

IN THIS ISSUE:

History Database (p. 2)
*Two Views of Stanwick Road,
past and present (p. 2)*
*J. Bispham Stokes remembers
his Boyhood Days (p. 3)*
Who was Henry Rambo? (p. 4)
*Preserving our stitched
History (p. 5)*
*A Civil War Trunk —
sturdy and heavy (p.7)*

FROM THE FRONT PORCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF MOORESTOWN



House Tours and Gift Shop Hours:

Sunday 1-3 PM
Tuesdays 1-3 PM

Research Library Hours:

Tuesday 1-4 PM
Second Sunday of
each Month 1-3 PM

Address

Historical Society of
Moorestown
Smith-Cadbury Mansion
12 High St.
Moorestown, NJ 08057

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856-235-0353

Web Site

www.moorestown.com/history

E-mail

moorestownhistory@verizon.net

Facebook

facebook.com/historical-societyofmoorestown

Published by

*The Historical Society
of Moorestown*

View From the Porch

It is hard to believe that I am writing this for the September edition of our newsletter. It seems like Memorial Day was just a few days ago, but the calendar says differently. It is time for the Historical Society of Moorestown to pick up where we left off at the start of summer on a number of important fronts.

However our 2014-2015 season has not gotten off to a very good start with the sad news of the passing of our colleague and dear friend Sara Homer. Nothing that I could write here could improve on the many moving tributes to her memory that have been posted on Facebook. I will just say that she was a beautiful person both inside and out. She was fun to be around and very knowledgeable. She made significant contributions, not only to our work locally, but at the state and regional level as well. Anyone who appreciates the importance of historic understanding and preservation owes her a debt of gratitude. She will be missed.

This season should see us move forward with our plans to make the Smith-Cadbury Mansion available to all citizens. With the cooperation of TD Bank, our plans have been finalized to allow access to our property from the bank's parking lot, which is pretty much level with our building. This will make our exhibits available without having to traverse, what for some people is at best a long climb up from High Street, and at worst an outright barrier to entering our facility. I know that it seems like we have been talking about this forever, but there were a number of approvals we needed to get from a variety of agencies so that the work can be done in such a way as to protect the historic integrity of the building. With most of these hurdles cleared, we will start a major fund raising effort over the next few months.

Our current exhibit *Moorestown During the Civil War*, will remain up through the end of 2014. We will add some items over the next few weeks, highlighted by a copy of the original muster roll from Company E of 4th New Jersey regiment, courtesy of the Palmyra Historical Society, written in the hand of Charles Hall, the company commander. We also plan to create a podcast for our website, in conjunction with some of the students at Moorestown High School, based on the exhibit. Mary Berardi has been hard at work on the script for the podcast, and the plan is to use students to do some of the video and voice work.

Finally, we are hard at work at our normal autumn activities. Our general membership meeting will be held at the Community House on October 9th. This will be followed up by a special opening of the Smith-Cadbury Mansion in conjunction with Autumn in Moorestown Day, on October 11th. At the end of the month we will once again conduct our popular Ghost Tours. I hope to see you at one or all of these events.

Lenny Wagner, President



It is with great sadness that the Board of the Historical Society reports the sudden passing of our board member Sara Homer. A dedicated advocate for historic preservation, Sara was a trained archeologist and had wide-ranging interests that included photography and her family history (including the large *Franklin* clan in Tennessee and the Swedish *Toy* family that settled in South Jersey).

We will miss her laugh, her lovely smile, her enthusiasm. We will miss *her*.



**The Historical Society
of Moorestown**

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Jill Weiss

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Carrie Wagner

Trustees Emeritus

Nan Pillsbury

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Library

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Library News

Searchable Database Completed!

As we begin our new season, there is good news to report. Thanks to the steady determination of Bill Archer and various other volunteers over the years, the task of creating a searchable database of our museum collection has finally been completed. Congratulations and thank you to Bill for sticking with this project (for over 6 years!) and seeing it through to the end!!



During the summer, we've been going through hundreds of unindexed old photographic slides and negatives and thanks to the talents of members John and Barbara Watson, these have been digitally scanned and saved for posterity. Over the coming months, the newsletter will be presenting some of these images which have not been seen for decades.

To the left is one of these photos originally from William H. Roberts's glass slide collection from around the turn of the century. The description read "Stanwick Road at C. Zelle's showing narrow track in wide road."

