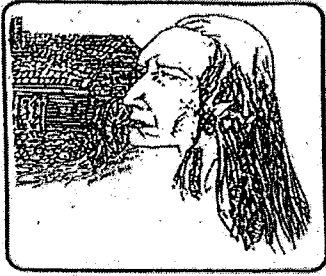


THE INDIAN MILLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED FEBRUARY 1973



NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Issue 1

mysite.verizon.net/vzet2t12/imhs

Winter 2008

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This Quarterly newsletter is published by the Indian Mills Historical Society ~ January, April, July and October.

NewsLetter Editor:

*Don Catts ~ Articles Welcome
Please E-mail question,
comments and News Articles to
ddcatts@verizon.net*

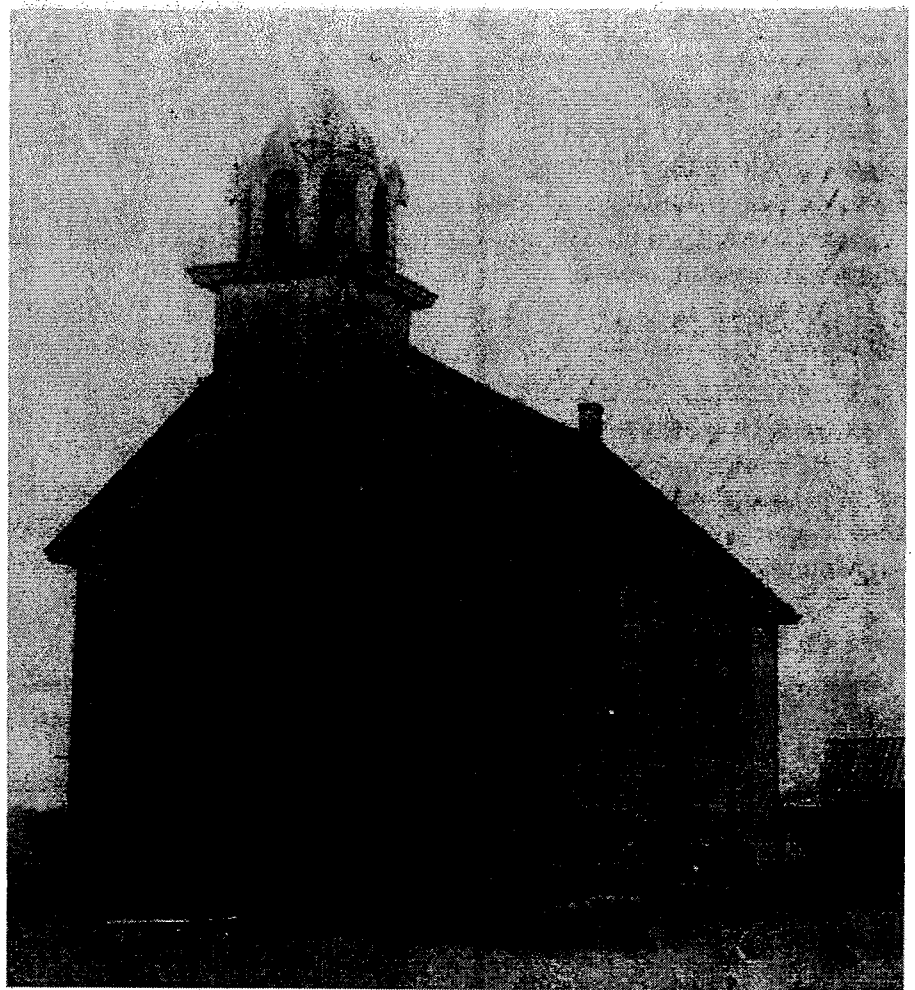


Photo courtesy of the late Frederick (Fritz) Miller

A building can form a major part of an area's identity because of its past function in the community and the length of time it has been in existence. **The Red Men's Hall** is one of these buildings. *see page 3*

SHAMONG TOWNSHIP MAKING HISTORY SINCE 1852

President's Message

2007 has been a busy year for our Society. Many new and exciting things have happened. This newsletter is just one of them – check out our website – lots on there! Everyone seems excited about what's happening. Any ideas for programs, projects, etc: Please contact the society. Looking forward to a GREAT 2008

Join us at our monthly meetings

Meetings are open to the public and are held at the Shamong Twp Municipal building at 105 Willow Grove Road at 7:30pm unless indicated otherwise.

