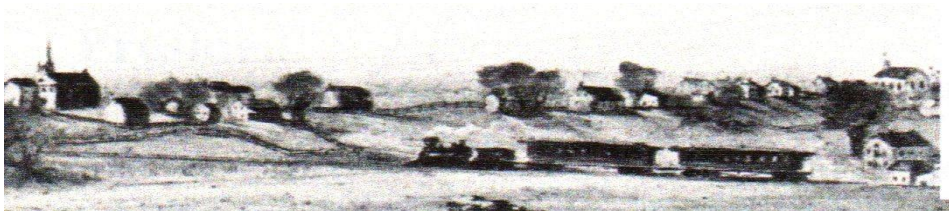


# *Madison Historical Society*

*Madison, N.J*



*November 2015  
Newsletter  
2st edition 2015-2016*



## **The Madison Historical Society's Annual Holiday Wreath Sale and Benefit**

**December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**1:00- 4:00 pm**

**The Hughes House**

**99 Madison Ave., Madison**

- **Wreath Sale**
- **Refreshments**
- **Tour of the  
Historic House  
and Grounds  
\$5 per person**



**(Park on Morris Place and walk through the back.)**

## Historical Society Officers

### President

*Linda Connors*

### Vice President

*Jim Malcolm*

### Corresponding Secretary

*Noreen McManus*

### Recording Secretary

*Laurie Hagerich*

### Treasurer

*David Luber*

### Custodian

*Kate Malcolm*

### Trustees

*Cathie Coultas*

*Kay Leary*

*Judy Seery*

*Stu Shippey*

*Doug Simon*

*Susan Simon*

### Newsletter

*Doug Simon*

## Message from President Linda Connors

A Museum of Madison History has long been a goal of the Madison Historical Society. Various options have been examined and sometimes reluctantly discarded. We were hopeful that the unused space in the Madison train station might be a possible venue and we worked diligently to that end. Ultimately, it was not to be. Currently we are working with the Borough of Madison to create a museum in the to-be-renovated east wing of the Hartley Dodge Memorial. Although we are relying on the borough to renovate the space in *their* building, the Society will fund, through bequests and gifts, the cost of creating a museum.

The Society is excited about this possibility and it does seem to be an ideal solution. With that space the Society can create a museum that Madison will be proud of. A museum in Hartley Dodge would also fulfill Mrs. Dodge's wish that the Memorial Building contain a Museum of Madison History.

Renovation of Hartley Dodge is currently on hold pending the outcome of several grant applications. The borough is understandably reluctant to spend borough dollars in this anti-tax environment especially during an election season. We are asking you, supporters of the Madison Historical Society and its work, to be outspoken with borough officials about the need for a Museum of Madison History. The story of Madison—of the impact of the railroad, the importance of the rose industry, the ongoing influence of immigrants and immigration, the critical role played by Mrs. Dodge—deserves to be recorded, publicized and celebrated. A museum will do that. We need your help in carrying the message.

## For the love of history...

Members of the Madison Historical Society do not limit their interest in history and preservation to the society alone, but serve in various capacities in other organizations with similar missions and visions. For example:

- **Kate Malcolm** serves as Vice-President, Northern New Jersey for the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey. **Dorothy Pietrowski** serves as Membership Chair.
- **Susan Simon** is former President of MAGS (Morris Area Genealogy Society) and currently serves as its Vice-President.
- **Dave Luber** serves as a member of the Madison Historical Preservation Commission as well as Secretary on the Board of Trustees of the Madison Public Library.
- **Cathie Coultas** serves as Secretary for the Madison Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Committee whose mission is to oversee the Open Space Fund and review applications for funding. She is also a member of the Madison Advisory Committee on Parks which oversee the historic Luke Miller property including the Forge.
- **Kay Leery** is currently the Historian for the Borough of Madison.
- **Jim Malcolm** has been a judge at New Jersey History Day for the past 5 years.

## The Hughes House\*

The Madison Historical Society's annual wreath sale and benefit will take place this year at the Hughes home, 99 Main St. in Madison. The American Foursquare house was built in 1903. Moving from Morris Plains, the Hughes bought the house in 2000 saving it from teardown and new development. The house was considerably distressed and for the better part of a year the Hughes devoted considerable time, effort and hundreds of thousands of dollars for its renovation and preservation. When



they first moved into the house, they established residence in the basement. There was no functioning bathroom and both the plumbing and electrical systems had to be completely reworked and a lot of plaster repaired. Among the notable features of the house retained in the preservation process were the unpainted chestnut wood trim throughout the first floor, an original alabaster overhead light fixture, several original leaded stained glass windows, original wallpaper in the formal parlor and dining area and the original coal cooking stove from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the kitchen.

For their efforts, the Madison Historic Preservation Committee presented the Hughes its first ever Historic Preservation Award on May 8, 2001.

\*Information for this article was obtained from Rick Hartten, "Preservationists cheer a success," Madison Eagle, May 17, 2001.

## The Rose City on "Drive By History"

On Wednesday, October 14, society trustee **Susan Simon** appeared on the NJTV's "Drive By History," a television program that celebrates the local histories of communities around the state of New Jersey. The program was anchored by Ken Magos and Cindy Perman. The show focused on Madison as a major center for the rose growing industry.



