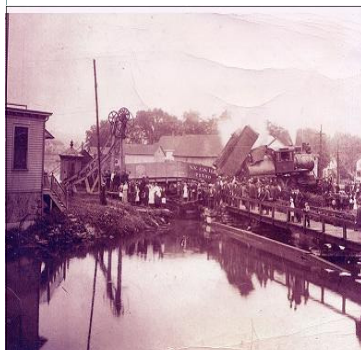




Museum House First Anniversary



100th Anniversary of the Great Dover

Canalboat-Train Crash

*Look for details of the
event on June 12, 2005
during the Flea Market*

**(See complete Canal-Boat
story on page 3.)**

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DOVER-In October 2004, the historical society celebrated its first year of ownership of the Dr. Arthur W. Condict house located at 55 W. Blackwell St. In keeping with the society's contractual agreement with the Dover Presbyterian Church, trustee **Jim Johnson** submitted the following required report:

"The exterior of the house has been completely repainted by Dukes Painting of Dover. This includes all the trim, railings and the rear three-story fire escape.

Carpentry work was done to replace about one-half of the cedar shingles on the four peaks and the second story porch.

The Region Oil Plumbing Department re-piped and revalved the water service. The town replaced the shut off valve under the sidewalk. Region also replaced over half of the copper piping and added shutoff valves to upgrade the basement water system.

A 30-yard dumpster was filled twice with the old house carpeting, padding and all the other junk items that were abandoned by previous tenants.

Donated signs include a small "Dover Museum" sign on the front door and a "Dover Area Historical Society" sign on the side porch and a large billboard sign in the church parking lot welcoming the Dover Museum.

Groups and individuals have already begun restoration and repair work on the interior of the building. The Masonic Lodge, Dover Rotary, Bob Wagner of Williams Auto Body, Frank Poolas, Rich Kelly and the East Dover Social Club have either started work or about to begin. Other groups and individuals have expressed interest.

The stained glass window in the front room by the main door has been restored by Bonnie of Rockaway Glass.

Electrical work is nearing completion throughout the entire house, fire

extinguishers installed and soon to be installed fire alarm system.

A new authentic antique front door will soon be installed donated by Maggie Fischer and Bob Starling.

The 10 to 12 code violations uncovered by the town's inspection have been resolved and soon a Certificate of Occupancy will be obtained.

The original contract was signed on October 23, 2003 and at that time a five-year timeline for work was proposed. It is my opinion that by the summer of 2005, the historical society will be over half way of that five-year plan.

This is certainly an expression of the enthusiasm and dedication of the society's members, the town and the people who value the preservation of Dover's history. Anyone wanting to view the ongoing interior work need only contact a society member and request a walk through." Sincerely, **Jim Johnson**. (See *Schedule of Events* to find out

Kekuku Guitar Festival Huge Success

DOVER-It took the combined energies of the Dover Renaissance and the Dover Area Historical Society to pull off one of the finest events Dover has ever experienced. It caught the attention of steel guitar enthusiasts from around the country who focused on Dover for one day in October 2004.

The first annual **Joseph**

Kekuku Steel Guitar Festival was attended by over 200 people who filled the American Legion Hall to hear and enjoy Hawaiian Steel Guitar Music and Hula dancing from some of the prettiest girls outside of Hawaii. The Hawaiian style food was delicious and everyone who attended, plans on attending this year's two-day event on October 8th and 9th 2005.



Left to right: **Robin Foster, Mike Esposito, Bob Garth & Jack Delaney**
Photo by Rick Kelly

2005 Paid Membership (Jan. - Dec. '05)

The following members have paid their annual dues for 2005.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Dr. A.L. & Jean Baker, Hopatcong
Joan & Alan Bocchino, Dover
James Brooks, Ocean City
Curtis & Lois Brown, Lancaster, PA
Harriet Buono, Dover
Al Ciardi, Dover
George Coulthard, Dover
Evelyn Gilbert, Florida
David & Karen Glaser, Dover
Victor & Ellen Guadagno, Sparta
Clifford Johnson, Wharton
Patricia Kalena, Dover
Richard Kelly, Dover
Marilyn Martin, Cottage Grove,
MINN
Richard & Barbara Newman, Dover
Frank Poolas, Dover

Mr. Wm Richardson, Mt.Arlington
Tuttle Funeral Home, Randolph
Kay Walker, Dover
JoAnne Zarger, Mine Hill

SUSTAINING

Jim & Verna Johnson, Dover

FAMILY

Penny & Jack Bennett, Dover
Russell & Edith Fine, Medford, DE
John & Caroline Huntzinger, Milford,
DE
Byard & Linda Miller, Kissimmee, FL
Dr. Hugh & Minerva Miller, Dover, DE
Karl & Ginny Miller, Hayes, VA
Duncan & Dorothy Smith, Silver
Springs, MD

INDIVIDUAL

Cindy Mahoney, Dover

SENIOR

Faith Andres, Dover
Dave & Lynn Davis, Lady Lakes, FL
Alice Erickson, Freehold
Elizabeth Huelsenbeck, Rockaway
Charlotte Morgan Luer, Denville
Helen Peterson, Dover
Donald Seath, Wharton
K. Robert Thompson, Denville

Membership dues are accepted anytime between January and December for the current year. We depend on your membership and support. Thank You, **Pat Kalena**, Chairman, Membership Committee.

