

Washington Township Historical Society
6 Fairview Avenue PO Box 189 Long Valley NJ 07853
908.876.9696 info@wthsnj.org www.wthsnj.org

Annual Report for 2011

Message from the President

To paraphrase a famous quote, "That which does not shut us down, makes us stronger."

This past year marked the 50th anniversary of the incorporation of the WTHS. It has been a productive year for the Society. We have had hurdles to deal with - an earthquake, two hurricanes, and a very early snowfall not to mention installation of a new boiler and chimney liner - but through it all the Society has been able to continue the mission of the original founders. In March we had a weekend long celebration to mark our anniversary and, with the help of many members, particularly Shelley Heretyk and Naresh Garg, as well as student volunteers, it was a success. We have had several delightful temporary exhibits in the museum as well as creating new shadow boxes for a permanent display of the eleven districts of Long Valley - long ago.

This year has also been a year of loss for the Society. Several long standing members passed away this year and they will be greatly missed. Lucille Orion, Jack and Dorothy Brahney, Gertrude Taylor, Shirley Gillette, and Marie Farley will be remembered as members who gave so much to ensure the continued success of the Society.

WTHS Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 22, 2012
4:00 PM
WTHS Museum
6 Fairview Avenue, Long Valley NJ

Board of Trustees

Officers

President ~ Betsy Guzenski
Vice President ~ Mary Ann Kordys
Treasurer ~ Denise Niessing
Recording Secretary ~ Holly Zimmerman
Corresponding Secretary ~ Barbara Rossi

Honorary Members:

Virginia Allen
Dominic Puleo

Trustees

John Hemmings
Dominic Puleo
Martha Puleo
Karen Muscat
Bob Pennisi

Mary Darter
Martha Puleo

Volunteer Hours in the Museum

This year a total of over 1,240 hours were logged in! This included hours put in by members of the Museum and Library Committees, student volunteers, docents, and committee members. It does not include hours put in by individuals at home, particularly for the House Tour. Thank you all!

Museum Docents

The museum was open for 48 Sundays this year as well as several Wednesday evenings during the Fashion Exhibit. Special thanks go to all the docents this year – Betsy Guzinski, John Hemmings, Shelley Heretyk, Mary Ann Kordys, Karen Muscat, Bob Pennisi, Dianne Pennisi, Millicent Palmer, Ruth Reed, Barbara Rossi, Eileen Stokes, Eleanor Taormina, and Holly Zimmerman.

Museum Watch

We had several floods in the basement this summer thanks to Irene and a weather pattern that, hopefully, can occur only once every 1,000 years. Loss of items was kept to a minimum thanks to all of those who helped with clean-up.

The Museum “checkers” this year were Eileen Stokes, Holly Zimmerman, John Hemmings, Denise Niessing, Mary Ann Kordys, Shelley Heretyk and Betsy Guzinski as well as members of the Museum and Library Committees and all of the Sunday docents.

Buildings and Grounds Report

Respectfully submitted by

John Hemmings, Bob Pennisi, Dianne Pennisi

Early this year John Hemmings and Bob Pennisi installed a new front door lock and keys were made and numbered for everyone who needed one. Spring saw John Hemmings and Naresh Garg reattaching leaders that had come loose from the building. Also, Rich Muha was called in to fix our leaky toilet. July and August was the cleaning, caulking, and painting of the inside of the back porch by Bob and Dianne Pennisi. Sara Schorr donated curtains which added a more finished look out there. The space can now be used for display. Dianne made a new bathroom curtain, swept and cleaned the basement before and after Hurricane Irene left us flooded down there. She and Bob also washed windows as best as can be done since they don't open up. Summer into fall John re-laid the bricks on our front walk way. In October Diane installed and painted the glass window insert for the front entrance door. John met with the inspector who replenished our fire extinguishers.

*In November a new chimney liner was installed by Luna Chimney and Van Doren installed a new boiler in the basement. The cost of both items and installation costs were shared equally by Washington Township and the Society.

*Seth Noll continued to mow the Union Church Cemetery and the museum lawn. Nancy Allen continued to clean the Museum once a month.