The picture is from a little north of Central Avenue, looking toward Bridgeboro Road. A current photo taken by John Watson at the same location is shown for comparison.



— Stephanie Herz

Library News

Boyhood Days: My First Lesson in Buying and Selling

The Stokes Family Collection arrived at the Historical Society in 2012, a gift of Mrs. Jackie Stokes and her husband John B. Stokes III, M.D., who resided in Iowa City until his death in 2012. It is a treasure trove of letters, poems, recollections, journals, business correspondence, estate documents, and photographs pertaining to four generations of Stokes: *John H. Stokes* (b.1831) and his wife *Alverda Dunham*, *J. Bispham Stokes* (b.1870) and his wife *Elizabeth Clarke Stokes*, *John B. Stokes, Jr.* (b. 1913) and his wife *Joy Lawson Dumas*, and *John B. Stokes III* (b.1944) and his wife *Jackie*.

The vast majority of letters were written between J. Bispham, a traveling salesman of watches, clocks, silver and jewelry early in his career, and his wife Elizabeth. They married in 1907 and moved to 141 E. Oak Ave. in 1908. The letters reveal that J. Bispham missed his growing family very much as he traveled all over the country and in 1924 he took a job closer to home with Penn Mutual Life Insurance Co. where his son would later join him.

Another large number of letters are between John B. Stokes, Jr. and his wife Joy while he was serving in the US Army. He was stationed in Fiji in 1944 when he learned his son "Bip" was born (John B. Stokes III). An example of what can be found among the papers is an undated recollection written by J. Bispham titled, "Boyhood Days," that tells of a time when sheep once walked the streets of Moorestown.

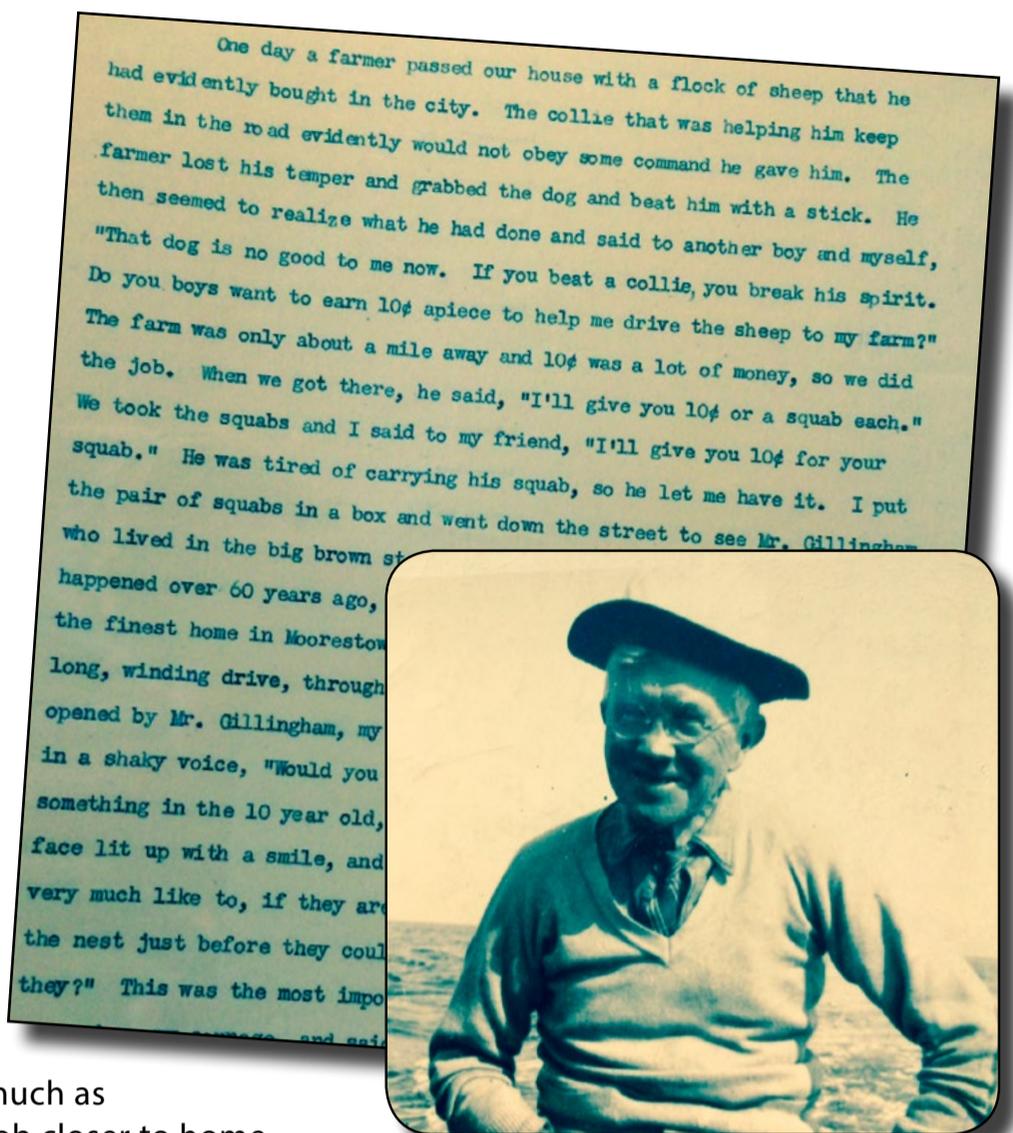
Excerpted from "Boyhood Days" by J. Bispham Stokes:

