

# *Historical Society News*

**The Local Use of Brick**

**Society Annual  
Dinner  
at Walnford**

**Evergreen Farm  
...more pictures**

**100 Years Ago**

**National Lead Rendering**

**Hightstown-East Windsor  
Historical Society**  
164 North Main Street  
Hightstown, NJ 08520  
[www.hewhs.com](http://www.hewhs.com)

**Hightstown HPC**

**Camden & Amboy Railroad  
Right-of-Way Site**

**HPC Identity  
Official Logo**

**Steward of  
Hightstown History**

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## Editor's Column

There was too much material from the National Lead story to fit in the Winter issue. Left out was an architect's rendering of the Hightstown Laboratories that was included in the formal invitation to the company's open house in September 1962. We also have more photos of Evergreen Farm than we were able to include. We've added a couple more in this issue.

One of the remarkable personal accomplishments of anyone who has written about our community has been the historical account that Rev. Edward Gaul has compiled of the Baptist church. It is Hightstown's oldest institution and has occupied its property on Main Street since just after the Revolutionary War. For reasons of length and format, however, his chapters do not easily fit in the Newsletter, but because of the focus on brick in Hightstown, it seems fitting to include excerpts from his writing about the Baptists' new brick meetinghouse of the 1830s.

Walnford has a special resonance for me. As a high school freshman, on my very first day as a budding preservationist, now nearly 50 years ago, Eleanore Shuman, advisor of the Exploring New Jersey Club, took some of the club members to Walnford. It was a scene right out of Henry Charlton Beck's *More Forgotten Towns of Southern New Jersey*, long before the Monmouth County Parks Commission was able to acquire it.

- Bob

### CORRECTION:

IN THE WINTER ISSUE, IT WAS THE MYSTERY PHOTOGRAPH OF JAMES W. O'BRIEN'S HOTEL ON PAGE 10 THAT WAS PROBABLY TAKEN IN APRIL 1882, NOT THE MYSTERY PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE FALL 2015 ISSUE. THE SOCIETY SEEKS TO FIND THE LOCATION OF O'BRIEN'S HOTEL.

# President's Message

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

Spring is the time of rebirth for nature and our Society. Your volunteer officers and committee members have been very busy tending to usual business and many new projects.

I want to give special thanks to Robin Smith for agreeing to be our Vice President, Bob Craig for his constant support and expertise, and to the Olsen's for their continued stewardship. I greatly appreciate the support of past and current officers and committee members who have been there and willingly brought me up to date.

We were saddened by the news of the passing of our long-time member Clifford Pullen. He bequeathed to the Society six pieces of furniture that date from the 1850s-1890s that are perfect period pieces for the museum. Included are a unique Stella Music Box in excellent condition and a large Marlatt charcoal of Archibald Forman to add to our Marlatt collection.

The Society continues to receive valuable written materials for our library. We are in the process of reorganizing our space to preserve all such items properly and safely. HEWHS is recognized as a superior repository for such items thanks to our capable historians and librarians; both past and current.

This year our annual dinner has been moved to the more weather friendly month of May. It will be held at Historic Walnford, Cream Ridge, on May 1st at 4:30 pm. The park will be closed to the public as we receive private tours of the operating mill, the amazingly well preserved 1700s structures and the beautiful grounds on the bucolic Crosswicks Creek. It is one of my favorite places in the area and I hope to see you there. Please see the additional information in this newsletter and RSVP today to help with our planning.

We invite you to attend our monthly meetings which have been moved to the first Monday of each month at 7:00 PM. Agendas are limited to 90 minutes or less!

Having your email will greatly assist us with communications. Please send yours to [cstults@allenstults.com](mailto:cstults@allenstults.com) and [olsenfarr@verizon.net](mailto:olsenfarr@verizon.net). Also email me with any thoughts, ideas and questions. I look forward to seeing you at a meeting and hopefully at Walnford. You'll love it. I promise. Bring a neighbor with you too.

