



Old Sussex Almanack

The Newsletter of Sussex County Historical Society

Published Quarterly

Summer 2013

President's Message

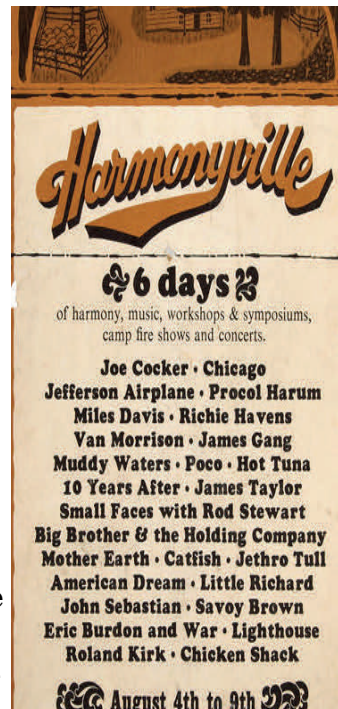
Summer's winding down. Fall can be felt in the evening air. Schools will be opening soon, which usually happens after Labor Day – September 2nd. As president of this Historical Society, I'd like to relate some facts about Labor Day began. This day celebrates the economic and social contributions of workers. It was first nationally recognized in 1894 to placate unionists following the [Pullman Strike](#). With the decline in union membership, the holiday is generally viewed as a time for barbecues and the end of summer vacations.

Through the years the nation gave increasing emphasis to Labor Day. The first governmental recognition came through municipal ordinances passed during 1885 and 1886. From these, a movement developed to secure state legislation. The first state bill was introduced into the New York legislature, but the first to become law was passed by Oregon on February 21, 1887. During the year four more states — Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York — created the Labor Day holiday by legislative enactment. By the end of the decade Connecticut, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania had followed suit. By 1894, 23 other states had adopted the holiday in honor of workers, and on June 28 of that year, Congress passed an act making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and

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WALPACK'S Almost *WOODSTOCK*

1970 was the year of the rock festival. The Spivak brothers of the Electric Factory in Philadelphia attempted to follow the success of Woodstock with the Harmonyville Pop Festival in Walpack. The proposed festival posed a debate among the residents that extended beyond the concert to the counterculture movement of the 1960s. The practical need to acquire a new age and the open mind fueled residents in favor of the festival. The practical reality of the importance of an influx of people and the Tocks Island Dam project in their protests.



posed festival among the residents that extended beyond the counterculture youth. The practical reality of the importance of an influx of people and the Tocks Island Dam project in their protests.

Adults against the approach of the rock concert faced youth and adults in Walpack. A poll taken in 1970 showed that

one hundred percent of people under the age of thirty and twenty nine percent of people over the age of thirty were in favor of the festival. The older residents believed that the youth required outlets for the expression of their own values and customs. The rock concert represented one common outlet. According to Johannes M. Hansen, a father of two children in high school at the time, the rock concert was a part of the new social change and needed the assistance of the community in order to be safe and fun for everyone. Hansen believed that talk about the end of the world in order to frighten people could not control the social change. Some youth cited this negative rhetoric as the cause of the close-minded attitude of the older residents against the concert. According to Jeffrey M. Daly, a local twenty four year old, the outrage at the concert stemmed partially from a "lack of understanding and respect

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Sussex County Historical Society



82 Main Street, P.O. Box 913
Newton, NJ 07860
973-383-6010
www.sussexcountyhistory.org
Email: sussexcountyhs@gmail.com

HOURS

Friday: 9 am-2 pm;
2nd Saturday of the month:
10 am-2 pm; or by appointment

SCHS Officers

President

Peter Chletsos

Vice-President

Nancy Madacsi

Treasurer

James Wright

Recording Secretary

Wayne McCabe

Acting-Corresponding Secretary

Peter Lubrecht

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Society is to promote public knowledge and interest in the history of Sussex County, New Jersey, and surrounding areas, by compiling, publishing and disseminating information; collecting, preserving and studying historical, genealogical and archaeological records, documents, papers and artifacts; maintaining a museum for public exhibits; promoting the preservation and protection of buildings, cemeteries and other sites of historic interest; and cooperating with other organizations of similar interest.

FALL & WINTER PROGRAMS

THE TITANIC—A GREAT BOAT

Tuesday, September 24, 2013 at 7:30 pm

Held at Theater at Sussex County Community College

Author **Charles A. Haas**, President of Titanic
International Society

GRAVEYARDS, GHOSTS & GALLOWS

Saturday, October 26, 2013

Professor **Jeff Williamson** and “Grave Matters”

Graveyard Tours: 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

Presentation: 1:30 pm **The Victorian Way of Death
and what Grave Stones Tell Us.**

AUTHORS' DAY

Saturday, November 30, 2013

10:00 am—4:00 pm

Book signing and sale by local Historical Authors

A Civil War Christmas

Saturday, December 7, 2013 // 10:00 am—3:00 pm

With **President and Mrs. Lincoln**

Musical Entertainment by “Cracked Walnuts”:

11:00 am—1:00 pm

**MEET, GREET AND HAVE YOUR PICTURE TAKEN
WITH THE PRESIDENT**

All Events are at the Sussex County

Historical Society Building

82 Main St. Newton, NJ

(Unless Otherwise Noted)

973-383-6010

Please Call for Reservations

All Events Free to Members

Board of Trustees

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is held every month
on the third Monday. Upcoming meeting dates are:

Monday, September 16 at 7:00 pm

Monday, October 21 at 7:00 pm

Monday, November 18 at 7:00 pm

SCHS Members are Welcome to Attend Trustee Meetings

The Hill Memorial Building

Organization of the Sussex County Historical Society was the crowning achievement of the Sussex County Sesquicentennial celebration (1753-1903). Charter members adopted a constitution and elected officers at a meeting in the Presbyterian Chapel in Newton on Feb. 26, 1904.

