*, the ultimate New Jersey book.

This revised edition contains new sections on Lawnside, the Morris Canal, Albert Einstein in Princeton, the Bordentown Manual Training School, Rockefeller/Ocean County Park, the bicycle railroad, Morro Castle, Alice Paul, and more. Russell Roberts is a freelance writer who has lived in New Jersey all his life and now resides in Bordentown. He is the coauthor of *Down the Jersey Shore* (Rutgers University Press) and many other books for adults and children.

Available at local bookstores, Amazon, and through Rutgers at Longleaf Services, Inc., 116 South Boundary St., Chapel Hill, NC 27514-3808; 800-848-6224; customerservice@longleafservices.org.

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**OWNING NEW JERSEY: HISTORIC TALES OF WAR, PROPERTY DISPUTES, & THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS**

By Joseph Grabas

New Jersey’s land records and deeds are unlikely sources for a thrilling tale but reveal little-known, fascinating history. A detailed story of the founding of the Garden State 350 years ago is preserved in these papers. The state’s boundaries were drawn in such documents centuries ago, even if the authors never set foot in North America. The archives hide heroes, like the freed African Americans who fought for their right to own their piece of the state. And of course, there are the bizarre and mysterious tales, like the silk baron’s castle and the assault against a sixteen-year-old maiden during the throes of the American Revolution.

Join land title expert Joseph Grabas as he combs through these all-but-forgotten stories of the pursuit of happiness and property in early New Jersey. Available through Amazon and Barnes & Noble. The author is available for appearances; jgrabas@continuingeducationnj.org; 732-261-1013.
THE LEAGUE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES SPRING MEETING
Hosted by the Merchants and Drovers Tavern Museum Association at
1623 St. Georges Avenue (Route 27) Rahway, NJ 07065
Saturday, June 13, 2015

8:45  Registration and continental breakfast
9:15  Welcome and introductions
9:30  League Business Meeting
9:45  Al Shipley, Director of Museum Operations, presentation on history and preservation of the Merchants and Drovers Tavern Museum from 1795 to the present.
10:45  Presentation of Kevin Hale Publication awards
11:00  Break
11:15  Lawrence McCullough, Executive Director, Union County Arts Center, presentation on the history of the former Rahway Theater and its evolution to the present-day Union County Arts Center
12:00  Luncheon on the lawn under tents
1-4  Sign up for guided cemetery tours of Rahway Cemetery, led by 6 reenactors. Famous burials include Abraham Clark, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; Walter Bramhall, a Civil War officer; John Cladek, a Civil War colonel of the 35th New Jersey Volunteer Infantry; Carolyn Wells, a noted mystery author; over 29 members of the United States Colored Troops, 299 Civil War Soldiers; and 70 Revolutionary War soldiers.
Visit the Union County Arts Center, 1601 Irving Street, Rahway, NJ.

Place to stay:  Homewood Suites, 2 Jackson Drive, Cranford, NJ 07016

Questions before June 13: 732-381-0441 or e-mail mdtavernmuseum@aol.com
Questions on the morning of June 13: 732-381-0441 or e-mail mdtavernmuseum@aol.com

REGISTRATION FORM – PLEASE RETURN BY JUNE 3, 2015
Please include a check for $25 per person, payable to the Merchants and Drovers Tavern Museum, and mail to 1623 St. Georges Avenue (Route 27) Rahway, NJ 07065

Name(s) ______________________________________________ Email___________________________
Address________________________________________________________________________________
City____________________________State,Zip_____________Phone____________________________
Affiliation:______________________________________________________________________________
Directions to the Merchants and Drovers Tavern Museum,
1632 St. Georges Avenue (Route 27), Rahway, NJ 07065; 732-381-0441

From North via Garden State Parkway:
Take Parkway South to Exit 135 (Westfield/Clark). Stay to the left two lanes toward Rahway/Linden. Once you have stayed left, move into the right lane. At 2nd traffic light at bottom of exit, make a left and go under the overpass. Keep right (you’ll see sign for Rahway) and stay on Brant Ave. to next traffic light. Turn left at the light onto Westfield Ave. Drive to 3rd light. Third light is St. Georges Ave. (Merchants and Drovers is on the left corner). At St. Georges, turn right, go half a block and turn into the parking lot at the 1600 sign on right.

From North via New Jersey Turnpike:
Take New Jersey Turnpike South to exit 13. After toll, keep right toward Linden/Elizabeth, then keep left toward Linden. Get on Route 1&9 South and drive approx. 2 miles. After the sign “Entering Rahway,” the first traffic light will be Grand Ave. Turn right on Grand Ave. and drive approx. 1 ½ miles until you reach St. Georges Ave. (Merchants and Drovers will be in front of you). At St. Georges, turn left, and go half a block and turn into the parking lot at the 1600 sign on right.

From South via Garden State Parkway:
Take Parkway North to Exit 135. At end of ramp, keep right and take Brant Ave. to traffic light. Turn left onto Westfield Ave. and follow directions as outlined in From North via Garden State Parkway.

From South via New Jersey Turnpike:
Take N.J. Turnpike North to Exit 11 (Garden State Parkway). Get on Parkway North and go to Exit 135. Follow directions From South via Parkway.

From West via Route 80 and Garden State Parkway:
Take Route 80 East to Exit 43 and get on Route 287 South. Go to exit 37 for N.J. 24 East. Take exit on left onto Route 78 East. From Route 78, take Exit 52 onto Garden State Parkway South. Follow directions From North via Parkway.

From West via Route 78 and Garden State Parkway:
Take Route 78 East to Exit 52 onto Garden State Parkway South. Follow directions From North via Parkway.

The League of Historical Societies of New Jersey
P.O. Box 909, Madison, New Jersey 07940
www.lhsnj.org