Meetings are not scheduled in January & February.

Monday, March 17, 2008
7:30pm
(to be announced)

Monday, April 21, 2008
7:30pm
(to be announced)

Monday, May 19, 2008
7:30pm
(to be announced)

Officers:

President: Laura King
Vice President: Don Catts
Rec. Secretary: Ruth Boice
Treasurer: Janice Woytowich
Corr. Secretary: Gail Currier
Historian: George Flemming
RR Historian: Daniel Tavani

Trustees:

George D. Flemming
Daniel Tavani
Leon King

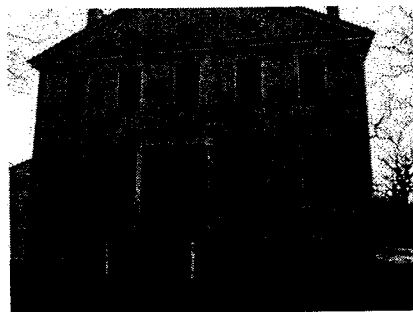
TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

*If you have not already done so, it is time to renew your membership for the 2008 calendar year. **Your continuing support is important to us!** The back page has the renewal form. Please take a moment to fill it out and send it in or bring it to the next meeting. If you are not already a member you are invited to join. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in history and particularly the history of Shamong Township. By joining the Indian Mills Historical Society you will share in the pleasure and responsibility of preserving the rich heritage of the area. Also, members have an opportunity to attend historical programs, receive the quarterly newsletter, participate in local historical research, meet professional and amateur historians, and attend social events. Your membership dues will help us promote public awareness and encourage local preservation. Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month. You can join by filling out the membership form on page 8 and mailing it to the address on the form.*

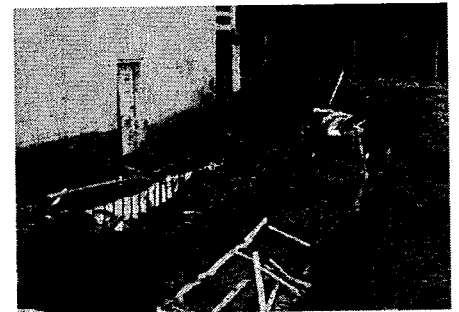
We appreciate your support!

"IMHS STUDENT MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM" Working with Township educators we would like to reach out to students through our website, our newsletter, and a new program we are starting this year. In an attempt to get students more involved in local history, we are offering all students an invitation to become a member of the Indian Mills Historical Society. Students under 18 years of age may become an honorary member by filling out the form on page 8 and mailing it to the address on the form. This membership has no dues. Students will be honorary members in good stand and receive a membership card. However, there will be no voting privileges. Anyone wishing to help with student programs Call: 609-268-7882

Restoration Continues at the Richards Mansion ~ Atsion



North side of Mansion



Excavation of West Porch Foundation

The photograph shows the original window frames and shutters have been removed and taken off site for restoration. They will be returned and installed at the proper stage of reconstruction. The excavation for the West Porch footing has been completed and the concrete poured. The contractor was responsible for archeological monitoring during excavation. *See page 5*

Atsion Day 2008

The Spring Atsion Day will be on Sunday, April 27, and the Fall Atsion Day will be October 5, 2008. Mark your calendar; we hope to see you there. More information will be available as the day draws near. To see the last Atsion Day Photos visit our website

Historical Afghans for Sale

Our Indian Mills Historical Afghans are 100% cotton, measuring 50 by 70 inches, and are available in four colors; light blue, dark blue, green, and red. Woven in the USA, these beautiful Afghans have eleven (11) historic buildings, depicting the history of Shamong Township. This decorative keepsake is destined to become a family heirloom. Some colors are limited so buy yours soon. They sell for \$40.00 and proceeds will be used to help meet the society's operating expenses. They may be purchased at our general monthly meetings, fundraisers or by calling 609-268-1693, 609-268-7882 or 609-268-0327. Thank you.

