Historical Society of Haddonfield

"Dedicated to the study and preservation of Haddonfield History"



CANDLELIGHT DINNER & PROGRAM: HISTORY OF THE **BENJAMIN COOPER HOUSE IN CAMDEN: MARCH 19, 2025**

By Dave Stewart

he Benjamin Cooper House has seen a lot director of the Camden Carnegie Renaissance from its spot near the Delaware River on Erie Street in North Camden since being built in 1734. Besides being a residence, it has served as a ferry stop and tavern, a hotel and a "pleasure garden." It managed to (barely) survive the American Revolution, then many

Library. Chris Perks is director of engineering at the South Jersey Port Corporation, president of the board of trustees of the Camden County Historical Society and trustee and former chairman of the New Jersev Historic trust, among other offices.

vears of abandonment and neglect, and finally its greatest depredations in a devastating fire in 2012.

But recent years have shown hope that it can literally rise from the ashes. Jack O'Byrne and Chris Perks have

spearheaded the

The Glass Universe by Dava Sobel Tuesday, March 25 7 pm Virtual

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> First Floor. Greenfield Hall

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Benjamin Cooper House, built in 1734.

efforts for the site to house the American Revolution Museum of Southern New Jersey. These efforts are now likely coming to fruition in time for America's 250th birthday in 2026. Perks and O'Byrne will speak about the challenges faced and the reward of finally opening the house to the public when they address the Historical Society at our annual Candlelight Dinner.

Both O'Byrne and Perks have worn many hats as they have sought to bring this dream to reality. O'Byrne is CEO of a nonprofit management and grant writing consultancy, has managed the Camden Shipyard & Maritime Museum since April 2015, and has served as executive director of the Camden County Historical Society and as executive



The Cooper House was built as a two-story Dutch colonial home with an addition made later in the late 18th century. During the occupation of Philadelphia by the British and Hessian forces in the Revolutionary War, it served as a headquarters for British Lt. Colonel Abercromby, and was a focal point of the battles that brought troops skirmishing in the area and passing through Haddonfield. It served as the last ferry tavern in Camden and

as a saloon in its later years, becoming known as the Old Stone Jug.

The vision of O'Byrne and Perks is similarly varied and stretches far beyond that of a historical site and museum. Efforts continue to be made to bring the site to life once again as a tayern, to tie it into the Camden County LINK Trail and to provide a place for job training for area residents. Ways to support and further information for this project can be found at amrevmuseumsni.com.

Or, even better, join us for an evening of fellowship, education, and fun at the annual Candlelight Dinner. So many things can be saved from neglect by coming together.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

E xciting things are happening at Greenfield Hall and the Historical Society!

Thanks to generous funding from the New Jersey Historic Trust (NJHT) and Camden County, we are thrilled to announce that the long-awaited restoration of Greenfield Hall's roof is underway. The NJHT has awarded us \$150,000, while Camden County has contributed \$50,000 toward this crucial preservation project.

In addition to this major restoration effort, we are grateful to receive a \$5,000 re-grant from Camden County College's Cultural & Heritage Commission to support our general operating expenses. These funds help us continue our mission of preserving and sharing local history.

We are also excited to welcome several new volunteers, who have been working diligently in both

the archives and Greenfield Hall. Some of these dedicated individuals are using our museum software, PastPerfect, to update our collections records—a task that hasn't been completed since 2011! Their work is helping us better organize and preserve historical artifacts. Speaking of history, visitors can now enjoy a fascinating new exhibit at Greenfield Hall: 240 Years of Women's Shoes. This unique display highlights footwear trends and their cultural significance over the centuries.

Beyond our ongoing projects, we are partnering with the Lawnside Historical Society to help them expand their archival digitization, while also slowly planning the next phase of work on the historic Samuel Mickle House. Future

programming and the 2025 Skirmish are also in the works! Please check your email and our website for more upcoming events.

For those interested in getting involved, we encourage you to fill out the volunteer form on our website or contact us via email.