SPRING 2016



*Hightstown East Windsor  
Historical Society*  
founded 1971

**to educate while preserving for  
future generations, our people and  
our community's history.**

## *Officers for 2014-2015*

|                      |                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| President-           | Charles S. Stults III             |
| Vice President-      | Robin Smith                       |
| Recording Secretary- | Shirley Olsen<br>609-448-8388     |
| Corres. Secretary-   | Vacant                            |
| Treasurer-           | Robert Szychowski<br>609-448-9490 |

## *Committee Chairs*

|                                   |                                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Finance-                          | Robert Szychowski<br>609-448-9490                   |
| Property & Grounds-               | Warren Olsen<br>609-448-8388                        |
| Library-                          | Robert Craig<br>609-584-1806                        |
| Website-                          | Gary Stevens<br>609-469-1860                        |
| Membership-                       | Shirley Olsen<br>609-448-8388                       |
| Museum- Cookie & Christa Cummings |                                                     |
| Newsletter-                       | Robert Craig<br>609-584-1806                        |
| Programs-                         | Christian Kirkpatrick &<br>Jane Cox<br>609-443-3138 |
| Programs-                         | Nancy Laudenberger<br>609-443-6536                  |
| Publicity-                        | Shirley Olsen<br>609-448-8388                       |

## *Building Committee*

Christian Kirkpatrick, Suzann Fallon,  
Shirley Olsen, Warren Olsen, Robert  
Szychowski

## *Society Trustees*

Marie Gerland & Irene Schubert

Layout by Rick Pratt  
Printed by Old Hights Print Shop

## The Local Use of Brick

BY ROBERT W. CRAIG

If you had visited Hightstown in, say, the 1770s, you would have seen a nascent village surrounded by a farming neighborhood that approximated the territory of East Windsor Township today. You would have seen a farmscape of timber-framed, clapboarded farmhouses, on stone foundations, with wood-shingled roofs, and interior walls of plaster on lath. You would have seen timber-framed English barns and outbuildings, from wagon houses to privies, that were also built of wood. What you would not have seen was much use of brick, except in chimneys or in the occasional smoke-house.

It wasn't that way everywhere. Brick buildings in the region had a long history before they appeared in Hightstown. They made their first appearance in the town of Burlington in about 1680, where the first settlers included

brick makers. Burlington soon became one of the two South Jersey hearths of the phenomenon known as "patterned brickwork." Brick construction spread throughout the clay-

rich parts of Burlington County, and even as far as Upper Freehold where some patterned brickwork houses were built in the latter years of the colonial period. Trenton began as a village of framed houses, but stone began to be used as a major building material about 1700. Brick was introduced, however, perhaps when Philadelphia merchant William Trent built his house from 1719-21. Stone remained the material of choice for most who did not build in wood, but Trenton also gained a sprinkling of brick buildings as the 18th century moved forward. One was the Trenton Friends (Quakers) Meeting-house of 1739-40.

Princeton also developed in its better buildings a decided preference for stone construction in the first half of the 18th century, best exemplified by Nassau Hall (1754-56) on the Princeton University campus (then the College of New Jersey). But the college trustees refused the request by Robert Smith of Philadelphia, the



*This house at 171-173 Stockton Street was built as the First Methodist Church of Hightstown in 1835.*

### *The Baptists' Meetinghouse of 1836*

*"... on the 8th day of November 1833 .... 'unanimously agreed to build a new meeting house.' .... In the long run, [Rev. John] Segar was in charge. Just in case he was successful in obtaining their consent, he had prepared an architectural drawing in his pocket to be presented to the congregation. It worked out just as he planned. The congregation 'Unanimously agreed [that the new meeting house] should be 38 feet by 48 feet ... and should be built of brick.'"*

*Rev. Edward W. Gaul*

Nassau Hall designer and builder, to use brick instead. They did permit him to use brick in the house built for the college president. The "President's House," completed in 1757, was apparently the first brick house in the town of Princeton. Several others followed soon afterward.

