



Turkey Tracks

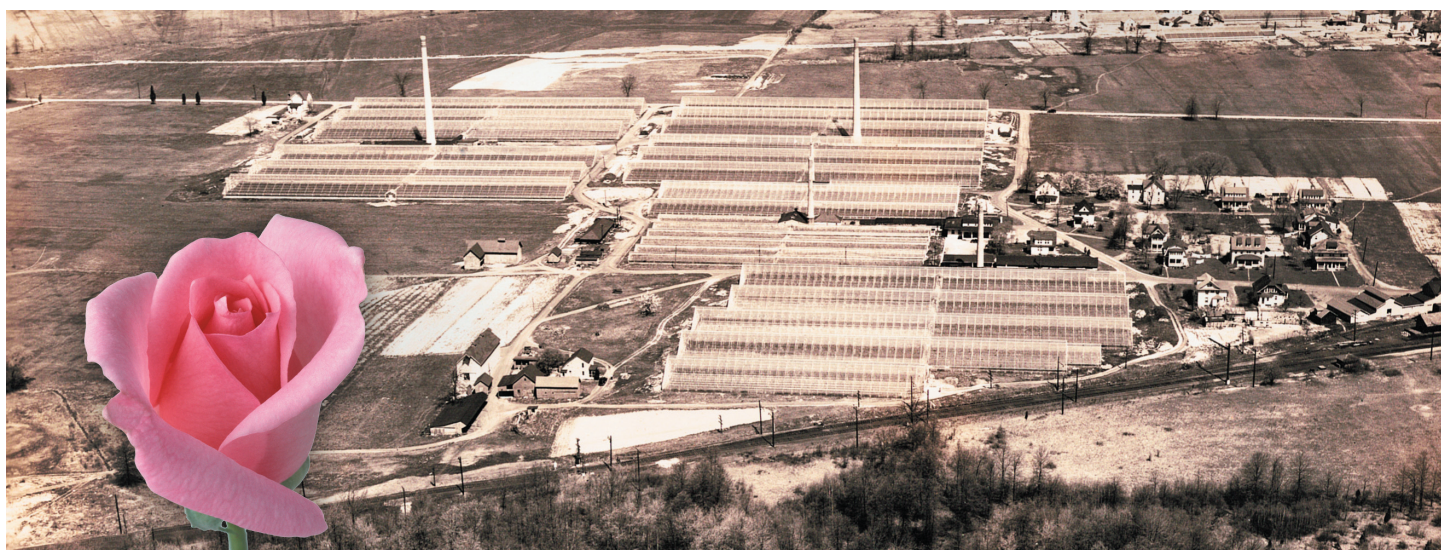
Newsletter of the *New Providence Historical Society*

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September 2026

The Coddington Greenhouses



The Coddington Greenhouses were once a major industry in New Providence. These greenhouses were well known for their roses and gardenias, often introducing new breeds such as President Hoover, Mrs. Herbert Hoover, Autumn, Briarcliff, Madame Butterfly, and Rapture roses. Thousands of new roses were produced

annually at great expense in an effort to give rose lovers better, more beautiful flowers. Descendent and historian **Peter Coddington** will share his knowledge of his family's legendary business at the Society's Fall Talk on Thursday, **October 22nd** at 7 PM, at the DeCorso Center.



New Providence
Book Festival

New Providence Book Festival

On Saturday, **September 26, 2026**, 10 AM to 4 PM, the Salt Box Museum will host the eighth annual New Providence Book Festival. Over a dozen local authors will be on hand to discuss and sign their books. A free raffle ticket will be given for every book purchased. We will also have a Spoken-Word Open Mic 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 October 3rd. More information is available at www.NewProvidenceBookFestival.com.

Board of Trustees Letter

Dear Members,

As you know, America's 250th Anniversary coincided with the New Providence Historical Society's 60th Anniversary.

Special thanks to those members who have stepped up and renewed their society 2026 membership in one of the two new membership categories: The first is "1966 Patron" which signifies a \$100 contribution. The second is "1720 Pioneer Society" which signifies a \$250 contribution. Special thanks to those member who stepped up. (Listed to the right.)

The display case at the New Providence Memorial Library was transitioned for use solely by our society, and was moved to the foyer outside the Conti Room. Currently displaying history of our society, highlighting the society's 60th Anniversary in August 2026.



In addition, new library signage includes a "Historical Society Archives," shingle which raises the Society's profile, making it easier for researchers to find the Mason Archive Room.

The Society will host the ninth **New Providence Book Festival** on **September 26th**.

John Sponauer will return with his **Presbyterian Graveyard Tours**. Please see the calendar for the specific dates.

On **October 17th & 18th**, the Salt Box Museum will again participate in Union County's **Four Centuries in a Weekend**.

The Society will have a booth at the Pioneer Day festivities on Sunday, **October 25th**.

The **Fall Talk** on Thursday, **October 22nd** will feature Peter Coddington discussing the history of the Coddington greenhouses and their importance to New Providence's economic history.

Treasurer Kerry Lee is retiring this fall. We thank Kerry for his valuable service. We are seeking a new treasurer.