Please make checks payable to:
Dover Area Historical Society
PO Box 609
Dover, New Jersey 07802-0609

Dover's Oil Lamp

You've probably hear the old story of the Oil Lamp that kept the Temple's eternal flame alight for a miraculous eight days. Well Dover has its own oil lamp, but in a slightly different version. Dover's oil lamp sits in the window of the museum house at 55 W. Blackwell Street. In Dover's case, we don't want to see the oil lamp on. Dover's oil lamp "on" means the oil-heat in the house is "off". In Dover's case, the oil lamp is connected to a temperature-regulated thermostat. If the temperature in the house goes below 40 degrees, the lamp goes "on". When the lamp is "on", the inside of the house is "cold" and the pipes may be freezing. If you should ever drive by the house, day or night, and notice the oil lamp on, please notify someone from the historical society or the church immediately. (973) 361-6205.



Performers from Washington, D.C. perform at Kekuku Concert inside the American Legion Hall. Photo courtesy of Jack Bennett

Upcoming Events and Activities of the Historical Society

Tues. Feb. 15th – 7:30 pm
Dover Moose Lodge

Historical Society meeting.

History of Post Cards

No Charge – Refreshments served.

Mon. Feb. 21st – 7 – 9pm
Museum House Work

Come and join in cleaning, repairing and renovating the museum house. Or just come by, hang out and talk about Dover history. A great get-together for those who love local history.

Mon. Mar. 7th 7 – 9pm
Museum House Work
(Bring a friend)

Tues. Mar. 15th – 7:30pm
Dover Moose Lodge
Historical Society meeting

History of Dover's Morris Canal
No Charge – Refreshments served

Mon. Mar. 21st 7 – 9 pm
Museum House Work

Mons. April 4 & 18th 7 – 9 pm
Work at Museum House
(Bring two friends)

Tues. April 19th – 7:30 pm
Dover Moose Lodge
Bon Ton Movie Night
(Movie to be announced)

No charge – Refreshments served.

*(These programs are dates reserved.
Actual programs may change.)*

2005 Proposal to Presbyterian Church on Condict House Renovations

The following letter was submitted to the Presbyterian Church of Dover by Jim Johnson, trustee on behalf of the Dover Area Historical Society.

"January 7, 2003 To Pastor Dave Myers. The Church Trustees moved to allow the Historical Society of Dover to go ahead with three proposed plans at the Dr. Condict House (Church House) at 55 W. Blackwell St.

1. There is concern with the porch on the east side of the building. Originally, there was a one-story porch at the first level. At some time in the past, a second section was added and enclosed. This addition has caused the pillars on the outside corner to sink and pull away from the house. Society member, **Leroy Varga**, a professional engineer, contacted two structural engineers. They were concerned with

the safety of the structure. Our proposal is to remove the second level enclosed porch and restore it to its original design.

2. We have had offers to construct a porch in the front of the house as shown in original historic photos of the house. Town building permits have been applied for, which would allow this construction in the future.

3. A fund raiser is seriously being considered to build a Memorial Patio in the yard at the rear of the house in the grass area. This would be paved with donated memorial bricks with the names of forbearers associated with Dover. Sale of the bricks will produce funds to refurbish the Dover Dogs in front of town hall."

The above items were presented to the

Presbyterian Board of Trustees on Tuesday 1/5/05. Motions made and passed with instructions to present the same to the next Session Meeting.

TOWNWIDE YARD SALE
AT THE
DOVER FLEA MARKET
 Sunday * June 12th * 8 am – 5
 \$20
 (First time Vendors)
 \$15
 (Returning Vendors)
 Sponsored by the
 Dover Area Historical Society
 For reservations, call (973) 366-0629

Dover's Famous Canal Boat-Train Crash Turns 100 Years

DOVER-The only recorded train wreck between a canal-boat and a train in the history of the Morris Canal happened in downtown Dover. On June 12, 1905, a collision occurred between the Central Railroad of NJ engine #410 and a Morris Canal boat at the Guard Lock in Dover, directly behind the Central House Hotel. The train's brakes failed to operate properly. The train crashed through the drawbridge, which was open to permit a boat to pass. The engineer was **Henry Schafer** and the boat captain was **George Meyers**. Miraculously, Captain Meyers, his wife and sleeping 2-year old child were not injured.

Neither was the train engineer.

According to **Benjamin Hosking**, "about 70-years ago when I was 10 or 12, I lived in Dover, not far from the N.J. Central Railroad Station. Baseball was a popular sport of that time. (**John McGraw, Christy Mathewson, Ty Cobb, and Hans Wagner** were our heroes.) We were playing ball in the open space between Clinton & Pequannock Sts. and the railroad freight station when we heard the whistle of a railroad engine blowing continuously. In those days, on poles along the railroad tracks there were strung many telegraph wires. We looked up at these wires and they were all vibrating wildly.

