

Gem of the Mountains

Spring 2014 • Edition 1

The Boonton Historical Society & Museum



Schultz Park

Where was it and what happened to it?

By Monica Scozzafava

You would have to be at least 70 years old to have any first-hand recollection of this gazebo. (See photo.) It was built around 1918 and was torn down around 1946. It was located on Main Street in the 500 block where Don's Sandwich Shop and Bob's Men's Shop are located today. Arline Fowler Dempsey, 92, remembers going there after school to share stories with the firemen who had walked to the gazebo

parcel of land. It was a small, narrow parcel of land that dropped off steeply to Plane Street below. Yet articles written about the park at the time of its donation boasted its merits, "perpetuates a magnificent view", "beautifying the town", "keeping open one of the most picturesque views." The general feeling was the park was a valuable addition to the town not for the property itself, but for the view that the property afforded.



Looking down Main Street, past Soldier's Monument and the old bandstand which was removed September, 1946.

from the Firemen's Home on Lathrop Avenue. Evelyn Barnish Eckardt, 89, remembers pushing her first child in a baby carriage to the gazebo to socialize with other young mothers who had also made the gazebo their destination.

The gazebo was built on land that was donated to the town in 1910 to be used as a park. The donor was General John S. Schultz, and the park was named after him. To be truthful, the park was not very park like. It was not a large, flat

The deeds for the property spelled out the conditions and covenants that would protect the property. The covenants would "run with the land and bind the successors, heirs, and assignees... the property is conveyed for public use or park purposes and that no structure shall be erected that will obstruct its view from Main Street." Additionally, the deed stated, "Whenever the above conditions are not complied with, the title to the land... will revert to the heirs... of John S. Schultz."

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The Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor is the United States of America's highest military honor, awarded for personal acts of valor above and beyond the call of duty. The medal is awarded by the President of the United States in the name of Congress to US military personnel only. The medal was established during the civil war to give recognition to men who distinguished themselves "conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity" in combat with an enemy of the United States.

We are honored to have had the Medal of Honor awarded to Charles F. Hopkins donated to the Boonton Historical Society by Elaine Hopkins. The donation consists of a shadow box containing three medals and a photograph of Mr. Hopkins in dress uniform. The Medal of Honor is displayed on the right hand side of the box, while on the left hand are two medals: a commemorative medal with a red cross struck for the "unveiling of Philip Kearney Monument at Washington, D.C." and a "souvenir (partial medal) of the 25th National Encampment GAR, Washington, D.C. 1892."

CHARLES F. HOPKINS (1842-1934)

Charles Hopkins was a descendant of the signers of the Mayflower Compact of 1620 and the Declaration of Independence. He was born in Hope, New Jersey, in 1842. At the age of 14 he moved with his family to Powerville, now Boonton Township.

His father ran a hotel along side of the Morris Canal. The hotel was also used as a "station" on the Underground Rail-

road. As a young man he was very aware of what was going on and was also very involved in the secretive activities of the day. As a young boy, Charles would help move slaves from Dr. Grime's house to his father's hotel, and then north to Pequannock, then Kinnelon and into New York. On a few occasions he was followed by law enforcement officers and, of course, was very afraid of being discovered, because what he was doing was illegal.

At age 19 he was the first man from Morris County to enlist in the Union Army. He was a Corporal in Company 1, 1st. New Jersey Infantry. On 27 June 1862 at the battle of Gaines Mill in Virginia he was wounded. He was able to get to safety and took another wounded soldier with him. Two weeks later during the Battle of Wilderness he was captured and sent to the infamous Andersonville prison and later to Florence prison. He survived both prisons and in 1892 he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism during the Civil War. The citation reads "Voluntarily carried a wounded comrade, under heavy fire, to a place of safety; though twice wounded in the act, he continued in action until again severely wounded."

When the war was over, he came back to Boonton and established a harness making business. He married and had nine children. For the next 30 years he was very involved in public and political affairs. He served as Town Committeeman, member of the Board of Freeholders, Mayor, NJ State Senator, postmaster of Boonton, member of the NJ Assembly and chief of the Boonton Fire Department. He died in 1934 at age 92.

