

Bergen County Executive
James J. Tedesco III
The Board of Chosen Freeholders
The Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs
The Bergen County Historic Preservation Advisory Board
present the

2015 BERGEN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

CELEBRATING HISTORIC PRESERVATION
IN BERGEN COUNTY, N.J.



7 p.m., May 7, 2015

Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church
120 Atlantic Street
Hackensack, New Jersey

Welcome!

Cynthia L. Forster

Director, Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs

Bill Comery

Acting Director, Bergen County Department of Parks

★★★★★★★

Opening remarks and reading of the Historic Preservation Month Proclamation

HONORED GUESTS

James J. Tedesco III, County Executive

BERGEN COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS:

Joan Voss, Chairwoman

Steven A. Tanelli, Vice Chairman

John A. Felice, Chairman Pro Tempore

Maura R. DeNicola, David L. Ganz, Thomas J. Sullivan Jr., Tracy Silna Zur

John S. Hogan, Bergen County Clerk

Senator Loretta Weinberg

Assemblywoman Holly Shepisi

Mayor John P. Labrosse, Jr., Hackensack

Presiding Elder George W. Maize III, Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church

★★★★★★★

Bruce A. Barton, A.I.A.

Chairman, Historic Preservation Advisory Board

William J. Martin, A.I.A.

Historic Preservation Advisory Board

**Presentation of the
2015 Bergen County Historic Preservation Awards**

★★★★★★★

Please join us after the ceremony for a reception.

2015 BERGEN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

“Preserve the past. Change the future.”
World Monument Fund

YOUTH PRESERVATION PROJECT

This category is for individuals or groups, of high school age or younger, who have completed projects that contribute to historic preservation in Bergen County.

◆ **Matthew C. Yale, Westwood** ◆ **Restoration of “Old Well” in Westwood Veterans’ Memorial Park**

Project Team: Matthew C. Yale; Members & leaders of Westwood Boy Scout Troop 47; Westwood Heritage Society - Jim Gines, Robert Hibler, George Mulhauser, Linda Salib, Lee Tremble; Westwood - Mayor John Birkner, Councilman Peter Grefrath, Rick Woods, Public Works Dept.; Kuiken Brothers; Emerson Fence.



Veterans’ Memorial Park in Westwood contains many important landmarks including the train station/Westwood Museum, the band stand, a World War I trench mortar, and the 9-11 monument. Matthew C. Yale noticed that in back of the station stood an old fieldstone well, that had been capped and had tree growing out of it.

In late 2013, he met with Lee Tremble and Jim Gines of the Westwood Heritage Society, and was able to learn more about the history of the “old well.” The well dates back to the early 1900s when most of the area now comprising the park

(Left) Matthew Yale and finished “Old Well” project.

PHOTOGRAPHS

We ask that you refrain from taking photographs during the ceremony as it causes problems and delays for the professional photographer. All photographs will be made available upon request to Janet Strom, 201-336-7267 or jstrom@co.bergen.nj.us, and will also be on the County website: www.co.bergen.nj.us

was private homes, including the Onderdonk family who owned the well. The town purchased the land and moved many of the homes to new locations. The well remained and was used as a source of water for park visitors. From an old postcard he learned that a roof structure once stood over the well, but eventually decayed and was removed.

For his Eagle Scout project he wanted to make the well “look more like the historical artifact that it truly is,” by recreating the roof structure and creating a sign with the old picture of the well and explaining its history. He consulted with local architect William Martin who created a design similar to the original structure, but made with more durable wood.

Next he gathered the needed materials with the help of the Kuiken Brothers, Emerson Fence, and donations. In June 2014 he and his fellow scouts with supervising adult leaders constructed and installed the new roof structure. With the help of the Heritage Society and Enviro Signs an informative sign now stands next to the well. Thanks to Matthew’s leadership and the help of many others a part of Westwood’s early history has been preserved.



(Above) Before - with tree growing out of the “Old Well.”
(Below) c.1920s postcard.



(Above) Installation of posts.

Left to right are: Dan Atkins, Bob Maul, Matthew Yale, Pranav Muthuraman, Shaun Maul and Cochi Ho.

