

# The Historic County

Newsletter of The Passaic County Historical Society

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## Three Historic Passaic County Sites Will Receive Grants from State

The New Jersey Historic Trust recently announced its recommendation to award \$18 million in historic preservation grants. The funding will support the restoration and conservation of 85 historic sites, in all 21 counties, throughout the state of New Jersey.

In Passaic County, the Dey Mansion in Wayne and the Morris Canal Park from Brophy Lane to Thomas E. May Memorial Park in West Paterson, will receive \$37,500 each, and the Long Pond Iron Works in West Milford is slated to receive \$24,000.

Public and private sectors created the Trust's grant program to initiate and promote historic preservation throughout the state and to encourage joint preservation efforts. It funds both capital projects and planning projects for historic preservation.

"The New Jersey Historic Trust's investment in preservation projects around the state is an investment in both our past and our future," said DCA Commissioner Susan Bass Levin. "Through the Trust, New Jersey recognizes the role that historic preservation plays in creating dynamic and diverse communities."

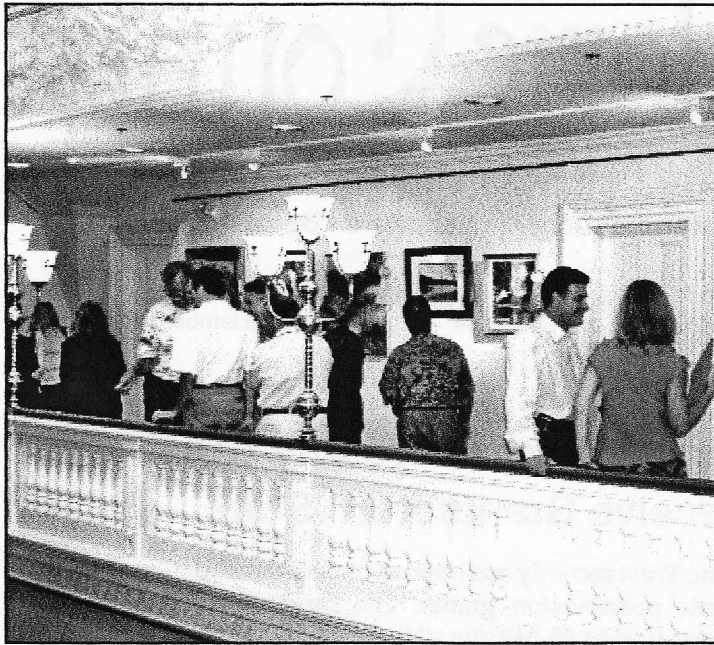
The Trust awarded \$16,871,654 million to Capital Preservation Grants projects for interior and exterior repairs and \$1,128,346 million for Historic Site Management Grants projects for preservation plans, conditions analysis, historic research, site management plans and architectural design. Capital Preservation Grants fund the restoration, preservation, repair and rehabilitation of historic sites for new or continued use by non-profit organizations or county and municipal governments. The properties must be listed or eligible for listing in the State or National Register of Historical Places. The Historic Site Management Grants support non-construction activities such as long-term planning of operations and programs including building assessments, accessibility, landscape plans, and creating educational campaigns to increase public awareness.

"Historic structures are tangible reminders of our past," said Historic Trust Executive Director, Barbara Irvine. "By providing the support to restore and open them for public use or visitation, we create places to learn more about ourselves and those who came before us."

Since 1990, the Trust has awarded a total of \$132 million in matching grants to 329 preservation projects through the Garden State Historic Preservation Trust Fund and the Historic Preservation Bond Program. This is the fourth round of funding under the current matching grant program, which was established by a voter-approved ballot initiative. The Garden State Preservation Trust and the NJ State Legislature must approve all of the projects selected for funding before grant monies can be released. Established in 1967, the New Jersey Historic Trust is the only nonprofit historic preservation organization in New Jersey created by the state law.

*The Passaic County Historical Society is a private, not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) educational institution.  
The Society operates and manages Lambert Castle, which is owned by the County of Passaic.*

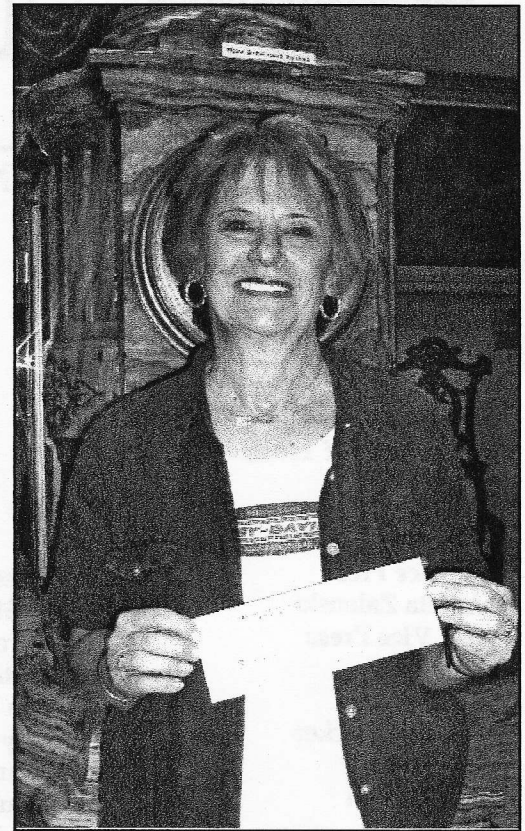
## Wayne Art Association Art Show



Over 150 guests attended the evening preview reception of the Wayne Art Association's First Annual Open Juried Art Exhibition on Friday, September 17th at Lambert Castle Museum. The exhibition's theme was vanishing landscapes of Passaic County and it showcased works submitted by local artists. Awards were presented in several categories, including best in show, oils/acrylics, photography, watercolors, sculpture and mixed media. Over sixty works were on display in the Museum's third floor changing exhibition gallery. The exhibition, which ran through October 17th, was enjoyed by visitors to Lambert Castle.