One day a farmer passed our house with a flock of sheep that he had evidently bought in the city. The collie that was helping him keep them in the road evidently would not obey some command he gave him. The farmer lost his temper and grabbed the dog and beat him with a stick. He then seemed to realize what he had done and said to another boy and myself, "That dog is no good to me now. If you beat a collie, you break his spirit. Do you boys want to earn 10¢ apiece to help me drive the sheep to my farm?" The farm was only about a mile away and 10¢ was a lot of money, so we did the job. When we got there, he said, "I'll give you 10¢ or a squab each." We took the squabs and I said to my friend, "I'll give you 10¢ for your squab." He was tired of carrying his squab, so he let me have it. I put the pair of squabs in a box and went down the street to see Mr. Gillingham, who lived in the big brown stone house. I can see myself now, though it happened over 60 years ago, a barefooted, hatless boy, ringing the bell of the finest home in Moorestown. It had taken all my courage to walk up the long, winding drive, through the well-kept lawn, but when the door was opened by Mr. Gillingham, my speech nearly left me. I did manage to say, in a shaky voice, "Would you buy a pair of squabs?" There must have been something in the 10 year old, barefooted boy before him that appealed. His face lit up with a smile, and in the kindest way, he said, "Yes, I would very much like to, if they are young." I assured him I had taken them from the nest just before they could fly. "Fine, fine!" he said, "How much are they?" This was the most important part of the transaction to me. I screwed up my courage, and said, "50¢ for the pair." The price did not disturb him, for he said, "I'll take them." So I went home, killed and dressed the squabs, received payment and Mr. Gillingham's thanks for such nice birds.

This, my first lesson in buying and selling, has stood me in good stead throughout my business life. The lesson learned was that you never know what you can do until you try.

Although the collection is still being processed, if you'd like to view it please make an appointment with the Library & Archives staff at 856-235-0353 or e-mail Jill Weiss at jill@thewio.com. The Library is open for research Tuesdays 1-4 and the second Sunday of the month 1-3.

— Jill Weiss



J. Bispham Stokes

Oldest Continuously Operated Business in Moorestown

William C. Coles, Jr., past president of the Historical Society of Moorestown, had this to say about this picture during his slide show presentation given February 10, 1978:

"... the present location of Doug Lewis's funeral home. When this picture was taken it was Mr. Rambo's funeral home, who was the undertaker at the time, and he has a sign up there "Furnishing Undertaker". The house that Doug has now is still the same, but it has gone through a great deal of remodeling.

