

Places In Time

LAWRENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FALL 2009

Cemeteries of Lawrence: Tour on October 24

By John Halvorsen

Do you know how many cemeteries we have in Lawrence?

No?

Then you need to join us on Saturday, October 24, at 2:00pm for a guided bus tour of Lawrence's cemeteries. The tour will visit all 5 cemeteries and should take about 2 hours to complete. We'll meet at the Brearley House at 1:45pm. Following the tour, join us at Brearley House for refreshments, ghost stories and house tours. The cost is \$10.00 per person for tickets purchased in advance \$15.00 on the day of the event. A ticket order form is available on our website or you may write or call to reserve tickets, PO Box 6025, Lawrenceville NJ 08648 or 609-895-1728.

The five cemeteries of Lawrence reveal much of our township's history, which dates to 1697.

Here's what you'll see –

Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church Cemetery. A visitor from the late eighteenth century to this site on the King's Highway (US Route 206) would recognize today's church and cemetery. The monuments marking the graves of church members buried there are located on each side of the historic church. The earliest markers – fieldstones made unreadable by time and weather – are silent and eloquent reminders of the hardships endured by our early settlers.

Upper Burial Ground. Located North of the Church on Route 206 on the hillside facing the village are irregular rows of early red, grey and brown gravestones, some of which are for Revolutionary War veterans. The oldest stone with a readable inscription dates to 1738. There is a tradition that Mary, a runaway slave, is buried here but this cannot be independently confirmed as there is no stone to mark her resting place.

Cemetery on the Hill. Close by the Upper Burial Ground and guarded by a row of lofty evergreens is the Upper Cemetery, established by the New Jersey legislature just prior to the Civil War. Running the cemetery was never easy. In 1903, the Board advertised for a sexton who would work for \$225 a year. His job description included digging graves. The cemetery was expanded in 1918 with the help of a \$200 loan from Trenton Trust Co.

Princessville Cemetery. Located on Princeton Pike, this cemetery dates from 1843, when the owner of the then-Princessville Inn donated three-fourths of an acre to the trustees of the Methodist-Episcopal Church for a Chapel. The first recorded burial dates to 1846. In 1890, the Chapel was moved and the African-American families living in the area built a small church of their own. Burials – some in unmarked graves -- continued there until 1921. The church was destroyed by a hurricane in 1950 and never rebuilt.

Continued on page 3

Militia Museum of New Jersey Tour



LHS held our annual membership event at the militia museum at the armory on Eggert Crossing Road. The museum has extensive displays on NJ's involvement in US military history and is perhaps Lawrence's best kept history secret. If you missed the event, the museum offers regular tours given by their knowledgeable volunteer staff. For more information, call 609-530-6802.



Society officers Carolyn Kozlowski, Jacqi Haun, Ruth Barringer, and Laura Nawrocik examine the historic rifles on display.

Hogmanay Set For December 31

As we head into fall, many of us are thinking of our family holiday traditions. One tradition that is dear to the LHS family is our annual Hogmanay bonfire, which will return to the Great Meadow behind Brearley House at 6:00pm on December 31. Come out and join us as we say goodbye to 2009.

Russ Wins Nash Award

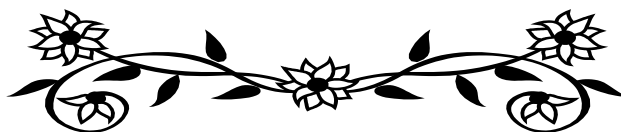


Each year, the Winona Nash History Award is awarded to the Lawrence High School senior demonstrating excellence in history, as determined by the faculty. This year's winner is Anthony Russ, right, shown receiving the award presented by LHS board member John Halvorsen on Senior Awards Night. Anthony was ranked as one of the Lawrence High School Top Ten students. He begins his freshman year at Harvard University this fall as a History or Economics major. He also plans to play college football and, after graduation, hopes to pursue a career in athletics.

Mary Tanner Lecture, October 11

The 6th Annual Mary Tanner Lecture will be held on October 11 at 2:00pm in the SRC Seminar Room at Rider University. This year's featured speakers are Richard Hunter and Howard L. Green, who will present "The Curious Career and Fateful Future of the Delaware and Raritan Canal."

2009 marks the 175th Anniversary of the opening of the D&R Canal. Hunter and Green will illustrate the lush history of the canal from its use as a major transport avenue to its future as a serene state park.



