

HERITAGE NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY THE BERGEN COUNTY (NJ) DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
DIVISION OF CULTURAL AND HISTORIC AFFAIRS

SPRING 2009

2008 BERGEN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST FUND GRANT AWARDS

On January 21, 2009 the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders awarded *Bergen County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund* grants to the Edgewater Free Public Library and the Borough of Oakland.

The Edgewater Free Public Library received a \$250,000 grant for the Phase 1 Exterior Restoration of its 1915-16 building, the last functioning Carnegie library in Bergen County. This red brick Colonial Revival building, designed by Hobart Alexander Walker, was originally funded by a gift from Andrew Carnegie and is the physical embodiment of Carnegie's ideals and innovations for public libraries. The grant funds will be used for roofing and gutter repairs and other exterior restoration.



The \$10,000 grant awarded to the Borough of Oakland is a supplemental grant that increases the budget for preparation of the Preservation Plan for the Van Allen House property located at 1-3 Franklin Turnpike. During the Revolutionary war, on July 14, 1777, this property served briefly as General George Washington's headquarters when he and his troops were marching north. In the early 20th century it was part of "Vygeberg Farm," the estate of Edward Day Page who was a founding trustee of the Borough of Oakland and the community's second mayor. The property has an 18th century stone house associated with early regional Dutch-American architecture and a picturesque early-20th century farm office building that spans a stream. The Preservation Plan will guide all future preservation work at this site. This project also received a 2006 Historic Preservation



Edgewater Free Public Library shortly after it was built in 1916.

Trust Fund grant for \$30,000.

The *Bergen County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund* is a competitive grant program that, among other objectives, provides matching grants for historic preservation projects in the county. To be eligible for a historic preservation award a property must be listed on, or eligible for, listing on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places either individually or as a contributing property within a historic district. Eligible applicants must be Bergen County or local municipal governmental agencies, or non-profit organizations. Grant funds are available for the preparation of pre-construction planning documents, such as Historic Structures Reports and Preservation Plans, and for capital work. The Bergen County Historic Preservation Advisory Board administers this historic preservation grant program.



Van Allen House, Oakland

For additional information and to be notified about future trust grant deadlines, please send an e-mail to rbrown@co.bergen.nj.us or phone 201-336-7294. To consult a list of properties that might be eligible for grants, log-on to the Dept. of Parks, Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs home page www.co.bergen.nj.us/parks and click on "Historic Preservation Trust Fund Grant Program." Applications for the next grant round are projected to be available in spring 2009, with a projected grant deadline in early summer 2009.

-T. Robins Brown, Bergen County Historic Preservation Consultant

2009 BERGEN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMENDATION AWARDS

The public is invited to join County Executive Dennis McNerney, the Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs (DCHA), members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Bergen County Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB) on **May 7th at 7:00 pm for the presentation of the 2009 Bergen County Historic Preservation Commendation Awards.** The ceremony will take place at Hackensack's historic "Church on the Green" as part of the nationwide celebration of *National Historic Preservation Month*.

Since 1982 the Bergen County Historic Preservation Advisory Board has presented Commendation Awards to local students, property owners, architects, preservation commissions, scouts, societies, schools, houses of worship and authors in seven different categories of achievement. These awards were created to encourage preservation, restoration and adaptive use of Bergen County's valuable and irreplaceable historic buildings, houses, schools, houses of worship, cemeteries and other historic resources. Over 200 awards have been presented recognizing these extraordinary preservation efforts.

Carol Messer, DCHA Director, extends a special invitation to past recipients of Commendation Awards, the historic preservation community and the public to this evening when the County recognizes these contributions. For information and to attend the awards ceremony, call 201-336-7267 or e-mail jstrom@co.bergen.nj.us.

National Preservation Month has been celebrated annually since 1971. It is sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For more information go to www.nationaltrust.org/preservationmonth

BERGEN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

The *Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB)* was originally established by the Board of Freeholders as the *Historic Sites Advisory Board (HSAB)*. The HSAB was instrumental in initiating the *Survey of the Early Stone Houses in Bergen County* which resulted in the listing of 208 buildings on the State and National Registers in 1980. The survey was followed by the *Bergen County Historic Sites Survey (HSS)*, a comprehensive survey of the county's historic properties completed by the Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs in 1985. Almost 8,000 historic sites were included in the HSS. The process of updating HSS for each of the county's 70 municipalities continues under the supervision of the county's Historic Preservation Consultant, T. Robins Brown.

