

WALPACK

historical society

*"Preserving a Fine
Tradition of Caring"*

www.walpackhistory.org

Newsletter of the
Walpack Historical Society

Published Quarterly

Summer 2023

ENOS JOHNSON THE MAIL CARRIER

by Sharon Spangenberg

While researching the occupants of the Johnson/Losey house, an interesting discovery was made.

Enos Johnson was born about 1778 and was a documented slave of Isaac Van Campen. He was freed in 1802 as ordered by Isaac Van Campen in his 1801 will. Shortly afterwards Enos married Elizabeth Bakeman, and together they had one confirmed child born in 1804. The 1830 and 1840 censuses confirm that Enos and his family were living in Walpack Township. In July of 1843 Enos purchased 10 acres of land just south of the Van Campen Inn and on it built a home for his family. One hundred eighty years later, although in disrepair, that small green house continues to stand as a reminder of one of Walpack's slaves. The 1850 census shows Enos as a 71-year-old laborer. Nine years later in 1859, he died of bleeding lungs.

Many may not realize that there was a second man by the name of Enos Johnson who lived in Walpack Township. For the sake of distinguishing them apart, this Enos will be referred to as Enos the younger.

Enos the younger was born in 1826. He lived in Walpack Township as well as in Sandyston. According to the 1850 census, he was listed as a 24-year-old man with the occupation noted as laborer, living with the Peter DeWitt family. Censuses recorded after 1850 through 1900 show he was living in Sandyston Township. Enos the younger was not the son of Enos and Elizabeth, but could he have been the mail carrier?

To assist in answering this question, several references were reviewed. Snell, in his 1881 book, titled *History of Sussex and Warren Counties*, Enos "was engaged by the people of the neighborhood to bring their mail once a week from Tuttle's Corners and that he also served the people in this capacity as far down as Flatbrookville."

J. L. Bunnell in his 1904 *New Jersey Herald* column, reported that, an "old colored man" [who lived with the Peter DeWitt family by the name of Enos Johnson] "deserves a passing notice. Years ago, when the county newspapers were carried around from house to house, Enos Johnson was the first carrier



*Rendition of Enos Johnson sitting outside his home before 1859.
Painting by artist Michael Jaroszko, photo courtesy of Bob Williams.*

in Walpack Township and continued to fill the place for many years. At first, he had a horse and wagon. The horse died; then he went on foot. He carried a horn to announce his coming. The children along the way would all try to see who would be the first to get the paper on Saturday afternoon. Enos was a great friend of the young folks. Many love missives were entrusted to his care and were always delivered promptly, and no tales were told. The comfort and welfare of the colored people was one of the noble traits of their friend and benefactor, Peter DeWitt."

The 1850 census reports that both Enos and Enos the younger were living in separate dwellings in Walpack, one was 71 years of age and the other age 24.

Len Peck in his report on the *History of Postmasters of Sussex County*, noted that the first post office in Walpack began in 1829 and was discontinued in 1844. Then, in 1854, Jasper Rundle opened a post office in Walpack Center. Perhaps during that ten-year period when there was no one to deliver the newspapers or mail Enos Johnson took over that responsibility.

Past historians have believed the mail carrier was Enos the manumitted slave of Isaac Van Campen who built and lived in the small green house south of Van Campen Inn, but was he? Based on the information provided, it could very well have been Enos Johnson the younger who lived with Peter DeWitt and was almost five decades younger.

JANINA ANN “JEN” WYCALEK

JULY 6TH, 1946 - APRIL 25TH, 2023



Long time Walpack Historical Society trustee, Jen Wycalek passed away on April 25, 2023 at the age of 76.

Jen, as she preferred to be called, was born in Orange, NJ and lived in Cedar Grove. After graduating from Cedar Grove High School, she attended Katherine Gibbs School in Montclair. Jen worked in the trust department of the National Newark and Essex Bank in Newark. She furthered her career in banking and retired from PNC Bank in 1998.

