MONTCLAIR HISTORY CENTER

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer with the Montclair History Center. Since our organization was formed in 1965, the passion and dedication of volunteers has made our growth possible. This handbook will guide you through our organization's background and opportunities to get involved with.

If you have not done so already, please register to be a volunteer through our website at www.montclairhistory.org/volunteer.

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Mission

The mission of the Montclair History Center is to preserve, educate, and share. We preserve our local history through our historical buildings, artifacts and documents. We educate the community on local history and its importance through programs, advocacy and exhibits. We share the stories and history of the people who have – and continue to -- shape Montclair.

Adopted 2-14-2012

Organizational History

The Montclair Historical Society (now the Montclair History Center) was originally founded in 1965 to save the Israel Crane House, a Federal Revival style landmark home built by a local entrepreneur in 1796. It was relocated from Glen Ridge Avenue to its current location on Orange Road and now serves as a house museum, exhibition center, and meeting space for local groups. For nearly 50 years, the Crane House told the story of Israel Crane, a prominent citizen in Montclair in the early 19th century. In 2014, the scope of interpretation for the Crane House expanded to include the period in the 20th century when it served as a YWCA for African American women and girls. It was renamed as "the Crane House and Historic YWCA."

The Nathaniel Crane House, adjacent to the Crane House and Historic YWCA on Orange Road, was built about 1818. The Sampson family donated it to the Montclair Historical Society in 1973. Together, the two Crane Houses serve the public as a historic house museum, visitor's center, museum shop and space for demonstrations, lectures and classes interpreting our area's past.

In 1984, the Montclair Historical Society purchased the Clark House, located at 108 Orange Road, next door to the two Crane houses. The house, built in 1896, expanded the institution's ability to serve the public by creating space for the Terhune Research Library and administrative offices. Since its inception, the Library has been a valuable resource for scholars, historians, local teachers and homeowners wishing to know more about their families or home, often to aid in restoration efforts and thus preserving historic districts.

In 1997, Marion (Molly) Shultz, the granddaughter of a successful Montclair banker Charles Shultz, donated the family home o North Mountain to the Montclair Historical Society. Known as Evergreens, the house has been virtually unaltered for 100 years and holds an important collection that reflects Charles Shultz's keen personal interest in science, the arts and world travel.

In 2012, the Montclair Historical Society welcomed the Montclair Community Farm Coalition to its Orange Road site. The Coalition created a microfarm on previously unused space. Although the microfarm does not focus on historic agricultural practices, it does help people reconnect with their agricultural roots. Volunteers help tend the farm. Produce from the farm is sold at affordable rates to area seniors and food pantries via a mobile farm stand.

When the organization was founded 52 years ago, it consisted of one historic home. Today, we have four historic houses, a microfarm and learning garden, a library and

archives. It is, in fact, a place to visit. A history center. Visit our website for more history on our houses.

In January 2017, the Montclair Historical Society officially became the Montclair History Center. The new name encapsulates all the organization has become and will continue to evolve into in its next fifty years.

An Introduction to Montclair's History

The Early Years of New Jersey
When Henry Hudson landed in New Jersey in 1609, he came across the Lenni Lenape people. For hundreds of years, these indigenous people hunted through the

Montclair area as they traveled to and from the Jersey shore. As far as we know, there were no permanent Lenape settlements in Montclair.

By the mid 1600s, the Dutch and English began to settle in northern New Jersey. The Dutch settled the land in and around present-day New Jersey and called it New Amsterdam. In 1664, the English took control of the territory, renaming it New York and New Jersey. English settlers from Connecticut came to start a new community near the Passaic River, known today as Newark, in 1666. Robert Treat, Abraham Pierson, and Jasper Crane led these Puritans from the New Haven Colony. Later on, Robert Treat's daughter Mary married Jasper Crane's son Azariah.

The Crane family was one of thirty families that founded new settlements along the Watchung Mountains. These English pioneers purchased the land of present-day Newark, Bloomfield, the Oranges, Belleville, Glen Ridge, and Montclair from the Lenape people.

The English families bought the land for "50 double hands of powder, 100 bars of lead, 20 axes, 23 coats, 10 guns, 20 pistols, 400 barrels of beer, 2 pairs of britches, 50 knives, 20 hoes, 850,000 fathoms of wampum, 2 ankers of liquor, 10 kettles, 10 swords, and 4 blankets. All of this land included present-day Newark, Bloomfield, the Oranges, Belleville, Glen Ridge, and northern parts of Montclair.