We looked down the track toward

the east and saw a railroad steam locomotive in trouble. Closer inspection showed that it had run into the open hinged drawbridge over the Morris Canal. A canal boat was in the lock at the same spot and the engine had knocked the drawbridge down on top of the canal boat. Both the canal boat and the drawbridge were badly damaged.

In 1963 I told this story to **Mrs. Paul (Dorothy Sektberg) Bostrom** and she said, "I know, I saw it too. I took my small brother, **Herbert**, by the hand and ran to the scene of the action. When all the excitement was over my father let me know in no uncertain terms that little girls were not supposed to be in such dangerous places."

Upcoming events (cont.)

Mons. May 2 & 16th – 7 – 9 pm
Work at Museum House

Tues. May 17th – 7:30 pm
Dover Moose Lodge
History of North Dover School
 No charge – Refreshments served.

Mons. May 30th June 13th & 27th
Work at Museum House
 (Bring a relative)

Sun. June 12th—All Day Long
Dover Flea Market
3rd Annual Townwide Yard Sale
 (973) 366-0629 reservations
100th Anniversary of Morris
Canal boat-train wreck.

Mons. June 13th & 27th—7-9pm
Work at Museum House

Tues. June 21st—7:30 pm
Dover Moose Lodge
 Historical Society Meeting

Sun. July 10th—All Day Long
Dover Flea Market
3rd Annual Wm Young Root Beer
Social & Yard Sale
 (973) 366-0629 reservations

July 19th—7:30 pm
 Historical Society Meeting

Aug 16th—6:00 pm
Annual Society Picnic
 (Bring a covered dish)
Aug 28th - Flea Market
1st Annual North Jersey Tomato Festival

Looking For Active Members New Projects For The Dover Area Historical Society

Are you interested in becoming involved with a new project? Under consideration by the Society at this time are a number of new undertakings.

- Second edition of **Images of America – Dover**. A new photo history publication focusing on Dover from the late 1940s and 50s, utilizing before and after photos.
- **Dover Hall of Fame** Patio. Brick monument patio to be constructed behind the Condict House honoring former Dover notables.
- **Dover High Football Team**

Reunion. An event to recognize all Dover High football teams over the past 100 years.

- **Dover Historical Society Web Site.** Creating a site where anyone can find out the activities of the society and view historical programs on Dover's History.

- Posting **Dover High Class Reunions** and helping find missing classmates.

If any of these areas interest you, call either **Stan Schoonmaker** at (973) 366-2319 or **George Laurie** at (973) 361-6205.

Now Available on DVD

1st Annual Joseph Kekuku Steel Guitar Festival

Memorial at Orchard Street Cemetery with Kas Nakamura of Maryland & Kaipo Bridges of Monville, descendants of Kekuku and Rev. Dave Myers * Steel Guitar performances inside

Letters Of Appreciation

by Brenda Woodhull

As the year 2004 comes to a close, the **Dover Area Historical Society** would like to express its appreciation for the kindness and generosity of those who gave a monetary donation or time and effort to see that our hopes of a museum comes to fruition. We will always be grateful for your concern for our success and endeavors to keep Dover in the hearts and minds of all who have an interest in our town. Very truly yours, **Brenda Woodhull**, Corresponding Secretary. **McNaughton Family, Malman Family, Joyce Lake, DHS Class "57, Dover Moose Lodge, PNC Bank, Kiwanis, Rotary** and invitation to the opening of the **Children's Museum**.

Editor's Note: A complete list of all contributors and donors will be posted at the Museum House.

The History of Dover's First Public School by Stan Schoonmaker

DOVER-The first public school in Dover, I prefer to believe, dates back to 1796 when permission was granted by local officials to build a district schoolhouse "near the foot of the road to **Lamson's Farm**." The road still exists today, but we know it as Morris Street. The school was built 50-years prior to the railroad and stood on the opposite side of the railroad tracts of today's train station. While there are no photos of the original building, what photos do exist were taken around 1860 after the structure had been enlarged to meet the growing demands. For 75-years, this was the "school" to many Dover residents. It's often

be referred to as "**The Little Red Schoolhouse**," "**The Old Academy**," or "**The Dover Academy**" and after no longer being used as a school-house, it was known as "**The Birch Building**." In a disastrous fire on June 16, 1917, the old schoolhouse was destroyed forever.

In 1817, a depressed economy followed the War of 1812. Even the iron industry was stagnant with no signs of growth. There was little concern about the educational opportunities of a public nature until **Henry McFarlan** and **Joseph Blackwell** took over a large portion of Dover's property. They immediately began

to map out streets in Dover, naming two of the prime ones after themselves and began selling property lots. Dover suddenly saw a major real estate boom. In 1829, the State passed an Act of Legislature to establish public schools and reforms and regulations for teachers and community involvement in operating them. **Henry McFarlan** seized this opportunity by building a new schoolhouse and public building in town across from the old schoolhouse. This new building became known as "**The Stone Academy**" and still stands today as a symbol of Dover's oldest structure.

