



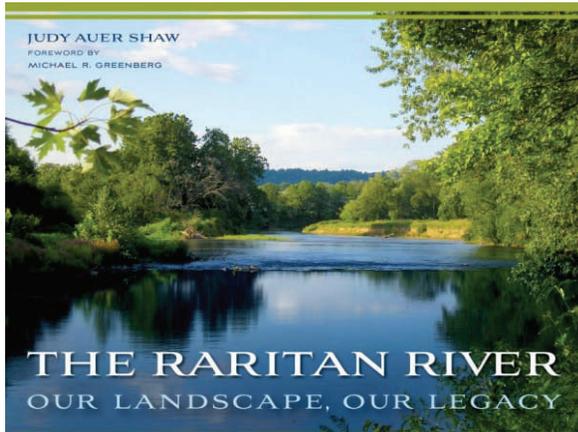
The Link

joining the sites along the rivers

Volume 18 , Issue 4

The Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance

Fall 2015



The Raritan River: Our Landscape Our Legacy

By Judy Auer Shaw - Rutgers University Press

The Raritan River Our Landscape Our Legacy celebrates an amazing New Jersey treasure. Wholly within the state, the 90-mile-long river has 2,000 miles of tributary streams and brooks. The river and its shorelines offer a magnificent contiguous stretch of wildlife habitat. It is a source of family recreation and a true asset to future economic development. It is also a precious record of our historic development across the region.

With some of the most beautiful scenery in the country, the photographs and paintings in the book show the variety of landscapes within the Raritan River region. The pictures remind us why we need to rescue the land, restore the habitat, and live in harmony with nature. People are the solution, and we need to engage local leaders as we educate ourselves and work local land management efforts. We want to adopt new best management practices that enrich our treasured natural resource and ensure its safety into the future.

Throughout the book are stories of major organizations that represent the region and provide opportunities to engage: The Raritan Headwaters Association, the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, the Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership and the New York New Jersey Baykeeper all lead us forward and keep the restoration and future protection of this resource high on our common agenda. Organizations like the Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance and Crossroads of the American Revolution protect and celebrate our history in the region.

The Van Wickle House (Right) was a typical example of the fine preservation work of organizations like the Meadows Foundation and the Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance. The group hosts events there every month to acquaint local residents and guests with the history of the region.

We recognize and praise the work within the historic preservation community and thank you for all you do to protect the buildings that give us a glimpse of life in times gone by. The genesis of the book came from conversations with the Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance and the homes under the care of the Meadows Foundation. It is our hope that the Raritan River School of Art will come to fruition through the efforts of these organizations – and that the beauty of our region will be renowned across the country by travelers and those who call New Jersey home.



Contact Dr. Shaw: jashaw@ejb.rutgers.edu

Book purchase: <http://rutgerspress.rutgers.edu/product/Raritan-River,5244.aspx>

Raritan Website: <http://raritan.rutgers.edu/>

The next scheduled meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS

will be held on Saturday,
Saturday Sept. 19, 2015
from 10 a.m. till Noon at

The South River Museum

64-66 Main Street South River, NJ 08882

TEL: 732-613-3078 **HOURS:** first Sun. of each month, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. (*second Sun. if the first is a holiday*)

The South River Museum is housed in the Old School Baptist Church building, constructed on Main Street in 1805 for church meetings.



It was used for a time in the 20th century as the municipal library and later as town offices. Exhibitions showcase all aspects of borough history. The burial yard in back contains a marble urn created by noted local and New York sculptor John Frazee as a memorial to his wife, Jane, who died in the 1832 cholera epidemic and is buried there.

Featured Guest Speaker

Judy Shaw, Ph.D., AICP/PP,

Director, Sustainable Raritan River Initiative
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy, Rutgers University

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Representatives from all Alliance sites are encouraged to attend.

YOUR LINK TO THE PUBLIC: The Link is on a quarterly publication schedule. News of major upcoming events for possible placement in the newsletter may be mailed, emailed or faxed to the following address. Any questions, please contact: Donald J. Peck, Editor, The Clausen Company, P.O. Box 140, Fords, NJ 08863 or Tel 732-738-1165, fax 732-738-1618, or E-mail clausenco@aol.com.

RARITAN-MILLSTONE HERITAGE ALLIANCE

P.O. Box 5583 Somerset, NJ 08875-6683

www.raritanmillstone.org

An organization of individuals, organizations, and sites working to promote preservation and understanding of the rich, eventful, and cultural heritage of significant historical, educational, and cultural sites located in Central New Jersey

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The Board of Directors meets on the third or fourth Saturday of March, May, September and November at designated historic and museum member sites in the region.

