

Places In Time

LAWRENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WINTER 2009

Looking Back at 2008 and Ahead to 2009

By Laura Nawrocik

As always, Hogmanay was a spectacular exclamation point on Lawrence Historical Society's year. The 2008 event brought more than 500 visitors to the grounds of Brearley House. Despite the cold and wind, the large crowd enjoyed one of our best fires ever, once again tended to by Joe Logan and Tom Ledwith. To keep warm, guests were treated to hot chocolate and cider, as well as Munchkins. The house was open for tours and entertainment was once again provided by Graham Kronk, who played the bagpipes outside and the fiddle in the house.

Well before Hogmanay, the society started off 2008 with its annual meeting in February, which featured a talk by Martha Leigh Wolfe on the 1783 celebration that took place in Princeton this past year. Ms. Wolfe spoke at length of the history surrounding the U.S. Congress setting up in Mercer County as well as the events that were planned to celebrate the 225th anniversary of the event.

January and February saw the annual open houses at Port Mercer Canal House. In April, a nature/history walk from that house to Brearley was held, connecting the two house tours. As always, Brearley House was open the first Saturday of every month for tours.

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Graham Kronk playing the bagpipes

Annual Meeting Set for Feb. 22

The 2009 annual membership meeting is slated to take place on February 22 at 2:00pm in the lower level conference room of the Lawrence Municipal Building. This year's speaker will be Dr. Edward Struve, who will talk about "A Jersey Lenape View of Lawrenceville History."

Dr. Struve, a graduate of the Lawrenceville School, has done extensive archeological digging at the Hamill property in Lawrenceville and is considered an expert on Indian artifacts in New Jersey. Board certified in internal medicine, Dr. Struve spent six months studying the remote tribes on the Peruvian Amazon and later practiced medicine in Botswana and Papua New Guinea. In addition to the Leni Lenape, Dr. Struve has worked with the Choctaw tribe in the United States.

The slate of 2009 Board of Trustees and two proposed constitutional amendments will be voted on at the meeting. See page three for the amendments and page four for the list of trustees.

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Apple Day returned to Brearley in April, with Gary Mount trimming the apple trees while telling the crowd about the history of apple growing in New Jersey. The late Marie Messeroll was popular with her apple treats. Summer featured the annual Garden Party at Port Mercer while Brearley hosted our membership picnic in August, which was enjoyed by 30 families.

In the fall, the 5th Annual Mary Tanner Lecture was held at Rider University and featured Dr. Harold Tanner who gave a fascinating talk about the history of Taiwan as a Chinese-American international relations topic.

November saw the society co-host a “getting started in genealogy” event with the Friends of the Lawrence Library. Guest speaker Casey Zahn demonstrated research tips and resources to over 25 people.

Besides the public events hosted by the society, Brearley house was the site of two weddings, a school visit and at least three private tours. The house also received a makeover this year. The township replaced the ramp and the society paid to have one room re-plastered in addition to various other repairs.

The New Year opens with Brearley House still in need of more plaster work; while the Canal House requires a roof replacement. The society hopes to find funding for both these items in 2009.

Events on the calendar include the usual compliment of tours and annual events, supplemented with a lecture on the history of baseball in May by Bob Golon, a possible summer tour at the N.J. Militia Museum and a photo preservation workshop in November.

Many thanks to all the volunteers that made 2008 a year to remember and will surely make a successful 2009!



Tom Ledwidth cheerfully tending the bonfire



A large turnout at the bonfire in spite of the cold weather

Brearley House Visitors

2008 saw more than 120 people visit Brearley House, some from as far away as Denmark. Other out-of-town guests hailed from North Carolina, Kentucky, Connecticut, Virginia, Illinois, Washington, Massachusetts, Pittsburgh and Washington, DC. In 2009, the house will continue to be open the first Saturday of every month for tours.

Open House at Port Mercer

An open house with tours and a talk from D&R Canal Historian Vicki Chirco will be held on Saturday, January 24 and February 21 from 1:00pm-3:00pm at the Port Mercer Canal House on Quakerbridge Road. 2009 marks the 175th Anniversary of the opening of the canal.



Co-presidents: Laura Nawrocik & Jacqi Haun



The northeast room of the Brearley House was re-plastered in 2008 by Specialty Plaster, LLC. From left to right: David Smith, plasterer (on ladder) and Jesse Bolognini (corner). LHS hopes to raise enough money in 2009 to continue the much-needed re-plastering of the other rooms and hallways in Brearley.



Proposed Constitutional Amendments

The following amendments to the society constitution are proposed and will be voted upon at the annual meeting on February 22, 2009:

3. Membership

This Society shall consist of all those who are Honorary or annual dues-paying members. Classes of regular members shall consist of, with dues going into effect Nov. 1, 2009:

1	Honorary Membership	\$ 0
2	Individual Membership	\$20.00
3	Family Membership	\$40.00
4	Senior/Student Membership	\$10.00
5	Business/Patron Membership	\$50.00
6	Benefactor Membership	\$100.00

12. Quorum

A majority present and voting at any meeting shall be necessary for the transaction of business, but a lesser number may proceed with historical work and the announcement of new members. Four members of the Board of Trustees of the Society present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum thereof for the transaction of business.

LHS Sees Increase In Online Visitors

The newly designed society website saw an increase in traffic in 2008, with 3,674 visitors, up more than 1,000 over 2007. Visitors to the site stayed longer and viewed more pages in 2008 than in the previous year. The site was viewed in 44 different countries and 45 states. Ireland, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Spain produced the most international visitors. In the United States, the majority of hits to the website came from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, California and Massachusetts. The most popular topics on the site were the Brearley House and Hogmanay.

In addition to the main website, LHS launched a Flickr photo site in 2008, which proved to be very popular. The photo site went live in March and now hosts over 800 photos from society events and the township photo archive. In the nine months that the society ran the site in 2008, the photos were viewed 6,200 times. More photos are being added on a regular basis, so the site should grow in 2009.

Join the Lawrence Historical Society!

Join the society today or renew your membership! Members receive the society newsletter, and notice and discounts of society events. The society is a non-profit, charitable organization. Membership fees are tax deductible.

Name: _____ Tel (____) _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Student/Senior (62+)	\$5
Individual	\$15
Family	\$35
Business/Patron	\$50
Lifetime	\$250
Benefactor	\$500

Mail to:
Lawrence Historical Society
PO Box 6025
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

I am enclosing a special contribution to commemorate:

Nominees for the Board of Trustees for 2009:

Bill Agress
Rina Banerjee
Ruth Barringer
Janet Bickal
Bruce Bitcover
Skip Conover
Paul Gatterdam
John Halvorsen
Jacqueline Haun
Janet Hubbard
Carolyn Kozlowski
Catherine Medich
Mike Milewski
Laura Nawrocik
Karen Perkins
Dennis Waters
Jim Williams

Places in Time is published three times a year by the Lawrence Historical Society. Back issues and color editions of our award winning newsletter are available at the LHS website—www.TheLHS.org.

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Renew on-line at
www.TheLHS.org