

Historical Society News

Old Eglinton Estate
A Look Back

George W. Clark
Forgotten
Townsmen & Author

New in the Library
George T. Norton's
Business Ledger

**Hightstown-East Windsor
Historical Society**
164 North Main Street
Hightstown, NJ 08520
www.hewhs.com

Annie L. Hay
Photographer

**Making an
Impression**
Ceiling medallion restoration



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1909-1911 Business ledger cover. See: New in the Library
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HELP NEEDED FOR HOUSE-KEEPING:
VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED ON NOV. 19, 20, AND 21, TO HELP CLEAN ELY HOUSE AND PUT UP HOLIDAY DECORATIONS, IN ADVANCE OF THE UPCOMING CHRISTMAS TEA ON DEC. 13. THE PROPERTY WILL NEED DUSTING AND WINDOWS WILL NEED CLEANING. EACH DAY WE WILL WORK FROM 9:30 TO NOON TO GET THE HOUSE READY FOR THE TEA. SOCIETY MEMBERS WHO CAN VOLUNTEER ARE ASKED TO CONTACT SHIRLEY OLSEN AT 448-8388 FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

Editor's Note

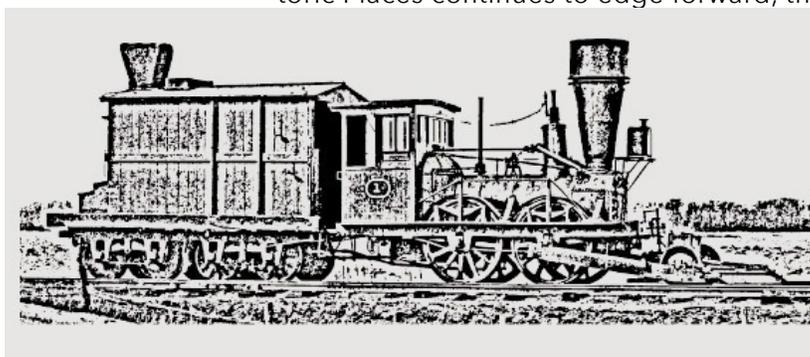
Thanks to all who have gone out of their way to comment on the design of the newsletter, which premiered in the last issue. We have Rick Pratt of Stockton Street Solutions, LLC to thank for it.

The importance of attics cannot be overestimated. Both the Luella Pullen papers and the Norton ledger, recently donated (see "New in the Library"), survived in the attics of local homes where they were left behind, found again many years later by subsequent owners. The original manuscript of Gertrude Maxwell's memoir *My First Decade*, excerpted in the last newsletter, survived for decades after it was left behind in the attic of a house in South Amboy! Many pieces of the Society's Ely Family Papers collection were found in the attic of Ely House back in the early 1970s. Attics are not always fully cleaned out when a property changes hands!

About the time that the next issue of the Newsletter will appear, the Hightstown High School as a building will witness the 50th anniversary of its opening in January 1966. If anyone has memorabilia related to the opening, or photographs or memories related to its first year of operation, please let me know. I can be reached by email at rcraig4002@verizon.net.

Recently I accompanied USGS geologist Pierre Lacombe on a walk through Bordentown to examine a part of the original right-of-way of the Camden & Amboy Railroad, the same right-of-way that goes through downtown Hightstown. Lacombe is studying the types of stone that were used in the "railway blocks" (1830s preferred term) or sleepers that were placed under the rails of the original track, and he has actually identified some of the lesser-known sources where that stone was quarried. To see the original "cut" through Bordentown, where the bridges still have arches with "1831" in their keystones, is to be brought back to the very beginnings of railroading in America, when a line like the Camden & Amboy--effectively an experiment from beginning to end--could be built in a manner unlike any railroad that came afterward.

The Camden & Amboy was also in the news here in June when Nathaniel Crabtree unveiled a series of plaques honoring a nomination to list the Hightstown "sleeper site" downtown in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places continues to edge forward, thanks to Kathy Patten.



Finally, a research report on the history of the Main Street crossing over Rocky Brook is still in the works, being prepared by a Cranbury consulting firm.

*What's the Difference...
at the Peddie Bridge?*



THERE ARE 14 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THESE TWO IMAGES.
SEE HOW MANY YOU CAN FIND.



