

Local Spotlight: Repository Holdings

Lake Hopatcong Historical Society

by Carole Flatley & Mary-Jo Solomon

The Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum
Is located in Lake Hopatcong State Park
323 Lakeside Boulevard, Landing, New Jersey.

Website: www.lakehopatconghistory.com/ Email: lhhistory@att.net



On Sunday April 29, 2018 MAGS Special Projects Group members Carole Flatley and Mary-Jo Solomon met with Marty Kane, President of the Lake Hopatcong Historical Society in their museum which is housed in an 1825 Morris Canal Lock Tender's House. This gem of a museum honors our state's largest lake and tells its story. Anything that relates to the lake is included: the history, the families, the famous people, the sporting events, the Morris Canal, the writers and poets and the tons of wonderful memories of people who have spent time in the "jewel of the mountains", Lake Hopatcong. The LHHS was founded in 1955 with only eight members; it currently has over eight hundred members. The museum is open on some Sundays, as well as on some Friday evenings. The LHHS has four major evening programs each year at offsite locations and they sell out quickly. So check the website for the dates and times for the museum openings and programs.

The archive has a unique variety of local treasures including 1887 and 1912 maps, which show the original property owners. Currently the seventy-five maps in the archives collection are being digitized. Over 12,000 images have been digitized and there are several thousand memorabilia items in the museum. There are family histories, some oral histories and many artifacts from the artists who performed at the lake and those who summered here. Included are copies of poems and books written by authors and poets while they were staying at Lake Hopatcong. On the website you can see the extensive list of the collections in the museum. Also, there are many articles about Lake Hopatcong history that you can download. The MAGS Indexing Group has indexed many of the Images of America books on local history. Please go to the MAGS website, <https://mags-public.weebly.com/books.html> to "Search" to "Books"

Hopatcong: A Century of Memories (Arcadia, 1998) authored by Martin Kane and look up your ancestor's name.

There are four local libraries: Hopatcong, Jefferson, Mt. Arlington and Roxbury. Each one has unique materials in their New Jersey History Section. The *Lake Hopatcong Breeze* Newspaper that was published from 1894-1982 (except during WWII) has been digitized. Check with the LHHS for specific items.

The museum has the following permanent exhibits:

The Morris Canal and The Transformation of Lake Hopatcong

Simpler Times at Lake Hopatcong

Jewel of the Mountains: The Great Hotel Era at Lake Hopatcong

Passage to Progress: The Morris Canal and The Transformation of Lake Hopatcong

Famous Folks, featuring former Lake Hopatcong residents: Hudson Maxim, Lotta Crabtree, Joe Cook and others

Greetings from Bertrand Island Amusement Park

These exhibits are brought to life by the original photos and objects connected with them. A standout exhibit is the piano owned by comedian Joe Cook who threw galas at his lake estate and invited his friends to autograph his piano. Search the many names and among others, find Babe Ruth! Another exhibit is the one on the Morris Canal with a very detailed diorama of the working of the canal. The Bertrand Island exhibit really brings back memories of summer fun that was not so long ago!

If your family vacationed at the lake you might find them mentioned in the local newspaper the *Hopatcong Breeze*, which has been digitized. By visiting this museum you can take a trip back in time to when your ancestor's vacation locations were only a car trip away. Please contact the LHHS if you have inquiries or if you want to donate local memorabilia: old photos, flyers, postcards, etc.

**Special thanks to MAGS member, Roy Lindsey, for recommending his local historical society. Happily Roy was able to join the SPG for this visit.

The Special Projects Group (SPG) members have been visiting local repositories to learn what genealogy related materials might be available for review by our members in researching their ancestors and/or gaining historical context to enhance their stories. In the series of articles we share the main features of our interviews with repository members spotlighting the information, collections and features available for research at each location. If you know of a local repository that the SPG should visit, or one that you wish to cover with us for a future article, please contact the Special Projects Group Committee at maryjosolomon@gmail.com