McFarlan anticipated that his new

school would be of a great service to the community. While he thought he was doing a most benevolent thing for the town, many residents became extremely upset when they discovered that the old schoolhouse had been turned over to the owner of the land and was to be torn down. In fact, a very serious conflict arose among the town citizens, which came close to becoming violent, however, cooler heads prevailed and the result was the formation of a board known as the "**Trustees of the Dover Common School House**" which was authorized to govern the local public education. The trustees first meeting was

held on May 28, 1838 and immediately plans were made to enlarge the old schoolhouse and not Mr. McFarlan's new schoolhouse. In 1843, the old schoolhouse was enlarged and improved until 1871 when the Northside schoolhouse was opened.

In 1909, the membership of the Board of Trustees was expanded and then became known at the "**Dover Board of Education**." Meanwhile, McFarlan's Stone Academy did serve as a school, but mainly for private classes. It was also used as a church, Sunday School and is believed to be the first parochial school in the State of New Jersey. In 1871, it was sold to a private



The fire of June 16, 1917 that completely destroyed Dover's first public schoolhouse dating back to 1796. (The Birch Building)

Dover's Urban Renewal and Revitalization Success or Failure? (Depends on whom you ask)

DOVER-In 1966, a Federal grant of \$2.7 million was made available for the demolition and rebuilding of a large section of downtown Dover district, embracing approximately 18 acres and containing 87 properties. It commenced with the completion of a \$90,000 addition to the Public Library that was expanded to include a workroom, a children's reading room, and the non-fiction collection.

An entire row of buildings on the East side of South Morris Street were demolished, including the old **Playhouse Theater** and the **Montgomery Ward** building. An entire row on the West side of South Essex Street near the train station was demolished, along with most of Dickerson Street bordering the railroad tracks. The only buildings left standing were the **Baldis Building** on South Essex Street and the **Old Stone Academy** on Dickerson street. Also razed were the buildings from the corner of Bergen Street

going east on Blackwell Street toward the old **Park Union Lumber Co.**

In 1978, a seven-man commission was formed, and \$2.3 million was made available for downtown Dover's revitalization, which when completed, would have restored about one-fourth of the buildings in the downtown area. It began with the development of the business district, including 20 store fronts along Blackwell and South Warren streets, small specialty shops, apartment complexes and new sidewalks and trees, flower planting boxes, and several mini-parks. Private developers were called upon to rebuild 16

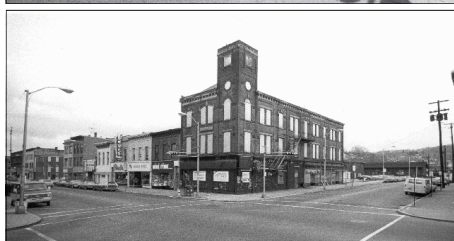
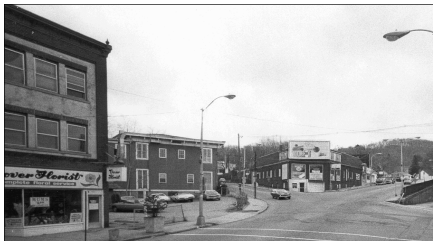
stores and many new offices along with condominiums.

Buildings Lost to Urban Renewal

Below left: 1. Along S. Morris St. **UQZ Rest.** on corner. 2. Essex & Dickerson Streets, **Johnny Nichols Confectionary Store**. 3. Building along Warren St. **Hedden Co.** 4. Intersection Blackwell & Bergen St. 5. Professional Bld. at Prospect St. **Arcanum Hall**. 6. Baker Opera House was to be razed but was saved by **Jack Bennett**. Also saved, through the efforts of the **Dover Area**

In Memoriam

Arch Nicholas * Augustus Ritzer * Robert Zarger



Dover Historic Paintings by Bea Cook (First in a series) by Jim Johnson

Artist **Bea Cook** has been able to capture the imagination and admiration of local history buffs through her many paintings of "old-time" Dover. **Jim Johnson** is presenting the first in a series of her work. Pictured to the right is perhaps the oldest standing house in Dover (still stands today) at the intersection of N. Sussex St. & Rt. 46. The subject matter of this painting is the old Dover High School from its wooden structure to its new brick school. The man walking in the lower left corner was **Rubin Farr**. Later, the wooden section was moved to the rear and two new brick additions were added. Today, the building is one of Dover's finest historic building, preserved. Today, it is known as the North Side



The Historic Stone Academy Saved

DOVER-According to the Morris County Trust for Historic Preservation (714 F.2d 271 (3dCir.) Case 81, in 1968, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved an urban renewal plan submitted by the Town of Dover, that provided for the demolition of a number of buildings along Dickerson, Morris, Warren, Sussex, Bergen and Blackwell Streets including the historic **Baker Opera House**, the **Playhouse Theatre** and the **Old Stone Academy**.

