

HIGHTSTOWN
NEW



EAST WINDSOR
JERSEY

Historical Society News

SEPTEMBER 2012

A Tribute to Thirty-five Men

Taken from "Reflections from the Shrine: An Anecdotal History of Hightstown and East Windsor" written by John W. Orr, Jr., published by Longstreet House in 1998 and used with permission. Copies of the book are available for \$35 postpaid from Longstreet House, PO Box 730, Hightstown, NJ 08520

A hundred and twenty-five years ago East Windsor was dominated by secure and close-knit farming families. Many residents of Hightstown and East Windsor today are descendants of these families. During the Great Rebellion, many of the young men of these families would volunteer as soldiers, to fight in this struggle of ideologies between North and South. Newly elected President Abraham Lincoln found himself facing a split in the Union of the United States over the extension of slavery into the western territories. Within two months after Lincoln took the oath of office, the Federal garrison at Fort Sumter was fired upon by the State of South Carolina, thus

igniting the tinder of war. On May 3, 1861, President Lincoln would issue his famous emancipation proclamation freeing all slaves. Many of our unsuspecting young volunteers expected a short tour of duty, probably no more than two or three months, and a way of making some promised wages doing some "soldiering". Little did they know that they would be swept up into what was to become the deadliest conflict in the history of our country.

Many of these East Windsor and Hightstown families would feel the shattering pain and grief that comes with the news of the loss of a loved one. These young men of purpose, filled with the vitality of youth, would leave an empty void in this central Jersey community, while their lifeblood nourished a distant battlefield. Men like Steven Burns and James Reamer, both shot in the head on June 1, 1862, at the Battle of Fair Oaks; Lieutenant Voorhees Dye of the 1st New Jersey Cavalry, killed May 28, 1864, near Haws Store, Virginia; and Samuel Herbert, shot in the cheek at Williamsburg, later dying in the fight at Petersburg, Virginia, in 1864. There was James M. Evernham and Peter A. Jemison, who both died with a bullet in the head at the furious battle of Williamsburg, as did James Carr by a bullet in the heart. Also felled in the Williamsburg conflict was young Charles C. Lehming, taking a bullet in the thigh and later dying in the hospital at Fort Monroe. Peter Jemison's hero brother, William, died at Petersburg, Virginia, after participating in over twenty engagements. William had been



captured as a prisoner of war, later returning to duty only to receive a severe wound in the Battle of the Wilderness. There were others like William Rogers, who died of starvation and cruelty in Libby Prison, Richmond, Virginia; George Thompson, who died in Andersonville Prison, Georgia; and James Holman, who died of typhoid fever at Camp Baker, Maryland.

Charles A. Coward, another of Hightstown's sons, was taken prisoner by the Confederate soldiers and confined in the prison at Lynchburg, Virginia. He was brutally murdered by a guard there on October 1, 1864. When his father, a Hightstown merchant and businessman, received word through the Masonic fraternity, he went to Lynchburg, where he discovered his son's grave among those

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2012

22 Work Party at Ely House 9:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 2012

2 Business meeting at Ely House
7:30 p.m.

21 Society House Tour-from 1-5 p.m.

27 Train Show 9-4, Hightstown High
School

NOVEMBER 2012

17 Holiday decorating Ely House 10 a.m.

DECEMBER 2012

9 Christmas Tea Ely House 2-4 p.m.

HIGHTSTOWN EAST WINDSOR
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Hightstown, New Jersey
Founded 1971

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

Shirley Olsen, Editor



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George W. Ford House

The home of Kathleen and Daniel Yurwit

This charming bungalow, built in 1917, has an inviting full-width covered porch supported by wood pillars on brick piers. The feature that sets this house apart from other bungalows is the pair of wide dormers in semi-octagonal form, each with three windows under a hipped roof. The home was built by Frank Allen for George W. Ford and his bride in 1917.



Furnished and decorated in the Arts and Crafts style, visitors will enjoy seeing original aspects of the home the minute they pass through the chestnut door with its beveled glass panes, from the steam heat radiators, the patterned flooring in the foyer, the fireplace in the living room to the beautiful large one-over-one windows throughout the house. A stained glass window enhances the living room, along with the Mission style furniture and Arts and Crafts textiles.