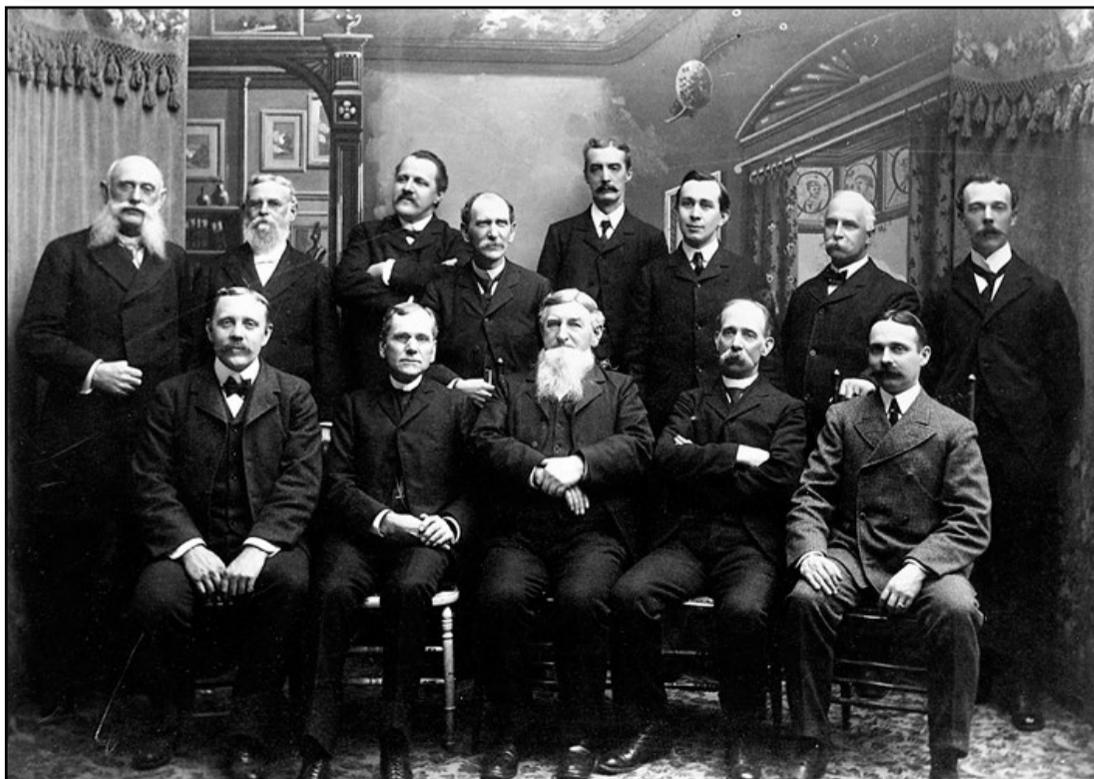
That incidentally is the oldest continuously operated business in Moorestown, having been started by Samuel Jones either one or two generations ahead of Mr. Rambo."

The present owner of this business at 78 East Main Street, is John D. Engleman, who is the sixth owner in a series of undertakers of which Samuel Jones was the first. They were in order: Samuel Jones, Henry Rambo, William Grobler, Edward Melton, Douglas Lewis, and John Engleman, most having served as the assistant of the previous owner. The first funeral directed by Samuel Jones on record took place in May of 1836. By 1884 there had been over 5,000 burials.

In the group picture "Undertakers of Burlington County", Henry A. Rambo is seated second from left in the front row.



— John Watson



Undertakers of Burlington County



2nd Annual Historical Society Scholarship Awarded

The Historical Society of Moorestown presented its 2nd annual scholarship at Moorestown High School's Recognition Reception held on June 10, 2014, at the MHS Athletic Center.

The award is given to a graduating student who excelled in history while a student at the High School and who plans to continue their studies in a related field in college.

This year's award was presented by HSM President Lenny Wagner to Sophia Gamber.

Sophia will attend Ursinus College and study history and political science.



Museum News

Opportunities to Conserve

The Historical Society of Moorestown is pleased to announce several important donations to the museum.

- A schoolgirl sampler stitched by Elizabeth Perkins in 1818
- A Quaker certificate dated 1790 celebrating the marriage of Henry Warrington and Rebekah Dudley
- A paint decorated chest owned by Shaula Wright's father and is now part of the Civil War exhibit

These historic pieces, along with a sampler dated 1818 by Martha Cowperthwaite already in the museum collection, would benefit by careful conservation, cleaning and mounting.