The last time the Jersey Devil was seen in Shamong Township was 1981 at Atsion Lake.

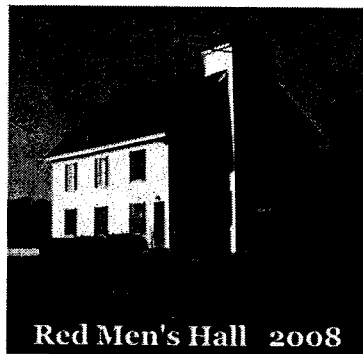
On the Cover ~The Red Men's Hall *continued from page 1*

The following brief history of Red Men's Hall is from a presentation made by Mary Anne and Joseph Reinhart for the Indian Mills Historical Society and presented to the Township Committee to express the importance of preserving the historic building.

- 1876 – 1881 Centennial Baptist Church
- 1892 – 1923 Edgepillock Hall – Tribe #168 Improved Order of the Red Men, NJ used the building for their meetings.
- 20th Century - became Red Men's Hall. The hall then served as a social gathering place that conducted dances with music by live musicians.
- July 20, 1964 – Lewis Schrider Jr. purchased the hall from Edgepillock Tribe #168 Improved Order of the Red Men.
- 1970's – Schauman family purchased the building and extensively remodeled it, then converted it into a grocery store.
- 1997 – 2000 the McDonald family purchased the property, converting it into a nursery school.
- 2000 – present, the property is currently being used as a residence.

To view the full presentation please visit our website at:

<http://mysite.verizon.net/vzet2t12/imhs/>



Red Men's Hall 2008

Red Men's Hall is one of the few remaining historical buildings in Shamong township, located directly across the street from the township municipal building at the corner of Stokes and Willow Grove Roads. It is and has been the focus of the Indian Mills Historical Society to purchase this property for historical preservation. The current owner has indicated a

willingness to sell this property to the Indian Mills Historical Society for historical preservation.

It is and has been the vision and dream of the Indian Mills Historical Society members to preserve Red Men's Hall as a living museum. It is the intention of the members to use this facility as their meeting place and to display and house the many accumulated artifacts and historical memorabilia that have been donated to collected by the members. In addition, they believe that the best use of this spacious and centrally located building is as a meeting place for the various township social and civic organizations' activities, i.e., Senior Citizens, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Athletic Association, etc.

The Indian Mills Historical Society seeks the support of the residents, businesses, and the township leaders in the acquisition of the Red men's Hall. We would like to hear from you regarding this project, please contact the Indian Mills Historical Society at 609-268-7882.

WILLIAM HENRY RICHARDS

BY GEORGE D. FLEMMING

The ironmaster, Samuel Richards, was born May 8, 1769 in Pennsylvania. He was the son of William Richards of Batsto fame. He married a widow, Mary Smith Morgan, Nov. 18, 1797. They had eight children. Their second child was William Smith Richards, born Dec. 3, 1799, died Jan. 23, 1803. Their seventh child was again named William Smith Richards, born Nov. 11, 1806, and died in early childhood. Samuel's wife Mary died on May 3, 1820.

Samuel Richards remarried on October 8, 1822 to another widow named Anna Maria Martin Witherspoon. They had three children, Mary born June 23, 1824, died Sept. 10 1824. Maria Lawrence was born Sept. 2, 1826 and died Dec. 21, 1899. The third child, and the subject of this article, William Henry Richards, was born June 25, 1828. The Richards family usually spent their winters in Philadelphia, and their summers at Atsion. The Atsion mansion had been completed in 1826.

