



The Castle Light

The Passaic County Historical Society, Lambert Castle, 3 Valley Road, Paterson, NJ 07503

(201)881-2761

Calling All Volunteers!

Even though Lambert Castle will be closed, the Society will still need its loyal crew of volunteers. There's lots to do!

As we settle into our new home on Pennsylvania Avenue, we would appreciate help unpacking and organizing the library and archives. We want to get them up and running for researchers as soon as possible.

We also need volunteers in each community to act as a Clipping Service and send us notices of Society events and other items of historical interest. There's no way we can read all of the Passaic County papers, so if you devour your local paper cover to cover consider becoming a "press agent."

We are also looking for volunteers who would be willing to act as Society Ambassadors and take the our table-top exhibit and brochures to community picnics and festivals this summer. We want to let the whole County know that it has a strong and active Historical Society, publicize our events and recruit new members. We don't want to take up too much of anyone's time--so the more, the merrier.

Other volunteer opportunities include helping with the collections and clerical work in the office. We are also exploring the possibility of developing a volunteer speakers bureau to give scripted slide lectures to community groups.

If any of this sounds like your cup of tea, call the Historical Society at (201) 881-2761 and ask for Kate or Andy. Remember, volunteers are magic people!

Update: The Castle Restoration is Going Forward!

Hold onto your hats! Work will begin on Lambert Castle in just a few weeks!

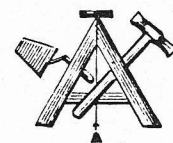
Already, the place is teeming with architects and preservation experts. One young woman spent weeks in the depths of February surveying the exterior stone work, block by block, and then came back to survey the windows, one pane at a time. The ceiling has been pulled down in the Society's offices to expose the support beams in the area where the new elevator and fire stairs will be located. Once the working plans have received their final blessing from the New Jersey Historic Trust, construction will begin.

The major challenge faced by the Society at this point is our move. Nothing will be left in the Castle. Community treasures collected over the last sixty years are being packed up, labelled and moved out with the help of Society volunteers and crews from the County's Department of Buildings and Grounds. The County is also arranging for art handlers to move the largest and most fragile items, such as the one-ton Cornu clock in the Castle ballroom.

The Society's new offices will be in the old County Administration Building at 317 Pennsylvania Avenue, just north of Crooks Avenue by the Paterson Farmer's Market. The County is very generously providing us with the entire third floor of the building, so we will be able to take the library with us and set it up again in our temporary home.

With the library and offices in the same suite, researchers will have much better access to our resources. The library will be available weekdays between 10:00 and 4:00--just call us in advance (our phone number won't change) to make sure that we're not out of the office for some reason (a school presentation for instance).

If you want to learn more about the project, be sure to come to the Society's annual meeting on May 18th.



Get The Inside Story on the Castle Restoration Come to the Society's Annual Meeting May 18th, 1995.

Freeholder Norman Robertson, a past-president and long-time friend of the Historical Society, has agreed to come to the Society's annual meeting on May 18th and give us the details of the restoration of Lambert Castle. This is a splendid opportunity to learn all about the project from the man who made it possible.

Since work will probably be underway at the Castle by then, the meeting will be held at the Allwood Branch of the Clifton Public Library. A flyer with directions to the library is enclosed in this newsletter.

We will start the proceedings at 7:00 with light refreshments. At 7:15, there will be a brief business meeting to elect new trustees and officers, and then we will turn the floor over to Freeholder Robertson. It promises to be a very interesting and informative program. See you there!

For Sale Bound Volumes of Passaic Co. Newspapers

The Historical Society is selling its collection of bound volumes of local newspapers to raise the money to buy microfilmed versions of the same newspapers, and reduce the volume of its collections prior to moving out of the Castle.

PCHS has extensive holdings of local newspapers dating from the 1860's to the 1950's. Unfortunately, the volumes are in very poor condition; the bindings are rotten, and many suffer from mildew and water damage, sustained when the roof of the storage vault failed in 1991. In addition, the papers themselves are self-destructing due to the acidity of the paper, which has yellowed and become extremely brittle. As a result, the volumes are too fragile to be used, and we send researchers to consult the microfilms in the Paterson Library.

