



Turkey Tracks

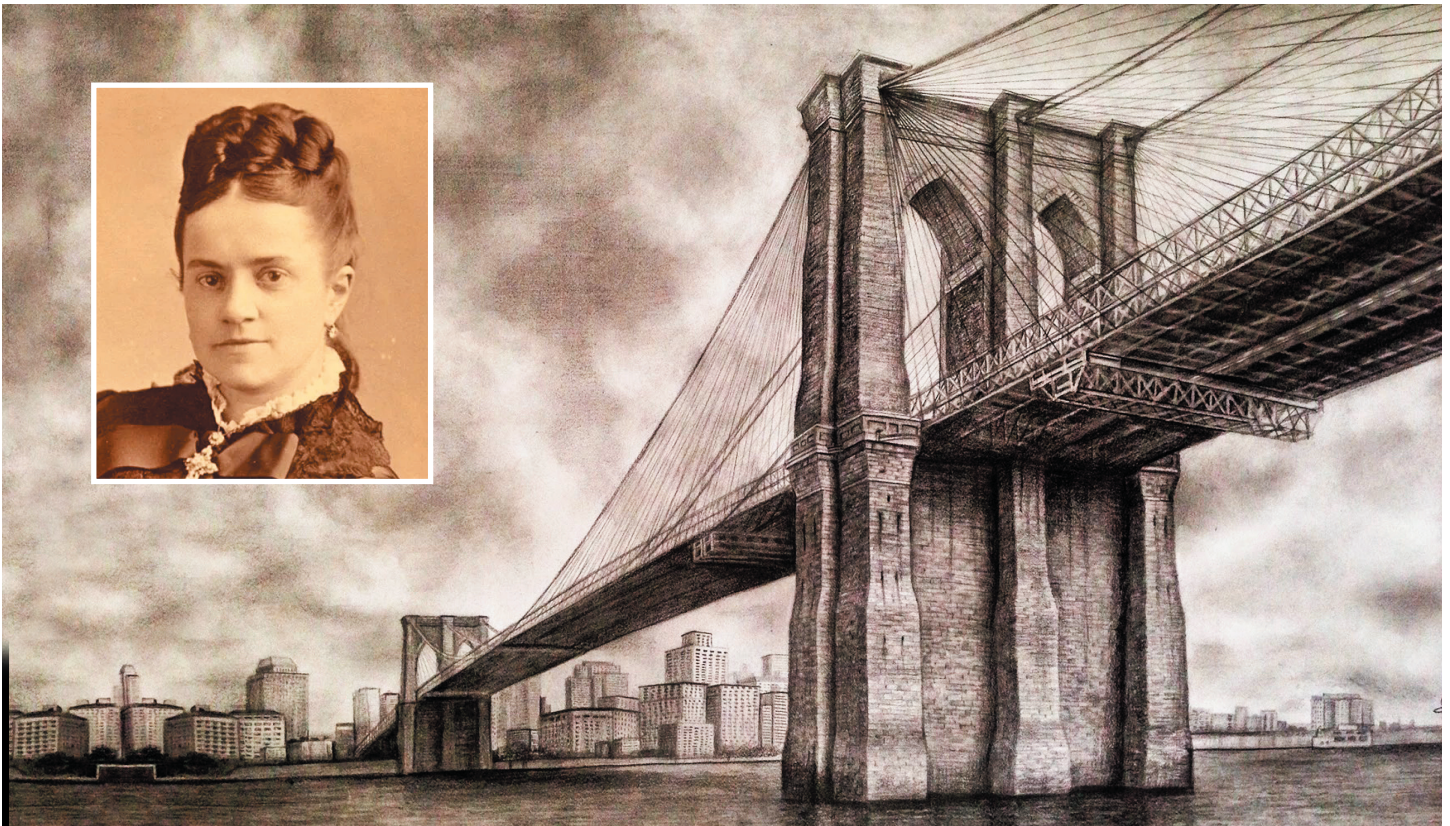
Newsletter of the New Providence Historical Society

Volume 58 No. 2

Issue #134

September 2024

Bridge Builder in Petticoats



Read more on Page 3 about the October 10th Fall Talk, "Bridge Builder in Petticoats" on Emily Roebling.



New Providence
Book Festival

New Providence Book Festival

On **Saturday, September 21, 2024**, 9 AM to 3 PM, the Salt Box Museum will host the seventh annual New Providence Book Festival. Over 17 local authors will be on hand to discuss and sign their books. A free raffle ticket will be given for every book purchased. All are invited to come to this cultural event. Refreshments will be available at our bake sale. The Salt Box Museum will be open to all visitors free of charge. The rain date is September 28th. More information is available at www.NewProvidenceBookFestival.com.

Board of Trustees Letter

Dear Members,

September and October are packed with a range of society activities, including cemetery tours, free museum tours, our participation in Union County's "Four Centuries in a Weekend," the New Providence Book Festival, as well as the Fall Talk on Emily Roebling, the engineer responsible for the building of the Brooklyn Bridge. See the calendar below.