(Right) Artifacts discovered during project include various glass bottles, coal, pieces of a vase, and a bucket handle.

“Preservationists are the only people in the world who are invariably confirmed in their wisdom after the fact....”

John Kenneth Galbraith

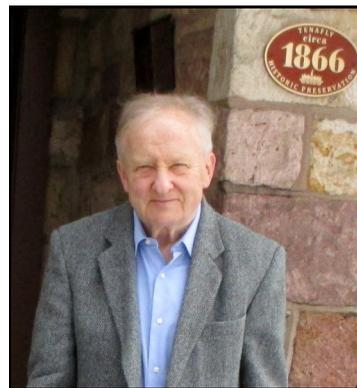
For Preservation Leadership

This category includes individuals, groups, and governmental agencies exhibiting outstanding leadership that has contributed, or continues to contribute, to historic preservation in Bergen County.

◆ David R. Wall ◆ Tenaflly

David R. Wall is the current Chair of the Tenaflly Historic Preservation Commission. It's an important leadership position in any city, borough, or town because the HPC has to foster preservation through educating the public, testify before the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment, interacting with the code enforcement officials regarding historic sites, participating in drafting Master Plan updates, and proposing sites to the Council and Mayor for designation as historic. In Tenaflly, he learned under knowledgeable mentors including Virginia T. Mosley, Kevin Tremble, and Donald Merino, who helped establish the Commission and establish a strong tradition that made Tenaflly a local leader in this field.

But Dave Wall did not just hold the position and do his job; he exercised leadership in important ways. In 1998 his *History of Tenaflly* was published, establishing the historical context for Tenaflly's many historic buildings and leading citizens. Two years earlier he had written a small book, *Mount Carmel Remembers*, which among other things remembers the parish's fallen soldiers, and in 2009, he published an article on the parish cemetery in which he revealed the resting places of celebrities from bygone eras. In 2004 he got Camp Merritt into the *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*. His meticulous research uncovered a Tenaflly Civil War soldier, Pvt. James Blauvelt DeMott, and through his efforts a memorial plaque now hangs in Huyler Park. Dave's work supported the "colorful and specific" *Tenaflly Design Guidelines for Landmarks and Historic Districts*, published in 2012 and prepared by long-time Bergen County architectural historian T. Robins Brown. He proposed the "Circa" signs now sprinkled around Tenaflly, educating pedestrians and drivers about the approximate dates of houses paid for by the owners of the properties. These further the cause of historic preservation in people's everyday lives. He and the HPC successfully fought a cell phone tower that would have had a negative impact on an historic district. He helped fight a case in which the New Jersey Supreme Court confirmed the right of a municipality to require a "Certificate of Appropriateness" for a significant



David R. Wall

change to an historic site, in this case a well-known statue in front of a landmark residence. Dave is now a key member of a committee planning to erect monuments to both Elizabeth Cady Stanton, whose National Historic Landmark house is one of the most important historic sites in the county and New Jersey, and her friend, visitor, and fellow suffragist leader, Susan B. Anthony. Stanton's 200th birthday is approaching, as is the 100th anniversary of the Constitutional amendment granting Women's Suffrage.

Dave has led walking and bus tours and presented slide shows. He has lectured on St. Cecilia's Church in Englewood, and indeed, his work has benefitted all the towns of the Northern Valley, not just Tenafly.



David Wall at Tenafly's Huyler Park Veterans' Memorial.

"It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future."

William Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* [1988]

FOR PRESERVATION EDUCATION

This category recognizes specific programs, educational institutions, authors, publishers and groups displaying excellence in increasing the public's knowledge of historic preservation, Bergen County's architecture and historic sites.

◆ **Sunset Park: a WWI Living Memorial** ◆ **Eileen Davis and Janet Mariano Merli, Rutherford**

Project Team: Eileen Davis & Janet Mariano Merli, and citizens of Rutherford.