While single newspaper sheets can be chemically de-acidified, the cost of conserving entire volumes of newspapers is prohibitive. The standard, approved method of preserving news-

papers is to microfilm them. In fact, the New Jersey State Archives recently completed a major project to microfilm all New Jersey local newspapers. The Historical Society participated in this project, and received microfilm copies of papers that were filmed from originals in our collections. We provided them with a few volumes of the Morning Call that the Paterson Library did not have, plus some of smaller papers such as the Paterson Volksfreund.



The money from the sale is being earmarked to purchase microfilm versions of the same papers, which cost about \$50 per reel. In this way, the Society will not lose the information, but rather gain it in a more stable and accessible form.

Even though the volumes are self-destructing, they are fun—if messy—to look at. They provide a first-hand glimpse of historic and trivial events; a window on the world of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. It is fascinating to see what has changed—and what hasn't.

If you are interested in purchasing any volumes, they are available here at the Castle on a first-come, first-serve basis for \$10 each (\$8 to PCHS members - sorry, we can't reserve or ship volumes). Depending on the year and paper, a volume contains anywhere from a year's to a month's worth of news. Call the Society at (201) 881-2761, and we'll set a time for you to come and make your selection. Please call in advance, since we will be shuttling back and forth between our new and old offices during the move.

The Castle Light

The Castle Light (formerly *The Castle Lite*) is the newsletter of the Passaic County Historical Society (PCHS). It is published quarterly, and distributed without charge to members of the Historical Society.

PCHS Trustees: President, Mathew Witecki; First Vice President, Toby Bizub; Second Vice President, Elliott Collins; Treasurer, John Pullara; Secretary, Anne Sia. Dominic Bucci, Joseph Hannan, Raymond J. Hovey, Howard Lanza, Robert Masiello, Elbertus Prol, Ed Schumacher, Richard Wein.

Staff: Kate Gordon, Director; Andrew Shick, Curator; Pauline Zliceski, Secretary. Newsletter edited by Kate Gordon.

Passaic County Historical Society,
Lambert Castle, 3 Valley Road, Paterson,
NJ 07503 Phone (201)881-2761, FAX
(201)881-2762.

And Also...

A Sampling of Events of Historic Interest In and Around Passaic County.

April 17th: "Tea and Etiquette in the Victorian Era." Catherine Titus Felix, will explore the custom of tea drinking. Sponsored by the Northern N.J. Chapter of the Victorian Society in America. 8:00 pm at the Montclair Women's Club, 82 Union St., Montclair, NJ. Cost: \$5.00

May 6th & 7th: "Step Back in Time" with the Friends of Ringwood Manor. Experience the romance of the Victorian Era as you tour the historic country home of the Cooper/Hewitt family. The manor will be decorated with authentic, period floral displays. Donation of \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for seniors & students, children under 10 are free. For more information and directions call (201) 962-6118.

May 17th: "Little Falls Remembers," sponsored by the Little Falls Historical Society. Older residents will share their memories of Little Falls in the 1920's and earlier. 8:00 pm, Little Falls Methodist Church, Main St., Little Falls. Free.

Acquackanonk Potpourri

In the Acquackanonk Purchase of March 16, 1684, an agreement was perfected whereby the East Jersey Proprietors granted fourteen Dutchmen a deed to 15,000 acres of land. The tract included all of Passaic, most of Clifton and Paterson, and a part of Little Falls. The land was divided among the new owners in tiers of land grants. Nearly a century later, in 1776, only the road from Newark to Paterson and one from the Passaic River to the Notch has been laid out in what is now known as Clifton.

During the American Revolution, the strategic Notch was guarded continuously to keep the British from capturing the camps and supply lines located behind Wesel or Garret Mountain. Rifle Camp on the mountain, just north of the Notch, was the base for the riflemen who defended the Notch and kept watch on the British troops in the Passaic Valley and naval movements in New York harbor. They had a good vantage point, the ridge just north of the Notch was 596 feet above sea level.

Shortly after the Revolution, a tavern was established in the Notch at the Jacob Pier homestead. It was run by the Piaget family from 1839 right up to 1897. The building, subsequently known as the Great Notch Inn, burned in 1935, and the site is now occupied by Gensiger's Auto.

