

Thistle



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Short Hills House Tour

The first thing most visitors to Short Hills notice is the stunning homes and gardens. Society members and friends can now visit some of those homes as the Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society and the Millburn Rotary Club join forces to sponsor a truly unique fall house tour. The self-guided tour will feature beautiful houses throughout Short Hills, whose owners have graciously offered to open their homes and surrounding property for this event.

The tour will be on Sunday, October 18th, from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. All proceeds from this both groups. The your continued maintain the train well as to support of artifacts, this educational The Rotary Club



a variety of noteworthy causes, such as their very special "Gift of Life" program, which benefits children in medical emergency.

fundraiser will benefit historical society needs financial support to station museum, as exhibits, preservation newsletter and programs and lectures. raises money to benefit

It has been a few years since we have undertaken a major fundraising effort. Please support this one! Tickets are \$25 per person and can be purchased by sending a check to (and made payable to) the Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society, PO Box 243, Short Hills, NJ 07078. The check can be returned with the form on the last page of this Thistle. On the day of the tour, registrants go to the historical society's headquarters in the westbound Short Hills train station building, to pick up the addresses and map.

For more information, please call the society at 564-9519 and leave a message.

The Carriage Trade



On Sunday, November 8th, at 2:00 pm, the historical society is excited to present the first of the annual Fredrickson Lectures, a series of lectures generously underwritten by the Fredrickson Foundation. Lecture topics will include history (NJ and local), genealogy, antiques, etc.

Please join us at the train station for this first fascinating lecture on "The Carriage Trade", Millburn Township's nobility! The very popular lecturer Louise Devenish will introduce you to who they were, where they lived and who catered to them. Enter the world of the Hartshorns, the Days, The Hacks and the Russells.

Learn about their beautiful homes and interiors, their exquisite gardens, their barn dances and tragedies (through the years 1880-1920). Appreciate the beautiful legacy left to us - our landscapes, our architecture, our parks.

Louise Devenish, lecturer and decorative arts consultant, will give us a glimpse into this forgotten world, through a slide-illustrated lecture using our own photographs, generously donated by members of our own community and now in the care of the society.

Join us also to celebrate this festive season with light refreshments and good spirits. Seating is limited in the museum, so please call the society as soon as possible to make reservations. The number at the museum is (973)564-9519 and please note that the phone will give a fax beep first, then a brief pause, then the message will start. You may leave a 60-second message after the museum's message.

Recent Acquisitions

The society is very grateful to receive artifacts from generous residents and/or members. We are happy to be able to preserve, share and use for reference, these relics of Millburn-Short Hills history.

Our sincerest thanks to the following people for enriching the lives of all residents by their donations:

- From Karen Eastman Bigos, a "moving" postcard from an Overlook Terrace home, a "Kindergarten in Millburn" booklet, a 1974 DAR Annual Benefit Bridge Luncheon program
 - From Margaret Howarth, a "Sharing Our Best" cookbook from Pilgrim Congregational Church
 - From Gail Engelschjon, numerous bits of ephemera, including MHS yearbooks, a bicentennial book, numerous community cookbooks
 - From Jill Hanauer, a 1988 centennial edition of The Item
 - From Carol D'Alessio, a copy of Glenwood School's 1998 yearbook
 - From Herman and Max Lebersfeld, two new Casablanca ceiling fans for the museum
 - From Sebastian Cupo, of La Strada restaurant, 1939 newspapers found at the Tiger Hardware site
 - From Mrs. Robert J Cunliffe, a bicentennial book, 1968 anniversary edition of The Item, an early Thistle, two 1976 The Items
 - From Richard O'Hara, in memory of his parents Edward & Catherine O'Hara, a bicentennial book, 1857-1957 centennial ribbon, St. Rose of Lima program "Millburn-Then and Now", two centennial envelopes, "Development of a Community" book, centennial placard, 1947 zoning ordinance map, centennial eyeglasses wiper
 - From Heather Richvalsky, beautiful pieces of marble rescued from the original B'Nai Israel (on Lackawanna Place)
 - From Courtney Richvalsky, a Short Hills school visor
 - From Mr and Mrs Vaclav Benes, a collection of early bottles found at 26 Taylor Street, Millburn
 - From Estelle Urquhart, courtesy of M/M Clarence Bair, numerous wonderful White Oak Ridge Chapel papers, hymn book from WOR chapel, picture from the chapel's 125th anniv. celebration
 - From Margaret & Norman Hornecker, a DL&W glass lantern globe, 1947 Drapkins calendar, circa 1910 wool suit, hat, high-top shoes worn at WOR chapel's anniversary
 - From Mike Cuzzo, installation of the museum ceiling fans
 - From Mr and Mrs Robert Moore, 1971 MHS yearbook
- PLEASE...if your gift was not acknowledged here, contact us at 564-9519.