*Highstown East Windsor
Historical Society*

founded 1971

**to educate while preserving for
future generations, our people and
our community's history.**

Officers for 2014-2015

President-	Vacant
Vice President-	Vacant
Recording Secretary-	Shirley Olsen 609-448-8388
Corres. Secretary-	Vacant
Treasurer-	Robert Szychowski 609-448-9490

Committee Chairs

Finance-	Robert Szychowski 609-448-9490
Property & Grounds-	Warren Olsen 609-448-8388
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Website-	Gary Stevens 609-469-1860
Membership-	Shirley Olsen 609-448-8388
Museum-	Cookie & Christa Cummings
Newsletter-	Robert Craig 609-584-1806
Programs-	Christian Kirkpatrick 609-443-3138 Jane Cox 609-235-6139
Programs-	Nancy Laudenberger 609-443-6536
Publicity-	Shirley Olsen 609-448-8388

Building Committee

Christian Kirkpatrick, Suzann Fallon,
Shirley Olsen, Warren Olsen, Robert
Szychowski

Society Trustees

Marie Gerland & Irene Schubert

Layout by Rick Pratt
Printed by Old Hights Print Shop

Answers can be found at www.hewfs.com

This past summer a housing developer has begun to make what are likely to become the final destructive touches to the old Eglinton estate in Upper Freehold Township on County Route 524 about a half-mile east of Old York Road (County Route 539). This action caps a slow, long-running demolition that, in itself, has taken about a lifetime to complete. When I first knew this property in the late 1960s, the house and the barn complex were still standing. The house, the main part of which was built in 1773, with a kitchen wing that was even older, hadn't been occupied since the late 1930s, and its outer envelope was failing. The grass so overgrown it was heavy work just to get to the front doorway, Eglinton in the 1960s was like a scene out of one of Henry Charlton Beck's books on the forgotten towns of southern New Jersey.

It had been one of the largest and most prestigious properties in all of Upper Freehold before the Revolutionary War. Its owner, Robert Montgomery, Esq. had been a justice of the peace--like a municipal judge today, but also with administrative responsibility. His brick house was one of the finest examples in Upper Freehold of the southern New Jersey patterned brickwork tradition, the signature architecture that is still conspicuous from Bordentown to Salem, the region's best advertisement of each owner's social standing. These houses were family "seats" in the traditional sense, signs of permanence for families whose

great-grandparents had been pariahs in Scotland and England, prosecuted and persecuted. These people had made it.

It is not often that ink in these pages is devoted to people or events outside the bounds of Hightstown and East Windsor, but Eglinton was a particular fascination for several of the students--myself included--in Eleanor Shuman's Exploring New Jersey Club at Hightstown High School. Caroline Braun won a prize for a paper she wrote about it, and for several years members of the club would from time to time visit the place and take modest steps to record the house and try to keep vegetation from enveloping it. Decay had already set in, and the frame wing on the east side was probably a lost cause, but the large, main, brick section was certainly worth saving, and could have been rehabbed. But instead it was gutted by an arson fire in 1972, and the surviving walls were pushed in in 1975. The extensive barn complex to the southeast of the house, vacant and structurally failing, disappeared over the years, leaving only the foundations, which as of this writing still stand. The owners sold the western part of the property to a company that only wanted it to mine sand.

Eglinton has vanished because it fell through a whole host of cracks. The first one was the Montgomerys, themselves. The estate had been sold out of the family in the 19th century, but two wealthy family members, direct descendants of Robert Montgomery, bought the property in the 1920s, ostensibly intending to restore the brick section of the house. They arranged for farming to continue, and placed tenants in the frame portion of the house. But they failed to unite on a course of action to save the house. The coming of the Great Depression followed by the war didn't help, and by the 1950s the house had been vacant for more than a decade. The wife of one of the Montgomerys was Eglinton's only champion, and she actually achieved the removal of a small, late addition to the west side of the house and the restoration of the brickwork where a door had been cut in to access that addition. From what I saw in the 1960s, this part of the restoration was carried out with great skill by an experienced restoration craftsman, probably from Philadelphia. "Mrs. Montgomery" would make visits to the house each spring and fall, and she often came with an architect, ready to guide the house's transformation for her. But the co-owners never gave the go-ahead, leaving the house to slowly get worse.

