



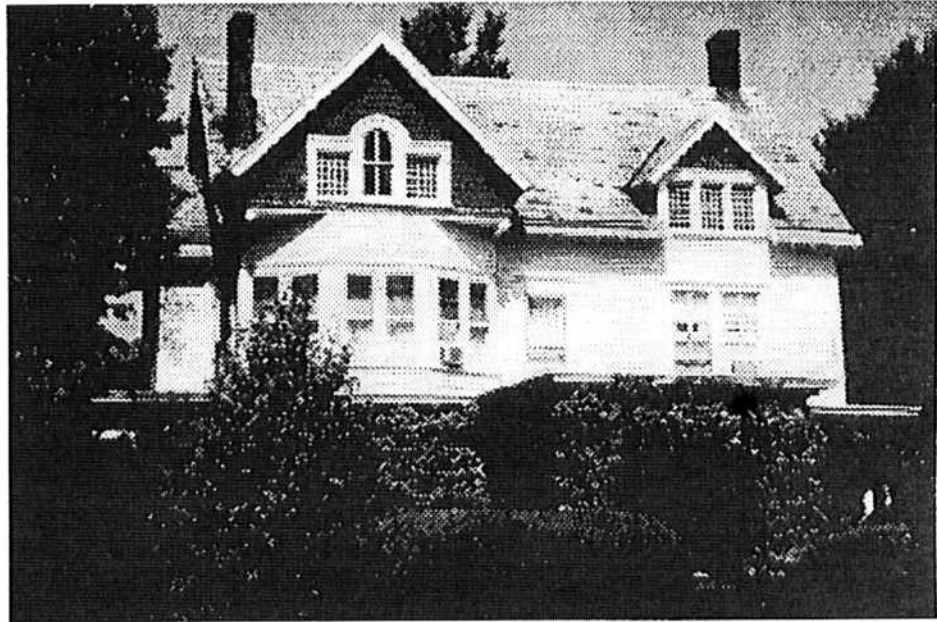
HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

JANUARY - FEBRUARY, 1993

ANNUAL BANQUET TO FEATURE PROGRAM ON CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

The Society's annual banquet will be held on Sunday, January 24, 1992, at 1:00 P.M. at the Coach & Four Restaurant on Route 33 in Hightstown. Social hour will begin at 12:30 P.M. Following the meal, an interesting illustrated program on Christopher Columbus will be given by Richard McClory of Brick Township, New Jersey. Mr. McClory is a teacher at Brick High School and has been seriously researching Columbus' travels for the past several years. In the process he has travelled extensively in Italy and Spain to secure background material. His talk will include a discussion of the multi-cultural aspects of

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The Elizabeth R. Tracy house (Circa 1890) located at 232 Stockton Street

HISTORIC SITES IN HIGHTSTOWN AND EAST WINDSOR

(The Ninth Installment in a Continuing Series)

This house stands on a lot of land that Joseph McMurrin (1825-1899) purchased on 12/9/1867 from the Hightstown Building And Improvement Association. The price he paid, \$933.33, is a clear indication that this lot was empty at the time of his purchase. At that time, the property had the same frontage on Stockton Street that it still does, but extended back to Grant Avenue. Joseph McMurrin, who had been born in Ireland and lived in Canada, came to Hightstown during his youth, where he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church and came to own a shoe store downtown. He became a prominent and well respected businessman. He was a member of Hightstown Lodge #41-Free & Accepted Masons and Windsor Lodge #59-International Order of Odd Fellows. Joseph and his wife, Alice (1826-1886), held this property for 18-years,

but evidently did not build on it. Joseph and Alice McMurrin are buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery.

On 10/1/1885, Elizabeth R. Tracy, a
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MUSEUM COMMITTEE MEETING

The Museum Committee will hold a meeting on January 12th at 9:30 A.M. at the home of Eileen Couturier. The meeting will include a discussion on the monthly Open Houses and gather ideas on possible exhibits that can be displayed. If you are not a member of the committee or cannot attend, but have ideas you would like to share with the committee, please call Eileen at (609) 443-3906. The committee is also looking for new members. ■



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

- 4 Executive Committee (8 PM)
- 12 Museum Committee (9:30 AM)
- Freight Station Committee (8 PM)
- 19 Deadline: Annual Banquet Reservations
- 24 Annual Banquet (1 PM)

FEBRUARY

- 1 Deadline: Mar.-April Newsletter Executive Committee (8 PM)
- 9 Freight Station Committee (8 PM)

E. R. TRACY HOUSE

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widow who lived in Hightstown, purchased this lot from the McMurrans for \$900.00. The present house was built for her sometime between 1885 and 1895, but research has not yet revealed in which year it was constructed, or who the architect or builders were. The price she paid for the property, almost unchanged since 1867, is strong evidence that the lot was still vacant. The house, however, does appear on both the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Hightstown for 1895, and the Bird's-Eye-View of Hightstown also published that year. The design of the house blends architectural features of the Queen Anne Style and the Shingle Style. Elizabeth R. Tracy, however, is a poorly understood figure. It is unclear who her husband had been, or how long she lived in Hightstown either before or after owning this property. It is unknown whether she was related to either the McMurrans from whom she purchased the property or the McMurrans to whom she sold it.