## 50/50 Raffle Winner

Congratulations to PCHS member Barbara Belli of Fairfield, NJ for winning the 2004 Beefsteak 50/50 Raffle drawing which netted both the Historical Society and Barbara over one thousand dollars. Shown inside Lambert Castle accepting her winnings, Barbara was leaving the next day on a planned vacation to San Francisco. Barbara said that her trip would be especially wonderful with the addition of this extra spending money.



The Passaic County Historical Society would like to thank Barbara and the others who generously participated in this year's raffle. (See photos of the Beefsteak Dinner on page 3.)

## Holiday House Ad Journal Advertisers and Patrons

**W**e extend our sincere thanks to the following businesses and individuals for supporting our 2nd Annual Holiday House Ad Journal:

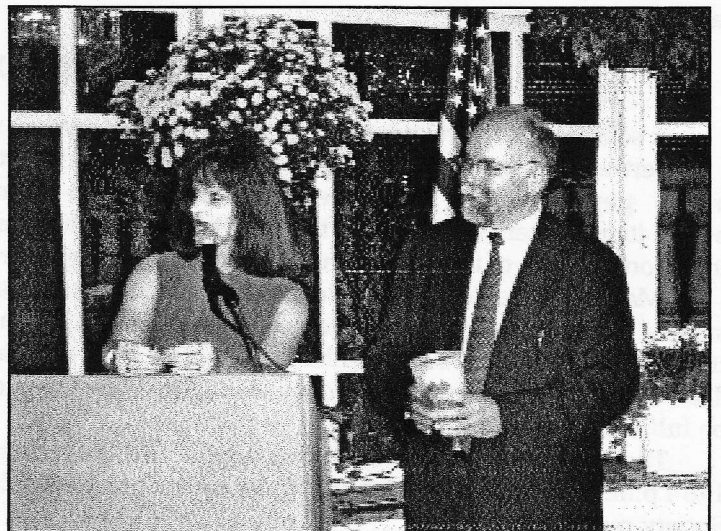
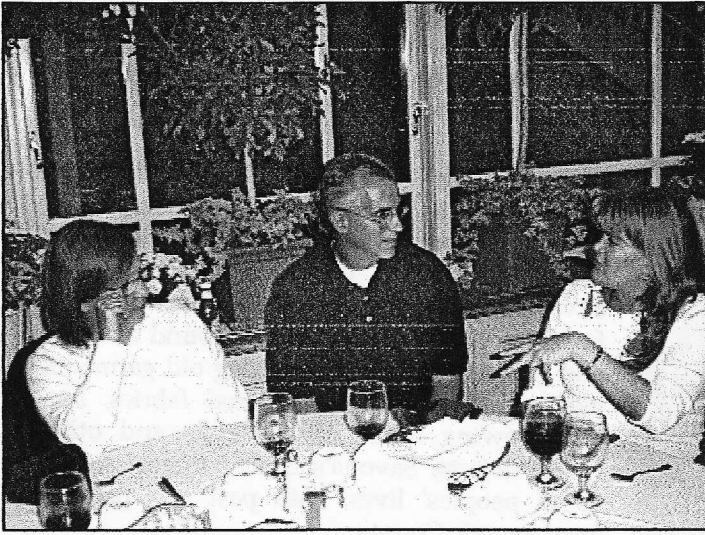
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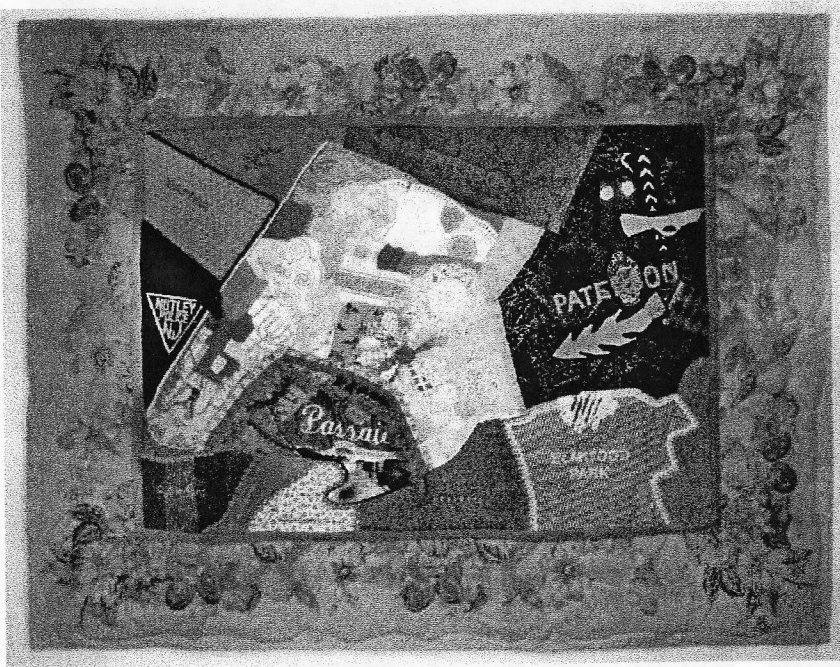
# Annual Beefsteak Dinner - October 6, 2004

*Thank you to all who made this event at the Brownstone a success! All monies raised will benefit the PCHS.*



# Stitches of History: Quilts From The Heart

A New Exhibition at Lambert Castle Museum



"A MAP OF HOMETOWN PERCEPTIONS" - 56" w x 45" h

From the Artist: *A young man told me that he is afraid to go into neighboring Paterson: it's dangerous. I'm a middle-aged woman, and feel no such danger. . . I thought about this as I was reading "Hidden in Plain View: A Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad" and wondered if I could use my quilting to explore subconscious feelings and prejudices. This map explores the perceptions we develop about our homes and our neighbors.*

of her quilts are "portraits" incorporating the work, tools and information of particular women or groups of women. Like an amateur archeologist, Savona pieces together a jumble of clues to try to understand each woman's life through what remains today of her stitchery.