It Was a Dog's Life in 1886

(The following excerpts are taken from the 1886 newspaper, The Budget, a short-lived local paper)

Jan. 6, 1886 - Dogs are being poisoned in Springfield, but so far nothing but worthless curs have suffered

- Henry Whitehead of Short Hills received, per Adams Express, from Dixon, Missouri, a doe deer which is a fine one, and despite the long ride, is in first class condition
- The "Aunt Polly's Basset's Singin' Skewl" at Short Hills Music Hall on Tues evening of last week was very largely attended and was a decided success, the performers doing exceptionally well. The efforts of "Joel" and "Belinda" were very frequently applauded. Afterward a special train conveyed the audience to their homes along the line of the DL&W railroad

Jan. 20, 1886 - On Wednesday afternoon, ten of the young ladies of Milburn and Springfield passed through Milburn in five sleighs, bent on thoroughly enjoying the day's sport, and returned home, in the early evening, having accomplished their object.

Jan. 27, 1886 On Thursday morning about 10:30 o'clock as John Burbridge who was employed at Wellington Campbell's paper mill, in Milburn, had completed the boiling of a barrel of water, the head was forced out and the hoops, giving way, discharged the entire contents upon his feet, scalding them badly. Dr. Campbell was sent for, but he not being at home, the injured man was attended by the employees, who under the efficient supervision of Mr. William Denman, dressed his feet in cotton and vaseline (which are kept for use in cases of this kind) and the sufferer is doing as well as can be expected, but will be confined for a month at least.

Feb. 17, 1886 **Another Land Mark Gone** - The old brick jail at the west end of Church street Milburn, which was erected several years ago, for the accommodation of tramps, etc. and which was recently purchased by the Hon. S. Culbert, has been torn down and carted away, leaving the township with not even a Town Hall, for the accommodation of transient visitors. Perhaps the "Bastile" at Summit can be borrowed when the occasion demands it.

A Musk Rat Supper Lewis Smith the well-known proprietor of the 'Half-Way House' midway between Milburn and Hilton, having lately refurnished his place, invited a large number of his friends to attend an old fashioned Musk Rat supper one evening not long since. At the appointed time, all were present and the rats were brought in, done up in first class style, for which Lewis is famous. The affair was enlivened by reminiscences of "Auld Lang Syne" and lasted until a very late hour, when all present took leave expressing their appreciation of Mr. Smith's cookery.

Mar. 3, 1886 - During the prevalence of the high wind on Friday and Saturday last, grave fears were expressed of the wind mill at Short Hills and the engineers of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western railroad received orders to exercise unusual caution in the immediate vicinity of it, as it was feared it would fall upon the track. (1998 note: The wind mill was apparently erected by Stewart Hartshorn to 'aid in the local water supply'. It stood near the tracks, on his property, near Great Oak Drive. The rotating arms were apparently removed later and a 1906 postcard shows "The old tower in Short Hills", alongside the tracks. Please visit the museum to see the sketch of the early windmill, as it appeared in an early newspaper, and the tower postcard)

Mar. 24, 1886 **The M.E. Sociable** The "Apron and Necktie" sociable for the benefit of the M.E. Church, at Springfield Town Hall, on Friday evening was very largely attended, notwithstanding the threatening weather. About one hundred persons were present, the majority of whom were young folks. A feature of the necktie drawing was their being placed in separate bags, one for young misses, one for young ladies and another for the older ones. The aprons were of all styles and patterns, many of the latter being of an especially noticeable odd design. Among which was that of Mrs. Wm Dillon whose apron was conceded as the homeliest one and whose necktie was obtained by Mr. Gilbert Ellis. Miss L. Pierson was the wearer of the "oddest" and her necktie was "grabbed" by Mr. W.H. Marshall. The prettiest apron was that of Miss Kate Parsell whose necktie was captured by Mr. C.H. Roll. Supper was partaken of by those present, each of the young men escorting the lady whose apron matched the necktie obtained by him; except in the case of Mr. Randell, who having four neckties made four trips. After supper, games were indulged in until 11:30 o'clock when the affair closed, and all left the hall. The sociable was a decided success, and the net proceeds amounted to \$65; this was largely due to the efficiency of the committee in charge, Miss Anna Toole, Miss Georgie Mulford, Mrs Albert Stickle and Mrs John Sheville

- Mr. W.F. Holme's Blacksmith shop on Milburn avenue was besieged by a crowd of curious persons on Friday, who wished to witness the shoeing of Mr. S. Hartshorn's yoke of oxen. The animals were placed in a heavy frame and secured by ropes, etc., and although strenuously opposed to it, were shod without injury.

