



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.

Know Someone with an Interesting EHT Story?

We would love to hear from you on what programs you would like to see or speakers you would enjoy.

Please contact us with your ideas and we will try to make them happen.

GEHTSMuseum@aol.com

or through our Facebook page.

History in the Making

GREATE EGG HARBOUR TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Summer 2023

Ribbon Cutting Brings History to Life for MK Betterment.

The Greate Egg Harbour Township Historical Society (GEHTHS) worked with original MK Betterment family members and the Egg Harbor Township Recreation Department to reopen a new MK Betterment facility for Township residents.

May 21, 2023. After a one day delay due to weather, the relatives of the founders of the MK Betterment Association joined the GEHTHS, the EHT Recreation department, and EHT residents under sunny skies to help cut the ribbon for the newly renovated MK Betterment building and grounds. It was an emotional event for the founder's relatives. The MK Betterment Association was started in 1963 by Atlas Lane who wanted to improve his local community.



Barry Lane, son of Atlas, had the honor of cutting the ribbon with help from Mayor Laura Pfrommer and Township Committee members, relatives of the MK Betterment Association founders, GEHTHS officers and community members.



Clarence Davenport helped worked with the GEHTHS society by finding founder's families.

With the help of his neighbors and friends, they built a meeting house, created a recreation area, and worked with the township for better roads, side walks, school bus stops and lights. The original building was used for civic, club and social meetings.

During the recent ribbon cutting ceremony, relatives of

the founders shared their memories. Items were donated for a historical display. Pickleball and basketball tournaments were held.

Renovation of the facilities was approved by the Township Committee and managed through the EHT Recreation Department. Improvements included renovating the original building, creating new pickle ball courts and working to upgrade the basketball courts and the surrounding grounds. *More photos on page 3.*

Guest Speaker Events

Bargaintown Boy: A Memoir by John P. Hiers

John and GEHTHS attendees shared heartfelt memories of growing up in Bargaintown from 1960-1974

June 26, 2023. From selling pony-pulled cart rides to kids for 25¢, to fishing and swimming in Bargaintown and Patcong lakes, and to creating and selling a kid edited newsletter, John shared

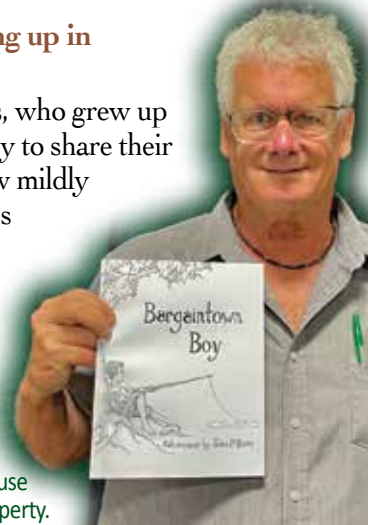


many stories from a memoir he compiled during the pandemic.

Many of the attendees, who grew up with John, were happy to share their stories filled with a few mildly embarrassing antidotes creating a good laugh.

John, who now lives in Vermont, enjoyed the "reunion" and reconnecting with the local families.

John's family made the Press of Atlantic City because of the collection of animals that lived on their property.



What's Happening Through Year End!

Upcoming Programs!

Thursday, October 5, 2023- Annual Recognition Dinner
Crab Trap Restaurant • Somers Point, NJ • 6pm • Greg Gregory and Brooke Handley will share their knowledge through a presentation titled *Life Along the River with the Lenni Lenape*.

November 2023- Speaker Series

Marco Polo Smigliani has dedicated his life to veterans and sharing their stories. • Date, time and place TBA

Sunday, December 3, 2023 • 1-3 pm

Annual Holiday Open House

FREE Inside Event • GEHTHS Museum • Special visitor & gifts for the children • Free holiday desserts • Honor or remember loved ones with messages on our tree



Thank You to Our 2023 Members!

Life Membership

Chris Barbo
Jerry Bell
Elizabeth Naylor
David Speer

Provider Membership

Gordon Thornton

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 and Sam Colella
Ann Cousin
Nicole DelGozzo
Lou DellaBarca
Deborah Denesevich
Leah Drobelt
JoAnne Fricano
Kathleen Fritz
Carol Gaffney
Sally Hastings
Dee Landgraf
Michael Price
John Risley
Mary Ann Robeson
Nicholas Seppy
Mark Steelman
MaryEllen Weathers
Lynn Wood

Programs and Responses

GEHTHS Partners with EHT History Research Project

Mary Ann Trail, Author of historical mysteries, is researching the history of Egg Harbor Township with plans to create a journal, write a novella and share her research through the GEHTHS speaker series.

The Greate Egg Harbour Township Historical Society and Mary Ann Trail have partnered to offer our residents a look into EHT during the 1800's. The research is being funded by Atlantic County Cultural & Heritage Affairs and Atlantic County.

Ms. Trail will act as the researcher and primary author of the documents describing the Township. The agreement is to provide a journal article and at least two lectures on her findings. Another outcome will be a historical romance novella set in EHT. The novella provides an opportunity to demonstrate fiction informed by the science of history and

hopefully encourages a different audience to become interested in local history.

Lynn Wood, Historian for the Historical Society is also working on the project by providing local expertise and photographic documentation.

Research should be completed by December 2023 and final documents in the late Spring. Ms Trail's first lecture will be on accuracy in historical research.