This exhibition, which features more than thirty of Savona's quilts, runs through March 20, 2005. In addition to the exhibition, and in observance of Women's History Month, the artist will present a lecture/slide presentation about textile heritage at Lambert Castle Museum on Sunday, March 13, 2005 at 2:00 p.m.. Savona will show examples of needle-work history and discuss how she collects old linens at local garage sales and combines them with antique images to create her unique quilts.

## Spoon Exhibition

A selection of the reknowned Bertha Schaefer Koempel spoon collection will be placed on exhibit this winter.

Bertha Schaefer (1882-1966) of Paterson began her collection of souvenir spoons when she was a young girl. This was a very popular hobby in the late 19th and early 20th-centuries. Throughout her life, relatives and friends frequently added items to her collection. Bertha married Dr. Koempel and many of their friends began to give her new and interesting spoons. Some of the spoons in the collection were gifts from European royalty.

Many of these later acquisitions were beautiful examples of craftsmanship made by outstanding jewelers and silver-smiths. Some were encrusted with semiprecious jewels, enameled porcelain bowls, mother-of-pearl, and cloisonne. At the time of her death, Mrs. Koempel had amassed several thousand spoons. It was her wish that the collection remain intact. The Passaic County Historical Society was selected by the executors of her estate as a fitting spot where her wishess could be fulfilled.

The spoons can be viewed during regular Musuem hours. The Museum is open Wednesdays through Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m.. Admission is \$5 for adults; \$4 for senior citizens; \$3 for children ages 5-12; and free to Passaic County Historical Society members.

Opening at Lambert Castle Museum on February 5, 2005 is a new exhibition that explores a non-traditional approach to revealing personal histories through the medium of stitchery.

The new exhibition, called *Stitches of History: Quilts From The Heart*, showcases the work of a single quilt artist, Diane Savona, a longtime resident of the City of Passaic. Savona's quilts are a unique art form lovingly fashioned from used materials found at estate and garage sales. By combining old garments, hand-crocheted or embroidered fabrics, buttons, sewing tools, photographs and other found objects, Savona's quilts suggest stories about peoples' lives, both past and present, from Passaic County.

Savona's quilts are influenced by her own personal history of growing up during the last half of the twentieth century between the two major textile manufacturing centers of Passaic and Paterson. This industry was built on the labor of immigrants, mostly women, who brought their homeland's textile traditions to Passaic County. Savona is devoted to finding, saving and honoring the rapidly vanishing hoards of old hand-worked linens from her mother's and grandmothers' generations. Some

# Catholina Lambert

## A Biographical Sketch

By Edward M. Graf

*Edward M. Graf (1896-1892) was Curator of the Society's Lambert Castle Museum, serving also as Librarian, from 1961 until 1977. This article was first published in 1970. It was revised for this publication by E. A. Smyk, Passaic County Historian.*

Lambert Castle, now the museum and library of the Passaic County Historical Society, has overlooked the city of Paterson from a prominence on the eastern slope of Garret Mountain for more than a century. This impressive sandstone and granite structure was originally the residence of Catholina Lambert, an English-born silk worker who immigrated to the United States in the mid-19th century. During his lifetime, Lambert would amass—and then lose—most of the fortune he had accumulated as one of Paterson's most ambitious and enterprising silk manufacturers.

Catholina Lambert was born in Goose Eye, Yorkshire, England on March 28, 1834, and died at the Castle on February 15, 1923. He was nearly 89 years of age. The following day, Lambert's obituary was front-page news of the *Paterson Morning Call*.

In his native England, Lambert started work at the age of 10 in the cotton mill of Walter Evans & Company for the equivalent of thirty-two cents a week in American money. At 17, in search of greater opportunities, he set out for New York City where he arrived on October 29, 1851. Lambert had a friend living in Boston. He found employment there as an office boy for four dollars a week with the silk firm of Tilt & Dexter, of which the principals were Benjamin B. Tilt and Anson Dexter. In 1853, Lambert bought the shares of the retiring Mr. Tilt and the firm changed its name to Dexter, Lambert & Co., so remaining until its termination more than 60 years later.

The firm had experimented with ribbon weaving as early as 1849, and again in 1856, but their first attempts were not financially successful. Tilt and Dexter have been credited with being the first company to weave ribbon in America. Their factory, a two-story building, 40 x 100 feet,

was on Coventry Street in Boston, the street having been named by Mr. Tilt. They had machines to weave fringes, gimps, and braiding as well as trimmings. Known as a trimming house, Tilt and Dexter manufactured their product for upholsterers, the military, parasol makers, milliners, hatters, furriers, cloak and dressmakers.



Catholina Lambert

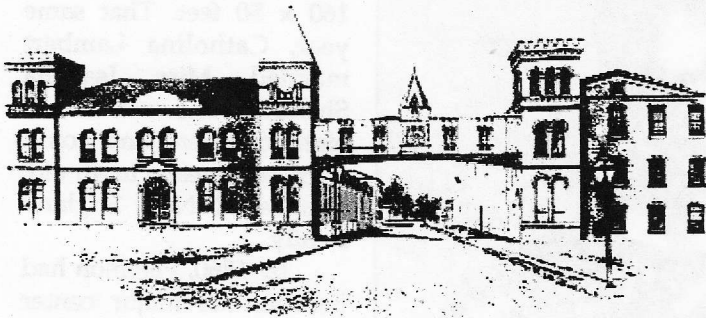
In 1856, business had increased, and with the need for additional space, the firm erected another, more commodious mill on Lennox Street. It was three stories high and measured 160 x 50 feet. That same year, Catholina Lambert married Miss Isabella Shattuck. She was one of eight children, and could trace her lineage to an old, established New England family.

By 1860, Paterson had become the major center for American silk manufacturing, thus frequently bringing Lambert to Paterson on business trips. Attracted to the natural beauty of the Passaic Valley and Garret Mountain, he purchased 22 acres in South Paterson known as "Maplewood" from James Close in 1861. The same year, Anson Dexter retired. George R. Dexter, his son, and William Nelson Lambert, a younger brother of Catholina, were admitted to the firm. In 1869, during a visit to South America for reasons of health, William Lambert died. George R. Dexter retired in 1875.

