The Sandyston Journal

The Sandyston Township Historical Society has been organized to discover and preserve the history, environment and architecture of Sandyston Township and to educate the public and foster an appreciation of our unique local heritage. This newsletter represents the previous newsletters—a story or two from each. We hope you will join the society and enjoy the upcoming programs!

The Keeper of the Flame

On Sunday, Oct. 3, 2010, we all met at what we remember as the entrance to Bevans, NJ on S.C. Route 617 at 1:00pm. It was a beautiful clear and crisp early fall day. The sky was a deep blue and the sun shone brightly. All the fall colors were on parade, and the air had that warm early fall feel, yet hints of winter in the background. It was a picture perfect day for the dedication of our long anticipated Sussex County Historic Marker—dedicated not only to the legacy of Bevans, but also giving back this hamlet its name which was lost over 40 years ago. Known as Bevans for nearly 200 years, the name was changed in 1970 by the then National Park Service’s superintendent to Peter’s Valley and included as part of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. The hamlet was then turned into the Peter’s Valley Craft Center.

In the 1960's and 1970's plans were put in motion under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers and the lands on both sides of the Delaware River were obtained by order of eminent domain. Many stood their ground and refused to cooperate, holding on to their lands and refusing to sell. Still many more feared they had no choice but to sell and leave. These were very confusing, critical and heart breaking times in the history of Sandyston Township. We can’t even assume to try to measure the unbearable pain these families faced, not only with their homes, but the loss of the place they called home.

As early as 1761, Peter VanNeste, a surveyor of lands, is credited with being one of the earliest settlers to this valley. The valley took on his surname, thus being called Peter’s Valley in his honor. Early history of this area abounded in this valley, and especially the small hamlet that met in the center of four distinct roads. Taking on the names of Hen’s Foot, and The Corner’s, the hamlet became known officially as Bevans, NJ in 1829 due to the efforts of James C. Bevans. James was the son of an early Revolutionary War Veteran and settler, Even Bevans. Members of this family were not only numerous, but they owned large tracts of land in Sandyston. Peter’s Valley was located entirely in the Township of Sandyston - and the heart of Peter’s Valley was the hamlet known as Bevans.

For as far back as anyone can remember, there seems to have always been a controversy as to just how the name “Bevans” is to be pronounced. Correct grammar denotes a short “e”, yet the family for which the hamlet was named carried a long “e”. Locals of the day, which included the Bevans family, wanted the name pronounced as they gave their name, and that was with the long “e”. Yet, new settlers to the area fancied the sound of the short “e”, and the thus the chit-chat over the name of Bevans has carried on to the present day.
The heartfelt stories of the days of the Tocks Island years to Sandyston Township residents as well as residents covering over 40 miles on both sides of the Delaware River would fill volumes of historic references. A trip along the Delaware on the Old Mine Road gives a clear reminder of what took place here. Today this entire area is part of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and under the control of the National Park Service. I was not personally affected by the actions of this critical era in our history, but I did stand on the outside gazing in, and I did feel the pain. For me the this area today is more like a graveyard, a place to be reflected upon, remembered and respected.

As for Bevans, it’s name was changed and slowly began to be lost to the whispers of the wind. We, the locals that lived these times, and live here still will not forget, but for many the name Bevans was slowly to be lost as the years mounted. The name, along with what the valley once was, was slowly dying. People new to our area, had not a clue to what we were talking about if we were to mention the once hamlet known as “Bevans”. A flourishing valley was slowly lost to the sands of time, and such little time at that.

In April of this year, I presented to the Sandyston Township Historical Society my idea to purchase a Sussex County Historic Marker, dedicated to the legacy of the hamlet of Bevans located in the heart of Peter’s Valley. In 100 words we could highlight some of the rich history of Bevans, and in so doing, we would once again be able to give this hamlet back it’s rightful name. The members of the society were totally supportive of the project. In less than three weeks the necessary funds were raised to purchase the marker which cost $2,000.00. One dollar from every member was donated from the society for the purchase of this marker, and that, along with larger donations made by many of the members this marker became a reality. Along with our society we appreciate the co-operation of the Sussex Co. Historic Marker Committee, the Sussex Co. Board of Chosen Freeholders, The Sussex Co. Administrator, and The Sussex County Div. Of Facilities Management. Everyone came together to make this project a reality. Special thanks to Wayne McCabe, Sussex County Historian, for coming to the dedication and providing his special presentation.

