

Madison Historical Society

Madison, N.J



*April 2016
Newsletter
4th edition 2015-2016*

The Madison Historical Society Presents

Marta McDowell

Speaking on

“The White House Gardens”



April 19th, 2016 7:00 PM

Chase Room, Madison Public Library

(More on Marta McDowell on page 3)

Historical Society Officers

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Newsletter

Doug Simon

Message from President Linda Connors

Madison's streetscape is rapidly changing. Plots that held one house are subdivided to contain two or more. The nineteenth-century house at the corner of Kings Road and Division has been torn down to be replaced by *six* houses. In 1910 that house and property was owned by Frank Bruen who named it "Lawn View" (Mueller *Atlas of Morris County*). Any trip through the borough reveals spaces where yet another house has been torn down. This has happened in the past, but the pace in recent years has been accelerating. Madison may have reached a tipping point.

The demolition of each historic home detracts from the character and history of Madison. Often the new homes, by changing the streetscape, can change the character of the neighborhood. The older homes with their distinctive character add value and attract newcomers to our town. As an expression of our concern the Board of Trustees has resolved to support efforts to prevent the further demolition of Madison's historic homes.

We believe these demolitions are endangering our Madison history and without an awareness of its history, no place is a community. People are drawn to communities that have preserved a strong sense of historical identity and character. Too much of our history, as represented by the architecture of our homes, has been lost. The critical need is to preserve what remains.

A Request to Members Who Receive the Society Newsletter by Email

If you are a Historical Society member receiving our newsletter via email, please add our address (historicalsociety@rosenet.org) to your email address book. This helps ensure that our emailings to you are not misinterpreted as spam. Also, please let us know if you change your email address.



Society Memberships Hits 100!

As of mid-March, the Madison Historical Society currently stands at 100 memberships representing 149 individuals.

Marta McDowell

Marta McDowell lives, writes and gardens in Chatham, New Jersey. She shares with her husband Kirke Bent, their crested Cockatiel, Sydney, and assorted wildlife. Marta is the author of *Beatrix Potter's Gardening Life* (2013) and *Emily Dickinson's Gardens* (2005) and her latest project is a forthcoming book on the White House Gardens, *All the Presidents' Gardens*, to be released during the summer of 2016. Her garden writing has appeared in popular publications such as *Woman's Day*, *Fine Gardening* and *The New York Times*. Scholars and specialists have read her essays on American authors and their horticultural interests in the journals *Hortus* and *Arnoldia*.



Marta teaches landscape history and horticulture at the New York Botanical Gardens. She has lectured widely both here and in England including delivering the Beatrix Potter Society's Linder Lecture at the Sloane Club in London. Marta interned at Wave Hill, Frelinghuysen Arboretum, the Royal Horticultural Society's Rosemoor in Devon, England and the Chelsea Physic Garden. She worked as a horticulturist for five years at Reeves-Reed Arboretum in Summit, N.J. Marta serves on the Board of the N.J. Historical Garden Foundation at the Cross Estate.

Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen at Annual Dinner



Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen will be the principle speaker at the Madison Historical Society's annual dinner and meeting at Rod's Steak House on May 19, 2016. His topic will be "**The 100th Anniversary of America's National Parks.**"

Congressman Frelinghuysen was born April 29, 1946 and is the U.S. Representative for New Jersey's 11th congressional district, serving since 1995. The district includes most of Morris County.

Frelinghuysen matriculated at Hobart and William Smith College in New York. There he served as president of the Kappa Alpha Society and earned a BA in American history in 1969. He later served with the 93rd Engineer Battalion in Vietnam, which was primarily responsible for building roads and water supply systems in the Mekong Delta.

Currently he serves on the House Committee on Appropriations, is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Defense, Vice Chairman of the Subcommittee on Homeland Security and serves on the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies.



Spotlight on History **The Garden Club of Madison**

By Doug Simon and Cathie Coultas

On March 19, 1922, thirteen women founded The Garden Club of Madison. It was the same year that the Madison Historical Society was created. Shortly after the first meeting the Garden Club's membership was increased to its present limit of fifty active members. At that first meeting Mrs. Colin S. McKinney, was elected Honorary President. Mrs. McKinney had a national reputation based on her creative work breeding iris and other horticultural accomplishments. In 1923 she won the Medal of Achievement of the Garden Club of America.