On July 25, 1870, while on a return trip from Europe where he had gone to recuperate from ill health, Lambert was notified at sea of the death of his one year and five month old son, Clifford. The funeral was postponed, pending the arrival of the child's parents and was held in their residence on August 4th.

Henry B. Wilson was admitted to the Lambert partnership in 1878, and Charles Barton who had been in the com-

pany since 1860, retired in 1880. In 1885, three more partners were added — Catholina's son, Walter S. Lambert, William Farrington Suydam, his son-in-law, and Charles N. Sterrett. In 1866, Lambert wished to locate nearer to New York City and he purchased a mill site in Paterson on the east side of Straight Street and north of Clay Street (now called 21st Avenue). The brick three story structure he erected was called the Dexter Mill. It measured 220 by 50 feet. (This mill was sold in December 1916, to Van Der Weye Brothers, Belgian fur manufacturers, for \$60,000). In 1874, Lambert went to England and bought a plant of power looms which he shipped to Paterson and installed in the Straight Street mill, where he began weaving broad silk goods. Three years later, the firm purchased the ribbon plant of A. Soleliac & Sons, located in the Dale Mill, and operations continued there until June 1879. The Lambert Mill, across Straight Street and opposite the Dexter Mill, was built in December 1878, on land purchased from the Society for Establishing Useful Manufacturers. This building was 100 by 74 feet and two stories when completed on July 1, 1879. The Lambert and Dexter Mills were connected at the second story by a bridge over Straight Street.



Lambert's Straight Street mill in Paterson was built in 1879. Lambert is said to have designed his mills himself.

Lambert further expanded his operations, and in the Spring of 1879, purchased the ribbon loom plant of Sterrett, Ryle & Murphy.

In 1880, a fourth large silk mill was erected at Hawley, Pennsylvania. This mill was christened "Bellmonte" on Thursday, June 3, 1881, by Lambert in company with his wife, daughter, and a large group of personal and business associates. Subsequently, in 1887, the last large mill was erected at Honesdale, Pennsylvania, where the firm manufactured silk of all kind, starting from raw, imported skeins that could be transformed into beautifully finished products. (At Lambert Castle, the Society often exhibits such products.)

Catholina Lambert took great pleasure in planning and building the edifice now called Lambert Castle. He constructed his new residence during 1892, and named it "Belle Vista" in honor of his wife, Isabella. Their original home, Maplewood, stood on the plot of the old Close Farm lying between Valley Road and Marshall Street. It no longer could contain Lambert's ever-expanding collection of paint-

ings and art objects. Maplewood was afterward occupied by Freeman Shattuck, Mrs. Lambert's brother. During 1892, stonecutters began assembling brownstone blocks from local quarries, and construction of the castle proceeded. By the end of the year, the present building as it now stands was completed and is said to resemble Warwick Castle in Lambert's native England. Ruth Bree Rebbeck, the daughter of one of Lambert's long deceased retainers, recounted that, as a poor delivery boy in England, Catholina had often delivered goods to Warwick Castle and later achieved his boyish dream to build such a castle. He accomplished it in the space of 40 years. In 1893, Lambert established his residence at the "Belle Vista," displaying his immense art collection in a home of princely magnificence.

Three years after Mrs. Lambert's death in 1901, Lambert married her sister, Harriet Estelle Bibby, widow of Doctor Bibby, by whom she had a son, Harry Lambert Bibby a practicing physician in New York City. Mr. Lambert's second wife also pre-deceased him, dying November 27, 1916. Seven of his eight children also pre-deceased him, with only his son, Walter, remaining of his large family. Two daughters who had married, left nine grandchildren between them.

Paterson's labor strike of 1913, and conditions elsewhere put a great strain on the silk manufacturing business. By 1914, the firm of Dexter, Lambert & Co. found itself in financial difficulties and decided to liquidate. On October 20, 1914, credit was obtained in an effort to meet liabilities against the firm, and Mr. Lambert signed notes payable two years from date with the pledge of his estate as collateral. On January 15, 1915, Lambert offered his entire estate, including his immense and valuable art collection, for an extension of credit, and placed his signature on a trust mortgage in favor of the Paterson Safe Deposit and Trust Co. in the amount of \$1,103,754.95 — said to be the largest personal mortgage ever recorded in Passaic County at that time. Subsequently, Lambert decided to dispose of his art holdings, and an auction was conducted by the American Art Galleries in the Grand Ballroom of New York's Hotel Plaza from February 21 to 24, 1916. There were 365 pictures and numerous pieces of statuary auctioned, realizing a total amount of \$592,050, which was estimated at about one-third of the real value.

On Thursday, February 15, 1923, Lambert and one of his closest friends, his brother-in-law, John C. Ryle, discussed their favorite topic, the silk industry, in Lambert's first floor study. At nearly 89 years of age, Lambert still retained his keen insight into the trade conditions that had made him a remarkable businessman for almost his entire life. By two o'clock of that afternoon, however, the pioneer manufacturer, who was in declining health, took to his bed and a few minutes after 4 p.m., peacefully died. With him at the time were his only living child, Walter, and his personal physician, Dr. Victor E. Bullen.

Mr. Lambert had requested a simple funeral. Services were conducted at the Castle on Sunday at two p.m. February 18, 1923, by Reverend Alvin C. Sawtelle of the

Second Presbyterian Church on Broadway at Summer Street, of which Mr. Lambert had been the oldest member of the congregation. The services were held in the northeast parlor where the body lay in a mahogany half-couch coffin surrounded by numerous floral pieces. A quartette sang *Abide With Me*, *It is Well With my Soul*, and *Lead Kindly Light*. Rev. Sawtelle delivered a fitting eulogy, and a Masonic service terminated the proceedings with the deposit of the lambskin apron, the badge, and the evergreen as emblems of Lambert's Masonic connections. He had been initiated into Joppa Lodge No. 28 F. and A.M. in April 1879, and raised to Master Mason August 27, 1879. The Masonic services at the funeral were conducted by Worshipful Master Walter W. Penney, assisted by several 33rd degree masons

of Paterson, and Robert J. Hanna, Everett T. Whitford, and Rev. O. M. Demcott.