* Rich Muha also installed a new pipe leading out to the outdoor spigot and a new spigot.

Museum Garden

Our thanks go to the members of the Garden *Club of Long Valley* for continuing to maintain the lovely historic gardens for the WTHS. Once again this year, many people have remarked on how inviting our entrance area looks, from spring through fall.

Website

Submitted by Naresh Garg

Our website had 2485 hits, resulting from an average of 165 unique visitors a month during 2011. Minor modifications continue to be made for various program announcements and additions to the site as relevant content becomes available.

*Naresh Garg did a great job on updating the website for every new display and the House Tour.

Grants

Shelley Heretyk and Naresh Garg submitted a grant to the Morris County Heritage Commission's 2011 History Re-Grant Program. We were awarded \$2,200.00 which was used to purchase archival materials, a camera tripod, scanner, external drive backup drive, wireless mouse, and USB flash drives which enabled us to complete archiving/cataloging a backlog of items and photos. Also purchased was a digital recorder which was used by several student volunteers to record oral histories. The purchase of digital picture frames allowed for more presentations to be viewed within the Museum. Mary Ann Kordys submitted a grant for window shades. The grant was accepted and we will receive \$2,615.00 to complete the project during 2012.

Publications

Special thanks go to Barbara Rossi for her design skills in sending out a newsletter to keep our members informed of events and happenings.

Donations and Acquisitions

Several acquisitions were made in 2011 including a book on the history and genealogy of the Schooley family. Many accessions were made during the year including photographs, posters, clothing, and assorted items. They are too numerous to mention all in the report but the accession forms are available in the Museum Library files.

YEAR IN REVIEW:

January :

~The grant that Shelley and Naresh submitted was granted from the Morris County Heritage Commission . In general, the monies were spent on electronic equipment and archival materials.

~Shelley and Betsy started working with the WMCHS student volunteers and Ms. Lichatin. A total of over 140 hours were logged in by the volunteers. Their help with scanning, setting up displays, taking oral histories, and competing the archiving of the Staiano photo books was greatly appreciated.

~The election of the new officers and trustees took place at the annual meeting.

~Eileen Stokes, Mary Ann Kordys, Barbara Rossi and Betsy Guzenski attended a grant workshop given by The Morris County Heritage Commission.

February:

~Oral histories were conducted by several of the student volunteers. Mary Darter and John Hemmings were both interviewed about their memories of school days in Long Valley.

March:

~March was the month of our 50th Anniversary Celebration. Many thanks go to Shelley Heretyk and Naresh Garg for the displays and the week-end long celebration which included presentations made by some of the student volunteers. Mayor Kenneth Short presented the WTHS with a proclamation.

~The cemetery workshops were presented by Richard Veit and Mark Nonestied at the Morris County Heritage building. Both sessions were attended Eileen Stokes, Bob Stokes, and Betsy Guzenski. Karen Muscat, Holly Zimmerman and Shelley Heretyk were able to attend one session each.

~Shelley and Naresh held two workshops for docents on the new filing system in the Museum.

April:

~A new water meter was installed.

~Sig and Sara Schorr ran the Book Sale the weekend of April 14th – 16th. A tremendous amount of work was put into this sale by many members.

~John Hemmings presented his Program, "Historic Railroads in Washington Township" during the regular meeting which was held at the Zion Lutheran Church.

May:

~On May 12, Shelley and Naresh made a presentation "Washington Township Historic Overview" to the Chester Historical Society.

~On May 26, Peg Schultz conducted a site visit to the Museum. Shelley and Naresh did the presentation and Peg was most impressed with all the work that had been

completed and the new filing system in the museum.

Thanks go to Shelley and Naresh for all their hard work.

~Also in May we received word that the DVD, "Historic Railroads in Washington Township" won second prize in the Kevin Hale Publications Awards. Many thanks go to John Hemmings, Naresh Garg, and Shelley Heretyk for all the work they put into the DVD.

June:

~Holly Zimmerman and Betsy Guzenski attended the West Morris Central High School Awards Ceremony. That night Betsy presented the WTHS scholarship in the amount of \$500 to Matthew Whalen for his Eagle project – a walking trail at the Belmont Hall/Dorincourt site in Schooley's Mountain.