Cemetery Tours by John Sponauer return. (See calendar below.) To sign up, email NPcemeterytours@gmail.com with name and number of people attending. Meet 10 minutes before start time on the sidewalk by church parking lot. Sturdy shoes are recommended due to uneven ground.

The Society has been very active this year. Maria DeLuca, our display coordinator, set up displays in both the New Providence Memorial Library and the Lantern Hill retirement community. The most recent display revolves around Lincoln School, which was later converted to the Municipal Center on Academy Street.

Looking forward to 2026, the United States will have its 250th anniversary. Some of us are old enough to remember the Bicentennial celebrations back in 1976. Although the anniversary is over a year away, plans are being developed for that celebration. So stay tuned.

Volunteers are always needed and encouraged, especially docents to guide visitors at the museum. There is always lots more to do. We'd also need to expand the programming committee to maintain and augment our schedule of activities. If you'd like to volunteer, or just have questions, please give us a call at 908-665-1034.

New Providence Historical Society Board of Trustees



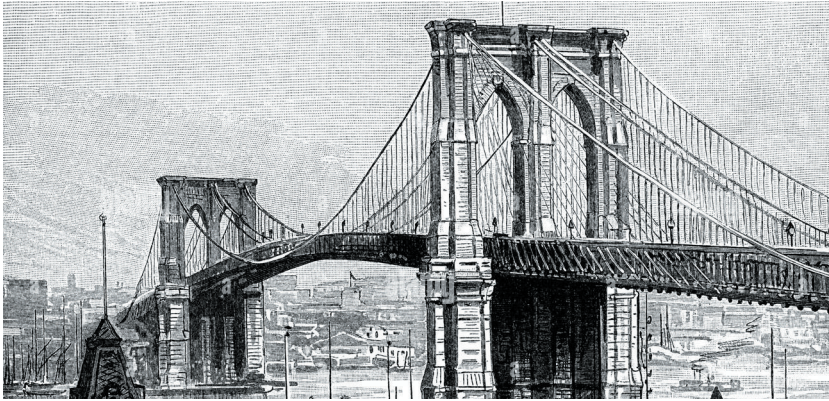
2024 Calendar for Upcoming Society Events

Saturday 14, 2024	Saturday	Presbyterian Cemetery Tour, 1:30 PM
September 21, 2024	Saturday	New Providence Book Festival, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
September 28, 2024	Saturday	Presbyterian Cemetery Tour, 1:30 PM
October 5, 2024	Saturday	Presbyterian Cemetery Tour, 1:30 PM
October 10, 2024	Thursday	Fall Talk, 7:00 PM
October 21, 2024	Saturday	Presbyterian Cemetery Tour, 1:30 PM
October 19-20, 2024	Saturday & Sunday	Four Centuries in a Weekend
October 20, 2024	Sunday	Presbyterian Cemetery Tour, 1:30 PM & 2:30 PM
October 27, 2024	Sunday	New Providence Street Fair

Other events may be added, so check our calendar at www.newprovidencehistorical.com.

Fall Talk: *The Bridgebuilder in Petticoats*

On Thursday, **October 10, 2024** at 7:00 PM, speaker **Carol Levin** will tell us the story of Emily Warren Roebling, the woman engineer who completed the building of the Brooklyn Bridge after her husband became ill with Caisson Disease. The world-famous Brooklyn Bridge was considered an engineering marvel. Her talk will take place at the DeCorso Center at 15 East 4th Street. All are invited.



Lincoln School Display at the NP Memorial Library

A display honoring Lincoln School was set up in the New Providence Memorial Library.

Much of the town's Municipal Center was originally Lincoln School, which was the borough's first large K-8 school. The building added several additions over the years to accommodate the growing number of students.

For more information on Lincoln School or anything else related to the town's history be sure to stop by the Mason Room (archive room) at the rear of the library every Tuesday from 10 am to 12 pm and the second Saturday of the month from 11 am to 1 pm.



The Changing Face of New Providence

Costarican Cravings opened in May at 76 Marion Avenue.

Y Yoga opened in Village Shopping Center, 1260 Springfield Avenue, the former location of Aladdin Cleaners.

Elements Massage in the Village Shopping Center's center island has closed.

Regency Centers, owner of the Village Shopping Center, has changed the name to "South Pass Village."

Demolition of Mea Greenhouse, and other buildings near the corner of South Street and High Street began on July 26, where construction is underway for a new Primrose School.

Carmen's Barbershop has moved from 1308 Springfield Avenue, two doors west to 1312 Springfield Avenue, where "Lavender & Sage" was previously. It shares this recently renovated historic building with Body Align at 1310 Springfield. Note: This building has hosted many businesses since it was moved here in 1913, from Passaic Street, behind N.P. Presbyterian Church. It was the first Academy School in New Providence.