The current owners, antique enthusiasts, have several collections on display including their salt glazed crockery, Stangl pottery, and many fine examples of Native American art and artifacts. The kitchen was remodeled in keeping with the home's style with theme matched tiles, original Shangle and Hunt door trim and a delightful set of vintage children's pottery. The original mud-room is now a sun-room with more interesting details, which include a large mural from the Walker Gordon Dairy Farm's world famous Rotolactor Room, where Borden's beloved mascot, Elsie the Cow, was milked before her many fans in the 30's and 40's.

You will enjoy the eclectic mix of fun and fancy in this richly detailed home. ♦

*Camden & Amboy Railroad Historical Group and
Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society
are sponsoring*

180th Anniversary Event/Train Show

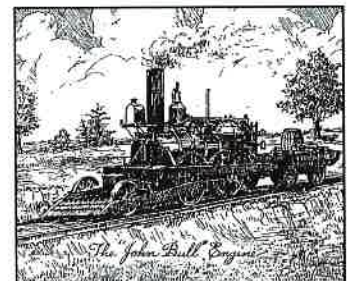
*All day event commemorates the arrival of the
Camden & Amboy Railroad into Hightstown!*

Saturday, October 27, 2012

Hightstown High School ♦ 25 Leshin Lane—9:00am-4:00pm

Planned activities:

- Three history lectures
- Railroadiana show
- Model Train Displays
- Vendors
- Collector Items
- Refreshments
- Children's event
- Tour of sleeper site



Fares

- Lectures: Pre-registration \$15
\$20 at door, includes show admission
- Show admission: \$8 (family fare: \$10, under 12 free)

Vendors sought! (tables \$25)

Contact information

**Camden & Amboy RR
Historical Group:**

jktrr@msn.com

609-577-7281

Tickets now available.

Another Hidden Treasure in Hightstown

On the Historic Homes Tour, October 21, 2012

When you think of architecture in Hightstown, stately Victorians come to mind. While that is certainly true, there is another vintage home in Hightstown which is set aside from the rest in its simplicity and beauty.

It is a lovely French Cottage, built in 1929 by Sumner G. Norton as a three car garage, part of a larger estate that was never built as a result of the stock market crash of 1929. The owner was forced to convert the storage area above the garage into a one bedroom apartment in which he lived with his wife until his death in 1973. His wife remained there until she sold the property in 1989.

The makeover as a French country cottage—from top to bottom—began in 1989 with new owners, Samuel and Dawne Danch, who saw its potential. At that time, the house was purchased as a three-car garage with dirt floors, with a



small apartment above. It required new wiring, plumbing and new heating. New floors were poured. The garage doors were replaced with giant 32 pane windows. The upstairs was also completely renovated.

The most eastern garage bay became the kitchen. The kitchen was a mixture of old and new—old windows, new appliances, and furniture from old wood. The windows allowed natural light to reflect all the soft white walls.

There were forest green tiles on the counter top.

The 32-pane windows that replaced the garage doors in the living room and office area were created from recycled church windows and specially designed frames. There still remains a beautiful view of the golf course from these windows.

This three bedroom, two bath stucco home, was then sold to the Fischbachs, who have brought up their family there since November, 1993.

Visitors will enjoy the tranquil setting of this unique home, serenely tucked away and almost hidden from the main road.

This house demonstrates what creativity and respect for already existing resources can produce—a masterpiece of simplicity and beauty. ♦

A Tribute to Thirty-Five Men

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of other Union soldiers in the public cemetery. He had his son's remains lifted up and returned home. The G.A.R. emblem now decorates his last resting place on Cedar Hill.

On March 30, 1866, the Common Council of Hightstown voted to erect a suitable monument to our fallen soldiers. They appointed a committee of dedicated men and women to see this charge to completion. One thousand dollars was raised by public fund raising activities, and another twelve hundred dollars was voted by East Windsor Township to be raised by taxation. In 1870, Congressman Charles Haight of Monmouth County, introduced a joint resolution that was unanimously adopted, directing the Secretary of War to deliver to Hightstown for the ornamentation of our soldier's monument, four pieces of condemned bronze cannon. Five years later, on July 5, 1875, a beautiful monument of Italian marble placed on a base of American granite twenty-three feet high, was unveiled. The soldiers herein personally referred to, and the twenty-two others who laid their lives on the line for their country and have since died as patriots of the Union were, this day, hon-

ored by their townsmen as heroes of the great Civil War.

