



# In Bergen's Attic

SUMMER 2020

## President's Message

Hello Society Members and Friends!



We are truly going through historic times. So much time is spent learning about events of the past, it is unique that we are living through an event many will study in the future. We have all been through a wave of emotions since the Covid-19 Pandemic, but since the beginning, I have been proud of the work the Bergen County Historical Society has done to not skip a beat. The purpose is simple, hope. Nearly daily updates on historical happenings in Bergen County have been shared via our social media presence. Our website also went through a major overhaul to help facilitate contact and discussion, along with continuing projects through the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission such as new interpretative panels at the site along with an updated paint analysis of the Von Steuben House! Both projects are game changers in that they will help to continue to tell the story of New Bridge and it allows people to develop their own experiences. The latter project will also help further restoration and the future interpretation of the Von Steuben.

One project that we have also continued to move forward with is the new Museum Building project. The Society has assembled a team that will look at all aspects of the structure from final designs to HVAC, temperature control, fire suppression and visitor experience. The first question that



FUTURE BCHS MUSEUM INTERIOR

does come up from time to time is the building's location. To be clear, we take this issue very seriously. Historic New Bridge Landing's shoreline is that of an 18th century wharf and has not been raised or altered. Yet the river is tidal and it is important to take that into consideration. Therefore the structure will be constructed in a manner that exceeds requirements set out by FEMA. Secondly, the structure will also not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment. All considerations are being made, even down to the pavers, to ensure that water goes into the soil first and not into storm drains. This is a 21st century concept that you can see at Duke Farms and we hope to be an example for all of Bergen County. The exterior will utilize a long lasting construction

### IN THIS ISSUE

President's Letter .....	1 and 7
The Dutch, Tulips and Art .....	2 - 3
Document Box Restoration .....	4 - 6
Elizabeth Piccino .....	6
Tell Me Your Story .....	7
New Interpretive Signs for HNBL & Website .....	8 - 9
History from the Strawberry Patch .....	10 -11
"Mr. Zabrisky had sent for the wine" .....	12

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## The Dutch, Tulips and Art

Abigail Duffany



Tulips were imported to Holland in the late sixteenth century and were a luxury item until around the mid-1630's when the flowers became more available and affordable. The influence and popularity of tulips is evident in Dutch art where tulips make frequent appearances as symbols. Expensive tulips show up in still life paintings, portraits, botanical studies and more.

The *Semper Augustus* tulip was one rare Dutch tulip. It had multicolored variegations and feathering on its petals which were a result of a mosaic virus. These “broken bulb” tulips were coveted, costing more than average, but they were a grower’s gamble. Naturally the rarity and high prices led to the flower becoming a symbol of wealth. Blooming *Semper Augustus* tulips are sometimes seen being held in portraits. They were representation of wealth as well as a possible suggestion to fertility. Eventually the tulip market crashed. Buyers were no longer willing to pay the high prices originally agreed upon. Following this crash, *Semper Augustus* tulips took on a different meaning in art. The painting, “*Flora’s Wagon of Fools*, circa 1637 by Hendrik Gerritsz Pot... shows Haarlem weavers, who have abandoned their looms, follow the goddess Flora as her chariot drives blindly to the sea. She holds out flamed red-and-white *Semper Augustus* tulips while another woman weighs bulbs, and other companions in fool’s caps, one with a bag of money, drink and chatter on.” (Brenner, Riddell, and Moore 2007, 93). In this painting the once coveted *Semper Augustus* tulip symbolizes a foolish investment.

Tulips can be seen in composite paintings based on an artist’s individual botanical studies that we later painted in bouquets comprised of flowers that do not bloom at the same time (Pound 2018). These floral arrangements exist in a variety of still life paintings. Still life paintings are scenes of floral arrangements sometimes paired with food, drink and other fineries. This style of painting can vary but they serve as *memento mori*. Flowers, bulbs, fruit and bread symbolize the fleeting nature of life and beauty (Artspace 2019). The once beautiful flowers often show signs of aging. As they begin to wilt; the viewer knows that soon they will be dead. These paintings also remind the viewer that in death comes to all no matter how beautiful or how expensive in life.