In 1982 the HSAB created the *Historic Preservation Commendation Awards* program. Members of the HPAB still review all the nominations for commendations and then select the winners.

In 2000, the HSAB's responsibilities were officially expanded by Freeholder Resolution and its name was changed to the **Historic Preservation Advisory Board**. It continues to serve as a resource to the Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs, the Freeholders and the County Executive on historic preservation policy, the

operation of county-owned historic sites and facilities, and administers the historic preservation components of the *Bergen County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund*.

NEW JERSEY HISTORIC TRUST

The *New Jersey Historic Trust* (NJHT) was established in 1967 – just one year after the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act and two years after Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty were named National Historic Sites. The creation of the NJHT and the *Historic Sites Council* was New Jersey's first effort in developing a state preservation.

By 1970, the state passed the *NJ Register of Historic Places Act* that created the register – the official list of NJ's historic sites – mirroring the federal government's creation of the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1966. The NJHT was established in the image of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) in that the NTHP was established by an act of congress and for many years received federal money as well as private foundation support. Its first duties included acquisition and presentation of historic house museums. Over the years the role of the NTHP evolved and eventually severed itself from relying on federal funds.

Unlike the NTHP, the NJHT never stepped into the direct stewardship role, mostly because for the first ten years of its existence it received little government funding. In 1987, when voters passed the first bond referendum to include historic preservation along with Green Acres open space funding, the NJHT became the entity to set up and administer the bricks and mortar grant program. From 1987-98, the NJHT was allocated about \$60M through voter approved referendum. In 1998, the voters approved a ballot initiative approving a ten-year stable source of funding. The NJHT's apportionment has been \$6M/year but this upcoming round is its last. In November 2007, the voters approved a stop-gap initiative and on Feb. 25, the NJHT Board of Trustees voted to award this final \$6M, mirroring state and national efforts to expedite shovel-ready projects as part of the economy's economic stimulus.

Since the NJHT grants require a match, we know that the \$120M has leveraged substantially more than \$240M in actual preservation activity. And that's without factoring job creation, skills and business development, residual neighborhood stabilization and enhancement, and the spillover effects of Heritage Tourism.

The NJHT has the ability to hold and sell property, hold easements, directly contract for professional services, solicit donations, educate and foster statewide historic preservation initiatives. It has funded house museums, churches, lighthouses, mill buildings, schools, monuments, archaeological site exploration and interpretation, agricultural buildings, landscape restoration, a battleship and a schooner.

The NJHT's *Stewardship Programs* include the acceptance of *Perpetual Easements*. For a private property the owners *receive tax advantages* to granting an easement on their property because, in theory, if you assign ownership rights to a third party, you've de-valued the price of your real estate. The NJHT receives an administrative fee to process each easement it holds – funds are held in an endowment account – and it annually inspects the perpetual easement sites. This is a great way to ensure protection on a site that is not regulated, and will pass with the transfer of ownership.

Through the *Legacies Program*, the NJHT accepts charitable donations of real property that are protected by preservation easements and sold to preservation-minded buyers. Donors may realize significant tax advantages and have flexibility regarding the mode of donation.

The Trust's *Emergency Grant and Loan Program* is available for emergency repair or stabilization, or for activities that would facilitate preservation of a threatened property. It's *Revolving Loan Program* for non-profit organizations and local governments can be used for preservation, improvement, restoration, rehabilitation and acquisition of historic properties.

The Trust's primary grant program is the bricks and mortar matching grants. To be eligible a site must be listed or declared eligible for the NJ Register of Historic Places. There are two types of grants: Historic Site Management Grants - for planning exercises that promote effective management at historic sites; Capital

Preservation Grants - for construction expenses related to the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic properties and associated architectural and engineering expenses.

Applications are on the NJHT website and are due May 14, 2009: www.njht.org/dca/njht/programs/

The Trust has accomplished much for New Jersey since it was created over 40 years ago. But today, everyone in the history and preservation community is facing difficult economic times. It is important for historic organizations to share their resources and experiences, to learn from each other, and link their sites' activities with one another. By networking and sharing information about funding sources, educational opportunities, informational resources, we all will be better able to face the future and insure that history and preservation are part of a thriving, vital New Jersey.

