



Gem of the Mountains

The Newsletter of the Boonton Historical Society and Museum

March, 2026

210 Main Street, Boonton, New Jersey 07005 ♦ (973) 402-8840 ♦ boontonhistory@boonton.org ♦ <http://www.boontonhistory.org>

New Exhibit Opening

Reception: Sunday – March 15th – Noon to 4 PM



This photo shows a building on Division Street at the corner of Wootton Street. It is still there today and looks very much the same as it did when it housed Boonton Full-Fashioned Hosiery in the 1930s and Fuld and Company Valentines in the 1950s.

Our new changing exhibit at the museum picks up where the permanent exhibit leaves off telling the industrial history of our town. The iron works that occupied the hollow from 1830 to 1876 was no longer a viable industry to sustain the town and its workers. The town had depended on that single industry, and when it closed the town was in a recession.

Some of the first industries to take the place of the iron works were the Pelgram and Meyer Silk Mill in on Monroe Street in 1880 and the Loando Rubber Company in 1891, later called the Boonton Rubber Manufacturing Company. Its first location was in the hollow where the ironworks had been.

Those first industries were followed by hosiery industries: Boonton Hosiery Company, 1913, Van Raalte Company, and Boonton Full-Fashioned Hosiery. In 1917, E F Drew and Company started a vegetable oil and shortening company on the site that Knox Hat Company had occupied.

A parade of electronic instrument companies, six in all, founded in the 1920s and 1930s came next, and those were followed by companies engaged in molding plastics: Boonton Molding Company, 1921, Valley Molding Company, and Mechanical Institute.

The exhibit includes a sewing machine and a clock used when workers punched in and out of work from Beverly Bag Company. In 1938, that industry occupied the building that had been Pegram and Meyer Silk Mill.

Pathways Of History

Saturday & Sunday – May 2 & 3 – 11 AM to 4 PM



Celebrating 17 years of Morris County's free self-guided weekend tour of Museums and historic sites.

We are also celebrating the semiquincentennial of our country. What better time to connect with your historical past in Boonton?

♦ Miller-Kingsland House

465 Vreeland Avenue, Boonton

A step back in time at the oldest recorded home in Boonton.

♦ The Boonton Museum

210 Main Street, Boonton

Where we will be featuring a new exhibit of Boonton industry.

Walking Tour

Sunday – May 17th – 1:30 PM

WALKING TOUR

Morris Canal & Boonton Ironworks

Sunday, May 17th – 1:30 PM

Led by Joe Macasek. The tour meets at the Boonton Museum.

Annual Membership Meeting

Despite one postponement and some bone-chilling weather, our annual membership meeting was held on February 15th at the Boonton Senior Center.

A brief business meeting presented reports on our Treasury, Gift Shop, and Membership, as well as the nomination of Joanne Fattrosso for a four year term as Trustee and Jennifer Coultas for a two year term as Recording Secretary.



Our guest speaker was our museum educator Loren Katsakos (above). Loren's presentation *Boonton Leaders* is one of several well-received presentations Loren has developed and given to various local school and senior groups.

Museum Visit



Professor Tabiai, Joanne Fattrosso, Tammie Holloway, Veronica Jelic, and Richard Seabury.

On December 28th we welcomed Professor Ilyas Tabiai from the Ecole Technologie Superieure in Montral. Professor Tabiai is currently producing an educational video (narrated in French) for his engineering students. The topic is the historical develop-

ment of Bakelite and Boonton plastics. He came to the right place and just in time to see our Boontonware exhibit, which officially closed in December.

Holiday Open House



We were thrilled to greet so many members and friends at our Holiday Open House held on December 14th. Music, refreshments, and a visit from Santa highlighted this last opportunity to see our closing exhibit of Boontonware.



Dee Kromka and Polly Eberhardt.



Art Charlton.

amazing collection of Boontonware. We were pleased to display Joanne's extensive collection, along with our own, in our 2025 exhibit.

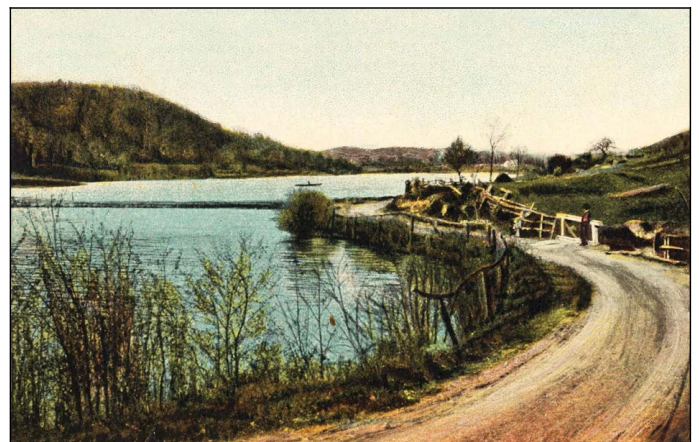


Joanne Fattrosso. Photo: Nancy Questa

A Reservoir By Any Other Name

The Town of Boonton owns the Boonton Reservoir located on Boonton Avenue. Why then is it often referred to as the Taylortown Reservoir and why is the Jersey City Reservoir often called the Boonton Reservoir?