Very little is known of William Henry during his formative years. He was just 14 years of age when his father, Samuel Richards, died Jan. 4, 1842, at his home in Philadelphia, at 357 Arch St. The Atsion estate was then divided between William Henry, and his sister Maria Lawrence Richards. The Atsion record books show that he was married on April 29, 1850 to a woman named Mary Thorne. William Henry left the Atsion mansion and moved to a 150-acre farm, three miles west of present day Rt. 206. In 1850 this part of Atsion Road was in Washington Township. The 1850 Federal Census shows Mary Richards age 23. No mention of William Henry. They had a daughter, Anna Maria, born in 1852, however she was raised by her grandmother Maria Richards.

On January 5, 1855, a legal document was filed and recorded in Book 5 of deeds, page 77, by John S. Irick of Southampton. The trust was to pay William Richards, \$200.00 per month during his lifetime. Following his death his estate was to be

divided with 1/3 to his "reputed" wife Mary Richards. 1/3 to his "reputed" daughter Anna Maria Richards, and 1/3 to his sister Maria. The document also mentions bonds, mortgages, bank stock, household and kitchen furnishings, horses, mules, cattle, stock wagon, hay grain, and farming utensils.

The Kuhn & Janney of Burlington County dated 1858 shows three buildings very close to Atsion Road. One building is labeled "Home of W.H. Richards, 150 acres". The 1860 Federal Census shows the occupants as Mary Richards age 34, Wm. H. Richards age 32, and Cathran Flangan age 42. It is possible this older woman was a housekeeper for the family.

William Henry Richards died Jan 19, 1863, one week shy of his 35th birthday. His cause of death is unknown. Perhaps he had been ill for a long time since his estate had been placed in a trust since 1855, eight years prior. There is no record of his death in the Shamong Township records. William Henry Richards will was recorded in Will Book K, page 157. An inventory was made by John Stanton Irick, of Southampton. It should be noted that Irick was a very wealthy and prominent businessman of Vincentown, and also a New Jersey State Senator. The estate totaled \$74,321.17. It directed that all real and personal property be sold and the proceeds divided among his reputed wife Mary Richards, his reputed daughter Anna Maria, and his sister Maria. The inventory list provides some idea of the size of the Richards home. It describes sundry household goods in the S/E room, middle room, and S/W room upstairs, S/E room, middle room, and S/W room downstairs, also household goods in the garret (attic). There is also a small room, kitchen, and store room downstairs, in addition to one piano forte and a large bell and gun. There was one pair of mules and one horse and wagon, two cows and one steer. A lot of manure on the farm, lot of corn, potatoes, and green corn, farming and gardening utensils, lot of meat tubs in the cellar.

That William Henry Richards led a rather stoic existence is an understatement. He appeared to live the life of a "gentleman farmer" leaving any

manual work to others. There is no apparent record of what caused his early death. The Shamong records do not list his death.

On June 18, 1869, in Deed Book Y-7, page 404, there is a document whereby Mrs. Mary Richards of Vincentown, a widow of William H. Richards, of Shamong, to Samuel E. Colwell of Weymouth, Atlantic Co. and directed a \$750. Annual annuity to be paid to him on behalf of his wife Anna Maria Richards Colwell, daughter of William H. Richards. Mrs. Mary Richards is not mentioned any further and does not appear in the census records of 1870. She may have died or moved from the area.

In Deed Book Y-6, page 344, John S. Irick, executor of the estate of William H. Richards, sold the farm and plantation in Shamong Township, on the public road leading from Atsion to Smith's Tavern, containing 150 acres to George Taylor of Freehold.

On Jan. 1, 1864 George Taylor and Emma his wife, sold the farm to James and Caroline Lippincott, recorded in Book Y-6, page 348.

