



# *The Communiqué*

The Historical Society of Plainfield  
Drake House Museum

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## Message from the President, Nancy A. Piwowar

The Historical Society was fortunate to be the site of two Eagle Scout projects during the winter, spring and summer months. One project was the scanning of over 300 photographs in the archival collection, and the other, recently completed, was the restoration and rehabilitation of the former caretaker's rear yard area. The exterior shed was refurbished and an herb garden was planted which will allow the Society to utilize the rear yard area for outdoor events. The Eagle Scout candidates did GoFundMe events. Both involved the larger community and exceeded expectations. The Eagle Scout shed project received over \$4,000 in-kind contributions from local businesses which included scraping and prepping the shed for paint, donations of paint and topsoil, and discounts at hardware and garden stores.

This past summer, the Society hosted three college interns. All three were local area residents, and one each from Lycoming College, Drew University, and Fairleigh Dickinson University. They were instrumental in scanning a 1,000 page scrapbook and a pre-Civil War autographed quilt. They made a slide show of all the pieces in the quilt. The Society's internship program has enabled young people to give back to their community, earn service hours, gain hands-on experience, and obtain

references for future endeavors. Some of the previous interns from the Drake House have gone to work at the 9/11 Memorial, Newark Museum, Ellis Island, and attend law school.

Major and minor restoration and preservation projects were undertaken concurrent with the Eagle Scout and Internships. The 1746 and 1860's basements had areas of mortar replaced which included a total of 52 bags of mortar being mixed outside and then brought downstairs to the basement areas. A new boiler was installed in the 1746 basement. The plumbing for the toilet was replaced, and a repair and a replacement of one of the steam pipes were completed. A lot going on in this old house!

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## Special "Thanks" to all who contributed to: "Joshua Lang's Eagle Scout Project"

### Scout Leader:

Joshua Lang

### Scouts:

Joshua Lang, Andrew Cunningham, Logan Shepard, David Mild, Joshua Mild, Timmy Coleman, CJ Estevez, Michael Estevez, JP Johnson, Diego Sanchez, Joseph Slingerland, Peter Slingerland, Peter Munkittrick, Kevin Stokes, Tim O'Brien, Danny Fannick, Gerard Cummings, Evan Alvarez, Malcolm Kahora

### Adults:

Justin Lang, Joseph Johnson, Perry Johnson, Robert Lang, Seamus Cunningham, Glenn Fannick

### Supervising Adults and Workers:

Nancy Piwowar, Bill Dorward, and Gerald Piwowar



Pictured from left to right Scouts:  
Evan Alvarez, Tim O'Brien, Joshua Lang

### Business Donors

- \*Height Associates LLC
- \*Huston Lumber
- \*Great Swamp Greenhouses
- \*John Louise, Superintendent of Public Works, City of Plainfield and Public Works Team
- \*Oren K. Dabney, Director of Public Works
- \*JBL Realty Management
- \*Home Depot, Watchung
- \*Riccardi Brothers Paint Store

### Special Thanks

Painting, Etc., ([www.PaintingEtc.net](http://www.PaintingEtc.net)) and their team of workers who prepped the shed for the Scouts to paint, supplied the paint and materials, and power washed the shed.

### Individual Donors

Victoria Griswold, Francis Gallic, Marc & Dawn Hudock, Stephen Delia, Henry Hom, Nancy Piwowar, Barbara Kreder, Gladys Sroczynski, Daniel Wolf, Steve Deduck, Carl Moccia, Deborah Ransom, Munkittrick Family, Glenn Fannick, Carlos & Janette Cardozo, Seamus Cunningham, Robin Kusik, Jennifer Grawehr, Terry Campbell (Drake Relative), Dan Butterfield, David Coletta, Stephanie Carson, Constance Jennings, Justin Almendral, Michael Coletta, Bob Coletta, Robert Meicke, Gregory Allen, Veronica Buffington, Robert Lang, Joe Castro, Logan Shepherd, Timmy Coleman, Joshua Lang, and Laura Ciarrooca.



