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# ❖ THE GENERAL STORE ❖

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NEWSLETTER OF THE RALSTON HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

SPRING 1997

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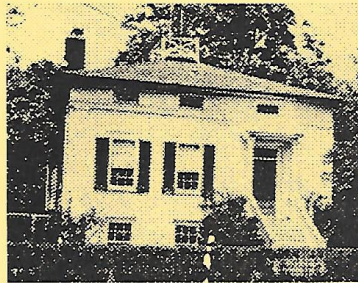
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## Ralston Historic District Approved

The long anticipated signing of the expanded Ralston Historic District onto the New Jersey Register of Historic Places officially occurred on March 11, 1997. The application will now be sent to the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior to be considered for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Prior to the acceptance, only a handful of structures in Ralston were protected. Ernie Maw and other local preservationists who sought to protect more of the area's historically significant sites and structures convinced the Township to commission architectural consultant Janet Foster to prepare a detailed inventory of the area - a requirement needed for the official application. It was completed and submitted to the State in 1993 and after several years of negotiation between the State and a landowner with a number of historically significant sites and buildings, the application was finally approved.

What does this mean to the residents of the Ralston District? According to a letter sent to the homeowners within the district from the DEP of the State of New Jersey, "listing of an area, site, structure, or object in the New Jersey Register of Historic Places prevents the State, county, municipality or any



*The Leddell House pictured above was designed by local architect Aaron Hudson. The current occupants are Beirne Donaldson and Wood Huntley. This house is one of the many sites added to the expanded Ralston Historic District.*

of their agencies of instrumentality from undertaking any project that will encroach upon, damage or destroy the property listed without approval from the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection."

Signs indicating the approximate boundaries of the district are located on Mendham Road [Rt.24] and Roxiticus Road. The Ralston General Store contains many photographs and artifacts from the district and welcomes visitors on Sundays from 2-4 p.m., June through October. Special visits can also be arranged by contacting Marge Davidson at 543-4347.

## Early Lighting to be the Topic at the Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Ralston Historical Association will be held at the Garabrant Center on Wilson Street in Mendham Borough at 8 p.m. on Thursday, May 22, 1997. Local historian and antique collector Wilma Sagurton will be the featured speaker at the event. She has prepared an interesting talk and display dealing with early forms of illumination. Refreshments will be served and the public is invited to attend.

## Railroad Book Reprinted

The *Rock-a-Bye Baby* book written by Thomas Taber was reprinted last year and is available for sale in the Mendham Township Library and at the Ralston General Store. The railroad passed through Ralston near the intersection of Route 24 and Jane Terrace and continued through Mendham Borough, Brookside and Washington Valley along what is now Patriot's Path. The book has many illustrations and details the rise and fall of the Rockaway Valley Railroad. The book sells for \$6.00.

## Coming This Fall

The Historical Preservation Committee of Mendham Township chaired by Ernie Maw will celebrate the official designation of the expanded Ralston Historic District with a tour of Sammy's Cider Mill. It was built and used by John Ralston as a grist mill around 1848. In 1908, it was purchased by John Laughlin who converted it into a distillery where Tiger Applejack or "Jersey Lightning" was made. Prohibition forced the mill to close in 1919. Watch for more information about this special opportunity - the cider will flow!

## Lifetime Members Honored

Last October, the Ralston Historical Association held a high tea to honor its Lifetime members at the home of Beirne Donaldson and Wood Huntley. Plaques were also presented to Wilma Sagurton and Marge Davidson for their many years of work in creating and preserving the General Store Museum.

## Local Items Displayed

The Ralston Historical Association loaned a number of artifacts to Macculloch Hall in Morristown for its "Made In Morris" exhibition which ran through April of this year. Included in the display were a barrel and tools made in the Willet Forge.

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**Don't forget to send your company's Matching Gift!**

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## Wall Hanging

Last fall, a throw or lap robe depicting the Mendhams was designed by Carol Eshe of Chester Country Furnishings. More recently, a wall hanging of the same design became available. These items show the Ralston General Store and the Manor House along with other buildings that have historical significance in Mendham. Marge Davidson provided her with the ideas and Carol took pictures and laid out the design. The items are for sale at Chester Country Furnishings on Main Street in Chester. Carol will be donating five percent of her proceeds from the sale of these items to the Ralston Historical Association.

## Donations

Longtime member and former treasurer of the Association, Ada Erickson, who now lives in Lakehurst, NJ, attended the appreciation tea in October. She brought with her several items that were given to her by the Nesbitt family and are illustrated in the book *The Mendhams*. Very generously, she has donated these items to the Association. The two glass carafes and plaques with Ralston and Nesbitt Coats of Arms are pictured on pages 90 and 91 of the book.

## Historic Walk

The newly organized Mendham Borough Historical Society is sponsoring a walk through the older section of the Borough on May 15, 1997. Sites of interest will be explained at the event which will end at the Black Horse Inn with a luncheon buffet. Call Denise Fuchs at 543-7152 to learn more.

## Trustee Nominations

At the annual meeting, the following have been nominated by the trustees to serve as officers for the 1997-1998 season:

President - Pat Rhodes  
Vice President - Marge Davidson  
Recording Secy. - Wilma Sagurton  
Corres. Secy. - Rose Carlin  
Treasurer - Jeff Purcell

Nominations for trustees include:

Russ Buchanan  
Marge Davidson  
Wilma Sagurton  
Lucille Heimrod

The Association has trustee positions open. If you would like to get involved, let us know. Call Jeff Purcell at 543-7834.