Tulips can also be seen in some of the cobalt designs and white glazes of Delft



DOUBLE PORTRAIT OF A HUSBAND AND WIFE WITH TULIP, BULB, AND SHELLS 1609 MICHEL JANSZ. VAN MIEREVELT.

pottery and tiles which was popularized when access to Chinese porcelain was limited. While some of these tiles served as beautiful decoration, they also served a purpose; they were used on the walls of homes which lacked adequate insulation. “Tin-glazed tiles were ... used as wall-cladding in cellars, as wall-skirtings and in kitchens and fireplaces. They kept out damp, their glazed surfaces were easily cleaned, and their decorative patterns introduced colour and design to interiors” (Nelson et al. 7, 2003). The motifs used changed and developed over time. At the start of the 17th century designs included “animals, pots with flowers and grapes and pomegranates... usually confined to a single tile... By the mid-17th century the range of subject-matter was extended still further with sea creatures, cupids and soldiers on horseback, while in the late 17th century landscapes, children’s games and biblical scenes appeared” (Nelson 8). Tulips were not only a decorative design on the tiles but were the features of elaborate vases. These vases came in varying shapes and sizes including extravagant towers with many spouts for cut flowers, especially tulips.

Naturally, as Dutch settlers came to the American colonies, they brought tulips and objects bearing tulip imagery with them. Thomas Jefferson enjoyed growing tulips in his garden, “In 1806, Jefferson received a shipment of Bizarre, Bybloemen and Rose tulips as well as the Baguet Rigauts and Primo Baguets, some of the most desired tulips for centuries” (High Plains Garden, 2020). Tulips appeared in American made art like Pennsylvania Slip-Ware which is sometimes referred to as Tulip Ware (The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 208, 1912). These earthenware pieces were made by the Pennsylvania Dutch as early as 1733 by decorating them either *sgraffito*, which is decorating by removing the top layer of slip to reveal a contrasting color beneath it to create a design, or *slip-painting*, which using a slip with a different consistency to create designs. The designs were often tulips and fuchsia, birds with symbolic meaning like the eagle or turtle dove, as well as a wide variety of animals (The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 210).



**SEMPER  
AUGUSTUS**

BROKEN BULB TULIP,  
DETAIL FROM  
DELFT TILE.  
BCHC COLLECTIONS



*Semper  
Augustus* 3

THE DUTCH, TULIPS AND ART CONTINUES ON PAGE 6



## British Document Box with Royal Cipher & Crown



Deborah Powell

Last fall we made an appeal on Facebook for donations for the restoration of this 18th century leather Document Box stamped with the George Rex “Royal Cipher and Crown.” Several people responded to the tune of \$970 out of the cost of \$2,600. We are so thankful for your support.

The inside is lined with unpublished book pages that were further decorated with fanciful ink motifs and stamps. Gary McGowan of Cultural Preservation and Restoration conserved the leather box by an elaborate process of rehumidifying it, cleaning, HEPA-vacuumed, adhesive used to rejoin the fractured and detached leather portions of the wooden carcass. Further consolidation included using sturgeon bladder glue! He recently returned it to us. In 2016, Gary contacted Barbara Smith, Curator, Division of Political

History at the Smithsonian. She lamented there are more questions than answers on these boxes but the ones that have provenances, have associations with New Jersey. A box at Princeton belonged to John Witherspoon and the makers label survives, identifying it as made in the shop of James Season, London. Smith wondered if it may have been produced by his shop and shipped here and someone else added the “Stamp Act Repeal’d” declaration at a later date or did Season fabricate them with the stamp.

