



UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



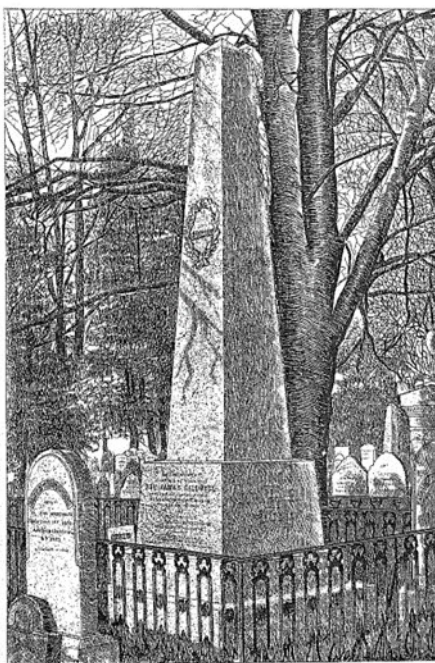
Heart Grant Awarded to Society

Society President Joanne Rajoppi announced that the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs has awarded the Union County Historical Society a Heart Grant to assist with the restoration of the Caldwell Memorial Obelisk located in the First Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth.

"We are thrilled that the county recognizes the historical significance of the James and Hannah Caldwell Memorial Obelisk which unfortunately has seriously deteriorated in recent years due to weather and age conditions. As we approach the 250th Anniversary of our country we believe this restoration will provide renewed inspiration to our community as it honors two outstanding patriots, Reverend James Caldwell and his wife Hannah, both of whom were murdered during the American Revolution."

The grant will help to assist the Society in the overall restoration. It also will include an educational and training component for community participants including school children to aid with the preservation of the historic cemetery that contains the graves of dozens of Revolutionary patriots, soldiers and officers along with hundreds of African Americans. The Society has made an additional grant application to the

Daughters of the American Revolution to assist with the cost of the project.



THE CALDWELL MONUMENT.
at its dedication.
1846

Renowned Historian To Speak at Luncheon

Dr. Richard Veit, a professor of Anthropology in the Wayne D. McMurray School of Humanities and Society Sciences at Monmouth University, will be the speaker at the Society's annual luncheon to be held on Sunday, April 14 at the Garden Restaurant in Union. He is currently researching a project centering on the Battle of Connecticut Farms and the Battle of Springfield and will be remarking on that research.

"We are honored to spon-

sor Dr. Veit as our speaker. He brings a wealth of knowledge about New Jersey's past as well as 'new' finds," President Joanne Rajoppi said.

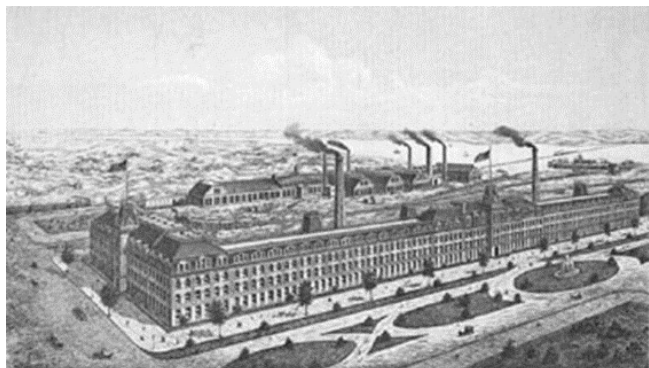
Dr. Veit received his B.A. degree from Drew University, his M.A. in Historical Archaeology from The College of William and Mary, and his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. He is the recipient of Monmouth University's distinguished teacher award and Monmouth University's Donald Warnecke Award for outstanding university service.

He teaches courses on archaeology, historical archaeology, New Jersey history, Native Americans, and historic preservation. He has authored or co-authored numerous articles and reviews and five books.

For those interested in attending a flyer with Luncheon information is included in this mailing.



This article is excerpted from William Frolich's written experiences while working for more than 45 years in various departments of the Singer Manufacturing Company in Elizabethport, NJ



The Singer Manufacturing Company commenced operations in 1873 and began making sewing machines for home and commercial use. It was a very successful venture, and soon expanded, making within its many buildings everything needed to produce its product. By 1903 there were several thousand workers employed in the many departments of the factory. Some of these workers came from the western areas of the county by the special train of the Central Railroad that brought them directly to the gate of the factory. Later, just before quitting time that train pulled up to the gate and waited for its passengers to take them home.

The factory was as self-sufficient as a small city as it made from the raw material everything needed, including nuts, screws, tools, and even the machines that made the

sewing machines.

In the Tool Room, Department #47, skilled workers using plans drawn by the engineering staff, created the machines that build the sewing machines. Those same workers repaired and re-built production machines worn out by years of use. Gears, shafts, spindles, and special milling cutters were also made in that department.

Busy in the Needle Room, Department #26 were 500 people turning out more than a million sewing needles of several varieties each week.

The foundry's main purpose was to produce the cast iron arms and beds of the actual sewing machines. All of the working parts of the sewing machines, such as shafts, spindles, needle bars, shuttles, bobbins, gears and cover plates were made in this factory and added to the arm and bed, producing the finished product, which was then tested for ability to sew. Decorative decal and nameplates were also added. After careful packaging the new sewing machines were sent to the Singer stores for sale to everyone.

A rather unusual item made in the factory was the Singer Surgical Stitcher, to be used to sew up wounds caused by medical operations. In the hands of a skilled surgeon this tool could insert stitches much faster than conventional hand methods.

There were a few times when the factory took time out from making sewing

machines to produce war material. During World War I, the gunshop made recoil mechanisms for the French 75 mm cannon. In 1940 the company produced a limited number of Colt .45 automatic pistols. Their quality was so great that they are still expensive collector items. After the United States entered World War II the factory built the M-5 Director, an aiming device for 37 millimeter anti-aircraft defense weapons. A later product was the B-29 Computer, a device that controlled and aimed all of the machine guns of the B29 Superfortress Bomber.

Sadly, this city-within-a-city closed its doors in 1982, and several of its buildings have been torn down to make room for warehouses.



OVER THE BACK FENCE
AFTER

We are saddened to report that Former UCHS President and Board Member Michael R. Yesenko passed away on Feb 28th. A lover of American history, Michael was a prolific author, penning many books and articles about the Revolutionary War era. His service to history, the Union Township School District and the Society will long be remembered. Condolences to his family.