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## General Store's 1997 - 98 Accomplishments/ Plans

### Accomplishments

1. Township-wide mailing
2. Increased membership by 30%
3. Donation of wood for residing
4. Reprinted Railroad Book
5. RHA cake won first prize

### Plans

1. Reside the museum
2. Rebuild the outside benches.
3. Expand the museum's collection
4. Present new exhibit
5. Increase membership/donations
6. Possible fund raiser
7. Document inventory

## RALSTON HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION 1996-1997

### LIFE MEMBERS

\*Mr. and Mrs. T. Andruskevich  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Bigham  
Mrs. Wilson Britten  
\*Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Buchanan  
\*Mr. and Mrs. Owen Carlin  
\*Mr. Calvin Carver, Jr.  
\*Mr. and Mrs. Edward Clauss  
\*Mr. and Mrs. C. Davidson  
Mr. and Mrs. H. DeNeufville  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Devine  
Edwin and Katherine Devore  
\*Ms. Beirne Donaldson  
Dr. Robert Dorian  
Mr. and Mrs. John Drzik  
Mrs. Ada R. Erickson  
Mr. Louis Farrelly  
Mr. Sam Fornaro  
Ms. Patricia F. Kellogg  
Alan L. Kenwood  
A. P. Kirby, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Link  
Ms. Dorothy MacNeil  
Mr. Ernest E. Maw  
Mr. and Mrs. A. Merck  
Mr. Raymond Nadasky  
Mr. and Mrs. Raoul H. Nehr  
Mr. and Mrs. M. Newton  
\*Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Patten  
Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Pitney  
\*Mr. and Mrs. James Porter  
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Porto  
Mr. Robert J. Purcell  
\*Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Rhodes  
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Ms. Wilma L. Sagurton  
Ms. Inge Schnee  
Ms. Darby Anne Scott  
Robert and Valerie Sinclair  
Mary H. Smith  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Spruth  
\*Carlyn Taylor  
Mr. and Mrs. Carl G. Taylor  
Ms. Henrietta S. Thomas  
Mr. Edwin Thompson  
\*Mr. Alan Willemsen  
Mr. and Mrs. H. Wilmerding  
Mr. Robert D. Worley  
Mr. and Mrs. M. Yamashita  
\*Ms. Patricia Zimmerman

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Ms. Helena Alves  
Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Betz  
Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Clauss  
Robert and Betty Conable  
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Ms. Jean Dauernheim  
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Mrs. Thaw Malin  
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Ms. Janet Mills  
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James and Anne Patterson  
\*Margaret Patton  
Ms. Jane Peterson  
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Pfunke  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pierson  
Dr. Rene A. Pingeon  
Mr. and Mrs. William Pluymers  
Mr. and Mrs. T. F. Pugsley  
Edward and Rhoda Radke  
Ms. Deborah A. Richman  
Mrs. Martha V. Robinson  
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Mr. Matthew Rohsler  
Mr. and Mrs. E. Rolin  
\*Anna N. Savadge  
Dr. Leslie D. Schlessinger  
Glenn C. Schulte  
Ms. Mary Smith  
\*Mr. Klaus Steiner  
Mr. and Mrs. R. Stewart  
Ms. Betty Alice Strater  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Taboada  
Mr. Peter J. Tol  
Mr. Sam K. Tolley  
Mrs. Elizabeth S. Tomkins  
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Wagner  
Thomas and Susanne Walsh  
Ms. Kim Wentworth  
Ray and Nancy White  
Mrs. Neibert Wright  
Ms. Kiyoko Yamashita

### REGULAR MEMBERS

Mr. and Mrs. F. Bartenstein, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Baziuk  
Mrs. William M. Berenbak  
Mr. Carl H. Bergelt  
Rudolph Bottiglione  
Thomas and Phyllis Branch  
Mr. Frank Buchner  
Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Buck  
Ms. Ann F. Caskey  
Mr. and Mrs. Lewis C. Cooper  
Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Corsico  
Ms. Laurie Crowley  
\*Mr. Rudolph H. Deetjen, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Michael DeFelice  
Deborah and Joseph D'Urso  
Mr. Peter Dworman  
\*Ms. Catherine Emmons  
Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Ewels  
Mrs. Alice Findlay  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fox  
Ms. Rhoda Galembro  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gates  
Mr. Frank W. Goodhart  
Wayne and Natalie Guida  
Mr. James H. Gunther  
Mr. and Mrs. Thor Gustafson  
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Mrs. Ann B. Mills  
Rose Marie C. Nicholson  
\*Ms. Catherine A. Omegna  
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Ms. Bierce Riley  
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Ms. Catherine Sandbach  
Stephanie Siegel  
Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Schorr  
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Mrs. Janet Schurter  
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Mr. William F. Steinen  
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Paul and Mary Ellen Troast  
Mr. and Mrs. C. Wagner  
Ms. Nancy J. Watt  
Mr. and Mrs. H. White, Jr.  
William and Marsha Wilkie  
Ms. Gertrude G. Zander

\*Building Fund Contributor

19 2 2  
PURCELL, ROBERT J  
14 ROXITICLS RD  
MENDHAM NJ 07945

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 37  
Mendham, NJ  
07945

Ralston Historical Association  
313 Mendham Road West  
Mendham, NJ 07945

### 1997-1998 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Check the appropriate Membership:

- |   |                   |  |
|---|-------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Membership | \$ 10.00 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> New Member              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron Membership  | \$ 20.00 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership    | \$150.00 one time | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Matching Gift |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Fund      | \$ _____          |  |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to serve one Sunday afternoon at the store,  
please include your phone number # \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the  
Ralston Historical Association  
313 Mendham Road West  
Mendham, NJ 07945