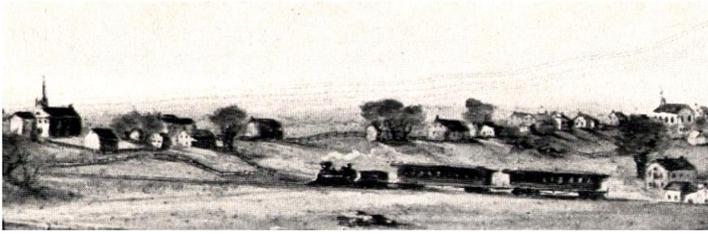


# *The Madison Historical Society*



*The Newsletter*  
*February 2011*

## **Programs Announced for Spring**

### **The Transportation Revolution of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries**



**March 16, 2011                      7:00 PM**  
**Chase Room   Madison Public  
Library**

With the use of PowerPoint, this marvelous “Gallery Walk” program staged by students of Mark De Biasse of Madison High School, will explore the “Transportation Revolution” of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and how it unfolded in New Jersey and impacted the development of our community. Subjects will include roadways, maritime transportation, canals and railroads. Specific attention will be on places like Kings Road, the Black Horse Inn, Madison House, the Morris Canal, the Erie Lackawana Railroad and the Madison Trolley.

### **A Very Disagreeable War: A Civil War Journal**

**April 20, 2011**

**7:00 PM**

**Chase Room**

**Madison Public Library**

An active member of the Civil War Roundtable, speaker **Jim Malcolm** spent many hours transcribing the “Civil War Journal” written by Hayward Emmell who spent three years in combat during the Civil War serving with the 7th Regiment NJ Volunteers. Jim is looking forward to telling us about this amazing record of Emmell’s life during those terrible years.



If you need transportation to our programs, please call 973-377-0722 Ext, 8 or 973-377-2292. Wheelchairs are also available.

## Officers

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*Susan Simon*

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*Cathie Coultas*

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*Dorothy Pietrowski*

*Melda Pike*

*Daniel Seidel*

### Newsletter

*Doug Simon*

## Message From The President

**Susan Simon**

The first month of 2011 brought us some great news. The New Jersey Historical Commission has awarded the Society a grant of \$9,749 for the continuing archaeological work on the Luke Miller forge. I would like to extend a big thank you to Society Vice-President Cathie Coultas for all her work on this project and another big thank you to our Grants Officer, Chris Fillimon who has done so much of the critical paper work for securing both this grant and others as well.

We are nearing the end of our Adopt-A-Picture project. While we feel it has been a terrific success, some work remains to be done as indicated on page 6. One additional critical project that also requires attention is the preservation of a 1932 map depicting the military campaigns of General George Washington in the War for Independence. Because of its condition, the map must be worked on at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia and generally the level of work they perform is not inexpensive. Any contribution you can make to aid in this endeavor would be greatly appreciated.

One of the things the Society is most proud of is the involvement with local youth. Madison High School students working at the Luke Miller site is a prime example. Another example of this outreach will be on display on March 16<sup>th</sup> when Madison High School history students will be presenting their research on the history of transportation in and around the Madison area. We hope to see all of you at the Madison Library for this event.

Finally, on behalf of the Society I am currently doing some research on the Gibbons-Lathrop Families of Madison for the Friends of Mead Hall at Drew University and was wondering if anyone knows of any descendants of the family living in the area. You can contact me at 973-822-2377.



## Award Winner Cathie Coultas

Cathie Coultas, Vice-President of Madison's Historical Society and a member of the Garden Club of Madison, has been given the Zone Historic Preservation Award for 2010 from the Garden Club of America Zone 4. The citation reads, "In recognition of sustained dedication to historical preservation within the community, in particular, the Luke Miller House, a National Historic Register site." Congratulations Cathie!

## Welcome New Members

A big welcome to Society members Laurie Erickson and Michelle and George Greco.

# Society Awarded Grant



*Society President Susan Simon, VP Cathie Coultas, and Trustee and Grant Writer, Chris Fillimon on the Luke Miller property reading the recently awarded grant.*

The Madison Historical Society has been awarded an operating support grant totaling \$9749 from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State. The grant will be used to continue work on the archaeological excavation of the Luke Miller property. This is the third and by far the largest grant given to the society since the project began in 2008.

The panel reviewing the grant proposal included some very complimentary comments: “While the historical question being addressed is limited in scope and historical

importance, the project delivers genuine value and an excellent track record in engaging young people in local history.” The review continues, “The applicant’s ability to build on past achievement, its effective use of partnerships,

and the well-demonstrated evidence of interest and commitment from Madison High School were identified as strengths of the application.”

The project has been led by Dr. Ian C. Burrow of Hunter Research, Inc. in Trenton assisted by history students from Madison High School. The Miller House built sometime between 1730 and 1750, was also referred to as Miller’s Station and served as a hospitality center for officers in the Continental Army during the American Revolution.

