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Pres.: Robert C. Rafano  
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 Secretary: Ann Rafano  
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 Iris Schmitt  
 Anne Sivess  
 Rose Mary Freese  
 Kenneth Roginski

Class of '99  
 Irene Buga  
 Candice Lewandowski  
 Dolores Roginski  
 Edwin Roginski

Class of '00  
 Ray Bruhn  
 Joann Goepfert  
 Doris Miller  
 Donna Rafano

Standing Committee:  
 Artifacts: Corinne Cebula

**Honorary Trustees:**

Harold Armstrong  
 Helen Armstrong

**Meeting**

November 18

*People from the  
 1999 Calendar  
 Speak & Reflect*

**Conklin  
 Methodist  
 Church  
 Wednesday,  
 November 18  
 6:30 p.m.  
 Dinner**

**President's Report**  
*by Robert C. Rafano*

At last, at last, at last, the Borough Council, on September 23, 1998, awarded a contract to L. G. Roman, II Company, Incorporated, Cedar Grove, New Jersey, in the amount of \$359,500.00 to complete the renovation of the Old School Baptist Church. After delays caused by high bids initially received and a reworking of the construction schedule, the big day finally arrived.

On October 9, 1998, a pre-construction meeting occurred between the builder, municipal representatives, and the architect. Permits have now been obtained, and a project meeting has been scheduled for November 5, 1998. Recent communication between the architect and myself indicates the first portion of the project will be the installation of new utili-

ties to service the building—electric, gas, and water. The balance of construction was worked out at a project meeting on November 5th. As the project progresses, we will keep everyone informed.

It has been a long hard road, starting back in 1990 when this organization began the process of having the building placed on the national Register of Historic Places. It has taken hard work and perseverance to get us to this point. Hopefully, 1999 will see the completion of the building and offices for the Historical Society, as well as a museum.

On to other matters:

As our year ends, I would like to thank all those who worked so hard during the year to make our many projects successful.

**THANK YOU!**

**NOVEMBER 18  
 ANNUAL  
 MEETING  
 WILL BE A  
 DINNER MEETING**

There is a change in venue for the annual meeting. It will be at the **Conklin Methodist Church** on Gordon and Main Streets.

The Trustees *invite* you to a dinner meeting. We invite you to meet us at 6:30 p.m. in the upstairs auditorium. (The entrance is on the Gordon Street side of the church.)

After dinner and conversation, we will have the annual meeting. We have invited people who are in the pictures of the **1999 Calendar** or people who are descendants of the people in the pictures to speak at our meeting.

If you have any recollection of participating in any of the events in the calendar pictures, please join and contribute what you remember of the event. You can help us in better understanding more of the history behind the pictures.

Please be assured that **YOU** are invited!!!!!!!!!!!!

We hope that the evening will be both delicious and memorable for those who attend.

## Many People Helped!

There were many people who contributed time and energy to make this a successful year for the Society.

The programs were well received by the membership. Mr. Mark Nonesteid presented programs about the historical dig at a church cemetery in New Brunswick and the Indians of New Jersey.



Photo: Mark Nonesteid

Mr. Andy Brasno spoke about George, Richard, and Olive Brasno. Pictures and videos brought back memories of the talented family. Mrs. Lois Servon brought, dis-

played, and explained quilts and quilting. Her presentation reflected her love for the past and traditions.



Photo: Lois Servon

Thanks to the Banner Committee: Doris Miller, Iris Schmitt, Donna Rafano; Calendar Committee: Doris Miller, Emily Miller, Woodis Booraem, Dolores Roginski, Joann Smith-Goepfert, Anne Sivess; Membership: Woodis and Warren Booraem; Artifacts Committee: Corinne Cebula; Newsletter Committee: Earl Wenger, Dolores and Edwin Roginski, Candice Lewandoski, A. Rafano, M. Anastasio.

The Auction Committee made up of Rose

Mary Freese, Doris Miller, Earl Wenger and Raymond Bruhn were helped by Boro workers, Pete Rossi, Kelly Andre and the Boy Scouts to move the materials which were purchased from the Board of Education.