A few years after the tragedy of WWI, the Borough of Rutherford set aside a small hillside park to be a "Living Memorial" to commemorate the service Rutherford citizens had provided in the World War. Sunset Park was planned to be contained by a perimeter of newly planted trees beneath which were placed small stone monuments with the names of WWI service people. Over the next 90 years this peaceful park lost much of its relevance as a war memorial.

In 2008 the neighboring Davis family began to revive this historic park. Eileen Davis encouraged her sons to produce projects that identified the buried or



Janet Mariano Merli & Eileen Davis



Rutherford's Sunset Park
WWI Walk of Remembrance
A Living Memorial

missing stone monuments and to discover additional service people to be memorialized on a new stone walkway designed for the park. Through their projects both boys attained Eagle Scout status.

Last year, when the WWI Centennial Committee appointed by Rutherford's Mayor Joseph DeSalvo reached out to Eileen Davis to involve Sunset Park, she knew there was even more life for this "Living Memorial." Eileen considered many concepts, then burrowed into research and sent out letters for help. One letter she received back was from Janet Mariano Merli, a woman who had six relatives who served in WWI.

Eileen and Janet just clicked. Janet understood the huge task at hand and added focus and management skills to the project as she began her own research. Together they searched official records, street directories, genealogies, naturalization logs, high school yearbooks, church records, library and museum holdings. They enlisted Girl Scout Troop 4041 to research Rutherford women who served during the WWI. Together they produced a list of Rutherford wartime addresses and the birth dates for over 500 service people. Physically their concepts evolved into a long running wall displaying rich panels of newly discovered information on Rutherfordians who served in the war. The display wall would be temporarily erected in Sunset Park and centered around Veterans Day, 2014.

But preserving and enhancing Sunset Park as a "Living Memorial" only with information just wasn't enough for Eileen and Janet. They wanted to connect service people to the 1917 homes they lived in to the houses that remained today. So the day before the display went up in Sunset Park, ten cars of volunteers spread throughout the borough with 500 carnations each attached with a note with a service person's name, 1917 physical address and an invitation to view the wall of information. Volunteers dropped off the carnations and notes to each house where a WWI veteran had lived. Now each existing house had a specific connection to the war.

The result was overwhelming. People received the curious carnations and visited Sunset Park eager to learn about the people that they never knew who lived in their house and who had sacrificed years of service in the "War to End All Wars"



One of the original 47 Stone Markers in Sunset Park



Renewed walkway with additional names of WWI Service People

*“These old buildings do not belong to us only, they belong to our forefathers
and they will belong to our descendants unless we play them false.
They are not in any sense our own property to do as we like with them.
We are only trustees for those that come after us.”*

William Morris

PRESERVATION OF A STRUCTURE, OBJECT OR SITE

For the successful preservation/restoration of a structure, object or site on its original site, such as a bridge, cemetery or historic landscape, or for the successful preservation of an archaeological site.

◆ Captain William Tyson House ◆ Rochelle Park

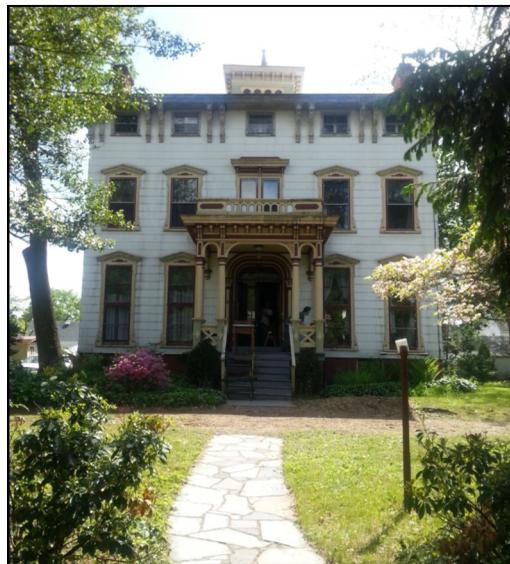
Project Team: Rochelle Park Township Committee: Mayor Jayme Ouellette, Deputy Mayor Michael Kazimir, Jay Kovalcik, Frank Valenzuela, Joseph Scarpa and Township Administrator Robert Davidson.