Jen came to Walpack in the mid-1990s to research an ancestor who lived in nearby Sandyston. She rented a cabin in Walpack along the Delaware River and fell in love with the area. After retirement she had an opportunity to purchase a house that had been known in the early 1900s as Camp Shapanack. As time progressed, she began delving into Walpack Township's history and joined the Walpack Historical Society. Jen loved being surrounded by nature while living along the dirt section of Old Mine Road. She had a great respect for wildlife. Isolation did not bother Jen. She loved to read about local history as well as hike and explore the Delaware Valley. She was a dedicated WHS volunteer and trustee. Many know Jen as being the long-time docent at the Van Campen Inn.

In 2013 she ran for and was elected Walpack Township's first committeewoman and served the township for 10 years; one term as deputy Mayor. She also served as the township's historian.

As one of her friends recently relayed to us, “Walpack lost a giant,” and that we surely did. Jen has and will continue to be missed.



*Jen at 2022 Van Campen Day.
Photo courtesy of Jeff Stoveken*

Funding has been made available in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, through the State/County Partnership Block Grant Program, as administered by the Sussex County Arts & Heritage Council.



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The Walpack Historical Society
newsletter is designed and edited
by Tom Dust. Photographs are provided
by the author, unless otherwise noted.

2023 CALENDAR

April 23	Spring Hike to Schoonover Cemetery – Bushkill, PA
April 30	*Spring Dinner
May 6	Peony bed and Walpack Center Village clean up
May 21	Presentation - 1967 Video Tour of the Minisink Valley
May 27	VCI open 12 -3 pm
May 28	Walpack Church, Rosenkrans Museum, and VCI open 1- 4 pm
June 25	Presentation – Recollections of Blue Mountain Lakes
July 1	Peony bed and Walpack Center Village clean up
July 16	“Tock’s Island: Dammed if you Do” - David Pierce
August 20	Flatbrookville Presentation
September 17	Catfish Fire Tower Hike and Presentation
October 8	Van Campen Day (Heritage Weekend)
December 2	Walpack Christmas (museum open)
December 3	*Holiday Dinner
December 9 & 10	Walpack Christmas (museum open)

**Members and their guests.*

All events are subject to change. Current CDC & NPS Covid guidelines may affect events. Visit WalpackHistory.org and [Facebook.com/WalpackHistory](https://www.facebook.com/WalpackHistory) for calendar updates, changes and details.

WHS NEWSLETTER SPONSORSHIPS

The production of our newsletter is a time-consuming and costly ongoing project for the WHS. As our membership grows so do our expenses for printing and mailing the newsletter. To help, please consider becoming a sponsor. Simply make a donation and note that it is for “Newsletter Sponsor.”



DUES ARE DUE

Members and friends of the WHS can fill out the membership form on page seven and mail it in with a payment to the address on the form.

Also, payment can be made online with a credit card by visiting WalpackHistory.org.

All memberships must be made current in order to remain on our mailing list. Thank you!

The Walpack Historical Society would like to acknowledge and express its appreciation to our many Lifetime Members for their generosity.

THANK YOU!

To everyone who becomes a member, makes a donation, sponsors the newsletter, attends a dinner, or buys a book, we sincerely appreciate your support.

New Members

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New Donations

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Thank you to all of those who have chosen to support Walpack Historical Society through anonymous donations on Facebook.

BE A PART OF HISTORY - DOCENTS AND VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



A docent is a person who acts as a guide, typically on a voluntary basis. We are always looking for new people to help us at our events and meetings throughout the year.

