October 2026

Chatham Historical Society Newsletter

Jazz Night in Chatham

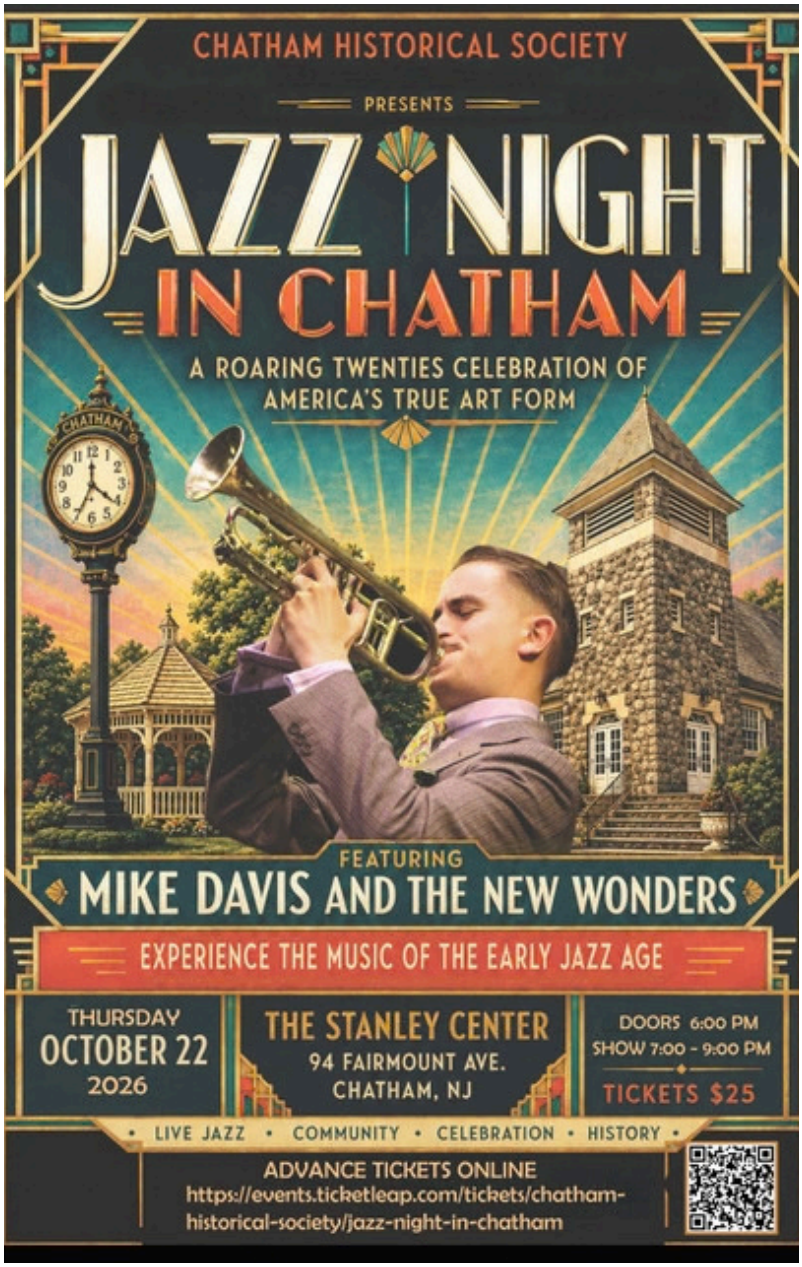
A Roaring Twenties Celebration of America's True Art Form

As part of our America 250th celebrations, the Chatham Historical Society will host a special musical event at the Stanley Center on Thursday from 7:00-9:00 p.m. on Oct. 22, featuring the music of renowned jazz septet Mike Davis and the New Wonders: "Jazz Night in Chatham".

So much of Chatham's history can be tied to the "Roaring Twenties"-the beginning of the Jazz Age in America. The Chatham Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, was founded in 1924 and is dedicated to sharing the rich history of Chatham Borough. The Society presents information of historical interest through events like this one, and programs, publications and other media. The Society encourages an appreciation of the borough's historic character and recognizes that today's residents, places and events will become our history.

Refreshments will be served during the intermission and post-performance reception with the band.

Purchase tickets for $25.00 using this link:https://events.ticketleap.com/tickets/chatham-historical-society/jazz-night-in-chatham



Walking Tour of Historic Main Street

Due to inclement weather, the Walking Tour of Historic Main Street in Chatham Borough program is rescheduled to **Sat., Oct. 24.**

CHS Board members will conduct a tour starting from Shepard Kollock Park at 12 p.m., walking a mile along Main Street into downtown to enjoy shopping and dining. A second tour will start at 2 p.m. from Shepard Kollock Park. Lace up your comfy shoes and join us!

CHS Fall Program

Renowned Art Historian Mallory Mortillaro will present From Sea to Shining Sea: A Celebration of American Landscape Painting on **Sun., Nov. 15** at 3 p.m. in The Lundt Room of The Library of the Chathams.