Member & Citizen News

Please welcome our newest society members, **Helen Kaplus, Svetlana Gribovskaia, Frank Molle, Susan York, Beth Post** and **Diane Goodwin**.

J. Stephen "Steve" Badgley (74) passed away on December 30, 2023. A lifelong resident of New Providence, Steve graduated from New Providence High School in 1967. He started his college career at Rutgers and transferred to Huron College in South Dakota, where he graduated with a BS in Biology. He volunteered for the the VA and EMS services. He was a 50-year Respiratory Therapist at Overlook and Morristown Memorial Hospitals.

Robert Foster Brown (88) passed away on May 4, 2024. Robert was a member of the historical society and the Old Guard.

Kenneth R. Johanson (81) passed away on July 8, 2024 in Overlook Hospital. He attended Lincoln School and was a member of the first New Providence High School graduating class in 1960. Ken graduated from Lehigh University Business School in 1964 and Harvard Law School in 1967. Practicing law in NJ for 26 years, he helped get approval for the first group home for girls in Summit and the opening of McDonalds in New Providence. Ken was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1968 and served state-side until 1970. He was awarded the Army Commendation Medal. Ken and his wife Winifred recently celebrated 51 years of marriage. Ken was responsible for establishing and administering the NPHS Class of 1960 Scholarship Fund.



New Providence Train Station

We are pleased to announce that NJ Transit, under the leadership of Ms. Christine Yewaisis from the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office in Trenton, has successfully completed essential maintenance of our New Providence Station, restoring it to its original colors. The New Providence Historical Society is now collaborating with NJ Transit to design and install a historical marker on the building, allowing future patrons to appreciate its rich history as it continues to serve our community.

Key Dates

- 1872: Opened January 29th as West Summit Station
- 1899: Replaced with a larger Victorian-era structure
- 1927: Renamed New Providence Station
- 1931: Electrified January 6th
- 2023/24: Repainted original historic colors

New Providence Station, managed by New Jersey Transit, lies on the Gladstone Branch of the Morris and Essex Line. Built in 1899 by the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad, this historic station faces the intersection of Old Springfield Avenue and Division Avenue. To accommodate growing traffic, Springfield Avenue was rerouted north of the station in 1931.

Originally known as ‘West Summit,’ the station was renamed ‘New Providence’ by the Public Utilities Commission in March 1927. This change aimed to resolve confusion caused by the absence of the borough’s name on railroad timetables, reflecting its growing identity and importance in the region.

The origin of ‘New Providence’ not being listed as a railway stop can be traced back to events from several years earlier. The first New Providence station was built in 1872, two miles west near Floral Ave. In 1889, responding to the need for a larger space, a new station was built on land associated with Carl Schultz, a prominent businessman known as the ‘Mineral Water King.’ Schultz owned a country home in New Providence and named this area of town ‘Murray Hill’ in honor of his favorite Manhattan neighborhood. As a result, the 1889 structure was named ‘Murray Hill Station,’ and the original New Providence station was repurposed as the Murray Hill post office, continuing its service to the community in a new capacity.



2024 Society Scholarship

The New Providence Historical Society is proud to announce the 26th recipient of our annual scholarship is New Providence High School student **Gabriel DeLuca**.

Gabriel has been very active in extracurricular activities, including the History Club, National Honor Society and three years on the varsity football team. He also volunteers around town, including the PAL, the Brooke Healey Foundation and the New Providence Historical Society.

In the fall, Gabriel plans to pursue a minor in History, when he attends Fairfield University in Connecticut.



New Providence Historical Society Officers & Trustees

President	Rick Anderson
Vice President	Maria DeLuca
Treasurer	Kerry Lee
Grounds & Property	Rick Anderson
Membership	John Sponauer
Website & <i>Turkey Tracks</i> editor	J.R. Bale
Social Media	Maria DeLuca
Recording Secretary	Audrey Keebler
Corresponding Secretary	(Vacant)
Museum Docent Coordinator	Elizabeth Ryan
Display Coordinator	Maria DeLuca
Accession Volunteer	(Vacant)
Publicity Coordinator	(Vacant)

Trustees

Rick Anderson, J.R. Bale, Maria DeLuca, Robert Keller,
Kerry Lee, John Sponauer, Sara Jane Vignali

Email: newprovidencehistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Facebook Page: facebook.com/NewProvidenceHistoricalSociety



Salt Box Museum Hours

1350 Springfield Avenue
First Sundays, 1-3 PM
Or by appointment
Telephone: 908-665-1034

Mason Room Hours

at the New Providence Library
Tuesday Mornings,
10 AM to Noon
Second Saturdays, 11AM - 1 PM
Telephone: 908-665-1034
Appointments available

Website:

NewProvidenceHistorical.com

Turkey Tracks is available in
color on our website as a PDF.



New Providence Historical Society
Memorial Library
377 Elkwood Avenue
New Providence, New Jersey 07974