The GR & crown cipher appears in each of the four corners of the embossed diamond (right) on the top of the BCHS box and under the iron handle. It was not stamped with “Stamp Act Repeal’d.” The box is lined with unpublished pages. **Michael Reade** responded on the Face Book photo appeal: an effort to determine if the pages could





INTERIOR OF THE DOCUMENT BOX IS LINED WITH UNPUBLISHED PAGES AND OVER DRAWN WITH FLORAL MOTIFS.

THE  
**I R I S H**  
*Historical Library.*  
 Pointing at most of the  
*Authors and Records*  
 I N  
 Print or Manuscript,  
 Which may be ferriable to the  
**COMPILERS**  
 Of a General  
**History of Ireland.**

By *WILLIAM*, Lord Bishop of  
 DERRY.

John vi. 12.—*Gather up the Fragments*—

DUBLIN:  
 Printed by AARON RHAMES, for R. OWEN,  
 Bookbeller, in Skinner-Row, 1724.

shed any light on the history of the box. He found one of the pages came from *The Irish Historical Library* printed in Dublin in 1724 and two pages from the book referencing Irish Saints (Patrick, Colman, and Columba.) Additionally, Reade found later references, for example “a text string which led to a book of extant theological writings (epistles) of the the Apostolic Fathers in early Christian history (Pope Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp) compiled and published in Latin/Greek in 1838 by William Jacobson, Bishop of Chester.” Apparently, the pages are from an earlier publication. We could wish to know how exactly these boxes were used.

**We have  
 an artifact  
 in want  
 of more  
 research.**

The Stamp Act of 1765 was imposed on the British colonies requiring many printed material (legal documents, newspapers, playing cards) to be produced on London paper. Repealed March 1766, but the act played a major role in organized colonial resistance.

My husband, historian Kevin Wright spotted the Smithsonian’s box on exhibit when we visited there in 2011, theirs missing the top handle (unlike ours.) Objects like this box are one of the reasons we are working hard to get a museum building constructed at Historic New Bridge Landing. Many items in our collections need a preservation-friendly, climate-controlled environment so future generations can enjoy and study them too. 100% of your donations and memberships go to our mission. 🌿

The tulip is an easily recognizable flower that often recalls the Dutch cultivation of the flower and is difficult to separate from “Tulip Mania”. These flowers have a fascinating history and no doubt will continue making appearances in art as they are clearly a versatile and familiar flower.

SOURCES:

- Boissoneault, Lorraine. “There Never Was a Real Tulip Fever.” Smithsonian.com. Smithsonian Institution, September 18, 2017. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/there-never-was-real-tulip-fever-180964915/>.
- Brenner, Carla, Jennifer Riddell, and Barbra Moore. “A Resource for Teachers Painting in the Dutch Golden Age A Profile of the Seventeenth Century.” National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2007. [https://www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/Education/learning-resources/teaching-packets/pdfs/dutch\\_painting.pdf](https://www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/Education/learning-resources/teaching-packets/pdfs/dutch_painting.pdf).
- Brenner, Laurie. “How to Identify Colonial-Era Pottery.” Home Guides | SF Gate, November 21, 2017. <https://homeguides.sfgate.com/identify-colonialera-pottery-100142.html>.
- Brown, Glen R.1. 2013. “Sanam Emami: Channeling The Silk Road.” Ceramics Monthly, April, 39–43. <http://search.ebscohost.com.library2.ramapo.edu:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aft&AN=86218701&site=ehost-live>.
- Gebhardt, Andrew. “Early Dutch Horticulture.” In *Holland Flowering: How the Dutch Flower Industry Conquered the World*, 45–86. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014. doi:10.2307/j.ctt128783w.4.
- Nelson, Bernadette, M. Leticia Sánchez Hernández, Bruce Tattersall, Hans van Lemmen and Cleota Reed (2003). *Tule*. Grove Art Online. <https://www.oxfordartonline.com/groveart/view/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.001.0001/oa0-9781884446054-e-7000085016>.

