



Leon Brady's award winning Ayrshire heifer he raised for the Pleasant Valley Calf Club and entered in the 1928 Miss Pleasant Valley beauty contest

# History of the Mercer County 4-H Fair

Wednesday, May 24, 2023; 7:00 pm

Presented by Larry Kidder

In person at the Hopewell Branch of the Mercer County Library  
245 Pennington–Titusville Rd., Pennington, NJ

Or online virtual presentation via Zoom. Please visit  
[www.hopewellvalleyhistory.org](http://www.hopewellvalleyhistory.org) for registration information\*

\*Registration required for both in-person and Zoom



**Speaker:**

Larry Kidder is a retired history teacher who taught for 40 years, including 32 years at The Hun School of Princeton. He is a graduate of Allegheny College (BA 1967, MS

1969) and served four years in the US Navy. Larry has been a volunteer historian and historical interpreter for the Howell Living History Farm in Hopewell for over 30 years and is a member of the board of the Princeton Battlefield Society where he focuses on educational programs and battlefield tours. He is a past president of the Hopewell Valley Historical Society and has served on the board for many years. The author of two books on rural New Jersey history and three on aspects of the American Revolution in Mercer County, Larry is a frequent speaker throughout New Jersey. He has also been a presenter at conferences on the American Revolution in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and New York. For more of Larry's projects and books, visit [WlKidderHistorian.com](http://WlKidderHistorian.com).

Larry Kidder tells the story of the changing nature of agriculture that led to changes in rural life in the early 20th century. New opportunities in towns and cities resulting from the industrial revolution, combined with a focus on celebrating rural life and finding ways to make farming a viable lifestyle, led to the creation of educational opportunities for all ages and especially the young. The 4-H programs that we know today grew out of that movement. In Pleasant Valley, one of the earliest and very successful programs for young people in Mercer County developed into the Pleasant Valley Calf Club during the second decade of the twentieth century. One activity of the club was putting on a community wide agricultural fair in the summer, which was held at the rural school house in the center of the Valley. The Calf Club and other youth clubs devoted to aspects of rural life became part of the growing 4-H program and the annual county 4-H fair. Today, the Mercer County 4-H Fair is held in central Pleasant Valley near where those early Calf Club Fairs were held.

Co-sponsored by Hopewell Valley Historical Society, The Hopewell Museum and the Hopewell Branch of the Mercer County Library.