Finally, THANK YOU, members and friends of the Sandyston Township Historical Society, for making this endeavor a reality. Thank you for helping me make this dream come true for not only myself but for each person this sign represents. Thank you for allowing me to do the verbiage on this marker and for being so supportive from start to finish on something that means so much to the history of our beautiful Sandyston Township. Many members of those original families still reside in Sandyston Township today and this keeps those family memories alive.

It is said that, “A rose by any other name can smell as sweet”, and this is true. But, in the end, when all is said and done, the only thing you can truly call your own is your name. I ask you, does anyone have the right to take away your name? I think not.
Shay Gravestones Dedicated on Saturday, July 5, 2008

On an overcast day on July 5, 2008, two men were honored for their service to their country at the Hainesville Cemetery (Shaytown Burial Ground). Newly installed gravestones (cenotaphs) for Timothy Shay and his son, David, were dedicated in a beautiful service. History states Timothy Shay was a very early settler to Sandyston Township and was the owner of a vast amount of the property in Hainesville, New Jersey. In 1812, Timothy Shay and bordering property owner Benjamin DePue each gave a portion of their property to form the Shaytown Burial Ground in Hainesville. David Shay, son of Timothy Shay, was drafted as a soldier in 1812 and was stationed at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, where he contracted the measles. He was discharged and came home to Hainesville. David died in December of 1814 and was the first to be interred at the “Shaytown Burial Ground”. Presuming that at one point in time both Timothy and David Shay have most likely had gravestones that either fell over or were fieldstone markers that have broken apart, new gravestones were requested by Hainesville Cemetery President, Patte Haggerty Frato, and granted by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

On Saturday, July 5, 2008, two men in the small Shaytown Burial Ground were remembered as husbands, sons, fathers, farmers and soldiers. On this day, we honored the memory of these two men and their service to our great country.

Thank you to all who attended our dedication.

With special thanks to Gerald DeGroat, President of the Col. John Rosenkrans Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, Irene Popielarz, and Wendy Wyman, Jean Zwrik; Joanne Cosh; Nancy Malone, Kathy Weakland, Diana Matthies—members of the Chinkchewanska Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Wantage for being apart of our service.

Thank you to Trooper Matt Avenatti for the playing the bagpipes so beautifully at our dedication ceremony.

Thank you to Bill Berliner, and Mr. and Mrs. Dan McCole—members of the American Legion Post No. 157 of Branchville for attending our dedication ceremony.

Thank you to Lou Frato and Louis P. Frato for the great job installing the grave-stones.
Smith Family Lecture

The Sandyston Township Historical Society presented a program on Sunday, November 2, 2008 entitled “The History of The Smith Family”. Albert Fiacre, Smith Family Descendant and Genealogist presented a program outlining the history of the Smith Family that settled along the Bevans section of the Old Mine Road in Sandyston.

Mr. Fiacre has been researching his family for many years and provided a lecture on his Smith ancestors and their migration to this area during the 1800’s. Many of the Smith homes that once stood proudly along the Old Mine Road are now gone, and few remain which are now referred to by the names of the families who owned these homes prior to the Tocks Island Dam Project (Birchenough Farm, Fort Carmer, John Dodd Homestead, Cy Harker Farm, Lennington Homestead, etc). It is very difficult to do a presentation on genealogy and even more difficult if it isn’t your family the lecture is on. Mr. Fiacre did a great job outlining his family by handing out Smith Family outlines and referring to family breakdowns on well crafted boards. Mr. Fiacre and Sandyston Township Historian, Patte Haggerty Frato, also presented a slide show corresponding with the lecture depicting photos of Smith relatives, homes, census records and more, explaining each photo and its relationship to the past as well as the present. During the photo presentation, a special segment was dedicated to the Lennington Homestead showing family photos and the interior of the home.

