



LEAGUE NEWS

The Newsletter of the League of Historical Societies of New

The Springfield Historical Society & the Union County Cultural & Heritage Commission will host the Spring League Meeting in Springfield on June 4th

Registration form
on page 9.

First Annual Celebrate New Jersey! Days

This June will mark the first statewide marketing campaign entitled *Celebrate New Jersey!* We ask for your assistance in supporting this effort.

Until now, New Jersey was one of the few states that did not have a yearly celebration of itself. Throughout the month of June, declared *Celebrate New Jersey!* Month, organizations of all types and sizes across New Jersey will list their events on www.CelebrateNJ.org by simply registering their event information. Participation is FREE.

A statewide coalition of groups, including the New Jersey Association of Museums, has joined together to create widespread awareness of and pride in New Jersey and our state's contributions to the nation and the world.

We invite all sectors of our state to participate. We want the opportunity of *Celebrate New Jersey!* to demonstrate our state's resilience, ingenuity, vitality and beauty—past and present—in all that we do. We seek to awaken enthusiasm for New Jersey's "firsts and bests." We want to showcase events that delight the eye, the senses, and the soul. Through our cross-marketing plan, we intend to create and sustain statewide visibility and publicity throughout May and June—and, in the process, develop a mandate to make *Celebrate New Jersey!* an annual event.

For more information, consult the interim website for "insider" information. The public website will be launched about April 15 (and can be viewed now by linking to <http://seanhayes.info/cnj/index.html>). To maximize publicity, we ask that you list your June events no later than April 30 (but sooner is better). Single events can be listed directly at www.AboutNewJersey.com/events/ (choose "Submit an Event" and fill in the form). Events entered on www.AboutNewJersey.com will be shared automatically on the *Celebrate New Jersey!* website. If your group has multiple events throughout June, you can submit your information in Microsoft Excel, Word, or any electronic format directly to info@CelebrateNJ.org and we will translate the data and automatically share it with www.AboutNewJersey.com and www.VisitNJ.org.

We are also looking for photos in jpeg files as well as ideas for feature stories for newspaper inserts. Picture your story and your photos in statewide publicity—and then send them to info@celebrateNJ.org. Thanks for caring—and sharing—the greatness of our state!

Marguerite Chandler, President, Crossroads of the American Revolution Association
Erin Dougherty, President, New Jersey Association of Museums

**The Officers and Trustess
of the League of
Historical Societies
of New Jersey**

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The following are valuable
members of our board, but they
are not elected positions:

Membership Chairman
Dorothy Pietrowski
Madison Historical Society

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Bernard Bush
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Historical Society

Ruth Kane Fern
Passaic County Historical Society

DEADLINE: Submissions for the
August issue of *League News* must
be on the editor's desk no later than
July 15, 2005. Please send all items
to: Linda Barth, 214 North Bridge
Street, Somerville, New Jersey 08876;
barths@att.net.

**Material submitted electronically
should be in WORD format.
Photographs will be scanned and
returned. Digital photographs
should be submitted in .jpeg or .tiff.**

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Members:

I am pleased to report that the
Publication Awards Committee,
chaired by Sally Yerkovich,
CEO of the New Jersey Historical
Society, was able to convene
without snow and make selec-
tions.

I am very grateful to Sally
and her committee for accom-
plishing this difficult task.

There have been several
changes in upcoming meetings.
Please check other locations in
the LEAGUE NEWS for these. I
am thankful that Jack Chance
was able to contact the Union
County Cultural and Heritage
Society. They have graciously
agreed to co-host the meeting
on June 4 with the Springfield
Historical Society.

Your League officers are
responsible for arranging our
three meetings each year. This is
not an easy job. If your society
would consider hosting a meet-
ing in the future, please let me
know. It would be a big help to
the League and very rewarding
for your society.

Thanks for your considera-
tion and support.

Sincerely,
Bob Hunter
bhunte@camden.lib.nj.us
856-465-7751

LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS.....



This letter, from Verona Historical Society President Gerald Caprio, concerns William Fidurski's railroad article, which appeared in the August issue of the *League News*.