This award is being presented to the governing body of Rochelle Park for its acquisition and ultimate preservation of the Captain William Tyson House. We applaud the efforts of Mayor Jayme Ouellette and the entire governing body for preventing the demolition of this impressive building and the property’s subdivision.

As town councils and especially finance chairs know, there is a fiduciary responsibility to the tax payers of any town. However, preserving this Rochelle Park property for future generations to use and enjoy was the right thing to do.

This outstanding 19th Italianate villa was built c.1863-1864 for Capt. William Tyson of New York City, an owner of sailing ships. This was the time of America’s brutal Civil War. 1863 was witness to the battles at Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Vicksburg and Chattanooga, and President Lincoln delivering his famous Gettysburg address on Nov. 19.

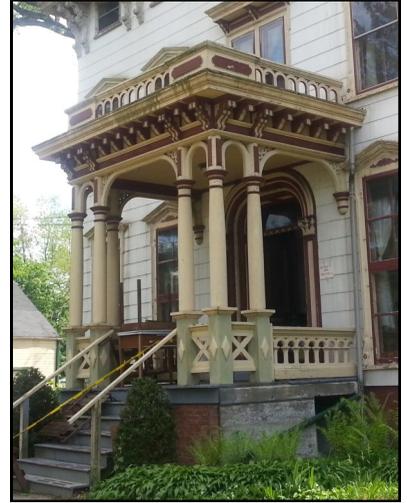
This is a captain’s house, with its central cupola, “widow’s walk,” and ornate entrance porch on a rise of land. Entering it is taking a step back in time. The interior is amazingly unaltered: natural gas chandeliers that were never electro-fitted hang from plaster medallions, original gas sconces are mounted high on the walls, large Eastlake-style pier mirrors and



floor-to-ceiling windows allow in natural light. A shed that once contained the house's own gas supply is still on the property.

Upon Capt. Tyson's death in 1884, the property was sold at public auction and was purchased by Conrad Stein of New York City who retained ownership until 1949. Each family of owners has maintained this grand villa's architectural integrity. Now, 150 years later, it is one of Bergen County's most beautiful 18th century Italianate houses.

We commend Rochelle Park's Mayor and Council for their commitment to historic preservation and their vision for adapting this 19th house to a 21st century town's needs. How much better than reading yet another obituary bemoaning the loss of one more Bergen County historic building that could have been saved if only they had the vision possessed by Rochelle Park's leaders.



*“The past is not dead history,
it is the living material out of which man makes himself and builds the future...”*
René Dubos

FOR PRESERVATION EDUCATION

This category recognizes specific programs, educational institutions, authors, publishers and groups displaying excellence in increasing the public's knowledge of historic preservation, Bergen County's architecture and historic sites.

◆ **The Fritz Behnke Historical Museum** ◆ **Paramus**

Project Team: Fred Behnke, owner; Bill Leaver, Director.

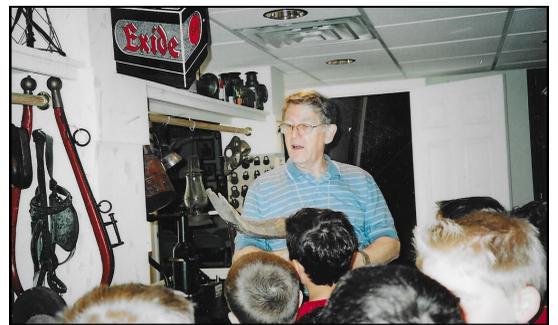
The Fritz Behnke Museum opened in the fall of 2003 and was named after the Borough Historian, Fritz Behnke. It is a powerhouse of exhibits educating the public about Paramus from the days that the Lenni-Lenape Indians settled by the Saddle River, the history surrounding the Old Paramus Reformed Church and the region's involvement in the Revolutionary War, the early 20th century when the area was a 100% farming community, to the post World War II suburban housing developments. We learn that the west side of Paramus was mostly celery farms due to the unique land called “muck” and that the east side farmers grew other types of vegetables. Photos and maps teach us about its transformation after WWII when farmers sold their land to developers and housing was built for soldiers returning from the war. We learn about the history of retail de-

velopment along the two highways running through the community.