Had Eglinton survived intact through the 1970s, it might still be surviving today. The time thus gained might have been enough to get the property listed in the National Register of Historic Places, which would have advertised its worthiness for preservation. It might also have been included in the Monmouth County architectural survey. Had New Jersey not gone through such a long period in which farming was unprofitable to so many farmers, and not waited so long to begin preserving farmland and open space in a

continued on page 5, "Look"

Look - continued from page 4

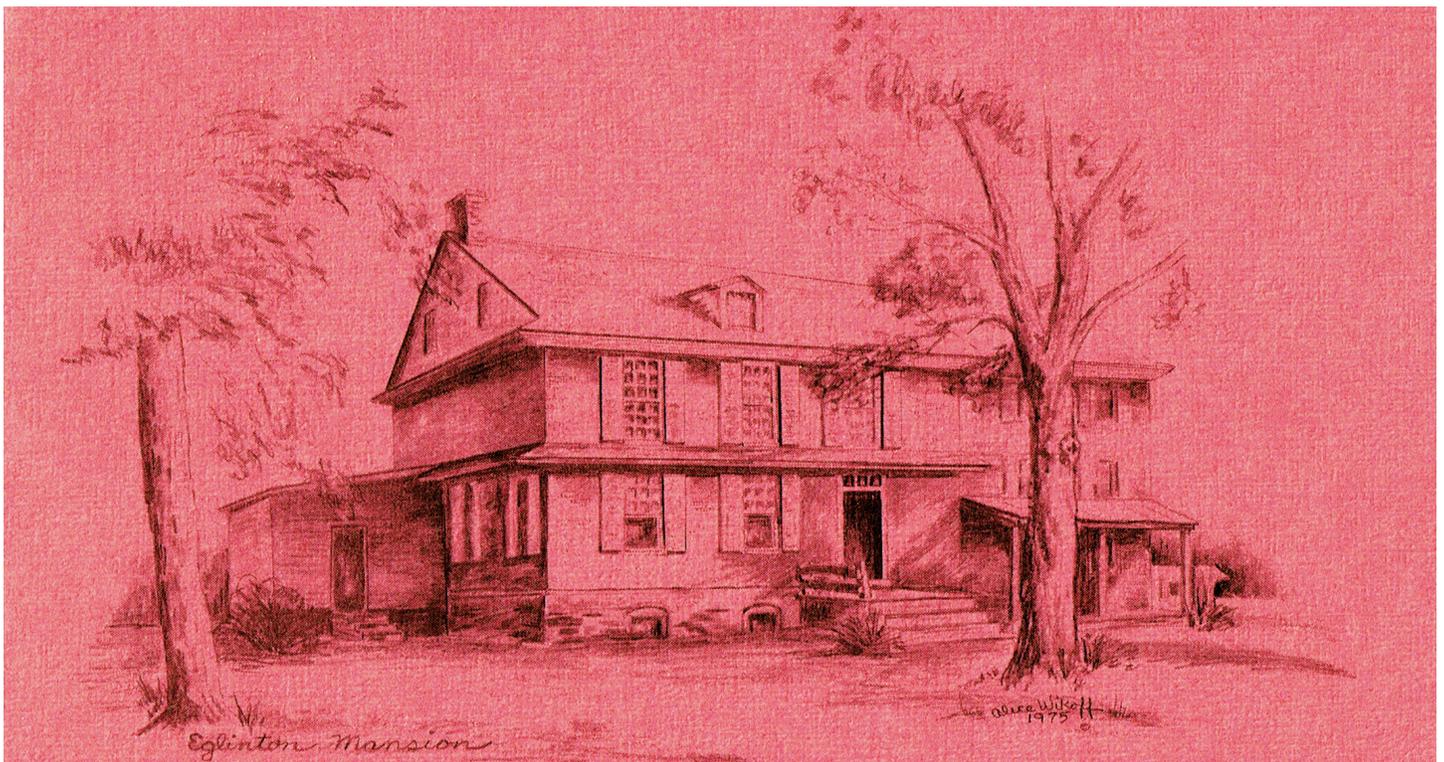
meaningful fashion, the house might not have been abandoned, and the Eglinton acreage--more than 700 acres--might have witnessed a kinder fate than sand mining and housing subdivisions.

At least from the time of the fire, it has been hard to organize a constituency for saving what was left of Eglinton. Upper Freehold has had so many preservation challenges that a gutted brick house--and then a demolished one--always seemed far from the top of the list. Meanwhile, the junior historians of Hightstown High, mere novices really, only managed to scratch the surface of the Eglinton paper trail. So much of the Eglinton story has still not been uncovered, especially with regard to the colonial period and the Revolutionary War years. It briefly witnessed the campsites of the British army during its march to the battle of Monmouth. The Exploring New Jersey Club were neither the only local historians nor even the first Hightstowner to peer into its complicated story, but at least it left behind a collection of notes, photographs, and measurements of the house that now rest in the Society's library collections (see Acc.#:1988-16). Joseph J. Ely, Hightstown's local historian in the 19th century, paid a visit during the summer of 1858. The Allentown historian Charles R. Hutchinson included it in his extensive researches between the 1870s and the 1920s. A reporter for the *Allentown Messenger* wrote about Eglinton in 1905. One has to wonder, however, whether any future historian will wander back into the complex past of Upper Freehold in the 18th century to find its still untold stories, when there are no longer any physical remains of the place to prompt that difficult rediscovery.