Dear Sir:

I enjoyed reading your comments "Along the tracks..." in the recent issue of the League's newsletter. As an avid League member and rail fan, I certainly appreciate your views, as detailed in your excellent piece. Your points are very well taken, I assure you.

As a former resident of Roselle Park (1973-1982), I got involved in efforts by the County of Union to reactivate the former Rahway Valley & Staten Island lines recently. The amount of political and citizen protests that this issue raised was, as I'm sure you know, enormous and widespread. Unfortunately, when abandoned or little-used lines are reactivated, the hue and cry of the NIMBY folks soon follows! I strongly feel that as historians and conservationists, we should all try to maintain a balanced view regarding updating of rails. I remember so well how the tiny Rahway Valley R.R. pattered busily between Summit and Cranford for so many years. Why in the world anyone would oppose the reactivation of that line is beyond me.

I've been very active also with the Glen Ridge-based group that wants to restore service on the so-called "Lower Boonton Line" of N.J. Transit, from Walnut Street, Montclair, to the Hoboken Terminal of NJT. The elimination of passenger service on this segment several years ago was truly a disgrace in the heavily traveled counties of Essex and Hudson.

Pleading ignorance, I am totally unfamiliar with any restoration of service recently that has impacted negatively upon historical areas or sites. Most rail lines in our heavily polluted and over-peopled state are in areas that have long been accepted as "transportation corridors" and most, as I'm sure you realize, go way back to the pioneering days of railroading in this entire country. The proliferation of heavy hauling trucks certainly makes possible our transportation systems, food replenishment, quality of life supplies, and everything else. But, isn't the diversion of so much of this needed cargo to rails, not roads, desirable?

Most rail historians I know (I belong to a half-dozen or so groups) are also, as can be expected, staunch advocates of our Nation's railroads — from our colorful little short-lines to troubled and threatened Amtrak. I'm quite sure many of us would be fully in agreement with the points raised in your article. Many (if not most) of us respect history and historical presentation and conservation. In this complex and vital issue, I feel we should all strive to maintain a balanced viewpoint on rail reactivation and its possible legal and illegal impact on every aspect of the areas so affected.

I will continue to read of your committee's updates in the League newsletter. Our wonderful state League certainly is a proper forum for developments in this area and dialogue on any issue is welcome and vital, I feel.

Are you familiar with the Friends of the New Jersey Transportation Heritage Center? The Friends have an annual symposium at Drew University every spring (this year it was held on April 2) which features a dozen or so short presentations regarding transportation issues. Perhaps this might be a possible future opportunity to share your committee's views and objectives with many rail and history fans and experts. I think it would be an interesting and provocative event!

Best wishes for the new year, and I look forward to further updates from the League's Preservation Committee!

Yours truly,
Gerald T. Caprio, President
The Verona Historical Society, Inc.
The League of Historical Societies of West Essex, Inc.

Dear Fellow Historians:

I am pleased to announce that the Morris County Heritage Commission has unveiled its new MORRIS COUNTY HERITAGE COMMISSION WEBSITE, www.morrisheritage.org. The website is completely new and has information about the Heritage Commission and links to many Morris County historical agencies and museums. Special thanks to David Mitros, our archivist, who worked very hard on this project, the members of our web committee, and the Morris County Freeholders for their support. I am certain that this website will be a valuable resource for those interested in Morris County and New Jersey history.

Bonnie-Lynn Nadzeika
Acting Chairman for the Morris County Heritage Commission
Director of the Morris County Historical Society

LEAGUE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES OF NEW JERSEY 2005 PUBLICATION AWARDS



The following awards for works published in 2004 will be presented at the Spring League Meeting on June 4, 2005, in Springfield:

BOOKS

First Prize - *A Century of Summers—The Lake Hopatcong Yacht Club's First Hundred Years* (published by the Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum)

Second Prize - *Elizabeth Meirs Morgan, 1913-2004—Historian, Botanist, Environmentalist* (published by the Ocean County Historical Society)

BROCHURES

First Prize - "Dey Farm Historic Site" (published by the Township of Monroe Historic Preservation Commission)

Second Prize - "Lyndhurst Historical Society brochure and membership application" (published by the Lyndhurst Historical Society)