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The Kingsland Marionettes



Throughout the world the puppet show is a popular entertainment. An ancient art form, articulated puppets made of clay and ivory have been found in Egyptian tombs and the writings of Herodotus date the oldest written records of puppetry to the 5th. century BC.. In modern times a revival of the art as entertainment for both adults and children has taken place, as well as the development of its wide use in education and therapy. Marionettes are puppets suspended on strings manipulated by a puppeteer.

The last Kingsland descendant to live in Boonton's oldest recorded home, the Miller- Kingsland House, was Mabel Kingsland Byrne Head. Mabel and her husband Cedric, who married in 1929, went on to establish the Kingsland Marionettes. Touring the country from coast to coast, their puppetry performances were well known, putting on such

Playing to over
200 audiences annually,
Mabel and Cedric
built and acquired over
700 maronettes.

shows as Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp, Alice in Wonderland, Robin Hood, Rapunzel, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Jack and the Beanstalk, The King of the Golden River, as well as scenes from Shakespeare and other well-loved stories.

Playing to over 200 audiences annually, Mabel and Cedric built and acquired over 700 maronettes. They often followed performances with demonstrations and lectures, presenting a general view of puppetry illustrated by their elaborate collection of historical puppet figures, many

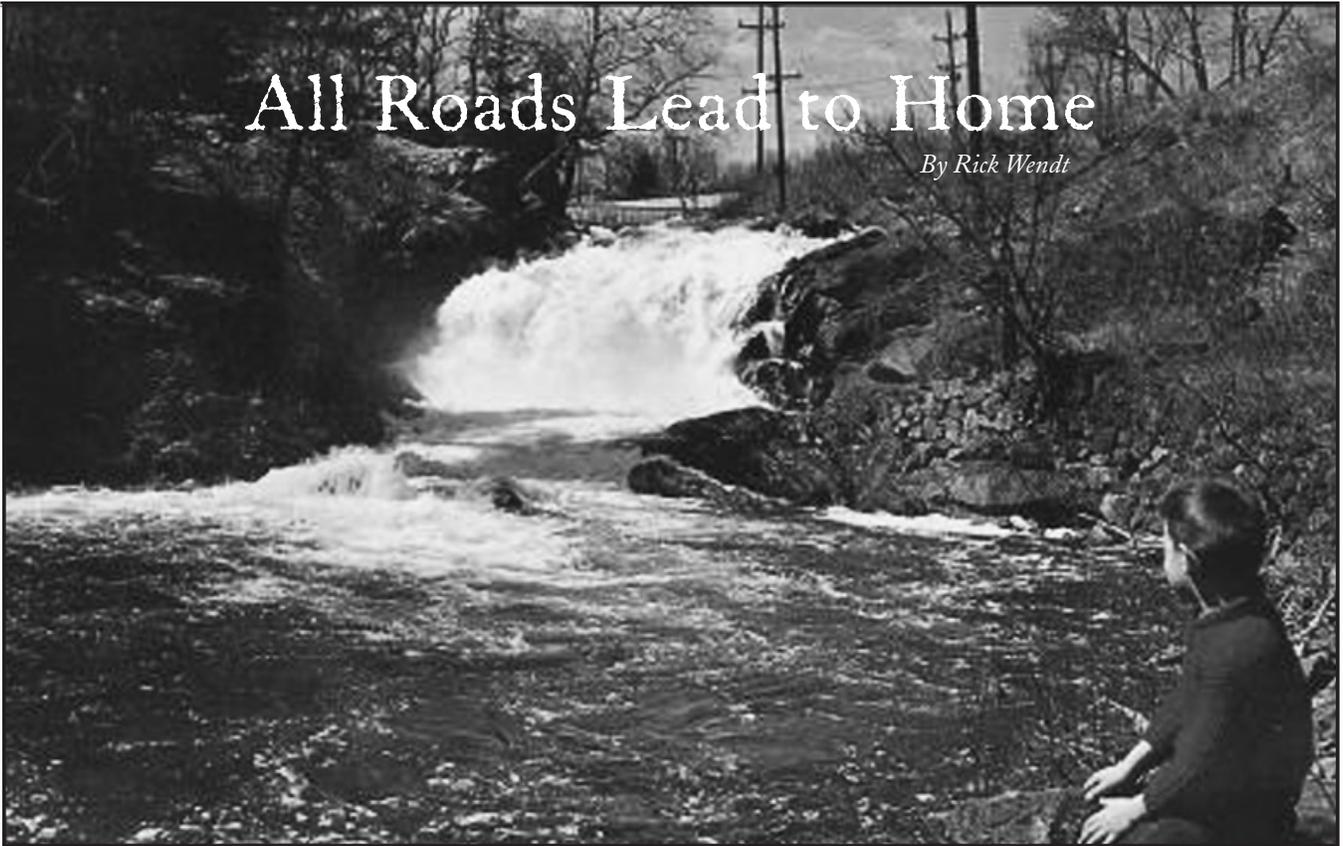
of which were museum pieces. In the 1940's, despite war time travel restrictions the Kingsland Marionettes were classed as "essential to the war effort"

