

SAVING THE LEVI CORY HOUSE





IN THE BEGINNING

1810-1818

Jonathan Woodruff builds a house which
remains in the Woodruff family until 1851

24 Women from Westfield Churches

- In 1891, the women raise money to offer a summer retreat experience for inner-city children from New York City and/or Newark.
- They rent a house from Levi Cory at the corner of New Providence Road and Mountain Avenue, then in Westfield.
- 60 children, each summer, spend time in the country funded by the Fresh Air Fund in the “Children’s Country Home”.
- Because many of the children require medical care, local doctors and nurses volunteer time tending to them.

The Children's Country Home

- From 1891-1896, the “Levi Cory” house is a summer retreat for the city children.
- In 1895, Mountainside splits from Westfield and the home now has a Mountainside address.
- Joseph Cory (a cousin of Levi) is named the first mayor of Mountainside.
- By 1896, the women decide that the Children's Country Home should cater to sick children.
- The “Levi Cory” house becomes too small for the increasing numbers of children and the “Children's Country Home” moves north on New Providence Road after the women purchase the Drew estate which is its current location.
- By 1962, the Children's Country Home is renamed Children's Specialized Hospital.

After the Children...

- In the years following the summer children, the Levi Cory house changes hands. Levi passes on in 1895 and his wife, Harriet, owns the home.
- After Harriet's death in 1905, the home is sold and changes hands many times.
- Most recently, the house was the home of businesses such as Barrett & Crain Realtors and Jan Patterson Interiors.
- The property's current owner, a real estate developer, has plans to develop the property commercially by building a new structure. Original plans were to demolish the current house.
- The developer has agreed to allow the Mountainside Restoration Committee to move the house and save it from demolition.

Our Mission...

- The Mission of the Mountainside Restoration Committee is to maintain the Deacon Andrew Hetfield House & The Levi Cory House and collect and save historic information and items from destruction.

Who we are...

- The Mountainside Restoration Committee is a committee of 15 volunteers – all Mountainside residents - appointed by the Borough of Mountainside to carry out the Mission.
- Fund raisers, donations and grants help to raise the money necessary to fulfill the Mission.
- The Committee fund raises, collects and restores archives, showcases historic items and artifacts, creates museum displays, maintains the Deacon Andrew Hetfield House, holds events in the Hetfield House throughout the year, offers school support in local history, provides programs & meeting space for scouts and other local organizations.

The Levi Cory House endeavor

- We have been given the house to move.
- The Borough of Mountainside has generously given us the space, adjacent to the Hetfield House & Mountainside Library, on which to move the house.
- Children's Specialized Hospital has given us their stamp of approval and endorsed our efforts to save and move their original home.
- We look forward to working with Children's Specialized Hospital on joint projects to promote the move of the Levi Cory House.

The Logistics of the move...

- Architect (Dan Falcone) and engineer (Casey & Keller) have provided advice and plans for preparing the new site and foundation.
- Building mover, W.A. Building Movers & Contractors of Westfield, has been secured to do the actual move tentatively scheduled for August 24.
- Historic Architects (Connolly & Hickey of Cranford) have inspected the house and confirmed its historic authenticity as circa early 1800's (and possibly earlier).
- The Levi Cory house is being prepared for the move.
 - House clean-out sale & donation of left over goods.
 - Shrub removal (courtesy of Harol's Landscaping, Mtsd.)

Behind the Scenes...

- Historic Searches
 - Researching the history and lineage of the house & its inhabitants
- Creating Awareness of the Cause
 - Publicity including signage, newspaper articles, mailings, TV35, boro bulletin board, websites, promotional video, social media, notices to churches & schools.
- Application for Certificate of Eligibility
 - This application to the State Historic Preservation Office, when approved, will secure our eligibility to receive government funds and grants for the Levi Cory House and allows us to apply for Historic Registry.
- Regular interface with Borough of Mountainside
 - Cooperation has been ongoing with Mayor Mirabelli and the Borough Administration concerning the logistics of the move.

Behind the Scenes (cont'd)...

- Consultation with Historic Organizations on Local, County & State Level
 - Union County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs
 - Union County Office of Open Space, Recreation & Historic Preservation Trust
 - NJ Historic Preservation Office
 - NJ Historic Trust
 - Kenilworth Historical Society
 - Westfield Historical Society
- Planning and Carrying out the fund raising
- Determining ultimate use of Levi Cory House.

The Fund Raising

- Donations from individuals & organizations - ongoing
- Securing Grants - ongoing
- Dinner Dance – June 28
- Golf Outing – July 29
- Yacht Outing – August 15
- “Put a Sign On It” – July 15 deadline
- “Put a Plaque In It” - ongoing
- Buy a Brick - ongoing
- Spin-a-thon at NBD – t/b/a
- Garden Party – t/b/a

What the Children are saying...

- “Historic structures in Mountainside have great importance to the town’s history.”
- “...the importance of preserving little places in Mountainside can be a great thing to do. They hold so many memories and each historical structure in our town has its own story and value.”
- “The history of Mountainside should be preserved through the buildings since the structures demonstrate and retell the history of Mountainside. The old buildings give the “charm” of Mountainside, while giving people the feeling of what life was like back in the early days”

What the Children are saying (cont'd)

- “Old buildings keep the town’s identity intact by preserving the historical, architectural, and aesthetic character of our town.”
- “The significance of the preservation of such structures is in the many generations to come. It is important that our children, and the children of our children know what our town has experienced, to come to what they know and love in the present.”
- “preserving our past, gives us a better and fuller understanding for the future to come”

What the future can hold...

- The future of the Levi Cory house is envisioned as a museum showcase for children. A “Levi Cory Children’s Home” so to speak.
- The lower level rooms may be devoted to a fund raising “consignment shop” which can help support the upkeep of the house.
- Other rooms in the house will be devoted to the history of children in Mountainside
 - Sports & Recreation programs & history
 - Scouting programs & history
 - Children’s Specialized Hospital history
 - Watchung Stables riding school history
 - Replicating a room as it may have been during the 1890’s when the house was the Children’s Country Home.
 - History of schools in Mountainside
 - Watts Foundation’s history (Levi Cory house or Hetfield House)

Costs Associated with the Move

- Professional Fees including architects, engineer, etc.
 - Estimated at \$5000 (donated)
- Permit Fees for road closures, planning board, attorney, etc.
 - Estimated at \$15,000 (some may be waived)
- Utility company fees to adjust overhead wires & fixtures to allow for roadway passage of house (Verizon, Comcast & PSE&G).
 - Estimated at \$65,000
- House mover
 - Estimated at \$25,000
- Site Work to prepare new location including excavation, tree removal, etc.
 - Estimated at \$35,000 (may be donated)
- New foundation
 - Estimated at \$25,000 (portions may be donated)
- Installation of utilities – electric, plumbing, heat, etc.
 - Estimated at \$20,000 (portions may be donated)

Costs (cont'd)

- Estimated Total (if nothing is donated)
 - \$190,000
- Estimated Total (if services/materials are donated)
 - \$135,000 (will likely be less)
- Amount of funds on hand to date (6/11/13)
 - \$20,000 in treasury
 - \$28,000 (includes monetary and in-kind donations)



IN THE FUTURE

2013 and beyond

The Borough of Mountainside sees the Levi Cory House transform into a fixture on Constitution Plaza where the history of our Children is preserved for all to learn from and enjoy.



HELP MOVE THE LEVI CORY HOUSE

“A country without a past has the emptiness of a barren continent, and a city without old buildings is like a man without a memory” ~ ~ Graeme Shankland



Q & A

Thank you for your time & interest.