Third Prize - "Annual Apple Festival" (published by the Lacey Historical Society)

PAMPHLETS

First Prize - "Map of the Montrose Park Historic District" (published by the Montrose Park Historic District Association)

Second Prize - "Christmas in Long Valley—2004 House Tour" (published by the Washington Township Historical Society)

NEWSLETTERS

First Prize - "Atlantic Heritage" (published by the Atlantic County Historical Society)

Second Prize - TIE

"New Jersey Transport Heritage" (published by Friends of the New Jersey Transportation Heritage Center)

and

"The Montrose Compass" (published by the Montrose Park Historic District Association)

Continued Distinction—"Hopewell Valley Historical Society Newsletter" (published by the Hopewell Valley Historical Society)

(continued on page five)

2005 PUBLICATION AWARDS

(continued from page four)

CALENDAR

First Prize - "2004 Calendar of the South River Historical and Preservation Society, Inc."
(published by the South River Historical & Preservation Society, Inc.)

MEDIA

First Prize - "Onward with Valor: A Tribute to Edward C. Benford" — DVD (published by the Audubon Historical Society)

We congratulate all of the winners and urge our member organizations to submit items published in 2005 for the 2006 awards. See page 8 for details.

IDEAS-4-U

History on the Hoof is pleased to announce a new offering: **The Distaff Muse**: What qualities define the 18th Century Woman? Virtue? Piety? Gentility? Spirit? Wit? Fortitude? Resignation? Passion?

Historical interpreter Stacy F. Roth explores the private thoughts and popular image of women of the 18th century through songs, quotations, poetry and prose. In this unique presentation from a revolving repertoire, audiences will visit with humble heroines, brave Amazons, bold actresses, wise wits, warriors in disguise, and backbones of society.

Miss Roth will sing songs by and about women from folk, popular, and theater traditions, and illustrate the struggles, triumphs and private thoughts of women both renowned and little known, with a special emphasis on women of New Jersey. She accompanies herself occasionally on guitar, penny whistle, and concertina.

Come, be amused with the distaff muse. For adults.

Two other mainstay programs are

also available:

Over Here, Molly Pitcher: Stories of a Woman of the Army in the American Revolution: A dramatic presentation highlighting the lives of women who "belonged to the army" during the American Revolution. Mary Hays a.k.a. "Molly Pitcher" reminisces about the days when she accompanied her husband through summer battles and winter encampments from Valley Forge to Monmouth to Morristown. Relating her tales of firing a cannon in the heat of battle to trudging "behind the baggage," she provides a glimpse into what it was like to be a "camp follower" in the days when American Independence was a dream rather than a certainty. Adult and children's versions available.

"Totally Tea," An 18th Century Tea Experience: Why was tea so important in the lives of 18th century people that fashion-conscious families posed for portraits with their tea sets? Did Great Britain lose her American Colonies over

"the cup that cheers"? Find out in this unusual costumed presentation of tea lore, history, songs, poetry, living history display and demonstration. Presented with New Jersey-related tea tales on request. Call to inquire about Tea Party options. Adult and children's versions available.

A complete list of History on the Hoof's programs is available at: <http://www.voicenet.com/~frstprsn/hoof/hoof.htm> .

"Over Here, Molly Pitcher" and "Totally Tea" are currently among the programs available from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities' Horizons Speakers Bureau, which serves member NJ not-for-profit organizations. (For more information on the NJCH, see their website at www.njch.org/speakers.html). For rates and availability, please contact Stacy Roth at 609-239-2706 or frstprsn@voicenet.com. History on the Hoof, 342 Barclay Street, Burlington, NJ 08016 www.voicenet.com/~frstprsn or www.mollypitcher.net

June is Celebrate New Jersey! Month

*We urge everyone, every town, and every society
to celebrate our great state of New Jersey*

HISTORY EVENTS AND EXHIBITS

Day of Sussex History—Sussex County Community College, **Saturday, April 30**, 9 am-3 pm; Sussex County Historical Society, 973-383-6010; www.sussexcountyhistory.org; schs@tellurian.com