-Dorothy P. Guzzo, NJHT Executive Director

NEW JERSEY'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

SHPO is the acronym for the State of New Jersey's Historic Preservation Office, which is a part of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. Its staff, which brings expertise in a variety of fields essential to preserving New Jersey's historic resources, responds to more than 40,000 calls yearly from people working to preserve, protect and promote the state's historic resources.

Anyone interested in establishing a local historic district, nominating a building to the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, or interested in restoring their house can find information and guidance by talking with the SHPO staff and exploring their website: www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/ This extensive, easy-to-use site is one of NJ's *most valuable tools* for historic preservation. The site includes information on preservation resources and surveys, GIS information systems, Women's History and Revolutionary War Initiatives, the Section 106 Review Process, Review Procedures Under the NJ Register of Historic Places Act, Archaeological Site Protection, Local Historic Preservation Programs, Tax Incentives, NJ Rehabilitation Subcode, Main Street NJ, NJ Historic Preservation Plan, links to conferences, grant sources and other technical assistance programs, and information on NJ's *Annual Historic Preservation Awards* which is held in Trenton during National Historic Preservation Month (May 17th, 2009).

Independent file review and research can be conducted at the SHPO offices in Trenton on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, between 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. in half-day or whole-day increments. To schedule an appointment, please call 609-292-0062. One-hour free introductory training sessions are provided by the staff on the first Thursday of each month (dates are on the website). Sessions start at 10 a.m. - space is limited. To schedule a reservation in the introductory training session, call 609-292-0061. You may also call the SHPO main line: 609-984-0578.

The SHPO website also has information on the **New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places** (SR/NR). Here you can access the up-to-date list of New Jersey's SR/NR listed properties, sites and districts, arranged by county and municipality. Properties and historic districts that are listed all meet the New Jersey and National Register *criteria for significance* in American history, archaeology, architecture, engineering or culture, and *possess integrity* of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

For this information, go to: www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/1identify/nrsr_lists.htm

2009 HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE – JUNE 4TH

Every year SHPO sponsor's the annual **Historic Preservation Conference** to be held on June 4, 2009 at Rowan University in Glassboro. This year's conference theme is *Regeneration for a New Generation.*"

To maintain and increase support for historic preservation in this dynamic climate means changing with the times – and the times call for taking fresh looks at the ways we communicate our message, craft policy, sustain organizational boards and create strategic plans, and identify 20th century landmarks that are ripe for

restoration, rehabilitation and investment. The 2009 New Jersey Historic Preservation Conference will explore these ideas, look at new models and celebrate the reasons why historic preservation is more relevant today than ever before.

For more conference information and to register, log-on to www.state.nj.us/dca/preservationconference/ or call (609) 984-0473.

PRESERVATION NEW JERSEY

Founded in 1978, *Preservation New Jersey* advocates for and promotes historic preservation to protect and enhance the vitality and heritage of New Jersey's richly diverse communities. PNJ is the only statewide private membership-supported historic preservation organization in New Jersey.

PNJ serves as a clearinghouse for technical assistance and information to homeowners, municipalities, historic preservation commissions, nonprofit agencies and other individuals and groups. We offer instructional and informative Toolkits and other educational materials and publications, as well as direct assistance. The group also publishes the annual *10 Most Endangered Historic Sites in NJ* list, which draws attention to remarkable sites and to their many challenges. We believe that listing them will be a catalyst for change and that positive solutions can be found for their preservation.

Preservation New Jersey conducts tours, workshops, lectures and conferences to educate the public about historic sites and preservation issues. The PNJ Building Industry Network provides a forum and informative training opportunities for professionals.

PNJ is working hard to advocate for sound public policy at the local, state and federal levels on behalf of the historic preservation community in New Jersey. We represent the broader preservation community as we reach out to legislators and the Administration, collaborate with key partners like the Keep it Green and NJ Heritage Development coalitions, testify at hearings, inform supporters and members. But we also are committed to expanding pathways that allow everyone in New Jersey who cares about preserving and sustaining the historic character of our communities to work directly with each other.

Our print periodical, *Preservation Perspectives*, is now available online (www.preservationnj.org/magazine). And we welcome stories from you about preservation concerns in your town or neighborhood. The semi-monthly e-news alerts, PNJnet, are also easily forwarded and shared. If you're not receiving the e-newsletters, please send us your e-mail address, to info@preservationnj.org and add that address to your e-mail address book.

