

Madison Historical Society

Madison, N.J



February 2016

Newsletter

3rd edition 2015-2016

The Madison Historical Society Presents

Rich Rosenthal

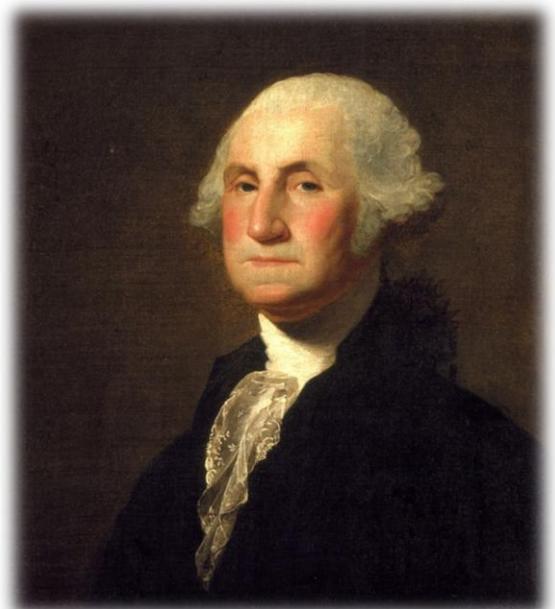
President of the Northern New Jersey American Revolution Roundtable

Speaking on:

“The Precedents of the *Prefident- George Washington”

***Note: In 1789 the “s” was printed as “f”**

**March 15, 2016
Refreshments 7:00 PM
Program 7:15 PM
Chase Room
Madison Public
Library**



Historical Society Officers

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Linda Connors

Vice President

Jim Malcolm

Corresponding Secretary

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Newsletter

Doug Simon

Message from President Linda Connors

Readers of this column know that the Historical Society has dreamed, planned and worked for a Museum of Madison History. Under Susan Simon's leadership the Society worked diligently to establish a museum in the Madison train station. Architectural drawings were produced, members debated long and hard over which of our treasures should be in the museum and how displays would be mounted. After much negotiating with New Jersey Transit, the building's owner, we were reasonably confident that NJT would support our proposal. But ultimately we had to acknowledge that various historic preservation agencies would not permit the one alteration, creating a new interior doorway that would make the museum possible.

About a year ago, we learned of borough interest in renovating the east wing of the Hartley Dodge Memorial and using that space to house a local history museum honoring Mrs. Dodge's original intention. Although the project would depend on grant funding, we, and the borough, were confident that it would be forthcoming. When the grant application was not funded, we heard suggestions of alternate funding strategies and remained hopeful.

Now it appears that the borough must first secure a grant to repair the damaged front plaza, delaying a grant application for the interior for perhaps another year. Proposals for other uses of the space have also been put forward. At present we are trying to get clarification from Council members.

Despite setbacks, the Society remains committed to realizing its dream of a Museum of Madison History.

Becoming George: The George Washington Manuscript Collection at Morristown National Historical Park

Hear how America's favorite founder found his voice, his character, and his reputation through the nib of his pen. February 25, 2016---4:00 to 5:30 PM at Drew University's Rose Memorial Library 2nd floor, Pilling Room (no admission fee). Join Morristown National Historic Park Chief of Cultural Resources, Dr. Jude M. Pfister as he talks about the over 400 Washington manuscripts (including two from Martha) in the park's archival collection. Learn how the collection was put together by organizations during the late 19th and early 20th centuries before being gifted to Morristown NHP.

Washington's papers, rather than clarifying the man, only deepen the mystery of this larger than life figure. Everything from his writing style to the way he crafted his signature evolved along with his many roles during the founding of the United States.

Dr. Pfister will also discuss some of the various attempts to codify Washington's manuscripts since his death in 1799. This story is partly told in his 2014 (McFarland Press) book, *America Writes Its History, The Formation of a National Narrative, 1650-1850*. Dr. Pfister's presentation will also include some special "show-and-tell" items.



Rich Rosenthal

Rich Rosenthal, a retired attorney, is a graduate of Weequahic High School, New York University, majoring in History and Government, Brooklyn Law School, J.D. and L.L.M degrees. He has lectured on numerous historical subjects and serves as president of the North Jersey Civil War Round Table. He is also a board member and one of the founding members, with the pre-eminent New Jersey historian, the late John T. Cunningham, of the North Jersey American Revolution Round Table. He resides in Parsippany with his wife, Harriet. They have two daughters and three grandchildren.

With regard to his presentation to the Madison Historical Society, Mr. Rosenthal states the following:

“When George Washington was about to become the first President under the Constitution of the United States he said, ‘I walk on untrodden ground to shape America.’ And he did! Everything that George Washington did, from the inaugural oath, through the establishment of the U.S. Treasury and its financial system, to the creation of the Coast Guard, cabinet meetings, appointment of ambassadors, appointment of the justices of the Supreme Court, his dealings with Congress, to the time when Washington unilaterally on his own volition, refused to run for a third term for the presidency of the United States was a precedent.”

