



Dedicated to the discovery, collection, and preservation of any material and stories which may help to document or illustrate the history and progress of Egg Harbor Township.

Everyone Has a Story and We Would Like to Hear Yours!

We take both oral and written stories.

We also love photographs with captions.

Stop by the museum on Sundays from 10am-12 noon

or contact us: 609-380-4524

GEHTHSMuseum@aol.com

or through our Facebook page.

The mission of the Greate Egg Harbour Township Historical Society and Museum is to preserve history, educate, and inspire by displaying the events, places and people of Egg Harbor Township to the community.

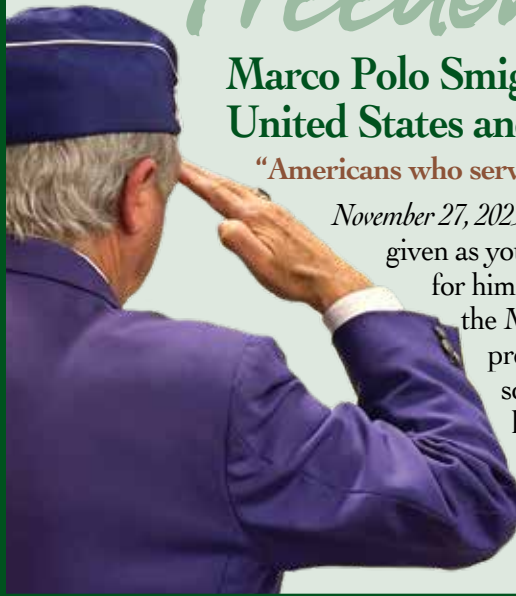
History in the Making

WINTER 2024
GREATE EGG HARBOUR TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

"Freedom is not Free"

Marco Polo Smigliani Shares His Passion for the United States and to Those Who Have Served

"Americans who serve earn the privilege to hold their heads high."



November 27, 2023. When Marco Polo realized the opportunities he had been given as young immigrant from Italy, he knew that it was important for him to defend these freedoms. He enlisted at age 17 and joined the Marine Corps. The world became his school. During his presentation, sponsored by GEHTHS, he was humbled when someone asked about his four purple hearts. After sharing how he had been severely injured helping his fellow service members while in Vietnam, he feels that "I have been blessed with a guardian angel on each shoulder." An important theme during his presentation was, "It is important that we come together as one light."



Veterans, who served in different wars, came together to meet and learn more about this caring veteran who earned four purple hearts.



Atlantic City Police Chief Jim Sarkos and Egg Harbor Twp Police Chief Frederick Spano join Marco Polo.



Boy Scout Troop 389 from the Atlantic Christian School presented the colors to start the program.

Guest Speaker Event

How Far Does Your Horse Walk In A Day?

40 miles, according to Mary Ann Trail's research on EHT's history.

September 7, 2023. Mary Ann Trail, a self published author and historical novelist, spoke about research she is doing in partnership with GEHTHS – EHT's history in the early 1800's.

Concerning her findings, Mary Ann says, "In 1805 Egg Harbor Township, there were more villages, more folks living in them, and more occupations than I ever realized. For example, a



map from 1795 suggests the Pine Barrens were an impenetrable transportation barrier with only Local resident Sterling Brown shared his knowledge of navigating English Creek.

rivers, no roads. Yet, two diaries from travelers of the time clearly state that there were roads going from Cooper's Ferry (Camden) to Somers Point and another to Tuckerton." According to a young lady traveling to the 'shore' for the summer.

"In my novel, as my character makes his way along the sandy tracks, he will need refreshment. I am currently trying to match names of old taverns with current names or places. The Gabriel Davies Tavern in Glendora is still standing, most of the other taverns have left only their names to posterity."

Look for an upcoming GEHTHS program with Mary Ann.



Historic novelist Mary Ann Trail studies old maps to get a sense of the history of an area.

What Happened Through Year's End!

Scenes From Our Annual Holiday Open House & Decorating!

A special thank you to Mrs. Claus (Janice Cambron) and her elves who decorated, baked yummy treats and acquired gifts for the children visitors.



Thank You to Our 2023 Members!

