

# Drakesville Times

*Exploring History in the New Jersey Highlands*

EXTERIOR ELEVATION - NORTH  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

EXTERIOR ELEVATION - WEST  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

EXTERIOR ELEVATION - SOUTH  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

EXTERIOR ELEVATION - EAST  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Drawings John Bolt Architect

Semi-annual Newsletter

Issue No. 9 December 2014

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## President's Letter

This report picks up with Beth Blewett's talk to the RHT members on June 8 before the annual meeting (photo below). We were privileged to share in her grandmother, Sara McWilliams', recollections of growing up as the Plane 3 East planetender's daughter, school days and life in Ledgewood c. 1900.

The ice cream social in July was perhaps the most popular and relaxed event of the year, but the Pathways of History Tour openings, and the School visits by Roxbury High School sophomores and the Denville Riverview and Lakeview schools gifted 3-5 graders have been special highlights. The latter returned on December 14 to make the Museums [hum with life](#) as they enacted the King and Riggs families and friends: a delightfully successful and innovative project led by Denville teacher and long-time Roxbury resident, Brenda Harrower.

A new venture for 2014 is the gift shop at the King House led by Sue Rawlinson. During the summer months the shop was on the back porch, but, come the cold, it has been in Mr. King's office. RHT now has Drakesville Historic Park tee shirts for sale, designed by member Francesca Picone.

Several new artifacts have arrived at the King Store and House this year including clothing donated by Kathryn Orr in memory of Herbert King and Bertha Salmon, augers and tools by Ronald Watson, a gas-fired iron rest by Tracy P. Yung and a fine Olin Vought watercolor of the mill at Waterloo Village, donated by Maria Sudol.



Turning to progress with rehabilitation, RHT received a grant award of \$91,763 from Morris County Historic Preservation Trust, matched by \$22,940 from Roxbury's Open Space Fund. This is for an electrical upgrade and ground floor reinforcement at the King House. In spring, 2015, work will also

begin on the King Store windows and exterior doors. General operating support will continue with a recently received \$5,000 GOS grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission a Division of the Department of State.

The RHT Board has welcomed an important new addition: Brian Corsi who is the capable new treasurer, assisted by Charlie Alpaugh. Much appreciated former treasurer, Richard Cramond, has stepped down after holding the office since June 2000 when the Trust was incorporated. RHT has also been joined by new volunteers, Jaki Albrecht, Patrick and Jack Andriani and Marie Lepre.

Please remember to pay your 2015 dues by December 31 - support from our members is vital. Many thanks to those who have already sent in their dues....

And special thanks to our small band of faithful and dedicated volunteers.

Best wishes to all readers for 2015.

*Miriam*

## Officers and Board of Trustees

Miriam Morris President, Janet Lordi VP, Brian Corsi Treasurer, Charles Alpaugh Assistant Treasurer, Mary Ann Dudak Secretary and Rotary representative, Richard Cramond Roxbury Historical Society representative, Rev. David Holwick, Robert Morris, Barbara Pescow, Louis Picone and Susan Rawlinson - Trustees

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## RHT Mission:

*The Roxbury Historic Trust, Inc. provides unique opportunities for discovery of our shared heritage through interpretation of the King Store and King House Museums. Visitors explore the roles of the King and Riggs families in the development of the Morris Canal, the Roxbury community and the region, from the 1820s through the 1930s, a time of tremendous growth and innovation in our nation.*

Roxbury Historic Trust  
209 Main Street  
Ledgewood, NJ 07852  
973 - 927-7603

## CALENDAR of EVENTS

**Sunday, April 12,** First opening from 1 - 4 PM

**Sunday, May 17,** Celebrate Preservation, 1 - 4 PM

Photos of buildings receiving Roxbury Township Preservation Awards, hot dogs, etc.

