



VINELAND

Historical and Antiquarian Society

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2020

The oldest local historical society in New Jersey, founded in 1864.

The Return of 'A Race Through Time'

Although life is a little uncertain for everyone these days, the Society has decided to move forward with "A Race Through Time." The start date will be getting pushed back to July 1 and seventeen Cumberland County historic sites will be participating in the free event, which is designed to raise awareness about Cumberland County's rich, culturally-diverse past in an educational but entertaining way.

How does it work? Visitors can register at any of the participating sites, where they will receive a brochure listing all of the organizations and a small "passport." After touring a location, visitors will get their passports stamped as proof they were at that location. Anyone who visits at least eight sites will then be eligible to enter a drawing to win prizes.

The participating sites include: Bayshore Center at Bivalve, Cumberland County Historical Society, Cumberland County Pre-History Museum, Kathleen B. and Henry R. Hansen Boy Scout Museum, Maurice River Historical Society, Mauricetown Historical Society, Millville Army Air Field Museum, Millville Historical Society, Baracha Dunn House, Nail House Museum, Old Broad Street Presbyterian Church and Cemetery, Palace of Depression, Port Norris Historical Society, Seabrook Educational and Cultural Center, Siloam Cemetery, Wheaton Arts and Cultural Alliance and the Vineland Historical and Antiquarian Society.

This summer's event will be a prelude to an expanded Race in 2021, which will include historic sites throughout the eight South Jersey counties. Representatives of different county historical sites have already expressed eagerness to participate next year.

To learn more about this year's event, visit the A Race Through Time Facebook page or e-mail vinelandhistory@gmail.com. The Race is sponsored in part by a grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, administered by the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission and a grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust.



The Nail House Museum (above) in Bridgeton and the Seabrook Educational and Cultural Center (at right) are just two of the seventeen sites that will be open to visitors this summer as part of the county-wide "A Race Through Time" program.



Spiritualists, Gospel Music and More...

Although our calendar of events was interrupted by the spread of COVID-19, we were fortunate enough to enjoy a program in February thanks to Dr. Virginia Perry and her daughter, Midge Perry Spenser before we had to cancel our schedule for March, April and May.

The program, titled "Spirituals, Gospel Music and More," was offered as part of Black History Month, and gave visitors an opportunity to learn more about the significance of music to the African-American community.

Early on, Perry explained, the music was often used by slaves to send coded messages regarding potential escape routes and help along the way. Later, it often inspired them to stay strong in the face of prejudice.

Spencer, a gifted singer, sang some of the songs that played such an important role in African-American history. The audience learned how many of the musical traditions that were brought from Africa to America survived over the years and were later incorporated into contemporary musical forms such as jazz and rap.



Dr. Virginia Perry

Genealogy for Beginners

If you've always wanted to learn how to track down your family history, please join us on Saturday, July 18, when Society trustee Joseph Hunter will offer a beginners workshop on genealogy at the museum. Hunter, who became interested in genealogy after conducting research into his own family history, later became certified in the field. In recent years, he has assisted numerous area residents with learning more about their roots. Seating for the program is limited to thirty people, so please RSVP by July 1 if you are interested in attending. There is a \$10 per person fee, which includes refreshments and written materials. Museum doors will open at 1:30 p.m. and the program will begin at 2 p.m. For further information, please contact the Society.

This past year, the Society started a genealogy service that offers researchers the opportunity to uncover information in the museum archives. There is a \$10 an hour charge. Anyone interested in utilizing the service can apply at the Society's web site, www.discovervinelandhistory.org.



Volunteers needed!

If you find yourself with a couple of spare hours a month, consider becoming a volunteer at the Society's museum. You don't have to have an extensive knowledge of history, just an interest in helping to preserve the collections. Volunteers are needed in just about every area, ranging from general office work to museum maintenance, special events and more. If you enjoy working with children, consider volunteering as a guide for our annual fourth grade school tour program. Working as a volunteer is a great way to learn more about the history of your community while helping to maintain the oldest purpose-built museum in the state of New Jersey. To learn more, just call us at 856-691-1111 or e-mail vinelandhistory@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

Summer Scenes Gone By...



VHAS Magazine to focus on arts and culture

The 2020 issue of the Historical Society Magazine will examine Vineland's rich cultural history, including brief histories of some of the artists, writers and musicians who once called Vineland home. One of the most multitalented of those individuals was none other than Charles K. Landis himself. Not only did he have a talent for art but he was a prolific writer of both fiction and non-fiction. His third son, Richard W.M. Landis, apparently inherited his father's artistic ability and was recognizing as an up-and-coming talent in the field of painting. Other early talented residents included Adna Tenney, a portrait painter from New England who moved to Vineland and Henry Clay Work, who penned such popular songs as "Marching Through Georgia" and "My Grandfather's Clock." The magazine, which will be published in December, will also include stories on other aspects of local life, including the Vineland Burial Reform Association and the Maplehurst School, a facility for mentally-challenged children. If you are interested in submitting an article for publication, please make sure the material reaches Patricia A. Martinelli, curator, before September 1. We can't pay but authors will receive two copies of the magazine for their submission. The Historical Society Magazine was started in 1916 by Frank D. Andrews, VHAS Secretary.

Hey, kids! Looking a fun summer project?

Try gardening with Gilbert Grape!

Hi, I'm Gilbert! Let's make a garden!



I love to watch things grow. In Vineland's early days, people grew their own food all the time. If you want to make your own garden, you can start small, with a couple of flower pots, or ask if it's okay to make space for a garden in your yard. There are a few things you will need to get started: Seeds, a small spade to dig with and, of course, dirt. All of them may be available at your local Dollar Store!



GETTING STARTED

If you make a garden in your yard, don't make it too big! Set aside a space that is about two feet wide and three feet long. That will be big enough to grow a lot of flowers or herbs or vegetables.

Make sure you follow the directions on the seed packets, which will tell you how deep to dig the hole for the seeds and how much sunlight and water to give your plants.

Once you get everything planted, think about adding a little statue or bird bath to your garden. You can make something yourself or buy a shallow dish to fill with water.

Check your garden every day to make sure no weeds are getting in the way of your seeds.

Send Gilbert a picture of your garden and he'll put it on Facebook!

Don't Forget to Call First!

As of this printing, we don't know if we'll be open to the public in June or July. So, PLEASE CALL us at 856-691-1111 before you make the trip out to visit the museum or check our Facebook page or web site (www.discovervinelandhistory.org) to keep track of our schedule. We are looking forward to opening our doors to the public again and hope that it won't be long before we get to see everyone! In the meantime, please stay safe.

