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The Historic Village at Allaire

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# *The Village Star*

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Winter/Spring 2025

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## **A GOOSE ENJOYING THE WARMER WEATHER**

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**“One cannot help but take notice of the enormous numbers of wildflowers and their variety. This annual natural exhibition attracts many visitors to Allaire and is an event which should be enjoyed by all.”**

— The Howell Works Chronicle, Spring 1972

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The Historic Village At Allaire  
4263 Atlantic Avenue  
Farmingdale NJ 07727  
[www.allairevillage.org](http://www.allairevillage.org)





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The Historic Village at Allaire

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## Letter from the Executive Director

Good Day! And welcome Spring! Another year is rolling in at the Historic Village at Allaire and it's exciting to see all the historical and fundraising programs we have on the schedule for 2025! The Allaire staff has been busy planning out our special events and Friday to Sunday general admission openings (April to November). The collections and archives/library staff have been busy researching to strengthen our educational programming and authenticity.

Group tour pre-bookings – for schools and “Everyone History” – has been very strong. After a six-month hiatus, we are very happy to be re-launching our monthly History Kids Club program. Beyond the Counter (aka History Kids for Adults!) is also planned out monthly. We look forward to welcoming a new generation of historians to share our site's history. Pre-register today on Eventbrite for both programs as they sell out fast!

Without a doubt, lifelong memories, including friends and marriages, are made possible here at Allaire. Holiday Strolls, Easter Festival, Chapel rentals, or buying a cookie for the first time at the Bakery leave lasting impressions. We strive for community engagement and experiences that immerse visitors into hands-on-history. We hope that Allaire finds a special place in your heart that leads you to volunteer, become a member, donate to our mission, or even become staff members and trustees!

Look for a “refresh” at our historic homes in the village this year as we make them more authentic to the early 19th century. We've been busy cleaning out attics and basements of many of our buildings to introduce new collection objects for display, special exhibit, or incorporate into our regular educational programming. Find out some of the “hidden history” of Allaire by coming to our first “Opening of the Allaire Vault” that I will be hosting in June, as well as rotating exhibits where we explore some of the pre/post Howell Works history of the site! All part of our 250 years of innovation series at Allaire!

At LAST - new roofs on the Chapel and Enameling Building. And we just got approved to proceed with painting and repairing the interior of the Chapel where some of the water damage affected the ceiling. Through a matching grant with the Preserve New Jersey Historic Preservation Fund, Allaire Village Inc. has or will be spending in excess of \$90,000 for the roofs, repair of any water damage from the old roofs, an ADA study to make the Enameling Building more accessible, and HVAC/air purification for the Enameling Building.

To complete the projects over the winter season, Allaire Village Inc had to take a line of credit (LOC) of \$90,000. Thus, we are looking for direct donations or your patronage at our fundraising events to pay this LOC back AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

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# The Village Star

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Other general repair and maintenance projects at the village have also been planned for 2025. Allaire Village Inc. has an annual expense of \$165K for maintenance within the 40-acre historic district, some of which had previously been covered by the State Park Service. But 25 years of State Park budget cutbacks has left a void that we Allaire Village Inc. have filled. The Board of Trustees is looking to garner political support for funding other much needed capital improvements at Allaire (e.g. repairing and re-opening the Carriage House and Gardener's Cottage).

When the Historic Village (and over 1,800 acres of land) was donated by the Brisbane family to the State of NJ for historical and recreational use, there were still 16 of the former JP Allaire Howell Works buildings on the property. Today, only 12 are left. So please help preserve and keep the operation of the village sustained by coming out and participating in all that we have to offer at Allaire! It is greatly appreciated. We must keep this treasured site around for many years to come. It's an extremely hard decision as to whether we undertake major repair projects while still having to raise \$1.5M just to operate and open the village annually. Now more than ever, please support us, and THANK YOU! See you around the village this Spring!!!

