

# History in the Making

GREATE EGG HARBOUR TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS



*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.*

*Visit the museum and research library to share your stories and learn more of your ancestors.*

## GEHTHS Programs Return with Great Egg Harbor River Talk

Lynn Maun, from the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, presented a power point slide show on the history and wildlife of the river.

*Thursday, September 17, 2021.* Greate Egg Harbour Township Historical Society (GEHTHS) members and the local community joined us to learn about the importance of the Great Egg Harbor River to the South Jersey shore's history and also the ecological balance to ensure that native birds and wildlife thrive. The river provided the perfect location for a booming ship building industry from the 1860's-1880's. The forests provided the

lumber and the bogs provided the iron to build large two and three masted schooners.

Today, Lynn Maun and the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association study and keep track of the wildlife with various programs including: building and maintaining nesting towers for ospreys; banding young birds; following and discovering new species in and along the river; and sponsoring educational

river tours for middle school students.



## History Notes- Then & Now

### Central Avenue & Bargaintown in the 1800's and Now

This photo was taken on the Linwood side of Patcong Creek at Central Ave. by the Bargaintown Lake. Linwood was a part of Great Egg Harbor Township until it became its own municipality in 1889. This photo shows the location of the early grist mill on the left and ice house on the right. The grist mill was destroyed by fire in 1927 and there is no sign of the early ice house left either.



# Calling all Members

## Members and Volunteers are the Foundation of the GEHTHS

As a member, you have the benefit of attending our events and speaker series at no cost. You may join us as a member at any time with the normal renewal time of January of each year. Let us know if you need a membership form by emailing [GEHTSMuseum@aol.com](mailto:GEHTSMuseum@aol.com)

### Join us as an Active Member / Volunteer

- Bring refreshments or help at events
- Help with museum and yard cleanup in the spring and fall

- Maintain various gardens on the grounds
- Light cleaning of our buildings,
- For those who have strong backs, occasional moving, filing and storing artifacts.

### Prefer office work?

- You can learn how to record (accession) incoming donations and help our librarian file and organize

Invite your friends and family to join us!

## Join as a Member!

You may join at any time. Renewals due in January.

- Individual: \$15
- Family: \$25
- Student: \$8
- Associate: \$40
- Provider: \$50
- Patron: \$100

Mail your donation to:  
**GEHTHS**  
6647 West Jersey Ave  
EHT, NJ 08234

### Excerpts from the "Life of Captain John J. Blackman"

Steelmanville, NJ - Written January 1, 1930

I, Captain John J. Blackman, son of Louisa and Nehemiah Blackman, was born at English Creek in the year 1852. I lived with my parents at English Creek until I was thirteen years of age. I then started to sea, sailing on various vessels as cook, and then later on was sailor before the mast for some time..... When I was nineteen years of age I became Master Captain of the Schooner Althea..... I sailed this schooner mostly in Southern trade.

I think it was in the year 1800, while I was on a voyage from Charleston, South Carolina to Baltimore, Maryland..... I was caught in the worst weather I had ever experience. My vessel sprung a leak and lost sails, and was obliged to scud under bare poles, with pumps going all of the time..... I ran for the Bermuda Islands; made it, and got a pilot aboard. But the vessel sun on the reef of Bermuda. All the crew were safely landed in Bermuda. I came to New York in a steamer, and was very happy to get home to my dear wife, for then I was married, but no willing to give up the sea. To read more on Captain Blackwell, visit the GEHTHS Museum Sundays from 1pm-3pm



Remembering GEHTHS Board Member Marjorie Garwood. We will miss you.

# Sponsors Help Us Serve the Community

## Gabriel Garage Doors Comes Through Again!

Gabriel Garage Doors donates and installs a large garage door and electric opener for our storage garage.



September 2021. The GEHTHS is thrilled to report that Gabriel Garage Doors has once again made a wonderful donation of a new garage door and electric opener.

If you ever noticed the previous door, you would understand our happy dance, since it took a Herculean effort to open and close it, and its appearance was far from attractive.

The owner, Mickey Gabriel, a long time EHT resident, has recently retired after founding the company and working for more than 40 years. He has been a staunch supporter of our efforts to improve our facility, and we are ever grateful. Stepping into Mickey's hard to fill shoes is Ray Derbyshire, another awesome EHT resident, who is all about helping our Society continue its mission. We wish Mickey and his wife a wonderful retirement life. We already know that working with Ray and the GDD crew will be a rewarding experience.

Thank you again, Ray and Gabriel Garage Doors!

Thank you sponsors and inkind donors who help us preserve EHT history; which allows us to share that information with the EHT community and beyond.

**Jerry Bell** **pjm**

**Janice & Frank Cambron**



The Godfrey  
Funeral Homes  
Ocean City - Palermo  
Egg Harbor Twp.

