

# *Inside* THE BRICK ACADEMY



The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

June 2021



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## Brick Academy Museum Reopens with New Exhibit!



*President Pat Gray & Vice President Dan Lincoln*

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills is pleased and poised to reopen the Brick Academy Museum on Sunday, June 6 from 2 to 4pm!

The museum welcomes the public to its main gallery with a unique exhibit showcasing fourteen plaster maquettes of grotesques that were designed some 120 years ago by the architectural firm of George B. Post & Sons for the College of the City of New York. The rotating exhibit (story on page two) is one in a continuing series of collaborations between the Historical Society and community residents. The main gallery also displays "*What Put Somerset Hills on the Map*", a visual narrative of the five towns. The museum shop offers visitors unique Somerset Hills items and local history books. The top floor of the museum comprises the 1890s schoolroom, teacher's office and student classwork.

The trustees thank museum visitors in advance for adhering to our continuing Covid-19 safety guidelines of limited capacity, face masks and social distancing.

We look forward to reopening our doors with exciting new plans, and there is a place for you! Volunteer to be a museum docent or assist with speaker programs, membership socials, school groups, and/or holiday tours. To learn about volunteer opportunities, please leave a message at 908.221.1770, visit our website [www.thssh.org](http://www.thssh.org), or connect with us on Facebook - "SomersetHills HistoricalSociety".

## The Upton Pyne Carriage House



*Sunday • September 19*

Mark your calendar! The 19th century stone carriage house at the Upton Pyne estate, once a crown jewel of the Bernardsville Mountain Colony, will be the venue of an exclusive Historical Society of the Somerset Hills fundraiser to be held on Sunday, September 19 from 2 to 5pm.

W. Barry Thomson, THSSH trustee and local historian, will present an illustrated talk: "How The Somerset Hills Became The Somerset Hills". The distinguished Pyne family and estate, named for the Upton community in England from which they came, figure importantly in that story.

Patrons will enjoy an hors d'oeuvres and beverage reception, music program, and benefit brochure. Invitations to the Historical Society of the Somerset Hills fundraiser at Upton Pyne will be mailed to our members in August.

### 2021 MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Through the support of its members the Historical Society of the Somerset Hills has preserved and promoted our community's history and rich cultural heritage since 1928.

As a non-profit organization your annual dues provide revenue for our speaker programs, museum exhibits, proprietary publications, and Brick Academy operating expenses.

THSSH members enjoy exclusive privileges, including advance notice and discounts to special events; free access to the Brick Academy Research Center and Library; reduced reproduction fees; a print subscription to *Inside the Brick Academy* newsletter; and a Membership Directory.

Renewal envelopes are being mailed to the Society's annual members. Please remit your 2021 Membership Dues by June 30. *Thank you for your continued support!*

## GEORGE B. POST AND CITY COLLEGE GROTESQUES *New Museum Exhibit*

When the Brick Academy reopens to the public one of our historical displays will include fourteen plaster maquettes of grotesques that were designed some 120 years ago by the architectural firm of George B. Post & Sons for the new Collegiate Gothic-style campus Post designed for the College of the City of New York, in upper Manhattan.



Small plaster models, like the ones on display, were first designed for what eventually became some 600 large-scale grotesques that were fabricated in terra cotta and installed on the college's buildings. Some of the plaster models were later placed by Post as decorative devices around the cornice of the library in his new (1904) "Claremont" mansion in Bernardsville. The fourteen "extra" plaster models now on display at the Brick Academy had remained stored in the attic at "Claremont" until 2012 when the contents of the mansion were auctioned off following the death of the last Post family descendant to own the house.

In addition to the plaster maquettes, the display will include historical photographs and other items related to George B. Post, his design of City College and its grotesques, and his "Claremont" estate.

A documentary video produced by W. Barry Thomson about Post and his design of the College of the City of New York is at: <https://somersehillshistoricalociety.org/news/>