**-Hance Morton Sitkus, CPA,  
Executive Director**

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## A note from the Editor

Welcome back to the village! Like the wild daffodils that sprout up throughout the village every spring, so are new and exciting events and displays. You may notice some of the building interiors look a bit different. As we continue to do research and learn more about life in the 1830s, we change our displays to create spaces that most accurately reflect a home from the time. The Museum Collections department is also conducting an inventory of the items in the museum collection making sure everything is in the right location and looking for any damage that would need conservation. Be sure to visit the Enameling Building throughout the year, underneath our new roof you'll find rotating exhibits featuring never before seen images from our archives. The planned exhibitions for this year include:

The Mill Run: The Mill Run flows through the village to the Manasquan River, passing through the Mill Pond along the way. This brook served an important purpose in the 1800s providing power to the mills. The lake that formed provided fishing and recreation, now the water system is starting to dry up. What will this mean for our current environment? Learn about the mills that ran the village and how humans shape the landscape. Coming in April.

Delights at Delisle's: After the furnace at Allaire stopped, the village did not just go away overnight. Located on the train line to the shore and centered between the tourist towns of Lakewood and Spring Lake the village soon became a spot for motorists to rest and enjoy an outing. At the center of the fun was Delisle's Inn located in what was and is the Carpenter's Shop. The Inn hosted Celebrities and Banquets. Learn about the Village through the Gilded Age, Great War, and Prohibition. Coming in Summer.

Local Artist Showcase: A showcase of local artists. Exhibit theme, contest, and application process to be announced at a later date. Coming in Fall.

In addition to these new exhibits we are entering the 250th year of America. In partnership with RevolutionNJ we will be unveiling commemorative events and exhibits as we enter the semiquincentennial in 2026. I hope you enjoy all the new offerings this year and can't wait to see you in the village.

Felicity Bennett  
Museum Collections Manager  
Village Star Editor



The Historic Village at Allaire

### Bakery and Store Updates



The Allaire Village Bakery has been working hard this winter to provide visitors with new treats. This spring look forward to new products such as cannoli cookies.

The Bakery is also expanding. There will be a Bakery Annex in the General Store. On event days when the line is long, head to the General Store to purchase the same treats while shopping an array of souvenirs and other items. (Please note the Bakery Annex will NOT have coffee or large cookies). The Bakery's Table at the Flea Markets are also expanding incase you get hungry while bargain hunting.

### Tour Updates

The tour season is off and running! Last week, our tour guides went through our Tour Guide Orientation to ready themselves for this upcoming tour season. We are expecting over 5,000 guests to book tours with us throughout the year. This year we introduced the "Early Ages" tour which is geared towards preschool and kindergarten students. We wanted to create an experience that would excite our younger generation and allow them to have fun while learning. Tours can be booked from March 1st to November 20th. Please feel free to reach out to [tours@allairevillage.org](mailto:tours@allairevillage.org) to book a unique historic experience!

### Wishlist

- Portable Projector and screen
  - Cardstock (all colors)
  - Battery Operated Candles
  - Amazon Giftcards for supplies
  - Clothing Steamer
  - Dehumidifiers
  - Exterior Paint
- Donations are always Appreciated.

**Please call (732) 919-3500, Ext. 13 if you would like to donate to our wish list.**

**ANSWER**

From Fall 2024's Issue



**It's a wheelwrights traveler!**

A wheelwright, or a person who builds and repairs wagon wheels, would use this tool to measure the circumference of a wheel to get the perfect length of iron to make the iron tire.

VISIT OUR WHEELWRIGHT SHOP AND SEE IF YOU CAN SPOT IT IN THERE!





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# The Village Star

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## Become a Villager

### What do volunteers do at Allaire?

Besides teaching visitors all about life in the 1830's, they learn new skills and make new friends while working in a highly engaging environment. Volunteers bring life to the village through acting part of the villagers. Enter the shoes of a citizen of the Howell Iron Works and live history. Volunteers make visits to the village memorable for guests. They meet lifelong friends, some past volunteers even met their future spouse here!



Every spring before the season kicks off, Allaire provides volunteers with workshops and trainings where they can learn a new 19th century skill or craft. Past workshops included Hearth cooking, quilting, advanced blacksmithing where volunteers learned to make a knife, and how to sew a 19th century men's shirt. The training sessions are always popular and a great way to learn something new.