Newton contractor Thomas Farrell constructed the Hill Memorial in Renaissance Revival style in 1916, according to design of Henry T. Stephens, a Paterson architect. Joshua Hill, a native of Sussex County, donated \$15,000 for its construction as a home for the Sussex County Historical Society. Dedicated on Founders' Day, June 8, 1917, the Society's new headquarters was named in memory of Joshua's parents, Luther and Abigail (Dildine) Hill, and his uncle, Joseph Price Hill. The Historical Society Building is faced with two shades of tapestry brick furnished by the N. H. Sloan kilns of Pennsylvania. The main entrance is ornamented with a portico and door casings manufactured by the Brick Terra Cotta & Tile Company of Corning, New York. The Hill Memorial was listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places in 1985 as the oldest museum building in the State of New Jersey.

Written by Kevin Wright

Walpack's almost Woodstock, continued from Page 1

for someone with different musical and social tastes". A general public with an open mind would create a peaceful atmosphere in which young people could express themselves.

Practical and more concrete concerns from the opposition of the festival largely overshadowed the cultural concerns of the support. The prospect of thirty thousand to three hundred thousand young people in Walpack concerned local residents deeply. Local institutions could not handle the large amount of people. According to Dr. Wylly, Chief of Staff of Newton Memorial Hospital, the area was not suitable sanitarily. The medical facilities could "barely meet local needs" at that time. Traffic blockage on Old Mine Road, the only access point to the festival site, would interfere with the removal of patients in the event of an emergency. The local infrastructure could not handle such a large population. The close approach of the Tocks Island Dam project intensified the emotional attachment of the residents to their home. The project would transform most of Walpack into the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. According to Mayor Russell Heater of Walpack, many residents rejected the proposed festival in order to "enjoy the last couple of years [they had] here in Walpack in peace".

The result of the court battle over the concert ensured the desired peace of local residents. Normal life in Walpack continued after an injunction by Superior Court Judge Joseph H. Stamler banned the proposed festival. State troopers stationed in the area turned around disappointed youths that came from across the country to see Jefferson Airplane and Joe Cocker. Arguably, the promoters themselves could be blamed entirely for the failure of the proposed concert. It is certain that poor timing and planning on the part of the promoters hindered the Harmonyville Pop Festival greatly. Proper facilities for ticket holders and a date set after the failure of the Tocks Island Dam project could have allowed the notes of electric guitars to echo in the Appalachian Mountains. History showed that nothing interrupted the sound of the wind in the trees on August 4th, 1970.

Article written by a SCHS Intern, Shawn Conroy

Information taken from the Newark Evening News (July 1970 to May 1971)
and the NJ Herald (June-August 1970) in our Mitchell Collection

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the territories. (More information about Labor Day can be found at the website: <http://www.dol.gov/opa/aboutdol/laborday.htm>) So, here's hoping everybody had a wonderful summer and a safe Labor Day celebration.

I encourage each member to volunteer help on one or more of our committees - Programs and Special Events; Building and Grounds (includes the Old Newton Cemetery); Museum; Library & Genealogy; and Membership and Development (includes communications/publicity and technology/website). Presently, we are in **dire** need of a member to manage our *Old Sussex Almanack* - our newsletter. If you are interested, email us at sussex-countyhs@gmail.com or call us at 973-383-6010 with your interested committee and we'll contact you immediately.

I also ask that members support and attend our programs and special events. We have very exciting programs planned for the fall and winter; beginning in the fall with a lecture on **The Titanic - A Great Boat**, then a tour and lecture **Graveyards, Ghosts and Gallows**, and finally, book signings on **Authors' Day**. Additionally, on Saturday, October 12th, the Sussex County Historical Society will participate in the Sussex County Heritage Program sponsored by the Sussex County Arts and Heritage Society. We will highlight those famous Sussex County individuals who have made an impact on the county and the state of New Jersey as well as feature our unique fireplace which was built with rocks and minerals from the county. Finally, this December's Open House features Abraham and Mrs. Lincoln with photographic opportunities.

--Dr. Peter N. Chletsos, President, SCHS

SCHS COMMITTEES

SCHS members are encouraged to get active in the Society. There is such a variety of opportunities that one is sure to capture your interest.

Come on out and volunteer on one or more of our committees -
Nominating; Finance; Programs and Special Events;
Building and Grounds: (includes the Old Newton Cemetery);
Museum; Library & Genealogy;
Membership and Development (includes communications, publicity, technology and website).

If you are interested or want more information, email us at sussexcountyhs@gmail.com,

Or call us at 973-383-6010 with your committee of interest.

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