

# Freehold Township Heritage Society

Summer 2020

## Our President's message

As we navigate through the Covid-19 pandemic, we are aware that this will be of historic significance for a very long time. People will want to know what it was like.

The Monmouth County Historical Association has created a project for Monmouth County **Citizen Historians** to fill out a questionnaire. This project will collect people's thoughts and experiences during this time. You can also send in photos. The information will be archived under their digital collection.

Humans have always wondered what it must have been like for people to go through a big event. Looking at journals and other recordings of thoughts and experiences shed some light. You can add your voice to enlighten future generations by telling what it's like for you during this crisis.

I now more fully understand my parents' experience living through the Great Depression. They quietly carried that with them throughout their lives.

The news video clips from a couple of months ago showing people in China wearing masks going about their daily lives and in airports seemed to me to be so disconnected from us here in America. It wasn't until I went to Sam's Club several days later for a regular shopping trip to get mundane items that I saw people hoarding cases of water bottles and other non-perishable items like it was Super Storm Sandy all over again. And there were no tissues. I was perplexed. Looking back, I see that I was late to realize what the worldwide situation was becoming!

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The Covid-19 crisis cancelled our annual events. We will announce any plans for tours or events through our email communications and future newsletters. STAY TUNED!

## **Monthly Meetings – ALL ARE WELCOME**

Whether you want to attend to hear what is being planned, whether you want to find out how to volunteer or if you want to make some new friends. All are welcome to join.

Bring your own folding chair, if possible, and wear a mask.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month @ 10:30 a.m. at the Oakley Farm, 189B Wemrock Road



September 9  
October 14

November 11  
December 9

## Civil War Tea

September @ The Oakley Farmhouse

Learn the Civil War History, talk with re-enactors while enjoying tea, sandwiches and dessert. A gift auction will also take place and guests take home a thank you gift.

Call Jerri Chadwick for tickets  
732.920.3039



President's message continued

I believe that the good coming out of this is, among other things, creativity, innovation, empathy for and showing kindness toward our fellow human beings. People are learning new things – lots of Do It Yourself projects, reviving old board games, gardening and other ways of getting out into Nature to relax and perhaps growing some of your own food, and creative cooking.

TV personalities are learning to do their own hair and make-up, and they look a little different. It makes them seem somehow more human. New hobbies and crafts are being learned, books, movies, and Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, etc. offerings are being discovered and everyone is jumping on board to create new virtual offerings.

As a member of my town's Environmental Commission, I'm sad to see that the environment is hurting in some ways – DISPOSABLE everything – no ban on plastic bags now, disposable plastic gloves and disposable face masks in the garbage stream and in parking lots. BUT some parts of the environment are doing better. With less driving, less carbon emissions are making for improved air quality.

No one knows where this experience will lead us. We are all learning what the word "essential" means to each of us individually. We are discovering a new sense of optimism and developing a new perspective on life.

Let's hope that more people are learning about how they can reuse things and live without certain things, too, even when this pandemic is over. That takes us back to lessons learned from the Great Depression.

If you are interested in filling out the Monmouth County Historical Association questionnaire during this historic time, click on the link.

<https://www.monmouthhistory.org/covid19>

Pat Eisemann

Contact Us: 732.577.9766

Freehold Township Heritage Society  
189b Wemrock Road  
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### **Old Time Music at Oakley**

Old Time is music of and by the people. The basis of many Old time tunes is simple and follows a predictable pattern and chord progression. The challenge for proficient musicians is the improvisation that occurs once the melody is learned.

Passed down by ear with regional differences, Revolutionary and Civil War tunes are in the mix, hymns, ballads and silly nonsense songs make up a variety of music shared by many. Fiddles, banjos, mandolins are commonly used, however, this program includes harmonica, fiddles/violins, bass, guitars, dulcimer and other instruments.

Come and participate with your old time instrument. The group gathers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month,  
6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

**Next sessions are Sept 8 and Oct 13  
189b Wemrock Road in Freehold, NJ**

**Bring a chair and wear a mask**



## **Henderson Park may become a real place in Freehold Township to visit**

The former home of Dr. Thomas Henderson which sat along the Burlington Path just north of where Walmart now sits will soon become a passive park for contemplation and reflection. The Freehold Township Historic Preservation Commission (FTHPC) has been working since 2003 to make this a reality and hope to see great progress in 2019.