The Executive Committee meets in January and June

Save The Date

February 20, 2016 1 p.m.
George Washington
Birthday Party, Cranbury Inn,
Cranbury, NJ



New Jersey's Revolutionary War Legacy

Battle of Princeton: The Thomas Clarke House

Submitted By: Albert M. Previte

In 1772, Thomas Clarke, a Quaker farmer, purchased 200 acres of land from his brother William. The land, then part of West Windsor, had been in the Clarke family since 1696. Thomas replaced an existing structure with the two-and-a-half story Georgian structure that still stands today.



It has been documented that he lived there with at least two of his sisters, Hannah and Sarah, until his death in 1802. They were members of the nearby Stony Brook Friends Meeting.

Sarah inherited the house and lived in it until her death in 1840. Her nephew, John H. Clarke, enlarged the east wing which included a new kitchen. The house was sold in 1863 to Henry E. Hale and again in 1944 to Blackwell Smith. The State of New Jersey purchased the property in 1946 and established the Clarke House Museum in 1976.

The Thomas Clarke House Museum was built by the third generation of Quakers at Stony Brook. The house is furnished in the Revolutionary period and contains military artifacts and battle exhibits, as well as a research library. The Battle of Princeton was fought on the farm. The Clarke House served as a field hospital for the wounded of both sides. The 85-acre park, a National Historic landmark, contains a cutting from the historic Mercer Oak, the memorial colonnade, and a graveyard for British and American soldiers.

In the aftermath of the victory at the Battle of Trenton on December 26, 1776, General George Washington decided to move the Continental Army northward. After dodging the British at the second Battle of Trenton on January 2, 1777, the troops made a night march to the outskirts of Princeton. Early on the morning of January 3, they encountered a British brigade moving south under the command of Lt. Col. Charles Mawhood. A skirmish ensued in an orchard between Mawhood's troops and the troops under General Hugh Mercer. American troops under General George Washington surprised and defeated a force of British Regulars. General Mercer was struck with seven bayonet wounds during the battle and sent to the Thomas Clarke house, which was set up as a field hospital. General Mercer died in the home nine days later, tended by Major George Lewis, George Washington's nephew.

Coming at the end of "The Ten Crucial Days," which saw the well-known night crossing of the Delaware River and two battles in Trenton, the Battle of Princeton gave Washington his first victory against the British Regulars on the field. The battle extended over a mile away to the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University).

The retreating British suffered additional attacks from troops commanded by General John Sullivan. The British retreated toward Princeton and Nassau Hall, which they were utilizing as a makeshift headquarters. Captain Alexander Hamilton and an artillery battery under his command dislodged the remaining troops from Nassau Hall. The casualties at Princeton number 40 Americans and 86 British killed or wounded. The British also had 187 missing. This American victory, coupled with the successes at Trenton, helped to keep the Revolutionary cause alive at a time when support was waning.

The Thomas Clarke house sits on the highpoint of Princeton Battlefield State Park. The house and its exhibits tell the story of those who survived and perished during this brief but pivotal American victory over British forces in the waning moments of the "Ten Crucial Days." Inside the house visitors can view the civilian and military exhibits displayed throughout the restored farmhouse. The Clarke House volunteers enjoy educating the public on the ways of 18th-century living through demonstrations and hands on activities at Princeton Battlefield State Park.

To assist with preserving the house and educating the public of the importance of its history, the Clarke House volunteers hold various events each year. Visitors can participate in candle making, play 18th-century games and observe the various ways to cook over an open fire pit. While the demonstration might look much different compared to today's lifestyle, small similarities will shine through, showing how what was done then has continued steadfast through today's modern society. Their mission through 18th-century living history programs, educational presentations plus displays and project fundraising work to foster a public interest and awareness in preserving the building, collections, and grounds of the Thomas Clarke Museum.

Hours of Operation

Princeton Battlefield State Park
500 Mercer Road Princeton, NJ 08540
Wednesday - Saturday 10-12, 1-4,
Sunday 1-4 Closed Monday -Tuesday

RARITAN MILLSTONE HERITAGE ALLIANCE

Membership Contribution

- Membership Fees
- Individual \$35
 - Site \$35
 - Household \$50

- Additional Support Levels
- Benefactor \$1,000
 - Patron \$ 500
 - Sponsor \$ 250
 - Donor \$ 100

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please return this form with your check

To: Raritan Millstone Heritage Alliance
PO Box 5583
Somerset, NJ 08875-5583

Thank you!
Visit our website: raritanmillstone.org

The Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance consists of committed individuals and organizations representing sites within the region of Raritan and Millstone systems. In an area that has continually contributed to the strength of the United States, we seek through our programs to promote, protect and preserve an understanding of our rich historical, cultural and educational heritage as we work to be a model for current and future generations by promoting the rich heritage of our American society.



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Somerset, NJ 08875-5583