Spirit of the Jerseys Fair—Fun for the whole family! Come & discover NJ's history. Celebrate the Centennial of the State Forests. Enjoy period games, crafts, living history demonstrations, tours, food, music and more. Be on the lookout for Molly Pitcher, George Washington, Walt Whitman, Alice Paul and other historical figures from New Jersey's past; free admission; rain or shine. **Saturday, May 7**, Washington Crossing State Park, County Route 546, Titusville. 11 am - 4 pm; contact the New Jersey State Park System, 609-737-9303; www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/historic

One Big Union: The Dream, the Reality, the History-The IWW and a Century of Radical Labor Activism, 1905-2005—A Conference and a Celebration; plenaries, workshops; performances by Phyllis Capello ("The Ukulele Lady") and the Solidarity Singers, as well as book and art exhibits; **Saturday, May 7**; Paul Robeson Campus Center, Rutgers University, Newark Campus, 350 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Newark; admission free; lunch and all-day refreshments \$15. For the full conference program see <http://www.maliacollective.org/brochure.pdf>; Write to Jennifer Guglielmo at jgugliel@email.smith.edu for more info; 413-585-3712.

Sandy Hook Coastal Defenses Day—Mark Armed Forces Day with an afternoon of tours and living history presentations at the gun batteries and Nike missile sites that once defended New York Harbor. **Saturday, May 14**; noon - 4 pm; sponsored by the National Park Service; Fort Hancock Museum; 732-872-7733; www.nps.gov/gate.

D&R Canal and Hamilton-Trenton-Bordentown Marsh from the NJ Transit River Line —Meet in the parking lot of the Bordentown Light Rail station (100 W. Park Avenue at Prince Street) at 10:30 am sharp; board the River Line at 10:47 for an 11-minute ride to Trenton, and return to Bordentown on the 11:15 train; follow the path of the D&R Main Canal and view parts of the Hamilton-Trenton-Bordentown Marsh. Tickets \$1.10; parking and tour are free. **Saturday, May 28, 10:30 am**. Directions: Route 206/130 south to Bordentown exit at Farnsworth Avenue, turn right (west); go nearly to end of Farnsworth; turn left onto Park Ave; at the end of Park, bear left into Light Rail station parking lot.

Delaware Bay Days Festival—One of the largest free festivals in the tri-state region is held along the Maurice River and Delaware Bay in the historic New Jersey fishing villages of Bivalve, Shellpile, Port Norris and the East Point Lighthouse in Heislerville. An oyster-shucking contest, bluecrab races, living maritime history exhibits, children's games and activities, crafters/artisans, fresh seafood and local fare; parade and lighted boat parade and fireworks (Sat.) and free deck tours of New Jersey's tall ship, the Schooner A. J. MEERWALD; free admission and parking; call 856-785-2060 x100 for further information; **Saturday, Sunday, June 4-5**; www.ajmeerwald.org; www.bayshorediscoveryproject.org

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Waterloo Canal Day—Enjoy canal-era food and music, ride a mule, tour the canal sites in historic Waterloo Village; children’s crafts. **Saturday, June 11**; 11 am-4 pm; Waterloo Village, Exit 25, Route 80, Stanhope; co-sponsored by the Canal Society of New Jersey; 908-722-9556; www.CanalSocietyNJ.org; www.waterloovillage.org.

Annual Reenactment of the Battle of Monmouth—Reenactment of the 1778 Battle of Monmouth, the largest land artillery battle of the American Revolution; the event features troop encampments, drills, living history, tactical demonstrations, and colonial music, crafts and gifts. **Saturday, Sunday, June 18-19**; Monmouth Battlefield State Park, 347 Freehold Englishtown Rd., Freehold; 732-462-9616; www.njparksandforests.org.

