

Goshen to again be the center of the harness racing universe

by Ellen Harvey, Harness Racing Communications

Freehold, NJ --- The village of Goshen, N.Y., so enmeshed with the history of harness racing that a trotter is emblazoned on their police cars, is the center of the harness racing world over July 4th weekend each year.

The village, with tree-lined streets dotted by historic homes, is just 65 miles from New York City and will be the site of inductions to the Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame and host of a race meet at adjacent Historic Track on July 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Four days of harness racing fun will be complemented by the 35th annual Great American Weekend celebration on Saturday and Sunday (July 2 and 3) at the town green, a short walk from the Museum and Track.

From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday (July 2) and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday (July 3), the nine acre town green will feature 100-plus craft booths, creative food offerings of every description and entertainment.

On July 1, racing kicks off with a day of New York-bred pacing colts and fillies, with a 1 p.m. post time at [Goshen Historic Track](#), located at 44 Park Place. Racing has taken place at Historic Track since 1838. Admission is \$5 for adults and includes a program, children 12 and younger are free.

[The Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame](#), housed in a century-old converted Tudor carriage house, adjacent to the track at 240 Main St., opens at 10 a.m. every day except a few major holidays and closes at 5 p.m. Admission is always free.

On July 2, racing at Historic Track resumes at 1 p.m. with Landmark Stakes races and a visit from goodwill ambassador Whiskey Pete, a retired pacer with nearly a half million dollars in winnings. The 9-year-old is now a riding horse and babysitter for yearlings. He will greet guests behind the grandstand and accept pats after races one, three, five and seven on Saturday.

July 3 is Hall of Fame day, with inductions of horsemen Charlie Keller and Bruce Nickells set to take place at the Museum on Sunday evening and New York-bred trotters at Historic Track. Hall of Fame drivers will be featured in the \$10,000 Mr. and Mrs. Elbridge Gerry Sr. Memorial Trot and they'll meet fans and sign photos after the race.

This year, the driver lineup is Carmine Abbatiello, John Campbell, Wally Hennessey, David Miller, Bill O'Donnell, Dave Palone, Jimmy Takter and Ron Waples.

Racing at Historic Track concludes on July 4, with a 1 p.m. post time and New York-bred county fair races on the card. With the help of a U.S. Trotting Association Fair marketing grant, there will be special drawings for residents within walking distance of the track. The Goshen 4H Horse and Pony Club teamed up to give each household within walking distance to the track a coupon to deposit on July 4 for gift card drawings for area businesses.