Cranbury, like Hightstown, was a town of frame buildings throughout the 18th century, but even in Cranbury a fine brick house in the Federal style was built in the early years of the 19th century. A similar house was built on Main Street in Allentown, about the same time. But with the possible exception of a brick school-house supposedly built about 1820 somewhere out beyond Milford (Etra), Hightstown and East Windsor may have had no brick buildings before 1830. (This may be a bit confusing to some architecturally astute readers, however, because the "mystery" photo that appeared in the last issue of the Newsletter, of the James W. O'Brien's Hotel, depicts a brick tavern building evidently built during the early years of the 19th century, probably well before 1830. But that building may not have stood in Hightstown. The photo shows that it had

much in common with taverns built in southern New Jersey during the early 19th century, and one of the posters shown in this photo advertised an event that took place in Philadelphia.)

Brick construction in Hightstown in the 1830s became one visible change in the new era that was ushered in by the Camden & Amboy Railroad. The railroad, itself, occupied a brick building downtown that was apparently of its own sponsorship or construction. That later became the cemetery monument dealer's shop. The railroad also used brick in some of its culverts and other drainage structures. Brick everywhere was becoming a more common foundation material.

The first brick house in East Windsor Township is the Ely-Mount house, built about 1834 along One Mile Road. It still stands, now beyond the Bypass, despite many alterations and a renovation in recent years. The railroad building may have been Hightstown's first, but the Methodists, who had occupied a small, timber-frame church building in Milford (Etra) in East Windsor, came to Hightstown in 1835 when they completed a new brick church building on Stockton Street at the corner of Church Street. This remained their church building until the 1850s when the congregation outgrew it. Unlike the other brick buildings of this period, however, the Methodist church of 1835 still stands, long ago converted into a residence and shop.

The First Baptist Church of Hightstown completed a new brick sanctuary on Main Street by 1836, replacing the frame church