Battle of Springfield—Jonathan Dayton High School. Camp opens, 10 am; demonstrations, displays of 18th-century life throughout both days. **Saturday, June 25**: Centennial rededication of the Battle Monument, First Presbyterian Church, Morris Avenue & Church Mall, 11am; Battle Re-enactment, 3-4 pm; music and fireworks in the evening. **Sunday, June 26**: Historic Church Service; parade at 11:30; Battle Re-enactment, 1:30 pm; Springfield Anniversary Committee; 973-912-2200; www.springfieldbattle.com; seidel1000@aol.com

Seafood and Music Festival—Stroll the Tuckerton Seaport and sample delicious Jersey fresh clams, crabs and shrimp from the finest seafood purveyors. After you satisfy your appetite, move your feet to the beat of live, top-tapping entertainment. Bring the family and your beach chairs and plan to spend the whole day. **Saturday, June 25**; Tuckerton Seaport, 120 West Main Street, Tuckerton; 10 am to 5 pm; \$8 adults; \$3, children; 609-296-8868; www.tuckertonseaport.org

Public Reading of the Declaration of Independence—Ranger in period garb entertains the crowd and gives a “kid-level” explanation of the document, followed by the official reading. **Monday, July 4**; warm-up at noon; actual reading at 1:00 pm; Morristown National Historical Park, 30 Washington Place, Morristown; 973-539-2016; www.nps.gov/morr.

Christmas in July—Crafters, quilters, and the Lost Art Lacers will exhibit and demonstrate; museum tours will feature period decorations and the sights and smells of Christmas; **July 22-24**; \$4; the Chinchewunski Chapter of the D.A.R; Route 23, north of Sussex (follow the signs); 973-875-7634.

Mount Tabor House Tour—The Mount Tabor Historical Society hosts its Twelfth Annual House Tour; rain or shine; **Saturday, October 1**; \$15.00 per person; Mt. Tabor is a stop on the NJ Transit Morris & Essex line; Route 53, Mt. Tabor; Beth Shaw, 973-586-1564; www.mounttabornj.org.

2004 New Jersey Lighthouse Challenge—Join lighthouse enthusiasts from all over the country in visiting New Jersey's 11 land-based lighthouses in one weekend. **Saturday, Sunday, October 15-16**; 609-449-1360; www.njlhs.burlco.org; www.abseconlighthouse.org.

World War II in Cape May Exhibit—the war effort in Cape May and the changing face of Cape May’s landscape as a result of the war; **May 27-September 5**; Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts, 1048 Washington Street, Cape May; 800-275-4278; www.capemaymac.org.

Our Long Endurance: New Jersey in the Civil War—Two-year exhibit focusing on the role of New Jersey throughout the Civil War. Lecture series and educational programming to be offered. **thru December 31**; group & school tours welcome. Cornelius Low House/Middlesex County Museum; Piscataway, NJ; 732-745-4489; www.cultureheritage.org.

ANNUAL PUBLICATION AWARDS PROGRAM

The League of Historical Societies of New Jersey announces the **ANNUAL PUBLICATION AWARDS PROGRAM** and invites its member organizations to submit entries. Awards will be given for works published in the year 2005, in the following categories:

BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, NEWSLETTERS, JOURNALS, CALENDARS, and
MEDIA (AUDIO CASSETTES/CDs, VIDEO CASSETTES/DVDS)

For works published in 2005, awards will be presented at the League meeting in **March 2006**. Deadline for submission of entries: **JANUARY 31, 2006**. Send entries to: **Publication Awards Committee, League of Historical Societies of NJ, New Jersey Historical Society, 52 Park Place, Newark, NJ 07102**.

For further information, contact Linda Barth, Administrator, LHSNJ, at 908-722-7428, barths@att.net, 214 North Bridge Street, Somerville, New Jersey 08876. Please **DO NOT** send entries to this address.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR...FOR UPCOMING LEAGUE MEETINGS



The League's Spring Meeting will be held at Springfield, in Union County, on Saturday, June 4, 2005. The Fall Meeting will be held in Denville in Morris County on October 1st. The Ocean County Historical Society will host the Winter Meeting in March 2006.

LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP REPORT

For the year 2004, Membership Chair Dorothy Pietrowski reports that 163 member organizations have paid their dues, and we thank them. Sadly, 154 societies have not yet paid. Has your organization done so? If you are not sure that your dues are up to date, please call Dorothy at 973-377-7023.

The 2004 Directory is available. It lists all organizations belonging to the League. Send for your copy: 1 copy, \$1.00; 2 copies, \$1.50; 3-4 copies, \$2.50.