The Paterson Plank road was officially laid out in 1809 as a part of the turnpike which eventually extended from the Hudson River into Sussex County. Across present-day Clifton the road eventually became Main Avenue. At first, it was a toll road. There was a toll gate at the intersection of what would become Crooks Avenue. A toll was established for every possible user of the highway:

For every score of sheep,
hogs, or calves 10c
For every score of cattle,
horses or mules 20c

For every sleigh drawn by
one beast 6c
For every additional beast 4c
For every horse and rider 4c
For every carriage drawn
by one beast 10c
For every additional beast 6c

Samuel Groocock, who built a large home at Washington and Main Avenues in Clifton about 1870, decided to send his two sons to a private school in Paterson, rather than enroll them in the district school near Ackerman's Lane (Clifton Avenue) and Lexington Avenue in the Wesel section of Clifton. He sent them, each on his own horse, to Paterson by way of the Turnpike. They passed through the toll gate or, as a rule, jumped over it. It didn't matter to the toll collector. He settled the bill with the boys' father each month. The cost would have been, I imagine, 4c each day, each way, for each boy, or 16c per day for each school day.

Pearl Brook rises on Garret Mountain and meanders through the Notch, Upper Montclair and Bloomfield before becoming part of Third River, which enters the Passaic in Delawanna. Much has been written about the pearl rush of 1857, when 300 people at a time were searching for fresh water mussels in Pearl Brook. Less has been said about the cars that arrived along Pearl Brook right up to World War II, so that bottles could be filled with the clear spring water that fed the stream. Watercress grew abundantly as well. All of this disappeared in a pipe under Route 46 fifty years ago.

Since the turn of the century, quarrying of basalt, or trap rock, has lead to the destruction of the cliffs of Garret Mountain and the disappearance of the Notch itself. Embedded in the trap rock were some of the most beautiful mineral crystals imaginable. These now grace museum shelves around the world. Sandstone quarries were also found at the base of Garret Mountain. Lambert's Castle is

constructed of such building material.

In the blizzard of 1888, which dumped some two feet of wind-driven snow and bitter temperatures on Acquackanonk Township, at least one passenger train on the Newark Branch of the Erie Railroad was snowbound. At the end of three days on the train,

(cont. on page 6)

In Memoriam

The Society notes with sadness the passing of two dear friends, Gerasimos Livitsanos and William Thomas.

Gerasimos ("Gerry") Livitsanos was a noted photographer and long-time friend of the Historical Society. Over the years, he assisted the Society and its photograph collection in many ways, and his breathtaking shot of the Castle after an ice storm graces the cover of our book *Silk and Sandstone: The Story of Catholina Lambert*. In October, just a few weeks before his death, he gave a presentation based on his collection of historic views of Paterson to the Society's Genealogy Club.

William Thomas was a former Postmaster of Paterson. He became a trustee of the Society in 1989, and was elected treasurer in 1990. In 1991 he suffered a stroke and retired from his duties, but he and his wife remained supporters of the Society.

If you would like to make a contribution or bequest to the Society in memory of these two friends, or other loved ones, please call or write to us.

Friends Group To Meet Once Again

Are you interested in historical tours, outings, lectures, and special events? Would you like to be more involved in the Historical Society? Now is your opportunity.

Society trustee Anne Sia and member Sue Philpott are reviving the Historical Society's Friends' Group and invite new, old and prospective members to a meeting on Thursday, May 25th at 7:00 pm at the Allwood Branch of the Clifton Library. "We're going to have a lot of fun" said Anne in a recent conversation with Director Kate Gordon, "Sue and I have some great ideas for trips and things, and we are sure others will want to be involved."

The Friends of the Passaic County Historical Society was originally founded in 1985 to "cultivate interest in the Passaic County Historical Society, and to support the Society by volunteer work, fund-raising and good community relations."