Settling Cranetown and Speertown
When Jasper Crane died in 1681, two of his sons, Azariah and Jasper, Jr., were given land at the foot of the Watchung Mountains (Orange Mountains). In 1694, Azariah built the first house in the area that became known as Cranetown near the intersection of Orange Road and Myrtle Avenue. The community was named after the Crane because the family started the town, and before long as the Crane family grew, it wasn't long before there were Cranes everywhere. One of the earliest Crane homes

is found on 140 Union Street. Some historians believe it was in the 1790s, others think it may have been built in the 1740s.

During this time, Dutch settlers were moving in from the north and west. Led by John Hendricks Speer, the Dutch built homes and farmed the land north of today's Watchung Avenue. One of the earliest Speer homes is 612 Upper Mountain Avenue in Upper Montclair, built in 1780s. The Garrabrant House on Valley Road is a Dutch farmhouse may predate that home by about 40 years.

Cranetown and Speertown were friendly neighbors. Azariah started some industries, including an apple mill in Cranetown. The people in Speertown also farmed the land and produced corn, wheat, rye, oats, potatoes, beans, cabbages, apples, herbs, and onions.

In the 1700s, roads were poor and usually people just used the old Indian trails to get from place to place. One of these trails was called "The Old Road." There were two main roads in Cranetown and Speertown during the Colonial period, "The New Road" and "Speertown Road." Around 1740, the community's first school was built in Cranetown, and Isaac Watts Crane was the first headmaster.

During the American Revolution
By the time of the American Revolution, Cranetown and Speertown did not witness any battles. However since the 600-foot tall Watching Mountains were perfect for keeping a lookout, in the fall of 1780, George Washington headquartered briefly at the corner of Speertown Road (Valley Road) and The Old Road (Claremont Avenue) in a homestead built by William Crane in 1700. The Marquis de Lafayette stayed at a home on Valley Road, near the Upper Montclair business district. Their troops were camped in and around today's Church Street, as the as the Continental Army planned a surprise attack on Staten Island that never happened.

After America won its independence, patriots such as Alexander Hamilton understood the importance of industry. Hamilton created the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures in 1791 with the Great Falls of Paterson in mind because water power was necessary for industry. Locally, Toney's Brook powered smaller mills.

In 1806, Newark was divided into three parts: Newark, the Oranges, and Bloomfield, which included Speertown and Cranetown. Bloomfield was part of Newark until 1812 when it separated from Newark. In the same year, Cranetown adopted a new name, "West Bloomfield."

Azariah Crane's great, great grandson Israel opened the first general store in Cranetown, and was a successful businessman. Cranetown's general store, located on the corner of The Old Road and Lackawanna Plaza had many of the products that farmers might have needed, such as medicine, seeds, crockery, and paint. Farmers could also sell or trade things grown on their farms like flower grapes, or apples. It was located next door to his house, which at the time was considered a mansion. His house today is known as the Crane House and Historic YWCA museum.

He organized and owned the Newark Pompton Turnpike (the road we now know as Bloomfield Avenue). He also helped finance part of the Morris Canal.
The railroads changed everyone's life. In 1856, the Newark and Bloomfield Railroad Company began regular service to West Bloomfield. By changing trains at Newark and taking a ferry from Hoboken, people could travel from Lackawanna station in West Bloomfield to New York in an hour and twenty minutes. Attracted to the beautiful views of the country, city folk began riding the train to West Bloomfield. By 1860 West Bloomfield had a special identity.

Finally in 1868, some influential citizens in West Bloomfield such as Julius Pratt persuaded the post office to change the name to Montclair, which is French for "clear

mountain." Mr. Pratt completed the New York and Greenwood Lake Railway in 1873 with five stations in Montclair.

The population of the community grew rapidly as New York businessmen and their families began building homes along the mountainside. In Montclair, the new residents created a model "country town" with convenient access to the city. Their vision was shared by a notable artist colony that began forming in the 1870s. A central figure was the landscape painter, George Inness. Able and dedicated community leaders endowed the town with superior schools, an excellent public library, a distinguished art museum and many large and influential churches.

