

# Whitesbog Preservation Trust

## NEWSLETTER

3rd Quarter

www.whitesbog.org

2014

Birthplace of the Highbush Blueberry - Historic Center for Cranberry Innovation

## Janet S. Robbins, 1935 - 2014

On July 14, 2014, the Trust lost one of its stalwarts, Janet Robbins, due to a sudden unforeseen illness. Janet began working with the Trust in the late 1980s, and for many people she was one of the everyday faces of the Trust in the early years. Whenever there was a staffing void, Janet would function as the Acting Director, but modestly, she never sought Trust office. She was the person who often recruited new volunteers by her enthusiasm and her ability to make people feel that the Trust needed them. Her real love though was Elizabeth White's garden, and the one responsibility she bore over many years was the management of the Landscape and Garden Committee. Her goal was restoration of the garden to its heyday, a dream that is still in progress, but not yet fully completed. We dedicate this issue of the Newsletter to Janet as a tribute to her dedication. The following contributions are reminiscences from fellow Trust members.



about her own 'back story' in the Pines and how her family had developed a small blueberry farm outside of Pemberton in the 1940s. And so there was a direct and personal effect that Miss White's work had for Janet and her family. I believe that Janet was committed to giving back to Whitesbog in return for what she felt it had given her.

The second quality was the sheer energy that fueled the countless hours of hard work that Janet devoted to Whitesbog. She had more energy in her 70s than I ever had. And it wasn't that she had no other demands on her time. Janet always gave Whitesbog her full measure of effort and then added more.

Finally, and most meaningful to me, was Janet's skills as a border collie. When some of us either wandered away from Whitesbog or became estranged from the organization, Janet would gently nudge us back together, usually over food and wine, but always with the purpose of reminding us that the work to be done was more important than any one person or any personal agenda. That is a rare quality and

one that all organizations need in large supply.

- Bill Bolger -

National Park Service, Historian

There are several qualities that Janet possessed that I will always remember fondly and value for the rest of my own days. There are three regarding Whitesbog that come to mind without having to pause.

First was Janet's passionate devotion to Whitesbog. It was the kind of connection that most people have to their closest loved ones. While some of us feel a gravitational pull to certain places, Janet's bond to Elizabeth White and her farm seemed more of a strong chemical bond, one that was unbreakable. It was only a few years ago that she told me

Those of us who rubbed shoulders with her in the steadfast efforts to preserve the village of Whitesbog will remember Janet Robbins for her cheerful and considerate disposition, her friendliness, her refinement, and  
*(continued on page 2)*



*Janet and a group of Blueberry Festival - Plant Sale buddies.*

her contagious dedication. I first became acquainted with Janet during a February 19, 1992 inspection of the Suningive Garden, which had Janet seeking botanical advice from June Vail, Len Little, and me to enable her and Mindy Gottsegen to develop a garden restoration plan for the Whitesbog Trust. Bringing back Elizabeth White's garden to its former glory was one of Janet's major goals. Thanks to her commitment we are well on the way of achieving that goal.

*- Ted Gordon -*

*Chair, Interpretative Education & Archives Committee*

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As an instructor at Whitesbog for many years, I knew Janet to be a very caring and giving person. She was a little powerhouse, with an infectious smile and a twinkle in her eyes. I'll miss her hugs, good conversation, and little Chase Utley who was always prancing around her feet. She is one of the good ones, and I will miss her.

*- Susan Girard -*

*Burlington Co. College, P.I.N.E.S. Program*

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Janet Robbins was a wonderful, sweet person who was a major contributor to the Whitesbog Preservation Trust for decades. When I think about Janet, I can remember when she seemed to step up every time the Trust would begin to stumble. There were some "lean times", especially in the late 1980's and into the 90's, when staffing was thin and experience was lacking. Budgets were small and retaining employees was difficult. But Janet always seemed to show up to rescue the day, volunteering countless hours while we searched for permanent help. There were times when she

literally carried the administrative load for the Trust on her very capable shoulders.