On 11/7/1895, Charles W. McMurrans (1861-1940) purchased this house and lot from Tracy. Charles was a nephew of Joseph and Alice McMurrans; his father, John McMurrans (1823-1882), brought his family to Hightstown in 1869. John McMurrans had earned a fortune in shipbuilding at St. Johns, New Brunswick, Canada, but came to Hightstown for family and health reasons. Here, he was known as the "founding father" of the local Y.M.C.A. which he started in 1869. He served as its president from 1873 until 1876, and his son Charles served in the same capacity for five years beginning in 1883.

Charles W. McMurrans led a life of considerable interest and noteworthiness. He was born in St. Johns, New Brunswick, Canada. He attended Peddie Institute during the 1870's. Charles and his father ran a dry goods store under the firm name of C. W. McMurrans & Co. Charles continued the store after the death of his father under the firm name of C. W. McMurrans. In an 1882 newspaper advertisement the store was called "The Corner Brick Store" offering spring dress goods, lawns, buntings, gingham, and cambrics. He sold the store in 1885

to Joseph V. Davison. Charles was a member of the Hightstown Engine Co. No. 1 from 1880 to 1887. He was also one of the oldest members (1940) of Hightstown Lodge #41-Free & Accepted Masons, having joined in 1891. Charles left here in his late 30's and engaged in newspaper work in New York City. Apparently he ran into financial difficulties or lost touch with the property in Hightstown because it was sold at a sheriff's sale on 11/12/1903. Charles later traveled around the world and syndicated articles for a number of newspapers. He settled in California about 1915, where he became prominently identified with the Democratic Party. From 1918 through 1922 he was a Deputy Internal Revenue Collector, assigned to the Los Angeles and San Francisco offices. He never severed his ties to Hightstown, however, and when he died he was buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery.

The First National Bank of Hightstown purchased the house and lot on 11/12/1903 from Thomas H. Thropp, Sheriff of Mercer County. Lydia M. McIlwain (?-1929) purchased the house and lot on 10/11/1904. On 6/24/1921, she sold the rear part of the property to Casper and Herman Diefenback. Lydia died in Hamilton Township, New Jersey leaving one son, Ernest W.

Harvey Wyckoff (1871-1939) purchased the house and present-day lot on 3/31/1921 from Lydia M. McIlwain, widow. Harvey was a president of the Hightstown Trust Company and was also associated with his brother, George T. Wyckoff, in the firm of Wyckoff Brothers, dealers in farm implements and machinery and coal. The firm of Wyckoff Brothers was located on the easterly side of Academy Street between Mercer Street and Railroad Avenue. Harvey was a member of Hightstown Lodge #41-Free & Accepted Masons, Hightstown Chapter #103-Order of Eastern Star, First Presbyterian Church, and the Scottish Rite and Crescent Temple. He died on 11/10/1939 leaving the house and lot to his widow, Marian H. Wyckoff, and their daughter, Nola W. Allen. Harvey is buried in Brainerd Cemetery in Cranbury, New Jersey.

Today, long-time Hightstown residents most often remember this house

as the office and residence of Dr. John D. Barlow, who with his wife, Mary K., purchased the house and lot on 2/2/1942 from Marian H. Wyckoff, widow, and Nola W. Allen and David G., her husband. Dr. Barlow, who still lives in East Windsor Township, was a popular Hightstown physician who practiced general medicine here for more than thirty-years before his retirement in the 1970's. His office occupied the first-floor rooms on the east side of the house.

The current owners, Roy B. and Patricia K. Herring, purchased the house and lot on 3/1/1979. They turned the doctor's office into a guest suite with a kitchen and bath. ■

THE CHARLES M. PERRINE HOUSE

Charles M. Perrine (1830-1912) purchased this lot on 12/27/1862 from John C. Ward and Margaret, his wife, for \$400.00. The price he paid for the lot indicates the property was an empty lot. Although a specific reference to the construction of this house has not been found, it appears likely that Charles built it during the year following his purchase. South Street had been laid out and opened shortly before 1860, and Charles' new home was the first residence on this street. Architecturally the house is a vernacular combination of Greek Revival elements and Italianate embellishments.

