



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.



Thank you EHT Living Magazine for sharing the story of our incredible volunteer team who work hard to preserve EHT history for future generations !

The mission of the Great Egg Harbour Township Historical Society and Museum is to collect and preserve historical records, including the events, places and people of Egg Harbor Township, to educate and inspire the community.

History in the Making

Fall 2024
GREATE EGG HARBOUR TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

A Night of Everything Irish

A Great Mixture of Traditional Irish Dance & Bagpipe Music

Monday, March 4, 2024, Egg Harbor Township, NJ. A very Irish evening included the talented Emerald Isle Academy of Irish Dance dancers, the Sandpipers Pipes and Drums of Atlantic County bagpipers, and Irish sweet treats entertained an enthusiastic audience from young children to senior citizens decked out in multiple shades of green. The students from the Academy impressed the audience with their variety of Irish dances from traditional with music, to an a capella number and a Riverdance. We had a very enthusiastic audience that was evident as they clapped along to the music. The



program continued with the music of 8 bagpipers, 2 drummers, and a drum major filled the room as they proceeded to the front to play a medley of traditional bagpipe songs. The Sandpipers are a local non-profit service organization dedicated to our community helping groups in need and performs at funerals for fallen heroes from military to firefighters, EMTs and police officers. We thank them for their service and for joining us for Everything Irish.



Guest Speaker Event

An Enjoyable Evening of Travel Through EHT's History

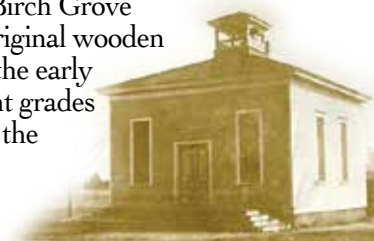
Lead by Historian Lynn Wood & Novelist Mary Ann Trail

Monday, September 16, 2024, Egg Harbor Twp, NJ

MaryAnn Trail, author of historical novels, shared her passion of researching a historic era in a particular location and then spinning that information into a mystery novel. To help make her newest novella, which takes place in the greater Egg Harbor Township area feel more authentic, she studied maps (a personal passion), she physically visited areas that would have been stopovers for travelers from Philadelphia and had to determine how to navigate between each location to the next, either on land through the Pine Barrens or by the Great Egg Harbor River. When writing about her protagonist's experiences in 1805, Ms. Trail wants the reader to have a realistic view of Egg Harbor Township and the challenges of the times, plus enjoy a great mystery.



GEHTHS Historian Lynn Wood took us on a "Journey Through Time" which featured past and present photos of various locations throughout Egg Harbor Twp. Ms. Wood's enthusiasm showed when describing how she discovered remnants of the original Steelmanville School. "I was exploring the area where the early Steelmanville schoolhouse once stood... just woods now. After seeing an old picture of it, I realized that it had a chimney, I got permission of the landowners and investigated the dense area... and to my amazement there is was... a toppled down chimney broken into thirds, laying on the ground. The bricks had the markings from the Somers Brick Yard which was located in Northfield where Birch Grove Park is today." The original wooden building was built in the early 1800s to teach all eight grades to the few children in the Steelmanville area.



Sharing Local History in the Community



Egg Harbor Township's History Featured at the EHT Branch of the Atlantic County Library

A special thank you to our local librarians for their support of the GEHTHS by providing space for us to share the varied and interesting history that makes Egg Harbor Township unique. Museum volunteers will update the display periodically. Our first display covers the history of the smaller outlying schools from when they were originally built until 1992, when they were closed and students moved into newer and larger schools.

Sharing our Message during Atlantic Pops Community Band Concerts



Thank you to the Atlantic Pops President, Gary Press and Music Director, Mark Kadetsky for understanding the importance of partnerships between local non-profits. GEHTHS volunteers share information at a table about the Historical Society before and after the concerts. We also are partnering for Revolution NJ, a program that is bringing communities together throughout NJ to promote America's 250th Anniversary in 2026.

Recognizing Volunteers and Heroes!

Museum Recognizes Local Veterans' Contributions and Military History

Display Features Historic Newspapers & Memorabilia

June 9, 2024, Egg Harbor Twp, NJ. GEHTHS held an open house at the museum recognizing the United States military veterans of various conflicts. Attendees shared amazing stories about their family's contributions, accomplishments and experiences during World War II, from a father surviving a POW camp and a mother serving as an Army nurse in the North African Campaign. During the summer and fall, the museum featured artifacts and information related to military history.

Cynthia Domino discussed her father Joe's military medals. Joe was a WWII veteran and POW. Even at 99 years old, Joe took great pride in his military service.



Janice Thornton Cambron learns more about her father's military career through the medals on his WWII Eisenhower jacket – worn by Col. Thornton of EHT.

Learning from Oral History

Meet EHT Resident Sheryl Collins

During an interview with Sheryl, she shared many memories from dealing with WWII through still being active with the Atlantic County Historical Society.

Submitted by GEHTHS historian Lynn Wood who interviewed Collins in March of 2024

Louise Sheryl Rosenberger Collins was born March 31, 1935 in Abington, Pennsylvania.

During the 1940's her many memories from WWII include air raid drills in dark rooms, rationed items such as butter, sugar, flour, meat, shoes and gasoline, and a Victory Garden. She compared it to the Covid shortages of toilet paper, Clorox and sanitizer. The 40's was also the time of the polio epidemic, restricting Sheryl and her brothers to their back yard. She remembers the ice man delivering blocks of ice for the small ice box in their kitchen. The selection of foods was nothing like we have today. The only crackers available in stores were Ritz and Saltines.

