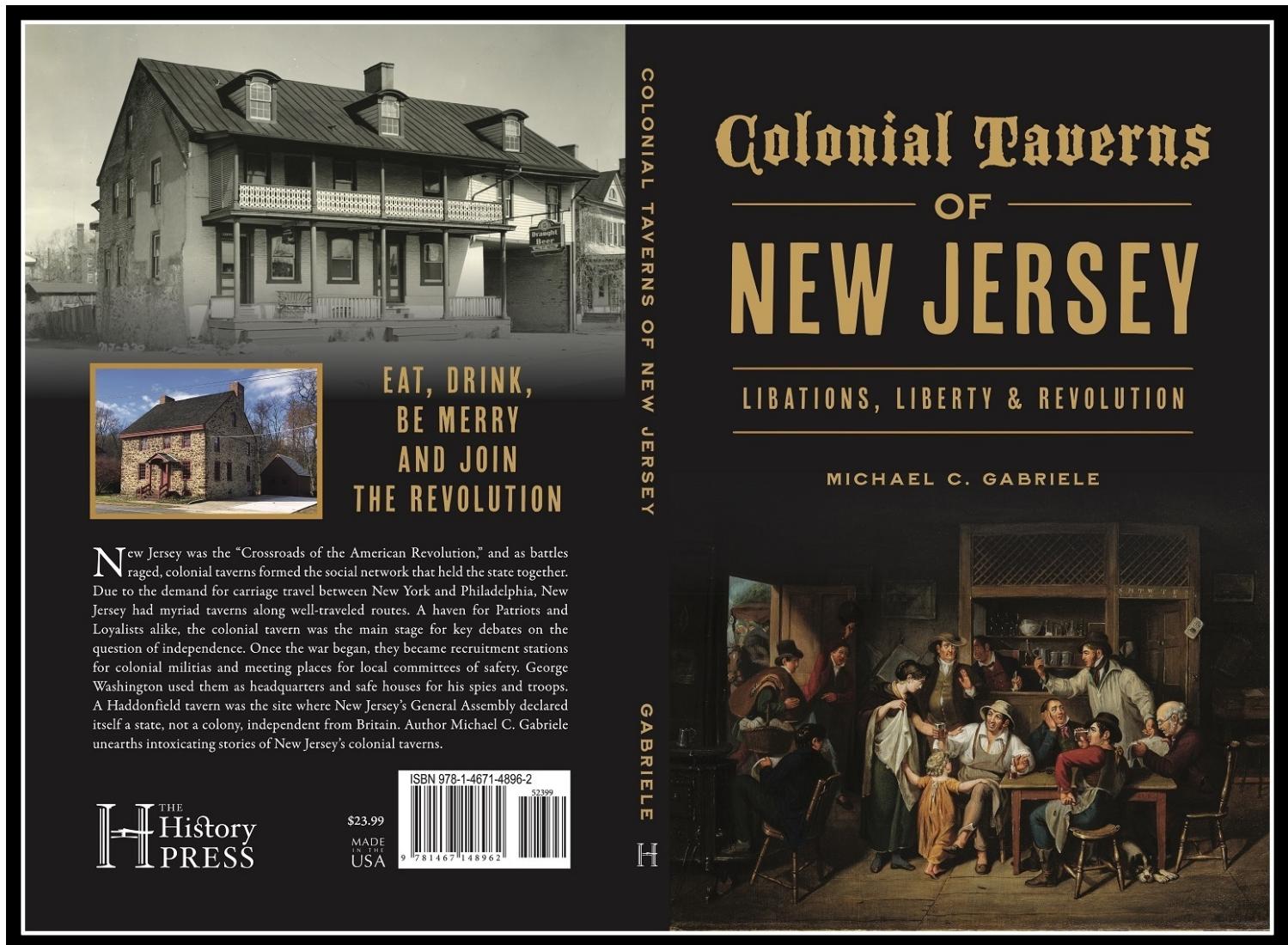


Event Date
Fri, May 12 2023, 7 - 9pm

New Book by Michael Gabriele

Taverns were an important part of the colonial landscape and served as community hubs in villages throughout the state. New Jersey was the “Crossroads of the American Revolution” and as battles raged, colonial taverns formed the social network that held the state together.