Following services, the funeral procession made its way to Cedar Lawn Cemetery, where interment was made in the family plot. More than 300 men of prominence attended the services, not only former employees but important figures in the textile world. The honorary pall bearers had all been colleagues of Mr. Lambert, and those from Paterson included U. S. attorney-General John W. Griggs, Vice-Chancellor Vivian M. Lewis, Judge William I. Lewis, Hon. William B. Gourley, Henry Doherty, Elmer Z. Halstead, Daniel H. Murray, Wayne Dumont, Dr. Victor E. Bullen, and Thomas Smith. Eight well-known associates from New York completed the cortege.

## When Cecil B. DeMille Lived In Wayne

Extracted from *Under the Sign of the Eagle*, by William E. Berce  
for the Wayne Township Historical Commission, 1964



Pompton [Wayne]

At the age of 75 he directed his 70th picture — a \$15-million epic called the *Ten Commandments*.

And before, commencing with a picture called *The Squaw Man*, produced in a \$25-per-month leased barn in 1913, he had turned out screen productions that cost \$40 million, grossed \$650 million, and were viewed by a total paying audience of four billion people. Among his trophies and awards were the cherished Oscar and decorations from

five nations.

Cecil Blount DeMille (1881-1959) and others like Sam Goldwyn, Jesse L. Lasky, Adolph Zukor, and D. W. Griffith, not only were the famed of Hollywood but *were* Hollywood. They conceived it — helped it come to life — and nourished it into the miracle industrial giant that it became. All this, of course, is fairly well known and requires no elaboration.



On the set of *The Ten Commandments*: Theodore Roberts, Cecil B. DeMille, and publicity man Barret Kiesling (1923)

Not too many people, however, know that the man who filed such all-time movie classics as *The Greatest Show on Earth*, *The King of Kings*, and *Reap the Wild Wind* spent much of his boyhood in Wayne Township.

In 1889, when DeMille was eight years old, the family moved into the Wayne area from North Carolina and settled in a spacious frame house, since dismantled, on what is today Terhune Drive but in those days was known as The High Road.

Henry C. DeMille — Cecil's father — then 36 years old, had long contemplated the ministry as a career, and still was a candidate for Holy Orders at the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island. Pronounced talents in the fields of drama and acting, however, finally lured him towards the theater and playwriting instead. As Cecil B. DeMille himself later recalled, his father claimed, "he could reach a larger congregation that way." At the same time, Henry DeMille maintained a very staunch attitude towards the faith, and read passages from the Old and New Testaments to the children every evening — a custom that exposed young Cecil to the great adventures of the Bible.

With the famed David Belasco, Henry C. DeMille formed a team of what stage people call theater-wise playwrights. From 1887 through 1890 alone, they produced four straight hits in a row, including *Men and Women*, starring the great Maude Adams.

Under this influence, Cecil and his older brother, William C. DeMille, made up their minds to follow careers on the stage. In between stints at various private schools — during which he tried to volunteer for the Spanish-American War at the age of fifteen — Cecil B. DeMille prepared for his all-important "first role," aided by formal training at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts.

William, in the meantime, went into playwriting, later turning out such hits as *Strongheart* and *The Warrens of Virginia*. It was in the latter play, produced by David Belasco, that Mary Pickford made her stage debut.

Many of our senior citizens vividly recalled the decade during which the DeMilles lived in the area. One of these was Frank A. Marion of Pompton Lakes.

"The DeMilles lived in a huge, elegant frame house on the hill across from the street from the present nursing home," said Marion. "They also had a home at Echo Lake, in the upper section of Passaic County."

He also remembered when Henry C. DeMille was a member of Christ Episcopal Church in Pompton Lakes, and his rich rhetoric as a Lay Reader kept all his listeners spellbound.

It was while the DeMilles were residents of Wayne Township that tragedy struck. Henry C. DeMille, at the peak of his career, died on February 10, 1893, at the age of forty.

Cecil's mother, displaying a remarkable fortitude, immediately plunged into other role as head of the family and chief provider. So successful was she that she was able to continue the boys' education.

One of her enterprises, Mr. Marion recalls, was the construction of what is now the nursing home on Terhune Drive and its operation by her as a "preparatory school for aspiring actors and actresses."

Former Wayne Township Committeeman, Harry Tintle, often spoke of the days when a string of the DeMille ponies would be brought to the Tintle Blacksmith Shop to be shod, after which they would be ridden or driven back to the school. On one occasion, when a shop assistant was called to the school - unaware that it was an establishment for fledgling actors and actresses - he was "greatly startled to hear all that loud, strange talk" echoing across the grounds, and swore never to return.

Shortly after the beginning of the 20th century, when Cecil B. DeMille was 21 years old, he was wed to Constance Adams, the daughter of an Essex County circuit judge. Following this, new careers and callings took the DeMilles from the area.

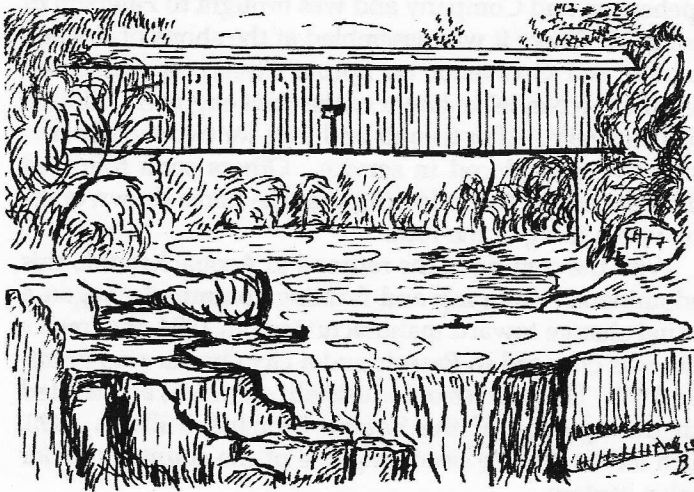
Today, sounds of auto traffic and construction replace the stentorian echoes of young stage hopefuls, who, it is said, included the renowned Evelyn Nesbit. But with their departure, the curtain descended on yet another chapter of Wayne's history, providing a rich legacy for the "scripts" that are still to be written.

