

HIGHTSTOWN  
NEW



EAST WINDSOR  
JERSEY

# Historical Society News

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2014

## One Small Step for Man

Written by John Orr, Jr.

No sooner had the good folks of Hightstown adapted to properly dating their letters with the year 1900, than they had to face a new reality. The new reality would change their lives forever. Transportation would no longer be dependent on corn and oats. The horseless carriage had arrived!

Let us take a peek backward and see how the horseless carriage opened a new era in the sleepy village of Hightstown. The partial chronology is courtesy of the Hightstown Gazette.

**June 7, 1900:** The first automobile ever seen in Hightstown was on last Thursday when a Philadelphia gentleman and his wife came down Main Street on their way to a tour of the Atlantic shore. They stayed overnight at the Railroad Hotel. He was driving an Orient Quadricycle, run on gasoline.

**September 20, 1900:** E. W. McIlwaine has taken the agency for the Locomobile Company of America, from whom he recently bought his machine. Those who have seen Mr. McIlwaine's machine pronounce it one of the best motor carriages on the market. (This was most likely the first automobile agency in Hightstown.)



### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 6—Business meeting at 7 p.m.  
Sara Hutchinson Educational Center

Oct. 26—House Tour—1-5 p.m.

Nov. 4 & Dec. 2—Business meeting  
at 7 p.m. Sara Hutchinson  
Educational Center

Dec. 7—Christmas Tea 1-3 p.m.

**October 18, 1900:** Ernest W. McIlwaine has sold a horseless carriage similar to his own, to Kenneth J. Ward this week.

**July 10, 1902:** Thomas and Edward

Applegate have just purchased an Oldsmobile. It runs on gasoline and is almost noiseless. It is the third horseless carriage owned by residents of Hightstown.

**June 1, 1905:** Thomas E. Applegate has just purchased a handsome four seat Winton touring car.

**July 6, 1905:** A. T. Skillman and daughter rode home from Philadelphia in a new Elmore car that they purchased on Monday.

**January 25, 1906:** Richard D. Norton bought a new Tribune Toledo for his wife and sold his Pope Toledo to Oscar T. Fenton.

**June 25, 1906:** Mayor Richard D. Norton has taken the agency for the Queen Automobile.

**June 25, 1906:** William Kirby of Etra has purchased a Pope Tribune Automobile.

Go back with me about a hundred years and envision, if you will, Thomas Applegate humping along in his new 1911 Hupmobile Runabout. The following year, he upped the ante and bought a Winton Six touring car. See Major Voorhees scooting across town in his new Ford car as Horace Ayres and Arthur Thompson, sitting side by side, wave to him from their new Pierce-Arrow. Horace and Arthur claim it is a 1900 model and that they bought it from Henry and Morris Minor. William Franklin bought a Model M. Franklin touring car. He must have liked the name. Andrew J. Ely bought a fine new 1910 Chalmers Detroit touring car and can often be seen bouncing in and out of town on the Old York Road. Oscar T. Fenton must have liked what he saw because he bought a Chalmers-Detroit automobile also. It was a far cry from his days spent in Cuba during the Spanish-American War! ♦

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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# Historic Hightstown-East Windsor House Tour "TIME & AGAIN" Sunday, October 26, 2014 from 1-5 p.m.

The Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society is proud to announce the details of the 2014 House tour, called "Time & Again" to be held Sunday, October 26, 2014, from 1-5 p.m. There will be six private homes on tour. Tickets can be purchased the day of the tour at Ely House after 12:30 p.m. for \$25. Pre-sale tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at Old Hights Print Shop, 133 South Main Street, (Monday-Friday), Perennial Home, 119 West Ward Street, (Thursday-Saturday), Weichert Realtors, Route 130 and Stockton Street, and Hair by Sharon, 128 Stockton Street. Shirley Olsen will be selling house tour tickets at the Community Fair on October 11 at the Weichert Booth in front of Wells Fargo Bank.

The locations on tour will be: The Mount-Ely-Hancock House on One Hidden Springs Lane, in East Windsor, now owned by Pat and Kevin Donahue. The Octagon House at 231 South Main Street, Hightstown; The Josephine Dawes (Samuel Sloan House) on 238 South Main Street, now owned by Peddie School and is the home of its headmaster. The Johnes-Rue house, 326 South Main Street now owned by Robin Conrad and Lyn Beamesderfer. The Charles R. and Laura D. Field House, 429 South Main Street, now owned by Catherine and William McMann. The Frederick C. Berrien House, 508 South Main Street, now owned by Barbara and Kristopher Grudt. The Society appreciates the homeowners who have made this 2014 house tour possible by opening their lovely homes. We also gratefully acknowledge all the volunteers who generously have given their time to make this event successful.

