

# *Inside* THE BRICK ACADEMY



The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

February 2020



## *Inside this Edition...*

- Under the Great Oak Film Screening
- Welcome THSSH Members!
- New Site:  
[www.tshhs.org](http://www.tshhs.org)
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## Historical Society Appoints Trustees

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills welcomed five trustees this past December. Two new trustees were appointed and three former trustees were reinstated to the board. "This is an exciting time for the Historical Society," said Chair Sue Zibelli. "2019 was a growth year with the completion of major projects and the reorganization of several committees. I'm proud of the progress we continue to make and pleased to have these experienced individuals contribute their expertise to our organization".

### **Kate Lincoln**

Kate has had a lifelong interest in history, particularly related to medicine, architecture and the decorative arts. Her first job was Special Assistant to the Special Consultant (Diana Vreeland) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art Costume Institute. More recently, Kate volunteered at the Local History Room of the Bernardsville Public Library helping to produce an exhibit of photographs from the Crater Collection as well as illustrated talks presented to area scout groups and the general public. Kate is a lifetime and third-generation resident of the Somerset Hills.



### **Ron Zibelli**

Ron is Senior Portfolio Manager at Invesco, an international investment management company, with a B.A. degree in Finance from Lehigh University. Ron is a Certified Financial Analyst (CFA) and a member of the New York Society of Security Analysts, with 37 years experience in the industry. Ron and his wife Sue, Chairman of THSSH, currently reside in Bernardsville. They raised their two children in Basking Ridge, both of whom are graduates of Ridge High School.



*(Continued on Page Two)*

## Historical Society Appoints Trustees

*(Continued from Front Page)*



**Jon Booth** - With degrees from Clemson University in South Carolina, Jon established an architectural practice in 1985 specializing in residential design. He served as a trustee of the Historical Society of the Somerset Hills in the mid 1990s, and assisted with the phased restoration of the Brick Academy. For a ten year period, Jon was also the architectural consultant to the Washington Township (Morris) Historical Society, advising on construction and development applications in the German Valley, Middle Valley, Schooley's Mountain, and thematic historic districts. He is a lifelong resident of the Somerset Hills area, and on the maternal side his family extends locally to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Jon and his wife Sally, a public school teacher, raised their three children in Basking Ridge.



**Sylvia Gambony** - Sylvia earned a Masters of Science in Botany from University of Iowa and began her career at the University of Wisconsin. After marriage, she relocated to New Jersey and was employed at Ortho Pharmaceutical until her first child was born. She continued her career at AT&T for 13 years. Sylvia has been a resident of Basking Ridge since 1959 and was active with the PTA and high school association. Personal hobbies include square dancing and counted cross stitch. In 1997, she was appointed a Trustee of THSSH and served as interim Recording Secretary. During the renovation of the Brick Academy third floor, she worked on a group project to copy original files on acid-free paper and restructure the Society's archives. Sylvia has also served as Records Administrator, is a longstanding member of the Museum Committee, and volunteers with Holiday House Tours and Community Events.



**Daniel Lincoln** - Dan is the founder of an architecture firm experienced in traditional residential, light commercial and institutional designs. His projects are intended to preserve the architectural integrity of the existing buildings and surrounding neighborhood. Dan has notably served the Historical Society for three decades, acting as President from 1992-2019. He has built an impressive list of accomplishments with THSSH Committees; NJ Historic Preservation Office; Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission; and Somerset Hills municipalities. Throughout his tenure, Dan has made significant contributions to the Society's Long-Range Plans, Community Events, Historic Preservation, and Brick Academy Restoration/Maintenance. Dan is also Chair of the Programs Committee for the Bernardsville Public Library, President of Friends of Historic Bernardsville, and Chair of the Bernardsville Historic Preservation Advisory Committee. Dan and his wife Kate reside in an early Colonial Revival style home in the Olcott Avenue Historic District.

