

HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION NEWS

President's Message by Brian Armstrong

The recent news stories about houses in the borough being bought by the state with Blue Acres Funding, and torn down as part of the Superstorm Sandy recovery, remind us of what a significant historical event the storm was to both South River and New Jersey as a whole. Like the Blizzard of 1888, the 1908 Main Street Fire, World War I, the Depression, World War II, the Vietnam War, and 9/11, this storm has forever altered the borough and created a common event that all those who lived through it will never forget.



The Richard K. Meyers South River History High School Essay Contest, sponsored by the South River Historical & Preservation Society for the last two years, has included multiple entries concerning the personal stories of those affected by the storm. While some of the essays focus on the inconvenience factor of the storm, the more moving accounts recall more tragic stories that include lost homes, belongings, and relocations. The personal observations and descriptions of the water rising on homes and streets are incredible firsthand accounts of the event. All of these essays have been included in the Museum collection as historical artifacts from this era and will provide a window to future generations interested in what happened in 2012.

When high school class reunions are held 25 or 30 years from now, this storm will be remembered as a significant event that provided a common experience for the graduating classes. Hopefully the steps being taken today by the town, state, and nation will reduce the chances of a similar tragedy taking place in the future. But as the last hundred years of South River history has shown us, human history always contains both happy and tragic events that dominate the collective memory of the residents of a town.

Third Graders Visit On Government Day – by William Goepfert

On Thursday May 29th, South River's third graders visited the museum as part of their annual Government Day events. Six classes, totaling over two hundred students spread out over three hours, came through the doors. The students learned about the history of the museum itself, from its beginnings as a Baptist church to its roles as the library, Borough Clerk's office, and finally, as the town museum. The students also learned about the cemetery behind the building and some of the graves located there.



Overall, the students seemed to enjoy their visit, with many looking on in amazement as they first walked through the doors and saw the various exhibits and displays. When shown the fire helmet with "Washington" written on it and asked how it relates to the town, many students guessed that George Washington was a fireman, and were surprised when it was revealed that South River was previously called Washington.

The docents for the day were Ann Rafano, Marilyn Anastasio, Charlie Sicknick, and William Goepfert.

SRH&PS 2014 EXECUTIVE BOARD

OFFICERS

Brian Armstrong
President
Nan Whitehead
Vice President
Richard Alai
Secretary
Marilyn Anastasio
Treasurer

Dick Meyers [*Deceased*]
Immediate
Past President

TRUSTEES

Hank Dziemian
William Goepfert
Sara-Ann Goldman
Linda Grimm
Anita Hermstedt
Paul Migut
Bernadette Palaski
Greg Palaski
Gary Petrie
Ken Roginski
Iris Schmitt
Charles Sicknick

COMMITTEES

Artifacts - Stephanie Bartz
Buildings & Grounds -
Ann and Bob Rafano
Calendar - Doris Miller
Fund Raising - Joann Smith-
Goepfert and Paul Goepfert
Grants - Brian Armstrong
Historic Buildings & Sites -
Ken Roginski
Hospitality - Linda Grimm
Membership - Marilyn Anastasio
Newsletter - Raja Waran
Program - Nan Whitehead
Publicity - Kathleen Hyland
Scholarship - Brian Armstrong
and Joann Smith-Goepfert
Web Site - Stephanie Bartz

HONORARY TRUSTEES

Helen Armstrong (1993)
Warren Booraem (2002)
Woodis Booraem (2002)
Ann Rafano (2003)
Marilyn Anastasio (2005)
Stephanie Bartz (2007)
Doris Miller (2008)
Robert Rafano (2008)

South River Historical & Preservation News

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

Co-Editors: Stephanie Bartz and Raja Waran

Contributors:

William Goepfert Ann Rafano
Brian Armstrong Stephanie Bartz

Mailings & Distribution:

Paul Goepfert Brian Armstrong
Joann Smith-Goepfert

To Our Readers:

The *South River Historical & Preservation News* willingly corrects its factual errors. If you believe we have made a mistake, please let us know.

Readers' contributions to the newsletter are welcomed. Submissions for the September 2014 issue must be received by August 15.

Please advise us if you would prefer to receive your newsletter via email by sending a message to southernriverhistory@gmail.com.