# Passaic County's Covered Bridges

Extracted from *Of Time, Fire and the River: The Story of New Jersey's Covered Bridges*  
by Norman F. Brydon

The Passaic River, where it courses its way through Passaic County, once had three covered bridges of widely different characteristics spanning its banks.

## Little Falls



THE LITTLE FALLS BRIDGE  
above sandstone deposit

A single-span, covered bridge, white, with vertical sideboards, crossed the little falls of the Passaic River at the present location of the road alongside of Beattie's Mill. In 1887, the falls then beneath the bridge were blasted out to their present location to provide power for the mill. The dates of erection and removal of this covered bridge have not been ascertainable. It is understood, however, to have been replaced by an iron structure in the mid-1890s.

A romantic reference to this bridge is contained in Verse XIII of a poem, "Song of the Passaic" by John A. MacNab, first published in 1890.

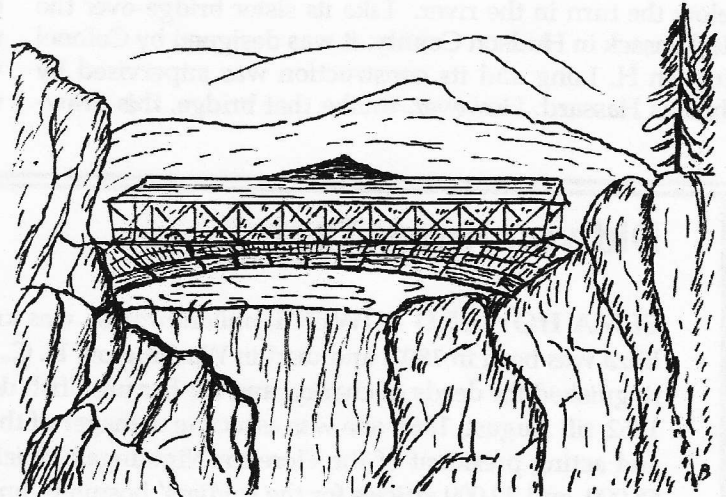
"Up and above the whirl and toss  
Of maddened river, swings across  
A timbered bridge, with shingled roof  
And covered sides, thrown high aloof  
O'r ragged, deep, rock-bound defile  
Nor pier nor butments serve to guile  
The rushing tides in hurried flow  
To basins cleft in rocks below."

Little Falls was first settled in 1711 by eight Acquackanonk (Passaic) farmers of Dutch origin who purchased a large tract of land from the Indians. The community's name was derived from the nearby falls of the Passaic. It was organized as a township by an Act of the Legislature approved April 2, 1868. Its Centennial was observed in

1968. The power of the little falls has long been used for industrial purposes. The first foundry and a mill were erected there by Thomas Gray. Robert Beattie bought the property in 1846 and began the business still operating there as the Beattie Carpet Manufacturing Company. The bridge site was also the location of a famous high-grade sandstone quarry, stone from which was used in the construction of many important bridges and buildings, including Trinity Cathedral in New York City.

Local legend tells us that the earliest school was conducted under an ancient apple tree, the hollow trunk of which was used as a cloak and hat room. Following this, a seven by twelve-foot room in a distillery became the seat of learning. Humble origins, indeed, for today's fine public school system in the township.

## Paterson (Great Falls)



CLINTON BRIDGE  
first above the Great Falls

The Great Falls (also called Totowa Falls and Passaic Falls) of the Passaic River at Paterson, have long been considered one of the most imposing natural wonders of New Jersey. Their scenic beauty was advertised in New York newspapers as early as 1770 and stage runs were made to the Falls from that city and other points. They also provided a power source for the mills operated by the Society for Useful Manufacture, founded by Alexander Hamilton in 1791. By deed of August 14, 1827, the property around the Falls was purchased by Timothy B. Crane, who built the first bridge over the top of the falls. This covered structure was opened to the public on September 30, 1827, and was named the Clinton Bridge in honor of DeWitt Clinton.

On the day the bridge was opened, there was a gala celebration. The famous Sam Patch made a leap from the

rocks nearly seventy feet high to the basin below. Sam received considerable publicity for his jumps. He later tried Niagara Falls and Genesee Falls, the latter resulting in his death in 1829.

The original bridge, a single span with arched ends and eighty-five feet long, was replaced by a second covered bridge over the falls in 1844. This was similar to the first but did not have the arch-shape at the bottom. It was declared unsafe and replaced by an open wooden structure in 1854.

A favorite subject for artists, the bridges and the falls have been and are still frequently drawn, painted and photographed. The falls also were for many years the amusement center for the area. Fireworks on the Fourth of July, tightrope walkers over the basin, and jumpers (some of whom lost their lives), were some of the features. The balloon, "Queen of the Air" made an ascent from the falls and landed in New York City on August 6, 1858.

#### Passaic-Paterson and Hudson River Rail Road Bridge

This bridge of the Paterson and Hudson River Rail Road crossed the Passaic at Acquackanonk (Passaic) just below the turn in the river. Like its sister bridge over the Hackensack in Hudson County, it was designed by Colonel Stephen H. Long and its construction was supervised by Thomas Hassard. However, unlike that bridge, this draw-

bridge consisted of a single section, thirty feet in length, and was built of heavy timbers. It was raised through the operation of a weight connected to the draw by chains and so placed as to furnish a counter-balancing force to its weight as the draw was raised. The whole mass was lifted by an operator turning a simple crank. The overall length of the bridge, which was completed in 1833, was some three hundred and fifty feet.

