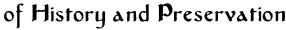
# The CHRONICLE



From the History and Preservation Section of the New Jersey Library Association

Volume 9, No. I Spring 2006

## **H/P Section Conference Programs**

This year's NJLA Conference takes place on April 24-26 at the Ocean Place Resort and Spa in Long Branch, NJ. The History and Preservation Section is sponsoring the following programs:

Tuesday, April 25, 2006 3:30 - 5:20 pm Librarian, Historian, Teacher, Friend.:

A celebration of the life of Charles Cummings (video program).

Wednesday, April 26, 2006 11:30–12:20

The CAPES Program: Unexplored preservation opportunities

Presenters: Elsalyn Palmisano, CAPES Coordinator; Ingrid Bruck, Long Branch Public Library; Joe DaRold, Plainfield Public Library; Frederic C. Pachman, Altschul Medical Library, Monmouth Medical Center and CAPES Consultant; Gary Saretzky, Monmouth County Archives and CAPES Consultant

http://www.state.nj.us/state/history/capes.html

Wednesday, April 26, 2006 2:30-3:20 pm

New Jersey Shipwrecks

Presenter: Margaret Thomas Buchholz, author of *New Jersey Shipwrecks: 350 Years in the Graveyard of the Atlantic, Great Storms of the Jersey Shore* and editor of *Shore Chronicles: Diaries and TravelersTales from the Jersey Shore 1764 – 1955.* 

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### Theft Case Rattles Sedate World of Rare Maps

Thus blared a headline in the 10-3-05 edition of the New York Times, reporting the newest scandal in the world of art and antiquities. The discovery of an X-Acto knife blade on the reading room floor of the Beinecke Library at Yale has led to an investigation that is reaching as far as the British Museum.

Security cameras caught a well-known, international map dealer removing from a book an antique map valued by Yale at \$150,000. "Later that day," The NYTimes article continued, "the police found in his jacket a fragile map that appeared to have been taken from a 17th-century book; others that also appeared to be stolen, worth more than \$700,000, were in his briefcase."

"This is just the tip of the iceberg," W. Graham Arader 3rd, a dealer considered by many to be preeminent in the world of antiquarian maps, said of the New Haven case. Arader, a former trustee of Yale's library system, said he had to nag the university to install the cameras that ultimately helped nab the thief.

### **Letter from the President**

I am taking this newsletter as an opportunity to announce my resignation as President of the History and Preservation Section as I have accepted an archives position in Pennsylvania starting early April. I wish to sincerely thank the entire section for all your wonderful support throughout the past eight months. My time at the helm has been an exciting and valuable experience for me allowing me to consult with New Jersey's most dedicated history and preservation professionals.

The section is well prepared for the NJLA conference in April and I hope that many of you will make a special effort to attend our presentations. This year we are pleased to have New Jersey author Margaret Buckholz talk about her latest book "New Jersey Shipwrecks; 350 Years in the Graveyard of the Atlantic".

Our second presentation will focus on the New Jersey Historic Commission's CAPES program, the Caucus Archival Projects Evaluation Service. Too many institutions are not aware of this invaluable and free program. The conference gives us a perfect opportunity to inform our colleagues that help with their conservation concerns is available. This program has proven invaluable to many libraries, archives, and historical societies.

I hope that I have served the section, its members and mission well and I am confident that future members and boards will continue to provide leadership to New Jersey's historic community. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your President.

Lawrence Greene Morristown and Morris Township Library

## Exploring our Cultural Heritage: MARAC Fall Conference

Greetings to all practioners of archival activity and friends of historical preservation. We are proud to announce that the Mid-Atlantic Archivist community is coming back to the Garden State this fall, from October 26-28. The Westin Governor Morris Hotel in the heart of Morristown, New Jersey will serve as the site for our annual autumn archival-fest. The various planning committees are currently at work with the preparation particulars in anticipation of the big event.

More updates will be forthcoming in the weeks ahead, but if you need further information on MARAC or the conference in the meantime, please feel free to contact Dale Patterson (973) 408-3195 dpatterson@gcah.org or Alan Delozier (973)275-2378 delozial@shu. edu. There is also information available on the MARAC website: http://www.lib.umd.edu/MARAC/

# History and Preservation Section Officer Candidates 2006-2007

#### President

Bruce Bardarik
MLS Rutgers - SCILS 1994
Local History Librarian, Paterson Free
Public Library
Preservation Management Institute
2003

History & Preservation Vice-President 2004-2006, Secretary 2003-2004

#### Vice-President

Joseph Da Rold Archives, Rutgers
Director, Plainfield Public Library
History & Preservation, Member at Large
2005-2006, New Jersey Colle
President 2002-2004 Jersey State Libra

#### Secretary

Lynn Schott MLS Rutgers - SCILS Reference Librarian, Sidney Library at Bergen Community College

#### Member at Large

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Deborah Mercer New Jersey Collections Librarian, New Jersey State Library

Dr. Larry Kroah Trenton Public Library The Chronicle of History and Preservation is published quarterly

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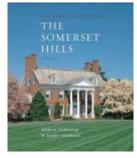
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### Read any good books lately?