## Test Yore Knowledge—A Crossword Contest

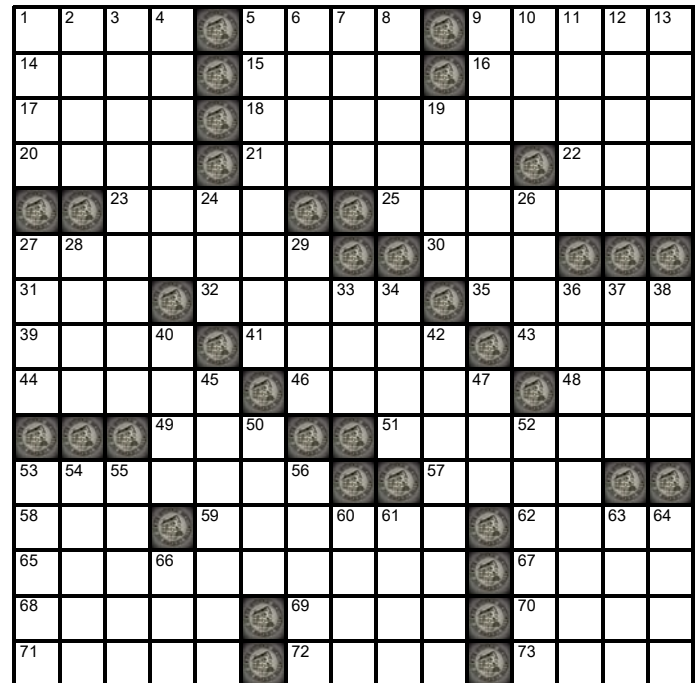
Know your local history? Complete this crossword—and then find the hidden-in-plain-sight reference to the historical center of the Somerset Hills spelled out in the grid! Submit your solution and completed grid (per the instructions on the reverse side of this page) by August 31. A drawing from among the correct entries will be held in September. First drawn will receive a signed copy of *The Boys of Late Summer* by Jerry Miccolis, *NY Times* crossword constructor and creator of this puzzle. Second drawn will receive the coffee-table book, *Schoolhouses of Early Bernards Township*. Solution and winners' names will appear in our fall newsletter.

### Across

1. Russian news agency
5. Natl. org. that curates major sports history museum in Liberty Corner
9. He preceded/succeeded Curly in The Three Stooges
14. "\_\_\_\_ be in England...": Robert Browning
15. Kind of sign in many NJ diner windows
16. Conger catcher
17. Steel one has been Atlantic City landmark since 1898
18. Eponymous proprietress of Basking Ridge tavern where, on 12/13/1776, Maj. Gen. Charles Lee was captured in his pajamas
20. Attempt
21. Michael who portrayed Cochise on 1950s "Broken Arrow"
22. Singing cowboy Ritter
23. Charlie Chan creator Earl \_\_\_\_ Biggers
25. Reverend Samuel who founded the Basking Ridge Classical School in 1764
27. Kauai cocktails
30. Flanders of "The Simpsons"
31. NJ Govt. Div. formed in 1933 in response to Prohibition's repeal
32. Peptic problem
35. Course that's a breeze
39. Former NJ Governor Tom who resides in Bedminster
41. Country bumpkin
43. Rev. War General Henry who commanded the colonies' Artillery Corps in Pluckemin
44. Actor Edward James of "Stand and Deliver"
46. "Coffee, \_\_\_\_ Me? The Uninhibited Memoirs of Two Airline Stewardesses"
48. Last word of patriotic pledge penned by socialist minister Francis Bellamy in 1892

### Down

49. Cotillion VIP
51. Bad boy John of '70s-'80s tennis
53. Ultimate surname (not the one in 25-Across) of First Lady who weekendend in Peapack
57. To improve soil quality, farmers would \_\_\_\_ lime home from the Peapack kilns
58. 1980 NFC Player of the Year Jaworski, now owner of several NJ golf courses
59. Cholesterol control drug
62. Juicy gossip
65. Residence school established in 1916 in Basking Ridge for young men in crisis
67. Duds
68. "Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_ Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die."
69. Drei minus zwei
70. Salinger's "For \_\_\_\_—With Love and Squalor"
71. Mortise insert
72. Noted 18th Century seamstress buried, legend has it, in the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church cemetery
73. One can still enjoy a nice \_\_\_\_ at 1907's Bernards Inn



9. Tennessee home of, and common name for, the University of the South (sorta sounds like an Al Jolson classic)
10. Sneaky laugh syllable
11. Aristocratic, like late 19th Century residents of the Grand Mansions in Somerset Hills
12. Allotted
13. University head honcho
19. Acclaimed late 17th/early 18th Century English architect and polymath Christopher
24. 1999-2004 German President Johannes
26. Home state of Theo. Roosevelt Natl. Park
27. Record-breaking 926-lb. one was caught in NJ waters in 2017
28. Son of couple who raised Cain
29. Typical immigrant to East Jersey circa its 1683 founding
33. Scratch (out), as a living
34. Chew (out), as a subordinate
36. Most ill-tempered
37. Carpe diem, initially?
38. Wheel shaft

40. Silent assents
42. It contains more water than all the lakes in England and Wales combined (presumably a point of pride to a 29-Down)
45. Meeting, of the Continental Congress, say
47. "The Crying Game" actor Stephen
50. One can still grab a beer and a \_\_\_\_ in 1768's Grain House
52. Pokes
53. Path taken by Glen Ridge native Buzz Aldrin in July 1969
54. Who remains living from the founding of Liberty Corner?
55. 18th Century Liberty Corner settler William who had a Bernards Township middle school named for him
56. One might be found in the scabbard of a Rev. War horseman
60. NJ's Jonas Brothers, for one
61. "Lord of the Rings" actors Holm and McKellen
63. Hindu deity
64. It barely beats a deuce
66. UNICEF or CARE, e.g.