**Sunday, June 7,** Regular opening from 1 - 4 PM followed by the Annual Meeting and program. All are welcome!

**Sunday, July 12,** Ice Cream Social 1 - 4 PM

**Saturday, August 8,** Peach Festival/Ledgewood Gala Day 10:00 AM - 3 PM at the Ledgewood Baptist Church

**Sunday, August 9,** Regular opening from 1 - 4 PM

**Saturday, September 12,** Suckasunny Day on Main Street, Succasunna: 10 AM - 3 PM

**Sunday, September 13,** Regular opening 1 - 4 PM

**Saturday, October 10,** Pathways of History Museum Tour first day, 10 AM - 4 PM

**Sunday, October 11,** Living History Day and the second day of Pathways of History Noon - 4 PM

**Sunday, November 8,** Regular opening from 1 - 4 PM, Veterans Day theme including War memorabilia

**Friday, December 4,** Salt Box Christmas and Historic King House Celebration from 6 - 9 PM

**Sunday, December 13,** Holiday opening from 1 - 4 PM, event to be announced

**Friday, December 18,** Evening get together 5 - 7 PM

**Thursday, December 31,** Membership renewals due for 2016!!

## The Morris Canal Greenway

Imagine a network of hiking and biking trails, historic parks, working canal locks and a few stretches of open water, all following the route of the historic Morris Canal across New Jersey. The Morris Canal Greenway is a shared vision of a diverse group of individuals and organizations in Warren, Sussex, Morris, Passaic, Essex and Hudson counties. The idea has been around for decades but the project has gained momentum over the last two years thanks to the involvement of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) in long-term planning and coordination of local efforts.

The early 1800s saw the golden era of canal building in the eastern United States. The recently completed Erie Canal provided inspiration for the highly innovative "mountain climbing" Morris Canal, built between 1825 and 1831. The canal carried coal, iron and zinc ore, lime, cement, and other cargo across the New Jersey Highlands for about fifty years before being rendered obsolete by rail transport in the late 1800s. The 102 mile-long canal started at an elevation of 200 feet above sea level in Phillipsburg where it linked to the Lehigh and Delaware Canals. It headed east, alternately climbing hills and following ridges, to an elevation of 914 feet below the Brookland feeder lock, which provided access to the surface of Lake Hopatcong at an elevation of 926 feet. The route then descended to sea level at Jersey City. The unprecedented elevation change was made possible by an ingenious system of twenty-three water-powered inclined planes for larger lifts, and a similar number of conventional locks for the more gentle slopes.



Lock 1 East as seen looking east from the Main Street bridge in Ledgewood. Route 10 now occupies most of the space in the foreground of this photograph.



Excavation of the canal was started in 1825 by Silas Riggs in Drakesville, probably on the Riggs property near the current location of Riggs Park, which was purchased by Roxbury Township and the Canal Society using Open Space funds c. 2005. About eight miles of canal crosses Roxbury Township: starting in Port Morris near Lake Musconetcong, passing the feeder lock from the highest elevation at Lake Hopatcong in Landing, proceeding on down Plane 1 East along Shippenport Road, taking the viaduct over the Morris Turnpike near the present intersection of Routes 46 and Interstate 80, descending Planes 2 and 3 East and Lock 1 East (photo below) in Drakesville, then following the level through Kenvil parallel to Route 46, Berkshire Valley Road and Dewey Avenue toward Lock 2 East in Wharton.

About 1.4 miles of the canal route in Roxbury Township lies within the Township's contiguous Veteran's and Morris Canal Parks. The Roxbury Township Trails Committee has expressed an intent to develop a Greenway Trail with interpretive signage following the canal through these areas and down to Drakesville Historic Park.