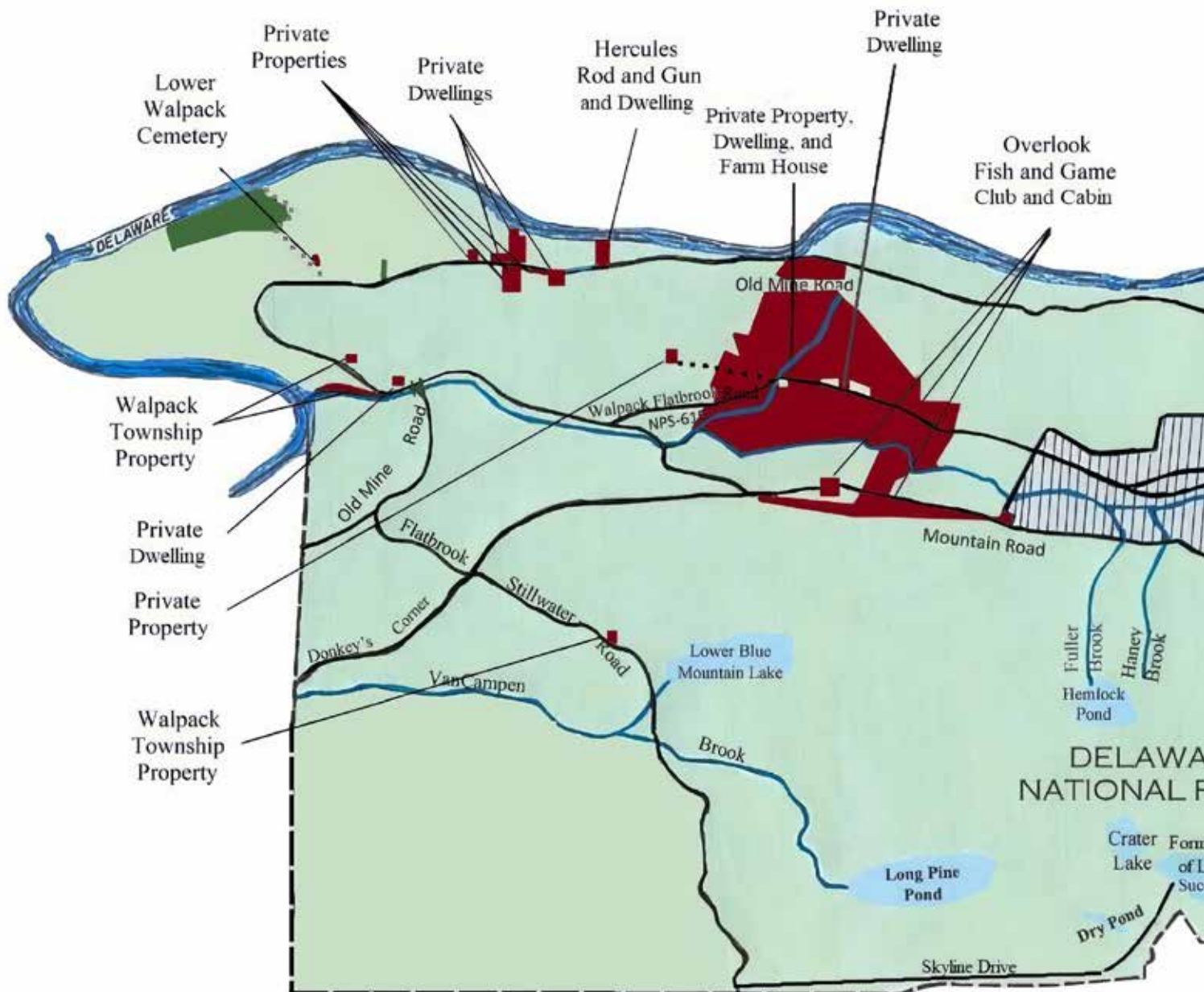
Please call (973) 552-8880 to learn more about how you can help play a part in history.