## 1844 Friendship Quilt

On January 1, 1844, Elder Drake and his wife were gifted a quilt by the ladies of their congregation of First Baptist Church (now First-Park Baptist Church). Inscribed in the blocks of the quilt are the names of the women congregational members and their chosen bible verses. At the center of the quilt reads:

*"The Young Ladies and...Congregation of Plainfield N.J. present this quilt  
Before our Father's throne  
We pour our ardent prayers;  
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one  
Our comforts and our cares.  
To Elder Drake and Wife as a token of their regard..."*

This quilt is believed to have represented the intimate friendship between Reverend Simeon Drake and his wife with the local First Baptist Church. Since the revolutionary war era, quilts have been represented as a symbol of patriotism and warmth. This 175 year-old quilt was found at a second hand shop by a customer who contacted the East Hampton Historical Society in NY. It was analyzed for historical significance. The East Hampton Historical Society contacted the Drake House Museum to return the quilt to its roots. The Drake House interns were responsible for taking photos of the quilt and archiving the text extracted from the quilt. Thanks to their extensive work there is now a record of the names of the people from the Church and the bible verses they chose for the quilt.

## Scrapbook from the 50s Found

In May of 2019, the Drake House Museum with the assistance of three interns, Mayra Moreno, Gabrielle Lugbauer, and JaNaya Stewart, banded together to archive a scrapbook compiled in the 50s. The scrapbook features news articles, press releases, historical photos, exhibits, and community/cultural influences pertaining to the Drake House.

A few of the interns' favorite articles include an exhibit of the Lenape Indians with correspondence from Wardlaw Hartridge students about their experience, a copy of the May 1922 deed, and pictures of the exhibits from the 60's and 70's era. The interns scanned, sorted, and digitally archived the contents of the scrapbook. The scrapbook was approximately 800 pages long. The project was finished the week of Independence Day.

### 2019–2020 Historical Society of Plainfield Board Members

Nancy Piwowar (President), Paul Pannone (1<sup>st</sup> Vice President), Gail Scott Bey (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President), Nancy Jordan (Acting Recording Secretary), Leanne Manna (Treasurer), Larry Bashe, Curtis Brown, Liz D'Aversa, Daleketa Franklin, Nancy Gerald, Taraka Gilbert, Vicky Griswold, Sandy Gurshman, Andrea Kee, John Kozimbo, Diane Pender, & Carla Phoenix



## Twenty-Third Annual Tree Lighting Featuring Restored Dollhouse

Our annual tree lighting event on Friday, December 13, 2019, was well-attended. The children, as well as the adults, had a great time. There was lots of singing of Christmas carols led by our trustee, Daleketa. Each child went home with a gift from Santa. Mike Franklin played Santa for the third year in a row. Our trustee, Vicky, played the piano, and our trustee, Liz and volunteer, Cricket, provided and displayed the refreshments. Our trustee, Carla, lovingly cleaned, repaired and restored the dollhouse using special techniques and old "wives' remedies," such as ketchup to clean the copper roof. She was careful to preserve the integrity of the doll house. Many thanks to all those who donated.

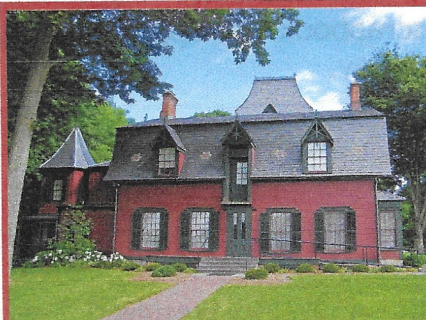
## Membership

The Board of Trustees would like to acknowledge and give a special THANK YOU to those members who have paid their dues in 2019 and to our new members who joined the Society for the first time. These monies help to defray the costs of special events and exhibits.