After the program, Mr. Fiacre visited with many Smith Descendants who attended the lecture. A special surprise was provided by Lori Donkersloot who lives in Layton with her husband John and three children. Lori currently lives in the Lester T. Smith Home which is across the street from the Layton Country Store. When Lori and John purchased their home, a family outline was found in one of the bedrooms and Lori shared this piece of history with those who attended the lecture. Thank you, Mr. Fiacre, for traveling from West Hartford, Connecticut and sharing your family with us!

DePue House Re-visited

On Sunday May 23, 2010 at 1:00pm the Sandyston Township Historical Society will hold a program entitled: The DePue House Re-Visited. The program will be held in the meeting room of the Sandyston Township Municipal Building located at 133 Rt. 645 in Hainesville, NJ. Our guest speaker will be ex-brigadier John DePue of Manassas, Va. John grew up in Sussex County and is a great nephew to Alonzo DePue, Alonzo spent his entire lifetime on this homestead. As a boy John spent many happy times at the DePue Farm. John has done several programs over the years in connection to the DePue Family and this historic landmark. This time John will present a program about the DePue Family and their historical connections to the area, but he also plans to tell about his great Uncle Alonzo DePue. Alonzo was a local school teacher and held many township positions in his lifetime. He had a great love of photography and many of his photos appear in older issues of the New Jersey Herald. Alonzo DePue operated a weather station on the DePue Farm, and would report his daily stats to the National Weather Service. Even after the death of Alonzo, the weather station still functioned for many years. The DePue Homestead was the site of a large farm and apple orchard. After the program at the meeting room of the municipal building, we plan to car pool to the DePue Homestead, where John plans to show everyone the sites in and about the DePue Farm. This homestead, like so many others throughout the National Park, has very deep roots in the township in connection to local family history. Many members of this founding family can still be found throughout Sussex and Warren Counties in NJ, and just a hop across the Dingman’s Bridge into Pa. This DePue Homestead is just a fraction of the immense DePue Family History. Once again on May 23, the Sandyston Township Historical Society will pay homage to this historic homestead, one of the earliest to this Delaware Valley. The DePue House is also referred to as the Nyce/DePue House. In researching the property, I recently found that the property was purchased from Isaac and Barbara Van Auken in 1810 by the Nyce Family. Van Auken is another very early family that came to the Minisink to settle on the fertile lands along the Delaware Valley. Please join us!
On Sunday May 23, 2010 at the Sandyston Municipal Building, DePue Family member, John DePue gave a very in depth lecture and power point photo presentation of the DePue’s of Sandyston Township. John is a graduate of Newton High School, and is currently an ex-Brigadier General, Retired., yet is still very active as a lawyer with the United States Army.

Home today for John and his wife Patricia, is Manassas, Va., but he still has very vivid memories of his days visiting the DePue Family on the DePue Homestead located on the Old Mine Road in Sandyston, NJ.

John presented a very informative program detailing the settlement of the DePue Family to Sandyston Township, and how this family played a very major role in the development of the history to this area.

John talked about his ancestors, and gave a very detailed explanation of the DePue House and Homestead from it’s creation, through the 1800 and 1900’s, up to when the property was claimed by the Army Corps of Engineers, and now part of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreational Area, under the control of the National Park Service. Today, the DePue House stands stately along the Old Mine Road. A reminder of the love of generations of this family that called this place home.

There seems to be some misunderstanding concerning today’s care of the homes located within the National Park Service along the Old Mine Road in Sandyston Township. The DePue House is currently under the care of the Sandyston Township Historical Society under an agreement with the National Park Service’s “Volunteer of the Park Program”. This program concerning the DePue House went into effect in March of 2010, and has been maintained by members Ollie Treible and Louie Frato, Jr. These two members make weekly visits to care for these grounds, which give this homestead the respect and care it deserves. This house is under the Sandyston Township Historical Society’s Landmark Preservation Project. We are currently in the process of adding three additional historic homes along the Old Mine Road for grounds care.

