

# Tuckerton Historical Society NEWSLETTER

## Jul Aug Sept 2022

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

### OFFICERS:

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

### NON OFFICERS:

Sue Zubriski – Admin. Sect./Newsletter Editing  
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 Editor  
Ursula Catalano – Membership/Display Mgr.  
Chuck Richmond – Building/Grounds Mgr.

**OUR GENERAL MEETINGS ARE HELD ON  
THE SECOND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH  
AT 7 PM (OPEN TO THE PUBLIC).**

**MUSEUM IS OPEN WEDNESDAYS 10AM TO  
4PM (ALL YEAR). SATURDAYS: JUNE THRU  
SEPTEMBER, 2PM TO 4PM. FOR OTHER  
TIMES AND PRIVATE TOURS, CALL FOR AN  
APPOINTMENT.**

## **DEFENSE OF LITTLE EGG HARBOR** **OCTOBER 1778**



Dale Denda, Executive Director at AEHHS, Inc.

The presentation given by Dale Denda at the Quaker Meeting House on June 11<sup>th</sup> focused on the British attempt to destroy the entire Port of Little Egg Harbor, and their inability to do so, even with superior numbers, when confronted with horse Calvary. The campaign lasted nearly three weeks that month and the outcome was the saving of the port after two failed British attacks.

Mr. Denda tells us how Pulaski's legion was the decisive factor in blocking the British advances, rewriting South Jersey history with Little Egg Harbor as its center of gravity in the American Revolution.



Anthony Lindner, West Jersey Artillery/Reader



*I came here where freedom is being  
defended to serve it, and to live or die for it.*

-Casimir Pulaski

# Discover Revolutionary New Jersey

*The Tuckerton Historical Society, in honor of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration will be hosting a walk-thru presentation centered on the Port of Little Egg Harbor and presented by Lisa Stevens, AEHHS, Inc. on Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> (location and time to be announced).*

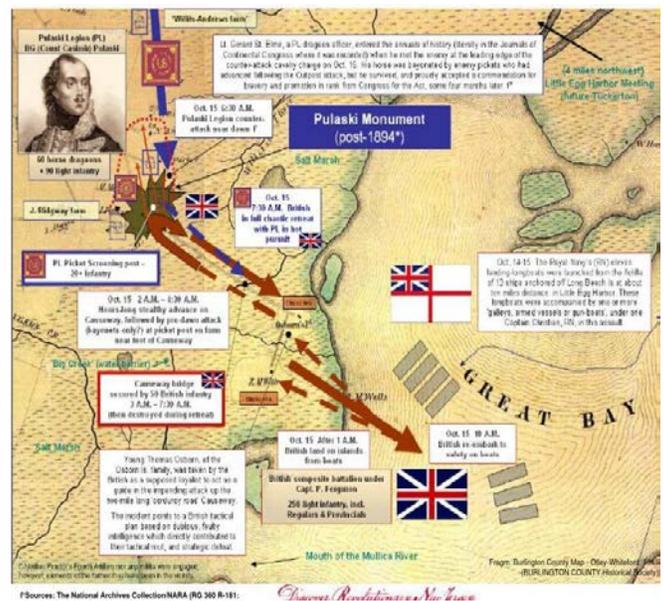
## HISTORY'S VERDICT: PULASKI'S SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE OF LITTLE EGG HARBOR-1778

The Pulaski Monument marks the spot where a strong British amphibious force landing on Osborn-'Mincock' Island(s) from ships was repulsed in a campaign known in history as the Defense of Little Egg Harbor. Brig. General (Count Casimir) Pulaski's defensive scheme proved effective on October 15, 1778 during that renewed British assault, even though the enemy clumsily attacked and butchered an infantry outpost located about 2 miles off Great Bay. The attack betrayed a strategically-envisioned, carefully-laid, but ultimately useless British plan of secret advance by 250 crack infantry, already at least 7 hours in execution. 17 American infantrymen, 2 foreign-born officers and a few prisoners were lost at the Upland arm outpost (Pulaski Monument).

Pulaski's 'trap' was then sprung in a decisive counter-attack unleashed from his ¾ mile distant headquarters at the *Willits-Andrews* farm, Polish-schooled American dragoon calvary, some 60 horses, and a swarm of infantry, caused another panicked retreat of British light infantry back to an island and onto boats. The enemy never reached a point closer than 1/2 mile of Pulaski's main body of troops before being attacked. Contact at that moment between the Pulaski's Riflemen who pursued them for a mile down to the Causeway Bridge. The British lost a dozen soldiers, or more, missing --- scattered by charging horses, and about 4 soldiers killed or wounded. Some enemy prisoners were taken. On October 16, after arrests of loyalist suspects, a loyalty oath to Continental Congress was also administered at *Willits* farm headquarters by

Legion officers to area residents. None were hanged.

