

# Tuckerton Historical Society

## NEWSLETTER

### January February March Edition 2022

Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum  
35 Leitz Blvd. & Wisteria Lane  
West Tuckerton, LEH, NJ 08087  
609-294-1547

[www.tuckertonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.tuckertonhistoricalsociety.org)  
[tuckertonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:tuckertonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

#### OFFICERS:

Donald O. Caselli – President  
Joe Harness – Vice President  
Pat Johnson – Curator  
Joan Exel – Treasurer/Membership Chair  
Jennifer Etherington – Recording Secretary  
Connie Woolson – Corresponding Secretary

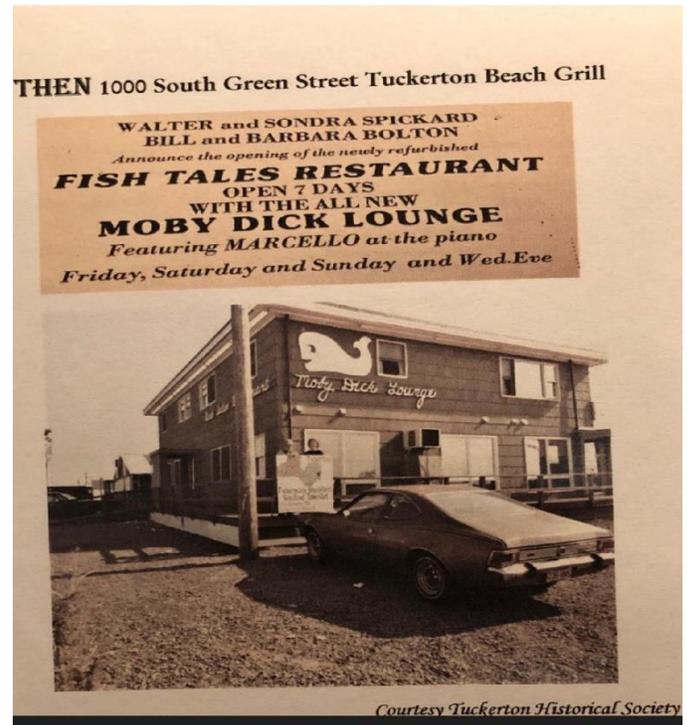
#### NON-OFFICERS:

Sue Zubriski – Administrative Secretary  
Tom Applegate – Archivist Historian  
Steve Dodson – Chronicler of Tuckerton History  
Horace Somes – Mullica River Valley Historian  
Sam Leifried – Tuckerton Historian  
Kathleen Cortese – Proj. Mgr./Genealogy/Newsletter  
Ursula Catalano – Membership/Display Mgr.  
Chuck Richmond – Building/Grounds Mgr.

## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

In this coming year 2022, we will be celebrating the Tuckerton Historical Society's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The first official meeting was held on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1972 at the Fish Tales Restaurant on S. Green Street in Tuckerton Beach. The group of life-long friends elected Barbara Bolton President, Florence O'Neil Vice President, Sandra Spickard Recording Secretary, Joan Exel Corresponding Secretary, Lois Beranek Treasurer, Shirley Whealton Historian, Lynn Tuttle Curator, Vonnie Hugg Membership, G. Sterling Otis Honorary Chairman, and others who were actively involved in the setting up of THS.

For the next 5 years, meetings continued at Fish Tales with the hopes of one day finding a historical building in the borough which could hold their ever-growing donations of family collections and local artifacts.



In June of 1977, the Giffordtown Schoolhouse on Rt. 9 was slated for demolition. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Leitz of West Tuckerton offered to donate the school (which was on their property) to the Tuckerton Historical Society along with land at 35 Leitz Blvd. in Little Egg Harbor.

The one room schoolhouse was built in 1844 and later converted to two rooms. Students from West Tuckerton and Little Egg Harbor Township attended through eighth grade with four grades in each room. The schoolhouse was operational until 1951. The building remained unoccupied for the next 26 years until the Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum was born.