❖ Indicates 2024 member as of 1/23/24

Life Membership

Chris Barbo*
Jerry Bell*
Elizabeth Naylor*
David Speer*

Family Membership

Don and Lois Baird
Kirk and Ruth Bye
Zak and Melissa Landgraf
Rick and Gina Lang
Charles and Jean Lawless*
Dan and Betty Lawless*
Carol-Jo and William Martin
Richard and MaryLou Monihan
Bryant Nguyen
Lee and Rob Portnoy
Arleen and Gene Puggi
Scott and Patricia Warner
Ken and Jessica Weaver

Individual Membership

Lois Angelozzi
Richard Baxter
Larry Boylan
Mary Anne Cabage
Marguerite & Sam Colella
Suzanne Cooper*
Ann Cousin
Nicole DelGozzo
Lou DellaBarca
Deborah Denesevich
Leah & John Drobek
JoAnne Fricano
Kathleen Fritz
Carol Gaffney
Art Handson*
Sally Hastings
Dee Landgraf
Sandy Large*
Tina Pierce*
Michael Price
John Risley
Mary Ann Robeson
Nicholas Seppy
Mark Steelman
MaryEllen Weathers
Lynn Wood

Learning from Oral History

Meet EHT Resident Art Handson

His resume includes being Mayor of EHT, serving on the EHT Committee, Scullville volunteer fireman, and more.....

Submitted by GEHTHS historian Lynn Wood who recently interviewed Handson

Arthur L. Handson Jr., born in 1935, lived in Atlantic City in the 1940's. He recalls walking along Ventnor Ave. and the beach after Sunday School every Sunday and seeing piles of debris laying on the beach. These were WWII supplies from merchant marine ships that had been destroyed and set on fire by German submarines. He remembers the beaches being patrolled in the early mornings by the Coast Guard.

Art joined the Scullville Volunteer Fire Co. in 1953, and is still a social member, sharing stories of fire calls in the past to fellow firefighters on Saturday nights.

He is proud of serving as an Egg Harbor Township Committeeman from 1968-1973 and being the Mayor in 1972 and 1973. He is also credited with starting the first Egg Harbor Township paid police department, starting January, 1 1969.

*Art's recommendations for today's youth...
Spend some time in the military, health care or environmental organizations to acquire service and appreciation for our country.*

Today, Art and his wife Barbara live in a historic home built in the early 1800s. It was built near the Israel Smith shipyard in the English Creek section of the township, by Mr. Somers English. Bricks around the house were made at the Somers Brick Yard in Northfield (today's Birch Grove Park area). In the early days, workers that harvested salt hay in the meadows lived in his home. Salt hay would be taken by horse and wagon all the way as far as Philadelphia. It was used as insulation for ice houses and feed for livestock.



Today Art, 88, and Barb, 86, still work together harvesting hay from their meadows, purchased mostly by gardeners and animal owners like the Giberson's sheep farm in Port Republic.

When Art was young, during the summer, his family lived in Scullville across the street from Lee's Country Store (the early Joe Scull store). He has memories of enjoying a soda and sitting on the porch listening to stories from the locals. In the very early days, that store supplied food to ships along the river – wagons would take food up to the waiting ships. He remembers good times fishing and boating on the Great Egg Harbor River.

He enlisted in the US Army National Guard, became a cook for 250 men and then went to the Fort Dix large food service school.

Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of Cultural Affairs within the Department of State, through funds administered by the Atlantic County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.

Recognizing our Volunteers

Lynn Wood Honored with the "June Sheridan GEHTHS Award"

Annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner features guest speakers Gregory Gregory and Brook Handley



Lynn and her granddaughter, son and daughter who helped us keep this a secret.

October 5, 2023. We were pleased to honor Lynn Wood with the 2023 Award. Lynn is an incredible asset to GEHTHS, and is often referred to as the "Ever-Ready Battery Bunny" volunteer. Among her many contributions are: researching Egg Harbor Township's past; finding treasures for the museum; answering questions for those who contact the museum; collecting oral histories for the museum; photographing events; coordinating and working with guest speakers; promoting the community garden; vigorously doing yard maintenance around the property; and more.

Guest speakers for the evening were Chairman of the Great Egg Harbor River Council, Gregory Gregory and River Administrator for the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, Brooke Handley. They spoke about "Life Along the River with the Lenni Lenape" and habitat restoration.



Historic Homes in Egg Harbor Township

Do you live in an older home in Egg Harbor Township and would like to know more about your house's history? Contact the museum at 609-380-4524, GEHTHSMuseum@aol.com, or stop by on Sunday morning from 10am-Noon. We will try to help you. Or if you know history of a house, please share with us.