*Brick - continued on page 6*



*Brick - continued from page 5*

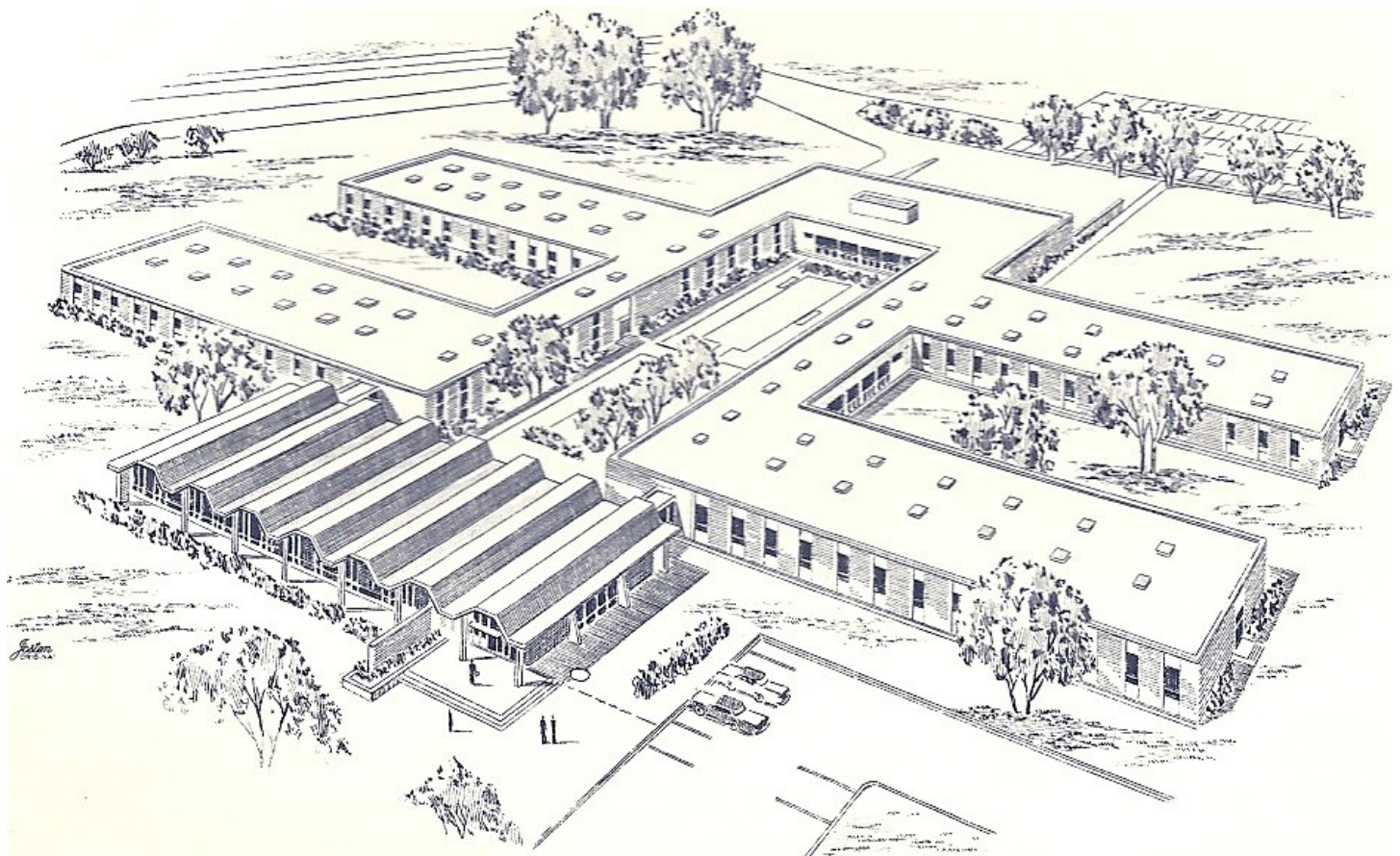
built in 1785. This church, like that of the Methodists, remained in use for about twenty years until the Baptists outgrew it and built the current church. In the spring of 1838, however, it narrowly escaped destruction when a small store that stood next door, operated by Hightstown merchant and politician R.M. Smith, exploded causing a fire that not only destroyed the store and risked the church, it also destroyed the home of Dr. Charles G. McChesney, a frame house just to the north. This story is told by John Orr in his book *Reflections from the Shrine*, but he got one detail wrong. He reported that McChesney did not rebuild. While it is true that McChesney moved to Trenton, either before or after his appointment in 1840 as New Jersey's Secretary of State, he nonetheless had a new home built—in brick—on the site of the previous one.

It was the most noteworthy brick house in town, on the east side of Main Street just north of the Baptist Church, where the driveway to the Borough parking lot and part of the bank parking lot are now located. This house appears in the 1840 woodcut drawing of Main Street and it is marvelously described in an insurance survey prepared in 1844 when McChesney had the home insured by the Franklin Fire Insurance Company of Philadelphia. The insurance



*The Ely Mount House, 108 One Mile Road, East Windsor*

*Brick - continued on page 10*



*This rendering was included by National Lead in the invitations it produced for the public open house of its new "Hightstown Laboratories" on September 29, 1962.*

## 100 Years Ago...

A few items from the  
*Hightstown Gazette*:

Former President William Howard Taft came to Hightstown on June 7th, 1916 and delivered the major address at Peddie's 50th annual commencement exercises. Taft spoke on the theme of "preparedness." One of the commencement events was a pageant that combined the history of Peddie and of Hightstown, written by a Prof. Jack R. Crawford of Yale University. A rendering of Taft's portrait graced the front page of the Gazette on May 31, 1916.

