



Volume 13, No. 4

Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance

Fall 2011

www.raritanmillstone.org

A Brief History of the Founding of the Meadows

By Christine Retz, President

The origins of the Meadows Foundation in Somerset date back to c. 1975 when the property, then known as the Bogan Meadows, whose charming Van Wickle House dates to the 1720s, was under consideration for development as a strip mall. The Bogan family, who owned the property, was divided on the matter. Some siblings wanted to sell it for such development, others didn't.

The naysayers also included members of the Bogan Meadows Fund Raising Committee, one of whose leaders was Dr. Bruce Hamilton of Rutgers University. This committee, which wanted to save the house and the five acres it sat on, initially raised \$40,000 through canvassing and fund



Van Wickle House

raising, and additional funds were raised as the committee morphed into the Meadows Foundation as we now know it. Many programs were run to assist the fund raising, including various horticultural seminars by Dr. Hamilton and giveaways by local merchants such as Rubin and Sons General Store and Hennings Flower Fair. Other donation programs were run by the Jaycees and the Jaycee-ettes. Prominent among private donors was the late Mary Jane Post, who generously donated \$10,000 towards the purchase price of \$87,000.



*Van Liew-Suydam
Today*

(continued on page three)

The next scheduled meeting of the
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
will be held on October 20, 2011
from 1:30—3:00 pm at the

**FIRST REFORMED CHURCH,
NEW BRUNSWICK**

Representatives from all Alliance
sites are encouraged to attend.

**DIRECTIONS TO
The First Reformed Church, 9 Bayard
Street, New Brunswick**

From Route 18, take the New St. exit. Turn
right at Neilson Street. Turn left at Bayard
Street. The church will be on the right.

To be excused, contact Donald Peck at
clausenco@aol.com or 732-738-5522 in
advance.

**Check the calendar pages for
upcoming board
meetings.**

YOUR LINK TO THE PUBLIC: *The Link*, the newsletter
of the Raritan–Millstone Heritage Alliance, is a quarterly
publication.

News of upcoming events for possible inclusion in the
next issue must be mailed or emailed to the editor no later
than January 15, 2012. While the editor, George Dawson,
is working on the guide book, please send all items to:
Ann Suydam, Associate Editor, 54 Skillman's Lane,
Somerset, NJ 08873; 732-846-7448.

Please send photos (in .jpeg or .tiff) to Linda Barth,
908-722-7428; barths@att.net. Material submitted
electronically should be in WORD format. Photographs
will be scanned and returned.

**Raritan-Millstone Heritage
Alliance**

P.O. Box 5583
Somerset, NJ 08875-5583
www.raritanmillstone.com

*An organization of individuals,
organizations, and sites working to promote
preservation and understanding of the rich,
eventful, and cultural heritage of significant
historical, educational, and cultural sites
located in Central New Jersey*

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The Board of Directors meets on the third
Thursday of March, May, September,
October, and November at designated
historic and museum member
sites in the region.



The Meadows was incorporated on January 16, 1977.

The initial trustees were Dr. Eugene Howe, Mr. John Cullen, Mrs. Betty Davison, Dr. David Denker, and Dr. Hamilton. In addition to these trustees, the incorporation was witnessed by Ann Suydam, James Moise, Robert Metter, and Mary Jane Post. On March 30, 1977 then state Environmental Protection Commissioner David Bardin and Franklin State Bank official Anthony Schoberl presented Franklin Mayor Norman Fisher with Green Acres and bank checks totaling \$85,000 to buy the tract and begin



Van Liew Suydam House, Middlebush Road



Tulipwood

interior restoration, including heating and septic repairs.

The Meadows has always been known for its signature event, Sinterklaas. The first one was held at the Meadows on December 9, 1976, and attracted 400 people, young and old alike. The famous Meadows Dutch Dancers, which add a special sparkle to the arrival of St. Nicholas, have been performing since c. 1982.

Many different types of programs have been held in the 40-odd years since the Meadows' founding. These have included art shows and concerts at the Van Wickle House, as well as Pumpkin Patch and the Bunny Jamboree, both held in conjunction with Franklin Township's

Parks and Recreation Dept. The Meadows today administers five properties, leased from Franklin Township, and uses these sites on a rotating basis for its Fireside Chats, held from September – April.