Mary Ann Trail takes notes pertaining to her EHT research by experiencing the Great Egg Harbor River first hand.



From John Dilks after John Hiers presentation - Bargaintown Boy.

Hi Lynn, Last night I had the best time. I met Arnie Garwood for the first time, we have a hobby in common. I also re-met an old neighbor from when we were about 5 years old, and lost contact after high school. And I talked with a few others.

Meeting John was fun as we have so much in common. 73, John Dilks, K2TQN

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 (NEW HOURS)** or contact us: 609-380-4524 • GEHTHSMuseum@aol.com.



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.

Keeping History Alive



MK Betterment Ribbon Cutting *Cont'd*

Top Left Photo: Left to right: Gail Hall-Parker, Clarence Davenport, Joseph Rice, Natalie Hall-Rice, Harriet Saxon, Yvonne Almond, Lynette Lane, Barry Lane, and David Almond.

Top Right Photo: An original MK Betterment T-shirt was donated to the new MK Betterment Center by Barry Lane for display. His parents Atlas and Elva Lane are in the framed photo.

Bottom Left: Pickleball players Heather Moller, Jacqui Batt, Pat Coccozza, and Shannon Campbell.



Bottom Middle: GEHTHS Historian, Lynn Wood shares the book "Journey Through Time in Egg Harbor Township, NJ" with Gail Hall-Parker and Natalie Hall-Rice.

Bottom Right: Joseph Hall Jr. (not in attendance) was among those who helped build MK Betterment with his dad Joseph Hall Sr.

Zion Methodist Church Celebrates 200 Years in EHT

Members marked the 200th anniversary of the brick church built in 1922.

2022 After the service, attendees enjoyed a homemade dinner in the church hall. Long time members were given awards.



Left: Miniature models of the Zion Methodist Church made by Dave Clayton showing how the building changed through the years. Middle: Mayor Hodson with wife Pat and Joe Cafero enjoy the home-style meatloaf dinner after the service. Right: Eleanor Garwood Hand and Dave Clayton...long time members of the church.

GEHTHS Partners with DAR for USA Semiquincentennial

We are working together to recognize local patriots who fought in the America Revolution and are buried in the Zion Methodist Cemetery.

The Daughters of the American Revolution National Society's 250 Patriots Marker is a new effort to raise awareness of the Patriots who won America's independence.



The hope is to create a coast-to-coast network of markers, similar to the Madonna of the Trail statues dedicated in 1928 and 1929 to honor women whose courage and strength aided in conquering the wilderness.



The cemetery surrounding the Zion Church holds the remains of 11 Revolutionary War soldiers. The General Lafayette Chapter

of the DAR is honoring them by cleaning the grave markers. The GEHTHS is working on a historical marker to commemorate these American Heroes.

Recognizing Volunteer/Member

Thank you to Lee Portnoy

We are grateful for the talents our members share.

Lee, an EHT resident and GEHTHS member, has a love of gardening. She readily volunteered to help turn a weed patch next to the museum into a bee and butterfly friendly perennial garden this past spring. She and GEHTHS Vice President Pam Tyson donated plants from their personal home gardens.



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** GEHTSMuseum@aol.com or 609-380-4524. Or mail donations to: GEHTHS • 6647 West Jersey Avenue • Egg Harbor Twp, NJ 08234

Jerry Bell • Leo Schoffer

John and Elizabeth Steelman Foundation

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Tracey Miller & Associates

Tamara & John Lamb

Jade Egelhoff & Dan Palmer • Gary and Lisa & Press

Peter Miller & AnnaMarie Kane • Pamela & Tony Tyson

Township of Egg Harbor Administration & Public Works

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

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

609-380-4524

GEHTSMuseum@aol.com

NOTE NEW HOURS

**Visit us: Sundays: 10am-Noon
 or by appointment**

GEHTSMuseum.org

facebook.com/GEHTSMuseumLibrary

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

Zion Methodist Church Started as the Blackman Meeting House

Many well-known EHT families contributed to building this church community.



The early Blackman Meeting House, a small cedar planked structure built circa 1764 on land belonging to Andrew Blackman, was used by Presbyterian worshipers until 1798 when Methodists began sharing the building.

A Methodist Society was formed October 23, 1814. The wooden meeting house soon became way too small for the growing congregation. Thomas Garwood and Japhet Ireland oversaw the building of a larger brick church and in 1822 the "Zion Methodist Episcopalian Church" was completed. The bricks were made by Samuel Somers. The bricks were laid in a lime mortar made from shells gathered from Lakes and Sculls Bays. All the shingles on the building were split and shaved, mostly by Thomas Garwood. Timothy Andrews was the master mason for the church. So in 1822, the Blackman Meeting House ceased to exist and the Zion Methodist Episcopalian Church was born. The cedar planks taken from the earlier meeting house were saved to build a shelter for the

horses and oxen that brought worshipers to church in their wagons, sometimes from 20 miles away.

Renovations to the church were made throughout the years but the interior remains much the same as it did in the 1800s. A large brick addition was added behind the church in 1949. The cemetery contains ancestors of many early families in the area who contributed to this community church.

History of Zion Meeting House by William Lake.

Brick church built in 1822 - Overseen by
 Thomas Garwood and Japhet Ireland.