Just send a check, payable to the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey (LHSNJ) to: LHSNJ, P.O. Box 909, Madison, New Jersey 07940.

We welcome our newest member organization: **the Danish Archive Northeast, from Edison**.

The Delaware & Raritan Canal: The Past, The Present and The Promise

Please join us on June 1, 2005, for a **day-long conference** at The College of New Jersey to learn about, contribute to, and celebrate the importance of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. This event will include speakers and interactive workshops followed by an evening reception. Together they will focus on the past, the present, and the future promise of the Delaware and Raritan Canal corridor.

Conference Topics Include:

- The D&R Canal: A Framework for Regional Cooperation
- The D&R Canal: Opportunities for Healthy & Active Living
- The D&R Canal: Neighbors and Their Local Perspectives
- The D&R Canal: The Canal as an Economic Catalyst
- The D&R Canal: Rediscovering a Capital Resource
- The D&R Canal: A Regional Natural Resource

A wine-and-cheese social event will follow in the evening at the Prallsville Mill in Stockton. Entertainment by the DEP band. Remarks by James W. Hughes, Dean, The Edward J. Bloustein School, Rutgers University and Jerry Fitzgerald English, former Commissioner, NJDEP.

The complete conference brochure will be available in April by calling or emailing the Municipal Land Use Center.

Municipal Land Use Center at The College of New Jersey, McCauley House, PO Box 7718, Ewing, NJ 08628; 609-771-2832, mluc@tcnj.edu; www.tcnj.edu/mluc

LEAGUE MEETING, JUNE 4, 2005, SPRINGFIELD

The Springfield Historical Society, the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield and the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs welcome the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey to the June 4th meeting at the First Presbyterian Church, 201 Morris Avenue, Springfield, NJ.

AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m. Registration and breakfast treats
- 9:30 a.m. Welcome, Introductions and League Business Meeting
- 10:45 a.m. Program presented by the host organizations
- 11:45 a.m. Lunch in the church hall
- 12:30 p.m. Tours of the adjoining First Presbyterian Church Cemetery and the Cannon Ball House Museum, 126 Morris Avenue
- 1:30 p.m. Members drive their cars 4.5 miles to Liberty Hall Museum, 1003 Morris Avenue, Union Township, for "The British are Coming!" (a reenactment by British, German and Loyalist regiments). The special League entrance fee is available on both Saturday, June 4th and Sunday, June 5th.

On Sunday, June 5th, the Springfield Historical Society presents guest speaker Thomas Fleming, author of *The Forgotten Victory*, the story of the Battle of Springfield. The restored John Ward Dunsmore painting, "Give 'em Watts Boys," depicting the Battle of Springfield, will be unveiled on Sunday. For information call 973-376-4784.

DIRECTIONS

NJ Turnpike, North or South, to Exit 14, Newark Airport or Garden State Parkway to the exit for Route 78 West (near the Union Toll Plaza). Follow Route 78 West to Exit 50B, Springfield/Union. Follow the exit lane and cross over Route 78. Go to the traffic light and turn right onto Liberty Avenue. Continue to the traffic light and turn right onto Morris Avenue. Go one block. Turn right onto Church Mall and right into the parking lot.

From Route 78 East: Take Exit 49A, Springfield/Maplewood. Bear right onto Springfield Avenue. Continue to the light at Morris Avenue. Turn right onto Morris Avenue. Go one block. Turn right onto Church Mall and right into the parking lot.

Saturday morning questions: 908-756-4489 before 8:00, 908-313-0038 after 8:00

REGISTRATION FORM

Registration is \$20.00 per person and includes a buffet lunch. Registration must be received by May 27th. The church and the church hall are ADA compliant. Mail the registration form and your check, payable to the County of Union, to: Union County Division of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, 633 Pearl Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

AFFILIATION _____

Names of additional registrants _____

Email (optional) _____ Amount enclosed _____

**SPRINGFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND UNION COUNTY CULTURAL
AND HERITAGE COMMISSION SPONSOR LEAGUE'S SPRING MEETING**



The League of Historical Societies of New Jersey
P.O. Box 909
Madison, New Jersey 07940