March 30, 1916:

"According to the contract existing between Public Service and the Hightstown Electric Light and Power Company it is agreed that continuous current be furnished by July first. Materials are being ordered and it will be only a matter of a few weeks before the construction gangs will be on the ground and up the poles at work."

May 31, 1916:

[in a piece on the Hight family and its descendants, "Thomas Griffith [Haight, great-grandson of John and Mary Hight], was a prominent politician and previous to his death was favorably mentioned for Governor. He owned the Capt. Huddy House, at Colt's Neck, where he died in 1847."

June 29, 1916:

"Dr. Roger W. Swetland ... has been headmaster of Peddie Institute for the past eighteen years and during his administration the Peddie Institute has grown from a straggling school to one in the foremost ranks of preparatory schools in this country."

July 27, 1916:

"This summer the passenger traffic between Hightstown and Perrineville is heavy. Groden Brothers erected this spring a large boarding house and are catering to New York and Brooklyn Hebrews."

SPRING 2016

## Where is this?

In each newsletter we will show you a picture from somewhere in Hightstown or East Windsor. We will identify which town it is.

If you know where it is, send us the address either by mail (see page 10 for our address) or by email: [HPC@HightstownBorough.com](mailto:HPC@HightstownBorough.com) and include your address and phone number.

The first person to get it right will be entered into a drawing to be held at our annual dinner in January. The award will be determined by the membership committee.

*You are not allowed to enter if it's your house.*

*East Windsor*



## Stage-Coaches and the Jersey Shore - 1836!

The New York *Commercial Advertiser* in July 1836 ran the following advertisement [excerpted]:

### "Sea Bathing-Rail Road Line

"For Shrewsbury, Long Branch, Deal, Manasquan via Hightstown and the Camden & Amboy Rail Road.

"The Subscribers will commence running a line of Stages from Hightstown on [July 20th] for the above celebrated Watering Places. Passengers [will proceed] ... via the Camden & Amboy Rail Road, to Hightstown, where Stage Coaches will be provided to convey them to either of the above places, arriving an early hour the same afternoon... Passengers from New Brunswick and Princeton, will be conveyed to Hightstown to unite with this line..."

Coaches made the return trip the following morning, bringing the shore goers back to Hightstown for the train back to South Amboy and the steamboat for New York.