Hightstown becomes a



In July, through the efforts of the Historic Preservation Commission, Hightstown became a Preserve America Community. While there are more than 800 nationwide, there are only six towns and two neighborhoods with this designation in New Jersey. The Borough received a letter from First Lady Michelle Obama congratulating them and thanking them for their continuing commitment to our Nation's Heritage. A ceremony to place the sign will be held later in the year.



Eglinton Mansion (from a Christmas card issued by the Allentown-Upper Freehold Historical Society, rendering the house as it appeared in 1905)

George W. Clark: Forgotten Townsman and Author

From work that I performed about thirty years ago, I thought I had identified all of the historians who have lived in Hightstown, and that I generally understood what each of their writings had contributed. How surprised I was, then, a few months ago, when I came across a newspaper clipping from about 1910 that identified a George W. Clark "of Hightstown"--of whom I had never heard--and said of him that he had been "quite a historian in his day." All the more surprising, then, when I learned even more recently that this Clark was a Baptist clergyman and theologian, and that he was widely published in his time. Even so, he has been all but forgotten today. Searching online with 'Google Books' for an hour or two brought forth facsimile reproductions of enough 19th-century and early 20th-century sources that I was able to piece together a spare profile of the life of this quiet and elusive Hightstonian.

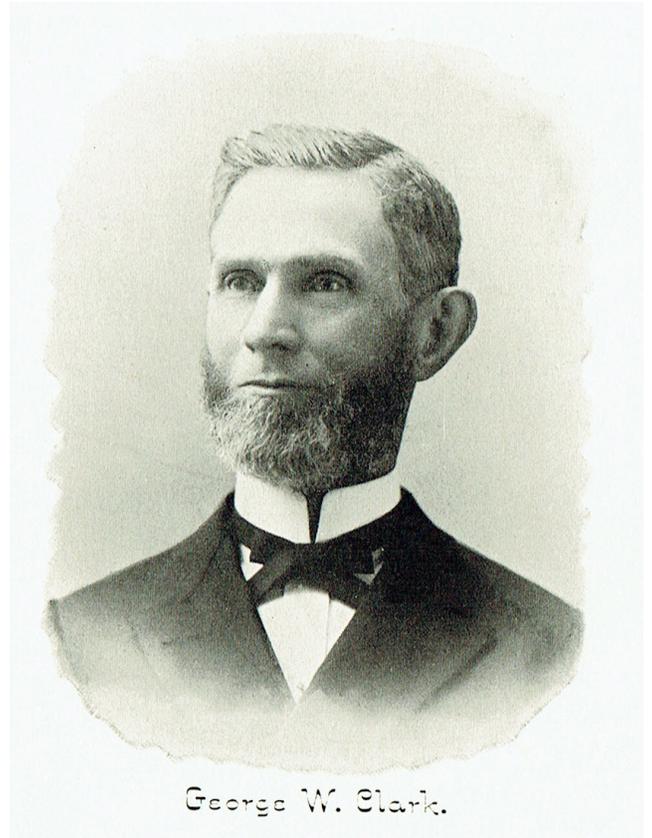
George Whitefield Clark (1831-1911), apparently named for the famous evangelist of the Great Awakening, was born in South Orange, NJ in 1831. Reared in the Baptist faith, he expressed an early piety and was baptized in 1843 in the church in Northfield (in Essex County) and was for nine years a member of that church. He attended Amherst College, graduating in the class of 1853, then attended the Rochester [NY] Theological Seminary. He later served two terms as first vice-president of the seminary's alumni society.

Clark served several pastorates in New Jersey. He was

ordained in 1855 and called to lead the Baptist Church in New Market in Middlesex County, where he served for four years. Despite receiving advice that the First Baptist Church in Elizabeth had "discouraging" prospects, Clark accepted a call there in 1859 and continued for over nine years. Baptist historian Thomas Griffiths later wrote that under Clark's care in Elizabeth, "Baptist interests were put on a firm foundation." He not only helped establish two new churches, he also helped a small group of African American Baptists in Elizabeth start a congregation of their own that became yet another church after Clark had moved on.