Birthday Anniversary The 13th birthday anniversary of Miss Cora Hartshorn, was the occasion of a pleasant gathering at Music Hall, Short Hills, on Saturday last. The dresses were superb and "The Royal Marionettes" provoked storms of applause. Supper was afterward served by caterer from the city. Numerous friends were present from neighboring parts, and by whom the occasion will long be remembered.

Apr 7, 1886 On Thursday evening about dusk a wild goose flew over the railroad track near the depot and striking the Telegraph wires, was stunned so that it was easily captured by Mr John Flanagan, who was standing nearby.

Apr 21, 1886 Some dastardly vandals entered the school house at Short Hills, one night last week and amused themselves by pouring ink upon the desks and benches and smearing the maps and walls with it, besides breaking or destroying the pencils etc. of scholars. If caught Milburn climate will prove very unhealthy for them.

Museum Update

Thanks to the generosity of our members and grants, the historical society was able to retrofit more of the cabinets donated to the museum by Mr. Sebastian Cupo, of LaStrada restaurant. The oak built-in pieces were salvaged from the former Tiger Hardware store in Millburn. Doors and shelves were added to the bases of the pieces in the museum. One large unit in the office had file drawers added to the bottom and a shelf added on top. The pieces were carefully retrofitted by so as to maintain as much of their original appearance as possible.

One of the problems the society has faced in the museum is the high utility bills for heating and cooling the museum (even though the temperature is kept as low as is safe for the artifacts). A consultation with the architect, Robert Heintz, and the utility company made it clear that the problem arose primarily because the heat was at the ceiling and the thermostat is at our height. Two very generous residents, Max and Herman Lebersfeld, kindly donated two new Casablanca ceiling fans, to bring the heat down to us and the thermostat, and resident Mike Cuozzo donated his services in installing the fans for us! We are now looking forward to the winter in the museum!



The society was finally able to take delivery of the long-awaited beautiful base cabinets purchased from the NJ Historical Society. If you have been to the museum since their arrival, you will agree that they are the perfect pieces for the long narrow space we have.

We are equally grateful to the visitors who have come in almost weekly to generously donate items for the education and enjoyment of all visitors to the museum (see the donation list elsewhere in this newsletter). These kind donations and the existing accumulations of the historical society mean a slow filing and organizing process, so please be patient as we carefully organize and put away many years worth of collection. If you would like to help with this process - and frequently stopping to sit and read the things unearthed - please feel free to drop in, whenever we are open, and lend a hand.

The museum is presently open on Tuesdays from 10:00/10:30 - 1:00/1:30 and Thursdays from 2:30/3:00-5:30/5:45. We are also open from 2:00-4:00 on the first Sunday of the month. Visitors are always welcome.

Although we have generally been able to adhere to this schedule, modest staffing means an occasional divergence from these hours, so if you are planning a special trip here, please consider first calling the museum at 973/564-9519. Please note, too, that our phone is also a fax machine, should you want to fax information to us. This also means the phone will answer your call first with a fax beep, then the message will come on, after which you may leave a 60-second message. We look forward to seeing you!

The Development of a Community

[The historical society has been given a couple of copies of a 1947 booklet published for the First National Bank of Millburn, which was located in the building at the corner of Millburn Avenue and Main Street, where Emack & Bolio's is now and which was built in 1908. The purpose of the booklet, as explained inside the front cover, was to present a "brief history of the origin and growth of the area known as Short Hills and Millburn,-offered as a milestone marking the fortieth Anniversary of the First National Bank of Millburn, with a phrase here and there indicating its complete banking facilities". We present here most of just two chapters from the book - and from the community's history]

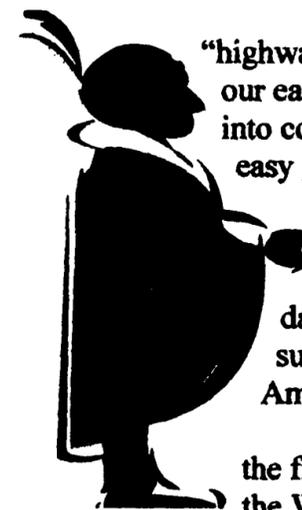
The Wampum Era

So far as can be judged by vague records, the first "place name" given to the area now known as Millburn Township, was "the short hills", by which the Indians designated such terrain as was formed by low, rolling hills in the presence of greater heights. Locally, those greater heights were the peaks of Summit, and that which we call Washington Rock, at the extremity of South Mountain.