We also could use your help with our visual inspections of the homes within Sandyston Township, we simply can not have too many eyes just checking on the everyday at these homes. We need your help. If you could donate some time to help the society with the care of these historic homes and become a Volunteer of the Park, please contact Patte Frato at patte@nac.net, or by calling (973) 948-6110 or (973) 948-7443.

We are so fortunate to have so much history in Sandyston Township, we need your help to keep an eye out for vandals, destruction that these historic homes face on an everyday basis. It’s as easy as taking a ride along the Old Mine Road and reporting anything that looks out of the ordinary. It is important and it does matter”!

You can report any problems to: Patte Frato @ 973-948-6110 or 7443, Amy Lobban @ 973-948-0832 or National Park Service at Bushkill, Pa. at 570-426-2457
On Sunday, July 18, 2010, the society returned once again to visit the Ancient Minisink/Westbrook Family Burial Ground located off the Old Mine Road in Sandyston Township. In the summer of 2009, we visited the burial ground for a lecture and program about the early history of the Minisink area, and the Westbrook Family that settled here in 1730. Anthony Westbrook was the first of the family to settle here and is noted for the building of what was known as Fort Westbrook. His son, Johannes Westbrook and his wife, Magdalena Decker, are credited with building the still standing Westbrook/Bell House. Anthony Westbrook served in the Revolutionary War and was a soldier in the nearby Battle of the Minisink. He was captured by Brandt’s Indians and Tories and was taken to Canada as a prisoner, later to be traded for prisoners here in the US. Anthony returned to Canada and settled there with his family. Most of the Westbrook Family started in the local area. Johannes Westbrook set off land for a burial ground and school in 1731. The Westbrook/Minisink Burial Ground is credited with being the oldest public burial ground in Sussex County. Many of the gravestones in this burial ground are hand-scribed fieldstones carved in the Old Dutch Language. The earliest date being the mid 1700’s. This cemetery has a story in that most of the people in the graveyard are related in one way or another to each other.

I wonder how many people are buried in this ancient place with no gravestone at all? People lost in time with not even a stone with their name to mark their existence on earth. With this question in mind, I started to research the “Battle of Conneshaugh” monument in the cemetery which was placed by John J. VanSickle, President of the Sussex County Historical Society in 1913. In researching the battle, I found that many of our local Sussex County sons served in the Revolution from the Sussex Militia, 3rd Battalion, under Col. John Rosencrans. Col. Rosencrans was a resident of Walpack, NJ. So many of our local boys served against Brant’s Indians and Tories during the ending years of the Revolution.

Thus was the story of this marker placed by John J. VanSickle. The Battle of Conneshaugh took place on a rainy April morning of 1780. The battle took place just across the Delaware River at Raymondskill, PA. Soldiers from the Sussex Branch of the NJ Militia, along with soldiers from the PA Militia, took battle and in the end 14 soldiers were killed. These soldiers were carried back across the Delaware, carried up a narrow sandy path to the Minisink Burial Ground. 14 Soldiers buried with cedar post crosses, yet today not one sign is left as a credit to the lives of those brave men. Only a memorial dedicated to the men lost in that battle of 1780.

After much research, I was able to acquire pension records of Capt. Peter Westbrook who was killed in the Battle of Conneshaugh. His wife had submitted to Washington, DC, for her husband’s pension and his papers were on file. I was able to acquire the entire set of paperwork. Peter was the son of Cornelius Westbrook, and grandson of Johannes Westbrook. Peter’s father built what we remember as Fort Normanaock, and Capt. Peter Westbrook was stationed at the fort with his soldiers that day in 1780 when they traveled across the Delaware and met with the battle.
With the pension papers as my guide and proof, I was able to apply to the Veterans Administration in Washington, DC, for a military gravestone for Capt. Peter Westbrook. On Sunday, July 18, 2010, members of our society along with members of the Chinchewunska Chapter of the DAR, Mr. Gerald DeGroat, President of the Son’s of the American Revolution Col. Jon Rosen crans Chapter, joined together to dedicate a military gravestone to Capt. Peter Westbrook, who lost his life in the Revolutionary War Battle of Connessaug. 230 years have passed since Peter Westbrook lost his life. How exciting to be able to place a gravestone in his honor.

