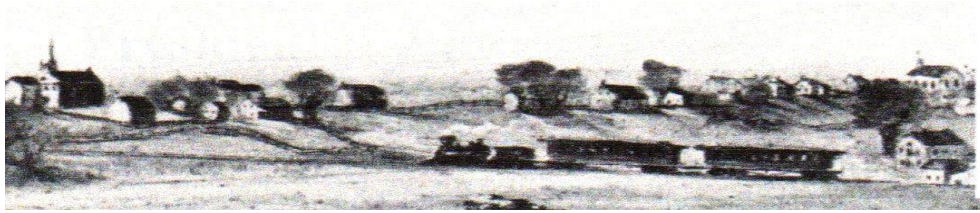


# Madison Historical Society

Madison, N.J



November 2022  
Newsletter  
2nd edition 2022-2023

## 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Madison Historical Society

November marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Madison Historical Society. It was on November 13, 1922 that a group of civic minded citizens successfully raised the funds to move the historic and beloved Madison Inn from the corner of Waverly and Main to save it from destruction in order to make way for the First National Bank. Those citizens formed the nucleus of the newly founded Madison Historical Society. Throughout this year, the Society has engaged in a number of activities to celebrate the anniversary. Some were deliberately designed to celebrate the event. Others were not, but nevertheless, fell into the calendar year and should be included.

### *The Banner Project*



In September of 2022, thirteen banners were put up on Main St. downtown, Waverly Place, and Lincoln St. Images from Madison's rich history appear on each side of the banners. Among them are the Luke Miller House, the railroad and early railroad station, George Yeaman, instrumental in passing the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment ending slavery, Betty Baumgarner, the first woman mayor of Madison, William O. Stoddard, President Abraham Lincoln's Third Secretary, the Reverend Rebecca Lassiter of the Bethal AME Church.

### *The Museum Agreement*

While not officially designated as a celebration event, one could certainly assert that things got rolling with the signing of an agreement with the borough government to house a Madison Historical Museum in the east wing of the Hartley Dodge Memorial Building. The Society had been looking for a place to house a museum for decades and the east wing of Borough Hall seemed ideal. On February 28, 2022 the agreement was signed by Mayor Bob Conley and society president Virginia Laughlin.



Madison Mayor Bob Conley and Historical Society President Ginie Laughlin sign the official lease enabling the Madison Historical Society to establish a museum in the east wing of the Hartley Dodge

**Continued on page 3**

## Historical Society Officers

### President

Virginia Laughlin

### Vice President

Dave Luber

### Corresponding

### Secretary

Herman Huber

### Recording Secretary

Anne Meyer

### Treasurer

Jim Malcolm

### Custodian

Kate Malcolm

### Historian

Nikolina Uzicanin

### Membership Chair

Judy Seery

### Museum Chair

Susan Simon

### Newsletter Editor

Doug Simon

### Trustees

Nancy Adamczyk

Linda Connors

Howard Craig

Robert Dunne

Rebecca Fields

Johanna Glazewski

Laurie Hagerich

Noreen McManus

Susan Simon

Dorothy Pietrowski

(Emeritus)



## Message From President Virginia Laughlin

The Madison Historical Society was established on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1922 when a group of concerned residents got together to save the old building known as the Madison House for historic purposes.

As 2022 draws to a close, so does our centennial celebration. I hope you have seen our anniversary banners all over town and the archival display in the Coldwell Banker window on Main St. I also hope you were pleased to see the Society as the lead story in 'Madison Living' and in a lecture given by Doug Simon in the Madison Library Lecture Series. Our celebration was capped off by our participation in Bottle Hill Day. Visitors to our booth were invited to take a chance to win one of three bottles of 'Bottle Hill Honey' (made and donated by our own Trustee, Blair Conley) and 'Guess the Gummy Bears' (it was their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary too!). Congratulations to the winners of both contests!

Our intention was to raise the profile of the Society in the community. We wished to bring the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the town in a very public way. I thank everyone in the Society who helped to organize our year long celebration. And I am most grateful to all those who came before us, who saw the need and had the desire to record and maintain the history of our wonderful town.

## Did You Know?

- Did you know that Madison was an important part of the Underground Railroad helping escaped slaves flee the South. Town citizens Baxter Sayre, Henry Keep, and Alfred M. Treadwell were all important abolitionists. Treadwell's Bousibin Manor on Treadwell Ave. had one of its porch columns hollowed out and containing a stairway which led to a cave and the estate's barn?
- Did you know that one of Madison's most famous citizens was a thoroughbred horse named Fashion. Owed by William Gibbons, Fashion raced in the mid-1800s and was inducted in the Racing Hall of Fame in 1980?
- Did you know that Madison's first newspaper was called *The Eye Opener*?



