
HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION

Number 51

NEWS

President's Message by Brian Armstrong

As I celebrate my 50th birthday, I would like to reflect on demographic and preservation changes to South River in the last 50 years. The people who moved into South River during this time period and those who were born during these years will have a dramatic impact on the future of historical preservation in the town. South River has been affected over its long history by the different immigrants that have come to live and work in the town and contribute to its success. The Portuguese and other nationalities that have become South River residents during the past 50 years have significantly affected the borough in a positive manner, adding new families, businesses, and cultural practices to the community. Their experiences and contributions are now part of the historical record of the borough.

Although many of the commercial buildings of the past have disappeared or been significantly altered during the last 50 years, most of the major residential gems in the borough still survive along Main Street and other roads. New homeowners proudly maintain these houses which add to the visual appeal of the town. One study that I recently saw of buildings added to a preservation list in the late 1970s included only one building that was demolished. The South River Historical and Preservation Society is currently working with the borough council to ensure that South River's structural past is preserved and valued as an asset to the quality of life for the community.

So as I turn 50, I hope that in the next 50 years South River will continue to preserve its past and find ways of engaging all people in the community to find value with its history and relevance in their lives. I was so excited to meet a man at South River's Night Out who was a new owner of a house in South River and was so excited about the town's past. We had people from all types of cultural and ethnic backgrounds come by our table and take interest in the history of the borough. I firmly believe that whether you have lived in the borough for 90 years or 90 days, your history in the town is important. If your connection is to the high school, a favorite restaurant, bar, store, or an old house that you purchased and want to know its history, we are here to answer your questions and help you discover the great history of this borough.

New Acquisitions, May-August 2009

1. **Yearbook**, 1942 SRHS Oriflamme, volume fifteen; **photograph**, Class of 1944, SRHS. Donated by Lorraine Nisonoff.
2. **Ten photographs** (digital copies), planting of Liberty Tree at SRHS, April 17, 1976; **six photographs** (digital copies), dismantling of Causeway bridge, late 1970s; **three photographs** (digital copies), view towards South River from the Veterans Memorial Bridge shortly after the bridge opened, late 1970s. Donated by Greg Bito.
3. **Program**, Capitol Theatre Inaugural Presentation Souvenir Program, Friday, January Twentieth, 1928. Donated by Janet Hartman.
4. **Button hook**, Rubin's Department Store [no date]; **two pinback buttons**, Deutscher Tag [German Day], August 7, 1911, South River, NJ; **pinback button**, Dzien Pulaskiego U.K.K., 13 Paz., 1935 [Pulaski Day, Oct. 13, 1935], South River, NJ; **pinback button**, "I'm an S.R.H.S. Booster" [no date]; **pinback button**, "I'm an S.R.H.S. Rooter" [no date]; **pinback button**, "South River" with gold tone football suspended on a ribbon [no date]; **two photographs**, Rebuilding the South River Bridge, Aug. 21, 1916 [pasted on opposite sides of a loose scrapbook page]; **postcard**, New Campbell School, South River, NJ [circa 1936]; **magnet**, South River Food Bank Supporter, 2009; **leaflet**, South River's First Annual National Night Out Event, Aug. 4, 2009. Donated by Stephanie and Ed Bartz.

...to be continued

**South River
Historical & Preservation News**

Published five times yearly by the
South River Historical & Preservation
Society, Inc.

Editor: Dick Meyers

Associate Editors & Contributors:

Marilyn Anastasio Stephanie Bartz
Candice Lewandoski Ann Rafano

Mailings & Distribution:

Paul & Joann Goepfert

To receive your newsletter via email, please
contact us at SouthRiverHistory@gmail.com.

Corrections

The *South River Historical & Preservation News*
willingly corrects its factual errors. If you believe
we have made a mistake, please let us know (see
p. 4 for contact information).

In the SRH&PS Website Guest Register

Greetings From...



**Glen (Greenberg) Gilbert, 2008-01-12,
Little Rock, AR**

My grandparents, Samuel and Anna Greenberg,
owned the home at 236 Main Street for many years

up until the late sixties. I was delighted to find it on this wonderful site. I'm only sorry the porch I remember
in my youth has been taken down. The house as I remember it looked more like the earlier photo, but the new
residents have done wonders preserving such a wonderful home.

Judith Ann (MacFarlane) Trever, 2009-02-22, Albuquerque NM

I grew up in South River. Left in 1968. My grandparents and uncle John Bosko had embroidery factories in
South River. I believe that my sister, Louise Bruhn, is a member of your historical society.

Special Acknowledgements (7/09-8/09)

CONTRIBUTIONS IN MEMORY OF:

Janet Booraem Fairweather by Woodis & Warren Booraem

Janet Booraem Fairweather by Ann & Robert Rafano

Walter Mrozek by Woodis & Warren Booraem

**The South River Historical & Preservation Society extends its sympathies
to the friends and family of two Society members who recently passed away:**

Janet Booraem Fairweather and Walter W. Mrozek

SRH&PS 2009 EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Newsletter - Dick Meyers

Program - Anita Hermstedt

Publicity - Marilyn Anastasio

Web Site - Stephanie Bartz

South River in The Great Depression Or “EMERGENCY”: 1930’s Style

Highlighting our June meeting, the South River Historical and Preservation Society’s president, Brian Armstrong, researched the Great Depression in South River. He referenced the late Paul Shack’s collection of articles and artifacts for his presentation.