Even more interactive are our Facebook page, – *please become a fan* – our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/preservnj) where we welcome preservation-themed videos, and our blog (www.preservationnj.wordpress.com). Timely stories, alerts and links to regional and national preservation issues are posted many times each week. And you are urged to provide direct comment and feedback.

Help us to overcome the muteness that Thomas Jefferson describes as “...a lethargy that is ... the forerunner of death to the public liberty.” Join in the conversation, talk directly to your state legislators as well as to your mayor and local officials, and offer your comments on the Greener Heritage blog. And join Preservation New Jersey and help us to preserve the someplaces that would otherwise become ‘anyplace.’

Give online at http://preservationnj.org/give_to_pnj/give_online.asp.

- Ron Emrich, PNJ Executive Director

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION & THE TEARDOWN EPIDEMIC

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to saving historic places and revitalizing America's communities. Founded in 1949, it provides leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to help save America's diverse historic places and revitalize our communities. The NTHP publishes the magazine "Preservation."

The NTHP website has information for homeowners, legal resources, technical assistance, disaster recovery, public policy, funding, historic travel, advocacy, books, and on current issues facing the preservation community.

When historic buildings and neighborhoods are torn down or allowed to deteriorate, a part of our past disappears forever and we lose history that helps us know who we are. One of the newest additions to the NTHP website is **TEARDOWNS** (www.preservationnation.org/issues/teardowns/) "*Across the nation a teardown epidemic is wiping out historic neighborhoods one house at a time. As older homes are demolished and replaced with dramatically larger, out-of-scale new structures, the historic character of the existing neighborhood is changed forever. The NTHP believes historic neighborhoods can and should be protected from teardowns, through a variety of tools and approaches that manage this type of growth. Because there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution or "magic bullet" that will stop teardowns, communities should expect to use a combination of tools.*"

You can download from the site informative documents and guides including: "Managing Teardowns: Preserving Community Character and Livability", "Advocacy for Alternatives to Teardowns", "What's Wrong with Teardowns: A Visual Analysis", "Teardown in the News" and a "Teardown Glossary."

"Teardowns by State and Community" is an up-to-date National Trust count of teardowns in the US. New Jersey leads the nation in the number of teardowns.

And Bergen County has the *most teardowns out of all of New Jersey's 21 counties.*

TECHNICAL PRESERVATION SERVICES FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb/

The Standards are the ten basic principles designed to help preserve the distinctive character of an historic building and the site while allowing for reasonable change to meet new needs. "*The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for establishing standards for all programs under Departmental authority and for advising Federal agencies on the preservation of historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*" The goal of creating these standards is to assist in the long-term preservation of a building's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features. They have been used extensively particularly to determine if specific rehabilitation projects qualify as a "Certified Rehabilitation" for Federal tax purposes. Also, they are used to guide Federal agencies in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities for properties in Federal ownership or control; and State and local officials in reviewing both Federal and nonfederal rehabilitation proposals. They have been adopted by local historic district and planning commissions. Both the Standards and Guidelines are available on-line.

There is now the **ELECTRONIC REHAB**, an interactive site designed specifically for historic building owners; new members of design review and historic preservation commissions; architects, contractors, and developers; maintenance personnel and others involved in the care of historic buildings; and students in historic preservation courses. This great site is a fun and easy way to learn about the Standards:

www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/e-rehab/index.htm

WORKING ON THE PAST IN LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

www.nps.gov/history/hps/workingonthepast/index.htm

This site contains information for historic property owners, historic preservation commissions, municipal officials, architects and developers. It is divided into five sections: What are the *strengths* of becoming a local historic district? ; What is a *local preservation ordinance*?; What are *local design guidelines* and how to develop them? What *treatment* is best for a historic property? What *questions* about historic districts are commonly asked?

Many other TPS Online Education Services from the National Park Service can be found at: www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/

“DISCOVER NJ HISTORY” LICENSE PLATE

Support Historic Preservation in New Jersey by ordering a “Discover NJ History” license plate. It features a Victorian-style row house image from a painting by the renowned NJ artist Harry Devlin. They will remind others that history is always ready to be “discovered” in NJ.

Money from the sale of these plates goes to the Historic License Plate Preservation Fund. The Fund is currently supporting the preparation of a Heritage Tourism Plan for the State of New Jersey. The Fund will continue to support preservation projects and heritage tourism initiatives that benefit the history community well into the future.