WALPACK TOWNSHIP PROPERTY OWNERS

by Sharon Spangenberg

The Tocks Island Dam Project, authorized by an act of congress in 1962, would have created a lake-sized reservoir about 40 miles long and one mile wide. As a result of that act, the Federal Government through the Army Corp of Engineers began acquiring land on both sides of the Delaware River through eminent domain. Several Sussex County municipalities were affected by the proposed project - Walpack Township was impacted the most. Prior to the final congressional deauthorization of the project, the properties that had been previously acquired were transferred to the Secretary of the Interior for management by the National Park Service. This map shows the breakdown of ownership of Walpack's 16,009 acres, according to Sussex County's 2023 property tax records.



Acreage from Property Tax List 2023 – County of Sussex

Governmental Agencies

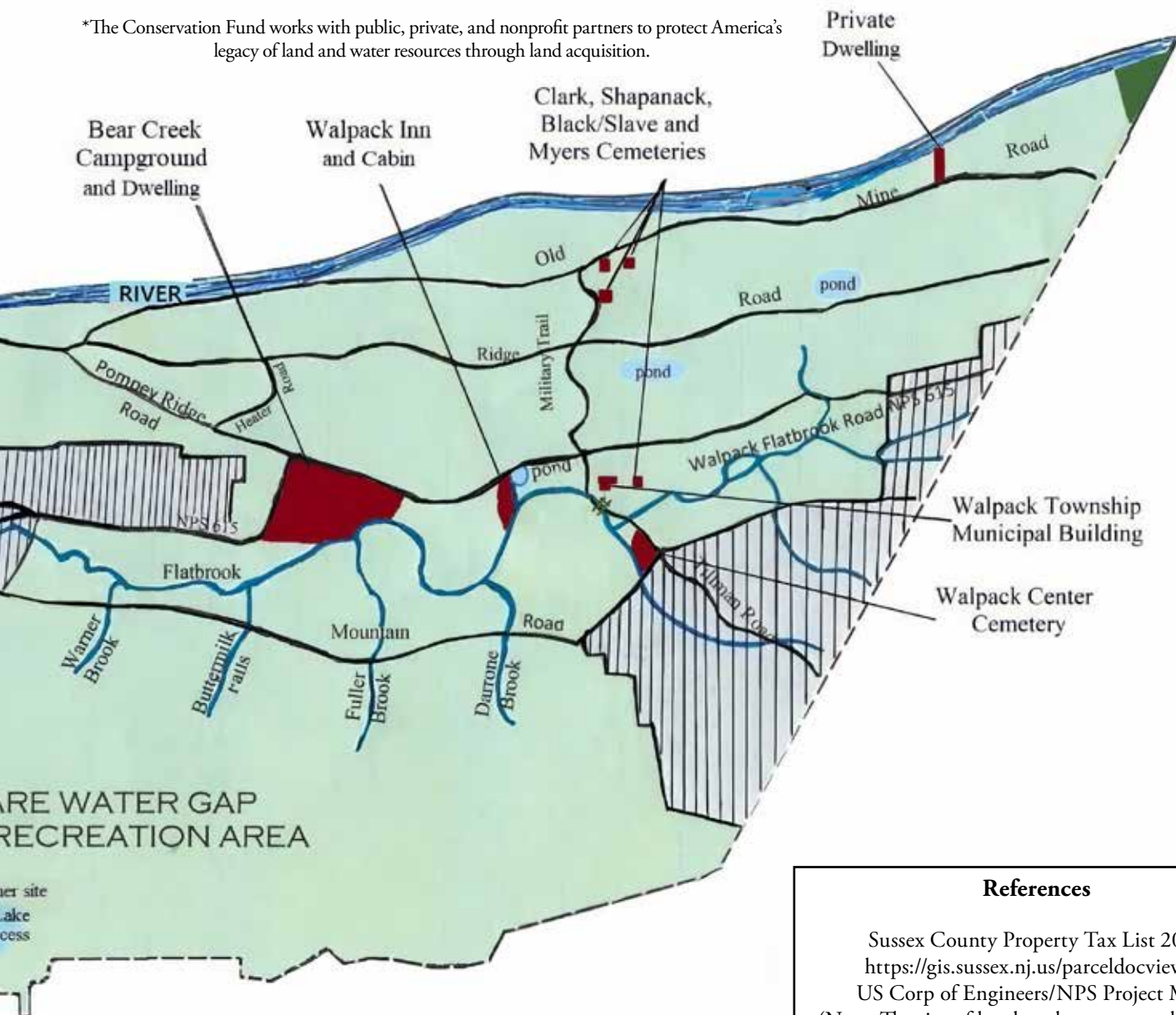
US of America	14,368.12
NJ State Fish & Game	528.53
Other State Property	546.53
Conservation Fund*	44.31
Walpack Township	2.97
Total Governmental Agencies	15,490.46