FTHPC has enlisted the service of Richard Grubb Associates, Inc. which is a historic research company that his helping to the logistics of how to accomplish our vision. Located on the hill overlooking Walmart, Longhorn Steakhouse and Olive Garden, there is approximately 2 acres which will be restored to its natural beauty, a pathway from Walmart Drive will be installed around the site. The property also includes the foundation of the original 1700s home and the 1820 barn built with timbers from that home.

Dr. Henderson was the town doctor taking over from Dr. Nathaniel Scudder. He was also a confidant of George Washington who is rumored to have had tea at Dr.

Henderson's home in the year leading up to the American Revolution. Dr. Henderson also served during the Battle of Monmouth under General Washington. The home was burned by the British upon their arrival in Freehold as were the most of the other buildings along the Burlington path and in town itself. Upon returning home, Dr. Henderson was quoted as saying he would rebuild his home and it would be named Cincinnati Hall as a reference to the Order of Cincinnati which was the first veteran's organization in the United States. The organization was for former officers of the Continental Army.

Benches will be installed in Henderson Park, the barn will be rehabilitated for displays and hopefully it will become a visitor's center. This is a 3-phase project starting with cleaning up the area and installing the walkway, benches and signage. Phase 2 will expose part of the foundation of the home and Phase 3 will be creating the visitor's center. We will keep you updated on the progress.

**By Cheryl "Cookie"  
Polverino**

## **Is Looming a Craft from the Past?**

Can you imagine having to weave your own fabric! Well people had to do just that when America was colonized. Shipping fabric from Great Britain was just too expensive and impractical. Homesteaders would have to raise the sheep, sheer the wool, Washed, dyed, carded and spun each thread before they could do anything in the weaving area.

All looms consist of Warp and Weft threads. A warp thread runs from back to front of all looms and a weft thread goes from side to side. The simplest of looms, is where the weft thread is passed over or under the warp threads by hand. As time progressed people kept coming up with ways to make things easier.

Frames were built in many different ways. Then heddles and Harness cords were added to make things easier and faster for the weavers. Each Heddle has a single thread pulled through an eyelet. There are 4 different harness groups on our loom. The warp threads are passed through the heddles and harnesses in such a way that when one set is lifted the ones next to it remain in the down position. Heddles are lifted by a series of peddles that are worked by the weavers feet.

After the warp threads are passed through the heddles in a uniformed pattern, they are then pulled through a reed/ batten. The reed can hold from one to three warp ends, depending on the thickness of the threads. Once that is done the warp threads are then tied to a take up bar.

Now we are just about ready to weave! How exciting! We are ready to pick what color and type of twisted thread or yarn we want to use as our weft thread. Dyes were made from plants, berries, tree bark and similar things that people could grow or find in the natural environment of their area.

Once the color and yarn is picked, it in then wound onto a shuttle bobbin. That is then placed into a wooden shuttle that is then passed back and forth in front of the reed through the shed. The shed is the space created by lifting half of the warp threads up and leaving half of them in the down position.

Looming continued on next page



Looming continued

Once the color and yarn is picked, it is then wound onto a shuttle bobbin. That is then placed into a wooden shuttle that is then passed back and forth in front of the reed through the shed. The shed is the space created by lifting half of the warp threads up and leaving half of them in the down position. This is done in a sequence so that the warp threads are spread out evenly to hold our weft thread in place. Once the weft / shuttle is passed through the shed, the reed is then pulled forward to push the weft thread as far forward as possible. It is done once with the shed open and then a second time with the shed closed, meaning all heddles down.

The reed is then pushed back toward the heddles again in the resting position. Different heddles are then raised and the process is repeated. We are now in the beginning of the actual weaving process!

Weft color can be changed as often as you wish to create a colorful cloth with variety or the same color can be used to create a solid colored cloth. The warp is released at the same time that the cloth is cranked forward to keep the same tension on the warp threads. This is a practiced art. A weaver may take many hours, weeks or years to perfect the art of manipulating all these things at the same time. Getting the weft tension right is the hardest thing to learn. Your cloth can be as long as the warp allows. When the warp is done, a new one is either tied to the old one (one thread at a time) or totally retreaded through the heddles, reed and again tied down to the take up bar.

The beginning and end of the cloth is tied to keep it from unraveling. This is great for shawls and rugs, because we will then have fancy little tassels at the beginning and the end of our project.

At the Oakley farm we are excited to explore the different patterns and threads we can use to create different cloths. We are happy to demonstrate how our loom works to the public at scheduled times. Please contact our fiber arts department with any questions or to schedule a demonstration.