The next workshop is a three-day introductory blacksmithing class on March 22nd, 29th, and 30th led by Master Blacksmith, Mike Sheridan. This class is required training for all returning and potential blacksmiths. Space is very limited; however additional classes will be held in the future.

Whether you are interested in blacksmithing or becoming the newest townsman we are always looking for more volunteers. Contact Shelby Register our Historical Outreach Coordinator at [sregister@allairevillage.org](mailto:sregister@allairevillage.org) or 732-919-3500 ext. 19 to learn more about our volunteer program.





## The Industry That No Longer Stands

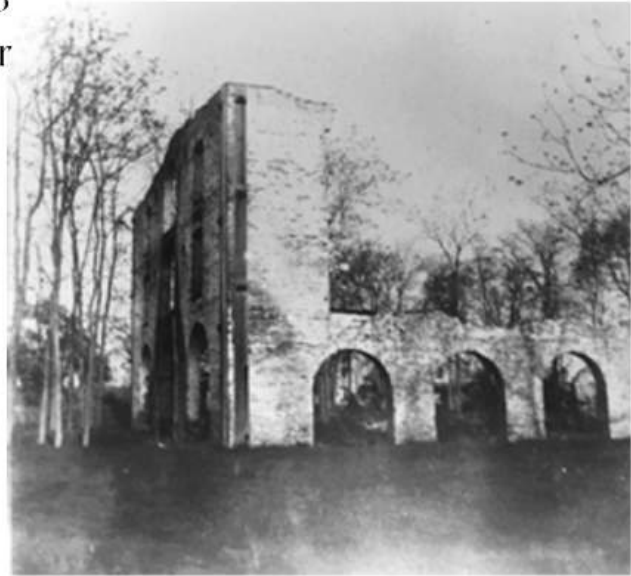
by Alex Capobianco, Library &  
Archive Coordinator

One of the main goals of James P. Allaire was to have complete control of the production process from raw material to finished product, as well as the movement of those materials. The purchase of the Howell Works in 1822 was a business move to not only control that process, but his labor supply as well with the creation of the company village. The construction of housing for his workers and their families, the general store, and the acquiring of land for farms to provide the food to the store were all done with industry in mind. By providing for his labor forces needs, Allaire grew his industry and its influence, even expanding it outside the village.

Howell Works did not just help Allaire control his iron production for his engine works up in New York City, but also created an entire line of different products that were manufactured. With the selling of cast iron and produce from the farm, an additional manufacturing arm to his overall iron industry was made.

Industry shaped everything in the village, Allaire made multiple waterways, roads, and dams changing the landscape to fit his industrial needs. Not only that, but peoples' whole lives were influenced by it. Such as, the 12-hour workmen sleeping in the bridgehouse always ready to work instead of in a bed at home.

Despite that influence however, when looking out at the village today, a lot of that once valuable industry is no longer visible. Here are two buildings that are no longer standing that were important to the keeping the village alive:



**C. 1901**

the Charcoal Depot, a once important building to the iron industry here at the Howell Works. Originally built in 1832, the Charcoal Depot, was one of the largest buildings in the Village, standing 3 stories high. It would store the charcoal that was used to keep the continuous fire down in the Blast Furnace.



**C.1901-1908**

Connected to the depot was the bridgehouse, shown in the photograph above, that was connected to the Blast Furnace at the top of the ravine. The charcoal from the depot would be moved to the charging room and combined with the other ingredients to make the furnace charge, which were charcoal, ore, and flux.



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## Select Events at Allaire

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# Spring Events

### Opening Day- Saturday, April 5th, 2025

#### General Admission into the Village begins Saturday, April 5th.

General Admission is Friday to Sunday on Non-Event days. 11 am to 4pm. Village Buildings, Historic Homes, and Retail Shops are open. 19th Century trade demos and tours are available. Admission is \$5 per person ages 4 and up. If you are interested in free admission check out our membership program. More info available at [allairevillage.org](http://allairevillage.org).

