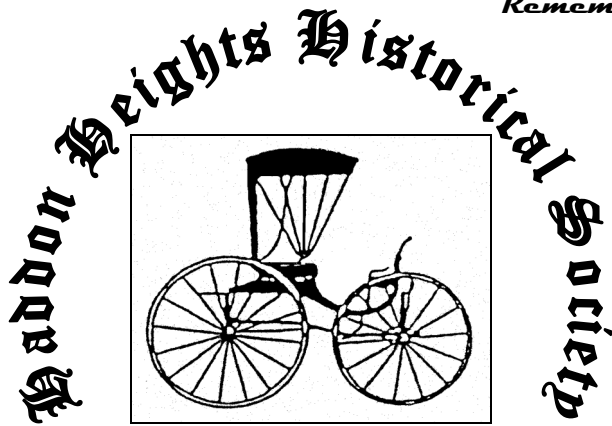


*" Remembering Yesterday For The People Of Tomorrow "*



# Bulletin

P.O. Box 118 • Haddon Heights, NJ 08035

[WWW.HHHISTORICAL.ORG](http://WWW.HHHISTORICAL.ORG)

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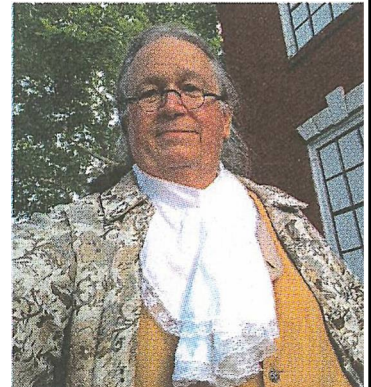
July 2019

We meet on the third Monday of January, April, July, and October - at 7:00pm in the Library

**JULY MEETING: EVER WANTED TO MEET "BENJAMIN FRANKLIN"?** – On July 15th, at 7:00pm, our presenter is Dr. Michael Skelly, Sr. He earned his Doctorate in Law from Seton Hall University after earning a Bachelors degree from Rutgers University. Dr. Skelly has long been interested in Benjamin Franklin admiring him as a printer, civic leader, scientist/inventor, and founding father. In fact, he has some parallels with Franklin, in that Franklin conducted his scientific studies in electricity and was involved in many community improvement projects after his career as a printer. After many years in active law practice, Dr. Skelly went into business doing fuel cell projects, solar and electric vehicles, and finally hydroelectric projects. Like Benjamin Franklin, he became very active in community groups, non-profit activities, history, art, and education.

He serves as Education and Events Director and Trustee of Bordentown Historical Society, and Director of Isaac Pearson Mansion House for Historical Society of Hamilton (Mercer County). In his spare time, he directs historic site restorations, and frequently gives historic presentations and tours. In recent years he has been encouraged to do Dr. Franklin by George Washington, John Adams, and Molly Pitcher presenters.

That all has me thinking.....Before I meet Mr. Franklin, I need to stop playing my glass harmonica, check my fire insurance policy, put on my bifocals, drop a letter at the Post Office, and return that overdue book to the Library! Come hear Ben Franklin in his own words. Listen to stories of the life and times of this most interesting Founding Father...



**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**– Friends, sun, sand & sea, and the pool, that sounds like summer to me!!!!!!!!!! Summer is the perfect season to bring friends together and enhance friendships. Another fun place to be with friends and meet new people is The Haddon Heights Historical Society Meeting!!!!!!!!!! On July 15 we will enjoy hosting America's most inventive Founding Father Ben Franklin as portrayed by Michael Skelly. You will be able to say that you were entertained by his wit and wisdom!!!!!!!!!!



A special THANK YOU to Ken Funkhouser, "Florence" (his 1929 Model A Ford), and our supporters for representing the Haddon Heights Historical Society in the Fourth of July Parade. I am very pleased to introduce Lauren McBeath as the Society's new Secretary, and Amy Schmidt as our new photographer and Facebook "poster". We can now say "Follow us on Facebook"!!!!!!!!!! We appreciate their enthusiasm and interest in history. I look forward to seeing you all at the July meeting and please bring a friend.

Elena Hill

**WE FONDLY REMEMBER–** I am sad to report the recent passing of Wilma Hickman. She was a long-time friend, supporter, and member of the Haddon Heights Historical Society. Anyone wishing to make a donation in her memory can do so through the Fellowship United Methodist Church in Haddon Heights.