Spring Meeting— Springfield, Union County—
June 4, 2005
Fall Meeting— Denville, Morris County
October 1, 2005

Visit the League at:
www.lhsnj.org

Elizabeth Morgan, one of the great resources and cheerleaders of Ocean County history passed away in February. This memorial by Kirk Moore appeared in the Asbury Park Press on February 7. She will be sorely missed.—Kathleen F. Heim

Last week Elizabeth Meirs Morgan passed away at the age of ninety. She was a rare combination of scholarly historian and environmentalist who was always willing to share her vast knowledge. She will be truly missed. — Patricia H. Burke, Executive Director, Toms River Seaport Society & Maritime Museum.

Elizabeth Morgan, local historian and naturalist

By KIRK MOORE, STAFF WRITER

LACEY -- Even into her late 80s, Elizabeth Meirs Morgan was always up for an adventure in the woods -- hunting the cellar holes of some long-lost Pinelands ghost town, perhaps, or tracking down the last chestnut trees surviving in the forest.

Morgan, a well-known local historian and naturalist, died early yesterday morning of a stroke at age 90, family members said. She lived in the Forked River section. People who knew Morgan said she will be remembered as a great teacher who passed on generations of local history and folk knowledge to new generations who arrived just as the Ocean County landscape was dramatically transformed.

"She's always been an inspiration to everyone who has met her," said Kerry Jennings of the Forked River Mountain Coalition, of which Morgan was a founding board member. "She's gone now, but we have a lot of expertise and a lot of knowledge."

"Friends of mine have said that when Elizabeth dies, it will be like losing a whole library," said longtime friend Caroline Campbell of Toms River.

Morgan, sometimes nicknamed "The Pines Baroness," was well-known for her environmental and historical activism, her prodigious knowledge of the history and nature of Ocean and Monmouth counties, and her Episcopal church work.

She was intellectually generous, and often seemed intent on downloading as much information to others as she could, friends often said. When local conservationists organized to preserve the Forked River Mountains -- a region of low, gravelly hills west of Forked River and Waretown -- Morgan supplied them with carefully drawn maps and reams of lore she had heard over the decades from woodsmen, hunters and longtime area families.

"She was a great lover of history," recalled Pauline S. Miller of the Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission, who met Morgan in the 1960s and collaborated with her on projects. While Miller delved into books and old documents to trace the county's history, Morgan "liked a different kind of history. She liked old places," Miller said. "She had this curiosity about many things, the environment especially."

A painting in the nature center at Wells Mills County Park outside Waretown shows Morgan attired in hiking garb, with a broad-brimmed hat, long coat and walking stick. In the back country, hunters and horseback riders were sometimes surprised to see her behind the wheel of her Jeep, accompanied only by her dogs, miles from the nearest paved road.

"She was really interested in people, and in listening to them and their stories," Campbell said. The firsthand knowledge Morgan learned in those travels often helped local residents and activists save pieces of Pinelands heritage, such as a campaign some years ago to head off demolition of an old-time hunting cabin at Wells Mills Lake. Publicity about the Forked River Mountains has led to major land purchases there by the state and non-profit conservation groups. "Elizabeth always knew the key people to contact if something needed to be done," Campbell said.

After difficult health problems last year, Morgan seemed to be doing well and was planning to host a small meeting of local conservationists at her home next week, Jennings and Campbell said.

"She had to ration herself, but she did more under those circumstances than a lot of people in perfect health do," Campbell said.

Morgan was born, and grew up in, the New Egypt section of Plumsted, the daughter of John and Sarah Henshaw Meirs, a family with roots in the area going back to the 1700s. After graduating from Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, with a master's degree in history, she was a teacher and social worker before marrying the Rev. Luman J. Morgan in 1941. Morgan wrote for church publications, and on history and the environment for Ocean



COPIES OF THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

If you or your organization would like a copy of the League's Membership Directory, just send a check, payable to the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey, to our Membership Chairman, Dorothy Pietrowski, 15 Wilmer Street, Apt. 11, Madison, New Jersey 07940. Send \$1.00 for one copy, \$1.50 for two copies, \$2.00 for three copies, or \$2.25 for four copies.