The Nutley Historical Society will host New Jersey author Michael Gabriele for a program on his newest book: “Colonial Taverns of New Jersey – Libations, Liberty and Revolution,” published by The History Press. The book-launch event will be held on Friday, May 12, 7-9 p.m. at the Nutley Museum, 65 Church Street, Nutley. The program is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served, and books will be available for sale (cash only).

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Taverns were the stage for the unfolding drama of a colony transitioning into statehood and making decisions about declaring a war of independence. New Jersey’s General Assembly, meeting in September 1777 at a tavern in Haddonfield, passed legislation that declared New Jersey to be “a state, not a colony,” in effect, joining the call for revolution and a break from British rule.

Due to the demand for carriage travel between New York and Philadelphia, New Jersey had myriad taverns, which were located along well-traveled routes and near ferry boat slips. The early colonial roadways were used by soldiers, merchants, farmers, dignitaries and citizens, with taverns serving as hospitality stops, providing food, drink, overnight accommodations and services for stagecoach drivers and their horses. George Washington frequently used taverns as temporary headquarters during the Revolutionary War, where he drafted his many letters and planned strategy with his generals.

Rum, beer and alcoholic apple cider were the beverages of choice at village taverns in the 18th century. During the 1600s and 1700s, taverns housed the daily experiences of people during the colonial era, and their stories provide a window into the state's history from that period. Taverns were the "seedbeds" for the revolution, strongholds for political activities, beacons for travelers, and venues for entertainment, merriment, treachery, and libations. Once the war began, taverns became recruitment stations for colonial militias and meeting places for local committees of safety.

The book focuses on activities associated with taverns in Haddonfield, Bordentown, Burlington, Princeton, Piscataway, New Brunswick, Trenton, Newark, Morristown and all points in between. It spotlights the lives of New Jersey's little-known colonial era/Revolutionary War luminaries such as Elizabeth Haddon, Jacob Hyer, Christopher Ludwick, Cyrus Bustell, Timothy Matlack, John Dickinson, Ann Risley, John Neilson, John Woolman and Henry Lyon. The book also provide insights into the New Jersey experiences of iconic Revolutionary War figures such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine and Alexander Hamilton.

Each day in the Garden State, we literally walk along the Crossroads of the American Revolution in the footprints of our forbearers—a legacy that lies just below the surface of our everyday lives. The ghosts that linger on these byways sustain our state's collective heritage. Individual sketches of people, places and events presented in the book are illuminating, but when assembled as a whole from numerous sources, a more complete, colorful mosaic emerges—a grassroots saga of New Jersey's Revolutionary spirit and colonial life. This mosaic, this saga is the foundation of our state's living history.

Keynote Speaker



Jennifer Dowling Norato, who served as the peer editor for Gabriele's book, will be the keynote speaker at the May 12 reception. Norato is a former chapter regent and current member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR); the New Jersey chapter president of the Alexander Hamilton Awareness Society; a published author; and a teacher in the Emerson public school district. She is a graduate of Ramapo College and earned a master's degree in history and social sciences from Montclair State University.

About the Author





This is Michael C. Gabriele's fifth book on New Jersey history, all published by Arcadia Publishing/The History Press. His previous books are, in chronological order: *The Golden Age of Bicycle Racing in New Jersey* (2011), *The History of Diners in New Jersey* (2013), *New Jersey Folk Revival Music: History and Tradition* (2016) and *Stories from New Jersey Diners: Monuments to Community* (2019).

A lifelong Garden State resident and a former Nutley Sun editor, he is a 1975 graduate of Montclair State University and has worked as a journalist, freelance writer, and author for more than forty years. Gabriele is a member of the board of trustees for the New Jersey Folk Festival at Rutgers University and a member of the executive boards for the Allied Artists of America, New York; the Nutley Historical Society; and the Theater League of Clifton, and he serves on the advisory board of the Clifton Arts Center.

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