



## *Historical Society of Stillwater Township*

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www.HistoricStillwater.org

2011 Number 1

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### **From the President's Desk**

*Bob Grabowsky*

Nothing succeeds like success. I'm hoping this familiar proverb is true. If so, the outlook for the Historical Society for the coming year is better than ever.

We hosted some great events in 2010 and it was one of our most successful years ever. The Fall Festival at the end of September was the highlight of the year. HSST took a new approach in 2010 and partnered with the Stillwater Recreation Commission. The results were truly amazing. Those attending had a great time and it was a record fundraiser for us.

Building on the Grist Mill's National Register listing in late 2009, the Historical Society is forming an Officially Recognized Friends Organization (ORFO) for the Mill. As an ORFO, HSST will be in a position to collaborate with the State on the care of the Mill. A necessary step in the ORFO process was for HSST to become incorporated. We finalized HSST's incorporation last year and I'm pleased to announce the following Board of Trustees for the newly-incorporated Historical Society of Stillwater Township:

### ***Special Member Meeting***

**Thursday, April 14, 2011  
7:30 pm at the Museum**

**"History in the Making"**

**When was the last time you  
toured the museum?**

**Enjoy a members-only museum  
tour given by our most  
experienced members. Refresh  
your memory and see our recent  
collection additions, too.**

Lawrence Earl  
Donald Robbins  
Lou Sylvester  
Roy Knutsen  
Ernest "Skip" Hemschot

Below are the HSST Officers for 2011. The list is the same as 2010; all were re-elected at the December meeting.

President, Bob Grabowsky  
Vice President, Dennis Pegg  
Treasurer, Maureen Block  
Corresponding Secretary, Lynn Rosenkrans Meyer  
Recording Secretary, Betty English

Lastly, to improve the timeliness and quality of HSST's communications, we will be updating the website more frequently with the latest Society news and articles of interest to our members. Please check the site often. You can also sign up for tweets and RSS feeds on the web site. Periodically, we will print and mail the web articles to our members so everyone is kept in the loop. In fact, this newsletter consists of the articles that have been posted on our website so far this year.

I'm looking forward to an exciting 2011 for HSST, its members and for the community. I hope you agree.

## **HSST Remembers Wilma Hill and Ed Hornung**

Wilma (Sipley) Hill, an honorary lifetime member of HSST, passed away on Sunday, October 3, 2010. Born in Andover, Wilma lived in Stillwater most of her life. She was active in both church and civic organizations, including service as Secretary to the Historical Society. Sadie Hill Gass, one of Wilma's children, and a lifetime member of HSST, said she'd like our members to know how much the family loves the Stillwater community.

Ed Hornung, a lifetime member of HSST, died on November 4, 2010. Ed was a summer resident of Stillwater since 1933, but moved here permanently in 1987. He lived in the Middleville section of town. A World War II Navy veteran, Ed was actively involved in the Stillwater community, including HSST.

Thank you to Wilma and Ed for their hard work and dedication to the Historical Society. They are missed.

## **Grist Mill Friends Progress**

In keeping with the Historical Society's goal of forming a Friends organization (ORFO), for the Grist Mill, Bob Grabowsky announced at the February meeting that the ORFO paperwork has been filed with the State. Thanks go to Skip Hemschot for handling the paperwork and for all who helped Skip prepare it.

Although it may seem bit early to mention, HSST has a program on New Jersey mills planned for the June meeting. Please check the calendar for this and other programs and events for 2011.

### **Calendar of Events for 2011**

Apr 14 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm, at the Museum, ***"History in the Making" Museum Tour***

Apr 30 - ***Stillwater Cleanup Day*** (volunteer opportunity)

May 7 - ***Sussex County History Day***, 9am to 3pm at Sussex County Community College (volunteer opportunity)

May 12 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm, at the Museum, ***Presentation by Tom Gable, "Colonial Gardening"***

June 5 through Aug 28 - ***Museum Open to Public***, every Sunday 2pm to 4pm

June 9 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm at the Museum, ***Presentation by Phil Jaeger, "New Jersey's Mills: Whatever Happened to Them?"***

June 12 - ***Strawberry Festival*** - 1pm to 4pm at Museum (2nd Sun) (volunteer opportunity)

July 8 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm at the Museum

Aug 11 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm, at the Museum

Aug 21 - ***Peach Festival*** - 1pm to 4pm at Museum (3rd Sun) (volunteer opportunity)

Sep 8 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm, at the Museum

Sep 24 - ***Fall Festival***, Sat 11am to 4pm at Elementary School (volunteer opportunity)

Oct 13 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm, at the Museum

Nov 10 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm, at the Museum

Dec 4 - ***Christmas Open House*** - from 1pm to 4pm (1st Sun)

Dec 8 - Membership Meeting, Thurs at 7:30pm, Museum, ***Presentation by Priscilla Hayes, "Crater Lake History"***

## Donation Covers a Range of Stillwater's History

Dr. Edward Cosgrove, lifetime member of HSST, donated a large collection of Native American artifacts, Stillwater photos and vintage postcards to the Society. His donation is a wonderful addition to HSST's collection and we extend our thanks to Dr. Cosgrove for his generosity.