Special Acknowledgements

CONTRIBUTORS:

Mary Ann & Walter Boyler
Maureen McCallion
Jeanmarie & Larry Ruch
Gloria & Ken Smutko

IN MEMORY OF:

Peter G. Obert (1771-1860)
by Eileen White

Janet Mark Stout
by Lorraine Chevalier McDonald

Joyce McIlvaine Leaming
by Karen and Richard Satterthwaite

New Acquisitions: April—May 2014

- Ball caps from the 1996 and 1998 South River P.B.A Fishing Derbies. Donated by William Goepfert.
- Digital copy of a photo of the interior of Monush's Tavern (now the South River Pub) with Betty and Stanley Dey, Joe and Rosie Ruszaj, Martha and Harry Rushworth, circa 1961. Donated by Barbara Rushworth.
- Photograph of Frank Joseph Shamy Sr., owner, in the Central Pool Parlor on Ferry Street, 1916. Donated by Frank Shamy Jr.



Let the River Run

The motto on South River's official seal is "Our flowing tides can carry cargoes to the markets of the world." The April program went a long way toward telling the story of the river that provided the inspiration for that motto.

"Along the Raritan River: South Amboy to New Brunswick" was presented by Jason Slesinski, author of the forthcoming book by the same title, Borough Historian of Sayreville, and Vice President of the Sayreville Historical Society. The presentation included everything from a 1685 map drawn by John Reid to images and stories about Hurricanes Floyd, Irene, and Sandy.

A wealth of information about river industries such as oystering, brickmaking, and shipping was provided, along with a fascinating selection of related images. The decline in water traffic with the coming of the railroad was also discussed.

Although the depiction of the area as "The Chemical Belt," with all of the related industrial and sewage pollution, was covered, the presentation ended on a positive note with information about the return of turtles, whales, dolphins, ospreys, and fishing and sailing.

Along the Raritan River: South Amboy to New Brunswick is part of the *Images of America* series and will be available for purchase in August 2014. Several images from the collections at the South River Museum, as well as other local images, are included in the volume.



Jason Slesinski addresses the audience during his April 23rd presentation.

Help Wanted!

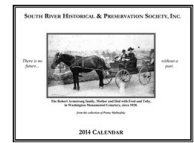
The SRH&PS is in need of a kiosk to display and protect artifacts in the yard behind the museum. If you know of a Boy Scout who's looking for a project for his Eagle Scout award, or someone who might like to volunteer for the project, please ask them to get in touch. We can be reached by email at southriverhistory@gmail.com.

SRH&PS GIFT SHOP

2014 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

Old School Baptist Church Postcard - Set of 3

postcards, \$1.00
Features an 1894 photo of the OSBC (now the South River Museum).



Commemorative Book Celebrating 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 - Set of 5 cards, \$2.50; set of 10 cards, \$4.00
Features an early photo of the OSBC.

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.



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

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 589
SOUTH RIVER, NJ
08882

South River Historical & Preservation Society, Inc.

Mailing address: See above
Email: SouthRiverHistory@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njsrhps/>
Visit our Museum: See Calendar (insert)
Phone: 732-613-3078 [Messages only]

South River Historical & Preservation Society
4.6 ★★★★★ (33 ratings)
579 likes · 3 talking about this · 15 were here

History Museum
The SRH&PS is an all volunteer organization dedicated to preserving South River's past for future generations.

About - Suggest an Edit

Photos Likes Events

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

2014 Meetings: June 25 September 17 November 19

June 25th Program: *1914: The Year that Changed the World, the United States, and New Jersey.* Brian Armstrong, President of the Society, will cover a wide range of topics including the start of World War I, the introduction of the Federal Reserve System, and New Jersey news about the blizzard of 1914, the Fort Lee movie industry, the Standard Oil Trust, and Thomas Edison.

The meeting will convene at 7:00 p.m. at the South River Museum — Old School Baptist Church, 64-66 Main Street, South River. Refreshments will be served.

The Museum is also open to the general public from 1:30 until 3:30 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month (second Sunday if the first is a holiday): **July 6 August 3 September 7 October 5**

2014 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: _____

ANNUAL DUES CATEGORIES

Please check one:

Adult \$10.00

Student \$5.00

Family/Couple \$15.00

(please enter number in family ____)

Business/Corporate \$25.00

Lifetime - Individual \$250.00

Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope to receive a membership card.

Check here & include your email above if you would like 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 checks 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.