

Brick Township Historical Society June Meeting

At the June 12 meeting of the Brick Township Historical Society at the Herbertsville Firehouse the township historian Gene Donatiello presented a power point program on "Historic Homes of Brick Township."

First Donatiello explained, "the construction of the older homes was 'post and beam,' which was joined together with mortise and tenon joints. There were no saw mills in the area then, so the wood was sawed by hand." Then, he showed pictures of many homes still existing throughout the township. In some cases he had photos of people who lived in the homes and he described their professions and history. Some of those mentioned were:

The home of Joseph Brick was located in Howell Township. At that time Brick did not yet exist. Joseph Brick died in 1847, and Brick Township was incorporated Feb. 15, 1850 from parts of Howell and Dover Twp. Donatiello explained that since "Brick was the owner of the local forge, and his workers were very loyal to him, they proposed the town be named after him."

Richard Burr was the third owner of Butcher's Forge, and his house still stands on Burrsville Rd. which was called Dave Reed Rd. at one time. Now a stretch of connector roadway to enter the Garden State Parkway north bound by entrance 91 is called Dave Reed Rd.

The Hall House on Adamston Rd., built in 1873, was the home of a Civil War veteran named William Hall who did not return home, having been shot in the hand. In the audience for the program was Shirley Cooper, a life long resident of Brick, who, upon seeing the picture of the house, immediately said, "That was my great grandmother's home. Her name was Rebecca, and she died before I was born, but I was in the house many times. After Rebecca died, my grandmother rented the house. It is still standing. It is very different now, an addition is on it." Also in the audience was Cooper's first cousin Barbara Skinner who is a descendent of William and Rebecca as well.

Percy Gant lived in a house on Drum Point Rd. circa 1920, and he became a well known carver of duck decoys. Donatiello said, "He carved the wings on the back in the shape of a heart. I saw one of his decoys was for sale on the internet for \$1,500. U.S. stamps were made with a picture of one of his mallard decoys."

Also on Drum Point Rd. at number 223 is the Theron Johnson home and barn. It is across the street from the Osbornville School, and there was a small store near it. There was a logging sled on the third floor of the barn which was given to the Brick Township Historical Society. Donatiello said, "It is now in our barn at the Havens Homestead Museum." Cooper, who attended Osbornville School, told the group, "We were allowed to go across the street at lunch time and spend our pennies to buy penny candy."

The Mutah and John Patterson House on Drum Point Rd. was called the "Cranberry House" because they grew cranberries. Donatiello told us, "there were many cranberry bogs. Brick was

a major producer of cranberries. It led the county at the turn of the century. The largest field was where Brick Plaza is now, and it was owned by Alonzo Van Note.

The Enoch Robbins House at 1845 Hwy. 88 East was built in 1840 with an addition from 1861.

Donatiello told the group, "there was a community of log cabins called "Laurelton in the Pines" from 1920. They were very crude log cabins built for hunters. There were no inspections at that time, so you could build what you wanted to build. Across from Laurelton in the Pines was Park and Tilford's Chicken Farm. They could incubate 48,000 eggs at one time, and they supplied supermarkets in New York City."

Among the slides shown was a picture of a vertical log cabin built from 1948 to 1950, and it is still on Mantoloking Rd.

The Strickland House at Havens Cove Rd. later became a retreat for nuns from the Archdiocese of Trenton.

The Tilton Herbert Osborn House (1790/1890) stands on Herbertsville Rd. across from the Herbertsville Firehouse and is owned by an a couple who are members of the historical society. It was close to the road and was moved back to its present location in 1974.

The program ended with pictures of the Havens Homestead Museum complex consisting of the museum, the Lizzie Herbert House (from 1790, moved to the property in 2002), a barn, a cranberry shed, a fishing shack and a corn crib. The museum dates back to 1827 with a large addition from 1847.