The October 15<sup>th</sup> action, involving 400 troops (on both sides) on or near the Upland opposite *Osborn Is./Great Bay*, actually marked already the second time in 9 days the enemy retreated in front of Pulaski's calvary. The British had already done so on October 7, about 5 miles to the southwest (even at 500 strong in the enemy attack which began October 6 on the *Mullica River*) when Pulaski's opening surprise arrival turned the *Bass River* raid into a rout, or so it seemed---at least until Oct. 15. But the enemy's failure---twice---to reach its strategic goal, *Batsto-at-the-Forks*, the heart of Little Egg Harbor port, was of such importance as to draw the attention of Thomas Paine in his pamphlet series, *The American Crisis*. He wrote, if the British look back they see "*Nothing but Loss and Disgrace*" at Egg harbor.



Map depiction of the three-week military campaign brought to fame Brig. General Casimir Pulaski in 1778.

Attention all students on summer break, plan a trip to our two-room schoolhouse and see how kids were taught in 1844. Here at the Giffordtown Museum, we love history and sharing history. Plus you will learn of past historical events that took place in Tuckerton and Little Egg Harbor.

## THS PRESENTATION SCHEDULE 2022:

*Presentations are held 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Tuckerton Quaker Meeting House unless otherwise indicated.*

**July 9** – Encore Presentation, Sean Kinnevy, Clerk of the Society of Friends, talks about the Little Egg Harbor Meeting and the Society's importance as the first religious group to settle in Tuckerton/Little Egg Harbor.

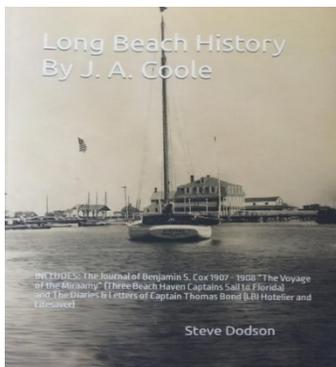
**August 6** – War of 1812—Jeff Brown, local historian and teacher at PRHS will present "The Life of a Soldier" during the War of 1812 between the U.S. and Great Britain's Canada. This presentation will explain the clothing, food and sacrifices the soldiers endured.

**September 10** – The 47<sup>th</sup> Ye Old Clamtown Antique Flea Market is planned at Tip Seaman Park from 8 a.m. til 4 p.m. Over 80 vendors plus food truck and THS booth with books, clothes, 50/50 and more for sale.



## BOOK/GIFT SHOP

Steve Dodson's latest book on sale now at the Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum:



## STEVE DODSON'S BOOK COLLECTION:

1. Tuckerton A Newspaper History 1852-1917
2. The Tuckerton Beacon 1917-1929
3. The Tuckerton Beacon 1929-1941 Part One
4. The Tuckerton Beacon 1929-1941 Part Two
5. The Tuckerton Beacon 1941-1945
6. Here & There by The Observer (Tuckerton's Gossip & Humor Column 1929-1934)
7. Long Beach History By J.A. Coole

Connie Woolson/Kate Cortese  
Book Shop Mgr./Asst.

## MEMBERSHIP:



*Jerry Jaquinto of West Jersey Artillery*

**HEAR YE, HEAR YE** Residents of Little Egg Harbor and Tuckerton. Join the Tuckerton Historical Society and keep the Colonial and Revolutionary Period in our area alive learning about the defense of Little Egg Harbor

Joan Exel / Ursula Catalano  
Membership Committee

**October 18<sup>th</sup>** marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Tuckerton Historical Society and Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum. We will be celebrating throughout the year including a ceremonial dinner at Calloway's Restaurant on Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>...all are welcome. For tickets, stop in or call the Museum at 609-294-1547.



## *the Writer*

Featuring articles and stories by THS in-house writers.

### **THE SPANISH FLU VISITED TUCKERTON IN 1918 By Pat Johnson**



**YESTERYEAR:** The 1918 Spanish flu disrupted life, and Americans, like this typist, were quarantined or told to protect themselves. (National Archives)

This is not the first pandemic to hit the Little Egg Harbor/Tuckerton area. In the fall of 1918, the so called “Spanish Flu” arrived in Southern Ocean County, with Tuckerton, a bustling small town, as the epicenter.

One of the reasons is the U.S. Marines had taken over the Tuckerton Wireless as a precaution during World War I, and it is generally accepted that soldiers who contracted the disease in training camps, such as Camp Dix in Pemberton, helped spread the disease.

By the end of October, this H1N1 flu had killed over 675,000 Americans, according to the CDC’s historical accounts. The symptoms of the Spanish flu were almost the same as the COVID-19 virus: headache, tiredness, dry hacking cough, excessive sweating and pneumonia. Cause of death was complications with pneumonia, as no antibiotics were available to treat secondary bacterial infections. In contrast to today’s

pandemic, the Spanish flu seemed to infect younger people between 20 and 40 years old.

The following stories come from the archives of the 1918 Tuckerton Beacon as researched by Tuckerton historian and writer Steve Dodson.

On Oct. 3, the Beacon published a report that the Tuckerton Radio Station had been put under quarantine as a proactive measure, as there were no cases as of yet at the station but the influenza was spreading “at an alarming rate” at military camps, and some Tuckerton residents were ill.