Cemeteries/Burial Grounds (6) 3.64

Privately Owned Property (18) 515.52

Total land in Walpack Township
divided by 640 acres per square mile **25 square miles**

*The Conservation Fund works with public, private, and nonprofit partners to protect America's legacy of land and water resources through land acquisition.



References

Sussex County Property Tax List 2023
<https://gis.sussex.nj.us/parceldocviewer/>
 US Corp of Engineers/NPS Project Maps
 (Note: The size of lots less than one acre have been slightly enlarged so they can easily be seen.)

A HIKE TO THE TRIANGLE

by Jeff Stoveken

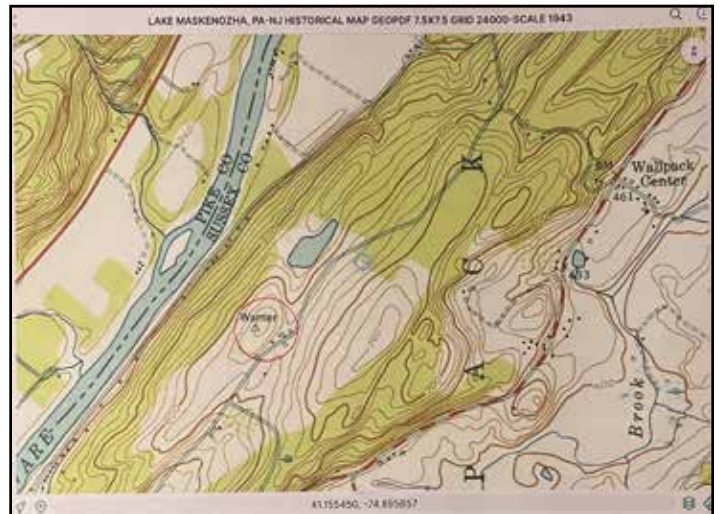
The following Sussex County Excursions article appeared in the February 7, 2018 edition of the New Jersey Herald. Because Jeff's and Dan's hikes are so interesting, we decided to reprint their adventure.

While scanning a 1954 map of the area, I came across some buildings marked on the top of a ridge that appeared to be an old farm. There was one solid black dot and a few dots that were just outlines. The solid one would be the farmhouse and the others would be outbuildings such as barns.

I was pretty sure that there would be no buildings left but I figured it may be an interesting area to check out, and that there would probably be some foundations and remnants of the farm itself, not to mention, mountaintop farms are usually pretty scenic.

Dan Tassey and I have been hiking the old roads of the area which usually lead to an old homestead or something interesting. I also noticed a triangle right near that farm on one of the knolls of that ridge. It shows it being a USGS survey marker. I figured that would be something to look for while we were there.

After walking up a couple of old woods roads, we came upon the site of the old farm. The woods opened up into pastures. On the right was a large square outline in the ground. I went on my interactive map on my phone and, sure enough, this



was the site of a rather large barn. As we continued down the road, we found what was left of a spring house on the left -- oddly enough, there was a bathtub next to it. On the right, if you looked hard within the brush, you'll see a stone silo base which on the map marks another barn.

