

# The Roundabout

Number 2

May 2008



## Sayreville Historical Society

425 Main Street, PO Box 66, Sayreville, NJ 08871

732-390-7048 [www.sayhistory.com](http://www.sayhistory.com) [history@sayhistory.com](mailto:history@sayhistory.com)

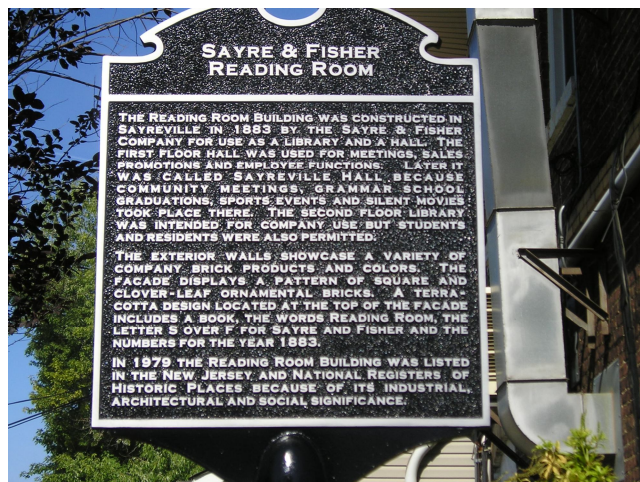
### SAYRE & FISHER READING ROOM

On September 30, 2007 a marker was unveiled at the historic site of the former Sayre & Fisher Reading Room, also known as Fisher Hall.

Andrew Lytkowski, president of the Sayreville Historical Society, recognized the following:

- The Middlesex County Cultural & Heritage Commission, the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and the NJ Historical Commission/Department of State for sponsoring this marker.
- Donna and Michael Matrafajlo, owners of the Reading Room, for their permission.
- Assemblyman John Wisniewski, a member of the Sayreville Historical Society, who is supportive of our many programs and who was instrumental in gaining funding for the elevator in our museum.
- Our county Board of Chosen Freeholders for their supportive interest of history throughout the county by means of the expert staff at Middlesex County Cultural & Heritage Commission, directed by Anna M. Aschkenes.
- The Borough of Sayreville Mayor and Council who support our efforts and our building in a variety of ways.
- Carol Kadi and Ed Pytel who researched the history of the Sayre & Fisher Reading Room.
- David Pavlik and his borough staff who are always there to help us with our activities and who assisted us in erecting this marker.
- All the volunteers of the Sayreville Historical Society.

Joan Lytkowski, Vice President of the Sayreville Historical Society, pointed out that the marker will show the historical importance of this building which is the only one in Sayreville that is on both the National and NJ State Registers of Historic Places. The exterior still has most of its original design, materials and workmanship. The first floor of this Reading Room, in its role as Fisher Hall, was also the cultural heart of this “company town” where graduations, dances, sports events, plays, silent movies, etc. took place. The second floor was the library for the company, but in many ways was the first Sayreville library.



The Reading Room marker



The building on Main Street and River Road

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Andrew Lytkowski..... President
Joan Lytkowski..... Vice President
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COMMITTEES

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Hospitality.....Irene Jorgensen
Sunshine.....Madeline Suchowiecki
Museum.....John B. McCormack
Exhibit.....Christine Dominik
Katherine Boehm
Preservation.....Christine Dominik
Artifacts.....Al Baumann
Katherine Boehm
Carol Kadi
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Activities.....Adele O'Hara
Amy Puchala
Bylaws.....John Kosakowski
Research.....Carol Kadi
Florence Cooney
Group Visits.....Theresa Semasko
Callers.....Winnie Coman
Florence Cooney
Eleanor Egan
Lillian Lukacs
Ceal Pasterick
Stella Stasiak
Nominating.....Katherine Boehm
Website.....Adoree Nielsen
Naming.....Shirley Dill
John Kosakowski
J. Lorraine Laubach
Welcome.....Bernadine Lajewski
Alfreda Dzergoski
Newsletter.....Katharina Loniewski

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Andrew Lytkowski

This has been a memorable year for our Historical Society with the reopening of the museum. We are now handicap accessible thanks to the grants received by the Borough of Sayreville.

I have had the honor of officiating at the dedication of the Reading Room marker and the dedication of the six signs about Sayre & Fisher on the walkway of Ken Buchanan Riverfront Park.

All this was made possible due to the efforts, research, and many hours of planning by Carol Kadi, John McCormack, Edward Pytel, and the members of the Historical Society Board of Trustees.

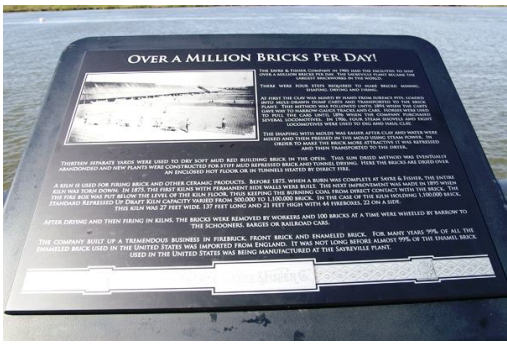
Now that spring has arrived, you can enjoy visiting the Riverfront Park area at your leisure and see the Reading Room marker located on the corner of Main Street and River Road. This is where the history of Sayreville began and we can be very proud of what the Historical Society has accomplished.

SAYRE & FISHER INFORMATIONAL SIGNS

Dedication of the signs at Ken Buchanan Riverfront Park took place on October 14, 2007. The signs include information and pictures with the following titles: Early Sayreville, The Workers, Transportation, The Sayre & Fisher Area, Over A Million Bricks Per Day, and The Founders.



