

HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION

News

Number 29

2005 MEETINGS

FEBRUARY 23

APRIL 27

JUNE 22

SEPTEMBER 28

NOVEMBER 16

All meetings begin at 7 p.m. and are held at the South River Museum (formerly known as the War Memorial building) located at 64-66 Main Street, South River.

For more information: visit www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/, or call us at 732-613-3078.

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President's Message by Marilyn Anastasio

The Dedication of the Restored South River War Memorial Monuments on October 3rd was one of the highlights of the year. Blessed with a beautiful day, the program was memorable. Participating in the ceremony were the American Legion Frandsen Levandowski Post #214, the VFW Lyons-Shepsco Post #1451, and speakers Leo Surak, George Cerekwas, Ann Rafano, Helen Armstrong, and David Sliker. A reception for the guests followed the ceremony. Thank you for your attendance and financial support of this worthy project. Our monuments are and will be preserved.

Your continued support of the South River Historical & Preservation Society is greatly appreciated. We hope to meet your expectations and dreams for the Museum.

We look forward to seeing you at our Annual Meeting on November 17 at the Museum. The dinner and program will begin at 7 p.m.

The Liberty Ballroom Remembered

"Tales of the Liberty Ballroom" was the topic of the September 22nd meeting of the South River Historical Society. Martin Adler presented a history of the South River ballroom, which featured original posters advertising famous dance bands that played there.

Each band was described briefly and attendees were treated to a video tape of Tex Beneke and his orchestra as they might have performed at the Liberty. Actual photographs of bandleaders and patrons at the ballroom were also presented. Photos of rising stars like the young Edy Gorme, were amongst the treasures that Mr. Adler shared with us.

Featured guests of the evening were Mr. Mitchell Janowski, one of the proprietors of the Liberty during its Big Band days, and his wife, Betty. Mr. Janowski regaled the audience with stories and anecdotes about the people and events which made owning a ballroom such an exciting and challenging experience. His firsthand knowledge of the ballroom and its operation was of great interest to all.

The Liberty building is still standing on Whitehead Avenue. It is a reminder of a colorful and unique chapter in the history of South River.



Above: Martin Adler shows one of the many posters from his collection. Below: Former owner Mitchell Janowski shared his fond memories of the "Liberty" in its hey-day.



Meeting Highlights—

In June, President Marilyn Anastasio presented the general membership with a wonderful overview of the artifact cataloging process. Stephanie Bartz was on hand to explain some of the tedious details involved in the cataloging process. Dick Meyers organized the Van Dyke Reid records of births, marriages and deaths in South River into two volumes. This is a great tool for researching South River family histories.

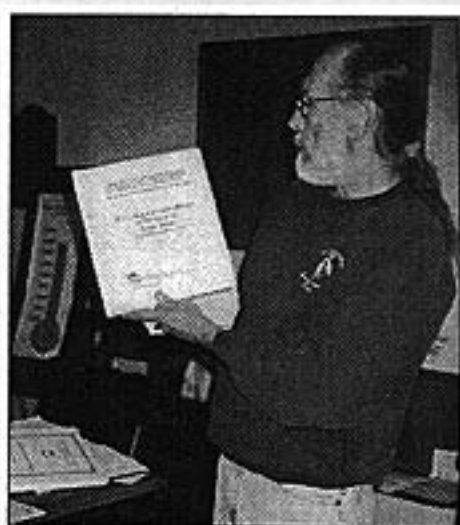
The effort of cataloging and organizing the museum collections began in earnest in 2003 when the New Jersey Historical Commission awarded the Society a \$5,000 grant for the project. Maria Gostkowski, a lifelong resident of South River who had previously expressed interest in the project, has been employed as cataloger since that time. Using a dedicated computer and



Left: Stephanie Bartz explains how she processes an artifact through the museum cataloging system. Right: Dick Meyers displays a volume from his Van Dyke Reid project.

a software program called PastPerfect, more than 1,400 individual items have been cataloged to date.