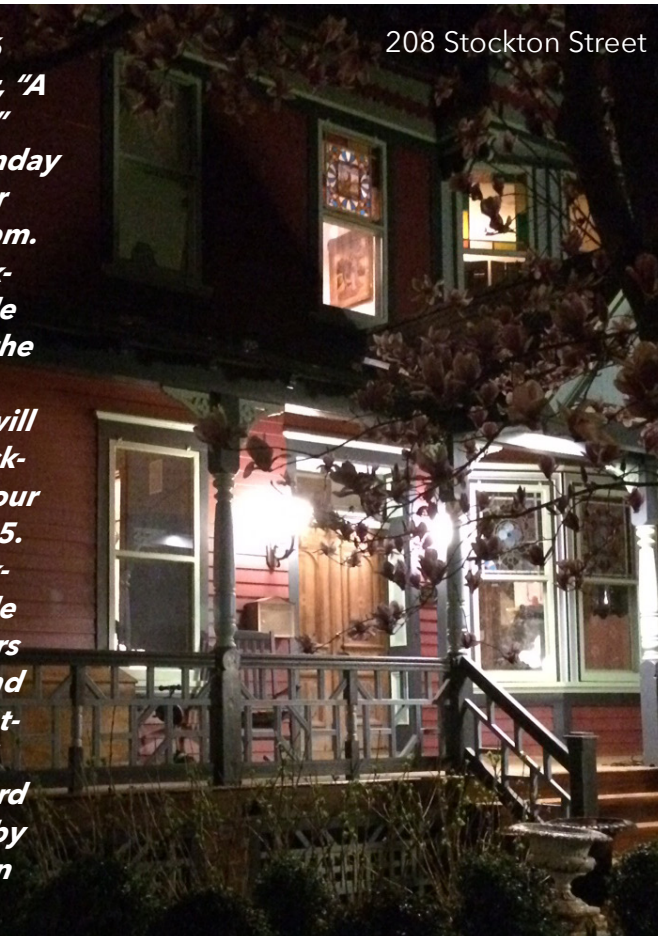


*Evergreen Farm*

## House Tour set for October

**The Society's 2016 historic house tour, "A Step Back in Time," will be held on Sunday afternoon, October 23rd, from 1 to 5 pm. Advanced-sale tickets will be available before the day of the tour for \$20 each. Same-day tickets will be \$25 apiece. Tickets for the house tour docents will be \$15. Advanced sale tickets will be available at Weichert Realtors in East Windsor, and in downtown Hightstown at Perennial Home on West Ward Street and at Hair by Sharon on Stockton Street.**

208 Stockton Street



### Monthly Meetings

Anyone is welcome to attend our meetings. We discuss progress of each committee and welcome your input for new ideas and offers to assist with our upcoming programs.

#### Meetings are held:

The first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in Ely House. 164 North Main Street, Hightstown.

*Brick - continued from page 6*

survey combines a lengthy written description of the house with a floor plan sketch, which, together with surviving photographs, makes this the best-recorded house in Hightstown from this period.

The early bricks were probably brought in by the railroad, because local demand for brick was very small before the 1830s. The railroad was a significant user of brick, and there were a number of towns along the railroad right-of-way where brick had long been made—Bordentown for example. We do know that a "Hightstown Brickyard" advertised its products in the *Village Record* in 1849 when that newspaper was first published, but we have not yet learned the date of the brickyard's establishment.

### Membership ~Application~ Support us this year at the following rates:

|                                            |       |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual        | \$20  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family            | \$25  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Booster           | \$40  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining        | \$50  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life (Individual) | \$200 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life (Family)     | \$275 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter ONLY   | \$10  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Email 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you hear about membership?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail the completed application along with a check payable to:

**HEW Historical Society  
Membership Committee  
164 North Main Street  
Hightstown, NJ 08520**

☐ I would not like to be part of the New Member Spotlight.

### Volunteer Opportunities

I would like to volunteer to help out with the following committee(s):

- ☐ Property & Grounds
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Museum
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Programs
- ☐ Publicity