The museum fosters great pride in the community for visiting schoolchildren and adults. We are taken down the dirt roads and learn of important landmarks on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places still standing, including houses on Paramus Road and the Easton Tower from the George Easton Estate. Many lost landmarks are shown through photo exhibits. They illustrate lost farms and farmhouses, the old gristmill, the airport on Passaic Street, the trolley line running from Paterson to the Hudson River and others. The museum is arranged by rooms with themes dating from 100 years ago. The one room schoolhouse starts the tour with the very desk of Mr. Fritz Behnke. We see laundry implements and a kitchen from the early 20th century, a parlor with historic phonographs, an organ, early radios and period furniture. Children's toys of the past are beautifully displayed. The lower level has large farm machinery and hand tools.

There are exhibits of the Paramus Police and Fire Departments, the history of Bergen Pines County Hospital and the original 1950's open shopping malls that brought and still bring so many people to Paramus from far and wide.

Fritz Behnke's family farm was sold and developed many years ago but tucked among residential development the family barn still stands. This barn is where the museum really started as he and his family invited schoolchildren to view the life his family lived as farmers. Thanks are due to Fritz Behnke for saving the historic artifacts of Paramus and for putting all his knowledge in a book entitled *Paramus: The Way We Were 1922-1960*. Thanks are due to his family, trustees of the museum and volunteers for increasing the awareness of the history of Paramus.



Top: Fritz Behnke Museum

Above: Bill Leaver, museum director, with school group.

Left: Behnke Museum exhibit.

"He who loves an old house never loves in vain."

Isabel La Howe Conant

FOR PRESERVATION OR RESTORATION PROJECT

For the successful rehabilitation or restoration of buildings for original or museum use.

◆ Resolvert Nagel House & Farm Complex/Metropolitan Farm ◆ Closter

Project Team: Frank and Lori Vastano, owners; Frank Vastano, Jr.; Douglas Radick, architect.

The Resolvert Nagel House at 119 Hickory Lane, Closter is noted as the oldest continually used farmhouse in the State of New Jersey. The house is one of only a very small number of intact pre-Revolutionary War houses in Bergen County and one of an even smaller number of first period settlement houses with construction starting in 1710. The house retains the majority of its original early 18th century fabric and significant features including a rare “lozenge” stone to the west of the present entrance door. The use of lozenge stones can be linked to the heraldry and guild marker traditions of the Netherlands and evidence suggests this flat stone at one time may have been painted with a design associated with the Nagel family. The painting of lozenges was the primary Netherlands tradition.



Restored Resolvert Nagle House.

Restoration work at the property has included the reroofing of the barns and interior work at those structures, as well as required structural repairs and the restoration of the doors. In 2012, repointing was done on the exterior of the original stone house. In 2014, due to leaks, the roof and chimneys were restored, the ice house roof was replaced and the building painted. The relocation of electrical and cable lines was undertaken providing a more historic vista of the home and other structures within the farm complex have also been painted and a long white wooden fence has been installed.

Today we are celebrating the work undertaken by the current owners, Frank and Lori Vastano to restore this historic structure and its associated farm complex. Following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties,



the owners have shown a significant commitment to preserve this historic property which still functions as a farm today allowing public access to the site for all to see their good works.



(Far right) Restored barn.

(Right) The Nagle House Farm Complex is *Preserved Bergen County Farmland*.

*"A country without a past has the emptiness of a barren continent;
and a city without old buildings is like a man without a memory."*

Graeme Shankland

FOR PRESERVATION EDUCATION

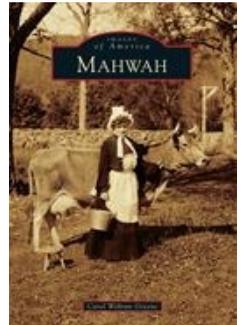
This category recognizes specific programs, educational institutions, authors, publishers and groups displaying excellence in increasing the public's knowledge of historic preservation, Bergen County's architecture and historic sites.