- Pound, Cath. “Culture - Secret Symbols in Still-Life Painting.” BBC. BBC, March 19, 2018. <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20180318-secret-symbols-in-still-life-painting>.
- Prak, Maarten. “The Golden Age.” In *Discovering the Dutch: On Culture and Society of the Netherlands*, edited by BESAMUSCA EMMELINE and VERHEUL JAAP, 109–19. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1x76h7z.13.
- “A Symbolism Guide to the Spooky World of Dutch Still-Lives.” Artspace, October 25, 2019. [https://www.artspace.com/magazine/art\\_101/in\\_depth/a-symbolism-guide-to-the-spooky-world-of-dutch-still-lives-56298](https://www.artspace.com/magazine/art_101/in_depth/a-symbolism-guide-to-the-spooky-world-of-dutch-still-lives-56298).
- “Broken Tulips: The Beautiful Curse.” Amsterdam Tulip Museum, December 5, 2017. <https://amsterdamtulipmuseumonline.com/blogs/tulip-facts/broken-tulips-the-beautiful-curse>.
- “Delftware.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, January 22, 2020. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delftware#History>.
- “History of Tulips in Holland.” Holland.com, December 9, 2019. <https://www.holland.com/global/tourism/travel-inspiration/traditional/tulips/history-of-tulips-in-holland.htm>.
- “Pennsylvania Slip-Ware.” The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 7, no. 11 (1912): 208–11. doi:10.2307/3252878.
- “Semper Augustus.” Semper Augustus. Accessed April 6, 2020. [https://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia\\_romana/aconite/semperaugustus.html](https://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia_romana/aconite/semperaugustus.html).
- “Tulips: From Wildflower to Cut Flower, Part 4 of 4, America, and the Dutch BulbMasters.” High Plains Gardening, April 2, 2020. <http://www.highplainsgardening.com/tulips-wild-flower-cut-flower-part-4-4-america-and-dutch-bulbmasters>.
- “Tulip Mania.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, March 28, 2020. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulip\\_mania#Social\\_mania\\_and\\_legacy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulip_mania#Social_mania_and_legacy).
- “Tulip Vase.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, July 11, 2018. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulip\\_vase](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulip_vase).
- “Tulip Ware of the Pennsylvania-German Potters.” Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum 4, no. 16 (1906): 61. doi:10.2307/3793415.

**In Memoriam - Elizabeth Marie Helene Piccino (nee du Fossé) 1922-2020.**

As a BCHS member & beloved figure in the Campbell-Christie House during events at HNBL she celebrated her Dutch heritage as a volunteer, always wearing her brooch with the blue & white windmill. Born in 1922 in Sluis, Zeeland, The Netherlands, she migrated to the U.S. in 1926 with her parents, a brother & a sister. She spent most of her life living in Hawthorne, NJ. In 1947, she married her dancing partner, Frank Piccino & they had two children, Denise and Frank. An active member of the *Unicorn Dance Ensemble*, & *Tricorn Dance & Performing Ensemble*, she danced, sang, was noted for her comedic talent & served many years as their Seamstress. (Elizabeth’s daughter, Denise Piccino carries on the Tricorn Dance tradition & manages the food sales in the CCH during HNBL events.) Also, a gourmet cook, she was acknowledged twice by the State of New Jersey & honored by then Governor Jon Corzine for her cooking & baking. She will be greatly missed.





material so that future Society members do not have to worry about upkeep. Besides allowing for ample storage space and space to allow for the rotation of different exhibits, the building will also provide the site with much needed ADA bathrooms. These bathrooms will be designed in a way that they can be open, but the whole building does not have to be, whether it's for our Grounds Committee conducting site work, or a walking tour.

I think one of the more unique features that will really come into play is "Bergen's front porch" (naming rights available) and the "tavern yard." The large deck area will allow for outdoor presentations and designed to be almost like an amphitheater. I can just imagine Historian Todd Braisted standing at the bottom and visitors sitting on the stairs hanging on his every word. The large green space in front of the museum and adjacent to the Campbell-Christie House, will be imagined as a tavern yard. In the 18th century, taverns not only offered weary travelers a place to rest, but a place to rest their animals. This will be a continuation of open space, with a purpose for events and shows how the Museum Building will be connected to the site.