Following are several of the houses which will be in the tour:

## Annual Membership Application (January-December)

### JOIN TODAY ~ BECOME A MEMBER!

- Individual Membership—\$20.00
- Family Membership—\$25.00
- Booster/Patron Membership— \$40.00
- Sustaining Membership—\$50.00
- Life (Individual) Membership—\$200.00
- Life (Married) Membership—\$275.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please mail the completed application, along with a check made payable to*

**2015 DUES  
ARE DUE  
JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>**

**Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society**  
Membership Committee  
Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society  
164 North Main Street  
Hightstown, NJ 08520

**429 South Main Street**

**The Charles & Laura Field House, circa 1911-1917**

This gracious home is a classic American Four-square, featuring red brick on the first story and frame on the second story. The marble tiled entry has a set of original Arts and Crafts doors that provide an inviting entrance to the center hall. The owner's handiwork is displayed throughout the upstairs as quilts and wall hangings.



**508 South Main Street**

**The Frederick Berrien House, circa 1917-1920**

An American Arts and Crafts style home of beauty and simplicity, this home exemplifies the style of the times in which it was built. This is announced in its deep broad front porch, with detailed Craftsmen elements, its roof supported by decorative brackets and supports. Inside the entrance, a wide staircase in a Colonial Revival design turns as it ascends, well lit by small windows along the way, framed in original wood trim. An elevated shelf accompanies the stairway as it climbs to the second floor and displays an assortment of children's toys and antiques.



**326 South Main Street**

**The Johnes-Rue House, circa 1880**

This is a 2 1/2 story, L-plan high-Victorian-era house displays both Italianate and Carpenter Gothic features, such as its lancet-arch windows in the front and rear gable. The house was evidently built for Stephen C. Johnes and his wife, Rebecca. Their daughter, Blanche, married Harvey G. Rue in 1878, and the couple continued afterward to live here with her parents. Harvey G. Rue was a local pharmacist who attended the Peddie School and Yale University. There are collections throughout the home which display the owner's wide interest in art, antiques, Native Americans, and nature.



**4420 One Hidden Springs Lane, East Windsor**

The Mount-Ely-Hancock House is the oldest home on tour. It originally stood on 308 acres as a farmhouse along Disbrow Hill Road. The house began

with a small one and one-half story dwelling, built for Richard Mount around 1774, which was positioned where the front portion of the right wing of the house now stands. The main part of the house, consisting of a two story, two-room-deep arrangement with a side stair hall, now a center hall, was constructed in 1800 for Samuel Ely. In 1856, Elijah Hancock bought the house and expanded the right-hand side of the house to match the left hand side. In so doing, however, he first took down the original house, so that the oldest part that remains is the 1800 section. Michael and Frances Pane bought the home and had it moved to its current location in 1981. They rehabbed the house and added the heavy timber-framed "great room" during their ownership. ♦



**Business Meetings**

Our business meetings are always the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the freight station. All members are welcome to attend!

**So Long and a Big...  
THANK YOU**

We thank Bob and Kathy Patten for all the work they did in our library. The Pattens have sold their house and moved to Florida. Kathy was instrumental in getting help from the Friday Club members to get all our accessions into the computers, and the boxes of archival materials put away and stored properly in the library. Bob and Kathy also worked hard as president and corresponding secretary, taking all the calls from the public, providing help in the library, and sending out correspondence. We will truly miss them. We always need more volunteers to make our Society effective.

We do hope members will support the upcoming fundraiser and come to the house tour. The search is still on for a new President and Vice President. Shirley Olsen will continue on as recording secretary, and Robert Szychowski as treasurer. ♦



# Ely House Maintenance

On Thursday, September 11, a group of about 15 young adults from ARC had just toured the facility. Warren Olsen noticed that the deck between Ely House and the Freight Station was sagging. Looking under the deck Warren saw that the main beam was rotted. On Friday Warren met with Bruce from Bryne Brothers in Allentown. He declared the deck to be extremely dangerous and advised that it should be closed, so they put yellow tape around the deck. The proposed estimate for repair is \$3,300. This repair, as well as having the front porch power washed and painted, will be done before the house tour.

A tree had to be removed in front of the property and was done this summer by the Borough. The Rocky Brook Garden Club has tried to keep the property looking good out front by watering plants all summer. We've had a landscaper come in to trim bushes, get rid of poison ivy, weed the entire property, and mulch the shrubs. ♦

## IN REMEMBRANCE

Clark Hutchinson passed away earlier this year and will be truly missed by all who knew him. His love of history and his expertise in researching all aspects of Hightstown's history was inspirational to many. Clark spent a great deal of time helping with our house tours.

## Christmas Tea

The Christmas tea will take place Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 p.m. Decorating Ely House and the front porch will begin Saturday, November 15 at 10 a.m. Volunteers are encouraged to come and help get ready for the holidays.

There is no Christmas house tour this year. ♦



Visit our website at [www.hewhs.com](http://www.hewhs.com)

09/27

Mrs. & Mrs. Robert Craig  
4002 Nottingham Way  
Hamilton Square, NJ 08690

HOUSE TOUR  
OCTOBER 26,  
2014



Hightstown-East Windsor  
Historical Society  
164 North Main Street  
Hightstown, NJ 08520