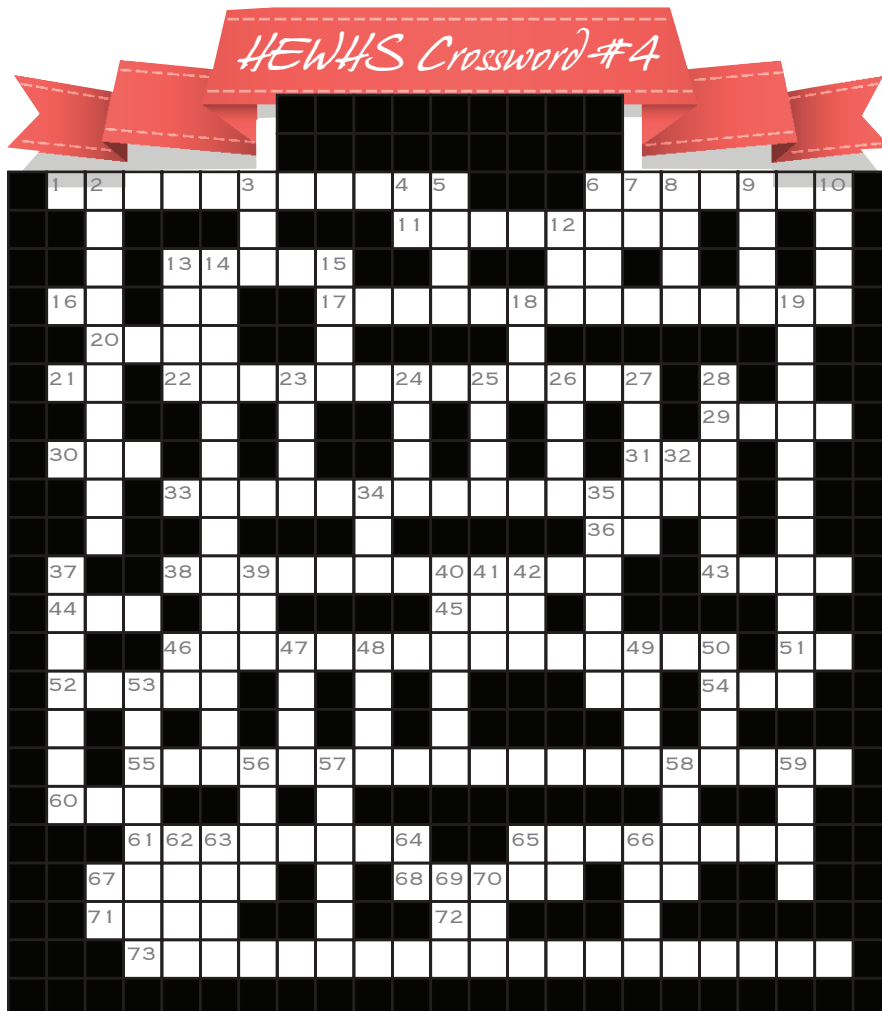
# Places of Hightstown & East Windsor

## ACROSS

1. Burgers made violently
6. 10<sup>9</sup>
11. Hightstown's Taco Bell
13. Harry's appliances
16. Sentido "to go"
17. Mustard colored building
20. Skilled
21. Toe stub exclamation
22. A diner in East Windsor
29. Snakes of the sea
30. Take a load off
31. Loose floor covering
33. Great American Saloon
36. L \_ \_ . Texting tag.
38. Joe's place in Hightstown
43. What architects do
44. Head to \_\_\_\_.
45. To beat leather smooth
46. Not a diner in East Windsor
51. Not Pa
52. Opposite of end
54. Where surgeons work
55. Used to be Eufemia's
60. Her
61. Where we buy food
67. Where we cook
68. Not Izzy's, but \_\_\_\_.
71. Expectation. A girls name
72. Iowa
73. Where the mail used to be sorted.

## DOWN

2. Big book publisher
3. What 2 all beef patties go on
4. Phone home
5. A triathlon is a \_\_\_\_?
6. To hold together tightly
7. Addam's Family cousin
8. Missing
9. Tiki God
10. Not the Knicks
12. Runned
13. \_\_\_\_ wanted
14. A diner is East Windsor
15. Stop
18. A friend
19. There's a carrot on the sign
23. For \_\_\_\_.
24. Decorative lighting device
25. Scratch and \_\_\_\_.
26. "N" in ENT
27. Countryside
28. Singular of Izzy's place
32. England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland
34. Flying \_\_\_\_.
35. Port in Northern Ohio
37. Carriage motor storage
39. Repeatedly remind
40. Places to shop
41. Not many
42. Not rent
47. Israeli dance
48. Without
49. Strong Ale
50. New Indian Restaurant
53. A place to buy PS3
56. Stare with open mouth
57. Don't screw it
58. Corn is planted in
59. Peddie's water
62. A girls name. Expectation
63. Not under
64. Abbreviation of our donut
65. Small boat from WWII
66. Chest, box or coffin
69. Architect's suffix
70. Perrit's



Directions to Walnford...