The incoming trustees join five current THSSH board members - Sue Zibelli (*Chairman*), Pat Gray (*President*), Florence Hallgring, Marcella Miccolis, and Paula Axt. The Board of Trustees extends its sincere appreciation to resigning trustees Larry Terricone, Robin Marion and Meg Wastie for their personal commitment, exemplary service and significant contributions to the Historical Society of the Somerset Hills.

## Under the Great Oak

### Film Screening - April 2

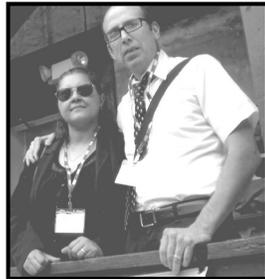
The Montclair Art Museum is hosting a public screening of the documentary *Under the Great Oak* on Thursday, April 2 from 7pm to 8pm. The feature-length film, directed by Michael Reynolds, celebrates the life of the Great Oak tree, which stood on the grounds of the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church for over six hundred years.

The film illustrates the impact the tree, taken down on 4/24/2017, had on the community through interviews and the Great Oak Art Celebration of artists and residents to honor the tree and its place in history.

Moderated by Dana Reynolds, the Executive Producer, the film screening will be followed by an informative panel discussion of prominent community members and the documentary team. Trustee Daniel Lincoln, will represent the Historical Society.

'Free First Thursday' at the Montclair Art Museum provides programs from 5:00pm to 9:00pm. There is no charge to view the documentary.

**Michael and Dana Reynolds**



*Our apology for a photo mislabeled in the October 2019 newsletter*

Welcome  
New Members!



John Adams  
Megan Bonanno  
Craig and Elda Feldman  
Bruce Goldstein  
Dave Johnson  
Scott Kessel  
Jennifer Kohan  
Megan Lipset  
Carla Llewellyn  
Maggie Macchiarola  
Salvatore Racioppi  
Maureen Wolfenden

Bridgewater  
Bernardsville  
Basking Ridge  
Little Falls  
Basking Ridge  
Basking Ridge  
Gillette  
Basking Ridge  
Sun Lakes, AZ  
Far Hills  
Elmwood Park  
Bernardsville

Browse Our  
**NEW SITE**

Upcoming events,  
special announcements,  
and feature stories!

[www.tshhs.org](http://www.tshhs.org)

## THSSH GIFT PROGRAM

The Board of Trustees offers a sincere and heartfelt **Thank You** to THSSH members and community friends who have contributed above and beyond with donations and bequests this past year. The Historical Society's Gift Program includes donation levels to highlight some of the historical figures from the Brick Academy (Basking Ridge Classical School). To learn about their remarkable lives please visit [www.tshhs.org](http://www.tshhs.org).

William Dayton - Up to \$100  
Robert Stockton - Up to \$200  
Samuel Southard - Up to \$300

Theodore Frelinghuysen - Up to \$400  
Reverend Robert Finley - Up to \$500  
Reverend Samuel Kennedy - Above \$500

**William Dayton** - Mr. & Mrs. Eric Alber, William Allen, Peter Avioli, Mr. & Mrs. John Campbell, Mr. & Mrs. William Cronin, Mr. & Mrs. Tom Fitzsimons, Diane Gallaway, Mr. & Mrs. Ed Gould, Janice Gursky, Florence Hallgring, Joan Hughes, Mr. & Mrs. John Koch, Jane Koop, Edwin Landis, Patricia Lorenz, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Lufkin, Mr. & Mrs. Lou Matlack, E. Joan Palmer, Ed Schroeder IV, John Smith, Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Suriano, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Trinter, and Mr. & Mrs. Wayman Williams

**Robert Stockton** - George Applegate, Elizabeth Bagnato, William Engel, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Gelfand, Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kellogg, Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Miccolis, Mr. & Mrs. Jay Petrillo, and W. Barry Thomson

**Samuel Southard** - Larry Schwenk and Mr. & Mrs. Jim Wooldridge

**Reverend Robert Finley** - Joseph Metelski and Mr. & Mrs. Ron Zibelli

## PRESIDENTS' DAY

Originally established in 1885 in recognition of President George Washington, born on February 22, it is still referred to as Washington's Birthday by the federal government. The holiday became popularly known as Presidents' Day after it was moved to the third Monday in February as part of the Uniform Monday Holiday Act (1968). It is now viewed as a day to celebrate all U.S. Presidents. In honor of the recent holiday, did you know..?