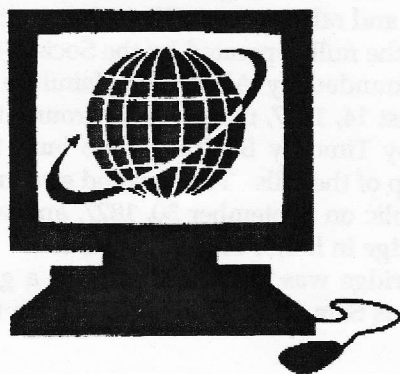
Steam came to the Paterson and Hudson early in June 1835. The first locomotive was built in England by Robert Stephenson and Company and was brought to Paterson in April 1835. There it was assembled at the shops of Rogers, Ketchum and Grosvenor on Spruce Street. It was christened the "McNeille" in honor of the chief engineer, William Gibbs McNeille. After tryouts and tests for two months, the locomotive was placed in service. Others soon followed and by the end of the following year the horse drawn operation was a thing of the past.

With the coming of the railroad to Acquackanonk, this predominantly shipping and farming community began a gradual change toward manufacturing. In 1854, the town's name was changed to Passaic and a city charter was granted in 1873. The process of industrialization was accelerated with the opening of the Botany Worsted Mills in 1890, which led to the city becoming one of the country's major woolen centers.

### Did you Know That.....

**ELIZA HOWARD POWERS**, philanthropist, was known as Paterson's "Florence Nightingale." Eliza was born in 1802, and died in Washington, D. C., August 25, 1887. During the civil war she was distinguished for deeds of charity, and for her unselfish devotion to the sick and wounded. From November, 1862, till August, 1864, she was associate manager of the United States sanitary commission of New Jersey, and acting president of the Florence Nightingale relief association of Paterson, New Jersey. She collected \$8,000, and 20,000 articles for the soldiers' hospitals, and contributed \$2,500 of her own money to the same purpose, without receiving any compensation. The 48th congress voted her a pension. The committee favoring her claims said in their report that from April 28, 1861, till August 14, 1864, she devoted her whole time, energy, and means to the service of the soldiers of the National army and for the success of the Union cause.

## The Passaic County Historical Society On the Internet



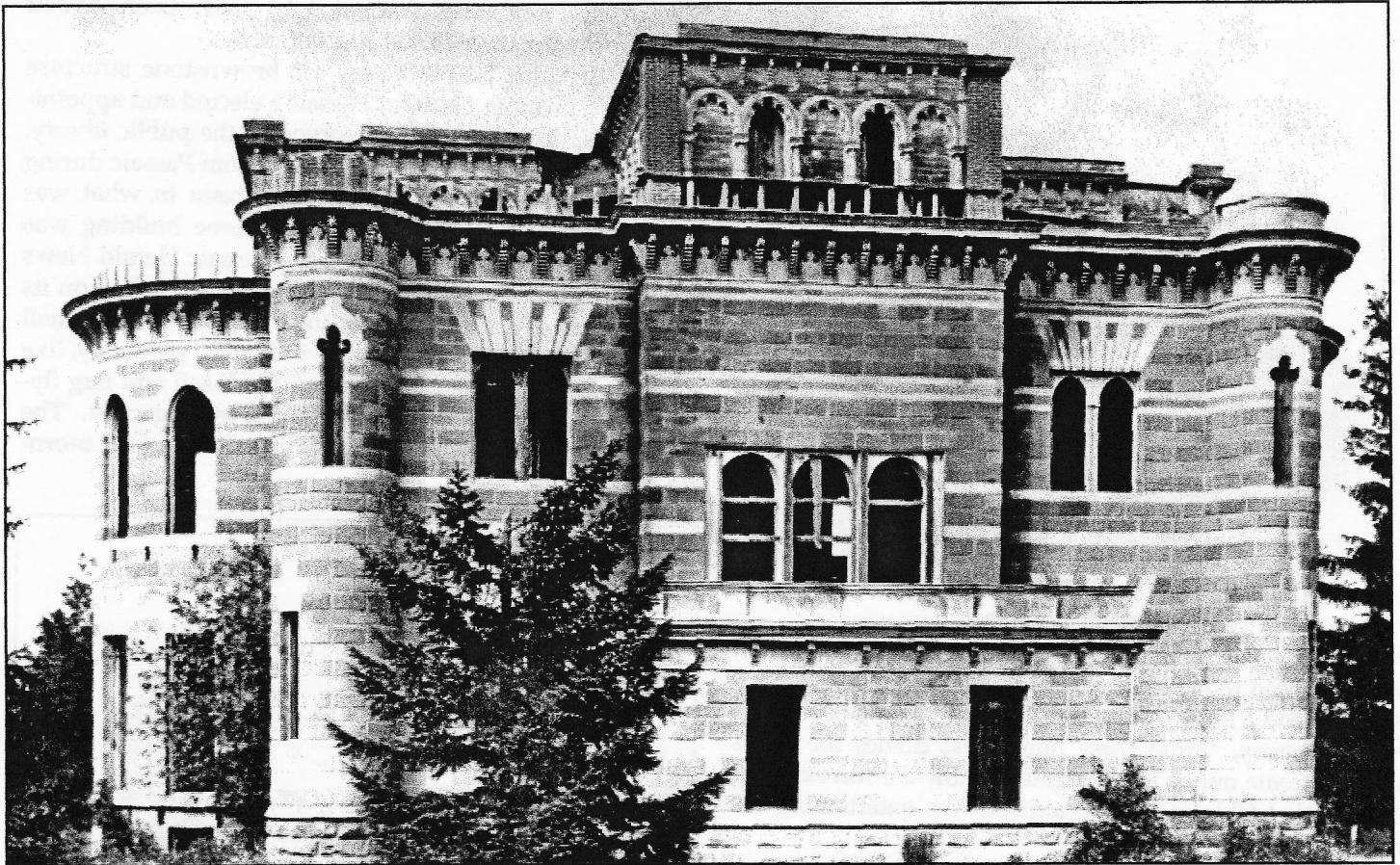
The Passaic County Historical Society has TWO sites on the internet. One web page is dedicated to genealogy, the other contains information about the museum and library, the PCHS calendar, and local history articles; however, because history and genealogy are so entwined there is much overlapping and cross-linking.