On the front of the Soldiers Monument was inscribed the Arms of the United States; on the left side, the Arms of New Jersey, and on the right, the Arms of Mercer County. The Springfield rifle was modeled after that carried by townsman Thomas Scroggy, and the sword was modeled after that carried by Major Thomas B. Appleget, Editor and Publisher of the "Hightstown Gazette". On the top of the marble shaft was a lifesize carving of an eagle. A time capsule was enclosed in the base of the monument and the following inscription engraved:

To the memory of the heroic volunteers of East Windsor Township, who gave their lives for their country and humanity, in the suppression of the great rebellion of 1861-1865, this monument is erected by their grateful citizens.

When it was unveiled, the monument stood in the countryside beyond the village, at the junction of Morrison Street and Stockton Street. Today it can be seen, with four Parrott Rifles at its base, at the junction of Rogers Avenue and Stockton Street. No, the monument has not been moved. Morrison Street was later renamed Rogers Avenue to

honor the name of a prominent businessman, Job S. Rogers, who had a thriving furniture store at the intersection of Liberty Street, now called Railroad Avenue.

And now you know a small part of the story behind the tribute to 35 very special men whose faded names can still be seen engraved on the base of the East Windsor Township Soldiers Monument, now part of the Borough of Hightstown, New Jersey.

Soldiers Monument is being featured this month because the grounds have never looked so beautiful. The grounds at Monument Square have benefited significantly in recent years through volunteer contributions and contributions from Rocky Brook Garden Club. The Club helped plant 500 flowers before the Memorial Day celebration and included Monument Square as one of their stops on their garden tour on June 2, 2012. Led by a local Hightstown Preservationist, the Square was restored to its original design as part of the Stockton Street Historic District Streetscape Infrastructure Project, funded by a \$1.7 million federal grant. The monument's brilliant white marble surface was carefully cleaned using the gentle process of dry ice blasting to reveal details of the Monument's carved reliefs. ♦

Raffle Ticket Fund Raiser

All Society members were sent raffle tickets in their last newsletter to support the ongoing property expenses as well as the new library computer. Carole Nelson has graciously agreed to provide us with a handmade queen/king size quilt to be raffled off the evening of the house tour. If you have lost your tickets, contact Shirley at 609-448-8388. Please return any unsold tickets so that they can be sold at the community fair October 6. Let's make this House tour and Raffle a Success. Thanks to Carole Nelson and members of The Hightstown Woman's Club for the use of their raffle license with all the proceeds going to benefit the Society. ♦



House Tour to Feature Fischbach Home

The Historical House tour is set for Sunday, October 21 from 1-5 p.m. Ann and Paul Fischbach have just recently agreed

to have their French Country Cottage on tour.

Pre-sale tour tickets will be available after October 1 for \$17 at the community fair, Perennial Home, Weichert Realtors on Route 130 in East Windsor, and Hair by Sharon on Stockton Street. The day of tour, tickets can be purchased \$20 at Ely House after 12 noon. ♦



Work Party Sept. 22

We need you! On Saturday, September 22 at 9:30 a.m. members from the Hightstown Woman's Club have volunteered to wash the crystal lamps, glass bowls, dishes and other fragile objects in Ely House for a couple of hours. We need help to accomplish this task. Many hands make light work. ♦



Rick Pratt Book on Sale at House Tour

Rick Pratt has made a generous proposal of having his book titled, "A Guide to

the Architecture of Hightstown Houses" available at Ely House during the day of the house tour. For every book sold, Rick will donate 20% of his sale. Ely House will be open after 12 noon day of tour. ♦



Save the Date

The Christmas tea will take place Sunday, December 9th from 2-4 p.m. Decorating Ely House and the front porch will begin Saturday, November 17 at 10 a.m. Volunteers are encouraged to come and help get ready for the holidays. ♦



Visit our website at www.hewhs.com



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