On Sept. 6, 1866, in Deed Book U-7 page 9, James and Caroline Lippincott, sold the farm to Lydia Ann Fox, wife of Leander B. Fox of Lumberton. Lydia Ann and Leander B. Fox, owned the farm 42 years and longer than anyone else since William H. Richards. The 1876 Atlas shows Leander B. Fox, with 150 acres on Atsion Road. Lydia Fox died intestate on March 22, 1901. The farm was divided unto her two sons William and Winfield R. Fox of Somers pt., by courtesy of Leander B. Fox. They in turn sold the 150-acre farm to Agnes Watts, of Burlington City, March 17, 1908, recorded in Book 432, page 50.

Agnes Watts sold to Leola V. Wilson, of Jersey City, March 20, 1908 in Book 432, page 147. Leola & William Wilson of Jersey, sold to Herbert Baker of Shamong for \$5,000 on Sept. 5, 1918, recorded in Book 549, page 141. Herbert J. Baker sold to George W. Baker of Shamong, April 23, 1922, recorded in Book 598, page 154. Hannah A. Baker, executrix of the last will and testament of

George W. Baker of Shamong, sold to Joseph S. Sykes for \$5,500 recorded in Book 830, page 229 dated August 30, 1934. Joseph Sykes died in 1963 and the property passed to his widow Emma V. Sykes, who was then living in Williamstown, N.J. Emma V. Sykes sold to Sykes, Duple, Wood, and Geissert, July 27, 1973, recorded in Book 1852, page 890. The property then transferred to various corporations, none of which lived on the farm which was being leased for crop raising to various local farmers. It may have also been leased during the latter part of the Sykes ownership. One such lease was recorded Dec. 22, 1948, to Forrest Jennings, for 100 acres for three years. The farm still retains the name Sykes's Field, and has been so called within the living memory of many still living in the area today.

The property finally passed down to a corporation known as Karma Thegsum Choling, Inc. and is Block 54, Lot 2 in Shamong Township. Approximately five acres is assessed at \$585,000 which contains a large home. It is tax exempt as a charitable property and a Buddhist Temple. The balance of the tillable land is still being leased to local farmers and is taxable.

The William Henry Richards home site is today marked by a large white pine tree that fell down in recent years. It is directly across Atsion Road from the Indian Mills Gun Club. Remains of the foundation stones of bog iron and brick are still evident. Looking over these 150 acres of farmland today, surrounded by native pines, conjures up visions of what had once been here, with the old stage road to Little Egg Harbor in the rear of the property.