**OCTOBER HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING–** Our fall Historical Society meeting happens during Camden County's "History Month". In 2018 the County launched a 10-day History "Week". However, There were so many activities and events going on, that this year it is expanded to the entire month of October! Join us on October 21st as we welcome Ira Jersey, President of the Crossroads for the American Revolution Organization to talk about New Jersey's plans for celebrating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution (2026-2033).

**HEAR YE, HEAR YE ! NEW VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED FOR THE BOARD-**

The Haddon Heights historical Society needs YOU! We are currently searching for a few more individuals interested in volunteering a little bit of time in our organization. Join our few but mighty group of Board Members and Committee Chairs. Please consider helping make your historical society even better and more vibrant, and help us fill the following openings: \* programs Chairperson \* Publicity \* Borough Council Liaison. No prior experience necessary, just a love of history and an interest in making a difference. Please reach out to the Editor or any Board Member for information or to volunteer.

**LEAGUE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES OF NEW JERSEY MEMBERSHIP–** As a reminder, The Haddon Heights Historical Society (and all of our members) is a member of the LHSNJ. This organization was founded in 1966 and is composed of over 220 organizations representing over 45,000 individual members. The members of the League share information and ideas about their activities and their problems, and about the work of other groups engaged in saving NJ history; county by county, town by town. They hold three meetings a year in the northern, central and southern regions of the state, and our members are welcome to participate in their activities. Please see the upcoming meeting information on the back page. The "winter 2020" meeting will be hosted by the Historical Society of Camden County. In 2004, Haddon Heights Historical Society even hosted a meeting in celebration of our town's 100th anniversary!

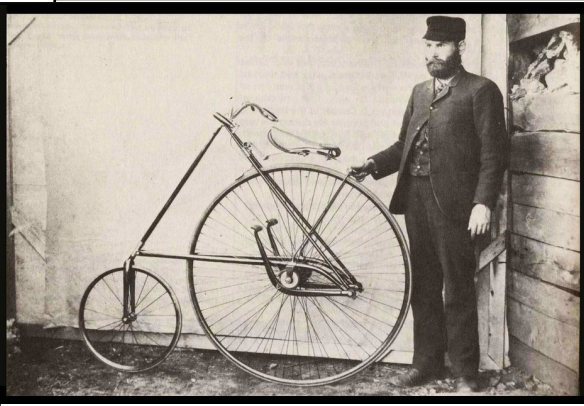
**SMITHVILLE– PART-II** As you may recall from our last installment, Hezekiah B. Smith went to his sister's house and took a pocket knife to the family Bible to excise all record of his marriage and children from the family tree recorded within, burning the paper scraps in his sister's stove. Having completed what he felt to be a divorce, he left Woodstock, never to return.



Smith and Alice Gilkerson were married in a civil ceremony that same year, and the two of them made their home in Smithville. There, he continued his business of manufacturing wood-working machinery, while she practiced medicine and made and sold herbal remedies. Smith also published the *New Jersey Mechanic* trade journal, which his second wife also edited; she also advertised her medical wares in it. In January 1881, Alice died of cancer, without producing any children for Smith. After her death, Smith commissioned an Italian marble statue in her likeness and stood it on a brick pedestal under an iron canopy in the formal garden of the mansion at Smithville.

Smith had over forty patents for his inventions with the United States Patent Office. The Smithsonian Institution describes Smith as having taken the woodworking business from hand tools to mechanized. His business, was incorporated in 1878 under the name "H.B. Smith Machine Company". In addition to the woodworking tools which were the staple of his business, he also manufactured the American Star Bicycle. This bicycle differed from others of its time by having a larger back wheel, where the rider sat, and a smaller front





wheel for steering. The Star was driven by ratchet drive, had a hand brake and a sprung leather seat.

The Star sold for \$150 at a time when the average person earned \$500 a year. Not the greatest of commercial successes, it was fast, and a great stunt bike, winning many track races, endurance rides, and stunt exhibitions, as well as being a great advertising tool for the Smith Machine Co. He also manufactured the first steam-driven vehicle operated in New Jersey, although only one was ever manufactured as he died before it could go into regular production. On his desk at the time of his death was a prototype of an autogiro.

Hezekiah Smith was elected as a Democrat to the 46th United States Congress, serving one term from March 4, 1879, to March 3, 1881. During the election it was discovered that he was a bigamist. He was not re-elected to the 47th United States Congress; however, it is likely that his defeat was a result of the changing winds of American politics and not a reflection on the electorate's opinion of his bigamy, as that year James A. Garfield's Republican Party dominated the election. Smith also later served as a member of the New Jersey Senate, from 1883 to 1885.