By the opening of the 20th century, a richly diverse population characterized the community. A new influx of New Englanders was joined by Black Americans from the South and by Irish, Germans, Italians, Scandinavians and others newly arrived from Europe. Great mansions went up, but so did many modest homes. Between 1880 and 1930, Montclair's population leaped from 5,147 to 42,017. Talented people continued to be attracted to the community and by the 1930s more than 130 Montclair residents were listed in each issue of Who's Who in America.

Montclair's growth lead to organizations like the Montclair YWCA to open. In the first half of the 20th century, YWCAs were segregated. A "white" YWCA would deem it appropriate to establish a "colored" YWCA as an offshoot if the population would support it. There were about 50 YWCAs for African American women and girls in the United States. The Montclair YWCA was remarkable because it was the only one in America not affiliated with a white YWCA. Alice Hooe Foster began the Montclair YWCA in 1912 in a small home until the Crane House was purchased as its permanent location in 1920. The YWCA used the house for offices, dormitories, and as a social center for African American women until 1965. It became a safe, respectable place for domestic servants to stay when then arrived in Montclair looking for work and a civic and social hub for African American women.

The period following World War II was marked by tremendous expansion of the metropolitan area. New suburbs popped up in the hinterland along with shopping malls and corporate offices. No longer a country town, Montclair faced the challenge of preserving its character as a gracious residential community while at the same time sustaining its aging commercial centers. Social changes of the 1960s and 1970s brought further challenges. In 1977 the Board of Education established a system of magnet schools with the aim both of achieving racial balance and of enriching the curriculum. After many years under the commission form of government, the community adopted the manager-council plan. Revenue considerations led to the Town of Montclair returning to the status of Township.

Today Montclair is a community of about 39,000 inhabitants. Never content to be merely a "bedroom community," Montclair is nevertheless a family-centered town that is going through another period of growth. Its innovative public and private school educational programs and the expanded offerings at Montclair State University have enhanced its heritage in education. The Montclair Art Museum is a center for cultural activity. Once again our hillside has become a haven for artists and writers. The town has also become a go-to destination for a wide variety of restaurants, and is home to the increasingly renowned Montclair Film Festival. This is a seasoned community whose many old houses enhance its charm, yet at the dawn of a new century, Montclair remains alive to the spirit of the times.

Who's Who

Volunteer Projects and Services

Administrative Office
Volunteers assist with mailings, record keeping and telephone/email assignments.

Archives & Library
Archive volunteers work with staff to make the collection of historic documents accessible to the public and perform tasks designated to organize documents into exiting filing systems. Work assignments are under the supervision of the Manager of Museum Collections.

Collections/Registration
Collections volunteers participate in the care of collections and management by assisting with cataloging and the recording of data and research needs. The inventory of collections objects and exhibition preparation are volunteer opportunities for which there is mandatory training. Work assignments are under the supervision of the Manager of Museum Collections.

Development
Volunteers with a passion for writing explore grant opportunities for funding of existing and new program initiatives of the Montclair History Center. Work assignments under the supervision of the Executive Director.

Educators: Docents
Educators provide staffing of docents during museum hours to greet visitors and to offer, where appropriate, an interpretive guided tour of the museums. Attendance at training and orientation sessions is required for the development of interpretive skills and techniques. Upgrading the standards for quality guiding is an ongoing commitment. Guides also assist with special events and group tours. Work assignments are under the supervision of the Manager of Audience Engagement.

Educators: Teaching Assistants
Teaching Assistants are volunteers trained by staff to assist in and to conduct museum programs for classes of school children and homeschool programs. Attendance at training and orientation sessions is required for the development of interpretive skills and techniques. Upgrading the standards for quality guiding is an ongoing commitment. Work assignments are under the supervision of the Manager of Audience Engagement.

Events/Fundraisers

Volunteers are called to assist in large events and fundraisers (such as the annual Herb Sale, Appraisal Day, Heirloom Bulb Sale) to manage check in tables, sales, distribute information, collect visitor data, etc.

Farm and Gardens

Many volunteers want to work with our herb gardens and farm. These areas of our museums are supervised by the Montclair Community Farms Coalition staff. For volunteer opportunities and planned service events contact the Coordinator at info@montclaircommunityfarms.org.

Hospitality

Hospitality volunteers host meetings and programs for volunteer/member events by planning, preparing and presenting refreshments. They are called upon to assist in other events throughout the year.