At this dedication, the society also dedicated a new sign for the Ancient Minisink/Westbrook Family Burial Ground. The sign simply asks that all that visit please respect the graves of our ancestors.

Thank you to everyone that made the dedication of the gravestone for Capt. Peter Westbrook and the placement of the new cemetery sign possible. Thank you to my husband, Lou, my daughter and son-in law, Amy and Dave Lobban, my grandsons, Patrick and Parker Lobban, and special friends Pete Shaffer and Bob Collis. It was not easy lug ging the gravestone, sign, posts, stone, water, shovels and equipment up and down the path on what seemed to be the hottest day of the year! It was a small sacrifice for a cemetery that holds so much history and an a pleasure to do something to honor the men of the Battle of Connessaug.

We hope you will take a walk down this path soon to visit and pay your respects to those who rest peacefully in this quiet cemetery off Old Mine Road.
A TRIBUTE TO
JOHN VANSICKELE

John J. VanSickle was born July 12, 1851 and attended school here in Sandyston. John was a teacher here in his hometown, and assisted his father on their family farm. He became a merchant at Bevans, NJ where he prospered for six years. During the next eleven years of his life, John went West where he dealt in hay and grain sales on a large scale. John then returned to Sandyston, where he purchased large sections of property and became the owner of several excellent productive farms. He became involved in the mercantile business here in Layton, and built this building that we are holding our ceremony at today, as well as the two buildings located next door. John served as a Freeholder for Sandyston Township, but his ambitions took him to Newton, where he served on township committees and became owner of the Park Block area of Newton. John also was the owner of 500 acres of property outside of Layton which he sold to the Flatbrook Valley Club in 1905.

John cared deeply about the history of Sussex County and became a major benefactor in many historic events. One of his most important accomplishments was his work in connection to the “Hill Museum” in Newton which was built to house the Sussex County Historical Society. John was also responsible for the placement of numerous historic markers along the famous Old Mine Road. John B. Layton is credited with bringing mail delivery to Layton in 1861. At that time Layton was known as Centerville. A post office already existed with this name, so the name “Laytons” was assigned, which was later changed to Layton, dropping the (s). For quite a period of time mail carried the name “Laytons”. The Layton Post Office has been housed over the years in both of the Layton General Stores that were located in Layton. The building next to today’s post office was known as “McKeeby’s General Store and Post Office which was owned by Frank McKeeby. In later years this building was known as the “Shay’s Store”. The first general store that was built in Layton is situated just up the street at the blinking light. This store dates back to the early times of the miners traveling along the Old Mine Road in the early 1800’s. Many people will relate to this store as the store which was owned by Lester T. Smith. This was the first home of the Layton Post Office. Prior to the opening of this building the Layton Post Office had been housed directly across the street.

In the early 1900’s the Delaware Valley Grange was established and meetings were held in the basement of the home of Mr. Dayton DePue. His home still stands today across the street. In 1906 this building was sold by John J. VanSickle to the Delaware Valley Grange for $675.00. This building housed the “Grange” for many years. The “Grange” was an organization established primarily for farmers after the close of the “Civil War” to help people get their lives back to some normalcy. It later opened it’s membership to anyone that was interested in agriculture. This organization had a very close relation between Church and local organizations. And many events were held in this building, from local church dinners and events to school functions and graduations. In later years the “Grange” dissolved and building became the “Sandyston Township Municipal Building”.

In 2004 the new Sandyston Township Municipal Building opened in Hainesville, NJ. This present building’s future became somewhat uncertain. What would happen to this place and all the history connected to it? Many ideas came to light, some that would cause despair to any historian. Would Sandyston Township be able to keep this building that was so much a part of Layton, it’s people, and it’s history? So many people had been a part of this building’s past. You could feel the presence of J.J. VanSickle telling us there was a way to work this out so that this building can be a win-win situation for everyone involved.