**Saturday, April 5th:**

#### **Flea Market**

Day of Tickets \$5 ages 11 and up

**Saturday, April 12th**

#### **Easter Celebration - TWO DAYS!**

**Saturday, April 19th:**

Collect eggs, entertainment, live animals, scavenger hunt, crafts & more!

Tickets \$10 ages 3 and up

**Sunday, April 20th:**

#### **Easter Sunrise Service at the Allaire Chapel**

6:30 am. Free. Village is closed.

**Saturday, April 26th:**

#### **Annual Allaire 5k Beer Run**

Online registration required. MUST BE 21 or Older

**Friday, May 2nd:**

#### **Home School Day!**

Experience life as a child in the 1830s.

Tickets \$10 ages 5 and up

**Saturday, May 10th:**

#### **Flea Market**

Tickets \$5 ages 11 and up

**Saturday, May 17th:**

#### **Spring Craft & Vendor Show**

Tickets \$5 ages 10 and up

**Saturday, May 24th:**

#### **Antique & Vintage Show**

Tickets \$5 ages 11 and up

**Saturday, June 7th:**

#### **Allaire Arts Festival in Collaboration with The Art Society of Monmouth County**

Tickets \$6 ages 10 and up

**Saturday, June 14th:**

#### **Flea Market**

Tickets \$5 ages 11 and up

**Saturday, June 28th**

#### **Ducky Derby! - TWO DAYS**

**Sunday, June 29th:**

Rubber Duck races down the millpond. Races every half hour, animals, scavenger hunt & more!

Tickets \$10 ages 4 and up

To see our full calendar of events, purchase vendor spaces or tickets, or to find out more information please visit us online at [allairevillage.org](http://allairevillage.org).



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## Select Events at Allaire

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# Workshops and More!

### Beyond the Counter

An adult Workshop and Lecture series held monthly in the village General Store. Each month learn a new craft or skill. See our website for details on each month's activity.

Register Online \$ 25, designed for ages 16 and up.

### Beyond the Counter Upcoming Dates

All Beyond the Counters are hosted on Sundays from 2pm to 4pm.

March 23rd - Tea Tasting

April 6th - Desktop Tree of Life Sculpture

May 4th - Victorian Shell Box

June 8th - Quilling

July 13th - Fruit Shrubs (drink) Tasting

August 17th - Fabric Coil Baskets

September 7th - Tussie Mussie Paper Flowers

November 9th - Christmas Putz Houses

### It's BACK! History Kids Club

A kid's activity and lesson for those that love hands-on history! New activities every month. See our website for details on each month's activity.

Register Online \$ 12, designed for ages 5-13

### History Kids Club Upcoming Dates

All History Kids Clubss are hosted on Sundays from 1pm to 3pm.

April 27th - Basket Weaving

May 4th - Tinsmithing

June 22nd - Nature Walk

July 13th - Paint Your own Yo-yo or Spinning Top

August 17th - Bog Iron Hunt

September 7th - Leather Making

November 9th - Sachets and Pomanders



*For tickets and more information, check out our Allaire Village Eventbrite Page!  
Scan our QR code to see more!*



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## The Historic Village at Allaire

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### Water Powers

by Felicity Bennett, Museum  
Collections Manager

As Olaf said in Frozen 2 “Water has memories”, although not in a traditional sense. By looking at the way water moves through the landscape you determine a few things about the area. Where different things were located, where the river source is, and what was on the river. Man-made waterways give insight of the community there. Was it a canal used to transport heavy goods along the road? Was it irrigation for a farm? Or was it the water that powered wheels and mills?



**1842**

A lake forms above the road. The Manasquan River is labelled as is the Howell Works.



**1781**

A map showing the location of Isaac Palmer's sawmill located on an unnamed road at the intersection of Clear Brook and what would be known as Millrun. These two continue to flow to the Manasquan River which is shown running parallel with the road.