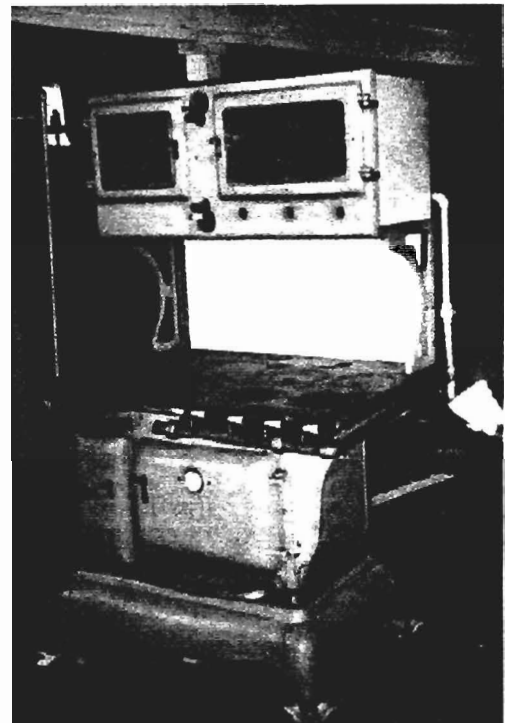
**THANK YOU, THANK YOU!**  
*There are 144 members in the Society!*

### Acquisition by Earl Wenger

A four-plate wood or coal 4-burner gas range with oven and overhead cabinets was donated to the Society by **Helene R. Schrager**. The range has a 3"X 6" cast iron name plate just below the oven door which

reads:  
"S. Davidovitz South River"  
Woodis Booraem says Sam Davidovitz had a furniture store on Ferry Street.

Photo: Schrager Range



## *Influenza Epidemic of 1918*

*by Paul F. Geopfert*

Regarding the Influenza Epidemic of 1918 in South River, much information has been found from the newspapers during that time. The flu outbreak started in early October 1918, and by the middle of the month nearly 50 percent of the people in town had the flu to some degree. The South River Board of Health ordered all schools, churches, movie houses, and beer saloons to close.

By the end of October, the crisis seemed to have passed. The number of cases of illness was dropping, and families were recovering. The Board of Health lifted its quarantine

order on October 25.

There were no reports or information of any mass burial sites at Monumental Cemetery. In fact, the number of people who died (at least those named in the newspapers during October) in South River was not nearly enough to have warranted the need for a mass grave.

I do plan to continue researching the newspapers for the months of November 1918 through February 1919 to see if any other influenza outbreaks of a more serious nature occurred.

Perhaps the need for a mass grave was required during this later period. I shall keep you posted of my progress!

## *Banner/ Calendar*

*by Doris Miller*

The Society is in the final stages of designing a banner that will be displayed at meetings, parades, and special events. The logo on the banner is an original design by South River artist Joseph Csatari. Look for its appearance in the near future.

The 1999 Calendars are on sale for \$5.00 at various locations throughout South River.

The calendar has 12 pictures of the "People of S. R." from the 1800's up to the 1950's.

## *Cannons*

*submitted by*

*Woodis M. Booraem*

For thirty-three years, the Civil War Cannons were located on the front lawns of the East and West wings of the former South River High School on Thomas Street.

A number of cannonballs were placed around the flagpole which was situated between the cannons. Vandals were responsible for their disappearance.

Procured through the efforts of Charles Anderson, a former sheriff of Middlesex County and a local insurance agent, the cannons arrived at South River at George Allgair's Wharf on August 4, 1902 on the schooner C. D. Emerson out of Brooklyn, New York. The cannons came from Governor's Island and were of the Revolutionary design.

The idea of having the cannons was suggested by a Commander Smith and the order for them was secured by Congressman Howell.

In 1935, the Board of Education ordered the cannons to be scrapped and they were sold to a New Brunswick junk yard.



Above: This is a rendering by the late Raymond Booraem of the cannons in front of the school on Thomas Street. It appeared in the 1931 Oriflame.

South River Historical & Preservation Society, Inc.  
Box 545  
South River, New Jersey 08882

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 82  
SOUTH RIVER, NJ  
08882

**Meeting**

Wednesday, November 18 at 6:30 p.m., Conklin Methodist Church. Free Admission & Dinner!!

*Membership Application*

**Dues per year: \$5.00 Adults, \$1.00 Students**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send your check payable to the *South River  
Historical & Preservation Society, Inc.* to:**

**Woodis & Warren Booraem  
208 Main Street**

**South River, New Jersey 08882**

**Membership and Information: Woodis Booraem, 257-0365**

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*Sorry!*

*Corrections from the  
last publication.*

*The SZARKA  
Family donated the  
scrapbooks.*

*Edwin Roginski is a  
Trustee.*

*Carol and Susan  
DeVoe are members.*

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