As I conclude my final term as President, I want to thank you for your support. I also want to thank the Board of Trustees and volunteers for their tireless effort. I am thrilled at what the Society has been able to accomplish, it is because of you. I also look forward to what the Society will accomplish as the groundwork is laid for a fantastic future. I also look forward to continuing to serve the Society through the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission. As an educator, I often sign yearbooks with the following line "don't just read history, make it." Let's continue to make history together! - James Smith



## Tell Me Your Story

By Lindsey Wood

### "Revolutionary War Rifle Found at the bottom of Hackensack River"

Such simple words, yet so much more lies beneath, more than a little plaque will ever say.

Tell me your story.  
Were you a gift from father to son?  
Or purchased by a young man for himself?  
Your wood weathered  
from years spent in that riverbed.  
I suppose it was once polished,  
the color revealing the exact wood you were  
made from,  
but now the dull grayish black  
only marks you as old.  
Do you remember your soldier's hands  
as they poured the powder and loaded the bullets?  
Did they tremble  
as they prepared for battle?

The metal of your trigger and barrel,  
almost the same color as the wood  
but not weathered and softened.  
Instead, the once bright metal  
is made harsh by a crusty layer of rust  
How many times  
did he aim your once glinting barrel  
at another soldier?  
How many fell  
to your leaden breath?

Your joints are weak  
and nearly splitting now,  
with wires serving as braces.  
All your edges jagged and surfaces chipped.  
Once you were a young man's source of pride  
as he marched with you on his shoulder.  
Even now, amid the hush of a museum  
you're cocked, still waiting to fire  
the shot he never got to take.  
Did his cry rise above  
the other sounds of war?  
Or did you only realize  
that he would never again pull your trigger  
when you flew from limp hands  
and felt the rush of the river?

# New Interpretive Signs for HNBL

We have new five interpretive signs on their way for Historic New Bridge Landing. These signs will create a destination for visitors who come, dawn to dusk, from around the country, to the museum site throughout the year. The pathway through the site is in “chatting distance” to the historic buildings, evoking a time when people wanted to hear the news the passing traveler might impart. The signs are not located very near the buildings but pulled away or low to fence level to keep modern visual intrusions to a minimum. They are largely based on historian Kevin Wright’s writings and research. Kevin was the Historic Preservation Specialist at Steuben House before he was promoted to Regional Historic Preservation Specialist within the

2001 report “Archaeological Investigations in Connection with Exterior Repairs at the Zabriskie/Steuben House Historic New Bridge Landing, River Edge Borough, Bergen County, NJ.”

Besides my longtime involvement at the site both with interpretation, planning, programming, leadership, collections, I have a full-time job as art director for a prominent real estate developer which involves a wide spectrum of marketing projects and assessing effectiveness of reaching audiences through different informational mediums. I’m particularly delighted with how well the sign “Timeline of New Bridge in the American Revolution” turned out. The 44” x 23” color sign graphically shows how the site was impacted throughout the conflict, year by year. The idea for it grew out of the “Famous Faces” image that I developed for the site brochure; one day

Kevin rattled off so many historical figures that everyone can recognize and I went to work on visualizing it.