Layton is a treasure trove of history. It is indeed a credit to the efforts of the United States Postal Service and the Sandyston Township Committee to work together and create a modern facility in a historic building that keeps the “hometown” feel of Layton. A picture perfect presentation of an up to date facility with the feel and character of yesterday. John J. VanSickle would be pleased. John J. VanSickle died in 1931 and is buried in the Bevans (Old Dutch) Churchyard located just outside of Layton. How pleased he would be to know that his love of history is shared today, in a world that moves at such a rapid pace. We can’t move into the future without taking care of our past.

In the spirit of John J. VanSickle, Thank you!
American Flag Dedication

The next time you are in the neighborhood of the Sandyston Township Municipal Building, stop in and visit the meeting room. There on display behind the meeting room desks is a magnificent framed American Flag. The 5’ x 9’ flag was a gift to the Sandyston Township Historical Society by Nan and Tom Horsfield of Hardwick, NJ, in memory of her uncle, Jason Spangenberg of Layton, NJ. This flag was presented to the Horsfield Family on behalf of the Veterans Administration, and it was Nan and Tom’s thought to have the flag framed and presented to Sandyston Township in Jason’s memory. The Sandyston Township Historical Society felt that the most fitting site for this beautiful framed flag would be in the meeting room of the municipal building where all the residents of Sandyston Township could enjoy it.

Jason G. Spangenberg, a life long resident of Sandyston Township, lived his entire life in Layton, NJ. Jason’s family has roots deep in Sussex and Warren Counties. A plaque that has been placed in the meeting hall reads as follows:

“The United States Flag proudly displayed in this meeting hall was generously framed and donated by Nan and Tom Horsfield, niece of Jason G. Spangenberg. This flag was presented in honor of Jason’s service in the U.S. Air Force where he served as a top mechanic working on disabled aircraft. A life-long resident of Layton, Jason was a member of the Sandyston Township Committee from 1964-1986 and served as Mayor eight times. This flag is dedicated to the memory of Jason G. Spangenberg.”

On April 13, 2010, the Township Committee (George Harper, William Leppert and Fred MacDonald) dedicated the flag, along with Nan and Tom Horsfield and Patte Haggerty Frato.

A framed photo of Jason in his military uniform, as well as framed collage of his service metals were also donated to the Sandyston Township Historical Society and will hang proudly with the plaque in the meeting room.

Landmark Preservation Project

Sandyston Township Historical Society is proud to announce that we now have an agreement with the National Park Service under the Volunteers of the Park to care for the grounds at the DePue House on the Old Mine Road in Sandyston Township. Thanks to Ollie Treible and Louie Frato, Jr. for their recent work at the house. The grounds already look much improved, and with a little more attention and love it will have the appearance of a place that is well maintained. The monument that is laying on the front lawn is being addressed by the park service, and hopefully that will be back to it’s rightful position soon. The society is in the process of expanding the Landmark Preservation Project with the Volunteers of the Park and the National Park Service, and once we have the official documentation it will be shared with you in the next newsletter our hopes for expanding our program concerning the homes within the recreational area in Sandyston Township. If you have any questions concerning the care of the DePue House, or the society’s plans for this project in the future, please call Patte Haggerty Frato, President of the society. In the meantime, if anyone is traveling along the Old Mine Road in Sandyston Township, and something unusual catches your eye, please contact Patte or the National Park Service and let us know. National Park Service 973-948-6500 or 973-948-7761 or Patte Haggerty Frato at 973-948-7443 or patte@nac.net.
During the holiday season, we are asked for donations to help families or organizations in need. Many times we have thought “Wouldn’t it be nice to make a donation for someone in our own town?” This year, the Sandyston Township Historical Society made this idea a reality with the “Sandyston Has Heart” program. In cooperation with the Sandyston-Walpack School and the Sandyston Township Committee, the historical society collected donations from local residents and businesses in the form of gift cards from stores like Shop-Rite, Wal-mart, Weiss, K-mart, etc. Upon donating, a paper heart with the family name was created and hung on the door at the municipal building. These donations were then turned over to the nurse at the Sandyston-Walpack School for distribution to families in need in Sandyston Township.

