



Kingston Historian

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

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Fall 2014

John Kilbride, Camden & Amboy Railroad historian, to speak at the Kingston Historical Society's annual meeting on Tuesday, October 14 at 7:30 pm.

The meeting, at the Kingston Firehouse, on Heathcote Road, will include a very brief business meeting followed by Kilbride's slide illustrated talk on "Railroads and Kingston" which includes a history of the C&A Railroad and the Rocky Hill Railroad. The C&A was the state's first railroad and enjoyed a monopolistic relationship with the State's legislators. Kilbride will cover the planning, construction and expansion of the lines that led to the creation of today's Northeast Corridor and conclude with thoughts on the present-day abandonment of the Rocky Hill Branch.



Kilbride retired from Amtrak after a 34-year career. He has been researching the C&A railroad since moving to NJ in 1979. He has published and continues to publish articles of historical research on a variety of railroad related subjects.

The C&A Branch Line – Camden, Trenton, along the D&R Canal to Kingston, Deans Pond and New Brunswick was completed in 1839. The original Kingston station was off Mapleton Road. The station was moved to opposite the Locktender's House when the Rocky Hill RR began operating in 1864. For a time the original C&ARR's John Bull engine was used on the Kingston/Rocky Hill Branch. **The meeting is free and open to all. Refreshments served.**

Improvements coming to the Locktender's House, soon!

The KHS is aware of the deteriorating conditions of some windows and doors at the Locktender's House. KHS has a contract for repair work that should begin soon.

More about Kingston. **Sunday, October 26, at 1:30 pm.**

Join KHS as we walk and learn more about Kingston with George Luck. You can see George really gets into Kingston's history.

We will meet at the Kingston Presbyterian Church parking lot where George will begin his commentary on Kingston from 1683 to the 1930s. Quite a length of time, but all part of Kingston's story. Both Kingston and Princeton claim the house on the west side of the Kingston-Princeton Road, second from River Road as the first house in the area in 1683 – Dr. Henry Greenland's house which has served as an inn/tavern at the crossing of the Millstone River on the main road between NY and Philadelphia. More inns and taverns soon followed as did the Kingston Presbyterian Church, shops and mills. George will talk about Kingston's role in the Revolutionary War and the about the changes brought by the D&R Canal and the Camden & Amboy RR.



Remember to see the KHS display on "Kingston and the Rocky Hill Railroad"

at the Locktender's House on weekends this fall from 10 am-6 pm in October and 10 am-4 pm in November. KHS thanks Ceil Leedom for organizing this exhibit.

Kingston United Methodist Church's "Day of Service"

KHS benefited from the Kingston United Methodist Church's "Day of Service" on Sunday, June 22. The Church wanted to contribute to the community and KHS had a project that needed help. On this beautiful day, a group of church members arrived at the Locktender's House ready to paint and spruce up the place, which they did in short order. Carl Adair, Debbie Wince, Chaz Boice, Hunter Morris, and Robert Ashbaugh began work, where previous volunteer painters left off, in the kitchen and fireplace room.



Carl Adair and Debbie Wince

Meanwhile, on the outside, Kevin, Kenda, and Shannon Dear weeded flower beds and planted bright gold marigolds, which are still beaming in front of the house. KHS provided refreshments to the group.

The KHS Website Contact Form is Active and Used.

There have been many inquiries from the KHS website at "khsnj.org" about Kingston history.

One request concerned Van Tilburgh's Inn. M.K. Van Tilburg has written, "Van Tilburgh's Tavern/Inn, the Sign of the Mermaid: 1733-1880." Based on research from many sources and help of KHS members. The author included a drawing of "The Sign of the Mermaid" as it once looked on the corner of Laurel Avenue and Main Street (Route 27) before it was torn down. The article lists most inn mentions from various sources. KHS sent additional information from Van Tilburgh's Tavern License Petitions from the 1700s.

A request for information on Peter Shann, a Kingston Civil War veteran, was easily answered by George Luck, who had just given a performance as Peter Shann at the Kingston Presbyterian Church this June.

KHS is most grateful to Doug Miller and Tari Pantaleo for their work in setting up and maintaining our website.

KHS Contact Information: **Website:** khsnj.org
Email Address: KHSofNJ@gmail.com
Regular Mail: **Kingston Historical Society,**
P.O. Box 323, Kingston, NJ 08528-0323.

Congratulations to Kingston Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 for 90 years of service to the community.

The company celebrated its 90th year with a community picnic this past September. From its start in 1924 to now, it is an important Kingston institution serving in many capacities that enrich this community.

Kingston News from the Past...

- 1/23/1948. Kingston Rod and Gun Club voting new officers at February meeting. *The Record*.
- 1/23/1948. Kingston Boys' Club elected officers for 1948. Pres. Roger Potts, VP. William Kokedka, Sec. Jack Esche, Treas. Norman Luck, Basketball Capt. David Keiupi. *The Record*.
- 12/9/1940. "Kingston Fireman to Hold Election: Catelli is unopposed as President of the Company." *Trenton Evening Times*.
- 3/14/1940. Joseph Catelli, Jr. is a member of the South Brunswick Twp. Board of Ed. *Trenton Evening Times*.
- 6/28/1942. Donald Briggs of Ridge Road, son of Mrs. Katherine Briggs and late Nicholas Briggs now on duty on a destroyer with the Navy. *Trenton Evening Times*.
- 8/10/1947. Mr. & Mrs. John Brabson, Jr. are parents of a baby boy. *Trenton Evening Times*. *The Record* from Franklin Township Public Library; *Trenton Evening Times* items from Genealogybank.com.

Peter Shann

KHS Vice President, George Luck, portrayed the life of Peter Shann, Civil War veteran, local businessman and Elder of the Kingston Presbyterian Church on Saturday, June 7, 2014. His excellent portrayal was very well received by a large crowd. The presentation was co-sponsored by the Board of Deacons of the Church and KHS.

SAVE THE DATE

KHS Annual Holiday Open House and Tree Lighting

December 7th, 2014 at 3:30 pm.

(tree lighting at 5 pm) at the Locktender's House

Kingston Historical Society Officers

President – Robert von Zumbusch
Vice-President – George Luck
Treasurer – Tom Jacoby
Secretary – Ceil Leedom