There can only be one Number One – and George Washington was that Number One, setting the guidelines for all future presidents.

Marta McDowell in April....Put it on your calendar



On April 19th, 2016 Marta McDowell will return to the Madison Historical Society to present a program titled “White House Gardens.” Marta lives, writes and gardens in Chatham, New Jersey and is the author of *Beatrix Potter’s Gardening Life* published in 2013 and *Emily Dickinson’s Gardens* published in 2005. Her garden writing has appeared in a number of publications including *Woman’s Day*, *Fine Gardening* and *The New York Times*. She teaches landscape history and horticulture at the New York Botanical Gardens and has lectured widely both here and in England.





Spotlight on History

The Underground Railroad in New Jersey, Morris County, and Madison

By Doug Simon



The use of the term “Underground Railroad” to denote the system by which American slaves escaped their owners and fled north first appeared around 1830. But slave revolts and escapes go clear back to the first quarter of the 16th Century to a Spanish colony established in what is present day South Carolina. Slave resistance and flight from British colonies of North America goes back to the early 17th Century. The railroad was by necessity secret, a private network of persons and places, sometimes well organized and at other times a little more chaotic. Recent scholarship suggests that between 30,000 and 40,000 were involved, certainly no more than 50,000. The overwhelming majority who fled during the antebellum period remained in the South, moving into urban centers. Most of the slaves who headed north came from the states of Kentucky, Missouri, Delaware, and Maryland. The preponderance were male and traveled alone by any means available to them, e.g. on foot, horseback, wagon, stage coach, train and boat, and most of the time at night.¹

New Jersey

In 1804 New Jersey passed *An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery* and the state soon became one of the key destinations for runaway slaves as well as a key section of the Underground Railroad for those seeking to go further north. The State’s location was crucial, positioned between two of the Railroad’s most active urban centers – Philadelphia and New York City. Most of the fugitives transiting the state came from the coastline states Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia, Maryland and Delaware.² Jersey City was the last major “stop” on the Underground Railroad that ran through New Jersey before moving into New York and further north.³



Harriet Tubman



William Still

Two of the most celebrated figures in the history of the railroad were linked to New Jersey, the legendary Harriet Tubman and William Still. Harriet Tubman worked summers as a hotel worker in Cape May between 1849 and 1852 as a means of earning money to finance her operations guiding fugitive slaves to freedom. Her primary area of activity was the Maryland Eastern Shore.⁴ The other key figure was William Still, a native of New Jersey who is considered the most important Railroad operative in Philadelphia and the author of the book *The Underground Railroad*.⁵

Finally, it should be noted that New Jersey exceeded all other northern states in the establishment of all-black communities that served as sanctuaries for southern slaves. Among those communities were Springtown in Cumberland County, Marshalltown in Salem County, Snow Hill in present-day Lawnside, Camden County, and Timbuctoo in Burlington County.⁶

Morris County

While not one of the “main” routes of the Underground Railroad through New Jersey, Morris County, nevertheless, played an important role in its success. The most active area was in Boonton and Boonton Township which had several stations and the most notable figure in the area was Dr. John Grimes, the editor of Boonton’s first newspaper and a committed abolitionist. He and his family helped many fugitive slaves on their way to Canada. The Grimes family was Quaker and vehemently opposed to slavery. As might be expected, pro-slavery factions were not happy with Grime’s activities and constantly harassed him and his family. He was once arrested for harboring a runaway slave.⁷



The Grimes House in Boonton

Madison



The Boisaubin Manor, Madison

It would be a mistake to claim that the Borough of Madison was a key stop along the Underground Railroad. But it did play a significant role. One of the most active members in the anti-slavery movement was Baxter Sayre who was born in Madison in 1786 and married Elizabeth Kitchell in 1809. Sayre was a deacon in the Presbyterian Church, a zealous Christian and champion of the Temperance and Anti-Slavery reform. He was responsible for sending numerous fugitive slaves to John Grimes in Boonton to continue their journey on the railroad.⁸ Henry Keep was another key figure. Keep owned an umbrella factory in Madison and like Sayre maintained close ties to John Grimes of Boonton.⁹

Madison’s other notable contribution to the Underground Railroad was through the Boisaubin Manor on Treadwell Avenue which is on the National Register of Historic Houses. The house was built around 1790 on 15 acres. The original owner, Vincent Boisaubin, was a nobleman and officer in the body guard of Louis XVI of France. In 1853 the manor was sold to Alfred M. Treadwell who was an avid abolitionist and supporter of the Underground Railroad. One of manor’s porch columns is hollow and contains a stairway which led to a cave and the estate’s barn. During the civil war days, the tunnel was equipped with hollowed alcoves for sleeping and wiring for a telegraph communications system.¹⁰

