

# Tuckerton Historical Society Opens Little Museum on Tuckerton Creek

By Pat Johnson



Newest Museum location.  
Photo Credit: Pat Johnson.

The Tuckerton Historical Society celebrated 50 years in 2020 and is still going strong and growing under new leadership. President Kathleen Cortese, Vice-President Connie Woolson and co-curators, Sue Zubriski and Ursula Catalano have come up with ways to increase donations and interest in Tuckerton history by opening The Tuckerton 'Crik' Museum in the Little Borough Hall, 22 South Green Street and Willow Landing in Tuckerton.

The present small building was once the borough of Tuckerton's town hall and jail. A number of years ago, the borough agreed to let the Tuckerton Historical Society rent the vacant building for \$1 a year as long as the Society maintained the inside of the building including utilities and the town maintained the outside and grounds.

Since the Society's headquarters and main depository of artifacts and ephemera is housed in the Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum located at

the corner of Wisteria and Oak Lanes in Little Egg Harbor, the Society used it sparingly. The Society always decorated the building for Christmas and for many years held their annual holiday party during the town's 'Ye Olde Tuckerton Christmas' event in the building while inviting the community to enjoy free clam chowder and cookies. One of the founding members, Barbara Bolton also held Rocking Chair and Strawberry Tea events for the older residents of town who gave oral history of days gone by.

The recent decision to move some artifacts related to the Creek's history to downtown Tuckerton is to capture the casual street traffic. Already by opening it on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., many have stopped in and had their curiosity peaked in local history, said Cortese.

The front of the two-room building constructed in 1906 houses the artifacts and some of the books that are published through the Society. Included are a series of 15 books with stories compiled and edited from local newspapers (The Tuckerton Beacon and The Observer) by Steve Dodson. President Kathleen Cortese has also written a historical novel, *Once Upon a Time in Tuckerton* imaginatively recreating the time (1912-1925) when Tuckerton was at the forefront of wireless communication.

If Cortese is there on Saturdays, she will gladly autograph her book with purchase.

All monetary donations collected from visitors to Little Borough Hall and a percentage of sales donated from local crafters & consignment items will be set aside for the Tuckerton Historical Preservation Commission to use exclusively towards the restoration of the exterior of the building. Money from the sale of THS books, hats, sweatshirts, t-shirts and memorabilia which will go directly to the upkeep of the Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum.

In a recent letter to Tuckerton Borough Mayor Sue Marshall, Cortese noted that during Superstorm Sandy in 2010, former THS President Donald Caselli



Vice-President Connie Woolson, Administrative Curator Sue Zubriski, President Kathleen Cortese.  
Photo Credit: Pat Johnson.

bailed standing water out of the building—saving it from total destruction. (The Borough awarded a plaque to Caselli for his actions.)

By opening the building, the Tuckerton Historical Society is honoring its obligation to use the premises for historic purposes and is also honoring a commitment to save a Tuckerton landmark.

The society then asked the Borough, through The Historic Preservation Commission to get an estimate for the professional exterior restoration of Little Borough Hall.