Many long-time Trust members still fondly recall our big grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust that enabled so much of the huge preservation efforts since 2002. Janet was a key player in securing that grant. I can remember going over to her house in Mt. Holly to meet with her and Bill Bolger. We had to navigate through the intricacies of a complicated state grant process, and Janet was instrumental in assembling the large application that secured \$380,000 for the preservation of Whitesbog Village.

While I am incredibly saddened by her sudden passing, I take some solace from our last conversation which took place at the Blueberry Festival in June. Janet was in great spirits and looked fabulous. She was displaying the vigor of a woman 25 years her junior. Her enthusiasm for Whitesbog burned as fiercely as ever, and her broad smile showed the sheer delight with which she approached her task for the day. We will all miss her terribly, but I'm quite sure that God is holding her in the palm of his hand. She was just too kind and caring a person to have ended up anywhere else!

With love and fond memories,

*- John Joyce -*

*Chair, Buildings & Restoration Committee*

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Janet was a dear friend and a role model --- I miss her greatly. She did so much for Whitesbog and worked like a busy bee for many years! She had so many other interests also. I loved stopping by her house to chat about various topics (such as her RV travels) when she lived on Pine Street. Sometimes we would take a walk in the park with her dog Jay Jay. She always would make sure that I had something to eat before I left. Janet (along with other dedicated volunteers) is an integral reason Whitesbog is where it is today. I believe it would be fitting to have a tree planted or a plaque placed in memory of Janet somewhere at Whitesbog.

*- Martha Windisch -*

*Whitesbog Volunteer*

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I met Janet through the Landscaping Committee. I knew nothing about plants and Janet was very helpful, showing me the information and notes about what Elizabeth had in her gardens and where they were planted. I went with her to get plants, helped plant them and to weed the gardens. Janet was always laughing and seemed to have endless energy. I admired her dedication to Whitesbog and treasured her friendship. I had many a grilled ham and cheese sandwich at her house in Mt. Holly and later, some dinners at her place in Lumberton. It was a joy to work with her. I will miss her.

*- Jeanne Streiter -*

*Chair, Membership Committee*

I have three recollections about Janet Robbins, in no particular order.

First, as many know, Janet was at various times the Events Coordinator/Acting Director of the Trust, and, as such, did all the planning and groundwork for the Blueberry Festival. One of the things I remember is that for a day (or maybe two) before the Blueberry Festival, Janet and her husband Everett (and often some friends) brought their RV campers to Whitesbog, set them up and stayed overnight. I originally thought this was charmingly convenient in that they were able to provide security for booths that were being set up for the Blueberry Festival, but it was also one of the few ways a person could legitimately “camp” at Whitesbog. The area where they set up near the General Store always looked inviting and cozy, and I was always envious and wished that I could spend a night like that too. In retrospect, I realize that Janet probably got little actual rest out of the arrangement. More likely, it allowed her to oversee operations until the very last volunteer or vendor left on Friday, no matter what the hour, and allowed her to be there first thing in the morning on the day of the Blueberry Festival. Maybe Everett got to enjoy it a bit more (although I think he got to do late night security patrol). My recollection is that the RVs were always all gone by the time the Festival began on Saturday morning, but the Robbins had assured that everything was safely watched over.

Second, I originally was recruited by Janet to help out with blueberry work in the garden. What I particularly remember was that on garden workdays Janet always had coffee and doughnuts set up on a table in the Suningive driveway, and always seemed to be primarily interested in making everyone feel welcome. She was most happy to have you there, and wanted you to be happy to be there, and was only secondarily concerned as to whether some quantifiable work was actually accomplished.

Finally, Janet Robbins was one of the few people who may or may not have seen a *Ghost of Whitesbog*. A conversation with Janet once drifted around to ghosts, and Janet relayed that she was once leading a village tour (I don't recall all the details, but I imagine it to have been at twilight), and the group was at the end of the village where the now-collapsing cranberry packing warehouse stood. She told me that as they walked in that area there was suddenly a strong odor of decaying cranberries and in the near distance at the edge of the woods there stood a man in old-fashioned farm worker clothes looking at the group. My recollection is that she said the group turned away for a minute or two, and when they looked back the man had vanished. Was he a ghost? Janet wasn't sure either, but she felt it had definitely been something out of the ordinary.