**Joan Exel, Matriarch and a Founding Member of the Tuckerton Historical Society.**

**MEMBERSHIP:**

**Here at the Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum, we love history and sharing history and we look forward to the next 50 years. As we continue to grow and plan for the future, please help us by becoming an active member.**

**Joan Exel / Ursula Catalano  
Membership Committee**

**MUSEUM IS OPEN WEDNESDAYS 10AM TO 4PM (ALL YEAR). SATURDAYS: JUNE THRU SEPTEMBER, TIMES TBD. FOR OTHER TIMES AND PRIVATE TOURS, CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT 609-294-1547.**

**Our general meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 7 pm (open to the public).**

# **BOOK/GIFT SHOP**



**The Tuckerton Historical Society has a wide selection of books and publications by our in-house writers. Currently we are featuring Steve Dodson's Tuckerton Beacon Book Collection and Tom Applegate's newest book "Then and Now Green Street North and South".**

**Our shop is operated entirely by our dedicated volunteer staff so that your purchases directly support the Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum.**



**FAVORITE QUOTE:**

**When you're young, your grandparents try to tell you their history, and you don't care because it doesn't interest you at the time...  
Later on, you wish you had written down what they said.**

## “YE OLDE CHRISTMAS IN TUCKERTON”



Ernie Falkinburg and Sean Kinney

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, to celebrate the day, THS served clam chowder to the public at the Quaker Meeting House. There to greet the crowds was Henry Jacob Falkinburg “the first LEH settler (1690’s)” after purchasing land from the Indians in 1674; and Mordecai Andrews who (along with his brother Edward) in 1709 built the first Quaker Meeting House in Tuckerton.



THS Members with Santa Claus



For the 2021 Christmas Season, Tuckerton’s Little Borough Hall on South Green Street was “JustBe Photography’s” setting for Santa Claus’s office. The historic building’s small council room was where families gathered to meet and take holiday photos with Santa. Each family had their own time slot, which allowed the kids time to sit and chat with Santa about different things, and even help him stuff a teddy bear! The event was such a success, and everyone truly loved seeing it in such a unique building!



I am beyond grateful to the Tuckerton Historical Society for allowing me to use LBH for something new. Both Santa and I can’t wait to return again next year. Thank you all so much again!

- Alyss Hess  
JustBe Photography  
[www.justbephotos.com](http://www.justbephotos.com)



## *the Writer*

Featuring articles and stories by THS in-house writers.

### THE JILLSON TWINS by Steve Dodson

Folk tales, traditionally, are those that have been passed by the common people. They are stories without evidence and can neither be proven true or untrue. Regardless, these oral stories have been passed down from generation to generation because they are telling, because they are worth remembering.



Twin Brothers, Arthur and Alfred

In researching my first local history story, back in the mid 90's, that of the giant skeletons found on the farm of the Jillson twins, the original Art and Alf. I came across a few tales concerning those boys. They were told to me by their descendants. I think these events happened, but there is no evidence to prove them true.

"And none to prove them false," Davey Jillson reminded me.

I have taken some poetic license in my telling of one tale, but the core of it, the truth of it, is how it came to me.

The Jillson twins were, of course, born together and grew up together. But even after coming of age, they lived and worked together every day. No doubt they loved one another, and no doubt they were sometimes sick of one another. Their only escape from their labor, monotony, and each other was town. Small town, small escape; the post office, the barber shop, the saloon. And when the talk of seeders and disc harrows, of fishing and duck hunting, had been exhausted, when gossip and cards and camaraderie were not enough, they drank in earnest.

If their high was more belligerent than jolly, the boys would fight. If no one made themselves available, if no one insulted their corn crop or objected to the tone of their belching, then they would find themselves looking through disdainful eyes at one another. Each twin knew secretly that his brother lacked breeding, and in the clarity of their respective minds the remedy was plain, a paste in the mush.

Not wanting to incur the cost of breakage, they adjourned outdoors; there they engaged in fisticuffs, part pugilistic science, part Neanderthal pummeling. And when the better one that day knocked his brother down, he took the horse and wagon and rode away.

But because they were brothers, or twins, or because they had to work together out on the lonely farm, the riding brother did what he always did, and what his twin did when he won. He rode over dam and past the houses at the edge of town, through woods and fields and natural meadows. On a rise, at a certain worn spot, he slowed, then braked and got down. He tethered their horse to the halfway tree and began to walk to the farm.

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