Looking west toward Main Street bridge from Lock 1 East

Pennsylvania coal transported by the canal in its early years was key to reinvigorating northern New Jersey's struggling iron industry after unsustainable timber harvest had curtailed the supply of charcoal needed in the region's numerous bloomery forges and blast furnaces. By the late 1800s steam railroads had monopolized coal transport and the financially defunct canal was eventually taken over and decommissioned in the 1920s by the State of New Jersey. This proceeded over the objections of the Morris Canal Parkway Association which advocated preservation of rural sections of the canal as parkland. (see <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njmorris/morriscanal>) This idea has now resurfaced under the banner of the Morris Canal Greenway.

The Morris Canal was [nominated](#) to and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. Then, in the 1970s and 1980s the [Canal Society of New Jersey](#), the Warren County Morris Canal Committee and the Warren County Planning Office revived the Morris Canal

Parkway idea and began purchasing selected properties along the canal. In 2001 a new section of trail near Saxton Falls was designated as "Morris Canal Greenway," the first use of these words and the distinctive logo on park signage (see photo on following page). The first discussions of a statewide Greenway occurred at about this time.

Key early contributors to the Morris Canal Greenway project include Jim Lee, Dennis Bertland and David Detrick from the Warren County Morris Canal Committee and Bob Barth, Richard Cramond, Joe Macasek and Brian Morrell from the Canal Society.

In 2007 the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders passed a resolution authorizing preparation

of the [Morris Canal Greenway 25 Year Action Plan](#), completed in 2011. The origin of the Greenway in Warren County is not surprising given the county's 33 miles of canal, including long stretches of relatively undisturbed prism and a number of accessible and well-preserved historic sites.

Public and private preservation efforts have resulted in the creation of a number of excellent Morris Canal destinations

along the [Warren County Greenway](#) including [Plane 9 West](#), [Bread Lock Park](#) and [Saxton Falls](#). Particularly noteworthy is the hydraulic turbine which powered Plane 9 West, restored by owner Jim Lee, which was designated a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in 1979.

Other New Jersey counties soon began to follow suit and the concept of a statewide Greenway linking the Delaware River at Phillipsburg to tidewater in Jersey City was definitely in the air. This crystallized in 2012, when the New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, with leadership from Project Manager Megan Kelly, sponsored the formation of the [Morris Canal Greenway Working Group](#), an affiliation of stakeholders including the Canal Society of NJ, representatives of State, County and Municipal governments and a number of local non-profit history organizations and individuals working to promote and implement the common vision.



First use of "Morris Canal Greenway" and logo on 2001 interpretive sign at Saxton Falls

The Working Group held its kickoff meeting in March 2012 followed by full membership meetings in July 2012, August 2013 and July 2014. Nearly 100 Working Group stakeholders participated in the Morris Canal Greenway Conference held at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Whippany on March 27, 2014.

Some recent and ongoing efforts along the canal to the east of Warren County include:

- ◆ Sussex County's main Morris Canal destination, Waterloo Village, a restored 19th-century canal town, had fallen on [hard times](#), after the 2007 bankruptcy of the Waterloo Foundation for the Arts. The village now has a new lease on life due to the joint efforts of the Canal Society, the [Friends of Waterloo Village](#), and the NJ DEP Division of Parks and Forestry which has committed more than \$800,000 to renewed maintenance efforts. NJDEP Interpretive Specialist Andrea Proctor represents Waterloo on the Working Group.
- ◆ In 2005 the Canal Society created a Greenway plan that established goals and identified canal assets for Morris County. Greenway projects include the recently completed Braille Trail in Mount Olive Township, restoration and maintenance of the well-

preserved Plane 2E in Ledgewood, ongoing restoration of Wharton's Lock 2 East and locktender's house, and Montville's new Greenway Park. In addition, the Lake Hopatcong Foundation is planning a long trail, encircling the lake, which would link to the Greenway at the Feeder Lock in Lake Hopatcong State Park.