Soon after that, we approached the area shown by the solid black dot on the map. When we looked off the side of the old road, we could see a stone foundation and the front steps. We walked out the size of the house and made note of the usual farmstead trees that surrounded the site. Nearby, to the south of the house, was an old well. It had been covered but the curved slabs of rock that used to sit on top of it were lying nearby.

We had a pretty good idea of the layout of the farm thanks to the interactive 1954 map. One barn was unaccounted for, but as we headed away from the farm near a steep embankment, we spotted a group of concrete footings that appeared to have been a bank barn. We rechecked the map, and that's exactly where it showed the barn, even though the terrain was confusing at first.

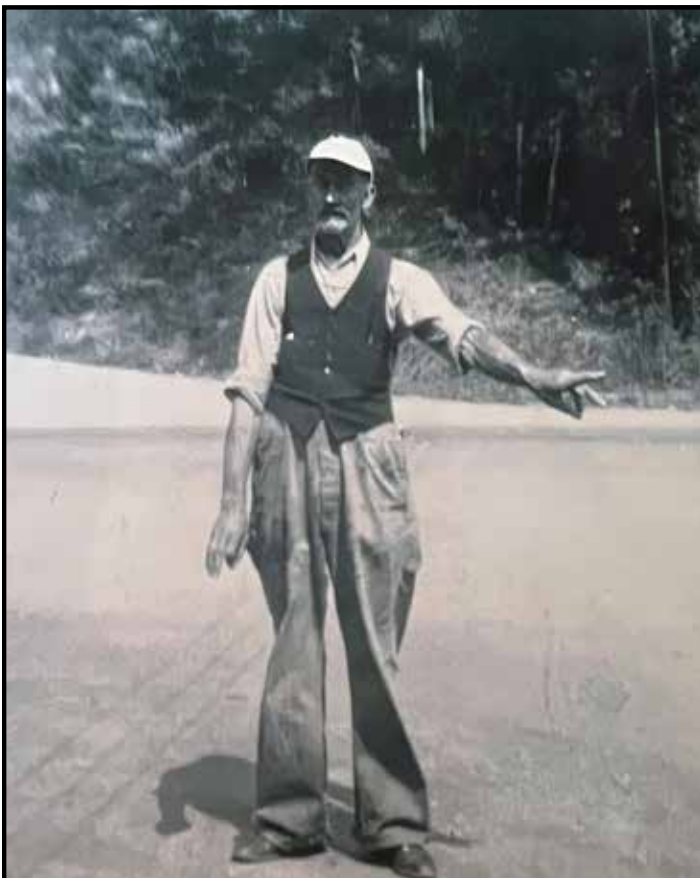
(A bank barn is a two-story barn built on a slope that provides an outside entrance to the lower story on one side and an entrance to the second story on the other side.)

At this point we decided to take a spur of the road that headed up toward the peak to see if we could locate the USGS marker. We came upon a very old radio tower that looked like it hadn't been used in quite some time. The only clearing was around the radio tower itself and surrounding that were some very low stone walls. I wasn't sure how easy the marker would be to find but we split up to cover the area.

I had spotted a game trail heading toward the western section of the knoll, so I decided to start there.

We searched for a good 15 minutes. As I came around the side of a stone wall, there was a small, downed tree blocking my path. I peered over the top of the tree and spotted the aqua colored marker.

The marker was set in a stone with some concrete around it for the setting. It had the word Warner stamped into it with no



Ike is one of the Warners for whom this Geodetic marker is named. Photo from Walpack Historical Society records.

