



New Milford Hall of Fame

Class of 2024

Arts and Letters

Mary Joyce Doyle: Ms. Doyle, a longtime New Milford resident, is best known as the creator of the Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS), which revolutionized book lending in the county – and beyond. She worked for the Fair Lawn Library before being named director of the Bergenfield Library in 1974. After becoming president of the New Jersey Library Association, she helped launch BCCLS, to facilitate sharing of books and other resources among libraries. Ms. Doyle lived for many years on Holland Avenue with her sister, June, and was a parishioner of Ascension Church. Following her retirement after 25 years as Bergenfield Library Director, she became active with the Friends of New Milford Public Library. She ran the library’s Monday morning book club and Thursday afternoon movies for many years. Ms. Doyle died in 2016.

Natalie Frier: Ms. Frier has been a stone sculpture instructor at the Art Center of Northern New Jersey since 2000 and has served on its Board of Trustees. Two of her sculptures are featured in the Sculpture Garden at the New Milford Public Library. Additionally, her work can be found in private collections throughout the United States and internationally. She has also created works for Sheering Plough, Englewood Hospital and Medical Center, and Temple Beth El (in Closter). A resident of Harrington Park, Ms. Frier is a graduate of Simmons College in Boston, MA, and Columbia University in New York. She studied for 15 years with the acclaimed Japanese abstract sculptor Minoru Nizzuma. Under her guidance, the Art Center has made professional instruction in the arts accessible to residents of New Milford and surrounding areas, while also sponsoring programs that promote cultural awareness.

Business and Enterprise

Klinger Family: The Klinger family started farming in New Milford in 1913, after moving to New Jersey from Queens. In 1963, son Bill and his wife Shaaron took over the farm from his parents. They primarily grew flowers, although Shaaron also kept a ceramics studio on the farm. Bill also served as Municipal Court bailiff (the courtroom is named in his honor) and an auxiliary police officer, and was a member of the Historic Preservation Commission. In 2008, Bill and his neighbor, Mike Perrone, signed a conservation easement to ensure that the borough’s last remaining farms would be preserved as open space. Bill never stopped farming until the day he died in March 2010. Shaaron died in 2017. The property is now Fresh & Fancy Farms.

Perrone Family: Carmine and Rose Perrone moved to New Milford in 1922 and purchased about 10 acres of land on River Road, adjacent to the Klingers. Anthony, the youngest of their eight children, eventually took over the family farm. Tony’s son, Michael, became a third-generation farmer. Mike Perrone and Bill Klinger were inseparable friends, so it’s not surprising that together they signed the conservation easement to protect New Milford’s farming heritage. Following Bill’s

death, Mike took his seat on the Historic Preservation Commission. He was later named honorary borough historian. Mike died in 2023. The property is now the New Bridge Garden Center.

Local Hero:

Teresa M. Martin: Mrs. Martin served as principal of New Milford Junior High School (now New Milford High School) for 30 years. During WWII, she shared the news about the military service of more than 560 former students (men and women) through a monthly newsletter distributed to local residents. Following the war, she compiled a book, “New Milford in World War II,” which contained biographies of those who served, including photographs of the 16 residents who made the ultimate sacrifice. A native of Massachusetts, Mrs. Martin lived in Bogota, where she was active in the Women’s Club. She and her husband, Leo, were also active parishioners of St. Joseph’s Church, Bogota.

Ray Woods Jr.: Patrolman Woods is the first member of the New Milford Police Department to die in the line of duty. In November 1972, Woods, 26, rushed into a burning home on Rheim Court and saved the lives of Patrolmen Michael Burns and Milton Barrett. A resident of the house, Marie Cordey died, and Barrett and Firefighter Joseph Costello were critically injured. After pushing Barrett out of the house, Woods reentered the flaming structure. He was found unconscious after his air supply ran out. Initially, it seemed as if Woods would survive; however, his lungs were severely damaged and he succumbed to the injuries. Woods, who was married, coached a Babe Ruth team and was an avid collector of railroad memorabilia. The address of the borough’s Police Headquarters, 112 Patrolman Ray Woods Drive, honors his name and badge number.

Performing Arts

Jack Antonoff: Antonoff was born in 1984 and spent his early years in New Milford, attending the Solomon Schechter Day School. The family later moved to Woodcliff Lake, and he and his sister, Rachel, attended the Professional Children’s School. Another sister, Sarah, died of brain cancer, an event that profoundly impacted his life and inspired his work. A singer, songwriter and musician, Antonoff may be best known for his success as a producer. In 2024 he won his third consecutive Grammy as Producer of the Year, Non Classical. In total, he has earned 24 nominations and 10 Grammy Awards. He has worked with artists such as Taylor Swift, Lana Del Rey, Lorde and Bruce Springsteen.

Ruth Beiner: Ms. Beiner has served as producer for New Milford High School’s spring musical for two decades. Her commitment to this event has become a cherished tradition in the school and wider community. By bringing the community together through the arts, she has strengthen bonds and fostered a sense of unity and pride. Through memorable performances and engaging productions, she has inspired audiences, both young and old, to appreciate the arts and recognize their importance in society.

Public Service

Joseph Costello: Costello was seriously injured in the 1972 Rhein Court fire that killed Patrolman Ray Woods and resident Marie Cordey and injured Office Milton Barrett. He joined Fire Co. 1 in the 1960s and served as its president. After recovering from his devastating and life-altering injuries,

Costello became an advocate for fire victims. He received the Fire Industry Act of Heroism Award by the Fire Chiefs Convention and the Fireman of the Year Award from the New York/New Jersey Volunteer Firemen's Association. He and his wife, Betty, had four children, including former New Milford Police Chief Richard Costello. He died in 2004 at the age of 82.

Florence "Peggy" Saslow: Mrs. Saslow became an icon in many ways to many people. Loving wife and mother. Inspiring teacher. Dedicated member of the New Milford Board of Education, which she served for 19 years. She represented the school district at the National School Boards and Bergen County School boards associations. In 1991, she was named "NJ School Board Member of the Year" by the state association. An avid tennis player, the courts at New Milford High School were named in her honor in 2022. She died in 2023 at the age of 100.

Sports:

William Hartney: William "Bill" Hartney has been a head and assistant coach at New Milford High School for more than 40 years. Dedicated to the Knights programs, he has coached more than 100 seasons compiling championships in various sports and aiding many athletes reach the college level. Hartney also serves as a permanent substitute teacher at the high school and is the athletic department's site supervisor at football, soccer, basketball and wrestling. He is a staple of the community and specifically New Milford Athletics. While also being inducted into the New Milford HS Hall of Fame as well as the NJSIAA Hall of Fame, Hartney was recently honored by the YMCA as their Thomas Della Torre Special Achievement honoree for dedication to the values of spirit, mind and body.

Debra Yager: Ms. Yager has been involved in recreation sports in New Milford for almost 30 years. She began as a coach when her two daughters were in elementary school. She coached teams in soccer, travel soccer, softball, volleyball, and travel softball. She went on to be a coordinator for soccer, indoor soccer, softball, and travel softball. She stayed as a coach, long after her two daughters outgrew the program, and she still serves as a coordinator for softball and travel softball. She has mentored countless coaches and ensured the program continued to develop under four different recreation directors.