In 1781 the Mill Run is first seen connecting to Clear Brook. Isaac Palmer's sawmill is marked along the intersection. It is likely that Palmer dug the original Mill Run for the mill. By 1842 a lake appears on the map, was this the result of more mills at the Howell Iron Works that James P. Allaire formed in 1822? The lake fed several canals that run through pipes and slough ways under the village. 30 years later, in 1872 the road cuts through the lake to make a safer road crossing for the new train tracks. A meeting was held at the Allaire residence to find an alternative option but in the end builders decided to go through with the original plan. Later when redoing the same road in the 1920's rubble was found which was theorized this was the location of Palmer's Mill.



# The Village Star

necessities occasioned by the new condition of affairs.

**CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS.**

**SPECIAL MEETING.**

**A BRIDGE TO BE BUILT ON THE NEW ROAD AT ALLAIRES.**

**PROPOSITION FOR MONTHLY MEETINGS OF THE BOARD.**

**MONDAY, Dec. 2, 1872.**

A special meeting of the Board of Chosen Freeholders was held to-day at Allaire, Howell Works, in Howell township, to consider the question of building a bridge on a road recently laid out by the Surveyors of the Highways, at a point where it crosses a mill pond on the Allaire estate. The old road crossed the stream by low water dam, and a small bridge sufficed. The new road will require a bridge of considerable size, variously estimated to cost from one thousand to six thousand dollars. The new road, as made necessary by the construction of the railroad which crossed the old road, in consequence of its tortuous course, three times within a very short distance, making it very dangerous to travel. The new road, or rather the new location of a part of the old road from Squan to Farmingdale, makes an air-line, which entirely wipes out the serpentine course alluded to, and crosses the railroad but once, and at right angles, which is a decided improvement. This air-line, however, carries the road over the mill pond, where a bridge is not only expensive, but a decided disadvantage to the owners of the pond. It was to consider the advantages and disadvan-

## Monmouth Democrat - December 2, 1872

A portion of an article from the Monmouth Democrat describes the meeting held at the Allaire Residence hosted by Calicia and Hal Allaire to discuss the proposed road reroute with the Freeholders.

The lake still there quickly became a tourist location. In the late 1800's through the 1920's the lake was called Allaire Lake. It was regularly stocked with trout and other fish for fishing, and used as a place to swim. After Arthur Brisbane purchased the land and revitalized the surrounding property the lake was renamed Brisbane Lake. During the 1930's it was used heavily for recreation such as boating, swimming, and fishing. In 1950 the name Brisbane Lake became the official name of the lake on all maps as part of an effort by the State of New Jersey to standardize names of waterways in the state.

In the 1960's the 100-year-old dam was in need of repair. Several newspapers advertised a proposal calling for bids. By 2001 most of the dams in New Jersey were in a state of disrepair and dangerous. The dam at Brisbane Lake was listed as one of the critical dams. If it failed it could lead to severe damage to the surrounding land. In 2007 the lake was drained by the NJDEP in order to repair the dam. The repairs were never made and almost 10 years later the lake started to shrink.

Now Brisbane Lake is all but dried up, a stream flows and feeds the millpond in the village. But without the lake the millpond is also starting to shrink. What will become of the lake next? Is there time to save the millpond in the Historic Village from the same fate?



(TOP) COURTESY OF HANCK SIKIUS

(BOTTOM) SALLIE HAAS THE COAST STAR

The top picture shows Brisbane Lake in the fall of 2005, two years before the Department of Environmental Protection drained the lake for a dam repair. The picture below was taken in 2016. Nearly a decade later, the dam still has not been repaired, and the lake is almost completely dried up.

## "Is There Still Time to Save Brisbane Lake?"

The Coast Star - Mar 17, 2016

A clipping from an article from The Coast Star published in 2016. The lake quickly shrunk in size. Today the only remaining water is a stream that passes through the area of the former lake.





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The Historic Village at Allaire

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# Winter Highlights





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# The Village Star

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## Winter Event Highlights



Thanks to the support of all our visitors and members we had a very successful fall and winter season. Last year The Historic Village at Allaire welcomed over 50,000 attendees to our fall and winter events hosted September through December.