Enterprise Class Members

Many thanks to these companies and organizations for their support:

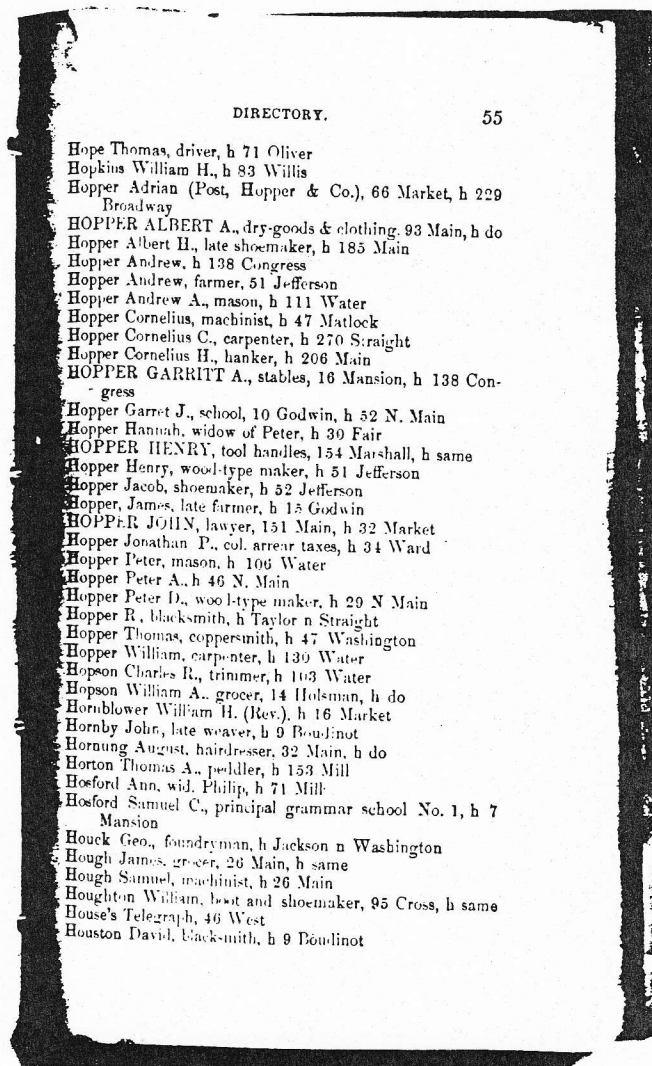
Dr. John Ambrose;
Beth Israel Hospital;
Car-Mart;
General Hospital Center at Passaic;
J.W. Holding Group;
Hallock & Ammann;
Lerch, Vinci & Higgins;
L.M.C. Corp.;
Passaic Co. Medical Society;
Radiology Imaging Associates;
Harish H. Shah; MD; and
The Steel Agency.

The Enterprise Class of membership offers many benefits to corporations. If your company is interested in joining, please call the Historical Society at (201) 881-2761.

Over the years, the Friends have sponsored a wide variety of activities to entertain and educate the public and raise money for the Historical Society. In 1991, they sponsored a Victorian Tea at Lambert Castle, with crumpets, scones and other dainty fare. The following year, a bus trip to the South Street Seaport Museum was organized. About 35 members of the Society and their friends went on a behind-the-scenes tour of the ships, and then spent the afternoon shopping in the restored Seaport.

The money raised by the Friends

has done much to help the Historical Society preserve its collections and improve services in the library and in our general operations. The Friends sponsored the restoration of one of the Society's paintings by the 19th century Paterson artist Julian Rix that hung (until the current move) in the Castle dining room. The Group also contributed essential equipment, such as cabinets for our growing collection of microfilmed newspapers, archival folders and envelopes for the genealogy collection, a drum for the library copier and the cash register in the museum.



A page from the *Paterson City Directory* of 1859 compiled by William H. Boyd. This is one of the many treasures found in the Historical Society's library.

Interested in Family History? Check out PCHS's Genealogy Club

If you are interested in researching your family's history, consider joining the Historical Society's Genealogy Club. The Club is open, free of charge, to all members of the Historical Society. It meets monthly from September to May (except in December) and publishes a quarterly newsletter, *The Castle Genie*. Members also receive preferred access to the Society's library and genealogical files.