An immediate outcry from the local public and the historical society over the possible loss of Dover's oldest historic landmark, the Stone Academy, led to the attention of Dover's urban renewal project. (see related Stone Academy story)

The following year, HUD and the town entered into a loan and capital grant contract under which HUD was to fund the demolition. The contract imposed on the town a continuing responsibility to supply HUD with documentation concerning any proposed actions pertaining to the project, and HUD retained the authority to demand alterations in the plan based on the data provided.

The grant contract between HUD and the Town of Dover was closed out on April 16, 1982. A month later, The Old Stone Academy was determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and was listed in the Register on May 21, 1982.

HUD did not comply with either the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), arguing that NHPA did not apply because at the time the renewal plan was approved, the academy was neither listed nor eligible for listing in the National Register and that NEPA did not apply because it had been enacted after the grant contract was executed between HUD and the Town of Dover. The NHPA and NEPA sought to hold off demolition of the academy until the agency complied with these two statutes.

The court began its discussion by supporting NHPA allegations, by noting that NHPA, like NEPA, is primarily a procedural statute designed to ensure that Federal agencies take historic values into account in their decision making.

Although the academy had not been formally determined to be eligible for or listed in the Register until 1982, the court found that in 1976 it was an "eligible property" as defined in the Council's regulations. Because HUD had the opportunity at that time to effect changes in the plan, based on its review of the city's data submitted under the contract, it was required to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act.

Finally, the court held that HUD must also comply with NEPA, finding that HUD's continuing involvement in the project was a "major Federal action" requiring an environmental impact statement. NEPA, too, applies at any stage of an ongoing project, even if begun prior to 1970, in which a Federal agency has authority to alter the substance of the project. Thus, the old **Stone Academy** was saved by the courts.



The old **Stone Academy** (center) was scheduled for demolition until the courts ruled in favor of historic preservation.

Dover Historical Society Angry Over Academy's Fate

Dr. Scott Dickerson comes to the rescue and saves Academy from wrecking ball.

DOVER-The decision to raze the historic **1829 Stone Academy** brought immediate concern and anger from members of the Dover historical community. Soon the struggle between the old and new resulted in bitter confrontations and lawsuits. The historic **Johnson Building** on Blackwell Street, a building dating

back to the Civil War, was also slated to be torn down.

George Coulthard, historian for the First Presbyterian Church of Dover said, "if there is any building in town that should be saved, it's the **Stone Academy**." Coulthard immediately went to work trying to get the building listed on the National

Registry of Historic sites. **Coulthard and Vivian Berg of the Dover Area Historical Society** took it upon themselves to try to save the building.

"We have not had the cooperation of the politicians in this town" said Coulthard. The historical society wanted to be more active in assisting to save the building, but, at the time, was in its own

Angry Fight to Save Stone Academy

(Cont. from previous page)

bitter dispute with Dover General Hospital over efforts to save its museum, the historic **Bonnieview Estate**, from being vacated and torn down.

According to Coultard, “they are going wild tearing down these buildings. Other towns in the county like **Chester**, **Rockaway** and **Mendham**, you don’t have this kind of nonsense.”

In the eleventh hour, the Redevelopment Agency commissioners were willing to give the building a chance for survival. Agency chairman **Alan Shreffin** said, “we want to stay flexible.” The agency hired the consulting firm of **Short and Ford of Princeton** to recommend a detailed report on the preservation of the building.

It was estimated that the restoration of the building would exceed \$200,000, a price tag that included interior and exterior work.

Commissioners on the board, all of them businessmen, were not convinced that someone could be found to invest into restoring the building into a professional office complex.

Around 1987, **Dr. Scott E. Dickerson, D.D.S.** expressed interest in the property and hired **Short and Ford of Princeton** to draw up a plan of restoring the Stone Academy building itself and add a wing to the north side in order to create enough space for an office complex and setting up office space for his own practice which he continues there to this day.

What Dr. Dickerson was able to accomplish with the Stone Academy is called “**adaptive reuse**” which is highly encouraged by the historic preservation community. Instead of tearing old buildings down, restore them and adapt them for updated uses. This is the process the Dover Area Historical Society will be urging the commissioners, who are developing Dover’s new **Master Plan**, to consider when planning for the future of Dover’s historic buildings.

Finally, **Dr. Dickerson**, purchased the property, renovated the Stone Academy building and added a wing to the north side to produce professional office spaces and setting up his own practice. This only proves that historic preservation

Movie-Chain Theaters May Have Started in Dover

DOVER-You’ve probably already heard the story of one of the nation’s first grocery-store chains that was started in Dover around 1900 by **Lester Lehman** and **Max Heller**. (If not, you need to attend some historical society meetings.) Now, recently uncovered documents reveal that one of the nation’s first “movie-chains” was started in Dover as well.

