
HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION

Number 52

NEWS

President's Message by Brian Armstrong

Ten years ago, after a four year restoration, the South River Historical & Preservation Society opened our Museum. The story of the Museum actually began in the early 1990s when, through the efforts of the South River Historical & Preservation Society and local residents, and with the support of the Mayor and Council, the property was placed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places on November 19, 1991, and on the National Register of Historic Places on January 7, 1992. Upon the initiative of the SRH&PS, the South River Borough Council applied for and received a grant for restoration of the building which was approved in June 1995. The grant was funded by the Historic Preservation Bond Program and administered by the New Jersey Historic Trust. The restoration was completed and the Museum opened in 1999.

Since then, the Museum has served as the focal point for most SRH&PS activities and the display of our collection of more than 7,000 historical artifacts donated by residents and former residents. There are five general membership meetings a year at the Museum, at which presentations related to South River and New Jersey are offered concerning the history of important buildings, monuments, civic organizations, and families of South River. The Museum is open the first Sunday of the month from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Cruise Nights during the summer, and by special arrangement. Tours and activities are hosted by trustee-docents for the South River schools, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Senior Citizens, and interested families. The Historical Society uses the second floor as office and storage space.

So if you have not visited the Museum lately or want to take another look, please come by when the Museum is open. Trustee-docents are there to answer any questions. I try to come to the Museum each time it is open so that I can speak to the visitors and learn what they are interested in. I enjoy speaking to the older visitors who share great stories and provide additional information about several of our artifacts. I also enjoy seeing the younger visitors exploring the past as they look at old pictures, tools, coins, or cooking equipment. There is something for everyone at the South River Museum.

New Acquisitions, May-August 2009

...continued from September Newsletter

1. **Mug**, 25th anniversary of the St. Marys Catholic Club, 1933-1958. Donated by Emiel and Eliane Verloove.
2. **Commencement announcement**, SRHS Class of 1958; **program**, Golden Jubilee of the South River Presbyterian Church, 1944; **ruler**, "vote Democratic - Vaughn for Mayor, Rafano & Szegeti for Council" [no date]; **concrete calculator**, SEBOLT, Inc., South River/Edison [no date]. Donated by Eleanor Eppinger.
3. **Scrapbook**, newspaper clippings about scouting, SRHS football, and boxing benefit (circa 1941); **program**, SRHS football 1939; **schedule and school songs**, SRHS basketball, 1939; **booklet**, "The Trumpet," Spring 1941 [SRHS]; **four booklets**, "The Commercial Broadcast," Apr. 1939, Dec. 1940, May 1941, and Dec. 1941 [SRHS]; **seven newspapers**, "The Tell-Tale," Dec. 1941, Feb. 1942, Mar. 1942, Apr. 1942, June 1942, Dec. 1942, and Oct. 1943 [SRHS]; **scrapbook**, "History of South River Woman's Club, 1981-1982"; **program**, Tour of Homes, South River Woman's Club, May 24, 1969; **program**, South River Woman's Club Eleventh Annual Installation Dinner, May 27, 1975 (with added sheets detailing candle lighting); **catalog**, Boy Scout uniforms and equipment (missing cover) [circa 1940]; **booklet**, Instructions for Howard Johnson's Soda Fountains [no date]; **newspaper sections**, *Sunday Times*, New Brunswick, NJ, pp.5-8, Dec. 31, 1939 and "Daily Home News," New Brunswick, NJ, pp.13-14, May 1, 1946. Donated by Joyce Combs Weinheimer.

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Marilyn Anastasio (2005)
Stephanie Bartz (2007)
Dick Meyers (2008)
Doris Miller (2008)
Robert Rafano (2008)

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

Readers' contributions to the newsletter are welcomed (see p. 6 for contact information). Submissions for the February, 2010 issue must be received by January 15.

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

Museum Hosts Scouts

On Tuesday, October 13, the Museum was open for a Cub Scout Troop 4 Bear Den 2 meeting and program on the history of South River. The information they gathered was to be used to earn a badge.



Marilyn Anastasio and Ann Rafano began by leading the six Cub Scouts (pictured above), with leaders and parents, on a tour of the cemetery and a discussion about the Frazee Urn and some of the people buried in the cemetery. This was followed by a stop at the two war monuments where Marilyn explained what they represented.

Inside, Marilyn and Ann spoke of the history of the Museum building and its original use as a church, the exhibits, and the history of the Historical Society.

The Cub Scouts were very attentive and enthusiastic and asked a number of questions. They liked especially the Indian artifacts, the objects found in the ponds, the "school corner," the Van Dyke Reid map, and the large aerial map on the wall. The leaders and parents seemed to enjoy the tour and also asked a number of questions. It was a pleasure to see everyone's interest in their community and its history.

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. 6 for contact information).

2009 Members of the South River Historical & Preservation Society, Inc.

"The loftier the building, the deeper its foundation must be laid." Thomas Kempis

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*Deceased

Greetings From...



Doris A. Hamelin-Basilico, Kendall Park, NJ (June 20, 2009)

Peter Kondratyk is my grandfather. I was raised in South River and graduated from SRHS in 1981. My mother, Irene Kondratyk still resides in South River on Fairview Avenue.

