

# HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION NEWS

Number 17

**NEXT MEETING:**

**February 27th  
at 7 p.m.**

For those of you who missed our "Buried in New Jersey" program of John Frazee, Father of American Sculpture in October, here is a second chance to get to know our famous South River resident (and his wife, Jane) as we present a sketch revealing a glimpse of life in the 1800's.

Join us and enjoy this VERY entertaining piece of history.

**2002 Meeting Date:**

FEBRUARY 27  
APRIL 24  
JUNE 26  
SEPTEMBER 25  
NOVEMBER 20

**SRH&PS Officers**

**Marilyn Anastasio**  
President

**Donna Rafano**  
Vice President

**Paul Goepfert**  
Treasurer

**Stephanie Bartz**  
Secretary

**President's Message**

by Marilyn Anastasio

I would like to thank the immediate past officers — Donna Rafano (President), Paul Goepfert (Vice-President), Stephanie Bartz (Secretary), Edwin Roginski (Treasurer) — the trustees and the volunteers for all their work during 2001.

Among the projects the SRH&PS focused on in 2001 were:

- the publication of five newsletters,
- the utilization of grant awards for educational activities conducted on-site as well as on an outreach basis,
- the presentation of an original dialogue between Jane and John Frazee (noted sculptor),
- the acquisition of artifacts representative of life in our borough in the 19th and 20th centuries,
- the initiation of archiving our collections,

- the scheduling of programs by the police and fire departments, by the grant recipients, by the members.

We welcome all members and friends to the SRH&PS. We invite all members and friends to not only attend our meetings and programs but also to get involved (to whatever level they are comfortable) in the operation of our organization. In this newsletter, you will find a "Volunteer Job List." You'll see there's something for everyone at the SRH&PS. Let us hear from you.

I look forward to working with the officers, trustees, and members this year. This year, 2002, promises to be exciting as we build on our successes and, with the continued support of the Mayor and Council, the Borough of South River, the residents and friends of South River, we maintain our faith in South River's "Proud Past and Bright Future."

**Woodis and Warren Booraem*****Two Extraordinary Members***

When someone mentions the South River Historical Society, two people immediately come to mind, Woodis and Warren Booraem. For over a decade now, Woodis and Warren have been committed to the preservation of the history of our town. They were among the original twelve residents who pooled their resources together to form the Society back in 1988. Woodis and Warren have lead the drive each year, chairing our membership committee. Each year they sent out personal greetings to every member welcoming their renewed membership for the next year. For over 10 years our membership has been consistently over 120 members. But their dedication goes beyond just membership, they are pillars of our organization. Whenever a question arises, whether it be about a photograph for our annual calendar or a member of the community is researching their family history, you can be sure that Woodis and



*Woodis and Warren Booraem*

Warren have been consulted *and* almost always know the answer *and* almost always have a story to tell about it! Their knowledge of South River is amazing. As direct descendants of Samuel Willet, founder of South River, they have a vested interest in keeping South River's rich history alive.

Thank you Woodis and Warren, for many years of outstanding dedication and service.

## November 28th Meeting Highlights - *Annual General Membership meeting*

Once again our Annual meeting was a success. Thirty members were in attendance. A cover dish-supper was provided by members of the Executive Board followed by the Show and Tell portion of the meeting. Highlights of the evening included: Ed Roginski sharing several interesting swords including a 1863 Civil War sword, a replica of a sword from western Europe, a Polish/Galician walking stick and an African spear; Stephanie Bartz brought a 1940 dish given out at the Capitol Theater; Pat Gawarkiewicz displayed an Orange Crush bottle with South River embossed on it (she donated the bottle to the Society); Julia Devine also showed us a milk bottle from Allgeier's, and a second bottle from George Algair. (she also donated both bottles to the Society); William and Paul Goepfert displayed a bowling ball from the two lane bowling alley at Al's Tavern, formerly on William St. in South River, William proudly donated the ball to the Society; and lastly William also showed several overseas shipping containers from WWII, a Signal Corps flag bag, a 1941 British ammunition box, along with a contemporary ammunition box. We all went home with a full stomach and a head full of interesting facts!