Recently **Mr. Marco Matteo** of Washington (Warren Co.) N.J. contacted the historical society and wanted more information about a Dover resident who started **The Washington Theater**. When told the gentleman in question was **John T. Howell**, the historical society knew immediately that it was the same **John Howell** who started Dover’s **Bon Ton Theater** and later managed **The Playhouse Theater**. What we didn’t know was Mr. Howell’s history.

Born in Chester in 1873, **John Howell** later met and married **Miss Clara Bowlby** of Dover in 1896. A year later, they both moved to Dover where Mr. Howell became interested in a new form of entertainment called “motion pictures.” He immediately began purchasing these films and conceived the idea of projecting these movies on screens by taking them from town



to town in a covered wagon. According to the **Dover Advance (11/22/28)** “it was perhaps the first “chain movie theater” on record and forerunner of the famous theatrical combines of today.”

Mr. Howell began his successful “traveling road-show” enterprise around 1900. By 1906, he opened his first “all motion picture” movie house in a building constructed in 1868 on Blackwell St. called **The Bon Ton Theater**. The theater seated about 75 to 150 patrons who paid either 5 or 10 cents to see a movie. As one entered the theater he or she would face the audience with the screen above the entrance, similar to the old **Boonton Theater**. Mr. Howell changed the movies twice a week. During the early silent movies, it was customary to have a piano player accompany the film to

dramatize the picture by highlighting each episode. **Clara Bowlby Howell** and **Elizabeth Dalrymple** were the piano players.

In 1913, the **Essex Amusement Co.** constructed a new vaudeville playhouse on Morris St. called **The Playhouse Theater**. Six months later, Mr. Howell closed the Bon Ton and took over the management of The Playhouse. He later opened the Washington Theater, which brought much joy to many people in that part of the state.

John Howell was very popular in Dover, not only for his popular motion pictures, but for the mere fact of owning Dover’s first automobile. He and his wife lived at 23 **Fairview Ave.** and he was a member of the **Dover Lodge, R.P.O. Elks**, a member of the **Chamber of Commerce**, the **Exempt Fireman’s Association**, a former member of the **Kiwanis Club**, a member on the **Board of Fire Wardens** and very active in community affairs. John Howell passed away on October 20, 1928 and was buried in the **Locust Hill Cemetery**. The old Playhouse and Bon Ton theaters are long gone, but John Howell’s memory will live on forever in Dover’s history.

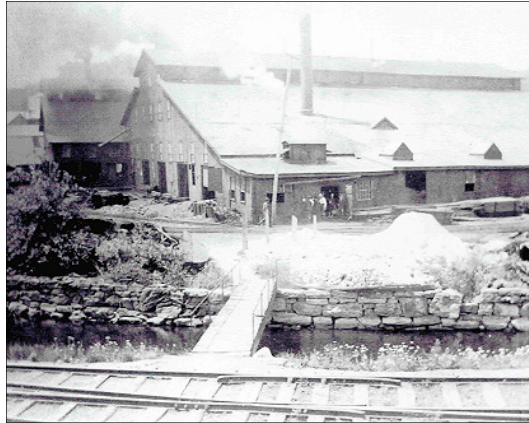
Reminder: Every year, the historical society holds the Bon Ton Movie

America's Mighty Dover Ulster Iron Works

By Bob Wagner, M.C. Historical Society, M.C. Heritage Comm. & Story of Iron Making at Picatinny

DOVER-To understand the Iron Works of Dover and its long history, we must first realize the big picture of Dover's development and contribution to history. When the white man first came to the Dover area in the 1600s, they found that **Native Americans** were already aware of the magic "black stone". Almost immediately, 1722, Dover was settled and the process of iron production was started at **Jackson's Forge**.

Iron ore production and the workings of iron were the major support of the settlers to Dover from the very beginning. "It is estimated that the Dover area had a total iron production of 26 million long tons up through the year 1950, worth \$100 million. In a historical sketch published by the Freeholders of Morris County in 1937, it was stated that the stores of iron in Northern N.J., chiefly Morris County, were sufficient to



provide all the iron the nation could use in 350 years. Since the iron ore mined and worked in the Dover area was among the first in America and for many years, this made an early and significant contribution to the industrial development of our country and to our industrial independence from England prior to and during the

R e v o l u t i o n . "

The Dover area was particularly suited for this development, since it not only had iron ore, but the hardwood forests needed for the production of charcoal and the rivers and streams that could be dammed to provide water power for the operation of iron forges and furnaces.