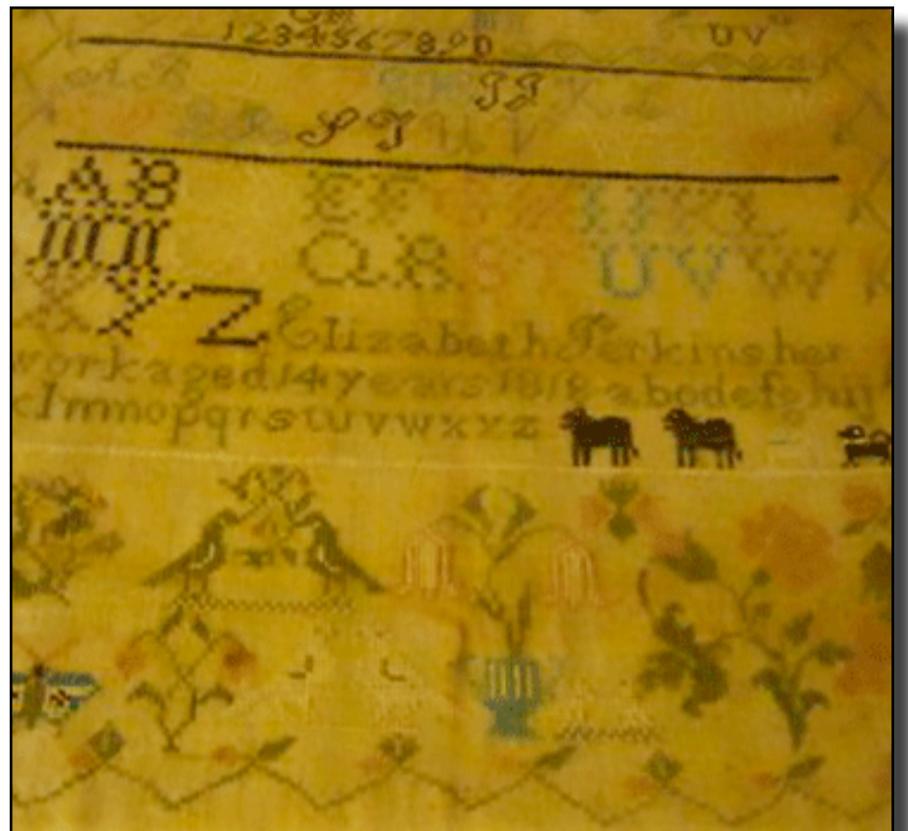
In order to preserve these treasures from the past for future generations to enjoy, the Society is providing an opportunity for its members to contribute. Simply choose an item from the list above and send your contribution of any dollar amount to The Historical Society of Moorestown, P.O. Box 477 Moorestown, NJ 08057.

On the subject line of your check, please list the item you wish to help conserve.

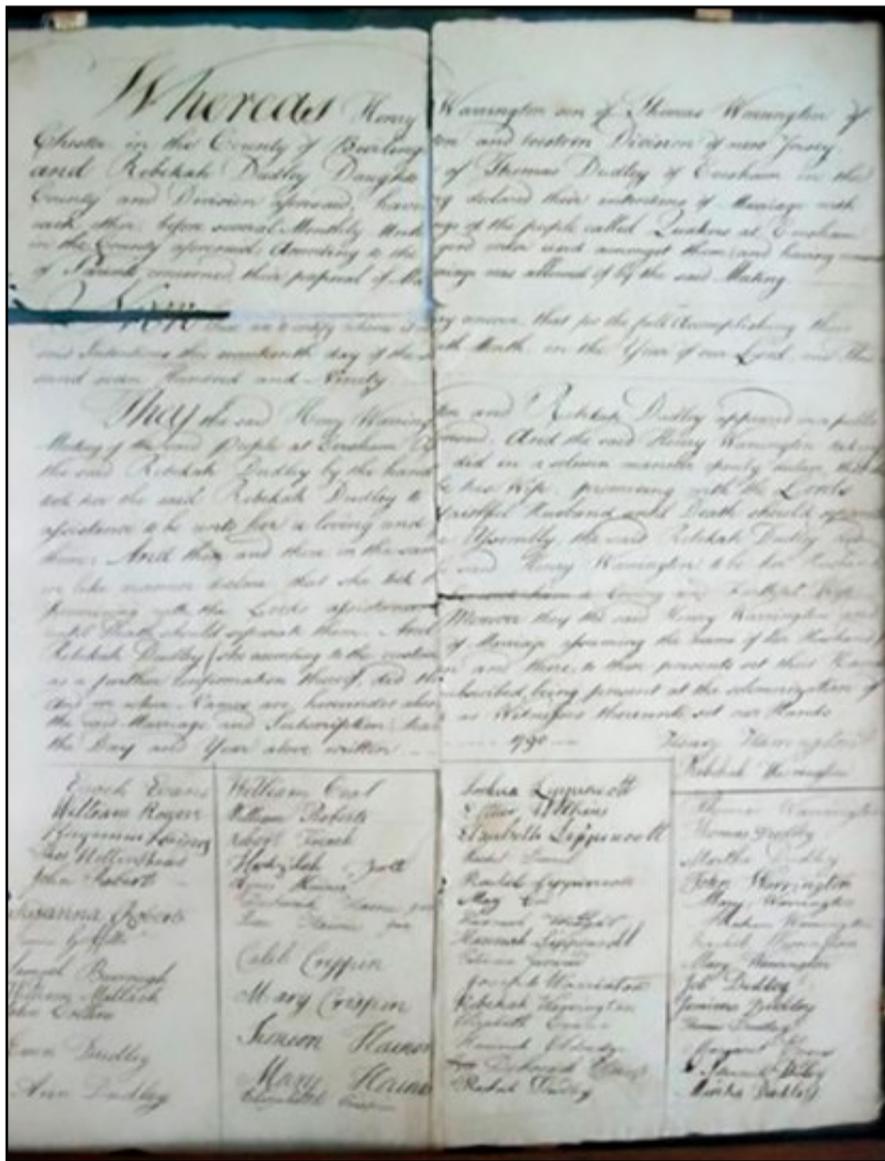
A small plaque will accompany each item in the museum and will list the names of the contributors.