The Boonton Historical Society will again participate in the Pathways of History tour on October 11 and 12. We are planning a presentation about

the Kingsland Marionettes and are soliciting any information from the public regarding Cedric and Mabel Head, photographs, contemporary advertising, memorabilia and, hopefully, the loan of some Kingsland Marionettes. Please contact us if you can help us to develop what we anticipate will be an entertaining and historical perspective on the world of marionettes and the connection to Boonton's past. Boontonhistory@Boonton.org.

All Roads Lead to Home

By Rick Wendt



All roads lead to home. No matter how far I am from there my heart always draws me back to that Small Town.

When I was young I thought that my town was a trap. One designed by my parents to hold me hostage and suck the singularity out of me. I thought that if I could just break the bonds of its tentacles I would be free to experience the real world!! The wonders that awaited me would be truly marvelous!

So I jumped ship as soon as I could. First I tried other towns then other states. When new states were not enough I joined the Navy and went coast to coast and border to border. Landed on a ship and sailed nearly around the world. In all that time when I dreamed I most time dreamed of my home, my town. That in a place so vast as the world the place I grew up in played out most in my thoughts.

It was the same for all those that were with me in our travels. Yes we would explore and experience. But when we remembered it was mostly of the place we grew up in. The place we became who we were to be. Even those from the big cities would talk of just their small little part of it.

Our words would tell on us. Those from the Mid West or the North East, the Southerners, the Texans, New Englanders. Jersey and the Bronx, Boston and L.A. you could hear the Small Town or the neighborhood in all those voices. You could feel the pride when they spoke of it. You could hear their history in those words. And you

know what? Most wanted to go back. To go back and start a new history. One that would have their kids in it. One that would feel comfortable and safe. Not the one we ran from but one we wanted to run to.

After I sowed the oats that my restlessness required and viewed the world from outside the shell of Small Town life. I found that is what I wanted for my kids. I missed the closeness of Kin and neighbors. I missed the safe feeling of my kids going to the same schools both my parents and I did. Having the same teachers and knowing the same history and the pride of place that comes with that. The "I knew/know your Daddy" that came when you marched through the happenings of the day.

I never made it back to that Small Town but then I never really left it. It is in the way I look at others and tend to my life. I put it in my writings because I have come to understand that although this country is vast the Small Town is where it started. Some of those towns grew to the big cities they are now. But their heart is the people the ideals the glue of pride and heritage when someone asks, "Where are you from?". Then that rush of remembering comes over them as they look inside and say, "I come from a Small Town just outside of....."

"There is a banner in the Sky The streaming red and black
And under it all Boonton's foes Are gallantly turned back!!!"

Managing Museum Archives

By *Monica Scozzafava*

Archivist, Boonton Historical Society

What do the archivists at the museum do?

Every item that we have in our museum collection was donated to the museum. One by one, year after year, we have

least aggressive way. Usually wiping it with a clean cloth or soft brush, or washing it with water but no soap will get the job done. If the item is paper and it is wrinkled or folded, we can release those wrinkles and folds by carefully exposing the paper to moist air.

Once the photo, document, or map is clean and flat,



Evelyn Eckardt and Monica Eckardt Scozzafava

accumulated the items that tell the history of Boonton. We work with and store all of these items on the second and third floors of the museum. These floors are somewhat like an attic, because we store things there, but they are also like a library, because we arrange the items in a specific order so they can be located. The people who do this preservation and organization work are archivists.