Through the generosity and kindness of local residents and businesses, the “Sandyston Has Heart” program was a huge success. Special thanks to: The Wm. Leppert Family, D. Hull Family, Macdonald Family, Jakob Family, Frato Family, Pinzone Family, Putera Family, Lilly and Mason Hull, Paige Kristin Hull, Kyle Douglas Hull, Mary Burger, Ryan & Jake, H. Green Family, Dingmans Bridge, deJager Family, Diaz Family, Tanzola Farm & Lawn, Mahon Family, Russ & Delores Spinks, Jensen Family, Scrivani Family, Lobban Family and the Chatterbox Drive In. In the spirit of giving, we have truly made the holiday a little brighter for these families and we look forward to running this program again next year.

Thank You, Jennie!

Jennie Sweetman is the Sunday New Jersey Herald's history writer. For anyone who loves the history of the area, one of the best things about getting the paper on Sunday is checking the local section to read Jennie's current historical story. Jennie is a dear lady who has a huge love of local history and is a wealth of knowledge. This year marks Jennie's 40th year of faithful service with the New Jersey Herald. She was honored for her work by the Sussex County Historical Society at their luncheon in March. A story about our Sandyston Township Historical Society will be in the Sunday's local section of the New Jersey Herald on Sunday April 27, 2008. If you didn't see the story, you may still have time to buy a copy of the paper. Over the years Jennie has done numerous stories about the history of Sandyston Township. Thank you Jennie, for keeping the past alive for all of us to remember and respect.
“A Step Back In Time”

The following are news items from the Sussex Independent in September 1908. It is amazing how much you can learn about Sandyston Township from reading old newspapers.

Carpenters are at work overhauling the dwelling of Mrs. Maria DePue in Layton.

Miss Sadie McCracken has entered a millinery shop in Newton for the purpose of learning the trade.

Mrs. Washington Lantz, of Hainesville, had the ill luck to fall from the haymow last week, spraining both ankles.

It looks now as if there would be some excitement at election over the local offices. Discard party lines and vote for the best man.

The price of potatoes at Port Jervis of $1 to $1.25 per bushel is causing many to gather their crop. The yield is about one-third of the normal.

Within the borders of Sandyston there are thirty-six widows and fifteen widowers, and from the above figures it would appear that the female sex live longer.

The Sandyston Committee met on Saturday to receive road orders. The board offers a reward of $25 for the detection of the parties who destroyed a lot of tile at Bevans.

The law forbidding the holding of elections in buildings where liquor is sold has compelled the selection of the dwelling formerly owned by Charles Grau, deceased, at Hainesville.

Now that John Snider has cleared the Layton cemetery of brush and briers, would it not be a good idea to have many of the monuments reset? Many are leaning and need attention at once.

Our streams are the lowest in years, and now the sly fishermen know just where the fish are gathered and proceed to scoop them in. The restocking of our streams does not seem to increase the number of fish.

Mrs. William Major had been seriously ill for a long time and earnestly desired to go to her home in Indiana. She started with her three little children and her sister and has arrived at her old home in a feeble state. It was thought she could not stand the trip, but the old home was at the end of the road.

Chicken thieves have visited several henneries in this town and got away with the poultry. On Saturday night one of our farmers was called out of bed and told that some one was among his poultry. Grabbing up his trousers, he ran to the coop only to see a couple of retreating figures with this chickens.

The children and grandchildren of Mrs. Narcissus Rosenkrans at Layton gave her a surprise party on Thursday evening. Mrs. Rosenkrans had made a quilt, and the one guessing the number of blocks would get the quilt. Her daughter, Mrs. Myra Major, won it on a guess of 2140 coming within ten of the exact number. Four generations were present.

