



Published by the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee - November, 2009

www.mountainsidehistory.org

MISSILES in Mountainside – Nike Battery NY-73

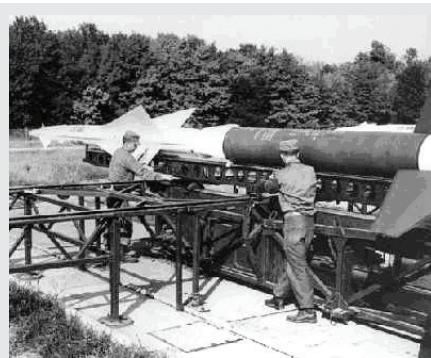
The following article was written by Frank Harpster and was the winning essay for this year's Arthur J. Brahm Historic Preservation Award. Frank was awarded a scholarship savings bond during Deerfield's eighth grade graduation ceremony in June.

Down the street and around the corner from my house are the Watchung Stables. It was not always a stable, it was once a missile base named, Nike Battery NY-73.

During the Cold War in 1944, the United States War Department wanted a new air defense system to combat and defend the United States against nuclear aircraft from the Soviet Union. In 1945, Bell Labs began developing a line of sight anti-aircraft missiles, and in 1953, the first operational missiles were complete. The army ordered 1,000 missiles and 60 launchers. The new missiles were named, "Nike Ajax" after the Greek mythological goddess of victory. These new Nike Ajax missiles now needed sites to be launched from.

In 1957, the Army announced it would be constructing a Nike missile base in a large section of the Watchung Reservation located in Mountainside and Summit. Union county officials and local residents protested loudly and strongly and held up construction for a while; but, they eventually lost the battle and the missile base was completed in 1958.

The new site was officially named Nike Battery NY-73 and was under the command of the 483rd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Guided Missile Battalion of the U.S. Army Air Defense. The "NY" in NY-73 tells us that the base was in the New York defense area. The numbers 01-25 were supposed to be in northeast and eastern states, while numbers 51-75 were supposed to be southwest and western states. Technically, Nike Battery NY-73 has correct letters and incorrect numbers. The Army identified the battery by the letters first and then referred to the numbers for the base in question. Nike Battery NY-73 had a



Believe it or not – this is a photo of what once was the Watchung Stables in Mountainside. From 1958-1963, the stables area was the site of Nike Battery NY-73

crew of 109 officers and men who ran the site 24 hours a day, constantly alert and ready to defend their assigned region. During the Cold War, New Jersey had planned for nineteen missile bases to be constructed; but, only fourteen were eventually built. These bases protected and defended the ports of Elizabeth and Newark as well as the populous cities of New York and Philadelphia.

Nike NY-73 had two parts. The launcher was in Mountainside at the entrance from Summit Lane. Here missiles were assembled, tested and stored in three underground storage magazines. Each magazine held ten Nike Ajax missiles. When practice alerts were done, the missiles were brought from the magazine to the surface, put on the launcher and set in a vertical firing position. The second part was located in Berkeley Heights on the hilltop next to Governor Livingston High School – this was the Missile Tracking Radar Station. There were never any missiles fired from Nike Battery NY-73.

The New Jersey Army National Guard closed Nike Battery NY-73 in 1963 after a little over four years of operation. The missile

(continued on page 3)

From the CHAIRMAN'S INKWELL



Following are some of the many activities and announcements from the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee during the past year. You are encouraged to take advantage of any of these programs and help support Historic Preservation in Mountainside.

BRICK FUNDRAISER: To purchase bricks for the next dedication, please pick up a flyer at the Mountainside Library, Borough Hall or go to www.mountainsidehistory.org. The next brick dedication will take place in 2010. These bricks make up the path leading to the front door of the Hetfield House. The MHPC began this walkway to raise funds to write and publish an updated history book of our Borough's history from 1945 to present. The original by Jean Hesketh-Hershey covers the history until 1945 (copies are available for \$5 each, call 789-9420).

(continued on page 2)



MISSION STATEMENT

The Mountainside Restoration Committee and the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee were established to preserve the Borough's links to the past. The premier venue is the Deacon Andrew Hetfield House, our circa 1760 building, preserved by these two committees whose volunteers share membership. We strive to focus attention on our heritage through tours, newsletters, videos and many events during the year. Our mission includes maintaining the Hetfield House property in perpetuity.

