

President's Message by Marilyn Anastasio

One Friday afternoon as I sat in the museum eating pizza, I looked around the building and out the windows. I was pleased to see all the artifacts in the museum. My next thoughts were of the people connected to the items.

It's not **just** soldiers' uniforms but **the** uniforms worn by Ted Appleby and Ted Sivess from World War II.

It's not **just** a chairs in the museum but **the** chairs from the old High School and Campbell School in which our students sat.

It's not **just** child's sled but **the** sled ridden by Irene Buga in her childhood.

It's not **just** a wedding gown but **the** wedding gown worn by Emily Miller on her wedding day.

It's not **just** a doctor's instruments and office furnishings

but **the** instruments and office furnishings of Dr. Albert Smith.

It's not **just** a Christmas tree but **the** Christmas feather tree from Emil and Lena Fritz's home.

It's not **just** monuments in front of the museum but **the** sacred names of South River's sons, fathers, uncles, and husbands who died for our country.

In our museum, every picture, item of clothing, paper, or memento reminds us of the people who used, enjoyed, played with, or made the items. It is the people of South River who are the museum. I am sure that there will always be people to take care of this wonderful place.

Thanks to the members of the South River Historical & Preservation Society for making my four years as president a most rewarding

experience (and a lot of enjoyable work, too). I know the residents of South River consider themselves fortunate to have a Mayor and Council that support and will continue to support their efforts to maintain the museum—a place to proudly display and honor the history of the people of South River.



Ted Sivess - His portrait and uniform are pictured here.

SOUTH RIVER HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION SOCIETY MEETINGS**2006 MEETINGS:****FEBRUARY 22****APRIL 26****JUNE 28****SEPTEMBER 27****NOVEMBER 15****PLEASE JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16th FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING**

Speaking at the November 16 meeting will be Brian and Quentin Armstrong, descendants of the David Armstrong Family of South River. They will discuss the over 100 year history of the Armstrong family in South River including their civic and business contributions to the town (e.g., Mayor James B. Armstrong, Armstrong Sales Car Dealership, the Shade Tree Committee, the Jesse Selover History of South River, etc.).

All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and are held at the South River Museum (formerly known as the Old School Baptist Church/War Memorial building) located at 64-66 Main Street, South River. For more information: visit www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/, or call: (732)613-3078.

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The 200th Anniversary Celebration of the Old School Baptist Church

On Sunday, September 18, 2005, the Bicentennial of the Old School Baptist Church was celebrated. President of the South River Historical & Preservation Society, Marilyn Anastasio, welcomed attendees and presented an overview of the afternoon's program. Here are the highlights of the celebration:

- Elena Marie Chalcraft led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and proceeded to beautifully sing a patriotic hymn solo.
- Reverend Frank Davis, Pastor of the Conklin Methodist Church, offered kind thoughts then gave the invocation.
- Throughout its 200 years the building has been in service to

South River as a church, a free public library, a municipal office, and a museum.

- Robert Rafano explained the "Old School" aspect as he gave a brief history of the building as a church.
- Irene Goldberg, former library director, recalled her days in the library at this address. Prior to her arrival no catalog system existed and most books were donated. (Early library ledgers on-hand attest to this.) During her tenure "Story Time" was initiated and many moms and tots attended while volunteers assisted. Heating was a standing issue; a dropped ceiling (of sorts) was an attempt to rectify the problem yet provided



A photographic history of the Old School Baptist Church from the 1890's to current day was on display.

In Memoriam

The Executive Board and members of the SRH&P

Society offer our condolences to the family of:

EDWARD W. PRICE

Special Acknowledgements:

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Lorraine F. McDonald

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200th Anniversary Celebration of the Old School Baptist Church

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children with another opportunity to challenge the librarian's resourcefulness and good humor as books were tossed onto the dropped ceiling to be retrieved with mops and brooms by library employees.

- The Deputy Borough Clerk, Anita Hermstedt, fondly reminisced about the building as the municipal office, what it meant to her and her family, her various duties, how the office became **the** spot in town for local information. Mrs. Hermstedt also recalled her amazement to discover, during the building's remodeling, old tree trunks had supported the portico. (One is on display in the museum.) Her shared memories were truly touching.

- Ann Rafano, honorary trustee and one of the founders of the South River Historical & Preservation Society, spoke about the Society's

beginnings. The portraits of the Willett Sisters were the first acquisitions. Memorabilia relating to South River was being stored in people's homes and attics. A place to share these artifacts and memories with the town was needed. In the 1990's members of the South River Historical & Preservation Society approached the Mayor and Council about using the Old School Baptist Church as a museum; a lease was signed. The building has subsequently been placed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Mayor Szegeti and members of the Borough Council are to be commended for their continued support of the museum, of the Society, and of its mission.

- Councilman David Sliker reiterated the support of the mayor and council for the SRH&PS and delivered a proclamation recognizing



Mr. & Mrs. Boshko and Rev. Frank Davis enjoy the celebration.

ing the 200 years of the building's existence.

- Closing remarks were delivered by vice-president Dick Meyers who gratefully acknowledged all responsible for the success of the day's events.

Refreshments were served. 2006 calendars, note cards, and gold-tone ornaments (depicting the building and war monuments) were some of the items available for purchase.



Ann Rafano spoke of the Society's inception and the purchase of the Willett Sisters' portraits.



New museum displays were unveiled at the celebration.



Councilman David Sliker presents a proclamation celebrating the building's 200 years.

SOUTH RIVER HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION SOCIETY GIFT SHOP

Commemorative 200th Anniversary Old School Baptist Church Ornament (South River Museum) - \$10.00

Wooden Plaque of the Old School Baptist Church (made from timber from the original columns) - \$10.00

Old School Baptist Church Notecards with Envelopes (features an early photo of the OSBC) Set of 5 cards - \$2.50; Set of 10 cards - \$4.00

2006 SRH&PS Calendar - \$6.00 (current year and previous years)

Numbered Limited edition print of the Old School Baptist Church by Joseph Csatari (13" x 15 3/4", unframed, includes brief biography of the artist and history of the Old School Baptist Church building) - \$25.00



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Total amount enclosed: \$ _____ 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

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My company has a matching gift program. Company Name: _____
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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.

I would like to donate an additional amount of \$ _____

This gift is in honor of in memory of _____

Gifts will be recognized in our newsletter.

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