The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills  
**CROSSWORD PUZZLE ENTRY FORM**

**To submit by mail:**

1. Complete the crossword puzzle and entry form in black or blue ink
2. Mail the two-sided page to THSSH, P.O. Box 136, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Name:

Street Address:

City:

State/Province/Region:

Zip Code/Postal Code:

Country:

Email:

Phone:

*What is the historical center of the Somerset Hills  
hidden in the crossword grid?*

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**To submit online:**

Go to [THSSH.org/puzzle](http://THSSH.org/puzzle) and follow the instructions

Or scan the QR code:



## *Who Knew?*

### Pikes Peak is Named for a Lamington Resident



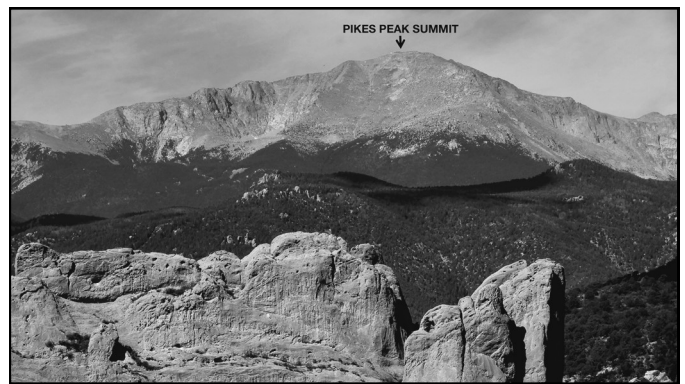
Zebulon Montgomery Pike was born on January 5, 1779 in Lamington, New Jersey. He was the son of Isabella and Zebulon Pike, and would follow in the footsteps of his father, who had begun his own career in the military service of the United States in 1775 at the start of the American Revolutionary War.

Pike grew to adulthood with his family at a series of outposts in Ohio and Illinois, the United States' northwestern frontier at the time. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant of infantry in 1799 and promoted to first lieutenant later that same year.

As a U.S. Army officer he led two expeditions under the authority of President Thomas Jefferson through the Louisiana Purchase territory, first in 1805-1806 to reconnoiter the upper northern reaches of the Mississippi River. His journeys coincided with both the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Red River Expedition.

Shortly after his return, Pike was sent on his second and most famous expedition, the Southwest in 1806-1807. He and his men traveled 3,664 miles through seven of today's states and three Mexican provinces in 353 days. While en route they attempted to climb to the top of the tallest mountain (14,114 feet) in the Rocky Mountain range but were not successful. Pike claimed that no one would be able to scale the mountain. Fourteen years later Major Stephen Long's expedition would reach the top of the mountain eventually called Pikes Peak.

Pike published journals of his explorations in 1810 as *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi and through the Western Parts of Louisiana*. He later achieved the rank of brigadier general in the American Army and served during the War of 1812, until he was killed during the Battle of York on April 27, 1813 at the young age of 34.




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## MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

The Board of Trustees extends its sincere gratitude to the following patrons  
for their generous gifts to the Brick Academy Museum:

- Far Hills Train Station Log of "Notice of Arrival of Goods". Dated April 3, 1945 to February 7, 1947.  
*Gift of David Judd, Westfield NJ*
- A reproduction of a circa 1780 map of the route from Pluckemin to Chester (then Black River) drawn during the American Revolution for the Continental Artillery Cantonment at Pluckemin.  
*Gift of W. Barry Thomson, New York NY*
- Antique cast iron and oak wood school desk with ink well. *Gift of Debbie Carroll, Basking Ridge NJ*
- Early collection of Betsy Boocock's notes and maps related to listing Franklyn Corners on the National and New Jersey Registers of Historic Places. *Gift of Dan Lincoln, Bernardsville NJ*



## NEW MUNICIPALITY PROPOSALS OF 100 YEARS AGO

By W. Barry Thomson

Over the years a number of efforts have been made to alter municipal boundaries and create new municipalities in the Somerset Hills region, with the goal of making local governments more responsive to the changing needs of residents. Invariably these efforts have been driven by disputes over a wide range of local budgetary matters, such as road maintenance, policing, public utilities, infrastructure needs, schools, zoning, and tax rates, as well as by differing priorities and needs of those living in rural and village sections.