Jim Smith, Chairman of the Historic New Bridge



**THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR TIMELINE AT NEW BRIDGE AND HISTORIC VISITORS TO NEW BRIDGE LANDING.**

New Jersey State Park System, a career that spanned twenty-six years before he retired in 2008. For example, Hunter Research, Inc. acknowledged and quoted his research extensively for their October

Landing Park Commission and BCBS president on two separate three year terms, brought a unique perspective. As Commander of Outwater’s Militia, a Revolutionary War re-enactment group, he has traveled to many historic sites in





## History from The Strawberry Patch

Kevin Wright©2015

### Old Bergen's Strawberry Fields Part I

The piquant fragrance of strawberries always brings back boyhood expectations of summer, just as school was winding down in June. My grandparents' well-guarded strawberry patch was down back of the barn, surrounded with a waist-high chicken-wire fence to exclude marauding rabbits and prying neighbors. I recall its starry blossoms in early May, shining upon a green mat. Anticipating the first delectable fruit of summer, we helped tend plants in well-hoed loam, fertilized with ashes and manure. The bed was always mulched with straw to conserve moisture, to keep down weeds, and to protect maturing berries from contact with the soil. When picking season finally arrived, we consumed as many from the stalks as we ever harvested for shortcake, for slicing in bowls of cereal, for preserves and other wonderful



desserts. Their season was short but sweet.

Many share this olfactory memory. Even at 92 years of age in 1916, James C. Demarest could recall the same fragrance from a passing wagon loaded with strawberries. Just as today—on farms where you can pick your own strawberries—the plants were set in long rows with intervening paths wide enough for pickers to work comfortably without trampling the fruits of their labor. In James' youth, pickers earned a penny per basket, carefully covering each small splint basket they filled with an oak leaf before placing it in a handled wooden cradle. Children were excused from school to work the fields during the short but profitable season. A century ago, a farm wagon could carry a thousand baskets of this dainty fruit and a Bergen County farmer could pocket \$14 for a thousand pints, taking home the first cash income after a long winter. Strawberry culture accordingly received special attention.

NEW JERSEY STRAWBERRY PICKING



The strawberry has a long history in these parts. American Indians admixed crushed wild strawberries with cornmeal in making their bread, gathering the fragrant fruit from abandoned maize land and the understory of open woodlands. Wild strawberries were sourer, smaller and seedier than later hybrid cultivars, but were widely regarded as superior to European varieties. Being hardy but uncertain bearers, species indigenous to North America, such as the Large Early American

Scarlet or Virginian Strawberry, the Boston Pine (possibly re-imported from Europe about 1800), and the Chilean (native to the Pacific coast), were crossbred to create the first market standards. The Hudson, descended of the American Scarlet, was an early commercial favorite, making its first documented appearance in 1791.

Operating a produce market at the foot of Barclay Street in New York City, Charles W. Idell, who resided in Hoboken, knowledgeable informed the Horticultural Society of London in 1826, “The first strawberries marketed in New York were wild ones from Bergen County, N. J. The Negroes were the first to pick this fruit for the New York market and invented those quaint old-fashioned splint baskets with handles. The baskets were strung on poles and thus peddled through the city.” Rapid population growth increased demand, which quickly

outstripped the haphazard supply of wild fruit. Commercial cultivation of strawberries began about 1820 as farmers around Hackensack began growing berries in open fields and on hillsides, shipping the fruit by wagon

and sloop twice weekly to Manhattan. Berries sold without their hulls or green caps, which were left on the vine. The half-pint splint baskets, called punnets, neatly nested atop one another in larger baskets called hampers. Strawberries sold for 3¢ to 8¢ per basket, earning farmers \$30 to \$40

per acre, a return greater than for most other crops. The primitive handmade baskets, paint marked to identify the shipper, were returned empty for re-use.

Strawberries from Virginia were the first to appear in Broadway saloons about the middle of May and commanded 50¢ for a pint basket; a plate of strawberries and cream sold for about the same price. Once the crop from Bergen County flooded city markets, prices dropped. The Crimson Cone, a medium-sized cultivar of the Early American Scarlet, was variously known as the Scotch Runner or Dutchberry—New Yorkers, however, simply called them “Hackensacks,” honoring their place of origin.