Restoration Continues

continued from page 2

The concrete footing is covered with insulated blankets to protect it from cold weather during the curing period. The electric box in the background is a temporary hook-up, to be used for construction equipment and lighting during construction. The finished mansion will be as it was in 1826 when Samuel Richards built it, without electricity or water.

~~~~~ IN THE OL' DAYS ~~~~~

from the Central Record and Mount Holly Mirror

75 Years Ago

- **June 6** ~ The first Drive-In Theater opened on Crescent Boulevard in Camden, NJ. Admission price of 25 cents for the car, 25 cents per person and no car to pay more than \$1.00 total.
- **Dec 5** ~ Beer is legalized in the USA.
- **1933** ~ Pickett Russell Sr. acquired the first liquor license in Shamong Township for "Snyder's Tavern" the named was changed to the "Pic-A-Lilli Inn" in 1937.
- **1933** ~ Ruth Wakefield invented the Chocolate Chip Cookie.

100 Years Ago

➤ **Jan 22** ~ Italian Murderer Arrested ~ Felice Ronca, royal consular agent at Trenton, conveyed information to Prosecutor Atkinson on Thursday of the arrest of Antonio Schiavo, in Italy wanted for the murder of Guiseppe Mercurio, at the cranberry bogs of Rider & Wilkinson, at Hampton Gate, near Atsion, on October 29, last. He also advised the state's Attorney that as soon as all the testimony in the case has been taken and forwarded to the proper officials in Italy the prisoner will be tried there, and executed, if found guilty, just as though the crime had been committed in that country.

Prosecutor Atkinson is not yet sure that this form of trail proceedings will be satisfactory to him, and before taking any action toward forwarding testimony he will consult higher authorities to remove all doubt in his mind as to his rights in this matter.

The crime for which Schiavo has been arrested occurred while he and Mercurio were out together gunning. The victim always carried at least \$200 with him, and robbery was the motive for the crime. There was every evidence of this fact when the body was found on November 24, the secret pockets in Mercurio's clothing having been cut open and their contents removed. Schiavo was traced from the pines to Philadelphia and there it

was learned that he had sailed on November 2, on the steamship Romo, for his home country.

Communication was had with Italian officials and as a result of instructions given they were able to arrest the murderer at the Province of Salerno.

➤ **Feb 8** ~ On the first of the month a new rule went into effect on the Pennsylvania Railroad fixing 25 cents as the minimum charge for carrying freight.

200 Years Ago

➤ Anthracite coal first burned as fuel by Jesse Fell in Wilkes-Barre, PA. Discovery leads to use of coal as key fuel source of America's Industrial Revolution.

**SYKES FIELD FOR SALE ~ 150 ACRES**

*From the Mount Holly Mirror*

*By virtue of the will and testament of William H. Richards, late of Burlington County, dec'd, will be sold at public vendue, on Tuesday, the First of September, on the premises, on the road leading from Medford to Atsion, within three miles of the latter place, and 2 miles of the Raritan & Delaware Bay Railroad, all that FARM, containing 150 Acres of land. Well fenced with good cedar rails, and along the road with cedar pickets. The improvements are a Large Three-Story Frame Mansion House, formerly the residence of said deceased, divided into 20 rooms, some of which are large and well finished; with a green house, ice house, 3 large barns, crib and carriage house &c., all in good order. Also, 2 tenant houses, about 20 by 30 feet, each two stories high, and in good repair. The House being large and pleasantly located near railroad communication, would make a first-rate Boarding House for persons from New York and Philadelphia, seeking health and pleasure in the summer season, being 1 hour's ride from the latter and about 3 from the former place. Persons wishing to view the property will call on the widow, Mrs. Mary Richards, residing thereon, or the subscriber, who will show the premises, and give any information relative thereto. Sale to take place between 2 and 5 o'clock, P.M. Conditions at sale by JOHN S. IRICK, Sole Executor, July 29, 1863.*