We are grateful for your support!

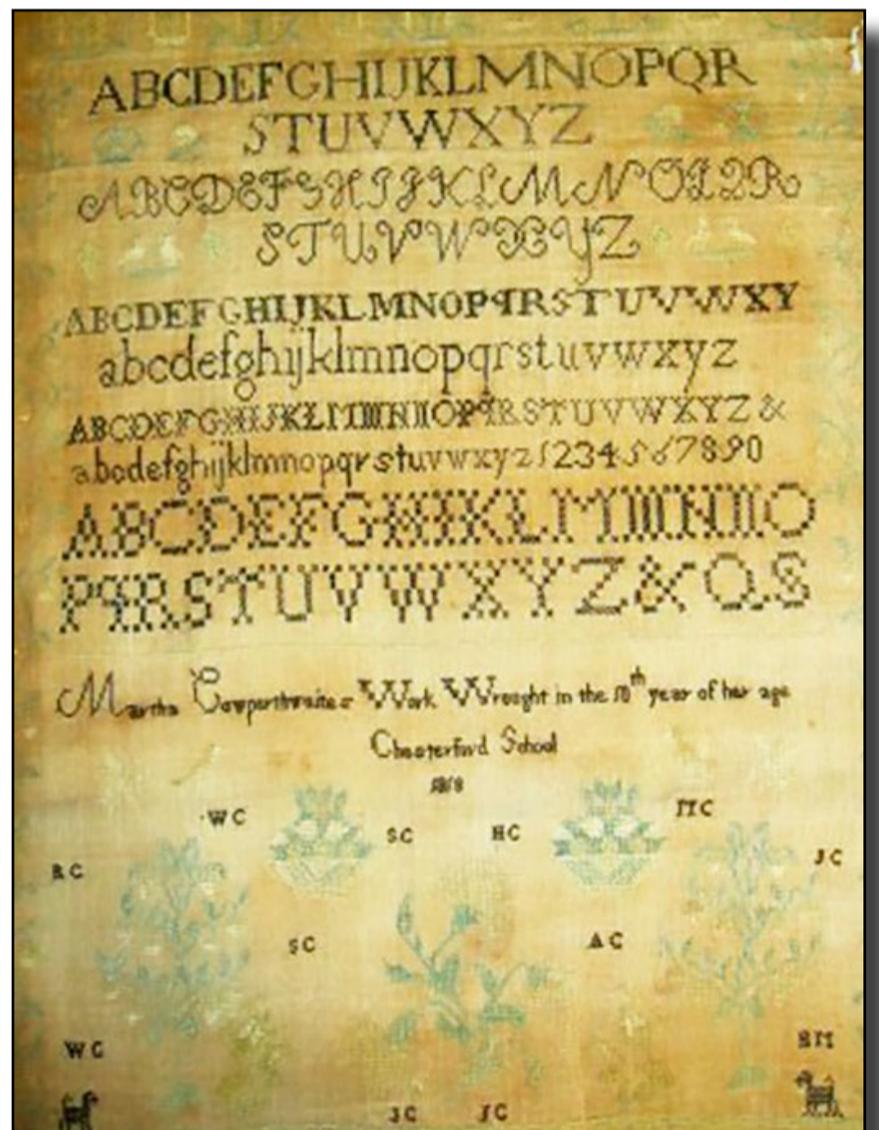
— Museum Committee



Elizabeth Perkins
1818 School-girl sampler



Henry Warrington and Rebekah Dudley 1792 Marriage Certificate



Martha Cowperthwaite Sampler

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Hello Members! It hardly feels like summer in Moorestown as I write this: 77 sunny degrees with low humidity! Oh the joy! I hope our good luck continues into the Fall... A few more membership renewals have trickled in over the summer (thank-you!) but not to worry, if you haven't sent yours in yet simply use the form below. If you don't know if you've renewed, look at the date next to your name on the front of this newsletter. If it says 04/15 you're good; if it says 04/14 we would greatly appreciate your continued support! If your name is very long the date will not show, please call the Society if you are unsure of your status.