Brand new this year were Ghost Tours which were a hit for fans of history and the paranormal alike. Tour guides led guests through the lantern lit village to places not normally open to the public, like the second floor of the store. The Holiday Stroll entered it's second year and had diehard fans brave the icy cold to come see the village lit up with candles and twinkling lights.

### A Holly Jolly Holiday Season

A festive arch greets visitors during the Christmas Season (above left), Moon rising above the blacksmith shop roof (above right), Villagers toast and give thanks during Day of Thanks (below), the Allaire team makes the winter nights feel jolly and bright with lights and decorations (opposite)

We thank everyone who joined us last year and hope to see you again in 2025.







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The Historic Village at Allaire

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## New Roofs!

The Enameling Building and Chapel both received new roofs this January as part of a grant from the Preserve New Jersey Historic Preservation Fund. This matching grant allowed us to make emergency repairs to the roofs of these buildings and repair damage due to leaks. It was vital that the repairs were done before more damage could occur. The last time the roofs were redone were over 35 years ago. Prior to recent years the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection was in charge of building repairs and maintenance. Allaire Village, Inc. seeing the need for the repairs have taken on several tasks in order to preserve the buildings that are the heart of the site. Cedar and copper were used to maintain the historic integrity of the buildings while looking stunning. The golden hue of the wood will slowly gray as it ages. We still need to raise 90k to cover our costs. If you can please consider donating to village.







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## The Historic Village at Allaire

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### Staff Updates

Our long-reigning Employee of the Month, Rudy, enjoys another month of being top dog in the office. Seen here getting a congratulatory hug from our Historical Outreach Coordinator. (Top Left)

Rising Star Jasper the Collie puts in a hard day's work of being fluffy and boosting office morale. Rudy might have to share his spot as Employee of the Month. (Top Right)

An unexpected guest visits the village during the Holiday Stroll. A young cat found her way into the park and our hearts. Thankfully this lost kitten was reunited with her family with the help of our volunteers and employees. Seen here being held by our Director of Development & Operations. (Left)





# The Village Star

## A Thank You To Our Annual Sponsors & Grantors



Allaire Village Inc. received an operating support grant from ;  
 New Jersey Historical Commission,  
 a division of the Department of State.  
 The Stone Foundation of NJ  
 Ocean First Foundation  
 Monmouth Park Charity Fund  
 Brisbane Associates  
 Estate of Evelyn Frostick Kessler Morton  
 Sandpiper Questers  
 New Jersey State Questers  
 Americana Corner  
 New Jersey Arts and Culture Renewal Fund at the  
 Princeton Area Community Foundation  
 Preserve New Jersey Historic Preservation Fund  
 Impact 100 Jersey Coast  
 Manasquan Bank Foundation

## The Historic Village at Allaire Board of Trustees

Ellie Eith, Chairman  
 Jason Bryant, Vice Chairman  
 Charles A. Brisbane, Treasurer  
 Tom Lavery, Secretary  
 Russ McIver  
 Dara McGuinness  
 John Hein

## Allaire Village Inc. Staff

Hance M. Sitkus, CPA, Executive Director  
 Daryl Lynn O'Connell, Director of  
 Development & Operations  
 Felicity Bennett, Museum Collections  
 Manager  
 Bonnie Brown, General Store Manager  
 Cynthia Dwyer, Chapel Coordinator  
 Sharon Knauf, Bakery Manager  
 Ren Kelly, Museum Education & Tour  
 Manager  
 Waine Heffelfinger, Facilities Coordinator  
 Shelby Register, Historical Outreach  
 Coordinator  
 Kara Colonna, Special Events Manager  
 Alex Capobianco, Library & Archive  
 Coordinator  
 (732) 919-3500  
 allairevillage.org  
 Check out our Facebook and Instagram!  
 @TheHistoricVillageAtAllaire

## State Parks, Forest & Historic Sites: Allaire State Park

Mark Texel, State Historic Sites Administrator  
 Jenny Felton, Central Regional State Park Superintendent  
 Inga Gabliks, Allaire State Park Superintendent