Cemeteries, continued from page 1

The Paupers Cemetery. Located on Allen Lane, the plot was purchased for \$75.00 in 1859. No one knows for sure who was buried here. This tranquil spot offers a welcome respite from the onrushing traffic of nearby Route One. There are no monuments, only tall trees serve as benign and lofty guardians of the resting places. The site endured years of neglect. In the late 70s, the township restored the site, and placed a marker reminding us that in the past, as well as the present, life could be tough and unrewarding.

Morris Hall Cemetery. Founded in 1904 as the Catholic home for the aged poor, the cemetery of the Holy Rosary adjacent to this modern facility is the resting place for the Second Bishop of Trenton. The granite monument marking his grave is topped by an obelisk with an intricately wrought Celtic cross. The cemetery – unused for many years -- is the resting place for those residents of Morris Hall who had no other relatives to make their funeral arrangements.

Come Join Us! A visit to these restful surroundings helps us understand our past and how our ancestors endured the rigors of pioneer life. The narrated tour will illustrate our diverse origins and the mix of people which uniquely define today's Lawrence Township.

See you on October 24!

Canal House Garden Party and Tea Party



At the tea party celebrating the 175th Anniversary of the opening of the D&R Canal, Joe Logan serves sandwiches to Carolyn Kozlowski, Rina Banerjee, Martha Logan and Janet Bickal.



LHS hosted its annual Garden Party in June. As usual, the party featured ice cream and the music of the Rhythmairs. This year also saw a guest appearance by Syd the Parrot, seen here greeting guests with owner Linda Field.

Robert B. Immordino, In Memoriam

A longstanding advocate for history in Lawrence Township, Robert B. Immordino, died June 27, 2009 at the age of 94. Bob Immordino and his wife Jennie moved to Lawrence just after World War II and lived here ever since. Although his civic interests ranged well beyond history, Bob is known in the Lawrence history community as the town's first Municipal Historian, for his role in creating the annual Colonel Hand March, for his chairmanship of the Lawrence Township Historic and Aesthetic Commission, and for his role in developing the Lawrence History Collection at the Lawrence Headquarters Branch of the Mercer County Library. On October 13th he will be honored posthumously with the Podmore/Dwyer Historic Award presented by the Lawrence Township Growth and Redevelopment Committee. The presentation will take place at a ceremony and breakfast at the Greenacres Country Club at 8:00 a.m. For information contact 609-689-9960 ext. 14.

The Lawrence Historical Society
P.O. Box 6025
Lawrenceville, N.J. 08648

Return Service Requested

Renew on-line at
www.TheLHS.org

Author Talk Focuses on a Child's Life in World War II Britain

By Janet Bickal

On September 1, 1939, the day England declared war on Germany, ten-year-old Gwen Redfern, along with most of her classmates and teachers, boarded a train in London and was evacuated to the countryside. All these years later, Gwen Redfern Southgate has written a fascinating memoir about her childhood in the slums of London and in the wartime villages to which she was sent. Now retired from teaching physics in Highland Park, she lives in Kingston and Maine. Ms. Southgate will be speaking about her experiences and reading from her book *Coin Street Chronicles* at the Lawrence Library on Sunday, November 15 at 2 pm. The event, free to the public, is jointly sponsored by the Friends of the Lawrence Library and the Lawrence Historical Society.

The Coin Street of the title was a "grimy industrial corner of London," which no longer exists, displaced by the chic cultural area known as the South Bank. Southgate tells wonderful stories about her family, her neighbors, her fellow evacuees and the farm families with whom they were abruptly housed. Her story is a tribute to her mother, who struggled valiantly to educate her children in a harsh urban world and to all the gutsy Britons who endured the blitz and the six grim years of World War II.

For further information, please call 609-895-1728 or check online at www.thelhs.org.

Advertise Here!

LHS is looking for newsletter sponsors. *Places in Time* reaches over 250 readers.

Contact us at 609-895-1728 or webmaster@thelhs.org for more information.

Places in Time is published four 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.

Contributors for this issue: Rina Banerjee (editor), Jim Williams (photographer), Laura Nawrocik (webmaster), John Halvorsen, Janet Bickal, and Dennis Waters.

We can be contacted at the following address: webmaster@thelhs.org