Debbie Marion, and daughter Connie, reading one of the signs



Pictures of decorative tiles, made by Sayre & Fisher, are displayed in the Capital One Bank, located next to ShopRite at Sayrebrook Towne Center on Ernston Road.

DONATIONS

If you donate an item to the Sayreville Historical Society Museum, be sure to fill out and sign a form which identifies the object.

We are seeking donations of the following SWMHS yearbooks to complete our collection: 1988, 1989, 1990, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007

Please note: This, our second newsletter, is marked Number 2, our first one was marked Issue 1.

# The town of SAYREVILLE

as described in a 1913 INDUSTRIAL CIRCULAR  
of The Raritan River Railroad Co.

## SAYREVILLE.

5.1 Miles from South Amboy.

10.2 Miles from New Brunswick.

On the Raritan River Railroad, station in the town. Population, 5,000. Banking town, South River. Money order post office; telegraph and telephone. Express service, United States Company. Value of taxable property \$1,877,655.

Sayreville is situated directly on Raritan River, and has an extensive deep water frontage along that stream. Lines of freight boats and barges make daily trips to and from New York City. Transportation facilities by rail are good, as the Raritan River road connects at South Amboy with the lines of the Pennsylvania and the Central Railroad of New Jersey, and by water they are unsurpassable. The location is specially favorable to brick and other lines of clay manufacture, because of the large deposits of material, and the open waterway for the economical transportation of products to their destination. Land for industrial purposes along the water front or adjoining the railroad, can be purchased at very low prices. The labor supply, particularly men having experience in clay work, is abundant.

Sayreville has one building and loan society, two public schools and three churches—Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian. Of social and fraternal organizations there are Red Men and Knights of Pythias. The water supply is obtained from wells, and for fire protection there is a company of volunteers. A large number of foreign workmen are employed in the brick works and live in or about the town.

The industries now in operation are:

	No. of Employees
Paul Muschick & Bro., embroidery.....	20
Sayre & Fisher Co., building brick.....	1,450

For further particulars, address E. A. Fisher, Sayreville, N. J.

### ITEMS FOR SALE

**Borough of Sayreville Coverlet** with pictures of early Sayreville, 50"x70", fringed, two-layer, washable, 100% cotton, jacquard-woven in the USA, handsome and practical, \$45. Make check payable to Sayreville Historical Society, include your name, address and phone number. Mail orders to Amy Puchala, 45 Foch St., Sayreville, NJ 08872.

**The Plunge Through the Trestle from THE JUGGERNAUT**, a DVD said to be "one of the greatest thrillers in theatrical production ever witnessed" was the silent movie train crash reel filmed in 1914 at Sayreville's Bailey Park. Informative booklet is included. Both are available for \$10 with membership. Make check payable to Sayreville Historical Society, include your name, address and phone number. Mail orders to Adele O'Hara, 24 Avon Way, Parlin, NJ 08859.

**IMAGES of America SAYREVILLE**, \$19.99

**OUR TOWN 1776 1876 1976**, \$5.

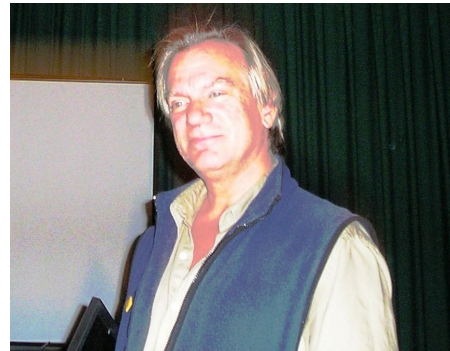
These books are available on Sundays at the museum or send orders to Sayreville Historical Society, PO Box 66, Sayreville, NJ 08871.

### SAYREVILLE DAY

Amy Puchala makes the following announcement: The winner of the "Guess The Artifact" was Gail Macagnone. The correct identification of the article was a coupling for the clay cars at Sayre & Fisher Brick Works. There were 21 correct IDs. Mrs. Macagnone was picked randomly from among the correct answers.

### AMBER

At the September 13, 2007 meeting, Paul Nascimbene of the American Museum of Natural History described the importance of the 92-million-year-old fossils found off Lower Main Street in Sayreville more than a decade ago. Over 100 pounds of material went to several institutions. Sayreville's Cretaceous amber is the oldest in the Americas. Within or near to this amber scientists found the oldest ever flowers, mushrooms, bee, moth, ants, mosquito, and feather. The site is considered one of the most important paleontology sites in North America. Antoinette Isabella, a member of the Historical Society, prompted our invitation to Paul Nascimbene.





Sayreville Historical Society  
 425 Main Street, PO Box 66  
 Sayreville, NJ 08871

Call us: 732-390-7048

Write to us: PO Box 66, Sayreville, NJ 08871

Visit our museum: 425 Main Street, open Sundays 1:30 - 4:00. Group visits are accommodated

Visit our website: [www.sayhistory.com](http://www.sayhistory.com) - E-mail us: [history@sayhistory.com](mailto:history@sayhistory.com)

Meetings are on the second Thursday of the month, September through June, at the Senior Center, adjacent to the museum, 7:30 p.m.

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

#### ANNUAL DUES

- Individual \$10.
  - Seniors (62 and over) \$6.
  - Students (under 18) \$4.
- Check: \_\_\_\_\_new\_\_\_\_\_renewal

Checks payable to  
 Sayreville Historical Society.

Attach list for additional persons and mail to:

Phyllis Baumann  
 Sayreville Historical Society  
 18 Quaid Street,  
 Sayreville. NJ 08872