After a short pastorate in Ballston, New York, Clark was called to the church in Somerville, New Jersey in September 1873. He continued there until May 1877, after which his whereabouts have not yet been learned, but he was already a Hightstown resident by 1888, even though he was never listed in the Hightstown section of the Mercer County directories that were published each year. What brought him to Hightstown is unclear, because it was not to take over the pastorate of the First Baptist Church. The Hightstown church was ably led by Rev. Owen P. Eaches, whose pastorate still had many years to run. Clark and his wife, however, remained active in the local church for the remainder of their lives, and when Eaches celebrated the 25th anniversary of his pastorate in 1895, Clark delivered an anniversary sermon as part of the observance.

And Clark did not take a position at the Peddie School either, the other obvious reason why a Baptist clergyman might have chosen to move to Hightstown. He was not one of Peddie's succession of headmasters, nor was he a faculty member. This is more surprising still because Clark had a long-time interest in Christian education and was a vice-president of the "Education Society" of the New Jersey Baptist Convention in 1891.



George W. Clark.

continued on page 7

New in the Library

Two important new donations have been received in the Library. In June, Buck Stella donated a collection of the personal papers of Luella Pullen, who lived at 137 North Main Street. This collection chronicles the financial affairs of Mrs. Pullen, who was widowed during the influenza pandemic of 1918. The pages of this collection document how she made ends meet during the Roaring '20s and the Great Depression, until her own death in 1940.

Mary Jane Sisk, formerly of Hightstown, has donated a business ledger kept by Charles T. Norton from 1909-1911, during his operation of the Cereal Roller Mills that stood downtown. This leather-bound volume, "Ledger no.1," a thick book of nearly 750 pages, forms a two-year record of Norton's customers, and the products and quantities they purchased. The entries enumer-



ate purchases of corn, wheat, oats, and other grains, bran and meal, and types of flour by name. Quantities were sold by the pound, rather than the bushel or other measure, and most entries appear to be for wholesale customers who purchased by the hundred-weight. Norton did also, however, sell to retail customers, who might purchase the same products, in weights as small as a half-pound. A few of the entries identify locations outside Hightstown Borough, such as Etra, Cranbury, and "Sharon" [New Sharon in Robbinsville Township], and the geographic spread of Norton's customer base would, of course, have included a

Clark was most widely known as a prolific author of books of Bible commentary, especially of the New Testament.

He was part of a movement to undertake the comparative study of the Gospels, to better understand the life of Jesus from both historical and theological perspectives. Perhaps his best known book of this kind was *A New Harmony of the Gospels* [its short title], published in 1870 more or less simultaneously in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, and London! He followed it with books of commentary on the books of the New Testament, starting with Matthew and working his way through. He also contributed to the works of other Biblical scholars, such as *Brief Notes on the New Testament*, with James Madison Pendleton in 1884.

Clark continued writing during his Hightstown years, and also helped Griffiths prepare for publication his history of New Jersey Baptists in 1904. He died at his home on Stockton Street on November 10, 1911. The *Hightstown Gazette* reported that he had suffered from a brief illness and that he was interred in Cedar Hill Cemetery.

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great many East Windsor Township customers. This volume long rested unseen in the attic of 512 North Main Street, until it was found by Sisk's parents, Gertrude and James Schureman, who owned the house from the 1950s until the '70s.

Milling during these years was still an important business within the Hightstown economy, and the ledger documents its reach very well. Milling of wheat and other grains in Hightstown began with the completion of the first gristmill at Rocky Brook in 1749. A very early view of the importance of milling in Hightstown can be seen in the inventory of the estate of the mill owner in 1763 that identifies each of his customers who owed him money--essentially all of his customers. Rutgers University holds a comparable ledger that records sales at

continued on page 8, "New"

Annie L. Hay

Photographer

The number of commercial photographers who practiced in Hightstown during the second half of the 19th century is remarkable. John Orr in his book *Reflections from the Shrine* devoted a chapter to these people: the 32 men and one woman who hung up a shingle for longer or shorter periods in a downtown location between 1853 and 1907. A few were homegrown, but most were newcomers and some were merely temporary transplants who followed the summertime vacation trade (that would be worth a Newsletter article in itself!). Some of their careers have been hard to trace: where they practiced before and where they went afterward not always being known.