By Christine Jochem Morristown and Morris Township Library

Turpin, John K. and Barry W. Thomson. *New Jersey Country Houses–The Somerset Hills, Volume 2.* Mountain Colony Press, 2005.

Sometimes a book is so compelling, so visually pleasing, we cannot help but add it to our collection. In 2004, John Turpin and Barry Thomson published New Jersey Country Houses, a book about the 19th century estates built in the Somerset Hills of northern New Jersey by a burgeoning class of wealthy industrialists and financiers. Many of these houses, constructed



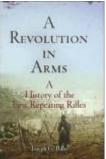
mostly between the 1870s and the Depression, still stand as a testament to the excesses of the nouveau-riche anxious to join the ranks of the upper class. Though some of the estates have long-since been razed for tract homes and townhouses, McMansions and starter-castles, enough remain to provide a glimpse into the life of New Jersey's gentry. Their latest venture, New Jersey Country Houses - The Somerset Hills, Volume 2, again documents the country homes of Somerset and Morris counties, this time focusing on homes built during the years between the first and second world wars.

Perhaps the most important aspect of these books is the new standard they set for local history publications. Both of these large-format books are lavishly illustrated with almost 300 contemporary and vintage color and black & white photographs of the homes as well as profiles of the families of businessmen and celebrities who built or lived in them. They have been carefully researched and edited by architectural historians. Volume two also includes a very useful appendix of prominent architects and land-scape architects who designed these beautiful estates. New Jersey Country Houses - The Somerset Hills, Vols. 1 & 2, are not only historical, social and architectural documents of a special time and place in New Jersey history, they are a visual treat.

## Meeker, Sharon and Robert. *The Changewater Murders:* Library Edition. 2005.

Oh, how we love a good murder mystery! And here in New Jersey, we have some doozies: the hanging of Anton LeBlanc on the Morristown Green for the murders of the Sayre family, the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, the Charles Cullen 'mercy' killings. Adding to our notorious reputation, the husband and wife team of Sharon and Robert Meeker have recently published a library edition of their research into the murders of John Parke, John Castner, Maria Parke Castner and Maria Matilda Castner on the night of May 1, 1843, in Changewater, New Jersey. That these individuals were murdered is indisputable. That two men, Joseph Carter, Jr. and Peter W. Parke, later convicted of and hung for this crime, were guilty of this crime, however, is highly disputed.

More than a decade of research has gone into this book, and if, like Bruno Hauptmann in the Lindbergh case, the innocence of Carter and Parke cannot be irrefutably proven, at least the facts of their case have at last been presented in the impartial light only time can render. The Meekers have painstakingly reproduced maps, documents, photographs and other images in this edition, further drawing readers into this murder mystery. Libraries interested in purchasing a copy of The Changewater Murders may contact the Meekers at 164 Broad Street, Washington, NJ 07882.



Bilby, Joseph G. *A Revolution in Arms: A History of the First Repeating Rifles.* Westholme, 2006.

A Revolution at Arms is a history of the repeating rifle, first used during the Civil War. Benjamin Henry and Christopher Spencer developed the technology, but Oliver Winchester transformed it when he introduced a weapon that revolutionized

warfare. The rapid fire of the repeating rifle allowed soldiers to give up the traditional battle line tactic of fire, drop and reload, required of muzzle-loaded guns which limited a soldier to no more than three shots per minute. Rapid-fire repeating rifles accelerated the pace of warfare and proved far more deadly in their reliability and accuracy. Though not strictly about New Jersey, Bilby's book contains numerous references to New Jersey cavalry and infantry, and their role in the Civil War.

## Congratulations to ...

**Lawrence Greene** will be the new Archives and Special Collections Librarian for the Montgomery County Community College beginning April 3.

## Librarian, Historian, Teacher, Friend... Charles F. Cummings

By Elsalyn Palmisano and Frederic C. Pachman

"Librarian, Historian, Teacher, Friend... Charles F. Cummings; a Celebration of His Life and Legacy" was the title printed on the evening's program for January 18, 2006 at the Newark Public Library. In attendance were hundreds of colleagues, acquaintances and comrades who traveled to Newark on a cold and blustery evening to honor a friend and witness the dedication of the Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center.

Charles F. Cummings, Assistant Director of Special Collections and Statewide Outreach, passed away on December 21 after a brief illness. An employee of the Newark Public Library since 1963, he was recognized as the Newark City Historian, in addition to being the expert source for "everything Newark" and himself a primary resource for "everything New Jersey".

During his tenure at the Newark Public Library he was honored with numerous awards including a key to the city presented by Mayor Sharpe James, the 2005 Public Humanities Award from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, the Genealogical Publishing Company/History Section award from the American Library Association's – Reference and User Services Association in 2003, an Award of Recognition from the New Jersey Historical Commission, and in 2004 the New Jersey History and Preservation Section presented him with our Roger McDonough Librarian's Award.