The Genealogy Club meets the second Saturday of the month, to share tips and resources, and to hear speakers on various aspects of family history. This April, for instance, Ken and Edna Franz will present a program on "Maps and Migration Trails." In May the Club takes a trip. This year, they will be given a guided tour of the genealogy and local history resources in the Walsh Library of Seaton Hall University (reservations are required, see the Calendar of Events for details). The meetings are free, and guests are welcome. However, we do ask anyone attending more than three meetings to join the Historical Society.

The Castle Genie contains excellent

articles on local history resources. Among recent articles that we have all found useful are: a guide to Passaic County Cemeteries in the March 1995 issue; hints on preserving your family records in the September 1994 issue; a guide to Paterson's enigmatic Sandy Hill cemeteries in the March 1994 issue; and information on how to research ship passenger records and the records of defunct churches in the May 1993 issue.

Back issues may be ordered from the Historical Society. The price is \$3.00 (\$2.50 for PCHS members) per issue to offset the cost of photocopying and postage. PLEASE, hold your order until May, when we're settled in our new home and can give it the attention it deserves.

If you are already a PCHS member and would like to receive notices of the meetings and *The Castle Genie*, call the Historical Society and we update your record in the membership files. If you are joining PCHS for the first time, just check the Genealogy Club box on your membership application.

Acquackanonk (cont.)

with only pickles to eat, the Pastor of the Centerville Reformed Church was rescued by one of his parishioners who, with a partner, pushed a sleigh from Athenia to Nutley to rescue their minister. My grandfather was the rescuer.

The age of air travel probably reached Clifton in the summer of 1919 when a barnstorming aviator with a two-seater biplane established a landing strip at Highland Avenue and Clifton Boulevard. The pilot, Billy Coates, offered plane rides for 50¢ as well as an aerial circus. Large crowds walked from Main Avenue trolleys to watch the spectacle. The plane frequently overshoot or undershot the landing strip, only to be pulled out of the sand pit by spectators so the show could go on.

*David L. VanDillen
Clifton City Historian
and PCHS Volunteer*

Second Annual Valentine's Ball at Lambert Castle

Live music, dancing, dinner by candlelight and a castle—the perfect ingredients for romance. All of these were present on Saturday, February 11 when the Historical Society hosted its second annual gala Valentine's Ball at the Castle.

The party evoked Lambert's day, with dancing to live music in the Castle's central ball room. The evening "collation", a 19th-century term for the food served at a party, was served buffet-style throughout the house. The menu was drawn from Marian Harland's *Common Sense in the Kitchen*. One of America's pioneering cookbook writers of the late 19th

century, Harland was the wife of a Passaic County minister, and the mother of Albert Payson Terhune, who wrote *Lad: A Dog* and other stories.

To enhance the romantic mood of the evening, guests were encouraged to wear formal attire or turn-of-the-century costume, and about a third of them did. Most costumes were rented, but some were created just for the occasion. One guest, Karen Cito, made an accurate replica of an 1860's gown in blue and red, complete with hoop skirts.

Among the guests for the evening were the architects David Gibson and Steven Bauer, who are in charge of the

restoration project. "This house was built for entertaining," said Mr. Bauer, "just think what it will be like when it's restored."

The Ball raised nearly \$4,000 to support the Society's programs, much of it from the souvenir journal with ads placed by area businesses and supporters of the Society. "We plan to hold this ball every year," said Trustee Anne Sia, chair of the Valentine's Ball Committee, "although it will have to be somewhere else while the Castle is being restored."

Folk Finder

Linda Dunnican McDonald, 2764 Parental Home Road, Jacksonville, FL, 32216, hopes to get in touch with decendants of her great-aunt Mary E. **DUNNICAN WILSON**, late of Paterson who was a charter member of the Passaic Council #127 Daughters of Liberty; a member of Council #39, D. of L.; a member of the William Paterson Chapter of the DAR; and an associate life member of the New Jersey Genealogical and Biographical Society. Some of her grandchildren are **HASBROUCHS** and some have the name **REIS**.

Nancy Pietruszka, 621 Alwyn Blvd., Ladson, SC, 29456 seeks information on the **SANDERS** family in the Passaic Co. area. GG Grandfather was William G. Sanders (b. 1812) who lived in the Echo Lake section of West Milford. His father was Bernard Sanders.

