

◇ The General Store ◇

Volume 1, Issue 1

Newsletter of the Ralston Historical Association

Spring 1999

250TH Anniversary Upcoming Events

May 2
Brookside Belles

May 15
House Tour

May 30
General Store Opens
Sundays and Holidays
2 - 5 p.m.

June
Educational Programs

July 3
81st Annual Parade

July 4
Church in the Woods

August
Victorian Ice Cream So-
cial

September 11
Brookside Clam Bake

October 16-17
Historic Ralston Week
End

November 21
Interchurch Thanksgiving

December
To Be Announced

Trustee Nominations

Owen Carlin

Dolores Crammer

Beirne Donaldson

Tracy Kinsel

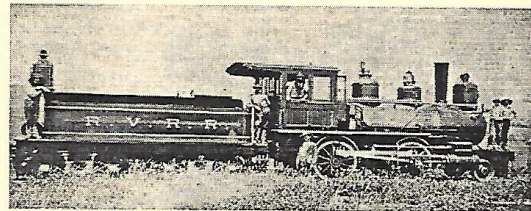
Pat Rhodes

Annual Meeting to be held on April 30, 1999 *Rock-a-bye Railroad Presentation to be Featured*

Bill Wilke, a railroad enthusiast and former Mendham resident, will be the featured speaker at this year's annual meeting of the Ralston Historical Association. The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 30, 1999 at the Brookside Community Club on East Main Street in Brookside.

Over the years, Bill, who is a member of the Tri-State Railroad Club, has compiled numerous slides related to railroads and the local industries of the Mendham area.

The Rockaway Valley Railroad, nicknamed the "Rock-a-bye Baby" because of its uneven railbed and bumpy ride originated in Whitehouse and



*This photo of the Rockaway Valley Railroad's No. 3 engine and coal car was taken in 1890.
Photo courtesy of Ida Alpaugh*

was eventually extended through Peapack, Ralston (near the intersection of Jane Terrace and Rt.24), Mendham, Brookside, Washington Valley and finally Morristown.

According to Tom Taber's book, *The Rock-a-bye Baby*, the railroad "was the culmination of thirty-nine years work to reach the orchards, grist and saw mills, and the lime kilns." The railroad was a victim

of the peach blight that hit the 50 year old Hunterdon County peach orchards in 1901.

A number of revivals were attempted but none succeeded. On October, 1914, the railroad had its last scheduled run.

Learn more about this story at the annual meeting. Taber's *Rock-a-bye Baby* book will also be available for purchase.

Drainage work is completed at the General Store

Dealing with the persistent water problem at the General Store has been a problem the Association has been trying to solve.

Initially, simple solutions such as putting plastic sheets on the basement floor to deal with the musty smell was tried.

While it did provide some temporary relief during the dry spells, it just didn't do the job during the rainy season. Ernie Maw and Ray Nadasky made a number of inspections of the site and determined that the ground needed both re-grading and drainage ditches to keep

the surface water away from the back of the building. This work was completed last Fall.

The Township Road Department also modified the storm sewer next to the museum to keep the water away from the cellar door.

Lucille Hobbie's poster is on sale at Mendham Books

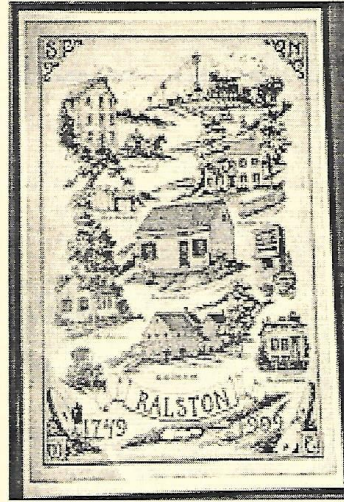


Lucille Hobbie in her studio with the poster that includes many familiar sites.

The Nesbitt Mill, the Ralston General Store and the Leddell house are just a few of the local structures featured in Lucille Hobbie's latest poster. Mendham's 250th anniversary was the inspiration for her latest work in which she has captured the area's early history.

A long time resident of Mendham who now lives in Hackettstown, Hobbie, is listed in 'Who's Who in American Art,' and is known locally for her 'Historic Morris County' and 'On the Green 1890s' lithograph series. Her prints and paintings are part of many corporate and private collections including Nabisco, AT&T and Colonial Williamsburg.

This new limited edition poster is on sale at Mendham Books for \$10.00. Lucille is donating the proceeds from the sale to the Ralston Historical Association.



Mendham Township's 250th Anniversary was the inspiration for Hobbie's poster.

Wilma Sagurton Adds to the Museum Collection

She is a subject matter expert on local history and a former Mendham Boro teacher. She recently gave a presentation entitled *Early Forms of Lighting* at the Township's lecture series. And now, Wilma Sagurton has donated a portion of her extensive collection to the Ralston General Store Museum.

In all, more than 20 items have been added to the museum's permanent collection including a Betty lamp with holder, coach lantern, cruise lamp, and a pottery oil lamp. She has also donated a number of toys including a bird house, a canoe, soldiers and cannons.

Visitors to the General Store may not realize it, but almost half of the objects on display belong to Wilma. The trustees approached her last year about donating some of her pieces to the museum and the process of identifying items that were particularly important to the period was begun.

Now that they have been added to the museum's permanent collection, they will be viewed by future generations. The trustees greatly appreciate Wilma's generosity!



Wilma Sagurton (center) in period costume at the recent lecture series at the Community Club in Brookside. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Gee.

RALSTON HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION 1998-1999

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REGULAR MEMBERS

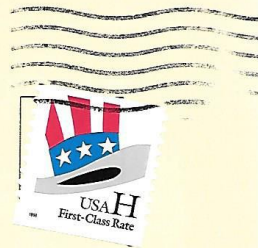
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*Building Fund Contributor

Ralston Historical Association
313 Mendham Road - West
Mendham, NJ 07945



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FORWARDED UNDER **FORWARDING TIME EXPIRED**

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Vice President - Marge Davidson
Recording Secretary - Wilma Sagurton
Corresponding Secretary - Rose Carlin
Treasurer - Jeff Purcell

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Merrie Clauss
Catherine Emmons
Russell Buchanan
Lucille Heimrod
Owen Carlin
Dolores Crammer
Beirne Donaldson
Sam Fornaro

[Handwritten signatures and scribbles]

1999 - 2000 Membership Renewal Form Check the Appropriate Membership

New Member Renewal Corporate Matching Gift

Regular Member (\$10.00 per year)

Patron Member (\$20.00 per year)

Life Member (\$150.00 one time)

Building Fund Amount

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

The Ralston Historical Association is always looking for new volunteers to help in a variety of ways. If you'd like to be a host at the museum on a Sunday afternoon during our season, which runs from June through October, please include your name and phone number below.

Name:

Phone:

Please make checks payable to:

Ralston Historical Association
313 Mendham Road - West
Mendham, NJ 07945