The first of such efforts in the 20<sup>th</sup> century resulted in the creation of Mendham Borough out of Mendham Township in 1906, and the separation of the Borough of Peapack-Gladstone from Bedminster Township in 1912.

The 1920s and early 1930s, however, saw several more efforts, some successful and some not, to further alter municipal boundaries.

One hundred years ago, in 1921, efforts were made to break up Bernards Township to create three new boroughs: Far Hills, Bernardsville, and Basking Ridge. As originally proposed, only the areas around Liberty Corner and Lyons would have remained within Bernards Township.

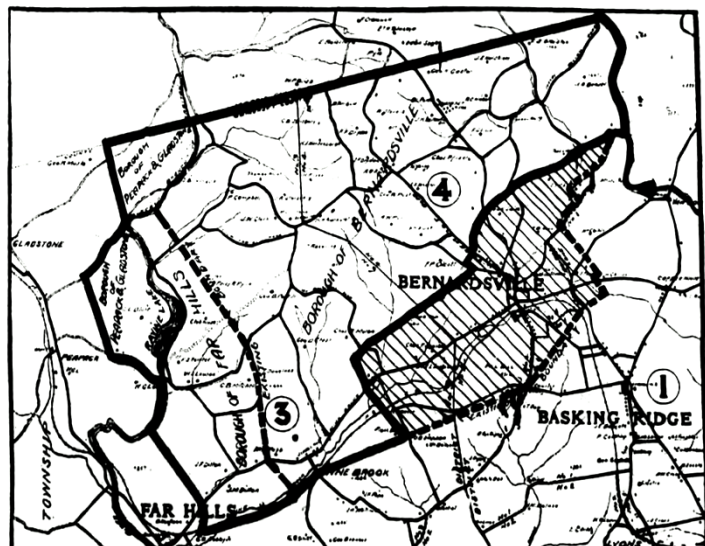
After bills authorizing these new boroughs passed the New Jersey Legislature, local referenda were held in June 1921 allowing residents in each of the affected areas to vote on the proposals. The vote to create the Borough of Far Hills passed, while votes to form the separate boroughs of Bernardsville and Basking Ridge were defeated. The Borough of Bernardsville, however, would be formed three years later, in 1924.

Farther afield in neighboring Morris County, Harding Township formally seceded from what was then Passaic Township (today's Long Hill Township) in 1922.

In the early 1930s two more municipal changes were proposed, one successful and one not. The Borough of Chester separated from Chester Township in 1930. Then, in early 1931 a more contentious proposal was made to form a new Borough of Mine Mount, derogatively dubbed the "Millionaire Boro." This proposal, which was made by a group of some 17 residents of the so-called "Mountain Colony" area of Bernardsville, Peapack-Gladstone, and Far Hills, would have taken in virtually all of the rural, non-commercial areas of those three towns. Meeting with strong opposition, primarily due to the significant loss of tax ratables in each of the affected municipalities, the proposal was soon dropped.

### MAP OF THE PROPOSED NEW "BOROUGH OF MINE MOUNT" PUBLISHED JANUARY 29, 1931 IN THE BERNARDSVILLE NEWS

*Heavy black line completely encircles territory it is planned to include within the proposed new territory. Shaded section (right) shows portion of original Borough of Bernardsville remaining if new Borough of Mine Mount is formed. Heavy dotted line at left of map and portion of North Branch of the Raritan River show present western boundary of Bernardsville Borough. Territory between heavy dotted line (left) and heavy solid line shows portions of Far Hills and Peapack-Gladstone Boroughs planned to be included in the new proposed borough.*



## Historical Society of the Somerset Hills Awarded Grant

The Historical Society received a grant of \$4,000 from the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission as part of the County History Partnership Program. The CHPP grant for nonprofit organizations enables the New Jersey Historical Commission to support local history within each of New Jersey's twenty-one counties through a competitive grant application process.

THSSH's grant application was prepared by Susan Zibelli, Chair and Cynthia Crosson, volunteer. The funds will be used for ongoing maintenance, the Brick Academy museum collections, and to support membership programs.

"The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills are stewards of our area's history. We play a crucial role in the safeguarding of our area's heritage. Thanks to the generous contribution we received through the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission CHPP Grant, our organization was able to continue to operate throughout the past year despite our shortfalls due to the COVID restrictions, allowing us to continue our work to preserve and make accessible the rich resources in our repositories," said Susan Zibelli.

Grant recipients also included Friends of Kennedy Martin Stelle Farmstead, The Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum, and The Somerset County Historical Society.

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

THSSH  
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