History on Display

Nancy Sharrock donated the framed picture of her distant relative John English to our museum. It had been on loan from her family, but her father recently passed and she signed it over to us as she has no room for it in her home in California and is happy that it's in our possession. She's also related to Andrew English. She has fond memories of playing in the English home on English Lane by the old "English oak."



GEHTHS Active with Our Local Community

Presentation at Village Grande



GEHTHS Historian Lynn Wood made a presentation to approximately

50 residents and guests of Village Grande at Little Mill. She shared information from the book that she and June Sheridan produced – "A Journey Through Time."

Recent Acquisitions

Learn More About Our Historical Documents

The GEHTHS Resource Library is now open to the public on Tuesdays from 1pm-3pm or by appointment.

A few items that we recently acquired are great resources to find information on families and properties in the Township. Pictured is a guest book from Uncle Dick's Museum. The first pages in the book include a ledger of food bought on credit at Ryon's store in Northfield.

We have EHT Deed Books from the 1740s through 1924 or so. We also have a list of death notices from 1848-1878, which include many with "the Grip," drowning or lost at sea, and one green fruit death.



Thank you to our Generous Supporters

To help support our mission to preserve historic materials, events, places and lifestyles related to Egg Harbor Township for prosperity, please join us as a sponsor. Contact us at GEHTHSMuseum@aol.com or 609-380-4524. Donations are deeply appreciated and can be mailed to: GEHTHS • 6647 West Jersey Ave. Egg Harbor Twp, NJ 08234

Janice & Frank Cambron Tracey Miller & Associates Leo Schoffer

John and Elizabeth Steelman Foundation
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Adams-Perfect Funeral Home
Jade Egelhoff & Dan Palmer • Godfrey Funeral Home
Peter Miller & Anna Marie Kane
Sidney Parker • Gary and Lisa & Press
Gordon Thornton • Pamela & Tony Tyson

Participating in EHT Pride Day

GEHTHS volunteers challenged attendees to answer trivia questions about EHT's history.

Janice Cambron challenges Mayor Laura Pfrommer.



Thank you to the following for their continuing commitment to bettering our facilities.

- Egg Harbor Township Committee
- Public Works • Recreation
- Boy Scout Troop 94



GEHTHS Mission

The mission of the society is to collect and preserve historical materials exemplifying the events, places and lifestyles of the people of Egg Harbor Township, to encourage the study of history and genealogy, and to provide historical and genealogical information to our membership and the general public.

Board of Trustees

Tamara Lamb, *Chair*
 Pamela Tyson, *Vice Chair*
 Adrienne (Dee) Landgraf, *Secretary, Parliamentarian*
 Janice Cambron, *Treasurer*
 Lynn Wood, *Historian*
 Lisa Press, *Curator*
 Carol Jo Martin, *Librarian*
 Lou Dellabarca, *Director*
 Leah Drobelt, *Director*
 Lee Portnoy, *Director*
 Nicholas Seppy, *Director*



GEHTHS Museum
 and Research Library
 6647 West Jersey Ave.
 Egg Harbor Twp,
 NJ 08234

609-380-4524

GEHTSMuseum@aol.com

**Visit us during these hours
 or by appointment:**

Museum: Sundays: 10am-Noon

Library: Tuesdays: 1-3pm

GEHTSMuseum.org

facebook.com/GEHTSMuseumLibrary

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GEHTHS is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
 Donations are tax deductible to the limit of the
 law. Tax ID # 22-2313429

History Notes - Then & Now

Steelmanville Country Store Was a Popular Place to Meet Friends

Now known as the Ocean Heights Marina, the building continues to be an active part of the community.

James S. Smith opened the country store on Neck Road (today known as Ocean Heights Ave.) circa 1870. It contained a general store, the local post office and Smith's residence. Smith was appointed the job of local postmaster.



The store was a popular place to meet friends, catch up on local news, and purchase goods. Imagine the excitement when the stage coach would come up the dirt path by the store and drop off the bag of mail. The postmaster would dump the mail out on the floor and he and his family would sort through the mail collecting those with Steelmanville addresses and placing them in their proper boxes. The rest would be put back in the bag to be taken to other post offices the area.

In 1879, James' son, Charles H. Smith, took over the business. The post office closed in 1913 but he continued running the general store until his death in 1931. The store

section of the building caught fire and that section was demolished, leaving just the residential part of the building.

Today, in 2024, the old building is home to the Ocean Heights Marina and has maintained much of the original architectural features.