To order: Pay a one-time \$50 fee (and a \$10 annual renewal) and pick up your Discover NJ History plates at any motor vehicle agency or by mail. You can personalize your historical plates with up to five characters for an initial \$100 fee (and a \$10 annual renewal). Visit Motor Vehicle Services at www.state.nj.us/mvc/Vehicle/DedicatedPlate.htm or call 8880486-3399

GILES R. WRIGHT II

1935-2009



It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Giles Wright who died on February 5, 2009. A dedicated and passionate historian, Mr. Wright joined the staff of the New Jersey Historical Commission in 1979. In the 1980s he became the inaugural director of the NJHC’s *African-American History Program*, believed to be the first such officially established state post in the U.S. He held this position until his retirement in 2008.

Many people from all over NJ have been sharing their memories of his life and contributions to the historical narrative of NJ and the US. As was written in one obituary, he was “*one of America’s most admired and productive public historians...As result of his years of devotion to the public’s interest, New Jersey is a foremost leader in placing the narratives of slavery, the Underground*

Railroad, freedom, civil rights, immigration, labor and social activism at the center of the story of democratic life of the Republic.”

He wrote many books and contributed to numerous publications. These include *Steal Away, Steal Away: A Guide to the Underground Railroad in New Jersey*; *Afro-Americans in New Jersey: A Short History*; six booklets in the *New Jersey Ethnic Life Series*; and the recent “Moving Toward Breaking the Chains: Black New Jerseyans and the American Revolution” in the *American Revolution*, ed. Barbara Mitnick.

The Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs is especially grateful and honored to have received his input and advice in the creation of the historic panels that tell the story of Gethsemane Cemetery, the historic African American and National Register County Historic Site in Little Ferry. Mr. Wright spoke at the cemetery’s extraordinary dedication, an afternoon that was filled with the sounds of African drums, poetry, songs, and stories of the African Americans who lived here in Bergen County. On that Sunday afternoon, Mr. Wright said: “*We think the first place in this country that brought together people from different places in Africa was the church. But, it was the burial ground. They were speaking a new language, answering to new names. Here, they forged a new consciousness as a unified people.*”

Thank you, Giles, for raising our consciousness, shining a light on the lives of those who were too often forgotten, and enriching all of us through your good works.

Giles Wright speaking at the
Gethsemane Cemetery
Dedication, October 26, 2003.

When I am cold
and buried deep away,
and have no zest to live
or to return,
come to my grave
and flower-strew the clay,
and dance and sing,
but never weep or mourn.
Edythe Mae Gordon, poet, writer (c. 1896 -
?)

Deadline for the next issue Summer-Fall 2009 is July 1, 2008

To request HN Events Forms, call the Division of Cultural & Historic Affairs, 201-336-7267

This newsletter is available in a LARGE PRINT VERSION

201-336-7267; jstrom@co.bergen.nj.us

BOOK ORDERS & REQUESTS FOR LITERATURE & INFORMATION

- ___ Add my name to the mailing list to receive the *Heritage Newsletter*. (free)
- ___ Add my name to receive the *Bergen Arts Connection* newsletter. (free)
- ___ Send me the current historical brochures and information. (free)
- ___ Send me the current preservation brochures and information. (free)
- ___ Send me the current arts brochures and information. (free)
- ___ Send me *AN OPEN DOOR TO HISTORY*, a guide to historic sites in Bergen County. (free)
- ___ Send me *BERGEN COUNTY, N.J., HISTORY AND HERITAGE*. (\$30* for 7-vol. paperback set.)
- ___ Send me *BERGEN COUNTY, N.J., HISTORY AND HERITAGE*. (\$55* for 7-vol. hardback boxed set.)
- ___ Send me the *BERGEN COUNTY AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY BICENTENNIAL MAP*. (\$3*)
- ___ Send me information on *BERGEN COUNTY TRICENTENNIAL ARMETALE PLATE*. (\$25*).

____Send me *GETHSEMANE CEMETERY IN LIFE AND DEATH* (\$20*)

Name_____

Address_____

Town_____

State_____ Zip_____

***All checks should be made payable to "THE COUNTY OF BERGEN"**

Return this form to: Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs, One Bergen County Plaza – 4th Floor,
Hackensack, NJ 07601-7076

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