Hageman House Barn

Hageman House, South Middlebush Road



CALENDAR OF CENTRAL JERSEY EVENTS

Now through 2011—“Fore and Away: The Golden Age of Travel Posters” The United States Golf Association Museum and Arnold Palmer Center for Golf History, 77 Liberty Corner Road, Bernards Township, invites you to its new exhibit, “Fore and Away: The Golden Age of Travel Posters.” Journey to foreign locations through vintage travel posters that were used as promotional advertisements for international golf destinations. This exhibit features the work of one of the notable French travel poster artists, Roger Broders, who produced more than 100 iconic images during his career. These vintage images allow the visitor to explore modes of travel of the time and experience the varied artistic styles of the international artists who created them. Tuesday-Sunday, 10-5. Contact: Kim Gianetti, USGA Museum, 908-234-2300 ext.1245; E-mail: kgianetti@usga.org. Visit: www.usgamuseum.com.

Thursday, October 20—Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance board meeting: First Reformed Church, 9 Bayard Street, New Brunswick, 1:30-3:00 pm.

Saturday, October 22—The Lizzie Tapes, A Paranormal Investigation. — Lizzie Borden took an ax...or did she? Paranormal investigator Al Rauber was commissioned by two production companies for two separate television shows to capture evidence of reported haunting phenomena at 192 Second St., Fall River Massachusetts, where the bodies of Andrew and Abbie Borden were found bludgeoned to death on August 4, 1982. On Saturday, October 22, 2011, at the Metlar-Bodine House Museum, hear Mr. Rauber tell the detailed story of his investigations, and hear the voices of the spirits of the Lizzie Borden house. Tickets: \$15.00 per person. Reception following the program. Limited seating; reserve by October 20th. Reservations: 732-463-8363. Metlar-Bodine House Museum, 1281 River Road, Piscataway, NJ

Wednesday, October 26—The New Jersey Studies Academic Alliance invites you to a public program at 5 pm in the Pane Room on the first floor of the Alexander Library, 169 College Ave., New Brunswick, NJ 08901. Chad Leinaweaver, chair of the NJSAA’s authors awards committee, will moderate a panel of award-winning New Jersey authors. Parking passes for the College Avenue deck may be requested in advance from Bonita Grant (crafft@rulmail.rutgers.edu) or Nancy Martin (ngmartin@rci.rutgers.edu). Information on the Alliance is available at www.njsaa.org.

Thursday, October 27—All Aboard: Railroads in New Jersey, 1812-1930, a major exhibition at the Rutgers University Libraries, will open on Thursday, October 27, 2011. The exhibition, which will be on display at the Special Collections and University Archives Gallery until January 6, 2012, features rare broadsides, pamphlets, and images documenting the history of railroads in the Garden State from Rutgers University Libraries’ collections. Lorett Treese, author of *Railroads of New Jersey* (2006) will speak at the exhibition opening, which will be held at 5:00 p.m. in the Remigio U. Pane Room at the Archibald S. Alexander Library in New Brunswick. For more details about the exhibition and program or to RSVP, see www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/news/11/09_nj_railroads.shtml. Fernanda H. Perrone, Special Collections and University Archives Rutgers University Libraries, 169 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1163; voice: 732 932 7006 x363; email: hperrone@rulmail.rutgers.edu.

Saturday, October 29—Famous Ghosts, Lovers, and Murderers of Somerset County. This narrated, two-hour bus tour is a unique opportunity to learn more about the county - its history, colorful characters, and strange events. Visitors will hear about the ghost at the old Bernardsville library, the murder of a Pluckemin farmer, and the Hall-Mills “Trial of the Century” as we visit Bernardsville, Pluckemin, and the Somerset County Courthouse. Two tours available: 10 am and 2 pm. Tours will leave from the historic Van Horne House, 941 East Main Street, Bridgewater, across from Patriots Ballpark. Free parking is available behind Target and at the ballpark. Reservations are required. Call 732-356-8856 for reservations, or sign up online at www.heritagetrail.org. The cost of the tour is \$20 per person.

Saturday, October 29—“Ellis Island: Past, Present, and Future.” 11 a.m. Presented by John Hnedak, Deputy Superintendent of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. Luncheon will be served after this multimedia presentation. \$15. The Meadows Foundation, Wyckoff-Garretson House, 215 S. Middlebush Rd., Somerset. Tix by reservation only. 732-748-7657.

Saturday, November 5— “The Wreck of the Lady Mary” - 2 p.m. The Meadows Foundation, Wyckoff Garretson House, 215 South Middlebush Road, Somerset, NJ 08873; 732-748-7657. Amy Nutt, Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for the *Star-Ledger*. Tix are \$10.

Thursday, November 17—Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance board meeting, Wyckoff-Garretson House, 215 South Middlebush Road, Middlebush. 1:30-3:00. Follow South Middlebush Road to the Hageman Farm on the right (#209), near the high utility wires. Go a littler farther on the right to the Wyckoff-Garretson.