The Boonton Reservoir is not actually in Boonton; its shores lap up against Montville Township and Kinnelon Borough about 5 miles away from the town of Boonton.



July 1910 view heading northbound toward Butler, showing the location where Boonton Township, Kinnelon, and Monville Township converge at Pyramid Mountain Park on the Boonton Reservoir.



The Trustees with Santa. Photos: Nancy Questa

New Trustee

We are pleased to announce that Joanne Fattrosso has joined our Board of Trustees. Prior to her retirement, Joanne had a successful career in all aspects of library administration and financial reporting. Surrounded by local history in her career roles, Joanne's avid interest in local history is demonstrated by her

Over the years, newspaper articles, books, and landscape changes have contributed to misnomers when it comes to place names. In addition, municipalities have often given their names to bodies of water along their shores.

Constructed circa 1893, the Boonton Reservoir was called, as it is today in some areas, the Taylortown Reservoir. The village of Taylortown extended to the Boonton Town line in those days.

As an example of mistaken identities, we discovered the following photograph description by Boonton photographer Frank Wendt. An 1897 booklet published by the Boonton Board of Trade included the picture with the caption "**Boonton Reservoir.**"

By 1910, a later publication issued by the Boonton Businessmen's Association included the same photograph with the caption, "**High Mountain Reservoir Where Boonton gets its Pure Water Supply.**"



Today, the name is appropriately referred to as **Boonton/Taylortown Reservoir** to avoid any confusion with the Jersey City Reservoir's waters, which extend over both Boonton and Parsippany, and to clarify where exactly our Boonton Reservoir is located.

Whatever the name attributed to it, the reservoir has beautiful scenic views in every season. Early photographs indicate that it was a popular place for an outing along its shores with its access to fishing and hiking trails. Because it is a public water supply system, there is no trespassing permitted on the property. However, a portion of the Orange Trail in the adjacent Natural Historic Area runs along its western side offering public views.

Industrial growth in Boonton prompted expansion of the reservoir's reach into the town, serving both domestic and economic needs.

Vintage photographs from the collection of the late Jean Ricker, former Boonton Township Historian.



*Boonton/Taylortown Reservoir, 2025.
Photo: Gretchen Longo*

The Helen Dixon Kunzelmann Scholarship In History



The Boonton Historical Society has established a \$500 academic scholarship in memory of Helen Dixon Kunzelmann.

This scholarship is open to Boonton High School seniors (regardless of residence) and other Boonton residents who are high school seniors (regardless of the school they attend, including those who are homeschooled) pursuing a degree in history, education, museum studies, or other related field.

The scholarship will be awarded at the conclusion of the current academic year. Applications and selection criteria can be obtained at the Historical Society Museum at 210 Main Street, emailing Boontohistory@Boonton.org, or on the web at boontohistory.org/forms.html. The submission deadline is May 15, 2026.

THE BOONTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS
– Our New Changing Exhibit –



Boonton Was An Industrial Town

Our new exhibit showcases the industrial history of our town. By 1876 the iron works, which had occupied the hollow since 1830, was no longer able to sustain the town and its workers.

Some of the first industries to take its place were a silk mill in 1880 and a rubber company in 1891. These were followed by hosiery industries, a vegetable oil and shortening company, a parade of six electronic instrument companies founded in the 1920s and 1930s, and companies engaged in molding plastics.

Reception: Sunday ♦ March 15th ♦ Noon to 4 PM

All are welcome – Admission is free – Refreshments will be served

Boonton Historical Society ♦ 210 Main Street, Boonton, NJ 07005 ♦ 973-402-8840

BOONTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM EVENTS CALENDAR 2026

FEBRUARY

15th Sunday	2 PM	Annual Membership Meeting <i>Boonton Leaders: My Five Guys – Loren Katsakos</i> Boonton Senior Center
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MARCH

15th Sunday	Noon to 4 PM	New Changing Exhibit <i>Boonton Was An Industrial Town</i>
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APRIL

18th Saturday	Noon to 4 PM	Canal Day Celebration <i>Macculloch Drive, Montville Township</i>
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MAY

2nd & 3rd	11 AM to 4 PM	Pathways of History
17th Sunday	1:30 PM	Walking Tour <i>Canal & Ironworks Tour – Joe Macasek</i> Tour starts at the Museum