Following is just a sampling of items in the Cosgrove Collection. We encourage you to visit the Museum this summer during our Sunday openings to see the collection or -email- to arrange an appointment.

### Native American Artifacts

The Native American artifacts were found on the property of Mr. Levi T. Serey. Mr Serey, a Middleville farmer in the early-mid 20th Century, was married to May Hill, Dr. Cosgrove's relative. The farm was located on the current Route 521 in the Keen's Mill area and is shown on the map below:



The artifacts range from arrowheads and axes to ornamental pieces and pestles.

#### **Ax Head:**



*Gorget (ornamental piece worn around the neck; had a ceremonial purpose):*



*Nutter (used to grind nuts in the concave area):*



### **Photo Albums**

There are two photo albums in the Cosgrove Collection, both of which belonged to May Hill Serey. The earlier album (before circa 1917/1918) centers around the Lake House, a hotel May's parents owned in Swartswood. The later album (post circa 1917/1918) centers around the Middleville farm that would later belong to May and Levi Serey. It had a boarding house called Lake Cottage as well as a schoolhouse.

*This line crew, shown in Swartswood, laid the first phone lines in the area:*



*Levi Serey, working his Middleville farm:*

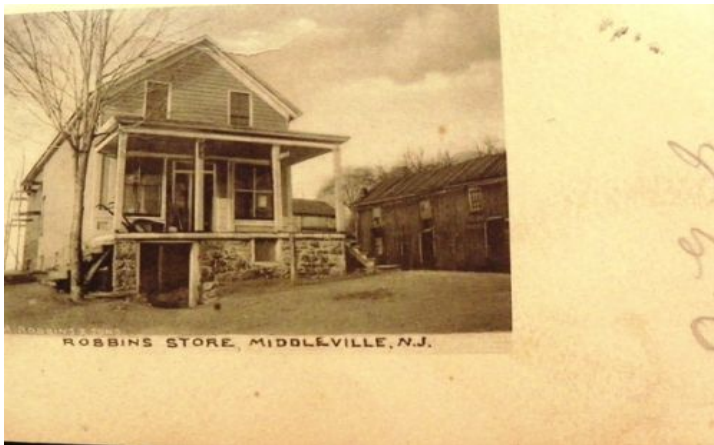




## Postcards

The postcards in the Cosgrove Collection primarily consist of Stillwater area postcards, though New Jersey at large and other geographic locations are represented. The messages on some of the postcards give us a glimpse into everyday life in our area in the early 20th Century. One postcard promises a secret if the reader looks under the stamp. Of course, the stamp is long gone - and the secret along with it.

**Robbins Store:**



**Swartswood Post Office and General Store:**



**High Falls House:**





## 2010 Fall Festival Photos

The Historical Society of Stillwater Township's 5th Annual Fall Festival, was held on September 25, 2010 in partnership with Stillwater's Recreation Commission. It was a record-breaking Fall Festival for HSST but, best of all, it was fun!



Boy Scouts on parade.



Next came the tractors.



Past the museum...



...which was open for tours.



There were big crafters...



...and little crafters!





Of course, there was music...



...and an apple pie contest, too.



There were faces to paint...



...and friends to meet.



The snacks were tasty, but...



...there was more substantial fare, as well!

## NJ Maps and History - Perfect Together

Ever wonder about the historic buildings and farms you pass each day? We're fortunate to be surrounded by historic properties, but we rarely take the time to learn about them. Did you know that you can satisfy your curiosity fairly easily online? Here's a look at a couple of websites worth exploring.

### NJ-GeoWeb

NJ DEP, the parent organization of the State Historic Preservation Office, has a fascinating site called NJ-GeoWeb: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/gis/geoweb splash.htm>. The interactive GIS system shows environmental information, tax parcels, geologic data, historic areas and many other attributes about properties throughout the state.