Lastly, don't forget to secure your tickets for our Candlelight Dinner on March 19! This event serves

as our Annual Meeting and promises to be an evening of history, community, and good company.

All the best,

No 343 Haddonfield Historical

Society

Jami B. Luns

PATRICIA LENNON ARCHIVES CENTER NEWS

t PLAC, we are wrapping up our work with Haddonfield Memorial High School's Advanced Placement U.S. History students for another year.

Ten years ago, my predecessor, Dana Dorman, reached out to David Reader about the possibility of using HSH archival materials in his History classes. Dana had found the William "Bull" Reynolds Collection of World War Two letters and realized that these might be a great way for students to experience primary historical sources. Reynolds was HMHS's Principal, in the war years, and he wrote to alumni on active duty. With each letter sent out, the Principal's office included a copy of the *Haddon Higher* (the school newspaper of the time). The collection includes not only Mr. Reynolds's letters and the school newspapers, but also a card index of alumni in the armed services and, crucially, the replies received.

The letters from those serving alumni tell us a lot about their day-to-day concerns, their memories of HMHS,

and their hopes for the future (more than one asks about college applications). But they also include other details that help our understanding of the period and their lives. The letters might bear letterheads specific to a particular military unit, while the envelopes carry postal marks (telling us when and where they were mailed) and maybe even censors' marks. Occasionally, the correspondents mailed photographs, postcards, or holiday cards. The letters really are fascinating documents!

Mr. Reader's students each pick a handwritten letter to transcribe, giving them some experience of reading cursive—still a critical skill for any historian! They then combine what they find in the Reynolds collection with information from newspapers, school yearbooks, and secondary historical **By David Platt**

sources (such as history textbooks and academic articles) for a paper and group presentation.

Every year, I like to ask the students to consider a couple of questions as they work—and write down an answer to one, on a note card, before they leave.

What drew them to a letter? What's the difference between reading these on a screen and in person?

In a world in which the emphasis is increasingly on digitizing original documents and making them available online, I think that the second of these questions is particularly relevant. So, I want to leave you, the readers of this column, with the second of these questions. Please do email me with your thoughts. I'll tell you some of the things that students have told me, over the years, and why I think reading the original paper documents is important, in the *Bulletin*'s next issue.



AP U.S. History students, at work with the Reynolds Collection. Photo courtesy of David Reynolds.

BRYSON C. ARMSTEAD, SR.: HADDONFIELD RESIDENT AND WORLD WAR II VETERAN **By Leah Cedar**

This article is from a student in the Haddonfield Memorial High School's Advanced Placement U.S. History class. It features research conducted through the partnership between HMHS and the Historical Society of Haddonfield's Patricia Lennon Archives Center. (To hear about the partnership from staff archivist, David Platt, see page 3.)

D 21, 1923, in Haddonfield, New Jersey. His father, James, was from Lee Hall, Virginia. His mother, Sadie, was from Raleigh, North Carolina, and worked as a domestic servant for the Stern

🗩 ryson C. Armstead, Sr., was born on December His father, a cement finisher, was later injured in a car accident, leaving him disabled. Despite this setback, his father remained a central figure in the family, contributing to their lives in other ways, such as cooking. Bryson's mother maintained her

family in Haddonfield, who were owners of the *Courier* -Post. Her employer often provided food and essentials for Bryson's family, reflecting the hardships they faced during the Great Depression.

Bryson grew up the voungest of eight siblings

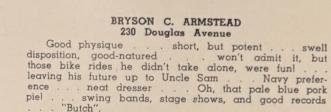
(three girls and five boys) in a household that emphasized resilience and hard work despite limited means. The Armstead family initially lived on Potter Street in Haddonfield, later moving to Douglass Avenue, both within a predominantly African American area known as The Point.