In 1881, when the principal local photographers were a partnership known as Weller & Smith, the *Gazette* praised a photo they took of twenty-one young women students of Peddie School. Possibly in the photo was Annie Levering Hay (1862-1951) a member of the graduating class of 1883, and the woman who would become the first female professional photographer in the town. She was born in Pennsylvania, April 3, 1862, a daughter of the Rev. Andrew Jackson Hay and his wife Sarah E. Yerkes. Rev. Hay later became pastor of the Baptist Church in Jacobstown, NJ, where the family was living when Annie began her schooling at Peddie.

She studied at the University of Lewisburg [PA], which would later become Bucknell University. It was a Baptist school that had the appealing feature that the sons (at least) of active Baptist ministers could attend tuition-free. Whether this privilege was extended to the daughters, also, is unclear from records online, but she was graduated in the Class of 1887 when her family had moved to a fashionable residential area of Camden. Annie came back to Hightstown, however, and for a time she became an instructor at Peddie.

It is unclear when she first took up photography, but local photographer Edward Thorburn began his practice sometime during the late 1880s, and Hay bought his business in 1907. The wanderings of many persons were recorded in the "local items" columns of the *Gazette*, and occasionally in the Trenton newspapers. In June 1911, the *Trenton Evening Times* reported that Hay had gone to Asheville, North Carolina, to take a position with photographer there, at least for the summer. A month later and again

in August, the paper reported that she expected to return in September.

They did not stay in Hightstown for long. On April 27, 1912, the *Times* reported that Hay and her housemate Isabelle White had left the day before for southern California, where "Miss Hay will engage in the photographic business." The Friday Club gave a reception in their honor before they left. Despite Hay's Baptist education, she and White became among the most active members of the Hightstown Universalist Church, so their departure for California must have been a significant loss to the congregation. Their departure had been preceded a year before by that of the Rev. George H. Ashworth, the Universalist minister, who resigned his Hightstown charge in 1911 to take over a pulpit in Chicago. Hay and White had hosted a party honoring Ashworth just before his leaving. The remainder of Hay's life and career remains a California story. She and White lived at different times in Santa Barbara and San Bernardino; Hay died in Los Angeles in December 1951.

Camden & Amboy Railroad plaques

On June 13th, an unveiling ceremony took place for four new plaques dedicated to honoring the role Hightstown played in early railroad history. These plaques were produced as an Eagle Scout project by Nathaniel Crabtree of Hightstown, a 2015 graduate of Hightstown High School who currently attends Mercer County Community College. The plaques consist of engraved metal plates mounted onto wooden stands, and they are located along the railroad greenway that courses through the Borough. Both the Society and the Camden & Amboy Railroad Historical Group, a chapter of a larger, "umbrella" historical society dedicated to railroad history, lent assistance to this project.

See pages 3 & 11 for plaque images

New - continued from page 7

the mill in the late 1780s. The importance of these documents lies in their ability to reveal how the boundaries of East Windsor Township today still reflect the local economic geography of the 18th century. The Norton ledger, however, is the first document the Society has been able to obtain that shows how the milling business was conducted in the 20th century.

Genealogical Help

The Society needs help fielding replies to genealogical inquiries. If you have experience in genealogical research and would like to get involved, please contact Shirley Olsen or Bob Craig. There are currently outstanding queries related to the Robbins and the Hoogland families that need further attention. The Society receives one or more such queries each month, from correspondents around the country, and a volunteer to handle them is needed.

Research Committee Needs Help

With the Society's next bi-annual historic house tour coming up in just twelve months, the Research Committee will need new volunteers to help do its work. The Society provides a history of each house on the tour, based on a combination of title searches, architectural examination, newspaper searches, genealogical information, and information drawn from the Society's library collections, all synthesized to tell the story of the construction of the house and the families who have occupied it. If you have an interest in participating in these research efforts, please contact Shirley Olsen (609-448-8388) or Bob Craig (609-584-1806). There is a meeting Nov. 12th at 3pm, 6 Farr Ave., Hightstown to meet and discuss this year's tour.

Where is this?

If you know where it is, send us the address either by mail (see page 10 for our address) or by email: HPC@HightstownBorough.com and include your address and phone number.

The first person to get it right will be entered into a drawing to be held at our annual dinner in January. The award will be determined by the membership committee.

You're not allowed to enter if it's your house.