Marilyn, Stephanie, Dick and Maria can be found several nights a month



diligently working upstairs at the museum "cataloging". If anyone is interested in helping them in this effort, please call 732-613-3078. Your help is very much welcome!

October Dedication of the Restored War Memorial Monuments

Sunday, October 3rd, sunny and mild, was a perfect day for the dedication ceremony and reception for all those generous people who donated their time and/or money toward the restoration of our war memorial monuments.

Presentation of the Colors by the American Legion Color Guard, remarks by Commander Brian Cannon and Past Commander Leo Surak and the prayer by George Cerekwas were very moving. The South River Historical Society appreciates the

part the American Legion, the Ladies Auxiliary and the Veterans of Foreign Wars had in the success of this fund raising project.

The highlight of the dedication was the introduction of Helen Clayton Armstrong as special guest speaker. Mrs. Armstrong, six years old at the time, and her sister (now deceased) unveiled the Doughboy statue and World War I Memorial in 1926.

Following the ceremony, refreshments were served in the museum. This provided a chance for all those who

had not yet visited the museum to see all the interesting exhibits and artifacts donated by past and present residents of South River.



Helen Clayton Armstrong, honored guest, unveiled the Dough

Looking down from the second floor of the museum to the reception following the dedication

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The Executive Board would like to extend a sincere thank you to those listed below for their continued support of the Society.

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Special Guests Welcomed at the Museum

SOUTH RIVER SENIORS—

Doris Miller and Emily Miller were truly the "hostesses with the mostest!"

South River Seniors visited the museum, took an "armchair tour" of the museum via video, had the opportunity to look over our collections, and then were treated to a delicious buffet provided by the Millers. We look forward to the "Seniors" next visit.

TED GOLDMAN—

Ted Goldman, SRHS Class of 1934, visited the museum during the summer with his son Ralph Goldman. The Society videotaped more than two hours of Mr. Goldman's reminiscences of his years in South River. His vivid descriptions of Ferry Street, the high school, and his family are a treasured addition to our archives.



Ted Goldman and his son Ralph.

If you are interested in adding to our "video history" collection, please contact us at the Museum. 732-613-3078



South River
Historical & Preservation Society, Inc.

64-66 Main Street
P.O. Box 545-466
South River, New Jersey 08882



Visit our website at:
www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/

Looking back in time...

Below is a list of South River Street names and their origins:

Anne Street	Anne Klauser Bissett - wife of Asber W. Bissett, former mayor
Arlington Street	Arlington Cemetery, Virginia
Burton Avenue	George L. Burton, Sr. - attorney, former mayor and freholder
Cleveland Street	President Grover Cleveland
Elizabeth Street	Named in honor of Whitehead daughter
Frandsen Street	Hannah Frandsen - church organizer and Board of Education member
Grant Street	President Ulysses S. Grant
Hillside Avenue	Originally named Cemetery Avenue
Lexington Street	Battle of Lexington
Louis Street	Louis Maklary - tavern keeper
Marks Place	Bernard Mark - cobbler and shoe merchant
Milton Street	Named in honor of Whitehead son
Old Bridge Turnpike	Formerly New Brunswick Turnpike
Russell Street	Named in honor of Whitehead son
Pottery Lane	Jacob Eaton and others who operated pottery factories
Sheinfine Avenue	Originally "Pushkin Ave" named after Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, renamed in 1963 after Sheldon Sheinfine killed in WWII
Seppi Street	Joseph Richard Seppi - U.S. Navy - killed in WWII
Snapper Avenue	Dave Snapper - operator of the Capital Theatre in town and developer
Stanton Street	Edward M. Stanton - Secretary of War under President Abraham Lincoln
Thomas Street	Thomas Booraem - ship builder
Wojcie Way	Alexander F. Wojciechowicz - SRHS 1934 All State Center, 1937 Fordham University - All American Center, NFL Detroit Lions