Jean (Hudson) McNamara, 17451 Almond Rd., Castro Valley, CA, 94546 seeks info or descendants of Henry (Harry) C. **HUDSON** (b. c.1851), mar. Sarah F. (b. c.1854), sons Alfred (b. c.1872) and Vincent (b. 9/30/1866). Also John **HARRISON** Sr. (b. Jan 1848); John Jr. (b. Feb 1874), Lydia (b. 1870's) - related to Phoebe M. and Catherine Harrison. All lived on Ward St., Paterson.

Lyda M. Spear, 21-B Byren Court, Wayne, NJ, 07470 seeks info on John **SPEER** and wife Elizabeth **POST** of "Slooterdam." B. & d. dates unknown, married possibly c.1788, perhaps at Totowa Church. Their children Barent (b. 1792) and Hendrick (b. 1794). Is Hendrick the same Henry Speer who later lived in Franklin Twp. (The Ponds) and married Ann **ZABRISKIE**?

Donna A. Comet, 867 West Main St., Watertown, NY, 13601 seeks burial places of Morris **RIFKIN** (d. 12/25/1964), Sydal Rifkin **ARRONOWITZ** (d. 7/25/1959) and Alan Rifkin (d. between 1959-64), all believed to be buried in Paramus or Lodi, NJ. She offers to try to assist those doing research in the Jefferson Co. area of New York State.

Thank You!

All of us at the Historical Society would like to thank the members and friends who contributed so generously to our year-end appeal in December. Together, you contributed over \$2,600 to the Society's operating funds, in your own names and in memory of loved ones. Your support and confidence will help immeasurably as we face the challenge of becoming a "Museum Without Walls."

Ruth Barbarow
 Zygmunt Bazanowski
 Elizabeth A. Beam
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen L. Beers
in memory of Isabel Lambert Dorflinger
 Allen D. Bird
 Carol Blanchfield
in memory of Theodore DeFranco
 Alvin G. Blau
 Harriet Bonucelli
 Audrey Braun
 Mrs. Lee Brooks
in memory of Louis Brooks
 Francis Bureau
 The Cammilleri Family
in memory of Rocco Cammilleri
 Cathy Capo
 Harold W. Daniels
in memory of his mother, Lillian Rider
 Mrs. Ellen DeLosh
 Delight W. Dodyk
in memory of Robert MacFarland
 Mrs. Kathryn Stanley Dohr
 Richard Drake
 Miss Jean Fiore
in memory of William & Mary Gass
 Howard Fox

Catherine Frinco
in memory of her dear ones
 Joe Hannan
in memory of Joseph O'Niell
 W. Jerome Hatch
 John Herbst
in memory of Louise Reif Herbst
 Betsy Hoffman
in memory of Blanche & May Kerner
 Mr. & Mrs. Raymond J. Hovey
 Drusilla W. Jacobsen, R.N.
 Robert Y. Johnson
 Carolyn Kennedy
 Herbert & Jacqueline Klein
 Matthew Krautheim
 Gustave & Virginia Kunis
in memory of James Kunis
 Stan & Peggy Lacz
 Mrs. Marjorie Lavin
in memory of Emil Anthony
 Alain Lemaur
 Cecelia & Bernard Liss
 Linda Dunnican McDonald
*in memory of her great aunt, Mary E.
 Dunnican Wilson*
 Kathryn E. McLean
 John H. Marshall

Lise Martina
 Robert J. Masiello
 Gerald & Helen Mault
 William B. Maynard
 John R. O'Brien
 Vincent N. Parrillo
 Sarah Virginia Peterson
 Hon. Robert A. Roe
in memory of James W. Roe, Sr.
 Joan Sanford
 George P. Sellmer
 Mrs. Arthur V. Shurts (Mary Jane Barton)
*in memory of her father, Charles K.
 Barton*
 John Simonelli
 Spencer Savings Bank
 Carole Stocks
in memory of John Stocks
 Walter Van Gieson, Jr.
 Helen Viola
 Elsie Visser
in memory of William Visser, Sr.
 Lillian (Jean) Wardle
 Karen E. Weeks
 Eleanor F. Winnett
in memory of her father, John Rohlf