- ◆ Passaic County completed and approved a [Morris Canal Greenway Feasibility Study](#) in 2011. In 2012 the County Freeholders approved funding for six kiosks, a brochure, and one thousand trail markers for the existing off-road segments of the Greenway. The county has also received a Federal Highway Administration grant of \$532,566 through the Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program to create bike lanes along the Greenway route in Clifton and Paterson, which connects to the new Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park.
- ◆ Current activities in Essex County include a Township of Bloomfield resolution to designate five miles of the Canal's route as Greenway. Bloomfield is pursuing funding for Canal/Greenway signage. Also under consideration is the potential for a Greenway connection between Clifton and Bloomfield and restoration of the [Collins House](#) (on the inclined plane in Bloomfield).
- ◆ Jersey City in Hudson County completed a Morris Canal Greenway Plan with funding from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority. Currently, the City is actively pursuing funding for construction of the first off-road section of the greenway through Berry Lane Park, including a grant from the NJDOT Transportation Alternatives Program. Jersey City is a densely-populated urban area with an increasing demand for accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists. With much of the long-term route for the Greenway located in redevelopment plan areas, the City is exploring potential strategies and techniques for implementation. Additionally the East Coast Greenway follows the Morris Canal in Jersey City.

The Morris Canal Greenway project has been underway in various forms for more than thirty years and while much has been accomplished, there is a great deal more to do before the vision of a continuous Greenway linking the Delaware River to tidewater in Jersey City is realized. However, the tempo has been accelerating and the prospects appear bright.





## Roxbury Township Historical Society

(adapted from a recent NJ Historical Commission Grant application)

The origins of the Roxbury Township Historical Society, Inc. (RTHS) go back to 1961 when the New Jersey Department of Conservation and Economic Development requested all communities to catalog their historic sites and structures in preparation for New Jersey's 1964 State Tercentenary. Upon completion of the inventory, those who had participated were inspired to formally establish the society on February 12, 1962, "to bring together those persons interested in the history of Roxbury Township and its environs, to encourage the search for historical data and arouse interest in the past in order to intelligently understand the present."<sup>1</sup>

Many local residents participated in the early days of the society but Annie Hosking and Harriet Meeker stand out for their early leadership and sustained contributions.

One of the buildings on the inventory, had been the home of Silas and Harriet Riggs and their large family in the early 1800's. Architecturally significant for its early style and construction, it was threatened by imminent destruction. Adding to the Riggs house's importance were

the economic contributions made to the community by Silas Riggs, a tanner whose trade had supported the local iron industry, and who had participated in the construction of the Morris Canal and subsequently owned and operated three canal boats.

Rescue and restoration of the house became the Society's first goal. The house was donated to the Society by its owner then moved a half a mile to its current location at 213 Main Street Ledgewood, next to the King Store, on land deeded to the Society by Silas Riggs' great-granddaughter, Emma Louise King, who was still living in the King House just beyond the Store.

The Roxbury Township community rallied round the newly formed Society as it restored the Silas Riggs House with donated funds; proceeds from fundraisers sponsored by local organizations and the Society; money borrowed from Society members and a local bank; and labor donated by resident craftsmen, as well as by paid contractors; along with the advice of John Dodd an architect and architectural historian. The Society's efforts were rewarded in 1974 when their nomination of the [Silas Riggs House](#) to the NJ State and National Registers of Historic Places was approved. Local, state and federal representatives attended a gala Silas Riggs

House dedication in 1976 as part of the American Revolution Bicentennial celebrations.

Interestingly, while there have been suggestions that the Riggs House is "pre-revolutionary in construction," this is not supported by tax records or other objective evidence. In keeping with its stated purpose, RTHS is considering a dendrochronology study of the house's timber frame to answer this long-standing question.

Over the years society has supported the successful nominations of the King Store, the King House, the Daniel Cary House, the Cary Station House and the Ledgewood Historic District to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. In conjunction with Roxbury

Rotary, the Society founded the Roxbury Historic Trust in 2000 to oversee the ongoing restoration and operation of the township-owned King Store and King House Museums.