Travel across our country enjoying its rich history and majestic beauty, via some of America's finest landscape paintings. This lecture explores how American landscape painting helped establish a national identity, while also providing commentary on the relationship between nature and humanity. Marvel at the works of Thomas Cole, Frederic Edwin Church, Albert Bierstadt, and others. Mallory Mortillaro will bring America's natural beauty to life!

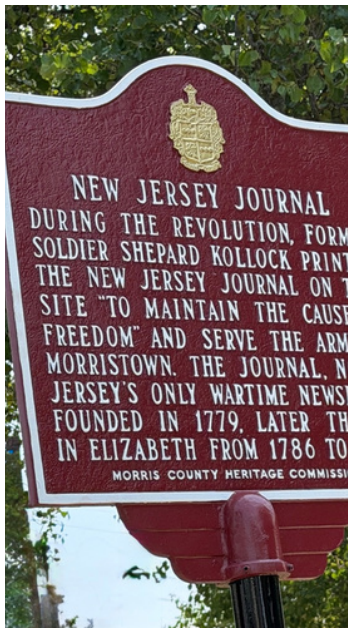
Jeff Davis Repaints Historic Markers

As the nation approached the 250th anniversary of the United States, Curator Susan Allen of the Chatham Historical Society noticed the deteriorating conditions of the historic Chatham signs. First, she reached out to the Morris County Heritage Commission and the New Jersey Historical Society but could not garner help from either organization. She brought up the poor state of the signs during her discussion with Borough Administrator Stephen Williams who agreed that the signs should be freshly painted in honor of the nation's semiquincentennial. Williams turned to former Chatham resident and business owner Jeff Davis who has always generously lent his time, talent and craftmanship to benefit the community. Davis ran a well-known auto repair establishment in Chatham for nearly 50 years before handing it down to his son-in-law.

Scraping the paint of the five signs was more difficult than Davis had expected. It took a broken thumb and a road trip to New York to visit a friend with a laser to remove the old paint. Slightly delayed by a quick stop at the doctor's office, he set his eyes on the final product. "It was all worth it," he said. The freshly painted signs were installed just in time for the 250th anniversary of the revolution.

Davis was honored for his volunteerism and restoration work at the Borough Council meeting on Monday, July 13. Among those extending their heartfelt gratitude were members of the Chatham Historical Society Board.

"Chatham's rich Revolutionary War history can be found in the historical markers lining our streets," Allen said and pointed out that once the signs were taken down for repainting, residents kept asking the historical society about their absence. "Hopefully all the dedicated history lovers will revisit Chatham's markers and not only be impressed with their beauty and message, but by the very thing that built Chatham - volunteerism! Thank you, Jeff, on behalf of the Chatham Historical Society," she added.



(L-R): Jeff Davis, Chatham Historical Society former curator Susan Allen, Chatham Historical Society Co-President Karen Hoerrner, Chatham Borough Administrator Steve Williams, Chatham Historical Society board member Lynn Magrane

CHS 2026 Scholarship Winner: Jake Keltz

The Chatham Historical Society 2026 Margaret Keisler Scholarship was awarded to Jake Keltz. The $1500 scholarship, presented at the commencement exercises of Chatham High School, is named in memory of "Peg" Keisler, a lifelong resident of Chatham who was the Borough's historian and dedicated educator. It is the generosity of members and friends that makes this scholarship possible.

Chatham is made up of unique individuals, each with a distinctive story to tell. As part of the scholarship process, students were asked to share their own stories about growing up in Chatham.

In his essay Jake attributes the creek running down Van Doren Avenue and behind Rowan Road as the place that greatly shaped his childhood in Chatham. As a young child, he explored the creek and nearby woods with his dad. Later, the creek was his place of independence where he gathered with his friends. Together they carved bike trails through the woods and built treehouses and forts from fallen branches while honing their problem-solving skills through team work. The ever-present creek and surrounding woods offered Jake and his friends an outlet of normalcy during Covid. As he moves on to his next chapter of life the memories of his childhood by the creek will always stay with him.

Jake grew up near the creek with his younger brother who will begin his sophomore year in the fall. He was a captain of the soccer team and also played lacrosse. His favorite things to do are surfing and sailing, but mostly he loves to spend time with his friends and family. He will be attending Virginia Tech in the fall. He is planning to participate in NROTC while studying finance and real estate.

The Chatham Historical Society is wishing him the best of luck and success in his future endeavors.

CHS @ Community Events

(L-R)250th Anniversary Committee member Colleen Truppo, CHS Co-President Amy Crandall, CHS Board members Barb Farricker and Brigid McMenamin and CHS Co-President Karen Hoerrner serve red-white-and-blue Italian ices at the Chatham Community Band's patriotic concert that celebrated the country's 250 birthday in June at Reasoner Park.

(L-R)CHS Secretary Stacey Keenan and CHS Co-President Karen Hoerrner at Chatham's Sustainability Fair in September.

CHS former curator Susan Allen reads a portion of the Declaration of Independence at the borough's public reading of the Declaration of Independence event in July.

Chatham Historical Society | PO Box 682 | Chatham, NJ 07928 | chathamnjhistory@gmail.com