Prepare an item for storage

Sometimes items come to us from dusty garages or damp basements, so the first thing we do is clean the item in the

we slide it into a clear, archival, polyester sleeve that gives support to the paper item and protects it from dust and fingerprints.

Accession the item

Each item is recorded or logged in. We assign each item an identifying number and record a description of the item, the name of the person who gave us the item and the date

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The Boonton Historical Society is Proud to Present a Retrospective
on the Molded Plastics Industry in Boonton.

Exhibit opens on
Sunday, May 18, 2014
from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Boontonware®



We need your help!

To help us create the most well rounded and accurate
exhibit, we are looking for unique Boontonware
items from you to loan the Museum:

Collections, Unique Shapes, Colors, Patterns,
Advertisements, stories, industrial molds, etc.

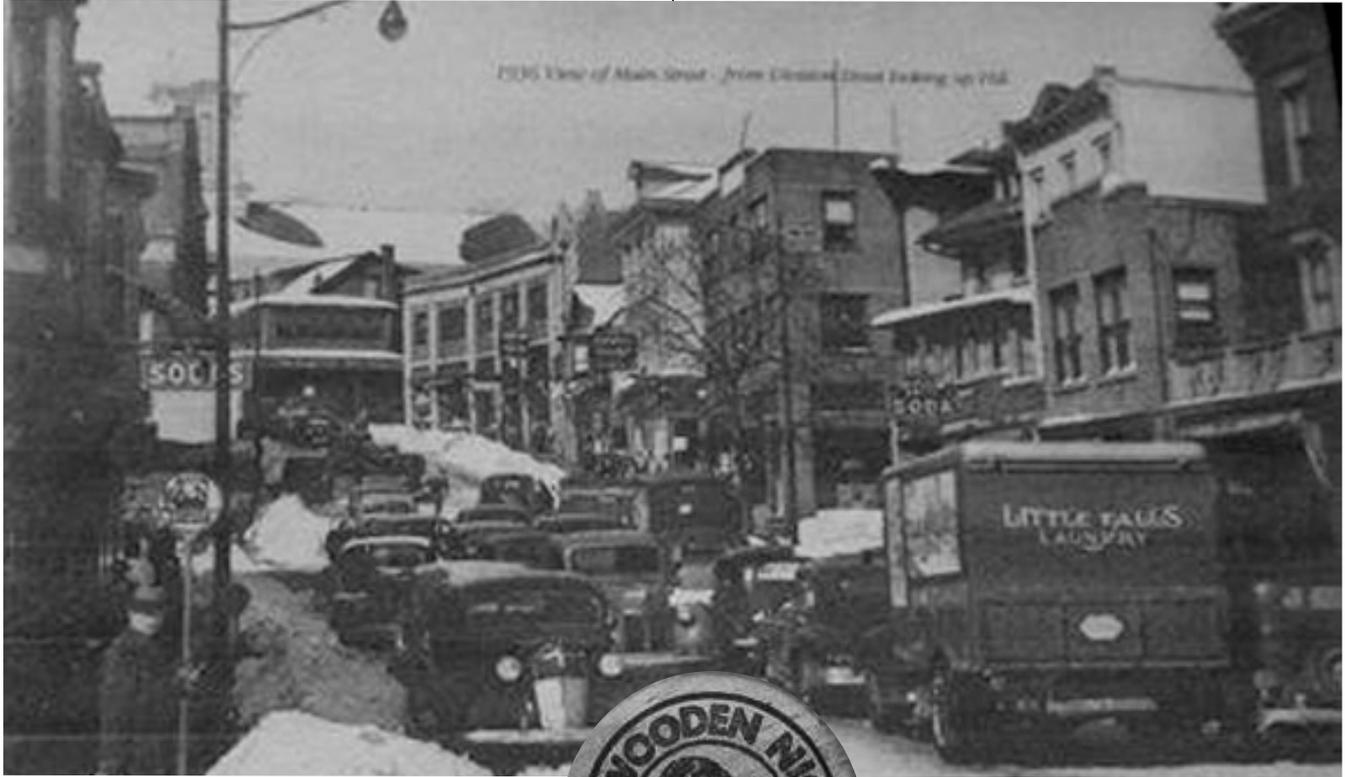
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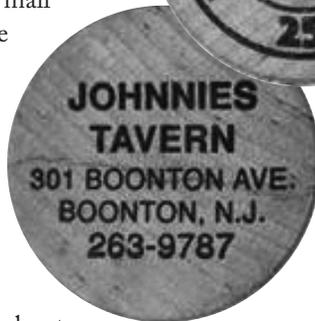
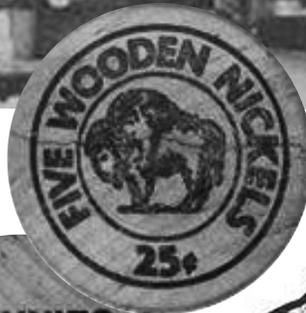
Some recent posts from our Facebook page.