*Donna Rafano shows off a dresser set and clock from the Capital Theater recently donated by Helen Antonitis.*



*Julia Devine shares bottles from Allgeier's and George Algair.*



*Paul and William Goepfert display one of many WWII overseas shipping containers.*



*SRH&P Society members enjoy the cover dish supper.*



*Donna Rafano passes the gavel to newly elected Marilyn Anastasio.*

**SRH&PS OFFICERS**

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*President*

**Donna Rafano**  
*Vice President*

**Paul Goepfert**  
*Treasurer*

**Stephanie Bartz**  
*Secretary*

**IMMEDIATE PAST  
PRESIDENT  
Donna Rafano**

**TRUSTEES**

**Irene Buga**

**Corinne Cebula**

**Pat Gawarkiewicz**

**Kathy Heilman**

**Candice Lewandoski**

**Paul Migut**

**Doris F. Miller**

**Ann Rafano**

**Dolores Roginski**

**Edwin A. Roginski**

**Joann Smith-Goepfert**

**Eliane Verloove**

**AN HISTORIC EVENT HAS JUST OCCURRED**

At 8:02 p.m. on February 20 something happened which had not occurred for 1,001 years. For sixty seconds only, read in perfect symmetry 2002, 2002, 2002, or to be more precise — **20:02, 20/02, 2002.** This historic event will never have the same poignancy as the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month which marks Armistice Day, but it is an event which has only ever happened once before, and is something which will never be repeated. The last occasion that time read in such a symmetrical pattern was long before the digital watch and the 24-hour clock — at 10:01 a.m. on January 10, 1001. And because the clock only goes up to 23:59, it is something that will never happen again!

**Earl Wenger receives recognition for his years of services as South River's Historian**

Much to his surprise, Earl Wenger was presented with a proclamation from the Mayor and Council for his dedication and service to South River as town Historian. Mayor Robert Szegeti personally thanked Earl for all his time and unselfish efforts over the past few years. Earl was an integral part of the renovation of the Old School Baptist Church, the restoration of the Van Dyke Reid map, the driving force in the setup of the OSBC museum, and

an active member of the SRH&P Society's Executive Board.

On behalf of the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Bob Rafano also presented Earl with a resolution recognizing his years of dedication and service.

Earl graciously accepted both presentations and thanked the town and the Society for honoring him.



*Bob Rafano presents Earl with a plaque from the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Middlesex County.*



*Mayor Robert Szegeti presents Earl with a proclamation from the Borough Council.*

**Museum Information**

**Old School Baptist Church Museum**

The museum is open on the first Sunday of every month from 1:30 pm to 3:30 p.m. Volunteers are need.

For more information about the South River Historical & Preservation Society visit our website at: [www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/) To become a member contact Candice Lewandoski at 60 Hillside Avenue, South River, NJ 08882. For more information call 732-613-3078.



**South River  
Historical & Preservation Society, Inc.**

129 Main Street,  
South River, New Jersey 08882

Visit our website at: [www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/)

**2002 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Please check one:  New membership  Renewal membership

Please print your name clearly as it should appear on membership listing:

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
                    First                                    Middle Initial                                    Last

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

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues: **\$5.00 per adult**    **\$1.00 per student**

Payment enclosed: Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Cash  Check (Please make check payable to "SRH&PS, Inc.")

Send your application and dues payment to: Candice Lewandoski  
60 Hillside Avenue  
South River, NJ 08882

My company has a matching gift program. My company: \_\_\_\_\_  
My company's address: \_\_\_\_\_

As a tax-exempt corporation, the SRH&PS, Inc. is eligible to receive matching gifts. If your employer participates in such a program, please send matching gift forms with your membership donation.

The Society's fiscal year is January 1 to December 31.

Or apply by e-mail: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/sapply.htm>