CHAIRMAN'S INKWELL

(continued from page 1)

TV-35's WELCOME TO THE HETFIELD HOUSE: The fourth episode of *Welcome to the Hetfield House* was produced and aired for TV35 this fall. This episode, hosted by the MHPC's own Don Jeka, featured an interview with Mountainside Police Lieutenant Al Attanasio and discussed the history of the police department in Mountainside. The episode can be viewed on TV35 or borrowed from the Mountainside Library.

HETFIELD HOUSE NOTECARDS FOR SALE: Classic ivory-colored, folded note cards are available for sale in sets of 12 with envelopes. They feature the Harry Devlin sketch of the Hetfield House on the front with a brief history on the back. The inside is blank. Anyone interested in purchasing these cards can do so at Borough Hall or stop by the Hetfield House during any open house or event. They are sold for \$7.00 per set and make a great gift or stocking stuffer!

SCHEDULED OPEN HOUSES: Generally, the Hetfield House is open to the public during most months from September through June on the third Sunday from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. The public is invited during these times to tour the house and gain insight into Mountainside's historic past. Specially scheduled events will be planned during these Open Houses: Dec. 13, 2009 – Gingerbread Open House (see back cover for details); Jan. 17, 2010 – Antiques Appraisal event; February 21, 2010 – History Book Signing; April 18, 2010 – Classic Car Show and May 16, 2010 – Tea & Strings.

HETFIELD HOUSE IS AVAILABLE FOR USE: The Deacon Andrew Hetfield House is available for use by community groups for meetings or tours. It is also available for rent to individuals or organizations for other events. For information on availability, please contact Lenore Toner at 233-7260.

For further information on the activities of the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee and updates on the Hetfield House happenings, please call 789-9420 or visit www.mountainsidehistory.org.

Scott Daniels - Chairman, Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee

IN MEMORIAM

The members of the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee wish to express their deepest sorrow at the loss of our dear Mayor Robert Viglianti. Mayor Viglianti was a great supporter and friend of the Hetfield House and he will be greatly missed. He truly deserves his place in the History of Mountainside.

The ARTHUR J. BRAHM Historic Preservation Scholarship Award

At the 8th grade Graduation Ceremony for Deerfield School, held on Tuesday, June 23rd, Scott Daniels, Chairman of the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee presented the Annual Arthur J. Brahm Historic Preservation Scholarship Award. This award is presented to the graduating eighth grader who demonstrated excellence in a written essay depicting some aspect of Mountainside's history. The 2009 award was presented to Frank Harpster for his essay *Missiles in Mountainside* which is featured on page one. All contest entries are on display at the Hetfield House for all to read.

UPDATE on Mountainside's WRITTEN HISTORY

The updated history of Mountainside has been delivered to the publisher, The History Press. The book will be published and available in early 2010. The Historic Preservation Committee wishes to thank author, Connie McNamara, for her years of research and dedication to this project. For Connie, it was truly a labor of love for Mountainside and we appreciate her time and dedication to the writing of this history. Details will be made available on how to purchase this book when it is published. If you would like to reserve a copy of *The History of Mountainside: 1945-2007*, please call 789-9420. We can provide you with a promissory card to present as a Holiday gift in lieu of the book which will be available in a few months.

DRAWING WINNERS announced

Each year, the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee holds a Spring fundraising drive for the upkeep of the Hetfield House. This year, the funds were used for repairs to the Victorian Parlor. Thank you to all who participated in this fundraiser – the Hetfield House really does need your support! A drawing was held on May 16th from names submitted during this fundraiser.

Following are the winners:

\$500 Gift Certificate: Jay Kelk

\$300 Gift Certificate: Alice Fallon

\$100 Gift Certificate: Margaret D'Angelo

\$100 Gift Certificate: Robert Kline

Congratulations winners and thank you all for your support!



Historic Preservation Committee Chairman, Scott Daniels, presents the 2009 Arthur J. Brahm Historic Preservation Scholarship Award to Frank Harpster.

A Special THANK YOU to friends

The Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee would like to thank the following businesses, groups and individuals for your constant willingness to help the Hetfield House. For this, we thank you!