- Mark Ehlenfeldt -  
WPT Vice-President

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Janet and I met when we were both members of the Mt. Holly Garden Club and became friends, enjoying each other's garden and sharing our favorite plants. Since Janet knew I was an artist who painted many local scenes and arranged art exhibits, she asked me to organize an exhibit in one of the recently restored buildings at Whitesbog. Apparently the exhibit was so well received, she then asked me to provide information about inviting local artists to display their art on the surrounding grounds --- which has been successfully continued.

- Irvine Spraklin -  
Local artist

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Janet Robbins was my 'Jewel of the Pines'. She generously shared her energy, experience, and enthusiasm, with a spirit and sensitivity that demonstrated her deep and enduring love for Whitesbog and the folks who shared her vision. Her time and talents served as bricks and mortar for the organization's foundation, her unending devotion served as inspiration for me personally and professionally, and I will miss her dearly.

- Susan Phillips -  
WPT Executive Director

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About twenty-five years ago I decided to be a tourist in South Jersey. Even though I live about one hour away, I wanted to see what was in the area close to the bogs and wanted to ask someone about why water was in the bogs in the winter! I went driving around Browns Mills and stumbled  
*(continued on page 7)*



Janet doing the work she loved in the Suningive garden.

# Whitesbog Preservation Trust Membership - 2014 Thank You!

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## Memberships-in-Kind

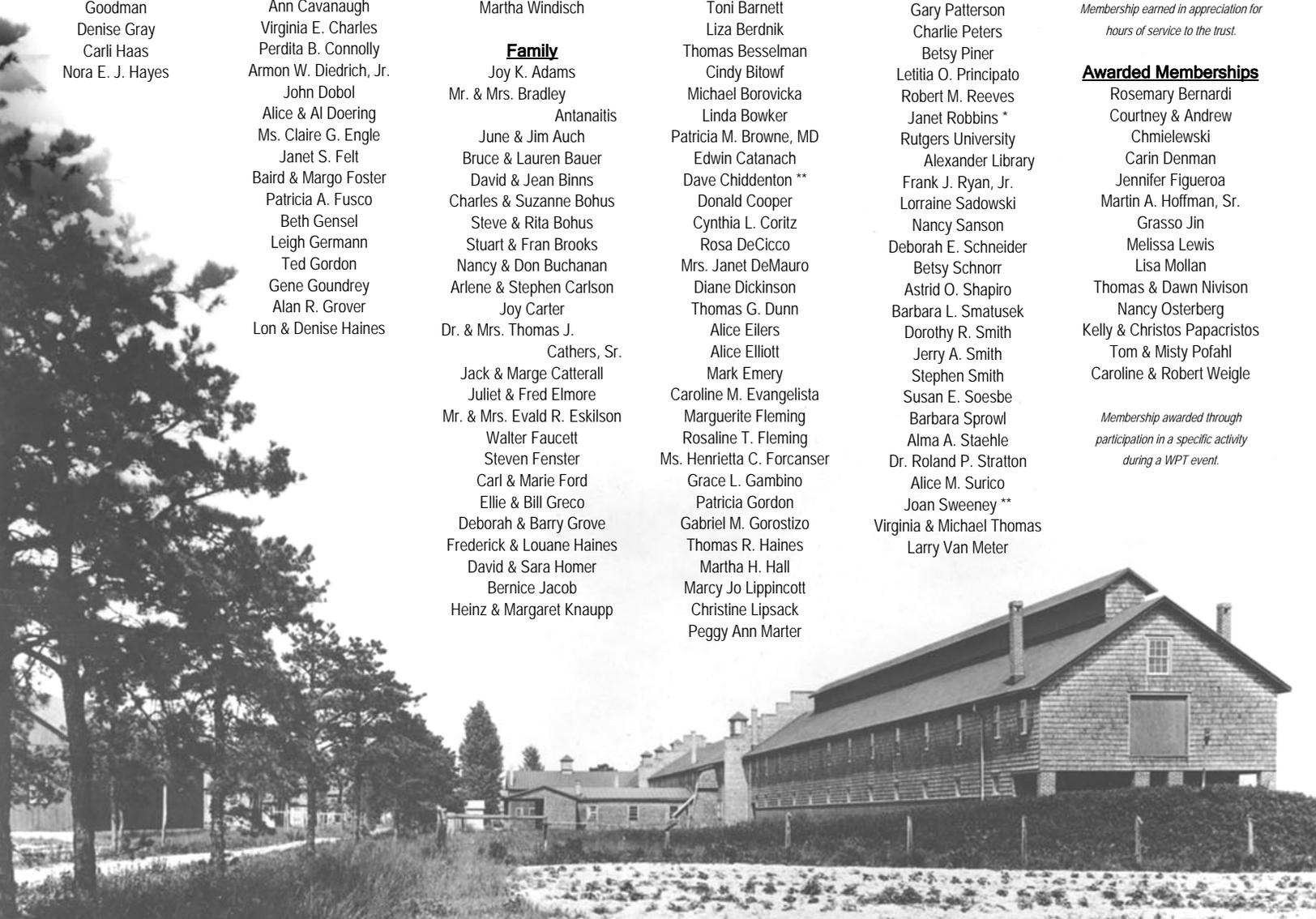
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*Membership earned in appreciation for  
hours of service to the trust.*