Fashion

## *Continued from page 1*

### *Window Display*



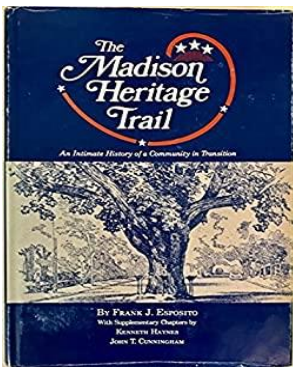
Coldwell Banker in the center of the commercial downtown, was gracious in letting us install a window display celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Madison Historical Society. The display includes a mid-1920s pressed steel train engine that came from the Moor Estate, a hat worn by Harold Downs in 1916 while participating in the Madison Fife and Drum Corps, and a whiskey bottle sold at the Williams Brown Drugstore and Apothecary on the corner of Main and Waverly in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### *Lectures on Madison History and Historical Society*

On September 22, Susan and Doug Simon presented a lecture on “The History of Madison” to over one hundred residents of the Del Webb 55+ housing development on Park Avenue next to the Jet training facility. Five days later, on September 27, Doug presented an expanded version of the same program, “The History of Madison and the Madison Historical Society” in a Zoom lecture for the Madison Public Library with again, with a registered audience of over 100.



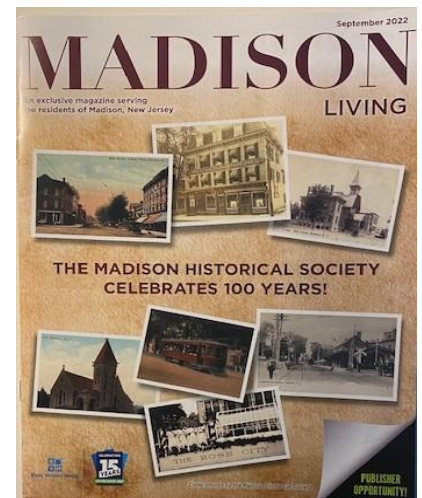
### *A Portrait of the Rose City, A History of Madison, N.J.*

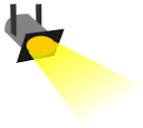


Work continues on the updating and rewriting of a new edition of the book *The Madison Heritage Trail*, under its new title, *The Portrait of the Rose City, the History of Madison, New Jersey*. Dr. Frank Esposito returns as the principal author with the guidance from an advisory committee of historical society members and Madison Public Library Trustees. The committee has been actively researching and helping to write on various topics. The first thirteen chapters will come from the first thirteen chapters of the *Madison Heritage Trail* with additional material being added. The remaining three chapters will consist of new material from the 1980s to the present, including how the coronavirus affected Madisonians and their reaction.

### *Madison Living Magazine*

In their September edition, the monthly magazine *Madison Living* published a wonderful cover story by Stacey McEvoy, the magazine’s Content Coordinator. The article traces the historical origins of the Madison Historical Society as well as the many activities it regularly engages in. Also receiving attention is the agreement with the Borough of Madison for the East Wing of the Hartley Dodge Memorial and the variety of activities within the borough celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Look for more articles on the history of Madison in future editions.





## Spotlight on History

# Madison's Oldest Continuous Business: And No End In Sight

by Herman Huber

*"I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter."*  
Winston Churchill, 1947

At his death in 1965, had he then been a client of the Burroughs & Kohr Funeral Home at 106 Main St., they would have undoubtedly prepared Winston Churchill to make an excellent impression on his Maker. For by that year, the funeral home had already been in operation for 145 years. Today named the Burroughs, Kohr, & Dangler Funeral Home, remarkably, it began life 5 years before Revolutionary War hero General Marquis de Lafayette made his grand return to Madison in 1825.



It was Caleb C. Burroughs, an early settler of Bottle Hill, and a future deacon in the Presbyterian Church, who gained a reputation for cabinetwork and furniture repair, and opened up shop in 1820 near the corner of Main St. and Greenwood Ave. He had served an apprenticeship with Elihu Britton for 5 years in Elizabethtown, starting at age 16. Soon he added the construction of coffins and funeral direction to his burgeoning business.<sup>1</sup> Back in the 1820s coffins were handmade from local pine or walnut trees and cost about \$7, according to James Dangler (a future owner). Ever inventive, Caleb developed a particular method of using ice to preserve the body. In part due to the carnage of the Civil War, more modern embalming methods became increasingly popular around 1900.<sup>2</sup>