In the days of leafy wilderness, two main trails, worn by ages of Indian travel met near the center of Millburn, approximately where the junction of Millburn Avenue and Main Street now lies. One of them, threading its way in from the northwest probably was the forerunner of Parsonage Hill Road, and Old Short Hills Road, and the other, starting from a point on Morris Turnpike, (again probably) followed roughly along what is now Hobart Avenue and the Lackawanna Railroad right of way. These trails were the red man's paths of trade, in his quest for seafood and wampum, both of which were obtained by barter with Indians dwelling along the shore of Newark and New York Bay.

While there is room for doubt in thus trying to establish the earliest "highways" in Millburn, it is based on the inescapable conclusion that almost all of our early roads were developed from cart-trails, which by usage and habit evolved into country roads. Studies of ancient maps also show that early settlers found the easy grades followed by the savages in blazing their trails, to afford acceptable paths, which expanded into cart trails when carts became available. On this premise, and after due examination of the earliest available map (*Thomas Ball's, drawn for the New Ark Mountain Purchase Claim*) dated 1764, eleven years before the Revolution, there seems strong evidence to surmise that such trails actually existed long before white men came to America.

From the top of South Mountain, red men undoubtedly gazed in awe at the first ships sailing into the distant bay, and undoubtedly, where the course of the West Branch of the Raw-way River curved towards the trail, Indians often stopped to slake their thirst from the never-failing supply of fresh water which rippled over ancient rocks in its journey to the Great Water beyond. That same stream, with its banks altered by civilized requirements is the same "burn" which flows through today's Taylor Park, and is spanned by the highway we call Millburn Avenue.



At approximately the "four corners", the early trails separated, one of them continuing on toward Staten Island and Elizabeth, and the other entailing a ford, leading in the general direction of Newark. There is no evidence that Indians ever settled in this area permanently. It was probably little more than a road junction. Within a stone's throw from that ford, set against the bank of that same stream, the present First National Bank now stands. It was almost three hundred years after white men first came into this general area, before the wants of a growing community felt the need of a local bank, and many events and changes, most of them obscure in their origin, took place in the leisurely growth of population and trade. To preserve what is known, and to record the development of the community is the purpose of this booklet. In the pages that follow, we rely increasingly more on fact, rather than conjecture.

...and fast forward to...

The Horse-and-Buggy Era

During the decades following the establishment of The United States, Alexander Hamilton fostered a policy of encouragement to skilled artisans. Emissaries dispatched to Europe prevailed upon thousands of craftsmen to settle in the infant nation, and many of them came to New Jersey. Millers, sawyers, wheelwrights, blacksmiths and wood turners began to seek homesteads where water was abundant as a source of power, and one mill after another straddled or flanked the Raw Way River. Many of the other streams flowing through the short hills, and purling across meadows were similarly harnessed, and the small businessman found plenty of work on which to found a substantial livelihood.

Among the artisans attracted by the Hamiltonian policy were paper makers, and as the demand for house timbers subsided, some of the mills were converted to the making of pasteboard, chip-board, and book paper, all of which found a ready market in New York, Boston and Philadelphia. Before 1830, the manufacture of these paper products became a major item in Millburn's industrial life. The stream which flows through the present reservation park was dammed at frequent intervals to conserve power supply, and five of the millponds are still evident, the best known of which is the wading and swimming pool in Taylor Park.

Early in the nineteenth century, a resident named I.D. Condit and a John Henderson founded a pasteboard mill on the site now occupied by the Papermill Playhouse. It was about this period that the present Reeve House at 155 Millburn Avenue was built. A little later the Henderson family withdrew and started in for themselves in the Phenix Paper Mill which is still operating as the Fandango Mills, making nothing but binders board. The mill was the first in the locality to abandon water power and utilize steam.

Gradually, paper-making was superseded in importance by the manufacture of hats and hat bodies, and by the middle 1800s more than half a dozen of these establishments dotted the Main Street of the town.

By an act of the State Legislature, approved March 20th, 1857, all that part of Springfield lying north of the Union County boundary was designated as Millburn Township and assigned to Essex County. Also at about this time, the small group of houses to the extreme eastern edge of the township acquired the name of Wyoming. Usage had already identified the hilly part of the township as Short Hills.