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*Membership awarded through  
participation in a specific activity  
during a WPT event.*



# WHITESBOG EVENT SCHEDULE

For more information call (609) 893-4646, e-mail us at [WhitesbogPreservationTrust@comcast.net](mailto:WhitesbogPreservationTrust@comcast.net) or visit us on the web at [www.whitesbog.org](http://www.whitesbog.org).

## October

### Cranberry Industry Bus Tours 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

See descriptive listing at [www.pbnf.co](http://www.pbnf.co) for details.

- 4 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
Have fun with friends, working in the gardens, repairing trails, restocking the General Store and working around the Village. Lunch provided.
- 4 Fiddling in the Forest Concert 6 - 8 p.m.**  
Enjoy the series finale - an evening under the stars with Denise Sullivan and Friends. \$5 donation
- 5 Celebrate Elizabeth White's Life & Legacy on her Birthday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
Join us to recognize Elizabeth White's pioneering contributions to agriculture on her birthday. Enjoy some cake and meet Elizabeth White, played by Stephanie Schrader. Tour the Village museums with historical interpreters. \$5.00 donation/per person
- 11 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.**  
Buck Moon. Listen to the night sounds of the Pines, learn about Whitesbog and experience the seasonal changes of the Pinelands. Walks are 3 to 5 miles long, and led by experienced leaders. \$5 donation per person, reservations requested.
- 26 Living History Tours 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.**  
Learn about Whitesbog's founder and legendary cranberry grower, J.J. White, his daughter and blueberry innovator, Elizabeth C. White, and other residents of Whitesbog from scientists to berry pickers. Docents in period dress will guide you through the Village's fascinating buildings. **Reservations required.** \$10 donation per person.

## November

- 1 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
(See October 4).
- 1 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.**  
Stroll the Historic Village, learn about Whitesbog's history, and visit Suningive, Elizabeth White's historic home, the worker's cottages and other buildings of Whitesbog's heritage. \$5 donation/person, reservations requested.
- 8 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.**  
Beaver Moon. \$5 donation/person, reservations requested. (See October 11 listing for details).
- 9 Semi-Annual WPT Meeting 12 Noon**  
Membership Meeting & Volunteer Recognition.

- 30 WPT Greens Sale 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
Select and make your own Holiday Greens and help us decorate the Village. Volunteers' lunch provided.

## December

- 6 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.**  
\$5 donation/person. (See November 1).
- 6 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
(See October 4).
- 7 Whitesbog's Winter Celebration 1 p.m.**  
\$5 members, \$7 non-members, by reservation. Enjoy a Nature walk and Candy-cane find with Santa's helper, holiday arts & crafts for kids.
- 13 General Store Open House 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.**  
The perfect opportunity to shop for that last minute gift, before our store closes for the season.
- 21 General Store closes for the season 4 p.m.**
- 27 Whitesbog's Holiday Party 4:30 p.m.**  
Members only, reservations requested.  
Celebrate the season and tour the Village homes.