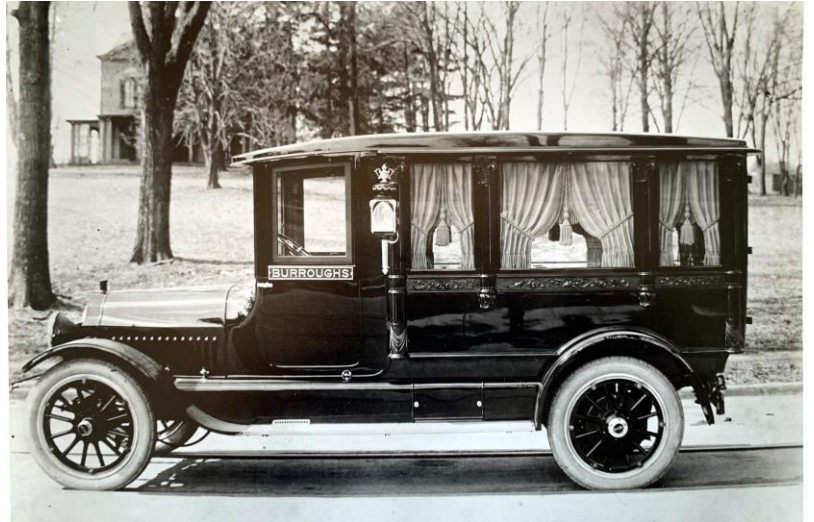
Not surprisingly perhaps, Ms. Betty Dangler, owner and current president, has many precious historical artifacts in her possession. One of the most amazing is the actual hand-written ledger used by Caleb Burroughs to keep his accounts. Extremely fragile, with the earliest entry dated August 31, 1820, the ledger details his business dealings and items of furniture he built for many of Madison's founding families. The first one appears to be for his teacher, Elihu Brittin. And in a sign of the times, all transactions were in British currency - pounds, shillings, and pence.<sup>4</sup>

Caleb's son, Edwin P. Burroughs was brought into the business in 1850 (or 1860), (depending on source) now called C.C. Burroughs and Son, and eventually succeeded his father upon his death in 1885. Edwin also opened a retail furniture wing on site, replacing the hand-made items with manufactured ones. It outlived him by far, lasting until 1954 (or 1945).<sup>5, 5a</sup> It was reputed to have been one of the oldest cabinet-making and furniture store combinations in the country.

Edwin's son, Preston A. Burroughs, entered the business in 1898 or 1903 at the age of 18 or 23 (accounts vary). He had attended Miss Lovell's private school next door, at the corner of Greenwood Ave. and Main St.<sup>5b</sup> The school was soon added to the enlarged physical structure of the furniture store. When Edwin died in 1911, the line of succession continued, as Preston took over the enterprise. During his tenure, he modernized transportation by acquiring their first automotive hearse, a sleek Cunningham, in 1915.<sup>6</sup> He married Lulu Armstrong of Morristown in 1904, and their two daughters married brothers; Margaret married Robert B. Kohr, who eventually became a member of not only the family, but of the business.<sup>7</sup> 1955 was the year that Preston

died, passing the business on to his daughter Margaret, and Robert took over as head of the firm, after having worked there for 22 years.<sup>7a</sup> The year before, the funeral business changed its name to Burroughs and Kohr.<sup>8</sup>

The funeral home has been honored over the years to manage the funerals of prominent people. Alas, Winston Churchill was not one of them. But Marcellus Hartley Dodge Sr. and Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge, two of Madison's most cherished citizens and benefactors, were. Mr. Dodge passed away in December 1963 at age 83, and Burroughs and Kohr was charged with transporting his body, embalming, and providing a copper vault and mahogany casket, among other tasks. The service was at Grace Episcopal Church. When Geraldine Dodge died in August 1973 at age 91, the firm provided similar services to her. They are interred in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, NY, along with their son, Marcellus Hartley Dodge Jr.



By 1979, the descendants of the original family were gone from active involvement. William R. Dangler

Sr. and his son James E. Dangler knew a promising and historic business when they saw one. That year, they purchased it from the partners of Robert Kohr Inc, and the Burroughs, Kohr, and & Dangler Funeral Home in Madison became the latest edition of the more than 200 year old company. In addition to Betty Dangler, her daughter Christine, and cousin Kip manage the running of the business. It continues to be the oldest business in Madison and remarkably has remained in the same location from its humble beginnings, serving the families of Madison and surrounding communities.