Around 1745, **Joseph Shotwell**, son-in-law of **John Jackson** started the **Quaker Iron Works** a few miles east of Jackson's Forge on the **Rockaway River** in downtown Dover. Here, Shotwell dammed the river and began his iron processing until 1757 when **Joseph Beaman** took over the operations. Around 1792, **Israel Canfield** and **Jacob Losey** bought the plant and set up a major forge, nail factory, rolling mills and slitting mills. **The Dover Rolling Mill** was a profitable operation until the economic slump following the War of 1812. Being deeply in debt to New York

The John Roach Jr. Municipal Building by George Laurie

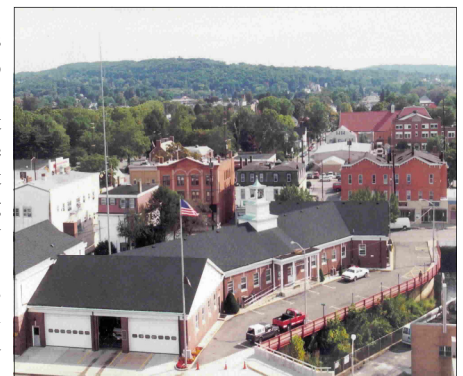
DOVER-On November 26, 1961, long-time **Mayor John Roach Jr.** passed away. He was a colorful figure who served as mayor for 32 years beginning in 1929, one of the longest serving mayors in NJ history. He was an insurance agent who had his office on North Morris Street and also served on the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Morris County from 1936 to his death, making him one of the most influential figures in the entire area. Born on December 19, 1890, his family moved to Dover from Geneva, N.Y. when Roach was 6 years old. He was a graduate of Dover High School, and a World War I veteran. He was elected an Alderman in 1928. In 1929, he was

elected to his first two-year term as Mayor. He continued to serve as Mayor until his death in 1961. In November, 1935 he was elected to the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Morris County and served from 1936 to 1961. He died on November 26, 1961.

He guided Dover through the difficult years of the depression and war, through the post war boom times. Such was his impact on Dover that his large home bordering western **Hurd Park** is still referred to by many old-timers as the "**Mayor's House**."

In honor of his long service to the town, the new **John Roach Jr. Municipal Building** on North Sussex Street was named

in his honor. The attractive new building was dedicated on May 25, 1963.



President's Annual Message to the Society by Betty Inglis

This year has been a year of progress for the Dover Area Historical Society. The Church House has been painted and the broken outside shakes have been replaced. Work has begun on several rooms in the house. At present, the electrical work is being done to rectify code violations and update the electric system.

We have had a variety of programs held at Dover General Hospital (100th anniversary of "The Great Train Robbery"), the Moose Lodge, Guenther's Mill, the Baker Theater and the American Legion. There have been good attendances at the various meetings. Members have brought refreshments. Thank you **Joan Bocchino, Kay Walker, Verna Johnson, Brenda Woodhull, Stu Inglis, Stan Schoonmaker** and **Emma Eckhart**.

The Newsletter has gone out four times – Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. It has been well received by many members.

Fundraisers this past year have included the Yard Sales at the Flea Market, a Root Beer Social and the Hawaiian Festival in conjunction with the **Dover Renaissance** and the **Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association**. (cont. on page 10)

Outreach Mission

The Dover Area Historical Society maintains its goal of bringing the history of the Dover area to both young and old in and around Morris County. During the past year, 2004, presentations were made to over a half dozen clubs and organizations in other communities. Each presentation utilized PowerPoint technology and was done by a number of different members of our society. Shows were presented to: 1. **The Porsche Society of NJ** 2. **The Denville Senior Citizens**, 3. **Dover H.S.** freshmen learning community, 4. the **Wharton Historical Society**, 5. **D.H.S. Class of 1949** reunion, 6. **The Ferro Monte Chapter of NJDAR in Roxbury**, plus several other presentations at various locations around town.

If you are a member of a local club or service group that might enjoy one of our programs, please contact **Stan Schoonmaker** at 973-366-2319 to book a show.

LETTER OFFERS SUPPORT

Dear Historical Society,

You are all to be applauded for the wonderful exterior restoration of your new home, the Condict House on W. Blackwell St. Thanks to all of you, it sparkles once again like the true Victorian jewel it originally was. From the illuminated refurbished stained glass window to the perfectly positioned Christmas tree in the rounded tri-corner window, it bids a 'Very Merry Christmas' to all passers-by!

However, despite being adorned with a holiday wreath, the current replacement front door diminishes the overall Victorian exterior. Having discussed this, we would like to donate an historically correct new front door.

Our thoughts are to locate an antique door as close to the original door, in style and

wood type, as possible. We have a few contacts in Bucks County who can assist us with this search. Additionally, should this prove to be impossible, we would then contract the services of a restoration carpenter to re-create the original door, at our expense.

Our best wishes to all of you for a wonderful Holiday Season followed by a healthy, happy, and productive New Year!

Sincerely, **Maggie Fischer and Bob**

DHS Class of '65 40th Reunion in 2005

Is your class planning a reunion?
Let the *Dover Area Historical Society* help.

We can help locate classmates through our
Newsletter and provide PowerPoint
Presentations. Call us at
(973) 366-0629

Grant Helps Develop Historic Glass Negatives

When **Dick and Betty Davis** moved from their Randolph home, they donated a large collection (150) old glass negative photographs to the historical society. Both Dick and Betty grew up in Dover and graduated from **Dover High School**.