from Steve Stross *Boonton in Winter - 1936*



from Ernie Piscitello

I got this wooden nickle in a birthday card from cousin Mark Marcello. It broke in the mail and I glued it. I thought that as a piece of Boonton memorabilia it merited a place on the Boonton Historical Society and Museum page.



from

Candace Grant

Did you know? We're on Pinterest, where we're all about all things Boonton AND all things New Jersey.

<http://pinterest.com/bntnhistsoc/>

We'd like you to follow us!

from Candace Grant

Our friend and trustee Daniel Clark is dishing up (pun on the Boontonware theme!) a fabulous doggie design for this year's **Boonton Dog Daze**. If you'd like to be a sponsor, visit us at <http://boontondogdaze.org/>

The Gift Shoppes at the Boonton Museum

Upcoming Sales Special

For the next few months we will be offering discounts and specials in our main gift shop and our gift shop annex in our lower level. If you haven't visited our shops lately, come by. We add new inventory all the time.

Hope to see you soon.

April

50% off all SPRING and EASTER ITEMS
in our gift shop annex!



May

50% off GIFTS FOR MOTHER
in our gift shop annex!

June, July, & August

Summer Reading Special – show us
your membership card and receive
20% off ALL BOOKS – in both of
our shops – no limit!



It's Membership time at the Boonton Historical Society

ITS TIME TO **renew** your membership or **join** the Boonton Historical Society and Museum. If you have enjoyed our programs and events this past year, please recommend us to your friends and family members. With your continued support we can continue to remain an active organization in the community.

Your membership in the Society includes:

1. On-line news bulletin
2. Semi-annual newsletter
3. Special events
4. Educational programs
5. Free admission to our walking tours
6. Special previews to exhibits
7. Free museum admission

Thanks for your support



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please make checks payable to the **Boonton Historical Society** and mail to:
BHSM Memberships c/o Eric Wallin 465 Hill Street, Boonton, NJ 07005

ANNUAL FEES (please choose one)

Individual \$20.00 Family \$25.00 Seniors/Students \$15.00
 Business/Professional \$30.00 Lifetime \$200.00 Lifetime Couple \$350

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone (optional): _____

E-mail Address: _____

Boonton Historical Society & Museum 210 Main Street, Boonton, New Jersey 07005

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Managing Museum Archives

it was given. This has been done since 1972 and most of the records have been written or typed on paper. In recent years, however, we are slowly switching to keeping these records on the computer using Powerpoint. The accession number is written either directly on the item or onto a tag that is tied onto the item.

Research the item

We look for any labels or imprints on the item that would help us to identify it. We just received a leather cartridge case. We noticed "Watervliet" imprinted on the clasp and googled it. We found a case identical to the one we had and learned that it was from the NJ National Guard and was used during the time of the French and Indian War.

Our research is usually more local than that. We refer to maps and address directories to find out about locations of stores and other buildings in town. We note this information on the back of photos, so anyone going forward can have the benefit of our research.

Store the item

We store the item in an appropriate way. Photos and postcards are stored in clear, polyester pockets in binders. Dresses and uniforms are wrapped in buffered tissue and placed in acid-free, archival boxes.

Find the item again

We have to be able to locate the item after it has been stored in the archives. If we want to use it in an exhibit or add something similar to the same storage box, we have to have a way of finding the item again. The shelves in the archives are organized according to topics--- Schools, Toys, Churches, Morris Canal, Small Businesses, Industry, etc. The boxes on the shelves are labeled with their contents. For instance, the boxes on the "Schools" shelves are labeled---Class Photos, Buildings and Teachers, Yearbooks, Wampus (school newspaper), Textbooks, Event Programs, Student Projects, etc.

