

STATION REHAB — NJ Transit won a 2007 Historic Preservation Award for its \$15 million rehabilitation of the Madison train station shown above.

MADISON — "Making Preservation Work" is the national theme for May as Historic Preservation Month. On Saturday, April 28, New Jersey Transit was among seven state-wide recipients of a 2007 New Jersey State Historic Preservation Award at the 17th annual awards ceremony held in the State Assembly Chamber in Trenton.

FLORENCE, NJ TRANSIT Americans with Disabilities Act compliance Project Manager David Timmer; and seated, former Mayor Gary Ruckelshaus; Friends of the Madison Train Station chair Richard Romano; and former Historic

DeBiase is History Channel contest finalist

MADISON — Underscoring the nation's celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Preservation Act, The History Channel is honoring Mark DeBiase, chair of the History Department of Madison High School as one of 25 outstanding teachers across the country who have creatively brought the preservation of local history to life in the classroom. As a 2007 Save Our History Teacher of the Year finalist, Mr. DeBiase is recognized for distinguished efforts that include instilling a preservation ethic in his students, providing students with an in-depth understanding of their local history's importance, and enabling students to take an active role in the preservation process.

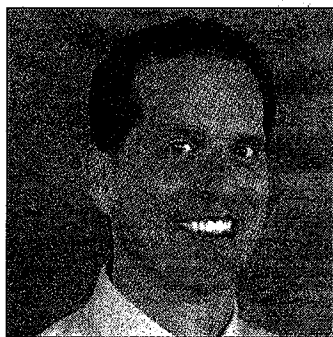
After receiving notification of the Save Our History award, Mark DeBiase said, "I am honored to be recognized by the History Channel for our work on the Luke Miller Project. However, the credit must really go to the students who invested considerable time and energy uncovering the historical significance of the Miller property. As a teacher, I know I'm getting it right when the students are driving the work forward and when the audience and beneficiary of their work is someone

other than myself." Twenty-six sophomores at Madison High School have been researching the Luke Miller house, the historically significant property on Ridgedale Avenue that was recently threatened with demolition and development. The town, with the help of local preservation funds purchased the property.

The home, including the remains of a blacksmith's forge, lies in the heart of the newly designated Bottle Hill Historic District. This student-centered project involves two separate classes, which together have investigated the property, the family who built the home, the role of the farm and blacksmith's forge in the area's economy, and the social and political climate of the region during the Revolutionary era.

Of particular interest for the student researchers was the role of the farm and the forge in supporting General George Washington's troops, who were stationed at the Loantaka Encampment nearby, during the winters of 1777-8 and 1779-80.

The project culminated in the creation of a 20-minute educational video about the site that was shown at the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts during "Luke Miller



Mark DeBiase

Day" celebrations on Sunday, May 6. The video will also be shown at the May 17 meeting of the Madison Historical Society (MHS) in the Chase Room of the Madison Public Library at 7:30 p.m.

Copies of the video will be distributed for use in the United States and New Jersey history curriculum throughout the school district. The research will also support future grant applications aimed at the preservation and interpretation of the forge.

When describing the project DeBiase said, "I am grateful to the Madison Historical Society and the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts for their continued interest in helping Madison High School students to better understand the past through the study of local and New Jersey history. Providing students with "hands on" learning experiences like the Luke Miller Project makes the study of history so much more relevant, interesting and enjoyable. Our hope is that the students involved in this project will develop a healthy respect for the people and places of the past and will support future efforts to preserve and

protect our nations' cultural resources."

Hundreds of applications were received for 2007 Save Our History Teacher of the Year, with hands-on projects ranging from a documentary focused on local Vietnam War Veterans to the preservation of a Revolutionary War-era home. Mr. DeBiase is one of 25 recipients of a \$500 cash prize from The History Channel. One of the 25 teachers will be invited to the National Awards Breakfast, taking place in Washington, D.C. on May 16 with the Historic Preservation Caucus, and will be honored as 2007 Save Our History Teacher of the Year. The History Channel will also award that individual a \$5,000 cash prize. The breakfast will also honor the 2007 Save Our History Student of the Year as well as the 10 Save Our History National Awards finalists.

The History Channel has created the Save Our History Grant Program to provide resources for schools and youth organizations that collaborate with historic societies on preserving local history. This year \$250,000 has been awarded to execute hands-on projects that not only help students take pride in their local history, but also leave a lasting legacy for future generations. By the end of 2007, The History Channel Save Our History Grant program will have provided \$1 million in grant funding.

The Historical Society revisits Luke Miller

MADISON — The Madison Historical Society will present "Luke Miller Revisited" at their next membership meeting on May 17, 7:30 p.m. in the Chase Room of the Madison Public Library, 39 Keep St.

The program was developed by the Madison High School history department and students, and is the culmination of a partnership with the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts with research support from the Historical Society and the Madison Public Library.

After receiving a \$10,000 Save our History grant from the History Channel to research the Luke Miller family, forge, home and property, the museum collaborated with the high school history department and students to conduct the research. The program will highlight a video production and also the efforts and discoveries of the young people who worked on this project.

Refreshments will be served and the event is open to the public. For information, call the Historical Society at 973-37709722 ext. 8, or 973-377-2292.

Kean acquires Union museum

AREA — Kean University announced the details of its historic new partnership with Liberty Hall and John Kean, the Kean family patriarch, at an event on May 9 at Liberty Hall Museum, 1003 Morris Avenue, Union.

The collection of manuscripts at Liberty Hall includes a never-before-seen letter from George Washington, as well as correspondence from well-known figures like Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. The signing ceremonies marked the official announcement of the collaboration between the university that bears the Kean family name and the foundation that has long guarded this priceless collection of Kean family letters, manuscripts and artifacts.

The partnership between Kean University and Liberty Hall secures New Jersey and

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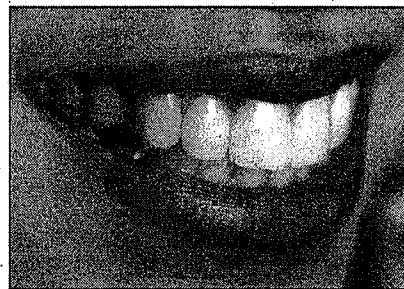
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