Susan Simon, Cindy Perman and Ken Magos on "Drive By History"



## Spotlight on History

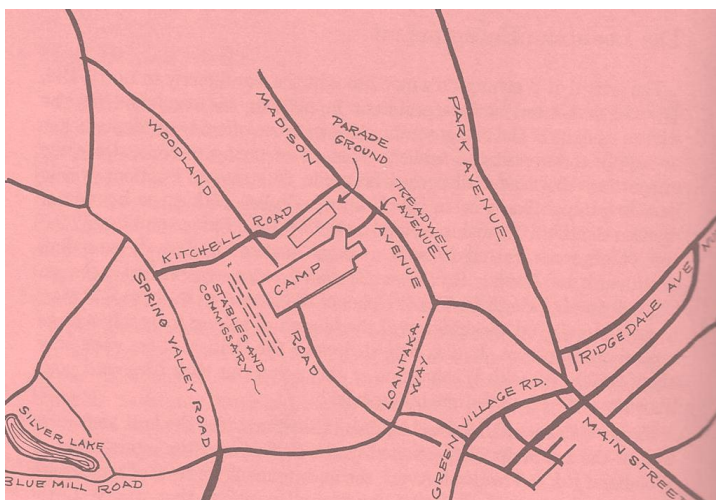
# Did Washington Have an Encampment in the Madison Area?

By Doug Simon

General George Washington's encampment in Morristown during the winter of 1779 is well known. But for years controversy has swirled around the question, did General Washington have an encampment of revolutionary militia in the Madison region two years earlier in 1777? There is no question that a sizeable contingent of the Continental Army, encamped in the Morristown area in 1777 and that Washington himself was lodged in Morristown at the old Freeman Tavern on the west side of the Morristown Green. But for years historians believed that as part of that operation Washington had an encampment of log buildings in what was known as the Lowantica (Loantaka) or Spring Valley somewhere near what is now Treadwell Avenue in the region of Bottle Hill, later Madison. But over the years arguments began to surface that the camp might never have existed based upon the fact that no documentary or substantial physical evidence of the site has ever been found. An archaeological dig led by Drew faculty member Dr. Robert Bull and historical society member Sandra Fulda, found no physical evidence of the encampment. Perhaps most telling is that not one of Washington's published letters or orders refers to the log buildings, nor are they mentioned in any other contemporary written records studied to date. Regardless, there is one eye-witness account and what might be termed considerable "indirect" or circumstantial evidence that, in fact, the encampment was a reality.



John Warner Barber Woodcut of the 1777 Morristown encampment.



Copy of Loantaka Valley campsite map drawn by William Parhurst Tuttle from description by his father, the Rev. Samuel L. Tuttle. Map as it appeared in Frank J. Esposito, *The Madison Heritage Trail*, The Madison bicentennial Heritage Committee, Madison New Jersey, 1985.

The story begins with one Silas Brookfield who lived nearby the campsite and gave very clear, precise, and vivid account of its existence to Joseph F. Tuttle. Later the story of the encampment appeared in William Parkhurst Tuttle's 1916 book, *Bottle Hill and Madison: Glimpses and Reminiscences From its Earliest Settlement to the Civil War*.<sup>1</sup> According to the Brookfield/Tuttle account some three hundred log cabins were made to accommodate roughly 3000 men. As relayed in Tuttle's book, "The elevated plateau just north of the camp and adjoining the road now called Kitchell Avenue, was used for general reviews and musters."<sup>2</sup> The encampment was according to Brookfield, located on the property of Isaac Pierson and John Easton.

What were the circumstances that led to the establishment of the camp? Near the middle of December 1776, Commander in Chief of His

Majesty's Army, Sir William Howe, believed the rebellion was crushed. The revolutionary army had been driven from New York, pursued through New Jersey and forced to cross the Delaware River. But Howe was wrong. With almost lightening speed that bewildered and panicked the British force, the Americans struck at

Trenton on December 26 and again at Princeton on January 3. The British pulled back to New Brunswick some 60 miles from their objective, Philadelphia. General Washington originally hoped to capture New Brunswick where he would destroy all the British supplies and ammunition. But his officers warned against attempting too much. The men were exhausted, many having not slept for two nights and a day. It was then that Washington marched his men first to Pluckemin and northward toward Morristown, with a large contingent encamped near Bottle Hill.<sup>3</sup>

But as noted earlier in this article, there appears to be a dearth of hard evidence that the Bottle Hill encampment ever existed. The only thorough first-hand account came from Silas Brookfield as he relayed it to Joseph F. Tuttle. Regardless, there remains some credible reasons to believe that it was real. Theodore Thayer in his 1979 book *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, lays out a number of reasons supporting the encampment's existence.<sup>4</sup>

“In the first place,” Thayer writes, “Silas Brookfield lived nearby and would have been an eyewitness. Although many years had passed since the event took place, it would seem improbable that he could have been mistaken or confused. Furthermore, his facts about the camp were clear, precise and vivid.”<sup>5</sup>