The system is fairly intuitive, but a tutorial is available, if needed. Clicking the Launch button pulls up an outline map of New Jersey and a Layer Manager. Zoom to the desired area and select the layer or multiple layers you want to view. (Not every layer is viewable at every zoom level.)



Here's a close-up of Stillwater village with the Historic Properties layer selected. The Grist Mill property is shaded in red because it is listed on the State and National Historic Registers while the yellow area indicates non-listed historic properties.

If you click on the "i" button (identify) and on a property, a pop-up box will show attributes which can be identified for the property.

Selecting Historic Properties from the drop-down menu identifies the property as the Ellen Vass house located at 925 Main Street (next to the Stillwater Inn.)

Other history-related layers include Historic Districts and Archaeological Sites. You can also delve into many more layers and attributes for properties throughout the state - including your own.

Attribute Details For: Historic Properties	
Select Reports: Report (CSV) View	
1 features found. Displaying 1 To 1	
Attribute	Value
Survey Database ID	0.00
Inventory Database ID	4,144.006
Historic Property Name	Ellen Vass House
Historic Property Address	925 Main Street
National Historic Landmark	0
National Register Date	
NJ Register Date	
Determination of Eligibility	
SHPO Opinion	
Certification of Eligibility	
Local Designation Date	
Survey Date	
Survey Name	
Survey ID	0.00
Survey Shelf Code	
Historic District Name	Stillwater Historic District
Historic District Inventory ID	4,144.00
Property to District Relationship Status	2.00
NRIS ID	
Digitizing Code	G
Historic District Survey Database ID	0.00

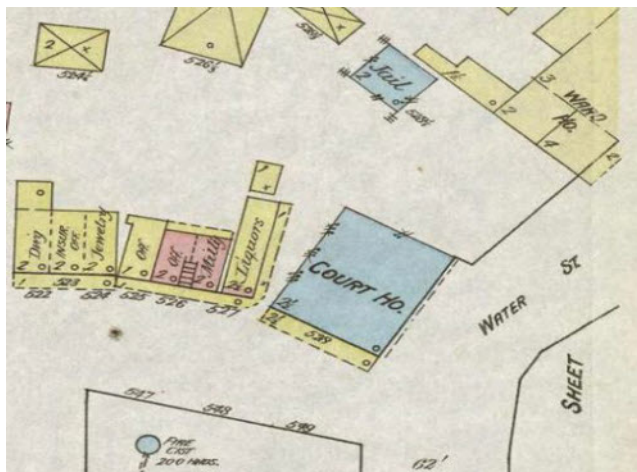


## Princeton University Library

Princeton University has digitized almost 2000 New Jersey maps published by the Sanborn Map Company from the late 19th to mid 20th Century and has made the collection accessible to the public online.

Stillwater's maps are not among the collection, but here is a link to Newton maps:

<http://library.princeton.edu/libraries/firestone/rbnc/aids/sanborn/sussex/newton.html>. On the Newton page, if you click on the link for other New Jersey maps, you will get an Excel file with hyperlinks to all the maps in the collection.



A section of one of the Newton maps from 1890 shows the courthouse area. Behind it is the jail and next to it are stores and offices including a liquor store, a jewelry store and an insurance office.

The Newton maps span 1890 through 1916. Using them, you can see the development of the town over those years. The page also includes a link for an Excel file with hyperlinks to all the maps in the collection.

This is just a brief idea of some map resources for historical applications. There are many others out there and, hopefully, you will be encouraged to seek them out as well.

*A page of history is worth a volume of logic.*

*~Oliver Wendell Holmes*

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### Dues Remittance / Donation Form

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues:      Student: \$10      Individual: \$20      Family: \$30

Lifetime Membership: \$300 Individual/Family

Fall Festival:      Sponsorship:    Platinum \$500 + \_\_\_\_\_    Gold \$250+ \_\_\_\_\_    Silver \$100+ \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail completed form with check to Historical Society of Stillwater Township, PO Box 238, 900 Main Street, Stillwater, NJ 07875.

*The Historical Society of Stillwater Township is an IRS recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Donations to HSST are tax deductible. Ask your accountant or tax preparer for details. Annual memberships beginning in August or later will be active through the following year.*

Member thru:  
{MM:Member Thru}  
{MM:FIRST} {MM:LAST}  
{MM:STREET}  
{MM:TOWN}, {MM:STATE} {MM:ZIP}

*Historical Society of Stillwater Township*  
PO Box 238  
Stillwater, New Jersey 07875

**Special Member Meeting!**  
Thursday, April 14  
More Inside.....