REGISTRATION CARD-(Men born on or after January 1, 1922 and on or before June 30, 192 x 373-A BRYSON CARVEL ARMSTERD. THAT OF LACEMANT IT THE AS AVE. HADDON FILED COMORN N.J. IT HE PLACE AS AVE. HADDON FILED COMORN N.J. IT HE PLACE OF BRETHERE BUT OF THE MATTER TO THE DETRIMET TO ALL BOARD SUBSDICTION. LENE 3 OF BREDERLANDER ADDON FILE DETRIMETED ALL BUT DETRICAL THE PUBLICHOVE MATTER SAME S MRS YARD HADDONFIELD NJ. HADDONFIELD NJ. HADDONFERD Registrant states Barth Certificate is hated 12/1923 The

domestic work across the street from their home. helping sustain the family during challenging times.

Armstead's early life in Haddonfield was marked by segregation and limited opportunities for African Americans. Bryson attended segregated schools, starting at the

Lincoln School, which was staffed by just three teachers. Despite facing challenges like being held back in school, Armstead persevered and graduated from Haddonfield High School in 1943. He was one of the few African Americans in his graduating class, reflecting the significant racial barriers in





HMHS Yearbook

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education and extracurricular activities during that era.

After graduating, Armstead served in the Navy as a Stewards Mate in World War II, experiencing the harsh realities of a segregated military. As an African American soldier, he fought overseas for freedoms that were denied to him and his community at home.

Post-war, he returned to Haddonfield and pursued higher education, earning a master's degree at Temple University on the GI Bill. He married his wife Florence Bawl on July 9, 1946 and his son, Bryson Carvel Armstead, Jr., was born November 14, 1946. They settled in Lawnside, New Jersey, a historically African American community near Haddonfield. He became a teacher and later an administrator in Mount Laurel, Cherry Hill, and Philadelphia. In addition, Armstead's commitment to public service led him to become a councilman in Lawnside.

When Armstead retired, he volunteered extensively, notably with Interfaith Caregivers, assisting elderly residents with transportation and errands. He also served as the President of the Good Samaritan Center which provides

emergency food and clothing to low-income families within Camden County.

Armstead was also deeply involved in preserving and maintaining the Mount Peace Cemetery in Lawnside, a historically significant African American burial ground, where he worked to honor and protect the legacy of those who were interred there.

Bryson C. Armstead, Sr., died in 2014 and was buried at the Harleigh Cemetery which is also known as the Camden County Veterans Cemetery.





Courier-Post, November 1, 1987

OUTREACH COMMITTEE: ON REPARATIVE AND LEGACY DESCRIPTIONS

The term "reparative description" is fairly new in the world of libraries, archives, and museums. One definition, from Yale University Library, explains that it "aims to remediate or contextualize potentially outdated or harmful language used in archival description and to create archival description that is accurate, inclusive, and community-centered."

Reparative description builds on "legacy description"—the explanatory information once written by librarians about books, by archivists about evidential records, and by museum curators about artifacts held in institutional collections. Legacy descriptions accompany resources from the 19th and 20th centuries when specialists—like archivists and museum curators—saw their stewardship role as preserving archives and museum artifacts for use by other specialists.

Our contemporary outlook on welcoming all patrons to publicfunded institutional collections came after the middle of the 20th century. The 1948 United Nation's Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man inspired an international movement that included the right to information. Gathering momentum, the United States passed the Freedom of Information Act in 1967. Archivists and museum curators along with librarians now understood their stewardship role as educational, providing guidance for patrons while also preserving artifacts.

By that time, many legacy descriptions had been in place for a century. The terms and phrases librarians, archivists, and other

By Deborah Garwood information professionals used reflected the world view of their

time and culture. Today people who search for books, consult archives, and visit museums are likely to encounter these source descriptions written by information professionals who lived long ago.

Many Library of Congress Subject Headings to classify books, and archives preserved at U.S. National Archives fall into the category of legacy description. Now work is underway in collaboration with the National Archives' guidelines for reparative description. At HSH, archivist David Platt explained, "As we review and revise, we move the old terms from the public description into a nonpublic part of the record. This retains a record of the historical description and tells a story of the changing social context of the material. Please note that we are not altering the original documents and, in line with standard practice in reparative description, we continue to use titles assigned by a document's original creator."