The Historical Society would like to welcome its newest members and to extend an extra special thank you to our members who gave at the Contributor level and above.

New Members:

William C. Carson • Mrs. Lyn Cech • Donna L. Fynan •

Contributor Level & Above:

Mrs. Janis Granger-Sparacio • Patti & Matthew DelDuca (in honor of Harry Koons) • Ms. Nancy Froelicher • C. DeWitt Peterson • Mr. & Mrs. Milton & Edith McFalls II • Mr. & Mrs. Louis Berardi • Mr. & Mrs. Jon E. Ingersoll • Mr. & Mrs. Adam & Sharon Watson •

Thank you to all who have expressed an interest in helping out in a variety of ways at the Historical Society. Also, new members are always welcome! If you have a friend or neighbor who might be interested in joining the Historical Society, please have them use the membership form below or e-mail me at jill@thewio.com.

Till next time,

Jill Weiss, Membership Chairperson



In Memoriam

The Board of the Historical Society mourns the loss of Trustee Emeritus Dolores Kocyan. A trustee for some fifteen years, Dolores was the head of the Acquisitions Committee, a duty she dependably performed with thoroughness and accuracy. Her capable and cheerful spirit will be missed by all.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME(S):

ADDRESS:

DATE:

TELEPHONE #:

EMAIL:

NEW

RENEWAL

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY:

BASIC MEMBERSHIP:

Student \$10 ____

Individual/Family \$35 ____

DONOR LEVELS:

Contributor \$100-499 ____

Patron \$500-999 ____

Benefactor \$1,000+ ____

Make check payable to:

Historical Society of Moorestown

Mail to: Jill Weiss,

Membership Chair

440 E. Main St.

Moorestown, NJ 08057

New members are always welcome. If you have a friend or neighbor who might be interested in joining the Historical Society, please encourage them to contact Jill Weiss via email (jill@thewio.com).

We are always in need of volunteers... Thank you!

Jobs — big and small — that we need help with:

Activities/Events: Helps plan, organize and hold Society events.

Docents: Museum and special exhibit guides.

Exhibits: Helps create interesting displays.

Fund Raising: Helps plan and hold income-generating events.

Museum: Helps with maintaining collection.

Oral History: Collects oral histories and oversees written work.

Photography: Attends events and take digital photos for our archives and publicity.

Programs: Helps select programs and speakers, coordinates meetings.

Publicity/News/Web:

Helps get Society information to the members and public.

If you can help out, call the Society at 856-235-0353 or email Jill Weiss

jill@thewio.com



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2014

Ongoing exhibit:

Moorestown During the Civil War

- 7 Opening Day
Smith-Cadbury tours, 1-3
- 9 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 14 *Smith-Cadbury* tours
& research library, 1-3
- 16 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 21 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 23 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 28 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 30 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4

OCTOBER 2014

Ongoing exhibit:

Moorestown During the Civil War

- 5 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 7 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 9 Historical Society **General Meeting**
at the Community House, 7:30 PM
- 11 *Smith-Cadbury* open for **Autumn
in Moorestown**, 9 AM to 3 PM
- 12 *Smith-Cadbury* tours
& research library, 1-3
- 14 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 17 **Ghost Tours**, starting at
Smith-Cadbury, 7 PM and 9 PM
- 18 **Ghost Tours**, starting at
Smith-Cadbury, 7 PM and 9 PM
- 19 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 21 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 24 **Ghost Tours**, starting at
Smith-Cadbury, 7 PM and 9 PM
- 25 **Ghost Tours**, starting at
Smith-Cadbury, 7 PM and 9 PM
- 26 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 28 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4

NOVEMBER 2014

Ongoing exhibit:

Moorestown During the Civil War

- 2 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 4 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 9 *Smith-Cadbury* tours
& research library, 1-3
- 11 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 16 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 18 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 23 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3
- 25 *Smith-Cadbury* library & tours, 1-4
- 30 *Smith-Cadbury* tours, 1-3

Call for Docents

We are seeking docents for the 2014-15 season. Training will be provided. If you love sharing our local history and can offer a few hours to conduct Sunday afternoon tours from 1 to 3 PM, please contact Edmund E. Moore at 856-662-6757 or email the Society at moorestownhistory@verizon.net.