Hezekiah B. Smith died in Smithville, Burlington County, New Jersey, on November 3, 1887. He was buried next to his second wife, in the Saint Andrews section of the Pine Street Cemetery in Mount Holly, New Jersey. Upon the death of his mother, in 1897, Elton Smith, Hezekiah's oldest son, went to Mount Holly in an attempt to remove his father's remains. He wanted them transported to Woodstock to be buried next to his mother. Hezekiah had anticipated any attempts to move his body, and had been interred in an iron coffin encased in an iron cage that had been set in concrete. Elton then had the statue of his father's second wife toppled, broken into pieces, ground to dust and scattered along Rancocas Creek, using workers from the family business.



The descendants of Hezekiah Smith continued to live in the mansion until 1962, when it was purchased by Louis and Grace Thomas. In 1975 the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders purchased the mansion and property. Smithville is listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, and is open year round. This was once a thriving self-sufficient manufacturing community full of life and activity for those employed by the H.B. Smith Machine company. The mansion is decorated for the holidays and offers docent led tours. You can see the mansion, the schoolhouse, and some of the workers' homes.

Please visit their website for details. The mansion sits on land that is part of Burlington County's Smithville Park, and is located near Route 38, a short distance past Mount Holly. I highly recommend it !

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## 2019 Membership Application / Renewal- Haddon Heights Historical Society

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ Single- \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Household- \$15.00

I would like to make a tax deductible donation to Haddon Heights Historical Society, in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Coming Events

July 15, 2019- HHHS General Membership Mtg.  
7:00pm in the Haddon Heights Library-  
Benjamin Franklin portrayal

October 5, 2019- League of Historical Societies of  
NJ Meeting- Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum

October 21, 2019- NJ Plans for celebration of the  
nation's 250th anniversary!

Winter 2020- League of Historical Societies of NJ  
Meeting- Camden County Historical Society

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**MEMBERSHIP DUES-** Your *"Paid Through  
YEAR"* is printed on your Newsletter label. Your  
dues help us keep history alive. Only paid-up mem-  
bers will continue to receive the HHHS Newsletter!

Those members who provide us an e-mail address,  
will also receive an electronic color copy of each  
edition of the newsletter in advance of the mailing.

**HEIGHTS NOTE CARDS-** Note card packs  
featuring pre-Revolutionary War homes in town.  
Available at the Library. \$4.00 for a pack of 8.

**CHECK OUR REVITALIZED WEBSITE-**  
Go have a look! [www.hhhistorical.org](http://www.hhhistorical.org)

*The Haddon Heights Historical Society is a 501(c)3 organization. Please keep us in mind as  
you plan your charitable donations. Make History by Making us part of Your Legacy...*

July 4th has come and gone, again! I use the four parades I drive in each 4th of July, as my unofficial gauge of  
how America is doing. I would have to say, based on the turnout and enthusiasm I saw as I drove through  
Haddon Heights, Haddonfield, Barrington and Bellmawr, that our country is doing pretty well !!!  
Thanks for listening all these years!

Ken Funkhouser, Editor (25 yrs)

### 2019 Historical Society Board

<u>President-(2018-2020)</u>	Elena Hill
<u>Vice-President-(2018-2020)</u>	Bob Hunter
<u>Past President-</u>	Margaret Westfield
<u>Treasurer-(2018- 2020)</u>	David Somerville
<u>Secretary- (2019- 2021)</u>	Lauren McBeath
<u>Trustees- (2016-2019)</u>	Ken Funkhouser
	Anne McAdams
	Peter Hill

### COMMITTEES / CHAIRS

<u>Newsletter Ed.-</u>	Ken Funkhouser
<u>Membership Chair-</u>	Joan Rossler
<u>Web Master-</u>	Gianna Hill
<u>Nominating Comm.-</u>	Bob Hunter/ Peter Hill
<u>Borough Council Liaison</u>	VACANT
<u>Affairs-</u>	VACANT
<u>Merch/Fund Raising-</u>	Joan Rossler
<u>Programs/Publicity-</u>	VACANT
<u>Programs/Publicity- Asst.</u>	VACANT
<u>Digital Photographer</u>	Amy Schmidt

Contact the Board : [WWW.HHHISTORICAL.ORG](http://WWW.HHHISTORICAL.ORG)

Mail correspondence- P.O. Box 118 Haddon Heights, NJ 08035

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