From the Roaring Twenties to the Crash of ‘29, through the labor riot in South River to President FDR and the New Deal, Brian walked us through the people, problems, issues, and politics of the times. Unemployment as high as twenty-five percent, homelessness, commercial and residential foreclosures, labor unrest... these were signs of the times.

On the other hand, the good news: South River weathered “the emergency.” The embroidery industry did not suffer the severe economic downturn that other businesses did, and there were “heroes” – “well-known” as well as “unsung” – who helped people avoid foreclosures, find employment, food, and shelter.

By Mayoral proclamation in 1930, “the EMERGENCY” (a.k.a. the Great Depression) in South River was ameliorated to some extent by food and clothing drives, fund-raising basketball games, door-to-door solicitations, etc., and by the kindness and generosity of neighbors and friends. Recovery was a community effort. Pride and patriotism were pervasive.

Early New Deal years saw the institution of the alphabet soup programs, such as the CCC, CWA, NREA, PWA, and WPA. These programs (some short lived, others more enduring) put people back to work, created stability, assured those in need the basic essentials of food, clothing, and shelter, and gave people HOPE. However, despite all the efforts on the local and national fronts, it was not until World War II that things seemed to return to “normal” (i.e. pre-“emergency” standard).

Mr. Armstrong’s presentation was truly well-received. Attendees shared their thoughts, memories and insights. Mr. Armstrong encouraged audience members to contact him if they had any questions to ask or stories to share.



To supplement his talk, SRH&PS President Brian Armstrong constructed a display (to his right) featuring newspaper stories from the early 1930s.

SRH&PS GIFT SHOP

2010 SRH&PS Calendar - \$8.00
Previous years also available - \$6.00



Old School Baptist Church print by Joseph Csatari - \$25.00
Numbered limited edition print 13” x 15 ¾”, unframed, includes brief biography of the artist and history of the Old School Baptist Church building.

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

Commemorative Book in Celebration of South River's 275th Anniversary, 1720-1995 - \$10.00
Over 90 pages of text & photos.

Wooden Plaque of the Old School Baptist Church - \$10.00
Made from timber from the original portico columns.

Old School Baptist Church Note Cards with Envelopes
Features an early photo of the OSBC;
Set of 5 cards - \$2.50
Set of 10 cards - \$4.00

SRH&PS Hat - \$5.00
Blue with white lettering and a picture of the Old School Baptist Church.

Lapel Pin - \$5.00
Collectible pin commemorating the South River Museum - Old School Baptist Church
[size- 7/8 inch]



Note: Prices do not include postage. Please visit our website (see back page) for additional items.

ATTENTION MEMBERS:

Please consider paying your membership dues for 2010 now. You can use the membership form supplied in this newsletter or print one from the website. The SRH&PS appreciates your continued support.



P.O. Box 446
South River, New Jersey 08882

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08882

South River Historical & Preservation Society, Inc.

Phone us: **732-613-3078**
Email us: **SouthRiverHistory@gmail.com**
Visit our Website: **<http://www.rootsweb.com/~njsrhps/>**
Visit our Museum: **See Calendar (insert)**
Write to us: **See mailing address, above**

The SRH&PS Needs Your Help!

The Society's "to-do list" seems to get ever longer, and volunteers are sorely needed to help us achieve our goals. Among the many activities awaiting a benefactor are the following:

- extracting pertinent articles and news from issues of the *Spokesman*.
- photographing some of South River's most interesting and historically significant sites.
- determining which downstairs items in the Museum have yet to be catalogued.
- inventorying catalogued items and inputting their locations into the database.
- starting the business history survey, including stuffing envelopes, photographing businesses, and visiting some of the oldest businesses to do an oral history/survey.
- indexing a turn-of-the-20th century Van Dyke Reid scrapbook.

If you'd like to contribute your time and effort, please let us know (see above for contact information).

Old School Baptist Church Cemetery Conservation Program Donation Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP Code: _____

Phone (Optional): _____

Email (Optional): _____

Amount of donation: _____

Please make checks payable to the South River Historical & Preservation Society, Inc. and send them with the form to: SRH&PS, Inc.

P.O. Box 446

South River, NJ 08882

(If you would like to make a memorial donation, please add the information to the back of the form.)

South River Historical & Preservation Society Calendar

2009 Meetings: September 23, November 18

September 23 Program: *Vintage Photography* (Jeff Thompson will explain how to identify daguerreotype, ambrotype, tintype, and Carte-deVisite photos. He'll also discuss how to begin collecting vintage photographs and will display part of his amazing collection.)

These Wednesday meetings will convene at 7:00 p.m. at the South River Museum (formerly the Old School Baptist Church/War Memorial Building), 64-66 Main Street, South River.

The Museum is also open to the general public from 1:30 until 3:30 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month:

October 4 November 1 December 6

2010 SRH&PS Membership Application Form

Please check one: New Renewal Gift (from _____)

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

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Check here and include a stamped, self-addressed envelope to receive a membership card.

Check here and include your email above if you would like to receive your newsletter via email.

I would like to donate an additional amount of \$ _____ (Gifts will be recognized in our newsletter)

The gift is: in honor of in memory of: _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____ Cash Check (Please make check payable to "SRH&PS, Inc.")

Send your application and dues payment to: SRH&PS Membership
P.O. Box 446
South River, NJ 08882

[All dues and contributions are tax-deductible.]

My company has a matching gift program.

Company name: _____

Company 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.

ANNUAL DUES CATEGORIES

Please check one:

Adult \$10.00

Student \$5.00

Family/Couple \$15.00

Business/Corporate \$25.00

Lifetime - Individual 250.00