

# Notes, News & Nostalgia...



From *M. A. R. C. H.*

April, 2023

## *President's Letter*

A Happy 2023 to all of you. It has been quite a while since I have talked to you. We had a very successful Holiday Open House time in November and December. In March, a few of us met with NPS staff to discuss future educational programs, normal operations within the Recreation Area, and future work programs to be completed in the near future. Now we are about to embark upon our 2023 schedule for the rest of the year. On April 22 we will have a joint program with the Montague Grange called Spring Fling. Each of us will have activities at our respective sites. Beginning in July on Sundays, we will open both of our sites to the public for tours, from 1-4 pm into August. We will scheduling separate programs on relevant topics.

We were not able to get a membership reminder out to each of you this year, and we apologize. I am taking this opportunity to ask you to please continue your support of MARCH. We have kept our membership donations lower than most historic groups. We have also offered a variety of options so that you can select what category fits your needs. Beth and I have joined a number of groups in order to support local organizations that are saving local historical buildings and/or just keeping residents aware of local history.

Sorry, but your newsletter may have a red dot on the mailing label. That is our way of reminding you of the importance of your membership. Membership does not demand that you volunteer your time to help us with the exhibits, the newsletter, the programs, operations and etc., but if you are inclined and have the time you are welcome. Beth and I will be glad to hear from you at 973 293-3949.

Enough about membership. In 2026, the Country will be celebrating its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the nation. I keep getting notices asking what is MARCH is doing to celebrate the event. Montague Township will be celebrating with an emphasis on the Revolutionary War, which is what the State of New Jersey will be focusing on. We are still thinking about appropriate ideas, but it challenging. If you have any suggestions, they will be welcome and, of course, any help to make them happen is welcome.

As a young person learning about the history of the world and the USA, most of it was about men. Since then, much of that has changed because the study and recording of history has changed dramatically. Now we know that women, and people of color played a vital role in the historic events that have shaped the world into what we see and live in today. The month of April is set aside to recognize the role women have played in our history. Everywhere you turn you will see the different roles they have played in family, in the schools, in industry, in government and in times of war, I am so thankful for the role of women in the operation of MARCH, for without them, MARCH would not exist.

In conclusion I am going to express two thanks to groups who support and keep MARCH as a functioning and responsible organization. My first is to all of you who annually support us with your membership and donations, as well as your volunteer help when able. The second thank you goes to all of the staff at the National Park Service, especially those who work here in the Recreation Area. You are responsive and helpful whenever you can provide support.

Everyone, have a wonderful spring and a joyful rest of the year. If you can, stop by to see us. You are always welcome.

Richard J. Jones. President

## *Thoughts on Collecting*

Recently I read an article in the AARP magazine about what to do with those collections that many of us have at home. I know if your family is anything like our families, the younger generations are not interested in some of relics that we seem to have collected over our lifetimes. So now that we are trying, and I do emphasize the verb trying, to downsize a bit, declutter a bit, and try to clean out and open up a bit, what do we do with these things? Of course, there are many suggestions of selling or donating these collections, but I would like to explore the donating suggestion from a museum point of view. When you have an item that has some historical significance, think about donating it to a museum. I found a set of old postcards from a Jersey shore town. Do I collect postcards? Yes. Do I need to keep all of them? No. I knew their historical society had their own collection, and I also knew they sold the ones they had duplicates of. So, I mailed them an envelope with a note that said that they could use them for their collection or sell them if they wanted to. I received a lovely thank you note telling me how much they made selling them. Was it a lot? No. But did they appreciate it? Yes. I was glad my donation was able to help them, and you know what? My collection didn't miss them at all!

As you know, our two museums are filled to the brim with artifacts and research materials. When someone wants to donate something to us, I first ask its relevance to Montague and/or to a Montague resident. Then I assess if it's something that fits into our ongoing displays, or to our collections. Most of the time, I can say yes. But if it's something that I feel would be better donated to another museum, I will make that suggestion. Like you, I do not want to see things thrown away into the landfill! If we can help find a home for it, that's the goal. But that is also the reason we have 8 handmade crocheted bedcovers on our quilt rack – I did not want them thrown away, so I bought them at that garage sale anyway!

## *From the History Corner*

On page 3 of this newsletter, you will find the reproduced page of the New Jersey Journal, dated Wednesday, April 5, 2023 May 16, 1781. It was sent to MARCH by former president Gene Crawford in 2007, and is about the Indian raid that was made at the Captain Shimer House on River Rd. in Montague. Remember as you read it, it is written in the language of 1781, which you will find is a bit different than our current language. We used this story in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade bus tour of Montague. As you can guess, the students were most attentive with this gruesome event! I came across this article when doing some research for a MARCH member on the Job family. Hope you also enjoy this little bit of Montague history.

## *Upcoming Events*

Our first big event of 2023 is coming up soon on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Spring Fling! Along with the Montague Grange, the Foster Armstrong House will be open from 1 – 4 pm. The Grange will be open from 11am – 3pm, so you will be able to visit both sites on the same day! Our curatorial crew has the first floor of the museum all spiffed up and cleaned for you. If the weather cooperates, the second floor will also be open. See page 4 for more details.

## *Curators Corner*

We have been given some exciting and beautiful new things over the winter:

A wooden tea cart from Peggy Soracco, which had belonged to her grandmother, and Montague photographs.  
A silverplated coffee set from Toni-Lu Martin which looks lovely on the new tea cart!  
Old kitchen items, tablecloths, linens and hankchiefs from Denise Bogel's aunt and grandmother.  
Many local history books and photographs from Mim Carpenter.  
Some unusual WWII and Korean War artifacts from Ginny Caputo, that were her father-in-laws.