◆ "Images of America – Mahwah" ◆ Carol Greene, author

Project Team: Carol Greene

For many people, the familiar brown and yellowish cover of an Arcadia book begins a journey into historic preservation. These published collections of photographs and captions are inducements to understand the underlying history of the structures revealed in their pages. When coupled with exceptional research and writing, these concise books become extremely valuable in the effort to educate communities to their history and culture.

Many of us have been fortunate to have witnessed Carol Greene's exceptional depth and passion in her research and writing. She has participated in historic preservation and history writing from the granular to the great and has produced rich texts on Mahwah and its surrounding area. *Images of America: Mahwah* is no exception. As expected, Carol's encyclopedic knowledge really





Carol W. Greene

shines in her chapter openers and in concise captioning. Carol's book never speaks down to its reader. Rather it exposes lavish images that roll through the many waves of change Mahwah has endured in its 300-year history. Contrasting images showing then and now clearly illustrate these changes; many of these images also point out how the spirit of preservation has taken hold within the borough. A number of these photos, obtained from the Mahwah Museum and Mahwah Library collections, have never before been published. Supplements came from private collections and the author's own treasury. This is a literary project for all levels of interest in historic preservation.

Carol Greene has long been a leader in historic preservation in Mahwah and the surrounding community. A long-time resident of Mahwah, she is the Municipal Historian and Township Archivist, on the township's Historic Preservation Commission and co-founder of the Mahwah Museum Society. She was a member of the New Jersey Historic Trust's Board of Trustees for almost ten years where she co-chaired the State Grant Program, and chaired the Emergency Grants & Loans and Historic Easements Committees. In 2007 she was given the Bergen County Claire Tholl Award in recognition of her life-long outstanding contribution and dedication to historic preservation in Bergen County.

"Great architecture has only two natural enemies: water and stupid men."

Richard Nickel

*"It is not rational to consider a building to be sustainable
when its parts reach a landfill in a generation or two."*

Stephen A. Mouzon, "The Original Green, Unlocking the Mystery of True Sustainability"

FOR ADAPTIVE USE

This category of preservation is for the successful rehabilitation of a building for a changed use while maintaining the original architectural integrity.

◆ The Darlington Schoolhouse ◆ Mahwah

Project Team: Edward Goodell, NY-NJ Trail Conference Ex. Dir.; NJ-NY Trail Conference Volunteers; Vincent LaBarbiera, contractor; Colgan Perry Lawler Aurell Architects; Conklin Associates Engineers; Farewell Mills Gatsch Architects; Carol Greene, Mahwah Historian; Mahwah Mayors and Councils; and many, many others.

The 1891 Darlington Schoolhouse, already adaptively and actively used by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, may be the project that exhibited the most progress from start

to finish in the history of Bergen County and New Jersey State grants. Newport architect Dudley Newton designed it as a masterpiece from the start. The generous budget invited him to combine high quality materials with a dramatic, eclectic sense of style in a building that would combine the educational purposes of a school on the first floor with the religious purposes of the local Reformed Church on the second floor. Newton melded the Richardson Romanesque style, with broad, dramatic, red sandstone arches for the entrance and for the two large side bay windows of the fieldstone ground floor with a shingle-style upper story and a combination of stick-style timbers and delicate Swiss Chalet cutouts for the front gable and a roof featuring both a handsome belfry and a cupola. The Gilded Age had put public-spirited hotel baron Alfred B. Darling and sugar baron Theodore A. Havemeyer in a position to sponsor this building in which they spared no expense.

But by 2004, the building had become, with no exaggeration, a derelict headed for demolition. The stick-style trusses of the roof structure had loosened enough to threaten the side walls, and both the exterior and interior told a sad story of long-term deterioration, and abandonment. That same year, Mahwah and the Trail Conference rode to the rescue. A Bergen County Open Space Trust grant helped Mahwah acquire the property, and soon after, the key first step in a project of this significance, a Preservation Plan, was prepared. It took 11 years and counting to restore the original building to its former glory. In fact, a remarkably sympathetic addition that imitates in shingles the original stone arches has increased that glory and once again directed the much larger site toward



(Above) Restored
Darlington Schoolhouse,
April 7 2015.
(Right) Before restoration
2009.