Historical Society URL: <http://www.lambertcastle.org>

Genealogy Club URL: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~njpchsgc/>

# “Paulison’s Folly” Became Passaic’s City Hall

by E. A. Smyk, Passaic County Historian



Paulison Mansion half finished and abandoned in the 1870s

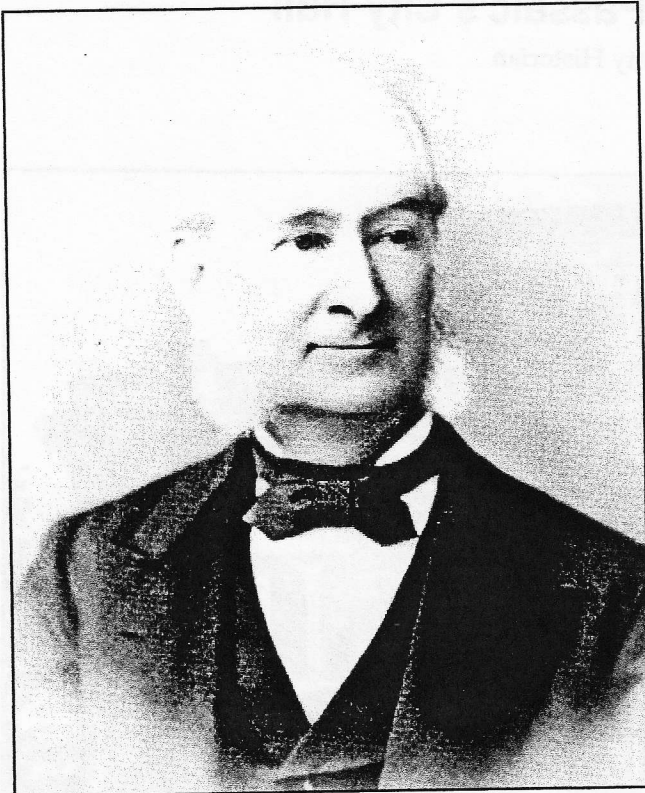
The mid-19th century was a time when large fortunes could be accumulated by brash young capitalists who worried little about government intervention. It was also an age when a plunge in the economy would suddenly leave over-confident investors with broken dreams and tarnished reputations.

Charles McKnight Paulison of Passaic was one of many who enjoyed the fruits of prosperity, only to see his substantial holdings evaporate in the financial panic of 1873. Paulison, in the decorous language of the Victorian era, was “ruined.” With his money gone, the real estate developer was forced to abandon work on the imposing brownstone mansion he called Park Heights. Situated atop the Gregory Avenue hill, the pretentious structure was never finished, even though Paulison spent \$200,000 on the building and its park-like setting. After Paulison’s untimely death in October 1881, the residents of Passaic would pass the abandoned structure, and probably speculated about its future. The name Paulison had given it was not on their lips. The businessman’s cherished showplace had

been dubbed “Paulison’s Folly.”

Paulison arrived in Passaic with an impeccable family pedigree. His father, Paul graduated from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) in 1794. The family lived in Hackensack, but when Paul Paulison died in 1832, his widow moved to New York. Young Charles lived for a time in San Francisco. During gold rush days, he opened a business and became a city alderman. He eventually returned east. Sensing that there were business opportunities in then-developing Passaic, Paulison purchased large tracts of land at Acquackanonk Landing between 1864 and 1865. He built houses, laid out a number of streets and, with ebullient optimism, invested his earnings in new enterprises. Paulison was not yet 50 when he began the construction of his Moorish-style mansion. Artisans were supplied with brownstone from a Paulison-owned quarry. The gatekeeper’s house cost \$12,000, and a similar amount was spent on the stable. The camelia-loving Paulison expended \$27,000 for greenhouses.

Paulison directed his architect to plan a banquet hall



Charles M. K. Paulison

that could accommodate 500 dinner guests. The mansion was supposed to have four small towers topped by glazed minarets and a large central dome. In the words of an 1899 Passaic history, "From these huge glass domes the lights were to stream out on festal nights to show the surrounding country that Charles M. K. Paulison was entertaining his friends."

After losing his fortune the still ambitious businessman left Passaic and although it's claimed he wanted to return to the city and finish his mansion, fate decreed otherwise. He went to Tennessee and speculated in walnut timber, but he was unsuccessful. Paulison was appointed register of the Arizona Land Office. Not long before his death in Tucson, he published a pamphlet entitled *Arizona: The Wonder Country*. Apparently, to the end of his life, Paulison retained his optimism.

Paulison's unfinished Passaic residence was acquired by an insurance company through foreclosure proceedings, but they couldn't sell the property. The building was boarded up and left to decay. In 1954, David S. Webster recalled the place as it appeared 65 years earlier, "The old building was just a shell, but stood sturdy and strong, dominating the village from its proud hill. Its 3-foot walls still defied time and weather, but inside it was a wreck and

shambles." Fortunately, the near ruin received a new lease on life when it was purchased from the insurance company for \$33,000 by Passaic civic leaders A. Swan Brown, Peter Reid and Moses E. Worthen. They successfully induced the city to reimburse them for the cost, and the building was adapted for use as City Hall. On April 30, 1892, the former "Paulison's Folly" was dedicated by Gov. Leon Abbett before approximately 15,000 spectators.

For the next 62-1/2 years, the brownstone structure served as a meeting place for Passaic's elected and appointed officials. The second floor served as the public library. On the third floor, every youth drafted from Passaic during World War I was given his physical exam in what was called the drill hall. When the huge stone building was demolished on December 29, 1954, a Passaic Herald-News editorial sounded a note of nostalgia and remarked on its slide into history. According to the editor, the old city hall "... passed out of existence with swift finality yesterday, like a gallant frigate going to bottom with full sail and flag flying. No salvage squads followed the wrecking crew. The last of the stout walls came thundering down in the morning rain."



Paulison Mansion after completion as Passaic City Hall

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