... from downtown Hightstown: follow South Main Street / Old York Road (County Route 539) about 9 miles south to the center of Allentown. Pass the gristmill on your right and cross the bridge at the lake. Take the first left turn-- Church Street--and follow it about 2.8 miles to Holmes Mill Road, just beyond the Cream Ridge Winery [Note: you will pass Walnford Road--do not turn there!]. Turn right onto Holmes Mill Road and continue 0.8 miles to Walnford Road. Turn right onto Walnford Road and continue 0.7 miles to the parking lot. (Altogether, about 12 miles and 20 minutes.)



Society's Annual Dinner Moves to Walnford

For more than 40 years, the Society has hosted an annual dinner that has been a midwinter highlight, while carefully sidestepping Super Bowl Sunday! This year, however, the annual dinner is moving to the Spring and will be held on Sunday afternoon, May 1st, at 4:00 pm. And for the first time the dinner will be held at Walnford, in Upper Freehold, southeast of Allentown. Historic Walnford is the Historic District at the heart of Crosswicks Creek Park.

The program will consist of a tour of Walnford by the Park's curator, Sarah Bent. The Society will also conduct a brief annual meeting in which the slate of officers and committee chairs for the coming year will be officially elected.

Directions to Walnford  
Use exit 7A from the New Jersey Turnpike to I-195, exit 8, Allentown to Rt 539, or from Freehold, Rt 537 to Rt 539. Follow the signs for Historic Walnford. Call (609) 259-6275 for more information.

Good News on Prices!  
Prices will be lower than they have been in prior years, and they will be tiered as follows:

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Adults over 18 years old | \$25 |
| Teens 12-18 yrs old      | \$20 |
| Youth under 12           | \$15 |

To RSVP  
To reserve places at the Dinner please mail in your reservation to: HEWHS Annual Dinner, P.O. 164 North Main Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520.

Please Print:

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Total reservations \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$\$ \_\_\_\_\_

For confirmation:

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

or

Email address \_\_\_\_\_



# Historic Preservation Commission

## 2015 Steward of Hightstown History

Last year Keith White from West Ward Street received the 2014 plaque for display on his home showcasing his commitment to the preservation of his home. Since receiving the plaque he has become a member of the Commission.

We are again looking for nominations of people that have gone the extra mile to preserve their home for future generations. Please send your nomination to us at [hpc@hightstownborough.com](mailto:hpc@hightstownborough.com)

The chosen homeowner will receive an oval bronze plaque to proudly display on their house.



## Hightstown is now a Preserve America Community!

Hightstown is now a Preserve America Community! This is a federal initiative that encourages and supports our commitment to historic preservation.

It is a prestigious designation bringing us heritage tourism and the ability to apply for significant grants to enrich the community. The sign has been mounted on Mercer Street entering Hightstown from the south.

### NATIONAL REGISTER

#### *John Bull Sleepers*

Thanks in large part to Kathy Patten and Christian Kirkpatrick, the John Bull Sleepers along Railroad Avenue have been placed on the State Register of Historic Places. The nomination process began while both were on the Historic Preservation Commission. Even after they both left the Commission, and Kathy retired to Florida, they kept at it. This was a labor of love that finally paid off. What a great accomplishment for them and for the town. Thank you both!

### NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

#### *503 North Main Street*

Following in the footsteps of Kathy and Christian, Connor Montferrat is working on the nomination of the Applegate Maxwell house featured on the cover of the Society's Spring 2015 Newsletter.

## Historic District Signage

The Historic Preservation Commission has been searching for the one house that exemplifies the District to use on signage, letters, etc.

It has been decided that the house of Dan Buriak, 194 Stockton Street is the house to showcase. See right for the graphic.

Dan's transformation of this house was somewhat of a catalyst for many renovations in the district. Additionally, he did a lot of the legwork to get the district established in the first place.

If you are familiar with the house, you may note that the tower does not have an onion dome. However, according to Dan Buriak, the original house did. So, in hope that one day Dan or the next owner will reconstruct it, we have included it in the logo.





*What are the twelve Differences...  
Downtown?*