Mountainside Deli
Rejuvenations Salon and Spa
Patterson Interiors
Christoffer's
George Urban
Karen Massa
Dana Klein
Joan Barna
Sharon Green
Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts of Troop 177
Mountainside Girl Scouts
Mountainside Fire Department
Mountainside School District
Questers
Foothill Club
Rake & Hoe Garden Club
Westfield Volunteer String Ensemble

VOLUNTEERs needed

If you enjoy watching *This Old House* or *If Walls Could Talk* on TV, then we have the volunteer jobs for you. The Hetfield House is a successful historic house, thanks to our wonderful volunteers. Volunteers, who are a vital part of our organization, are what keeps the house maintained and allow us to provide so many wonderful events and services to our community. Areas where we could use help include: Archiving, Membership, Events, Exhibits, Fund-Raising, Housekeeping and Gardening. As an added benefit to our students, ages 13 through 18, they can have the opportunity to fulfill their community service requirements. No experience necessary! Please contact Sandy VanderMeer at hetfieldhouse1@yahoo.com or call 789-9420 and leave a message which will be promptly returned.

SUCCESSFUL EVENTS held at Hetfield House

Since last November, the Historic Preservation Committee has hosted several very successful public events at the Deacon Andrew Hetfield House.

GINGERBREAD OPEN HOUSE: The first was the wonderful Gingerbread Open House held on Sunday, December 14, 2008. Hundreds of people visited the house and enjoyed music, crafts, delicious holiday treats, hot cider, a beautiful display of our community's talents at Gingerbread Creations, and Mr. and Mrs. Claus. Don't miss this year's Gingerbread Open House being held on Sunday, December 13, 2009 from 1:00-5:00 pm. Scheduled performances include the Deerfield Middle School Chorus at 1:30 pm, the Westfield Volunteer Strings Ensemble at 2:00 pm and Our Lady of Lourdes Children's Choir at 3:00 pm.

TEA & STRINGS: In the spring, on Sunday, May 17, the Hetfield House was the site of a wonderful event entitled Tea & Strings. Dozens of visitors enjoyed a civilized afternoon of beautiful string music performed by the Westfield Volunteer String Ensemble with hot and cold tea and delicious home-baked sweets. Please mark your calendars and join us Sunday, May 16, 2010 for the next Tea & Strings.

QUILT DISPLAY & DEMONSTRATION: On Sunday, September 20, the Hetfield House was awash with the colors of quilts – dozens of beautiful, hand-sewn quilt creations were on display for visitors to enjoy. In addition, our own, Ruth Goense was on-hand to demonstrate some of her expert quilting skills and knowledge.

PIE-BAKING CONTEST: On Sunday, October 18, 2009, in conjunction with the Union County Four Centuries in a Weekend festivities, the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee held its second annual Pie Baking Contest at the historic Deacon Andrew Hetfield House. The judges included: Elena Bentley, Life Skills Teacher



Winners and judges at Mountainside's Second Annual Pie Baking Contest held on Oct. 18, 2009. From left to right: judge Anjali Mehrotra, 2nd place winner Joan Barna, 1st place winner Andrea Rizzo, judge Elena Bentley and judge Jayne Salomon. Missing from photo is 3rd place winner, Susanne Barna Morabito.

at Deerfield School in Mountainside; Jayne Salomon, Food Writer for the *Westfield Leader* and Anjali Mehrotra, last year's blue ribbon winner. After tasting and scoring, the judges tallied up their scores and the three winners were announced. They were: 1st Place – Andrea Rizzo for her Nini's Apple Nut Pie; 2nd Place – Joan Barna for her Early American Pear Pie with Tart Cherries; and 3rd Place – Susanne Barna Morabito for her Apple Cobblestone Pie. The winning recipes may be viewed at www.mountainsidehistory.org. At the conclusion of the judging, slices of the pies were sold to raise funds for the Historic Restoration Committee.

The Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee wishes to thank all the wonderful bakers and judges for their time and efforts to make this pie baking contest a great success. We look forward to next year.

HEARTH-COOKING AT THE HETFIELD HOUSE: On Sunday, November 15, Joan Barna shared her expertise in Colonial cooking with visitors at the Hetfield House. Using the newly-restored fireplace in the 1760's kitchen, Joan demonstrated colonial cooking utensils and cooked delicious chowders, cookies and bread in the hearth. This was a first-time event for the Hetfield House and it was wonderful to see the kitchen fireplace used to cook as it was nearly 250 years ago!