¹ New Jersey Historical Commission, “Steal Away, Steal Away...”, A Guide to the Underground Railroad in New Jersey. <https://dspace.njstatelib.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10929/24563/h6732002.pdf?sequence=1>

² Ibid

³ Jersey City, Past and Present, “The Underground Railroad in Jersey City, http://www.njcu.edu/programs/jchistory/pages/u_pages/underground_railroad.htm

⁴ Official Web Site For The State of New Jersey, The Underground Railroad, http://www.state.nj.us/nj/about/history/underground_railroad.html

⁵ “Steal Away, Steal Away...”, A Guide to the Underground Railroad in New Jersey.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Lisa Kintish, “The Underground Railroad ran through our towns”, NorthJersey.com. <http://www.northjersey.com/news/the-underground-railroad-ran-through-our-towns-1.267229>

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Richard T. Irwin, *Bibliographical Traces of a Change: New Jersey, Slavery, The Underground Railroad, and Morris County New Jersey*. Historiographies of New Jersey, 2001.

¹⁰ “The Boisaubin House”, N.J. Historical Commission, 1978

Another Successful Wreath Sale

For the tenth straight year the Historical Society has scored success with its annual wreath sale. This year the event was held at the home of Karen Hughes on Madison Ave. and resulted in a net income of roughly \$1400 for the Society activities. Music was provided by The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey. The Society is grateful to the Madison Garden Club, students at Madison High School, and society members who made wreaths as well as The Farm that donated one of their beautiful wreaths.



Ginny Laughlin oversees the holiday spread at the wreath sale.



The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey



Cathie Coultas, principle organizer of the wreath sale and Society President Linda Connors



Noreen McManus (center) with her daughter, Kerry, on her right and her husband, Michael, on her left.

MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY – ITEMS FOR SALE

Books:

<u>CIVIL WAR JOURNAL OF PRIVATE HEYWARD EMMELL</u> , edited by Jim Malcolm	\$55.00
<u>GERALDINE Rockefeller Dodge</u> by Barbara J. Minick	Hardcover \$20.00 Paper \$10.00
<u>HIDDEN NEW JERSEY</u> by Linda J. Barth, Illustrations by Hazel Mitchell	Hardcover \$17.95 Paper \$ 8.95
<u>BOTTLE HILL AND MADISON</u> by William Parkhurst Tuttle	\$30.00
<u>GROWING UP IN THE ROSE CITY</u> by William F. Redmond, II	\$10.00
<u>IMAGES OF AMERICA – MADISON</u> by John T. Cunningham	\$20.00
<u>IMAGES OF AMERICA – CHATHAM TOWNSHIP</u> by John T. Cunningham	\$20.00
<u>MANSIONS OF MORRIS COUNTY</u> by John W. Rae	\$20.00
<u>ST. VINCENT MARTYR PARISH, 200 YEARS OF FAITH</u> by Michael P. Riccards	\$25.00
<u>THE UNCERTAIN REVOLUTION</u> by John T. Cunningham	\$26.95
<u>CROSSROADS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: A GUIDE TO NEW JERSEY'S AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR SITES</u>	\$ 5.00
<u>NEW JERSEY GOES TO WAR: BIOGRAPHIES OF 150 NEW JERSEYANS CAUGHT UP IN THE STRUGGLE OF THE CIVIL WAR</u> edited by Joseph G. Bilby	\$20.00
<u>LINCOLN'S WHITE HOUSE SECRETARY: THE ADVENTUROUS LIFE OF WILLIAM O. STODDARD</u> edited by Harold Holzer	\$39.95

Maps:

1910 ATLAS OF MORRIS COUNTY by A.H. Mueller	Members \$115
MADISON PLATES 3, 4, 5: Approximate size 22" x 31" each	Non members \$125

Miscellaneous:

Postcards of Historic Madison	\$1.00 each or Set of 4 \$3.75
Rose City Tote Bag	\$10.00
Hartley Dodge Memorial Anniversary Note Cards (Pack of 4)	\$3.00
Christmas Ornament: Historic Sayre House	\$10.00
Christmas Ornament: Luke Miller House	\$10.00
	(2 for \$15.00)
2008, 2009, 2012 Madison Photos on Calendar by Joe Mezzacca, Jr.	\$ 1.00

Madison Historical Society DVD's

The War Years, On the Home Front 1940-1955	Black Church History	\$10.00 each
History of Roses in Madison	Luke Miller, Forging History	
Vietnam Oral History Project (with booklet)	Transportation	
Italian History in Madison, Black Church History		
Historic Photos of Madison, 7 different views		\$30.00 each

The Madison Historical Society

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