Charles M. Perrine was born in Englishtown, New Jersey, and was a prominent carpenter, contractor, and builder, having been a resident of Hightstown since 1849. In addition to probably building his own home, he also built the John T. Hutchinson farmhouse and barn (located on the southerly corner of Old York Road and Airport Road). Charles was also a member and officer of the Universalist Church in Hightstown. He married Caroline Perrine [1830-?], who was born in Montgomery County, New York, the marriage taking place in that County on 9/7/1858. Charles and Caroline were the parents of one child, Emma Carroll [1872-?]. Emma scratched "E. C." on one of the house's windows, and the year 1885. She attended the public schools here and

of Hightstown, sold the house and lot to Mary A. Kester of Hightstown. Mary A. Kester and Thomas E., her husband, sold the house and lot to Virginia S. Spaulding, of Trenton, on 3/25/1937. On the same date Spaulding sold the house and lot back to the Kesters. Apparently this was to vest title to the house and lot in both Mary and Thomas. Warren E. Field and Janet D., his wife, the current owners, purchased the house and lot on 9/30/1948. ■

BANQUET TO FEATURE CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Cont. from page 1

Columbus' voyages and their effects on the Indians and Blacks as well as Europeans.

To make reservations, please complete the reservation form located at the bottom of page #3 of this newsletter and return it with a check payable to HEWHS, 164 North Main Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520, Att: Banquet. Please include your telephone number in case there are any last minute questions. Prices are \$16.00 per person for Chicken Florentine, \$16.00 per person for Baked Filet of Flounder, and \$19.00 per person for New York Sirloin Strip Steak. For further information, call Dr. David Martin at 609-490-7520 (day) or 609-448-6355 (evening). The deadline for reservations in January 19, 1993. ■

The Charles M. Perrine house (Circa 1863) located at 120 South Street

graduated from the Peddie Institute and the State Normal School of Pennsylvania. Immediately after graduating from the State Normal School she began teaching in Spotswood, New Jersey, and also taught in the Counties of Mercer, Morris, and Hunterdon. During this time Emma gave lessons in both vocal and instrumental music, and often played and sang, by special request, at prominent church and social gatherings. She mar-

ried Asher V. Bellis in Hightstown on 10/25/1903. Asher resided on an 101-acre farm on Cranbury Road in East Windsor Township. Charles M. Perrine died on 4/8/1912 at his son-in-law's home. In his Will he directed that the house and lot on South Street be sold.

Annie M. Field of Hightstown, purchased the house and lot on 3/25/1913 from the heirs of Charles M. Perrine. On 6/19/1929, Annie M. Field, widow,

BANQUET 1992 RESERVATION FORM

Return this form with check payable to: HEWHS, 164 North Main Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520, ATT: Banquet. Please give the full name and meal choice of each person attending. Please print! Reservation deadline is January 19, 1992.

COST: Chicken: \$16

Fish: \$16

Steak \$19.

NAME:

MEAL:

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_____	_____
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_____	_____
_____	_____

Your address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Total Reservations: _____ Amount enclosed: _____

EAST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION IN SEARCH OF NEW MEMBERS

The East Windsor Township Historic Preservation Commission (EWTHPC) was created in 1990 by the Township of East Windsor to identify sites within the township which have historical, archaeological, and/or architectural significance and nominate them for preservation. The EWTHPC also has the responsibility of producing surveys, researching potential sites, approving of changes to the exterior of nominated sites, and promoting public awareness of historic preservation. To date the EWTHPC has nominated seven sites. These sites are the Ely-Mount House, Rescarrick Moore House, Ayres-Wilson House, East Windsor Township Municipal Hall of 1915, William & Ann Hutchinson Burial Ground, Anderson-Holland House, and Windsor Mill & Windsor Hollow Prehistoric Sites.

The EWTHPC meets once a month and is composed of all volunteers. The commission needs residents and non-residents for open positions. A resident member means someone who resides in East Windsor Township. There are two regular positions and two alternate positions currently open. The commission especially needs a resident with an architectural background. Those interested in serving on the EWTHPC must submit a brief letter to the Clerk of East Windsor Township explaining their interest and qualifications (including residency). Please mail your letters to East Windsor Township, c/o E. Nolan, 16 Lanning Blvd., East Windsor, NJ 08520 or call Chris Gould at 609-426-8955 between 7:00 P.M. and 10:00 P.M. HISTORIC SITES IN HIGHTSTOWN AND EAST WINDSOR. ■

**Hightstown-East Windsor
Historical Society**
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