Ribbon cutting opening April 7, 2015

furthering the public good.

This classic public-private partnership took the cooperation of the Trail Conference, an incredibly effective organization that will celebrate its 100-year anniversary in its new home in another six years, Mahwah, Bergen County grants, New Jersey Historic Trust grants, a great preservation architectural firm, local historian Carol Greene, private donors, an effective board, an indefatigable and visionary leader, Edward Goodell, and an army of volunteers ranging from lawyers to trailblazers to bring this architectural masterpiece back to life and render it both functional and once again beautiful.

Special interior touches include the restoration of the schoolhouse paneling, the blackboards, the magnificent staircases, the Eastlake brass hardware on the chestnut doors, large, open spaces for public meetings and volunteer work within facilities that make it a pleasure to come to work every day. As a result, the Trail Conference is in a position to pursue its noble mission, connecting people with nature. Along with the Darlington Schoolhouse itself, which deserves its place on the National Register of Historic Places, the stream that runs around it and the woods beyond represent what the organization is all about.

“[Grassroots preservation] is empty pocketbooks, bloody fingers, and private satisfactions. It is long hours, hard work, and no pay. It is a personal dialogue with ghosts. It is a face-to-face confrontation with the past... It is an equation between self and history so powerful that it makes us lie down in front of bulldozers, raise toppled statues, salvage old boats.”

Peter Neil, 1991 National Historic Preservation Conference

FOR PRESERVATION EDUCATION

This category recognizes specific programs, educational institutions, authors, publishers and groups displaying excellence in increasing the public’s knowledge of historic preservation, Bergen County’s architecture and historic sites.

◆ “The Champion: A Story of America’s First Film Town” ◆ Fort Lee Film Commission

Project Team: Fort Lee Film Commission – Tom Meyers, Ex. Dir. & producer; Nelson Page, Chair & Assoc. Producer; Kay Nest, Vice Chair; Donna Brennan; Professor Richard Koszarski; Marc Perez, Director; Councilman Armand Pohan; Lou Azzollini, graphic artist.

At the Garden State Film Festival on March 22, 2015, *“The Champion: A Story of America’s First Film Town,”* produced by the Fort Lee Film Commission, won the award for Best Home Grown Documentary Short.

What more can be said about the outstanding accomplishments of the Fort Lee Film Commission? Everything they do is of the highest quality: we're running out of superlatives. Can it be only 15 years ago, in 2000, that the FLFC was established to preserve and promote Fort Lee's role as the *Birthplace of the American Motion Picture Industry*?

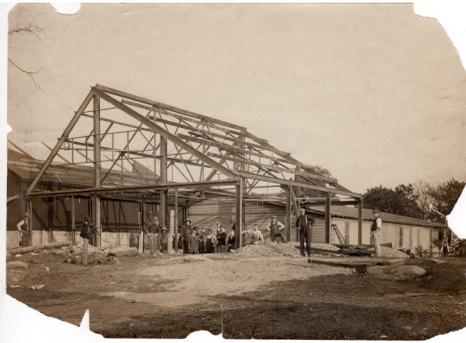
When the FLFC found out in 2013 that a building located on the Fort Lee/Coytesville border in Englewood Cliffs was going to be demolished, they rallied their forces to save it. Why? Because this 1910 building was the home to the Champion Studio, the first Universal Studio, and the oldest standing

studio in America. But it was too late. The building was going to be demolished. Facing the inevitable, members of the Commission began documenting every part of the building, determining what of the old studio was still there. Saving some bricks from the original foundation and a portion of the original dressing room, they recorded as much of the building as they could.

And they made a film. A great one.