## WREATH SALE BIG SUCCESS



The Historical Society’s annual Wreath Sale was a terrific success netting over \$2400 that will be used to supplement the recently awarded grant to continue work at the Luke Miller property and also for the purchase of a much needed new computer. The Society would like to thank the staff at the Masonic Lodge No. 93 for their gracious hosting of the sale. Also, a big thank you to members of the Madison Garden Club and students at Madison High School who supplied many of the decorated wreaths.



## Spotlight on History



# Well Known and Less Known Facts About The Hartley Dodge Memorial

By Doug Simon



With the reopening of the Hartley Dodge Memorial after its multimillion dollar renovation, it seems appropriate to comment on its history. The building was a gift from Geraldine Dodge to the borough in memory of her son, Marcellus Hartley Dodge Jr., who at 22 years of age tragically died in an automobile accident while on vacation in Mogesca, France in August of 1930. It was built between 1932 and 1935 with an estimated cost of \$500,000, that figure falling some \$300,000 short with the project topping out at \$800,000, roughly \$10 million today. The materials used in the building were world class. Granite blocks were shipped in from Lowell, Massachusetts. The Council chamber floor was laid with black Belgium marble and White stone from Colorado. On the second floor are doors made of solid mahogany imported from Honduras. Inside, Mrs. Dodge adorned the halls and rooms with valuable works of art including portraits of George and Martha Washington by American painter Rembrandt Peale, a marble relief sculpture of the Washingtons by John Adams Jackson, an oil painting of John Quincy Adams by George Peter Alexander Healy, a bronze bust of Benjamin Franklin by French sculptor Jean Antoine Houdon, a full standing portrait of Abraham Lincoln by William Karel Frederik Travers, a bronze bust of Lincoln by Max Bachman, and a Marble bust of Napoleon by Auguste Rodin. Also part of this remarkable collection was a carved desk used by Lincoln while he served in the House of Representatives and a tapestry-covered chair made from timbers of the house Lincoln helped build with his father. This admittedly brief historical summary is fairly well known. But there are some aspects of the building and its construction that are perhaps a little less known.

**The Land** - In October of 1933 a British penny dated 1757 was found in the excavation made for the Dodge building site. That provoked interest in the site itself and research indicated that it had been in use since 1715. During the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the land on which the municipal building now stands formed a part of the homestead farm of Benjamin Carter, who was the father of Captain Benjamin Carter of Revolutionary days and the great-great-grandfather of Preston A. Burroughs, whose family name is found on the well known funeral home of Burroughs, Kohr & Dangler.<sup>1</sup> Eventually the land facing Kings Road became the property of Mrs. Dodge and she donated it to Madison in 1922. A parcel of adjoining property on Green Ave. was later donated to the borough by Mrs. James A Webb, completing the site for the municipal building.

**The Election** - In November of 1931 there was a mayoralty election in Madison and just prior to the election Mrs. Dodge's secretary issued a statement which implied that if the Democratic candidate, Frank A. Cook, were elected, she would give a new municipal building. As related in his book, *The Madison Heritage Trail*, Frank J. Esposito notes, "In an overwhelmingly Republican town, Democrat Cook won handily. His opponent, James A. Smith, complained: 'what a price the people of Madison are asked to pay for a municipal building. In order to secure this benefit, they must sacrifice their right to a free choice.' For the public the price seemed small, since both men had administrative talent. The town could not lose no matter who received the office."<sup>2</sup>

**The Time** – In 1932, the first year of construction, Franklin Roosevelt was elected President, Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* was published, the Winter Olympics were held in Lake Placid and the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, Charles Lindbergh’s infant son was kidnapped, Amelia Earhart flew from New York to Ireland, Babe Ruth called his famous home run in the World Series, Adolf Hitler obtained German citizenship by naturalization, and it was the Great Depression. The national unemployment rate in 1932 was 23.6 % and growing worse. Around the building site an eight foot fence was constructed and every morning outside the fence men lined up looking for work. Most accounts put the number at between 80 and 90. But there are some observers who place the number in the hundreds.<sup>3</sup>

**The Shack** - A construction shack was built inside the enclosure and it is said to have served as more than a place to pour over blueprints. It was generally known that racetrack bets were taken here and that tabs on the horses were slipped through the fence to the bookie on the job. Each morning a workman secured a “scratch sheet” from a confederate on the train which he passed around on the construction site so men could place their bets.<sup>4</sup>

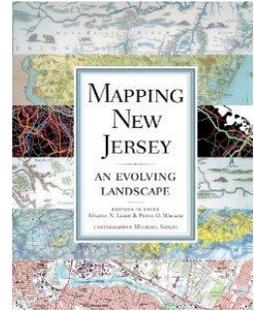
**The Artisans** - In a 1969 article in the *Madison Eagle*, the story is told of a father and son team who were key members of the building’s construction. As a young man, Madison resident John J. Keefe worked on the building with his father William Frances Keefe.<sup>5</sup> The Keefes were the Artisans responsible for among other things, the curving bronze railing and its supports on the central divided staircase.<sup>6</sup> They also worked side by side laying courses of terra cotta block on the wall outside what is now the Council chamber. John Keefe relates the story of near disaster that befell them on the project. At the time the marble staircase was not yet installed and the second floor was reached by ladder. Workman on the wall were ordered to install the block at a faster pace. This was dangerous because the material should be allowed to set for a time before additional courses were added. Keefe’s father, William, warned his son that the wall would inevitably fall on them if they followed orders. He also told his son that at the first hint of a collapse, they were to dive into a mountain of sand that was piled where the marble stairway now is. The wall did indeed collapse and the Keefes dove for the sand, saving themselves from the injury that befell four of their co-workers.<sup>7</sup>

