

# Notes, News ... Nostalgia...



From *M. A. R. C. H.*

November, 2023

## *President's Letter*

The end of the year will be coming soon, and we have already started our Holiday Schedule early. We started off with our Annual Member's Reception in November and one week later the first weekend of our Holiday Schedule. We made history with our first reception in three years and the earliest Holiday weekend. The reception was enjoyed by nearly 40 members and guests. The Holiday weekend was a partial success with a large attendance on Saturday who enjoyed the music of the Skylands Dulcimer String Band. On Sunday three ancestors of the Armstrong family also visited us. We took a break during Thanksgiving and will begin again in December.

The Federal fiscal year runs from October 1<sup>st</sup> thru September 30, which means I have to prepare two annual reports in October and November. The Annual Operations Report includes the number of active volunteers, their work load and the number of work hours. For 2023 we had 20 volunteers down from 40 in 2018 and a total of 2,494 work hours. Tasks included in the total are administration, maintenance, curatorial activities, genealogy, historical research and exhibit preparation. Even though we have fewer volunteers, they have been able to prepare both houses to accept visitors. There are a few drawbacks like less hours open to public, less support for the tours and restricted hours at the Nelden-Roberts Stonehouse.

Due to the increased cost of printing and mailing our newsletter and any special announcements, we would like to send them out through the e-mail system. The NPS staff have been recently receiving them and it seems to work well. We have a few e-mails from some of you, but we need to have them from all of you who have one. Of course, we will honor those who have no e-mail, or those who want it sent, but please accept this new way of receiving your newsletter if you can. Send your e-mail to me at [richhojones@hotmail.com](mailto:richhojones@hotmail.com). We will use the bcc method so that your e-mail is confidential. You will also receive more timely notifications via e-mail.

January 1<sup>st</sup> is the beginning of the new year and the time to send your membership for 2024. I know that several of you have not sent your 2023 membership and perhaps you have decided to not continue it. We will miss you if that is the case. If you continue to support us and want us to continue the work that we do, please do not hesitate sending us your dues.

Volunteering is vital to our success for there are many tasks that need to be all year round. If you can we welcome you with open arms, but if you cannot for any reason, your membership is still very much welcome. Without the additional income, we cannot pay for all of the annual costs to keep the lights on and the doors open.

Thank you all once again for continuing your support, and we look forward to another successful year in 2024. Happy New Year to you all.

Richard Jones, President

## *Our New Website is Finally Activated*

After many years of finding a website that worked for MARCH, we have a new website that was activated this past month. It reads very clearly, moves from page to page with ease, and best of all, we will be able to add to it, and make changes easily. We thank Peggy Soracco for hooking us up with Tyler Dennis. He has been so patient in finding us just what we needed and will continue to work with Rich and Beth as we learn to be the administrators of this site. Check it out – remember, we are just starting out and will be adding to it!

[www.montaguehistorical.org](http://www.montaguehistorical.org)

## *Curator's Corner*

MARCH has received some wonderful artifacts, furniture, linens, books, photos, quilts, and clothing over the last few months. If you venture into the research library, you will see that it is full of things that need to be curated in, as well as many empty boxes of current Christmas display things that are scattered around the FAH. Donna Cameron and I have taken on a huge undertaking of making an index of all the photos we have in our archival boxes. I discovered a set of 4 by 6 inch small index cards from years ago that were done by then curator, Barbara Reichel. She had begun an index of the photos that MARCH had then. They were an excellent start for us to begin adding onto. When someone came in to do research, we had to skim through the big accession book of photos until we found the name or place that they were looking for. Now, it will be much more efficient looking things up on the alphabetical index file. We are almost done with all the different size photos, and will tackle and add our extensive postcard file after the new year.

Beth Jones

## *From the History Corner*

MARCH has so much history both in artifacts, and on paper. In 2023, we published a small booklet with reprints from past newsletters. The title is Montague's Memories and Mementos. I was reading through it recently looking for interesting things that could be included in current newsletters. The following retype was from page 3 of the September, 1992 newsletter. I thought you might be interested in it; I did not know this is where the marker came from. The article is about the wooden cemetery marker that is upstairs in the Military Room with the Civil War items.

**Capt. C.C. Shimer, 15<sup>th</sup> N.J.**

***The Civil War ... In small towns throughout the United States, memorial markers, such as the one ( we have upstairs in the Military Room), were placed in family burial grounds for loved ones killed in battles fought in remote towns and distant valleys across the country.***

***The Shimer name is an old one in Montague. Descendants were here before the Revolutionary War. But, who was Capt. C.C. Shimer? When a National Park Service ranger brought this marker to us after it was uncovered along the Old Mine Road, we did a little research to learn something about this man and his service in the Civil War.***

***The 15<sup>th</sup> Regiment was organized at Flemington in July and August, 1862. The Regiment was mustered into service on August 25<sup>th</sup> and left for Washington D.C. on the 27<sup>th</sup>. It numbered 925 officers and men under the command of Col. Samuel Fowler.***

***The Regiment was composed of ten companies: Three recruited in Sussex County, two in Warren, two in Hunterdon, two in Morris and one in Somerset. Cornelius C. Shimer ( a young man born and raised in Montague, N.J.) was the First Lieutenant of Company I.***

***In September, the Regiment was assigned to the First (Jersey) Brigade, 1st Division, 6<sup>th</sup> Army Corps. It fought with distinction in all the major campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, including Fredericksburg, in December, 1862, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg in the summer of 1863.***