An interesting observation brought to light by (an 1859) map is the appearance of the town name as "Milburn". For a time Millburn had been variously known as Milltown, Millville, and possibly even Rum Brook (for legend tells us that this was once the name given to the town's main stream). The existence of another New Jersey community by the name of Milltown, caused the Post Office authorities to suggest that some other name be selected, and the town became known from then on as Millburn.

There must, in this area as in most communities, have been many public spirited men whose contributions to better living and to industry have been obscured by the neglect of contemporary historians. ..An outstanding local figure assumes considerable stature shortly after 1860. He was Stewart Hartshorn, inventor of the Shade Roller. While a resident of Springfield, Mr. Hartshorn bought a tract in Short Hills for his own home, and in ensuing years, following an early desire to found an ideal residential community, he acquired a total of almost 1500 acres. This was developed with an eye to retaining all the beauty of the rolling woodland with its "kettle holes" and native trees. In order to provide adequate water and sewerage facilities, the most approved methods were followed far in advance of other adjacent communities. By 1880 Mr. Hartshorn built the first Short Hills Station, and engaged Stanford White, the architect, to design a Music Hall, which is now known as the Racquets Club (1998 note: This was the former Racquets Club building). Subsequently he built Christ Church.

During this same period Millburn acquired municipal status, electing its first Town Council in 1857, comprising Abner D. Reeve, Thomas A Reeve, William Taylor, Ezra Gardner and Robert McChesney. Rural areas were isolated in those days, and probably their chief concern was water supply, sewerage, a volunteer brigade with suitable fire-fighting equipment, maintenance of highways and the school, which was originally the Washington School on Millburn Avenue (then called Washington Avenue) and known as "Number 25". The two homes conceded to be the oldest within the township are the Morehouse home, opposite the East Orange Golf Club, and the Reeve house at 155 Millburn Avenue. The First Baptist Church, Saint Stephen's, the Wyoming Church and the predecessor of the St. Rose of Lima Church all date from the early days of the founding of Millburn Township, or earlier.

More on the Fredrickson Lectures

The society is the recipient of a generous grant, from the Fredrickson Foundation, for a series of lectures of interest to our membership. See page two of this Thistle for information about our first lecture, "The Carriage Trade". Next in the series is "Thomas Nast-America's Image Maker" presented by David Breslauer, director of Morristown's Macculloch Hall Historical Museum. Nast was a political cartoonist, at the turn of the century, who created the images we know of Santa Claus, Uncle Sam, the Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant. His home was across the street from Macculloch Hall. Breslauer will illustrate his lecture with original material and handouts.

Programs being organized for 1999 include a presentation on genealogy, a slide lecture on the town and a lecture on antique tools, presented by a local long-time collector.

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Searching...



The historical society regularly receives letters requesting help with genealogical searches for information on early residents of Millburn and Short Hills. While we search, perhaps some of our readers have information about the "missing people". If you do, please call us at (973) 564-9519 and we'll pass on the information...

Kent - Nancy Kent Thoban of Hemet, California is requesting information about the parents of John Kent and the children of John Kent and Rhoda Meeker. John's date of birth was 1740-1765, in Essex County and his date of death was 1800, also in Essex County. His wife, Rhoda Meeker was the daughter of William Meeker and Hannah Tichenor

Renewals and Reservations

If you have not yet renewed your membership in the historical society or if you would like to make reservations for the house tour, please send your check to, and made payable to, the **Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society, PO Box 243, Short Hills, NJ 07078** with either or both of the forms below.

If you aren't sure if your dues need to be renewed, check your mailing label on this Thistle and note the (approximate) date when we last received your last dues renewal.

DUES RENEWAL FORM

Name _____

Address _____
(City/State/Zip)

Phone _____

| <u>Annual Dues</u> | <u>Museum Restoration</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| _____ \$10 (Individual) | _____ \$50 (Donor) |
| _____ \$15 (Family) | _____ \$100 (Sponsor) |
| _____ \$25 Patron) | _____ \$250 (Patron) |
| _____ \$25 (Business) | _____ \$500 (Benefactor) |
| _____ \$ 150 (Life) | _____ \$ (Other) |

HOUSE TOUR RESERVATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____
(City/State/Zip)

Phone _____

_____ tickets @ \$25 per person Total enclosed: _____

NOTE: Advance reservation forms must be received by October 14th!



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