Holly Ruggiero's Gingerbread version of the Hetfield House on display at last year's Gingerbread Open House.



Mr. & Mrs. Claus arrive at the 2008 Gingerbread Open House with the help of the Mountainside Fire Department.

GINGERBREAD CREATIONS Contest



The The Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee is holding the third Annual Gingerbread Open House on Sunday, December 13th from 1:00-5:00 pm. Held at the

Historic Deacon Andrew Hetfield House, the open house will feature lots of holiday activities. During this open house, we will feature the Gingerbread talents of our friends and neighbors and they will be judged this year by the visitors. If you have a Gingerbread Creation that you would like to share during our Gingerbread Open House, please bring it to the Hetfield House (located on Constitution Plaza near the Mountainside Library) on Saturday, December 12th between 10:00 am-12:00 pm. You could win one of many wonderful prizes donated by our local businesses. Your creation will be displayed for all to see and admire. (Creations may be picked up between 5:00-5:30 pm on Sunday, December 13th). For further information or to make alternate arrangements for drop-off or pick-up, please call 789-9420.

MISSILES in Mountainside

(continued from page 1)

site remained abandoned until the start of construction for the Watching Stables in 1983. Today, the stable is a beautiful part of the Watching Reservation and it is almost impossible to believe that this was the home of Nike Battery NY-73.

Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee

Scott Daniels, *Chairman*
Ruth Goense, *Vice Chair*
Carol Clark, *Treasurer*
Maureen Giannone, *Secretary*
Carol Goggi, *Newsletter Editor*

Alice Cowell, Donald Jeka, Thomas McGee, Eleanor Pfeifer, Diane Ruggiero, Nancy Spadaccini, Lenore Toner, Sandra VandeMeer, Cynthia West.

Glenn Mortimer, *Borough Council Liaison*

Hetfield House Special Events Committee: Mary Faella and Mary Jo Stearns

The members and officers of this committee are also the members of the Mountainside Restoration Committee, Inc. which was formed to acquire and expend funds for the preservation of the Hetfield House and other historical purposes.

Become a MEMBER of the HETFIELD HOUSE!

Membership is available in a variety of categories. Benefits include:

- Free admission to Hetfield House events (when a fee is charged)
- Free one hour genealogy session
- Yearly Newsletter
- 10% discount in the Gift Shop

Membership categories

- Individual - \$30/yr Students & Seniors - \$20/yr
- Family - \$50/yr Lifetime - \$500/individual or couple

Please enclose check made out to the "Mountainside Historic Restoration Committee" and mail to Sandy VanderMeer, 1033 Ledgewood Road, Mountainside, NJ 07092. A membership card will be mailed to you.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Your dollars make it possible for floors and windows to be restored, rooms to be painted and the endless upkeep of maintaining a historic house. Donations - are tax deductible and are always welcome in any amount.

- \$35.00 \$50.00 \$75.00 Other _____

Many companies match donations made by their employees. Please check with your employer to learn if your gift qualifies for a match.

Bequest - Remembering the Hetfield House as you plan for the future will help ensure that this historical site remains a vital and living part of our shared history in Mountainside for generations to come.

**Gingerbread
Open House**
The Hetfield House
Constitution Plaza,
Mountainside
Sunday, Dec. 13, 2009
1:00 - 5:00 pm

Join us for Kids' Crafts, Refreshments, Live Music, Mr. & Mrs. Claus, Community Gingerbread House Contest and more!
Admission is Free (but, donations are accepted!)
Please bring a non-perishable food item to be donated to the needy.

Enrich the Holiday Season with a visit to an authentically-decorated, centuries-old home. Stop by for a visit and feel the warmth of the holidays as they once were.
Bring your cameras for photos with Mr. & Mrs. Claus!

Sponsored by the Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee - For Information, Contact: (908)789-9420.

MOUNTAINSIDE, NEW JERSEY 07092
POSTAL PATRON

Borough of Mountainside
Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee
1385 Route 22
Mountainside, New Jersey 07092

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 682
RAHWAY, N.J.