***By 1864 the 15<sup>th</sup> had become a battle-hardened veteran outfit. They were in the thick of the fighting during the Wilderness Campaign in Virginia. On May 12, the 15<sup>th</sup> was one of the lead regiments in the assault on the Bloody Angle of Spotsylvania, among the most famous and tragic incidents of the whole war. In that single day the Union Army suffered more than 6,800 casualties, one of the worst days in military history. The 15<sup>th</sup> N.J. Regiment lost 116 men, killed or mortally wounded, 26% of its compliment. This was the second highest casualty rate of any infantry regiment during the war. One of those killed was Cornelius Shimer, now a captain, who fell in the famous fighting for the confederate entrenchments.***

***In the History of the Fifteenth Regiment New Jersey Volunteers by Alanson A. Haines, Chaplain of the Regiment (Jenkins & Thomas, Printers, New York 1883) Mr. Haines recalls " Captain Cornelius C. Shimer, Company A, was killed near Captain Walker, almost at the same moment and in the same way, being struck by a bullet in the head. A faithful officer, he was prompt in duty and never absent from his place in line."***

## *Upcoming Events ...*

# **COME JOIN US FOR MARCH'S 2023 Old Fashioned Holiday Weekends**

We invite you to come and begin your holiday season early this year in the historic ambiance of Montague, New Jersey. MARCH's Holiday Open House Days will be held this year on November 18th and 19th and December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9th and 10th from 1:00pm – 4:00 pm at the Foster Armstrong House on 320 River Road in Montague, N.J. Five specially decorated rooms on the first floor await you with decorated Christmas trees in each room as well as our historical displays. A sneak preview of our decorated trees this year include a 1960's tree with tinsel, Montague Wild Life, Victorian, Santa's Workshop and a repeat of last years' Farms in Montague tree.

Musical performances this year are all at 2:00 pm in the Keeping Room of the FAH:

November 18<sup>th</sup> – The Skylands Dulcimer Band

December 3<sup>rd</sup> – The Montague Elementary School Bell Choir

December 9<sup>th</sup> – Harmony in Motion.

You don't want to miss these spectacular, specialty, decorated trees and displays this year, thanks to our own resident holiday decorator, Sharon, and our curatorial crew that loves to decorate our museum!

Our gift store will be open each of the opened days from 1pm– 4pm. Only cash or checks are accepted, no credit cards, sorry. The store features hand-made craft items, Christmas tree ornaments, aprons, blankets, Afghans, dish towels, baskets, needle work pictures and other decorations made by our crafters group. A wide variety of local and unusual books from the Tri-State area are also available. There are also a limited number of dinner table items and original postcards from the Rock View Hotel for sale.

The Foster-Armstrong House, circa 1790, is listed on the National Register of Historic Sites and is located on CR521/320 River Road, about 1 mile north of Route 206 and the Milford/Montague Bridge. It is opened to the public as a museum located within the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area on a long-term agreement with the National Park Service.

Come and enjoy the sights and sounds of the holidays!

There is no charge for admission. Donations and new memberships are always welcomed and are used to help us keep our doors open to visitors.

All Open Holiday dates are weather contingent. Check our Face Book page for closings.

MARCH, Montague Association for the Restoration of Community History, PO Box 1101, Montague, NJ 07827. 973-293-3106, a 501(c)(3).

Follow us on FaceBook, MontagueNJHistory

## *Special Thanks to...*

Montague Township for having the lawns mowed at both the FAH and NRS, thank you!  
Sharon Aeberli for her spectacular Montague Christmas displays this year!  
Art and Sharon Aeberli for decorating the outside of the FAH with traditional evergreens.  
Fred Merusi for the large wreath of the main front door of the FAH.  
Mim Carpenter and Joanna Muhlbeck for treating us all to the Harmony in Motion quartet.

## *Condolences...*

To the Aeberli Family on the loss of Art's sister, Rosemary Owen. Many of you might have known her over the years as a longtime Montague person and as the former proprietor of Wine & Roses Restaurant, the current location of Elks Lodge #645, in Port Jervis, NY. With a Master's Degree in Nursing, she worked and retired as a nurse. She leaves a huge whole in her family's hearts.

## 2023 and 2024 Dues (still very reasonable and they help to pay museum expenses!)

Individual	\$10.00	Old Mine Road Supporter	\$100.00
Couples (2 people)	\$15.00	Millville Contributing Supporter	\$250.00
Family	\$20.00	Foster-Armstrong Patron	\$500.00
Tappantown Supporter	\$50.00	Brick House Village Sponsor	\$1,000.00

If you are a renewing member, or if you want to be a new member, please make out your check to M.A.R.C.H., and mail to M.A.R.C.H., PO Box 1101, Montague, N.J. 07827. And of course, you can always contribute more than the suggested amounts to help offset our utility and maintenance bills! Thank you in advance.

### MARCH 2024 Trustees, Officers and Committee Chairs

President & Executive Director	Richard Jones	973-293-3949	Historian	Kathy Hankins	845-856-5065
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	Maureen Kaman	Peggy Brahm			Dan Kavanagh (Oct. 2025)

*Notes, News, & Nostalgia* is generally published quarterly. As newsletter editor, I apologize for the short newsletters this past year. Like many of you, our family, home and volunteer lives were a bit full this year. **Meeting Schedule: Business Meetings generally are held at 1:00 pm on the last Thursday of the month at the FAH. Elections are held in October. Dues are due in January.**

**IF YOU HAVE A RED DOT ON YOUR MAILING ADDRESS LABEL, YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR 2023 DUES**

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