For more information about libraries and archives engaged in reparative description: Descriptive Notes, Society of American Archivists: sadescription.wordpress.com; Reparative Description and Digitization, National Archives: archives.gov/research/reparative-description; Davis S. Ferriero, 10th Archivist of the United States, National Archives: aotus.blogs.archives.gov/2022/01/18/guiding-principles-for-reparativedescription; Yale Library Reparative Archival Description Working Group: guides.library.yale.edu/reparativearchivalDescription; Princeton University Library: library.princeton.edu/about/library-news/2023/princeton-universitylibrary-advocates-reparative-description-indigenous; Cataloging Lab: cataloginglab.org/2021/02/01/introduction-to-the-cataloging-lab; Cataloging Lab Statements on Bias in Library Description: cataloginglab.org/list-of-statements-on -bias-in-library-and-archives-description.

> Zach Baer Karynna Baresel

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HADDONFIELD Officers Trustees

Term expires

2025

Jessica Lucas

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Colle	ctions - General -	Dianne Snodgrass	Library -	Doug Rauschenberger
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Annual Candlelight Dinner Wednesday, March 19, starting at 6 pm

Join us for our upcoming 102nd Annual Candlelight Dinner on Wednesday, March 19, at Tavistock Country Club. Cocktails start at 6 pm, and our featured speakers starts a little after 7 pm.

The Candlelight Dinner is one of our largest fundraisers, and we hope you will come and enjoy the evening in support the Historical Society of Haddonfield.

All are welcome: You do not need to be a member of HSH to attend.

Speakers Jack O'Byrne and Chris Peaks from the Camden County Historical Society will enlighten us on Camden County's history and its impact on the Revolutionary War. As we plan for 2026 to honor our community's role in the fight for the freedom of our country, Jack and Chris will highlight the significant events that took place within Camden County and Haddonfield that helped tip the outcome of the Revolutionary War. They will also be presenting on the plans for and progress of the Benjamin Cooper House. This historic tavern, located at 75 Erie Street in North Camden, has been referred to as Camden's most historic property and is being turned into a museum. The museum is scheduled to be completed and ready to open in 2026.

David Stewart's article on the cover page highlights this event and our speaker. And you can find more information here: <u>https://amrevmuseumsnj.com/</u> <u>preserving-history</u>.

There is a reservation form inserted into your *Bulletin*. You can also find information about the event and signup on our website Just go to: www.haddonfieldhistory.org.



Benjamin Cooper House

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The nominating committee of Doug Rauschenberger, Linda Armstead, Paul Quintavalle, Matt Falicani, and chair Joan Brong, has proposed the following slate of officers to be approved at the upcoming Candlelight Dinner on March 19, 2025.

OFFICERS

- President: Jessica Lucas
- Vice President: Jen Wilson
- Corresponding Secretary: Raynel Otero
- Recording Secretary: Joan Brong
- Treasurer: Kevin Webb

TRUSTEES

Term expires 2025	Zach Baer Steve DiPilla Paul Quintavalle David Reader
Term expires 2026	Victoria Bollinger Jeff Boogaard Bill Brahms Jim Tassini
Term expires 2027	Linda Armstead Deborah Garwood Mike Gotwols Chris Stone



Membership News

If you have not paid your dues yet please pay them either by check or online at our website. We are happy to check and see if your dues are up to date.

info@haddonfieldhistory.org or (856) 429-7375.

Remember your benefits include:

* A subscription to the BULLETIN.

* Free admittance to general membership meetings and quarterly lectures.

* Free tours of Greenfield Hall and the Don Wallace Tool Gallery.

* Discounts on special events, rentals and 10% off Society Publication. By Karynna Baresel

* Access to the Patricia Lennon Archive Center, when we are open to public; and

* Most importantly, the opportunity to contribute to the preservation and teaching of Haddonfield's rich history, and to the maintenance of the Society's historic buildings, grounds, and collections.