Christmas Tea, December 13th

The Society's traditional Christmas Tea at Ely House will be held on Sunday, December 13, 2015, from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Society ladies will provide punch and homemade cookies. A choral group from Hightstown High School will perform at 2 p.m. Women from the First Presbyterian Church of Hightstown will hold a Holiday Boutique in the Freight Station at Ely House, with craft items as well as evergreen centerpieces.

Richard (Dick) Simmons...

The sad news of Richard Simmons' passing came too late for the Spring newsletter. On May 6th, Dick Simmons, husband of Cathy Simmons passed away suddenly. They opened Old Hights Print Shop in 1973, a year after their marriage and for many years handled much of the printing for the Society. They donated their time, services and expertise. Dick began his association with the Society in its early days as a member of the Exchange Club, helping to remove much old wallpaper from Ely House. A man of many talents, Dick served our country as a Navy jet pilot, a police officer in the NYPD, and a trooper with the NJ State Police. He was a past member of Hightstown Lions Club, the Parks & Recreation Dept. for the Borough, a licensed aircraft mechanic, a birder, photographer, shooting enthusiast, jewelry maker, numismatist, and most of all, an avid cook. Many of the Society's functions included a dish prepared by Dick. If you didn't know him, you missed out. He had a great sense of humor and was always ready with a story or joke. He had an insatiable desire to learn new things. A very interesting man, Dick was a loving husband and father and a doting grandparent. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Monthly Meetings

All are welcome to attend. We discuss progress of each committee and welcome your input for new ideas and offers to assist with our upcoming programs.

Meetings are held:

The 1st Tuesday of the month at 7 pm in Ely House. 164 N. Main Street, Hightstown.

Women's Club House Tour, December 13th.

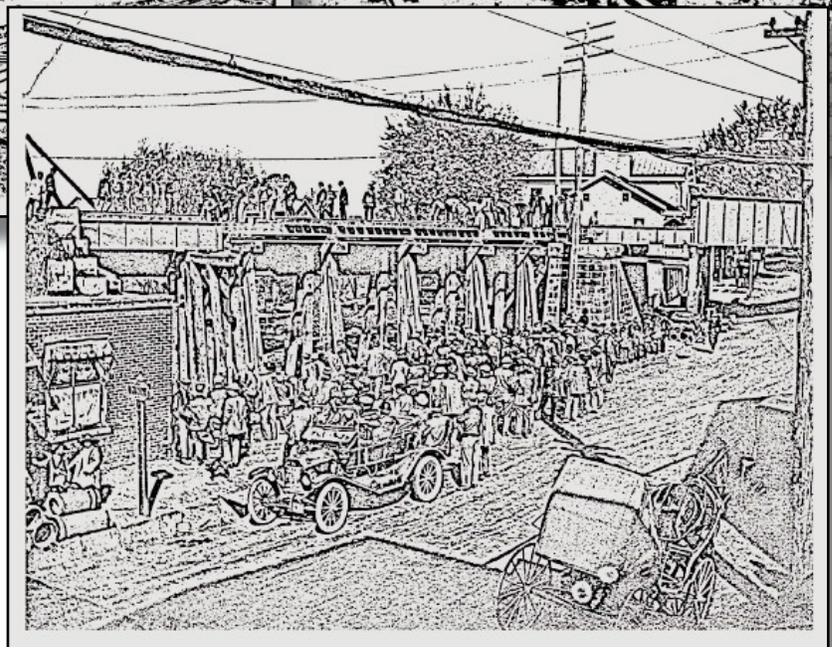
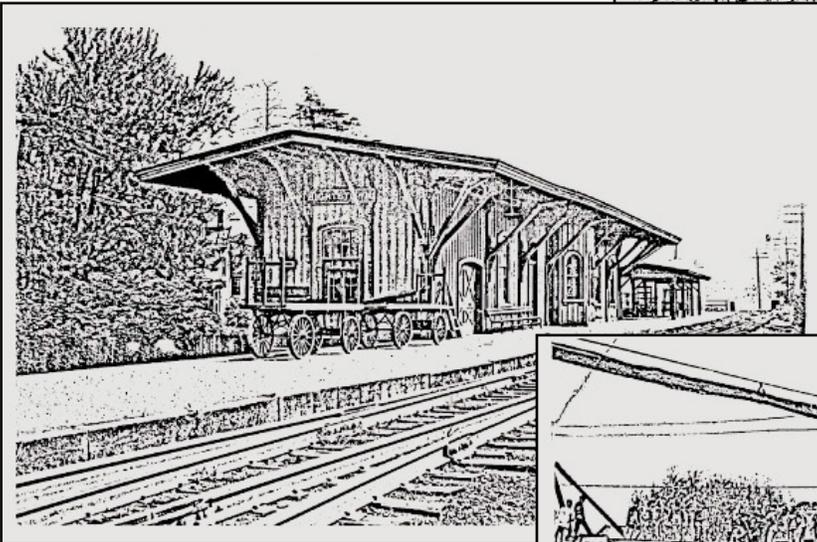
A Christmas Candlelight House Tour, sponsored by the Hightstown Woman's Club, will follow the traditional Society Christmas Tea at Ely House, on Sunday, December 13, 2015, from 3 to 6 p.m. Tickets for the Tour will be on sale after 1 p.m. at Ely House. Tickets will be sold for \$15 on the day of the tour