Second, Thayer writes, when Washington arrived in Morris County, he had no alternative but to house his troops in private homes, barns and other available buildings and we have considerable documentation that this was done in Chatham and Bottle Hill. It was a period when at Washington's insistence, the men were participating in a massive inoculation for small pox and it would have been difficult to build a log camp during that period. But afterward there was considerable motivation to construct such a camp. It would have relieved the families whose homes were already crowded. Also, Washington was expecting reinforcements and putting even more troops into the homes would have been difficult.<sup>6</sup>

Third, as asserted by Thayer, there were military reasons for concentrating soldiers in a camp where they could be mustered quickly for action should the enemy attack. A camp would also facilitate drilling, promote discipline, and simplify supply. More important, the Loantaka site was strategically sound. Thayer writes, “It protected on the east and south in the direction of the enemy by the first range of the Watchungs and by the Passaic River Long Hill, and the Great Swamp. Fairly near Morristown, troops at Lowantica could quickly fall back to stronger ground if necessary.”<sup>7</sup>

Beyond these arguments, we do have snippets of evidence of the encampment. Major Robert Erskine was Washington's cartographer and he was charged with the task of making a map of every district occupied by the army. One of his maps was a sketch of Bottle Hill and Chatham.<sup>8</sup> We also note that General “Mad” Anthony Wayne, one of Washington's principal officers, was quartered in Sayre House in Bottle Hill and we know that Washington frequented the Luke Miller home on Ridgedale in 1777-80, perhaps to review the encampment at Bottle Hill. At the turn of the century, residents of the region reportedly found rock piles from the chimneys of the soldiers' huts.<sup>9</sup> And finally, there is a letter from Joseph Eggleston, Jr., to his father, Joseph Eggleston, written between May 27 and May 30, 1777. In the letter, he discusses the Continental Army encampment at Bottle Hill, near Morristown, New Jersey.<sup>10</sup>



**Major Robert Erskine, Gen.  
Washington's  
cartographer.**

So did the Bottle Hill encampment really exist? The consensus by most historians is that it did. However, because the evidence is sketchy, it remains shrouded in a degree of mystery.

<sup>1</sup>William Parkhurst Tuttle, *Bottle Hill and Madison: Glimpses and Reminiscences From Its Earliest Settlement to the Civil War*, Salem, MA: Higginson Book Company, 1916, pp.20-26.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 22

<sup>3</sup> “The First Winter Encampment in Morris County, : Morristown National Historic park.

[http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/hh/7hh7b.htm](http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/hh/7hh7b.htm)

<sup>4</sup> Theodore Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, The Morris County Heritage Commission, 1975.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 180

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 180

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 180-181

<sup>8</sup> Tuttle, p. 26. For background on Erskine see: “Robert Erskine 1735-1780,” Ringwood Manor.

[www.rinwoodmanor.org/robert-erskine.html](http://www.rinwoodmanor.org/robert-erskine.html)

The Erskine maps are held by the New York Historical Society.

<sup>9</sup> Barbara S. Parker, *Tours of Historical Madison*, Madison: Madison Historical Society, 1983, pp. 19-20. From: Frank J. Esposito, *The Madison Heritage Trail*, The Madison Bicentennial Heritage Committee, 1985, p. 35.

<sup>10</sup> University of Virginia, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, Charlottesville, VA. Letter from Joseph Eggleston, Jr. to his father Joseph Eggleston, May 27-30, 1777.

## Events of Historical Interest

**Digital Preservation Event.** Sunday, November 15, 2015, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Milburn Free Public Library. The Milburn-Short Hills Historical Society will sponsor this digital preservation event to help residents and visitors preserve personal collections of print, photographs, slides, and audio-visual material, including VHS videos, 8 mm and 16 mm movies. The society partnered with Digital Memory Media, a leading provider of digital imaging services to provide services to attendees. Digital Memory Media advisors will be on hand to counsel patrons on the best way to digitally preserve their collections. Materials can be brought to the library the day of the session. Once scanned and digitalized, patrons will be notified of a date and time to retrieve their material, at the historical society museum at the Short Hills train station.

**Native Americans in the Revolutionary War.** Sunday, November 22, 2015. 1:00pm – 2:00 pm. Ford Mansion, 30 Washington Place, Morristown, NJ 07960. Which side would you support in the American Revolution, if you were a Native-American? Find out what influenced their choice and discover the role of Native-Americans during the Revolutionary War on special Ford Mansion tours. For more information call 973-539-2016 ext. 210.



## 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>FROM HERE TO HEAVEN</u> by Thomas Sapio	SALE ITEM! \$12.00
<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

<i>Madison Historical Society DVD's</i>	\$10.00
each	

The War Years, On the Home Front 1940-1955	Black Church History	
History of Roses in Madison	Luke Miller, Forging History	
Vietnam Oral History Project (with booklet)	Transportation	
Italian History in Madison, Black Church History		
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

**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 10:30 am to 3:30 pm and by appointment.

**Office Phone:** 973-377-0722 x8

**Contact:** President Linda Connors 973-377-8662

**Web:** [www.madisonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.madisonhistoricalsociety.org)

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