## January

- 3 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
(See October 4).
- 3 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.**  
\$5 donation/person. (See November 1).
- 3 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.**  
Wolf Moon. \$5 donation/person, reservations requested. (See October 11 listing for details).
- 19 MLK Day of Service 10 a.m.**
- 31 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.**  
Snow Moon. \$5 donation per person, reservations requested. (See October 11 listing for details).

## February

- 7 General Store Re-opens 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.**  
The Store is open Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and by special request.
- 7 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
(See October 4).
- 7 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.**  
\$5 donation per person. (See November 1).
- 21 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.**  
\$5 donation per person. (See November 1).

*Sunday, November 9, 2014*

*New!!*

*SEMI-Annual Membership Meeting*

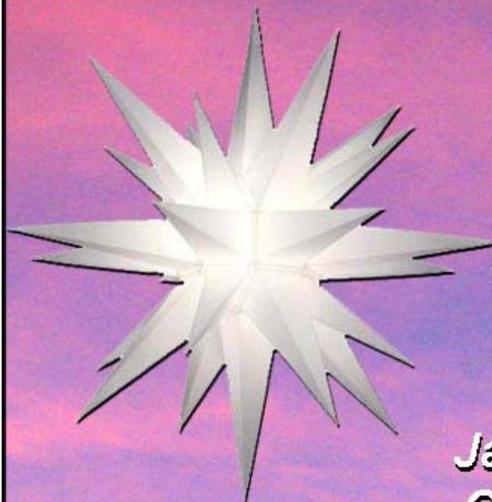
*12 Noon*

*Elections, By-laws, Strategic Planning*

*Pot-luck Luncheon*

*to follow*

*R.S.V.P. requested*



**This Holiday Season,  
Patronize the  
Whitesbog General Store**

*Thanksgiving:*

*Jams - Jellies - Relishes*

*Christmas / Hannukah:*

*Books - T-shirts - Sweatshirts - Crafts*

*Saturdays & Sundays 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

*and by special request !*

## 2014 Board of Trustees

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Meetings Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

October 22, December 3, January 28, February 25, March 25

Membership meeting Sunday November 9 at 12:00 noon

## Staff

Susan B. Phillips, Executive Director  
Jennifer Rubeo, Bookkeeper/Assistant

## Newsletter

Mark Ehlenfeldt & Susan Phillips - Editors

## Committees - 2014

Buildings & Restoration - John Joyce  
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Landscape and Garden - Mark Szutarski  
Nominating - Stephanie Schrader  
Membership - Jeanne Streiter  
Personnel - Stephanie Schrader

*(continued from page 3)*

onto a place called Whitesbog. Curiosity overcame me and I entered the village where I was met by a short, brown-haired, welcoming, and enthusiastic lady called Janet Robbins. Her warmth, her exuberance, eye-contact, and infectious personality captivated me. Then, she told me the story of Elizabeth Coleman White ... I was entranced and “hooked”. When I volunteered, Janet started me out folding T-shirts and putting pamphlets together, and “progressed” me from there to now being President of the Trust.

I thank Janet to this day for her friendship and for stimulating my deep interest, and helping me to understand the history of cranberry and blueberry agriculture. I deeply miss her character, phone calls, her e-mails, and her dinners of chicken salad. She is with the angels now.

*- Stephanie Schrader -*

*President, Whitesbog Preservation Trust*



Whitesbog is administered by the State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry as part of the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest.



NEW JERSEY  
STATE  
COUNCIL  
ON THE  
ARTS

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust has received a General Operating Support Grant for fiscal year 2015, and a 2014 Special Project Grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State.



Funding for the 2014 Whitesbog Blueberry Festival and the Fiddling in the Forest Concert Series, a Local Arts Project, was made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/ Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts from a grant to the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Department of Resource Conservation, Division of Parks.