The tour will feature six private homes in Hightstown and East Windsor, including the farmhouse of Ronnie and Janet Lee of Lee's Turkey farm. At 6 pm, following the tour, a Bell Choir Concert will be held at the First United Methodist Church, located at 187 Stockton Street.

Proceeds from the tour will benefit the Historical Society and the other Woman's Club charities.

Three of the four plaque images by Nathaniel Crabtree for his Eagle Scout project. The fourth plaque image is on page 3.



Probasco Gift

The Society would like to thank the estate of the late Alan Probasco for a generous donation. Mr. Probasco was a lifetime resident of the Hightstown area, maintained a keen interest in railroading history, and was for many years a member of the Society.

ACROSS

1. Makes the lake
2. Side part of a Door
3. Year exit 8 opened, 19__
4. Not good, rhymes w/tuck
5. School bus color
6. Light bulb meaning
7. New signs on Morrison
8. Clover leaved pattern
9. Bracket from wall
10. Willis leaf on Bank Street
11. Only boulevard in town
12. Slimy snake of the sea
13. Between sidewalk & curb
14. Square blocks as molding
15. Trim under a window
16. A municipal building road
17. Hightstown founded 17__
18. Lead of Stained Glass
19. Center of the hallowed triangle
20. Window over a door
21. Color of the new walking bridge
22. Post on a stair

DOWN

1. An outdoor toilet
2. Needed to tango
3. The 'A' in CAC, singular
4. Babies wear them
5. The street to Princeton
6. Soldier's mon. dedicated in 18__
7. Lining color
8. 3.14159265358979
9. Scott Jenkins
10. Opposite of fluting
11. Cracked in Philadelphia
12. Applegate's Road
13. Fancy word for windows
14. Not don't
15. 1st house east of Peddie bridge
16. Pass it to collect \$200
17. _____ Dairy
18. NY basketball team
19. Comes after Hights
20. Bob von Riegen makes a living
21. Haint _____
22. Two thousand pounds
23. Not daughter
24. Our windsor neighbor
25. Town House
26. Single thickness of a brick wall



Answers can be found at www.hewhs.com

Membership
~Application~
Support us this year at the following rates:

- Individual \$20
- Family \$25
- Booster \$40
- Sustaining \$50
- Life (Individual) \$200
- Life (Family) \$275
- Newsletter ONLY \$10

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email 1: _____

Email 2: _____

Where did you hear about membership?

Please mail the completed application along with a check payable to:

HEW Historical Society
Membership Committee
164 North Main Street
Hightstown, NJ 08520

I would not like to be part of the New Member Spotlight.

Volunteer Opportunities

I would like to volunteer to help out with the following committee(s):

- Property & Grounds
- Library
- Membership
- Museum
- Newsletter
- Programs
- Publicity

Making an impression

About a year ago, we received a letter that began, "I want to thank you for the article 'Ornamental Plaster Restoration' in the January 1990 issue. By using the techniques outlined in the article, and just about four years' worth of off-and-on work, I finally completed a plaster ceiling medallion—Regards, Mike Dufano."

As we fanned through the photos that Mike sent, we were quickly impressed. Dufano designed and built the medallion to adorn the dining room of his new Victorian home. Using the profile from a period base cap, he made a steel gauge to form the outer ring. He cast ornamental leaves using molds made of urethane and auto-body filler. After rough-casting the 400 outer-ring beads from a rubber-bumper sheet mold, Dufano sanded each to uniformity. The perimeter embellishments were applied after the medallion was secured to the ceiling.

To view more photos and details about the ceiling medallion, visit the editor's blog at FineHomebuilding.com.

To read the original—and still relevant—article, see "Ornamental Plaster Restoration" by David Flaharty in *FHB* #57 and online at FineHomebuilding.com.