Word was received on Thursday last of the death of Mrs. Phebe Shay, in Shaytown, at the age of eighty-seven years. Her long life had been spent in the vicinity where she died and “Aunt Phebe”, as she was called, was known and loved by all. She leaves seven children: Theodore, Edwin and Robert at home; Nancy, wife of J. M. Stoll; Catherine, wife of John Bell, and Nellie, widow of Robert Bevans, all at Hainesville, and Celeste Bell of Newton.

Benjamin Peach, whose foot was amputated last week, was taken to the Port Jervis hospital.

Sandyston has a surplus of nearly $800 in its treasury. The money is lying in the bank while the township is paying interest on bonds. John Raser, Jr., a lad of fourteen years fell from a wagon on Saturday, breaking both bones of the arm at the wrist. Johnny will have a long rest now.

Word has been received here that Mrs. William Major’s condition does not improve. In hopes that the change of air would benefit her she returned to her Indiana home.

During the past week this valley has been filled with a very dense smoke. Fires are reported on all sides, and all efforts to put out the fire along the mountain in Walpack have failed. The state fire officials are now on the ground.

The net valuation ratable in Sandyston for the present year is $305,725. The local tax-rate is $10.58; county tax $4.96; state school tax $2.18; total tax $17.72 per thousand. The apportionment of county and state school tax is $2,182.88.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. William Heater, at Layton, a son, on the 18th inst.

Corn cutting is over, and the hardest work is done, for the husking is the easiest part of the job.

The primaries are over and gone and some of the candidates are doubtless surprised that promises and results do not correspond. It was ever thus.

The work on the Sandyston-Frankford macadam road is being vigorously pushed. No loafing nor smoking is permitted on the job, and if anyone tries either, he is promptly discharged. The work will be well along by winter.

Benjamin Peach, of Walpack, whose foot was so badly mangled in the threshing machine as to necessitate amputation, was taken to the Port Jervis hospital the past week where a second amputation was to have been done on Saturday.

An effort is being made to have a R.F.D. from Milford through Jersey to Bevans, then over the Ridge to Shaytown, and so on to Milford. The U.S. inspector, passed over the proposed route last week, and if his report is favorable we will have the benefits of a R.F.D.
We appreciate your interest in the Sandyston Township Historical Society, Inc. At this time, we are accepting membership. Please see the chart below for the membership dues. Dues will renew every April and will include a quarterly newsletter. **Great gift idea for hard to buy for friends and relatives!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Level</th>
<th>Dues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Citizens</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic*</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guardian*</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patriot*</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>$________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* denotes Life Member

**Make Checks Payable to:**
STHS, Inc., 133 Route 645
Sandyston, NJ 07826

Name:_______________________________________
Address:_____________________________________
_____________________________________
Phone:_______________________________________
E-Mail_____________________________________

**Welcome New Members**

**Patriot:** John and Patricia DePue, James Georginis

**Guardian:** Erma and Gene Gormley

**Historic:** Fred and Wendy MacDonald, Albert Fiacre, In Memory of David G. Serena; Thomas & Nan Horsfield; Dingmans Bridge; George & Beth Harper; Vince and Cindy Depew; Betsy Cuneo; Louise Talbot; Roger Nestle

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Wouldn't YOU like to be a member?

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**The DePue House Marker Update**

During the early winter of 2010, the memorial stone at the DePue Homestead was pushed over. I contacted the National Park Service reporting the damage and requested permission to return the stone to its rightful place. The National Park Service granted the society permission to fix the memorial stone. Our first attempt to right the stone failed due to the extreme weight of the marker which proved to be too heavy for the machine we had brought with us. A larger, more powerful machine with a lift was needed and our second attempt worked like a charm. A project like this cannot be done quickly, it must be done with care and expertise. The marker once again sits proudly in the front yard of the DePue Homestead.

Again, thank you to members of my family for taking the time to fix this stone. Louis, my husband; Lou, Jr., my son; David, my son-in-law; Patrick and Parker, my grandsons. A sincere thank you to Darren Tanzola of Tanzola Farm and Lawn who graciously loaned us a machine to lift this stone. Were it not for his generosity, we would have been unable to accomplish this task.