**By Beth Applegate**



### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

We are limited in what we can do, but we still need help. If you would like something to do while at home staying safe, please contact us. We need assistance with the following:

- Grant researchers
- Grant writers
- Basic caretaking of the Oakley Farmhouse
- Light cleaning of the Oakley Farmhouse and the West Freehold one-room Schoolhouse
- Newsletter articles

**NEW** Our Heritage Society newsletter is adding a new section, which we are calling the **Puzzle Corner**. The Puzzle Corner section will allow you to work in an interactive jigsaw format to put together the pieces to see our photos.



Jigsaw puzzles were invented in 1767 as an enjoyable pastime. Playing these puzzles has a variety of benefits. In child development, jigsaw puzzles help develop fine motor ability, eye-hand coordination, problem-solving skills, spatial awareness and concentration. In adults, benefits include improved memory, improved visual-spatial reasoning, increased attention to detail, lower stress levels, and improved mood.

In addition to the benefits mentioned above, in this time of quarantine, virtual jigsaw puzzles can help to pass the time. There are three puzzles for you to solve.

A window will open with puzzle pieces. Pieces are moved with your mouse. You can change some things if you want as listed below:

<https://tinyurl.com/One-Room-School>

<https://tinyurl.com/Barn-Quilt>

<https://tinyurl.com/Civil-War>



### **Oakley Farmstead Update**

We are very excited to say that the Oakley Farmhouse had a recent facelift. New flashing was installed in the eaves to keep the squirrels from entering the roof and attic space and then covered by new clapboard. The shutters were removed, repaired and after the whole house was repainted, the shutters were painted and re-installed. Window sills were repaired and the front porch posts were repaired. The house looks as grand as ever!



Hello everyone.

Coming to you straight from Oakley Community Garden. This is our 5th year. We have sold all of our 46 beds with most of the gardeners are veterans. Everybody was very excited to get into the garden. As you all know, we had a cold spring, so lots of veggies had to wait to get planted. Most plants need a constant temperature of 65\* to 70\*.

Our CG was started to introduce locals to be able to grow their own vegetables and flowers too. Reasons why people want to be in a CG is because they may not have the space or problems with deer in their yards. Each year we try to plant at least one bed for the local Food Banks. This year we will not be doing that as we have no empty beds and our gardeners are always generous with their produce. When it is time to harvest, they will donate so we can give even more to the Food Bank.

We are located on the Oakley property to the right of the house towards the back. If you are ever in the neighborhood, please come and take a look. If anyone is at the garden, they will be happy to tell you about it. Only members can be inside the gates.

Wishing everyone a healthy and prosperous gardening season. Take care and stay safe.

Ronnie and Rich Co- chairs

It is with very sad hearts that we announce the passing of Marion Oakley. Marion and her husband Hugh were the biggest supporters of the Freehold Township Heritage Society. They enjoyed receiving our newsletters, hearing updates about the events at the Oakley Farmstead and how well it was being cared for as Elizabeth had wanted. Hugh and Marion each have an engraved brick at the foot of the flagpole and will be remembered fondly.



### **Marion Wilkinson Oakley**

Salisbury - Marion Wilkinson Oakley, 92, passed away on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 in Salisbury, MD. Born in Atlanta, GA June 15, 1927, she was the daughter of the late Everett and Ruth Wilkinson.

Marion received her bachelor's degree from Cornell University and her master's degree in Guidance Counseling from Trenton State College. She was in education for many years retiring in 1989 to pursue her and her husband's love of travel. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Hugh Oakley in 2009.

She was a faithful member of Trinity United Methodist Church. She loved playing cards, nurturing friendships and sharing her love of travel with her children and grandchildren. She was a master hostess enjoying all aspects of entertaining friends in her home.

Marion leaves to cherish her memory her three children, William (Kathleen) Oakley, Jeanne (Dale) Dwiggins and Wendy (Richard) Kemmet. Six grandchildren, Jason (Jessica) Oakley, Megan (Matt) Barner, Colleen (Fred) Tull, Kristen (Ian) Winstanley, Brian (Caitlin) Kemmet and Jennifer Dwiggins and 10 great-grandchildren.

A Memorial Service will be held at 2:00 PM, Saturday, February 29, 2020 at Trinity United Methodist Church. Family and friends may call from 12:30-2:00 PM in the Jackson Memorial building adjacent to Trinity United Methodist Church, 207 North Division Street, Salisbury, MD. Her body was donated to the Maryland Anatomy Board.

Memorial contributions may be made in her memory to Trinity United Methodist Church, 112 High Street, Salisbury, MD 21801 or the Freehold Township Heritage Society, 189 B Wemrock Road, Freehold, NJ 07728.

To read the obituary of Hugh Oakley, [click here](#).