~Work by the Museum and Library Committees continued throughout the summer. A permanent display of shadow boxes located in the downstairs on the museum was completed. The shadow boxes give a short history of the eleven districts once found in Washington Township. Many thanks go to Mary Ann Kordys, Karen Muscat, Dianne Pennisi, Sara Schorr, Holly Zimmerman and Betsy Guzenski.

July:

~On July 24, Millicent Palmer hosted the WTHS Ice Cream Social at her home. Over 30 members attended and although the weather was hot the ice cream was cold and all who came enjoyed themselves.

~At the end of July, Shelley and Naresh presented the program, "German Palatine Roots" , off-site to the Swackhamer-Dufford Genealogical Society.

August:

~The first annual "Spirit of '45 Day" was held. The museum committee set up a display of WWII memorabilia to celebrate the day.

~The Fall Festival was postponed due to the weather. The museum committee had set up display boards for the festival covering the eleven districts of Long Valley long ago.

~Susan Hoekstra came to the museum on two separate dates to work with the museum committee. She went through all the clothing in our collections and helped date the items and gave a description of material, detailing work, etc. Work on the actual display started the end of August.

September:

~The Fashion Month in Long Valley exhibit opened officially in the Museum on September 11th. The display was also open Wednesday evenings through October 2nd and the display was left up through early November.

~ Dianne Pennisi presented a short program based on Jean Fritz's book, Shh! We're Writing the Constitution, in honor of Constitution Week.

October:

~It came to our attention in September that we needed a new boiler and chimney liner. Many thanks to all who were involved in the decision process of what to choose and contacting the Township about sharing the cost.
~Betsy Guzenski and Holly Zimmerman held two tours of the cemetery and the museum for three Cub Scout Troops on two separate dates the end of October.

November:

~The new boiler and chimney liner were finally installed and are in working order.
~Rich Muha was contacted to replace the outside faucet and the inside pipe leading to it.
~The museum committee started work on the holiday display, "Antique and Vintage Toys and Books". Bob Pennisi made a train display specifically for the display.

Crafts Group

Once again, the Crafts Group met weekly and was able to raise funds for the WTHS during the sale at the House Tour.

Active members this year were:

Laurie Akin, Mary Darter, Ruth Fish, Joanne Groves, Martina De Tollenaere-Heuckels, Evelyn Lesch, Janice Mills, Margie Milne, Janet Noll, Eleanor Taormina, and Peg Van Brunt. Special thank goes to Peg for hosting the weekly work sessions at her home.

Requests

Members of the Museum and Library Committees were able to complete approximately 20 requests from as far away as California.

Scouts

Eileen Stokes continued to give certificates of congratulations from the WTHS to many Eagle and Gold Award recipients. Their contributions to the town are greatly appreciated by our Society and we wish all the recipients best of luck in their future endeavors.

December:

~December 10th was the date of the 28th "Christmas in Long Valley Historic House Tour". The tour took place primarily in the Pleasant Grove area of Schooley's Mountain. The weather cooperated and the homes, churches, and mill were enjoyed by many. Many thanks go to all those involved with the publication of the 2011 House Tour Book – particularly Denise Niessing and Eileen Stokes for editing and putting it all together.

Many, many people put in many, many hours to ensure the success of the Washington Township Historical Society. As president, I am very grateful to them all and look forward to another productive year working in the Society.

Patron Members

Laura and Sam Akin
Dale Blum
Fran Borgenicht
Bill Cappell
Naresh Garg and Shelley Heretyk
Randy and Mary Grace Hix
Raymond and Michele Kramer
Michael and June Logan
Millicent Palmer
Wil and Dale Reyes
Walt Sharp
Peter and Barbara Westergaard
Chris and Holly Zimmerman
Carol Zaikowski

Welcome to New Members

Brian and Jusy Bumpus
Mary Lynn Schiavi
Arley and Lyn Smith
WTL Trust
Highlands Presbyterian Church
Steve(Dan) and Christine Galzier
Matthew Davison
Tracy and Dotty Tobin