The work of the archivist is certainly detailed and definitely

time-consuming, but it is also rewarding. Hour after hour and week after week, the history of Boonton slowly reveals itself to you. You start to make connections---an unlabeled postcard later matches up with an ad in a 1910 phone directory, which later makes even more sense as you compare it to a map of 1900. So now you know how the Worman Inn became the Zucker Department Store in 1930s and The Laurie Shop in the 1950s-1980s. And that explains why there was that grand staircase inside a clothing store when you went shopping there as a twelve-year-old girl. The store was a home before it became a store. History is often about putting together the pieces and finally making sense of them.

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We assign each item
an identifying number
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of the item, the name
of the person who gave
us the item and the date
it was given.

The current archivists are Evelyn Eckardt and her daughter, Monica Eckardt Scozzafava . Evelyn has been doing the work for the past 40 years, and Monica has been working for just five years. There have been other archivists through the years. Pearl Clark was one of the first, and Jean Lee worked both in the museum and the Holmes Library for many years in the 1960s-1990s. Jean's daughter, Laura Lee Linder, also worked as an archivist in Boonton, and then went to work in Schenectady (NY) Museum. There have been others have who worked in the archives for short stints here and there, but that list would be incomplete, so we will not try to list their names.

But a big thank you to those who work behind the scenes to preserve our history. Will they finish the job one day??? The job will never be done. But when it is a labor of love, I guess that does not matter.

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Schultz Park

So with such an auspicious beginning, how is it that the park no longer exists and there are two stores on what should be park land? Our archivist, Monica Eckardt Scozzafava, took those questions to town hall. Mayor Cy Wekilsky's interest was piqued and he spent some time reading town meeting minute books from 1910 to 1952 to find an answer. He read through 4000 pages of hand written notes, and while he did not uncover every detail, here is what we now know:

- The minutes for the first 10 years mention a bandstand being built, lights being added later, and some dirt from work on Main Street being used to fill in the park.
- In 1934, the minutes refer to the town wanting to use some of the park property for its own use. The clerk is asked to write to the heirs and ask that the restriction on Schultz Park be removed. The heir refuses to change the deed.
- In 1941, the minutes refer to the Mayor and Board directing the town attorney to look into returning the Schultz Park property to the heirs. By September of that year, a question is put on the ballot, "Should the former Schultz property be returned to the former owner or his heirs?"
- In early 1942, the minutes report the adoption of a resolution to execute the papers necessary to return the property to the heirs.
- In 1947, the minutes indicate the return of the property to the heirs is complete.

Five years after returning the property, the building that now houses Don's Sandwich Shop was built, and thirty years later, Bob's Men's Shop was built.

One wonders how a park falls out of favor. In 1910, the Improvement Society worked tirelessly to convince General Schultz to donate the property. Everyone was on board; everyone wanted the park. What happened between the

town-wide effort to gain the park in 1910 and the town fathers contacting the heirs to return the park in 1941? There are no clear cut answers that anyone currently living knows, but whatever the reasons, one can lament the decision.

The gazebo was built on land that was donated to the town in 1910 to be used as a park.

Luckily, fate has worked in the town's favor. No building has been erected on the remaining open property in the past 30 years, so we continue to enjoy the view from the boardwalk as was intended from the very beginning. However, the property is privately owned, and there is no guarantee that it will not be built on someday. Enjoy the view while you can.

Who was General John S. Schultz?

He was born in Pennsylvania in 1837 and had an active career before he came to Boonton around 1887. He took over as superintendent/ agent for the Boonton Ironworks when William G. Lathrop announced his retirement. He lived in the house that Lathrop had occupied on Cornelia Street in the area where the Elks Club is located today. At that time, the grounds of his house extended all the way to Main Street. That house no longer exists. He also was director and later vice-president of the Boonton National Bank. In 1891, at age 54, he married a local woman, Susan Munn DeCamp. There is a stained glass window in the Rockaway Valley Methodist Church that bears his name. He died in 1912.

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The Boonton Historical Society & Museum

210 Main Street, Boonton, NJ 07005

Boonton Historical Society & Museum

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The Boonton Historical Society & Museum

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Open on Sundays from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
 and by appointment.



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Opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the society.