You will see that the Cole Room has a new display in it. We left the cameras in the display case that had been up for the Holiday Weekends, and added our small collection of movie cameras to it. Then we brought the Thompson record player in from the front Armstrong room, and added another old record player from the Jones family, as well as a third newer model from the 50's from the Heise family. Many of you commented on the large records from the Reinhardt family, so we got more of them, and added other assorted size records to that display. Then we added, just for fun, some of the huge hankchiefs collection we have on the other side of the room for you to enjoy. All of these items will bring back many happy memories to all who see them, I know it sure did for me! Most of our other displays have had minor changes to them, so even if you visited in December, you will be sure to see something new now! Put us on your list to visit in 2023!

## *A Special Thanks to...*

Montague Township DPW for keeping the driveway at the Foster Armstrong House cleared of snow. We did not have a lot of snow this year, but it seems that each time we had snow, it coincided when a small tour of the museum was scheduled. We were able to keep all appointments, thanks to our local DPW!

## *Buildings and Grounds*

Luckily, both the Foster Armstrong House and the Nelden Roberts Stonehouse survived this past winter with no water leakage damage in either building. We are thankful for that. The front rampway for the FAH needs a little bit of assistance, so that project will begin shortly. We are rearranging and changing some things in the front Keeping Room of the FAH to make it a little more handicapped accessible for those with walkers and canes.

This is the time for cleaning up lawns, and as with many of you, we, too are picking up twigs and broken branches, and raking out leaves and dead foliage. You might have seen the three new planters on the front porch of the FAH. We had to retire the one last wooden barrel this year, so you will be seeing new plants soon in the three new ones. We will all miss Ed Ibold and his summer plants, and hopefully, what we plant this year will remind you how much Ed loved our MARCH. I hope he will be smiling down on us all!

## *Summer Scheduling*

The FAH is going to be open from 1-4 pm every Sunday for all of July and August. We hope to add another Sunday opening in June and/September, but those dates have not been scheduled yet. If we have enough volunteers, we will also open the NRS on the same days and the same times. If you are interested in docenting, you will have a guide to read, and it really is a very rewarding thing to do. Don't worry that you might feel that you don't know enough, that is what the guide is for. The most important thing about volunteering is that you love living in Montague, and that you are pleased to welcome visitors into our museums.

## *The Crafters*

Our diligent crafters have been busy over the winter reorganizing the crafts that we have available for you. Most are now sorted in clear, closed containers so that they are easier to find when you're looking. Some are going to be put into clear plastic bags to help keep them better sanitized and clean. We hope to begin putting tables outside on the front porch when we're open to the public with an variety of homemade crafts to preview. PS: We also hope it will catch the cars attention as they drive by and will turn back into the driveway to shop! Come and check us out – we still have an excellent selection of local books, also!

## **2023 Dues**

Individual	\$10.00	Old Mine Road Supporter	\$100.00
Couples (2 people)	\$15.00	Millville Contributing Supporter	\$250.00
Family	\$20.00	Foster-Armstrong Patron	\$500.00
Tappantown Supporter	\$50.00	Brick House Village Sponsor	\$1,000.00

If you are a renewing member, or if you want to be a new member, please make out your check to M.A.R.C.H., and mail to M.A.R.C.H., PO Box 1101, Montague, N.J. 07827. And of course, you can always contribute more than the suggested amounts to help offset our utility and maintenance bills! Thank you in advance.

## **MARCH 2023 Trustees, Officers and Committee Chairs**

President & Executive Director	Richard Jones	973-293-3949	Historian	Kathy Hankins	845-856-5065	
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	Barbara Meyer	Kathy Hankins				
	Maureen Kaman	Peggy Brahm				

## *Gently Used History Books*

There is a new bookshelf in our store that has gently used books for sale. Most of them are history related. They have been donated so that others can enjoy them. Come and browse when you need new reading material!

## *E Mailed Newsletters*

If you are interested in having your newsletter emailed to you, instead of a paper copy mailed to you, please include those directions when you mail in your current dues. You can also email Beth Jones with that request at her email address, printed in the previous paragraph. Please include "MARCH" in your subject heading, so that when it goes to her junk mail, she knows to look for your request. We will continue to send paper copies for all of you who would prefer that.

## *Share your Memories and Photos*

We would love to hear from you about the people you have known, the changes you have seen, and the spots you most enjoy in Montague. Please share those special thoughts and memories with us so that others will have a better sense of how special our community is. Thanks! We look forward to hearing from you and being able to include you in our Mailbag column.

*Notes, News, & Nostalgia* is generally published quarterly.

**Distribution:** Copies are mailed to members and delivered to staff and students at the Montague Elementary School.

**Meeting Schedule:** Business Meetings generally are held at 12:00, noon, on the last Thursday of the month. Programs are on a Sunday at 2:00pm. Elections are held in October. Dues are owed for the current year in January.

All meetings and programs are held at the Historic Foster-Armstrong House, 320 River Road (Route 521) in Montague, NJ.

**Directions:** From Route 206 North: make a right onto Route 521 (River Road); the Foster-Armstrong House is approx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile ahead on left. From Milford: Cross the Milford-Montague Bridge and turn left onto Route 521. FAH is  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile on left. From Port Jervis: Take Maple Avenue South (turns into Route 521), Foster-Armstrong House is 5 miles ahead on your right. Visitors are always welcome ... and bring a friend!

**IF YOU HAVE A RED DOT ON YOUR MAILING ADDRESS LABEL, YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR 2023 DUES**

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