Betty's father, **Bill Matilla**, was employed by **William Harris** (Harris' Jewelry Store) who took these photos of Dover from the 1890s into the early 1900s. A number of these plates were used in the Images of

Dover book published in 1999. The society had no funds available to have the rest developed at a cost of \$20 each.

At Christmas 2004, the **PNC Bank of Easton Pennsylvania**, presented the historical society with a \$900 grant to have these negatives printed. The grant was expedited by former Dover resident and high school graduate, **Ester Guzman**, currently employed by PNC. This is the second grant she has been able to obtain. Even though she no longer resides in

Dover, she has been a true friend and strong supporter of the historical society.

Upon receipt of this grant, **Rama**, a noted Dover photographer and artist was selected to take the task of printing about 40 of these glass plates.

When completed, the historical society will create a display for public viewing with location to be announced. Anyone wishing to offer ideas or suggestions for the display are encouraged to contact **Stan**



Rare Historic Scenes of Dover

These are two rare photos from the collection of glass negatives being developed. The left views a large parade looking east on Blackwell from the roof of the old **Dover Hotel** c 1895. Notice the Steam Engine. To the right is a view of another flood at the **Mill Pond** of the Iron Works.



President Emerita—Vivian Berg

President—Betty Inglis

Vice President—Stan Schoonmaker

Recording Secretary—Joan Bocchino

Corresponding Secretary—Brenda Woodhull

Treasurer—Stu Inglis

Museum Curator—George Laurie

Annual Membership dues:

Family - \$20, Individual - \$12,

Senior Citizen

(62 and older) - \$8

Junior Member—\$6

Sustaining Member - \$50

Life (one-time payment) - \$250

The Dover Area Historical Society is a 501 C-3

not-for-profit organization.

All donations are tax deductible!

**DOVER AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Board of Trustees**

Phyllis Casey

Pat Kalena

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Kathy Gilbert

Jim Johnson

Carolyn Bishop

Robert Wagner

Richard Kelly

Pat Fahy

William Woodhull

Virginia Shukailo

Kay Walker

**Dover Area Historical Society
PO Box 609
Dover, New Jersey
07802-0609**

**Annual membership
runs from Jan. thru Dec.**

Ulster Iron Works (cont. from pg. 8)

Blackwell, Canfield and Losey abandoned the operations in 1817 to pay off debts.

McFarlan and Blackwell soon renamed the company, the **Dover Iron Works** and produced much of the equipment and tools needed to dig and construct the **Morris Canal**. During this time, Dover grew from a small hamlet into a large village (incorporated in 1827) and eventually to a large industrial town.

In 1869, following the Civil War, the plant closed because business was very slow. In 1880, **Judge Francis S. Lathrop** reopened the plant under the name of the **Dover Iron Company** and repaired the buildings, made improvements and revived Dover's economic slump. In 1884, the **Ulster Iron Works** of Saugerties, New York moved their operations to the Dover plant to be near the canal and railroads. In 1903, they purchased the plant and renamed it the **Ulster Iron Works of Dover**. In 1923, ground was broken for a new \$100,000 factory, including a building for drilling hollow staybolts for trains and a warehouse for box making, packing and shipping. At its peak, the Ulster Iron Works employed 450 men. Ulster sold the works to **J.A. Williams** in 1935 and by 1950, the plant shut down for lack of business. In 1951, the main buildings of the works were torn down and the land cleared for the eventual construction of the **Dover Shopping Center**. For over 200 years, the Iron Works of Dover served the nation with some of the finest Iron products and materials ever produced bearing the tag "Made in Dover".

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(CONT. from pg. 8)

We are selling books "**Images of America: Dover**". Arcadia sends us checks for sales. Verizon has sent us checks for the rental of the cell phone pole near town hall. We have magnets of Dover scenes available as well as stuffed dogs and cats, and maps from **Evelyn Gilbert**. **Ulla Shuler's** program at Guenter's Mill needed us \$102. We have Cat's Meow plaques of five Dover scenes courtesy of the Occasion Shop in Rockaway.

Many donations have been received from groups such as the 1954 class and service clubs such as the Rotary and Moose Lodge.

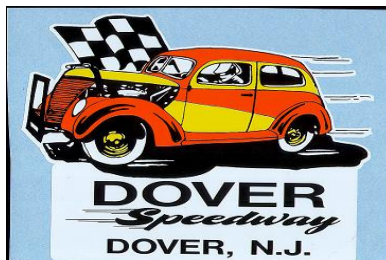
Thanks to **Jim Johnson** we have a good price for oil. Special thanks too for the repairs to the stained glass window in the foyer.

Many items have been donated by various members. We will soon be able to display everything in our very own museum. Much still remains to be done, but it is encouraging to see us coming closer to the time when we will have our own home. Thanks to all who have contributed to this.

Respectfully submitted,



The old Johnson Oil Co. Building which dated back to the Civil War was razed during Dover's Urban Renewal Program.



Authentic decals made from the original prints are a rare collectors item now being made available by Bob Wagner of Wharton. For more information call (973) 366-0629.