Acquisitions

Civil War Storage Trunk on Casters

The lid of this heavy wooden painted trunk measures about 40" x 21" x 21". The lid is fastened by metal hinges to the body. There are two holes at either end where handles or a piece of rope might have been fastened. There is a keyhole with metal parts of a lock but no key. There should be straps to hold the lid up when the trunk is open. On the top of the lid is a faded remnant of the name of the owner, George Wiltshire — a "G" and a "W". On the face of the body of the trunk, under the keyhole, is painted a "G" with decorative spirals on either side. There are stains and scrapes, especially on the lid, reflecting heavy usage.



Provenance and Chain of Ownership: A young farmer named George Wiltshire owned and used this trunk after enlisting to fight in the Civil War. In addition to being twice wounded during his military service, he was a prisoner of war for two months. Because of neglect during his imprisonment, his health suffered and he never fully recovered. Wiltshire is buried at Colestown cemetery and is a direct ancestor of the donor, Shaula C. Wright. *Thank you, Shaula.*

This trunk is so heavy it must have been transported by wagon or train. One could hardly fancy it atop a horse. It is a hands-on experience of the physical strength required to navigate in a war zone.

The trunk is now on display as part of the *Moorestown During the Civil War* exhibit.

— Ann Condon



**Historical Society of
Moorestown**

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SEPTEMBER 2014

The New Jersey Mirror. One of the oldest Weekly Journals in the State. Established 1818. Now fresh and vigorous as ever after rounding the turn to the century mark. CHARLES H. FOLWELL, Proprietor, Mount Holly.

300 MOORESTOWN (T) DIRECTORY.

Stokes Joseph, physician, Main ab Chestnut, h do
 Stokes J Bispham, salesman, h Central ave nr Chestnut
 Stokes Newlin N, com mer, h Chester ave cor Maple ave
 Stokes Newlin N, physician, Main cor Chestnut, h do
 Stokes Walter P, seedsman, h Chester ave cor Oak ave
STOKES WILLIAM W, cashier Moorestown National Bank and sec and treas Burlington Co Safe Deposit and Trust Co, h Main opp Post Office
 Stokes W Chester, clerk, h Central ave nr Chestnut
 Stratton Benjamin F, h Second nr Mill
 Stratton Bodine C, tinsmith, h Second nr Mill
 Strauch Abraham, plumber, h Third nr Chestnut
 Strickland William, painter, h 24 Second
 Stroud Annie, wid Joseph C, ice cream, h Main bel Mill

Traveling salesman J. Bispham Stokes (see story on page 3) is listed in the [Boyd's Directory of Burlington County New Jersey, 1895](#) as a "salesman" living on Central Ave. near Chestnut.

Note the advertisement at the top for *The New Jersey Mirror*: "One of the oldest Weekly Journals in the State. Established 1818. Now fresh and vigorous as ever after rounding the turn to the century mark."

is on the most direct route to the National Export Exposition grounds, and on this account Mr. Doake says he has already noticed an increase in business.

—J. Bispham Stokes, head city salesman for Whitall, Tatum & Co., has returned with three friends from a hunting and fishing trip through the wilds of Maine. The party succeeded in bagging four deer and also worried the "speckled beauties" of the brook. Last fall Mr. Stokes had a fierce encounter with a wild cat in Pike's County, Pa.

—The notivity exhibited about the actuary's office of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, is accounted for by the fact that this year's registration is ahead of last

Stokes also appears in the pages of the 1899 [The Pharmaceutical Era, Volume 22](#):

—J. Bispham Stokes, head city salesman for Whitall, Tatum & Co., has returned with three friends from a hunting and fishing trip through the wilds of Maine. The party succeeded in bagging four deer and also worried the "speckled beauties" of the brook. Last fall Mr. Stokes had a fierce encounter with a wild cat in Pike's County, Pa.

(Whitall, Tatum & Co. was a well-known manufacturer of prescription glassware established in Millville, NJ.)