



## Stockton's South Jersey Culture & History Center Hosts Symposium to Revisit John McPhee's *The Pine Barrens*

*Classic Work on History, People, Culture, and Ecosystem of New Jersey Pinelands to be Re-visited on its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Publication*

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**Galloway Township, NJ-** In 1967, acclaimed author John McPhee published *The Pine Barrens*, a moving and influential work that touched on the cultural and environmental riches of the New Jersey pines. Stockton and its South Jersey Culture & History Center will present a one-day symposium on the region to mark the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of McPhee's influential work. The event is co-sponsored by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities and Stockton's School of Arts and Humanities.

The event will take place Saturday, May 12, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Campus Center Event Room. Free on-line registration is available at <http://wp.stockton.edu/sjhc/>.

"While much has changed in the state since the publication of *The Pine Barrens*, much has been preserved and protected," said Dr. Thomas Kinsella, Stockton Professor of Literature who organized the symposium. "As the book reaches its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it is appropriate to reflect on cultural, historical and ecological developments in the region."

Six speakers will be featured at the event. They include:

- Gabe Donio on "Still the Separate Worlds." A look at those associated with the agricultural industry whose people are literally tethered to the land. As a result much

of the vibrant culture and unique local tradition in towns such as Hammonton has been retained.

- Emile DeVito on “Conservation of Rare Animals of the Pine Barrens: Threats, Status, Research, and Applications of Conservation Strategies.” The ecology of animal rarity will be explored, with examples of how land management and development patterns impact rare species.
- Paul W. Schopp on “Still Days: The Black Doctor of the Pines.” McPhee wrote about an African American named James Still, known as “Doctor of the Pines” who used medical botany to treat his patients. This presentation will amplify and expound on McPhee’s words about Still, one of the important African American figures of New Jersey in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Amy Karpati on “Fire and Flora in the Pine Barrens.” Fire shaped the ecology of the Pinelands and management of fire has significant ecological effects as well. This presentation will discuss the ecology of fire and provide an update on Pine Barrens flora that has fascinated botanists and caused concern among conservation biologists.
- Ted Gordon on “Lost and Forgotten Towns of the Pine Barrens.” The remains of historical structures such as dams, reservoirs and raceways of early sawmills and gristmills are scattered throughout the region. In recent years many have fallen victim to demolition and vandalism, though some remain. Gordon examines some of the long abandoned settlements of the region.
- Mark Demitroff on “Sugar Sand and Springs: A Turbulent Record of Ancient Climate Change.” This presentation will discuss the Ice-Age legacy of the Pine Barrens that helped to fashion the terrain and landscape that we value today.

The Symposium is the first public event of the newly inaugurated South Jersey Culture & History Center at Stockton. The Center’s mission is to foster awareness of the rich cultural and historical heritage of Southern New Jersey and to promote research and study of the region, especially among local students.



This symposium was made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations in this symposium do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities or the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.