- John Adams and his wife Abigail moved into the White House in 1800, before it was completed.
- James Buchanan regularly bought slaves with his own money and discretely freed them.
- Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary held séances at the White House after their young son's death.
- Andrew Johnson had no formal education. His wife taught him reading, writing and mathematics.
- Ulysses S. Grant established Yellowstone as the nation's first national park on March 1, 1872.
- James Garfield claimed squirrel soup was his favorite delicacy, even after he was shot in 1881.
- Grover Cleveland held the job of a hangman. He was previously the sheriff of Erie County, New York.
- John Tyler had aspired to be a concert violinist and often entertained guests at the White House.
- William Taft's wife Helen arranged for the 3,020 Japanese cherry trees planted in Washington, D.C.
- Two asteroids were named for Herbert Hoover: Hooveria in 1920 and Herberta in 1935
- Warren Harding once lost a priceless set of White House china in a weekly poker game.
- The "S" in Harry S. Truman is his actual middle name. It is the first initial of his two grandfathers.
- Gerald Ford worked as a fashion model for *Cosmopolitan* and *Look* magazines in the 1940s.
- Barack Obama won a Grammy in 2006 for his voice on the audio book *Dreams From My Father*.

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## 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

*By Sue Zibelli, Chairman*

### Executive Summary

The primary objective of The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills (THSSH) in 2019 was to create cultural opportunities and enrichment for the local community by providing programs and initiatives that inform, educate and foster interest in local history.

#### **Education Programs** – Bernards Township and Madison area

Bernards Township Elementary Schools and the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts (METC) sent over 200 children, chaperones and teachers to visit the Brick Academy and participate in early education programs.

#### **Research** – Nationwide

The Research Library at the Brick Academy was open by appointment throughout 2019. The Historical Society recorded 19 research requests in 2019 compared to 29 in 2018.

#### **Museum** – Somerset Hills

The museum was open to the public first Sunday of each month (excluding holidays and inclement weather) and open by appointment to educators and other non-profit groups. Historic artifacts from THSSH collections were also on display at the local municipal building, at community events, and in other partner museums.

#### **Rotating Collections** – Somerset Hills

Historic information and artifacts were placed on rotating display by the Young Historians and Trustees. Residents are also encouraged to share personal collections in the rotating display case at the Brick Academy.

**2019 Annual Report** (continued from Page 4)**Charter Day** – Bernards Township

THSSH Trustees handed out information, displayed small local artifacts, and provided information regarding the history of Charter Day. The Brick Academy was open all day to showcase Somerset Hills history.

**Lord Stirling 1770s Festival** – Somerset County Parks Commission

Demonstrating New Jersey's colonial heritage in the 1700's, this event promotes historical and environmental education. THSSH had a prominent position with Brick Academy Museum artifacts and information on display.

**Weekend Journey through the Past** – Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission

The Brick Academy was opened to the public with over 100 visitors from our community and various NJ areas. Visitors toured the museum and schoolroom, interacted with trustees, and learned about Somerset Hills history.

**Boudinot/Southard/Ross Estate** – Somerset County Parks Commission

Kitchenware and farming equipment from THSSH collections remain on long-term loan to the Ross Farm.

**Speaker Programs** – Somerset Hills

An off-site speaker program was held at the VNA Senior Wellness Center – Cruciverbalism: The Art of Solving (& Creating) Crossword Puzzles.

**Student Enrichment** – Bernards Township

The "Young Historians" worked on several programs and activities throughout 2019, including the *ABC's of the Somerset Hills* poster collection on display in the Brick Academy Museum.

**New Jersey Digital Highway (NJDH)** – Rutgers University

THSSH museum and archives collections were catalogued, digitized, and entered into Rutgers' New Jersey Digital Highway, a digital repository of 50 state historical organizations that preserves the state's cultural resources and artifacts for current and future generations of citizens, educators, researchers, and students.