The *Beacon* also reported that a prominent Tuckertonian, Mrs. Theophilus Price, was called to Washington, D.C., to care for her daughter Eleanor, who was working as a secretary in the war effort and had become ill.

On Oct. 7, the newspaper reported that 30-year-old Sarah Stevens in Staffordville and 37-year-old Rueban Brown from Peahala had died from the flu.

Just a week later, the Tuckerton Board of Health closed the schools and moving picture shows as 18 people in Tuckerton and three in West Tuckerton (Little Egg Harbor Township) had become ill. Three residents died, including a soldier at the wireless radio station.

By Oct. 10, Horner’s Grocery Store on Main Street in Tuckerton closed, as the grocer and all but two clerks were sick. J.W. Horner posted a sign saying, “Hoping to be able to wait on you next week.”

Tuckerton had only one doctor, Dr. J.L. Lane, who was tending to the sick day and night until he collapsed from the contagion; it was reported on Oct. 10. Dr. Herbert Willis of Beach Haven stepped in to help out in Tuckerton, which had become the center of the outbreak in Ocean County, with 164 cases reported and nine deaths.

Tuckerton Board of Health officer John H. Kohler had made the survey himself, bravely going door to door and quarantining houses.

The newspaper reported that “Undertaker Jon Smith has been at his wit’s end as it has been difficult to get caskets as the great demand in the cities has exceeded the supply.”

Reported on Oct. 17, “Owing to the epidemic, which seems to have nearly every state in its grip, the state board of health on Monday of last week ordered all local boards to shut down the places where people congregate such as churches, theatres, motion picture theatres, barrooms, soda

fountains, lodge rooms, dance halls and pool rooms. This order was mandatory as to the above but local boards are given discretion as to the closing of schools.

“Practically all the schools in the county have been closed down. The epidemic has been worse in the south end of the county than anywhere else. Schools have closed in New Egypt, Lakewood, Point Pleasant, Island Heights, Barnegat, Manahawkin, West Creek, Tuckerton and in many similar places.”

“While there have not so far been many deaths, compared with the situation in Philadelphia and vicinity, there are quite a number down with bad colds, and there are several cases of pneumonia in every village or town. The situation is so bad in Philadelphia and vicinity that people that stayed in their cottages on the shore until October 1, intended then to return to the city, have to a larger extent remained at the shore. Others have come back from the city and reopened their cottages to stay until the epidemic subsides.”

In the same Oct. 17 edition, the newspaper reported the quarantine might be lifted by Oct. 24 if new cases subsided.

Tuckerton also had a factory that was making parachutes for the war effort; it had to close down because of illness among the workers.

Under local news, it was reported that Mrs. T. Price had returned from Washington, D.C., with two very sick daughters, Eleanor and her sister Florence.

And “Druggist George Kumpf from Jones’s Pharmacy has put forth an unusual effort, going day and night while fighting his own case of the flu.”

The sad list of those who had died included three family members: J. Lawrence Allen and his sons, ages 17 and 9, had all died within four days. Five other deaths included Forrest Allen (brother of Lawrence), 65-year old Henrietta Otis, 24-year-old Hannah Driscoll, Mrs. Raymond Stevens and a Marine Corps private, William Gray.

In Parkertown a 16-month-old child, Edwin Parker, passed on, as did Mrs. Norris Parker and Mrs. Josephine Parker, age 22.

The Oct. 24 headline read “Many Deaths from Flu This Week/Several Victims Along the Shore and Former Townspeople.” The list included Augustus Driscoll, age 26, a naval reserve member stationed at the radio station, Joshua Parker, age 47; Abbie Lamson, age 30; Harry Carver, a government worker in Camden and former employee of Beach

Haven Railroad; Phineas Conklin, age 27. Three sons of Tuckerton’s Joseph Gilbert, William, Robert and Elwood had all died within a few days of each other in their home in Atlantic City. William Kelly, a member of the Coast Guard station in Harvey Cedars and West Creek native, and Mary Jane Cranmer, age 74, died in Cedar Run. Others lost family members and friends residing in other towns. Some were brought back to Tuckerton for burial, such as.....the Tuckerton Board of Health voted to open the firehouse to the sick from the military installation at the wireless radio station in order to concentrate the sick in one place; it also voted to raise the quarantine while urging residents to “exercise great care and keep away from the few cases still among us and thus prevent any fresh outbreak of the epidemic.”

As a postscript to the above news items collected by Dodson, on Nov. 14, the Beacon reported that a Rev. Mr. Brewer of the Children’s Home Society located in Trenton spoke to the Methodist congregation about how the recent influenza epidemic had made thousands of children orphans.

*Reprinted with permission from Sandpaper Newspaper.*



TODAY: The Covid-19 Virus also disrupted life. Like this typist at The Tuckerton Historical Society, we quarantined and protected ourselves.

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR: K. Cortese**  
**COPYEDIT/TYPESSETTER: S. Zubriski**