## **INDIAN MILLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY ~ MEMBERSHIP LIST 1973**

Abrams, M&M Everett  
Abrams, Mrs. Diana  
Abrams, Mrs. Pearl  
Adams, Mrs. Helen  
Allen, M&M Amos  
Allen, M&M Fred  
Andress, Mrs.  
Atkins, M&M George  
Baker, Mrs Mabel  
Barbour, M&M George H.  
Barrett, Mrs. Dorothy  
Batiste, M&M Frank J.  
Batley, M&M William  
Benson, M&M Gerald  
Berry, Mrs. Helen S.  
Bowman, Mrs. Gloria M.  
Birdsall, M&M Clyde  
Boehm, Mrs. Janet E.  
Bozearth, Mr. Harold E.  
Brown, Mrs. Isabel  
Brown, Mrs. L. G.  
Broy, Mrs. Evelyn  
Bruder, M&M Richard  
Catts, M&M Donald D.  
Chispin, Mrs. Verna  
Chwastek, M&M Philip J.  
Cleveland, Mrs. Linda Alice  
Cline, M&M Walter G.  
Convery, Mr. Frank  
Costello, Mr. Edward J.  
Crain, Mrs. Mary  
Cramer, M&M William  
Crowell, M&M Mansel H.  
Currier, M&M William  
Currier, Mrs. Dorothea P.  
Dayton, M&M Richard  
Dayton, Richard  
Dolan, M&M Thomas  
Doran, Mrs. Helen  
Eberson, Mrs. Elizabeth  
Erisman, M&M Robert  
Entwistle, M&M Richard F.  
Firestine, M&M Richard  
Flemming, Mr. George  
Foster, M&M Kenneth E.

Gager, Mr. Alvin C.  
Gager, Mrs. Josie  
Garron, Mrs. Frances  
Giberson, Mrs. Edith  
Giberson, M&M Richard  
Giberson, Mrs. Marjorie  
Gordon, M&M Theodore  
Grassie, M&M William  
Grunning, M&M Thomas  
Hand, M&M Louis E.  
Harrison, Mr. Robert  
Hojnacki, Mrs. Josephine  
Jennings, M&M Forrest H. Jr.  
Jennings, M&M John H.  
Jennings, Miss Tina  
Jennings, Mrs. Mamie  
Johnson, M&M Ralph W.  
Jones, Mr. Robert  
King, M&M Leon  
King, M&M William  
King, Miss Laurel Anne  
King, Mrs. Alice May  
King, Mrs. Helen  
Lane, Mrs. Rose  
Lemmon, Mrs.  
LeVan, Mr. Glyde W.  
Livingston, Mrs. Connie  
Mabchiano, Mrs. Alexandria  
Mackey, M&M Raymond  
Maressa, Senator, Joseph A.  
McCorriston, Mrs. Marie  
Miller, Anthony S.  
Miller, Charles L.  
Miller, M&M Anthony S.  
Miller, M&M Clement  
Miller, M&M Frederick  
Miller, Mr. H. C.  
Moore, M&M Mark, Sr.  
Moorehead, Mrs. Jan  
Nelson, Mrs. Catherine  
Noonan, Mrs. Lois  
O'Keefe, Mr. Stephen  
Odus, Mrs. Pearl B.  
Perri, M&M Samuel  
Perri, Mr. John

Philips, Dr. Helen C.  
Preston, M&M Robert  
Prickett, Miss Leah V.  
Ranck, Mr. William L.  
Reamer, Mrs. Verna  
Richies, M&M Wm H.  
Rose, Mr Lee  
Ruble, Mr. Dean  
Russell, M&M Pickett  
Russell, M&M Thomas  
Schiller, Mrs. Norma  
Sheasley, M&M James A.  
Sheasley, Mr. Edward  
Sheckart, Mr. Arthur C.  
Sheferman, Ms. Sunny  
Shinske, Mrs. Burnis  
Shoemaker, M&M Irvin  
Sipp, Mr. Arthur G.  
Smith, M&M John  
Sovicski, Mr. Stephen  
Stratmann, Mrs. Mary  
Swain, Mrs. Edna  
Tait, Mr. John J.  
Tavani, M&M Daniel  
Tidswell, M&M Arthur H.  
Tomlinson, Major Ephraim  
Treat, Mrs. Janet M.  
Turner, M&M Albert  
Vaccaro, M&M Samuel G.  
Vincent, M&M Robert  
Walker, Mrs. Dorothy  
Weiss, Mrs. Trudy  
Welch, M&M Ray  
Wells, M&M Floyd  
Welsh, Mrs. Martha  
Whalen, Mrs. Barbara  
Wiker, Mrs. Dorothy  
Woytowich, M&M Henry  
Woytowich, Mr. Kenneth  
Wright, Mrs. Josie  
Wright, Mrs. Sydney L.  
Yates, M&M Stanley W.  
Zimba, Mr. Stanley  
Zimmerman, M&M Milton  
Zimmerman, Mrs. Florence

Your are Invited to Become a Member

Make checks payable to: **Indian Mills Historical Society.**  
Mail to: **Don Catts 39 Manitoba Trail, Shamong, NJ 08088**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ BIRTHDATE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Individual \$7.00    \_\_\_ Family \$12.00    \_\_\_ Senior (62 & over) \$5.00

\_\_\_ Life \$50.00    \_\_\_ Honorary Member (no dues) Student under 18 years of age

Optional Tax Deductible Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to dedicate this donation in memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person(s), event, and date of memory

Example; John and Jane Doe, 20<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary February 14, 2007

Thank you for your support!

*Indian Mills Historical Society*  
*105 Willow Grove Rd*  
*Shamong, N.J. 08088*

Place  
Stamp  
Here

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF SHAMONG TOWNSHIP HERITAGE