**Communications** – Nationwide (Membership)

Members received three issues of "*Inside the Brick Academy*" newsletters, along with the 2018 Annual Report. An updated Membership Directory was provided. THSSH changed its letterhead to align with an updated image.

**Website and Social Media** – Nationwide

A new website (TSHHS.org) was developed for THSSH having lost its long-standing website (THSSH.org). A Facebook page was also created as an additional method of communicating news and information.

**Historic Restoration and Preservation** – Bernards Township and Peapack-Gladstone

Two major projects were completed in 2019: the Brick Academy roof and the Moses Craig Lime Kilns.

**Membership** – Nationwide

THSSH membership totaled 174. We welcomed 12 new members in 2019, down from 38 in 2018. One Lifetime member joined THSSH in 2019.

**Donations** – Nationwide

In addition to dues paid in 2019, THSSH received \$2,135 in donations. A Gift Program was created to highlight some of the historical figures from the Basking Ridge Classical School (Brick Academy).

**Grants** – Bernards Township and Peapack-Gladstone

THSSH managed three Somerset County grant projects throughout 2019.

**Local Organization Collaboration**

- Business Networking Group – A local business networking group met regularly at the Brick Academy to share information to promote their businesses.
- Porsche Club – A local social networking group met regularly at the Brick Academy.
- Welcome to Our Neighborhood – THSSH booklet delivered to new residents of the Somerset Hills.

**Community Outreach**

In order to provide opportunities for the community to gain an understanding of our mission, and to raise consciousness of the historical heritage of the Somerset Hills, THSSH participated in many Somerset County and Somerset Hills history-related programs.

## 2019 Annual Report (continued from Page 5)

### Education

The Education Committee continues to welcome students from all Bernards Township Schools, either using reservations through The Museum of Early Trades and Crafts, or our own teaching staff, for an education program. We hosted over 200 students plus chaperones and teachers from Liberty Corner and Oak Street schools.

Print publications available free of charge at the Brick Academy and community events include:

- **THSSH Pamphlet** – Highlights the history of the Brick Academy, the mission of The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills, ongoing projects, fund raising events, museum hours, and membership information.
- **Inside the Brick Academy Newsletter** – Published three times a year and mailed to our membership, this newsletter comprises society news, event calendar, and local interest stories
- **Volunteer Brochure** – Describes the primary THSSH committees and various volunteer opportunities.

History related books are on sale at the Brick Academy and community events.

### Archives & Research

THSSH archives is coveted by local and distant researchers who contact THSSH via our website, phone and mail requesting appointments to conduct local research. The primary information requested was local family and house documents and pictures; historic maps; local historic figures; and buildings.

*NOTE: Allowing the use of materials or supplying a "fair use" copy is not an authorization to publish.*

Fees for use normally apply to corporations, partnerships, private businesses, and individuals when images are to be used in books, periodicals, films, video productions, advertising, projection, or for direct sales. This includes images displayed in public areas of buildings, restaurants, galleries, the Internet, and retail spaces.

### Museum

- The Brick Academy serves as a museum of local artifacts and historical information about the five towns in the Somerset Hills. The top floor has been restored to an 1890s period schoolroom and is used for education programs. The lower floor is used mainly for research and meetings.

- In the interest of collaborating with other history organizations, the Museum Committee has provided on long-term loan to the Boudinot-Southard-Ross Estate a collection of tools and kitchen utensils.

### Student Enrichment

The Young Historians program continued in 2019. Local high school students work with THSSH trustees to earn community service hours at the Brick Academy or community events.