Read the entire article of  
**Old Bergen's Strawberry Fields**  
 on our re-designed and expanded website:  
**[bergencountyhistory.org](http://bergencountyhistory.org)**

JOHN KEESE  
 STRAWBERRY PRINT  
 1860





## “Mr. Zabrisky had sent for the wine & it might be charged to the General”

Lt Col. William North, a former aide-de-camp of Major General Baron von Steuben, resided with the General at the Louvre, a dwelling on the East River at 68th Street in Manhattan. The following account of General Steuben's visit to his estate at New Bridge is found in North's Journal of a trip to Ohio. The Zabriskie mansion at the Hackensack New Bridge, then owned by Steuben, was partly occupied by another aide-de-camp, Capt. Benjamin Walker, and partly leased to its former owner, the Loyalist Jan Zabriskie.

North writes in his Journal in 1786;

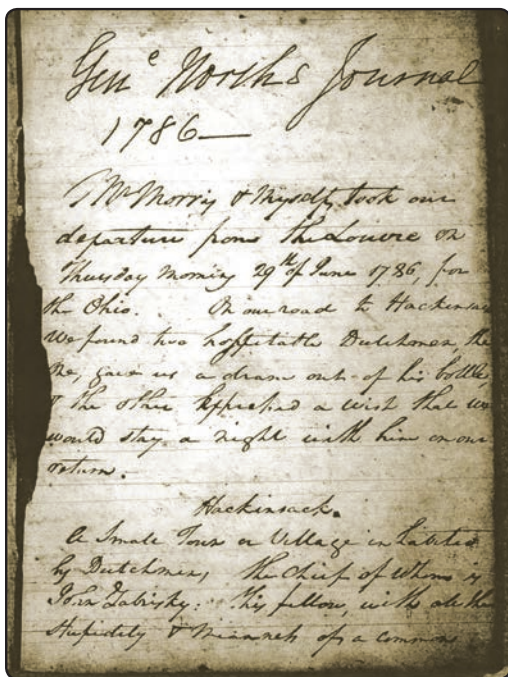
### “Hackinsack

*A Small Town or Village inhabited by Dutchmen, The Chief of Whom is John Zabrisky: This fellow, with all the Stupidity & meanness of a common Dutchman, pretends to be descended in a right line from John Sobiesky, King of Poland. The following anecdote will give an idea of this Prince.*

*General Steuben arrived at Hackinsack on the evening of a 4th of July, Bonfires blazed, the Bell rung and all was festivity and mirth; This Baron was a guest Zabrisky wished might be seen at his home — he invited him and myself, all the town were sent for, they came, drank, smoke and went away. A Bill was presented to & paid by the Baron for all the wine drank by the herd — The Tavern keeper observing that a Mr. Zabrisky had sent for the wine & it might be charged to the General.”*

Apparently Zabriskie's prank did not go over well. But he must have been smarting

with the loss of his family homestead. Zabriskie was the third generation to settle here. He was born in the house in 1767, but the Americans confiscated the property because of the Zabriskie's Loyalist sympathies during the war and gave it to Steuben. Zabriskie filed a loss claim with the British and on December 4, 1788, John Zabriskie, Jr. buys back the house, grist mill, kiln and forty acres from Steuben who needs cash to stave off his creditors. Steuben had advertised the house was “thoroughly rebuilt lately” which indicates



he spent funds restoring the war-damaged mansion and he may very well have been planning to keep the estate but for his financial troubles. - Deborah Powell

**NOT RECEIVING YOUR BCHS EMAIL BLASTS?**  
IT COULD BE BECAUSE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS WAS ENTERED INCORRECTLY OR YOUR SERVER IS REJECTING THE EMAIL. PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE BCHS EVENT BLASTS:  
[CONTACTBCHS@BERGENCOUNTYHISTORY.ORG](mailto:CONTACTBCHS@BERGENCOUNTYHISTORY.ORG)

**Bergen County Historical Society**  
P.O. Box 55, River Edge, NJ 07661  
[www.BergenCountyHistory.org](http://www.BergenCountyHistory.org)  
DEBORAH POWELL & PATTY DAURIZIO  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR AND LAYOUT