**The Bell** – The colonial cupola atop the Memorial housed a 3000 lb. bell. When the bell was first due to be struck, Mrs. Dodge drove out from her residence in New York for the occasion. But when the scheduled time arrived, 12 noon, there was silence. Nothing happened. As the story goes, Mrs. Dodge was very perturbed and drove away returning to the city before it was discovered that an electrician had inadvertently disconnected the switch that operated the bell.<sup>8</sup>

- 1 Henry W. Pilch, “History of the Dodge Building Site Dates Back to 1700s Old Records Show” *The Madison Eagle*, October 20, 1933.
- 2 Frank J. Esposito, *The Madison Heritage Trail*, Madison Bicentennial Heritage Committee, 1985, p. 161.
- 3 “Local Artisan Reminisces On Building of Dodge,” *Madison Eagle*, Feb. 27, 1969; Esposito, p. 161.
- 4 Ibid, p. 8.
- 5 *Madison Eagle*, April 20, 1972.
- 6 “Local Artisan,” *Eagle*, Feb. 27, 1969, p. 8
- 7 Ibid, p. 8
- 8 Ibid, p. 8

## “19<sup>th</sup> Century New Jersey Maps” at Drew

The Friends of Mead Hall, at Drew University cordially invite the public to a special lecture, “19<sup>th</sup> Century New Jersey in Maps” on Sunday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, at 2 p.m. in Mead Hall, Drew University, 36 Madison Ave., Madison, N.J. The speaker will be **Maxine N. Lurie**, history professor emeritus at Seton Hall and co-editor of the book, *Mapping New Jersey: An Evolving Landscape*. The book will be available for purchase and signing. Those interested in attending this event can consult [www.friendsofmeadhall.org](http://www.friendsofmeadhall.org) for more information.



## Preservation Program Soars

Madison Historical Society’s program to help preserve its collection of valuable pictures and documents continues with great success. Thus far 10 major pieces having been adopted for preservation and reframing.

Our latest thanks go to Noreen McManus who adopted the *Portrait of Madison’s first Mayor Redmond*, to Valley Manor Merchants LLC that adopted the *Map of Morris County: Its History and Progress* and to David and Sylvia Luber who adopted the painting on tin of *The First Madison Academy*.

The following are additional items that need preservation work and if you would like to adopt one of these items or just make a general contribution to the effort, please contact Susan L. Simon at 973-822-2377 or the Society at 973-377-0722 x 8. The cost for preservation and reframing are indicated.



A copy of the Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington originally in the possession of the Callmeyer family of Madison, descendants of the children who greeted Lafayette when he visited the borough in 1825. \$448.50



Mayor S. Q. Gruver with Council and Administrators in 1939. \$79



Drew University Epworth League, 1927. Founded in 1889 in Cleveland, Ohio, the League is a young adult association of the United Methodist Church. \$220

## Annual Dinner

The annual dinner for the Madison Historical Society will take place on May 19, 2011 at 6:00 PM at the Madison Hotel. The program will feature Jerry Vezza, Madison's own extraordinary Jazz Pianist.

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### Madison Historical Society – Items for Sale

#### **Books:**

<u>BOTTLE HILL AND MADISON</u> by William Parkhurst Tuttle	\$30.00
<u>FROM HERE TO HEAVEN</u> by Thomas Sapio	\$14.50
<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>MEMORIES ENTWINED WITH ROSES</u> by Ruth Churchill	\$15.00
<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:**

2010-2011 Pocket Calendar by Madison Historical Society	\$1.00
Postcards of Historic Madison	\$1.00 each or Set of 4 \$3.75
Rose City Tote Bag	\$12.00
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
Madison Historical Society Note Pad with Pen	\$ 2.50
2008, 2009 Madison Photos on Calendar	\$ 5.00

#### **Madison Historical Society DVD's**

The War Years, On the Home Front 1940-1955	\$10.00 each
History of Roses in Madison,	
Vietnam Oral History Project (with booklet),	
Italian History in Madison, Black Church History,	
Luke Miller, Forging History,	
Isaac Gordon – Civil War in N.J.	

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## **The Madison Historical Society**

**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 148, Madison, 07940. Office located in the Local History Center of the Madison Library

**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 10:30 am to 3:30 pm, First Wednesday evening of the month, by appointment only.

**Office Phone:** 973-377-0722 x8

**Contacts:** President Susan Simon: 973-822-2377

**Collection Custodian:** Kate Malcolm: 973-377-3203

**Web:** [www.madisonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.madisonhistoricalsociety.org)

**Email:** [historicalsociety@rosenet.org](mailto:historicalsociety@rosenet.org)