This upcoming year the Society will host several events such as our Black History celebration, "Sojourner Truth", "Dismantling the Racism Machine," Lost Fort of the Plainfields, Four Centuries in a Weekend, and the annual Christmas Tree Lighting.

We hope that you will continue to join us at upcoming events. If you would like to send a donation in addition to your membership dues or know of someone who would like to send a tax deductible donation to the Society, please mail all donations to The Historical Society of Plainfield, 602 West Front Street, Plainfield, NJ 07060.

Remember, your membership enables us to continue to develop a strong no-cost series of diverse and educational programs that celebrate Plainfield's rich and colorful history.



Support **Historical Society of Plainfield New Jersey**

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## Meet the Interns!

**Gabrielle Lugbauer** is a graduate of the Union County Vocational-Technical High School and a current student of Drew University, where she is majoring in studio arts. She is a resident of Plainfield and has always held a fascination with the history of Plainfield. Gabrielle is currently interning with the Drake House Museum where she has contributed to projects such as archiving a scrapbook from the '50s and photographing a quilt from 1844. She hopes to continue museum work post-college and start her career in the field of curation.

**JaNaya Stewart** is a second generation Plainfielder with avid interests in history, art, gardening, and music. She holds a bachelor's degree in English from Fairleigh Dickinson University. She is interested in Plainfield history as both she and her parents were raised in the City of Plainfield. She particularly enjoys activities that allow her to give back to the city she grew up in.

**Mayra Moreno** is a South Plainfield resident studying biology and music at Lycoming College in Pennsylvania. Initially, she chose the Drake House Museum to satisfy her volunteer requirements, but, working with archiving and photographing historical items has sparked her interest in local history. She hopes to continue helping in the Drake House Museum and learn more about her surrounding community.

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## Membership Donation Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100.00 or more
<input type="checkbox"/> Sr.Citizen	\$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate	\$100.00 or more
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime	\$500.00 or more
		<input type="checkbox"/> Matching Fund \$	_____

Please make checks payable to: **The Historical Society of Plainfield** and mail to:  
**602 West Front Street, Plainfield, NJ 07060-1004.** Membership donations are tax-deductible.



## Save the Dates 2020 Historical Society of Plainfield

### EXHIBIT AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS ***Molly Banta Lecture Series\****

Special Program dates are:

**Saturday, February 29, 2020 - 10:30 AM** at the Plainfield Public Library, Anne Louise Davis  
**“Dismantling the Racism Machine”** by Karen Gaffney \*\*~

**Saturday, March 28, 2020 - 10:30 AM** at the Plainfield Public Library, Anne Louise Davis  
**“Sojourner Truth”** Portrayed by Dr. Daisy Century \*\*

**Sunday, April 19, 2020 – 2 PM** at the Drake House Museum

**“Lost Fort of the Plainfields”** by John Daniel

Exhibit in progress

**“100 Years of Music in Plainfield”** – celebrating the people who started the Plainfield Symphony \*\*

For more details go to the Drake House Museum website: [www.drakehouseplainfieldnj.org](http://www.drakehouseplainfieldnj.org)

All programs and dates subject to change. All programs are at the Drake House Museum unless noted otherwise. Please check the website for up-to-date information.

*\*Molly Banta (1956-2016) was a Trustee of the Historical Society of Plainfield for over 20 years.*

*\*\* These history and educational programs are made possible in part by a 2019 HEART (History, Education, Arts Reaching Thousands) Grant from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders.*

*~ This program is funded by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.*

Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of Department of State through a grant administered by the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, Department of Parks and Recreation; a 2019 HEART (History, Education, Arts Reaching Thousands) Grant from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders; the City of Plainfield; the Plainfield Cultural and Heritage Commission; the Hyde and Watson Foundation; the McCutchen Foundation; and the Gannett Foundation.