### Historic Preservation and Restoration

#### **- Moses Craig Lime Kilns, Peapack-Gladstone**

Working with several preservation consultants and the Peapack-Gladstone HPC, The Historical Society received a grant of \$122,600 from the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission in 2016 for the restoration of the Peapack Lime Kilns, located in Peapack-Gladstone, and owned by THSSH. These kilns are significant for the type of stone construction and the history of lime production in New Jersey from 1835 to 1885. This particular lime kiln was in active use until the 1950s. Dennis Bertland, a NJ historic preservation consultant, and John Bolt, a NJ historic preservation architect, prepared the successful 2015 grant application with the assistance of Dan Lincoln, THSSH President, and Pat Delaney from the Peapack-Gladstone HPC. The property received a Certificate of Eligibility from the State Historic Preservation Office for nomination to the NJ and National Registers of Historic Places qualifying the property for grant money. The proposed application was submitted to the 2015 Somerset County C&HC Historic Preservation Grant Program and the award was presented on 10/27/15. The money has been used to prepare and submit a NJ and National Register nomination application for the property. This application, submitted by Dennis Bertland, received final approval by the NJ Historic Preservation Office in 2018. The grant has paid for mortar analysis, archaeological monitoring, and design/construction documents. Also completed was the removal of invasive vegetation and trees; installation of safety barrier fencing & signs; rust removal and repainting of metal surfaces; and reconstruction/stabilization of the historic stonework. A new interpretive sign with photographs and explanatory exhibits is displayed at the site. THSSH presented the finished project to the Borough of Peapack-Gladstone in 2019 for the sale price of \$1.00.

## **2019 Annual Report** (Continued from Page 6)

### **- Brick Academy Re-Roofing**

The Historical Society received an award in 2013 of \$37,600, from the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission Historic Preservation Program. The award is being used to replace the existing wood shake roof at the Brick Academy, headquarters for THSSH. John Bolt, a well-known historic preservation architect was hired to prepare a project specification. With the assistance of President, Pat Gray, as well as Trustee Dan Lincoln, the roofing project was completed in 2019. Remaining work for 2020 includes painting, minor repairs, and signage.

### **Website and Social Media**

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills (THSSH) online:

Website: [www.tshhs.org](http://www.tshhs.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SomersetHillsHistoricalSociety/>

### **Publicity**

Promotion of THSSH and the Brick Academy appeared in The Connection and Town Planner.

### **Grants**

THSSH received a grant in 2019 from Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission to build a new website (TSHHS.org) to replace their lost website (THSSH.org).

### **Donations**

- In addition to dues paid in 2019, THSSH received \$2,135 in donations.
- Donations and Bequests are received from current and past members and their families.
- Revenue is generated through advertisements in the Society's newsletter and Holiday House Tour guide.
- Gift items are sold at the Brick Academy and community events, as well as displayed on our website.
- Nonprofit organizations that conduct meetings at the Brick Academy provide a contribution.
- Schoolchildren, area residents, and out-of-town visitors leave donations at the Brick Academy.

### **Brick Academy Utilization**

In addition to our museum, research room, education programs, speaker programs, and community events, the Brick Academy is utilized for:

- THSSH Board of Trustees and Committees – monthly meetings
- *The Northern NJ Region Porsche Club of America* – monthly meetings
- *The Museum of Early Trades and Crafts* – as scheduled
- *Friends of the Boudinot-Southard-Ross Estate* – as scheduled (when BSR Estate is not available)
- *Oak Street Networking Group* – monthly meetings

### **Advocacy & Affiliations**

The Historical Society is a member of The Somerset County Historical Society, League of Historical Societies of New Jersey, and National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Preservation New Jersey.

### **2020 Outlook**

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills will continue to pursue its mission to acquire, conserve and share artifacts and information on matters of local historic interest; cultivate interest in local history; partake in community events; encourage the preservation of local historic resources; facilitate historic research; and preserve, operate and interpret the Brick Academy.

- To strengthen and grow the organizational structure of THSSH's Board of Trustees.
- Trustees will actively engage current members to volunteer on THSSH committees, programs and events.
- THSSH will maintain its image as a premier historical society through committee work.
- Programs will be offered that appeal to our members and to the community.
- Our website and social media strategy will continue to share information about local events and history.
- THSSH will work toward participating in local and county grant projects, as well as growing sources of income to achieve financial independence.

Museum Hours:  
First Sunday of the Month  
2 to 4 PM  
Research Room/Library:  
By Appointment

THSSH  
P.O. Box 136  
Basking Ridge, NJ  
07920



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