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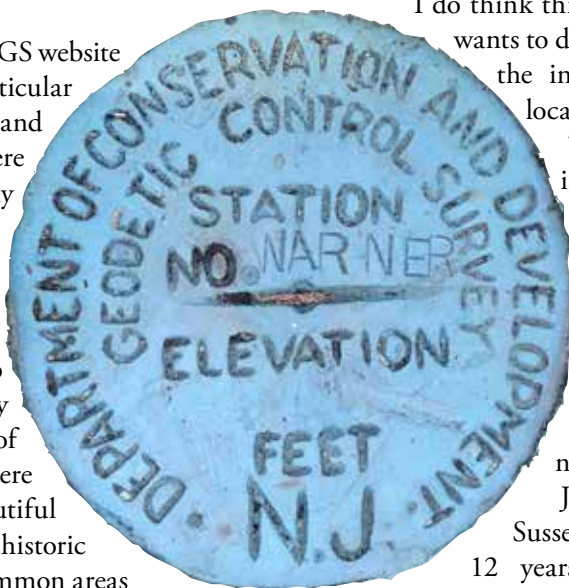
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continued from pg. 6

altitude reading. We photo documented this marker as well as the farm site and we were happy with our finds.

After telling some members of the historical society where we had gone, they said, "Oh, you went out to the old Warner Farm."

Later on that night, I went on the USGS website and I located information on that particular marker. The station was set in 1938 and the Warner farm and farmhouse were mentioned in that description. The only other time it was visited was 2006. So, after finding that marker and reading reports on the website about how geologic survey representatives visit these sites to locate them from time to time, I came up with a brainstorm: Why not use these for geocaching? A lot of these happen to be on a peak somewhere offering the person who finds it a beautiful view of the countryside. Many are in historic areas too. I know a lot of parks and common areas don't appreciate geocaching only because of the articles that people put there. Usually, a box containing little trinkets as well as a pen and paper to write about your discovery. These are not part of the natural environment and are frowned upon. However, these markers are already there for the finding, and



in my opinion, just as much fun!

So, I googled geocaching to find out a little more about it and I came across "Benchmarking." Apparently, people already look for USGS markers, so it was not my idea after all.

I do think this is a great adventure for anyone who wants to do something different on a hike. Using the interactive maps, you can find these locations and plan how to get out to them. The next one on the list is to find the iron bolt that was once the marker at Culver's Gap.

The interactive map is on an app called Avenza Maps. It's a free app and it's commonly used by the New York/New Jersey Trail Conference.

Benchmark information can be found at USGS.gov and at www.ngs.noaa.gov/.

Jeff Stoveken has been researching Sussex County history for more than 12 years and started photo documenting the county's historic sites and buildings as a way to preserve them. Sussex County Excursions began as a Facebook page in 2013 to inform and/or remind residents of the area's historic attractions and outdoor recreation. To read about their other adventures, visit Sussex County Excursions Facebook page.



WE ARE LOOKING FOR WRITERS

As we continue to keep Walpack's history alive, we are requesting our members consider writing an article for possible inclusion in our quarterly newsletter. Please know in advance that any article submitted must be

approved by our trustees and must go through our editing process. If you have an interesting story to tell or have photos of Walpack that you would be willing to share, please submit them to us by mail to info@walpackhistory.org or by visiting walpackhistory.org/newsletter/

www.walpackhistory.org

SAVE THE DATE - 8/20/2023



FLATBROOKVILLE HISTORICAL MARKER

On Sunday, August 20th there will be a presentation about the Village of Flatbrookville. The presentation will take place at one (1) o'clock pm at the Walpack Center Church, after which interested attendees will carpool to the residence of Eugene Rosenkrans in Flatbrookville where the Sussex County historical marker will be unveiled. We are so fortunate Eugene graciously allowed placement of this marker on his property. Please see our Facebook page or visit walpackhistory.org for updates. We hope to see you there!

JEN WYCALEK



2017 DEWA VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

MISSION STATEMENT

The Society actively stimulates an awareness and interest in the Walpack area through lectures, tours, publications and special events, such as Van Campen Day, hikes and exhibits at county-wide events.

It promotes collection, preservation and dissemination of Walpack area history and acts as a repository for artifacts of the Walpack area, and also maintains a small museum and book store and provides tours of Walpack Center and VCI.