



Participants place their LEGO structures on a giant map April 23 inside the Wojciechowicz Barn at Updike Farmstead in Princeton. Photos by Neil H. Davis, for The Star-Ledger

PRINCETON

Brick by brick, creativity comes alive at this ‘block party’

Princeton Historical Society hosts event for architects of all ages.

Linda O’Brien For The Star-Ledger

The Historical Society of Princeton hosted its fifth annual Building Princeton event on a recent Sunday in the Wojciechowicz Barn at Updike Farmstead.

Working from photographs, 28 teams recreated iconic Princeton structures out of LEGO building blocks. Participants chose from more than 50 historic structures, famous residences, community buildings, and houses of worship. When the models were finished, they were added to a map of Princeton.

Some of the LEGO buildings constructed included:

- › Nassau Hall at Princeton University;
- › Einstein’s House, 112 Mercer St.
- › Clio Hall at Princeton University.
- › Stony Brook Meeting House.
- › Drumthwacket Manor House.
- › Kalkus House at Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart.
- › Arts Council of Princeton.
- › Trinity Episcopal Church.
- › Garden Theatre.
- › Stanhope Hall at Princeton University.
- › Nassau Club.
- › St. Paul Church.

The annual event, designed to “increase awareness of the town’s rich architectural heritage,” is led by architect Stephen W. Schwartz from Building Blocks Workshops LLC.

Groups of up to four participants each



Left, Aaradhya Fernando places the T.S. Eliot House on the map. Right, Owen Berkman, Joshua Sambol and William Vermut build Trinity Episcopal Church.



Left, Nicholas Weihe, Ziliang Ling and Ryan Ying build the public library. Right, Zora Trainor builds the Princeton Garden Theatre.



had up to 100,000 LEGO building blocks at their disposal, and all ages were invited to participate, but teams with children younger than 16 needed one adult team member.

Some teams, with participants as young as 5, included parents and grandparents. There also were at least two adults-only teams, including a group of four employees from Studio Hillier, one of the event

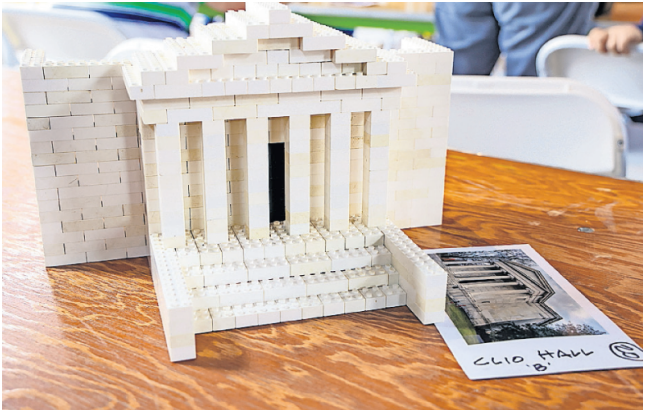
sponsors.

“Adults love this program as much as the kids,” said Eve Mandel, director of programs and outreach for the Historical Society of Princeton. “It’s incredible to watch the construction of each building, but there’s nothing like seeing them all together on the map. It’s a LEGO skyline of Princeton.”

At the conclusion of the program, each team received a copy of “The Princeton

Architectural Treasure Hunt Map” and was encouraged to explore Princeton and find the actual buildings.

“We were thrilled with this year’s turnout. Groups were formed with families, friends, classmates, and co-workers - It’s incredible to see what teams can build in just two hours,” Mandel said. “At the end, everyone’s work is on display to create a collaborative, LEGO version of Princeton.”



From left, LEGO models of St. Paul Church, the Einstein House and Clio Hall.