You can submit your membership dues by sending payment in the return envelope, which is provided with your renewal letter, or by completing the form below.

You can also pay your membership online through our website www.haddonfieldhistory.org by clicking the "Support" tab and then clicking on the "Become a Member" tab.

☐ YES! I (we) would	l like to .	JOIN The H	listorical Society!
YES! I (we) would	l like to]	RENEW m	y (our) membership!
The type of membership desir	red is:	Contact Information:	
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THE BULLETIN newsletter prefere			ronic copy"snail mail" copy
nformation filed with the Attorney General conce and the percentage of contributions received by th ng period that were dedicated to the charitable pu Attorney General of the State of NJ by calling 973	he charity durin urpose may be o 3-504-6215 and i	ng the last report- obtained from the	Mail this form & check to: The Historical Society of Haddonfield 343 Kings Highway East Haddonfield, NJ 08033

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP MAINTAIN GARDENS OF GREENFIELD HALL By

weather conditions are immensely consequential for determining the gardening success. The exceptionally favorable rainfall amounts during the winter of 2023-2024 were good for extensive new plantings at the Gardens of Greenfield Hall in December 2023, helping them grow deep roots and establish themselves.

But then the significant drought during the summer of 2024, placed significant stress on the new plantings. Hand watering by our newest Grounds volunteer, Kevin Leckerman, was of great help, assisting them to survive the season's long dry spells.



We are looking forward to many beautiful returns as the plantings leaf, bloom, and otherwise emerge from their winter hibernation.

The plantings and other improvements were made possible by a design provided by Sikora Wells Appel and plantings by Knolltop Nursery. Funding was provided by the insurer of the Previte Estate, in compensation for the temporary use of the Society's property to stage the residence during the remediation of contaminated soils on that property.

Our wish list for 2025 includes recruiting a volunteer team for restorative maintenance on our featured pergola while extensive roof work is underway on Greenfield Hall. We also hope to implement a landscaping and lighting plan for the interior portions of the campus grounds by the fall. Come join us! We could use some helping hands! For more information, contact our grounds chair, Bob Marshall, at rmarshall1514@verizon.net.

You also can sign up to be a garden volunteer through the QR code above or emailing the office at <u>info@haddonfieldhistory.org</u>.

By Bob Marshall





GREENFIELD HALL AND ITS GARDENS ARE AVAILABLE TO RENT

F or your next event keep in mind that the gardens, along with historic Greenfield Hall, are available for rent. Whether it's for your wedding, shower, birthday party, graduation, or even a business luncheon or meeting, we can accommodate your function. We recently updated our Wi-Fi and extended coverage into our gardens.

Greenfield Hall accommodates up to

50 people inside, and 100 people when combining the inside and outside facilities. The house, a mid-19th-century beauty from 1841 has 4 large rooms and a kitchen and two bathrooms. We also have a handicap accessible bathroom in our gardens available for your guests. Please call or email us to inquire about your event. (856) 429-7375 or rentals@haddonfieldhistory.org.



COLLECTIONS UPDATE: WOMEN'S FOOTWEAR EXHIBITION HAS OPENED FOR VIEWING

by Dianne Snodgrass

e welcome visitors to come and view our latest exhibition: "Women's Footwear c. 240 years." Items will be on display through the Skirmish on June 7, 2025. Each pair of shoes featured in the exhibition is accompanied by historical and educational information. The parts of a shoe and a shoe style timeline are among the topics explained on the exhibition data boards. You'll also learn about trades using leather and what a shoe "last" is.



This calamanco slipper, c. 1740, is currently on display at the Historical Society of Haddonfield.

The earliest example on display is from approximately 1740, believed to be a calamanco slipper. Few people today have heard of calamanco slippers, but if you were a well-to -do woman living in British America around the time of the Revolution, you probably owned a pair of them. That's because calamancos were the practical go-to footwear of early American life, like sneaker are today, according to Kimberly Alexander in *What It Means to Be American*, a publication from the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and Arizona State University.