The family moved to Ocean City NJ in 1945, never owning a car while living there. She walked or took the trolley. Sheryl recalls a favorite middle school teacher who once said

"Those who swear do not have a very good command of the English language." (This meant so much to her, that she never swears to this day!) As a senior in high school, Sheryl

worked at Freedy's Drug Store, complete with a soda fountain. There

she met Richard Robert Collins. She recalled one date to Ben's BarBQ in West Atlantic City.



Until recently, Sunshine had been a special pet for 17 years, since it hatched.

Rich and Sheryl married on June 25, 1955 in the Ocean City Presbyterian Church. Being a Bargaintown boy all his life, Rich bought property from Lou Mason on Central Avenue. They lived in this location for 30 years, raising three sons... Doug born in 1957, Craig, 1958 then Jeffrey was born in 1964. After Jeffrey's death, November 17, 1980, due to a car striking him while riding his moped, Sheryl became a spokesperson for implementing bike helmet laws in New Jersey. Jeffrey's kidney was donated to a teenage girl in New York.

Sheryl worked various jobs in the Egg Harbor Township Municipal Building and then from 1984-2000 she was Richard Squires' executive secretary. Upon retiring from this position, Dick convinced her to join the Atlantic County Historical Society board. Even today, she is still active with their program committee.

Sheryl admits to having many ups and downs in her life, but professes that life is still good.

Her advice to today's young generation is from a quote that she tries to live by... "Do not fret over things beyond your control".

Thank You to Our 2024 Members!

Life Memberships

Chris Barbo
Jerry Bell
Elizabeth Naylor
David Speer

Family Memberships

Don & Lois Baird
Ken Blankenbueler
Marguerite & Samuel Colella
Leah & John Drobek
Zak & Melissa Landgraf
Rick & Gina Lang
Charles & Jean Lawless
Dan & Betty Lawless
William & Stephanie Loder
Carol-Jo & William Martin
Richard & MaryLou Monihan
Lee & Rob Portnoy
Scott & Patricia Warner

Individual Memberships

Charlene Canale
Lori Casas
Suzanne Cooper
Lou Dellabarca
Thomas F Dougherty
JoAnne Fricano
Kathleen Fritz
Ashley Gonsalves
Art Handson
Dee Landgraf
Sandy Large
Anna J. Meade
Tina Pierce
Michael Price
Dot Smith
Mark Steelman
Lori Ward
Lynn Wood



Recognize anyone from Mrs. Caruso's class from 1986? Check out our display at the EHT Library on Swift Avenue.

Forever Grateful to the Many Volunteers Who Help Improve Our Facilities

Thank you to the Egg Harbor Township Key Club

Spring and Summer 2024. On three separate Sunday mornings, students from Egg Harbor Township High School's Key Club volunteered by cleaning out and moving items in our large garage, weeding and mulching various gardens, adding commemorative bricks to our walkway and creating a pumpkin patch in our community garden. Thank you to this amazing group of hard workers who also showed us that it can be fun to volunteer.



Thank you to all including those recognized in this photos Miko Wong, Sophia Ruscitto, Carson Bellak, Alex Griffin, and Caleigh. Thank you to Gordon Lai for coordinating the volunteers

Thank you to our Generous Supporters who support our mission to preserve historic materials, events, places and lifestyles related to Egg Harbor Township for prosperity. Please join us as a sponsor or with a donation.

Mail: GEHTHS • 6647 West Jersey Ave. Egg Harbor Twp, NJ 08234 • Email: info@GEHTHSmuseum.org • Phone: 609-380-4524

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Peter Miller & Annamarie Kane • Sidney Parker • Gary and Lisa & Press • Gordon Thornton • Pamela & Tony Tyson
Egg Harbor Township Committee • Public Works • EHT Recreation • Boy Scout Troop 94 • EHT Key Club

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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.

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

609-380-4524

info@GEHTHSMuseum.org

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

Museum: Sundays: 10am-Noon

Library: Tuesdays: 1-3pm

GEHTHSMuseum.org

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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

Old Steelman Homestead - circa 1690

The Old Homestead was in Steelman hands until the late 1940's when Dr. Norwood Band converted it into classrooms and activity rooms.

The exterior is as it was except for tall white columns added from Dr. Band's former home in West Atlantic City. The oldest section of the building is what is called the fireplace room and the room above it, built in saltbox construction.

Dr. Band estimates that James Steelman, the first owner of the 188 acre property, built it in the 1690's soon after coming to the area. The boarded-up fireplace room was returned to its original condition including a wooden mantel. The cellar below the fireplace room reveals the strong old trees used as rafters to support the floor above it; the trees have not been finished off and still contain parts of limbs and bark.

Between the first and second floors, there is a hidden passageway which runs the length of the second floor hallway. **There has been speculation that the Homestead may have been a stop on the Underground Railway and the secret passage may have been used to conceal runaway slaves.**

Outside, a cylindrical root cellar was used for two centuries until it was filled in because the above-ground construction presented a potential danger to the students.



At one time a visitor could see the marks of English cannon balls and bullets in the wall of the root cellars and in those of a log cabin standing close to Mill Road. Legend has it that the attacking British, not knowing the local terrain, were searching for an east-west river to carry their man-of-war to Philadelphia. As they searched on foot, they met a local Revolutionary War militia who put up a fight. The women and children hid in the root cellar which came under heavy fire during the defense.

Information above was copied from a sign on the property which is credited to Carol A. Patrick