#### References

1. *Testimonial Dinner tendered to Preston A. Burroughs...* December 3, 1935 at the Madison Elks' Club.
2. Today's Funeral Directors Seek To Serve The Living As Well. *Daily Record*. February 4, 1979.
3. Interview with Ms. Betty Dangler, July 15, 2022.
4. Morris Funeral Home Observes 150th Year. *Newark News*, October 16, 1970.
5. Ibid.
- 5a. Burroughs and Kohr Observe 150th Anniversary, *NSM Newsletter*, February 1971.
- 5b. see #1.
6. Colleagues in the News. *The Forum (NJ State Funeral Directors' Association)*, December 1970
7. See #4.
- 7a. Burroughs, Kohr & Dangler: From Furniture Store to Funeral Home. *Newjersey hills.com*. October 24, 2019, p. 6.
8. Local Undertaker Heritage Blends Funerals, Furniture. *Madison Eagle*, November 12, 1970.

# Another Successful Bottle Hill Day

October 15 saw another successful Bottle Hill Day for the Madison Historical Society. This year booth featured a drawing for Blair Conley’s honey, a count the Gummie Bears contest, a special edition of the Society newsletter celebrating the organization’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, as well as books, maps and other items for sale. Many people helped to make the day a big success and some featured below. In addition, kudos go out to Nancy Adamczyk, Linda Connors, Kate Malcolm, Blair Conley and high school volunteer Yanyan Li.



**Doug Simon and Ginnie Laughlin**



**Jim Malcolm**



**Rebecca Fields**



**Noreen McManus**



**Howard Craig**



**Patricia Becker**



**Susan Simon**



**Herm Huber**

# MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## ITEMS FOR SALE

### Books:

BOTTLE HILL AND MADISON by William Parkhurst Tuttle	\$30.00
CARING FOR YOUR HISTORIC HOUSE by Heritage Preservation & NPS	\$15.00
CIVIL WAR JOURNAL OF PRIVATE HEYWARD EMMELL by Jim Malcolm	\$20.00
COLLEGE OF SAINT ELIZABETH by Sister Mary Ellen Gleason, et al.	\$20.00
CROSSROADS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: A Guide to New Jersey's American Revolutionary War Sites	\$ 5.00
DREW UNIVERSITY by John T Cunningham & Regina Deverio	\$20.00
GOLDEN AGE OF DOG SHOWS, Morris & Essex Kennel Club	\$40.00
HIDDEN NEW JERSEY by Linda Barth -	Soft=\$ 8.95 / Hard =\$17.95
HISTORY OF INVENTING IN NEW JERSEY by Linda Barth	\$20.00
IMAGES OF AMERICA –	\$20.00
CHATHAM & CHATHAM TOWNSHIP by John T. Cunningham	
CRAFTSMAN FARM by Heather V. Stivison	
FLORHAM PARK by John T. Cunningham	
MADISON by John T. Cunningham	
MANSIONS OF MORRIS COUNTY by John Rae	
MORRISTOWN by Joan M. Williams	
SUMMIT by Patricia E. Meola	
LINCOLN'S WHITE HOUSE SECRETARY edited by Harold Holzer	\$39.95
MADISON, THE ROSE CITY: A NEW SPRINGTIME ed. Woody Kerkeslager	\$20.00
MEMORIES ENTWINED WITH ROSES by Ruth Churchill	\$15.00
POSTCARD HISTORY SERIES: Morristown by Bonnie Lynn-Nadzeika	\$20.00
NEW JERSEY GOES TO WAR: Biographies of 150 New Jerseyans	
Caught Up in the Civil War edited by Joseph G. Bilby	\$20.00
ST. VINCENT MARTYR PARISH, 200 YEARS OF HISTORY by Michael P. Riccards	\$25.00
THE UNCERTAIN REVOLUTION by John T. Cunningham	\$27.00

### Maps:

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

### Miscellaneous:

Christmas Ornament: Historic Sayre House or Luke Miller House	<b>2 for \$15.0</b> \$10.00
Note Cards: Hartley Dodge Memorial (Pack of 4)	\$ 3.00
Photo Prints: Historic Madison, 7 different views	\$30.00@
Postcards: Historic Madison	\$1.00 each or Set of 4 for \$ 3.75
Tote Bag: Rose City	\$10.00

### Madison Historical Society DVD's

\$10.00 each

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

**USED BOOKS: VARIOUS TITLES, ALSO FOR SALE AT DISCOUNTED PRICES.**

## **The Madison Historical Society**

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

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

**Office Hours:** Due to covid, appointments are required when the office is  
open on Thursdays. Masks are recommended.

**Contact:** President Virginia Laughlin, 973-593-4875

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

**Email:** [historicalsociety@rosenet.org](mailto:historicalsociety@rosenet.org)