The American-made slippers featured a worsted wool textile—called calamanco—that came from Norfolk, England, and was finished with a glossy, glazed surface created by forcing the cloth through hot rollers, Alexander notes. She adds that calamanco shoes were available in a variety of colors and favored for being warm and durable, as the glazed fabric could be surface cleaned, so it was less likely to be ruined by a little mud or rainy weather.

Sources: Alexander K. The Woolen Shoes That Made Revolutionary-Era Women Feel Patriotic. *What It Means to Be American*. Published Nov. 7, 2019. Accessed Jan. 26, 2025 at www.whatitmeanstobeamerican.org/artifacts/the-woolen-shoesthat-made-revolutionary-era-women-feel-patriotic. Smith Beatty D. The Fashion Shoe: A Timeline of the 20th Century (2018); Atglen, PA: Schiffer Fashion Press; Morse Earle A. Two Centuries of Costume in America (1903); New York: Macmillan Co.





Samples of additional shoes in the exhibition, which includes samples of American women's shoes spanning approximately 240 years.

FROM THE DON WALLACE TOOL CELLAR

A fter you enjoy our ladies shoe exhibit upstairs in the Victorian Parlor step into our basement tool cellar and stop and take a look in the basement at the tool collection of George Washington Day, the left-handed

cobbler who had his shop on Tanner Street in Haddonfield for many years.

George came to Haddonfield in 1886 when he was 17. He started out as an apprentice of

Squire Moss. Seven years later, in 1894, George bought Squire Moss's shoemaking business for \$200.

His shop had a warm pot belly stove, and it became a gathering place for all the Civil War veterans in Haddonfield to gather. George became an expert cobbler with a loveable personality who had a good word and a smile for everyone. George also never used

any machines whatsoever: every shoe was repaired or created by his own hand.

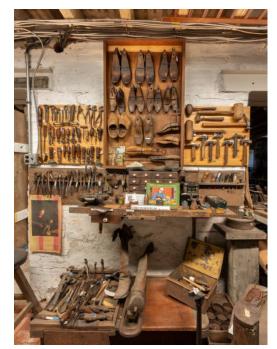
When George died in 1933, his family very generously donated all of his cobbler tools and equipment

to the Historical Society of Haddonfield. At first there was no place to exhibit them, but once Don Wallace and his volunteers created the amazing display space in the cellar, the cobbler equipment of

George Washington Day had a place of prominence in our tool museum.

We are looking for volunteers to help out in the tool cellar. If you have time and want to learn more about our tool collection, please click on the QR code.

by Sarah Tambussi



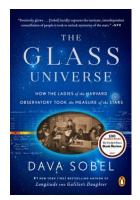


HSH VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB

THE GLASS UNIVERSE BY DAVA SOBEL

We hope you'll join us Tuesday, March 25, at 7 pm for book club. the Harvard Observatory Took the Measure of the Stars.

We'll be discussing *The Glass Universe: How the Ladies of* To sign up, email the office at info@haddonfieldhistory.org.



The Historical Society of Haddonfield

343 Kings Highway East Haddonfield, NJ 08033 Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Bellmawr, NJ

Permit # 1627

Addressee or Current Resident

Preserve our past... Leave a legacy for the future!



Phone: (856) 429-7375 E-mail: info@haddonfieldhistory.org

GREENFIELD HALL HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

ARCHIVES CENTER HOURS

in the *Patrica Lennon Archives Center* Thursday 10:00 am to noon Saturday noon to 3:00pm

SPECIAL HOURS/TOURS BY APPOINTMENT

info@haddonfieldhistory.org (856) 429-7375

Funding provided by the Camden County Cultural and Heritage Commission at Camden County College, the officially designated county history agency of the New Jersey Historical Commission.

www.haddon field history.org