Members were instrumental in the formation of the Township Landmarks Committee that resulted in the designation of four Historic Preservation Districts in 1984, now overseen by the [Historic Advisory Committee](#) which was created by ordinance to "advise or consult with the council, planning board, and or zoning board, with respect

to development and preservation of the historic areas of Roxbury Township in accordance with the provisions of Chapter XII of the Revised General Ordinance of the Township of Roxbury (1978)."

The RTHS Calendar of Events throughout the years has included evening lectures open to the public; school group tours of the town and the Riggs House; sponsoring of girl and boy scout projects; open-hearth cooking demonstrations; events to celebrate Preservation Month in May; Living History Day in October; house tours of private historic homes; and "A Silas Riggs Saltbox Christmas" in early December, featuring hearth-cooked cornbread and soup, a twenty-five year tradition.

The society has published three volumes of *The History of Roxbury Township*, available for sale along with several other publications relating to historic figures and places in the community. Vol. I, referenced in footnote 1, and Vol. II, detail the early days of the organization. The third volume thoroughly documents the "Old Homes of Roxbury Township"<sup>3</sup> including the Riggs House.

The Silas Riggs House still serves as headquarters for RTHS. For more information, call 973 584 6931 or 973 584 7903 or write to Roxbury Township Historical Society, PO Box 18, Succasunna, NJ 07876. New members and volunteers are always welcome. **\$**



Photo by Brian Corsi

<sup>1</sup> A. Hosking and H. Meeker, *The History of Roxbury Township Volume I*, Pyramid Press, Inc, Netcong, NJ, 1965.



## East Jersey Cottage style dwellings in Roxbury Township

The Ledgewood Historic District NJ State and National Register nomination, prepared by Dennis Bertland Associates of Stockton, NJ, identified the Silas Riggs House (discussed above) and several other structures in Ledgewood as [East Jersey Cottage Style](#) buildings. This building style melds Dutch and English influences, and is common in northeast New Jersey. The term East Jersey Cottage was coined by Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker in 1938.<sup>2</sup> Variations on the rural one-and-a-half story vernacular cottage in stone and wood can be seen from western New York to Maine and beyond.

Reference to “Old Homes of Roxbury Township”<sup>3</sup> and a drive around town will reveal a number of examples, all exhibiting the characteristic “knee wall” construction, a few of which are shown here.



58 S. Hillside Avenue - Edward Alward House, later known as “Paradise”



Above 111 Main Street Succasunna -Slaight’s Tavern, the newer wing of the late 1700s tavern, which shared this stretch of road with the Succasunna Presbyterian Church 100 yards east.



59 Main Street Succasunna, c. 1800, Silas Jennings, a carpenter, may have also built 111 Main St.



15 Carey Road, Flanders, c. 1850, G. Allpock.House



34 Unneberg Avenue, possibly mid -1700s, Frederick Honnel House

<sup>2</sup> T.J. Wertenbaker, *The Founding of American Civilization -The Middle Colonies*, p. 153, C. Scribner's Sons, NY, 1938.

<sup>3</sup> *Old Homes of Roxbury Township*, ed. Ruthann Seraly and Frances Lyman, Diversi-Comm, Boonton, NJ 1982. (available from the Roxbury Township Historical Society, see previous page for contact info)



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## New Jersey 350th - Innovations in Roxbury

New Jersey's 350th Anniversary celebration is winding down but the state's contributions to the 350th themes, Innovation, Diversity, and Liberty, continue to grow. Roxbury Township's history is rich in Innovation beyond being the birthplace of the famous mountain-climbing Morris Canal discussed above:

- Roxbury was an early site for dynamite manufacture, partly because of the local deposits of diatomaceous earth left by the retreating glaciers. This chalk-like substance was used in dynamite to dilute and desensitize the otherwise touchy nitroglycerine. A succession of dynamite manufacturers with operations in Drakesville, Kenil and Landing were eventually purchased by E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company as it gained a monopoly position in the high explosives industry. The duPont monopoly was broken up in 1912 by the Sherman Antitrust Act, resulting in divestment of the Atlas Powder operation in Landing and the Hercules Powder Company, located in Kenil. Both contributed to innovations in explosives, supporting industrial, recreational, and military applications of energetic materials. Hercules was a major local employer until it closed in 1996.