Saturday, November 19—“**Castles of New Jersey.**” 2 p.m. Although not as numerous or grand as their European counterparts, a surprisingly large number of castles were built in New Jersey a century or more ago. This program by Phil Jaeger will take you on a tour of well-known castles such as Lambert and Kip's castles as well as lesser known ones throughout the state. Many of them still exist, some have been disguised over the years, and others have vanished. \$10. The Meadows Foundation, Wyckoff-Garretson House, 215 S. Middlebush Rd., Somerset. 732-748-7657.

Sunday, December 4—“**Sinterklaas**” - 1–4 p.m. The Meadows Foundation. Due to flood damage, site TBA. Call 732-748-7657.

Sunday, December 11, 2011, 11 am to 4 pm – Rockingham’s Annual Candlelight Holiday House Tours. Docents in period dress will give a specially-themed tour of the historically-decorated house. Music, museum store, light refreshments available. Reservations REQUIRED: 609-683-7132 before Nov. 21/609-683-7136 after Nov. 20. Event is free, but donations are welcome. www.rockingham.net. 84 Laurel Ave., Kingston, NJ.

Saturday, January 21—“**Murder Most Malicious.**” Noted popular NJ historian Tom Ainsworth talks about Ernest Ingenito, Robert Redlin, Carl Cuppolino, Robert Zarinsky, Joseph Kallinger, John List, Howard Unruh, Thomas Tarantino. Is this a baseball roster? Or a real “Murderer’s Row”? How much do you remember about these names? Relive the stories/crimes of eight of New Jersey’s most famous killers. Were these guys from your county? Town? Down the block? What did they do? Where? Why? What happened to them? Learn all the answers – and be prepared to sleep with one eye open in our “Garden State.” Van Liew-Suydam House, 280 South Middlebush Road, Somerset, NJ 08873. 2-4 p.m. Tix are \$10. 732-748-7657.

Saturday, February 18—“**True Freedom Fighters.**” The Meadows marks Black History month with a fascinating program on black soldiers in the Civil War. Van Liew-Suydam House, 280 South Middlebush Road, Somerset, NJ 08873; 732-748-7657. 2-4 p.m. Tix are \$10.

Sunday, February 12—Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance: **George Washington's Birthday Party.** (location to be announced)

Thursday, March 15—Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance **board meeting:** Historic Morven, Stockton Street (Route 206), Princeton, 1:30-3:00 pm

Saturday, March 17 – “**The Legend of the Freedom Quilt.**” Meadows perennial favorite Trish Chambers will do a presentation, performed in period costume, discusses the history, legends and personal stories that make up the rich heritage associated with the Underground Railroad. Explore how African traditions and the use of story cloths documented the history of the tribes and set the stage for the slaves to learn the lessons needed for survival during the arduous journey to freedom. African slave songs and the lessons contained in them are also discussed. Van Liew Suydam House, 280 South Middlebush Road, Somerset, NJ 08873; 732-748-7657. 2-4 p.m. Tix are \$10.

Saturday, April 7—**Bunny Jamboree.** 10-12 p.m. The Meadows Foundation, Van Wickle House, 1289 Easton Avenue, Somerset, NJ 08873; 732-748-7657.

Saturday, April 14 – **Living history event** at the Wyckoff-Garretson House, 215 South Middlebush Road, Middlebush. Details TBA. 732-748-7657.

Thursday, April 19—Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance: **Annual Meeting,** The Raritan Yacht Club, Water Street, Perth Amboy.

Saturday, April 21 – “**The Richard Stockton/Morven Story,**” presented by NJ historian Don Peck. The Meadows Foundation. Due to flood damage, location TBA. 2-4 p.m. Tix are \$10. 732-748-7657

Saturday, April 28—“**Springtime Tea**” - 2-4 p. m. The Meadows Foundation, Van Liew Suydam House, 280 South Middlebush Road, Somerset, NJ 08873; 732-748-7657.

Thursday, May 17—Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance **board meeting:** The Conference House, 298 Satterlee Street, Tottenville, Staten Island, NY 10307; 718-984-6046; info@conferencehouse.org.

RARITAN MILLSTONE HERITAGE ALLIANCE

Membership Contribution

- Membership Fees
- Individual \$35
 - Site \$35
 - Household \$50

- Additional Support Levels
- Benefactor \$1,000
 - Patron \$ 500
 - Sponsor \$ 250
 - Donor \$ 100

Name: _____

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Please return this form with your check

To: Raritan Millstone Heritage Alliance
PO Box 5583
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Thank you!
Visit our website: raritanmillstone.org

Thanks to Steve Russell and our new webmaster, Dinohost, we have an updated, bright, and newsy website. The new address:

www.raritanmillstone.org



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