One of the club's longest continuing relationships began in 1927 with the first flower show at Drew University's Mead Hall. Many more shows followed, including the popular "Rose Festivals," co-sponsored by Madison's commercial growers, which drew thousands of attendees and won critical acclaim throughout the country.



In 1928 members of the Garden Club of Madison on the steps of Mead Hall, Drew University. From Left to right: Mrs. W. Rogers, Mrs. W. A. Starett, Mrs. A. M. Decker, Mrs. M.G. Averett, Mrs. W.R. Baker and Mrs. S.S. Marsh



One of many flower show opening ceremonies held on the steps of Mead Hall, Drew University. Late 1940s.

Inspired by the club's honorary member and Drew University Professor of Botany Florence Zuck, the club began work in 1956 to preserve twenty acres as a forest arboretum and wildlife sanctuary at Drew. This important work continues today through grants and support from the club and the New Jersey Committee of Garden Club of America.

In 1959 vigorous public controversy arose over the proposed development of the nearby Great Swamp as a jetport. Club member and future President Grace Hand was a founding member, along with Helen Fenske and others, of the Great Swamp Committee formed to lead

the frantic race to save thousands of acres. A battle ensued that lasted several years but finally the forces for preservation of the unique ecological area won out. By 1962 the Great Swamp was dedicated as the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge and by 1967, the Great Swamp was declared a permanent wilderness area to be preserved for all time.

Throughout the years the club has maintained historic properties and worked tirelessly to beautify the town of Madison. Among its many projects was the 1985 effort providing plantings as well as financial support to Cheshire Homes for the construction of a garden specifically designed for those in wheelchairs. The club annually makes decorations and wraps gifts for the residents of Mt. Kemble Home as well as bouquets for Pine Acres Nursing Home. Also in the holiday season, club members decorate and donate Christmas wreaths that are sold by the Madison Historical Society which has supported the archeological work at the Forge located on the Luke Miller House property. In addition, the club has a long tradition of donating plantings and flower arrangements as well as books for the library and has been instrumental in enhancing the landscaping at a variety of Madison's well known venues.



Hanging baskets in the downtown area. One of the many projects of the Garden Club of Madison.

The club works with our local businesses and the Downtown Development Committee to beautify downtown Madison with the summer hanging baskets that make Madison so special. The club's annual Mum Sale serves to beautify downtown in the fall. In partnership with the Friends of Madison Shade Trees, an unsightly empty corner lot near the train station was transformed into a beautiful and welcoming little retreat called Rose Garden Park. The lovely pocket park honors Madison's history as Rose City USA. The club continues its contribution to this important Madison landmark through its care and upkeep of the park. It also provides seasonal plantings at the "Millennium Clock" space in the center of town.



Another GCM project, plantings around the Millennium Clock on Waverly Place

The Garden Club of Madison is also very active in the field of conservation. The Club's Conservation Committee helps to preserve the environment by informing members on environmental issues such as clean water, waste reduction, green space, native plants and climate change. One project was the restoration of Madison's Central Green Park.

A major milestone in GCM's history was an invitation, in 1998, to join the Garden Club of America and to be recognized as exemplifying and promoting the ideals of GCA. Today, the Garden Club of Madison continues to initiate and support many community projects, both

financially and through the volunteer work of the members. Each year GCM joins other Madisonians in celebrating Borough pride with a massive town-wide clean up called Madison May Day.

For over ninety-five years the Garden Club of Madison has worked tirelessly to beautify the community.

Events of Interest

Price of Liberty Film Series: This Little Light of Mine.