We last spent an evening with Charles in December at the opening reception for his latest exhibit "Photo by Dorer: American Photographer and New Jersey Chronicler", which he organized and developed with John Cunningham at the Newark Public Library. It would be hard to have a better memory of him than one that included a gathering of friends for a lecture on New Jersey history.

Please join us for a special program and video tribute during the New Jersey Library Association Annual Conference in Long Branch, on Tuesday April 25 from 3:00 – 5:00pm.

# Plainfield Public Library Shares Ideas for Local History Project

Always wanting to add new images to its local history photograph collection of 25,000 images, Plainfield Public Library has secured a small grant from its county arts office to conduct a local history photograph contest. Cash prizes will be awarded, thanks to the Plainfield "Friends." The project is expected to produce 50 to 75 new images of Plainfield, the best of which will be selected by a community jury for inclusion into an exhibit entitled Plainfield in Focus, opening May 20th. The winning photograph will be turned into a color postcard for free distribution by the Chamber of Commerce, the City Hall, and the library. Contest photos will be processed into the library's collection and select images will be digitized for an online exhibit. Library Director Joe Da Rold comments that this type of project can be easily replicated by other libraries. He expects this to become an annual event.

continued from page 1

Jessica Myers, Local History Librarian at the Plainfield Public Library, sheds some interesting light on university procedures:

"Things have certainly changed since I was there. In order to even use the reading room you had to have a card or a letter of introduction as a visiting scholar. Dealers were not EVER allowed to even touch the books! Of course in 1965 it was just up and they were still struggling to form an access policy. Yale staff began their digitization project with their maps because they had such a big problem with theft and access.

"At Sterling where I worked for a summer, there was an interesting list that included all professors and their current topic of research, i.e., 19th Century Photographers in New Jersey or Neurobiology in young primates. If a group of books "went missing" this person was the one who was notified immediately. The theory behind this ostensibly of course that probably the professors had taken them, or if not, then they would be the only ones interested in them being replaced. "At Princeton's Firestone, the Rare Book Librarian held a secret master key to all study carrels on B floor to retrieve such things."

### C.F.C. & Me

April Kane, Woodbridge Public Library

I worked with Charles F. Cummings in the Newark Public Library from 2001-2004. This would turn out to be near the end of his illustrious career. At this point he was a greatly noted and adored figure in the New Jersey History community. I realize that many of Charles' colleagues knew him for a much longer period than I did. Few people, however, had the experience of working with him on a day-to-day basis. I was very fortunate to be able to work with such a distinguished librarian.

Although Charles spent his life in a variety of places – Puerto Rico (his birthplace), Maine, Mississippi, and Tennessee – there is no question that he loved Newark. He devoted his life to enhancing and preserving the collections of the New Jersey Information Center (now known as the Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center). Often I would ask him a simple question such as the location of Clifton Avenue, and I would be treated to an abbreviated history of that part of town. Charles always had a story to tell about a building, a road, or a personality of Newark.

I admired his talent of being able to excitedly talk about any issue regarding Newark, no matter how obscure, with anyone at anytime. Famous individuals such as Philip Roth, Mayor Sharpe James and anthropologist Sherry Ortner contacted the Department but Charles always made time for the student, genealogist or Newarker who simply stopped by with a question. On some days he did not even have time to take his trench coat off and straighten his bow tie before the phone began ringing and the visitors started coming in.

Needless to say this was a very daunting place for a new, young librarian to join. Charles, though, always told me not to worry. He'd often tell me "Kiddo, I was just like you when I was young. I was so shy." I never believed that for a minute. Those of you who knew him know that there's no way Charles was *ever* shy!

And of course, the materials held in the New Jersey Information Center covered topics well beyond Newark. The New Jersey Documents Collection is one of the older, more complete State Depositories in the New Jersey. Also in the collection's holdings are photographs, broadsides and ephemera covering people and places all over New Jersey. Charles was never above taking a matchbook, flyer or a bumper sticker and adding it to a box that contained hundreds of others, gathered through the decades! The indices and morgue files of the now extinct *Newark News* provide information about the whole world.

Charles continued the tradition and built upon the important foundations created by other illustrious Newark Public Librarians, such as Julia Sabine and Miriam Studley, who diligently compiled, noted, edited, and wrote about the diverse historical achievements of Newark and New Jersey. Even Charles did not come to the Newark Public Library as the Charles we knew and now remember: it took him a lifetime to acquire the knowledge and experiences that made him into Charles.

Charles established the Robert Treat Endowment to supplement and care for the priceless collections of the New Jersey Information Center. If you are interested in continuing this essential mission, I would encourage you to make a donation. You can send any contributions to the following address:

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C/O The Development Department
Newark Public Library
PO Box 630
Newark, NJ 07101-0630
Please make checks payable to The Newark Public Library – Robert Treat Endowment