- The first transistor-based Electronic Switching System, #1 ESS, was developed by Bell Laboratories and installed in the telephone exchange office at 140 Route 10, Succasunna in 1965. The ESS digital logic technology revolutionized the way in which we communicate by introducing features such as call waiting, three-way calling and call forwarding. The discrete transistors and diodes and magnetic memory technologies used in IESS were cutting edge at the time but now seem antiquated compared with today's microprocessors and semiconductor-based Random Access Memory (RAM). The photo at the right was made available by the Alcatel-Lucent Bell Labs Archives along with a number of IESS artifacts currently on display in the King House Museum. 2015 will mark the 50th anniversary of IESS.

- The AT&T National Emergency Communications Center; located in Roxbury's Veteran's Park on the ridge overlooking Emmans Road, was a cold-war-era microwave relay station which superficially resembles other AT&T Long Lines stations. This facility was nuclear hardened and capable of surviving a detonation as close as 5 miles. Buildings were shielded with copper to protect equipment from the Electromagnetic Pulse associated with a nuclear explosion. Interestingly, the facility does not appear on published lists of AT&T Long Lines microwave relay stations.

- Kenil was the childhood home of financial innovator Arnie Staloff. Arnie is credited with the introduction of options on foreign currencies at the Philadelphia Stock Exchange in the 1970s, a precursor of SPDR funds and Standard and Poors Depository Receipts. (Options are financial contracts that give the holders the right to buy or sell an underlying asset at a specific price for a specific period of time.)

- A recently completed Preservation Plan, funded by the Morris County Historic Preservation Trust, has revealed that the structural shell of the Ledgewood Baptist Church, built in 1917, is a notable early use of steel-reinforced concrete (see photo in Drakesville Times No. 8).

- Evidence of a very early innovative use of Portland cement was recently discovered at the King Store Museum during mortar analysis of the stucco cladding. In 1885 Theodore King had the store stuccoed, scored and painted to resemble cut stone masonry. According to historical finishes expert Chris Frey of Keystone Preservation Group, stucco cladding before 1900 was invariably lime-based mortar. However, Mr. King, likely being familiar with Lehigh Valley Portland cement as one of the cargoes transported on the Morris Canal, apparently decided to use it in re-cladding the Store. Little did he know that it would still be looking good beyond 2014.



Technicians preparing the first 1 ESS electronic switch, Succasunna NJ, 1965.

Visit the [Roxbury Historic Trust](http://www.roxburynewjersey.com/trust.htm) online at <http://www.roxburynewjersey.com/trust.htm> or Facebook [Museums at Drakesville](#)



Photos of December 14 school visit by Brian Corsi and Bob Morris

Roxbury Historic Trust, Inc. DRAKESVILLE TIMES

Issue No. 9 Dec. 2014

209 Main Street / Ledgewood, NJ 07852

# MUSEUMS AT DRAKESVILLE

[I wish to renew my membership in or join the Roxbury Historic Trust, Inc.](#) (click for Paypal link)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address

Annual Membership Dues - \_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$25.00, Corporate \$125

would like to help fund a special project: \_\_\_\_\_ King House Mural Restoration  
(Funding goal: \$15,000)

King House wheel chair ramp

I would like to help the Trust fund continuing restoration \_\_\_\_\_ General Donation

Total enclosed

Please mail information with payment to: *Roxbury Historic Trust, Inc., 209 Main Street, Ledgewood, NJ 07852*

I would like to volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Skills / interests \_\_\_\_\_