Marketing and Social Media

MHC maintains social media platforms, distributes monthly press releases, and updates event listings on various public websites. Volunteers can be trained for routine public relations work and be part of staff meetings for streamlining of efforts.

Membership

Volunteers assist with membership acquisition, mailings and record keeping in the office and at events.

Museum Shop

Volunteers serve as shopkeepers and assist with gift-buying, mail-order, display work, and assist with other activities necessary to maintain the appearance and integrity of the Museum Shop.

Internship Projects and Services

Staff Assistant Internship
Learn what is really means to work at a small nonprofit history site. Ideal for history, museums management/studies, nonprofit, and business management students. Assist in day to day operations, research and exhibition related assistance, event and/or programming management, public relations, collections management, and education assistance with school groups/homeschool groups.

- Minimum of 15 hours/week required including some weekends
- For school credit or as a resume builder
- Interview required

Collections Management Internship
Understand what collection management entails at a historic site ranging from archival to artifact practices. Learn to use the PastPerfect collection management system for managing content and understand the basics of collections care and storage. Ideal for a museum management/studies and/or registration track student.

- Minimum of 15 hours/week
- For school credit or as a resume builder
- Interview required

Educator Internship
Work with staff and volunteers on new and existing programming for students (grades Pre-K through 12). Projects vary based on time of year. The 2018 project open is to develop online classroom curriculum content for parents and teachers to download from our website for the Early American history program. Student will observe and lead regular field trips in this program to understand the content for online curriculum development. Ideal for a museum management/studies, history, or education student.

- Minimum of 15 hours/week required including some weekends
- For school credit or as a resume builder
- Interview required

Policies and Procedures

For your convenience and safety, as well as that of visitors with whom you may come in contact, it is important to familiarize yourself with the proper emergency procedures and that you know the operational policies. Volunteers are considered a vital part of the MHC and are expected to adhere to the general policies of the institution. All activities should be planned in cooperation with staff, and none should be undertaken independently without staff awareness and approval. Please take the time to review these policies and procedures.

Policies

1. Read your handbook. It is your best guide.
2. Read the Personnel Policy, a copy is included in your handbook.
3. Sign in and record your hours on the appropriate sheet located in the volunteer area where you are working. A record of hours is maintained and is used for grant applications by MHC.
4. Wear your name tag while in the building.
5. Absenteeism exerts a strain on the system. While we understand emergencies do arise, we ask when possible, if you are unable to attend your volunteer shift, please notify staff 24 hours in advance.
6. No smoking anywhere in the museum buildings or on the grounds.
7. Lunches, dinners and snacks may be consumed only in the modern kitchen or Clark House to conserve our museum collections.
8. Briefcases and bags should be store in closets when public programming is being conducted.
9. The Crane House & Historic YWCA and Shultz House museums are first floor accessible by ramps. When needed, there is a lift to the lower level of the Crane House & Historic YWCA (Founder's Room) for bathrooms and programs. Please ask a staff member how to operate prior to use.
10. The hearth fireplace should not be operated unless training and supervision is given by staff members.
11. Care of collections is an important part of MHC's responsibility. Volunteers are expected to set an example by not handling historic objects on display unless with proper training and protective gloves under the supervision of the Manager of Museum Collections.

Emergency Procedures

Be familiar with emergency procedures.

1. Whenever you hear an alarm, move calmly and quickly to the nearest exit and remain outside the building until you are told by a staff member in authority that it is safe to re-enter. Any visitors with you should also be safely escorted to an exit. Report the names of visitors who you escorted to be checked against the sign-in book.
2. If you notice a violation of security or a suspicious act on the part of a visitor, report immediately to a staff member what you have witnessed. Do not try to apprehend or reprimand the visitor.
3. If a visitor feels ill or requires first aid, notify the nearest staff member and then remain with the visitor until a staff member comes to take charge. Do not attempt to administer first aid yourself unless you are qualified and licensed to do so. First aid kits are located in each museum. Incident reports are also located at each museum and will be conducted by a staff member on site.
4. Follow 911 instructions.
5. A full emergency and disaster plan is on site in each museum. First consultant a staff member before utilizing this guide for additional emergency procedures.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

- Implement Innovative Interpretive Plans and Programs

- Expand Audience Engagement and Membership (on-site, virtual, members, volunteers)

- Maintain Authentic Historic Sites and Collections

- Improve Brand Awareness

- Ensure Long Term Financial Success

- Partner with Community Organizations