**GABRIEL  
GARAGE  
DOORS INC.**

*B.F. Mazzeo*



**John and Elizabeth Steelman Foundation**  
**Boy Scout Troup 94, Jersey Shore Council**

**Around the Corner Landscaping**

**Friends of Paul W. Hodson • Hughes Family**

**Tamara & John Lamb • Peter Miller**

**Carolyn Patterson • Leo Schoffer**

**Egg Harbor Township Administration & Public Works**



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.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BECOMING A SPONSOR: [GEHTSMUSEUM@AOL.COM](mailto:GEHTSMUSEUM@AOL.COM)**



# Keeping History Alive

*Even during the closings and challenges that the Covid-19 brought us, GEHTHS upgraded our museum and property; enjoyed partnerships with youth community groups; thanked our advocates; and even became a remote teaching background.*



▲ On April 8, the board of directors of the Great Egg Harbor Township Historical Society presented Peter Miller a Resolution which states their appreciation for all his help in the past years with the historical society. We wish him all the best in his retirement. Pictured are GEHTHS President Tamara Lamb, retiring Township Administrator Peter Miller and GEHTHS Vice President Pam Tyson.



◀ Girls from Egg Harbor Township Brownie Troop #10520 volunteered their time and resources to plant beautiful annuals and perennials around the GEHTHS museum. The museum thanked them by giving each scout a 300th Anniversary Egg Harbor Twp calendar. ▼



◀ We were thrilled and honored to have Mr. Brian Cottelli teaching his 8th grade, Alder Avenue Middle School, US History II students virtually from the GEHTHS museum in March of 2021!

Mr. Cottelli we commend you, and all teachers who are not only working hard, but thinking outside the box to keep things more interesting during the difficult time when school classes were all taught online.



## Join us for our Annual Holiday Open House

Wednesday, December 9, 2021

6-8pm • GEHTHS Museum

Featuring Mrs. Claus, Holiday Treats, Holiday Historic Displays, and Tree of Lights.



*Honor or remember someone with a \$10 donation for an ornamental tag on our "Tree of Lights."*

*For more information:  
GEHTSMuseum@aol.com*







## 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, *Chairperson*  
Pamela Tyson, *Vice Chairperson*  
Adrienne (Dee) Landgraf  
*Secretary, Parliamentarian*  
Janice Cambron, *Treasurer*  
Lynn Wood, *Historian*  
Beth Ryan, *Librarian*  
Lou Della Barca, *Director*  
Leah Drobek, *Director*  
Tamika Gilbert-Floyd, *Director*  
Lisa Press, *Director*  
June Sheridan, *Chairperson Emeritus*



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

609-813-2002

GEHTHSMuseum@aol.com

**Visit us: Sundays: 1 to 3 PM  
or by appointment**

GEHTHSMuseum.org

facebook.com/GEHTHSMuseumLibrary

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

## Getting to Know Your Community!

Dusk delivers crimson and scarlet hues in the western sky just as it has since the beginning of time along the Great Egg Harbor River, which borders much of Egg Harbor Township, home to more than 43,000 people today in 2021. The river begins as a trickle near Berlin, New Jersey and meanders its way down through the pinelands into Hamilton Township to Lake Lenape where the river was dammed in 1846. From there it becomes tidal and flows for several miles to the salty Egg Harbor Bay and on out to the Atlantic Ocean. No longer is the water sliced by bows of huge schooners from the 1800s loaded with cargo headed for various ports up and down the coast and the West Indies, but rather it is mostly a recreational river that Congress has designated to be a part of the national park system. Of course fishing, hunting, clamming, and oystering still remains active along the river as a livelihood for many, just as in early days.

If you know where to look at extreme low tides you can find aged, waterlogged beams and ties that once carried steam trains over trestles across the river their way to towns that are no longer on the maps today. The many nooks and crannies of the tributaries along the river once provided good hiding places for privateers during the Revolutionary War.

The Great Egg Harbor River got its name from Dutch explorer Cornelius Jacobsen May as he sailed upon the inlet in 1614 and noticed many large birds eggs along the banks. He named the river Eyren Haven, meaning Egg Harbor. The entire watershed area was occupied by the Lenni Lenape Indians for thousands of years, long before European settlers entered this area .

The woodlands provided natural materials for shipbuilding along the river in the 1800s. Bog iron mined from the Great Egg Harbor streams and waterways was used to make cannon balls at the Weymouth Furnace during the War of 1812. The flow of the water was harnessed to create power at many grist and saw mills that sprang up all along the river. In 1829, naturalist John James Audubon wrote in his journal, " Many a drawing I made at the Great Egg Harbor River and many a pleasant day I spent along its shores".

In 1986, President Reagan signed legislation authorizing study of how natural rivers can be protected and finally in 1992, thanks to the hard work of elected officials, the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association (formed in 1989), and others, President George Bush signed a bill designating the river and its tributaries to be protected as a "A Wild and Scenic River".