JULY

17th, 18th, 19th	Noon to 5 PM	Christmas in July Sale <i>Big Sales in our Gift Shops!</i>
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SEPTEMBER

27th Sunday	Noon to 4 PM	Boonton Day
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OCTOBER

18th Sunday	1:30 PM	Walking Tour <i>Historic Main Street Tour – Nancy Charlton Questa</i> Tour starts at Canalside Park Overlook
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DECEMBER

6th Sunday	Noon to 4 PM	Museum Annual Holiday Open House <i>Live Musical Entertainment & Special Sales!</i>
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We are open to the public every first and third Sunday, 1 to 4 PM, and other days by special appointment. Email us at boontonhistory@boonton.org to schedule a visit, or leave a message at 973-402-8840. Dates and times subject to change.

Boonton Historical Society & Museum

Board of Trustees

Tammie Holloway – *President*

Nancy Charlton Questa – *Vice President*

Geoffrey Millington – *Treasurer*

Jennifer Coultas – *Recording Secretary*

Anthony Angiolini – *Strategic Planning*

Arthur Charlton – *Special Projects*

James Cook – *Gift Shop*

Joanne Fattrosso – *Special Projects*

James M. Gannon – *Guidelines & Policies*

Candace Grant – *Social Media*

Steven Milkowski – *Nominations*

Sima Roy Chowdhury – *Guidelines & Policies*



Veronica Jelic – *Archivist*

Loren Katsakos – *Museum Educator*

Monica Scozzafava – *Archivist*

Eric Wallin – *Membership*

Mission Statement

The Boonton Historical Society and Museum is a non-profit organization incorporated in 1959, located in the town of Boonton, New Jersey. Its mission is to:

- Preserve and protect the town of Boonton's unique cultural, architectural, and industrial history;
- Preserve and share the area's rich history, folklore, arts, and humanities of the past and present;
- Encourage preservation and restoration of historic landmarks in the town;
- Protect and display the museum's collections;
- Provide educational programs, guided historical tours, and exhibitions to a diverse population.



*Kevin M. Hale Publication Award Winner
2020 & 2021 First Place
2022 & 2024 Second Place*

Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Boonton Historical Society.

– BHS&M MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL –

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

I would like to volunteer! (We have a variety of volunteer opportunities.)

Please choose your level of support (annual memberships renew in January)

LIFETIME: \$350 Couple \$200 Individual \$150 Add Your Spouse

ANNUAL: \$25 Family \$30 Business / Professional

\$20 Individual \$15 Senior \$15 Student

DONATION: I have included an additional donation of \$ _____

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

– All monies directly fund the efforts of the Society and are tax deductible –



Home Calendar Flyers Newsletters Brochures Forms

The Boonton Historical Society & Museum



The Historic Dr. John Taylor Building

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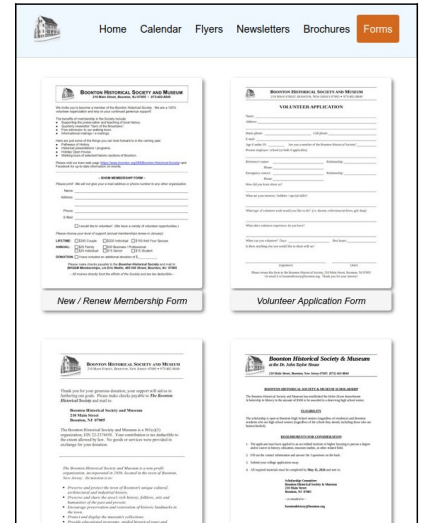
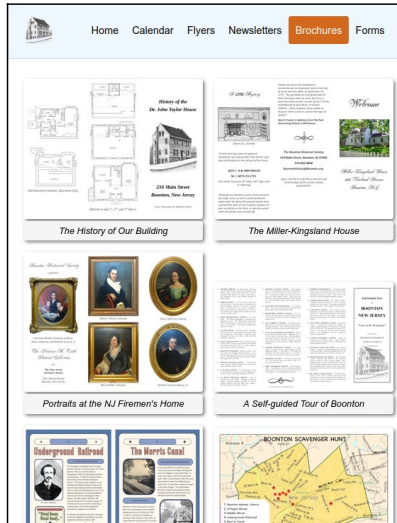
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We Have A New Website!

Point your browser to boontonhistory.org and you will be instantly transported to our brand new website, where you will find an up-to-date calendar, current flyers & brochures, our newsletter archive, and more.

We have an amazing collection of Boonton-related artifacts and photographs in our archives which we would love to display for you on our website. Let us know what you would like to see!



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Boonton, NJ 07005