April 20, 2016, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM, Montclair Public Library. For the third year in a row, the Montclair Historical Society is hosting a film series focusing on Civil Rights and the African American experience with a historical perspective. Each program in The Price of Liberty Film Series consists of excerpts of the documentary plus lively discussion and Q&A with a humanities scholar. All programs take place at the Montclair Public Library, 50 S. Fullerton Avenue, Montclair, on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm. Admission is free. "This Little Light of Mine: The Legacy of Fannie Lou Hamer," explores the life of Fannie Lou Hamer, an impoverished sharecropper who became a powerhouse in the battle for the right to vote during the Civil Rights Movement. Central to this ½-hour film is her testimony at the Democratic National Convention in 1964. Dr. Lillie Edwards hosts this program. - See more at:

<http://montclairhistorical.org/events/price-of-liberty-film-series-this-little-light-of-mine/#sthash.YSURGe5F.dpuf>



Mary Lou Hamer



Press, Justice, Celebrity: A Panel Discussion at the Site of the 1935

Lindbergh Kidnapping Trial. Saturday, April 9, 2016, 2:00 p.m., Hunterdon County Courthouse, 71 Main St. Flemington, NJ. Speakers include Landon Jones, former editor of *People Magazine*; Patty Rhule, Director of Exhibit Development at the Newseum; Edward Tenner, historian; and William O'Shaughnessy, trial lawyer. Tickets are \$25 per person; \$20 for Friends of Morven. To purchase, visit morven.org/Lindbergh.

MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY – ITEMS FOR SALE

Books:

<u>CIVIL WAR JOURNAL OF PRIVATE HEYWARD EMMELL</u> , edited by Jim Malcolm	\$55.00
<u>GERALDINE Rockefeller Dodge</u> by Barbara J. Minick	Hardcover \$20.00 Paper \$10.00
<u>HIDDEN NEW JERSEY</u> by Linda J. Barth, Illustrations by Hazel Mitchell	Hardcover \$17.95 Paper \$ 8.95
<u>BOTTLE HILL AND MADISON</u> by William Parkhurst Tuttle	\$30.00
<u>GROWING UP IN THE ROSE CITY</u> by William F. Redmond, II	\$10.00
<u>IMAGES OF AMERICA – MADISON</u> by John T. Cunningham	\$20.00
<u>IMAGES OF AMERICA – CHATHAM TOWNSHIP</u> by John T. Cunningham	\$20.00
<u>MANSIONS OF MORRIS COUNTY</u> by John W. Rae	\$20.00
<u>ST. VINCENT MARTYR PARISH, 200 YEARS OF FAITH</u> by Michael P. Riccards	\$25.00
<u>THE UNCERTAIN REVOLUTION</u> by John T. Cunningham	\$26.95
<u>CROSSROADS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: A GUIDE TO NEW JERSEY'S AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR SITES</u>	\$ 5.00
<u>NEW JERSEY GOES TO WAR: BIOGRAPHIES OF 150 NEW JERSEYANS CAUGHT UP IN THE STRUGGLE OF THE CIVIL WAR</u> edited by Joseph G. Bilby	\$20.00
<u>LINCOLN'S WHITE HOUSE SECRETARY: THE ADVENTUROUS LIFE OF WILLIAM O. STODDARD</u> edited by Harold Holzer	\$39.95

Maps:

1910 ATLAS OF MORRIS COUNTY by A.H. Mueller	Members \$115
MADISON PLATES 3, 4, 5: Approximate size 22" x 31" each	Non members \$125

Miscellaneous:

Postcards of Historic Madison	\$1.00 each or Set of 4 \$3.75
Rose City Tote Bag	\$10.00
Hartley Dodge Memorial Anniversary Note Cards (Pack of 4)	\$3.00
Christmas Ornament: Historic Sayre House	\$10.00
Christmas Ornament: Luke Miller House	\$10.00
	(2 for \$15.00)
2008, 2009, 2012 Madison Photos on Calendar by Joe Mezzacca, Jr.	\$ 1.00

Madison Historical Society DVD's

The War Years, On the Home Front 1940-1955	\$10.00 each
History of Roses in Madison	Black Church History
Vietnam Oral History Project (with booklet)	Luke Miller, Forging History
Italian History in Madison, Black Church History	Transportation
Historic Photos of Madison, 7 different views	\$30.00 each

The Madison Historical Society

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 148, Madison, 07940. Office located in the
Local History Center of the Madison Library

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