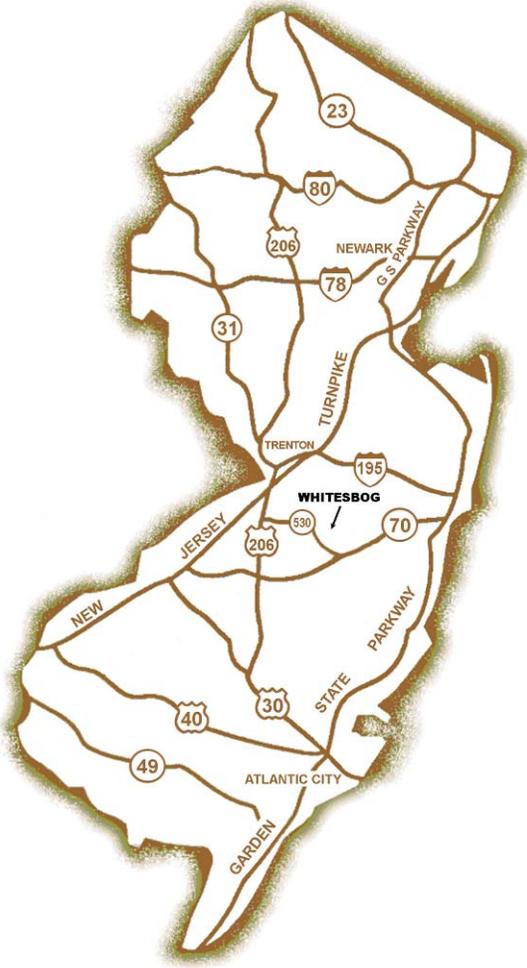


The Whitesbog Preservation Trust has received a Recreational Trail Grant from the Department of Environmental Protection and the Federal Highway Administration for 2014 and 2015.



*Janet dressed for historical interpretation at one of the workers cottages.*

The mission of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust is to protect and enhance historic Whitesbog Village, to interpret the White family legacy and to inspire audiences of all ages to experience the past innovations, present circumstances and future possibilities of cranberry and blueberry culture.



**Driving Directions:**

**From NJ Turnpike**

Take Exit 7 to Rt. 206 South to intersection of Rt. 206, Rt. 38 and Rt. 530. (Landmarks - Vincentown Diner and White Dotte)  
 Turn East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13. (Landmarks – You will go through the towns of Pemberton & Browns Mills, passing Burlington County College on the right.)  
 Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot on the left.

**From PA Turnpike**

Travel to NJ Turnpike North and follow above instructions.

**From 206 South**

Travel North to circle intersection with Rt. 70.  
 Travel East on Rt. 70 to Rt. 530. (Rt. 530 is between mile markers 33 & 34.)  
 Travel West on Rt. 530 for one mile to mile marker 13.  
 Turn right onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

**From 206 North**

Travel South to intersection of Rt. 206, Rt. 38 and Rt. 530.  
 Turn East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13.  
 Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

**From Philadelphia**

From Ben Franklin Bridge, take Rt. 38 East, crossing over Rt. 206 and onto Rt. 530 East.  
 Travel East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13.  
 Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

The General Store is across from parking lot. Trust Offices are approximately 1/8 of a mile down the crossroad to the right (at Suningive).



Visit our website: [WWW.WHITESBOG.ORG](http://WWW.WHITESBOG.ORG) or call: 609.893.4646



Whitesbog Preservation Trust  
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*Online Extras Start Here*

# Janet S. Robbins

May 20, 1935 – July 14, 2014

Janet S. Robbins of Lumberton, formerly of Mount Holly, died Monday, July 14, 2014 at Virtua-Memorial Hospital in Mount Holly. She was 79.

Born in Mount Holly, Janet was a lifelong area resident. She was a graduate of Pemberton High School and was a longtime executive secretary for Inductotherm in Westampton.

Janet was also a longtime volunteer at Whitesbog Village, where she served as the Events Coordinator. She was also a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Mount Holly, and a member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

She loved gardening and was a master gardener.

The wife of the late Everett, she is survived by her son, Everett David Robbins (Sandra) of Lumberton, and daughter, Carol Ann Green (Michael) of Southampton. The loves of her life were her grandchildren, Jamie Ellis (Joe), Christopher Green (Jade), Rachael Green (Craig Pettit), and David Robbins. She is also survived by four great-grandchildren, Ava and Aubree and Charlee and Liam. She was the sister of the late Sam and Pat Scelza and is survived by a sister, Barbara Simpkins.