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

Sincerely,

New Providence Historical Society Board of Trustees

1720 Pioneer Society

Maria DeLuca
Jeff Grob
Audrey Keebler
Maureen Kehoe
Kerry Lee

1966 Patrons

Beverly & Michael Kaczmariski
Diane Bilicska
John FX Keane
Robert Keller
Steve Lieder
Kathryn Rodgers
Sara Jane Vignali



2026 Calendar for Upcoming Society Events

September 6, 2026	Sunday	Salt Box Museum Open House, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
September 20, 2026	Saturday	Spoken-Word Open Mic, New Providence Library, 2:00 PM
September 26, 2026	Saturday	New Providence Book Festival, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
October 3, 2026	Saturday	Presbyterian Graveyard Tour, 1:30 PM
October 17-18, 2026	Saturday & Sunday	Four Centuries in a Weekend
October 17, 2026	Saturday	Presbyterian Graveyard Tour, 12:30 PM and 1:30 PM
October 22, 2026	Thursday	Fall Talk, DeCorso Community Center, 7:00 PM
October 25, 2026	Sunday	New Providence Street Fair / Pioneer Day
October 31, 2026	Saturday	Presbyterian Graveyard Tour, 1:30 PM
November 8, 2026	Sunday	Salt Box Museum Open House, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
December 6, 2026	Sunday	Salt Box Museum Open House, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

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



Snap Shots



The New Providence Historical Society rode in style in the Memorial Day Parade.



The "Crescents" and the "Reds" before their big game on June 27th, celebrating America's 250th Anniversary.

The Changing Face of New Providence

Lucy Lane Needlepoint opened at the front of 44 South Street.

Ferdinand Jewelers moved to the back of 44 South Street from their former South Street location.

A **Buffalo Wild Wings** is moving into 1275 Springfield Avenue, formerly Max Challenge gym in the Adams Shopping Center.

The large brick building at 630 Central Avenue, on the corner of Chanlon Road., formerly NEC & RWJ Barnabas Health, has been demolished.

After many decades, **Holiday Hairdressers** at 29 Passaic Street has closed.

Gregoro's Taqueria is opening at 1294 Springfield Avenue. This is the former location of Pastrami House.

The former Martindale-Hubbell building at 121 Chanlon Road, on the corner of Floral Avenue has begun being demolished.



2026 Society Scholarship

The New Providence Historical Society is proud to announce the 28th recipient of its annual scholarship is New Providence High School graduate Jack Thomas. Jack plans to attend The College of Saint Scholastica in Duluth, Minnesota, where he will study history and secondary education. He says, "History is highly important as it runs in patterns; it never repeats itself. If we learn from mistakes in the past, we can make a better future." Jack's eventual goal is to become a college professor.



Member & Citizen News

Please welcome our newest society members, **Dawn Doyle, Wayne Felts, Jeffrey H. Geller, Toby Rossmann,** and **Joy Steidel.**

Betty Metzger (94) passed away on April 9, 2026. Betty held jobs at the historic Bell Labs in Murray Hill, NJ and at the FBI. Once, when taking time off from the FBI for an appendectomy, she received a telegram from J. Edgar Hoover wishing her well. While raising two children, she went back to school in the evenings, and received her Bachelor's degree from Rutgers University. She later held several teaching and administrative roles in the New Providence school system.

Dayton Balcom Parcels, Jr. (90), known to all as "Balcom," passed away May 11, 2026. Born in Summit, raised in New Providence, and graduated from Summit High School before making Chatham his home.

Balcom served in the US Army during the Korean War, where he earned the distinction of being selected for the prestigious 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment Honor Guard (The Old Guard), which required rigorous training and extreme attention to detail and was responsible for conducting military ceremonies at the White House, the Pentagon, and National memorials in Washington, D.C.

After his honorable discharge, Balcom pursued his education at Seton Hall University, earning an associate degree in criminology, which led to his service with the Chatham Police Department before joining his father in the family lumber business. He was the brother of Sara Jane Parcels Vignali.

Frank P. McAneny (88) passed away on May 29, 2026. The early part of his career was at Bell Laboratories, where he worked for ten years, followed by a distinguished career of twenty-five years as a computer systems engineer with Foster Wheeler Energy Corporation. Frank was a dedicated member of the New Providence Amateur Radio Club.

Frank Robina (98) passed away on June 9, 2026. After graduating dental school, Frank joined the United States Air Force as a dental officer, working at the Pentagon. Upon returning to New Providence, Frank and his wife Ruth started a dental practice at 1351 Springfield Avenue, which ran for 36 years until retiring in 1990. Frank was a devoted parishioner and usher at Our Lady of Peace Church in New Providence, a member of the Summit Council Knights of Columbus #783, a longtime member of the New Providence Board of Health and the New Providence Community Service Association.

Frank and his partners donated the old house at 1351 Springfield Avenue, which was destined for demolition, to the New Providence Historical Society. The house was moved across the street in 1967 and set up as the Salt Box Museum.

Shirley Bittman (96) passed away June 26, 2026. She grew up in Chatham Township and moved to New Providence after her marriage to Ernest Bittman in 1949. Shirley was an active member of The DAR/Beacon Fire chapter, the New Providence Town Club, and the Women's Club.

Marie Ann Allocco (99) passed away on July 5, 2026. Marie graduated from Summit High School and continued her education for two years at St. Elizabeth's College, then moved to Chicago to study fashion. Marie eventually returned to New Providence, where she met and started a family with her late husband, Alphonso (Steve) Allocco. A longtime parishioner of Our Lady of Peace Church in New Providence, Marie was very involved in weekly mass, as well as the clothing drive organized by the church. She and her husband, Steve, were among the first couples to celebrate their wedding nuptials at the parish.

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	Chris Tallone
Museum Docent Coordinator	(Vacant)
Display Coordinator	Maria DeLuca
Accession Volunteer	Ronald Weinger
Publicity Coordinator	(Vacant)

Trustees

Rick Anderson, J.R. Bale, Maria DeLuca, Jeff Grob,
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