Jan Grodzki, Robbinsville, NJ (July 3, 2009)

Looking for Judy Glock or Paula Goss. I went to Junior high with them in the mid-60s. Feel free to E-mail me at Sheep8@optonline.net.

Joseph C. Blakaitis, Duck, NC (Aug. 12, 2009)

Born and raised in South River. Lived with parents at 5 Fairview Ave., attended Campbell School and South River High and graduated in 1957. Great town. Went to Lafayette College and then went to work for DuPont in Parlin with my Dad and Mom until about 1966 and then moved to the Morristown area in north Jersey. Love to hear from some old friends.
blak@embarqmail.com

Bernie Behrens, Fullerton, CA (Sept. 14, 2009)

My late mother was Edith Pansey Behrens (1919- 2008) who was born and raised in South River NJ. Her parents were Dr. Abraham and Anna Pansy. He was a doctor in South River for several decades, from the 1920s-1960s. His practice was at 5 4th Street near Jackson Avenue. Would any among you recall the Pansy family ?

Donna Ragucci, Neptune Beach, FL (Oct. 1, 2009)

Thank you for all the work in creating this interesting and informative site!
SRHS alumna- class of 1986

Good News...

The SRH&PS was awarded a \$1,915 grant for cataloging from the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission.

...and No News...

about the parachute factory that operated on Raritan Avenue. Info and photos desperately wanted (see p. 6 for contact information).

Discover Your Home's History

Wouldn't you like to know who built your house, the names of all the owners through the years, their children, where they worked, when they planted that big tree in the backyard, why they put on that addition, what colors they painted the house, etc., etc.?

Well so would we! Documenting history has to start somewhere, so why not let it start with you?

If you are the first owner of a new house or the tenth owner of an old house, write down all the information you know in your own personal style and format. Include photos of your house and your family – and don't forget the family pet! That's the first step. Then, if your house had previous owners, try researching what you can. Finally, forward your findings to the SRH&PS (see p. 6 for contact information), and it will be safely stored at the South River Museum for future generations.

Not sure how to start or how to research the history of your house? The SRH&PS will gladly provide some guidelines and assistance.

Historic Preservation Advocate

Raj Waran has been working on an Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Document for the Borough's Master Planning Process as part of his coursework at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University.



Raj Waran, speaking at September's General Membership Meeting.

Raj's work is intended to be used by the SRH&PS to assist the public, elected officials, and Borough planner in developing an active Historic Preservation Plan to be incorporated into the Master Plan. The intent of the Society is to serve in an advisory, not regulatory, role, in which notable characteristics in the Borough's built environment are highlighted for the public's appreciation and protection.

Resources are provided in the Advisory document to help evaluate the potential for South River to identify target areas and develop mechanisms for maintaining a connection to the past as the Borough moves towards a bright future through the master plan process currently underway.

Special Acknowledgements (9/09-10/09)

CONTRIBUTORS:

JoAnn & Anthony Razzano
Joanne & Steve Senko

CONTRIBUTIONS IN MEMORY OF:

JoAnn Czapkowski by Frank Czapkowski
Daniel L. & Evelyn Golden by Roger M. Golden
Ted Kadela by Hilda Kadela
William & Theresa McIlvaine by William J. McIlvaine
Beatrice Stults by Myles Garrigan

The South River Historical & Preservation Society extends its sympathies to the friends and family of Trustee Kathleen Hyland at the passing of her Mother, Patricia Hyland.

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 3/4", 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.

Vintage Photography Takes Center Stage

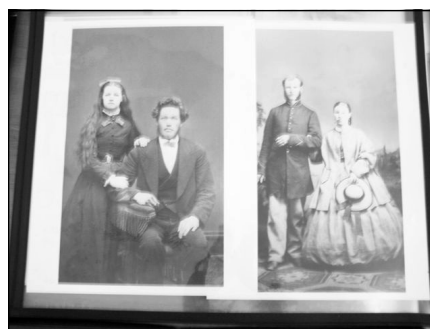


Jeff Thompson shared a wealth of information on vintage photographs.

Jeff Thompson wowed those in attendance at September's General Meeting with his presentation on vintage photography, focusing on the Civil War era.

In explaining how to identify daguerreotype, ambrotype, carte de visite, "dead letter" photos, cabinet cards, and other types of early photographs, Jeff delved into his personal collection for examples of each, and many were stunningly beautiful.

At the end of the evening, Jeff invited members to come forward with their own old photographs, which he then examined and discussed.



Just a few of the many photographs Jeff brought along to illustrate his talk and to allow his audience to peruse, which they did with enthusiasm.



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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**

South River Scout Tackles a Daunting Challenge

Andrew Sandler (right) of South River has been approved by the Boy Scout Council for his Eagle Scout Award project. Andrew will be compiling information about South River from hundreds of copies of *The Sentinel*, going back to the 1950s.

After finding and organizing the information, Andrew will transfer his project to a CD and present it to the South River Museum, where it will be made available to the public.

The newspapers were donated by former South River School Superintendent Anthony Agnone.



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 Meeting: November 18 (Annual Meeting)

November 18 Program: Everyone is invited to bring a bit of South River history to the yearly "Show and Tell" session. Bring, too, an appetite, for a light dinner will be awaiting.

This, as with all 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:

December 6 January 3 February 7

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: _____

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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:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult | \$10.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$5.00 |
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