

# THE MOUNT AMWELL NEWS

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## Excellence in Historic Preservation Award 2021

Readington Township recognized the Mount Amwell Project for historic preservation in celebration of National Historic Preservation month with an Excellence In Historic Preservation Award for 2021. The award was given “For outstanding commitment to our cultural heritage through the preservation of our historic cemeteries.”

The award read, in part, “Readington’s historic resources are the enduring physical connections to our collective past. On behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission, Mayor Albanese and

the Township Committee, we are pleased to present this award for your dedication to preserving the integrity of our historic cemeteries. The present and future citizens of Readington are the beneficiaries of your efforts that help to keep Readington the historic and beautiful township we have all come to love”.

Pat Fisher-Olsen, Readington Township Historical Preservation Commission Chair, arranged the presentation at the Haypress Cemetery on July 14 which was attended by Mayor Albanese and several members of the Commission, former Mayor Betty Ann Fort, and Mount Amwell Project Executive Director, Beverly Kirby-McDonough, Chief Steward, David Voorhees, and President, Dave Reading.



Left to right, Mayor John Albanese, David Reading, David Voorhees, and Beverly Kirby-McDonough

## Cemetery status



The **Woodschurch** cemetery in Readington Township is in very good condition. The headstones were cleaned, the trees have been removed, the depressions filled with top soil, and signage has been installed. In mid-July we got the mowing under contract and in August cleared the old wire front fence. We hope to replace it with a wood post and rail fence spanning about 100 feet facing the road.



There was considerable work done at the **Hankinson/Voorhees** cemetery on West Woodschurch Road during the summer and fall. The site was cleared and put under mowing contract, a sign was installed, and several headstones were repaired, straightened, or reset. The Township will remove five large trees in the near future. *See [maintenance activity at the Hankinson on You Tube](#). Visit [www.mtamwell.org](http://www.mtamwell.org) for link.*



The **Haypress Cemetery** at 15 High Street, Whitehouse Station is in very good shape. There are a few headstones left to be reset, but most trees are gone and the contractor keeps it mowed. Readington Township presented us with the Historic Preservation Award here in July.



The farm in Delaware Twp where the **Reading Burying Ground** is located was sold again in September. The new owner has agreed to renew a maintenance agreement with us. Our contractor cuts the site 4 times a year. There are a few trees that need to be removed, but nothing is scheduled yet.



The **Howell/Rittenhouse** Graveyard is cleared approximately 80% of its area of brush and downed trees. There are no burial sites located in the remaining 20%. There are a few headstones needing repair, but overall, the site is in good condition. We have not found a contractor to mow due to the difficulty of access, so volunteers have kept it cut. The sign installed 2 years ago is in good shape.



At the **Swackhammer Churchyard** we had to remove several dead trees threatening the neighbor's fence last spring. The contractor keeps it well mowed, but 3 headstones need repair. The ruins of the church have not deteriorated in the past year.



The **Slacktown Cemetery** experienced the falling of a large tree very near several gravestones. We contacted Kingwood Township for assistance and a DPW crew removed several dead trees on the property, but only partially removed the tree we called about. Our volunteers cut up the fallen tree in November. We hope to fill in grave depressions in the coming year with topsoil.



The 16 X 30-foot Dr. **Oliver Barnet Cemetery** near Oldwick was cleared of brush and fallen logs, a dead tree cut down and removed, and the tablet stones reset in gravel. Because the cemetery is located on private property, we obtained a verbal approval for the work from the owner. The Tewksbury Historical Society has shown some interest in providing volunteers for upkeep.

## Annual meeting Luncheon



The Mount Amwell Project held its 15<sup>th</sup> annual luncheon meeting after missing last year’s event due to the Covid pandemic. The event was held at the Clinton house restaurant in Clinton, NJ and featured guest speaker Henry “Hank” Bonnell. Hank presented a very informative talk on the history of Bonnell’s Tavern and the Revolutionary War. He is the process of restoring the 7,000 square foot building and graciously led a tour of the site after the luncheon.

## Tewksbury Township Historical Society Lecture

The Tewksbury Historical Society hosted a lecture by David R. Reading on Sunday, November 14th at 6:15 PM. at the Fairmount Presbyterian Church Community House, 247 Old Turnpike Road, Fairmount section of Tewksbury. Dave was introduced by THS president, Shaun Van Doren, and lectured on the process, methods and legal aspects required to preserve abandoned at risk cemeteries in Hunterdon County. He illustrated the talk with examples of the preservations completed over the last fifteen years, beginning with the Reading Burial Ground near Rosemont. Approximately 35 people attended the lecture.



John Reading, Mount Amwell’s **Web Master**, was named the Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year by the Colorado Tree Farmers, a landowner network co-sponsored by the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS).



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## Thank You, Donors

The year-end fundraising was very successful thanks to the generosity of all of you donors. Your gifts will enable us to continue our mission of protecting the memory of our heritage during the coming year.

If you have not made a contribution yet, please make a donation of an amount that you consider generous.