This extraordinary film on the history of the Champion Studio, the early film industry in Fort Lee, and the efforts to save "The Champion" building, should be seen by not just film history buffs, but by those who question the need for the preservation of our local historic sites and buildings. Partially funded by the Bergen County History Grant program, "The Champion" is an outstanding 39-minute documentary that pays tribute to the history of the studio's movies, the movie community - the actors, the technicians, the artists - and the place, Fort Lee, N.J.

With its popular public educational programs, film preservation activities, publications, public tours and lectures, film festivals,



Top: Champion Studio under construction. Middle: Champion building awaiting its fate. Bottom: Demolished.

and an outstanding website that provides access for people around the world to the FLFC's activities and resources, this organization of dedicated volunteers, students, filmmakers, historians and movie enthusiasts, is the best example of how a few good people can significantly contribute to the preservation of historic sites and the history of a whole industry.

The Champion was lost, but the FLFC and Fort Lee did save the Rambo Hotel, one of the few remaining buildings connected with the early film industry. Undoubtedly there will be more sites threatened: some will be lost, but with the help of the Commission, some will be saved.

It is the Fort Lee Film Commission that is the Champion of Bergen County. Next year's Oscars anyone?

"Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set."

Proverbs 22:28

FOR CONTINUING PRESERVATION AND USE

This category of preservation includes little-altered commercial, governmental, agricultural and industrial structures, private houses and ecclesiastical buildings, still used for original or similar functions.

◆ **Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church** ◆
Hackensack

Project Team: Past and present ministers and congregations of the Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church

In 1864, during the Civil War, a group of African Americans in central Bergen County established a mission church which at first met in private homes and then at the Hackensack Meeting House at the corner of Main and Mercer Streets in Hackensack. This was the first African American church organized in Hackensack. At first it was non-denominational and as it expanded it became an outgrowth of the New York Mission Society, an agency of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church. The A.M.E. Zion church was founded in 1796 in New York City. Its founder and first bishop was James Varick. Today this denomination worldwide has well over a 1,000,000 members.

Two years later on Dec. 7, 1866, this mis-

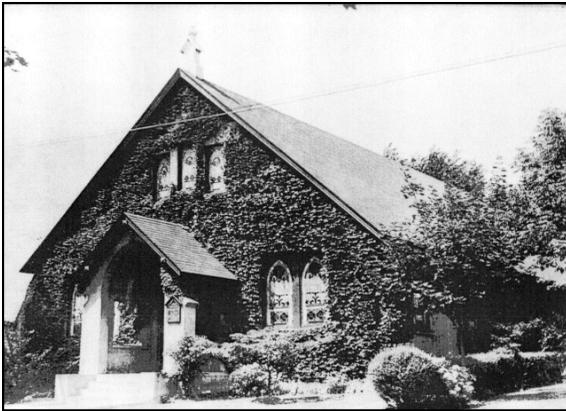


1919 - Newly erected Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church with pastor Rev. J.D. Virgil.

sion church incorporated and acquired the name: The Olive Branch Colored Mission Number Three of Hackensack. A year later it acquired its present site and carried to this site an old lime shed of the Board of Education that was being used as a social hall, renovated it and used it as the church's worship center. The church went through several name changes and finally in 1917 it was named in honor of Bishop James Varick, the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The mother of Bishop James Varick was a slave of Richard Varick, who was the father of James. Richard Varick was baptized in 1720 in the "Church on the Green" here in Hackensack.

The present church building was erected in 1919 when Rev. J.D. Virgil was pastor. A Fellowship Hall was added in 1964 when Rev. George L. Blackwell was pastor. There have been no major alterations or changes to the exterior or interior of the church building, giving great credit to the workmanship when first erected in 1919, and the care it has received by all the congregations up to the present.

In 2014 the Varick Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church of Hackensack celebrated the 150th Anniversary of its service to the community.



Varick Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in 1944 (above left), 1966 (above right) and today.

“The Congress finds and declares that:

- (a.) the spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage;
- (b.) the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people;

- - Preamble to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966



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Thanks also to William Neumann for being the Preservation Awards official photographer.

To see more of Billy's work go to: www.neumannphoto.com

Program created by Janet E. Strom, Historian, Division of Cultural & Historic Affairs

BERGEN COUNTY 2015



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